Mich-A-Con RF

Iron Mountain, Michigan

January 2009

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Visit the ARRL's Web Site at http://www.arrl.org

Words from the President January 2009 Tom, W8JWN

January 2008's "Words" described my difficulties in the ARRL RU:

I only spent 15.7 hours in the test out of the allowed 30. My XYL was even sorry that I had a

terrible time this year. That was nice of her.

I did meet a goal to make more than 56 contacts an hour on 80 meters. I made exactly

80 contacts in one hour Sunday morning.

N1MMLogger worked great as usual in SO2R. I finally used the keys more than the mouse.

Can't wait until next year!

2008 ARRL RU

Band	QSOs	Pts	Sta	Cty
3.5	235	235	33	3
7	86	86	1	7
14	196	196	20	22
21	1	1	0	0
Total	518	518	54	32

Score: 44,548

With better preparation and new antennas on my rebuilt tower, I was able to markedly improve my RTTY score in the RU. I operated 30 hours this year and only had one mishap. I transmitted on the wrong antenna and destroyed the 80 meter band pass filter. The new 4 element StepIR worked beautifully on 20 meters. My rotating 40 meter dipole at 80 feet really made 40 meters come alive. I spent more time on 40 this year and less on 80, as the results below indicate. I worked all 50 states.

2009 ARRL RU

Band	QSOs	Pts	Sec	Cty
3.5	126	126	9	0
7	418	418	6	4
14	455	455	44	27
21	35	35	0	8
Total	1034	1034	59	39

Score: 101,332

With sunspot numbers at a minimum, I have been concentrating on the low bands, namely 80 and 160. Unfortunately, on 80 meters, I don't have the room for a 4 Square like Skip. My Vee at 68 feet and sloper do OK but local power line noise is usually S9 and I have difficulty hearing weak signals. I have called WE Energies and they will get back to me. Hopefully, they will trace the reason for the BUZZZZZZZZZZZZZ in my receiver. I know that I have lost several new countries because of the noise. Even so, I have worked some new ones. Just this morning I worked H44MS in the Solomon Islands on 75 SSB and, a few weeks ago, TS7C in Tunisia on 80 RTTY.

Now, 160 meters, or Top Band as it is usually recognized, is a real challenge. One of my Christmas presents to myself was ON4UN's *Low-Band DXing*. This book is the BIBLE for 160-40 meter Dxers. John has a ton of info on 160 propagation and antennas. I have been especially interested in receiving antennas to null the noise here on West "B" Street. I studied loops, Beverages, Flags, and BOGs. The BOG is a Beverage on the Ground.

My transmitting antenna is a 130 foot sloper. The shield of the coax is grounded to the tower at the 65 foot level and the center conductor is attached to a 65 foot sloping wire (Normally, I use this on 80 meters.) down to a clothes pole in the side yard. From there, I add an additional 65 foot wire that runs along the top of a vinyl fence. It transmits extremely well. In the CQ 160 Meter CW Contest this past weekend, I



worked 12 countries and 43 states. In the past 6 weeks, I have worked Wales, (with 50 watts), European Russia, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Moldova, Ukraine, and Tunisia to name a few. Of course, 1000-1500 watts with the Alpha 99 helps!

No amount of power can work them if they can't be heard. I tried a "Snake", a 100 foot length of coax, shorted at one end on the snow but without a preamp, it doesn't work. I need more ROOM! If I lived on a larger piece of property, I would have a 700 foot Beverage. I probably wouldn't have the S9 noise either. Dream on!

So, my plans for next season call for some antenna experimentation. I will try an Inverted L for transmit on 80 and 160. I just want to see if there is a big difference between the sloper and L. Pete, K8PT, in Marquette is using an L. I'll have to run up there and visit. Also, I will build a receiving loop to place in the yard only in the winter. I will also need to buy, or build a preamp for the receiving antenna.

Working DX on 160 from a small, 50 X 100, city lot, isn't impossible. I am fortunate to have a 72 foot tower for one end of an antenna. I can't go "out" so I have to go up. I can't do that with ground radials. HI!

