



HARBOR BEAM

Michigan City Amateur Radio Club

MARCH 2007

146.970 / 441.950

Echolink Node: 193001

**What's
new?**

P.O. Box 148, Michigan City, Indiana 46361

WEBPAGE: <http://w9ly.org>

EMAIL: w9ly@w9ly.org / 2MAudio via the web: <mms://12.159.236.164:8080/>

► The Front Page

News & Events

Forgot to send in your Club Dues? There still is time. Annual dues are \$12.00/\$6.00 for students. If you can't attend the meeting, please mail your dues to the club's P.O. Box. We updating our membership roster. If you have not paid your dues, please do so. Your dues help to support the club and all that it does. Our club can not grow with out you. Even if you just use the repeaters from time to time, please help support them.



JIM FONTE, K9FI / SK

Jim Fonte, K9FI passed away Sunday, February 18, 2007. Jim was a long time member of the club, as well as a good friend to many. His passing will be missed by many of us.

For me personally, Jim was someone who always pushed me to learn more about our hobby. When the NOAA transmitter was installed, at our site, Jim was someone I could turn to for help and advise. I will always remember Jim as someone who was always willing to help and share his vast knowledge. Jim loved Amateur Radio. He was responsible for so many of us getting our tickets.

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MEETING NOTICE:

The Michigan City Amateur Radio Club will hold it's next meeting March 21st at 7:30pm. Meetings are held at Queen of All Saints School, Woodland Ave & Barker, Michigan City.

ARES & SKYWARN Information Nets are on **Thursday Nights at 8:00pm**. Please check in and show your support, or even just to see if your radio still works. Nets are held on **146.970 the W9LY repeater**.

SIREN TESTS

Michigan City and LaPorte County conduct the Emergency siren test on the first Saturday of each month at 11:00am. LaPorte County wide net is 146.610, and Michigan City Local is on 146.970. Early warning sirens saves lives, and we need your help each month to assure they are working. For more information contact Jim KB9MAS or Ken N9ZIP.

Saturday Morning Breakfast is held at Memo's (formally Mulligans) at 8:00am in the morning. Come and join some good friends and club members for breakfast. The numbers are growing, and seats fill fast.

The Harbor Beam is published the Saturday, before the next monthly club meeting, 12 times each year, by the Michigan City Amateur Radio Club, P.O. Box 148 Michigan City, Indiana 46361; for it's members and those interested. Inquires and submissions should be sent to the Harbor Beam Editor at our e-mail address w9ly@w9ly.org.

Michigan City Amateur Radio Club

IT'S MARCH

The weather is getting warmer. Before you know we will be talking Field Day. But with warmer weather comes severe storms.

When severe weather hits, our normal means of communications via amateur radio can come to halt. While our repeater has two back up systems to keep it on the air, what about you?

Our repeater is attached to back up generator in the event of power outage. If that fails, battery back ups will keep the repeater on the air for several hours.

The following is some simple suggestions that could help keep you on the air.

1. Have more than one source of radio communications. If your base stations fails, do you have a HT or mobile unit?
2. Are the batteries for your HT charged all the time, with a spare battery?
3. Do you have battery backup at home to run your radios and is it on trickle charge?
4. If you have gas generator, can it be operated safely outdoors?
5. If your Base Stations antenna should be damaged, do you have back up antenna that you can switch to or put up quickly?
6. Remember cell phones are tied to hardwire phone systems and can go down or even be tied up. If you need help, what will you use if your normal mode of communications should fail?

AMATEUR RADIO IN THE MOVIES

If All the Guys in the World (original title *Si tous les gars du monde...*) (1956 film) A French film largely devoted to the art of Amateur Radio. *Jean Louis*, a young Parisian ham, receives an **SOS** message sent from a ship in the high seas. With the help of fellow radio amateurs around the world he tries to prevent a major catastrophe from happening. This is the first movie appearance of the celebrated French actor [Jean Louis Trintignant](#).

NAME THIS AMATEUR



If you can name this Amateur, you win. The winner should watch their mail.

PICTURE OF THE MONTH



This month we added something new to the Harbor Beam called Picture of the Month. It may or may not have any to do with amateur radio. This month's picture is of Sun Pillar. The setting sun reflecting from water vapors created this illusion of a pillar.

