

Wide-Coverage Transceivers

HF through VHF/UHF in One Radio



* Specified performance: Amateur bands only



A Superb All-around Transceiver with a built-in real-time spectrum scope and superior basic operation

HF/50/144/430MHz 100W All Mode Transceiver

FT-991 A

Operating Modes: CW/SSB/AM/FM/C4FM

- Covers all-modes SSB/CW/AM/FM and C4FM digital
- Built in Real-Time Spectrum Scope with Multi-Color Waterfall Display
- 100 Watts (2 Meter & 70 Centimeter: 50 Watts) of Solid Performance
- IF DSP for Superior Interference Rejection
- 3.5-inch TFT Full-Color Touch Panel Display
- Advanced Support for C4FM Digital

* Desktop Microphone & External Speaker (Optional)



The Smallest HF/VHF/UHF Mobile Transceiver Provides base station performance from a compact package

HF/50/144/430MHz 100W All Mode Transceiver

FT-857D

Operating Modes: CW/SSB/AM/FM * C4FM digital mode is not supported

- Ultra-Compact Package (6.1" x 2.0" x 9.2")
- The 4 Pole Roofing Filter (MCF) and 11 Band Pass Filter RF stages
- Large Radio Tuning Dial and Outstanding Ergonomics



The Ultimate Backpack Multi-Mode Portable Transceiver

HF/50/144/430MHz 6W All Mode Transceiver

FT-818ND NEW

Operating Modes: CW/SSB/AM/FM * C4FM digital mode is not supported

- Incredibly Small Size (5.3" x 1.5" x 6.5") and Light Weight (under 2 pounds)
- High Frequency Stability (± 0.5 ppm) TCXO Included
- 6Watts of TX Output Power (AM: 2Watts)
- 1900mAh Ni-MH Battery Pack and Battery Charger Included
- AA Alkaline Battery Operation

“Antenna Here is a Light Bulb...,” p. 28

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

Amateur ^{75th} Year! Radio

\$6.99

COMMUNICATIONS & TECHNOLOGY
APRIL 2019

CQ

- **What's Up With Cycle 25?** p. 10
- **SSB Results, 2018 CQ WW DX Contest,** p. 14
- **The Family That DXes Together...** p. 78



On the Cover: Faith Hannah Lea, AE4FH (foreground), and her sister Hope, KM4IPF, wait for a satellite pass during a family DXpedition to the Dry Tortugas. Their story is on page 78.

KENWOOD



OUT OF THIS WORLD AUCTION For a TS-890S Signed by Astronauts!



By taking part in this auction you are helping ARISS continue its mission by inspiring students and teachers alike via Amateur Radio to endeavor into the fields of science, technology, engineering and math. We hope even if you don't win the prizes at the auction, you will find it in your heart to donate to this noble cause.

Kenwood has a proud heritage of space flight beginning with the TM-V7A, TM-D700A, TM-D710E and upcoming TM-D710GA. We at Kenwood are happy to donate this TS-890S and our engineering time and energies to provide customized firmware and radios to the ARISS mission.

Bidding starts April 8th at Noon UTC and ends April 14th at 10PM UTC.
For more details go to www.ARISS.org

Donations to ARISS are tax deductible and go directly toward reaching out to the next generation of Hams. Additional donations may be made online at <http://www.amsat.org/donate> (select the "ARISS Donations" button)

Customer Support/Distribution
(310) 639-4200 Fax: (310) 537-8235


www.kenwood.com/usa



ADS#07919

RETURN OF THE TW-1 TALKING WATTMETER!



In 2005 LDG introduced the TW-1, an extraordinary wattmeter that spoke the power and SWR levels aloud via a self-contained speaker. It was intended primarily for visually impaired hams, and was quite popular. We sold quite a few of them, then dropped the product from our lineup as we moved on to other new products.

We recently learned that the TW-1 is still highly prized by visually impaired hams, and is even passed down from one to another as they become Silent Keys. LDG is proud to announce the return of the TW-1 Talking Wattmeter to our product lineup, and as a thank you to our loyal customers, we are offering it at its original 2005 price of only \$150.

The TW-1 Talking Wattmeter handles all power levels up to 2,000 watts, and speaks the power aloud when you press the button. You can select forward or reverse power, or the Standing Wave Ratio (SWR). The TW-1 will speak in English, Spanish or German as you select. You can also select Tone Mode, in which the TW-1 plays a continuous tone whose pitch varies with Forward or Reverse power, or SWR. This mode is ideal for manually adjusting a tuner, or a vacuum tube transmitter or amplifier. You can watch the plate current meter while listening to the power output.

The TW-1 can also be used mobile; it's great for tuning a screwdriver type antenna while keeping your eyes on the road. It runs on 12 volts DC at 200 mA, so providing power in a car, truck or van is no problem.

Visit us on the web at www.ldgelectronics.com for more information on the TW-1, and all of LDG's other innovative, high-quality products. For this special promotion, the TW-1 is available exclusively from MTC Radio (www.mtcradio.com).



THE ORIGINAL TALKING WATTMETER

\$150 | Available Now at the
Original 2005 Price!

**SPEAKS ENGLISH, SPANISH OR GERMAN
OR CAN BE USED IN TONE MODE**

Easy
Hook-up



AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY AT



LDG Electronics is Proud to Sponsor

Handiham



www.handiham.org

support@ldgelectronics.com

www.ldgelectronics.com

BEST SERVICE. BEST WARRANTY. BEST VALUE. Ask around and check online; no one beats LDG!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

APRIL

BELTON, TEXAS — The Temple Amateur Radio Club will hold **HamEXPO** from 7 a.m. to noon, Saturday, April 6 at the Bell County Expo Center, 301 W. Loop 121. Website: <www.tarrc.org>. VE exams.

BRANSON, MISSOURI — The Four State QRP Group will hold **OzarkCon** beginning 4 p.m., Friday, April 5 and from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, April 6 at the Stone Castle Hotel & Conference Center, 3050 Green Mountain Drive. Website: <www.ozarkcon.com>. Friday kit building workshop, special event station: KØN.

BRAINERD, MINNESOTA — The Brainerd Amateur Radio Club will hold the **Brainerd Area Hamfest** from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, April 6 at the Brainerd National Guard Armory, 1115 Wright Street. Contact: BAARC, 33247 East Shamaineau Drive, Motley, MN 56466. Website: <www.brainerdham.org>. Talk-in 147.225+. VE exams, ARRL card checking.

COLUMBUS, INDIANA — The Columbus Amateur Radio Club will hold the **36th Annual Columbus HAMFEST** from 8 a.m. to noon, Saturday, April 6 at the Bartholomew County Fairgrounds-Community Building, 750 W. County Road 200S. Contact: Matthew Bruner, KC9BWO, 325 Robbins Street, Hope, IN 47246. Phone: (812) 375-4860. Email: <kc9bwo@att.net>. Website: <www.carcnet.net>. Talk-in 146.79- (PL 103.5). VE exams.

FORT SMITH, ARKANSAS — The Fort Smith Area Amateur Radio Club will hold the **Hanging Judge Hamfest** from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, April 6 at the Sebastian County Emergency Communications and Training Facility, 8400 South Zero Street. Contact: Mike Cole, W5TMC, (918) 427-1431 or (479) 522-3683. Email: <mikew5tmc@gmail.com>. Website: <www.hanging-judgehamfest.com>. VE exams.

GLENWOOD, IOWA — The Heartland Hams will hold **Hamfest – 2019** from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Saturday, April 6 at the American Legion Hall, 104 N. Vine Street. Contact: Don Brown (712) 520-7942 or Sharon Sullivan (402) 551-1673. Website: <http://heartlandhams.org>. Talk-in 145.290.

LONGMONT, COLORADO — The Longmont Amateur Radio Club will hold **LARCFEST 2019** from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, April 6 at the Boulder County Fairgrounds-Exhibit Hall, 9595 Nelson Avenue. Contact: Jeff, <jnoon.kdohaq@gmail.com>. Website: <www.w0eno.org>.

NOBLE, ILLINOIS — The Clay County Area Amateur Radio Club will hold its **9th Annual April Fools' Fest** from 8 a.m. to noon, Saturday, April 6 at the West Richland Center, 320 E. North Avenue. Email: <claycountyradio@gmail.com>. Website: <claycountyradio.webs.com>. Talk-in 146.760- (PL 94.8). VE exams.

NORWICH, NEW YORK — The Chenango Valley Amateur Radio Association will hold the **CVARA Bullthistle Hamfest** from 8 a.m. to noon, Saturday, April 6 at the Chenango County Pomona Grange, 167 County Road 32A. Email: <hamfest@cvaraa.net>. Website: <http://cvara.net>. Talk-in 146.685- (PL 110.96). VE exams.

BOSTON, PENNSYLVANIA — The Two Rivers Amateur Radio Club will hold its **48th Annual Hamfest / Computer Show** from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Sunday, April 7 at The Boston Spectrum, 6001 Smithfield Street. Phone: (412) 398-1092. Email: <petersondt@verizon.net> or <information@trarc.net>. Website: <www.trarc.net>. Talk-in 146.73. VE exams and card checking.

FRAMINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS — The Framingham Amateur Radio Association will hold the **Framingham Flea** from 9 a.m. to noon, Sunday, April 7 at Keefe Technical School, 750 Winter Street. Contact: Andy, KC1DMM, (508) 310-5913 (before 9 p.m.). Email: <tables@w1fy.org>. Website: <http://w1fy.org>. Talk-in 147.15. VE exams.

MADISON HEIGHTS, MICHIGAN — The GM Amateur Radio Club will hold its **Technology Expo** from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Sunday, April 7 at the Madison Heights Convention Center, 876 Horace Brown Drive. Contact: Mike Carelli, W8MJC, (248) 835-9545. Email: <swap@gmarc.org>. Website: <www.gmarc.org>. Talk-in 443.075+ (PL 123). VE exams.

CLAREMORE, OKLAHOMA — The Green Country Hamfest and 2019 ARRL Oklahoma State Convention will be held 4-9 p.m., Friday, April 12 and from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, April 13 at the Claremore Expo Center, 400 Veterans Parkway. Email: <info@greencountryhamfest.org>. Website: <greencountryhamfest.org>. Talk-in 147.09+ (PL 88.5). VE exams, DXCC / WAS / WAC / VUCC card checking.

VISALIA, CALIFORNIA — The Northern California DX Club will hold the **70th International DX Convention** from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday, April 12; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, April 13; and 7:30-11 a.m., Sunday, April 14 at the Visalia Convention Center, 303 E. Acequia Avenue. Email: <info@dxconvention.com>. Website: <www.dxconvention.com>. DXCC / WAS / VUCC / CQ Award card checking; special event station: N6V.

BARTLETT, TENNESSEE — The Mid-South Amateur Radio Association will hold the **Memphis FreeFest** from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, April 13 at the Bartlett Station Municipal Center, 5858 Stage Road. Contact: Art Barnett, WA4PSS, (901) 619-5573. Email: <wa4pss@gmail.com> or <freefest@maraonline.org>. Website: <www.maraonline.org>. Talk-in 145.21/144.61 (PL 107.2) or 147.03/147.63 (PL 107.2). VE exams.

CUYAHOGA FALLS, OHIO — The Cuyahoga Falls Amateur Radio Club will hold its **65th Annual Hamfest Electronic and Computer Show** from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, April 13 at the Elidio & Sons Party Center, 48 E. Bath Road. Contact: Pat Morrow, N8OQP, P.O. Box 614, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44222-0614. Phone: (234) 206-0270. Email: <hamfest2019@cfarc.org>. Website: <www.cfarc.org>. Talk-in 147.27+ or 444.850+. Free VE exams.

HAMPTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE — The Port City Amateur Radio Club will hold the **Seacoast Amateur Radio Flea Market** from 8 a.m. to noon, Saturday, April 13 at the St. James Masonic Lodge, 77 Tide Mill Road. Contact: Mark Pride, K1RX, (603) 231-8695 or Dick Cooper, W1MSN, (603) 474-2373. Email: <fleamarket@w1wqm.org>. Website: <www.w1wqm.org>. VE exams.

MOBILE, ALABAMA — The Mobile Amateur Radio Club will hold the **Mobile Hamfest** from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, April 13 at the Abba Shrine Center, 7701 Hitt Road. Contact: Larry, (251) 635-2327. Email: <mobilehamfest@outlook.com>. Website: <http://w4iax.net>. VE exams.

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON — The Communications Academy will be held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, April 13 and from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday, April 14 at South Seattle College, 600 16th Avenue SW. Contact: Marina Zuetell <n7sl@arrl.net>. Website: <http://communicationsacademy.org>. Talk-in 441.800 (PL 141.3).

STOUGHTON, WISCONSIN — The Madison Area Repeater Association will hold the **47th Annual Madison Hamfest** from 8 a.m. to noon, Saturday, April 13 at the Mandt Community Center, 400 Mandt Parkway. Contact: Paul Toussaint, (608) 205-1994. Email: <w9hsy@execpc.com>. Website: <www.w9hsy.org>. Talk-in 147.150+ (PL 123). VE exams.

YAKIMA, WASHINGTON — The Yakima Amateur Radio Club will hold its **Hamfair** from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, April 13 at the State Fair Park-Modern Living Building, 1301 South Fair Avenue. Contact: Bob Rutherford, (509) 945-5366. Email: <w7aqtreasurer@gmail.com>. Website: <www.w7aq.com>. Talk-in 146.660 (PL 123). VE exams, fox hunt.

TOMS RIVER, NEW JERSEY — The Jersey Shore Amateur Radio Society will hold the **Hamfest By The Shore** beginning 8 a.m., Sunday, April 14 at Riverwood Park, corner of Roverwood Drive & Whiteville Road. Contact: Tom, KD9BVC, (732) 403-0448. Email: <kd9bvc@aol.com>. Website: <www.jsars.org>. Talk-in 146.910- (PL 127.3). VE exams.

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI — The Ararat Shrine Amateur Radio Club will hold **HAMBASH 2019** from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, April 20 at the Ararat Shrine Temple, 5100 Ararat Drive. Website: <www.hambash.com>. Talk-in 145.13. VE exams.

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA — The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society will hold **RARSfest 2019** and the **2019 ARRL North Carolina State Convention** from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, April 20 at the Jim Graham Building-North Carolina State Fairgrounds, 1025 Blue Ridge Road. Contact: Jim Wittich, AC4ZO, (919) 362-4787. Email: <jwittich@nc.rr.com>. Website: <www.rarsfest.org>. Talk-in 146.64. VE exams, ARRL & CQ award card checking, fox hunt, GOTA station.

WALDO, FLORIDA — The Gainesville Amateur Radio Society will hold the **Gainesville Hamfest 2019** from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, April 20 at the First Baptist Church of Waldo, 14730 Kennard Street. Contact: Larry Rovak, WB2SVB, (201) 697-7721. Email: <hamfestchairman@gars.club>. Website: <www.gars.club>. Talk-in 146.82-. VE exams.

LINWOOD, NORTH CAROLINA — The RV Radio Network will hold the **2019 RV Radio Network Spring Eyeball Rally** beginning Wednesday, April 24 through Saturday, April 27 at the Cross Winds Family Campground, 160 Campground Lane. Contact: Hank or Selene Montgomery <hank@k4hm.net>. Phone: (336) 853-4567. Website: <http://radionetwork.com>.

STERLING, VIRGINIA — The Southeastern VHF Society, Northeast Weak Signal Group, and Mt. Airy VHF Radio Club will hold the **VHF Super Conference** from Friday, April 26 through Sunday, April 28 at the Holiday Inn Washington-Dulles International Airport, 45425 Holiday Drive. Contact: Mark Casey, K1MAP, 303 Main Street, Hampden, MA 01036. Website: <www.vhfsuperconference.com>.

DES MOINES, IOWA — The Des Moines Radio Amateurs Association will hold the **2019 DMRAA Hamfest** from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, April 27 at the Iowa State Fairgrounds-Elwell Family Center, 300 East Grand Avenue. Contact: DMRAA, P.O. Box 88, Des Moines, IA 50301. Email: <info@dmraa.com>. Website: <www.dmraa.com>. Talk-in 146.940 (PL 114.8). VE exams.

GARLAND, TEXAS — The Hella Hams in conjunction with the **ARRL North Texas Section** will hold the **2019 MENTOR-FEST** from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, April 27 at the Hella Shrine Center, 2121 Rowlett Road. Email: <mentorfest@arrlntx.org>. Website: <www.arrlntx.org>.

GEORGETOWN, DELAWARE — The Sussex Amateur Radio Association will hold the **Delmarva Amateur Radio & Electronics EXPO** beginning 7:30 a.m., Saturday, April 27 at the Cheer Community Center, 20520 Sand Hill Road. Contact: Vic, KC3BUI, (302) 628-3060. Website: <www.radioelectronicsexpo.com>. Talk-in 147.090 (PL 156.7). VE exams, card checking.

(Continued on page 93)

EDITORIAL STAFF

Richard S. Moseson, W2VU, Editor
Jason Feldman, KD2IWM, Managing Editor
Susan Moseson, Editorial Consultant

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Kent Britain, WA5VJB, Antennas
Gerry L. Dexter, The Listening Post
Joe Eisenberg, KØNEB, Kit-Building
Tony Emanuele, K8ZR, VHF
Tomas Hood, NW7US, Propagation
John Langridge, KB5NJD, MF/LF Operating
Anthony Luscre, K8ZT, Microcontrollers
Irwin Math, WA2NDM, Math's Notes
Joe Moell, KØOV, Homing In
Eric Nichols, KL7AJ, Analog Adventures
Ron Ochu, KOØZ, Learning Curve
Jeff Reinhardt, AA6JR, Mobile/Radio Magic
Scott Rought, KA8SMA, QRP
Don Rotolo, N2IRZ, Digital
Rob de Santos, K8RKD, Communications Horizons
Walt Palmer, W4ALT, Emergency Communications
Bob Schenck, N2OO, DX
David Siddall, K3ZJ, Contesting
Tom Smerk, AA6TS, International
Jason Togyer, KB3CNM, Spurious Signals
Gordon West, WB6NOA, Short Circuits
Wayne Yoshida, KH6WZ, The Ham Notebook

AWARD MANAGEMENT

John Bergman, KC5LK, WAZ Award
Steve Bolia, N8BJQ, WPX Award
Keith Gilbertson, KØKG, CQ DX Award

CONTEST MANAGEMENT

Andy Blank, N2NT, CQ 160 Meter Contest
Steve Bolia, N8BJQ, CQ VHF Contest
John Dorr, K1AR, CQWW DX Contest
Ed Muns, WØYK, CQ RTTY Contest
John Sweeney, K9EL, CQ DX Marathon
Terry Zivney, N4TZ, CQWW WPX Contest

BUSINESS STAFF

Richard A. Ross, K2MGA, Publisher
Dorothy Kehwieder, Associate Publisher,
Advertising
Richard S. Moseson, W2VU, Associate Publisher,
Editorial
Emily Leary, Sales Coordinator
Doris Watts, Accounting Department

CIRCULATION STAFF

Cheryl DiLorenzo, Customer Service Manager

PRODUCTION STAFF

Elizabeth Ryan, Art Director
Dorothy Kehwieder, Production Director
Emily Leary, Production Manager
Hal Keith, Illustrator
Larry Mulvehill, WB2ZPI, Staff Photographer

A publication of



CQ Communications, Inc.
17 West John Street
Hicksville, NY 11801 USA.

CQ Amateur Radio (ISSN 0007-893X) Volume 75, No. 4.
Published monthly by CQ Communications, Inc., 17 West John Street, Hicksville, NY 11801, Telephone 516-681-2922. E-mail: cq@cq-amateur-radio.com. Fax 516-681-2926. Web site: www.cq-amateur-radio.com. Periodicals Postage Paid at Hicksville, NY 11801 and at additional mailing offices. Subscription prices (all in U.S. dollars): Domestic-one year \$38.95, two years \$70.95, three years \$102.95; Canada/Mexico-one year \$51.95, two years \$96.95, three years \$138.95; Foreign Air Post-one year \$63.95, two years \$120.95, three years \$177.95. Single copy \$6.99. U.S. Government Agencies: Subscriptions to CQ are available to agencies of the United States government including military services, only on a cash with order basis. Requests for quotations, bids, contracts, etc. will be refused and will not be returned or processed. Entire contents copyrighted 2019 by CQ Communications, Inc. CQ does not assume responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts. Allow six weeks for change of address.

Printed in the U.S.A.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:

CQ Amateur Radio, 17 W. John Street., Hicksville, NY 11801

Nominations Open for Young Ham of the Year Award

Nominations are open for the 2019 Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, Memorial Newline Young Ham of the Year Award (YHOTY). CQ is a proud corporate sponsor of this award. Nominees must be age 18 or younger and live in the United States or Canada. They must be making a significant contribution to amateur radio and/or using amateur radio to make a significant contribution to their communities (e.g., simply being licensed at age 2 won't cut it). This year, for the first time, only emailed nominations will be accepted. The nomination deadline is May 31, 2019. For complete information and nominating forms, visit <www.arnewline.org/2019yhotyform>.

WWV Funding Restored, Centennial Preparations Continue

Congress has restored full funding for WWV, WWVB, and WWVH, despite a budget proposal from the National Institute of Standards and Technology to shut down the three standard time and frequency radio stations. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2019 included some \$725 million for NIST's Scientific and Technical Research and Services (STRS), the budget category that includes the stations' funding, according to NIST Public Affairs Director Gail Porter. The conference report accompanying the budget bill notes that "(t)he agreement rejects the proposed terminations and reductions for all STRS programs" and includes "not less than fiscal year 2018 funding" for several services, including "Time and Fundamental Measurement Dissemination."

With the shutdown threat ended, preparations continue for marking WWV's centennial this fall. According to the *ARRL Letter*, the Northern Colorado Amateur Radio Club will be operating a special event station from the WWV transmitter site from September 28 through October 2, using the callsign WWØWWV.

WWV and WWVH are also making timeslots available from April 20 to May 3 for the Department of Defense to request reception reports of communication during its "Northcom Vital Connection Wisconsin" exercise. The announcements will be broadcast at 10 minutes after each hour on WWV and 50 minutes after the hour on WWVH. It will reportedly serve as a pilot for future broadcasts of similar exercises. (Tnx WA2KBZ)

"RF Seismograph" May Give Advance Notice of Earthquakes

A ham in British Columbia has developed an "RF Seismograph" that detects changes in noise and activity levels on the HF spectrum resulting from earthquakes. According to the *ARRL Letter*, Alex Schwarz, VE7DXW, reports that the device has not only monitored band changes associated with earthquakes as they happen, but in some cases has begun tracking increased noise levels up to an hour before a quake. He says electric field lines associated with earthquakes result in increased RF noise levels. Schwarz is continuing to conduct research and analyze links between earthquakes and HF noise level changes.

Over-the-Horizon Radar Returns

Over-the-horizon radar is making a return to the HF spectrum, causing interference on several amateur bands. The International Amateur Radio Union's Region 1 Monitoring System reports that Russian, Chinese, and British radar have been heard in recent months on the 80-, 60-, 40-, and 15-meter bands. German monitors reported that a Russian radar system has made 60 meters virtually useless there.

Meanwhile, CNN Travel reports that the receive site for the original over-the-horizon radar system — widely known as the Russian woodpecker back in the 1970s — has become a tourist attraction in the Ukraine. The site is located near the Chernobyl

nuclear power plant and was abandoned after the meltdown there. The area around the antenna site has been reopened to visitors. (*There is much more to this story; we will try to provide details next month.* — ed.)

Ham Population Ticks Upward as High Numbers of New Licenses Continue

The number of licensed amateurs in the United States increased by about 1% from 2017 to 2018, according to FCC statistics collected by Joe Speroni, AHØA, reaching a total of 755,430 at the end of the year. This number includes both additions of new amateurs — more than 31,000 for the fifth year in a row, according to the ARRL VEC — and reductions due to non-renewed licenses and deaths.



Carole Perry, WB2MGP, receives the first Carole Perry Educator of the Year award from the Orlando Amateur Radio Club at February's Hamcation. (Photo courtesy WB2MGP)

Milestones: Carole, Riley, and Queen Mary

The Orlando Hamcation® has introduced the Carole Perry Educator of the Year award to recognize teachers who promote the use of amateur radio by young people. Carole, WB2MGP, heads up the Radio Club of America's Youth Initiative program and leads youth forums at various hamfests each year, including the Dayton Hamvention® (31 years and counting) and the Hamcation. She was the first recipient of the Orlando award, presented at the 2019 Hamcation in February.

Former FCC amateur radio enforcer Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, will coordinate the development and implementation of ARRL's new Volunteer Monitors program, a joint ARRL/FCC effort that will replace the Official Observer program. The *ARRL Letter* reports that Hollingsworth resigned as Atlantic Division Vice Director in order to avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest.

The Associated Radio Amateurs of Long Beach (California) are celebrating the 40th anniversary this month of a permanent amateur radio presence on the *Queen Mary* museum ship. W6RO began operations from the ship's radio room on April 22, 1979 and was the first of what the *ARRL Letter* says are now more than 100 ham stations operating from museum ships around the world.

Milestones: Several Prominent Amateurs Become Silent Keys

The amateur radio community has lost several prominent members in recent months, including Don Tyrrell, W8AD, of Alpha Delta; British QRP enthusiast Rev. George Dobbs, G3RJV, who was founder and secretary of the G-QRP Club and editor of its magazine, *SPRAT*; Indian amateur R. Jayaraman, VU2JN, an engineering professor and Director of Technical Education for the state of Kerala, and first recipient of the lifetime achievement award from the Amateur Radio Society of India; former Young Ladies Radio League president Carol Hall, WD8DQG; and former National Traffic System Eastern Area staff chair Bill Thompson, W2MTA.



CONTENTS

APRIL 2019 • VOLUME 75 NUMBER 4

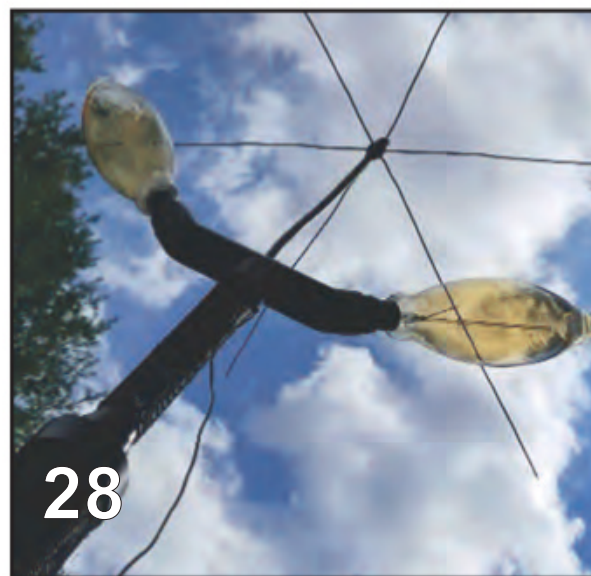


78 COVER: DX

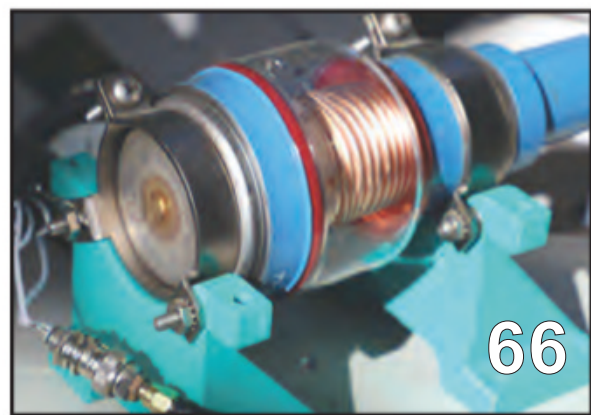
The Family that DXes Together ...

By Bob Schenck, N2OO and Faith Hannah Lee, AE4FH

Faith Hannah Lee, AE4FH (foreground), and her sister Hope, KM4IPF (holding the antenna), wait for an OSCAR-92 satellite pass during a family DXpedition to Dry Tortugas National Park, some 70 miles off Key West, Florida. Faith Hannah recounts the adventure in this month's DX column, starting on page 78. (Photo by James Lea, WX4TV)



28



66

FEATURES

- 10 **WHAT'S UP WITH SOLAR CYCLE 25?**
What Will Solar Cycle 25 Look Like?
By Theodore J. Cohen, Ph.D., N4XX
- 14 **RESULTS OF THE 2018 CQWW DX SSB CONTEST**
"Once More a Wonderful Weekend Among Friends ..."
By John Dorr, K1AR
- 24 **A CQ EXCLUSIVE: NEW COMPETITION ANNOUNCED: SPORADIC iCloud CONTESTING**
By Professor Emil Heisseluft
- 27 **TIME-SHARING TECHNOLOGY REMOVES THE TEDIUM OF CONTESTING**
By Jim Talens, N3JT
- 28 **THE LIGHT BULB ANTENNA**
This Just-For-Fun Project Will Let You Work DX On A Light Bulb
By David Day, N1DAY & Ernie Hollingsworth, KC4SIT
- 36 **ANNOUNCING: 2019 CQ WORLD WIDE FOXHUNTING WEEKEND**
May 11-12 (Or Whenever Works For Your Group)
By Joe Moell, KØOV
- 38 **HAM RADIO AUDIO PODCASTS**
There Is Nearly An Endless Variety of Audio "Podcasts" Available On The Internet
By David Guder, AI6OU
- 41 **A SIMPLE 14-WATT AMPLIFIER FOR DIGITAL MODES ON 630 METERS**
W8MQW Has A Straightforward Design To Get You Making Contacts
By Chuck MacCluer, W8MQW

SPOTLIGHT ON: See the results of the largest radio contest in the world as John Dorr, K1AR, discusses the CQWW DX SSB contest on p. 14. See how you did against the thousands of other contestors with the full scores on p. 94. Also, Professor Emil Heisseluft reveals the new age of constesting on p.24!

COLUMNS

- 44 **MATH'S NOTES:** A Technique for Recovering Very Weak Signals
By Irwin Math, WA2NDM
- 46 **THE LISTENING POST:** Meyerton Shuts Down!
By Gerry Dexter
- 50 **QRP: LOW-POWER COMMUNICATIONS:** Winter Field Day, Digital QRP Operation, and a Note from Z35M
By R. Scott Rought, KA8SMA
- 53 **KIT-BUILDING:** Singing the Blues and a 49er
By Joe Eisenberg, KØNEB
- 55 **LEARNING CURVE:** Show Me Pictures! All About SSTV
By Ron Ochu, KOØZ
- 61 **MAGIC IN THE SKY:** Water, Water Everywhere ...
By Jeff Reinhardt, AA6JR
- 64 **COMMUNICATIONS HORIZONS:** Smart Cities
By Rob de Santos, K8RKD
- 66 **MF/LF OPERATING:** Let's Talk About Transmitting Loops for MF and LF
By John Langridge, KB5NJD
- 72 **ANTENNAS:** NVR and AMSAT X-Band Antennas
By Kent Britain, WA5VJB

DEPARTMENTS

- 48 **EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS:** Ready, Set ... STOP!
By Walt Palmer, W4ALT
 - 74 **VHF PLUS:** VHF-Plus DXpeditions and More
By Tony Emanuele, K8ZR
 - 76 **AWARDS:** Focus on CQ Awards: The CQ Worked All Zones Award
By Staff
 - 83 **CONTESTING:** Radiosport Provides Common Ground for Young and Old
By David Siddall, K3ZJ
 - 88 **PROPAGATION:** Random Joy and Planned Success
By Tomas Hood, NW7US
- 2 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - 3 **HAM RADIO NEWS**
 - 8 **ZERO BIAS**
 - 22, 77 **WHAT'S NEW**
 - 60 **OOPS**
 - 71 **SPURIOUS SIGNALS**
 - 86 **BEHIND THE BYLINES**
 - 87 **LOOKING AHEAD**
 - 94 **CQWW DX SSB SCORES**
 - 110 **OUR READERS SAY**
 - 112 **HAM SHOP**

AR-DV1

Multi-mode Digital Voice Receiver

Get your hands on the industry-leading analog and digital voice receiver that automatically recognizes and monitors popular digital modes including APCO P25, DMR, dPMR™, NXDN™, MOTOTURBO™, D-Star™, Digital CR, Yaesu System Fusion, Kenwood and Alinco EJ-47U formats. You also get analog AM, WFM, NFM, CW and Upper & Lower Sideband reception.

Packed with features like a SD/SDHC card to record audio, back up its 2,000 memories or update its field-upgradeable firmware, the AR-DV1 can operate on its own or using computer control through its micro USB port. The multi-purpose display shows the digital or analog mode, DMR color codes, channel IDs, P25 NAC Codes and more!



The AR-DV1 can serve monitoring enthusiasts, public safety, military, federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, emergency managers, diplomatic services, news-gathering operations and more.

The AR-DV1 is available in a professional (unblocked) or USA consumer version.*

For more information on the AR-DV1, go to www.aorusa.com

Check these AR-DV1 Features:

- wide band coverage from 100kHz to 1300MHz*
- computer control for easier programming and monitoring operation
- Field upgradeable with downloads from the AOR website
- a micro USB computer interface
- built-in SD/SDHC card reader for audio recording
- higher 1st IF frequency 1705 MHz provides higher image rejections
- CSV memory data capability for frequency uploads/ downloads and firmware updates
- 2000 memory channels (50 channels X 40 banks)
- alpha-numeric channel labels
- offset reception and priority channel selection
- auto-notch filter
- noise reduction
- voice inverter
- discriminator output



® The Serious Choice in Advanced Technology Receivers

AOR U.S.A., Inc.
20655 S. Western Ave., Suite 112
Torrance, CA 90501, USA
Tel: 310-787-8615 Fax: 310-787-8619
info@aorusa.com • www.aorusa.com

Product and brand names are used for identification purposes only, all trademarks remain the property of their respective owners. Specifications and product appearance subject to change without notice or obligation. Cellular frequencies blocked in USA version.

The Conclusive Choice

1- Pulling out weak signals during extremely harsh band conditions

VC-Tune

Unparalleled damping characteristic of -70 dB maximum attenuation

Newly developed VC-Tune RF Preselector with high precision stepping motor drive provides outstanding attenuation characteristics

VC-Tune further improves the high performance RF μ -Tuning system design adopted in FTDX9000, using a remarkable miniaturization design while producing an unparalleled attenuation characteristic of maximum attenuation -70 dB. A high precision stepping motor drives a variable capacitor to continuously cover the band as it follows the movement of the selected frequency by the operator. Fine-tuning for optimum improvement point is also available by MPVD (Multi-Purpose VFO Outer Dial) placed outside the VFO dial.

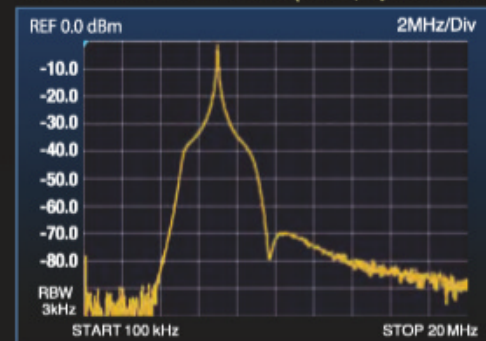
VC-Tune (7MHz, Span 20MHz)



Band Pass Filter (7MHz, Span 20MHz)



VC-Tune + Band Pass Filter (7MHz, Span 20MHz)



Maximum Attenuation: -70 dB
 -3 dB Bandwidth: 62kHz



VC-Tune
(Variable Capacitor Unit)



In Homage to the Founder of Yaesu – Sako Hasegawa JA1MP

FTDX101MP 200W

HF/50MHz TRANSCEIVER

The Ultimate

FTDX101D 100W

HF/50MHz TRANSCEIVER

This device has not been approved by the FCC. This device may not be offered for sale or lease or be sold or leased until approval of the FCC has been obtained. The information shown is preliminary and may be subject to change without notice or obligation.



C4FM/FM 144/430 MHz Dual Band 5W
Digital Transceiver

New

FT-70DR

« 700 mW Loud and Clear audio,
Commercial Grade Specifications »



C4FM/FM 144/430 MHz Dual Band 5 W
Digital Transceiver

FT2DR

« Improved 66 ch GPS receiver included »

System Fusion

C4FM Digital Pursuing Advanced Communications



C4FM/FM 144/430 MHz Dual Band 50 W
Digital Transceiver

FTM-100DR

« Improved 66 ch GPS receiver included »



C4FM/FM 144/430 MHz
Dual Band Dual Receive Digital Repeater

New

DR-2X



C4FM/FM 144/430 MHz Dual Band 50 W
Digital Transceiver

FTM-400XDR

« Improved 66 ch GPS receiver included »



C4FM/FM 144 MHz 65 W
Digital Transceiver

FTM-3200DR

« Genuine 65 Watts High Power »



CW/SSB/AM/FM/C4FM
HF/50/144/430 MHz Wide-Coverage
100 W All Mode Transceiver (144/430 MHz: 50 W)

FT-991A

« Real-Time Spectrum Scope included »



C4FM/FM 430 MHz 55 W
Digital Transceiver

New

FTM-3207DR

« Heavy Duty 55 Watts High Power »

System Fusion II Supports All C4FM Portables and Mobiles

• Firmware updates will enable System Fusion II compatibility with all existing C4FM products.

YAESU
The radio

YAESU USA
6125 Phyllis Drive, Cypress,
CA 90630 (714) 827-7600

For the latest Yaesu news, visit us on the Internet: <http://www.yaesu.com>

Specifications subject to change without notice. Some accessories and/or options may be standard in certain areas. Frequency coverage may differ in some countries. Check with your local Yaesu Dealer for specific details.

ZERO BIAS: A CQ Editorial

BY RICH MOSESON,* W2VU

YOTA, YCP, YARC ... ARRL is MIA

The key letter in the abbreviations and acronyms in the headline is “Y.” In all three cases, it refers to young hams — Youngsters on the Air, Youth Contesting Program, Young Amateurs Radio Club. You’ll notice that there’s no “Y” in ARRL, figuratively as well as literally, and that’s a problem.

It certainly isn’t a new problem. My initial involvement in organized amateur radio (beyond my local club) was a program I tried to get the League behind for outreach to young people back in the early 1980s. The response at the time was that it would be best to pursue the program through local clubs and the net result was an article in *QST* and an appointment to the then-newly-created position of Affiliated Club Coordinator for the ARRL section in which I lived at the time. A few years later, “Amateur Radio Newsline” producer Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF (SK), started the Young Ham of the Year award, a program with which *CQ* has been proudly affiliated nearly since its start. Around the same time, Carole Perry, WB2MGP, began showcasing the abilities and accomplishments of young hams at her annual Dayton Hamvention® Youth Forum — #32 is coming up next month!

More recently, Mike Kalter, W8CI, of the Dayton Amateur Radio Association, organized the Dave Kalter Memorial Youth DX Adventure program in memory of his brother, KB8OCP (now the program’s callsign). Each year, this program gives a few young hams the opportunity to operate from a DX location with guidance from accomplished DXers. For 2019, three young operators will go to Curacao for DX adventure in July.

This month’s Contesting column (p. 82) reports on the formation in 2017 of the Young Amateurs Radio Club (YARC) and its effort to create an American equivalent of Europe’s Youth Contesting Program (YCP; also discussed in Contesting this month and in the past). The YCP in Europe is part of the broader Youth On The Air (YOTA) program sponsored by Region 1 of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU).

Another YOTA activity is its annual youth camp, to which a young American ham is frequently invited. This past January’s *CQ* featured a report by Faith Hannah Lea, AE4FH, on her experience as the U.S. member of last year’s YOTA camp in South Africa. Faith Hannah returns to our pages this month with a report in the DX column on a family mini-DXpedition to the Dry Tortugas (p. 78). In addition, Tim Duffy, K3LR, regularly hosts young hams at his contest superstation in Pennsylvania (one group was scheduled to be there for the recent *CQ* WPX SSB Contest). And the Radio Club of America (of which Tim is the current president and Carole is youth activities chair) has an active Youth Activities program which sponsors Carole’s Dayton forum each year and presents annual Young Achiever awards.

There is one missing element from all of these great programs and activities: The ARRL. While the League has long sponsored an annual teacher training program, provides grants for equipping school club stations (a program which originated with an idea from *CQ*), holds a “Kids’ Day” activity on the air and offers mini-grants to clubs that promote youth activities, virtually all of these programs are a step removed, sticking with the mindset I first heard nearly 40 years ago — “go through the local clubs.”

Across the pond, on the other hand, the YOTA program is a direct hands-on activity of IARU Region 1, with a full-time staff member providing coordination. YOTA camps and the YCP program have had the direct support of and participation by the national ham radio association of each host country. There

“When it comes to direct sponsorship of youth recruitment and mentoring programs, ARRL has been missing in action for decades, and it’s time for that to end.”

is no equivalent on this side of the Atlantic, either by the ARRL or IARU Region 2 (of which ARRL is the 800-lb. gorilla).

Last August, we discussed efforts by one of the first American hams to take part in a YOTA camp to build support for a similar program here. He told us that he first approached the League but could not generate any real interest. That is mind-boggling but hardly surprising.

When it comes to direct sponsorship of youth recruitment and mentoring programs, ARRL has been missing in action for decades, and it’s time for that to end. What could possibly be more important to the future of amateur radio, or a better use of ARRL member dues, than direct support and sponsorship of activities that not only encourage young people to get their ham licenses but help them get on the air, learn how to build stuff, and discover all the excitement our hobby has to offer?



Participants in last year’s Youngsters on the Air camp in South Africa launched a balloon carrying amateur radio payloads they’d built themselves. ARRL needs to lead similar programs here in the U.S. (Photo by WX4TV)

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

Radio Programming Made Sooooo Easy

Receive Frequency	Transmit Frequency	Offset	Direction	Operating Mode	Name	Tone Mode	CTCSS	PLS	DCS	DCS Priority	Step	Size	Digital Speech	Digital Code	Tone Category	Rpt 1 Callign	Rpt 2 Callign	Blank	Bank Channel Number
144.00000	144.00000		Simplex	FM	None	None					5 kHz								
145.70000	145.70000		Simplex	FM	Unidirect Noise	None					5 kHz								
145.71250	145.71250	600 kHz	+DUP	FM	Unidirect Noise	None					5 kHz								
146.01000	146.01000		Simplex	FM	None	None					5 kHz								
146.01000	147.40000	600 kHz	+DUP	FM	None	None					5 kHz								

Easy Editing Includes:

- Auto fill for many details.
- Calculations (offset frequency, offset direction, etc) are done for you.
- Allowable values match those of your radio.

Your radio does more than just memories. So does this software.

- Explore all your radio can do by seeing the features on the computer screen.
- Options you struggle to set from the face of the radio can be set up and saved in the Programmer, then easily transferred to the radio.

384
379 unique radio
Programmers...
Check for your
radio model at:
www.rtsystems.com

Available from RT Systems or Your Local Radio Dealer
800-476-0719 | www.rtsystems.com
Personal Assistance Mon.-Fri., 8:00-5:00, Sat. 9:00-1:00 Mountain Time

rt SYSTEMS

The League's new CEO says he wants to reach out to a broader base of amateurs with ARRL programs and services. Here's a starting point: Get behind — better yet, get out in front of — programs and activities such as an American version of YOTA and the YCP, with direct support and leadership. Programs and activities by individuals, clubs and other organizations are important and should continue to be supported, but there is no substitute for direct hands-on leadership by the national association to show that mentoring the next generation of hams is a number-one priority. It may be that there's no "I" in "team," but there needs to be a "Y" in "ARRL."

Smart Cities, Smart Cars (and QRM?)

In this issue's "Communications Horizons" column (p. 64), Rob de Santos, K8RKD, writes about "smart cities" and the growing need for "smart infrastructure," systems that will allow increasingly autonomous vehicles to be alerted to changing traffic signals, reduced speed limits or road hazards, such as icy conditions or a traffic slowdown ahead. It sounds like science fiction, but the need for this type of communication is right on the horizon. While fully autonomous vehicles are still experimental right now, many of today's cars have close-to-autonomous technology already built in. I had the opportunity during a recent trip to spend a few days driving a rental car that featured look-ahead radar and lane-departure alerts with "steering assist." Combined with traditional cruise control, this car was nearly able to drive itself. If I started drifting out of my lane, it not only beeped at me, but started to pull the car back into the lane on its own (putting on the turn signal disabled this feature; and yes, Mom, I waited until I was in an area with no nearby traffic to play with it). With cruise control on, the car maintained a safe following distance for me. At one point, I was in traffic with the cruise control set at

the speed limit of 50 miles per hour. Another driver pulled into my lane ahead of me and my car automatically slowed down to about 45 to maintain a gap of roughly four car lengths. That car then made a right turn ... and mine very smoothly accelerated itself back up to 50! It was amazing! I recall thinking that it's too bad it can't tell when a traffic light is turning red or when the speed limit changes. That's exactly the type of smart infrastructure that Rob writes about this month.

What does this have to do with ham radio? There's added spectrum usage for all of these communication systems, of course, but Rob notes that most of them will operate on frequencies already allocated for 5G systems. The big factor for hams is that our cars — in addition to already being rolling computers — are on their way to becoming rolling communication platforms as well. And that creates new levels of electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) concerns for us as hams. Will all of these systems cause interference on our receivers and/or raise our noise floors? (Probably.) But more concerning is whether a mobile amateur radio transmitter will interfere with the vehicle's communication systems — or those of the cars around us — and cause them to behave unpredictably. This is a serious concern that our industry will need to monitor and work to minimize as our vehicles become more dependent on a "clean" RF environment to operate safely and efficiently.

Welcome Back, Gerry!

We're pleased to have "Listening Post" editor Gerry Dexter back in the saddle as of this issue. Gerry has been sidelined for the past three months while recovering from a hip fracture. We're glad to have you back aboard! (PS — We're still looking for new Awards Editor and USA-CA Award Manager. Email me if you're interested.)
—73, Rich, W2VU

Whether you're a radio amateur, CBer, or shortwave listener (SWL), it's a sure bet one of the questions at the top of your mind is: What will the next solar cycle — Cycle 25 — look like? We asked one of our resident experts to take a look for us.

What's Up with Solar Cycle 25?

BY THEODORE J. COHEN, Ph.D.,* N4XX

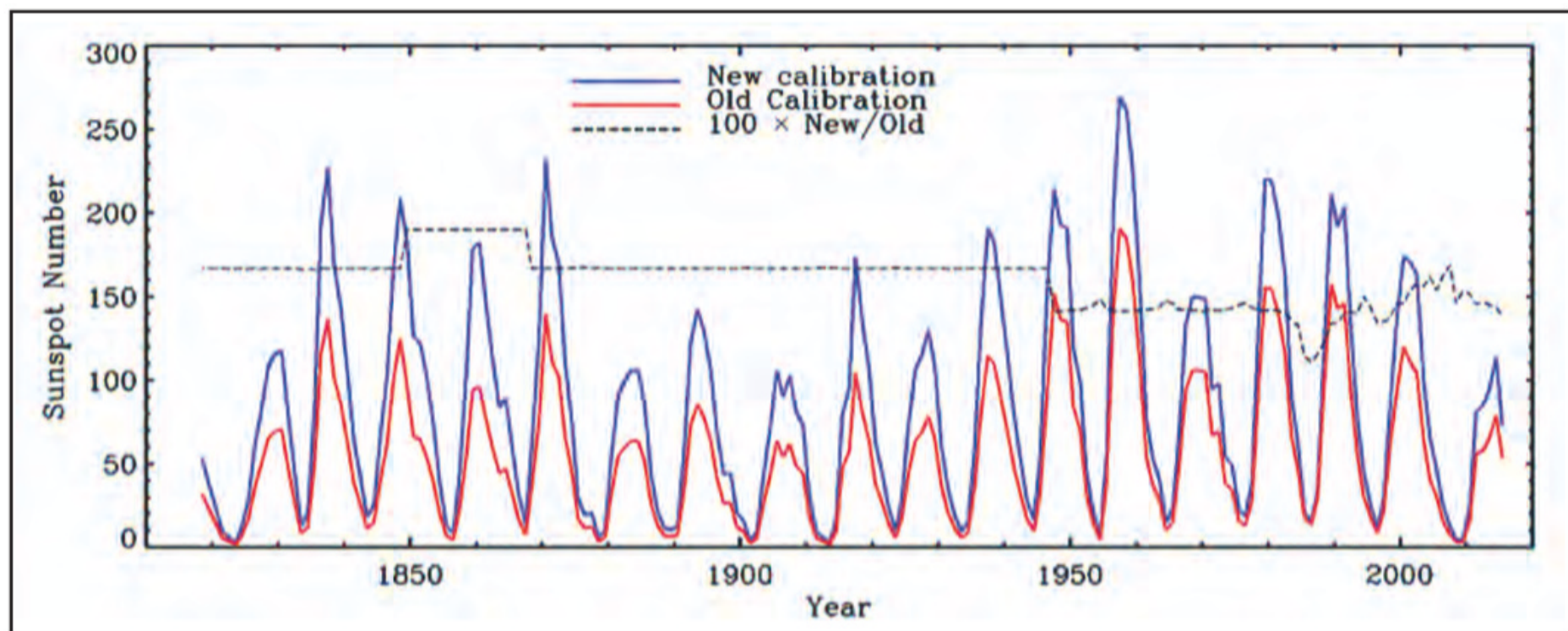



Figure 1. As seen here for the revised sunspot data (called "V2," blue line), the new smoothed sunspot numbers (SSN) are significantly higher in value than those previously stated in the old, "V1" (red line) dataset. (after Space Climate 6, Levi, Finland, April 2016¹)

The nature of the next solar cycle, number 25 since they first were observed and reported by the Swiss Observatory in Zurich, and now, by the Royal Observatory of Belgium, Brussels, is of utmost importance to all users of the high-frequency (HF; 3-30 MHz) spectrum. It's the radiation from the active Sun, after all, that controls the strength of the Earth's ionosphere and hence, our ability to use this naturally occurring phenomenon for long-distance communications.

As seen in Figure 1, we currently are in the final years of Cycle 24, which is the weakest in our lifetimes (note that this chart begins in 1820.) So, this is a good time to ask: Where are we heading?

Before I answer that question, you should understand that the 12-month running smoothed sunspot numbers (SSN) now reported have been "recali-



What Kinds of Predictions?

- Climatological (statistical): Future is an average of the past
 - One example: The upcoming solar maximum will be 115 ± 40 , the long-term average of all prior maxima
 - Should be obsolete!
- Spectral: Evolution of Fourier coefficients
- Precursor: Look for other variables that are leading indicators of activity
 - Polar magnetic field at minimum ~ level of activity at next maximum
 - Flares are anticipated by the appearance of a sigmoid
- Physics-based models: Forecasts produced by models capable of integrating conservation equations, possibly using data-assimilation

the signal and the noise
why most predictions fail but some don't
nate silver

Figure 2. The common methods for producing solar cycle predictions: Climatological (statistical); spectral, precursor, and physics-based. (after Solar Cycle Predictions, W. Dean Pesnell, NASA, Goddard Space Flight Center²)

* c/o Media-Tech,
122 Shady Brook Drive,
Langhorne, PA 19047

brated” as of July 2015. As a matter of fact, at that time, the entire sunspot database was republished using recalibrated numbers. This may not have made much of a difference in the numbers you have been seeing reported in various publications, given we are near a solar minimum and the sunspot counts have been low, but take a look at the maximum that occurred in March 1958. Remember that one? Or at least hear-

ing about it? The old method of reporting SSNs had the 12-month running SSN at 201; the new calibration puts that Cycle 19 maximum at just under 300. The lesson here is: Be aware of which SSNs are being discussed in any given presentation. Your CQ “Propagation” editor will be reminding you of this as well from time to time.

There are several different ways in which predictions can be made. Some of

the more important ones are described in *Figure 2*. And believe me, everybody and their brother (as the saying goes) will be out in force making predictions over the next few years as to where we’ll be headed. Don’t believe me? Take a look at *Figure 3*. Obviously, only a few even got in the ballpark.

So, back to our original question: Where might we be going in Cycle 25? The fact is, there are not a lot of predictions available at this writing, suggesting that researchers are holding their fire until they get a bit more visibility into the early years of the new cycle. Some, however, are not afraid to step into the arena. As seen in *Figure 4*, Bhowmik and Nandi have some good news for us: Their models predict that next cycle could be stronger than the cycle that is just ending. They expect the new cycle to start rising in approximately a year and to peak in 2024 with a (new) SSN in excess of 100.

Schatten, et al. are not as sanguine. Using a Solar Dynamo Amplitude (SODA) index, which monitors the Sun’s buried dynamo fields, his team’s prediction methods suggest a reduced amount of buried magnetic flux, and hence, unless the Sun’s dynamo processes increase dramatically, Cycle 25 will likely be significantly weaker than Cycle 24. Their results are shown in *Figure 5*.

This result is echoed by Javaraiah⁶, who used the amplitudes of the first 24 cycles to predict the relative amplitudes of the solar cycles during the rising phase of what he calls the “upcoming Gleissberg cycle.” (The Gleissberg cycle of solar activity spans roughly 80 to 90 years.) He infers that Cycle 25 will be weaker than Cycle 24 (and, by the way, that Cycle 26 will have almost the same strength).

Hathaway and Upton, on the other hand, examined the average strength of the polar fields near the end of Cycle 24 and found them similar to — or slightly weaker than — those measured near the end of Cycle 23. From this, they concluded that Cycle 25 will be similar in strength or, perhaps, slightly weaker, than the current cycle (see *Figure 6*). They also noted that small cycles such as the one we now are experiencing, are usually preceded by “long extended minima.” This being the case, they concluded we can expect a similar long, extended minimum before Cycle 25 gets underway.

With respect to using the duration of a minimum to predict the strength of the following solar maximum (this would be considered a precursor method of predicting solar cycles), some years ago,

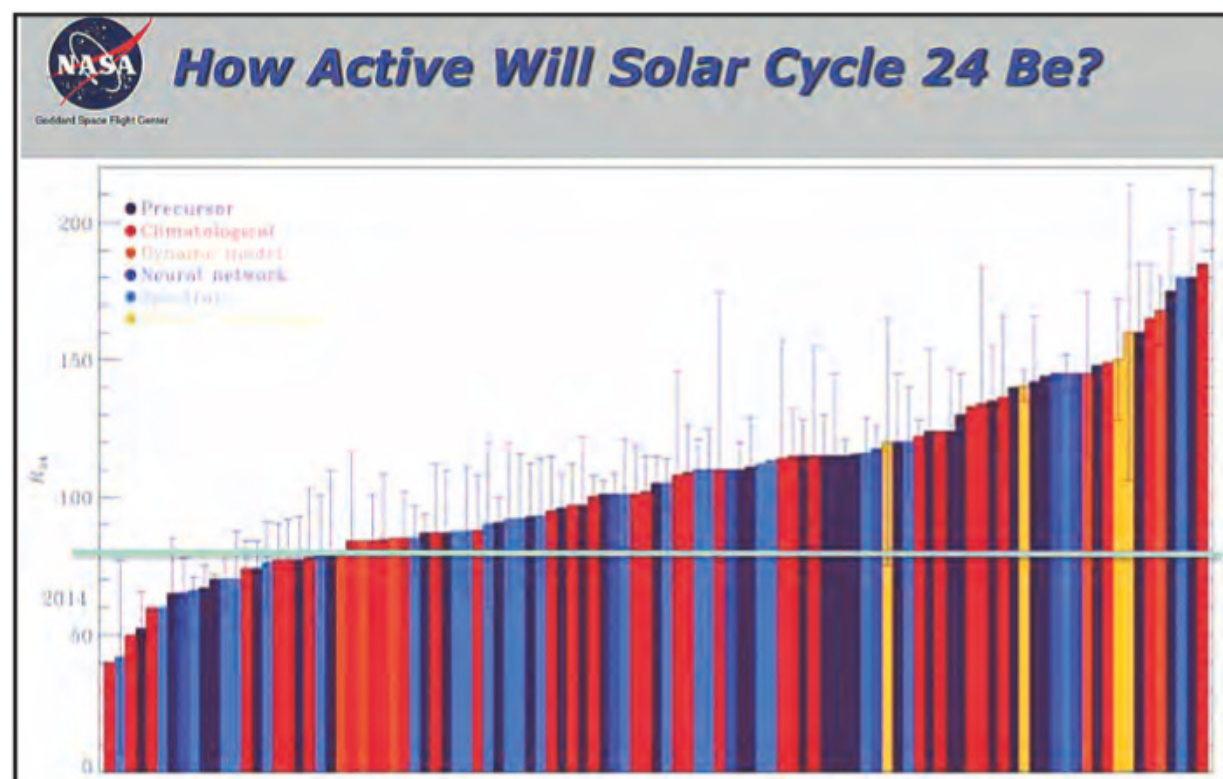


Figure 3. When the smoke cleared, there were more than 100 solar cycle predictions from around the world for the current solar cycle. Most were wrong. (after Space Climate 6, Levi, Finland, April 2016³)

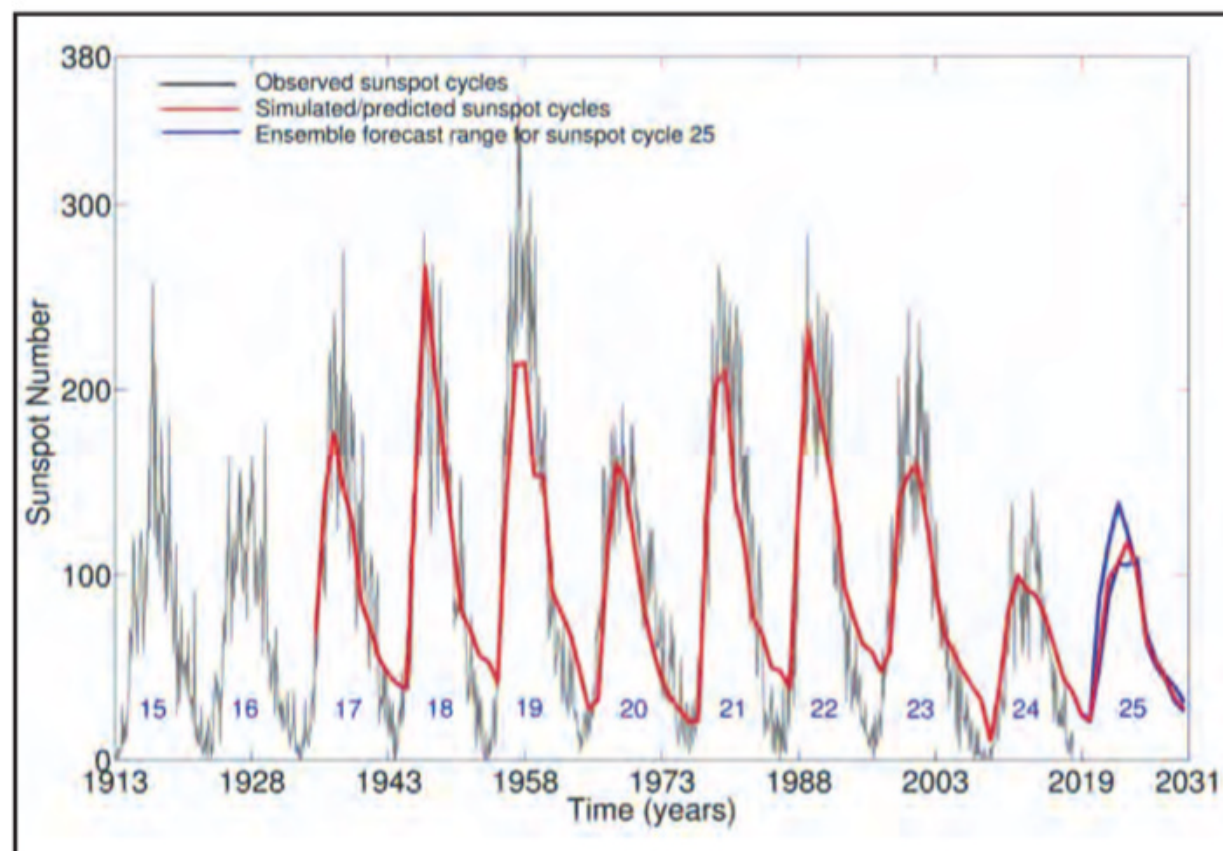


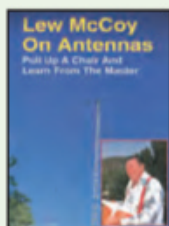
Figure 4. Bhowmik and Nandi successfully reproduced a century of sunspot observations with their model. The red curve represents the simulated (starting from the beginning of solar cycle 17) and predicted (cycle 25) solar activity. The new, observed 12-month smoothed sunspot numbers (V2) are shown in black. (Image via CESSI.⁴)



Low McCoy on Antennas

by Low McCoy, W1ICP

Unlike many technical publications, Low presents his invaluable antenna info in a casual, non-intimidating way for anyone!



8.5 X 11 Paperback \$19.95

CD Version \$14.95

Buy both for only \$29.95



The NEW Shortwave Propagation Handbook

by W3ASK, N4XX & K6GKU

A shortwave propagation book with information on sunspot activity, propagation predictions, unusual propagation effects and do-it-yourself forecasting tips.



8.5 X 11 Paperback \$19.95

CD Version \$14.95

Buy both for only \$29.95

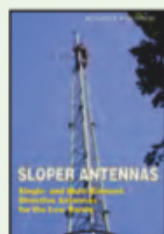


Sloper Antennas

By Juergen A. Weigl, OE5CWL

Single- and Multi-Element Directive Antennas for the Low Bands

With calculations and practical experience, this book shows which basic concepts have to be considered for sloper antennas for the low bands.



6 X 9 Paperback \$24.95

CD Version \$18.95

Buy both for only \$36.95



Shipping & Handling: U.S. add \$7 for the first item, \$3.50 for the second and \$2 for each add'l item. FREE shipping on orders over \$100 to one U.S. address. CN/FN add \$25 for 1st item, \$10 for 2nd and \$5 for each additional. Buy Both=single item!

