

RADIOWAVES



MARCI Newsletter

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Important Information – Please Read!

Editor's note: This section will include important and time sensitive information. I'm placing this section at the beginning of the newsletter so you will see it first. Please note that some of the content may be repeated elsewhere in this newsletter in more or less detail.

Our December monthly meeting is our Christmas Party and Awards dinner. It is being held on Tuesday, December 6th, at the Peridia Golf and Country Club, located at 4950 Peridia Blvd E, Bradenton FL 34203. Plan to arrive around 6:30 p.m., with dinner starting around 7:00 p.m.

As of this writing, 68 people have paid for the dinner and will be attending. Look for a lot of pictures and details of the prize winners in the January 2023 issue of Radiowaves!

The MARCI Sunday night net will NOT be held on December 25th due to the Christmas holiday.

VE Exam Sessions are held the 3rd Saturday of the month, every two months. The last session this year is on December 17, 2022, starting at 9:00 a.m., at The Bible Baptist Church.

From The President of MARCI

I hope everyone had an enjoyable and safe Thanksgiving. No doubt the shareholders of PUBLIX and the other grocery chains are thankful for our appetites. Mine in particular because as in years past, I ate my way right through all three football games on Thanksgiving Day!

Coming up on Tuesday December 6th is of course our annual Christmas Party and Dinner. With your input, you the membership chose the recipients of our awards for 2022, for HAM OF THE YEAR, for ELMER OF THE YEAR, as well as those for Special Recognition Awards. The winners will receive their respective awards at the Christmas Party. All the winners are more than deserving of their individual awards and I am grateful for their work and contribution to MARCI and to me personally and my efforts as President.

I mentioned a number of times lately and on most recent Sunday night nets, MARCI is in need of a new Sunday Night Information Net Control Operator. Tony Vasile, KB9A who had done just a fantastic job for us the last year or so is unable to continue at least for the foreseeable future. If you would be interested in helping out occasionally, please contact me. While on the subject of the Sunday Night Net, be advised that there will not be a Sunday night net on December 25th Christmas Night, so that everyone can spend the time with their families.

As a proactive move I included my MARCI Dues for 2023 along with my payment for the Christmas Party Dinner for my wife Susan and myself. There will not be any increase in dues for 2023, with single operator membership of just \$25 per year and an additional family member for just \$5 more.

I hope to see all MARCI Members at our Christmas Party. As with a group our size I will not know everyone on sight. Please say hello and introduce yourselves if I don't acknowledge each of you. But if we miss shaking hands, please know that I appreciate all of you and all of your support of MARCI. And HAVE A GOOD TIME!

I'll close this month again by just saying 'tell someone you love them'.

See you soon. '73, Mike K4CVL - mryan001@tampabay.rr.com

From the Editor

Errata

Please note the following errors in previous issues of Radiowaves:

- In the August issue, on page 3, the call sign for Rick Wheeler is incorrect. It was listed as **K4RX**. Rick's call sign is **K4LX**.
- Steve du Buis:
 - In the November issue, on page 3, the last name for Steve, **KY4SG**, was listed as "Du Buis." The correct spelling of Steve's last name is "du Buis," lower case "d."
 - Although not an error at the time of publication in November, Steve has a new call sign. It is now **W4DUB**.

I apologize for these errors. Please feel free to contact me at N4BB.brian@gmail.com if you notice any mistakes in any future issues.

Member Updates

Please welcome the following individuals who were recently approved as new or returning members by the MARCI Board of Directors:

Mort, Roger	WA4DNO
Turner, Bill	KQ4CQY

Please note that Jennifer Jordan has a new call sign. It has changed from KQ4DXE to **KB1JEN**.

If you joined or rejoined in the last few months, upgraded your license, or changed your call sign, and you are not listed above or in a recent issue of Radiowaves, please let me know and I will be sure to add your name in the next issue.

Radiowaves Content Needed

We are continually looking for content for our monthly newsletter. If you have pictures of your 'shack' or have ideas for additional items on a monthly and/or quarterly basis, please send them to N4BB.brian@gmail.com.

Until next month, continue to enjoy our fascinating hobby, and stay safe!

Brian Biery, N4BB, Radiowaves Editor
N4BB.brian@gmail.com

MARCI Lunch Bunch at Beef 'O' Brady's

Please note that Beef 'O' Brady's is closed on Mondays until further notice. The day for the lunch has been moved to Wednesdays at noon. You will be notified of any future changes to the schedule via email. MARCI member Jim Zientara, W4MAN, submitted these pictures from a recent "lunch bunch." Thanks Jim!



