



# The Tickler

## *From the Prez.....*

Hello everyone. I hope everyone is enjoying their winter so far this year. We have had enough snow already for me. It can warm up and melt it all away. I am ready for summer again.

I hope the holidays have also been good for everyone so far. I hope you got all the presents that you wanted for Christmas. Of course, it is always good to have time off from work and be able to spend it with your loved ones. Let's hope the New Year starts out good for all of us. This year has been a mess for me with my accident and time off of work. I am hopeful the next year will be a lot better.

I have written this article a little sooner than usual once again, because Dr. Bob and his lovely wife will be leaving for Florida at the end of December. He wanted to make sure *The Tickler* got to you before the next meeting, so off to the press it must go.

Ted K8AQM will be presenting the program for the January meeting. The content will be his adventures at his latest Dxpedition in St. Pierre. It sounds like he and the other fellows that went had a fabulous time and he will share the fun and experiences that he had with us.

Three board members were elected last month and they are NORM (W8TTH), DICK (K8GX), and LARRY (W8LNR).

Joe (K8YZA) has notified us that the special equipment will be at the January meeting to take the pictures for our RACES cards. Please come prepared if you need to get your picture taken. The previous pictures were not to their approval, so they all need to be re-taken.

I don't really have a lot to talk about this month. There weren't any hamfests that we went to in December and I can hardly wait until next year when we can start attending them again.

That is all I have for now. Hope to see you at the meeting.

73,  
Ginny W8TTX

## Boat Anchors and a Touch of Modern K8AQM

Most of you know I have a collection of “boat anchors” (old tube radio gear to those not familiar with the term “boat anchors”), my intent is to have a multi-station of tube equipment and yet be able to compete in small contests still using computers and packet cluster spots. These older receiver, and basically Drake 2B radios, have an analog dial and getting an accurate reading as today’s digital radios give us is not possible. Thanks to the teaching and efforts of K8NP all my Drake 2B radios are up to “factory specs” a la 1962. But how could I tune in those packet spots accurately and quickly? National RF Inc. to the rescue! This company has produced a digital display for vintage radio gear. The unit has the ability to connect seven radios and switch between them. The unit can also be used with transmitters too.

Dave K8AA was looking for an easy project and offered to give me a hand figuring how to connect up the Drake 2B to the unit. It wasn’t exactly plug and play and Dave had to do some “figuring” to get a stable receiver display. For full details of the unit visit [www.NationalRF.com](http://www.NationalRF.com) Here is the unit connected to a Drake 2B and reading the frequency of 40M, note you need to add the megahertz number to the shown display. The unit is on the left side of Drake 2B. My plans are to have the three Drake 2B receivers connected and both the Collins 75A-4 and 75A-1. What will they think of next?



73...K8AQM

## AARC Club Gossip! .....

### *Did you know that...*

...Denny WE8Z and xyl Beth have joined the Florida snowbirds?  
 ...W8LNR's antenna is still sitting on the ground? It ain't over yet Larry!  
 ...you missed Straight Key Night? Remember those little cw sending "thingys"?  
 ...K8AQM's "museum shack" is coming along nicely?  
 ...K8AA is quite as opposed to "boat anchor" equipment?  
 ...KG8CO is looking for a Ranger so he can do 160M AM?  
 ...NU8Z has ordered a "mess of books" on RC flying? Sheez, what happened to "beacon Dxing"?  
 ...K8ADM repeater has a new antenna for better 440 coverage?  
 ...if you didn't check the website you missed your chance to vote on the meeting change survey?  
 ...K2IBM has joined the snowbirds for a month?  
 ...NU8Z has worked hard to scour the area for new members?  
 ...we need to think about our entry level class...soon!  
 ...K8GX now copies 25 wpm comfortably in his head running cw with K8KIC?

