



# THE CHERRY JUICE

cherryland amateur radio club      traverse city, mi

March 2008

## Coming Club Events

### March 25<sup>th</sup> Club Meeting

This months program will be the Weather Spotter program presented by representatives of the National Weather Service, Gaylord office. This is your chance to renew your certification if you have been a Weather Spotter or become certified for the first time. Where: The Governmental Center at Eighth and Boardman streets. Lower level Cafeteria. Use the front entrance.

### Tuesday Project Nights

Where: At the club station in the lower level of the Salvation Army Building located at the NE corner of Barlow and Boone. 7 p.m. Every Tuesday except the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month which is reserved for the regular club meeting.

#### CLUB OFFICERS

President  
Don N8QZ

Vice President  
Hope AA8SN

Recording Secy  
Gloria N8KXJ

Corresponding Secy  
Bill W8PIT

Treasurer  
Ward N8WK

#### Directors

John N8UL

Chuck W8SGR

Dave K8WPE

Cherry Juice Editor  
Dave N8CN

#### CLUB NETS

MESH NET  
8 pm Monday  
146.86 MHz

SMASH NET  
9 am Sunday  
3.935 MHz



ARRL Affiliated Club  
#1082

### Forward Waves

#### VE EXAMS:

**Gaylord, MI.** April 5, 2008. Top of MI ARC. Otsego County Public Library. 700 Otsego Ave. 9 a.m. Walk-ins OK. Contact: Chad 989 705-9612

**Cadillac, MI.** May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008. Wexaukee ARC At the Cadillac Hamfest. Cadillac Junior High School. 500 Chestnut St. 10:30 a.m. No walk-ins. Contact : Alan 231 829-3433

#### HAM FESTS:

**Saturday, April 5, 2008.** Lowell, MI. Amateur Radio Group of Youth in Lowell. Lowell HS. 11700 Vergennes Street. TI: 146.620 (PL 94.8) 145.270 (PL 94.8) Contact: Al Eckman WW8WW 616 897-7659.

**Saturday, April 12, 2008.** Utica, MI. GMARK Trunk Swap. GM Amateur Radio Club. Trinity Lutheran Church. 45160 VanDyke Ave. TI: 145.210 (PL123), 443.075 (PL 123). Contact: Kurt WU8V 586 747-7535.

### Reflected Waves

#### March 1985

The March meeting was presented by Tom Dickerson from Grayling. Tom discussed the Civil Air Patrol and the role ham radio could play in the CAP. The 1985 ARRL State Convention will be held in Muskegon in conjunction with the Muskegon ARC's annual Swap & Shop. Club membership has reached 150 members

#### March 2000

The March program covered free or low cost computer programs for the ham shack that are easily downloaded from the internet. President Tom AA8YI and Dave N8CN were the presenters. Bill W8PIT will be holding code classes on Tuesday nights. Joe W8TVT reported on the February Swap-N-Shop attended by 332 hearty hams. This was a surprising number in light of the bone-chilling subzero temperatures.

**MARCH MUSINGS**

March is usually a rather quiet month for the CARC. After all the work of pulling off the February Swap-n-Shop, everyone seems to kind of hunker down and keep a low profile in March. For me, March is always the time for the ARRL DX contest the first weekend of the month and the CQ WPX contest at the end of the month. This year, the conditions were so poor on Friday night I bailed out of the DX test as it was just too painful trying to find someone to work. I ran into Ken **W8QKP** on Saturday and he shared my feelings that the conditions were too poor to have much fun. Hopefully, the bands will be in better shape for the WPX test but right now it doesn't look to good for better propagation.

If you read the first page, you know that we will have the crew from the NWS at Gaylord at the March general meeting for weather spotter training. Many of us received postcards this winter that we need to renew our certification and thanks to the efforts of Hope **AA8SN** this training will be available at the club meeting. Even if you aren't interested in Weather Spotter training, the program is interesting with lots of great storm pictures. Hope you will come out for the meeting.

