

# KCRA Newsletter

Keweenaw County Repeater Association, Inc.

## Northernmost VHF-FM Voice Repeater Michigan's

### **HISTORY OF THE K.C.R.A. (See the Addendum)**

### **NEW MEMBER:**

We have a new member he is Rick Schutze and he is N8QYB. Welcome Rick!

### **MEMBERSHIP DUES:**

Our fiscal year started on January 1 and ends on December 31. May we count on your generosity to continue your membership for 2014? Membership dues remain the same for the year 2014 and are just \$13.00 for an individual, and \$18.00 for a family. Renew your membership today by sending your dues to:

KCRA, Inc.  
c/o William R. LaBell, KD8JAM, Treasurer  
59897 Apple Street  
Allouez, MI 49805

### **ADVANTAGES OF MEMBERSHIP:**

1. Speed dial: Call \*911 (star-911) for police, fire, ambulance - (Negaunee Dispatch).
2. Speed dial: Call \*912 (star-912) and get the Keweenaw County Sheriff (Ron Lahti's office).
3. Speed dial: Call \*916 (star-916) and get the U.S. Coast Guard, Station D.Bay .
4. Low cost, affordable membership to its members.
5. Information exchange with fellow members (trouble-shooting, etc.).
6. FREE Autopatch service (The only autopatch system in the entire U.P. of Michigan!).
7. TWO, FREE autodial slots (Your choice of 2-digit dialing: speed dialing).
8. Internet connection to the repeater while away from home, without your ham gear (Echo Link).
9. Meetings only four times/year (Quarterly).
10. Delicious refreshments, including coffee and cake after the meeting.
11. Free Deviation (Modulation) testing by W8FWG, to any ham (even non-members).
12. 100% backup power, during extended commercial power outages.

### **KCRA MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:**

**Quarterly meetings of the KCRA are held during the months of JAN-APR-JUL-OCT, on the second Wednesday of Each quarter. The April 9, 2014 meeting of the KCRA was held at the home of**

## MINUTES OF THE JULY 09, 2014 KCRA, INC. MEETING

President Gary Hansen, K8YSZ. The meeting was called to order at 7 pm EDT, with the following officers present :

President (K8YSZ), Vice President & Treasurer (KD8JAM), Secretary (W8FWG). Self introductions followed: K8YSZ, KD8JAM, W9GY, W8FWG, KD8HYG, KB8XI, KC8RGO, K9GIR, WB8QJZ, N8QYB, a total of 10 members.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Showed a balance of **\$1326.25**. Also: Jonathan Hopper has promised us a link with an IP address, so this is going to reduce our telephone bill from approximately \$34 dollars a month(\$408.00/Year) to only \$20/Year .

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** For the last 30 years, we have been given free rent, free tower space, and free power. Now, just a week ago, I received a telephone call from our president to call Gregg Patrick of the Keweenaw County Road Commission. This I did, and he tells this story." We have had an audit of our books, and we show an outstanding UPPCO (power) bill of some \$1100.00. We do not have any equipment operating in the tower (Building 154) where we once had the Keweenaw County Sheriff and the Keweenaw County Road Commission. We have since gone to the 800 MHz band, and no longer have any equipment operating in that building, and so we will not be paying that power bill. I want to ask you, 'Do you have any high wattage equipment operating in that building that would incur such a large power bill?' [Editor: I checked with Bill, KD8JAM, and his answer was, "Yes, unfortunately, there were two large electric heaters going in the room we took over from the National Park Service, and so they most likely ran 24/7 all winter long, where a power bill was only estimated and the snow load prevented anyone from reaching the meter at the top of the hill"] I told Mr. Patrick that I would handle this though our club and would get back to him, as to how this bill would be handled. I talked it over with Bill, and it was agreed that the existing bill is to be transferred over to our organization (the KCRA) and a new account would be established in our name to pay future power bills. {Bill informed me that those large heaters were now turned off, and I suggested they be marked DO NOT TURN ON} Also: Checking with Ron Lahti (Sheriff of Keweenaw Co.) that there was an original agreement that Keweenaw County would pay a portion of the power bill, so that is something for us to investigate further.) In the meantime one-half of the power bill will be paid to UPPCO, and donations have already been coming in, to help pay the other half. In an agreement with the power company they would receive payment as donations come in, to us.