## AARC Club Minutes

The Adrian Amateur Radio Club met at the CAP bldg December 2, 2005. Those present were: Ginny W8TTX, Margie KB8TMM, Larry W8LNR, Dick K8GX, Norm W8TTH, Alec K8ADM, Mark NU8Z, Bob K2IBM, Art KC8GTA, and Bill KA8ARK. The board discussed having a trial membership of \$10 for one half year. Bob K2IBM will poll the membership to see if they wish to change meeting nights. It was decided to notify WQTE that we can no longer pay for the phone which is at the repeater site. The board approved Mark's letter to ex and potential members outlining value based reasons for joining the club. The board approved renewing our liability insurance at a cost of \$500 per year. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm.

The December meeting of the Adrian Amateur Radio club was called to order at 7:30 pm on December 2, 2005 by President Ginny W8TTX with 20 persons present. The treasurer's report presented by Mark NU8Z showed a balance of \$5,066.67 and was accepted upon a motion by Bob K2IBM second by Norm W8TTH. The November minutes were accepted as published in *The Tickler* upon a motion by Phil K8HCL second by Larry W8LNR. Ted K8AQM is heading up a program committee and solicited members to help. Also send him articles for the Tickler. Bob K2IBM would also like any items to put on the club website. Bob K2IBM will also be polling the membership on the website to see if they desire to change meeting nights. A plaque was presented to Jeff N8CC from the Michigan QSO party for his first place standing in the Michigan QSO Party. Motion by Bob K2IBM second by Phil K8HCL to pay \$500 to renew the club's liability insurance policy. Motion passed. Joe K8YZA informed us that pictures for the "RACES" will be taken at the January meeting. We have secured another site for our repeater if we need to vacate WQTE's tower, so we are going to notify the station we can no longer pay the phone bill for the phone at that site. Mark NU8Z will be sending a letter to explain to potential members outlining value based reasons for joining the club. The program for January will be by Ted K8AQM on his latest Dxpedition.

Secretary Bill KA8ARK.



## Dxpedition 2005, Miquelon Island FP/K8DD

Another Dxpedition is in the log. For the third time in my radio career I returned to St. Pierre but this time to the island of Miquelon. This month at the club I'll present the details, sights and adventures of the hardy group who headed "north" and thought "pine trees" not "palm trees" for an end of November trip into the North Atlantic.



This was a trip of six friends who all but one had been on Dxpeditions and operated from the "heavy" end of the pileups. Good friend Hank Kohl, K8DD and Stan Arnett, AC8W had also been to FP twice among their many other Dxpeditions. Kurt Meyer, W8IQ from Toledo also had been to FP before and with both K8DD and AC8W. Greg Surma, K8GL has been to the Caribbean Dxing and a major operator from super contest station K3LR. Greg is also a major single operator from his own home station in the big contests. Ian Hill, K8MM,

the "kid" of the group or "Sputnik boy" as we nick-named him, was on his "first ever" Dxpedition and received his baptism under fire in the CQ World Wide CW DX Contest with us. And he passed with flying colors! Well done Ian!

We arrived on Miquelon Island November 20 with bright sun and mild temperatures which turned out to be the weather forecast for our entire week long stay. The above picture is actually a sunrise and a very typical one we saw nearly every morning. We did have one 24 hour period of gale force winds, 40-60 mph and completely horizontal rain but the wind and rain were warm, mid 50's.

Our QSO totals were over 11,000 and included CW (of course!), some SSB and thanks to Ian (sputnik boy), FP/K8MM perhaps the first-ever satellite QSOs from Miquelon... ever! We

brought our own equipment and competed against some of "the already set up permanent" stations from the Caribbean. At last report we were in the top 15 of the world as a multi-multi crew. Basically there were three stations running continuously and we had about 300-500 watts at each station.

Be sure to come to the January 6, 2006 meeting for the full presentation of the FP/K8DD operation. There are a lot of great pictures and many funny stories to tell; toilets needing repairs, AC8W confused about getting his cigar lit, and rocks with holes in them...many more! See you at the meeting!