At the Board meeting, we continued our discussion of ways to increase interest in ham radio and how to help people earn their ticket. If you have ideas along these lines, either come to the April Board meeting with your thoughts or contact one of the Board members. We are especially interested in ways to get young people involved in the hobby. Ham radio is a natural for technically oriented youth but they need exposure!! Our activities at Camp Greilick during the summer give some Boy Scouts exposure but we need to find ways to keep up the interest.

If you have any doubts about the positive influence of ham radio on young people, check out the interview with Vice Admiral John Scott Redd, Ret. **K0DQ** in the February CQ magazine. Vice Admiral Redd obtained his first amateur license at the age of 10 and said, "I've used the knowledge gained in ham radio in virtually every job I've had". Those jobs included a variety of military positions followed by several high-level civilian positions culminating as the first Senate-confirmed Director of the National Counterterrorism Center.

Dave Wilcox **K8WPE** reports that a friend of his passed the Technician exam at the Swap-N-Shop. Dave Edgecomb now has the call **KD8HTH** and will hopefully be joining us on the air in the near future.

Kudos to Scott **KC8UPS** for answering the call to act as Net Control for the MESH net. We could use some more check-ins on Monday night so why not pick up the mike around 8 p.m. next Monday and let us know what's going on in your shack!

Hope **AA8SN** is looking for club members to enter the Michigan QSO party again this year. We have done well in this contest in the past and have sponsored an award plaque for several years. Check out the details farther down the log.

I received an e-mail from Don Lama **K8OEX** last month. Don was a member of the CARC from 1984 to 1990 when he moved to Georgia. He has been living in Florida the past few years but plans to move back to Traverse City in the next year or so. Don picked up on the Cherry Juice via the CJ Web site. I've been pleasantly surprised at how many "hits" we've had in the short time the CJ Web site has been up and running. Since January we've had 862 unique visits: 34 in January, 579 in February and 253 so far in March. This translates to 147 page views in January, 4259 page views in February and 1,003 page views so far this month. I'm impressed so far!

**SILENT KEYS**

Some of you might remember the old country store in downtown Williamsburg. This establishment was run for many years by Vic and Mary Devlin who were licensed as **W8QPO** and **WB8SNP**. They were very active in the early history of the 86 repeater. About 30 years ago they sold their store and moved to Arizona. They ended up in Mesa, AZ to be near their daughter Dorothy. She has informed us that both Vic and Mary have passed away.

-73 de Joe **W8TVT**

**MICHIGAN QSO PARTY**

It's that time of year again! Its time to gear it up and get ready for the 2008 Michigan QSO Party. The MiQP has something to offer for everyone and there is no shortage of reasons for joining in on the fun on April 19th, 2008.

Last year was a good year for the MiQP. Activity was up and we hope to do even better this year. We hope to see an increase in activity within the traditional amateur radio clubs in Michigan. I think that most clubs are looking for special activities and the MiQP has some features that should be considered in filling this need. This type of event is what its all about. It is a group activity that can be a source enjoyment before, during and after the event!

This year we will have the traditional categories such as Single-Operator, Multi-Operator and Mobile. But in addition to these, we are adding a new Emergencies Operation Center (EOC) category. This will provide an opportunity to brush up your clubs emergency operation skills and provide great training and fun. This would also be a great opportunity to expose some of your newer members to emergency communications operations, but in a less formal environment.

As you can see from the rules listed below, this is only a 12 hour event. Please consider getting on the air for the whole thing, or any portion of the 12 hour period. You can operate from home, portable, mobile or at the clubs EOC. With the support of mobile and portable stations, we plan on having activity in all 83 counties.

Last but not least, we ask those of you that have participated in the MIQP to please help us get the word out and encourage other Michigan hams and radio clubs to participate and join the fun. See <http://www.miqp.org> for more details and the rules.

