



# THE CHERRY JUICE

cherryland amateur radio club

traverse city, mi

November 2011

## Coming Club Events

### November 22nd Club Meeting

This month our program will be a presentation on Ham Radio Activity during the aftermath of hurricane Katrina. Kit Hinz from the American Red Cross will be presenting the program. Where: The Governmental Center Lower Level Cafeteria located at Boardman and Eighth Street. 7 pm. Coffee and cookies and plenty of time for socializing after the video.

### Tuesday Project Nights

Where: At the club station in the lower level of the Salvation Army Building located at the NE corner of Barlow and Boone. 7 p.m. Every Tuesday except the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month which is reserved for the regular club meeting.

## Forward Waves

### VE EXAMS:

**Muskegon**, Saturday, December 3, 2011  
Muskegon Area Amateur Radio Council. 9 a.m. Walk-ins OK. American Red Cross Bldg. 313 Webster Ave. Contact: Bob 231 799-3634

**Traverse City, MI**. Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011. At the Swap-n-Shop. 10 am. Immaculate Conception Elementary School. Walk-ins OK. Contact: Hope AA8SN 231 941-7262 or [hopeaa8sn@juno.com](mailto:hopeaa8sn@juno.com)

### HAMFESTS:

**Sunday, December 4, 2011**. L'Anse Creuse ARC Hamfest. L'Anse Creuse HS. 38495 L'Anse Creuse St. Harrison Twp, MI 48045 TI: 147.08 (PL 100) Info: Greg N8GEO 586-477-0364

**Sunday, January 15, 2012**. Hazel Park, MI. Hazel Park 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Hamfest. Hazel Park HS. 8 am til noon. TI: 146.640 (PL 100). Contact: Walter KD8LWC 249 548-4645 or [kd8lwc@yahoo.com](mailto:kd8lwc@yahoo.com)

## Reflected Waves

### November 1991

Twenty CARC members participated in the November Fox Hunt. The fox (**W8XR**) was tricky and it took over an hour for **W8LVZ** and crew to locate Chuck. The licensing class was a big success with 40 prospective hams. Nice article in the Record Eagle with a great picture of Joe **W8TVT**. Next month's Christmas party will be held at Boone's Long Lake Inn.

### November 2001

The November meeting was an ARRL video promoting Ham Radio Activities. Following the video there was a discussion of ways to promote the hobby locally. Several club members attended the Fort Wayne Swap meet. Chuck **W8SGR** took some of our surplus club equipment to see at the swap. Dave **N8CN** has resigned as editor of the Cherry Juice. His first issue was September 1992 and he has authored 102 issues since that time. Dave replaced Elbert Ford **W8SY**. Norm Brown **KC8CLM** will be the new editor.

Club Officers  
President  
Don N8QX

Vice President  
Hope AA8SN

Recording Secy  
Russ K8RUS

Corresponding Secy  
Dave K8WPE

Treasurer  
Ward N8WK

Directors

Ann KA8AYJ

Chuck W8SGR

Mike W8VPC

Cherry Juice Editor  
Dave N8CN

CLUB NETS

MESH NET  
8 pm Monday  
146.86 MHZ

SMASH NET  
9 am Sunday  
3.935 MHZ

TBARG EmComm Net  
9 pm Monday  
146.86



ARRL Affiliated Club  
#1082

## NOVEMBER CLUB NOTES

As this is the last Cherry Juice for 2011 there are a few items we need bring to your attention. Once again, it is time to be thinking about paying your **CARC dues**. Thanks to a successful swap (revenue enhancement) and budget cutting (eliminating the snail mail Cherry Juice) our dues remain unchanged and the greatest bargain in NW Michigan at \$12.00 per year. Additional family members are only \$2.00. We no longer require a \$12.00 autopatch fee but encourage a repeater fund donation to pay for future equipment repairs and tower climbs. (See the article on the Repeater Fund).

The **Christmas party** will be December 13<sup>th</sup> at the Elks Club in Traverse City. Cash bar and socializing will begin at 6 pm and we will be eating around 7 p.m. You can send your reservations and check to Dave Erlewein N8CN at 2738 Ra-Wa-Si Ave, Traverse City, MI 49685. You can reach Dave at 231 941-7978 or e-mail at [n8cn@charter.net](mailto:n8cn@charter.net). The dinner and entertainment will be **\$18.00** per person or the discount rate of \$36.00/couple, whichever you prefer. Hope to see you there.

