



# The BAARCer



June 2014

For Anyone Interested in Amateur Radio

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**Club Call Sign: WØUJ**

**BAARC REPEATERS**

53.110 MHz- 123.0 Hz  
**147.225 MHz+** (main rpt)  
 145.130 MHz- Echo  
 Link  
 Node number 233515  
 443.925 MHz + 110.9 Hz  
 Packet: 145.670 MHz  
 MNBRD, BRDBBS  
 144.390 WØUJ-5 APRS  
 Crosslake 147.030 MHz+  
 Crosby 146.700 MHz+  
 Tone 127.3  
 Crosby 444.925 MHz +  
<http://brainerdham.org>

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**Ralph KØIR's Amsterdam Island DXpedition Presentation**



**Nearly 40 members of the BAARC and their companions were treated to a masterful presentation by the veteran DXer. See the following page for more and the June QST.**

— **Events Calendar** —

**Sat., June 7—Tour of the Lakes Bike Ride—volunteers needed—Contact Shirley, KØDCW—more info on net**

**Sat., June 7, Club Brkfst. @ 9 @ Northwind Grille in Brd.**

**Sat., June 21, Club Brkfst. @ 9 @ Northwind Grille in Brd.**

**MON-WED—June 23-25—Club Towers and Antennas Take-Down Project—Help Needed—Disassembling—Ground work for us**

**Thurs., June 19, Club Meeting: Board @ 4 and Membership @ 7 @ Fire Hall.**

**Sat. & Sun., June 28 & 30-ARRL Field Day at Fairgrounds in Brd. Details later.**

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**Check the Club's Website and Activity Calendar**

**Listen for Activity Updates on our Sunday Night Nets**

**Encourage New Membership: Dues are still only \$20/year—a bargain for all you get. E-mail Doug for info: [djbdesk@gmail.com](mailto:djbdesk@gmail.com)**

## Photos & Notes on Ralph Fedor's Presentation taken by Fritz WØKO.

Where is Amsterdam Island? It is in the Indian Ocean west of Perth, Australia. Not very big, it measures about 3X5 miles. Why would hams want to go to such an out-of-the-way place?—because it is there and counts as another country/radio entity. Hams who care about DX want to have radio contacts (QSO's) with as many as possible out of the 340 +/- countries listed.

In this case it took some two years of planning and preparation. It was difficult in part because they had to deal with a foreign country (France) to get permission. After the permission was granted, transportation had to be arranged, team members assembled, and—most importantly—money had to be raised. Payments had to be made in advance as well. Ralph mentioned a Bio-Security Certificate had to be acquired, so that the French authorities could be assured that these 14 some operators (many from different countries) and all their gear would not present a hazard to the delicate ecosystem on the small volcanic island. After some intelligent work with the French language on Ralph's part, a certificate was generated and officially accepted. It was a great collaborative effort by DX-interested hams and many radio suppliers. Donations were solicited from clubs and individuals around the world. The BAARC also made a modest contribution to the effort. The group needed \$450K. After some uncertainty they raised all of it and came in within budget. Of course, the individual participants made sizable personal monetary contributions as well. For instance, fuel for the Braveheart, the 137-foot ocean-worthy ship, required 80-90K liters of fuel—that cost alone was \$80K. They spent some 9 days at sea and after getting set up on the island, they made some 170,142 contacts—with most being on CW. QSL cards should be ready soon, he said. At the end he answered many question after using an elaborate slide show with audio and lots of humor. The participants at the dinner enjoyed not only the meal, but also an education about such a venture. Our sincere thanks to Ralph for putting it all together. In addition, we appreciate the arrangements made by our master dinner-meeting arranger/negotiator, Jim Shubert, WØJDS. Jim has done this many times for us at the Niswaga Legion. Also thanks to the our very able treasurer, Doug Bergsnev, KDØERE, for taking care of collecting the money , paying the bills, etc.



Some of the couples enjoying the evening. Sorry, Fritz could not include all. In fact, some broke his camera!!!!

