

THE LED

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Howell, Michigan



JULY 2006

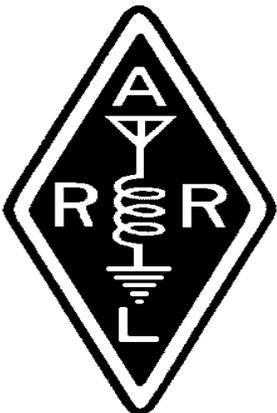
Livingston Amateur
Radio Klub
PO Box 283
Howell, Michigan
48844

www.qsl.net/milark

IET 146.680
SUNDAY 9PM

CLUB CALL IS: W8LRK

NEXT CLUB MEETING
July 13th 7:30PM at the EOC,
Highlander Way, Howell, MI



BOARD MEMBERS

President	Art	KC8WAZ
Vice-President	Bruce	N8GVD
Secretary	Mary	KC8SER
Treasurer	Clairus	KC8QQN
Program Director	Jon	KC8VAB
Tech Coordinator	Jim	WB8AZP
Tech Coordinator	Jon	KC8VAB
Board Member	Chuck	W8CLK

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON'S

146.680 Repeater	Jim	WB8AZP
LED Editor	Jim	WB8AZP
VE Coordinator	Jim	WB8AZP
PIO Officer	Brandon	KC8YHE
PIO Officer	Jim	N8ENX

SOCIAL EVENTS

- July 8th Straits Area Amateur Radio Club Petoskey, MI
- July 15th NOARS Fest Wellington, OH
- July 16th Van Wert ARC Fest Van Wert, OH
- July 30th Hamfair 2006 Randolph, OH

PREZ SAYS



"Why not attend a meeting in person, or at least join us for breakfast on the first and third Saturday of the month? Amateur Radio needs your involvement to help keep it an important hobby and public service."

73, from your President, Art KC8WAZ

LARK SOCIAL NOTES

LARK Dinner before the Meeting (DBTM)

Check in on the 146.68 repeater.

LARK Saturday Morning Breakfast

Join us for Saturday morning breakfast, held on the first and third Saturdays of each month. Our current location is the Crossroads Grill, near the intersection of Oak Grove Road and M59 in Howell. (The restaurant is located near the south end of the Kroger plaza). This is a great opportunity to get together with hams that can't always make our regular Klub meetings, and for hams just passing through! All are welcome!



COMPARING 2MTR SSB RIGS.....

I decided a couple of years ago to try a new mode. 2 meter sideband. There is nobody making just a single band 2 meter ssb radio anymore, so I bought a Icom 271h, it is a very nice rig with a beautiful receive and 100 watts out.

The 100 watts out is nice because you don't need a brick amp to get your power up. The problem is that this radio is a 22 year old rig and some of the parts are no longer available. The first radio I bought had a problem and I sent it to the shop only to find out that some of the parts are no longer available. Before I found this out I had already bought a second one because I like the rig so well. So now I have a old radio that depending on what goes wrong with it, it might not be able to be repaired. Well I set out to try and find out what was out there in the way of a new ssb radio. I was fortunate enough to have 2 rigs loaned to me to try, the first was a Icom 7000 and the second was a Icom 746Pro.

You know QST magazine does write ups on all the rigs and they give you there

opinion on the rig, its operation, and how it worked and sounded, however I have never seen them compare the rigs on 2 meters, and a lot of the newer radios are starting to come with 2 meters in it.

Well while my radio was off being repaired I had a chance to try that Icom 7000 radio for about 6 weeks. What a wonderful rig. I also had the 746pro over here for a couple of days. When I got my radio back, I had all 3 rigs on my desk at once. I was only interested in comparing the 2 meter side of the rigs. I started by trying to compare them with a signal that was very strong, well I didn't see hardly any difference between them. Next I took a signal and turned off of it far enough that it was very weak (about a S-1 on the meter) the voice was picket fencing a little and not just a real good copy, this was the 7000. Next I hooked my 271 up and the same signal was about s-6. I know that s meters are all different and they are exactly what the say they are RELATIVE signal strength. In other words seldom do you find 2 calibrated exactly the same. The interesting part of that was that not just the signal was improved but the actual capture was way better.

