

The Hertzian Herald



September 2024 • Volume 48, Issue 9 • Monroe, Michigan, U.S..

Hello to all,

I hope you are all well and hope you can make the club meeting this Thursday Sept 19.

I've been driving around Monroe County playing Uber grandpa for my two granddaughters lately. I set up a portable station in the parking lot at Monroe Community College one evening and had some success. It's nice to have some "cooler" weather to enjoy as the days grow shorter. Autumn is days away and it's so dry I broke down and watered some plants that looked parched. The birds have been continuously visiting the birdbath (which is a safe oasis for them).



I only have seen one squirrel drink out of it one time. Nuts? Hopefully we get some rain soon to head off grass fires and perhaps worse (like in other areas of the country).

Solar cycle 25 is peaking and making radio contacts difficult at times, if not impossible. Between these solar events are opportunities to make good and even rare contacts. 10 meters is heating up lately and will keep getting better, as will 6 meters. I hope to get my 6m antenna up soon. Aurora is possible, so look up if you live in a low light area.

I've been reprogramming my handhelds to update them to the most current Repeater Book database. I found some changes and additions in our area so it might be a good thing to check on your own rigs. Hopefully you remember how to program your HT? Next up are my mobile rigs. Has anyone in the club had a contact with the space station?

The last two big hamfests are over for our area. Sorry you didn't see me there because I had planned to go. Maybe next year. I hope to hear a report from someone who could go.

73, Take care and be well. Turn your radios on Keith KJ8H

So dry the catfish are carrying canteens.
So dry the trees are bribing the dogs.
It's so dry that the cows are giving evaporated milk.
It's so dry the fish are knocking on the door, askin' for a drink of water.
It's so dry here the all the fish have ticks.
It's so dry the government has announced a water pistol buy back scheme.
It's so dry, crooks are siphoning off radiators instead of gas tanks.
It's so dry, the the dogs are marking their territory with chalk lines.
It's so dry they've had to close two lanes at the swimming pool.
It's so dry the river only runs twice a week.
So dry we're fishin' on lawn chairs with slingshots.
It's so dry we went rafting on hand trucks.
Its so dry here that the fire hydrants are chasing the dogs around.

<http://mcrcra.org/>

www.facebook.com/groups/1643856795878368/

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MCRCA Meeting minutes August 15, 2024

Meeting called to order at 7:36 pm, by Keith KJ8H.

Pledge of Allegiance

Introductions: No new members, no upgrade and 1 guest

MINUTES: Motion by Paul W8PI, supported by Scott W8SMB, to approve as written in the Herald. Approved.

TREASURER REPORT: N/A

DX REPORT: Paul W8PI, Talked about N5J DXpedition and overall band conditions.

CONTESTING: Paul W8PI, Busy state QSO party month coming up, 11 state parties during the next 5 weeks.

TESTING: Paul - Next session - Sat. August 17, 2024. Appointments Preferred - FRN and email req'd

CLASSES: Sat. October, 2024 contact Don N8BZN – Technician class. Planning on General class in December.

ARPSC: Had one exercise and all went well. More information next month.

RRRA: Dale WA8EFK, one issue with voter, repaired and working fine now.

OLD BUSINESS: Club T-shirts, - coming – but not for this meeting – should be available by next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: None

DOOR PRIZE DRAWING: Wes KC8SKP

50/50: Steve KE8MFY

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Findley Hamfest Sept. 8 and Adrian Hamfest Sept. 15

PROGRAM: Oscilloscopes by Dale WA8EFK. Video and demonstration of digital oscilloscopes. Why digital scopes are better than CRT. What you can do with scopes.

ADJOURNED: 8:30 pm

ATTENDANCE: 11

W8PI Paul,	WA8EFK Dale,	KE8OSX Ron,
W8SMB Scott,	KC8SKP Wes,	KE8MFY Steve,
KJ8H Keith,	KE8YQE Phil,	KF8AYH Omar,
K8EKG Dave,	KF8BBF Jason (New)	

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

Tom Imlach KE8KNZ

Scholarship

Fred VanDaele K8EBI

Program Chairman

Dale WA8EFK

dale.wms1@frontier.com

Membership

Terry Kolton N8NYP

n8nyp@arrl.net

Property Custodian

Paul Trouten W8PI

ARPSC - Fall is knocking at our door, and that means...

