

MARC January 2026 NEWSLETTER



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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

NO JANUARY “MEETING”- Holiday Party on January 8th at Red Oak Restaurant (Read Below)

Winter! Colder temperatures and longer nights bring new opportunities to enjoy the hobby. It's an ideal season for equipment maintenance, indoor projects, and sharpening operating skills as band conditions shift. Whether you're exploring winter DX, experimenting with digital modes, or checking in on local nets, there's always something engaging happening on the airwaves—even when the snow is falling.



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View From the Top of the Tower

In lieu of our monthly MARC meeting we will be having a holiday celebration party on January 8th at Red Oaks Restaurant in Sanford at 6:00 pm. All are welcome. Bring along a white elephant gift if you would like to participate in this fun activity.

For the last several months we have been discussing the functionality and future of the Midland repeater, AKA, the W8KEA repeater or the MARC repeater. I think everyone will agree that in its current configuration, the repeater does not satisfy the needs or desires of the membership. I also think everyone will agree that not everyone has the same needs or vision for the Midland Repeater. Ham radio is a very diverse enterprise, so a diversity of thought and perspective should not be surprising.



We were presented with the situation where we appeared to have two options; continue the improvement of our current repeater system, or give everything over to CMEN to implement a county wide coverage, and linked repeater system. John – W8QN, Art – K0ACP and others have been working to answer the question; “Is it even possible for the W8KEA repeater to give us the coverage we want.” That work is ongoing and I applaud their efforts.

We have recently been approached by the CMEN group with an alternative proposal. They are proposing to install their own equipment on their spot on a tower in southeast Midland County, where they would have put the W8KEA repeater. If implemented, they believe the repeater would give us county wide coverage and would be linked into their extensive network. However, they need funding to make that happen.

In today’s economic environment, grant money is very hard to come by. The CMEN group has asked if MARC would donate \$5,000 to make the installation of the repeater system possible. This repeater would be an open system that we would use for emergency and public service communications as well as any other legitimate amateur radio use of the repeater, including inter-county communications via their linked system.

In the meantime, we would continue to own, operate and improve the W8KEA repeater to meet the club’s needs and desires. I think this proposal merits serious consideration.

I look forward to seeing you at the Saturday morning breakfasts at Bob Evans (8:00 am), on the Thursday night net (7:30 pm), the Sunday night 10M net and at the Christmas party January 8th.

Best Regards,
Dennis, N8ERF
MARC President

★ From the Michigan Section Manager, Larry Camp, WB8R- December 2025 Section News...

Greetings to all who read this.



With very mixed emotions, I welcome you to the latest and my last Section News column.

Over many years, I have had the pleasure of spending countless hours with some of the finest amateur radio operators in the world. These are the hams of Michigan (and beyond in many cases). We have done some neat things, breaking trail into new avenues, some with great success and others that didn't turn out as we would have liked. Generally speaking, any let-downs were not result of lack of trying on the part of Amateur Radio Operators.

The time has come to turn the page and let some fresh ideas bubble to the surface and take hold. Our new Section Manager for 2026/2027 is Ralph Katz, AA8RK from Ann Arbor.

I ask all Michigan hams to support Ralph in his new endeavor and also to continue to support the ARRL as our national voice. As with all organizations, the ARRL has some difficulties and I personally believe that if criticism is offered, one must also provide a valid, reasonable and do-able alternative to the current program(s). To just be negative is not fruitful and not adequate. Anyone can do that. Change begins from inside organizations. If one is not a member, then the opportunity to criticize does not really exist.

Michigan 2026 Hamfest / Convention Schedule

Feb 8, 2026 — Cherryland ARC Annual Swap and Shop, Traverse City, MI

Feb 21, 2026 — Livonia ARC Annual Shop and Swap, Northville, MI

Mar 21, 2026 — Lowell Amateur Radio Youth Club, Lowell, MI

Apr 11, 2026 — AC8RC Mini-Swap, Burnips, MI

Jun 6, 2026 — IRA Hamfest, Hudsonville, MI

I end this column with sincere appreciation to the ARRL hams of Michigan for allowing me to lead our team.

Looking back at serving as a volunteer in the Michigan ARRL Section since the mid 1980's, I cannot think of a finer group of folks to serve and spend time with. I do not expect to completely disappear from sight, but I do plan to enjoy not driving the bus.

Very best 73,
Larry, WB8R
wb8r@arrl.net

Editor's Note

Please thank Larry, WB8R, for his many years of dedicated service to the Michigan ARRL Section and for his contributions to amateur radio in our state.



From the Midland County EC...

