MICH-A-CON RF

IRON MOUNTAIN, MICHIGAN   **February, 2008**

IN THIS ISSUE:

Visit the ARRL's web site at http://www.arrl.org

CW RINGTONES for your CELL PHONE
submitted by:
Mike, K8DDB

Many of today's cell phone users assign unique ringtones to individuals listed in their call directory to alert them to an incoming call from a specific caller. A wide variety of tones are already loaded into your phone when it is purchased and other tones, songs, etc., are available via download. Why then, with all of these options available, would anyone want to spend the time to create their own ringtones? If you have ever built a transmitter using a circuit from an old Amateur Radio Handbook or bought a kit and assembled it yourself rather than buying a commercially made radio off the shelf, then you probably have a good idea why. Ham operators love to tinker with things!

So, if you are an avid CW operator like I am, why not create your own unique CW ringtones for each person on your cell phone call directory? Sounds geeky! Hey, who cares? After all, we are Ham radio operators aren't we?

Here's how I did it.

Making CW "ringtones" for the cell phone:

I downloaded a free copy of F8EHO's "EhoCW : Software CW Keyer" from the internet - http://www.f8eho.net/eng/ . One of the features of the software allows the user to create MP3 or WAV files in Morse code from printed text. The format that I use for my ringtone is:

` de Bernie Bernie Bernie k ` for a call received from my XYL Bernie's cell phone, or

` de w8jwn w8jwn w8jwn k ` for a call received from fellow ham, Tom Martin, W8JWN.

The software allows the user to select the speed in WPM of the recorded CW message.

Getting the "ringtones" into the cell phone:

My cell phone is a Motorola RAZR V3m, so I bought "Motorola Phone Tools" from Amazon.com for a little over $18. It came with a CD, instructions for installing the software onto the PC and two data cables. A USB to mini USB cable and a USB to CE bus cable. Phone Tools allows your PC to connect with your cell phone to synchronize phonebooks and calendars, manage phonebook contacts, manage calendar tasks and appointments, send/receive Email and SMS, and manage multimedia objects such as images and ringtones. It also allows you to connect to the internet using your cell phone. Check with your cell provider for the availability of "tools" for your brand of cell phone.

Using Phone Tools, I transferred the MP3 files created with the EhoCW program from the PC to the cell phone. Once the "ringtones" are transferred to the phone, it is a simple matter of associating a "ringtone" with a stored phone number/person in your cell phone call directory.

That's all there is to it.
I'll be listening for your CW ringtones. Have fun!

Words from the President
Tom, W8JWN

As many of you know, I had a total knee replacement on January 16th. After many years of suffering with the bone on bone pain in my right knee, I decided to get the bionic knee joint. The surgery went well and the doctor said that, after seeing the knee, I had made the right decision. The knee looked like "marble"!

I spent five days in the hospital and hated every minute of it. Well, maybe I liked the morphine drip. HI! I couldn't sleep or eat. The combination of different medications made the food tasteless. The constant noise in the hall and outside my door led to little rest. I was very happy when I was released.

I came home to a bed set up in the basement right next to the "shack". There was a bathroom and walk-in shower just a few feet away from the bed. This would be a good place for recovery. For the first few days, Ann would bring me my meals. Eventually, with the use of a cane, I was going upstairs.

It was my intention to use the recovery time to operate a lot on the radio and to finish the K8V QSLing. Wrong! It took two weeks before I could sit at the operating table for more than 15 minutes. It was too uncomfortable. It was February 8th before I made my first contact and started the QSLs.

Now, after five weeks, I am moving around the house without a cane, going out for therapy three times a week, and sitting at the radio for an hour or longer. I have mailed all of the QSLs. I even took a ride to one of my favorite casinos for a little diversion. I didn't drive because, with a right knee replacement, driving isn't suggested until six weeks after the surgery.

I have added several new countries on 80, 17, 30, 40, and even 160. I worked the Ducie Island VP6DX, DXpedition on seven bands, including 80 and 160, and got them on RTTY for a new one on that mode.

I would like to thank Mike, N9NBN, for taking the last meeting.

See you on Tuesday March 11th.

ARRL Board Adds Two New ARES Positions

Background Investigation Committee Report is in

Last month, two new ARES positions were created by the ARRL Board of Directors at the recommendation of its Programs and Services Committee:

Assistant Section Emergency Coordinator and

Assistant District Emergency Coordinator.

