MARC September 2025 NEWSLETTER

W8KEA REPEATER
MARC
MIDLAND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
P.O. Box 1049, Midland, Michigan 48641-1049

President	Dennis Klipa N8ERF	(989) 948-5427
Vice President	Paul Morabito K8PLM	(989) 859-6669
Secretary	Linda Hodges KC8MUD	(989) 652-6213
Treasurer	John Wolters, W8QN	(989) 832-9122
W8KEA Station Trustee	John Wolters W8QN	(989) 832-9122
Midland County RO	Jack Robinson K8GTG	(989) 492-4882
Midland County EC	Ric Sauer KD0RMK	(210) 802-9537
Newsletter Editor	Kanushi Desai KE8RNA	(989) 948-5889
ARRL VEC Liaison	Dennis Klipa N8ERF	(989) 948-5427
Web Page Chairman	Max Schneider KE8DON	(989) 859-4288
Club Historian	Stan Rowe K6VWE	(989) 837-7252
Quartermaster	Lee Hodges KC8ITI	(989) 486-3771
Public Information Officer	Paul Tolly N8GEM	(989) 492-1239
Swap Committee Chair	Keith Johnson KB8SOE	(989) 948-5427
Resident Agent	Dennis Klipa, N8ERF	(989) 948-5427

LIFE MEMBERS
Lee Hodges KC8ITI, Linda Hodges KC8MUD, Larry Macklin N8CGP, Dennis Klipa N8ERF, John Wolters W8QN, Will Halphen K8VFO

MARC Web Page – www.w8kea.org

Midland W8KEA Repeater — 147.000 MHz +, 103.5 Hz

NEXT CLUB MEETING — September 4th, 2025, at 7:30 pm, Salvation Army Building, 220 S. Waldo Ave.

Summer! Longer days and warmer weather bring new opportunities for outdoor operations, emergency preparedness drills, and antenna projects. Whether you're chasing DX, experimenting with new modes, or simply enjoying the camaraderie of fellow hams, there's always something exciting on the airwaves!

🪟View From the Top of the Tower🪟

From the MARC President, Dennis Klipa N8ERF

Elections

The September meeting is the annual election of new club officers and School Club Advisors. Club Candidates include Pres: Dennis, N8ERF. V. Pres: none. Secretary: none. Treasurer: John, W8QN. For the MHS ARC Advisory Board, the nominees are Dennis - N8ERF, Lee – KC8ITI, Art – K0ACP, Will – K8VFO, Jackie – N8NNA.

Please consider volunteering for either the VP or Secretary position. You can check out their responsibilities in the By-Laws which can be found on the W8KEA.org website.

MARC IS AT A CROSSROADS The Future of our Repeater!!!

MARC is at a crossroads and we need to make a decision about what we are going to do to move forward. This is going to be an emotional issue for our club and it will likely cause hurt feelings and frustration for some no matter which choice we make, just different folks. I think that is probably unavoidable. But I hope you will remember that our repeater is a tool and only a tool. Amateur Radio, believe it or not, is about people, not equipment.

Two years ago, we had to relocate our repeater. Ever since, John, W8QN, and others have been trying to regain the repeater coverage that we had before the move. Improvements at the repeater site and the installation of a remote receiver at the high school have made improvements to the coverage. Returning the remote receiver to the Edenville site and reactivating the West Midland Family Center remote receiver should also help. However, the transmitter footprint is still lacking. It is a little complicated, but the implementation of the remote receivers may allow increased power output of the repeater. However, the current antenna is still 50 ft below the previous antenna. Will the increased power output be enough? Would we raise the height of the tower? Is it possible to do that? Would we be allowed to do that? At this point we do not know. There may be other solutions to the problem. It will take time and it will certainly cost money.

We have been presented with an alternative path. We have been approached by the Central Michigan Emergency Network, www.w8cmn.net. They have a network of repeaters from Mt. Clemens to Mackinaw City. Instead of using the commercial internet for linking, they have built their own microwave network. More recently, they took over the Bay City repeater, now called the Gilford repeater. They have offered to take over our system, and in return provide us with the kind of coverage we would like to have and beyond through the linked system.

So now we must decide which of the crossroads we are going to take. Are we going to continue down the path that we have been on or are we going to go down a new path. There are a lot of things to consider when making this decision. A few members have offered their opinions which can be found later in the newsletter.

The path to a decision.

There have been some isolated discussions between representatives of W8CMN and individual MARC members for some time. However, there was no clear and consistent understanding of what was involved. The repeater committee met with W8CMN representatives today, August

24th, to learn more about how the W8CMN option would work. It was a two-hour meeting. In this newsletter, you will find opinion pieces in favor of the current road and others in favor of a new road.

The path forward will be a decision of the membership. At the September meeting we will spend a lot of time talking about this and exploring the options, giving everyone a chance to ask questions and express opinions. I think this is a very important decision, so my intention is to not have a vote at the September meeting but rather take the time to let this all digest and then vote at the October meeting. I would like to offer the pages of this newsletter for members to offer their opinions to be published in the October newsletter, before the vote.

Origins of the Midland Repeater.

