



Zero Beat

Volume XXXV, no 3

<http://www.w8lky.org>

March, 2021

Serving the Tri-County area since 1986

Upcoming Club Programs & Events

March 6 - Club Breakfast

March 10 - Club Meeting
(On Air)

[for all events, see w8lky.org](http://www.w8lky.org)

Club Breakfast

At 8:30am on the first Saturday of each month, we meet for breakfast at Don Panchos Restaurant (2105 W. State St, Alliance).

All are welcome.

Club Meeting

Our next club meeting will be held on March 10th at 7:30PM.

This months meeting will be on our Two Meter repeater

145.370 with a PL of 110.9hz on the Transmit, and receive.



President's Remarks

Getting Back to Basics

We will soon attain the magic figure of Fifty(50) members in AARC. But for me there is one thing lacking, participation in CW or Morse Code use. The question that many hams ask is why bother with CW? Well the bottom line is, it was the method of communication at the beginning of Amateur Radio. Take a few minutes and visit our club web site and look for the word "Presentation" on the menu, Open up the club's power point presentation, the presentation begins but with the use of CW in the wireless form of communication.

It is all and well that we have fancy rigs in our shacks for "Phone" aka voice, but the real fun in Amateur Radio is still that tool called "CW-PADDIES OR KEY". In reality, our Ten(10) Meter CW Net on Thursday night should have about the same number of check in's as our Two Meter Phone Net. Correct me if I am wrong, but the main reason to set aside the requirement of knowing and communicating in CW was to make it easier for people to become license in Ham Radio and insure the number of Hams remain constant in numbers. So what are we going to do about the lack of participation in CW? That is the real \$64,000. dollar question. There is no quick fix in sight but hopefully, you have the desire to upgrade your craft as an Amateur Radio Operator and

(Continued on page 3)

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AARC Meetings

The Alliance Amateur Radio Club meetings are temporarily cancelled due the COVID19 Pandemic. For now, our meetings are being held on our two Meter repeater. See pg. 1 for more information.

Find Us Online:

Web: www.w8lky.org

E-mail: w8lky@w8lky.org



AARC Repeaters

2 Meters

145.370 (-) W8LKY
(PL - 110.9hz)

440 MHz

442.350 (+) W8LKY
(PL - 131.8hz)

Nets

Tuesday

Homeland security Net

7:00PM 147.51 Simplex

Thursday

Ten Meters

7:30 PM 28.122 MHz (Olivia)

8:00PM 28.420 MHz (SSB)

8:20PM 28.100 MHz (CW)

Two Meters

9:00 PM 145.37 MHz W8LKY (-)

Presidents Remarks

(Continued from page 1)

communicate in both CW and Phone (Voice). For those who pursue CW in our own club like Frank WA8WHP, Tony KD8BBK, John KD8MQ, Paul K2ASA and others (sorry I do not know for sure which club members participate in CW). I envy their knowledge and strong desire to communicate in CW and it is also my personal goal to acquire the knowledge and eventually communicate in CW. I do know that CW is not everyone's cup of Tea in Amateur Radio, I respect that and honor your opinion. Let's talk about this and maybe we can help you add another method of communication to your list of accomplishments in Amateur Radio.

Changing Frequencies!!!

Hopefully by the time you read this, we will have conducted a very successful VE Session (Conducting tests for Tech Licenses and upgrades for General and Extra tickets) at First Christian Church (DOC) in Alliance. Many thanks to James KD8VT and the other VE's who volunteered their time. We will give you the results "On Air" and in articles on the Clubs web site. The true life blood of any organization are new members and upgrading the licenses of present members of our club and other Ham Operators. I know when I received my General ticket, it felt great to be able to finally get on the HF Bands. But I have to wait for the weather to put up an antenna, our antenna team only works when it is warm. I recently earned my VE Certification, it's my way giving back to the club.

Earlier I spoke about our club membership reaching and surpassing Fifty(50) members, and 2021 dues for AARC are due by March 31st. Unlike many other organizations, our dues are less and that is the way it should be. Please renew your 2021 dues for AARC as soon as you can. Remember a dues renewal form must accompany your payment and please fill it out completely. We have updated the club's business card and pamphlet and those will be available at our club breakfast's the first Saturday of each month at Don Ponchos Restaurant on West State Street in Alliance. Bring a friend who you think might be considering becoming an Amateur Radio Operator.

We need to concentrate on our 2021 ways and means project. We already have one major suggestion, but I would like to see more items suggested. Send me an email or call me and share your suggestion for the 2021. Many thanks to John KD8MQ and Joe N8JEW and everyone in the club for their support of our 2020 Ways and Means project. We are anticipating the replacement of the 440 Machine's antenna this summer, this has been part of our ongoing equipment maintenance program.

The light at the end of the tunnel for Covid 19 is getting brighter, but we still have a long way to go before we return to normal operations: Meeting in conference room 1A in Aultman Alliance Community Hospital, Field Days outside and Face to Face like we use to do and all the projects we do during the year as a team. Getting the Covid vaccination is a personal choice, but I pray that you will make the proper decision based on what is best for you and your family. Remember: Mask Up, Step Back and Wash up, we can do this!!!!