## DX and the Paper Chase

Today is one of those unhappy days of nothing but band noise... or is it? I went from the top to the bottom of 17 meters with hardly an intelligible signal to be copied. I pointed my antenna towards Europe, called CQ several times and ended up in a nice but noisy QSO with a station in Germany. Who said the band was dead? Going back to the last week in April and the first 10 days or so of May, it was a different story. The Amsterdam Is. DXpedition was QRV as was Christmas Is., Austral Is., Chatham Is., Mauritius and Vanuatu. These were all DXpeditions and I was able to work each of them on at least one band SSB and two of them on CW. This was truly a gift to the worldwide DX community. DXers worldwide owe a huge debt of gratitude to the dedicated folks who sometimes spend years of planning and a lot of their own funds to enable you and me the opportunity to work these far-away entities all over the globe. One comment on CW: if it weren't for CW, I would not have been able to contact many of the countries that are now in my log. This is a wonderful mode and...it's available to everyone. Try it and I think you'll like it as more opportunities are open to you in the world of HF radio. On a personal note, I have reached my goal of working and... confirming 300 countries, a journey that's taken me 17 years to accomplish. I received a lot of support along the way and a lot of knowledge from those in the DX community who went before me. What a wonderful ride and what a rewarding hobby. That's all for now from Huntersville. Sit down at your radio and call CQ because someone somewhere in the world is listening for you. Don't disappoint anyone of them. So long for now, 73 es gud DX from Bob/WØZPE.

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**Secretary's Note:** Because of the abbreviated business meeting on Thursday, May 22, there are no minutes to be published in this BAARCer.—de Ron KØGOP

## **Number Five Recovered**

This year the Forestview Middle School High Altitude Balloon (HAB) Club started like previous years with 12 students participating with two of the best of the best teachers I have known, Jim Reed and Cory Olson.

They started out with plans to launch two balloons, a 600 gram and a 1200 gram with different payloads in each one. These plans held until after several delays due to weather and scheduling problems forced the cancelling of the 600 gram balloon. The weather and scheduling issues provided a good day on May 15, 2014, to launch the 1200 gram balloon.

Due to the prediction path on Thursday, Jim and Cory decided to launch from Staples, MN, with a good chance for recovery. We eventually were able to launch at the Staples airport. The teachers and the students prepared the balloon and the launch happened about 8:25 AM.

Everything looked good, the APRS tracker was sending out beacons as programmed until about 16,600 ft. at which time the tracker quit working and we had no idea where the balloon was going.

After waiting in the Burger King in Staples for over an hour and half, thinking that all was lost, Jim called the search off as he figured it had already landed and the Pocket Finder failed to send any messages, which meant there was no way of knowing where it was.

Obviously everyone was very disappointed. After several attempts at waking up the Pocket finder, Jim Reed called the CEO of the Pocket Finder company, and he did some magic and lo and behold early Friday morning the Pocket Finder sent a message with the GPS location. Unlike the APRS tracker that sends beacons to the Ham Radio APRS Digipeater, the Pocket Finder sends messages to Cell towers and sends messages to your cell phone.

After school on Friday, Jim, Cory , as many of the kids that could make it, Shirley, and I met in Staples. We went to the GPS location that was sent, and along a fence line, about ¼ mile from the road, the payload was recovered and everyone was very happy. That makes 5 straight payloads recovered for Jim and Cory's HAB club.

Al & Shirley

WØRC & KØDCW

**Editor's Note:** Al and Shirley have faithfully supported the HAB at FMS. Al, in particular, has served as technical advisor/mentor to the group. Some of the participants have even become hams. What a fantastic Science Program at that school!!!!

