

May 2006 Smoke Signals

The newsletter of the Indian Hills Radio Club

Wickliffe, Ohio 44092

Flea market and auction At our May 8 meeting

Clear out those forgotten items in your shack!

Spring has sprung, so it's time for the almost-annual Spring cleaning of the radio shack. Grab those ancient treasures that have gathered dust for decades and bring them to our Monday, May 8 meeting. Sell them or auction them off, but **DO** something with them! A small portion of the proceeds may be donated to the club's treasury if you're in a sharing mood.

Please make sure that all items you bring are in good working order. (Or at least *reasonably* good working order.)



A nominating committee to select new officers will be formed during this meeting, so please consider helping out in this important assignment. A slate of proposed officers will be compiled and an election for the 2006-2007 club leadership will be held at our June 12 meeting.

Your support for the new Cleveland Ham Radio Promotion Project is needed so that this important effort can begin. Since our radio club is a co-sponsor, and has done most of the work so far, members will be asked to authorize a club registration fee of \$50.00. Individual contributions also are being solicited in addition to those from other radio clubs. Funds will be matched by the Cleveland Hamfest Association up to a combined total of \$500. All funds used will be accounted for on an annual basis. ■

Indian Hills Radio Club Net
Thursday Evenings
8:00 PM local time
146.430 MHz simplex

The Cleveland Ham Radio Promotion Project begins

Area radio clubs meet April 15

Cleveland-area radio club representatives met Saturday April 15 at the American Red Cross to review progress and discuss plans for the Cleveland Ham Radio Promotion Project. The Indian Hills Radio Club is a co-sponsor, along with Cleveland Chapter One of the Quarter Century Wireless Association.

Don Ritchie, K8ZGW, told the attendees that the idea for the promotion project originated with the Indian Hills Radio Club. A main reason for the project, he said, is the drop in the number of Amateur Radio operators due to aging of the ham population and general disinterest.

David Dennis, W8DDD, emphasized the need for active participation by radio clubs, saying that more hams can result in more club members. Those clubs that become participating members of the project by giving a \$50 contribution will receive several promotional tools. Included are the new 21-minute video, "Amateur Radio: Wireless Window to the World," a 50-page how-to manual or Toolkit, use of the portable display, a newsletter and free promotional assistance.

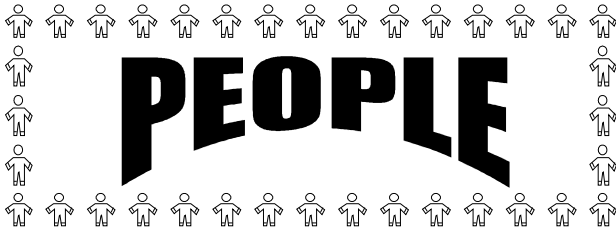


Clubs at promotion project update

"Dee" Logan, W1HEO, told the audience that all costs of producing the video have been donated. He read a message from video co-producer K8IFH, who donated his time, travel and production help.

In summing up, Dee stressed the need for an "Elmer Corps" that would be the contact points for radio clubs that also would offer training sessions.

"We need your participation as we move forward," he said. "Let's roll up our sleeves and do it!" ■



Gus Mirsalis, W8RPT, has recovered from a recent “small” heart attack following surgery to open a clogged artery. What began as a series of late night heartburn episodes turned out to be something much more serious. Gus is now back on his feet and feeling much better.

Top band fun: Members have been enjoying 160 meters lately. **Jim, K8BLB**, reports that he’s also having fun on 40, 17 and 20 meters, too. **Les, K8LP**, after struggling with a 160-meter dipole, has turned his attention to adding a loading coil to his Butternut vertical. Meanwhile, **“Dee,” W1HEO**, has researched antennas and decided to try an inverted L for 160.

Hamvention, ho! David, W8DDD, is planning to wheel and deal at the Dayton flea market.

Beam me up, Ed! Ed, N8THI, is building his own three-band beam. A true homebrew project that will also save a few bucks.

