

UPPER PENINSULA NET NEWS SERVING THE WESTERN GREAT LAKES



HAM OF THE YEAR
WB8VOF DOUG ALMQUIST
WELLSTON MI

HAM OF THE MONTH
K8RCT ERNIE ABLE
TRAVERSE CITY MI

DECEMBER 2009

FROM THE EDITOR-----BILL, N8NJA bkn8nja@att.net

Let me be the first to wish you a Merry Christmas. That is MERRY CHRISTMAS, not happy holidays. Just got back from the tree lighting ceremony here in Marion. Not as spectacular as some, but our little town does a great job and gets a good turn out. They have singing, a luminary walk and light the tree. We even have a Nativity Scene right in the public park. I think we told the ACLU to leave us alone several years ago. We head into December with no snow on the ground as of 11/27, better than last year, but I am sure it will come.

I found a nice article on the "art of traffic creation" on the ARRL website. I hope you enjoy it and get the message. It takes practice to create good traffic. It also takes practice to take traffic. So don't be afraid to practice both on the Net. Save yourself some postage this year and send your Merry Christmas and Happy New Year greetings via Ham Radio. Everyone knows somebody who does not have email, facebook, text messaging, etc. So use Ham Radio as a unique way to send that greeting this year.

NET STATS

OCTOBER 2008 TRAFFIC 48 CHECKINS 1195
OCTOBER 2009 TRAFFIC 59 CHECKINS 1387
HIGH CHECKINS WB8VOF & WA8DHB 50
HIGH TRAFFIC W8OWN & WB8VOF 6

UPPER PENINSULA NET WEBSITE www.michupnet.com

The Amateur Amateur: Hammy-Grams

By Gary Hoffman, KB0H
Contributing Editor

November 24, 2009

Some years ago when I took the ARECC (Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course), I discovered an aspect of the hobby of which I'd been unaware: Formal traffic. One of the exercises in the course said that I should compose a formal message and then send it to my ARRL Section Manager.



The image shows the original ARRL Radiogram form, titled "THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE RADIOGRAM". It is a complex form with multiple sections for sender and receiver information, a large area for the message text, and a section for routing instructions. The form is designed for formal communication via amateur radio.

THIS IS FROM THE ARRL WEBSITE

This is the original ARRL radiogram form.



The image shows a practice radiogram form, titled "The American Radio Relay League RADIOGRAM Via Amateur Radio". It is a simplified version of the original form, with fields for sender and receiver information, a message area, and routing instructions. The form is designed for practice and is filled out with example information.

My second effort at a practice message.

That particular assignment changed everything for me. First, I had to get my fledgling HF efforts moving along so that I could reach a traffic net. And second, I had to figure out just what formal traffic was.

In a nutshell -- and I realize that this is a gross oversimplification -- formal traffic is a telegram-like message sent over the air. Such messages are often called radiograms.

If that term conjures up images of cramped radio rooms aboard ships at sea, then you've got it about right. But many radiograms have also been sent over land, often by Amateur Radio operators. Just remember that there was a time when not everyone had a telephone, and even those who did were loath to make a long-distance call.

Telegraph Line

Long ago, the ARRL set up the National Traffic System (NTS) to efficiently handle the movement of radiograms. I won't go into the intricacies of its structure. Suffice it to say that it worked then, and it still works today.

You may be wondering why radiograms are still sent. There are several reasons, but the one most relevant to the ARECC was that during an emergency you want crystal-clear communications. You want explicit, undistorted information sent. You want to know exactly who sent the information. You want to know precisely who should receive it. And you want to know how urgent the information is.

The ARRL devised a standard message form that is blocked out to contain all of these data. It also created standard formats for the data so that all traffic-handling operators know what everything means.

Gee, sounds kind of like a telegram, doesn't it?

The Preamble

There are four sections to the ARRL message form:

- The preamble: This contains clerical information, such as the date and urgency.
- The addressee: Who's supposed to get the message?
- The text: What's the message?
- The signature

The fundamentals aren't all that complicated. Some hams love handling traffic. It's their niche in the hobby. There are also hams who will avoid it at all costs.

Personally, I'm ambivalent. I can't say that I'm enamored with message-handling, but I do recognize its value as an important emergency communications tool. That's why, as the net manager of a weekly ARES net, I promote the passing of formal traffic. I also encourage its use during exercises.

The exercises are actually fun. The exercise director makes up the messages that will be passed. They often have sneaky content such as, "Send the latter." Over the air, that may sound like "Send the ladder." If the transmitting operator is on their toes, they will spell the word. Sometimes the messages are just plain amusing, such as the one having to do with the disposition of pickle juice.

For our weekly net, we used to rely on messages that had come from the National Traffic System. That was a sporadic effort, though, sometimes feast and sometimes famine. So for a long time I talked about creating our own practice messages for the net, just as we do for the exercises. I just never got around to it.

Until last week.

The Shot Heard 'round the World

I finally did it. I sat down and wrote a practice message for our weekly net. I deliberately kept it very simple so that (1) people listening to the net would give it a try, and (2) no one called and told me that I'd put together the message incorrectly.

