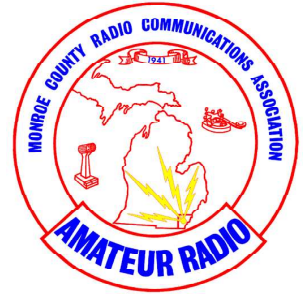


The Hertzian Herald



February 2026 • Volume 50, Issue 2 • Monroe, Michigan, U.S.A.

D Fritz Bitz:



I did a Technician License class yesterday, which means I am sending this in late. Again. We had three out of four students pass the Tech test, which is about what I expect. Our success rate is about 90% overall so that fourth person was kind of a toss up pass or not. We had one student who passed the Tech test easily and then passed the General test also. We have only had a couple of people do that in the past so big congratulations to Aaron. The Tech Exam questions change this year on July 1st so I will have to re-write my Study Guide. Looking forward to that.

The Hamfest is rapidly closing in so we need to start working on that. Fred has been working on it for several weeks I am sure. Obviously we will need help with set-up on Saturday and clean-up on Sunday so plan ahead and reserve some time to help us out. We will have the food truck again and I have put a request in for good weather as always.

Yesterday was Valentine's Day and before I left for class at 7am, I made my wife a nice card from stuff in my granddaughter's craft cart. Later, she text me how nice it was and took it to work to show off to the people she works with. Everyone thought it was so nice that I did that for her. I did it because I forgot to get her a card on Saturday. Shhhh.

So, until next month, 73.
See you at the meeting.
Don Fritz, N8BZN

MCRCA February Program

We've all heard about Oscar Seven "The little Satellite that could", but what is the background behind all of this and how did it earn this nickname?

We'll find out at the February MCRCA meeting where our program will cover the history of some of our amateur radio satellites and focus on OSCAR Seven, the oldest operating ham satellite. We'll see some of the designers, engineers and builders, learn about the technology and how they managed to hop a ride on the launch vehicle.

Join us for this interesting view of our past, present and future.

See you at the meeting.

<http://mcrca.org/>

www.facebook.com/groups/1643856795878368/

Club Officers

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MCRCA Meeting Minutes for January 15, 2026

Meeting called to order at 7:32 pm, by Don N8BZN.

Pledge of Allegiance

Introductions: No new members, upgrades or guests.

MINUTES: Motion by Mike N8KUF, supported by John N8DXR, to approve as written in the Herald. Approved.

TREASURER REPORT: Not available

DX REPORT: Tom KG8P, 6m has disappointing propagation. Most islands are closed or increasingly difficult to get to – a new method to get to them are in the works – see program for more details of this method.

CONTESTING: Paul W8PI, several in Jan/Feb, (8 total listed) VHF is hard currently, so Jan 17 – ARRL Contest may be practically hard.

TESTING: Paul - Next session - Sat. February 21, 2025. **Appointments Preferred - FRN and email req'd**

CLASSES: Don - Next class - Sat. February 14, 2025 contact Don N8BZN – **Tech class.** Only one person signed up currently – need 3 to hold a class.

ARPSC, Last Saturday training on 2.0 message system. Several nets available to check into. Reminder, Monday night MCRPSC local net, all encouraged to attend.

RRRA: All functional, 220 was on temp now on permanent system again. Echo Link, dropping first character/symbol – working on a fix – First attempt in place may hear a little beep at very beginning. Recommend, key up, count to two, then start transmission.

OLD BUSINESS: Some shirts have been passed out – still have a few to pass out. Reminder, club dues may be due, check the sign-in sheet.

NEW BUSINESS: Elections

President	Don N8BZN
V-President	Mike N8KUF
Secretary	Brenda KB8KQC
Treasurer	Fred K8EBI
Director 1	Aaron KE8PUN
Director 2	Ron KE8OSX
Director/Station Trustee	Wes KC8SK

Nominations were closed, Motion to accept slate, John N8DXR, second Bob KF8AOL, above slate was voted and passed.

