

The Ragchewer

February 2008

The monthly newsletter of the
Lancaster & Fairfield
County Amateur Radio Club

On the Web: www.k8qik.org

Send email to K8QIK@columbus.rr.com

Club Meetings :

1st Thursday of every month
at 7:30 pm at the club house.

VE Testing:

The third Sunday of every
even numbered month.
Register at 9:30 am and
testing at 10:00 am

Club House

Location:

On State Route 37 (Granville
Pike) next to Beavers Field.

Nets:

Mondays at 9:00 p.m.
147.03 MHz (+.6)
146.70 MHz (-.6) Alt. Freq.
443.875 MHz (+5)
Thursday at 8:00 p.m.
443.875 MHz (+5)
UHF linked system

Packet BBS 145.53MHz
K8QIK-1 BBS
K8QIK-2: Ohio53

Weather Spotter Net:

146.76 Repeater with 123Hz
tone Tuesday at 7:30 pm
Alt frequency 147.24 MHz

February Birthdays

George Lambert	KB8USP
Edward Barnhart	WB8JBG
Candice Wright	KC8NQG
Carolyn Campbell	KB8ZBV
Rhonda Judy	KD8GNM
Dave Kennedy	WA8EUT

Thursday Night Radio Night

Radio night is every Thursday at 6:00 p.m.
(except the first Thursday which is the club
monthly meeting). Work a little HF, maybe
build something? How about a hot cup of
coffee. We'll have them all waiting for you.

ARRL Membership

When you join the ARRL, or renew your
membership through the club, we retain \$15 for
each new membership OR lapsed membership
(of two years or more), and we retain \$2 for
each renewal. Please support our club, it doesn't
cost any more. Send or give all paperwork to
Treasurer with your money.

February VE Test:

The next VE test will be Sunday February
17th at the clubhouse on Route 37. Register at
9:30 a.m. and testing begins at 10:00 a.m.
Prepare yourself, take this test and upgrade!

Free Swap and Sell

If you have anything ham radio related, you can
swap it or sell it here. List your items for free.
Give a price and how to contact you. Send the
list to K8QIK@columbus.rr.com

2007-2008 Officers

President:

Charlie Snoke, N8KZN

Vice President:

Mark Urbine, KC8TUW

Treasurer:

Ed Campbell Sr., WD8PGO

Secretary:

Mary Travis, KD8EEI

Trustee:

John Hilliard, W8OF

Station Engineer:

John Hilliard, W8OF

Net Manager:

John Fick, KD8EEK

Activities Manager:

John Fick, KD8EEK

Public Relations:

Mark Urbine, KC8TUW

Flower Fund:

Ed Bennett, KD8EEJ

Web Master:

Robert Northrup, KC8PSW

Chief Cook and Bottle Washer:

Charlie Snoke, N8KZN

Editor:

Jack Travis, AE8P
(740) 687-1985

February 7, 2008 Meeting Minutes

At 7:30 p.m. the meeting was called to order by President Charlie Snoke, N8KZN who lead the Pledge of Allegiance

There were 18 members present and one guest, George Skeele. There were no new applications to review.

There was a 2nd reading on Staltz Croucher, KD8GBN, application for membership. Charlie presented membership packet and card to Joel Skeele.

Officer Reports

Secretary Report: Mary Travis, KD8EEI

Minutes are posted in the Ragchewer. Motion to accept minutes was made by John, W8OF and seconded by Bob, KI8JM, adding names of Joel Skeele, KD8GTL and Richard Weaver, N8EWC as second reading which was omitted. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Ed Campbell, Sr., WD8PGO

Ed gave the club financials. Motion to accept by John, W8AGS and seconded by Bob, KI8JM. Motion carried.

VP Report: Mark Urbine, KC8TUW

Mark stated that he had entered the club meeting and radio night schedule along with picture of the clubhouse on the Lancaster Eagle Gazette website. He also stated if anyone had suggestions for any public relations contacts they would like him to make, please e-mail or let him know by phone.

