

Spark Gap

Volume 25, Issue 3, March 2008 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities for Twenty-Five Years*

Kit Building Experience

Kit Building a Success!

The experience was intense. The anxiety level for many was off the scale. Sweat beads began to form on the face of several amateur radio veterans. You could

almost see the words black, brown, red, red and gold passing across each pair of eyes as they strained to read the tiny lines. This was a test of nerves. Packing over three dozen resistors, capacitors, diodes and transistors onto a small circuit board was a huge challenge for these hams. Learning to solder and place components on a circuit board proved to be a real test of patience.

Over a dozen MARC members and even two non-hams, spent three hours building a digital multi-meter. Under the watchful eye of Brian Murrey, KB9BVN, and Marc Snell, KC9CCM, each person followed step-by-step instructions to solder parts onto their small circuit board.

Two of the kit builders finished before noon and tested their project before calling it a day. One worked and one smoked. That's what happens when a bad solder joint causes a short. This is where trouble shooting takes over.

Brain Murrey is looking at future building projects. Those include building a dummy load and putting together a QRP

transceiver. While soldering irons cooled most agreed, that thanks to this experience, they felt more confident about soldering and handling basic circuit components. Check the club web page and emails for future kit building details.

-w8ish

Editor's note: Those that did not finish their multi-meter kit are encouraged to do so at home. For those who did not finish but feel the need for guidance should bring the kits with them to the March 15th meeting. Kit building will continue after the regularly scheduled meeting.



Photo by Jack Parker, W8ISH, MARC President

The Official Newsletter of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

MARC

Mid-State Amateur Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Franklin, IN 46131
www.midstatehams.org



Braxton, one of our non-hams, hard at work. Photo by Jack Parker, W8ISH

CQ CQ CQ

Boy Scouts of America Calling



Brian Murrey, KB9BVN, and Marc Snell, KC9CCM with our first group of boy scouts

Former scout leader Brian Murrey, KB9BVN, and Marc Snell, KC9CCM, set up an amateur radio station inside the Greenwood High School on Friday night February 29th. They lead the boys in trying their hand at making VHF radio contacts towards earning their communications merit badge. MARC club members and other local amateur radio

operators helped each scout pass their on-air requirement by talking with them from their home or mobile ham station. A total of 9 scouts earned their communication merit badge. Our PIO, Linda, KC9GCH, was on hand to talk to the scouts about Amateur Radio and SKYWARN. Scouts went away with information on getting their ham license.

Jack Parker, W8ISH, was able to get a satellite uplink truck and James McCreary, K9JMC, operator/engineer from WISH-TV, to attend the scout session. The truck is capable of sending live pictures and sound from anywhere in the United States. Five minute time-blocks are purchased by WISH-TV through CBS Newspath. They assign the satellite and the transponder that we are to use. James bought a five minute test window (\$80 cost) to show the boys what our return signal looks like when we come up on the bird. The truck has three cell phones, a video switcher, multi-channel audio board, satellite phone and the capability to do two uplinks at the same time. It's a portable broadcast facility on wheels. The only thing missing was an amateur radio.

The scouts were impressed with the truck and appreciated WISH-TV for allowing the visit. Thanks to all who participated and made this a successful evening for the local boy scouts

BMV Plates

The BMV has a new procedure in 2008 for obtaining an amateur license plate. Last year you could apply for your plate and it would be sent to your specific branch for pickup. Beginning in 2008, you must still reserve your plate, either in person or by using their mail in form. I had reserved mine at the Greenwood branch last year. I knew that they were all being mailed from Winchester, IN, but I went to the Greenwood branch anyway to see what the procedure was. I was told that I could renew my registration there, but my plate would be mailed to me from Winchester. They processed the order (including reserving next year's plate). Then they gave me a temporary paper plate (their required procedure) that expired 9 days before my plate did. I received my new plate 13 days after paying at the branch, way ahead of my paper plate expiration date. As of now, you can't order an amateur plate online like a regular one, but hopefully that will change. I understand that you can also call 765-584-7038, or fax a copy of your current registration, along with proof of insurance to 765-584-7190.

- K9DY, Steve Carmean



Steve, K9DY, with his 2008 license plate

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Technician Class

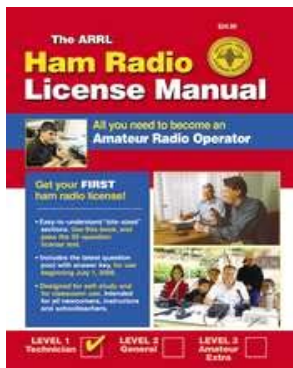
It's that time again. MARC will hold it's annual Spring Technician class beginning on March 19th 2008. Classes are free. All students should have a copy of The ARRL Ham Radio License Manual available from the ARRL. Advance orders for the textbooks can also be made by calling Linda at 887-2558 or via e-mail to kc9gch@arrl.net. Books purchased from MARC will be \$24.95/each, the same price as ARRL, however shipping will be covered by the club.