DOOR PRIZE DRAWING: Delmer KF8DZD

50/50: Delmer KF8DZD, donated his winnings to the scholarship

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Reminder, Hamfest is coming up – work started on it.

PROGRAM: DXpedition to the island of Desecheo, by Tom KG8P – was done in 2009, small island (1/2 mile) just off Puerto Rico.

ADJOURNED: 8:47 pm

ATTENDANCE: 18

NM8I Barb	KF8AOL Bob	KF8DZD Delmer	N8BZN Don
WD8NWF James	N8DXR John	KJ8H Keith	N8KUF Mike
KA8PQH Neil	N9PWL Rick	KE8RIJ Richard	KE8OSX Ron
WA8PYL Scott	KE8MFY Steve	N8NYP Terry	KG8P Tom
KE8NSU Tony	KC8SKP Wes		

Committees**Club Station**

Wes Busdiecker KC8SKP

DX Net

Soon

Field Day

Jeff Breitner KA8NCR

Finance

Paul Trouten W8PI (chair)
Fred VanDaele K8EBI
Dale Williams WA8EFK

HamFest

Fred VanDaele K8EBI

Hertzian Herald

Fred VanDaele K8EBI

Historian

Paul Trouten W8PI

Public Relations

Terry Kolton N8NYP

Scholarship

Fred VanDaele K8EBI

Program Chairman

Dale WA8EFK
dale.wms1@frontier.com

Membership

Terry Kolton N8NYP
n8nyp@arrl.net

Property Custodian

Paul Trouten W8PI

SKYWARN - NWS Training, County Procedures

The Monroe County NWS SKYWARN Training will be Wednesday March 25th from 6:00pm-7:30pm at the Bedford Branch Library 8575 Jackman Rd Temperance. You MUST register with EMD by going to: <https://www.co.monroe.mi.us/305/Sky-Warn-Spotter> and filling out the registration form.

We will then discuss county SKYWARN reporting procedures at the April Meeting 4/2/2026

Don't forget to participate in the weekly Monday night ARPSC net at 8pm on 72 Monroe.

If you are interested in honing your skills or building new ones, please feel free to stop in to any of our meetings or training sessions, or participate on our nets. We are here to help every operator learn and perform better. It doesn't matter if your call sign was just posted on the FCC database or you have had your ticket for decades, we are always looking for additional operators.



ARPSC meetings are usually the first Thursday of every month at 7:30pm at the EMD on Raisinville Rd. The next meeting is Thursday March 5th.

As always Thanks to the club and the club webmaster for linking our FB and webpage, and to Fred for his time getting this newsletter out.

73, Lance Charter, KE8BYC
Emergency Coordinator
Monroe County Amateur Radio Public Service Corps

Nudging a teacher to Tech after our historic school contact with astronaut Chris Williams

February 9, 2026

On Friday January 30, 2026, my daughter and about a dozen other Conn Magnet Elementary students in Raleigh, North Carolina became the first in the universe to make a scheduled amateur radio contact with astronaut Chris Williams KJ5GEW on the International Space Station. I wrote an article about it for our club newsletter, [available here starting on page 32](#).

I wouldn't have a successful [ARISS](#) contact under my belt if it wasn't for our champion teacher on the inside, one Dan Gridley, Magnet Coordinator. Gridley was the glue that held everything together. How do you thank someone for an opportunity like that? With strings attached!

The radio team wanted this to be the start of Gridley's amateur radio journey, so we got him a Technician license exam study guide from another Dan—Romanchik KB6NU! I happened to have an extra tribander HT so I programmed it with local repeaters and put together a new ham starter package for him. The Technician questions are getting updated in June 2026 so there's a deadline built in to motivate him!

