



FEEDBACK

JANUARY 2010



COMMENTS

Our hamshack has both the 2 meter and the 220 local repeaters on 24 hours a day. Not always are we within hearing range or capable of answering the call made on those repeaters but we do try to keep up with whatever is happening. At least twice we have been able to get emergency help that couldn't be found any other way.

Many use their radios only when they expect to find someone. Lately, there has been an extremely annoying noise on the 2 meter repeater and those who use the repeater less often don't get as bothered by this extra noise as those of the 24 hour a day group. As a result of this it has been necessary to use the PL tones to secure the repeater from this noise.

The easiest way for users of the repeater to live with the noise until the source is found is to turn on their PL tones and just leave them on. No need to turn them off at any time and the repeater can be used just like it has been in the past. No pain, no sweat!

CTCSS

Continuous Tone Coded Subaudible Squelch is the official name. It is more commonly known as PL, or Private Line which is a Motorola term from many years ago. CTCSS tones range from 67.0 to 218.1 hertz. The tone is transmitted continuously while the transmitter is keyed. A receiver is configured to open its squelch when the correct CTCSS tone is received. This allows multiple users to occupy the same frequency but receive only the transmissions intended for them.

The W8DF repeater is capable of operating with CTCSS. The repeater has seldom required CTCSS in its history. Over the past several weeks, an interfering signal has caused the repeater to transmit. To relieve this annoyance, the CTCSS requirement has been turned on. All reasonably modern (less than 25 years old) transceivers have the ability to transmit CTCSS. The tone can be transmitted at all times without problem.

The CTCSS for W8DF is 94.8 hertz for the 146.66 and 443.95 repeaters. If you don't have it enabled, turn it on! If you need help, get it!

Don-W8RVT

ECHOLINK WORKS!

As most of you know, Ned-WB4BKO has set up winter residence in not so sunny and warm Florida. He has twice already this month connected to W8DF-R on the 224.24 repeater. At least he has not been telling us how nice and warm it is down there!

Gary-W8USU also left town for less cold and snow in Florida. For how long is unknown, but he has also connected to W8DF-R.

Echolink works great! Get in gear and learn how to use it!

Don-W8RVT



MAKES SENSE TO ME

What Should Every Ham Know How to Do?

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

On the HamRadioHelpGroup mailing list, there was recently a discussion about using modulated CW on 2m. One fellow pointed out that MFJ sold a unit that would do this. When I pointed out that this box cost \$100 and that they could do exactly the same thing with the \$18 PicoKeyer from HamGadgets.Com, I got some flack that the PicoKeyer was a kit, and that some people might not be able to build it.

I pointed out that a couple of years ago our club held a construction night, and that several people who had never soldered before successfully completed the kit. I also pointed out that even if the ham didn't have the proper tools, he or she could purchase a soldering iron, needle-nose pliers, and diagonal cutters, in addition to the kit, for less than \$100.

I don't know if that convinced him, but it got me thinking about what a ham should be able to do. This is the list I've come up with so far:

1. Solder. Every ham should know how to solder a connection, and by extension, build small kits and cables. Over the course of one's ham career, this skill will save you a ton of time and money.
2. Build a dipole antenna. The dipole is the simplest and most versatile antenna. Knowing how to build one and use it is an essential skill.
3. Check into a net. Net operation is one of the most basic operating skills.
4. Use a multimeter to measure voltage, current, and resistance and know what those measurements mean. This is the most basic skill used in trouble shooting, and at some point or another, you're going to have to troubleshoot something.

This list does, of course, imply that a ham is physically capable of doing them. I would not expect hams that are physically disabled to be able to do everything on this list.

After I posted this to my blog (www.kb6nu.com), I got several good responses. Jeff said, "I believe hams should know how to install RF connectors, particularly the three most used in our hobby, the PL-259, the BNC, and the N connector." Blair, WB3AWI, replied, "Another thing that hams should know how to do is to measure the SWR of an antenna."

So, now I ask you, What do you think every ham should know how to do? Feel free to post a comment to my blog or e-mail me at cwvgeek@kb6nu.com.