Annual Simulated Emergency Test Saturday Oct 12th 8am-??TBD

You do NOT have to be an ARPSC member to participate. Just like Field Day, this is an opportunity for everyone to practice and participate.

The SET is ARRL's primary national emergency exercise and is designed to assess the skills and preparedness of Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®) volunteers, as well as those affiliated with other organizations involved in emergency and disaster response.

The SET encourages maximum participation by all radio amateurs, partner organizations, and national, state, and local officials who typically engage in emergency or disaster response. In addition to ARES volunteers, those active in the National Traffic System (NTS), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES), National Weather Service (NWS) SKYWARN®, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and a variety of other allied groups and public service-oriented radio amateurs are needed to fulfill important roles in this nationwide exercise.



This year we will have a larger need for stations that can deploy with go kits to a served location (Mostly parking lots) and handle message traffic. We are also planning on deploying the 58Com1 trailer for its first heavy use event. There will also be need for folks that can operate from their home, but we hope you take advantage of the chance to get out once more before the weather gets cold and snow piles up and operate from the field.

In 2023 we ended up 4th NATIONWIDE for the SET and for the 5th year in a row 1st place in Great Lakes District which is Michigan, Ohio and Kentucky. Please consider participating with us for a few hours on the 12th to bump that National rank and continue being the best in 3 states!

We will start the process around 7:30am, be operational by 8am and then after the drill ends we will have everyone report to the trailer for a debrief and discussion.

The SET offers volunteers an opportunity to test equipment, modes, and skills under simulated emergency conditions and scenarios. Individuals can use the time to update a "go-kit" for use during deployments and to ensure their home station's operational capability in an emergency or disaster. To get involved, contact me via email at my callsign @yahoo.com, sign up on the ARPSC web page or during a Monday night ARES Net 8pm on the 146.720MHz (72 Monroe) repeater.

Speaking of the Trailer...

We are working hard to get this asset outfitted and turn it into a highly usable asset for the county. We have a grant request in the works thru the county and are working on odd jobs to make its use easier. Since we are not a 501c3 entity (nor do we want to undertake that headache), we cannot simply go out and ask for donations from the general public, so all supplies and equipment must come thru the county or team donations. This will be a slow process but it will be worth waiting for.

The calendar for the fall is filling quickly and we have a lot of events scheduled with more in the process being added. Watch the calendar at MCARPSC.org for events and sign up under the "Upcoming Public Service Events" by clicking on the Event Sign up link at the top of the page. Please read description of each event before you sign up as some events may require specific training or authorizations. You will receive an email with the events you sign up for, please save the included link in case you want to participate in additional events or need to withdraw.

Thursday September 19th 6pm-8pm EVENT FERMI Emergency Worker Decon Drill-MUST have REP101 Training

Thursday October 3rd 7:30pm ARPSC Meeting—SET Information—Please plan on attending if you wish to be part of the Simulated Emergency Drill

Saturday October 12th 8am-12pm Fall Simulated Emergency Test **Sunday October 13th**—POSSIBLE EVENT Ann Arbor Marathon—Operated by Michigan District 2 More information coming soon

Continued next page

Sunday October 13th—POSSIBLE EVENT Ann Arbor Marathon—Operated by Michigan District 2 More information coming soon

Thursday October 26th 6pm-8pm EVENT FERMI Emergency Worker Decon Exercise-MUST have REP101 Training and County ID

Thursday October 31st 4-8pm(?)—Dundee Spook Patrol—We will need at least 5 teams to cover the area.

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.

ARPSA meetings are usually the first Thursday of every month at 7:30pm at the EMD on Raisinville Rd. The next meeting is Thursday October 3rd.

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



CLUB LOG....MCRCA PROGRAM FOR THE SEPTEMBER MEETING

We have all heard about it and several MCRCA members are using it very effectively. For those of us who may be new to DX and are just getting started "Club Log" is a very useful tool to have in our ham radio toolbox.

For the September club program, Michael Wells G7VJR the developer of Club Log, will do a presentation specifically for beginners explaining how and why he developed this really useful (and free) program. Michael will also detail the key features and benefits for the beginner. Its capabilities are amazing.

