



# The Feedline

## Good Things Come in Sixes by Ward Silver, NoAX

### *From the ARRL Contest Update, March 17, 2010*

If you haven't read Dave Sumner K1ZZ's editorial in the latest QST, you should. (It Seems To Us, page 9, April QST) Titled "Our 'New' 6 Meter Band", Dave lays out the reasons for the "Magic Band" to be enjoying a resurgence of interest. For too long, fears of TVI to adjacent Channel 2 (54-60 MHz) kept many hams off the band. With the changing of TV broadcasts to digital HDTV, many stations moved their transmissions to UHF channels better suited for the subtleties of the complex digital signal.

This removes a significant barrier to 6 meter operation. In addition, many new HF transceivers include full 6 meter multi-mode coverage. All of the new and sophisticated receiver features can now be brought to bear on a band with a tremendous range of propagation modes, from sporadic-E, tropospheric and meteor scatter, to regular F2 skip anticipated in the coming years of higher solar flux. The band is no longer a poor cousin to HF, supporting interesting opportunities for grid-chasing and even DXCC.

The summer VHF+ contest season is imminent. The WSJT Sprint includes 6

meters, running on March 27 and April 24. May brings the 50 MHz Spring Sprint. June features the ARRL's VHF QSO Party and SMIRK QSO Party on back to back weekends in prime sporadic-E season. Field Day has special incentives to be active on 6 Meters, too. If you take a close look at the contest calendars, you'll also find many QSO parties include the VHF/UHF bands.

A whole new antenna complement is not required. Often times, your 40 meter antenna will load up on 6 meters just fine, it being resonant around the 7th harmonic of 7 MHz. There are loads of designs for small Yagis and quads for six meters, a CB whip can be cut down to work on 50 MHz, and even a dipole will get you a log full of contest contacts. Just think - a 6 meter antenna raised to 20 feet is about a wavelength high. That's hard to accomplish on most of HF!

See "Good Things", page 3

### Upcoming Programs

Mike Nie, W8VMX, Public Information Officer of [WARN](#), will be presenting at the April NKARC meeting.

The deadline for submissions for the May Feedline is **Saturday, May 1.**

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### Dates to Remember:

- Apr 12 – NKARC membership meeting
- May 10 – NKARC membership meeting
- May 14-16 – Dayton [Hamvention](#)
- May 19-23 – [National ARDF Championship](#)
- June 26 – [Paddlefest](#)
- June 26-27 – ARRL Field Day

# NKARC Directory

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**Repeaters (K4CO):** 147.255+ and 444.350+ Edgewood (PL 123.0), 147.375+ Walton, 146.895+ Highland Heights. The 147.255 repeater is a linked Echolink node, accessible via N4IJS-R.

**NKARC Net:** Tuesdays, 8:30 PM on the 147.255 repeater

**VE Testing:** Testing sessions are held by appointment only on the 2nd Monday of each month, prior to the NKARC membership meeting. Testing begins at 6:00 pm. To make an appointment, contact Lyle Hamilton at [ab8sh@arrl.net](mailto:ab8sh@arrl.net) or tel. 513-315-4032

**NKARC Web Site:** <http://www.k4co.org>

**NKARC Membership Meetings:** 2nd Monday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Hilltop Church of Christ, 5300 Taylor Mill Rd (Ky. 16), Taylor Mill, KY. Visitors are always welcome!

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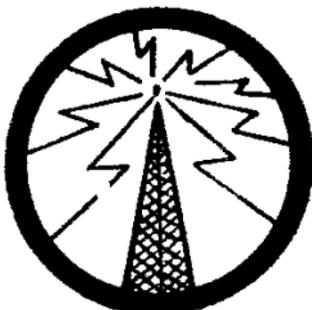
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# Top of the Tower

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Hello everyone,

Spring is in the air, we are having some very nice days, and I can already smell the hot dogs cooking at Field Day. With the nice weather we find ourselves outdoors working on projects, putting up that new antenna that you got for Christmas. Fixing wire antennas that took a beating in the trees over the winter time. That's on top of the spring projects and activities we have every year.



dures needed when working on towers, roofs and trees to prevent falls and injuries.