**Repeater changes:** Very shortly, the Club VHF repeater at 146.86 will have a PL(CTCSS) tone of 114.8 Hz. In addition, the 147.100 repeater will be PL's at 100 Hz.

Several **Tuesday Project Nite** activities centered around fox hunting will be coming up this winter at the Tuesday night project sessions. Direction finding antennas, roll-up VHF antennas and step attenuator will likely be the first projects. Notify either Chuck W8SGR or Don N8QX if you are interested.

The **Club trailer** is for sale. If you are interested call Don **N8QX** at 231 632-4075. Also, if you are in possession of any Club equipment, please notify President Don **N8QX** and he will tell you whether you need to turn it in or retain possession.

We have purchased a **flat bed trailer** for transporting towers, antennas, generators, etch for activities such as Field Day and Emergency exercises. The trailer was a good buy at \$700.00 and should serve us well for many years.

**Club elections** will be coming up in January. Usually the CARC Board will propose a slate of officers but all club members should be aware that any member can nominate any other member for a club office. Nominations from the floor are accepted at the January meeting. If you are interested in a club office, contact President Don N8QX as the Board slate has yet to be determined. Better yet, come to the December Board meeting at the Salvation Army, Tuesday December 6<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.

**February Swap:** we have received authorization from the ARRL for the February Swap-n-Shop which this year will be held Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup>. If you have worked at the swap in the past, we are counting on your help again this year. If you haven't participated before, we always need help. Contact Joe **W8TVT** if you'd like to participate.

November **VE Session:** Hope AA8SN reports the November VE exams resulted in 2 new hams in the community. Ernie K8RCT reports that Mike Vandermey just passed his technician exam and is looking for a VHF radio and antenna. If you have one that he could purchase, please drop him a line. Mike is the CERT coordinator for Grand Traverse Co and will be a good addition to our group. His email address is: [gtccert@yahoo.com](mailto:gtccert@yahoo.com)

## NEW CLUB CONTEST

Joe Novak **W8TVT** announces a new club contest for January 2012, the **UseThe Repeater** or **UTR** contest. The rules are very simple: the station with the most contacts using the 146.86 repeater wins. No other repeater contacts will count and you can only have one contact with a given station per day. You could, however, since there are 31 days in January, show 31 contacts with, for example, W8SGR. Your log should be turned into Joe W8TVT by February 5, 2012 either in person, US mail or email at [jjnovak@charter.net](mailto:jjnovak@charter.net). Your log must have 5 items with each contact: date, time, call sign, name and location.

There will be prizes for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place and the awards will be announced at the Swap on February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

## REPEATER RESTORATION PROJECT

If you read the minutes from the November Board meeting, you're aware that the Board voted to embark on a repeater update project. Our sole club VHF repeater is aging and the system is weaker than it should be. The controller is 20-30 year old technology and our hardline is mix of sizes, very old and the antennas are not in good shape. The repeater itself is older technology and performance is less than optimum.

As a consequence, the Board has decided that we need to start a dedicated repeater fund and re-do the entire system, antennas, hardline, controller and radio. It is estimated that this will cost somewhere around \$5-6K. Since we dropped the autopatch system and fee, it is suggested that members donate \$12.00/year for the repeater fund, more if you can. In addition, we are considering some other fund raisers for later in the year to generate the funds we are going to need. Anything you can do to help will be appreciated.

## THE K8RCT REPORT

Grab your calendars...

1. The first event that we are participating in is bell ringing for the Salvation Army. They have provided us with a great deal of support and now we can help them by bell ringing. We have November 26th from 10 AM to 5 PM at Horizon Books as our assigned time. Several hams have already signed up but we could use your help! I'd like to see two person teams sign up for a 2 hour shift. One person can ring the bell, the other can sit inside Horizon books and drink coffee! Please send either Jim Palmer or me an email if you can help.

