



TMRA Amateur Radio Beacon

February 2016



The Prez Sez

I want to thank all who took part in the Winter Field Day Saturday January 30th, especially Steve W8TER and Dave KD8EVN for organizing it– TMRA had their activity at the Maumee branch of the library, and there's more coverage of it elsewhere in this edition of the Newsletter. One of the highlights was the Software Defined Radio (SDR) that Santa brought Steve KC8TVW for Christmas.

The 2016 TMRA Hamfest is only about 6 weeks away – March 20th – and volunteers are needed to help with various activities: Skeet KD8KXD is in charge of tickets, Chris KC8UFV talk-in, Tom KB8PAI set-up and tear down, Steve KC8TVW VE exams, Mike W8MAL security (manning the doors). We'll have food vouchers for all who volunteer at least an hour of their time to help.

I hope everyone is aware of the TMRA digital net that Steve W8TER is running on Tuesday evenings 8:00pm – at least 9:00pm. It's an instructional net, partly as a follow-up to the Steves' (W8TER and KC8TVW) digital training session, but attendance at that session is not a pre-requisite to take part in the net. It's on the 147.27 repeater for voice and simplex 145.555MHz for the Fldigi. At the first 2 nets we had about 7-8 participants and the nets ran beyond the scheduled 9:00pm end. As we (LCARES) continue the monthly tests/drills with the LCARES/ASPR radios on the first Saturday of each month, we'll be introducing digital messaging as part of those drills – so the weekly TMRA net is a good place to learn about Fldigi and get in some practice sending and receiving digital.

73, Brian WD8MXR

ARES News

At the January meeting four trustees were elected for 2016-17. They are Brian, WD8MXR, Richard Brownlee, KA9IVY, Tim Gray, KD8IZU and Rick Sharpe, K8RKS. The next ARES meeting is Feb. 27, 2016 at 9:00 am at St. Luke's Hospital, 5901 Monclova Road in Maumee, Ohio in the private dining room in the basement. Arrive early and enjoy breakfast in the basement cafeteria at 7:30 a.m.

Tune into the ARES IN BRIEF Net on Sunday nights at 7:30 pm on 147.270. It is open to all.

The Skywarn Meeting is Thursday, Feb. 4 at 7:30 p.m. at the 911 training center on Jefferson Ave. (behind the 911 bldg.).



Winter Field Day

Winter Field Day, held January 30th at the Maumee, Ohio public library, was a big success. Over 30 hams and visitors came to make contacts, enjoy great food and see what ham radio is all about. About a dozen rigs, from classic base stations to well-designed grab-and-go kits operated on voice, digital, and CW modes. Joe, KD8UZA had his newly acquired old 6 meter ICOM rig and a delta loop antenna. Steve, KC8TVW brought his Flex Radio which was quite impressive and used a 40 meter dipole for his station. Ron, N8RLH brought his new "Grab and Go station in a case". Dave, KD8EVN had the Electcraft station operational and Rob, KV8P had his ICOM operational. Antennas included dipoles, verticals, and random wires.



Ron, N8NLR's grab-and-go kit at Winter Field



The perfect cookies for Winter Field Day

A special thank-you to Dave, KD8EVN, who did the advertising and also secured the room for our use. He and his XYL, Candy, prepared the hotdogs and cookies. As usual, Steve, W8TER was busy handling details and promoting this event. Many thanks to those hams who welcomed visitors and explained what was going on or just lent a hand when needed.

January Ninth Was a Busy Day . . .

A report from Steve, KC8TVW

First, there was the VE session. Congratulations to the new Techs: Toby, KE8CZO and Bradley, KE8CZP; and to the new General: Terry, KE8CZQ.

Next, there was the Fldigi entry level class. About fifteen hams practiced basic digital skills. Thanks to all of the experienced "data mode" Elmers that showed up to help. Look for phase two (messaging) later this spring.

Finally, the CW training class had 13 in attendance. This was a fun event with CW being sent over the "air" in the classroom using straight keys and code practice oscillators. Thanks to the CW Elmers that showed up to help. The next practice session will be Feb. 13 at the Maumee Fire Station, 450 W. Dussel Drive from 1:00-4:00 pm.

Thanks to the City of Maumee for making rooms available in its municipal building and fire station. For information about VE sessions and future training contact Steve, KC8TVW.

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Glass City Marathon

Mark your calendars for April 16, 2016. That is the date for the Glass City Marathon. The Toledo amateur radio community has a proud tradition of assisting with radio communications at this and many other events in the Toledo area. Many volunteers will be needed. If you are a newly licensed ham and are looking for ways to use

your new skills and equipment, you couldn't find a better way than to volunteer for the Glass City Marathon. Don't worry about knowing what to do. You can be paired with an experienced ham, who will show you how to operate. As a bonus, you will be learning important skills useful in emergencies.

