



June 2006

Smoke Signals

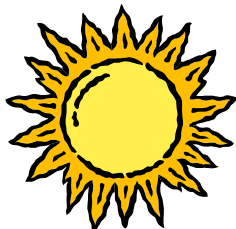
The newsletter of the Indian Hills Radio Club

Wickliffe, Ohio 44092

Dayton updates, election At Monday, June 12 meeting

Come and help create a quorum!

Our club year wraps up at the “Sunny June” meeting with a report from those who attended this year’s somewhat soggy-to-sunny Dayton Hamvention. We trust that they didn’t sink into the ooze while traveling the muddy grounds of the Hara Arena, or dodging rain-drops in the wilds of the flea market. We’ll just have to come to the meeting to find out the dripping details.



Another important piece of club business is the election of officers for the upcoming club year of 2006-2007. The nominating committee, consisting of John Esborn, K8OCK, Joe Gutosky, W8DOE, and Dick Scott, W8FDN, will present a slate of candidates.

President W8DOE, said, “I think that our club is headed in the right direction by emphasizing ham radio activities. While social activities are an important part, they are not the major focus. Our club’s leadership in launching the Ham Radio Promotion Project is an example of how this club can move ahead.”

Members are urged to attend this meeting so that a quorum will be present so elections can proceed on a legal footing. If you would like to help the club by accepting a post, please stand up and be counted.

Remember that our next meeting is September 11th following our summer break.

Bring a friend! The meeting is being held, as usual, at the Wickliffe Public Library, 1713 Lincoln Road, starting at 7:15 p.m.

A reminder: if you haven’t yet made a personal contribution to the Ham Radio Promotion Project, please bring your check payable to: HAC/RP Fund and give it to Treasurer David Dennis, W8DDD. Thanks! ■

The Indian Hills Radio Club to Observe its 50th birthday

A committee begins planning a party

Can you believe it? The Indian Hills Radio Club was formed over a half-century ago, in 1955. And it’s still here and in business after all these years.

How about that!

It seems like a celebration would be in order, so that’s what the club decided to do during a discussion of the subject during the May meeting.

So a committee was formed to begin the planning. The members include John Esborn, K8OCK; Dick Scott, W8FDN; and Al Benedetti, W8NPH.

“The bulk of the core members and old timers have become silent keys,” comments W8FDN. “But our anniversary gives us a chance to invite some of our former members, who are still with us and can be reached, to share in the celebration.”



John Esborn, K8OCK, said that the committee will be planning a celebration and intends to review it with the members at the September meeting.

In discussing some of the club’s history with a few of the veteran members, it’s been fairly well established that 1955 was the first year of the club’s existence.

One of the charter members was Rol Randolph, K8ATQ, who recalls that he was a 15-year-old Novice in 1955 and intimidated by some of the older veteran hams who founded the club.

“In some ways the club was similar to what it is now, although back then I was brought to the club meetings by my dad, and the meetings were held in an old veteran’s club in Euclid,” he said.

Since Rol was a young Novice in 1955, he confesses that the details are a blur. He does remember Joe, W8DOE, and Ray, W8ICS as among the founders. ■

The Treasurer reports how Our finances are doing

An update from David Dennis, W8DDD

Financially speaking, we are having a pretty good year. It's estimated that we will end the 2005/06 fiscal year substantially even with a year ago.

Translation: dues can remain the same come next September.

Printer ink and postal rates have increased, but the expanded use of electronic distribution of the *Smoke Signals* has helped in containing costs.

Printing and mailing of our newsletter constitute the largest expenses we have; yet it appears that we'll realize a reduction of approximately 4 percent. Thanks to those who have opted to receive our newsletter via the Internet! ■

Ham equipment available

Gerard, WB8ADF, has some ham equipment, coax, old QST magazines that he's willing to donate. He has a Heath SB102 HF transceiver, AC power supply, speaker and extra tubes. (Switch contacts need cleaning, but otherwise works OK.)

He also has a Heath Mohawk receiver & speaker, Heath Warrior 1KW amplifier & extra tubes, Heath DX 100 transmitter, RG8 & RG58 coax, EICO oscilloscope, Commodore 64 PC & printer with color TV monitor.

