



NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2002

REMARKS

www.marc-radio.org

HOLIDAY PARTY DECEMBER 17

MARC's annual holiday party takes the place of our regular December meeting on Tuesday, December 17. We have no business meeting or technical program. Instead, we enjoy special refreshments, conversation, and good fellowship. Your family members are cordially invited to attend.

The party is held at the usual meeting location and time. Since it's a party, you can come a bit later and/or leave a bit earlier, in

case you have other obligations. We will be done by 10 PM, as usual. Dress is casual.

At press time, we don't have a chairman for the event. If you would like to chair the party or just contribute some refreshments, please contact **Kay WT3P** (610-993-9623, wt3p@arrl.net) for the time being.

NOVEMBER 19 PROGRAM: HONDURAS MEDICAL MISSION AND HAM RADIO

"Beautiful country, tough existence," is how **Phil N3RX** sums up life in Honduras. He says, "I spent 2 months in La Ceiba, Honduras, as a medical student on a tropical medicine fellowship. A large number of cases represented either machete or gun shot wounds (my life was actually threatened on two occasions) and the rest composed of parasites, leprosy, malaria, vitamin deficiency, etc."

Despite the difficulties and dangers, humanitarian medical assistance continues in Honduras. Our November 19 club meeting program will be given by **Loring Kutchins W3QA** about the International Health Service's Honduras project and how ham radio volunteers are involved.

The International Health Service (IHS) of Minnesota is a non-profit organization that provides free health care to the people of Honduras. Each year, IHS sends teams to various parts of Honduras to provide health care to people who desperately need it. IHS has been doing this work for over 20 years. In February, 2002, the mission trip included 111 people assigned to ten teams that set up temporary clinics to serve over 10,000 medical and dental patients.

A typical team includes doctors, nurses, a pharmacist, a dentist, a radio operator, an engineer, a language translator and a few general helpers. These teams are spread out, often into remote parts of the country, so the role of radio operator is critical to providing communications that link the teams together. Most villages have no phones, electricity, or even roads. The typical radio setup at each location is similar to a basic Field Day operation — an HF transceiver powered by a gasoline generator, driving a wire antenna hung on the nearest tree or building.

The next mission to Honduras is scheduled for February 14 to March 2, 2003. The ARRL Web page (www.arrl.org) carried a story about the project on August 23.

If you have friends or colleagues in medical professions who are not hams (yet!), bring them to this program to learn how ham radio is playing a key role in a humanitarian project.

SANTA'S BRIGADE DELIVERS CHRISTMAS SMILES

The Main Line Volunteer Force, a consortium of 28 businesses and organizations of which MARC is a member, is sponsoring "Santa's Brigade" again in 2002. This is an opportunity to reach out to less-fortunate people in our area during the holiday season. If you choose to donate a gift, you'll help ensure that children, seniors, and families who would not otherwise have gifts on Christmas will not be left out.

You will be provided with a recipient's name, age, gender, clothing size (if needed), and suggestions for an appropriate gift. You'll be given a gift tag so the item can be routed to the right person. The recommended cost per gift is in the \$15 to \$25 range.

MARC has committed to provide 5 gifts this year. We can always get more names of recipients, if more than 5 club members step forward to be donors.

The wrapped gifts will be brought to the holiday party on December 17. If you want to donate a gift but can't attend the party, we can work out a way to collect your gift.

Among the members of MLVF along with MARC are Aetna U. S. Healthcare, ANRO Printing/Direct Mail, Janney Montgomery Scott's Berwyn office, Wawa, Wilmington Trust, Malvern Federal Savings, Prudential Fox Roach Realtors, Salomon Smith Barney's Berwyn office, Valley Press, Ford Main Line, Paoli-Malvern-Berwyn Rotary, Sovereign Bank Philadelphia Region, and Berwyn-Devon Business & Professional Association.

If you want to join Santa's Brigade, contact **Kay WT3P** (610-993-9623, wt3p@arrl.net) as soon as possible.

INSIDE . . . Adding CTCSS to older rigs . . . Caps for public service volunteers . . . K3YPO estate sale . . . PR report . . . Emergency comm training session . . . Public service events . . . Board meeting high-lights . . . ARES/RACES contact persons . . . More!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE MID-ATLANTIC AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

ABOUT MARC

wb3joe@marc-radio.org
http://www.marc-radio.org

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

3rd Tuesdays, 8 PM, Radnor Township
Building, St. Davids. Guests welcome.
Smoke-free. Handicapped-accessible.