Tips for Beginning Net Control Operators

From The *ARES E-Letter* for January 20, 2016 by Steve Bellner, W8TER

Here in northwest Ohio, we have acquired many new hams and encourage them to operate as net control station (NCS) for various routine nets to gain them experience, providing us with a pool of competent net controllers in the event of an emergency/disaster. Here are some of the basic tips we convey to our novice net control stations for a smoothly running net:



Steve, W8TER
w8muk photo

- Get a glass of water or something to drink.
- Make yourself comfortable. Sit in a good location with plenty of room on a desk or table to write.
- Have a good writing instrument and a back-up along with an extra piece of paper in case you need to jot down notes.
- Take your time; go at your own pace. Remember, you are in control of the net and the frequency.
- Don't worry about making mistakes; there are no mistakes to be made.
- To handle the crowd that is trying to check in, you will develop your own way.
- Stop stations from checking in ("Let's hold it for a minute") until you are caught up.
- Weak stations and stations who give their call signs too fast, are always a problem -- skip them at first. Go back later for repeats.
- Write your log as you see fit. You are the one that has to read it.
- Headphones are a good idea -- they help you focus on what you are hearing and help keep you from getting distracted.

As I mentioned before, there are no mistakes, only experience. When you've finished the net that is what you will have.

Ohio NVIS Antenna Day

A message from Stan Broadway, Ohio SEC

Distribute! Get the antenna books out!!

Hey gang! I want to let you in on the early details for this year's Ohio NVIS Antenna Day! We hope to expand our operation this year, and you are invited! Our teams had a lot of fun doing this, even though we ran into major rain and weather last year!

This is not really a contest- there is no score. The purpose is to have teams (counties, groups within counties, friends, even individuals) research and determine the NVIS antenna designs they think will work the best- then actually get together to build and try them! Throughout the years, fiddling with antennas has always been fun for hams of any level- and the data we'll get from these tests will help determine the most effective NVIS antenna designs out there! Last year, 40 and 80 were busy with stations doing tests and making contacts! This year, we hope for even more activity.

Starting at 10AM Saturday, April 23, teams can begin making contacts to compare their antennas. They do not have to be portable, but there should be room for several antennas. This year, we're offering the concept of "anchor" stations- which will be in place to provide consistent signal reports to all stations who contact them. For example, Team A puts together a low-altitude G5RV. They contact Anchor A in Toledo, Anchor B in Dayton, and the Ohio EOC station (The Sarge) for signal reports. They then either adjust their design, or try antenna number 2, a 2259-design, contacting the same anchors. From their signal reports, they can determine right away which antenna is better and by how much! We don't have an "end time" set- because some stations had so much fun (and so many pile-ups) that they went on for quite a while past dark.

Our anchor stations' frequencies will be published, but stations can contact as many other stations as they can find for more fun. Like our VHF contest, this will allow stations to plot their coverage "footprint" to get a good idea of their capabilities for a real emergency.

After the contest, all teams file reports with their call and location, operators, number of contacts and most important, all antenna details- antenna design, height, specific comments, and pictures. Each station then can rank its top (3) antenna performers with comments and ideas. Pictures are very much encouraged! Our Marion County ARES team is sponsoring the event this year. They will compile the documentation, and narrow down the best performing antennas across the region – antennas we might all want to put in our 'go bags' as proven performers.

In something like a grid-down situation, our emergency communicating would not be limited within the boundaries of Ohio, so I'm asking our neighboring states to get involved with us! We would really like to make this a regional event!!

We'll put out more specifics as time goes on, but mark the calendar now- and we really hope to make this a regional event!

Stan
Stan Broadway, N8BHL
Section Emergency Coordinator – Ohio

Dale's Tales

Greetings everyone, welcome to "Dale's Tales" for February, 2016.

OUR NEW CEO: As you are no doubt seen the press release, our ARRL CEO Dave Sumner K1ZZ plans to retire this year. Dave has announced that the date will be April 18, ending more than 44 years of service at ARRL HQ. For many of us, it will be hard to imagine headquarters without Dave at the helm. None the less, on that date, our new CEO will step into office, Tom Gallagher NY2RF. There will be a few weeks of overlap

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President, Brian, WD8MXR;
Vice-President, Glenn, W8MUK;
Secretary, Zack, N8ZAK;
Treasurer, Rich, KD8WCB.

Board Members: Steve, W8TER;
Skeet, KD8XKD; James, WD8IOL;
Dan, KE8UE; Dave, KD8EVN.