**Date /Time:** Michigan QSO Party, sponsored by the Mad River Radio Club, from 1600Z April 19th until 0400Z April 20th. Stations may operate the full 12 hours. (12 noon to 12 midnight local Michigan time on April 20th )

**Modes and Categories:** Phone and CW on 80/40/20/15/10 meters. Single-op, multi-op, mobile and Emergencies Operations Center (EOC) categories. Single-op entries are categorized by output power, QRP (5W or less), Low Power (100W or less), and High Power (greater than 100W).

**Multipliers:** Work stations once per band and mode. Work other states and Michigan Stations. MI to MI QSO's are allowed. Work portables and mobiles again as they change counties, state or province.

**Exchange:** Exchange QSO number and location (county for MI stations, state/province or "DX" for others).

**Scoring:** One point per phone QSO, two points per CW QSO. Count multipliers once per mode. Multipliers are MI counties for all entries, plus states & provinces for MI entries only. Final score is total QSO points times total multipliers.

**Frequencies:** Suggested frequencies: CW-3545, 7045, 14045, 21045, 28045; Phone-3800, 7200, 14250, 21300, 28450.

**Log Submittal:** Mail logs no later than 30 days after the contest to:  
Mad River Radio Club,  
c/o Dave Pruett,  
2727 Harris Road  
Ypsilanti, MI 48198

or via e-mail to [logs@miqp.org](mailto:logs@miqp.org)

More Information: For complete rules, along with free logging software, log and summary sheets, see <http://www.miqp.org>

-73 es cu April 19<sup>th</sup>, Mark NU8Z

## A SIMPLE HF, VHF OR UHF ANTENNA

I made a nice simple 20 meter antenna for a special event station this January. It worked great! First, I cut a piece of old CAT-5 ether net cable to a length of 16' 8" and removed the outer covering, using just five of the eight lengths of #22 copper wire. One was soldered to the center terminal of a silver plated SO-239 coax connector. The other four wires were connected/soldered to the four corners of the coax connector.

A choke balun was made by coiling the coax (RG-8X) cable seven turns at about four inches in diameter and connecting to the SO239 with a PL-259 connector soldered to the end of the cable. Then, the free end of the center conductor wire was tied to a length of string which was then tossed over a tree branch in my back yard.

The antenna was hauled up until the SO-239 connect or (center of antenna) was about ten feet off the ground. The four counterpoise wires were then angled down toward the ground at about 30 degrees and attached to simple wooden stakes made from fallen branches, and other trees in my backyard. The antenna has not broken even with the snow, ice and wind we had this last month.

SWR was about 1.25 across the band, and I made over 100 contacts across the country from the east coast to the west coast, including Hawaii and Alaska during the special event operation. I plan on using this antenna again this spring, cutting it for 6 meter use. This simple antenna is low cost, and can be made for any HF, VHF, or UHF ham band.

-73 de Jeff K9JP

## MICHIGAN STATE CONVENTION

The Kalamazoo ARC (KARC) and Southwest Michigan Amateur Radio Team (SMART) are combining to present the Michigan State Convention & Hamfest on October 12, 2008. Details of the Convention are being finalized. These include DXCC card checking, a lunch, VE exams and educational forums.

Ruth Bates-Hill, WB8VEV is the contact person. ([Ruth.M.Bates-hill@pfizer.com](mailto:Ruth.M.Bates-hill@pfizer.com)) Information will also be posted at [www.kalamazoohamfest.com](http://www.kalamazoohamfest.com) as it becomes available.

## CYCLE 24 HERE!

With the appearance of Sunspot 981, high-latitude, reversed polarity sunspot, on Friday, January 4, experts at NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said that Cycle 24 is now here. "This sunspot is like the first robin of spring," said solar physicist Douglas Biesecker of the Space Weather Prediction Center (SWPC), part of NOAA. "In this case, it's an early omen of solar storms that will gradually increase over the next few years." Solar physicist David Hathaway of NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama concurred, saying that new solar cycles begin with a "modest knot" of magnetism, like the one that appeared on December 11 on the east limb of the Sun: "That patch of magnetism could be a sign of the next solar cycle. New solar cycles always begin with a high-

latitude, reversed polarity sunspot." The region of magnetism that appeared back in December achieved high latitude (24 degrees North) and was magnetically reversed, but no supporting sunspot appeared until 25 days later.

