

# CQ Chatter

Volume B3•Issue #7

Wood County Amateur Radio Club

DECEMBER 2000

P. O. Box 534, Bowling Green, OH 43402

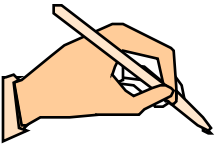
<http://wcarc.bgsu.edu>

President-AA8XS, John Lager  
Secretary-N8QMV, Esther Creps

Vice President-WB8NQW, Bob Willman  
Treasurer-N1RB, Bob Boughton

## A Note from the Editor

On the agenda for the November meeting of the WCARC was an extremely important issue for the Club to consider --- should Hamarama be continued or not? It was somewhat disappointing so see less than 10 members show up to participate in the discussion. I realize that Mondays are busy nights for many people, what with other organizations meeting, work, school, etc. at that time. However, the issue that was discussed should make every member of the Club think seriously, take a position and let his opinion be known. Even if you cannot make it to the meeting, you should try to get hold of any one of the officers to let him know what you think. The Club is organized for the benefit of the community, but first and foremost for the benefit of its members.



The decision was made to continue holding the Hamarama for at least one more year. The thinking is that we (the Club members) have not really been giving it our full attention lately. The set-up and tear-down, and the operation of the hamfest itself have not elicited a lot of participation in recent years. It was decided to make a strong effort to get out the troops to participate and see what can be done if we all try to do our best. This task includes sales of raffle tickets throughout the months leading up to July. If you can help, please pitch in!

This year the Hamarama will be held on Sunday, July 8th. Set-up will take place on Saturday, July 7th. We will certainly need lots of help on both days. If you cannot be available during Hamarama weekend, there many other jobs that need to be taken care of before the event: ticket sales, database entry, flyer distribution, and mailings. If you would like to pitch in, but haven't done so yet, now is the time if ever for you to participate. The success of your Club depends on the success of Hamarama. 73 de Bob ■

**WCARC Weekly Net:  
Tuesdays at 2130  
147.18 & 444.475 MHz**

**Club Meeting:  
Monday, December 11th  
Location: Fairgrounds  
Time: 7:30 pm  
Social Hour: 7:00 pm**

## Special Notice

The December meeting of WCARC will have on its agenda a motion to raise the annual dues of the Club. This notice is provided in keeping with the Bylaws which state that adequate notice be given to all members whenever a change of dues is to be discussed.

The proposal is for a \$5.00 increase in all membership categories. The Regular dues rate would be \$15.00, the Family rate would be \$20.00, and the Senior/Student rate \$10.00. It is important for all members who have an interest in the success of the Club to attend this meeting to consider all the alternatives. ■

## Pagers Available

The emergency pagers that the Club purchased some time ago are ready to go. These units can be obtained for a \$35.00 deposit that is refundable on return.

Thanks to the efforts of KB8QEW, they can be activated through the 440 MHz machine whenever an emergency occurs. If you want to be alerted whenever ARES/RACES requires your services, you need a pager. To obtain one, contact Bob, N1RB, at 354-1811 or at:

[boughton@bgnet.bgsu.edu](mailto:boughton@bgnet.bgsu.edu) ■

## December Contests

The full contest line-up for the month of December includes the following:

Nov 25-26 CQ WWDX 'test	0000 to 2359 Z	160 to 10 m CW
Dec 9-10 ARRL 10 Meter 'Test	0000 to 2359 Z	10 m all modes
Dec 16-17 Croatian CW 'Test	1400 to 1400 Z	160 to 10 m CW
Dec 30 RAC Canada Winter 'Test	0000 to 2359 Z	160 to 2 m all modes
Dec 31-Jan 1 ARRL Straight Key Night	2400 to 2400 Z	all bands CW
Jan 12-14 Japan Int'l DX CW 'Test	2200 to 2200 Z	160 to 40 m CW
Jan 13-14 North American QSO Party	1800 to 0600 Z	160 to 10 m CW

## New Amateur Award

Worldradio magazine is offering a new DX award for aficionados of the newest HF mode, PSK31. Shawn, KB8QEW, lent his PSK31 setup to the JOTA activity last month where I got a chance to observe the operation. Believe me, it's neat! Anybody who has an interest in computers and is still thrilled by the act of contacting another station across the oceans or on the other side of the world should truly investigate this new mode.

