

Presidents Message

Well, I am pretty certain by now most of you have heard that we lost our 105 ft. VHF tower at the Club site to perhaps a 90 mph gust. This occurred during a rather violent windstorm in March, just a few days following our Club meeting. At this juncture the insurance adjuster has surveyed the fallen mass, taken pictures, etc. and, thanks to Al, KB2AYU, the tower remains have been cut-up and disposed of. We lost all of the antennas, the mast, but not the rotator. Fortunately, the tower missed landing on the trailer, the storage shack, and the generator. We are now in the process of preparing a submission to the insurance company for replacement. Unfortunately, we just received a copy of a letter from the adjuster to our insurance company indicating that, in their opinion, we are not covered for wind damage to external appendages to our main building (i.e. the trailer). Fortunately, we have within our membership roster Dennis, K2SE, who owns his own insurance agency, and he has agreed to look over our policy and take it from here. We have met with Dennis and he is in the process of following-up on the letter, etc. We will keep you informed of the outcome. Regardless, we will be without 100 ft. VHF/UHF antenna capability at the Club site for some time as the insurance situation becomes unwound and then the antennas are restored, etc. Hence, our club VHF DXers will have to upgrade their patience factors for a bit until this issue is resolved.

On a much brighter note, Harry, K2ATX, following up on a chance meeting with the 4H Program people, has attended a formal meeting with the program chair ladies, and with the 4H Club officers. They are anxious that we resurrect our support of a 4H youth Radio Club, assist with organization, instruction, operation, etc. The 4H folks are now in the process of identifying members who are interested in Ham Radio and forming the nucleus of a 4H Radio Club. K2ATX has agreed to help with this club and would welcome any other GCARC members who would like to assist. The formation of this Club and successful assistance from us would certainly build a nice bridge between our two organizations. See Harry to volunteer your help with this project.

At our last Club meeting, we were very pleased to have John, AA2BN, volunteer to be our Field Day (FD) chairman for this year and, if we're lucky, for beyond. Be sure to check with John if you would like to be a band chairman, or help-out in any other way. Next month's Crosstalk should have more complete details of this year's event.

I also thank Dave Strout, W2YC, for giving us an update on Log Book of the World at the April meeting.

Incidentally, you won't want to miss our May 7th Club meeting. Charlie, K2PQD, has donated a really first-rate mystery gift for our 50:50 and you may be the lucky winner! Also, Alan, KB2AYU, is scheduled to present a really worthwhile program on SWR. I hope to see everyone at our 7:30 PM meeting.

Down Jersey DXing

By Bill Grim, W0MHK

Slowly the sun is bubbling up a few tiny sunspots to tease us into the new Solar Cycle. It's painfully slow pace is not making it any easy to write a DX Column. C'mon Mr. Sun! DX pickings are still pretty slim, but there have been a few decent Pacific openings the last few days from 160M to 17M from this QTH. I hope you have some luck with this trend in the next few weeks.

YK9G, with well-known DXpeditioners, G3SXW and G3TXF, mounted a serious multi-band and multi-mode effort from Syria this month. Unfortunately, they did not seem to have a great deal of success working stateside. It is interesting how relatively easy working 4X4 is compared to YK from the East Coast. Special effort was made to work the U.S. West Coast where Syria is especially tough for the DX population. W2YC did snag them on 80 Meter CW, but I have not heard of any other local successes, myself included.

I would like to ask for your help in compiling your yearly stats for publication of the annual Club DXCC Standings list which will be in the July issue of our newsletter. Check the July 2007 "DX Dope" column for categories needed with your totals and yes/no successes. Please direct your "hard-fought" DX accomplishments over the past year to me at w0mhk7388@aol.com. Be glad to answer any questions about how to calculate or express your endorsements for posting at that same email address!