Contact Gerard at: gfdusa@sbcglobal.net. He is in Wickliffe some weekends, where the gear is. ■

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

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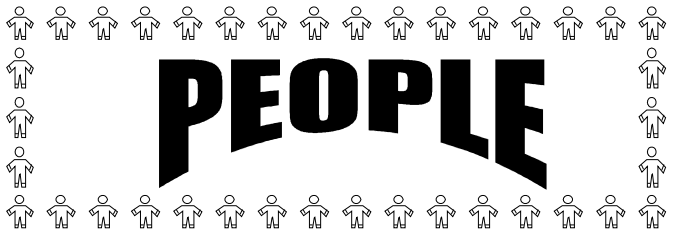
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A warm welcome to new member **Bob Lawson, N8ORC**. Bob lives on Lakeshore Blvd. in Euclid and recently dropped in on the Friday lunch bunch with his XYL Judy.

Travel plans are being made by **Cathie McAdams, AB8GV**, for a June trip to Slovakia with her sister to visit family members there. No ham radio activities are planned, but she does intend to bring back her 18-year-old cousin for a six-week visit to the U.S. He will return home to Slovakia in late August for his final year in high school. Have a safe and fun trip!

Dayton travelers included **Don Ritchie, K8ZGW**, who now resumes working on the new Ham Radio Promotion Project Website. (www.neoham.org). **David Dennis, W8DDD**, likewise made the trek west, and upon his return is turning his attention to preparations for the Fall Cleveland Hamfest. **Jim Iams, K8BLB**, intends to make his post-Dayton project the construction of a full-wave 160-meter loop. Good luck!

Non-Daytonians include **Dick Scott, W8FDN**, who confesses that he didn't go to Dayton, "for religious reasons. I'm a devout coward," he says.

Maritime trackings by **Ed Meglic, N8THI**, have focused on tracing the progress of a friend from his marina who is bringing a boat up from the island of Grenada. Ed is also researching designs for a compact tri-band antenna.

Zapped in Washington! The recent video written by "**Dee**" **Logan, W1HEO**, was sent to the U.S. Copyright office in Washington to protect the production against unlawful copying. But it ran into trouble in the mails. Since all deliveries to the copyright office are irradiated as a security precaution against anthrax, the DVD disk was ruined. A replacement copy was requested, with the hope that it enjoys a better fate this time.

Vacuum tubes are king! Rigs with tubes are very easy to service, says **Joe Gutoskey, W8DOE**, so he's hard at work refurbishing a Central Electronics phasing-type sideband unit. Sounds like a great project. ■



The bookshelf
DXing on the Edge
 The thrill of 160 meters

Many club members have been on the 160-meter band or are planning to do so, which is why we picked up a copy of *DXing on the Edge*. This 224-



page book published by the ARRL is a tribute to Stew Perry, W1BB, but also is a history of top band and those hams who pioneered on this challenging part of the spectrum. The book is dedicated to W1BB, “who led the way and demon-

strated what was possible on 160 meters.” But its pages are also full of sound, practical information on top band receiving and transmitting antennas and some insights into working DX on the band. Also included are many stories and recollections by veteran top band operators, including a CD of recorded “Memorable Moments on 160.”

Big antennas are necessary, of course, and the one that W1BB used was a monster. Back in the 1930s, he had a station in the Boston suburbs that was located on a narrow peninsula jutting out into the salty Atlantic Ocean. He erected an inverted vee beam, using a 265-foot high water tower for support. He also had a variety of receiving antennas up and down the beach. His signal enjoyed a salt water takeoff in nearly all directions.

Throughout this book there are profiles of many leading 160-meter operators and DXers, with photos of top banders from around the world. The CD included in the book enables readers to become listeners, hearing from many famous operators in their own words, including “Mr. 160” himself, Stew Perry.

This book is a very unusual one since it offers a detailed examination of a single ham band by those who know it best. It should provide fascinating reading for anyone with an interest in this most challenging Amateur band. ■

WIHEO

Next Meeting:
Monday September 11
Have a great summer!



