



FEEDBACK

July 2026

Do you have a story, humorous or otherwise, about amateur radio? If so, please contact the newsletter editor (w8kdb@arrl.net) and get it published in **FEEDBACK!**

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

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Daniel Pesch, WB8KC

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Club News

Membership Renewals

Just a friendly reminder that Membership Dues are due. These can be paid at a Club Meeting (on the 3rd Thursday of every month) or sent in to the Club's PO Box. The amount has increased a little this year. For 1 year it is \$20, for 5 years it is \$75, for 10 years it is \$145, for 20 years it is \$280, and for Lifetime it is \$500. For the 1 year, each additional Family Member is an additional \$5. Dues are due January 1st of each year. Newly licensed members get a year free. Donations to the club can also be sent into the PO Box or taken care of at the Club Meeting.

SMARS

P.O. Box 934
Battle Creek, MI 49016

Other News

Navigating an HOA and Returning to Amateur Radio and Field Day!

Fred Johnson, K6FRD, is an amateur radio operator in Riverside, California. Like many hams, he lives in an HOA-controlled neighborhood. For Johnson, finding practical, low-visibility, antenna solutions has become part of the fun over the years.

"For years I struggled to enjoy HF because, like many amateurs in an HOA, towers and conventional outdoor antennas simply aren't an option," said Johnson. "I tried several radios over the years, but without an effective antenna I rarely heard much activity and had very limited success making contacts. A few weeks ago, I decided to stop chasing radios and instead focus on building the best stealth antenna I could."

Johnson said that after returning to HF last year, he enjoyed experimenting with antennas, portable operating, FT8, and station design to see what's possible from a suburban backyard.

"The result is a simple 145-foot horizontal loop made from 14 AWG THHN wire, mounted on stainless cup hooks around the top of my backyard fences about six feet above the ground. The wire is insulated from the hooks with short pieces of clear vinyl tubing and is fed with a 4:1 current balun and approximately 25 feet of RG-8X coax. I also added ferrite chokes at both the

Upcoming Radio Contests

Looking for a little action on the airwaves? You might want to check out these upcoming contests!

IARU HF World Championship

Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 Meters

Mode: Phone and CW

Date: 07/11 – 07/12

URL: www.arrl.org/iaru-hf-world-championship

222 MHz and Up Distance Contest

Bands: 222 MHz through 241 GHz

Mode: Phone, Digital, CW

Date: 08/01 – 08/02

URL: www.arrl.org/222-mhz-and-up-distance-contest

EME Contest

Bands: 2.4 GHz & Up

Mode: Phone, Digital, CW

Date: 08/08 – 08/09

URL: www.arrl.org/eme-contest

10 GHz & Up

Bands: 10 GHz & Up

Mode: Phone, Digital, CW

Date: 08/15 – 08/16

URL: www.arrl.org/10-ghz-up

Rookie Roundup

Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 Meters

Mode: RTTY

Date: 08/16

URL: www.arrl.org/rookie-roundup

**A more thorough listing of upcoming Contests can be found on the ARRL's web page [ContestCalendar](http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar), <http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar>*

antenna and radio ends of the feed line to help minimize common-mode current and noise.”

“The results have honestly exceeded my expectations,” he said. “My noise floor is typically only S1 to S2, allowing me to hear stations I would have completely missed before.”

ARRL Field Day 2026 gave Johnson a chance to operate entirely on battery power using his IC-7300 and his new antenna, making contacts on 10, 15, and 20 meters. Since installing the loop, he has worked 39 states, 24 countries, and stations throughout Japan, Hawaii, Samoa, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, South America, and across North America—all from his HOA backyard!

Johnson went on to say he hopes that sharing his successes, and the occasional lessons learned along the way, encourages other operators, especially those with HOA restrictions, to get on the air and enjoy this amazing hobby.

Johnson has created a Google photo album with all of the photos of his antenna design: photos.app.goo.gl/qeF1eToA4q7cAj5PA

Editor’s note: Thanks to Fred Johnson, K6FRD, for sharing his story, his HOA-proof antenna, and his effort to return to amateur radio and Field Day!