Consider joining these great folks at the MARCI lunch on Wednesday, December 7th at Beef 'O' Brady's, located at 1795 Lakewood Ranch Blvd, Bradenton, FL. Here's a link to the menu: <https://www.beefobradys.com/menus.aspx>.

Ham Shack of the Month

Unfortunately, we did not receive any pictures this month. Everyone - please consider sending us a picture of your shack for inclusion in a future Radiowaves!

How to Beat the System by Jim Zientara, W4MAN

Some “tongue-in-cheek” humor to brighten your day!

1. My goal for 2022 was to lose 10 pounds. Only 15 to go.
2. Ate salad for dinner. Mostly croutons & tomatoes. Really just one big round crouton covered with tomato sauce. And cheese. OK, it was a pizza. I ate a pizza.
3. How to prepare Tofu:
 - a. Throw it in the trash.
 - b. Grill some meat and don't use the tofu.
4. I just did a week's worth of cardio after walking into a spider web
5. I don't mean to brag, but I finished my 14-day diet food in 3 hours and 20 minutes.
6. Kids today don't know how easy they have it. When I was young, I had to walk 3 feet through shag carpet to change the TV channel because there was no remote control.
7. Senility has been a smooth transition for me.
8. Remember back when we were kids and every time it was below zero outside, they closed school? Nah, me either.
9. I may not be that funny or athletic or good looking or smart or talented. Wait a minute. I forgot where I was going with this.
10. I love being over 65. I learn something new every day and forget at least 5 others. I'm clearing my mind. Soon it will be zero.
11. A thief broke into my house last night. He started searching for money, so I woke up and searched with him. Found nothing.
12. I think I'll just put an "Out of Order" sticker on my forehead and call it a day.
13. November 5, 2022, was the end of Daylight-Saving Time. Hopefully you remembered to set your bathroom scale back 10 pounds that night.

A Ham Radio Detective Story by Geoff Haines, N1GY

Editor's note: I recently had a need to work on my HVAC unit and remembered that Geoff had published an article back in 2011 which described noise in his transmitted signals and how his HVAC system was found to be the culprit. It's an interesting story that is still relevant today for those of us living in Florida. Read Geoff's account of how he ultimately solved his interference problems!

Recently, I experienced a puzzling problem at my station. Around the holiday season of 2010-2011 I began to receive reports that there was some extraneous noise on my transmitted audio signal. Sometimes the noise would disappear when I switched from my homebrewed headset adapter (QST – May 2009) to the stock hand microphone for my Icom 706 Mk II G. Sometimes it would vanish completely for a few days, only to reappear, usually at some inopportune time like the start of a net. Since I was usually the net control station, this would cause me no end of aggravation and embarrassment.

With lots of helpful suggestions from my fellow operators, I began to try to track down the source of the noise. Initially, I was certain that it could not be an internal problem to the headset adapter since I had been using the design successfully for several years. I found some problems with the extra fan I had mounted on the heat sink of my 706. I removed the fan and the noise disappeared. My satisfaction was short lived because a few days later, the noise came back. Someone suggested that it might be the tuner control cable or the AH-4 tuner (remotely mounted on the base of my flagpole vertical antenna. The cable was disconnected, the AH-4 was sent to a professional technician. The AH-4 came back with a clean bill of health and the control cable was checked for shorts or broken wires. The cable was fine. What now!

I even sent the 706 out to the same technician (Steve Senft, KG4LJB) and he tuned the radio up so every possible parameter was within the factory specs. The noise continued. Then I realized the I had installed my new LCD flat screen TV and the set top box almost right next to my radio stack. The TV and STB were banished to the far side of the room. The noise then pulled a vanishing act for a few days before returning.

At some point in all of this, it was suggested that perhaps the circuit of the headset adapter was at fault with some kind of a ground loop built into the circuit. Various fixes were discussed at length on the technical support net that the West Central Florida Section of ARRL runs on Thursday evenings. I tried most of them, shunt capacitors to ground, isolation transformers on the transmit audio lines, even ferrite chokes on the adapter cable that connected to the radio. Nothing seemed to work.

The only thing that kept my radio station up and on the air was the fact that the stock hand mic did not seem to have the problem. Being used to my featherweight cellular headset, using the hand mic for nets was a real chore. Particularly because the radios are on the right-hand side of the operating position, and I write with my right hand. Put down the mic, log the check-in, pick up the mic, call for the next station, etc. This was not going to work. I realized that the hand mic probably had a lot more circuitry devoted to filtering than my headset adapter did, even with the modifications, but I was still doubtful that the problem was internal to the adapter. I have been using this same adapter for several years with universal reports of great audio and clear signals.