The DX activity list below will reflect a few Pacific "goodies" that may still favor our locale. Note also, that there is an extremely rare opportunity potentially to work ZS8, Marion Island, off the southern tip of the Republic of South Africa coming up. Question marks best describe this effort thus far. We just don't know how active the individual who is going there for approximately a year will be. ZS8 is rated among the Top Ten Most Wanted in the World, so keep one eye on the clusters/DX Bulletins and one ear to the bands for activity from this normally "hamless" DXCC entity!

| STATION | DATES | BAND/MODES* | RARITY# | ENTITY |
|---------|------------|--------------|---------|---------------|
| TK7C | 5/2-5/13 | 80-10/c/s/d | 2 | Corsica |
| KH2 | 5/9-5/11 | 80-6 | 3 | Guam |
| ZS8 | 5/1-5/1/09 | ? | 5 | Marion Island |
| 3D2 | 5/17-5/31 | 160/6-c/s/d | 2 | Fiji |
| 3V8SS | 5/15-5/26 | 160/2-c/s/d | 2 | Tunisia |
| 8P9TS | 5/21-6/21 | HF&6M Focus! | 1 | Barbados |
| T32XG | 5/27-6/3 | HF/c/s/d | 2 | East Kiribati |
| A52TL | 5/3-5/30 | Most Bands | 4 | Nepal |

* c=cw s=ssb d=digital # - 5 is most difficult

Credits: The Daily DX, NG3K ADXO

May General Meeting Program

Alan Arrison, KB2AYU, will give the May program on SWR-Truths, Myths, and Urban Legends which was postponed from the April Meeting due to projector problems. Al is currently our Club Secretary as well as Chairman of the Club House and Repeater Committees.

Those “Other” VHF FM Bands

By Cory Sickles, WAUVV

Did you know that 10 meters was once considered VHF? My Junior High’s library even had a radio book from the early 1900’s that referred to that range of the spectrum as UHF! (At least it had some books on radio.)

Oh, yeah, one text book for our Health Class explained how “popping zits” in the facial areas near your nose could cause insanity and how X-Ray machines in stores were a good idea for fitting shoes on children.

When most hams think of FM activity, they think 2 meters. But there are opportunities to work FM on both 10 and 6. Repeaters are allowed on both and when the bands are open, it’s amazing what you can do with 10 watts and a quarter-wave antenna on your car.

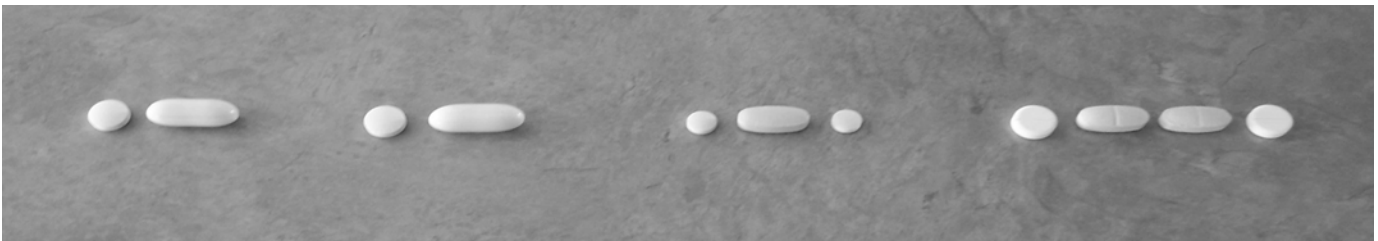
On 10 meters, the most common simplex frequency is 29.60 MHz, although many will argue it is not the official “calling frequency”. Repeaters are found on 29.62, 29.64, 29.66 and 29.68 with inputs 100 KHz lower. In Europe, you can find machines spaced in between on “odd” channels. Sunspots aren’t the only things that drive propagation here, tropo openings provide mornings and evenings full of surprises.

On 6 meters, the calling frequency is 52.525 MHz and there are many more repeater possibilities. Here too, a 10 watt mobile can open up another world of contacts and conversations. A quick bit of research in the “Repeater Guide” will give you information on local machines and related info.

