

The Bolt

The Official Publication of the Ford Amateur Radio League

2007-2008 Club Officers

Please contact any of the officers for information regarding the Ford Amateur Radio League, or go to the club website at www.geocities.com/capecanaveral/hall/2183/ for current events and activities.

President	Dave Treharne	N8HKU	734-476-1666
Vice President	Pat Quinn	WD8JDZ	734-729-1993
Treasurer	Bill Brezina	WA8HEA	313-563-2905
Secretary	Roger Reini	KD8CSE	734-728-1509
Repeater Chair	Murray Scott	KE8UM	248-743-1704
K8UTT Trustee	Dave Treharne	N8HKU	734-476-1666

Next Club Meeting: Thursday, March 13th @ 7pm
Presentation: ARRL On Line Training Resources

The Ford Amateur Radio League
PO Box 2711
Dearborn, MI 48123

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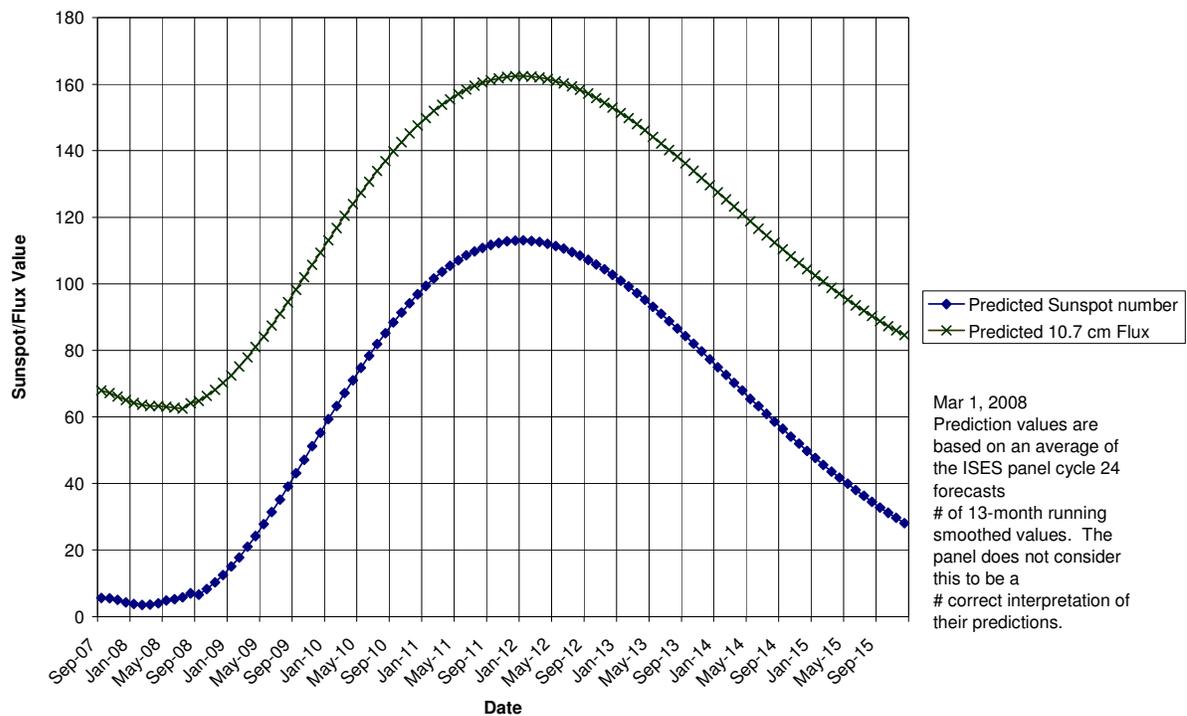
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Sunspot Alert

With the days getting longer, there are more opportunities to transmit during daylight hours and take advantage of whatever ionization the sun is providing to the atmosphere. There are not too many sunspots yet on the surface for this new cycle, Cycle 24. There have been some solar wind hitting the earth, and this has been causing some atmospheric noise. Fortunately, no major storms have been present.

On Friday, March 1st, NOAA put out a prediction of the next sunspot cycle, cycle 24. Here is a graph of the data, although the note indicates there is disagreement if this chart is really a valid prediction or not.

NOAA Sunspot Prediction Cycle 24



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LARC MEETING: We've been invited to attend LARC's next meeting, which will be on the last Monday of the month at 7:30 PM at the Livonia Public Library. The presentation this month will be on CW.

FUTURE PRESENTATIONS: A topic for March is still needed. Roger, KD8CSE, offered to speak on digital TV and HDTV. This is targeted for April.

