



# FEEDBACK

May 2012

### Your Story:

Do you have a story, humorous or otherwise about amateur radio? If so, please contact the newsletter editor (wr8g@omega-link.com) and get it published in FEEDBACK.

You don't have to be a professional writer, or even a writer at all. If you're comfortable with writing, great! If not, relate the story in the fashion that you are comfortable with and let the editor do the rest.

I'd Like to thank those who contributed articles to this month's Feedback. Thanks to you, I had the problem of finding enough space to fit every thing into the 6 pages of this newsletter. I'm looking forward to more articles from the members in the coming months.. —WR8G

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## '3900 Saturdays'

The older I get, the more I enjoy Saturday mornings. Perhaps it's the quiet solitude that comes with being the first to rise, or maybe it's the unbounded joy of not having to be at work. Either way, the first few hours of a Saturday morning are most enjoyable.

A few weeks ago, I was shuffling toward the garage with a steaming cup of coffee in one hand and the morning paper in the other. What began as a typical Saturday morning turned into one of those Lessons that life seems to hand you from time to time. Let me tell you about it:

I turned the dial up into the phone portion of the band on my ham radio in order to listen to a Saturday morning swap net. Along the way, I came across an older sounding chap, with a tremendous signal and a golden voice. You know the kind, he sounded like he should be in the broadcasting business. He was telling whom-ever he was talking with something about 'a thousand marbles..' I was intrigued and stopped to listen to what he had to say....

Well, Tom, it sure sounds like you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. Hard to believe a

young fellow should have to work sixty or seventy hours a week to make ends meet. It's too bad you missed your daughter's 'dance recital' he continued. 'Let me tell you something that has helped me keep my own priorities.' And that's when he began to explain his theory of a 'thousand marbles.'

'You see, I sat down one day and did a little arithmetic. The average person lives about seventy-five years. I know, some live more and some live less, but on average, folks live about seventy-five years.

'Now then, I multiplied 75 times 52 and I came up with 3900, which is the number of Saturdays that the average person has in their entire lifetime. Now, stick with me, Tom, I'm getting to the important part.

It took me until I was fifty-five years old to think about all this in any detail', he went on, 'and by that time I had lived through over twenty-eight hundred Saturdays.' 'I got to thinking that if I lived to be seventy-five, I only had about a thousand of them left to enjoy. So I went to a toy store and bought every single marble they had. I ended up having to visit three toy stores to round up 1000 marbles I

*(Continued on page 3)*



### Board of Directors

#### President

Gary Williams, N8QC  
n8qc@arrl.net

#### Vice President

Dave Ashbolt, K8OLY  
k8oly@arrl.net

#### Secretary

John Davidson, W8JRD  
w8jrd@arrl.net

#### Treasurer

Don Larkin, W8RVT  
w8rvt@arrl.net

#### Past President

Bob Kingsbury, AC8GL  
kings-boo@yahoo.com

### Club Meeting

3rd Thursday of every month  
Maple United Methodist Church  
342 Capital Avenue NE  
Battle Creek, MI 49017

### Next Meeting

May 17th, 2012 @ 7 pm.

### BLB Luncheon

2nd Thursday of every month  
Mancino's  
1791 W. Columbia Avenue  
Battle Creek, MI 49015

### Next meeting

June 14th @ 11:30 AM

### SMARS Breakfast

1st Saturday of every month

### Next Meeting

June 2nd @ 8:30

SMARS Club Meeting April 19, 2012

Called To Order: 7:00 PM

Officers Present: **Bob, AC8GL; Don, W8RVT; John, W8JRD; Gary, N8QC; Doc, K8OLY**

Pledge of Allegiance

Introductions

Secretary's Report: approved as reported at the Club Meeting.

Treasurer's Report: approved as reported at the Club Meeting.