Do you have a photo you like to share?
Send us a copy.



Radio Wave Propagation

LUF: Lowest usable frequency.

Meteor scatter: A remarkable type of propagation caused by the ionization by meteors (also known as “shooting stars”) entering the earth’s atmosphere. Meteors are small rocks orbiting in space and every year on certain dates, the earth passes through streams of these meteors. When the earth crosses an orbit of meteors, meteors hit the earth’s atmosphere at a speeds of over 10.000km/h causing them they burn up at extremely high temperatures. The resulting high temperatures leave traces of ionized air behind them at 80-150km in altitude. Fortunately for radio operators, this trace of ionized air can reflect radio waves up to 500MHz and sometimes beyond. It can also reflect HF signals in the range of 30MHz. Each meteor entry results in a radio wave scatter that can be categorized into either a “ping” or “burst”. Pings are short openings lasting a few seconds and bursts are openings lasting for minutes. During meteor storms (i.e., when meteors occur at high rates), both pings and bursts can occur so regularly that long QSO’s are possible. The most famous meteor shower is called the Perseids and it occurs when the earth crosses the Perseid meteor orbit around August 12th of each year. This particular shower is known to have up to 120 meteors per hour. For instance, in 1994 the Perseids supported radio conversations having strong signal strengths for several hours and the skip distances ranged from 200 to 1800km. However, meteor scatter contacts are usually more brief; and a result, APRS and VHF packet radio is considered to be a good means of communication during meteor showers due to the mode’s short packets of data containing useful information such as the transmitting station’s callsign as well as location in each packet sent.

Easy Weather Questions

Question 1

Scientists have determined that if we listen very carefully to the sound this creature makes, we can determine the current temperature quite precisely. This creature is a:

- a) wooly worm
- b) cricket
- c) bumble bee
- d) penguin

Question 2

Which of the following has the distinction of being the only month in which a tropical storm has not formed on the Atlantic Ocean?

- a) January
- b) February
- c) March
- d) April

Question 3

Which of the following does Punxsutawney Phil eat at his regular meal?

- a) fresh ground beef
- b) broccoli and cauliflower
- c) sirloin steak
- d) dog food

Question 4

As roofs become steeper, generally the climate becomes warmer.

TRUE FALSE

Question 5

Washing your car is a necessity in Indiana during the winter to prevent rust forming from salt accumulations on the roads. Which of the following materials is also used to treat slick highways in the United States?

- a) peanuts
- b) corn
- c) potatoes
- d) bananas

REMEMBERING JIM FONTE K9FI /SK



Jim loved radio. That pretty much sums it up. Not only did he love Amateur Radio, it was his profession. In the above photo, Jim worked on putting together a small beam.



As with any project, Jim did the work while others looked on. Jim was a perfectionist and we just stood by trying to stay out of his way.



Of course, when he was done he loved to show off his work followed by installing the radios and other equipment in the cabinet.

To sum everything up, this was Jim.

This was his life. Right now Jim is most likely building a radio and calling CQ.

ARES NEWS

ARRL's EMERGENCY PLANNING REPORT RELEASED

The full report can be viewed at the following link: <http://www.arrl.org/announce/reports-2007/january/NERPC-32aa.pdf>

Again it reinforces the fact that we as Amateurs need to be prepared and trained. With NIMS becoming the norm it is important for Amateurs to understand NIMS and the communications we will be handled during an emergency.

In brief the report states the amateurs should take the following courses.

ARRL's ARECC Level 1,
Red Cross combined course in Adult CPR/First Aid Basics,
Red Cross Introduction to Disaster Services,
FEMA IS-100 (Introduction to Incident Command System),
FEMA IS-200 (ICS for Single Resource and Initial Action Incidents) and
FEMA IS-700 (National Incident Management System).

The FEMA courses are free and can be taken on-line.

Also Amateurs who may be called to work with a governmental agency will need to have taken the three FEMA courses. Communications and the way we communicate during an emergency has changed. It is no longer simply passing traffic and ARES and RACES and the language we would use has changed with along with it.

