



# The **RADIOGRAM**

When All Else Fails ~ Amateur Radio Works



April 2010 ~ Official Newsletter of the Portage County Amateur Radio Service, Inc. (PCARS) ~ Vol. 5 No. 4

~ 2010 Officers ~

President - Jim Aylward - KC8PD  
Vice President - Dave Rarrick - WB2DFC  
Treasurer - Bill Fraedrich - WB9LBI  
3 Year Trustee - Robert Gurney - N8RLG  
2 Year Trustee - Ed Pollack - N8EQJ  
1 Year Trustee - Chuck Patellis - W8PT

~ Meetings & Nets ~

2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month. 7 pm  
Thursday nights Nets at 8 PM on 146.895

**PCARS Incorporated**  
Nov. 1, 2005

**First Meeting**  
Nov. 14, 2005



**ARRL Affiliated**  
April 20, 2006



**Special Services Club**  
March 22, 2010

## President's Column

This month, PCARS achieved another milestone. The club has been honored by the American Radio Relay League which has designated PCARS as a Special Service Club. Just what does that mean? Here is the League's explanation:

"The ARRL is especially proud of our affiliated clubs that excel in their activities. Clubs that go the extra mile to provide on-going training and support for the benefit of their community, fall into our Special Service Club category. These extraordinary groups actively pursue all aspects of Amateur Radio: New Ham Development and Training; Public Relations; Emergency Communications; School Club Support; Technical Advancement; Operating Activities; Annual Reports, and more."



Across the board, the programs and accomplishments of PCARS over the past four years more than satisfied the League's criteria for the SSC designation. One of the benefits of SSC status for PCARS, its members, and other area hams will be the ability of the club to appoint local Award Managers who will be able to check applications and endorsements for Worked All States (WAS) and VHF-UHF Century Club (VUCC) awards.

The SSC recognition is something that all PCARS members can be proud of.

We are happy to report that our quest for a new location for the club's monthly meetings appears to have been successful. The March meeting was held at the On Tap Grille in Stow. Nearly eighty members and guests attended and we pretty well filled the room. Service was excellent and the restaurant management has gone out of their way to make sure that things went well and that PCARS was satisfied with the accommodations.

Hope to see you there at the April 12th meeting!

April showers bring...May and the Dayton Hamvention. The weekend of May 14th-16th the Hamvention will once again be at the Hara Arena in Dayton. Many of us will be heading down there, whether for one day or the whole weekend. Those PCARS members who work for DX Engineering will be working at DX's well stocked display. Make sure that you stop by and say hello to them. Watch for details about the time and location of the PCARS group photo shoot.

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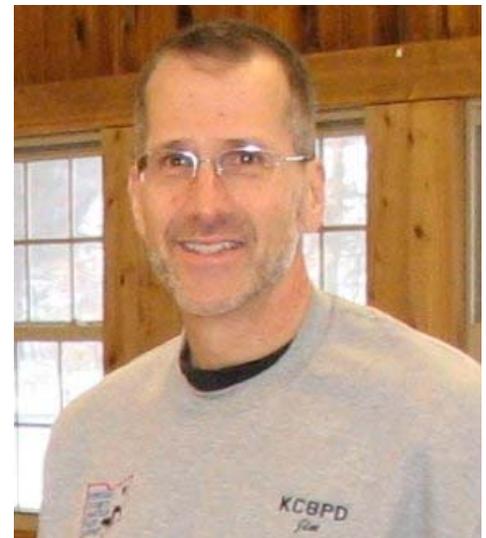


### From the President - Continued from Page 1

The theme for this year's Hamvention is "Amateur Radio Clubs Worldwide" and that will also be the focus of the ARRL Expo in Dayton. The League contacted PCARS to see if we could provide volunteers to staff the ARRL Amateur Radio Club display at the Expo. They felt that the story of PCARS' success could be beneficial to other clubs and their leaders who are looking for ideas for increasing membership and participation.

Tom, WB8LCD, Dave, WB2DFC, Chuck, W8PT and myself will all be spending some time working at the ARRL Amateur Radio Club display spreading the word about PCARS.

The next few months will be busy with PCARS activities: the Rookie Roundup on April 18th, Antenna Day on May 8th, and our excellent Field Day on the weekend of June 26th and 27th. Plus, watch for announcements about other happenings at the PCARS club site in the meantime. Come on out and join us for some ham radio fun!

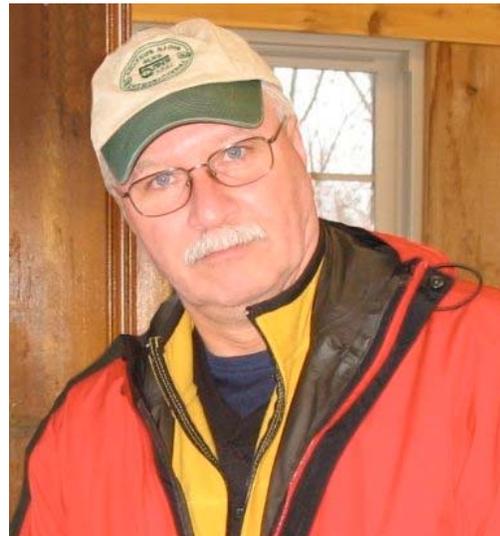


73,  
**Jim, KC8PD**

## *From the Vice President*

With April on the approach and the severe weather season tagging along with it, it will pay to get your "stuff" together. By "stuff", I mean your Go Kit, your home station, back up power and radios. If you have a generator, start it up and run it. Put your entire system in back up/emergency operation and really test it for proper operation. Spare antennas, cables, power supplies, fuel, etc are all considerations to be dealt with BEFORE the "big one hits". You will be pleasantly surprised when you actually have to use your back up system and all operates as it should.

A recent test of emergency warning systems at work showed me the absolute necessity to be totally prepared. If you participated in the recent Ohio state wide tornado siren drill you most likely heard several ops checking in reporting the results of the tests. I was on the roof of the police station and heard several sirens, none of them from the City. We had a problem. The siren system was checked and put back in service. Needless to say, the fix was a simple changing of a switch position, and a reset of the equipment. It doesn't take much to invite "Murphy" (of Murphy's Law) into your realm. So get out there and test your readiness, it will pay big dividends when you need it most !



Thanks to all of who wished my XYL (Vicki) and I a happy St Patty's Day and 1st Anniversary. As I have done for the last 15 years, I took the day off and enjoyed my favorite holiday. The limo, about 40 feet long, was a blast. No radios on board, but a great time! We ran into many friends and a few amateur radio friends. I'm hoping no embarrassing pics show up, but you never know.

April promises to be an exciting month! April 3rd will be the first ever QRP Show and tell + Swap and Shop. This activity also coincides with the QRPARCI Spring QSO Party. So I hope to see you on April 3rd, 2010, from 10AM to 2PM at the PCARS Club Site. Bring your QRP gear, do some swappin' and shoppin', make a few Qs, and enjoy all of the great fellowship. The wire antenna at the club site can be used for anyone wanting to operate their station.... and please feel free to bring your own portable antenna, there's plenty of room. We can use any QSOs made with the club call sign towards the club contest log. Your own Qs at home also count towards contest points using your own call. The QRPARCI website: <http://www.qrparci.org/>. A great website and full of QRP info!

Neil Gerren, N8IL, will be presenting D-Star at the April PCARS Meeting. Neil is expert with this topic so make a list of your questions. D-Star, Icom's digital radio format, is the wave of the future. As radio spectrum becomes more and more valuable, digital radio technology may be the answer to "un-crowd" some of our frequencies. D-Star has many other features and benefits, so please plan on attending and learning about D-Star. Information on the web can be viewed at: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/D-STAR>.

And finally, Field Day. It appears the action and interest is really revving up! The different station captains and support crews are getting lots of response from members. So, we will see you all on Antenna Day on May 8th, 2010. Remember the goal of antenna is fun, fun, fun, with the side benefit of setting up and operating the Field Day stations. Antenna Day gives us the opportunity to work out the bugs. If you are not yet signed up for one of the stations, whether operating or logging, Antenna Day will be the perfect opportunity to get your name on one or more of the station lists. Please actively participate.

Happy Spring-Time to everyone.... 72/73,

*Dave, WB2DFC*



## *Charlie the Tuner's HF High Lites*

Spring has sprung, the grass has rise, wonder where the DX is?? Well, if you've been on the HF bands lately, you know where the DX is. It's everywhere!!

K8NYM – Wes sent in a report on what DX entities he worked in March. Among those worked were: China, Niue, Sam Marino, Isle of Man, Saipan, Sudan, Burundi, Cape Verde, East Malasia (Borneo), Taiwan, Japan, Hong Kong, S.Cook Is, Mongolia, S. Korea, Antarctica, Ceuta & Melilla, Surinam, Grenada, New Zealand, French Guiana, St. Vincent, Corsica, Cocos-Keeling Is., Congo, Angola, Papua, New Guinea, Tazmania, and Maldives. You have to admit that Wes has another impressive list here.



KE8G – Jim sent in a report also. In fact, he sent an Excel spread sheet showing 56 contacts . I really can't take the room to list them all, but I will list a few of the more interesting DX that he worked: Tokelau Is. St. Lucia, Martinique, Antarctica, Zimbabwe, Montserrat, Easter Is., Turks & Caicos Is., Antigua & Barbuda, French Polynesia, and Chagos Is. What was also impressive is that all of the 56 contacts reported were on CW at 100 watts. Dave, maybe you need to recruit Jim and get him involved with the CW station for Field Day.

Then there is this bum of an operator, Chuck – W8PT, who is lucky that he knows which end of the mic to speak into. He reports the following: Estonia, Greece, Cape Verde, Japan on 15 m, Burundi, Micronesia, Dominica, and Tokelau Is. all on CW. Indonesia, Latvia, Bosnia, Estonia, Morocco, Suriname, Madeira Is., Macedonia, Central African Republic, Rodriguez Is., Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, Oman, Easter Is, Ceuta & Melilla, Madagascar, India, and finally Kyrgyzstan. These were done on a mix of 15, 20 and 40 meters. So the DX is spread across our Ham bands.

And there is more that we can look for in the coming months.

I want to thank those local Hams that sent me reports of their success and also the following for the forecast reports: the Northern Ohio Amateur Radio Society, Northern Ohio DX Association, Ohio/Penn PacketCluster Network (especially Tedd Mirgliotta, KB8NW for the following DX and IOTA information. Please remember that this report can contain some erroneous information due to the simple nature of bad info or busted call signs, so do yourself a favor and please adhere to the old adage of “Work First Worry Later” (WFWL).

**3B8, MAURITIUS (AF-049)** - DL6UAA, will be back in Mauritius as 3B8MM beginning April 4th; duration will be 3 weeks. Activity will be on 160-10 meters mostly CW. Some SSB and Digital will be possible. QSL via DL6UAA, by the Bureau or direct.

**3B8, MAURITIUS (AF-049)** - SP2JMB, will once again be active from here between April 7–14th, but as 3B8SC this time. Activity will be on all HF bands using CW. QSL via his home call sign.

**5X, UGANDA** – (Reminder) NP2OR, is active as 5X7JD from Masaka. Reports indicate that he will stay there until May. He can be found daily on 40 or 20 meters SSB between 0500-1550z. He is using a IC-718 transceiver w/100 watts into a Hy-Gain multi-band vertical. QSLs only direct via Jack Dunigan, Box 100, Masaka, Uganda.

**5Z, KENYA** – (Reminder) LA9PF, is now active as 5Z4/LA9PF until May. Look for him to be active mainly on SSB and the Digital modes. QSL only direct to: Cato B. De Savigny, POB 5642 Malindi, 80200 Malindi, Kenya.

**7Q, MALAWI** – (Reminder) 7Q7HB (G0JMU), is again heading to the warmer climate of Malawi for a period of 3 months or so. He was stuck in Nairobi but was hoping to be in 7Q-land via Lusaka. Activity will probably be on the Digital modes and CW. QSL as usual is ONLY DIRECT to G0IAS with sufficient funds for return cards. NO BUREAU cards. NO eQSLs. Just old fashioned paper cards DIRECT!