Even if you are only a very casual DX'er or are interested in shooting for your Worked all States award or for that matter working for any of the many awards available for operating activities, you will find Club Log really worthwhile to have on hand.

Rank	Prefix	Entity Name	Most Wanted	Whiteliste
1.	P5	DPRK (NORTH KOREA)		✓
2.	BS7H	SCARBOROUGH REEF		✓
3.	CE0X	SAN FELIX ISLANDS		✓
4.	BV9P	PRATAS ISLAND		✓
5.	KH7K	KURE ISLAND		✓
6.	KH3	JOHNSTON ISLAND		✓
7.	3Y/P	PETER 1 ISLAND		✓
8.	FT5/X	KERGUELEN ISLAND		✓
9.	YV0	AVES ISLAND		✓
10.	3Y/B	BOUVET ISLAND		✓
11.	ZS8	PRINCE EDWARD & MARION ISLANDS		✓
12.	KH4	MIDWAY ISLAND		✓
13.	VK0M	MACQUARIE ISLAND		✓
14.	PY0S	SAINT PETER AND PAUL ROCKS		✓
15.	KP5	DESECHEO ISLAND		✓
16.	VP0S	SOUTH SANDWICH ISLANDS		✓
17.	KH5	PALMYRA & JARVIS ISLANDS		✓
18.	ZL9	NEW ZEALAND SUBANTARCTIC ISLANDS		✓
19.	FK/C	CHESTERFIELD ISLANDS		✓
20.	VK0H	HEARD ISLAND		✓

Tech Trivia 3: — Dit Dit Dah Dah Dit Dit

For this month, forgive me if I indulge in two of my favorite topics:

CW and the history of radio. Did you know that Samuel 'FB' Morse did not invent the Morse code? He came up with the idea for a magnetic telegraph in 1832, and had a working version by 1837. For a code, he envisioned sending only numbers. The first five digits would be represented by one to five brief ON switching's of the current. He called the ON signals dots. For the digits 6 through 0, he proposed to use again a series of up to five dots, only these would have a much wider spacing between them, since operators might lose count if ten dots were required. Every word in the language was then to be assigned a number, which would be sent to represent the word. Morse was nearing completion of his word-to-number and number-to-word dictionaries in 1844 when his assistant, Alfred Vail, came up with a new idea for a code using dots and dashes to represent letters. In fact, it used three ON lengths (dots, dashes, and long dashes) and four spacing's (short or long spacing between elements of a letter, a longer space between letters, and a still longer space between words.) This became the American Morse code. You can still hear some oldtimers using it on 80 and 40 meters. Most Old American Morse letters are the same as the new International Morse letters we are familiar with. Here are some that are different:

C didit-it	F didahdit
L daahhh	O dit-dit
P didididit	Y didit-didit
3 (numeral) didididahdit	
question dahdididahdit	

Note that didit (short space) is I; dit-dit (long space) is O; and dit dit (longer space) is two letters (E E) in succession. The rhythm of the Old Morse C is familiar to us in the last three dots we send for DE, meaning FROM. A very long dash is letter L, which is also used for numeral 0. (If you thought it was a clever time saver to send a single long dash for a zero, Vail thought of it a century and a half ago.)

American Morse was the standard in the days of spark, and wasn't effectively replaced by International Morse until tubes took over about 1920. The surviving wireless operator of the Titanic (1912) complained bitterly about rescue operators who knew only American Morse.

Our SK, meaning End Of Work, comes from American Morse. The numerals 30, long used by newspaper copy editors to mark the end of an article, come out didididahdit daahhh in Old Morse. We simply closed it up to didididahdidah.

Our ES for AND is not borrowed from another language, as many assume. Old Morse has a separate symbol for the ampersand (&) which is dit-dididit. (By the way, the name ampersand comes from a slurring of British schoolchildren reciting the alphabet and tacking on at the end, 'and per se, and.' Per se is Latin for 'by itself.')

Frustrated telegraph ops often sent DAMN which they shortened to DN. To avoid trouble in a Victorian era this was copied on the message pad as a question mark or a slash. In American Morse dahdididahdit is now the official question mark, while for us it is the slash. Like the word HAM itself, the word LID, meaning a poor operator, has several contending explanations. One is that new Morse ops would attach a tobacco can lid to their sounder to get a ring that could be distinguished from the clacking of other sounders in a crowded telegraph office. Another is that it is simply a contraction of LIfteD, a slang term applied to an operator who had been taken out of a main office and sent to a backwater station where he could cause less trouble.