Well then I tried the Icom 746pro and it seemed to be about half way in between the 2. I guess the bottom line is that even though there has been 25 years of technology improvements you just can't squeeze that much into one of those little boxes. If a person was only going to own 1 rig or wanted a good mobile rig the 7000 would make a good one, it does a lot of things good. The difference between it and my single band radio is that it is designed to do only 1 thing and it does it excellent. The 746pro is in a much bigger case and it does a lot of things very good. This was a very rare opportunity and a lot of fun.

I have a friend who has a Icom 910 which is a dual band radio 2/440. I'm going to get with him soon and compare. I'm looking forward to it.

73 AA5GO

BalloonFest 2006 – It all started with an idea bounced around by a few guys ... “What if we ...” “Do you think we could ...”

Originally what we had wanted to do was incorporate Field Day and BalloonFest. We were going to set up the CBRNE Support Trailer at the BalloonFest and then use ATV and transmit a picture over to a group set up in the parking lot at the Sheriff's Dept. During a meeting of the BalloonFest committee we let it slip what we had planned and Howell PD asked if the ATV could be used for security. Being the FNG (if you don't know that term see me some time and I'll explain!), I had no idea, but set up a meeting with Jon (KC8VAB), myself and Howell PD. We discussed what they wanted to accomplish and then a few of us met to come up with a plan.

We were pretty sure we could do the ATV and transmit it over to the command center at the Middle School. Bruce (N8WWX), Neil (K8IT), Jon (KC8VAB), Jim (WB8AZP), Don (N8SKE), Shannon (KD8BVT) and myself met at my Genoa station one Saturday to put equipment and a plan together. Everyone brought something ... an antenna, transmitter, TV, cable or adapters ... OH, and also wire ties, can't forget the wire ties!! We got things working although Jon was having some trouble with the video editor we were using to transmit the call sign. This was a minor problem that was fixed in time for BalloonFest.

After putting things together we decided to go for some grant money and purchase some equipment to do the job even better. Jon (KC8VAB), Neil (K8IT) and Jim (WB8AZP) put together the equipment list and wrote the grant and submitted it. Bruce (N8WWX) was able to get it pushed through the state for approval fairly quickly, but we weren't able to get the equipment in time so we went back to "Plan B".

Friday morning came and it was a beautiful morning. We gathered at the EOC to load equipment around 9:00 am and then headed over to the field. We had a great spot, up on the hill in the ball field behind the Middle School overlooking the launch field and also a good view of the carnival. It took a while, but by 2:00 pm we had things up and running with the ATV feed being sent to the command post. Howell PD was impressed with what we were able to set up and with the quality of the picture they were getting. We focused on the carnival as that was the main area they couldn't see from the command post.

On Saturday we went over to the Field Day operations located in the Sheriff's Dept. parking lot and set them up to receive the feed. We then headed to Central Dispatch and were able to get them up and going also. One of the dispatchers made the comment, "You guys ROCK!" as we headed out. On Sunday we were contacted by KC8LMI near Jackson, MI who was receiving our signal! Not bad for a "Plan B" operation!

I'd like to thank all those who helped get this project going, helped with setting up/tearing down, and running the equipment ... Bruce (N8WWX), Jon (KC8VAB), Jim (WB8AZP), Neil (K8IT), Shannan (KD8BVT), Don (N8SKE), Van (N8GVD), Steve (N8GQ) and Tom (AB8IT) (hopefully I didn't forget anyone!!!). We had a lot of folks stop by and even some out of state hams stopped in to see what we had and were doing and all were suitably impressed.

The two most heard phrases during BalloonFest 2006:

U-bolts? We don't need no stinking U-bolts!
Hey Neil, got any more wire ties?

73
John (KD8CCR)

Well, I am looking for a used HF radio for around \$250 - 300 that works. Maybe an IC-725 or TS-440SAT. I am also looking for an antenna tuner and maybe an amplifier. I also have a radio for sale. It's a Radioshack HTX-242 VHF mobile radio. It puts out 10 watts low power and 45 watts high power.