The Board authorized Dave Patton, NN1N, Manager of the Membership and Volunteer Services Department, to develop and implement terms of reference for these positions.

Atlantic Division Director Bill Edgar, N3LLR, presented the final report of the Ad Hoc Background Investigation Committee. He reported that there is no Statement of Understanding with the American Red Cross (ARC) at this time, since the previous SOU expired in September 2007.

The Committee has communicated to ARC that there are still conflicts with the ARC's background investigation policy as compared to the published statements of its online background investigation contractor. ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, has written to ARC, but as yet there has been no formal response. The remaining issues related to credentialing and to renewal of the expired SOU with the Red Cross were referred to the Programs and Services Committee and to staff.

New Emcomm Software For Windows Now Available For Beta Testing

The NarrowBand Emergency Messaging System (NBEMS) development team announced that a Windows NBEMS software suite is now available for beta testing.

NBEMS for Windows is a suite of programs designed for point-to-point, error-free emergency messaging. According to developers Skip Teller, KH6TY, and Dave Freese, W1HKJ, the NBEMS system is designed primarily for use on VHF and up, or on HF with Near Vertical Incidence Skywave (NVIS) antennas. The system uses the computer soundcard as the modem. Other than a simple interface connection between the computer and transceiver, no additional hardware is needed.

Composing and sending emergency messages on NBEMS is no more difficult than sending e-mail via the Internet. All forwarding is done by stations manned by live operators on both ends who can confirm that a frequency is clear locally, or negotiate a frequency change to avoid causing interference.

The NBEMS software can also be used for daily casual communications on PSK31, PSK63, RTTY or MFSK16 and is capable of sending flawless, high resolution, passport photo-sized color images in less than 10 minutes over any path that can sustain PSK250 without excessive repeats, according to program authors.

Radio amateurs are invited to participate in the beta test of the NBEMS. The NBEMS

suite can be downloaded from the NBEMS Web site:
http://w1hkj.com/NBEMS
Send comments and bug reports via email: kh6ty@comcast.net

Wisconsin Tornado Response

from:

The ARES E-Letter

February 22, 2008

Rick Palm, K1CE, Editor

Wisconsin Tornado Response January 7, 2008 -- A rare January EF3 tornado in Wisconsin destroyed houses and knocked out power, displacing about 160 people.

The Red Cross activated Kenosha County and Racine County ARES groups to provide logistical communications at the two relief shelters in Kenosha County, as well as from a communications station at the Kenosha County EOC.

Shadowing American Red Cross teams, ARES members helped relay damage assessments back to the Red Cross building in Racine. Racine Assistant EC Alex Voss, N9RGX, said "We set up a communications network at the American Red Cross in

The National Weather Service forecast office in Marquette has released the 2008 severe weather spotter training schedule:

http://www.crh.noaa.gov/mqt/spotter_talks.php

Hope to see you all there!!!

Racine, outside of the affected area. We were ready to go when activated. I couldn't be more proud of our volunteers. We will work with the responding agencies as long as they need us. We'll take what we've learned this time and use it to improve our response in the future."

Wisconsin SEC William Niemuth, KB9ENO, reported "in Wheatland, 20 homes were destroyed. In Kenosha, six homes were destroyed." He thanked the 18 ARES and RACES members who responded. "I bet this morning that [the 18 responders] never thought they would be responding to help their community recover from an EF3 tornado by evening! But, the reality is emergency and disaster situations most always catch us by surprise. That is why we train and prepare."

Sheriff Beth concurred: "It was heart-wrenching to see how most of these people are volunteers, and they just strap on their clothes, they leave their loved ones at home and they go running to help others. -- Racine County EC Jim Markstrom, KB9MMA; Racine County AEC Alexander Voss, N9RGX; Wisconsin SEC William Niemuth, KB9ENO; David Voss, WB9USI; in the ARRL Letter

My First New Radio
Steve, KD8CCP

I attended the Swap n Shop the Hiawatha Radio Club hosted in Marquette in early February and purchased a new hand held radio!

I have been looking for a new radio from day one of being licensed. I have a good hand held and the rig in my truck is great too... I just wanted to experience buying my own **new** equipment.

I just recently completed my address change on my license and thus have been receiving numerous catalogs. I had narrowed my search down to a couple of radios so I was very pleased when one of the vendors at the swap had a great selection of equipment on hand for immediate purchase.