2. The second event is on December 3rd where we need a fleet of mobile units - the more the merrier! We discovered during the SET that there is a large radio shadow from Munson to downtown Traverse City. This is caused by a large building (one of

Munson's towers) between our operating position and downtown TC. Our plan is to dispatch mobiles to specific locations to get signal reports from various locations around town and off to the East (Kalkaska for example). We need to know where we can communicate with our mobile units and where there is a dead area. We haven't finalized the details yet but we'll most likely start around 10 AM and be done around noon.

3. We have a great program lined up for the CARC meeting on November 22nd! Kit Hinz from the Red Cross will come down and talk to us about her experiences as a shelter manager during hurricane Katrina. They had no power, no phones and the only communications that was work was....you guessed it, ham radio. She has a bunch of slides of the ham operations and some wonderful stories to tell about real-life emergency operations. You don't want to miss this!

### COUNTY HUNTING

Not sure if you are aware of Ed K8ZZ's County Hunting activities but he is one of the most active guys in the country in this area. Ed sent me the following log from his latest trip to share with the members through the Cherry Juice. Enjoy!

#### Trip October 26<sup>th</sup> to November 6<sup>th</sup> 2011 By K8ZZ

Here are a few bits of info on a typical day running counties on CW and SSB.

**Thursday:** Left early morning my usual thing on these trips, from my son's, W8JJ, in Genesee county Michigan. It was pouring rain and the Hustler resonators were wet before I got to Ohio. It rained hard the whole day. Made my first contact in Erie county Ohio on CW with K1TKL, who had a nice signal. Was running the Turnpike and the counties were coming up quick, and as the "folks" woke up, I was busy on CW. DX on 20 meters was alive early. I went to 40 SSB a few times but no takers. Later in the day 20 SSB and 17 meter CW was good with Preston and Randolph, WV being the highest takers. Thanks to W0GXQ and N4CD and others for lurking on the sidelines and helping me at the end on CW with all the 339's that I could not dig out with the rain pounding on the SUV. Spent the night in Elkin's, WV.

**Friday:** Rain was the order of the day again with snow in the upper elevations of WV. First run was C/L of Pocahontas and Randolph, WV. The county line was on top of a mountain and the cloud ceiling was low with the rims of the mountain caps showing through the clouds. It was one of the most beautiful lines I have ever run. K4AMC was my first contact on CW with his booming signal on 40 meters – Jim is a great CW op and is always ready to help with a relay if needed. The trip in Virginia from Highland county to Roanoke was also very pretty. The mountains still had color and the cattle grazing on the farms were keeping me entertained. I had to remind myself to run that next county as I shut the radio off after every run to enjoy this beautiful land we live in. The county line of Campbell and Appomattox, VA is on a four lane highway, but I was able to get off and run it from tire repair place right on the line. I was courteous and went and asked the business if I could park for 20 minutes or so in their lot. They were very nice and of course wanted to know what all that "stuff" was on the roof of my SUV. The C/L of Roanoke and Franklin, VA are on the mountain and there is barely enough room to get off and run the line safely. I had a county deputy sheriff remind me that was not in his best interest, but I had just finished the run so we were good. I had an orange LED light bar in my back window flashing, and I think that saved my bacon. Good run in Craig, VA with 17 CW really busy. N9JF/m, jumped in and did some relays on 20 CW while mobile – what a great CW op Jim is and always ready to help - I appreciate it. Spent the night in Salem, VA.

**Saturday:** Woke up to no rain but the antennas were white with frost - did have rain mixed with snow later in the day. K4AMC was there early for my only contact in Montgomery, VA and thanks for the spot to let the folks know I was on the road. Band conditions on 17 meters were great early - W0GXQ booming in 10 over 9 at 1320z in Smyth, VA. No luck on SSB due to the contest. It was a very long slow drive up the mountain from the freeway to the C/L of Russell and Washington, VA. The C/L was right on top of a mountain with everything white with snow. Very clean looking and beautiful with the wet snow clinging to nature. It was sleet and hail for a short period on my way down the mountain to Buchanan and Dickenson County in VA. In Buchanan county there were times I saw half the mountain with snow on the higher elevations and the beautiful fall colors on the trees on the lower half. The bands were okay today, but with mountain driving all day I am sure I missed some of you. It is always nice to work N9QS/m on the road. Last County of the day was Carroll, VA and heard W8JJ/m on 40 & 30 meters – always get a warm fuzzy working my son on CW. (Tim is a better CW op than Dad) Spent the night in Woodlawn, VA.