BOARD MEETINGS

4th Thursdays, 7:30 PM, Paoli Hospital.
Members may attend as observers.

SYSTEMS

145.13/R, 147.06/R, 224.42/R
145.13 and 147.06 CTCSS 131.8 Hz
Webmaster: Steve N3ORH (610-313-8080,
smaslin@marc-radio.org)

NETS

Club Net, Sunday, 8:30 PM 147.06/145.13
Traffic net, M/W/F, 8:30 PM 147.06/145.13
Net Manager: Carter N3AO
(610-993-9623, n3ao@arrl.net)

DUES

\$15 Full (licensed Amateurs)
\$5 Associate (unlicensed persons)
Family rate \$5 per ham after first
member pays full dues.

NEWSLETTER

REMARCS is published in the odd
months, edited by Kay WT3P
(610-993-9623, wt3p@arrl.net)

BRING A FRIEND
TO A MARC MEETING!

PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

At the Wyeth-Ayerst 5-mile Radnor Run on October 27, MARC members used the new yellow "Amateur Radio Communications" caps for the first time. These caps are given to event volunteers to keep and use at future events. Our volunteers for this event were **Owen N3WO**, **Dick KB3IIN**, **Ray KB3IGL**, **Steve KD0VA**, **Bob KB3FSQ**, **Rick N3AGS**, and **Bob N3JIZ**.

November 9 is the Penn Wynne Library 5k run, 8 AM. Meet at the library in Wynnewood. Talk-in is on 147.06/R.

November 17 is the Vietnam Vets 5k run, 8 AM. Meet at the Norristown Farm Park. Talk-in on 145.13/R.

To sign up or get additional information about what's involved in helping at public service events, contact **Bob N3JIZ** (610-687-4587, rjpelectric@worldlynx.net).

**DID YOU TELL SOMEONE
ABOUT HAM RADIO TODAY?**

VOX

Please welcome new members **Dana AA3QN**, **John N3RJB** (n3rjb@arrl.net), **Allan W3AHR** (ahr1@comcast.net), and **Joe KB3IJC** (kb3ijc@arrl.net).

Al N3EA is now the Vice President for Coordination for the ARCC repeater coordinators. **Dave W3LAW** is the president of ARCC, **Dick K3ITH** is a regional rep, and **Jeff WN3A** is the database manager. **Carter N3AO** is now the operations officer for Chester County ARES/RACES and has been awarded membership in ARRL's A-1 Operator Club. **Leland N3LJB** (ex-KB3HWY) and joined the ranks of hams with their initials as their suffix; his e-mail address is now n3ljb@arrl.net. **Alan AA3DB's** new e-mail address is alanponting@comcast.net. Change **Eric N2JBE's** e-mail to n2jbe@ie-ap.org. Add **Owen N3WO** to the e-mail list as n3wo@arrl.net. **Jeff K3UV's** e-mail address is now k3uv@ollis.org. **Jenny KA3WVD** is engaged to be married next October. **Lee K2BIZ** enjoyed a trip to Scandinavia and Russia this fall.

Several MARC members have passed ARRL's emergency comm training courses, and some are serving as mentors in the program. It's good education whether you're new or experienced. Read a related story on page 5, and see ARRL's web site for additional info on how to get this training.

HOMEBREWER NET OFF TO A GOOD START

The first MARC homebrewer net on Saturday, September 14, drew 14 enthusiastic check-ins. Anyone interested in building ham radio equipment, whether an old hand or a new one, is welcome to check in at 9 AM on Saturdays on the linked repeaters. **Leland N3LJB** is in charge of this net, which was his idea. It's not just a random ragchew. There's a discussion topic for each week. The first week, for example, people were invited to describe a project they were working on at the time. The second week, the topic was odd, pointless, or "what was I thinking?" projects people had built. As you can see, there is fun here as well as serious discussion. Join in!

Field Day follow-up: Two QSL cards were received for W3NWA Field Day contacts . . . one from 2002, one from 2000. Each was acknowledged by Kay WT3P, callsign trustee, with a QSL card showing a photo of Bob Young W3NWA (SK) operating at MARC's first Field Day.

ELECTION RESULTS

When the ballots were counted at the September meeting, all incumbents were re-elected without opposition. One write-in vote was cast for Program Chairman. The person was contacted about the job but declined.