CQ The Radio Amateur's Journal

Phone 516-681-2922

FAX 516-681-2926

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

Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA, plotted the peak V1 12-month smoothed sunspot numbers of solar cycles versus the durations in months of their preceding solar minima (defined as when the V1 SSNs stayed below 20)⁹. The results are shown in Figure 7. Now, a correlation

coefficient of $R=0.78$ between the old (V1) and new (V2) sunspot scales does not denote a perfect correlation, but it does demonstrate that there's an obvious trend to be observed: Specifically, the longer the period of low sunspot activity (that is, the longer the duration

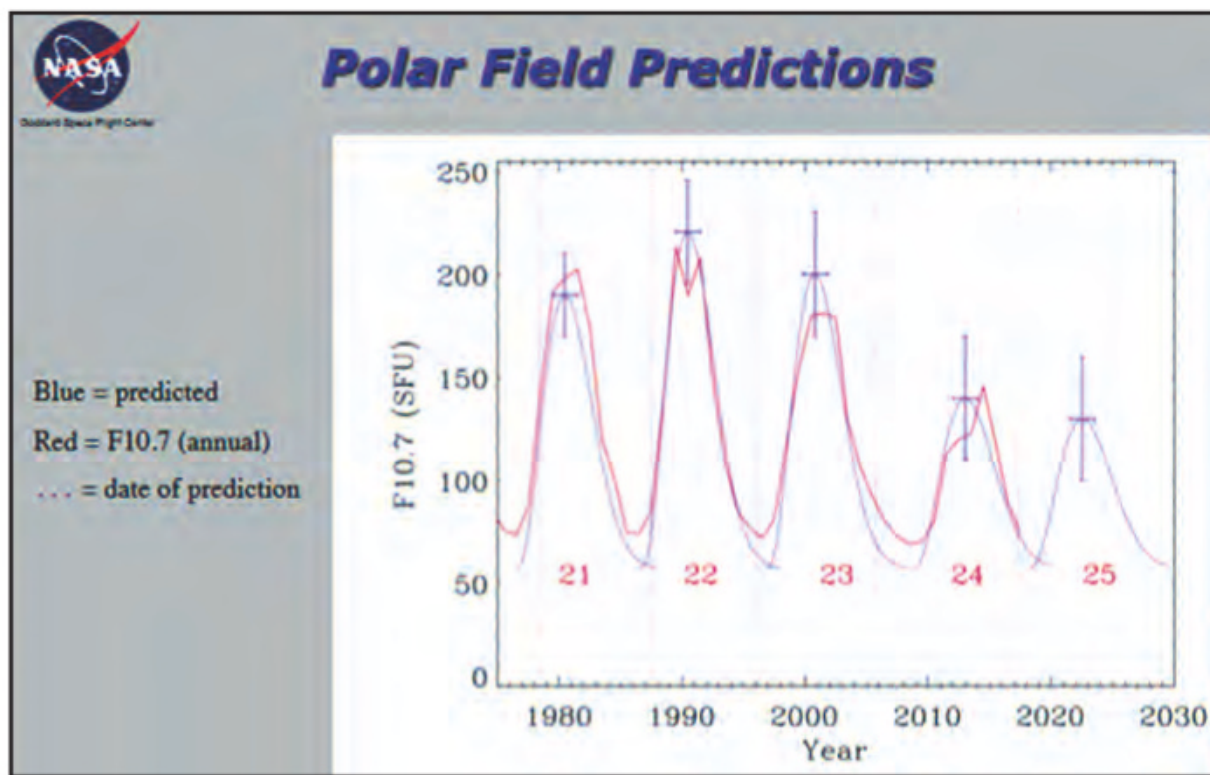


Figure 5. Solar activity predictions by Schatten, et al. use the Sun's polar magnetic field. Be aware that solar predictions are for the new sunspot numbers.⁵

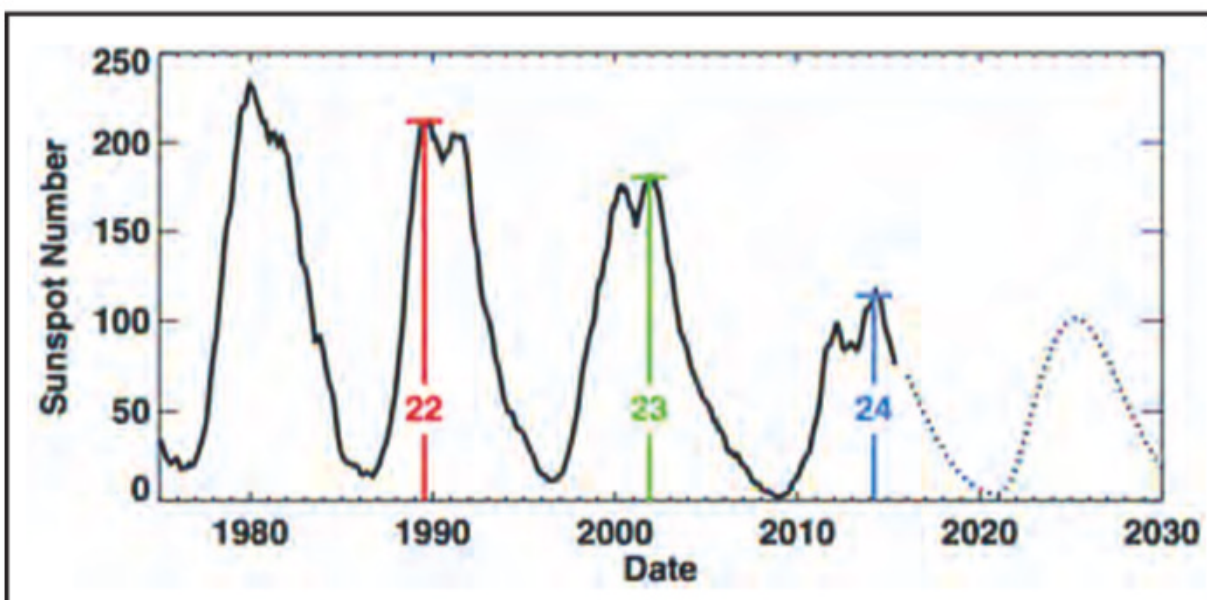
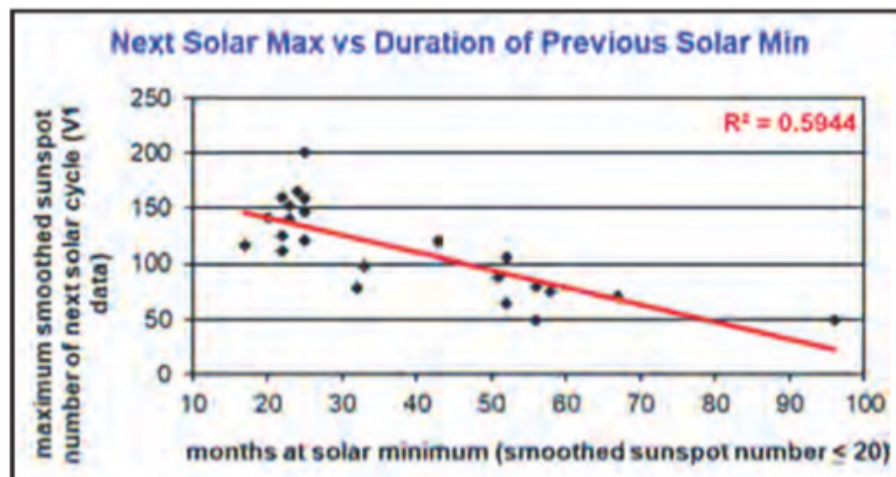


Figure 6. Another Solar Cycle 25 prediction, suggesting that the polar fields indicate that the new (V2) sunspot numbers for Cycle 25 will be similar in size to (or slightly smaller than) the current small cycle, Cycle 24. (after Hathaway and Upton^{7,8})

Figure 7. An analysis of solar minima duration to their following solar maxima suggests extended periods of low solar activity are followed by cycles that exhibit low activity. (K9LA date⁹)



Our Amplifiers Play Well with Others.



Whether you choose the KPA500 or KPA1500 amplifier, rest assured it will play well with your current transceiver. Our new KPA1500 solid-state amplifier won't take over your entire desktop: it's just 4.5 x 13.5 x 11.5" (HWD; 11.5 x 34 x 29 cm). The lightweight companion power supply can be placed on the floor or in any other convenient location.

The KPA1500 was designed with the serious operator in mind. Its no-nonsense front panel shows all important parameters at a glance, with a high-contrast 32-character LCD and fast, bright LED bar graphs. Band switching is instantaneous, via control inputs or RF sensing.

Protection and monitoring circuitry is extensive and foolproof, letting you focus on the job at hand — breaking pileups and overcoming the most difficult operating conditions. And it wouldn't be an Elecraft amp without robust PIN-diode T/R switching. Like our KPA500, the KPA1500 offers fast QSK without a noisy relay. The amplifier's rugged internal ATU can handle full power with load SWR up to 3:1, while a wider matching range is allowed at lower power, including up to 10:1 in standby mode.

Visit elecraft.com for complete details on rig compatibility.

NEW!
Popular K3s Packages!
Visit Elecraft.com
for details!

ELECRAFT®

For complete features and specifications, go to elecraft.com | sales@elecraft.com | 831-763-4211



of the solar minimum), the lower the maximum of the following cycle.

So, how is the minimum between Cycles 24 and 25 doing so far, compared with other recent solar minima? Well, as seen in *Figure 8*, the data appear to be tracking well with the previous minimum. This suggests it could be at least another year or so (at this writing) before the sunspot numbers for the new cycle begin to increase significantly.

Mixed Messages

Taken together, the predictions above for Cycle 25 are mixed. They point to the upcoming cycle being of roughly the same magnitude as the current one, with the chance we'll experience a broad minimum before the new cycle "takes off."

That said, the good news, according to the Solar-Terrestrial Centre of Excellence,¹ is that what appears to be the first sunspot group of Cycle 25 was spotted on the solar disk on December 20, 2016, at a high latitude (23°) and with reverse polarity. At this writing, three new-cycle sunspots had already been observed. While spots from the old and new cycles can overlap for years, sighting of the first spot of the new cycle is something in which we indeed can rejoice.

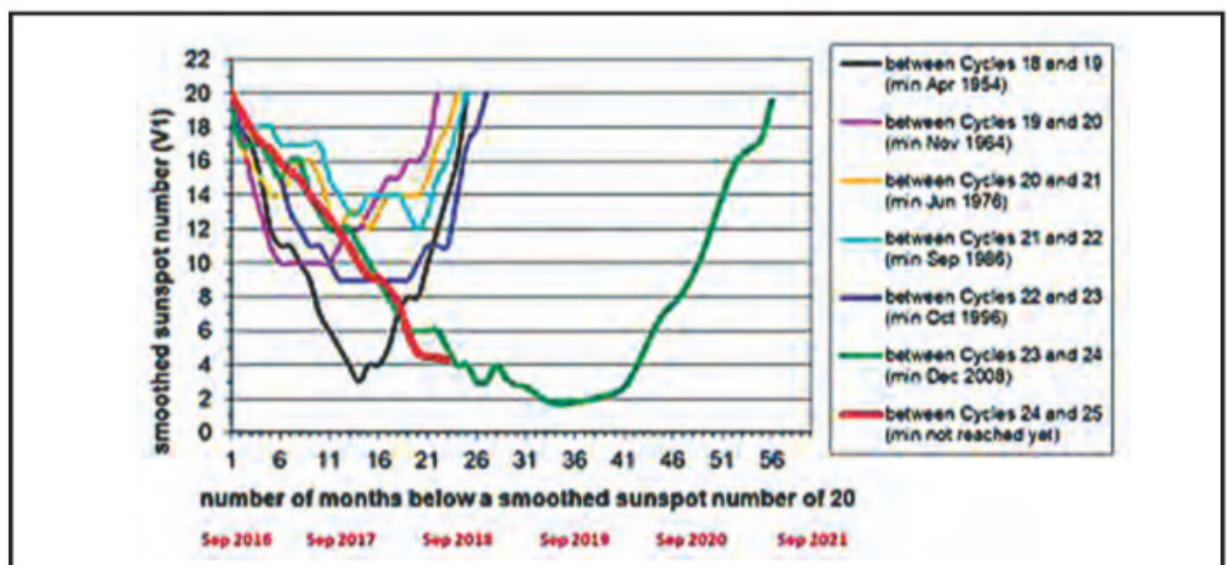


Figure 8. The data suggest it could be at least another year or so (at this writing) before the sunspot numbers for Cycle 25 begin to increase significantly. (Note: This graphic shows the old, V1 sunspot numbers.)

Notes:

1. <<http://tinyurl.com/y7qutomn>>
2. <<http://tinyurl.com/yygded44>>
3. Ibid
4. <<http://tinyurl.com/yyzgd9og>>
5. <<http://tinyurl.com/y4fgemo2>>
6. Javaraiah, J, Solar Physics 292(11), November 2017 <<http://tinyurl.com/y29hh3rm>>
7. <<http://tinyurl.com/y273gg7e>>
8. <<http://tinyurl.com/y3dcnmss>>
9. Personal communications, February 4, 2019
10. <www.stce.be/node/359>

Results of the 2018 CQWW DX SSB Contest

“Once More a Wonderful Weekend Among Friends Doing Radio” – LU8YE

BY JOHN DORR*, K1AR

It seems almost impossible to believe, but the 71st CQ World Wide SSB contest is in the books. PY2AC won the SOAB (single-operator, all-band) category in 1948 with a “blistering” score of 124,068 points. In sharp contrast, the current SOAB record is now held by EA8BH (N5TJ op.), who stunned the contest community in 1999 with a score of 25M+ points and over 10,000 QSOs!

Of course, for us mortals, making 10,000 contacts in a single weekend not only appears to be unachievable, but frankly is unachievable for 99.99% of those who participate. However, the CQWW SSB contest explodes on the scene in late October and something magical happens. The relatively inactive bands that we are currently experiencing in this torturous solar minimum miraculously light up. Twenty meters becomes filled from one end to the other, 15 meters demonstrates it can still support global communications and even our unpredictable 10-meter band sports contacts between continents.

As it turns out, the CQWW singularly stands out as a contest for everyone — rookie, small pistol, or monster multi-multi. And, with over 38,000 verified stations active in this year’s contest, you couldn’t help but have a great time.

Some Amazing Results

A long-standing adage in contesting is that, “if conditions are bad for me, they’re bad for everyone.” Well, if you’re looking through the lens of 10 meters in the 2018 CQWW, band conditions were horrible. Fortunately for all of us, the 160- to 15-meter bands were established a long time ago and our fun was rescued.

I’m always amazed at how close the final scores can be for certain categories, especially high-profile ones such as SOAB World. This year did not disappoint as the top three scores were separated by only 193K points. The win-



Charlotte, KQ1F, discovering that operating in the Arctic from KL7RA can be challenging on 15 meters.



What do you get when you combine 17 operators and a great station? 4,000 QSOs from SZ1A!

* QK1AR@gmail.com,

The radio... **YAESU**

True RF Legend

True Performance

FT DX 5000MP Limited



RF μ -Tuning Unit
(Optional)

- Provides ultra-high-Q RF preselection selectivity

Congratulations



We congratulate WRTC 2018 Y81N Winning Team from Lithuania

The winners of the World Radio Team Championship 2018
Gedas Lucinskas (LY9A) and Mindis Jukna (LY4L)

Rig used: 2 x FTDX5000MP



YAESU
The radio

YAESU USA
6125 Phyllis Drive, Cypress,
CA 90630 (714) 827-7600

For the latest Yaesu news, visit us on the Internet: <http://www.yaesu.com>

Specifications subject to change without notice. Some accessories and/or options may be standard in certain areas. Frequency coverage may differ in some countries. Check with your local Yaesu Dealer for specific details.

ning score of CN2CO (RA3CO op.) and #2 P4ØT (VE3DZ op.) had a minuscule difference of only 21K or 0.2%. Yuri's slightly better error rate from P4 (1.3% vs. 1.8%) compared to that of Dimitri from Morocco nearly closed the gap, proving again how much accuracy matters — both for big logs and small.

Speaking of Morocco, the opposite result took place on the World Multi-Multi stage with the CN3A team crushing the competition from K3LR (who notably had a #2 World score this time) by a 17-million-point margin. That's the *margin*, not the score. CN3A had just over 31 million points while K3LR scored just less than 14 million. As a demonstration of poor conditions, the D4C Multi-2 group trailed their Multi-Multi CN3A brethren by only 3 million points.

It shouldn't go unnoticed that remote stations are increasingly joining the top ranks of contesting. This year, Ray, W2RE, topped the SOAB USA HP ranks while operating one

of his impressive station options remotely located in Maine. This rapidly growing mode of operation continues to explode as we'll see next month in the CW results.

The CQWW is a DX Machine!

One of the attributes for which the CQWW contest is known is its global level of activity. The CQWW is truly a worldwide contest. 2011 was the benchmark year for DX activity with 282 countries worked across the spectrum of logs submitted. Think about that for a minute — nearly 75% of all available countries (as measured by the CQWW rules) participated that year. Yet, Ol' Sol has impacted us significantly in 2018, with this year's contest results showing a sub-200 total for the first time in over a decade. Of course, that makes multiplier totals in the top logs even more impressive as stations

2018 CQWW DX SSB TROPHY WINNERS AND DONORS

SINGLE OPERATOR

World
CN2CO (Opr.: Dimitri Kryukov, RA3CO)
Donor: Southern California DX Club

World – Low Power
Ted Jimenez, HI3T
Donor: Slovenian Contest Club

World – QRP
Doug Zwiebel, KR2Q
Donor: Jeff Steinman, N5TJ

World – Assisted
KH7XS (Opr.: Bill Kollenbaum, K4XS)
Donor: Glenn Johnson, WØGJ

World – Assisted Low Power
P4ØW (Opr.: John Crovelli, W2GD)
Donor: Gail Sheehan, K2RED

U.S.A.
Ray Higgins, W2RE
Donor: Potomac Valley Radio Club – KC8C Memorial

U.S.A. – Low Power
Ted Rappaport, N9NB
Donor: North Coast Contesters

U.S.A. – QRP
Anthony Luscre, K8ZT*
Donor: Pat Collins, N8VW

U.S.A. – Assisted
Kevin Stockton, N5DX
Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

U.S.A. – Assisted Low Power
Jim Bowman, KS1J
Donor: LA9Z/LN9Z Leia Contest Club

U.S.A. – Zone 3
Mitch Mason, K7RL
Donor: Northern California Contest Club

U.S.A. – Zone 4
Mike Wetzel, W9RE
Donor: Kansas City DX Club

U.S.A. – Zone 5
Ed Sawyer, N1UR*
Donor: Carolina DX Association – N4ZC Memorial

Europe
TMØT (Opr.: Gildas Ballanec, F4HQZ)
Donor: Potomac Valley Radio Club – W4BVV Memorial

Europe – Low Power
HG6V (Opr.: Imre Gulyás, HA6IAM)
Donor: Tim Duffy, K3LR

Europe – QRP
Karel Karmasin, OK2FD
Donor: Steve "Sid" Caesar, NH7C

Europe – Assisted
Andrius Ignotas, LY7Z
Donor: Martin Huml, OL5Y

Europe – Assisted Low Power
TM3Z (Opr.: Dimitri Cosson, F4DSK)
Donor: Alex Goncharov, R3ZZ

Africa
Mario Xavier Laporte, FR4QT*
Donor: Chris Terkla, N1XS

Asia

UPØL (Opr.: Vladimir Vinichenko, UN9LW)
Donor: Nodir Tursun-Zade, EY8MM

Caribbean/Central America – High Power
8P5A (Opr.: Tom Georgens, W2SC)
Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

Caribbean/Central America – Low Power
Francisco Vassaux, TG9ANF*
Donor: Albert Crespo, NH7A

Oceania

KH7M (Opr.: Jim Neiger, N6TJ)
Donor: Barbara Yasson, AC7UH

South America
P4ØL (Opr.: John Fore, W6LD)*
Donor: Yankee Clipper Contest Club

Canada

Jeff Briggs, VY2ZM
Donor: Contest Club Ontario – VE3WT Memorial

Russia

Sergey Chebotarev, RW1F
Donor: Roman Thomas, R5AA

Indonesia

Dra. Endah Winarti, YB3VI
Donor: Karsono Suyanto, YBØNDT

Japan

Masaki Masa Okano, JH4UYB
Donor: Rush Drake, W7RM Memorial

Japan – Low Power
Nob Watanabe, JH1EAQ
Donor: Juan Carlos Munoz, TG9AJR

Southern Cone (CE, CX, LU) – Assisted
CB8E (Opr.: Luis Fierro Andrade, CE8EIO)
Donor: LU Contest Group

ASEAN (XZ, HS, XW, XU, 3W, 9M, 9V, V8, YB, DU)
Thanawat Nithisantipong, HS5SRH
Donor: YB Land DX Club

ASEAN (XZ, HS, XW, XU, 3W, 9M, 9V, V8, YB, DU)
– Low Power
4E1A (Opr.: Klaus D Goepel, 4E1ADW)
Donor: World Wide Radio Operators Foundation (WWROF)

SINGLE OPERATOR, SINGLE BAND

World – 28 MHz
Marcelo Egües, CX2DK
Donor: Joel Chalmers, KG6DX

World – 21 MHz
CR3DX (Opr.: Tibor Ferenec, OM3RM)
Donor: Robert Naumann, W5OV

World – 14 MHz
4M1K (Opr.: Julio Rivero, YV1KK)
Donor: North Jersey DX Assn.

World – 7 MHz
CT9ABP (Opr.: Ratislav Hrnko, OM3BH)
Donor: Fred Laun, K3ZO – K7ZZ Memorial

World – 3.7 MHz
UP2L (Opr.: Vladimir Umanets, UA9BA)
Donor: Fred Capossela, K6SSS

World – 1.8 MHz

NP2J (Opr.: Dan Flaig, K8RF)
Donor: OL7M Contest Group, QRO.cz, RemoteQTH.com

U.S.A. – 28 MHz
Chuck Dietz, W5PR
Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

U.S.A. – 21 MHz
Steve London, N2IC
Donor: 11 P.M. Dayton Pizza Gang

U.S.A. – 14 MHz
Peter Bizlewicz, KU2M
Donor: Yankee Clipper Contest Club – KC1F Memorial

U.S.A. – 7 MHz
Dan Handa, W7WA
Donor: Chuck Dietz, W5PR

U.S.A. – 3.7 MHz
Steven Sussmann, W3BGN
Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

U.S.A. – 1.8 MHz
Stephen Werner, AG4W
Donor: South Texas DX & Contest Club (STDXCC)

Europe – 28 MHz
George Charokopakis, SV9GPV
Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

Europe – 21 MHz
CR6T (Opr.: Antonio Rui Sousa Santos, CT1ESV)
Donor: Tine Brajnik, S5ØA

Europe – 14 MHz
OH8X (Opr.: Pasi Luoma-Aho, OH6UM)
Donor: Charles Wooten, NF4A

Europe – 7 MHz
Angel Turpin Guillaumon, EA5SR
Donor: Central Texas DX and Contest Club – NT5C Memorial

Europe – 3.7 MHz
Ivo Jereb, S57AL
Donor: Ted Demopoulos, KT1V

Europe – 1.8 MHz
Lukasz Gruszczynski, SQ7CL
Donor: Robert Kasca, S53R

Caribbean/Central America (21 MHz)
Carlos Paez, TI1T
Donor: Nate Moreschi, N4YDU

Oceania (21 MHz)
9M8YY (Opr.: Yasumasa Yagi, JR3WXA)
Donor: Bruce D. Lee, KD6WW

Asia – 14 MHz
Mamuka Kordzakhia, 4L2M
Donor: Dallas/Fort Worth Contest Group – W5PG Memorial

OVERLAY CATEGORIES

World – Classic
P4ØT (Opr.: Yuri Onipko, VE3DZ)
Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

U.S.A. – Classic
Randy Thompson, K5ZD
Donor: www.BeLoud.us

such as ES9C (149 countries – 15 million points) and EF8R (151 countries – 15 million points) both worked a sizable percentage of them.

Year	# entities worked
2009	273
2010	268
2011	282
2012	259
2013	236
2014	235
2015	232
2016	224
2017	202
2018	199

Impressive Accuracy

In the end, the most important job of the CQWW Contest Committee is to ensure the logs we receive are properly scored and that the results are accurate. Unfortunately, we also spend a sizable amount of time ferreting out those who choose to not play by the rules. Thankfully, however, the vast majority of CQWW operators do their best to submit accurate logs.

All being said, some entries truly stand out as being exceptionally accurate. Twenty of the best can be found in the following table, with KR2Q owning the

distinction of having submitted a perfect “Golden Log.” Congratulations to this group for demonstrating a strong commitment to getting it right.

Call	Score Reduction (%) (logs with >100 QSOs)
KR2Q	0.00
WA2FZB	0.33
UA1CUR	0.38
DL2CC	0.40
DF2RG	0.54
JM1NKT	0.55
R3OM	0.69
K2CYE	0.79
R7MM	0.87
N9NC	0.96
OH6ECM	0.97
N4PQX	1.01
DG5E	1.02
DK2LO	1.06
K9BGL	1.11
RZ6BR	1.11
DL7URH	1.16
DL1NEO	1.20
ON6LR	1.34
PY2EX	1.41

Europe – Classic
GD9W (Opr.: Mark Haynes, MØDXR)
Donor: Steve Cole, GW4BLE Memorial

World – Rookie
Todor Todorov, LZ4AW
Donor: Tim Duffy, K3LR – N8SM Memorial

U.S.A. – Rookie
Mason W Matrazzo, KM4SII
Donor: Tim Duffy, K3LR – K3TUP Memorial

Europe – Rookie
Karolina Vaiciunaite, LY5XX*
Donor: EA Contest Club

MULTI-OPERATOR, SINGLE TRANSMITTER

World
EF8R (Oprs.: EA8KW, EA8RM, I4UFH, KU1CW, R3XAW, RA5A, RC5A, RV1AW, RW7K, UA5C, UB6HLW, UB7K, UF1F)
Donor: So. Calif. DX Club – W6AM Memorial

World – Low Power
ED9E (Oprs.: EA9CD, EA9ACD, EA7KI, EA9FY, EA9ACL, EA9ACP)
Donor: Rex Turvin, NR6M

U.S.A.
K1LZ (Oprs.: W1UE, KC1CWF, N1RR, K3JO, YT6W, K1VR)
Donor: Carolina DX Assoc. – W4VHF and K4DXA Memorial

North America
VE3EJ (Oprs.: VE3EJ, VE3EK, VE3EY, VE3OI)
Donor: John Sluymmer, VE3EJ

Africa
ED8W (Oprs.: OM5RW, EA8DO, EA7LL, EA7RU)*
Donor: Fabio Schettino, I4UFH

Asia
P33W (Oprs.: LZ2HM, YO3JR, R3DCX, 5B4AIF, R4FO, UA4FER, RW4WR, RA3AUU)
Donor: World Wide Radio Operators Foundation (WWROF)

Europe
IR4X (Oprs.: I4AVG, I4TJE, I4USC, I4YRW, I4VEQ, IK2JUB, IK2NCJ, IK4UPB, IK4ZGO, IT9RGY, IZ4BOY, IZ4JMA)
Donor: Gail Sheehan, K2RED

Europe – Low Power
4U1A (Oprs.: OE1ZZZ, RL5D, HB9RB)
Donor: EA Contest Club

Oceania
AH2R (Oprs.: JI3ERV/NH2C, JR7OMD/WI3O, JO1RUR/KHØG, JR8VSE/NH2N, JA1KSA/N3NQL)
Donor: Junichi Tanaka, JH4RHF

South America
9Y4W (Oprs.: 9Y4W, DK2OY, DK6WL)
Donor: Victor Burns, KI6IM – The Cuba Libre Contest Club

Caribbean/Central America
VP2MDG (Oprs.: AL7BA, K2DM, KA1AF, NØSMX)
Donor: Bob Raymond, WA1Z

Japan
JA7ZFN (Oprs.: JG7PSJ, JH7XMO, JI7GBI, JP7DKQ)
Donor: Arizona Outlaws Contest Club

ASEAN (XZ, HS, XW, XU, 3W, 9M, 9V, V8, YB, DU) – Low Power
E28AI (Oprs.: HS1LCI, ZL1DD, E24NQN, E22ZXX, HS5BQT, HS5WYM, E24OEE, E23GLG, E23WQS, E21IZC, E23WWT, HS5NFP, HS9YBR, HSØKQR, HS5YPD, E23WQD)
Donor: Bruce Frahm, KØBJ

MULTI-OPERATOR, TWO TRANSMITTERS

World
D4C (Oprs.: EA8FF, HB9DUR, IK2LFF, IZ4DPV, PY2EL, PY2LED, PY2WC, SQ9D)
Donor: Array Solutions

U.S.A.
K9CT (Oprs.: ND9G, KB9OWD, K9CT, WT2P, K9ZO, K9QQ, AB9YC, N7MB)
Donor: Kimo Chun, KH7U & Mike Gibson, KH6ND - Dan Robbins, KL7Y Memorial

Europe
ES9C (Oprs.: 4O3A, 4O9TTT, ES2MC, ES2NA, ES4BG, ES4NY, ES5JR, ES5QA, ES5RY, ES5TV, ES6QC, ES7GM, HA5BVG, ON1GPS, YL1ZF, YL2BJ, YL2KL, YL3AJA, YL3DW)
Donor: D4C Monteverde Contest Team

Japan
JE2YRP (Oprs.: JR2SCJ, JA1KFX, JA8RWU, JE8KKX, JF2XGF, JM1FHL, JQ1ABC, JQ1BVI)
Donor: Coconut Wireless Contest Club

ASEAN (XZ, HS, XW, XU, 3W, 9M, 9V, V8, YB, DU)
9M2CHS (Oprs.: 9M2RMT, 9M2WAN, 9M2KRZ, 9W2KMB, 9W2EXY, 9W2JAG, 9W2WGD, 9W2ERD, 9W2SYX, 9W2EPQ)
Donor: Champ C. Muangamphun, E21EIC – Siam DX Group

MULTI-OPERATOR, MULTI-TRANSMITTER

World
CN3A (Oprs.: IK2QEI, IK2SGC, OK1RI, OK1FFU, OK1JKT, OK1VVT, OM6NM, 9A6A, LY4A, IZ1LBG, IZ2ZOZ, CN8WW)
Donor: Dave Leeson, W6NL & Barb Leeson, K6BL

U.S.A.
K3LR (Oprs.: N2NC, N5UM, AA4WJ, K3LR, KL9A, W2RQ, K3LA, N2NT, K1AR, N3SD, K3UA, DL6LAU, N3GJ, LU7DW, WM2H)
Donor: Jim Lawson, W2PV Memorial

Europe
M6T (Oprs.: MØMDR, MØBCT, MØCLW, MØHKB, MØBTZ, G4PIQ, MØSDV, G4BUO, GØVJG, MØTGV, G7TWC, G4MJS, GØAEV, GØWCW, G3XLG, GØDVJ, GØJJG, M1ACB, G4ADM)
Donor: Finnish Amateur Radio League

CONTEST EXPEDITIONS

World Single Operator
TO1J (Opr.: Hideto Takeda, JF2QNM)
Donor: National Capitol DX Association – Stuart Meyer, W2GHK Memorial

World Multi-Op
XT2SZZ (Oprs.: S54W, S57L, S58Y, S59ZZ, S5ØA)
Donor: Gail Sheehan, K2RED

*Awarded to second place finisher

What's Your Category?

One of the most common areas of feedback your CQWW committee receives is requests for new categories. Some of them can be a little too specific (e.g., SOAB – North Korea) while others are often good ideas. Category proliferation



The VP5W team suffering in Zone 8 with a really loud SteppIR in the background.

W2CG1,910,656
 KT7E1,400,250

MULTI-OP

MULTI-TRANSMITTER

K3LR13,970,364
 W3LPL11,474,490
 KC1XX11,227,068
 K1TTT4,868,864
 WX3B3,573,948
 K1KI3,548,260
 W4AAW2,382,904
 W0AIH1,917,403
 K1KP1,803,108
 NE3F1,493,115

ROOKIE

High Power

W3XOX184,414
 K8PK153,225
 N7WJ140,448
 W2KU133,964
 W4BBT127,600
 N4VLK63,510
 KE8IVY50,895
 KE0ITC44,811
 KE4PLT39,368
 KN4BIT23,716

Low Power

KM4SII234,038
 W2XK82,720
 KC3INR73,904
 KC3HXF49,408
 K3ABE40,432

AA4LS28,381
 K2ELV21,900
 AC9TO20,196
 W7AXN18,139
 KG5WZD15,834

CLASSIC

High Power

K5ZD3,062,108
 WB9Z1,696,940
 K4AB1,542,525
 KQ2M874,239
 K4BAI638,514
 K1RM588,138
 W1WEF543,312
 ND4Y413,028
 AC4G376,200
 K9JF368,544

Low Power

N9NB827,904
 K1HT180,648
 AC2RL174,460
 N1ALO153,116
 W2CCC (K2CS)141,372
 KC6X109,248
 K3HW106,368
 W8GX104,652
 WD9CIR91,040
 ND0C76,000

can be a challenge to all contest organizers as the administrative headaches increase exponentially with the creation of new classes of operation. So, it's a perpetual balancing act, including taking an honest look at categories that have served their time well but may need change for the future (the never-ending debate about combining assisted and non-assisted single operators comes to mind).

Speaking of assisted operators, the legitimate use of assistance has truly taken hold in contesting and the CQWW is no exception. Although low-power, all-band, single operators continue to strongly prefer operating on their own, overall, we are now seeing these categories converging with 41% of all single-operator, all-band entries being assisted in this year's CQWW SSB contest. Will next year see this group cross the halfway point?

All Band Ops	AF	AS	EU	NA	OC	SA	ALL
All Band (U) High	10	125	337	379	28	26	905
All Band (A) High	3	99	476	587	27	29	1,221
All Band (U) Low	13	198	1,057	636	66	57	2,027
All Band (A) Low	10	72	441	300	15	47	885
All Band (U) QRP	1	6	59	12	5	6	89
All Band (A) QRP	1	19	4	3			27
MS High	2	32	145	54	11	11	255
MS Low	5	28	78	22	12	14	159
Multi-2	4	16	47	32	4	9	112
Multi-Multi	1	9	14	18	5	7	54
Checklog	3	52	338	85	5	10	493
All	52	638	3,011	2,129	181	216	6,227

Assisted (A) vs. unassisted (U) entries in the 2018 CQWW DX SSB Contest. All multi-op stations are considered assisted. Unassisted still rules in the single-op all-band low power category, but the number of assisted entries is steadily increasing.

A Look at Overlays

The overlay concept was introduced in the CQWW contest several years ago with the creation of two important new categories: Classic (24 hours of operation) and Rookie (recognition of competitors who have been licensed for less than three years). Needless to say, with over 13% of all submitted logs collectively falling into these overlay groups in 2018, the concept has taken off, particularly in the Classic category, where busy contesters (or maybe those with a little more gray hair) can now compete against each other without the need to make a full week-end commitment. If you are generally time-constrained or know of a new con-tester, check out this special way to play in the CQWW and give it a try next year.

Overlay	AF	AS	EU	NA	OC	SA	ALL
CLASSIC	3	87	439	250	42	35	856
ROOKIE	3	20	137	89	24	17	290
All	6	107	576	339	66	52	1,146

Log Checking Notes

As good fortune would have it for the contest community, the vast majority of competitors who enter the CQWW contest are honest and maintain a high degree of ethical behavior. Indeed, they embody the best of ham radio — honesty, competitive spirit, embracing new technology, pushing propagation to its limits, etc. As with most aspects of life, however, there is always the small minority that makes the job of log checking a challenge. An amazing amount of energy and time is invested in this part of the process, not only to get the results right but to ensure that the “bad guys” are discovered.

In the end, this year's effort was not unlike the past, with particular focus on illegal use of assistance, self-spotting violations, operating “out-of-band,” and rubber-clocking/multi-op time violations. And, of course, the elephant in the room remains the group that believes it's acceptable to run illegal power. Claiming that “everyone else does it” is not an acceptable position. While we have put a serious dent in the small but impactful world of cheaters, the real solution will always come from peer pressure. The CQWW Contest Committee depends on each of you to help us ensure ethical behavior will continue to dominate our event. We're counting on you more than ever.

Closing Comments

As I close, I'm thinking about my own experiences in this contest, going back to 1975. I vividly recall my first CQWW contest, making a few hundred contacts from



And you wondered why Andy, LY7Z, is so loud on the bands?

2018 CQWW DX SSB BAND-BY-BAND BREAKDOWN—TOP ALL BAND SCORES

Number groups indicate: QSOs/Zones/Countries on each band

WORLD SINGLE OPERATOR ALL BAND

Station	160	80	40	20	15	10
CN2CO	117/11/54	687/22/89	1843/32/107	1606/26/91	1863/30/104	61/14/35
P40T	97/15/41	723/24/85	1198/30/113	2050/30/107	1596/29/102	583/14/26
8P5A	134/10/27	726/23/78	2364/30/106	2415/29/96	1954/27/105	528/15/31
VY2ZM	443/17/73	512/21/85	987/24/101	2171/29/107	423/22/80	21/6/11
ZF9CW	168/15/44	699/28/80	1422/24/65	1462/26/85	1624/26/80	29/10/19

USA TOP SINGLE OPERATOR ALL BAND

Station	160	80	40	20	15	10
W2RE	148/13/48	325/16/74	556/24/86	1449/25/97	684/21/83	66/9/18
N1UR	58/10/35	251/21/71	451/27/86	1401/29/107	524/22/93	52/7/19
W9RE	46/11/29	223/21/65	451/31/93	1339/34/116	468/25/91	56/8/15
K5ZD	52/11/33	189/18/69	229/20/68	1119/27/101	652/25/89	14/6/9
K3ZO	14/4/9	223/18/70	356/25/80	742/29/95	461/21/77	98/9/22

WORLD SINGLE OPERATOR ASSISTED ALL BAND

Station	160	80	40	20	15	10
KH7XS	19/10/11	128/24/41	2114/36/97	1625/38/111	1999/33/74	91/9/12
ZX5J	18/10/13	195/24/72	779/34/95	1271/36/115	2244/37/136	266/14/41
LY7Z	496/16/66	943/22/101	1263/35/131	1148/32/115	883/33/120	141/6/28
CR2L	85/11/35	587/18/84	439/22/87	1570/31/112	1816/34/122	21/9/16
KP3Z	63/11/23	582/21/84	1444/30/110	1017/31/81	928/24/85	177/9/14

USA SINGLE OPERATOR ASSISTED ALL BAND

Station	160	80	40	20	15	10
N5DX	64/11/38	205/17/77	410/32/100	1209/31/118	606/26/105	20/7/20
K3WW	57/12/36	187/17/73	277/25/86	1091/29/119	591/27/93	55/9/23
N3RS	46/11/25	184/18/75	287/28/96	706/31/120	585/26/105	56/9/20
N2SR	8/4/6	80/15/46	210/22/82	996/33/122	601/26/101	81/10/25
AA3B	53/9/28	151/16/65	298/27/83	936/28/109	336/26/92	80/9/24

WORLD MULTI-OPERATOR SINGLE TRANSMITTER

Station	160	80	40	20	15	10
EF8R	247/18/77	1245/28/109	2273/34/135	2979/39/144	4000/38/151	94/21/73
P33W	171/14/65	878/25/110	2064/35/133	2529/37/135	2309/36/134	96/13/47
ED8W	96/13/40	543/23/100	1384/33/122	2234/35/133	1550/34/118	32/9/19
IR4X	93/15/72	524/21/101	1897/38/135	2574/38/141	1198/38/138	44/15/44
LX7I	365/16/71	995/20/101	2056/36/135	2258/36/129	1096/35/143	85/18/51

USA MULTI-OPERATOR SINGLE TRANSMITTER

Station	160	80	40	20	15	10
K1LZ	91/13/50	250/22/85	645/32/109	1639/30/126	710/27/113	24/10/24
W1NA	53/11/39	181/23/85	644/31/108	1612/33/133	520/25/98	16/8/16
K5TR	31/17/30	138/26/76	1135/36/104	1040/37/134	704/34/117	23/10/19
N3AD	11/6/9	286/22/80	463/33/99	891/31/124	401/27/102	66/9/22
WW4LL	19/9/15	124/19/71	491/27/93	1086/30/111	145/23/89	13/5/13

WORLD MULTI-OPERATOR TWO TRANSMITTER

Station	160	80	40	20	15	10
D4C	262/16/73	1337/28/105	1807/34/124	3402/38/133	4262/39/157	542/22/92
FY5KE	108/14/33	848/24/94	2042/34/125	3189/37/134	3655/33/145	352/16/61
PZ5K	88/10/24	1055/29/93	2183/34/121	3018/36/125	3543/33/131	219/16/41
PJ4G	190/16/50	1061/28/97	2087/32/113	2829/35/117	3282/34/117	535/11/18
ZF1A	171/14/27	1203/24/87	2798/29/115	3662/30/112	2177/33/104	76/11/26

USA MULTI-OPERATOR TWO TRANSMITTER

Station	160	80	40	20	15	10
K9CT	73/16/34	263/24/76	693/35/98	1749/37/136	663/29/112	74/9/21
N4WW	34/10/22	257/23/84	893/34/107	1585/35/122	468/28/101	74/9/19
N1MM	44/10/23	263/20/76	363/26/86	1322/31/130	806/25/104	46/9/19
K1RX	41/10/21	129/16/62	393/24/80	1286/30/121	547/27/109	38/5/14
K2LE	41/9/20	244/19/73	358/29/91	957/31/109	398/28/97	6/2/4

WORLD MULTI-OPERATOR MULTI-TRANSMITTER

Station	160	80	40	20	15	10
CN3A	387/17/73	1624/26/108	2981/36/138	3701/37/140	3624/37/149	470/21/84
K3LR	442/23/76	762/28/103	1593/37/133	2957/38/149	1484/31/128	151/12/28
ZW5B	17/6/11	383/28/83	1606/35/127	1643/39/128	2407/34/127	558/19/47
V26B	251/15/48	1206/24/97	1482/30/112	3409/34/122	1697/29/95	307/13/25
A73A	113/12/41	805/27/101	1871/32/119	2105/34/119	1663/33/124	114/11/38

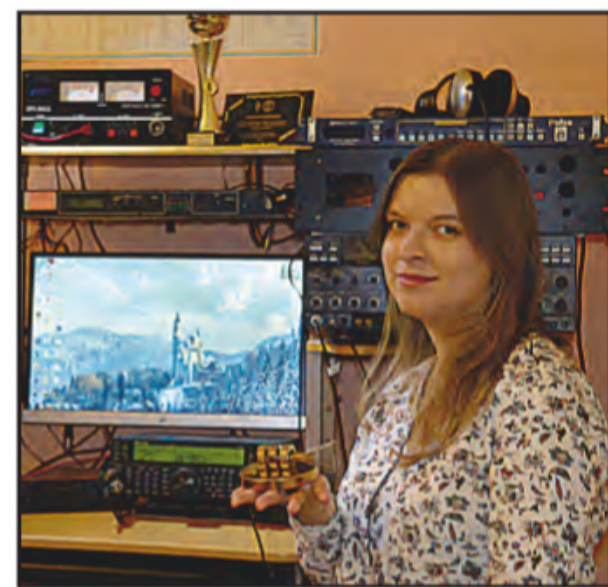
USA MULTI-OPERATOR MULTI-TRANSMITTER

Station	160	80	40	20	15	10
K3LR	442/23/76	762/28/103	1593/37/133	2957/38/149	1484/31/128	151/12/28
W3LPL	350/22/72	511/24/93	1435/35/124	2158/37/142	1508/29/125	207/12/30
KC1XX	306/20/46	644/28/100	1292/34/129	2764/36/142	1072/27/122	218/12/28
K1TTT	90/11/29	366/24/87	656/31/106	1591/30/126	668/26/102	131/11/25
WX3B	85/8/12	213/21/68	605/30/93	1112/32/111	706/27/107	109/10/23



Is this an antenna challenge or two VE guys getting ready for ice fishing at VYØERC?

Long Island, New York, with a tri-bander on my roof and a wire hung in one of those “tall” 30-foot trees in my back yard. Fast forward a few years and I’m standing in the living room of long-time contest director, Bob Cox, K3EST, who had boxes of papers everywhere. Those papers were CQWW logs. As I picked one up, I noticed it was the log of UK9AAN, totally re-copied and con-



Katrina, LY5XX, at the station of LY4L. The castle tower on the computer is not part of the station.

EUROPE TOP SINGLE OPERATOR ALL BAND

Station	160	80	40	20	15	10
TMØT	83/6/29	641/16/73	1478/32/106	1934/27/90	841/25/77	55/7/16
EA5DFV	0/0/0	153/9/47	1119/24/87	1858/27/76	1013/29/77	6/3/5
GD9W	193/11/45	665/16/72	534/15/70	1399/24/85	618/25/88	22/5/13
YPØC	132/7/36	364/9/55	1138/27/82	1086/23/79	1036/33/91	80/9/22
G6XX	167/12/48	493/16/75	586/20/64	938/30/88	535/31/99	24/6/14

EUROPE SINGLE OPERATOR ASSISTED ALL BAND

LY7Z	496/16/66	943/22/101	1263/35/131	1148/32/115	883/33/120	141/6/28
CR2L	85/11/35	587/18/84	439/22/87	1570/31/112	1816/34/122	21/9/16
S53M	100/11/50	652/17/85	870/35/119	1277/35/116	740/34/121	146/14/50
EW6W	219/13/55	451/20/85	1260/33/115	1012/28/89	950/32/114	186/8/36
RT5Z	91/8/39	375/19/88	1425/34/126	1344/35/122	655/32/116	17/4/9

EUROPE MULTI-OPERATOR SINGLE TRANSMITTER

IR4X	93/15/72	524/21/101	1897/38/135	2574/38/141	1198/38/138	44/15/44
LX7I	365/16/71	995/20/101	2056/36/135	2258/36/129	1096/35/143	85/18/51
DR1A	228/16/69	825/23/104	1312/35/131	2517/39/145	1050/35/143	87/11/42
IR4M	114/15/69	568/22/101	1835/36/135	2486/38/138	682/35/137	53/16/43
LZ5R	151/13/62	781/27/106	2190/37/136	2146/37/141	1448/36/138	130/17/55

EUROPE MULTI-OPERATOR TWO TRANSMITTER

ES9C	542/18/78	1529/26/109	2370/34/137	2979/39/147	1799/36/149	246/12/45
9A7A	175/11/55	1442/20/99	1578/35/129	1779/36/121	1524/38/143	211/16/56
HG7T	213/13/61	1425/30/111	1724/38/141	1870/37/134	1345/35/140	218/12/46
SN8B	357/15/62	1414/26/102	1662/36/131	1867/36/123	1123/35/133	203/7/24
PI4COM	355/12/56	979/18/91	939/33/119	1511/39/125	1124/33/132	40/5/18

EUROPE MULTI-OPERATOR MULTI-TRANSMITTER

M6T	681/15/70	2057/28/113	2746/38/139	1977/38/128	1177/34/140	263/17/54
LZ9W	759/15/73	1772/33/121	2354/37/142	2472/39/136	1407/37/125	260/17/55
DFØHQ	891/16/72	1761/27/110	2488/37/141	1772/39/147	1139/34/139	237/18/55
OH5Z	466/11/58	1179/25/101	2043/34/127	2014/38/134	859/33/130	45/10/23
OT5A	635/12/64	1293/16/77	2136/31/120	826/38/116	879/33/118	139/12/35

tained in a hardbound book. I asked Bob what was involved in producing the results I would later see in CQ magazine. And now, 40 years later, I sit in this chair as the new contest director ... still trying to answer that same question. It seems surreal to type these words and I can only hope that I can live up to the amazing accomplishments and skilled leadership of the past. The CQWW was the best contest in the world back then and it still is today.

Finally, I can't offer enough thanks and accolades to the most dedicated and accomplished contest committee mem-



The impressive shack of Andy, LY7Z. It's a good thing he knows what all those knobs and buttons do.

TOP SCORES IN VERY ACTIVE ZONES

Zone 3

K6XX	1,699,775
K6NA	865,060
N7ZG	581,484
W7AT (W7EW)	544,425
W7WA	537,040

Zone 4

CF3A (VE3AT)	5,351,688
W9RE	3,580,577
*VC3M (VE3LA)	2,046,369
N9RV	2,040,560
WB9Z	1,696,940

Zone 5

VY2ZM (K1ZM)	6,871,680
W2RE	4,502,126
N1UR	3,918,772
K5ZD	3,062,108
VE9CB	2,970,708

Zone 14

TMØT (F4HQZ)	4,865,616
EA5DFV	2,959,872
GD9W (MØDXR)	2,913,428
G6XX (G4FAL)	2,500,413
DJ5MW	2,291,408

Zone 15

ES6RW (ES5RW)	2,247,434
---------------	-----------

OM7RU	1,480,680
OH8X (OH6UM)	1,245,108
UA2FZ	1,142,532
OK1GTH	920,185

Zone 16

EU1A	2,161,540
RW1F	2,102,792
US5D (UT7DX)	1,486,368
R8WF	1,447,506
RD4F	1,412,670

Zone 20

YPØC (YO3CZW)	2,656,841
4Z5LY	1,258,020
4X2M (4X4DZ)	639,090
YO3RU	429,324
4X1IM	426,972

Zone 25

JH4UYB	3,861,990
JE6RPM (JH5GHM)	3,596,817
*JH1EAQ	686,375
JH3CUL	416,245
JA5FDJ	401,286

*Low Power

bers in the world. As a rookie director, there has been so much to learn and I couldn't have done any of it without the support, expertise, suggestions (and occasional "growls") from some of the smartest and hardest-working volunteers I know. They are not only committee members, but also my respected friends, who include: CT1BOH, José Nunes; EA4KD, Pedro Vellido; ES5TV, Tonno Vahk; F6BEE, Jacques Saget; GØMTN, Lee Volante; HA1AG, Zoli Pitman; IK2QEI, Stefano Brioschi; JH5GHM, Katsuhiko (Don) Kondou; K1DG, Doug Grant; K1EA, Ken Wolff; K3LR, Tim Duffy; K3WW, Charles Fulp; K3ZO, Alfred A. (Fred) Laun, III; K5ZD, Randy Thompson; KR2Q, Doug Zwiebel; LA6VQ, Frode Igland; LU5DX, Martin Monsalvo; N8BJQ, Steve Bolia; OH6LI, Jukka Klemola; PA3AAV, Gert Meinen; RA3AUU, Igor (Harry) Booklan; S5ØA, Tine Brajnik; S5ØXX, Kristjan



Michael, W3MAS, showing the VP5W team how it's done.

Kodermac; UA9CDC, Igor Sokolov; VE3EJ, John Sluymer; VK2IA, Bernd Langer; YO3JR, Andrei (Andy) Ruse; and YU1EW, Zoran Mladenovic. Space doesn't allow me to summarize what it takes for these guys to compile and publish these results after you push your last F1-key late on Sunday, including several who went well beyond the call of duty with their contributions.

Thanks to all who played in the 2018 CQWW SSB Contest. I'll be looking forward to hearing you this fall: SSB on October 26-27 and CW on November 23-24 (*not* Thanksgiving weekend!) in 2019.

73, John, K1AR

Some CQWW SSB Personal Stories

One of the consistent themes after each CQWW contest is not just the amazing scores made by the winners, but the personal stories of accomplishment that happen time after time. What follows are just a few that paint an amazing picture for you to enjoy.

LY5XX

The 2018 CQWW DX Contest was my first WW as a single operator, operating low power. I was extremely happy to

have the opportunity to use Mindaugas Jukna's LY4L station while he was away in Qatar participating as a member of A73A team. The equipment I had included a Yaesu FTDX-5000, AD-2334, dipole for 80 meters and Inverted-L for 160 meters. My goal was 1,200 QSOs and at least 30 hours on air. I was ready as I could be to be a rookie.

At first it was a little bit tricky to find a decent spot for CQ-ing, so I was only able to spend the first few hours at a relatively slow rate of 30 QSOs per hour. The equipment was running smoothly; the operator had other problems, mostly a concern about my sore throat (rookies get those, too!).

Finally, I reached a more productive period — Sunday morning — when my average rate increased to 50+ QSOs per hour. The best hour happened to be 0800Z with 109 QSOs. Of course the highlight for me was reaching my goal on Sunday afternoon, so for the rest of the contest I was testing my limits. It turns out that the most productive band for me was 40 meters with 488 contacts. And, like so many others, I didn't manage to make any contacts on 10 meters.

In total, I spent 32 hours operating and used the remaining hours trying to sleep, which is, of course, impossible,

knowing that the contest was going on in the background. In some ways, I felt some remorse by sleeping for more than 3 hours.

My sincere thanks to Mindaugas, LY4L, and others who helped me to prepare for this contest. Although I'm still a rookie in some ways, I exceeded my expectations and will consider this as a milestone for all future CQWW DX SSB contests.

KL7RA

We did good, Rich!

The North Pole Contest Group (NPCG) — KL7RA — operated our first really big Multi-Multi contest since we turned the station into a club operation in honor of Rich Strand (*the original KL7RA, who became a Silent Key in 2015 – ed.*). Our friend put an incredible amount of work into the station. We picked up where KL7RA left off with the 2018 CQWW Contest being the first fruit of all of those efforts. No pressure except to make Rich proud as 7,500 QSOs entered our logs.

Given that this is the very bottom of a very deep sunspot cycle, we couldn't have been happier with our Q totals. As for mults, I guess you "gotta hear 'em to work 'em." When looking at our QSO

what's new

DX Engineering's ISO-PLUS

The ISO-PLUS Ethernet RF Filter from DX Engineering provides amateur radio operators with a tool to help pull out weak signals and operate more effectively by combating interference that can affect station performance.

Designed and manufactured by DX Engineering, the patent-pending Ethernet RF Filter suppresses electromagnetic interference (EMI) and reduces common-mode radio frequency interference (RFI) to and from Ethernet cables used between personal computers, printers, routers, multi-port switches, cable modems, transceivers and other devices. This interference is a typical problem



on Ethernet Cat5e and Cat6 cables used for local area network (LAN) connections.

The inline ISO-PLUS Ethernet RF Filter joins two RJ-45 connectors together to fight common-mode RFI and EMI for radio frequencies from below 1 MHz to over 100 MHz, including 160- through 6-meter amateur bands. Installed on either end of Ethernet cables, ISO-PLUS filters mitigate RFI caused to the Ethernet-connected device. At the same time, they reduce interference to radio receivers and other Ethernet devices caused by RFI or EMI generated by an Ethernet-connected device.

The ISO-PLUS also provides common-mode attenuation resulting in reduced or eliminated EMI or RFI generated by power supplies, wall power adapters, touch lamps, appliances, and just about anything else near RJ-45 cables. Interference from these devices can creep into Ethernet cables, which then radiate RF signals that can be picked up by a radio receiver.

The filter supports 10/100 Mbps fast Ethernet and GbE Gigabit Ethernet with no effect on data signal or speed. Each ISO-PLUS comes with one shielded RJ-45 patch cable (about six inches). The filters work with Cat5, Cat5e, Cat6 and Cat6a cables with RJ-45 connectors.

DX Engineering's ISO-PLUS is available now in packs of two or 10 and has a retail price of \$49.99 for 2 or \$239.99 for a pack of 10. For more information, contact DX Engineering, 1200 Southeast Avenue, Tallmadge, OH 44278. Phone: (800) 777-0703. Website: <www.dxengineering.com>.

totals, particularly on 40, 80, and 160 meters — we were thrilled. As most of you know, it's never easy operating from the Arctic. As for 10 meters — well, that just never happens in this part of the cycle.

A few emails and a chance meeting at Dayton led to our guests, Paul, K1XM, and Charlotte, KQ1F, joining us for the effort. A little W1 mojo never hurts.

So, need Zone 1 in the next one? We're your guys (and gals).

SZ1A

In some ways, SZ1A is a training ground for contesters. Many of the operators in the 2018 CQWW SSB Contest were new to contesting. Although we had three stations on the air, only two of them were HP for the entire contest as the third station used a borrowed amplifier that was not available all the time. The team had a great time, promoting contesting and enjoying making new friends, working nearly 4,000 QSOs.

The SZ1A project is described in detail at <www.sz1a.org>. Over the last eight years, we have tried to build a competitive station. Each year we make some improvements that align with the generous donations we receive from team members and friends. Our goal is to offer the station to anyone who wants to operate a contest. Many Greek and foreign operators, experienced or not, have visited us, either operating or helping improve the station. Some of the more well-known guests have included Zorro, JH1AJT; Don, G3XTT; and Tony, LZ1JZ. We hope to include you in our guestbook some day or hear you on the air from beautiful Greece.

VYØERC

In between our scientific observations of the lower atmosphere, Pierre, VE1RUS; and Alexey, VE3KTB, operated the 2018 CQWW SSB contest at VYØERC as we have for the past few years. VYØERC is located in Zone 2 at 80° N latitude, approximately 100 kilometers from the north geomagnetic pole and is housed at the Polar Environment Atmospheric Research Laboratory (PEARL) near the Eureka High Arctic Weather Station on Ellesmere Island (IOTA NA-008). Upon arriving in Eureka a few days earlier, we scrambled to get the antennas ready in time for the contest.

This year, we added a vertical to help with 40 meters and get us on 80 meters. It was an improvement, but better antennas were still needed for those two bands. The 20-meter homebrew Moxon rectangle continues to be

our workhorse. All antennas have to be removed at the end of every visit or they WILL be destroyed by the weather. The CQWW takes place after the Sun sets for the year on October 20th and at the time the auroral oval starts to show more activity, so conditions are not usually conducive to good results.

Making 1,007 QSOs was our best effort to date. The productive 20-meter openings into Europe both Saturday and Sunday really helped, but we didn't do as well into Japan as we would have

liked. We would have done even better except for some unfortunate events on Sunday afternoon when the amplifier got hot enough to melt the bushings holding the tuning capacitor in place, leading to arcing. Overheating is not a term you hear very often in this location. Although the last four hours were tedious and slow as we were limited to S&P while operating barefoot, we didn't stop.

Yes, we will be back, coats and gloves in hand!

(Continued on page 94)

NEW! NEW! NEW!

We stock the new rugged FREESCALE 1KW transistor and parts for the 2M and 88-108MHz amplifier designs.



HF Broadband
RF Transformers
2 to 30MHz



COAX WIRE
TC-12 TC-18
TC-20 TC-22
TC-24



RF Transformers
Type "U"
2 to 300MHz

HF Amplifiers
We stock the complete parts list and PC boards for the Motorola amplifier designs featured in their Application Notes and Engineering Bulletins

AN779L (20W)	AN758 (300W)
AN779H (20W)	AR305 (300W)
AN762 (140W)	AR313 (300W)
EB63A (140W)	EB104 (600W)
EB27A (300W)	AR347 (1000W)



Communication Concepts, Inc.

508 Millstone Drive, Beavercreek, OH 45434-5840
Email: cci.dayton@pobox.com

www.communication-concepts.com

Phone (937) 426-8600
FAX (937) 429-3811

In Business for 37 Years

HF Power Splitter / Combiners
2 to 30MHz

2 Port		
PSC-2L	600W	PEP
PSC-2H	1000W	PEP
4 Port		
PSC-4L	1200W	PEP
PSC-4H	2000W	PEP
PSC-4H5	5000W	PEP

What's your choice?

**8 Years running
the undisputed
choice among
top DXers
Contesters and
DXpeditions**

**Quality supported by our
exclusive 5 Year Warranty on
our deluxe "dream" edition
headsets.**



RS20S Listen-Only \$179
RS60CF Boom-Mic \$398 (for most popular Desktop HF Radios)

Headsets also available for collector's Vintage Radio gear.

See what our users have to say - visit 

radiosport
headsets
www.arlancommunications.com

805-504-3944 M-F 9AM-6PM, Sat 10AM-2PM (Pacific Time)

Professor Heisseluft reveals a plan by several amateur radio organizations worldwide to conduct a revolutionary new Internet-based contest.

A CQ Exclusive: New Competition Announced: Sporadic iCloud Contesting

By Professor Emil Heisseluft*

Lauton Institute, Grossmaul-an der Donau, Austria

<heisseluft.emil@mashuga.orf.ar>

Anyone reading the "Contesting" column in CQ magazine should not be surprised to see more than 50 events highlighted for each two-month period displayed. These events can range from the full-year CQ DX Marathon to such things as a state QSO party or the ARRL Rookie Roundup. All, of course, are meant to spur competition, call attention to a special event, and/or bring together kindred spirits. Whatever the reason, the contests cited have one thing in common: They are on-the-air events. Now, an entirely new type of competition is being envisioned by its planners, a competition for the 21st century: sporadic iCloud contesting. Fortuitously, while on a recent ski trip in the Alps, Professor Heisseluft overheard a multinational group of amateur radio contesters planning the first such event for 2019. He has generously agreed to share what he's learned with us today. —W2VU

* Professor Heisseluft has returned to the Lauton Institute, Grossmaul-an der Donau, Austria, where he is preparing the final exam for the class he teaches on Hamiltonian mechanics. Mail may be conveniently sent to the professor c/o CQ magazine, 17 West John Street, Hicksville, NY 11801.

For better or for worse, competition is a part of almost every aspect of human endeavor. Certainly, one has only to listen to the amateur bands during the CQ World Wide DX CW and Phone competitions, or during any of the contests sponsored by this magazine and other organizations worldwide, to know that amateurs thrive on testing their mettle at the drop of a hat. It's what drives them to build larger and larger antennas that are mounted on towers of ever-increasing height; to employ power amplifiers that pump the legal limit into these antennas; and to use receivers and coding techniques capable of detecting signals so far beneath the noise it strains credulity. In short, competition is the life-blood of the amateur radio community, and the mere hint that something new might be on the horizon in the way of a contest is enough to get an operator's competitive juices flowing.

So, it was with some interest that I, while having a beer late last year in a pub in the Alps, overheard a hush-hush discussion among several American, European, and Japanese amateurs regarding their plans for a revolutionary new type of contest: A sporadic iCloud competition. The idea, while unbelievably ingenious, had its genesis in a storm-induced fail-

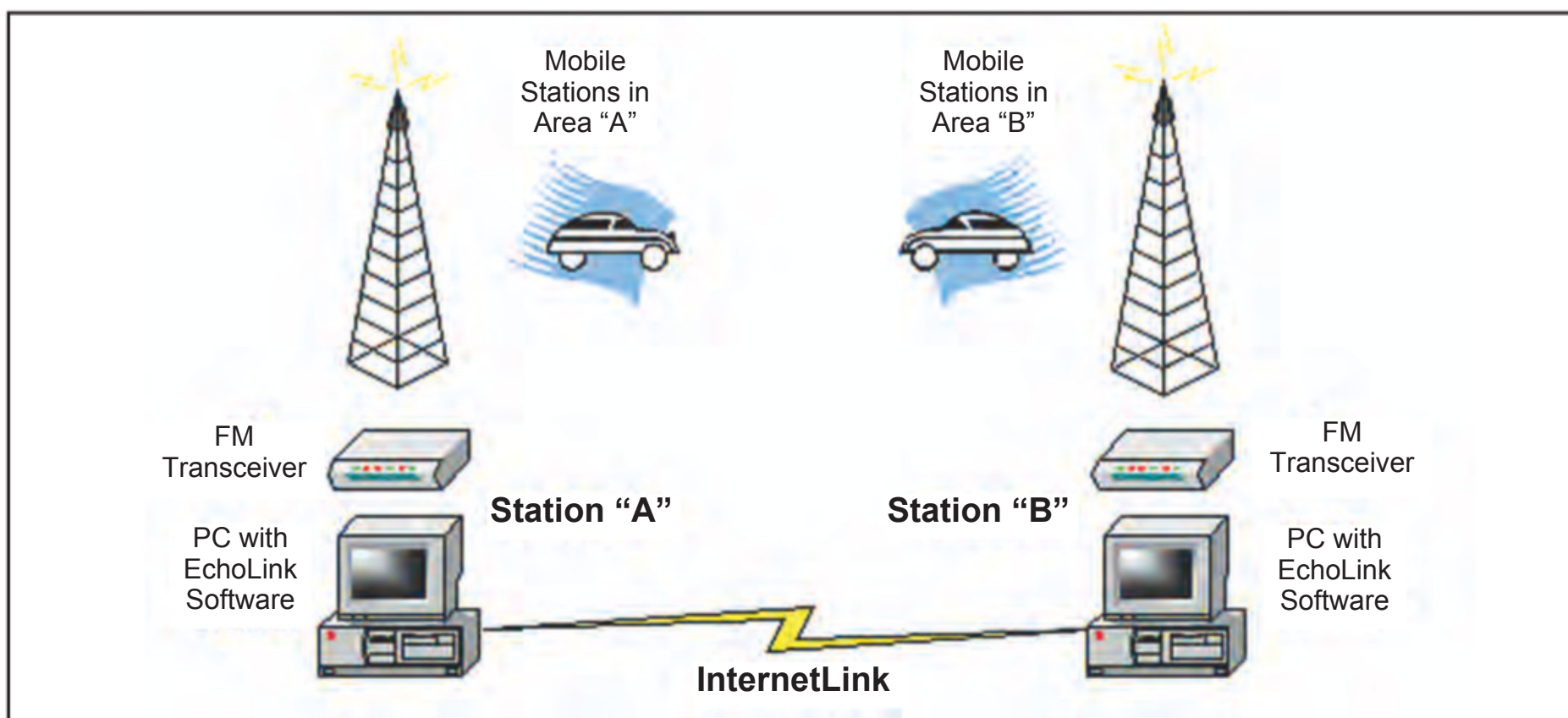


Figure 1. Example of a simulated sporadic-E contest link using EchoLink and DOPES software (modified after EchoLink diagram from Reference 5).

ure of the Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud center in Northern Virginia in 2012.

Cloud Failure

The problem, plain and simple, was a severe thunderstorm in northern Virginia on the night of June 30, 2012. Specifically, at 11:21 p.m. EST, Amazon's Elastic Compute (EC) Cloud went down following reports of torrential rains, "scary winds," lightning and massive power outages in the DC area.¹ According to a *Forbes* report at the time, "Amazon EC2 runs many major websites and services. Netflix, Instagram, and Pinterest have all been taken out of service during the outage. ... VentureBeat has reported that Instagram, and Ruby platform Heroku (that runs many other sites) were also down."² Even QRZ.com, a ham radio internet site owned by Fred Lloyd, AA7BQ, was affected when it incurred a complete database failure.³

As the night wore on, despite power being restored to the impacted Availability Zone, Amazon's EC2 and Elastic Block Store (EBS) application program interfaces (APIs) continued to experience elevated error rates. And even after the EC2 and EBS APIs were again operating normally, some services still were impacted. To say service was sporadic, even more than 24 hours from inception of the event, is an understatement.

Sporadic-E

Aha, you say! Sporadic operation of the iCloud! Well, dear readers, that's exactly the hand-to-forehead thought that simultaneously must have hit the radio amateurs I overheard talking in the Alps. The words "sporadic" and "cloud" had meant only one thing to them until then: Sporadic-E (or E_s). We know this propagation mode allows signals at the upper end of the HF spectrum and above to propagate over long distances via a reflection from electrified clouds at the level of the ionosphere's E layer. What we don't know, however, is what causes it.⁴

That said, we do know its characteristics. Sporadic-E is generally classified into three types: Mid-latitude, equatorial, and auroral. Because of specular or mirror-like reflections, signal propagation via mid-latitude E_s , for example, can suddenly appear out of nowhere and peak to extremely high signal levels, sustain these levels for short periods of time, and then quickly disappear.

In general, E_s openings are unpredictable in terms of (1) when they occur in time of day [though seasonally, mid-

latitude E_s openings peak twice a year (roughly), in June and December], and (2) for how long a path actually will exist between two points. And that's exactly what this group of contesters in Bavaria thought: Let's devise an internet-based, sporadic iCloud contest to challenge the worldwide community in which the "openings" on the internet between stations mimic E_s openings.

