

Amateur Radio

45241

<http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com>

COMMUNICATIONS & TECHNOLOGY
AUGUST 2006

CQ

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Incredible Propagation on
6 Meters! p. 82

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On the Cover: Steve Flood,
KK7UV, of Missoula, Montana.
Story on page 70.

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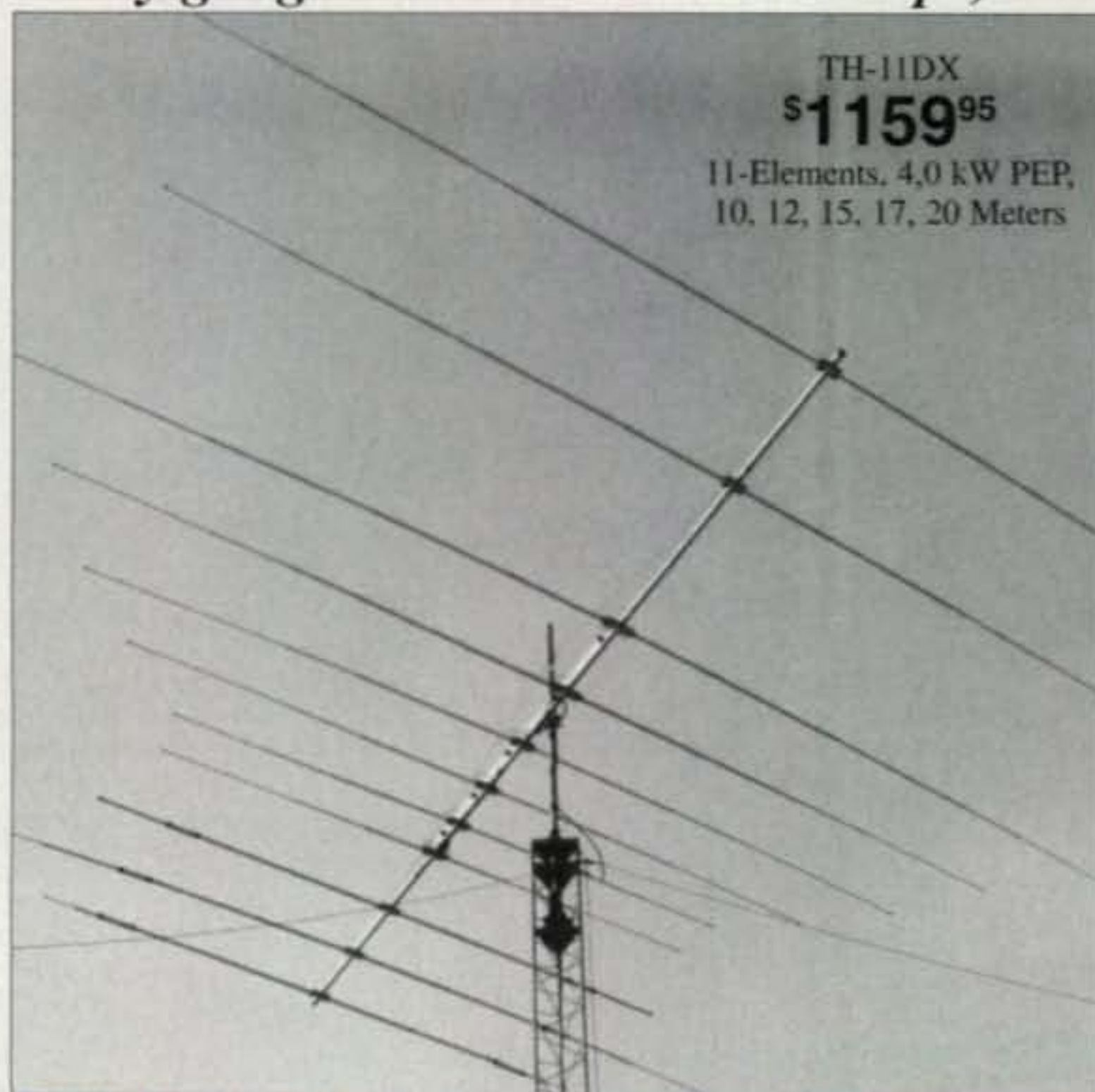


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hy-gain® HF BEAMS...

... are stronger, lighter, have less wind surface and last years longer. Why? Hy-Gain uses durable **tooled** components -- massive boom-to-mast bracket, heavy gauge element-to-boom clamps, thick-wall swaged tubing -- virtually no failures!



TH-11DX
\$1159⁹⁵

11-Elements, 4.0 kW PEP,
10, 12, 15, 17, 20 Meters

TH-11DX, \$1159.95. 11-element, 4.0 kW PEP, 10,12,15,17,20M

The choice of top DXers. With 11-elements, excellent gain and 5-bands, the super rugged TH-11DX is the "Big Daddy" of all HF beams! Handles 2000 Watts continuous, 4000 Watts PEP. Every part is selected for durability and ruggedness for years of trouble-free service.

Features a low loss log-periodic driven array on all bands with monoband reflectors, BN-4000 high power balun, corrosion resistant wire boom support, hot dipped galvanized and stainless steel parts. Stainless steel hardware and clamps are used on all electrical connections.

TH-7DX, \$869.95. 7-element, 1.5 kW PEP, 10,15,20 Meters

7-Elements gives you the highest average gain of any Hy-Gain tri-bander! Dual driven for broadband operation without compromising gain. SWR less than 2:1 on all bands. Uniquely combining monoband

and trapped parasitic elements give you an excellent F/B ratio. Includes Hy-Gain's diecast aluminum, rugged boom-to-mast clamp, heavy gauge element-to-boom brackets, BN-86 balun. For high power, upgrade to BN-4000.

TH-5MK2, \$759.95. 5-element, 1.5 kW PEP, 10,15,20 Meters

The broadband five element TH5-MK2 gives you outstanding gain.

Separate air dielectric Hy-Q traps let you adjust for maxi-

mum F/B ratio on each band.

Also standard is Hy-Gain's exclusive BetaMATCH™, stainless steel hardware and compression clamps and BN-86 balun.

TH-3MK4, \$469.95. 3-element, 1.5 kW PEP, 10,15,20 Meters

The super popular TH-3MK4 gives you the most gain for your money in a full-power, full-size durable Hy-Gain tri-bander!

You get an impressive average gain and a whopping average front-to-back ratio. Handles a full 1500 Watts PEP. 95 MPH wind survival.

Fits on average size lot with

room to spare -- turning radius is just 15.3 feet. Four piece boom is ideal for DXpeditions. Rotates with CD-45II or HAM-IV rotator.

Features Hy-Gain BetaMATCH™ for DC ground, full power Hy-Q™ traps, rugged boom-to-mast bracket and mounts on standard 2" O.D. mast. Stainless steel hardware. BN-86 balun recommended.

TH-2MK3, \$369.95. 2-element, 1.5 kW PEP, 10,15,20 Meters

The 2-element TH-2MK3 is Hy-Gain's most economical full power (1.5kW PEP) full size tri-bander.

For just \$339.95 you can greatly increase your effective radiated power and hear far better!

Ruggedly constructed, top-performing, compact 6 foot boom, tight 14.3 foot turning radius. Installs almost anywhere. Rotate with CD-45II or HAM-IV. BN-86 balun recommended.

EXP-14, \$599.95. 4-element, 1.5 kW PEP, 10,15,20 Meters

Revolutionary 4-element compact tri-bander lets you add 40 or 30 Meters! Has 14 foot boom and tight 17.25 feet turning radius. Fits on roof tri-pod, mast or medium duty tower.

Hy-Gain's patented broadbanding Para Sleeve gives you

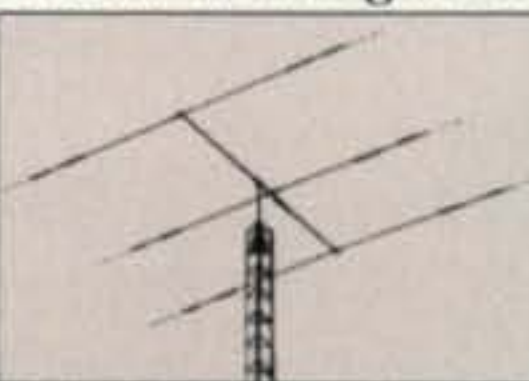
less than 2:1 VSWR. 1.5kW PEP. BetaMATCH™ provides DC ground to eliminate static. Includes BN-86 balun. Easily assembled.

Truly competitive against giant tri-banders at half the cost!

QK-710, \$179.95. 30/40 Meter option kit for EXP-14.

Compact 3-element 10, 15, 20 Meter Tri-Bander

For limited space... Installs anywhere... 14.75 ft turning radius... weighs 21 lbs... Rotate with CD-45II, HAM-IV



Fits on light tower, suitable guyed TV pole, roof tri-pod

TH-3JRS, \$359.95. Hy-Gain's most popular 3-element 10, 15, 20 Meter tri-bander fits on most lots! Same top performance as the full power TH3MK4 in a compact 600 watt PEP design.

Excellent gain and F/B ratio let you compete with the "big guns".

Tooled manufacturing gives you Hy-Gain durability with 80 MPH wind survival.

Model No.	No. of elements	avg gain dBd	avg F/B dB	MaxPwr watts PEP	Bands Covered	Wind sq.ft. area	Wind Survival (mph)	boom feet	Longest Elem. (ft)	Turning radius(ft)	Weight (lbs.)	Mast dia O.D.(in.)	Recom. Rotator	Sugg. Retail
TH-11DX	11	For Gain and F/B ratio--See...		4000	10,12,15,17,20	12.5	100	24	37	22	88	1.9-2.5	T2X	\$1159.95
TH-7DX	7			1500	10, 15, 20	9.4	100	24	31	20	75	1.5-2.5	HAM-IV	\$869.95
TH-5MK2	5	www.hy-gain.com Hy-Gain catalog Call toll-free 800-973-6572		1500	10, 15, 20	7.4	100	19	31.5	18.42	57	1.5-2.5	HAM-IV	\$759.95
TH-3MK4	3			1500	10, 15, 20	4.6	95	14	27.42	15.33	35	1.9-2.5	CD-45II	\$469.95
TH-3JRS	3			600	10, 15, 20	3.35	80	12	27.25	14.75	21	1.25-2.0	CD-45II	\$359.95
TH-2MK3	2			1500	10, 15, 20	3.25	80	6	27.3	14.25	20	1.9-2.5	CD-45II	\$369.95
EXP-14	4	800-973-6572		1500	10,15,20	7.5	100	14	31.5	17.25	45	1.9-2.5	HAM IV	\$599.95

Tooled Manufacturing... Highest Quality Materials

1. Hy-Gain's famous super strong tooled die cast Boom-to-Mast Clamp



2. Tooled Boom-to-Element Clamp



3. Thick-wall swaged aluminum tubing



Tooled manufacturing is the difference between Hy-Gain antennas and the others -- they just don't have it (it's expensive!).

Die-cast aluminum boom-to-mast bracket and element-to-boom compression clamps are made with specially tooled machinery.

Hy-Gain antennas feature tooled swaged tubing that is easily and securely clamped in place. All tubing is deburred and cleaned for smooth and easy assembly.

Durable precision injection molded parts.

Hy-Gain antennas are stronger, lighter, have less wind surface area, better wind survival, need no adjustments, look professional and last years longer.

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MFJ Small, high efficiency Loop Tuners™

Turns any wire loop into small, high efficiency multi-band transmitting loop antenna

Mount for
PVC Cross Loop



MFJ-933
\$179⁹⁵

New!

MFJ-935B
\$199⁹⁵

MFJ-936B
\$249⁹⁵

Drape a wire around a bookcase or window and attach both ends to this new MFJ Small Loop Tuner™.

It instantly turns into a small, high efficiency multi-band transmitting loop antenna!

You can operate 5.3 to 30 MHz with a full 150 Watts. No ground, radials or counterpoises needed.

The excellent performance of a high-efficiency small loop antenna is legendary and well proven by users all over the world.

You'll radiate a low angle DX signal that literally rivals full size dipoles and work incredible DX!

It's a very quiet receiving antenna -- you'll hardly notice static crashes. Its high-Q reduces QRM, overloading, harmonics.

It's perfect for apartments, antenna restricted areas and portable operation -- it really gets out!

A 13 foot wire formed into a loop operates 30-20 Meters (4 foot for 17-10 M; 7 foot for 20-15 M; 28 foot for 60-40 M).

You can tune any shape loop -- circle, square, rectangle, any odd shape. A quarter wavelength wire shaped as a circle is the most efficient.

A given wire length covers about 1.5 to 1 frequency range (i.e. 7-10/18-28 MHz, etc.). Exact frequency coverage depends on wire length, loop shape, surroundings and height above ground.

Has MFJ low loss Butterfly loop tuning capacitor, no rotating contacts. Easy-Carry handle. Mount for PVC Cross on cover.

See June, 1986, QST or recent ARRL Antenna Handbook for more details on small, high efficiency loops.

MFJ-936B, \$249.95. For home/portable stations. Has relative RF antenna current meter with sensitivity control and 30/300 Watts Cross-Needle SWR/Wattmeter. 9 1/4"Wx5 1/2"Hx9 1/2"D inches.

MFJ-935B, \$199.95. For portable/home stations. Smaller, lighter. Relative RF current meter with sensitivity control. 6 1/4"Wx5 1/2"Hx9 1/2"D inches.

MFJ-933, \$179.95. Same as MFJ-935B less RF current meter. 6 1/4"Wx5 1/2"Hx9 1/2"D in.

Wire Loops and Mounts

MFJ-57B, \$29.95. Has PVC Cross for mounting loop on cover, 20-15M insulated 10-gauge flexible loop, low resistance lugs.

MFJ-58B, \$49.95. Has MFJ-57B above, plus 60-40 M, 20-15 M, 17-10 M loops; wire clips.



Butterfly loop Tuning Capacitors

The heart of the MFJ Loop Tuners is an extremely low loss butterfly tuning capacitor with no rotating contacts. 4200 Volts RMS. 1/4" dia. x 2 1/2" long shaft.

A. MFJ-19, \$69.95. 12 to 67 pF. 6Dx3Wx3 1/2"H in.

B. MFJ-23, \$89.95. 18 to 136 pF. 10Dx3Wx3 1/2"H in.

Mini high-efficiency Loop Tuner™



MFJ-932
\$129⁹⁵

Tiny 50-Watt version of MFJ-933, Small High-Efficiency Loop Tuner™. Makes portable operation really portable and fun!

Ultra low loss butterfly capacitor. Covers 80-10 Meters with appropriate wire loop. Tiny 3Wx4Hx1 1/2"D inches.

Whip Tuner/Artificial Ground gives instant 80-10M, 150 Watt Antenna

Just add short whip and counterpoise wire and instantly get an effective portable 150 Watt all band 3.5-30 MHz antenna.

It's effective, compact and simple to use for portable, fixed station and emergencies.

High power, hi-Q 3-core variable loading coil efficiently resonates short whip or random wire. Identical inductor tunes counterpoise. Operates 30-10 Meters with included 4 1/2 foot telescoping whip antenna and counterpoise assembly.

Add longer whip/random wire and external loading coil for more efficient operation especially on 80-30M. 12 foot whip, hamstick, Hustler antennas all work great.

Tune for

MFJ-1644
\$149⁹⁵



low SWR with built-in reversible L-network. Current balun decouples radiating elements.

Tune for maximum current on RF Current Meter to give you maximum radiated power and minimum SWR. Sensitivity control lets you use QRP to 150 Watts QRO.

Ultra low capacitance fiberglass antenna/counterpoise insulator minimizes shunting antenna current to ground for maximum radiated power.

Standard 3/8x24 female connector for whip antennas and wing-nut for counterpoise. SO-239. 7 1/4"Wx2 1/4"Hx2 1/2"D inches.

MFJ-1642, \$119.95. Like MFJ-1644 but less RF Current Meter.

Window/Balcony 80-6 Meter Antenna, built-in Tuner



MFJ-1625
\$199⁹⁵

Complete antenna system mounts on window frame, balcony or railing.

Perfect for apartment, condo. 80-6 Meters, 200 Watts. Universal mount/clamp, built-in antenna tuner with RF isolator, extra long 12 foot telescoping whip (22.5 inches collapsed), high efficiency loading coil for 40/80 Meters, counterpoise wires, safety rope. **MFJ-1623, \$179.95.** Like MFJ-1625, but 6-30 Meters.

Telescoping Whips

10 and 12 foot long, standard 3/8x24 threaded stud. **MFJ-1954, \$22.95.** 10 foot, 19" collapsed. **MFJ-1956, \$29.95.** 12 foot, 22.5" collapsed.

Ruggedized flat Mobile/portable SWR/Wattmeter



MFJ-818
\$69⁹⁵

MFJ's new flat, compact SWR/Wattmeter is plenty rugged to take the abuse of brutal mobile and portable operation.

Meter fully enclosed in strong aluminum case with just the scales and two small switches exposed -- there's little to break.

Simultaneously read SWR/forward/reflected power on full size 3-inch lighted Cross-Needle Meter. 30/300 Watt ranges, 1.8-30 MHz, SO-239 connectors. 5Wx3Hx2D". Use 12 VDC for meter lamp or plug into cigarette lighter with MFJ-5510, \$9.95.

Dealer/Catalog/Manuals

Visit: <http://www.mfjenterprises.com> or call toll-free 800-647-1800

• 1 Year No Matter What™ warranty • 30 day money back guarantee (less s/h) on orders direct from MFJ

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FAX: (662) 323-6551 8-4:30 CST, Mon.-Fri. Add shipping.
Prices and specifications subject to change. (c) 2006 MFJ Enterprises, Inc.

MFJ... The World Leader in Ham Radio Accessories!

FCC Katrina Panel Recognizes Hams' Contributions

The contributions of amateur radio operators in the response to Hurricane Katrina was recognized by the FCC's "Independent Panel Reviewing the Impact of Hurricane Katrina on Communications Networks" in its final report, issued June 12. A paragraph on ham radio noted that like other services, "amateur radio stations were also adversely affected by Katrina," but that once called into help, "amateur radio operators volunteered to support many agencies ... provided wireless communications in many locations where there was no other means of communicating and also provided other technical aid to the communities affected by Katrina."

The report was included in an 82-page Notice of Proposed Rule Making issued by the FCC on June 19, requesting public comments on the panel's many recommendations, including one that, in a disaster, any restrictive amateur radio rules be waived in order to permit any "transmissions necessary to meet essential communications needs."

EB Docket No. 06-119 may be accessed on the FCC website at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-06-83A1.pdf. Comments will be due 60 days after publication of the Notice in the *Federal Register*.

McDowell Confirmed for FCC

Robert McDowell, whose nomination to the FCC was among several non-judicial appointments blocked for months by Louisiana Senator Mary Landrieu as a protest of slow federal help after Hurricane Katrina, was finally confirmed by the Senate and sworn in as a Commissioner. McDowell, an attorney and former top official of the Competitive Telecommunications Association, fills one of the Republican seats on the Commission and brings the FCC to full strength for the first time since the departure of former Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy. McDowell's term runs through June, 2009.

CubeSat Launch Postponed

There's been a delay of at least a month in the planned launch of a constellation of tiny "cubesats," each measuring 10 cubic centimeters and weighing just one kilogram. A total of 14 cubesats—13 of them carrying amateur band transmitters—were scheduled to be launched together in late June from Russia's Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, but according to the *ARRL Letter*, "a technical issue during launch vehicle preparation" caused the launch to be delayed until July 26 (UTC) at the earliest. The amateur satellites were each designed and built by university students around the world; 12 of them will transmit on the 70-centimeter band, one on 2 meters. According to the AMSAT News Service, the launch will represent the largest-ever deployment of amateur radio satellites. Updated information is available online at <http://showcase.netins.net/web/wallo/ CubeSat.htm>.

AMSAT-UK Sees Threat from Wireless Broadband

The British amateur satellite organization is warning that a proposal in the United Kingdom to permit significantly higher power for unlicensed wireless broadband services in rural areas could pose a serious threat to amateur radio and amateur satellites. The *ARRL Letter* reports that British regulators are considering permitting wireless broadband transmitters to operate with up to 80 watts effective radiated power in the 2.4 GHz band and as much as 200 watts ERP at 5 GHz. Current permitted levels are 100 milliwatts and 2 watts, respectively. The bands are shared by amateurs, who by virtue of being licensed, are supposed to have priority over unlicensed services.

FCC Getting Tough with Manassas BPL Provider

The FCC's Enforcement Bureau, which has taken over responsibility for responding to complaints of interference from Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) systems, has told the operator of a controversial system in Manassas, Virginia, to resolve the problems or face the possibility of being shut down. In a June 16 letter to the City of Manassas and to BPL operator COMTek, Enforcement Bureau Chief Joseph Casey says the Commission's preliminary review of an April report on interference complaints suggests that "the BPL system is not in compliance with the Commission's emission requirements at several frequencies." While noting that those frequencies are not within amateur bands, they are nonetheless "directed to take immediate steps to eliminate all excessive emissions." Casey also said the report did not include any indication that the tests "included steps to specifically address" the amateur complaints and directed them to do so and to either resolve the problem or bring signals on the frequencies in question to at least 20 dB below the Part 15 limit.

In addition, Casey said that "in light of the apparent ongoing interference ... and the insufficiency of data reported to the Commission, you are requested to provide a description of what steps you will take to inform customers of a cessation of services ... should you be directed to cease operations, either in part or system-wide." The Commission also forwarded to Manassas and COMTek similar complaints from four additional amateurs.

Meanwhile, the full House of Representatives has approved a telecommunications bill (HR 5252, the Communications Opportunity, Promotion and Enhancement Act of 2006) which includes a provision requiring the FCC to study and report to Congress the potential for interference from BPL systems. A companion bill is still in committee in the Senate.

Two Hams Killed in Foxhunt Accident

Two California amateurs on a hidden transmitter hunt ("foxhunt") were killed May 27 when the Jeep in which they were riding apparently went out of control and plunged off a 900-foot cliff. According to the *ARRL Letter*, 46-year-old Michael Obermeier, K6SNE, of Anaheim, and 35-year-old David Gordon-Ross, N6IDF, of Yucaipa, were both expert transmitter hunters, each with hundreds of hunts completed. The 147.435 Amateur Radio Repeater System is collecting donations to help Gordon-Ross's wife, Melanie, KF6GWV, and their one-year old child. More information is available at <http://www.435online.com>.

CEPT Proposes Foundation Licenses Across Europe

Looking at the apparent success of "Foundation" licenses in the United Kingdom and Australia, the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) is proposing that all member nations adopt similar entry-level amateur licenses. According to *Newsline*, the proposed standard would include both theoretical and practical exam modules, and would permit limited access to HF ham bands. The United States and CEPT recognize each others' licenses, but the U.S. is not a member of CEPT, so this proposal would have no impact on the FCC's licensing structure.

Additional and updated news is available on the Ham Radio News page of the CQ website at <http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com>. For breaking news stories, plus info on additional items of interest, sign up for CQ's free online newsletter service. Just click on "CQ Newsletter" on the home page of our website.

hy-gain® ROTATORS

... the first choice of hams around the world!

HAM-IV

The most popular rotator in the world!

For medium communications arrays up to 15 square feet wind load area. New 5-second brake delay! New Test/Calibrate function. New low temperature grease permits normal operation down to -30 degrees F. New alloy ring gear gives extra strength up to 100,000 PSI for maximum reliability. New indicator potentiometer. New ferrite beads reduce RF susceptibility. New Cinch plug plus 8-pin plug at control box. Dual 98 ball bearing race for load bearing strength and electric locking steel wedge brake prevents wind induced antenna movement. North or South center of rotation scale on meter, low voltage control, max mast size of 2 1/16 inches.

HAM-IV
\$559⁹⁵



TAILTWISTER SERIES II

For large medium antenna arrays up to 20 sq. ft. wind load. Available with DCU-1 Pathfinder digital control (T2XD) or standard analog control box (T2X) with new 5-second brake delay and new Test/Calibrate function. Low temperature grease, alloy ring gear, indicator potentiometer, ferrite beads on potentiometer wires, new weather-proof AMP connectors plus 8-pin plug at control box, triple bearing race with 138 ball bearings for large load bearing strength, electric locking steel wedge brake, North or South center of rotation scale on meter, low voltage control, 2 1/16 inch max. mast.



T-2X
\$649⁹⁵

T-2XD
\$1029⁹⁵
with DCU-1

CD-45II

For antenna arrays up to 8.5 sq. feet mounted inside tower or 5 sq. ft. with mast adapter. Low temperature grease good to -30 F degrees. New Test/Calibrate function. Bell rotator design gives total weather protection, dual 58 ball bearing race gives proven support. Die-cast ring gear, stamped steel gear drive, heavy duty, trouble free gear train, North center scale, lighted directional indicator, 8-pin plug/socket on control unit, snap-action control switches, low voltage control, safe operation, takes maximum mast size to 2 1/16 inches. MSLD light duty lower mast support included.



CD-45II
\$389⁹⁵

HAM IV and HAM V Rotator Specifications

Wind Load capacity (inside tower)	15 square feet
Wind Load (w/mast adapter)	7.5 square feet
Turning Power	800 in.-lbs.
Brake Power	5000 in.-lbs.
Brake Construction	Electric Wedge
Bearing Assembly	dual race/96 ball bearings
Mounting Hardware	Clamp plate/steel U-bolts
Control Cable Conductors	8
Shipping Weight	26 lbs.
Effective Moment (in tower)	2800 ft.-lbs.

TAILTWISTER Rotator Specifications

Wind load capacity (inside tower)	20 square feet
Wind Load (w/ mast adapter)	10 square feet
Turning Power	1000 in.-lbs.
Brake Power	9000 in.-lbs.
Brake Construction	Electric Wedge
Bearing Assembly	Triple race/138 ball brngs
Mounting Hardware	Clamp plate/steel U-bolts
Control Cable Conductors	8
Shipping Weight	31 lbs.
Effective Moment (in tower)	3400 ft.-lbs.

CD-45II Rotator Specifications

Wind load capacity (inside tower)	8.5 square feet
Wind Load (w/ mast adapter)	5.0 square feet
Turning Power	600 in.-lbs.
Brake Power	800 in.-lbs.
Brake Construction	Disc Brake
Bearing Assembly	Dual race/48 ball brngs
Mounting Hardware	Clamp plate/steel U-bolts
Control Cable Conductors	8
Shipping Weight	22 lbs.
Effective Moment (in tower)	1200 ft.-lbs.

HAM-V

HAM-V
\$949⁹⁵
with DCU-1

For medium antenna arrays up to 15 square feet wind load area. Similar to the HAM IV, but includes DCU-1 Pathfinder digital control unit with gas plasma display. Provides automatic operation of brake and rotor, compatible with many logging/contest programs, 6 presets for beam headings, 1 degree accuracy, auto 8-second brake delay, 360 degree choice for center location, more!

ROTATOR OPTIONS

MSHD, \$99.95. Heavy duty mast support for T2X, HAM-IV and HAM-V.

MSLD, \$39.95. Light duty mast support for CD-45II and AR-40.

TSP-1, \$34.95. Lower spacer plate for HAM-IV and HAM-V.

Digital Automatic Controller



Automatically controls T2X, HAM-IV, V rotators. 6 presets for favorite headings, 1 degree accuracy, 8-sec. brake delay, choice for center of rotation, crisp plasma display. Computer controlled with many logging/contest programs.



DCU-1
\$649⁹⁵

AR-40

AR-40
\$289⁹⁵



For compact antenna arrays and large FM/TV up to 3.0 square feet wind load area. Dual 12 ball bearing race. Automatic position sensor never needs resetting. Fully automatic control -- just dial and touch for any desired location. Solid state, low voltage control, safe and silent operation. 2 1/16 inch maximum mast size. MSLD light duty lower mast support included.

AR-40 Rotator Specifications

Wind load capacity (inside tower)	3.0 square feet
Wind Load (w/ mast adapter)	1.5 square feet
Turning Power	350 in.-lbs.
Brake Power	450 in.-lbs.
Brake Construction	Disc Brake
Bearing Assembly	Dual race/12 ball bearings
Mounting Hardware	Clamp plate/steel bolts
Control Cable Conductors	5
Shipping Weight	14 lbs.
Effective Moment (in tower)	300 ft.-lbs.

AR-40

HDR-300A
\$1379⁹⁵



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HDR-300A Rotator Specifications

Wind load capacity (inside tower)	25 square feet
Wind Load (w/ mast adapter)	not applicable
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Brake Power	7500 in.-lbs.
Brake Construction	solenoid operated locking
Bearing Assembly	bronze sleeve w/rollers
Mounting Hardware	stainless steel bolts
Control Cable Conductors	7
Shipping Weight	61 lbs.
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DSP 60 m Band

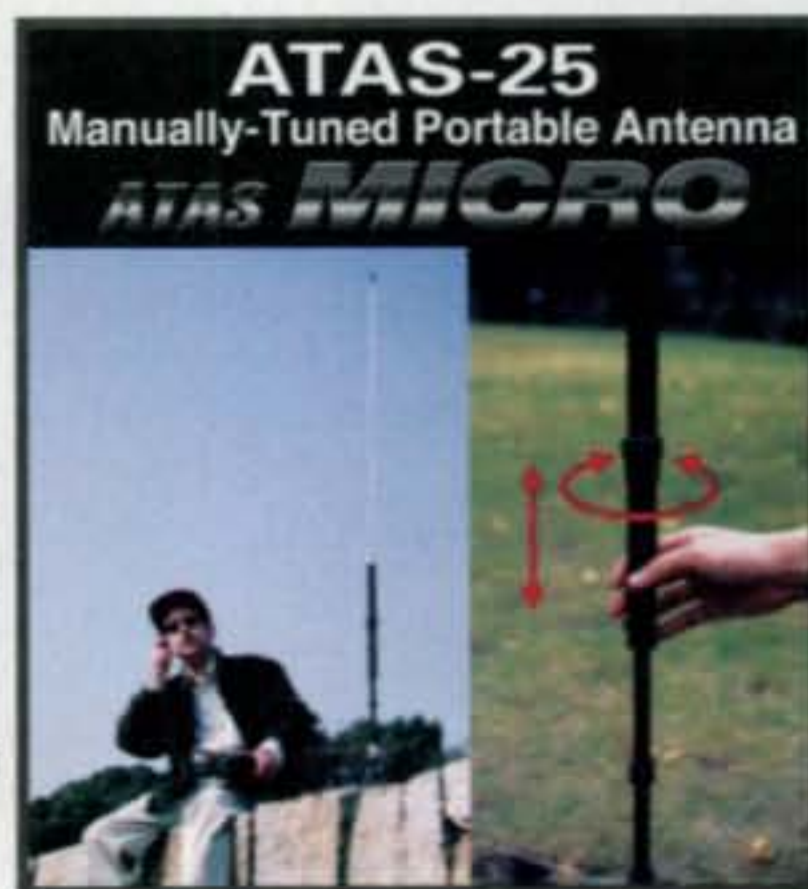


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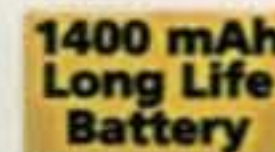
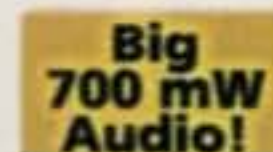


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Submersible 6 m/2 m/70 cm
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VX-7R/VX-7Rb



IPX7
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3 feet (1m) for 30 min.
5 W Heavy Duty
Submersible 2 m/70 cm
Dual Band FM Handheld
VX-6R



5 W Heavy Duty
2 m/70 cm
Dual Band FM Handheld
FT-60R



1.5 W Ultra Compact
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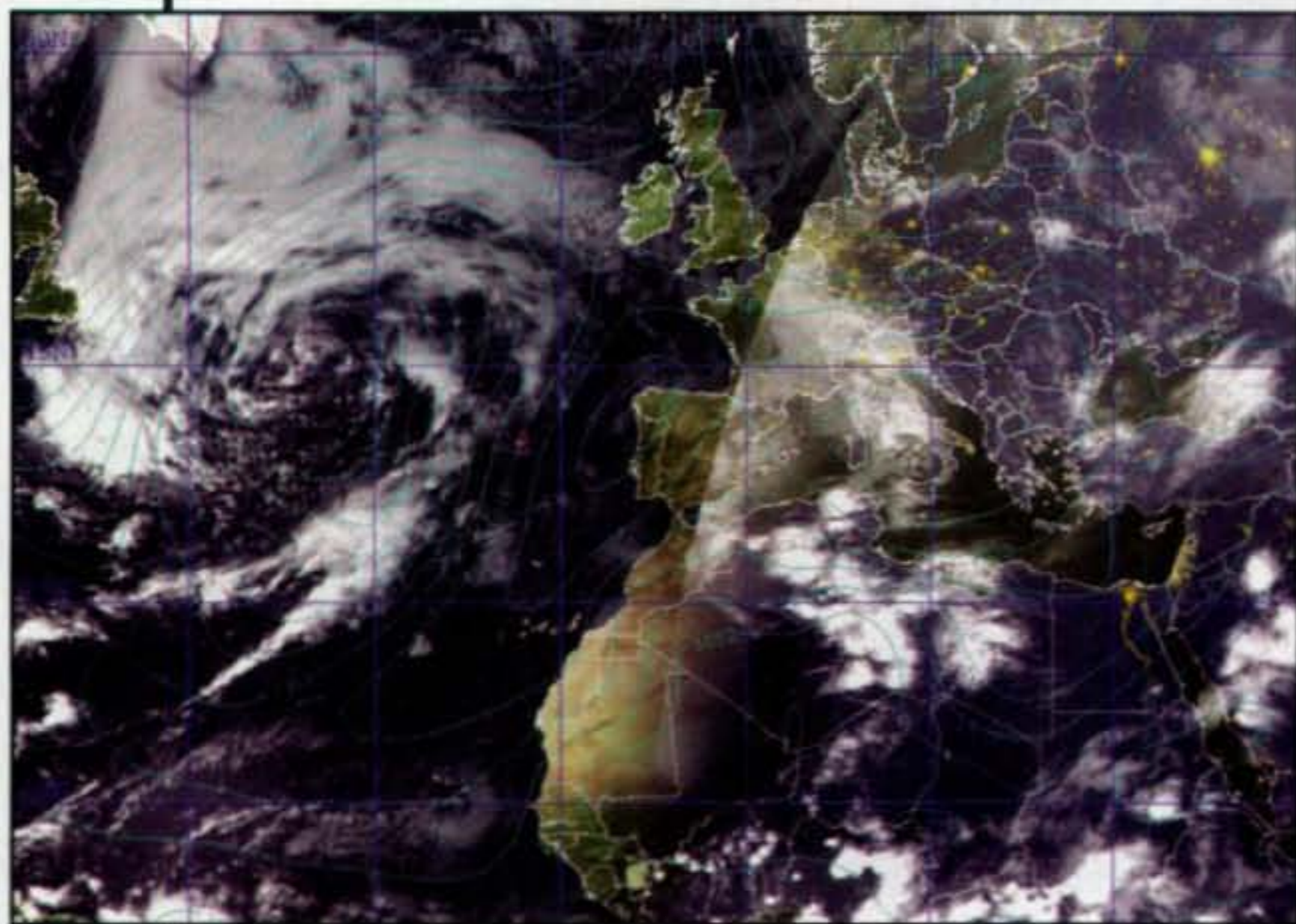
Turn On That Radio!

If you're sitting around waiting for the next sunspot cycle to bring back the good DX, then you're missing out on a lot of good DX. I wrote here in May about great band openings on 15 meters the weekend before NASA officially announced that we'd reached the bottom of the current cycle. Now, as I write this in mid-June, six meters has been going wild with propagation the likes of which we've come to expect only at the peak of the sunspot cycle, not the bottom. N6CL's VHF-Plus column this month (page 82) details some of the biggest openings—from the U.S. West Coast to Europe and from the Midwest to Japan!

I'd been hearing about these openings but hadn't had time to get on the air, until this morning, when I was scratching my head about something to write for this column. I have a foolproof approach to writer's block when it concerns CQ editorials: get on the radio! It never fails. So this morning, I turned on six meters and in short order, worked VP2MRT in Montserrat, CT1HZE in Portugal (on CW), and FM5JC in Martinique! Now, double-hop sporadic-E will get my signals to the Caribbean from New Jersey (although this is the first time I'd worked either on the "Magic Band"), but I'd need either triple-hop E-skip or F-layer propagation to get "across the pond" to Europe on six ... unless it's something different.

The conventional wisdom among most of the folks whose reports Joe quotes in his column is that we're seeing greatly enhanced sporadic-E, but I'm with Dave Bernhardt, N7DB, who wrote, "OK, why don't we just throw out conventional wisdom this season?" I think that's a great idea, because my guess is that something other than the conventional wisdom is at play here, such as a combination of E-skip and tropospheric ducting. I took a look at some current weather maps for the Atlantic Ocean and, lo and behold, there's a big fat high pressure system sitting out over the central Atlantic. If you start in New Jersey and go south along the western edge of that high, you end up—guess where?—in the Caribbean. Now, follow the northern edge up and over the top and you reach land in, that's right, Portugal. So I'm guessing that my contacts today

*e-mail: <w2vu@cq-amateur-radio.com>



Are high pressure systems over the Atlantic at least partially responsible for this spring's great DX on 6 meters? (US Navy photo courtesy Naval Research Lab, Monterey, CA)

had a lot more to do with tropospheric ducting than sporadic-E. These openings have most likely been there before but haven't been noticed until recently because six meters has become a ham band in Europe only over the course of the past ten years, and gradually at that. The population of VHF-active hams in the Caribbean is still pretty sparse, but growing (Cuba is the most active). But what about those really long-distance paths? Try taking some single- or double-hop sporadic-E and drop one end of the path into the duct and you've got stations on the west coast talking to Europe or hams in the Midwest working Japan.

I hope some of our resident propagation gurus will take a close look at the patterns of these contacts and, throwing out conventional wisdom, analyze the most likely way(s) that all of these various signals got from point A to point B ... on a band that's not supposed to see any real DX for another five or six years!

But the real point here, for all of us—reinforcing what I wrote in May—is that even though we're at the bottom of the sunspot cycle, there's plenty of great DX to be worked, and sometimes where you'd least expect to find it. So throw out the conventional wisdom, turn on the radio, tune in bands that are "supposed to" be dead, and see who you can work. You might have to work a little harder and have a little more patience than you did four or five years ago, but you might be very pleasantly surprised.

By the way, my son, Dan, KC2OOM, joined me on six meters this morning and made his first contact—with FM5AA! My first QSO was in Pennsylvania (from New York); my first DX contact was in Canada. But Dan? Nooo.... Martinique on six meters ... at the bottom of the sunspot cycle ... and no, I didn't work the guy. He went QRT before I had a chance ... figures... gotta outdo the old man (grumble, grumble ... smile, smile).

Speaking of Young Hams...

A trend I've been noticing at recent hamfests, particularly so at Dayton and Dallas this year, is the presence of more and more young hams. I'm seeing more kids—pre-teens and teenagers—with callsign tags and HTs, and perhaps of equal importance, more 20- and 30-something hams, often with spouses (sometimes with calls of their own) and little kids in tow. So, perhaps the conventional wisdom about our not getting under-50s into ham radio is about as valid as the conventional wisdom that says you can't work DX on six meters unless we're at the peak of the sunspot cycle. Maybe, like some band openings, they've been there all along but we just haven't noticed them until now.

And speaking of hamfests, another trend that's been pretty obvious of late has been that there's less and less "good stuff" at most flea markets, as well as fewer flea market vendors. This is a bad trend, as flea markets "drive" the hamfests. As flea markets shrink so does overall hamfest attendance. As attendance shrinks, so does participation by commercial vendors and manufacturers. It's a vicious cycle. Hamfests are an important part of the "glue" that holds our hobby together, and it's important not to let that glue get dry and cracked. You can do your part by supporting your local hamfest and flea market, whether as a seller or a buyer, or even just a browser.

The most important way to keep ham radio healthy, though, is by getting on the air and making contacts. They are out there to be made, regardless of conventional wisdom. So fire up that rig, hook up that antenna and get on the air!

73, W2VU

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The following Special Event stations are scheduled for the month of August:

N4J, from 200th anniversary of the building of President Thomas Jefferson's Retreat Home, Poplar Forest, Virginia; 1200Z August 25 to 2400Z August 27 on SSB all General class bands; WARC bands and 6 meters; Tech/Novice portion of 10 meters, and local repeaters. For a QSL send QSL and SASE to Ed Narwid, W4OAF, 1799 Otter Hill Rd., Bedford, VA 24523.

WA5DTK, from Galveston, Texas area lighthouses; August 4-10, including national Lightship/Lighthouse Weekend; SSB 3.990, 7.260, 14.270, 21.360 MHz; CW 7.030, 14.030. QSL to Barry Brewer, 603 Broken Bow Drive, Round Rock, TX 78681-7401.

N7C, from Navejo Code Talkers Day, Window Rock, Arizona; August 13 and 14 from 1400-2400Z each day; on 14.265, 7.265, 21.305 MHz ±. QSL with SASE to N7HG, P.O. Box 3611, Window Rock, AZ 86515.

K9R, from 200th birthday of Richmond, Indiana; 11 AM to 7 PM EDT August 17-20; on or around 7.265 and 14.265 MHz. For QSL send QSL and SASE to Whitewater ARC, 1417 North A Street, Richmond, IN 47374.

The following hamfests, etc., are slated for August and early September:

Aug. 5, **Western Illinois Ham Radio & Computer Swapfest**, Eagles Alps Grounds, Quincy, Illinois. For information go to <www.w9awe.org/Swapfest2006.pdf>. (Talk-in 147.030+ w/103.5 PL; exams 12:30 PM, info and reservations <na9q@arrl.net>)

Aug. 12, **Northwest Ohio ARC Hamfest 2006**, the grounds of Fair Radio Sales, Lima, Ohio. Contact Gary Clements, KCØJDT, 419-227-6573, e-mail: <FAIRRADIO@fairradio.com>.

Aug. 13, **Hamfesters Radio Club Hamfest**, Will County Fairgrounds, Peotone, Illinois. Contact Christine Mack, K9RFY, 630-993-0249, e-mail: <christine1500@comcast.net>; <www.hamfesters.org>. (Talk-in 146.52 simplex; exams 8:00-10:30 AM)

Aug. 20, **NoBARC Fleamarket**, Bowe Field, Adams Agricultural Fair Grounds, Adams, Massachusetts. Contact George Bourassa, KB2SAE, 413-443-7539, e-mail: <kb2sae@amsat.org>; <http://www.nobarc.org>.

Aug. 26, **Owen County Hamfest**, Owen County Fairgrounds, Spencer, Indiana. Contact Katie Smith, K9INU, 812-829-2140, e-mail: <rasacres@ccrtc.com>. (Talk-in 146.985 [-600 kHz]; exams 2 PM)

Aug. 26-27, **Boxboro 2006**, Holiday Inn Boxborough Woods Hotel, Boxboro, Massachusetts. E-mail: <boxboro2006@gmail.com>; <www.boxboro.org>. **See us at the CQ booth.**

Aug. 27, **Lapeer County ARA Ham & Computer Swap**, Lapeer Center Building, Lapeer, Michigan. Contact Bill Miller, KD8VP, 810-797-5329, e-mail: <kd8vp@arrl.net>; <www.w8lap.com>. (Talk-in 146.620 -100 Hz)

Sept. 2, **Uniontown ARC Gabfest**, club grounds at Old Pittsburgh Rd. Contact Carl, WA3HQK, 304-594-3779; <www.w3pie.org>. ((Talk-in 147.045+)

Foxhunting and Security Issues

Editor, CQ:

A photograph that accompanied the article "It's Radio Foxhunting Season" (April CQ) shows an old ammunition box being used as an enclosure for a transmitter. I could not help wonder that such a sight would set in action a series of events here in New York such as a police response, closing of a park, and the unnecessary deployment of dozens of police officers to respond to what appears to be a "suspicious device." I assure you that it would result in the arrest of the control operator of the transmitter!

We in the ham radio community owe it to our neighbors to use our good judgment when sharing parks or public places. Notifications to the authorities so that our activities are not misunderstood are of the first order. Unfortunately, these troubled times make us all take certain precautions we normally should not have to.

Efrem Acosta, W2CZ

Author KØOV replies:

W2CZ makes a good point. I have written about it in other articles, but it bears repeating. A mention in the photo caption for this article would have been a good idea. The topic of security comes up regularly on the internet mailing lists for foxhunters. I can assure everyone that most foxhunters take this very seriously. They are in general agreement on these unwritten rules:

1. **MARK YOUR FOXBOX.** In the article photo, you can see two labels atop my box. They explain that this is a radio beacon, placed temporarily and to be removed within 24 hours. One lists both my cell phone and pager

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numbers. The other warns that tampering with a radio transmitter is a federal offense.

2. **PICK LOCATIONS CAREFULLY.** Ten years ago, it was common to find a foxbox chained to the base of a high-voltage power transmission line tower. Not anymore! Unless you will be very close and watching your foxbox throughout the hunt, avoid locations near "assets" or crowds of people. A foxbox next to a tree in a wilderness park will be considered much less threatening than one in a school playground.

3. **SECURE YOUR FOXBOX.** Radio foxes can get stolen. (It has happened to me!) Make it hard for a thief without tools to grab your box and run. It's hard to see, but my foxbox in the photo has a bicycle chain (painted green) securing it to the bushes.

4. **NOTIFY WHERE APPROPRIATE.** The foxbox in the photo is near the entrance of a hospital, but there was no problem because the hospital's director of security had been in on the hunt planning. He was quite willing to support the hunt because the Orange County Hospital Disaster Support Communications System (an ARES group headed by my wife April, WA6OPS, see <www.hdscs.org>) has provided emergency communications for his facility. He even came out that evening to watch the fun! Many of our in-the-park on-foot hunts are cooperative events with the Los Angeles Orienteering club, which obtains permits where necessary. For other park events, we make a point to notify the rangers that they may see green boxes and not to be alarmed.

With a little care and common sense, fox-hunting can coexist with today's heightened security concerns. Thanks for the opportunity to point this out.

Pile-up Behavior

Editor, CQ:

I read your comments about the bad ops working Peter I (sidebar, 3YØX article, June 2006 CQ). I am one of those who could not break through the pile-ups. I looked at some of the stations in the online log that I heard and saw all the dupes. 3YØX never made an effort to work weak stations, as far as I could tell, except the last night on 40 CW, they called for EU only. That was really tough to listen to. I have 100 watts and a low folded dipole (antenna restrictions). It was good enough to work Kure and Kerguelen last year, but each time it was when the pileups had subsided and the ops were listening on specific frequencies for weak stations. KK6EK pretty much told me only the advanced RX in the ICOM they were using allowed them to pull out the weak ones. I thought the actions of my fellow hams were pretty disgusting. It takes a lot of the fun out of DXing. I spent many, many hours calling 3YØX.

Thanks for telling it like it is.

73, Mike, K8IW

W2VU replies:

My guess is that it would have been useless for the 3YØX ops to ask for weak stations (if indeed they did not), knowing the request would be ignored by those few selfish hams who took the fun out of this DXpedition for many others. Your strategy would have been correct in other circumstances. I remember asking K4UEE before the DXpedition if it was worth it for someone with 100 watts and a vertical (me) to even try contacting them, and if so, how to maximize my chances for success. He said I should def-

initely try, but to wait until the latter days of the operation when all the big guns will already have worked them. But when some of those big guns stayed in there, working the DXpedition over and over, for reasons known only to them, they made it impossible for the rest of us.

Alphabet Soup

Editor, CQ:

Is it lack of imagination which makes people pirate acronyms? CERT stands for Computer Emergency Readiness Team, an institution founded in 2003 to fight cyber attacks. OEM means Original Equipment Manufacturer, nothing else. Google exists—i.e., there is no plead-

ing ignorance when attaching a new meaning to an already established acronym.

Eddi Ramm, DK3UZ

Eddi – You are correct as far as the world of computers goes. But in the world of emergency management, CERT and OEM have different meanings—specifically Community Emergency Response Team and Office of Emergency Management. There are only 26 letters in the English alphabet and a limited number of combinations that work well as acronyms, so some duplication is unavoidable. That's why it's a good idea to use plain language whenever possible, to minimize confusion.

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Results of the 2005 CQ WW DX SSB Contest

BY BOB COX,* K3EST

Expanded CQ WW Contest Results on the Web

A few additional elements of our contest reporting are on the CQ website, including **Station Operators** of Multi-Op stations and **Zone Leaders/Single Op**. In addition, there is expanded **QRM** on the web.

To view these additional and expanded elements of the 2005 CQ WW SSB results, go to <<http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com/cqwwhome.html>>, then click on "Expanded Results, 2005 CQ WW SSB" and select the category you want to see. You may also get there by going to our home page at <<http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com>>, clicking on "Contest Rules & Info," then clicking on "CQ World Wide DX Contest" and selecting "Expanded Results, 2005 CQ WW SSB."

In 2005 the CQ WW DX SSB Contest occurred about as late as you can get and still be in October. The second to third week of October usually has some of the best conditions of the year, but solar activity was predicted not to cooperate for the 2005 contest. However, this did not stop a record number (4430) of SSB operators from entering the world's largest international radio event. Days before the CQ WW you could hear stations from around the world getting ready for the competition. With solar conditions on the decline, contestants of all ages from every corner of the world turned on their radios and were surprised when the bands sprang to life. Once again, the CQ WW made its own propagation.

The CQ WW is a fantastic competition, but it is also much more than that. It is a celebration of ham radio skill and effort. Over the years thousands of hams throughout the world have received their first ham radio thrill in the CQ WW. Many new and experienced hams who try the CQ WW become addicted. If you want to know *exactly* how long it is until the next CQ WW SSB test, check out the website of OT5A: <<http://www.on7lr.org>>. It has a countdown to the second!

Below is a summary of the results of the 2005 contest. Read on to see how you and your friends ended up. Everyone who operated the CQ WW last year was a winner.

High Power All Band

A few years ago it would have difficult to think that a station from a two-point area would win for the world. Not only has it happened several times, but Tom, W2SC, has done it again. Place a great operator in an ideal QTH and anything is possible. Tom traveled down to 8P to activate 8P1A. After he finished, his score stood on top of the world! It is not an easy task to win from a two-point area. Tom showed that with more QSOs it can be done. Finishing in second place was perennial top finisher John, P40W (W2GD), and third place went to Scott, W4PA, who operated from VY2PA. All three

operators exemplify the ideal contestant, exhibiting motivation and detailed planning. The top three positions in Europe went to three stations located more or less at its corners. Breaking the 6-million point barrier is a real accomplishment and the first and second place finishers did just that. First place in Europe was Tonno, ES5TV. Conditions seemed to favor his location, plus he put his operating skills and super station to their best use (<http://www.lhv.ee/images/files/es5tv.htm>). Second position was taken by Steve, GW4BLE, and third place went to Tine, S50A, with his FB station in the countryside near Ljubljana.

In the U.S. Dave, KM3T, drove over to the K5ZD/1 QTH and proceeded to take top honors. Ken, K4ZW, located in Virginia near Washington, D.C., took position #2 (<http://pvrc.org/k4zw/>), and the third spot went to Alex, LZ4AX, operating the Penn State contest station, K3CR. Special mention should be made

of Steve, N2IC/5, the highest scoring U.S. entrant from the far west.