Wear proper personal safety equipment, safety glasses, gloves, ear-plugs and the proper footwear to protect you while doing yard work and other projects.

Make sure you have the right tool for the job; forcing tools to do a job they were not designed for may damage

the tool or you.

After my trip to the urgent care and others to the emergency room, this spring I am going to say let's think safety.

Field Day and Paddlefest will soon be on us. If you have not signed up you'll want to do that soon. Volunteers are always needed at both events.

Antennas conduct electricity; be mindful of electric lines before you start your antenna work and keep antennas and wires away from power lines.

73,  
Dann FOX  
KI4AVO

Research the proper safety equipment and proce-

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## "Good Things", cont'd from Cover

As the HF bands quiet down a little for the summer, there is another exciting band just waiting to take their place in your operating schedule. Read

up on 6 meter operation and band plans, tune around the beacon segment, and don't be afraid to call "CQ Six" from time to time. Behind the "50" button on your HF rig lies a whole new world.

## March NKARC Net Report

*Net report was not available at publication deadline*

DATE	NCS	CHECKINS	TIME (MINS)	TRAFFIC
TOTALS:				

# March Meeting Minutes

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## MINUTES OF THE MARCH 8, 2010 MEETING OF THE NORTHERN KENTUCKY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

I. Meeting called to order – 1935

II. Allegiance to the Flag / Roll call

III. Approval of minutes from last meeting:

- Motion by: Tony, AI4IP
- Second by: Greg, W2ORO
- All in favor: All
- All opposed: None.

IV. Old Business

- Donation to church  
Collected \$50 to donate to the church. Thank you!
- Raising membership was discussed.  
Would wait until Dann, KI4AVO, was back.
- Split the Pot!  
- 2 drawing – one cash, one for Tony's, AI4IP, donation of a wireless keyboard and mouse.  
- Greg, W4TSA, won the cash split the pot and donated the money back to the Club. Thank you Greg!
- Field Day  
- Currently Joe, KI4QG, is the Chair and Mark, AI4BJ, is the assistant Chair.  
- Need additional members.  
- Need to meet to prepare for the event. Not too far away.  
- Also, don't forget about Paddlefest – happening same weekend. Please see Lynn, WD8JAW, for more information.
- Fund Raising Committee  
|- Tony, AI4IP, will be bringing in LaRosa Buddy Cards for next month's meeting to help raise funds.  
- Need more members on the Committee.  
(Currently, the committee is Dann Fox, KI4AVO, as Chair and Tony White, AI4IP, as a member).

V. New business

- QSL cards from Special Event  
- Idea submitted by Ben Jenkins, KG4NMH, to place images of cards on our web site.  
- Robert, N4IJS, will be looking into this and targeting the end of April to have this completed.
- Dayton Hamvention  
- Idea was brought up to use 146.895 simplex (with a tone of 123.0 Hz) for talking to other Club members while there.
- ARDF Championships  
- Brian, K4BRI, discussed the ARDF Championships being held in Cincinnati this year on 5/12, 22, and 23. Please see our website ([www.k4co.org](http://www.k4co.org)) for more information.

VI. Other information

- Please remember our Net Contest is running again this year. Join the Net every Tuesday for your chance to win the prize this year!
- Next month, Mike Nie, W8VMX, will be our presenter. He is the PIO (Public Information Officer) for WARN. Please note that this is NOT a WX Spotter class, but an in-depth look at how WARN operates. Should be very interesting and timely!
- Speaking of WARN, there will be training Thursday nights at 7:30 on the 147.375 machine. This training is for our support the WARN nets (the 375 machine is used as a relay to the WARN main repeater).

VII. Adjournment

- Motioned by Dave, KI4QH, and seconded by Tony, AI4IP.
- Meeting adjourned at 1950.