Ham Radio on the Internet

One way to employ the Internet for amateur-to-amateur communications is

through the use of EchoLink (see *Figure 1*). According to EchoLink.org, "EchoLink® software allows licensed amateur radio stations to communicate with one another over the Internet, using streaming-audio technology. The program allows worldwide connections to be made between stations, or from computer to station, greatly enhancing amateur radio's communications capabilities. There are more than 200,000 validated users worldwide — in 151 of the world's 193 nations — with about 6,000 online at any given time."⁵

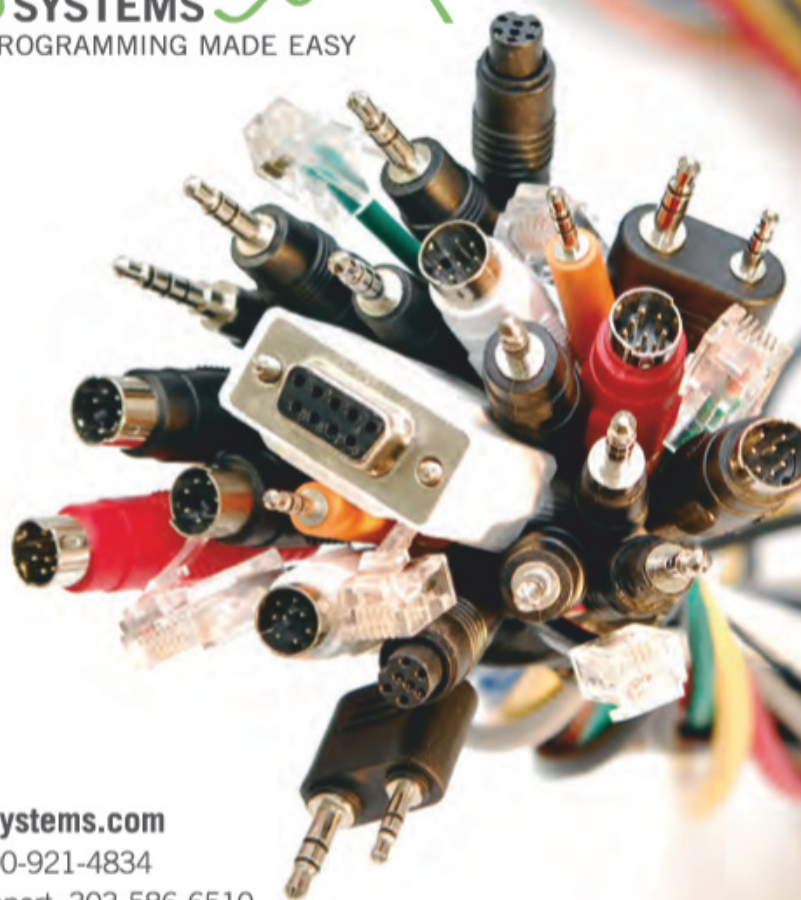
USB CONTROL CABLES THAT WORK!

- Cables for CAT (control) operations and logging activities with software from other sources.
- USB control cables for current and past radio models from Icom, Kenwood, Ten-tec and Yaesu.

Check for your radio model at:
www.rtsystems.com

IT'S ALL GOOD ON OUR ENDS!

rt SYSTEMS 
RADIO PROGRAMMING MADE EASY



www.rtsystems.com

Sales: 800-921-4834

Tech Support: 303-586-6510

Mon.-Fri., 8:00-5:00, Sat. 9:00-1:00 Mountain Time

Join the Nuts & Volts community and get pearls of electronics wisdom delivered right to your door!

Print, Digital Edition, Mobile App & email Newsletter - *You get it ALL for one price!*

One Year (6 issues) \$26.95
 Two Years (12 issues) \$49.95
 Three Years (18 issues)..... \$71.95

Canada add \$5 per year

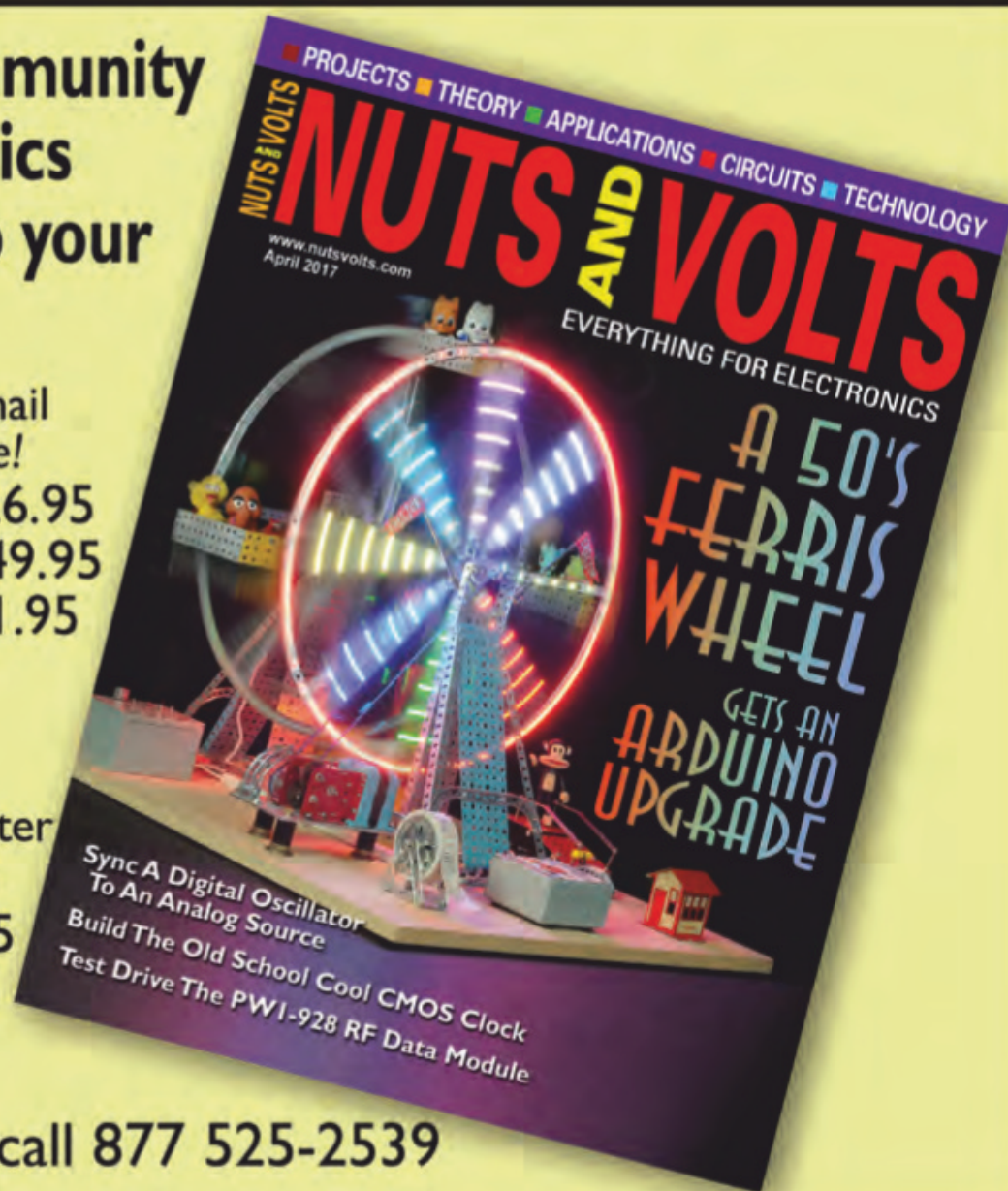
Other Foreign add \$15.00 per year

Digital Edition, Mobile App + Newsletter

One Year (6 issues)..... \$19.95
 Two Years (12 issues)..... \$35.95
 Three Years (18 issues)..... \$50.95

To subscribe:

go to www.nutsvolts.com or call 877 525-2539



Another method is to employ D-STAR: D-STAR (Digital Smart Technologies for Amateur Radio) is a digital voice and data protocol specification for amateur radio <<https://tinyurl.com/6rk6vu2>>. The system was developed in the late 1990s by the Japan Amateur Radio League <<https://tinyurl.com/yxzbr54w>> and uses minimum-shift keying <<https://tinyurl.com/p977bd9>> in its packet-based <<https://tinyurl.com/gv8sczq>> standard. There are other digital modes that have been adapted for use by amateurs, but D-STAR was the first that was designed specifically for amateur radio.^{6,7}

Putting it All Together

With the above as background, and based on what I overheard, my take regarding what the international contesters plan to do is to create a new suite of internet-linking software for amateurs called Deployed Operational Programme for E_s Simulation (DOPES). It could be released as soon as next month. The software deployed at each station will include a pseudo-random number generator, the purpose of which is to open internet links for station-to-station communications during the contest period at random points in time and for randomly determined periods of time that will be different for each station. That is, each station using the DOPES software will have their internet connectivity cut in and out unpredictably during a group-sponsored contest. In this way, only when internet availability at two stations occurs simultaneously — that is, when their internet availability coincides in time such that an “opening” occurs between the two stations — will it be possible for them to communicate. Even then, the link will only be available for an unpredictably short period of time.

As you can see from the above, the intent is to replicate what operators might experience in the way of ionospheric conditions during a real E_s opening. This puts a premium on executing fast exchanges, exchanges that likely will be the same as those used in CQ’s DX contests (signal report and zone). I am working now, behind the scenes, to determine whether the Lauton Institute’s Centre for Radio Amateur Programmes (CRAP) can play a part in the development of the new software, though I have to be careful in this endeavor or not to reveal how I learned of the plan.

Summary

I have uncovered a plan by a group of international radio amateurs to create a revolutionary new suite of software to simulate E_s contest communications on the internet via the iCloud, something the creators of the software are developing for sporadic iCloud contesting. Early indications suggest the software, called DOPES, could be made available as early as this April 1, 2019, with the announcement of a contest employing the software soon to follow.

Notes:

1. <https://tinyurl.com/yy5uselu>
2. *ibid*
3. <https://tinyurl.com/y3o4mwyb>
4. Jacobs, G., Cohen, T., and Rose, R., *The NEW Shortwave Propagation Handbook*, CQ Communications, Hicksville, NY, 1995
5. www.echolink.org
6. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/D-STAR>
7. <https://tinyurl.com/ykqudvv>

*Do you enjoy top-level contesting but get bored on Sunday afternoon?
Do you have more enthusiastic operators than space for antennas?
Technology to the rescue, reports N3JT...*

Time-Sharing Technology Removes the Tedium of Contesting

BY JIM TALENS,* N3JT

Competitive contesting today increasingly involves using techniques not commonly available even a decade ago. SO2R, which permits a single operator to simultaneously use two radios and two antennas, is an example. QSO rates for those adept at this are impressive, but it requires considerable practice to master. Some do it very well. But for multi-operator situations, a different set of approaches is used. These stations typically have multiple antennas, one dedicated to each operator position, though sometimes with a second person listening for multipliers on a separate receiver. It is now even possible to use the same antenna, such as a tribander, on three different bands by three operators at the same time. Filters with steep bandpass skirts are used, though reportedly there are some noise and artifact issues. The latest idea now under development, which should eliminate these problems, involves application of principles of sampling that have been used in telegraph, telephone, and data networks for a long time. It is referred to as *Time Division Individual Unlimited Multiplexing*, or TDIUM.

Advanced Antenna Sharing

When applied correctly, TDIUM supports the following: A single-band antenna with multiple users (operator and spotter); a triband antenna with multiple users (and spotters); multiple antennas with multiple users. All of these are possible because time slots are assigned to each transceiver and synchronized so that no transmitter emits during a listening slot. Because the sampling is done so quickly, no operator is even aware that there is another signal on the same antenna. Of course, more than one transmitter on a band-mode at one time is not generally acceptable in most contests, so the practical utility of TDIUM lies in using multiple antennas (even a tribander) with multiple operators and spotters without mutual interference.

Basically, each antenna-radio path is sampled at a sufficiently fast rate to permit transfer of the communications content, seamlessly, for both send and receive. The sampling is referred to as the *Nyquist Interval* (later proved by Shannon) and is equal to the reciprocal of twice the highest frequency component of the sampled signal. The communications path (cables between radio and antenna) must be capable of transporting this bandwidth, but as you'll see, this is not a problem in the typical ham radio shack.

* email: <jtalens@verizon.net>

As a basic example of how this works, consider that two voice signals can be transmitted along a single pair of wires by switching in a synchronized way between the two users at 6 kHz, with 3 kHz being the highest frequency component of typical human voice transmission. The path, meaning the cables and wires, all have a bandwidth of at least 6 kHz. This can be applied to more than two users, which is where it gets interesting. The sampling rate then must be increased linearly so that four users would need 24 kHz, and so on.

SSB operation may be intuitive, but how does TDIUM apply to CW? At 30 words per minute, there are 150 characters/minute, or 2.5 characters per second (cps). If we digitize CW, we need to accommodate at least 36 characters (plus punctuation, etc.). This means we need 2^6 different values, or 6 bits per character, which translates to 15 bps at 30 wpm, meaning a 30-Hz bandwidth would be sufficient. Two operators could share one antenna (two bands on a tribander, or an operator and spotter on the same band) using a CODEC capable of also sampling at 60 Hz. To be safe and avoid artifacts, let's assume we sample at 3 kHz. In the TDIUM application for the shack, the existing cables would more than suffice for this bandwidth under the Nyquist Interval criterion. A CODEC may soon be available to handle this encoding, too. A preliminary release was expected around April 1st.

Future Contest Stations

Imagine what this all means. At our future HF contest station, we will have a tribander and separate antennas for 40, 80, and 160 meters. There will also be a receiving antenna for 160. With TDIUM, it will be possible to have 12 operators actively sending, receiving, and searching for multipliers on all six contesting bands, two per band, meaning 12 transceivers (or VFOs in transceivers with second receivers) — all without any problem of mutual noise or interference. For Field Day, it can mean using multiple modes on the same band with the same antenna! Each antenna feed will, of course, have to be able to handle the transmit power, but that is already done in other applications with sturdy vacuum switches.

The notion of TDIUM is upon us, and soon the contesting world will be better than we have imagined it, with room for more operators and more active stations at a given location. It is not folly to think that, with this system, most stations in a contest can be worked in a shorter period of time, leaving Sunday afternoon for viewing sporting events or joining the family instead of passing the day suffering the tedium of calling incessant CQs!

No, this isn't an April Fool article. It's a just-for-fun project that will let you tell your friends you're working DX on a light bulb!

The Light Bulb Antenna

BY DAVID DAY,* N1DAY AND ERNIE HOLLINGSWORTH, KC4SIT

Back in 2000, Tom Shiller, N6BT, wrote an article in *QST* titled "Everything Works."¹ The article's premise was that just about anything will radiate some applied RF energy and details were provided on the use of a 150-watt light bulb in two DX contests during which modest success was achieved in completed QSOs. During the era of tube transmitters, the light bulb was often used as a dummy load to aid in tuning before transmission. Amateur radio operators who were active during the 1950s and '60s will tell stories of other hams returning their calls while transmitting into light bulb dummy loads. This raises the possibility of incorporating a light bulb into an antenna system in which the light bulb would serve as a critical component in antenna operation.

Tungsten as a Radiating Element

Tungsten is the element that radiates light and heat in incandescent bulbs. A review of the thermal and electrical properties of this material found several properties that suggested it could be a fairly good radiator of RF energy. Relative thermal conductivity of tungsten is approximately 45% that of copper, while its electrical conductivity is a little less at 30%. Both the thermal and electrical conductivity of tungsten compare favorably with the conductivity of aluminum when impurities are present in the aluminum mix under consideration (*Table 1*). An interesting finding was that the electrical conductivity of tungsten was much greater than that of stainless steel, which is commonly employed in mobile antennas due to its resistance to atmospheric degradation and structural integrity in harsh environmental applications. This suggests that tungsten could be used as a component in an antenna.^{2,3}

* 11 Mountain Spring Drive
Hendersonville, NC 28739
email: davidlday@yahoo.com

Tungsten filaments have two physical drawbacks when considered for use in antennas. First, the material oxidizes rapidly when power is applied in a non-vacuum environment. Second, as RF power begins to radiate as heat from a tungsten filament, the electrical resistance to energy flow changes dramatically. In a cold state, resistance of the filament contained in common 60- to 100-watt household light bulbs is typically 10-40 ohms. However, when energy is applied and the filament begins to

generate heat, that resistance rapidly rises to well over 100 ohms.⁴ As expected, this can become a challenge in matching an antenna to a transmitter that expects a 50-ohm impedance load during operation.

Given the physical properties and limitations of tungsten, it was clear that if a light bulb were to be used as a component in an antenna, it would need to have a significant filament length. This was demonstrated in testing a variety of incandescent light bulbs with fila-



Photo A. A 100-watt Satco S2431 light bulb (left) and the Edison "squirrel cage" light bulb (right).



Photo B. LBA MK V Light bulb antenna.

ments varying in length from 2 inches to 84 inches. To serve as the radiating element in a multi-band antenna, the light bulb would also need to be positioned in series with a variable tap induction coil to cancel the capacitive reactance that naturally occurs with electrically short antennas.

From visits to several local hardware, lighting stores, and an internet search, several candidate light bulbs were identified with relatively long tungsten filaments. The first was a 60-watt bulb sold by various companies as the 5.25-inch Edison reproduction "squirrel cage." The bulb gets its name by referring to a 42-inch filament that is folded back upon itself seven times to form a cage-like structure. The second light bulb of interest was the 100-watt Satco S2341. The design of this bulb was similar to the Edison light bulb, but in a much larger 15 inch-long globe. Total filament length in this light bulb is 84 inches in a 7-fold cage-like design similar to the smaller Edison bulb (*Photo A*). Unfortunately, the S2431 was only available through several online stores and the first three bulbs delivered were broken during shipping as a consequence of their fragile glass stem design. While awaiting delivery of an intact S2431, experimentation began with the smaller Edison reproduction light bulb. After a functioning S2431 light bulb was received, the Edison light bulb was retired. Although the Edison light bulb ultimately proved to be a good radiator of RF energy, the S2431 was immediately found to be superior to its smaller cousin, presumably due to the doubling of the filament length.

Antenna Design

Five antennas were constructed over the course of three months. In each case, discoveries of strengths and weaknesses in each antenna were used in the next generation design. Only the last two antenna designs — the LBA MK V and LBA DB "Dual Bulb" are described in this article.

The best way to think about the light bulb antenna is by comparison to a mobile antenna in which the light bulb replaces the whip. Like a mobile antenna, the light bulb antenna has a radiator, variable loading coil, ground system, and an antenna tuner to provide the desired 50-ohm impedance match for the transceiver. (However, the light bulb was found to be only between 30-40% as efficient as a 6-foot whip radiator ... so don't expect miracles. But as you will see, it gets out nonetheless!)

The loading coil of the simpler anten-

RELATIVE ELECTRICAL CONDUCTIVITY

Material	Conductivity (s/m)	Relative to copper
Silver	68×10^6	113%
Copper	60×10^6	100%
Gold	43×10^6	72%
Aluminum (pure)	38×10^6	63%*
Tungsten	17.9×10^6	30%
Carbon steel	6.0×10^6	10%
Stainless Steel	1.4×10^6	2%

* 26% - 63% depending on impurities

Table 1. Electrical conductivity of several metals commonly used in electronic applications.

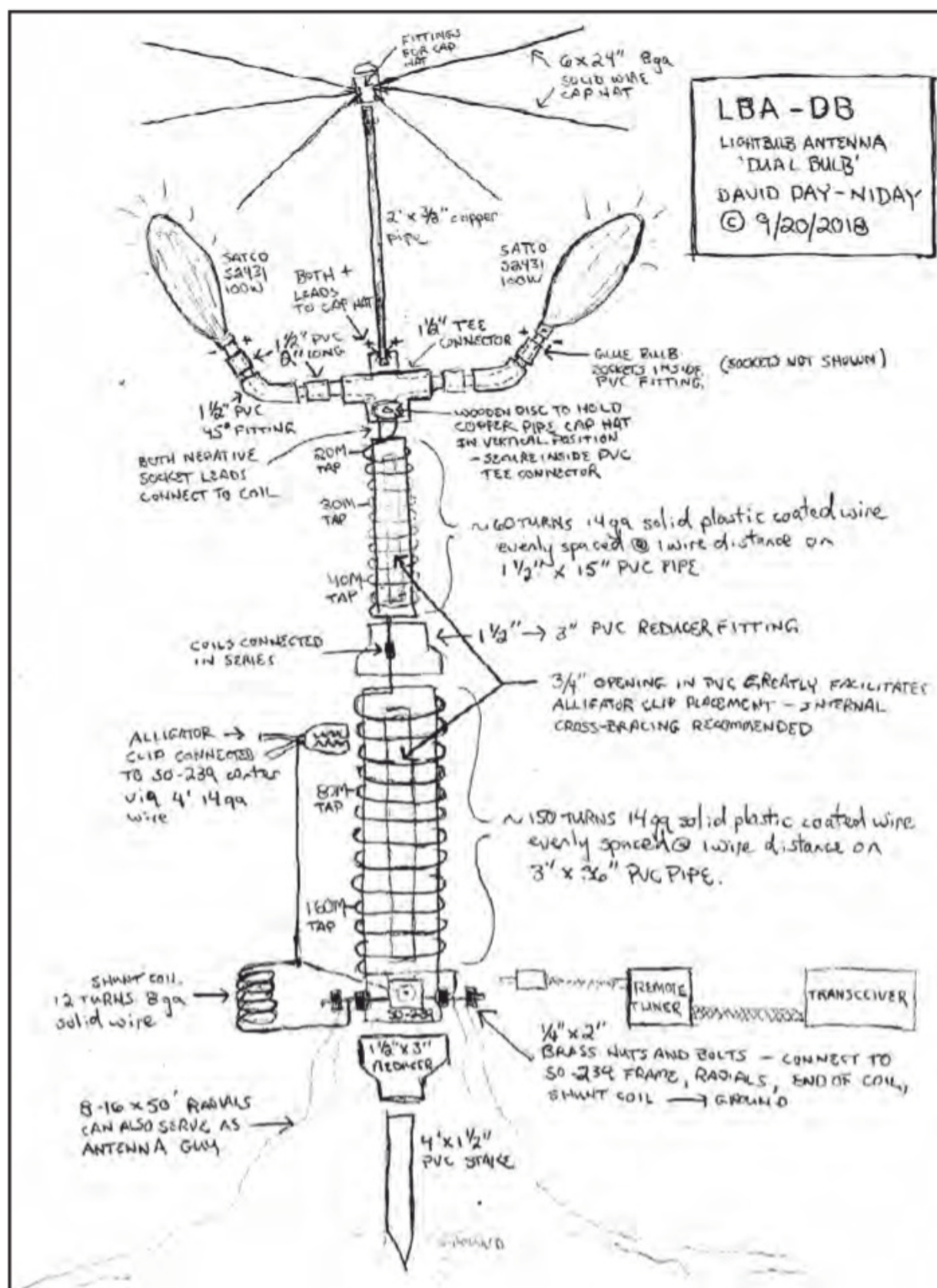


Figure 1. LBA – DB light bulb antenna schematic.



Photo C. Dual light bulb antenna and capacitance hat.

na (LBA MK V) currently being used by KC4SIT consists of two loading coils attached in series leading up to the S2431 light bulb at the top of the structure. The coil at the base of the antenna is constructed on a 3-foot section of 3-inch diameter schedule 40 PVC pipe with 150 turns of evenly-spaced 14-gauge THHN solid copper wire. Above that coil, a second coil containing 60 turns of 14-gauge solid wire is placed in series with the first coil. This coil was wound on a 15-inch piece of 1.5-inch diameter schedule 40 PVC pipe. In earlier designs, it was found that finding a tap point for tuning on the higher HF frequencies (30-10 meters) was difficult on the 3-inch coil and that a smaller coil simplified the process of identifying a tap point that resulted in an acceptable impedance match. So the smaller coil is used for tuning on 30 through 10 meters while the larger coil is used for tuning on the 80- and 40-meter bands.

Four 1/4-inch x 2-inch brass bolts and nuts are connected to the base of the coil form. These serve as connection points for 20 50-foot radials, common ground to the frame of the SO-239 connector, and the base end of the larger loading coil. The base of the antenna is elevated approximately 3 feet above ground to minimize RF losses to ground through the induction coil and improve antenna efficiency. An LDG RT-100 remote antenna tuner is attached to the 3-foot PVC mast below the main coil. In addition to providing a 50-ohm impedance match, remote tuning serves to keep RF energy from radiating off the coax and reduces signal loss due to antenna / feedline mismatch.

Table 2.

Antenna element	No Bulb in Circuit Field Strength (milliwatts per cm ²)	Bulb in Circuit Field Strength (milliwatts per cm ²)
Coax feedline	0.00012	0.00012
Radials	0.12	0.12
Top of coil	0.18	35
30° above coil	0.8	40

Table 2. Field strength measurements with and without light bulb.

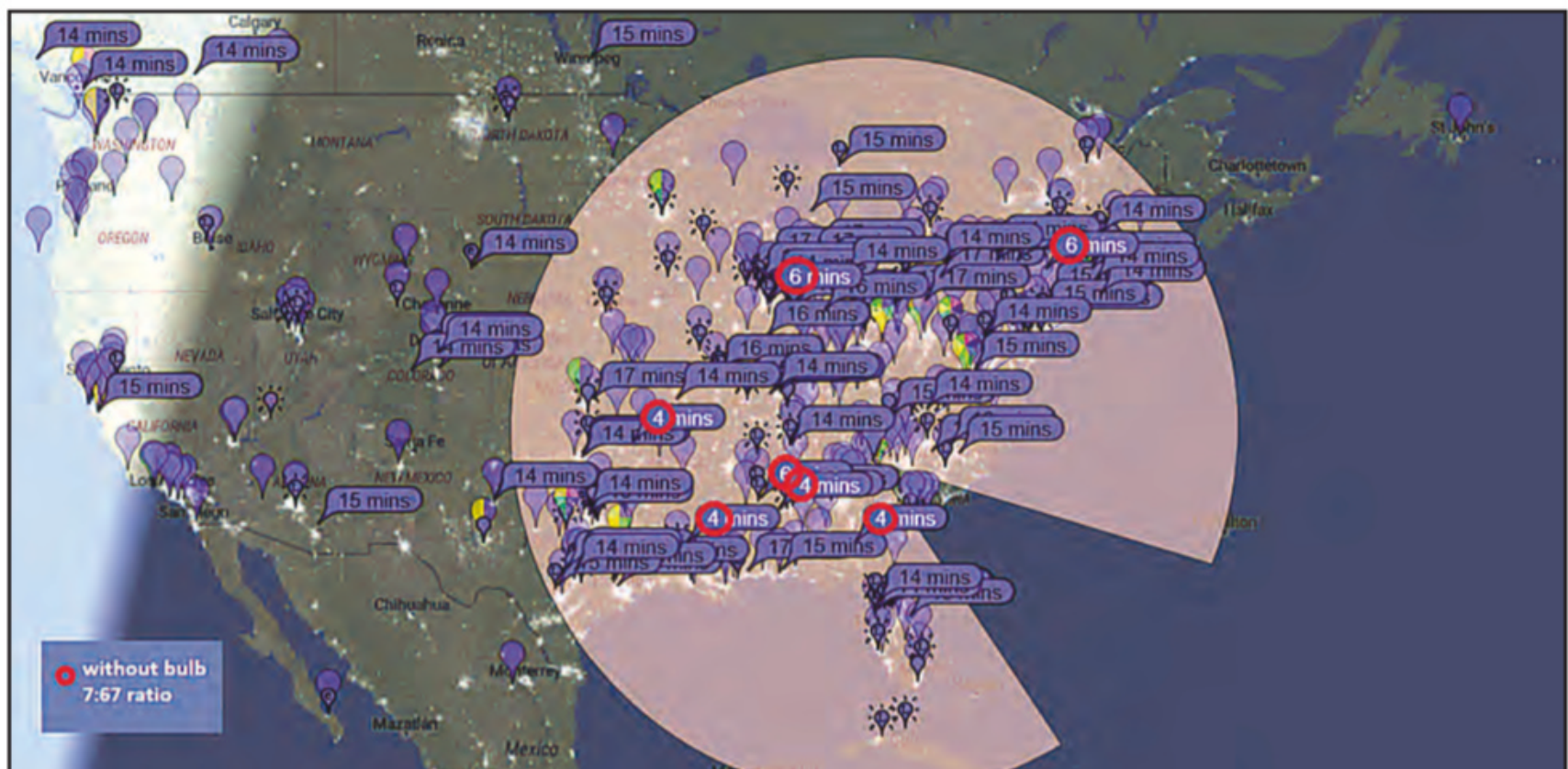


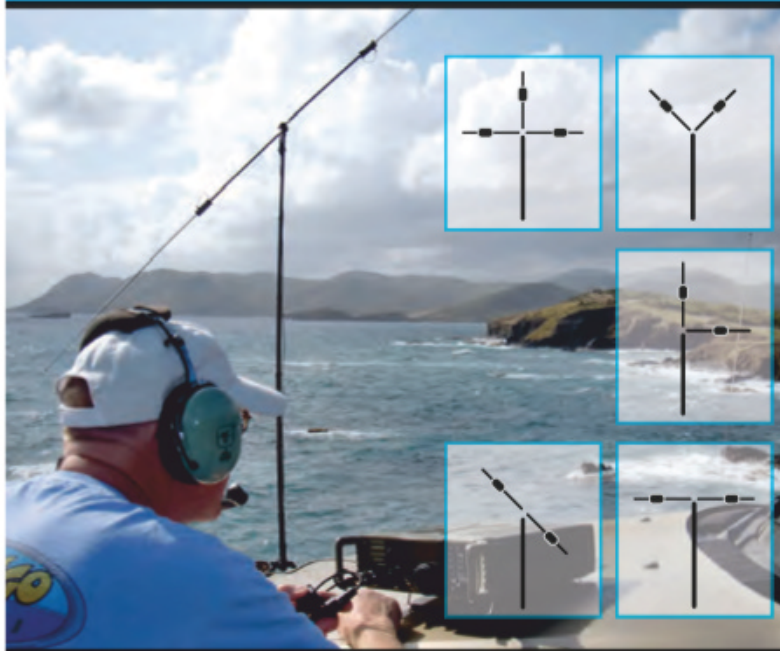
Figure 2. PSK Reporter map with and without the light bulb in circuit (without circled in red).



BUDDIPOLE

Secure online ordering at:
www.buddipole.com

HOT New Product
POWERMINI™ Back in Stock!



BUDDIPOLE FEATURES

- > Multi-band design works 9 bands (40 meters thru 2 meters) with one set of adjustable coils!
- > Modular Design – create dozens of different antennas with interchangeable parts
- > Rotatable/Directional
- > Lightweight, rugged components
- > Rotating Arm Kit allows users to instantly change antenna configurations
- > Used by Emergency Services Groups throughout the world
- > Rated from QRP to 250 watts PEP



Compact Portable DC Power Management System with built-in Solar Controller

- > High contrast OLED display
- > Power management includes current and voltage readout
- > User-definable Low Voltage Alarm + Cutoff
- > RF Quiet Solar controller for use with panels up to 10 amps
- > Rugged enclosure for field use
- > Maximum current handling capacity – 25 amps

WHAT IS THE BUDDIPOLE?

The Buddipole™ Portable Dipole fits in your travel bag and assembles in minutes. The Buddipole is more than an antenna, it's a versatile system for launching your signal. Optimized for transmit power and proven for DX work, the Buddipole is the secret weapon used by HF portable operators all over the world.

3028 SE 59th Ct. #600
Hillsboro, OR 97123

tel: (503) 591 8001
fax: (503) 214 6802

info@buddipole.com

See our videos

www.youtube.com/buddipole

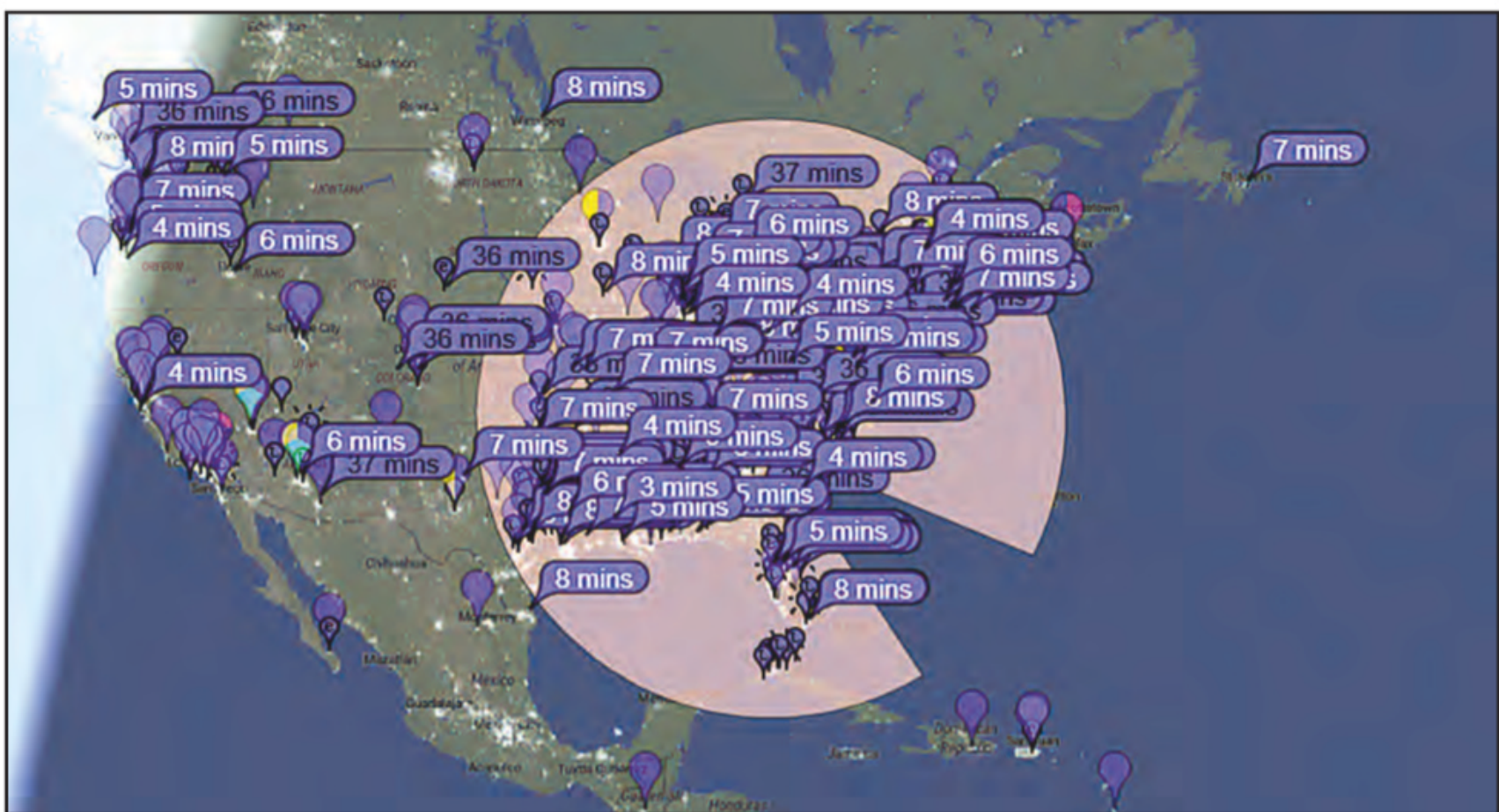


Figure 3. PSK Reporter map after re-insertion of light bulb into the antenna circuit.

It should be noted that only one end of the tungsten filament is attached to the end of the upper coil of the antenna. This was done because the intent was to use the entire length of the 84-inch filament as the “whip” of the antenna. Attaching both leads of the light bulb socket to the upper

induction coil would have reduced the electrical length of the filament by 50% and this was considered undesirable in the antenna design.

With an antenna analyzer, taps were located on the induction coils that allowed the antenna to be tuned on all HF bands

from 10-80 meters. In tuning, it was noted that the antenna behaves exactly like any other electrically short antenna. Tap points that included a greater number of coils in the antenna caused the resonant frequency to go down, as one would expect, and vice versa. Once the taps on the coil were located, a length of wire was attached to the center of the SO-239 connector and an alligator clip connected to the opposite end. This allows easy connection to the tap point associated with the desired band of operation. *Photo B* shows the complete antenna.

Branching Out

Several weeks of FT-8 operation at 50-85 watts of transmitter power with over 300 completed QSOs demonstrated that the antenna works on 80-15 meters. One issue noted during this period was that the antenna required periodic retuning during the first few minutes of use. This was presumed to be the result of resistance changes occurring within the tungsten element as it became hot from application of RF energy.

As a workaround to this problem, we decided to use two S2431 light bulbs in a parallel configuration so that, as the light bulbs warmed up, the increase in resistance of the filament would be reduced by half. The open ends of each light bulb filament were eventually connected to a 2-foot length of 3/8-inch copper pipe to which a 6-element X 4-foot-diameter capacitance hat was added to further control the capacitive reactance associated with electrically short antenna designs. A small 10-turn X 2-inch diameter shunt coil was placed between the SO-239 center connector and ground to increase resistance at the resonance points on the 80- to 40-meter bands (see *Figure 1* and *Photo C*). The shunt coil should be considered optional depending on desired bands of operation. Although the shunt coil improved tuning ease on 40 and 80 meters, it ultimately made tuning more difficult on 160 and 30-15 meters.

These changes to the antenna design worked as planned and the changes in impedance that occur with heating of the tungsten filament are no longer great enough to cause the external tuner to trigger an automatic retuning sequence on any band of operation. Like most conventional antennas, once the light bulb antenna is tuned for a specific frequency of operation, it now stays tuned during periods of prolonged use.

It was also noted that after the capacitance hat was incorporated into the design, the need for inductance to bring the antenna to resonance on the lower bands was greatly diminished. As a result, the antenna can now be turned on the 160-meter band with a number of FT-8 contacts being completed on that band out to a distance of approximately 1,100 kilometers (685 miles).

Is the Light Bulb Responsible for RF Radiation?

In early testing of the single bulb antenna at 50 watts of trans-

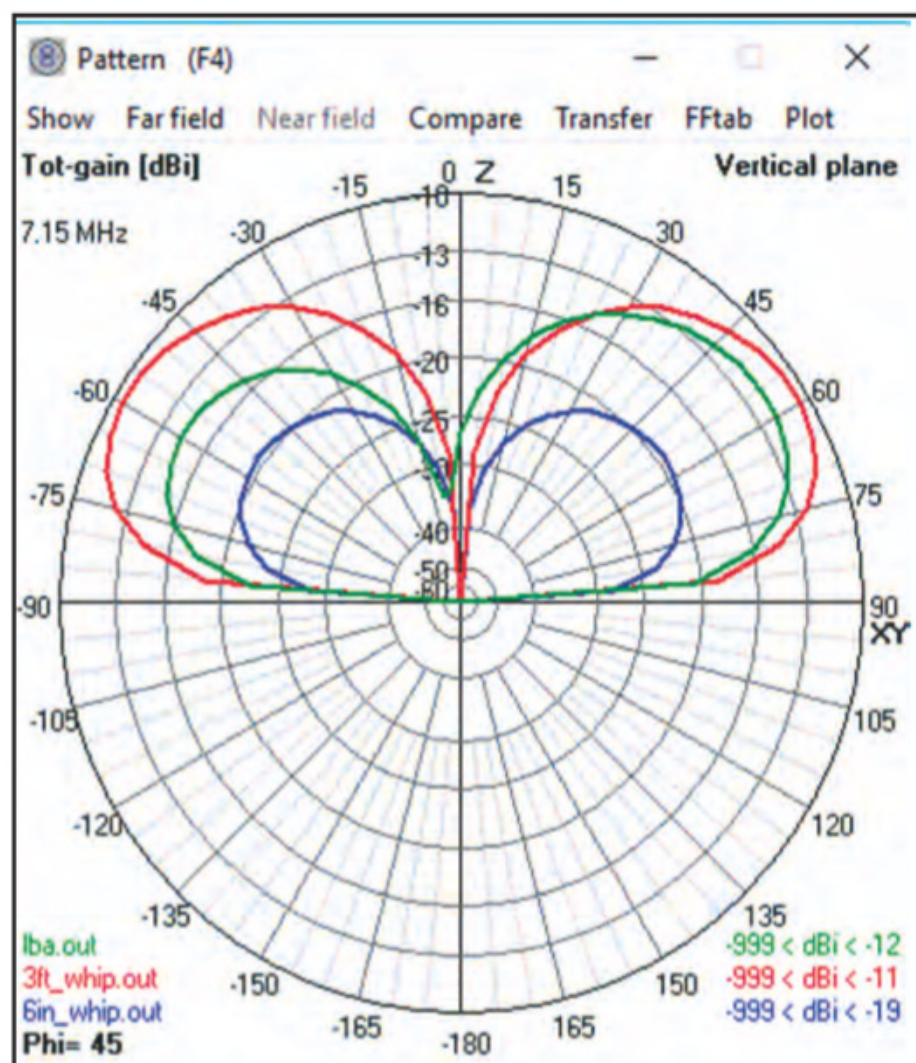


Figure 4. Comparison of modeled radiation patterns for a 3-foot whip (red), S2431 light bulb (green), and 6-inch whip (blue).

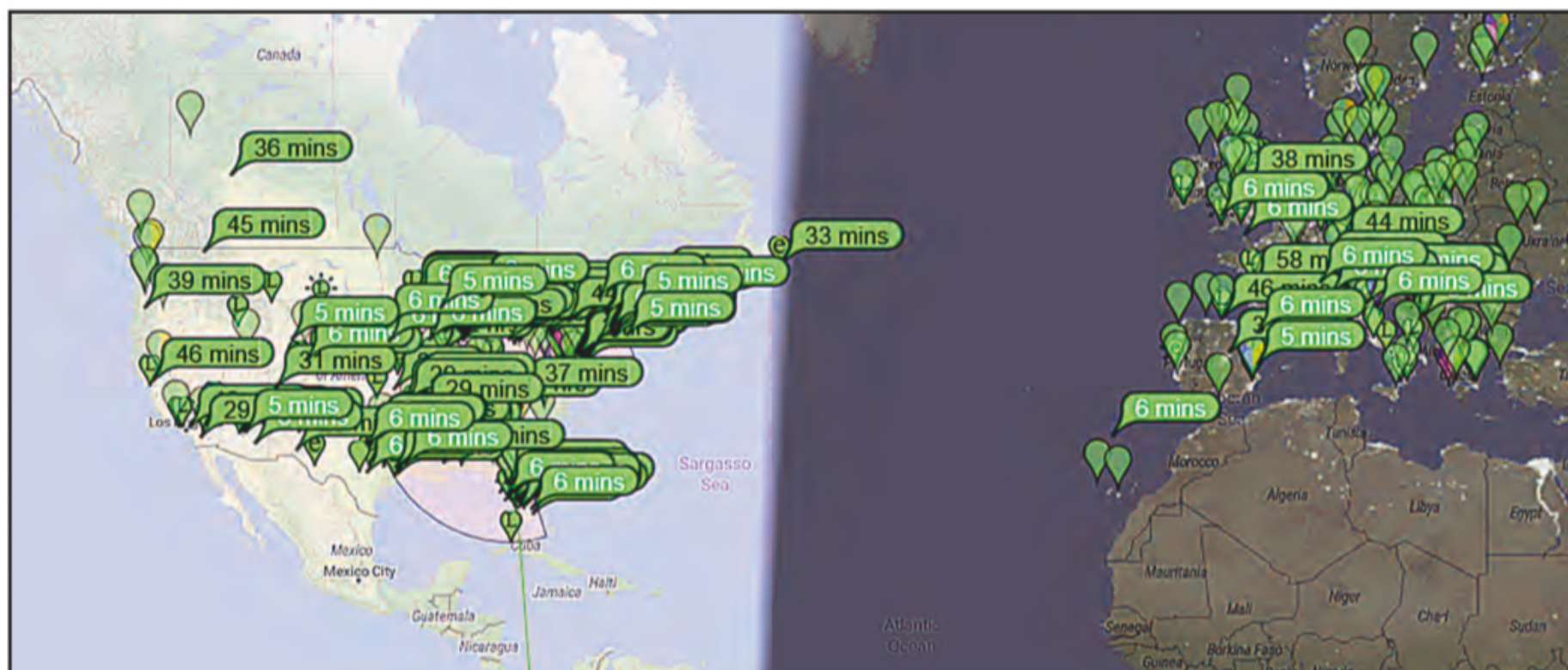


Figure 5. Signal-received reports on PSK Reporter from 30-meter operation using FT-8 at 50 watts.

Beautifully Simple
and
Simply Beautiful.

ALINCO[®]
Quality. Style. Performance!

Visit alinco.com for more details!



T-version with EMS-79 microphone.
Optional cable required for separation.

- Full-duplex receiver enables simultaneous TX/RX within 145/440MHz bands
- Fully independent frequency, audio level and squelch knobs for right and left VFOs
- 50W output on both VHF and UHF bands with Mid and Low settings
- Eight full color LEDs enabling you to customize your display colors
- Large heatsink and quiet fan for stability while operating
- Front panel separation and 2 speaker ports
- Stores memories by simply pressing a key
- Crossband repeater (T model only)
- DIN socket for connection with external devices

145/440MHz Twinband FM Transceiver **NEW**
DR-735T FC/E CE



REMTronix, Inc.

17508 Murphy Parkway, Lathrop, CA 95330

Ph: (209) 900-1296 Fax: (209) 624-3153 Website: <http://www.remtronix.com>

Email: alinco@remtronix.com Service: alincosupport@remtronix.com

REMTRONIX

Products intended for properly licensed operators. Required products are FCC part 15B certified. Specification subject to change without notice or obligation.

mitter output power, satisfactory success was achieved on all bands of operation, with over 300 QSOs completed on FT-8 in a few weeks of casual use. In comparison to available vertical delta loop antennas, which are dedicated to one specific band of operation, the light bulb antenna was clearly inferior, but not by a lot. FT-8 signal reports from stations reporting transmissions were generally down by approximately 6-10 dB signal to noise ratio (SNR) when comparing the LBA-DB antenna to band-specific vertical delta loop reference antennas. Surprisingly, several transoceanic QSOs were completed on the light bulb antenna and contacts from North Carolina to the West Coast of the U.S. were common on 80-20 meters. Testing has yet to be completed above 20 meters as these bands have had continually poor propagation over the period of testing.

Even though the light bulb antenna appears to be a fair radiator of RF energy, the nagging question was the source of that radiation. Several amateur operators who were aware of the project pointed out that the radiation could be coming from the inductor coils, radial wires, and the coax leading to the transmitter. This was a fair objection and concern that warranted further research.

To find out where radiation was coming off the antenna, a number of field strength measurements were performed on the LBA MK V antenna. Transmitter power was turned down to 250 milliwatts so that we could safely get close to the antenna to do the measurements within the bounds of our field strength meter that has an upper measurement limit of 40 milliwatts/cm². With the transmitter generating a steady carrier, field strength measurements at 7.074 MHz were taken at an 8-inch distance from the antenna elements, both with and without the light bulb in the circuit. All measurements

were performed with the field strength meter parallel to the antenna element being examined. The results are summarized in *Table 2*. As you can see, the presence of the light bulb in the antenna circuit results in a significant improvement in radiation from the antenna. Subsequent to introduction of the second light bulb and capacitance hat into the antenna design (*Figure 1*), the measurement process was again performed with no changes in results. As expected, the capacitance hat was also found to generate very little additional RF energy, both in field measurements and subsequent computer modeling.

On-air testing was performed on the single light bulb antenna by calling CQ on 40 meters, using the FT-8 digital mode both with and without the light bulb in the circuit. When the light bulb was taken out of the circuit, a new tap on the coil was found to provide an impedance match on 40. CQ was called over 5-minute intervals and the number of stations reporting the signal were counted on the PSK Reporter website.⁵

With the light bulb in the circuit, 67 stations reported receipt of our signal. Without it, only seven stations heard us. This is approximately a 10:1 signal-reporting ratio with vs. without the light bulb in the antenna circuit (*Figure 2*). At the end of the 5-minute transmission without the light bulb in the circuit, the bulb was again affixed to the top of the antenna with retuning and another 5-minute CQ session was conducted. At the end of this session, nearly all of the original stations reporting our signal with the light bulb again reported to the PSK Reporter map (*Figure 3*).

Based on the results of this test, field strength measurements, and subsequent computer modeling, it appears that the light bulb is performing as a key component of the anten-

na. Although other parts of the antenna may contribute small amounts of radiation to the total RF output, the light bulb antenna radiates in a manner similar to other electrically short vertical antenna designs.

To better understand why this was happening, antenna modeling was performed using the 4NEC2 antenna modeling software.⁶ In the models, the light bulb was replaced with suc-

cessively smaller antenna whips starting at 10-foot whip length and ending up with a 6-inch whip (essentially the last turn of the induction coil). After a long time working with the geometry of an 84-inch tungsten filament being folded back on itself seven times, a model of the light bulb was achieved. *Figure 4* shows the results for the comparison of a traditional 3-foot whip, S2431 light bulb, and an extremely short 6-inch whip.

This comparison demonstrates two things. First, the light bulb pattern exhibits a bit of directional behavior, presumably due to the way the tungsten filament is folded and terminated within the light bulb. Second, the bulb produces a radiation pattern and strength approximately equivalent to a 3-foot whip at -12 dBi. Even though the tungsten filament is about 7 feet in length, this result was expected as the folds of the filament likely result in a fair amount of radiated signal cancellation.

Light Bulb SSTV

On December 18, 2018, co-authors N1DAY and KC4SIT completed a slow-scan TV (SSTV) QSO over the nearly 5-mile distance between them, each using a light bulb antenna. N1DAY suggests this might have been the first-ever, two-way light bulb antenna SSTV QSO ... and who are we to argue? Here are a couple of the photos they exchanged...



Ongoing Use of the Light Bulb Antenna

As experience progresses with the light bulb antenna, it has become clear that it is an adequate performer despite significant RF energy loss from generation of heat and light relative to conventional antenna designs. Even though the light bulb antenna will likely never achieve the performance success of conventional antennas with longer and straighter radiating elements, it is not uncommon for signals emitted from a light bulb to be heard by distant stations when propagation conditions are good. (*Figure 5*). Completed FT-8 QSOs from North Carolina to the western United States, Mexico, and many Caribbean nations routinely occur. Under good conditions, QSOs have been completed with a number of European and Asian countries on 20, 30, and 40 meters, with the most distant being to Australia on 40 at 9,796 miles (N1DAY to VK3BVW @ -15 dB SNR) during the morning grayline period.

In case you were wondering, the bulbs do glow visibly starting at about 40-50 watts. As power approaches that range, the RF meter shows an increasing power density measured at 50 feet away. At glow level, power density levels off, but at about 70 watts it continues to go up again as TX power is increased. Be careful, though ... the upper limit is a little above the bulbs' power rating. They do burn out if bulb wattage is exceeded.

QRP Capability?

Given the light bulb antenna's signal loss relative to the delta loop antennas used in this study, we were wary of its ability to function at all at transmit powers of 5 watts or less. To test the antenna in QRP mode, KC4SIT and N1DAY transmitted FT-8 CQ calls for two days utilizing both the LBA MK V and LBA-DB antennas. In short, both antennas outperformed our expectations at 5 watts of transmitter power with signals being reported across the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean (*Figure 6*).

During the testing, N1DAY focused on SNR comparisons to a band-specific delta loop reference antenna on 40 meters utilizing PSK Reporter statistics, while KC4SIT attempted to make as many QRP calls as possible. As expected, SNR reports for the light bulb antennas were consistently well below SNR reports for the reference antennas. In the 40-meter SNR comparison, 32 stations reported N1DAY's light bulb-generated FT-8 signal at 5 watts over a transmission time of 10 minutes and 48 stations reported N1DAY's delta loop-generated signal over the same time interval. The most distant station reporting signal receipt from the light bulb transmission was WB1EAZ in Guatay, California, 1,944 miles from N1DAY's QTH. In total, 19 stations reported the signal from both the light bulb and delta loop antennas with the aver-

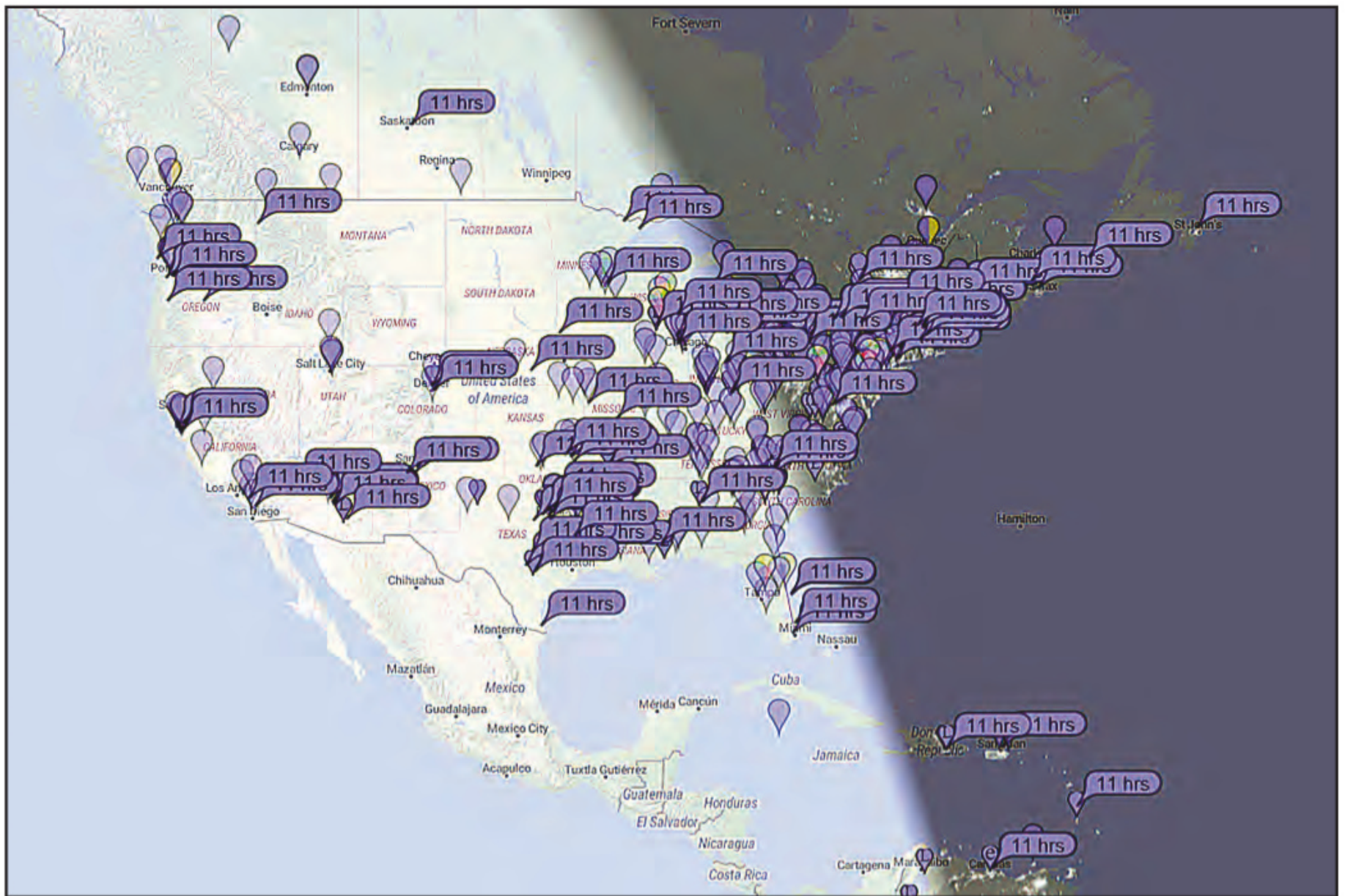


Figure 6. PSK Reporter map from KC4SIT's 5-watt FT-8 CQ calls.

age SNR reduction being -20.7 dB for the light bulb antenna.

KC4SIT's efforts at completing FT-8 QSOs at 5 watts on the LBA MK V antenna yielded 16 QSOs on 80 meters, 35 QSOs on 40, and 9 on 30 meters, while N1DAY completed 4 QSOs on 80, 5 QSOs on 40, and 15 on 30 meters with the LBA-DB antenna. Several of the QSOs exceeded 1,000 miles. KC4SIT also observed signal-received reports on PSK Reporter during his CQ activity utilizing FT-8. This yielded a total of 301 stations reporting his call with the most distant station being NN7U in Astoria, Oregon, at a distance of 2,270 miles on 40 meters.

Keys to Success

During operation at both stations, several operating techniques to improve QRP success became apparent:

- Transmission interference on crowded bands and operators utilizing high power necessitates split operation when answering CQ calls and transmission in an unused portion of the FT-8 band allocation away from operators using high power when calling CQ.
- Utilization of PSK Reporter maps to verify that the station you are trying to call is hearing your signal.
- Continual attention to the waterfall for band shifts and openings. Stations will often not see a QRP station calling CQ on the waterfall and will accidentally transmit over weak signals.
- A mixture of calling both CQ and answering CQ calls maximizes opportunities for success.
- Persistence pays. Sometimes stations do not see or return QRP calls simply because band conditions at any given time may be sub-optimal. Over the course of several hours, prop-

agation conditions can go from very poor to very good, making calls that could not be completed earlier in the day possible at QRP levels of operation.

Summary

Our work has demonstrated that with attention to detail, certain incandescent light bulbs can be successfully incorporated into an antenna for both low power (<100 watts) and QRP (<5 watts). In addition to selecting a light bulb with a long tungsten filament, minimizing RF losses through remote tuning, inductance coil winding uniformity, and mitigation of ground losses with proper coil placement along with an adequate ground path return system, are important to success.

The light bulb antenna has been a good experiment in relearning and applying some of the basics of good antenna design. Other than that, the big benefit of experimentation with the light bulb antenna has been the fun factor. As word gets out about the antenna, we are finding that pileups begin to occur as soon as we start transmitting on FT-8. It seems that everyone wants to talk to the guys using the light bulb antenna so they can say they've had first-hand experience and not just heard the stories of QSOs using light bulbs as dummy loads from someone else.

References:

1. Shiller, T., "Everything Works," QST, July 2000, p. 47
2. <http://tinyurl.com/y5tnx4em>
3. <http://tinyurl.com/y5sn9htz>
4. <http://tinyurl.com/y5hphrw6>
5. <https://pskreporter.info/pskmap.html>
6. Voors, A., 4NEC2, version 5.8.16, 2017

Announcing:

2019 CQ World Wide Foxhunting Weekend

May 11-12, 2019 (or whenever works for your group)



Orienteering enthusiast Addison Bosley, KJ4VCV, wore his competition clothes during the on-foot foxhunt at the Dayton Hamvention. (Photo by Bob Frey, WA6EZV)

Mobile or on-foot, one transmitter or many, a radio foxhunt is sure to stir up activity in your ham club. Now is the time to plan for this year's CQ World Wide Foxhunting Weekend, which will be May 11-12, or a different date in the spring if that works better for your group. CQ doesn't impose any rules or offer any awards for Foxhunting Weekend. That's up to you and the hams in your hometown. Your hunt can be for mobiles or all on foot. Use the international rules or make up your own.

For many clubs, Foxhunting Weekend kicks off a season of regular transmitter hunts. For others, it's a special once-a-year event, like Field Day. Since the primary objective is lots of hunt participation, we don't insist that your event be on that weekend. Any time in the spring is fine with us!

Some hams prefer the formalities of carefully crafted boundaries, specifications for signal parameters, time limits, and so forth. Others are content just to have one or more signals to hunt. No need for any regulations, they say. Talk it up on the local repeater and social media to find out what your friends have in mind.

*P.O. Box 2508, Fullerton, CA 92837

email: <homingin@aol.com>

Web: <www.homingin.com>

Foxhunting teaches an important skill — the ability to find the source of signals from afar. RDF, or *radio direction-finding*, is useful for public service and volunteer enforcement. It can even save lives. Most of all, it's fun. Give it a try, but make sure your group has safe fun. See to it that no one can be injured by your hidden transmitter or by trying to get to them.

Don't let the excitement of the hunt make you an unsafe runner or driver. Make sure that all transmitting and receiving antennas are eye-safe. Always be mindful of your own physical limitations and never take chances behind the wheel or in the forest.

Afterward, write up the results and send them to CQWW Foxhunting Weekend Moderator Joe Moell, KØOV.* The list of information in a complete CQ Foxhunting Weekend report is posted on Joe's website at <www.homingin.com/joek0ov/report>. In addition to the details of date, location, hiders and winners, CQ's readers also want to know what was unique about your hunt and what lessons (positive and negative) you learned from it. Don't forget to include some sharp action photos. The higher the resolution, the better.

Let's make Foxhunting Weekend 2019 the biggest ever. I look forward to receiving your reports. Happy hunting!

Enjoy the Hobby read, read, read...



W6SAI HF Antenna Handbook

by Bill Orr, W6SAI

W6SAI was known for his easy-to-understand writing style. In keeping with this tradition, this book is a thoroughly readable text for any antenna enthusiast, jam-packed with dozens of inexpensive, practical antenna projects that work!



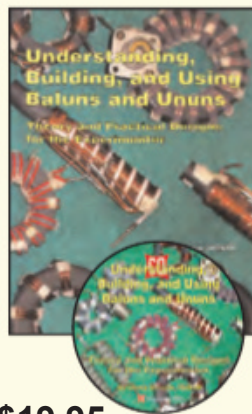
8.5 X 11 Paperback \$19.95
CD Version \$14.95

Buy both for only \$29.95

Understanding, Building & Using Baluns & Ununs

by Jerry Sevick, W2FMI

The successor to the popular and authoritative Baluns and Ununs. Great deal of new tutorial material, and designs not in previous book, with crystal clear explanations of how and why they work.



8.5 X 11 Paperback \$19.95
CD Version \$14.95

Buy both for only \$29.95

The Quad Antenna

by Bob Haviland, W4MB

Comprehensive guide to the construction, design and performance of Quad Antennas. General Concepts, Circular-Loop & Arrays, Rectangular & Square Loops, Multi-Element Quads and more!



8.5 X 11 Paperback \$19.95
CD Version \$14.95

Buy both for only \$29.95

DX World Guide

by Franz Langner, DJ9ZB

This 380-page, fourth edition, full color throughout, includes information on well over 300 DX entities.



Whether used as a desk reference for the DXer of any level of proficiency or as a "wish book" for DXers just starting his or her DXCC journey, the new *DX World Guide* is a worthy and pleasant companion!

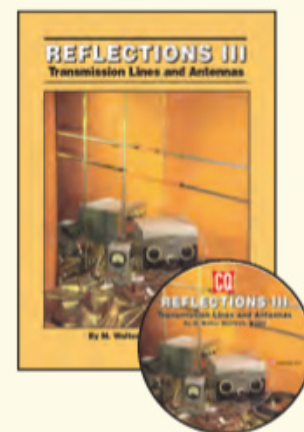
6 X 9 Paperback \$49.95
CD Version \$34.95

Buy both for only \$68.95

Reflections III

by Walt Maxwell, W2DU

All the info in Reflections I and II and more! This completely revised and updated, 424-page 3rd edition is a must-have!



8.5 X 11 Paperback \$39.95
CD Version \$29.95

Buy both for only \$59.95

Shipping & Handling:

U.S. add \$7 for the first item, \$3.50 for the second and \$2 for each add'l item.
FREE shipping on orders over \$100 to one U.S. address.
CN/MX-\$15 for 1st item, \$7 for 2nd and \$3 for each add'l.
All Other Countries-\$25 for 1st item, \$10 for 2nd and \$5 for each additional.

CQ Communications, Inc.

Phone 516-681-2922 • FAX 516-681-2926

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

You can learn about different aspects of ham radio from a variety of sources, starting with this magazine! But there are other options as well, including a nearly endless variety of audio “podcasts” available on the internet. AI6OU takes us on a tour of some of his favorites.