On the road again: It’s trips ahoy for **Al, W8NPH**. One will be to Branson, Missouri, for a Marine Corps reunion. A second will be to Harrisburg, PA. He may opt to go by train in order to enjoy more leg room.

Outta site? Please note that the correct address for the Web site of **Tom, KC8QGJ**, is <kc8qgj.tripod.com>

Tall tower takedown: The future of his 50-foot tall tower is being evaluated by **John, KS8A**. Could be that he’ll take down his Universal aluminum tower and may offer it for sale. Any takers?

Riding the rails: Rail buff **Jim, WD8PFK**, has been certified on railroad safety rules and qualified as a student fireman on locomotive 1225. That’s the engine that was featured in the popular movie *Polar Express*. ■

High technology galore in Today’s ham rigs described

Details from April meeting speaker K8EUR

The ICOM 756 Pro III and new IC7000 transceivers were featured at the club’s April meeting. Guest speaker Al Dolgosh, K8EUR, told the members that the two sophisticated rigs represent the state of the art and where Amateur Radio technology is today.

“The selectivity and sensitivity of these rigs was unheard of 10 to 15 years ago,” he said. “CW signals of 100 Hertz are copied thanks to IF digital filters.”

Today’s radios are half computers, he pointed out. He demonstrated some of the features of the two rigs, which Al brought along from Amateur Electronic Supply in Wickliffe where he is a sales rep.

Some of the high-tech advantages of the 756 Pro III that were explained include:

- ▶ Excellent third-order intercept performance against strong interfering signals;
- ▶ Roofing filters to stop intermod problems;
- ▶ A spectrum scope providing several visual displays of frequencies and signals;
- ▶ The ability to listen to two signals at the same time.

Numerous additional features were covered, many of which are user-selectable thanks to the rig’s large software menu of options.

As to the reliability of today’s highly complex ham radio transceivers, Al commented that the in-warranty failure rate is very low. ■

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

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Secretary: Don Ritchie, K8ZGW

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FCC fines Maine ham \$21,000 For rules violations

Warning notices in 2004 tignored

The FCC has announced fines totaling \$21,000 for violation of several sections of Part 97 Amateur Service rules by Glenn Baxter, K1MAN, of Belgrade Lakes, Maine.

“The noted violations of the rules involves interference with the ongoing communications of other Amateur Radio stations, failure to exercise station control, transmission of communications in which Baxter had pecuniary interest, and transmissions of communications that constituted impermissible broadcasting,” the FCC said.

Baxter also apparently failed to file required information in response to an Enforcement Bureau order. In 2004, two warning notices were issued by FCC Special Counsel Riley Hollingsworth directing Baxter to provide information on how K1MAN was controlled and the identity of the station’s control operator.

In response, Baxter denied liability and cited the fifth and sixth amendments to the U.S. Constitution and requested a “trial-like hearing before the Commission.” His request was denied by the FCC.

However the law provides that forfeitures are ultimately subject to a trial de novo in federal district court should Baxter not pay the fine beforehand. ■



Katrina panel told ham radio Is “part of the solution”

FCC panel reviews storm’s comm impact

ARRL Alabama Section Manager Greg Sarratt, W4OZK, speaking to the FCC panel reviewing Hurricane Katrina’s impact on communications, praised Amateur Radio’s ability to “get the job done.”

During a hearing in Jackson, Miss., Sarratt said that ham radio volunteers were tremendously effective in their ability to re-establish communication links using their own gear or by building systems from scratch. Hams replaced or supplemented public service communications personnel in the devastated area, he reported, saying that their equipment proved “very effective,” in supporting emergency management and the Red Cross. ■



News From The Wide World of Amateur Radio

ARRL urges BPL shutdown. Manassas, Virginia, BPL firm COMtek denies that it’s causing interference to ham bands, but ARRL counters the claim by asking FCC to shut down the system. Tests by ARRL showed that the BPL system violates Section 15.5 of the FCC’s rules.

Hams help in tornado emergency. Heavy thunderstorms and tornadoes struck 70 counties in Western Tennessee April 7, resulting in calls for communication help from area hams. Emergency nets were activated and carried reports of severe weather damage.

