

# GM Net News

Volume I

Editor: Rick WØPC

November Issue – 2008

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## **Life after the Firebirds, we are still here:** by Rick, WØPC

All of us are saddened by the folding of our Firebird Club. The handwriting has been on the wall for the last several years when the old officers had to keep taking on the same offices again and again just to keep the club afloat. But now, with the closing the books on the old times we are looking forward to a new era and better band conditions for sure.

The “GM Net” is going strong on the same net schedule as before. Even with the lousy band conditions, we still get 15 check-ins on the mid day 40 meter net. Don’t be shy, come join us. We all are struggling with not saying “Firebird, Firebird Group or Friendly Firebirds.” It’s a tough habit to break after so many years (48 years as a club).

I was a Firebird member for around 30 years and enjoyed meeting people working at the plants and GM facilities I visited around the country and in Germany. The nice part is that we can still be friends even though the club is defunct. The way I look at it is: “I didn’t pay dues to buy friends.” We can still stay in touch via email as well as via our nets.

Speaking of nets, Walter, DF4IZ was sure sounding good on the 20 meter net Tuesday morning. I’ve been pretty bad about remembering to check into that group. Last week, I heard guys check-in from all over some in German as well as English. Walter can handle both. It’s sure nice to hear from our DX friends.

What about net controls? George, KB9VF is suggesting that we put together a new net control schedule. If any one is interested in getting on a schedule, let George know. Lately, who ever shows-up on frequency first usually takes the net control duties. Not everyone is comfortable about taking the net, so a schedule is probably a good idea. In today’s busy world we can’t always be there every day. A schedule might help remind our busier members to turn the rig on and tune into our frequency at least on their scheduled net control days...Hi Hi. This season with the cooler weather and shorter days, is making chasing that little white ball around a little less frequent so come in out of the cold and join us.

Band conditions have been going up and down. We have had some pretty good days where everyone hears everyone and others where you only hear half the guys. Fortunately, cycle 24 is starting to pick up with more and more sunspots. Keep the faith! It will get better. Currently we have regular stations checking in from the north, south and middle that make the relay calls as necessary to get everyone a chance.

Come join us on the Firebird... excuse me... GM Group Net. You will hear that a lot as we learn the new lingo. George, KB8VF has been working on a new “Net Preamble.” You will feel right at home.

**Amateur Logic TV podcast** <http://www.amateurlogic.com/blog/>

If you have some spare time on your hands and a broadband Internet connection, I suggest you take a look at Amateur Logic TV. It's put together by a few guys on various topics that are of interest to hams. Some items are pretty basic but others are very educational like doing surface mount construction the home brew method. Every ham knows about MFJ and all their products. One of the segments is an interview with Martin F. Jue, President and founder of MFJ Enterprises. Another is a tour of the factory where MFJ equipment is built. Another episode is a tour of the Ameritron factory where the amplifiers are built. It's pretty interesting to see what goes on there. Another episode is a tour of the Hy-Gain factory. How about Soft Defined Radios? One episode is on the Softrock transceiver kit. All these video clips are homebrew without paid professional actors. I think you will enjoy spending a cool fall afternoon or evening inside next to the fireplace watching the programs.

73 de WØPC (Rick)

**40 Meter Net - Wally Renn, WB8M Net Control**

We are proud of how our nets are run and the very fine job our net controls do. 40 meters has been difficult to say the least these past couple of years. I'm very proud of the job Wally did on the July 25<sup>th</sup> net. His job as net control was monitored by an ARRL Official Observer and got great comments, the kind you want to get. GOOD JOB WALLY

**Good Operator Report**

Radio: WB8M, your call was heard calling/working \_\_\_\_\_ at 1745 UTC

Date: 07-25 20 08 Frequency 7.277 MHz Mode LSB Your RST 5x7

**We thought you would like to know . . .**

That this Official Observer has noted your EXCELLENT radio signal quality/operating procedure as a fine example for all amateurs.

Remarks: The on-air operations of your entire group is a

fine example of amateur radio. I would not

hesitate to let a visitor to listen to the QSO.

73 and keep up the good work.

This observation by the undersigned ARRL Official Observer is a function of the Amateur Auxiliary to the FCC. This Observer thanks you for your excellent example of good amateur practice for others in the Amateur Radio Service. Keep up the good work.