It's TX/RX is 136-174mhz so it works as a marine or MURS radio. I'm not sure if the microphone will be coming with the radio or not. It is preprogrammed for all the local Michigan repeaters. Radio is in great condition and I am looking to make around \$50 for it.

You can get in touch with me at alex.jr13@sbcglobal.net

Alex KD8BVS

EDITORS COMMENTS



My mother in-law passed away back in May, and although her leaving this earth was a sad note, there was much to learn from her funeral. Jean Long was an interesting woman, 88 years young, and had actually retired from three careers; first, a professional ballet and tap dancer, second, an accountant for a large real estate firm, and third, a salesperson for Avon products. Through all of her labors, however, her passion for children, and the nurturing of young lives was always felt. None of her family knew exactly how committed Jean was to that passion – until the funeral.

The family visited the funeral home to go over the details of calling hours and such, there really wasn't much to handle, because Jean had taken care of everything years before herself. We visited next with the pastor who would conduct Jean's funeral service, sharing little stories that he might be able to weave into the event. The surprises started happening during calling hours the next day.

When we walked into the funeral parlor, we had expected flowers and plants from some of the usual folks who might send them, coworkers, distant relatives, family friends, etc. We were not prepared for all of the flowers from people that none of the family really knew. The story became apparent after a little more investigation throughout the evening.

It seems that Jean Long practiced her passion with some regularity, especially during those years as an Avon representative. She had the perfect venue, and the perfect "cover", to get to know her potential clients in the rural farm communities in and around Kokomo, Indiana. Whenever there was a need that she uncovered, she did her best to fill it – quietly, discreetly, and with great respect for the families she assisted. A brief conversation with her pastor confirmed that she had indeed conspired with church leaders all

over the area to make sure there was food on tables, and shoes on children's feet. Jean practiced her passion without a lot of fanfare....she just handled it. Dozens of families shared their stories of all the things that she had been able to help them with. She never asked to be repaid, but rather asked all of them to help out someone else in need.

This whole thing was even more spectacular at the funeral service the next day. Crammed into a little country church were hundreds of people who wanted to pay their final respects to this remarkable woman. The pastor was more than a little amazed, and in what could only have been divine intervention, cut his own remarks short so that we could all share the stories from so many people who have had their lives touched in some way by Jean Long.

Even the drive to the cemetery had a little touch of Jean's influence sprinkled in for good measure. Jean had often been directionally challenged, especially in areas of the state she hadn't spent much time in. Her friends had often commented that she would probably be late for her own funeral. Well, in a way, she was. The hearse driver got lost on the way to her final resting place, taking the entire funeral procession on a pleasant little drive through the Indiana corn fields.

The guiding principle behind all of Jean's life is pretty clear. She wasn't out for fame or glory, just out to make a positive difference. She never swayed from her passion or mission, until the last 3 days of her life on this earth. She never stopped, never gave up, and never let "retirement" signal an end to her efforts.

Whatever our own passions, may we work in the example of Jean Long. May our own personal motto become "find a way, make a way, or get out of my way". May we all care a little less about the past, and a lot more about the future. May our funeral service be filled with hundreds whose life we have touched in a positive way.

I will miss Jean Long. I will miss racing her for the last piece of peach pie (she always won, by the way). I will miss her a little less, because of her passion and compassion for her fellow travelers on this journey we call life. Her efforts will be felt for many years to come.

Farewell Jean, until we meet again.

Articles

For newsletters to continue to be interesting, most editors rely on articles written by the membership at large. This is a very common and time honored practice. However, it doesn't seem to be much of a practice around here. We still need YOUR articles for the newsletter. Swap items, favorite stories, magical operating moments, remembering your first rig, the time your transmitter set off all the fireworks, swap and for sale items, favorite recipes, antenna projects, when you first discovered that you were fascinated by CW, or whatever. While I appreciate those who forward previously published material, it clearly isn't new and fresh, like something you create yourself. Need a suggestion for a good article? Just call! Need help writing it down? We can assist you. In case thoughts of laying in the hammock have you all in a twitter, and you just can't seem to remember how to reach me:

Jim Kvochick WB8AZP
10366 Greystone Court
Brighton, MI 48114-7650

810-220-2098 Voice
810-220-2126 Fax
330-283-7070 Cellular
WB8AZP@ARRL.NET
146.680 MHz most evenings

Note that the best form to submit an article in is electronic, however we do accept handwritten and typed manuscripts. Beginning with the May issue of the LED, I have made a decision to attempt to appeal to your sense of greed to get articles for the LED. I will pay for articles that are original works, based on a schedule that I decide upon, that are submitted. Electronic submission will receive greater compensation than hardcopy or FAX pages. Payments will be made in cash, and will only be delivered to a LARK event, (meeting, breakfast, picnic, etc). Please don't worry; I will spend my own money on this project. All decisions for payment are mine, (after all, it's my money), and anyone who is a LARK member can participate. So far, I haven't had to spend a dime. Seems that even greed doesn't motivate this crowd!

50/50 Plus Drawings

If you haven't attended a recent regular meeting, then you've missed out on fabulous prizes that are given away along with splitting the raffle pot. Ask a member who has attended for the low down. Better yet, why not show up at the next regular meeting? Regardless, the 50/50 drawing is a great way to help support the Klub, and the extra prizes give everyone a chance to win!

SUNDAY EVENING NET ON 146.68

It seems that the Sunday evening net is pretty much dead now. With less than one check in a session on average, the tradition has pretty much died! Sadly, emergency preparedness and a brief social QSO has fallen very low on the list of priorities.

LARK SATURDAY BREAKFAST

It's just a nice way to offer an opportunity to mingle with the membership. These meetings are currently held at the Cross Roads Grill in Howell, on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month, usually starting around 8 AM or so. Stop on in for a glass of water, or breakfast, or a cup of coffee. Heck, if I'm there (and I often try to be) you can probably get me to buy your coffee! Oh yes, let's see; your lame excuse for not making it on Saturday morning is?

LARK WEBSITE

Our current website has been moved to its new electronic home. Find us on the web at: <http://www.w8lrk.org>

Thanks again to Van, N8GVD, for acquiring the new site! Again, if any of you feel compelled to take on this project going forward, just let us know. (Especially all the web experts out there)

OTHER COMMENTS

See you at the next meeting, right? (Even if you're not a member now, you can become one!) Need a ride to the meeting? We'll send someone to get you! Need someone to buy you dinner before the meeting? We can probably take care of that, too. Not sure if you have enough change to buy yourself a refreshing beverage at the meeting? We'll handle that for you as well. Afraid the room will be too cold for you? Bring your blanky. Dress is casual, so don't worry about digging out your Tux or Formal. We have plenty of seats in the front (or back) row for you. Do you have another unique excuse for not attending the meeting? Why not share it with others, in a lovely article for the newsletter? Especially now that you can get paid for an article!

Amateurs help with local International Young Eagles Day

Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 384 would like to thank those amateurs from the Livingston Amateur Radio Klub (LARK) that helped get 50 kids from the ages 8 thru 17 their first flight in a small airplane. Most of the kids that participate in the program actually get to fly the airplane. The smiles on there faces when they climb out of the airplane are what it is all about.



The EAA Young Eagles program was launched in 1992 to give interested young people an opportunity to go flying in a general aviation airplane. These flights are offered free of charge and are made possible through the generosity of EAA member volunteers.

Since 1992, more than 1.25 million Young Eagles have enjoyed a flight through the program. Young Eagles have been registered in more than 90 different countries and have been flown by nearly 40,000 volunteer pilots.



You might recognize some of these Young Eagles as members of the LARK. Thanks to KC8ZKZ, KC8ZKY, KC8VMB, AB8IT, and K8IT. Also thanks to Neil's (K8IT) Daughters and son for lending a hand.





All those that flew on June 10th will have their name placed in the world's largest log book on display at the EAA Aircraft Museum in Oshkosh WI. Entries can also be seen on the web at www.young eagles.org.