If you don’t have a rig capable of covering these bands, there are some interesting possibilities. While there are new radios being manufactured that cover these bands from several companies, (Alinco, Icom, Ranger, Yaesu and more) some great bargains can be had at ham fests. I’ve picked up some Azden’s for under \$40 and Regency’s for \$25 or less. The Azden-2800 (10 watts) is synthesized, as is the discontinued Radio Shack HTX-10. An old HR-6 is crystal controlled, but most come with 52.525 in there and give you 25 watts. For a buck a watt or less, that’s still a great deal. You may need to pick up a CTCSS (PL) encoder for repeater use, but those are really cheap if you know where to look. Alternately, you can build one out of junk box parts (your junk box may vary).

Another source of rigs is found in older commercial units. Motorola, GE and Kenwood have all made radios for low-band VHF and many can simply be reprogrammed without any hardware modifications. Some models even have 100 watt PA’s. Here, you will need some programming expertise to set up the rig, but that is available from several sources, as well.

Now that spring is here, bringing many of the “cool to hot” mornings and “hot to cool” evenings that encourage tropo ducting, it’s a good time to explore these other VHF bands.



You know you are an “Old Timer” when you can spell out things with you daily pills.

Build Your Own “Space Station”

By Cory Sickles, WA3UVV

No, not the kind you put in orbit, but one you can use to talk to or through those things that are already in orbit such as OSCAR satellites and ARISS on the International Space Station.

OK, before your eyes develop the “Thousand Yard Stare”, you probably have just about everything already needed to do it. I’m talking about what’s commonly known as the “Easy Sats”. They are a sub-category of satellites that use FM, typically with a 2 meter uplink and 70 cm downlink. (ARISS is the opposite.) Further, it’s possible to use as little as 5 watts and an inexpensive antenna to do it.

Since virtually every ham has a 2 meter handheld, that takes care of the transmitter. If you have a dual-bander or a spare scanner that covers 435~437 MHz, that can take care of your receiver needs. Yes, your mobile rig works great, too and the additional power allows you to use an even simpler antenna!

Passes are typically up to 12~14 minutes at a time, several times a day. It’s cool to work QRP from Canada to the Caribbean on VHF/UHF! With my setup, I also use a small tape recorder. Then, I just play the tape back and log from it later, instead of worrying about writing stuff down during the pass. It all fits into a small case at my side while holding the mike and antenna. Again, chances are you have most of this stuff already. This is just a new way to use it!

You can get information on the satellites, current positions, overhead pass times and more at Amsat.org. There are also some informative videos on YouTube.com. You’ll see neat ways to use a crossed yagi and cheap camera tripod. I’ve even had some success with a pair of j-poles made out of twinlead and some PVC. I’m also planning on bringing my “space station” to the meeting for you to see. You don’t need to know everything about how satellites work or be a rocket scientist to have fun with these things - just the desire to try something new.

Awards Program Progress

Dave, W2YC, our Awards chairman reports he has nearly completed computerizing all of the past information regarding our Club members standings for the Club Award. Also, Dave has located the member progress information regarding the Club Megapoint Award given to those attaining one million contest points. He is proposing that we broaden the Megapoint Award to include most of the worldwide contests rather than just the few contests that were included previously. He is proposing that the Club, following recommendation from the Board, approve this change before proceeding with implementation. Further details will be available at the May General Membership Meeting.

Random Technologies to Help You Spend More Money on Amateur Radio

By Cory Sickles, WA3UVV

The other day, I got some samples of electric fence tape from one of the companies (HorseGuardFence.com) that like to send us stuff for dogs and horses. That, of course, has nothing to do with ham radio, right?

Well, after a few moments of thinking about it, I realized it could be someone’s solution to creating a “stealth antenna.” It is plastic, with wires woven in and comes in colors. They even have one version

that resembles twin lead.

For those of us that like to grab a QRP rig (preferably one we built) and go to a park or hike in the woods, one of the topics of discussion is earphones/headphones. You want something that works well, but is small and lightweight. The stock iPod 'phones are pretty good, but don't do much to block out external noise sources.