The Central Michigan Amateur Repeater Association (CMARA) was formed in 1975. Its original repeater was a very wide area coverage FM repeater on 146.72 MHz called the Pleasant Valley repeater, near the southwest corner of Midland County. A vast majority of the association membership were Midland residents and members of MARC as well. In Jan-Feb of 1977 the Midland Repeater on 146.73 MHz was activated. Due to a change of repeater coordinated frequency separations, the Midland repeater frequency was changed to the current 147.000 MHz. For 16 years CMARA operated, funded and maintained both repeaters.

From its birth in 1948 the Midland Amateur Radio Club had been a general purpose club for 45 years. In 1993, MARC took over responsibility for the Midland repeater and became a repeater club as well. With its 501(c)3 non-profit status MARC conducted a significant fundraising campaign to implement and support the repeater. The repeater was relocated to the Dow tower near the soccer fields. Two years ago the repeater was moved to its current location. After 32 years MARC is now facing the possibility of returning to a general purpose club.

A Brief Review of Recent Repeater History - John, W8QN

I asked John to put together a brief recent history of the work that has been done on our repeater, almost all of which was done by John. Thank you, John, for all of your time, energy and expertise. de Dennis, N8ERF

This is an attempt at the Repeater History that I know. It is in time sequence to the best of my knowledge or at least close. Not everything is included. In the early history of the club repeater system there were 3 Kendecom repeaters, 2 Duplexers, 1 Kendecom remote link with local receiver, 2 Kendecom 100 watt amplifiers, and 1 Kendecom – 4 input voter. Two of the repeaters have failed PA's with working receivers and the final repeater still works but there is no software to program the machine, and it has the wrong callsign. Both amplifiers work (with modifications to work with existing repeater). The remote receiver never worked properly and was taken out of service. Once I got my hands on it I found out that the controller had been set up improperly, and once again there is no capability to change it. The voter was also taken out of service.

The remote receiver, when in service, was located on a Midland County Tower at the West Family Center near Oil City. Height was approximately 100 ft with a receive antenna on the west side of the tower. One of the repeaters had phone patch capability and for the longest time had a connected phone line for phone patch and remote control. With the lack of use with the advent of cell phones, the phone line (and cost) was removed. The manufacturer of the above equipment is no longer in business.

At one time the repeater site was evidently hit by lightning and the duplexer in service was damaged. Repair was attempted with no success. The second duplexer was put in service but required that the power be reduced to control desence. The antenna also was believed damaged and replaced (2015). All this hardware had no PL capability.

A new Repeater with PL capability and a multi-receiver capable controller was purchased and put in service at the original tower location next to the soccer fields. The repeater was switched to PL control. The tower site was owned by Dow Chemical, and we had a written agreement to use it. A past member was allowed a tour of the repeater site and then took it upon himself to complain to Dow about the electrical setup. Up until this time Dow had been paying for electricity. The club was contacted and told to take over the electrical service cost, which we did. It cost us more for the privilege of having the service than the actual cost of the power.

A new water tower was being built in Edenville Township on the north side of the county. A member of the club had connections, and an agreement was made to place antennas on the tower and equipment inside. Because the repeater was now under PL the existing remote receiver would not work as desired. I built a new remote receiver, interfaced the voter to the new repeater and a new local receiver, and put it in service. At the same time, I applied for a coordinated second remote receiver link frequency, which was granted. We now have 2 link frequencies.

In February 2020, Dow Chemical contacted us about the future life of the tower. We were required to have a tower inspection performed at our cost to make such a determination. The tower was at the end of its life and the inspection confirmed that. It was not necessarily in danger of falling, but no climber would agree to climb it.

I undertook 2 personal projects for the repeater. One was to allow for remote control of a system to download and make announcements when needed, and the other was a replacement for the existing voter system, at my cost. Due to a lot of reasons these projects were shelved but the hardware exists and could be restarted.

At this point Dow wanted to tear the tower down but because we had a formal agreement to use it, an attempt was made by Dow to help us find another site. We looked at multiple locations on Dow property including the tower inside the Dow Plant, but nothing worked out. A committee was formed to look for another site outside of Dow. Every commercial tower had an associated cost. There was even discussion in the club about acquiring land and having a tower site built. Midland County was not very interested in us putting equipment on any of their towers or buildings.

Michigan Family Radio had a studio on M-20 and 5 Mile Rd. with a 120 ft tower for remote microwave connection to their main tower. That building was purchased by the M-20 Animal Hospital, and the new owner happened to be a ham. By chance he contacted our then President (Lee Hodges) and asked if we were interested in the use of the tower at their site. Discussions followed and agreements were made.

In Oct 2022, with a lot of work and planning, the repeater was moved from the Dow tower to the M-20 Animal Hospital tower. The move to the new tower was not without impact. The old tower was built on the highest ridge in Midland County and did an excellent job of covering the city of

Midland handheld radios. The new location is sea-level wise approximately 50 ft lower than the original tower and 10 miles further west from the city. Both towers were approximately the same height. Old tower base 209m/685 ft sea level; new tower base 193m/633 ft sea level (per en-gb.topographic-map.com).

