

The Wireless
 June 2023
 The Garden City
 Amateur Radio Club
 PO Box 482 • Garden City, MI 48135-9998

Next Meeting:
 Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2023, 7:00pm
 Garden City Presbyterian Church
 1841 Middlebelt Rd.
 Garden City, MI 48135

Photo courtesy W9JZ

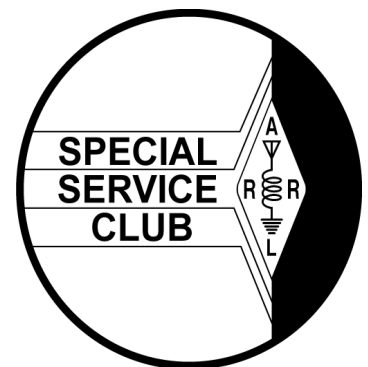
Congratulations:

- ◆ KE8YRY
- ◆ KE8YRZ
- ◆ KE8WAI/AG

Congratulations to those that have recently earned their first Amateur license or have upgraded. We look forward to joining with you as together we explore the many possible worlds of Amateur Radio. We'd like to begin by inviting you to join us for breakfast this Saturday at 9:00 am at Big Boy on the corner of Ford Rd. and Harrison in Garden City. Topics of conversation are wide and varied, and it's a great place to informally ask radio related questions and share ideas.



If you can't make it in person, we also invite you to tune your radio to the GC Repeater and give us a call. We almost always have a couple of radios on the table and would love to have you join us that way.



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Have you heard of Trail to Eagle (TTE)?



Over the years, you may have heard Scott Deykes / WT8S and myself mention this Boy Scout program on our repeater or at one of our many club breakfasts. Let me enlighten you with a synopsis of what this entails. This one-of-a-kind program was developed by our Michigan Crossroads Council over 25 years ago. It is an opportunity for Scouts of First-Class rank and at least 13 years old to earn additional unique merit badges not necessarily made available within their local troop geographical area before they turn 18 years of age. Once one turns 18, are considered an adult and not able to earn Scouts highest honor, Eagle Scout. It is held at D-Bar-A Scout Ranch in Metamora, MI and run by an amazing volunteer staff, who continue to set the bar high every year.

Since its inception in 1995, over 2,400 Eagle candidates from 12 states, 31 councils, as well as from the Far East and Trans-Atlantic Councils, have attended this unique program. One of the largest attended camps had 191 Scouts participate from six states, eleven different councils, and a Scout from Shanghai, China. Scouts from nearly every corner of the Michigan Crossroads Council have participated in this event.

Over 64% of our candidates have attained the rank of Eagle Scout and even more are still working on achieving this lofty goal. We have 60 staff members who have been with the program for ten years or more. Scott has been involved many more years than I have. There is a ratio of one staff member for every two youth.

The Scouts have earned, on average, over 1,000 merit badges each year with an average of over six to 10 merit badges per Scout. TTE is not a merit badge mill, but rather a highly structured week that allows ample time to work on merit badges. A Scout must earn the merit badge; they are not just given one. Eagle required merit badges are offered along with 68 non-Eagle merit badges. A sampling of merit badges offered include Aviation, Surveying, Geocaching, Robotics, Fly Fishing, Animation, Movie Making, Cooking, Photography, Horsemanship, Digital Technology, Signals & Codes, Engineering, Wood Carving, Golf, Mining in Society, Metalwork, Welding, Farm Mechanics, Railroading, Animal Science and Small Boat Sailing.

Scott is a registered merit badge counselor for Search and Rescue, Plumbing and Weather. He also serves as a Scoutmaster to one of the 8 troop color units. I am registered for the Radio merit badge. In addition, our Garden City Amateur Radio club (GCARC), sponsors a special event station during that week. We usually reserve the use of the Boy Scouts K2BSA Amateur Radio Association call sign, notifying operators over the air about this program. This year, that call sign is being used by another group in the same region. We also monitor specific frequencies on 2, 20, 40 and 80 meters. This year's event will be listed in the July issue of QST magazine using our club call K8GC. We're also listed on the ARRL website. One of the requirements of this badge is to have a QSO with some operator on the air. Scouts will learn about propagation and how signals travel all over the world.

All Scout participants, who are called "Eagle Candidates" will be divided into provisional units and will be based out of the cabins at the Ranch. Overseeing the Scouts per cabin will be at least three Scoutmasters and a Junior Assistant Scoutmaster (JASM), many of whom are Eagle Scouts, and in most cases have gone through the TTE program. All meals will be served by the D-Bar-A food service staff, in Wyckoff Lodge Dining Hall.

While the emphasis is on earning merit badges, there will be many other high adventure activities which all add to the fun. These include flag ceremonies, a water ball competition, "Basarball" (volleyball), Boy Scout Jeopardy, chess tournament, mile swim, a camp wide Vesper Service, and the ever-popular Order of the Arrow (service organization within the Boy Scouts) sponsored ice cream social.

Throughout the week, the Eagle candidates are competing for the highly coveted Troop Spirit Award. Troops demonstrate their spirit with cheers and songs performed at assemblies before and during all meals. One of the MOST sought-after distinctions is the George Thomas Award. This award is presented to Eagle Candidates who exhibit the same spirit and enthusiasm that this outstanding Scouter showed for the principles of the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

Preparation for this camp starts after the last one ends. It is literally, a year long effort to keep all the moving pieces reserved in place. Our motto is "You've Got to Believe".

Richard Zarczynski / AC8FJ