My son bought a set of Skull Candy 'phones recently. They come in colors and if you don't mind the deathly logo, work well at dampening outside noise while being about 2~3dB less efficient than those that come with the iPod.

While I'm on the subject of the iPod, or most any other MP3 player, they can be used for more than just listening to music. There are many podcasts (think recorded radio show) available, including some ham radio related programs I mentioned last month. Whatever your interest, from cooking to wine to investing to sports, someone, somewhere is producing them. You can also use them for CW practice or to learn a foreign language. Just knowing a few phrases in someone's native tongue can get you through the DX pileups, too. While the "Shuffle" starts at \$49 and the 4GB "Nano" (with video!) is available for \$149, I've also found 1GB players for \$20.

You can also record your own stuff and play it back. Ever get tired of calling "CQ contest..."? Just make up a cable and hit a button on your iPod. If you get bored while shopping with the family, you can check out the new Apple store at the Cherry Hill Mall. For big ticket items though, I'd go to Delaware. Hey, there's a Ham Radio Outlet down there on the way...

Finally, (for now) do you have a UPS on your computer(s)? How about your station? More than just keep things running when the mains drop out, they can protect you against sags and surges. It's a good investment. I have these things all over the house attached to the cable converter, TV, internet router and a few other things. I also have a small generator, for longer outages. It's nice for keeping the furnace and refrigerators going, if nothing else.

Field Day 2008

As mentioned in our President's Message this month, John Zaruba, AA2BN, has volunteered to chair Field Day this year. This is our Club's biggest event of the year and will held June 28th and 29th at the Club site on the 4H fairgrounds. It is not too early to start making plans for that weekend or at least to get the weekend on the calendar so that you don't make other plans for the time. This is always a fun event and the more active you get the more fun you will have. I am sure John will have more information about Field Day in the next issue of Crosstalk or you can see him at the May General Membership Meeting.

New Law in New Jersey

As I am sure all of you know as of March 1st it is illegal to use a wireless communication device in a moving vehicle on a public highway unless it is a hands-free. The law does not apply to amateur radio communications but in a moving car it will be difficult for law enforcement officers to distinguish between an amateur radio microphone and a cell phone so it will be very handy to have you amateur radio license handy in the vehicle if you get pulled over. Of course it is important that you operate your vehicle safely while talking on any communications device cell phone or 2 meter rig.



MAY **CONDUCTED BY N2SS** **2008**

WARC BANDS

| <u>30 Meters</u> | <u>17 Meters</u> | <u>12 Meters</u> |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| W2YC. 312 | N2SS ...325 | WØMHK310 |
| N2SS297 | WØMHK.. 322 | N2SS.....303 |
| WØMHK ..279 | W2YC 316 | W2YC.....280 |
| WA2NPD ..216 | WA2NPD . 221 | N2CQ.....99 |
| AA2WN....171 | AA2WN ... 122 | WA2NPD...96 |
| AB2E147 | AB2E..... 122 | AB2E92 |
| N2CQ..... 111 | N2CQ 115 | AA2WN.....20 |

When the same call heads all 3 WARC bands we will have that elusive, undisputed **KING OF WARC**

160 Meters

| | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| W2YC..... 208 | N2SS 79 |
| WØMHK 152 | AA2WN 36 |
| AB2E 100 | N2CQ 9 |
| WA2NPD..... 96 | |

W2YC continues as our undisputed **Top of Top Band.**

RTTY **DIGITAL**

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| W2YC..... 287 | N2SS 53 |
| AA2WN..... 187 | WA2JSG 10 |
| N2CQ..... 151 | |

MOBILE DX

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| W2YC276 | WØMHK 141 |
| N2SS.....234 | AA2WN 131 |

Looks like Dave and I have spent entirely too much time behind the wheel!