We did have one LARK member, KC8VAB that snuck off and went flying when I was not looking. He had to be reminded that this day was for the kids. He then claimed that he was still a kid, at least on the inside!

Thanks You LARK!

Shannon (KD8BVT)
EAA Chapter 384 Young Eagles Coordinator

WAS THIRTY FEET ENOUGH?

It was June 5th or 6th that I heard such a rumor,
That Amateur Television (ATV) would be needed at the balloon fest.
Crowd surveillance they said, it should be easy, “ah”, they said.
The LARK meeting came, June 8th to be exact.
And we talked in concepts, as no details yet were made.
Several suggested equipment availability,
But we were unsure.
The plan came together, later that night.
We would write a grant, and get the correct stuff.
As stuff is good, when funds are made available.

And Jon KC8VAB wrote the grant application,
With help from Jim WB8AZP & Neil K8IT.
Bruce N8WWX worked his magic,
And the state approved the grant on Friday June 16, 2006.

And Neil K8IT being doubtful that magic would prevail,
Suggested we get together, and devise a backup plan.
And so we did, Saturday June 17th with
Don N8SKE, Shannon KC8BVT, Jon KC8VAB, John KC8CCR,
Bruce N8WWX, Neil K8IT
We all brought some parts, be it a connector or antenna,
A transmitter or soldering iron, a TV or coax jumper.
The solder flowed, and Murphy was told.
I will fix this editing keyboard, for we need to ID legally.
The transmitter worked, the plan took focus.
The hope was we would not need this stuff,
As the new stuff would be much better.

But the final approvals hung in the distance,
This would be the future, not this week they said.
The email came on June 20th at 5:41pm from John KC8CCR.

“I think we're going to have to use our plan B which was just the ATV stuff”

With two days to go, the emails flew,
We still need this & that & don't forget that widget.
Dave KE8Z and Bob **KC8TGX** lent Don N8SKE a
Backup ATV transmitter and a backup camera.

We would meet on Friday June 23, at 9AM at the EOC.
John KC8CCR towed the CBRNE Trailer.
We all loaded the last of the supplies and headed for the hill.

It took about three hours,
But all was well.

The video was on, the last bugs got worked out.
Missing U-Bolts were made from wire ties,
Gas for the generator was watched like a hawk.

The Balloons flew and
We never lost power,
And even provided some lights
As Skydivers hate to land in the dark.

But then on Sunday Brian KC8LMI
From Jackson, Michigan reported receiving our video
In color Saturday night!
That's some 35 air miles Jon said.
Not bad for a Yagi thirty feet up with 1.5 Watts.

And special thanks to Tom AB8IT, Jim WB8AZP, Van N8GVD,
Alex & Shannon & Bree (food, oom, oom, good) & Jan.

The Balloonfest committee was pleased,
Howell PD was pleased,
We talked about next year,
With remote ATV cameras and such.
Someone said we should get a large screen,
And show the crowd, the view from a balloon!
We would need an ATV repeater we thought,
And so it went on.

A job well done by all,
A special thanks again to all.
Because without ALL THE EFFORTS,
This would not be,
"LIFE IS GOOD AT THIRTY FEET"

