

"LET NO CALL GO UNANSWERED"

CLUB REPEATERS  
146.940 (-) (94.8PL)  
(Patch w/\*key and end w/#)

444.55 (+) (94.8PL)

ARES/RACES  
146.82 (-) (94.8PL)

# Flashovers

Newsletter of the Muskegon Area Amateur Radio Council  
Since 1941

PO Box 691 Muskegon, MI 49443  
Club Station, W8ZHO  
2888 Scenic Drive

[www.qsl.net/w8zho](http://www.qsl.net/w8zho)  
[w8zho@arrl.net](mailto:w8zho@arrl.net)



Editor: Tom Porritt, N8YJT  
Email: [N8YJT@arrl.net](mailto:N8YJT@arrl.net)

March 2009  
Vol. 69 No. 3

## 2009 MAARC Leadership

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Tom Nickisch,  
W8AMZ

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CC Pam Flint

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Doc, AC8AL

### Committee Member

Bob, N9AUY

Dan, N8PPQ

Chuck, KC8MDL

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Tom Nickisch, W8AMZ  
[w8amz@yahoo.com](mailto:w8amz@yahoo.com)

Greetings members. Another month has passed and much warmer than the one before. Spring is lurking right around the corner. There is an old-wise tale that says spring will arrive only if we attend the Marshall swap on the 14th. I'm sure a lot of you want to see spring arrive with it's warmer weather and the awakening of the flowers and green grass and leaves on our trees, and lets not forget outdoor amateur radio activities. (That's the real important one) So I encourage everyone to attend the Marshall Hamfest this month and help the arrival of spring.

I also want to encourage all members to attend the Leadership and Planning Workshop on March 7th. This is as much for me as it is for the Club. The goals and directions I expect to receive out of this workshop will help to guide me as I try to carry out my responsibilities as president. Please try to make some time to join us for part or all of the day. Remember lunch and breaks will be provided.

I would also like to thank everyone for their support and prayers earlier this month when word was received of my mother's heart attack and impending bypass surgery. Everything turned out OK and she has been improving by leaps and bounds each day.

I again want to thank all you my friends ever so much and look forward to seeing all of you at our general membership meeting this month.

73'

Tom, W8AMZ

## MUSKEGON AREA AMATEUR RADIO COUNCIL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

February 5, 2009

The meeting started with the usual greeting, pledge, recognition of guests, and introduction of members

The program was a presentation by Dan, N8PPQ, on his E-Z-O Antenna. The E-Z-O is a variation on the quad theme. See Dan's article starting on page 3.

The Board recommended sale of Drake Twins. A motion was made, "The MAARC will sell to W8GXT the Drake Twins for \$375. The proceeds will be deposited into the council's general fund." Motion by Bob, WB8IXV, with second by Denny, N8CTT. After some discussion the motion carried on a voice vote. The Drake Twins are going to a good home.

Radio on Silversides, N8SUB. W8GXT gave a brief report of how MAARC will request a new sequential call sign. That call sign will be traded for a vanity

## AREA COFFEE BREAKS & BREAKFASTS

Pine Street Café  
Spring Lake, 7AM Saturday

Whitlow's Restaurant,  
8:30AM Saturday

Gary's Restaurant, Montague,  
7AM Saturday

Fruitport Village Inn, 9:00AM  
Monday

Russ' Restaurant, Grand Haven,  
8:30PM Tuesday

Samuel's Restaurant, Fremont.  
First Saturday of every month at 8AM

call. We are hoping to have N8SUB assigned for use on the USS Silversides submarine.

The 2009 Field Day Chairman was introduced and it will be AB8SC.

AB8SC gave the assembled a brief (can you believe it?) report and requested volunteer assistance in all things Field Day. See the Field Day Corner starting on page 4.

Next Club Meeting March 5, 2009

events (Foxhunts, contests, Geocaching, exercises and tests), and an information packet for all of the above. Tom, W8AMZ, will facilitate the production of a handout for the Ham in a Day class.

