

Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club

Feb-Mar 2010

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President's Note:

Here we go... This is your big chance to show off your talents and skills. Gain the accolades of those around you and share your life's work with us at the February Club

Meeting. OK, it doesn't need to be quite that dramatic. However, we want to see what you have been spending all of your time on in the shack.

Yes, it's a good old fashion "show n' tell." Remember those days in front of the class with that favorite "do-dad" or "what's it." Well, relive those exciting times again with the soon to be famous project and kit night. This show is all about you and your cool stuff!

If you built, collected or experimented on it... Bring it! We want to see it and hear all the wonderful things it does. Even if it doesn't do anything but it was a lot of fun trying to get it to, bring it along. Nearly anything can fit into this event. Maybe even a cub tractor with disgruntled compression if you want to really stretch things out (just stick an antenna on it). Antenna projects, electronic kits, QSL card collection, collections of any kind, purple crystals, or just about anything that interests you will be welcome fun. This meeting will be

mostly social with a chance to look at and talk about all of our neat stuff. Demonstrations are welcome and encouraged.

It's the end of an era; George, W8OWN is retiring as club coordinator for VE testing. I was looking back at Club records and George was the coordinator for a long time. Thank you, George for all of your hard work and dedication. The gold watch is in the mail and don't spend your club pension all in one spot. These shoes are going to be hard to fill but George did offer to share his wisdom with the next coordinator. This is an opportunity to really help out and make a difference in amateur radio. We need you as VE Coordinator! If you are interested in volunteering let me know. Planning needs to begin today for VE testing and "Ham in a Day" on April 10, 2010. Without you, these sessions will not happen.

We lost a Secretary and we found one. Joe, KD8KPS volunteered and was appointed as interim Secretary to fill the vacancy left by Jim, N8PUG's passing. Joe will be assuming his new duties at the February Club meeting. Thank you, Joe for stepping up in this time of need. Please don't hesitate to ask any of us for assistance.

Spring is on its way, Happy Hamming!
Mike, KD8DIB

Big Rapids Amateur Area Radio Club
MINUTES 1/7/10

Called to order: 7:05PM by President Mike KD8DIB, Mike had everyone introduce themselves

Announcements

- Annual Club dues: Due by February 4, 2010
- February Meeting: Project Night – bring your kit, project or demo a project
- Winter Field Day: January 30-31 - Not enough interest – members will participate on an individual basis

Treasurers Report – Val KD8IAM – approved

- Passed around a calendar for net control

Secretary Report – Shila KD8 IAL - approved

Repeater Report – no report

- There was discussion about the time/clock on the repeater, it runs slow because the crystal drifts
- There was discussion about having a field trip to the tower

Youth Activities Report – David KC8WGA

- Kid's day was successful with 4-5 kids participate and 4-5 contacts
- Construction days coming up with kids: 2/27, 3/13, 3/27 & 4/17

Old Business

- Mike KD8DIB – Club food drive in December donated over 170 lbs of food
- Winter Field Day – not enough interest

New Business

- Mike KD8DIB places a silent key on the club plaque for Jim N8PUG
- Mike KD8DIB led a discussion about memorial ideas for Jim N8PUG, **MOTION TO TABLE**
 - Putting his call sign on the repeater

- Helping son financially with the historical donation for family from club
- 10 Meter beacon automatic transmission
- Joe Aldrich volunteered and is appointed as the interim secretary
- Mike KD8DIB – Ham in a Day/VE Session set for April 10, 2010
 - George said it was time for the club to find a new VE Coordinator, he gave the club his list of VE's.
- Mike KD8DIB – Asked if the club wanted to continue the AARL Special Service Club Status, **MOVED and APPROVED.**
- Mike KD8DIB – Announced the annual club banquet in May. Anyone can bring in quotes for the banquet to the February meeting. Get quotes for 30 people.

Program – How to become a VE (Volunteer Examiner)

- Mike KD8DIB – handed out applications for VE
- Manuals for “How to be a VE” will be in the library to check out
- On line there is a PDF version that you can search (www.arrl.org/arrlvec/become-a-ve.html)

Miscellaneous

- David KC8WGA – shared about his weather station
- Phil won the Net Drawig
- Gary won the 50/50 drawing
- Treats for February Meeting - VAL

Adjourned at 8:33PM

Submitted by Vice President: Shila, KD8IAL

Announcements:

Next club breakfast Saturday: January 30 at 9:00 a.m. at our new permanent breakfast location-- Sharon's restaurant in Rogers Heights. Talk-in on the 146.740 Big Rapids 2-meter repeater for anyone needing directions.

Club breakfast Saturday: February 27 at 9:00 a.m. at our new permanent breakfast location--Sharon's restaurant in Rogers Heights. Talk-in on the 146.740 Big Rapids 2-meter repeater for anyone needing directions.

Winter Field Day: January 30-31, 2010 - Sorry no Club operations this year. Don't let that stop you!
[Rules](#)

BRAARC club meeting Thursday: February 4 at 7 p.m. at the Big Rapids Department Of Public Safety Building, 435 N. Michigan in Big Rapids. Presentation Topic: "Show and Tell" us about your projects new or old. We are looking forward to seeing your interesting things!

BRAARC club meeting Thursday: March 4 at 7 p.m. at the Big Rapids Department Of Public Safety Building, 435 N. Michigan in Big Rapids. Presentation Topic:

Next Emergency Committee Meeting: TBD 7:00pm

Brain Teaser

Don MacConnel, WA4FRJ

Let's exercise a little rust out of our brains and try this one. It's more typical of questions found on FCC license exams twenty-five years ago.