With this agreement in force, I did call Mr. Patrick back and told him the bill would be paid for under a new account of the KCRA. **And so with this in mind we ask all members if they feel so inclined to include an extra amount each year, to help defray the cost of the power bill; any amount you feel is right, is right with us, and we thank you in advance. Thanks!**

**Editor's Comment:** I feel this site is worth keeping, and we would like to keep operating at Mt. Horace Greeley, even though it means the added responsibility of paying a power bill. Only the future will tell what future monthly power bills will be at our site, for supplying the "315" voice repeater, a new UHF voice repeater, and assorted packet radio systems, along with an AIS system. Let's at least aim for another 20 years of operation here, that will give us our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Keweenaw County. In the Treasurer's Report for this

month, it shows an account is established with the Superior National Bank and Trust Co. in the name of the KCRA. I will be reporting on the power bills at our next meeting on October 8.

**EDITORIAL:** As much as I hate to editorialize, I believe this item should be run at least once a year, just to remind one another of the FCC Rules and Regulations. So here we go..... the subject?

### **TACTICAL CALL SIGNS:**

(Taken from the ARRL Publication "Ham Radio License Manual") [I'm only going to quote a portion of this work, or as we learned in school....."A word to the wise is sufficient"] Now, continuing from the ARRL book: "To increase efficiency and smooth coordination, stations engaged in tactical communications should use *tactical call signs*, such as "Command Post Three" or "School Kitchen" or "Judges Stand". These describe a function, location or organization. This allows operators to change without changing the call sign of the stations and frees non-amateur personnel from having to use amateur call signs.

Tactical all signs do not, however, satisfy the FCC regulations for station identification, which must be followed. To properly identify, each operator should identify with both their personal call sign and the tactical call sign at the beginning and end o their operation and at least once every 10 minutes during their shift of operation." [From the FCC: Station Operation Standards, Subpart B Para. 97.119 (a)]

**ENGINEER'S REPORT:** Given by Gary, K8YSZ, that the repeater is operating properly. A trip to this site was made in October. K8YSZ, W9GY and KD8JAM checked out all operating parameters of the "315" repeater and the repeater was found to be in good operating order. Thank you, gentlemen!

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT:** By Presidential proclamation, George, W8FWG was appointed as the Chairman of the Education Committee. W9GY offered to help with teaching a class in amateur radio, should the need for one come up.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Gregg Patrick (Of Keweenaw Co. Road Commission) was contacted by George, W8FWG RE: The large power bill, and the problem was resolved (see Secretary's Report [above] in this month's newsletter.

**OLD BUSINESS:** We need approximately fifty feet of (RF) cable to move the AIS receiver into our newly acquired room (Former Isle Royale Park Service area) By putting that equipment into our room, we will have all of our equipment under lock and key. (Yes, three new locks have been provided for three locations: (The gate at the bottom of the hill, the "315" repeater door on the First floor and the RF Room on the Fourth floor in the tower.)

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. A special financial report was given to us by Bill, KD8JAM.
2. An updated report was given by George, W8FWG to Bill's report.
3. Installation of a new repeater, possibly this weekend (July 12, 2014)
4. Provision of possibly a new telephone service, lowering our annual telephone bill.
5. A \$100.0 donation toward our power bill was received this evening.
6. Triathlon? Gary (K8YSZ) will be checking with the chairman to see if we can help
7. A new Trustee is need by our sister club (CCRAA) for W8CDZ's repeaters.
8. We have a possible portable UHF repeater for Brockway Mountain, for Copper Harbor events.
9. HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Bill, KD8JAM whose birthday was today!

10. Facts on the new UHF repeater: Freq. 443.150 MHz, PL: 100.0 Hz, Output 40W, (can add a 100W amp) Need cable for DC connection., programmable with a laptop computer. (Donated by N8PUM).

11.