**9H, MALTA** - G0SGB, will be active as 9H3/G0SGB/p from Malta (EU-023, MIA MM-001, WLOTA LH-1113) between June 12-25th. He will also be active from Gozo Island (EU-023, MIA MM-004, WLOTA LH-0046) as 9H4/G0SGB/p. (No specific dates were provided). His activity will focus on lighthouse activations from Malta. QSL via his home callsign, direct only.

**9J, ZAMBIA.** (Reminder) YO4HEK, will be here for one year and will be active as 9J2YO. Activity will be on all bands using CW, SSB, and PSK31. Over the past week Gabriel has been very active on 40/30 meters between 1700-2030z. QSL via YO4ATW.

**9M2, WEST MALAYSIA** – (Reminder) EA4ATI, is working now in Malaysia. He has been issued the call sign 9M2TI and will be operating from Kuala Lumpur city. Using a vertical antenna with 400 watts, look for Dani to be active on 40/20/15/10 meters using CW and SSB. He also mentions that he will participate in the main international contests (like the CQ WPX) from a different location with a better station. Dani will stay in Malaysia for at least one year. QSL via his home call sign.

**9Q, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO** - ON5NT (ex-9Q1NT), reports that Georges, VE2EK, will once again be active as 9Q1EK from Kinshasa very soon and will be the ONLY radio amateur station left in the DRC with a VALID LICENSE.

**A5, BHUTAN** - W7VOA, is scheduled to be active again as A52SW next month in Thimpu from about April 23rd until, at least, May 1st. Activity is planned for CW and SSB, primarily 80-10 meters. RF output is limited to 100w, and his planned antenna is a full-length G5RV. This is a work trip, so his activity will be limited mainly on the weekends and during the evening weekday hours. Paper QSLs go to his QSL Manager K2AU and e-QSLs via the LoTW only. Steve states (edited), "Although my goal is to complete DXCC for the A52SW callsign. I'll be happy to work as many North American and JA stations as I possibly can."

**A7, QATAR** (Special Event). Look for special event station A71RCAR to be active during the "2010 Regional Conference on Amateur Radio" in Doha, April 4-6th. This year's event is being hosted by the "Qatar Amateur Radio Society (QARS - A71A) in collaboration with the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) in Region 1. A special QSL card will be available to commemorate this event. QSL via QARS Bureau: Qatar Amateur Radio Society (QARS), PO Box 22122, Doha, Qatar.

**A9, BAHRAIN** (Update). EI3IO, has received his license and is expected to be active as A92IO from Sar, Northern Region, Kingdom of Bahrain (AS-002). His activity will last until at least August 2011. His focus will be on 80-10 meters, but he does plan to be on 160 meters. QSL direct to: Dave Court, P.O. Box 31183, Budaiya, Bahrain. QSL can also go by the Bureau to EI3IO. For more details about QSLing, please see QRZ.com.

**E4, PALESTINE** (Update). Dates for the upcoming E4X operation have been announced. Activity will take place between May 28th and June 6th. Operations will be on 160-6 meters including 30/17/12 meters using CW, SSB and RTTY with at least 3 stations on the air at the same time on different bands and modes. QSL via EA5RM: Antonio Gonzalez, P.O. Box 930, E-03200 Elche, SPAIN.

**HB0, LIECHTENSTEIN** - OZ1MDX, will be active as HB0/OU4U between June 22-27th. Activity will be on the HF bands using CW, SSB, RTTY and possibly PSK31. Direct QSL for HB0/OU4U is via Tim, M0URX (United Radio QSL Bureau). For Bureau QSL by E-mail requests, please visit: <http://www.m0urx.com/qs1-request-form.html>

**KH9, WAKE ISLAND** - WA2YUN, will once again be active as KH9/WA2YUN from Wake Island (OC-053, USI OI-012S, WLOTA LH-2293) for about one year while on work assignment. Activity will be limited to his spare time. QSL via K2PF.

**YI, IRAQ** (Update/Need Ops!). A group of operators called the "YI9PSE DXpedition team" are planning to operate from Kurdistan and be active between April 3-11th. The team will receive a ten day visa issued by the Government of Kurdistan. Suggested frequencies are also published on their Web page. They are still looking for two skilled CW operators. The group is also looking for donations to help fund their DXpedition. Donations can be made via PayPal or mail a check to: Kurdistan 2010 DXpedition, 3052 Wetmore Dr., San Jose, CA 95148, USA. Online logs will be available during and after the DXpedition.

## **IOTA News**

**AS-118.** Members of the Kuwait Amateur Radio Society (KARS - 9K2RA) will be active using a special callsign 9K2F from Failaka Island between April 1-5th. QSL via 9K2HN.

**EU-068** - Members of a French DX Group will be active as TM5EL from Sein Island (AT-007, L-2721, PB-106, Loc: IN78NA), France, between April 7-14th. Activity will be on the HF bands, as well as 6m, 2m, 70cm and 23cm, using CW, SSB and the Digital modes. QSL via F6KHI, direct or by the Bureau.

**EU-078 - EA3NT**, will be making another attempt to Formigues Is (DIE E-058, FEA E-0467, WLOTA LH-2128, ARLHS SPA-139) along with EA1DR, EA2TA & F4BKV. Callsign: EG3FI, and ops will take place between June 25–26th. The first ever DXpedition to Formigues took place last year but only lasted for a few hours (See Web page: [www.tinet.cat/~jfc/eg3fi.html](http://www.tinet.cat/~jfc/eg3fi.html)). ADDED NOTE: All the members of this operation will also be involved in the upcoming Flannan Isles (EU-118) DXpedition between June 18-21st.

**IS0, SARDINIA** - Members of the F6KOP Team will be active as IS0R from Isola Rossa, Sardinia (EU-024, Loc. JN41ka), between May 7-15th. Activity will be on 160-6 meters, using 3 stations on HF and 1 station on 6 meters. They plan to use CW, SSB and RTTY. Each station will be a FT450 with an Acom 1010 using Micro Ham and PC. Antennas include 6m Yagi Beam, Spider Beam for 30-10m, 4 square for 40m, vertical for 80m (K9AY) and an Inverted L for 160m plus a beverage. QSL route TBA.

**JD, OGASAWARA** (Update). JF3MYU, will be active as JD1BNN between March 28-31st. He is part of the "JD1 PROJECT 2010" and is expected to be there with four other operators who will be staying long (See the next JD, OGASAWARA). Kirk's activity will be focused on the 30/17/12m bands, SSB, some CW and 6 meters. QSL is "OK" via the JARL Bureau but write JD1BNN on your QSL (so it can be sorted easily). Also, you can receive his QSL direct if you send your QSL to his address in Kobe, JAPAN: Kirk Itaya, 5-1-35, Daikaidori, KOBE, 652-0803 JAPAN. Please enclose SASE plus sufficient return postage. For JA stations, SASE, please. For NA, SA, EU and AF include one new IRC or 2 USDs. For Asia, one IRC or 1 USD.

**JD, OGASAWARA**. Operators will be active from Chichijima Island (AS-031) as part of the "JD1 PROJECT 2010" between March 28th and April 12th. Activity will be on 160-10 meters using CW, SSB and RTTY. Each operator will be active as follows: JD1BNJ - Only RTTY and PSK31. JD1BNK - Mainly CW on the HF bands. JD1BNM - Mainly CW on the lower bands. JD1BNQ - Mainly CW on the HFbands and 6m. QSL via K8AQM, direct, by the Bureau or LOTW.

**NA-182. (Update)** VE8EV, reports that contrary to what was reported, a second operator for the expedition to Greens Island has been ruled out due to cost and logistical concerns. The trip is now scheduled to go ahead as a solo operation from April 15-20th, using the callsign CK8G (rare prefix as well!). Donations are still being sought to help cover the costs of travelling to this very rare Arctic IOTA.

**T30, WESTERN KIRIBATI** - JA1XGI/W8XGI, reports that he will be active once again from Western Kiribati as T30XG or T30/T32XG between June 3-9th. Activity will be on 40-6 meters, including 30/17/12m, using CW and the Digital modes. QSL via JA1XGI, direct or by the Bureau.

**T32, EASTERN KIRIBATI** (New IOTAs To Be Activated). A team of operators lead by Nils, SM6CAS, will activate four uninhabited IOTA islands (in the Southern Line Islands Group) that have never been put on the air before between mid-March and early April. Also a team of 5 Government Kiribati officers will be with them. The team will sail on the "SV Kwai" from Kiritimati (Christmas Island) on approximately March 17th, returning to Kiritimati approximately April 18th. The IOTAs mentioned to be aired are: Malden Island (OC-279), Starbuck Island (OC-280), Caroline Island (OC-281) and Vostok Island (OC-282). Per their Web site (under construction), the team will operate from two sites (two stations each) and will operate on 40-10 meters using a variety of verticals and dipoles. The T32 Southern Line Islands Dxpediton's Web page is at: <http://t32line.webnode.com>

**V2, BARBUDA AND ANTIQUA** - WD8MGZ, will be active as V25WV from Codrington Village on Barbuda (NA-100) between April 24th and May 1st. For frequencies and schedules, use Twitter.com and search wd8mgz. Also, contact Randy via echolink (V21RW-R). He will be using a Icom 706 and a Yaseu 2 meter mobile.

**VP8, FALKLAND ISLANDS** - M0PCB, is now active from the RAF Amateur Radio Club Station located at Mount Pleasant Airport using the callsigns VP8FIR or VP8RAF until April 7th. QSNs show that he has been on 15 meters CW. QSL via his home callsign. QSL cards will be printed once Iain is back in the UK.

**WH0, MARIANA ISLANDS** - AL5A (JH0MGJ), will once again be active as WH0/AL5A from Saipan Island (OC-086), Northern Mariana Islands (KH0), between April 24-26th. Activity will be on 80-10 meters using CW and SSB. He plans to listen especially for "weak" European stations. QSL direct to JA7JEC. Send Bureau QSLs to the JARL Bureau to JH0MGJ.

**XV2, VIETNAM** - OH4MDY (OX3RZ/XU7MDY/XV2MDY), will once again be active as XV2RZ from Southeast Vietnam between March 26th and April 6th. Activity will be on 80-10 meters using the "normal modes". QSL only direct via OH4MDY with a SASE and 2 USDs.

**YI, IRAQ (Update)**. Plans for the YI9PSE DXpedition to Kurdistan is progressing and the operation will take place in about two weeks. The YI9PSE team reported this past week that they shipped 1600KG of radio gear to IRAQ. Their equipment consists of five Icom IC-7600s, four Acom amps, numerous antennas and over 5000' of coax.

**ZL7, CHATHAM ISLAND - ZL3JP**, will be active from here between April 28th and May 3rd. He will use ZL7J, a special and temporary callsign issued only to ZL3JP for this operation from Chatham Island. Kaz is planning to arrive on Chatham Island (OC-038) on April 27th, and will be leaving on May 4th. Activity will be on 160-10 meters using CW and SSB. His QSL Manager is JH1HRJ. QSL by the Bureau, direct (w/SASE) and/or e-QSL is also planned.

**And finally: ZS8M PIRATE?** Pierre, ZS1HF, reports this past week: "Hi All, Yes, in true tradition, we will have an idiot pirating my callsign - ZS8M. Shame on you! Please note....ZS8M will only be operational from approx 15 May 2010. Before I get operational, I will notify you all via qrz.com once I am ready. Please do not entertain any idiot pirating my call sign before I make the announcement.

So there you have it. There is a lot going on and the sun spot cycle is co-operating so there is no excuse for not working a lot of great DX. So until next month, 73 and gud DX.

*Chuck, W8PT*



## *Deadly Serious Field Day Update*

**DISCLAIMER:** This is not an April Fools article. There's nothing remotely funny here. It's all absolutely, incontrovertibly true information about Field Day. If you're looking for entertainment, try the President's Message. Parky tells me it's a real thigh-slapper.

Really, there's no humor in this piece. Stop that giggling; it's really inappropriate.

Have you regained you composure? Good, let's move on. The Field Day Committee is busy making preparations for FD 2010, June 26-27.