Trustee Report: John Hilliard, W8OF

Nothing to report

Committee Reports

VE Testing: Allan Sellers, KB8JLG

Allan was unable to be at the meeting but it was noted that the next testing is Feb. 17 at 10:00 a.m., with registration at 9:30 a.m.

No report on equipment disposition for old timers room.

Monday Night Net: John Fick, KD8EEK

Feb. 11 John, W8OF
Feb. 18 Charlie, N8KZN
Feb. 25 John, KD8EEK
Mar. 3 John, W8AGS

Ragchewer: Jack Travis, AE8P

Nothing to report. Submit any article, news item, cartoon, or other ham related bits of trivia to Jack at k8qik@columbus.rr.com

Emergency Coordinator: Ed Campbell, WD8PGO

Ed stated he had the written report from the August 2007 emergency exercise held at Millersport for anyone to review. There was discussion on improvements in communications for future exercises. John, W8OF, mentioned there was a repeater set up for county commissioners so that when there was a need for several agencies to work together such as sheriff's office, EMA, police, fire, etc. they can all use that one repeater. Also, John, W8OF, suggested maybe a portable repeater might be built and utilized when we go outside our repeater range for emergency communications.

Ed also gave Charlie the antenna checklist that will be used for checking the antennas at the fire stations. Reports will be filed.

Safety: Scott Snoke, WD8IXO

No report

Station Engineer: John Hilliard, W8OF

John reported that there was a problem with the audio on the 147.030 repeater due to the cold weather and no heat in the building where the repeater is located. John has put a thermostat connected to several light bulbs in the cabinet so when it gets cold and temperature dips, the light bulbs will heat the equipment. There was no cost to the club.

Activities Manager: John Fick, KD8EEK

50/50 winner was Mike Amirault, KB8GHW – not present - no winner - \$9.00 collected, total \$42.50.

John said if anyone is interested in the Fun Bus to the Dayton Hamfest on Saturday, May 17 the cost will be \$35 if we have 26 riders (the cost could be less with more riders), please get in touch with John if you are interested.

John said a tentative emergency plan has been prepared for the club. The plan was passed around for members to review.

Flower Fund: Ed Bennett, KD8EEJ

\$12.00 collected and John, W8OF won \$6.00.

Old Business:

Charlie will get in touch with everyone who volunteered to work with him on the antenna check now that we have the form. It will be on a Saturday and the 147.555 will be the frequency used in addition to the 147.030 repeater. The form will be sent to those who have e-mail addresses so they can print the form for the antenna check.

New Business:

Robert, KC8PSW, reported there was nothing he could do to have a hit counter or button to have application completed online and sent via website to the club. He asked if we wanted to have this capacity did we want to pay for a web service that would give us features that would enhance the website. John, W8OF suggested contacting a couple of the local people who offer web service to see if maybe they would provide us this service free since we do the communications for the county. Robert will check into the possibility of getting a free service or secure the cost of switching to a service that would utilize the features of the software, Front Page.

Ed, WD8PGO, reported the 2008 Weather Spotter Training will be held on March 24, 2008 at the Liberty Center, 951 Liberty Center Drive, Lancaster at 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 – 9 p.m. Please call the Fairfield County

EMA office at 654-4357 M-F 8 to 4:30 p.m. if you wish to attend. There is no cost for this training.

The club received a free ticket to the Jackson Hamfest in April and Michael Hamilton, KC8LCY was given the ticket to attend.

Charlie said there would be a meeting on Feb. 14th at 7 p.m. at the clubhouse to discuss what we want to do with the old timers room upstairs (disposition of equipment, painting, carpeting, etc.). Anyone interested in having input into this project, please attend this meeting.

Work has begun on the beginning of a station on the first floor of the clubhouse for members who are unable to climb the stairs so they will have access to radio equipment.

Charlie has made arrangements for Dave Phalen to speak to the group on April 3rd.

