

Zero Beat

February, 2026



President's QRM

As we begin another busy and exciting season for our club, I want to take a moment to thank each of you for the time, talent, and enthusiasm you bring to amateur radio and to our organization. Whether you're active on the air daily, supporting club operations behind the scenes, or simply enjoying staying connected through our nets and meetings, your participation truly matters.

This year continues to be an important one for amateur radio. Across the country—and right here in our community—hams are being called upon to provide reliable communications, technical expertise, and public service. Our club remains committed to supporting that mission through ongoing training, emergency-preparedness efforts, and technical innovation. From repeater system improvements to digital operating modes and portable operations, we are working to ensure our members have the tools and knowledge to succeed.

We also have several opportunities ahead to learn, connect, and have some fun. Upcoming meetings, operating events, and special projects offer great chances to sharpen skills, mentor newer operators, and share ideas. I encourage everyone—especially newer members—to get involved, ask questions, and take advantage of the experience within our membership. Amateur radio is, at its heart, a shared journey of learning.

Equally important is the sense of community we build together. Our club thrives because of volunteers who give their time, instructors who share their knowledge, and members who step up when help is needed. If you've ever considered helping with a net, a committee, an event, or a technical project, now is a great time to raise your hand. Every contribution, large or small, strengthens the club.

Finally, I invite your feedback and ideas. This is your club, and your voice helps guide where we go next. If you have suggestions for programs, topics, or activities you'd like to see, please reach out to any board member or bring them to a meeting.

Thank you for being part of our amateur radio family. I look forward to hearing you on the air and seeing you at our upcoming events.

73,

Joe Raznik, WB8ADX

General Meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month, 7:30 pm at the Hazel Park Library and on Zoom With Socializing At 7:00 pm .

See you there!

Club Officers:

President: Joe WB8ADX

1st. VP: Len AD8FK

2nd. VP: Andrew AJ0WX

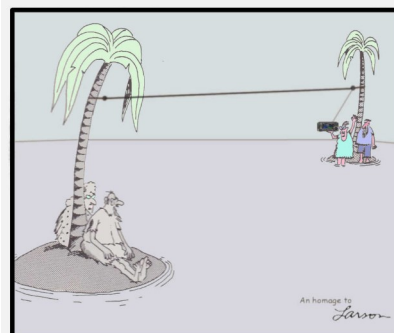
Secretary: Reuven KB3EHW

Treasurer: Bob N8REL

Parliamentarian: Hugh KE8BED

Director: Dave W8HOO

Zero Beat Editor: Mike N8VDZ



"Islands On The Air" would be more fun if WE had a radio too!

Hamvention 2026 Dayton, Ohio

The ARROW Communications Association and the Toledo Mobile Radio Association (TMRA) are proud to sponsor a motor coach trip to the Hamvention 2026 in Dayton, Ohio. This one-day trip leaves early in the morning on May 16, 2026 and returns the same day after Hamvention closes for the day at 5:00 p.m. The bus has two pickup spots, in Ann Arbor and in Toledo (Rossford). Please join us!

Tickets are \$95 per person January 1st 2026 – April 17th 2026, or \$110 per person April 18th 2026 – May 15th 2026

Please note that this does not include the Hamvention ticket, which you need to purchase separately.

To Register and see full Details visit: <https://>



Need to get Caught up on the Repeater Upgrade?
The Repeater Grant Team is working hard to get the repeater replaced. Please check out the News feeds at HPARC.org

60 Meter Band Changes

The FCC has announced changes in the 60 meter band that will give it a split personality between a “real” ham band and fixed channels. In December 2025, the FCC ruled on an ARRL petition from two years earlier, granting the minimum frequency allocation agreed to at the WRC-15 international conference.

The rule changes take effect 30 days after publication in the Federal Register, with an effective date expected in February or March 2026.

