CQ Chatter

MARCH 2014 VOLUME B14 • ISSUE 1

WOOD COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

President	WB8ABY	Al Murray
Vice President	WB8NQW	Bob Willman
Secretary	N1RB	Bob Boughton
Treasurer	KD8NJW	Jim Barnhouse

http://wcarc.bgsu.edu

Minutes

WCARC Meeting

February 10, 2014

Present: *N1RB-Bob, W8CNJ-Roger, K8LL-Stan, WB8NQW-Bob, K8BBK-Steve, WD8JWJ-Bill, WB8VUL-Hoot, KD8NJW-Jim*

Meeting Called to Order with Pledge of Allegiance at 7:50 pm, presided over by VP Bob, WB8NQW.

Minutes from last meeting were approved unanimously. Treasurer's report approved unanimously.

Old Business:

- Bob (NQW) reported that he has already "penciled in" a reservation for the Club to use the County Historical Museum grounds on Field Day, June 28/29, and sought formal approval. Motion to approve by Bob (RB), seconded by Bill (JWJ). Motion passed unanimously.
- Bob (NQW) also asked for volunteers to head up various committees for Field Day. Steve (BBK) and Phil (PSK) will organize the antennas and Bob (RB) will round up radios for the event. We still need someone to head up the food committee.
- Steve (BBK) commented on the kick-off banquet by expressing his satisfaction. He suggested that it would be nice in future to have larger tables if possible so that more people could interact with each other.
- Jim (NJW) reported that he has the forms ready for the gratis table at the TMRA hamfest in March, but wanted to know if electricity were needed or not. Consensus of the group was to go with no electricity.

New Business:

- Bob (RB) mentioned the scheduling of a VE exam session for Saturday, March 1, at 1:30 pm in the Sheriff's Training room. All members are requested to contact any likely candidates to take the exam at that time. The current fee is $15. Adjournment at 8:15 ■

Net Check Ins

Jan 28 Traffic: 0

KD8NJW (NC)
K8BBK
N1RB
WD8JWJ
KG8FH
KD8VWU
WD8LEI
WB8NQW
WB8ABY
KD8UHO/M
N8YAE (11)

Feb 4 Traffic: 0

N1RB (NC)
WB8ABY/M
K8BBK
KG8FH
WD8LEI
WB8NQW
KD8VWU
KD8NJW
N8YAE (9)

Feb 11 Traffic: 0

K8OVO (NC)
WB8ABY
N8YAE
KD8VWU
KD8NJW
WD8LEI
WB8NQW
K8BBK
N8PYA
KD8DUX/M (10)

BRAIN TEASERS

1. What does a capacitor do?

a.) stores energy electrochemically and opposes a change in current

b.) stores energy electrostatically and opposes a change in voltage

c.) stores energy electromagnetically and opposes a change in current

d.) stores energy electromechanically and opposes a change in voltage

2. What does an inductor do?

a.) stores energy electrostatically and opposes a change in voltage

b.) stores energy electrochemically and opposes a change in current

c.) stores energy electromagnetically and opposes a change in current

d.) stores energy electromechancially and opposes a change in voltage

3. What would you use to connect a dual band antenna to a mobile transceiver which has separate VHF and UHF outputs?

a.) dual needle SWR meter

b.) full duplex phone patch

c.) twin high pass filters

d.) duplexer

March Contests

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

Mar 1-2	*0000 to 2359 Z*	160 m to 10 m
ARRL Int'l DX 'test		**SSB**
Mar 8-9	*1900 to 1900 Z*	80 m to 10 m
Idaho QSO Party		**all modes**
Mar 9-10	*11800 to 0100 Z*	80 m to 10 m
Wisconsin QSO Party		**all modes**
Mar 15-16	*1200 to 1159 Z*	160 m to 10 m
Russian DX 'test		**all modes**
Mar 15-16	*1400 to 0200;1200 to 2400 Z*	160 m to 10 m
Virginia QSO Party		**all modes**
Mar 22-23	*1300 to 0100; 1300 to 1900 Z*	80 m to 10 m
Oklahoma QSO Party		**all modes**
Mar 22-23	*1400 to 0200 Z*	160 m to 10 m
Louisiana QSO Party		**all modes**
Mar 29-30	*0000 2359 Z*	160 m to 10 m
CQ WPX SSB 'test		**SSB**

March Hamfests

Mar 16 **Toledo Mobile Radio Association, Hamfest and Computer Fair**, Owens Community College, Perrysburg, OH. Contact Brian, WD8MXR, (419) 385-5624.
e-mail: wd8mxr@gmail.com
web: http://www.tmrahamradio.org

How's Propagation on the Bands?