73, FP/K8AQM

*Here's an interesting article lifted from "ARRL Contest Rate Sheet, November". It displays some of the philosophy of contesting from home and makes for some thoughtful reading.*

## Turning the Crank

Well, we can't all be on the sunny shores of a Zone 9 QTH pumping out QSOs by the bushels over a salt water horizon, can we? It's a dirty job, but somebody has to stay home and populate the pileups!

When

the solar flux is well up in the triple digits and the "livin' is easy" it's easy to get motivated for big contests. However, as confirmed yet again this past weekend, we are firmly at the bottom of the current solar cycle. This means a lot of tough sledding for contesters in the middle of the pack (and even for some at the top).

How is it that those familiar calls are in there every year, through thick and thin? What keeps them motivated even when conditions aren't suitable for them to "win"?

Kirk Pickering K4RO posted a nice ramble on this and related subjects on the cq-contest reflector last week (<http://lists.contesting.com/pipermail/cq-contest/2005-November/06493> [8.html](#)). It captured several epiphanies that all long-term contesters must eventually have if they are to stay in the game through solar cycle after cycle. Kirk writes, "It took me awhile to understand that I enjoyed the operating immensely regardless of the outcome. I learned to choose my battles carefully. I now have a better understanding of what is possible from my station. I'm a lot less frustrated and disappointed as a result. I've even found a contest or two that I can win from home. I've traveled for contest DXpeditions and tasted the thrill of world-class competing as a team. I'm hooked on contesting for life now." Everybody hits the Wall of Frustration at some point: Why can't I crack the 1000-QSO barrier? How come my accuracy isn't improving? How can I possibly hold a frequency on [pick your band]? Why does [pick your rival] keep beating me? You eventually have to decide that you're going to "climb and scratch" your very own personal way to better performance. There's no easy way. As Jeff N5TJ replied to a "what's the trick?" question, "There's no magic" implying that you just have to keep turning the crank in order to get better. Once you

understand that improvement will come from within yourself, the small successes that come from practice have so much more meaning. Take care of your own business and the Top Ten box will take care of itself. Kirk continues, "I wonder if there is a way to describe the contesting scene to newcomers so that they don't wind up early on with a "what's the point" attitude? Ultimately I guess it comes down to finding satisfaction in the pursuit itself, regardless of the score. The point is, we get out of this game exactly what we put into it." That may be the most important insight any mentor can pass on down the line to the Little Pistols struggling to play this game called contesting. Amen, brother, amen!



## Tally Ho! 5W ... Again!

Brian KG8CO, Jeff N8CC, Ted K8AQM and several others are planning a trip back to the 5W0DL (K8AA) and 5W0TR (K8AQM) sight on Samoa. The trip is planned for the first two weeks in August. If you'd like to consider joining the group contact one of the afore mentioned ops for details. It's a wonderful location and despite it being the bottom of the cycle there will be plenty of DX to work. It's a fact if N8CC goes there will be a major big signal on 160M and 80M. KG8CO promises to carry on the digital modes from K8AA's operation. K8AQM

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### Local Area 2 Meter Net and 10 Meter Chats

Sunday 9:00 p.m. The ARES Net on 145.370 - Ken, K8KIC-Net Control  
Tuesday 10 Meter CW Local Chat at 8:00 p.m. on 28.050 +/- QRM  
Tuesday and Thursday 10 Meter Local Chat 9:00 p.m. on 28.325 +/-QRM

### Local Area Repeaters

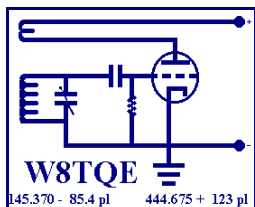
W8TQE 145.370 - 85.4 pl Adrian, Michigan  
W8TQE 444.675 + 123 pl Adrian, Michigan  
K8ADM 443.375 + 107.2 pl Adrian, Michigan  
K8ADM has access to Echo Link

### Adrian ARC 32th Annual Hamfest and Computer Show

September , 2006  
Hamfest Chair Eric, K8JVV k8jvw@arri.net

### AARC Web Page and E-mail Reflector

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