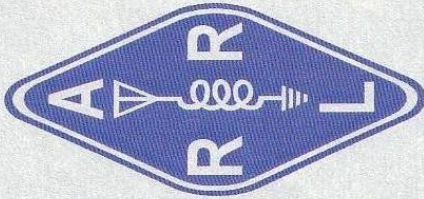
FSD-15(7-04) Signature Wayne P Staats Call WS8RM



For observed excellent radio operating procedure the Official Observer's

# Good Operator Report Is Awarded to Amateur Radio Station:

## WB8M



The Official Observer program is sponsored by the American Radio Relay League, 225 Main Street, Newington CT 06111, USA, to help amateurs help each other. For over 50 years, this volunteer program has aided thousands of amateurs to maintain their transmitting equipment and operating procedures in compliance with the regulations. The OO program is a function of the Amateur Auxiliary of the FCC's Field Operations Bureau in accordance with Public Law 97-259. High standards of operation benefit the entire amateur community. Your continued cooperation is appreciated.

Radio: WB8M, your call was heard  
Date: 07-25 2008  
Frequency 7.277 Mhz Mode LSB  
Calling FIREBIRDS At 1745 UTC.  
Working Your RST 5x7

### We thought you would like to know...

That this Official Observer has noted your EXCELLENT radio signal quality/operating procedure as a fine example for all radio amateurs.

Remarks: The on-air operations of your entire group is a

*fine example of amateur radio. I would not*

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*73 and keep up the good work.*

This observation by the undersigned ARRL Official Observer is a function of the Amateur Auxiliary to the FCC. This Observer thanks you for your excellent example of good amateur practice for others in the Amateur Radio Service. Keep up the good work!

Signature

Call WS8RM

A function of the Amateur Auxiliary of the FCC's Field Operations Bureau

## **Colonoscopy Story - By Dave Barry**

The doctor sends you a BILL for allowing him to do this to you, where is the justice in that?

This is from newshound Dave Barry's colonoscopy journal:

... I called my friend Andy Sable, a Gastroenterologist, to make an appointment for a colonoscopy. A few days later, in his office, Andy showed me a color diagram of the colon, a lengthy organ that appears to go all over the place, at one point passing briefly through Minneapolis. Then Andy explained the colonoscopy procedure to me in a thorough, reassuring and patient manner. I nodded thoughtfully, but I didn't really hear anything he said, because my brain was shrieking, Quote, 'HE'S GOING TO STICK A TUBE 17,000 FEET UP YOUR BEHIND!'

I left Andy's office with some written instructions, and a prescription for a product called 'MoviPrep,' which comes in a box large enough to hold a microwave oven. I will discuss MoviPrep in detail later; for now suffice it to say that we must never allow it to fall into the hands of America's enemies.

I spent the next several days productively sitting around being nervous. Then, on the day before my colonoscopy, I began my preparation. In accordance with my instructions, I didn't eat any solid food that day; all I had was chicken broth, which is basically water, only with less flavor. Then, in the evening, I took the MoviPrep. You mix two packets of powder together in a one-liter plastic jug, and then you fill it with lukewarm water. (For those unfamiliar with the metric system, a liter is about 32 gallons.) Then you have to drink the whole jug. This takes about an hour, because MoviPrep tastes - and here I am being kind - like a mixture of goat spit and urinal cleanser, with just a hint of lemon.

The instructions for MoviPrep, clearly written by somebody with a great sense of humor, state that after you drink it, 'a loose watery bowel movement may result.' This is kind of like saying that after you jump off your roof, you may experience contact with the ground.

MoviPrep is a nuclear laxative. I don't want to be too graphic, here, but have you ever seen a space-shuttle launch? This is pretty much the MoviPrep experience, with you as the shuttle. There are times when you wish the commode had a seat belt. You spend several hours pretty much confined to the bathroom, spurting violently. You eliminate everything. And then, when you figure you must be totally empty, you have to drink another liter of MoviPrep, at which point, as far as I can tell, your bowels travel into the future and start eliminating food that you have not even eaten yet.

After an action-packed evening, I finally got to sleep. The next morning my wife drove me to the clinic. I was very nervous. Not only was I worried about the procedure, but I had been experiencing occasional return bouts of MoviPrep spurtage. I was thinking, 'What if I spurt on Andy?' How do you apologize to a friend for something like that? Flowers would not be enough.

At the clinic I had to sign many forms acknowledging that I understood and totally agreed with whatever the heck the forms said. Then they led me to a room full of other colonoscopy people, where I went inside a little curtained space and took off my clothes and put on one of those hospital garments designed by sadist perverts, the kind that, when you put it on, makes you feel even more naked than when you are actually naked.

(Continued)

## Colonoscopy Story (Continued)

Then a nurse named Eddie put a little needle in a vein in my left hand. Ordinarily I would have fainted, but Eddie was very good, and I was already lying down. Eddie also told me that some people put vodka in their MoviPrep. At first I was ticked off that I hadn't thought of this, but then I pondered what would happen if you got yourself too tipsy to make it to the bathroom, so you were staggering around in full Fire Hose Mode. You would have no choice but to burn your house.