Jack, AE8P made motion to adjourn, seconded by Gary, W8GTS. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Secretary, Mary Travis, KD8EEI

Upcoming Hamfests

March 16th is The Toledo Mobile Radio Association Hamfest and Computer Fair in Maumee, Ohio. Additional information is available from <http://www.tmrahamradio.org>

Tubes For Sale

If you need tubes for your boat anchor or TV contact Jeff Bell WD8JLI at 614-774-2973 or email at jbelle@imagearray.net he has a huge supply for most needs

E-mail Addresses

If you are currently receiving The Ragchewer via regular mail but have an Internet account, the Ragchewer can be sent to you and save the club some money. You'll also get your Ragchewer about a

week earlier. Send me your e-mail address and tell me to take you off the snail mail list.

If you have a new email address, be sure to also let me know. Send to K8QIK@columbus.rr.com

Antennas, towers and poles for Sale

We're moving --- so some things need to go....

1. 30 foot steel expandable antenna pole with guy ring - \$40
2. Two ea 10 foot steel poles - \$ 10 ea
3. 35 foot steel tower (in 3 sections) - \$ 40
4. Alpha Delta DX-CC antenna for 10m/80m - \$100
5. High Sierra screwdriver antenna with all hardware and stainless whip for 10/80m- \$150
6. GAP Titan antenna for 10m/80m - \$ 150

Contact Robert, KC8PSW at kc8psw@arrl.net

The Wayback Machine #20

by Bill Continelli, W2XOY

In our last installment, we took a look at the new "dual Ladder" licensing system proposed by the FCC late in 1974. In effect, there would be 2 parallel series of Amateur Radio Licenses, with 29 MHz as the Line of Demarcation. Series A covered the frequencies below 29 MHz, and included the Novice, General, Advanced and Extra Classes. The Conditional Class would be abolished, Extra and Advanced Classes received a power increase, the Advanced License would get access to the Extra phone bands, and Generals would lose power, frequencies, certain modes of operation, and the ability to be a Trustee of a Club station or a Repeater. Series B covered the frequencies above 29 MHz, and included 2 new license classes--the "Communicator", which would be FM only above 144 MHz, and the "Experimenter", which would offer all Amateur privileges above 29 MHz. Like Generals, Technicians would lose big. In fact, those who took their exam by mail (over 90%) would NOT be allowed to renew.

Reaction to the proposal was strong, but somewhat puzzling. Instead of a vehement output of negative comments from the 180,000 General, Conditional, and Technician Class Amateurs, (who stood to lose substantial privileges, and, in many cases, their very licenses), instead, comments concentrated on the "no code" Communicator Class. Amateurs were overwhelmingly against it. In fact, the Communicator License received the same amount of contempt and disdain that the "Hobby Class" proposal had received a few years back. However, while amateurs were debating the FCC Restructuring proposal on the air, and in letters to QST, the ARRL was unusually quiet. Why weren't they coming out with a position?

The answer, in a word, was "Incentive"--as in Incentive Licensing. The ARRL had learned its lesson back in the '60's, when it had submitted its proposal for restrictive phone bands. Now, before any response was made, the ARRL wanted to know exactly what the members wanted.

Thus, the League sent out a comprehensive survey to all 100,000 members. Fifty six percent, or 56,000 (myself included) returned the questionnaires. The ARRL tabulated the results, printed them in a

multi page report in QST, and then, in the Summer of 1975, submitted their own proposal to the FCC.

The ARRL's plan kept the basic amateur structure that was in existence--but with a few changes. The League suggested a "Basic Amateur" License, which would provide limited VHF operating privileges. The "Basic Amateur" would not actually have to pass a code exam, but would have to be familiar with CW characters. The trick here, of course, is that once someone has memorized the letters, numbers and basic punctuation marks, they are at 5 wpm already. So, this wasn't really a "no code" license, but it did eliminate formal CW testing.

As for Technicians, the League once again asked that they no longer be burdened with the "experimenter" designation, that they receive Novice HF subbands, and that they receive full VHF privileges.

Generals would see their code requirement drop to 10 wpm, while the Advanced Class would be bumped up to 15 wpm. No major changes were proposed for the Extra Class.

Unlike the '60's, when the ARRL was blasted for shoving Incentive Licensing at the members, this proposal was met with overall approval and appreciation from amateurs.