There are a number of tools that hams use to assess propagation conditions. Most sources give the general conditions and maximum useable frequency (muf) for any period during the day. But what about the conditions to and from your very own QTH on a particular band using your very own transmitter and antenna?

An impressive set of software has been developed by K1JT to continuously detect and display the conditions on any band of your choice and by using your equipment. K1JT is Joseph Taylor, a radio astronomer at Princeton University. These folks are in the business of detecting extremely faint signals that are buried in noise and come to us from outer space. As a ham, Joe thought it would be interesting to apply some of the weak signal techniques that he uses professionally to our hobby. Among other weak signal applications, he developed a program called Weak Signal Propagation Reporting (WSPR) that enables any ham with a sound card interface to his transceiver to sample the propagation success of his signals anywhere in the world. The system depends on a world wide network of hams all who participate in WSPR.

The method works like this: After choosing the band of interest and tuning up your transceiver and antenna to transmit on the designated frequency for that band, your station sends out a weak signal (5 W or less) for a two minute stretch. You then listen for a number of two minute periods, after each of which any detected WSPR signals are decoded. The usual ratio is four receive periods to one transmit period. After a short while, if there is propagation to anywhere, you will have a listing of the stations that your receiver has picked up. What's even better is that you can see who has received your signal by looking at the propagation map at http://wsprnet.org/. It can show the stations located anywhere in the world that have heard your signal over a specified elapsed time frame. There is also an activity page that records your call (if heard) and the average frequency reported for your transmissions.

In order for this weak signal technique to work, both frequency and timing must be relatively precise. Most modern transceivers have sufficient frequency stability and accuracy for WSPR. Timing is another question. Most computers check some time source on a daily basis to refresh their clock accuracy. This is not good enough for WSPR. If you are running Windows in any form, you will need to download another application called Dimension-4 that re-adjusts your

continued---on p. 5

WCARC Weekly Net

Tuesdays at 2130 EDST/

2030 EST (0130 Z)

147.18 MHz 67 Hz PL

Net Control Roster

Feb 25	KD8NJW
Mar 4	N1RB
Mar 11	K8OVO
Mar 18	WB8NQW
Mar 25	KD8NJW
Apr 1	N1RB
Apr 8	K8OVO

NEXT MEETING

BREAKFAST MEETING

Saturday, March 1st

TIME: 9:00 am

PLACE:

Frisch's Big Boy North

N. Main St. &

E. Poe Rd.

Bowling Green, OH

propagation---from p. 4

computer clock every half hour. Below is a map of the propagation on 10 meters from N1RB on a morning in early February. The set up is a Kenwood TS-2000 running 5 W with a 3 element tri-bander beam up about 40 feet. The interface is a Signalink USB to an iMac computer running Windows 8.

As you can see, the ten meter propagation seems to be really good to Europe and possibly to South Africa and South America. You can also observe good propagation to the US west coast and a cluster in the Eastern half of the country (skip zone over CO?). There is WSPR ac-

continued---on p. 6

DON'T FORGET!