Respectfully submitted by Robert Kluck, N4IJS

# Mark's Mutterings

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## CW Keyers

During my club presentation last month on techniques for learning CW, I was asked to recommend an external keyer that could be used hams whose rigs do not include a built-in keyer. Since my Elecraft rigs all have built-in keyers, I do not have first-hand experience with any external units. I do know that they come in a wide range of features and prices, from a [keyer-on-a-chip](#) for \$6 to sophisticated units that sell for hundreds of dollars.

There are some very inexpensive keyer kits available, but these usually come without a case and are controlled by entering commands via the CW paddle. A good example is the PicoKeyer-Plus kit:



[http://www.hamgadgets.com/store/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=89](http://www.hamgadgets.com/store/product_info.php?products_id=89)

A step up, at least in terms of packaging, is this nice kit from Hendricks QRP Kits:

<http://www.qrpkits.com/buddyconsole.html>

These are probably not a good choice for somebody who is just getting started with CW. In my view, for a keyer to be truly useful, it needs to have a dedicated control for adjusting speed. MFJ has a number of keyers that won't bust your budget:

<http://www.mfjenterprises.com/Search.php?search=keyer>

## HF Sub-bands for Techs

During the same presentation last month I was asked which HF bands Techs were allowed to operate CW on. Embarrassingly (because I am a VE and should be able to answer this question in my sleep!), I didn't know the answer. Well, I've done my homework, and can now state with confidence that Techs can operate on the following HF bands:

80 Meters: 3.525—3.600 CW

40 Meters: 7.025—7.125 CW

15 Meters: 21.025—21.200 CW

10 Meters: 28.000—28.300 CW, RTTY, Data

10 Meters: 28.300—28.500 SSB

That's a lot of spectrum to play with, especially now that sunspots have begun to [return](#) and 10 and 15 Meters are frequently open. You can download a complete band chart from the ARRL web site at

<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/bands.html>. (This URL will probably break when the oft-delayed new ARRL web site is finally launched.) I keep this chart pinned to the wall at the operating position in my shack, so that that I don't have to rely on my untrustworthy memory!

di-di-dah dah-dit dah di-dit di-dah-di-dit  
dah-dit dit dah-di-di-dah dah  
dah-dah dah-dah-dah dah-dit dah di-di-di-dit

73, Mark, AI4BJ

# Weaver's Words

## Happy Passover and Easter

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**Jim Weaver, K8JE**  
**Great Lakes Division Director, ARRL**  
**E-mail: [k8je@arrl.org](mailto:k8je@arrl.org); Tel.: 513-459-0142**

### **New MOU between Red Cross and ARRL is Signed**

ARRL President Kay Craigie, N3KN and Joseph C. Becker, Senior Vice President, Disaster Services for the American National Red Cross (ANRC) signed the new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two organizations on March 25 in Washington, DC. The ceremony took place at ANRC Headquarters.

Two features of the new MOU that were not included in previous memoranda are clauses regarding background checks and the status of amateurs as RC volunteers. The new MOU allows amateurs to have criminal background checks performed by certain agencies other than Mybackgroundcheck.com. It also clarifies that amateur's who provide communication services to RC do not need to become RC "volunteers." The latter clarification permits hams to support RC communication activities without being subjected to certain requirements of RC volunteers.

This new MOU replaces one that expired in 2007 and is the result of considerable discussion between ARRL and RC. The new MOU can be read in its entirety at [http://www.arrl.org/news/files/ARRL-ARC\\_MoU.pdf](http://www.arrl.org/news/files/ARRL-ARC_MoU.pdf).

### **WA8EFK named ECAC Chairman**

Last month I was pleased to announce the appointment of Michigan SM Dale Williams, WA8EFK as the Great Lakes Division representative on the new ARRL Emergency Communications Advisory Committee (ECAC). This month it is my great pleasure to announce that Dale has accepted ARRL President Kay Craigie's, N3KN appointment to chair this committee. Congratu-

lations and thanks, again, Dale. I will add a great thank you to Judy, Dale's wife, for her willingness to share her husband with Amateur Radio.

