



# Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club

Field Day June 27-28

June –July 2009

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## From the Presidents Desk

Thanks to all who helped with the club dinner. It was a wonderful evening. Congratulations to the new Hams of the Year, and also to

Tom and Sue Behler for a very long overdue award.

June has to be one of my favorite months as summer is here, and we have many activities. Field day this year is June 27 and 28 at the tractor pull club, east of town. I hope you can stop by and operate or just say hi.

Remember to check out the club website at [www.braarc.net](http://www.braarc.net) for current announcements.

My thanks to all the club officers and Board members for all the work you do.

73 Jim N8PUG

**BRAARC April 2, 2009 Meeting Minutes**

**Call to order:** 7:05pm at Big Rapids DPS, by President Jim N8PUG.

**Guests:** 2 new members, Tricia KD8KPU and Joe KD8KPS

## Announcements:

- Club Dinner, Thursday 5/14/09, 5:30 at West Campus Community Center
- Mini Fox Hunt, Saturday 5/16/09, 9am at North End Park in Big Rapids
- Club Breakfast, Saturday 5/30/09, 8am at Sharon's Restaurant in Rogers Heights
- Girls On the Run communication event, Saturday 5/30/09 9am at North End Park in Big Rapids
- Emergency Committee Meeting, 6/11/09

**Secretary's Report:** April Minutes submitted (discussed and approved)

**Treasurer's report:** March 2009 financial report submitted by Sue KC8IFP (discussed and approved)

- Last night to sign up for club dinner

**Old Business**

- WARC Cadillac Hamfest Recap – passed out several newsletters, 50amp power poles sold out.
- Girls on the Run sign in sheet was passed around. The Event is expecting about 250 girls. There will be treats after.
- Club dinner – motion to spend \$50 on door prizes approved. Appreciation Certificates will be issued to those who attend. Secret ballot taken for Ham of the year.
- Net Control Coordinator – Val KD8IAM agreed to be the NET coordinator.
- Trail Mixer – Gary reported an excellent turnout
- Field Day – plans will be finalized next month. The tractor board agreed to let us use their grounds. The 4 band captains will receive t-shirts, pins, t-shirts and water bottles will be ordered for prizes. Field day is the last full weekend in June. Starts at 2pm and runs for 24 hours.
- 6 meter repeater – Fritz will remove the 6 meter by the 23<sup>rd</sup>. If not the club will remove it and place it in storage.

#### New Business

- Elmers – Don, Tom, Mike, Gary and Jim have agreed to be Elmers
- Need to set a couple of dates for club members antenna projects – decided to look at sometime in June or July

- Discussion on follow up to ham in a day class – Tabled
- Jesse (the horse) – Gary suggested we donate to the fund for medical expenses at UofM. Club agreed to donate \$100.
- Club website – Mike did a great job of updating the web site [www.braarc.net](http://www.braarc.net) or [www.bigrapidsarc.net](http://www.bigrapidsarc.net).
- Newsletter – those who don't want to receive the newsletter via snail mail contact Patricia McKay KD8GGD
- CERT training – starts 5/13, 5/14, 5/27, 5/28

**Program:** David gave a juggling demonstration that was very impressive

#### Wrap up items:

- **Newsletter Articles** – to Phil KC8QOV by 5/21/09
- **Club Breakfast** – 8am on 5/30/09 at Sharon's
- **Treats:** Yens
- **50/50 winner:** Bev
- **Next meeting:** 6/4/09, 7PM at the Big Rapids Department of Public Safety Building.

**Adjourned:** 8:35 PM

Minutes taken by Val KD8IAM

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**BRAARC June 4, 2009 Meeting Minutes**  
**Call to order:** 7:09pm at Big Rapids DPS, by Treasurer Sue KC8IFP

#### News:

- 50/50 tickets
- Net control sign up sheets
- Phil thanked the club for remembering him and his family during his mothers passing.
- Bill Kelso's step daughter passed away (Shila will send a sympathy card)
- Steve passed his Extra exam
- Lavonne passed her Technician exam

- Gary reported that Jesse (the horse) is doing better

#### Announcements:

- Jeff Barstow WD8DLK was diagnosed with bladder cancer. Chris Wall is setting up a work weekend at Jeff's house for general maintenance. You can contact him by phone at 231.206.0743
- Field Day – from Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup> @ 2pm through Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup> @ 2pm.
- Emergency Committee meeting, Thursday June 11, 7PM at 911 dispatch

- Tom and Sue are moving to Boulder, Colorado.
- David Hutala is visiting his brother in England June 14<sup>th</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Secretary's Report: Shila will submit the May and June minutes at the July meeting.**

**Treasurer's report: March 2009 financial report submitted by Sue KC8IFP (discussed and approved)**

- The raffle at the club dinner went well. All raffle money goes into the repeater account.