Reversed polarity describes a sunspot with opposite magnetic polarity compared to sunspots from the previous solar cycle. High-latitude refers to the Sun's grid of latitude and longitude. Old-cycle spots congregate near the Sun's equator; new-cycle spots appear higher, around 25 or 30 degrees latitude. Sunspot 981's high-latitude location at 27 degrees North and its negative polarity leading to the right in the Northern Hemisphere are clear-cut signs of a new solar cycle, according to NOAA experts. The first active regions and sunspots of a new solar cycle can emerge at high latitudes while those from the previous cycle continue to form closer to the equator. While experts vary in their predictions on when the solar cycle will peak and how strong it will be, NOAA, in April 2007, in coordination with an international panel of solar experts, predicted that the next 11-year cycle of solar storms "would start in March 2008, plus or minus six months, and peak in late 2011 or mid-2012." In the cycle forecast issued in April 2007, half of the panel predicted a "moderately strong cycle of 140 sunspots, plus or minus 20, expected to peak in October 2011. The other half predicted a moderately weak cycle of 90 sunspots, plus or minus 10, peaking in August 2012. An average solar cycle ranges from 75 to 155 sunspots. The late decline of Cycle 23 has helped shift the panel away from its earlier leaning toward a strong Cycle 24. The group is evenly split between a strong and a weak cycle."

NASA's Hathaway, along with colleague Robert Wilson at a meeting of the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco last month, said that Solar Cycle 24 "looks like it's going to be one of the most intense cycles since record-keeping began almost 400 years ago." They believe the next solar maximum should peak around 2010 with a sunspot number of 160, plus or minus 25. "This would make it one of the strongest solar cycles of the past fifty years -- which is to say, one of the strongest in recorded history." Four of the five biggest cycles on record have come in the past 50 years. "Cycle 24 should fit right into that pattern," Hathaway said.

According to Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA, "As for improvement in propagation on the higher bands, we still have a way to go before that happens, and it depends on the magnitude of Cycle 24. The Solar Cycle 24 Prediction Panel has published predictions for Cycle 24, but unfortunately the panel did not reach one consensus prediction. If the larger of the two predictions comes true, we should expect consistent F2 propagation on 10 and 12 meters to start toward the end of 2009. If the smaller prediction comes true, this will be delayed about one year."

Luetzelschwab, who writes the column *Propagation* for the National Contest Journal (NCJ), continued: "While we wait for improved high band conditions, don't forget the low bands. Around solar minimum and for the next year or so, the Earth's geomagnetic field is at its quietest. This is good for low band propagation. Thus, right now is the time to start (or add to) your 80 and 160 meter DXCC efforts."

According to NASA's Tony Phillips, many forecasters believe Solar Cycle 24 will be big and intense. "Solar cycles usually take a few years to build to a frenzy and Cycle 24 will be no exception. We still have some quiet times ahead," says Hathaway.

-tnx to *The ARRL Letter*

## NATIONAL DISASTER TRAINING PROGRAM

### WESTERN MICHIGAN NORTHERN INDIANA

MARCH 14-15, 2008

TRAVERSE CITY MICHIGAN CORPS

#### FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 2008

9:00–4:00 p.m.

Incident Command System

#### SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 2008

8:15–12:00 p.m.

Introduction to Disaster Services

12:30–4:00 p.m.

Introduction to Disaster Food Services  
See your Corps Officer for more details.

Cost per course: \$10.00

## EAST TIMOR DXPEDITION

The Union de Radioaficionados Españoles, URE, the Spanish Amateur Radio League, is proud to announce a project in East Timor to take place in June 2008.

