

Chirps & Clicks

August 2007

An ARRL Special Service Club

Since 1932

In This Issue

- KARC Special Event Station
- August Meeting Preview
- CyberHam
- Calendar
- Office of Emergency Management
- Public Service Events
- The KARC at 75, Part 6
- SMART News
- Public Service Events



Important Dates

- August 2nd KARC Board meeting
- August 8th RACES
- August 11th SMART Club Meeting
- August 13th 5th District EC Meeting
- August 16th KARC meeting
- August 18th KARC 75th Anniversary Special Event Station

KARC Special Event Station



This year marks our 75th anniversary as a club. As you have no doubt read in "Chirps and Clicks," we are actually a much older club with records dating back to 1924.

We became an official ARRL club in 1932 which are going to mark with a Special Event station.

The station will operate portable from lot 1 on East Campus at Western Michigan University. The East Campus site was the original home for our club and on West Hall there were masts supporting a four wire dipole. This image shows the West Hall where the club ended meeting after moving out of East Hall and into the physics room. K8WPI has researched this and found that the club had a 600 watt transmitter for 80 and 20 meters.



The image from the Western Michigan University Archives shows West Hall around 1934 with the masts

clearly visible. JeRB K8WPI has done an excellent series on the history of the club which reflects our hobby in its early years and explores the development of the club and of early radio as well. Our early history reflects the work of early amateurs. Be sure to check out JeRB's work at <http://www.w8vy.net/chirps>. We will be compiling the articles to become a permanent feature of our website.

The Special Event Station will be operating starting at noon on August 18th and will conclude at midnight August 18th. That will August 18th, 1600 UTC until August 19th at 0400 UTC. We will be operating on Single Side Band and CW. Our frequencies will be on 14.250MHz and 7.125 MHz plus or minus QRM for single side band and for CW we will be on 10.110 MHz and 3.575 MHz plus or minus QRM. If possible we will be operating a PSK31 station on 15 meters. The club will need people to volunteer for event and operate one of the stations even if only for a brief time. We will have control operators available so license class will not

be an issue. So polish up the keys and warm up the paddles. Contact me direct at jspokes@yahoo.com or call me at 329-0692 sign up. Hope to see everyone there.

John, KC8ZTJ

August KARC Meeting

The August Kalamazoo Amateur Radio Club meeting should be an interesting one. George and George have agreed to come over from Battle Creek and do a presentation on their amateur radio adventures.

George Guerin, K8GG holds a 9 band DXCC certificate and works the CQ WW 160 CW contest either from Michigan or the Caribbean. George Taft, W8UVZ also holds multiple band DXCC certificates and also participates in the DXpeditions.

One of the subjects that will be covered is the "Battle Creek Special" which

the two gentlemen, along with one other developed and has been much publicized. It is a portable, trapped vertical for operations on 40, 80, and 160 meters. Measuring over 50 feet it should really be interesting to see and hear about it. There are only about three of them in existence and one of them will be at our meeting.



George, K8GG at his station.

Please plan to attend the meeting on the 16th and bring a friend along, or contact a club member that you haven't seen in a while and remind them that we'd love to see them again.

CyberHam

It's travel time and everyone needs an on-line repeater directory:

www.artscipub.com/repeaters/

You might think of the as the LOSTeam of HF, only they have hats, t-shirts, and a net at Dayton! They call themselves HF-PACK.

<http://hfpack.com>

Is it time to upgrade, or do you have someone you work with that needs to brush-up on their test? W8MHB has a practice exam generator on line to help out.

www.w8mhb.com/exam

If you're shopping for a new "radio car" and have money to burn you might consider the MaxiMog. If you still have money left you might buy the trailer too. And you thought a Hummer was cool

www.maximog.com

August

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 LOSTeam 5th District Hospital Net	2 KARC Board Meeting	3	4
5 UHF Net	6	7 SMART Club Net	8 RACES Banquet	9	10	11 SMART Club Meeting
12 UHF Net	13	14 SMART Club Net	15 LOSTeam	16 KARC Meeting	17	18 KARC 75th Anniversary Special Event Station
19 UHF Net	20	21 SMART Club Net	22 LOSTeam	23	24	25
26 UHF Net	27	28 SMART Club Net	29 LOSTeam	30	31	

Office of Emergency Management

Public Service Events

Where has the nice warm weather come from but where is our rain???