The next Board Leadership and Planning Workshop will be March 7. Report, discussion, etc. N8YJT will facilitate this event. Runs 9:00 to 5:00. It will be at Pioneer Resources. We need a lunch, snacks, and break person. W8AMZ will handle this task.

Field Day '09. There will be a sign-up on the web. (also see the table on page 5). W8AMZ asked the question "Should we do a trial run on a weekend before"?

The power system will be different and managed by W8AMZ. There are plans to have a monthly "Field Day Update" in *Flashovers*.

Venturing Crew will have "Wilderness First Aid" training at our Clubhouse on the first two Saturdays of March.

Club dinner combined with an activity at the Clubhouse? April? Steak fry by W8AMZ. April 18 and MIQP.

Current needs for antennas and towers was discussed. The discussion was around replacing the top section of the 100' tower and upgrading some of the antennas as part of the project. The Board

**NEXT MAARC MEETING  
THURSDAY  
March 5, 2009  
7PM**

**Program:  
W8UJ on QSL Cards**

directed the House Manager to come up with a plan for consideration.

The Board discussed the potential for a summer DXpedition for W8ZHO? There are emails and conversations on the subject. It's a project looking for a leader.

Russ, K8BGP, suggested a membership card for dues paying folks. We should resurrect this ser-

## MAARC BOARD MEETING

**7 o'clock February 23, 2009**

**Location: Uncle Mark's Restaurant**

Minutes from previous Board meeting were approved as presented earlier.

Treasurer's Report. No Report, N8CTT was not present

The March 5 Club meeting will feature a program by W8UJ. It will deal with paper QSL cards. Members are encouraged to bring their QSL gems for show and tell.

The request for a call sign for the Silversides has been submitted. When the sequential call sign is issued, a vanity call sign, N8SUB, will be requested.

Venturing Crew's Kick-Back Weekend at Camp Gerber was a one-day event on Saturday February 21. Club participants, including, AB8SC, AC8AL, KC8MDL, and KC8FXE were satisfied with the results. One of the improvements that could be made for such events would be to have a tri-fold brochure to promote the club.

There will be a Ham in a Day class at Muskegon Community College on Saturday February 28 sponsored by MCECS. N8YJT observed that this is an opportunity for the Club to promote itself and participate in the education and learning of new Hams. Part of that opportunity might be to get the Monday evening class started again. But other things are needed too, like seminars, workshops, competitions,

## VHF NETS

### Sunday:

MCECS Net:  
146.82—7:30PM

West MI Traffic  
145.33 – 9 PM

### Monday:

IRA  
145.33 – 8 PM

West MI Traffic  
145.33 – 9 PM

### Tuesday:

NOARC  
145.49 – 8 PM

### Wednesday:

MAARC 2 Meter  
Net  
146.94—7PM

West MI Traffic  
145.33 – 9 PM

### Friday:

West MI Traffic  
145.33 – 9 PM

## STATEWIDE ARPSK NET

Sunday 5 PM  
3932 MHz Isb

## TEENAGE NET

M – F 6:00 PM  
3.945 MHz Isb

## BATHROBE NET

Daily 9AM  
14.235.5 MHz usb

## MITN

Daily 7PM  
3.952 MHz Isb

## HAIRNET

Sunday morn-  
ings, 8:00AM  
3945 +/- QRM.

vice. AB8SC will notify W8AMZ of the current members who qualify for a membership card. A two-sided card would be great. "Let No Call Go Unanswered."

N8YJT is looking for suggestions to improve the two-meter net. There should be Board members doing some of the net's tasks.

