

MARC March 2026 NEWSLETTER



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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: SKYWARN TRAINING – March 5, 2026 @ 6:00 PM *NOTICE THE DIFFERENT STARTING TIME* at the Law Enforcement Center (2727 Rodd St., Midland, MI)

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

Lots of things happening in the local ham radio community.

The March meeting of MARC will be the Skywarn Training. It will happen at 6:00 pm on Thursday, March 5, 2026, at the Midland Law Enforcement Center at 2727 Rodd St.

Planning for Field Day, June 26th and 27th, 2026, is underway and is being led by Ric, KD0RMK. Information is posted on Discord. Contact Ric for access to Discord. We are looking for volunteers to help get everything organized. It is going to be a fun time. It is also going to be a learning experience as we re-engage in the Field Day experience, so I ask for mercy as we learn.



The school clubs continue to run well, with plans for the annual balloon launch beginning to take shape. We are starting to purchase the equipment with funds from the recent fundraising effort, which we believe will enhance the student experience. See the School Club Report for more details.

Thank you to the Zonta Club of Midland! I was very pleasantly surprised to receive a \$1,000 check from the Zonta Club of Midland today for the Electronics Clubs in response to our recent grant application. That brings our total raised to \$7,500.

As we get closer to warm weather, I am looking forward to some more POTA activations led by Art, K0ACP.

A few folks have suggested that we have a “club build,” where club members get to come together to build something—maybe a multiband antenna. In the past, we have built tape measure Yagi antennas for Fox Hunting, an Offset Attenuator also for Fox Hunting, and a 40-meter receiver kit. This type of activity would give folks who might not have much experience building electronics the opportunity to do it in an environment where support and guidance are at hand.

Repeaters continue to be a big focus for MARC. Thanks to John, W8QN, and Mitchell, W8DOD, the Edenville remote receiver system has been installed and is now active. We are close to having the alternate Motorola repeater installed at the main site, which should help us with the desense problem and enable us to increase the repeater output and the receive sensitivity.

There has been a development with the West Midland Family Center site for our westerly remote receiver site. Several years ago, the tower at that site was designated for removal by Midland County. When the County began looking into broadband internet for the county, they put the removal on hold should that site be needed for the broadband effort. The county has decided that they will not need that tower and have decided to remove it in 2027. The county has approached the club with some options related to the tower. These options are being considered, as is the need for a remote site in the western part of the county. Anything that we decide to do with the tower and potentially a new site is going to cost some serious money.

At the April meeting, we will be addressing the proposal from CMEN to donate \$5,000 to help them install a 2-meter repeater on their tower site near Bullock Creek High School. This would give us a backup repeater in the area with pretty broad coverage. We have been discussing this for a few months now, and I want to bring the question to a vote at the April meeting. Some folks are interested in making the investment, and others are less inclined to spend 20% of our funds on the CMEN repeater. I encourage everyone with an opinion to share their thoughts either way in the next newsletter. Please write them up in the form of a letter to the editor and send them to me or to Kanushi, KE8RNA, for inclusion in the April Newsletter.

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), and the Sunday night 10M (28.380 MHz) net at 7:00 pm.

Best Regards,
Dennis, N8ERF
MARC President

School Clubs Report

The high school and middle school clubs continue to go well.

Middle school students recently completed the Pulsating Heart Kit in time for Valentine's Day, along with a Dice Kit, and have also gained experience building inductors. This coming Wednesday, Dennis, N8ERF, will present his engaging demonstration on the science of electricity and magnetism, an experience that has captivated students in the past. He will also deliver a slightly shorter version of the demonstration to ten 8th-grade science classes at Northeast on Thursday and Friday.

At the high school club, students continue to pursue their individual projects and learning journeys. Kanushi is nearing completion of her two-year project: a wireless fencing scoring system. We anticipate a presentation of her system at an upcoming meeting. Three students are collaborating to build a QRP Labs transceiver with WSPR capability. This is a complex but rewarding build—I have built one myself and can attest that while it is not simple, it is an excellent learning experience. Another first-year student has enthusiastically begun her exploration of electronics and, over the past two weeks, has been learning about on-the-air communications with Lee, KC8ITI.