At the end of June 2011, the “rainy season” commenced here in Florida. Yes, I know Hurricane Season also started around that time, but rainy season is kind of unique to central Florida. Each afternoon, the sea breeze from the West coast meets the sea breeze from the East coast of the peninsula. This causes afternoon thunderstorms which are epic. Fortunately, they tend to be brief and actually are mostly beneficial since the lawns and plantings get well watered.

This time, however, our house began to suffer from power outages. Each time the power went out, both the main 150-amp breaker inside on the power distribution panel and the 150-amp breaker outside under the electric meter would trip. Also, the 50-amp breaker for the air conditioning would trip. After they were reset, all would be normal until the next outage, which might be days away or mere hours. This always seemed to coincide with rainfall. No other circuit breakers were affected. My son-in law, a pretty good journeyman electrician, came over and we decided that the main breaker out on the pole under the meter might be age-weakened since it had been there since the mid 70s. It was replaced. I found out just how expensive big circuit breakers can be.

This did not solve the problem with the outages. Since the AC seemed to be affected along with the main breakers, I called the air conditioning company that installed the unit and provides routine maintenance for it. They agreed to come out the next day. The technician that arrived was doubtful about the AC causing the outages because it checked out fine, but he agreed to run some tests on the power feed to the air conditioner. What he found amazed both of us.

Between the AC unit and the breaker on the distribution panel in the house is what is called a T-handle shut-off. This is installed on all AC units, at least here in Florida, so that the serviceperson does not have to have access to the house to service the unit. They just pull the “T-handle,” and power is disconnected from the unit, making it safe to work on. Inside the “T-Handle” Box mounted on our house, there are also connections to a surge protector and a control box supplied by our electric utility that allows them to shut off our AC temporarily to avoid brownouts during the summer. We get a slight discount from the utility for the flexibility this provides them.

The problem was that between a wire nut that had come loose and a ground wire from the 240-volt cables that was too close to the neutral and/or the hot wires in the same cable where it enters the shut-off box, fate had created a crude “spark-gap transmitter”. When the weather turned damp, that slight arcing would turn into a full-blown meg-amp dump of power and the breakers would blow. When the weather was less damp the arcing simply created an RF generator that was then passed through the power distribution panel about 24 inches away from my radios.

The moral of this tale is self-evident. Do not ignore possible sources of interference just because they are not in the immediate vicinity of the radios. Before this episode, I never would have thought that an intermittent short circuit in the air conditioner power feed could cause all the problems it did. I would have expected the short to simply defy any attempt to turn the power back on. I also would not have thought to look on the outside of the house to solve a problem only noted on my radios for several months. These things can and do happen. Keep an open mind when trying to solve RFI problems.

With the “spark gap transmitter” permanently shut down, two problems instantly disappeared. We no longer suffer power outages that don’t affect anyone else in our neighborhood and my transmitted audio is now free of extraneous noise. Plus, I am now able to use my little cell-phone headset and run my nets in total comfort. Yippee!