In the end, although the FCC dropped the "dual ladder" idea, they did incorporate many of the ARRL's ideas into future rule changes. Technicians were mainstreamed into the amateur license structure, Novices received expanded privileges, to eventually include HF & VHF phone, and the FCC, after years of restrictive proposals, finally chose the path of gradual deregulation.

But the "dual ladder" story was not the only event of 1975. When amateurs weren't arguing over the evils of the "Communicator" Class, they were blasting the idea of Class E CB. What was it? In summary, the Electronic Industry Association, or EIA, proposed taking away up to 2 MHz of our 220 band, and turning it over to a new CB service. With 25 kHz spacing between channels, the new EIA Class E CB could have as many as 80 channels. The EIA claimed that the 23 channel CB Band at 27 MHz was impossibly crowded, and worthless for local communication among legitimate users. Remember, this was at the time of the gas crisis and the "CB

Boom". The EIA argued that a skip free area was needed for CB, and that the 220 band was underutilized by hams. The EIA's proposals, in fact were quite stringent and, had it not been for their unfortunate choice of frequencies, they may have received the support of the ARRL.

But, the EIA was trying to mix matter and anti-matter--in this case, amateur frequencies and CB. This had happened once before, in 1958, when Class D CB was created out of "our" 11 meter band. "Never Again" was the cry from hams. The explosion of protest from the amateur community was palatable. Amateurs pointed out that CB wouldn't be such a mess if everyone obeyed the Part 95 rules, and the FCC took some enforcement action. The ARRL stated that CB'ers themselves were opposed to 220 MHz CB--which was only partly true. The only CB operators surveyed were those who read hobby type magazines, such as S-9. They were opposed to anything that would take them away from the skip and DX zone into a tightly regulated land of local

communications. Lost in the emotional shuffle was the logical point that CB did not belong in the HF spectrum.

In the end, with the strong opposition of the ARRL, and the indifferent support of CB'ers who really wanted to stay on HF, the FCC dropped the idea. Instead, in late 1976, the FCC expanded the CB band from 23 to 40 channels, and prohibited the sale of the older 23 channel units. This created a mini bonanza for hams, who snapped up the "obsolete" 23 channel units at fire sale prices, and converted them to 10 meters.

As a postscript, amateurs did lose 2 MHz of our 220 band in the early 90's. These frequencies are now in a no man's land, unused. Which is better--to lose 2 MHz to a service that hams and their families could use productively, or to lose it to something that is inaccessible--and doesn't even exist yet?

In our next installment, we will look at the war protest movement in 1970, and how it affected amateur radio. I hope you will join me.

DXING:

DXing is the hobby of tuning in and identifying distant radio signals, or making two way radio contact with distant stations in amateur radio, citizens band radio or other two way radio communications hobbies. Many DXers also attempt to receive written verifications of reception (sometimes referred to as "QSL's" or "veries") from the stations heard. The name of the hobby comes from DX, telegraphic shorthand for "distance" or "distant".

Early radio listeners, often using home made crystal sets and long wire antennas, faced the dilemma of radio stations that were few and far between. With the broadcast bands uncrowded, signals of the most powerful stations could be heard over hundreds of miles, but weaker signals required more precise tuning or better receiving gear.

By the 1950s, and continuing through the mid 1970s, many of the most powerful North American "clear channel" stations such as WLW, CKLW, CHUM, WABC, WLS, KHJ, and a host of border blasters from Mexico pumped out Top 40 music played by popular disc jockeys. As most smaller, local AM radio stations had to sign off at night, the big 50 kW stations had loyal listeners hundreds of miles away.

The popularity of DXing the medium wave band has diminished as the popular music formats quickly

migrated to the clearer, though less propagating, FM radio band beginning in the 1970s.

Although the classic definition of DX is "distance", today it generally means contacting amateur radio stations in far-away places. On the HF (also known as shortwave) bands, DX stations are those in foreign countries. On the VHF/UHF bands, DX stations can be within the same country or continent, since making a long-distance VHF contact, without the help of a satellite, can be very difficult.