TABLES FOR UPCOMING SWAPS: Did the club wish to obtain a table at the LARC swap on Feb. 17 or the Toledo swap in March? No; there was no interest in a club table for either event.

FIELD DAY: It was moved that the club partner with LARC again for Field Day; this passed unanimously.

HAMVENTION: get your rooms soon if you're going. There's also the bus from Ann Arbor sponsored by the Arrow club.

CEPT: The European PTT authorities have declared that full reciprocal operating privileges in Europe for US amateurs are available only to holders of Advanced or Extra Class licenses. General license holders are now limited to the privileges of the lower-class licenses in Europe (Technician-equivalent).

PRESENTATION: Roger, KD8CSE, spoke about the Buddipole. He set up and demonstrated the commercial version of the antenna. Plans for the original homebrew version were shown on the screen.

ADJOURN: 8:15 PM.

Cool Calculators Save Time

Online calculators are nothing new, but [Calculatoredge](http://calculatoredge.com/) <http://calculatoredge.com/> takes the concept to a new level. On this site, you'll find more than 200 different calculators in 12 different categories including mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, electronic engineering, physics, and more.

Most all of them are interesting and educational; some of them could even prove to be useful. For example, the "line of sight" calculator determines how far you can communicate by line of sight given two antenna heights. It doesn't take into account effects such as multi-path propagation, but it will give you a figure that you can use as a rule of thumb when figuring out a simplex link.

Another one I found interesting is the "wire parameter" calculator. Input the wire gauge and it will tell you the wire diameter and the current-carrying capacity of the wire. Crank in the length, and it will also tell you the resistance of that length of wire.

There are lots more. Check it out.

KB6NU

Editor's note: I have a favorite conversion program called convert1. It is a simple .exe that can convert almost any quantity. It is freeware located at: <http://joshmadison.com/software/convert/> N8HKU Dave

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FARL MEETING MINUTES – February 14, 2008

Recorded by club secretary Roger Reini, KD8CSE

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 7:08 PM by club treasurer Bill, WA8HEA, in the absence of our president, Dave, N8HKU (on vacation in Hawaii at the time). There were 6 attendees. There was no call-in this month because no one had the code to set it up.

MINUTES: secretary Roger, KD8CSE, read the minutes from the January meeting. A motion to approve them as read passed 5-1.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Bill, WA8HEA, reported on the status of the club's funds. Major expenses last month were the phone bill for the repeater, office supplies for the new membership cards, and a table for the Hazel Park swap. Major income last month came from dues and from rebates from FERA for selling auto show tickets.

MEMBERSHIP: Bill, WA8HEA, reported that there are 38 members on the active roster. 8 of these are not paid up through April 2008; they will be contacted and, if they don't pay up, will be dropped from the roster.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: No meeting during the month.

REPEATER: No known problems at this time with the 2m or 70 cm repeaters. No users of the 220 MHz repeater were present, so no one could brief us on its condition. Subsequent to the meeting, Bob, N8JUH, reported during the Sunday night net that the link between the 2m and 220 MHz repeater was still not functioning.

TRAINING: No report this month due to the absence of Bill, N8OZV.

NEWSLETTER: Volunteer needed for the March issue of the Bolt. Roger, KD8CSE, said he would consider it.

WEBSITE: There was some discussion about possible alternatives if we wished to move to a more accommodating provider. Much of the discussion centered on something called MyFamily; however, that is a private website for the benefit of a group, not something intended for the public, so it's not suitable for us.

WEEKLY NET: Still on the 2m repeater Sunday nights at 8 PM (Super Bowl Sundays excluded).

OTHER NETS: Bill, WA8HEA, mentioned two other nets active on Sunday evenings, the Garden City ARC net at 9 PM and the Southeast Michigan Traffic Net at 10:15 PM. The Garden City net was quite active this past Sunday, he said; it operated more formally than our net.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS: Pay your dues, receive a membership card. It'll be attached to your next copy of the newsletter.

BADGES: 2 have been ordered for new members but haven't arrived yet.

E-MAIL: Still requesting e-mail addresses to support the e-mailing of the Bolt in case Ford cuts back on mailings for FERA clubs. With another postal rate hike looming, there may be even more incentive to move to an all-electronic newsletter.

50th ANNIVERSARY PATCH: No update.

EVENT CALENDAR: Published in the Bolt newsletter. Some more events could stand to be added, such as Dayton Hamvention, LARC and Garden City meetings, etc.

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Allen Park Municipal offices. Park in the front of the building and come into the main lobby at the side. Knock on the inside door on the right if no one is standing there to let you in.

