

Mich-A-Con RF

Iron Mountain, Michigan

April 2009

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WHEN VANDALS STRIKE INFRASTRUCTURE, HAMS PROVIDE COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT

from:

The ARRL Letter
Vol. 28, No. 15
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Just after midnight on April 9, someone climbed down four manholes in the San Jose, California area and cut underground fiber optic cables. The sabotage led to widespread disruption of phone service -- including tens of thousands of land lines, an undetermined number of cell phones, Internet access and 911 emergency service -- in southern Santa Clara County, as well as in Santa Cruz and San Benito counties. San Jose is the county seat of Santa Clara County. With the infrastructure disabled, local Emergency Management officials called on ham radio operators in their communities to provide back-up communications. According to the "San Jose Mercury News," Santa Clara County called a local state of emergency, "but worst-case scenarios were successfully avoided through use of ham radios, door-to-door checks and extra-vigilant patrols"

http://www.mercurynews.com/centralcoast/ci_12121118?nclink_check=1>.

In Santa Cruz County, just over the Santa Cruz Mountains from San Jose, Santa Cruz County District Emergency Coordinator Cap Pennell, KE6AFE, was awoken just after 5 AM on April 9 by uniformed police at his door. Sent by Dominican Hospital President Nanette Mickiewicz, the police officers escorted Pennell to the hospital for a brief on this situation: The fiber optic lines that had been cut in San

Jose had affected the Santa Cruz hospital's communications infrastructure, cutting off communications from the hospital to the outside world. Santa Cruz is located on the northern edge of the Monterey Bay, about 70 miles south of San Francisco.

"While I was meeting with hospital department heads, Bob Wolbert, K6XX, had started our ARES Resource Net on the W6WLS/W6MOW linked repeaters," Pennell told the ARRL. "During the briefing, the hospital determined to implement HICS/SEMS for this emergency. There hadn't been telephones or Internet anywhere since about 2:30 AM. The hospital's phone system did work, but only within the hospital. Their internal computer local area network wasn't working either, so they were instantly on a 'paper system.'"

By 6:15, Pennell said they had established tactical radio links on the K6BJ/KI6EH linked repeaters between the Dominican Hospital Emergency Operations Center in Santa Cruz and the Watsonville Community Hospital emergency room; Watsonville is about 15 miles south of Santa Cruz via the Pacific Coast Highway. "We established HEARNET 155.385 simplex between both hospital ERs and County 911; HEARNET is the Hospital Emergency Administrative Radio Network. Once HEARNET (ER staff) and K6BJ repeater (hams) were staffed and operating at both hospitals, I left the hospital to become our initial ham operator at the County Emergency Operations Center and operated as ARES/ACS shift supervisor from there for the rest of the day," Pennell reported.

Throughout the day, Pennell said that hams -- including some in Monterey County who had been working telephones -- helped dispatch ambulances, conferred with the Poison Center on a children's poisoning case, ordered replacement blood supplies for two hospitals from San Jose Red Cross, relayed a complex major "whole hospital" day's food order to the supplier out of county, tracked down various doctors for emergency consultations and shared status updates from our area. "We did all this while in unity with the County government, public safety agencies and California Emergency Management Agency's Coastal Region," he said. "Greg Smith of Cal-EMA <<http://www.calema.ca.gov/>> spent the day in the Santa Cruz EOC with us." All service was restored by 12:15 AM on Friday, April 10.

NETCOM, the dispatch center for most police and fire agencies in Santa Cruz County, was able to receive 911 calls placed from land lines, but could not receive calls placed from cell phones, said Santa Cruz County Senior Dispatcher Stephanie Zube. "Because the only phone number many land line phone owners could call was 911," she said the center received "countless calls" regarding the blackout: "At least several people attempted to call 911 before driving themselves to the emergency room. A lady in Gilroy fled her home when a robber broke in, and couldn't call 911 before fleeing to a nearby firehouse."

Vandalism Takes Out System

San Jose and San Carlos police are joined in their investigation of the cut fiber optic cables -- now considered by authorities to be a coordinated act of sabotage -- by the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office and the FBI. The investigation also includes members of AT&T's security force, a handful of trained investigators working for the company. Authorities said on April 10 that evidence collection was complete, but would not elaborate on what exactly what they are

examining or whether new security measures are in place to prevent similar acts of destruction.