For a closer, how about some CW information you can use? If you've wondered how fast you're sending and want a quick way to check it out, send THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPS OVER THE LAZY DOG (no period). There are 35 letters, equivalent to 7 five-letter words. If you send it in 60 seconds, that's 7 wpm - good enough to pass the Novice test with room to spare. If you send it (and receive it) in 30 seconds, that's 14 wpm, and you're ready for the General. Do it in 20 seconds, and you're at 21 wpm - time to upgrade to Extra!

Until next month - 73 de Dan, K8JWR

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 _____

The Great Shack QRM Hunt (2024 Edition)

Written on Saturday 17 August 2024 - Ian Renton

A year or so ago, being unhappy with the large amount of noise I saw when playing radio from home (particularly on the 40-metre band), I went on a hunt for the causes. I turned off everything I could, bar the radio and its power supply, jumped around the band and found: no difference at all.

I blamed the neighbor's solar panel inverters, not something I could really do much about, and settled in for a life of disappointing FT8.



Finally, a radio that can hear things

Over time, if anything, the problem seemed to be getting worse. This year, I've wanted to join some of the weekly OARC nets on 40m but found myself totally thwarted by S9+20 background noise. Even the FT8 was getting worse, with reliable S7 noise on 20m as well.

Now that I've taken up POTA and know how nice S0-1 background noise is, I wanted to have another go at the home situation to see if anything could be done. The POTA activities mean I now have a big 12V battery, a mobile HF radio and another antenna, so I could switch things around and see if radio, power supply or antenna were causing the issues. They weren't—battery, FT-891 and 40m dipole showed exactly the same noise levels as 12V mains PSU, FT-840 and end-fed random wire. So far, so good: at least it wasn't a fault with my radio equipment.

Another try at turning everything in the house off, however, left me at S5 noise on 40m (not great, but maybe usable) and immediately down to S1-2 on 20m!

I scanned around the band—I could hear people again! I could do SSB!

I gradually turned the rest of the house back on again. 40m noise slowly rose to around S6-7, which I'm not too happy about, but maybe Winter evenings might improve things a little. On 20m, noise stayed blissfully low, until I turned on: this thing put me straight up to S6 on 20m and S9 on 40m; with the PC on it was back to S7 and S9+20 respectively.

This is the power supply for one of my "Home Lab" Mini PCs. It was an aftermarket eBay purchase, Chinese import, and CE marking provided only on a dubious sticker on the side.

Weirdly, the *other* Mini PC which has a genuine Lenovo charger was a little noisy too, putting me up to S3-4. But the dodgy one, even with the PC off and no current draw on the DC side, put me straight up to S6 on 20m and S9 on 40m; with the PC on it was back to S7 and S9+20 respectively.



The culprit

Powering the radio from the mains-sourced PSU or from battery made no difference, so I can only assume the noise was either picked up directly inside the radios, or more likely coupled onto the braid of the coax going close by it.

So, this thing goes in the bin.

The PC with the less-bad supply has been relocated to a different room, where it continues providing various home-lab staples such as Home Assistant, AdGuard and the NAS drive. The remaining issue, then, is [Plane/Sailing](#). This used RTL-SDR dongles connected to the Mini PCs, which required them to be on the desk near to the rest of my radio gear. I'm not sure yet what to do about that. Since even the legitimate Lenovo PSU wasn't totally noise-free, I'm reluctant to just buy a new replacement PSU and swap that in, even though that would be the simple solution.

I am hoping to take advantage of the lessons learned in [Plane/Sailing Portable](#) and run the three RTL-SDRs from three Pi Zeros, but first I need to see if this approach works—and make sure it doesn't cause just as much noise as its predecessor.

But for now, I might pick up my HF set mic and actually... call someone...

And hear their reply.

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

2024 Schedule:

February 17	April 20
June 15	August 17
October 19	December 21

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

September 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 October 12, 2024

The Monroe County Radio Communications Association (MCRCA) is offering a one-day Amateur Radio course for the entry level Technician class license. 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.

Steve Orłowski, KE8MFY and Delmer Taylor no call yet