

70 YEARS OF THE SAGINAW VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

by Joe Turner K8CQF

Aug. 22, 2026

Sullivan's Restaurant, Saginaw Michigan



1985 Tower Project

K8OT
K8CQF
WB8DIT
Jeff Peters
W8SGR
NY7F

The Job Is Done !!

Resolution

WHEREAS, Amateur radio operators have had an exemplary record of service to the public since 1899 when radio was used for the first time to save lives, and

WHEREAS, The importance of amateur radio to individual communities and the United States as a whole has been formally recognized by the Federal Communications Act of 1934 which established the service based upon its unique ability to foster international goodwill, its value as a national reservoir of trained radio operators available for national emergency, and because of the willingness of these amateur radio enthusiasts to create new electronic technologies, and

WHEREAS, Michigan "Hams" have provided desperately needed emergency communication links during floods, tornadoes, plane crashes, the Mexican earthquake disaster, and other disasters over the years, and

WHEREAS, These radio operators have enriched our communities by providing free classes in electrical theory and Morse code, by donating books to local library systems, and by providing service to community events such as Saginaw's Friendship Games, and

WHEREAS, The members of the Amateur Radio Relay League (ARRL) have chosen to gather in Saginaw on Friday, April 11 and Saturday, April 12, for their 1986 State Convention, and

WHEREAS, attending the Convention will be NASA Space Shuttle Challenger Mission Specialist Dr. Anthony England of Texas, ARRL directors and officials from throughout the United States, and approximately 1,500 Michigan Ham radio operators, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That this City Council does hereby salute the dedicated work of Michigan's amateur radio operators and extends its official welcome and good wishes to the members of the Amateur Radio Relay League on the occasion of their forthcoming state convention in our community.

Lawrence D. Crawford, Mayor

Councilmembers

Ronald N. Bushey	Carter McWright
Joy L. Hargrove	Louisa Oates
M. Randall Jurrans	Roosevelt S. Ruffin
Mildred Mason	Delbert J. Schrens

Attest: *Enid G. Davis*
Enid G. Davis, City Clerk



SECTIONS

Club Beginnings

Articles and Awards

Conventions/Swaps/Displays

Emergency Operations - Creating Skills

Fun Events - Fostering Goodwill

Unique Information



Part of Ed Trombly's (8CAM, W8CAM) Awards and accomplishments

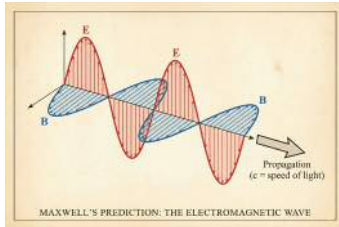
Club Beginnings

BACKGROUND DATA

Saginaw Valley Amateur Radio Association

A NONPROFIT CORPORATION DEDICATED TO THE Advancement TO THE ELECTRONIC SCIENCES

P. O. BOX 1783 • SAGINAW, MICHIGAN 48605-1783



In 1865 James Clerk Maxwell predicted the existence of invisible waves of energy using a formula based upon years of prior research and experimentation by others. The invisible waves were proven to exist during the late 1880s into the mid-1890s by Alekandr Popov, in Russia, Oliver Lodge in Great Britain and Heinrich Hertz in Germany. First, only as a spark. Then as an agent making iron filings cohere. Finally, as sound. Guglielmo Marconi led the making a practical communication device from their work. With the introduction of “valves” or “tubes” Spark gap radio transformed into an RF carrier frequency with information imposed on it. Following tons of experimentation by the curious around the world, a plethora of individuals learned how to transmit “radio waves.” Ocean vessels began using this new fangled “radio.” Lives were saved following ship sinkings. By 1906 countries gathered from around the world to coordinate the use of radio. It was used in expeditions to the world’s poles and other remote parts of the world. In World War I demand for radio demonstrated the usefulness of having an existing pool of skilled communicators. Consequently, a federal law was passed to assure “ham radio” was preserved.



The U.S. Communication's Act of 1934 exists to provide: a pool of skilled personnel in times of crisis; to encourage the development of technology; and to encourage the unique ability of ham radio to foster international goodwill. The Saginaw Valley had its share of experimenters and leaders. Among them was Ed Trombley, a remarkable man. Born at the same time radio was born, he lived until there were cell phones and people had walked on the moon. I hope you enjoy this history of the adventures and achievements of SVARA using Ed’s stories. and those of many other old timers. After all, you are SVARA today, and these tales are legitimately your legacy.

Recollections of 8CAM and others

HAM RADIO IN THE SAGINAW VALLEY

According to Mr. Ed Trombley (8CAM), Mr. Hank Bronson (WBESA), and other local radio pioneers, amateur radio operators began having group meetings in Saginaw during the 1920's. They first met in each other's homes and and only gathered together once in a while.