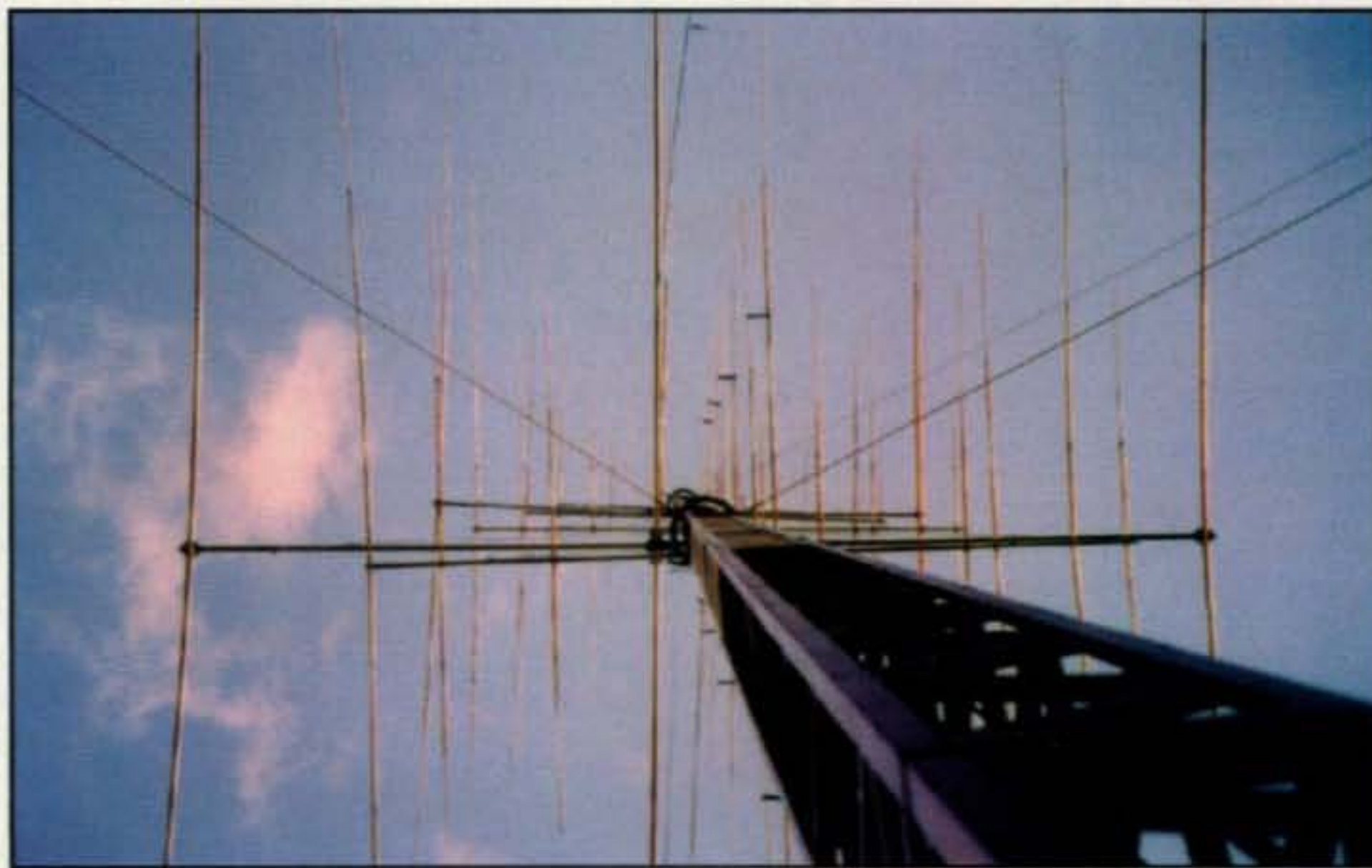
Again three Canadian stations made the World Top 10 box: VY2PA, VE2IM, and VC3O. The continental winners were: North America 8P1A, Africa ZD8Z, Asia UP0L, Europe ES5TV, Oceania AH7C, South America P40W, Japan JH4UYB, and U.S. K5ZD/1.

Low Power All Band

The various low power categories have by far the greatest number of participants. To win any low power category really is an achievement. The top three world positions were from three different continents. It means that at least three continents had a chance to finish near the top.

Taking the #1 position in the world was John, KK9A, operating from Aruba as P40A (<http://www.qrz.com/p40A>). Second place went to Mike as FG/K9NW, who keeps moving towards the top slot, and third went to CT7T operated by CT1CJJ, Filipe, who finished as #1 in Europe. The number two 100 watts or less entrant in Europe was Kresimir, 9A5K. The number three scorer in Europe was LY9A operated by LY3BA, Gediminas. Here in the U.S., Ed, N1UR, who reprised his win from last year, was the winner in the barefoot category. Taking second place was Ann, WA1S (<http://home.tiac.net/~wa1s/>), who is always on the move to a DX location when she is not operating from home. Third place went to John, N1PGA.

The continental winners were: North America FG/K9NW, Africa CN8SG, Asia 7Z1SJ,



Tonno, ES5TV's QTH in Estonia.

*e-mail: <k3est@cqww.com>



The world champion Multi-Multi team, CT3YA.

Europe CT7T, Oceania VK2KPP, South America P40A, Japan JF2QNM, and U.S. N1UR.

QRP

QRP in the CQ WW is a great way to have fun and increase your DXCC totals. There are so many stations active in the contest from rare locations that with a little patience a QRP station make a lot of Qs. The CQ WW offers a challenge to all entrants, especially QRPers.

Gerard, F5BEG, was able to work more stations than any other QRPer—almost 1000 QSOs! Only 5400 points behind was John, KO1H, with the #1 score in North America. Third place in the world went to another contestant from New England, Chris, KA1LMR (<http://hometown.aol.com/ka1lrmrusa/myhomepage/index.html>). Third place in the U.S. was taken again by Anthony, K8ZT, in Ohio. The #2 score in Europe came from Simone, IK5RUN, and third place was Juergen, DF1DX. Special mention is made of the top QRP Asia score of JR4DAH. He is a long way from any population center. Working contesters with 5 watts is exciting and may bring back long-forgotten contest skills.

The continental winners were: North America KO1H, Africa EA8IK, Asia JR4DAH, Europe F5BEG, Oceania YB5AQB, South America LU1VK, Japan JR4DAH, and U.S. KO1H.

Assisted

The Assisted category offers a way for DXers and contesters to contribute to their clubs' score. Remember, QSOs are the name of the game. Try not to chase the band map too much and you may end up with a better score. Remember, too, when a single op receives QSO/multiplier spotting assistance from any source, in any form, he or she is operating in the Assisted category.

A hard-fought battle took place for the world top position. Winning by a million points was Christian, F6HLC, operating FM5BH (<http://www.fm5bh.com/>). He was followed by Wanderley, PY2MNL, at ZX2B, who took second place. RG9A (UA9AM), Yuri, was #3 world and

#1 Asia. In the U.S. first place went to Ray, W2RE (<http://www.hamsonline.net/w2re>). Second place went to Noah, K2NG, operating from central New Jersey, while third place went to John, K1AR. In Europe, the #1 spot was taken by Philippe, LX2AJ, at LX7I (<http://www.qsl.net/de/member/lx2aj/>). Farther east, in second place was Paul, RK4FD. Manfred, DJ5MW, put the new German club call DRØW to good use by taking third place Europe (<http://www.dj5mw.de/>).

The continental winners were: North America FM5BH, Africa EA8/DL5AXX, Asia RG9A, Europe LX7I, Oceania ZL1ANH, South America ZX2B, Japan JF2SKV, U.S. W2RE.

Multi-Single

Multi-Op Single Transmitter is the popular, and therefore the most competitive, of the three multi categories. It takes months of planning coupled with assembling a team of operators. Each year many contesters band together and travel to compete in this category.

In 2005 a real battle occurred in Multi-Single. Two zone 9 stations went at it, and after the dust settled the world winner was FY5KE (<http://www.fy5ke.org/>). This international team from Kourou took full advantage of their location. In second place was the four-man team from Austria and Germany, PJ4W. Located on a mountain in central Bonaire made their take-off angle FB. Taking third place in the world and #1 in Europe was OM8A (<http://www.qsl.net/om8a/>). Second place went to the Irish and English team of EI7M. You can see their station at <http://www.lral.lv/exped/ei7m/index.html>. Third place in Europe went to 9A1P (<http://www.9A1P.com/>).

A battle took place in the U.S. for top MS honors. The winner was Tom's K8AZ station. K8AZ is located in northeast Ohio and has a seasoned crew. Second place went to K3EST/4 operating from the all-wire station of KT3Y. Trees hold up everything! Third place went to Chuck's station, KØRF, out in Colorado. That three-man crew rocked! A special mention of AH2R must be made, too. For many



Ken, K4ZW, #2 USA Single Op, All Band.



PX5E operated by Sergio, PP5JR.

years this Japanese team has put zone 27 in many logs.

The continental winners were: North America J7DM, Africa IG9R, Asia 9K2HN, Europe OM8A, Oceania AH2R, South America FY7KE, Japan JA7YAA, USA K8AZ.

Multi-Two

Every year the Multi-Op Two Transmitter category continues to grow in popularity. Having two transmitters on the air for 48 hours requires a real strategy. You have to have both good operators and stamina if you want to try for the top spot.

The Rhein-Ruhr DX Association put together a team and travelled to the Madeira Islands to put CT9L on the air. They took top prize in this difficult category. About a half hour from the Canadian Niagra Falls is the super station of John, VE3EJ. His crew took full claim to the world #2 position, quite a fantastic job from a two-point area. Third place went to the Caribbean Contesting Consortium, PJ2T (<http://www.pj2t.org>). Once again the station with the highest score in Europe was IR4X (ne IQ4A), located on a mountain overlooking the plains of central Italy (<http://www.ari-bo.it/iq4a.htm>). Second place again went to 9A7A (<http://www.qsl.net/9a7a>) located in beautiful Croatia, and third went to RU1A (<http://ru1a.ru/eng/>).

In the U.S., Frankford Radio Club's N3RS team decided to try for top honors and they took it (<http://n3rs.com>)! Second place went to K3NA/1. Eric's team located in Massachusetts is a team to watch out for in the future. Third place in the U.S. went to K11G. A special mention must be made of the fine effort of K5NA to finish U.S. high west of zone 5.

The continental winners were: North America VE3EJ, Africa CT9L, Asia EKØB, Europe

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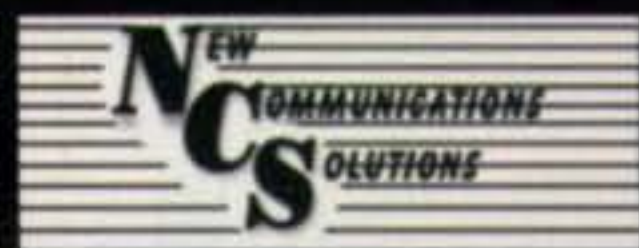
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M6T	163/8/52	452/13/70	667/22/84	1385/32/100	1087/35/103	144/17/42
EA4KR	58/6/39	396/15/77	362/19/76	1044/32/103	1305/31/103	233/14/48
DJ4PT	184/12/50	435/18/67	502/23/77	958/33/85	841/34/91	74/13/42
LB8IB	407/10/58	812/17/75	475/24/87	997/30/97	904/32/92	36/9/32
OZ7X	323/9/47	654/15/63	163/18/63	1387/33/102	877/29/82	21/7/12
US5D	116/5/36	401/11/54	239/16/62	1067/29/91	925/35/103	131/15/36
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9A1P	140/12/62	663/20/81	1043/34/124	1511/36/129	1408/39/135	146/25/73
OM7M	269/12/64	645/24/86	930/37/129	1428/38/140	1136/38/146	170/25/82
G5W	222/9/59	653/18/85	778/27/108	1775/36/137	1407/35/127	58/18/58
OK5W	172/10/57	738/23/89	1093/35/129	1101/36/143	1144/37/124	163/27/82

EUROPE MULTI-OPERATOR TWO TRANSMITTER

IR4X	94/11/58	1264/29/101	1635/34/125	1937/38/146	2188/38/150	427/27/93
9A7A	629/9/60	1479/22/95	1664/33/123	2281/37/141	1703/38/141	396/25/82
RU1A	402/12/58	934/26/98	1806/35/122	2383/38/135	1861/38/145	403/24/82
HG6N	497/12/59	1014/19/81	1121/33/127	1652/37/132	1937/39/144	263/20/64
DQ4W	200/8/50	1057/20/89	1124/32/113	1249/36/130	1592/38/142	279/25/73
LY7Z	464/10/55	845/20/78	882/33/117	2070/37/127	1227/38/118	250/20/50

EUROPE MULTI-OPERATOR MULTI-TRANSMITTER

DF0CG	917/15/70	1825/27/108	2253/35/134	2566/38/143	1703/38/148	413/27/88
OT5A	858/13/64	1492/21/90	2601/33/127	2474/38/145	1362/38/127	609/25/92
DQ0Q	957/11/64	1565/25/93	2604/36/137	2381/38/156	1467/38/144	431/28/94
RW2F	1121/18/81	1500/22/90	2124/34/134	2223/37/143	1631/38/142	419/25/88
LZ9W	684/10/66	1189/25/94	1856/31/121	2732/38/145	2206/37/140	625/27/96
MD4K	945/12/67	1509/18/89	2314/31/120	2062/34/130	1519/36/134	595/17/80

Records

On the CQWW.com web page there are the all-time records for each continent and every country for every mode. Check out your country or call area. Trying to best an existing record or your prior year's score is a worthy goal.

Congratulations to the following stations who set new world and continental records.

World: 7 CN2R (W7EJ), L3.7 TA3D, L1.8 YM0T (TA2RC), Q1.8 KP4KE, A3.7 SP8BRQ, A1.8 ON4WW.

Africa: 7 CN2R (W7EJ), L3.7 7X0RY, A21 EA8URL (EC8AUA).

Asia: 7 UA9AYA (UA9BA), L3.7 TA3D, L1.8 YM0T (TA2RC).

Europe: 3.7 SM0W (SM0WKA), 1.8 OZ1DD, L7 T94DO, A3.7 SP8BRQ, A1.8 ON4WW.

Japan: Q3.7 JE1LFX.

USA: L1.8 K9RO, Q1.8 K3BU, A7 N4CC, A1.8 W2MF.

North America: L1.8 VE3MGY, Q1.8 KP4KE, A7 N4CC.

Oceania: 14 KH7X, A21 KG6DX, A14 9M6DXX, A7 AH6RF.

South America: A7 PX8C(PY8AZT).

Special Mention

The CQ WW is famous for encouraging contesters to put on their travel shoes and go to a DX location for the contest. Every year hundreds of contesters travel to exotic locations. Thank you to the many DXpeditions and the efforts of hundreds of contesters who made the contest experience more interesting for all of us. Here are some calls you probably worked: VP2EAZ, VP2EWX, VP2ECM, 8P1A, V31MQ, VY2PA, J3/SP9PT, J3/SP9BQJ, FG/K9NW, HQ9R, V47KP, V49A, FS/AH8DX, VP5KE, VP5DX, IH9P, ZD8Z, EA8AH, EA8EA, D44TD, CN2R, ST2T, 5H3EE, T6X, A47RS, OH0JFP, CU2A, CU2B, CU2/OH2PM, CU2/OH1VR, T96Q, SV9/OH4FR, J48NL, J48PL, J43J, IS0/WH0Q, IS0/K7QB, VK9XD, VK9XG, 9M8YY, 9M6/G3OKK, KH6/N0CO, KH6/ W0CN, P40W, P49Y, P40A, VP9I, FM5BH, EA8/DL5AXX, TF/N0HJZ, LX/ON4ACA, YB0/ HA2VR, ZL3TE, J7DM, V47NS, FS/AA4V, IG9R, 9G5A, 3V8SF, T18M, OH0Z, J49Z, GD6IA, GJ2A, AH2R, PJ4W, FY5KE, V31MD, T15N, CT9L, 3V5A, 8Q7EA, SX5P, PJ2T, V26B, J3A, 6Y2Z, VP5T, WP2Z, CT3YA, MD4K, HB0/HB9AON, IS0/DL3EW. Check out the full results for many more exotic callsigns.

Once again there were many intra-country competitions. Two ops or more try their best to see who will come out on top. By looking careful-

TROPHY WINNERS AND DONORS

SINGLE OPERATOR
World All Band
8P1A (Opr. Tom Georgens, W2SC)
 Donor: Dave Rosen, K2GM
 WA2RAU and W2SKE Memorial

World Low Power
P40A (Opr. John Bayne, KK9A)
 Donor: Slovenian Contest Club

World QRP
Gerard Gendron, F5BEG
 Donor: Jeff Steinman, N5TJ

World Assisted
FM5BH (Opr. Christian Pidancier, F6HLC)
 Donor: CQ magazine

U.S.A.
K5ZD/1 (Opr. Dave Pascoe, KM3T)
 Donor: Potomac Valley R.C. - KC8C Memorial

U.S.A Low Power
Edward Sawyer, N1UR
 Donor: North Coast Contesters

U.S.A. Zone 3
Mitch Mason, K7RL
 Donor: Dave Pruett, K8CC & Greg Surma, K8GL

U.S.A. Zone 4
Mike Wetzell, W9RE
 Donor: Dave Pruett, K8CC & Greg Surma, K8GL

Canada
VY2PA (Opr. Scott Robbins, W4PA)
 Donor: Niagara Frontier Int'l DX Assoc.
 VE3WT Memorial

Caribbean/C.A.
Jose Hector Garcia M., XE2K
 Donor: Alex M. Kasevich, VP2MM

Europe
Tonno Vahk, ES5TV
 Donor: Potomac Valley R.C. - W4BVV Memorial

Europe Low Power
CT7T (Opr. Jose Manuel Farto Lopes, CT1CJJ)
 Donor: Scott Jones, N3RA & Tim Duffy, K3LR

Russia
Igor Burykh, UA3QDX
 Donor: Roman Thomas, RZ3AA

Africa
ZD8Z (Opr. James Neiger, N6TJ)
 Donor: Gordon Marshall, W6RR

Asia
UPSSL (Opr. Vladimir Vinichenko, UN9LW)
 Donor: 2 AM Dayton Pizza Gang

Japan
Masaki Masa Okano, JH4UYB
 Donor: Tack Kumagai, JE1CKA

Japan Low Power
Takeda Hideto, JF2QNM
 Donor: Western Washington DX Club

Oceania
Tetsuo Tanaka, AH7C
 Donor: Northern California DX Club

South America
P40W (Opr. John Crovelli, W2GD)
 Donor: Yankee Clipper Contest Club

SINGLE OPERATOR, SINGLE BAND
World - 28 MHz
Juan Manuel Morandi, LU1HF
 Donor: Joel Chalmers, KG6DX

World - 21 MHz
PX5E (Opr. Sergio Almeida, PP5JR)
 Donor: Robert Naumann, N5NJ

World - 14 MHz
D44TD (Opr. Alberto Annesi, IV3TAN)
 Donor: North Jersey DX Assn. - K2HLB Memorial

World - 7 MHz
CN2R (Opr. James Sullivan, W7EJ)
 Donor: Fred Laun, K3ZO - K7ZZ Memorial

World - 3.7 MHz
Mauri Leppala, EA8/OH4NL
 Donor: Fred Capossela, K6SSS

World - 1.8 MHz
Jens Rohme, OZ1DD
 Donor: Robert Wruble, W7GG

USA - 28 MHz
Charles Dietz, W5PR
 Donor: Donald Thomas, N6DT

USA - 21 MHz
Neal Sulmeyer, K4EA
 Donor: WorldRadio

USA - 14 MHz
Daniel Handa, W7WA
 Donor: Southern California DX Club

USA - 7 MHz
Bill Kollenbaum, K4XS
 Donor: Stanley Cohen, W8QDQ

USA - 3.7 MHz
James Eppright, K5RX
 Donor: Alex Jozsa, KG1E

USA - 1.8 MHz
Bill Tippet II, W4ZV
 Donor: CQ magazine

Carib./C.A. (21 MHz)
VP5DX (James Iori, NU4Y)
 Donor: Nate Moreschi, N4YDU

Europe - 28 MHz
Zdravko "Emil" Balen, 9A9A
 Donor: CQ magazine

Europe - 21 MHz
T96Q (Opr. Slobodan Kojic, YZ1AU)
 Donor: Tine Brajnik, S50A

Europe - 14 MHz
Veijo Kontas, OH6KN
 Donor: CQ magazine

Europe - 7 MHz
Jiri Sanda, OK1RI
 Donor: John Warren, NT5C

Europe - 3.7 MHz
Teemu Korhonen, SM8W
 Donor: Ted Demopoulos, KT1V

Europe - 1.8 MHz
Dragan Djordjevic, YT6Y*
 Donor: Robert Kasca, S53R

Oceania (14 MHz)
KH7X (Opr. Mike Gibson, KH6ND)
 Donor: Bruce D. Lee, KD6WW

Asia - 14 MHz
Vakhtang Mumladze, 4L8A
 Donor: Al Teimurazov, 4L5A - JA4FWM Memorial

Japan - 21 MHz
Ooshika Tarou, JI2UNR
 Donor: DX Family Foundation

Japan - 14 MHz
Akira Minagawa, JA8JHA
 Donor: Take Yokoyama, JL1BLW

MULTI-OPERATOR, SINGLE TRANSMITTER
World
FY5YE (Oprs: F1HAR, F5HRY, F5LND, F5MZN, F6FGZ, I4UFH)
 Donor: So. Calif. DX Club - W6AM Memorial

U.S.A.
K8AZ (Oprs: K8AZ, K8BL, K8MR, N8AA, ND8L, W8CAR, W8KIC, W8K, WT8C)
 Donor: Carolina DX Association

Carib./C.A.
J7DM (Oprs: AD4J, K2DM, K3ZM, W4GKA)
 Donor: Eric Scace, K3NA

Africa
IG9R (Oprs: IK8HCG, IZ8DFO, IZ8FBU, IV3OWC, IV3JVJ, IV3TDM)
 Donor: Tikiriki Contest Club - IH9P

Asia
9K2HN (Oprs: 9K2YH, 9K2YM, 9K2RR, 9K2ID, 9K2CQ, 9K2HS)
 Donor: Edward L. Campbell, NT4TT
 AA6BB and KA6V Memorial

Japan
JA7YAA (Oprs: JI5RPT, JE7HLZ, JG7PSJ, JO7DJT, JH8NZN)
 Donor: CQ magazine

Europe
OM8A (Oprs: OM2KW, OM2VL, OM3BH, OM3GI, OM3LA, OM3NA, OM3RG, OM3RM)
 Donor: Bob Cox, K3EST

Oceania
AH2R (Oprs: JI3ERV/NH2C, JR7OMD/WI3O, JE8KKX/AH2K, JO1DFG/KH2XC, KH2/JH7QXJ)
 Donor: Junichi Tanaka, JH4RHF

South America
PJ4W (Oprs: DK1MM, OE2GEN, OE2VEL, OE9MON)*
 Donor: Victor Burns, K16IM -
 The Cuba Libra Contest Club

MULTI-OPERATOR, TWO TRANSMITTERS
World
CT9L (Oprs: DL1YD, DL1QW, DL1YFF, DL8OBQ, DK3DM, DK5QN, DF8AE, DB7QJ, DJ8OG, DJ6QT, SV8CS, IK2QEI)
 Donor: CQ magazine

U.S.A.
N3RS (Oprs: N3NA, N3RD, N3RS, W8FJ, WA3LRO, K9RS, N2SR)
 Donor: Kimo Chun, KH7U
 Dan Robbins, KL7Y Memorial

Europe
IR4X (Oprs: I4TJE, I4VEQ, I4EAT, I4AVG, I4IND, I4IKW, IK4EWK, IK4DCT, IZ4BOY, IZ3EYZ, IK2NCJ)
 Donor: Aki Nagi, JA5DQH

Oceania
VK6ANC (Oprs: VK6NU, VK6XH, VK6ZN, VK6ZAA, VK6ANC)
 Donor: Japan CQ Ham Radio

MULTI-OPERATOR, MULTI-TRANSMITTER
World
CT3YA (Oprs: CT3BD, CT3DL, CT3DZ, CT3EE, CT3EN, CT3HK, CT3IA, CT3IQ, CT3KU, CT3KY, CT1BOH, CT1BOP, CT1DIZ, CT4NH, W6NV, N6MJ, P43E, OH2KI)
 Donor: Dave, W6NL and Barb, K6BL Leeson

U.S.A.
K3LR (Oprs: K3LR, N2NC, K5GO, W9ZRX, K8GL, W2RQ, W8JV, N2NT, N9RV, K3UA, N5DX, N3SD, N3GJ, VE2DWA)
 Donor: CQ magazine

Europe
DF8CG (Oprs: DB6JG, DF3KV, DG3FK, DH1NFL, DH5HV, DJ7EO, DK6WL, DL1EJA, DL1MGB, DL2AA, DL2YL, DL3DXX, DL5SDK, DL6FBL, DL6LAU, DO1ET, DO2WW)
 Donor: Finnish Amateur Radio League

Japan
JA3YBK (Oprs: JG3KIV, JI3OPA, JO3LDN, JP3PZD, JH3PRR, JH4NMT, JR4ISF, JF4FUF)
 Donor: Ryozo Goto, JH3JYS

CONTEST EXPEDITIONS
World Single Operator
Michael Tessmer, FG/K9NW
 Donor: National Capitol DX Assn.
 Stuart Meyer, W2GHK Memorial

World Multi-Single
J49Z (Oprs: I2WIJ, IK8UND, IZ4DPV)
 Donor: Gail Schieber, K2RED

World Multi-Multi
6Y2Z (Oprs: AB6BH, K5OT, K6AM, K6JL, K6MC, N5ZO, N6AA, N6VI, N6ZZ, W6XD)
 Donor: Tachio Yuasa, JA9VDA

*Second place

ly at the results, you can see many such competitions. Noticed the three XE teams in the Team Contesting category. What a great way to increase activity in a rare zone. A very special thanks is due to the team of HBØ/HB9AON (DJ2YE and crew). Over the years they have provided the rare HBØ multiplier to thousands of contesters.

Comments

As the opening comments indicated, the 2005 CQ WW SSB was a case where the contest makes the conditions. We received about 4430 SSB contest logs, of which about 4200 were electronic! Thanks to all the contesters around the world who sent in a log. *Please send in your log no matter how small.*

Your submission of an electronic log allows for a fairer adjudication process. Submitting an electronic log is easy. Send your SSB log to <ssb@cqww.com> (CW logs go to <cw@cqww.com>). Please send your log in Cabrillo format. If you did everything OK, you will get back an acknowledgment. If there was something wrong, you will get a message telling you what to do to correct the error. You can then resubmit your log to the same above addresses. The messages are presented in numerous languages. If you don't see your language and you would be willing to help out by translating for your fellow countrymen, or for any inquiry, please send a message to <questions@cqww.com> for more information.

Each year everyone who submitted an electronic log receives a UBN report of how their log was judged. You can learn more about the UBN report by going to the CQWW.com website and scrolling down to the end, where it is explained. The CQ WW Contest Committee provides many ways for an entrant to check his/her log for category, club, operator, and score accuracy. Long before the final results are published, a logs-received list with your category and your UBN list is posted on the CQ WW site. Look over these lists to find out if your information is accurate.

Thanks to the input from numerous entrants a few systemic errors were found and corrected. All these efforts help to make the results as accurate as possible. We enter the contest to have fun, meet friends, perhaps work some new ones, and compete fairly. You can see information concerning the CQ WW on the web at: <<http://www.cqww.com>>.

Packet and other help. If you plan to try to make the Top Scores box, you can count on your log being carefully scrutinized. The CQ WW CC is looking to confirm that you are really in the category you claim and that your score entry is true. In a perfect world we would not have to spend this extra effort to check potential problem logs; however, some entrants feel they must win even if it means not following the rules. Just as in other aspects of life, cheating will not be tolerated. The use of undeclared packet, the use of additional operators for a single operator entry, two signals at the same time on the same band or on separate bands at the same time if you are single operator, all are in violation of the CQ WW rules. The CQ WW has at its disposal years of data, category averages for packet and non-packet scores, statistical aids to verify winners, URL tracing, packet clusters, and reverse log time/band checking (the stations an entrant works can be electronically queried for frequencies and times; therefore an entrant's log without frequencies is not nec-

essary to discover a violation of the rules) are just some of the tools we have available. In addition, we frequently confer with excellent operators in the SO2R and other categories to help confirm what is possible.

Several problems have arisen through the use of packet. If you are a single operator in **any** single operator category, you **cannot receive help in any way from another person or any DX spotting network.** Every year we receive reports of someone allegedly having another operator spot or work QSOs for him, or the unclaimed use of packet. This is cheating, and we will crack down on such cases. The use of packet to self-spot is against the rules, and anyone trying to hide the fact that he is doing it by using other callsigns is obvious to the CQ WW CC. There is nothing wrong with coming across a station and spotting it, but self-spotting is against the rules.

The clever use of packet to add multipliers to your score will not be tolerated. If you do this, you will be **disqualified.** A fair competition means that everyone follows the same written rules. There is no problem with using a DX spotting network: **just submit your entry as Assisted.**

Thanks

Every year the CQ WW Contest Committee devotes a great deal of effort to make the results as complete and accurate as possible. Creating the line scores is just the final product. Thanks to the committee, entrant log submission problems, incomplete logs, forgotten band changes

not in log, incorrect call indicated for the contest, and a myriad of other subtle problems are sorted out behind the scenes. Using an armatorium of log-checking tools and data sources, the CQ WW Contest Committee has done its best to certify the winners. The members of the committee who provided insight into many contesting topics are: K1DG, K3WW, K3ZO, KR2Q, N2AA, N2NC, N3ED, N6ZZ, N9RV, W3ZZ, K1AR, KM3T, KT3Y, N5TJ, W5OV, N5KO, K6AW, N6ZZ, N6AA, and N8BJQ. The DX advisors who offered advice and sorted out potential problems are: CT1BOH, EA3DU, F6BEE, G3SXW, I2UIY, JE1CKA, OH2KI, OH2MM, PY5EG, S50A, UA9BA, VA7RR, VE3EJ, RA3AUU, and E21EIC. A special thanks to Dick, N6AA, and Larry, N6TW, who once again spent countless hours to make the CQ WW database the best in contesting. The CQ WW uses the software developed by Tree, N6TR. Additional software provided by WT4I was used. The CQ WW records are maintained by John, N2NC, and K3EST. Phil, N6ZZ, put in lots of hours beta testing the callsign the database and UBN reports. Thanks as always to John, K1AR, and Tim, K3LR, for their advice.

Congratulations to all the winners and entrants! CU in the '06 test!

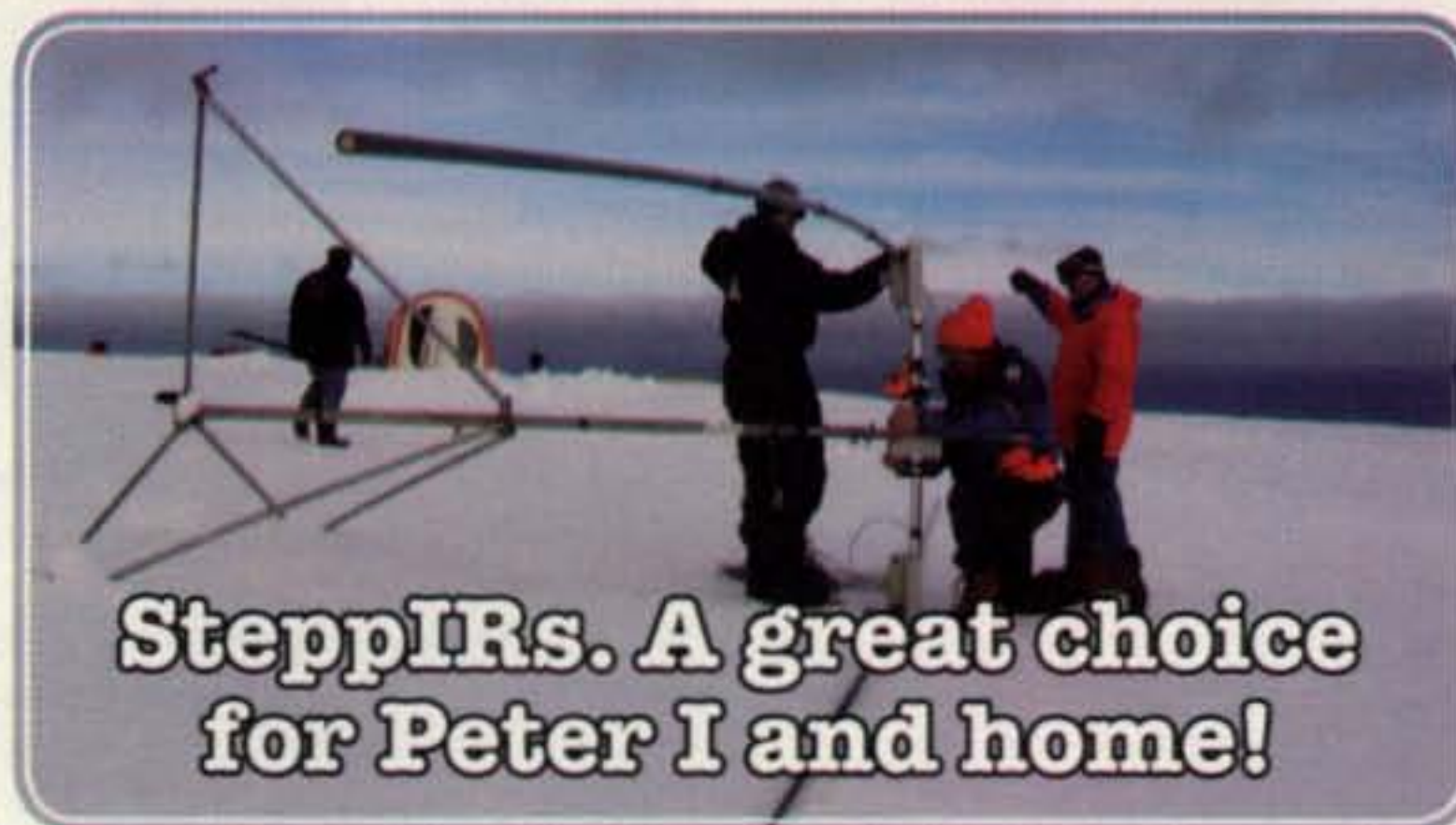
73, Bob, K3EST

DX QRM

Logging all those Caribbean mults is easy, I always thought. Not located in their main direction, it's been a tricky game from East Africa (15m low power) . . . 5H3EE. Thanks to Langkah Syabas Beach Resort

(Continued on page 101)

www.steppir.com



SteppIRs. A great choice for Peter I and home!

"We added four SteppIR 2el yagis to our antenna arsenal for several reasons. First, the ability to cover 5 bands with one antenna, greatly simplified our planning and antenna erection under difficult circumstances. We were on the air quickly! Second, we had NA and EU roughly in one direction and with a simple throw of a switch the antennas would switch 180 degrees and we would beam Japan. That way, it was not necessary to go outside in the bad weather and manually rotate the antenna. Lastly, they performed just as advertised and stood up to wind, ice, sleet and snow. They are a great choice for Peter I and home!" **Bob, K4UEE, 3Y0X DXpedition co-leader**

We couldn't have said it better ourselves!
Get a SteppIR and hear the difference.

SteppIR Antennas
23831 SE Tiger Mtn. Rd, Issaquah, WA 98027
Call Toll Free 866-STEPPIR (866-783-7747)

SteppIR
Antenna Systems

Three New HAM Accessories

All With a Two-Year Warranty

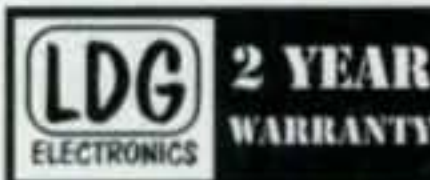
Your Power Problems—Solved!

New! The Multi-DC, a 12 Volt DC Distribution Box

The provided cables have the right coaxial DC power plug to connect to all your LDG products. The Multi-DC can source up to three amps; each of the six outputs can provide up to .5 amps to your LDG accessories. The Multi-DC comes with an input cable, and six output cables, each 3 feet long.

The six outputs are organized in three groups of two. Each pair is internally regulated to 12 vdc, thermal protected and short-limited; a short circuit just shuts down the regulator and turns off that output. So, with the Multi-DC, you can easily and safely power your LDG tuners and accessories (with more coming, by the way!).

List Price \$49



Your Eye Strain Problems—Solved!



Yaesu's popular FT-857 and FT-897 transceivers are wonders of compact efficiency. These do-everything, go-anywhere transceivers were science fiction just a few years ago, but ham's today are using them in shacks, mobiles and on expeditions from the back yard to the top of the world.



The FT-Meter presents a lush, highly readable 2.5" meter face with calibrated scales for signal strength and

discriminator reading on receive, and power output, SWR, modulation, ALC action and supply voltage on transmit.

Each function is selectable from the radio's menu. Easily visible from anywhere on your desk or dash, the FT-Meter is illuminated by any external 12 vdc source.

The FT-Meter comes fully assembled and ready to go; just plug it into the radio and you're in the picture like never before.

List Price \$49



Your Cable Problems—Solved!

RCA-14 is a breakout box for the accessory jacks on most popular transceivers. It comes with cables with the right DIN plugs, and all the outputs are amazingly simple RCA jacks. You simply plug the RCA-14 into your radio's accessory jacks, and all your ports are right there at your fingertips; just plug and play, one function or all of them. It makes no difference. And, you can change things around as often as you like; it's as simple as swapping out an RCA plug.

The RCA-14 comes with a DIN 13 cable, a mini DIN 6 and a mini Din 8. The DIN 13 cable breaks out the functions to RCA jacks 1 - 13, while the mini DIN 6 goes to RCA 1 - 6, and the mini DIN 8 goes to RCA 7 - 14. You can use the DIN 13 or the mini DIN 6 and/or 8, depending on your radio.

The RCA-14 is compatible with: Icom 703, 706, 718, 746, 756, 7000 and 7800, Yaesu 817, 857, 897 and 840, Kenwood 480, 570, 2000 Ten Tec Orion and many others.

List price \$59



"The Forward Power is 112 Watts"

The "Talking" Watt Meter

The TW-1 Talking Wattmeter provides an aural spoken indication of power and SWR using a digitally recorded voice. It is ideal for the vision-impaired, for those of us in the "bi-focal set", or just for those times when you need to be looking somewhere else. At the press of a button, the TW-1 speaks the forward power, reverse power or SWR. Three languages are available: English, Spanish and German. It includes its own internal speaker; no external audio hookups are needed. Available soon the TW-2 UHF/VHF.

List Price \$149

AT-897 for the Yaesu FT-897



If you own a Yaesu FT-897 and want a broad range automatic antenna tuner, look no further! The AT-897 Autotuner mounts on the side of your FT-897 just like the original equipment. We even added the ability to mount the "feet" on the side of the tuner so when you are transporting your rig by the handle, you can safely set it down and not worry about scratching the case. The AT-897 takes power

directly from the CAT port of the FT-897 and provides a second CAT port on the back of the tuner so if you are using another CAT device, hooking it up couldn't be easier.

List Price \$199



The DTS Series Antenna Switches

Tired of that tangled mess of coax and pigtailed in your shack? Always worrying about whether you set the ground switch on your antenna before you left your shack? LDG's new

DTS Series antenna switches are for you. Instantly switch your rig between 4 or 6 antennas with the press of a button. Auto-grounding when you shut your rig down. Purchase the additional remote control and put the DTS Series switch anywhere indoors and operate it from your desk.

They handle up to 1500 watts of RF power on HF (250W on 6M), and can be used with any coax-fed antenna.

List Price DTS-4 \$79, remote \$39
DTS-6 \$99, remote \$49



Baluns and Cables

- RBA-4:1 Remote 4:1 Balun List \$30
- RBA-1:1 Remote 1:1 Balun List \$30

- Y-ACC FT-897, FT-857 Interface List \$12
- IC-1 Icom Interface, 10 foot List \$20
- IC-2 Icom Interface, 1 foot List \$8

Two New Autotuners This Year

All Tuners With a Two-Year Warranty and 6 Meter Coverage



Z-11Pro

The Return of a Legend.

The original portable Z-11 was one of LDG's most popular tuners, accompanying adventurous hams to their backyards, or to the ends of the earth. Now meet the Z-11Pro, everything you always wanted in a small, portable tuner designed from the ground up for battery operation.

Only 5" x 7.7" x 1.5", and weighing only 1.5 pounds, it handles 0.1 to 125 watts, making it ideal for both QRP and standard 100 watt transceivers from 160 - 6 meters.

With **8,000 memories** in LDG's exclusive "3-D Memory" array, the Z-11Pro uses LDG's state-of-the-art processor-controlled Switched-L tuning network. It will match dipoles, verticals, inverted-Vs or virtually any coax-fed antenna. With an optional LDG balun, it will also match longwires or antennas fed with ladder-line.

List Price \$179

AT-200Pro

The first auto tuner specifically designed for today's high-powered transceivers.



The AT-200 features LDG's new "3-D memory system" allowing

up to eight antenna settings to be stored for each frequency. Handles up to 250 watts SSB or CW on 1.8 - 30 MHz, and 100 watts on 54 MH (including 6 meters).

Rugged and easy-to-read LED bar graphs show power and SWR, and a function key on the front panel allows you to access data such as mode and status.

List Price \$249

AT-100Pro

Automatic Antenna Tuner



This desktop tuner covers all frequencies from 1.8 - 54 MHz (including

6 meters), and will automatically match your antenna in no time. It features a two-position antenna switch, allowing you to switch instantly between two antennas. The AT-100Pro requires just 1 watt for operation, but will handle up to 125 watts. The AT-100Pro includes over 2,000 memories for each antenna, automatically storing tuning configurations for each frequency and band as you use them.

List Price \$219

AT-7000

The Hottest Radio in the Industry! Now with It's Own Autotuner!

The AT-7000 is the ideal tuner for IC-7000 & other ICOM Radios: Covers all frequencies from 1.8-54 MHz (including 6 meters), and will automatically match your antenna in a flash. Requires just 0.1 W for operation, but will handle up to 125 W (100 W on 6 m), making it suitable for everything from QRP (IC-703Plus) to a typical 100 W ICOM transceiver.



Ready to go right out of the box! No extra cable to buy.

Tune with the AT-7000 or use your radio. Includes over 2,000 memories, uses latching relays, tuning range is 4-800 ohms, powered by your radio. Includes ICOM interface cable.

List Price \$169

AT-200PC

The First Automatic Tuner Designed Specifically for PC Rig Control



Now you can have a state-of-the-art, high performance automatic tuner and still run your whole station right from your keyboard and mouse. LDG's AT-200PC is a special version of the popular AT-200Pro, designed for PC control. All of its functions are controlled entirely by a program running on your PC. The tuner itself can be installed out of the way, on the floor or even in another room, interfacing to your PC via a serial or USB cable.

List Price \$259



AT-1000

An Autotuner for use with your amplifier!

No more knob spinning or inductor rolling. Tunes your antenna in 1 to 8 seconds when you QSY either in the same band or to a different band! Easy installation and use make this the choice for any Amateur Radio Operator with an amplifier. Power rating HF (1.8 to 30 MHz): 1000 Watts Single Side Band, 750 Watts CW, 500 Watts Digital (RTTY, Packet, etc.) including 6 meters. Just about any antenna can be tuned with the AT-1000. The antenna must be between 6 to 800 ohms (approximately 10:1 SWR) in order to bring the SWR down to 1.5:1.

List Price \$599



Z-100

The definitive low cost automatic antenna tuner!

Designed from the ground up to provide the 100 watt power handling you asked for, in a small, lightweight package, perfect for portable as well as sitting on your desk in your shack!

The Z-100 will tune with 0.1 to 125 watts (50 watts on 6 meters), making it an excellent choice for almost any radio or operating style. Backpackers and QRP operators will appreciate the latching relays. Power can be removed from the tuner once you have tuned. Additionally, when the tuner is not tuning, it draws nearly zero amps.

Additionally, the Z-100 features 200 fast memories which will decrease tuning time up to 95%! List Price \$149



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Hot Stuff at Hamvention® (& Ham-Com®)



Photo by Dan Moseson, KC2OOM

BY RICH MOSESON,* W2VU

More than 30 new amateur radio products made their debuts at this year's Dayton Hamvention®, ranging from a few new radios to a host of new accessories. As usual in this annual feature, we'll divide these products into three broad groups: devices that transmit and/or receive RF energy, including amplifiers; antennas and related accessories, such as SWR analyzers; and general station accessories.

Before we get into the new products, though, we'd like to introduce two new owners of companies that make amateur products. Bruce Wood is now at the helm of SGC, whose ultra-rugged SG-2020 HF transceiver has long been a staple for both amateur and non-amateur use in harsh conditions. In addition, we learned in Dallas that Ramsey Electronics has been purchased by Mike Leo, a longtime employee and associate of company founder John Ramsey, N2HWA, who had quietly sold the firm a few years ago to a group of investors.

*Editor, CQ

Finally, Alinco Electronics has a new U.S. distributor, Ham Distributors, Inc., of Conroe, Texas. Now, on to the goodies...

Radios, etc.

The newest high-end HF radio is the Yaesu FT-2000 from Vertex Standard (photo A). This HF+6-meter transceiver

is billed as the successor to the FT-1000 series and the next generation of the "FT-DX 9000 concept." Features include a parametric equalizer—which permits you to separately adjust the parameters of each of the high-, mid-, and low-frequency equalization ranges of transmit audio—"contour tuning," which allows similar audio shaping on receive, and a block diagram display



Photo A—Yaesu's new FT-2000 will replace the FT-1000 line. (Photo courtesy of Vertex Standard)



Photo B—The ICOM IC-7000 is the likely successor to the IC-706 series.



Photo D—The AOR AR-Alpha receiver covers 10 kHz to 3.3 GHz and will even function as a TV.

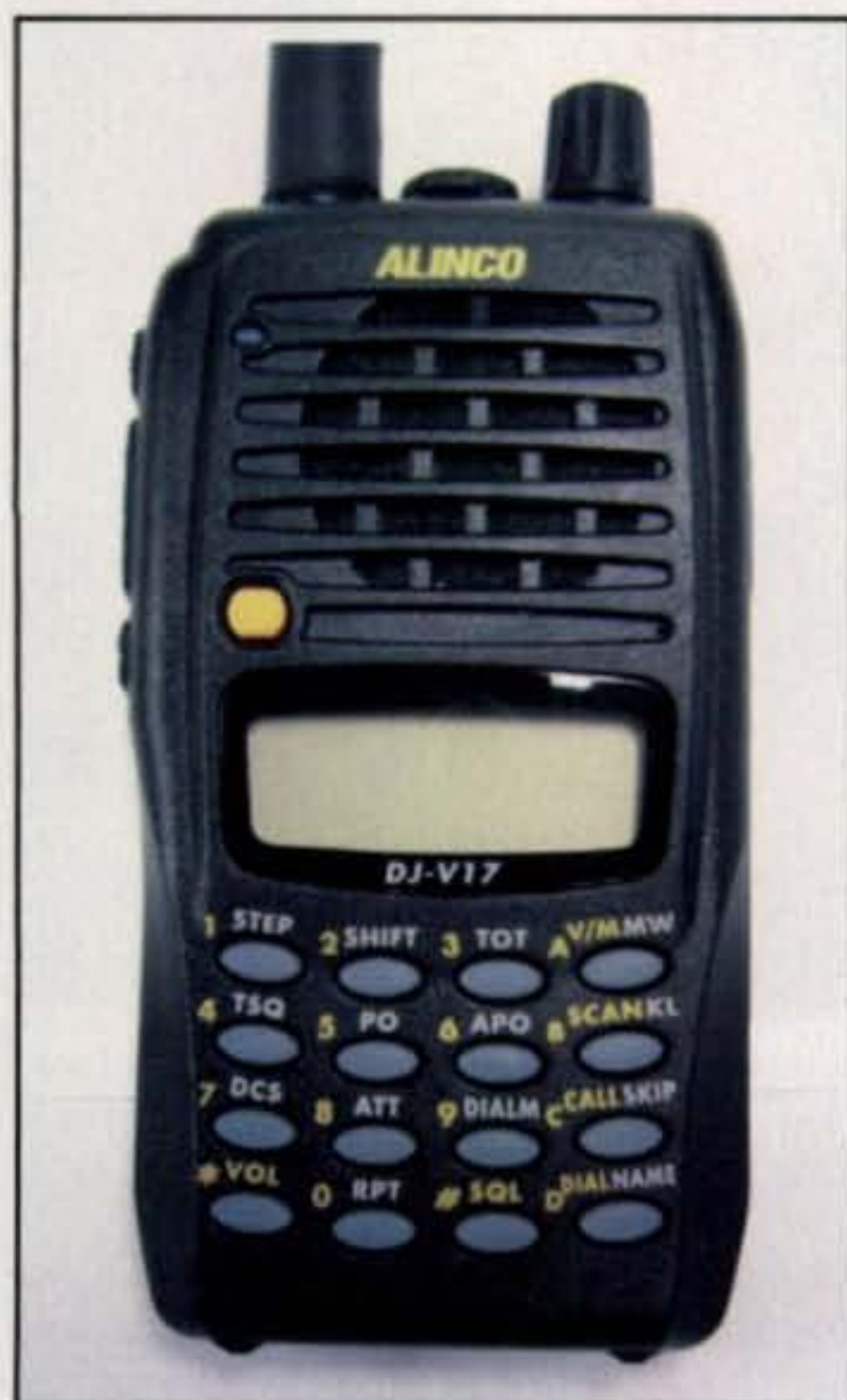


Photo C—Alinco's new DJ-V17 handheld. (Photo courtesy of Alinco)

that shows you at a glance your current selections for antenna, attenuator, pre-selector, preamp, roofing filter, and AGC recovery time. As Yaesu's Chip Margelli, K7JA, explains, "(i)t really helps you figure out, at four o'clock in the morning, what you might have set wrong."

ICOM America has introduced one new radio—the IC-7000—and, in the words of Sales Manager Ray Novak, N9JA, "a new system"—D-Star—which has truly come together in the past year with several D-Star repeaters coming online, allowing users to take advantage

of the digital voice and data features of D-Star equipped transceivers such as the 1.2-GHz ID-1, the IC-82 for 2 meters, and the brand-new dual-band IC-91AD for both 2 meters and 70 centimeters. Some of the repeaters offer crossband linking, while others include internet links between repeaters. At Ham-Com in Dallas, Rich Painter, ABØVO, introduced his μ SmartDigi D-Gate, which will translate D-Star position data into the format used by APRS (Automatic Position Reporting System).

The IC-7000 (photo B) is a likely successor to the venerable IC-706, covering HF, 6 meters, 2 meters, and 70 centimeters in a compact case that's easy to fit into most cars. It includes digital signal processing (DSP) features borrowed from its bigger and more expen-

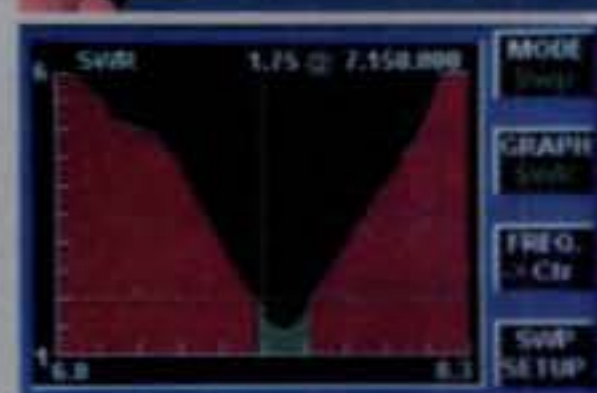
sive cousins, plus a built-in digital voice recorder and a built-in RTTY demodulator/decoder.

Alinco's new DJ-V17T (photo C) is a 5-watt 2-meter handheld featuring 200 memories, wideband receive, two-touch repeater access, and a "battery drain" function designed to avoid the "memory effect" from repeated recharges of only partially-discharged NiCd batteries.

DZ-Kit, whose Heathkit-clone manuals we featured here last year, was reported to be working on modifications to its Sierra transceiver kit, but a release date was not available at Dayton.

On the receive-only side of things, AOR introduced its nearly-DC-to-light AR-Alpha communications receiver (photo D). Covering 10 kHz to 3.3 GHz,

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Photo E— WinRadio's new WR-G305 software-defined radio is available either as an external unit (seen here at right rear) or built onto a PCI card that installs inside a computer.



Photo G— Alpha's new 8100 amplifier continues to rely on tubes in the final, a pair of 4CX800 tetrodes.



Photo F— The solid-state KPA-1500 amplifier puts Elecraft into the world of high power for the first time.