Mich-A-Con Members attend the Swap n Shop!

The price seemed right .... the time was right.... I made the move and purchased the Yaesu VX-6R hand held dual band heavy duty submersible transceiver! I later verified the price was the same as the catalogs I have been receiving. The instant gratification of taking the radio home reminds me of the rush I felt when I made my first contact!

I spent a night programming the radio, making sure I put the PL tones in on the repeaters in the area. I was motivated to read the manual and finish programming the VX-6R all in one night because the repeater was very busy. I think the Hams kept the "27" busy from about 9 PM until after midnight!

I also wanted to make sure a had a good hand held for my adventure with the UP200 Dog Sled race for this year. I knew I would be in a remote location and even if I could not hit the repeater with the hand held I could monitor when outside of the truck. I also learned from passed experience that having simplex capabilities with my partner on the scene can be a great asset.

The radio works awesome, I hope to have many years of fun and adventure.... now ... which radio should I buy next? Spring is coming... maybe a tower in the back yard would be a great spring project.

Mich-A-Con ARC Activities for March 2008						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						1
2 UPSN	3	4	5	6 ARES	7	8
9 UPSN	10	11 Meeting	12	13 ARES	14	15 Club Breakfast
16 UPSN	17	18	19	20 ARES	2 1	22
23 UPSN	24	25	26	27 ARES	28	29
30	31					

Club Activities:

The Upper Peninsula 2-meter Social Net (UPSN) is conducted every Sunday at 7:00 PM Central Time on the 146.850 repeater. Dennis, K8SWX will facilitate the link from our repeater to the other participating stations via Echo Link. (Note: Dennis is currently working on a problem with the Link and therefore the net may not be held on our local repeater.)

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 Amateur Radio Club
Membership Application/Renewal Form

Please remit dues to :

Dennis Beurjey, K8SWX
612 Balsam Street
Kingsford, Mi 49802

Name: _____
Address:_____
City, State, Zip _____
Call Sign: _____
Email Address: _____
Phone: _____
ARRL Member? Yes_____ 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.
** If you are in an occasional or seasonal user of the repeater, please consider our Repeater Only Membership.

V.E. TESTING:
03/08 *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
Note: You must Pre-Register at least one week in advance.

4/12 *Houghton:* 9:00 am eastern time (arrive by 8:30 am) Wadsworth Residence Hall, Room G04-W (basement of 'WADS'). Contact Glenn at (906) 482-7743 or by e-mail: wa8qnf@arrl.net

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 $14.00. Please have the correct fee as examiners do not carry change.

2008 Field Day Web Page Good to Go:

from: The ARRL Letter Vol. 27, No. 7

February 22, 2008

The official 2008 ARRL Field Day Web page: www.arrl.org/FieldDay is up and running. The page includes a summary of available resources, with links to Field Day forms and rules, logos and reference links. There is also a link for ordering commemorative Field Day T-shirts, pins and other supplies.

ARRL Sales and Marketing Manager Bob Inderbitzen, NQ1R, said supplies will begin shipping in early March, but it's not too early to place a pre-order now.

Radio clubs are encouraged to order early.

Mich-A-Con Amateur Radio Club
Minutes of the February 12, 2008 Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Mike Boileau, N9NBN, at 7:00 PM.

Secretary Report
The minutes of the January 8th meeting were read and approved.

Treasurer Report
Balances as of the end of January:
Checking - $380.67
Regular Savings – $1992.62 which includes $475 in the trailer fund
Repeater Savings - $979.75
Petty Cash - $21.00

Repeater Report
The 2-meter repeater was placed in service on Thursday, February 7th in a weather-tight cabinet at the WE Energies site on Pine Mountain. Power output to the feedline is 55 watts, which is the same as before. We still have some noise on the repeater. Tom, W8JWN, thanked those involved with getting the repeater back in service.

Mike, N9NBN has been working with the engineer of Northern Star Broadcasting for the possibility of placing the 440 repeater and his 220 repeater at their facility on Millie Hill.

ARES
The ARES Net is back on the repeater on Thursdays at 6:30PM. There was a good amount of check-ins.

Old Business
Special Event –
A bill of $69 was presented by Tom, W8JWN, for the cost of QSL cards.

Special event certificates and QSL cards have been sent to all that have requested them.