The County of Midland radio system was changed from a VHF system to the State 800 MHz trunk system because of narrow banding requirements. The county stored some of their old equipment in case of need. This now became surplus and was offered to us. It included a VHF Motorola repeater and 2 – 6 can duplexers. The repeater was placed on the shelf, one duplexer was donated to another club so they could build a repeater, and I took the second to Texas, where the manufacturer was located, to have it returned for our Amateur frequencies. That duplexer was put in service and the 4 can duplexer placed in reserve. This helped the desence issue (May 2023).

In July 2023, heliax to the main VHF antenna was replaced because we did not know the history of the heliax on the tower and wanted to remove any doubt. A 440 MHz side-mount antenna was also installed using existing tower heliax. The Dow tower was torn down.

In May of 2024, Dennis Klipa asked me to put in a remote receiver somewhere near the upcoming June swap to help handheld radios and city of Midland coverage. Because of the short timeframe there was no easy way to come up with a new remote receiver, so I made the decision to “temporarily” relocate the Edenville remote. It was decided to “temporarily” utilize the High School radio club’s VHF and UHF antennas to make the link possible. It worked well. Dennis had contacts in the School District and we asked if we could utilize their unused tower on the top of the High School. Verbal agreement was reached but time and weather ran out to make the move.

Finally, in Aug 2025, new antennas were installed and a new remote link built and installed. The owner of the M-20 Animal Hospital has also extended an Ethernet link to an isolated ethernet network for our use as of 8/10/25. More to come here.

Repeater Opinions!

Of the members of the repeater committee, there is not universal agreement on which crossroad we should take at this point. I have asked members on both sides of the discussion to submit an opinion for the newsletter. So far, I have not received an article in favor of maintaining our course. Please do not take this as meaning there is no support for staying the course. There is a passionate interest in maintaining ownership and control of our repeater. I just don’t have a written opinion to share with you at this time. Perhaps we will hear more at the September and October meetings. At this point, as president of the club, I can only vote in the case of a tie vote. As such I am refraining from expressing my opinion. In fact, I can see both sides of the discussion. It is going to come down to what the membership wants. And remember, if you want to vote, you have to be a member in good standing.

An open letter to the W8KEA Midland Amateur Radio Club: - K0ACP

My name is Art Peters, K0ACP. My XYL, Kathy, KD0JHX, and I live on the southern edge of Edenville Township here in Midland County. We moved into our home in August of 2014. Prior to that, we lived in Midland not far from the Dow Diamond, where I settled when I first came to Michigan in 2011.

I was first licensed in 1983 as KA8KDL, which I obtained as I left college as a freshly minted Purdue EE—Electrical Engineer, not Elementary Educator. Though I didn't become "radioactive" at that time, I retained an innate curiosity toward the hobby and service. Fast forward 25 years: my SO239 graduated high school, and I found myself an empty nester with a hole to fill. Choosing not to work more or watch TV, I rekindled my exploration journey in amateur radio.

With a bit of dusting off of study materials, I quickly passed Technician and General, becoming KD0CBE. With a tad more dusting, a month later I became AC0JV, then vanity took over and I switched to K0ACP. As a freshly reminded ham, I purchased an HT and an HF rig. The Yaesu FT-60 remains in the cabinet as an excellent 2-band solution, and the HF rig is now one of the operating positions at the Midland High School Club. I am mostly an HF operator but rather took for granted the access and community a repeater brought to the amateur world.

In Iowa, where I picked up my "0" call, we had the W0JV repeater and enjoyed a very active Sunday evening net with frequent round tables and formal message traffic. Unfortunately, it also got frequent use for a SkyWarn net, for which I eventually became one of the Net Controls. Candidly, I took access to the local VHF repeater for granted and didn't give it the consideration or respect that it deserved.

When I moved to Midland, I found the W8KEA repeater, stumbled across the Thursday evening net, and found the club at a subsequent meeting. The W8KEA repeater provided a great gateway for meeting local hams. I have vivid memories standing on the western bank of Sanford Lake and talking with Jack, W8GTG, during the 2020 dam failure, again using my trusty FT-60 with a rubber duck.

Then we lost our site, and the repeater had to move. Through the dedication and efforts of the folks behind the scenes, the repeater "magically" moved into its new home on M-20. When I say magically, I really mean that I did not pay much attention to the significant effort required to find a new home, disassemble, pack, move, and reinstall the equipment, and then do the necessary engineering and adjustments to tune it up. Today the face of the repeater is our own John Wolters, W8QN, and he deserves praise and credit for his valiant efforts.

All that said, I and several other local W8KEA members are disappointed and disenfranchised, as we no longer enjoy reliable access to the repeater from our QTH. As a result, my HT has fallen into disuse, and I no longer attempt Thursday evening net check-ins. Several other hams have expressed similar situations to me and, in some cases, we have maintained contact via cellphones. Sadly, in other situations, we have lost contact altogether.

All this long-winded introduction was a way of introducing myself, my amateur background, and the situation we find ourselves in: the current state of the W8KEA repeater is perhaps the worst possible state a system can be—inconsistent, unreliable, and unpredictable. In some ways, it would be better powered off until it can be fully restored; at least then it would be in a known and predictable state. This statement is not to point fingers or cast blame, but rather a candid assessment of the repeater's condition.