TMRA Home Page
www.tmrahamradio.org
Webmasters, Zak, N8ZAK &
Mike, N8ZLW

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)

D-Star Repeater: 442.750
APRS: 144.390

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

as Tom and Dave will be working together to effect a smooth transition of leadership. Tom's selection comes after an extensive search and an offer was tendered following the decision at the January ARRL Board meeting. Tom accepted, and the Board held an electronic meeting Monday evening January 25, where he was elected to serve as CEO and Secretary following Dave Sumner's retirement. Tom's bio is available on the ARRL web site.

The recent Board meeting also included another important change in Leadership, as President Kay Craigie N3KN completed her 6th year as League President and opted to return to private life. Our First Vice President Rick Roderick K5UR was unanimously elected to the office of President and began his term at the end of the meeting. Rick has served on the Board as a Vice Director, Director and a VP for more than 24 years.

One other change is forthcoming, as our Chief Operating Officer, Harold Kramer W1JB is planning to retire in early 2016. More details will follow as our new COO is selected.

In addition to the above, various Board actions included election of the 2016 Executive Committee, (your Director was re-elected to this body) plus reviewing and accepting standing Committee Reports. The ARRL Strategic Plan was accepted and the Board will be assigning priorities for implementation. There was considerable discussion about how US population shifts have affected the number of ARRL members in each Division since Division boundaries were last adjusted. A committee was established to examine these changes, collect member input and report at the January 2017 meeting with their recommendations.

Actions by our newly elected President included the appointments to several committees. Our Vice Director, Tom Delaney W8WTD was selected as Board Liaison to the ARRL RF Safety Committee, while your Director was re-appointed as chair of the Ethics and Elections Committee.

ON THE AIR SPECIAL EVENT: The big operating event National Parks on the Air has begun. Be sure to check out the full details at <https://npota.arrl.org/>. You can view your contact status on <http://www.arrl.org/NPOTA> and selecting "The Leaderboard". Standings come from Logbook of the World uploads, so remember that some may be delayed until the operators return to their home QTHs where they have Internet connectivity.

MEA CULPA: Being human and subject to making an occasional (Okay, frequent) mistake, I did so last month when I inadvertently omitted from the Great Lakes Division Annual Report, the call sign of Bill Finnegan NR8I. Bill was the winner of the ARRL's Herb S. Brier W9AD Instructor of the Year Award.

TOM'S COMMENTS: Comments from our Vice Director Tom Delany W8WTD

ARES: So who turned the map of the Division upside down? It seemed like it for a few hours this past weekend. Normally, cold temperatures and large snowfalls are more likely in Central Michigan than in Central Kentucky. But the storm that eventually became the Northeast Blizzard came roaring through the southern part of the Division before it charged up the East Coast. And it dropped enough snow to stop traffic on I-75 between London, KY and Lexington. While it was reminiscent of the I-65 snow last winter that stopped traffic over near Elizabethtown, this one probably wasn't quite as bad. But the Kentucky ARES folks responded, at least in the "ready" mode. KEN was activated on 3.9725 MHz, and several local nets were called up throughout the area. No one actually deployed, but all the procedures were in place to do so. Thanks to everyone who participated!

Who's an expert? Here's a story for you. Maybe it has to do with the fact that we are called amateur radio operators. Or maybe it's something else. I was asked recently to help find someone who could do a presentation on wire antennas for one of the clubs in our area. So I started asking around for an expert. People I thought were experts declined, saying that they weren't experts. After a while, I started thinking about the term, and decided that must be what was making the search difficult. No one wants to self-identify as an expert. We all have this mental picture of an expert as someone who knows so much about resonance, reactance, impedance, theory, and the ability to use complex antenna-modelling systems. What about the practical? How many antennas has an individual constructed and put up? In my fifty-plus years of ham radio, I've put up temporary antennas for field day, permanent antennas on my house and the houses of friends, as well as antennas on public buildings, etc. Some worked well, others didn't, but I learned from what went wrong.

With that in mind, I recruited one of the non-experts (who knows a lot about antennas) and together we led a discussion with the club. Everyone took part, and we all found out more about antennas and what to expect. By sharing what we know and asking questions about what we didn't know, we all came to a better understanding of antennas. And it was one of the better club meetings I've attended anywhere. Funny thing. Even though to my "English-teacher" mind, expert and experience seem to have the same root, one term is more intimidating than the other. Bottom line—those of us with experience should not be so hesitant to share what we know. The winter and early spring Hamfest season is just about here. Weather permitting, I'll be seeing some of you in the next month or so.