If the high bands aren't giving you enough excitement, try the low bands. Working the rare state, or country on 80 and 160 is a real challenge.



The Snake Begins



The Snake Ends

Please remit dues to:

Mike Boileau, N9NBN 1106 Cleveland St Niagara, Wi. 54151

111agara, W. 34131
Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip
Call Sign:
Email Address:
Phone:
Phone: No
Annual dues are due in January.
Please make check payable to Mich-A-Con ARC
Annual dues for Full Membership - Single \$20* Family \$30 Repeater Only \$10**
If family membership, please list additional names and call signs:
* The dues for NEW members are prorated - you only pay for the remainder of the year! Please remit \$1.67 per month for a Single membership or \$2.50 per month for a Family membership.

Mich-A-Con Amateur Radio Club Minutes of the January 13, 2009 Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President Tom Martin, W8JWN, at 7:00 p.m.

Secretary Report

The minutes of the December 9th meeting were read and approved.

Treasurer Report

Balances as of December 31, 2008:

Regular Savings - \$2,134.40, \$860.20 of which is in the Trailer Fund.

Repeater Savings - \$899.87.

Checking - \$137.37.

Petty Cash - \$0.00.

Repeater Report

Bob, WA8FXQ, reported that locks have been purchased for the WE Energies gate and club repeater building. The locks are keyed the same. Bob has requested reimbursement of \$11.00 for purchase of the locks.

ARES

No report. Are we still holding weekly nets?

Old Business

Veterans Day Special Event –

Certificates and QSL cards have been sent to all that have requested them. Requests continue at the rate of about one a week.

Club Station -

Randy has contacted the VA hospital about space for a club station. Tom reported that club will pursue this with VA hospital administration, but it is temporarily on hold

Charlie Dickinson Estate -

Randy, KB9ZES, has purchased the two 2-meter beams. Tom has tried the 80 meter bazooka and reported that it will be a good antenna for Field Day.

Jay Jennings Estate -

Tom will check with ManorCare about Jay's tower and beam.

New Business

Club Anniversary -

2009 is the 40th anniversary of the founding of Mich-A-Con ARC. Members are asked to consider how we wish to celebrate.

Technician License Class -

Bob, WA8FXQ, asked if the club is willing to support a license class this winter. Steve, KC8RYY, made a motion to spend up to \$100 for instructor material, seconded by Burt, WB8EBS. The motion carried. The class would be taught by Bob, WA8FXQ, Skip, KE9L, Nate, KD8GLP and anyone else interested in doing so.

Club Website -

The club website has been moved from the server at QSL.net to Scott's QTH.com server due to the retirement of Al Waller. Mike, K8DDB, made a personal \$15 donation to QTH.com for our website.

Field Day 2009 -

Mike, K8DDB, will submit paperwork for the use of the small pavilion at Marion Park again this year.

Negaunee Swap Fest -

Le Roy, N8WQG, advised that the Swap Fest will be held on Saturday, February 7.

Trailer Fund -

Tom, W8JWN, brought items to be sold for a donation to the trailer fund.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

For The Good Of The Order

Attendees discussed their recent radio related activities.

Submitted by Mike Bray

Nate Mieras, KD8GLP

Attendees

Mike Bray, K8DDB---Secretary
Tom Martin, W8JWN---President
Michael Boileau, N9NBN---Vice President/Treasurer
Steve Johnson, KC8RYY
Bob Uren, KC8TWG
Le Roy Anderson, N8WQG
Bob, Meyers, WA8FXQ
Burton Armbrust, WB8EBS
Barry Perron, KC9NFT
Scott Jarmusch, KA8TFF
Art Costa, KD8GLO

Links

ARRL WEB PAGE: http://www.arrl.org

ARRL MICHIGAN: http://www.arrl.mi.org
US REPEATERS:

http://www.usrepeaters.com

MICH-A-CON:

http://www.qsl.net/ka1ddb

Tropospheric Ducting Forecasts:

http://www.dxinfocentre.com/tropo.html

FCC Universal Licensing System:

http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/

QTH.COM: http://www.qth.com/
QRZ.COM: http://www.qrz.com/
Ehamnet.com: http://www.eham.net/

EAU CLAIR AMATEUR RADIO CLUB AUCTION ANNOUNCED

submitted via email by: Terry, KB9ZER

The EAU Clair Amateur Radio Club announced it will be holding the club's 20th annual Amateur Equipment Auction on March 14th, 2009. Doors open at 7:00 am and the Auction begins at 8:30 am. Admission is only \$5.00.

