CQ CHATTER

MAY 2021

VOLUME B21 • ISSUE 3

WOOD COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

President KG8FH/W8PSK Jeff Halsey/Loren Phillips
Vice President KE8CVA Terry Halliwill

Secretary N1RB Bob Boughton

Treasurer KD8NJW Jim Barnhouse

Board Member WB8NQW Bob Willman

Minutes WCARC Meeting April 12, 2021

Jeff-KG8FH presiding

Present: Stan-K8LL, Jeff-KG8FH, Eric-WD8LEI, Rex-KC8PFP, Roger-KE8QGV, Bob-WB8NQW, Terry-KE8CVA, Steve-K8BBK, Bill-WD8JWJ, Thom-WB8ZHU, Phil-W8PSK, Lynn-KD8RNO, Bob-N1RB

Meeting called to order: at 7:30 with Pledge of Allegiance (Woodland Mall).

Minutes: of February business meeting as published in March CQ Chatter were approved (TOM/NQW). Secretary reported that the Club Roster that appeared in April CQ Chatter was in error

regarding several e-mail addresses. A revised version will appear in the May edition.

Treasurer Report: Treasurer was not in attendance

ARES Report: Eric (LEI) announced that the Lucas County ARES has requested help for the Glass City Marathon on April 25th. Please let Eric know if you can help out. He also gave a heads-up that the DEC will be using the WCARES repeater for testing in late April. Eric is currently working on setting up some surplus repeater voting equipment to use with the ARES repeater and should have the system in operation soon. Remote sites include: Grand Rapids, Perrysburg Twp.

Net Check Ins

Traffic: 0 Apr 6 N1RB (NCS) KA8VNG KD8RNO KD8VWU **WE8TOM** WB8NQW **KB8QEW** W8PSK WD8JWJ WD8LEI KE8CVA KG8FH WD8ICP (13)

Apr 13 Traffic: 0

KG8FH (NCS)

KE8CUZ

KE8CVA

KC8EKT

WD8JWJ

WD8LEI

W8PSK

WB8NQW

N8MSU

N8VNT

KA8VNG

KD8RNO

WE8TOM

N1RB

WD8ICP

KC8NKC

(16)

Brain Teasers

- **1.** What happens to the current at the junction of two components in parallel?
 - **a.)** it divides between them dependent on the value of the components
 - **b.)** it is the same in both components
 - c.) its value doubles
 - d.) its value is halved
- 2. What is the current in a circuit with an applied voltage of 120 volts and a resistance of 80 ohms?
 - **a.)** 9600 A
 - **b.)** 200 A
 - **c.)** 0.667 A
 - **d.)** 1.5 A
- **3.** Why is it unwise to install a 20 ampere fuse in the place of a 5 ampere fuse?
 - **a.)** the larger fuse would be likely to blow because it is rated for a higher current
 - **b.)** the power supply ripple would greatly increase
 - c.) excessive current could cause a fire
 - d.) all of the above choices are correct

May Contests

The contest lineup for the month of May is given below. Please note that the WARC bands (60, 30, 17 and 12 m) are <u>never</u> open to contesting.

May 1-2	1200 to 1159 Z	80 m to 10 m
ARI (Italy) Int'l DX 'test		all modes
May 1-2	1300 to 0700 Z	160 m to 10 m
7th Call Area QSO Party		all modes
May 1-2	1500 to 0300 Z	160 m to 10 m
Indiana QSO Party		all modes
May 1-2	1700 to 2359 Z	160 m to10 m
Delaware QSO Party		all modes
May 1-2	2000 to 2359 Z	80 m to 10 m
New England QSO Party		all modes
May 8-9	1200 to 1159 Z	160 m to 10 m
CQ-M (Russia) Int'l DX 'test		CW/SSB
May 8-9	1400 to 0200 Z	80 m to 10 m
Arkansas QSO Party		all modes
May 15-16	1200 to 1200 Z	160 m to 10 m
King of Spain 'test		CW
May 21	1200 to 2359 Z	80 m to 10 m
Hamvention QSO Party		CW/SSB
May 29-30	0000 to 2359 Z	160 m to 10 m
CQ WW WPX 'test		CW

Net Check In

Apr 20 Traffic: 0 (NCS) N1RB KE8CUZ KD8RNO KE8PFS/M KE8CVA KG8FH WD8LEI KD8NJW **WB8NQW** W8PSK KE8QGV **WE8TOM** KA8VNG (13)

Apr 27 Traffic: 0

KD8NJW (NCS)

K8BBK

WD8JWJ

WD8LEI

W8PSK

WB8NQW

N1RB

N8MSU

KD8RNO

KE8CUZ

WD8PIC (12)

Brain Teaser answers: (T) 1-a, 2-d, 3-c

Strange Story of DC's Lost AM Radio Station Still Transmitting Since 2013

by Rob Stumpf

Not everyone pays the most attention to AM radio. To some, talk is talk and fuzzy signals are exactly that. Still, it'd be odd if the same broadcast looped continuously for eight years without anyone noticing—but it's not impossible. As it turns out, that very scenario took place up until March, 2021, in Washington D.C. where an AM radio station had been broadcasting the same traffic report since 2013, and nobody seems to know why.