For award purposes, other areas than just political countries can be classified as "DX countries". For example, the French protectorate of Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean is counted as a DX country, even though it is a department of France. The rules for determining what is a DX country can be quite complex and to avoid potential confusion, radio amateurs often use the term entity instead of country. In addition to entities, some awards are based on island groups in the world's oceans. On the VHF/UHF bands, many radio amateurs pursue awards based on Maidenhead grid locators.

For the most rare locations, DX-peditions are often organized to allow radio amateurs to "work a new one".

There are frequent contests where radio amateurs operate their stations on certain dates for a fixed

period of time to try to communicate with as many DX stations as possible.

In addition, many clubs offer awards for communicating with a certain number of DX stations. For example, the ARRL offers the DX Century Club award, or DXCC. The basic certificate is awarded for working and confirming at least 100 entities on the ARRL DXCC List.

Many radio enthusiasts are members of DX clubs. There are many DX clubs in many countries around the world. They are useful places to find information about up-to-date news relating to international radio. Many people also enjoy social events, which can form a large part of the enjoyment that people can get out of the radio hobby.

DX communication is communication over great distances using the ionosphere to refract the transmitted radio beam. The beam returns to the Earth's surface, and may then be reflected back into the ionosphere for a second bounce. Ionospheric refraction is generally only feasible for frequencies below about 50 MHz, and is highly dependent upon atmospheric conditions, the time of day, and the eleven-year sunspot cycle. It is also affected by solar storms and some other solar events, which can alter the Earth's ionosphere by ejecting a shower of charged particles.

The angle of refraction places a minimum on the distance at which the refracted beam will first return to Earth. This distance increases with frequency. As a result, any station employing DX will be surrounded

by an annular dead zone where they can't hear other stations or be heard by them.

This is the phenomenon that allows short wave radio reception to occur beyond the limits of line of sight. It is utilized by amateur radio enthusiasts (hams), shortwave broadcast stations (such as BBC and Voice of America) and others. This is what allows you to hear AM (MW) stations from locations far from your location. It is the only backup to failure of long distance communication by satellites, when their operation is affected by electromagnetic storms from the sun.

Radio equipment used in DXing ranges from inexpensive portable receivers to deluxe equipment costing thousands of dollars. Using just a simple AM radio, one can easily hear signals from the most powerful stations propagating hundreds of miles at night. Even an inexpensive shortwave radio can receive signals emanating from several countries during any time of day.

Serious hobbyists use more elaborate receivers designed specifically for pulling in distant signals, and often build their own antennas specifically designed for a specific frequency band. Having a minimum of two Dipole antenna at right angles to each other, for example, one running North-South and one running East-West can produce dramatically different reception patterns. These simple antennas can be made for a few dollars worth of wire and a couple of insulators.

Station Engineer Report

By John, W8OF

Thought I would give you an update on the recent issues with the clubs equipment. First, the repeaters are in good shape with both the 147.03 and 146.70 getting new some new equipment and updates this past year. The 147.03 and the 443.875 both have a 71.9 Hz PL tone full time on the output. The 146.70 repeater uses 94.8 Hz as the full time PL tone output. If your radio is programmed for "tone reception" then you will not hear any other noises or traffic unless the local repeater is transmitting. This also helps your equipment from false stopping when used in the "scan mode".

The clubs packet equipment is running great. Hope to have an APRS digi-node up soon for those running APRS as part of your base or mobile stations with or without GPS enabled. Free software is

offered on the Internet called "Mixed W" if your wanting to use the clubs BBS, or you can download a current version of WinAPRS. Both are free shareware. Many new radios have APRS software already installed as part of the unit.

Jeff Bell WD8JLI will be organizing a work squad to help finish the upstairs remodeling. A meeting is scheduled for February 14 at 7 pm to discuss what improvements the squad will be attempting. We will be working toward getting a radio operators station set up on the first floor. Jeff has provided a table for this project and it should be up and running by summer. All these projects make our clubhouse more appealing and fun. Hope you can join in and help out at some point. Your support is appreciated. Later. 73, W8OF

Grow The Club With New Hams

By Norm Fusaro, W3IZ

One of the most frequently asked questions that we hear from ARRL affiliated clubs is "How can we increase membership in our club?" On the surface the solution is a simple one - make more hams. A foundation of active Amateur Radio operators is required in order to maintain a healthy Amateur Radio club. If you lack a sufficient pool of licensed hams in your area then create some. Clubs that conduct licensing classes where they make recruitment part of the lesson continually increase membership. It does not matter if the course is an eight-week program or a weekend crash course, a good instructor will pepper the syllabus with the advantages of membership in the local club and the Radio Amateur's national association -- ARRL.