For additional information see the following web site:

http://www.ecarc.org/auction.html

HAMS HELP OUT WITH HISTORIC DAY

The ARRL Letter Vol. 28, No. 3 January 23, 2009

On Tuesday, January 20, Barack Obama was inaugurated as the 44th President of the United States. Numerous organizations -- federal, state and local agencies, the staff of Presidents Bush and Obama, as well as private agencies -- were involved in the months of planning required to make the event go smoothly. From the very beginning, Amateur Radio operators were involved, making sure that communications support was available by providing backup communications in the event that primary communications were disrupted.

According to ARRL Virginia Section Public Information Coordinator Joe\ Safranek, K4JJS, the Virginia and Maryland Offices of Emergency Management -- as well as various local jurisdictions in and around the Washington, DC metro area -- requested the assistance of Amateur Radio operators to provide local and short distance communications for the inauguration and the events leading up to it.

Safranek said that ARRL Virginia Section Manager Carl Clements, W4CAC, and ARES-RACES of Virginia Section Emergency Coordinator Ron Sokol, K4KHZ, selected Assistant Section Emergency Coordinator Bruce Freund, K7BC, to be the project officer for this event.

"Freund's area of responsibility covered two Virginia ARES districts that are comprised of 14 cities and counties along the western border of the District of Columbia," Safranek said. "These districts are managed by Howard Cunningham, WD5DBC, and Tom Lauzon, KI4AFE. They had to ensure that their jurisdictional Emergency Coordinators and members accomplished the mission objectives received from event officials. Numerous Amateur Radio operators involved with the various organizations serving the jurisdictions in Virginia, DC and Maryland all worked together."

Across the Potomac River, ARRL Maryland/DC Section Manager James Cross, WI3N, and Section Emergency Coordinator Steve Beckman, N3SB, were actively involved from the beginning with planning and preparation efforts. If needed, Section leadership was prepared to assist within the District. In DC, members of Radio Emergency Associated Communications Teams (REACT) http://www.reactintl.org/ were also part of the planning; the organization had a representative at the very first regional planning meeting. Planning for communications support during the inauguration drew upon

the expertise and relationships developed through the years of planning the annual Marine Corps Marathon (MCM) in DC

<a href="mailto:http://www.marinemarathon.com"

Safranek listed some of the many ways amateurs helped out with communications support: Nick

Meacher, N3WWE, built on a template the group used for the marathon for the compilation of the Incident Communications Plan. Weeks in advance of the inauguration, Fairfax County Emergency Coordinator Jeff Wilson, AI4IO, led a field test of the repeaters planned for use for the primary Regional Coordination Net to ensure that participating Emergency Operations Centers would be able operate cleanly through the selected repeaters. Field tests are a key lesson learned from MCM and identified necessary changes to the Communication Plan. District Emergency Coordinator Howard Cunningham, WB5DBC, serves the marathon as Special Project Officer. He prepared a staffing approach for mutual assistance that, if needed, would rely on

the on-call ARES/RACES organizations in Loudoun, Prince William and Fauquier counties to supplement the activated groups in Arlington, Alexandria, Falls Church and Fairfax.

Safranek said that the area's communications equipment was well suited to the task: "Using a combination of many systems, hams were able to move information quickly and efficiently. The Network Engineers Repeater Association (NERA) UHF linked repeater system http://www.qsl.net/nera/ supported the primary Regional Coordination Net. Local group operations used other analog VHF and UHF systems for phone, Winlink, packet and other modes of operation, as well as the use of a D-STAR VHF/UHF voice and data system. Some operators monitored the Old Dominion Emergency Net/Alfa on 3947 kHz."