It was <u>first pointed out on Twitter</u> by Matt Blaze, security researcher and chair of computer science and law at Georgetown University. In certain parts of D.C., you could tune-in to 1650 kHz and be greeted by a looped recording. The message, which read off the call sign <u>WQOQ613</u> and warned listeners to avoid the 14th Street bridges, had been repeating since at least Jan. 21, 2013—the day of former U.S. President Barack Obama's second inauguration. But that was more than *eight* years ago. Why in the world would this message still be broadcasting? And why could it only be picked up in certain parts of the city?

To answer that question, I reached out to several individuals who work for the District of Columbia, including the technical contact registered with the FCC. Within an hour of sending off an email, my phone rang and Bill Curry, the chief of communications security at Homeland Security Emergency Management in Washington D.C., was on the other end. Bill was immediately interested in the rogue signal. He didn't seem rushed or bothered by the fact that the message was being broadcasted, but was

WCARC Weekly Net

Tuesdays at 2100 all year 147.18 MHz 67 Hz PL

Net Control Roster

May 4 WB8NQW

May 11 N1RB

May 18 KG8FH

May 25 KD8VWU

Jun 1 KD8NJW

Jun 8 WB8NQW

NEXT MEETING

Breakfast Meeting

Saturday

May 1

TIME: 9:00 AM

PLACE:

Frisch's Big Boy

N. Main St. & E. Poe Rd.

Bowling Green, OH

10 meter Net

informal group

meets

Sunday

@ 20:30

on 28.335 MHz

Fusion Net

Thursday

@ 19:30

on 442.125 MHz

67 Hz PL on analog

Informal net

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North Baltimore, and possibly Fostoria in the future. The system would allow an HT located at just about any point in the County to get into the repeater.

Old Business:

• As recommended at the last meeting, Jeff (FH) circulated a draft letter intended to be mailed out to prospective members in the Bowling Green zip code, 43402. A copy of the promotional brochure developed several years ago by Rex (PFP) will be included. The consensus was that the letter was ready to go, so Jeff will proceed with the mailing.

New Business:

Bob (NQW) gave an update on the upcoming International King Midget Car Club (IKMCC) Jamboree in Bowling Green on August 12, 13 and 14th. The group is celebrating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the King Midget Motor Co. The itinerary is set for the Jamboree, and includes several visits/tours to local attractions. involvement of WCARC is to be operating a special event station, K8M. One question is where to set up the station and when to operate it. IKMCC has reserved the Huntington Bank parking lot at the corner of Clough and Main for the banquet on Saturday, so an inspection of this site

- will be made to determine if and how a station could be set up. Stand by for further information. Volunteers for helping out are: tom (TOM), and Bob (RB).
- A demonstration by the Lucas County ARES (NWOAREDN Mesh Users) folks of the capabilities of the AREDN Mesh mode was presented at the February meeting. It was wellreceived and a number of members expressed interest in setting up this type of operation for Wood County ARES work. Eric (LEI) was able to obtain five Mikrotik mANTBox2 microwave node units, which were distributed to those members who were interested. Phil (PSK) set up a visit from a representative of the NWO AREDN Mesh Users group, Chrissy Hart-KC8UFV, at his shack on April 11. She gave a very informative overview of what is needed to set up an AREDN node, and subsequently demonstrated AREDN video capabilities with her go-Eric commented that it was his goal as EC to set up an AREDN link between the Lucas County group and Wood County. It is surmised that an intermediate relay point will be needed to complete the connection.
- Jeff reminded everyone that Field Day is coming soon on Sat/Sun, June 26/27—-only one more business meeting before it happens. He asked for opinions on keeping the location at

strange—from p. 4

instead curious that it managed to stay alive for so long without anyone knowing that it existed or complaining that it was out of date. See, Bill has been a radio enthusiast his entire life, even building homemade Ham radios before he began working with RF professionally, so the thought that some unmanned station was looping a recorded message was...intriguing.