URE's Radiosolidarity Department will organize an Amateur Radio DXpedition, combined with activities to promote Amateur Radio including the donation and setting up of a complete amateur radio station at the University of Dili. It is hoped that by operating alongside students and teachers of the Electrical Engineering and other departments it will be possible to sow the seeds of future amateur radio activity of a permanent nature in East Timor. During the last few years URE's Radiosolidarity has been involved in projects in the following countries: Cameroun, Cuba, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Albania, Algeria and Mali.

This new project will take place in cooperation with the University of Dili, located in the capital of East Timor. We don't yet know the callsign that will be used; whether it will be a special one for the occasion, hopefully 4W6R, the callsign of the University (4W6UTL) or the callsign of one of the operators (4W6ERC).

The group that will take part in the activity is made up of the following experienced operators: EA1QF Angel (team leader), EA3CUU Pere, EA4DB (ex-EA4BPJ) Jose, EA4KA Eugene, EA5BWR Txema, CT1ERC Jose. QSLs will be via EA4URE.

A complete station (Kenwood TS690 + Mosley TA63M + G5RV + rotor) will be donated to and installed at the University of Dili for use of the students and teachers of the Electrical Engineering Department or anyone else who might be interested in Amateur Radio. Another station will be set up, temporarily, at the teams lodgings in order to have two stations (CW and SSB) operating permanently during the 15 days of operation. Time will be spent on other modes (RTTY, etc) and special attention will be paid to operation on six meters.

The majority of this project's funding is provided by the Alicante Provincial Government and by URE. The rest of the budget, at this time, will be down to the operators although we have already received news of some small but useful donations. We would be very grateful if individuals and organizations could consider

making contributions to this project at any time, including after the operation. Please bear in mind the following two considerations.

The objective of this project is to contribute to the development of a very young country and to promote amateur radio activity by East Timor nationals.

The DXpedition part of the activity is intended to achieve 30,000 plus QSOs in spite of the limitations imposed on us. We feel able to achieve this due to the very considerable experience of our six-man team of proven DXpedition operators.

–tnx to QRZ

## SOME NEW HAM SOFTWARE

Here's some neat software I've stumbled upon in the last month. As you may have noticed, the ARRL is offering a new 6 meter award for working all 488 grid squares in the 48 contiguous United States. The award honors Fred Fish W5FF, the only amateur who worked and confirmed all 488 grid squares on 6 meters. Here's some software to help with the task.

Bert **VE2ZAZ** has recently released *WorkedGrids* a ham log grid square mapping software. It is freeware and it runs under Windows. The program displays a map showing the amateur radio grid squares contacted and logged in using third-party logging program. *WorkedGrids* uses colors to display information on a per-band basis. Up to four bands can be displayed concurrently on the map. The program reads plain-text (ASCII) log files generated by most logging programs.

The software is directed towards the VHF and above operators who collect grid squares for contesting or award purposes. It is designed to supplement a logging program and it replaces the pen and paper technique for marking worked grid squares. To download the software visit: <http://ve2zaz.net>.

## DXPEDITION SITE

N0HR has created an outstanding site for keeping up with the latest dxpeditions. Go to <http://n0hr.com> and on the menu on the left side of the home page look for *Misc Topics & QRM*. Here, if you click on **Dxpedition Map** and it will take you to a full color Mercator projection with little white dots indicating sites of current dxpeditions. If you click on the spots you'll get the details of the dxpedition and many of them you can click on and go directly to the web site for the dxpedition. There is a slider at the bottom of the map that you can move and dxpeditions slated for the future will come up. There is also a Zoom In/Zoom Out control. Currently there are listings extending well into 2009. There's also a whole bunch of other great information on this site. Try it, you'll like it!!

Well, that's a wrap for this month. As always, I'm looking for anything related to the CARC and it's members or something you think our members would find interesting.

-73 and gud DX de N8CN

Junk: Stuff we throw away. Stuff: Junk we keep.

<SK>