



FEEDBACK

April 2014

Your Story:

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

If you would like to place a classified ad to sell or purchase amateur radio related items, please contact the editor.

Inside this issue:

Meeting Minutes	4
Board Meeting Minutes	2
Treasurer's report	5
Hamfests	3
Club Repeaters	3
Upcoming events and local nets	6

Help for New Hams

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

In a box of stuff recently donated to WA2HOM, our amateur radio station at the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum, there was a book W1FB's Help for New Hams by Doug DeMaw, W1FB. This book hits on just about all the topics that a new ham in the late 1980s would want to know about, and W1FB does a great job of walking the new ham through these topics.

Of course, being 25 years old, some of it, is out-of-date, and it doesn't cover some questions that a new ham today would ask. For example, there's nothing in this book about digital modes or using a computer in the shack.

So, I'm thinking of writing my own Help for New Hams. Mine would probably be a little less HF-centric and include advice on joining clubs and how to use a computer in the shack. I am also thinking that maybe I should write two separate versions: an HF version and a VHF version.

At any rate, I've listed the chapters of the W1FB version below. If you have any comments about what I should include in my version, I'd love to hear from you.

* The Newly Licensed Amateur. This chapter talks mainly about how to choose equipment, but also covers some of the modes that amateur radio operators can use.

* Your New Equipment—Getting Acquainted. This chapter discusses how to use the features of modern transceivers, amplifiers, and antenna tuners. It also talks a little bit about antennas and SWR.

* Constructing and Using Antennas. This chapter goes into greater depth on antennas. It discusses the different types of antennas, how to feed them, and how to bring feedlines into the shack.

* Station Layout and Safety. This chapter covers the practical aspects of setting up an amateur radio station, including desk and chair selection and station wiring.

(Continued on page 4)



Board of Directors

President

Gary Williams, N8QC
n8qc@arrl.net

Vice President

Dave "Doc" Ashbolt, K8OLY

Secretary

Jay Jarrett, N8ARR
n8arr@hughes.net

Treasurer

Don Larkin, W8RVT
w8rvt@arrl.net

Member At Large

Tom Goodson, WR8G
wr8g@arrl.net

Meeting Minutes 04/17/2014

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.
Pledge of Allegiance
Introductions

Officers present – Gary N8QC, Doc K8OLY, Don W8RVT, Jay N8ARR, Tom WR8G. 17 members in attendance total.

Secretary's report accepted.
Treasurer's report accepted.

Committee reports:

Hamfest 2015 – Looking into new venue since MAC is turning into a bar. One possible location is Wings Stadium, either the Annex or the Cube. 17,000 square feet on arena floor along with rooms for VE testing. They will provide all the tables we need, there are 2,000 paved parking spaces that will be plowed if there is snow and they will run their own concession stand. They will also provide advertising on their Facebook page as well as on their large billboard along I-94. The location also provides easy access to the Interstate.

Other locations that need to be explored are the Marshall High School, Firekeeper's Casino and the Calhoun Co. Fairgrounds. Calls have been placed but no further information has come forth.

SKYWARN – Communications are needed for the Get Your Colon Rollin' fundraiser at Bailey Park on June 7th. Doc will be accepting volunteers during the Monday night SKYWARN net prior to the event. Volunteers need to be at Bailey Park by 7:00 a.m. on the day of the walk. It is expected that the event will conclude in enough time for the siren test, which will be held that same Saturday.

There will also be another March of Dimes walk at Binder Park Zoo on April

26th. Again, volunteers will be recruited on the SKYWARN net the Monday prior. Again, volunteers need to arrive at the net control location by 7:00 a.m.

VE session – The next VE session will be held on April 24th. Terry N8LN has a handful of students who will be finishing their training on the Monday prior and should all be ready to test. The next HI-AD will be held on May 17th at the Emmett Township Training Room. VE testing should begin around 3:00 p.m.

Field Day – The airport location has finally cleared of the snow piles. The snow fences should be removed soon, also. Jim K8JMZ mentioned that there is an antenna field at the Custer airbase that has been abandoned by the Department of Defense and may have some material/antennas/towers that could be repurposed for amateur use. A crew will be formed soon to take a look at what is available.

DStar repeater – The repeater works well enough at the temporary location but the hope is that the antenna can be moved to the same location as all the other SMARS repeaters. Negotiations are ongoing with the owners of the radio tower. The club may have to trade some labor removing extraneous cabling in exchange for new construction.

Old Business: The current Question Pool for Technician licenses will expire at the end of June of this year. John W8JRD would like the club to purchase a new guide for the library as soon as they become available. John and Don will work something out.