The new band is continuous from 5351.5 to 5366.5 KHz, replacing the current fixed channel at 5357 KHz. The other four fixed channels, at 5330.5, 5346.5, 5371.5 and 5403.5 KHz (carrier frequency, USB) remain unchanged, with 100 watts transmitted ERP allowed. However, the power limit for the new allocation is only 9.15 watts ERP, so QRP op-

eration will be required. Figuring out the allowed transmit power is a two-step process. For the new allocation, the formulas are:

$$9.15 \text{ W} = 9.6 \text{ dBW}$$

$$P_{\text{TX}} [\text{dBW}] \leq 9.6 [\text{dBW}] - \text{antenna gain [dBd]} + \text{feedline loss [dB]}$$

$$P_{\text{TX}} [\text{W}] = 10^{P_{\text{TX}} [\text{dBW}]}$$

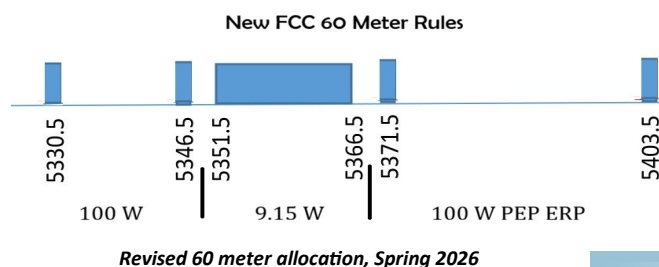
For the fixed channels, 100 W = 20 dBW, so just substitute 20 for 9.6. For a dipole, antenna gain is 0 dBd. For a station using a dipole antenna, a simple rule of thumb is to set transmit power just under 9 watts or just under 100 watts.

Some other things to know are that the new FCC rule permits any data mode requiring 2.8 KHz bandwidth or less in both the continuous band and the fixed channels. However, radio amateurs are secondary users in this band, so hams must be careful not to interfere with government stations, the primary users.

privileges.

The rule changes are expected to go into effect on February 14, 2026.

Wes Plouff
AC8JF, 6 January
2026



From the Editor

First I want to thank the members who of their own accord have sent me articles for the newsletter. Thank you and keep them coming. If you hear of an event coming up or if you learned something new and want to share it, send it to me. My deadline for articles is the first Monday of the month.

I also want to apologize for those of you who are saying "Where the heck is the January 2026 issue. Between family illnesses and other pieces of life getting in the way between me and the board, deadlines were missed and when everything finally came together it was 2 days before the deadline for the February issue. So it simply made sense to skip the issue.

Mike N8VDZ

Antenna Polarization

No matter what kind of radio or antenna you're using, one thing to keep in mind for effective communication is for you and your friend to send and receive radio waves that are aligned the same way. This is known as signal polarization. In order for you two to make your signal polarizations match, you both need to have the same antenna orientation. Orientation is simply the physical alignment of your antenna relative to the up-and-down pull of gravity, while polarization refers to the alignment of a radio signal. Two antennas are aligned when they operate in parallel, meaning when they run in the same or opposite directions. This means that one antenna pointed up and another pointed down are both aligned and oriented vertically, because they point in directions parallel to each other. This results in their signal polarizations aligning vertically too. This is why a Jpole hanging upside down from a tree works just as well as when it's mounted upright. Most of our communication using HTs, and mobile radios, and through repeaters require a vertical orientation of our antennas, meaning they are pointed either up or down. This is because most repeater and vehicle-mounted antennas are fixed pointed upwards. Then again, if you're talking with a friend on simplex, and his antenna is pointed horizontally, like to the side, you'll need to point your antenna to the side as well, to allow for the best reception between you two. If your VHF antenna is not oriented the same as that of the repeater or your friend, only a portion of your signals will be received by each other. It's a little

like trying to melt a popsicle in the sun shining through the blinds; you'll probably get the most coverage by orienting the popsicle sideways, rather than up-and-down, because it'll match the polarization of the sun's rays through the blinds better. You might find that many hams using HTs will suddenly sound better, as they turn their radios so that their antennas are pointed upward. An additional benefit of having a vertical orientation is that you don't need to worry about which direction the repeater or your friend is, in relation to your VHF antenna, while with a horizontal orientation you'll need to face the flat side of your antenna to them. One last thing about antenna orientation. Make sure you don't point your HT antenna at your friend, or your signal might not be heard at all. Nearly all of an antenna's signal leaves it from off its side, and not the end, so pointing the end at the repeater will present it with the weakest signal possible. These orientation principles also apply to HF "wire" antennas, such as dipole, end-fed, OCFD, long wires, even sloper antennas, and "rod" antennas, such as Buddi-Pole and HamStick antennas. Wire and rod antennas tend to be mounted, and therefore oriented, horizontally, but in spite of the vertical advantage mentioned above, HF antenna orientation (vertical vs. horizontal) is not quite as critical, because signals refracting off the ionosphere end up with a circular or elliptical polarization anyway. **Noji Ratzlaff, KNØJI**