**DON'T FORGET:**

**New 60m Band Plans & Rules effective March 3, 2012**

- . Are you aware of the NEW 60m band plans effective in 2012?
- . or that the FCC has removed CW from ALL Amateur Radio examinations in 2007?
- . or that the FCC has given new HF privileges to Technician license holders?

**NEXT MEETING:**

Will be October 8, 2014. (This is the second Wednesday of October)

**DOOR PRIZE:** Was a digital multimeter, and was won by Roland, KB8XI.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn by 7:39pm by Vance, KC8RGO and seconded by Jeff, W9GY. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at: 7:30pm EDT.

The formal business meeting adjourned and refreshments were served by Gary, K8YSZ. Thanks from all of us!

**KCRA NEWSLETTER is published four times annually ( January, April, July and October) by the Keweenaw County Repeater Association, Inc. It is a Michigan based, non-profit organization for the purpose of operating and maintaining a VHF voice repeater, in Keweenaw County, in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The VHF repeater operates on a frequency of 147.315 MHZ, with a 100.0 Hz PL tone and a positive split. The UHF repeater operates on 443.150 MHz with a 100.0 Hz PL tone. The editor is George R. Thurner, W8FWG. W8FWG can be reached by telephone at: (906) 337-2542 or by E-Mail at: w8fwg@arrl.net The officers of the KCRA are listed below:**

<u>Office</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Call sign</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>	<u>E-Mail Address</u>
<b>President:</b>	<b>Gary L. Hansen</b>	<b>K8YSZ</b>	<b>(906) 337-1436</b>	<b><a href="mailto:k8ysz@arrl.net">k8ysz@arrl.net</a></b>
<b>Vice President:</b>	<b>William R. LaBell</b>	<b>KD8JAM</b>	<b>(906) 337-2546</b>	<b><a href="mailto:kd8jam@charter.net">kd8jam@charter.net</a></b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>William R. LaBell</b>	<b>KD8JAM</b>	<b>(906) 337-2546</b>	<b><a href="mailto:kd8jam@charter.net">kd8jam@charter.net</a></b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>George R. Thurner</b>	<b>W8FWG</b>	<b>(906) 337-2542</b>	<b><a href="mailto:w8fwg@arrl.net">w8fwg@arrl.net</a></b>
<b>Engineer</b>	<b>Gary L. Hansen</b>	<b>K8YSZ</b>	<b>(906) 337-1436</b>	<b><a href="mailto:k8ysz@arrl.net">k8ysz@arrl.net</a></b>

**Tech. Adv. Committee:**

<b>(Chairman)</b>	<b>Gary L. Hansen</b>	<b>K8YSZ</b>	<b>(906) 337-1436</b>	<b><a href="mailto:k8ysz@arrl.net">k8ysz@arrl.net</a></b>
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## ADDENDUM

