



March 2016

Volume V, Issue I

## Q5er – The Official Newsletter of the Skyview Radio Society

Looking to Join  
Skyview Radio Society?  
Go to  
[www.skyviewradio.net](http://www.skyviewradio.net) to  
learn more about becoming  
a member and also to see all  
the club's activities

The Skyview Radio Society  
weekly net is on Thursday  
nights at 9:00 PM local time  
146.640 Repeater pl 131.8

### Skyview Officers for 2016:

#### President:

Dewey Chauvin – W3VYK

#### Vice President:

Jack Buzon – KA3HPM

#### Secretary:

Bob Bereit – K3RMB

#### Treasurer:

Pat Cancro – NK3P

#### Membership:

Bob Bereit – K3RMB

#### Radio Officer:

Bob Bastone – WC3O

#### Kitchen:

Bob Bastone – WC3O

#### Facilities:

Dave Dailey – N3TIN

#### Chairman:

John Hoffman – K3STL

#### Trustees:

Bob Siska – K3OFX

Dave Dailey – N3TIN

John Italiano – WA3KFS

Paul Rykaceski -WA3LCY

Frank Puskar – KB3YJQ

Bob Yusko – KB3OMB

Rich Ryba – WQ3Q

Bill Dillen – N3WMC

Jim Painter – KQ3S

Jody Nelis – K3JZD

## A Letter from the Editor

Hi Everyone,

The chipmunks started crumb snatching at the bottom of my bird feeders, which means it's time for the Q5er Spring Edition!

I've been busy with life and am not around as much lately. This had me concerned the Q5er might be a little thin for the Spring edition. All I can say is the contributors did a heck of a great job because this is the largest Q5er to date! You've outdone yourselves again and thank you!

The Skyview Spotlight shines on Mike K3FH.

Terry K3JEL wrote a few articles of interest which everyone should enjoy.

Jody K3JZD wrote another informative article about the George Jones museum.

Have you heard about the Skyview Digital Challenge? Rules and this month's digital mode are in the newsletter.

Rich N2GBR wrote a great article about SOTA – Summits on the Air.

Speaking of Rich... Rich Ryba WQ3Q has a last call for anyone wanting to attend the DXpedition in Italy. Details inside the newsletter.

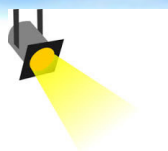
Bob WC3O wrote another good article in the Radio Officer's section.

There's a few more things in the newsletter that everyone should like.

It's really great that so many of you contributed to keeping the Q5er alive and kickin. Just when I think we won't have a Q5er this large again, the next edition proves to be better. Thanks again!

I'm hoping you continue to send Q5er articles and you can write about just about anything. You don't have to write a long article. The Q5er is published quarterly and remember... **it's up to YOU to help make it happen and YOU are making it happen!**

73 de John – K3STL@arrl.net



## The Skyview Spotlight

### Upcoming Hamfests:

**April 24, 2016**

Two Rivers Hamfest  
The Spectrum  
6001 Smithfield Street  
Boston, PA 15135  
Talk-in: 146.730(-)  
Mobile Check-In: 146.520  
Contact:  
[n3lqc@trarc.net](mailto:n3lqc@trarc.net)

**May 20-22, 2016**

Dayton Hamvention  
To learn more and purchase  
tickets for the vent, go to:  
[Hamvention.org](http://Hamvention.org)

**June 5th 2016**

Breezeshooters Hamfest  
Largest Hamfest in  
the Tri-State Area  
VE Session

**NEW LOCATION!!!**

Big Butler Fair  
1127 New Castle Road  
Prospect, PA 16052

Email:

[Hamfest2016@breezeshooters.org](mailto:Hamfest2016@breezeshooters.org)

Website:

[www.breezeshooters.org](http://www.breezeshooters.org)

The Skyview Spotlight for this quarter shines on:

**Mike Fufari K3FH**

**K3STL: Tell me what got you first involved with Ham Radio and what was your impression of it?**

K3FH: In my early teens I was playing around with a 100mw walkie talkie, which was on 28 MHz CB in those days (the mid-60s). It was illegal for anyone with a CB license to talk to anyone not licensed (walkie talkies). So I talked my dad into getting a CB license and I bought a Lafayette CB radio. I had a ground plane mounted on a TV mast in the yard. In those days a lot of younger hams also played in the CB spectrum, even though CB was not to be used as a hobby. I found out what ham radio was about, and visited the local club (Monongalia Wireless Association in Morgantown, WV). I signed up for a Novice class, learned the Morse code, and passed my Novice exam.