On the Maryland/DC side of the Potomac River, hams were active in other areas, including several stationed at RFK Stadium to assist with the visitors from the more than 1200 buses that were parked there. District EOCs in Prince Georges and Montgomery Counties also had hams providing communications support.

ASEC Bruce Freund singled out the achievements of the Fairfax ARES-RACES Unit, specifically the actions of Fairfax Assistant Emergency Coordinator Tom Azlin, N4ZPT. "Tom was deeply involved in the local and regional planning activities before the event; he serves a similar key role in the Marine Corps Marathon leadership. But in my opinion, it was his performance in the execution of the plan that is particularly noteworthy. During the field testing for the Regional Coordination Net, several jurisdictions could not reliably hit the planned repeaters, so we made the decision to shift to the NERA linked UHF system. Unfortunately, the Fairfax EOC VHF/UHF antenna only provides marginal coverage into NERA. Due to the difficulties the EOC experienced when the Regional Coordination Net opened at 4 AM, Tom put a separate liaison channel in place to supplement the EOC's NERA link and manned it himself while developing a watch bill to ensure coverage on this unanticipated circuit. That liaison channel was covered solidly throughout the day and was the last ARES-RACES circuit secured at the end of operations on Tuesday evening. Tom made sure that the EOC was staffed beginning at 3_AM, until it was secured a little after 8 PM. While his leadership in the planning activities is noteworthy, Tom's stepping forward to provide leadership ensuring successful execution merits special recognition."

Fairfax Assistant Emergency Coordinator for Operations, Art Pond, KD4FBT, worked very long days during the planning phase. Due to his job on Capitol Hill, he was busy getting the new

members' IT infrastructure set up. "He pulled one of the six hour rotations in the EOC during what might have been the highest activity time if there had been transport problems inbound," Freund said. "This shows the dedication of the volunteers in working very long days on their regular job, pulling activation duty for the event, and then going back to their regular jobs the very next day."

In Fairfax, one operator was on duty at the local Emergency Operations Center at the beginning and end of the activation, while two were on duty during the main portion of the event. EOCs in Alexandria, Arlington and Falls Church City also had ARES/RACES operators on duty. The Virginia State EOC was manned with a full Amateur Radio crew utilizing HF, VHF and UHF links via voice, packet and Winlink to the inauguration Nets. Besides providing support at EOCs, amateurs were also on duty at Alexandria Hospital, while others were on standby to support communications at two other hospitals in Prince William County, as well as EOCs in Loudoun, Fauquier and Prince William Counties.

Freund is also a member of Army MARS. He served as Net Control Station on the MARS frequencies during the event. According to Safranek, Army MARS HQ at Ft Huachuca, Arizona, put out a directive stating an Actual Incident Net would be established, directing the type of MARS coverage that would be required and how Region 3 (in the DC area) would have liaisons from other regions available to pass any necessary traffic. ARRL Emergency Preparedness and Response Manager Dennis Dura, K2DCD, monitored both ham radio frequencies and the ARRL HQ MARS station, AAN1ARL. At the Virginia Commonwealth level, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management opened their EOC where Terry Hebert, KG4GLS, coordinated Amateur Radio activities. State EOCs in Maryland and Virginia had Army MARS operators on premises participating in their regional nets.

Sokol said he was pleased at the outcome of this historical event: "When I was appointed SEC in April 2008, I told the ASECs that they are the managers over their areas and they will be given the opportunity to do just that -- manage operations in their designated areas. Section Manager Carl Clements, W4CAC, totally agreed with this comment and has been extremely supportive of efforts to delegate authority to the intermediary managers, the ASECs and the District Emergency Coordinators, since they are the local area experts. I am really proud of the way in which ARES-RACES of Virginia participated in this event."