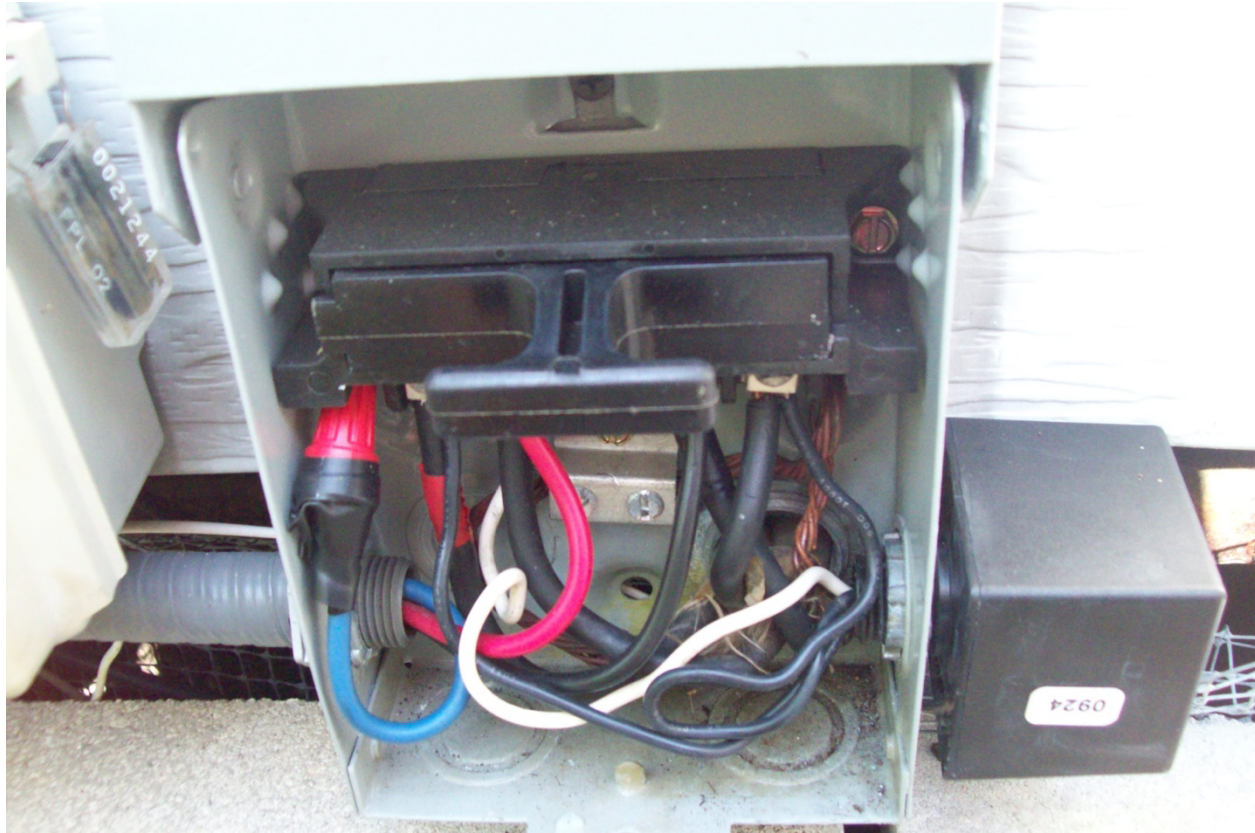


Photo submitted by Geoff Haines, N1GY on July 12, 2011.

Here is the T-Handle shutoff that caused all the problems. The arcing was occurring between one of the large black wires (center right) and the bare ground wire just to the right of that. The wire nut had also fallen off the blue wire (center left) and it was intermittently grounding to the box. The red and blue wires are connected to the utility company’s control box. The blue wire is not connected to anything since it is apparently used for a different device which we do not have.

December Puzzle – Geoff Haines – N1GY

QST DEC. 22

S U P P R E S S O R E M K Z
R N H T F A R C E L E G X M
E N A B N N B R B G Q W A K
N I N D R E F A O R R M W E
U A D Z A I T I S R E U T N
T T B M C R D Y K R K J S W
Y N O L O A A G I T M W E O
P U O P R D A T E M R Q T O
P O K M I N R R T C T V N D
A M D L Z O L K R S O K O W
H Y O L N B K B K L E M C J
N H F Z A N N E T N A W Y G
T D F L E X G M L A R R O C
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WEST

Items for Sale

Mike Ryan - K4CVL - mryan001@tampabay.rr.com

Tripp Lite Heavy Duty 50amp 12volt power supply. Plenty of power to handle your HF or VHF radios and most amplifiers. \$175 of best offer.

Call Mike, K4CVL (941) 376 - 6453

The SWAN items listed for sale are from the estate of a SK in Parrish, FL. All were tested to make sure they power up and have output unless indicated. These are sold 'AS IS' with no returns though I think these items are priced accordingly. I have not been able to put any of these 'on the air' as there are no mics that pair with any of the radios, but most have rated output or at least close based on what I could see on a Swan watt meter. If there are any known anomalies, I have described these as best I can. All come with manuals and power cables unless noted. Those units that require power supplies do not have supplies included with transceivers. Pictures are available on request. If you have interest but questions, please contact me. – Mike, K4CVL

Swan 500 Recvr and TX good \$225

Swan 350 (there are three total) \$125 each. One with weak recvr \$100

Jack Ham – WG9X – WG9X@arrl.net and (941) 567-6716

DISCONE Antenna. Used at camper for 2M and 70cm. Worked well. I will throw in a 10' section of ½" pipe for mounting. Asking \$50 for this antenna—a great deal.

Gould OS3600 Dual Trace 100 MHz Oscilloscope with DM3010 Digital Measuring Unit. Complete with Operating Manuals, Parts List and Schematics. Vintage equipment category. Scope works fine but there is no power getting to the DM3010. Was used as demo equipment for shows and customers. Otherwise has very few hours on it. Will sell for \$125. Great for bench service work.

IEC 20MHz Log Linear Sweep Generator Model F77. Complete with (2) Operating Manuals, Parts List and Schematics. Vintage equipment category. Works fine. Was used as demo equipment for shows, customers, and a few personal audio projects. Instrument has very few hours on it. Will Sell for \$75. Great for bench service work.