Ham Radio Audio Podcasts

BY DAVID GUDER,* AI6OU

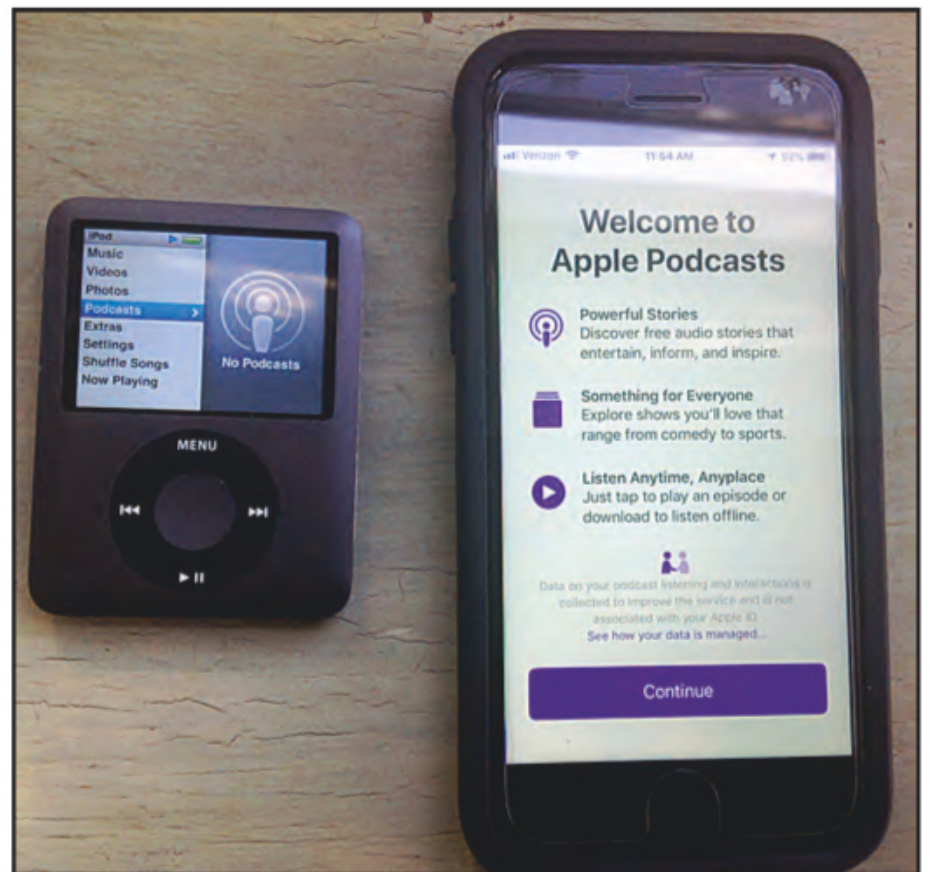
About four years ago, my wife and I went to the greater Denver area to visit our son for his winter college break. Although my favorite form of exercise is bicycling, I was not about to go from sea level to 5,000 feet, in February, and ride outdoors. I had an old iPod (portable digital music player), so I decided to load a few podcasts on it and listen to whatever I thought might interest me while spinning away on the stationary bike in the hotel’s indoor gym. I had always been interested in amateur radio, so I found a few episodes and added them to my normal selections and we were off. I would have never thought that listening to an amateur radio podcast would be the final push to finally get my license.

Podcast Basics

“What is a podcast?” “How do I listen?” “What can I learn?” Let’s unpack this and maybe you can learn something new this year as well.

Podcast – The word comes from a blending of the Apple-branded “iPod” and the term “broadcast,” hence the name “podcast.” You do not need an iPod to listen to a podcast — you can listen on many types of technology, many of which you already have and use daily. It is kind of like an on-demand radio show that is recorded for you to listen to whenever it is convenient. A wonderful thing about podcasts is that they are not only created by the huge media outlets. They can be created by anyone wishing to share or teach something that interests them. Thought to have started in the 1980s, the first officially-named podcast was in 2004 and the name has stuck since then. According to *Podcast Insights*, as of mid-2018 there were over 550,000 podcasts with over 18.5 million episodes¹. There are many other stats from the Podcast Insights website, including the fact that 64% of the U.S. population is familiar with the term “podcasting.” From conversations with some of the hosts of amateur radio podcasts, that number is much lower for the average ham. If you have never listened to a podcast, read on and listen in.

How do I listen? What is unique about podcasts is that you can use many forms of technology to listen. Most have an internet website with links to both the latest shows and a library of past shows that are all pretty much available “on demand.” As soon as they are posted, you can click and listen on your home computer. If you have a smartphone, you can find an application (app) that acts as a distribution point for specific shows that you may like. For instance, I can go on iTunes, Stitcher Radio, or RSS (Real Simple Syndication) feeds, select the shows that I like and new episodes will auto-



Podcasts got their name from combining “iPod” (left) with “broadcast.” Even though iPods can be hard to find today, you can still listen to podcasts on your smartphone or any other device that can download audio from the internet.

matically be downloaded to my phone or computer. When you make the time to “mow the back 40,” go for that long walk with the dog because the bands are not cooperating, or have a long commute like I do — it’s now your time to learn something new. If you have an audio player (iPod, MP3 player, etc.), you can load it the same way you load your favorite music and listen to it on the go.

Social Media — Since podcasts are electronic broadcast shows, many of their fans often have their own ideas, similar experiences, or comments to share with the creators or other followers. Most podcasts also have a presence on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. On these sites, the followers (or users) can interact with other users to share how they raised their new antenna, tried the latest radio, contacted that rare DX, or reviewed the nearby hamfest. You do not have to participate in this side of the podcast experience, but this is where ideas are exchanged and relationships beyond a contact over the airwaves can grow.

What can I learn? That week in Colorado, I listened to episodes on FM repeater basics, how to study for the FCC license test, the basics of SOTA (Summits on the Air), and

* email: ai6ou@yahoo.com

even a shopping list show. I learned that the FCC test was not as ominous as some say, and that I could actually afford a radio after I passed the exam. However, I still have not found the show on how to justify the purchase of a new radio to your significant other — I need to explore the Marriage Enrichment / Communication genre of podcasts and polish those skills. The amateur radio subjects are almost endless and include interviews with award-winning DXers and icons in ham radio, how to help with JOTA (Jamboree on the Air), how best to study for your upcoming FCC exam, what NVIS is all about, how to use solar power for your station, and much more.

Specific Amateur Radio Podcasts

I will list and describe a few podcasts that I listen to as examples. Consider this a personal list and not a formal endorsement of any podcast, but merely descriptions of the typical type of content presented with more information as warranted. There are many more excellent podcasts I can't mention here but I will assemble a list of these and others (with clickable links to websites) that you can request from me at the end of this article. Here's my personal favorites list:



100 Watts and a Wire: Hosted by Emmy Award-winning producer / director Christian Cudnik, KØSTH, the show focuses on the intersection of life and amateur radio and represents a place where hams can learn from each other, share the challenges and celebrations we experience as a diverse group of amateur radio operators. The podcast addresses common — and some not-so-common — operating issues and solutions from which we can all learn. There is a strong Facebook following (over 10,000 members) where you can contribute conversations on issues from operating and rig questions to sharing Hamvention® experiences. Abbreviated 100WAAW, the community that's grown up around the program has created "activity days" where members and friends gather on the HF bands in the spring and fall as an opportunity to test gear and teach other operators about the 100WAAW community. There is also a weekly on-air presence with the 100 WAAW 40-meter net, held every Sunday night with net control stations scattered across the U.S. and followers talk on the air (spots communicated on Facebook or Twitter).



Amateur Radio Newsline: A weekly newscast of issues and events of interest to radio amateurs worldwide. Often heard on repeaters during or after your local FM net, content ranges from the serious issues such as first-hand reporting from emergency areas to fun issues that have included in-depth interviews with hams and others who are active in current news items. ARN is also the prime sponsor of the Young

Ham of the Year Award (YHOTY), started by Newsline founder William Pasternak, WA6ITF (SK), in 1986 to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of young people to the amateur radio service. A very experienced staff assembles and brings a wealth of information each week.

ARRL Audio News: A weekly newscast of the week's top stories that relate to amateur radio, produced by the American Radio Relay League that includes interviews and features of significance and highlights current events and sources that benefit amateur radio operators worldwide. For those who don't have time to read other sources, this podcast provides brief information so that amateurs can seek further knowledge on the ARRL's website or other resources.



Ham Radio 360: Hosted by Cale Nelson, K4CDN, this was a bi-weekly podcast aimed at the newer ham radio operator. The show provided in-depth interviews with people in every area of the hobby (hence the 360 reference). Although the programs ended in early 2018, the entire library of podcasts is still available on the website and is a valuable resource. The library is voluminous and offers nearly 100 episodes of detailed interviews and instruction on subjects that include APRS, DXpedition reports, mobile installations, traveling with ham radio, Field Day reports, DSTAR/digital radio, and much more. You will likely learn more here than from your local radio club.

Ham Radio Workbench

Ham Radio Workbench: Hosted by George Zafiroopoulos, KJ6VU, and Jeremy Kolonay, KF7IJZ, this podcast is the in-depth technical giant of ham radio podcasts. George and Jeremy were brought in by Cale Nelson to the Ham Radio 360 podcast and together, they eventually decided to launch a new podcast in 2016 with a focus on more detailed technical issues such as exploring electronics, software, hardware (using Arduino, Raspberry Pi, etc.), and making and DIY (do-it-yourself) aspects, even creating ham radio-related projects for their listeners to build. Detailed reviews and introductions on items such as spectrum analyzers, HF antenna design, HF amplifiers, packet radio, VHF/UHF repeaters; and construction projects that include an HF antenna analyzer, 4-port coax relay, and "QRP Smarty" Arduino-enhanced dummy loads challenge their listeners to



constantly learn more about the electronic side of the hobby. This podcast also features a strong Facebook and Twitter following where listeners share projects, questions and experiences in the technical aspects of amateur radio.

Solder Smoke: Hosted by Bill Meara, MØHBR/N2CQR, and Pete Juliano, N6QW, this podcast is focused on homebrewing amateur radio transmitters, receivers, and antennas. If you are interested in all things homebrew, this is your podcast. Bill and Pete do an excellent job of describing projects they are working on so even newbies like me can (almost) understand. The hosts and fans of this podcast also share their construction techniques, latest rigs and news items in videos that are posted on their web blog site. They take time to walk through subjects such as the BitX transceivers (including interviews with designer Ashhar Farhan, VU2ESE), including the latest modifications listeners have created. If you listen to this podcast, I strongly suggest you read Bill's book, *Solder Smoke – Global Adventures in Wireless Electronics*, as it describes his work as a diplomat and how his interest in electronics pushed him along. You too can become part of the "International Brotherhood of Electronic Wizards!"

QSO Today: Hosted by Eric Guth, 4Z1UG, "QSO Today" provides a unique podcast in a one-on-one interview format, in which Eric talks with a prominent leader in the amateur radio community every week. If you've ever heard of famous amateur radio mentors and pioneers, Eric has likely interviewed them on his podcast. This is an excellent source to learn about some of the giants in amateur radio, what interested them, what path radio helped them take in life, and includes advice they may have for new hams. Eric also provides links to

most of the subjects that the guest mentions on his website where you can do further research yourself. With over 200 interviews, you are sure to find someone you have heard of and will be surprised at what you can learn.

Beyond Listening

Once you find a subject in which you are interested, you can contact most of the podcast hosts or their guests with questions from links on their websites. I have done this a few times and those contacts have led to other sources to help with specific questions such as providing answers to operating issues. Although these hosts are "electronically published" on the internet, they are hams just like us and like most hams, they too are more than willing to help you learn something they know. We all have areas of expertise and these amateur radio podcasts can help bring those people to your computer, phone, or player so you can fill otherwise empty time with knowledge to better your ham radio experience or plan which part of the hobby to explore next.

Video and Web-Based Podcasts

You may wonder why I have not mentioned well-known video programs such as "Ham Nation," Tom Medlin's "Amateur Radio Roundtable," or "Amateur Logic."

The focus of this article is on audio-only podcasts and these (along with many others) are initially video broadcast programs with recorded shows being saved in the audio podcast format. This is great for those of us on the West Coast (and not yet retired), who cannot make it home in time to watch some of these programs "live." I know I am grateful for their creators / producers' willingness to provide their content in the recorded or podcast format for later listening. While you may miss out on some of the visual content in this manner, some programs offer recorded video programs on the internet and you can search on YouTube or their specific web page for video recordings to watch the programs.

In addition, there were several "original" amateur radio internet-based programs in existence before the term "podcast" was created. These programs were typically broadcast over local FM repeaters in conjunction with a club net and many clubs continue the tradition today. Examples of these include the Westlink Amateur Radio News (predecessor of Amateur Radio Newslines), and Hap Holly's "RAIN Report." Some of these programs are currently available on iTunes and other podcast engines, as well as directly accessible on their respective websites. The websites usually also include an archive where you can listen to previous shows on demand.

Where Podcasts Can Lead You...

Back to that winter riding on the stationary bike — those few podcasts I listened to years ago led to a book and websites to study for my license. A few months later, I was off and running with a new Technician license. If you are in a remote area without access to a club, if you are a new parent who can only squeeze in a few minutes to learn something new or can't make it to Dayton and want to hear about the latest gear but can't sit and watch a video for an hour, spend some time listening to a podcast and enjoy.

Resources:

Here are web links for each of the audio podcasts profiled in this article:

- * 100 Watts and a Wire: <<http://100wattsandawire.com/>>
- * Amateur Radio Newslines: <www.arnewslines.org>
- * ARRL Audio News: <www.arrl.org/arrl-audio-news>
- * Ham Radio 360: <<http://hamradio360.com>>
- * Ham Radio Workbench: <www.hamradioworkbench.com>
- * Solder Smoke: <www.soldersmoke.com>
- * QSO Today: <www.qsotoday.com>

Note:

1. <www.podcastinsights.com/podcast-statistics/>

Many modern transceivers provide a low-level transverter output that can be used to put you on our new 630-meter band. But the power levels coming directly out of the rigs are too low to make yourself heard. W8MQW has a straightforward design for a 14-watt amplifier to get you making contacts on digital modes.

A Simple 14-Watt Amplifier for Digital Modes on 630 Meters

BY CHUCK MACCLUER,* W8MQW

Many modern transceivers have low-level transverter capabilities on 630 meters¹ — our new band at 472-479 kHz. Moreover, many of our HF antennas can be brought into effective service on 630 meters as a Marconi by simply using the feedline as the radiator and the horizontal antenna wire as capacitive top loading. But a basic problem is how to raise the typical -10 to 0 dBm (1-mW) transverter output to a reasonable level to be heard. Two inexpensive active parts plus the familiar IRF510 MOSFET are all that is needed for running 14 watts on the digital modes used at 630 meters, namely JT9, WSPR, and CW.

Circuit Description

Figure 1 is the amplifier schematic. It is composed of three sections: The preamp/divider, the broadband amplifier, and the terminal lowpass filter.

First, the preamp/divider consists of the venerable Mini-Circuits MAR-8 monolithic amplifier² followed by a MCP1404 MOSFET driver. The MAR-8 is used to raise the transceiver's 0 dBm to a level necessary to trip the MCP1404. The objective is to hit the IRF510 MOSFET amplifier with a 12-volt square wave to toggle it on and off as a switch. But inducing a vertical rise in drain current requires rapid charging of the significant gate capacitance (typically 180 pF), meaning high instantaneous gate current. This is the job of the MCP1404 MOSFET driver. Using the charge stored in the 1- μ F capacitor (attached as close as possible to its 12-volt supply, pin 6), the driver delivers the required current to bring the ampli-

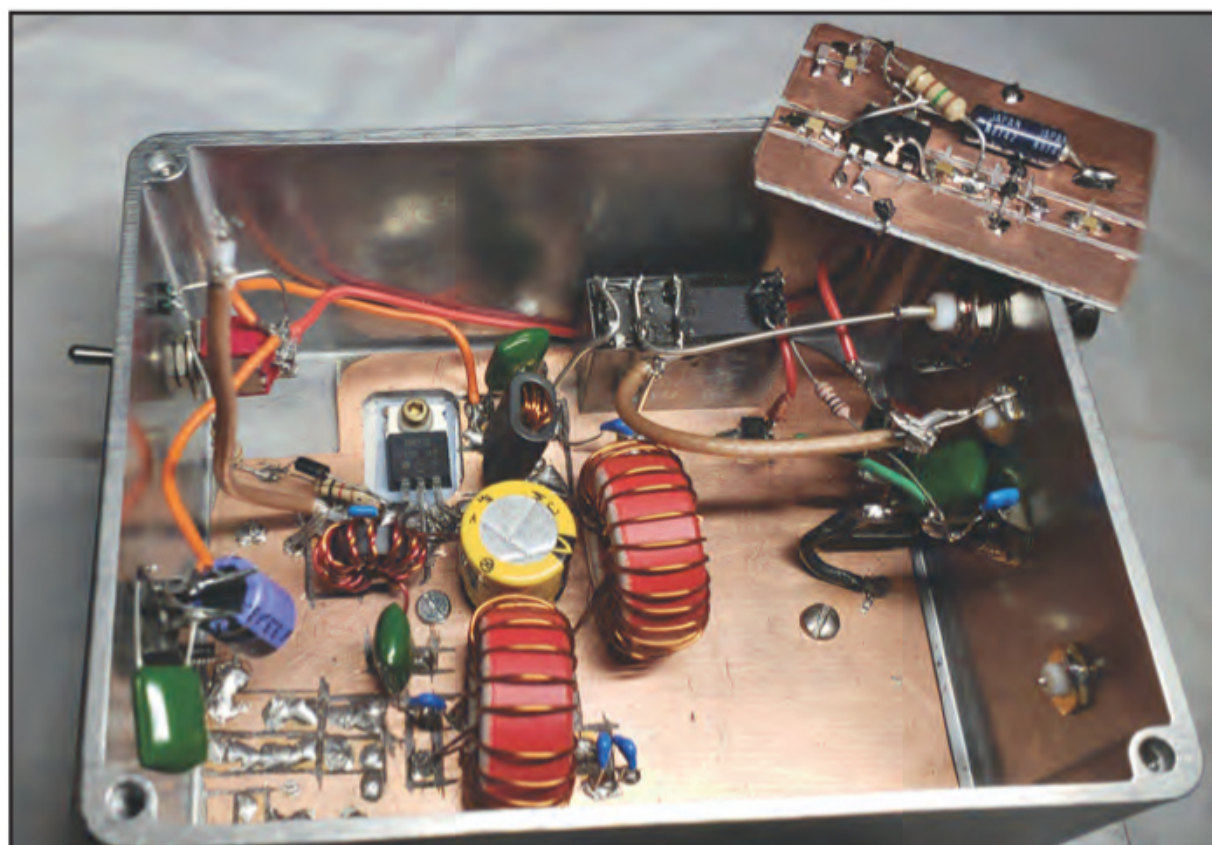


Photo A. The amplifier and low-pass filter mounted on a double-sided PC board bolted through the Hammond enclosure to the heatsink below. The small board in the upper right is the preamp/divider circuit waiting to be installed.

fier quickly into full conduction (and to then discharge the gate on the downward swing). Although residing in a petite 8-pin dip IC, the MCP1404 is nevertheless able to source and sink these brief but repetitive high currents. This idea of employing the MCP1404 driver comes from GØMRF's famous 300-watt, 630-meter amplifier design³. This preamp/divider would work well as a Class E driver.

Second, the IRF510 amplifier circuit is standard and described in many places, for instance by N6QW⁴. In this case, it is run class C well into cutoff. When powered from a 13.8-volt supply, the output is 13.7 watts⁵. The IRF510

is heatsinked but modest heat is generated because of its 78% efficiency in this configuration.

Third, the low-pass network consists of two cascaded pi-sections of $Q=1$, where each L and C has reactance of 50 ohms at 475 kHz. This amplifier could be scaled to any frequency by merely scaling these component values — the previous two sections of the schematic are frequency independent.

Construction

The IRF510 circuitry and the low-pass filter can be mounted on a double-sided PC board that is bolted through the bottom of the Hammond enclosure into

* email: <maccluer13@gmail.com>

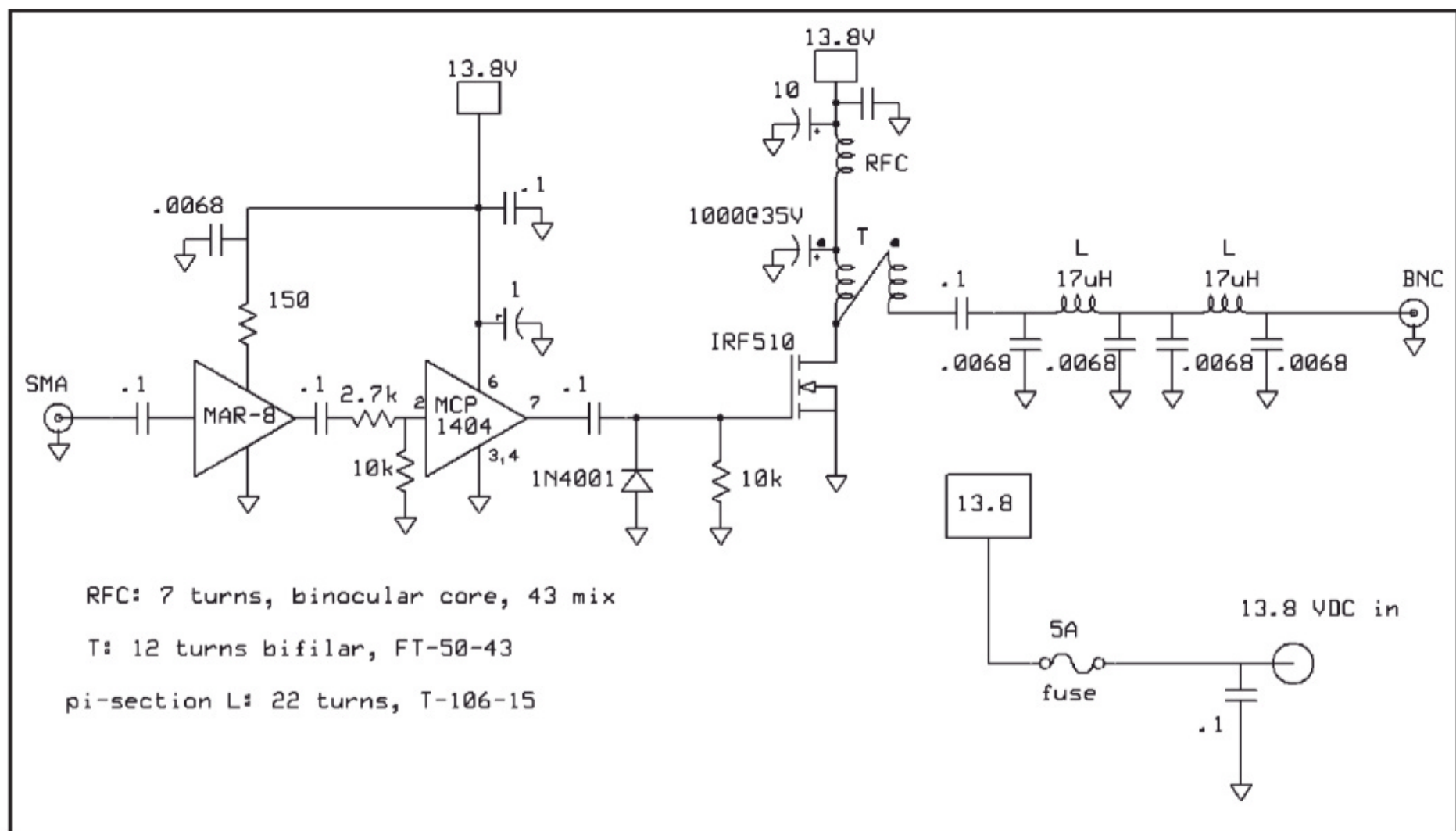


Figure 1. The circuit is composed of three sections: The preamp/driver, an IRF510 MOSFET broadband amplifier, and the terminal low-pass filter consisting of two identical cascaded pi sections.

tapped holes in the heatsink below (see *Photo A*). Convenient solder pads should be outlined with a Dremel® cutting wheel⁶. The only difficult mechanical step will be cutting away matching rectangles in the PC board and the cast aluminum of the enclosure so that the IRF510 and its insulating pad can be mounted directly to the aluminum heatsink. In my experience, the cast aluminum of Hammond boxes is not effective at conducting heat to an attached heatsink. (It would be easier yet to forego the enclosure altogether and build in the open on a PC board bolted to a heatsink.)

The preamp/driver circuit can be constructed dead-bug style on a small PC board scrap and mounted several inches above the bottom amplifier board.

As seen in *Photo A*, I have glued a change-over relay to the amplifier board and included a PTT transceiver protection circuit to create a compact complete amplifier in one box. If you do include a change-over relay on the board, it would be clever to place one of the two pi sections as common to both RX and TX.

Getting on 630 Meters

Your existing HF wire antenna will make a surprisingly effective antenna at 630 meters when configured as a Marconi (see *Figure 2*). The feedline will now be your antenna, while the horizontal wire above will serve only as top loading to pull up the current loop. Connect your inner and outer coax conductors or openline feedline together as it enters the shack. Use an antenna analyzer to measure the impedance of this point against the station ground bus. (You may have to borrow an analyzer like the Rig Expert 54 that actually covers 475 kHz.) You should expect results like $Z=120-987j$, which I measured from my openline-fed 160-meter dipole⁷. The imaginary part will be very negative since your vertical feedline is a very short stub at this frequency.

Once your antenna is set, the first step is to listen to the band. You will need to match the Marconi's complex Z to 50 ohms with a low-pass L network (*Figure 2*), namely by a shunt C followed by a series L, whose values can be supplied by an online "L network calculator." The C value can be cobbled together from paralleling familiar values. I found my L as a molded RF choke, or you can wind a coil on a ferrite toroid or an AM radio ferrite rod. For instance, to match the above $Z = 120 - 987j$ to 50 ohms will require a shunt C (on the antenna side) of $C = 185$ pF and a series $L = 214$ μ H (on the receiver side). Depending on your local RF environment you may also need to build up one of the pi low-pass sections of *Figure 1* to use before the receiver. Without some such matching and low-passing, you will hear nothing but mixing product garbage from local broadcast and commercial transmitters. But once low-passed, a rich world of aviation and amateur services awaits your not-so-shortwave listening. Begin by copying and reporting WSPR spots from around the continent.

Transmitting requires more care. Because of the high voltage that will occur at the base of your Marconi, you will need to worry about the voltage breakdown of your matching components. The typical approach is to wind a large diameter base loading coil to cancel the capacitive reactance of your Marconi, then match the remaining real impedance with either a toroidal transformer or an L network⁸ (see *Figure 2*). For safety reasons, the base loading coil is most often placed outdoors — for after all, online calculators⁹ estimate that even the 14 watts of power from this amplifier will produce nearly 1.5 kilovolts at the base of a typical 40-meter dipole.

Jump On In

But expect to be pounced upon as rare DX. We are all lying in wait for new blood to arrive. You can see in advance what

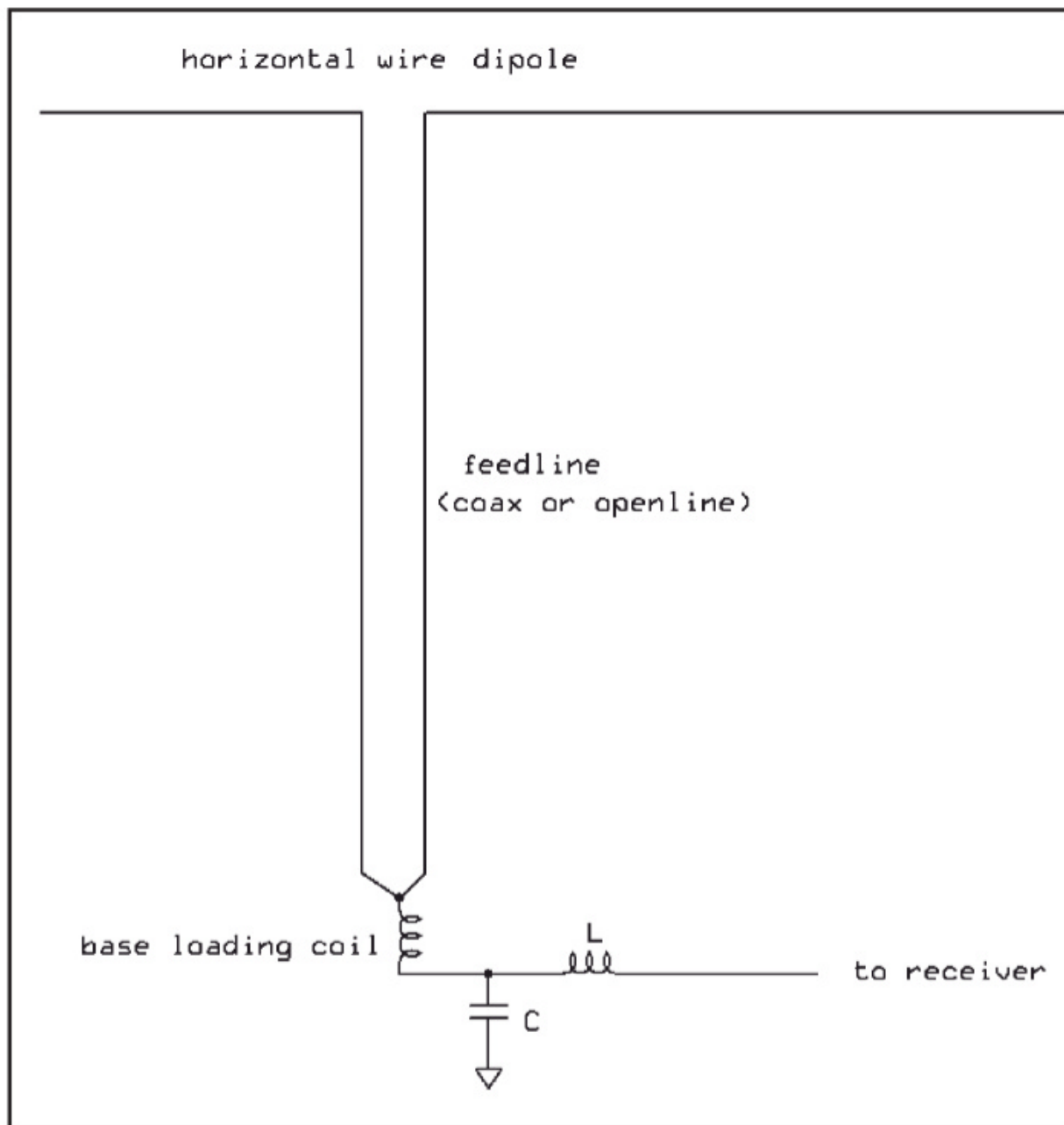


Figure 2. A Marconi antenna is formed by using the transmission line of an HF dipole as a vertical stub that is top loaded by its horizontal wire. To only receive, a simple LC low-pass L network matches the Marconi to 50 ohms. Later, when transmitting, a large outside base-loading coil must be wound to cancel the huge capacitance of the short vertical stub.

propagation you may expect by examining the WSPR map at <<https://tinyurl.com/yz4a449>>. And remember, if you haven't already done so, be sure to register your station with the Utilities Technology Council (UTC) at <<https://tinyurl.com/yab7cnou>> and wait 30 days to receive either approval (including no response) or a rejection.

I thank K9JRI for his critiquing of this manuscript.

Notes:

1. Transceivers with 630-meter transverter capabilities include the Flex 1500, 6300, 6600; the Elecraft K3, K3S; the Kenwood TS-980S, TS-990S; the SunSDR2 pro; and others.
2. A MAV-11 may be more appropriate than a MAR-8 for transverter outputs higher than 0 dBm.
3. <www.g0mrf.com/630m.htm>
4. <www.n6qw.com/IRF510.html>
5. The amplifier will not function below 12 volts. It can, however, be modified to run at higher voltages to obtain higher output by merely supplying the preamp/driver board with regulated 12 volts.
6. Op. Cit., note 4
7. Your local broadcast interference may be so intense that your antenna analyzer will not function. In that case, using an online estimate for your antenna (see Note 9 below), build an interim low-pass filter, measure its output impedance, then arithmetically deduce your Marconi's actual impedance.
8. See for instance, LF Today, by Mike Dennison, G3XDV; RSGB Publications, Bedford, UK.
9. <<http://472khz.org>> (tools)

From **MILLIWATTS**
To **KILOWATTS**SM
In Stock Now!

**Semiconductors
for Manufacturing
and Servicing
Communications
Equipment**

Visit
Our
Website

- **RF Modules**
- **Semiconductors**
- **Transmitter Tubes**

Se Habla Español • We Export

Phone: **760-744-0700**

Toll-Free: **800-737-2787**

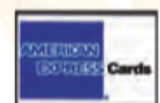
(Orders only) **800-RF PARTS**

Website: **www.rfparts.com**

Fax: **760-744-1943**

888-744-1943

Email: **rfp@rfparts.com**



MATH'S NOTES

BY IRWIN MATH,* WA2NDM

A Technique for Recovering Very Weak Signals

This month (in keeping with the season), we would like to present an update on a technique we described a number of years ago. This is a scheme that could easily revolutionize communications where extremely weak signals are concerned. The original version was a bit more complex and we received many messages indicating that it was difficult to understand and implement. As a result, we decided to present the technique again but this time with a more understandable explanation of what is going on. To refer to our original comments, as everyone knows, noise limiters, digital signal processing (DSP) and the like are all valuable tools in helping us deal with signals that are in the area of less than S1, but what about signals that are so weak that they are "lost in the noise" and not normally detectable at all? Is there hope? This is what the technique is all about.

Figure 1 is a drawing of what a spectrum analyzer might display when a normal typical signal well above the residual noise level is received. In this case we have used a single carrier (to avoid confusion); however modulated carriers would look similar but with various sidebands as well. The signal shown here is probably in the area of S8 or S9. The noise amplitude compared to the signal is so low that the signal sounds perfect. Now, as the signal gets weaker and weaker, we progress to the drawing in Figure 2. Here we have an S1 signal which, as you can see, is just about at or slightly above the noise level. Since there is still some signal, we have a chance ... although deciphering it can be an ordeal. Consider Figure 3, however. Now the signal (shown by dotted lines) has dropped below the noise level and no matter how long we listen, we hear nothing but a hiss, which is what random noise usually sounds like. If we could somehow eliminate (or at least reduce) the noise level, we would be in business. This is exactly what our technique does. Figure 4 is a block diagram of the system, which is built around four NPN transistors (Q1-Q4). For the low bands, these can be common 2N4123s. Also present are three general-pur-

*c/o CQ magazine

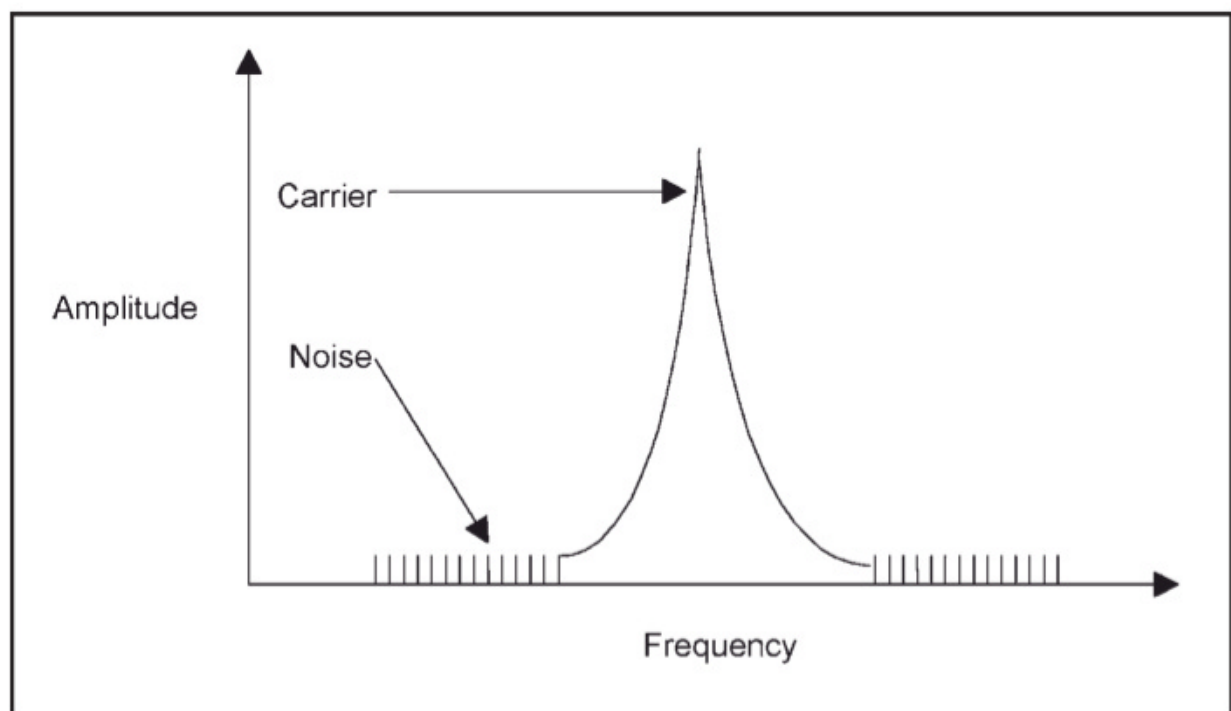


Figure 1. normal S8 or S9 received.

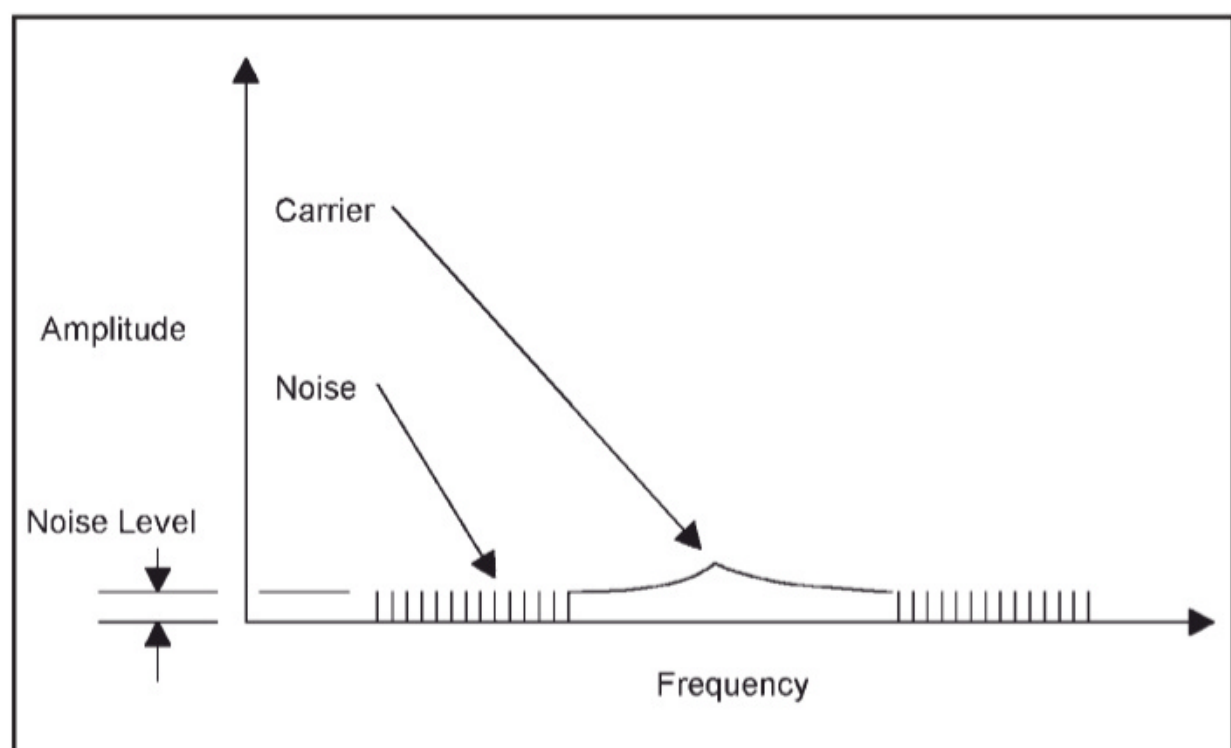


Figure 2. Normal S1 received signal.

pose, low-cost op-amps (A1-A3), which can be any decent quality low cost audio device.

In operation, when Q1 is turned on, it shorts the input to the receiver and when cut off, the receiver receives normally. The audio output and audio output plus noise are then applied to two op amp channels comprising A1 and A2. These are common op-amp amplifiers with a gain of one (the two 1K resistors and the 2K feedback resistor for each channel). If Q2 and Q3 are cut off,

both amplifiers pass their inputs to their outputs. If either one conducts, however, then the output of that particular amplifier is cut off. Now, notice that there is an oscillator, OSC 1, that drives Q1 and Q2 directly and Q3 opposite, due to Q4. As a result, when Q1 and Q2 conduct, Q3 is cut off and when Q1 and Q2 are cut off, Q3 conducts.

When both Q1 and Q2 are cut off, RF from the antenna (at the input to the receiver) is passed through a 50-ohm load and then through the normal

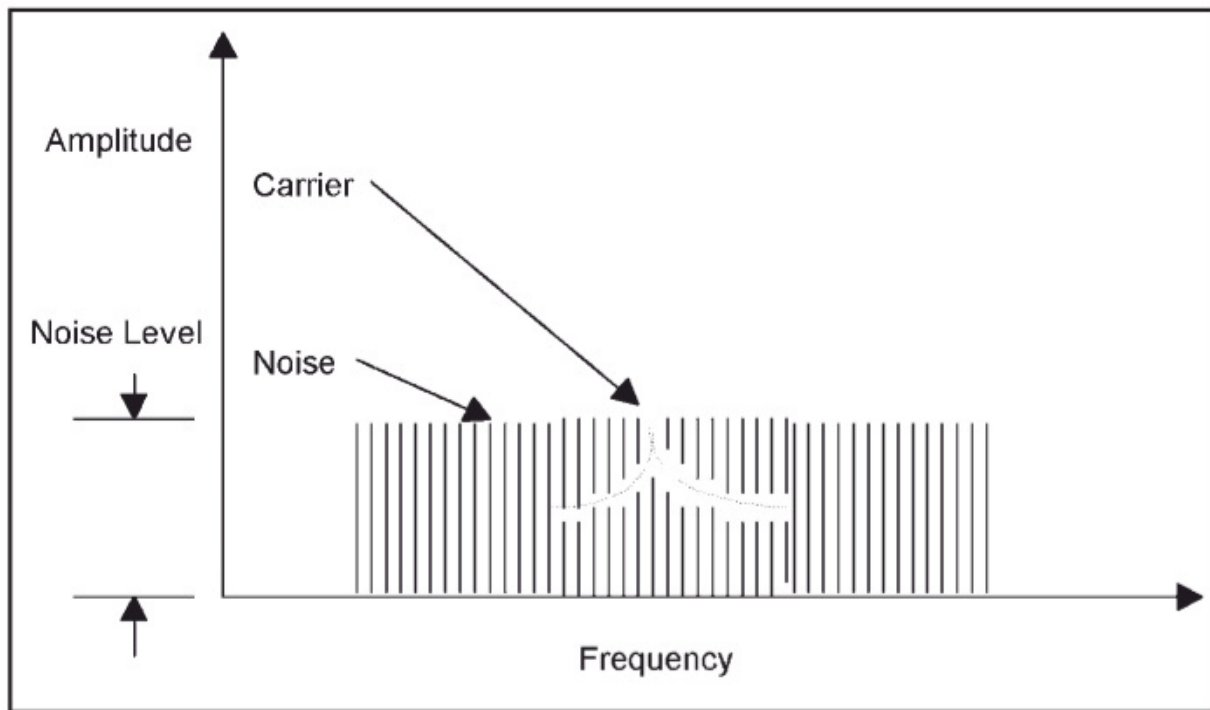


Figure 3. Received signal below noise.

receiver RF/IF/detector chain. Audio output is then passed through channel 1 in the normal manner and appears at the output of channel 1 (A1). This output we will call {signal + noise}. At the same time, Q2 is conducting, so the output from channel 2 (A2) is zero since its input is shorted.

Now consider what happens when Q1 and Q2 conduct and Q3 is cut off. The output from the receiver is now only noise (since Q1 is shorting the input) and the output of channel 1 is zero since Q2 is shorting its input. At this time, Q3 is cut off, however, so the

output from channel 2, which can now amplify, is simply {noise}. Next both the {signal + noise} output from channel 1 and the {noise} output from channel 2 are connected to a differential amplifier, A3, which neatly subtracts one from the other according to the following relationship:

$$\{\text{signal} + \text{noise}\} - \{\text{noise}\} = \text{signal}$$

The result is the recovered signal.

As the speed and duty cycle of the oscillator are varied, the ratio of signal-to-noise reduction will also vary,

and optimum results can be obtained with all types of signals from AM to FM to SSB by the proper adjustment. The frequency of the oscillator, however, should be at least 2 times faster than the expected maximum modulation frequency of the detected signal. If the oscillator is too slow, portions of the signal that occur during the "noise" channel interval will be lost, resulting in distortion.

Please note that the accuracy of this system is not ideal. Since there is a finite time interval between the {signal + noise} portion and the {noise} alone portion and since noise itself is random in nature, cancellation (of noise) will never be truly perfect. With careful adjustment of the oscillator's frequency and duty cycle, however, it should be easy to "pull" signals that are least 10 to 20 times below the noise up to levels that can be cleaned up by more conventional methods. Obviously, such an approach needs a lot of additional experimentation but the description given here is a very good place to start.

Since the beginning of April is usually filled with all sorts of unconventional noise, we could not think of a better project at this time than noise reduction. We certainly got a fair share of email the last time we proposed this solution. Please let us know of your results.

- 73, Irwin, WA2NDM

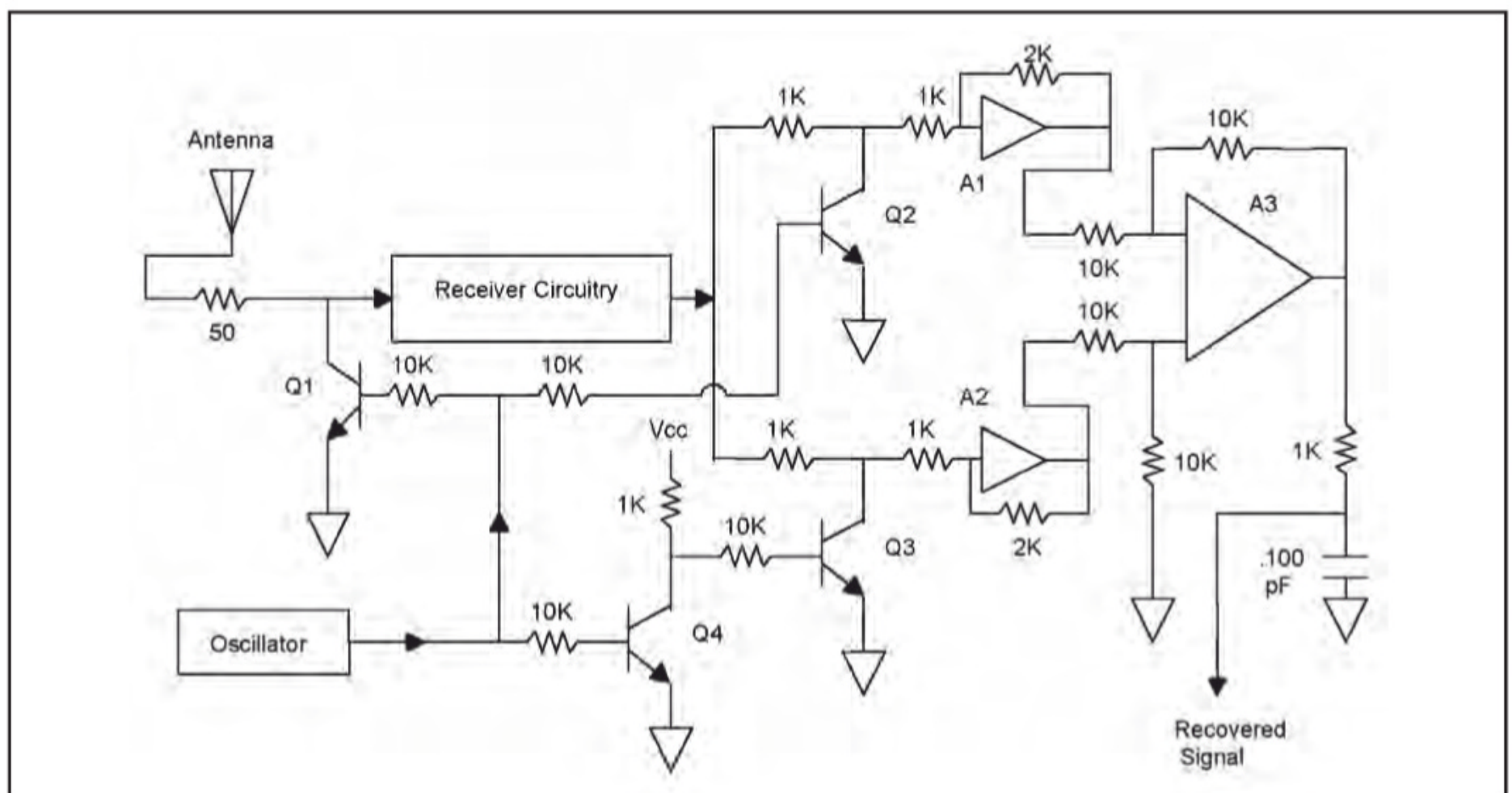


Figure 4. Diagram of noise eliminator.

THE LISTENING POST

BY GERRY DEXTER

Meyerton Shuts Down!

~ Oh no! There comes word that the Sentech-operated Meyerton relay in South Africa was closed down at the end of March. Neither the BBC nor Channel Africa used the facility enough to make it profitable, and the other assorted users didn't occupy enough transmitter time to take up the financial slack. Overcomer to the rescue?

~ Ralph Perry forwards word about two rejuvenated stations in Colombia: Alcaravan Radio (5910 kHz) and La Voz de Concencia (6010 kHz) are to receive solid-state 1-kilowatt transmitters. Both stations are located in Puerto Lleras and both suffer from local power supply problems. *The World Radio TV Handbook* (WRTH) shows the two as being "irregular" for now.

~ The same group that owns the Colombian stations from the previous shortwavelet is awaiting a license for a shortwave broadcast station in Pucallpa, Peru, although the start-up for that one may be years in the future, if it ever happens.

~ Koode Radio International is the latest opposition broadcaster aiming at Nigeria. The program goes out via Issoudun in France daily from 1900-1930 UTC on 7265 kHz in the Fulfulde, Hausa, and Fulani languages. This is apparently run by Public Radio International, based in Minneapolis.

~ Radio Cultura de Araquara in Brazil has announced plans to reactivate 3365 kHz with a 1-kilowatt transmitter from 2100-0300 UTC. It is already listed on that frequency, and has been for several years.

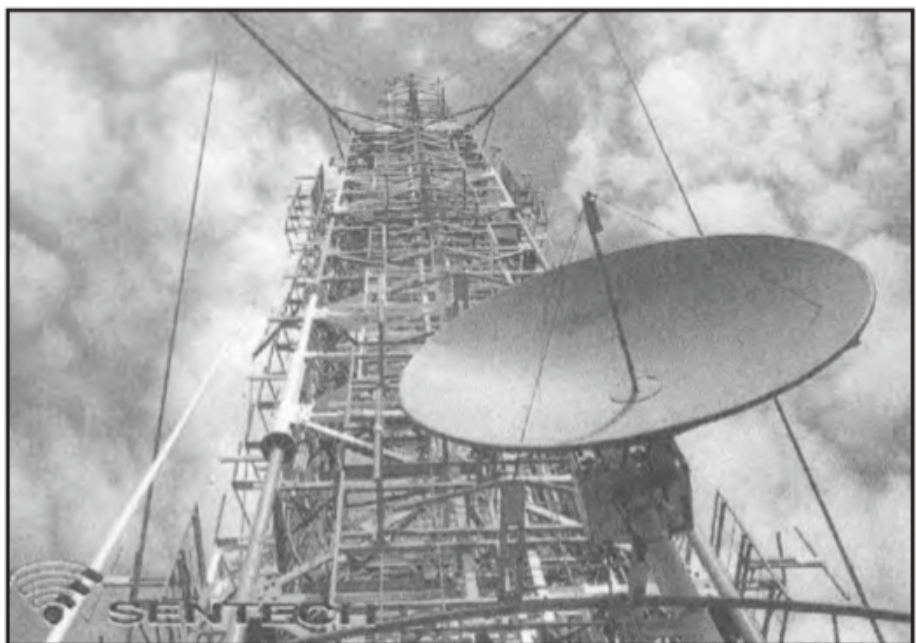
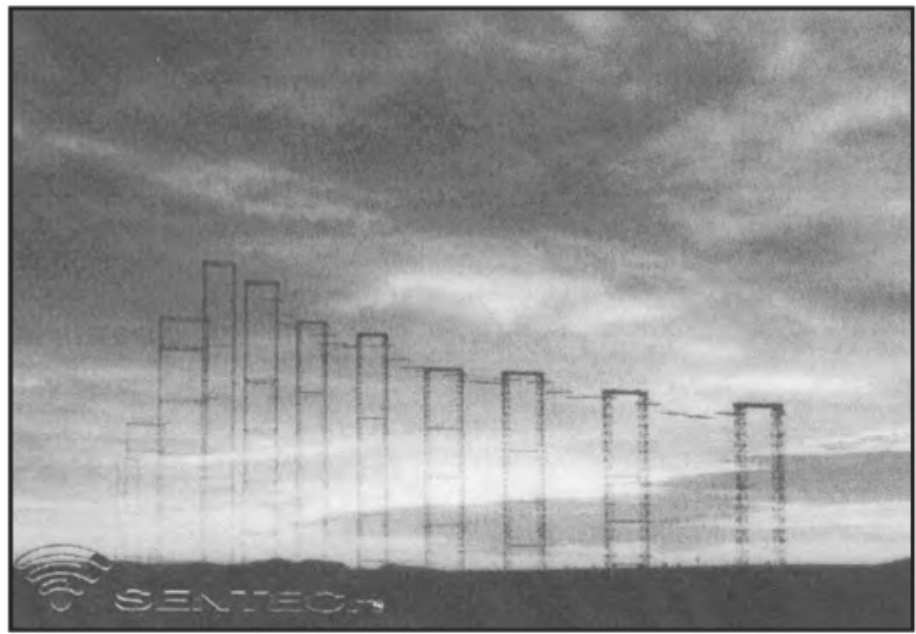
~ Eye Radio, an opposition station aimed at South Sudan, has restarted broadcasts via Madagascar from 0400-0500 UTC on 11630 kHz and 1500-1600 UTC on 15410 kHz via France using Sudanese Arabic, English, and vernaculars.

~ Radio Sinit Eritrea is the latest anti-Eritrean opposition station entry. It's broadcasting via France on Saturdays at 0500 UTC on 9540 kHz. Another new one is Sowt Al-Somood (The Voice of Steadfastness), also via France on 17545 kHz at 1500-1600 UTC in Arabic and Tigrina.

~ After a six-year absence, Radio Nepal is back on 5005 kHz from 1100-1500 UTC in English, though using very low power. However, some say the station is also testing power levels up to 20 kilowatts in the hours before it signs on.

~ Papua New Guinea's national broadcaster (NBC) plans to reopen its station at Daru, which was formerly on 3305 kHz.

~ Radio Spaceshuttle, the (only?) Finnish pirate, says it plans to resume activity on many of the usual pirate frequencies, not to mention 9290 and 12265 kHz, as well as in the 15805-to-15880-kHz range. In other words, just about



Two photos of the doomed Meyerton transmitter site antennas in South Africa.

anywhere on the dial. The list of possibilities is too long to include here. Man the "scan" feature on your receiver.

~ As I suspected, the WWV service has been refunded, including all frequencies ... and WWVB and WWVH. The service will celebrate 100 years this year.

~ The federal government has changed the name of the Board of Broadcast Governors to the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM).

Leading Logs

Your shortwave broadcast station logs are always welcome. But please be sure to double- or triple-space between the items, list each logging according to the station's home country and include your last name and state abbreviation after each. Also needed are spare QSLs, station schedules, brochures, pennants, station photos, and anything else you think would be of interest. The same holds for you amateur

**c/o CQ magazine*



144/430MHz 5W FM Dualband
Handheld Transceiver

DJ-500T/E

T: FC IC E: CE

ALINCO[®]
Quality. Style. Performance!

Visit alinco.com for more details!

**Amazing high performance,
compact size, and full featured!**

- High power Li-Ion battery pack, stand charger and beltclip included
- Output Power 5 / 2.5 / 1W selectable
- Large, dot-matrix, 3 color-selectable display and keypad
- Semi-Duplex dualband, V/V-U/U and FM broadcast receiver
- 200 memory channels, any mix of VHF/UHF
- RX Frequency Coverage 76-108 / 136-174 / 400-480MHz
- Alphanumeric channel labels
- Direct frequency input from keypad
- Landmobile-grade signaling features
- Variety of scanning modes
- IP54 dust/splash proof, MILSPEC vibration/shock compliant
- Wide and narrow FM TX/RX
- 12Vdc input using an optional cigar-socket adapter.
- Internal VOX and Wire cloning capability



REMTronix, Inc.

17508 Murphy Parkway, Lathrop, CA 95330

Ph: (209) 900-1296 Fax: (209) 624-3153 Website: <http://www.remtronix.com>

Email: alinco@remtronix.com Service: alincosupport@remtronix.com

REMTRONIX

Products intended for properly licensed operators. Required products are FCC part 15B certified. Specification subject to change without notice or obligation.

radio operators who also listen to shortwave broadcasts. You, too, are also most welcome to contribute.

Here are this month's leading logs. All times are in UTC. If no language is mentioned English is assumed. After you've read the printed logs, you can find more online at <www.cqpluslisteningpostblogspot.com>.

ALGERIA—Radio Algerienne, 5980 via France in Arabic at 2146. (Brossell, WI)

BANGLADESH—Bangladesh Betar, 15105 at *1228-1300* woman reading station ID, opening announcements in English followed by news, comments, and music to close. (D'Angelo, FCDX)

BOLIVIA—Radio Mosoj Chaski, Cochobamba, 3310 at 1004-1036 faded out with man hosting music program in Spanish. (D'Angelo, FCDX)

CHINA—China National Radio, Network 2, 6090, Kunming at 1125 man and woman speaking Chinese with talks and music, several announcements at the bottom of the hour; 6165, Lhasa, Tibet, at 1139 with man speaking in Chinese, traditional Chinese music.

PBS, Lhasa, 6130 at 1157, traditional Chinese vocals, time pips and female announcer in Tibetan. (D'Angelo, FCDX)

PBS, Sichuan, 7225, Chengdu in Mandarin at 2155, obliterated by a ham after about 4 minutes. (Taylor, WI)

ETHIOPIA—Radio Fana, Addis Ababa, at 0424 with terrific HOA vocals and announcer in Amharic. (D'Angelo, FCDX)

INDIA—Athmik Vatra Radio, 15350 at 1432 with talks in Sambalpuri. (Brossell, WI)

PAPUA NEW GUINEA—NBC-Bougainville, 3325 at 1142-1157* some announcer talk, island vocals, but very weak. (D'Angelo, FCDX)

SWEDEN—IBRA/Radio Sadaye Zindagi service via UAE, 5940 at 0249 with man speaking in Dari and a musical bridge. (Taylor, WI)

ZANZIBAR—ZBC, Dole, 6015 at 0351, several men in a heated Swahili discussion. (D'Angelo, FCDX)

You can find the complete log listings online at: <www.cqpluslisteningpostblogspot.com>.

Back in the Day

Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, Gweru, newly on the air with 100 kilowatts on 3306 at 0318 on September 27, 1995, with its domestic service in vernacular.

Just Sayin'

My sincere thanks and deep appreciation to Mark Taylor of Madison, Wisconsin, who took over the reins of collecting and reporting log listings for the past three months. Mark edits the weekly NASWA Flashsheet of the North American Shortwave Association <www.naswa.net>. He had to have more fun with it than I did, what with a broken hip operation, followed by three fun months of physical therapy!

Thanks!

The usual high fives to the too few who checked in this time: Bob Brossell, Pewaukee, WI; Rich D'Angelo, French Creek DXpedition, PA; Mark Taylor, Madison, WI; Harold Sellers, Vernon, ON; and William Hassig, Mt. Pleasant, IL. Thanks to all of you!

Until next month ... Keep on keepin' on, and ... Celebrate Shortwave!

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

BY WALT PALMER,* W4ALT

Ready, Set... STOP!

Uh, oh ... overnight the fit hit the sham. A tornado, dam break, blizzard, major power outage, whatever, has caused your EmComm group to activate. You gather up your “stuff” and are ready to head out the door. You take a quick inventory:

- Go Kit, check
- Batteries, check
- Spare antenna, check
- Extra cables, check

Looks like everything is ready to hit the road. But wait, we forgot the most important part of our inventory: YOU! Are you ready to deploy?

Preparing for your emergency deployment usually requires you to consider:

- Psychological preparedness – for you, your family, and friends.
- Practical readiness, including your personal and professional affairs, and what to pack.
- Situational preparedness. You should study and understand, as much as possible, the operational context in which you will be working.

You may be called to deploy to an emergency at short notice. You may have little time to make yourself ready and deployment will dramatically interrupt and change your daily routine.

An emergency assignment also challenges your wellbeing: The working hours will be long; working conditions will not be ideal; living conditions may be spartan; security may be a concern; your sleep is likely to suffer. You can be effective in such conditions, but you are likely to be able to manage the stress of your deployment much better if you are well prepared.

Emergency missions can also create anxiety in those around you. Deployments can easily disrupt our relationships with partners, spouses, children, and friends. All may have concerns, and it is important to find ways to include them as you prepare to deploy.

Psychological Preparedness

One of the first canons of emergency communications deployment is that your family and home will be safe during your absence. Areas to consider:

- Personal and family issues
- Practical and logistical arrangements at home or at base
- Practical preparations for deployment
- Psychological preparation

When you prepare psychologically, you attune your inner resources to the coming situation. A person who is psycho-

logically prepared expects certain challenges, foresees their impact, understands how he or she will react, is able to identify his or her inner resources, and knows where and how to seek support when needed.

People differ in the degree of preparation they need. Some prepare very thoroughly. Their preparation is planned and detailed. Others are happier to go with the flow. Find out beforehand what level of preparation suits your personal needs.

Attitude is an important factor and will influence your ability to succeed in the demanding and chaotic environment of an emergency. What qualities are required of members of an emergency team?

- To be professional
- To be a team player
- To be flexible and understanding
- To have a sense of humor!

Practical Considerations

The underlying principle is that you should not delay your deployment, because the emergency response operation will need you. A few days in a fast-moving operation can make a big difference.

- Have a primary and alternate child-care plan
- Have a primary and alternate elder-care plan
- Have emergency plans in place in the event of a disaster — where you will go; how you will communicate
- Have an emergency plan for pets in the event of a pet’s illness or injury or the family’s need to shelter or evacuate in a disaster
- Have a communications plan for your family and friends. Determine and identify someone, preferably outside of the potential local disaster area, or better yet, in another part of the country, whom you can use as a central point of contact should your family need to bug out quickly.

Psychological Readiness

Create a mental picture: Think about the upcoming deployment and compare it to previous deployments. Develop this into a structured preparation by reflecting on what was helpful to you in similar contexts and what you would have done differently. Ask what aspects of the new deployment are likely to be the most challenging for you, professionally and personally.

This exercise will help you to identify the challenges you are likely to face and the resources you will draw on to cope and deal with them.

Assess your current psychosocial wellbeing: It may be difficult to assess your own state of mind. Nevertheless, try to give yourself some honest feedback on how you have functioned in recent months. Have you slept enough and well? What has been your level of energy? What has been your prevailing mood? Have you consumed more alcohol than usual, or other substances? What level of social sup-

* email: <w4alt@cq-amateur-radio.com>

Packing Tips

- Make a checklist now
- Adjust it to account for anticipated conditions (climate, weather, culture) in the place to which you are deployed
- Start packing early; do not wait until the last minute
- Have small and large bags
- Pack essential food and medical items that are not standard and may be unavailable
- Pack personal items that will give you comfort
- Shop ahead of time for camping equipment, clothes, etc.
- Prioritize light, essential items. Be ready to adapt packing to actual conditions (cold, hot, humid etc.)
- Find out what you are expected to bring, and what will be available when you arrive (laptop, specialized equipment, etc.)
- Take an inventory with you in case your bag gets lost

Some Packing Ideas for Deep Field Locations

- Mosquito net dome, treated with repellent, freestanding
- Sleeping bag, full zip, treated with repellent
- Fleece blanket and mattress (including repair kit)
- Your favorite pillow, ear plugs, sleeping mask
- Tarpaulin, solar shower, fire blanket
- Water purification bottle with integrated filter
- Micropur tablets
- Kitchen utensils (Camp-A-Box), thermos
- Multi tool, whistle
- LED lamp
- Compass, fire steel lighter, sewing kit, waterproof matchbox
- Set of cleaning sponges
- TSA-approved padlock with code
- Refreshing tissues, germicide
- Mosquito coils with holder
- Working gloves
- Batteries

port have you received from others? Have you been able to support people close to you? Are you running away from anything?

