



# March 2005

# Smoke Signals

The newsletter of The Indian Hills Radio Club

Wickliffe, Ohio 44092

## More Antenna Basics Featured During March 14 Meeting

*A continuation of last meeting's video*

**March may enter as a lion** or lamb, but regardless of the weather, the club will meet on Monday, March 14th. We do hope to see you there.

The March program will be a continuation of last meeting's interesting and instructional video, "Everything you always wanted to know about antennas but were afraid to ask."

Those who saw the first portion of the video enjoyed a very graphic demonstration of antenna fundamentals by Frank Rutter, K3AW. His show-and-tell approach gave us an impressive visual demonstration of the effect of antenna height on antenna wave patterns. The next presentation should involve other types of antennae, such as the inverted vee.

**With winter winding down**, thoughts turn to antenna projects. This video gives us plenty to think about, and tips for making our antenna installations better. So do check it out.

In addition to the video, enjoy a cup of coffee and a sweet roll while chatting with fellow members. Thanks to Don, K8ZGW, Joe, W8DOE, and John, K8OCK, for their volunteer service in bringing the refreshments.

The March meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. in the Wickliffe Public Library, 1713 Lincoln Road.

Join us! Bring a friend. ■

**Indian Hills Radio Club Net**  
**Thursday Evenings**  
**8:00 p.m. local time**  
**146.430 MHz simplex**

## FCC's Hollingsworth to speak at Toledo Hamfest March 19

*Other hamfests are on the calendar, too*

**Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH**, FCC Special Counsel and Enforcer, will be the featured speaker during the ARRL Great Lakes Convention Saturday, March 19. The event is held in conjunction with the Toledo Hamfest March 20.

Site of the Great Lakes Convention will be the Holiday Inn and Conference Center, 2340 South Reynolds Road, Maumee. Activities began at noon.

For information, contact Jeanie Dalton, PO Box 24188, Lexington, KY 40524-4188. Phone (859) 245-7703 or E-mail to <kb8qlc@arrl.net>

**Lake County Hamfest** is Sunday, April 3rd at the Madison High School in Madison from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. For those who haven't attended previously, this is an all-indoor event, with cafeteria food service.

Among the activities are an indoor fox hunt featured at 1:00 p.m. (bring your two-meter HT), and two craft demonstrations at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

There are hourly prize drawings, a mobile check-in prize awarded at noon, and main drawings will be held at 1:30 p.m. First prize is an ICOM dual band mobile radio, second prize is an ICOM dual band HT, and third prize is a watt meter. Admission is \$6.00. Flea market tables at \$9.00 for a six-footer, and \$12.00 for an eight-footer.

For information and reservations call (440) 209-8953 and leave a message between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. The E-mail address is: rocky@lcara.org.

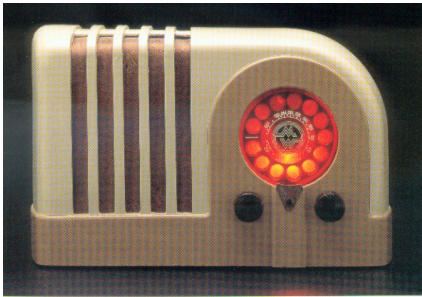
**Other hamfests** include Cuyahoga Falls on April 17, and the Dayton Hamvention May 20-22. ■



## A Look Back at Table Model Radios In Use in 1946

*Still look good today!*

**Plastic table model radios** were the rage after World War II. Radio broadcasts were still the favorite home entertainment medium, and while the larger consoles held a special place in the living room, the portables were found throughout the house.



Collector Philip Collins, from whose private stock this radio comes, says that between 1930 and 1941 alone about 71 million home

radio receivers were sold in the U.S. The radio shown is an Airline Model 62-455 sold in 1946.

Technical advances allowed the radios to be downsized from bulky wooden cabinet floor models. Radio cabinet designs also grew more stylish, colorful and interesting. Modern materials such as plastic and chrome reflected America's evolving tastes and interests.

Perhaps you can still hear Fred Allen's nasal radio voice saying, "Jack Benny is so cheap he wouldn't give you the parsley off his fish." ■

### Smoke Signals is the official publication of The Indian Hills Radio Club.

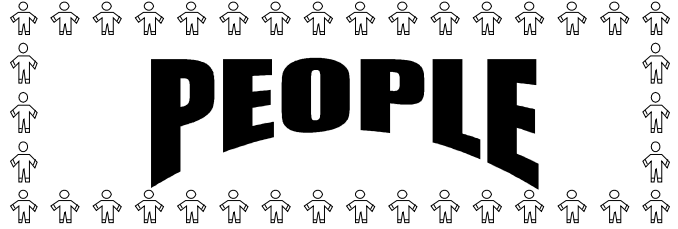
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**Dick Scott, W8FDN**, reports that he recently visited member **Lou Sabetto, W8PIU**, at the Greens on Brainard Road. Lou sends his regards to all the members and says he enjoys reading the club newsletter. Lou's address is The Greens, 1575 Brainard Road, Room 192D, Lyndhurst 44124. His telephone number is (440) 646-1266. Best time to telephone is in the evening.