73, Tom W8WTD Vice Director, Great Lakes Division

UPDATE for AMATEUR RADIO PARITY ACT: We continue to be encouraged by the efforts of our Washington team as they continue to foster support of the passage of the Amateur Radio Parity Act. The House version now has 118 Co-Sponsors. HR 1301 is the Bill number for the House of Representatives. The Senate version of the bill is number S 1685. If you have not done so, please contact your Senator and Congressman in Washington and encourage his/her support for the Act. You can find more information at <http://www.arrl.org/amateur-radio-parity-act>. Please be sure to route your letters through ARRL Headquarters for personal delivery: ARRL, Attn: Amateur Radio Parity Act Grassroots Campaign, 225 Main St., Newington, CT 06111.

HAMFESTING: Here is the current Great Lakes Division ARRL Sanctioned Hamfest Schedule for the next few weeks. These swaps have received their sanctioning approval from ARRL HQ at the time of this publication. We have approximately 65 hamfests each year in the Great Lakes Division. I do encourage each Hamfest Chair to register early for ARRL Sanctioning. It is never too early to register your hamfest with Headquarters. Be sure to invite your ARRL Officials as soon as your date is set. Help avoid date conflicts, do it early!

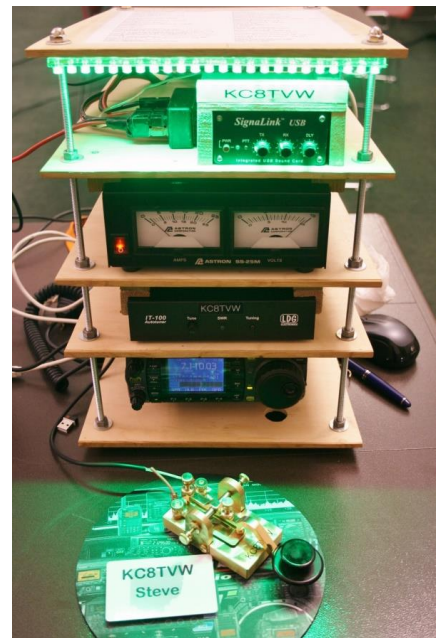
- Feb 6 - HARA Swap - Negaunee, MI
- Feb 13 - Cherryland - Traverse City, MI
- Feb 21 - Mansfield - Mansfield, OH
- Feb 21 - Livonia - Livonia, MI
- Mar 5 - Cave City - Cave City, KY
- Mar 6 - NOARS - Elyria, OH
- Mar 19 - Crossroads - Kalamazoo, MI
- Mar 20 - TMRA Hamfest - Perrysburg, OH
- Mar 26 - MOVARC - Gallipolis, OH

73, See you on the bands.

Dale Williams WA8EFK
Director, Great Lakes Division

Field Day 2016

Is all the activity surrounding Winter Field Day making you long for the balmy days of late June? Maybe you have happy memories of past field days (not June 2015!) and would like to get started with your planning. If you're like many hams, you tend to put off taking action when field day is still several months away. Then, like the rest of us, you rush to get



Steve, KC8TVW's grab and go kit

things ready. Maybe this year can be different. Where to begin? How about with your rig and antenna?

When it comes to erecting antennas in the field, there's no substitute for experience and the right tools. Yes, you might get lucky on field day and reach that perfect limb in the exact tree you want, but a better approach is to practice beforehand. While it's still winter and the leaves are off the trees, practice with that slingshot or whatever you like to use. Do you prefer masting or tripods? Dust them off and check for cracks, missing parts, or rusty hardware.

Have you admired the grab-and-go kits you saw at past field days? It's not too late to build your own. There were several varieties at past field days to use as examples. Still don't have the rig you want? Lately, there have been several rigs for sale from silent keys or hams retiring from our hobby. Don't wait until the last minute.

Finally, think about digital. The price of laptop and smaller computers has been coming down. Even more important, TMRA has been building a body of expertise, so there are many Elmers to help you get started.



Brian, WD8MXR's grab and go kit

w8muk photo

Did You Know?

- The Lucas County Siren Net is the first Friday of each month from 10:30 to 11:30 AM on 147.270 + W/103.5 PL and 442.850 + W/103.5 PL.
- The Tech Committee meets the second Monday of each month at Maumee Fire Station #2 on Dussel Drive (in front of the water tower).
- The TMRA general meeting is the second Wednesday of each month.
- The Lucas County ARES Informational Net is every Sunday at 7:30 pm on 147.270.
- The TMRA Newcomers and Elmers Net is every Sunday at 8:00 pm on 147.270.
- The TMRA Hamfest is March 20th at Owens Community College. Set-up will be Saturday, March 19th. Many volunteers will be needed both days.
- The TMRA bus to the Dayton Hamvention travels on May 21.
- The calendar at the TMRA website lists numerous ham radio activities each month.

**TMRA
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February 2016