The new / old board took office on October 1. The continuing lack of a Program Chairman means that all club members must share the responsibility for thinking up program topics. The "let's you entertain me" philosophy has sunk more than once nice ham radio club. Don't let it happen to MARC! Send your program suggestions (topics, speakers, etc.) to one of the board Members-at-

MESSAGE-HANDLING BASICS ON-LINE

In support of our effort to train MARC members in formal message-handling, we have put some instructional material on the Web.

<http://home.earthlink.net/~wt3p/TRAFFIC.HTML>

Credit where it's due: Radiogram forms were designed by **Bart K4BF**. The presentation on composing radiograms was created by **Kay WT3P** and **Carter N3AO**, based on an original version by ARRL Minnesota Section Manager **Max Wendel KM0D**. The rest of the material was written by **Kay WT3P** and reviewed by **Carter N3AO**.

FROM THE EDITOR'S JUNK BOX

I once said to my mother that I hated the Spam sandwiches we always had for roadside-table picnics on interminable pre-Interstate-era treks to visit Great Aunt Whozit. Huffily, she replied that we never ate Spam. "We had lunch meat," she said. "Lunch meat," in case you escaped its acquaintance, is store-brand Spam-clone. Sorry, Mom, but mystery meat by any other name was just as icky. If whatever doesn't kill you makes you stronger, after years of eating that stuff I should be Xena, Warrior Princess.

Anyway, call it what you will, I didn't like Spam then, and I don't like spam now. I get a lot of the stuff. Spammers have software that harvests e-mail addresses off of web pages, and I'm a somewhat public person. Fortunately, my ISP has a good filter that screens out probably 95% of the unsolicited, unwanted, and unappetizing e-mail coming my way.

For the rest, I have discovered a program that allows me to look at information about messages before I download them from the ISP's server. I can delete a message without downloading it, if I don't want it or if it has a dubious attachment. I can (*this is fun*) even make spam bounce back to its senders, so they'll think my address is no good. The program, called Mail-Washer, is a free download from www.mailwasher.net. Registration is optional for \$20. It may not work with web-based e-mail systems or with AOL. Read the info on the web site to see if this program might work for you. Then you won't find in your inbox what you wouldn't want in your icebox.

In Dubrovnik, Croatia, our guide took us to the heights above the city where they take all the beautiful postcard photos, and explained that this was the position from which the city was shelled during the war with Yugoslavia ten years ago. Up the coast in the pretty island town of Hvar, our guide said that although Hvar was not attacked, the town had to cope with thousands of refugees who arrived carrying all their possessions in a plastic bag. Croatia is repaired and prosperous again, but in the Balkans nobody forgets a thing. In Kotor, Montenegro, we learned they don't use the Yugoslav national currency, preferring the Euro. I looked at the astounding mountain scenery and quaint towns along the fjord leading to Kotor and wondered what will happen if and when the Montenegrins decide they, too, have had enough of Yugoslavia. In Albania (*yeah, Albania!*), we saw what a country looks like whose economy (*never that great to start with*) has imploded . . . but also a country that has spectacular natural beauty. And they also brew decent local beer. I felt it was my duty to check that out, y'know. Can't be all museums and cathedrals.

The fact that somebody else, somewhere else, has had it immeasurably worse doesn't make it acceptable that plenty of things aren't okay here in the USA. But it sure will make you stop and think, in this season when we are giving thanks. — 73, Kay WT3P

TESTING SESSIONS SET FOR 2003

The Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church has confirmed that MARC may use their education building for our 2003 license exam sessions. Thanks are due to exam team captain **Bob W3ZQN** for setting up the schedule.

The dates of the 2003 Tom Powell Memorial Testing Sessions will be as follows: February 1, May 3, August 2, November 1. All these Saturday morning sessions will be coordinated through ARRL/VEC. Although walk-ins are accepted, applicants are strongly encouraged to pre-register with Bob, because if there are no pre-registered candidates for a session, it is cancelled. This is done to avoid wasting examiners' time waiting for walk-in applicants who do not materialize.