Board of Directors

President

Bob Kingsbury
KC8PRL
Kings-boo@yahoo.com

Vice President

James Heckman
KD8MNX

Secretary

John Davidson
W8JRD
kc8wmm@arrl.net

Treasurer

Don Larkin
W8RVT
w8rvt@arrl.net

Past President

Russ Beutler
N8UU
N8uu@mei.net

Advisory Committee

Public Information Officer

Lewis (Lou) Ryason
WB8WXS
wb8wxs@mei.net

Trustee

Russ Beutler
N8UU
n8uu@mei.net

Technical Engineer

David Gerber
AB8HK
David@mei.net

Editor

Marion Davidson
WA8MFL
wa8mfl@arrl.net

SMARS Web Site

www.w8df.com

All correspondence
should be addressed to

SMARS

P. O. box 934
Battle Creek, MI. 49016

QRPp on 500kHz

Roger G3XBM has been showing what can be achieved on the 500 kHz band using very low power and WSPR software.

On the GQRP reflector he writes:

My small 1mW ERP station reached further than ever into Europe last night [Thursday] with a report from DG6RCH (JN68) in S.Germany.

Distance was 960kms, just 40kms short of my elusive 1000kms personal target. More details of the QRP 500kHz station are on my website and blog.

Over the next few nights I'll be WSPRring overnight as there are a lot of new stations listening in Europe and conditions seem to be best in the small hours. There have also been new stations Txing from EI and PA of late and I've received WD2XSH/17 (running 5W ERP WSPR) several times in the last few weeks. 500kHz continues to hold me in its thrall.

The 500kHz vertical was coming down to make way for my 28MHz antenna, but I've decided to keep on 500kHz for the next few weeks at least. If the weather lets up, I may try to get a few more dB ERP by making some further antenna/ATU improvements.

Why not try listening on 500kHz WSPR this weekend? Audio from a RX tuned to 502.4kHz USB into a PC running the W1JT WSPR2 software is all you need. Even quite small, untuned, antennas work OK with rigs like the FT817 on 500kHz.

Roger G3XBM

(from e-ham)

YOUR DUCK IS DEAD

A woman brought a very limp duck into a veterinary surgeon. As she laid her pet on the table, the vet pulled out his stethoscope and listened to the bird's chest.

After a moment or two, the vet shook his head and sadly said, "I'm sorry, your duck, Cuddles, has passed away."

The distressed woman wailed, "Are you sure?" "Yes, I am sure. Your duck is dead," replied the vet..

"How can you be so sure?" she protested. "I mean you haven't done any testing on him or anything. He might just be in a coma or something."

The vet rolled his eyes, turned around and left the room. He returned a few minutes later with a black Labrador Retriever. As the duck's owner looked on in amazement, the dog stood on his hind legs, put his front paws on the examination table and sniffed the duck from top to bottom. He then looked up at the vet with sad eyes and shook his head.

The vet patted the dog on the head and took it out of the room. A few minutes later he returned with a cat. The cat jumped on the table and also delicately sniffed the bird from head to foot. The cat sat back on its haunches, shook its head, meowed softly and strolled out of the room.

The vet looked at the woman and said, "I'm sorry, but as I said, this is most definitely, 100% certifiably, a dead duck."

The vet turned to his computer terminal, hit a few keys and produced a bill, which he handed to the woman.. The duck's owner, still in shock, took the bill. "\$150!" she cried, "\$150 just to tell me my duck is dead!"

The vet shrugged, "I'm sorry.. If you had just taken my word for it, the bill would have been \$20, but with the Lab Report and the Cat Scan, it's now \$150."

ARES / RACES Report for DEC. 2009 in Calhoun County

RACES / Skywarn Nets and Training

10 Skywarn Training Nets 1hr each @ 139 People = Total 139 hrs

<u>Public Service Events</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Administration Hours,</u>	<u>Total 18hrs</u>
<u>Emergency Operations</u>	
<u>Equipment Hours</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Travel Hours</u>	<u>4 hrs Total</u>
<u>Expenses- Out of Pocke</u>	<u>\$75.00 Total</u>
<u>Travel Miles</u>	<u>50 Miles Total</u>
<u>Members</u>	<u>34</u>

Dave Smith
KC8COT
E-12
City of Battle Creek and Calhoun County
RACES, Emergency Coordinator

HAMFESTS

17 Jan
Hazel Park, MI
44th Annual Hamfest
Hazel Park Amateur Radio Club
Hazel Park High School
23400 Hughes St.
Talk-In 146.640 (PL 100)
Contact:
Mike Van Buren WD8S
Phone: 248-399-7970
email: wd8s@arrl.net

13 Feb
Traverse City, MI
Cherryland Amateur Radio Club
Immaculate Conception Elementary School
218 Vine St.
Talk-In 146.860
Contact:
Joe Novak W8TVT
Phone: 231-947-8555
email: jjnovak@charter.net