Ed N8EQJ and I have completed a site survey to lay out the stations and antennas in a way to minimize interference. We plan on lining up the antennas end-to-end where possible. We have identified the precise locations for each station with a GPS. I took these measurements myself while wearing a dress shirt and tie. No, I'm not kidding, I really was walking around the park dressed like I was going to a funeral. You can ask Ed, he was there. Look, there's really no reason to lean forward like that, there's no punch line here. This is a serious article, remember?

Turns out that our main location is located at co-ordinates [N41° 09.657 W81° 15.562](#). You can click on this link and see the exact spot. Yes, it's safe to open that link; it doesn't go to a porn site or a compendium of light bulb jokes. You can trust me, okay? Why are you grinning? There's no reason to do so, desist immediately.

Dave WB2DFC has started up a program to get more CW operators up to speed for the contest. He is asking all potential CW operators to download a computer program called [Morse Runner](#), which does an excellent job of simulating a CW contest. Dave's plan is that everyone hone their skills using their computers at home. During actual Field Day operations, Dave says he will not allow a computer to be connected to the radio, as he feels that it is morally reprehensible to conduct a CW contest this way. I swear I am not making this up. Yes, I realize the irony in this position, but I'm telling you the absolute, unvarnished truth here. Take it up with Dave if you don't believe me.

I really wish you wouldn't snort like that.

Chef de Cuisine Robert N8RLG is fine tuning the menu, and at last report was planning on kebobs, but contemplating whether to substitute Jasmine rice with something else. As he explains it, cooking rice for 100 people in the field is something of a problem, and he doesn't want to present you with gloppy rice. Yes, I realize



that “gloppy rice” sounds funny, but these are Robert’s words and I want to quote him accurately, because I’m trying to preserve solemn journalistic integrity here. Anyway, Robert is committed to preparing an absolutely stellar meal, and it’s just too bad that he won’t be eating any of it. No, really, he won’t. Robert tells me that he went and scheduled some medical procedure the day after Field Day, and he’s not supposed to take any food 48 hours prior. No, I don’t know why it couldn’t have been delayed a couple of days, and frankly I’m appalled that you would want to pry into the man’s personal affairs like that. I’m sure our food will be just fine.

Dammit, STOP LAUGHING. It’s all TRUE, every bit of it. There’s nothing the least bit funny, I am telling you. And while I’m thinking about it, I would be much obliged if you referred to both Chuck W8PT and myself as the Field Day Co-Chairmen. The phrase “Half A Field Day Chairman” that you’ve been kicking around denigrates both Chuck and all the people who work so hard to a successful Field Day event, and Chuck is far too fine a fellow for you to walk all over his feelings like that. So just back off and show a little respect for a change, okay?

I’m just sayin’,  
**Bill, WB9LBI**

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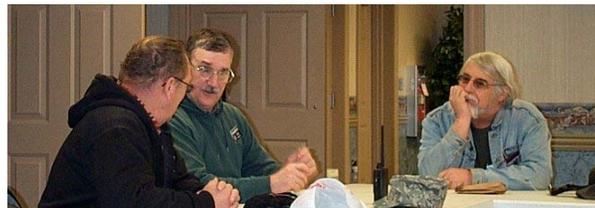
## *Mansfield Hamfest – A Different Take*

I’ve been to a lot of hamfests through the years. I’ve bought everything from Antennas to Zener diodes, and believe me, everything in between! I’ve set up tables and sold stuff out of the back of the car. I’ve ridden with friends, and they’ve ridden with me. I’ve been able to talk with old friends, and meet people for the first time. Most fests are different now from what they used to be, but they’re still a good time and a big part of the overall Ham Radio Experience. One thing I hadn’t done at fests, until the past few years, was attend the forums.

From my own experience, I understand how easy it is to pass on the forums. Now, my experience says I really have to go to the ones that interest me – there’s a lot of good information I’m going to miss out on if I don’t. Most forums I’ve been to have had knowledgeable speakers who put on a good presentation. Unlike The Dayton Hamvention, the forums at most local fests are much smaller and you end up with a good opportunity to meet others with similar interests, and talk one on one with the presenters. It’s a really good deal for the cost of admission (free).



At Mansfield, I attended the MARS forum. I’m not a member of MARS, but I know one of the presenters so I thought I’d check it out. The MARS mission has changed through the years to one of providing Emergency Communications, similar to ARES or RACES. MARS has some unique ways of doing things, but they also have some abilities and resources not available to “regular” ham radio. Mars operators are well ahead of the curve when it comes to digital communications and they have some good ideas on establishing rapid deployment teams. Many of the challenges they face are similar to what I’ve seen in ARES and RACES: establishing relationships with potential served agencies and recruiting operators being the two most evident. Jim, KC8PD, was part of the forum and presented his “go-kit” as a good example of how to build and equip a modular package that could be deployed with the necessary equipment for just about any type of deployment. His go-kit works for any of the EMCOMM services he might be deployed by. I came away from the MARS forum with the thought that MARS, ARES and RACES all perform similar services and would be well served by working together.



I also attended the ARRL forum at Mansfield right after the MARS forum. Ohio Section Manager Frank Piper gave an update on ARRL activities. The new ARRL website roll out has been postponed to February 26<sup>th</sup>, and in the OHIO Section this year, instead of having the ARES meeting in the spring and the Section meeting in the fall, they would be

combined into one “Super Session” in October. Frank also talked about the efforts to get Antenna Legislation passed in the state of OHIO. Each of the other Section officers who were in attendance spoke about their area of involvement including Ohio Single Sideband Net (OSSBN), the National Traffic System (NTS), the Official Observer (OO) program and the Legislative Action Committee. If you've never attended an ARRL forum before, try to catch one at an upcoming fest. There's a lot of organized activity going on and the ARRL forum is a good place to find out about all things the Ohio Section is involved in.

*Tom, WB8LCD*



## ***EmComm***

The Portage County RACES unit conducted an exercise at Robinson Memorial Hospital on Saturday, March 20th. The event was designed and organized by RACES members Sandy, KD8JCY, and Bob, K8FEY, who did a fine job putting it together.

The exercise was held to test the limits of simplex operations using HT's on both VHF and UHF frequencies inside the hospital facility. In addition, one of the two Yaesu FT-8800's installed at the hospital was used as a cross-band repeater to determine its utility in improving communications capabilities.

Much was learned during the two hour exercise. Simplex communications are greatly hampered in buildings such as a hospital. Many of the walls and floors were built to withstand RF, not provided a path for it. For simplex, UHF was better than VHF. But the FT-8800 certainly proved its worth as a cross-band repeater, enabling all stations at all times to stay in contact with each other no matter where they were located.



The exercise was observed by Bob Walker, the Emergency Medical Services Coordinator for RMH, who was impressed by the professionalism and skills of the RACES members. In addition, it made for a good demonstration of how the FT-8800 could be utilized in a way that was never envisioned (in-house communications) when the radios were purchased.

Also on March 20th, Ohio ARES District Ten (Lorain, Cuyahoga, Lake, Geauga and Ashtabula Counties) held a district-wide drill. It appears to have been quite successful thanks to the efforts of Matt Welch, W8DEC, who is the District Ten Emergency Coordinator. Matt, who many of us know from shopping at AES in Wickliffe, was our speaker at the March meeting and he did a great job explaining APRS operations. He is doing an excellent job as the District Ten DEC.

On Friday, March 19th, myself and Al Mytyk, W8AII/AAA5OH, the Ohio Army MARS Director, and Bob Evans, K8AAB/AAM5OH, the Assistant State MARS Director and PCARS member, traveled to Fremont where the EMA directors from North Central Ohio were having their monthly meeting. Our attendance was arranged by Chris Mock, KB8GSA/AAR5UW, who is the Sandusky County EMA Director.

We were there to give a presentation on MARS in general and the emcomm services it can offer now that its mission has been defined as providing contingency communications to the federal government, the Department of Defense, as well as state and local civil authorities. But we also took the opportunity to explain how MARS members around the state can and should be participants in local RACES or ARES units so that they could then be the liaisons to the additional mid- to long-haul communication facilities that MARS offers.

The message was well received and with luck will lead to future presentations to other EMA directors as well as amateur radio clubs and ARES and RACES teams around the state. I hope that you take the time to get involved and put your amateur radio skills to use in supporting emcomm activities.

**Jim, KC8PD/AAM5EOH**  
**Radio Officer, Portage County EMA/RACES**  
**EC, ARES of Portage County**  
**Emergency Operations Officer, Ohio Army MARS**

## Public Service Schedule - 2010

Here is our regularly scheduled public service calendar. We welcome all volunteers... experienced or new. We will find a place for you to work according to your ability and equipment. It's fun, plus we hams have a mandate to use our expertise to benefit the public.

- Sunday, May 16 - Rite Aid Cleveland Marathon  
<http://www.clevelandmarathon.com/>
- Saturday, July 10 - Headwaters Adventure Race Mantua
- Saturday, Aug. 7 - Black Squirrel Adventure Kent
- Sunday, Aug. 22 - Bellefaire JCB Biathlon Shaker Hgts.
- Saturday, Oct. 23 - Brady's Leap Kent



**Gay, WB8VNO**

Looking forward to hearing from you,

**Editor's Note:** Gay can be contacted by e-mail: [gwands@neo.rr.com](mailto:gwands@neo.rr.com), or call 330-474-1573 home or 330-592-1967 cell

## Happy Birthday PCARS Members

PCARS members having a birthday in April:

<b>AB8SX</b>	<b>Mark Eldridge</b>	<b>N1EZZ</b>	<b>George Riedel</b>
<b>AI8P</b>	<b>Dennis Conklin</b>	<b>N8GLK</b>	<b>Leon Loveland</b>
<b>KA8BNS</b>	<b>Elizabeth Milford</b>	<b>N8OQQ</b>	<b>Bryan Buchwalter</b>
<b>KC8FQV</b>	<b>Mark Studer</b>	<b>N8QE</b>	<b>Bob Hajdak</b>
<b>KD8GHB</b>	<b>Joe Rocco</b>	<b>W8JJW</b>	<b>John Wagner</b>
<b>KD8MWE</b>	<b>Jeff Burke</b>	<b>WB2DFC</b>	<b>Dave Rarrick</b>
<b>KW8KW</b>	<b>Bill O'Neil</b>		



## *Amateur Radio Call Sign Auto License Plates*

After completing an article about Amateur Radio Call sign auto license plates for the January 1995 issue of the American Radio Relay League's official journal, QST, I felt it would be appropriate to put together a collection of first year of issue ham plates from all the 50 states. My intentions were to also document this information for posterity. This unique collection had been attempted by plate collectors in the past, but to my knowledge it has never been successfully completed. Not something for the Guinness Book, but I feel it is an important part of Amateur Radio history.

There were some problems associated with collecting first year of issue ham plates. Many states issued their first ham plates in small numbers, maybe due to the lack of communications and many states had a relatively small number of Amateur Radio operators licensed at the time. Not every ham chose to pay the extra fee for a special call sign plate and numerous states had strict restrictions on the use of their specially issued ham plates intended for emergency communications during the "Cold War" period. Some states required mobile radio installations while using the special ham plates. Several first year of issue ham plates are 45 years old and this makes the original owners over 65 years old. Most of them are now Silent Keys (deceased) and their old plates were often thrown out after their death. Besides, who saves their expired auto license plates?

I have to thank the many thoughtful hams who helped me with this unusual collection. Without their help it would not have been possible. A few plates were received from family members of Silent Keys, donating the plates to my collection in the deceased ham's memory. I can sympathize with some who did not care to part with their first ham plate as being a ham myself I think I might feel the same way. I do not begrudge anyone for not caring to give up their first ham plate for my collection. I offered to pay a "reasonable price" to anyone who had a sentimental attachment to their vintage ham plate, but less than 5% wanted more than the shipping cost, that generally ran less than \$2. Many wanted nothing in exchange and were delighted to add their plates to this prestigious collection, but I always reimbursed them for any expenses. Two hams asked \$1000 for their ham plates and this gave me a very strong message.