MARC members may take part in one club-sponsored test session per year free of charge, as a membership benefit.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2003

PRESIDENT

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smaslin@marc-radio.org

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Dennis Silage K3DS 610-353-4829
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PROGRAMS

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

To 9/30/2004: Al Maslin N3EA
610-446-4936, amaslin@earthlink.net
To 9/30/2003: Gene Hoenig N3HG
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610-446-4936, amaslin@earthlink.net
W3NWA: Kay Craigie WT3P
610-993-9623, wt3p@arri.net

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BOARD MEETINGS

At the September 26 meeting, the board received reports on public service, future programs, membership, and the annual elections. A technical committee visit to the 224.42 repeater site was described. **Bob W3SA** was asked to look into availability of our usual Field Day site for 2003, owing to construction of a retirement complex nearby. The treasury balance was \$11,878.93.

At the October 24 meeting, the board voted to donate \$10 for expenses of the Main Line Volunteer Force Christmas charity project in which the club participates. It was also voted that allowing members to participate in one MARC test session per year free of charge will be a permanent policy. In addition, the board voted that each public service volunteer will be given one public service event cap free of charge. There will be a \$15 charge for any additional caps (such as replacement for a lost one), to cover the cost. Other reports concerned public service events, public relations, the traffic nets, programs, and technical matters. The annual liability insurance bill has been paid. The treasury balance was \$10,515.53.

CAPS FOR PUBLIC SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

At public service events, it's important for people to be able to find the ham communications volunteers, especially if they have an emergency to report. Also, an identifiable appearance helps us make a good impression . . . there's always an element of public relations in what we do at parades and whatever-a-thon's.

In the past, MARC used day-glow orange vests that many of you resisted wearing because you thought they looked dumb. The board decided to replace these fashion flops with bright yellow baseball caps saying "Amateur Radio Communications." **Gene N3HG** researched prices and placed the order.

Now, if you come out to a MARC public service event, you'll be given one of these caps to wear and to keep for future events. You won't be asked to put on a cap somebody else has worn.

Each volunteer receives a cap free of charge. If a replacement cap is needed, because you lost yours or let the dog chew it up, there will be a \$15 charge to cover the cost of the cap.

WHAT IS THE A-1 OPERATOR CLUB?

Unique among ARRL operating awards, the A-1 Op Club is one that you cannot apply for. You must be nominated by 2 existing members, whose identities are never revealed to you. In fact, the sure way not to become an A-1 Op is to ask people to nominate you! Ego-tripping is not the mark of the A-1 Op.

A-1 Op began in 1933. Originally, as the name suggests (A1 was the old emission designator equivalent to today's A1A) the qualifications emphasized CW operating. In those days, CW traffic-handling was The Thing. In the 1990's, the criteria were revised to make it clear that worthy people could be nominated regardless of their preferred modes and favorite on-air activities.

To learn more about A-1 Op and other ARRL awards that you may not have heard about before, check out www.arrl.org/awards/.

DX PACKET CLUSTER CHANGES

Users of the K3WW or W3FRC nodes in the Frankford RC DX packet system know that the node software has recently been changed to a program called "DX Spider."

Most of the basic commands are the same as always. One with a new twist is the SHOW/DX command for a particular band. In the old system, you typed SH/DX 40 to get spots on 40 meters. Now, you type SH/DX ON 40M. There are also cool new ways to filter out spots you aren't interested in seeing.

The command summary file can be downloaded free from the web at www.dxcluster.com.

To find out more about the digital voice experiments described by Dennis K3DS in his talk at the October MARC meeting, go to

www.temple.edu/k3tu/digital_voice.htm

ADDING CTCSS TO YOUR OLDER RIG

CTCSS (also known by the Motorola trade name "PL") is coming to all the repeaters in eastern PA and southern NJ in the next few years, mandated by the ARCC, Inc., repeater coordination organization.

Although CTCSS solves a number of problems, it also creates a problem for people who use rigs manufactured before CTCSS capability was standard and who don't feel like buying a new rig.

Many older rigs can be retro-fitted with CTCSS units. Although HT's may have too small a case to allow insertion of a third-party CTCSS unit, old rigs made for mobile use usually have enough space inside the box.

Technical Chairman **Dennis K3DS** says, "Very inexpensive units are made by Communication Specialists (www.com-spec.com). Their SS-64 encoder is \$29 and much less than a square inch and should easily be 'tuckable' inside mobile rigs. Ham Radio Outlet (www.hamradio.com) has them in stock. Model # SS-64 is the single tone model (but programmable). Delaware Valley repeaters nearly universally use 131.8 Hz (3B) tone so these should not be a problem."

Before you go and buy one of these gizmos, make certain you have the manual for your rig! If not, then you need to get one from the people who sell manuals for vintage radios (try www.w7fg.com/). Also, before you buy, talk to **Dennis K3DS** to decrease the possibility of getting an add-on you can't use after all.

