



The Amateur's News

January & February 2024

203TH Edition

Editor: Russell Hall - N8RSH

Ogemaw Arenac Amateur Radio Society – www.K8OAR.club – an ARRL Affiliate

President's 2023 year-end report



Thank you, for allowing me to serve you all and the comradery and closeness that you all have given me. Lastly my best wishes to our new officers and our club in the next year 2024.

God Bless our club!

Dale Wheeler KD8JSL 73

Club Officer for 2024

Club officer election results from our January club meeting are:

President Dean Coleman W8BUH

Vice President Dave Burnell K8BD

Treasurer Tyler Rosebrugh KC8JOZ

Secretary Russell Hall N8RSH

Reminder, our club meetings are the first Wednesday of the month at 7PM at the Mills Township Hall, unless Dale forgets to get the key again. Then the location will be announced the 146.940 MHz repeater.

Our Monday night talk nets are on the 146.940 MHz repeater, unless otherwise directed. During the Winter (Oct 1-May 1) the net starts at 7PM EST. Summer (May 1 – Oct 1) we switch the start time to 8PM EST.

I would like to thank everyone for a successful year. So many members giving a helpful hand to others. The helpful hands were given out to lots of ham related needs, but to go further the hands was also extended to many others needs as well. To name a few, transportation to doctor appointments, taking food to sick folks and helping others fix things etc. The big thing to me is the comradery that comes with it all.

A few events to reflect on, that was enjoyed through the year, include fox hunts, picnic/memorial, Field Day, Auction and Christmas party.

Also, the many meetings after the meeting at Dee's. On the sad side the loss of a few good hams and friends.

da Bob Purple Crystal awards

At our December club meeting Alan KC8EHU received two more purple crystal awards from this fall's actives on the 146.940 MHz repeater. Back in October, Alan timed out the repeater so long that someone else had to key up the repeater so Alan could keep transmitting. Then the morning before the club meeting in December, during coffee talk net, he struck again.



Alan is up to 17 purple crystal awards so far. Please, everyone reading this, don't take this statement as a challenge to outdo him.

**My adventure into digital HF radio**

I have been watching a lot of videos on how to use FT8 for about a year now. However, I didn't have any way to connect my laptop to a radio to try it. I have been a good boy this year and Santa bought me a SignalLink USB device. This started my adventure Christmas evening with making FT8 contacts.

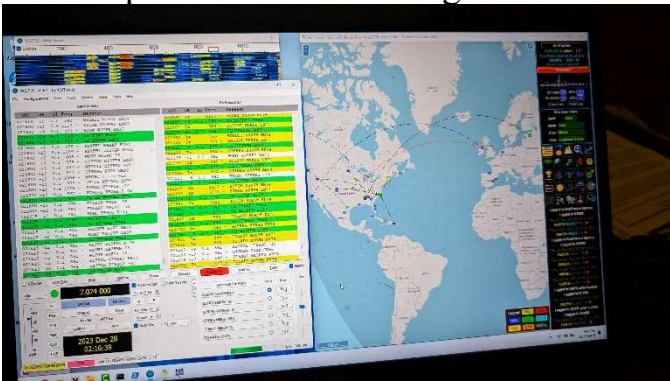
FT8 is one of the weak signal modes created by Joe Taylor K1JT & Steve Franke K9AN. They also created a free to use software program called WSJT-X. FT8 which is time based with a 15 second cycles and can send 13 text characters with error correction built into it. Due to the time cycles, your computer time needs to be very accurate and it is recommended to use a time server to sync your local time.

It took me some time to get everything physically connected. At this point I now had three programs to learn and get working correctly. WSJT-X is the program used to encode/decode the data messages to and from the radio.

Grid Tracker is what I use to visually look at the decoded data and it gives me the ability to react faster to a station calling CQ. It will also popup an alarm messages when your callsign is decoded. This allows you to respond to their request in the huge list of messages. Grid Tracker also logs your QSO contacts to a file, which I am using this feature as a backup option. There are a lot more features built-in and more in development.

Lastly, I am using N1MM Logger+ to log all of the QSO contacts for later processing on QRZ.com and Logbook of the world. Getting access and using Logbook of the world is a story for a different article and one more program I needed to learn.

All of the software packages I am currently using are free to download and use. There are other combinations of logging and tracking programs out there. For right now this setup seems to be working for me.



I do realize that some people will say that FT8 or digital modes are not real ham radio. To that I would say this; I have spent more time on HF in a week, than the entire time I have had my ham license in the last ten years. In addition, this is the first time I have had to upload a log to the internet. Which is not very compiled, however, I haven't had a need to confirm any contacts before.