### **New Business**

- Fritz reported on the 2 meter repeater. He has fixed it but has more work to do.
- FSU will donate our 440 phone line. They will charge us \$.11 for each out going call. It was decided the club should purchase a plaque to put by the phone for identification.
- Fritz reported that the 6 meter repeater has been moved from Pete's but is not up at Jeff's yet. Fritz will work on the details.
- Annual insurance bill for equipment was received. It was reported that there was no new equipment to be added and it should be paid.
- Val is the new net coordinator. She handed out the preamble for Net so everybody had a copy. The suggestion was made that the preamble and other forms for net control be put on the web site. Val discussed incentives to encourage people to sign up for Net Control. She talked about handing out Club Bucks that could be used to purchase things through the club for example pins, shirts etc... Also to have a monthly drawing for a free breakfast with the names of the people who volunteered for net control. Val asked the question, "what will happen if no one volunteers for net control?" The answer is then there is no net control for that night.
- Mike is doing a great job on the web site.
- Roben-Hood Airport Fly-in Friday: July 4th from approximately 6 a.m.—noon. If you can

help provide communications, contact Mike McKay (KD8DIB).

- Phil will check with Mike about the May newsletter

### **Old Business**

- Girls on the Run went well
- The John East scholarship was discussed – it wasn't taken care of properly and balance got too low. We need to let it sit for a couple of years and let it build back up before we offer more scholarships. It was decided that the Treasurer will be in charge of keeping track and reporting on the balance every year.
- Field day discussion involved the possible need for screened tents. Fritz reported that the club can use the search and rescue trailer. The Band Captains are as follows: for the 20 meter Tom, for the 440 meter Mike and for the 80/10 meter Jim. Mike has the antennas.
- Sue had an extra post office key and will put in the filing cabinet.

**Program:** Shila and Val talked about the County Damage Assessment Team and the importance of RACES. They also talked about CERT training.

### **Wrap up items:**

- **Newsletter Articles** – Because of Phil's family emergency, Phil was unable to complete the newsletter, Phil will get with Mike. If Mike didn't get the May newsletter out, June will be combined newsletter.
- **Club Breakfast** – 9am on 6/27/09 at Sharon's
- **Treats:** Val
- **50/50 winner:** Gary
- **Next meeting:** 7/2/09, 7PM at the Big Rapids Department of Public Safety Building.

**Adjourned:** 9:00 PM

Minutes taken by Shila KD8IAL

## Announcements:

1. Club breakfast Saturday, June 27, at Sharon's in Rogers Heights at 9am.
2. Field Day Saturday, June 27 through Sunday June 28 2pm at the Big Rapids Tractor Field
3. Potluck style dinner June 27 during Field Day, for Tom, KB8TYJ, and Sue, KC8IFP as they get ready to leave for Colorado on new adventures. Dinner will begin at 5pm
4. Next club meeting at Big Rapids Public Safety at 7pm on Thursday, July 2.
5. Freedom Air Fest 2009, July 4, at Robin Hood Airport from 6am until noon. Pancake breakfast. Need people to work.

## Field Day Farewell Dinner...

I'm sure most of you know by now that Tom & Sue Behler are heading west to find fame and fortune in Colorado. They are on a tight time line to relocate out there and didn't want to miss an opportunity to say good bye to everyone. They are planning on attending Field Day.

We are planning a pot luck style dinner to say good luck and wish them well. The dinner will be in conjunction with the Field Day event on Saturday, June 27, 2009 at 5PM. The Antique Tractor Club grounds are located at 15422 Old Millpond Road. The club will provide the pizza. Please bring a dish to pass, non-alcoholic beverage, and a lawn chair. We hope to see you there!

Please pass this message on to all who know Tom or Sue and invite them along. A little ham radio fun and a chance to say "until we meet again" to some great friends.

Contact Patricia, KD8GGD or Mike, KD8DIB at 527-1688 for questions.