**Sunday:** Woke up to sunshine – WOW! W7GVE was up early out west for my first contact on 40 CW at 1150z on C/L of Carroll & Floyd, VA. Band conditions were good all day with great signals on 17 meter CW at 1326z from W0QE and AD1C. It was beautiful driving on "normal" roads after the slow going for three days in the mountains. Virginia is one of my favorite states for scenery and good roads. I was surprised by the long run on the C/L of Caswell & Person, NC as N4JT does a great job in that area. The longest run of the day was on C/L of Charlotte & Mecklenburg, VA – should have packed a lunch!! KM1C was booming into Warren county NC from Fairfield, CT in the afternoon on 30 meters. I finished transmitting from all 95 counties in Virginia today with Charlotte being my last. Spent the night in Wilson, NC.

**Monday:** Sunshine again today and it was gorgeous seeing the fall colors on the mountains. C/L of Greene and Wayne, NC started my day with K4XI up early at the key waiting for me on 40 meter CW. 17 meters CW was open early and worked W7FEN at 1232z. The longest run of the day was on the C/L of Wake & Johnston, NC with 20 meters being the best band. Big signals coming in from up north with WA9DLB, N8KIE and my MI Mini co-sponsor Joe, W8TVT leading the pack on SSB. Tried 40 SSB again today many times but no contacts. The cotton fields were spectacular and in full bloom. The large equipment used to pick the cotton is an amazing site and I stopped to watch and take a break. 17 meters CW was still open into Gaston, NC at 2228z with a good signal from AB7RW. I finished transmitting from all 100 counties in North Carolina today with Davie county being my last. Spent the night in Gastonia, NC.

**Tuesday:** Another beautiful day for driving in SC. W7GVE was up early again and gave me my only contact in Gaston, NC at 1138z on 40 meter CW. Band conditions were not the best today but W0QE was loud all day on 17 meter CW. Was nice to work NN9K/m on 30 meters when he was traveling across NE and IA. Pete always has a great signal on 30 meters and is a smooth CW mobile op. Large counties in SC and was nice to turn the radio off after the runs and enjoy the scenery. Traffic thru Augusta, GA was horrible before I headed north. I finished transmitting from all 46 counties in South Carolina today with Calhoun being my last. Spent the night in Lincolnton, GA.

**Wednesday:** Very pleasant fall day with temps in the low 70's and perfect conditions for site seeing and running counties. W0GXQ and W0EAR were up early with their coffee waiting at the key for RF from Lincoln county GA. At 1155z the bands came alive on 40 meter CW. Had a long run on 80 CW with everyone booming in like contest season. VK4AAR was 559 on 20 meter CW at 1333. N4AAT/m had a nice signal on 40 meter SSB from Florida and I needed those counties. WD4OIN/m was doing a great job in VA with a nice signal on 40 SSB. N9JF/m had a booming signal on 30 meters from WI and IL late in the day. Sightseeing highlight of the day was going over the mountain in White county GA. Wow! Was very busy in all the TN counties, which surprised me, as TN was run quite a bit with the Mini in SC last month. Spent the night in Dayton, TN.

**Thursday:** Woke up to cloudy skies but it all changed for the worse very quickly. N8KIE was my weatherman and he did a better job than the TV folks. His forecast was correct when he said I was heading into some very turbulent weather. It rained very hard all day – and I should have stopped to run the counties. I sent a bunch of AS's (standby) because there were times I could not see the shoulder of the mountain roads. At 1148z K4XI was waiting for me on 40 CW for my first contact. Before the rain started, driving the mountains in Bledsoe county was beautiful. Signals were good on all bands considering the weather conditions. WD4OIN/m and WG9A/m had nice signals on SSB. Towards the end of the day it was raining too hard for me to run all bands – it just was not safe for the public for me to be on the CW key. I was also getting very tired and worked N0KV at 2322z, with a big signal in Grant county KY on 17 meter CW for my last contact of the day. Spent the night in Richwood, KY.