**Bruce Thorne, KE8TI**, who is still greeting customers at AES, says that the "Candy Store" has recently downsized, but is alive and well. (We certainly hope so! - ed).

**Tom Korycki, KC8QGJ**, recently headed downtown from Chardon and paid a visit to the Amateur Radio station at the VA Hospital. Is he going to volunteer to staff the station? Time will tell.

**Looking great:** We're pleased to see **Stan Skebe, WA8LWH**, attending club meetings after a long string of bad luck with his health. Stan's not on the air, but is feeling okay.

**John Slauter, K8OFI**, says that he also had a recent health issue, but that his hernia is fixed. Easy does it!

**Top banders unite!** Lots of talk on the net about the 160-meter band and antennas to consider. **Les Peine, K8LP**, is hoping to build a new half-wave skyhook for the top band when the weather improves. Meanwhile, Les is enjoying a new MFJ automatic antenna tuner.

**Frank Baldo, KE8DV**, popped into the club meeting last month, looking fit. He's planning on buying a two meter rig, so we might hear him on the net soon.

**Author, author!** Readers of the Hints and Kinks section of *QST* may have seen an article by **Jeff Covelli, WA8SAJ**, in the February issue. Jeff says his article, "Restore Drake 'B-Line' Dials," was a full four pages, which was made much smaller by the editors. Jeff says he's just getting over the death of his grandfather and having a root canal done. (Ouch!) He hopes to make a meeting again soon. ■

## Phunny Phonetics

*Bet you've heard a few, too!*

The Friday lunch bunch has recalled a number of strange, funny or just plain different phonetics used with ham calls over the years. During a recent gabfest at Wellington's, your editor jotted down a few interesting ones as contributed by W8DOE, K8OCK, W8FDN, W8RPT, and W2TTW. Here they are:

**W8RPT:** Real Putrid Transmissions

**W8PJR:** Papa's Jumping Romeo

**W8RJF:** Roy's Junk Phone

**W2TSI:** Twin Sitting Indians

**W8ORM:** The Worm

**W8ICS:** I Can't Spell

**W8LJS:** Little Junk Station

**W1HEO:** Highly Excited Oscillator

**W8MMQ:** Many More Quintuplets

**K8OFI:** Old Fat Indians

**W8LAM:** Lost At Midnight

**9V1OI:** Nine Virgins, One Old Indian

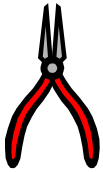
**W5HSG:** High Society Gentleman

**W8QYB:** Quit Your Bellyaching

**W8QEE:** Queer Electronic Engineer

**KH6BZF:** Bloomin' Zipper Flipper

How many more do you remember? Please jot them down and pass them along to the editor for a future update. ■



## Hints and



**Joe, W8DOE, contributed this one:** A magnetic screwdriver is handy to have in order to keep your screws from wandering away. To magnetize your screwdriver, Joe suggests using a Weller soldering gun to either magnetize or demagnetize tools.

**To magnetize:** Insert a screwdriver into the tip of the soldering gun and then turn it on and off.

**To demagnetize:** leave the soldering gun on as you remove the screwdriver.

**Waterproofing coax connectors:** Saran wrap is pretty tough, so wrap coax connectors with a few layers before adding the electrical tape. Coax Seal does a nice job. ■



## News From The Wide World of Amateur Radio

**ARRL's BPL comments** were presented during a California Public Utilities Commission public hearing on broadband over power lines. Key point: the PUC document neglected to mention the interference risk.

**FCC levies \$4,000 fine.** Paul Westcott, KCØOAB, of Purdy, Missouri, is being fined for willful and repeated failure to respond to Commission requests about his station. The FCC reports that the ham has been transmitting CW 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 7.03 MHz. Also, the FCC has fined a New Jersey restaurant \$10,000 for operating unlicensed transmitters — sold as cordless phones — on two meters.

**Vanity call fees:** The FCC is holding the current \$20.80 fee for vanity calls. The rate went from \$16.30 to the current fee last August. About 8,000 vanity call applications are expected during the year.

