

SVARA Harmonic

A monthly publication of the Saginaw Valley
Amateur Radio Association

April, 2006

Hi Everyone,

In a follow-up to the silent auction we had this month giving members first chance at the radios -- SVARA is going to have a live auction of equipment on Friday, April 7th, 2006 - 8:00 PM at the Red Cross during the regular meeting. We have invited the members of the Midland and Bay City radio club to this auction. In addition to the radios you saw last time, there are two desktop all mode satellite radios, and other miscellaneous equipment. Here are the main items:

Yaesu FT 736 R - All mode dual band satellite radio with 6m, 2m & 440

Drake TR270 FM - All mode 2m, 440 Receive, satellite, doppler, cross band

ADI 247 - 30 watt 220 FM transceiver

ADI AT 200 - HT 2m

Alinco DJ-G1 - 2m transmit, 440 receive

Icom IC 281H - 50 watt 2m transmit, 440 receive

Icom ICT21A - 6watt 2meter, 440 receive

Icom IC-T8A - 6m, 2m, 440

Kenwood TM 271A - 2m 60 watts

Orca Tait - HT program only 136-176 MHz

Misc Other equipment

Hope to see you there!

--Keith (N8XD)

Amateur Radio Revealed

By: Jennie L. Tuttle, KC0RBV

Wickes and Claytor libraries had an outstanding turn-out for their amateur radio program Tuesday, March 7th. Four volunteers from SVARA graciously donated their time and equipment to provide a PowerPoint presentation about amateur radio, a demonstration of Morse code, and gave participants a chance to make a contact over the club's repeater. Wickes Library hosted 14 children and 5 adults including Public Libraries of Saginaw Director Trish Burns, Children's and Youth Services Coordinator Rhonda Farrell-Butler, and a reporter/photographer from the Saginaw News. Around 35 children and 5 adults participated at Claytor Library.

It was only with the assistance of many individuals that this program was a huge success. The author would like to take this paragraph to thank these helpful hams. The first set of thanks belongs to Joe Turner, K8CQF, and John Kraemer, KC8WZM, for conducting activities at Claytor and Gordon Schram, KC8YVD, and Bob Tuttle, N8YXR, for presenting at Wickes. Without these wonderful gentlemen, the program would not have gotten off the drawing board. Additional thanks belong to Ed Ireland, W8HZF, who was kind enough to record the radio exchanges. Thank you Larry Davidson, WD8RIK, who filled in as a contact for Claytor while Wickes was finishing their informational section. Heartfelt gratitude also goes to Keith DeLong, N8XD, for supplying Morse code mice and gathering some of the club's QSL cards for display at the library branches. Finally, the author would like to thank the entire SVARA membership for their support and donation of repeater time so that the program was possible.

Tuning a Single Band Antenna

By Tracy Albert (KC8YVE)

I cannot emphasize how important antenna tuning skills are to the everyday ham radio operator. It is a basic amateur radio operator skill. What makes it important is getting on the air after a disaster like Katrina. The Boy Scouts say "Always Be Prepared." If you're not ready for an emergency, you might be part of the problem. You should take a moment and imagine that the local repeater is down and your antennas are down. How long will it take you to get on the air in simplex mode? How can I make sure the new (or temporary) antenna is working properly? Getting on the air can be as simple as using a piece of coax with a connector, a SWR meter and a couple coat hangers. That kind of innovation is what makes us hams!

A standard SWR meter is a basic tool that everyone needs. Knowing how to use it can make your antenna work efficiently; and send its signal farther. Without a properly tuned antenna you are wasting RF energy.

Basic rules of thumb for tuning an antenna are as follows:

If your SWR is low at the bottom of the band and gets higher toward the top of the band - your antenna is too long.

If your SWR is high at the bottom of the band gets lower toward the top of the band - your antenna is too short.

For this example we are tuning to the center of the band. So for a 6 meter antenna used in the range of 50.00-53.99 MHz, the center of the band is 52 MHz so at 52 MHz the standing wave meter should not deflect much. At the edges of the band, 50.00 and 53.99 MHz the meter will read higher (less efficient). That what's called "tuned to the center of the band." You can shorten or lengthen the antenna to move that center point toward the frequencies you use most.

When tuning higher frequencies like UHF trim off very small pieces of material like 1 mm at a time so you don't remove too much material when tuning 6 meter you can remove an inch at a time till you're close to your final tuning length.

