



M.C.W.A. NEWS

Vol. 16 #4

April 2016



MEETING April 5, 2016

Socializing - 6:30 PM
Meeting - 7:00 PM

Crystal Lake Bank
5100 Northwest Hwy
Crystal Lake, IL 60014

Program :

Non-Resonant Antennas

Speaker is Jack , W9MU

(I guess so because all I got was the
title - JH)



Apr. Hamfests

2 Superfest
AES Milwaukee

16 Stoughton (WI)
www.qsl.net/mara

30 Cedarburg (WI)
www.ozaukeeclub.org

Apr. Contests

3 NA Sprint

10 NM QP

16 Feld Hell
Sprint

16-17 NDak QP

17 ARRL
Rookie Round-
Up

24 10-10 Spring
Digital

Apr. DX

7 E44YL Palestine

10 VK0EK Heard Is

11 5V7D Togo

12 ET7L Ethiopia

April 18 World Amateur Radio Day

SPECIAL EVENT STATION W9TY on Saturday, February 6, 2016 between 1700Z (11:00 CST) and 2300Z (17:00 CST) commemorating the Diamond, Illinois coal mine disaster of 1883. Operation is planned for 21.285, 14.265 or 7.265. Check our listing in February QST. Both the scene of the disaster and our Special Event Station are located in the same county, Grundy County, Illinois. Here is a brief summary of what happened:

In the town of Diamond is a memorial marker to one of the worst coal mine disasters in Illinois that occurred on February 16, 1883. At about 11 AM, a three blast whistle was sounded after an unusual amount of water was discovered flowing at the bottom of the mineshaft. All families within several miles knew what it meant: the mine was flooding! In all, seventy-four men and boys perished leaving behind thirty-nine widows and ninety-three fatherless children. The memorial with a bronze plate containing the names of the victims was dedicated on September 6, 1926. For the full story, follow this link:
http://hintongen.com/coal/grundy_diamond.html#disaster

STRAY Dipole on the ground after a storm. Half acre back yard and the dogs manage to poop on that little wire. Think it will help the SWR?

KB4XV de Eham.net



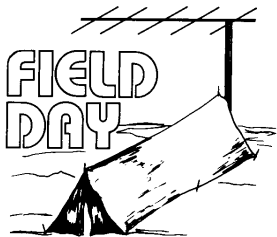
2016

Still only \$10.00

Pay at meeting
(N9OK) or use
application form at
mcwa.org

FIELD DAY 2016 !

Return to Emricson
Park ! Back where it
all began in 1978 !



M.C.W.A. NEWS

OFFICERS & STAFF

President	Jim McDonald, N7US
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News letter	Jerry Heien, N9AVY
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NEW ! McHenry Wireless Association VE Testing **NEW !**

Contact is Steve Maresso (KB9OLD) 847-477-3518

Testing is conducted (quarterly) at 7:00pm on the Third Tuesday for the months of February, May, August, and November. Walk in's welcome until 8:00pm. No appointment necessary. Testing Requirements:

1. Cost for 2016 is \$15.00. (Cash, or check made payable to ARRL) If initial test element is passed, the person testing may continue to take the next test element(s) at no extra charge during the given session. Retesting of an element failed during the same test session will require payment of an additional \$15.00 test fee.
2. Must show original, and provide copy of Amateur Radio license and/or CSCE (if upgrading).
3. Must show a valid Government Issued Photo ID (Passport, Driver License or State ID Card) for identification.
4. SS Security Number or FRN number required. Location: Free Methodist Church, 934 N. Seminary, Woodstock, IL 60098



“Conditions Not Too Shabby”

Other than loud atmospheric noise, conditions have not been too shabby. Since last month's article I worked about 175 DX contacts here and there amidst a busy schedule. Contributing to these numbers were a couple DX contests. On Easter weekend I squeezed in 60 DX contacts during the CQ WPX contest. Throughout March I show plenty of DX contacts on 10m. When 10m is open the other bands usually cooperate even if the lower HF bands are troubled with QRN. I worked the 3XY1T dxpedition easily on four bands. The 5J0P group also did a nice job making contacts easy on all bands for most hams. The lower bands such as 40m and down have been noisy, but I enjoyed QSO's on 40m with South Africa with 9 plus signals both ways and an easy QSO with Bulgaria on 80m. All of these contacts were made with 200w and various dipoles on SSB. A couple contacts were made with a vertical 6 band antenna.