Ric Sauer KD0RMK

W8KEA Repeater Capabilities

We find ourselves at a pivotal moment that will help define our communication capabilities for emergency and event operations. We've been approached again by a representative of the CMEN group with an alternative opportunity that could satisfy the concerns of all involved.

CMEN proposes that instead of MARC donating our equipment, our repeater frequency pair and giving up all control over our system, they will install a separate repeater in the area that will be connected to their extensive network. This would allow us to continue to own and operate the W8KEA repeater as we see fit, with whatever internet based capabilities that we want.

Their new CMEN repeater would provide extended coverage that would quickly provide us with the public service and emergency communication coverage that we want for Midland County.

MARC could continue pursuing the upgrades and improvements to our current system. This will allow us to have the best of both worlds, allowing MARC to continue with the maturing of our communication infrastructure and quickly have a repeater that provides the function of community service and support in emergencies. This allows us to meet our corporate objectives and the subsequent emergency service needs.

In today's economic environment, grant money is hard to come by. The CMEN group is asking MARC for a \$5,000 donation to make this happen. The additional repeater could be used for inter-county communications, special events and community functions, leaving the W8KEA repeater to be used for local daily communications.

From an emergency service perspective, this is ideal from a technical aspect as well as a short term and long-term infrastructure capability.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

10-Meter Net

MARC has started a 10 meter net on Sunday evenings. This opportunity to test and learn the strengths and weaknesses of this as a communication tool locally started on 7 December as scheduled. We've only had a couple of operators call in on this net. Even with limited turnout, we have already learned a few things about operating locally on this band.

Please join us to continue evaluating the pros and cons of this band for future events. We've published additional details about the event and other band related information on our Discord server.

Net Details

Sunday at 7:00 PM

28.380 MHz USB

(technical level access)

DISCORD

MARC has a DISCORD server. Discord is a free communication platform for voice, video and text chat that was originally built for gamers but is now used by many different communities. Users can join or create “servers,” which are communities centered around specific topics, like gaming, hobbies, amateur radio, or friend groups. Within a server, users can chat in real-time and organize themselves into different channels for specific conversations.

As previously stated, the service is free, however we have augmented capabilities that occur at a fee. We also have an API that automatically posts information from the National Weather Service on the SKYWARN® channel of our discord site. This posting typically occurs within 10 minutes of notice from the NWS.

As the EC, I would like to use this platform for ARES training and links to emergency communications services. We can have scheduled or impromptu text, voice, and video for as little as two people and many more than the size of our current organization.

ARES

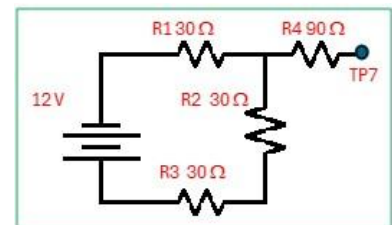
ARRL has a terrific information page dedicated to [ARES](#). As the world experiences new emergency services challenges on a national and community level, we need to maintain our training and situational awareness of things that may occur.

To assist with some of the training assignments, please let me know if you would like to present information and personal experiences as it relates to emergency training, FEMA, NIMS, or any other specialized training. Please contact Ric Sauer (Midland EC) at KD0RMK@arrl.net.

Ohms Law Puzzle

What is the voltage on TP7? Depending on how it’s answered, this puzzle has more than two correct answers.

Also, for the correct answer, why is it correct?



December 4th MARC Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Kanushi KE8RNA at 7:30 pm with 18 members present and 5 via Zoom. A sign-in sheet was passed around and introductions were made.

Presentation - Thank-you Kanushi KE8RNA for arranging this presentation. Our remote guest speaker was Robert Schafer W5IUA. Robert shared information about his app, Ham.live, and the website that supports it. This app allows hams to manage multiple online SDR sites.

Business - A motion was made by Max KE8DON to approve the minutes and seconded by Ric KD0RMK. Passed.

Treasurer's Report - John W8QN - Thank-you to all the members who have renewed their dues.

EC Report - Ric KD0RMK - Ric told members about the 10 meter net starting on Sunday at 7:00 pm. Remember to turn in your annual Skywarn requirements including time spent and a copy of your certificate. Contact Ric if you would like more info on how to have access to ARES on Discord. An I-Gate will be installed in the spring. Don't forget breakfast at Bob Evans at 8:00 am. Please sign up for the Thursday night net.

Repeater Report - John W8QN - John has checked on the status of the equipment at the West Midland Family Center.

School Club - Dennis N8ERF - Students are having a good time and have Demo Day coming up. If you have any old (not too old) equipment the students can tear down, let Dennis know. Dennis is also working on a grant proposal.

