

Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club

March 2012

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY MEETING

At our February meeting, Jeff Sells presented a video on amateur radio

communications from the International Space Station (ISS) to earth. It was quite interesting to watch the astronaut/ham radio operator make contacts with stations on earth as the space station passed over the United States. It was also eye opening to see how little room there is on the Russian space station, and how you have to maneuver throughout the facilities. Take a look at this link to the ISS: http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/station/main/index.html

The tech corner topic was on crystal radios and presented by me. An antique board-mounted crystal radio with a cat's whisker, hand wound coils, etc. was passed around by me to the members. I also gave out a packet on how crystal radios work and how to build a simple one. My ramblings included memories of building a crystal radio from a *Boy's Life* article, and subsequently building one from scratch using a crystal diode and a simple schematic.

Those were fun days building and learning about principles of radio waves.

NEXT MEETINGS

At our March 1st meeting, Vice President Jeff Sell will lead us in building a 2 meter Yagi antenna. At our April 5th meeting, representatives (AB8UG & K8JHR) for the linked repeater system will be talking about the current state of the system. May is being finalized and June will be on Field Day.

HAM-IN-A-DAY

We are conducting another Ham-in-a-Day class on March 24th at the same location as last year (Ferris State University, Room 109, West Commons Building, 1319 Cramer Circle, Big Rapids, Michigan 49307). Mike McKay secured the room for us, Patricia McKay volunteered to be the "registrar" for the event, and Jeff Sell volunteered to lead the VE session. Phil Marcotte volunteered to teach the class, and Robert Fox will assist him. We still need volunteers to help with registration activities and other needs for the event.

Price to take the class is thirty dollars (\$30).

PRESIDENTIAL MUSINGS

Our beloved "hobby" seems to attract some of the best people you will ever meet in life. All types of people, including those famous and even leaders of countries, have become "hams." Famous people include the King of Spain (Juan Carlos-EA0JC), Marlon Brando (FO5GJ), the Queen of Jordan (JY1NH), country singer Patty Loveless (KD4WUJ), country singer Ronnie Milsap (WB4KCG) who is also sight impaired, and the list goes on and on. As a young ham, I was able to work the famous TV personality, Arthur Godfrey (SK-K4LIB), and former U.S. senator Barry Goldwater (SK-K7UGA) who ran unsuccessfully for president.

While these famous personalities help bring awareness for our hobby, it is everyday people like us who represent amateur radio to the general public. People like you are one of the reasons for my nearly 54 year involvement with ham radio. I do not recall ever meeting a

bad amateur radio operator! Hams care about each other, their community, and advancing technology in the hobby. We are service oriented! You should be proud to be a member of such a fine group of individuals.

Many thanks goagainto our Vice President, Jeff Sell, who works very hard to provide programs for our monthly meetings. Also, thanks again to Mike McKay, Patricia McKay and Tom Behler who are working hard to deliver another high quality Ham-in-a-Day class.

I Hope to see you at the next club meeting on Thursday, March 1st at the Big Rapids Department of Public Safety.

73s,

Jim

K4UIH

BRAARC Meeting Minutes February 2, 2012

1. Next club breakfast February 25th 9 am at Sharon's Restaurant
2. Next club meeting March 1st, 7 pm, BR Dept of Public Safety
3. Several guests were on hand for the evening: Welcome to
Jim Hessler K8JH
Jeff Herndon KC8HJT
Delcy Herndon KC8HVR
4. Program, led by Jeff Sell, was an interesting video and discussion on communication with the International Space Station.
5. Tech corner – Crystal Radios by Jim Woolen
6. Club reports read and accepted.
7. Ham In A Day – Mike McKay will see that more copies of the study guides are reproduced. Phil Marcotte and Robert Fox have volunteered to be instructors for the class. We need more instructors.
We need VEs for the testing session – Jeff Sell in charge.
8. Winter Field Day was held January 28th at Jeff Sell's QTH. Good time was had – 3 club members and 4 visitors were present. Operated on HF, VHF, 6M, SSB, FM, CW.
9. DF Antenna Project being planned by Jeff Sell. 2M Yagi – construction cost about \$15.00.
10. ARES/RACES exercises coming up.

