

# SVARA Harmonic

A monthly publication of the Saginaw Valley  
Amateur Radio Association

March, 2005

## Notice

**The March 4<sup>th</sup> meeting will begin 1 hour early at 7:00 PM**

### The Prez Sez

We are all grieved by the passing of a good friend of SVARA. Steve Block (KC8BTE) was a good man and made great contributions to the club and amateur radio in the tri-cities. Joe Turner's letter to the ARRL and local radio clubs about Steve was a fine tribute and summed up his most recent accomplishments. We will all miss him greatly.

On the [www.k8dac.com](http://www.k8dac.com) website, we posted potential project night topics. Some of the projects are building j-pole antennas, radio-to-computer interfaces, tape measure yagi antennas, jump kit radio boxes, Anderson Power Pole connectors, and hands on training for the FT-897 club house radio. We have also included a signup for the General License training class. For the projects, parts will be available at cost, some are free. We have received enough interest that all of the projects will be offered, but we would like to pass around a sign up sheets in the March club meeting to see if others are interested before we set the dates. So if you want to participate, let us know through the website or on the signup sheet at the club meeting.

I would like to express my gratitude to those of you that have donated to the 220 Antenna for the repeater system. We are in the last stages of figuring out all of the components and calculating prices, the 220 antenna has been fully funded through the private donations. Thank you to all that contributed!

Finally, On March 5, 2005, 10 AM at the Red Cross (following the club breakfast at the Texan) the ARRL International DX Phone contest will be running; and we will have the club radio station open. This will be a great chance for Technicians to try HF using the club's K8DAC call sign. In addition, newer Generals and Extras can make world wide contacts with their own call signs. Those experienced hams that are interested in passing on their wisdom to the newer hams are very welcome to help. We hope to see you there!

Best Wishes,  
Keith (N8XD)

Dear ARRL, SVARA, MARC and BAARC Leaders:

It is with regret that I must inform you of the death of Mr. Steven J. Block, KC8BTE. I would appreciate it if you share this information with your respective organizations.

Steve recently accepted an appointment as the E.C. for Saginaw County, Michigan and was concurrently appointed as the county's RACES Officer. The appointments capped a half decade of dedicated service to amateur radio and especially to emergency management preparedness.

Most recently, Mr. Block had been a key figure in establishing an amateur radio communications infrastructure for emergency management purposes in Saginaw County. Mr. Block served as Vice Chair of the Saginaw County Citizens Corps, an organization delegated its authority by the office of Homeland Security. He was a charter member of the Saginaw County Emergency Planning Committee.

Under his leadership the county recently installed \$6,000 worth of antenna's at the emergency operation center. He also was a key leader in designing a new hospital and emergency management radio network for which a more than \$22,000 grant was recently acquired.

Mr. Block was an avid supporter of the Civil Air Patrol and did his best to assure that amateur radio and CAP coordinated activities within the jurisdiction he served.

He just finished a term as President of the Saginaw Valley Amateur Radio Association (SVARA). SVARA has been recognized as a special service club by the ARRL. In addition to his activities in SVARA KC8BTE, also participated in the Midland, Michigan Amateur Radio Club and the Bay Area Amateur Radio Club of Bay County, Michigan.

Mr. Block died on February 21, 2005 and leaves behind two sisters. He will be missed in the amateur radio community for his gentle sense of humor and his many contributions.

73 de Joe Turner, K8CQF  
ARRL Michigan STM

### **Birthdays**

March 6: Howard Hannon, KD8DX

March 7: Jerry Cox, WD8OQH

March 11: Dennis Poletti, KA8PRX

March 30: Tracy Albert, KC8YVE

*No March anniversaries*

**General Membership Meeting  
February 4, 2005  
American Red Cross**

The meeting was called to order at 8:01 PM. Introductions revealed there were 25 members and 5 guests present.

Brian, N8AVR did an excellent presentation of A.P.R.S. After a brief but informative demonstration of SSTV by Keith, N8XD, questions and answers and further discussion continued until 8:45 PM.

The treasurer's report was read and accepted unanimously on a motion from Roger, KB8QO that was seconded by Bill, WA8KFC.

The minutes of the January meeting were corrected concerning a BPL meeting to be held in Delta Township January 10. January's minutes gave an incorrect location. Bill WA8KFC moved to accept the corrected minutes. Bob, N8XYR seconded. All were in favor.

**Old Business**

The President, Keith, N8XD presented former President, Steve Block, KC8BTE with an engraved gavel plaque in thanks for his continued commitment to the club by serving his second term last year.

Keith, N8XD gave a report on the MARC update. We need to report all transmitters over 5 watts. Otherwise, all updates are completed.

Discussion showed an interest in keeping our 6 meter designation.

Keith, N8XD and other yet unnamed participants, cleaned out our two rooms at the Red Cross.

We can have a free broadband connection from the Red Cross if we can figure out how to get a network cable down 3 floors.

Roger, KB8QO reported that we had 227 contacts at E-QSL. We also had 687 from the 2002 contest.

Rick, KC8VOA asked if the board appointees had accepted their positions. Brian, N8AVR and Jeff, KB8SWR both accepted.

**New Business**

Lee, KC8ITI asked if we were interested in having a General class this spring. It was agreed to study it further.