The 1920s were a very exciting time for all interested in the development of radio. WWJ in Detroit and KDKA in Pittsburg became the nation's first commercial radio stations. The old fashioned "spark" telegraph transmissions used by Heinrich Hertz to discover radio and by Gugliamo Marconi to span the Atlantic ocean, were being replaced by continuous wave or "cw" signals using Morse's telegraph code. The term "radio" had just been inaugurated to replace "wireless" as preferred nomenclature and radio had proven its practical value in several dramatic ways.

Following the sinking of the Titanic and the Republic in 1912, radio equipment became mandated on all oceangoing passenger ships of U.S. registry. In 1913, a number of severe storms swept the midwest and on one weekend alone, at least 13 ships and 244 sailors were lost in a storm on the great lakes. Damage was extensive, much of the midwest was isolated and it was at this time that students at the University of Michigan and Ohio State formed the first known amateur radio emergency communication relief network.

Radio had developed just in time to become an essential tool in man's struggle to survive. Between 1923 and 1936 more than 100 expeditions explored the deadliest and harshest places in the world. Byrd, MacMillan, and others used amateur radio extensively and according to author Clinton B. DeSoto, "many millions of words have been transmitted by amateurs on behalf of exploration parties. Floods, tornadoes, earthquakes - disasters of all varieties provide a large part of the amateur message total in the form of emergency traffic - Tragedy...drama...human interest incidents of all kinds, provocative of both laughter and tears, have been logged in these hard working amateur radio stations."

This was the background against which Saginaw amateurs worked. While pioneers such as Ed Trombley individually experimented with radio, airplanes and other curiosities which struck their fancy, Mr. Clarence R. Pardridge focused public attention on local radio activities in 1921. Here is how Saginaw News columnist Jack Tucker described it. "In November 1921--- Pardridge performed quite a stunt when he transmitted music from his downtown Saginaw location to the Canoe Club, located at what is now the intersection of Fordney and Ezra Rust Drive, for a fraternity dance. Pardridge broadcast music from a cranked-up phonograph to a receiving set at the Canoe Club, where an amplifier made it loud enough for dancing."

Rcollections continued . . .

It was a time of excitement in the amateur radio community, and in 1932 local hams organized a radio club. Initially, members came from throughout the Saginaw Valley including Bay, Genesee, Gratiot, and Saginaw counties and certain portions of Michigan's Thumb. In 1956 The Saginaw Valley Amateur Radio Association was incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan as a non-profit corporation devoted to the advancement of the electrical science.

Also amateur radio as we know it today, was created by the federal governments "Communications Act of 1934". The reason that an amateur radio service exists under this law is to provide: a pool of skilled personnel for times of crises; to encourage the development of new technology; and to foster the unique ability of ham radio operators to create international goodwill through their frequent contacts with residents of other countries.

In order to meet its own goals and the mandates of congress SVARA members contribute to the community in many ways.

They provide communication networks for agencies such as the American Red Cross, the City of Saginaw, Saginaw County, the old Saginaw Hospital Emergency Radio Service, the annual WSAM Raft Race, and activities such as this one today.

They've contributed to our community's economy and its social opportunities by sponsoring events such as: a two month antique radio exhibit at the Saginaw County Historical Museum, an electronic hobby exposition, a number of state amateur radio conventions, co-sponsoring an annual event known as the Five County Swap-n-Shop, and donating books to local libraries.

At the request of local officials, a SVARA member serves on the Board of Directors of the Saginaw County Chapter of the American Red Cross and its disaster committee.

SVARA members participate in the Michigan State Police administered RACES program and the American Radio Relay League's ARES program, and the military's MARS system, and the ham radio National Traffic System.

SVARA has purchased and distributed books and other reference materials for several of the local school systems.

Among the forms of recognition SVARA and its individual members have received are the: Herb S. Brier (W9AD) award presented in 1982 to Mr. G. Ed King (K8OT), the Michigan amateur radio operator of the year award (Cosmo G. Caulkin's Award) to Mr. Ed Trombley (W8CAM), and the prestigious Hiram P. Maxim national award in 1985 to Mr. Mark Schreiner (NK8Q) for overall leadership, community service and contributions to the amateur radio service by a person 21 or younger. Also, K8OCP has been selected as operator of the of the year by the Michigan Amateur Communication System (MACS Net) and several club members have been included in the volume "Outstanding Young Men of America."

Recollections continued . . .

City of Saginaw officials have been so impressed with the emergency and relief communication networks of local hams, that the officials have given SVARA members a former laboratory room to set up a station in. It has been stocked with more than \$5,000 worth of equipment donated by various business and community groups. The facility was occupied by SVARA in October of 1986 and is open to their members 24 hours per day 365 days per year. It is provided with back-up generators and contains complete hf and vhf systems.

In 1985 SVARA members were honored by the local chapter of the Mexican Pioneers Association for their relief efforts during the September 1985 Mexico City earthquake. In 1986, they were summoned to the State Capitol for a gubernatorial commendation concerning their earthquake communication network too.