### SUBTITLE: BIRTH OF THE KCRA (UPDATED: THURSDAY JULY 10, 2014)

THE REPEATER WAS STARTED WITH AN IDEA OF JUST ONE PERSON. HE IS JIM LIENAU, K9ANU. IN 1984, JIM WORKED AS THE CHIEF ENGINEER FOR THE MTU RADIO STATION WGGL, AND WAS ALSO A RADIO HAM, AND LIVING IN THIS AREA. HE APPROACHED ME (W8FWG) ONE DAY, AND SAID “GEORGE, I’D LIKE TO START A REPEATER UP IN KEWEENAW COUNTY AS THERE NEVER HAS BEEN ONE UP THERE BEFORE, AND THAT IS A CHALLENGE WITH ALL THE HILLS IN THAT COUNTY; CAN YOU HELP?” I WORKED FOR MICHIGAN BELL TELEPHONE CO. AT THAT TIME, AND I WAS STATIONED AS A CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE FOR THE USAF, AND KNEW THE BASE COMMANDER. AND SO WE ARRANGED FOR A VISIT TO THE BASE, FIRST, JUST TO LOOK AROUND FOR A SITE. WE LOOKED AT ANTENNA TOWERS AT THE TRANSMITTER SITE, THE RECEIVER SITE, AND THE OPERATIONS BUILDING AT THE VERY HIGHEST POINT ON THAT HILL (MT. HORACE GREELEY. WE ARRANGED FOR AN INTERVIEW WITH THE COMMANDER ONE DAY IN JANUARY, AND IN EARLY MAY OF 1984, OUR FIRST REPEATER WITH A FREQUENCY OF 147.300 WENT ON THE AIR. IT WAS PLACED IN THE RECEIVER BUILDING AND THE ANTENNA WAS PLACED ON A 75 FOOT TOWER (WHICH JIM CLIMBED) AND THE COMMANDER PUT US IN CONTACT WITH A SERGEANT WHO NEEDED SOME FACTS: WHAT FREQUENCY WOULD IT BE ON? WOULD IT INTERFERE WITH THEIR RADIO OPERATIONS? HOW MUCH POWER (AC) WOULD IT CONSUME? HOW HIGH WOULD THE ANTENNA BE? WHERE WOULD IT BE PLACED? WOULD YOU REMOVE IT FROM SERVICE IF IT INTERFERED ANY OF THE USAF OPERATIONS? LATER BECAUSE OF AN INTERFERENCE PROBLEM WITH A REPEATER IN DULUTH, WE CHANGED OUR FREQUENCY TO WHAT IS TERMED A “SPLINTER FREQUENCY” OF 147.315 MHZ.

HERE, THEN IS THE (AMENDED) TEXT DESCRIBING HOW WE GOT STARTED:

#### HISTORY OF RADIO INSTALLATIONS AT MT. HORACE GREELEY

1. THIRTY YEAERS AGO, I, (GEORGE THURNER, W8FWG), WAS A CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE (MICHIGAN BELL TELEPHONE CO.)\_ AT THE CALUMET AIR FORCE STATION, HEREAFTER REFERRED TO AS “CAFS.” IT WAS OFFICIALLY TERMED THE “665TH AIRCRAFT CONTROL AND WARNING SQUADRON.” (665thAC&W). IT WAS A LONG RANGE RADAR SITE WITH A HEIGHT-FINDER RADAR AND A LONG RANGE RADAR SYSTEM OF ABOUT 300 MILES (i.e. IT WOULD REACH SAULT STE. MARIE, MI TO THE EAST AND DULUTH, MN TO THE WEST.)
2. IN THE 1980'S WE GOT PERMISSION FROM THE BASE COMMANDER TO INSTALL A “HAM” TYPE REPEATER IN BUILDING #70 (THE OLD RECEIVER SITE), AND ALONG

**WITH US THERE WAS THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RADIO SYSTEM, SERVING ISLE ROYALE NATIONAL PARK, IN THE SAME BUILDING.**

**3. YEAR'S LATER THEY TOLD US THAT THEY WERE DECOMMISSIONING THE BASE AND NOW EVERY AGENCY WOULD HAVE TO MOVE THEIR RADIO INSTALLATIONS UP TO THE "27 TOWER" (BUILDING 154) NOW KNOWN AS SIMPLY "THE TOWER." AT THAT TIME WE HELPED MOVE THE KEWEENAW COUNTY SHERIFF'S RADIO AND THE KEWEENAW COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION'S RADIO SYSTEM ALONG WITH TRANSCEIVERS, FEEDLINES AND ANTENNA SYSTEMS TO THE NEW LOCATION, AND EACH AGENCY WOULD NOW HAVE ITS OWN POWER METER, AND BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POWER BILL FROM THAT PARTICULAR METER. WE WERE TOLD (SINCE WE HELPED WITH THE MOVE) THAT WE COULD SHARE A.C. POWER FROM THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT AND WHATEVER BILLING THERE WOULD BE WOULD SIMPLY BE BILLED TO KEWEENAW COUNTY'S ACCOUNT. TO KEEP THE DOWNTIME (OUT-OF-SERVICE) TO A MINIMUM, WE EVEN LOANED THE KEWEENAW COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION ONE OF OUR ANTENNAS. (WHICH THEY USED UNTIL JUST A YEAR AGO!)**