While on the phone, Bill's brother flipped on his historic Zenith Trans-Oceanic radio, and sure enough, the traffic report began to play. Couple his interest with the security and communications work he does with **Fusion Centers** and it was clear that he needed to know where the signal was being broadcast—if, for nothing else, to satisfy his curiosity.

After exchanging stories about adventures in our own siloed worlds of engineering, Bill had a theory that actually seemed quite plausible: someone just forgot to flip the off-switch. See, when it comes to radio communications in Washington D.C., many people live under the "if it isn't broken, don't fix it" philosophy—especially since erecting a new radio tower is an extremely complicated process within a certain radius of the nation's capital.

According to Bill, the signal may have been originally transmitted on several temporary stations, all of which were thought to have been decommissioned some time ago. Some of these transmitters may have been affixed to telephone poles on the side of the highway, while others could've been stuffed into two-wheeled trailers to be towed wherever needed. The equipment in these trailers is often powered by solar panels so it can operate without an external power source. His bet was on the latter, that the case of the mystery radio signal may have just been sitting in a vacant parking lot getting power from the Sun and transmitting the same traffic information day after day for eight years.

Because the location of the transmitter wasn't documented, Bill needed to organize an effort to locate it. His team set off with a Radio Direction Finder (RDF), a device with a unidirectional antenna meant to help find the source of a radio signal, and began the hunt. By the following afternoon, the signal finally stopped broadcasting across the D.C. airwayes.

It's honestly kind of upsetting to know that it's gone—a little less electricity in the air. Just as quickly as it was found, the mystery signal simply fizzled out. Someone at Bill's directive must have found the transmitter and finally finished the job someone forgot to do eight years ago. We'd like to think of it as a service, considering the license expired later this year anyway.

Unfortunately, while the signal may be no more, we still don't know exactly continued on p. 8

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where it was being transmitted from. Perhaps it was a trailer parked in a vacant lot, or maybe a station was stuffed inside of an old decommissioned building. The world may never know—but at least we won't forget about the eight years of a phantom government traffic report riding the airwaves of Washington, D.C.

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the County Historical Museum. Α strong consensus was in favor. He also asked for volunteers to help run the event. It was decided that since things are still a bit uncertain regarding the Covid situation, no pot luck meal will be attempted. Instead, it is preferable to order out for the Saturday evening meal as was done last year. Other volunteers include: Phil (PSK) for antennas; and Bob (RB) for radios and other operating equipment. All who are interested are needed for set up on Saturday noon, and for tear down on Sunday noon. Final details will be covered at the June business meeting.

 Bob (NQW) asked if the Club was interested in holding a foxhunt this year. Discussion followed, and it was suggested that it would be a good idea to dust off the old UHF HTs for a pedestrian foxhunt. This would give all those who have obtained heterodyne direction finders a good opportunity to test them out. A definitive consensus will be reached at the June meeting.

Adjournment: at 8:30 PM (LEI/BBK). ■

Learning and Using Morse Code-I

by Bob Nellans, K9DE Copyright ©1998, Bob Nellans. All Rights Reserved

International Morse Code

The International Morse Code is made up of a series of what were incorrectly called dots and dashes for many, many years. The problem with equating those symbols to and calling them dots and dashes is the fact that you do not actually send or receive those dots or dashes on the air, but rather the sound equivalency of dots, "dits", and dashes, "dahs". Actually the ending "t" or the "h" of those sounds is not included in the written representation of those sounds, unless it is the last dit or dah in that letter, number or punctuation. For instance, while the two simplest codes for letters are for the letter E, which sounds like "dit", and the letter T, which sounds like "dah", codes for more complex letters such as A are "didah" and I is "didit". Much more complex codes such as for C is "dadidadit", for Q is "dadadidah", for B is "dadididit", for Z is "dadadidit", for Y is "dadidadah", for the period is "didadidadidah", for the forward slash bar is "dadididadit", etc.

What is being sent, the dits and the dahs, are segments of a continuous tone, commonly called Continuous Wave (CW), a term often used interchangeably with

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the International Morse Code. In the most pristine form of CW, a dit is one third as long as a dah. Variations from that norm are mentioned below.

Sending the code

The original code sending device was a simple make/break contact device, much like a telegraph key, which is commonly called a straight key. The operator would press down on the knob of the device to close the contact point gap, hold the key down for the duration of the individual character element, be it a dit or a dah, and the operator would then release the pressure on the knob of the key, so that the associated spring would again pull or push the contacts apart, thus stopping the individual dit or dah. Needless to say, the lengths of everything, including the dits, the dahs, the spacing between letters or numbers, and the spacing between words or groups, were all controlled by the timing of the operator. Thus more musically inclined people, with better timing, were normally the people that sent the best code (CW). However, even if the person was musically inclined, virtually no two of those dits or dahs were ever EXACTLY identical.