Amateur Radio Finally Jumps on the Maker Bandwagon

by Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

Over three years ago, I wrote that amateur radio should do more to associate itself with the Maker, or "do it yourself" (DIY) movement (www.kb6nu.com/lets-get-on-the-maker-bandwagon/). Well, it finally looks like it is going to do just that.

Just before the first of the year, the ARRL unveiled its DIY campaign (www.arrl.org/news/arrl-launches-new-diy-campaign). The most visible part of the campaign is a video (www.youtube.com/ARRLHQ), but there are also some other bits, including:

- a flier to be handed out to interested persons,
- buttons that say "Ask Why I DIY with Ham Radio," and
- a PowerPoint presentation and speaker's notes that you can use to give a presentation to an amateur radio club or other non-ham group.

These items are available from the ARRL website, www.arrl.org/DIY.

CQ also on board

CQ magazine is also jumping on the bandwagon. They recently announced that they will run a quarterly "Maker" column, written by Matt Stultz, KB3TAN. Stultz is the founder of HackPittsburgh, a "hackerspace" or community workshop for makers in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He has been a ham since 2009 and has integrated amateur radio into many of HackPittsburgh's activities.

Stultz's first column, titled "We Are Makers," will appear in the March issue of CQ. It provides a general introduction to the maker/hacker community for hams, as well as a description of a high-altitude balloon project that brought the two groups together in Pittsburgh.

Hams at the Maker Faire

In 2006, Make: magazine hosted the first Maker Faire (www.makerfaire.com) in San Mateo, CA. Since then, Maker Faires have also been held in Austin, TX, New York, NY; and Detroit, MI. Maker Faires are showcases for all kinds of crazy projects that people are working on.

Hams usually have a presence at these events. This year, the theme for one of the amateur radio groups participating in the California Maker Faire, which is the flagship event, is Arduino (www.arduino.cc) applications in amateur radio. Michael, NE6RD, who is organizing this group has lined up several very cool projects. One of them is an Arduino-controlled satellite antenna system.

A project I proposed is an Arduino-controlled keyer. On the face of it, this is not a real exciting project, but my twist on this is that instead of directly keying a transmitter, I plan to have the Arduino actuate a solenoid that will press a straight key. That should make the project a little more visual.

Hams sometimes like to claim that we were the original makers and hackers. We certainly have a long tradition of DIYing. Let's show these upstarts exactly what ham radio is capable of. Perhaps, in the process, we'll even entice a few of them to join us.

When he's not "making" things, Dan, KB6NU, teaches ham radio classes and works a lot of CW. You can contact him about some of the things you're making by e-mailing cwgeek@kb6nu.com.



Ham In A Day

The Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club is sponsoring a **HAM IN A DAY STUDY SESSION** for individuals interested in earning a Technician Class Amateur Radio License. **VE testing*** will be available for license upgrades as well.

Date:	Saturday, March 24, 2012
Cost:	\$30.00 includes license exam fee**
Location:	Ferris State University Room 109: West Commons Building 1319 Cramer Circle Big Rapids, Michigan 49307 (see map on reverse side)
Time:	Registration: 8:30 am Class: 9:00 am—4:00 pm Lunch: 12:00—12:45 pm on your own VE Testing registration: 4:00 pm Testing begins: 4:30 pm
Questions or Registration:	Mike or Patricia (231)527-1688 kd8ggd@braarc.net / www.braarc.net

Preregistration for class required by Sunday, March 18.
Bring to the exam: photo ID (or two other forms of ID) and #2 pencils. **For license upgrades:** bring any completed CSCEs, and a photocopy of your existing license. Coffee and treats provided.
30 days advance notice required for special testing.

This class is an intense 6-hour structured self-study session of the test material.

No guarantee is made by BRAARC as to your testing success. * VE Test Fee \$15

**2012 Club membership awarded to successful "hams in a day"



Breakfast

9:00am Saturday February 25

@

Sharon's in Rogers Heights



Come and enjoy good company
and a great buffet breakfast

March 2012
PO Box 343 Paris MI 49338

