

**ALPENA**

# NOAA sets 'Weather Radio Awareness Week'

**By PATTY RAMUS**  
News Staff Writer

Robert Colarusso bought his first weather radio while living in Maryland in 1962, after he began working for the National Weather Service.

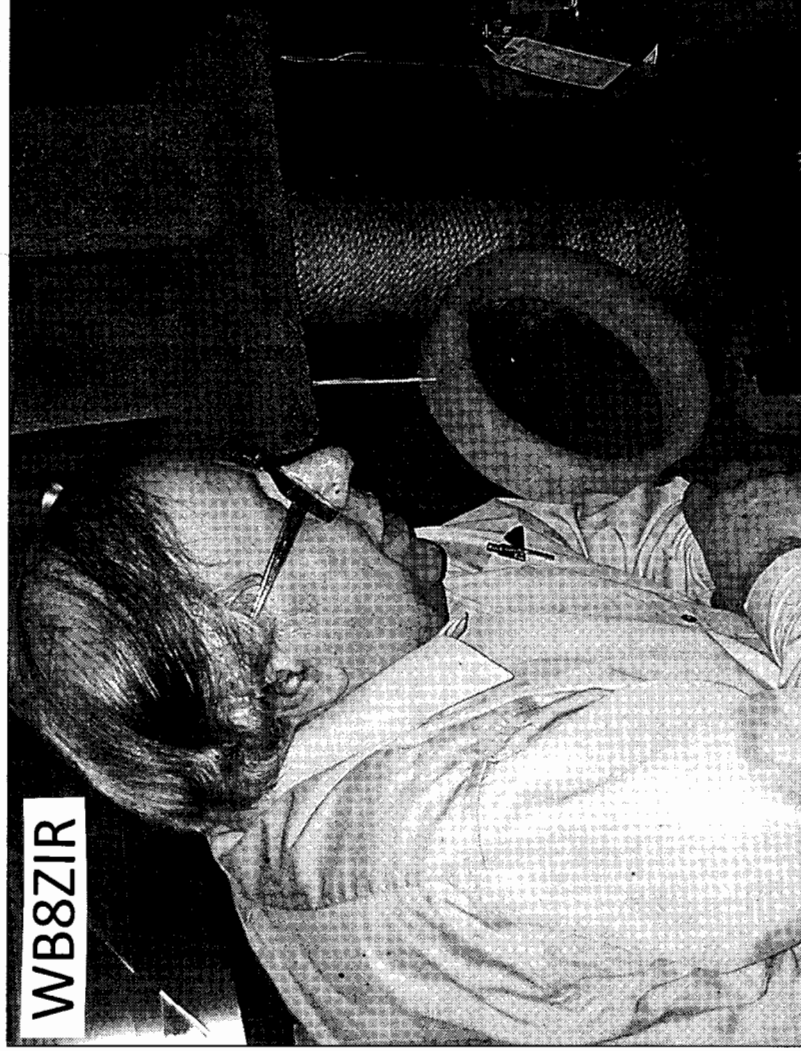
Colarusso, a retired weather service radar specialist now living in Sanborn Township, now owns three weather radios and uses each in a different room of his house. They are necessary tools in his work as a trained weather spotter with the weather service's Skywarn program.

"I pay attention to all (of the weather warnings)," he said. "It's to feed information into the weather conditions. We're the eyes and ears of the weather service."

Sunday, Feb. 3 is the first day of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Radio Awareness Week, which runs until Feb. 9.

The week was set aside to increase awareness about weather radios and to educate the public about them. The radios are something that every home, school or hospital should have because it's the quickest way to receive up-to-date weather reports said Jim Keysor, weather service meteorologist in Gaylord.

"A lot of people are just not aware of this separate weather



**News Photo by Patty Ramus**  
Robert Colarusso of Sanborn Township listens to his weather radio Thursday afternoon in his home. Sunday, marks the first day of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Radio Awareness Week, which is intended to raise awareness and to educate the public about weather radios.

frequency that's available to them," he said. "When we talk to people about weather radio, we put them in the same category as a smoke detector in the home."

"There are seven different frequencies that weather radios operate on across the United States making them portable from state to state," weather service has six trans-

mitters which covers a 40-50 mile radius around each transmitter.

"In general the coverage is quite good. Greater than 95 percent of the people in Michigan are covered by weather radio broadcasts," Keysor said.

On a weather radio individuals can hear reports of current conditions, seven day forecast, marine forecast and any types of storm warnings and watches.

"We shorten the broadcast when the weather is active so people can get the most important things," Keysor said.

Keysor said newer models of weather radios can be programmed to set off an alarm for certain alerts or programmed to receive broadcasts for specific areas. They can cost between \$30-\$50 and can be purchased at most electronics or department stores.

"The biggest one is to make sure it has all seven frequencies. Some of the less expensive models have only three," he said.

Colarusso said it's also important to make sure the radio has a battery back-up so they can still be used during power outages.

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