

BIG RAPIDS AREA

NOVEMBER 2005

AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

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Indiana Ham Radio Volunteers Assisting in Wake of Killer Tornado

Indiana Section Emergency Coordinator David Pifer, N9YNF, reports Amateur Radio volunteers are assisting relief operations in the wake of a November 6 tornado that left 22 people dead and 200 injured. The twister slashed a more than 40-mile swath through part of Kentucky and extreme southwestern Indiana in the early morning hours, wiping out a section of a trailer park in Vanderburgh County where 18 of the fatalities occurred.

"Amateur radio has been involved with various aspects of the response from the beginning," Pifer said. The Salvation Army and the American Red Cross are on the scene in the affected areas with canteen and mass-care facilities to feed and care for relief workers and tornado victims.

The November 6 tornado, an F3 on the Fujita scale with winds of up to 200 MPH, originated within a line of thunderstorms that struck the region. Indiana Gov Mitch Daniels has declared a state of emergency.

Kentucky SEC Ron Dodson, KA4MAP, says SKYWARN was active as the storms approached. "I had our Amateur Radio net going with National Weather Service Louisville and monitored those in the counties west of me as it approached," Dodson told ARRL. The storm hit the Hart County community of Munfordville, he said.

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CLUB NETS

440 NET Sundays at 7:30 PM

2 Meter Net Tuesdays at 8:00 PM
Time change ! Was after November 1

ARES/RACES Net 2nd and 4th Wednesday at
9:00 PM on the 2 Meter repeater.

If you want to be the net control station, for 2 meter or 440 nets, contact Tom Behler KB8TYJ
email: kb8tyj@arrl.net or phone 231-592-9854



The next Club Breakfast will be at
Williams Café in Barryton on
November 26th

LAST CALL TO DONATE TOYS!! BRING THEM TO THE DECEMBER CLUB MEETING!

ARRL Hams hold Second Holiday Toy Drive for Katrina Children

The American Radio Relay League, is coming to the aid of children in the coastal areas of Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana this season by conducting a nation-wide toy drive. Between now and December 10, ham radio operators throughout the United States are collecting **new toys** for children and sending them with a Card showing their radio call sign to:

ARRL Toy Drive / Salvation Army

1775 Moriah Woods Blvd - Suite 12

Memphis, TN 38117-7125

Unwrapped toys for boys and girls of ages 1 to 14 are being gathered. Those members wishing to donate money instead of toys can send a check to:

ARRL -Toy Drive

225 Main Street

Newington, CT 06111

Please bring your donation to the December club meeting. Sue Behler, KC8IFP will box up the toys and mail them to Memphis, TN. What a good way to help celebrate the holidays!

Join the new BRAARC Yahoo Group ---- Join the fun!!

A big thank you to Vice President, Matthew Trombley for his great work in setting up a new yahoo group for our membership. The yahoo group will allow the club to have a mailing list and a place to upload files or other interesting information. This group could become a wonderful place to share ideas about ham radio issues and to ask questions about ham radio concerns. Please sign up and use this new service. Let us know how it is going – and what you think about it.

Below are the instructions to join.

1. To join just the mailing list send a blank email message with no subject line to braarc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. This will allow you to join the mailing list but not enjoy all the benefits of the group website at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/braarc/>.
2. You also may join the group by going to the group website at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/braarc/> and clicking on the join the group link on the front page.
3. A third way to join is to send an email to the address provided on the contact information page on bigrapidsarc.net. An invite will then be sent to the email address that is provided.

Note: You must be approved to join the group; so when your request for membership is submitted the group moderator must approve it--which can take up to 24-48 hours.

November Meeting Minutes
by Jim Orłowski N8PUG

Meeting called to order by Sue Behler KC8IFP,
at the Big Rapids Public Safety Building At
7 Pm.

No Guests.

Minutes were read by Jim N8PUG,
And approved.

Treasurers Report was read By John KC8BAR,
and approved.

Sue Behler Thanked Pete W8PET, Don WA4FRJ
and Fritz Ni8E for their work on getting the
repeater fixed .

Old Business:

J pole construction:- Getting materials
Permanent Digipeater Operation- Pete is
working on this

Hospitality Committee. Don M to be in charge
of Technology education committee Don,phil
and Gary Atteberry to be on this committee.

