



TMRA Amateur Radio Beacon

January 2018



The Prez Sez

From Brian, WD8MXR, President

Christmas Party: maybe the threatening weather kept some members away, but we had an impressive turnout and excellent foods. Thanks go to the organizing committee – Rob, KV8P; Bradley, WB8RG; Mike, WA8SYD; Dave, KD8EVN; and Skeet, KD8KXD; - have I missed anyone? - Especially for their last minute scrambling to make the party a success.

Hamfest update: we're gearing up for the 2018 Hamfest: it will be Sunday March 18th at Owens Community College, with set up Saturday March 17th. It's registered with and "approved" by the ARRL. By the time you read this, the tickets, vendor passes and postcards will have been ordered at Maumee Kwik-Print; table application forms will have been mailed out to potential vendors. The table application form is on the TMRA website, as is a one page announcement flyer. We expect many of our usual vendors to be back. Mark and Brenda's "Homestyle Concessions" will be providing the food service again this year. We'll continue making considerable savings by renting tables from Toledo Trainmasters again this year – they have the train and toys show at OCC the Sunday before our Hamfest. Volunteers will be needed – Skeet, KD8KXD, for tickets, Chrissy, KC8UFV, for talk-in, Steve, KC8TVW, for VE testing, Tom, KB8PAI, for set-up/teardown (especially volunteers for teardown Sunday afternoon, Mike, W8MAL, for security (manning the doors). With the prize drawings every 30 minutes from 9:00am to Noon, Mike, WA8SYD, and Chrissy (on the computer to display the winning numbers) need an assistant to relay the information between them. All will be grateful for volunteers to help with those activities: again we'll have food vouchers for all who volunteer at least 1 hour to help in any way. If there are any ideas/suggestions for Forums, contact Ron, N8RLH.

Speaking of volunteers, it is important that for liability insurance and other aspects of coverage, everyone who works on TMRA projects be a registered member of TMRA – i.e. has a membership application form on file with our Membership Chairperson, Ernie, K8EEE, for the current membership year (runs July 1 to June 30). Remember, the only complimentary memberships are those for graduates of a TMRA license class – ALL others pay dues. We keep discovering cases of amateurs who think they are members of TMRA, but have not submitted membership forms or paid dues for the current (or several) years.

Speaking of dues, one item on the agenda for discussion at the January TMRA Executive Committee meeting (4th Wednesday 7:30pm Maumee #2 Fire Station) will be concern the possibility of Life Memberships in TMRA – we need your input on this, especially regarding "how much"/\$ dues" ?.

The TMRA Executive Committee is proposing a change in the By-Laws to allow us to simply require that an Officer be bondable, but not require that we carry bonding insurance. The proposed changes are:

Currently reads: SECTION VI. OFFICERS.

1. The Officers of the Association shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and as many other officers as the membership may designate. The term for elected Officers shall be from July 1st through June 30th. Any officer that becomes a signatory for the Association shall be bonded.

6. The Treasurer. i. Treasurer and all signatories shall be bonded.

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The proposed changes were presented in the November Newsletter and at that meeting, and in the December Newsletter and again here: they will be presented for a vote at the January General Meeting.

Running out of space – hopefully elsewhere in the Newsletter will be information on Zak’s, N8ZAK, D-STAR presentation, Winter Field Day at the Maumee branch of the library, the 6m repeater, and other club activities and news.

73, Brian, WD8MXR

ARES News

From Lucas County EC, Skeet, KD8KXD

The next Lucas County ARES meeting will be held Saturday, January 27, 2018. The meeting location is at St. Luke's Hospital in the basement Private Dining Room near the cafeteria. The meeting starts at 9:00am

Please tune into the Lucas County ARES in Brief Net, Sunday nights on the 147.270 repeater at 7:30pm for the latest information.

Ham Radio Class Forming Now

From Steve, KC8TVW

TMRA will be holding a two-day Technician License class on April 7 & 21, 2018. There is no charge for the class. A text book is required and costs \$25.00. At the end of the second day, students may take the FCC license exam. The cost of the exam is \$15.00.

The class will be held at the Lucas County EMS Training Center, 2127 Jefferson Street, Toledo, Ohio 43624. Registration is required. Contact Steve, KC8TVW, phone: 419-467-3734 or email: kc8tvw@arrl.net.