San Jose police reported receiving about 10 tips concerning the sabotage; San Carlos police told the "Mercury News" that they were examining video surveillance of a major intersection near one of the four locations where AT&T's underground fiber-optic cables were sliced early Thursday morning.

On April 11, AT&T issued a \$100,000 reward for information, but bumped up the reward to \$250,000 the next day when it discovered that the damage was more serious than originally thought. According to the Daily Tech, some banks in the area were forced to close temporarily, while all service was disabled and hand-written receipts were offered to customers. Many businesses also were forced to either accept cash or close for a few hours, since credit card and ATM transactions were unavailable

<<http://www.dailytech.com/Vandals+Cut+Phone+Cables+Drop+Service+for+50K+People+911+Services/article14821.htm>>.

Authorities say the communications sabotage occurred in two separate incidents, one at 1:30 AM in south San Jose and the other two hours later in San Carlos. Several companies, such as Verizon, "piggy back" on the AT&T-owned cables. AT&T spokesman John Britton told the "Mercury News" <http://www.mercurynews.com/centralcoast/ci_12115324?nclick> that it appears vandals opened a manhole and climbed down at least 8 feet to cut four or five fiber optic cables along Monterey Road just north of the Blossom Hill Road exit. The second vandalism was along Old County Road near Bing Street in San Carlos. San Jose police spokesman Sergeant Ronnie Lopez said the manhole covers are heavy and would take quite an effort to lift, perhaps even requiring a tool. Investigators do not have a suspect yet, he said, but have learned "to expect the unexpected. We have some obvious clues and can assume some things," but a motive remains elusive <http://www.mercurynews.com/valley/ci_12142268>.

Community Leaders Praise Hams

Gilroy, the southernmost city in Santa Clara County, was also affected. City Administrator/Director of Emergency Services Thomas J. Haglund expressed his thanks to the Amateur Radio operators who assisted with communications support, saying, "This particular emergency situation underscores that our reliance on technology should be balanced with maintaining the very types of capabilities that you provided to us. Communication is an obvious key to adequately responding to any emergency and the efforts of the Mutual Aid Communicators and the Gilroy Police VIP's provided the necessary communication and public visibility in this instance and demonstrated just how important your training and skill is to our community. Thank you very much for your dedication and expertise."

Gilroy Police Chief Denise Turner echoed Haglund's comments: "We truly appreciated all of your help during this challenging event! Each of you played a key role in a successful operation. I feel better knowing we have dedicated volunteers like you that will come to our aid in time of need! Thank you!" -- Some information provided by "The San Jose Mercury News" and "The Daily Tech"

Words from the president:

Tom, W8JWN

Field Day 2004 is history, but the memories will linger for a long time. How could I ever forget the smell of plastic melting in the surge protectors, the cold, crisp breeze at 3 A.M. that drove Mike and me to our vehicles to get warm, the frustration of calling KP4 "umpteenth" times with no contact being made, and the glow of dawn as the sun came up directly in front of my operating position. It was a great experience! I didn't realize until late Sunday, after a very long nap, that I missed being a part of these events. My last FD was back in the late 70's. I would hope that many of the readers of this newsletter get to savor the FD experience in the future. Don't wait as long as I did.

The above was from the July 2004 newsletter. Since that time, our club has participated in FD every year. In a few months it will be Field Day time again and I am inviting all of our members, and those who haven't yet joined the club, to share the FD experience the weekend of June 27-28.

If you have wondered about digital communications such as RTTY and PSK, come to Marion Park in Norway and see for yourself how your computer can be used with a transceiver to communicate around the world.

If you want to learn about antenna erection, come to Marion Park early Saturday morning and see how those dipoles get above the ground.

This year we will also be celebrating our 40th anniversary as a club. We will have a 1960s vintage station in operation. Jump right in and dip those finals!

Finally, if you want to be an active member of our club, participate in some way during the Field Day weekend.



Mich-A-Con Amateur Radio Club
Minutes of the April 14, 2009 Meeting

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

Secretary Report

The minutes of the March 10th meeting were read and approved.

Treasurer Report

Balances as of April 1, 2009:
Regular Savings - \$2,175.94, \$900.20 of which is in the Trailer Fund.
Repeater Savings - \$899.87.
Checking - \$324.36.
Petty Cash - \$0.00.
We now have 24 paid members.

Repeater Report

Bob, WA8FXQ, reported that the AUTOPATCH is working for both repeaters:
2-meter access code is *, then dial the phone number, then release PTT: terminate access with #
440 repeater access code is *22, terminate access with #73

Need to label coax for each antenna.