Breakfast location is Williams Cafe in Barryton
on November 26th

50/50 raffle winner was Al Snyder KB8FJB,
Al donated his winnings back to the club!
Thanks Al.

No program this month.

Board of Directors List

Sue Behler President - PIO

suebehler@yahoo.com

Matthew Trombley, Vice President, Webmaster

trom9@fsuimail.ferris.edu

Jim Orłowski Secretary

n8pug01@yahoo.com

John McDowell, Treasurer and
Publicity Committee Chair

kc8bar@arrl.net

Tom Behler - past president,
EC/RO Mecosta County

kb8tyj@arrl.net

Gary Atteberry- past president,
EC/RO Osceola County

c_gatteberry@charter.net

Bev Callewaert Emergency Committee Chair

callewaert@net-port.com

Gordon Trute, Newsletter editor

gordon-kc8wfx@usa.net

Fritz Pins, Past president,
Repeater Committee Chair

fpins@sbcglobal.net

George Rouman, Past president

w8own@arrl.net

Don MacConnel Past president

don@omnitrack.com



A Note From The President

Twas the night before Christmas and all around the world,
 Dear Santa was visiting every good boy and girl.
 Their antennas were hung on the towers so high,
 That Santa had to duck as his sleigh flew right by.
 My XYL in her Field Day Tee and I in my Vest,
 Had just settled down at the radio for a test.
 When over the airwaves we heard such a buzz,
 We strained all our ears to hear who it was.
 "CQ CQ," we both heard him say,
 "This is NOEL calling mobile in the sleigh."
 We sprang to the mic to give out our call,
 We wanted that QSL card to hang on the wall.
 The pile up was fierce but with power just right,
 We made contact with Santa on that one special night.
 And as his signal was fading and he disappeared behind trees,
 He wished us a Merry Christmas and best 73s.

Yes, I know what you're going to say--- SNOW!!!! Christmas!!! New Year's Eve!!! The year is almost over and a new year will be starting soon. Here's hoping that your holiday season is wonderful. Here's hoping that you are surrounded by the ones who make your life meaningful and memorable. Here's hoping that the new year brings you health, happiness, and the best bargains at the swap meets.

At our last club meeting we made plans to do some wonderful activities together in the new year. I really appreciate Don WA4FRJ stepping forward and taking on the leadership of the Hospitality Committee. If you'd like to assist Don and volunteer some goodies for our meetings, just give him a call. Don, Phil KC8QOV, and Gary WB8WIA also volunteered to help with the Technology/Education Committee. Don and I have looked at some interesting kits to make at a construction event, and I know there are many other areas where education would be much appreciated. Stay tuned for future dates and event highlights.

Jim, N8PUG has volunteered to be in charge of the BRAARC Salvation Army Bell Ringer contingent. Jim will let us know when the day is scheduled and then we'll be able to get our members organized. This will be our first attempt at this kind of public service. What a great way to showcase our club and help a worthy cause at the same time.

Another volunteer during our last club meeting was Kevin Strieter, KC8ZRT. Kevin is a student at FSU and has offered to run Ebay auctions for items the club might like to donate. If you'd like to donate an "auctionable" item to the club (could be anything - collectible, clothing, jewelry, appliances OR ham radio equipment) - Kevin will run the auction and ship the item to the auction winner. The proceeds (less costs) would go to the club. This would be a less labor-intensive way of raising money than the equipment auctions we have had in the past. Try it out and see how it works. You can contact Kevin at 591-7116.

Please remember that there is still time to donate toys to the hurricane victims. Just bring your toy to the December meeting and I will box it up and mail it out. It would be wonderful to have a nice big box from our club members, bringing joy to some very displaced children.

Good news that Walt, WB8GAO is out of the hospital after surgery and recovering at his home in Reed City. If you hear Walt on the air, wish him a speedy recovery. He says he plans to make it to the next club meeting. Good for you, Walt.

One last development--- THANK YOU to Vice President, Matthew Trombley for getting the BRAARC group up and running on Yahoo. Please follow the directions in this newsletter to sign up - and use the group. I really think once it gets started, with ideas flying back and forth, we will all see what a wonderful communication tool it could be.

Looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible at Williams Café in Barryton, on Saturday, November 26th. The food is always great, and the company is even greater.

Take care,
Sue, KC8IFP

Next BRAARC monthly meeting
Thursday December 1 at 7 p.m.
In the classroom of the
Department Of Public Safety building
435 North Michigan Ave in
down town Big Rapids



BRAARC YEARLY DUES INCREASED TO \$25.00

The decision was unanimous at the October BRAARC meeting. The dues for membership must be increased to \$25.00 per year. The club members present had a good discussion of our financial situation and offered excellent suggestions on both keeping expenses to a minimum as well as coming up with fundraising ideas. Please remember that your dues payment is DUE JANUARY 1, 2006. If dues are not paid before March 1, 2006, your name will be dropped from active membership. Thank you for your continued support of our club and the hobby of amateur radio.

Call: _____ Class: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Dues \$25.00 for 2006. _____ Donation: _____

Dues payable by January 1, 2006. Checks should be made out to the Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club (BRAARC). Mail your check and this form to John McDowell, KC8BAR, Treasurer, P.O. Box 116, Reed City, MI 49677 or bring your dues to a meeting.

Shoe Box Electronics Don MacConnel WA4FRJ

CW Gets Through—But Why??

We know that CW gets through when voice can't. Why is that? Well, let's think about a really broadband receiver that tunes the entire 40 meter band at the same time. What would we hear? We would hear a whole bunch of noise. Not a useful receiver but it helps make a point. Let's go in the other direction. If we had a receiver with zero bandwidth we wouldn't hear anything. Not useful either, but it too teaches a lesson. The narrower the receiver bandwidth, the less noise there is.

The number one communication problem is noise. If we want to get better communication we need less noise. Narrow bandwidth helps eliminate noise. And what kind of radio communication has narrow bandwidth? You're right, CW.

CW uses less bandwidth than voice because CW transmits less information.

For example, can you tell the gender of the sender? (Sorry about the rhyme) Can you tell if the sender has an accent? Can you tell if the sender is yelling or whispering? Can you send CW faster than you can talk? The answers, if you're not into sorting fly specs from pepper, is no to all of those questions. CW doesn't give as much information as voice.

In the late 1940's a Bell Labs scientist, Dr. Claude Shannon, wrote a book, "A Mathematical Theory of Communication." In his book Dr. Shannon determined, and this is really very cool, that more information transmission requires more bandwidth.

Thus with less information less bandwidth is required. If your receiver has narrow bandwidth you will hear less noise. A CW signal will punch through better than voice and require less power to transmit. For example, In 1970 QRP hams KL7YU and W7BVV used a one microwatt* ten meter CW transmitter over a 1,650 mile path between Alaska and Oregon. Regardless of atmospheric conditions that's amazing.

Shannon's information theory is used to improve every type of information transmission and storage. Using his theories, television engineers are able to put color TV information in the same bandwidth as black and white. Music is compressed with MP3 technology and put on tiny iPods, TV satellite communication broadcasts an astounding 500 Mb/s to your house. The list is almost endless.

One last thought, remember that radio started out with CW, not voice. It didn't take long for hams to get on board CW. Now we're told that we may forget about CW; I hope that won't happen very quickly. There's a lot to be said for tradition.

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Don's editorial comment: Eliminating CW as a license requirement seems to me to have more to do with selling additional equipment than with the fact that CW is not widely used. We've seen other relaxed license requirements which appear to have the same commercial goals. Is it all bad? No, but I don't like what it implies about commercial influence on regulatory bodies. That is bad.

In the above article I simplified Dr. Shannon's findings so I could understand them.

- A microwatt is one millionth of a watt. Wow, Tom's backup battery would last forever.

Mecosta County EOC Update from Tom Behler: KB8TYJ, Mecosta County EC/RO

On Thursday: November 10, our quarterly Emergency Committee meeting was held at the Mecosta County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), located in the basement of the Mecosta County Sheriff's Department. The purpose of the evening was to demonstrate our ARES/RACES station, not only for members of the Emergency Committee, but also for Dan Dowdy, our County Emergency Management Director. By all accounts, the demonstration was a success, and represented the accomplishments of a number of dedicated ARES and RACES members who have been working on the project for the past several months.

