

June 2005

Smoke Signals

The newsletter of the Indian Hills Radio Club

Wickliffe, Ohio 44092

Flea market and Hamvention Report at June 13 meeting

Clean out your junk box and piggy bank!

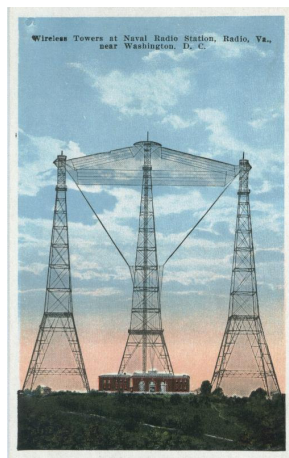
Our last meeting before the Summer break is a flea market, auction, swapfest and boat anchor cleanout. So check your junk box and bring along a few items that could use a new home. Please bring only items that are in good working order (or close to it).

We'll also hear from members who made the trek to the 2005 Dayton Hamvention. What's new? They'll tell all. Any great bargains? You'll find out. Was the weather good or so-so? And so on.

Nominating committee members will present a slate of proposed candidates for officers to serve during the 2005-2006 fiscal year. Following their report, members will vote, so please make an effort to attend this meeting so that the election is legal!

The Indian Hills Radio Club meetings are held at the Wickliffe Public Library, 1713 Lincoln Road, starting at 7:00 p.m. Join us, and bring a friend! ■

Thanks to KF8VX for his interesting talk on radio in the 1920s. His antique publications and historic highlights during the last meeting reminded us just how far we've come. At right are the wireless towers of the Naval radio stations in Washington and Virginia used in that era.



The 2005 Dayton Hamvention Was a really big show

Plenty to see and do, and it didn't rain!

The 53rd annual Hamvention attracted an ample crowd of over 25,000 from around the world for this year's event May 20-22. The weather cooperated, with a cloudy, but dry Friday, and sunny weather the rest of the way. The event is estimated to pump nearly \$10 million into the Dayton area economy. Several Indian Hills Radio Club members were on hand to check out the activities and no doubt made a financial contribution.



The club also was represented at a Town Meeting forum held Saturday afternoon. A presentation on the Cleveland Ham Radio Promotion Project was given by W1HEO, along with W8DDD and K8ZGW providing moral support.

New products were abundant. For example, SGC showed a new 500-watt solid-state amplifier weighing only four pounds.

Some of the new antenna offerings: Cushcraft is pushing its 80/40 meter vertical, and its new 160 meter vertical that handles 1500 watts and weighs only 12 pounds. A new rotatable dipole, the MA3040D, covers 30 and 40 meters. We also checked out the HEX-Beams, available in monoband and multiband designs.

We met the inventor of the portable Buddipole™ antenna, W3FF, who is, of course, named Bud. He explained that his goal was designing an antenna system that's versatile, rugged, lightweight and efficient. His kit allows quick switches between horizontal dipole, sloper, V or L in seconds.

Another portable wire antenna is the Bushcomm HF broadband 100-watt dipole covering 3-30MHz with no tuner needed. It weighs only 800 grams. ■

Looking back: The Heathkit SB-104

Solidstate SSB transceiver was \$670

In 1975, Heathkit offered a “revolutionary new generation” transceiver that was all solid-state and broadbanded with 100 watts of sideband power. The SB-104 provided a digital readout down to 100 Hertz, with receiver intermod minimized.

Sensitivity was better than 1µV and front-end overload was “dramatically reduced.”

The SB-104 was powered by 12 volts DC for mobility, with an optional fixed station supply (\$89.95) that fit inside the



SB-604 speaker cabinet (\$29.95). An optional noise blanker was available for \$24.95, and an optional 400 Hertz crystal filter (\$34.95) improved CW selectivity.

A **matching linear**, the SB-230, ran 1200 watts PEP on sideband and one kilowatt on CW with an Eimac 8873 triode that was conduction cooled. The price of this 40-pound amp was only \$319.95.

A matching remote VFO, the SB-644 was priced at \$119.95. A station monitor, the SB-614, was \$139.95, and the SB-634 station console included an ID timer, wattmeter, SWR bridge, clock and phone patch for \$179.95. ■