**Ballon & Payload Recovery Photos provided by Al and Shirley, WØRC & KØDCW**



### **Notes on Al Doree's (WØRC) presentation on Echolink and on Skywarn communication with the NWS in Duluth.**

Al demonstrated communicating with the WX service and others who are part of the LSAC system which allows connections from our Echolink repeater WØUJ-R on 145.130 with node number 233515. We can do it by radio or by Internet, as Al demonstrated. From where we live we can connect with Knife River 233515 Echolink KCØMKS-R node # 239444. At the end in order to bring down the MKS link, you key #. During WX alerts, storm watches and warnings, we should report conditions that are threatening—weather wise. For example, do not call in that you see no threatening WX at Nisswa. However, do report hail and its size, like 3/4 inch in downtown Pequot Lakes. Be as specific as you can with the reports, especially as to your location. Of course, practice makes perfect. Feel free to be net control. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT WE USE THE MAIN BAARC REPEATER 147.225 for the local weather reports and the gathering of information. Our thanks to Al for an informative update and protocol reminder. By the way, John WØWY is our BAARC's link to Crow Wing County's Emergency Management System. He has also laid much of this groundwork with the WX Service and local authorities. Our thanks to them both.



### **Rick Vinje (KDØVLR) gave the second portion of April's Program: SDRs—Software Defined Radios, and Dongles.**

Yes—you read right. Rick ably demonstrated using a dongle and down converter—with a total cost of about \$100 or so—you can create a new receive range by using your computer. You can even build a transmitter to work in combination. There are really many options and opportunities to experiment with. To help, Rick suggested these informative web-sites to peruse to get more of a background on this topic.

[http://wiki.spench.net/wiki/USRP\\_Interfaces](http://wiki.spench.net/wiki/USRP_Interfaces)

<https://sites.google.com/site/g4zfradio/installing-and-using-hdsdr>

<http://zadig.akeo.ie> Our thanks to Rick for presenting a newer facet of amateur radio.



### **BRAINERD JAYCEES "RUN FOR THE LAKES" MARATHON—7th Event with the BAARC**

The Brainerd Jaycees "Run for the Lakes" Marathon was held Saturday, April 26, 2014, starting at 8:25 AM at the hardware store near the community center in Nisswa, MN. Our BAARC com trailer was located at the Nisswa American Legion parking lot. The Brainerd Area Amateur Radio Club supported the event with twelve on-site operators and one floater. We thank our operators for a job well done. Our operators were: Dave KBØSCT – Medical #1, Jim WØJDS and Marwin KDØVLX – Medical #2, Steve WØTNT – Water Stop #2, Dave KØNRI – Water Stop #4, Roger WØWUG – Water Stop #5, Doug KDØERE – Water Stop #7, Kevin KAØWJC – Start Line, John WØWY – Shadow, Al WØRC – Rover, Terry KIØFW and Shirley KØDCW – Net Control and Alan AAØAS – floater. We had 1200 runners for the marathon this year. This included full marathon, half marathon runners, and relay teams. There were no major medical events at this year's marathon, but two runners did need to be transported for exhaustion.

We were thanked for a job well-done and the event operators said they couldn't do the event without us. THANK YOU to everyone that worked this event!

Al & Shirley—WØRC & KØDCW



**Alan Cibuzar, KDØCJL (SK):** Alan Cibuzar passed away on April 27th at the age of 65. Alan was a good friend and fellow Rotarian to John WØWY, and gave us a memorable Spring Banquet presentation a few years back on his Aerial Imaging business, AW Research, headquartered at the BRD airport. Although Alan lived with health problems for many years, he was always energetic and thinking about the next question. He had stopped in during the refreshment break during our last Club meeting on Thursday, and talked about the possibility of again doing a balloon chase for the Forestview Launch that was scheduled. I got to know Alan through our kids' Alpine Skiing Team at BHS, as a Club member, and through the BRD airport. He told me he was looking forward to retiring, and we talked about using PSK reporting

databases to investigate the time-displacement theories he briefly shared with us at the end of his Banquet presentation. He was an original. He was a very kind man. He will be greatly missed. ———by Ron Finger, KØGOP. (Since Al was a member of the BAARC, Fritz sent a card of condolences on behalf of the BAARC to the family)