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The CQ WPX contest demonstrated that even with low sunspot numbers, the bands are more alive than we think. One could talk with some DX station on 20m all night. And South America has been especially strong on 10m. One thing to our advantage is the recent Equinox and the lengthening daylight now.

As we cross into April, look for DX from Spratly Island and East Timor (call signs to be announced). Personally I would like to catch Spratly on more bands. I have one QSO with this entry on 15m from the last dxpedition. In addition to these, we will be looking for OJ0W, XU7AKC, JX9JKA, A25UK, VK9L, EP2A, JD1BOI, E51DLD, JD1BMH, and A91HI. Of course, this list is not exhaustive.

Some warm breaks in March allowed me to do some antenna work in high and low places. I hope your system is ready for the DX excitement on all bands. It's a terrific hobby and I have made radio friends around the globe. Happy Spring DX! Dave KA9OZP

STRAY I told my wife “I think I'll work on my antennas” She smiles and says “ok” as she hands me the weed eater pointing to the strings. “these little antennas need worked on” True story

N5CWF de Eham.net

M.C.W.A.

Proposed New Constitution Vote April 5th

The current MCWA constitution has not been updated since 2007 and the club officers have been considering amending it for several years. A proposed new club constitution was submitted in writing (per our current constitution) by the club officers (Jim N7US President, Mike WB8BZK Vice President, Roger KF9D Secretary and Joe N9OK Treasurer) at the March membership meeting and paper copies were distributed to all who desired a hard copy at that meeting. In addition the proposed new constitution has been placed on our club web site next to the posting of our current constitution for all to review.

The current constitution has served the club fairly well but has become out of date and there are several new items that the officers feel should be included in the document. The officers used several resources in designing the proposed constitution including the ARRL sample constitution and guidance notes found on the ARRL web site, our existing constitution and a sample constitution from the Central Arizona DX Association that they officers felt was extremely well written.

The proposed constitution includes the following along with other minor updates:

- Establishes a club Board of Directors to help guide the club and to maintain continuity. The board would include the club's four officers, two new Directors at Large and the immediate past President.
- Officer duties update including a change moving the membership roster responsibilities from the Secretary to the Treasurer.
- Member notification of meetings and votes will no longer require snail mail notification.
- BOD ability to waive annual dues for true hardship circumstances. This ability is expected to be used sparingly.

-----> next column

- Establishment of an Honorary (non-voting) membership class. This ability is expected to be used sparingly.
- Establishment of Membership ability to remove any Officer or Director.
- Establishment of a Nominating Committee for club elections.
- Establishment of club call sign trustee assignment criteria.
- Update of dues from \$15 per year to \$10 per year.
- Establishment of how things would be handled if the club was ever dissolved.

A vote to adopt the new proposed constitution will be held at our April 5th 2016 regular meeting. The club officers encourage all members to review the proposed constitution before the April meeting. Per our existing constitution, a minimum of 1/3 of the membership shall constitute a quorum for the vote. The proposal requires a 2/3 majority of votes cast at the meeting in order to successfully pass. Members who are unable to attend the April 5th meeting may mail ballots in advance of the vote to Roger KF9D our club Secretary.

Mike, WB8BZK



M.C.W.A.



From the Editor's Desk

I Just May Be Done with Ham Radio

Lou giovannetti (KB2DHG)

I love this hobby. Been into it since the 70's...

It has always been a friend to me and company when I was lonely...

I have enjoyed many years of fun, excitement, made good friends and got a great education...

Man how great it has been making contacts all over the world... it was that, an exotic DX contact was one of those rare moments, which really made us thrill over the hobby. Those long QSO's and fostering great friendships...

Well I am finding, more and more rare these days, to have a long QSO! No longer the want for that distant DX Country, I long for a decent QSO outside of, signal, report rig, weather and QTH...

I mean, really why get on the air at all if all your going to get is a signal report, the rig, QTH and weather???

I was in the shack one cold wintry day and decided to make some good QSO contacts. After about 4 contacts I just gave up. It was the same 'ol transfer of information and 73! REALLY? Why is it we don't want to talk and get to know each other anymore?

Try to talk me back in, but I think I am losing it for ham radio? Something I never ever thought I would say or do...