Winter Field Day

TMRA will hold Winter Field Day on January 27, 2018 at the Maumee Branch Library from 12 noon to 5:00 PM. The library is located at 501 River Road in Maumee, Ohio. This is a change in location from Maumee Fire Station #2. Talk-in will be 147.27 MHz with a PL of 103.5 or 250.3 (downtown Toledo link).

As reported by Bradley, WB8RG, TMRA Information Officer: “The purpose of this event is to help operators have **fun** and get hands on help with operation and setup of FLdigi and FLmsg. MMSSTV is also an option.



Bring your 2 meter radio and your laptop. An interface such as a Signalink is optional. Operators will be on hand to assist you through trouble shooting and operation. Get on the air with digital soundcard modes. We also want to have fun making HF contacts using digital soundcard modes during Winter Field Day.”

Winter Field Day is open to the general public.

Tech Committee News

From Rob, KV8P

Technical Committee Update:

While the technical committee did not meet in December (due to the holidays), that didn't stop some progress this past month. Most committee effort this past month was related to getting the 6 meter repeater on the air before Christmas. Thanks to the work of several people, that was accomplished! We have had a few additional days of on-site "tweaking" since then. The new 6 meter (53.110 -) repeater seems to be getting a lot of use and we are hearing some new call-signs on it which everyone is excited about! We will be discussing PL and pre-amp options at the next technical committee meeting (more on the 6 meter repeater separately in this newsletter).



Work also continues on the antenna raising planning for spring. We had previously received a damaged 224.14 antenna from Sinclair (damaged during shipping), however, the manufacturer replaced it and the new/good 224.14 antenna is now in storage (along with the other 4 antennas) and is ready for a spring raising party. A new Rohn 25G tower section is now also in storage but will soon be "fit tested" with one of the available mounting options for the 147.27 mast (more on that in the near future after review). Chrissy, KC8UFV, is also working her magic to finalize some additional repeater control capability. She is always working hard behind the scenes which we all appreciate! The other repeaters all seem to be working well. However, work continues on the 442.850 and 224.14 amplifiers. 927.025 stays fairly busy (on and off) while 224.14 is usually very quiet.

Some additional clean-up was also done at our downtown repeater site. The cleanup was necessary before putting the 6 meter repeater in place (to help make room for it). Thanks to those that helped out!

And the Six Meter Repeater. . .

The TMRA 6 meter repeater is now officially "on the air" (as of December 22nd). The frequency is 53.110 with a 1 MHz negative offset (repeater receives on 52.110). Note that we have noticed that many radios are not programmed with an automatic offset for 6 meters (or have the wrong offset for a different country). Therefore,



you may need to configure the offset spacing in your radio which typically can be done via a visit to your radio manual. (This setting is often one in your radio's menu settings).

The repeater will soon be in 103.5 pl tone squelch, however, it is currently in carrier squelch for testing.

We still have a little audio and receiver sensitivity tweaking to do, so watch for some improvements in the coming weeks. (right now, you will likely hear it a bit better than it hears you).

Thanks to Rich, KQ6EF, for his major role in bringing the 6 meter repeater online! Also, thanks to Rich, Tom, KD8WCD, and Mike, W8MAL, for raising the repeater antenna!

Editor's Note: The above photos of the six meter repeater and antenna are courtesy of Rob, KV8P.

Six Meter Nets

From Steve, W8TER

The 6 Meter Nets are Wednesdays at 9:00 pm

- 1st Wednesday of the month is on 50.400 AM mode.
- 2nd Wednesday of the month is on 52.525 FM mode.
- 3rd Wednesday of the month is on 50.125 USB mode.
- 4th Wednesday of the month is on 52.525 FM mode.
- 5th Wednesday of the month is on 52.525 FM mode.
- 6th Wednesday of the month does not exist so....there is also a 6-meter net on Thursday at 9pm on 50.255 USB mode.

Here is a PDF article showing an easy version of a 6 meter vertical/horizontal dipole and a PDF showing a variety of easy to build 6 meter antennas: http://www.hbphoto.com/Radio/6_meter_antennas.pdf. Next, this is the easiest antenna for 6 meters. The dimensions in there are for USB portion of the band but you can adjust the length by folding the ends of the antenna back on itself. Also, you can purchase a couple of HAM STICKS and a center mount to make a vertical: <http://www.americanradiosupply.com/procomm-pcf6-6-meter-vhf-fiberglass-ham-stick-antenna-black-500-watt/>. Finally, the Ringo Ranger version of the 6 meter is less than \$100.00 and does have gain. <https://www.universal-radio.com/catalog/hamants/0634.html>.