Three new members were voted in. They were: Jeff, N8AME; Aaron, KD8AVA; Richard, W8KNB. Rick, KC8VOA is heading up an anniversary committee and discussed a special event station, media coverage and possibly a special event call. He also mentioned the need for a Field Day coordinator June 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>.

Carl, KC8YVI inquired as to the date of the Simulated Emergency Test.

Judy, KC8BYI reported that Care Break forms had been submitted.

Ron, KC8YVF announced an informal 6 meter net on 50.640 FM Wednesday nights at 8:00 PM.

Jeff, KB8SWR announced a Sunday night net on 52.525 simplex at 9:00 PM.

Steve, KC8BTE gave an Emergency Preparedness report. He also announced his EC appointments. Reminders for Breakfast Saturday morning, our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Field Day, and the March meeting will be 1 hour early for Skywarn training.

Bill WA8KFC moved to adjourn. Harold, K8LNR seconded after announcing he has 20 years of QST and Radio News to give away.

All were in favor and the meeting closed at 9:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeff Weirauch, KC8BDQ Secretary

**SVARA**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**February 22, 2005**  
American Red Cross

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM. Present were: N8XD, KC8BYI, KC8BDQ, KC8VOA, N8NPW, KC8YVF and KB8QO.

The board reviewed the minutes of the January board meeting and accepted them unanimously on a motion by Keith, N8XD that was seconded by Rick, KC8VOA.

Judy, KC8BYI presented the treasurer's report.

Judy, KC8BYI announced that the MARC repeater coordination update was complete. She also told the board the Care Break forms have been submitted.

Keith, N8XD inquired if we have enough cups for Care Break. Judy, KC8BYI informed him that she has some 5,000 at her house and there are about 7,000 we need to get from the late KC8BTE's residence.

The board agreed to send flowers to Steve Block, KC8BTE.

A repeater committee report by Rick, KC8VOA included details of his appointment as Chairperson of the committee. They are still researching antennas and parts.

There was a brief discussion of the March meeting program.

There was a motion by Keith, N8XD to purchase a frame for our recently received Special Services Club certificate from the ARRL. Jeff, KC8BDQ seconded and all were in favor.

Rick, KC8VOA reported that he had two volunteers for Field Day. They were Brian, N8AVR and Dave, N8ERL. They will be operating special event stations.

Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup> after breakfast, the Red Cross will be open for the ARRL Intl Phone DX event.

KC8VOA reported that he would be attending a March 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting concerning the MS Walk May 7<sup>th</sup>. We need volunteers for this event.

It was noted by Keith, N8XD that Lee, KC8ITI was preparing a general class for this spring. A sign-up sheet will be at the March meeting.

Keith, N8XD is still working on getting us internet access from the Red Cross.

John Walters from the Midland club donated some large 8D size batteries for club use. These are very large (132 lbs.) and are intended for backup use at our repeater locations.

Our April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting will feature the state O.O.C. (Official Observer Coordinator).

Six projects are planned for Project Nights. Ron, KC8YVF noted that the frequency for his six meter net had changed to 52.540.

Keith, N8XD donated a wireless router and an atomic clock for use in the Red Cross radio room.

The meeting closed on a motion by Jeff, KC8BDQ and a second by N8NPW at 8:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeff Weirauch, KC8BDQ, Secretary

# QRP Corner

by Brian Buckstiegel N8AVR

## QRP Calling Freq (US) kHz

<u>Band</u>	<u>CW</u>	<u>Phone</u>
160M	1810	1910
80M	3560	3985
novice	3710	
40M	7040	87285
30M	10106	
20M	14060	14285
17M	18096	
15M	21060	21385
novice	21110	
12M	24906	
10M	28060	28885
novice	28110	28385
6M	50060	50885
2M	144060	144285

## QRP Websites

American QRP Club – [www.amqrp.org](http://www.amqrp.org)

QRP ARC Int. – [www.qrparci.org](http://www.qrparci.org)

NJ QRP Club – [www.njqrp.org](http://www.njqrp.org)



## Getting Started – What is it?

QRP, originally a Q code in CW, meaning, "shall I reduce power" is currently defined as "low-power operations." QRP operations can be fun, exciting, challenging, and sometimes downright frustrating - hi. The above listed frequencies tend to be a great place to start and become accustomed to deciphering weak signals. QRP, defined by QRP Amateur Radio Club Int'l defines QRP as any operations below 5 watts, while the ARRL defines QRP CW as less than 5 watts, and phone as operating less than 10W. Either way - whatever your preference - it can be a challenge.

## What determines the playing field?

The playing field is a hot topic right now with no clear answer. 5 watts or less - is a great general definition for QRP. However, if I'm running 5 watts from an IC703 into a dipole, is that a level playing field when communicating with stacked yagis over 100 feet? Again, there are no clear-cut definitions. The North American QRP CW Club (NAQCC) is trying to level the field by maintaining 5 watts and utilizing only simple wire antennas. Rigs also present controversy. Does a modern DSP rig compete fairly with a homebrew tube rig from the 50's? You be the judge. I believe the most important thing to remember is TO HAVE FUN! That's what the "hobby" is about - Whether you spend tens of dollars or thousands of dollars - just enjoy what you're doing.

NEXT MONTH... QRP Digital Activities i.e. PSK31

73 de Brian N8AVR/QRP [brian@n8avr.us](mailto:brian@n8avr.us) [www.n8avr.us](http://www.n8avr.us)