{Ed. this was from a forum at Eham.net. . A response from a German seemed like a bit of good advice. His reply follows:}

“

I have Asperger's Syndrome which means that (in my case) conversation can be difficult unless we very quickly find a common frame of reference between us. It also meant that my first months on air were a VERY nervous experience but one day I saw someone else operate and I realized the trick.

This operator worked with a pad and paper by his side rather than the logbook and during the initial contact he noted down what antenna and what transceiver the other station was using. He then made a point of asking them questions about their equipment. How easy did they find tuning up the rig? How is that TTFD working out? What did they use as spacers when they made their ladder line?

Conversation, just like Morse code is a skill and once I learned the skill my contacts lasted longer. Radio hams take pride in their equipment and if you push them a little they'll talk about it for ages, trust me in this. My record is a 45 minute CW QSO with an IC-7800 owner talking about complex front panels.

Now, granted, you will have quite a few name, QTH, rig, antenna, weather QSOs but if you push a little you may find that some of these QSOs turn into a conversation.

Peter DL8OV ”

Ed. Perhaps this is a sign of something in our hobby that has changed . Have we lost the art of conversation ? There have been times when this editor has been scanning the bands only to stop and listen to an interesting conversation between 2 hams. This doesn't happen as much as in the past. With the advent of DX spotting networks all people want to do is get in and get that signal report. Has ham radio come down to this ? Digital modes are worse with their macros of canned data. WHAT DO YOU THINK ???

M.W.C.A.

Since 1978



More From the Editors Desk

Small Rant With all the comments flying back and forth about refarming the bands, there still needs to be more done.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the digital portions where various digital modes cannot coexist. RTTY stations QRM the heck out of low-power PSK stations. Other digital modes QRM each other as well. The problem seems to be that there is no worldwide band plan. This is something that needs to be tackled as more and more digital modes are in use.

Digital modes like PSK31, PSK63, PSK125, RTTY, Hellschreiber, ROS, Contestia, JT-65, MFSK16, Amtor, Pactor, G-tor, Clover, HF packet, MT-63, Throb, Olivia, DominoEx, and many others which show up on the bands.

As you can see there are many digital modes which you've probably never heard of. As people experiment it will be likely more digital modes will show up, all fighting to carve out the own piece of spectrum.

Add to this the fact the no one owns a frequency and you have the makings for feuds. Oh, and let's not forget that CW station have the run of the bands! They can go anywhere they like and often do much to dismay of digital operators.

So, someone out there may have a solution and it can't come fast enough. The ham that figures it out should have a statue erected in his honor!

STRAY The only reason old hams are deaf is because when they reach 70 years old, people start yelling at them and this impairs their hearing.

KI7DG de eham.net

When You Least Expect It, Expect It!

Patrick Greenlee (NJ5G) on March 26, 2016

A while back I had an intermittent unacceptable VSWR with an antenna and feedline that had been performing flawlessly.

I wondered what could cause an intermittent VSWR. After much wondering and Ohm meter tests of long coax runs I got so frustrated I threw together a quickie dipole just outside the door to my shack as a confidence builder that something could work.

I was short enough coax to reach out to the antenna so I joined all my spare jumpers to add length to the coax run. I didn't have enough barrel connectors (AKA double female to accept PL-259 connectors) so I used some "T" connectors with one connection unused. I finally got enough coax length to connect to the antenna. Yay!

I had intermittent VSWR... Boo! On a hunch I eliminated one jumper and the problem persisted so I put that one back and removed another. The third time was a charm. Without that jumper in-line the antenna loaded up fine with low VSWR. Yay!

I Ohm'ed the apparent culprit jumper; shield was continuous, center conductor was continuous, center to shield was open. Huh? Put it back in the daisy chain and got bad VSWR.

I cut the jumper in half and removed a few inches of jacket from one of the cut ends. Then I cut off a little more center conductor and... Funny thing, the center conductor wasn't centered; it was up against the foil layer under the braid.

M.C.W.A.