### **Michigan QSO Party in April**

The 2010 Michigan QSO Party (MiQP) will be April 17-18. All amateurs are invited to participate. As usual, Michigan amateurs receive contest points for contacting other amateurs within the state/section. Amateurs outside of Michigan earn contest points for QSOs with Michigan hams, only. As the announcement of the Party says, "This is a great opportunity develop HF operating skills, represent the great state of Michigan, and last but not least, have a bunch of fun. Even if you don't consider yourself a contest operator, you'll probably find it's a blast to jump in to work the throng who will be looking for Michigan QSOs. If you've ever operated on Field Day, you'll certainly be ready for MiQP."



The operating period is twelve hours long, from noon local time (1600Z) until midnight local (0400Z) Eastern time. "Activity takes place on the 80 thru 10 meter bands, on both phone and CW. The exchange is simple: a sequential QSO number (starting with 1, then 2, 3...) and your location (county for Michigan stations, and state, province or 'DX' for others). A station may be worked once per band and mode, with CW QSOs counting two points and phone QSOs counting one point (just like Field Day). Multipliers are states, provinces, and Michigan counties, counted once on phone and once on CW. Final score is total QSO points times total multipliers."

There are handsome plaques for major category winners in Michigan and certificates for the top single-operator score in each Michigan county. There is a competition for Michigan clubs where scores of its members are combined into an aggregate score for that club. There are also categories and awards for mobile and multi-operator stations.

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“The separate category instituted in 2008 for Emergency Operation Center (EOC) stations has become a permanent part of MiQP, and continues in 2010. A handsome MiQP plaque will be awarded to the highest scoring EOC station and certificates for second and third place. We are also continuing the 'MiQP Rookie Of The Year' plaque instituted in 2007, which is awarded to the top single-operator score submitted by a Michigan station who has never participated in MiQP before.”

See <http://www.miqp.org> for complete rules and further information. The MiQP is sponsored by the Mad River Radio Club.

### Ohio OO Clearly a Good Guy

“After receiving a call about a transmitter stuck on 10 meters, an Ohio OO was able to help the family of a SK who had just passed away during the night. Not knowing what to do after seeing his equipment still on, a family member finally asked on the air if anyone was hearing them and that they needed help closing down the station. The OO was able to locate the QTH since the family member gave the ham's call sign after seeing it on his desk. After arriving, he learned the story and was asked to later contact this amateur's friends to pass on the news. A rather unique service provided by an OO.” (From the ARRL February OO Summary.)



### Kentucky Initiates Digital Net

Kentucky Section Emergency Coordinator Ken Garrett, N4KLG announced the activation of a digital net in the Commonwealth. The Kentucky Digital Net (KDN) operates each Wednesday on 3.585 MHz (+/- QRM) at 7 PM (EDT). The mode used is PSK-31. Using USB the transmission is 1 KHz above the frequency shown on the dial.

All amateurs are invited to participate in the net. Contact Net Manager Joe Leitsch, K4DMU ([joe@iglou.com](mailto:joe@iglou.com)) or SEC Ken Garrett ([sec@kyham.net](mailto:sec@kyham.net)) for additional information.

### VHF Conference in Division this Year

The Southeastern VHF Society (SEVHFS) is holding its 14th annual Conference at Morehead State University in Morehead Kentucky on April 23-24. This is an excellent conference. Information is available at <http://www.svhfs.org/conference.html>.

Conference activities will be at the University's new Space Science Center. Guided tours will be given of the Center's 21 meter radio telescope facility. Other features of the Conference include testing of home-brew antennas on an antenna range, a Friday evening flea market, presentations on a variety of topics related to UHF and VHF operating on Saturday and a Saturday evening banquet.

### Outline of Division Conventions Revised

The outline of Division conventions has been one topic discussed during recent teleconferences. The goal of the discussions has been to make the conventions easier for members to attend, to have the sessions draw a larger audience, and to create timely, relevant and interesting seminars. We would like the input of clubs and individuals concerning the following general outline for future conventions.