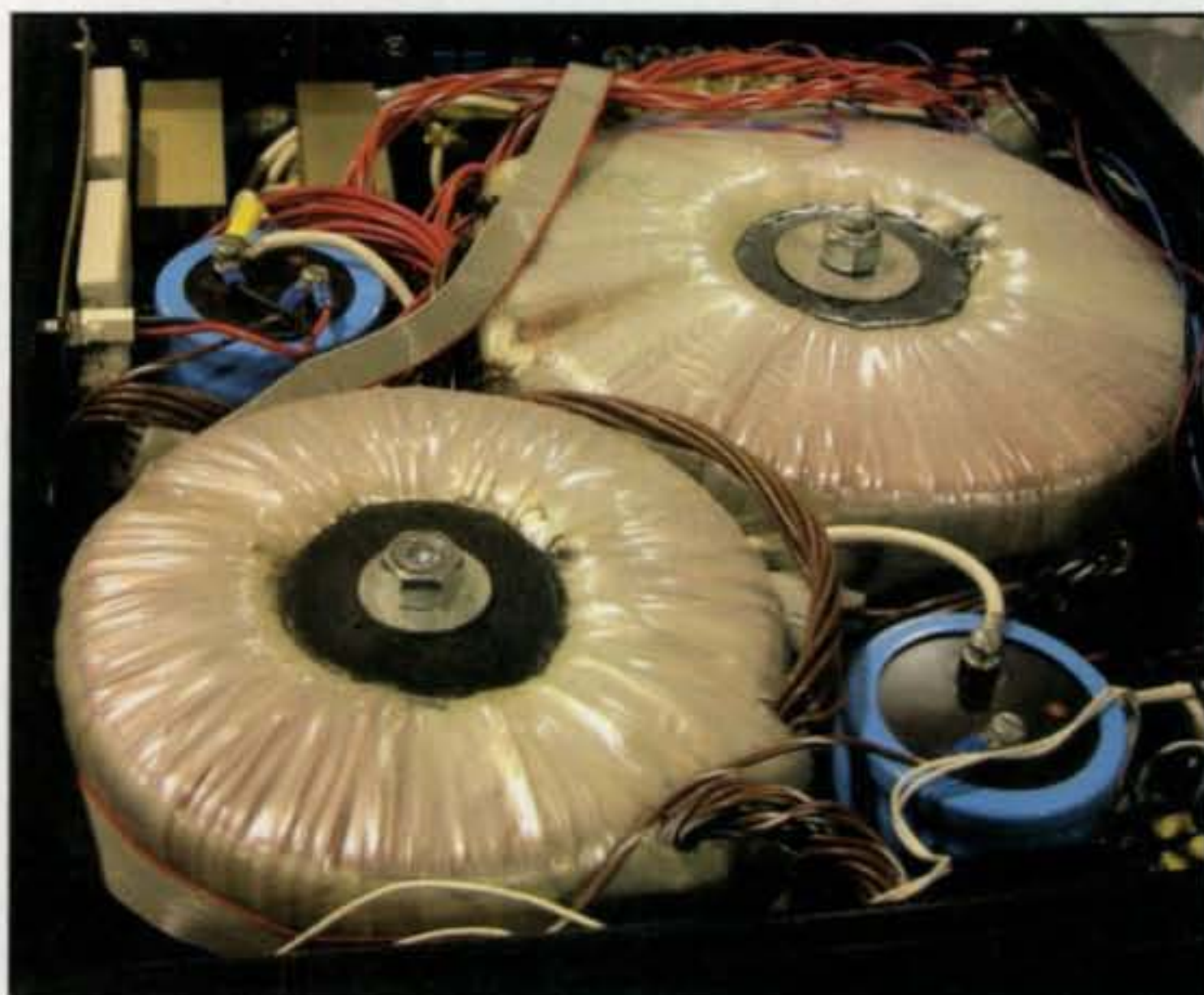


Photo H— Talk about heavy-duty components ... take a look inside the new Dishtronix DWM-2400 amplifier!

the Alpha features IF DSP, I/Q digital output, and multimode receive, including P25 and a mode we've never heard of, RZSSB. Plus, its 6-inch color TFT display will even function as a TV screen to monitor commercial or amateur television signals.

WinRadio has brought out the new WR-G305 software-defined scanning receiver (photo E). It's being promoted as a VHF/UHF receiver, but its spec sheet says it tunes from 9 kHz to 1800 MHz. There are two versions, the G305e, which is built into a computer-noise resistant metal case and connects to the host computer via a USB cable, and the G305i, which is built onto a PCI card and installs inside your desktop computer! The only external connection is for the antenna.

Finally, from the "life's too short for QRP" department, we have three new RF amplifiers, including a surprise entry from a company that made its name in the world of QRP, producing high-quality, low-power transceiver kits. Elecraft has joined the QRO (high power) crowd with its all solid-state KPA-1500 legal-limit amplifier (photo F). Features include 1500 watts out on 160–10 meters with just 60 watts of drive,

plus operation at lower power on 6 meters; a built-in automatic tuner; RF-sensing automatic band switching; two rig inputs; and two antenna outputs. Elecraft notes that this could permit a contest station operating SO2R (single operator, two radios) to operate both rigs with just one amplifier!

Alpha, a name long associated with high power, has introduced its model 8100 manual-tune amplifier (photo G), putting out 1500 watts (minimum) on all amateur bands from 160–10 meters, with drive power as low as 50 watts. Unlike Elecraft's all solid-state amp, the Alpha 8100 is a little more traditional, using two Svetlana 4CX800 tetrodes to produce its amplification.

This year's third amp is the Dishtronix DWM-2400L1 (photo H). This all solid-state 1500-watt amplifier covers 160 to 15 meters, along with the capability for authorized users to operate on 12 and 10 meters as well. This amp was introduced last year as a prototype but is now in production.

(A note on amplifiers operating on 12 and 10 meters: FCC rules currently prohibit the commercial sale in the U.S. of amps capable of operating between 25 and 30 MHz in an effort to keep CBers from using illegally high power. However, a ruling is expected any day now on an FCC proposal to rescind that rule. Clearly, all three of these manufacturers are anticipating

Photo I— Comet's new Super Beam will handle up to 150 watts on 2 meters or 70 centimeters. (Photo courtesy of NCG Company)

positive FCC action, and a ruling in the near future.)

Antennas

Now all that RF energy won't do you any good unless you have a way to get yours into the air and pull other people's out of the air. For that, of course, you need an antenna. There were two new options on display in Dayton this year, one for HF and the other for VHF/UHF. Comet's new CSB7700 Super Beam (photo I) will handle up to 150 watts on 2 meters and 70 centimeters.

On HF, SteppIR is offering a 40-20 meter dipole option as an add-on to its well-known Yagi with elements that change lengths for different bands (photo J). The 40-20 meter dipole does the same thing and can be retrofitted to an existing SteppIR Yagi without disturbing its radiation pattern, and included with a new Yagi at the time of purchase. SteppIR has also introduced an 80-meter vertical rotary loading coil for its BigIR multiband vertical. Adding the coil provides continuous coverage from 80–6 meters, and the coil is automatically switched out above 7 MHz to avoid degrading the antenna's HF performance.

Of course, an antenna system isn't complete without some antenna accessories, such as tuners and SWR meters. Palstar has introduced the AT-200AUTO automatic 200-watt tuner (photo K), with a built-in power and SWR meter and provision for two different antennas. The high-power AT-AUTO tuner, which was shown last year as a prototype and is now in production, handles up to 1500 watts on 160–10 meters and features a two-line LCD display showing the status of the antenna feed, frequency, and memory.

Alpha is offering a companion dummy load for its new 8100 amplifier. The model 2100 will dissipate up to 6 kilowatts for two to three minutes, and 1500 watts virtually forever. It features a full bypass shunt, so it can be kept in line with the amplifier and antenna, and just switched in as needed.

N8LP's Telepost host introduced two antenna accessories, the LP-200 digital dummy load and wattmeter kit (100 watts max) and the LP-100 digital vector wattmeter (2500 watts max; photo L), which displays not only RF power, but also SWR, impedance, resistance, reactance, and phase angle. It can be controlled by computer, and firmware upgrades will be downloadable from the internet.

MFJ has introduced over 130 new products since Dayton 2005, but we only have space to cover a few of them here. Among antenna accessories, we have the MFJ-868 giant SWR/wattmeter, which the company claims is the world's largest, and which may be just what the optician ordered for those of us whose eyesight just ain't what it used to be. Getting feedlines into and out of the house is a perennial challenge, and MFJ has come up with an antenna feedthrough panel mounted on a piece of painted pressure-treated wood



Photo J— The loop element on this SteppIR Yagi is the company's new 40-20 meter dipole.



Photo K— The Palstar AT-200 AUTO is, as its name suggests, a 200-watt automatic antenna tuner. It has a built-in SWR meter and provision for two antennas.



Photo L— Telepost's LP-100 digital vector wattmeter displays not only power and SWR but impedance (Z), resistance (R), reactance (X), and phase angle (P).

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By Joe Carr, K4IPV
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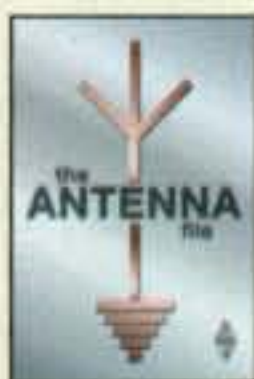


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The Antenna File

RSGB. ©2001. 288 pages. Order: RSTAF

50 HF antennas, 14 VHF/UHF/SHF antennas, 3 receiving antennas, 6 articles on masts and supports, 9 articles on tuning and measuring, 4 on antenna construction, 5 on design and theory, and 9 Peter Hart antenna reviews. Every band from 73kHz to 2.3GHz!



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VHF/UHF Antennas

By Ian Poole, G3YWX

RSGB, 2002 Ed, 128 pages. This great new book investigates the exciting area of VHF and UHF antennas. VHF and UHF bands provide an exciting opportunity for those wishing to experiment, while the antenna sizes at these frequencies do not occupy great amounts of space.



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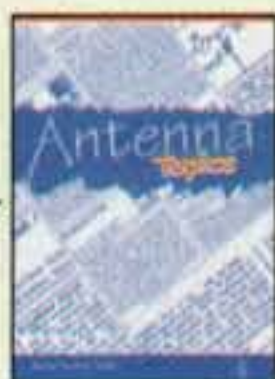
By Fred Handscombe, G4BWP.
RSGB. 6th Ed., 2003. 48 pages. This book is an excellent tool for the beginner and the experienced hand alike. Designed with a "lay flat" wire binding for ease of use the new "Prefix Guide" is a must for every shack.



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Antenna Topics

by Pat Hawker, G3VA
RSGB. 2002 Ed. 384 pages. This book is a chronological collection of selections of G3VA's words over the years. Hundreds of areas and subjects are covered and many a good idea is included.



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(photo M) that sits in your windowsill (you cut it to size) and is held in place by the window itself. Weatherstripping is included.

The M² RH0900 SWR analyzer (photo N) is a specialized unit for 850–950 MHz with commercial as well as amateur applications. It not only measures the SWR of an antenna or



Photo M— MFJ's window feedthrough will let you run several feedlines between your shack and your antenna without drilling holes in your house. (Photo courtesy of MFJ)



Photo N— The RH0900 SWR analyzer from M² is a specialized unit for 850–950 MHz, useful for the 900 MHz amateur band as well as cellphone antennas.



Photo O— Putting up a wire antenna? The new EZ-Hang toolkit comes with everything you'll need, except the antenna wire and feedline.

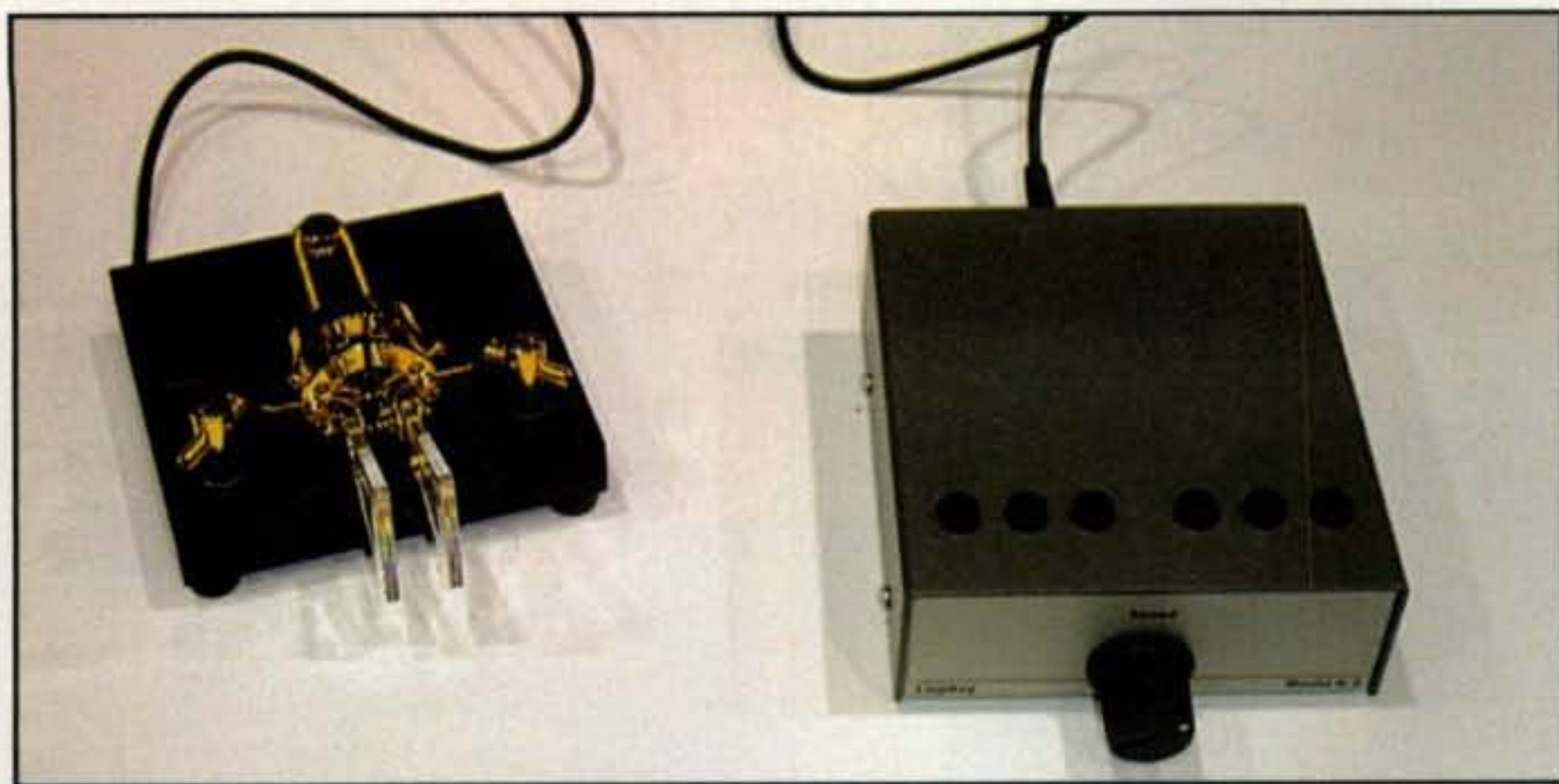


Photo P— The Logikey K-5 keyer from Idiom Press lets you store up to 18 pre-recorded messages and will run off batteries or 12 volts DC.

antenna system, but also has an interference test mode that listens for other strong signals on or near the operating frequency of the antenna being tested.

Finally among our antenna accessories is the EZ-Hang Deluxe Tool Case. How is a tool case an antenna accessory? When it's packed with all the tools you need to put up a wire antenna using the well-known EZ-Hang slingshot. The toolkit (photo O) includes an EZ-Hang slingshot with fishing reel attached, two spools of fishing line, a variety of pliers, wire-cutters and screwdrivers, cable ties, a digital multimeter, electrical tape, and more. It's a true all-in-one package for putting up wire antennas.

Accessory Accessories

Our final segment is general station accessories, which this year includes over a dozen products, from keyers to frequency counters, that can make your station more efficient and/or more effective.

If your computer's serial ports all are occupied with other accessories (or you don't have a serial port on your computer) and you have no output for your rig control software, West Mountain Radio's new RIGtalk provides a USB connection for a CAT/CI-V interface to control your radio from your computer.

Another accessory that's particularly useful for the SO2R contester is the microHAM microKeyer 2R+, which gives you complete audio input and output control for two radios, letting you separately adjust and switch between each one. It includes a built-in CW keyer and digital voice recorder.

On the topic of CW keyers, the Logikey K-5 (photo P) is the latest in the Logikey line from Idiom Press. It replaces the classic K-3 keyer, with all of

the K-3's features plus a smaller cabinet, circuit refinements, a built-in battery holder, and the ability to run off 12 volts DC. It can store up to 18 pre-recorded messages, six of which may be active at any time.

Moving from CW to phone, MFJ has introduced the MFJ-655 HamProAudio equalizer and conditioner. Features include an 8-band equalizer; both 8-pin and modular mic inputs; separately controllable input, output, and compression levels; and a "downward expansion" noise gate.

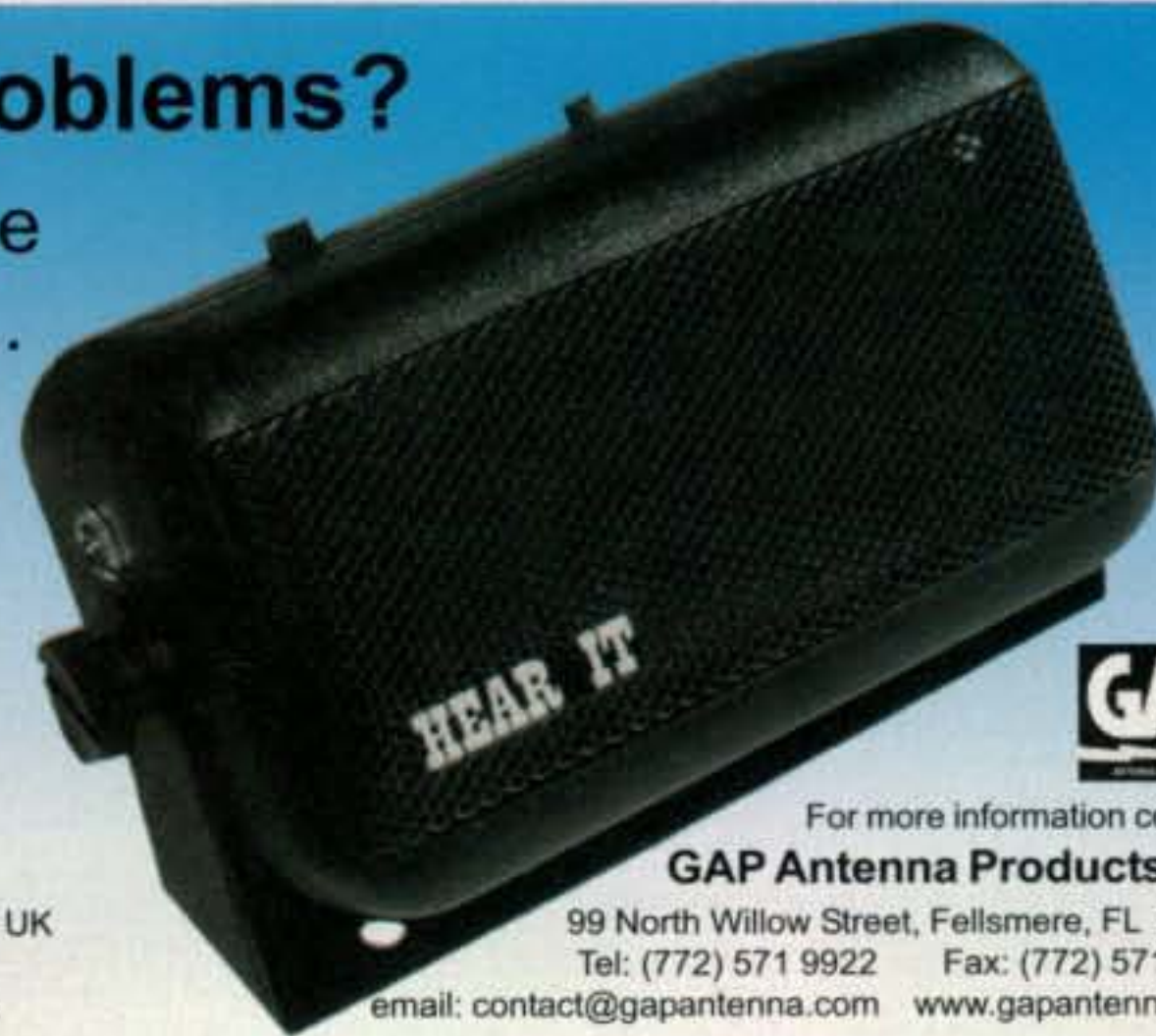
Now moving from phone to the digital modes, West Mountain Radio has introduced a new, just-the-basics, version of its standard-setting RIGblaster, the RIGblaster Plug & Play (photo Q). It works only with USB-equipped computers and includes cables needed for sound-card operation. It also provides for computerized rig control (on rigs with that option), and is compatible with EchoLink and will automatically detect EchoLink signals. It works with every digital mode currently supported by the other products in the RIGblaster line.

A different approach to digital modes comes from microHAM, which introduced its USB Digi Keyer (photo R) at Dayton this year. It includes a rig con-

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S&H \$11.00 Three year parts & labor warranty.



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Photo Q— The RIGblaster Plug & Play from West Mountain Radio will let you run digital modes with a minimum of fuss, using your USB-equipped computer and just about any transceiver.

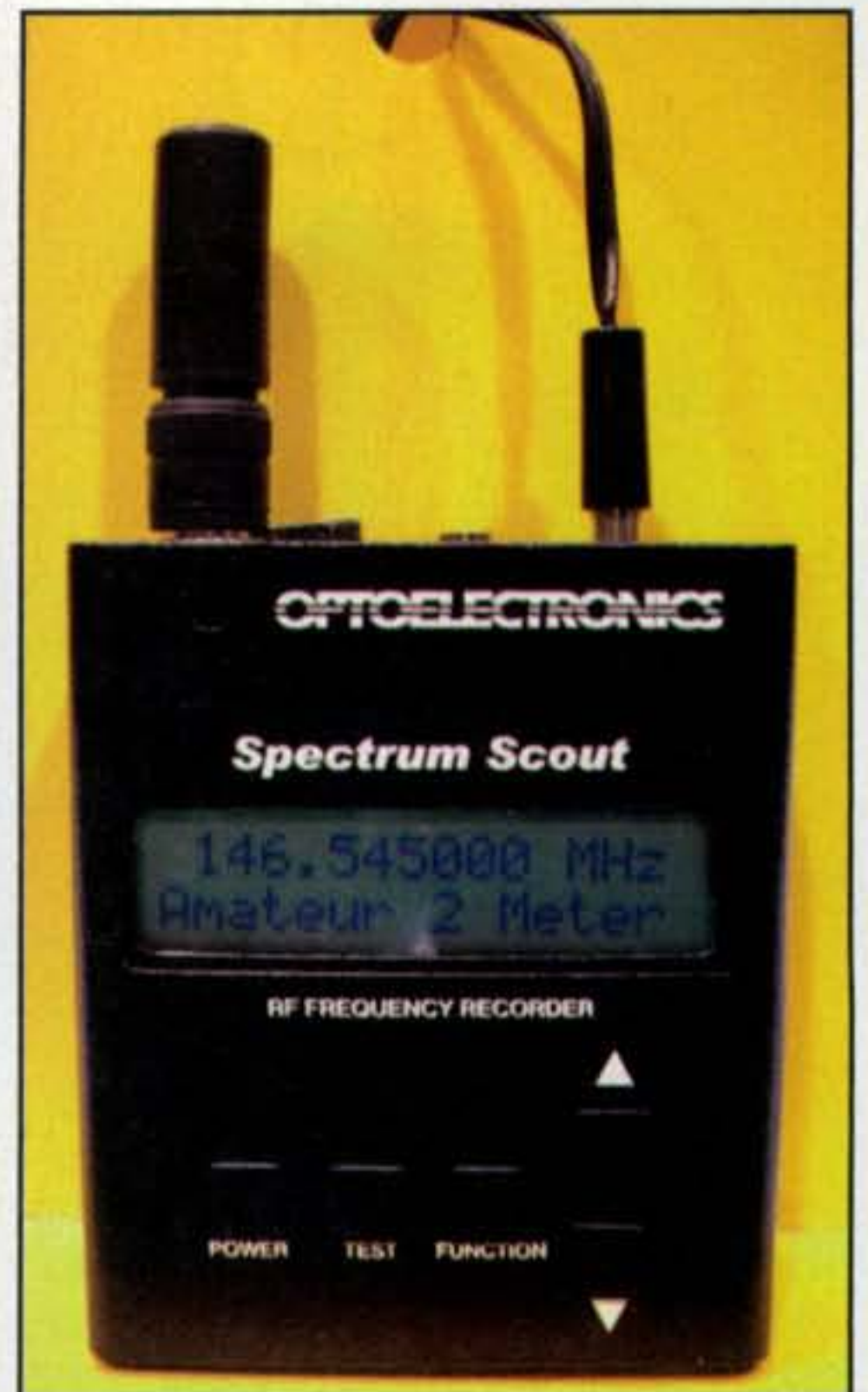


Photo T— The Spectrum Scout from Optoelectronics is a frequency meter covering 10 MHz to 2.6 GHz, and it includes a database of FCC service assignments for whatever frequency is picked up.



Photo R— The microHAM DigiKeyer contains its own sound chip, so you can operate digital modes without relying on your computer sound card.



Photo S— The Rig Expert SD is another digital-mode interface with its own sound card built in, and runs everything on a single USB line to your computer and the line-in on your rig.

control interface and contains its own sound chip, so it's not necessary to use a computer to operate digital modes with the Digi Keyer.

Another new digital modes interface is the Rig Expert SD (photo S), which runs everything over a single USB cable and connects to the line input on the back of most rigs, rather than going in through the mic jack. It has its own sound card, meaning no sound card, IRQ, or com-port conflicts on your computer, and it has a very low power draw.

One problem people sometimes encounter with digital modes such as PSK-31 is incorrect audio level settings that result in intermodulation distortion, or IMD. Being able to measure IMD levels can help you adjust those settings for the best signal. The KK7UQ IMD Meter, available through Rig Expert, does just that, reading IMD levels off the air for PSK 31 or 63 signals. It also doubles as a relative HF field strength meter.

Measuring the frequency of a signal is something with a variety of applications, from seeing whether your transmitter is transmitting where it says it is to finding the frequency of a station that may be causing interference or hooking up with your scanner to jump on active

Photo U— West Mountain Radio's PWRbrite light uses bright white LEDs and can be rotate in its mounting clips for maximum flexibility.



be rotated in or removed from its mounting clips for maximum flexibility.

That's our wrapup of this year's new products seen at the Dayton Hamvention® and at Ham-Com® in Texas. You can find more information on each manufacturer's website. Those who are CQ advertisers have their websites listed in our monthly ad index at the back of the magazine. A quick web search should turn up the others in practically no time.

frequencies in a new area. The new Spectrum Scout from Optoelectronics (photo T) does all this for frequencies between 10 MHz and 2.6 GHz, and can store up to 1000 captured frequencies. In addition, it comes with the FCC bandplan database built in, and displays the service to which a frequency is allocated along with a signal's frequency and signal strength. You can also develop and upload your own database. The Spectrum Scout is compatible with many scanning receivers and is surprisingly affordable, listing for just \$399.

So far, we've massaged the audio coming into and out of your radio, but what about electrical power? We have three new accessories to help keep your power up and running whenever you need it. First is the MFJ-4403 transceiver voltage conditioner, which provides protection against reverse polarity, over-voltage, transients in the power lines, and short circuits. Plus, its huge capacitors will even let you run a 100-watt HF rig off your car's cigarette lighter!

Providing 12-volt DC power to a variety of radios and accessories was always a thorny problem until West Mountain Radio introduced its RIGrunner DC power strips a few years back. The latest addition to that line is the heavy-duty RIGrunner 8012, which can handle a total load of up to 80 amps at 12 VDC for powering those high-current-draw rigs. Another power-related accessory from West Mountain is the new 500-watt CBA Amplifier, which permits the use of West Mountain's Computerized Battery Analyzer (CBA) with high-current power sources, such as car batteries. It will test power sources running up to 160 amps or 500 watts.

Finally, West Mountain has developed the PWRbrite LED light (photo U), which can be mounted to any flat surface. More like a small fluorescent tube than a flashlight, the PWRbrite can be used to illuminate a small area in the event of a power outage, or can even

Do You Want to Be Able to Work Worldwide DX Using a Single Wire Multiband Antenna that's Free of Traps and Loading Coils?

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This 135-foot long* OFF CENTER FED (one leg 45 feet, the other 90 feet) wire antenna is built to survive in severe weather environments. It covers from band edge to band edge on 75/80, 40, 20, 17, 12 and 10 meters and the lower portion of 6, and is fed with a single 50 ohm coax.

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- **Balun components within the center insulator are potted in epoxy** to assure moisture and corrosion resistance, and there are no external wire connections, splices or solder joints.

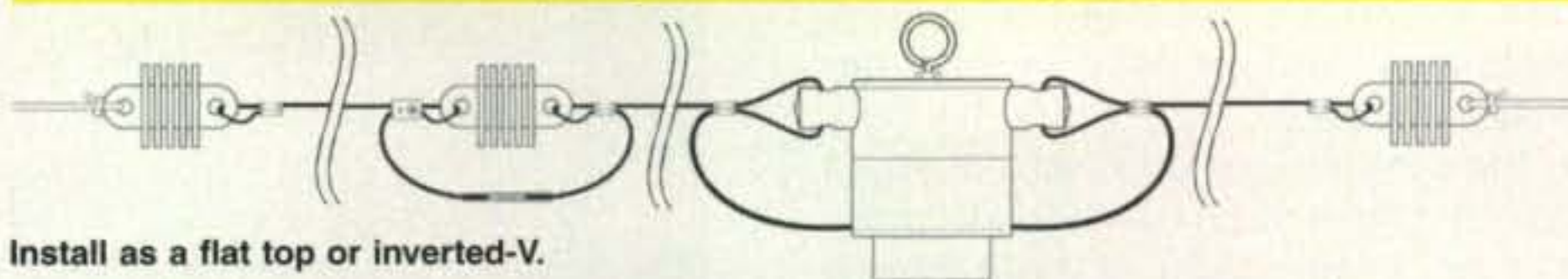


The DX-OCF employs a **thick, flexible, 65-strand 12-gauge PVC-coated wire**, with every strand individually tinned to prevent corrosion. **Put this antenna up and forget it!** Save time *and* money by eliminating the frequent maintenance and replacement headaches that result from installing a lesser-quality antenna!

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When we published "The License Conspiracy Experiment," in last November's CQ, we hoped it would encourage other ham-family members to follow its example. WA4ILO shares his story.

Merry Christmas, Dad! Another Ham Radio Family Story

BY JIMMY WALKER,* WA4ILO

Naturally, a ham radio operator is always eager to talk about the hobby in response to questions from a curious friend. We love to talk about our favorite activities, such as repeaters, Morse Code, satellite work, public service, technical projects, or DX work. However, in offering our elaborate explanations, we all have seen the glaze that quickly comes over the eyes of the listener who regrets having asked the question.

Shifting to another, hopefully more interesting, line of inquiry, our friend may ask, "How did you get interested in ham radio?" Our answers to that question are as varied as our experiences. Often, a family member inspires our interest in ham radio. With no disrespect to my loving family, I can say without reservation that not one of them has expressed any interest in my ham radio hobby except as a courtesy to me.

When my wife tries to engage me in activities about which I have absolutely no interest, I explain my unwillingness by reminding her of ham radio and how much she would not enjoy spending a few hours with me at a hamfest. She always understands. My two children, while they have been willing to spend time with me in my radio room-office, were never inspired to participate in ham radio.

Having always dreamed of a ham radio family, I was amused by the story by Rich Moseson, W2VU, and his son, who tried to find out how hard it would be to get a ham radio license with practically no preparation ("The License Conspiracy Experiment," CQ, November 2005). The story offers the conclusion that it takes some preparation, but not very much, to get a beginning ham radio license.

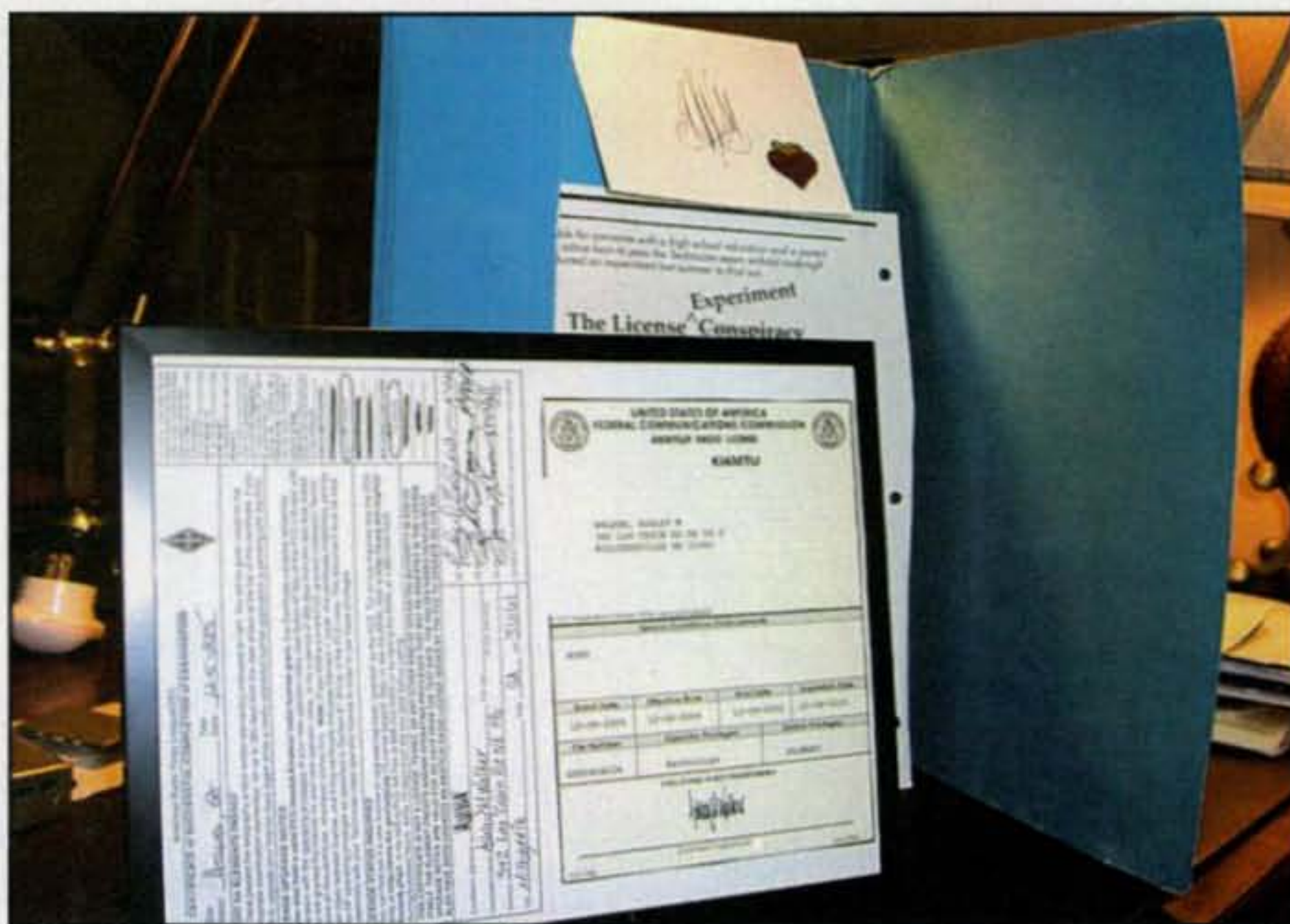
I had always suspected that our licensing barrier was lowered sufficiently to

allow anyone who was willing to learn (or memorize) a few rules and technical concepts to become a ham (*Actually, it used to be that way, too. See KH6HU's "Op Ed" in the April 2006 issue.—ed.*). I had said as much to my family for years and recently shared a copy of Rich's story with them to fortify my continuing encouragement. However, beyond the courteous responses of "ho hum" and "that's interesting," there was no further discussion of the subject.

Consoling myself, I thought, "Who would want to share a ham shack with another member of the family anyway?" Imagine this exchange: "How much longer will you be using the radio for the contest, Dad?" Or how about this? "Hey Dad, I wired a modification to our new transceiver to increase our power output." Perhaps it is best to be the boss and only operator of the family ham radio station.



The author opens his mystery gift on Christmas morning. (Photos courtesy of the author)



Contents of the mystery package: Daughter Ashley's framed ham license and Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination, as well as a copy of the CQ article that inspired her to get her license.

*118 Troon Way, Macon, GA 31210
e-mail: <JDWalkerJr@aol.com>

Ashley's Story

I became a ham over the Christmas holidays in 2005. My father has been a ham since 1962. My father and I have been best friends for my whole life, 25 years. He is the reason I am a ham; I wanted to be a part of his passion. I had never attempted the ham test, though, because I always thought it would be too difficult. I never *really* thought I would join my dad on the air.

But in the fall of 2005, my dad gave me an article about someone's son, who passed the Technician test without doing much studying. The article asked the questions, "Can the child of a ham pass the test without studying? Does being the child of a ham give you the tools you need to pass the ham test?" In early December, I drove to Athens, Georgia from my home in Macon to find out, and learned that the answer to that question is yes. I, too, passed the license exam without doing much studying.

I anxiously waited until Christmas Day to give my license to my father. Christmas morning, he opened the present and, to my surprise, didn't jump for joy. Rather, he

looked more like he was in shock. He wore this face of disbelief for the rest of the morning. Once the shock wore off, my dad started shopping for a new radio, a radio for me. So, as a late Christmas present, my dad bought me the ICOM 2200. I didn't have a big part in choosing it, but now that I have it, I use it every day.

I had my first QSO toward the end of January 2006. I hang out on the AA4RI repeater in Macon, Georgia. I love all of my new friends. Everyone who hangs out on the repeater got together to have lunch a couple of weeks ago. All of my new friends are really welcoming me to into ham radio. I know I will have to break out the book for my Amateur Extra license, but I am looking forward to it! I will be attending the 2006 Dayton hamfest. It will be my first hamfest, and I am totally looking forward to that! (Ashley did indeed attend the Dayton Hamvention®... and brought the story full-circle. See "Postscript: The Dayton Connection" later in this article.—ed.)

— Ashley Walker, KI4MTU

My two children are now in their mid-20s, living in their own homes in other cities, but within easy range of my 75-meter transceiver and several VHF repeaters. Of course, like so many families we communicate mostly via cell phone. There is e-mail, too, and IMing (instant messaging) for the quick question, report on some activity, or for the sharing of pictures. Still, wouldn't it be fun to have a ham radio contact with one of the children? Such are the daydreams of an aging ham radio father. If you are a ham radio parent, you cannot honestly say that you have never had this daydream.

A Christmas Present Like No Other

Fast forward now to Christmas morning 2005. Picture me, a ham radio operator of baby-boomer vintage, licensed for over 40 years, watching the loved ones of my life exchange gifts around our Christmas tree. Our family is not always together on Christmas day, since our two children have merged with other families. As families typically do, we find ourselves in competition for attendance at these special occasions. This was our year to have the children, the daughter-in-law, the brother and sister-in-law, the two nieces, and five rather large dogs in our home, which is ordinarily occupied by two adult persons (no dog).

It was the very best of Christmas mornings, confusing, loud, and glorious. There were dogs and people and wrapping paper and thank yous and laughter, and... what's this? A gift for

Dad? "Thank you," I said, always glad to receive another tie, or shirt, or book. This package, though, oddly shaped as it was, seemed to be something different. It was something in a frame.

More curious than the shape of the package was my daughter's call for the attention of the family. "Everybody," she said, "let's see what this gift is," referring to the package in my hands. The room grew solemnly and oddly quiet. Cameras began to point my way. I became, for the moment, the center of attention, a most unlikely circumstance for a father on Christmas morning.



It's hard to tell who is happier here, "old" ham Jimmy, WA4ILO, or new ham Ashley, KI4MTU.

"What is this?" I said out loud, and to myself, in earnest. As the content of the package was revealed under the wrapping paper, I saw the familiar logo of the Federal Communications Commission. "How odd," I thought. Someone had framed my ham radio license. "This is a nice present," I said, still thinking to

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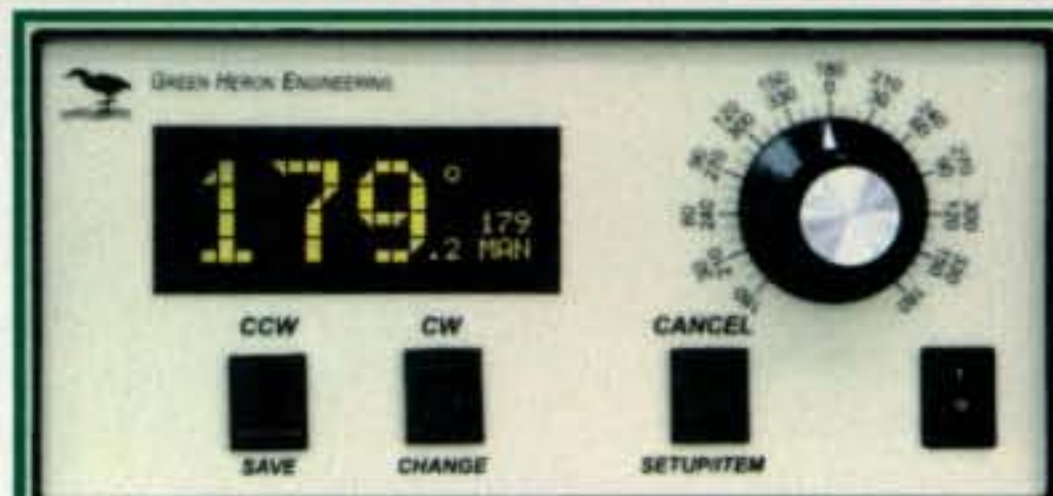
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myself that there was something very peculiar about it.

Where my name should have been there was another name, a Walker, like me, but not me. The call was not mine, WA4ILO, but a strange one, KI4MTU. It was one of those moments you read about when they say time begins to move in slow motion. I read the license class, not Extra Class like my own, but Technician, a beginner's license. I touched the letters of the name and slowly recognized them to be my daughter, Ashley M. Walker.

It was one of those times where you realize you don't know very much about how your brain works. I could feel tears forming in my eyes before I knew why. The next step in the slow wave of realization was the glow of pride in my daughter's eyes. The reality of what had happened slowly bubbled to the surface of my consciousness; I realized that my daughter had become a licensed ham radio operator.

"This can't be true," I said to myself. "Why," I thought, "does this make me want to cry?" When my paralysis began to seem a bit awkward, even to me, I realized that I had to make some verbal response. I said something like, "Wow!" "Amazing!" I was not feeling my most articulate self.

Fortunately, my daughter's hugs con-

cealed my continuing emotion and gave me a chance to gather my thoughts sufficiently for coherent conversation. I asked, "What made you decide to do this?" My daughter replied, "It was the magazine article about the son of the man who took the test without seriously studying for it."

I instantly remembered Rich's article and having shared a copy of it with her. I wanted to hear more details, but with Christmas morning being the madhouse it always is, everyone's attention began to be distracted to other presents and activities. My daughter agreed to tell me the complete story later.

... the Rest of the Story

The next day, when the two of us went for an errand in the car, my daughter shared the details of her preparation and test-taking experience. Like Rich's son, she did very little preparation. She studied the practice questions on the internet and took the practice exam several times, failing it as often as she passed it, always by narrow margins.

She consulted a very helpful ham operator in her community and found the test would not be available in her home town soon enough for the license to be issued in time for Christmas. Consulting an internet listing, she presented herself for testing at a city about

80 miles from her home and learned the test was not being given on that night.

Consulting the internet further, and this time calling in advance, she located another testing location in a city about as far in the other direction and presented herself for that testing session. As one might expect, she failed the test the first time. After paying another fee and taking the test again later in the day, she passed.

Having told the Volunteer Examiners her story about trying to get the license issued as a Christmas present to her father, they shared her happiness when she passed the second test. The exam results were processed at the FCC and a license was issued in time to be framed, wrapped, and presented to a proud father as evidence of the respect and affection of a daughter for a father's lifetime hobby.

I wish Rich's story and mine could be heard by ham radio families everywhere. I believe there are a few more prospective hams who would be encouraged by these reports to give the license test a try. Mostly, though, my story is reported here as thanks to a family that has lovingly supported my ham radio hobby for all the years they have known me.

WA4ILO calling KI4MTU. Ashley, are you listening? 88s! ■

Postscript: The Dayton Connection

By Rich Moseson, W2VU

What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas ... but what happens in Dayton, we tend to share with the rest of the world! It was Friday morning of the 2006 Dayton Hamvention®. I was in my usual spot at the CQ booth, chatting with readers and hawking subscriptions. My son Dan, KC2OOM, the subject of the article that inspired Ashley to get her license, was with me, filling in for a CQ staffer who couldn't make it. At one point, I looked up and saw a man and a young woman approaching, and I immediately recognized both of them.

"I haven't forgotten your story," I told Jimmy, WA4ILO. "We just haven't had space for it yet, but it's ready to roll as soon as we do."

"Well, I just wanted to meet you and introduce you to Ashley," he replied. "This is KI4MTU."

"It's so nice to meet you," said Ashley, "and I wanted to thank you so much for writing that article and inspiring me to get my license."

"Well, all I did was write about it," I said. "Your real inspiration is right over there." I pointed to my left. "Dan, come here, there's somebody you need to meet!"

Ashley broke into a huge smile, while Dan was completely mystified, since I'd conveniently neglected to tell him about the article, wanting him to see it for the first time in print. Interestingly, while Ashley knew her father was writing an article about their experience, she hadn't seen what he'd written either (and as far as I know, still hasn't, until now).

They both seemed kind of awed by the whole thing, Ashley at meeting the person responsible for her deciding she really could get her ham license, and Dan at the realization that he'd been that person, even though he, himself, hadn't yet been on the air. Truly, it was one of those "only in Dayton" experiences that you can't wait to tell the whole world about. So I am...



CQ Editor Rich Moseson, W2VU; Ashley Walker, KI4MTU; Dan Moseson, KC2OOM, and Jimmy Walker, WA4ILO, outside the CQ booth at the 2006 Dayton Hamvention®.

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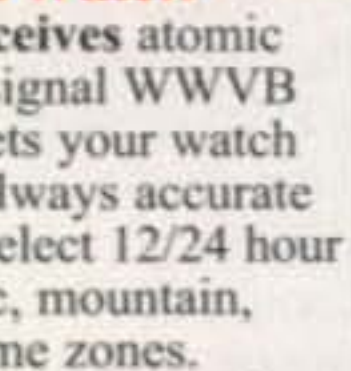


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News from All Over

We have a variety of significant reports this month, literally from all over the globe, all focused on ham radio emergency communications. The Atlantic hurricane season began on June 1, and "Right on Schedule..." the first tropical storm formed before the month was two weeks old. On the other side of the world, we have reports of hams helping provide communications after the massive earthquake in Indonesia and flooding in

*c/o CQ magazine

e-mail: <wa3pzo@cq-amateur-radio.com>

Thailand. We also have an update on the changing mission of MARS (the Military Affiliate Radio System), on which we first reported in June.

Besides those hams listed in each segment, we would like to thank Bill Sexton, N1IN, for supplying some of this month's information. I look forward to meeting some of you at the Maryland State Convention in Hagerstown, Maryland on July 29.

Have a story to tell? Drop us a note and let us know what you are doing in the world of amateur radio public service. Until next time...

73, Bob, WA3PZO

Right on Schedule....

Just 12 days into the 2006 hurricane season, Tropical Storm Alberto had already started to dump heavy rain over Florida and was threatening to become a hurricane. Early reports from the National Hurricane Center indicated that 10 to 20 inches of rain had fallen over western Cuba, which could cause "devastating flash floods and mud slides." Grand Cayman Island had reported 22.72 inches of rain in just 24 hours and 4 to 8 inches of rain were possible over the Florida Keys and western Florida. Major damage from the storm was not expected in the U.S., but officials were hoping it would serve as a wake-up call all along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts that hurricane season is back and preparedness is essential.

Along those lines, preparations and testing continued at key points along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts of the United States. In early June, operators at the National Hurricane Center conducted their annual test. Julio Ripoll, WD4R, Assistant Coordinator, said the purpose of this annual station test is to "test all of our radio equipment, computers, and antennas using as many modes and frequencies as possible." He also indicated that RFI monitoring would be done on NHC equipment.

Ripoll reminded amateurs in the affected area of any hurricane that "your safety comes first!" He commented that Max Mayfield, NHC Director, repeatedly reminds everyone, "Don't just look at the thin black line," meaning that dangerous conditions may exist for hundreds of miles on either side of a storm's center path as shown on most maps.

Numerous state hurricane drills took place along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. In the New York City area, Bronx County ARES® participated in an exercise called "The Bronx Storm Rehearsal." The drill, sponsored by the American Red Cross in Greater New York, was "designed to prepare volunteers by giving a hands-on experience in emergency shelter operations."

The drill activated the amateur radio station at the Red Cross Headquarters in Manhattan and at a shelter set up at a local high school for the purpose of passing emergency traffic between the shelter and Red Cross headquarters. According



New York amateurs Carl Glovinsky, WA2IAF, Joe Nieves, N2TEE (Staten Island ARRL Emergency Coordinator), Chris Kilpert, KC2OBN, and Gabe Cheng, N2GAB, test emergency preparedness. (Photo courtesy of Laura Rudin, KB2VDV)

to Mike Lisenco, N2YBB, ARRL District Emergency Coordinator for New York City, "ARES is relied upon by our clients, like the Red Cross, to be able to quickly, adequately, and professionally set up and run a portable communications system to help those affected by a disaster. In order to provide that service, ARES members participate in drills such as this to hone our skills."

"The drill provided the opportunity to test our readiness," said Joe Nieves, N2TEE, ARRL Emergency Coordinator for Staten Island. "We need to be prepared at all times should we be called upon to support our community."

Laura Rudin, KB2VDV, said "many 'monkey-wrenches' were incorporated into the drill scenario. To that end, ARES volunteers needed to be on their toes at all times. During the drill, the script changed the situation to ensure a complete breakdown in 'conventional' forms of communication such as cell phones. From that point on, the ARES team provided the only communications from the shelter to the EOC in Manhattan." When a blackout scenario occurred, the hams were able to provide a seamless transition to battery-backup power.