Christmas Party - Linda KC8MUD - Instead of a regular meeting, we'll be gathering at the Red Oak Restaurant in Sanford on January 8th at 6:00 pm. Please bring a white elephant gift and a hearty appetite.

Saginaw Club Meeting - Mike KD8MMH - Mike mentioned Santa Grams at the zoo and their pot-luck meeting. Ron KC8YVF told about an upcoming award ceremony.

Equipment - Lee KC8ITI - Lee has put a list of equipment and information published in the DECEMBER newsletter (last edition) about items from the estate of Bob W8LSS (SK) that are for sale.

Swap - Doug N8NTN - Doug mentioned the upcoming Troy Swap Meet and said that it is a good one.

Larry made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed. The meeting ended at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda KC8MUD
MARC Secretary

Art's journey into CW and POTA

"The following article chronicles Art's journey into CW and POTA over the last year or so, which is a very interesting read. But more importantly, it is, I believe, Art's tribute to his father and their final year spent together. It is also a reminder that we usually only see the surface of our fellow ham's life and not the pain and stress behind the facade. I got to meet and talk with Art's dad some time ago. He was an amazing person who lived a full and self made colorful life. His passing will leave a hole in Art's heart for some time to come. I suspect that you knowing the story will fill it at least a little bit. May God bless you Art.. Dennis N8ERF"

My year with Dad: 100 Unique FL Park Activations in 10 Months.



Life is funny and the saying that you cannot script these events is really true!

Through a series of unanticipated happenings, I found myself as primary caretaker for my 96-year old father last December. Part of these new-found responsibilities included finding my father a suitable Assisted Living facility and setting up cadence visits to make sure all was copacetic. This presented me with a great opportunity to simultaneously do three of my favorite activities: spend time with my Dad; perfect my CW; activate new parks for POTA.

My preferred POTA activation is a 10-15 Q (contact) quick CW in and out. This gives me practice in quick deployment, keeps the pace moving, and lets me see more beautiful sights. At the beginning of this adventure, December 2024, I was still a fledgling CWA student having just finished my Beginner and preparing for my Fundamental class. My code was painful to listen to, my unending gratitude to all of you who endured my QLF sending.

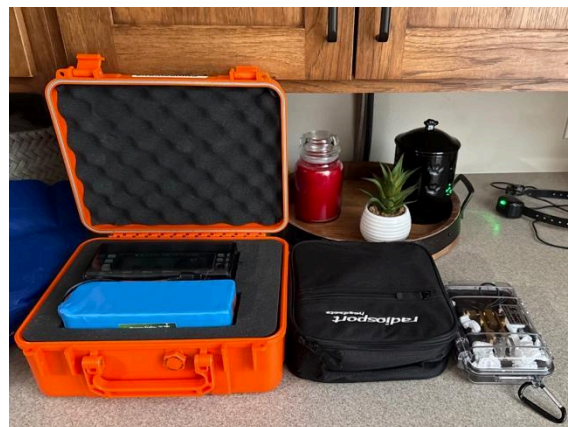
The POTA.APP was a great source of information and made it easy to lay out an afternoon excursion that would allow us to hit a couple to five parks in a single rove, and then end at either an ocean-facing seafood shack, or a BBQ joint. This was initially easy as Florida has over 450 parks and Orlando, where my Father was living, is rather centrally located.



My first challenge: a good travel key. My Vibroplex Code Warrior Jr., has rather fragile paddles and left me high and dry when they broke on my initial activation forcing me to break out my microphone to successfully activate our first park, Wekiwa Springs State Park, US-1927, on Christmas day, 2024. This park will come back later as a CW activation.

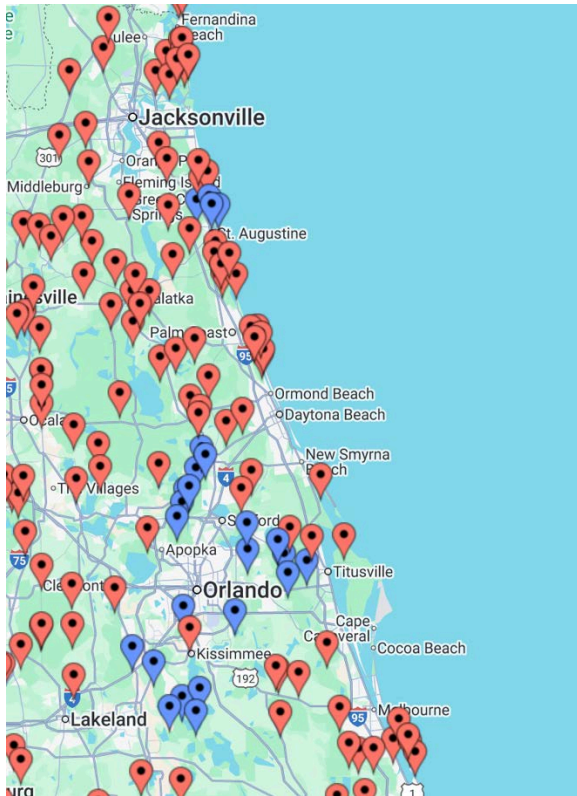
At the time, my travel kit consisted of a pelican case filled with a KX3, KXPA100, PX3, key, microphone, a zillion cables, and a 12 AH Bioenno Battery. My antenna was, and remains mostly, a Chameleon TDL. Logging was accomplished using my MacBook Air and POLO.