If you're thinking, "My hands aren't as steady as they used to be," or "My eyesight isn't so sharp any more," or "I don't have the workbench skills to be messing about in the guts of my rig," do not be discouraged. Contact Dennis, and he'll help set you up with someone in the club who can give you a hand. It's what hams do for each other.

PARTICIPATE IN ARES / RACES!

When the president of the ARRL goes to Washington to jaw-bone the FCC and other government bigwigs, do you think he argues that hams should have access to spectrum and the right to erect meaningful antennas so we can play at DXing or yak on the repeater about the last Eagles game? Of course not!

Emergency communications service and technical experimentation are the leverage we have in the USA for the privilege of using billions (billions!) of dollars' worth of radio spectrum.

MARC encourages members to join and actively participate in ARES/RACES in your county. Contact people for ARES/RACES in the counties where most MARC members live are:

Chester County: Lloyd Roach W3QT (w3qt@arrl.net)
Delaware County: Dan Amoroso W3DI (w3di@arrl.net)
Montgomery County: Bob Lees W3ZQN (rjlees@aol.com)

If you live elsewhere, contact your ARRL Section Manager, whose e-mail address and phone number are on page 12 of every QST. If you're not an ARRL member, join now. **Carter N3AO** can explain how you can join the League and benefit MARC at the same time.

EMERGENCY COMM TRAINING SESSION

By Loring Kutchins W3QA

On Saturday, November 23rd at 8:30AM at the Chester County Government Services Center, 601 Westtown Road, West Chester (talk-in 146.94- pl 131.8, 446.525- pl 100), Chester County ARES/RACES will hold a 6-hour intensive Level I Emergency Communications review seminar. There is no cost for the seminar, but participants are expected to have obtained and read the ARRL text "Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course--Level I" (2nd edition) or alternatively worked through the online text, activities and questions at www.w3qa.net/ccar. The seminar is not a comprehensive course. There is no cost for the seminar.

Immediately following at 3:00 PM, same place, is a formal ARECC exam session in which Level I, II, and III certification exams will be given by ARRL Certified Examiners. All students pay \$10 for each level exam they attempt--not for the entire session like VE exams. Cash or checks made payable to ARRL are acceptable. We give all three exams in order beginning with Level I. Students may take higher level exams as they pass the prerequisite levels. You earn certifications based on a passing grade of 80% or better. If you fail an exam, you may immediately retake a second version of it at no cost. We report all the results to the ARRL according to their published guidelines and rules. If you earn a certificate, the ARRL will send it to you directly from headquarters in Newington, CT.

All licensed Radio Amateurs are welcome. Register by sending name, callsign, phone and email address by email to: registration@w3qa.net, or do it online at www.w3qa.net/ccar/register.htm.

DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE BAND EDGE IS?

Of course you do. You had to memorize that stuff for your license exam. You had to learn where the ham bands stop, and where you're allowed to use what mode.

You also had to learn about bandwidth of various modes: How wide is a SSB signal? A RTTY signal? An FM signal? A CW signal? Did you ever stop to think about how this stuff you had to learn about bandwidth relates to the business of band edges?

Several hams have learned about this the hard way, the embarrassing way — i.e., via letters from Riley that are public documents. Just the other day, I heard someone with at least a General class license say to another operator on upper sideband, "This isn't my frequency, but I'd like to talk with you. Let's go down one." So they went down 1 kHz and proceeded to QRM the heck out the guy they intended to be polite to.

If you might have made the same mistake, it's time to get back to some basics. Sideband signals are approximately 3 kHz wide, so going 1 kHz below someone's QSO on upper sideband is not enough to avoid causing interference.

Ward Silver N0AX has started a series of articles in *QST* to refresh our memories about these things. The first one is "The ARRL Frequency Measuring Tests," in the November magazine. If you don't read anything else, at least look at Table 2 on the bottom of page 51. Then maybe your name won't be on the wrong page of Riley's address book.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MARC PR EFFORT

By Bob Weiss KB3FSQ

Taking over the Public Relations job this year was quite a challenge, but it would not have been possible without your participation in the club's many efforts. The following are highlights of what has been done this year to upgrade our PR effort and make our club more visible in the public eye.