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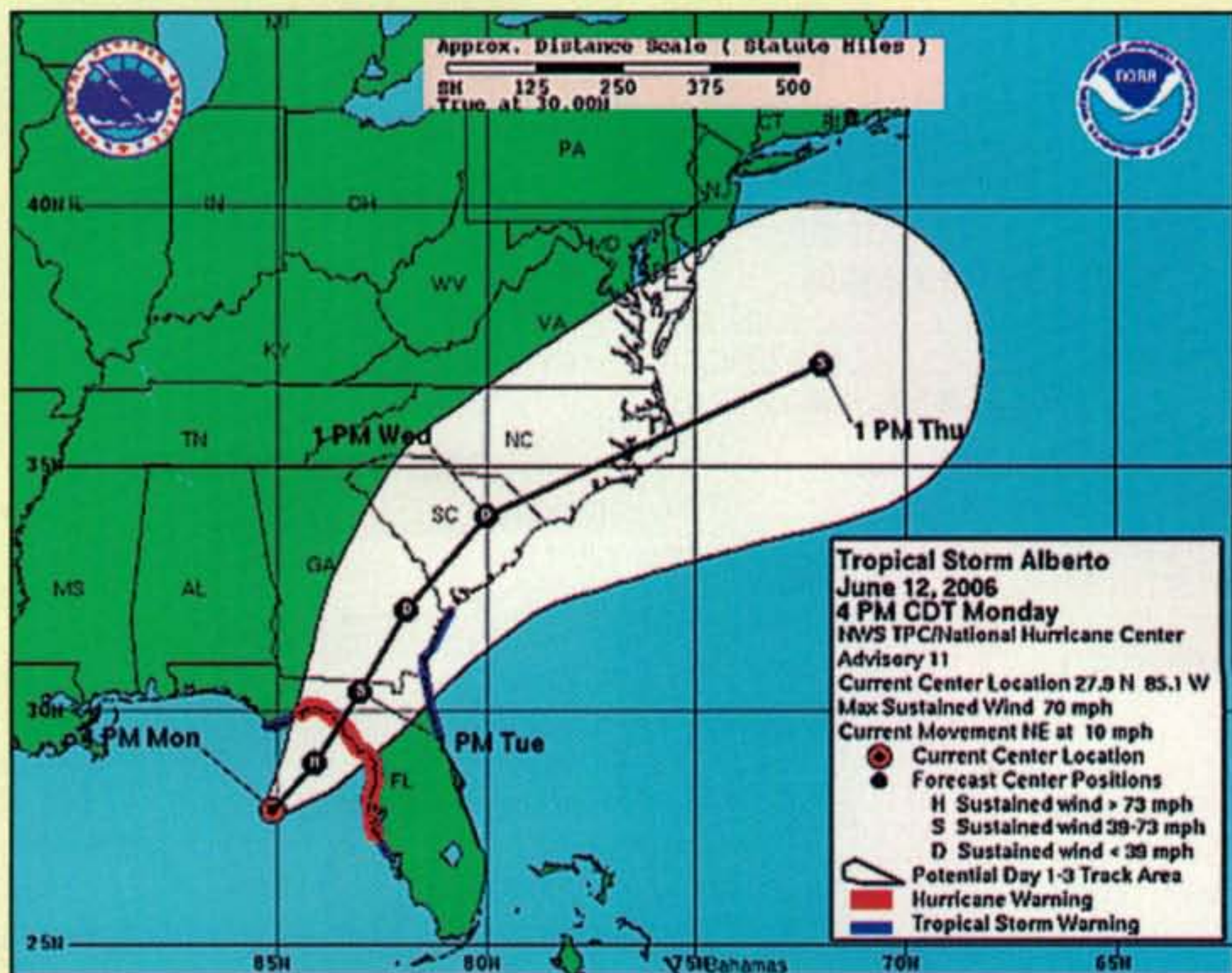


Getting the Word Out

This year's hurricane season could provide a good opportunity to promote amateur radio even if you are not in a hurricane prone area. As a hurricane heads for the coastline, you need to understand what the news story is, and what it is will depend on where you are located.

If you are in the path of the storm, the local story before landfall will be the preparations being made in case it hits, and the ham radio "angle" is that hams are preparing to assist local agencies in case there is a communications failure or overload. If you are in an area that has been hit by a hurricane, the story is about the destruction in the area, saving lives, and protecting property. Amateur radio will not be the story for several days (unless, of course, it is the only source of information. Even then, the "message" will be more important than the "messenger."). As the immediate threat passes, however, and stories of agencies and volunteers helping out begin to appear, there is an opportunity to tell our story.

If you are completely out of the path of the hurricane, then there are other opportunities to tell our story. It might be



a story of local hams monitoring emergency nets in case they can help out or it could be about local hams traveling to the disaster area. There are also other opportunities to say that if a hurricane or

other bad storm were to hit the local area, the local amateur radio group would be there to support emergency response agencies and that local hams train to respond to communications failures.

SAVE BIG ON ANTENNAS, TOWERS & CABLE

TELESCOPING ALUMINUM TUBING

DRAWN 6063-T832		1.250" \$1.65/ft
.375" \$.80/ft	1.375" \$1.85/ft	
.500" \$.90/ft	1.500" \$2.05/ft	
.625" \$1.00/ft	1.625" \$2.35/ft	
.750" \$1.10/ft	1.750" \$2.60/ft	
.875" \$1.20/ft	1.875" \$2.85/ft	
1.000" \$1.30/ft	2.000" \$3.10/ft	
1.125" \$1.45/ft	2.125" \$3.60/ft	
EXTRUDED 6061-T6		.188" rod \$.35/ft
.250" rod \$.50/ft	4"x.375" bar.. \$6.50/ft	
2"x.125" \$4.50/ft	2"x.250" \$8.00/ft	
6' OR 12' LENGTHS. 6' LENGTHS SHIP UPS.		

ANTENNA ROTATORS

M2 OR-2800PDX.....	\$1379
Hygain HAM IV.....	\$499
Hygain T2X Tailtwister.....	\$569
Yaesu G-450A.....	\$249
Yaesu G-800SA/G-800DXA.....	\$329/409
G-1000DXA.....	\$499
Yaesu G-2800SDX.....	\$1089
Yaesu G-550.....	\$299
Yaesu G-5500.....	\$599

ROHN TOWER

25G/45G/55G.....	\$99/209/259
25AG2/25AG3/25AG4.....	\$119/149/129
45AG2/45AG4.....	\$249/249
AS25G/AS455G.....	\$49/109
BPC25G/BPC45G/BPC55G... \$89/119/129	
BPL25G/BPL45G/BPL55G... \$99/189/219	
GA25GD/GA45GD/GA55GD ... \$99/139/159	
GAR30/GAS604.....	\$39/49
SB25G/45/55.....	\$59/109/149
SB25G5/SBH25G.....	\$79/139
TB3/TB4.....	\$139/159
PLEASE CALL FOR MORE ROHN ITEMS.	

COMET ANTENNAS

GP3, 2m/70cm Vertical.....	\$99
GP6, 2m/70cm Vertical.....	\$149
GP9 2m/70cm Vertical.....	\$189
GP15, 6m/2m/70cm Vertical.....	\$159
GP98, 2m/70cm/23cm Vertical.....	\$189

COAX CABLE

RG-213/U, (#8267 Equiv.).....	\$.69/ft
RG-8X, Mini RG-8 Foam.....	\$.35/ft
RG-213/U Jumpers.....	Please Call
RG-8X Jumpers.....	Please Call
CALL FOR MORE COAX/CONNECTORS.	

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T200-96	96', 15 square feet.....	\$2969
T300-88	88', 22 square feet.....	\$2869
T400-80	80', 34 square feet.....	\$2759
T500-72	72', 45 square feet.....	\$2629
T600-64	64', 60 square feet.....	\$2499
T700-56	56', 80 square feet.....	\$2349
MORE TRYLON TOWERS AVAILABLE.		

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X50A, 2m/70cm Vertical.....	\$109
X200A, 2m/70cm Vertical.....	\$149
X510MA 2m/70cm Vertical.....	\$195
X500HNA 2m/70cm Vertical.....	\$259
X700HNA 2m/70cm Vertical.....	\$399
V2000A 6m/2m/70cm Vertical.....	\$172

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LMR-400.....	\$.69/ft
LMR-400DB Direct Bury.....	\$.99/ft
LMR-400 Ultraflex.....	\$.99/ft
LMR-600.....	\$1.39/ft
LMR600 Ultraflex.....	\$2.19/ft
CALL FOR MORE SIZES & CONNECTORS.	

M2 VHF/UHF ANTENNAS

6M5X/6M7JHV.....	\$259/319
6M2WLC/6M9KHW.....	\$549/589
2M4/2M7/2M9SSBFM.....	\$119/129/149
2M12/2M5WL.....	\$209/249
2M5-440XP, 2m/70cm.....	\$219
440-470-5HD/420-50-11.....	\$169/119
432-9WL/432-13WLA.....	\$219/299
440-18/440-21ATV.....	\$159/179

TOWER HARDWARE

3/8"EE/EJ Turnbuckle.....	\$15/16
1/2"x9"EE/EJ Turnbuckle.....	\$21/23
1/2"x12"EE/EJ Turnbuckle.....	\$24/26
3/16"/1/4" Big Grips.....	\$5/6
3/16"EHS-500'/1/4"EHS-500'.....	\$119/149
PLEASE CALL FOR MORE HARDWARE.	

UNIVERSAL ALUMINUM TOWERS

4-40'/50'/60'.....	\$619/879/1249
7-50'/60'/70'.....	\$1119/1599/2079
9-40'/50'/60'.....	\$869/1249/1719
12-30'/40'.....	\$659/1029
15-40'/50'.....	\$1159/1629
16-60'/80'.....	\$1529/3529
21-50'/60'/70'.....	\$1849/2459/3059
23-30'/40'.....	\$1029/1509
35-40'.....	\$1739

M2 SATELLITE ANTENNAS

2MCP14/2MCP22.....	\$209/299
436CP30/436CP42UG.....	\$299/349
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12 FT x .18" / 17 FT x .12".....	\$159/149
20 FT x .18" / 22 FT x .12".....	\$249/199
23 FT x .25" / 24 FT x .18".....	\$369/299

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HYGAIN ANTENNAS

AV18HT Hightower.....	\$739
DIS71/72.....	\$269/569
TH3JRS/TH3MK4.....	\$319/399
TH5MK2/TH2MK3.....	\$659/319
TH7DX/TH11DX.....	\$749/995

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HPTG1200I.....	\$.45/ft
1200 END KIT.....	\$3.60
HPTG2100I.....	\$.59/ft
PLP2738 Big Grip (2100).....	\$7.00
HPTG4000I.....	\$.89/ft
PLP2739 Big Grip (4000).....	\$9.50
HPTG6700I.....	\$1.29/ft
PLP2755 Big Grip (6700).....	\$13.50
HPTG11200.....	\$1.89/ft
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US TOWER CRANK-UPS

MA40/MA550.....	\$1099/1699
MA770/MA850.....	\$2799/4349
TMM433SS/HD.....	\$1479/1789
TMM541SS.....	\$1939
TX438, 38' Crankup Tower.....	\$1379
TX455, 55' Crankup Tower.....	\$1899
TX472, 72' Crankup Tower.....	\$3139
TX489MDPL, 89' Motorized HD.....	\$8239
HDX538, 38' Extra Heavy Duty.....	\$1649
HDX555, 55' Extra Heavy Duty.....	\$2889
HDX572MDPL 72' Motorized.....	\$7549
SHIPPED DIRECT TO SAVE YOU MONEY!	

MFJ

259B/269, Analyzers.....	\$259/339
948/949E, Tuners.....	\$139/159
969, HF-6m Tuner.....	\$189
986, 3kW Tuner.....	\$319
989D, Deluxe 3kW Tuner.....	\$339
991/993 Autotuners.....	\$169/229

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TX SERIES HEAVY DUTY CRANK-UP TOWERS

TOWER MODEL	MAX. HT.	MIN. HT.	WT. (LBS.)	LIST PRICE	SALE PRICE
TX-438	38'	21'6"	355	\$1,523	\$1,279
TX-455	55'	22'	670	\$2,107	\$1,749
TX-472	72'	22'8"	1040	\$3,462	\$2,899
TX-472MDP	72'	22'8"	1210	\$5,571	\$4,499
TX-489MDPL	89'	23'4"	1800	\$9,034	\$7,299



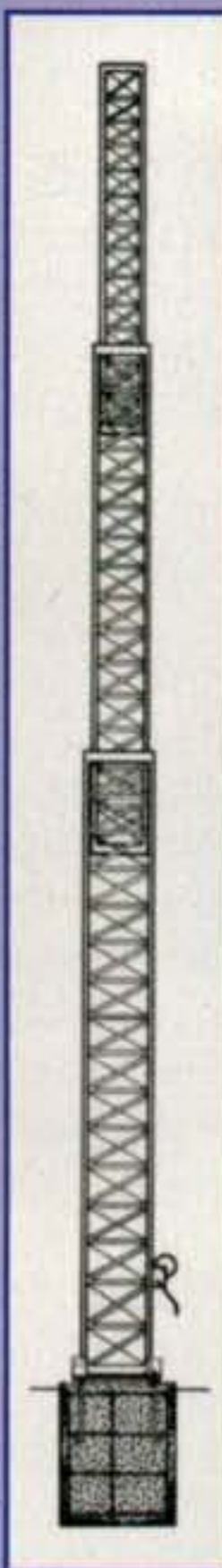
HDX SERIES CRANK-UP TOWERS

- Heavy duty, handles 44.7 square feet of antenna load at 50 MPH, 35 square feet at 70 MPH.
- All models supplied with hinged T-base, anchor bolts, hand winch (except motor drive models), top plate, and rotor plate.
- MDPL models include motor drive
- Options include coax arms, raising fixtures, masts, motor drives, and more!

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HDX SERIES HEAVY DUTY CRANK-UP TOWERS

TOWER MODEL	MAX. HT.	MIN. HT.	WT. (LBS.)	LIST PRICE	SALE PRICE
HDX-538	38'	21'6"	600	\$1,807	\$2,099
HDX-555	55'	22'	870	\$3,162	\$2,549
HDX-572MDPL	72'	22'8"	1600	\$8,281	\$6,669
HDX-589MDPL	89'	23'8"	2440	\$10,841	\$8,699
HDX-689MDPL	89'	23'8"	3450	\$20,943	\$16,499
HDX-5106MDPL	106'	24'8"	3700	\$22,791	\$17,549



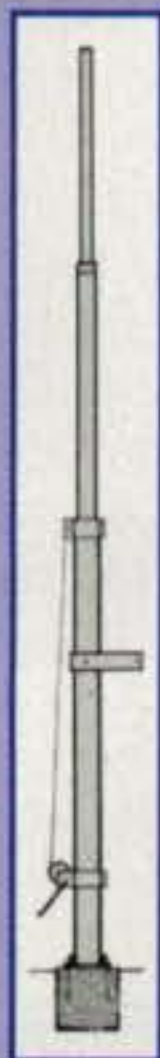
MA SERIES CRANK-UP MASTS

- Handles up to 22 square feet of antenna load. (See chart below)
- MDP models include motor drive.
- All models supplied with anchor bolts, load-actuated hand winch, and house bracket.
- Options include coax arms, raising fixtures, motor drives, self-supporting and rotator bases, remote control panel, and more!

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MA SERIES CRANK-UP MASTS

MAST MODEL	MAX. HT.	MIN. HT.	WT. (LBS.)	50 MPH (sq. ft.)	70 MPH (sq. ft.)	LIST PRICE	SALE PRICE
MA-40	40'	21'6"	242	16.5	6.8	\$1,209	\$999
MA-550	55'	22'1"	435	22	9	\$1,875	\$1,549
MA-550MDP	55'	22'1"	620	22	9	\$3,584	\$2,999
MA-770	71'	22'10"	645	15.5	5.5	\$3,091	\$2,599
MA-770MDP	71'	22'10"	830	15.5	5.5	\$4,890	\$3,999
MA-850MDP	85'	23'6"	1128	15.3	6.3	\$6,591	\$5,499



TMM SERIES COMPACT CRANK-UP TOWERS

- Handles 20 square feet of antenna load at 50 MPH, 8 square feet at 70 MPH.
- Compact design is great for areas with tower restrictions, or where a less intrusive installation is desirable.
- All models supplied with hinged T-base, anchor bolts, load-actuated hand winch, 8' steel mast, top plate, and rotor plate.
- Options include coax arms, raising fixtures, motor drives, thrust bearing, remote control panel, and more!

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TMM SERIES COMPACT CRANK-UP TOWERS

TOWER MODEL	MAX. HT.	MIN. HT.	WT. (LBS.)	LIST PRICE	SALE PRICE
TMM-433SS	33'	11'4"	315	\$1,626	\$1,349
TMM-433HD	33'	11'4"	400	\$1,970	\$1,649
TMM-541SS	41'	12'	430	\$2,135	\$1,789



WEEKDAY HOURS:
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Earthquake!

Indonesian amateur radio operators provided critical emergency communications in the greater Yogyakarta area, located in the center of Java Island, following a destructive earthquake in late May. The earthquake measured a 6.3 magnitude on the Richter scale. The quake left more than 6200 people dead, injured 30,000, and leveled entire communities.

According to reports relayed to Wyn Purwinto, AB2QV, amateurs from the Organization of Amateur Radio for Indonesia, ORARI, coordinated an emergency communications network comprised of individual hams and "Zulu Stations." Common practice in Indonesia is to designate several zulu-suffix emergency communication stations to handle disaster-related traffic on HF and VHF. Several ham radio medical teams headed to the affected area, including the North Sumatra team, led by Dr. Soejat Harto, YB6HB, which had provided important aid following the 2004 tsunami that struck the area. Other amateur radio teams responded from other parts of the country with equipment and backup generators. Some hams were also supporting the Indonesian Off-Road Federation with its heavy-duty all-wheel-drive vehicles.

The emergency nets not only provided communications for earthquake relief, but were also set up to monitor the active volcano situation at Mount Merapi. If providing communications for two emergencies was not enough, many local hams had to deal with personal tragedy from the earthquake. Several hams were killed as a result of the earthquake. One ham radio operator's daughter was killed when a wood-



Indonesian amateur radio operators provided important emergency communications when an earthquake struck the Greater Yogyakarta area. (Photo courtesy of Deta Sayekti, YB2VTO, and Win Purwinto, AB2QV)



Emergency station YC2ZEB was set up in the lobby of the Bantul Mayor's official house. (Photo courtesy of Halim Dani, YC2TJV, and Win Purwinto, AB2QV)



Erwin, YD2UER, operates emergency station YC2ZEB, which was set up in the lobby of the Bantul Mayor's official house. (Photo courtesy of Halim Dani, YC2TJV, and Win Purwinto, AB2QV)

en wardrobe hit her. Yet within one hour he was on the air reporting the tragedy.

By mid-June most of the amateur radio support had come to an end in the affected area, but hams were still stationed at the Yogyakarta gubernatorial building and several relief centers.

Flooding in Thailand

Meanwhile in Thailand, the Office of the National Telecommunications Commission set up two amateur radio repeaters in Sukhothai and Uttaradit to help provide communications in flood-stricken areas. Manas Songsaeng, deputy secretary-general of the Office of the NTC, said the repeaters would allow radio amateurs in the areas to link together to provide communications networks to assist the authorities in providing relief to flood victims.

The repeaters were installed based on advice from Thailand's King Bhumibol Adulyadej, HS1A, who voiced concern that mobile phones had no signal in the forested areas of the flood-stricken provinces. The flooding has affected over 200,000 people. At least 555 homes were destroyed and more than 75 people were killed.

MARS Mission Changing

There's word of a new evolving mission for Army MARS (Military Affiliate Radio System). As reported in CQ's June Public Service column, Army MARS Chief Kathy Harrison said, "We will have many new challenges in the next year to meet our mission with directed budget cuts, but I feel our NETCOM/9TH ASC MARS staff and volunteer membership will meet those challenges."

Now Harrison has told MARS members that the customer base is being reviewed and updated. Missions throughout the Department of Defense and other government agencies have changed dramatically over the last few years, meaning the MARS customer base and its missions have also changed, she said.

In the past, so-called EEI messages (for Emergency Elements of Information) were directed to the Joint Staff Directorate of Military Support (JDOMS), which had the mission to coordinate military support to civil agencies. EEIs are used to alert federal authorities to disasters, weather emergencies, highway closings, and other situations with a potential to involve government operations. One example of EEIs being sent was on September 11, 2001, when information was relayed from the New York City area to the Pentagon. Harrison said that this reporting is a primary mission for MARS members who are distributed throughout the United States and charged with providing emergency backup communications by radio when normal channels fail.

"The good news is that NORTHCOM (the U.S. Northern Command) assumed the role that JDOMS previously had and we are already working with them to define our roles and their needs," she said. "Please note that the elimination of JDOMS from our chain does not mean the mission no longer exists. It does mean that we are long overdue for a review of our customers, their needs, and our mission specifics."

Her wide-ranging message, dated May 11, called on MARS members "to stay actively involved in determining customer needs at the local levels." Also, she said, "(m)ilitary units and the state level and local agencies may have requirements for local and/or deployed operations."

Ms. Harrison, a civilian employee of the Department of the Army with 30 years experience in communications, is a former Eastern Area Director of Army MARS and graduated with honors from the U.S. Army Signal Officers Advanced Course. As Chief of Army MARS, she succeeded Robert Sutton, N7UZU, who retired after 16 years in the post.

"We already know MARS is continuing to evolve with technology, customer base, and cost containment," her mes-

sage said. "There will be changes in our program to meet these needs...The Army is transforming and Army MARS will have to transform along with it. This will present many challenges to us at HQ and to all the membership. You have met the challenges to MARS in the past and I am confident you will do so again," she said.

U.S. Northern Command was established in 2002 to provide command and control of Department of Defense (DoD) homeland defense efforts and to coordi-

nate military assistance to civil authorities. Civil service employees and uniformed members representing all service branches comprise NORTHCOM's headquarters, which is located at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, Colo. The commander of NORTHCOM, Adm. Timothy J. Keating, also commands the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), a bi-national command responsible for aerospace warning and aerospace control for Canada, Alaska, and the continental United States.

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What You've Told Us...

Our May column asked about tools in and around your ham shack, and 90% of the respondents said they have an electronics workbench or similar area in which they build &/or repair electronic gear.

Among tools in your possession, 99% of you have screwdrivers, pliers and wire cutters; 98% have a utility or hobby knife; 97% have a handheld electric drill, a hacksaw, a hammer, and wrenches; 95% have wire strippers, 94% have a magnifying glass and a soldering gun, 93% have tweezers, and 92% have a pencil-type soldering iron.

Next, 85% each have a crimper and a solder sucker or wick; 78% have a power saw, 76% have alignment tools, 75% have a "third hand" clamp, 74% have a Dremel® tool or similar, and 72% have some sort of punch (center, hole or chassis). Moving down, 63% have something that wasn't on our list, 62% have a drill press, 57% have a soldering torch, 51% have a nibbler, and 48% have an anti-static wrist strap. Finally, 19% have a metal bending brake and a lone one per cent reports having no tools at all.

Electronic tools are not quite so widespread, with an analog VOM topping the list at 88%, followed closely by an SWR/wattmeter at 87%, a digital multimeter at 86%, and a dummy load at 84%. Then we have a big drop, to 65% each with an antenna analyzer and a DC ammeter, followed by oscilloscopes and RF signal generators (56% each), a capacitance &/or inductance meter (50%), other (49%), an audio signal generator (47%), and a grid dip oscillator, at 43%. Getting into the more esoteric gear, 33% of you have an RF voltmeter, while 25% have a step attenuator, 24% have an impedance bridge, and 15% have a spectrum analyzer. Only 2% report having no electronic tools at all.

Finally, we asked how active you were in building and fixing things, and 13% responded "very active," while 31% replied "active" (for a total of 44%); another 48% said they occasionally build or fix something, while 7% said they rarely do so and only 2% said never. Overall, not too shabby for a group of people who, according to popular wisdom, never build anything anymore. Maybe it's time to rethink the popular wisdom.

Our free subscription winner for this month is Delbert Clark, KA9ZMK, of Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin.

Reader Survey August 2006

We'd like to know more about you—about who you are, where you live, what kind(s) of work you do, and of course, what kinds of amateur radio activities you enjoy. Why? To help us serve you better.

Each time we run one of these surveys, we'll ask a few different questions and ask you to indicate your answers by circling numbers on the Survey Card and returning it to us. As a bit of an incentive, we'll pick one respondent each month and give that person a complimentary one-year subscription (or subscription extension) to *CQ*.

This month, we'd like to ask about where your ham shack is located.

Please answer by circling the appropriate numbers on the reply card.

1. Where is your *primary* station location? (Choose one)

In my house/apartment	26
In my vacation home	27
In another remote location	28
In my vehicle	29
On my boat.....	30
On my belt (handheld).....	31
Not currently on the air.....	32

2. If you have a station in your home, where is it located?

Basement.....	33
Attic.....	34
Room in main living area.....	35
Garage/"real" shack	36
Other	37
No station in home	38

3. If you have a station in your home, is it in its own room?

Separate room for ham station.....	39
Shared room, main living area	40
Shared room, attic or basement.....	41
No station in home	42

4. From what type of vehicle (if any) do you operate? (Circle all that apply)

Family car, truck or van.....	43
Work vehicle.....	44
Recreational vehicle.....	45
Bicycle.....	46
Boat.....	47
Airplane	48
Do not operate from a vehicle	49

5. If you operate mobile, is your radio permanently or temporarily installed in your vehicle?

Permanent.....	50
Temporary.....	51
Combination	52

6. What band(s) do you operate from your vehicle? (Circle all that apply)

HF.....	53
VHF/UHF.....	54
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Thank you very much for your replies. We'll be back next month with more questions.

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A Receiver for Aircraft Transmissions

It is well known fact that operating radio transmitters (cell phones, HTs, etc.) is not allowed onboard commercial airliners due to the fact that RF from such devices could potentially interfere with the signals normally used to communicate with and control the aircraft. The same potential problem also arises from radio receivers, particularly those of the superheterodyne variety, since harmonics of the local oscillator (in these circuits) could also cause interference. Even though most transmitters and receivers do not actually operate directly on specific vital frequencies, harmonics, various beat products and even unsuspected rectification products of high RF fields could still cause problems. Therefore, the simplest solution is just to completely prohibit any non-certified emitter. If, however, one were to fabricate a totally non-radiating receiver, this potential problem would be totally eliminated.

Last month we looked at field strength meters, and since these devices detect RF passively, one can slightly rearrange the various circuit compo-

nents and build a neat, simple non-radiating receiver. Fig. 1 shows one example—an ultra-simple AM receiver, or as we called it in the old days, “a crystal set”!

In operation, a short antenna picks up nearby AM-modulated RF and applies it to a voltage doubler comprised of two germanium diode detectors. The output of the doubler is then filtered by a ceramic capacitor and converted back into audio by means of a high-impedance crystal earphone. Since the aircraft band extends from about 118 to 136 MHz, the input is specifically untuned to achieve the necessary wide bandwidth, and the receiver therefore responds to whatever strong RF is present.

For those who wish to experiment with a tuned front end, an optional input circuit (also shown in the schematic) should be connected in place of the 100K resistor. This circuit obviously is not very sensitive and, having no power supply, is not capable of radiating anything. However, that is precisely what we want. Its lack of sensitivity results in only the strongest signals being heard in the earphone. If used in an aircraft, the only strong, nearby RF

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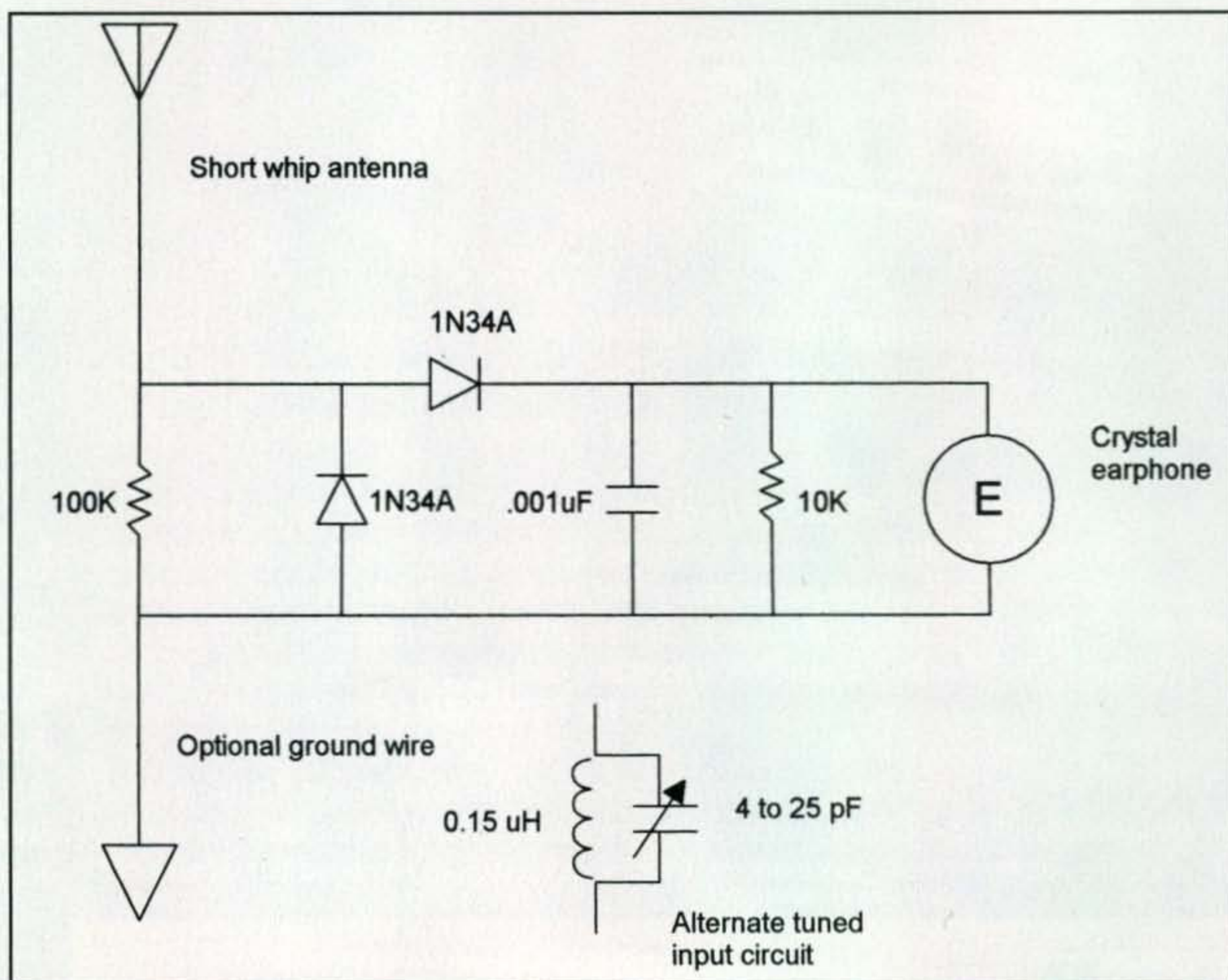
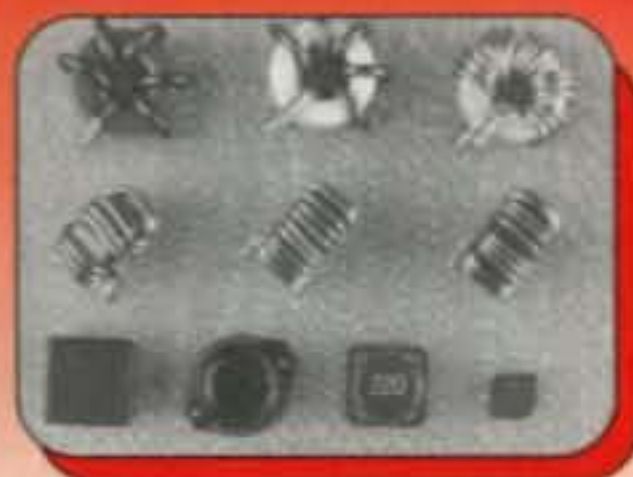


Fig. 1—A simple self-powered aircraft receiver.

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carrier will be the transmitter in the cockpit, and we should be able to hear at least one side of the conversation between the pilot and ground (or other aircraft). The antenna is only 6 to 12 inches of wire, long enough to pick up the signals we want but not so long as to be too cumbersome. The optional ground wire is also just a few inches of wire separated from the antenna. In some cases, neither antenna nor ground leads actually will be needed, since the circuit by itself may pick up enough RF to work.

If the 1N34A diodes cannot be found, 1N5711 Schottky diodes can be substituted and should also work well. However, the earphone must be of the high-impedance type (such as a Mouser Electronics part No. 25CR060), since the recovered audio will be very weak. Standard 8-ohm aircraft-type entertainment headphones will load the circuit and definitely not work properly. If you choose to try the input tuned circuit, a suitable capacitor (4 to 25 pF) is a Mouser Electronics 242-3410-34, and a suitable inductor (0.15 μ H) is a Mouser Electronics 434-22-R15. Keep in mind that a simple tuned circuit will not be very selective, but may provide somewhat more signal. The best part, as we

have already mentioned, is that the receiver does not need any operating power at all! Note that we have given Mouser Electronics parts numbers, but most other major distributors and surplus houses have similar parts, and you can certainly feel free to hunt around for the best value.

After building the receiver, you can easily test it if you happen to have an RF generator that covers the range of interest and can be modulated. Set the RF output of the generator to any point in the 118- to 136-MHz region (the center at 127 MHz is a good choice). Turn on the internal audio modulation of the generator and place a short lead from the generator's RF output connector near the antenna input of the receiver. You should clearly hear the modulation tone in the earphone. As an alternative, you can use any radio transmitter that can be AM modulated. Experiment with antenna and ground-lead lengths for best results.

If you plan to use (or even just test) this receiver on an actual commercial airline flight, be absolutely sure to divulge any and all details of your intentions to an appropriate security agent and/or flight attendant well before boarding. The last thing you want to do

is cause any concerns or get into any legal hot water. Aircraft security is an extremely sensitive issue these days, and you do not want to start anything that could be construed as more than a simple, innocent experiment by a hobbyist. A good idea would be to build the receiver in a clear-plastic box with a complete unobstructed view of all components along with the schematic diagram. A copy of your amateur license also wouldn't hurt to help ease and explain the situation if necessary.

Above all, do not even think of trying to hide or camouflage the receiver. If the powers that be do not want you to use it, don't argue, and if necessary even be prepared to throw it away. The cost is less than a dollar and isn't worth a fraction of the trouble and aggravation that it can cause you.

In conclusion, keep in mind that this same idea can be employed at any frequency within the range of the various components, from hundreds of kHz to hundreds of MHz. You can add an audio amplifier such as the LM386 for more volume (but then you will need a power supply) or even bias the diodes (see last month's column) for more sensitivity, etc. Most of all, have fun!

73, Irwin, WA2NDM

"Amateur-Radio-Friendly" BPL Company Gets Major Funding

Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) provider Current Communications Group announced in May that it had secured enough funding to begin building the nation's largest BPL system in metropolitan Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas. The Germantown, Maryland based company is one of the few BPL providers that the ARRL has deemed to be "amateur radio friendly."

BPL has been touted by its providers and even the FCC (especially former FCC Chairman Michael Powell) as a so-called "third pipe" to provide high-speed internet access to Americans along with cable TV lines and phone-line DSL (digital subscriber line) service.

Both Congress and the President have indicated that high-speed access to the internet for all Americans is critically important. Broadband is seen as a vital economic engine, a vehicle for enhanced business productivity and employee efficiency, and a way to improve learning, health care, news distribution, and entertainment.

A recent report, however, concludes that the U.S. is falling behind the rest of the world in broadband speeds due to various market and policy failures. Two reasons for the low ranking of the U.S. is that other countries have subsidized broadband service and that their populations live in areas that are easier to serve.

Hong Kong and South Korea have the world's highest per capita broadband penetration. More than two-thirds of their households have high-bandwidth connections, compared to less than one-third in the United States. Even though the U.S. has more total high-speed connections (about 50 million), it barely makes the top-20 country ranking based on population. It is expected that China will pass the U.S. in total broadband lines later this year.

The price of high-speed internet service remains a barrier to adoption for some consumers. Broadband prices in Korea are as little as \$25 a month, about half of what Americans pay. On a per-megabit basis, U.S. consumers pay 10 to 25 times more than broadband users in Japan.

There are various ways to access the internet at high speeds, including digital subscriber lines (DSL) on copper telephone lines, cable TV connections, direct fiber optics ("fiber to the home," or FTTH), direct-to-home (D-T-H) satellite, terrestrial wireless (such as Wi-Fi), and in some areas BPL.

A typical home in urban or suburban America is connected to the outside world by three "wires"—coaxial TV cables, telephone lines, and electric power wiring. Right now two incoming "wires" lashed to cable modems and DSL access provide more than 98% of all household high-speed internet connections. Sixty-one percent are via cable

modem service offered by companies such as Comcast Corp.; more than 37 percent are DSL offered by telephone companies such as AT&T; and the rest are split among the others listed above. According to the FCC, however, BPL currently has virtually no percentage (0.01%) of the broadband market.

The Future of BPL

BPL consists of a variety of proprietary technologies, each of which uses electric power distribution lines to transmit data to reach the "last mile" into homes and businesses. These last-mile facilities are then connected to more traditional fiber and high-capacity wireless facilities to provide the backbone of the network.

The ability to use power lines to access the internet is not a new idea. It works because electricity operates at a lower frequency than internet signals and the two can coexist on the same line. Power lines are an attractive broadband delivery system because they are already in place and reach virtually everyone.

The FCC describes two types of BPL: "Access BPL" and "In-House BPL." Access BPL systems can deliver high-speed internet access or bundles of broadband services—including Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) for internet phone service or video-on-demand—to homes and businesses. These broadband services are offered by electric utility companies to consumers either on their own or in partnership with other firms. In addition, electric utility companies can use Access BPL systems to monitor, and thereby more effectively manage, their electric power distribution operations.

Because Access BPL capability can be made available in conjunction with the delivery of electric power, it can provide an effective means for "last-mile" delivery of broadband services, and in many cases can offer a competitive alternative to DSL, cable modem services, and other high-speed internet access technologies.

In-House BPL systems use the electrical outlets available within a building to transfer information between computers, and between other home electronic devices, eliminating the need to install new wires between devices and hence facilitating the implementation of home networks via power lines.

According to BPL press releases, the most exciting thing about the technology is not its speed, but the ease with which an alternative nationwide broadband delivery system could be created. However, it's not as simple for the provider as for the consumer. Although the electrical wiring is already in place, additional infrastructure is required. For example, repeaters are needed every 500 to 2000 feet along a power line, along with equipment to "jump" the BPL signal from medium-voltage to low-voltage lines (it can't go through a trans-

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former), so investment costs are significant for the utility or other provider.

The interference problems cited by the ARRL and others come primarily from Access BPL systems whose signals use portions of the HF radio spectrum. Electric lines are unshielded and overhead power lines can function as giant antennas.

Regulating BPL

The FCC began investigating BPL technology three years ago and adopted rules for using the nation's power grids to transport high-speed internet access in October of 2004. One of the primary purposes of those rules is to help overcome BPL's potential to interfere with radio and telecommunications signals. A database of BPL systems was mandated by the FCC and is being managed by the United Telecom Council. UTC is an association of utility and energy companies that operate telecommunications and data networks in support of their core businesses.

BPL testing began in a few communities even before the FCC's rulemaking, including Cincinnati, Ohio, Allentown, Pennsylvania, and Manassas, Virginia. Initially, there were reports of interference to some public safety communications and ham radio operations. The Allentown system is now shut down, one of many tests on which operators have decided to pull the plug for a variety of reasons. Some instances of interference, such as from the Manassas BPL system, exist to this day and have not been corrected. On the other hand, recent trials using updated technology from Current Communications and Motorola have largely been interference free.

Implementation of BPL is complicated by the fact that power companies are not regulated solely by the FCC, but also by state public utilities commissions (PUCs). Thus, the various state PUCs must also adopt regulations allowing BPL to operate in each state.

This past April, for example, California state regulators voted to reduce the number of regulatory hurdles companies must clear to provide Californians with a new broadband BPL pipe to the home. The new regulations—written by Commissioner Rachelle Chong, a former FCC Commissioner—permit non-utilities as well as utilities to provide BPL services in California. This means that a BPL provider can effectively "rent" a power company's lines to build and operate a BPL system in which the utility's role is limited to collecting a fee from the BPL provider.

San Diego Gas & Electric, Edison International's Southern California Edison subsidiary, and the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, a municipally-owned utility, are already conducting BPL trials in California.

In 2003 the Washington, D.C. based National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) created a task force made up of six state regulators to examine the potential for BPL, and, in particular, the role of state utility commissions in advancing the use of the technology.

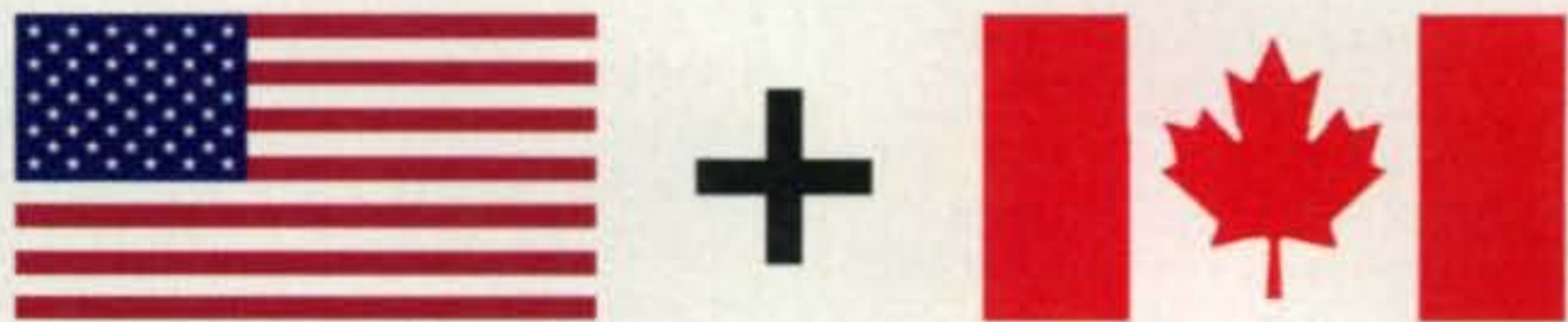
They echoed the FCC's desire to introduce more competition against cable and telephone companies. Also, as a group, state public utilities commissions largely have thrown their support behind BPL. Guidelines were drafted for use by the states to provide for joint ventures between utility companies, BPL equipment manufacturers, and internet access providers.

The United Power Line Council recently filed a petition for a declaratory ruling with the FCC, asking that BPL-enabled internet access services be

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classified as information services under exclusive FCC jurisdiction. The FCC is currently considering that petition.

The IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) recently announced the formation of a BPL Working Group and has begun work on a standard to define the nature of the communication channel to be used with AC power lines. Targeted for completion in early 2007, the standards will apply to BPL devices for the first-mile/last-mile connections to BPL service and to local area networks and data dis-

tribution systems that operate over copper cables in buildings.

Current Communications Gets Major BPL Financing

Last fall, Current Communications Group, presently one of the leading BPL providers in the U.S., received a major cash infusion from industry giants such as Google, publisher Hearst Corp., and Goldman Sachs, a leading global investment banking firm. *The Wall Street Journal* said the company received about \$100 million in financing from these sources. This was in addition to about the \$70 million that Current received last year from Cinergy, EnerTech Capital, and Liberty Associated Partners to build out broadband and voice services in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky.

Under its relationship with most power companies, Current runs the service, bills the customers, and collects all of the revenue. Utility companies receive payments from Current in return for use of their power grids.

On May 5, Current announced that it had received a third round of new funding which will be used to build out the largest BPL network in the U.S. It will be located in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex.

The \$130-million investment came from corporate powerhouses such as General Electric Co., internet service provider EarthLink, Texas electric utility TXU Corp., and automatic-metering provider Sensus Metering Systems Ltd. Venture capitalists are very interested in Current's BPL strategy to offer power-management capability to electric utility companies and broadband services to business and individual users.

The stage was set for the DFW venture by a new law in Texas, SB-5, specifically authorizing a utility company's deployment of BPL. According to the *Dallas Morning News*, the TXU investment—eventually totaling \$150 million paid over 10 years—provides "...for an ownership stake in Current Communications Group Inc., which will turn TXU's transmission system into a 'smart electricity grid.' In turn, Current plans to offer broadband service over TXU's lines."

EarthLink wants to find ways to reach customers without depending on the cable and telephone companies to provide access, and will be Current's retail provider of internet service for the Dallas system. Google's interest is not clear, and the company declined to comment beyond a one-sentence statement saying it is "very excited"

about its relationship with Current "to help promote better access to the internet." While Google doesn't compete directly against phone or cable companies today, it might in the future as it rolls out new services.

The so-called electrical two-way "smart grid" promises to reduce energy demand by as much as 10% by automatically monitoring, managing, and adjusting electricity demands. Appliances (such as not-yet-available intelligent refrigerators and washing machines) and any device that uses energy will ultimately be part of, and connected to, the grid. In addition, the BPL network will transmit user electric-usage and outage detection information back to a central office, eliminating the need for physical readings of utility meters.

Current's "CT Bridge" routes and manages "traffic" between each of the five to seven residents that are connected to a neighborhood transformer. The bridge also converts the power signal from medium voltage to low voltage and has built-in security. The two-way communication network on top of the utility backbone supports broadband including VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) telephone service. The "CT Coupler" bypasses the transformer and injects the communications signal directly onto the power line to establish the broadband connection. An upstream device transfers the local BPL signals to a fiber backbone network.

The majority of the \$130 million reportedly will be spent in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, where Texas utility giant TXU Corp. plans to hook up its more than 2-million electricity customers to Current's "smart grid." Current's largest BPL deployment in the U.S. thus far is in Cincinnati, Ohio, where its lines pass more than 50,000 homes. No figures are available from the privately held company on how many of those are BPL subscribers.

Current Communications and Ham Radio

According to the ARRL, Current Technologies' equipment and the company itself are amateur radio friendly. Its BPL system uses 31-48 MHz for its medium-voltage distribution system. The signals placed on overhead lines (the lines that act the most like antennas and radiate signals) are well separated from spectrum used by ham operators. System designers have implemented a guard band so they are nowhere near spectrum allocated to the Amateur

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Radio Service, so it is not likely that 10- or 6-meter amateur operation will be affected by a Current system. They do, however, use spectrum allocated to other radio services licensed in the low-VHF band.

Current's BPL systems also operate between 4 and 21 MHz, but those emissions are placed only on the low-voltage distribution wiring (240 volts), using HomePlug modems. Thus on HF, instead of having an interference potential along a mile-long run of overhead power lines from a single device connected to that line, the interference potential is essentially from premise wiring and, to some extent, from the low-voltage drop wires from the transformers to premises. The HomePlug modems then notch out all of the ham bands. They are also quiet except when in use.

The ARRL has done some testing in the Cincinnati area and concluded that the notching appears to be sufficient to generally protect mobile amateur radio operation. There could be some interference to fixed amateur stations near BPL-equipped houses, but that would depend on the local noise level, the level of the amateur communications signals, and whether the ham station is operating at the same time that the modem is in use.

The League concluded that the lack of major interference reports from the Cincinnati system indicates that the Current BPL system "...is effective enough that any problems that may crop up are small enough in number that they can be addressed on a case-by-case basis." The ARRL also said that Current Technologies' staff was cooperative and had a good communications relationship with the ARRL Laboratory.

ARRL Laboratory Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI, who has been involved with BPL on behalf of amateur radio for several years, says he is still very concerned about interference from BPL systems. According to Hare, "...although some BPL manufacturers have addressed interference to amateur radio, this is not universally the case. Some BPL manufacturers have not communicated effectively with ARRL and some are 'fixing' BPL with press releases, so there is still a lot more work to do. At this point, however, most BPL manufacturers have approached ARRL about resolving the ongoing problems with interference. Although talking about common ground is a good start, there is a long way to go in some cases to seeing that BPL is interference free for amateur radio."

73, Fred, W5YI



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Data Encryption is Legal!

Just like Dorothy returning to Kansas, it turns out we've been able to do it any time we wanted to. Data encryption for our intended purposes *is already permitted* under Part 97 of the FCC rules. We just hadn't realized it. Read on for the details.

Data encryption has been a hot topic for some time in the digital community. We discussed both sides of the issue in the past two columns. In this month's column we'll be putting the topic to rest, once and for all.

The basic point is that our ham bands are not meant to be secure against casual listening. However, when we are providing communications for some agency or organization, such as for disaster relief, those agencies have some expectation of confidentiality. Information about people, as well as movement of supplies and resources, is not meant to be heard by the general public. Unlicensed Part 15 users are afforded the opportunity to encrypt this information to protect privacy, so why not Part 97 users?

Until now, the "common wisdom" has been that Section 97.113(a)(4) of the FCC rules, which prohibits "messages in codes or ciphers intended to obscure the meaning thereof, except as otherwise provided herein...", made it illegal for hams to encrypt any information that wasn't specifically exempted, even passwords to prevent non-amateurs using Part 15 devices on shared frequencies from accessing Part 97 networks, even though another paragraph of §97.113, paragraph (e), says that except for a few specific exemptions, "No station shall retransmit programs or signals emanating from any type of radio station other than an amateur station..."

Paul Toth, NA4AR, a member of the ARRL's High-Speed Multimedia (HSMM) Working Group, a former ARRL Section Emergency Coordinator, and a recipient of the 2005 NOAA Environmental Hero award for his volunteer amateur radio work at the National Weather Service office in Ruskin, Florida during the 2004 hurricanes, posed some arguments for allowing limited encryption, which are excerpted here:

Commercial Part 15 operations have brought with them many benefits to society. Wireless networking has enabled greater use of the Internet and the volumes of information that are available there ... IEEE 802.11 devices, wireless telephones and dozens of other types of unlicensed, Part 15 radio emitters have become so pervasive they now number in the tens of millions. And that is just in the United States.

802.11 Wireless Access Points (WAPs), by default, are configured to act as repeaters. Most of these Part 15 WAPs are equipped with security features that comply

with IEEE standard 802.1x to limit access. When enabled, these 802.1x security features will repeat only those operators whose stations meet the encrypted access authentication criteria programmed into the WAP. Part 15 operators are free to use 802.1x security as well as WEP and WPA to limit access to their WAPs. Amateur Radio operators operating WAPs under Part 97 rules without encryption switched on are likely to violate 97.113(e) by inadvertently re-transmitting Part 15 signals. But 97.113(a)(4) prohibits encryption.

Two years ago, before Charley, Ivan, Katrina, Rita, Wilma, and the other hurricanes that made landfall in the US in 2004 and 2005, the ARRL Board voted unanimously to petition the FCC for a rules change on encryption. The proposal sought to legalize the use of "industry-standard security and encryption protocols" for domestic communications on all bands above 50 MHz. Such a change in the rules would allow amateur operations to utilize spectrum shared with commercial operators without fear of violating 97.113(a)(4) or 97.113(e) and address the growing need for secure disaster response communications. However, at its January 2006 meeting, after hearing a report from ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, on "the background for and implications of moving forward with" filing such a petition, the ARRL Board effectively rescinded its earlier motion, voting "to relieve the General Counsel of the requirements" to seek a rules change on this matter. Meanwhile, FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security have sought out organizations like Part15.org to explore emergency communications contingencies on frequencies licensed to the Amateur Radio Service.

No one is suggesting relocation of Part 15 users to other radio spectrum. Hams, of course, are just as free to operate an 802.11 or 802.16 station under Part 15 rules as are non-licensees. But why should we? After all, we hold licenses to operate on these bands. That license is supposed to afford Amateur Radio operators priority as well as the privilege of operating with higher transmitter power than Part 15 operators. What is holding hams back are antiquated rules written without recognition of the mixed spectrum utilization now in place. A change in the rules to permit the use of industry standard security and encryption protocols on domestic transmissions can, once again, open these bands to those who hold a license to use them.

After reading Paul's comments, we at CQ began some follow-up work to try to tie up loose ends. The result was that a variety of strings began to come together, leading to the conclusions presented here. My thanks to Paul for his willingness to share his thoughts and keep the issue on the table long enough to get the ball rolling. Let's review Paul's basic points and how they led to a rather startling conclusion:

It's Been Legal All Along!

Note: The following was developed from a series of discussions, both public and private, with numerous hams, including some with authoritative knowledge on these matters who asked not to be quoted at this point, as the discussions were

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still ongoing. It started with Paul's comments above and reaches the conclusions below. While it would be impossible to acknowledge everyone involved, much of the credit goes to the members of the High Speed Multimedia (HSMM) Working Group.

Paul's primary point in advocating encryption under Part 97 is the need for network security, which is to prevent non-hams from accessing amateur equipment (inadvertently or on purpose), which could result in a violation of the FCC rules. His conclusion is that some encryption is absolutely necessary for amateurs today. Also, as Paul stated two years ago, the ARRL Board of Directors agreed that it was a good idea to petition the FCC to permit limited data encryption. The digital and emergency communications communities had convinced the directors that such an action would further the Amateur Radio Service. What, then, changed their minds in 2006?