Our next activation, I was prepared, thanks to Orlando's HRO, with a new key and as they say, the rest was history as all subsequent activations were accomplished via CW. By my February trip, I decided to ditch the amp, pan adapter, and give QRP a shot. My back definitely liked the



lighter kit! Plus, I was stunned to find out that with even a modest antenna, much less, the Chameleon TDL, CW, QRP was a bunch of fun! True, activations took 10 minutes longer, but I spent the time operating and not fiddling with cable and interconnecting a bunch of equipment. By now, I had invested in a second TDL that stayed in FL with my father, and my travel kit had shrunk considerably to just KX3, spare LIFEPO4 battery, headset, and key (in its own pelican case).

With the arrival of February, we had a bonus trip to FL to help celebrate my nephew's wedding, in Ponte Vedra / St. Augustine, this allowed for a second trip to FL and a new region to explore. But by now, I was starting to run into an issue of how to easily (and graphically) sort out where our activations had taken us. Fortunately, a bit of googling led me to a site: easymapmaker.com. With this tool, I could download my activations in Florida and generate a map that shows which parks had been activated. There are a bunch of other options with this tool, but perhaps the



easiest is just color coding my activations to blue and the orange dot representing parks we hadn't been to (yet).

This tool made it much easier to plan our activation outings and track outliers. It also lets you easily see if parks touch / overlap for 2-fer & 3-fer activation opportunities.

By the end of February, we had been to 25 unique parks in Florida and made some great memories. We also had developed a good rhythm for our activations. We would enjoy our morning coffee and lay out a trip, then grab a bite of lunch and then off to the parks, usually ending up at a BBQ shack for dinner and back to the home for a relatively early evening. Being Florida, the weather was usually quite mild, but we did find our share of muddy trails, often returning the rental car looking like it had completed a Baja race.

Monthly trips continued for March, April, and May, with us finding our favorite spot to activate, Canaveral National Seashore, US-0660, where I discovered it paid to be a senior as I got my Lifetime Senior *America the Beautiful*, National Park Pass, which paid for itself after our 2nd visit. Turns out one of the Rangers at Canaveral is also a ham, and pointed us to a place where on the South end of the park you could set up and get a two-fer with Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, US-0249. In addition to being our favorite spot to activate, this also was a great location to watch SpaceX Falcon-9 launches. During one visit, Dad and I were treated to a

spectacular view. Unfortunately, we were taken by the sight and sharing the moment we forgot to get a picture. Still the memory remains.

June's trip was extra special as timing worked out that not only did I get to spend Father's Day with Dad, we were able to meet up with my daughter, who lives near Clearwater, FL. We met in Lakeland and knocked out a 10 park rove while heading to see her and her husband for an Excellent Steak Dinner at the *Texas Cattle Company*, and got a great picture to cap off the evening.

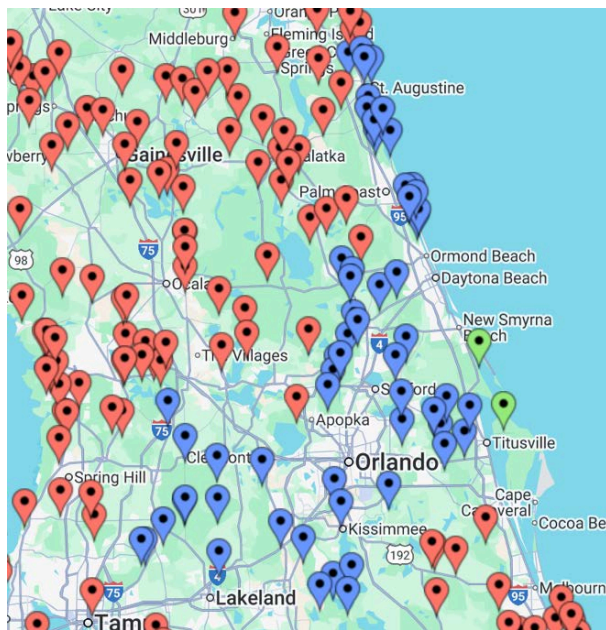


By this time, I had finished my Fundamental and three quarters of my Intermediate CWA classes. Correspondingly, my code and operating proficiency had greatly improved. By now I was a fairly committed QRP CW POTA activator and found that I could decode signals that were previously just noise. My speed and proficiency

had improved with my keyer now at a comfortable 20WPM and using Farnsworth spacing to help slower ops complete the "Q".