"As Virginia Section Manager, I am responsible for a myriad of items – the emergency communications aspect of the hobby being one of prime importance," Clements said. "With a senior leader like Ron Sokol, a staff of ASECs like Bruce, our DECs, and our local ECs performing their managerial and supervisory duties in an outstanding manner, there is no wonder why our numbers are constantly growing. The Section has accomplished a lot in less than a year, including a Memorandum of Understanding with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. We have been instrumental in working with a group of dedicated hams in the

western areas of the Commonwealth in building an RF link to the eastern areas of Virginia and now we are participating in the inauguration of the President of the United States of America. I could not be more proud of these fine men and women as I am now."

Mich-A-Con ARC Activities for February 2009						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
1 Super Bowl	2	3	4	5 ARES	6	7
8	9	10 Meeting	11	12 ARES	13	14 Valentines Day
15	16	17	18	19 ARES	20 UP 200 Dog Sled Races	21 UP 200 Dog Sled Races. Club Breakfast
22 UP 200 Dog Sled Races	23	24	25	26 ARES	27	28

Club Activities:

ARES Nets are conducted at 6:30 PM Central Time every Thursday on our 2-meter repeater (146.850 MHz.)

Meeting: The Mich-A-Con Amateur Radio Club meets the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM at the Dickinson County Library. Visitors and Prospective Members are always welcome!

Our Saturday Morning Breakfast is held on the 3rd Saturday of every month at 9:00 AM at the Holiday Kitchen Restaurant on Stephenson Ave (US-2) in Iron Mountain.

Mich-A-Con RF is published by the Mich-A-Con Amateur Radio Club of Iron Mountain. Send articles to: Steve Skauge KD8CCP@arrl.net.

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Wanted:

YOUR ARTICLES, IDEAS AND INPUT! SEND IT IN NOW TO:

kd8ccp@arrl.net

Club patches are available from:

Mike Boileau, N9NBN 1106 Cleveland Street Niagara, WI 54151

The patches are 3 inches in diameter and sell for \$3.00 each. If ordering by mail, please enclose a SASE along with your payment.

Club Repeaters:

The club maintains two repeaters, which are located on Pine Mountain (elevation 1,650 feet) in Iron Mountain, with tower and facilities provided by the Wisconsin Electric Power Co.

The range of the 2 meter repeater is about 40 miles under normal conditions, depending upon terrain. The 440 MHz repeater has a range of about 25 miles.

OUTPUT	OFFSET	PLTONE	CALLSIGN
146.850	Minus	-	WA8FXQ
444.850	Plus	100 Hz	WA8FXQ

Repeater Specifications:

The 146.85 repeater is a Melco Hi Pro (built from a kit in the 1970s) with 25 watts output.

The 444.85 repeater is a GE Master Pro with 30 watts output.

The repeaters share a Diamond dual band antenna at a tower height of 125 feet.

To use the Auto Patch, key your mic and dial the Auto Patch ON code and let up on your mic. You will then hear a dial tone. Key your mic and dial your number. The phone should then ring. When you complete your call, key your mic and dial the Auto Patch OFF code and the phone call will terminate. Club members will be given Auto Patch codes on request.

UPSDA 20TH ANNUAL SLED DOG RACES

from:
The Standing Wave
February 2009
Greg KI8AF, Editor

Providing radio communications for the sled dog races is one of the Hiawatha Amateur Radio Club's (HARA) major events for the community and gives us visibility. This event also provides us with necessary emergency training if the need ever arises. The races start on February 20th and finish up late on the 22^{nd} .

We are asking for volunteers to help fill the approximately 90 time slots over the course of the race. I am trying to fill each checkpoint with at least 2 radio operators for safety reasons. Many locations have only one operator so far, and several locations have not had any volunteers at this time. PLEASE consider volunteering for any of the open slots. If you are interested in working the race this year please contact me immediately and I will send you a list of open checkpoints.

Lou KG8NK HARA President 906 485-5442

lgembolis@chartermi.net

V.E. TESTING:

02/07 **Iron Mountain**: 9:00am central time, (arrive by 8:30am) Dickinson County Library (conference room), contact Mark J. Lewis N8UKD, (906) 396-5519 - 412 Fairmount St. Kingsford, Mi 49802.