The trailers need to be cleaned up before Field Day. Jay also has to get some measurements to mount the new fire extinguishers. We have scheduled

(Continued on page 4)

Hamfests

05/16/2014: Dayton Hamvention - "REGIONAL ARRL CENTENNIAL EVENT"

Trotwood, OH

Dayton Amateur Radio Association

<http://hamvention.org>

06/01/2014: Chelsea Radio Swap 'n Shop

Chelsea, MI

Chelsea Amateur Radio Club

<http://www.wd8iel.com>

06/01/2014: Starved Rock Radio Club's (W9MKS) 2014

Hamfest

Princeton, IL

Starved Rock Radio Club

<http://www.w9mks.org>

06/07/2014: Fulton County ARC Hamfest

Tedrow, OH

Fulton County Amateur Radio Club

<http://k8bxq.org>

06/07/2014: IRA Hamfest (W8IRA/R)

Hudsonville, MI

Independent Repeater Association (W8IRA/R)

<http://www.w8ira.org>

06/14/2014: Midland Hamfest

Midland, MI

Midland Amateur Radio Club

<http://w8kea.org>

06/15/2014: Monroe Hamfest

Monroe, MI

Monroe County Radio Communications Association

<http://www.mcrca.org>

06/15/2014: Six Meter Club of Chicago's 57th Annual Hamfest

Wheaton, IL

Six Meter Club of Chicago

<http://k9ona.com>

06/21/2014: MILFORD HAMFEST

Milford, OH

Milford Amateur Radio Club

<http://www.w8mrc.com>

Income and Expense Statement

4/1/14 Through 4/30/14

Category Description	4/1/14-4/30/14
EXPENSES	
Meetings:	
Refreshments	10.00
TOTAL Meetings	10.00
Utilities:	
Telephone	84.17
TOTAL Utilities	84.17
TOTAL EXPENSES	94.17
TOTAL INCOME - EXPENSES	-94.17

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

Southern Michigan Amateur Radio Society

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

2 Meter Digital/DStar 146.79/19 (-600KHz Offset)

70cm Repeater 443.950 MHz

+5MHz offset, PL 94.8

1.25 Meter Repeater 224.240 MHz

-1.6MHz offset

70cm and 1.25 meter repeaters are linked.

Also available via echolink.

W8DF-5 144.39Mhz Digipeater/Igate

Find it on www.aprs.fi

Other Area Repeaters:

Skywarn/ARES/RACES (WX8BTL)

2 Meter: 147.12, +600KHz offset, PL 186.2

70cm: 442.350, +5MHz offset, PL 94.8



(Continued from page 2)

the late morning and afternoon of May 10th to accomplish this task. We will be meeting for breakfast that morning and the trek from Coney Island to Doc's QTH will be easy for volunteers. Please consider helping out with buckets and brushes and brooms.

New Business: None

Presentation – John and Steph W8AEZ presented a slide show of their recent trip to Paris and London. It was enjoyed by the members. Thanks to both for an entertaining evening.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Jay Jarrett N8ARR, Secretary

FOR SALE

\$465

Kenwood TS400SAT HF Transceiver, Includes DC cable and mic. Has internal automatic antenna tuner. About 7 of 10 condition, minor blemishes and scratches. Works Great. Add \$30 for 30 amp power supply

W8RVT-Don at any SMARS repeater, 269 963-7797 or w8rvt@arrl.net

(Help for new Hams, continued from page 1)

* TVI and RFI—Strange Bedfellows. TVI and RFI are less of a problem these days than back in the 80s, but it's still something new hams need to know about.

* Operating Problems and Fears. This chapter discusses some of the operating problems new hams face, including honesty in signal reporting, how to operate split and how to work DX.

* On-the-Air Conduct and Procedures. This chapter discusses more operating procedures, including calling CQ, how to operate via a repeater, and how to ID.

* Station Accessories—What to Buy? This chapter discusses a variety of station accessories including keys and keyers, microphones, antenna tuners, phone patches (!), and antenna switches.

* DX and Contest Operating. This chapter not only discusses operating procedures, but how certain equipment features will help the new ham work more DX and score better in contests.

* Logging, QSL Cards, and Record Keeping. This chapter discusses why it is important to keep logs and how to QSL.

* Obtaining Accurate Information. This chapter is basically an ad for the ARRL, counseling the new ham to join the ARRL and buy ARRL books.

I am especially interested in hearing from new hams about these topics. What about amateur radio confused you at first? What information would have helped you have more fun with amateur radio? What do you know now that you wish you had known when you got started?

When he's not writing about amateur radio, Dan, KB6NU enjoys Elmering new hams and working CW on the HF bands. For more information about his operating activities and his "No-Nonsense" series of amateur radio license study guides, go to KB6NU.Com or e-mail cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

An Open Letter to the Members of SMARS

I would like to take this opportunity and this forum to express my deep gratitude to the friends and members of the club for their concern and support during what has become a very trying time in my life. I appreciate the outpouring of sympathy as well as the ongoing concern for my well being. Thank you, all.

73,
Jay N8ARR

VHF VERTICAL COAXIAL DIPOLE

This antenna can be constructed in a couple hours for \$15-\$20. It can be used indoors or out. Reference materials list and drawing for assembly.