Bottom line is I am really enjoying FT8 and am still learning. If you like this content, please let me know. You never know, there just maybe more articles to come. Russ N8RSH

Club Officers for 2024

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Vice President Dave Burnell K8BD
Treasurer Tyler Rosebrugh KC8JOZ
Secretary Russell Hall N8RSH

Upcoming Events:

Feb 7, 2024 – February Club Meeting
 Mar 6, 2024 – March Club Meeting
 Apr 3, 2024 – April Club Meeting
 May 1, 2024 – May Club Meeting
 Jun 5, 2024 – June Club Meeting

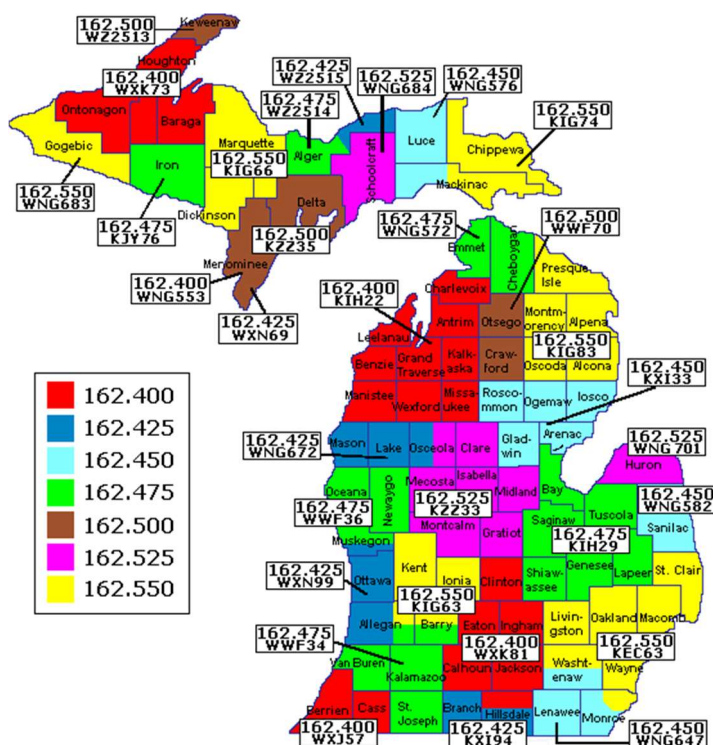
Come join us at our Monthly club Meetings, First Wednesday of the Month.

Monthly Club Attendance

January 2023: 18
 February 2023: 16
 March 2023: 13
 April 2023: 20
 May 2023: 20
 June 2023: 27
 July 2023: 37
 Aug 2023: 27
 Sep 2023: 26
 Oct 2023: 21
 Nov 2023: 26
 Dec 2023: 21
 Jan 2024: 21

Something most people have forgotten about is the NOAA weather radio system. It is a 24-hour FM Weather radio system design in the VHF bands on seven stations across the United States. The stations will broadcast a three to eight-minute program with local observations and weather forecasts from the National Weather Service in that area. In the event of weather advisories/warning/watches are issues they will interrupt the broadcast to relay this information. Most if not all of our 2m, radios can tune into these stations. On the left is a map of the channels in Michigan.

~Russ



The Ogemaw Arenac Amateur Radio Society meets the first Wednesday of every month at the Mills Township Hall, 2441 Greenwood Road, Skidway Lake, at 7 PM. For more information on the club or club events, contact Dean W8BUH.

The Prescott Testing Group has scheduled Amateur Radio Examinations the Third Wednesday of every month at the Mills Township Hall. Registration begins at 6:30 PM, Exams begin at 7 PM. For more information on testing or to pre-register, please contact: Dave, K8BD.

The Monday Night Talk Net on the 146.940 Mhz West Branch Repeater, Monday at 8PM EST
Please review the 'Repeater Rules of Conduct' on the web site for repeater operation use.

Local Repeaters in the area

West Branch Repeater 146.940Mhz -T103.5

Gladwin Repeater 147.180Mhz +T173.8

Bay City 145.310Hmz -T131.8

Rose City Repeater 145.110Mhz -T131.8

Lupton Repeater 147.080Mhz +T123 C4FM

Mio Repeater 444.975Mhz +T123

Club Officers 2023

President : W8BUH Dean Coleman
Vice President: Dave Burnell K8BD
Treasurer: KC8JOZ Tyler Rosebrugh
Secretary: N8RSH Russell Hall

Club Info

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