Thanks!  
Mike

## Brain Teaser:

Answer to last puzzle in May is one marble. Think about it and if you can't figure it out we'll give you a hint.

## Brain Teaser Don MacConnel— WA4FRJ

What letter comes first in this grid?

? T T F F  
S S E N T  
E T T F F  
S S E N T

We ran a similar puzzle before and several people had fun with it so if you like pattern puzzles this one is for you. If you like some other type please let me know.

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## **No Sun Spots?**

Don MacConnel, WA4FRJ

BBC news has just written about an unusual situation with our sun. We learn about this quiet period just when we thought solar flares could disrupt communications and possibly effect power grids and other electrical equipment.

Here's a partial quote from the BBC's release .

"The Sun is the dimmest it has been for nearly a century.

By Pallab Ghosh

Science correspondent, BBC News

There are no sunspots, very few solar flares - and our nearest star is the quietest it has been for a very long time.

The observations are baffling astronomers, who are due to study new pictures of the Sun, taken from space, at the UK National Astronomy Meeting.

The Sun normally undergoes an 11-year cycle of activity. At its peak, it has a tumultuous boiling atmosphere that spits out flares and planet-sized chunks of super-hot gas. This is followed by a calmer period.

Last year, it was expected that it would have been hotting up after a quiet spell. But instead it hit a 50-year low in solar wind pressure, a 55-year low in radio emissions, and a 100-year low in sunspot activity.

According to Prof Louise Hara of University College London, it is unclear why this is happening or when the Sun is likely to become more active again.

"There's no sign of us coming out of it yet," she told BBC News.

"At the moment, there are scientific papers coming out suggesting that we'll be going into a normal period of activity soon.

"Others are suggesting we'll be going into another minimum period - this is a big scientific debate at the moment."

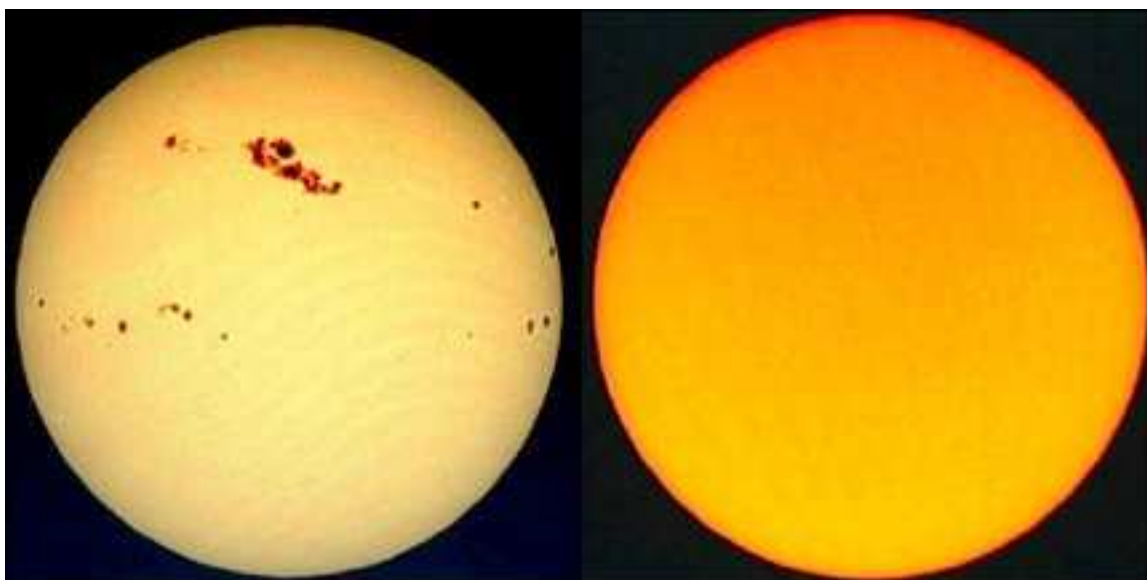
Images from Soho taken in 2001 (left) and 2007 (right)

Sunspots could be seen by the Soho telescope in 2001 (l), but not this year (r)

In the mid-17th Century, a quiet spell - known as the Maunder Minimum - lasted 70 years, and led to a "mini ice age".

This has resulted in some people suggesting that a similar cooling might offset the impact of climate change..."

Ed: Others dispute this thinking so the arguments continue about climate change. One of our members even believes we could be headed toward another ice age.



