



# TMRA Amateur Radio Beacon

April 2010



## The Prez Sez



Many volunteers made setup go smoothly.  
*kb8fxj photo*

First item has to be the TMRA Hamfest, and the first item under this heading has to be the recognition of the contributions made by the great turnout of volunteers on Saturday and Sunday. The large number of people who helped with table (and chair) set-up on Saturday and then with table take-down and general clean-up on Sunday made that part of the Hamfest, that we're not used to having to do ourselves, run efficiently and smoothly. I think that we had over 60 members (and a few non-members) helping with all the aspects – physical set-up/take-down, security, ticket sales, talk-in, table assignments, VE testing, helping vendors bring their stuff in and take their stuff out, etc.

The Hamfest Committee is very grateful for the responses we received to our requests for help. There were a few vendors that were initially unhappy with their

table(s) location (we expected some would be) but many expressed gratitude for the help that we offered in moving their stuff in. Overall, the responses to the Hamfest at Owens Community College were positive; the commonest complaint we heard was beyond our control and related to the access (distance) to the restrooms, but then there were comments on how clean they were in comparison to those at the Rec. Center. We have already expressed our thanks to OCC for providing us with the location for the Hamfest and told them that we'd like to come back there in the future. Regarding the actual numbers, tickets sold were very close to last year – I don't have the final number yet but it will be close to 1,200; the number of vendors/table sales were down from last year – some of our regular vendors for family/personal reasons couldn't make it this year, some had retired and are no longer in business, some told us they had other commitments this year.

Again, many thanks to all who helped in whatever way or ways. **As a thank you to those who volunteered and helped at the Hamfest – the Club is inviting you to a "thank you picnic" before the regular monthly meeting, at the shelter house at our regular meeting place on Lime City Road – starting at 6:00pm in the evening of our regular monthly meeting on April 14. Come hungry, TMRA will provide the food and drinks - hot dogs, hamburgers, buns, coleslaw, potato salad, beans, pop etc.**



Tom, KB8PAI, at the TMRA information table.  
*kb8fxj photo*

Any comments, suggestions, criticisms, ideas for future Hamfests are welcome, as are volunteers to be on the Hamfest Committee; send any of these to me and I'll share them with the committee. Don't forget that the Editor of this Newsletter would welcome letters from members – you could share your thoughts with the Club as a whole that way, and maybe we'd get a wider exchange of views and ideas.



A great turnout for our first hamfest at Owens Community College kb8fxj photo

Saturday March 27 was the NW Ohio District 2 Science Day held on UT Main Campus. I went over to judge the entries in our award category; there were 8 entries for the 3 awards. In my opinion, 3 that were in the “computing” section showed the best experimental approach. First place was a 9<sup>th</sup> grader from Ottawa Hills High School for a project looking at underclocking and its effect on the computer's speed and internal temperatures; 2<sup>nd</sup> was another 9<sup>th</sup> grader from OHHS for a project comparing techniques for restoring readability of scratched CDs, and 3<sup>rd</sup> was a 12<sup>th</sup> grader from Hilltop High School for a project in writing and trouble-shooting a program in Java language.

The TMRA membership year runs January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>. Renewals for 2010 are lagging way

behind our usual renewal rates – we'd like to think that, rather than many members from last year no longer wishing to be members of TMRA, many have overlooked renewing their membership because now that we are no longer mailing out printed copies of the TMRA Newsletter, there was not a printed form to fill out and return. If you haven't renewed yet, please consider doing it soon – Tom KB8PAI is our Membership person, you can send your renewal to him by mail or pay at a meeting.

We have a By-Laws review committee to perform a somewhat overdue review of the Club's By-Laws: committee members are Tom KB8PAI, Rita WB8FBG, Ron N8RLH, Dave KE8EH and me, WD8MXR. We'll probably meet sometime in May, so if you have any suggestions, ideas etc regarding changes to the By-Laws, pass them on to one of the committee members. Any proposed changes will have to be voted on by the general membership.



Something for everyone, an Atwater-Kent speaker. kb8fxj photo

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## HF Bands and Propagation Attributes.

This is the first of ten articles describing propagation and types of communication residing on our HF bands.

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*160 meters - 1.8 to 2.0 megahertz*

An interesting bit of radio spectrum, this. You can pretty much forget it during daylight hours except for local communications of less than 25 miles or so. It is also quite a challenge in the summer in most places because of its susceptibility to atmospheric static. But when the weather cools, it can be a delightful band for both ragchewing and DX.

It has its technical challenges. A half-wave dipole should be about 270 feet long to be efficient here, and that is more space than many can muster. Other antenna types can do well here, and especially vertical radiators. After all, just below the 160 meter ham band is the commercial AM band. Every one of those guys use vertical antennas. But even a quarter-wave vertical needs to be about 135 feet tall unless you employ wizardry like coils and traps. Many swear by the inverted-L, which offers the advantages of both a vertical and horizontal radiator in far less space. I use a full-wavelength loop, which rings the backyard. It does well on paths out to 750 miles or so, and I have worked Europe many times with it, but it would need to be higher in the air for real DX.

You will find many long-established roundtable QSOs on this band. Some are friendly and welcoming to strangers who are bold enough to break in to their groups. Others will either ignore you or give you an earful that might hurt your precious feelings. I would suggest that you treat a roundtable or QSO on the air on any band much as you would a conversation on the street. See if they seem welcoming of interruption. If not, go somewhere else. There are myriad frequencies available. Don't interrupt the flow of the conversation, either. Wait for a lull. But don't be surprised if you are told to go play in traffic.