Article courtesy of <https://www.arrl.org/news/navigating-an-hoa-and-returning-to-amateur-radio-and-field-day>

Young Ham Radio Operator Supports the America250 Celebration

While many teenagers spend their evenings playing video games or scrolling social media, 14-year-old amateur radio (also known as “ham radio”) operator Micah Sandoval, KB4MPS, was busy this past week making radio contacts across the US. Sandoval participated as part of a special event station supporting the [ARRL America250 Worked All States \(WAS\) Award](#) program, a year-long operating event celebrating the 250th Anniversary of the United States. [ARRL](#) The National Association for Amateur Radio® is a Supporting Partner of [America250](#) the national, nonpartisan organization charged by Congress to lead the commemoration of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, a milestone that marks America’s Semiquincentennial.

Operating alongside his mentor, James Hooper, K9QJS, Sandoval logged over 150 ham radio contacts. The event has attracted the participation of ham radio operators from across the country, and even around the world.

Sandoval’s amateur radio journey began when he was just nine years old. Inspired by his grandfather, Philip Wagner, WA6NER, who would bring a handheld radio during visits, Sandoval became fascinated by the hobby. That early interest turned into a passion for amateur radio when he earned his Technician Class

Upcoming Hamfests & Conventions

07/18/2026

Auburn Hamfest

Location: Auburn, IN

Sponsor: Northeastern Indiana
Amateur Radio Association

Site: <http://w9ou.org>

07/18/2026

LaPorte Tailgate Hamfest

Location: LaPorte, IN

Sponsor: LaPorte County Amateur
Radio Club

Site: <http://www.lpcarc.org>

08/01/2026

Elkhart East Hamfest

Location: Elkhart, IN

Sponsor: Northern Indiana K9DEW
Repeater Network

Site: <http://www.elkharthamfest.com>

09/12/2026

Grand Rapids Area Hamfest

Location: Wyoming, MI

Sponsor: Grand Rapids Amateur
Radio Association

Site: <https://w8dc.org/grand-rapids-area-hamfest>

09/13/2026

Findlay Hamfest

Location: Findlay, OH

Sponsor: Findlay Radio Club

Site: <http://findlayradioclub.org>

09/19/2026

BARA Trunk Swap

Location: Berrien Center, MI

Sponsor: Blossomland Amateur
Radio Association

Site:

<https://www.w8mai.org/index.php/club-information/bara-trunk-swap>

09/20/2026

Adrian Hamfest

Location: Adrian, MI

Sponsor: Adrian Amateur Radio Club

Site: <http://w8tqe.com>

license in October 2022, upgraded to General Class in June 2025, and achieved the highest amateur radio license level, Amateur Extra, a month later at the age of 13.

Asked whether he encourages other young people to explore amateur radio, Sandoval said, "Yes, I do talk to them and recommend they at least look into it and the things it can teach you."

Sandoval continues to learn about amateur radio, communications, public service, and emergency preparedness. He is also involved with a faith-based youth leadership and outdoor adventure program, teaching and inspiring the next generation about ham radio.

Throughout 2026, ARRL has assigned the iconic W1AW call sign to stations nationwide, activating each state twice during the year. W1AW is a memorial to ARRL's Founding President, Hiram Percy Maxim (1914-1936). Sandoval's participation with the W1AW/4 activation showcased not only the technical side of amateur radio but also the value of mentorship. With guidance from James Hooper, Sandoval gained valuable operating experience while contributing to a successful special event activation on the airwaves.

The ARRL America250 WAS event runs through December 31. Ham radio operators can pursue the award by making contact with other hams in all 50 states and confirming their contacts through the ARRL [Logbook of The World® – LoTW®](#). A process for ordering the award certificate and endorsements will be available soon.

Three separate endorsements can be earned by confirming contacts with all 50 states on CW (Morse code) and phone and digital modes for a Triple Play; by contacting the W1AW/portable station activations in all 50 states, or by contacting ARRL-affiliated radio clubs in all 50 states.