Committee Reports:

- ◆ Hamfest: Ticket sales up slightly from 2011. All tables sold out this year. All food sold out. **K8OLY** will be the 2013 Chairman. **Bob, AC8GL;** read a thank letter to everyone who helped. **Doc, K8OLY;** won the Wauxon handheld given to Hamfest helpers.
- ◆ ARES/RACES: March of Dimes walk on April 29 at 10am. Volunteers to be there at 8am. The second "Ham in a Day" session is April 28 from 9:30am with testing at 3:30pm.
- ◆ Skywarn participation was mentioned.
- ◆ Field Day: **John, W8JRD,** will be Chair. Louie will see about the permit.
- ◆ VE Testing: Next session is April 26 at Maple United Methodist. Walk-ins allowed at the "Ham in a Day" session on April 28.

Old Business:

- ◆ **Tom, WR8G;** is doing a great job with the club website and newsletter.
- ◆ The monthly SMARS breakfast on the first Saturday of each month is poorly attended. All are encouraged to attend at the Homespun restaurant at 8:30 am.

New Business:

- ◆ **Jay, KD8OXR;** reported that seats were still available on the bus to Dayton.
- ◆ An informal poll showed most members were in favor of SMARS operating from one of the club trailers once or so per month at locations yet to be determined. First session will be in May, in conjunction with a club potluck/picnic. New hams are to be encouraged to get an exposure to Ham Radio.
- ◆ Charlotte Longman, widow of **Jerry, W8FOK;** still has many antique radios to dispose of.

Presentation: **John, W8JRD,** displayed photos of trips to Oshkosh and Washington, DC.

Adjourned: 8:25 PM

### SMARS Breakfast well attended

For a pleasant change of pace, the May SMARS Breakfast was well attended with 12 people making an appearance. Nice to here that there was such a good showing. I hope to be able to attend the next breakfast (**June 2<sup>nd</sup>**) myself and hope to see everyone there. —WR8G

**SMARS Board Meeting April 30, 2012**

SMARS Board Meeting April 30, 2012

Called to Order: 5:15PM

Officers Present: **Gary N8QC Doc K8OLY John W8JRD Don W8RVT**

Others Present: **Stephanie, W8AEZ; Steve, KD8RWG; Melody; Tom, WR8G**

Topics:

- ◆ (Note: There was far more discussion than is noted here; these notes are not complete)
- ◆ The Club credit Union is requiring a physical address for the account. The Club Trustee's address will be used.
- ◆ Discussion of the pros and cons of becoming a 501C Corporation. At this time, the cons seem to outweigh the pros. Discussion tabled for now.
- ◆ **Tom, WR8G**, will move the club website from its current host to one he controls.
- ◆ Saturday, May 5, is the monthly SMARS breakfast. More participation would be nice.
- ◆ **Don, W8RVT**, discussed repairs needed to the computers at the repeater site.
- ◆ A date of May 26 was set for the first Saturday operating session. This will be combined with a picnic/potluck. Others may be held with a fox Hunt or other club activities, such as an antenna building session.
- ◆ The Club Leadership Workshop held in Kalamazoo on April 21 was discussed. Main points included: good/bad clubs, club evaluations, treatment of new hams, ideas for growing club size, plus lots more.
- ◆ A motion was made to allow all new members to pay no dues for the first year. Motion passed without dissent.
- ◆ A door prize of a Wauxon handheld will be held among participants at Field Day.

Adjourned: 6:45 PM

Respectfully Submitted,  
**John Davidson W8JRD**  
 SMARS Secretary

*(3900 Saturdays, continued from page 1)*

took them home and put them inside a large, clear plastic container right here in the shack next to my gear.'

'Every Saturday since then, I have taken one marble out and thrown it away. I found that by watching the marbles diminish, I focused more on the really important things in life.

There's nothing like watching your time here on this earth run out to help get your priorities straight.'

'Now let me tell you one last thing before I sign-off with you and take my lovely wife out for breakfast. This morning, I took the very last marble out of the container. I figure that if I make it until next Saturday then I have been given a little extra time.. And the one thing we can all use is a little more time.'

'It was nice to meet you Tom, I hope you spend more time with your family, and I hope to meet you again here on the band. This is a 75 Year old Man, K9NZQ, clear and going QRT, good morning!'

You could have heard a pin drop on the band when this fellow signed off. I guess he gave us all a lot to think about. I had planned to work on the antenna that morning, and then I was going to meet up with a few hams to work on the next club newsletter.