Need to clean/paint building.

Need 2-drawer steel file cabinet.

Bob, WA8FXQ, submitted a bill for the purchase of a heater for the building.

ARES

Storm Spotter training for Dickinson County will be held on April 28 at 6:30 p.m. CDT at Bay College West, Fornetti Hall.

The M&M club will hold a Mock Tornado Drill on Thursday April 23 at 1 p.m. Check ins will be accepted on the linked repeater system as well as the 147.000 repeater.

Tom, W8JWN, reviewed our storm spotting locations and explained the callingpost.com storm spotter alert.

Old Business

Club Station –

Tom, W8JWN, submitted a proposal to the VA hospital on January 21st. No response as yet.

Technician License Class –

We have 9 new hams that attended the class:
Doug Bacon, KD8KUE; Dr. Dennis Adam, KD8KUI; Mark Schultz, KD8KUH; Paul Schultz, KD8KUF;
Rob Brooks, KF7BTX; Robert Thomas, KD8KMT; Corissa Thomas, KD8KUG; Steve Brooks, KC9PNS;
Tanner Brooks, KC9PNT.

Field Day 2009 -

No one volunteered to chair Field Day. We need to decide whether we should emphasize competition or education this year. Boy Scouts expressed interest in attending. Need commitments of club members by the June meeting.

New Business

Barry, KC9NFT, stated that the Wisconsin DNR is looking for personnel to man the Buckeye Lookout tower in April and May, suggesting that it could be used as a means of raising funds for the club. The job pays \$9.00 per hour.

Randy, KB9ZES, brought radio items to be sold for the trailer fund.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

For The Good Of The Order

Attendees discussed their recent radio related activities.

Submitted by Mike Bray

Attendees

Mike Bray, K8DDB---Secretary
Michael Boileau, N9NBN---Vice President/Treasurer
Art Costa, KD8GLO
Bob, Meyers, WA8FXQ
Scott Baker, KB9AVX
Bob Uren, KC8TWG
Beth Baker, KC9KVP
Barry Perron, KC9NFT
Burton Armbrust, WB8EBS
Robert Thomas, KD8KMT
Corissa Thomas, KD8KUG
Nate Mieras, KD8GLP
Tom Martin, W8JWN---President
David Thomas, KB9JOG
Skip Caswell, KE9L
Terry Moriarity, K9TRY
Randy Zandt, KB9ZES
Paul Schultz, KD8KUF

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Send Articles to: Steve Skaug
kd8ccp@arrl.net

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

S.K. Enterprise Project

from:
The Standing Wave
Hiawatha Amateur Radio Association
Greg, KI8AF (editor)

Help is still needed. We need control operators at both the mission control site (Graveraet School) and the shuttle, so the student radio operators can use the amateur radio equipment. There are four training sessions planned prior to the start of the actual shuttle launches so the students will be well versed in radio procedures. All one has to do is sit along side them and be the legal control operator. Each mission lasts only about three (3) hours (1000-1300). Missions are scheduled for May 19,20,21,22,26,27,28,29 and June 1st with several time slots open. Please get a hold of Greg KI8AF at (906)225-1594 or ki8af@arrl.net and volunteer a few hours of your time, the students will really appreciate it.

Mich-A-Con ARC Activities for May 2009						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7 ARES	8	9
10	11	12 Meeting	13	14 ARES	15	16 Club Breakfast
17	18	19	20	21 ARES	22	23
24	24	26	27	28 ARES	29	30
31						

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.

Club Patches are available from:

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

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



Please remit dues to :

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

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.**

V.E. TESTING:

05/16 **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.

05/02 **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.

06/13 **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

906 249-3837 or e-mail: n8gba@chartermi.net

07/11 **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.

07/11/2009 **Gladstone:** Sponsor: Delta County Amateur Radio Society Time:10:00 AM (Walk-ins welcome)

Contact: Howard St. John (906) 428-9476 email: hjsj99@charter.net Vec: ARRL/VECLocation: Gladstone City Hall Main Meeting Room 1100 Delta Ave Gladstone, Mi. 49837

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. Note: If you have been assigned a FRN from the FCC you must use it on all forms rather than your SSN.

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.



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 May Mich-A-Con Meeting will be held on Tues May 12th 2009.

MICH-A-CON RF

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