**K3STL: How long have you been licensed? Any previous callsigns?**

K3FH: Licensed in spring of 1967, at age 16. My original call was WN8YCC, and then was WA8YCC when I took the General exam in 1968. I also took the Advanced Class exam in 1969 but the callsign remained WA8YCC. In the late 80s (when living in New York State) I was assigned KE2OV because I had let my license expire beyond the grace period. Upon returning to Pittsburgh I requested a 3-call and was assigned KE3FH. I passed my Extra in 1993 so I shortened the call to K3FH when the Vanity Callsign system went into effect in 1996.

**K3STL: How old were you when you first got licensed?**

K3FH: Age 16, I actually had my FCC license before my driver's license.

**K3STL: What was your first rig/antenna?**

K3FH: Homebrew 50-watt CW-only rig, 80 and 40 Meters only, all vacuum tubes. I got it from a QST article, crystal controlled (had to be as a Novice back then). I put up a 40-meter dipole which ran from our garage over the neighbor's yard and ended on the roof of my grandparents' house next door.



## An Elmer

By: Terry Long K3JEL

**NO this is not the Elmer  
you want**



**Unless your hunting  
wabbits!**

The ELMER you want is  
**a Mentor for Ham  
Radio.**

Generally, someone that's been a ham for more than a month. Older doesn't guarantee better, and of course, it depends what you need help on. If you pick an Elmer lacking the knowledge about your problem, ten to one he will admit he doesn't know the answer, BUT, he will probably know someone that does.

Here's the biggest problem: Even though some Elmers might say they are mind readers, they aren't! You need to make contact first. Unless you make contact with us, we don't know you need help, so don't be afraid to contact us!

**K3STL: What modes do you operate? What is your favorite and why?**

K3FH: My go-to mode is CW, I also play RTTY in some contests and occasionally (once in a blue moon) get on SSB. I've tried PSK, AMTOR, PACTOR but CW is still my favorite. I got into CW big time in the 90s, especially to work DX on the lower 25 KHz of each band. For someone running 100W on a modest omni-directional antenna, it is the best way to rack up countries. It's very tough to get rare DX on phone without more power and/or directional antennas. During my working career I did a lot of technical training, so after talking for most of 8 hours SSB wasn't something I wanted to do when I got home at night and on the weekends. So CW was a natural for me.

**K3STL: What is your most favorite memory about a Ham Radio experience?**

K3FH: The first few Field Days with MWA were the best! Our club was mostly younger folks with a few 40-somethings mixed in. After the old guys went to bed we took over! I remember we had Drake TR4's owned by club members and we operated remotely with wire antennas. It was a blast!

**K3STL: Are you a member of any other Ham Radio Clubs or any other organizations?**

K3FH: Only Skyview Radio Society. I was actually a member in the early 90s when I lived much closer to the clubhouse, but I dropped out due to family commitments, the kids were small and my evenings were too precious. Skyview is a much different club today, I love the fact that we're younger than most clubs around, we have a great station and clubhouse. But mostly I admire the energy and attitudes of our membership.

**K3STL: Is there anyone else in your family that is a Ham?**

K3FH: No, I think they all look at it as MY hobby and they pursue their own interests. My kids are grown now but never expressed any interest. My uncle Tony Furfari was K3IEX (SK) and provided my early Elmering.

**K3STL: What are your favorite Ham Radio Activities?**

K3FH: I love CW and RTTY contesting. I don't have anything close to a contest station, so my serious contesting is limited to our multioperator contest parties at K3MJW. As you know, we as a club do several CW and RTTY contests during the year, and I try to participate in as many as I can.

At home I do a lot of casual contesting, but very few really serious efforts. I usually set a goal, like 200 QSO's or some number of multipliers, countries or states, depending on what the contest is. My favorites are the CQ Worldwide CW contest in November, the ARRL DX CW in February, and the CQ WPX CW in May. The RTTY Roundup in January is a lot of fun for me whether I am at home or at the club. I always consider it the best way to get over the post-holiday blues.