We didn't have this idea in time to inscribe the book at the ARISS activation, so I spent the weekend driving around the Triangle collecting signatures. It mean I got to see the impressive stations of a couple of the mentors on the team, [N4TL](#) and [N8MH](#). As I drove through the tiny towns of Wake and Johnston counties listening to [the latest ICQ podcast](#), I found myself smiling and thinking about all the joy and peak experiences this hobby brought me during my first year as a Technician.

I hope Gridley gets the bug!

K3LOE: Tech on Ten

[SpottedHam.com Adds DX Cluster Integration and Customizable Club Widgets](#)

February 14, 2026

The following is a press release from SpottedHam.com:

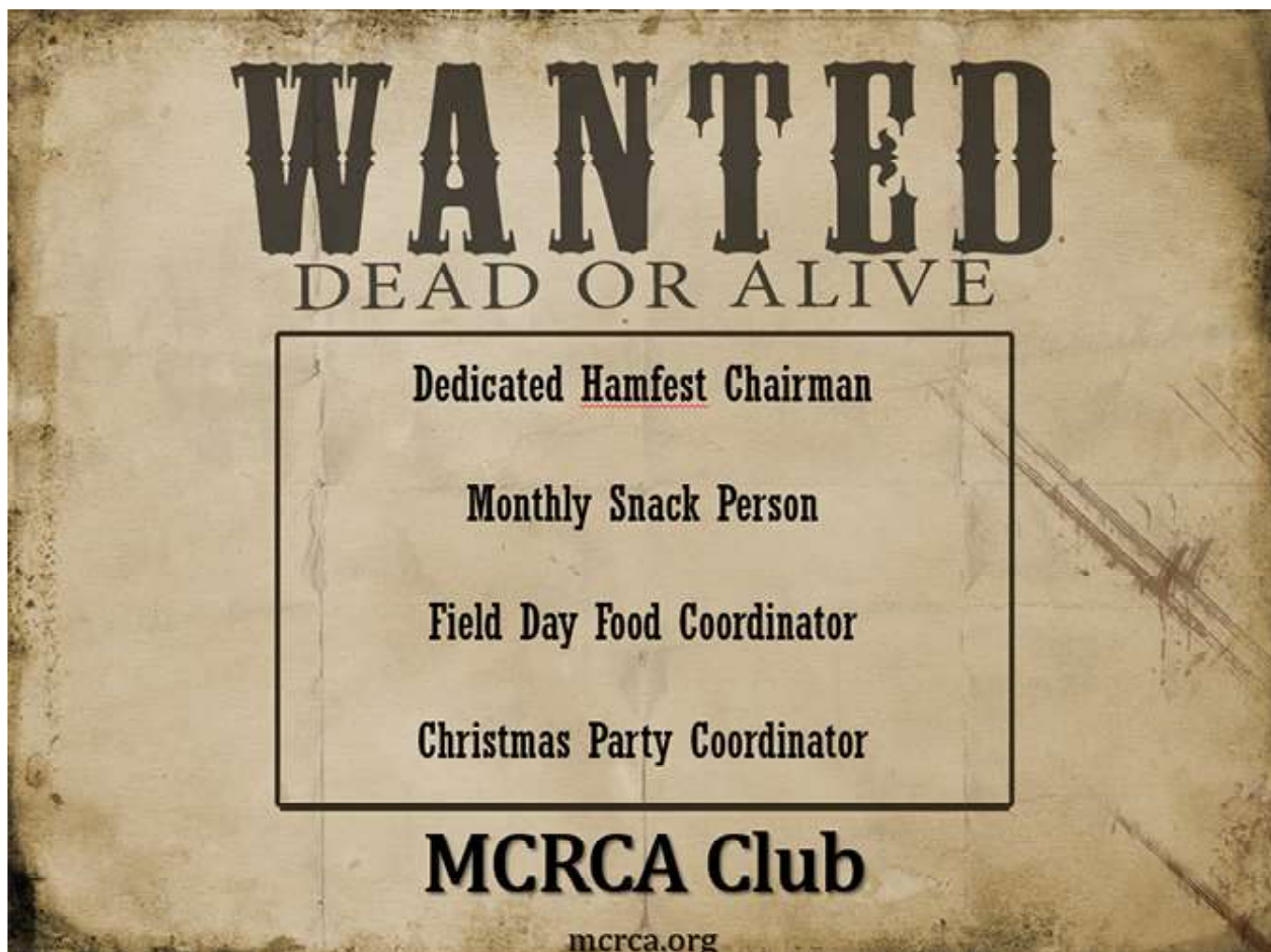
Following its successful launch earlier this month, the spotting and alert platform [SpottedHam.com](https://www.spottedham.com) has released a major feature update driven by community feedback.