Ha! I should have known better. Of course I put together the message incorrectly! As I said, the fundamentals aren't all that complicated, but the devil is in the details.

I crafted this week's message more carefully. Or so I thought. I think one person noted a mistake I'd made, and about a dozen more had questions. And by and large, I didn't have the answers. That was pretty embarrassing.

As I read the message over the air I wondered if anyone was actually writing it down. No one asked me to repeat anything during the breaks. It was only after I'd finished that the melee began.

Despite my mistakes and embarrassment it was a good experience. Clearly a lot of the net participants were paying attention to the message, indicating that they, too, realized the importance of practicing handling traffic. And truth be known, we do learn more from our mistakes than we do from getting everything perfect the first time.

So I guess I will continue. I'll put together a new message for next week. But from now on I think I will claim that all the mistakes are deliberate. Just for practice, you know.

Editor's note: ARRL member Gary Hoffman, KB0H, lives in Florissant, Missouri. He's been a ham since 1995. Hoffman says his column's name -- "The Amateur Amateur" -- suggests the explorations of a rank amateur, not those of an experienced or knowledgeable ham. His wife, Nancy, is N0NJ. Hoffman has a [ham-related Web page](#). Readers are invited to contact the author via [e-mail](#).

FROM MARK KX8XX

Those kids are so smart

TEACHER: Winnie name one important thing we have today that we didn't have ten years ago.

WINNIE: ME

TEACHER: Glen, why do you always get so dirty? Well, I am a lot closer to the ground than you are.

December 2009

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5 <i>DAVE W8NSH KC8NVI & KC8QII</i>
6	7	8	9 <i>W8SKS & DONNA</i>	10	11 <i>DONNA XYL OF KN8N PAUL K8CIA</i>	12
13	14	15	16	17 <i>LARRY KN8N</i>	18	19
20	21	22	23 <i>WD8PRW & HELEN</i>	24	25 <i>MERRY CHRISTMAS</i>	26
27	28	29	30 <i>KC8TXT & BARB</i>	31 <i>W8ERB & MARIE</i>		

EXAMS

01-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** HAZEL PARK ARC **Time:** 7:30PM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: DEE D FLINT (248)981-8145 **Email:** N8UZE@ARRL.NET **VEC:** ARRL/VEC
Location: OAK PARK COMMUNITY CENTER 14300 OAK PARK BLVD PRE-REGISTRATION URGED CHECKIN @ 7 - TEST 7:30 PM OAK PARK, MI 48237

01-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** INGHAM COUNTY VE GROUP **Time:** 7:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: DONALD L MCLAIN (517)694-0812 **Email:** KB8RADON@AOL.COM
VEC: ARRL/VEC **Location:** LANSING POLICE DEPT.3400 S CEDAR ST SMALL CONFERENCE RM DOWNSTAIRS WWW.INGHAMCOUNTYVE.WEBS.COM LANSING, MI 48910

01-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** THE GREATER FLINT VE TEAM **Time:** 1:00 PM (No walk-ins)
Contact: JEFFREY R PENDER (810)519-2608 **Email:** K8KZB@ARRL.NET
VEC: ARRL/VEC **Location:** BAKER COLLEGE OF FLINT-TECH CENTER G-1050 W BRISTOL ROAD ROOM S-120-PRE-REG. REG BEGINS AT 12:30 PM FLINT, MI 48507

05-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** MIDLAND ARC **Time:** 9:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: DENNIS K KLIPA (989)636-7704 **Email:** KLIPAD@MINDNET.ORG
VEC: ARRL/VEC **Location:** SALVATION ARMY 330 S WALDO AVE MIDLAND, MI 48642

05-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** TOP OF MICHIGAN ARC **Time:** 9:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: CHAD W JOHNSTON (989)705-9322 **Email:** CHAD@NUWAYSUPPLY.COM **VEC:** ARRL/VEC **Location:** OTSEGO COUNTY PUB LIBRARY 700 SOUTH OTSEGO AVE OLD 27 SOUTH MEETING ROOM GAYLORD, MI 49735

05-Dec-2009
Sponsor: MT CLEMENS SAROF **Time:** 7:30 PM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: HAROLD B RUDER (313)526-5261 **Email:** K8YB@ARRL.NET **VEC:** ARRL/VEC
Location: SALVATION ARMY CORPS-CORNER SOUTH GRATIOT 55 CHURCH ST
MAY ALSO CALL: CLIFF 586-776-1169 MOUNT CLEMENS, MI 48043

07-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** CHERRYLAND ARC **Time:** 1:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: R HOPE FRANCISCO (231)218-0622 **Email:** AA8SN@ARRL.NET
VEC: ARRL/VEC **Location:** SALVATION ARMY BLDG 1239 BARLOW ST TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49686

08-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** LIVINGSTON ARC **Time:** 7:00PM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: GEORGE BRUCE VAN DAM (313)999-5547 **Email:** BVANDAM@COMCAST.NET
VEC: ARRL/VEC **Location:** LIVINGSTON COUNTY EOC 300 S HIGHLANDER WAY HOWELL, MI 48843