The next Board Meeting March 23 at Uncle Mark's Restaurant.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

## CALENDAR

Wednesdays—MAARC 2 Meter  
Net—7PM

Sundays - MCECS Net—7:30PM

### March

5th Club Meeting  
7th Leadership and Planning  
Workshop  
14th Marshall Hamfest  
23rd Board Meeting

## SPECIAL EVENT STATIONS

**Mar 1-Mar 31, 0000Z-2359Z,** Ocean County, NJ. Old Barney Amateur Radio Club, N2OB/150. Relighting and 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Barnegat Lighthouse "Old Barney". All bands. QSL. via bureau or direct to: Old Barney ARC, PO Box 345, Tuckerton, NJ 08087. Also operating as N2OB/LH. IOTA NA-111. Event began Dec 27, 2008. [www.obarc.org](http://www.obarc.org)

**Mar 21, 1600Z-2359Z,** San Diego, CA. USS Midway (CV 41) Museum Radio Room, NI6IW. Commemorating the establishment of Naval Security Group in 1935, and Navy SEABEES in 1942. SSB 14.320 7.250 CW 14.060 7.055 PSK-31 7.070-7.080 RTTY 14.080 7.080 2m/70cm SOCAL rep WIN. QSL. USS Midway (CV 41) Museum Radio Room, 910 Harbor Dr, San Diego, CA 92101. [af6ha@yahoo.com](mailto:af6ha@yahoo.com)

## THE E-Z-O ANTENNA

by N8PPQ



3-Element E-Z-O Antenna Prototype

My thanks to MAARC for allowing me to introduce my baby, the E-Z-O Antenna, at our January meeting at the clubhouse. The club's projector worked fine with my older laptop, and allowed me to show pictures and videos of this new antenna. This was the first public showing of the new antenna design.

Since the E-Z-O is an improvement over the Quad design, that antenna was described first, in comparison to other parasitic array beams. The Quad sports these advantages:

- ?? Higher Gain
- ?? Radiation Resistance close to 50 O
- ?? Lower Boom Height
- ?? Shorter Boom
- ?? May Be Internally Stacked for Multi-Band Arrays
- ?? Lower Angle Radiation
- ?? Broader Bandwidth

The E-Z-O antenna, which uses flexible dielectric tubes rather than rigid poles to support the electrical elements, has slightly higher gain over the Quad due

to its circular form - circles being the shape that the Quad only roughly approximates. Here is his list of reported improvements over the Quad antenna:

- ?? Lower Cost
- ?? Higher Gain
- ?? Lighter in Weight
- ?? Less Wind/Ice Loading
- ?? Easier to Install and Maintain
- ?? Esthetically Pleasing

The *E-Z-O* antenna has met two design constraints: structural and electrical.

Mechanically, the antenna components snap together and the elements hang from the boom. Their freedom to move is greater than with conventional antennas, but this has not caused problems. In fact, it results in reduced peak stresses on the boom, rotator, and tower. Ice and wind storms this winter were recorded. A video showed the antenna's response to 60 mph gusts.

Electrically, the new design presented some surprises. The magnitude of the dielectric effect on the outside band elements was surprising. Experimentation was required to establish optimum element lengths. Referencing literature was not to be found. As reported at:

<http://personal.ee.surrey.ac.uk/Personal/D.Jefferies/antennexarticles/diecon.htm>,

"As far as we are aware, there has been no reported work on encasing loop antennas in dielectric". It appears that "near field" interaction between parallel components increases the magnitude of the dielectric effect. Near field analysis is too complicated for this designer.

Since this antenna design has been so successful, I decided to offer antennas, kits, and plans online. The convenience at not having to repeat my experiments will be appreciated, I'm sure. The first ten antennas/antenna kits sold will qualify for substantial discounts over and above what is shown on the webpage, bringing a pre-tuned, 3-element, 5-band antenna to \$365, or a 2-element, 3-band kit to just \$229! (2" boom not included.) The discounts are in exchange for feedback regarding the plans, procedures and performance. You can visit [www.ezoantennas.com](http://www.ezoantennas.com) for more information. Discount coupons are available by contacting N8PPQ. There's an email link from the ezoantennas page.

Thanks again to MAARC for being the launching pad

for my *E-Z-O* Antenna. CU on HF.