TR-7 designer a silent key: Michael Elliott, W8KRR, who designed the Drake TR-7 and Heathkit SB-104 transceivers died April 14. The SB-104 was the first rig to incorporate solidstate design, came with digital readout, and was priced for the mass market.

Vanity call renewal program. The ARRL VEC can now process vanity call sign renewals for \$21.90. Routine, non-vanity calls may be renewed at no cost to ARRL members. Applications must be made within 90 days of the license expiration date.

Ham astronaut leaves space station. International Space Station Commander Bill McArthur, KC5ACR, has returned to earth via the Soyuz spacecraft after making one last QSO from NA1SS. He spoke with students in Reno, Nevada, and Rio de Janeiro and expressed his interest in supporting future missions to the moon and Mars. A new space station crew includes Flight Engineer Jeff Williams, KD5TVQ.

Major New York disaster drill. Radio Amateurs were part of a mass casualty disaster drill March 26. Members of the New York City Amateur Radio Emergency Service and the Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network participated.

Promotional spots from ARRL: A new 30-second video announcement promoting the new “Hello” campaign that celebrates 100 years of voice of radio worldwide has been produced by ARRL. Both a radio and TV message have been created and may be used by local stations or cable channels. ■

The ARRL Letter



Jest A Moment!

The Lighter Side of The News
Collected By Dick Scott, W8FDN

Kids say the funniest things. The proof is in the amusing things they've said to elementary school teachers through years of teaching science. So here is another installment that shows how young minds seem to be vast storehouses of miscellaneous information; some true, some not quite so true, but always amusing.

Electricity – Lesson Two

“The dark ages lasted until the invention of electricity.”

“In electricity, positives are attracted by negatives for the reason that.....search me.”

“Electronics is the study of how to get electricity without lightning.”

“Once I saw an educational cartoon about how electrons move. Electrons are very interesting folks. All their ways are hurry ways.”

“Think of a volt. Then yippie, because you now have the same thought as Voltaire, after who this thought was named.”

“Electromagnets are what you get from mixing electricity and magnets together.”

“Current electricity is electricity that is currently in use.”

“You should always capitalize the word electricity unless it is not the first word in a sentence.”

“There are still some things about electricity we are still not sure of. These things are called whats.”

“But axually a choke coil is not as dangerous as it sounds.”

Have something funny to contribute? Pass it along to the editor



Chewing the Rag:
Odds and Ends From Here ,
There and On the Air.
By W1HEO

The ARRL “Hello” campaign

Our radio club's support of the Cleveland Ham Radio Promotion Project has been underway for over 18 months now, so it's gratifying to see that the ARRL has seen the need to promote our radio service by launching its “Hello” campaign. Details are in the April issue of *QST*.

This major promotional effort by the League is designed to place Amateur Radio in the light of the 21st century and focus on its universal appeal, even in today's already technology-rich society. At the same time, the “Hello” campaign will note the 100th anniversary of what historians consider the first voice radio broadcast in 1906 by Reginald Fessenden.

ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP, says “It is quite simply the largest PR campaign that ham radio has ever attempted.”

Good news, indeed!

An important point made by Pitts is that, while a national promotional effort can bring curious people into contact with ham radio groups, it will be up to local radio amateurs to make them feel truly welcome.

Who will do that? Us.

ARRL Chief Executive Officer Dave Sumner, K1ZZ, said in his April *QST* editorial that to be successful, the “Hello” campaign must be embraced by local radio clubs and other organizations as well as by individuals. In other words, *us*.

This important fact was evident to those who began the Cleveland Ham Radio Promotion Project. For without follow through, promotion alone will not guarantee that interest will be converted into the desire to become a radio Amateur. That's up to us. Radio clubs and individuals who will serve as Elmers or mentors are critical to reaching our goal of increasing the Amateur Radio population.

We need a local “Elmer Corps,” of dedicated people who will extend to the public that same warm person-to-person contact and help that influenced many of us to become radio Amateurs. Soon we'll begin recruiting our fellow hams to form this new volunteer group and develop some basic ideas as to how best to be effective goodwill ambassadors for our radio service. We invite you to join them. ■