As many of you know the Office of Emergency Management is heavily involved in the resource development of the rally that is coming on August 4th to Kalamazoo. We have been working on supporting the Deputies, Police Officers, and Troopers with different resources, as that's what we do!

Another area of interest for you all is we are working on the new Regional Communications Trailer. The RACES Emergency Coordinators within the fifth district have put their list to-



gether and did a nice job. Now it's time for a few of us to make it happen. We will be meeting with the factory for the final design and bid so it can go back to the Regional Homeland Security Board for approval, then purchase.

Don't forget our training for August is our normal get together as it's one of the funniest and most rewarding activities for the year. I'm excited again this year to see everyone and share our business activities and accomplishments, as it's been another great year for this group.

Until next time...

Lieutenant Paul R. Baker KZ8OEM,
Director



August 4th, The Sherminator

Labor Day—Duathlon at Prarieview Park



September

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Kalamazoo County UHF net 444.650 + 131.8	3 Labor Day	4 SMART Club net. 147.040 8:00 PM	5 LOSTeam 5th District Hospital Net	6 KARC Board meeting Red Cross 7:00	7	8 SMART Club Meeting Gigi's Restaurant
9 Kalamazoo County UHF net 444.650 + 131.8	10 5th District RACES meeting. Perkin's Restau-	11 SMART Club net. 147.040 8:00 PM	12 RACES meeting at KCSO EOC	13	14	15 VE Testing County Sheriff's Office
16 Kalamazoo County UHF net	17	18 SMART Club net. 147.040 8:00 PM	19 LOSTeam	20 KARC meeting at	21	22
23 Kalamazoo County UHF net	24	25 SMART Club net. 147.040 8:00 PM	26 LOSTeam	27	28	29
30 Kalamazoo County UHF net						

Post-war boom in the KARC and the local radio community

The KARC at 75 part 6

JeRB K8WPI

In September 1945, the FCC released the 2-1/2 meter band to return to active use by amateurs. This was great news to everyone, and the KARC was ready to get back on the air.¹ The "Megacycle Gadabouts," AKA "Dot and Dash Men," as the *Gazette* referred us, were also looking forward to reaping the rewards of war-based technology, FM, TV, and a new generation of high power tubes. If everything went well, limited or perhaps full HF privileges would be restored by November 15, 1945. That didn't work out too well, and in March 1946, it was reported² that a recent meeting between the ARRL and the War Department suggest that partial return of 80 meters may occur by March 31, 1946, with 40 and 20 meters open by fall.

The KARC held occasional meetings during the war, but of course, things were different. Not only could it be an expensive and uncomfortable evening, membership was reduced by nearly 50% due to military duty. An important aspect of getting back on the air was resuming traffic handling. Through very modern times, message handling was a large part of our hobby and a primary line-item in justifying our spectrum.

June of 1946 brought the first post-war Field Day, and it seems the whole country was ready to head out and set new records. Our club headed to a new location³, which would eventually be referred to as "On the hill in East Cooper, just north of Kalamazoo."⁴ The club is credited with 60 members, Art Covell was Field Day chairman and Jim McGregor, KARC secretary, would handle scoring. In a brief reflection to last month's column, the photo in the *Gazette* shows a typical Field Day ladder-tower, with a very nice 3 element Yagi on top complete with rotor plate, although likely the rotor was ropes and a ground crew.

The early fifties brought many changes to the amateur community. The 2-1/2 meter band was replaced with 2 meters, and the 5 meter band was replaced with 6 meters. This frequency rearrangement was primarily due to the development of TV and FM broadcasting. Additionally, we saw the Conditional, Technician and Novice class licenses appear. These were significant events, and this paragraph is worth an entire series by itself, but I digress...