Hazel Park Amateur Radio Club
Income Statement: Actual v Budget
FYE 06-30-2026 as of January 31, 2026
period as indicated

	Current Month - January			Year to date		
	month ACTUAL	month BUDGET	Variance	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance YTD
Summary						
TOTAL INCOME	60.00	370.00	(310.00)	879.00	1,480.00	(601.00)
TOTAL EXPENSE	<u>435.96</u>	<u>296.00</u>	<u>(139.96)</u>	<u>1,549.56</u>	<u>3,900.00</u>	<u>2,350.44</u>
Net	(375.96)	74.00	(449.96)	(670.56)	(2,420.00)	1,749.44
Surplus/ (Shortfall)	\$ (375.96)	\$ 74.00	\$ (449.96)	\$ (670.56)	\$ (2,420.00)	\$ 1,749.44

ARDC Grant progress by month								
at June 30, 2025	at July 31, 2025	at Aug 31, 2025	at Sept 30, 2025	at Oct 31, 2025	at Nov 30, 2025	at Dec 31, 2025	at Jan 31, 2026	
Avail at Beginning of Month	26,743.00	26,263.20	26,263.20	16,895.20	16,007.20	16,007.20	16,007.20	7,590.33
used	479.80	0.00	9,368.00	888.00	0.00	8,416.87	0.00	0.00
Remaining Grant fund NOT including Club contrib	26,263.20	26,263.20	16,895.20	16,007.20	16,007.20	7,590.33	7,590.33	7,590.33

Can I get a signal report?

You may spend a lot of money on your equipment from antenna to transceiver including the best coax, but if your signal is a little noisy or just plain bad, how do you know? You don't unless someone tells you.

I am a net controller for 3 different nets and as net control it is my responsibility to let people know even if they don't ask. Often people don't know they have an issue unless they notice SWR is out or they see their antenna or coax lying on the ground. So, 3 things, #1, don't be shy, kindly let them know. #2, Don't butt into someone's net to report someone's bad signal, that is net controls responsibility. And #3, Don't lie. If someone asks don't say, "5,9, Full Quieting" if they are not. Keep in mind when you do that it is you who will have to continue listening to their bacon.

Now let's talk about you and your signal. Again like I said before, you can't know is your signal is bad unless someone tells you, so ask. "Can I get a signal report?" This will be reported back to you in multiple possible ways. "You sound good". Of course that does not tell you much. Hopefully you will get more than that. Maybe they will say "Full Quieting". That means received signal is very strong, clear, and completely free of background hiss or static.

Another way they may report to you is "You are 5,9". That is from 2 different scales. The first, the 5, is Readability, Scale of 1-5. 1 = Not readable, 2 = Only occasional words are readable, 3 = Hard to read, 4 = readable with minimal difficulty, 5 is perfectly clear. The 9 in the report refers to signal strength. Most S-meters go 0-9 and some show -10 -20 -30 beyond the 9. If your signal shows on their radio -10 they might say 5,9+ Or is it is -30 they might say 5,9+++.

When someone asks for a signal report, train yourself to look at your S-Meter, or you'll need to ask them to transmit again, which really is ok. I have found it interesting to give someone a signal report of 5,0. Yep it sometimes happens on 70cm repeaters. They will be perfectly clear, but the S-meter needle doesn't move ay all, 0. Go figure. Keith KD8ZSK often calls that a BINGO. One final note, If someone tells you you have a lot of bacon in your signal or gives you a signal report that is not 5,9 whether you ask or not, do not get offended by that. They are helping you. You obviously did not know and now you do. Here's to 5,9's!

Mike S. N8VDZ