10 meter informal net meets Sunday @ 2030 EST/EDST on 28.335 MHz

Net Check Ins
continued

Feb 18 Traffic: 0

WB8NQW	***(NC)***
NM8W	
KD8NJW	
KG8FH	
WB8ABY	
N1RB	
N8YAE	***(7)***

It's time to renew !

dues for 2014

payable to:

WCARC

P.O. Box 534

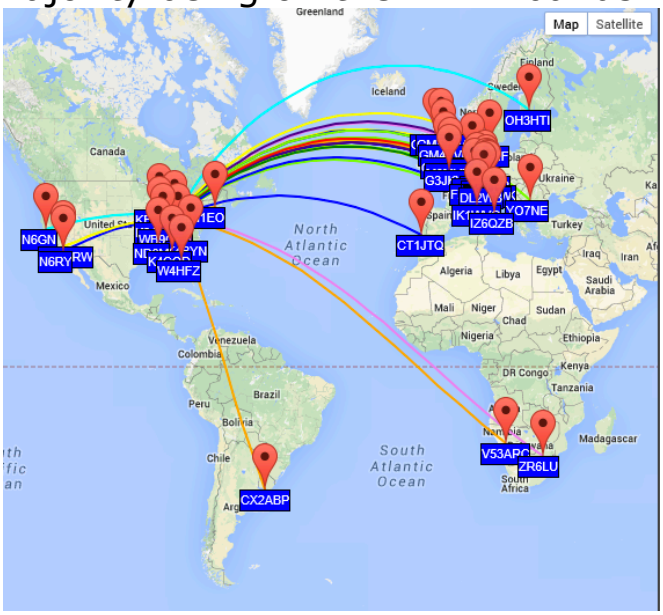
Bowling Green, OH 43402

senior/student	*$10.00*
regular	*$15.00*
family	*$20.00*

Brain Teaser answers: 1-b, 2-c, 3-d

propagation---from p. 5

tivity on every ham band with the majority being on the hf DX bands.



AM propagation from N1RB on 10 meters

WSPR is a useful way to check what's happening on 6 meters, for example. The interesting thing about WSPR is that if you listen on frequency, nothing is heard except perhaps a faint tonal hiss. To download the WSPR application, go to: http://physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/K1JT/wspr.html.

You should be able to be up and running in no time. If you want more information on some of the weak signal modes now gaining interest, see Steve Ford's article "Real Signal Reports in Real Time" on page 49 of the February, 2014, edition of QST. Steve goes over all of the weak signal modes, including JT65, which enables you to engage in QSOs via weak signal techniques. ■

Skywarn Training Offered

The annual meeting for Skywarn training in Wood County will be held on Wednesday, March 26, at 6:00

continued---on p. 7

Skywarn---from p. 6

pm. Skywarn is a cooperative effort between the National Weather Service (NWS) and the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) to spot tornadoes and other severe weather events and to report them quickly and accurately. The location for the meeting is:

Elmwood Schools Community Center
7650 Jerry City Rd.
Bloomdale, OH

This session will be led by a meteorological expert from the NWS who will provide information and suggestions for spotting and identifying the nature of severe storms. If you have an interest in public emergency service via ham radio through ARES and Skywarn, this is a "must-go" presentation to attend. ■

Centennial QSO Party

adapted from ARRL Letter

The ARRL Centennial QSO Party is a year-long operating event that celebrates hams making contacts. In the end you will have accumulated points, worked new stations and made new friends all over the world.

The Centennial QSO Party is made-up of two main activities: (1) W1AW operating portable in each state and most territories; and (2) The Centennial Points Challenge which is the accumulation of points from qualifying contacts made throughout 2014. To have a score listed online in the Points Challenge competition, logs must be submitted through the **Logbook of the World (LoTW)** system.

W1AW will be on the air from every state and most territories, and it will be easy to work WAS working only **W1AW portable operations**. This is the first ARRL-sponsored operating event where every member is worth at least one point, so work as many points as you can during 2014! Earn awards based upon points, working all states or working W1AW portable in every state and territory. This is an on-the-air event like no other.

The portable operation of W1AW has already started with week-long QTHs in North Carolina, South Carolina, Utah, Virginia, Nebraska, Delaware, New York, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Texas, Georgia, Hawaii, California, Wisconsin, Michigan, Florida, Washington, and Kansas. The plan is to operate from each state twice during the Centennial year, 2014. The QTH changes on Wednesday of each week for the two portable W1AW operations. For example, you should be able to contact W1AW/8 and W1AW/4 up through February 25. The stations make it a point to cover all bands and all the common modes of operation.

For those of us who are awards chasers, this year gives us a chance to go for Worked All States by working only W1AW, the ARRL official station. There are other special awards offered, so give it a try! ■

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