One Old Timer in his nineties misunderstood my request and sent me his original 1951 FCC Amateur Radio license. He hoped it would fit my needs. I returned the ham ticket to him with my thanks for his interest in helping me along with a thorough explanation of what I was trying to collect. Two other Old Timers, also in their nineties, donated their first ham plates to my collection saying their plates would have a "better home" in my collection, rather than being discarded later. One ham sent me his first year plate along with 27 other plates representing the 27 following years he had ham plates issued on a yearly basis.

One first year of issue ham plate was sent to me by the widow of a Silent Key asking the plate be added to my collection in his memory. The only problem was the plate had been repainted in silver with his call sign in black paint. He had displayed his expired ham plate on a second vehicle and did not want to be stopped by the authorities for using an expired plate on his automobile. I tried a little lacquer thinner on the back of the plate and found it removed his paint without effecting the original paint underneath (most likely an enamel paint). Under his workmanship I found an excellent condition first year plate for my collection. Unfortunately I did not have the foresight to photograph his repaint job that protected the plate for many years.

Almost every plate in my collection has a very personal story connected with it. One plate came from a judge who asked me to excuse the poor paint job on his plate that was produced at the state's prison. I responded that he was the person responsible for the painter by incarcerating him in the prison that made the plate, and the painter could not be too smart for committing a crime to be placed there.

Another plate came from the XYL (eX Young Lady = wife) of a ham who was terminally ill. She wrote she did not normally read her husband's mail but found my letter "intriguing" She had recalled seeing the plate I had

described among her husband's "radio junk" just the previous week in the garage. She sent me one of his first year issue plates for my collection and said the matching plate of the pair she would have buried with her husband upon his death. I don't consider myself to be an emotional person but this letter brought me close to tears as I regarded her husband as a "brother ham". He has recently passed away.

Most of the information about first year of issue ham plates was gained at the American Radio Relay League's library in Newington, CT. I searched QST magazines from 1937 thru 1973. I found information obtained from some hams not always reliable since time has a way of clouding memories. A few hams were extremely helpful by



sending me copies of legislation authorizing plates in their state. In some cases I believe the passing of laws allowing the issuing of ham plates was not always directly followed by the immediate action of the motor vehicle authority in providing the plates. A good example is in Oklahoma where the ham call letter plate bill was signed into law in mid 1953 and the first ham plates were not made available until 1958.

I had heard stories of a ham plate being issued in Oklahoma during 1938. I did find there were a few confirmations of 1938 Oklahoma ham plates that were black on yellow (the same color scheme as the 1935 passenger plates) but the state/date was at the bottom of the plate and the state abbreviated to OKLA. My investigation was not able to confirm this as an "official" issue so I have to assume it was a booster type plate.

The first plates with ham call signs on them were issued in Michigan for 1939. The Great Lakes Amateur Radio Telephone Association of Detroit under the leadership of James Strang, W8NFR, proposed the special plates for hams. They petitioned the Secretary of State, Leon D. Case, to allow the request be granted under legislation that allowed a maximum of 3 letters and 3 numbers. It was more correctly a personalized or vanity type and 400 to 500 of these plates were issued to hams (ref. March 1939 QST). After the first year the officials felt the system not administratively workable and Michigan discontinued issuing them the following year. Michigan did not start issuing official ham plates until 1954. The next plate issued with a ham call sign on it was a 1950 Florida plate that is generally considered to be the first "true" ham plate. This was made possible through the efforts of Florida's State Senator Lloyd F. Boyle, W4IMJ (ref. January 1950 QST), and Eddie Collins, W4MS, a good friend of mine. I was not aware of Eddie's achievement until after his death. Mississippi followed Florida by issuing ham plates in November of 1950 that expired in October of 1951.

I consider the "key" plate in this collection to be the 1951 Nevada ham plate since there were only 182 hams licensed in Nevada during 1951 and only 30 of them are now listed in the 1997 Radio Amateur Call Book as still living in Nevada. Of the remaining 152 hams they are either Silent Keys (deceased), moved years ago to another FCC District and had to change their call signs, upgraded their class of license and requested a new call sign, or have given up Amateur Radio in past years. None of the current Nevada hams were able to help me with a 1951 Nevada ham plate. The only 1951 Nevada ham plates that were known in existence belonged to

California plate collector (Rick Schofield, ALPCA #471) and to a Nevada ham who is the original owner. I located a California ham who had left Nevada in 1952. He eventually gave up Amateur Radio for 10 years and let his Amateur Radio license expire. After his retirement, he retook the FCC Amateur Radio exam and got back into ham radio with an entirely new call sign from California. Thanks to modern technology, I was able to locate him through a computer program that lists all the licensed Amateur Radio operators in the United States (QRZ! CD-ROM) . He felt his ham plate was better off in my collection rather than hanging on his garage wall where it had been for the past 44 years.

The last plate I was able to locate to complete this unique collection of ham plates was the 1950 Mississippi. There were 535 hams licensed in Mississippi at the end of 1950 and I was able to find 210 of them still licensed in Mississippi or in other states. Many acknowledged having had a 1950 Mississippi ham plate, but only one ham still had his original plate. Could it be that the 1950 Mississippi ham plate is the rarest in this unusual collection? I was very fortunate that WSPUI decided to donate his Mississippi ham plate so I could complete the collection.

I believe this collection of first year of issue ham plates from the 50 states and the District of Columbia may never be duplicated. The scarcity of some plates in this collection will further be enhanced with time as the original owners who held on to them for personal reasons are passing on, and their old expired plates are thrown out.

Amateur Radio call signs are very distinctive identifications. There are 715,462 Amateur Radio licensees in the United States listed in the 1997 Radio Amateur Call Book. There are 160 hams named John Smith and 149 named Robert Jones that are listed, but a ham's call sign is very unique as it is the only one like it in the entire world. There can never be 2 call signs that are identical.

Several states issued special ham plates as "add on" plates to be used with the vehicle's normal registration plate and they were generally displayed on the front of the vehicle with the regular plate displayed on the rear. These "unofficial" ham plates were issued as a compromise to the Amateur Radio operators who were trying to have their state issue ham plates. Both Arkansas in 1951 and Nebraska in 1952 issued undersized ham plates. Iowa in 1954 and North Carolina in 1955 issued full sized plates with the ham's call sign on them. After hurricane Hazel in 1954 North Carolina hams involved with emergency communications wanted a special ham plate as identification to access disaster areas not open to the general public. In 1955 they were issued undated silver plates with black letters similar to the police and other state vehicles. The hams were required to attach these plates over and covering the regular passenger plate. These special ham plates were replaced in 1956 with official ham plates similar in color scheme to the regular passenger plates. In light of this, it's possible that the police did not like the idea of civilians using police type plates. Arkansas issued their official ham plates in 1954, Nebraska in 1956, followed by Iowa in 1960.

Two states, Massachusetts in 1965, and New Jersey in 1968, used windshield stickers to validate their plates. The Massachusetts plate bore an embossed 64 date while the New Jersey plate was undated on a 1959 base. The 1964 District of Columbia plate was and still is a vanity type. It was the only first year ham plate to use a sticker to validate the plate. It was also the largest validation sticker in the United States and measured 3/4 inch by 11 inches. Metal year tabs were used by 7 states: California for 1954, Connecticut for 1956, Delaware for 1953 (with a 1954 expiration), Hawaii for 1955, New York for 1963, Oregon for 1954, and Rhode Island for 1958. Seven states displayed the expiration date of the plates: Delaware had a 6-30-54 expiration, Maryland had 3-31-57, Mississippi had OCT 51, Missouri had JAN 53, Pennsylvania had 3-31-57, Wisconsin had JAN 53, and the District of Columbia had 3-31-65 on the large sticker.

Four states did not have their plates embossed. They included the 1952 Alaska, the 1951 Tennessee, the 1956 South Carolina's call sign only, while the 1953 Delaware used the same porcelain base introduced in 1942.

Three states showed the outline of the state. They were the 1954 Kansas, the 1951 Tennessee, and the 1956 Pennsylvania, which had the state's outline embossed on the plate.

The 1957 Connecticut plate was the first ham plate to utilize a special ham related symbol, the spark, to individualize their ham plate. Many early wireless operators were nicknamed "Sparks". The following four states used non ham related symbols. The 1952 Alaska used their Territory's flag, the 1953 New Mexico used the Zia Sun , the 1953 South Dakota used a graphic of Mt. . Rushmore, and the 1960 Wyoming used the bucking bronco and rider. The 1958 Montana had an embossed PRISON MADE to indicate it's manufacturer.

Six states used radio slogans on their first year ham plate. The 1951 Arkansas used AMATEUR RADIO, the 1957 Idaho used RADIO AMATEUR , the 1956 Illinois used AMATEUR RADIO, the 1973 Kentucky used AM. RADIO, the 1951 Tennessee used RADIO, and the 1954 Texas used AMATEUR RADIO OPR.

Both Alaska and Hawaii were Territories when they issued their first ham plates. Alaska's first ham plate issued as a state was in 1960 and Hawaii's was an undated plate issued in 1961 that used a windshield sticker for validation. In 1973 Kentucky was the last of the 50 states to issue Amateur Radio call sign plates.

**MIKE, WIDGJ**  
ALPCA #5340

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## EXPOX

The Greater Western Reserve Council, Boy Scouts of America will be sponsoring an event called EXPO X. [www.gwrcexpo10.com](http://www.gwrcexpo10.com)



This event will be held on April 30, May 1st, and May 2nd at the Geauga County Fairgrounds. The expected attendance will be 5,000 to 10,000 participants.

That being said, Tenth District Ohio ARES is coordinating the special event station W8G celebrating the 100th anniversary of the BSA. I am looking for radio operators to help with this historic event.

Feel free to contact me at [w8dec@arrl.net](mailto:w8dec@arrl.net) or Ross, KB8J TZ at [kb8jtz@aol.com](mailto:kb8jtz@aol.com) for more information.

73,  
**Matt, W8DEC**  
District Emergency Coordinator  
ARES® Tenth District - ARRL OH Section  
[www.ohioares10.org](http://www.ohioares10.org)  
440-336-0295

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## PCARS Yahoo Site

Members are reminded that PCARS has a Yahoo Group dedicated to PCARS information. It's a great site to sign up for and get on the mailing list. Check out the PCARS web site at <http://www.portcars.org> and follow the link to sign up.



## *FCC Activities*

No, this is not an April Fools article though you might wish that it was. There have been a couple of recent actions by the Federal Communications Commission that should make amateur radio operators sit up and take notice.

In mid-March, the ARRL reported (<http://tinyurl.com/yk6gkxe>) that the FCC had announced that it had granted a waiver to a company called ReconRobotics so that it could manufacture and sell the Recon Scout, a “remote-controlled, maneuverable surveillance robot designed for use in areas that may be too hazardous for human entry.” The waiver would permit the licensing of these devices to operate in the 430-448 MHz band. That band is allocated to the federal government on a primary basis for its Radiolocation (military radar) service, and on a secondary basis to amateur radio.



The robots would be used by safety forces and employ a one watt transmitter with about a six megahertz bandwidth for its video signal and would be used subject to restrictions set by the FCC, though without indication of how they would be enforced. The ARRL and concerned hams had raised a number of objections, including tripping of repeaters, and interference with amateur satellites and emergency communications, to name a few.

The FCC disregarded the objections and granted the waiver, which is unique to this one company. Initial units will operate on the 436-442 MHz band segment where the FCC felt that there was the least risk of interference to hams. Later units would be sold using the 442-448 MHz segment and then the 430-436 MHz segment.

Within days of that announcement the FCC also went public with its “national broadband plan” that had been required by Congress, <http://tinyurl.com/yefgrzg>. The plan projects the need to use 300 MHz of band with in the bands between 225 MHz and 3.7 GHz, primarily by using frequencies that had previously been allocated to television stations. This plan may have some direct impact on some secondary allocations to amateur radio.

Why are both these FCC developments important to hams?

First, the broadband plan implicitly acknowledges that there is only so much RF spectrum and if you free up huge segments of it for specific purposes, former or prospective users of those frequencies will have to look elsewhere. Like, potentially, the ham bands. If they are not being actively used by hams the FCC could certainly find reasons why they should be reallocated to someone who will make a buck off of them.