## IC-7300

Credit:  
<http://www.icomamerica.com/en/products/amateur/hf/7300/default.aspx>

## HF/50MHz TRANSCEIVER

### Features



## The Innovative HF Transceiver

New technology is changing the way receivers are being designed and the IC-7300 is an industry first as an RF, Direct Sampling System is being used in an entry level HF radio. The ability to digitize RF before various receiver stages reduces the inherent noise that is generated in the different IF stages of a radio. We feel the performance of the '7300 will far exceed your expectations for a radio considered entry level.

*Output power:*  
100W (25W AM)  
*RX Frequencies:*  
0.030-74.800

*Receiver type:*  
Direct sampling

### K3STL: Do you volunteer your skills for Ham Radio events?

K3FH: I love to help out at local public service events where our efforts are really needed and important. The St. Patrick's Day parade is one I try to do often. I've also helped in the Great Race at times. In my opinion, participation in one public service event per year should be a requirement for all hams to maintain their licenses.

### K3STL: Who are your biggest influences? What did they do to influence you?

K3FH: My uncle, Tony Furfari, K3IEX, SK. He pushed me to get licensed after he found out I was playing with CB. He helped me with parts to build my first rig, and elmered me to get on the air. He lived most of his life in Forest Hills and we would QSO on 40 Meters CW when I was in high school.

### K3STL: It appears that the interest in Ham radio is growing. Why do you think that is?

K3FH: I HOPE it's growing. We have a lot of licensees, but I'm not sure we have a lot of really active hams. Those who came in after the code requirements were lifted seemed to get active but in many cases they didn't upgrade and/or didn't stick with it very long. I would love to see ARRL or CQ Magazine do some surveys to find out where we are and what activities are being pursued by the general ham population.

### K3STL: What do you find to be most challenging about Ham Radio?

K3FH: Our active ham population, at least the ones I work, is getting older. As we baby-boomers die off I wonder who will take our places. Go to any ham fest and check out the average age of the attendees.

### K3STL: What do you see changing about Ham radio in the next 5 years?

K3FH: The growth of SDRs, more interest in contesting and public service. Less activity on VHF/UHF and more on HF. Experimenters will look at LowFER ((Low-Frequency Experimental Radio, below the AM broadcast band) for something new to do.

### K3STL: If you weren't a Ham Radio Operator, what would you be doing with that time instead?

K3FH: Enjoying a multitude of interests that I have. One thing I've noticed that folks who work till they can't anymore do so because they have nothing else going on in their lives. It's so sad that they think that life is about a career. I've always worked to live, not lived to work. The best things in life are free, like a walk in the woods, watching a sunset or sunrise, and enjoying our world and the creatures that inhabit it. Visiting many of our stunning National Parks should be on everyone's bucket list. Watching the sun rise over Bryce Canyon and the Grand Canyon are two of my fondest memories.



## *15 discrete band-pass filters*

The RF Direct Sampling is protected by an array of bandpass filters. The signal passes through one of the fifteen bandpass filters, where signals outside the passband are rejected. To reduce the insertion loss, the IC-7300 utilizes High Q factor coils.

## *RF direct sampling system*

The IC-7300 employs an RF direct sampling system, where RF signals are directly convert to digital data. Then processed in the FPGA (Field-Programmable Gate Array), making it possible to simplify the circuit construction as well as reduce noise that can mask weak signals.

The new "IP+" improves the 3rd order intercept point (IP3) performance improving the ability to copy a weak signal that is adjacent to either a strong interfering signal. In this process, A/D converter is optimized to reduce or eliminate signal distortion.

## **K3STL: What would you tell someone who is thinking about becoming a Ham Radio operator?**

K3FH: There are many reasons to take up this hobby. It is the ORIGINAL social media, so talking/communicating with strangers who share common interests is not a new thing; hams have been doing it for so many decades. While ham radio isn't cutting edge technology, it is ever-changing with new digital modes and now software-defined radios. If we ever experience a disaster like a massive failure of the power grid, ham radio will likely be the only media which will work, so it's a national security asset. You make an initial investment in equipment, and you can enjoy years of activity without spending another dime beyond your electric bill. To take up golf, buying the clubs is just the start of the spending! Amateur Radio is a lifetime hobby that people may shelve for a while during their early adulthood to get married and raise a family. But as I and many friends of mine did, it will pull you back in at some point.