Familiarize yourself with typical stress and trauma reactions: When we experience psychological disturbances, if we do not understand what they are linked to, we can feel as if our body or mind has let us down. If you are familiar with the neurobiological symptoms of stress and trauma, you will be able to recognize stress reactions faster and will be more likely to address the situation.

Develop your personal indicators of fatigue: Being aware of your stress reactions is a first step towards building resilience. When you are in the middle of a difficult situation, it is hard to step back and decide what you need to do to change your situation. Put down how you feel, think and behave when you are close to the edge or extremely tired. Discuss your list with friends who know you well; ask them to comment on it and add their observations of you. Be ready to accept critique with the spirit in which it is offered. You are not under attack.

The “buddy system”: It has been shown that the support of close friends helps to sustain people who are working in stressful conditions. Ask a few trusted friends or family members to check on you regularly while you are deployed. If possible, discuss how they will “watch over you” and what warning signs they will look for. Make use of your personal indicators of fatigue.

Prepare a self-care plan: Think about what normally relaxes you (music, books, sports, etc.). Keep such items ready: prepare your Kindle and music, food, photographs, exercise equipment (skipping rope, pilates ball, football). Design a realistic self-care plan that you know you can implement.

Take care of your relationships: Emergency deployment will disrupt your relationships. That does not mean they will dissolve, but you need to pay attention to how they

are affected. History suggests that relationships survive best when everyone is involved in preparing for deployment. This may seem counterintuitive: You may be tempted to conceal dangerous or ugly aspects of the operation from those you love. In fact, by giving them a role, you help those close to you to prepare themselves; and they often feel fulfilled by supporting you.

Help your children to understand: Today it is harder and harder to keep information away from children. Try to understand how they imagine your world. Help them to understand where you will be going, what you will be doing, and how you will keep in contact.

Practical Readiness

Sort out your affairs: It is important to put your financial, legal and daily affairs in order before you leave. Once you are on mission, it is unlikely that you will be able to settle bills, pay the rent, or take care of other aspects of your life at home. Plan for this in advance and make sure that affairs at home are taken care of or can wait.

Health: Have a medical check-up and, if necessary, obtain medical clearance. If you are on a medical regimen, be aware of side-effects that may flare up during stressful periods. Be sure you have — and bring with you — an adequate supply of any medications you may need.

Paperwork: Make sure your passport, government photo ID, and radio licenses are up-to-date.

Your current work: If you need to take a leave of absence from your current job, make sure that backup arrangements are in place, and that you have agreed with your supervisor how outstanding projects and activities will be managed while you are away.

Situational Preparedness

Do not leave preparation for the last minute. Some things can be done much earlier. While you can and should actively research the area and operational context to which you will deploy, it is well understood that you cannot prepare deeply if you are deployed within a few hours or days.

Be mindful of how stress and lack of recuperative rest can affect your performance, mood, and nerves. Take breaks when available. Stretch and exercise to move and freshen blood. Take deep breaths. These little tasks can improve your overall wellbeing and performance.

There is a world of difference between working an exercise, where you know you will be home in your own bed that night, and a real-world emergency operations deployment. Make sure you are prepared, mentally, physically and tactically for the task at hand. Be careful out there!

QRP: Low-Power Communications

BY R. SCOTT ROUGHT,* KA8SMA

Winter Field Day, Digital QRP Operation, and a Note from Z35M

As I work on this month's column, I am huddled up inside the family travel trailer with my laptop computer, QRP rig, and a hot pot of coffee, operating Winter Field Day (WFD). Last year, I operated WFD from a picnic table in a nearby state park located along Lake Michigan's shoreline. I built a roaring bonfire, roasted hot dogs, and drank an endless supply of coffee brewed over an open flame — it was an excellent adventure (see *April 2018 cover and column -ed.*).

I was planning to do the same this year, but my XYL put a stop to my plans and told me I had to set up operations inside our travel trailer (parked next to our house for the winter) since the high temperature in northern Michigan for WFD was predicted to be in the single digits. As I make contacts from inside the warmth of the trailer, there is a frigid Arctic wind howling outdoors that would have turned my fingers into icicles had I been pounding brass or grasping a microphone outdoors. I give credit to my XYL for saving my fingers and warming my belly as she brought me a bowl of piping-hot chicken noodle soup for dinner a few hours after the start of WFD. Happiness is hot soup mixed with a little QRP fun on a cold winter's day! I am already tinkering with the idea of operating from the travel trailer for next year's WFD and thinking about where I can string my wire antennas. I may even suggest to my XYL that, if I operate from the travel trailer next year, meatloaf with a balsamic mushroom sauce, twice-baked potatoes finished with cheddar cheese and sour cream, and steamed green beans glazed with garlic and bacon should be on the dinner menu instead of soup — HI! I know that operating from a travel trailer is not the most "authentic" emergency operating location, but at least it gets me outdoors and on the air from somewhere other than my ham shack. Now that I've shared my 2019 WFD setup, let's get into this month's column.

Regular readers know that I have not written a lot about digital modes, and for good reason. Until recently, I have not been digitally active. I have operated RTTY, JT65, and other digital modes as a guest operator at other hams' shacks, but never from my QTH. This year, however, Santa Claus left a MFJ-1204 USB Radio Interface under the tree with a note attached to it indicating I should give FT8 and some of the other digital modes a try. It is amazing how well my XYL can read my mind. This month, we discuss the MFJ-1204, my "lesson learned" in setting up the computer so I could successfully operate FT8, and we hear from our friend Vlado Kovaceski, Z35M, in Macedonia, who again makes us marvel with one of his recent QRP endeavors and shares some amazing QSO statistics during this period of minimal sunspot activity.

Getting Digital with the MFJ-1204

The MFJ-1204 (*Photo A*) is a universal USB radio interface that provides a quick and easy way to join the digital age and have fun with the digital modes, such as RTTY, PSK31, AMTOR, JT65, and FT8. The interface is powered by your computer's USB port and can work with nearly any trans-



Photo A. The MFJ-1204 USB Radio Interface (top) mounted atop the Yaesu FT-817.

ceiver equipped with a data/accessory jack. MFJ has a complete line of interface cables, each equipped with the appropriate connector for plugging directly into your radio. Since I am using this unit with my Yaesu FT-817, MFJ's model number 1204MD6 equipped with a 6-pin mini-DIN interface cable is the version suited for my radio and other transceivers supporting a similar data port. MFJ's website <www.mfjenterprises.com> provides a breakdown of the product's model numbers to determine which model suits your needs.

What I like most about the MFJ-1204 is that setup is a snap and the only fumbling with cables required is plugging the USB connector from the unit into an empty computer port and connecting the interface cable to the transceiver. Its small size (2-inches H x 4.5-inches D x 3.75-inches W) and light weight should make portable operation easy. I will provide an update later this year after the weather breaks and I hit the trail (with my laptop in tow) for a digital outing. The MFJ-1204 uses no-solder internal jumper wires so that the unit can be easily reconfigured for use with other transceivers, if desired. The instruction manual (downloadable from MFJ's website) provides a wiring diagram showing the jumper wire configuration for different transceivers and connector types.

After connecting the cables, using the interface is as simple as tuning your transceiver to the frequency on which you want to operate, booting up your computer, and adjusting (per the instructions) the receive audio and transmit audio levels on the front panel of the MFJ-1204 for a clean signal. I have found that after making the initial level adjustments,

* <ka8sma@cq-amateur-radio.com>



Photo B. Z35M's hillside operating position overlooking Skopje, Macedonia. Hold onto that KX-2, Vlado!

no future adjustments have been necessary; however, your setup may be different. Setup is so quick I am on the air moments after my computer boots up. The MFJ-1204 makes digital operation a cinch.

Software Decisions

A variety of downloadable software options for operating the digital modes is available on the internet. I was surprised at the number of programs available and, after a bit of research, I decided to download WSJT-X <<https://tinyurl.com/hg6rnxm>> as it runs both FT8 and JT65, the two weak-signal digital modes that hold my interest, as well as WSPR (Weak Signal Propagation Reporter), a mode designed for sending and receiving weak signals to test propagation. Downloading the WSJT-X software was painless and took just a few minutes. I highly recommend that prior to downloading WSJT-X, you read the "WSJT-X 2.0 User Guide" and either download or print a copy for future reference as it covers important items such as installation, settings, on-screen controls, and instructions on how to operate modes such as FT8 and JT65.

Lesson Learned!

After downloading and configuring the software, making the appropriate cable connections to my computer and transceiver, and setting up my transceiver for digital operation, I was not able to decode any FT8 signals. Since I did not know where to begin troubleshooting this problem, I reloaded the WSJT-X software onto the computer, double-checked the cable connections to be sure none were loose, and went as far as removing the cover on the MFJ-1204 to check if the jumper wires (which came pre-wired for my transceiver) were

Table 1: Z35M's QRP QSO Totals 2016-2018

Year	QRP QSOs Portable Operation	QRP QSOs Home QTH	Total QRP QSOs
2018	3,055	3,431	6,486
2017	1,458	317	1,775
2016	3,736	638	4,374

in the proper configuration. I also checked that each jumper wire was secured and properly seated to the PC board. Still no luck! I was nearly at my wit's end when I remembered that the transmit and receive sequences between the transmitting and receiving stations must be in sync with each other for FT8 to work. Since the timing for each exchange works against the computer's internal clock, if my computer's clock was not set exactly to UTC (to the second), then I would be out of sync with the other station. After realizing this may be the issue, I tuned in WWV on my transceiver, double-clicked the clock on the lower right-hand corner of my computer screen, and listened for WWV's long beep to mark the minute as I watched the clock's second-hand sweep across the dial. I soon discovered that my computer's clock was off by more than 30 seconds. I manually reset the clock so it matched WWV to the second, then went back to try and decode FT8. The fix worked and I was soon decoding FT8. This was a hard lesson learned as I spent several hours troubleshooting a problem that took me less than a minute to fix. I now check my computer clock's accuracy against WWV each time before operating FT8.

Aside from WWV, there are websites such as Time.is <<https://time.is>> that will indicate if there is a time discrepancy between your computer's clock and the actual time, and Dimension 4 <www.thinkman.com/dimension4> that will automatically adjust your computer's clock to keep it on pace with the actual time. Although it takes a little finagling, I prefer to listen to WWV and manually reset the clock when firing-up the computer for FT8 operation. This is probably "old-school," but to me it seems like the right thing to do since I used to boast to my friends at school (many, many years ago) that my wristwatch was set to a government-run HF radio station linked to an atomic clock. I then argued their watches did not reflect the official United States time since they were set against the "time lady" on the telephone. Yes, I was a nerd and, to this day, still accept only WWV as the standard of time.

A Different Spin on Radio

I knew about FT8's popularity prior to trying it; however, I must admit that I am truly amazed at the number of stations on the air operating this mode. On several occasions, I have tuned across the HF bands in search of a CW or SSB signal and heard only a few stations on the air, but when I switched to FT8, the world lit up on my computer screen as the FT8 waterfall display was jam-packed with signals.

The big question ... Is FT8 a mode that I will be spending a lot of time with in the future? Since FT8 is new to me, the jury is still out on how many FT8 contacts will hit my logbook. I do believe that FT8 removes the human element due to its automated approach, but I am getting used to this type of operation. Making an FT8 contact is as simple as scrolling your mouse over a station that is calling CQ (as indicated by the software), clicking on that station, then watching your computer complete the QSO by following a pre-determined



Photo C. Z35M's low-height wire antenna against the rocky hillside.

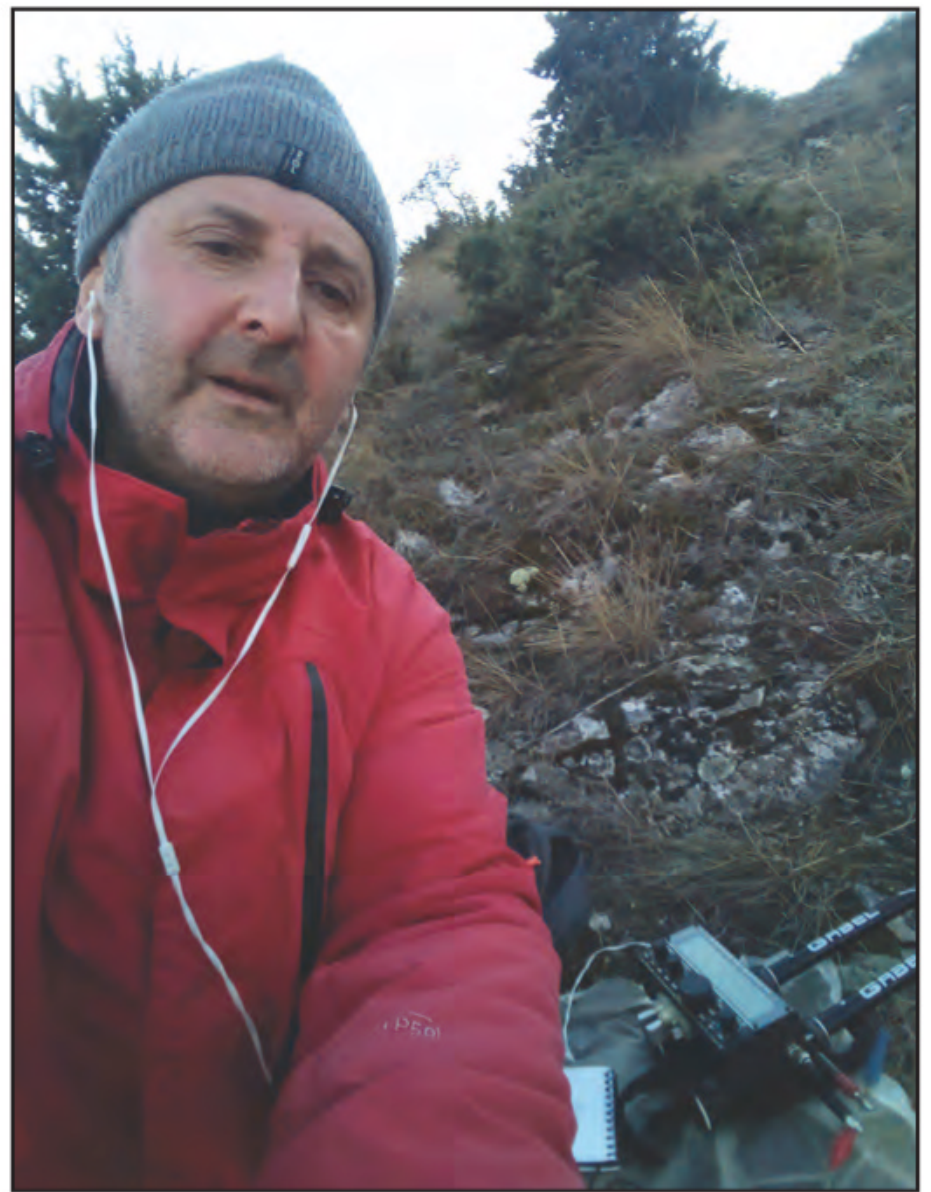


Photo D. Z35M says that at sunspot minimum, "the bands are not closed, the operators are closed."

script containing your callsign, grid square, and power output. The computer also automatically generates a signal report for the other station. FT8 is a completely different experience than CW, SSB, and other digital modes since human action is not necessary to maintain the exchange. What I really like about FT8 is experimenting with power output to determine how low I can go and still make a contact, but I do miss the opportunity for a bit of rag chewing.

Z35M Strikes Again!

Our friend Z35M checked in with the column after the first of the year to share a unique low height antenna test he performed on New Year's Day from a very steep hillside (I call it a mountain – HI!) overlooking Skopje, Macedonia (*Photo B*). He reports stringing two pieces of insulated wire, each measuring 5.3 meters (17 feet 4 inches) in length, along the rocky face of the hillside for use as an antenna (*Photo C*). The wires were fed into the automatic antenna tuner in his Elecraft KX-2. The results for a wire antenna lying on a rocky hillside are very surprising, especially when taking into consideration the contacts were made at QRP levels. After making one CW contact with a station in Finland on 20 meters, he switched to 30 meters and logged several QSOs with stations in Germany, Poland, Lithuania, and Belarus. Even more amazing, Z35M notes that while operating 20 meters he was spotted on the Reverse Beacon Network by stations in the United States. Once again, Z35M shows us just how little is needed to make a QSO.

Z35M also shared his QRP QSO statistics for the past three years as a reminder to all of us that it does not take much to make contacts when sunspots are far and few between. *Table 1* shows the number of QSOs he made each year while

working portable and from his home station. His total number of QRP QSOs for the past three years is 12,635! An additional 17,426 QSOs were made during this same period, but running 100 watts. It should be noted that all these contacts were made with single-element wire antennas.

Z35M's secret to making so many QRP contacts is staying active regardless of the sunspot number and implementing an operating strategy as though you are running 100 watts. In other words, do not adopt an inferior mindset because you are operating QRP. As Z35M states, an "inferior QRP mindset results in inferior QSO totals." He also reminds us that QRP contacts can be made when there are no sunspots and the bands are believed to be closed. Z35M has a different view on the topic of no sunspots equals no contacts, and states "the bands are not closed, the operators are closed." I wholeheartedly agree — great statement!

Tying the Knot

Do not overlook the fun the digital modes offer low power enthusiasts. I will be the first to admit I should have jumped into this several years ago. You will be surprised at what can be done when operating FT8, JT65, and some of the other digital modes at QRP and QRPp levels. Also, keep in mind what Z35M is currently accomplishing with simple wire antennas strung at low heights above the ground. He gives QRPers something to strive for and surprises us once again with his low power achievements. Finally, if you have not already done so, be sure to mark your calendars for WFD 2020 (the last full weekend in January) to get outdoors and make some QRP-style contacts while polishing your emergency communications skills.

Until June, 73

KIT-BUILDING

BY JOE EISENBERG,* KØNEB

Singing the Blues A 49er

One of my favorite parts of kit building is discovering new things that help a builder increase his or her chances for success and enjoyment of the process. For as long as I can remember, I have used a simple cookie sheet to both protect my work surface and to keep my parts from disappearing. I have been introduced to a new item that works with your cookie sheet to make things even nicer!

This new item, at least to me, is called a *soldering mat* (Photo A), and is available online from many outlets, including Amazon. The color mat I see offered most often is blue, and the mat is designed to both keep your parts from wandering and to absorb the heat from soldering, especially when blobs of solder are used, like in removing the insulation from certain kinds of enameled wire. Prior to this mat, my solder drips often adhered to the bottom of my cookie sheet, forever becoming a part of my kit building history. A non-stick surfaced cookie sheet can also help with preventing permanent blobs of solder on your work surface.

The soldering mat can prevent the problem of solder adhering to your cookie sheet. These mats are made from a pliable form of silicone and can be rolled up after use for storage. I just keep mine on the cookie sheet I use for my projects. In addition, there are numerous partitions on the mat, ideal for placing the parts you are using, especially when assembling smaller kits with fewer parts. The partitions are of various sizes, making them ideal for sorting various sizes of parts. There are also smaller dimples provided on the mat that are useful for sorting screws taken from disassembling such things as a laptop computer or small radio. There are mats available that have closable compartments as well, if desired.

The best thing about soldering mats is their low cost. I have seen the mats selling online anywhere from around \$7 to \$30, depending on size and features. Soldering mats also are anti-static, reducing the risk of electrostatic discharge (ESD) causing a problem with sensitive components such as CMOS

ICs or MOSFETs. The light weight and flexibility of the mat will make it a must-have item for me when traveling to do a group kit-building experience. Simply searching the web for “soldering mat” will return a wide variety of options and pricing. The size is often only given in centimeters, so be prepared to make a

metric measurement of your cookie sheet before ordering. A soldering mat can also protect the finish of your cases when working with them as well.

The 49er on 40

The kit I have chosen for this month is the “49er.” Although this kit is no longer

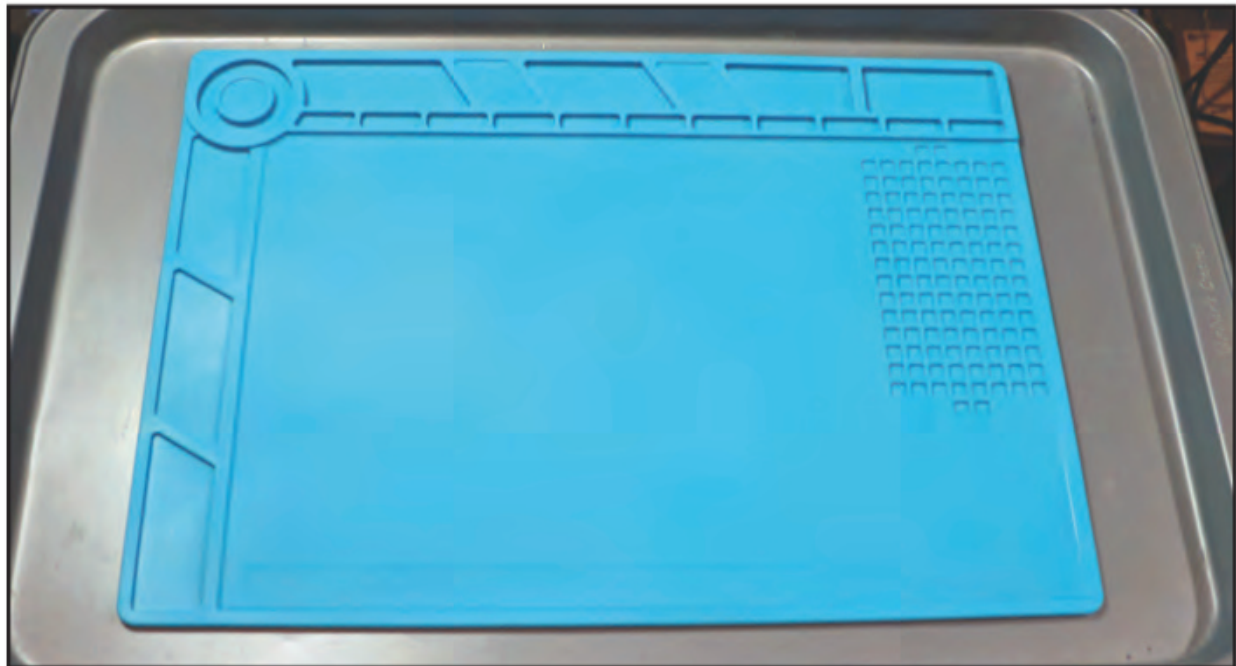


Photo A. Soldering mat in cookie sheet. The mat is very flexible and has anti-static properties as well as providing heat protection.



Photo B. Chinese “49er” 40-meter CW transceiver kit ready to assemble.

*7133 Yosemite Drive, Lincoln, NE 68507
e-mail: <k0neb@cq-amateur-radio.com>

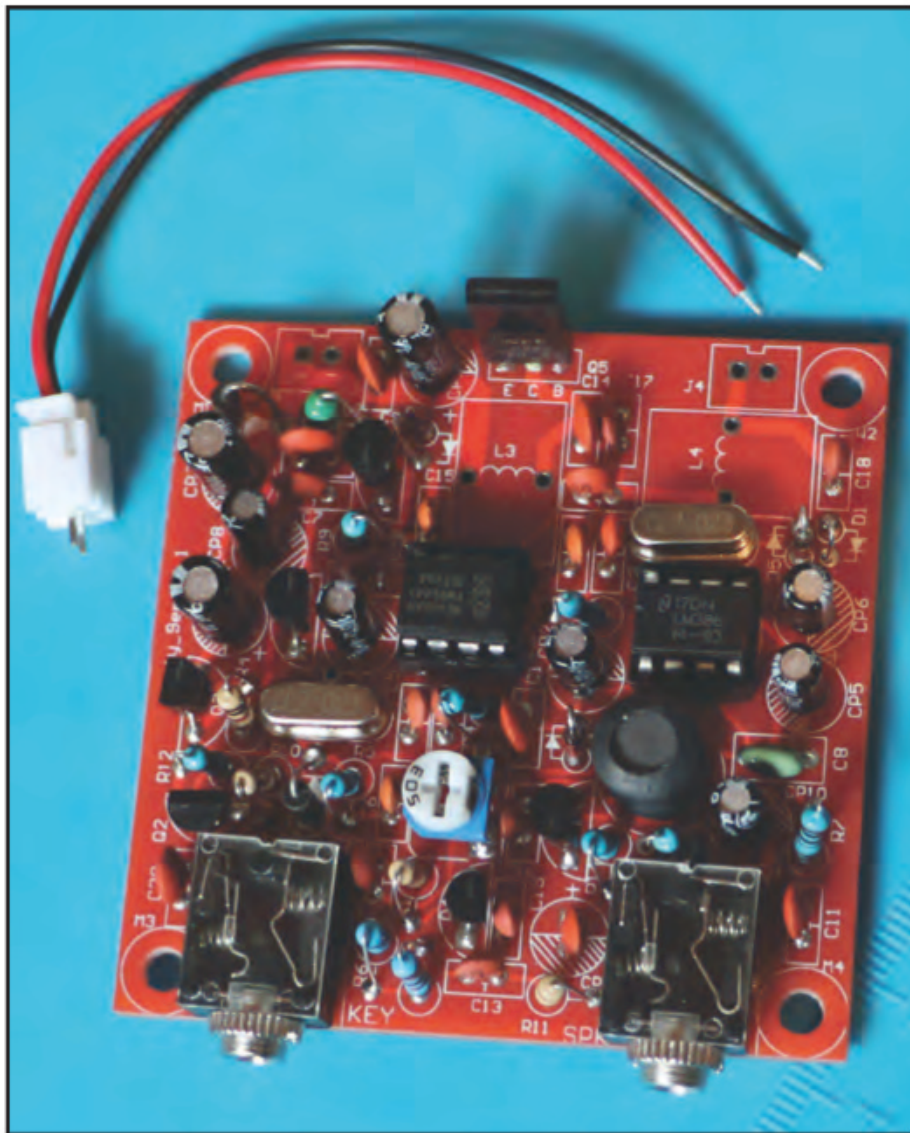


Photo C. Nearly completed 49er. Notice the two toroids are left to assemble as well as the wiring jacks.

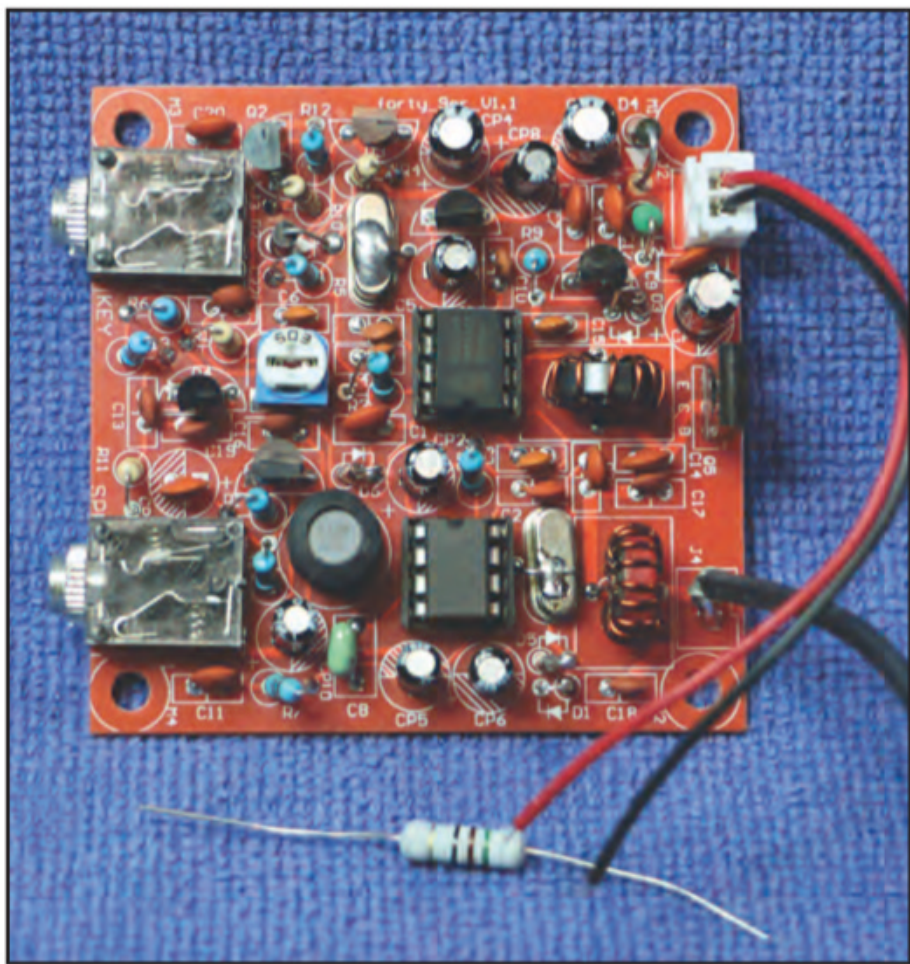


Photo D. Completed 49er ready for mounting in a case. I used the supplied 2-pin jack and cable for the 12-volt DC power supply, but used RG-174 coax on the antenna output instead of the supplied 2-pin plug. The two crystals have their cases grounded.

available in its original form, elements of the design have been incorporated into numerous kits made worldwide. The 49er is a minimalist design 40-meter CW transceiver. I'd say the 49er is a step above the "Pixie" kits in terms of receiver performance, but still very basic. The 49er kit I found online (Photos B, C and D) uses plug connectors to make the connections to the power source and the RF output. You can, however, bypass these connectors if you wish and solder those leads directly to the board. I keep some small gauge red/black wire handy for power connections as well as some RG-174 coax for making connections to your external RF BNC or SO-239 jacks. You can get away with using just regular wire for such small lengths of QRP RF wiring under a couple of inches, but I prefer to use RG-174. At a recent hamfest, I even found some very slim SMA panel-mount jacks, ideal for when using a mint tin or similar small enclosure for any small kit, such as the 49er.

The 49er kit I got had a parts diagram, and the board is marked as well. There are two toroids to wind, so be sure to take your time and be careful when winding these very small toroids. There are two different ferrite cores; one has a red band around it while the other does not. I referred to the online photo of the kit to determine which color core was used in which position. The red one gets 16 turns, while the black one gets 11 turns. Using Google Translate on my cell phone let me scan in the Chinese text and determine which toroid core went where.

Another thing to be aware of is that the power and RF 2-pin jacks may be a bit deceptive when looking at the markings on the board of this particular kit. There is a notch showing, but it does not correctly align with the notch of the jack. Be sure to look at the red/black wires to ensure that the red corresponds to the "+" mark on the board for the power connection and the RF hot lead corresponds to the square hole on the other jack's board space, with the ground being the round hole. Also missing but on the schematic is the fact that both crystal cases need to be grounded. There is a hole provided for that ground connection next to each crystal, and you can just use a scrap piece of wire left over from trimming your resistor leads to form the ground lead for the crystal cases. Next month, I'll complete the 49er, mount it in a case and put it on the air.

Looking Ahead

Also coming soon, I'll look at some very simple and quick kits that will be useful for direction-finding and for the upcoming hamfest season. Are you planning a group kit-building experience for your club? Let me know what you are doing and what kits you are using so I can share your successes and how you solved any problems that arose.

Coming up this month is the long-awaited Ozarkcon QRP convention in Branson, Missouri. Branson is a fun place to take your family as well, and a great time is always had by all. The Four State QRP Group (<4sqrp.com>) always showcases its new kits at Ozarkcon, so stay tuned for the latest new fun kits to be announced in Branson. The annual Friday night kit-build is a highlight of Ozarkcon and will feature the 40-meter version of the Cricket CW transceiver kit. In addition, I'll be at the Green Country Hamfest in Claremore, Oklahoma, also in April.

In May, look for me with my traditional "Cat In The Hat" hat at the Dayton Hamvention® in Xenia, Ohio. This year, I'll be celebrating my 40th visit to Hamvention! July is the Central States VHF Conference right here in Lincoln, Nebraska, and in August I'll be at the World's Friendliest Hamfest in Huntsville, Alabama. — Until next time, 73 de KØNEB

LEARNING CURVE

BY RON OCHU, KOØZ

Show Me Pictures!

It's said that variety is the spice of life, and who doesn't like a little variety and spice in life? No doubt, the same adage can hold equally true for ham radio. Newbies to ham radio tend to gravitate towards VHF/UHF (very high frequency/ultra high frequency) repeater systems. And why not? There's a proliferation of inexpensive dual-band handhelds (HTs) and repeater systems serve as ham radio's version of the workplace "water cooler" to mingle and exchange ideas. Not a thing wrong with that; in fact, it's a fine ham radio tradition. But ham radio has other traditions, too. A primary one is to explore and experiment, as evidenced in FCC (Federal Communications Commission) Part 97.1 (c): *Encouragement and improvement of the amateur service through rules which provide for advancing skills in both the communication and technical phases of the art.*

Explore

That doesn't mean abandoning VHF/UHF repeaters in search of new, electronic, communication frontiers. It also doesn't mean recklessly jumping, feet first, into unknown waters. However, it does mean encouraging amateur radio operators to experiment with existing or new technologies. I suppose, one could argue that any unfamiliar technological or communications mode could be considered "new" for "me"; as opposed to a completely brand new, previously non-existent, technology. I think DXers' (hams who look for long-distance contacts) response to the question of what is an "ATNO" (all-time new one) is apropos. "Any country that you haven't worked before is an ATNO." So, any mode you haven't tried before is a new one.

This month, let's explore the benefits of an existing, older technology that may be new for you. Who doesn't like to look at pictures? Can you imagine a QSO that involves pictures? Slow-scan television (SSTV) enables hams like you and me to send pictures over the air, similar to the one Clint, NW5P, sent in *Photo A*.

SSTV pictures are sent mostly over HF (high frequency) bands. However, there is no reason why SSTV can't be sent using FM on the VHF/UHF bands like the SSTV picture I received from the International Space Station (ISS) on 2 meters (*Photo B*).

SSTV

SSTV derives its name from its means of modulation. Most people are familiar with fast-scan analog TV, which gave viewers live-action pictures. SSTV is akin to watching a slide show (*Photo C*). Today, analog fast-scan TV has been replaced by HDTV (high-definition TV). Viewing live TV, either analog or through HDTV, requires a huge amount of bandwidth, typically around 6 MHz. That's more bandwidth for one channel than the entire amateur radio HF spectrum.

Consequently, live amateur television (ATV) is restricted to amateur frequencies in the UHF and above spectrum. SSTV sends just one picture at a time, which reduces need-

ed bandwidth, therefore allowing TV on the HF bands. SSTV software converts still pictures into audio frequencies, which allows hams to broadcast still pictures with no more bandwidth than a typical single sideband (SSB) signal, which is about 3 kHz. SSTV pictures can be sent worldwide using HF, such as the one I received from Gerald, TI4GSP, in Costa Rica (*Photo D*).

FM & ISS

HF, SSB, SSTV transmissions are fun to send and receive, but VHF/UHF FM (frequency modulation) offers us additional SSTV fun. There is no reason why SSTV cannot be used on VHF/UHF voice segments. However please be sure to avoid sending SSTV pictures on repeater pairs (frequency input/output) and OSCAR (Orbital Satellite Carrying Amateur Radio) uplink and downlink frequencies.

On the other hand, sending FM VHF/UHF SSTV pictures across town or to nearby counties via simplex can be a great way to spend part of the day in a fun, invigorating, and edu-

Photo A.
The author is receiving a good SSTV report from Clint Cook, NW5P. (All photos by KOØZ)



Photo B. In February, the International Space Station (ISS) sent a series of SSTV photos from Earth orbit. Photo number 4 of 12 celebrates the Martian rover Curiosity.

*Email: <ko0z@cq-amateur-radio.com>

cational way. Transmitting a picture of the progress of your latest project or a newly received QSL card can be loads of fun, as well as serving as a catalyst to inspire fellow hams.

Even NASA astronauts aboard the ISS send SSTV pictures on the ham bands. For two weekends in February, NASA celebrated ham radio's involvement in the manned space program by transmitting 12 pictures from the Earth-orbiting ISS on 145.800 MHz (*Photos E, F, and G*). If you missed it, don't fret, the ISS periodically transmits SSTV to Earth and there will be other opportunities. In the meantime, now is the time to set up your own SSTV station.

What Do I Need to Receive SSTV?

What do I need for SSTV?

Well, it depends.

Like most anything else in amateur radio, it depends on how deeply you care to delve into the mode. To receive SSTV signals, all that's needed is a receiver, a computer with a soundcard, MMSSTV software, and an audio patch cord to go from the receiver's audio-out port to your computer's soundcard's audio input. Please keep in mind that this configuration is a "bare-bones" minimal approach to receiving SSTV signals.

Twenty meters is a good place to begin searching for SSTV signals; you can find them between 14.230-14.233 MHz. Also keep in mind that this bare-bones approach will require a gradual increase in signal strength to your computer's sound card, which the MMSSTV software lets you monitor with a graph that indicates signal level. Before long, you'll have a

better idea of the proper audio drive level for your computer sound card. Since you most likely have all that's necessary to start receiving SSTV there's little, if any, financial commitment to explore a new communications mode. MMSSTV is free to download from <<https://tinyurl.com/yxajgb9w>>.

Transmitting SSTV

To transmit an SSTV picture, an audio patch cord between your computer sound card's audio output port to your transceiver's microphone input will be required. Again, setting audio levels is important for transmitting pictures and is crucial for a two-way SSTV QSO. In addition to the audio levels, you'll need to have a means to activate your rig's PTT (push to talk) switch. Setting proper audio levels and keying the rig's PTT can be a bit overwhelming. That's why a computer-to-rig interface is highly recommended.

There are a lot of commercially-made computer sound card to rig interfaces, also known as digital mode interfaces <<https://tinyurl.com/y6hus96y>> such as the West Mountain Radio RIGblaster, Tigertronic's Signalink and MFJ's 1204. If so inclined, you can even construct your own digital interface. Although I haven't tried this interface – at <<https://tinyurl.com/y4I963wm>> - it looks very feasible and it is a good spot to start researching a DIY (do it yourself) interface.

Personally, I prefer a commercial standalone external soundcard designed and filtered for amateur radio use. These units isolate ground loop problems and come equipped with the necessary cords to successfully interface

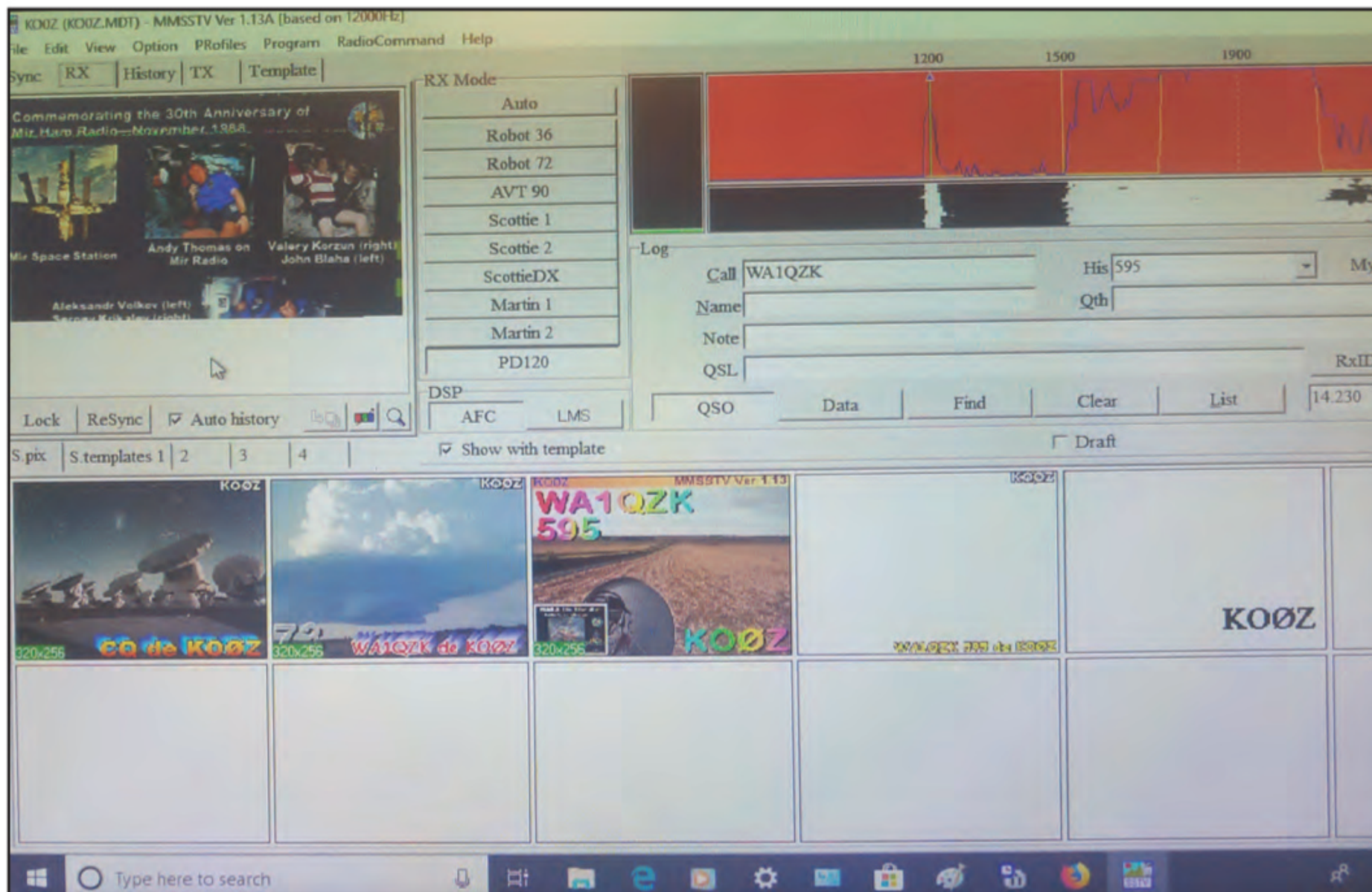


Photo C. The author is receiving an ISS SSTV picture. Note about two-thirds of the picture has been decoded. Further note the 1200-Hz sync pulse and the video information in the orange, spectral display top center of the photo.

Best Service. Best Warranty. Best Value. Ask around and check online; no one beats LDG!

H F ANTENNA MATCHING ACCESSORIES

High Power



AT-1000PROII
QRO Auto Tuner to 1000W
• Switch L Network
• Dual Antenna
• 1000W SSB / 350W Digital

AT-600PROII
600 Watts to Mid Size Amps
• Dual Bargraph
• 1.8 to 54MHz
• 600W SSB / 200W Digital



AT-200PROII
200 Watts Desktop
• Tunes 10:1 SWR
• 2 Year Warranty
• 250W SSB / 100W Digital



Desktop

Stand alone desktop tuner - works with most 100W HF radios.



AT-100PROII
• Dual Bargraph
• Auto / Semi-Auto Mode
• 125W SSB / 30W Digital

Balun / Unun



- RU 4:1 UNUN
- RBA 4:1 BALUN
- RBA 1:1 BALUN
- 200W SSB

Icom


Tuner dedicated to Icom radios with seamless integration.



IT-100
• AH-3 & AH-4 Compatible
• Includes Interface Cable
• 125W SSB / 30W Digital


Zero Power

Designed for portable and low power applications - zero current draw once tuned.



Z-11PROII
• LED SWR Indicator
• 10:1 SWR
• 125W SSB/30W Digital


Z-100 PLUS
• Low Cost
• Highly Portable
• 125W SSB/30W Digital




Z-817
• FT-817/818 Compatible
• Operates on 4 AAs
• 20W SSB/5W Digital

Yaesu

Tuner with built in Yaesu/antenna tuner interface.




YT-1200
• 2000 Memories
• For FT-991A, FTdx-1200, FTdx-3000, FT-450 and FT-950
• 125W SSB/30W Digital



YT-100
• 2000 Memories
• For FT-100, FT-857 and FT-897
• 125W SSB/30W Digital

Remote

Remote tuners mounted at or near the feedpoint minimize coax SWR losses.



- Includes Controller/Bias T
- Control Over Coax
- 600W SSB/200W Digital for RT-600
- 125W SSB/30W Digital for RT-100

RT-600 Shown

1445 Parran Rd. St. Leonard, MD 20685
(410) 586-2177

www.ldgelectronics.com
support@ldgelectronics.com



Photo D. SSTV is a worldwide (DX) activity. The author received an SSTV CQ transmission from Gerald Salas, TI4GSP, from Costa Rica. Note the pixelated dots indicating noise and static.



Photo E. The ISS transmitting picture 9 of 12 in February. Doppler shift, fading, and signal variations contributed to the noise (pixelated dots) on my received picture. Not a perfect picture, but still exciting to get.

your rig with your PC (Photo H). Once the interface is integrated between the PC and the rig, it's time to focus our attention on software.

MMSSTV

In the true spirit of amateur radio, Makoto Mori, JE3HHT (Mako), designed MMSSTV software and made it available for free download. MMSSTV has become a ham radio standard in SSTV circles. It is intuitive and relatively easy to setup. It's a Windows-based system, but there are other programs for Linux (QSSTV) and for Apple in their app store. I have Windows 10 as my OS (operating system) and I've had no problems with installing or operating MMSSTV.

Once you've downloaded Mako's MMSSTV software and open it up, you'll be prompted with a box to enter your callsign. Once you've done so, MMSSTV presents the operational SSTV screen (Photo I). Go to the menu bar, select option and click on the Setup MMSSTV (O)... button. In the MMSSTV Setup box, click on the MISC tab (Photo J). Make sure, in the sound card section, that your sound card is listed. If not, scroll down to select it. If it still does not appear, you most likely need to install a sound card driver. Now, clicking on the TX tab, your callsign should appear in the callsign template. Everything else contained under these tabs should be fine. YouTube offers good tutorials. Andy Bronze, M3ARB, has an excellent YouTube tutorial:



Photo F. Photo 2 of 12 sent from the ISS over the weekends of February 9-10th and 16-17th.

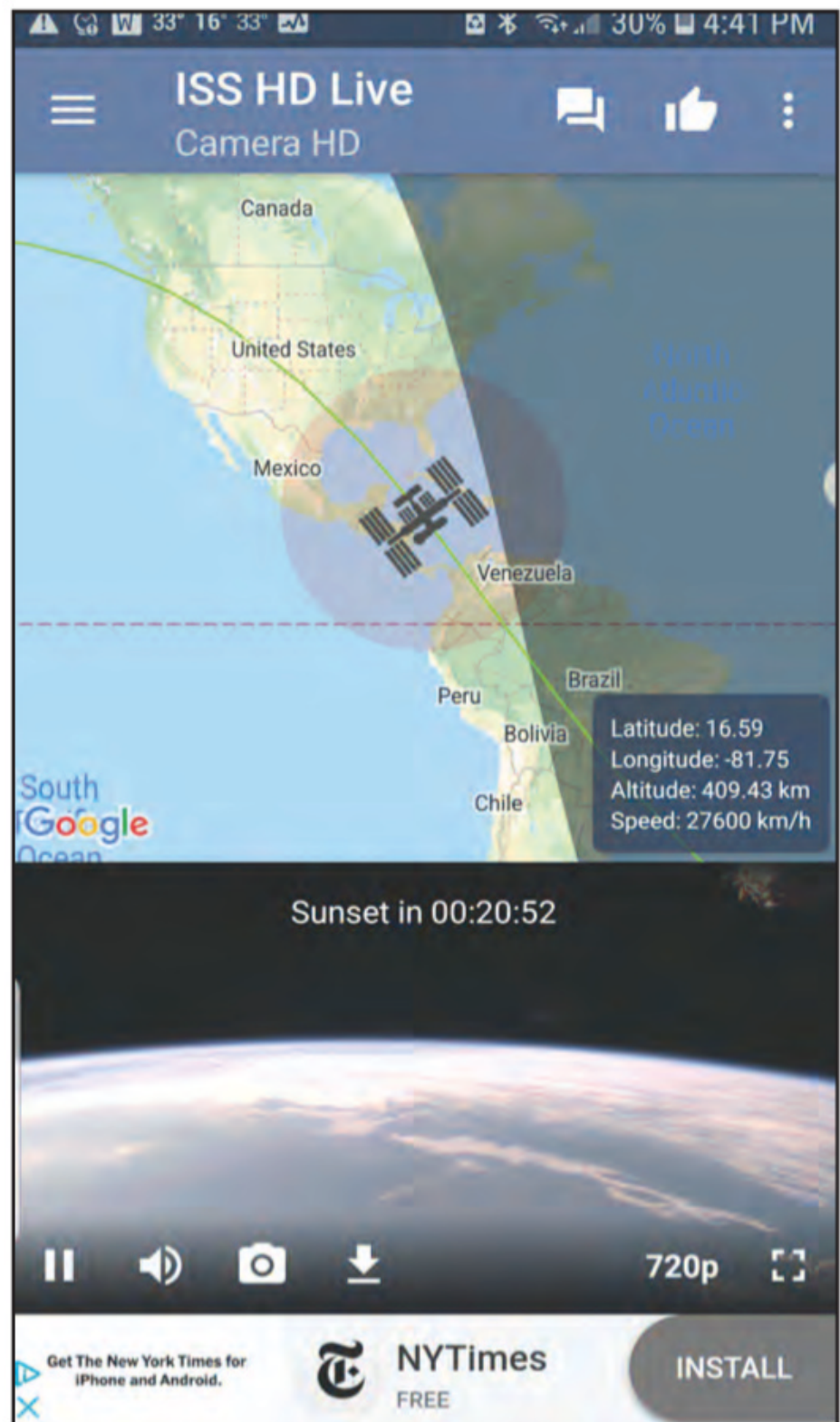


Photo G. ISS screen shot of the ISS location and its RF signal footprint. Anyone within the shaded circle is within radio range of the ISS as it races overhead.

<<https://tinyurl.com/y5j6ho5l>> along with Jeffery Kopcak, K8JTK: <<https://tinyurl.com/y2drkonk>>.

Tuning In a SSTV Picture

If you've set up MMSSTV correctly, tune in a signal on 14.230 MHz. Looking at *Photo C*, you'll notice a green bar towards the top center of the MMSSTV screen. This is an indication that the SSTV signal is being decoded. Just to the right of the green bar is a spectral display. Note that there is a pulse on 1200 Hz. This is the SSTV sync pulse. To the right of the 1200-Hz pulse is the video information in audio form, centered between 1500 and 2300 Hz. Another good sign that the picture is decoding is the picture forming in the upper left-hand corner frame. Be sure the RX tab is pressed so you can see the picture. The other tabs on the top of *Photo C* are for looking at received SSTV pictures (History), TX for picture to



Photo H. The author's Kenwood TS 2000 X used to receive SSTV pictures. Note the West Mountain RIGblaster Advantage sitting on top of the Kenwood. (The author needs to dust off his equipment.)

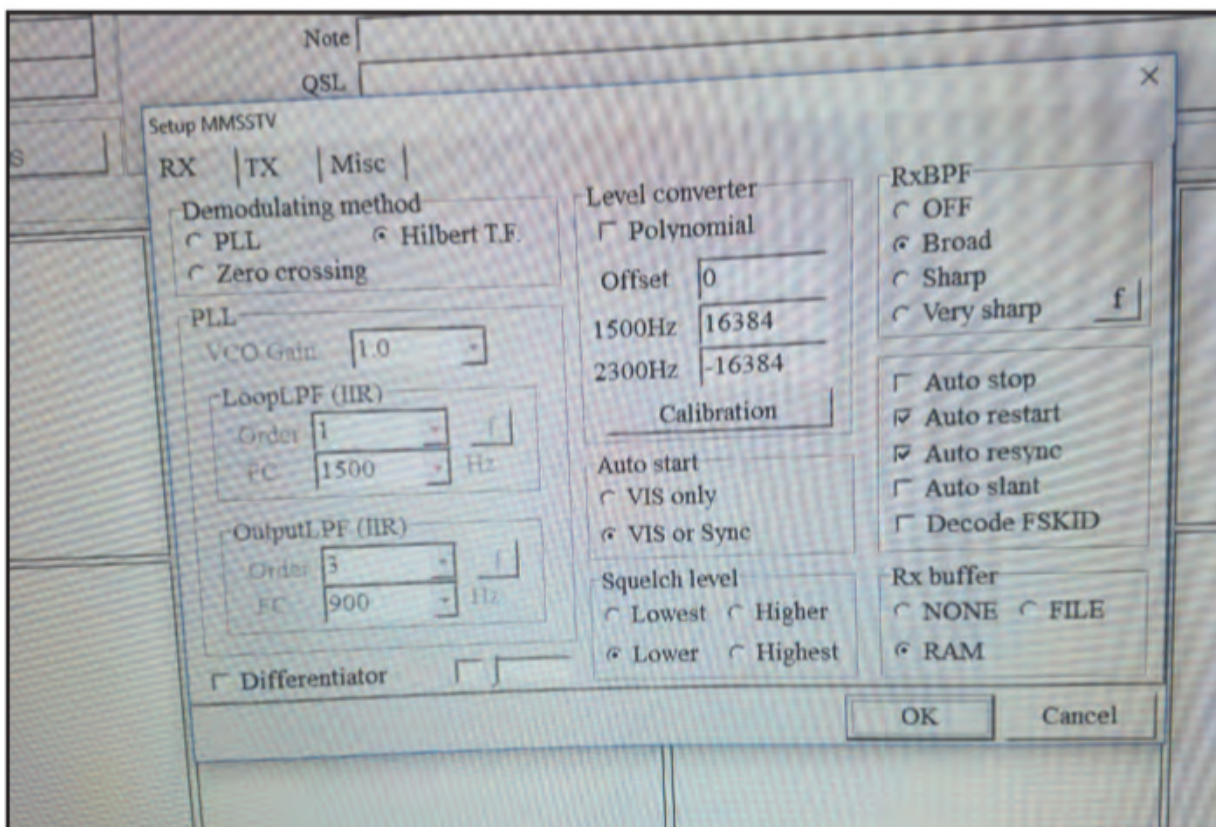


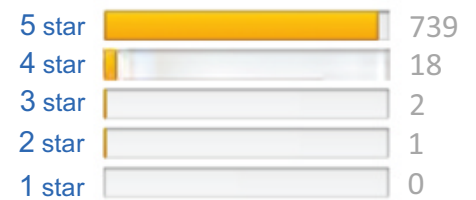
Photo I. MMSSTV operational screen before any templates are filled out or signal applied to the computer sound card.

HamTestOnline™ students are 50 times more likely to give us 5 stars than request a refund because they failed an exam!

eHam.net reviews

★★★★★ 760

5.0 out of 5 stars



The best study method, customer support, and guarantee in the industry!

www.hamtestonline.com

Spring into Savings

See Our Specials at the CQ Store
<http://store.cq-amateur-radio.com>



Were you first licensed 25 years ago and licensed today?

Then you should join the Quarter Century Wireless Association, Inc.

To Join or Renew, Visit:
<http://www.qcwa.org/join-renew.php>
For more information please contact om@qcwa.org

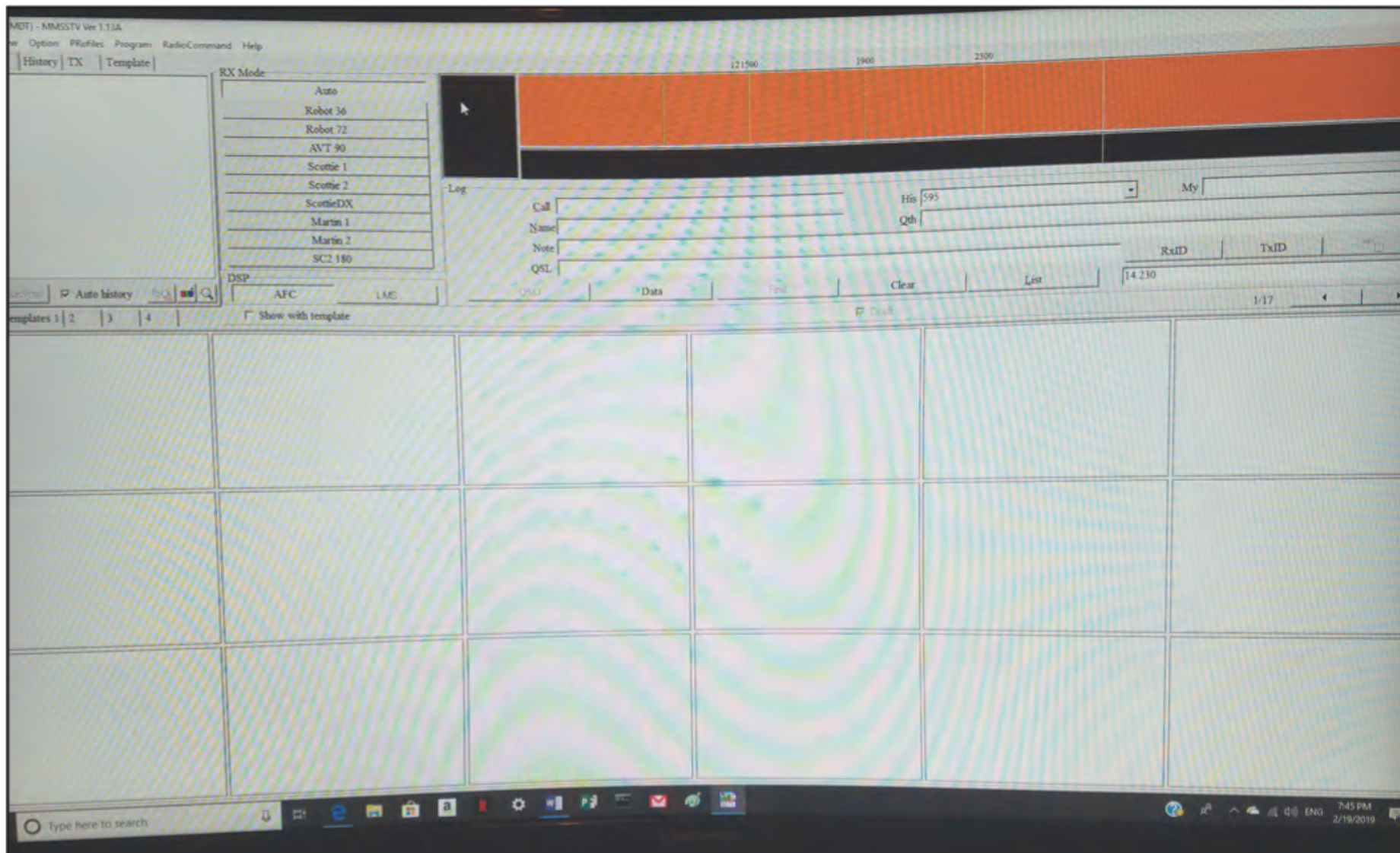


Photo J. MMSSTV setup drop box.

Join Christian, @K0STH at the intersection of life and amateur radio. Subscribe wherever you get your podcasts and join the community on Facebook, Twitter, & YouTube.

100WATTSANDAWIRE.COM

be transmitted, Sync for synchronization of the picture and template for creating custom made pictures to send.

Static and noise appear as pixelated dots on the received picture. To the right of the picture-viewing screen in the upper left-hand corner of MMSSTV, there is a list of RX modes such as Auto, Robot, Scottie, Martin, and SC2 180. These are various encoding schemes to transmit and receive SSTV signals. These modes require different amounts of time to transmit a full SSTV frame. I press the Auto button and almost every time, once MMSSTV detects the SSTV signal, it will automatically select the proper RX mode.

SSTV Signal Reporting

SSTV uses an RSV signal reporting system. R stands for readability (1-5), S stands for signal strength (1-9), and V represents video (1-5). RSV reporting - like RST (readability, strength, and tone) - is somewhat subjective, but that's what the letters represent.

Get on the Air!

SSTV sounds exciting, doesn't it? It's fun to transmit a picture of your progress on an antenna, tower, circuit board, etc. Did you receive a unique QSL card in the mail? Why not share it with friends and become the envy of all via SSTV. Why not create a local, 2-meter or 70-cm simplex SSTV net and experiment? You don't need to have a General or Extra Class license to operate SSTV on the VHF and higher bands. This article is not intended to be an inclusive technical primer on SSTV, but it does serve as a starting point to enter another exciting, fun, and dynamic aspect of the Amateur Radio Service. Thank you for reading CQ and I hope to not only hear, but to see you on the air.

73, Ron, KOØZ

MAGIC IN THE SKY

BY JEFF REINHARDT,* AA6JR

Water, Water, Everywhere....

“**T**he Rime of the Ancient Mariner” by Samuel Taylor Coleridge was written in the late 1700s and the classic has been a staple of English students for nearly as long. Mariners have existed for millennia and their mastery of the sea grew from craft like rafts that barely float to today’s behemoth super aircraft carriers, large oil tankers, container ships, and super cruise ships that are floating cities on the sea.

If ever a pursuit of mankind had a need for the miracle of radio communications, the loudest call would likely come from mariners. Indeed, it is no surprise or accident that the dawn of radio saw the U.S. Navy taking initial governmental control of the radio spectrum in our fair country.

With two-thirds of our planet covered by water, and more each day given the melting icecaps, there’s a lot of territory for ships to meander about. Until the 20th century, how to communicate with watercraft, and how boats might communicate with one another, was a challenge that brought many attempts at a solution.

Early seamen stayed close to shore for two reasons: one was geolocating by landmarks; the other was self-preservation, so as not to sail off the edge of the world, which was thought to be just beyond the line of sight. Not far into long-distance sailing came intentionally-constructed landmarks and lighthouses, as in the prime examples of the Colossus of Rhodes and the Lighthouse of Alexandria.

Ship-to-ship communications were also a challenge. From the basics, like whose flag the ship flew under, to the more intricate series of banners, pennants, and semaphores that allowed communications between vessels in times of war and peace. However, the vagaries of weather, daylight, and distance, not to mention rising and falling seas, made visual communications a hit-or-miss proposition.

And then there was sound. Ships and ports developed signal cannons, foghorns, harbor buoys with bells on them, whistles, and the trusty megaphone for barking out commands to those within earshot.

Nevertheless, the floor of the sea has a large collection of craft that strayed too close to a reef, got caught up in adverse weather, suffered a structural failure, or fell victim to enemy action.

Along Comes Radio

In an era when the term “game-changer” is applied to almost every development, it’s hard to accurately describe the vast impact radio had on maritime pursuits. From the basics of being able to receive or even send distress calls, to sharing weather information, expected arrivals in port up through making a line of battleships coordinate moves similar to those of the Rockettes, radio was the missing link. Add in radar, navigational aids like Loran and now GPS, one can quickly conclude the world’s waterways are a far better environment thanks to Marconi and those who followed. And all that happened in less than a century, as we just passed the 30th

anniversary of the launch of the first GPS satellite on February 14, 1989.

An Almost Ancient Mariner

Through much of his life, Fred Martin, KI6YN, has been a man of the sea. I’ve known Fred for a few decades and he’s, well, a character in the mold of those old salts who can keep you listening to stories of the sea for hours, especially if the bottom of your glass doesn’t go dry.

Fred spent much of his professional life on the water, working for defense contractors on a variety of projects, several having to do with navigation. His work also inspired a love



“Old Salt” Fred, KI6YN, with just a portion of his antique collection of keys and telegraphy gear.



This National classic is in the next batch of items headed to the Channel Islands Maritime Museum.

*5904 Lake Lindero Drive, Agoura Hills, CA 91301
e-mail: <aa6jr@cq-amateur-radio.com>



On a school field trip, students learn how to spell a message using signal flags. Wouldn't it be great to have a Morse demonstration where they spell their names in code?

and respect for radio and communications in general, but yes, radio has been his passion. And just when you think some of Fred's stories may be getting a bit too tall, out comes some evidence that he may actually have been understating his story. He's also a CW operator *par excellence*, meaning he can go as quickly as you like and head-copy your transmissions, no matter what the speed.

He spoke of a CW contact with VP6MW on Pitcairn Island and developed a long-running friendship with Meralda Warren, one of the *Bounty* crew descendants. After several exchanges, Fred decided to go visit her on that remote dot of an island, which is no easy feat. His adventure led to a most entertaining ham club presentation with numerous photos of the odyssey and portrayals of what life is like in that faraway place that's seldom heard.

Fred also respects lighthouses that he shows through a collection that rings the internal soffits of his home — and yes — they light up. His radio and telegraph key collection from the late 1800s is equally impressive, in quality if not in quantity. However, his collection is about to get somewhat smaller. Fred has already made several equipment donations to the Channel Islands Maritime Museum in Oxnard, California and he has plans to make more.

A Message to Posterity

Unlike our radio transmissions that largely deal with the "here and now," Fred's donations to the museum are intended to be shared with others, some of whom have not yet been born.



An early foghorn used to guide ships safely home.

Indeed, a visit to the museum adjacent to the Channel Islands Harbor and Marina reveals an amazing collection of ship replicas, art, and touchable items that share the history and lore of navigation and its many developments with today's students, their parents, and those interested in the sea. As one example, I witnessed a school tour learning how to send a message using signal flags (see photos).

According to Heather Behrens, Collections Manager for the museum,

Fred's donations have inspired the creation of a new exhibit that will recreate the radio room of a ship and relay some of the importance that radio has played in making navigation safer in so many ways. It's a legacy that will keep on giving, just as all that hard-won seamanship drawn from the experiences of centuries past has been handed down across time to the mariners of today.