I have made an effort to convert the mailing list for news releases from a paper copy, US Mail driven system to an all e-mail system very successfully. With the exception of Field Day and Hamfest, all news releases are sent electronically, thus allowing the club to hold its PR budget under \$10 annually. The amount of PR sources has been drastically upgraded. This has resulted in our PR effort being heard regularly on KYW Newsradio's *Dateline KYW Newsradio* segment and our club being placed in various print and electronic media throughout the greater Philadelphia region. Some new members joining is a result of our expanding PR effort.

We have started to promote our Tom Powell Memorial (VE) Test Sessions in an effort to promote them to a greater general public. A potential candidate actually signed up as a result of hearing about our test sessions in the print media. This is yet another dimension of our increasing PR effort.

Field Day was promoted in four different print media sources. One of the reporters, ironically, knew two of our members — the "youth corps," **Leland N3LJB** and **Owen N3WO**. We received a great story as a result of that. We also received great publicity from the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, Norristown *Times Herald* and *Montgomery Life*. The story in *Montgomery Life* made the front page in an excellent position. We also were able to get two visitors as a result of my outreach — **Bill Wilfong** (Lower Providence Fire Marshal) and **Bud Carroll** (Lower Providence Police Chief). The hamfest was featured in all of the Amateur Radio websites and media. We are grateful to all of the media who were able to promote this past year's hamfest.

I have told you what I have done. Now here is what you can do. GET INVOLVED! Monitor the media for articles on the subject that would interest both me and the club. Keep promoting amateur radio wherever you go. This will make my life a little easier. Finally, enjoy the club and its great efforts. We are trustees of the amateur radio industry/hobby. We are entrusted with keeping the industry/hobby alive for future generations. Our promotions, along with our participation in the club, go a long way in ensuring the value of the industry/hobby. We cannot spell success without u.

If you have any ideas, please contact me at the telephone number and e-mail address on the masthead of this edition of *REMARCS*.

HAMS AND HURRICANES

Since 1980, ham radio has been an official part of the National Hurricane Center, located at Florida International University in Miami. Today, the station signs W4EHW, and it anchors the Hurricane Watch Net.

To find out about the Hurricane Watch Net and W4EHW, go to www.fiu.edu/orgs/w4ehw/. The page on this site that summarizes what the station is all about is at www.fiu.edu/orgs/w4ehw/w4ehw-about.html.

DOES HF HAVE TO BE COMPLICATED & EXPENSIVE?

What ham doesn't dream of having an antenna farm with Roxborough-type towers and stacked Yagis and miles of hard-line and big honking amplifiers?

Few of us will ever own such stations. MARC members are living proof that there's plenty of fun on HF even if you live where gonzo stations aren't realistic, or if you like to operate portable in the backwoods on flea power.

They say that aerodynamically speaking, bumblebees can't fly. But nobody told the bumblebees, so they fly anyway. Don't let limitations get you down. Take a good look at the bumblebees . . . do they look like they're not having fun?

MY ANTENNA SYSTEM

By Dieter Hauer WB3JWU

No beam here. Never had one. I use a 140-foot off-center-fed dipole, approximately 30 feet up. It's resonant on 10, 20, 40, and 80 meters. It also loads up very nicely on 12 and 17 meters, using the internal tuner in the TS-850, even though it wasn't intended for use on those bands.

I've even used it a few times (with limited success) on 15 meters, although I have a 15 meter inverted vee inside the attic. CC&Rs here prevent me from putting up anything substantial. But I have a good relationship with my neighbors and was president of my homeowners association for 3 years. Our association is 26 years old, so the rules are not as comprehensive (i.e., ridiculous) as most others. However a tower, big vertical, or HF beam of any kind is totally out of the question.

The big dipole is pretty inconspicuous because the vertical run of feedline (slotted, 300 Ohm twin lead) is concealed by a 35-foot tree in my back yard. The 6:1 balun is waterproofed and mounted on the back of the tree trunk (so the neighbors can't see it) and . . . the 45-foot run of RG-9913 coax (rated for direct bury) from the house to the tree is buried 4 or 5 inches underground. Approximately 50 to 60 feet of the antenna goes into the neighboring woods, adjacent to my back yard, so you can't see that portion of the antenna.

I use a high-quality ceramic insulator screwed into a tree branch in the woods as a third support, approximately 50 feet from the end which is terminated in the woods. It prevents any excess sagging. This dipole is also very quiet. The balun is grounded for static dissipation and lightning protection. I redo all ground connections about 2 or 3 times a year.