Second, the ReconRobotics waiver demonstrates that when commercial interests make a plausible case for sharing the ham bands the FCC is more likely than not to brush aside concerns from the “amateurs” and let the “professionals” use the frequencies for commercial purposes. Remember the whole broadband over powerline (BPL) affair?

And consider the enforcement issues for the recon robots. In a real-time event who wants to be the complainant because hams were interfered with when lives were possibly being saved? But how about when the interference occurs during training? You can hear the responses now: it didn't happen; if there was some interference it wasn't the robot that caused it, there could be dozens of other causes that the hams aren't identifying; even if it possibly was the robot you can't replicate the circumstances to prove it; and so what if it was the robot, the interference was brief and furthered the critical for vital training.

Two lessons here: 1. Our frequencies, use them or lose them. 2. Join and support the ARRL which is the only organization that has the resources to provide the voice that will be heard in Washington to protect our interests.

*Jim, KC8PD*



## 2010 Freeze Your Acorns Off

The 5th Annual FYAO is now behind us. This was another fun event, although the format was just a bit different this year. This was also the first year since FYAO #1 when we really had cold and snowy weather! Overall it was a pleasant day, but I think a few participants got scared away by the weather guessers. FYAO #6 will be at the same location in the Roy Smith Shelter House at Fred Fuller Park on Saturday, February 19th, 2011, so put it on your calendar now.



Some of the FYAO participants



N8QE Setting up

A total of 72 contacts were reported on the logs that were turned in, and that included many DX contacts! (As our sunspot numbers continue to increase, this is going to be a very exciting event over the next few years).

This years FYAO had a new twist to it with the addition of an operating contest for the club members who participated. Since we had been getting pretty crowded in the shelter house the last few years, there were additional points for setting up and operating a station out in the park. Several stations did just that, and a few did set up in the shelter house. The one thing that set this years FYAO apart from

years past was the number of contacts made



K8CAV & W8PT

The winner of the First Ever FYAO contest was Mike Cibella, KC8UNR. There will be another winner next year, but Mike goes down in the PCARS record books as the First! The winners plaque is presented for the winner to take home, and then bring back the following months meeting to be displayed in the PCARS Club room. Congratulations Mike!



KC8UNR Setting Up

The other hallmark of FYAO is the fellowship and food in the shelter house. This year was no different with over 70 people present. The food was plentiful, and more importantly - good! Lots of Chili, finger foods and snacks.



KC8UNR getting his FYAO award

There was lots of room and time in the shelter house to chat with friends and just hang out.



WB2DFC at work

Since lots of our members and visitors don't come to operate, this year they were treated to two QRP related presentations. First was Anthony Luscre, K8ZT, who has been a QRP operator for his entire Amateur Radio career. He talked about keeping good records, operating hints to make little signals heard at the other end, and showed us a wide variety of QRP gear available. After lunch, Mike Bryce, WB8VGE, gave a talk on powering QRP and emergency stations. Mike is well known in amateur circles for his expertise in taking it off the grid! Both talks were interesting and provided those who were not there to operate a

little extra value for their participation with PCARS. Our thanks go out to both Anthony and Mike for being a part of our 2010 FYAO event.

Hint for next year: KC8UNR goes out into the field on a regular basis to practice his QRP operating skills and fine tune his equipment. If you want a shot at the plaque for next year turn off that TV, get on the air and find the setup that works for you!

73,  
**Tom, WB8LCD**

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## *Finally, A Computer I Can Live With*



After going through a virus attack, losing a hard drive, fighting off hackers, upgrading all my software, installing fire-walls, being threatened with being cut-off by my email provider, and a host of other problems...

I have fixed my computer... and NOW it works exactly the way I want it to!



**Tom, WB8LCD**

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## *Hamfests*

**18 Apr 2010** - 56th Annual Hamfest, Electronics, and Computer Show - Cuyahoga Falls Amateur Radio Club - Emidio & Sons Party Center - 48 East Bath Rd. - Cuyahoga Falls, OH - <http://www.cfarc.org/hamfest2010.html> - Talk-In: 147.27 - Contact: Ted Sarah, W8TTS - 239 Bermont Ave. - Munroe Falls, OH 44262 - Phone: 330-688-2013 - Email: [w8tts@w8tts.com](mailto:w8tts@w8tts.com)

**14-16 May 2010 - Dayton Hamvention** - Dayton ARA - Hara Arena - 1001 Shiloh Springs Road. - Trotwood, OH - <http://www.hamvention.org/> - Talk-In: 146.94(-) or 146.64(-) - Contact: Dayton Hamvention - PO Box 964 - Dayton, OH 45401-0964 - Phone: 937-276-6930 - Email: [info@hamvention.org](mailto:info@hamvention.org)

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## *Fox Hunt Season Starts*

The time is coming for the 2010 fox hunt season. We will start this year on Wed., March 17. The next hunt will be on the March 31<sup>st</sup>. We will start at 6:30 pm. Starting on April 7<sup>th</sup> we will switch to a 7:00 start.

Hunts will continue on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays and the 5<sup>th</sup>, if there is one.

As in the past, the starting place will be the parking (by the Scout House) behind the Church in Silver Lake, on Rt 59 (Kent Rd.) We welcome new hunters and those of you who want to ride along and see what it is all about. We end up a place to meet and eat and “debrief.”

Your fox,  
**Gay, WB8VNO**

## ***Metric Time***

Australia's *This Day Tonight* news program revealed that the country would soon be converting to "metric time." Under the new system there would be 100 seconds to the minute, 100 minutes to the hour, and 20-hour days.

Furthermore, seconds would become millidays, minutes become centidays, and hours become decidays.

The report included an interview with Deputy Premier Des Corcoran who praised the new time system. The Adelaide town hall was even shown sporting a new 10-hour metric clock face.

The picture (found at [TelevisionAU.com](http://TelevisionAU.com)) shows TDT Adelaide reporter Nigel Starck posing with a smaller metric clock. TDT has received numerous calls from viewers who wanted to know how he could convert his newly purchased digital clock to metric time.



*Australia's 'This Day Tonight'*

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## ***Ohio Turnpike Stops Higher Tolls for Roof Racks & Antennas***

*A follow up to an article that was in the February 2010 issue of The RADIOGRAM:*

BEREA, OHIO: The Ohio Turnpike has *stopped* charging cars higher tolls when they're carrying bicycles or luggage on the roof. Toll changes that took effect last year put vehicles with rooftop luggage carriers or bike racks into a higher toll classification meant for taller commercial trucks and moving vans. Amateur Radio Antennas could also cause a false increase in vehicle height.

Laser scanners that measure the heights of vehicles still cause the toll plazas to spit out the more expensive tickets to cars with items on the roof. But turnpike spokeswoman Lauren Hakos says toll collectors are now making adjustments and taking lower toll amounts from passenger vehicles.

It means a \$10 difference for a car traveling the entire length of the toll road. Hakos says E-ZPass users will have to call customer service to get a refund.

So, when you get your turnpike ticket - make sure the correct class is listed (usually class one for cars & passenger vans).

*Jason Liss*  
From the Associated Press

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## ***Mark Your Calendars***

On the calendar for upcoming meeting topics and activities are:

- April 1st - **Skywarn Training** - 6:30 pm at Maplewood Career Center
- April 3rd - **QRP Show & Tell + Swap & Shop** - Club Site - 10am-2pm
- April 12th meeting - **D-Star Digital Communications** - Neil, N8IL
- April 15th - **Tax Day** - crap, where *are* those papers.....
- April 18th - **Rookie Roundup Contest** at the PCARS club site - 2 pm-8 pm
- May 10th meeting - **AMSAT** - Ed, N8EQJ & Dave, WB2DFC
- May 8th - **Antenna Day** - Ravenna City Park on Oakwood St.



## *Radiogram Update*

The Radiogram staff works hard to keep the newsletter free from factual errors, grammatical errors, spelling gaffes, misrepresentations, blatant lies, vague sarcasms, off-color jokes, untested circuit diagrams, personal attacks, political posturing, unwarranted criticisms, questionable ethics, poorly drawn analogies, recipes involving trans-fats, and to a limited extent, pornography. We are only partially successful in this mission, and correct previous issues of The Radiogram as follows:

An article profiling Joe W8KNO and his numerous awards, should have more clearly stated that his transmitter was interfering with the microprocessor in his stove, instead of implying that Joe has received the Worked All Stoves award.

A related item, congratulating Chuck W8PT on winning the Worked All Garage Door Openers award, neglected to mention he has won this award twice in times past. This third presentation is known as Worked All Garage Door Openers With Oak Leaf Cluster.

The bitter editorial rant noting that The Radiogram has again failed to win the Ohio Section Best Newsletter award should have acknowledged that we did receive a Special Mention For Good Speling, a achievement apparently overlooked in the heat of the moment.

In last month's How To story, Matt Welch W8DEC of Amateur Electronic Supply (AES), demonstrated how to make an AES hat by starting with a Yaesu had and blocking out the letters Y, and S. However, the accompanying photo showed an Icom hat with the upper half of the letter O blocked out. This was apparently a prank by a computer hacker. The Radiogram apologizes for any confusion.

The item concerning Leslie Honeywell refers to PCARS member KD8JLY, not the exotic dancer of the same name with whom several readers are acquainted. Also, as used in the amateur radio community, a J-Pole is an antenna, not a device used by dancers or strippers, and a stripper is used to prepare cable for use with antennas.

Clarifying a story by KC8PD, Portage County Emergency Coordinator, members of ARES are not, if fact, required to drive a 1981 Dodge Aries as a requirement of membership. Any K-car model from any year will fulfill the requirement.

The monthly DX column cited special events station FU2OM. This station is now thought to be pirate operation.

A story asserted that Deron N8XTH was forced from his position in Obama Administration after an expose in the Radiogram revealed he believed in "Hope", but does not support "Change". Actually, it's the other way around.

The review of the Yaesu FT-817 opined that the radio was "favored by hams because it's constructed with 16% duct-tape." The manufacturer advises that 13% is a more accurate figure.

Several readers expressed concerns over apparent accusations of racism among hams who participate in the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service. Volunteers in RACES are, in fact, properly known as Racists. Hence, the phrase "That WB8LCD is a big Racist" is actually a compliment.

Amateurs who volunteer for emergency communications work are required by the Department of Homeland Security to pass certification course ICS-700, which was mistakenly identified as How To Burp Your Tupperware. The Tupperware course is actually ICS-718 and not generally required for communications work.

The effort to power wash the PCARS building in Ravenna was led by Jim KC8PD. The vague wording in the article left some readers to conclude that club members met to power wash KC8PD personally. His wife Laura Aylward added that Jim “could really use a good scrubbin’, but he’s definitely dry-clean only.”

Everything written about Field Day in the March issue of The Radiogram, was a pack of lies. After an internal investigation, Radiogram management determined that the article was actually submitted by Art N8RKA, who is the Field Day Chairman of a rival group. These people apparently find this sort of juvenile prank funny.

This picture, purporting to show the PCARS Communications Trailer actually depicts a 155 mm self-propelled Howitzer. The picture was supplied by Rick K8CAV, a former artillery officer. This should have been noticed by The Radiogram staff, but editor Parky KB8UUZ is a Navy veteran and can’t tell the difference.



**Bill, WB9LBI**

### ***PCARS Thursday Net Control***

If ***YOU*** would like to be a net control operator, please let me know when you are available and I'll get you into the rotation - email: [WB8LCD@portcars.org](mailto:WB8LCD@portcars.org). Your help would be greatly appreciated and it's a lot of fun !



<b>April</b>	
1	N8QE - April Fools Day
8	W8PT
15	KB8UUZ - Tax Day
22	WB8LCD - Earth Day
29	N8EQJ

<b>May</b>	
6	KC8PD
13	N8XTH - Hamvention Week
20	WB2DFC - On his NEW radio
27	N8QE - Full Moon

<b>June</b>	
3	W8PT
10	N8RLG
17	KB8UUZ
24	WB8LCD - 1st week of Summer

The PCARS net is ***Fun*** - tell your friends to check in via RF or Echolink!