Future conventions:

- Would be held concurrent with hamfests/swaps in this Division (Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio).
  - Would be sponsored by the host hamfest.
  - Would consist of a series of seminars that would last the duration of the hamfest.
  - Would include, when practical, an informal group dinner the evening before.
  - Would occur once each year and would rotate through the three sections in the Division.
- Host hamfests/swaps would be requested to arrange:
- For one or two rooms suitable for the seminars.

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- For a suitable restaurant for any evening-before dinner when appropriate.

- For publicity about the Convention to be included with hamfest publicity.

The Division would arrange:

- For the seminars. The hamfest committee would participate in arranging the seminars if it desires.

- For Division awards that will be given at the dinner or during a seminar.

- For a keynote speaker if appropriate.

Host hamfests/swaps will not be expected to incur expense related to the convention.

It is planned that this revised outline for Division conventions will take effect in 2010. Clubs interested in discussing the possibility of hosting a Convention are requested to contact me at [k8je@arll.org](mailto:k8je@arll.org).

### **Division Awards Process Updated; Criteria Refined**

The process for giving Great Lakes Division awards as well as the criteria for these awards have been reviewed by the Division Cabinet. During this process, the operation of the awards committee has been outlined, and the criteria for determining the winner of our awards have been tweaked. Five awards are available from the Division at each Division Convention. These are the George S. Wilson, III, W4OYI Lifetime Achievement Award, the Great Lakes Division Amateur of the Year Award, the Technical Achievement Award, the DX Achievement Award, the Amateur Radio Youth Award and the Joseph J. Phillips, K8QOE, Newsletter Award.

### **Thanks for the Letters**

I thank each member who sent Faxes and letters in support of Senate Bill S. 1755 in the US House of Representatives.

### **Do I have Cards at the Bureau?**

“Do I have cards at the QSL Bureau?” is a frequent question. The answer to this question is quite simple. Know who your QSL letter manager is and be sure to have envelopes and postage on file with him or her. If this is done, QSLs received from overseas will automatically be sent to you.

This being said, people who expect they may receive cards from DX stations should read the information at the web site for the correct Incoming QSL Bureau. The correct Bureau is determined by the number in your call sign. If you are KD3NEW, your QSL Bureau is the Third Area Bureau regardless of the FCC call area in which you live. Similarly, the QSL bureau for K4ZLE is the Fourth Area bureau even though Jay lives in the Eighth Area and is the Manager of the Eighth Area bureau. With my call, K8JE, my cards come via the 8th Area bureau. As a result most amateurs in Michigan and Ohio will use the 8th Area bureau and most amateurs in Kentucky will use the 4th Area bureau.

The first thing to remember is to become familiar with the procedures used by the QSL Bureau that services you. Read the information at its web site.

The second thing to do is to realize you cannot receive cards from your bureau unless you have envelopes and postage on file with your “letter manager.” Your letter manager is the ham who volunteers his or her time to sort cards according to the first letter of the suffix of the call sign. You can learn who this is at the Bureau web site.

A third thing to remember is that the letter sorter is not a mind reader. If you put postage stamps on the envelope it is logical for the sorter to think you want to have the card and QSLs sent to you only after you have enough cards to use up the amount of postage you've put on the envelope. For example, only a very active DXer would put \$5 worth of postage on an envelope of he expects the envelope to be sent back to him in a month. Talk with your letter sorter to let him know how often you want cards mailed to you and how he wants you to submit envelopes and postage to him.

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After you've done these things, sit back, work DX, wait for the cards to come back and enjoy Amateur Radio. Remember it often takes over two years (or longer) for DX stations to send reply QSLs. No one has ever claimed the Bureau works with great speed. For this, look forward to the day when Logbook of the World is used by nearly all DXers worldwide.

Links to all Incoming QSL Bureaus can be found at <http://www.arrl.org/qs/qslin.html>.