When everything was ready, Eddie wheeled me into the procedure room, where Andy was waiting with a nurse and an anesthesiologist. I did not see the 17,000-foot tube, but I knew Andy had it hidden around there somewhere. I was seriously nervous at this point. Andy had me roll over on my left side, and the anesthesiologist began hooking something up to the needle in my hand. There was music playing in the room, and I realized that the song was 'Dancing Queen' by ABBA. I remarked to Andy that, of all the songs that could be playing during this particular procedure, 'Dancing Queen' has to be the least appropriate.

'You want me to turn it up?' said Andy, from somewhere behind me. 'Ha ha,' I said. And then it was time, the moment I had been dreading for more than a decade. If you are squeamish, prepare yourself, because I am going to tell you, in explicit detail, exactly what it was like.

I have no idea. Really, I slept through it. One moment, ABBA was yelling 'Dancing Queen, Feel the beat of the tambourine,' and the next moment, I was back in the other room, waking up in a very mellow mood. Andy was looking down at me and asking me how I felt. I felt excellent. I felt even more excellent when Andy told me that it was all over, and that my colon had passed with flying colors. I have never been prouder of an internal organ.

ABOUT THE WRITER: Dave Barry is a Pulitzer Prize-winning humor columnist for the Miami Herald.

## Alt + Tab

Back by popular demand. You asked for it, so here it is!

Let's say you have about four different programs running on your PC all at the same time. For instance, maybe you have your e-mail up and running, a Web browser window open, a Word document ready for review and your music player playing your favorite song. With all of that going on, have you ever wondered if there was a quick way to pull each of those programs up as you need them, without the rest of them getting in your way? For example, maybe you're working on your Word document, but you want to bring your music player up to change songs. So, how can you do that quickly and painlessly?

Well, all you have to do is press **Alt + Tab** together one time. Once you do that, it will bring up a little box that has all of your open programs listed. Then while continuing to hold the Alt key down, just press the Tab key to scroll your way across the programs. Highlight the one you want and then release the Alt key to pull that program up. Want to change programs again? Just repeat the process as many times as you need. It's so simple and it also helps you to keep track of everything you have running on your PC at one time. Pretty cool, huh? Give it a try today!

Lee, WB8COG

## What's happening to our Florida friends?

Hopefully, this winter season will allow us to catch up on what's going on down there. We haven't heard from some of our full-time residents for a while. The snowbirds should be arriving and hopefully they have remembered to take their rigs with them. I do remember hearing Bob, K8ACQ say he was loading up a semi load in his trunk of his car. Hope there was enough room for the rig. Both Ray, K1RAY and Bob, K8MPV have assured us they will be able to pickup anyone that we can't hear up north. Those 2 guys are in a very good position to hear everyone. Keep checking Ray & Bob. You guys may not be getting much rain but you sure are blessed with good propagation for the net.

## Nets

It's about time to start up our 160 meter net again. The summer noise is settling down making a pleasure to get on "The Gentleman's Band." Anyone know of other nets that should be included in this schedule? Send me an email with any changes to the schedule and I'll update the list.

## Proposed "Net Preamble" by George, KB9VF

### Net Opening:

This is ( your call ), today's net control. This net is composed of employees and retirees of the General Motors Corporation and it's operating units around the world. This is one of the nets meeting daily on this frequency for the purpose of getting better acquainted, expanding our knowledge, and improving our operating techniques. We promote friendship among net participants in many locations who have many talents and have or have had a variety of work assignments. The General Motors nets are international in scope on some bands, and visitors are always welcome to check in. Please stay carefully tuned to net control at all times. This is ( your call ) ( working for or retired from ) ( your ) Division in ( your city ), ( state ). My home QTH is ( where you live ). My name is ( your name ) and we will now take check-ins, one at a time, please.

### Net Closing:

Are there any late check-ins for the net? (pause for late check-ins). Is there any further business for the net? ( pause for any further business ) Having no further business, we will close the net at this time. This net is composed of General Motors employees, retirees, and visitors. We meet each day, Monday through Saturday, on or about this frequency, at ( 1700z or 1800z ). Thank you for your participation and please return often. This is ( your call ) now closing the net and releasing the frequency for general amateur use. 73 and Good Afternoon to all.

## GM NET SCHEDULE:

<u>FREQ.MHz</u>	<u>DAY</u>	<u>TIME-UTC</u> <u>SUMMER</u>	<u>TIME-UTC</u> <u>WINTER</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
7.2775	Mon - Fri	1700	1800	
14.277**	Tuesday	1615	1615	+ or - 5 kHz for QRM ( <b>GM DX Net</b> )
1.877±	Tuesday	None	0030	
3.977	Thursday	2300	2300	
14.277*	Sunday	1200	1200	
3.977	Sunday	2000	2000	
14.277*	Sunday	2100	2100	

\* Indicates net is currently inactive, \*\* Indicates the Schedule with Walter, DF4IZ