Fldigi Net

From Bradley, WB8RG, TMRA Information Officer

Are you interested in learning more about Digital Modes? Well then be sure to check into the FLDIGI Net every Tuesday Night at 1930 on the 147.270 repeater. All are welcome and new operators are encouraged to check in and get up to speed on FLDIGI and MMSSTV. Its informative and a lot of fun.

For more info contact Steve, W8TER, at w8ter@bex.net

January Mobile Fox Hunt

Because of the cold weather and Winter Field Day, the January mobile fox hunt is cancelled.

Some DX Thoughts

By Rob, KV8P

With a couple very interesting DXpedition operations coming up in January, I thought it might be good to spend a few minutes and share some DXer tips and tricks! (Don't tell anyone I told you! haha) Yes, this is a brain dump, so hopefully it helps someone.

Some stations like 3Y0Z (Bouvet Island) coming up in January will be very difficult to wrangle without employing a few simple tips/tricks to help you get through. They are the #2 most wanted, so you can only imagine! I employ all of these, tips/tricks, below, and run a fairly modest station overall, so I know they work. Note that these are hints/tips to get through (to get yourself in the log). There is a completely separate list worth eventually sharing related to common courtesy in DXing. Most of those relate to "listen first".

If you have a simple or modest station, consider the following to help you get heard!

1. Consider waiting until 1/2 to 2/3 of the way through the DXpedition activation to begin your contact attempts if you have a very simple or relatively moderate station and/or no power amplifier. I know. This is hard to do! However, there are two reasons for this. The DX Stations will eventually/occasionally start calling for "Only All Time New Ones" (ATNO) about that time. If you have never worked that entity before, you will have a huge advantage getting through because the herd will be thinned! Also, the big guns have likely landed their "fish" on the primary bands already, by then, and are off to trying to make the contact on more obscure bands. This makes it MUCH easier for you to "get through" later. Also, many people have already "given up". Nothing like starting when others are giving up! (This also works well for working relatively weak stations! They are my favorite at that time!)

2. These rare DX stations almost always work a split, with a 5-10 kHz range, that they listen within (leveling the playing field a bit for more our modest stations). Especially if you are struggling, consider spending a few minutes "listening" to how the DX station is listening and where. Are they sliding up or down the band working stations (usually split)? Can you place your transmissions in a place where they will "find you next" as they scroll up or down? It is tricky toggling back and forth between the two frequencies, but sometimes you can find a good TX spot that way!

3. SSB: Have you heard about how DX stations often quickly respond to female voices and can generally pick them out and hear them easier than us "guys"? Try mimicking that "easier to hear" phenomena by placing your transmission frequency so that the "pitch" of your voice sounds a bit higher to the receiving station than everyone else. (It works!)

**THE TOLEDO MOBILE RADIO
ASSOCIATION P.O. BOX 9673,
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President, Brian, WD8MXR;
Vice-President, Rob, KV8P;
Secretary, Zack, N8ZAK;
Treasurer, Rich, KD8WCB.

Board Members: Steve, W8TER;
Skeet, KD8XKD; Tom, KD8WCD;
Dan, KE8UE; Rich, KQ6EF.

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.

4. SSB: When the entire "pile-up" starts calling the DX station, be patient and wait 1/2 a second before keying up and sending out your callsign (yah, you'll just get clobbered anyway...). If you've ever been on the "fun/pile-up" end of an operation, you quickly realize that the only callsigns you often can pick out are partial callsigns (the trailing letter) of the last stations you heard. By waiting 1/2 of a second before keying up, you give your callsign suffix a fighting chance of being the last station the receiving station hears. You eventually will be! Short callsigns may need to delay even a bit longer! Listen. You can often tell by how he answers others just how long you can wait.

5. SSB: If you have a speech compressor, use it. I said "use it", not "abuse it". A setting of 1 or 2 is usually a big enough difference and raises the overall power average of your transmission, which makes it easier to hear you overall. However, if you hit your transmit audio with too much compression, you will sound distorted and robotic and nobody will answer you. (So, know your radio and try this out with a friend before-hand to make sure you sound ok!) With some radios, this can make a huge difference.