***Tom WB8LCD***  
PCARS Net Control Coordinator

### ***Rookie Roundup***

The ARRL is sponsoring the “Rookie Roundup” contest to be held on Sunday, April 18th from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. local time (1800 UTC to 2359 UTC.) This contest is open to all hams who have had their licenses for three years or less. Even Technicians can participate as long as there is a General or Extra acting as the control operator.

This is a great opportunity for new hams to gain on-the-air contest experience, particularly with assistance from seasoned contest veterans. It is also a terrific chance to hone your skills for Field Day.

The contest rules can be found at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2010/rr.html>.

PCARS will have at least one station on the air at the club site for club members to use. If there is enough interest we will try to get another station up and running. If you would like to get on the air from the PCARS club shack for this contest, send a note to Jim, KC8PD, at [kc8pd@portcars.org](mailto:kc8pd@portcars.org). As soon as we know how many people will be participating we can divide up the six hours of operating time.

As usual, all PCARS members, guests and friends are invited to stop by and enjoy the ham radio fun with us. This might be a good time to roll the official PCARS grill out of the storage shed and fire it up for a cookout!

*Jim, KC8PD*



## *A Dark Corner of Paradise*

I had flown into the Caribbean wonderland of St Thomas, in the US Virgin Islands. The weather was superb, the sun was bright, and the beaches were calling. I was not listening, however. I was here for almost a week, but all of that was allocated for lions and tigers and bears, I mean radios and computers and antennas. This was a shack work party at KP2D. I might not see a beach this trip, except for driving by them on the way to and from the airport, but I would become intimately familiar with the Shack and everything in it before I left for home.

The first task was establishing a networked 2 station setup for Writelog. I didn't want a repeat of the last contest, when we had no Multiplier station. In half a day I had the software installed, a thousand software settings synchronized, and my laptop locked in a Vulcan mind meld with the Shack computer. I also had installed the FKeys add-on to Writelog that the team has used in the past.

Next up is checking out the rigs. Jungle rot is never pretty, and never less so than when sensitive electronics are involved. There are 4 rigs in the shack and every one of them has at least one problem. I've never seen so many sick Icoms in my life! I painstakingly go through all the rigs and test them to see what works and what doesn't. Each gets a sticky label with a description of the problems for the benefit of the repair shop. 746Pro #1 has low output power of



60Watts and doesn't report it's frequency on the CIV command channel. 746Pro #2 has a low output of only 40Watts. IC-718#1 has an inoperative mode switch, so we can't put it into RTTY mode. That makes it not very useful for a RTTY contesting station. IC-718#2 has a low output power of 40Watts. Neither IC-718 has any narrow filters appropriate for RTTY. I make a mental note to check for InRad filter availability. So, I'm 0 for 4 in finding a completely functional radio. PC-to-rig interfaces are next on my checklist. The Microham MicroKeyer that I had brought down earlier in the year was working great, except that my wife had to overnight a cable to us. We were trying to set up a 2 radio station (Rate rig and Multi rig) so we needed another interface for the second

radio. Once again I try to use the Rigblaster Pro that is in the Shack. Pete has had a 2 serial port card installed in the Shack PC since the last fiasco, so I try to connect the spaghetti that constitutes the cables for the RigBlaster (how many cables could a Rigblaster tangle, if a RigBlaster could tangle cables?- try saying that 3 times fast!). Nope - no go! I download new drivers for the serial card; still nothing. I scour the internet and find out that this particular card sometimes doesn't like certain ISA slots, so I spend a few hours playing Musical ISA cards (very similar to Musical Chairs, but more cursing!). After all this, I give up on the RigBlaster. Fortunately, Tom had purchased a Microham MK2 based on the

good performance of my Microham. We had intended that to be a backup interface but now it is pressed into service.

There's a rumor going around that antennas are important, so I decided to move on to checking out the aluminum. The tribander had been rebuilt since the last contest, but the news still was not good. God bless Pete and his home-made antenna parts, but we need something better. 10Meters is still bad and 15 and 20 meters are only fair. Clearly we are going to have to rebuild the beam again. A Gap Titan had been added to the arsenal since the last contest. As an all-band vertical it would make a perfect Multi station antenna while we pounded rates on the horizontal beam. I have one of these in my own backyard, and it works pretty well, and, best of all, it presents a low SWR on all bands, which should make the amps happy. But my bad luck string continues. SWR on the Titan is skyhigh on most bands. We try some adjustments, but conclude that there is a serious problem. Only later (too late, in this case), as I am on the plane flying home, do I have the "aha" moment that reveals the cure for this antenna. At least I am able to call down later from Ohio and tell the guys how to fix it! (hint: needs to be assembled correctly). We still have the 40M vertical that is on the Winlink node at the Shack. After dark, we shut down the Winlink and use it's antenna. So far no one has complained.



Next up are the SGC brick solid state amps. There are 2 of them and they have been home-brewed into a new species. They are mounted upside down, with giant capacitors wired into them, and fans wired up to blow across the heatsinks. There is a remnant of some switching circuit which is long past it's prime. Tom, KP2E, and I ponder over this for a while before deciding to ditch it and just switch directly on RF detection. Maybe when Bernie gets back from Diego Garcia he can reconstruct it. A little testing shows that these babies are super sensitive to SWR. With our ailing beam, they keep dropping offline from SWR. We finally get one of them online, but it is dropping offline about every 3rd transmission.

By now it's noon Friday, and we drive into town to have a nice Lunch. This is my first trip away from the Shack since I arrived - I even sleep in the Shack. I enjoy some terrific grouper and once again catch a glimpse of the glorious beaches that I will not visit this trip. In a few hours the CQ WW RTTY contest starts. After all this work in the Shack, we decide that we REALLY need to test the setup. Perhaps a 48 hour contest would be an excellent test. Of course, we don't want to enter the contest, no, not at all, but we REALLY need to test the equipment, so, what choice do we have? So, solely for the benefit of the Club, we agree to take our beaten and bruised equipment and perform a prolonged operational test.



The Rate or Run station is a 746Pro with the working amp. Together they put out 150Watts (Low Power limit) and the amp only needs to be reset every 3rd QSO. The Multi station (weird CQ WW rules) is running an IC-718 barefoot with a whopping 40W Output power. The wide SSB filter in this rig drove us crazy in the crowded RTTY band so we couldn't keep this rig manned fulltime.

The Virgin Islands ARC came together like they haven't in quite some time and we end up with 5 ops who work the contest. Myself, Tom - KP2E, Deb - NP2DJ, Pete - NP2DZ, and Tony - NP2Q. Unknownst to me, Tom's birthday party was planned for Saturday evening, so I got a few hours of pounding rate while everyone else was at the party - that's okay - I POUNDED RATE and won the rate competition with 142Q's/hour (for a short time). I also had my first ever contacts with Malaysia and Korea. Too bad we were using the club callsign.

The bottom line was 1200 QSO's, over 300 mults, and a score close to 3/4 million points. If the contesting reflectors are to be believed, we may very well have won North America. By Sunday night when the contest ended, you could stick a fork in me, cause I was done! I slept soundly, got up in the morning and packed. Another wonderful lunch in town on the way to the airport, and I was on my way. I was home Monday night, and at work Tuesday morning at 7:30 AM. FYI, all 4 radios from the Shack left the next day - on their way to Icom Service. I may have only visited a Dark Corner of Paradise on this trip, but I have no regrets. My favorite spot in the Virgin Islands is the Shack of KP2D.

*Dennis, AI8P*

## ***Redneck Ham***

You are a Redneck Ham Operator if...

- One leg of your dipole is tied to the outhouse.
- Needle nose pliers are needed to turn your transceiver on and off.
- You paid more for your mobile antenna than you did for your wife's wedding ring.
- You paused for ID every ten minutes while on your honeymoon.
- Your spouse says "Honey do you love me?" And your response is ROGER ROGER ROGER!
- Your trailer home is part of your antenna.
- Your mobile radio costs more than the vehicle it's mounted in.
- Your power supply consists of jumper cables hanging out the window of your shack attached to the battery of your truck.
- Your HF rig is the latest ICOM or KENWOOD and your Desk Mic came from Radio Shack.
- Your idea of RF is REAL FINE audio.
- Your homebrew amplifier resembles a moonshine whiskey still in Alabama.
- Your TV antenna and 10 Meter Beam are one in the same.
- You own a linear amplifier but not a lawn mower.

***Randy, K5NDX***



## ***QRP Show & Tell + Swap & Shop***

Schedule conflicts have bumped the PCARS March activity back a few days so it will be in April, but better late than never!

This will be the first (and maybe annual) PCARS QRP Show & Tell + Swap & Shop and this year it will be held on the same weekend as the QRP/ARCI Spring QSO Party. The event will be at the PCARS club site and will run from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 3rd and during that time we can run a club entry in the contest. The contest runs from Saturday morning until Sunday evening and the rules permit you to operate K8BF and then also operate your own station and enter using your own call sign.

This will be your chance to Show off and Tell about that favorite QRP rig that you have been hiding at home. Whether it is an Elecraft or a Tuna Tin, we want to see it. CW, phone or digital, however you put the radio to use, bring the accessories along and demonstrate your rig. You can put it on the air using the antenna at the club site. Or if you have a favorite portable HF antenna that works great with the rig, bring it along and set it up.

Maybe you have a QRP radio and related doo-dads that just aren't seeing as much use as you had hoped for. Pack all that stuff and haul it over. You can set up a table and maybe make the day for someone else has been looking for just that item. Swapping and Shopping are highly encouraged!

And even if the QRP bug hasn't bitten you yet, come on by and hang out and swap tales of ham radio adventures with your PCARS friends.

***Jim, KC8PD***



## Shocking Information

Today's scientific question is: What in the world is electricity and where does it go after it leaves the toaster?

Here is a simple experiment that will teach you an important electrical lesson: On a cool dry day, scuff your feet along a carpet, then reach your hand into a friend's mouth and touch one of his dental fillings. Did you notice how your friend twitched violently and cried out in pain? This teaches one that electricity can be a very powerful force, but we must never use it to hurt others unless we need to learn an important lesson about electricity. It also illustrates how an electrical circuit works. When you scuffed your feet, you picked up batches of "electrons", which are very small objects that carpet manufacturers weave into carpet so that they will attract dirt. The electrons travel through your bloodstream and collect in your finger, where they form a spark that leaps to your friend's filling, then travel down to his feet and back into the carpet, thus completing the circuit.

**AMAZING ELECTRONIC FACT:** If you scuffed your feet long enough without touching anything, you would build up so many electrons that your finger would explode! But this is nothing to worry about unless you have carpeting. Although we modern persons tend to take our electric lights, radios, mixers, etc. for granted, hundreds of years ago people did not have any of these things, which is just as well because there was no place to plug them in. Then along came the first Electrical Pioneer, Benjamin Franklin, who flew a kite in a lightning storm and received a serious electrical shock. This proved that lightning was powered by the same force as carpets, but it also damaged Franklin's brain so severely that he started speaking only in incomprehensible maxims, such as, "A penny saved is a penny earned." Eventually he had to be given a job running the post office.

After Franklin came a herd of Electrical Pioneers whose names have become part of our electrical terminology: Myron Volt, Mary Louise Amp, James Watt, Bob Transformer, etc. These pioneers conducted many important electrical experiments. Among them, Galvani discovered (this is the truth) that when he attached two different kinds of metal to the leg of a frog, an electrical current developed and the frog's leg kicked, even though it was no longer attached to the frog, which was dead anyway. Galvani's discovery led to enormous advances in the field of amphibian medicine. Today, skilled veterinary surgeons can take a frog that has been seriously injured or killed, implant pieces of metal in its muscles, and watch it hop back into the pond -- almost.

But the greatest Electrical Pioneer of them all was Thomas Edison, who was a brilliant inventor despite the fact that he had little formal education and lived in New Jersey. Edison's first major invention in 1877 was the phonograph, which could soon be found in thousands of American homes, where it basically sat until 1923, when the record was invented. But Edison's greatest achievement came in 1879 when he invented the electric company. Edison's design was a brilliant adaptation of the simple electrical circuit: the electric company sends electricity through a wire to a customer, then immediately gets the electricity back through another wire, then (this is the brilliant part) sends it right back to the customer again. This means that an electric company can sell a customer the same batch of electricity thousands of times a day and never get caught, since very few customers take the time to examine their electricity closely. In fact, the last year any new electricity was generated was 1937.