This past Sunday, I had the privilege to sit in a meeting with the Central Michigan Emergency Network (W8CMN), who tendered an offer to assume our VHF repeater, equipment, and—perhaps more valuable—coordinated frequency pair. In return, they committed to rehome the repeater and install it on a ~300' tower and link it with other VHF repeaters and some microwave-linked remote sites.

Dennis Klipa, N8ERF, has posed a question to me to see if I could provide some thoughtful dialogue on the topic. Well, this is my attempt at dialogue—I'll leave it up to the reader to determine if you find it thoughtful. The W8KEA club is at a crossroads, and we have a decision to make: do we keep the W8KEA repeater for ourselves, or turn it over to the W8CMN syndicate? On the surface this is a simple question with only two possible choices, yet the analysis shows a highly nuanced situation that bears examination.

I believe that there is a third alternative worth exploring, and I would ask for your indulgence in exploring that with me. I would propose that we:

1. Create a Technical Committee, chaired by John, W8QN, and composed of an even number of individuals.

2. This committee would initially be appointed by the club President for staggered 2- or 3-year terms and would report to the President, but provide monthly reports to the club.

3. The club President would sit on the committee with a voting responsibility to cast the tie-breaking vote.

4. This committee is charged with developing and reviewing a plan for restoring W8KEA operation to a capability similar to what was experienced prior to the repeater move in 2020. This plan, and associated budget, will be voted upon by the whole club at the November meeting.

5. The club agrees to fund the approved plan.

6. The committee agrees to execute the approved plan by 3/31/26, with regular checkpoints at the monthly W8KEA meetings.

If the committee fails to provide an acceptable plan, per the membership, or the committee or club fail to hold up their end of the agreement, then the W8KEA repeater should be transferred to the Central Michigan Emergency Network.

As we consider this proposal, I would ask folks to remember the following: coordinated VHF frequency pairs are limited and valuable commodities. In fact, the VHF spectrum in Mid-Michigan is fully allocated, and we would be unable to obtain a new pair if we ever wanted to get another repeater within the club.

1. W8KEA is a volunteer amateur club; we all need to take ownership for the repeater, and those who expect to use it need to provide the time and funds required to establish and

maintain a club-owned resource.

2. Similarly, the club leadership needs to be willing to accept assistance and work with members to train, build, maintain, and operate the repeater.

3. If we as a club are willing to support #2 and #3, then we should ask: do we have the technical expertise to design, implement, maintain, and operate an analog VHF FM repeater?

4. If we as a club are willing to support #2 and #3, are we also capable and willing to financially support the effort needed to run an analog VHF FM repeater, easily costing thousands of dollars?

Each of us will have to make our own assessments of our ability to answer in the affirmative to #2, #3, #4, and #5. If we can answer "yes" to these questions, then I believe we can succeed. I suggest we give the club a six-month opportunity to fully implement the W8KEA repeater.

I have many other thoughts on the matter and reasons for my beliefs, and I am willing to share them if folks want to engage. I can be reached at K0ACP@K0ACP.COM or via cell: 989-600-3920—but unfortunately, not on the W8KEA repeater.

73 es God Bless,
Art K0ACP

Repeater Opinion (Ric - KD0RMK)

We asked ourselves if we would consider turning over the care, maintenance, and ownership of our repeater to the Central Michigan Emergency Network (CMEN). The decision at the time was to not relinquish the ownership of the W8KEA repeater. This is a difficult decision on a good day, and even more difficult due to the uncertainty of guaranteed performance on either path we take. I happen to be in favor of this transition for multiple reasons.

Jack Robinson and I have talked about this several times based on the needs of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®). Our relationship with the Midland Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is mostly based on the relationship that Jack has built over the past few years. In an attempt to increase our city and county visibility from an emergency response perspective, one of the key components is a good communications infrastructure. I appreciate that this isn't our only challenge; however, for the sake of this message, we'll focus on our repeater for now.

The few points of interest that may help you make an informed decision include the following items:

Linkage to other repeaters outside Midland

- This is good for us to have the ability to communicate with groups outside our current communication footprint.
- During selected events, this allows us to connect, or not, to other repeaters. Obviously, during localized events, it will be optimal for us not to be connected to other repeater locations.
- This will increase the amount of traffic in the local repeater.

Linkage to CMEN (more information)

- The CMEN team (with our assistance) will augment the infrastructure by first moving the primary repeater functionality to a 320' tower. This will take care of our reach across the county.
- CMEN will help with remote receivers at multiple locations to aid in allowing the repeater infrastructure in Midland County to better receive signals from remote parts of the county, and provide better reception for operators transmitting from an HT.

AllStarLink (more information)

- This will allow us to optionally connect to our repeater when traveling outside the reach of the CMEN network.
- It will also allow for connection to the local repeater when operating in a stand-alone configuration. This will often occur during our weekly nets as one example.

Microwave Connection

- Optionally we can have a microwave connection between the MARC trailer and the repeater network for additional capabilities during special events or emergency operations.

Our repeater is a tool that helps identify who we are and is used to communicate to our local community using amateur radio. This part of the equation won't change other than providing additional coverage in our local communication footprint and beyond. The continued cost of maintaining the infrastructure will also be moved to the CMEN team if we move forward with this potential offer.