We ask that when you have completed the NIMS courses to send us or e-mail your course passing letter. This data will be forwarded to Emergency Management so that they can begin building a pool of trained radio operators. If you have any questions on these courses, you can e-mail the club at w9ly@w9ly.org.

Welcome New Hams and Upgrades

February 26th was a busy day for our local VE Team. With the drop of the code, a number of amateurs took advantage.

With the recent testing session, seven came out on cold winter evening. With this we now have two new Tech's joining the ranks, along with four upgrades to General.

HF nets are reporting a flood of new AG's checking in. Regardless of your position of the code being dropped, early reports on the HF nets seems to support that this is the shot in the arm HF needed.

The avalanche of Amateur Radio license and license upgrade applications prompted by the FCC's elimination of Morse code as a licensing requirement is well under way with no end in sight. ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM, reports that paperwork from upward of 450 Amateur Radio exam sessions, most held since the new rules went into effect February 23, arrived this week, more than her department sees in a month under "normal" circumstances. The ARRL VEC has had to add personnel and schedule extended hours to keep up with the workload.

"We've been seeing some of the largest brand-new Technician sessions ever," Somma said. "These examination sessions are huge, and a ton of new Technician license applications has been coming in — sometimes 60 or 70 at a clip." Somma says license upgrade traffic also has been brisk, and, with some 650 examination sessions already on the calendar for March and more arriving daily, it doesn't look like the pace will slacken anytime soon. As of February 25, there were approximately 324,200 Technician licensees in the US — more than any other license class. I wonder how many of these will upgrade.

Tnx: ARRL Letter

MCARC SPRING FUND RAISER

As you know, this year we will not host Hamfest. At our last meeting, the membership came up a idea of having a raffle. This year will be raffling off a WorldNav 3100 GPS unit. This unit retails for \$399.00. Tickets will be sold for \$3.00 each with the drawing to held on Field Day Sunday.

This GPS unit can be used by anyone and should appeal Amateurs and Non-Amateurs a like.

We ask that members pick up tickets to sell as soon as possible. This fundraiser is our only source of income for the club.

We need your help and support. On page 6, of the Newsletter we have a flyer which you can print to hand out.



SKYWARN NEWS

Another weather spotter training class has come and gone. This year we had about 60 residents of LaPorte County become weather spotters for the National Weather Service. Also the advance class that was held had about 360 attend.

This year we had a number of police officers and fireman attend the basic class. This year we rolled out a new program by which non-amateurs can send us weather reports in real time using Instant Messenger. Spotters who want to send us reports can log on to weatherreport@w9ly.org using IM.

MICHIGAN CITY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

SPRING RAFFLE

WorldNav 3100 Deluxe Mobile GPS



Retail Value \$399.00

\$3.00 Per Ticket

WorldNav 3100 Features

Automatic reroute

Voice directions

Play mp3

Watch movies

2D or 3D viewing

All 50 states , plus Canada

Vehicle power cord or battery for portable operation

Select route -shortest , fastest , toll free

Day or night screen

1 gig memory card installed

Windsheild mounts

USB connector

For more information

Visit us on the Web

<http://www.w9ly.org>



The Military Affiliate Radio System Needs You!

Are you an Amateur who wants to use your equipment and skills to serve our country and her people? Consider joining the Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS). Being an Amateur Radio Operator is a requirement to be a member of MARS. Are you a Novice or Technician without the necessary privileges? No worries – as long as you have any class of Amateur Radio license you can operate the HF Department of Defense frequencies assigned to MARS. MARS offers a training program, daily opportunities to participate in nets or pass traffic, and a chance to support the security of our country in a way that no other volunteer organization can. MARS operates primarily at the state level and in Indiana there are some exciting new missions. In addition to the regular traffic handling requirements, Indiana Army MARS has been given a national mission to provide emergency communications support to the Transportation Security Administration. During regular operating conditions, every state runs daily nets providing plenty of opportunities to learn through on the air training as well as test your equipment and your operating skills. MARS communicates on HF and VHF in many modes with the most common being voice, PACTOR, and MT63. MARS also maintains its own Winlink 2000 network worldwide with HF, VHF, and Telnet nodes. Contact Troy Harrison KC9E at 219-874-9572 kc9e@sbcglobal.net or on the MCARC repeater to find out more and become part of the team!

