

Kalamazoo  
Amateur

**W8VY**

Radio  
Club



## July 2022 Newsletter

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### K.A.R.C. Monthly Meeting

Meeting Topic: LiFePO4 Battery Boxes with Chuck (WD8AXA)  
and a Club Feedback Survey

Thursday July 21st at 7pm  
Kalamazoo Red Cross Chapter House  
5640 Venture Ct.  
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

The meeting will also be live on Zoom, if you're unable to join us in person and would still like to listen in and participate please join us via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88633801958?pwd=MjlQjB5MlNlNaWlNTm42bUg1SHFYZz09>

## Field Day Reports

### FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE EAST SIDE GANG

By Charles Agosti WD8AXA, K.A.R.C.  
President

Saturday morning came early, as Alex(KE8ICM) and Barry (KE8JCD) feverishly tried to be the first stations completed. Alex picked a location and spread huge tufts of bear fur around his screen tent to ward off evil spirits. This also kept me from his location, so I can only comment on his very well made home-brew DX commander antenna and ginormous folding solar panel from an unnamed government entity.

Barry erected his modified Bud-dipole to construct a full sized, quarter wave vertical with sloping counter poise. His immaculate Barry Box, that includes transceiver, antenna tuner, power supply, internal battery, DC switching and map light was first on the air as far as I could tell.

The 10 meter station, got off to a slow start, using a Precise RF loop antenna on a camera tripod, a Bulgarian RGO one transceiver at 50

watts and large gel cell batteries. Several visitors came out and guest operated the 10 meter station (Mac ,KE8RRG and his brother -Hugo, KE8SKI). They operated fruitlessly on 10 meters, since there was but one signal on the band in Colorado. A 10 meter dipole was finally constructed and an independent 10 meter mobile (Mac's) confirmed that there no signals on Saturday. The rest of the station time was taken up by Mindy (KB8CRT) and Kat (KD4ZLT).

Kat and Mindy got pizzas at the Duck In -Waddle Out Dive Bar. Kat taught the meaning of amateur radio to a completely drunk woman and Mindy made friends with all the bikers. The pizzas were delicious and shared with everyone on site.



Unfortunately, I never made it over to the West End Gang's location – so maybe we can get a report from someone who was there. All in all, fun was had by all, nobody fell in a hole, and only one ambulance was on scene – but I think it was used as a station on location by one of the operators.

### The West Side Report

By John Tucker WB8ZVV, K.A.R.C. Trustee

Field Day has many billings: as a contest, as a preparatory exercise for deployment during a disaster, as a time to learn, and, of course, a time to have fun operating. This year's Field Day encompassed elements of all these.

In preparation, the Fairgrounds site was duly scoped out and station locations were determined. However, checking for buried power lines was omitted. Granted, in an emergency deployment, there would probably not be a problem. For the 20m station, we had an S5 noise level that bore no relation to the actual atmospheric conditions. Definitely a learning experience.

Some new hams got operating experience. Microphones are scary things for some people. Sitting down and operating under the guidance of an experienced ham hopefully took some of the terror away, provided experience and some fun.

While no records were set with stations logged, contacts were made both on the air and between the participants. We learned, had fun, and actually operated. Isn't that what Field Day is all about?



## Member News

### New Members

Welcome to our new members this month. We look forward to meeting and getting to know you!

Riley—KE8VBU

### Birthdays

The following club members celebrate a birthday in July. If you see them or hear them on the radio be sure to say happy birthday this month!

Jon — KE8RRJ

Tim — KM8TLG

Mike — KD8GTX

Jeff — KD8NPV

Clint — KB8SY

### VE Testing

The next examination session in Kalamazoo will be on July 16th. For more information or to register, send an email to [wb8zvz@gmail.com](mailto:wb8zvz@gmail.com).

### Upcoming Hamfests

#### Van Wert Hamfest

Van Wert County Fairgrounds  
1055 S. Washington Street  
(U.S. Route 127)

Van Wert, Ohio

July 17th, 2022

<http://w8fy.org/>

#### Elkhart East Hamfest

Northern Indiana Event Center

21565 Executive Parkway

Elkhart, IN 46514

August 6th, 2022 8AM to 2PM

<https://elkharteasthamfest.com/>

### Classifieds

Have an item you would like to sell or trade? Drop us a line at [secretary@w8vy.org](mailto:secretary@w8vy.org) and give us the following information: Item, Condition, Asking Price, and Contact information and we'll add it to our newsletter here!