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

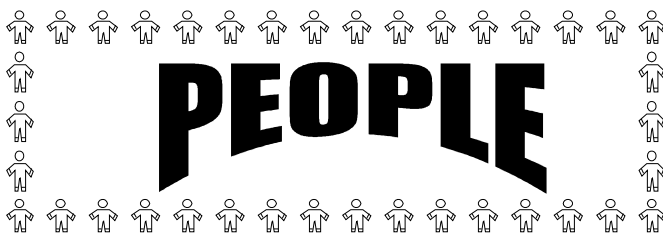
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Summertime, and the hammin’ is easy! With the club’s summer break comes opportunities for things that waited all winter. Here are some of the members’ plans for the warm weather ahead: **Gus, W8RPT**, and **John, K8OFI**, will be doing yard work. **Stan, WA8LWH**, intends to play some golf. **Bruce, KE8TI**, will be setting up an APRS station, while **Frank, KB8WHY**, attends an early June wedding and does some fishing. **Tom, KC8QGJ**, will relax with camping and fishing, and **Jim, WD8PFK**, boards the Amtrak *Empire Builder* for a train trip to Oregon. **Don, K8ZGW**, and **David, W8DDD**, both plan on drinking beer when not otherwise engaged in putting the house on the market or trimming trees respectively. **Ed, N8THI**, will take a trip to Georgian Bay, Ontario, probably in his boat, as **Dick, W8FDN**, puts his HF rig in mothballs for a while to do some gardening. **Joe, W8DOE**, will concentrate on doing some antenna work. **John, KS8A**, contemplates selling some Drake gear. **Dee, W1HEO**, will be cruising in Alaska and growing tomatoes.

Antenna party fun! It may have rushed the antenna season a bit, but when the rotor at **W1HEO**’s station malfunctioned recently, it seemed time to replace it. Thus, an antenna party was scheduled and six loyal club members assembled for what was expected to be a routine job. Not! Murphy strikes again! Before cranking down the tower, there was tree trimming to be done. Then, the existing control cable connector turned out to be the wrong gender. No plug and play! A new plug had to be soldered. **Don, K8ZGW**, powered up a soldering gun and did the deed. After checking out the new rotor, the tower was raised. Oops! What happened to the coax loop up top? Tugging on the cable must have de-looped it. Oh, well, a job for another day. Bottom line: the new rotor is up and working fine. Our sincere thanks to the rest of the great crew: **Joe, W8DOE**, **John, KS8A**, **Bruce, KE8TI**, **David, W8DDD**, and **Cathie, AB8GV**.

Bruce Knox, W8GN, SK. Some of us knew Bruce, who died unexpectedly during a medical checkup at age 49. He ran a DX packet cluster, was active in LCARA and ran RF Applications, MD Telecom and Sirius Technologies. ■

VOA Bethany Station Now a museum

Giant antennas are gone; memories remain

The Voice of America Bethany Station went on the air in 1944 with six transmitters and 200 kilowatts feeding into a shortwave antenna system occupying a square mile of land in West Chester, Ohio. After more than 50 years in operation, the station was decommissioned and presented to the township for historic monument purposes.



During the recent Dayton Hamvention, an open house was held at the site, which is now home to the Gray History of Wireless Museum and Media Heritage, Inc.

The Gray museum has one of the largest collections of antique radios in the country. It displays everything from Powel Crosley's earliest radios to field radios used by the military, plus items from the Munich studio of Radio Free Europe and the Voice of America.

Media Heritage pays tribute to the history of radio broadcasting. From the radio experiments of the 1920s; to WLW's superpower years of the 1930s; to the leadership of local TV stations in introducing new technologies in the 1950s and the emergence of companies like Taft, Avco, and Scripps.

The building that once housed the loudest voice in the world, raised the ire of Adolph Hitler who raged, "Those Cincinnati liars!" and was considered the Intel of its time, is now in need of repair. The years have taken their toll on the art deco structure. Patching and painting and electrical repairs are needed to save the historic structure. Tax-deductible contributions may be made to: The Veterans Voice of America Fund, 8070 Tylersville Road, West Chester, OH 45069.

More information is available by calling (513) 759-7304 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. weekdays. Tours can be arranged, and VOA tee shirts, caps and books are available.

Directions from Dayton: I-75 south to Exit 22, Tylersville Road. Turn east on Tylersville, travel about one mile, turn left onto Crosley Way. ■

**Next Meeting
September 12.
Have a great summer!**



News From The Wide World of Amateur Radio

Morse wins on Tonight Show: On May 13, the *Tonight Show* with Jay Leno held a sending/receiving contest between a teenage cell phone text messaging pair and a veteran Morse code team. The Morse crew included Chip Margelli, K7JA, and Ken Miller, K6CTW. A standard message was sent in each mode, and received by each team. Who copied the complete text first? Score one for Morse code! Miller said that he knew that 28-30 words per minute would easily keep them in front of the current world record holder for text messaging. It did.

Radio jammer nailed. Los Angeles-area jammer Jack Gerritsen has met requirements of a \$250,000 bond and been released from a federal lockup. Federal agents had seized his radio gear following complaints that he had transmitted political messages and profanity for hours at a time. He was fined \$10,000 for operating without a license.