**Ohio ham honored:** President Bush has presented a President's Volunteer Service Award to Thomas Powell, N8UIR, of Northfield, Ohio. Powell is active in the Northeast Ohio Medical Reserve Corps which provides medical support services for public events and emergency situations. He volunteers over 800 hours a year.

**Dayton Hamvention highlights** will include "ARRL Expo 2005," and be host to the League's National Convention during the May 20-22 event. About 25,000 visitors are expected for the Hamvention, which includes indoor and outdoor exhibits, forums, fleamarket and more. Early birds can save \$5.00 on admissions by getting tickets online at the Hamvention Website <<http://www.hamvention.org>>

**Ham is Jeopardy winner:** Michael Braun, K3LNT, of Silver Spring, MD, who is 16, recently won \$75,000 on the TV Jeopardy Teen Tournament. He'll use most of his winnings for college, but some for ham gear, too.

**Silent Keys:** Stan Burghardt, WØIT, founder of Burghardt Radio Supply, is dead at age 93. Also, Lavene Vorel, WA4AZE, one of the engineers who designed the original Signal One transceiver at Electronic Communications, Inc has died. He was 60. ■

*The ARRL Letter*



## Jest A Moment!

The Lighter Side of  
The News, Collected  
By Don Ritchie, K8ZGW

### Two-letter word

**English is Easy?** A two-letter word has a hundred completely different meanings. So what is this stuff about English being easy?

There is a two-letter word that perhaps has more meaning than any other two-letter word, and that is "UP."

It's easy to understand UP, meaning toward the sky or at the top of the list, but when we awaken in the morning, why do we wake UP?

At a meeting, why does a topic come UP? Why do we speak UP and why are the officers UP for election and why is it UP to the secretary to write UP a report?

We call UP our friends And we brighten UP a room, polish UP the silver, warm UP the leftovers and clean UP the kitchen.

We lock UP the house and some guys fix UP the old car.

At other times the little word has real special meaning. People stir UP trouble, line UP for tickets, work UP an appetite, and think UP excuses.

To be dressed is one thing, but to be dressed UP is special.

And this UP is confusing: A drain must be opened UP because it is stopped UP. We open UP a store in the morning but we close it UP at night.

We seem to be pretty mixed UP about UP!

To be knowledgeable of the proper uses of UP, look UP the word in the dictionary. In a desk size dictionary, the word up takes UP almost a quarter page and definitions add UP to about thirty.

When it threatens to rain, we say it is clouding UP. When the sun comes out we say it is clearing UP. When it rains, it wets UP the earth. When it doesn't rain, things dry UP.

If you are UP to it, you might try building UP a list of the many ways UP is used. It will take UP a lot of your time, but if you don't give UP, you may wind UP with a hundred or more.

Why do we always tune UP our rigs and never down?

Our time's UP for now, so we'll shut UP! ■



Chewing the Rag:  
Odds and Ends From Here ,  
There and On the Air.  
By the editor

### A cozy source of radio interference

BPL isn't the only source of interference to ham radio and other types of receiving apparatus. How about electric blankets that use switching power supplies?

It seems that the FCC has received numerous complaints of interference from heated mattress pads and blankets sold by a Charlotte, NC importer. Hams were among those noting the problems, including an ARRL EMI engineer, Mike Gruber, W1RFI. (Love that guy's call!) It turns out that his XYL bought one of the blankets.

"It seems paradoxical that an electric blanket marketer is getting this level of attention," he said. (The FCC has agreed to end enforcement action if the company signs a consent decree.) "The conducted emissions are less than one percent of the power level BPL manufacturers have told the FCC that they use in their installations."

The ARRL lab examined one of the blankets. They found that it generated ticking sounds even when turned off. Evidently many such devices made overseas don't carry labels stating that they comply with FCC Part 15 rules.

The ARRL folks point out that the FCC rules aren't a cure-all for such interference. The bottom line to companies is: "Clean up your act."

### What's that noise in my radio?

We've long felt that one of the most useful ways for hams to identify a specific type of radio interference would be to *listen to it*. The ARRL agrees, and in fact, has an RF Noise Identification Web site. You can hear their recordings of the electric blanket noise mentioned above. The site is operated by VE3HLS. The address is: <<http://ve3hls.tripod.com/noise/rfhome.html>>

While we don't know about BPL sound signatures, the ARRL is suggesting that hams establish a basic spectrum noise floor or standard ambient noise environment *before* they need to complain about BPL interference.

Detailed instructions have been provided by the Cincinnati BPL/LIC committee for those interested. Generally, it involves recording the s-meter noise readings on several bands at different times of day. Make sure no signals are present. Jot down the details

Let's hope that none of us ever needs to use this data. ■



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