If we were to just add additional receive sites, this would help HTs talk to the repeater; however, they may not necessarily be able to hear the repeater with the current location and configuration. This is just another reason to increase the altitude of the primary repeater location.

73,
Ric – KD0RMK

Justification for W8KEA to keep the repeater: Lee KC8ITI

I am not in favor of turning over the Midland Amateur Radio Club, Inc. repeater and all of the associated equipment over to Central Michigan Amateur Network, Inc. DBA as Central Michigan Emergency Network. A meeting was held on August 24, 2025, with a representative of Central Michigan Emergency Network (CMEN) and the repeater committee of the Midland Amateur Radio Club. The Central Michigan Emergency Network wants to take over, move, and manage the Midland Amateur Radio Club 2-meter repeater system. The new location would allow for an elevated repeater antenna position, which would provide a larger coverage area. In addition, the repeater would be connected to CMEN‘s network. The transfer of the repeater would eliminate any direct maintenance of the repeater by the Midland Amateur Radio Club.

For this type of proposal, one would expect the representative of CMEN to have a written document with details of the proposal. This was not the case, and most of the verbal responses were vague. My takeaways from this meeting were: Central Michigan Emergency Network wants control of as many of the 2-meter repeater pairs as possible. They also want us to donate all of our 2-meter equipment to them for use or sale at their discretion.

Central Michigan Amateur Network, Inc. is controlled by a board of directors who have total approval on any changes to the repeaters and the network. Local repeater groups have no representation on the board of directors. If a local repeater group requests any changes or upgrades to the repeater, the local group is expected to help fund those changes. If there is a catastrophic failure to the repeater, the local repeater group is expected to help fund the recovery.

Other than the ability to disconnect the repeater from the network for local nets and local emergency use, the local club has no command or control of the repeater. Adding voice announcements to the local repeater is limited and not encouraged. The local repeater group is expected to supply technical personnel to help support the Central Michigan Emergency Network, which is very complex. The local repeater group is also expected to assist Central Michigan Emergency Network in acquiring access to any remote receiver or auxiliary equipment sites.

In researching Central Michigan Amateur Network, Inc. since the meeting, I found that State of Michigan paperwork was filed on March 18, 2008, to incorporate with the stated purpose: *“To build and maintain a network of voice and data services to support amateur radio communications in Michigan. These networks are used in times of crisis and to support public service.”* A search of the Central Michigan Emergency Network website and public records provided no additional information on the incorporation or bylaws for how Central Michigan Amateur Network, Inc. is organized or how things are run. Central Michigan Amateur Network, Inc. has no formal agreements with any governmental agencies such as the state EOC or FEMA.

Since being asked to move our repeater from the Dow site, relocating the repeater to another site has been problematic. We’ve spent a lot of money and resources over the years trying to supply a usable repeater system for the Midland County area. It may be necessary to expend more resources to eventually get the repeater system to where everyone wants it. Currently, we only have one or two people working on the remaining problems, and they can only do so much.

Of course, the comments keep coming in: *How come I'm having this or that problem? It used to work this way. When are you going to implement this or that feature?* If there is a problem, what is needed is empirical documentation on what the problem is and possible fixes that might be used. We need more people to get involved—not just list their frustrations about how things are going.

Without knowing the goals and governance of the Central Michigan Amateur Network, Inc. and the Central Michigan Emergency Network, it is hard to know if their goals align with the goals of the Midland Amateur Radio Club. Without having any proposals in writing, it is hard to know what we are agreeing to.

Remember, if in the future we decide this was a mistake and we wish to reestablish a 2-meter repeater system, there are no 2-meter pairs available in Michigan. If there were any coordinated 2-meter pairs available, Central Michigan Emergency Network wouldn't be after our pair. Equipment we can get; frequencies are scarce.

I would like to give our repeater committee the time they need to work on the outstanding problems with our repeater system to see if they can all be resolved. I urge our club members to be patient and help out when they can. The cost and commitment of turning things over to Central Michigan Amateur Network, Inc. and the Central Michigan Emergency Network is just too high.

⭐From the Michigan Section Manager, Larry Camp, WB8R- July 2025 Section News…

Greetings to all who read this…..

As this is written, we are in August and living in the southernmost part of Michigan, we have had a number of consecutive days in the 90 degree (plus) range. When thinking about the extreme range of outside temperatures that we enjoy (endure) in winter and summer in this part of the country, I find it amazing that we just adapt and go on with our lives. I know that I only pay attention to the weather when I need to go someplace or if the lightning and winds are flashing/blowing or if the snow is being piled up by the wind. I have often heard the statement about Michigan weather that: "If you don't like the weather, just wait five minutes and it will change….." and this seems to have some truth to it…. Late summer ham radio events slow down a bit because a great number of events take place in areas that are subject to the whims of the weather plus the 'vacation factor' that often takes us out and about with the family and sometimes does not include hamfests.