Field Day 1950 was held on the Hope farm in Oshtemo.⁵ In the *Gazette* story, Art Covell, fessed up the last year's total was about 700 stations, and the KARC was shooting for 1,000 this year. Club census

included 80 licensed hams, 40 associate members and at least 12 operators had been on site for the duration of the Field Day weekend. Promoting the aspect of readiness and emergency communication, Art Covell pointed to recent disaster events; a massive ice storm in Clinton, Iowa, a flood in Winnipeg, Canada, and Amboy, New Jersey following a dock explosion. All events were served by amateur emergency communication while traditional means were unavailable. A photo of Ed VanPeenen, solo, in the back seat of his car wielding a chrome lightening bug with a home brew transmitter and his NX-80 receiver, the clock reading 2:55 exemplifies his spirit. A second photo of the phone station trying to keep dry in a tent, shows an operator and four gawkers.

For reasons not indicated, the KARC left McCracken Hall for the year 1952, and relocated to the Naval Reserve And Marine Corps Reserve Training Center, at 2414 Lake Street. Few of our current group will remember this building, but it was pretty funky! My memory indicates a single story, white block exterior, which vaguely resembled a squared-off ship's bridge of some sort. It had porthole windows, and the requisite spar out front. This building sat just west of the County complex and east of Goggin Rents on the south side of Lake Street. The Contract for this location required signatures of all members who would attend meetings. Seth Lover was a Navy guy and acquired the location for us. 1952 also seems to be the beginning of regular communication with the club members. A simple publication referred to originally as *Kalamazoo Amateur Radio Club News*, was inaugurated by Seth, and mailed to members. It's too bad so few of us knew Seth, he was quite a card, and his personality shows in the *News*. Beginning with "Hi gang," comments for the "gals", and continuing to "monkey business", his style defines a post-war America. Seth, quite likely pulling every string he could, managed to acquire a wide range of guest speakers for our meetings. In May, our meeting was rescheduled to offer a Joint meeting with the Audio Engineering Society. The KARC offered our first Morse code class, which was scheduled for before the regular KARC meeting so no one would miss anything, and limit radio outings to one night a month. It seems the meetings were also occasionally used for repair of club members' rigs, with some of the more technical members performing surgery in an open arena, just like *Grey's Anatomy*, I would guess.

Never letting an opportunity for promotion or freebies to escape, we hustled ESCO (Electronic Supply Company) to make contributions to the club for door prizes and give-away. Publicity of this relationship quickly brought Warren Radio Co. on board as a supporter, followed by Stevens Radio and Ralston's. When it came to Field Day, we literally had vendors throwing material at us. Warren Radio would occasionally arrange for their vendors to offer presentations to the club. Not so much hawking their wares, but offering technical information in generic terms. Would *you* like to attend a KARC meeting and be shown an industrial film by Belden Wire and Cable about how cable is made, hosted by a Belden representative from Chicago? I sure would!

Field Day was held at Lakeside Resort on Pine Lake, in Barry County, and the Battle Creek Radio Club promised to show up and give an assist. Along with very detailed plans for stations, food, beverage and an after-event meal. Seth made one more call for assistance; "...let's all turn out and give the boys' tonsils and left foot a rest now and then." Not being able to resist, during the next KARC meeting, your author will personally present the coveted, official, "KARC Purple Crystal Award" to the first ham licensed less than 30 years who can accurately explain what Seth meant in that statement. You may e-mail your entry to my address provided with this article.

After a few month's discussion, it was decided to start on-air code practice on 160 meters and a separate 146.16 MHz code practice station would also be placed in operation.

Post-war amateur radio included a lot of activity in the new areas of ARES and Civil Defense, and it seems the new Civil Air Patrol was demonstrating communication superiority over the hams. This led to an increase in activity by the local group who did not want to be out-done; even on the HF bands, the proliferation of traffic and emergency nets was growing.

1953 took us back to McCracken, and if my perpetual calendar Rosetta stone properly matched up dates with years, the *KARC NEWS* was being written by Ed VanPeenan. Ed, who was a professional, had a different style than Seth, but we are all individuals. Ed's letters are well formatted, and the very rare error which was not caught before running the mimeo-graph master for mass duplication, is very neatly hand corrected on each mailed copy!