Following Fred's example, if you have some vintage gear that's only collecting dust, consider donating it to a local

museum that will share our story of how communications developed. This old gear helped make nearly every modern convenience we enjoy today possible, from GPS in our cars, microwave ovens in our kitchens, and the ubiquitous cell phone in everyone's pocket. Because even though we joke about our collections of "boat anchors" — once they're gone, they're gone forever.

A Personal Note

I apologize for missing my last scheduled installment of "Magic In The Sky." If this edition has any grammatical faults or typos they are truly mine, but I have a heartfelt reason. Last November, my life partner, champion, inspiration, supporter, and at times proofreader, was taken after an 11-year battle against cancer. She was many things to many people and is sorely missed. However, we draw comfort from the stories of the many lives she touched with her smile, her unending supply of love, and respect for all. And we know that like radio waves, her spirit will carry on, as KD6BIT is now and forever part of the *Magic In The Sky*.



Worth a visit — The Channel Islands Maritime Museum in Oxnard, California.

Young Ladies' Radio League, Inc. Since 1939

For 75 years the Young Ladies' Radio League, Inc. (YLRL) has helped women find their voice in Amateur Radio with members of all ages and interests.



The YLRL sponsors a number of certificates for both YLs and OMs. Members can earn special YL Certificates.

YL-Harmonics is our bi-monthly publication highlighting what women are doing in Amateur Radio.

YLRL gives out scholarships to YLs each year.

For more information on the YLRL, the current dues amounts, weekly YL Net locations or how to join please go to our website at www.ylrl.org or contact the Publicity Chairwoman, Cheryl Muhr, NØWBV at n0wbv@earthlink.net. All Officer information is also listed both on the



website and in each edition of the magazine and you may contact any Officer as well.

With thanks to the OMs who encourage and support us.

Visit us at www.ylrl.org

Smart Cities

There has been extensive news coverage of the move toward smarter cars, particularly autonomous (or self-driving) vehicles. There has been less talk about changes in the infrastructure of roads and cities to support autonomous vehicles and very little about the communications necessary for all of this to work.

First and foremost, we need to look at the types of communications and the methods that will be used to facilitate autonomous vehicles. We'll call these AVs in the rest of this discussion. I will set aside, for now, questions of whether AVs are desirable or practical as we want to focus on the communications aspects.

Why Do They Need Communications?

Some communications would seem obvious, such as connections to GPS and navigation. Other aspects, such as recognition and communication of hazards or emergency vehicles, less so. For AVs to eliminate the need for occupants to be attentive to these risks, the AV must be able to obtain, act on this information, and communicate its response to the system and other vehicles.

During trials of semi-AVs on roads to date, when an accident occurs, the first blame is usually on the "attendant." As work in heavily automated airplane cockpits has already shown, if the pilot does not have enough to do, he or she may lose focus. At 35,000 feet and with no other aircraft within miles, this is a limited risk. On a roadway with thousands of vehicles, it won't work well. It also eliminates many of the benefits of AVs. To achieve gains in safety, it is increasingly obvious that it is important to work toward fewer and fewer humans in the loop. (Again, whether that's a world we want is another issue.)

In addition, individual AVs cannot be counted on to have nearly enough sensors and processing ability to anticipate the myriad risks and situations they may encounter. However, if the "herd" and the road can interact, most of the remaining risk can be reduced significantly.

What Types of Communication Are Anticipated?

Communications between several different entities are currently being studied:

- Car with road
- Car with traffic equipment
- Car with other vehicles
- Car (indirectly) with emergency vehicles or law enforcement
- Road, infrastructure, and sensors with each other

The fixed infrastructure can be linked by fiber or wire, but anything that moves will be wireless. Some sensors — such as RADAR, SONAR, computer vision recognition systems, in-road sensors, control systems, and AVs — will require



An autonomous Waymo Chrysler Pacifica making a test drive in Los Altos, California. (Photo via Wikimedia Commons, licensed under Creative Commons Attribution Share-Alike 4.0 International license <<https://tinyurl.com/ybdc8zs9>>)

wireless bandwidth. Substantial "smarts" will need to be built into the system and it's a given that AVs will need to have protocols to do this communication.

Non-Connected Users Won't Disappear

The roadway will never be completely free of non-connected users. These could be pedestrians, cyclists, animals, etc. Non-connected users will need to be tracked by sensors and appropriate instructions given to the other parts of the "smart road."

The initial approach in the U.S. is a federal system referred to as DSRC (dedicated short-range communications) to communicate with the cars, part of an approach called vehicle-to-everything or V2X communications. Each AV would need to be equipped with a special system to recognize DSRC messages and act accordingly. In the current world, the messages and warnings would appear in a car's head-up display (HUD). DSRC is a wireless protocol similar to that used in home Wi-Fi. Competing V2X approaches depend on the coming "5G" cellular communications. (Though DSRC 5G would use a different frequency range than your future smartphone, Qualcomm says it will make one chipset for both). I suspect that neither the Wi-Fi nor 5G represents where we will be in 20 years as the bandwidth and multiple protocols required are still evolving. I've not yet touched on the different frequency bands and the bandwidth required by sensors that may operate with microwave and SONAR technologies. The current presidential administration has backed off a bit on DSRC, so we'll see where that goes.

Infrastructure, or the Road is Talking

The potential to build smarter roads and supporting equipment such as traffic lights is high, but so will be the cost. The rush is on to do this as municipalities and governments around the world are jumping in and fear being left behind. Cities such as Tel Aviv, Israel, and Columbus, Ohio, are investing millions in piloting the technologies.

* email: commhorizons@gmail.com
Twitter: [@shuttleman58](https://twitter.com/shuttleman58)

Nearly all of the pilot projects are using existing frequency bands or operating under temporary authorizations and in very early stages. The ultimate focus will again be on 5G bands. One pilot is examining how to enable traffic lights to communicate with cars *now*, in advance of full AVs. You can't run a red light if your vehicle stops you before you enter the intersection. Another area being examined is a roadway that monitors its own condition. For example, if there are weather-related concerns or what the traction level is of the vehicles passing over at any moment. This could give later vehicles warnings that conditions were deteriorating, whether there is a pothole, or if traffic volume dictates an alternate route.

The Sky Isn't Falling (Yet)

Another communications piece in this picture is improved navigation and the view from above. Recently, the FCC voted to allow U.S. users greater access to data from GPS systems other than the U.S. system. Historically, the GPS data was downgraded or limited in accuracy as compared to military systems. Although most of the restrictions to U.S. GPS data were eliminated years ago, limitations still existed on use of foreign GPS systems and military grade accuracy. This was in spite of the fact that your smartphone could detect and receive data from other systems. Prior to this, consumer devices sold in the U.S. could only use non-military data from U.S. GPS and Russian GLONASS satellites for location determination. The FCC voted to allow U.S. users to access more precise data from European Galileo satellites. This may mean an improvement in location accuracy from prior 10 to 15-feet down to 3 feet without depending on Wi-Fi or other "kluges."

The use of drones in assisting future AVs is also under evaluation. Think of the drones as local traffic "eyes in the sky" to further assess conditions along a road and alert vehicles or traffic equipment so better flow can be achieved, or hazards avoided. These systems are also 5G-dependent.

Our whirlwind tour of the communications landscape for your future trip in an autonomous vehicle has drawn to a close. Feel free to pull out your monitoring equipment and get it tuned up now.

What's On Your Mind?

As always, I am happy to receive your comments, suggestions, and ideas. Feel free to reach out to me and share what you are thinking.

CQ Amateur Radio



Connecting Generations!

Fun to read, interesting from cover to cover, written so you can understand it. That's CQ. Read and enjoyed by thousands of people each month.

Print or Digital... Your Choice

Celebrating our 75th year as a leading ham publication. The changes in amateur radio over the past seventy-five years have been astounding. Still some things have remained remarkably the same, namely the type of people who are drawn to the hobby. As a group, hams have a tremendous amount of knowledge on a wide array of topics, an amazing willingness to share that knowledge with each other, and an unwavering commitment to helping neighbors, near or far, in times of need.

So whether you are an old-timer or new to the hobby accept the challenge and read CQ. **SUBSCRIBE TODAY!**

Visit us at www.cq-amateur-radio.com for a sample issue and pricing.

CQ Communications, Inc.

17 West John St., Hicksville, NY 11801 • 516-681-2922

Amateur Radio Roundtable



Katie Allen WY7YL

Bringing ham radio to you



Tom Medlin W5KUB

A weekly program with guests from around the world.

Simulcast on famous shortwave station WBCQ "The Planet" on 5130 KHz

Join us at W5KUB.COM

UTC

Wed 0100 Mar-Nov

Wed 0200 Dec-Feb

Every Tuesday night at 8:00 PM Central



MF/LF OPERATING: Life Below the AM Broadcast Band

BY JOHN LANGRIDGE,* KB5NJD

Let's Talk About Transmitting Loops for MF and LF

How N1VF got on the air with a clandestine apartment loop and hacked U3S to make JT9 QSOs on 630 meters, plus "SlowJT9" hits the airwaves with positive results for small stations.

Just a year ago, I was extolling Ben Gelb, N1VF, for his efforts in installing an effective 630-meter antenna in his urban San Francisco neighborhood. From this location and using several different implementations of a vertical antenna over the course of several months and fed against a small radial field, Ben surprised many with high-performance results that led to numerous states confirmed on both coasts and points in between while using JT9. He was also able to take advantage of trans-Pacific openings to Oceania while using WSPR, dispelling many of the preconceived notions about what one might be able to accomplish on 630 meters, much less from a small plot of land using simple antennas.

All things must come to an end, however, and Ben and his family had plans to relocate to a new home with a brief, intermediate stay in an apartment until the house was ready. While the stay was only to be for a few months, it occurred shortly after the start of the 2018/2019 season, something that would be deflating to any low-band operator — it certainly would to me! Ben had been encouraged by many in the MF and LF community to notify UTC of his intent to operate from the apartment just in case the opportunity presented itself. He was one step ahead of us, though, submitting the required information as soon as he knew where he would be temporarily living. A short time following move-in at the apartment, he had an itch to figure out a way to install some type of an antenna that was conducive to his current living situation. Because radials would probably be out of the question under the circumstances, Ben began considering small loops, significantly less than a wavelength in perimeter length, capacitor-resonated and transformer-coupled

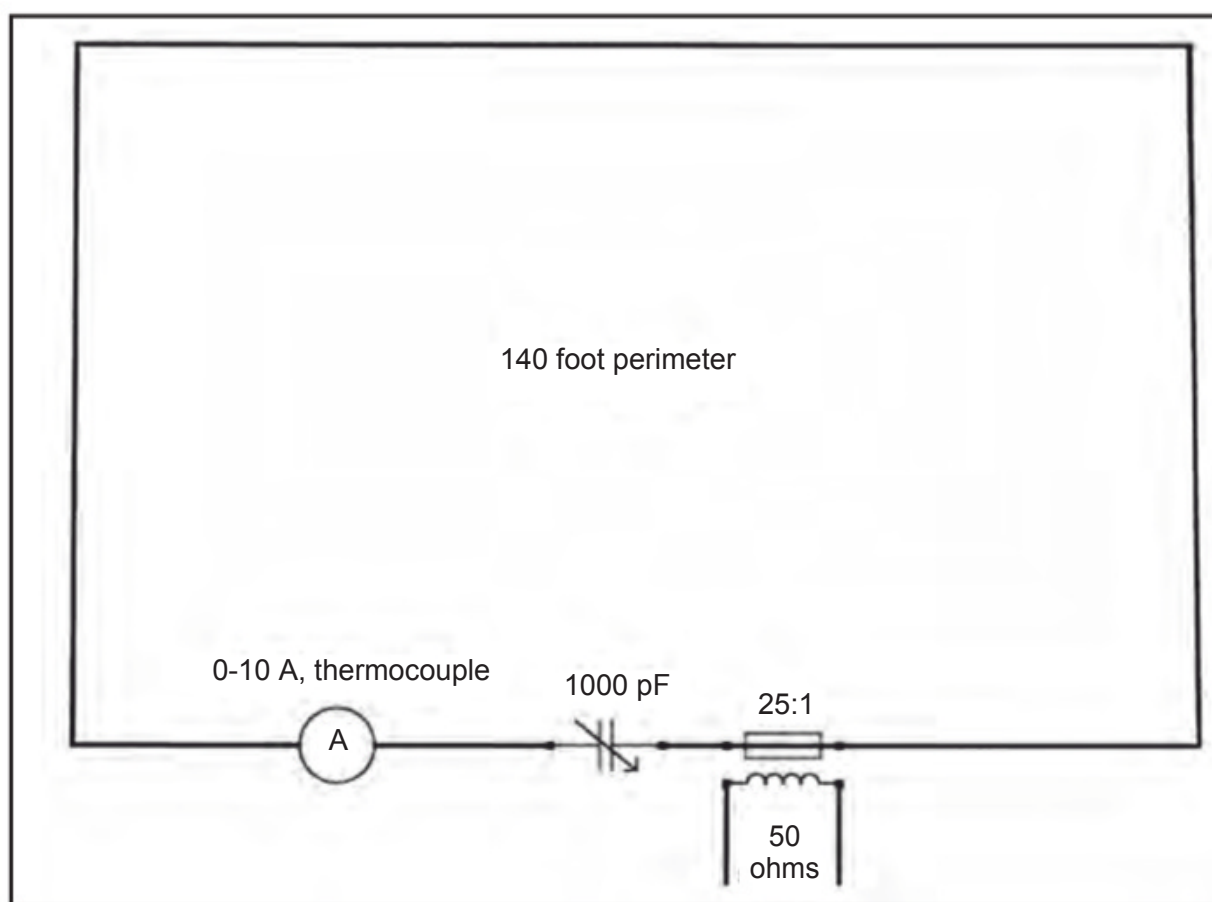


Figure 1. The basic layout for N1VF's loop is a common approach utilizing a vacuum variable capacitor and transformer coupling to a coaxial feed line. A thermocouple-type ammeter allows measurements to be taken for EIRP calculations.

(see Figure 1). This approach to transmit antenna design is highly regarded within the Part 15 "lowfer" and 2200-meter community but also works well on 630 meters, particularly in cluttered urban environments or areas where ground conditions are poor. Before installation, Ben had to confirm the operating conditions and metrics of the antenna since it would be in close proximity to trees, which would both support and hide the antenna. He also needed to ensure that voltage on the wire did not exceed the breakdown voltage of the insulation since the tuning and matching components would be located on his third story balcony. Fortunately, loops of this type, even very small ones, are magnetically-dominant where current is often high and voltage is relatively low compared to some of the short, reactive verticals that many

of us use on the air. (It should be noted that Ben's first vertical at his previous residence set the supporting tree on fire on his maiden voyage and subsequent verticals using presumed insulators found a path to ground, proving that wood is not an insulator when used with high voltage.) By using high voltage-rated wire¹, Ben's system was going to be safe for the power he was planning to apply, so he proceeded to use his drone² to deploy a monofilament line that would be used to pull the loop wire through the trees. In all, the loop was roughly a full wavelength on 40 meters (about 140 feet), deployed in the vertical plane and terminated on his third-floor balcony. What's best is that no one was the wiser that it was strung through the tree.

Resonating the loop required a vacuum variable capacitor, which was ideal

** 827 Middle Run Ct.
Duncanville, TX 75137
<kb5njd@cq-amateur-radio.com>

Enjoy the Hobby read, read, read...



DITS and DAHS

The **. _ A _ B _ C _**'s of Morse Code Operating

by Ed Tobias, KR3E

This small but solid guide is the perfect read for those interested in learning or improving CW operating techniques!

Within its pages you'll find:

- The secret of becoming a proficient CW Operator
- Where and how to practice, practice, practice.
- Straight Key or Paddle?
- Adjusting your Straight Key or Paddle
- Keyers, Iambic Keying and Bugs *and much more*



6 X 9 Paperback \$15.95

The NEW Shortwave Propagation Handbook

by W3ASK, N4XX & K6GKU

This authoritative book on shortwave propagation is your source for easy-to-understand information on sunspot activity, propagation predictions, unusual propagation effects and do-it-yourself forecasting tips.



8.5 X 11 Paperback \$19.95

CD Version \$14.95

Buy both for only \$29.95

The Short Vertical Antenna and Ground Radial

by Sevick, W2FMI

This small but solid guide walks you through the design and installation of inexpensive, yet effective short HF vertical antennas.



With antenna restrictions becoming a problem, it could keep you on the air!

6 x 9 Paperback \$10.00

DX World Guide

by Franz Langner, DJ9ZB

Known throughout the DX and DXpedition world as a meticulous and tireless operator, Franz Langner, DJ9ZB, is also noted as one of the most knowledgeable individuals in Amateur Radio in terms of documenting DXCC entities.

This is the fourth edition of his series of books bearing the title *DX World Guide*. It was first published in Germany in 1988 and followed by a second edition, also in Germany in 1977. The third edition, published in the U.S.A in 2012 was the first to use color throughout. This 380-page, fourth edition, also full color throughout, includes information on well over 300 DX entities.

Whether used as a desk reference for the DXer of any level of proficiency or as a "wish book" for DXers just starting his or her DXCC journey, the new *DX World Guide* is a worthy and pleasant companion!

6 X 9 Paperback – only \$49.95

Book on CD – only \$34.95

Buy both for only \$68.95



New 4th Edition!

33 Simple Weekend Projects

by Dave Ingram, K4TWJ

Do-it-yourself electronics projects from the most basic to the fairly sophisticated. Practical tips and techniques on creating your own projects.

6 X 9 Paperback \$17.95



Shipping & Handling:

U.S. add \$7 for the first item, \$3.50 for the second and \$2 for each add'l item.

FREE shipping on orders over \$100 to one U.S. address.

CN/MX-\$15 for 1st item, \$7 for 2nd and \$3 for each add'l.

All Other Countries-\$25 for 1st item, \$10 for 2nd and \$5 for each additional.

CQ Communications, Inc.

Phone 516-681-2922 • FAX 516-681-2926

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

Photo A. Ben's loop tuner, located on his apartment's third-floor balcony, consists of a vacuum-variable capacitor with each plate connected to one end of the loop wire. One side of the loop connects to the capacitor via a thermocouple RF ammeter for current measurement. RF is coupled to the loop from the feeder by way of a coaxial transformer.



for the current and voltage that he was anticipating. A toroidal transformer matched the loop to a 50-ohm coaxial feeder with a single pass of the loop for the primary and five turns on the secondary connected to the coax (25:1 impedance step-up ratio) (Photo A). Ben's initial results were astonishing. At under 10 mW estimated EIRP (probably closer to 1 mW EIRP!) and using WSPR to evaluate whether this exercise was a waste of time, he received detection-limit reports from KL7L, near Anchorage, at a distance of 3,283 kilometers (2,040 miles) with JT9 QSO-level reports being received from British Columbia (Figure 2). Based on these results, further effort was warranted. Even better, nothing caught fire during the evaluation.

With the system passing the initial smoke test, Ben incrementally increased the amplifier power to about 60 watts which resulted in about 5.5 amps of RF current flowing in the loop at just under 1,800 volts (Photo B). He estimated that the radiation resistance was going to be near 4 milliohms and with 2 Ohms of loop resistance at 472 kHz, the efficiency was going to be about 0.2%. This meant that his EIRP was going to be on the order of 120 milliwatts. While some might think that 120 milliwatts isn't much power, it was plenty under the circumstances (see Figure 3), particularly since the alternative was to remain off air until Ben moved into his new home.

Hacking the U3S

After a couple of weeks of testing the system on the air, Ben was ready to stretch his legs a bit and do something

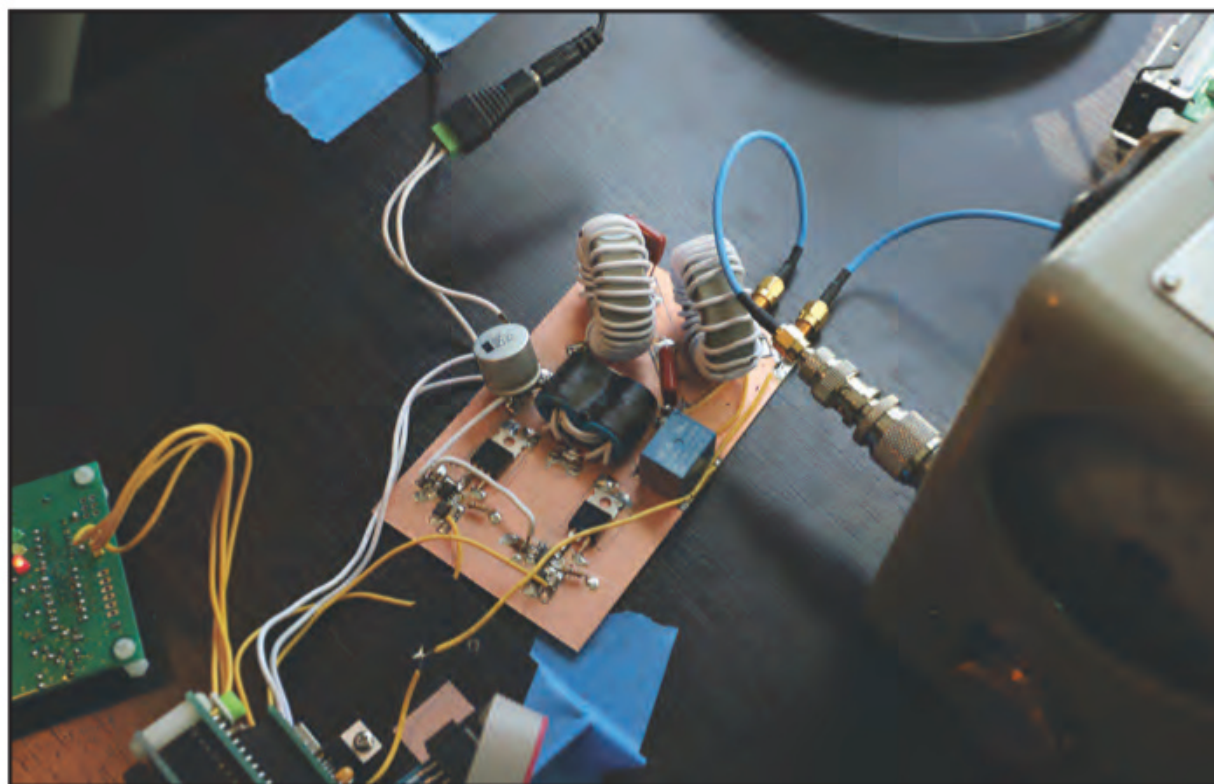


Photo B. N1VF's junkbox class-D amplifier for use with the U3S.

15 spots:											
Timestamp	Call	MHz	SNR	Drift	Grid	Pwr	Reporter	RGrid	km	az	# Spots
2018-10-20 13:22	N1VF	0.475702	-30	0	CM87wj	0.001	KL7L	BP51ip	3283	334	1
2018-10-20 12:32	N1VF	0.475702	-29	0	CM87wj	0.001	KL7L/9AY	BP51ip	3283	334	1
2018-10-20 10:42	N1VF	0.475702	-26	0	CM87wj	0.001	VE7CNF	CN89ng	1322	358	16
2018-10-20 10:42	N1VF	0.475702	-12	0	CM87wj	0.001	W6GJB	CM87	81	277	26
2018-10-20 09:02	N1VF	0.475704	-25	0	CM87wj	0.001	VE7VV	CN88il	1236	356	40
2018-10-20 09:02	N1VF	0.475702	-13	0	CM87wj	0.001	WB7ABP	CM88ok	130	333	67
2018-10-20 08:52	N1VF	0.475702	-8	0	CM87wj	0.001	KPH	CM88mc	108	317	67
2018-10-20 08:42	N1VF	0.475702	-12	0	CM87wj	0.001	KPH75	CM88mc	108	317	67
2018-10-20 08:32	N1VF	0.475702	-24	0	CM87wj	0.001	KP4MD	CM98iq	161	27	2
2018-10-20 07:42	N1VF	0.475700	-12	0	CM87wj	0.001	KJ6MKI/H	CM88oi	122	331	66
2018-10-20 07:42	N1VF	0.475702	-24	0	CM87wj	0.001	KR7OV	DM07ba	204	101	38
2018-10-20 07:32	N1VF	0.475699	-22	0	CM87wj	0.001	VE7BDQ	CN89la	1295	357	7
2018-10-20 07:32	N1VF	0.475707	-23	0	CM87wj	0.001	KR6LA	CN90ao	357	2	38
2018-10-20 02:32	N1VF	0.475703	-21	0	CM87wj	0.001	KR7O/L	DM07ba	204	101	58
2018-10-20 02:32	N1VF	0.475703	-16	0	CM87wj	0.001	KJ6MKI/AA	CM88oi	122	331	67

Figure 2. N1VF's astonishing WSPR results on his maiden voyage at the apartment using the hidden loop with about 20 watts applied for an estimated EIRP in the 1- to 10-milliwatt range.

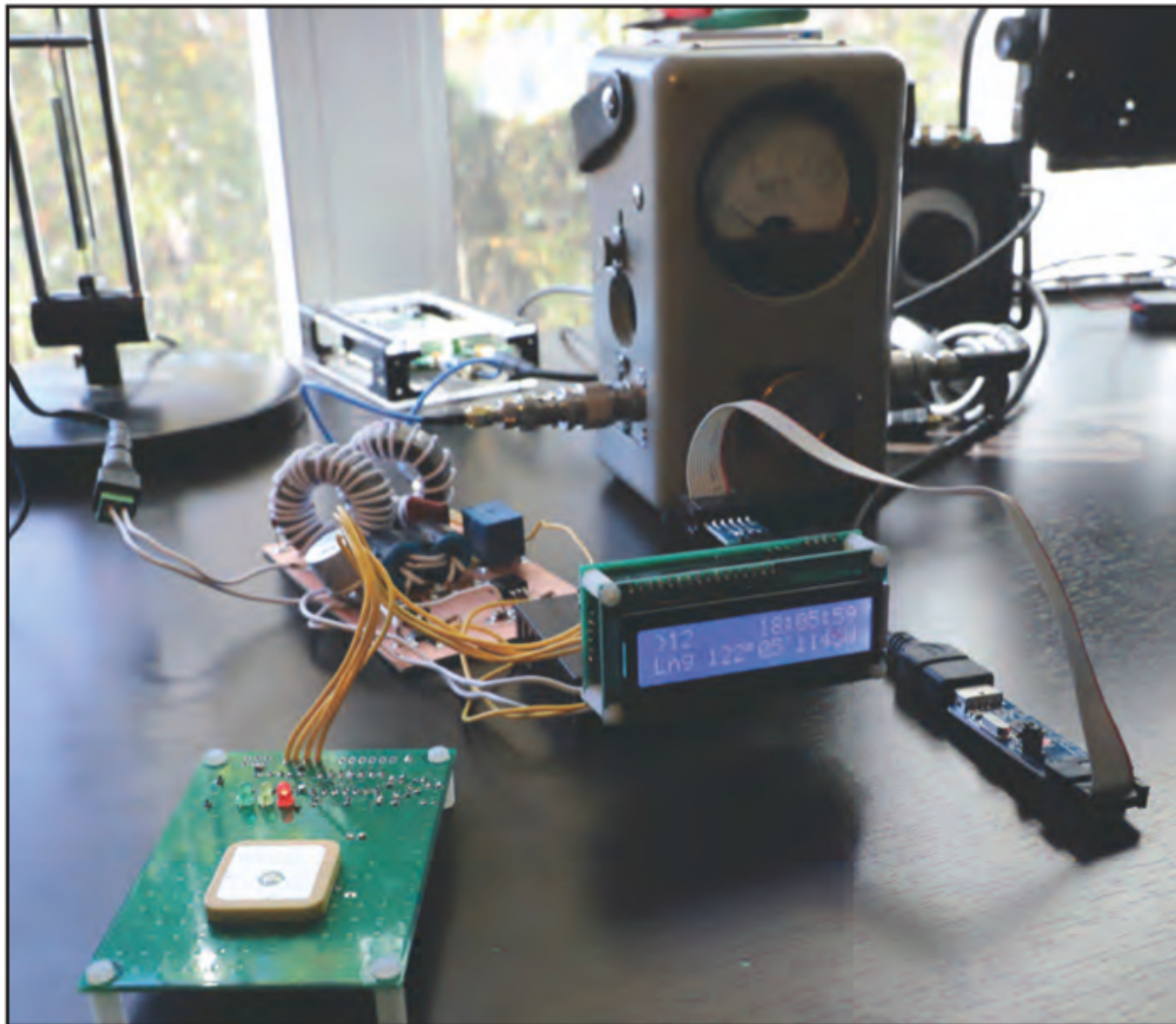


Photo C. Ben's complete apartment MF stations including U3S, GPS standard, homebrew amplifier, and SDR seen in the background. By programming U3S exchanges on-the-fly by flashing the U3S EEPROM, he can complete two-way JT9 QSOs from a platform that was really designed only for beaconing.

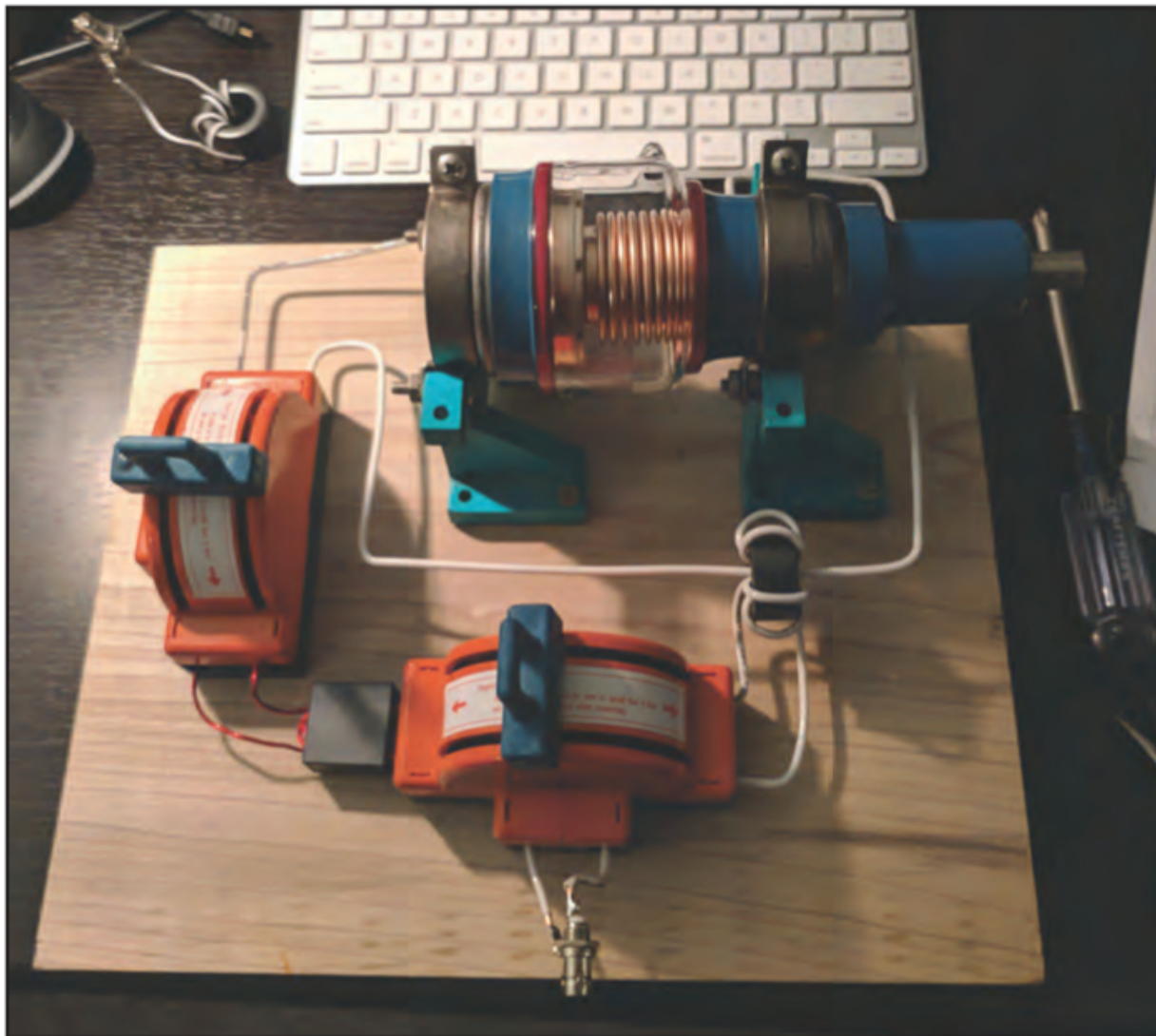


Photo D. The loop tuner, cleaned up and organized with knife switches to allow for resonating and matching the loop on 630 meters or 2200 meters.

bigger than simply transmitting WSPR. He was used to working QSO modes like JT9, but his Elecraft K3S was packed in storage and he was not keen on setting up a full amateur station in the apartment. For WSPR, he had been using the Hans Summers Ultimate 3S (U3S) transmitter,³ which is, for all intents and purposes, a beacon platform and, while QSO modes like JT9 are part of the package, the act of transitioning from one transmit sequence to another is generally impractical, certainly without missing the next transmit sequence, turning an otherwise three-to-four minute QSO into a nine-to-twelve minute QSO, at best. While one might be safe on 2200 meters with such a time scale where deep fades can often be seen approaching for several minutes, on 630 meters a long QSO could mean several QSB cycles depending on the state of the geomagnetic field. That ultimately could mean an even longer time to complete the QSO and more possibility of something going wrong.

The solution⁴ was a bit ambitious but only because it was an extreme approach that research indicated no one had ever tried. Ben was going to program the EEPROM on the U3S with a



Looking Ahead... Here are some of the articles we're working on for upcoming issues of **CQ**.

- CW Results: 2018 CQ World Wide DX Contest
- RWØA: CQWW CW From Siberia
- Spotlight Propagation on 20

Upcoming Special Issues

- June:** Take it to the Field
- October:** Emergency Communications
- December:** Technology

Do you have a hobby radio story to tell? Something for one of our specials? **CQ** now covers the entire radio hobby. See our writers' guidelines on the CQ website at <http://bit.ly/2qBF0dU>.



custom exchange for every transmit cycle. By using a script to automate the “memory flash” process, he learned that he had just enough time between the receive and transmit cycles to make this solution viable. And if something went wrong, he would simply be a cycle behind, as if he disappeared on a fade. Since most of the active community was aware of his situation, missing a cycle was nothing to worry about. With a small SDR and transmit/receive relay to couple to the loop, Ben had a very inexpensive, yet very impressive medium-wave station that was capable of completing two-way QSOs from an apartment (*Photo C*). This accomplishment was something that had never before been accomplished at these frequencies and under amateur radio rules.

At the time that this article is being developed, Ben and his family are preparing to move into their new home and Ben has already stated that a loop will likely be used, at least for experimentation, at his new station (see *Photo D*). Initial site surveys suggest that supporting the loop in the air is possible from surrounding trees but no baseline noise evaluation has been completed at this time.

The Loop Option

In the real-world scenario that I just described, a vertical antenna was going to be out of a question for a number of

reasons which have already been explored: High voltage and a potential for fire⁵ was not an option, installing a radial system was also going to be a problem and, of course, whatever was installed had to remain hidden from view and inaccessible by living creatures. While loops are not perfect solutions for everyone, there are a number of advantages that make them attractive solutions. Being a magnetically-dominant antenna, when a radiated wave front encounters flora and fauna, particularly in the near field, they do not become part of the loss resistance in the RF return path like a vertical antenna because loops are closed-circuit systems. Attenuation can occur, however, due to RF encounters with the environment, ultimately resulting in a decrease in radiated signal. Similarly, even though an RF return path through the surrounding environment does not exist, RF energy near lossy dielectric, like the ground, can be problematic and some operators have gone so far as to place ground screens under their lower horizontal wire that is closer to the ground. Some of these screens have been as simple as rolling out garden fence or chicken wire, extending beyond the ends of the loop plane.

Finally, the radiation pattern of a loop, which exists in the plane of the wire, is relatively diverse compared to a vertical antenna. While the vertical — with symmetrical, capacitive

Timestamp	Call	MHz	SNR	Drift	Grid	Pwr	Reporter	RGrid	km	az	# Spots
2018-10-25 14:02	N1VF	0.475683	-17	0	CM87wj	0.05	VA7MM	CN89og	1322	358	44
2018-10-25 13:52	N1VF	0.475686	-13	0	CM87wj	0.05	KPH74	CM88mc	108	317	93
2018-10-25 13:32	N1VF	0.475686	-16	0	CM87wj	0.05	WO7I	DN10cw	543	42	45
2018-10-25 13:22	N1VF	0.475686	-23	0	CM87wj	0.05	KA7OEI-1	DN31uo	964	58	39
2018-10-25 13:22	N1VF	0.475687	-12	0	CM87wj	0.05	KJ6MKI/AA	CM88oi	122	331	84
2018-10-25 13:12	N1VF	0.475687	-27	0	CM87wj	0.05	AF7MD	CN85nm	906	356	20
2018-10-25 13:02	N1VF	0.475686	-8	0	CM87wj	0.05	KPH	CM88mc	108	317	93
2018-10-25 12:32	N1VF	0.475681	-24	-1	CM87wj	0.05	KM5SW	DM65	1365	94	22
2018-10-25 12:12	N1VF	0.475690	-17	0	CM87wj	0.05	KR6LA	CN90ao	357	2	38
2018-10-25 12:12	N1VF	0.475689	-27	0	CM87wj	0.05	W0AY	DN26xo	1221	30	23
2018-10-25 12:02	N1VF	0.475682	-23	0	CM87wj	0.05	VE6EGN	DO23	1870	15	32
2018-10-25 11:32	N1VF	0.475686	-16	0	CM87wj	0.05	W0YSE	CN85rq	923	358	41
2018-10-25 11:02	N1VF	0.475686	-24	0	CM87wj	0.05	VE6JYKIWI	DO33	1920	18	26
2018-10-25 10:42	N1VF	0.475686	-15	0	CM87wj	0.05	ND7M	DM16	463	101	36
2018-10-25 10:42	N1VF	0.475687	-23	0	CM87wj	0.05	VE6JY	DO33or	1952	19	74
2018-10-25 10:32	N1VF	0.475687	-14	0	CM87wj	0.05	KR7O/L	DM07ba	204	101	49
2018-10-25 10:32	N1VF	0.475686	-21	0	CM87wj	0.05	WW6D	CM88pk	127	336	43
2018-10-25 10:32	N1VF	0.475684	-10	0	CM87wj	0.05	KJ6MKI/H	CM88oi	122	331	72
2018-10-25 10:22	N1VF	0.475685	-26	0	CM87wj	0.05	KL7L/9AY	BP51ip	3283	334	7
2018-10-25 09:52	N1VF	0.475688	-30	1	CM87wj	0.05	KU7Z	DN41af	972	61	1
2018-10-25 09:42	N1VF	0.475686	-24	0	CM87wj	0.05	KK6PR	CN94ik	786	5	31
2018-10-25 09:42	N1VF	0.475806	-11	0	CM87wj	0.05	W6SFH	CM88pl	131	337	94
2018-10-25 09:32	N1VF	0.475806	-11	0	CM87wj	0.05	WB7ABP	CM88ok	130	333	90
2018-10-25 09:22	N1VF	0.475806	-12	0	CM87wj	0.05	KB6WFC	CM87sq	44	318	72
2018-10-25 09:02	N1VF	0.475686	-30	0	CM87wj	0.05	KA7OEI	DN40ao	947	65	1
2018-10-25 08:52	N1VF	0.475688	-14	0	CM87wj	0.05	VE7BDQ	CN89la	1295	357	41
2018-10-25 08:52	N1VF	0.475686	-18	0	CM87wj	0.05	KP4MD	CM98iq	161	27	12
2018-10-25 08:22	N1VF	0.475687	-28	0	CM87wj	0.05	K9FD	BL11je	3819	252	1
2018-10-25 07:42	N1VF	0.475687	-29	0	CM87wj	0.05	VE7KPB	DN29cm	1441	19	2
2018-10-25 07:22	N1VF	0.475688	-25	0	CM87wj	0.05	VA7JX	CN79kv	1410	351	38
2018-10-25 06:32	N1VF	0.475687	-25	0	CM87wj	0.001	KL7L	BP51ip	3283	334	18

Figure 3. Increasing his power from 20 watts to 60 watts total power out, Ben realized a significant increase in WSPR decode count, range, and reported S/N. While he is reporting 50-milliwatts EIRP, further analysis suggests that he was actually closer to 120-milliwatts EIRP.

top loading — tends to minimize high-angle signals at the zenith (directly above), loops tend to have a fair share of high-angle component, particularly above the antenna, aside from ground reflection losses. We have often thought of this high-angle component as wasted energy except for periods of extremely active geomagnetic conditions but a recent article by Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA,⁶ might suggest otherwise. Carl examined, from a theoretical standpoint, the impact of elevation angle on coupling to extraordinary waves (x-waves) and ordinary waves (o-waves) and how that impact affects ionospheric absorption for short hops on 630 and 2200 meters. It seems that because both bands are found below the “electron gyro frequency,” a frequency range that Carl indicates is between 700-1700 kHz and describes the frequency at which free-electrons spiral around magnetic lines of force, one must consider both x-wave and o-wave ionospheric coupling. (Historically, many of us have examined these bands from what we know and could relate to 160 meters, which resides above the electron gyro frequency and is only o-wave dominant.) Carl’s theoretical treatment for short hops seems to suggest that higher angles might sometimes favor extraordinary wave coupling better than lower-angle radiators. Therefore, the higher-angle component of the loop might actually find some usefulness not previously recognized. Similar behavior could also be observed from inverted-L and *asymmetric* Marconi-T antennas in which imbalances in current distribution in the top loading wires result in radiation that is often at high angles.

As they say, there is no free lunch and everything has pros and cons, but hopefully, these considerations and even Ben’s story will help prospective operators make informed decisions ahead of installing an antenna for these frequencies.

JT9-2 and Longer Variants Return With “SlowJT9”⁷

For at least five years, there have been calls for Joe Taylor, K1JT, to continue development of JT9 variants designed to provide deeper decode limits than the traditional 1-minute transmission variety. One of the predecessors to the modern day WSJTx suite, known as WSPRx, contained versions of JT9 with transmit cycles of 2 minutes, 5 minutes, 10 minutes, and even 30 minutes, and which offered some degree of S/N improvement. The software had problems, though, and many stations lacked the frequency stability for these longer-sequence modes. There were also questions about the rate of fading on 630 meters specifically, and how data transfer might subsequently be impacted, so the project was abandoned. Attempts were made to revive the variants but the code was either never completed or removed from the published source code.

In late 2018, Rik Strobbe, ON7YD, began work to develop his own software utilizing the WSJTx libraries and infrastructure in an attempt to return these longer transmission variants to air. So far, his efforts have paid off with reported decode limits seen near -33 dB S/N in 2.4-kHz bandwidth using the 5-minute version compared to -27 dB S/N for the traditional JT9 variant. While there are varying opinions of these new modes and many stations still do not possess the frequency stability necessary for the longest JT9 variants, several smaller stations have completed QSOs that may not have been possible using traditional JT9. How the nature of rapid fading impacts these modes on 630 meters in the long run will require further study, but slower fading associated with 2200 meters might find better utility with these longer

modes. Testing is ongoing and changes are developing rapidly, so stay tuned for more details.

Don’t Forget to Submit Notification to UTC for Your Field Day Site!

ARRL Field Day is approaching once again, so if you have plans to try your hand at 630 meters or 2200 meters this year at your Field Day site, don’t forget to submit notification to UTC⁸ at least 30 days in advance. Field Day is an excellent opportunity to try these bands in spite of summer noise because many Field Day sites are spacious enough to experiment with antennas and often have a lot of bodies to provide assistance with antenna setup. Give some serious thought to setting something up and plan on operating JT9 or CW. Several of us plan on being on the air again this year.

If you have questions or comments, please contact me at <KB5NJD@gmail.com>.

For your convenience the following links, in addition to bonus material, can be found at <<http://njdtechnologies.net/cq>>.

Notes

1. High voltage wire for loop: <<https://tinyurl.com/ybvevvud>>
2. Drone footage of monofilament deployment: <<https://tinyurl.com/y7p3j3ua>>
3. Hans Summers U3S beacon: <<https://tinyurl.com/ya7xnz8v>>
4. N1VF U3S hack description and code: <<https://tinyurl.com/y84h6hgt>>
5. Hall of Flame: <<https://tinyurl.com/ybjrxbdg>>
6. K9LA Propagation article: <<https://tinyurl.com/y8bdol3h>>
7. SlowJT9: <<https://tinyurl.com/y8fdjrhu>>
8. UTC notification: <<https://tinyurl.com/yab7cnoo>>

SPURIOUS SIGNALS

By Jason Togyer W3MCK
spuriouscomic.blogspot.com



© 2019 Jason Togyer W3MCK | jtogyer@gmail.com CQ Magazine



ANTENNAS

BY KENT BRITAIN, WA5VJB

NVIR and AMSAT X-Band Antennas



Photo A. German command vehicle on the right with NVIR loop antenna. It obviously did not survive the encounter with the Churchill tank. (Courtesy of Wikipedia.org)

For years, I had watched documentaries on World War II and saw big loops over many of the German military vehicles (see *Photo A*). Always seemed like a good way to hang camouflage netting. Only recently did I find out that these were really NVIR, or Near Vertical Incidence Radiator, antennas for the German radios.

In many ways the NVIR antennas were an excellent choice for tactical communications. In *Figure 1*, we have the pattern of a whip antenna on a typical vehicle. Note how most of the signal goes towards the horizon and we would normally think of this as an ideal pattern for local communications.

In *Figure 2*, we have a loop antenna near the ground. Note how almost all of the signal is going straight up. Gee, that's dumb for a communications system to talk to the other vehicles in your command. Or is it?

When operating well below 10 MHz, signals typically go straight up, hit the ionosphere, and bounce straight back down. Horrible if you are trying to work DX, but great if you are interested in talking with others in a 50-to-100-mile circle.

* 1626 Vineyard, Grand Prairie, TX 75052
email:<wa5vjb@cq-amateur-radio.com>

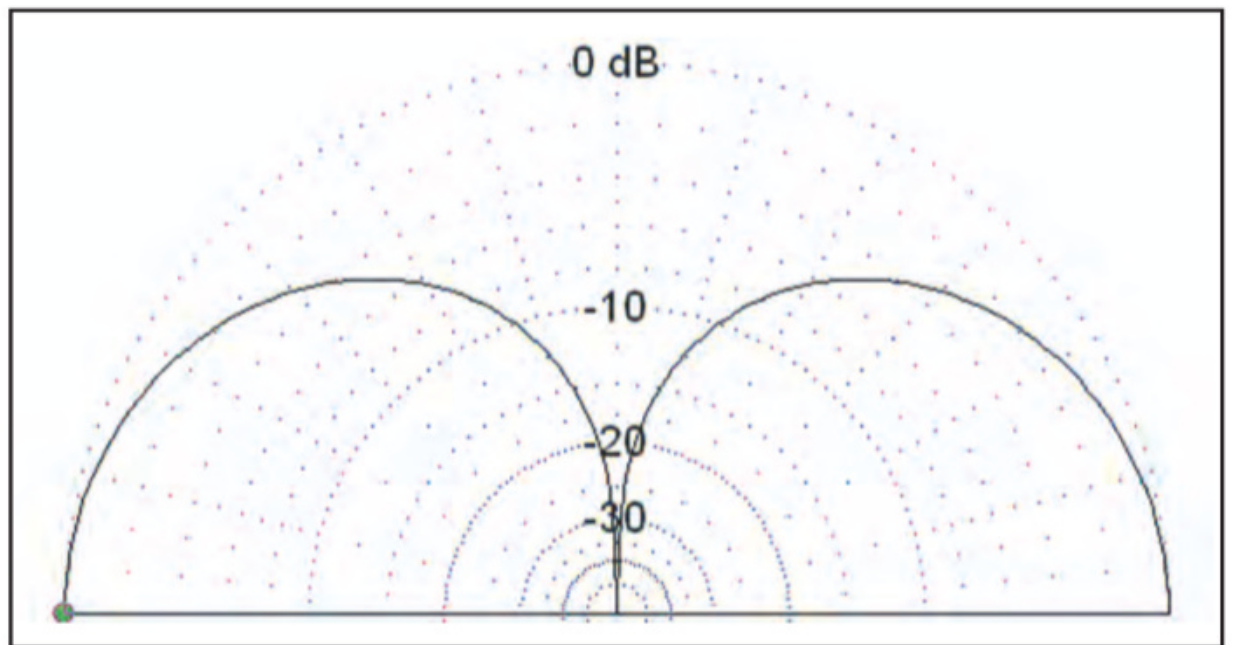


Figure 1. Vertical whip pattern

This is known as NVIS, or Near Vertical Incidence Skywave, propagation.

While higher frequencies skip nicely for DX communications, these higher shortwave frequencies just go straight through the ionosphere at vertical incidence and are useless for NVIS communications. Of course, this depends on where we are in the solar cycle, but NVIS limit is usually below 10 MHz.

So NVIR antenna systems are great for tactical communications and let you

easily talk with the guys on the other side of that hill. That's a problem VHF doesn't handle well at all.

Satellite X-Band Antennas

The AMSAT L-Band, S-Band, C-Band, GPS L1, GPS L2 antenna with the 435-MHz add-on shown in the last column generated quite a bit of reader response.

This time we have the X-Band downlink prototype antennas for the AMSAT

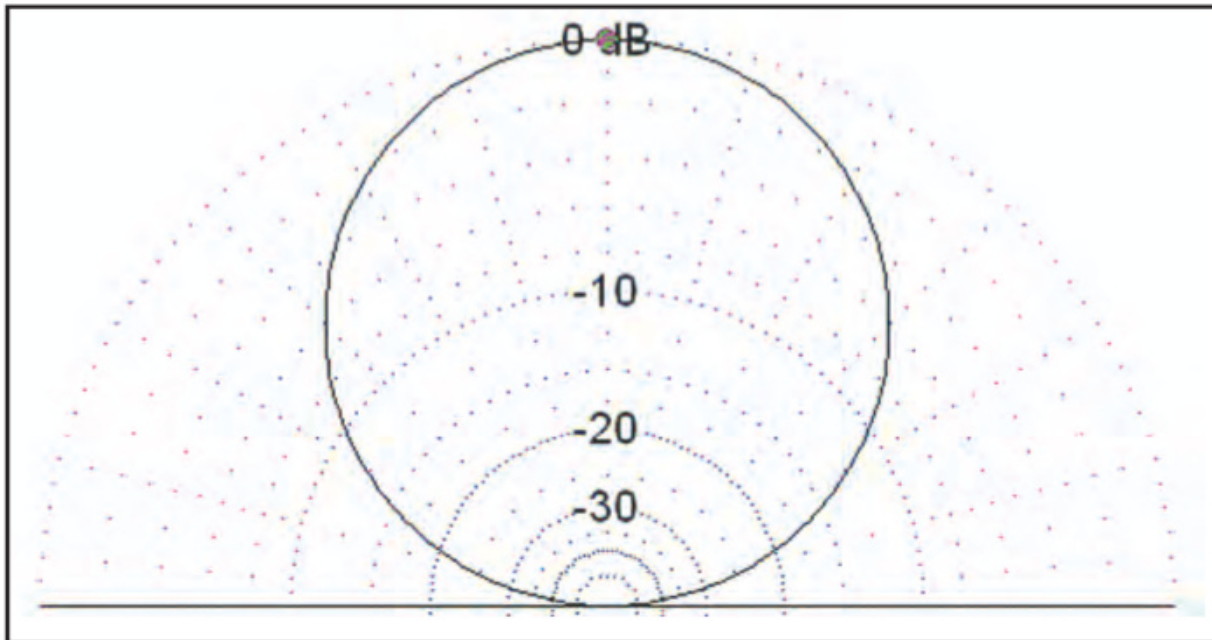


Figure 2. Loop near the ground

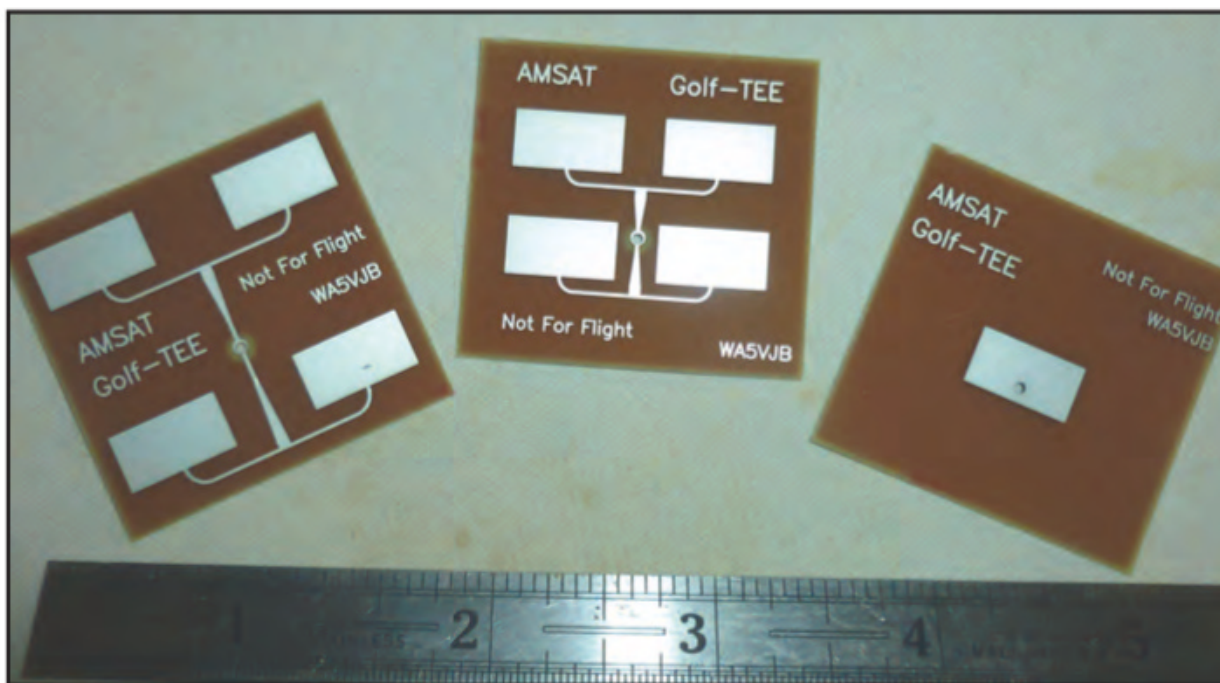


Photo B. AMSAT X-band antenna prototypes. See text for explanation.

GOLF-TEE cubesat (*Photo B*). When the antenna work first started, I had no idea how high the planned orbit was going to be, and that information is still a bit fuzzy. So I did three versions of the antenna. The single patch has a very broad pattern and would be best for low orbits. The version with four patches close together has a tighter pattern and is better for medium orbits. The four patches with a wide spacing are for higher orbits. Yes, those of you with a sharp eye see the “Not for Flight” on the antennas. These antennas will be used for pattern measurements when my antenna range dries out a bit, but the antennas are not on space-qualified PCB material. The problem with common PCB materials is outgassing. Various compounds in the PCB material tend to vaporize when in a vacuum. These “vapors” then condense on solar cells and optics. Now, DC power from the solar cells drops and any cameras or star trackers have fuzzy images. In short, if the material has any kind or odor, it will probably flunk outgassing specifications.

Looking Ahead

I planned this month to revisit my favorite technique for installing ground radials, but poor weather has made that a bit difficult. Guess it gives me a head start on the next column.

As always, we welcome your questions and topic suggestions. You folks do come up with some good questions and topic suggestions. Just drop a snail mail to my QRZ.COM address or an email to <wa5vjb@cq-amateur-radio.com>. Spring is here ... time to start planning those big antenna improvements. For other antenna articles and projects you are welcome to visit <www.wa5vjb.com>.

The NEW EZ HANG Square Shot Kit

www.ezhang.com

Suggestion from thousands of HAM's and Cable Installers around the world, led to a complete redesign of the EZ Hang. Custom Designed for YOU, the user in mind. Now safer and easier to use, you will hit your mark every time, with less chance of misfires or hitting the yoke.



OVER 15,000 SOLD AROUND THE WORLD!

See us at Dayton Hamvention Booth #1802

304-856-1026

www.ezhang.com

EZ HANG

75 Gold Finch Way, Capon Bridge, WV 26711

ADVANCED SPECIALTIES INC.

Orders/Quotes 1-800-926-9HAM

www.advancedspecialties.net

BIG ONLINE CATALOG



VX-6R
Triband
Submersible
Hand Held



FT-7900R
Dual-Band Mobile
50/45W Transceiver

AMATEUR RADIO EQUIPMENT & ACCESSORIES • SCANNERS
ANLI • COMET • TYT • UNIDEN • YAESU

(201)-VHF-2067

114 Essex Street, Lodi, NJ 07644

Closed Sunday & Monday

POWERPORT



RADIO CHEST HARNESS

Hands Free, comfortable, full chest harness. Pockets for radios, accessories, backup power, and 9" x 10" zipped map pocket.

831-427-8197 KC6QLB

www.powerportstore.com

The Only Separation Kit You'll Ever Need

\$89.99 Complete with 15' VGA Cable



Operate remotely up to 175 feet

Yaesu		Kenwood		ICOM	
FT-891	100'	TM-D710AVG	75'	ID-880H	15'†
FT-857	75'	TM-V71	75'	IC-2720/30H	100'
FTM-350	75'	TS-480	100'	IC-2820H	25'
FTM-100/400	90'	TM-D700	100'	ID-4100A	65'
FT-7-8xxx*	100'	TS-2000	100'	ID-5100	100'
				IC-7100+	175'

* Control & APRS

† Tested with 15' VGA cable only

NEW!

* Now SMRs can extend the IC-7100 USB port to a remote computer!

www.SwapMyRigs.com

VHF PLUS

BY TONY EMANUELE,* K8ZR

VHF-Plus DXpeditions and More

VHF Plus Calendar

144 MHz Spring Sprint: April 8th
DUBUS EME Contest 1.2 GHz: April 13th & 14th
222 MHz Spring Sprint: April 16th
Lyrid meteor shower predicted peak: April 21st & 22nd
432 MHz Spring Sprint: April 24th
Aurora Conference - White Bear Lake, MN: April 27th
VHF Super Conference - Sterling VA: April 26th-28th
Microwave Spring Sprint: May 4th 0800 to 1400 Local
DUBUS EME Contest 10 GHz & Up: May 11th & 12th
50 MHz Spring Sprint: Saturday May 11th
Hamvention® VHF/UHF/Microwave Forum - Xenia, OH: May 18th
ARRL June VHF Contest: June 8th-10th



Figure 1. The area within the red box, stretching from Kure Beach to Bald Head Island, North Carolina, is the only bit of land within grid square FM13. (Courtesy of k7fry.com)

Paul Newcombe, N2EME, and Hal Gress, K3NXH, will be activating the sliver of land that is FM13 south of Wilmington, NC (Figure 1) using the callsign N4EME from May 7th to May 17th. The team reports that FM13 was selected for this year's DXpedition because it is on the FFMA¹ want list of many VHFers west of the Mississippi. The 50-MHz station will run a kilowatt to at least one 7-element Yagi with elevation control. On 144 MHz, the N4EME team will light up the band with 1.5 kilowatts to four 12-element LFA yagis. Paul and Hal will take advantage of any propagation that comes their way, be it via the moon, meteor scatter, sporadic-E or tropo. (For pictures of their rover see: N4EME on QRZ.com)

Veteran EME DXpeditioners Chris Ploeger, PA2CHR, and Jos Wolters, PA3FYC, are packing their bags once again and this time heading to Anguilla Island. The June 2018 VHF+ column highlighted their very successful DXpedition to Guatemala in February 2018, though there was one glaring mistake in that I incorrectly noted Chris' name and callsign — my apologies, Chris. On Anguilla Island, FK88mg, Chris and Jos will use the callsign VP2EMB from April 12th to April 29th. The pair will be QRV on 144, 432, and 1296 MHz using JT65 and CW with a proven station consisting of an FT-857 and two 20-element, cross-polarized Yagis and SSPA on 2 meters. On 432 MHz, the station is an FT-857 to crossed-polarity 27-element horizontal / 23-element vertical Yagi and a 400 SSPA. The 1296-MHz station will use a

GPS locked FT-857 and transverter, 150-watt SSPA and single 67-element yagi. During their testing they have received their own echoes on 70 and 23 centimeters. The team anticipates being online at the HB9Q logger site. Their timetable and other operational notes can be found at <www.pa2chr.nl>. Their online log should be available on the VP2EMB QRZ.com page. Chris noted that they selected a location with backup power in a more exclusive area of the island in hopes of reducing the local noise that so often plagues operations in populated areas.

The gear for multiband DXpeditions such as this does not fit in the overhead compartment of an airliner and thus a large portion of it must be flown as checked luggage at considerable expense. In this case, the checked bags weigh over 180 kilograms/400 pounds. If you would like to make a small donation to help offset the cost of transporting DXpedition gear, see their website.

Speaking of EME DXpeditions, the team of Sam, HB9COG, and Dan, HB9CRQ, will pack their bags and make their way to the island of Crete in May. Operating on the southeast coast of Crete in KM25xa from May 10th to 17th on 23 centimeters to 3 centimeters,² the pair will use the callsign SV9/HB9CRQ. For schedule details see: <https://tinyurl.com/y6gzk5bl>.

Les Rayburn, N1LF, in EM63nf, reports that with the considerable assistance of Marcus Thomas, KF4YHP, the N1LF beacons are now on the air. The beacon site is located at the Pinnacle lookout tower in Shelby County near Birmingham, Alabama, in EM63pf. Les reports that the beacon lineup is as fol-

lows: The 10-meter beacon is 28.268.5 MHz @ 3 watts to a half-wave vertical; 6-meter beacon is on 50.068 MHz @ 0.5 watts to a loop antenna; the 2-meter beacon is 144.300 MHz @ 0.5 watt to a loop; the 222-MHz beacon is on 222.068 MHz @ 3 watts to a loop; and the 432 MHz beacon is on 432.298 MHz @ 10 watts to a pair of stacked loops. Beacon reception reports are welcomed. For images of the Pinnacle lookout tower, see <https://tinyurl.com/y6jm9fpy>.

KØFQA Silent Key

Jon Lieberg, KØFQA, a central figure in the promotion of VHF in the Midwest, became a silent key in February. In 1984 he organized the first VHF Midwinter Break, which became an annual event evolving five years later into the Aurora Conference. Today the Aurora Conference is the largest annual gathering of weak-signal VHFers in the Upper Midwest and is sponsored by the Northern Lights Radio Society (NRLS), an organization in which Lieberg played an important role. He was also involved with the Central States VHF Society. Jon Platt, WØZQ, fondly remembers working him on "that exotic band of 2304" using no-tune transverters @ 5

c/o CQ magazine
email: <k8zr@cq-amateur-radio.com>

milliwatts and surplus BBQ grid dishes. "Jon was a significant driving force for the NLRS, was a local pioneer and resource that led us into the micro-waves. He will be missed."

Cabrillo Adds "DG" for Digital Modes

Last September, a seemingly minor addition was made to the Cabrillo specification with the addition of DG as a new mode. Cabrillo refers to a universal contest log submission format created by Trey Garlough, N5KO. It is the preferred format for all electronic contest logs. Prior to the addition of DG as a recognized Cabrillo mode, all digital QSOs including RTTY, FT8, MSK144, and the others were tagged RY by contest and logging programs. With the addition of DG, the operator can differentiate between keyboard to keyboard modes such as RTTY and PSK and the digital modes of FT8, MSK144, and the JT modes. It is only a matter of time before the use of DG for the WSJT-X modes and RY for RTTY type modes is mandated by your favorite contest. Might as well get into the habit of making the distinction as early as your next log submission.

In his excellent *ARRL 10 GHz and Up Contest 2018 Results* summary released in February, Jeff Wadsworth, KI5WL, noted that for the 2019 version of the ARRL 10 GHz & Above Contest, the goal is to have as many participants as possible submit their logs in Cabrillo format. Cabrillo does support the 6-digit/character grid exchange required by the contest. He noted that, as is the case with the ARRL 222 MHz and Up Distance Contest, the distances are calculated automatically. For those who use paper logs, there is a tool to translate paper logs to the Cabrillo format. See <www.b4h.net/cabforms>. Submitting contest logs in the Cabrillo standard makes log checking by the contest sponsor easier, produces more accurate results (fewer errors), and permits the contest results to be published much sooner.

Dayton Forum

The VHF/UHF/Microwave Forum at the Hamvention® in Xenia, Ohio is scheduled for Saturday May 18th in forum room 4 from noon to 1:30 p.m.