**Friday:** Just a drizzle of rain this morning – cleared up as I headed back to Michigan for a few days of rest at my son's, W8JJ. This morning Boone county KY was my first and a contact at 1124z with W7GVE. It was strange driving on flat roads again in OH & MI after a week in the mountains. Propagation was very good today on all bands. I was very busy in all the counties of Ohio and into Michigan with 30 meters working good across the whole US all day.

My set up in the truck for the trip was an Elecraft K3 radio with Hustler resonators. The resonators were mounted in a horizontal custom fabricated hub, on a 60 inch 5/8 inch aluminum mast. The mast is mounted in the center of the roof on my SUV with a bracket across the luggage rack. I use an Apple MacBook Air 11 inch computer with Street Atlas - GPS and the WQ7A county overlay. I use a TomTom GPS to help make navigating painless while running on the fly. A Coteck inverter, which eliminates any hash from the computer etc., into the radio is a must have.

Many thanks again to all the SPOTTER's for your efforts, and making my runs exciting – I made thousands of CW contacts and a few hundred SSB - drove 3200 hundred miles in 11 days and transmitted from almost 200 counties. Cost of the trip – PRICELESS for all the fun I had. Look forward to working all of you on my next trip. Looks like the portable equipment will be going to California and Hawaii for about 3 weeks in late January.

-73 Ed K8ZZ

## Hello, Hello, is anyone out there?

I think perhaps my receivers have gone dead on me. Where have all the hams gone? I don't hear anyone on the 146.86 repeater anymore. There are only a few of us that come to project nights or the club meetings these days. Where has everyone gone? There is still a small group of stalwarts that meet on the MESH and TBARG nets on Monday nights but other than that, the repeater is dead. Where has everyone gone?

I'm thinking that many of us have drifted away from ham radio because we have many other interests competing for our time these days. Many don't find the excitement in ham radio that we used to have when we were first licensed. I'll admit the new digital gear is not very exciting. No nice glow of pilot light, the warm color of the filaments, the smell of ozone, the large meters and knobs. Most of us can't even fix our own radios anymore...ah the curse of modern equipment!

However, there still is a lot about ham radio in our area to get excited about! You can still have fun operating and you can still

make a big difference in our community – really!

Here are a few of the fun events that you can participate in...just come to the meetings and see what is happening.

**The Michigan QSO party.** Many of the CARC operators really got on board operating the QSO party this year. CARC came in 3<sup>rd</sup> statewide! Wow, we were competing with some really big gun counties downstate and we still came in third. I heard many comments during the QSO party like “what the heck is going on in Grand Traverse County, you guys having your own QSO party up there?” Nope, we just got organized and pumped up to give it a good go. You would have had fun and contributed to the club score!

**Field Day.** Now this can be a really fun event. The CARC gang heads out to a cherry orchard on Leelanau Peninsula for the weekend to operate field day. Sideband, CW, VHF operation goes on for 24 hours operating out of tents and trailers. There is also a nice social hour in the evening with pizza and beer! You have to give it a try!

**Club picnic.** Every summer we have a nice pot-luck picnic with lots of yummy food, cold beer and wine and burned hot-dogs. Now, what can't get better than that! Well, it's free; I guess that makes it better! Last year the “roach coach” (sorry Harry) and the Barge (what, you don't know what the Barge is???) were also out at the picnic providing food and beverages and the Barge had the radio gear. Come on out next year!

**Christmas Party.** This is a great end of the year event where we award the “Ham of the Year” award. Great food down at the Elks club and even entertainment if you can call my bag piping Christmas music “entertainment”. It's coming up in December so sign up!

**Training.** This fall we sponsored a Dstar (you do know what Dstar is, right?) training and had hams from all over the NW corner of the state attend. It was held at the Traverse City Salvation Army (thanks Harry) where we learned about how to use this new digital VHF/UHF mode of operation. Just to show how well this works, we were able to contact a VHF station in England using 5 watts to a mag-mount antenna on a serving platter inside the Salvation Army building. Now that was fun and exciting...see, ham radio can be fun again!