Maybe it went with the bow tie.

A number of meeting programs were provided by the crew at Heathkit, which repetitively dragged their newest and finest to the club for presentation and explanation. Professor Marburger occasionally offered additional information and specific use demonstrations of Heath's offerings other months. Of course, the FCC crew came back for a very interesting evening including a Q&A, with no holds barred. This was also the year our club first saw a transistor, and they were excited.

By now, we know VHF was big in the area and Walter Marburger initiated a 2 meter (145.26 MHz) AM weekly net on April 6, 1953,⁶ which continued through the late 1970's. Of course, it was a simplex net, with rigs typically running less than 10 Watts (input), and at least through the 60's, most receivers being the regenerative type. Most locals licensed by the end of the net days still recall a vivid aspect of the net. Using a directional antenna, check-ins came from Charlotte, Eaton Rapids, Niles, Benton Harbor and Allegan, among other locations. To accommodate the more distant stations, a directional call was made, for example; "W8CVQ looking for check-ins and beaming north." The transmitter would remain keyed while the antenna moved, and we all could hear the click-click-click of the antenna rotor control as it marched around the compass points. This also allowed time to rotate your antenna if you were so equipped, and you probably were.

Field Day was held at Boy Scout Camp Rota-Kiwan at Bass lake, west of Oakland drive at Whites road. A special effort was made to accommodate the new novice class operators. The feeling was the establishment needed to include, or mainstream the newer hams within their abilities, and offer whatever equipment and support would be needed for the novices to be successful. To offer inspiration with no doubt a humorous incentive, movies of the previous Field Day activities were shown at the June meeting, just to suggest what did and did not work.

New to Michigan hams were call letter plates, and for the '54 year, a reminder to get your application submitted ASAP was offered in September, along with a comment that over 1,000 hams statewide had already made application.

Continued on next page.

The KARC at 75, Part 6 Continued

In March, 1955,⁷ the "first annual VHF conference" was scheduled for Western's campus. It seems the VHF oriented focus of the pre-war radio conferences, along with the new bands and war-based technology, not to mention war surplus gear and parts working their way into the hobby, gave a new identity to this long standing activity. This was the first afternoon and evening conference, which included a dinner speaker. McCracken Hall was the location of the meetings and demonstrations, while the dinner was held downtown at the Harris Hotel. Ken Irish, W8JVP, was the host for the afternoon sessions. Thomas Mitchell of Buchanan, an engineer for Electro-Voice, spoke on VHF/UHF (note change in definitions) experimentation, followed by Louis Cerbert's presentation of a new and improved converter for two meters. After dinner and returning to McCracken hall, Prof. Marburger spoke on characteristics of transmission lines. Richard Boll, of the Allegan FCC monitoring station, and Art Covell, from WKZO, demonstrated a new method of measuring SWR on transmission lines.

November 1955 offered a surprise...are you ready? A general announcement⁸ invited all interested students to attend the second meeting of the Western Michigan College amateur radio club. The club was under the supervision of Professor Marburger.

The January 1956 KARC meeting⁹ suggested a community service of offering to send messages from local families to their military service based members around the world. Cliff Lesperance, W8YMG, offered a demonstration of construction using new miniature components and techniques.

The WMC ARC announced a meeting for February 24th,¹⁰ in which a constitution would be presented for ratification and submission to the College Council of Clubs for approval as a service organization. As the WMC-ARC held bi-weekly meetings,¹¹ the first March meeting would demonstrate two, high power HF transmitters.

Field Day 1956 was back on the hill in East Cooper, just north of Kalamazoo, and on the front page of the *Kalamazoo Gazette* for June 23. The novice station, running their own call, WN8GPB, was likely the first time the new novice class licensees enjoyed Field Day as an individual station in conjunction with the club.