Well, it turns out that there's no need for a petition because **there's nothing in the rules preventing the use of data encryption for the purposes we're discussing**, specifically protecting the network from unauthorized intrusion and usage, as well as the more general purpose of supporting emergency communications while maintaining the privacy of disaster victims—both in actual emergencies and in practice drills. (That last bit is important: While the emergency communications exemption in 97.401(a) essentially suspends all the rules when necessary, drills are not an emergency, and it is absolutely essential to practice with a system regularly if you expect it to work when there is an emergency.)

Network Security

First, let's discuss network security. What we're trying to accomplish here is to prevent outsiders from accessing the network, as required by 97.113(e) and implied in 97.105 and elsewhere. If this can be accomplished with a password, then there is nothing in the rules preventing us from encrypting that password. I compare that to keeping the control codes for a repeater secret: It is clear to anyone monitoring as to who is transmitting and the general purpose of the transmission, so the exact password that is being transmitted is not that important.

However, more than a password is needed to secure an 802.1x network. WEP (Wireline-Equivalent Privacy), for example, prevents anyone not using the proper key from associating with the

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WAP (Wireless Access Point). That means if we enable WEP, we are effectively preventing Part 15 users from accessing—inadvertently or on purpose—a network operating under Part 97 rules.

The Purpose is What Matters

The key here is that the *purpose* of encrypting is *not* to obscure meaning. It is to *secure the network* from unauthorized access. Let's take a look at Section 97.113(a)(4) again, which states that no amateur station shall transmit "...messages encoded for the purpose of obscuring their meaning...." The key word here is *purpose*. This rule is not regulating a method or practice; it regulates a purpose or intent.

For the communications purposes we are discussing—network security and access control, emergency communications, and practice for same—our *purposes* in using encryption are the *security* of the network and the *privacy* of third-party information. In either case, the purpose is *not* to obscure meaning. We have to assume that the rules were written very carefully, and they mean what they say. It might seem kind of odd that the rules deal with intent, rather than practice, but they are what they are: **If the purpose of encryption is not to obscure meaning, then it is permitted.** This carries over to any encryption method, on any frequency, including HF.

The FCC's main concern is knowing who transmitted a particular signal. Then, if there are problems or questions, the Commission would know whom to contact for more information.

Caveats

Well, there's no such thing as a free lunch. Of course, there are limits to how we carry this out, both operationally and from a practical standpoint.

The first caveat is that nothing relieves amateur radio operators from the requirement to identify their stations, at least every 10 minutes and at the end of each contact. With 802.1x gear the simplest method is to set the SSID to your callsign. If you use something different, you may need to work out some other methods to accommodate whatever system you decide to use.

The second caveat is that you still need to comply with Section 97.309 (a)(4), which states that "An amateur station transmitting a RTTY or data emission using a digital code specified in this paragraph may use any technique whose technical characteristics

have been documented publicly...." Whatever encryption methods you use—WEP, WPA, WPA2, or whatever—it *must* be publicly documented. Please note that this specifically means the encryption *algorithm*, *not* the encryption *key*. Making the key public is no security at all!

The third caveat is that you should probably refrain from attempting encrypted communications with other countries, since their FCC-equivalents may not permit it. At the very least, tread carefully here.

Finally, it would be good amateur practice to document the encryption key being used in your station logbook, and perhaps also a general characterization of the purposes for using encryption. It would also be good practice, particularly in a real emergency, to maintain copies of transmitted messages for possible future FCC inspection. Most e-mail programs do this automatically, unless you turn off the feature. It would be best to leave it on.

HSMM Leads the Direction

By the time you read this, the HSMM Working Group will have posted some new guidelines for the use of encryption on amateur frequencies. While this was still pending as I write this (mid-June), an update was expected by July. Have a look at the League's website for the latest news.

Again, my thanks to Paul Toth, NA4AR, for continuing the debate on encryption in the ham bands, and to all those I spoke with, especially those on the ARRL's HSMM WG, for the lively, spirited, and very intelligent discussion of this month's topic. The members of ARRL Board of Directors, even if you might not agree with everything they do, should certainly be thanked for their work to reach this point. This didn't happen in a vacuum, and it is only through the hard work of many that the amateur community can now celebrate the best possible outcome for this debate: It's been legal all along, so go out and have fun and/or provide the emergency communications services your community needs and that ham radio has traditionally been able to offer.

Finally, I thank everyone who takes the time to write to me with comments, suggestions, ideas for future columns and yes, even complaints. We're used to two-way communications, and this column isn't any different. See what it did this month?

Until next time . . .

73, Don, N2IRZ

"A Dollar Spent . . ."

There's an adage in ham radio that goes something like, "A dollar spent on an antenna is worth ten dollars spent on a radio." While that phrase seems to have been applied to conventional fixed installations, it doesn't always seem to hold when looking at mobile operations. Now don't get me wrong; I can't think of any mobile antenna that will replace a multi-element beam atop a 200-foot tower, but one advantage of mobiling is that you can take the antenna with you, and one of the places you can take it to is an elevated location.

"I have a 2000-foot tower..."

Can height make a difference? You bet! Here on the West Coast, the summer months often see a big high-pressure system set up over the Pacific Ocean. One of its side effects is the presence of an inversion layer that traps warmer air below, which for decades has been a factor in the smog experienced in the Los Angeles area. However, it's not too difficult to take a drive up through the inversion layer, either along the coastal mountains or even to some of the higher peaks found inland. The trip can be rewarding.

CQ writer Gordon West, WB6NOA, is among the many who have done just that, and beside benefiting from cleaner air, hams such as Gordo have discovered the joy of having HF, VHF, and UHF signals "ducting" along the high-pressure ridge. How far do those signals go? It's not unusual to have 2-meter contacts between California and Hawaii, or 6-meter QSOs with Washington, Oregon and British Columbia. There have even been cases of repeater-to-repeater interference between California and Hawaii!

Thus, you may be envious of the fixed station that has a hundred-foot tower, but many mobile hams can easily take their portable antennas up several hundred or even a few thousand feet by just driving into hilly terrain, depending on where they live. A little elevation can make a big difference, and if you live on the Great Plains . . . well, there has to be a mound somewhere!

Consider the Choices

Another advantage mobile operators have is a wide choice of antennas. From relatively low-cost "stick" type antennas to elaborate "screwdriver" types, "bugcatchers," multiband tap or trap antennas, retracting motorized units, automatic tuners feeding whips, multi-element "spider"-style units,



If it's attached to a car, you could see it at Dayton, where this month's photos were taken. Magnet mounts are a good solution for those opposed to drilling a hole in the car body.

and yes, I've even seen an abbreviated 10-meter dipole mounted over a car roof, the choices of mobile antennas are many and seem to be growing all the time. If you haven't taken the time to really weigh the choices of mobile antennas, you'd be doing yourself a big favor by checking some of the ads found in CQ and then visiting the websites of some of the antenna manufacturers.

A Match Made in Heaven

One critical item to watch diligently in mobile antennas is the match, or SWR reading. While a nice home-station antenna usually has a substantial 2:1 SWR bandwidth range, mobile antennas are very narrow-banded and some are downright notchy. A



Tell me that's not tape. Really . . . that's not tape, is it? Yup, guess it is!

*5904 Lake Lindero Drive, Agoura Hills, CA 91301
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Simple, neat, clean. It looks good and I hope it works as well!



Here's what happens when you cross a Ford Escort with a porcupine. (Photo taken by the author on I-70 just after the Dayton Hamvention®)

frequency change of just a few kilohertz can elevate your SWR to a level where the radio begins to reduce its output power in order to protect its finals. You then have to confine yourself to a narrow spread of operating frequencies, retune the antenna, or let a tuner (manual or automatic) help optimize the performance of your transceiver.

Low-Cost Performance Improvement

If your antenna is permanently installed on your vehicle, from time to time take a good look at it, including the connections to its feedline and, very importantly, to ground. Time has shown this to be the weakest link in many mobile installations, and it's always exposed to wind, moisture, and vibration. You may be amazed at how much signals improve with a little attention given to this critical area. Good transmission and reception seldom go away all at once. It often happens so gradually that you don't notice the effects of a deteriorating connection. To complicate the matter, you may lay the blame for poor operations on low sunspot activity, your transceiver, or other factors, when the real culprit is "father time" taking his toll on your antenna connections.

Seeing is Believing . . . Well, Maybe

There are antennas . . . and there are antennas. With this month's column, I've included some snapshots captured at and near the Dayton Hamvention®. I believe there are nearly as many ways to mount antennas as there are hams. This year's collection provides us with some classics. Maybe I caught yours? The callsigns have been suppressed to protect the innocent—and maybe a few of the guilty!

Manufacturer Help

Once again I'll pass along the contact info for the U.S. auto manufacturers (see sidebar). As cars get more complex and



Impressive!

designs more efficient, mounting a radio and antenna can prove to be a real challenge. Do yourself a favor and check with the vehicle's manufacturer *before* breaking out the installation tools. Here's a place where an ounce of planning and prevention could make a huge difference not only in the

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 Shields: **2** (100% bonded foil +90% TC Braid) **VP 80%**.
 Attenuation 0.45dB @ 2 GHz (3ft Jumper).
 Usage 1 MHz and Higher.

CNT400 (LMR type)

Connector: **N, PL259, TNC, SMA, BNC.** RG8U SIZE SHOWN
 Burial: **Yes**, UV Resistant: **Yes**.
 Shields: **2** (100% bonded foil +90% TC Braid) **VP 85%**.
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 Usage 450 MHz and Higher.

CNT240 (LMR type)

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 Shields: **2** (100% bonded foil +90% TC Braid) **VP 84%**.
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 Usage 1 MHz and Higher.

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OK, it's your turn, readers. Send an e-mail with your suggested caption and I'll choose the best one for publication in our next "Mobiling" column. We'll give a one-year CQ subscription to the winner. The decision of the judge (AA6JR) is final, irrevocable, and subject to interminable second-guessing.

success of your radio project, but it could also help you avoid making some costly mistakes with your vehicle. At the ARRL, Ed Hare, W1RFI, has devoted considerable energy to helping mobile operators resolve issues that emerge when trying to mix radios and cars. The following URL can be very useful when trying to track down issues that pertain to many popular brands of vehicles: <<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/carproblems.html>>.

Hit the Road

I hope the summer weather provides you with a backdrop for great mobile operations. Travel safely and enjoy!

73, Jeff, AA6JR

Vehicle Installation Information

Vehicle installation information from manufacturers can be found at: <www.arrl.org/tis/info/rficar.html>. Individual manufacturer information:

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Write to: Milford Proving Grounds EMC Facility, Department MR, Mail Code 483-340-111, General Motors Proving Ground, 3300 General Motors Road, Milford, MI 48380-3726

Ford

Ford suggests contacting its customer service hotline, 800-392-3673, or its customer website, <www.ownerconnection.com>.

HF Mobile and Lovin' It—Part II

Last month's views and notes on HF mobiling overfilled available space before all details on what's hot and happening could be squeezed in, so we continue with part two this month. After mailing part one to *CQ*, incidentally, I began wondering how many over-enthusiastic new mobileers might whittle half way through their auto's trunk or hatch lip before realizing it is not metal—and not ground. That's because an ever-increasing number of body sections on new autos are being made with "composite material" rather than metal, and full-metal underbody frames are also starting to disappear. A vehicle may seem made of metal when you tap on it or peek under it, but then you buy it and—surprise! Gotcha!

What's the importance of metal? Any quarter-wave vertical (or shorter than quarter-wave mobile antenna) must be complemented by a good electrical ground to operate effectively, and an automobile's metal body fills that requirement. Is there a good alternative here? Yes. Think elevated vertical or ground plane.

Time after time, simple four-radial ground planes have proven to work out as well as or better than ground-mounted verticals. Just apply that principle to your own vehicle to produce a rolling ground plane. It works! Using copper foil and double-sided tape to hold it, several years ago I devised a large and quite effective ground plane under the rear

section of my Chevy Camaro. Since then I literally have worked the world from that car—and the SWR on any band is almost 1:1. A sketch of my quickly fabricated ground plane is shown in fig. 1.

The rear bumper section is comprised of three 6-foot strips of 3-inch wide copper foil. One 6-foot to rear bumper section may have been sufficient, but I wanted to install a maximum amount of metal directly below the antenna. One strip is fitted inside the rubber bumper, one is stretched across the hard bumper's bottom area, and one is stretched out width-wise under the rear body. All three connect together and to 5-foot strips that fit inside rear fender sections, their fenderwell lips, and associated quarter panels. A 1-foot section connects to the antenna's underbody mount. If a trunk-lip mount had been used, another strip would have been added for connecting it to the below-body maze, and yes, the copper braid removed from old RG-8 coax can be used in lieu of copper foil. You can even loosen some rear-bumper screws and retighten them on the coax to hold it in place. Just remember to include a jumper from your antenna mount to the maze. It is not hard to keep the force of good signals on your side; it just takes a little radio finesse!

PSK-31 Mobile

Have you ever considered trying PSK-31 while mobile? Ed Cobb, K4YFR, thought it was an interesting challenge, so he gave it a go and had a ball. That makes sense. Running a digital mode with a computer in the car is quite an attraction. It generates as much curiosity and excitement as getting on the air with the first production run of a new model transceiver—and that is always a "biggie"!

The idea of going PSK mobile evolved when Ed and XYL Michelle began planning a 1000-mile, one-weekend road trip from Virginia Beach, Virginia, across the long Chesapeake Bay bridge and north-east Maryland, and into the Blue Ridge Mountains. The sojourn equated to 80 percent traveling and 20 percent stopped, so it was an ideal opportunity to get in some heavy-duty HF mobiling.

A view of Ed's setup is shown in photo A and a sketch of its interconnections are included in fig. 2. Laptops are notorious for their susceptibility to RF energy, so Ed took every measure and precaution imaginable to avoid problems—and it worked out admirably.

First, he completely isolated the laptop by powering it from a separate battery and used an optically coupled Electronic Devices, Inc. interface between it and his Kenwood TS-50. The antenna (a Hamstick for 20 meters) was mounted on the Honda van's roof, so it helped shield the setup from RF while pumping out a good signal. The TS-50 was powered by its own 100-amp/hour battery, directly grounded to the van's frame by a seat bolt, decoupled from the antenna by a Radio Works line isolator, and operated at the 10-watt level. The resultant setup was so squeaky clean that while XYL Michelle drove and listened to music on the

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e-mail: <k4twj@cq-amateur-radio.com>



Photo A—Ed's setup ready for operating PSK-31 mobile with his Kenwood TS-50 transceiver, Compaq laptop computer, and Electronic Devices, Inc. interface. Numerous U.S. and DX contacts were made while traveling freeways and byways. (Photo via K4YFR)



Photo B— Check out this new multiband mobile and portable antenna from Super Antennas, friends. It covers 40 through 10 meters (plus 80/75 and 60 meters with optional coil on right) and is supplied with universal clamp-on mount, adjustable coil, retractable whip, radial wire for non metal supports, and double-base masts with threaded coupler. The antenna has a clean, brushed-aluminum look, works great, and it all fits in the 14-inch-long mailing box.

van's stereo, Ed worked Uruguay, Puerto Rico, Costa Rico, and a number of stations across the U.S.

Ed says it took a while to get everything connected and positioned for comfortable use (on the van's rear seat), but it was well worth the effort. Our compliments to K4YFR on his unique endeavor!

New Super Antennas

One of the fastest growing names in HF mobiling antennas today is Super

Antennas, and thanks to the creative mind of owner Vern Wright, W6MMA, some clever new items recently have been added to the line.

First is an economical multiband mobile (and portable!) antenna that can be assembled to stand 4.5, 6.0, or 7.5 feet tall, as desired, and quickly separated to fit into a 14-inch long box for storing or carrying (photos B and C). The antenna's top section is a telescoping whip that extends to 50 inches or retracts to 10 inches. A standard 3/8-

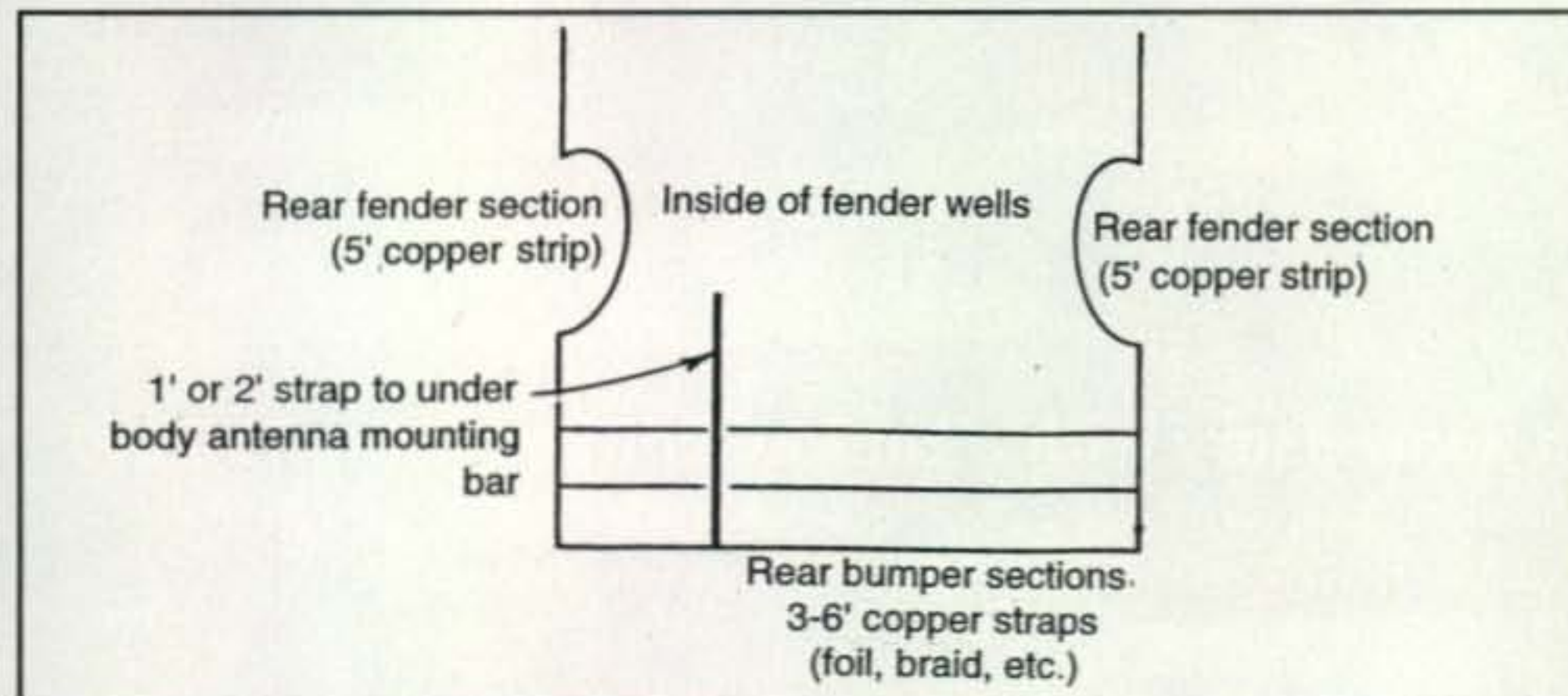
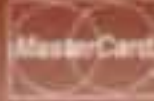


Fig. 1— Outline of a high-performance underbody ground plane for big-time mobiling in a composite (non-metal) body or "partial metal frame" vehicle. Strips may be held in place with heavy-duty double-sided tape or secured under existing body bolts, as desired. Details in text.

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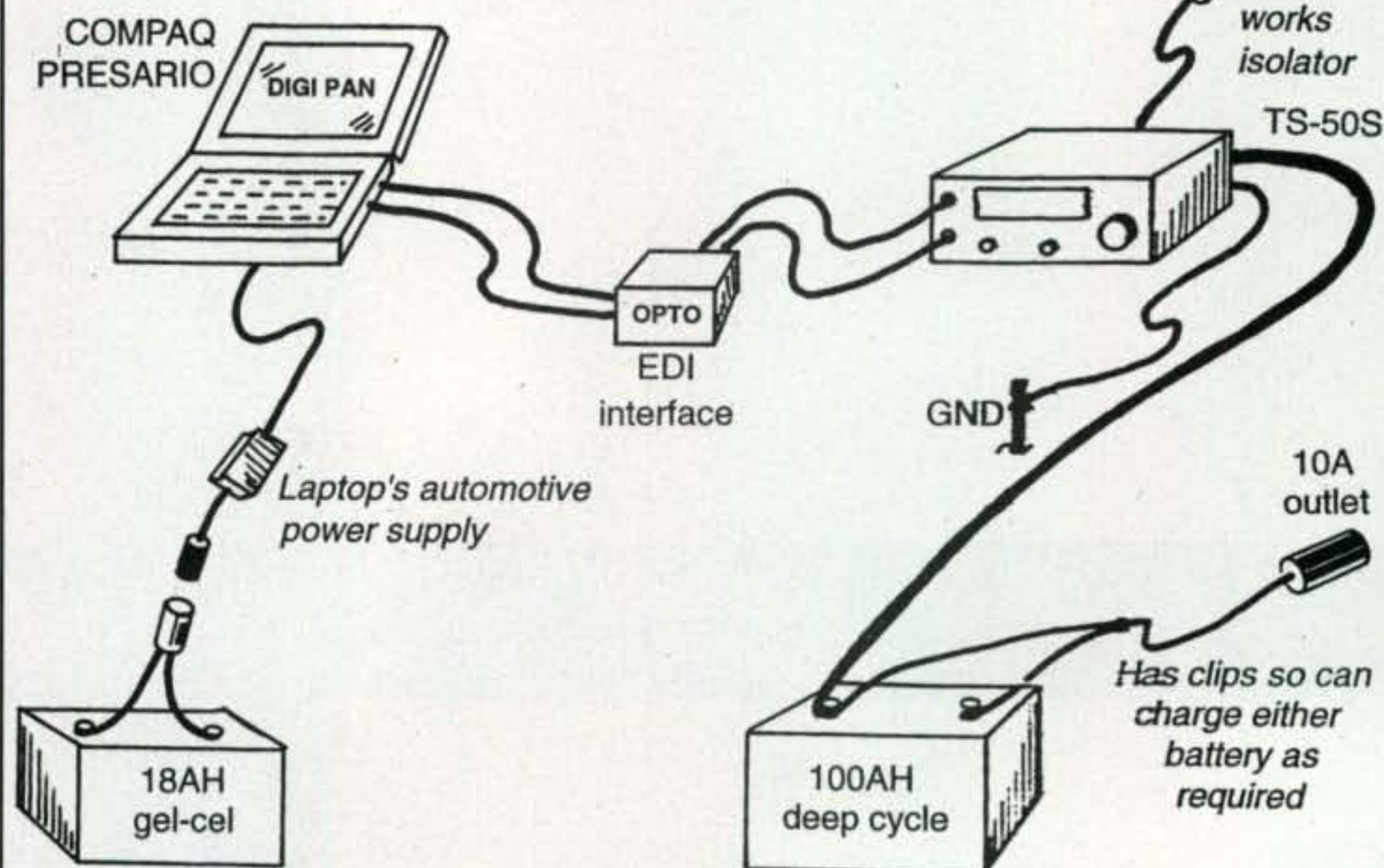
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Fig. 2— Pictorial diagram of the PSK-31 setup Ed Cobb, K4YFR, put together for mobiling on the rear seat of his Honda van. Laptop computers are overly sensitive to RFI, so an optically linked interface and separate battery was used for maximum isolation. The transceiver is also isolated with a separate battery, Radio Works RF Isolator, and roof-mounted antenna.



24 thread ferrule at its base screws into the coil assembly, which you tune/adjust manually to cover any frequency between 40 and 10 meters (by unlocking its side nut and sliding its aluminum tube up/down the coil). An optional (fixed) coil can be added in series with the adjustable coil for 80-meter and/or 60-meter operation.

The antenna's lower section consists of two 12-inch tall/long aluminum masts also with $3/8$ -24 thread ends and a mating coupler. An owner can thus use both masts to make a tall antenna, one mast for reduced height, or simply attach the coil directly to the mount with the short piece of screw stock for base loading and easy garaging.

There is also an unrealized surprise in this antenna that warrants mention. Take a second look at the brushed-aluminum cover you slide up/down over the coil for frequency tuning. If you assemble the antenna with that cover upward (it can go either way), the cover can act like a capacity hat and increase overall efficiency by reducing the amount of required inductance. Cool!

Need a quick auto-frame mount idea for this new mobile/portable antenna? Look under your vehicle and notice the frame channels or ship tie-down arms with large holes waiting for you to bolt

a long and flat antenna mounting plate to them. Do so, and then "C" clamp Super Antennas included "swivel to any angle bracket" with $3/8$ -24 thread-to SO-239 adapter to it. Screw the Super Antenna into the adapter, roughly tune it for maximum received signal strength, fine-tune it using low power and your rig's SWR metering, and then go mobiling in fine style.

Would you like to use the antenna at home or when vacationing, but your apartment's balcony rail (or other off-the-wall antenna mount) is not metal? No problem: Use the Super Antennas included multi-conductor radial wire to make a ground plane, and it will work out even better than a regular vertical. Remember that fact, too, if you discover your auto has a non-metallic composite material body. Tape, bolt, twist, and intertwine the radial wire under the vehicle's body to produce a rolling ground plane as I discussed earlier in this column.

Another new Super Antenna that is terrific for fixed-position mobiling is the three-element multiband mini beam with drive-on mast mount as shown in photos D and E. Many readers surely remember Super Antennas' two-element "beam in a bag" you can carry in an auto's trunk or "shoulder strap style"



Photo C— Here is the new Super Antenna standing tall on the trunk of XYL WB4OEE's Chevy Cavalier. Look closely and you can see the two base masts are coupled together to raise the coil above the roofline, and the sliding aluminum sleeve is positioned above the coil so it acts as a capacity hat. Combined, both measures ensure radiation of an impressive mobile signal.

and quickly field configure/adjust for operation on any band between 6 and 20 meters. This new antenna works the same way, but sports a third element for greater gain and directivity. It's a romper!

The drive-on mount is also wild. You just sit it on flat ground, secure it with one of the car's wheels, pull up and guy-ropes the beam and mast in place, and you're set for fun. Does it sound good for those weekend jaunts to the mountains or visits to the in-laws? Yes, indeed, and I am also thinking it may be a way around antenna CC&Rs in apartments—provided you move it and the car once or twice a month. More details on these new goodies are available at <www.superantennas.com>, or you can contact Vern, W6MMA, at 212 Mariner Circle, Lincoln, CA 95648; e-mail <w6mma@superantennas.com>. Check them out!

Closing Notes

Have you ever wanted to try something off-the-wall and a little crazy just for the fun of it? No, I am not talking about a wild weekend at the beach. I am talking about running 160-meter mobile, QRP and CW to boot. When? Not during summer, as the band is too noisy, but during winter amidst the CQ 160 Meter Contest (the last full weekend of January) when outdoors is biting cold and dark as soot. What a blast!



Photo D— This new three-element Super Antennas mini beam is a traveler's delight. It easily fits in an auto's trunk or on a rear seat; can be configured for operation on 20, 17, 15, 12, 10, or 6 meters; and assembly time is only 10 or 15 minutes. Being heard from the boonies is a cinch with this antenna! (Photo via W6MMA)

I gave it a go this past winter, running 5 watts and a whip with a gigantic coil (IR losses galore—whew!), and filled a log page with good (but not DX) contacts before scurrying back indoors to warm up. Looking back over scratch sheets, I see roughly seven out of every ten calls resulted in a contact. That's enough inspiration for me.

I am planning to assemble a really tall antenna for working 160 meters CW mobile this coming winter. Like to join the pursuit? Drop me a brief e-mail with your thoughts. Let's share them with the multitudes and get everyone cold and shivering . . . err—enthused!

73, Dave, K4TWJ



Photo E— The new drive-on mast mount makes getting the three-element Super Antennas mini beam up in the air and working quick and easy. Just roll a vehicle's wheel on it, pull up the antenna, and secure it with guy ropes.

Swap Meets— Great Deals and Great Fun

One of the greatest places for good deals on ham gear is the swap meet. Depending on what part of the country (or even what country) you live in, these ham radio buying, selling, and browsing events are held indoors and out, and usually at regular intervals. Although these events are meant for buying and selling ham radio goodies, other “sub-events” usually occur at the same time, such as breakfast or lunch get-togethers, ham license tests, and club membership recruiting.

In almost all cases, when hams get together it means not just swapping stories of their latest construction project, station upgrade, or exotic-location contact. It also means that someone in the group has something for sale or trade.

Lists of buying and selling events are posted in various places such as in ham publications (including *CQ*) and on the internet, and are also broadcast via word-of-mouth. Plug in “ham radio swap meets” in the Google search engine, and you will be amazed at what you can find. I just did this and saw that there are 489,000 entries for this key phrase. Of course, you need to narrow down the search to your location to get more meaningful results. Also check with fellow club members

*16428 Camino Canada Lane, Huntington Beach, CA 92649
e-mail: <kh6wz@cq-amateur-radio.com>

to find out when and where the next event will be and mark your calendar so you will not miss it.

Getting a Great Deal Takes Planning

Let's start with the “first order of business” at a swap meet as a visitor or buyer. You should think about what you want to accomplish on your swap-meet mission. Do you want to buy a used radio to set up your first station? If so, will it be an HF (or “low bands”) rig for international communications (see photo 1), or a VHF and/or UHF FM rig for local comms from the car? Maybe you are looking for a cheap rig to install in the garage or workshop so you can eavesdrop on the local repeater chatter as you work.

Do you want to get an accessory such as a power meter or station clock? Are you looking for parts to build that “Weekender” project from last month's column in *CQ* by Phil Salas, AD5X? Maybe you



Photo 2— You never know what you will find at a ham radio swap meet. I am not sure what these glass things are, but they sure look interesting!



Photo 1— Here is some very nice-looking vintage ham gear for sale. On the left is a classic Collins receiver from the 1960s and a Heathkit transmitter from the same era. Both units use vacuum tubes. The small unit on top of the Collins receiver is a station console, a unit used to “interface” a microphone to the transmitter, and includes an SWR and RF power meter.



Photo 3— An amazing find. This ancient radio even works!



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SS-18	15	18	1 1/2 x 6 x 9	3.6
SS-25	20	25	2 1/4 x 7 x 9 1/2	4.2
SS-30	25	30	3 1/4 x 7 x 9 1/2	5.0



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SS-30M*	25	30	3 1/4 x 7 x 9 1/2	5.0



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SRM-25	20	25	3 1/2 x 19 x 9 1/2	6.5
SRM-30	25	30	3 1/2 x 19 x 9 1/2	7.0

WITH SEPARATE VOLT & AMP METERS

MODEL	CONT. (Amps)	ICS	SIZE (inches)	Wt.(lbs.)
SRM-25M	20	25	3 1/2 x 19 x 9 1/2	6.5
SRM-30M	25	30	3 1/2 x 19 x 9 1/2	7.0



MODEL SRM-30M-2

2 ea SWITCHING POWER SUPPLIES ON ONE RACK PANEL

MODEL	CONT. (Amps)	ICS	SIZE (inches)	Wt.(lbs.)
SRM-25-2	20	25	3 1/2 x 19 x 9 1/2	10.5
SRM-30-2	25	30	3 1/2 x 19 x 9 1/2	11.0

WITH SEPARATE VOLT & AMP METERS

MODEL	CONT. (Amps)	ICS	SIZE (inches)	Wt.(lbs.)
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- KENWOOD TK760, 762, 840, 860, 940, 941
- KENWOOD TK760H, 762H
- MOTOROLA LOW POWER SM50, SM120, & GTX
- MOTOROLA HIGH POWER SM50, SM120, & GTX
- MOTOROLA RADIUS & GM 300
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- SS-18GX
- SS-12EFJ
- SS-18EFJ
- SS-10-EFJ-98, SS-12-EFJ-98, SS-18-EFJ-98
- SS-12MC
- SS-10MG, SS-12MG
- SS-101F, SS-121F
- SS-10TK
- SS-12TK OR SS-18TK
- SS-10SM/GTX
- SS-10SM/GTX, SS-12SM/GTX, SS-18SM/GTX
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have a vintage ham receiver that has those electronic glass objects called "tubes" and your local electronics parts emporium does not carry them. You can find these things and a whole lot more at the ham radio swap meet. You can even find some weird-looking items to decorate your ham shack. See photo 2 for something that made me go "hmmm" when I saw it and photo 3 for a neat-looking vintage receiver that actually works!



Photo 4— It always pays to plan ahead and arrive as early as you can at swap events, since the offerings are usually one-of-a-kind. In this photo, the vendors are lining up to get into the selling area and no buyers are in sight yet.

You may want to make up a shopping list before you venture out to the swap event. Just like going grocery shopping, this will help prevent "unwanted" purchases. One of the things I always try to do is limit the amount of cash in my wallet to avoid over-spending. By the same token, I generally leave my checkbook at home, too, although in just about all cases, these events are strictly "cash and carry."

After you have made your list, and if you are especially serious about buying something, make sure you arrive as early as you can. One secret I use is to get to the swap-meet location before the official opening time in order to see what's for sale (photo 4). In order to get there when it is "set-up time," you usually have to park in a more remote park-

ing lot for the event. This makes me walk a bit farther than normal, but it provides me with some exercise and helps me find the best deals, even before the event actually opens.

If you are ready to buy something at the swap meet, it is a good idea to take a ham friend (or several) with you for several reasons: First, you will have someone to offer a second opinion on whether or not to buy a particular item. Second, by having others with you on your buying excursion, you will be able to "cover more ground" at the same time, making your search for a particular item more efficient. If everyone carries an HT (handie-talkie), you all can stay in touch with one another and report on any especially good deals. You should limit your conversations to



Photos 5 and 6— A cart of some kind is a blessing when you go swap-shopping. This poor fellow found a great deal on some cables, but now must carry them to his car in the remote parking lot.



Photo 7— Here is a great example of how to help buyers quickly find what they want to buy. Everything is sorted and stored in individual bins, and the prices are clearly marked.

a simplex channel, rather than tying up the local repeater. Besides, if someone in your group discovers a major find and mentions it on the repeater, you may attract too much attention, and others may have the chance to grab your deal!

Another bonus of shopping in a group is the financial advantage: You might be able to get an interest-free, short-term loan in case your cash allowance is too small. Also, if you buy something large and heavy, you will have someone to help you haul the object to the car. Photos 5 and 6 show a very smart thing to do while shopping: Bring some kind of cart to haul things in. You will save your arms and back when you do this.

The phrase "let the buyer beware" is the best advice when swap-shopping or buying any used item. Most of the time, these buying and selling negotiations are between individual private parties and there are no guarantees. The items are being sold for various reasons, from owners being "just plain tired" of the particular item, or the item being broken and beyond economical repair, to a perfectly good item that is simply no longer being used. Thud, like a lot of things in life, you get what you pay for, and if the deal looks too good to be true, it probably is. This is the main reason why it is a good idea to bring along an experienced friend, since he or she may be able to offer sound advice and prevent any grief.

One of the issues at swap meets is

pricing of items. Depending on the seller, prices of goods may be fixed or negotiable. Photo 7 shows an example of a seller doing his best to help buyers by clearly sorting and marking what's what and how much each item costs.

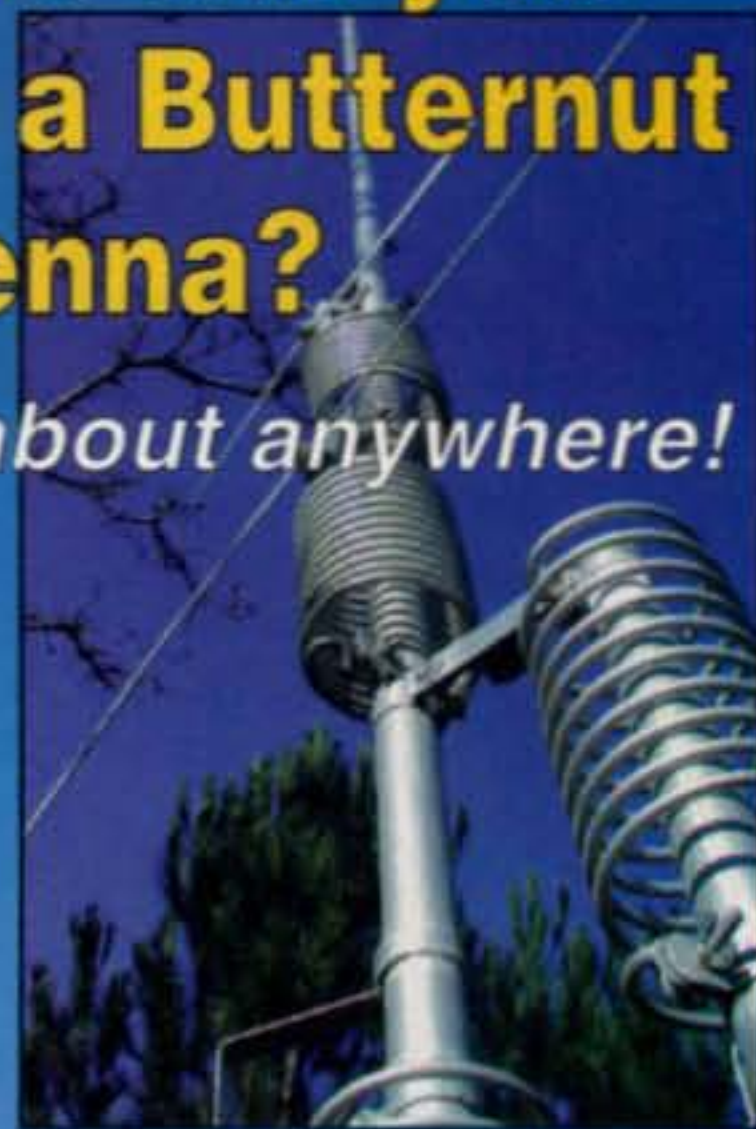
I have noticed that there are "unwritten" and "regional" rules regarding the pricing of goods at swap meets. In some cases, the sellers encourage haggling over the price of an object, and yet there are many places where "the price is the price." Often the seller really does not want to part with the object on display and for sale, even if it has a little price sticker or sign on it. This is an odd thing, but I can understand that sometimes an old, favorite piece of ham gear has some sentimental value. In any and all cases, you as the buyer must talk to the seller and ask questions about an item you think you might want to purchase. Depending on the seller's personality, you may sometimes get a great story about the history of that special doo-dad on display.

This brings us to another great reason to go to a swap meet: the social aspect of getting good friends and radios and electronic goodies together. Shopping in a group is a lot of fun, since everyone will be able to celebrate and discuss their finds of the day. What could be a better way for a ham to spend a warm summer day?

73, Wayne, KH6WZ

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Boatanchor T/R Switching

This month I'll address an input from Tom, K8VZD: "How about an electronic T/R switch for those of us with vintage gear? My particular rig (HT-37) runs about 100 watts. Any thoughts on something simple and, of course, reasonably economical?"

Well Tom, there certainly appears to be an upsurge in folks who like to rebuild and operate vintage equipment, and this is recognized by columns in *CQ* (Radio Classics), *QST* (Old Radio), and *WorldRadio* (Old Time Radio). I personally have a vintage ham station consisting of a Johnson Ranger transmitter and Drake 2B receiver. Anyway, you can easily and inexpensively build a T/R switch that is controlled from the transmit switch control on your transmitter. Eventually I plan on building a QSK (break-in) switch, although a QSK switch can be somewhat complex and expensive. However, I have some interesting ideas for a stand-alone QSK switch for separate transmitter/receivers. You just need to give me a little time to complete this project.

*1517 Creekside Drive, Richardson, TX 75081
e-mail: <ad5x@arrl.net>



Photo A— This inexpensive T/R switch solves antenna-switching and receiver-muting problems for your vintage ham radio station.

Back to the simple T/R switch: Most vintage transmitters have a 117-VAC relay driver output that is enabled on transmit. At frequencies below 30 MHz normal relays can be used for antenna switching, since lead lengths and their associated inductances are very forgiving at HF. The important thing becomes the current rating of the relay contacts and the required relay coil voltage. Also, at the 100-watt level you only need relay contacts capable of about two amps.

Power = I²R, so rearranging this equation gives you the following:

$$I_{\text{Relay}} = (\text{Power}/\text{Resistance})^{1/2} = (100 \text{ watts}/50 \text{ ohms})^{1/2} = 1.414 \text{ amps}$$

Of course, normal relays are rated for 60 Hz current, not HF current. However, I've found that typical power relays work just fine for RF frequencies up to at least 50 MHz. I've even built a remote A/B antenna switch using a power relay that works fine at 2 meters after taking some care with lead lengths and routing. I do like plenty of margin, so I'd recommend using relays capable of higher contact current ratings. Relays I've used at the 200-watt level at HF include the following:

Radio Shack 275-217 DPDT w/10-amp contact ratings at \$7.99 each.

Hosfelt 45-327 DPDT w/10-amp contact ratings at \$1.99 each.

All Electronics RLY-2120 DPDT w/10-amp contact ratings at \$2.75 each.

All Electronics 4PRLY-120L 4PDT w/5-amp contact ratings at \$4.00 each.

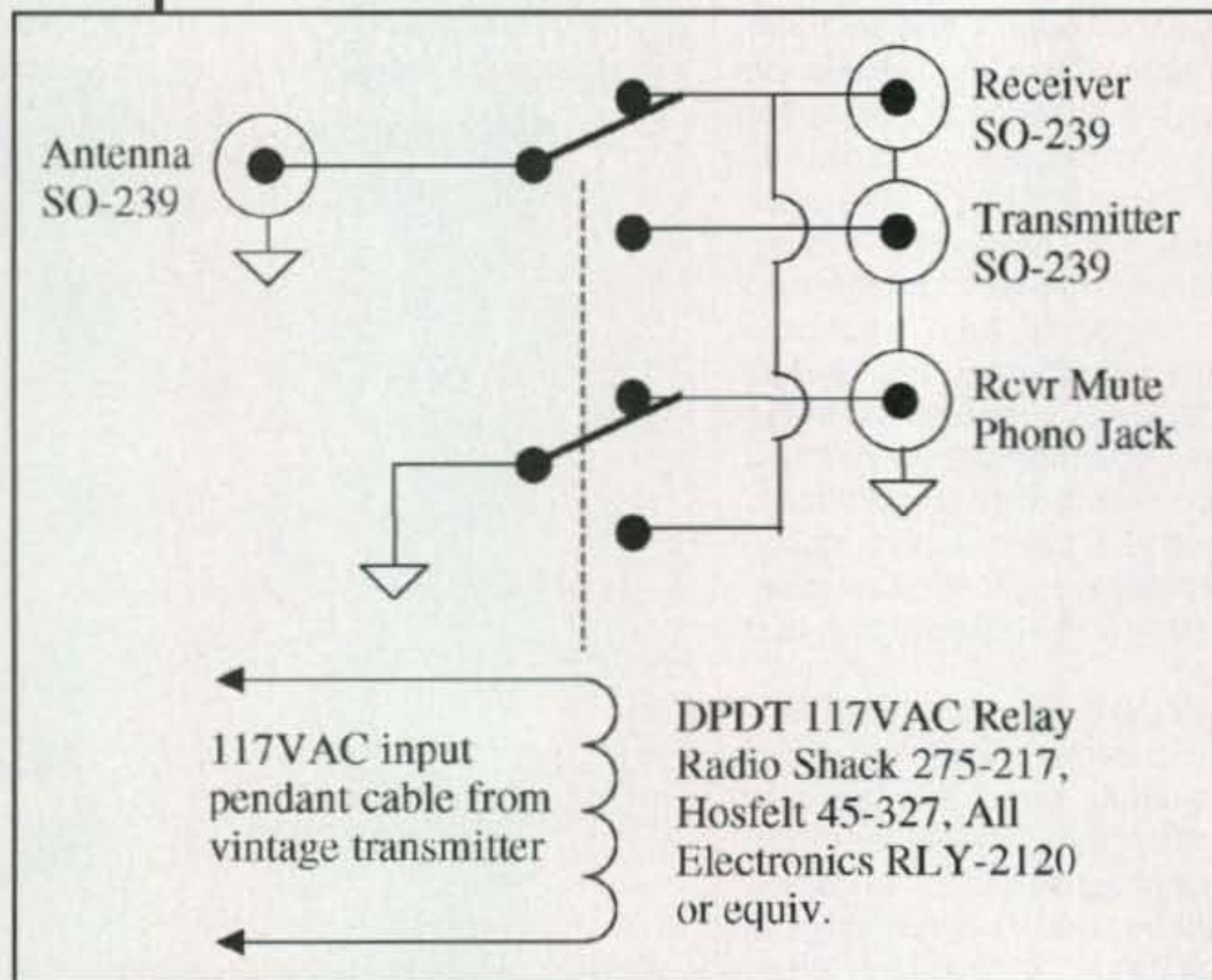


Fig. 1— Relay-based T/R switch for vintage ham equipment.

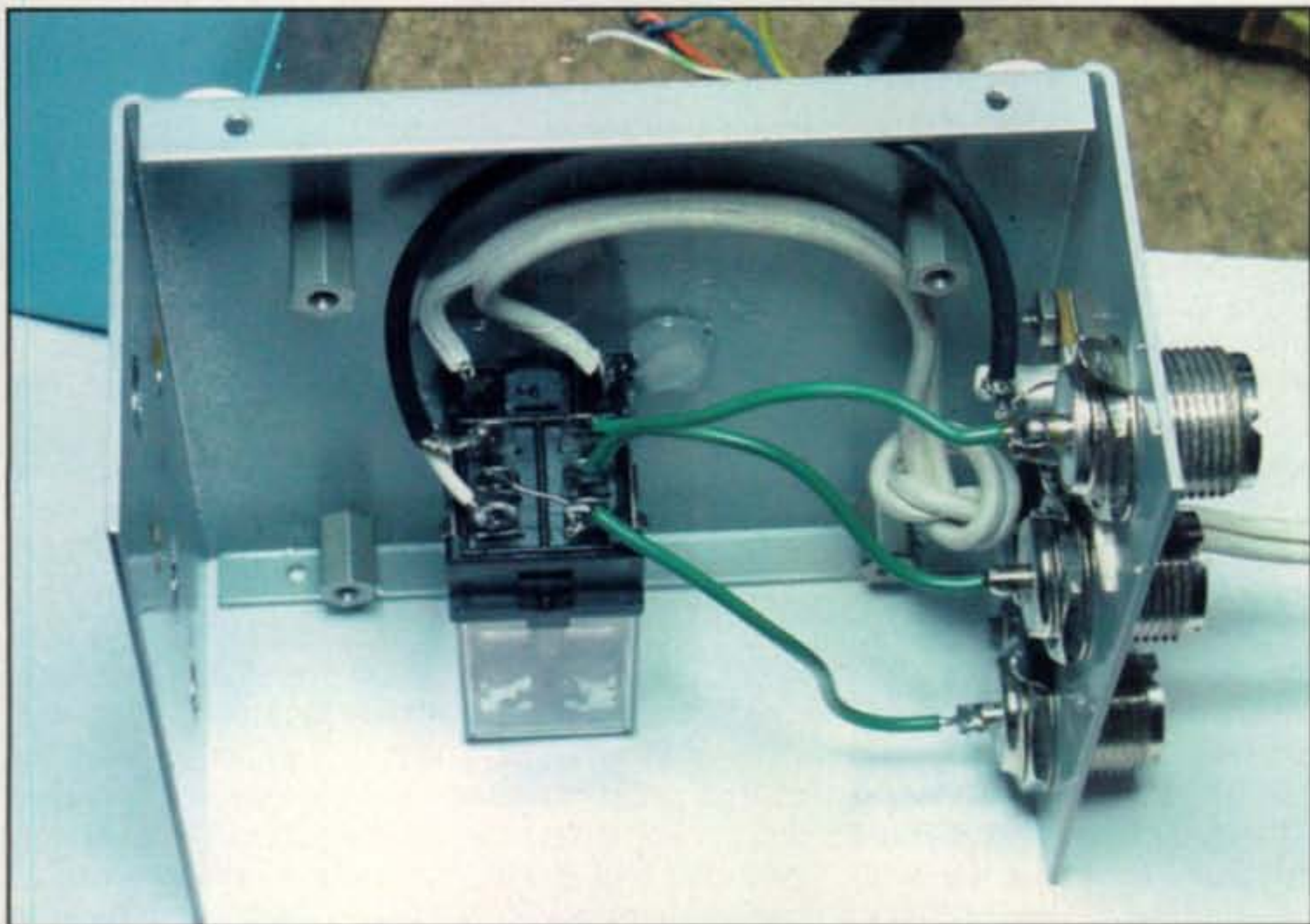


Photo B— The “innards” of the T/R switch. The relay is attached to the box with epoxy.

For QRP radios, miniature relays with 0.5-amp contacts work just fine.

Fig. 1 is the schematic of my T/R switch. I used SO-239 connectors for the RF interfaces, and an RCA phono jack for the “mute” interface. Everything can be built into any old aluminum box you can find. You can mount the relay to the aluminum box using hot-glue or epoxy. Photo A show the outside connector interfaces, and photo B shows a view of the internal wiring of the final T/R switch.

Incidentally, an inexpensive aluminum box you can use is one of those printer, telephone, or RS232 switch boxes that are so inexpensive in many of the surplus catalogs. A good example is the All Electronics FNS-2 A/B Phone Switch Box, which only costs \$4. Its dimensions are 3.5" x 5.8" x 2.1". This is a perfect enclosure for the antenna switch. You can probably buy everything (box/ relay/connectors) for about \$15.

Notice that the DPDT relay does several things:

1. It switches the antenna between receiver and transmitter.
2. It provides the necessary “mute” control to the receiver (“ground” for receive, “open” for mute).
3. It grounds the receiver antenna input when transmitting.

I only use the “mute” function when operating phone with my “boatanchors.” I leave the receiver un-muted for CW, since I want to monitor my signal directly. The combination of fast AGC

and a shorted receive antenna input during transmit works very well.

That’s it for another month. You can e-mail your thoughts, questions, and ideas to me at <ad5x@arrl.net>.

73, Phil, AD5X

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Everything is Coming Up QRP!

The headline for this month's column may sound like a cliché, but it is more factual than many folks realize. Only a couple of days ago, for example, I answered a CQ on 20 meters and discovered it was Ed, WA1FVJ, running 400 mw with a home-built Rock Mite transceiver. Ed told us he had worked over 20 states plus Finland and St. Pierre Island with the palm-size gem, and he was having as much fun (or more) than when he ran a 50- or 100-watt rig. Next I worked W1RAN running a little MFJ Cub at 1 watt, and he, too, was happy with his success. That's right, friends—1 watt, and I did not realize he was QRP until he told me during the QSO (the AGC in modern rigs is an excellent power equalizer).

A couple of days later, and while running 4 watts with my trusty Elecraft KX-1 and Hy-Gain AV-640 vertical, I worked TA2ZF on 20 meters and 3B8MM on 30 meters. I was elated until I checked the mailbag and found Russ, N9IV, did even better. Using a KX-1 with a 95-foot long wire, he worked 3B8CF plus EM1HO—the expedition to the Antarctica. Goodness gracious, but running high power (a rig's full 100 watts) seems like overkill!

That's enough "operating notes." Now let's check out the "homebrew" and "dink" scene!

One-Dollar Radio!

Our low-power colleagues in Great Britain have uncovered a unique "mod project" that seems too good to be true: a palm-size item they nicknamed the "Direct Conversion Pound Shop Radio." It was discovered and perfected by Peter Morris, G1IFN. Information on it appeared in the winter 2005 issue (No. 125) of the G-QRP Club's magazine *Sprat*

*3994 Long Leaf Drive, Gardendale, AL 35071
e-mail: <k4twj@cq-amateur-radio.com>

(www.gqrp.com), and conversion details are also available on the website of GØUPL (www.hanssummers.com). The "Pound Shop" is Britain's counterpart to a "Dollar Store" in the U.S. (British pounds, U.S. dollars), and yes, this little FM auto-scan radio is actually available in the UK for one pound. A pair of earbuds is even included in the price. What a deal!