We have secured the training room at the White River Township Fire Department #51 on Olive Branch Road and SR 135. Classes will begin on Wednesday, March 19, 2008 with Chapter 1 being covered. Please park at the rear of the building and enter through the back door. The training room is in the basement. Class is limited to 20 students so please be sure to RSVP with Linda (887-2558) to ensure a seat in the class. All classes are 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM.

Class #2 covering Chapters 2 & 3 will be held on Wednesday, March 26, 2008. Class #3 covering Chapters 4 & 5 will be held on Wednesday, April, 2, 2008. Finally, class #4 will be held on Wednesday, April 9, 2008 and cover Chapters 6 & 7.

Students are then encouraged to attend the MARC meeting on April 19, 2008 to take their licensing test. Testing costs \$14.00 for a 10-year license.

For any questions or to order textbooks from MARC, please call Linda at 887-2558 or e-mail to kc9gch@arrl.net.



VEC Testing

Our Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (VEC) team is ARRL accredited, and capable of administering any amateur radio test. As a public service, the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club sponsors test sessions after all but one of its monthly meetings. (September testing is done prior to the picnic.) Meetings begin at 8:00 AM with testing following the meeting (begins about 9:30 AM until 11:00 AM). We would love to have you join us for the meeting. For directions to the meeting and/or test site, please check out our website at www.midstatehams.org.

Are you a member of the ARRL? Please let Linda (KC9GCH) know the next time you see her or by sending her a note via e-mail to kc9gch@arrl.net.

NWS Info

The National Weather Service (NWS) in Indianapolis will hold a Severe Weather Safety Program at the Old National Bank, 900 S. SR 135 (across from Target), Greenwood, IN on Saturday, April 19th, 2008. The program will run from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM and cover 1) What causes severe weather, 2) Lightning safety, 3) Weather safety at home, and 4) Amateur radio and SKYWARN activities.

Participating in the event will be the National Weather Service, Indianapolis office, White River Township Fire Department, American Red Cross and the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club.

Reservations should be made by calling 317-885-3318.

**WA9RDF
Repeater
146.835/
146.235 MHz
151.4 Hz PL
Tone**

**Weekly Net
Every Sunday
at 7PM EST**

***Tune in to hear
the ARRL
Newsline!***

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club sponsors a weekly traffic and social net on our repeater. The net begins at 7:00 p.m. local time, and features local news, announcements, and NTS traffic, as well as rebroadcasts of Amateur Radio Newsline.

2008 Schedule of Events

Weekly Net

Make sure to check out our weekly net, held every Sunday at 1900 (7 PM) local time. This is a great chance to meet other local amateur radio operators and test your operating skills. Newline is often played, allowing net participants to get the latest news about the amateur radio hobby. For those without the license or means to check in over the air, we offer an email check-in. Just send an email with your name and contact information to netcontrol@midstatehams.org and we will record your check-in!



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MARCH 2008

- 8 Wabash Valley Amateur Radio Assoc., Inc. 2008 Hamfest & Computer Expo**
Wabash Valley Fairgrounds, Terre Haute, IN; Talk-in 146.685MHZ (151.4 Hz PL)
- 9 Daylight Savings Time begins**
- 15 MARC Meeting - 8 AM**
VEC Testing immediately following the meeting (approx. 9:30 am)
Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN
- 19 Technician Class - 1st Class - Covers Chapter 1 - 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM**
White River Twp. Fire Dept. #51, Olive Branch Road & SR 135 South, Greenwood, IN
- 26 Technician Class - 2nd Class - Covers Chapters 2 & 3 - 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM**
White River Twp. Fire Dept. #51, Olive Branch Road & SR 135 South, Greenwood, IN
- 29 Columbus Hamfest, Columbus, IN**
Bartholomew County Fairgrounds, Columbus, IN; Talk-In on 146.79 MHz (100 Hz PL)
MARC's VEC Team will be there testing.

APRIL 2008

- 2 Technician Class - 3rd Class - Covers Chapters 4 & 5 - 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM**
White River Twp. Fire Dept. #51, Olive Branch Road & SR 135 South, Greenwood, IN
- 9 Technician Class - 4th Class - Covers Chapters 6 & 7 - 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM**
Final Class
White River Twp. Fire Dept. #51, Olive Branch Road & SR 135 South, Greenwood, IN
- 12 15K Mini Marathon, Indianapolis, IN**
Contact Mike Palmer, N9FEB, at www.Indyhams.org for more information or to volunteer
- 19 MARC Meeting - 8 AM**
VEC Testing immediately following the meeting (approx. 9:30 am)
Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN
- 19 Weather Safety Program, Old National Bank, Greenwood, IN 10 AM to 12:30 PM**
Located across from Target on SR 135 just South of Smith Valley Road
- 20 North Central Indiana Hamfest, Peru, IN**
More details to come next month

MAY 2008

- 3 500 Festival Mini Marathon, Indianapolis, IN**
Contact Mike Palmer, N9FEB, at www.Indyhams.org for more information or to volunteer
- 17 MARC Meeting - 8 AM**
VEC Testing immediately following the meeting (approx. 9:30 am)
Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN

Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the **THIRD SATURDAY** of each month in the basement of the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, Indiana 46131.

See our website, www.midstatehams.org, for maps on how to get to our meeting.