Much to my surprise, I even started mini conversations with my contacts, doing my best to greet them by name, for regulars, and a "GUD TO C U" on occasion. I'm still not much of a rag chewer, but have caught myself in a couple of mini conversations.

Our coverage of FL parks continued to expand with Dad and I closing out June with 60 unique parks being activated. Somewhere along the way, we set ourselves a goal to activate 100 unique parks that year.



July and August in Florida was oppressively hot and our activations and roves frequently found either a shade tree to operate under or just let the car run with the AC trying to keep us cool. Because of the heat, our stops were as quick as possible and even included a few ice cream breaks to ease the summer heat.



By now my kit had further evolved, my key was one of Aaron's Modern Morse Nameless keys, and I had discovered USB C PD battery banks. This allowed me to get my whole kit into a single Maxpedition Beffy

Pocket organizer. My back was happier still. As an aside, I am amazed that I can regularly get a whole weekend of operating on the KX3 and only use 50% of my battery bank. This new arrangement also meant that I pretty much always have a radio with me at all times.

September was a special month as my father celebrated his 97th birthday, and as you can imagine, we celebrated with a family get-together. Later, he and I had a 3-day POTA palooza where we worked 25 parks, 22 were new ones. On his birthday proper, we headed back to the Atlantic and one of our stops, Tomoka State Park, US-1923, was around the corner from a great Shrimp Shack (my name for the waterfront seafood restaurants), where Dad and I enjoyed ocean air, and fresh Chili-banger shrimp. The next day we headed North and activated Ravine Gardens State Park, US-1913 and over to Interlachen / Mannville where we activated Carl Duval Moore State Forest, US-4615. We finished our Palooza with a trek West where we activated Honeymoon Island State Park, US-1880, and Skyway Fishing Pier State Park, US-1916, to name a few.

October rounded out our 100-Park trek with a swing North where we activated Lake Griffin State Park, US-1889, capped off with BBQ dinner at a Fruitland Park local haunt. The following day, we revisited Wekiwa Springs State Park, US-1927, where we completed a CW activation of the park, thus completing our quest to activate 100 unique Florida Parks using CW.

Shortly after the October trip, my father fell ill and future trips became more medically focused with no time or energy for POTA. Dad became a silent key, (passed away), peacefully in his sleep on December 10, 2025.

I will always remember this past year and our exceptional adventures.

Rest In Peace Dad.

73 es God Bless, Art K0ACP



Items of Interest

!! DISCORD !!

Please join the members who have already become part of the server to collaborate with others who have Amateur Radio as part of their passion. <https://discord.gg/CEX7kn6ev6>

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

Kanushi Desai is in charge of presentation topics for our monthly meetings. If you have a topic on which you would like to present or would like to lead a discussion, please contact her at ke8rna@arrl.net. 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](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.

 **MARC VITAL STATISTICS** 

Memberships Expiring in January 2026

none

Memberships Expiring in February 2026

AC8QF

Current Active Club Membership

KC8ITI* N8CGP* N8ERF* W8QN* K8VFO* KC8MUD* KB8SOE K0ACP KE8DON
K8GTG N8LBF N8GEM K6VWE KE8ZKS KF8BYT W8PMR KB8PGW W8PMR K8PLM
KF8DSP AB8PS W8DOD K8VB KF8DSK N8NTN KE8MND KC8YVF KD0RMK AC8QF
WB8WNF KD8MMH KE8RNA N8NNA, W8QOI K8WSR

*Life Member

Memberships Recently Expired

KB8HIK

New Memberships

none

Renewed Memberships

W8RBF

Birthdays Celebrated in January 2026 🎂

N8NNA W8QOI K8PLM W8PMR KD0RMK

Birthdays Celebrated in February 2026 🎂

KF8BYT KC8ITI K0ACP

Information based on data received December 27th, 2025

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 (mmddy) _____ 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, Midland MI 48641

⬛ **!!STOP RIGHT THERE!!** ⬛

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

Be Radio Active! 73!