**4. FOR A WHILE, THE MICHIGAN STATE POLICE WAS ALSO ON THE FOURTH FLOOR, BUT WHEN GOING TO THE 800 MHZ BAND, THAT INSTALLATION WAS DROPPED. THEY ALSO HAD A UHF RADIO FACILITY FOR AROUND THE BASE, WHEN "YSI" (YOUTH SERVICES INTERNATIONAL) WAS PRESENT AT THIS BASE.**

**5. STILL LATER, W8FWG (GEORGE), PUT UP A NOAA WEATHER STATION (WITH THE SHERIFF'S DEPT. PERMISSION), AND THAT BECAME KNOWN AS W8FWG-7 WHICH WAS LATER SOLD TO HOWARD KLANN (KD8ABP) AND HE IN TURN DONATED THAT STATION TO THE KCRA, INC. BUT, WITH A COMPUTER FAILURE AT THE FAR END (NEGAUNEE) AND NO FUNDS TO REPLACE IT, MY SYSTEM WAS REMOVED FROM THE BASE.**

**6. A FEW MONTHS BACK, THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT WENT TO THE 800 MHZ BAND, AND THEY GAVE US THEIR TRANSCEIVER, DUPLEXERS, 7/8" HELIAX TRANSMISSION LINE AND ANTENNA SYSTEM, AS THEY WERE NOW FULLY OPERATIONAL ON 800 MHZ.**

**7. STILL LATER (ABOUT A YEAR) THE KEWEENAW COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION GAVE UP THEIR INSTALLATION AND THEIR EQUIPMENT INCLUDING THE TRANSCEIVER DUPLEXERS, FEEDLINE AND ANTENNA SYSTEM WAS TURNED OVER TO THE KCRA.**

**8. NOW.....(AND HERE IS WHERE THE CHANGE CAME TO US.) I WAS ASKED TO CALL MR. GREGG PATRICK OF THE KEWEENAW COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION, AND HE HAD THIS QUESTION. "WE HAD AN AUDITOR HERE, AND HE WENT THROUGH OUR BOOKS AND FOUND AN OUTSTANDING BALANCE OF SOME \$1100.00. SINCE WE NO LONGER HAD ANY EQUIPMENT THERE, BUT WE (KCRA) DID, HE ANNOUNCED THAT THEY**

**WOULD NOT BE PAYING THIS BILL! HE ASKED WHETHER WE HAD ANYTHING HIGH POWERED, LIKE MAYBE SOME ELECTRIC HEATERS, THAT WERE OPERATING DURING THE WINTER, AND CHECKING WITH OUR TREASURER, THE ANSWER WAS “YES, INADVERTENTLY TWO LARGE ELECTRIC HEATERS WERE LEFT ON.....24/7 DURING THE WINTER MONTHS CREATING THIS ENORMOUS POWER BILL.”**

**I CALLED MR. PATRICK BACK, AND GAVE HIM THE ANSWER. IT WAS DECIDED THEN, THAT WE SHOULD START AN ACCOUNT WITH THE POWER COMPANY (UPPCO) AND TAKE OVER THAT AMOUNT AND PAY IT OFF. IT WAS AGREEABLE TO BOTH THE POWER COMPANY AND OUR ORGANIZATION (KCRA) THAT WE WOULD PAY ONE-HALF OF THE AMOUNT IMMEDIATELY AND WE WOULD PAY THE REMAINDER OF THE BILL, FROM DONATIONS THAT WOULD BE COMING IN FROM OUR MEMBERSHIP.**

**SO THAT'S WHERE WE STAND TODAY, THURSDAY, JULY 10, 2014. WE DEPEND NOW, ON THE GENEROSITY OF OUR MEMBERSHIP TO KEEP OUR ORGANIZATION GOING, EVEN THOUGH FOR THIRTY YEARS WE WERE GIVEN FREE RENT, FREE ANTENNA SPACE AND FREE POWER. WE ARE NOW IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**George R. Thurner, W8FWG  
Secretary, K.C.R.A., Inc.**