Having been involved with this ham radio thing pretty much every day since the late 1970's, I have become more convinced that radio clubs are where it's at….. Radio clubs are where you can have a conversation with knowledgeable hams who are more than willing to give you advice on how best to snag that rare DX, how to put up that tower, how to string that wire antenna up into the trees, how to participate in a net (or even how to properly run a net), how to run that wiring (electrical and antenna) in your new car, and a plethora of other items that you either need or want to do. The advice from a lifetime of learning comes at no cost other than some respect and appreciation for the help…. All we need to do is ask the questions and sit back and absorb some of the life-long learning that other hams have. This is the place where you can offer ideas and suggestions and sometimes physical assistance to that new ham or to assist that elderly ham that can no longer get on a ladder to fasten his/her antenna up in the tree. Opportunities to be helpful abound and the idea that there is strength in numbers absolutely rings true in clubs.
Every club needs 'sparkplugs' that offer, free of charge, sage advice that helps solve a problem, or sparks further thought that often ends in an epiphany (and great self-satisfaction) on the part of the individual that is working on a tough project. Nothing beats a friend that has been there and done that, and it is always willing to share their knowledge. Test drive the clubs in your area……. Do not hesitate to journey over to an adjacent county and meet the hams in that area. Be helpful and attentive. Join in the club activities such as fund raisers, meals together, on the air nets, and any other excuse to get together to talk radio. There is nothing wrong with supporting more than one club. Volunteer your services for your club(s). There are always areas in which clubs can use some fresh blood, fresh ideas, and enthusiasm.
That is it for this month. If you are at an event that I am also attending, please take a minute to stop by and say hello. I am always interested in what is happening in amateur radio around the state.

Have fun, and be Radioactive!

🗒️ From the Midland County EC…

Ric Sauer KD0RMK

Dirty Dog Run 2025!

The Dirty Dog Run was a learning opportunity for our team. With every event is the possibility for a mishap or unexpected events. This year was no exception. While no serious issues occurred during the event, we had a minor issue with a runner that quickly impacted our successful communication amongst the team. Either way, this was a learning opportunity for our group. We've already started preparing a Standard Operating Instruction (SOI) for use in future events. Such a document will help us define structure to our communication presence and give us the image of being prepared and coordinated as a team. Such a document also represents all our prior lessons learned and sets a baseline for future events. This in turn will provide a starting point for future event coordinators and the starting point for updated versions of the SOI for use in years to come. I wish to thank all that participated in this event and look forward to us all getting back together again next year for an opportunity to support our local community. If you didn't attend the event this year, please consider joining us next year in showing the community how amateur radio can assist in providing a safe and successful time for all.

🗒️ From the Midland County RO…

Jack Robinson K8GTG

HOW TO GET EAS ALERTS FROM THE CITY/COUNTY

In the last two newsletters, we covered several ways for you to get up-to-the-minute emergency information in the event of a local Midland emergency. Last month, you learned about text messages from Nixel. (A no-cost public safety messaging service that keeps you informed of public safety events.) If you missed these two articles, please go read them in the July and August 2025 newsletters!

The Emergency Alert System (EAS) is a national, state, and county-based system that can broadcast emergency notifications to a number of your devices, including television sets, AM/FM radios, and to your cellular phone. You've heard the screeching test alerts, "This is only a test...". Rather annoying those tests, but they do work! During the 2020 flood, EAS was activated so that TVs and weather radios would alert and inform residents to evacuate.

Today, modern cellphones can also act as an EAS receiver. Check your settings on your phone to make sure the Government Alerts are enabled to receive alerts. Here's a screenshot of my iPhone:

To get to these iPhone settings, go to Settings / Notifications, Government Alerts / Emergency Alerts, and enable alerts and also Local Awareness. I disabled AMBER Alerts; those usually cover a large geographic area (state-wide), and they are an annoyance if not local. For Android-based phones, go to Settings / Connections / Safety and Emergency / Wireless Emergency Alerts and enable the ones you want. There have already been two tornado warnings issued so far in 2025 for Midland County (May 15, August 12). You can bet we're not done with severe weather! Please protect yourself and your family, and use the assorted communications tools to stay in the know!

📻 Repeater Activity Report…

John Wolters W8QN

On the repeater front a fair amount of activity this month. The temporary Midland High School remote receiver has been replaced by a permanent setup. A VHF receive antenna was placed at the top of the Midland Public Schools tower, and a UHF yagi halfway down. With the coax length cut by a third or more, the receiver was able to hear a lot better. Thanks to Dennis Klipa, Lee Hodges, Mitchell Boyce, and Paul Filiczkowski for their help. I will now take the "temporary" equipment and, after some refurb, move it back to its normal home in Edenville. I have also applied for a third coordinated link frequency for a third remote. This will give us much better handheld receive coverage over the county. At the same time, the owner of the M20 Animal Hospital extended an Ethernet connection to our repeater. This will open up other future capabilities.