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Mini Fox Hunt – They had fun but it looks like it was chilly.

Three New Members



Tricia Walding-Smith, KD8KPU



Jeff Sell, K8OE



Joe Aldrich, KD8KPS

## A Tale of Two Tubes

By Dan Romnanchik, KB6NU

A couple of weeks ago, I worked N4QR on 40m CW. I could tell by the tone of his signal that he was operating a homebrew transmitter. There wasn't any 60 Hz on his signal, and it didn't chirp exactly, but I could tell it wasn't the pure tone you get out of today's radios.

I asked him about his rig, and he told me that it was a one-tube transmitter made with a 6L6. I forgot to ask him where he got the schematic, but a quick Internet search turned up the following:

\* The May 2005 issue of the K9YA Telegraph (<http://www.k9ya.org>) has an article written by N4QR titled, "The Wonderful One-Tuber," that contains the schematic for the transmitter. The K9YA folks don't make issues of The Telegraph available on their website, but I was able to get a copy of the issue by e-mailing them.

\* A 6L6 Classic (<http://www.io.com/~nielw/6l6/6L6.htm>)

\* WB2MIC 6L6 Transmitter Project

([http://www.metaphoria.us/hamradio/6L6\\_transmitter\\_schematic.htm](http://www.metaphoria.us/hamradio/6L6_transmitter_schematic.htm))

The 6L6 is a pentode that, according to Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/6L6>), was introduced by the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) in July 1936. Apparently, it was used quite a bit in public address systems.

After the tube became successful, tube manufacturers introduced a number of variations, including the venerable 807. The original 6L6 was capable of delivering 19 W; the latest variation, the 6L6GC is rated for 30 W. The 6L6GC is still used in guitar amps, and is still manufactured in Russia, China, and by Groove Tubes ([www.groovetubes.com](http://www.groovetubes.com)) in the U.S. They sell a number of different 6L6 variants; the cheapest is \$16, the most expensive \$180!!

### Tube #2

One of the reasons I was interested in the 6L6 is because about a year ago I came across a schematic for a transmitter using 6A6 dual triode. I had just come into possession of a couple hundred tubes, and while I didn't have a 6A6 (at least I haven't found one yet), I do have a couple of 6J6 dual triodes. They're not quite as high power as the 6A6, but I'm still thinking about building a little transmitter with one.

As you might expect, there's a bunch of information on the Internet about this tube:

\* The Jones Push-Pull Transmitter ([http://wv7g.home.mindspring.com/jones\\_6j6.html](http://wv7g.home.mindspring.com/jones_6j6.html)) was built with a 6J6 instead of a 6A6.

\* Another schematic can be found on the AK0B website (<http://www.qsl.net/ak0b/>).

\* 6J6 data sheet (<http://www.gargnas.net:3000/tubedata/6J6.pdf>) from the GE data book.

One interesting fact about the 6J6 is that IBM used it in the 604 computer. Unfortunately, they found it to be not as reliable as they wanted it to be, but at first none of the tube manufacturers

were interested in making a more robust version. This led IBM to set up a tube-making laboratory where they could experiment with designs. They developed a more reliable version of the 6J6 and finally convinced RCA to manufacture the tube. According to the author of the history of the 604 (<http://ed-thelen.org/comp-hist/IBM-604.html#new>), part of the concern is that IBM would decide to get into the tube business.

So, the next time you hear a signal that doesn't sound so perfect, remember that there just might be a story behind it. Ask the op about his transmitter, and listen to what he or she has to say.

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When not pondering the mysteries of vacuum tube part numbers, KB6NU teaches ham classes, works CW on the HF bands, and blogs about ham radio at <http://www.kb6nu.com>.

If you did not see the video with the hams on the tower then you should connect to the following link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5V9Qkd3dElw>

Photos of interest:



David, KC8WGA, showing the group how to juggle five balls.



Tom, KB8TYJ, receiving Community Award during the club spring banquet. Also pictured, Don, WA4FRJ, Sue, KC8IFP, Mike, KD8DIB, and Jim, N8PUG.



Bill, N8MZB, Returns for the summer.



Don't let Don, WA4FRJ, get your goat!!!



Tom, KB8TYJ, and Mike, KD8DIB, conferring!! Or plotting?

**June-July 2009**  
**PO Box 343 Parts MI 49338**