The second VHF Conference was scheduled for November 30, 1956¹². This year, the event is credited solely to WMC's Physics Department. Afternoon ses-

sions at McCracken, with a dinner presentation in the VanGogh room of Wallwood Union (on the East Campus) to conclude the conference. The theme of SWR on transmission lines was continued this year, presented by Richard Boll W8EYD from the FCC in Allegan and Art Covell, W8HDM. New types of radio apparatus for VHF were presented by Lester Willis, W8PYY of L-W Labs of Jackson, Michigan. For the younger crowd, L-W made a series of VHF transmitters, one for 6 and one for 2; they were very attractive little rigs and stayed on the market until well into the 60's, where they met stiff competition from Heath, Hallicrafters, the new Gonset-II, and others. The dinner speaker was Mason Suthworth of Hartford, Connecticut, who was the ARRL radio coordinator for the world-wide International Geophysical Year project. If you are not familiar with the IGY, enlighten yourself and at least enter International Geophysical Year into your favorite search engine; you might wish to disregard any wikipedia response.

To be continued next month.

1 *Kalamazoo Gazette*, Sept.2, 1945

2 *CQ Magazine*, March, 1946

3 *Kalamazoo Gazette*, June 23, 1946

4 JeRB, any VHF frequency 1960-1981, referring to his specific home location

5 *Kalamazoo Gazette*, June 25, 1950

6 Anniversary notice comments, Jim Keesler, K8EXF. Station log, April 5, 1971 and April 11, 1972

7 *Western Herald*, March 4, 1955

8 *Western Herald*, Nov, 18, 1955

9 *Western Herald*, Jan. 20, 1956

10 *Western Herald*, Feb. 24, 1956

11 *Western Herald*, Mar. 9, 1956

12 *Western Herald*, Nov. 30, 1956

oldbugger@earthlink.net



Two QSL cards from the fictitious Western Michigan College Radio Club. The Card on the left, from my personal collection acknowledges a QSO on two meter AM in 1961. On the right is a card from 1951, just after the "club" moved to its new quarters in McCracken Hall, and I believe were being discarded as obsolete. This card was given to me at the June KARC meeting by Ken Way from the collection of Walt Fuller, a long time club member. This was no QSL card, but a note card. The content of the note on the rear meant nothing to Ken, or anyone else still alive, but to me its another piece in the puzzle of the KARC in 1951. Stay tuned... K8WPI

Look for "The KARC at 75, Part 7" in the September Chirps & Clicks

Southwest Michigan Amateur Team News



Bill Vande Werken N8ZSF, president of the SMART Club, is now a silent key. Bill passed away on Thursday July 5th. He had been fighting a lot of medical problems and his body couldn't fight any more. He will be missed. There was a moment of silence for him at the SMART picnic which was held on Saturday, July 14th. Over 30 people attended the picnic and other than missing Bill, it was a fun time and a chance to meet some long time SMART members.

With Bill's passing, I inherited the position of President and at a short board meeting, Hal Thomas, KD8FFX was appointed to fill the Vice President position. Welcome to the board Hal.

Please join us on August 11th for the SMART Club meeting at the Gi Gi Restaurant 4010 Gull Rd. next to Frosty Boy. The restaurant opens at 7:00 am for breakfast on Saturdays and we will have our meeting about 8:30am.

Ronald Schubot, N8CML
SMART President

Public Service Events

Someday you may be approached to provide amateur radio support for an event. Generally the support we provide in the Kalamazoo area is sanctioned by either the Kalamazoo Amateur Radio Club or RACES.

On initial contact you should acquire the following information:

1. Who is in charge? (Contact information including an email address.)
2. What are we expected to do? (This helps us decide whether we are qualified to provide support.)
3. Where will we be needed? (Could this event be handled by hams in another County?)
4. When is the event and for how long? (Helps to determine manpower required. Don't forget that many events require us to be there early.)
5. Why us? (Do they just need bodies, or do they actually need us for what we can do?)
6. How did you do it previously? (Is it a new event? Did the event get too large?)

This information should help with preliminary planning. If the event is a "go", additional organization tools can be downloaded at <http://nk8x.net/library.htm>

73
de NK8X

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Our 75th Year!

For additional copies or submissions
Please write to:
Chirps&Clicks@W8VY.net

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www.W8VY.net

**75th Anniversary
Special Event Station**

August 18th

Western Michigan University East Campus

"It's a very big deal"