Conference call capability: All FARL club meetings are available via a conference call. Dial in at 7pm to 313-633-2320. When prompted, enter passcode 19153130#.

Meeting agendas start with club business items followed by a short break. Presentations on selected ham radio topics of interest are given after the break. Anyone wishing to present a topic can contact any Board member.

Potential Topics for Future Presentations

We are always looking for new and interesting topics for the club meetings, so if you have anything you would like to present, or would like to hear presented, please contact Dave Treharne, N8HKU, or any of the board officers. Some topics suggested for future meetings include the following:

- FIRST Robotics
- Digital Voice on HF
- Sky Command and/or D-Link
- HD TV – What’s It All About
- Fox Hunting techniques
- Mobile Installation
- Software Defined Radios

You don’t have to be a great presenter or an expert on the subject. If you have an interest in a topic, chances are that others will too. Paraphrasing Dale Carnegie – “If you’ve done it, you’ve earned the right to talk about it!”

Please suggest more topics for our club meetings!

Local VHF/UHF Radio Nets

Here is a list of local vhf/uhf repeater nets that are active in our area:

<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Club</u>	<u>Output Freq</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Club</u>	<u>Output Freq</u>
Daily	2215	S.E. MI Traffic Net	145.330	Tue	2100	Motor City RC	147.240
Sun	2000	Ford ARL	145.270	Wed	2100	ARPSC/Info	145.490
Sun	2100	Garden City ARC	146.860	Thu	2000	RACES/ARES	147.200
Mon	2000	GM ARC (PL 123)	443.075	Thu	2000	Stu Rock ARC	146.920

--The GCARC Wireless--

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2 Meters	145.270 Mhz	144.670 Mhz	100 Hz	Dave Treharne	734-476-1666
1.25 Meters	224.520 Mhz	222.920 Mhz	100 Hz	Murray Scott	248-734-1704
70 CM	443.425 Mhz	448.450 Mhz	107.2 Hz	Bob Krause	248-437-6634

2008 Calendar of Events

March	13	FARL Club Meeting, EMDO, 7 PM (Topic: ARRL On Line Training)
	15	Michigan Crossroads Hamfest, Marshall, MI http://www.w8df.com
	16	TMRA Swap, Maumee, Ohio www.tmrahamradio.org
April	5	ARGYL Hamfest, Lowell, MI http://www.argyl.org
	10	FARL Club Meeting, EMDO, 7 PM (Election of Officers)
	19	MARC Swap, Highland, MI http://www.qsl.net/w8ydk
May	3	Wexaukee ARC, Cadillac, MI http://www.wexaukeearc.org
	8	FARL Club Meeting, EMDO, 7 PM (Linux for Ham Radio)
	16-18	Dayton Hamvention, Dayton, OH www.hamvention.org
June	1	Chelsea Swap, Chelsea, MI - for info contact www.wd8iel.net
	7	IRA Good Old Days Hamfest, Grand Rapids, MI http://www.w8hvg.org
	12	FARL Club Meeting, EMDO, 7 PM (Field Day Preparations)
	14	Midland Hamfest, Midland, MI http://www.qsl.net/w8kea
	15	Monroe Hamfest, Monroe, MI http://www.mcrc.org
	28-29	Field Day Operations, Livonia Fire Dept.
28	NMARES Tailgate Swap, Elmira, MI http://www.nmares.net	
July		No Club Meeting
August		No Club Meeting
September	11	FARL Club Meeting, EMDO, 7 PM
	14	Adrian ARC Swap, Adrian, MI http://www.W8TQE.com
	20	PEAC Bike Ride, Hines Park
October	9	FARL Club Meeting, EMDO, 7 PM
	12	Michigan State Convention, Kalamazoo, MI http://www.kalamazoohamfest.com
November	13	FARL Club Meeting, EMDO, 7 PM
December	7	L'Anse Creuse Swap, Mt. Clemens, MI www.n8lc.org
	11	FARL Club Meeting, EMDO, 7 PM (FARL Christmas Party)
	TBD	Speaking With Santa, Mott Children Hospital

FARL Club Meetings

The Ford Amateur Radio Club meets the 2nd Thursday of each month, except for Christmas and the summer months (July & August). The meetings are held at 7 PM at the Ford Engine Manufacturing & Development Offices (EMDO) building. EMDO (located at 17000 Southfield Rd, Allen Park, MI) is south of I-94 on the east side of Southfield just north of the

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Ford Employee Recreation Association Questionnaire

One of our agenda topics for the March meeting will be discussions of the questionnaire from the FERA organization, which sponsors all affiliated Ford clubs. (We are known as the Radio Club in FERA parlance) Please take a peek at the questions below and help determine what we can do for FERA, and what FERA may be able to do for us.