The Worldradio folks are offering an award called "31 on 31" for anyone working 31 different countries on PSK31. The countries must be on Worldradio's countries list, which differs considerably from the DXCC list. You shouldn't have any problems if you pick major nations like England, Italy, Russia and Australia. The note in Worldradio says that the award is being offered to their "readers". At this point in time, your editor is not certain whether this means "subscribers" or not. Once you make the grade, you only need to send \$3.10 to Worldradio to receive a certificate suitable for framing. Interested persons are advised to contact Worldradio, 2120 28th St., Sacramento, CA 95818. ■

## WCARC

### Net Control Roster

Net meets every Tuesday at 2130

Nov 28	WD8ICP
Dec 5	N1RB
Dec 12	N8QMV
Dec 19	AA8XS
Dec 26	KG8FH
Jan 2	WD8JWJ
Jan 9	WD8ICP

## Michigan Scanner Bill Dies

A proposal in the Michigan legislature that would have regulated the possession of scanning receivers capable of receiving police frequencies has been killed. The bill's sponsor, Rep. Mike Kowall, scuttled the bill in the wake of complaints from amateurs, even though amateurs were specifically excluded from the bill's provisions. The measure would have made it illegal to have a receiver in a vehicle that received police frequencies. The sponsor is quoted as saying, "Rest assured that I have driven a stake through the heart of this bill, and it will never see the light of day and will die before it reaches the committee process. Amateur Radio operators play an integral role in emergency management agencies, and their freedoms are guaranteed.." ■

## For Sale—Coax

**100 ft – foam-filled 7/8 in  
coax cable with type-N  
connector on one end  
Line loss is less than 0.5 dB  
per 100 feet  
asking \$75.00  
Contact Duane, K8NEA  
(419) 874-8889**

## Club Meeting Elects to Continue Hamarama

At the November meeting of the WCARC, the main item of discussion was the report of the Ad Hoc Hamarama Committee to discontinue the annual hamfest and replace it with some other fund raising activity. After a long discussion of the pros and cons led by President Lagger, AA8XS, the consensus of those members who were present was to continue Hamarama for at least one more year.

The discussion centered mainly on the tradition that Hamarama represents, and the place that our hamfest holds as a meeting place for many hams in the Northwest Ohio area. It is one of the few remaining no-admission-fee hamfests that we know about, and that point was raised as a positive attribute of Hamarama. The members present resolved to "give it one last shot", by addressing two contentious issues: the lackluster participation by club members in helping set up and run the hamfest, and the lagging sales of raffle tickets. Both of these deficiencies will have to be remedied if Hamarama is to continue. Another disappointing year like the 2000 event last July, and Hamarama will be no more. The members present agreed to the proposition that Hamarama be continued for one last year with emphasis on fixing the shortcomings. All WCARC members should be alerted to the need for their participation because this is our only fund raising activity. ■

## What is PSK31 Anyway?

In early 1999, hams throughout the world discovered a new way to communicate using a digital scheme known as PSK31. The novel mode had its beginnings when Peter Martinez, G3PLX, developed some software that would allow anyone to send and receive *phase-shift-keyed* transmissions using little more than an SSB transceiver and a PC equipped with a 16-bit sound card. The new mode is extremely conservative of spectrum space, since its bandwidth is only 31.25 Hz. Because of its narrow bandwidth, it is ideal for digital communications using low power.

This feature can however, make it a bit more difficult to tune in properly because accurate tuning to within only a few hertz is necessary for proper decoding. Software development has progressed to the stage where this is no longer a concern. The new mode is not only easy to use, as

was demonstrated at the JOTA by the Scouts, but it allows hams to swap text information at very low power levels and in poor signal conditions. Does this environment ring a bell? Yes, it's a perfect description of HF operating! According to Steve Ford, WB8IMY, who writes in the May, 2000, issue of QST, the first time he used PSK31, it "knocked his socks off". Steve claims that he had never seen such weak-signal performance in a digital mode that did not rely on handshaking, as PACTOR and Clover do. PSK31 signals don't *deedle-deedle* like RTTY signals, or *chirp* like the TOR modes, they *warble* instead. If several PSK31 stations are operating close together, "they sound like a bunch of caterwauling cats", according to Skip Teller, KH6TY, writing in the June, 2000 issue of QST. In this article, Skip gives the details of a panoramic tuner project that can be put together at home. The PC board and necessary components can be obtained through Small Wonder Labs, 80 E. Robbins Ave., Newington, CT 06111.

Most of the PSK31 signals on 20 meters are clustered around 14.070 MHz, if you want to jump into the action. There is also a commercially available special "ham" sound card called the Rigblaster, which takes care of all the details: transceiver keying, microphone switching, audio level matching, etc. If you are interested in this new mode, contact Shawn, KB8QEW, who will be happy to help you get started. ■

## FCC Declines Covenant Petition

The FCC has denied an ARRL Petition for Reconsideration calling on the Commission to declare that PRB-1 (rule governing hams' right to erect towers) applies to amateurs living in areas governed by covenants (CC&Rs) or condominium regulations just as it does to hams regulated solely by local zoning laws. The FCC Order, released November 15th, also seeks to "amplify" the definition of the oft-cited "reasonable accommodation" phrase in PRB-1 with respect to local land use and zoning. "The Order provides some additional clarification on the extent of PRB-1 preemption, but it falls short of providing the relief that ARRL was seeking," said ARRL Executive Vice President David Sumner, K1ZZ.

In requesting that the FCC extend PRB-1 to restrictive covenants, the League said it wanted hams to be free to negotiate reasonable accommodation provisions with local homeowners' associations as they now may do with governmental land use regulators. ■

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