When the high school club began in 2013, our primary focus was Amateur Radio, with the idea that electronics would follow naturally. While we had some success, we discovered that today's students responded better when we shifted our focus to electronics first and introduced Amateur Radio along the way. One student has committed to earning her Technician and General Class licenses and is considering the Extra Class license after completing the first two. She is only a sophomore and fully capable of achieving this goal. Another student is learning 3D printing with our printer and will become a valuable resource when we need enclosures or attachments for other club projects.

We have begun purchasing new equipment using funds raised through our recent fundraising campaign. At the middle school, we currently have 15 soldering stations and tool kits, yet often serve more than 40 students. This means three or four students must share a soldering iron and tools, which can be frustrating. A major priority is increasing our soldering stations, multimeters, and tool kits to 30, so that at most only two students share equipment. Over the past 10 years, some equipment—such as flush-cut side cutters—has worn out and needs replacement.

In addition to soldering stations and tools, we are doubling the number of solderless protoboard and Arduino kits for the same reason. We have also purchased an oscilloscope with an HDMI port so we can display scope output to the entire class via a projector or a large screen. Additionally, we acquired an LCR meter and another meter capable of measuring active components—such as transistors, diodes, Zener diodes, and triacs—as well as passive components like capacitors and inductors.

The funds recently raised were designated for capital purchases. A list of donors can be found on the W8KEA website. Other funds will be used to purchase electronic kits for students to build and take home, along with consumable supplies such as solder and replacement soldering tips.

I have been involved in school club activities for 18 years, and it remains just as exciting and rewarding as when I began. I sincerely thank all the volunteers who have supported this effort over the years. A listing of those volunteers can also be found on the W8KEA website.

Dennis, N8ERF



From the Midland County EC...

Ric Sauer KD0RMK

March EC Report

You should see information about the SKYWARN® training scheduled for March 5. This is a recurring requirement for various emergency services. I hope to see everyone at this event. (See flyer below meeting minutes section)

Public Service

Any assistance from the group is truly appreciated. We are looking for volunteers to support amateur radio visibility at public events, community activities, training sessions, and MARC events. This is more than just volunteering—it's an opportunity to share the experiences and expertise of amateur radio operators. It's also a chance to spark interest among younger people and demonstrate how we communicate effectively when the need arises.

Upcoming opportunities include:

- Midland Fair
- Dirty Dog Run
- MARC Ham Fest

- Summer Field Day
- Fox Hunt
- Project Events
- Local Nets
- POTA

It doesn't matter how much experience you have. If you want to help perpetuate amateur radio, learn more about this fascinating hobby, or teach others, this is the place to be. Amateur radio offers the opportunity to learn something new all the time.

Contact Ric Sauer at KD0RMK@gmail.com or send a message on Discord to learn more about these activities or to volunteer. Don't be bashful—you may get a call for assistance anyway.

Daylight Saving Time

Most of the United States, including Michigan, begins Daylight Saving Time (DST) on Sunday, March 8, 2026. Don't forget to "Spring Forward" and set your clocks ahead on March 8. You can learn more at timeanddate.com.

Repeater

We've had some spirited discussions about our repeater. We, as individuals, want to embrace the hobby aspect of amateur radio. Our organizational structure indicates that we are also here to support public service and the community. Regardless of how this is accomplished, access to two local repeaters potentially gives us the opportunity to satisfy both aspects of amateur radio.

The Central Michigan Emergency Network has offered us a couple of opportunities to fulfill both sets of goals. I see both paths as viable options. From an emergency services point of view, two is always better than one. Having a backup is a stronger path toward being prepared.

10 Meter Net

This net has been running between 10 and 15 minutes on Sunday evening at 7:00 pm local time, on a frequency of 28.38 MHz USB. This net is also listed on Discord. Feel free to join us on Sunday evenings on 10 meters for a couple of quick rounds of information sharing.