You can see and direct-order this radio at <www.poundshop.co.uk>. Click on "index," and then enter "radio" in the search box. Use a global charge card such as Mastercard when ordering, and the currency conversion (typically 1.6 dollars = 1 pound) plus postage charges (3 or 4 dollars) can be included in your purchase.

As an alternative, you may find similar versions of this radio in variety stores, gas/convenience stores, and drug stores around the U.S. (probably priced at 5 or 6 dollars). There is only one caveat (well, maybe two): Be sure to get one of the really low-cost (cheap!) jobs with a single Phillips TDA 7088 IC (or equivalent, such as the TDA 7021 or TDA 7000). Second, be prepared to do some circuit-board tracing and analyzing in converting it to a ham-band receiver. In other words, some improvising to our upcoming mod description may be necessary (think of it as a good guideline for a new "dink" project).

The Phillips TDA 7088 is an all-in-one IC that, in conjunction with a single onboard transistor for audio amplification, produces a stand-alone FM radio. The only sections of the IC used here, however, are its VXO (which is tunable from 1.5 to 110 MHz), mixer, and IF amplifier (its bandwidth is set by an external RC network). The mod involves resetting the VXO feeding one of the mixer's inputs to approximately 7 MHz and directing 40-meter signals from a resonant antenna into the mixer's other

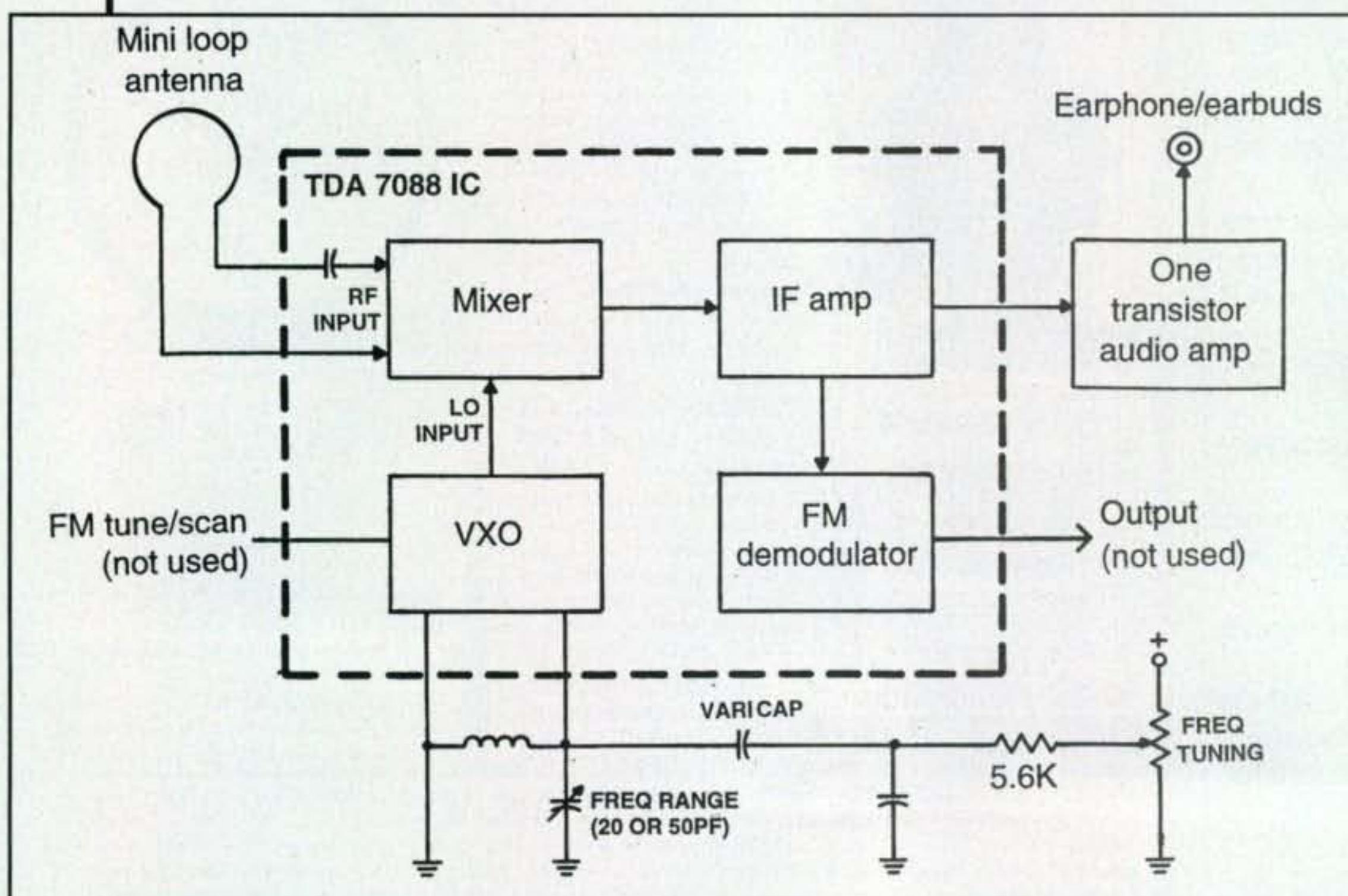


Fig. 1—Conceptual outline of how the components external to TDA 7088 IC in the Pound Shop radio are changed to make it a "volume control and varicap tuned receiver" for 40 meters.

books

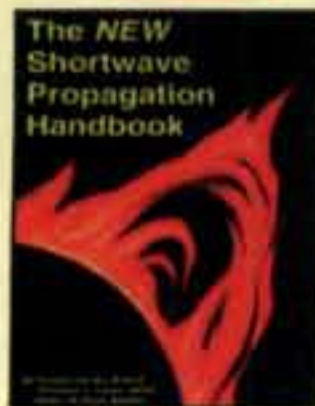
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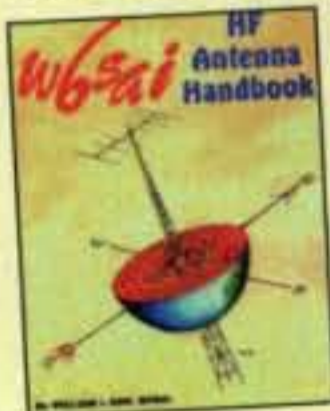


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input. You then “re-RC” the IF following the mixer to produce a 3-kHz bandwidth and change one or two capacitors in the transistor audio amplifier (fig. 1 may help here).

Once you are generally familiar with the Phillips TDA 7088 (or equivalent IC), changing its external components for covering different frequencies is another appealing possibility. The VXO is not crystal-controlled, however, so some drift can be expected. That’s also why conversion for 15 or 10 meters is not mentioned here. A general outline of the G1INF conversion follows.

First, the VXO is modified to tune 40 meters. Unsoldered R1 (5k6 ohm) from pin 16 of the IC. Remove any light or scan switches. Remove C5 (marked 473). Connect IC pin 16 to pin 14. Remove molded oscillator coil L1. Replace it with a 6.8- μ H inductor and a 20-pFd or 50-pFd trimmer for 40-meter reception. Mount the trimmer in the hole used for the light switch. Cut the PC board trace between the hot side of R2 (22k) and potentiometer CW. Remove “C6” link. Connect the previously unsoldered end of R1 to pot W. Connect pot CW to +V (3-volt battery). The radio’s volume control now becomes the varicap’s tuning control. Replace C13 (marked 103) with 15 pFd (for 100-kHz tuning span with the varicap).

Next modify the mixer’s input to receive 40 meters. Remove C1 (82 pFd). Connect IC pin 11 to the antenna via a 33-pFd capacitor. Connect the other antenna wire to IC pin 12. Then modify the IF and AF sections. Remove C8 (332). Replace C10 (181) with a 562 capacitor. Replace C9 (332) with a 104 capacitor. Connect IC pin 15 to transistor base through a 104 capacitor. Connect a 22k-ohm resistor from the base to the collector (or earphone) of the transistor. Connect a .1 mFd capacitor between IC pins 8 and 9. Bypass IC pin 3 to ground with a 220-mFd capacitor. As a helpful guide here, a diagram

On the Cover

Steve Flood, KK7UV, of Missoula, Montana, has a blend of current and vintage gear in his shack. Steve’s main rig is a Kenwood TS-870 transceiver, but he also has—and regularly uses—a Johnson Viking Valiant AM transmitter and National NC-183 receiver. Outside, he has a 270-foot dipole that he uses on all bands from 160–10 meters, plus a few more wire antennas specifically for his favorite band, 160 meters. The main “top band” transmitting antenna is a T-loaded wire vertical, a 75-foot vertical wire topped by a 70-foot horizontal top-hat, all built over a field of 60 radials on the ground. Steve’s receive antennas are K9AY loops.



Steve’s path to ham radio was a long one, starting in childhood as he listened on his shortwave receiver to hams on AM. But his interest dropped off after high school as he “managed to intimidate myself” into believing that the test was too hard. After college, though, Steve says he met a ham with whom he worked for a year and he “asked lots of questions, put it off some more and then decided in 1999 it was time to do it.” He did, and passed.

Steve got interested in 160 meters by “the challenge,” he told CQ, explaining that “it takes a little extra effort to work DX on it.” Steve also notes that he has more time for hamming in the winter, when the band is at its best, and that “right now, with the dip in the solar cycle, there’s a little more activity on it.”

Professionally, Steve is a hydrologist with the U.S. Department of the Interior. He is married with two children, neither of whom is a ham ... yet. “But I’m working on my son,” says Steve.

(Cover photo by Larry Mulvehill, WB2ZPI)



Photo A— Three varieties of ultra-low-cost (cheap!) personal FM radios with pushbutton tuning/scanning sold by Pound Shops in Great Britain. These single-IC radios are easily modified into direct-conversion 40-meter receivers for casual monitoring of QRP activity. (Photo courtesy of GØUPL)

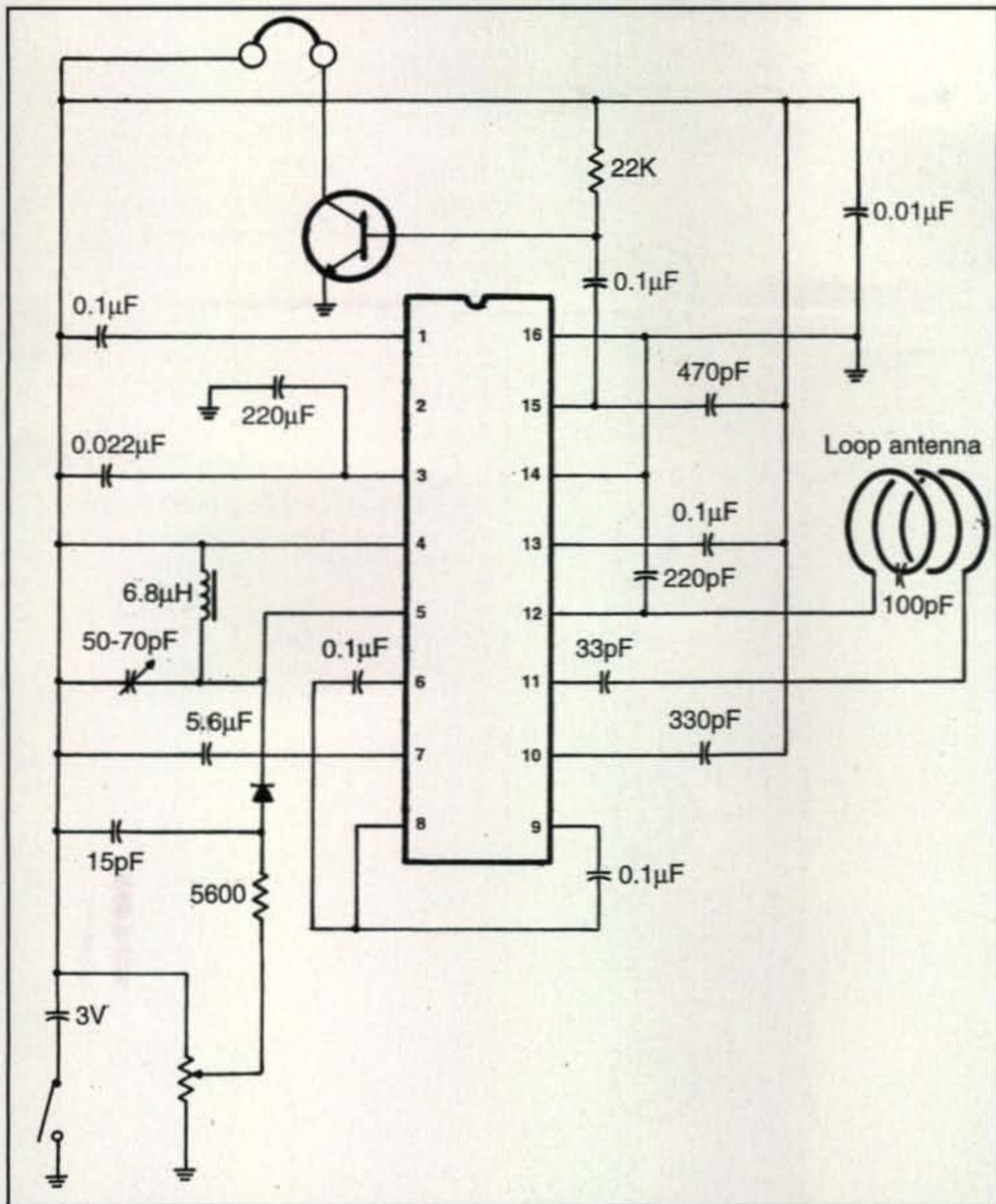


Fig. 2— Circuit diagram of the TDA 7088-based personal portable FM radio after modification to a direct-conversion 40-meter CW receiver. Discussion in text. (Figure courtesy of G1IFN, G0UPL, and G-QRP Club's magazine, Sprat)

of the fully rebuilt or "full moded" receiver is shown in fig. 2.

Now let's review some final notes. The pocket-size loop antenna (connected between IC pins 11 and 12) is made by cutting a 4-foot length of unshielded three-conductor cable, and then forming a two-turn coil with two of the wires. The wires are spliced at one end and their other ends connected in series through a 100-pF capacitor. The third wire is used as a pickup or coupling loop (again see fig. 2). G1INF used a grid dip meter as an aid in tweaking the coil's overall length for resonant at precisely 7.0 MHz. You can, of course, experiment with your own mini-antenna. A small antenna might seem wimpy here, but bear in mind that the little receiver runs at maximum gain and does not have AGC. Remember, too, all cheap FM radios are not necessarily TDA-family based. Armed with the infor-

mation presented here plus details of their IC's internal stages and pinouts (obtained from their particular manufacturer's website), however, modification should be relatively straightforward. Some references to helpful websites, incidentally, are listed under Pound Shop Radio discussions at <www.hanssummers.com>.

Need a small multi-function QRP transmitter to mate with this "el cheapo" receiver? Take a second look at my quick-to-assemble "Hamfest Buddy" featured in the August 2005 QRP column and revisited in the June 2006 QRP column. It is tiny, versatile, and kits (complete with a 40-, 30-, or 20-meter crystal) are still available direct to you from me (K4TWJ, 3994 Long Leaf Drive, Gardendale, AL 35071) for \$16 plus \$2 postage. Mail delivery is sometimes undependable, so drop me an e-mail before ordering and I will help "bird

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dog" your order. That also brings our next subject into focus.

Boost for Buddy

Several readers have requested that we highlight a small RF amplifier capable of boosting a Hamfest Buddy's output, so we did some heavy-duty hunting and came up with the mini-amp circuit shown in fig. 3. When driven by 50 or 60 milliwatts (typical output of a Hamfest Buddy), this mini-amp will produce 400 or 800 milliwatts output (400 with two parallel-connected 2N2222s, 800 with four parallel-connected 2N2222s). You can use a small .01-mF capacitor or a small ferrite bead slipped over the input wire for passing signals to the transistors' bases. Separate 2-ohm resistors on their emitters ensure each transistor draws the same current and conducts equally.

A T-50-2 toroid wound with No. 22 or 24 enamel-coated wire is used in the output filter. Wind 16 turns for 40 meters, 14 turns for 30 meters, or 12 turns for 20 meters. Space the turns evenly around the toroid, leaving only a small gap at the "start/finish" line, and remember each time you pass the wire through the toroid's center counts as one turn.

Rather than winding 30 turns of No.

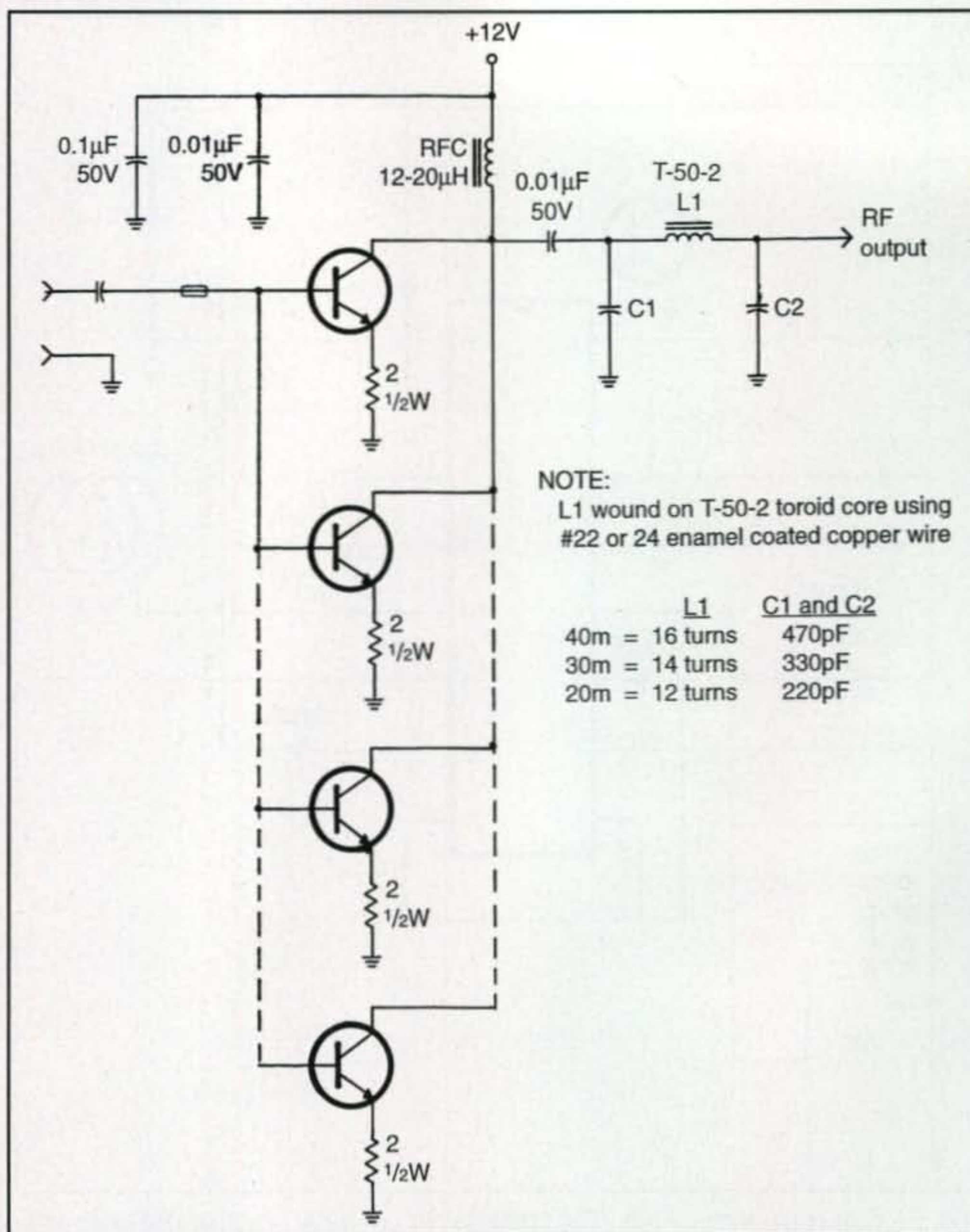


Fig. 3— Circuit diagram of a simple two- or four-transistor mini-amplifier capable of boosting the output of a 50- or 60-milliwatt transmitter to 400 to 800 milliwatts. (Details in text.)

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28 or 30 wire on another T-50-2 toroid to make the RF choke, I used a molded inductor (Mouser No. 542-78F120, telephone 1-800-346-6873). A similar 3.4- or 4.7-µH inductor (Mouser No. 542-78F3R4 or 542-78F4R7) can probably be substituted for the output filter's toroid. Try one of each after assembly, and then go with the one giving the most output. This little mini-amp works quite well to be so simple. Try it!

Closing Notes

Have you sensed QRP activity spreading out a bit on 40 meters lately? You may be correct. Our all-time favored frequency of 7.040 kHz is still the main focal point, but QRP ARCI is also promoting 7.030 kHz as an international frequency, and the Flying Pigs QRP Club gathers around 7.044 kHz to help minimize congestion

on 7.040 kHz. An ever-increasing number of amateurs are also joining our ranks and discovering the attraction of QRP—of operating the ever-popular HF bands without concern of strong RFI or large and ultra-expensive gear. As a result, an approximate 15-kHz section of 40 meters is supporting some good QRP action almost every day and night. Check it out!

That fills available space for this month, friends, but watch for more timely news and notes on today's hottest area of special interest, QRP, coming in our next column. Meanwhile, we look forward to exchanging on-the-air greetings with each of you soon—maybe during the Flying Pigs monthly "Run For the Bacon" contest (details at <www.fpqrp.com>). Click on "Flying Pigs Monthly Run For The Bacon Contest."

73, Dave, K4TWJ

RF Accessories, Ultra-Portable Transceiver Adapter, Antenna Tuner & more

This month we again shine CQ's bright product spotlight on a wide variety of accessories for the radio shack; antennas and antenna accessories; interesting websites; software; and books and catalogs for your bookshelf, taking a close look at "what's new" in our great radio hobby. Let's begin.

Accessories for the Shack

"Splatter View"® RF Demodulator and RF Sampler from CleanRF Technologies. CleanRF Technologies, on the web at <<http://www.cleanRF.com>> (see fig. 1), has announced several new products for the discriminating RF-signal perfectionist.

When an HF linear amplifier is not tuned correctly, undesired out-of-band or unintelligible RF products will develop. With more and more HF amateurs becoming increasingly concerned with bandwidth, the "Splatter View"® model RF-D RF Demodulator (see photo A) and the model RF-S RF Sampler (photo B) have been created to ensure that your signal remains truly linear and distortion free for maximum intelligibility.

Now a real-time signal comparison between your amplifier's various pre- and post-operating conditions can be achieved, helping to eliminate the true root causes of splatter, buckshot, over/under modulation, and nonlinearity.



Photo A—The "Splatter View"® RF-D Demodulator from CleanRF Technologies directly demodulates the RF envelope from your transmitter. See the text for technical details. (Photo courtesy of Tyler Stampfli, KA0KA)

The "Splatter View" RF-D and RF-S, when used with your existing oscilloscope, will provide an exact reference observation as your occupied RF bandwidth stays directly proportional to your transmitter's audio passband. The possibility of IMD (intermodulation distortion) products will be exponentially reduced to help you say goodbye to mistuned nonlinear amplifiers and dirty signals.

Specifically, the "Splatter View" RF-D is de-

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- Now, a real-time signal comparison between your amplifier's various pre and post operating conditions can be achieved!
- The RF-D and RF-S, when used with your existing oscilloscope, will provide you with a reference observation as your occupied RF bandwidth stays directly proportional to your transmitter's audio passband. Say goodbye to mistuned nonlinear amplifiers and dirty signals forever!

The "Splatter View" RF-D is designed to directly demodulate the RF envelope from your transmitter, converting the high power RF envelope to a usable audio signal suitable for feeding the horizontal "X" input of your oscilloscope. This establishes a pre-amplifier reference signal.

The RF-D may also be used as an RF Audio Modulation Monitor reproducing a flat audio frequency response from DC to 30KHz.

Model RF-D

The "Splatter View" RF-S is designed to directly sample the RF envelope from your amplifier, converting the high power RF envelope to a signal suitable for feeding the vertical "Y" input of your oscilloscope. This establishes a post-amplifier reference signal.

Additionally, the RF-S may be used as an RF coupling probe for spectrum analysis, RF envelope observation on an oscilloscope, or frequency counting and control.

Model RF-S

I'm

Fig. 1— CleanRF Technologies, which you'll find on the web at <<http://www.cleanRF.com>>, has announced innovative new products for the discriminating RF-signal perfectionist. Check out this month's column for details. (Image from the CleanRF Technologies website)

Oscilloscope/RF Demodulator/RF Sampler Block Diagram

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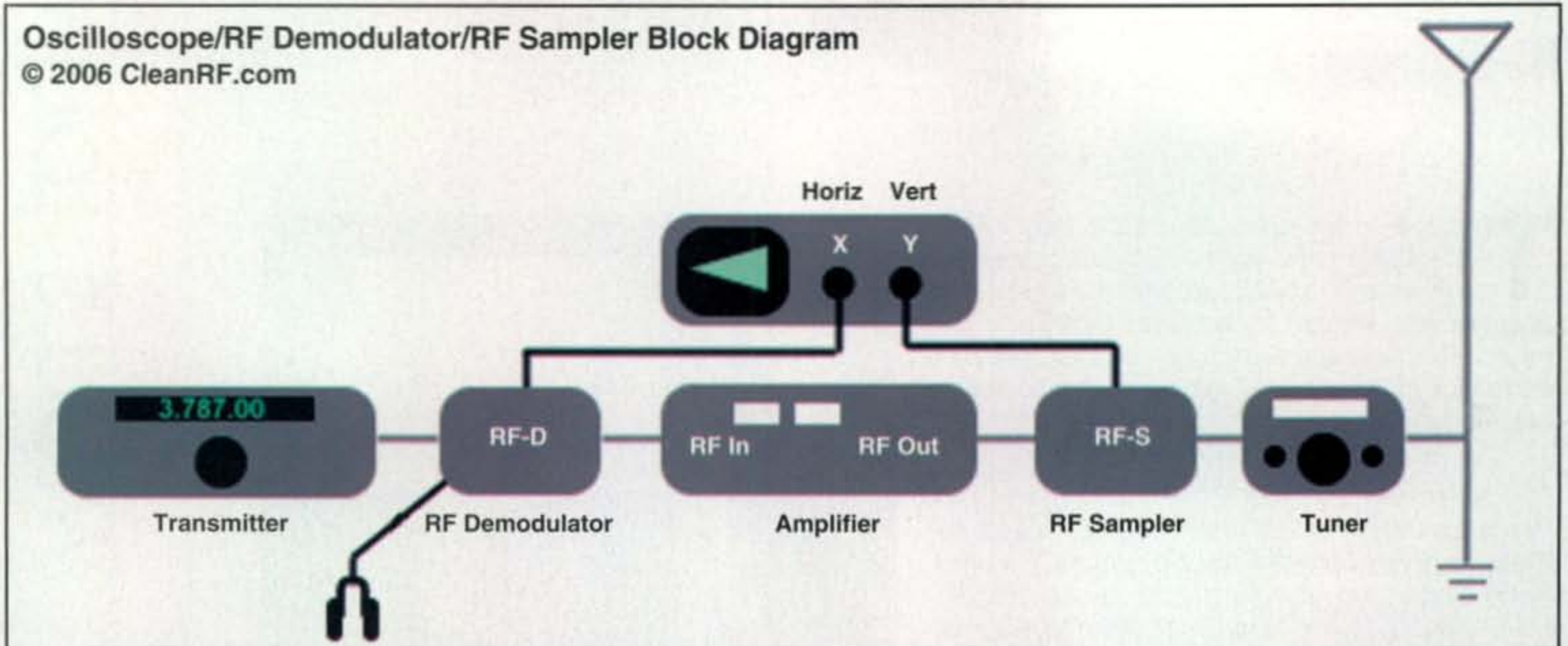


Fig. 2— A copyrighted complete block diagram of Clean RF's "Splatter View"© system illustrating pre- and post-signal monitoring connections is shown here. A description of the system is in this month's text. (Image courtesy of Tyler Stampfli, KA0KA)

signed to directly demodulate the RF envelope from your transmitter, converting the low-power RF envelope to a usable audio signal suitable for feeding the horizontal "X" input of your oscilloscope. This establishes a preamplifier reference signal.

In addition, the RF-D may be used as an AM audio modulation monitor, reproducing a flat audio frequency response from DC to 30 kHz. The unit features a very low operational VSWR over a broad frequency range, and insertion loss is a negligible 0.1 dB. The RF-D produces a rectified, nondirectional demodulated source at the BNC and 1/4-inch TRS jacks.

The "Splatter View" RF-S directly samples the RF envelope from your amplifier, converting the high-power RF envelope to a signal suitable for feeding the vertical "Y" input of your oscilloscope. This establishes a post-amplifier reference signal.

Also, the RF-S may be used as an RF coupling probe for spectrum analysis, RF envelope observation on an oscilloscope, or frequency counting and control. It features a very

low operational VSWR over a broad frequency range, and insertion loss is 0.1 dB. The RF-S produces an unrectified, nondirectional sample at the BNC jack.

Each completed unit is made with high-quality silver and gold Teflon® connectors, measures 3 1/4" L x 2 1/8" W x 1 5/8" H, and comes complete with 6-foot BNC-to-BNC cables and UHF male-to-male RF adapters for coupling directly to RF outputs.

A complete block diagram of the "Splatter View" system illustrating pre- and post-signal monitoring connections is shown in fig. 2.

For further information, contact Tyler Stampfli, KA0KA, at CleanRF Technologies, 1410B Hillwood Drive, Murray, KY 42071 (970-412-3456; e-mail: <info@cleanrf.com>; on the web: <<http://www.cleanrf.com/index.html>>).

Elecraft KX1 Ultra-Portable Transceiver Now Covers Up to Four Bands with an 80- and 30-meter Adapter. With the introduction of the KXB3080 option, the popular Elecraft KX1 Ultra-Portable Transceiver now covers up to four bands. The dual-band KXB3080 module, covering 80 and 30 meters, is installed in the same location as the 30-meter option, the KXB30 (photo C). The KX1 covers the full 40- and 20-meter bands as well.

KX1 revision 1.02 firmware is included at no charge with the KXB3080 option. The new firmware adds a scanning feature, useful for monitoring quiet bands. Scanning proceeds in "live" (unmuted) fashion, allowing you to hear even very weak stations. In emergency situations, scanning could help you find a strong local station you could contact even with weak batteries or an inefficient antenna.

With the KXB3080 installed, the rig's DDS VFO allows reception from 1.0 to 16.5 MHz, which includes many popular shortwave broadcast bands. While signals outside the amateur bands are attenuated, it is still possible to copy strong stations even in the commercial AM broadcast band. The KX1 transmits only in CW mode, but it can receive SSB and AM signals, thanks to its variable-passband crystal filter.

The four-band KX1—with internal automatic antenna tuner, internal batteries, and clip-on keyer paddle—represents a new level of integration in QRP transceivers. The enclosure measures just 1.2" x 3" x 5.3", and the transceiver weighs just 9



Photo B— The "Splatter View"© RF-S RF Sampler is designed to directly sample the RF envelope from your amplifier. See the explanation in the text. (Photo courtesy of KA0KA)

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Photo C— The Elecraft KX1 Ultra-Portable CW Transceiver Kit is a backpacker's dream. Addition of the KXB3080 option kit allows four-band coverage; new firmware adds a scanning feature. (Photo courtesy of Elecraft)

ounces (11 ounces with both the optional ATU and keyer paddle installed)—still a “backpacker's dream.”

The KXB3080 option kit is \$65. It can be ordered at the time one purchases a KX1, or at any time afterwards. As in all of the Elecraft transceivers, the options are all designed to be added at any time after the radio is built. For those who have already installed a 30-meter option, it can be removed and the 30/80-meter option installed.

For more information, contact Elecraft, Inc., P.O. Box 69, Aptos, CA 95001-0069 (831-662-8345; e-mail: <sales@elecraft.com>; on the web: <<http://www.elecraft.com>>). Online ordering and downloadable manuals are available on the company's website.

Antennas and Accessories

MFJ 2500-Watt ContinuousCarrier™ Antenna Tuner. The MFJ-9982 ContinuousCarrier™ Antenna Tuner handles 2500 watts continuous carrier output on all modes and all HF bands into most unbalanced antennas. The MFJ-9982 (photos D and E) gives you almost every feature you'd ever want in a high-power tuner: wide matching range, 1.8 to 30 MHz coverage, a six-position antenna switch, a four-core balun, a dummy load, true peak/average lighted SWR/wattmeter, 6:1 reduction drives, detailed logging scales, a 3-digit counter, large knobs, and more.

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The antenna switch is completely isolated to handle high-voltage, high-impedance antennas. High-current, low-



Photo D— The heavy-duty MFJ-9982 ContinuousCarrier™ Antenna Tuner handles 2500 watts continuous carrier output on all modes and all HF bands into most unbalanced antennas. It's designed to give you virtually every feature you'll ever want in a high-power tuner. (Photo courtesy of MFJ)

impedance antennas are handled by parallel sets of high-current contacts of two ceramic switches. Also, the TrueActive™ circuit reads true peak or average power on all modes, a cross-needle meter reads SWR/forward/ reflected power, and a 1500-watt air-cooled, non-inductive 50-ohm resistor serves as a dummy load.

The MFJ-9982, at \$699.95, is protected by MFJ's famous No Matter What™ one-year limited warranty. Under it, MFJ will repair or replace (at its option) your MFJ products, no matter what, for one complete year.

To order any MFJ product, find the name of your nearest MFJ dealer, or to request a free catalog, contact MFJ Enterprises, Inc., 300 Industrial Park Rd., Starkville, MS 39759 (1-800-647-1800; e-mail: <mfj@mfjenterprises.com>; on the web: <<http://www.mfjenterprises.com>>).

Software and Computers

MicroLog Ham Radio Logging Program from WA0H. Jerry Gentry, WA0H, has added many new features to his ambitious MicroLog shareware logging program since it was men-

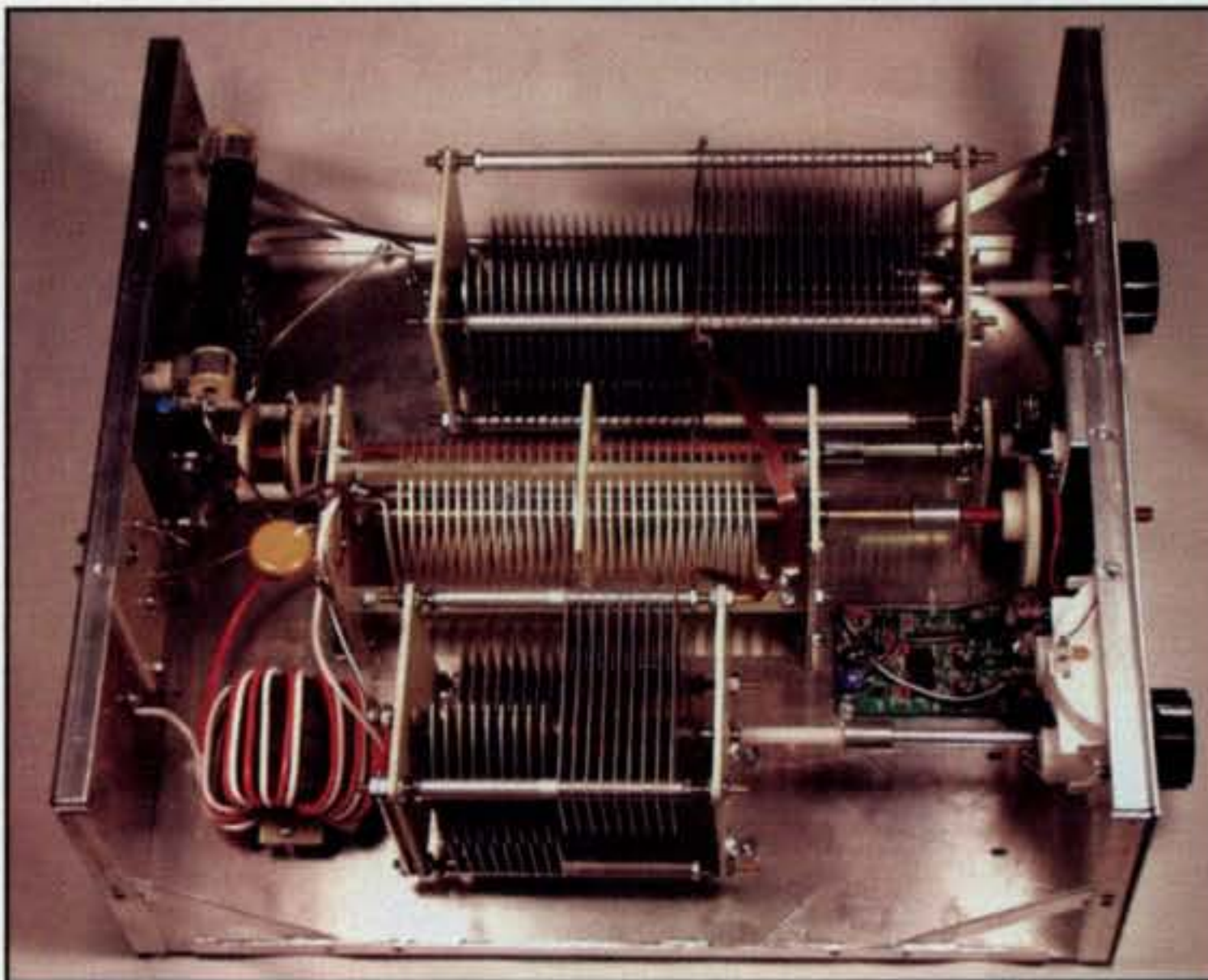


Photo E— The interior view of the MFJ-9982 tuner speaks for itself. It features heavy-duty construction, especially in its roller inductor, high-current air variable capacitors, and antenna switch. Details are in this month's column. (Photo courtesy of MFJ)

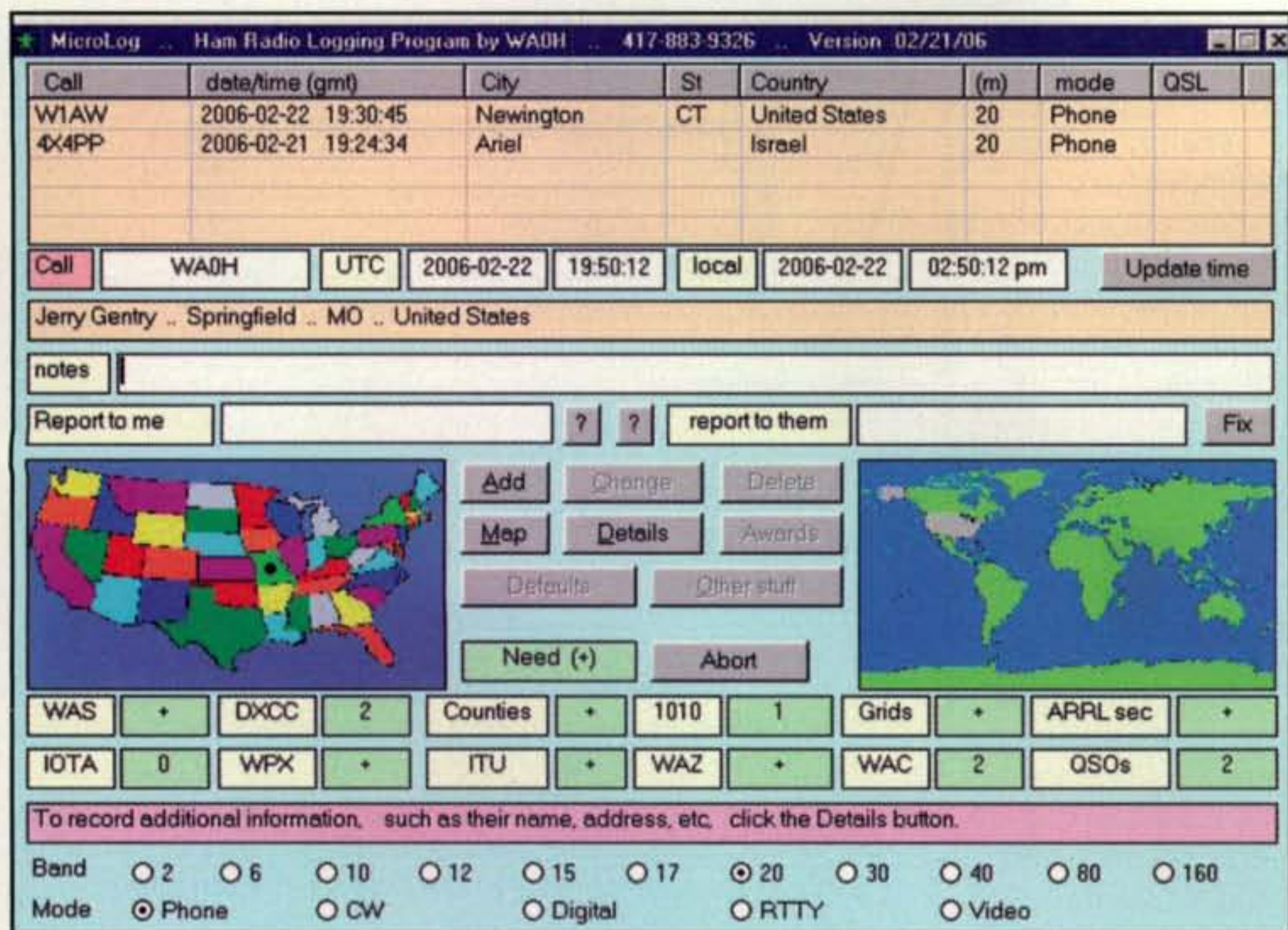


Fig. 3—Jerry Gentry, WA0H, has added many new features to his MicroLog shareware logging program since it was mentioned in a previous column. The program's Main Menu is shown here. (Image courtesy of Jerry Gentry, WA0H)

tioned in our July 2004 column. To recall, Jerry's MicroLog can be freely downloaded, copied, and given to others. MicroLog runs under Windows® 98 or later. Importantly, the U.S. and Canadian callbooks are built into the program, although due to the size of the

U.S. and Canadian callbooks, they are not included as part of the downloaded program. The program's main menu is shown in fig. 3.

Once a callsign is entered, MicroLog can display additional information, which it extracts from the built-in callbooks, or

which can be entered manually. Also, for several different types of awards, MicroLog can display a summary of the stations worked and confirmed. Too, MicroLog can display several types of lists, such as a list of islands, or a customized list of stations worked. The program allows you to specify which fields to display, and it can present a map that shows the location of the callsign you entered. MicroLog also can display a list of which types of licensees are allowed to work which frequencies, as well as present several types of maps, such as a U.S. grid map.

In the latest version, the U.S. and Canadian callbooks are still built into the program so you can enter a callsign and immediately see who the person is and where (on a map) he is located. And, the program still tells you if you have worked the station before, or if you need to work him for an award.

All NEW !!! **SPECTRUM SCOUT** ***All NEW !!!***
RF Frequency Counter with FCC DATABASE



The all new *Spectrum Scout* is the only frequency counter that captures the frequency of a nearby transmitter and also displays the FCC bandplan data for that frequency. With a frequency range of 10MHz-2.6GHz, over 1000 FCC records are programmed into the Spectrum Scout for your convenient automatic reference.

Make your OWN database!

No matter what state or country you live in, the *Spectrum Scout* allows you to program your own database files using simple text files. This allows you to tag information for frequencies in your own location and customize the unit for your unique applications.

Use as a Reference Guide!

With over 1000 records programmed into the *Spectrum Scout*, it can be used as your own portable reference guide. The database is searchable in steps of 1, 5, 6.25, 10, 12.5, 25, 30, and 50kHz, & also steps of 1, 5, and 10MHz. This allows for easy lookup of the FCC bandplan allocation tables by simply using the up/down buttons.

Features and Specifications

- Frequency Range 10MHz-2.6GHz
- Displays FCC bandplan info with each frequency
- RF signal strength bargraph
- Reaction Tune with ICOM IC R10, R20 R7000, R7100, R8500 and R9000, AOR 8000 & 8200, Optocom, OS456, OS535 and R11
- Download memory to PC with built-in RS232 (CBDS cable & software set sold separately)
- Beeper and vibrator alert
- 1000 memories & 65,000 hits per memory
- Use FCC bandplan data as reference guide
- Scroll FCC data using 11 different step sizes
- 2x16 LCD display w/EL backlight

Optoelectronics database ' 2006

\$459

Antenna sold separately (DB32 antenna shown, \$39)
 US Patent 5471402 & US Patents Pending



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Features and specifications are subject to change without notice or obligation.

MicroLog now lets you change the band or mode from the main screen. Also on the main screen, the U.S. and world maps can now be replaced with band charts or beacon maps, and QSL status has been added to the display. MicroLog also now lets you print your log and specify which fields to print.

Jerry downloads the U.S. and Canadian callbooks every month and builds them into MicroLog. For international calls, the program now can access any of the commercial callsign databases that you own, such as the Radio Amateur Callbook, Buckmaster's HamCall™ database, QRZ!™, or Golist.

Another nice "plus" is that MicroLog now lets you create and use multiple logs. You can even move records from one log to another. For stations operating from a portable location, MicroLog now separates the home location from the portable location, to allow more accurate award tracking.

MicroLog is still easy to use, still runs on Windows® 98 or later, and still costs just \$10 for a registered version of the program, which is mailed on a CD. You can download MicroLog from Jerry's website, but the website version does not have the callbooks built into the program, nor does it access commercial callsign databases. The registered version also allows the owner to have free phone or e-mail technical support; you'll also be notified of new program versions.

Contact Jerry Gentry, WA0H, Box 4485, Springfield, MO 65807 (417-883-9326; e-mail: <wa0h@arrl.net>; on the web: <http://www.wa0h.com>).

New on the Web

HamTestOnline™ Website Adds Canadian Exams. The popular HamTestOnline website has announced the addition

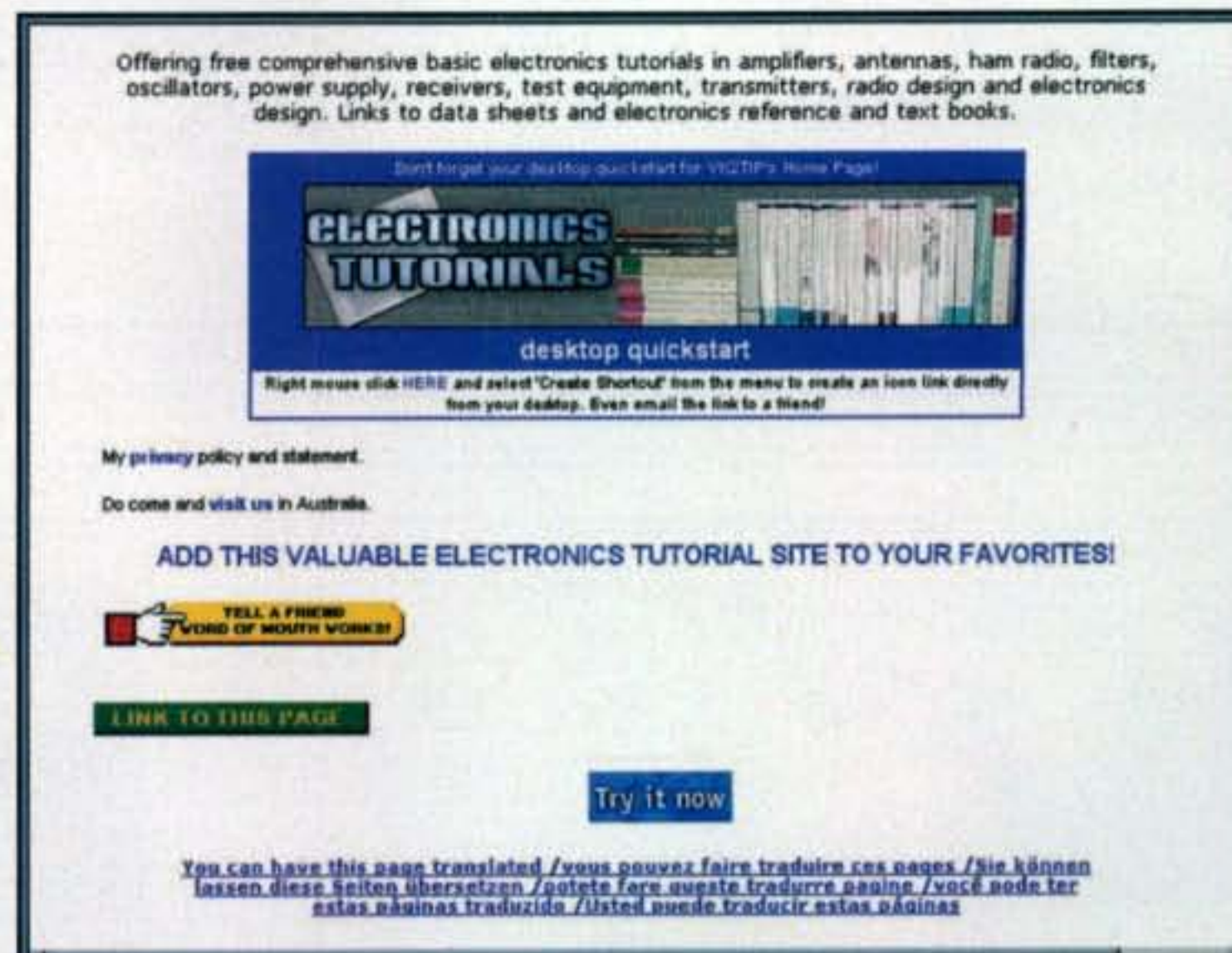


Fig. 4— Looking for some online learning? You'll find a very useful tutorial website at <http://www.electronics-tutorials.com>. The tutorials are free and very comprehensive. (Image from the Electronics Tutorials website)

of the Canadian Basic and Advanced question banks, making the impressive website even better. "We often get requests to add question banks," explained Harold "Pi" Pugh, K1RV, the website's sales manager, "and most of them come from Canadians. In fact, many of our existing customers are Canadians using the U.S. questions to study for the Canadian exams!"

The U.S. and Canadian exams cover the same subjects—regulations, electronics, circuits, antennas, propagation, operating, RF safety, etc.—but often with different emphasis. For example, the U.S. exams have more questions on RF safety, while the Canadian exams put more emphasis on electronics.

"We have two kinds of customers," Pi points out. "Those who just want to pass the exams and those who want to learn the materials. If education is your primary goal, turn on both sets of questions—except for the regulations—and you get a more thorough question drill." Pi adds, "That's why we're not selling the Canadian courses separately. We want our students to have access to both question sets."

The Canadian courses include all the same features, including logical question order, intelligent repetition, explanations, linked questions, and focus exams. The difference is that you get the Canadian exam questions.

The website offers unlimited, free, random practice exams that track your answer history. Advanced features require a \$49.95 USD subscription, which provides full access to all features and all U.S. and Canadian exams for two years. The sub is guaranteed: If you fail the test, you get your money back.

For more information, visit <http://www.hamtestonline.com> or send an e-mail to <k1rv@hamtestonline.com>.

Electronics Tutorials Website. Some time ago, a reader of our column, Tom Schwinn, W4BNS, alerted us to the existence of a very useful and popular tutorial website, which you'll find at <http://www.electronics-tutorials.com> (fig. 4). Offered by Ian Purdie, VK2TIP, the tutorials are free to you and are extremely comprehensive, with over 120 individual electronics tutorials topics covering a very wide range of electronics being offered online. The website is expanding, so it's a good idea to return to it often to see what new tutorials are offered.