## **K3STL: What would a Ham Radio operator be surprised to know about you?**

K3FH: In addition to radio, I have a very eclectic set of hobbies and interests. I love to golf and love professional spectator sports. Music of all kinds and genres. This year my wife and I have seen or will see Andrea Bocelli, the Pittsburgh Symphony, Blake Shelton (country), and Adele in concert! We lived in a suburb of Nashville for 5 years and went to songwriter bars like the famous Bluebird Café on a regular basis. When I'm in the car alone I listen to all genres of music on Sirius/XM satellite radio, rather than gab on FM repeaters. The mobile rig is always on, in scanning mode at low volume. I will get on repeaters from time to time if there's an interesting conversation going on.

Reading and movie-going are other activities I love and now that I'm retired there's much more time for my hobbies.

## **K3STL: Any Pet Peeves about Ham Radio that you wish to share?**

K3FH: We all need to do more to expand and create interest in our hobby. Some of our best engineers and technical experts pursued their fields after getting their amateur radio licenses, most during their teenage years. And God knows, we need more interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education. It's vital to our country if we are going to thrive as an economic force. Ham radio is a great starting point. So our clubs, ARRL, ARES and other organizations need to do a better job promoting themselves and ham radio. But we need to focus on bringing young, pre-college individuals into the hobby. And we need to TEACH them, not just give them the answers to the test questions. I'm not worried about frequency allocation as much as I'm worried about the long-term survival of our hobby. The numbers of people who have never heard of our hobby is astounding. We need



## Large color touch screen

The large 4.3" color TFT touch LCD offers intuitive operation of functions, settings, and various operational visual aids such as the band scope, waterfall function, and audio scope.

Like on the high-end rigs, the waterfall shows a change of signal strength over a period of time and allows you to find weak signals that may not be apparent on the spectrum scope.

Use the audio scope function to observe various AF TX/RX characteristics such as microphone compressor level, filter width, notch filter width and keying waveform in the CW mode. Image below shows the Audio scope with the waterfall function and the oscilloscope.

## Additional Features:

- Built-in automatic antenna tuner
- 101 channels (99 regular, 2 scan edges)
- SD memory card slot for saving data
- Cooling fan system
- Multi-function meter
- CW functions: full break-in, CW reverse, CW auto tuning
- SSB, CW, RTTY, AM, FM modes

to get the word out; we should be at Home Shows and other events which attract the average Joe. We should be talking to science classes in our public schools about our "experiments." There is a station at the submarine at the Carnegie Science Center, but there should also be a station (with modern equipment) in the main building. Local clubs could operate it during the weekends. There are so many similar Science Centers around the country, promoting our hobby in all those venues would have a huge impact! During these public exhibits we must highlight the many aspects of the hobby. It's really an amazing spectrum of sub-hobbies which hams can explore over a lifetime. The ARRL should be pushing this but we can't afford to wait for them to get onboard.

That's a lot of pet peeves, but they're all interrelated.

---

## New to the HF Bands? Welcome!

By: Terry Long K3JEL

*The following was written for those Technicians who were granted HF privileges by the FCC in early 2007. While this moment in ham radio occurred nearly a few years ago, the information below can certainly assist a ham who's venturing onto the HF bands today.*

Congratulations on receiving your new HF privileges, whether as a result of a new upgrade or due to the recent FCC rule changes! As of February 23, 2007 all Technician No Code licensees have been granted the privileges of Technician Plus licensees with the removal of Morse Code (CW) as a licensing requirement.

This short piece is intended to help you get active on the HF bands which, to me, embody the true magic of Ham Radio. Imagine sitting in the comfort of your own home and talking to somebody – literally – on the other side of the world with a simple dipole antenna strung between two trees. It's very possible.