## HAMFEST CALENDAR

**14 March 2009**

[Michigan Crossroads Hamfest](#)

Southern Michigan ARA & Marshall HS Industrial Arts Club

Marshall, MI

Marshall High School

[701 North Marshall Avenue](#)

**Contact:**

Stephanie Halbert, W8AEZ

20960 Capital Avenue NE

Battle Creek, MI 49017

Phone: 269-966-0770

Email: [daffne25@yahoo.com](mailto:daffne25@yahoo.com)

**4 April 2009**

[ARGYL Hamfest](#)

Lowell, MI

Lowell High School

[11700 Vergennes Street](#)

**Contact:**

Al Eckman, WW8WW

725 Bowes Road, Apt. K6

Lowell, MI 49331

Phone: 616-450-4332

Email: [al.eckman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:al.eckman@sbcglobal.net)

## COMING EVENTS DETAILS

### Leadership and Planning

What: MAARC Leadership & Planning Workshop

Where: Pioneer Resources  
1145 E. Wesley Ave  
Muskegon

When: Saturday March 7, 2009  
9AM to 5PM

A sandwich buffet will be provided for lunch.

## FIELD DAY CORNER

By Bill, AB8SC

Field Day Chairman

Hello amateur radio friends. This is the first in a series of articles that will trace our preparations for Field Day 2009. Please follow along as we look at this opportunity. I invite you to get involved.

First, just what is Field Day? The ARRL promotes this annual event on the fourth full weekend in June. And publishes a set of rules to govern the contest portion of the event. This summer's edition will be

June 27 and 28. The event starts in the early afternoon and runs through Sunday afternoon.

Hams will reminisce at length about the contacts made on the novice bands or on the higher bands. They will reflect on the modes or how a band was just plain dead before the starting gun and how the band came alive with the RF heating the ionosphere. We will be able to measure our success by the logs published in the December edition of QST when the Field Day results are posted and we see our position among the many Field Day entries.

Yes, Field Day has a contest aspect, but it is more than that. Field Day is also a social event. We want to invite all the local Hams to visit our site for a communal meal. The coffee is always hot. There are tons of eyeball QSOs to enjoy. Sometimes we won't see that Ham again until next year. Sometimes we recruit new Hams for our favorite operating mode. We have fun. Has a hotdog ever tasted better?

Field Day is an educational opportunity. The obvious education is enjoyed when a new person visits our public location. Or the education can be employed when a town's mayor drops in and asks, "What's going on here?" The education continues when a newer Ham works up the courage to make a Field Day QSO. There is a special shack designed to get the newer Ham on the air and enjoying the experience.

Field Day is an opportunity to breakout your emergency communications shack. Hams camp in a tent, motor home, or just hang out for the day or evening. They set up shacks for individual bands or modes and they operate while the band cooperates. At the same time there are hams that guest operate from the many shacks. Recently we have operated seven shacks. There is always something happening at the site of a successful Field Day. That means around the clock.

Field Day is a chance to put together a power system to support the site's shacks. There might be a loud generator. There might be whispering wind generator or silent solar panels. We have kicked around the idea of borrowing a fuel cell. There might be all manner of ways to deliver the power required by the shacks. We experiment and we make it happen.

Field Day is volunteering. We have a long list of opportunities for your involvement. Please take a moment to visit a special site set aside for your special part of Field Day <http://www.n8ppq.net/FieldDay/>

[FDSchedule.aspx](#). You will be able to sign-up for many of the tasks. You can also visit the MAARC website for a link to this page or reference the following table.

What is your idea of Field Day? Will you help us to put together an event to remember? Find a spot in the list below and let me know how you will help. Remember that many helping hands make light work.

**FIELD DAY '09 POSITION ASSIGNMENTS – As of 2/28/09 (subject to change)**

Position	Organizer
10 Meter Shack Manager	
15 Meter Shack Manager	
20 Meter CW	
20 Meter Phone	W8AMZ
40 Meter CW	
40 Meter Phone	
80 Meter CW	N8PPQ
80 Meter Phone	K8BP
160 Meter CW	
160 Meter Phone	
Satellite	KC8PCJ
ATV	
6 Meters	
2 Meters	
UHF	
Packet	N8YJT
GOTA	
Media	
W1AW Bulletin	
Info Booth	
Power Plant	W8AMZ
LAN	
Food Services	
Alternative Energy	
NTS Messages	N8YJT
Photographer	

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

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The ARRL Letter  
Vol. 28, No. 8  
February 27, 2009  
\*\*\*\*\*

## ARRL DX PHONE CONTEST BRINGS DX IN FULL FORCE TO HF BANDS

With the 2009 ARRL International DX CW Contest now history the first full weekend in March brings the next round of competition: The 2009 ARRL DX SSB Contest. Like its CW predecessor, this event focuses on DX stations working all US states and Canadian provinces, while US and Canadian amateurs try to work as many DX countries as possible over the 48 hour contest period.