In addition to its signature POTA and SOTA real-time email alerts, the platform now integrates a global DX Cluster feed. This allows operators to filter for rare DX alongside portable activations, all within the same lightweight, mobile-first interface. Users can still set custom watchlists for specific callsigns, ensuring they never miss a “need” on the bands.

Perhaps the most significant addition is the new SpottedHam Club Widget. Radio clubs can now generate a custom HTML snippet to embed a live member activity table on their own club websites. This feature aims to help local clubs stay connected by showing at-a-glance what club members are currently on the air.

Developed by Robert Campbell (KM6HBH), SpottedHam continues to focus on a “low-bandwidth, high-speed” philosophy, making it ideal for field use or slow shack connections. The service is free to use and is already running some DX club’s pages.

Operators can explore the new DX filters, set up their first email alert, or generate a widget for their club at: <https://www.spottedham.com>.



Tech Trivia 29 - Computer Trivia 3

Who's On First?

The conventional American view is that nothing much happened in computers from the time of Babbage until the mid-1930s, when Howard Aiken began work on the IBM/Harvard Mark I, which was finished in 1944.

The objective was similar to Babbage's — but with navigation under better control since the advent of radio, the tables to be calculated were ballistics — the aiming of big guns. A complete book of tables would require over two million 8-digit multiplications, an overwhelming task for humans. The Mark I was composed of motors, gears, and relays — a 51-foot long, 8-foot high monster. It did a 23-digit multiplication in 3 seconds. But it was not electronic.

J. Presper Eckert and John Mauchly at the University of Pennsylvania developed a fully electronic computer for doing ballistics tables, which became operational in 1946. It was called ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator And Calculator), and was 1000 times faster than the Harvard Mark I. It used 18,000 vacuum tubes, occupied a 30 x 50-foot room, and consumed 150 kW of power. It had a 100-kHz clock rate, and operated with decimal, rather than binary numbers. But it was "programmed" by hard-wire patch cords. Real computers today are expected to store their programs in memory, the same as data.

The EDVAC, built in the next room to the ENIAC at the U of PA, came on line in 1950. It was the first operational stored-program electronic digital computer in the US.

Eckert and Mauchly started a computer company which was soon bought out by Remington Rand Corp. This company delivered the first commercial digital computer in the US in May of 1951. It was called UNIVAC, for Universal Automatic Computer. It contained 5,000 tubes, had a 2.25-MHz clock rate, and a memory of about 6 kilobytes. UNIVAC was used amid great fanfare to "predict" Eisenhower's election in 1952, and to "formulate" the questions for the popular TV quiz show, The \$64,000 Question. These stunts undoubtedly had much to do with the public perception of the computer as a "giant brain."