I have created a yahoo group to share information. If you would like to signup, visit this webpage at:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SVARA03/>

Feel free to contact me at: thealbert@earthlink.net

While we were at the library doing the Ham presentation, a man talked to us about a 96 ft. tower his deceased father-in-law had. Ed (W8HZF) knew the ham but couldn't remember his call. (the man's first name was Fred) Fred passed away a few years ago and his daughter and son-in-law don't know what to do with the tower. I told him I would let the club membership know and anyone could contact him if they were interested. I don't know if this is a possibility for the news letter or just an announcement at the next meeting. The contact info is:

Martin Goodson

3160 Ramond St.

Saginaw, MI

777-9533 - Home

686-9255 - Office

He was looking for a reasonable offer. I believe the tower is located near the Grey Iron plant.

Thanks

Gordy KC8YVD

2006 ARRL International DX Phone Contest

by Keith DeLong (N8XD)

Saturday, March 4, 2006 after the Club Breakfast, the SVARA Radio station at the Red Cross was opened for the ARRL International DX Competition. We all took turns operating the station from 10 AM to 10 PM. Much of the time we were “tag teaming” calls – where we would catch a contact and several of us would call them one after another. Most operators used their own call signs to add contacts to their personal logs and a few used the club call sign with control operator supervision. For some of the members, it was a day of firsts: first 15 meter contacts, first HF contacts, first contest experience, and first split operation on 40 and 80 meters. In all we had contacted 150 different stations and had 89 multipliers. Members that had not truly contested before were inspired and continued operating from their home stations afterwards. Though there were some notable contacts with a few islands around the world, and Asiatic Russia, and Senegal in Africa -- the most amazing were the two contacts we made with Mongolian stations. Thanks to all that participated. We had a tremendously fun time and are looking forward to doing it again next year!

Here are the results:

Participants:	Keith (N8XD), Joe (K8CQF), Lou (KD8BLZ), Mike (KD8AUZ), Ron (KC8YVF), John (KC8WZM), Aaron (KD8AVA)
15 Meters:	Argentina, Aruba, Bonaire-Curacao, Brazil, Canary Is. , Columbia, Dominican Republic, French Guiana, Grenada, Guyana, Hawaii, Honduras, Italy, Jamaica, Japan , Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Saint Martin, Senegal , Turks & Caicos Is., Virgin Is.
20 Meters:	Aland Is. , Alaska, Argentina, Aruba, Asiatic Russia , Austria, Bahamas, Belarus, Belize, Bermuda, Bonaire-Curacao, Brazil, Canary Is. , Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Estonia, European Russia, Finland, France, French Guiana, Germany, Guantanamo Bay, Hawaii, Honduras, Hungary, Italy, Japan , Kaliningrad , Lithuania, Mexico, Mongolia , Netherlands, Poland, Puerto Rico, Romania, Saint Martin, Scotland, Senegal , Serbia & Montenegro, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine, Venezuela, Virgin Is.
40 Meters:	Aruba, Austria, Bermuda, Bonaire-Curacao, Brazil, Cuba, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, France, Guantanamo Bay, Hungary, Italy, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Slovenia, Spain, Venezuela
80 Meters:	Belgium , England

GROUND EVERYTHING

By Jim, WA8GRI

A strange thing happened the other day. While talking on the radio my lips starting tingling. Was this an electrical shock? My rig is powered by a twelve volt battery so stray ac didn't make sense. Further investigation showed that it was the result of stray RF. Radio Frequencies can be hazardous to your health. There is even FCC rules about the amount of radiation you allowed to generate.

The average Ham Operator doesn't need to worry about excessive radiations. Just remember the higher the frequency or higher the power the more the danger. FM and AM is worse than CW or SSB. I urge all to read Chapter 9 in the latest ARRL Handbook and GROUND EVERYTHING.

Jim WA8GRI

Dayton Hamvention Bus Trip (May 20, 2006)

A 1-day Saturday Event

Organized by Ham Radio Operators and members of the Bay Area Amateur Radio Club Anyone who is interested can attend this trip and everyone is welcome!! Bus will Leave Bay City, Michigan at 4:00 AM on Saturday, May 20, 2006 We plan to spend the whole day at the Hamvention in Dayton, Ohio and return to Bay City at approximately 12 AM on Sunday, May 21, 2006.

This is a one day power-shopping Hamvention trip and we need 47 participants to make it happen. The cost is \$55.00 per person and this only covers the round-trip bus trip to Dayton, Ohio. For more information, please contact Don KC8TLG at 989-777-4876 or Loren KF8F at 989-671-9007 Mail Reservation to: Don Brotemarkle KC8TLG, 4459 Warren St., Bridgeport, MI 48722

Please Return Form by April 1, 2006 with your non-refundable payment. Refunds will only be available, if bus trip is cancelled by organizers. This should be a fun trip and we hope to see you there!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

General Membership Meeting

SVARA

March 3, 2006

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 pm.