Note, too, that all legal modes of emission are allowed anywhere on this band. That means you could, if you wanted to, fire up on SSB at 1805. Please don't. There is a long-accepted band plan in effect on each amateur band. Follow it. First, it prevents chaos. Secondly, it is the polite thing to do. And finally, you could probably bellow, "CQ," for hours on that frequency and not have anyone answer you since it is in the middle of the portion of the band for digital modes. Oh, a few guys might tell you where you can shove your microphone, and that certainly would confirm that your rig and antenna are working, but there are far better ways to accomplish that!

What is this "band plan" thing? You didn't see any questions about that in the General exam pool? Visit the <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/bandplan.html> American Radio Relay League web site and print out a copy. And stick to it. For the reasons quoted above. But mostly because it is the right thing to do.

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## Michigan QSO Party in April

The 2010 Michigan QSO Party (MiQP) will be April 17-18. All amateurs are invited to participate. As usual, Michigan amateurs receive contest points for contacting other amateurs within the state/section. Amateurs outside of Michigan earn contest points for QSOs with Michigan hams, only. As the announcement of the Party says, "This is a great opportunity develop HF operating skills, represent the great state of Michigan, and last but not least, have a bunch of fun. Even if you don't consider yourself a contest operator, you'll probably find it's a blast to jump in to work the throng who will be looking for Michigan QSOs. If you've ever operated on Field Day, you'll certainly be ready for MiQP."

The operating period is twelve hours long, from noon local time (1600Z) until midnight local (0400Z) Eastern time. "Activity takes place on the 80 thru 10 meter bands, on both phone and CW. The exchange is simple: a sequential QSO number (starting with 1, then 2, 3...) and your location (county for Michigan stations, and state, province or "DX" for others). A station may be worked once per band and mode, with CW QSOs counting two points and phone QSOs counting one point (just like Field Day). Multipliers are states, provinces, and Michigan counties, counted once on phone and once on CW. Final score is total QSO points times total multipliers."

See <http://www.miqp.org> for complete rules and further information.  
The MiQP is sponsored by the Mad River Radio Club.

*From, WEAVER'S WORDS March 30, 2010 14:34*

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## Help needed!

Hi all! It's that time of year again and I need help with the Glass City Marathon. This year it's on April 25th and the race starts at 7:00AM. It's an all new venue and course this year and it's going to take lots of help. If you'd like more information on the race itself please see the Marathon website at: <http://www.glasscitymarathon.org/>. If you'd like to volunteer or have any questions please contact me at [k8rks@arrl.net](mailto:k8rks@arrl.net) or 419-471-0573. Also if you're volunteering please let me know if you have any time restrictions or if there are certain jobs you would particularly like to do (or if there are jobs you would rather not do). Thanks!

Rick K8RKS, [k8rks@arrl.net](mailto:k8rks@arrl.net) 419-471-0573

## SKYWARN® Spotter Training 2010:



This year's Spotter Training was another successful one. First of all, I would like to thank all of the people who helped organize and who worked very hard on making it the success that it was. We simply could not do it without everyone's help. Especially St. Luke's Hospital and Chuck and Brenda for arranging it with the Hospital. This year's turn out was down a little from last year but we brought in 224 people. I, along with a few others, felt it may have been from the lack of storms last year but maybe we will get a few of those in the upcoming months. Gary Garnet was our guest speaker again this year and did a great job. I had a lot of people come up to me and commented on how he kept it interesting. We made some changes on how people entered the Auditorium in hopes that it would cut back on the congestion we normally get. Needless to say, it worked. For those of you that were there and seen how it played out and have suggestions for improvements, drop me an email or come to the next Skywarn meeting on April 27th @7:00pm at the EMA building to talk about it. TMRA was able to get the word out about the upcoming classes for those who were interested in Ham radio.

We are always looking for net controllers that can help us out with Skywarn. I am hoping we can get the same amount or more to help as net controllers as we do for spotter training. If any would be interested in helping, Please contact me at KD8HLX@arrl.net I would also like to thank TMRA for the table offered to Skywarn at the Ham Fest and for the use of their repeater for Skywarn in the past and in the upcoming year along with WJ8E for the use of his repeater as a backup.

Again, none of this would be possible without the help of everyone involved who volunteer without question. Thank You very much!!!

Tim McConoughey - KD8HLX  
Lucas County Skywarn Coordinator



Over 220 people attended the annual SKYWARN® training.  
*n8rlh photo*

**The TMRA *Amateur Radio Beacon* is published monthly by the Toledo Mobile Radio Association. #216**  
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Treasurer, Brenda, KB8IUP; Public Information Officer, Steve, KC8TVW.  
Board Members: Chris, KC8UFV; Steve, KC8TVW; Tom, KB8PAI; Rita, WB8FBG; Dan, KE8UE.

TMRA Home Page [www.tmrahamradio.org](http://www.tmrahamradio.org) Webmaster, Tom, KB8PAI.

TMRA W8HHF Repeaters; 147.270+, 224.140-, 442.850+ (TMRA 2 meter, 220, and 440 repeaters operate with a 103.5 "PL", or a touch-tone access code of 1-2-3) Please "ID" before using phone-patch.  
(10 digit dialing, \*up and #down)

TMRA W8HHF Packet BBS Frequencies 51.780, 145.690, 223.480, 441.060

The TMRA meets at 7:30 PM every second Wednesday in  
The Electrical Industry Building, Lime City Rd. Rossford, Ohio.

The TMRA Q & A net meets every Sunday night at 7:30 PM, followed by the TMRA "Information & Swap 'N-Shop" net at 8:30 on the 147.270+ repeater. All amateurs are invited to check-in.