**Fox hunt.** Every summer we let the fox loose and try to find him or her as they hide somewhere and taunt us on the radio. The goal is to RDF the fox and be the first person to find it. This year Hope was the fox and it took a real effort to track her down. It was fun competition as there were three car loads of “hounds” out trying to track her down. Ward's group found her first, our car came in second and we had to send out a search party to find N8UL and his group! That was great fun and the teasing will go on until the next fox hunt. So, dig out your 2 meter portable beam, attenuators HT's and join the hunt!

**Emcomm.** A partner to the CARC is the TBARG group of Emergency Communications operators. TBARG is the short name for the Traverse Bay Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Group. Now you know why we just call it TBARG! This organization is a 501-c-3 not for profit group so that we could apply for grants to equip us with modern radio equipment. We were given an out of service ambulance that the guys have been busy converting to a mobile communications van. It is fully equipped with HF, VHF/UHF, packet and Dstar radios. We have also established a communications center at Munson hospital with the same radio equipment. It is stimulating and fun to be part of this organization...and we are always looking for more operators. For example, we just completed a VHF simplex drill where we simulated that the repeaters were down, power was out in the county and people were in Red Cross shelters. We dispatched three mobile units (we could have used 8 mobiles...where were you???) to Red Cross shelters, opened the Munson operating center and dispatched the Barge to tower hill to act as a relay. Now, that was fun, productive and beneficial to our community. We could have used your help if you didn't participate.

Oh yes, TBARG also participates the White Pine Stampede, the annual Simulated Emergency Test, regional exercises like the resent Madras earthquake exercise and frequent local drills. In case you're wondering, we are well respected by Grand Traverse Emergency Management, Fire and Police, Salvation Army and Red Cross. They need us and we need you! So back to my original question, Hello, is anybody out there? I know you are out there but I need you to turn on your radio, get active and get ready to have some fun stimulating ham radio. I'll be listing for you on 146.86!

-73 de Ernie, K8RCT  
Grand Traverse EC

## YEAR END CONTRIBUTIONS

Thinking about that year-end charitable donation? It is getting close to the end of the year and this is when we start thinking about making our charitable contributions. One charitable organization that I hope you will consider this year is our own emergency communications group, TBARG. TBARG is a 501-C3 not-for-profit organization that depends on charitable grants and donations to fund ham radio emergency communications in the Grand Traverse area.

A great deal of the expenses in operating TBARG comes right out of our wallets. I just spent \$30 on diesel fuel for example. Other hams have donated funds for insurance, equipment and supplies.

Donations to TBARG can be tax deductible and we will be more than happy to issue receipts for donations.

Of course a check made out to TBARG is a great way to help with our efforts. However, donations of your surplus radio equipment is also welcome. Just like Goodwill, we will issue a receipt for any gear donated to the group. Equipment collected will be put up for sale at the CARC swap in February.

I know I have a couple of surplus 2 meter rigs that I have collected over the years and I plan on donating them to TBARG. So, what do you have collecting dust in your shack? Put it to good use, donate it!

Thanks for considering us for your donations!

-73 de Ernie, K8RCT

## WX HR ES.....

Back in September 1936, Eugene A. Hubbell, W9ERU, took home the silver trophy at what the October 1936 issue of QST called the first official "Amateur Code Speed Contest." Only making one error, Hubbell won first prize with his winning speed of receiving 52.2 words per minute. Held at the ARRL Central Division Convention that year, the contest required operators to decipher plain language text at two minute intervals that ranged in speed from 25 to 52.7 words per minute.

But things have changed since Hubbell made history. Individuals all over the world compete in High Speed Telegraphy (HST) events where they are challenged to correctly receive and copy Morse code transmissions sent at very high speeds, upwards of 300 characters a minute. HST is very popular in Eastern Europe, but it is gaining ground all over the world, including the US.

International HST competitions are organized under the auspices of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU). Since 1995, HST World Championships take place each odd-numbered year. The Deutscher Amateur Radio Club (DARC) hosted the Ninth High Speed Telegraphy IARU World Championship in Bielefeld, Germany. The five day event -- held October 19-23, 2011 -- featured 22 nations competing for the title of Fastest Fist or Quickest Ear. Of the 22 nations represented, the US was the only country from the Western Hemisphere.