"While the origins of the ARRL DX Contest go back to 1929, the first Phone weekend wasn't until 1937," said ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X. "AM was the voice mode used at that time. The rules may have changed since the event was held back in the 1930s, but the premise remains the same: How many contacts with stations in far-away locales can you make?"

Just as in the CW contest a couple of weeks ago, US and Canadian stations send a signal report and their state or province, while DX stations send a signal report and their transmit power. Remember that for this contest, Alaska and Hawaii are considered DX stations – this means stations in KH6 and KL7 focus their efforts on working Stateside and Canada.

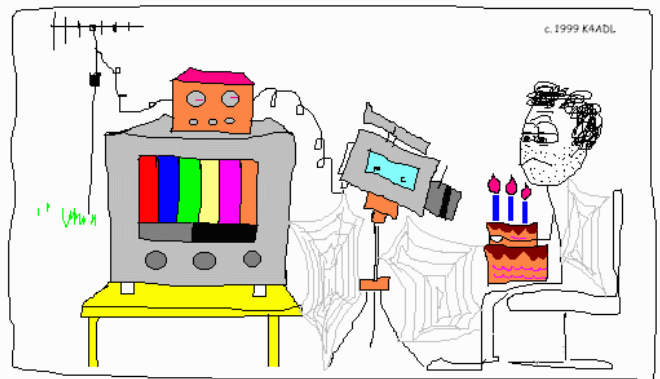
How can you participate? Kutzko said you're only limited by your imagination and willingness to get on the air: "Even though we are at the bottom of the 11-year solar cycle, there will be plenty of chances to work DX, even for stations running 100 W and a dipole or vertical antenna. If you live in an area where antenna restrictions exist, take your contest effort on the road! Operate from your car, set up a portable antenna in a park or campground or see if a friend's station is available. If you have a station and won't be using it, consider opening your doors to members of your club to try their hand at working some DX. If you make 100 QSOs, you're eligible to purchase a commemorative pin for your efforts."

The ARRL DX Phone Contest runs from 0000 UTC Saturday, March 7 to 2359 UTC Sunday, March 8. Complete rules and forms are available online <<http://www.arrl.org/contests/forms/>>. Why let all this

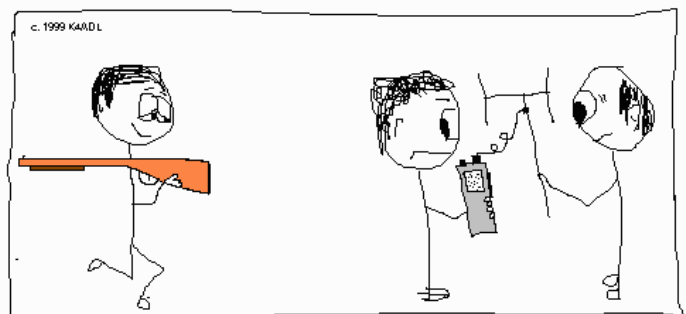
DX pass you by? Get on the air and have some fun!