Instead, I went upstairs and woke my wife up with a kiss. 'C'mon honey, I'm taking you and the kids to breakfast.' 'What brought this on?' she asked with a smile. 'Oh, nothing special, it's just been a long time since we spent a Saturday together with the kids. And hey, can we stop at a toy store while we're out? I need to buy some marbles.

Original author unknown

The above was forwarded to me by Lyn and Gary Bleyer with the suggestion that I condense it for the newsletter, but it was so good that I just couldn't cut anything out.

**Classified**

Classified ads due by 1st Sunday of publication month.

<b>FOR SALE From Estate of KG8GZ</b>	
Pyramid 20 Amp Power Supply	\$50
ICT 12012-20A Switching Power Supply	\$45
MFJ 422B-X Keyer	\$70

**Contact Don, W8RVT (269) 963-7797**

### Hamfests

**05/18/2012: Dayton Hamvention**  
 Trotwood, OH  
 Dayton Amateur Radio Association  
<http://www.hamvention.org>

06/02/2012: 2012 Independent Repeater Association's Hamfest  
 Hudsonville, MI  
 Independent Repeater Association (W8IRA)  
<http://www.w8ira.org>

06/02/2012: Fulton County ARC Hamfest  
 Tedrow, OH  
 Fulton County Amateur Radio Club  
<http://k8bxq.org>

06/03/2012: Chelsea Radio Swap 'n Shop  
 Chelsea, MI  
 Chelsea Amateur Radio Club  
<http://wd8iel.net>

06/03/2012: Starved Rock Radio Club's (W9MKS) 2012 Hamfest  
 Princeton, IL  
 Starved Rock Radio Club  
<http://www.qsl.net/w9mks/hamfest.htm>

06/16/2012: Midland ARC Hamfest  
 Midland, MI  
 Midland Amateur Radio Club  
<http://www.w8kea.org/hamfest>

06/16/2012: MILFORD HAMFEST  
 Milford, OH  
 Milford Amateur Radio Club  
<http://www.w8mrc.com>

06/17/2012: Monroe Hamfest  
 Monroe, MI  
 Monroe County Radio Communications Association  
<http://www.mcrca.org>

06/17/2012: Six Meter Club of Chicago's 55th Annual Hamfest  
 Wheaton, IL

Antique Radio Club of Illinois & Midwest Classic Radio Net  
<http://k9ona.com>

Do you know of a amateur radio related event that isn't listed in this news letter? If so, please contact the newsletter editor (WR8G, Thomas Goodson, [wr8g@omega-link.com](mailto:wr8g@omega-link.com), 269-962-8007) with details and I'll try to get it into the next edition of Feedback.

### Income and Expense Statement

4/1/12 Through 4/30/12

Category Description	4/1/12 -4/30/12
<b>INCOME</b>	
50 50	21.00
Dues	10.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>31.00</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Maintenance:	
Repeater	21.95
<b>TOTAL Maintenance</b>	<b>21.95</b>
Meetings	
Door Prize	209.91
<b>TOTAL Meetings</b>	<b>209.91</b>
Utilities	
Telephone	64.20
<b>TOTAL Utilities</b>	<b>64.20</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>296.06</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME - TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>-265.06</b>

### S.M.A.R.S. W8DF Club Repeaters

Southern Michigan Amateur Radio Society

2 Meter Repeater 146.660 MHz  
 -600KHz offset, CTCSS 94.8

70cm Repeater 443.950 MHz  
 +5MHz offset, CTCSS 94.8

1.25 Meter Repeater 224.240 MHz  
 -1.6MHz offset

70cm and 1.25 meter repeaters are linked. Also available via echolink.



## Notes from the VE Team

It's been a pretty busy start to this year, with the regular February and April sessions, plus a session at the Marshall Hamfest, and 2 special sessions for the "Ham in a Day" classes. To the best of my recollection, that's a total of 56 candidates served so far. I just wanted to thank all the VEs that have helped out, and my apologies if I leave someone out.