Net Control Training

We are looking for someone with formal net control training to build and provide a training session or two for this group. If you are interested in helping this effort, please contact Ric Sauer at kd0rmk@gmail.com

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; 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 few as two people and many more than the size of our current organization. (DISCORD LINK IN MARC ITEMS OF INTEREST SECTION)

February 5th MARC Meeting Minutes...

Dennis N8ERF brought the meeting to order at 7:30 pm at the Salvation Army Building with 23 members and guests present and online.

Introductions were made, and a sign-in sheet was passed around.

Dennis N8ERF made a motion to approve December's minutes. Seconded and passed.

There were no January minutes.

Treasurer's report – John W8QN – John gave December's and January's treasurer's report. Donations, equipment sales, and bills were reported. Thank you to those members who have renewed their membership dues.

School Club – Dennis N8ERF – The club is active and doing well. Dennis N8ERF was able to secure \$6500.00 of grant money for tools, soldering stations, and equipment for the school club. Wow!

Swap – Lee KC8ITI – Keith KB8SOE has agreed to chair the swap, which will take place on June 20th. Help is needed for that day. Let Keith know if you need a table or can help with set up or tear down. Many thanks to Keith.

Saginaw Club – Mike KD8MMH and Ron KC8YVF – The Saginaw Club meeting is held on the first Friday night of the month at the Harry Brown airport. Mike talked about their winter Field day and other activities.

New Business – Dennis N8ERF – Our repeater and its capabilities were the main topic of discussion. Dennis N8ERF began by reading the club by-laws pertaining to emergency services, and mainly focused on emergency services and why they are important. He reminded the club members of the importance of Amateur Radio use in emergency service and the possibility of losing the use of our frequencies.

The CMEN group is asking for a \$5000.00 donation from our club.

Discussion – John W8QN listed upcoming plans, testing, changes, and target dates. And future plans for three other remote sites. Followed by more questions and discussion.

Presentation – Art K0ACP – Tests were conducted to determine coverage of our current repeater system. A discussion followed about how to make our current system transmit and receive better. We are still collecting data.

Sky Warn Training – Art K0ACP – Spring Sky Warn Training is in March at the LEC.

Vote – Dennis N8ERF – In two months, our club members will have to vote whether or not to donate \$5000.00 to the CMEN group. Jeff KB8SWR, who is a representative of the CMEN group, added that their project will provide open and free communication to those people who can use it.

Other business – Art K0ACP mentioned POTA, Keith KB8SOE mentioned Packet Radio, and Mike KD8MMH mentioned that, because of a silent key, Hamclock is going to end.

Larry N8CGP made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by David N4DBR.

The meeting ended at 9:00 p.m.

★ 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



Free



SKYWARN SPOTTER TRAINING

Ages 10 and up, learn about weather climatology,
forecast safety, and identifying structure and
movement of thunderstorms

05 | March 2026
6 - 7:30 Pm
2727 Rodd St. Midland, MI
Midland Law Enforcement Building

Info Detail: www.weather.gov/dtx/spotter2

MARC 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.

Global Ham Radio News

If you're interested in staying up to date on amateur radio news beyond our local activities, be sure to check out Ham Weekly at <https://daily.hamweekly.com/>. It's a convenient way to keep a pulse on what's happening in the broader amateur radio world.

MARC VITAL STATISTICS

Memberships Expiring in March 2026

KD0RMK

Memberships Expiring in April 2026

K8VB KE8MND KF8DSK N8NTN

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 KF8FGO

*Life Member

Memberships Recently Expired

NONE

New Memberships

Bruce Spivey

Renewed Memberships

KC8YVF N4DBR

Birthdays Celebrated in March 2026 🎂

K8VB W8QN KE8MND

Birthdays Celebrated in April 2026 🎂

KE8RNA KF8DSK K8GTG

Information based on data received February 26th, 2026

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 220 S 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 events. 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!