Providing a license course for those people in the community who are interested in learning about Amateur Radio demonstrates the club's commitment to helping people. Reinforcing Amateur Radio's tradition of helping each other let's the new hams know that they are not just getting a license to operate a radio but that they are also earning a ticket to become part of a worldwide society whose existence is built on mutual contact. Whether on the air or in the community Amateur Radio has always been a two-way function.

From the moment the license class begins new hams need to know that your club is there to help them as they begin their Amateur Radio journey. This relationship begins not in the classroom but at the time of registration or when that first contact is made whether in person or on the telephone or through the internet.

As the class progresses the new ham is made aware of the reciprocal bond between hams and while the novice may not believe that he or she has something to offer at the moment, their attendance and a desire to belong is sufficient contribution. As long as the club maintains a friendly environment that encourages participation and supports activities the novice will soon become the Elmer to the next group of new hams and will eventually take on leadership positions in the club. However, a club is

destined to fade away if they choose to adopt the attitude "build it and they will come."

Be sure to invite the new licensees to your next club meeting. Using written invitations is a nice touch and sends a message that you really want them to attend. The focus of this meeting should be on your new hams and getting them into the mainstream. Several clubs have organized the meeting following a license class using the "Ham Radio 101" format where the entire evening's programming is to show the novices the basics of operating. Have refreshments on hand and be ready to talk about the fun activities such as Field Day or a community activity that your club is involved in. This is not the meeting where want to discuss politics or topics that will embattle the membership. Keep it light and focused on the needs of the newcomers.

New hams are thirsty for information no matter how basic. When and where are the club meetings held? How do I get on the air? What does this or that term mean? Be prepared to answer the simplest questions and provide details when you do. The Mt. Baker club in Bellingham Washington has developed a great handout for new hams that helps answer some of these questions. With Mt. Baker's permission ARRL has made this booklet available to download and customize for your use. The modified version provides a place for your club to insert club and local information.

<http://www.arrl.org/news/features/2005/03/06/1/MBARC-Info-Pack.pdf>

Use this brochure or develop one of your own but in any case be sure to give your new hams something informative to take home with them.

A closing thought when working with new hams, one person's favorite activity is not all that ham radio has to offer. Meeting programs and mentor sessions should stimulate new hams to explore the many options offered to the licensed radio amateur.

Organizing and teaching an Amateur Radio license class where the students are encouraged to be a part of the fabric of ham radio and invited to participate in club activities is guaranteed to increase your club's membership with active hams

Life shouldn't be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well preserved body, but rather, to skid in broadside, thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and loudly shouting....
"Wow! What a ride! Thank You Lord!!!"

CONTESTING:

Contesting (also known as radiosport) is a competitive activity pursued by amateur radio operators. In a contest, an amateur radio station, which may be operated by an individual or a team, seeks to contact as many other amateur radio stations as possible in a given period of time and exchange information. Rules for each competition define the amateur radio bands, the mode communication that may be used, and the kind of information that must be exchanged. The contacts made during the contest contribute to a score by which stations are ranked. Contest sponsors publish the results in magazines and on web sites.

Contesting grew out of other amateur radio activities in the 1920s and 1930s. As transoceanic communications with amateur radio became more common, competitions were formed to challenge stations to make as many contacts as possible with amateur radio stations in other countries. Contests were also formed to provide opportunities for amateur radio operators to practice their message handling skills, used for routine or emergency communications across long distances. Over time, the number and variety of radio contests has increased, and many amateur radio operators today pursue the sport as their primary amateur radio activity.

There is no international authority or governance organization for this sport. Each competition is sponsored separately and has its own set of rules. Participants must, however, adhere to the amateur radio regulations of the country in which they are located. Because radio contests take place using amateur radio, competitors are forbidden by regulation from being compensated financially for their activity.