73's
Ron KE8HCY

It's not a Begali, but....

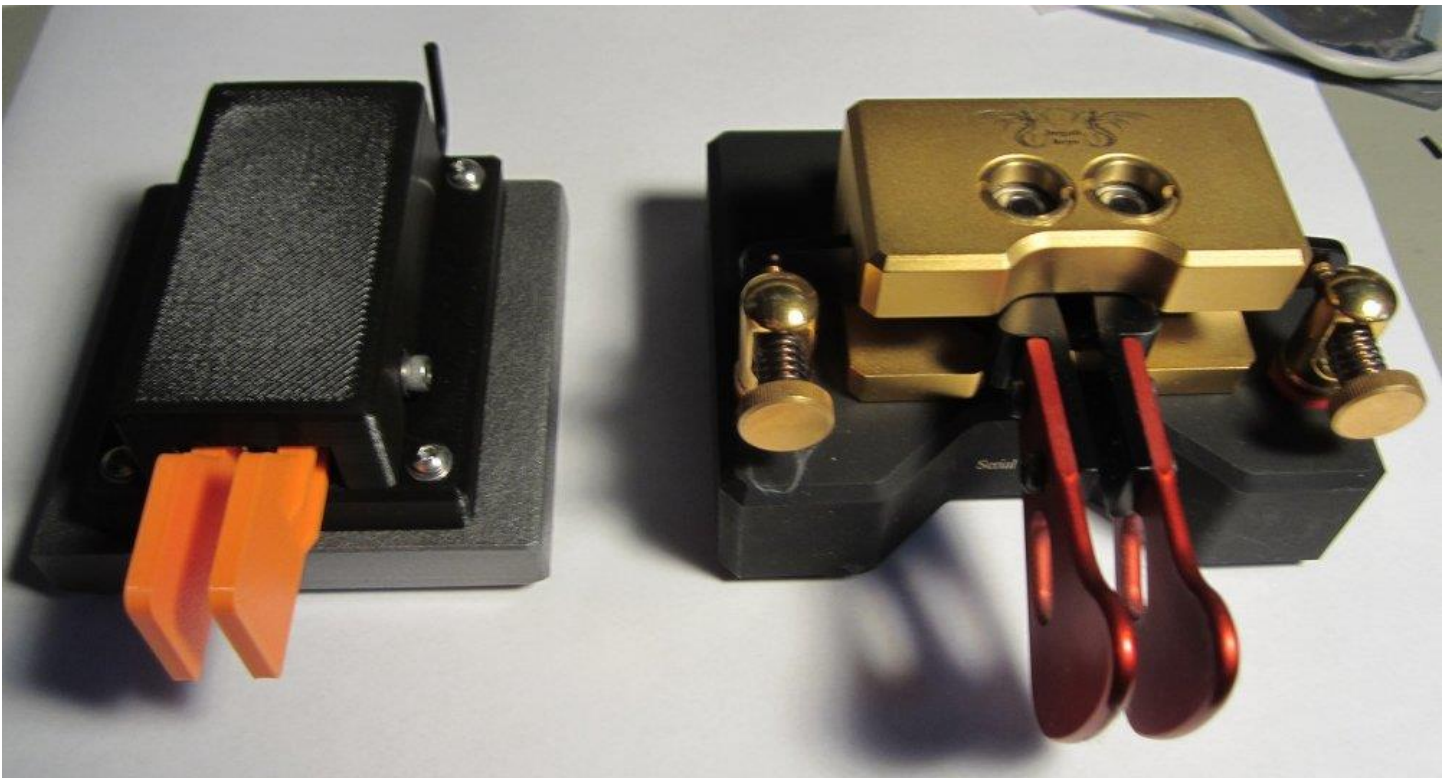
By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

One of the questions I'm most frequently asked is, "What is a good paddle for a beginner?" My usual answer to this question is to look for a used Bencher BY-1 at a hamfest or on one of the online venues. You used to be able to get them for \$60 or less. Now, however, there are few hamfests and the price has gone up. Now, used Benchers are close to \$80.

Another option that newcomers might consider is the [CW Morse](#) paddle (shown in photo below). They cost \$60 with a steel base (\$43 without), and are available from [3rd Planet Solar](#) and [Gigaparts](#). I purchased one recently, and used it for a couple of days. To be honest, I was prepared to hate it, but it actually works pretty well. It's not a Begali, but it's good enough that I'd recommend it as a starter key.

These keys are mostly made from 3D-printed plastic parts. You can tell this from the finish. While not as bad as some 3D-printed parts, they do look a little rough. I wouldn't be surprised if they go to molded parts, though, at some point. In high volumes, it has to be cheaper to mold the parts rather than print them.

The key does have metal parts where it counts, though. The contacts are all brass, the base is made from 1/2-in. cold-rolled steel, and the levers pivot on sealed ball bearings. My key weighed 22.5 oz (1.4 lbs.), and was quite



It's not a Begali Magnetic Pro (right), but the CW Morse dual-lever paddle (left) is worth considering as a first key.