According to Barry Kutner, W2UP, HST has long been considered a sport in Europe, especially Eastern Europe, similar to chess or an Olympic sport. Kutner was the sole US representative at the 2005 HST World Championship in Macedonia. In 2009, he led a team of seven to Bulgaria for the Eighth High Speed Telegraphy IARU World Championship. Kutner said there really isn't much of an interest in HST here in the US, so those who wish to participate in the World Championship must do so at their own expense. Kutner said that most of the participating IARU Member-Societies hold a national competition in their country, seeking members to field and sponsor a team to the World Championship. "In some of the Eastern European countries, they take HST very seriously, and they have team and individual coaches," he said. Competitors must be licensed Amateur Radio operators, except entrants in the younger categories may be SWLs. The IARU HST World Championships follow rules set forth by the IARU Region 1 High Speed Telegraphy Working Group.

This year, Team USA -- consisting of Kutner, Kennan Low, KE3X, and Kody Low, K3ODY -- placed 10th in the competition. Kutner won a Gold Medal -- the first in HST history to a non-European -- in the pileup competition, and a Bronze Medal in the RUFZ competition.

There are three main competitive events at HST meets: Transmitting, receiving and receiving Amateur Radio call signs via RUFZ; the sending and receiving portions of the competition are referred to as the Radioamateur Practicing Tests (RPT). There is also a pileup competition.

In the RPT, random letters and numbers are sent via Morse code -- five characters at a time -- at a high speed. Separate competitions are held for the reception of only the 26 letters of the Latin alphabet, only the 10 Arabic numerals or a mixed content of letters, numbers and some punctuation symbols. Competitors may choose to record the text by hand on paper or by typing on a computer keyboard. The competition starts with one minute of transmission sent at an initial speed defined for the entry category (usually 50 letters per minute for juniors and 80 letters per minute for the other age categories). After each test, the competitors' copy is judged for errors. Subsequent tests are each conducted at an increased speed until no competitor remains who can copy the text without excessive error.

The transmission tests require competitors to send five character groups in Morse code as fast as possible. Competitors send a printed message of five character groups at a specific speed that is judged for its accuracy by a panel of referees. Like the receiving tests, there are separate competitions for sending five character groups of only letters, only numbers or a mixed content of letters, numbers and some punctuation symbols. Kutner noted that 100 letters per minute is equivalent to 25 words per minute and 100 numbers per minute is equal to 36 words per minute. The mixed category of 100 letters, numbers and punctuation is equal to 29 words per minute.

The Amateur Radio Call Sign Receiving Test uses a software program called RufzXP that generates a score for each competitor. Rufz is the abbreviation of the German word Rufzeichen-Hören that means "listening of call signs." In RufzXP, competitors listen to an Amateur Radio call sign sent in Morse code and must enter that call sign with the computer keyboard. If the competitor types in the call sign correctly, their score improves, and the speed at which the program sends subsequent call signs increases. If the competitor types in the call sign incorrectly, the score is penalized and the speed decreases. Only one call sign is sent at a time and the event continues for a fixed number of call signs (usually 50). Competitors can choose the initial speed at which the program sends the Morse code and the winner is the competitor with the highest generated score.

There is also a Pileup Trainer Test that simulates a pileup situation on the air -- numerous stations attempt to establish two-way contact with one particular station at the same time. This competition uses a software program called MorseRunner. In this test, more than one amateur radio call sign is sent at a time via Morse code that is generated at different audio frequencies and speeds, timed to overlap each other. Competitors must record as many of the call signs as they can during a fixed period of time. They may choose to do this either by recording the call signs by hand on paper or by typing them in with a computer keyboard. The winner is the competitor with the most correctly recorded call signs.

With the 2011 competition in the books, it's not too early to think about 2013. If you are able to copy and/or send CW at dizzying speeds, why not think about attending the next IARU HST World Championship? "We are always looking for younger hams, especially young ladies, to join us," Kutner said. "There are 3 competitors per category per country, for a maximum of 27 competitors." For more information on HST events, contact Kutner via e-mail.