During a radio contest, each station attempts to establish two-way contact with other licensed amateur radio stations and exchange information specific to that contest. The information exchanged could include a signal report, a name, a U.S. state or Canadian province, a geographic zone, a Maidenhead grid locator, or an incrementing serial number. For each contact, the radio operator must correctly receive the call sign of the other station, as well as the information in the "exchange", and record this data, along with the time of the contact and the band

or frequency of operation, in a log. Stations can make contacts during the time period defined for the contest, on the radio bands specified in the rules for the contest. A contest score is computed based on a formula defined for that contest. A typical formula assigns some number of points for each contact, and a "multiplier" based on some aspect of the exchanged information.

A wide variety of amateur radio contests are sponsored every year. Contest sponsors have crafted competitive events that serve to promote a variety of interests and appeal to diverse audiences. Radio contests typically take place on weekends or local weeknight evenings, and can last from a few hours to forty-eight hours in duration. The rules of each contest will specify which stations are eligible for participation, the radio frequency bands on which they may operate, the communications modes they may employ, and the specific time period during which they may make contacts for the contest.

Contests exist for enthusiasts of all modes. Some contests are restricted to just CW emissions using the Morse code for communications, some are restricted to telephony modes and spoken communications, and some employ digital emissions modes such as RTTY or PSK31. Many popular contests are offered on two separate weekends, one for CW and one for telephony, with all the same rules.

The scale of activity varies from contest to contest. The largest contests are the DX contests that allow world wide participation. Many of these DX contests have been held annually for fifty years or more, and have devoted followings. Newer contests, those that intentionally restrict participation based on geography, and those that are shorter in duration tend to have fewer participating stations and attract more specialized operators and teams. Over time, contests that fail to attract enough entrants will be abandoned by their sponsor, and new contests will be proposed and sponsored to meet the evolving interests of amateur radio operators.

The geographic location of a station can impact its potential performance in radio contests. In almost all contests it helps to be in a rare location close to a major population center. Because the scoring formula in most contests uses the number of different

locations contacted (such as countries, states or grid locators) as a multiplier, contacts with stations in rare locations are in high demand. In contests on the VHF and higher frequency bands, having a location at a high altitude with unobstructed line of sight in all directions is also a major advantage.

Many radio amateurs are happy to contest from home, often with relatively low output power and simple antennas. Some of these operators at modest home stations operate competitively and others are simply on the air to give away some points to serious stations or to chase some unusual propagation. More serious radio contesters will spend significant sums

of money and invest a lot of time building a potentially winning station, whether at home, a local mountain top, or in a distant country.

Several contests are designed to encourage outdoor operations, and are known as field days. The motivating purpose of these events is to prepare operators for emergency readiness, but many enjoy the fun of operating in the most basic of circumstances. The rules for most field day events require or strongly suggest participating stations to use generator or battery power, and temporary antennas. This can create a more level playing field, as all stations are constructed in a similar manner.

Emergency Calling Tree

I have set up an email address for you to send your information should you desire to be on the calling tree. If you were already on the calling tree, please send the following requested information so I can update the calling tree.

The email address to use is fairfield_callingtree@yahoo.com (Note: there is a _ between fairfield and callingtree).

Please be advised that this email account is ONLY for emails directly relevant to the calling tree for emergencies (not just weather emergencies).

The information I will want from you follows:

- Your name
- Your call sign
- A primary phone number, the number at which you are most easily reached

- A secondary phone number
- A work phone number
- Do you want to be notified if the weather service issues a watch ?
- Do you want to be notified if the weather service issues a warning ?
- Your email address

This information will only be shared with fellow calling tree members. If you do not have access to the Internet you can call me at (740) 215-7096 or snail mail it to me at 1975 Smith Ave Lancaster OH 43130.

When sending your information by email, please enter your call in the subject field. Any emails that I believe to be junk mail or spam will be deleted.

Thank you, John Fick KD8EEK



Be Prepared

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LFCARC
P.O. Box 3
Lancaster, OH 43130

K8QIK

February 2008



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