Today, thanks to men like Edison and Franklin, and frogs like Galvani's, we receive almost unlimited benefits from electricity. For example, in the past decade scientists have developed the laser, an electronic appliance so powerful that it can vaporize a bulldozer 2000 yards away, yet so precise that doctors can use it to perform delicate operations to the human eyeball, provided they remember to change the power setting from "Bulldozer" to "Eyeball."

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### PCARS Patches & Stickers & Mugs



PCARS logo patches & stickers are now available!! Put the patch on your hat, your shirt, your jacket, show off that PCARS mug!! The patch is approximately 3". The embroidery is in Red, Black and Blue. Cost for a patch is \$2.00 each and can be obtained at any PCARS meeting. There are 2 types of stickers available. A 4"x6" oval and a 3" x 10" bumper sticker. Stickers are \$1 each. Show your pride in PCARS - Wear a patch, use the stickers! If you would like to order by mail contact the club Treasurer: Bill, WB9LBI at:

[WB9LBI@portcars.org](mailto:WB9LBI@portcars.org)



## ***Internet Reboot***

As you may have heard in the news, the Internet will be rebooted on the first Thursday in April and is expected to be down for around one minute. A global consortium of ISPs and technology companies has called for the action following several periods of instability over the past few years.

A spokesman for the group commented: "People forget that the Internet has been running continuously since the 1970s. This reboot will provide greater stability for years to come. We're also hoping it will result in fewer viagra and scam messages."

The plans have been meticulous and all information will be backed up to CD and tape drives. No one should lose data as a result of the reboot, but everyone is advised to:

1. Convert 1 April 11.59 am UTC to their local time using a tool such as The World Clock Time Zone Converter.
2. Shut down all Internet applications such as web browsers, email clients, and instant messengers shortly before the reboot.
3. Wait at least a minute before restarting any applications.

The process is especially hazardous for the Internet technicians handling the restart. One specialist – who wished to remain anonymous – told us: "Some of the equipment down there is nearly 40 years old. There are missing fuses, exposed wires and un-terminated cables: it will be dangerous. Anyone surfing the net or sending a large email attachment at 11:59 could easily electrocute one of my team."

How will your company handle the reboot downtime? Is the reboot necessary? Do you think it should have been done sooner?

***Craig Buckler***



## ***PCARS VE Test Sessions***

PCARS VE sessions are scheduled for the first Saturday of every even numbered month.

***April 3 - June 5 - August 7 - October 2 - December 4***

VE sessions for Technician, General & Amateur Extra start at 10:00 am at the **Center of Hope**: 1034 West Main St. in Ravenna. Walk-ins are always welcome. *Please* bring your original FCC license, a copy of your FCC license, your FRN number if you are already licensed or registered with the FCC (or your SSN number if you're not registered), your original CSCE (if you have one), a copy of your CSCE (if you have one), a photo ID, and \$15.00 in cash or a check for \$15.00 made out to "ARRL-VEC". We look forward to seeing you there!!!!



***Jim, KC8PD***  
PCARS VE Team Liaison



## April Contest Calendar

April 2010	
Missouri QSO Party	1800Z, Apr 3 to 2400Z, Apr 4
Georgia QSO Party	1800Z, Apr 10 to 2359Z, Apr 11
Michigan QSO Party	1600Z, Apr 17 to 0400Z, Apr 18
Ontario QSO Party	1800Z, Apr 17 to 1800Z, Apr 18
Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	0100Z-0300Z, Apr 19
10-10 Int. Spring Contest, CW	0001Z, Apr 24 to 2359Z, Apr 25
Florida QSO Party	1600Z, Apr 24 to 2159Z, Apr 25
Nebraska QSO Party	1700Z, Apr 24 to 1700Z, Apr 25

Yes - there are even more than what are listed here.  
Check the internet for contest activity from around the world.

## Stark County VHF QSO Party



Make as many contacts as you can on 2 Meter FM Simplex!

Stark County contacts are worth **2 Pts**,  
all others are worth **1 Pt!**

36 Multipliers!

**3 Bonus Stations Will Be On The Air!**

Sponsored by:

**The Alliance Amateur Radio Club**

Download Entry forms, Rules, and Information at: [www.w8lky.org](http://www.w8lky.org), or e-mail: [2mcontest@w8lky.org](mailto:2mcontest@w8lky.org)!

## Ham License Plates Wanted

Dig out an old amateur radio call sign license plate (with your present call sign), clean it up and bring it in to be permanently affixed to the wall in the club station.

We have 30 plates up on the wall now, but we can use more!

Don't have ham radio call plates on your vehicle? Well for those of you in Ohio, you can get the plates sent to you by going to any License Bureau office and filling out the special plate registration form. It costs about \$20 the first time for the bureau fee, mailing fee, and Amateur Radio plate fee. When your Amateur Radio plates need to be re-nued, you can get NEW plates issued (same call sign). Then you'll have an old plate to bring in to get hung up as a **permanent part of PCARS history!!** The official form for obtaining your Ohio Amateur Radio license plates is on the PCARS Yahoo Group site.



## Swap-N-Shop

**FOR SALE: Coax Jumper Cables** - made of Belden RG-213, 3 foot jumper \$10, 6 foot jumper \$15. As many as you need! Yes, they all have PL-259's on them! They are complete jumper cable assemblies! Can also supply any custom lengths you need! [exp 6/25/10]

**FOR SALE: 1.5" OD x 12 ft aluminum mast** - 1/4" wall, \$75.00 [exp 6/25/10]

**FOR SALE: 2" OD x 12 ft long aluminum mast** - 1/4" wall, \$100.00 [exp 6/25/10]

Contact **Tom** - [WB8LCD@portcars.org](mailto:WB8LCD@portcars.org)

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**FOR SALE: Mirage A-1015G, 6 Meter Amplifier** - 10 watts in, 160 watts out - Original manual & box - works great - \$275 [exp 6/25/10]

**FOR SALE: Heil HM-10 Dual (HC4 & HC-5 elements) microphone.** Original manual & case. W/cable for Kenwood. \$95 [exp 6/25/10]

**FOR SALE: MFJ-5124K - Autotuner cable** for Kenwood - Original box & manual. - \$24 [exp 6/25/10]

Contact **Tom** - [KB8UUZ@portcars.org](mailto:KB8UUZ@portcars.org) or call 330-527-7609

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**FOR SALE: TS-440-SAT Kenwood Transceiver, PS-50 Kenwood Power Supply, MC-60A Kenwood Desk Microphone, SP-430 Kenwood External Speaker.** Sold as package only. Excellent condition, Original owner, Non-smoker, Original Packaging and all manuals. Asking \$1000. [exp 6/25/10]

Contact **Bob** - 330-633-5408 or e-mail [N8QE@portcars.org](mailto:N8QE@portcars.org)

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**Editor's Note:** Ads run for 3 months then are dropped from the listing *UNLESS* you send it in again. Each ad will have a expiration date that looks like: [exp 6/25/10] when they will be removed. This will help keep the listings current.



## Skyhighgain Coax

The recent popularity of a new antenna cable called Skyhighgain Coax has created a safety problem for users and a nightmare for firefighters. SHGC was developed theoretically by Tricenters Experimental Laboratories, Inc. as a signal-boosting element for use in radio and television transmission lines. Scientists at TELI discovered that when a bias voltage is applied to the special material used to make SHGC the effect was incredible. Instead of simply reducing signal loss, the signal strength increased!

Amplification of RF (radio-frequency) signals in the new coaxial transmission cable was actually greater than 3 db (decibels) per meter per meter. (Read that again.)

In laymen's terms, that means that for every 10 centimeters a signal travels through the cable the signal strength doubles! Put 1 Watt of RF energy into one end of a one meter length of SHGC and you get 2 Watts at the other end (assuming you supply the bias voltage, of course). At two meters you get 4 Watts. At three meters the signal strength increases to eight Watts. Doubling the power every meter the total effective power of the signal exceeds 1,000 Watts by the time it has traveled only 10 meters up the line.

Now imagine what would happen if you had a 100-meter SHGC cable. (The actual figures are shown at the end of this article.)

In conventional transmission lines there is always some loss of signal depending upon frequency and the electric characteristics of the cable. But with SHGC, instead of a loss, you get a gain in signal strength. This is the stuff every radio engineer has dreamed of.

But here's the problem. The unwary (and mathematically challenged) average user seems to think that if a short section of SHGC inserted in his transmission line is good, then a longer one is better. If one were to, say substitute SHGC for the complete run from their radio shack to the top of their tower, the signal would have more energy than the cable (or the antenna) could withstand. (The 20-meter traps on the tri-band beam that used to be on the 60-meter Rohn 25g tower behind the house in the photograph above were never found.)

Designed to be used in short sections between standard coax and the antenna, SHGC is not currently available, pending the resolution of certain limiting manufacturing capabilities. Some reports have surfaced however that a few samples of

the hot-pink colored coax have somehow slipped past reality checkpoints and made their way into the Amateur (and amateur) community. And without official spec sheets and installation guides SHGC poses a significant hazard to the uneducated.

The following table dramatically illustrates the danger of using too much Skyhighgain Coax in any transmission line.

### Length of Coax / Power Output

1 meters - 2 Watts	2 meters - 4 Watts	3 meters - 8 Watts
4 meters - 16 Watts	5 meters - 32 Watts	6 meters - 64 Watts
7 meters - 128 Watts	8 meters - 256 Watts	9 meters - 512 Watts
10 meters - 1,024 Watts	11 meters - 2,048 Watts	12 meters - 4,096 Watts
13 meters - 8,192 Watts	14 meters - 16,384 Watts	15 meters - 32,768 Watts
16 meters - 65,536 Watts	17 meters - 131,072 Watts	18 meters - 262,144 Watts
19 meters - 524,288 Watts	20 meters - 1,048,576 Watts	21 meters - 2,097,152 Watts
22 meters - 4,194,304 Watts	23 meters - 8,388,608 Watts	24 meters - 16,777,216 Watts
25 meters - 33,554,432 Watts		

As you can see, by the time you reach only 20 meters, the signal power has exceeded a million Watts! Assuming your facility's commercial power mains could handle the load, the signal would exceed 30 million Watts at only 25 meters from the transmitter.

Of course, most power main breakers would trip long before the million Watt level, but once the signal starts up the transmission line the peak envelope power (PEP) climbs so fast that there is a possibility that the circuit breakers would either fuse or the electric current would simply jump the breaker's open switch gap and power would continue to increase until the primary main lines evaporated in what could only be described as an artificial bolt of lightning, showering every surrounding structure in hot plasma and sparks.



## CQ Serenade Song

Here's the lowdown on this song according to Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, of Amateur Radio Newline: The name of the song is *CQ Serenade* and we found it sometime back while trolling the world wide web. After downloading it, our curiosity got the best of us so we decided to find out more. Our search finally lead us to Jean-Guy Renaud, VE2AIK, who supplied us with allot of information. According to VE2AIK, CQ Serenade was composed sometime between 1965 and 1970 by Maurice Durieux, VE2QS. Durieux was orchestra conductor employed by Radio Canada who had emigrated from France. Assisting Duriux in the creation of the song was F9KT. CQ Serenade was first recorded with French lyrics by Raymond Girerd. An English language version written by VE2QS and by Georges Brewer, then VE2BR, of Montreal. It was later covered by songstress Joyce Hahn. Both versions were available on 45 RPM long playing records under the rather apropos QSO Records label.

Today, those discs are probably true collectors items and all but impossible to find. But don't despair. Thanks to the magic of MP3 audio and the Word-Wide-Web, CQ Serenade is still around to hear and enjoy.

**Bruce, K6PZW**  
From Amateur Radio Newline



Media Clip

*Editor's Note:* For those of you getting the electronic version of this newsletter - the song CQ Serenade can be heard by clicking this Media Clip icon.

If you cannot play the file, visit the PCARS Yahoo Site. I have uploaded 2 versions of the song, one with lyrics and one that is an instrumental. Enjoy!