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Looking Ahead in CQ

Here's a look at articles we're working on for upcoming issues of CQ:

- "CW Results, 2005 CQ World-Wide DX Contest"
- "All-Time Records, CQ World-Wide DX Contest"
- "Rack-Mount Your Station," by John Ellis, NP2B
- "The BasicX-24—An Easy-to-Use Microprocessor," by Dennis Nendza, W7KMV

Do you have a ham radio story to tell? See our writers' guidelines on the CQ website at <http://www.cq-amateurradio.com/guide.html>



Fig. 5— In the book *Google Gmail: Visual QuickStart Guide*, a visual, task-based reference from Peachpit Press, author Steve Schwartz shows you exactly what you need to know to get your Gmail account up and running fast. (Graphic from the Peachpit Press website)

The site offers free comprehensive basic electronics tutorials on amplifiers, antennas, amateur radio, filters, oscillators, power supplies, receivers, test equipment, transmitters, radio design, and electronics design. Links to data sheets, electronics references, and textbooks are provided.

So you don't become confused when navigating the site, it's largely set up on a basis of "directories." On the left-hand side are "clickable" navigation links that take you to things such as basic electronics, antennas, amplifiers, data sheets, downloads, filters, oscillators, receivers, etc. Each directory has its own navigation bars to different topics under that general heading. Also, each topic has at the end, and often throughout the topic, related topic links. It's that easy to use.

Bottom line: Be sure to check out the Electronics Tutorial Website at <<http://www.electronics-tutorials.com>>. You'll likely be pleased with what you find.

From the Bookshelf

Google Gmail: Visual QuickStart Guide. Imagine never having to delete or file an old e-mail—and still being able to find just the missive you need—and you begin to understand the incredible power of Google's new (and free) e-mail service. With Google's legendary search engine as its backbone and

offering an unheard of 1 gigabyte of storage space, Google's new Gmail service promises to revolutionize the way we use e-mail.

In this visual, task-based reference from Peachpit Press (fig. 5), author Steve Schwartz shows you exactly what you need to know to get your Gmail account up and running fast—from determining system requirements to signing up for an account, configuring your system, sending and receiving e-mail, fighting spam, managing e-mail, using Gmail's labeling and filtering systems, and more. Simple step-by-step instructions, loads of screen shots, and a plethora of time-saving tips will have you up and running with Google's Gmail in no time. *Google Gmail: Visual QuickStart Reference* is priced at \$16.99.

Visit your local bookstore, or for more information, contact Pearson Education, 200 Old Tappan Road, Tappan, NJ 07675 (1-800-283-9444 or 1-800-922-0579; e-mail: <info@peachpit.com>; on the web: <<http://www.peachpit.com>>).

Note: We should also mention that the 80-page, color Peachpit 2006 Catalog now is available. With the catalog you'll be able to search for titles by software program as well as by subject matter. It includes a full title index and an author index. Visit the Peachpit Press website's catalog page to download your copy or request a printed version.

ARRL Periodicals on CD-ROM. As a technical writer and as an educator, I find it useful to have an array of reference software on my PC or at arm's reach on CD-ROM. Thus, I read with interest the availability of the 2005 ARRL Periodicals on CD-ROM, a compilation of all 2005 *QST*, *QEX* (ARRL Experimenter's Exchange), and *NCJ* (*National Contest Journal*) articles.

The ARRL Periodicals on CD-ROM are fully searchable collections of pop-

ular ARRL journals, and reportedly every word and photo published throughout the year is included. With it, you can search the full text of every article by entering titles, callsigns, names—almost any word. You can see every word, photo, drawing, and table in technical and general-interest features, columns, and product reviews—plus all advertisements. You can print what you see, or copy it into other applications.

The 2005 ARRL Periodicals on CD-ROM is \$19.95 plus s/h from the ARRL. For more information, such as to check PC system requirements, or to order, contact the American Radio Relay League, 225 Main Street, Newington, CT 06111-1494 (1-888-2775289; e-mail: <pubsales@arrl.org>; on the web: <<http://www.arrl.org/shop>>). You may place orders online, and the paper-based ARRL Publications Catalog is available upon request.

Wrap-Up

That's all for this time, gang. Next time, more "What's New." See you then.

Overheard: I have found that to fully appreciate some advice others have offered, I sometimes have to reject it—and then, sadly, learn the lesson the hard way.

73, Karl, W8FX

Note: Listings in "What's New" are not product reviews and do not constitute a product endorsement by CQ or the column editor. Information in this column is primarily provided by manufacturers/vendors and has not necessarily been independently verified. The purpose of this column is to inform readers about new products in the marketplace. We encourage you to do additional research on products of interest to you.

Tremendous 6-meter Propagation

The middle of May to early June saw tremendous propagation on the "Magic Band" for those who were among the faithful listeners. This propagation included the West Coast working Europe and the Midwest and the Southwest working dozens of Japanese stations, as well as days of double-hop propagation that included CO2OJ working dozens of stateside stations on the West Coast. Among the reports received directly or via the VHF reflector are the following:

On May 20, 2006, **Oscar Morales, CO2OJ**, wrote: "Big opening on May 20, 2006. I turned on the IC-551 a little before 1200 UTC and called CQ on 50.125 MHz, and the party started! In about three hours I made 192 QSOs in 71 grids. These included 43 EM grids, 8 ENs, 6 FNs, 13 FMs, and one EL87. Worked a couple of stations in Canada. Wow! I was really missing those big pile-ups. Hi!

"By the way, I made most of the QSOs between 50.130 and 50.150 MHz. I wonder why during such an opening, so many people choose 50,125 for just chatting. Well, let's hope that this opening was only the beginning of a good summer season."

On June 3, 2006, Oscar wrote: "Good opening this Saturday morning and afternoon again. Worked more than 150 stations in 54 grids. Lot of stations in California, Arizona, New Mexico, and even a couple of XEs. Most reports were 59+ and some QSOs with FM grids were with the side of the 4-element beam."

Dave Bernhardt, N7DB: OK, why don't we throw out conventional wisdom this season? We are in the doldrums between cycles this summer. Usually the E-layer needs a kick, however slight, to produce any usable propagation. This low solar activity period is hardly conducive to producing anything beyond double-hop sporadic-E right?

Well, perhaps. In days of yore, before real-time propagation data, the type of band openings we have seen in the past week were just not seen, period. So, maybe these paths have been there all along, we just never realized their existence.

The evening of May 28, 2006 was a new chapter in NA-AS propagation, at least for the PNW. I cannot recall an earlier time for this path. Oregon stations were on the edge of the main action, but Seattle stations made the big score with HL1LTC (K7CW & W7FI.) Now, NL7Z made a pretty good haul with HL, VR2, UWØ, BD4, and DU, besides the JAs, of course.

I have noted during this past week how our friends to the east have really made a haul to EU and the Caribbean. Yes, we have had some propagation out here, but nothing too exciting.

This morning (June 3, 2006) the local stations were put on *full alert*. I had my suspicions when I saw the EU postings to NA earlier in the morning. Our propagation had a northerly tilt. KØGU reporting EU video was key in my mind. This was when I started to call local operators to look EU way. Around 1630 UTC I was on the phone to K7RWT when the report came over the local 2-meter FM network that VE7SL had worked IV3SIX. Then things

e-mail: <n6cl@sbcglobal.net>

VHF Plus Calendar

Aug. 2	First Quarter Moon
Aug. 2-6	Great Plains Super Launch, Hutchinson, Kansas (See text for details)
Aug. 5-6	ARRL UHF and Above Contest (See text for details)
Aug. 6	Very poor EME conditions
Aug. 9	Full Moon
Aug. 10	Moon Perigee
Aug. 12-13	Predicted peak for the <i>Perseids</i> meteor shower
Aug. 13	Good EME conditions.
Aug. 16	Last Quarter Moon.
Aug. 19-20	First weekend of the ARRL 10 GHz and Above Contest (See text for details)
Aug. 20	Poor EME conditions
Aug. 23	New Moon
Aug. 26	Moon Apogee
Aug. 25-17	EME 2006 Conference, Wuerzburg, Germany (See text for details)
Aug. 27	Poor EME conditions
Aug. 31	First Quarter Moon

—EME conditions courtesy W5LUU.

really got crazy around here. Dan, NN7J, finally got his antenna system swung around towards EU and heard IV3SIX about 1631 UTC. Bruce, KI7JA, heard a watery sounding CW signal in that direction too, so he probably heard IV3 also. I had some line noise and did not copy anything here. Dan was a bit perturbed at not getting his keyer working quickly enough!

To date the most exciting days were June 4-6. Among the comments were the following:

Sam Whitley, K5SW: "Got home from church about 1730 UTC on June 4, 2006 and found EH8BPX IL18 on 50.200. (Texas guys said that he had been for two hours.) Heard Missouri and Arkansas stations work CT3, but nil here.

"At 2240 UTC on June 4, I began hearing JAs on 50.110 MHz (all about S1). I began picking out calls as stations moved off 50.110 MHz. I worked 14 JAs by 2354Z and left for church. I got back (gone 90 minutes) and worked two additional JAs, at 0124 and 0146 UTC on June 5, making a total of 16 JAs worked. This was the best JA opening during summer sporadic-E season ever for me, all time. All were worked on CW. I heard no SSB JA signals. Last JA signal heard was about 0157 UTC on June 5. However, Pacific Northwest 7-land stations were in longer. I heard no KL7 or HL stations."

Dan Osborne, WB5AFY (EM04id): "I worked three JA stations on CW around 0100 UTC: JE1BMJ, JA9SJI, and JH7MSB, from EM04id using 100 watts and 7 elements at 90 ft. on my end. Listened to the guys in EM12 and EM13 working the JAs earlier and was not able to copy the JA end until 0100 UTC. Strange. Also no 6-meter Alaska or Europe heard or worked from here during the opening.

Jon Jones, NØJK: I worked at Wesley Hospital 3 PM to 12 AM Sunday, but was able to get on the radio around 6:30 PM. I worked JA7QVI QM08 at 2341 UTC



Members of Union Fire Company Number 1 pose after retrieving the Blanchard 1 payload during the the Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School (PALCS) Balloon Launch. (Photo from the PALCS website)



Members of the Blanchard 1 team pose with the payload after its retrieval from the ivy-wrapped hickory tree. (Photo from the PALCS website)

on 50.101 MHz. Was using a 2-element Yagi, and an IC-706MII, at 100 watts from the roof of the employee parking garage (east of the main Wesley tower). There is a clear shot to the northwest from there. JA7QVI had a solid clear signal. He gave me a 559.

The *Es* footprint in the central USA seemed best for Texas, then Oklahoma. It then moved north. I had JAs before Larry Lambert, NØLL, in EM09, who worked JA7QVI and another JA around 0015 UTC. Jim Kesterson, KØGU, in DM70, didn't hear them until later.

During the openings Pat Rose, W5OZI, EM00, claimed 20 JA QSOs. Joel Harrison, W5ZN, in EM45, reported working 78 JAs on June 6. During these sporadic-*E* openings, QSOs were reported as far east as K4RX, EM70; KY5R, EM64; and WZ8D, EM89.

Some perspectives: Not counting the 1958–59 *F2* openings, the June 4–6, 2006 sporadic-*E* openings to Japan are likely the best ever in terms of duration, intensity, and geographical extent. It was also, I believe, one of the best all-time ionospheric openings to Japan in recent history. The only one I recall as big was in solar cycle 21, on November 25, 1989. During that opening WBØDRL ran JAs that afternoon, and worked HL and DU. JAs worked as far east as W4.

JA summer sporadic-*E* openings are very rare, and when they do occur, are usually confined to W6, W7, and VE7. For example, during all the years between 1979 and 2000 Bob Magnani, K6QXY, reported working 85 JAs.

Chip Margelli, K7JA, reported that the June 4–5 opening footprint left many in the southern California area out of the loop. He reported working only two JAs during the Sunday–Monday UTC opening. He also stated that others did not hear anything during that time.

There were more than 250 DX QSOs of more than 6000 km listed on the DX Sherlock V 1.3 V-U-SHF DX-Spot QSO database lookup for the days of June 4–

6, 2006. Altogether, thousands of QSOs took place over these two days. (see <<http://www.vhfdx.net/index.html>> for more information). As Jon Jones, NØJK, points out above, these were truly unique days of 6-meter sporadic-*E* propagation. More coverage of these summer openings will appear in the Summer 2006 issue of *CQ VHF* magazine.

PALCS Balloon Launch

The Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School (PALCS) Balloon Launch on June 10, 2006 was a qualified success. Launching from the Samuel Lewis State Park between Lancaster and York, Pennsylvania, the balloon, named Blanchard I, carried a payload of an APRS beacon, an MCW beacon, and a digital camera. The original target altitude was to be 95,000 feet. However, because of the presence of unfavorable winds, the lift was purposely kept low so as to keep the payload from landing in the Delaware River.

Instead of reaching its target altitude, it is estimated that it only reached about 20,000 feet. Furthermore, instead of landing in the Delaware River, it landed in a poison-ivy-wrapped hickory tree, perched 70 feet high, at the Ware Boy Scout Camp near the Maryland-Pennsylvania border, southeast of Oxford, Pennsylvania.

It took some time for the Union Fire Company Number 1 to show up with its long ladder truck. However, when they did, the firemen were able to extend their long ladder and fairly quickly retrieve the payload from its branched perch.

For more information on this balloon launch as well as information on the Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School, please see the school's web-

site: <<http://the.captain.al.googlepages.com/home>>.

Jean Pierre, F1ANH, SK

The following is from Herve, F5HRY: "Jean Pierre, F1ANH, passed away on May 24, 2006 after a hard struggle against cancer. A few weeks ago he was still on the air, finishing his last QSOs, over the thousands he had during his long ham radio life.

"He was a very good technician and a great weak-signal operator. He was giving his time, and much more, to others. He was one of our references and more simply, he was our friend. We will deeply miss you Jean Pierre."

Current Contests

There are two important contests this month. The **ARRL UHF and Above Contest** is scheduled for August 5–6. The first weekend of the **ARRL 10 GHz and above cumulative contest** is scheduled for August 19–20. The second weekend is September 16–17. Complete rules for both contests can be found in the July issue of *QST* and at <www.arrl.org>.

Current Conferences and Conventions

The Great Plains Super Launch: The sixth Great Plains Super Launch (GPSL) will be held in Hutchinson, Kansas August 3–6. These dates encompass a Thursday evening gathering at Houlihans Restaurant, which is located in the Grand Prairie Hotel and Convention Center, 1400 North Lorraine Street, Hutchinson, KS 67501. The Grand Prairie Hotel is the lodging site for the conference. Other lodging is



Participants in the 2004 Great Plains Super Launch in Hutchinson, Kansas pause for a photo op. This year the GPSL returns to Hutchinson. See the text for further details. (N6CL photo)

available in the Hutchinson area.

The symposium will be held on Friday at the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center, which is located at 1100 North Plum, Hutchinson, Kansas. A full slate of speakers is scheduled, beginning at 8 AM. There will be a \$5 cover charge at the door to offset the cost of renting the room.

The launch will take place at 7:30 AM, either on Saturday or Sunday, depending upon the weather at launch time. The location of the launch site will be announced at the symposium, and is expected to be no more than 30 minutes drive time from Hutchinson.

For more information, please see the GPSL website: <<http://www.custom-ds.com/gpsl>>.

EME Conference 2006: The EME Conference 2006 will be held in Wuerzburg, Germany, August 25–27. For more information see: <<http://www.eme2006.com>>.

Calls for Papers

Calls for papers are issued in advance of forthcoming conferences either for presenters to be speakers, or for papers to be published in the conferences' *Proceedings*, or both. For more information, questions about format, media, hardcopy, email, etc., please contact the person listed with the announcement. The following have announced a call for papers:

ARRL and TAPR Digital Communications Conference: Technical papers are solicited for presentation at the 25th Annual ARRL and TAPR Digital Communications Conference to be held

September 15–17 in Tucson, Arizona. These papers will also be published in the Conference *Proceedings* (you do *not* need to attend the conference to have your paper included in the *Proceedings*). The submission deadline is July 31, 2006. Send papers to: Maty Weinberg, ARRL, 225 Main St., Newington, CT 06111, or you can make your submission via e-mail to: <maty@arrl.org>. Papers will be published exactly as submitted and authors will retain all rights.

Microwave Update: A call for papers has been issued for the 2006 Microwave Update, which will be held October

19–22 in Dayton, Ohio. If you are interested in submitting a paper for publication in the *Proceedings*, please contact Gerd Schrick, WB8IFM, at 937-253-3993 or e-mail: <wb8ifm@amsat.org>. The submission deadline is August 7, 2006. For more information on the conference, see: <<http://microwaveupdate.org/2006/mud06.html>>.

Current Meteor Shower

What began around July 23 and will last until approximately August 22 is increased activity tied to the *Perseids* meteor shower. Its predicted peak is



Drew Glasbrenner, KO4MA, demonstrates how easy it is to make amateur radio satellite QSOs during the Dayton Hamvention®. (N6CL photo)

around 2300-0130 UTC between August 12-13. According to the International Meteor Organization: "Simulations by Peter Brown made some years ago suggest enhanced *Perseid* activity is possible this year, though perhaps not as strongly as in 2004. The timing of any enhancement, though probably not far from the expected spread of possible maxima noted here, is not known."

For more information on the above meteor shower predictions see Tomas Hood, NW7US's "Propagation" column. Also visit the International Meteor Organization's website: <<http://www.imo.net/calendar/2006>>.

And Finally . . .

Just under 20,400 hams attended this year's Dayton Hamvention®. This number was down slightly from last year, which was just over 20,400. From the perspective of the exhibitors, it was a successful convention.

From the perspective of those of us on the VHF+ ham bands, there were exciting presentations. The guys at AMSAT touted their partnership with AMSAT-DL and the future launches. Gordon West, WB6NOA, demonstrated the AVMAP GPS RX and how it can be married to the Kenwood D7 or D700 radios for APRS tracking. Weak-signal gatherings at the Shuckin' Shack restaurant on Thursday night and the banquet on Friday night at the Holiday Inn North were well attended, as was the VHF forum on Saturday. Plus, there were lots and lots of VHF-related goodies in the flea market. Even with all of this activity, one still wonders about the future of the hobby in general and our specific niche. Here are a few of my observations:

First, AMSAT. The AMSAT people have lofty goals for the future. What has to happen, however, is funding. It will take lots of money to launch these satellites in the coming years. It is my suggestion that AMSAT seriously consider hiring a director of development to do some major fundraising from some major contributors in order to secure the needed financing. In addition, AMSAT needs to find a way to keep the sizzle of its projects alive during the months and years of development.

One way in which they are working on keeping the interest alive is via the new Eaglepedia program. Eaglepedia is the communications media used by the Project Eagle developers, and it was opened to all AMSAT members beginning on June 10, 2006. If you are an

AMSAT member, you can go to <<http://www.amsat.org>> and access these development pages.

Another way that AMSAT is working on keeping the sizzle alive is via the Suitsat program. The first deployment captured worldwide media coverage and brought a lot of attention to amateur radio. Another Suitsat is scheduled for deployment next year. Hopefully, school projects can be developed that

will piggyback on the deployment so as to involve more and more school children in learning about AMSAT and amateur radio in general.

Speaking of education, Dr. Paul Shuch, N6TX, recently was appointed to be AMSAT's Director of Education. Beginning with the spring issues of *CQ VHF* magazine and the *AMSAT Journal*, Paul began running columns related to education. This education of our

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Dr. Paul Shuch, N6TX, accompanied by Keith Pugh, W5IU, encouraged educators to become involved in Project Classroom during a forum at Dayton. (N6CL photo)

youth is a wide-open opportunity, and it need not stop with our youth. We need to find ways of educating adults as a way of recruiting them into the hobby. I believe that all age groups can be successfully targeted for recruitment. For example, as members of my generation begin to retire, amateur radio can be touted as a hobby that has so many applications for the increased leisure time available to us. For example, the use of APRS tracking in a growing hobby called "geocaching" is one such untapped use of our hobby.

This tracking system has a huge upside potential. It has been used in emergency communications, ballooning, and bike and motorcycle rallies, as well as parades. Its precise locating feature lends itself to many, many applications. Couple an APRS beacon with an ATV transmitter and the tracker cannot only watch the positioning of the beacon, but also see the environment. Such an application is being used in balloon launches, but also can be used in other areas, such as bike and motorcycle rallies, where the environment may need to be known by the participants.

Finally, we need to support our manufacturers and dealers. Through advertisements in magazines such as *CQ* and *CQ VHF*, they provide information about the latest and greatest toys for the hobby. We need to support them by buying the products. We also need to support them by telling them what products we would like to see developed.

For example, the new ICOM IC-7000 touts a fancy microphone that allows almost complete control of the radio from it. This is a great idea for the mobile operator. However, what about the fixed-station operator? One way of using the controls of the microphone is to plug it into one of the two mic jacks on the radio. What if you want to use a fancy after-market mic, such as something from Heil Sound? You need to plug that mic into the other jack. Now you have two microphones plugged into two jacks. What if instead of two mics,



Brian Justin, WA1ZMS, tells how he made all of those record-setting GHz QSOs during the Friday night VHF banquet at the Dayton Hamvention®. (N6CL photo)



Russ Hummel, WB4PGT, models Suitsat, accompanied by Lou McFadin, W5DID, who provided much technical support for its success. Look for an announcement of the next Suitsat later this year. (N6CL photo)

a keypad specifically designed around the controls built into the ICOM mic was developed and could plug into one or the other jack? A logical developer for such a keypad would be LDG, since the company has already developed an after-market antenna tuner for the radio.

As the saying goes, "If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem." Which part are you playing, the problem or the solution? It's your hobby, so you had better make up your mind as to whether or not you want it to have a future. For me, as long as I can, I intend to be part of the solution by way of this column and editorship of *CQ VHF* magazine.

I would love to publicize your efforts in also being part of the solution. If you have some ideas, please let me hear from you. Until next month...

73 de Joe, N6CL

Special Event Stations Award and Awards from Slovakia

Every day, and especially on weekends, you can find stations operating to commemorate one kind of special event or another. You've probably heard them on 20 meters SSB soliciting contacts.

The range of topics is truly astounding. Representative events include the 399th Anniversary of Jamestown Island (VA), Amusement Park Physics and Communications Day (PA), C. Grover Cleveland Birthplace (IL), D. Delta Junction Friendly Frontier Days (AK), and E. CQ Memorial Day (NJ). These were actual scheduled special event stations that planned to operate during May 2006, and each of them offered a certificate for making one contact with the keynoted station. Best of all, there was no charge for any of them, except that you should supply return postage. This is a cross section of Americana that covers an amazing array of history, education, and patriotic activities.

Where do you find out about these events? *CQ* lists them in the "Announcements" section in the front of the magazine. *QST* lists them in the appropriately named "Special Events" section.

Some of the certificates are really well-designed, such as the sample from the Upper Cumberland Amateur Radio Association (TN) commemorating a Railroad Rendezvous in 2005. The evil, grinning villain and the beauty tied to the railroad tracks recall the days of silent movies and the "Perils of Pauline" tragi-comedy. In this case, the award sponsors were assisted by the Cookeville Chamber of Commerce, which contributed to the professional layout of the award.

Not all such award certificates are as attractive. However, the cost of most of them is low, the number of events is large, and your contact with these little groups helps to promote the awareness of the event. Everyone wins.

Special Event Century Club Award

Stop the presses! Just as I was writing this month's column, VE3TMG sent me the details of an award for working special event stations. It's a perfect tie-in designed to provide a little stimulus to work this fascinating sub-division of awards. Here are the award details:

The SECC award is issued to any licensed amateur radio operator who has worked and confirmed contacts with 100 special event stations. For the initial award you only have to work and confirm 25 special event stations. You can upgrade the award in increments of 25, up to a total of 100 contacts. Stickers are available for 50, 75, and 100 stations. All bands and modes okay. Only two-way simplex-

USA-CA Special Honor Roll

Larry (Frosty) Phillips, WØFP
USA-CA All Counties #1135
May 16, 2006

USA-CA Honor Roll

500	WØFP.....1330	1330
WØFP.....3375	K4IJQ.....1331	1331
1000	2500	
WØFP.....1713	WØFP.....1248	1248
1500	3000	
WØFP.....1436	WØFP.....1158	1158
2000		
KU4YM.....1329		1329

The total number of counties for credit for the United States of America Counties Award is 3077. The basic award fee for subscribers is \$6.00. For nonsubscribers it is \$12.00. To qualify for the special subscriber rate, please send a recent CQ mailing label with your application. Initial application may be submitted in the USA-CA Record Book, which may be obtained from CQ Magazine, 25 Newbridge Road, Hicksville, NY 11801 USA for \$2.50, or by a PC-printed computer listing which is in alphabetical order by state and county within the state. To be eligible for the USA-CA Award, applicants must comply with the rules of the program as set forth in the revised USA-CA Rules and Program dated June 1, 2000. A complete copy of the rules may be obtained by sending an SASE to Ted Melinosky, K1BV, 12 Wells Woods Road, Columbia, CT 06237 USA. DX stations must include extra postage for airmail reply.

type contacts count. No contacts on repeaters, satellites, IRLP, or Echolink count for this award. Contacts are valid on or after January 1, 2006. You must have the QSLs in your possession.



In 2005 the Upper Cumberland Amateur Radio Association (TN) commemorated Railroad Rendezvous with a special event station.

*12 Wells Woods Rd., Columbia, CT 06237
e-mail: <k1bv@cq-amateur-radio.com>

The application form is available on website listed below. Send completed form along with fee of \$US5.00 and a copy of at least 10 of your QSL cards or certificates to Terry Greenwood, VE3TMG, 2210 Janette Ave., Windsor, ON, N8X 1Z8, Canada; internet <<http://www.mnsi.net/~tgreen/newaward.html>>.

Slovak Assn. of R. A. Awards Series

Nestled in central Europe, the country of Slovakia comprised the eastern portion of the nation of Czechoslovakia. On January 1, 1993 a peaceful division created the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic.

The Slovak Republic is a small country, an area only about twice the size of New Hampshire, and has a population of about 5.5 million. OM stations can be heard in just about all DX contests, and a great time to work them in order to earn these awards is in their annual contest, which is shared with the Czech Republic each year in mid-November.

The Slovak Association of Radio Amateurs sponsors a colorful series of awards. Most of them are fairly easy to earn, and their fee structure is modest—a good combination. The Slovakian equivalent of our county is the *okre* (there are 79 of them), and during their contest that is part of the exchange as a three-letter abbreviation.

General Requirements. All bands and modes except as indicated. No repeater contacts. SWLs may earn the awards under the same conditions. Send GCR list and fee of 5 Euros, \$US7, or 10 IRCs (endorsements are 2 Euros, 2 IRCs, or \$US2) to: Milan Horvath, OM3CDN, Lopenicka 23, 831 02



The Special Event Century Club Award is issued for confirmed contacts with 100 special event stations.

Bratislava, Slovakia (a self-addressed label is welcomed); internet: <<http://www.hamradio.sk>>.

Diplom Slovensko. Issued for contacts with different okres after January 1, 1997. OM, OK, HA, OE, SP, and UR need 50 okres; other Europeans need 30 okres; DX stations need 15 okres. Foreign stations may use contacts made during the OK/OM contest. A log excerpt must be enclosed with your application.

Diplom Slovakia. Contacts after January 1, 1993 count for the award. All bands and modes except repeaters allowed. OM9HQ (OM3KAB), the HQ station of the SARA, equals 2 QSOs. Slovak stations need 10 different OM stations, 3 of them from Bratislava. European stations need 5 different OM stations, 2 of them from Bratislava. All others need 3 different OM stations, 1 of them from Bratislava.

Bratislava Award. Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak Republic, celebrated the 200th anniversary of its founding in



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The Slovak Association of Radio Amateurs sponsors the Diplom Slovensko for contacting the "okres" (counties) of the Slovak Republic.



The Diplom Slovakia is issued for contacting stations with the OM prefix.



To earn the Dipl W-100 OM Award, contact at least 100 different Slovak stations (OM prefix).

1991. This permanent award is available to all amateurs and SWLs for contacting Bratislava stations since January 1, 1991. All bands, including repeaters allowed. Slovak stations need 10 different contacts, Europeans 5, DX 3.

Dipl W-100 OM Award. Contact at least 100 different Slovak stations (OM prefix) after January 1, 1993. SWL okay. Contacts must have been made from the same country. All bands and modes allowed. No use of packet or repeaters. There are separate certificates for CW, SSB, RTTY, and Mixed. Separate certificates are issued for each successive 100 contacts (200 up to 700). Minimum allowed reports are 33 or 339 both ways.

Slovak Republic WW Locator Award. Contact Slovak stations (SWL okay) in different geographical coordinates established by the WGS system on or after January 1, 1993. Only one QSO permitted from each locator. Endorsements are available for single band or mode as requested. The locator must be noted on the QSL card by the contacted station, not by the applicant. In the case of handwritten locators, the loca-

tor has to be countersigned by the original operator, not the applicant. The application must be accompanied by an alphabetical list of cards, using the following format as an example:

LOC	Call	Date	Band	Mode	QTH/okres
JN88NC	OM3FR	01.01.93	3.5 MHz	CW	Bratislava/BAE
JN98HS	OM4TX	10.05.95	7 MHz	SSB	Prievidza/PRI
JN99TB	OM6PR	17.07.94	10.1 MHz	CW	Lip. Mikulas/LMI
KN08MO	OM8AQ/p	23.03.97	3.5 MHz	CW	Caná/KEO
KN08OR	OM8AQ	30.09.00	3.7 MHz	SSB	Kosice/KEB

Europeans need 25 different locators, all others 5 with great (large-scale) locators: JN87, JN88, JN89, JN97, JN98, JN99, KN08, KN09, KN18, KN19.

Looking for some help in publicizing your group or club's award? CQ magazine can help. Send all details and samples to me to review.

73, Ted, K1BV



Contact Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak Republic, stations to earn the Bratislava Award.



Contact Slovak stations in different geographical coordinates established by the WGS system for the Slovak Republic WW Locator Award.

Lightning, A Serious Matter

As I sit here writing this column today, in mid-June, I am looking out over the mountains of western North Carolina at some pretty severe thunderstorms. Lightning is flashing, thunder crashing, and I am thinking of two of my ham friends over in eastern Tennessee. Both were hit by lightning recently. One suffered thousands of dollars of damage to antennas and equipment. The other was more fortunate, as he heard the storm approaching and was able to disconnect most of his cables before the lightning struck. Still, he was off the air for an extended period of time while the damaged equipment was evaluated and replaced/repared. The first case obviously took considerably longer to put all of his gear back in operating order.

Some of us are more prone to lightning than others, but everyone should take it very seriously. Personally, I've been hit twice in my 50-plus years of hamming. The first was many years ago when I was a teenager and still lived at home. It was over 40 years before it happened again, but that time the damage was more severe. I lost antennas, equipment, etc., to the tune of around \$6000. It took weeks to get it all put back together.

Now I often watch the Weather Channel, and if I even *think* there might be a storm in the area, the cables come off everything—antennas, control cables, power cables, etc. Computers all have UPS (uninterruptible power supplies), and telephone lines are protected as much as possible. Even with all that, lightning can still get in through grounds, AC lines, etc.

We can do a lot to protect our investments, but lightning has a way of doing its "thing" in spite of our efforts. I wish all of you the best through this year's thunderstorm season, as well as the hurricane season.

DX Activity

DXing has been just a bit tough so far this year. There have been some DXpeditions and some DX activity, but that pesky old sun just doesn't want to cooperate right now. Many DXers have found other outlets for their "habit" while waiting out the solar cycle.

I have found a lot of HF DXers experimenting with other modes and bands this year. RTTY has taken on a life of its own, with a huge number of spots on the clusters for that mode. Then there is PSK showing a lot of activity, too. Recently (early June), 6 meters has been wide open with propagation from the USA to Europe and even Japan. The ARRL's June VHF QSO Party found the band open for hours on end, with many stations working the whole country and beyond. I had not been

on six meters for many, many years, but even I found time to get an antenna working on 6 and made a lot of contacts. Unfortunately, I didn't have time to get the antenna up in the air, so the six-element Yagi was used with it just lying on the roof of the house pointing NNW. Even so, it was possible for me to hear a lot of HF DXers working the contest. Doug, K1DG, was in there along with Dennis, K7BV, and a lot of other calls I recognized from the low-band pile-ups. The grid-square business was something relatively new to me, but I

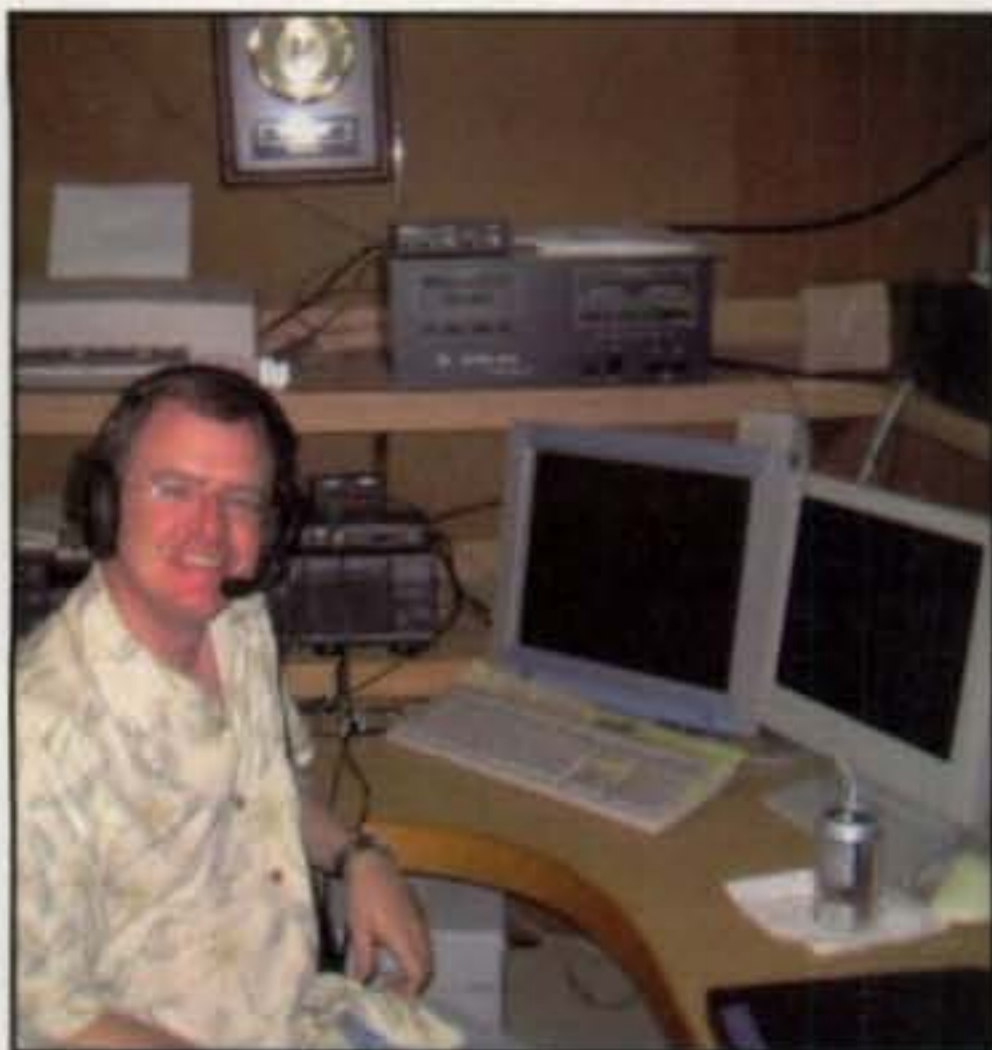


In April Jim, W0NB, had the opportunity to visit China. Here he is with the welcoming committee at the Shanghai Amateur Radio Club station. Left to right: Shanghai's first ham, Xu Ru, BA4AA; W0NB; and Hu Song Qing, BA4HU. (Photo courtesy of Jim, W0NB)



Tom, N4XP (right), says Roman, RZ3AA, visited with him for three days after the Dayton Hamvention®. (Photo courtesy of Tom, N4XP)

*P.O. Box DX, Leicester, NC 28748-0249
e-mail: <n4aa@cq-amateur-radio.com>



Dr. Kevin Roberts operating from AH8LG as AH8/W9EYE. He was with a group of volunteers working on repairing children's eyes in American Samoa and in the evening getting on the air. (Photo courtesy of Larry, AH8LG)



Paul, HC7AE, operates from an oil-pumping station in Dayuma, Provincia de Orellana, "Acua Territory" in the Amazon Jungle of Ecuador. He uses an FT-100D and 20-meter dipole. (Photo courtesy of Rick, NE8Z)

will be allowed to go to Glorioso. He says it is still expected to be in late October.

Cook Islands: We have heard that New Zealand will be assigning a new prefix for the Cook Islands sometime this summer. It is reported that the ZK prefix will be changed to E5. You may hear that E5 prefix sometime after July 1, but the date has not been confirmed.

Afghanistan: Although I have not seen confirmation yet, it is reported that the YA prefix is being replaced with T6. There have been some T6 calls on the air, but Ross, EX1UN, says he was issued the first "official" license of the Afghan Amateur Service—T61AA.

Montenegro: By the time you read this, Montenegro may be a "New One" with a new prefix. The people of Montenegro voted for independence and the new government applied for UN membership. That is one of the two ways for Montenegro to be added to the DXCC list as a New One. The other is for the ITU to assign it a new prefix. As soon as one or the other happens, there will be a flurry of activity to put those new

The WAZ Program

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20 Meter SSB

1147 ZS6NK 1148 W6IGK

10 Meter CW

194 OH2BCK

15 Meter CW

328 OH2BCK

160 Meters

229 DL9YX 231 HA9RT
230 WA5VGI 232 DJ0MDR

All Band WAZ SSB

4996 K2CVG 4998 K2AQ
4997 DL6MRS 4999 IK2DZN

Mixed

8408 UA0CA 8409 KM4H

CW

485 UR5MA

Satellite

23 VR2XMT

Rules and applications for the WAZ program may be obtained by sending a large SAE with two units of postage or an address label and \$1.00 to: WAZ Award Manager, Floyd Gerald, N5FG, 17 Green Hollow Rd., Wiggins, MS 39577. The processing fee for all CQ awards is \$6.00 for subscribers (please include your most recent CQ mailing label or a copy) and \$12.00 for nonsubscribers. Please make all checks payable to Floyd Gerald. Applicants sending QSL cards to a CQ checkpoint or the Award Manager must include return postage. N5FG may also be reached via e-mail: <n5fg@cq-amateur-radio.com>.

CQ DX Awards Program

SSB Endorsements

320 YU4VN/326 300 W4PGC/302

CW Endorsements

250 W4PGC/262 200 K6UXO/240

The basic award fee for subscribers to CQ is \$6. For non-subscribers, it is \$12. In order to qualify for the reduced subscriber rate, please enclose your latest CQ mailing label with your application. Endorsement stickers are \$1.00 each plus SASE. Updates not involving the issuance of a sticker are free. All updates and correspondence must include an SASE. Rules and application forms for the CQ DX Awards may be found on the <www.cq-amateur-radio.com> website, or may be obtained by sending a business-size, self-addressed, stamped envelope to CQ DX Awards Manager, Billy Williams, N4UF, Box 9673, Jacksonville, FL 32208 U.S.A. Currently we recognize 335 active countries. Please make all checks payable to the award manager.

5 Band WAZ

As of JUNE 1, 2006, 700 stations have attained the 200 zone level and 1502 stations have attained the 150 zone level.

New recipients of 5 Band WAZ with all 200 zones confirmed:

VO1CV NR0X

The top contenders for 5 Band WAZ (zones needed, 80 meters):

N4WW, 199 (26)	N4XR, 199 (27)
W4LI, 199 (26)	W0PGI, 199 (26)
K7UR, 199 (34)	HA5AGS, 199 (1)
W2YY, 199 (26)	EA8AYV, 199 (27)
VE7AHA, 199 (34)	W6XK, 198 (17, 34)
IK8BQE, 199 (31)	EA5BCX, 198 (27, 39)
JA2IVK, 199 (34 on 40m)	G3KDB, 198 (1, 12)
IK1AOD, 199 (1)	KG9N, 198 (18, 22)
DF3CB, 199 (1)	JA1DM, 198 (2, 40)
GM3YOR, 199 (31)	9A5I, 198 (1, 16)
VO1FB, 199 (19)	K5PC, 198 (18, 23)
KZ4V, 199 (26)	K4CN, 198 (23, 26)
W6DN, 199 (17)	G3KMQ, 198 (1, 27)
W3NO, 199 (26)	N2QT, 198 (23, 24)
HB9DDZ, 199 (31)	OK1DWC, 198 (6, 31)
RU3FM, 199 (1)	W4UM, 198 (18, 23)
HB9BGV, 199 (31)	US7MM, 198 (2, 6)
N3UN, 199 (18)	K2TK, 198 (23, 24)
OH2VZ, 199 (31)	K3JGJ, 198 (24, 26)
W1JZ, 199 (24)	W4DC, 198 (24, 26)
W1FZ, 199 (26)	F5NBU, 198 (19, 31)
SM7BIP, 199 (31)	OE2LCM, 198 (1, 31)
SP5DVP, 199 (31 on 40)	HA1RW, 198 (1, 31)
N4NX, 199 (26)	WK3N, 198 (23, 24)
N4MM, 199 (26)	W9XY, 198 (22, 26)
EA7GF, 199 (1)	KZ2I, 198 (24, 26)
N6HR/7, 199 (37)	WA5VGI, 198 (34, 37)
JA5IU, 199 (2)	K7BG, 198 (17, 22)
CT3DL, 199 (26)	W7VJ, 198 (34, 37)
N8IJ, 199 (21)	W0CP, 198 (18, 40)
RU3DX, 199 (6)	K9MIE (18, 21)

The following have qualified for the basic 5 Band WAZ Award:

UA0CA (190 zones)	W4GMY (162 zones)
OH2BK (160 zones)	KM4H (162 zones)

****Please note: Cost of the 5 Band WAZ Plaque is \$100 (\$120 if airmail shipping is requested).**

Rules and applications for the WAZ program may be obtained by sending a large SAE with two units of postage or an address label and \$1.00 to: WAZ Award Manager, Floyd Gerald, N5FG, 17 Green Hollow Rd., Wiggins, MS 39577. The processing fee for the 5BWAZ award is \$10.00 for subscribers (please include your most recent CQ mailing label or a copy) and \$15.00 for nonsubscribers. An endorsement fee of \$2.00 for subscribers and \$5.00 for nonsubscribers is charged for each additional 10 zones confirmed. Please make all checks payable to Floyd Gerald. Applicants sending QSL cards to a CQ checkpoint or the Award Manager must include return postage. N5FG may also be reached via e-mail: <n5fg@cq-amateur-radio.com>.

quickly figured it out and had a great time . . . until my XYL informed me that I was "talking through all the television sets in the house." That pretty much ended my participation in the contest. Now I have to figure a way to get that antenna away from the house . . . hmmm.

Upcoming DXpeditions

Glorioso, FR/G: We are anxiously awaiting word from Dany, F5CW, on just when this operation will finally take place. He confirmed that the nasty *chik-ougounia* disease that delayed the group earlier has been brought under control, and they are waiting for final word from the authorities on when they

calls on the air, and then to get those QSOs confirmed to add to your DXCC totals.

DXCC Fee Increase

The revised DXCC awards fee schedule becomes effective July 1. The ARRL DXCC Desk has announced DXCC program fees will rise slightly when a new awards fee schedule goes into effect on July 1 <<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2006/05/23/3/fees-06Jul.html>>.

The fee for a basic DXCC application (including certificate and pin for initial applications only, 120 QSOs maximum) and for first endorsement applications within a year will increase to \$12 for ARRL members and \$22 for foreign nonmembers.

Second and subsequent endorsements (up to 120 QSOs maximum) within a year will be \$22 for ARRL members and \$32 for foreign nonmembers.

The \$10 fee for a basic DXCC application (120-credit maximum) was established in 1990, and the current overall fee schedule has been in effect since 1998.

"It costs us to provide this service," explains ARRL Membership Services Manager Wayne Mills, N7NG. "We don't make any money from DXCC." The cost of other DXCC-related items such as plaques and pins also will go up July 1. Mills advised that DXCC fees will increase further in the years ahead, possibly at two-year intervals, at least to catch up with the Consumer Price Index, which has risen 49 percent since 1990. He estimates the active population of DXCC members at between 15,000 and 18,000.

Clarification: The 120 QSO maximum applies to the stated fee charged for initial or endorsement applications. You may submit more than 120 QSOs, but

you will be charged 15 cents per QSO for all over the first 120 QSOs. Also, the "120" for endorsement and/or subsequent submissions *will be increased* from the current 100 to 120 under the new fee schedule.

Dayton Recap

Allow me a moment to recap this year's Dayton hamvention®.

I spent most of my time around the CQ booth this year. I also spent some time across the aisle with Bob Locher, W9KNI, at the Bencher booth. Roger, G3SXW, was there and we spent some time talking about his DXploits. I was a little surprised when he told me he had acquired an Elecraft K2/100 to replace his trusty Kenwood TS-570 for DXpeditioning. He explained it by saying it was a "weight" thing. The K2/100 and a small switching power supply weigh far less

QSL Information

In response to a recent inquiry about the route for QSLs formerly handled by John Parrot, W4FRU, John Shelton, K1XN, editor of "The Go List," provided the following. I hope you find it useful.

New QSL Routes: The QSL Managers Society (<http://www.qsl.net/qslmanagers>) was created to protect and preserve amateur radio DX and DXpedition logs and to make QSL cards available for all such logs, no matter how old. In March 2003, the QSL Managers Society was approached by Bob Young, K4JDJ, about taking over the logs that he was handling (many of them were those from the late John Parrot, W4FRU) and on April 5, Bob Schenck, N2OO, and Skip Maze, N1IBM, drove down to Virginia to pick up 60 logs and some 100,000 blank QSL cards. Thirteen new QSL managers were solicited among the members of the QSL Managers Society to take over these logs, and on April 23 the logs and appropriate blank cards were shipped to their new homes.

The new QSL routes for cards formerly handled by W4FRU and/or K4JDJ are as follows:

Station	via	Time Period	TYA11	W9OL	19-21 Jun 81
1S0XV	N2OO	Apr - May 90	V29A	W9OL	Nov 88 - May 91
1S1RR	N2OO	11-12 May 90	VK0IR	N2OO	14-27 Jan 97
3W0A	K2PF	Jan 89 - Feb 89	VK4NIC/3X	W2GR	7 Nov 80 - 20 Apr 81
3W100HCM	K2PF	May 90	VP8CBC	N2OO	Dec 94
3W7A	K2PF	Mar 90	VP8CRB	N2OO	Dec 94
3X1Z	K2PF	Aug 81 - Nov 82	VP8CRC	N2OO	Dec 94
5N0DOG	NZ9Z	11 May 79 - 17 Mar 81	VP8SGP	N2OO	6-15 Jan 95
5N0RMJ	K2PF	Jun 80 - Mar 81	W3IVP/5N1	K2PF	Mar-Apr 81
5N20DOG	NZ9Z	Oct 80	WZ6C/MM/S21	W2GR	
5N20RMJ	K2PF	Oct 81	WZ6C/S21	W2GR	18 Jan 92 - 31 May 92
5N4ROF	K1BV	21 Sep 80 - 13 Apr 81	WZ6C/ST4	W2GR	29 Nov 89 - 22 Oct 90
5T5ZZ	K1BV	Jun 81 - Dec 81	XV0SU	K2PF	Apr 90
5Z4BI	NZ9Z	2 Sep 89 - 4 Jul 93	XV0SU/mm	K2PF	Apr 80
8R1ZG	NZ9Z	12 Feb 96 - 21 Jun 97	XV100HCM	K2PF	May 90
9M0S	N2OO	26 May - 2 Jun 93	YB1AQC	W9OL	16 Feb 88 - 11 Oct 88
9X5AA	W9OL	15 Nov 87 - 19 Dec 89	ZD7BJ	N1IBM	Dec 86 - Sep 96
A4XYS	W9OL	Sep 83 - Mar 84	ZD7HH	N1IBM	14 Sep 79 - 4 Jan 81, 26 May 00 - 12 Oct 00
BS7H	KU9C	1995 and 1997	ZD7XY	N1IBM	20 Oct 95 - 7 Jun 96
E30GA	N2OO	4-17 Nov 98	ZD8HH	N1IBM	25 Mar 87 - 5 May 90
ET3USE	W2GR	8 Dec 73 - 3 Feb 75	ZD8XX	W9OL	5 Aug 89 - 24 Aug 89, 30 May 91 - 10 Jun 91
FB8WJ	N2OO		ZD9BV	WB2YQH	1 Mar 81 - 17 Oct 2000
FM5WE	WF1N	Oct 85 - Dec 2001	ZD9CK	WF1N	Mar 86 - Oct 87
FR7BE	N1IBM	Jun 78 - Mar 79	ZD9CN	K1BV	Jun 90 - Jul 90
J28EM	W1TE	Jul 85 - Jul 87	ZD9CO	WF1N	Aug 90 - Dec 91, Jan 93 - Nov 93
KB4ATV/4S7	W9OL	Apr 84	ZD9YL	WF1N	May 82 - Sep 83
KX6PO	W9OL	10 Jun 83 - 14 Dec 83	ZS1EDR	K1BV	May 90 - Mar 92
S21A	N2VW	Jul 92 - Oct 95			
S21B	K2PF	Nov 92 - Apr 2000			
S21NQ	W2GR	5 Jun 91 - 30 Sep 91			
S21ZG	AA1M	7 Dec 92 - 27 Jul 94			
TA1A	N1IBM	1 Mar 88 - 2 Jan 89			
TO0R	N2OO	26 Dec 96 - 2 Jan 97			
TO0R/mm	N2OO	Jan-Feb 97			

(The table of QSL Managers is courtesy of John Shelton, K1XN, editor of "The Go List," 106 Dogwood Dr., Paris, TN 38242; phone 731-641-4354; e-mail: <golist@golist.net>.)

CQ DX Field Award Honor Roll

The CQ DX Field Award Honor Roll recognizes those DXers who have submitted proof of confirmation with 175 or more grid fields. Honor Roll listing is automatic upon approval of an application for 175 or more grid fields. To remain on the CQ DX Field Award Honor Roll, annual updates are required. Updates must be accompanied by an SASE if confirmation is desired. The fee for endorsement stickers is \$1.00 each plus SASE. Please make all checks payable to the Award Manager, Billy F. Williams. Mail all updates to P.O. Box 9673, Jacksonville, FL 32208.

Mixed

K2TQC.....229	F6HMJ.....182
VE3XN.....217	K2SHZ.....182
HA0DU.....217	N4NX.....182
K0DEQ.....207	K0CA.....181
N8PR.....200	OK1AOV.....181
HA1RW.....197	W5ODD.....177
JN3SAC.....194	K2AU.....177
N4MM.....194	N0FW.....176
W4UM.....193	ON4CAS.....175
BA4DW.....188	K8OOK.....175

SSB

VE7SMP.....182	N0FW.....176
K0DEQ.....180	N4MM.....176
W4ABW.....177	W4UM.....176

CW

K0DEQ.....198	K0CA.....175
W4UM.....184	N4MM.....175
JN3SAC.....181	

The CQ DX Field Award Program

Mixed

71.....HA1RW	74.....CT3EE
72.....VA2SG	75.....OE3JAG
73.....WF4W	

SSB

42.....AE6RR	43.....CT3EE
--------------	--------------

CW

43.....WF4W	45.....N6MA
44.....CT3EE	

Endorsements

Mixed

200.....HA1RW/197	150.....WF4W/154
-------------------	------------------

SSB

100.....DL3DXX/175

CW

200	100	WF4W/123
DL3DXX/203	3.57 MHz	WF4W

The basic award fee for subscribers to CQ is \$6. For non-subscribers, it is \$12. In order to qualify for the reduced subscriber rate, please enclose your latest CQ mailing label with your application. Endorsement stickers are \$1.00 each plus SASE. Updates not involving the issuance of a sticker are free. All updates and correspondence must include an SASE. Rules and application forms for the CQ DX Awards may be found on the <www.cq-amateur-radio.com> website, or may be obtained by sending a business-size, self-addressed, stamped envelope to CQ DX Awards Manager, Billy Williams, N4UF, Box 9673, Jacksonville, FL 32208 U.S.A. Please make all checks payable to the award manager.

than the TS-570 and are easier to carry. Also, Roger says the K2 is an excellent radio. I wonder where Roger will turn up next? Wherever it is, he is sure to make a lot of DXers happy.