A firm named *Vibroplex* later came up with a mechanical device that attempted to control the lengths of the dits by the settings of the mechanism, rather than by the timing of the operator. Instead of pressing down on the handle, as was the

case with the straight key, the device, which used a single lever that moved back and forth sideways, was sometimes called a "sidewinder", and utilized two springs that kept the paddle centered, where it would close neither of the two sets of electrical contacts. One set of contacts was mounted on a pendulum and allowed for automatic production of the dits.; another set of contacts was used for the dahs, and basically consisted of a straight key mounted sideways. Using the device, which was commonly called a <u>buq</u>, the operator moved the lever one way for dits and the other way for dahs. (Dits were/are sent with the thumb, and dahs were/are sent with the forefinger, in the case of either the bug or the electronic keyer, which is mentioned later in this article). The mechanical device had a weight at the back of the unit, mounted on a pendulum that was activated by moving the paddle in that direction, and it was the swinging of that mechanism at the back of the unit that controlled the actual sending and timing of the dits, as initiated by the movement of the paddle by the operator.

Most people found the bug to be more trouble than it was worth, but to this day there remain a few dedicated users of those mechanical keying devices. However, no two of those units were ever adjusted the same, so, even though the length of the dits and dahs sent by a given bug were relatively uniform in continued on p. 10

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length, the length of those dits and dahs varied from bug to bug. I share the opinion of most CW operators that if you can tell that the other operator is using a bug, then the bug is either adjusted improperly or is being operated incorrectly. On top of that, many operators adjusted the weight on the back of the unit so that the dahs were far longer than the standard of three dits in length, and since it was the adjustment of the weight that controlled the length of the dits, the practice of changing the length of the dits was commonly called weighting.

Because of that weighting, bugs were universally hated by all of the non-bug devotees, as well as by some users of the Fortunately, circa 1970, devices. someone developed an integrated circuit that would electronically control the lengths of all the dits and dahs, and that chip was/is the heart of the electronic The electronic keyer normally kever. includes pots to adjust the code speed, as well as the volume and tone of its enclosed sidetone, and at least two jacks, for the cords connecting the paddle(s) to the radio.

With the electronic keyer, the individual dits and dahs are self completing -- once a dit or dah has been started, it will automatically be completed. No longer needed was the vast majority of the mechanism of the <u>bug</u>. Rather, only two pairs of contact points were needed, and they were each directly controlled by

the movement of the single paddle. Needless to say, the company that manufactured the bug, Vibroplex, was the first company to offer a paddle for use with the electronic kevers, and I still have one of those Vibroplex devices. Mine is all chrome plated, and looks magnificent, but the combination of the lack of enough weight and the unit's small footprint allowed it to walk all over the counter top in my ham shack. I drilled and tapped the underside of its main plate, and installed large suction cups on the screws that I inserted into those holes, to keep the device in place, especially as I started to send the code at faster speeds.

However, that single paddle mechanism could not make use of all of the capabilities of most of the electronic keyers, so other manufacturers soon came up with devices with separate paddles, arranged back-to-back, to send the dits and the dahs, which allowed iambic keying. The technique of the use of the iambic keying method will not be explained in this document. I will tell you that just because you use separate paddles to send the dits and the dahs. that DOES NOT MEAN that it is necessary to employ the iambic keying technique, while using those two paddle systems. I NEVER use the iambic keying technique, but I do almost always use dual paddles.

ed. note: opinions expressed about bugs are strictly the opinion of the author————to be continued