### Feedback and Submissions

We'd love to hear your feedback. If you have any comments, suggestions, or if you have any upcoming news, events, stories or technical knowledge to share with the community, please drop us a line at [secretary@w8vy.org](mailto:secretary@w8vy.org)

## Silent Key

By Charles Agosti WD8AXA, K.A.R.C. President

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Ed Halcomb (KD8WAV) Friday, June 24, 2022, from his several year fight with cancer. Ed was a consummate volunteer with over 40 years in multiple organizations, a board member and former president of the KARC. He was also a lead in the Red Cross's disaster services and had retired at the rank of Captain from the Portage Fire Dept. With his connections at the Red Cross, he was able to upgrade the club station and our meeting rooms with high tech AV and telephone equipment. He was also able to secure a modern Red Cross base station for the W8VY club station.

For years, he was a fixture on the local repeater, D-Star and HF bands. He was often found on the 40 M friendly net.

He will be missed.



Ed presents two HTs to the Emergency Coordinator of Puerto Rico donated by

There will be a visitation on Thursday, July 21st from 4 to 7pm at Avink McCowen Secord Funeral Home, Portage Chapel 5975 Lov-ers Lane, Portage MI 49002. His obituary can be found [here](#).

## Field Day Results

Participants: 32 Club/Group Name: Kalamazoo ARC

Power Source(s): Generator, Battery, Solar

Power Multiplier: 2X

Preliminary Total Score: 2,510

Bonus Points:

100% emergency power 400

Public location 100

Educational activity 100

Safety officer 100

Entry submitted via web 50

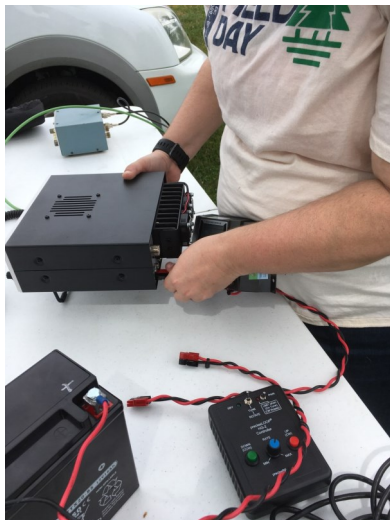
Total bonus points 750

## QSO Break down by Band/Mode

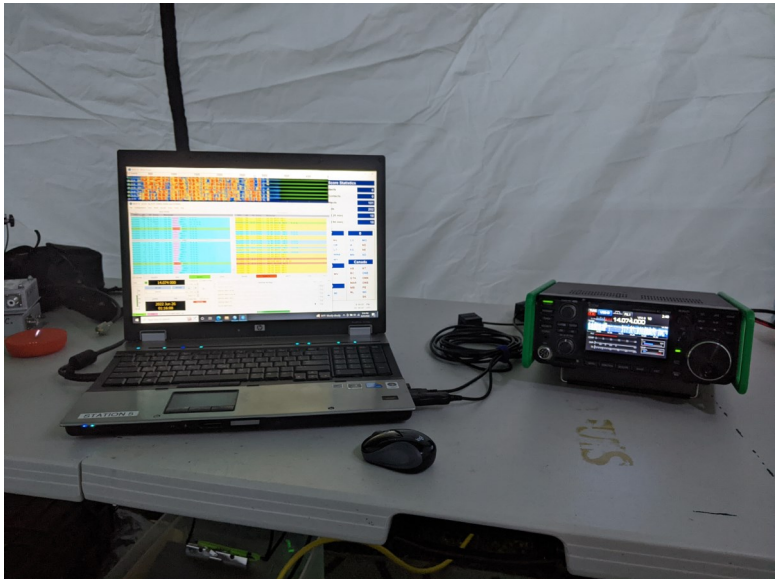
Band	CW	Dig	Phone	Total	%
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80	0	64	0	64	12
40	0	72	88	160	31
20	0	118	32	150	29
15	0	69	10	79	15
10	0	40	11	51	10
6	0	0	9	9	2
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Total	0	363	150	513	100











Since 1932

## Homebrew DX Commander Field Day Project

By Alex Stuart KE8ICM

This year at field day I hosted a digital station in place of our usual CW station. It was a great educational experience as we had several FT8 and FT4 demonstrations throughout the weekend and had several people get hands on and try the modes for the first time. Because we were the only dedicated digital station I wanted to have access to as many bands as possible to help maximize our ability to find stations to work. I took the opportunity to build an antenna I've wanted to try out for a number of years; a [DX Commander](#).