### Will you be a Flea Marketer at Dayton?

If you plan to Flea Market at the coming Dayton Hamvention (TM) you may be interested in this offer. Bob Reiff, WA8ULW of Mason, OH has arranged to make rigid, 8'x8'x12' watertight, portable storage units available to Hamvention-going amateurs at the cost of delivery and pick-up. The roll-up doors on these units can be locked to protect goodies in them. The units will be delivered to and picked up from the flea market area. Contact Bob at [wa8sulw@arrl.net](mailto:wa8sulw@arrl.net) for details.

### My apologies

Occasionally I receive invitations to join a member in a Facebook or other social networking system. I greatly appreciate these invitations, but have so far not accepted any of them. It is not that I am anti-social. I simply am reluctant to add further to the load of e-mail, meetings, hamfests, family obligations and other duties I already have. I hope anyone who has invited me or who is considering inviting me to join any such social net will understand and forgive me.

Please understand that I am still very eager to hear from anyone and to learn of problems, dissatisfactions and ideas, but I'd like to limit this to using e-mail, webinar, teleconference, US mail, the telephone ... and Amateur Radio. Thanks.

### Tentative Travel, Hamfest and Activity Schedule

Hamfests in the following list have received ARRL sanctioning as of press time. Hamfests and other

events for which a Great Lakes Division representative is scheduled to attend are identified with the representative's name. The schedule can be expected to be fine-tuned in the future.

Patronize ARRL-sanctioned hamfests. Hamfests, conventions, symposia and similar events sponsored by ARRL-affiliated clubs may be eligible to be sanctioned by the League. For information, see <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/hamfests/>. Please have your event sanctioned soon.

Support our Division hamfests and swaps:

- 3 Apr: ARGYL Hamfest, Lowell, MI
- 3 Apr: Lincoln Trail Hamfest, Elizabethtown, KY
- 10 Apr: JCARC Hamfest, Radio Show, Jackson, OH
- 17 Apr: Milford Swap & Shop, Highland, MI
- 18 Apr: Cuyahoga Falls Hamfest, Cuyahoga Falls, OH
- 22 Apr: Summit Co. ARES Mtg, Akron, OH - presentation, Jim
- 23-24 Apr: Southeastern VHF Soc. Conf., Morehead, KY
- 24 Apr: River Cities ARA Tail-Gate 'fest, Ashland, KY
- 25 Apr: Athens Hamfest, Athens, OH
- 26 Apr: Livonia (MI) ARC meeting - presentation, Jim
- 27 Apr: Cherryland ARC (Traverse City, MI) meeting - presentation, Jim
- 28 Apr: Directors webinar - Jim
- 1 May: Louisa Hamfest, Louisa, KY - Jim, John
- 1 May: Cadillac Hamfest, Cadillac, MI
- 5 May: A&F Committee meeting, Newington, CT - Jim
- 14-16 May: Hamvention(r), Dayton, OH - Gary, Jim, John
- 26 May: Directors webinar - Jim
- 5 Jun: IRA Hamfest, Hudsonville, MI
- 5 Jun: Mid-Ohio Valley ARC Drive-In 'fest, Gallipolis, OH
- 5 Jun: Fulton Co. ARC Hamfest, Tedrow, OH
- 5 Jun: Carter Co. Hamfest, Olive Hill, KY - Jim, John
- 6 Jun: Chelsea Swap & Shop, Chelsea, MI
- 11 Jun: Central MI ARC meeting, Lansing, MI - presentation, Jim
- 19 Jun: Milford Hamfest, Milford, OH - Jim, John
- 19 Jun: Midland Hamfest, Midland, MI
- 20 Jun: Monroe Hamfest, Monroe, MI -- Jim, John
- 23 Jun: Directors webinar - Jim
- 8 Jul: Mahoning Valley ARA, presentation -- Jim

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**FIRST  
CLASS**

**ADDRESS SERVICE  
REQUESTED**



**NKARC Feedline April 2010  
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