The above, as I said, is the traditional American view. Now for some lesser known facts:

1. John Atanasoff, at Iowa State College, was using vacuum tubes in a prototype digital computer in 1941. Mauchly visited Atanasoff in Iowa that summer, and the ENIAC surely owed much to what he learned there.
2. Konrad Zuse in Germany proposed a computer using 2,000 tubes for calculation of stress on aircraft wings. The Third Reich would not pay for the tubes, so he built, in 1941, a machine using 2,600 relays. It was successful, but was destroyed by an Allied bombing raid in 1945.
3. The British had built a computer-like machine to assist in breaking the German ENIGMA code in 1943. It contained 1,500 vacuum tubes, and was called Colossus. One of its progenitors was Alan Turing, who laid much of the theoretical foundation for later computer development, and whose tragic life was the subject of a recent PBS docudrama.
4. Kilburn and Williams developed a fully electronic, stored-program computer, which they called the Mark I, at the University of Manchester, England, in 1948 — predating the EDVAC by two years.
5. Ferranti, Ltd., in England, delivered a commercial electronic computer (another Mark I) in February of 1951, three months before the UNIVAC.

So, who built the first digital computer? I guess it's not so simple a question as, "Who invented the light bulb?"

MCRCA Dues run from January 1st to December 31st.
Please check your name on the sheet below to see where you stand.
You can fill out the form on the next page to pay your dues.

February 19, 2026

Call	Name	Exp date	Call	Name	Exp date
KE8PUN	Aaron Liske	2025	KJ8H	Keith Hutchinson	2026
NM8I	Barbara Wilson	2025	KE8LRD	Ken Grooms	2024
KE8TPU	Bill Mercer	2022	KE8BYC	Lance Charter	2020
KB8KQC	Brenda VanDaele	2026	KE8OTG	Larry Lenhart	2023
KF8AOL	Bob Morrison	2026	KE8QGU	Madonna Burkitt	2024
WB8GUN	Bob Van Klingereren	2026	W8MCW	Mark Wheeler	2027
KE8WYY	Brian Paules	2026	KN6EYQ	Mark White	2022
W8BKT	Brian Tennyson	2020	KE8UWZ	Mike Courington	2024
KE8RCN	Brody Madlock	2021	KE8TYC	Mike Isbell	2022
WA8EFK	Dale Williams	2025	N8KUF	Mike Karmol	2026
KC8BUD	Daniel Bain	2024	AD8EV	Michael Mc Peek	2021
KB8AQJ	Dan Kay	2025	KA8PQH	Neil Remaklus	2025
	Nancy Kay	2025	KF8AYH	Omar Metwally	2025
AC8SI	Dave Buchko	2026	W8PI	Paul Trouten	2026
W8IIE	Dave Benoit	2023	KC8AZZ	Peter Forgacs	2027
K8EKG	David Hatfield	2024	KE8YQE	Phil Bardoni	2025
KE8RXC	Debbie Bardoni	2022	W8NBS	Randy Meyer	2022
KC8CCR	Debbie Forgacs	2027	N9PWL	Rick Durham	2027
KF8DZD	Delmer Taylor	2026	KE8RIJ	Rich Spackey	2027
KE8ZAR	Dennis Hulvey	2025	KE8UNH	Rick Wykle	2022
N8BZN	Donald Fritz	2025	KD8ZUI	Rob Howe	2026
KF8CCH	Doug Orr	2027	K8HV	Robert Lawrence	2022
K8OF	Doug Wherry	2026	KE8OSX	Ron Duvall	2025
WS8Y	Ed Keller Jr	2023	KE8CQO	Ron Hills	2025
KC8RQK	Fred Kinsey	2025	KD8ZNZ	Rodney Haddix	2026
K8EBI	Fred VanDaele	2026	WO0O	Russ DeCrease	2025
KB8OSU	George Low	2026	KD8HYS	Sandra Burr	2026
KE8VLQ	Gregory Milatz	2026	W8SMB	Scott Burkey	2025
KE8VTT	Isaac Burkey	2025	WA8PYL	Scott Retzlaff	2026
KE8VLW	James Kiester	2024	KE8MFY	Steve Orlowski	2026
WD8NWF	James Toomey	2025	N8NYP	Terry Kolton	2029
KN8CR	Jeff Breitner	2024	N8OSC	Tom Cooper	2024
K8OLV	Jeff Giles	2026	KE8UDH	Tom Hughey	2022
KE8WMY	Jefferson Mathews	2023	KE8KNZ	Tom Imlach	2022
K9JP	Jeff Peters	2027	KG8P	Tom Jenkins	2026
N8RWI	John Bills	2025	KE8NSU	Tony Griffin	2027
N8DXR	John Copeland	2026	KC8SKP	Wes Busdiecker	2027
K8UMF	John Miller	2025	N8MWQ	Woody Kirkman	2023
WA8YZB	John Turner	2027			