1.5K Club

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| W2YC1598 | AA2WN 1369 |
| N2SS.....1543 | AB2E 1185 |
| WØMHK 1478 | N2CQ..... 1135 |
| WA2NPD ... 1453 | |

Islands On The Air

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| N2SS.....846 | AB2E 205 |
| W2YC.....674 | N2CQ..... 159 |
| WØMHK381 | |

6 METER DXCC

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| WØMHK..... 106 | W2YC.....38 |
| N2SS55 | AA2WN.....15 |

GRID SQUARES

| | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| WØMHK..... 540 | |
|-----------------------|-------|

Rules for GCARC Honor Roll Listings
 Provide me with your total IOTAs worked, or countries (including deleted) worked for: WARC Bands, 160 Meters, Digital modes, Mobile, 6 Meters or your total for 80,40,20, 15 and 10 for 1.5K Club. Final category is Grid Squares – just send me your total worked. Lastly, you do not have to participate in every category to be listed; just send me your totals for any of the categories listed.

CURRENT OFFICIAL ARRL DXCC STATISTICS

| | |
|--------------------|-------|
| Active Count | 338 |
| Deleted Count..... | 58 |
| Last Addition..... | KH8/S |
| Last Deletion..... | STØ |

May Birthdays

Congratulations to these members celebrating birthdays in May:

Walt Ashton, WB2OYQ
In Su Chon, AB2IT
Carmen Inverso, WA2TRS
Darrell Neron, AB2E
Virginia Wallace, KB2JCQ



Crosstalk Submissions

This is your Club newsletter. Make use of it. Feel free to contribute general interest articles and ideas for articles.

All submissions, queries, comments and editorials should be addressed to Gene Schoeberlein at aa2yo@arrl.net.

Submission deadline for June issue:
5/27/2008

Club Web-Site

<http://users.tellurian.com/freddie/w2mmd/>

President-Doug, WA2NPD
Vice President-Wayne Wilson, WA2LET
Treasurer-Ken Newman, N2CQ

Chuck Colabrese, WA2TML
Darrell Neron, AB2E
Bill Blakeley, WA2ADB

Cory, WA3UVV
Steve, W2TDS

GCARC Officers

Recording Secretary-Al Arrison, KB2AYU
Corresponding Secretary-Al Arrison, KB2AYU

Board of Directors

Harry Bryant, AA2WN
Gene Schoeberlein, AA2YO
William Grimm, W0MHK

Trustees

Ray, WB2NBJ
Mike, N2SRO

Committees

ARES/RACES-John, AA2BN
Awards-Dave, W2YC
Budget-Steve, W2TDS
Clubhouse Site-Al, KB2AYU
Club License Trustee-Darrell, AB2E
Constitution-As needed
Crosstalk-Gene, AA2YO
Database-Ray, W2RM
DX-Bill, W0MHK
Field Day-John, AA2BN
Hamfest-Harry, K2ATX

Hospitality-Ray, WB2NBJ
Membership-Ray, W2RM
Nominations-Doug, WA2NPD
Programs-Dave, WB3JOY
Publicity-Cory, WA3UVV
Repeaters-Al, KB2AYU
Scholarships-Greg, WN2T
Special Services, Darrell, AB2E
Sunshine-Ray, W2RM
Technical/TVI-Cory, WA3UVV
VEC Testing-Ray, W2RM

The W2MMD Repeaters

147.78/18 Mhz-Pitman
(CTCSS 131.8Hz)

223.06/224.66 Mhz-Sewell

447.1/442.1 Mhz-Pitman
(CTCSS 167.9Hz)

1272.4/1284.4 MHz-Pitman

GCARC Meetings

General Membership

7:30 pm 1st Wednesday every month
Pfeiffer Community Center
Williamstown, NJ

Board of Directors

8 pm 3rd Wednesday every month
GCARC Club site
Harrison Twp. 4H Grounds
1 mile south of Mullica Hill on RT77

Nets

ARES/RACES
Sunday 20:00 Hrs
(147.78/18 and
223.06/224.66
repeaters)

10 Meter- Sunday
following the
ARES/RACES Net
(28.350 Mhz)

May Meeting

SWR-Truths, Myths, and Urban Legends
By Alan Arrison, KB2AYU

Gloucester County Amateur Radio Club
P. O. Box 370
Pitman, NJ 08071