For more information about the ARRL America250 Worked All States Award, visit www.arrl.org/america250-was. See also "ARRL Joins America250 as a Supporting Partner for the Nation's 250th Anniversary" at www.arrl.org/america250.

Article courtesy of <https://www.arrl.org/news/young-ham-radio-operator-supports-the-america250-celebration>

Meeting Minutes 06/18/2026

Meeting Called to order at 1900

Welcome new ham Todd KF8GTL.

Secretary's Report: Motion made to accept, Motion was passed.

Treasurer's Report: Motion made to accept, Motion was passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Hamfest – No new updates.
- Skywarn – Bret mentioned last two meetings canceled due to preparation for storms. Thank you everyone who helped with nets. They will still have field day at the Legion. Washington school siren to be fixed by the Fourth of July. I-94 on hold for replacement. No HIAD planned for now. CERT classes pending as well thank you Bret. Also, for Auxcom information please contact Bret Kd8rhb@yahoo.com.
- Field Day – This is coming up next weekend. Thank you Tom Worthington and Dan Pesch for the update on computers for field day. Nice article in the shopper very back page about field day which also got us 100 points for field day. Good job Matt.
- Repeaters – Receiver side of the computer is no good. For the 146.660 2 meter repeater we are working on getting the Yaesu Repeater operational and out for the last six months. Echo link is still out as well.
- VE – Test Session will be held next Thursday before Field Day. New Tech pool go lives July 1.
- POTA – POTA report nine operators 27,512 contacts good job. POTA meet on Saturday at 8 AM Café Tal followed by set up and contacts. Whitford Lake by the pavilion out at Fort Custer.

OLD BUSINESS

- Nothing to discuss outside of Field Day items.

NEW BUSINESS

- Nothing to discuss outside of Field Day items.

PRESENTATION:

- Dan Pesch did a presentation on the Field Day Software to provide a better understanding how to use it during Field Day.

Meeting Adjourned around 2015 hours.

Respectfully Submitted,
Melanie Lake, KE8TPQ
SMARS Secretary

Board Meeting Minutes 06/25/2026

FINANCES:

- Checking \$3,362.90
- Savings \$3,005.26
- Cash on hand \$100.00
- Total \$6,468.16

No official board meeting happened in July. There was a little discussion between the officers during Field Day.

SOUTHERN MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY FEEDBACK

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

2m Repeater 146.66MHz, -600KHz offset, CTCSS 94.8Hz

2m DStar 146.79 MHz, -600 KHz offset

*1.25m Repeater 224.240 MHz, -1.6 MHz offset, CTCSS 94.8 Hz

APRS Digipeater/Igate, 144.39 MHz

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

70cm DStar Repeater 442.7625 MHz, +5 MHz offset

***Note:** 70cm & 1.25 meter repeaters are linked.

All repeaters are available via EchoLink (70cm and 1.25m are W8DF-R; 2m is W8DF-L)

Other Repeaters

2m Repeater 147.120 MHz, +600 KHz offset, CTCSS 186.2 Hz

70cm Repeater 442.350 MHz, +5 MHz offset, CTCSS 186.2 Hz

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 1st Thursday of every month Coney Island, 962 Capital Ave NE, Battle Creek, MI	SMARS Breakfast 2nd Saturday of every month Coney Island, 962 Capital Ave NE, Battle Creek, MI
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SMARS Nets: Monday—Friday 11:30 AM, 146.66 MHz Sunday Evening 8:00 PM, 146.66 MHz Monday 8:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95 MHz Wednesday 7:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95 MHz Wednesday 8:00 PM, 28.365 MHz Saturday 8:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95 MHz Other Nets: Skywarn Net: Tuesday 7:00 PM, 147.12 MHz <i>Please see previous page for offsets and CTCSS tones</i>	Upcoming Events: Club Meeting: July 16th @ 7:00pm BLB Luncheon: August 6th @ 11:30am Board Meeting: August 6th @ 6:30pm Club Breakfast: August 8th @ 8:30am VE Session: August 27th @ 7:00pm
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