11-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** GRAND RAPIDS ARA **Time:** 6:30 PM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: RICHARD H DOUGLAS (616)531-6218 **Email:** KC8NKA@ARRL.NET
VEC: ARRL/VEC **Location:** RED CROSS BLDG 1050 FULLER AVE NE INSTRUCTION ROOM L-4 GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503

12-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** ARROW COMMUNICATIONS ASSOC. **Time:** 9:00AM (No walk-ins)
Contact: ROGER F PLACE (734)663-4625 **Email:** MERROGPLACE@AOL.COM
VEC: ARRL/VEC **Location:** AMERICAN RED CROSS BUILDING 4624 PACKARD ST ANN ARBOR, MI 48108

12-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** EASTERN MICHIGAN ARC **Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)**Contact:** ROBERT G HERBERT (810)982-1561 **Email:** K8WMW@ARRL.NET
VEC: [ARRL/VEC](#) **Location:** ST CLAIR COUNTY LIBRARY 2ND FLOOR MEETING ROOM
210 MCMORRAN BLVD PORT HURON, MI 48060

12-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** EATON COUNTY ARC **Time:** 12 NOON (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: JOHN A DEWEY (517)645-2378 **Email:** DETTA@IA4U.NET **VEC:** [ARRL/VEC](#)
Location: EATON CTY SHERIFF'S DEPT-EOC 1025 INDEPENDENCE BLVD
CHARLOTTE, MI 48813

16-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** PRESCOTT TESTING GROUP **Time:** 6:30 PM (Walk-ins allowed)**Contact:** DALE E MONDEAU (989)873-6920 **Email:**
2HAMITUP@VERIZON.NET **VEC:** W5YI VEC **Location:** MILLS TOWNSHIP HALL
2441 GREENWOOD RD SKIDWAY LAKE PRESCOTT, MI 48756

19-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** GENESEE COUNTY RADIO CLUB **Time:** 9:30 AM (Walk-ins allowed)**Contact:** VERLE D WINNINGHAM (810)629-2633 **Email:** K8VW@ARRL.NET
VEC: [ARRL/VEC](#) **Location:** MOTT COMMUNITY COLLEGE 2100 W THOMPSON RD
SOUTHERN LAKES BRANCH CAMPUS FENTON/FLINT, MI 48430

19-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** CASCADES ARS **Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: RICHARD H MC GUIRE (517)782-1430 **Email:** DICKKI8C@JUNO.COM
VEC: W5YI VEC **Location:** JACKSON DISTRICT LIBRARY 244 WEST MICHIGAN
DOWNSTAIRS AUDITORIUM JACKSON, MI 49204

21-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** USECA ARC **Time:** 7:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: JOSEPH P KENNEDY (586)977-7222 **Email:** N8OZ@ARRL.NET
VEC: W5YI VEC **Location:** [HTTP://USECAARC.COM/TEST/](http://USECAARC.COM/TEST/) FOR IMPORTANT DETAILS
MOUNT CLEMENS, MI 48043

23-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** CORUNNA VE TEAM **Time:** 7:00PM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: THOMAS E CARPENTER (517)579-0599 **Email:** KI8AS@CHARTER.NET
VEC: [ARRL/VEC](#) **Location:** AMERICAN RED CROSS 712 CORUNNA AVE REGISTER AT
6:30 PM CORUNNA, MI 48817

23-Dec-2009 **Sponsor:** GARDEN CITY ARC **Time:** 6:30PM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: FRED COMPS (734)421-7730 **Email:** K8KUZ@AOL.COM **VEC:** [ARRL/VEC](#)
Location: MAPLEWOOD COMMUNITY CENTER 31735 MAPLEWOOD ST
ROOM #114 GARDEN CITY, MI 48135

HAMFEST

6 Dec 2009 L'Anse Creuse Amateur Radio Club <http://www.n8lc.org> **Talk-In:** 147.08
receive, 147.68 transmit (PL 100) **Contact:** Marty Folz, K8HVI 40360 Ryan Road
Sterling Heights, MI 48310 Phone: 586-268-0544 Email: k8hvi@arrl.net
Mount Clemens (Harrison Twp), MI L'Anse Creuse High School [38495 L'Anse Creuse
Street](#)

IF THE STRESS OF THE BUSY TIME OF YEAR GETS YOU DOWN, HAVE A FEW LAUGHS FOR CHRISTMAS

'Mr. Clark, I have reviewed this case very carefully,' the divorce Court Judge said, 'And I've decided to give your wife \$775 a week.' 'That's very fair, your honour,' the husband said. 'And every now and then I'll try to send her a few bucks myself.'

A blonde calls Delta Airlines and asks, 'Can you tell me how long it'll Take to fly from San Francisco to New York City ?' The agent replies, 'Just a minute.'

'Thank you,' the blonde says, and hangs up.
(GOT TO QUIT PICKING ON THOSE BLONDES)

A man is recovering from surgery when the Surgical Nurse appears and asks Him how he is feeling. 'I'm O. K., but I didn't like the four Letter-words the doctor used in surgery,' he answered. 'What did he say,' Asked the nurse. 'Oops!'

Frustration is trying to find your glasses without your glasses.



BILL KELSO
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