UPCOMING EVENTS 👀

- Sep 6, 2025, Grand Rapids Area Hamfest, Wyoming, MI (WB8R, K8TB)
- Sep 13, 2025, OAARS Hamfest, West Branch, MI (TBD)
- Sep 13, 2025, GMARC Trunk Swap, Shelby Twp, MI (TBD)
- Sep 14, 2025, Adrian Hamfest, Adrian, MI (WB8R)
- Sep 20, 2025, Top of Michigan ARC Hamfest, Gaylord, MI (WB8R)
- Oct 2, 2025, MAARC Meeting, Muskegon, MI (WB8R)
- Oct 4, 2025, Kalamazoo ARC/SMART Vintage Electronics Expo (WB8R)
- Oct 4, 2025, Copper Country Hamfest, Baraga, MI (TBD)
- Oct 11, 2025, Muskegon Color Tour Hamfest, Muskegon, MI (WB8R)
- Oct 19, 2025, USECA Hamfest, St. Clair Shores, MI (TBD)
- Dec 7, 2025, LCARC ARC Hamfest, Troy, MI (WB8R)

💥 Items of Interest 💥

The Woodpecker (learn more)
Duga (Russian: Дуга) was an over-the-horizon radar (OTH) system used in the Soviet Union as part of its early-warning radar network for missile defense. It operated from July 1976 to December 1989. Two operational durga radars were deployed, with one near Chernobyl and Liubech in the Ukrainian SSR, and the other in eastern Siberia. The duga system was extremely powerful, reaching over 10 MW, and emitted in the shortwave radio bands. It was given the nickname Russian Woodpecker by shortwave listeners for its emissions randomly appearing and sounding like sharp, repetitive tapping noises at a frequency of 10 Hz. The random frequency hops often disrupted legitimate broadcasts, amateur radio operations, oceanic, commercial, aviation communications, and utility transmissions, resulting in thousands of complaints from many countries worldwide. The signal became such a nuisance that some communications receivers began including "Woodpecker Blankers" in their circuit designs. The unclaimed signal was a source of speculation, giving rise to theories such as Soviet brainwashing and weather modification experiments. However, because of its distinctive transmission pattern, many experts and amateur radio hobbyists realized it was an over-the-horizon radar system. NATO military intelligence had already given it the reporting name STEEL WORK or STEEL YARD, based on the massive size of the antenna, which spanned 700 meters (2,300 ft) in length and 150 meters (490 ft) in height. This massive structure formed a phased array and was necessary in order to provide high gain at HF as well as facilitating beam-steering, though it is unconfirmed whether the latter was actually used in normal operation. While the amateur radio community was well aware of the system, the OTH theory was not publicly confirmed until after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

!! DISCORD !!

Did you know we have a Midland Emergency Communication DISCORD site? This is open for all central Michigan amateur radio operators, however it has highly targeted channels that are specific to Midland and Saginaw County as well as ARES members. Please join the members that have already become part of the server to help shape our local communication enthusiasts and collaborate with others that have Amateur Radio as part of their passion.
https://discord.gg/CEX7kn6ev6
With over 28 million servers, Discord has something for everyone. In the last few years, over 500 amateur radio servers have appeared using Discord. Real-time collaboration with your team members and the ability to pick areas of interest to you within a server platform makes this a terrific information sharing environment.

MARC Merchandise

Did you know that McCreadie Sales has the artwork for MARC? They can put our logo on shirts, jackets, hats, and more. Don’t just represent our club, represent it in style.
You can go to mccreadiesales.com to place an order with the MARC logo. Contact McCreadie Sales Printwear & Promotion at (989) 631-7650 or visit the store at 601 S Saginaw Rd, Midland, MI 48640!

MARC Help Wanted!

Club Quartermaster - We have been looking for someone to take over for Lee (KC8ITI). This is a great opportunity!
Field Day Committee - We are looking for someone to fill this open position! Contact Dennis Klipa N8ERF at n8erf@arrl.net for more information **:)**

Newsletter Deadline

Contact KE8RNA at ke8rna@arrl.net if you would like to submit anything– articles, images, events, ideas, etc. – to the newsletter. The deadline for items for inclusion in the newsletter is the last Thursday of the month!

MARC Meetings

Paul Morabito is in charge of presentation topics for our monthly meetings and has been doing a good job. If you have a topic on which you would like to present or would like to lead a discussion, please contact Paul at (989) 859-6669 or plmorabito21@gmail.com