Another event at Dayton made my day. Way back in my early days of ham radio, late 1954 and early 1955, I literally ran home from school each day to get on the air. Almost daily I talked to Jon, WN0UHL. We lost track of one another as we each went our separate ways after getting the General class ticket, etc.

A few months ago I got a letter from John, along with copies of some of his old log pages showing WN0YFT on almost every day. To say I was surprised is an understatement. He had seen the DX column in which I had mentioned some of my old calls and he

remembered me. Well, Jon said he was coming to Dayton and we agreed to meet at the CQ booth. Sure enough, he showed up, and we spent a long time talking about our lives after our "novice" days. Jon still lives in Kansas, while I've been all over the country. We had never met, and it was a special treat to meet him after 52 years. Thanks for the memories, Jon. We'll try to stay in touch in the future.

Some of you will note the absence of the WPX Award Program box and Honor Roll. We'll be back with those in the October column.

That's a wrap for this month. I hope to see you on one of the bands or in some contest along the way. Until next time, enjoy the chase and Have Fun!

73, Carl, N4AA

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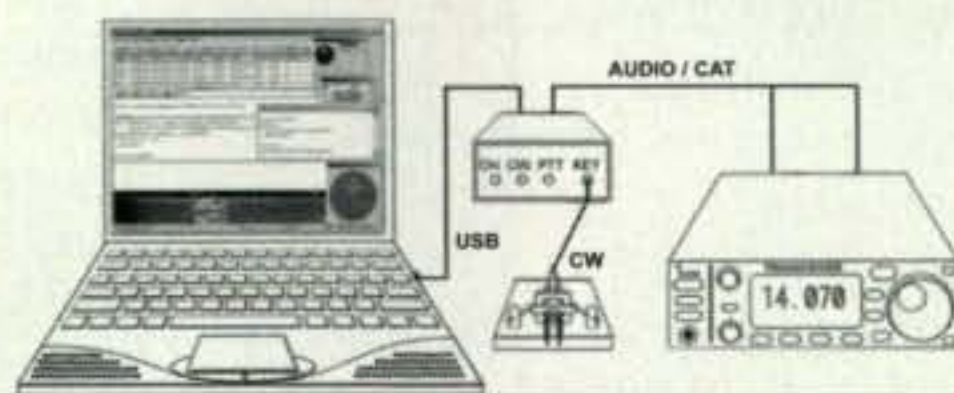


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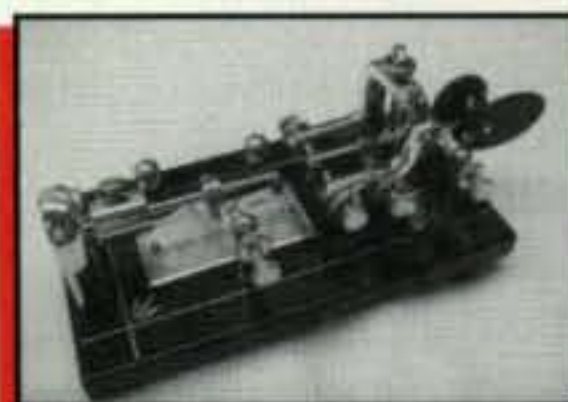


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BY JOHN DORR,* K1AR

How is Contesting Doing These Days?

August's Contest Tip

Hearing is winning—especially when it comes to low-band operating. Until just recently, achieving acceptable listening conditions meant that you needed to install beverage antennas that often were longer than the width of most developed countries. Now there are new "short verticals" and other alternatives available to deal with the problem. This month's tip is simple: Check out the latest products that deal with low-band reception. Implementation undoubtedly will result in better scores—both in logging weak stations and getting their calls/exchanges right!

More often than not, when I return from my annual trek to the Dayton Hamvention® I inevitably reflect on the state of contesting. It may be because I've just enjoyed seeing so many of my contesting friends in that once-a-year setting, or the fact that more and more of them have gray hair, or less hair, than the previous year.

While I'm hardly qualified to provide the definitive state-of-the-union, I can at least offer an opinion. So how is contesting doing these days? I'm glad you asked. The fact is that we do indeed have our challenges. While activity in contesting is at record levels (more on that later), so is our average age. I'm reminded every time I enter a group setting filled with fellow testers that the vast majority appear to be "over-50" men, well on their way to retirement. As we engage in conversation, we talk about our college-bound kids, various ailments, retirement activities . . . and sometimes even a bit about contesting.

The current solar downturn is perhaps the biggest threat to the health of ham radio that we have ever experienced. Never before have we had to struggle with a world of competing goods that includes the internet, unrelenting antenna restrictions, sometimes high cost of entry, and a world that is more complicated and busy than ever before. Simply put, we're dealing with all of these issues at a time when band conditions are at their absolute low. It's hardly a scenario to get newcomers excited about contesting.

Of course, I'm exaggerating to make a point, but the challenges to our long-term viability are very real. However, the fact remains that there is significant room for optimism. As I mentioned earlier, activity in contesting is at an all-time high. All you need to do is tune the bands in virtually any major contest and observe the wall-to-wall activity, whether it be CW or SSB. The CQ WW DX Contest, for example, now routinely receives over 4,000 entries per mode, with over 25,000 stations operating in the contest. Its activity levels have been steadily climbing throughout the current solar decline. By these measures alone, you'd be hard

*2 Mitchell Pond Road, Windham, NH 03087
e-mail: <K1AR@contesting.com>

Calendar of Events

All year	CQ DX Marathon
July 15-16	CQ WW VHF Contest
July 29-30	RSGB IOTA Contest
Aug. 5	European HF Championship
Aug. 5-6	North American CW QSO Party
Aug. 5-6	10-10 Int'l Summer SSB Contest
Aug. 5-6	ARRL UHF Contest
Aug. 6	SARL HF SSB Contest
Aug. 12-13	Worked All Europe CW Contest
Aug. 12-13	Maryland/DC QSO Party
Aug. 19-20	SARTG WW RTTY Contest
Aug. 19-20	North American SSB QSO Party
Aug. 19-21	New Jersey QSO Party
Aug. 26-27	ALARA Contest
Aug. 26-27	Hawaii QSO Party
Aug. 26-27	YO DX HF Contest
Aug. 26-27	SCC RTTY Contest
Aug. 26-27	Ohio QSO Party
Aug. 27	SARL HF CW Contest
Aug. 27-28	Kentucky QSO Party
Sept. 2	Russian RTTY Contest
Sept. 2-3	All Asian SSB Contest
Sept. 2-3	RSGB SSB Field Day
Sept. 23-24	CQ WW RTTY Contest
Oct. 28-29	CQ WW SSB Contest
Nov. 25-26	CQ WW CW Contest

pressed to observe contesting being in a state of crisis.

There are other encouraging indicators as well. Generally speaking, contest club membership rolls continue to grow to new highs. This year's contest dinner at Dayton had a record number of attendees. The Contest Forum was standing room only, with scores of testers filling a very large room. From the count we know of as of now (mid-June), WRTC (World Radio Team Championships) 2006 will have hundreds of guests flying to Brazil in July, and we know it will be a huge success for the Brazilian hosts.

Thus, much of this comes down to two key points: (1) interest in contesting is at an all-time high, and (2) so is the age of those playing the game. We are not challenged by the lack of participation in contesting; rather, we are confronted with the need to get younger hams involved.

A key initiative for Dayton next year will be the Contest University that Tim Duffy, K3LR, is trying to pull together (see <www.contestuniversity.com> for more information). While that is not an automatic draw for young testers, it certainly will pull in its share and is a step in the right direction. Our broader objective should be to seek every opportunity possible to break down the barriers that exist for younger hams to get involved, beginning with access to existing contest stations. Take a look at what Dave Robbins, K1TTT, is doing to bring new operators along, and you'll be both impressed and hopefully motivated to do the same.

There is plenty of opportunity to contribute. It just takes a little commitment and focus. Give it some thought, and you'll probably agree that contesting

Tim Duffy, K3LR, receiving his CQ Contest Hall of Fame plaque from CQ WW Contest Director Bob Cox, K3EST, at the 2006 Dayton Contest Dinner. (Tnx K8CX)



is still doing pretty well. The long-term ball is still in our court!

CQ Contest Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony

For those of you who don't know, the CQ Contest Hall of Fame induction ceremony takes place every year at the Contest Banquet in Dayton. This year, Tim Duffy, K3LR, and Bill Fisher, W4AN (SK), were the recipients of this prestigious honor, ably led by CQ WW Contest Director Bob Cox, K3EST. (Also see the July issue of CQ for the announcement of this year's recipients of CQ's Contest, DX, and Amateur Radio Halls of Fame.—ed.)

Tim Duffy was introduced by two well-known contesters, N9RV and K8AZ, both highly accomplished operators themselves. It was a moving experience to hear the accolades come from both Pat and Tom, respectively. As I can attest from personal experience, the Hall of Fame ceremony is one of those rare times at Dayton when tears come to many eyes. Pat and Tom both did the process proud.

We also had the honor of inducting Bill Fisher, W4AN, into the Contest Hall of Fame. Although Bill passed away two years ago, his presence is still being felt in contest circles, as has been widely discussed in this venue and elsewhere. Hal, N4GG, did a tremendous job of honoring Bill and thanking him on behalf of all of us for his contributions to the sport of contesting.

I'm honored to pass along my personal congratulations. The contesting world is a better place because of all they have given to us. Thank you!

A Great New Product for Contesters

What makes a proficient contester?

What makes a good operator? For most of us, it takes years of hard work and practice. Practice, participation, and persistence are key factors. Contesters indeed possess unique operating skills, capabilities that we were not born with and that are not covered or learned by reading any radio's manual or handbook, or by being on the neighborhood

repeater or down at the local radio club.

Using over 24 hours of raw material, Don Daso, K4ZA, has edited and collected the experience, wisdom, and opinions of 50 of today's contesters in one place—a special two-disc DVD compilation, running two hours, 49 minutes. *Contest Video Essay, A Look At Radio-sport*, provides unique and personal insights into this aspect of ham radio.

The collection premiered at the Dayton Hamvention® in May and is now available directly from K4ZA. The DVD boxed set is \$40; a VHS tape is \$20. If you'd like to place an order or want more information, contact Don directly via e-mail at <K4ZA@juno.com> or via snail mail at 515 Wither-shinn Drive, Charlotte, NC 28262.

Final Comments

I'm running short on time this month. Can you believe the 2006 CQ WW SSB DX Contest is only about 90 days away (depending on when you're reading this)? Time sure flies! Hope to see you on the bands.

73, John, K1AR

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Solar Wind and Coronal Holes

A Quick Look at Current Cycle 23 Conditions (Data rounded to nearest whole number)

Sunspots

Observed Monthly, May 2006: 22
Twelve-month smoothed, November 2005: 25

10.7 cm Flux

Observed Monthly, May 2006: 81
Twelve-month smoothed, November 2005: 87

Ap Index

Observed Monthly, May 2006: 8
Twelve-month smoothed, November 2005: 11

Space is not a vacuum, at least in our solar system. The sun's atmosphere actually extends very far out from the sun. Space in our system is filled with plasma, a low-density gas in which the individual atoms are charged. The temperature of the sun's atmosphere is so high that the sun's gravity cannot hold on to it. The plasma streams off the sun in all directions at speeds of about 400 kilometers per second (about 1 million miles per hour). This is known as the *solar wind*.

The speed of the solar wind fluctuates and carries with it magnetic clouds. These magnetic clouds are interacting regions where high-speed wind catches up with slow-speed wind. The solar wind speed is high (on average 800 km/s) over coronal holes and low (300 km/s) over streamers. These high- and low-speed streams interact with each other and alternately pass by the Earth as the sun rotates. These wind-speed variations buffet the Earth's magnetic field and can produce storms in the Earth's magnetosphere.

Coronal holes are an extended region of the corona that have exceptionally low density and "open" magnetic field topology. Coronal holes are largest and most stable at or near the solar poles and are a source of high-speed solar wind. However, those coronal holes situated at or near the solar equator tend to have the greatest impact on the Earth.

Coronal holes follow the rotation of the sun, taking about 27 days for a full revolution around the sun. This means that if the coronal hole lasts long enough, we'll see its influence on space weather every 27 days. When a coronal hole survives to make it around a second time, the coronal hole is said to be "recurrent." Coronal holes, then, are typically long-duration features, and since they spew out plasma at elevated speeds, degrade ionospheric propagation for days at a time.

The Earth has a magnetic field with a north and a south pole which are enclosed within a region surrounding the Earth called the "magnetosphere." As the Earth rotates, its hot core generates strong electric currents that produce the magnetic field, which reaches 36,000 miles into space. The mag-

*P.O. Box 213, Brinnon, WA 98320-0213
e-mail: <cq-prop-man@hfradio.org>

LAST-MINUTE FORECAST

Day-to-Day Conditions Expected for August 2006

Propagation Index.....	Expected Signal Quality			
	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
Above Normal: 5-8, 10-11, 13-19, 21, 24-26	A	A	B	C
High Normal: 3-4, 9, 12, 20, 22-23, 30-31	A	B	C	C-D
Low Normal: 2, 29	B	C-B	C-D	D-E
Below Normal: 1, 27-28	C	C-D	D-E	E
Disturbed: None	C-D	D	E	E

Where expected signal quality is:

- A—Excellent opening, exceptionally strong, steady signals greater than S9.
- B—Good opening, moderately strong signals varying between S6 and S9, with little fading or noise.
- C—Fair opening, signals between moderately strong and weak, varying between S3 and S6, with some fading and noise.
- D—Poor opening, with weak signals varying between S1 and S3, with considerable fading and noise.
- E—No opening expected.

HOW TO USE THIS FORECAST

1. Find the *propagation index* associated with the particular path opening from the Propagation Charts appearing on the following pages.
2. With the *propagation index*, use the above table to find the expected signal quality associated with the path opening for any given day of the month. For example, an opening shown in the Propagation Charts with a *propagation index* of 2 will be poor (D), if there even is an opening, on August 1st, fair to poor (C-D) on the 2nd, fair (C) on the 3rd and 4th, etc.

netosphere prevents most of the particles from the sun, carried in solar wind, from impacting the Earth. The solar wind distorts the shape of the magnetosphere by compressing it at the front and causing a long tail to form on the side away from the sun. This long tail is called the *magnetotail*.

Let's look at the relationship between coronal material and magnetic fields. The corona is so hot that the gases in it lose some of their electrons in the powerful collisions between atoms. This plasma is a mixture of positively charged ions and negatively charged electrons.

An example of plasma can be seen by looking at a neon light. You are looking at plasma, energized to the point where light is emitted. Because plasmas are electrically conductive, they can steer magnetic fields, and they are steered by magnetic fields. These loops of magnetic force are stretched and dragged into interplanetary space by the inertia of the expanding plasma that spirals out as the solar wind. When these magnetic forces impact the Earth, they are either diverted by or combined with Earth's magnetic field.

The speed of the solar wind fluctuates. During this year, at the end of solar Cycle 23, we're seeing a range of solar-wind speed of between 300 km/s to around 600 km/s on average (see fig. 1). When the solar wind picks up speed, and when the magnetic-field lines that are stretched out on the solar wind pass the Earth, geomagnetic storms may be triggered.

The majority of geomagnetic disturbances are generated by the encounter with the magnetic fields, and the volume and speed of the solar wind.

Issued: 2006 Jun 16 1244 UTC
Product: documentation at <http://www.sidc.be/products/meu>

DAILY BULLETIN ON SOLAR AND GEOMAGNETIC ACTIVITY from the SIDC (RWC Belgium)

SIDC URSIGRAM 60616
SIDC SOLAR BULLETIN 16 Jun 2006, 1149UT
SIDC FORECAST (valid from 1230UT, 16 Jun 2006 until 18 Jun 2006)
SOLAR FLARES : Quiet conditions (<50% probability of C-class flares)
GEOMAGNETISM : Quiet (A<20 and K<4)
SOLAR PROTONS : Quiet
PREDICTIONS FOR 16 Jun 2006 10CM FLUX: 077 / AP: 008
PREDICTIONS FOR 17 Jun 2006 10CM FLUX: 078 / AP: 012
PREDICTIONS FOR 18 Jun 2006 10CM FLUX: 085 / AP: 007
COMMENT: The solar wind speed is currently at 600 km/s, driven by a recurrent coronal hole. Geomagnetic conditions remain however quiet. Flaring activity is supposed to remain quiet as a few active regions are returning beyond the west limb. SOHO/EIT has awakened from its beauty sleep!

TODAY'S ESTIMATED ISN : 015, BASED ON 05 STATIONS.

SOLAR INDICES FOR 15 Jun 2006
WOLF NUMBER CATANIA: 023
10CM SOLAR FLUX : 076
AK CHAMBON LA FORET: 028
AK WINGST: ///
ESTIMATED AP: 029
ESTIMATED ISN:011, BASED ON 11 STATIONS.

NOTICEABLE EVENTS SUMMARY
DAY BEGIN MAX END LOC XRAY OP 10CM RADIO BURST TYPES Catania NOAA NOTE
NONE
END
BT

Solar Influences Data analysis Center - RWC Belgium
Royal Observatory of Belgium
Fax : 32 (0) 2 373 0 224
Tel.: 32 (0) 2 373 0 491

For more information, see <http://sidc.be/products/meu>.
Please do not reply directly to this message, but send comments directly to this message, but send comments and suggestions to 'sidctech@oma.be'. If you are unable to use that address, use 'rvdlinden@spd.aas.org' instead.

Fig. 1— Sample daily solar and geomagnetic bulletin issued from the Solar Influences Data Analysis Center (SIDC) at the Royal Observatory of Belgium. Notice the comment that the solar wind speed is at 600 kilometers per second as the result of a recurrent coronal hole (see text).

The ability of the solar wind to disturb the Earth's magnetosphere is a function of its speed and the strength and orientation of the magnetic fields. In the presence of a strong southward magnetic field component, a "connection" is made between the solar wind's magnetic fields and the Earth's magnetic fields (picture two pole magnets, where the north pole of one "connects" with the south pole of the other).

The Earth's magnetosphere is formed from two essential ingredients, the Earth's magnetic field (which has much the same form as that of a bar magnet, and is from pole to pole) and the solar wind. When the solar wind and magnetic fields combine with the Earth's magnetic field, they alter the shape and intensity of this shield around the Earth. The

ionosphere is affected by these changes, either by an increase of ionization, or a decrease or even a depletion of ionization. Depressions in ionospheric density cause major communications problems, because radio frequencies that previously had been refracting off the ionosphere now punch through. The MUF (maximum usable frequency) on a given radio signal path can be decreased by a factor of two during an ionospheric storm event. Storm effects are more pronounced at high latitudes.

During the periods of lowest solar activity of a solar cycle, such as we are in this month, we see far fewer CMEs (coronal mass ejections) than during the peak years of a cycle. However, we still see frequent recurring coronal holes. These combine with the low solar

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sunspot activity to contribute to days of poor propagation. The elevated solar wind speed and the increase in plasma volume, combined with a low solar X-ray energy level of the ionosphere, all cause the propagation of radio signals to suffer.

During August, we'll see days when coronal holes dominate space weather. Solar activity will be low to moderate, too, as we are at the end of solar Cycle 23. Major shortwave broadcasters have taken this into consideration and have chosen frequencies that, with the high power and gain of their transmitting facilities, will overcome tough propagation into their target areas. However, there may be days when it will be a challenge to hear the station for which you are hunting.

August Propagation

Late August and early September are a difficult time of year for which to make accurate band predictions, because conditions can change drastically from day to day. On many days typical summertime conditions will continue much as they were during June and July.

On the other days conditions may sound typically fall-like, with somewhat higher daytime usable frequencies and somewhat lower nighttime usable frequencies. When you add *equinoctial* conditions, which can begin as early as late August, we often experience optimum openings between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres on the one hand, but periods of active to stormy conditions on the other.

Since this is a period of transition, this month's DX Propagation Charts cover only the one-month period from August 15th through September 15th, rather than the usual two-month period. Short-Skip Charts for use during this period appeared in last month's column.

Despite being near the end of solar Cycle 23, with low solar activity, during the daylight hours good DX conditions should be possible on several bands: 15, 17, and 20 meters. Expect signals on the 17- and 20-meter bands to peak approximately during the two-hour window immediately following sunrise and again during the late afternoon. These two bands, and to a lesser degree the 15-meter band, will see openings for DX throughout the daylight hours. Fairly good DX openings should occur along an arc extending across central Africa, Latin America, and into the far Pacific area. Peak conditions should occur during the afternoon hours, but an increasing number of earlier openings should be possible by early September.

HOW TO USE THE DX PROPAGATION CHARTS

1. Use chart appropriate to your transmitter location. The Eastern USA Chart can be used in the 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, KP4, KG4, and KV4 areas in the USA and adjacent call areas in Canada; the Central USA Chart in the 5, 9, and 0 areas; the Western USA Chart in the 6 and 7 areas; and with somewhat less accuracy in the KH6 and KL7 areas.

2. The predicted times of openings are found under the appropriate meter band column (10 through 80 meters) for a particular DX region, as shown in the left-hand column of the charts. An * indicates the best time to listen for 160 meter openings.

3. The propagation index is the number that appears in () after the time of each predicted opening. The index indicates the number of days during the month on which the opening is expected to take place as follows:

- (4) Opening should occur on more than 22 days
- (3) Opening should occur between 14 and 22 days
- (2) Opening should occur between 7 and 13 days
- (1) Opening should occur on less than 7 days

Refer to the "Last Minute Forecast" at the beginning of this column for the actual dates on which an opening with a specific propagation index is likely to occur, and the signal quality that can be expected.

4. Times shown in the charts are in the 24-hour system, where 00 is midnight; 12 is noon; 01 is 1 A.M.; 13 is 1 P.M., etc. Appropriate *daylight* time is used, not GMT. To convert to GMT, add to the times shown in the appropriate chart 7 hours in PDT Zone, 6 hours in MDT Zone, 5 hours in CDT Zone, and 4 hours in EDT Zone. For example, 14 hours in Washington, D.C. is 18 GMT. When it is 20 hours in Los Angeles, it is 03 GMT, etc.

5. The charts are based upon a transmitted power of 250 watts CW, or 1 kw, PEP on sideband, into a dipole antenna a quarter-wavelength above ground on 160 and 80 meters, and a half-wavelength above ground on 40 and 20 meters, and a wavelength above ground on 15 and 10 meters. For each 10 dB gain above these reference levels, the *propagation index* will increase by one level; for each 10 dB loss, it will lower by one level.

6. Propagation data contained in the charts has been prepared from basic data published by the Institute for Telecommunication Sciences of the U.S. Dept of Commerce, Boulder, Colorado 80302.

August 15–September 15, 2006 Time Zone: EDT (24 Hour Time) EASTERN USA TO:

Reception Area	10 Meters	15 Meters	20 Meters	40/80 Meters
Western & Central	Nil	09-11 (1) 14-16 (1)	06-07 (1) 07-08 (2)	19-21 (1) 21-22 (2)
Europe & North Africa			08-09 (3) 09-10 (2) 10-13 (1) 13-14 (2) 14-16 (3) 16-17 (4) 17-18 (3) 18-19 (2) 19-20 (1)	22-01 (3) 01-03 (2) 03-04 (1) 21-23 (1)* 23-01 (2)* 01-03 (1)*
Northern Europe & CIS	Nil	09-11(1)	06-07 (1) 07-10 (2) 10-12 (1) 12-14 (2) 14-16 (3) 16-17 (2) 17-18 (1)	20-22 (1) 22-00 (2) 00-03 (1) 22-02 (1)*
Eastern Mediterranean & Middle East	Nil	11-13 (1) 13-15 (2) 15-16 (1)	06-07 (1) 07-09 (2) 09-14 (1) 14-15 (2) 15-17 (3) 17-18 (2) 18-19 (1) 22-00 (1)	19-21 (1) 21-23 (2) 23-00 (1) 22-00 (1)*
West Africa	14-16 (1)	09-13 (1) 13-14 (2) 14-16 (3) 16-17 (2) 17-18 (1)	13-15 (1) 15-16 (2) 16-17 (3) 17-18 (4) 18-20 (3) 20-21 (2) 21-23 (1)	20-23 (1) 23-02 (2) 02-04 (1) 22-02 (1)*
Central & East Africa	Nil	11-14 (1) 14-16 (2) 16-17 (1)	13-15 (1) 15-17 (2) 17-19 (3) 19-20 (2) 20-21 (1)	21-01 (1)

South Africa	12-14 (1) 11-12 (2) 12-14 (3) 14-15 (2) 15-16 (1)	08-11 (1) 11-12 (2) 16-17 (3) 17-18 (2) 18-20 (1) 23-01 (1)	07-15 (1) 15-16 (2) 16-17 (3) 17-18 (2) 18-20 (1) 23-01 (1)	21-23 (1) 23-01 (2) 01-03 (1) 23-02 (1)*
Central & South Asia	Nil	17-19 (1)	07-08 (1) 08-10 (2) 10-11 (1) 20-23 (1)	05-07 (1) 18-21 (1)
Southeast Asia	Nil	18-20 (1)	07-08 (1) 08-10 (2) 10-11 (1) 18-22 (1)	Nil
Far East	Nil	17-20 (1)	07-08 (1) 08-10 (2) 10-12 (1) 17-19 (1) 19-21 (2) 21-23 (1)	06-08 (1)
South Pacific & New Zealand	16-19 (1)	13-16 (1) 16-18 (2) 18-20 (1)	07-08 (1) 08-11 (2) 11-13 (1) 18-21 (1) 21-00 (2) 00-02 (1)	01-02 (1) 02-03 (2) 03-06 (3) 06-08 (2) 08-09 (1) 04-08 (1)*
Australasia	17-19 (1)	16-17 (1) 17-19 (2) 19-20 (1)	06-08 (1) 08-10 (2) 10-12 (1) 15-16 (1) 16-18 (2) 18-21 (1) 21-00 (2) 00-02 (1)	03-04 (1) 04-07 (2) 07-08 (1) 05-07 (1)*
Northern South America	13-15 (1) 15-17 (2) 17-18 (1)	08-12 (1) 12-14 (2) 14-16 (4) 16-17 (3) 17-19 (2) 19-20 (1)	06-07 (1) 07-08 (2) 08-10 (4) 10-12 (3) 12-15 (2) 15-17 (3) 17-19 (4) 19-21 (3) 21-22 (2) 22-02 (1)	19-20 (1) 20-21 (2) 21-04 (3) 04-06 (2) 06-08 (1) 22-02 (1)* 02-04 (2)* 04-07 (1)*
Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil, Chile, Argentina & Uruguay	14-16 (1) 16-17 (2) 17-18 (1)	08-10 (1) 10-12 (2) 12-15 (1)	06-08 (1) 14-16 (1) 16-17 (2) 17-18 (3) 18-20 (4) 20-21 (3) 21-00 (2) 00-02 (1)	21-23 (1) 23-01 (2) 01-03 (1) 03-06 (2) 06-07 (1) 04-06 (1)*
McMurdo Sound, Antarctica	Nil	15-18 (1)	07-09 (1) 16-18 (1) 18-19 (2) 19-21 (3) 21-23 (2) 23-01 (1)	01-06 (1)

Time Zones: CDT & MDT (24 Hour Time) CENTRAL USA TO:

Reception Area	10 Meters	15 Meters	20 Meters	40/80 Meters
Western & Central Europe & North Africa	Nil	09-11 (1) 13-15 (1)	06-07 (1) 07-09 (2)	20-22 (1) 22-01 (2)
Northern Europe & CIS	Nil	10-13 (1)	06-07 (1) 07-09 (2) 09-12 (1) 12-13 (2) 13-14 (3) 14-16 (2) 16-17 (1) 21-23 (1)	20-02 (1) 22-01 (1)*
Eastern Mediterranean & Middle East	Nil	10-15 (1)	07-14 (1) 14-16 (2) 16-18 (1) 21-23(1)	20-21 (1) 21-23 (2) 23-00 (1) 21-23(1)*
West Africa	12-14 (1)	09-11 (1) 11-14 (2) 14-16 (1)	07-09 (1) 13-15 (1) 15-16 (2) 16-19 (3) 19-20 (2) 20-22 (1)	20-22 (1) 22-01 (2) 01-02 (1) 23-01 (1)*

Central & East Africa	Nil	12-15 (1)	13-17 (1) 17-19 (2) 19-21 (1) 07-09 (1)	21-00 (1)
South Africa	11-14 (1)	08-10 (1) 10-14 (2) 14-15 (1)	07-09 (1) 12-15 (1) 15-18 (2) 18-20 (1) 22-01 (1)	20-21 (1) 21-23 (2) 23-01 (1) 22-00 (1)*
Central & South Asia	Nil	18-21 (1)	07-08 (1) 08-10 (2) 10-11 (1) 18-21 (1)	06-08 (1) 19-21 (1)
Southeast Asia	Nil	17-21 (1)	07-08 (1) 08-10 (2) 10-12 (1) 20-23 (1)	06-08 (1)
Far East	Nil	15-17 (1) 17-19 (2) 19-20 (1)	07-08 (1) 08-10 (2) 10-13 (1) 17-19 (1) 19-22 (1) 22-01 (1)	03-06 (1) 06-07 (2) 07-08 (1) 06-07 (1)*
South Pacific & New Zealand	16-19 (1)	12-15 (1) 15-19 (2) 19-21 (1)	07-08 (1) 08-10 (2) 10-12 (1) 12-14 (2) 14-18 (1) 18-21 (2) 21-23 (3) 23-02 (2) 02-07 (1)	00-01 (1) 01-03 (2) 03-06 (3) 06-08 (2) 08-09 (1) 02-04 (1)* 04-06 (2)* 06-07 (1)*
Australasia	16-19 (1)	14-16 (1) 16-19 (2) 19-21 (1)	00-07 (1) 07-08 (2) 08-10 (3) 10-11 (2) 11-16 (1) 16-18 (2) 18-20 (1) 20-00 (2)	02-04 (1) 04-07 (2) 07-09 (1) 04-05 (1)* 05-07 (2)* 07-08 (1)*
Northern & Central America	12-15 (1) 15-17 (2) 17-18 (1)	08-09 (1) 09-12 (2) 12-14 (3) 14-17 (4) 17-18 (2) 18-19 (1)	06-07 (1) 07-08 (3) 08-10 (4) 10-12 (3) 12-16 (2) 16-17 (3) 17-19 (4) 19-21 (3) 21-22 (2) 22-02 (1)	19-21 (1) 21-23 (2) 23-03 (3) 03-06 (2) 06-07 (1) 21-00 (1)* 00-03 (2)* 03-06 (1)*
Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay	13-14 (1) 14-16 (2) 16-17 (1)	08-10 (1) 10-12 (2) 12-15 (1) 15-16 (2) 16-18 (4) 18-19 (2) 19-20 (1)	07-09 (1) 13-15 (1) 15-16 (2) 16-17 (3) 17-20 (4) 20-22 (3) 22-01 (2) 01-03 (1)	21-23 (1) 23-01 (2) 01-03 (1) 03-05 (2) 05-07 (1) 02-06 (1)*
McMurdo Sound, Antarctica	Nil	15-18 (1)	15-17 (1) 17-19 (2) 19-21 (3) 21-23 (2) 23-00 (1) 08-10 (1)	01-06 (1)

**Time Zone: PDT (24 Hour Time)
WESTERN USA TO:**

Reception Area	10 Meters	15 Meters	20 Meters	40/80 Meters
Western Europe & North Africa	Nil	11-13 (1)	06-07 (1) 07-09 (2) 09-12 (1) 12-15 (2) 15-17 (1) 22-00 (1)	20-21 (1) 21-23 (2) 23-00 (1) 22-23 (1)*
Central & Northern Europe & CIS	Nil	10-13 (1)	06-07 (1) 07-09 (2) 09-12 (1) 12-14 (2) 14-16 (1) 21-23 (1)	19-00 (1)
Eastern Mediterranean & Middle East	Nil	09-12 (1)	07-08 (1) 08-10 (2) 10-12 (1) 12-14 (2) 14-15 (1) 20-22 (1)	20-23 (1)

Western & Central Africa	Nil	12-15 (1)	06-07 (1) 07-09 (2) 09-14 (1) 14-16 (2) 16-18 (3) 18-19 (2) 19-20 (1)	21-01 (1)
East Africa	Nil	Nil	12-15 (1) 15-17 (2) 17-19 (1)	20-22 (1)
South Africa	Nil	10-12 (1)	07-09 (1) 12-14 (1) 14-16 (2) 16-18 (1) 22-00 (1)	20-21 (1) 21-22 (2) 22-23 (1) 20-22 (1)*
Central & South Asia	Nil	17-20 (1)	07-08 (1) 08-10 (2) 10-12 (1) 17-19 (1) 19-20 (2) 20-21 (1)	06-08 (1)
Southeast Asia	Nil	16-20 (1)	08-09 (1) 09-11 (2) 11-13 (1) 18-21 (1) 21-00 (2) 00-01 (1)	02-05 (1) 05-07 (2) 07-08 (1) 06-07 (1)*
Far East	Nil	15-17 (1) 17-19 (2) 19-20 (1)	07-08 (1) 08-10 (2) 10-12 (1) 12-14 (2) 14-18 (1) 18-20 (2) 20-22 (3) 22-23 (3) 23-01 (1)	01-02 (1) 02-06 (2) 06-07 (3) 07-08 (1) 03-07 (1)*
South Pacific & New Zealand	16-18 (1)	12-15 (1) 15-16 (2) 16-19 (3) 19-20 (2) 20-21 (1)	01-07 (1) 07-08 (2) 08-10 (3) 10-11 (2) 11-14 (1) 14-18 (2) 18-20 (3) 20-22 (4) 22-23 (3) 23-01 (2)	22-23 (1) 23-00 (2) 00-06 (3) 06-07 (2) 07-08 (1) 23-02 (1)* 02-05 (2)* 05-07 (1)*
Australasia	15-18 (1)	13-16 (1) 16-17 (2) 17-19 (3) 19-21 (2) 21-22 (1)	12-19 (1) 19-20 (2) 20-01 (3) 01-04 (2) 04-07 (1) 07-08 (2) 08-10 (3) 10-12 (2)	00-02 (1) 02-03 (2) 03-06 (3) 06-08 (2) 08-09 (1) 02-04 (1)* 04-06 (2)* 06-07 (1)*
Northern & Central America	12-14 (1) 14-17 (2) 17-18 (1)	08-09 (1) 09-12 (2) 12-14 (3) 14-16 (4) 16-17 (3) 17-18 (2) 18-19 (1)	06-07 (1) 07-08 (2) 08-10 (3) 10-16 (2) 16-17 (3) 17-19 (4) 19-20 (3) 20-22 (2) 22-02 (1)	18-21 (1) 21-22 (2) 22-01 (3) 01-03 (2) 03-07 (1) 20-22 (1)* 22-02 (2)* 02-05 (1)
Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil, Chile, Argentina & Uruguay	13-14 (1) 14-16 (2) 16-17 (1)	08-10 (1) 10-12 (2) 12-15 (1) 15-16 (2) 16-17 (4) 17-19 (2) 19-20 (1)	04-07 (1) 07-09 (2) 09-15 (1) 15-17 (2) 17-19 (3) 19-22 (2) 22-00 (1)	20-22 (1) 22-00 (2) 00-02 (1) 02-04 (2) 04-06 (1) 01-05 (1)*
McMurdo Sound, Antarctica	Nil	13-16 (1) 16-18 (2) 18-20 (1)	08-10 (1) 16-19 (1) 19-21 (2) 21-23 (3) 23-00 (2) 00-01 (1)	01-06 (1)

Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil, Chile, Argentina & Uruguay	13-14 (1) 14-16 (2) 16-17 (1)	08-10 (1) 10-12 (2) 12-15 (1) 15-16 (2) 16-17 (4) 17-19 (2) 19-20 (1)	04-07 (1) 07-09 (2) 09-15 (1) 15-17 (2) 17-19 (3) 19-22 (2) 22-00 (1)	20-22 (1) 22-00 (2) 00-02 (1) 02-04 (2) 04-06 (1) 01-05 (1)*
McMurdo Sound, Antarctica	Nil	13-16 (1) 16-18 (2) 18-20 (1)	08-10 (1) 16-19 (1) 19-21 (2) 21-23 (3) 23-00 (2) 00-01 (1)	01-06 (1)

*Indicates best times to listen for 80 meter openings. Openings on 160 meters are also likely to occur during those times when 80 meter openings are shown with a propagation index of (2) or higher.
For 12 meter openings interpolate between 10 and 15 meter openings.
For 17 meter openings interpolate between 15 and 20 meter openings.
For 30 meter openings interpolate between 40 and 20 meter openings.

Propagation charts prepared by George Jacobs, W3ASK.

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Between sundown and sunrise 20 meters is expected to be the best DX band. However, with lower solar activity, the band in general will suffer compared with the past few years. Openings might be possible to many areas of the world, some with surprisingly strong signal levels. Until midnight good DX conditions should be found for openings toward Latin America, the far Pacific, and into Asia. You might even catch some activity on 17 or even 15 meters. Fairly good conditions are also expected on 30, 40, 60, and 80 meters despite the high static level at times. Openings should be possible before midnight along an arc extending from northern Europe, through Africa, and into Latin America, the far Pacific, and Asia after midnight.

By late August it should be possible to work some DX on 160 meters during the hours of darkness. Conditions on this band—as well as on 40, 60, and 80 meters—will tend to peak just as the sun

begins to rise on the light, or easternmost, terminal of a path.

For *short-skip* openings during August and early September, try 80 meters during the day for distances less than 250 miles, with 60 and 40 meters also usable. During the hours of darkness both 80 and 160 meters should provide excellent communications over this distance. For openings between 250 and 750 miles, use 30 and 40 meters during the day for distances up to 500 miles, and 20 and 17 meters between 500 and 750 miles. At night, 40 and 30 meters should be the best bands for this distance until midnight, with 80 meters optimum from midnight to sunrise. Try 60 meters, as well. For openings between 750 and 1300 miles, try 20 and 17 meters, as they should provide optimum propagation during the hours of daylight. Optimum conditions should continue on these bands for this distance range after sundown and until midnight. Between midnight and sunrise the best band should be 40 meters, but check 60 meters, too. For openings between 1300 miles and the one-hop short-skip limit of approximately 2300 miles, try 20 and 17 meters during the day, with 15 meters also usable. After sundown try 30, 40, and 60 meters, with 80 meters also providing good propagation conditions for this distance range.

meter band for possible TE (trans-equatorial) openings between 8 and 11 PM local daylight time. This type of propagation favors openings from the southern tier states into the far southern areas of South America, with the signal path crossing the magnetic equator at a right angle. TE openings during August are rare, but they can occur. Very weak signals and severe flutter fading usually characterize them.

Current Solar Cycle Progress

The Royal Observatory of Belgium reports that the monthly mean observed sunspot number for May 2006 is 22.2, just down from April's 30.2. The lowest daily sunspot value during May, recorded on May 14 through May 17, was zero (0). The highest daily sunspot count was 37 on May 28. The 12-month running smoothed sunspot number centered on November 2005 is 42.1. A smoothed sunspot count of 9 is expected for August 2006, but can be anywhere from a high of 22, down to zero, which is more and more likely as we near the very end of solar Cycle 23.

The Dominion Radio Astrophysical Observatory at Penticton, BC, Canada, reports a 10.7-cm observed monthly mean solar flux of 81 for May 2006. The 12-month smoothed 10.7-cm flux centered on November 2005 is 86.7. The predicted smoothed 10.7-cm solar flux for August 2006 is about 73, with a range from a high of 92 to a low of 60.

The observed monthly mean planetary A-index (*Ap*) for May 2006 is 8. The 12-month smoothed *Ap*-index centered on November 2005 is 11.1. Expect the overall geomagnetic activity to be quiet to unsettled during most days in August, with one or two possibly stormy periods; check the Last-Minute Forecast for those days likely to see geomagnetic storms.

Please come and participate in my online propagation discussion forum at <<http://hfradio.org/forums/>>. I've also enhanced my Space Weather and Radio Propagation center at <<http://prop.hfradio.org>>, so take a look. These resources may also be viewed on a cell phone or other wireless device that has WAP/WML features by browsing to <<http://wap.hfradio.org>>.

Drop me an e-mail or send me a letter if you have questions or topics you would like to see me explore in this column. I'd also love to hear any feedback you might have on what I have written. Until next month . . .

73, de Tomas, NW7US

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VHF Conditions

Sporadic-E propagation usually begins to taper off during August, but may continue to occur fairly frequently. Some 6-meter sporadic-E openings are expected during the month over distances of approximately 750 to 1300 miles. During periods of intense and widespread sporadic-E ionization, two-hop openings may be possible considerably beyond this range. Also check the 2-meter band for an occasional sporadic-E short-skip opening between approximately 1200 and 1400 miles. While sporadic-E short-skip openings may occur at any time, there is a tendency for them to peak between 8 AM and noon, and again between 6 PM and 9 PM local daylight time.

The *Perseids* meteor shower covers the period of July 23 to August 22. The peak is expected to occur between August 12 and 13, and will be most observable in the Northern Hemisphere. The radiant point for this shower will be in the constellation of Perseus. Look to the northeast. The maximum hourly visual rate is expected to reach about 60.

For the very patient, check the 6-



VK9XD (op. VK2CZ) Single Op All Band from Christmas Island.

phone? With my wife sleeping next to the radio I had to resort to a PC voice keyer. The next day my mic PTT switch died, so the pre-recorded computer messages helped not give up . . . **HA5X**. We run 100 watts limited power in Multi Single class and we have new Thai HF hams join with us in contest. A lot of fun! Thanks to all for QSOs . . . **HSØAR (E21E1C)**. Fine experience with IC8C special call. Lot of hams and activity on 80 meters. Hope to meet all of them next year too . . . **IC8C**. It was my first effort in LP category in phone mode. I must say that it is quite "harder" than CW with LP, which I like very much. I lost some multipliers because I could not get through the pile-ups. I used two beams (4-el OWA and 3-el tribander) and I think it helped to me in the pile-ups as well with 100w. Generally the contest was very nice, especially thanks to excellent propagation on 15. Thanks to all for QSOs and CU in CW! . . . **IH9P**. For me is the first time. I'm very happy . . . **IW2MWZ**.

Not good propagation . . . **IZ1DGG**. Propagation hurt, and high winds and rough sea did the rest! Our best ever low bands' beach setup was almost completely ruined on Saturday afternoon! Radials thrown away by the sea waves, one 40 mt vertical brought down by the sea, 160m vertical blown out when hit by sea waves, what more? Ah, Mr. Murphy, no, we didn't see him around. CU next one! . . . **J49Z (Bob, I2WIJ, on behalf of the team)**. As expected, high band propagation was not very good. Still, we had fairly good runs on 15m on Sunday toward Europe (around 06Z) and toward North America (around 22Z) . . . **JM1LPN**. Can't wait to get out of the bottom of this cycle . . . **KH6FI**. No propagation on second day . . . **KL7RA**. Gearing up and going full tilt and having lightning . . . **KP4US**. First effort from Sardinia . . . **LSØ/WHØQ**. Excellent conditions! And many many mults! Congratulations! . . . **LU8VCC**. Nice test, but who closed the door to JA? . . . **LV5V**. First attempt at CQ WW DX. Limited station and only two full-time operators made it fun but hard work. Need to develop better antennas and bigger tower for next year. See you in 2006 with a special contest call . . . **M5ARC**. Very, very hard work this year. Nearly gave up on a number of occasions. I'm pleased that I didn't. Such a great contest . . . **MW5HOC**. My special thanks to Eduardo, CU2AF/CU2T and Pedro, CU2JX. Their great help made this operation possible! It was a real sign of a true ham spirit. Thanks to everybody who called me. I had a great fun . . . **OH1VR**. This was a "one-man-show." I brought the whole stn to Crete Island by car. That meant 5 days to go down, 2 days to set up the stn, 2 days contest, 1 day removal, and another 5 days back (yes, I also had 3 weeks sunny vacation in-between). Condx were not as bad as I feared with the sunspot number near zero. Thanks to everybody who called me. I had great fun in the pile-up! . . . **OH4FR**. Condx not too good. 10m almost dead and no opening til West Coast USA/Canada on 15. But I did better than my own Danish record from 1978, 3,186,303 points . . . **OZ7X**. The display burned out on both transceivers, my microphone boom broke, and the pre-amp power supply burned up. Even with these inconveniences, it was a very fun contest! . . . **P4ØA**. We participated in the contest just for fun and education. We had fun and we learned a lot, so we got the goal! . . . **PI4ZOD**.

Propagation was very poor in our Arctic region. Tnx to many ops for attention! . . . **RK9XWW**. Double L and inverted V with ICOM 746, 100W. Some problems with setting antennas, but we managed to fix it all before the test (we finished setting the antennas in the dark). Location Mount Slivnica, 1114m asl S50L location. Tnx to S55Z, S59MA, and S56WKC for the support. The score is higher as was expected, but lack of experience made me miss some DX = mult . . . **S59CDE (S55O)**. Spent the weekend hiding in the basement shack. My little daughter thought I was away at work, hihi. Not the best condx from Sweden. Nice anyway. We will be on next year . . . **SM6RXZ**. This was my first contest with my new first license call. I am 16 years old. My father, SP4Z, said it is the biggest contest all over the world. See you again . . . **SQ4LH**. This was my first contest from a DX location. It's quite different to be on the other end of the pile-up. It's thrilling to be called by a weak station, and to find that he's a rare double-multiplier . . . **V31MQ**. Thanks to Karl Sage, V44NK, who helped set up the

antennas; operated from the Golden Rock Estates Hotel on Nevis Island. Mike and Bain last did a contest together while in high school in Cleveland, Ohio in 1960, some 45 years ago! . . . **V47NS**. I'm a new ham and was first contest. Had fun and really enjoyed it. Looking forward to more . . . **VA3TPS**. Even at the bottom of the cycle this contest always delivers. It is the best of the best! . . . **VC6R**. Loads of fun. Strangest occurrence when I tried in vain to break a pile-up for SV3 and then moments later I get called by an SV9. Go figure . . . **VE3JQA**. Limited operating time but still had fun. Hard to compete with 100W and a vertical! . . . **VE3TMT**. Did better the second time around. Tnx for getting me interested in contesting . . . **VE3VMP**. This was Joe's (VE6JSL) first contest and I think he is hooked! My 2004 certificate arrived just before the contest began and I think it was a great motivation for both of us to do well. Low bands were disappointing at this QTH after 0700Z Saturday, particularly 160. Better luck next year . . . **VE6ZC**.

All the ops except VE7FO are members of the Vector Club's basic license class and are working towards getting their first ticket. This was the first time any of them had ever made a ham radio contact. The idea was to give them some hands-on experience to help the classroom stuff come alive. It's such a great experience to watch the first nervous Q being made followed by a few less nervous ones, and somewhere around Q #5, the cheat sheet is no longer required . . . **VE7FO**. 10m just didn't get a chance to fire. 15m was certainly worth the effort and the new 5-element mono certainly proved its value. Now planning for next year begins! . . . **VK4CXZ**. Had good time but few contacts . . . **VK5UE**. This was a real mixture of disappointment (with initial condx and my own tactical errors), frustration (with extreme crowding and one important, flaky beam), excitement (called by VP6DB), and learning (how to do SO2R better). My score is way down, but it was still fun . . . **VO1AU**. Very good conditions. The best ever personal score in this contest. Was fun all time. Tnx for all the calls . . . **XE2K**. First activation of Koh Tas Island. Complete portable on generator. Antenna Spiderbeam for 20, 15, 17, delta loop, longwire from Yaesu FT-857D . . . **XU7TAS**. This is the greatest contest! It is hard to join the contest this year. We have fasting days, no food, no drink, so hungry and thirsty, but again contesting is fun! See you in next contest! . . . **YB2ECG**. My first attempt on 160m ever! Thanks all guys over Atlantic Ocean for patience, because on this side I had no beverages. It is good to be back in ham radio after 6 years . . . **YT6Y**. Antenna problems, electricity supply problems, wife left me on Friday, thank goodness she returned on Sunday (visiting parents!). Most enjoyable time . . . **ZS4BS**.

USA QRM

My first contest in 48 years as a ham. Had a great time. Already planning for next year! . . . **KØIZ**. Good opening to Asia on Sunday night. Was working a few JAs, and after I worked another station he gave his call as B1Z. Almost fell off my chair when I realized I just worked the China station without any trouble! . . . **K2MFY**. Thanks for the QSOs . . . **K3TW**. First contest in 30 years since old RTTY contests with "machines." Had a good time, but lots to learn . . . **K3WC**. Whew! I'm ready for the sunspot cycle to come back . . . **K5LAD**. Not many Asia/Pacific stations heard as expected. Some nice openings to Europe but wish they would have been longer. Where were all the Asia mults? . . . **K7ACZ**. Hope K1TTT is happy with my Q's . . . I got his dupes! . . . **K9TTT**.

Band conditions didn't start off too well. SD logger makes contesting a lot of fun . . . **KA1C**. I only wish I had more time to work more stations. Thirteen contacts isn't very many at all, but maybe by filing my log it might help confirm someone else's scores . . . **KA6GDT**. This is the first time I did single band (80m). Didn't do as well this year; same equipment and antennas when compared to last year's results. But I have learned value of RX antennas . . . **KBØFHP**. Only got a few hours in but hope it helps when added to the club score . . . **KB1LAX**. This is the third year with a Field Day type of operation. We bring all equipment up to Zone 2. Even with the low band conditions, everyone had a great time. Vertical antennas, including a home-built one for 160 meters, performed great . . . **KD3TB**. Great to be back on the air, even with a G5RV in the trees! 10m opening was a nice surprise . . . **KU4V**. Exciting contest as usual, but sadly my last log for the CQ WW. After 50 years at this QTH, we are moving to a retirement apartment without towers or beam antennas. Goodbye my friends from November One Alpha Uniform. I have enjoyed contesting with you immensely! . . . **N1AU**. Conditions were a lot rougher this year but still had fun. Sure wish more EU would listen up for USA on 40m. Where was the Pacific? Always amazing when you break a double mult pile-up on first call with 100w . . . **N1UR**. Finally worked JT on 40 SSB for last zone for 40m SSB WAZ. Thanks JT1JA! Casual contest fun as usual, mostly S&P for me . . . **N4CC**. If we're gonna get beat in 4-land, it might as well be by CQ WW Director K3EST. Nice work, Bob and Phil, KT3Y! Our best low band scores. Sure miss 10 meters . . . **W4WS**. Bands seemed to be in good shape. Great opening into Asia Saturday night on 20 meters . . . **W4WTB**. Using Telnet was a lot of fun. Did not operate enough during the wee hours to work the normal number of JA's. Getting too old for operating more than 40 hours. The CQ WW test is a "must" operate event. Glad to have make this event one more time! . . . **W7GG**. Honey dews = 1; contest = 0 . . . **W7KB**. Our first group effort, more for fun than glory. Great conditions using modern and ancient equipment . . . **W9DEW**. Excellent conditions. Boy I hate to think what the bedlam is going to be again when conditions get better . . . **W9IGJ**. As our crew became more familiar with multi-single, and with operating as a team, the more fun we had! This was great in spite of poor conditions . . . **WA7LT**. More good stuff to work than I've heard for years . . . **WBØHCH**. We are training new contest operators and having a great time . . . **WX7P**.

Table with columns for call sign, power, frequency, and various technical specifications. Includes sections for JAPAN, SINGAPORE, TAIWAN, TAJIKISTAN, THAILAND, TURKMENISTAN, UK BASES ON CYPRUS, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, UZBEKISTAN, WEST MALAYSIA, EUROPE, ALAND ISLANDS, ALBANIA, AUSTRIA, AZORES, BALEARIC ISLANDS, BELARUS, KAZAKHSTAN, KYRGYZSTAN, MACAO, MONGOLIA, OGASAWARA ISLANDS, OMAN, SAUDI ARABIA, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA, BULGARIA, CRETE, CROATIA, and CZECH REPUBLIC.

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