## SOLAR UPDATE

Tad "A savage Sun consumes its hidden day" Cook, K7RA, this week reports: Excitement mounted a few days ago when new Solar Cycle 24 sunspot 1013 emerged, but two days later it was fading away, similar to other recent sunspot appearances. The sunspot number for February 24-26 was 12, 14 and 12. Today's number will likely be 0. Sunspot numbers for February 19-25 were 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 12 and 14 with a mean of 3.7. The 10.7 cm flux was 68.9, 69.2, 70.6, 70.3, 70.8, 71 and 70.7 with a mean of 70.2. The estimated planetary A indices were 1, 3, 3, 3, 5, 6 and 3 with a mean of 3.4. The estimated mid-latitude A indices were 0, 3, 2, 3, 3, 6 and 2 with a mean of 2.7. For more information concerning radio propagation, visit the ARRL Technical Information Service Propagation page [www.arrl.org/tis/info/propagation.html](http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/propagation.html). To read this week's Solar Report in its entirety, check out the W1AW Propagation Bulletin page [www.arrl.org/w1aw/prop/](http://www.arrl.org/w1aw/prop/). This week's "Tad Cookism" brought to you by David Gascoyne's "Winter Garden".



WALLACE CELEBRATES HIS THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR OF WAITING FOR AN ATV STATION TO APPEAR ON HIS MONITOR



NEVER ONE TO PAY CLOSE ATTENTION AT CLUB MEETINGS, PHILLIP ARRIVES INCORRECTLY EQUIPPED FOR THE ANNUAL FOX HUNT.

(Continued on page 7)



**ASK ELMER** (Advice for the Ham)

Dear Wise One,  
How long should an antenna stay up?  
Sincerely, Just Wondering

Dear Mr. JW,  
A long time ago I asked this same question of an old Ham who said the answer came from the OM himself. I thought the answer I received was useless. However, In retrospect I think there is a certain wisdom to it that emphasizes the fact that it depends on how well it is constructed. Here's the answer: "Until it falls down". "If it didn't fall down last winter it is not big enough".  
Sincerely, Elmer

Elmer would like to hear from you too. Write to him at: *Flashovers*, PO Box 691, Muskegon, MI 49443-0691 or contact him through the editor, n8yjt@arrl.net



**EDITOR'S CORNER**

Once again its time to renew your club membership. You can use the form below or just mail your check to the PO Box. The form is handy if you need to record any changes in your information. It is not necessary for you to wait for a club meeting to re-up. This is the final issue of *Flashovers* that will be sent to members who are not current.

I want to encourage all MAARC members to participate in the "Leadership and Planning" workshop on March 7th. The goal will be to develop guidance for the leadership of the club and a vision for the membership. The best results will be achieved if there is good participation. The room will easily accommodate 20 to 30 people, so there will be plenty of room. Look at the announcement on page 4.

Tom, N8YJT

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2009  
MUSKEGON AREA AMATEUR RADIO COUNCIL  
PO BOX 691  
MUSKEGON, MICHIGAN**

**PLEASE PRINT CAREFULLY:**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **CALL** \_\_\_\_\_  
FIRST MIDDLE LAST

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET CITY STATE ZIP

**TELEPHONE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **EMAIL** \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE BELOW**

ARRL MEMBER?: YES NO      WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE FLASHOVERS BY EMAIL? YES NO

ANNUAL DUES: REGULAR MEMBER (\$25.00) ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBER IN THE HOME (\$10.00)  
ASSOCIATE MEMBER (\$10.00)

THIS IS A: RENEWAL      NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

DONATIONS

GENERAL FUND \$ \_\_\_\_\_ REPEATER \$ \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER (DESIGNATE) \$ \_\_\_\_\_



**M.C.E.C.S. Inc**  
 (Muskegon County Emergency  
 Communication Services, Inc.)  
 1611 E. Oak Avenue  
 Muskegon



**Meeting Second Monday of Each Month at 7:00 PM**  
**Everyone Welcome**

**K8WNJ 146.82 (94.8 PL)**

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 Muskegon, MI 49444

**Tom VanderMel, KB8VEE**  
 General Manager

Ph 231 798-7898  
 Fax 231 798-7770  
 Cell 231 206-0422

This Space Available

This Space Available

This Space Available

**Help Needed** - The club house could use your donations of time and money towards maintenance and improvements. Please consider what you may be able to do to help  
 Contact N8PPQ

**MUSKEGON AREA AMATEUR RADIO COUNCIL**  
 PO BOX 691  
 MUSKEGON, MI 49443-0691  
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