Crivitz Packet Equipment -
Lee hasn't received the TNCs from Skip.

Field Day –
Lofholm's of Norway will supply a man-lift.

We should spread the stations out more this year to cut down on the inter-station interference.

We will concentrate more on operator scheduling this year to ensure we have continuous coverage on all stations throughout the event.

Mike, K8DDB, will make a sketch of the Marion Park facility after logging operations are complete, showing location of trees available to support antennas.

Trailer Fund –
Randy, KB9ZES, had a box of items to donate to the trailer fund.

New Business
A list of items for sale by Pete Dalberto (779-1926) was circulated (these items are also listed on our website.

Testing – Barry Perron passed the Tech exam and is awaiting his license.

For The Good Of The Order
Attendees discussed their recent amateur radio related activities.

Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Submitted by Mike Bray

Attendees
Mike Bray, K8DDB --- Secretary
Bob Meyers, WA8FXQ
Lee Michaud, N8LT
Dennis Beurjey, K8SWX ---Treasurer
Bob Uren, KC8TWG
Nate Mieras, KD8GLP
Scott Baker, KB9AVX
Beth Baker, KC9KVP
Mike Boileau, N9NBN --- Vice President
Art Costa, KD8GLO
Barry Perron (new member, waiting for callsign)
Randy Zandt, KB9ZES

Wanted:
Your Articles, Ideas and Input!
Send them in now to....
kd8ccp@arrl.net

Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia on February 17, setting off new speculations on what this means to Amateur Radio and specifically, to the DXCC program.

ARRL DXCC Manager Bill Moore, NC1L, said he understands that there are many questions about the DXCC status of Kosovo, especially concerning whether or not the new state will be added to the DXCC list.

Moore said the DXCC rules, modified in 2000 to better handle inclusion to DXCC, are clear on how additions can be made: "For inclusion in the DXCC List, certain conditions must be met.

Gaining entry on the DXCC List is not contingent upon whether operation has occurred or will occur, but only upon the qualifications of the Entity." According to Moore, adding Kosovo to the DXCC List would be considered under the "Political Entity" DXCC guidelines.

The DXCC rules state that "Political Entities are those areas which are separated by reason of government or political division. They generally contain an indigenous population which is not predominantly composed of military or scientific personnel." Kosovo, according to the DXCC rules, would then be added to the DXCC List as a Political Entity if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

* The entity is a UN Member State.

* The entity has been assigned a call sign prefix block by the ITU. (The exceptions to this rule are international organizations, such as the UN and ICAO. These Entities are classified under Special Areas, 3.a; and Ineligible Areas, 4.b.) A provisional prefix bloc assignment may be made by the Secretary General of ITU. Should such provisional assignments not be ratified later by the full ITU, the Entity will be removed from the DXCC List.

* The Entity contains a permanent population, is administered by a local government and is located at least 800 km from its parent.

To satisfy the "permanent population" and "administered by a local government" criteria of this sub-section, an Entity must be listed on either (a) the US Department of State's list of "Dependencies and Areas of Special Sovereignty" as having a local "Administrative Center," or (b) the United Nations list of "Non-Self-Governing Territories." "New Entities satisfying one or more of the conditions above will be added to the DXCC List by administrative action as of their 'Event Date.' Kosovo will be added to the DXCC list if it becomes a member of the UN, or if it receives a prefix bloc from the ITU. The third condition does not apply," Moore said. "The 'Event Date' will be either the date Kosovo became a UN member or it receives its prefix from the ITU. Contacts made before the Event Date will be counted as Serbia."

Registration remains open through Sunday, March, 9, 2008, for these online course sessions beginning on Friday, March, 21, 2008:

Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Level 2 (EC-002);

Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Level 3 (EC-003R2);

Antenna Modeling (EC-004);

HF Digital Communications (EC-005); VHF/UHF -- Life Beyond the Repeater (EC-008), and

Radio Frequency Propagation (EC-011).

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/cce/courses.html

or contact the Continuing Education Program Coordinator: cce@arrl.org

NEW PRODUCTS: WXSpots Software Freely Available!