I like to listen to local station WDEE-FM on 97.3 MHZ. WDEE's transmitter is in the same building as the club's two-meter repeater and also the link repeater transmitters.

Let's assume that WDEE's transmitter has a power output of 3000 watts and is 60% efficient. If electricity is \$0.12 per kilowatt-hour, how much does it cost to run the transmitter for 24 hours?

Here's the answer to the December Brain Teaser.

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Present</u>
Mickey McKay	Newaygo	Pony
Cliffy Kiander	Montcalm	Guitar
Jennifer Antor	Osceola	Computer
Liz Huhtala	Mecosta	Painting Set
Sarah Marcotte	Kent	Bicycle

It's nice that the McKay family got a pony since they are 4 H leaders and have their own shovel.

What Should Every Ham Know How to Do?

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

On the HamRadioHelpGroup mailing list, there was recently a discussion about using modulated CW on 2m. One fellow pointed out that MFJ sold a unit that would do this. When I pointed out that this box cost \$100 and that they could do exactly the same thing with the \$18 PicoKeyer from HamGadgets.Com, I got some flack that the PicoKeyer was a kit, and that some people might not be able to build it.

I pointed out that a couple of years ago our club held a construction night, and that several people who had never soldered before successfully completed the kit. I also pointed out that even if the ham didn't have the proper tools, he or she could purchase a soldering iron, needle-nose pliers, and diagonal cutters, in addition to the kit, for less than \$100.

I don't know if that convinced him, but it got me thinking about what a ham should be able to do. This is the list I've come up with so far:

1. Solder. Every ham should know how to solder a connection, and by extension, build small kits and cables. Over the course of one's ham career, this skill will save you a ton of time and money.
2. Build a dipole antenna. The dipole is the simplest and most versatile antenna. Knowing how to build one and use one is an essential skill.
3. Check into a net. Net operation is one of the most basic operating skills.
4. Use a multimeter to measure voltage, current, and resistance and know what those measurements mean. This is the most basic skill used in troubleshooting, and at some point or another, you're going to have to troubleshoot something.

This list does, of course, imply that a ham is physically capable of doing them. I would not expect hams that are physically disabled to be able to do everything on this list.

After I posted this to my blog (www.kb6nu.com), I got several good responses. Jeff said, "I believe hams should know how to install RF connectors, particularly the three most used in our hobby, the PL-259, the BNC, and the N connector." Blair, WB3AWI, replied, "Another thing that hams should know how to do is to measure the SWR of an antenna."

So, now I ask you, What do you think every ham should know how to do? Feel free to post a comment to my blog or e-mail me at cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

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When not analyzing the abilities of amateurs, KB6NU pounds brass on nearly all the HF bands and teaches various ham radio classes in Ann Arbor, MI. You can read his other musings on our fine hobby at www.kb6nu.com.

Is Your Wiring Safe?

Hidden in your walls may be a wiring hazard that could quietly start a fire. At one time the electrical code permitted “daisy chaining” outlets. Power was supplied to the outlet and connected through it to other outlets. The problem occurs when one of the connections gets loose. If there is significant current flowing through the connection it will arc and heat. As the wire heats it may soften and get even looser. This will create more resistance and more heat. Because the outlets are daisy chained the outlet with the arcing may not even have anything plugged into it. Instead an outlet downstream may have the load.

The end result may be a fire. The National Electric Code now prohibits daisy chaining through outlets. Instead the code allows a standard splice using a wire nut with a separate wire coming out of the splice to feed the outlet. This way the downstream loads are through the splice, not the outlet. Even if the outlets are not daisy chained an individual outlet can have a loose connection and consequent heating.

Below is a picture of an outlet that was feeding a downstream load. In this case it was a microwave oven. This particular outlet had smoke curling out of it and was certainly hot enough to start a wall fire. If you have occasion to be working with outlets be certain that the screws are tightened securely with a proper wire wrap in the clockwise direction. As an aside, if you have aluminum wiring you need the services of a professional electrician. Connection problems are common with aluminum wire.



Mystery Station

Do you know whose station this is??



BRAARC MEMBERSHIP			
APPLICANT INFORMATION			
Name:			
Call:	Class:	Phone:	
address:			
City:	State:	ZIP:	Email:
ARRL Member: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Newsletter: <input type="checkbox"/> US Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Website – minimizes postage and printing costs	
SPOUSE INFORMATION IF JOINT MEMBERSHIP			
Name:			
Call:	Class:	Email:	
LICENSED CHILDREN			
Name:	Call:	Class:	
DUES / DONATION			
<input type="checkbox"/> Member (\$25) <input type="checkbox"/> College Student(\$12.50) <input type="checkbox"/> Youth(free if oldest licensed family member < 18 yrs)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Club Patch ____ X \$5 each - The club patch supports the repeater systems operated by the club.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Donation – general support for the club. <input type="checkbox"/> Repeater Donation – supports club repeaters			
			Total:

Membership runs from January 1 to December 31 each year. Please submit dues by the regular February club meeting to prevent accidental removal from club roster.



Kids Day at Mike, KD8DIB, and Patricia's, KD8GGD, home. David, KC8WGA, did an excellent job as Youth Coordinator on this project. The kids had a great time.







Don't Forget Breakfast
 Saturday, January 30, 2010
 Sharon's
 Rogers Heights @ 9AM



Great Food – Great Time



Feb-Mar 2010
PO Box 343, Paris, MI 49338