LOWER ELEMENT

Note the list specifies 1" Type "M" copper pipe. This has a thinner wall which allows 3/4" PVC to be inserted. If cutting the pipe, use a Dremel cutoff wheel to produce a clean factory-like end.

Drill a 9/16" hole in the copper cap. I used a "speedy bit" which is a tapered drill bit. Use care to make the hole just large enough to pass the barrel connector. Attach the cap to the copper pipe and solder the joint.

Attach a length of coax, RG8X is fine, to the barrel connector. Use pliers for a very tight connection. Install one nut on the barrel connector leaving 7/16" of the open end exposed. Use the coax to push the barrel connector into the pipe and through the cap. Thread a nut on the barrel connector and tighten the nut. Use pliers to get it tight as possible.

UPPER ELEMENT

Cut 2" off the 3/32" brass tube and insert into 1/8" brass tube leaving 5/8" exposed. Solder the two pieces together and insert the 3/32" end into the PL259. Solder the PL259 center conductor to the brass tube. Keep the 12" tube centered as possible in the PL259. Install the PL259 onto the coupler then insert the remaining 3/32" tube into 1/8" tube so that the radiator measures 19 1/2" from the PL259 body. You can solder this joint or scotch tape it and perform VSWR measurements and adjustments first. Insert a length of 3/4" PVC into the copper pipe first! The antenna must be kept in the clear. Also, expect a VSWR of no better than 1.2 : 1 as this antenna is a dipole which has a 70 ohm feedpoint. Put enough solder in the end of the radiator to close the opening. With the antenna assembled, adjust the radiator sideways to be a straight line with the lower part of the antenna to make it look pretty. After it is straight, fill the top of the PL259 with silicone adhesive and let it dry three or four hours.

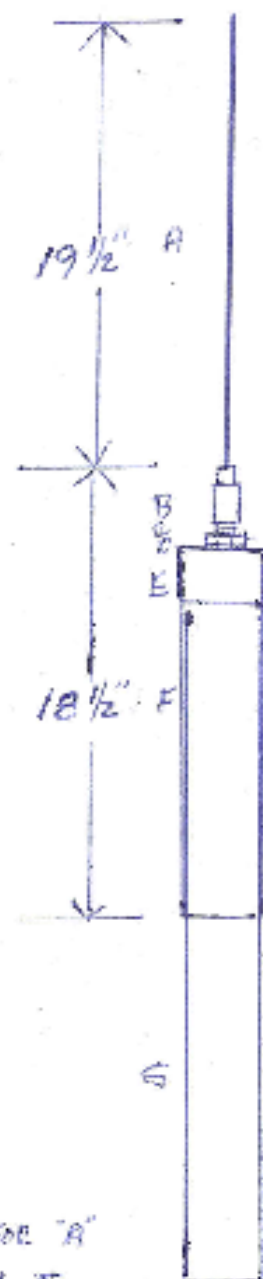
If the antenna is to be used outdoors, use PVC conduit which is gray and UV resistant. Paint a couple layers of liquid tape over the PL259, exposed coupler and nut to keep moisture out. This antenna will work on UHF. The transmitter will be happy with VSWR but the radiation pattern will be less desirable.

MATERIALS LIST

- "A" 1/8" O.D x 12" and 3/32" O.D. x 12". Brass Tubing
- "B" PL259 Coax Connector
- "C" Fully Threaded Barrel Connector
- "D" 2 each nuts for Barrel Connector
- "E" 1" Copper Pipe Cap
- "F" 18 3/4" Type M 1" Copper Pipe
- "G" User choice length 3/4" PVC Pipe

UHF VERSION

Follow VHF directions above except use only the 3/32" brass tube for the upper element. Cut it 6 3/4" above the top of the PL259. For the lower element, cut the 1" copper pipe for a combined BCDEF length of 6 1/4".



SOUTHERN MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

FEEDBACK



Club Meeting

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

SKYWARN Coffee

1st Saturday of every month
Immediately after Siren Test
Coney Island, N.E. Capital
Battle Creek, MI

BLB Luncheon

2nd Thursday of every
month
Coney Island, N.E. Capital
Battle Creek, MI

SMARS Breakfast

2nd Saturday of every month
Coney Island, N.E. Capital
Battle Creek, MI

SMARS NETS

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

Sunday Evening 8:00 PM, 146.66
Monday 7:00 PM, 147.12 (Skywarn)
Monday 8:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95
Wednesday 7:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95
Wednesday 8:00 PM, 28.365
Saturday 8:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95

Please see page 3 for offsets and PL tones

Upcoming events:

Club meeting: May 15th @ 7:00 PM

VE Testing: May 17th @ 3:00 PM

Siren test: June 7th @ 1:00 PM

SKYWARN Coffee: after siren test

BLB Lunch: June 12th @ 11:30 AM

SMARS Breakfast: June 14th @ 8:30 AM