It's been up for over 3 years now and is doing just fine. I built it with #14 gauge copperweld antenna wire and terminated the feedlines. It stretches very little, is tough as nails, and is a significant improvement over a full sized G5RV. It's 4 FULL wavelengths on 10 meters, 2 full wavelengths on 20 meters and a full wavelength on 40 meters. It behaves just like a 1/2 wave dipole on 80 meters. The balun was from W2FMI (Amidon) and expensive at \$90, but is well constructed and provides an excellent match between feedlines.

No amplifiers here, it's 100 watts or less and I always use a low-pass filter.

A 40-METER INVERTED VEE FOR HIKING TRIPS

By Carter Craigie N3AO

Most of the time when I go hiking and hamming, I use a simple inverted vee antenna. It seems to go up and down easily, and it gets out pretty well. I've tried other antennas — they all work to one degree or another — but I always seem to come back to that simple inverted vee. Let me explain.

As you already have learned about me, I like to operate in the out-of-doors, and most especially on the Appalachian Trail. In each of the spots I've hiked and hammed, there were always trees overhead, and these have become my antenna support systems.

In my backpack I always carry a deep-sea lead fishing weight: it's shaped like a little barrel with a hole drilled lengthwise from end to end. I tie a 12" length of brightly colored nylon string through the hole, and to this string I have attached a fishing line swivel (rated for 10 pounds). The color of the string helps me locate the weight after I throw it up in the trees. The swivel keeps the string from getting curled and twisted on itself.

I strip off about 50 feet of line from the slender tube on which it is wrapped. I next put the remaining string (and the tube) on the ground, pick up the string (coming from the tube) and then re-coil it on the ground loosely in front of me. When I reach the free end I attach the swivel on the weight to another swivel I had already tied to the free end of the string. Now I'm ready to take aim at a convenient overhanging branch.

After swinging the weight back and forth a few times, I let it fly, and sometimes it goes right over the branch I had intended; if it doesn't I have to repeat all the above procedure. I haven't found a shortcut that works!

There is an eye-hook on the top of my center insulator, and I attach the string's swivel hook after taking off the weight. I go back to my string and pull the insulator up to eye level. I make a quick tie of the string to a handy branch; then I attach, separate, and straighten out the two legs of the antenna. I make sure that the coax falling from the insulator will not kink up as I raise the antenna.

I go back to my string, untie it from the branch, and slowly haul the center insulator up to about 25 or 30 feet. I then tie down the string so it won't slip.

I have two smaller tubes of string each ended with a swivel. I have already soldered a small lug to the free ends of my antenna wires, so it is an easy thing to clip the wires to the strings. I pull each leg out and away, getting it as high off the ground as I can; then I tie the string of each end to tree branches. I try to get the antenna legs to be in a straight line, but being a little off doesn't seem to matter.

I hook up the coax (I use RG-174 or RG-58) to the connector on the back of my QRP rig, hook up the battery, plug in the headphones and the paddles, open my yellow stenographer's pad and black ink pen, lean back on a friendly tree trunk — and I'm calling "CQ" on my favorite 40-meter frequency! Fun!

EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

From the Estate of Tom Powell K3YPO

*Proceeds go to Tom's widow, Edith. All equipment is sold as-is. I have not tested anything to see if it works. Tom was a non-smoker, so equipment does not smell bad. Most prices have been set on the basis of info on eHam.net, but reasonable offers will be considered. Prices do NOT include shipping. If shipping is required, the buyer is expected to pay for packaging and shipping. Contact **Carter N3AO** (610-993-9623, n3ao@arrl.net).*