New ham satellite. The latest Amateur Radio satellite – the first by India – has been designated Vusat-52. Launched May 5, the bird operates in mode U/V, with passband center frequencies of 435.25 MHz for the uplink, and 145.90 MHz for the downlink.

Ham TV in emergency drill. ARES volunteers in Santa Barbara County, California, made slow-scan TV part of its communication mix in a recent wildfire evacuation drill. Emergency officials were impressed. An official of the county emergency services office said that ARES provided the only continuous, real-time information on traffic flow and conditions. "It was great!"

BPL resolution: Arkansas representative Michael Ross, WD5DVR, has introduced a resolution in the U.S. House of Representatives calling on the FCC to "conduct a full and complete analysis" of radio interference from broadband over power lines (BPL). Resolution 230 asks for extensive public review and comment and a reconsideration of BPL's interference potential.

Tiny HF amp announced. SGC introduced its Mini Lini 500-watt linear amplifier weighing only four pounds during the Dayton Hamvention. The amp uses class E technology capable of nearly 90% efficiency and includes an AC power supply. The unit measures 5 inches by 8 by 6 and uses plug-in modules for each band. ■

Join the Field Day fun June 24-26 at Lake Farmpark *Enjoy fun and an emergency drill*

Take a look at the photo below. How about being a part of this neat scene? All this is to convey some info about Field Day 2005 and an opportunity to join in the fun.

Philips Amateur Radio Club is again extending a hearty invitation to all Indian Hills Radio Club members to participate.



When: Friday June 24th through Sunday, June 26th. The place: Lake Farmpark on route 6, 1.1 miles east of SR 306. Parking is *free!*

The schedule: Friday the 24th at 2:00 p.m., begin setup (antennas, tents, generators etc.). Saturday, 10:00 a.m. — tune-up and last minute panic sessions. Saturday, 2:00 p.m. — begin on-air operating. Sunday, 2:00 p.m. — cease on-air operating and begin teardown.

Operators and loggers are needed for both CW and phone. Please contact David, W8DDD, to request a schedule and desired operating times. Contact: (440) 944-5579 or <w8ddd@netzero.net> I hope to see you there! 73.

By David Dennis, W8DDD

Summer hamfests ahead

Still got junk? Pack it up and go!

Here's the schedule:

Noarsfest 2005: Saturday, July 16, 8:00 a.m. to noon. Lorain County Fairgrounds, Wellington, OH. One mile west of SR 58 on SR 18. \$5.00. Contact Al Moriarity, N8CX: (216) 221-3682.

Portage Hamfair: July 31. Contact Joanne Solak, KJ3O, (330) 274-8240, <jsolak@apk.net>

Ham "OH" Rama: Saturday, August 6, 8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Aladdin Shrine, 3850 Stelzer Road, Columbus. \$5.00. <kb8kpj@arrrl.net>

Warren Hamfest: Sunday, August 21, KSU Trumbull Branch. <kc8tap@neo.rr.com>

Cleveland Hamfest: Sunday, Sept. 25, 8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds. Contact: 1-800-CLE-FEST; <info@hac.org> ■



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

When aliens are okay and hams aren't

Two Caribbean islands are among the rarest DX entities: Navassa Island (KP1) and Desecheo Island (KP5). Both are controlled by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and both are off limits to hams. But Navassa is regularly visited by Haitian fisherman, illegal aliens who are well-known to the U.S. They start fires and leave garbage. Navassa, which had bombs that were detonated by the government in 2002, is no longer a threat and has been visited by FWS personnel.

The FWS claims that the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 allows only wildlife-dependent recreational activities in the nation's refuges. Hams are evidently considered a threat to wildlife, so why hasn't anything been done about the Haitians?

Many major DXpeditions have operated from equally sensitive wildlife habitats without incident, as confirmed by veteran DXers such as Bob Allphin, K4UEE. He says, "Radio operators are experienced in these areas and good stewards of wildlife habitat."

Sorry to say that it will take an act of Congress to change this situation. Fortunately, a bill has been introduced that will require the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to allow public access to these islands, which would open the door to Amateur Radio. The bill is HR 298, and it needs our support. An easy way to comment is to visit the Web site at <www.kp1-5.com> and click on the green button 'Contact Your Congressman.'

Mini BPL may be in your house

X-10 is called BPL's little brother, and it may be in your own house. It's a communication language that allows products to talk to each other using electrical wiring in your home. There are X-10 transmitters involved, of course. When appliances are operating they generate noise over the powerline, as do switching power supplies. Interference can travel outside the house on the powerlines. The solution is to plug the appliance into a noise filter such as FilterLinc, or use a simple

**Join the Friday lunch bunch:
11:30 at Wellington's, 777 Alpha Drive,
Off Wilson Mills near I-271**