From:

The ARES E-Letter

February 22, 2008

Rick Palm, K1CE, Editor

WXSpots, a new tool in the tool chest for SKYWARN operations and weather enthusiasts is now available. WXSpots is a free, Internet based system designed to quickly disseminate observed reports of severe weather to all connected users. It provides the means to help monitor local severe weather as it unfolds with many more observers able to communicate what they are seeing. WXSpots features include:
 - The ability to disseminate observations quickly and efficiently anywhere.
 - The ability to add the eyes of SKYWARN enthusiasts who aren't Amateur Radio operators.
 - The ability to instantly create message groups with other connected users on the fly.
 - The ability to monitor observations from all users, or only display observations for your state or county.
 - An automated, historical record of recent observations.
 - The ability to keep tabs on current observations without necessarily being near a radio. To download the software and learn more, please visit :

www.wxspots.com

REWARD OFFERED

from an email sent by:

Mike, K8DDB

A reward of 500 MICROFARADS is offered for information leading to the arrest of this desperate criminal, HOP-A-LONG CAPACITY.

This Unrectified criminal escaped from a Western Primary Cell where he had been Clamped in Ions awaiting the Gauss chamber. He was Charged with the Induction of an 18 Turn Coil named Millihenry who was found Choked and robbed of valuable Joules. He is armed with a Carbon Rod and is a Potential killer. Capacity is also Charged with driving a DC Motor over a Wheatstone Bridge and Refusing to let the Band-Pass.

If encountered, he may offer Series Resistance. The Electromotive Force spent the night searching for him in a Magnetic Field, where he had gone to Earth. They had no success and believed he had returned Ohm via a Short Circuit.

He was last seen riding a Kilocycle with his friend Eddy Current who was playing a Harmonic.

Taken from The Keynote, the FISTS Club newsletter. The article was contributed by Richard Schwanke.

Visit the Mich-A-Con Web Site:
http://www.qsl.net/ka1ddb/

ASTRONAUTS WORK ON COLUMBUS LAB ON THE ISS

from:

The ARRL Letter Vol. 27, No. 6

February 15, 2008

Astronauts aboard the International Space Station complex are focusing on getting the new Columbus lab up and running.

Columbus, the laboratory built by the European Space Agency (ESA) and host of two Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) antennas, was launched into space on February 7 aboard the space shuttle Atlantis, arriving three days later.

According to NASA, Columbus' activation process has been running a little behind because of computer problems, but flight directors believe they've fixed the glitch.

In 2007, the ARISS antennas successfully passed electrical and SWR tests, with one of the two antennas, Antenna 42, going through a final test -- a thermal test under vacuum.

Columbus will house an additional Amateur Radio station, including the first digital Amateur Radio TV (DATV) station in space, as well as a ham radio transponder. The yet-to-be-built Columbus amateur gear will facilitate operation on new frequencies that will make it possible for ARISS to establish wideband and video operations for the first time and allow continuous transponder operation.

According to ARRL ARISS Program Manager Rosalie White, K1STO, "The ARISS-Europe Team has been holding meetings to determine what the ARISS International Team should have for a station in the Columbus module.

The Europeans will need to begin fund raising for the multiple sets of equipment, such as the on-orbit equipment, the required back-up on-orbit equipment and the test equipment. Some portions of the equipment system can be purchased, but much of it would need to be built. Once the team purchases or builds the equipment, it will need to undergo special testing for space and getting the equipment certified (probably by ESA) and finally manifesting the system for launch. All of that will take many months and help from ARISS volunteers from many countries.

" The mission, STS-122, brought seven astronauts to the ISS: Commander Stephen N. Frick, KD5DZC; Pilot Alan G. Poindexter; Mission Specialist Rex J. Walheim; Mission Specialist Stanley G. Love; Mission Specialist Leland D. Melvin; Mission Specialist Hans Schlegel, DG1KIH, of Germany, and Mission Specialist/Expedition 16 Flight Engineer Leopold Eyharts, KE5FNO, of France. Flight Engineer Dan Tani, KD5DXE, already on board the ISS, will depart when Atlantis returns to Earth; Eyharts will stay behind on the ISS and take his place.

Atlantis will remain at the ISS until February 18; touchdown is set for February 20, making for a 13-day flight.

A UP 200 Dog Team crosses the Chatham check point Sunday morning - kd8ccp

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:
Dennis Beurjey, K8SWX
(906) 771-1996
dbeurjey@msn.com

Reminders:

Club dues for the year 2008 were 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, Dennis Beurjey. K8SWX, at the address listed on the form. Thank-you for supporting your club!

The monthly meeting for March is on Tuesday the 11th at 7:00 PM in Dickinson County Library.