By: Neil Sablatzky K8IT

Livingston County
Amateur Radio Public Service Corps

300 S. Highlander Way

Howell, Michigan 48843

Phone (517) 546-4620

DATE: June 26, 2006

Short Term

1. **Copy of current FCC Operating License.**
2. **ARES / RACES ID**
3. Paper / Pens / Pencils / Notepad/ Message Handling Forms
4. **Dual-band HT in padded belt case**
5. **Earphones/Headphones**
6. **Operating reference card and / or manual for HT**
7. "Tiger tail" style antenna (enhances transmit and receive of typical "rubber duck" by 3 db)
8. **AA battery case for HT or multiple batteries if using NICADS etc...**
9. Extra Batteries if using AA battery case
10. DC adapter & cigarette plug cord for HT
11. Two extra fuses, for HT cord .
12. Charger for nicads or other type charged battery packs.
13. Small "Wal-Wart" power supply for HT and lightweight extension cord
14. SO-239 to male-BNC adapter to fit HT to mobile antenna coax and female BNC to SO-239 to fit HT gain antenna to coax jumper.
15. Magnetic Mount Dual Band Antenna with coax (25 feet?)
16. Leatherman style multi-purpose tool or similar
17. Mini-Mag-Lite, extra bulb and spare AAs
18. Emergency gas / phone money/ (CASH/ \$10 bill, + four quarters and five dimes in pill box).
19. Sunglasses, matches, tissues, sewing kit, insect repellent, tweezers, Spare eye glasses of current prescription.
20. Band aids, moist towelettes and sunscreen, personal medications
21. **Walking shoes/boots, jacket, foul weather gear, change of clothes**
22. **One meal, snacks and water**
23. ARES phone and frequency reference card
24. Compass / Binoculars / Whistle
25. 50 Watt Mobile Radio, Power cord, Manual, **Ear or Head Phones**, fuses
26. Extra 10' AWG 10 gage twin lead extension cord, with battery clips, in-line fuses and *Kenwood & Ford T type / Anderson power pole connectors* to HT or mobile Radios.

Extended Deployment

27. Cable ties, Electrical tape, rubber bands
28. Adjustable open-end wrench, (battery terminals & radio mounts)
29. Folding hex key set (antenna tuning)
30. Klein pliers with crimpers and side cutters (terminals)
31. Needle nose pliers
32. Channel locks or Vise-Grip pliers
33. Small, mobile-type SWR/power meter
34. Pocket VOM or multi-meter w/ test leads
35. Assorted connectors / adaptors including no-solder BNC and UHF for emergency repairs
36. List of important telephone numbers, cellphone
37. Basic Phone
38. Additional radio / packet kit??
 1. 50 Watt Mobile Radio, Power cord, Manual, Ext speaker, fuses
 2. Computer
 3. TNC
 4. Printer/Fax ?
 5. Extension cords
 6. Magnetic or base mount Dual Band Antenna with coax
 7. Assorted connectors / adaptors including no-solder BNC and UHF for emergency repairs
39. Soldering iron
40. Scanner
41. **Change of clothes and dry walking shoes/boots, jacket, foul weather gear**
42. **Several meals, snacks and lots of water**
43. Mini Maglite, extra bulb and spare AAs

44. Emergency gas / phone money/ (CASH/ \$10 bill, + four quarters and five dimes in pill box).
45. Sunglasses, matches, tissues, sewing kit, insect repellent, tweezers, Spare eye glasses of current prescription.
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Editor's note: The "go pack" list above was provided because it was expressed that folks didn't know what went inside of one.

Balloons and Amateur Radio

By
Jon Harris
(KC8VAB)



In amateur radio it is not very often that we are asked to support a local police department unless a bad accident or fire has occurred. That was not the case this year at the Howell balloon festival. The Howell police department found out through John Waters of Livingston EMS, also know as KC8CCR, that we might be able to provide live video to their command post during the 2006 Balloon festival. This is something that they were very interested in because of problems they had encountered in previous years.

Not to miss an opportunity to show that amateur radio can provide valuable, professional communication services, a meeting with the new Howell police, Chief Basar and Sgt. Harwood, was quickly arranged during the first week of June. They were very interested in the idea that we could provide extra eyes to watch the crowds for problems. That we could respond in real time to requests to zoom in on a trouble spots and provide the command post with an overview of the problem while recording the scene. They were also very interested in having live weather available so they would be aware of hazardous weather before the skies over the balloon fest turned dark.

With the knowledge of what the Howell PD wanted, a small group of us met after the LARK meeting on June 8th. This group consisted of Bruce (N8WWX), John (KD8CCR), Jim (WB8AZP), Neil (K8IT), Van

(N8GVD), Art (KC8WAX), Don (N8SKE) and my self. With very little time to prepare a solution for this event, several ideas were chased down by the group. This involved both 802.11 High speed Multi-Media (HSMM) and Amateur TV (ATV). Each of us went off during the next week to try to pull together hardware and software to find a solution for the balloon festival that was just two weeks away.