6. If you have only dipoles and a vertical, (if you have a Yagi, use that for the forward gain and rear rejection, obviously), unless you have that dipole way up in the air nearing 1/2 wave length up, use the vertical to transmit from, if you can. Verticals (with a good ground plane) have a very low take off angle for getting most of your power transmitted out to the horizon, where your "hop" has a better chance of landing on and getting to the DX station. (Not up, where they may only hear you state-side). Yes, you may hear better on that dipole (they are often quieter and don't pick up as much man made noise as the verticals, in general), but a low install with the dipole won't put your transmission at the angle you need it to be heard. Transmit on the vertical if you can. While not as predictable, longer loop antennas for 40 and 80m, even lower to the ground, used with a tuner to use higher frequency bands (20m and 15m), often have some very high gain at low angles as well. It might seem counter-intuitive, typically working as a NVIS antenna for you, but try it on the DX on 20 and 15 if you have it!

Feel free to post other ideas! I'm sure there are some other good ones!

TMRA Build Projects

Rich, KD8WCB, is looking for people to join him in a digital antenna analyzer build. The estimated cost is around \$55.00. You can see a write-up of the project in November 2017 issue of QST Magazine beginning on page 40. If you want to join the build or have questions, please contact Rich at rich.peper@gmail.com.

Chrissy, KC8UFV, is hosting s surface mount clock build. It will take place following the February 10, 2018, VE Session at Maumee Fire Station #2 on Dussel Drive. Contact Chrissy if you have questions at kc8ufv@gmail.com.

Dale's Tales

By Dale Williams, WA8EFK, Director Great Lakes Division

Greetings everyone, welcome to "Dale's Tales" for January 2018.

HAMFESTING: We have approximately 65 ARRL hamfests each year in the Division. I do encourage each Hamfest Chair to register early for ARRL Sanctioning. Be sure to invite your ARRL Officials as soon as your date is set. Here is the current Great Lakes Division ARRL Sanctioned Hamfest Schedule covering the next couple of months. These swaps have received their sanctioning approval from ARRL HQ at the time of this publication.

1/14/18	SCARF Hamfest	Nelsonville, OH
1/28/18	Hazel Park Hamfest	Madison Heights, MI
1/28/18	Tusco Hamfest	Strasburg, OH
2/3/18	HARA Hamfest	Negaunee, MI
2/10/18	Cherryland Hamfest	Traverse City, MI
2/18/18	InterCity Hamfest	Mansfield, OH
2/18/18	Livonia Hamfest	Livonia, MI
3/3/18	Cave City Hamfest	Cave City, KY
3/4/18	NOARS Hamfest	Elyria, OH
3/17/18	Crossroads Hamfest	Kalamazoo, MI
3/17/18	MOVARC Hamfest	Gallipolis, OH
3/18/18	Toledo Mobile R.A.	Perrysburg, OH

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Editor's Note: Dale's Tales was edited to fit the space available.

Did You Know?

- 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 **Tech Committee** meets the second Monday of each month at Maumee Fire Station #2 on Dussel Drive (in front of the water tower).
- The **Fldigi Net** meets every Tuesday night at 7:30 PM at 147.27 MHz
- The **TMRA general meeting** is the second Wednesday of each month at the Electrical Industry Building, Lime City Rd., Rossford, Ohio.
- The **Six Meter Net** meets every Wednesday and Thursday at 9:00 PM (EST).
- 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 **Lucas County Hospital Net** is the first Saturday of every other month at 10:00 AM.
- The **NORC Net** is the first Saturday of each month. This net typically meets at 11:00 AM on or around +/- 7.200 MHz LSB.
- **ARES** meets the fourth Saturday of each month at St. Luke's Hospital, 5901 Monclova Road, in Maumee, Ohio, at 9:00 AM.
- **Mobile Fox Hunt** will be February 24, 2018 after the ARES meeting.
- **The TMRA Hamfest** will be March 18, 2018 at Owens Community College, Perrysburg, OH.
- **VE testing** is each month. Contact Steve, KC8TVW at 419-467-3734 or kc8tvw@arrl.net.
- Register for **CW classes** by contacting Steve, KC8TVW at 419-467-3734 or kc8tvw@arrl.net.
- **Ron, N8RLH**, has ham gear from the estates of silent keys. Contact: 419-345-6382 or rlhornbeck@att.net.
- The calendar at the **TMRA website**, www.tmrahamradio.org, lists numerous ham radio activities each month.
- TMRA has a **Facebook** page.
- Don't forget to select TMRA as your Organization of choice for *Kroger Cares* and *Amazon Smile*. This results in a donation to the club as a portion of your purchase.

**TMRA
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