### A Century of Amateur Radio and the ARRL

You may have read about the dispute starting in 1919 and running well into the 1920s, about spark versus CW on the amateur bands. Although CW was easily proven to be better than spark, some real diehard hams held down the spark camp. Before the inevitable changeover, many an ugly insult was hurled back and forth between those two opposing camps. A similar situation developed when single sideband started pushing aside good ol' AM phone, with its double sideband plus carrier. It was a long time before most of the intransigent AMers gave up and went to SSB. Before reaching Amateur Radio, single sideband had been used successfully in commercial transoceanic telephony circuits as early as 1927. But, it proved both difficult and expensive to build transmitting equipment using the components and techniques available at the time. In Amateur Radio, the number of hams prior to World War II was small enough to be accommodated within our frequency allocations, so there was little interest in SSB and its narrower bandwidth; they didn't need it. Advances in radio technology during WW II yielded two important improvements that enabled post-war hams to get on SSB fairly easily and at reasonable cost: Stable VFOs and mechanical filters. A small number of hams started building SSB exciters. Many of them didn't convert their amplifiers from their former Class C function to a linear class of operation, however, so they made merry with 15 or 20 W, showing the AM operators what SSB could do, even with low power. The cover of *QST* for January 1948 showed an oscilloscope presentation of SSB at work, with the editorial and three articles in that issue introducing "s.s.s.c." (single sideband, suppressed carrier) to the amateur community. And then, the problems started. Most SSB operators tried friendly persuasion on their AM ham brethren, as they demonstrated the advantages of SSB. Many of these discussions became heated, however, often escalating to intentional interference wars. It was not pretty, and it was a downright embarrassment to the ham community. Most phone operators eventually came to realize, however, that SSB was truly better than AM phone, and they migrated to the new communication mode.

To this day, though, many AM proponents pride themselves on their excellent on-the-air signals. Some are pursuing nostalgia; others enjoy the engineering challenge of tweaking older gear to obtain the best-sounding full-carrier AM signals. Soon after SSB was introduced to Amateur Radio, transmitter kits became available from manufacturers, notably from Heathkit, which many of us remember fondly. Manufacturers also started offering ready-made SSB transmitters, as well as receivers designed for good SSB reception. Throughout this changeover period, the ARRL, via many articles in *QST*, encouraged hams to use SSB. Next week, we'll continue our look at some of the events of the SSB-changeover years. -- Al Brogdon, WIAB---from the ARRL

**Letter. BAARC Editor's Note:** Most of us high schoolers envied those who could afford the superior SSB gear. Thus, in ignorance, many of us at first mean-mouthed SSB stations operating near us AM stations and called them "Single Slop Buckets"!!! It was just that our "ancient" receivers were not really ready for that great new mode.

**SUNDAY NIGHT NET OPERATORS**

06-01-14	Rick	NØBJN
06-08-14	Dave	KCØTGT
06-15-14		
06-22-14		
06-29-14		
07-06-14	Rick	NØBJN
07-13-14	Dave	KCØTGT
07-20-14		
07-27-14		

Can't make the schedule? Find a substitute operator. BAARC Sunday Night Net Control Coordinator is Fritz WØKO. To volunteer: w0ko "at" arrl.net

**Can you help fill the schedule above?**

**Free Online Practice Licensing Tests now available on ARRL Website—ARRL Membership not required and the tests are based on the actual question pool in use.**

**Field Day 2014:** Planning will occur in part at the monthly mtg., June 19th. This is a change in schedule due to FD month. Set-up at fairgrounds is Friday, 27th. Actual Field Day is Sat. and Sun. 28th & 29th. Camping is allowed for FD participants Fri. and Sat. More info coming via e-mail, in the media, and on the nets from Lyle KØLFV, BAARC FD Chairman. Terry KIØFW is Co-Chair.

**Donations Received:** The BAARC recently received a box of tubes donated by Jack K9CDM. Also we received a Wilson Triband Yagi, Hygain rotor with control box, and antenna mast from Dave KYØX. Both gentlemen received a letter of acknowledgment for their generosity. They will be able to use it for tax purposes because of our Club's non-profit status.

United We Stand



**FIRST CLASS MAIL**  
Address Correction Requested

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