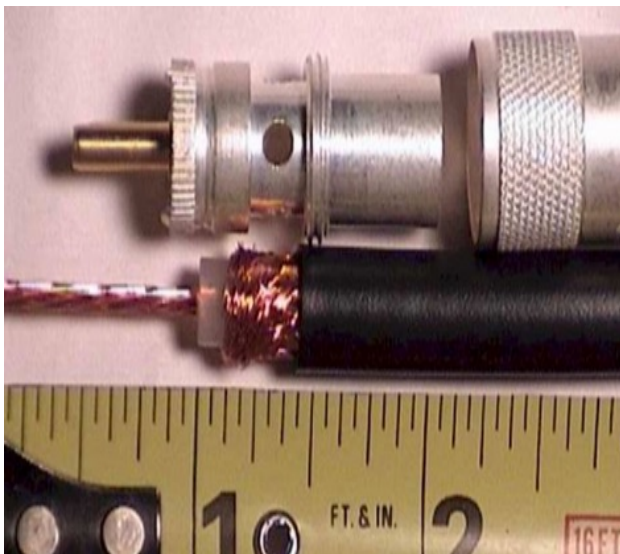
When you least expect .. cont'd

No continuity at the low DC voltage applied in Ohm'ing the jumper but apparently not the case with higher voltages of RF.

No more bargain jumpers from hamfests no matter how professional they look or how low the cost.

NJ5G from Eham.net

[Ed. - This can be a common occurrence in the shack. Once had a commercial cable assembly from ham radio store that was bad. Before you install a new cable or even a used one, it's a good idea to have an antenna analyzer & dummy load on hand for checking cables before finding out the hard way .]



PL-259

Gary Shandling - ex-KD6OY SK

Comedian, actor, and TV personality Garry Shandling, ex-KD6OY, died March 24 after suffering an apparent heart attack in Los Angeles. He was 66. Shandling became a ham as a teenager in the 1960s, long before he entered show business.

“When I was 13 I had a ham radio set (true!), so I could sit in my room and talk to people the world-over. Geeky? Or just ahead of my time!!?” Shandling had tweeted in May 2011.

Shandling grew up in Arizona and majored in electrical engineering at the University of Arizona. But went on to earn a degree in marketing and complete some post-graduate work in creative writing. He worked in marketing for a time, but a script he wrote for “Sanford and Son” turned into his first big break into entertainment.

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de ARRL

“Elmer” Inspiration, Elmer “Bud” Frohardt Jr, W9DY, SK

03/24/2016

The ham radio mentor who inspired the term “Elmer” — Elmer P. “Bud” Frohardt Jr, W9DY (ex-W9GFF), of Madison, Wisconsin — died on March 22. He was 93. A friend and co-worker of the late Rod Newkirk, W9BRD (later VA3ZBB), who edited QST’s “How’s DX?” column, Frohardt was the “Elmer” that Newkirk had in mind when he used the name in his March 1971 column, referring to someone who helped to mentor new Amateur Radio licensees and calling them “the unsung fathers of Amateur Radio.”

“Too frequently one hears a sad story in this little nutshell: ‘Oh, I almost got a ticket, too, but Elmer, W9XYZ, moved away and I kind of lost interest,’”

Newkirk had written. “We need those Elmers. All the Elmers, including the ham who took the most time and trouble to give you a push toward your license, are the birds who keep this great game young and fresh.”

On AC6V’s “Origin of Ham Speak” web page, John Becker, K9MM, is quoted as saying, “Bud was very well known locally for his involvement with the RAMS (Radio Amateur Megacycle Society) radio club, and he was always helping newcomers to the hobby.”

An ARRL Life Member, Frohardt, who preferred to be called “Bud,” had worked as a communications technician for the Illinois State Police, retiring in 1986. Licensed in the 1930s, he was a veteran DXer, eventually working all 381 countries at that time from his former home in Chicago. When he moved into an antenna-restricted neighborhood in the 1990s, he enthusiastically began chasing DX from his car, racking up 326 entities while operating from the back seat. He also was active in the annual Illinois QSO Party, which he managed at one point.

“Am most proud of all the wonderful young people I have been able to interest over the years in science, radio, DX, CW, and electronics,” Frohardt wrote on his QRZ.com page. “Many of them have become excellent operators, engineers, scientists, doctors or business people.” — Thanks to The Daily DX

de ARRL

[Ed. I had the privilege of knowing Bud through handling his QSL cards at the W9 Bureau for several years. He was living in Elgin at that time on the South side of I-90 just West of Fox River. Almost daily he would go to the shopping center pg lot just North of I-90 and operate mobile. The amount of DX he worked from that little mobile station was amazing ! There are many who probably couldn't work that kind of DX with big antennas and amplifiers. Bud suffered a stroke a while back and was moved to St. Charles and then up to Madison (WI). RIP Bud !]