02/21 **Iron River**: 9:00am central time, at the Beef-A-Roo Restaurant in Iron River. NOTE: Pre-registration is required, contact Dan Waters, AA9GJ at 906 265-4240 or e-mail: dmwaters@ironriver.tv.

03/14 **Marquette**: 8:30am eastern time, (arrive by 8:00am) Marquette County Health Dept. Bldg, U.S. 41 just east of the Michigan State Police Post. Contact Rich Schwenke, N8GBA at 906 249-3837or e-mail: n8gba@chartermi.net

04/11 **Houghton**: 8:30am eastern time, V.E. Exams at Michigan Tech. University in Houghton, MI will be held in the ballroom of DHH (Douglass Houghton Hall at Michigan Tech). Free Parking in Lot #14, front of DHH, across from Wadsworth Residence Hall. Use door #9 on the South-East side of DHH. Contact Glenn Ekdahl, WA8QNF at (906) 482-7743 if you have questions.

04/11 **Gladstone**: 9:00am arrival time with testing beginning at 9:00am, at the Gladstone Public Library. Contact Howard W8HSJ at (906) 428-9476 or w8hsi@dcars.org.

Please arrive one-half hour early for test sessions to give time to process applications. Testing applicants should bring the following items with them: Two pieces of I.D. one being a photo I.D., Original license and one clear copy of their license if applicable, Completed form 605 (one will be provided if you don't have one), pencils, calculator and the test fee of \$15.00. Please have the correct fee as examiners do not carry change. Please contact the individual(s) listed to confirm date(s), location(s), etc.

ARRL Continuing Education Course Registration

The ARRL Letter Vol. 28, No. 4 January 30, 2009

Registration remains open through Sunday, February 8, 2009, for these online course sessions beginning on Friday, February 20, 2009:

*Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Level 2; Antenna Modeling, and Radio Frequency Propagation.

Each online course has been developed in segments – learning units with objectives, informative text, student activities and quizzes. Courses are interactive, and some include direct communications with a Mentor/Instructor. Students register for a particular session that may be 8, 12 or 16 weeks (depending on the course) and they may access the course at any time of day during the course period, completing lessons and activities at times convenient for their personal schedule. Mentors assist students by answering questions, reviewing assignments and activities, as well as providing helpful feedback. Interaction with mentors is conducted through e-mail; there is no appointed time the student must be present -- allowing complete flexibility for the student to work when and where it is convenient. To learn more, visit the CCE Course Listing page http://www.arrl.org/cep/student or contact the Continuing Education_Program Coordinator sce@arrl.org.

MICH-A-CON RF

Mich-A-Con ARC c/o Stephen Skauge 213 South Angeline Ishpeming, Mi 49849

Club Meetings:

The Mich-A-Con Amateur Radio Club meets on the second Tuesday of the month in the Dickinson County Library at 7:00 PM. Visitors and prospective members are always welcome!

The URL for the Mich-A-Con ARC web site is:

http://www.qsl.net/ka1ddb/

Previous editions of Mich-A-Con RF can be accessed by a link on the news page.

The ARRL DX Bulletin on the Upcoming Activities page is updated each Thursday and the contests section is updated on a monthly basis.

Club Officers:

President: Tom Martin, W8JWN (906) 774-5463 tmartin@chartermi.net

Vice President:
Mike Boileau N9NBN
(715) 251-3137
n9nbn@uplogon.com

Secretary: Mike Bray, K8DDB (906) 563-7020 mikebray@chartermi.net

Treasurer:
Mike Boileau N9NBN
(715) 251-3137
n9nbn@uplogon.com

Reminders:

Club dues for the year 2009 are payable on January 1st. Please use the Membership Application - Renewal form in this newsletter when paying your dues. Checks should be made payable to Mich-A-Con Arc and sent to our Treasurer, Mike Boileau, N9NBN at the address listed on the form. Thank-you for supporting your club!

The January Mich-A-Con Meeting will be held on Tues February 10th 2009.