A meeting was called for Saturday June 17th at the Genoa EMS station. The amateurs at this meeting were KD8CCR, N8WWX, N8SKE, K8IT, KD8BVT and me. It was looking like the efforts made by Bruce (N8WWX) might not be able to get the needed HSMM hardware in time. We will have it for the next event, but you can only push government purchasing so hard. I must add here that we don't know how lucky we are to have Bruce. He is able to work the wicked web of government bureaucracy for us.

This left us with getting ATV up and running. Neil had gone digging through his radio gear storage facility. You know that big pile of radio gear in the attic, garage, or barn. He had found both his 440 and 1.2 Gig ATV hardware. After wiping off a bit of dust, a small bit of soldering and hooking together many odd pieces of hardware we had a live 440 ATV signal on the air! With one week to go, we now had a workable solution that would provide the needed video. A few small details had to be worked out but, none of them were big hurtles. We would still hold out some hope that the HSMM hardware might somehow get purchased in time, but we were ready either way.

The week before balloon fest went by quietly and the small issues were covered. Friday morning arrived and we met at the EOC around 9am to pack up and headed for the high school. Those who helped setup where John (KD8CCR), Bruce (N8WWX), Neil (K8IT), Don (N8SKE), Shannon (KD8BVT) and my self. By about noon we had an ATV signal on the air and video was being feed into the Howell PD command post. A few small adjustments had to be made, but things were working well. During the three day event we provided video from noon to 11pm Friday, 10am to 11pm Saturday, and from 10am to 8pm on Sunday. This video feed was, from all the feedback so far, very useful. In fact we have been invited back next year as well as talk of having us provide similar help during the melon festival.



During the three day event several amateurs helped out. KD8CCR, N8WWX, N8SKE, and K8IT spent many hours manning the trailer. Others that spent hours manning the camera are WB8AZP, KD8BVT, AB8IT, N8GVD, and me. Also those amateurs that stopped by for a while N8JVE, KC8MHI, KD8BVS, KC8ZKZ, and KC8ZKY I must also mention that Dave (KE8Z) helped out a lot by the contribution of a backup ATV system. It gave us breathing room just in case smoke escaped from Neil's system.

Food and soda was provided by John (KD8CCR) and Bruce (N8WWX). Shannon (KD8BVT) did the cooking along with my daughter Breguet. Hot dogs, hamburgers... Oh and Bratwurst provided by the Howell PD. There is some question of whether it was the video or the food we cooked up for everyone, but we think it was the video that got us the invitation to come back next year.



Now not only did we provide the video that was desired, but we were involved in helping solve several radio related problems. John's EMS people were also able to help Howell PD with a wireless problem they had. We did not have any bad weather, but Sunday the weather forecast threatened a chance of showers. The wireless network, also set up in the CBRNE trailer, allowed us to track the weather and determine that it was not going to effect us.

We were also able to provide a live video feed of the big balloon launches and night glow to the EOC folks and the Field day site. As it turns out we are also providing a live feed of the balloon festival to an amateur KC8LMI in Jackson. A long haul for only one and a half watts on 440MHz.

The big night time parachute jump also required our involvement. The lights that are part of the CBNRE trailer were set up and used to light up the landing field for the jumpers. I had breakfast the next morning with one of the jumpers and this lighting was greatly appreciated and really removed some of the hazards from this night time jump. This not only impressed the jumpers but also the balloon committee. They were very happy with our participation.

As it turns out some of the ATV video of the balloon launches is being reviewed by the balloon festival committee to see if two power parachutes violated FAA regulation during one of the balloon launches. Both the jumper lighting and the ATV video left the Balloon committee folks with a very good feel for the amateur radio community.



So it was a very successful weekend for amateur radio both at the balloon fest and field day just across the street. A few amateurs put a lot of effort into this event. It was a great way to test out those things that we have set in place with out the emergency that we hope never comes. Had more of you come out and used the free parking that was set aside for us and help eat some of the free food we would have many more of you ready for that event we hope never happens. That and you missed a great weekend, great food, and all the fun of the biggest Howell balloon festival ever!

Next year maybe we can get ATV on a balloon and we hope you will be there too!!!

Jon
KC8VAB