To all FERA club presidents please take the time to discuss these questions with your members.

1. What would you like to see FERA do to help your club?
2. What can FERA do to help your club attract new members?
3. What programs could FERA offer to help your club?
4. How can FERA attract new members to run for Executive Board, and help run programs?
5. How can FERA attract new Clubs?

Return Answer to jpellegr@ford.com by 3/19/2008

Club Repeater Information

The Ford Amateur Radio League operates 3 repeaters under the K8UTT call. The repeaters are located in the Dearborn, MI, area and are available for members and guests to operate. The 2 Meter and 1.25 Meter repeaters are linked together. (Note: Murray KE8UM has been working on the link, and we hope it is functional by the time you read this) The PL tone is also transmitted on the output of the 2 meter repeater so that you can use tone encoded squelch to reduce interference from other repeaters.

- **2 Meter Repeater Net: Every Sunday evening at 8 PM local time.**
- **2 Meter Repeater Autopatch Access: Codes are available to club members from Dave Treharne (N8HKU). Autopatch usage is restricted to the Detroit Metro area.**

Please contact the following people if there is any problem with a repeater listed below:

<u>Band</u>	<u>Output</u>	<u>Input</u>	<u>PL Freq</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Phone No.</u>
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President's Note

Thank you to Bill, WA8HEA for running the club meeting last week and for pulling together the club newsletter for February. As you can see by the new information included in the newsletter, Bill spent some time researching information and adding it to our calendar. I hope to see you at some of the listed events as well as the club meetings!

Thank you to Roger, KD8CSE, for his presentation on the BuddiPole antenna system. We learn from both our own experiences and from those of others. While it is OK to read a review in QST, or see an advertisement for a product, hearing the information from a direct user, and being able to ask questions, is probably the most fun and informative way to learn. Please share any knowledge you have on a subject with us at a club meeting. Contact myself or any club officer to share. We do not require any presentation materials whatsoever, so it is easy to present even if you are not a computerized presentation wizard!

I am enjoying the sometimes rare winter Michigan sunshine as I write this. My wife Deborah and I did manage to get plenty of sunshine last month while on vacation in Hawaii. Hawaii is a very laid back state. A tee shirt, shorts, and sandals appear to be the official island attire. It was very nice to dispense with the winter wear for the trip. (We did have to carry it with us, though, as warmer gear came in handy as we returned home.) This was our first trip to Hawaii, so we ended up packing some more dressy clothing that we ended up not wearing. Our Valentine's Day dinner was at this wonderful restaurant in Waikiki. (We seemed to have gotten the last reservations available by a miracle, as the locals make reservations months in advance.) The website for the restaurant boldly stated "Jacket Required for Dinner." I dutifully carried a nice Midwestern sports jacket and looked quite nice there. Once arriving there, however, I think the statement should have been "You are required to Own a jacket somewhere, but are not required to wear it here if you cannot find it at the moment!" We arrived at the restaurant just before sunset, and witnessed a beautiful sunset over the water.

I can see the joys and the challenges from operating Amateur Radio in Hawaii. Surrounded by saltwater, the ability to put a vertical antenna in the air and get those signals flying out across the ocean is a wonderful thing. Keeping the sand out of your radio and resisting the urge to do anything but operate a radio near the ocean is quite another. Local topography also presents some challenges. Maui is a pair of extinct volcanos. One is over 5,000 ft tall, the other over 10,000 ft tall. Maui broadcast FM radio is unable to swing around the 5,000 ft tall peak, so they have a transmitter on the east side, and one on the west side. Radio communication on the taller east side of the island is even more challenged. Our tour bus operator could not contact the base reliably until we got relatively close to the main city Kahului. It kind of gets a bit rugged toward the tops of the volcanic mountains, so most of the population is near the shore. Anyway, it seems that your location on the island determines where you are most likely to work contacts. Go east for North America and Europe, West for Asia. I suspect that North may give you pretty good coverage to much of both North America and Asia. While communications facilities on the islands are pretty good, having a back up system seems like a very wise idea when you are so far away from the mainland. I am sure that amateur radio operators would be a real asset during an emergency.

FARL Name Badges

We will still order name badges for any club member who has yet to receive one. They are included in the \$20 initial membership fees for new members and replacements are just \$5. Please let Bill Brezina, WA8HEA, know if you want a badge and he will order them. You can see what they look like at the next club meeting.