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stationary on the silicone mat that I use for my keys. The Begali is, of course, a lot heavier at nearly 60 oz. (3.75 lbs.).

A spring between the levers provides the tension. Two screws allow you to adjust the contact spacing. Unlike the Begali, whose adjustment screws have a very fine thread to give you plenty of adjustability, these screws are standard thread screws. What this means is that it can be a bit tricky to set the contact spacing. The screws are spring-loaded to prevent the adjustment from changing, but the springs don't seem to be very beefy, and I can see where the adjustment might change after a lot of use.

The ball bearings give the key a nice action. During my tests, I had the speed cranked up to 23 wpm, and this key performed well at that speed. One thing I didn't like very much is that the arms tend to flex more than I like, but I actually have the same problem with the plastic Begali finger pieces. That's why I use the aluminum finger pieces on the Begali.

Overall, though, I'm quite happy with this key. And, for sixty bucks, which is about one-fifth of the price of a new Begali Magnetic Pro, I can certainly recommend this key to newcomers getting started in CW.

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Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the author of the KB6NU amateur radio blog (KB6NU.Com), the "No Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides (KB6NU.Com/study-guides/), and often appears on the ICQPodcast (icqpodcast.com). When he's not testing new keys, he teaches online ham radio classes and likes to work special event stations and state QSO parties.

Hamfest Updates

You are probably tire of hearing that this pandemic is a "Fluid Situation". But, I have some updates since last months column.

Here's what 2021 is looking like as of this week.

Both the Cuyahoga Falls, Athens, Dayton, and Butler Hamfests have been cancelled for 2021. The following though, are still on as of February 24th:

July 10th - **Mansfield** Mid-summer Trunk-fest at the Richland County Fair-grounds. (<http://www.arrl.org/hamfests/mansfield-mid-summer-trunkfest>)

August 7th - DX Engineering Hamfest, and Ohio Section convention
<http://dxengineering.com/>

September 26 - **Cleveland** Hamfest (<http://www.hac.org/>)

Nov 13/14 **Fort Wayne** (<http://www.fortwaynehamfest.com/>)

I've also heard rumors about another Hamfest being planned for July. Stay tuned for more information.

AARC Nets

We run several nets during the week.

Homeland Security Net -

Each Tuesday evening at 7PM local time, we run the Homeland Security Net on 147.51 simplex. Your net manager is Dwight, KD8YFV.

Then, on Thursday night, we have four nets beginning at 7:30PM.

AARC Digital Net -

Our most recent addition is the AARCDN. It begins at 7:30PM each Thursday night on 28.122. Set the mode on your digital software to Olivia 8/500.

According to Net control Doug. KB8DNQ,

To check into the net:

"AARCDN de (your call), name. city, with or without a comment"

Then when making a comment or addressing the net use

"AARCDN de (your call) ' and then your comments.

For more information, contact Doug, KB8DNQ at kb8dnq@gmail.com.

Tri-county News, Training, and Information Net -

This begins at 8PM Local (0100 UTC right now), on 28.420 SSB. The Net manager is John, KD8MQ

W8LKY CW Net - The CW net runs immediately after the SSB net. You can find it at 28.100. The net manager is frank, WA8WHP.

Two Meter Net - The 2 Meter net starts at 9PM local on the W8LKY 2 Meter repeater (145.370 PL:110.9). Tune in early to get on the list, as they take early check-ins. Net manager is Tomas, KC8ZEH.

AARC Repeaters

2 Meters

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(PL - 110.9hz)
Echolink:

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(CW)

Two Meters

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W8LKY (-)

Minutes

Remember, our club minutes (with the financials redacted) can be found on our website at w8lky.org.

The treasurers report can be obtained by e-mailing the treasurer at kd8mq1@gmail.com

VE testing session to be held in Alliance

An in person VE testing session is scheduled for this weekend in Alliance.

Here's the info:

Date: Saturday, Feb 27, 2021

It will be held at the First Christian Church, 1141 W. Beech Street, in Alliance

Registration will be between 8-9AM, and testing will begin at 9 AM

The cost for testing will be \$15.00

Applicants Need to Bring the following;

1. Copy of any current Amateur Radio License
2. Photo ID showing current address like a Driver's License
3. One additional ID, like a CCW Permit, Passport or work ID
4. \$15.00, Cash only and exact change is encouraged
5. A calculator is optional for math problems

For any additional questions please contact VE Team Liaison

James K. Andrews, KD8VT
(330)-206-4909

Editors Rambling

Hi everyone,

This month, I am getting the newsletter out on time. The last couple days have been a welcome preview of springtime; I hope it continues.

I don't have a lot to report in my column this month.

I did receive a heads up from Doug, KB8DNQ about his new packet station in Minerva. He says that it is running on 145.010. Look for KB8DNQ-1 for the BBS, KB8DNQ-5 for the digipeater, and KB8DNQ-7 for the Node. It runs 24-7.

Also, don't forget that Dues are due by March 31st.

And that's all I have for this month.

73 DE KD8MQ

Newsletter Information

The Zero Beat is a publication of the

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