My most memorable contact was with Mayotte Island, just off the eastern coast of Africa – literally on the other side of the world. FH5CB was his call, and Elio was his name. I heard him on 20 meters, late one summer night at a little after 11:00pm. My HF station? A simple 100 watt transceiver and a dipole strung between two trees, only 30 feet above the ground. Nothing special, and nothing expensive. He was making contacts with other Hams left and right, and I was screaming in my microphone with excitement hoping he'd hear me. "N5ZGT this is FH5CB, you're 5 by 6; 5 by 6, QSL?" My jaw dropped. I worked this guy with a super simple station. Who needs a multi-element beam and 1,000 watts when I could do it with 100 watts and a dipole?

FH5CB's QSL card is the most prized card in my collection. That kind of excitement is what ham radio is all about.

So now here you are, with new HF privileges, probably not knowing what the next step might be. I hope these tips – certainly not standards, but a culmination of my experiences in Ham Radio – will point you in a direction so you'll soon find yourself unlocking the true magic of Ham Radio...on HF!



## Skyview Radio Society 2016 Digital Communication Challenge Rules

**Purpose:** Promote activity on the digital modes within the Skyview Radio Society membership by utilizing a different digital mode each month. Non-Members in the Western Pa Area are welcome to participate as well.

**Contest Period:** Five Months: February 2016 to June 2016.

**Modes:** The mode of operation will change each month. March will be PSK31. The mode for the following months will be announced by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month. The following other digital modes are presently being considered: JT9, PSK31, RTTY, Olivia, MFSK, HELL, and Domino.

**Categories:** 'Retired' and 'Employed' (levels the playing field based on time available to play radio). Single Operator Only. All Contacts must be made from Home Stations.

**Operation:** Spotting is allowed. Contest QSOs will count. Run 20 watts or less, except for RTTY where a maximum of 100 watts is permitted.

**Bands:** Any Amateur Band that permits Digital Operations may be used. Stay within the recommended frequency plan for the corresponding mode and band.

**Exchange:** Minimum exchange will be a Call Sign and RST Report.

**Scoring:** Score is based on the distance in miles between your QTH and your contact's QTH, using the miles that QRZ.com publishes for that call sign (the 'distance', not the 'long path'). You may make as many contacts as you wish each month, but you can only submit 10 of them. Therefore, you will want to submit your 10 contacts with the longest mileage.



## Multipliers:

The first entry for a particular Country (not Prefix) that is in your log of 10 contacts will be scored at 2x the QRZ.com miles. All remaining entries for that same Country (not Prefix) that are in your log of 10 contacts will be scored at 1x the QRZ.com miles.

Logs: Send each month's log to [k3jzd@nelis.net](mailto:k3jzd@nelis.net) no later than 1 week after the end of the month. Your logs can be in plain text or you may attach a spreadsheet. Provide your Call Sign and the Digital Mode in the Subject and in the body of your email. Say if you are entering in the 'Retired' category or the 'Employed' Category. Provide your 'Total Contacts Made Using this Digital Mode' for the month (which will just be for information only). Provide your Claimed Total Score for the month. Provide the following six pieces of information for each of your 10 contacts that you have based your

Claimed Total Score on: Date/Time (UTC) – Band - Call Worked – Country – QRZ Distance – Country Multiplier (2x or 1x)

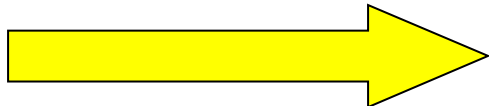
## Leaderboard:

Around the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, the rankings for the previous month as well as the accumulated overall rankings will be published on the reflector.

Awards: Submit 5 logs and you will receive a "2016 Skyview Digital Communications Master" certificate. The certificates will be numbered. The highest overall scorer in each Category will get Certificate Number 1. The remaining certificates will be numbered according to overall ranking within each Category.

Post any questions on the reflector. Or you may email me at: [k3jzd@nelis.net](mailto:k3jzd@nelis.net) (please put "Digital Challenge" in the Subject). Tuesday nights at the Sky view Clubhouse would be a great place for discussion and for comparing notes.