As the pictures should indicate, our ARES/RACES station consists of an ICOM 706 MKII-G transceiver, an LDG Z100 auto-tuner, and a Time Wave PK232 TNC. All of this equipment is connected to a professionally-installed Diamond X200-A antenna for VHF/UHF communication, and a B and W BWD-90 multi-band folded dipole for HF work. We are able to use a variety of modes with this equipment, ranging from CW to SSB phone, FM voice, and packet. In addition to this setup, we have a Kenwood TM-D700A VHF/UHF dual-band transceiver, which gives us additional FM voice and packet capabilities on 2 meters and 440. Like the IC 706 setup, the Kenwood rig is connected to yet another professionally-installed Diamond X200-A dual-band antenna. The laptop computer that is used for digital communications has been donated by Mecosta County, and a switch-box has been installed to switch between the ICOM 706 MKII-G, and the Kenwood TM-D700A as needed.

With these two station setups, we now have both primary and back-up VHF/UHF capability, as well as a fully functional HF station. All of this has been made possible by a substantial Homeland Security grant (amounting to roughly \$4,000) that has been procured by the Mecosta County Office Of Emergency Management. The support for this entire project by county officials has been heartening, and we hope that this support continues to be symbolic of a long-standing and close working relationship between local ARES/RACES operators and relevant served agencies in the years to come.

It also should be pointed out that an identical ARES/RACES communications set-up is currently being planned for the Osceola County EOC. More details on that particular endeavor will be forthcoming in future news letters.

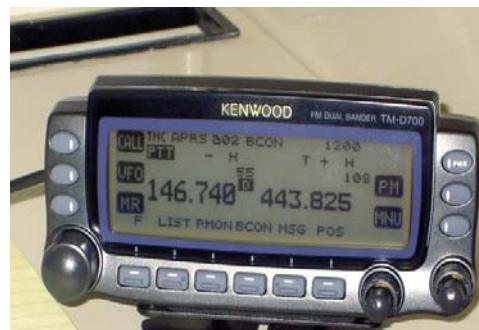
Gary Atteberry, WB8WIA, Osceola County EC, George Rouman W8OWN, and Dan Dowdy, Mecosta County Emergency Management Director discuss the usefulness of the new Emergency Operations Center Setup.



Tom Behler KC8TYJ
Mecosta County EC and Jake Spence, K18CK work with Packet operations.



Bev Callewaert, WD8PFC Emergency Committee Chairperson looks on as the equipment is demonstrated.



Kenwood TMD 700A VHF, UHF, FM Voice and digital communications



BRAARC Web Site

The secure web page for members only is now up at bigrapidsarc.net

. You may use this page to view/read/print future newsletters online. This will have color pictures and will be easy to read. Your user name will be your call sign. Please send Matthew the password that you want to use so that he can add you to the list. Contact him at : trom9@fsuimail.ferris.edu

Those who no longer wish to receive a paper copy should let the Editor know and provide him with an email address so he can send out a reminder when the newsletter is posted to the website. Contact Gordon at : gordon-kc8wfx@usa.net

Hamfests in West Michigan

18 December- Amateur Radio group of Youth in Lowell
<http://www.argyl.org> Contact: Al Eckman WW8WW
 Ph: 616-897-7659 Email: al.eckman@sbcglobal.net
 at Lowell High School 111700 Vergennes Street.

CLUB PATCHES

Club patches are available at a cost of \$5 a piece. \$3 for each patch will go into the club's repeater fund, so buy a patch and support our local repeaters. Patches can be ordered from John McDowell KC8BAR our club treasurer.



CONGRATULATIONS WALKER!

There is a new HAM among us! Walker Van Wagoner - the Ferris student in welding who has attended several of our meetings- passed his technician license exam on Friday evening, November 11. I know Walker is very interested in getting some hands-on experience with ham radio. He says he has never used a rig or experienced ham radio before. He's looking for a 2-meter radio if anyone has an extra they could loan him to get started. Also, if you have any time to invite him over to see what your station is like - and let him get on the air-- he'd greatly appreciate it. Having only CB experience in the past --- we definitely want to get him on the air and show him the Ham Radio advantage.

Here is his contact information: vanwagw@fsuimail.ferris.edu