WCARC 2021 Roster- 1st Qtr/rev

#		NAME	CALL	CLA	STREET	CITY	ST	ZIP	E-MAIL
1	Jim	Barnhouse	KD8NJW	G	1919 Hamilton Dr.	Perrysburg	ОН	43551	barnhouse@buckeye-express.com
2	Bob	Boughton	N1RB	Е	930 Champagne Ave.	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	boughton@bgsu.edu
3	Linda	Boughton	N1LB	Е	930 Champagne Ave.	Bowling Green		43402	boughton@dacor.net
4	Max	Cunnings	KE8OCK	Т	Apt 104, 451 Thurstin Ave.	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	maximiliancunnings@gmail.com
5	Jim	Davis	K8JU	Е	10990 Newton Rd.	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	jdavis@amplex.net
6	Chuck	Dicken	WD8ICP	Е	1066 Carol Rd	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	dicken@bgsu.edu
7	Danny	Dickey	KN4LEH	Т	753 W. Main St. #250	Haines City	FL	33844	c my ta2s@yahoo.com
8	John	Dvorack	KD8BIN	E	2142 Sherwood	Toledo	ОН	43614	ddvorack@buckeye-express.com
9	Russ	France	KE8PJM	G	13389 Bishop Rd.	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	cattlewalk@hotmail.com
10	Dallas	Fultz	K8DLF	Е	916 Melrose St	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	dallas.fultz@gmail.com
11	Hoot	Gibson	WB8VUL	Α	144 Stonegate Blvd.	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	
12	John S.	Gruber	N8MSU	E	920 MelroseSt.	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	JohnSGruber@gmail.com
13	Terry	Halliwill	KE8CVA	G	13944 Defiance Pike	Rudolph	ОН	43462	thalliwillsr@yahoo.com
14	Jeff	Halsey	KG8FH	Α	514 Rosewood Dr	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	jhalsey@bgsu.edu
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16	Ruth	Hasselman	KC8EKT	T	8656 Kramer Rd.	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	howies mommy@yahoo.com
17	Michael	Hunt	K4JQL	G	17325 Haskins Rd.	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	ms1hunt@gmail.com
18	Bob	Johnson	K3RC	Е	P.O. Box 248	Stony Ridge	ОН	43463	johnson@amplex.net
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20	Rex	Klopfenstein	KC8PFP	Е	605 S. Main St.	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	LKLOPFENSTEIN@woh.rr.com
21	Jeff	Kopcak	K8JTK	Е	1497 Canterbury Rd.	Westlake	ОН	44145	k8jtk@arrl.net
22	Thomas	Kopcak	N8ETP	Е	1497 Canterbury Rd.	Westlake	ОН	44145	tkopcak@att.net
23	Greg	Lahote	K8IXL	Α	9742 Roachton	Perrysburg	ОН	43551	k8ixl@lahote.com
24	Tom	Leingang	WE8TOM	Е	PO Box 252	Cygnet	ОН	43413	WE8TOM@nielmot.com
25	Craig	Magrum	NM8W	E	1100 Christopher St.	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	cmagrum001@woh.rr.com
26	Allen	Manrow	W8ALM	G	43138 Cloverdale	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	W8ALM73@gmail.com
27	Steve	McEwen	K8BBK	E	1053 Pinewood Ct.	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	snmcewen@wcnet.org
28	John	McLaughlin	KC8FCE	G	6230 County Rd 21	Risingsun	ОН	43457	jmmclaughlin@woh.rr.com
29	Ken	Natchman	KD8DWO	G	19477 Scott Rd	Bowling Green		43402	lamplyter1@gmail.com
30	Loren	Phillips	W8PSK	Е	324 S. Grove St.	Bowling Green			ljphil80@gmail.com
31	Wilfred	Roudebush	KC8IFW	Е	1374 Clough St.	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	wroudeb@bgnet.bgsu.edu
32	Tom	Sanderson	NF8T	Е	107 Silver Maple Dr.	Perrysburg		43551	tomsanderson@gmail.com
33	George	Stossel	W8GGS	G	19758 Sand Ridge Rd.	Weston	ОН	43569	stossel@dacor.net
34	Kent	Strickland	KA8CEH	E	16493 Euler Rd.	Bowling Green		43402	kstrick@amplex.net
35	Roger	Swinney	W8CNJ	G	27484 Oregon Rd. #271	Perrysburg		43551	w8cnj@yahoo.com
36	Roger	Weith	KE8QGV	E	802 Brittany Ave	Bowling Green			rweith@ps1kites.com
37	Bill	Wilkins	WD8JWJ	E	11065 Linwood Rd.	Bowling Green		43402	wild bill@amplex.net
38	Bob	Willman	WB8NQW	Е	14118 Bishop Rd.	Bowling Green		43402	blcksmth@reagan.com
39	Eric	Willman	WD8LEI	Т	545 W. Poe Rd.	Bowling Green			eric@willmantech.com
40	Lynn	Wineland	KD8RNO	Т	23 Trafalgar Bend	Bowling Green	ОН	43402	unclelester1979@gmail.com

FOR SALE Yaesu FT1-XDR

will not connect to Wires-X. does all other FM and Fusion

ASKING: \$100.00

CONTACT: WD8JWJ, Bill

E-MAIL: wild bill@amplex.net

FOR SALE

Alinco DR-735

dual band VHF/UHF radio INCLUDES: RT Systems

programming cable/CD.

PRICE for Club members: \$200

FOR MORE INFO:

E-MAIL: WE8TOM@WE8TOM.com

WOOD COUNTY ARC P.O.BOX 534 BOWLING GREEN, OH 43402