## Shack Shots - N8GLK, KD8GGZ

### Towers? Who needs a tower?

Check this out. A 30" x 4" piece of plywood that sits on the window sill. Outside is a bottom of a three pound coffee can with four radials. Sitting on this is a 5/8 wave mobile mag mount. Inside the house is a stack of books and a camping lantern to counter balance the weight of what's outside. Don't laugh! It works!



My shack is limited at this time. Current equipment list: Hammarlund HQ 100C receiver, Yaesu VX-170 HT, Yaesu FT-2800R mobile, Mirage B-310G amplifier, Samlex power supply and two scanners. Will soon be



ordering a Yaesu FT-7900R.

I originally got my ticket in 1985. I was heavily involved in community service and was part of a search & rescue/disaster response team. Part of the work involved working air shows, concerts, festivals, parades and races. I've worked tornadoes and floods in Ohio, PA and West Virginia. I assisted in staging mock disaster drills and assessing the results. I've taken radiological monitoring training through the State of Ohio and taught Search & Rescue classes at Columbiana County Fire School.

I'd gotten away from ham radio for awhile. When Mary Jo and I moved to Portage County not quite eleven years ago, I decided to get back into the hobby. Wasn't impressed with what I found – until I found PCARS! It's good to be back!

*Leon, N8GLK*

P.S. from Mary Jo (KD8GGZ) – MY shack looks just like his – but only when he's not home.....

### Word Search

P	O	R	T	A	G	E	R	F	I		ALIGN
C	A	M	A	T	E	U	R	C	W		AMPLIFIER
A	A	N	T	E	N	N	A	L	B		COAX
R	I	C	O	M	H	T	B	A	T		DC
S	I	F	Y	O	U	C	A	N	K		DIPOLE
W	R	E	A	D	T	H	I	S	B		FEEDLINE
N	O	N	E	O	F	T	H	E	S		FILTER
H	W	O	R	D	S	I	N	S	S		GROUND
D	X	G	T	H	E	L	I	S	T		MAP
A	R	E	I	N	T	H	I	S	J		MAST
D	P	U	Z	Z	L	E	T	N	A		NORTH
A	P	R	I	L	F	O	O	L	S		PLUG
E	D	R	A	D	I	O	M	I	C		WIRE

*Tom, KB8UUZ*

## PCARS Meetings

The Portage County Amateur Radio Service (PCARS) meetings are held the second Monday of each month.

The April 12th meeting will be at: the **On Tap** restaurant, 4396 Kent Road (St Rt. 59), in Stow. It is about a mile west of the Kent city limits.

**PCARS meeting - 7:00 pm Second Monday of Every Month**  
(January through November. December is the Christmas Party)



## Shack Shots - W8PT - New and Old

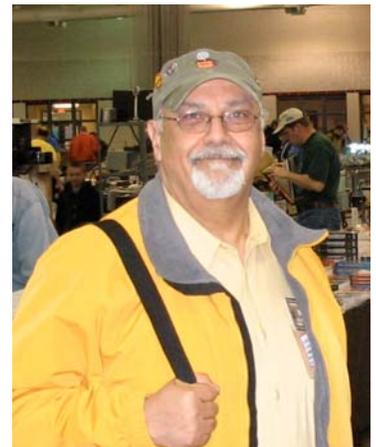
Top far left to right is an IC V8000 2m rig; IC-7000 HF sitting on top of an MFJ 986 tuner; Kenwood TS 570SG; flat panel showing N3FJP logging software; DM330 PS hidden between teh flat panels; flat panel showing output of the Yaesu DMU unit;

Bottom left to right: Yaesu G800SA Rotor controller for VHF tower; M2 Rotor controller for HF Tower; MFJ 976 Tuner; SEC 1223 PS on top; Ameritron AL80B 1K Amp; LDG AT-200Pro Autotuner on top; Yaesu FT 2000; Yaesu SWR Meter & a SteppIR Antenna Controller on top; Yaesu Speaker with filters; Yaesu DMU-2000.



Yep! the picture to the left is Chuck 'way back when'.

The picture on the right is the Chuck we know today.



*Pictures from the March PCARS Meeting*



## *Famous April Fools Pranks*

While searching for articles with an April Fools slant, I ran into these interesting tid-bits to share with you:

- ◆ **Alabama Changes the Value of Pi:** The April 1998 newsletter of New Mexicans for Science and Reason contained an article written by physicist Mark Boslough claiming that the Alabama Legislature had voted to change the value of the mathematical constant pi to the "Biblical value" of 3.0. This claim originally appeared as a news story in the 1961 science fiction novel *Stranger in a Strange Land* by Robert A. Heinlein.
- ◆ **Spaghetti trees:** The BBC television program *Panorama* ran a famous hoax in 1957, showing the Swiss harvesting spaghetti from trees. They had claimed that the despised pest, the spaghetti weevil, had been eradicated. A large number of people contacted the BBC wanting to know how to cultivate their own spaghetti trees. It was, in fact filmed in St Albans.
- ◆ **Left Handed Whoppers:** In 1998, Burger King ran an ad in *USA Today*, saying that people could get a Whopper for left-handed people whose condiments were designed to drip out of the right side. Not only did customers order the new burgers, but some specifically requested the "old", right-handed burger.
- ◆ **Taco Liberty Bell:** In 1996, Taco Bell took out a full-page advertisement in *The New York Times* announcing that they had purchased the Liberty Bell to "reduce the country's debt" and renamed it the "Taco Liberty Bell." When asked about the sale, White House press secretary Mike McCurry replied tongue-in-cheek that the Lincoln Memorial had also been sold and would henceforth be known as the Lincoln Mercury Memorial.
- ◆ **San Serriffe:** The *Guardian* printed a supplement in 1977 praising this fictional resort, its two main islands (Upper Caisse and Lower Caisse), its capital (Bodoni), and its leader (General Pica). Intrigued readers were later disappointed to learn that San Serriffe (sans serif) did not exist except as references to typeface terminology. (This comes from a Jorge Luis Borges story.)
- ◆ **Smell-o-vision:** In 1965, the BBC purported to conduct a trial of a new technology allowing the transmission of odor over the airwaves to all viewers. Many viewers reportedly contacted the BBC to report the trial's success. In 2007, the BBC website repeated an online version of the hoax.
- ◆ **Tower of Pisa:** The Dutch television news reported once in the 1950s that the Tower of Pisa had fallen over. Many shocked people contacted the station.



## *April Fools Facts*

April Fools' Day or All Fools' Day, although not a holiday in its own right, is a notable day celebrated in many countries on April 1. The day is marked by the commission of hoaxes and other practical jokes of varying sophistication on friends, family members, enemies, and neighbors, or sending them on fool's errand, the aim of which is to embarrass the gullible. Traditionally, in some countries, the jokes only last until noon: someone who plays a trick after noon is called an "April Fool".<sup>[1]</sup> Elsewhere, such as in Ireland, France, and the USA, the jokes last all day. Another origin is that April 1 was counted the first day of the year in France. When King Charles IX changed that to January 1, some people stayed with April 1. Those who did were called "April Fools" and were taunted by their neighbors.

The origin of April Fools' Day is obscure. One likely theory is that the modern holiday was first celebrated soon after the adoption of the Gregorian Calendar; the term referred to someone still adhering to the Julian Calendar which it replaced. In many pre-Christian cultures May Day (May 1) was celebrated as the first day of summer, and signaled the start of the spring planting season. An April Fool was someone who did this

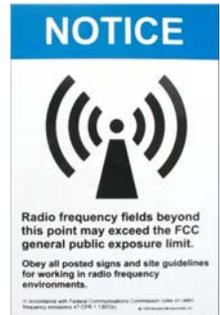
prematurely. In the eighteenth century the festival was often posited as going back to the times of Noah. An English newspaper article published on April 13th, 1789 said that the day had its origins when he sent the raven off too early, before the waters had receded. He did this on the first day of the Hebrew month that corresponds with April. A possible reference to April Fools' Day can be seen in the Canterbury Tales (ca 1400) in the Nun's Priest's tale, a tale of two fools: Chanticleer and the fox, which took place on March 32nd.

*Answer to this month's Word Search*

P	O	R	T	A	G	E	R	F	I
C	A	M	A	T	E	U	R	C	W
A	A	N	T	E	N	N	A	L	B
R	I	C	O	M	H	T	B	A	T
S	I	F-	Y	O	U-	C	A	N	K
W	R	E	A	D-	T	H	I	S	B
N	O	N	E-	O	F-	T	H	E	S
H	W	O	R	D	S-	I	N	S	S
D	X	G	T	H	E-	L	I	S	T
A	R	E-	I	N-	T	H	I	S	J
D	P	U	Z	Z	L	E	T	N	A
A	P	R	I	L-	F	O	O	L	S
E	D	R	A	D	I	O	M	I	C

*Thanks & 73*

I really appreciate your help in getting material for this newsletter. All of our members (and others) look forward to getting this newsletter every month, so keep sending those inputs! Thanks goes out to this months contributors:  
**KC8PD, WB2DFC, W8PT, WB9LBI, WB8LCD, WB8VNO, KB8UUZ, W1DGJ, W8DEC, AI8P, K5NDX, N8GLK, KD8GGZ, Jason Liss, Craig Buckler, Australia's 'This Day Tonight', the ARRL, and the World Wide Web.**



With your continued help – we can keep making this a great newsletter.

**Tom, KB8UUZ**  
**PCARS Newsletter Editor**

*Happy Easter*



**Coming Next Month - "OLD SHACKS" and Member QSL Cards**



# The Portage County Amateur Radio Service, Inc. (PCARS)

Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at 7:00 PM

Check the PCARS website for meeting location



All are welcome to attend – Drop in and say hello!

## "When All Else Fails - Amateur Radio Works"

PCARS Uses the N8EQJ Repeater: 146.895 MHz (PL 110.9 – Rootstown, Ohio PL 114.8 – Kent, Ohio)

Repeater is graciously provided by N8EQJ for use by PCARS members

### PCARS Appointments & Committees 2010

Awards	W8KNO	Joe Wehner
Club Call Trustee	KB8VJL	Al Atkins, Sr.
Club Site	KC8PD	Jim Aylward
Contest	W8KNO	Joe Wehner
Coordinators	W8PT	Chuck Patellis
Field Day 2010	WB9LBI W8PT	Bill Fraedrich Chuck Patellis
FYAO	WB8LCD	Tom Sly
Historian	KB8SZI	Peggy Parkinson
K8BF QSL Mgr.	KB8VJL	Al Atkins, Sr.
Net Coordinator	WB8LCD	Tom Sly
Newsletter	KB8UUZ	Tom Parkinson
OSPOTA	W8PT	Chuck Patellis
PIO	KC8PD	Jim Aylward
Secretary	KD8GGZ	Mary Jo Loveland
Web Master	K8SRR	Steve Randlett

	KC8PD	Jim Aylward	
	KB8UUZ	Tom Parkinson	
	KB8DPN	Russ Anderson, Sr.	
	N4IT	Carl Capps	
	WB8LCD	Tom Sly	
	N8XTH	Deron Boring	
	N8PXW	Jim Korenz	
	N8QE	Bob Hajdak	
	W8PT	Chuck Patellis	
	N8EQJ	Ed Polack	
	K8QF	Russ Conklin	
	K8GI	Rick Patterson	
	VE Team	WB8VNO	Gay Wands
	WD8CVH	Ted Wands	
	NX8G	Rex Simmons	
	N8RLG	Robert Gurney	
	AB8AA	Allan Avnet	
	K8JAA	Jane Avnet	
	KD8FLZ	Mike DiCarro	
KE8G	Jim Blanca		



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ARES® (Amateur Radio Emergency Service®) is a program of, and both logos are registered trademarks (used with permission) of the American Radio Relay League, Inc. **Why the Black Squirrel in our logo?** For those of you not familiar with it: the Black Squirrel is commonly seen around Portage County, Ohio. Seems that some of these little guys & gals got loose from Kent State University back in 1961 and have migrated and thrived throughout our county. Kent State University even has an annual Black Squirrel Festival. So when you spot a black squirrel – **think PCARS!**

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NLC