VEs:

- **K8AEM, Walter Wilson** (117 sessions and counting!)
- **N8QC, Gary Williams**
- **N8UU, Russ Beutler**
- **K8OLY, Dave "Doc" Ashbolt**
- **N8YEA, Erv Green**
- **W8RVT, Don Larkin**
- **WR8G, Tom Goodson**

And a special thanks to **W8AEZ, Stephanie Halbert** for handling the paperwork for the VE Team.

**John W8JRD**, VE Liaison, w8jrd@arrl.net

## What's a Field Day?

Every year amateur radio operators gather together in some place or other and take part in a contest that is not a contest --- HUH? Field Day is not supposed to be a contest, instead, the idea is to see how well amateurs can function as communicators under adverse conditions, either as individuals or in groups. This is an opportunity for all hams to participate. Here a technician licensed ham can make HF contacts if an appropriately licensed ham is by his side as a control operator. There will be plenty of general class hams to help.

Finding a site for this activity can be interesting – our club SMARS has used a farm field, a hill top, a deep woods forest, an abandoned radar site and more recently an airport. Each of the above places has had interesting activities associated with them. The farm field wasn't very good as far as contacts being made, but it was exciting when a VHF tower fell across the campfire late at night. The hill top (known as MOA's Hill) was the highest spot in the county. Many a night was spent with cups of Ted's gunpowder soup (made with plenty of peppers, tomatoes and other goodies, remembering always to empty the Tabasco bottle in the tub and then tossing in the bottle). Fort Custer supplied the deep woods togeth-

er with an ample supply of poison ivy,

Perhaps the old radar site has the richest of memories. For several years in a row, one of our members and his wife prepared a large turkey that always seemed to disappear. Another member and his father had a pig roasting setup that gave many members a satisfying meal. The ladies always brought or prepared much of the necessities for meals. Not to be forgotten was the time the ladies started their cooking on top of one BIG wasp nest. Sometimes the left hand and the right hand don't talk to each other enough. One late evening a police patrol came near our site and when he saw so many lights and people called in about a riot and wild party going on --- he was much relieved when dispatch told him what was happening. Message: always let the authorities know what you're doing.

Never to be forgotten were the years at Cornwell's Turkey farm using a noncommercial power source --- an old fashioned steam tractor with a large belt driving a couple alternators that powered all the needs of the site. There is nothing that gets your attention like the whooping of a steam whistle nearby. (Does anyone still have one of the small tooters that were used?)

What is Field Day? It's fun, crazy, and a chance for hams to have a great time.

73, **Marion WA8MFL**

## How to get an amateur radio license plate

It is pretty easy to obtain an amateur radio operator plate from the state of Michigan. It is also very inexpensive, at \$2 (or \$7 if you want one of the graphic plates). To obtain one of these plates, you need:

- ⇒ A copy of your FCC issued license
- ⇒ A proof of no-fault insurance for your vehicle
- ⇒ A check or money order for \$2 (or \$7)
- ⇒ A filled out form from: [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/orderform\\_aro\\_24944\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/orderform_aro_24944_7.pdf)

When I did mine in 2009, the form and paperwork needed to be mailed to Lansing. This may have changed by now, but expect confusion from the workers at the Secretary of State office, most of whom have never heard of amateur radio.

Good luck!

**John, W8JRD**; w8jrd@arrl.net

# SOUTHERN MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

## FEEDBACK



SMARS

P.O. Box 934

Battle Creek, MI 49016

## FIRST CLASS MAIL



### SMARS NETS

Before Lunch Bunch  
Monday—Friday 11:30 AM, 146.66

Sunday Evening 8:00 PM, 146.66  
Monday 8:00 PM, 224.24  
Wednesday 7:00 PM, 443.95  
Wednesday 8:00 PM, 28.365  
Saturday 8:00 PM, 443.95

### Upcoming events:

**Club meeting: May 17 @ 7:00 PM**  
**Daytona Hamfest: May 18-20, all day**  
**SMARS Breakfast: June 2 @ 8:30 AM**  
**BLB Luncheon: June 14 @ 11:30 AM**  
**VE Testing: June 28 @ 7:00 PM**  
**Field Day: June 23 & 24**