– 73 and CU on the bands! Tony, K8ZR

Notes:

1. FFMA: The Fred Fish Memorial Award was created in honor of Fred Fish, W5FF (SK), who was the first amateur to work and confirm all 488 Maidenhead grid squares in the 48 contiguous United States on 6 meters.

2. 1296 MHz, 2320 MHz, 3400 MHz, 5760 MHz, and 10 GHz.

INDEXA
International DX Association
WORLD RADIO AMATEURS DX GOODWILL DX FELLOWSHIP

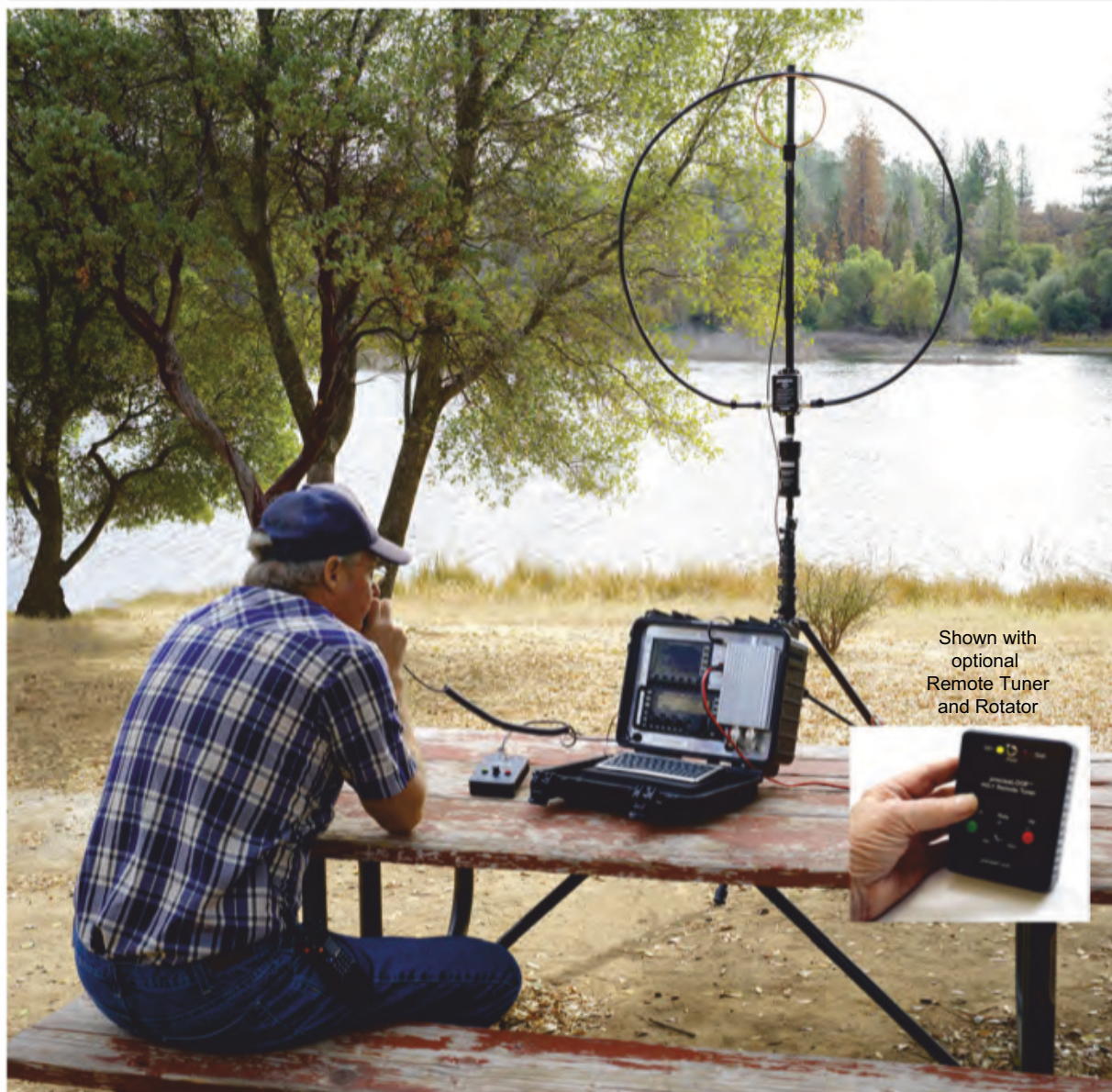
Making DX happen Since 1983
Support DXpeditions

HAP
Humanitarian Aid Project

Join INDEXA

f INDEXA **t** @indexa_dx

www.indexa.org International DX Association, 398 Lakeview Shores Loop, Mooresville, NC 28117 USA



For QSO on the GO Get the Best... the PreciseLOOP™ HG-1 Antenna!

Proven Performance

Proven in the very challenging environment of Mt. Kilimanjaro, yet perfect for a casual QSO at a nearby park. The PreciseLOOP is ideal when portability and performance matter. Many operators favor the MLA (Magnetic Loop Antenna) for Field Day, SOTA and restricted HOA operation. An MLA is a convenient, lightweight antenna, which can be deployed quickly.

PreciseLOOP Advantage

A dipole's takeoff angle is considerably higher in portable deployment. As a result an MLA outperforms a low dipole by as much as 6dB at the lower takeoff angles for DX use. The high-Q resonator imparts a very narrowband frequency selective bandpass filter ahead of the Rx front-end stages. Such an incidental preselector comprising the antenna itself greatly improves receiver performance.

Unmatched Features

- 80 - 10 meter bands*
- Low loss LMR600 loop
- 15-45 W (10W for 80m)
- Quick tune cal. dial
- Low PCB mounted cap
- Rugged compact tripod
- Remote tuner & rotator*
- Feed line - Balun*

* Some items optional



preciserf.com
13690 Wisteria Dr NE Aurora,
OR 97002 ph: (503) 915-2490

© 2018 preciseRF all rights reserved

AWARDS

Focus on CQ Awards: The CQ Worked All Zones Award

While we continue our search for a successor to K1BV as Awards Editor, we'll use the opportunity to shine a spotlight on CQ's own operating awards, some of which are very well-known, such as USA-CA (the USA Counties Award) and WAZ (Worked All Zones), and others of which don't always grab as much attention. This month, we'll take a closer look at our oldest and most challenging award, WAZ. —W2VU

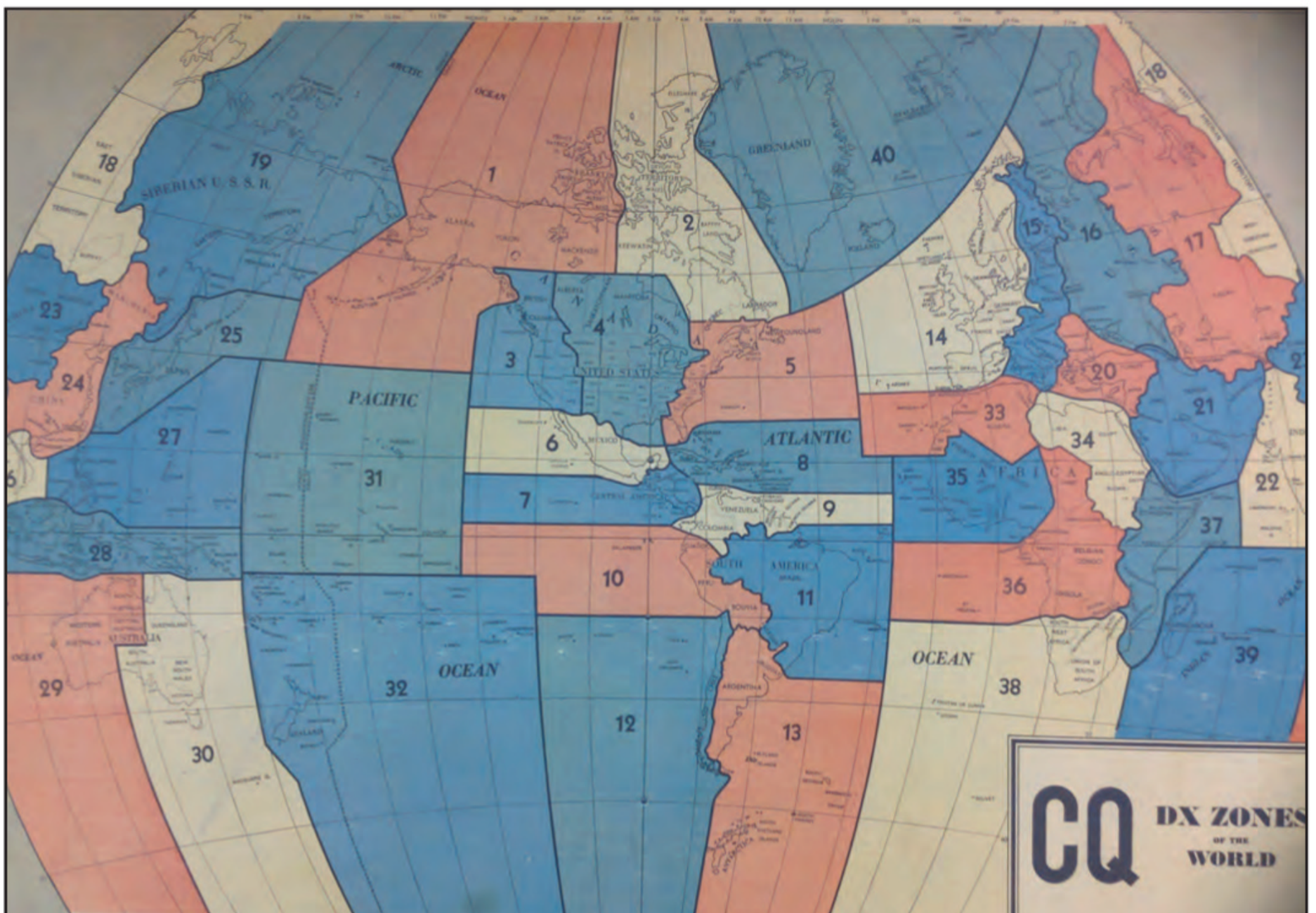
Later this year, we will be celebrating the 85th anniversary of WAZ, the CQ Worked All Zones award. Introduced in the November 1934 issue of R9 magazine, one of CQ's predecessors, WAZ has stood the test of time and multiple geopolitical upheavals.

As we recounted in our 50th anniversary issue in January 1995, early CQ Advisory Editor Robert York Chapman, W1QV (now a Silent Key), remembered publisher Sanford Cowan exclaiming, after selling out the first issue, "God, I can't believe it. We've sold everything!"

"A week or so later, I went to New York," Chapman recalled, "and John Potts (CQ's first editor) said to me, 'Where do we go from here?' I said to check if, when you bought the magazine, did you buy rights to a thing called WAZ? He said, 'what's that?' I told him it was a very popular program with the DXers and it had been run by R/9 and

then Radio. A few weeks later, Potts told me 'I checked that, and I do own that. It came with the magazine.' And he showed me a WAZ certificate."

CQ revived the Worked All Zones award with an announcement in the January 1947 issue, and it has been the cornerstone of our award and contest program ever since.



WAZ is the second-oldest active award program in amateur radio after the International Amateur Radio Union's Worked All Continents (WAC) award. It is older than the ARRL's DXCC award, which was launched in 1936.

One of the keys to WAZ's longevity is the fact that it is not tied to national borders, or to political changes in country names, sizes, or administrations. The zone borders are essentially unchanged since 1934 (there have been a couple of tweaks, but primarily to ease confusion).

While the exact reasoning behind creating 40 zones and setting their boundaries is lost to time, it is thought that the award designers tried to include roughly equivalent populations (in the 1930s) within each zone. Obviously, in some cases, this wasn't possible, such as the various zones that converge on the North and South Poles, but an effort was made to include at least one well-populated area within each zone when possible. For example, Zone 12, in southwestern South America, is mostly ocean, but it also includes Chile. Likewise, adjacent Zone 13 consists of Argentina, the Falkland Islands and a whole lot of water. It wasn't as easy up north, though, which is why Zone 2 (northern Quebec) is so difficult for so many of us to work.

Lots of WAZ "Flavors"

While making the contacts needed to earn the basic Worked All Zones award (at least one confirmed contact in each of the world's 40 CQ zones) is challenging enough, the desire for even greater challenges has led to the introduction over the decades of nearly a dozen more narrowly-focused WAZ awards, including single-mode [AM, CW, Digital, EME, (Baudot) RTTY, Satellite, SSB, and SSTV (slow-scan TV)]; single-band [160, 80, 40, 30, 20, 17, 15, 12, 10, and 6 meters], and most recently, location technology [Traditional (all contacts made from operator-attended station), Remote (some contacts made using remote station technology), and All-Remote (*all* contacts made using remote station technology)]. Some of the more difficult bands and modes have slightly less stringent requirements for the initial award level. The satellite, EME, and 6-meter awards have an initial threshold of 25 confirmed zones, while the 160-meter award requires 30 zones as a starting point. Endorsements stickers are available as you move toward working and confirming all 40 zones.

5-Band WAZ

The "top of the heap" for WAZ is the 5-Band WAZ award, issued for confirmed contacts on all five of the "traditional"

Help Wanted: CQ Awards Editor and USA-CA Award Manager

We are still looking for candidates interested in filling K1BV's shoes in both of his former roles — Awards Editor and USA-CA Award Manager. One person does not need to wear both hats. Awards Editor candidates should be accomplished "wallpaper" collectors with a passion for discovering and sharing information on operating awards from around the world, have the time to research and write a monthly column, and be able to reasonably express yourself with the written word. The USA-CA Award Manager must hold at least the basic level of the award (preferably All Counties) and must be a dedicated county-hunter who delights in helping to recognize the accomplishments of his/her fellow county aficionados! If you're interested in either role — or both — please contact Editor Rich Moseson, W2VU, at <w2vu@cq-amateur-radio.com>.

HF bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meters. The initial award level for 5-Band WAZ is 150 zones out of 200, with the added requirement of needing to have qualified for a full 40-zone award. There is an endorsement sticker for completing all 200 Zones, with the option of purchasing a plaque once you've confirmed all 200 contacts. As of February 25, 1,009 amateurs had confirmed all 200 zones for 5-Band WAZ.

In previous columns, we have printed the complete rules for each issue's highlighted CQ award. The WAZ rules are too long to print here, so instead, we'll refer you to the WAZ home page at <<https://tinyurl.com/7mlzqhf>>, which includes links to the rules in 10 different languages, plus listings for 5BWAZ holders, those with all 200 zones and "contenders" for 200, as well as standings for the 160-meter (569 awards to date), 6-meter (144), satellite (31), and EME (22) WAZ awards.

WAZ and Logbook of the World

For the past year, ARRL members using the online Logbook of the World (LoTW) system have been permitted to apply LoTW contacts to CQ's WAZ Award (in addition to WPX). For information on how to do this, please visit WAZ Award Manager KC5LK's LoTW page at <http://kc5lk.com/waz_app_proc.html>.

Coming Up...

We will continue our tour of CQ awards next month with WPX, followed by USA-CA, the USA-Counties Award.

what's new

The TW-1 Talking Wattmeter returns to LDG's lineup

LDG has announced the return of the TW-1 Talking Wattmeter to its product lineup. Intended primarily for visually-impaired radio amateurs, this instrument speaks the RF power level and standing wave ratio (SWR) aloud over a self-contained speaker.



On command, this wattmeter speaks the forward or reverse power level in watts, or the SWR. A constant Tone Mode is also available, in which the TW-1 plays a continuous tone whose pitch varies with forward power, reverse power, or SWR. This mode is ideal for manually adjusting a tuner or a vacuum tube transmitter or amplifier. You can watch the plate current meter while listening to the power output. It's also great for mobile operation, allowing the user to tune screwdriver-type antennas while safely watching the road.

The TW-1 handles all power levels up to 2,000 watts, and covers the 160- to 6-meter amateur bands. You can select forward or reverse power, or the SWR. The TW-1 will also allow you to select English, Spanish or German languages. It runs on 12 volts DC at 200 microamps, so providing power in a car, truck, or van is not a problem.

As a thank-you to its loyal customers, the price remains at its original 2005 level of \$150. For this special promotion, the TW-1 is available exclusively from MTC Radio <www.mtcradio.com>.

Like all LDG products, the TW-1 comes with a two-year, fully transferable warranty, and customer support. For more information, contact: LDG Electronics, 1445 Parran Road, St. Leonard, MD 20685. Phone: (410) 586-2177. Email: <support@ldgelectronics.com>. Website: <www.ldgelectronics.com>.

The Family that DXes Together...

This month, I have turned over the keyboard to 14-year-old Faith Hannah Lea, AE4FH, to tell us about her Dry Tortugas activation as N4T with her sister and Dad. Last year at the Orlando Hamcation, I learned about this mini DXpedition being planned for these young YLs and their father. I asked Faith Hannah at that time if she would be willing to write a story about their adventure, and she agreed, although I'm not sure if she fully understood at the time. When we saw her again at Dayton, I reminded her that I was serious, and she and dad both reconfirmed! They originally had planned to go in August, but Faith Hannah got an opportunity to participate in the "Youngsters On The Air" (YOTA) South Africa camp which was being held in August. Faith Hannah, who was accompanied by her dad was the only representative from the USA who attended. (See January CQ, p. 20, and <https://tinyurl.com/yxrjnx5n>.) The Dry Tortugas trip was thereby rescheduled for December.

The Lea family is quite "radio" active! Another sister, Grace, KM4TXT, passed her EXTRA at the Orlando Hamcation in February! Dad (James) is WX4TV and Mom (Michelle) is N8ZQZ. The four children are: Zechariah, WX4TVJ; Hope, KM4IPF; Grace, KM4TXT; and Faith Hannah, AE4FH. With

* Email: <n200@comcast.net>
Email: <info@hamradio.world>

Grace passing the Extra license test, now all four of the children hold Extra Class licenses.

James explained to me last year that he wanted his children to experience what it is like to go on a DXpedition somewhere that required them to be self-reliant, and not dependent on the normal infrastructure (electric, cellphone, etc). Dry Tortugas seemed to fit the bill for an introduction to DXpeditioning for 12-year-old Hope and 14-year-old Faith Hannah. I hope you enjoy their story. —N200

QRZed November Four Tango — A Mini DXpedition to the Dry Tortugas

BY FAITH HANNAH LEA, # AE4FH

In June 2018, Nathan Wood, K4NHW, and Ryan Kovacs, WG4I, went to the Dry Tortugas (a national park some 70 miles off of Key West) to activate it for all the eager grid, lighthouse, and park chasers out there. My sister Hope, KM4IPF; my dad James, WX4TV, and I were invited to join them on their activation. Although we were unable to participate, this didn't stop us and we decided to activate the Dry



Photo A. The TN07 Engineering 20-meter X-Beam and RadioWavz 40-meter double bazooka antennas stand atop the MGS MK4-HD push-up mast with Fort Jefferson in the background. The flag is at half staff in remembrance of President George H. W. Bush. (Photos by James Lea, WX4TV)

Tortugas ourselves as soon as possible. We secured the use of N4T as our callsign and began the process of getting to the island. We had originally planned to activate the small island in mid-August 2018, but plans soon changed to mid-December.

After the permits to operate were taken care of, we had to brainstorm various ways to get all of our equipment to the island and still be within the numerous restrictions the National Park Service had. The biggest one was weight.

The WPX Program

CW

3885 AA4IB 3886 PY2ZW

SSB

4187 K9QJ 4190 IW\$\$ROT
4188 KA7LJQ 4191 K2KJ
4189 K4KSV

Mixed

3792 K9QJ 3796 PY2RKG
3793 T88UW 3797 AA4IB
3794 WK\$\$DX 3798 AJ3DI
3795 DU3GKT

Digital

984 K9QJ 989 AA4IB
985 WA8KNE 990 JK3JXP
986 WK\$\$DX 991 KH2GM
987 K1EJL 992 K2KJ
988 NR50

CW: 450: JQ1CIV. **2200:** W3LL.

SSB: 350 K9QJ, EI5HVO, K4KSV. **500:** W7TLV. **2500:** PA2TMS. **3350:** W3LL.

Mixed: 450: K6PDL, PY2RKG. **550:** W7TLV. **600:** K2KJ. **700:** VE2SYQ, AA4IB. **800:** WKØDX. **850:** IZ1XBB. **1000:** T88UW, JQ1CIV. **1200:** K9QJ. **2500:** PA2TMS, HB9BIN. **2700:** DL3ANK.

Digital: 350: KH2GM, K2KJ. **400:** KE4KMG, WA8KNE. **550:** JJ3DKQ, IZ1XBB. **800:** WKØDX, JQ1CIV. **850:** NR50. **1000:** K9QJ. **1300:** HB9BIN. **2600:** W3LL.

160 Meters: K9QJ

80 Meters: K9QJ, PA2TMS

60 Meters: N8BJQ, DL3ANK

40 Meters: K9QJ, WKØDX, PA2TMS, K2KJ

30 Meters: K9QJ

20 Meters: K9QJ, PA2TMS, AA4IB, W7TLV

17 Meters: DL3ANK

15 Meters: K9QJ, PA2TMS, JF20HQ

12 Meters: N8BJQ

10 Meters: PA2TMS

Asia: K9QJ, WKØDX

Europe: K9QJ, PY2RKG, NR50, K2KJ

Oceania: K9QJ, NR50, W7TLV

North America: K9QJ, WKØDX, K1EJL, PY2RKG, NR50, AA4IB, KH2GM, K2KJ, AJ3DI

South America: K9QJ

60M Bar: N8BJQ, DL3ANK

12M Bar: N8BJQ

Complete rules and application forms may be obtained by sending a business-size, self-addressed, stamped envelope (foreign stations send extra postage for airmail) to "CQ WPX Awards," P.O. Box 355, New Carlisle, OH 45344 USA. Note: WPX will now accept prefixes/calls which have been confirmed by eQSL.cc. and the ARRL Logbook of The World (LoTW).

*Please Note: The price of the 160, 30, 17, 12, 6, and Digital bars for the Award of Excellence are \$6.50 each.

W2IHY Technologies

Outstanding Transmit Audio
Is Our Specialty

8 Band EQ

W2IHY 8 Band EQ & Noise Gate Thousands of Satisfied Users Worldwide



Add the legendary W2IHY 8 Band Equalizer And Noise Gate to your shack and get ready for great audio reports! From smooth rag-chew audio that makes them ask what you're running ... to penetrating DX/Contest audio that gets results, wide-range adjustability is at your command. Noise Gate reduces background noise for a cleaner, more effective signal. Universal Interface lets you use most any microphone with any radio including classics. I-K-Y selector for plug-n-play with popular brand micro-phones. Switched outputs for 2 radios. Headphone Monitor. RFI protection.

EQplus By W2IHY

Premium Audio Processing



Did you turn on an amplifier? Your signal is loud and squeaky-clean. EQplus users hear that report all the time. Compressor/Limiter increases talk power without the distortion and restricted frequency response of ordinary speech processors. Dual Band EQ, Downward Expander for noise reduction, Effects for psychoacoustic magic. LED Bar Graph. Front panel controls. Universal Interface matches most all mics, all radios. I-K-Y mic selector. Switched outputs for 3 radios. Headphone Monitor. RFI protection. Powerful stand alone system or combine with W2IHY 8-Band EQ for maximum adjustability.

Products purchased from W2IHY include 30 Day Money Back Guarantee and 3 Year Parts/Labor Warranty. Top-rated Product Quality, Technical Support and Customer Service.

Awesome Audio
Demonstrations
www.w2ihy.com

845-889-4253
email: julius@w2ihy.com
order online at
www.w2ihy.com

W2IHY Technologies Inc.

19 Vanessa Lane
Staatsburg, NY 12580



W7DXX REMOTE

The world's first internet remote base

ELECRAFT K3 ♦ 1500 W. 2KFA ♦ 11 ELEMENT LP at 4,500'
UNLIMITED DX ♦ MEMBERSHIP \$50/MO. \$200/YR



No Equipment Required,
Just a PC and Internet

Join Us

Visit www.w7dxx.com for details

DX World Guide

New 4th Edition!

By Franz Langner, DJ9ZB

Known throughout the DX and DXpedition world as a meticulous and tireless operator, Franz Langner, DJ9ZB, is also noted as one of the most knowledgeable individuals in Amateur Radio in terms of documenting DXCC entities.

This is the fourth edition of his series of books bearing the title *DX World Guide*. It was first published in Germany in 1988 and followed by a second edition, also in Germany in 1977. The third edition, published in the U.S.A in 2012 was the first to use color throughout. This 380-page, fourth edition, also full color throughout, includes information on well over 300 DX entities.

Whether used as a desk reference for the DXer of any level of proficiency or as a "wish book" for DXers just starting his or her DXCC journey, the new *DX World Guide* is a worthy and pleasant companion!

This 380-page, Fourth Edition is available in paperback and on CD!

6 X 9 Paperback – only \$49.95

Book on CD – only \$34.95

Buy both the Paperback and CD – only \$68.95

Plus applicable shipping and handling charge. Single item shipping charge applies when you purchase both the book and CD together.

CQ Communications, Inc.

17 W. John St., Hicksville, NY 11801 • Phone: 516-681-2926 • FAX 516 681-2926

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

Only 65 pounds of equipment were allowed per person. Most of this weight was taken up by radios, antennas, batteries, and solar equipment. These restrictions, combined with the fact that we were not allowed to tie anything

The WAZ Program

SINGLE BAND WAZ

6 Meter

141DK1FW, 25 Zones

10 Meter SSB

608JG8TDZ

17 Meter CW

124N6UK

20 Meter SSB

1250N7YDX

80 Meter CW

103K1CP

160 Meter

556DK1FW, 30 Zones	562N5ZN, 38 Zones
557OK2ZV, 30 Zones	563SV1FJA, 40 Zones
558RA3XDX, 40 Zones	564RM0F, 36 Zones
559JA5MHD, 39 Zones	565K6XT, 38 Zones
560LA5YJ, 31 Zones	566W8UV, 30 Zones
561RA3S, 30 Zones	

160 Meter Updates

542DL7BA, 36 Zones

ALL BAND WAZ

CW

1003JA2BDR	1008SP3CJS
1004N8IL	1009US1CT
1005AC9EM	1010RC2A
1006MM0EAX	1011W4QK
1007UA10IW	

Digital

50JF3LOP	70SP3RBG
68JA4DNC	71IW3GJF
69MM0EAX	

Mixed

9665K9NU	9673K2RD
96669A1AD	9674LB6GG
9667AC9EM	9675JF7RJM
9668EA4BAS	9676AH6FX/W4
9669SP9RXP	9677DL8FBH
9670JA1GVM	9678UR5EDX
9671R3AQ	9679RM0F
9672KK7YC	

RTTY

293SP6IXU	295LZ3YY
294I4UUL	296MM0EAX

SSB

5434SP3CJS	5436TA6N
5435TA7AZC	

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, John Bergman, KC5LK, 125 Deer Trail, Brandon, MS 39042-9409. 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 John Bergman. Applicants sending QSL cards to a CQ checkpoint or the Award Manager must include return postage. KC5LK may also be reached via e-mail: <kc5lk@cq-amateur-radio.com>.

down to a natural structure (such as trees), created our next challenge — antennas and how to support them. We experimented with several different kinds of antennas and ultimately decided on 40- and 80-meter double bazookas from RadioWavz, 17- and 20-meter Crappie pole antennas (a wire strung up a fishing pole with a few radials), and an X-beam by TN07 Engineering. Since only a few pounds per person were left, we had to find food that would last the trip and not get us over our weight limit. Eventually we found Mountain House freeze-dried food, which is delicious and only takes boiled water. No flammable liquids were allowed on the ferry, and we needed to find a way that didn't take 45 minutes to boil the water. A few weeks before the trip, we found the perfect match — the Kelly Kettle. It was able to boil water in a few minutes with some oak kindling that we got at Lowe's. Finally, having successfully scaled the biggest wall this trip would throw at us, it was time to head south.

We left early Thursday morning with the back of the Suburban loaded to the brim. After traveling for five hours, we made it to the hotel in Key West. Soon after arriving, our long-time friend Val Jacyno, AK4MM, and his wife came to spend some time with us and show us around Key West before we retired to bed for the early morning the next day. While being shown around, we stopped

to get a traditional dessert — key lime pie. However, it was not traditional in how it was served — frozen, on a stick, and dipped in chocolate. Having relished our key lime pie-on-a-stick, we decided to get some sleep. The boat for the Dry Tortugas needed to have all our equipment loaded by 6 a.m., so we needed to get everything down there by about 5:30 a.m. With the bags and passengers loaded, it was time to set sail. After two hours on the boat in some rough seas (and after getting a bit green), we docked at Fort Jefferson (the fort on the Dry Tortugas) and unloaded our gear.

When we got off the boat, the winds were steady at about 30 knots. Because of the high wind and the sky looking like it would pour any minute, the first thing we set up was the tent in order to protect any equipment that could be ruined if it got wet. When we found out where we were supposed to set up the radios (which turned out to be on the other side of the island) the process began. During the planning for the trip, we thought that I would get on 20 meters using the 20-meter Crappie pole antenna while Hope and Dad set up the EZup and other antennas. Because it was so windy, this plan didn't work out. Hope and Dad needed a bit of help setting up the EZup so it wouldn't blow away. Once the shelter was erected, we set up the Crappie pole antenna, transmitter, solar panels,



Photo B. Hope, KM4IPF, logs a contact on 20 meters while Faith Hannah, AE4FH, waits for breakfast to finish cooking.

and Bioenno Power LiFePO4 batteries and I was able to get on the air and call CQ. While Dad and Hope erected the Fiberglass mast, X-Beam, and 40-meter double bazooka antenna (*Photo A*), the answers to my CQs started

flooding in! After having made a couple hundred QSOs on 20, we decided to move to 40. A few hundred QSOs on 40 led into a cold, horizontal rain, so we adjourned for the day. Thankfully, our sleeping tent was warm and dry.



Photo C. Faith Hannah waits for AO-92 to make an ascending pass over the Dry Tortugas while Hope holds the Elk antenna. The team made a few dozen satellite contacts from the island.



Photo D. Faith Hannah and Hope explore Fort Jefferson and discover some stalagmites that have been forming for years.

KJI Electronics 

Serving Amateur Radio Since 1978

Full-line Dealer!

ICOM, KENWOOD, YAESU

Heil, LDG, Comet, Diamond, GAP, Jetstream, Palstar, ARRL, CQ, MFJ, Ameritron, Mirage, Nifty and many more!

KJI Electronics

610 Pompton Avenue
Cedar Grove, NJ 07009
973-571-1930

www.kjielelectronics.com

Air Boss Antenna Launcher

www.kr4loairboss.com

See Video

For when you want your antenna on top  **\$59.95**

boss@kr4loairboss.com


Real Hams Do Code

Learn code with hypnosis today. Download Now!

www.success-is-easy.com

561-302-7731

Success Easy
568 SE Maple Terrace
Port St. Lucie, FL 34983

ELECTRIC RADIO Magazine 

In circulation over 29 years. **ER** is a monthly publication celebrating classic equipment that was the pride of our shacks just a few years ago. Send \$1 for a sample.

Electric Radio Magazine • PO Box 242
Bailey, CO 80421-0242 • 720-924-0171
WWW.ERMAQ.COM

RF Connectors & Adapters

www.W5SWL.com

The next morning, things got a little more ordered. While breakfast was cooking, one person operated (*Photo B*). When the next person was ready, he or she would change seats with the operator and the original operator would then get a break. Every hour or so there was a satellite pass which we would work (*Photo C*). The main satellites we worked were AO-91 and -92. During the day, we mostly stayed on 20, but sometimes we would try 17. When evening came, we switched to 40 to get the most out of grayline propagation. After grayline had finished and we weren't getting any more contacts on 40, we took down the 40-meter double bazooka and put up the 80-meter double bazooka. When we weren't getting any more contacts on 80, we closed up the station and went to bed just in time for another storm.

One full operating day was left before we had to pack up and leave the island. During this day, we operated on several different satellites, making the most

satellite contacts we had on any of the other days. To go along with the satellites, we ran pile-ups on 20 meters for most of the day before switching to 40 as we had done the last two days. After 40 had been exhausted, we changed the antenna to the 80-meter double bazooka and worked 80 for a few hours before having to shut down because of more rain.

Early the next morning, we got up to call CQ on 80 for the last hour we had left before we had to take down the station. Unfortunately, we didn't get very many contacts during this hour, but we did make 1,970 HF contacts over the 36-hour operating time, plus several dozen satellite contacts.

As luck would have it, when it was time to break down the station, the wind picked up. It wasn't as bad as it was when we were setting up, but it was still about 20 knots. Once the antennas and operating equipment were down and in their respective carrying cases, we had

to get everything to the dock before we took down the tent. Thankfully, one of the park volunteers helped us get all the equipment through the half-mile trek to the boat. After everything was at the dock and ready to be loaded when the boat came, we took down the tent. At 10 a.m. the boat came, and we loaded our equipment before getting something to eat (after all that work, who wouldn't want to eat?).

We had about four hours until we had to be on the boat to leave the island, so we decided to take a dip in the beautiful Gulf of Mexico for a while. The staff allowed all the tourists to borrow snorkel gear for the entirety of their visit, so we brought those along to the moat wall around the fort (which is said to be amazing for snorkeling) to see the fish. Most of the fish we saw were stoplight parrotfish, sergeant majors, and various other fish of all sizes and colors (including some barracuda). Everything around the moat wall was beautiful, including the sand.

After snorkeling and enjoying the fish (which seemed to enjoy human company), we explored the fort. It has three levels, the third one being the roof (with lookout posts and old cannons, plus a gorgeous view of the Gulf of Mexico on all sides). The second level has stalactites and stalagmites almost everywhere, some up to about a foot high (*Photo D*). It turns out that all the suspects in the assassination of President Lincoln (as well as the people who were suspected to have helped somehow) were sent to the fort as if it were a prison, which surprisingly enough, it once was.

When it was time to board the boat back to Key West, we decided that because this activation was so much fun, we would try sometime in the next few years to come and activate this little island again. Two hours later, we arrived in Key West and were greeted by a beautiful sunset. When everything was off the boat, Val came to the dock to help us load our equipment into the Suburban. After everything we went through to go on this mini DXpedition, it turned out to be very successful and lots of fun.

I would like to thank everybody who worked us, tried to work us, or just listened to us when we were on the Dry Tortugas. I would like to thank Val and his wife for everything they did for us when we were in Key West. I would also like to thank everybody that helped us get to the island, with special thanks to the South Jersey DX Association for generously offering to print the QSL cards for the trip.

5 Band WAZ

As of February 15, 2019
2115 stations have attained at least the 150 Zone level,
and
1005 stations have attained the 200 Zone level.

As of February 15, 2019
The top contenders for 5 Band WAZ (Zones needed on
80 or other if indicated):
CHANGES shown in **BOLD**

Callsign	Zones	Zones Needed	Callsign	Zones	Zones Needed
AK8A	199	17	W1FZ	199	26
DM5EE	199	1	W2LK	199	23
EA5RM	199	1	W3NO	199	26
EA7GF	199	1	W4LI	199	26
H44MS	199	34	W6DN	199	17
HAØHW	199	1	W9XY	199	22
HA5AGS	199	1	WAØMHJ	199	23
I5REA	199	31	WA2BCK	199	23
IKØFVC	199	1	9A5I	198	1, 16
IKØXBX	199	19 on 10M	EA5BCX	198	27, 39
IK1AOD	199	1	F5NBU	198	19, 31
IK8BQE	199	31	G3KDG	198	1, 12
IZ3ZNR	199	1	G3KMQ	198	1, 27
JA1CMD	199	2	HB9FMN	198	1 on 80&10
JA5IU	199	2	JA1DM	198	2, 40
JA7XBG	199	2	JA3GN	198	2 on 80&40
JH7CFX	199	2	JA7MSQ	198	2 on 80&10
JK1BSM	199	2	JH1EEB	198	2, 33
K1LI	199	24	K2EP	198	23, 24
K2RD	199	18	K2TK	198	23, 24
K4HB	199	26	K3JGJ	198	24, 26
K5TR	199	22	K3LR	198	22, 23
K7UR	199	34	K4JLD	198	18, 24
K9KU	199	22 on 15	K5FUV	198	18, 23
KBØEO	199	23	K5OT	198	18, 23
KZ4V	199	26	K6FG	198	17, 18
N3UN	199	18	KZ2I	198	24, 26
N4NX	199	26	N2QT	198	23, 24
N4VWV	199	26	N4GG	198	18, 24
N4XR	199	27	N8TR	198	18, 23 on 10
N8AA	199	23	UA4LY	198	6 & 2 on 10
RA6AX	199	6 on 10M	UN5J	198	2, 7
RU3DX	199	6	US7MM	198	2, 6
RWØLT	199	2 on 40M	W4UM	198	18, 23
RX4HZ	199	13	W5CWQ	198	17, 18
RZ3EC	199	1 on 40M	W6OUL	198	37, 40
S58Q	199	31	W6TMD	198	34, 40
SM7BIP	199	31	W9RN	198	26, 19 on 40
SP3RBG	199	2 on 10M	WC5N	198	22, 26
VE2TZZ	199	23	WL7E	198	34, 37
VO1FB	199	19	ZL2AL	198	36, 37
W1FJ	199	24			

The following have qualified for the basic 5 Band WAZ Award:

Callsign	5BWAZ #	Date	# Zones
K9NU	2105	2019-01-18	200
9A1AD	2106	2019-01-18	180
RA3XDX	2107	2019-01-21	200
MMØEAX	2108	2019-01-22	198
KK7YC	2109	2019-01-31	177
K2RD	2110	2019-02-02	197
SP3RGB	2111	2019-02-07	199
US1CT	2112	2019-02-10	157
UR5EDX	2113	2019-02-12	200
RMØF	2114	2019-02-12	200
LU8ADX	2115	2019-02-12	187

Updates to the 5BWAZ list of stations:

Callsign	5BWAZ #	Date	# Zones
MMØEAX	2108	2019-01-22	200
DS4DRE	1748	2019-01-28	178
K9RX	2099	2019-01-28	200
K2RD	2110	2019-02-02	199
KE4KMG	2061	2019-02-04	159
VK3GA	2047	2019-02-04	193
HB9IQB	1831	2019-02-06	188
LU2DX	2035	2019-02-10	190
VK3GA	2047	2019-02-13	194
TF4M	1718	2011-03-15	186

New recipients of 5 Band WAZ with all 200 Zones confirmed:

5BWAZ #	Callsign	Date	All 200 #
2105	K9NU	2019-01-18	1000
2107	RA3XDX	2019-01-21	1001
2099	K9RX	2019-01-28	1002
2108	MMØEAX	2019-02-02	1003
2113	UR5EDX	2019-02-12	1004
2114	RMØF	2019-02-12	1005

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, John Bergman, KC5LK, 125 Deer Trail, Brandon, MS 39042-9409. 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 John Bergman. Applicants sending QSL cards to a CQ checkpoint or the Award Manager must include return postage. KC5LK may also be reached via e-mail: <kc5lk@cq-
amateur-radio.com>.

*Please note: Cost of the 5 Band WAZ Plaque is \$100 shipped within the U.S.; \$120 all foreign (sent airmail).

CONTESTING

BY DAVID SIDDALL,* K3ZJ

Radiosport Provides Common Ground for Young and Old

Plus: Italian and Russian international contests in May; IARU Region 1 Youth Contesting Program expands youth teams and big gun stations; Young Amateurs Radio Club initiates first youth contesting program in the U.S. and Canada; senior hams can enjoy contesting, too, at home or at the right retirement community; WRTC2018 movie available on YouTube.

Some of the smaller and regional contests take center stage during April and May, including the ARI International DX and the Russian CQ-M contests in early May. These contests are reprised below. Both will feature youth teams operating from “big gun” stations in Europe.

This is the fourth consecutive year that European youth teams will participate in the Italian ARI International DX Contest on the first weekend in May using the callsign ES9C at ES5TV’s station. The following weekend, another youth team is planning to operate from 9A1A. These youth teams and volunteer contest stations continue to build a strong future for competition in Europe.

For young and old alike, radiosport is an activity in which we all can compete on pretty much a level playing field. We can pit a lifetime of experience against youthful vigor. At WRTC2018 in Germany, some of the “older” teams came

out ahead of some of the younger ones, and vice versa.

This spring, a group of “kids” picked up on the theme, called themselves “Team Exuberance,” and were to go to K3LR’s superstation to learn and maybe to outpace some of the more experienced operators in the March CQWW WPX Phone contest. As noted

last month, the team picked up on the young versus old theme and asked whether it is true that “Old age and treachery will always win over youth and exuberance.” The quote, by the way, is adapted from one penned by David Mamet.

We also look at growth in the European IARU Region 1 Youth Contesting

email: <k3zj@cq-amateur-radio.com>



Photo A. Young Amateurs Radio Club (YARC) logo. YARC, WY4RC, was founded by an online chat room group. It has initiated a youth contesting program (YCP) patterned on that of the IARU Region 1 in Europe.



Photo B. The CQWW SSB crew members at DQ5M (@DM9EE) pose with their host. The station is located at the host’s hotel and restaurant. What more could a group of young contesters want? (Courtesy of DM9EE)

Calendar of Events

All year	CQ DX Marathon	http://bit.ly/vEKMWD
Apr. 1	RSGB 80m Club Championship, CW	http://bit.ly/2RsAJ4a
Apr. 1-7	IQRP Quarterly Marathon	http://bit.ly/2E1msE2
Apr. 3	UKEICC 80m Contests SSB	http://bit.ly/2cv97YF
Apr. 4	NRAU 10m Activity Contest	http://bit.ly/2RTmcel
Apr. 4	SARL 80m QSO Party	http://bit.ly/H0lqQf
Apr. 6	LZ Open 40m Sprint Contest	www.lzopen.com
Apr. 6-7	PODXS 070 Club PSK 31 Flavors Contest	http://bit.ly/2SEsbDg
Apr. 6-7	EA RTTY Contest	http://concursos.ure.es/en/earthy/bases
Apr. 6-7	Mississippi QSO Party	www.arrlmiss.org
Apr. 6-7	Missouri QSO Party	www.w0ma.org/index.php/missouri-qso-party
Apr. 6-7	SP DX Contest	https://spdxcontest-2018.pzk.org.pl/2018/rules.php
Apr. 6-7	Florida State Parks on the Air	http://flspota.org/rules
Apr. 7	RSGB RoLo SSB Contest	http://bit.ly/2EShHhc
Apr. 10	RSGB 80m Club Championship, SSB	http://bit.ly/2RsAJ4a
April 13	QRP Spring QSO Party	www.qrparci.org/contests
Apr. 13-14	New Mexico QSO Party	www.newmexicoqsoparty.org/wp
Apr. 13-14	North Dakota QSO Party	www.kg0yl.net/QSO.html
Apr. 13-14	JIDX CW Contest	www.jidx.org
Apr. 13-14	Georgia QSO Party	http://georgiaqsoparty.org
Apr. 13-14	OK/OM DX Contest, SSB	http://okomdx.crk.cz/index.php?page=englis
Apr. 13-14	Texas State Parks on the Air	www.tspota.org/rules
Apr. 13-14	Yuri Gagarin International DX Contest	http://gc.qst.ru/en/section/32
Apr. 14	ARRL Rookie Roundup, SSB	www.arrl.org/rookie-roundup
Apr. 14	Hungarian Straight Key Contest	http://hskc.ha8kux.com
Apr. 14	International Vintage Contest HF	https://contestvintage.beepworld.it/rules-2012.htm
Apr. 14	WAB 3.5/7/14 MHz Data Modes	http://wab.intermip.net/Contest%20Rules.php
Apr. 19-20	Holyland DX Contest	www.iarc.org/iarc/#HolylandContest
Apr. 20	ES Open HF Championship	http://bit.ly/2BLBNGL
Apr. 20-21	EA-QRP CW Contest	http://bit.ly/2I5SRxs
Apr. 20-21	Michigan QSO Party	www.miqp.org/index.html
Apr. 20-21	Ontario QSO Party	www.va3cco.com/oqp/rules.htm
Apr. 20-21	YU DX Contest	http://yudx.yu1srs.org.rs
Apr. 20-21	CQ Manchester Mineira DX Contest	www.cqmmdx.com/rules
Apr. 20-21	Worked All Provinces of China DX Contest	www.mulandxc.org/582#more-582
Apr. 24	UKEICC 80m Contests CW	http://bit.ly/2cv97YF
Apr. 25	RSGB 80m Club Championship, Data	http://bit.ly/2RsAJ4a
Apr. 27-28	SP DX RTTY Contest	www.pkrvg.org/strona,spdxrttyen.html
Apr. 27-28	10-10 Spring Digital Contest	http://bit.ly/1FrFeBc
Apr. 27-28	Helvetia Contest	http://bit.ly/2IR2L8v
Apr. 27-28	Florida QSO Party	www.floridaqsoparty.org
Apr. 28	BARTG Sprint 75	http://bartg.org.uk/wp/bartg-sprint75-contests-2018
May 1	AGCW QRP/QRP Party	http://bit.ly/1gnVDX0
May 4	FISTS Spring Slow Speed Sprint	http://fistsna.org/operating.html
May 4-5	7th Area QSO Party	http://ws7n.net/7QP/new/Page.asp?content=rules
May 4-5	10-10 Spring CW Contest	http://bit.ly/1FrFeBc
May 4-5	ARI DX Contest	www.ari.it
May 4-5	Delaware QSO Party	www.fsarc.org/qsoparty/rules.htm
May 4-5	Indiana QSO Party	www.hdxcc.org/inqp/index.html
May 4-5	New England QSO Party	www.neqp.org/rules.html
May 11	FISTS Spring Unlimited Sprint	http://fistsna.org/operating.html
May 11-12	Arkansas QSO Party	http://bit.ly/2GiHW1G
May 11-12	CQWW Foxhunting Weekend	www.homingin.com/joek0ov/nfw.html
May 11-12	CQ-M International DX Contest	http://cqm.srr.ru/en-rules
May 11-12	Volta WW RTTY Contest	www.contestvolta.it
May 11-12	Veron SLP Contest	http://swl.veron.nl/Rules_SLP.html
May 13	RSGB 80m Club Championship, SSB	http://bit.ly/2RsAJ4a
May 18-19	His Majesty King of Spain CW Contest	http://concursos.ure.es/en
May 18-19	Baltic Contest	www.lrsf.lt/en
May 18-19	EU PSK DX Contest	www.eupsk.com
May 22	RSGB 80m Club Championship, Data	http://bit.ly/2RsAJ4a
May 25-26	CQWW WPX CW Contest	www.cqwp.com
May 26	QRP ARCI Hoot Owl Sprint	www.qrparci.org/contests
May 30	RSGB 80m Club Championship, CW	http://bit.ly/2RsAJ4a
May 31- June 2	PODXS 070 Club Three Day Weekend Contest	http://bit.ly/2Srdp8A

Program (YCP). Then we describe an attempt to “clone” the YCP in North America by a new youth club, the Young Amateurs Radio Club. This club was founded online in 2017 and already has hundreds of members, with over 900 members participating in the online forum. To conclude, we consider the other end of the age spectrum and what one group of old timers has done to stay in the game.

As noted in earlier columns, competition for team leader positions at WRTC2022 kicked off with the ARRL DX CW and Phone contests in February and early March. Two additional qualifying contests were held later in March, the Russian DX Contest and the CQ World Wide WPX Phone contest. So four eligible competitions are completed and there are 20 in the future. With only the highest 12 eligible scores to be counted for any candidate team leader, there is still time to strategize and compete to win a spot, even if you missed the first six qualifying events completely. Careful picks from the remaining 18 contests and superb operating can still qualify you for a team leader position.

For a little extra incentive for working toward WRTC2022, I suggest viewing the nearly hour-long WRTC2018 movie with English subtitles on YouTube <<https://tinyurl.com/yyq2bqxv>>.

ARI International DX Contest

The Italian Radio Amateur Association (A.R.I.) sponsors this annual free-for-all where everyone works everyone outside their own country for points using all three common contest modes: CW, SSB, and RTTY. The contest starts at 1200 UTC on Saturday, May 4 and continues through 1159 UTC, Sunday, May 5. You may only use the 80-, 40-, 20-, 15-, and 10-meter bands (no 160). Each station may be worked a total of three times on each band, once per mode.

Italian stations send an abbreviation for their province, including IT9 (Sicily) and ISØ (Sardinia). All other stations send consecutive serial numbers. The multiplier is the sum of DXCC countries and Italian provinces worked per band, regardless of mode. There are 110 Italian provinces. Each QSO with an Italian station collects 10 points, a substantial number compared with 1 point for intra-continental QSOs and 3 points for intercontinental QSOs. QSOs within one’s own country do not count for points, but may be worked for the multiplier (only).

Note that as is common with European contests, all competitors can use spotting assistance. There is no

separate category for “non-assisted.” However, one may not spot his/her own station. You can find the complete rules at <<http://tinyurl.com/y2kl7ors>>. The log deadline is five days, which is 2359 UTC on May 10, 2019. Logs must be uploaded, using this link: <<http://tinyurl.com/yxpz5sot>>.

CQ-M International DX Contest

The CQ-M International DX Contest is organized by the Russian association Soyuz Radiolyubiteley Rossii (SRR). The contest starts at 1200 UTC on May 11

and continues through 1159 UTC on May 12. Both CW and SSB are used on the normal HF contest bands (160-80-40-20-15-10 meters). Complete rules in English can be found here <<http://cqm.srr.ru/en-rules>>.

In this competition, multipliers and QSOs are counted only once per band, regardless of mode. For North and South American stations, QSOs with the Russian Federation and with countries on another continent count for 3 points, while QSOs with another country on the same continent count for 2 points. QSOs with stations in one’s own

IN 2017



Our People Worked Thousands of Hours in their Communities for NO PAY and in 2018

96%

of them will do it again without hesitation

Find out why! Contact REACT International at 301-316-2900 or find us on the web at <http://www.reactintl.org> or Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/REACTInternational>



Celebrates FIFTY SIX YEARS of serving our communities this year. Shouldn't YOU be a part of US!

BEHIND THE BYLINES...

Ted Cohen, N4XX (“What’s Up with Solar Cycle 25?” p. 10), is an expert in HF propagation and co-author of CQ’s *The NEW Shortwave Propagation Handbook*. In addition to his extensive writing in the field of propagation, Ted also conducted the “CQ Interviews” series in the 1980s while living in the Washington, DC area. He currently lives in Langhorne, Pennsylvania.

CQ World Wide DX Contest Director **John Dorr, K1AR** (2018 CQWW SSB Results, p. 14), is a former CQ Contesting Editor and long-time member of the CQWW Contest Committee. He also worked as CQ’s marketing director back in the 1990s.

Professor Emil Heisseluft (“New Competition Announced: Sporadic iCloud Contesting,” p. 24) is a distinguished researcher and careful observer of technology and society. His always thought-provoking articles — which have frequently predicted advances in technology — appear in CQ every April.

Jim Talens, N3JT (“Time-Sharing Technology Removes the Tedium of Contesting,” p. 27), is a communications attorney who spent more than two decades at the FCC. He also enjoys CW (he is CW Operators Club member #1) and contesting, which he does not find at all tedious.

“The Light Bulb Antenna” (p. 28), is **David Day, N1DAY**’s second article for CQ. His first, in July 2017, was “Ocean Wave Height as a Variable in Predicting HF Propagation.” Co-author **Ernie Hollingsworth, KC4SIT**, has been a radio hobbyist since the 1960s and a ham since 1990. He enjoys digital modes and held an experimental license for 630 meters before it was opened for general ham use.



Photo C. Pete, N4ZR (left), and Linn, W1LWH (right), getting ready to operate in the ARRL DX CW Contest 60 years after their first team effort. (Courtesy of N4ZR)

country count for 1 point. The country list for multipliers is the Russian P-150-C list, which is found here <<http://tinyurl.com/y3vtkh5o>>. Logs must be submitted within 30 days by email <cqm@srr.ru> or uploaded to <<http://tinyurl.com/y3jvghbw>>.

Youth Contesting Program (YCP) in Europe

IARU’s Region 1 Youth Contesting Program (YCP) in Europe, which we first described in this column in April 2016,¹ has doubled in size over the past year. In addition to last fall’s successful CQWW Phone operation at DM9EE (using DQ5M, see *Photo B*), three new stations have been added to the 2019 contest schedule:

- LX7I for the ARRL phone contest March 2-3 (now past);
- OZ5E for the Islands on the Air (IOTA) contest July 27-28; and
- LZ9W for the Scandinavian Activity Contest (SAC) Phone weekend, October 12-13.

In addition, ES9C (using ES5TV’s station) and 9A1A will return to the contesting airwaves with YCP teams this spring. They will participate in the same contests as in past years. ES9C will be captained by a youth team for the ARI International DX Contest over the weekend of May 4-5. Similarly, 9A1A will host a YCP group for the CQ-M DX Contest on May 11-12. Why not get on the air and work the youngsters?

New U.S. Youth Contesting Initiative

A ham radio youth club based in North America has initiated its own YCP patterned on the YCP administered by IARU Region 1.

The Young Amateurs Radio Club (YARC) is an international ham radio youth group that originated online from a post on Reddit, a social media site. The club focuses on promoting amateur radio among youth worldwide. It manages the 900+ member online chat group known as the Young Hams Discord server for young people interested in radio, sponsors contests and QSO parties with a focus on youth participation, and authorizes activations of the YARC club station callsign WY4RC. Perhaps best of all, it is an online community with free membership. I checked as I wrote this, and found 160 members reported to be online at that moment. That’s a pretty large group.

DITS and DAHS

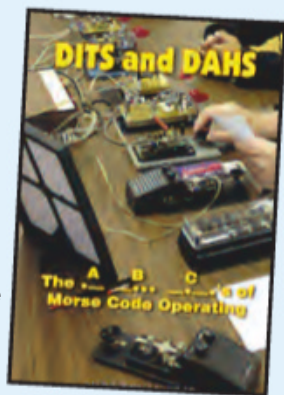
The **A B C**’s of Morse Code Operating

BY ED TOBIAS, KR3E

This small but solid guide is the perfect read for those interested in learning or improving CW operating techniques!

Within its pages you’ll find:

- The secret of becoming a proficient CW Operator
- Where and how to practice, practice, practice.
- Straight Key or Paddle?
- Adjusting your Straight Key or Paddle
- Keyers, Iambic Keying and Bugs
- Contests & Events, DXing
- Operating QSK
- CW Filters
- Signs, Signals and Procedures
- Tips on Taking CW On the Road . . . and much, much more!



6 X 9 Paperback

Only \$15.95

Shipping & Handling: U.S. & Possessions \$3; CN/MX \$5; All Other Countries \$10.00

Order your copy today!

CQ Communications, Inc. 17 West John St.,
Hicksville, NY 11801

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



Photo D. Dick Wilder, K3DI (SK) at the K3CCR station at the Collington Retirement Community in suburban Washington, DC. (Courtesy of Collington Retirement Community)

The club and chat group originated in October 2017, when now-YARC President David, KF1SHY, (which is a vanity call) submitted a post titled “Discord for Young Hams” <<https://tinyurl.com/yy68rjc8>> to the Amateur Radio subreddit <www.reddit.com/r/amateurradio>. David noted that there is a lack of a strong, active youth community in amateur radio. The server exploded with nearly 100 members within its first week and the YARC subsequently was formed. Today there are 900-plus users in the online forum from all over the world.

In February 2019, YARC announced that it has formed the Youth Contesting Program (YCP), which it modeled on the YCP in Europe. It is intended to be a weekend program throughout the U.S. and Canada for groups of up to four young amateur radio operators interested in contests. The idea is to meet at a nearby-as-possible volunteer station, preferably within a 5-hour or shorter drive. YARC acknowledges that its YCP is inspired by the efforts of the original YCP in Europe, as well as by “Team Exuberance” discussed in last December’s column².

The first event was scheduled to be the 2019 CQ World Wide WPX Phone Contest on March 30-31, 2019. This is the same weekend that “Team Exuberance” plans to be active from K3LR’s superstation for the contest.

Additional weekend contests are likely to be added later. It is, as they say, a work in progress. If you have a contest-grade station that you are willing to share with some youngsters during a contest weekend, check the YARC website <<https://yarc.world/ycp>> for current information.

Contest Fun Isn’t Just for the Youngsters

Friendships made among ham radio contesters frequently endure for a life-

time. Unlike most other sports, radio sport seniors participate on the same basis as youngsters, and even beat them sometimes. One example that I noted in an article published in CQ last September³ was in the highly competitive and demanding WRTC environment. A 77-year-old retiree qualified and competed at WRTC2018 on the same playing field as a 14-year-old student. The team with the oldest member placed higher than many of the younger teams, including the team with the youngest competitor.

So even as youth teams and young individuals enter the fray in more and more contests, it’s worthwhile to remember that the rest of us can do so too, and have fun while at it. Whether contesting with old friends or new, competing in one of the multi-operator categories can be lots of fun and perhaps better-suited to health and age.

I was reminded of this recently when I read a note from Pete, N4ZR. Pete explained that he and Linn, W1LWH, last operated together during the 1959 ARRL DX CW Contest when they were in high school. The two decided to do it again for the 60th anniversary of the original operation. They operated together from Pete’s modest station in Maryland this past February, entering the multi-one class in this year’s ARRL DX CW weekend (Photo C).

Another note directed my attention to K3CCR. Some senior hams have succeeded in establishing ham stations in retirement communities. Even contest stations. Most notable and consistent are the many contest scores submitted by active contesters retirees at K3CCR, which is the Collington Community Radio Club located at the Collington Retirement Community in Mitchellville, Maryland (a suburb of Washington, DC). Collington is a continuing-care retirement community where W3GB,

N3UM, K3DI (SK), N3ADY, and KB3US founded a club and convinced management to allow a tower so that they could participate in emergency preparedness, other ham activities ... and contests (Photo D).

You can expect to hear K3CCR again this year in the CQ World Wide WPX contests, both phone and CW, with mainstays W3GB and N3UM at the controls. They will join the youth teams on the air, and all of us at various points along the road from youth to senior+. Grant, W3GB, wrote an excellent article about establishing the Collington club. It was published in the January 2013 issue of QST, pages 70-72. There also is a video on YouTube <<http://tinyurl.com/y6bdhzxx>> in which Grant is interviewed about the club when the club was in its early stages.

– Until next month, 73, Dave, K3ZJ

Notes:

1. CQ Magazine, vol. 72, No. 4: Contesting at p. 85 (April 2016)
2. CQ Magazine, vol. 74, No. 12: Contesting at p. 101 (December 2018)
3. CQ Magazine, vol. 74, No. 9: A Competition to Top all Contests: Six Days in Wittenberg, Germany at pp. 10-17 (September 2018)

Oops...

- We accidentally transposed two characters in Frank Krozel’s callsign in the February issue (“QRP on the Cruise of a Lifetime”). Frank’s call is KG9H, not K9GH. Sorry about that, Frank.

- And in January’s “Zero Bias” editorial, we forgot to fill in the page number for KL7AJ’s “Tickled” article. In case you still can’t find it, look on page 34.

- In our December news story on the death of professional tower climber Ken Waddell during the installation of a new tower for a ham in Cookeville, Tennessee, we reported that the accident occurred at the home of Dale Darling, W9WBA. We have been informed that the incident actually occurred at the home of Cookeville amateur Gordon “Skip” Morris, K5FC. W9WBA lives in nearby Crossville, Tennessee. We regret the error. – Tnx. W5KUB

PROPAGATION

BY TOMAS HOOD,* NW7US

Random Joy and Planned Success

A Quick Look at Current Cycle 24 Conditions

(Data rounded to nearest whole number)

Sunspots:

Observed Monthly, January 2019: 5
12-month smoothed, July 2018: 4

10.7-cm Flux:

Observed Monthly, January 2019: 72
12-month smoothed, July 2018: 70

A_p Index:

Observed Monthly, January 2019: 6
12-month smoothed, July 2018: 7

One Year Ago: A Quick Look at Solar Cycle Conditions

(Data rounded to nearest whole number)

Sunspots:

Observed Monthly, January 2018: 4
12-month smoothed, July 2017: 13

10.7-cm Flux:

Observed Monthly, January 2018: 70
12-month smoothed, July 2017: 77

A_p Index:

Observed Monthly, January 2018: 6
12-month smoothed, July 2017: 11

Have you heard fellow radio hobbyists express, “I don’t really need to know what the Sun is doing, I just get on the air and try my luck at catching some DX,” or, “I like the thrill of the hunt; get on the radio, tune around, and just see what I can catch,” or other comments that convey the idea that exploring the science of propagation is a waste of time, or perhaps even anti-sportsmanship-like?

I admit: I, too, have fully enjoyed the sheer joy of randomly picking a range of frequencies and patiently tuning around to find new and exotic signals. What a pleasure to discover a radio broadcast from South Africa, or hear a DX pile-up between North and South America and the rare European running his 1-kilowatt, studio-quality signal into his five-over-five (that’s three separate five-element beam antennas, one above the other, phased together for maximum signal power) on a day when barely any other signal can be heard.

I once had just such a memorable experience that was totally unexpected. I awoke one morning, just after the early sun began warming up the eastern Montana springtime air. I had this strange draw to stop in at my little radio room, sat down, fired up the Kenwood transceiver, and decided to check out the CW-only segment of 15 meters. As the three tubes warmed up, I tuned from one band-edge to the other and heard nothing but a steady hiss. It seemed that the band was dead. I figured that if you heard nothing, from band edge to band edge, then signals were being lost in space. I was sure, given the high number of amateurs around the entire world, that someone, somewhere, was on 15 meters having a conversation, or at least calling CQ.

After I waited about 10 minutes for the transmitting tubes to fully warm up and settle in, I decided to just try sending a nice seven-words-per-minute CW call for any station. I got comfortable in my chair, adjusted my WWII Navy signaling key (one used for signal lamps from ship to ship, and not originally for radio), and started tapping out the standard, “CQ CQ CQ” with my callsign. I sent my CQ call several times. And then, I waited.

* P.O. Box 29553
Lincoln, NE 68529
Email: <nw7us@nw7us.us>
@NW7US
@hfradiospacewx

I did not have to wait long. Within seconds, a steady, rather strong signal came out of the speakers. So strong, in fact, that I quickly thought it was a call from nearby neighbors who are also hams. But the answering callsign had a JA prefix, from Japan.

The QSO lasted well over a half-hour and was quite pleasurable. Eventually the fine gentleman, in his 7th decade, sent me a picture of himself, his station, and a QSL card (Figure 1).

This whole experience was unplanned, and certainly a surprise since I heard no one else before or after that, for a few

LAST-MINUTE FORECAST

Day-to-Day Conditions Expected for March 2019

Propagation Index	Expected Signal Quality			
	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
Above Normal: 3, 11-13, 15-16, 18, 20-22, 30	A	A	B	C
High Normal: 1, 6, 8, 14, 19, 27-28	A	B	C	C-D
Low Normal: 2, 4-5, 7, 10, 17, 26, 29	B	C-B	C-D	D-E
Below Normal: 9, 23	C	C-D	D-E	E
Disturbed: 24, 25	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 in “The New Shortwave Propagation Handbook” by George Jacobs, Theodore J. Cohen, and R. B. Rose.

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 on a given signal path between two stations as shown in the Propagation Charts with a Propagation Index of 2 will be fair on April 1, poor to fair on April 2, good on April 3, and so forth.

Alternatively, you may use the Last-Minute Forecast as a general guide to space weather and geomagnetic conditions throughout the month. When conditions are Above Normal, for example, the geomagnetic field should be quiet, and space weather should be mild. On the other hand, days marked as Disturbed will be riddled with geomagnetic storms. Propagation of radio signals in the HF spectrum will be affected by these geomagnetic conditions. In general, when conditions are High Normal to Above Normal, signals will be more reliable on a given path, when the ionosphere supports the path that is in consideration. This chart is updated daily at <<http://SunSpotWatch.com>> provided by NW7US.



Figure 1. The picture of JA1KFN (SK) at his radio shack, and the QSL card received by your columnist after making an unexpected CW QSO on a quiet morning on the 15-meter band (see text). (Photo by NW7US)

hours, anywhere on that band. This was a testament to the fact that I did not need to know any propagation science to have a very exciting radio experience.

That's not unlike going fishing on a warm, lazy summer day. Hike up to a favorite fishing spot, sit down on a large sun-warmed rock, and drink in the sounds and sights of nature while waiting for a bite on your bait.

It might be fun to just "try your luck" and muck about fishing, enjoying the outdoors. However, if you have a limited budget of time and resources, and want to maximize your experience (and maybe bring home dinner), you might want to know when and where to fish. It is considered good sportsmanship to acquire the type of equipment that helps sports enthusiasts maximize their investment in time, energy, and expense.

Wouldn't it then make sense that the radio hobbyist might want to build better antennas, study space weather, and apply the tools of propagation forecasting, and hone operating skills?

Sure.

That is why, each month, my column explores space weather and radio signal propagation, with forecasts as well as observations.