Monroe County Radio Communications Association

Dues run from January 1st to December 31st of each year. As a current / Past Member, you are invited to attend our monthly meetings to find out the latest plans for our club. You may pay your dues at any regular meeting or by filling in the form below and mailing it to:

MCRCA, 4 Carl Dr, Monroe, MI 48162.

Your membership and support will help with the continued success of our club. Thank you.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Regular – \$10 — Add'l Family – \$5 each

DATE _____ ARRL MEMBER? Y _____ N _____ RRRR Member? Y _____ N _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

CALL _____ CLASS _____ E-MAIL: _____

ADDITIONAL Family Members: _____

Please Circle All That Apply:

Active Bands: 160 80 75 40 30 20 17 15 12 10 6 2 220 440 higher

Modes: CW - SSB – DIGITAL - PACKET - RTTY - FM - DX - MOBILE - EME - SAT - ATV - SSTV

Interests: Traffic - DX - Contests - Foxhunts - Satellites - Nets – Antennas - Computers
Emergency - ARES/RACES - Skywarn - Classic Radios (circle all that apply)

Do you plan to upgrade your license? Y _____ N _____ If yes, what class? _____

What kinds of meeting programs would you like to see?

Other activities you would like to see the Club offer _____

General Comment's _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Amateur Radio Examinations Monroe, MI

Monroe County Radio Communications Association Amateur Radio examinations are held the 3rd Saturday of every even numbered month at:

American Red Cross Chapter Bldg.
1645 North Dixie Highway
Monroe, MI 48161

**Registrations preferred
Call for information.
email address and FRN required**

2026 Schedule:
February 21 April 18
June 20 August 15
October 17 December 19

TESTING BEGINS PROMPTLY AT 9:00 AM

Applicants are expected to have all forms filled out and be ready to take tests at that time. Coffee and doughnuts are available at 8:30 AM. For more information or to make reservations, call Paul Trouten - W8PI at 734-854-2224

Join us at the next meeting

February 19th 7:30 pm
American Red Cross Chapter Bldg.
1645 North Dixie Highway
Monroe, MI 48162

Local Net

ARPSC Net - Every Monday evening on '72-Monroe (146.72 Mhz) starting at 8:00pm.

ARPSC Meeting first Thursday of every month at the EMD office on Raisinville Rd.. 7:00 PM

One Day Bi-Monthly Technician classes

Next class will be April 11th, 2026.

The Monroe County Radio Communications Association (MCRCA) is offering a one-day Amateur Radio course for the **Technician** class license in April. The class will run from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM on the **second Saturday of every even numbered month**. The cost is \$10 and includes lunch, snacks and beverages. The test will be conducted immediately following the class and has a separate fee of \$14. These classes will be held at the Red Cross building, 1645 N Dixie Hwy, Monroe, MI 48162.

There is a maximum class size of 10 people on a first come first served basis and you should sign up no later than 1 week before the class. All study material and testing paperwork will be provided at the time you sign up and you should plan on doing some pre-class studying to make things easier in the class.

If you are interested in becoming a Ham Radio Operator, please call or email me to get signed up for the next class.

N8BZN Don Fritz / (419) 345-4495 after 6PM / Donfritz56@gmail.com

New MCRCA Members

Please welcome recent new members to the club.