- ADI Communications At-600 handheld xcvr, 2m/440 MHz. Ext. power supply, cig lighter connector, ext. speaker mic, manual. \$150.
- Murch Electronics UT-2000A transmatch, 10-80m, handles up to 2000w PEP. \$200.
- Kenwood TS-520 (not 520S or SE!) HF xcvr, no manual; Kenwood SP-520 speaker; Kenwood MC-50 desk mic. For sale as a group for \$250.
- Heathkit SB-200 linear amp, assembly manual. Case painted orange, silver dollars for knob covers. Includes 4 RG-8U coax jumper cables. \$300.
- MFJ-1274 TNC 2 packet TNC. Manual, power supply, cabling. \$35
- Heathkit HM-102 SWR / power meter. No docs. \$35.
- Regency 6 ch VHF/UHF model H604 hand-held scanner, with power supply. Probably xtal controlled. \$10.
- Realistic PRO-2021 200 ch programmable scanner, AM/FM, VHF/UHF, wall plug, antenna cable, manual. \$75.
- Slinky dipole antenna, frequency unknown. \$25.
- Homebrew 2m ground plane antenna, 2m. \$2.
- Pro-Am mag mount antenna, 1/4 wave, 2m. \$25.
- Larsen dual-band 2m/440 MHz NMO 2/70 mag mount antenna. \$30.
- No-name 5/8 wave 2m mag mount antenna. \$20.
- No-name low pass filter, probably handles high pwr, \$5.
- Heath-Zenith HDP-1396 muff-type headphones, mono 1/4" plug, individually-adjustable volume controls for each ear. \$20.
- HF trap dipole antenna, band(s) unknown. \$20.
- Globe PP-1245-12v gel cell rechargeable battery pack in simulated leather carrying case. Wall charger, one fuse. No docs. \$20.

NEW PR MANUAL ON-LINE

ARRL's updated PR manual for ham radio is now on line at www.arrl.org/pio/handbook. It's available in both html and PDF formats. The booklet is designed to help anyone who wants to help publicize ham radio.

TIP FOR NEW CW CONTESTERS

Just as we often send N instead of 9 in signal reports (599 becomes 5NN) CW ops in contests abbreviate other numbers, too. Figure 0 usually becomes a T. Figure 1 is sometimes sent as an A. Know why? Maybe "nine" begins with the letter N, but also consider the dah-dit at the end of a 9. The 0 in Morse is like a string of T's, hence T for 0. The number 1 begins with a di-dah, hence A for 1. This can be confusing at first. And at second. But you get used to it. Eventually.

SOME OPERATING EVENTS ON HF

Nov. 2-4 ARRL November Sweepstakes, CW

Nov. 16-18 ARRL November Sweepstakes, phone

Sweepstakes has the most complex exchange in contesting, a legacy of its origin as a traffic-handling contest. See page 100 of October QST for rules.

Nov. 23-24 CQ World-Wide Contest, CW.

Good fast code practice, lots of nice DX. Send 599 plus your CQ zone, which for most MARC members is 05. Casual participants, please don't call USA stations in the contiguous 48 states; they get no points for working you. Calling Canadians is okay.

Dec. 7 NWS/ARRL Skywarn Recognition Day

Earn a certificate for contacting Skywarn stations around the USA. Details are on page 83 of November QST.

Dec. 6-8 ARRL 160 Meter Contest, CW

Send 599 and your state. Details are on page 114 of November QST.

Dec. 14-15 ARRL 10 Meter Contest, SSB and/or CW

Will we be able to work DX outside the western hemisphere this year, or will the declining sunspot cycle make this mostly a domestic contest? Send 59(9) and your ARRL Section. For most MARC members it's Eastern PA (EPA on CW). Details are on page 114 of November QST.

CALLSIGN FUN QUIZ

1. Your sweetie wants to go on vacation to a place with a pleasant climate, pretty beaches, comfy hotels, etc. Would you be more likely to choose VP8 or VP9 as your destination? Why?
2. These USA prefixes are for places outside the contiguous 48 states. How many can you match with their names? KH6, KL7, KP4, KP2, KH8.
3. If a station's prefix is 4U1, where is it located?
4. Today, calls with KZ5 prefixes are ordinary USA. Years ago, what did a KZ5 prefix signify?
5. Speaking of 5's, how many of the states in the 5th call area can you name?

CALLSIGN FUN QUIZ ANSWERS

1. VP8 is the prefix for several British island groups in the extreme south Atlantic Ocean (Falkland Islands is one), some of which have more penguins than people. Vacation spots? Nuh-uh! Head for VP9, which is Bermuda.
2. KH6 = Hawaii, KL7 = Alaska, KP4 = Puerto Rico, KP2 = U.S. Virgin Islands, KH8 = American Samoa.
3. Trick question. The 4 permanent stations with 4U1 prefixes are at United Nations buildings in 3 different countries. 4U1UN is at UN HQ in New York City. 4U1WB is at the World Bank in NYC. 4U1ITU is at International Telecommunications Union HQ in Geneva, Switzerland. 4U1VIC is at a UN facility in Vienna, Austria.
4. When there was a Panama Canal Zone controlled by the USA, the KZ5 prefixes were issued to stations there.
5. Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico are in the 5th call area. I always leave out New Mexico. How about you?