SVARA participates annually in the Friendship Games competition between the cities of Saginaw Michigan and Sault Ste. Marie Ontario. Its efforts within that activity have been the subject of several magazine and newspaper articles and their leadership was invited to participate in an Canadian-U.S. symposium which described for civic leaders from the two countries, various elements of sister city competitions.

In addition to the press coverage of the Friendship Games communication networks, SVARA members have the subject or contributed in some way to media coverage by ABC News, QST Magazine, The Canadian Amateur, and World Radio Magazine.

Major disaster relief efforts which SVARA members have participated in include the 1953 and 1956 Flint Michigan tornadoes, the Easter 1958 airplane crash at Freeland's Tri-City Airport, the 1985 Mexico City earthquake, the 1986 mid-Michigan floods, and the 1988 Hurricane Gilbert effort (during which, for the first time a single station - the Saginaw station K8DAC - was selected to handle all amateur radio relief messages for the entire state).

(written by: Joseph M. Turner, K8CQF
423 N. Granger St.
Saginaw, Mi. 48602
June 1989

Becoming a Not For Profit Organization

KNOWN MEETING LOCATIONS:

Moving on from a few people meeting at private homes, the club began gathering at a residential Structure located on S. Jefferson Ave. used by the Red Cross . It was believed to be SVARA's first meeting location. It was followed by the City of Saginaw fresh water Treatment Plant, the American Red Cross offices at 3535 State Street, the American Red Cross Offices on Michigan Ave., Covenant Hospital's Auditorium and now Harry Brown Airport

Form 9 - 10-24-59 - 1M

ORIGINAL
(Non-Profit)

MICHIGAN
ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

OF

SAGINAW VALLEY AMATEUR
(Please type or print corporate name)

RADIO ASSOCIATION

Under Act 327, Public Acts of 1931, as amended.

(This form prepared by Michigan Corporation and
Securities Commission.)

RECEIVED
MAY 28 1958
MICHIGAN CORPORATION AND
SECURITIES COMMISSION

RECEIVED
JUN 5 1958
MICHIGAN CORPORATION AND
SECURITIES COMMISSION

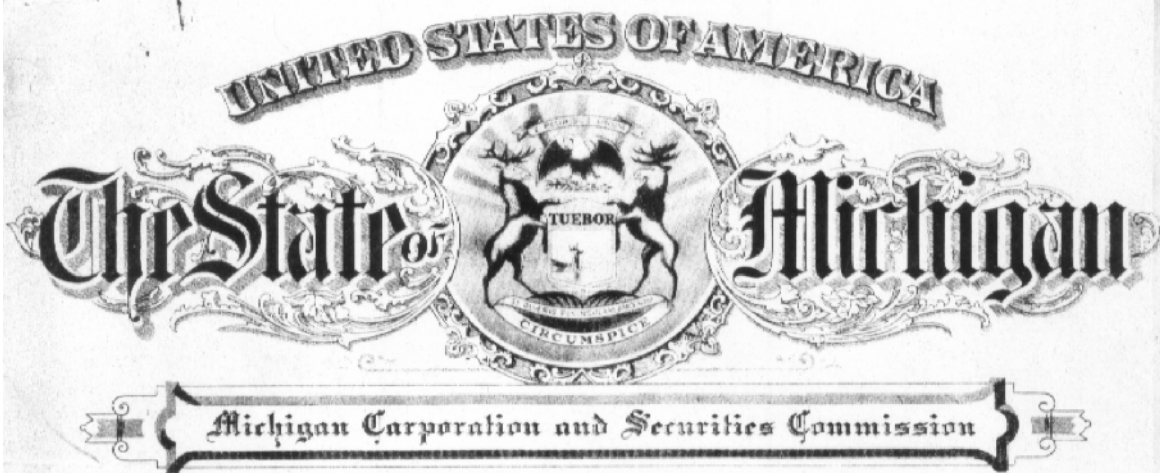
FILED
JUN 11 1958
This is to certify that the articles to
be a true copy of the original to
file in this office.

James J. Baker
COMMISSIONER
MICHIGAN CORPORATION AND
SECURITIES COMMISSION

MAIL THREE SIGNED AND ACKNOWLEDGED
COPIES TO:
Michigan Corporation & Securities Commission
P. O. Box 386 Lansing 4, Michigan

Fees \$15.00

MICHIGAN CORPORATION AND
SECURITIES COMMISSION
JUN - 6 1958
\$15.00
Comptroller



Lansing, Michigan

To All To Whom These Presents Shall Come:

I, ^{Lawrence Gubow}~~James C. Miller~~, Commissioner of the Michigan Corporation and Securities Commission, Do Hereby Certify That Articles of Incorporation of

SAGINAW VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

were duly filed in this office on the 6th day of June, 1956, in conformity with Act 327, Public Acts of 1931, as amended.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Seal of the Commission, in the City of Lansing, this
6th *day of* June, 1956

Lawrence Gubow
Commissioner