MFJ-931 Artificial Ground. \$40.

Geoff Haines – N1GY – (941) 447-8579 (cell) or (941) 752-3696 (home)

- I now have 3 headsets for sale, priced at \$15.00 each, for which I can build adapters to fit most radios. This includes the adapters to change them from 4 contact plugs to 2 x stereo plugs. The adapter from there to the radio would be extra depending on the Brand and Model of the radio.
- Offer to build: Custom extension cables for any remote-able radio such as the Yaesu FTM-300, 350, etc.
- Anderson Powerpole Power Distribution Blocks in 4+1, 6+1, and 8+1 sizes \$10, \$15, \$20 each respectively. Can custom build to suit.

- In addition, I have more parts and components than I will ever use, so if you need something, a transistor, a plug, a jack, etc. Call me first, I will give you a great price (as in no charge).

MARCI Library

The MARCI library has over 45 amateur radio books and study aids available for short term loans. Please visit the MARCI website at <http://manatee.startlogic.com/WP/marci-library/> for a complete description.

VE Exam Sessions

When you're ready to take the Technician, General or Amateur Extra license exams, you may take them locally.

VE Exam Sessions: 3rd Saturday of the month, every two months.
Testing starts at 9:00 a.m.

Last session this year: December 17, 2022.

2023 VE Exam Schedule:

02/18
04/15
06/17
08/19
10/21 Plus MARCIFEST
12/16

Location:

Bible Baptist Church of Bradenton
2113 57th St E
Bradenton, FL 34208

Contact: James E. Woodson
(941) 301-8703

Sponsor: Manatee Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Websites of Interest

Our MARCI website: Manatee-ARC.org

The ARES website: MCESG.org

Manatee County Public Safety: https://www.mymanatee.org/departments/public_safety

SKYWARN: <https://www.weather.gov/skywarn/>

ARRL: ARRL.ORG

Club Meetings

Monthly MARCI Club Meeting

General membership meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Bible Baptist Church located at 2113 57th St E, Bradenton, FL 34208.

Please note that our December 6th meeting will be our annual Christmas dinner. It will be held at the Peridia Golf and Country Club, located at 4950 Peridia Blvd E, Bradenton FL 34203.

Monthly ARES Meeting

General membership meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday each month. The next regular general membership meeting in December will be on Tuesday, December 27th at 7 p.m. at the Bible Baptist Church located at 2113 57th St E, Bradenton, FL 34208.

Clubs and Other Nets

MARCI Info Net	Sunday 7:00 p.m.	146.820 - 100 Hz
ARES Net	Monday 7:00 p.m.	146.820 - 100 Hz
MARCI Traders Net	Wednesday 8:00 p.m.	146.820 - 100 Hz
Manatee SKYWARN Net	Thursday 8:00 p.m.	146.820 - 100 Hz
WCF Eagle Net (Local NTS Net)	Nightly 8:30 p.m.	145.43 - 100 Hz or 442.95 + 100 Hz
WCF Technical Net (tech assistance)	Thursday 9:00 p.m.	145.43 - 100 Hz or 442.95 + 100 Hz

PLEASE PARTICIPATE IN ALL OF THE NETS ON OUR REPEATER

Our Manatee Amateur Radio Club Net every Sunday night at 7 p.m. on the K4GG repeater, 146.820, is an excellent opportunity to learn about all the fun amateur radio activities that are happening in our club and across our ham radio community.

Our Club Net on Sunday night is often very poorly attended. Our club has over 90 members. Surely at least 15 or 20 of you can take 20 minutes out of your Sunday evening to check into your own club net!

On Monday evenings, feel free to drop in on the Manatee County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) Net at 7 p.m. They are a bit more tactical and an easy way to improve your own operating skills.

On Thursday evenings at 8 p.m., we host the National Weather Service SKYWARN Net. Everyone is interested in the weather and SKYWARN is an easy way for you to contribute to this popular public service program.

DON'T FORGET about the Regional Nets on NI4CE on 145.430 and 442.950. The Eagle Net, the National Traffic System Traffic Net, is on every night at 8:30 p.m. Whether you are interested in "Traffic Handling" or not, everyone is welcome to check in and enjoy putting your radio to good use. They also host the regional SKYWARN Net on Tuesdays at 9 p.m.

The ARRL West Central Florida Technical Net is a very popular and informal activity held every Thursday at 9 p.m. or immediately after the end of the Eagle Net should that net run a little over.

With so many opportunities to listen in and participate, you are sure to meet new folks and discover many more of the interesting ways to use and enjoy your amateur radio license!