The Challenge

The technical challenge of radio communication is getting our signal from point A to point B. With shortwave (high-frequency, or, HF) radio transmissions, we hope the signal from

our transmitter will be heard by a ham in some far off (DX) location.

Many factors come into play once that signal leaves our antenna system, and there are conditions that influence the distant station's ability to "hear" our signal, such as local noise (generated by automobile engines, plasma TVs, electric motors) and weather-related noise. Beyond that, weather (both terrestrial and space) influences propagation. With so many factors playing a role in radio communications, the question is asked, "When is the best time to try and make a radio contact with that DX station?"

Noise

Local noise interference is one of the most obvious challenges in all radio reception. With some effort, we can usually eliminate the offending culprits. But even after dealing with local noise problems, there are two primary sources of noise not made by our own devices: Atmospheric and cosmic noise. Cosmic noise, which originates from points outside of the Earth's atmosphere, doesn't contribute much to the problem of radio signal reception. Atmospheric noise, however, has a significant impact on the reception of radio signals.

As we begin our look at atmospheric noise, it is most useful to look at the problem as an issue of effectiveness. Often, when people talk about radio reception, signal strength is touted as the most useful factor in broadcasting radio signals. However, since the problem of reception is more complex than a simple power issue — just pump more watts into the antenna — the better way to get a handle on the problem is to use the signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) measurement of a circuit (the path between, and including, the transmitter and receiver). The SNR is a genuine measure of effectiveness. With it, we can better understand how effectively a signal can get from point A to point B.

Look at the four sample radio circuit analysis graphs in Figure 2 (graphs a, b, c, and d). These are all modeled with isotropic antennas on both ends of the radio circuit, and the transmitter is running 100 watts. Each graph shows the signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) in decibels (dB) on each of the standard amateur radio HF bands, at 2000 UTC for February, between Washington State and Alaska. Figure 2a models the circuit with a manmade noise level of "remote" at the receiver (164 -dBW-Hz, for 1 Hz bandwidth at 3 MHz). Note that "propagation" is possible on several bands. The green color for a frequency band indicates that the circuit reliability is at least 80%. This means that for 80% of the month, statistically speaking, the signal will be reliably received on this circuit.

Increase the manmade noise by 10 dB, and we see a slight degradation on the bands, but the same bands are mostly usable, as charted in Figure 2b. Increase noise by another 10 dB, however, and you can note a significant degradation in circuit quality on most bands, as shown in Figure 2c. Finally, increasing the noise level a full 24 dB over the remote level as shown in Figure 2a, you can see in Figure 2d severely limited circuit usefulness on any band.

This means that with all parameters except noise staying the same (power, antenna, solar activity, azimuth, time-of-day), manmade noise makes a huge difference in the quality of a circuit. Be careful not to generalize from that finding, though, as different circuits and different seasons would yield different data. The other source of noise also plays the same way in a circuit's usefulness.

All atmospheric noise is created by weather. More specifically, this noise comes from lightning flashes, with most of the noise caused by cloud-to-ground flashes because the

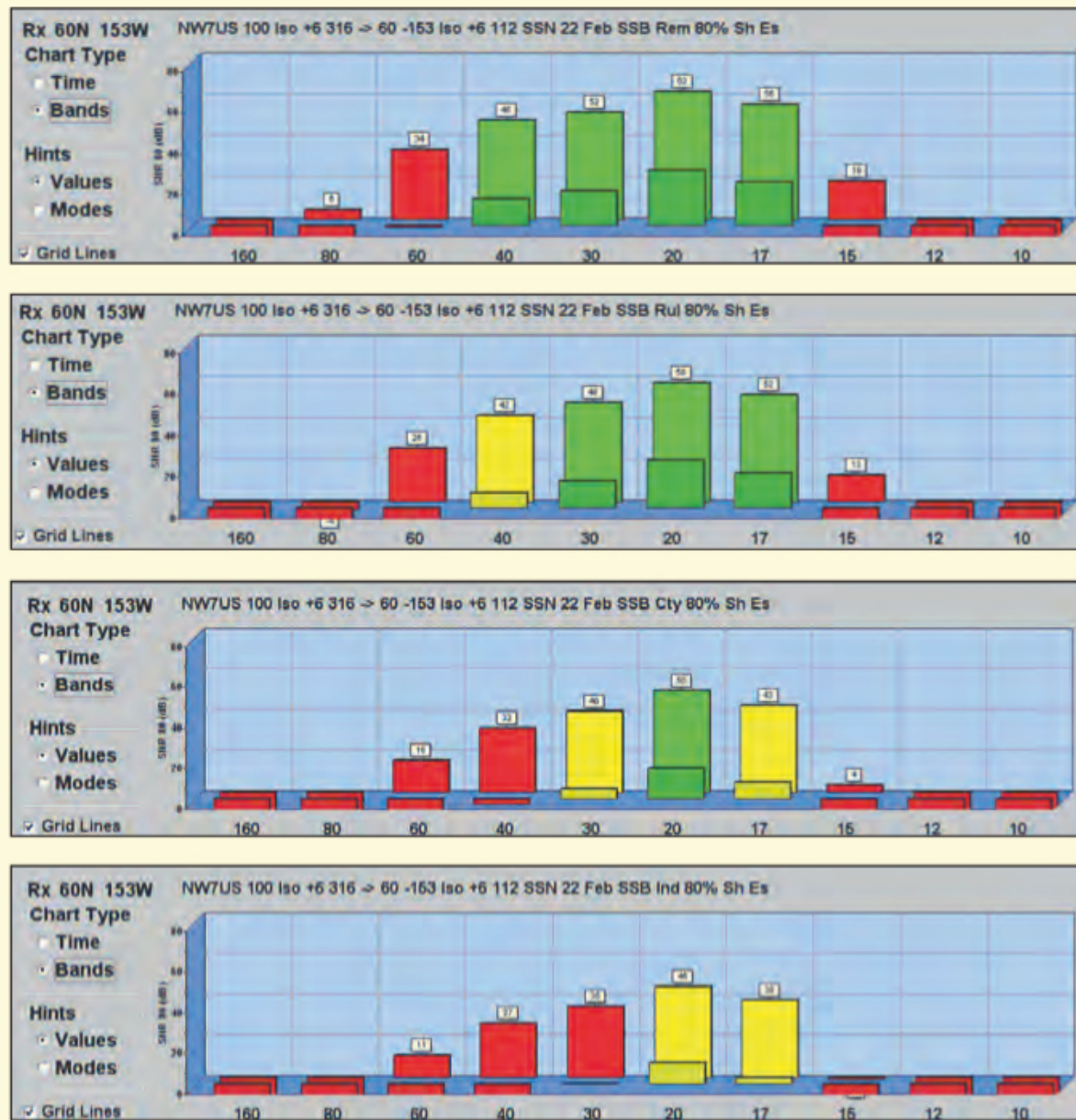


Figure 2. Four sample radio circuit analysis graphs, each modeled with isotropic antennas on both ends of the radio circuit, and with the transmitter running 100 watts. Each graph (a, b, c, and d) shows the signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) in dB, on each of the standard amateur radio HF bands, at 2000 UT, for February, between Washington state and Alaska. Clearly, noise makes a difference (see text). (Courtesy of NW7US, using the ACE-HF PPro software <www.longwaveinc.com/ace>)

currents in those strokes are much stronger than cloud-to-cloud flashes. However, some energy from horizontal flashes gets converted into vertically-polarized energy and adds to the total at the ground receiver. Horizontally-polarized energy doesn't propagate well to the surface, but is an important factor with airborne radio reception, such as used in trans-oceanic flights.

Worldwide, more than eight million lightning flashes occur daily (just the day before this column was penned, we had winter thundersnow! <<https://g.nw7us.us/2IduVlk>>). That's roughly 100 lightning flashes per second. If your receiver is very far away from the storm center, you'll only experience what is sometimes called "white noise." Atmospheric noise is impulsive, though, and is not evenly distributed as is true white noise. White noise, when viewed on a 'scope is pretty well evenly distrib-

uted, much like cosmic "background" noise. A Gaussian distribution of most parameters usually follows a "normal" (or Gaussian) probability curve — often called a bell-shaped curve. But Impulsive noise is just that — impulsive. If you view it on a 'scope, it looks like short-lived pulses rising out of an even bed of background noise.

Atmospheric noise, then, is the combination of many, many lightning flashes. Radio scientists model each thunderstorm center as a radio transmitter, usually called an "Equivalent Noise Transmitter" or ENT. Such energies then propagate around the world, just like shortwave transmissions. At a receiver we can then add up all those energies propagated from worldwide storm centers. We find that the amount of that power-sum varies with seasons and with the proximity of the major storm centers.

Starting in the 1960s and continuing through the 1980s, a worldwide effort was made to measure all of this. The result was the CCIR 322 publication <<https://g.nw7us.us/2IbhlcR>>. Now in its third edition, a reader of the publication will quickly note that frequency plays a great part in HF communication from a noise standpoint. Lightning creates a broad-spectrum emission, but in the HF range, it is frequency-dependent, with noise power decreasing as frequency increases. In VLF work, atmospheric noise dominates nearly completely (assuming an electromagnetic interference-clean local environment and EMI-clean radio components). At HF, however, manmade noise is a large part of the total energy in the high bands.

When the question is asked, "When will good propagation occur?" the reader should look at more factors than just concentrating on the space-weather disturbed environment. The other factors that affect propagation are radio circuit path length and orientation, frequency, diurnal effects, as well as the transmitter power, antenna gain, and the parameters of the receiving station. Space weather and geophysical (weather, geomagnetic field, location) factors are not changeable by the average radio hobbyist. The rest of these factors are the parts you can control.

The principal effect is always propagation itself, which is the result of ionospheric profiles that vary over the world as the day-night terminator sweeps through — and that cannot be controlled by the radio operator. One might start by running propagation analysis tools like <www.voacap.com/hf> to see how different the ionosphere is between steady-state daytime and nighttime, and how that affects reception on simple circuits. You might not need the power of a computer propagation tool to see what happens in cases where the radio circuit exists completely in either a day or night ambient environment. But when the circuit crosses the terminator and part is in day and part in night, the problem gets harder, and using computer modeling to sort out all the variables is about the only practical solution.

We have just begun to explore "when good propagation will occur." And we haven't touched on the disturbed environment. What then about A and K indices, solar flux, solar flares, geomagnetic fields, and so on? I suggest that to emphasize those factors alone is a mistake, because propagation analysis and prediction software that use the Voice of America VOACAP engine (which is keyed to the CCIR data) <www.greg-hand.com/hfwin32.html> have built-in

compensations for such factors. This is where statistics comes in.

The reason is that VOACAP was calibrated through measurements made during a wide range of environmental conditions, so that the resulting SNR distributions implicitly include the effects of a range of disturbed conditions. The range of environmental effects is built into the model, and shows up in the statistical factors. Since VOACAP was validated through so many years of testing, and is generally acknowledged to be the “gold standard” of propagation models, it’s a relief to know how easy it is to use with confidence. From a radio hobbyist standpoint, it is much easier to use tools based on VOACAP than other models where such factors must be laboriously worked out and input.

In upcoming issues, we’ll explore how to use these tools to begin unlocking the science of radio propagation at HF. More than ever before, any radio hobbyist can begin to make sense of all these factors that play a role in radio communications on HF.

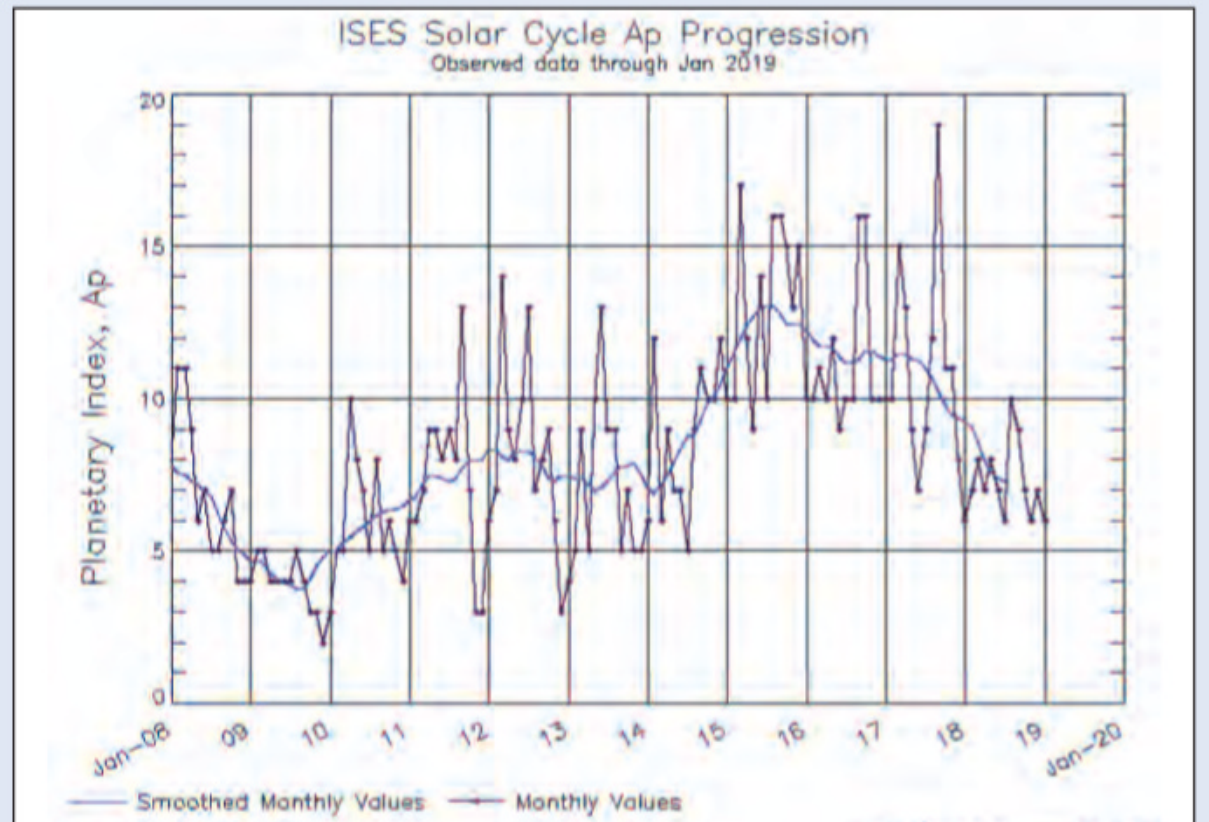
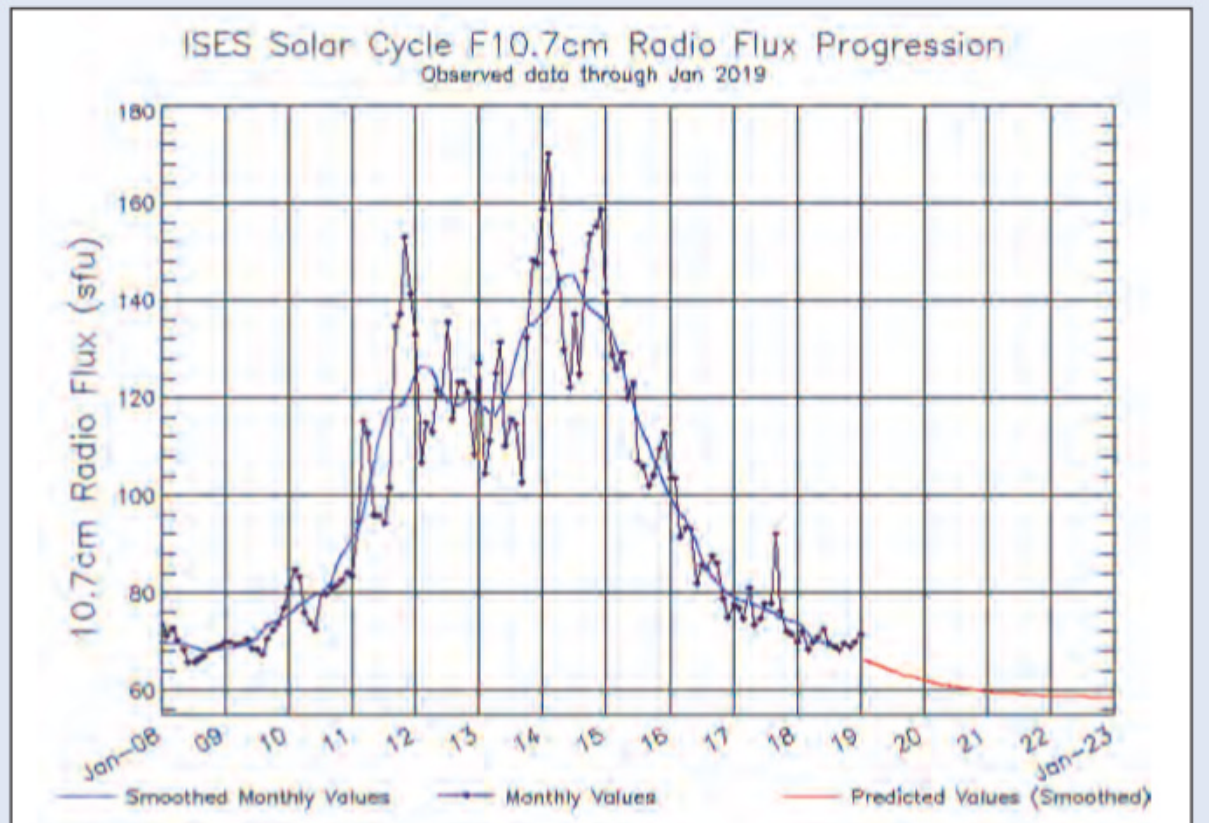
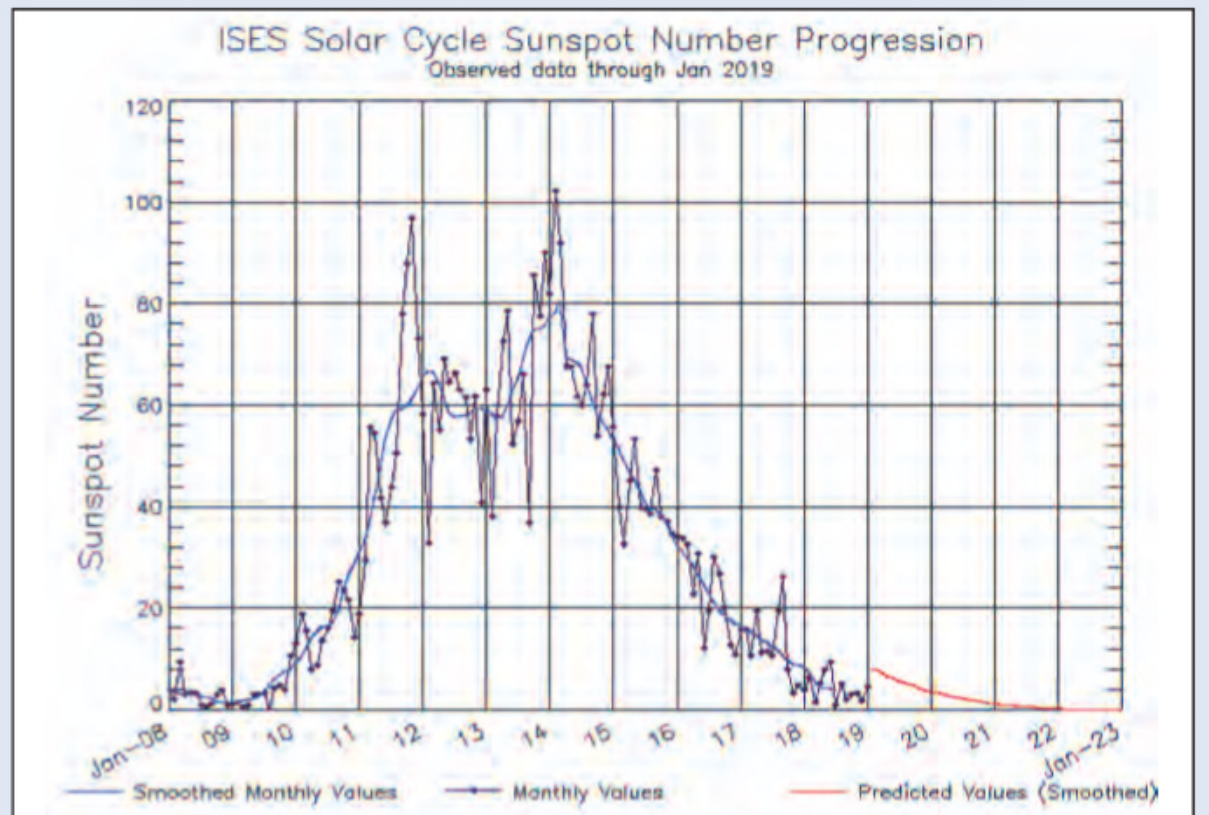
What to Expect During April

It has been observed by some readers of this column that the forecast for any given month one year does not appear much different from the year before. This observation is accurate because space weather and propagation conditions have not changed that much from year to year over the last few years. This is a result of the very quiet sunspot activity we’ve witnessed at the end of the current sunspot cycle, Cycle 24. Consider: When you have weeks of constant rain, the weather forecaster only can come up with unique ways to say, “Tomorrow’s forecast calls for rain.”

With that in mind, what can we expect for April this year? The lowest HF bands become less useful because of increasing seasonal noise, while higher bands close down due to changes in the ionosphere. This forces more activity to focus on the middle of the spectrum; daytime bands will be 15, 17, 20, and 30 meters. The night bands will be 40 and 30 meters.

Ten- and 15-meter propagation suffers during April and the summer

Figure 3. Sunspot Cycle 24 progression charts from February 2019. As can be seen, the ending of Cycle 24 is upon us. We are right at the edge of solar cycle minimum between current Cycle 24 and the new Cycle 25. (Courtesy of SWPC/NOAA)



months due to lower MUFs (Maximum Usable Frequencies) in the Northern Hemisphere. MUFs peak very late in the day during summer. Summertime MUFs are lower due to solar heating, which cause the ionosphere to expand. An expanded ionosphere produces lower ion density, which results in lower MUFs. Short path propagation between countries in the Northern Hemisphere will drop out entirely. Ten-meter propagation peaks in the autumn. April and May are autumnal months in the Southern Hemisphere making long-path DX possible. Short-path propagation to South America, South Pacific, and other areas south of the equator will be strong and reliable when open. But, with the decline of the current solar cycle, solar activity is not supporting the higher HF band propagation, so don't expect a lot from 10, 12, and 15 meters.

From April to June, fair to good propagation occurs on both daytime and nighttime paths on the middle HF bands. The strongest propagation occurs on paths that span areas of both day and night, following the MUF. During April, peaking in May, and still during June, the 17- and 20-meter bands may offer occasional 24-hour DX to all parts of the world. If you hear a lot of echo on a signal, you might be beamed in the wrong direction. Try the opposite azimuth. Twenty meters is more stable as a nighttime band, with propagation following gray-line and nighttime paths.

Low-band propagation is still hot on 40 meters, with Europe in the evening and Asia in the mornings. Occasional DX openings will occur on 80 meters around sunrise. However, these bands are quickly being degraded by the seasonal increase in noise.

VHF Conditions

The Lyrids, a major meteor shower, should take place April 16-28. Expect it to peak during the night of April 21-22, 2019. The unpredictability of the shower in any given year always makes the Lyrids worth watching, since we cannot say when the next unusual return may occur. If this year's event is average or better (up to 80 good-sized meteors entering the atmosphere every hour), this should make possible meteor-scatter type openings. However, some predict only a peak of 18 per hour this year.

Widespread auroral displays can occur during April, bringing with them unusual ionospheric short-skip openings on the VHF bands. The best times for these to occur are during periods of radio storminess on the HF bands. Look for days with high planetary K (K_p) and A (A_p) figures, when a coronal hole may be present, emitting high-speed solar wind that in turn could increase geomagnetic activity (watch a typical coronal hole as it rotates across the Earth-facing solar disc from October 31 to November 2, 2018: <<https://tinyurl.com/y637x6bw>>).

If you use Twitter.com, you can follow @hfradiospacewx for hourly updates that include the K index numbers. You can also check the numbers at <<http://sunspotwatch.com>>, where this columnist provides a wealth of current space weather details as well as links. Please report your observations of any notable propagation conditions, by writing this columnist via Twitter, or via the Space Weather and Radio Propagation Facebook page at <<https://fb.me/spacewx.hfradio>>.

Current Solar Cycle Progress

The Royal Observatory of Belgium reports that the monthly mean observed sunspot number for January 2019 is 4.7, a good upward bump from December's 1.9. The lowest daily sunspot value of 0 (zero) was recorded on January 6-20, and

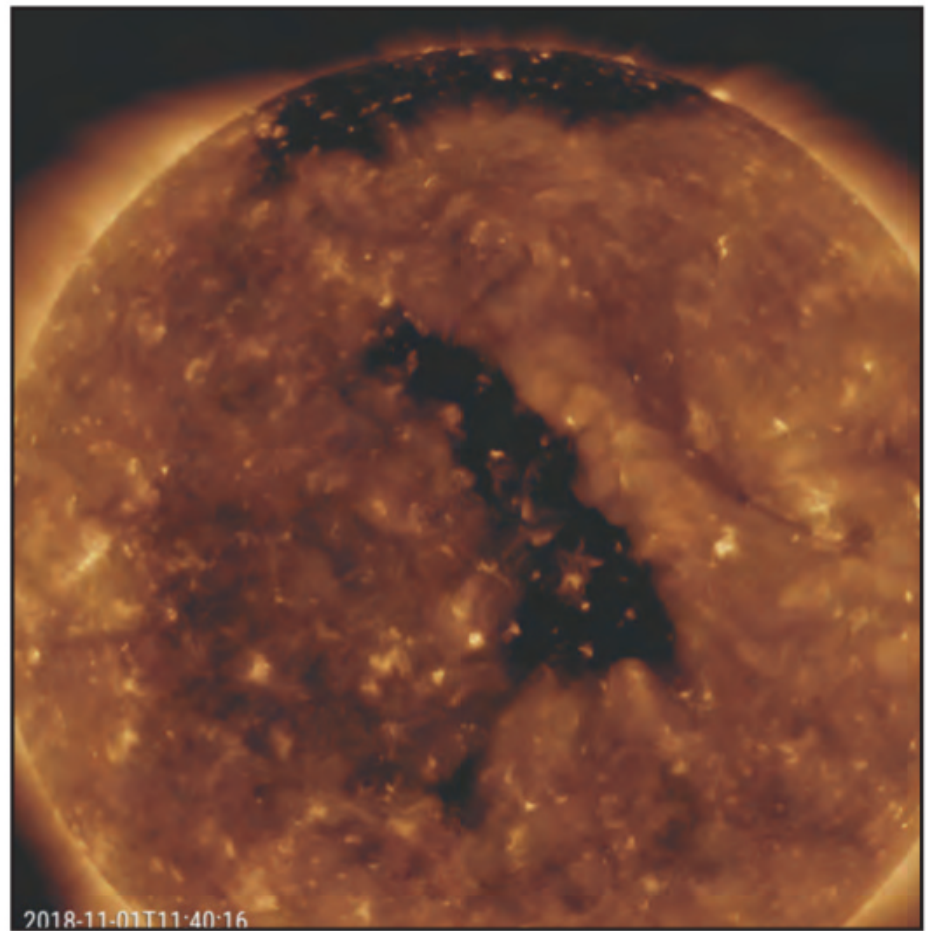


Figure 4. The darker area at the center on the Earth-facing solar disc is a coronal hole — an area of weaker magnetic structure — from which faster solar wind is ejected out toward the Earth. If these particles impact Earth's magnetosphere, they will likely generate aurora near the Earth's polar regions. Watch this coronal hole as it rotates across the Earth-facing solar disc from October 31 to November 2, 2018: <www.youtube.com/watch?v=EahbCshadzY>. (Courtesy of NASA/SDO)

January 31 — a total of 16 days with zero sunspots. The highest value of 26 was recorded on January 26. The 12-month running smoothed sunspot number centered on July 2018 is 4.3. A smoothed sunspot count of 6, give or take about 6 points is expected for April 2019.

The Dominion Radio Astrophysical Observatory at Penticton, BC, Canada, reports a 10.7-cm observed monthly mean solar flux of 71.6 for January 2019. The 12-month smoothed 10.7-cm flux centered on July 2018 is 70.0. The predicted smoothed 10.7-cm solar flux for April 2019 is 64, give or take about 9 points.

The observed monthly mean planetary A-Index (A_p) for January 2019 is 6. The 12-month smoothed A_p index centered on July 2018 is 7.3.

Geomagnetic activity this month should be mostly quiet with fair to good propagation conditions, except for those days indicated in the Last-Minute Forecast during which we expect degraded propagation (remember that you can get an up-to-the-day Last-Minute Forecast at <<http://SunSpotWatch.com>> on the main page).

I welcome your thoughts, questions, and experiences regarding this fascinating science of propagation. You may email me, write me a letter, or catch me on the HF amateur bands. If you are on Facebook, check out <www.facebook.com/spacewx.hfradio> and <www.facebook.com/NW7US> — speaking of Facebook — check out the CQ Amateur Radio Magazine fan page at <www.facebook.com/CQMag>.

– 73, Tomas, NW7US

Table with multiple columns containing alphanumeric codes (e.g., *W6ZL, *N6ORB), numerical values, and district labels (e.g., District 7, District 8, District 9, District 14A, District 7A, District 0). The table is organized into several vertical sections.

Table with columns for Country, Call Sign, Power (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z), and other numerical values. It lists amateur radio call signs and their corresponding power classes for various countries including Indonesia, Samoa, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Curacao, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela, and QRP. The table is organized into sections for each country, with call signs listed on the left and power/numerical values on the right.

Table with columns for country/region, call sign, and numerical values. Includes sections for Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Estonia, European Russia, Greece, Guernsey, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Isle of Man, Italy, Kaliningrad, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Moldova, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sardinia, Scotland, Serbia, Sicily, Slovakia Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, Ukraine, and various Districts.

OUR READERS SAY...

The Most Wanted Countries...

Editor, CQ:

Excellent informative article (February DX column, "The Most-Wanted Countries ... and Why"). Thanks!

Of the 4 DXCC entities I need, I had a good idea of what needs to happen for me to have a chance to work three of them — North Korea, Bouvet Island, and Mount Athos. But until I read your article I had not been able to find out much about Pratas Island.

– 73, Marsh, KA5M

The following letter was directed to author Ted Cohen, N4XX:

Hi Ted,

Just received our January CQ magazine and read your article, "A Coaxial Inverted-L Antenna for Top Band Revisited," and enjoyed it very much. This looks like it could be the answer to a prayer!

I have an inverted L hanging off a 56-foot tower at the 50-foot level. Given the much shorter vertical leg, we have a much lower feedpoint impedance. So I use a 1:2 transformer to match it. It seems to work very well, but I'm only seeing about 55 kHz of usable bandwidth. Your coaxial antenna looks like it could be just what I'm looking for! It looks very straightforward, except I have one question (which results from my lack of mechanical skills). Where you solder the shield and inner conductor together, is there a method to do this without cutting the coax in two pieces and then soldering them back together again? My concern is that I might make something mechanically unreliable. HELP! :-)

Thanks in advance for any help.

– 73, Bob Schreibaier, K3PH

N4XX replies:

Hi, Bob!

How kind of you to write. And yes, it's the answer to a prayer! This is a killer antenna, to be sure. I couldn't believe the difference it made in my operations, from the very first second I hooked the coax connector to my transceiver. Signals just boomed in! And on the transmit side, well ... you read the article.

What I did at the upper end was to slit and open the outer insulation a bit, spread the outer shield, scrape open the tubular insulating layer around the inner conductor, and wrap some copper wire around both the inner conductor and the outer shield. (Bending the cable will allow you to work the copper wire under the inner conductor.) Then, I put some solder flux on the inner conductor, outer shield, and copper wire and let solder flow over the connection using a solder gun (or you could use a big iron). This effectively shorted the coax at that point without breaking the cable open.

I hope this helps.

– 73 and DX, Ted



The "invigorating" outdoors at VY0ERC. Can you spell COLD?

*UR4WWR	2,660	73	5	30	LV1F	290,173	737	60	109	HA3MN, HA3NU, HA5KY, HA7ME, HA7NK, HB9CIP, HF5L, HG170VA, HG3FMZ, HK4L, IK2MXM, IK2SAU, IK5ZUK, IK8NBE, IN3XUG, IO3A, IO3T, IT9CML, IT9GSF, IT9YHR, IU2BHI, IU2CVS, IV3ARJ, IV3ZCS, IZ2DII, IZ3GNG, IZ5NFD, IZ8IFL, JA1RFF, JA2KVD, JA3AVO, JA5EXW, JA8AZN, JA8FFM, JE1AYU, JE6JZF, JG3GOM, JH0INE, JH1LEM, JH1SAJ, JH4IFF, JH8SGR, JI3MJK, JI1SWI, JK1PIU, JP7CFP, JR7RZK, JT1CS, K1SX, K2MRH, K3NK, K4ZO, K5ML, K5PS, K5TBA, K6DAJ, K6DTT, K6TET, K7DPS, K9JWP, K9OR, KA6KEN, KB0WMO, KC0FOT, KC1BJG, KC1CJD, KC2FQ, KC9LVT, KD6UY, KC7F, KE2A, KF5RUW, KG5KRZ, KI7DG, KJ6PON, KK4ADQ, KK4RXC, KL7KK, KT2UU, KX2A, KZ5J, LC2C, LU1DZ, LU3EBT, LY1CT, LY2CO, LY3G, LY3XN, LZ1JZ, LZ1MS, M0CLH, M0IPU, M0KNG, M0LDW, M0MGO, M0YRX, M3ECT, M3I, M5ADL, M6LXF, M6OPU, MW0IDX, MW0YVK, MW5R, N1IA, N3UA, N5XE, N6CW, N6DNU, N6WT, N8AMI, N8OO, N8ROY, N8ZVT, N9UFQ, NQ5M, NS3X, NT4K, NV5E, OE100FTE, OE2LGM, OE3HZW, OE4RGC, OE4XLC, OE5CYL, OE5FZO, OE8TR, OH1ZK, OH2BLV, OH2IS, OH2XX, OH6CT, OH6IO, OH6UBC, OH7MFO, OK1DWC, OK1ITK, OK1TA, OK1YM, OK2BZ, OK2EQ, OK2PAY, OK4FT, OK6TT, OM2XW, OM5CD, OM7OM, ON3HAT, ON5XX, ON8WV, OAOO, O09O, OS8D, PA0FVH, PA0LUX, PA0PIW, PA0VLY, PA0WBP, PA1FNV, PA2S, PA3C, PA3HLE, PA4WG, PA7JWC, PD0FW, PD0HF, PD4JUF, PH9E, PI4CC, PP6ZZ, PY2DV, R0CM, R1CU, R2AA, R2DR, R2SA, R3AT, R3FA, R4HM, R4SA, R6YY, R7RC, RA0R, RA1AL, RA3DNC, RA3RLJ, RA3WDK, RA4AA, RA4FUN, RA4LPC, RA4UKL, RA4UVK, RA9CIN, RA9MX, RC3W, RC7KY, RK3MXT, RK7A, RM0F, RM2A, RN0CT, RN6LG, R04I, RQ7R, RT3W, RU9CY, RV6LCT, RW0AR, RW3DKK, RW3RN, RW9HSB, RX3DPK, RX3DTN, RX3I, RY9C, RZ10A, RZ4Z, S51AD, S52AA, S52CU, S52F, S52GP, S52J, S53F, S56M, S58Q, S59A, S7WV, SM3GSK, SM6MSG, SM7JUN, SO9PC, SP2EWQ, SP2MKT, SP3J, SP3JZD, SP3QFZ, SP4W, SP4YB, SP5EAQ, SP5GDU, SP5NZ, SP6AB, SP6BPB, SP6EF, SP6HEQ, SP6OWY, SP7CDH, SP7ICE, SP7LE, SP8NTH, SP9MDY, SP9PDF, SQ3RX, SQ4HRN, SQ4NR, SQ5TA, SQ8JMC, SQ8LUU, SQ8VPS, SQ9FK, SQ9MZ, SQ9NFC, SV1GRB, SV1JMC, SV1MO, SV1RHL, SV1RRP, SV8/DK3SJ, SV9DJ0, T77C, TF3DC, TF3SG, TM7XX, UA1CEI, UA3GAF, UA4AAC, UA6ACA, UA6CT, UA6JXB, UA9CEP, UB3DLM, UN6G, UN8PT, UP2F, UR4LTX, UR5UZ, UR5WA, UR5WCW, UR7LY, UR8QU, US0LW, US3EW, US5VX, UT3UCP, UT5EO, UT5GW, UT5IA, UT5PY, UT5UHX, UT7E, UT7EV, UT7IS, UT7LW, UT7UX, UX1LW, UX5UO, UX7U, UX7VA, VA2EI, VA3AMX, VA3OB, VE3JSO, VE3XBH, VK2BJ, VK2IG, VK2JON, VU2KWJ, VU3BUN, VU3NXL, W0TK, W0ZAP, W1AJT, W2MRD, W3BNN, W3QT, W3SA, W3TJW, W4RQ, W6MZ, W6YA, W7SMW, W8QL, W9KG, WA6LBU, WA7URJ, WB2RIS, WC0EM, WD4EGF, WD5DBV, XU7AKL, YB3MM, YL2TD, YL2VW, Y02SH, Y03IPR, Y06CFB, Y06KGS, Y08SBR, Y08SSO, Y09GD, Y09TDN, YR0MB, Y1TQ, YU1UO, YU1XX, YU7EYX, YU7PEP, Y5YAM, Z35F, Z3B, ZL1ANH, ZW2EY
*UR6IM	135	5	4	5	AY8A	3,384	74	8	10	(OP:LU4FTA)
*UT2AB	117	5	4	5						(OP:LU8ADX)
**UX8ZA	13,224	194	10	47	*LU6EQV	15,330	112	29	41	
**UX8IX	11,120	117	19	61	*LU1EXR	13,206	95	22	40	
**UR5KBP	2,108	52	8	26	*LU8EHR	10,011	85	33	38	
					*LU9EHU	7,261	89	22	31	
Wales										
*MW8R	211,600	704	48	182	Aruba					
				(OP:GW4SHF)	P40T	5,539,345	3848	121	384	(OP:VE3DZ)
*MW2I	40,400	262	20	60						(OP:VE3DZ)
				(OP:G4FRE)	P40L	4,464,437	4155	103	270	(OP:W6LD)
*MW6M	11,036	114	20	69						(OP:W6LD)
				(OP:GW4BVJ)	Brazil					
*GW0FRE	1,200	41	7	17	PY7BEL	6	1	1	1	
**GW7APP	3,840	77	9	31	*PY2CP	93,912	478	18	68	
OCEANIA										
Australia										
VK2GR	12,121	149	15	16	*PY2RMY	14,964	111	32	55	
*VK6RT	13,805	115	18	37	*PU5BOY	8,288	140	10	18	
*VK5NS	1,120	22	10	10	*PY5AP	4,624	69	16	18	
*VK7DW	400	18	8	8	*PU8MRS	2,695	86	14	21	
*VK3UKW	396	19	12	10	*PU2SDX	1,740	34	13	16	
				(OP:@VK3BNW)	*PY2CYD	702	17	12	15	
					*PY4MHZ	475	18	9	10	
					*PY2PCZ	21	13	9	12	
					**PY2BN	8,360	81	32	44	
					**PY2IAX	2,176	43	16	18	
					**PY1XR	126	8	7	7	
East Malaysia										
*9M6GOH	60,786	361	27	39	Chile					
*9W8DEN	8,928	165	16	20	XR2K	35,389	348	15	28	(OP:CX1EK)
Indonesia										
YB0MWM	22,236	142	19	49	CE3OP	6,318	104	16	23	
YB4NY	18,326	107	28	49	CE2ML	208	8	6	7	
YB3FTD	1,755	32	12	15	*CA2CEV	46,752	413	17	31	
YC2EEE	1,700	74	10	15	*XG5CIE	5,940	127	11	22	
YC3GOQ	1,475	43	10	15	*CE4CBK	5,390	123	8	14	
YF3DFB	1,053	29	12	15	*CA4UFC	2,968	70	11	17	
YC3NHW	210	37	6	9	*CE3TL	1,474	60	10	12	
YB2VMC	42	9	3	4						
YF3CYT	24	4	3	3	Colombia					
*YD3BGM	6,120	99	16	29	HK3C	631,475	1572	42	103	
*YB1LUE	5,002	78	14	27						
*YB1EJL	3,740	48	14	20	Ecuador					
*YB3CMS	2,550	63	15	19	*HC7AE	158,060	420	42	98	
*YB4JOY	1,988	40	11	17						
*YD1SGB	1,092	59	9	12	Uruguay					
*YB3BQS	360	32	7	11	CX9AU	479,755	892	78	151	
*YD8CPZ	360	21	8	10	*CX1CAN	1,269	37	13	14	
*YB3BUP	325	22	5	8						
*YF3CYS	224	10	8	8	Venezuela					
*YC3TEN	165	9	7	8	*YV5AJI	575	16	10	13	
*YD7MHZ	77	5	3	4						
*YD3YPD	27	15	1	2	Check Logs					
*YF3CYU	2	1	1	1	3V8SS, 4M8E, 4Z5ML, 5B4AAB, 5B4ALS, 9A1CMC, 9A2R, 9A3GVD, 9A6TT, 9A6W, 9K2K, A45XR, A61ET, AA7EA, AB4SF, AC2QC, AC9JU, AC9LF, AC9PR, AD0PE, AF0Z, AI6EG, AL4Y, BD3ND, BD7OB, BG2TAA, BG3FB, BG4VRG, BG9HKP, BH3CKQ, CM2MM, C08RCP, CX2BR, CX3BZ, DC0HD, DC1GUN, DD0NM, DD1UN, DF2SD, DF8TY, DF9XI, DG3MR, DG80BN, DH0MB, DK1TBL, DK3PM, DK4JA, DK8NC, DL1BFR, DL1EAL, DL1EMV, DL1GZW, DL1SL, DL2DXA, DL2GPK, DL3AQJ, DL3BZ, DL3KVR, DL3LAR, DL3ZTA, DL5DTG, DL5JAG, DL5MK, DL6ATM, DL6GV, DL6JV, DL6MIG, DL6UD, DL7USW, DL7VEE, DL9CGG, DL9RDW, DL9VF, DM1LM, DM1PL, DM5EL, DM7MRE, DO2STS, E07EA, E17W, E2U, E7A0, E770D, EA1AAA, EA1ACP, EA1AF, EA1CF, EA1FDI, EA2KR, EA3IAA, EA4LG, EA4SE, EA5AJB, EA5AJX, EA5YI, EA5YT, EA6GP, EA8TX, EA9LZ, EC1DJ, EC7ABV, EF7A, EU2EU, EU4A, EW4RF, EY8MM, F1TIO, F4EUG, F4FPR, F4FTA, F4WCE, F6ARC, F6BGV, F6GEU, F6GOE, F6HSZ, G1OSI, G4BEE, G5W, G6OKU, G7WIR, G10MTX, GM3MZX, GS8VL, GU4EON, GW4BK, GW4J, HA1DAE, HA2MM, HA3FUT,					
	0	1	1	1						
New Zealand										
ZL2X	23,885	133	35	50						
				(OP:ZL4CZ)						
*ZL4CTS	924	18	9	12						
Philippines										
DU1IVT	199,383	661	47	76						
DU1R	93,444	461	25	53						
				(OP:DU1UGZ)						
4F3FSK	1,239	42	8	13						
*4E1A	351,400	761	68	107						
*DV1UUU	2,548	41	12	16						
*DU1VHY	567	16	9	12						
*DW7P6O	285	16	5	10						
**DU7OK	1,376	40	14	18						
**DW3TRZ	216	19	5	7						
SOUTH AMERICA										
Argentina										
LU5VV	601,776	1992	21	87						

Disqualified: A61FK (use of spotting as single-op), EN4U (self-spotting), HZ1TL (self-spotting), I18T (self-spotting), IK4GRO (self-spotting), LY4ZZ (self-spotting), LZ2JA (self-spotting), M0HMM (self-spotting), MM3AWD (self-spotting), R4FCJ (use of spotting as single-op), S52NR (self-spotting), S53D (use of spotting as single-op), S54ZZ (self-spotting), S57PKT (self-spotting), SN7D (use of spotting as single-op), UR5AS (self-spotting), Y18WW (self-spotting), Z33F (self-spotting).

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

APRIL 2019

Advertiser	Page	Phone	Website
100 Watts & A Wire	60		www.100WATTSSANDAWIRE.COM
AOR U.S.A., Inc.....	5	310-787-8615.....	www.aorusa.com
Advanced Specialties Inc.	73	201-VHF-2067	www.advancedspecialties.net
Air Boss — Innovative Tech.	81	252-249-0287	www.kr4loairboss.com
Alinco	33,47	209-900-1296.....	www.alinco.com
Amateur Radio Roundtable.....	65	901-570-2188.....	www.W5KUB.com
Arlan Communications.....	23	805-504-3744.....	www.arlancommunications.com
Buddipole Antennas	31	503-591-8001	www.buddipole.com
CQ Merchandise	37,67	516-681-2922.....	http://store.cq-amateur-radio.com
CW Easy/Success Easy.....	81	561-302-7731	www.success-is-easy.com
Communications Concepts, Inc.	23	937-426-8600.....	www.communication-concepts.com
Cutting Edge Enterprises.....	73	831-427-8197	www.powerportstore.com
EZ Hang.....	73	540-286-0176.....	www.ezhang.com
Elecraft.....	13	831-763-4211	www.elecraft.com
Electric Radio Magazine.....	81	720-924-0171	www.ermag.com
HamTestOnline	59	888-857-6164.....	www.hamtestonline.com
International DX Association	75		www.indexa.org
KJI Electronics.....	81	973-571-1930.....	www.kjielelectronics.com
Kenwood U.S.A. Corp... ..	Cov. II	310-639-4200.....	www.kenwoodusa.com
LDG.....	1,57,Cov. III	410-586-2177	www.ldgelectronics.com
Nuts & Volts.....	26	877-525-2539.....	www.nutsvolts.com
PowerPort	73	831-427-8197	www.powerportstore.com
preciseRF	75	503-915-2490.....	www.preciserf.com
QCWA	59	352-425-1097	www.qcwa.org
RF Parts.....	43	800-737-2787	www.rfparts.com
RT Systems.....	9,25	800-921-4834.....	www.rtsystems.com
REACT Int'l	85	301-316-2900.....	www.REACTintl.org
SwapMyRig.....	73	850-385-3769.....	www.swapmyrigs.com
W2IHY Technologies	79	845-889-4253.....	www.w2ihy.com
W5SWL.....	81		www.W5SWL.com
W7DXX Remote	79		www.w7dxx.com
YLRL	63		www.ylrl.org
Yaesu	6,7,15,Cov IV	714-827-7600.....	www.yaesu.com

Let **CQ** help you get the most for your advertising dollar!
Contact Dottie K, **CQ's** Advertising Director
at 516-681-2922 x 106 or via email at ads@cq-amateur-radio.com

Advertising Rates: Non-commercial ads are 20 cents per word including abbreviations and addresses. Commercial and organization ads are \$1.00 per word. Boldface words are \$1.50 each (specify which words). Minimum charge \$2.00. No ad will be printed unless accompanied by full remittance. All ads must be typewritten double-spaced.

Closing Date: The 10th day in the third month preceding date of publication (example: Jan. 10th for the March issue). Because the advertisers and equipment contained in Ham Shop have not been investigated, the Publisher of CQ cannot vouch for the merchandise listed therein. The publisher reserves the right to reject any advertisement. Direct all correspondence and ad copy to: CQ Ham Shop, 17 West John Street, Hicksville, NY 11801 (fax: 516-681-2926; e-mail: <hamshop@cq-amateur-radio.com>).

Yaesu FT-100D (HF-VHF-UHF). Great mobile rig with manual, internal keyer and mike. \$300. (281) 934-8783.

RF CONNECTORS & GADGETS - Parts - Products and More! www.W5SWL.com

Keychain QRP: Worlds Smallest HF Transmitter. Handmade in the USA. <www.bit.ly/KeychainQRP>

GET THE F.C.C. "COMMERCIAL" RADIOTELEPHONE LICENSE! Fast, inexpensive home study course. Command Productions. www.LicenseTraining.com. Free info: (800) 932-4268.

SUPERBERTHA "Worlds Strongest Antenna Tower" legendary monopole rotates from ground level carrying your custom stacked antenna load, no guy wires, TIA-G, hurricane zone option. <www.SuperBertha.com>.

NEVER have another faulty patch cable! 15-page, photo-illustrated manual details a revolutionary procedure for assembling failure-proof coaxial cable patches. \$10 postpaid U.S., \$15 foreign. R.W. Parker, 1205 Sleepy Hollow Road, Pennsburg, PA 18073.

CallSign Stuff www.hamQRU.com **KTØMMY**

WANTED: 500-Kc Ships Transmitter. IE: MACKAY MARINE 2017A. w8wz@aol.com

NO NONSENSE LICENSE STUDY GUIDES: kb6nu.com/cq

FOR SALE: 40-foot crank up tower. U.S. Tower model MA40, pole type \$400. Cushcraft model A4 tri-band beam \$200. Yaesu Antenna rotor and controller model G400RC \$200. Call Ed, WA7DAX, (801) 598-9217.

Wanted: Channel Master model 110 Quantum Antennas 1 or more in box good condition! W.J. Gibbs, Jr. 601 Howard Street. Columbia, NC 27925

QRP J-36: 1/2-Scale Microkey. Full-Functional "BUG" Made in the USA by KA6IRL. <QRPJ36.com>

Premium RF Connectors, Antennas, Coax, Parts, and Accessories. W5SWL's Ham Store — www.DavesHobbyShop.com

WANTED: IBM Model M, Space Saving Keyboard, Call KØKQ, (218) 850-1500 or email: <keith.gilbertson@q.com>.

AMATEUR RADIO ELECTRONICS: Home Study Software, Apps, and eBooks \$2.99. <www.eptsoft.com/HomeStudy>

POLYESTER ROPE: excellent for antenna support and guying. Go to <www.audiotronics.us>.

REAL HAMS DO CODE: Move up to CW with **CW Mental Block Buster III**. Succeed with hypnosis and NLP. Includes two (2) CDs and Manual. Only \$29.95 plus \$7.00 s/h US. FL add \$2.14 tax. Success Easy, 568 SE Maple Terrace, Port St. Lucie, FL 34983, phone 561-302-7731, <www.success-is-easy.com>.

TWO NEW NOVELS involving ham radio: *Full Circle*, and *Frozen in Time*, by N4XX. Visit <<http://www.theodore-cohen-novels.com>>.

QSLing SUPPLIES. e-mail: <plumdx@msn.com>.

CASH FOR COLLINS, HALLICRAFTERS SX-88, & DRAKE TR-6. Buy any Collins equipment. Leo, KJ6HI, phone/fax 310-418-9269, e-mail: <radioleo73@gmail.com>.

MicroLog by WAØH
Easy to use logging program.
Free download . . . www.wa0h.com

www.oldqslcards.com

OVERSEAS AIRMAIL POSTAGE plus complete line of airmail envelopes. Order directly from our website. James E. Mackey, proprietor. website: <www.airmailpostage.com>

TOWER ACCESSORIES Gin Pole Kits — stand off brackets — antenna mounts — vehicle radio mounts — for 30 years. IIX Equipment Ltd., 708-337-8172, <<http://www.w9iix.com>>.

HOME BREW! "Recollections of a Radio Receiver" a 565 page book on HBR homebrew receivers. \$10 delivered (eBook on CD-ROM). Details <www.w6hht.com>

ARMS — Amateur Radio Missionary Net. Christian Fellowship Net, Everyone Welcome. 14.3075 Daily except Sunday 1500-1700Z, -1 Hr DST. Website: www.qsl.net/arms

NEAT STUFF! DWM Communications: <<http://qth.com/dwm>>

DXPEDITION DVD VIDEOS: For full description and how to order . . . <www.k4uee.com/dvd/>.

VORTEX ANTENNA SYSTEMS specialist in HF and VHF high performance antennas. Yagis and Delta Loops. Linear Loaded 30 and 40m Arrays. OWA Arrays, bespoke individual design solutions. Antenna related hardware. We ship worldwide including North America. <www.vortexantennas.co.uk>. or by e-mail to <enquiries@vortexantennas.co.uk>.

"World of Keys — Keys III" book features highly detailed views and photos of keys, bugs, and paddles like few people have ever seen (\$18)!. Also still available, "Keys II" (\$16) and "QRP Romps!" (\$18), plus "Your Guide to HF Fun" (\$16). Available from dealers nationwide.

PACKET RADIO AND MORE! Join TAPR, connect with the largest amateur radio digital group in the U.S. Creators of the TNC-2 standard, working on Software Defined Radio technology. Benefits: newsletter, software, discounts on kits and publications. For membership prices see the TAPR website: <<http://www.tapr.org>>.

WWW.ISOTRONANTENNAS.COM FOR HF. CHECK IT OUT! Call: 719-687-0650; <wd0eja@isotronantennas.com>

HONDURAS DX VACATION: K3, Alpha 86, SteppIR, Meals, Private Facilities. HR2J, (206) 259-9688.

HY POWER ANTENNA COMPANY <<http://www.freewebs.com/hypower>> Multiband dipoles, delta loops, half squares and QRP antennas.

NEW AMATEUR RADIO MAP with DXCC list updates. Full color 22 x 34" — \$10. Free shipping on club orders. <http://www.hamradiomap.qth.com/>

QRP KITS: <www.breadboardradio.com>

NEED ROPE? All kinds, types, including: antenna rope, hauling, gin. **FREE**, free consultation, Go to <<http://www.davisropeandcable.com/>>. Veteran owned, K1PEK, 978-369-1738.

FUTURE TIMES: Dreams and visions of Disasters. Great guide book for Hams. www.xlibris.com/futuretimes.html

www.peidxlodge.com

HAWAII DX VACATION: SteppIR antennas, amplifiers, private. KH6RC, <www.leilanibedandbreakfast.com>.

HAM TRAVELERS Discount travel, tours, cruises, more. www.GreatExpectationTravel.com

PROMOTIONAL VIDEO: 15-minute DVD describes amateur radio's fun and public service. Details: <www.neoham.org>.

WANTED: OLD QSL CARD COLLECTIONS. Collector seeks US & DX cards. W2VRK, 9 Laird Terrace, Somerset, NJ 08873; e-mail: <tpllrs@comcast.net>.

TELEGRAPH KEY INFORMATION AND HISTORY MUSEUM: <<http://w1tp.com>>

HAM RADIO GIFTS: <www.mainestore.com>

FT243 AND HC6U CRYSTALS: www.af4k.com

OLD QSLs Available. 50's and 60's, DX and USA. Specify call, send SASE. W5SQA@arrl.net

RFI Filters <www.RFchoke.com>

SOTA BEAMS: <<http://www.sotabeams.co.uk>>. G3CW

CRANK-A-WATT Power & More via KE5NYS. Visit <www.FactorReady.com>

FMTV ARTICLES: Comprehensive transmitter and receiver deviation calibration, standards, intermodulation, power amplifier calculations. WB9OQM, <http://mathison.freeshell.org>

Wanna ham in the **CAYMAN ISLANDS?** Go to <www.martykaiser.com/24a.htm>.

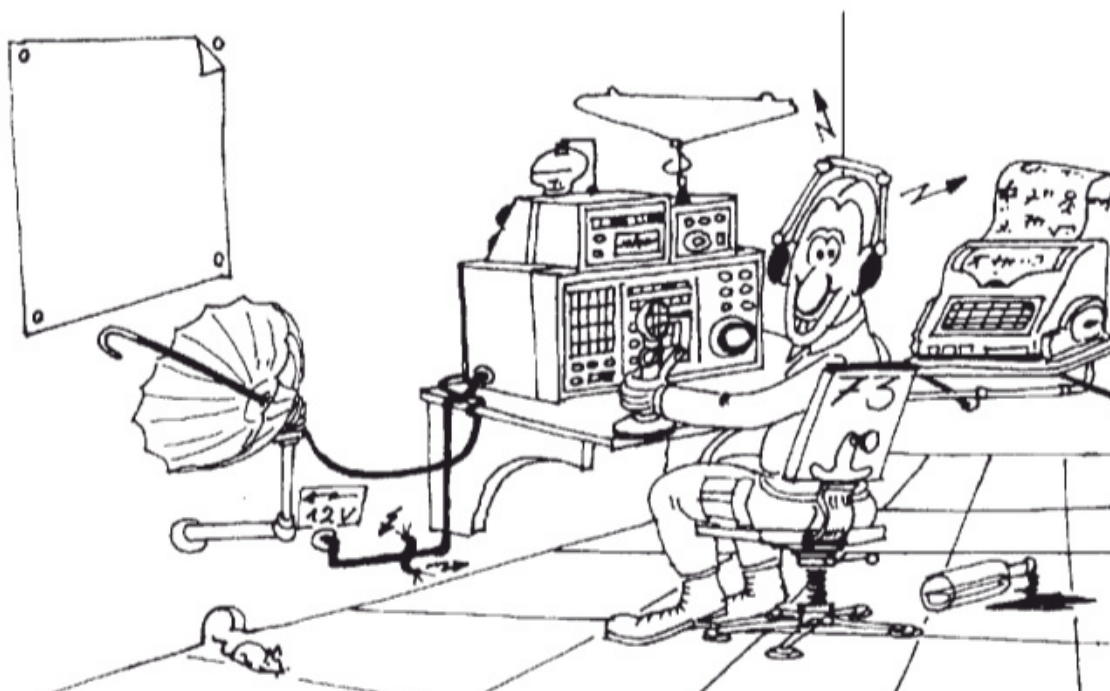
www.SecondHandRadio.com

HF Mobile or Fixed Virtual X Antenna Patent: For Sale or License. Request Free Power Point Presentation file. Shows design details, pictures, prototype tests. Design applies to a broad frequency range for many antenna arrays/beams/verticals. <lgslay@sbcglobal.net>. Larry Slay, K5WUL

FOR SALE: Samlex Power Supply Model SEC 1223, 13.8V @ 25 amps. Not working. Includes operating manual and schematic. Price \$50 or best offer. Contact Harry, W9HRQ, at <harrygraziano@gmail.com> or phone 1-773-334-4492.

YAESU FT-840, has FM-747 FM unit, YF-112A 6 kHz AM filter and manual. Problem with main tuning, otherwise good \$150. FC-800 1.8-30 MHz 150W remote ATU for FT-840 or FT-890. working with cables and manual, \$125. Shipping additional. KB2DMD, (215) 541-1099.

ANTENNA & TOWER HARDWARE: Aluminum plates: Boom to elements, boom to mast, GP/Vertical antennaground plates, Rohn 25/45 to cross arms plates, Hexabeam / spiderbeam Hubs, Moxon hubs, U bolts with saddles. **All info at: e78wz@yahoo.com or at e-bay store: stores.ebay.com/lyz4iz0**



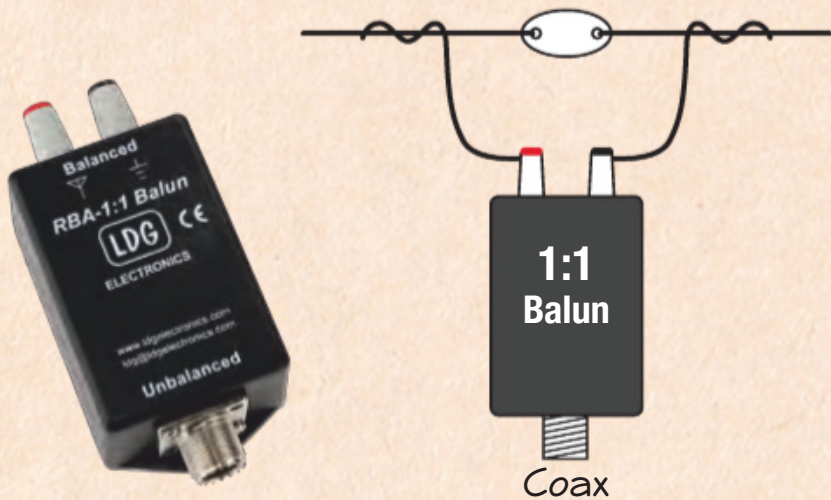
WHERE TO USE LDG BALUNS & UNUNS



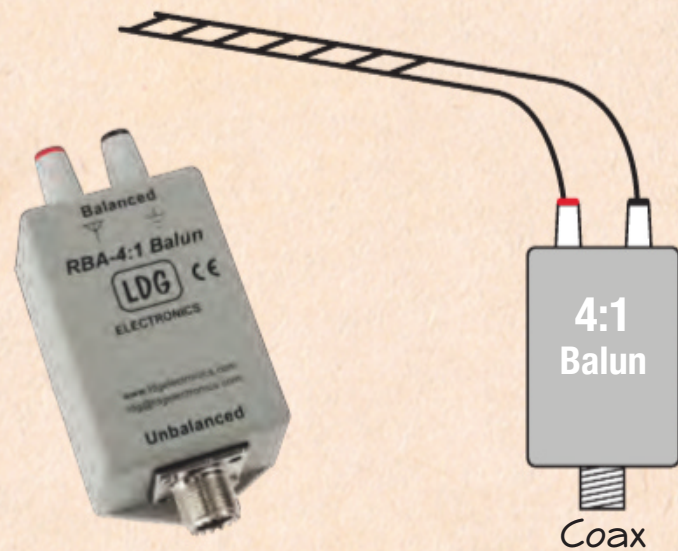
Not sure which balun or unun is right for your antenna? See our handy chart below to help you determine which is the best fit for your set-up. All LDG baluns and ununs handle up to 200 Watts PEP and cover frequencies from 1.8 to 30MHz. Visit us at www.ldgelectronics.com or see your favorite dealer today to learn more and to see our full line of products.

\$30 ea. | 200 Watts PEP
1.8-30MHz

DIPOLE
Length = $468/\text{freq}$

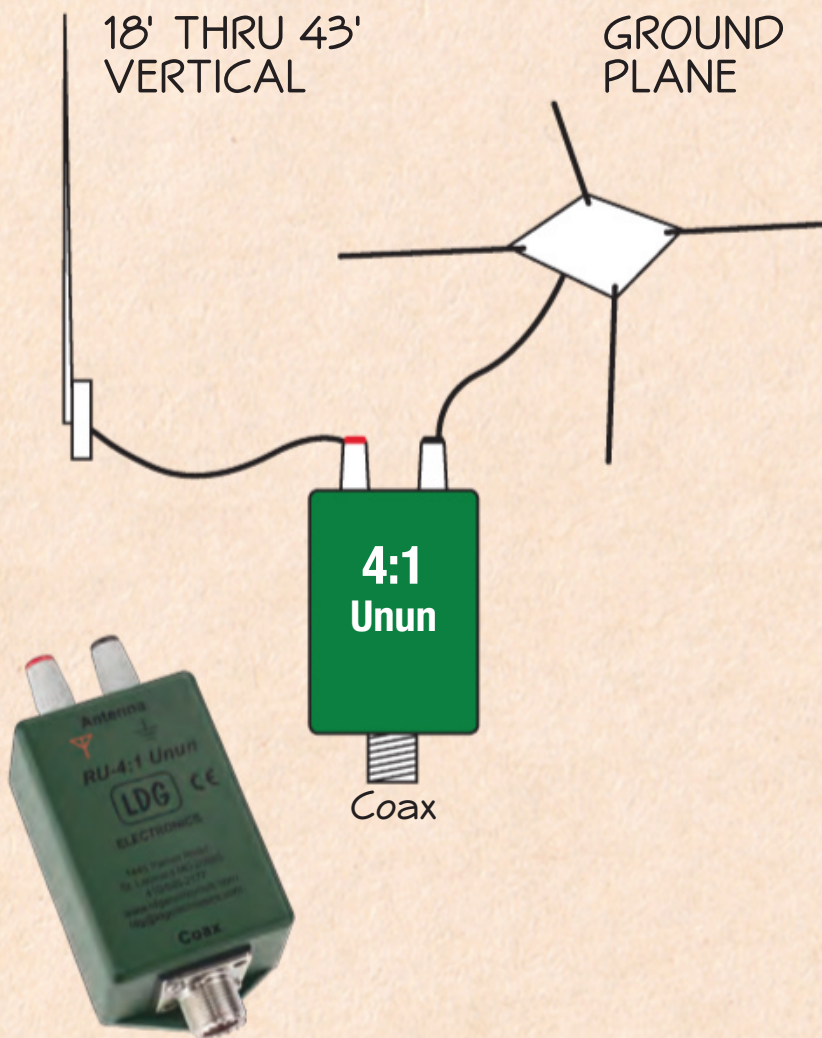


LADDER LINE/TWIN LEAD



18' THRU 43'
VERTICAL

GROUND
PLANE



END FED WIRE
30' - 135'