The DX Commander is a vertical antenna built on a similar principle as a fan dipole. A number of elements are attached to a common feed point and when presented to your transceiver a signal will seek the element most resonant. Instead of being a dipole; the system is a quarter wave vertical with radials.

The heart of the antenna is a 31 ft fiberglass pole and a series of spacer plates that help keep the elements in

place and self supporting. The spacers are loaded on the mast at various heights and secured with hose clamps. The whole arrangement is supported by 3-6 staked lines depending on duration of deployment and expected weather conditions.

I sourced my mast from a US company called [Jack Kite](#). For the spacers I designed and 3d printed them out of ABS plastic, making a similar design to the original layout. In the commercial product the spacers are made from HDPE plastic that is cut by water jet and the driven element plate is made from aluminum. Since I don't have the tools to do metal work at home, I printed it in ABS plastic and connected each element's connection point to the next in a ring back to the feed point with identical lengths of wire. For the radial plate I used a simple screw terminal strip and a short pigtail to the shield of the coax connection.



I cut the elements using the cut chart in the DX Commander instructions as a starting point, Electing to omit the 17 meter element and replace it with the 80 meter element for the contest. I used 14 gauge antenna wire DX engineering for the elements. There are 24 radials 10 ft long, grouped in 3's and soldered to ring connectors for easy installation in the field. The

radials were cut from 20 gauge silicone wire that is extremely flexible, it rolls up easily and lays on the ground flat without kinking.

With time, patience, and careful tuning you can achieve a near perfect SWR on all bands of operation. During initial build of the antenna I was able to achieve under 1.3:1 on the lower (FT8) portion of 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10m with little issue.



During deployment at field day I noticed it was closer to 1.5 - 1.8 on each band, so I simply used the Icom's built in tuner to bring it inline a little better. We manage 295 contacts at the digital station using the antenna during the weekend. So I'll consider it a successful test of the antenna. Thanks to all who stopped by the digital station and checked out the antenna and the FT modes.

<i>Analog Repeaters</i>				
Location/Info	Freq	Offset	Mode	Tone
W8VY Portage Main	147.000	+0.6	FM	94.8
W8VY Downtown In	147.000	-0.6	FM	127.3
W8VY Richland In	147.000	+0.6	FM	127.3
W8VY Oshtemo	224.300	-1.6	FM	none
W8VY Portage	444.650	+5.0	FM	94.8
K8KZO 2m	147.040	+0.6	FM	94.8
K8KZO 6m	51.720	-0.5	FM	94.8
W8IRA Kzoo Input	147.160	+0.6	FM	107.2

<i>Digital Repeaters</i>				
Location/Info	Freq	Off-set	Mode	Tone/CC
W8VY Paw Paw	145.340	-0.6	D-Star	-
W8VY Paw Paw	444.075	+5.0	D-Star	-
NK8X KazoBorgess	444.500	+5.0	D-Star	-
W8VY Paw Paw	444.075	+5.0	D-Star	-
K8KZO	444.875	+5.0	C4FM/YSF	94.8
KM8CC	443.400	+5.0	DMR	CC1 *

<i>Local Nets &amp; Useful Frequencies</i>				
Net	Day	Time	Freq	Mode
ARPSC RACES	Wed	7:30 pm	147.000	FM
SMART	Tue	7:30 pm	147.040	FM
6m SSB	Tue	8:30 pm	50.140	SSB
6m AM	Sun	8:00 pm	50.400	AM
10m Net	Wed	9:00 pm	28.485	SSB
MI Statewide DMR	Mon	8:30 pm	443.400 Michigan TG*	DMR
220 Mhz	Sun	9:00 pm	224.300	FM
Nat'l Simplex: 52.525, 146.52, 223.5, 446., 1294.5 APRS: 144.39 Local Skywarn: 147.00				

\*KM8CC TG info: <https://groups.io/g/km8cc/wiki>