**News From The
 Wide World of
 Amateur Radio**

FCC mum on Morse: There’s still no decision on what to do with the Morse code requirement for ham licenses. It was last July when the Commission issued a proposal for rule making on deleting Morse testing for all classes of licenses. The issue is wrapped up in another item: the omnibus or phone band expansion proceeding. Asked by the ARRL for an off-the-record estimate as to when a ruling would be announced, the FCC declined.

Hams handle flood duty: Amateur Radio volunteers provided emergency communication during the recent floods in New England, called the worse in 70 years. The Skywarn weather net was activated and RACES operators were stationed at the Mass. State Emergency Operations Center to provide communication support.

Oregon ham in tower mishap: DXer Ron Spears, W7IX, 44, of Klamath Falls, Oregon, died when the 170-foot tower he was working on collapsed. The accident happened while Spears was lowering a 40-meter beam which slipped and sheared off a guy wire, resulting in the tower failure.

BPL issue in Congress. An amendment requiring the FCC to study the BPL interference issue is now part of the House telecom bill, HR 5252, and the ARRL is now focusing on the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee which is holding hearings on its version of the bill. The League is urging radio Amateurs to write their Senators in support of a similar BPL section.

FCC stops illegal amp sales: A consent decree has ended enforcement action against Pilot Travel Centers for marketing CB transceivers labeled as Amateur Radio gear but intended for use on both CB and ham frequencies. The decree halts a possible \$125,000 in fines. ■

The ARRL Letter

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

Safety sidelights

Warning: don't get zapped by Summer Lightning!

Tips for protecting your shack

Thunderstorms and lightning are invading our area these days, and will continue to rattle our windows over the next several months. Lightning causes some 20,000 fires a year. So most hams are aware of the need for protection against lightning strikes. The ham shack is very vulnerable due to feedlines that can direct some nasty damaging voltages into ham gear. Your house is likewise at risk. So let's run through a checklist as printed in the 20/9 Radio Club newsletter.

Coaxial cables should be at ground level before entering the shack. If not, lightning currents induced in the cables will be forced through ham gear on the way to ground.

Ground shields with short leads. As much as 80 percent of a strike travels on the shield.

Use lightning arrestors on lines that feed sensitive electronics. Don't use gas-discharge types, since radio gear is damaged by the time the arrestor kicks in. Always specify a blocking type arrestor.

Establish a grounding bulkhead near the radio equipment where the distance to ground is short. The bulkhead can be a bar, metal sheet, or just heavy wire. Remember that the length of the ground lead is more important than the type of material or even wire size.

Ground coaxial cable shields. This provides protection for the center conductor and avoids ground level line leakage during transmissions. The grounding should be done at ground level for maximum benefit.

Most important is insuring that coaxial cable lines are always brought to the ground first and that ground shielding is done at that point before the cable is brought into the shack. Keep the connections clean, tight and waterproof so you don't panic during the next thunderstorm. ■

Let's do lunch!

**Fridays starting at 11:30 a.m.
Denny's at 6207 Wilson Mills
West of I-271**



Jest A Moment!

**The Lighter Side of the News
Collected by Dick Scott, W8FDN**

Marconi, not macaroni!

Once again our youngsters move ahead with their studies, although they manage to move sideways and even sometimes backwards in their responses. But we have to give them credit for their wide open view of the facts.

Here then are some responses to the question, "Who was Marconi and what did he do?"

"Marconi was born in 1874, supposedly on his birthday."

"It took much hard work for Marconi to think out how to invent the radio. He had to keep thinking around the clock, twelve days a week."

"In just a few short years he became a sensation over night."

"He expired in 1937 and later died from this."

"Question: when was the radio invented? Answer: on page 24."

"The radio was invented in pre-me times."

"The Romans did not have radios. They used smoke signals in both the A.C. and D.C. times."

"Progress was from electricity to radios to now."

"I believe the radio is one of the most important inventions of all time. Of course, my father works at a radio station, so I may be a little pregnant."

Overheard in a laundry room

A housewife reports that one day her housework-challenged husband decided to wash his own sweatshirt.

Seconds after stepping into the laundry room he shouted, "What setting do I use on the washing machine?"

"It depends," his wife replied. "What does it say on your shirt?"

He yelled back, "Go Michigan."

"Use hot water, a box of Tide and four cups of bleach!"

Submitted by David Dennis, W8DDD ■