To volunteer for net control, contact Ric Sauer KD0RMK at *kd0rmk@arrl.net*

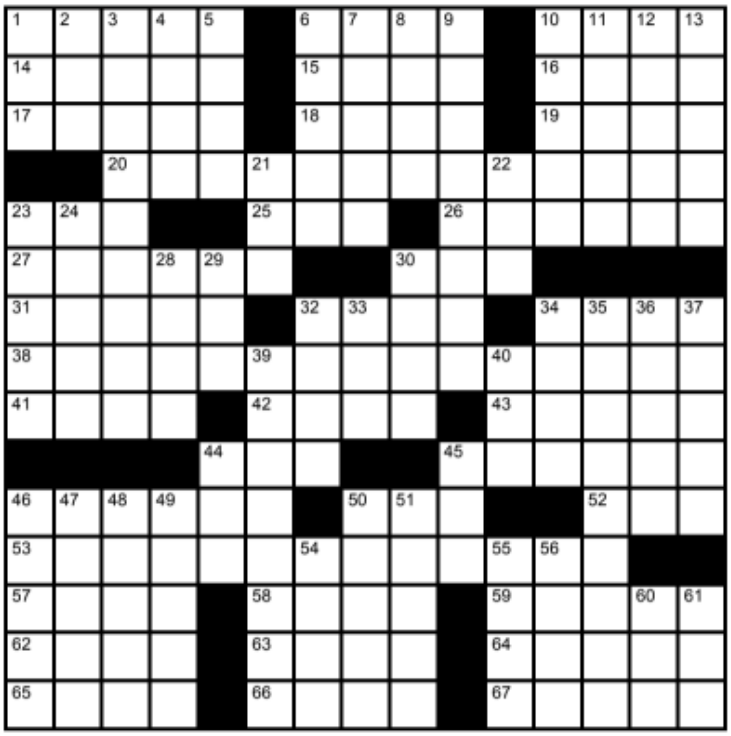
VE Examination Sessions

If you need to find an examination session, please check the ARRL website for scheduled exam sessions in Michigan at: Http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/examsearch.phtml?State=MI
Or contact Dennis Klipa by email at N8ERF@arrl.net or call at (989) 948-5427.

Crossword Puzzle of the Month :)

(email ke8rna@arrl.net for hints/ key)

Receiver Pathways



Across

1. Superhet preceder
6. BCD followers
10. UA missile made famous by YI
14. _____ loop
15. Meadow mouse
16. LA capital
17. ___ to back...
18. Part of LAN
19. Nit hatchlings
20. Teetering swizzle stick?
23. Golf ball position
25. Polite partner of TU
26. Sensors using RF
27. Antelope array element?
30. CW preposition
31. VS9H middle name
32. Employs
34. "___ that special?!"
38. Supermarket scanner?
41. What a non-ham might call rigs
42. Prefix with -line
43. I-land wine
44. CW T
45. Told to wait, on CW
46. Thicker
50. Function switch label
52. Double curve
53. Salt shaker?
57. Lone entry class
58. G-land YL title
59. Label on a PS, possibly
62. Like a xmtr in stby
63. And others, for short
64. RCA synonym
65. Rig
66. Pound brass, say
67. Next to Quebec

Down

1. Foxhunt activity (abbr.)
2. Ending, with engin-
3. Go on DXpeditions, far and wide
4. IT9 volcano
5. NCL-2000 mfgr.
6. Olympic swimmer Janet
7. ___-12 antennas
8. High spirits
9. Whiplash preventer
10. State with transistors
11. Possible Bahamas prefix
12. Worrier's worry
13. Action people
21. MI, MO and MT, QP mo.
22. ARRL DX test mo.
23. #44, #47 and others
24. Become accustomed (to)
28. Poor ops
29. F H2O
30. Word with line or point
32. W7 state
33. The Flex, e.g.
34. Desktop feature
35. /MM quarters
36. Big bangs
37. Lock of hair
39. Hand game
40. ZS dir. from W2
44. Stg. before AF amp.
45. W4 sect.
46. A series cap. blocks it
47. Eat away
48. African owner of 27-across
49. Upper or lower user
50. Isle ____ (GD)
51. _____ Day
54. Calling in after the sked
55. Pioneer digital comm. org.
56. EME sound
60. F-land one
61. "___ bad!"

About the Midland Amateur Radio Club

W8KEA is the Amateur Radio call sign assigned to the Midland Amateur Radio Club (MARC) by the Federal Communications Commission. MARC, established in 1948, holds monthly meetings of its members at 7:30 pm on the first Thursday of every month at the Salvation Army Building located at 330 Waldo Ave, Midland, Michigan. MARC is dedicated to the support of the Amateur Radio community in the Midland area, to providing public service and emergency communications to the community and to educating the public in all aspects of Amateur Radio. MARC provides communications support for community events such as the annual Dow Run and the MS Walk on a completely voluntary basis. MARC also works closely with the Midland County Department of Emergency Services, the Red Cross, and the Salvation Army to provide voluntary emergency communications support in times of emergency, disaster or severe weather event. MARC offers classes to anyone interested in earning an Amateur Radio License. The club repeater, W8KEA, operates on a frequency of 147.0000 MHz with a positive offset. The PL tone is 103.5. MARC also offers examination sessions so you can take your FCC examination here in Midland. MARC advisors lead the Electronics and Wireless Communications Clubs at Northeast Middle School and Midland High School.

Interested in knowing more about Amateur Radio? Come on down to our next meeting. Everyone is welcome, and we would be happy to get to know you.

MARC is a 501(c)(3) organization. The club's articles of incorporation and bylaws are available for review.

You can learn about amateur radio by visiting the American Radio Relay League website.

If you desire to join the **Midland Amateur Radio Club**, the dues are $20 per year and $5 for additional family members. Membership includes a *Monthly Newsletter.* Please supply the following information:

Name _____ Call: _____ N T G A E _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Birthdate (mmddyy) _____ Anniversary _____

Telephone-Home _____ Work _____

Are you an ARRL Member? Yes_____ No

If not an ARES member, do you want an application? Yes No

Please send to MARC, P.O, Box 1049, Midiand MI 48641

🛑 !!STOP RIGHT THERE!! 🛑

This is the end… for now. I hope you enjoyed this edition!

Be Radio Active! 73!

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