Income & Expense Statement

12/1/09 Through 12/31/09

<u>Category Description</u>	<u>12/1/09-</u> <u>12/31/09</u>
INCOME	
50 50	7.50
Dues	103.00
Hamfest Inc:	
Tables	150.00
Tickets	35.00
TOTAL Hamfest Inc	185.00
Interest Inc:	
Checking	0.37
TOTAL Interest Inc	0.37
TOTAL INCOME	295.87
EXPENSES	
Administration:	
Postage	22.00
TOTAL Administration	22.00
Feedback:	
Postage	35.20
Printing	108.57
TOTAL Feedback	143.77
Hamfest2010:	
Facility	626.00
Tickets	105.45
TOTAL Hamfest2010	731.45
Meetings:	
Refreshments	19.39
TOTAL Meetings	19.39
TOTAL EXPENSES	916.61
TOTAL INCOME - EXPENSES	-620.74

SMARS Board Meeting

January 4, 2010

Called to Order: 6:04 PM

Officers Present: Bob KC8PRL Don W8RVT John W8JRD

Topics:

Field Day: Fence is missing in construction area. Some other area might be usable for the Field Day setup. Perhaps the area just to the east of the last site. Bob will contact airport manager.

Hamfest: Reservations are coming in. Some vendors are asking for special table arrangements. The table layout needs to be finalized by February 1. Tables need to be set aside for ARRL, and a least 2 for the club. A decision is needed on how many rooms need to be reserved for TASYL's, MARS, etc. An area needs to be reserved for the talk-in. Don will check on reception and also the Wi-Fi situation at the MAC.

Membership Cards: The last few are being used right now. The current card does not have the club logo on it. John will check with Staples to see what formats are acceptable.

Presentations: Some alternatives were discussed, including captures of Youtube videos. John will check on tools to do this.

Repeaters: Don reported on his efforts to link the 220 and 440 repeaters. He also reported some issue with the I-gate.

Adjourned: 6:44 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
John Davidson W8JRD
SMARS Secretary

SMARS Club Meeting

December 17, 2009

Called To Order: 7:04 PM

Officers Present: Bob KC8PRL Don W8RVT John KC8WMM

Pledge of Allegiance

Introductions

Secretary's Report: approved as published in Feedback.

Treasurer's Report: approved as reported at the Club Meeting.

Committee Reports:

Hamfest: A report on tables sales was presented. Questions were raised about snow removal. Inquiries will be made concerning which club members may have access to snow plowing equipment. A question was raised about trunk sales at the hamfest. It has been decided not to allow these.

Field Day: A new site and new chairperson will be needed. The results of last year's event are published in QST.

ARES/RACES: no report

VE Testing: No report, other than there will not be a session in December.

Technical Engineer: The 220 and 440 repeaters are being linked together.

There is an issue with the audio which is being worked on. There is an intermittent noise on the 2 meter, requiring the use of a CTS tone (94.8).

The 440 is working well, just needing somebody to run the Wednesday night net.

Old Business:

The old 440 repeater still needs to find a new home.

New Business:

Elections: The following are the board members for 2010:

President: Bob Kingsbury KC8PRL
Vice-President: Jim Heckman KD8MNQ
Treasurer: Don Larkin W8RVT
Secretary: John Davidson W8JRD

Adjourned: 8:03 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
John Davidson W8JRD
SMARS Secretary

SOUTHERN MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

FEEDBACK



JANUARY 2010



SMARS
P.O. BOX 934
BATTLE CREEK MI 49016

FIRST CLASS MAIL



SMARS NETS

Before Lunch Bunch
Monday-Friday 11:30 A.M.
146.66

Sunday Evening 8:00 P.M.
146.66

Monday 7:30 P.M.
224.24

Wednesday 7:00 P.M.
443.95

Wednesday 8:00 P.M.
28.365

Saturday 8:00 P.M.
443.95

ARES/RACES/SKYWARN.NET
Monday 7:00 P.M. 147.12

ACTIVITY CALENDAR

HAMFEST HAZEL PARK JAN 17
THIS MONTH SMARS CLUB MEETING JAN 21
SMARS BOARD FEB 1
SMARS BREAKFAST FEB 6
B4LUNCH BUNCH LUNCH FEB 11
HAMFEST TRAVERSE CITY FEB 13
NEXT MONTH SMARS CLUB MEETING 18