The treasurer's report was accepted as presented on a motion by WA8KFC and seconded by N8YXR. There was one nay vote.

The secretary's report was accepted as presented on a motion by W8HZF and seconded by KC0RBV. There was one nay vote.

N8XD announced that Joe Turner, K8CQF received the State Police District 3 Volunteer of the Year award. Way to go, Joe.

Sign-up sheets went around to see who was interested in projects or being an Elmer.

Upgrades and improvements to the Harmonic were discussed.

A coordinator for Field Day is still needed.

Old Business:

It was agreed, on a motion by KC8YVE and seconded by K8DVX, to purchase 1000 QSL cards for \$65.00. KD8AVA will order them ASAP.

KC8YVE suggested having the club trailer at the Saginaw Fair.

KC8YVF mentioned club jackets once more.

KD8AVA reminded members of the Dayton Bus Trip.

KC8BDQ presented pricing for 3 different banquet halls in the area to have the 50th Anniversary dinner at. KD8BLZ will provide raffle prizes. He also discussed having a politician speak at the event. K8CQF suggested WB8SIW, Jim Wades as a speaker also. A preliminary count at the meeting showed 35 for the banquet.

KD8BLZ made a motion that all club members support KC8BDQ in his efforts to make the anniversary banquet a success. K8DVX seconded and all were in favor.

KC0RBV announced that on Tuesday, March 7, 2006 there will be a radio demonstration at 2 Saginaw library locations.

New Business:

The club voted on a new member, KC8FUV, Verne Williams. On a motion by W8HZF and seconded by WA8KFC, Verne was welcomed into the club.

KC8BYI reminded members that dues were due.

K8CQF announced the marriage of Brad (WA8QPO) and Maria Mellberg.

N8XD discussed plans for project night.

KC8YVF did a presentation on the NWS EC meeting. He also announced that SkyWarn training will be held March 9, 2006 at 6:30 pm in the Covenant Healthcare Cooper Campus Lecture Theater.

On a motion by N8YXR and seconded by K8DVX the meeting closed at 9:27 pm.

W6RTO won \$47.00 in the 50/50 drawing. Second prize of a stylish all-purpose canvas bag went to KC0RBV.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeff Weirauch, KC8BDQ
Secretary

Board of Directors
SVARA
March 14, 2006

The meeting was called to order at 8:04 pm. All board members were in attendance.

The Secretary's report was accepted on a motion by N8XD and seconded by KC8YVF.

The treasurer's report was reviewed.

The April general meeting program will feature a live auction for the remaining equipment from the KC8BTE estate. It was agreed to lower the minimum bids to \$25.00 for most items.

KC8BYI gave the totals for the silent auction held in February.

KD8AVA suggested keeping the leftover equipment for club use and as loaners.

N8XD suggested using a portion of the auction proceeds to purchase a number of handhelds for loan to club members during events or emergencies.

KD8BLZ was seconded by WA8GRI on a motion to purchase a power supply for the radio room. All agreed.

In honor of the club's 50th anniversary, N8ERL will operate a special event station June 3, 2006 from 12:00 pm until 6:00 pm. More info to come.

KD8BLZ announced he has procured 7 to 8 very nice prizes to be given away in a raffle at the 50th anniversary dinner.

On a motion by KD8BLZ and seconded by N8XD, it was agreed by all to let KC8BDQ choose the banquet hall.

N8XD announced the next project night will feature construction of a computer-to-radio interface. He requested funding for 2 kits for an FT-897 (the club rig) at a cost of about \$35.00 each. KC8BYI moved to do so and was seconded by KC8YVF. All were in favor.

KC8YVF presented the board with an additional style of jacket for the club. It is slightly heavier without a hood. It will be available in maroon with white lettering for the same price, embroidered would be extra.

WA8GRI suggested a column on the roster for a member's occupation. The hope is that we will know who to call when we need something done.

The board discussed the possibility of changing the club's non-profit status to 501c3. KD8BLZ moved we start an education process to inform the club members and give them ample opportunity to voice their opinions. It was agreed to include information in the Harmonic, as well as special mailings, and discussions on the topic. Board member concerns focused on being sure everyone was aware of the proposal and that the course of many not be changed by a few. WA8GRI seconded the motion and all agreed to begin supplying information to the club members for a possible vote later this year.

KD8AVA reported that the new club QSL cards would be in tomorrow.

On a motion by KD8BLZ and seconded by KC8BDQ the meeting adjourned at 9:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted.

Jeff Weirauch, KC8BDQ

Secretary