Good Luck !!!!  
Jody – K3JZD



**The 2016 Breezeshooters Hamfest  
will be held at a  
NEW LOCATION!**

**CAN I  
HAVE YOUR  
ATTENTION  
PLEASE!**

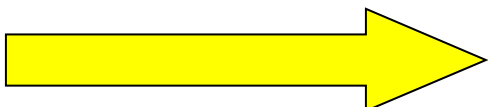
**The New Location is:  
The Big Butler Fair  
1127 New Castle Road (Route 422)**



**Prospect, PA 16052**

**For More Information:**

**<http://www.breezeshooters.net>**



## **REWARD OFFERED**

A reward of 500 microfarads is offered for the information leading to the arrest of hop-a-long capacity. This unrectified criminal escaped from a western primary cell where he had been clamped in ions awaiting the gauss chamber.

He is charged with the induction of an 18 turn coil named millihenry, who was found choked and robbed of valuable joules. He is armed with a carbon rod and is a potential killer. Capacity is also charged with driving dc motor over a wheatstone bridge and refusing to let the band-pass.

If encountered, he may offer series of resistance. The electromotive force spent the night searching for him in a magnetic field, where he had gone to earth. They had no success and believed he had returned ohm via a short circuit.

He was last seen riding a kilocycle with his friend eddy current that was playing a harmonic.



## My first Ham Radio Baofeng UV-5R experiences

By: Terry Long K3JEL

I have been a licensed ham for some time. However never had the time to buy a Ham handset and play with it. So finally I took the plunge and bought a cheapo Chinese Ham radio which seems to be very popular due to its price point among online reviewers. It is called Baofeng UV-5R and I bought it for \$40 shipped. Lots of US retailers selling on amazon or eBay and etc... I also bought the programming USB cable for about \$8.50, so for about \$50 I could get started on Ham radio.

Here are some of my notes after spending quite a bit of time on understanding Ham etc as I do not have any experience with using a Ham radio. Getting licensed and playing with an actual Ham radio are 2 different things :-).

First find the firmware version by following the instructions at

<http://www.miklor.com/uv5r/UV5R-Software.html> mine was BFB297

<http://www.brickolore.com/2011/09/baofeng-uv-3r-quick-start-video-guide.html>

<http://www.brickolore.com/2011/07/repeater-websearch.html>

Tried the chirp software on linux and it worked fabulously (it didnt give any errors as i still don't know what I programmed :-))and since I had a usb cable my port was /dev/ttyUSB0 . A lot of people have complained about prolific drivers on windows and etc , so you might want to try on linux as no special drivers needed.

As I'm new to Ham I didn't want to inadvertently transmit anything on any of channels. So I disabled most channels by following instructions below. As this unit can transmit on any frequency it receives. Please note in US you need proper licenses to transmit on most channels/frequency used by this radio.

Trying to follow instructions on comments <http://w0hc.com/2012/04/baofeng-uv-5r/> for receive only initially I have discovered that you can Tx inhibit the VFO of these radios using CHIRP. Set the VHF & UHF frequency to 1.000 und uncheck the "Allow Tx" checkboxes. Now only the memory channels can Tx (listen-only channels can be created by setting duplex to "OFF").

Finally, be aware that it has an "emergency alert" function and since the switch that activates this is just below the PTT switch, it's quite easy to accidentally hit it and send this attention-getting tone over the air.

Various alarm modes. For my alarm the setting was SITE which from the video i understand is just like a panic button on a car remote. It does not transmit anything to anyone. For a moment I had got worried that when I hit the alarm



button it would send some weird signals as it is very easy to click on the alarm button when you are trying to play with the FM radio.

keeping in mind that you should pre-program the frequency offsets of your local repeater, as automatic offsets (+/-) are not included on this one. Or use the chirp software as it does for you.

Few things to note about Antenna. I'm still using the stock antenna. - the antenna connection is a reverse TNC, so you will need an adaptor if you want to use your other handheld antennas with this radio

It is highly recommended to buy an aftermarket 2/440 (17") F-SMA antenna it will work a lot better. I have a BNC to F-SMA adapter to widen the antenna selection. I use a long range MFJ 1714 antenna for 2M. The original ducky works on 440 better than I'd thought it would.

Best site on what frequencies to program for a newbie:

<http://codegreenprep.com/2013/04/tips-on-how-to-best-configure-and-use-your-baofeng-uv-5r/>

Video to program NOAA weather channels for your area:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vszi6d2s5Sk>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/GriffTaylor/videos?view=0&flow=grid>

Just to be safe I turned off all transmissions from my unit by following the instructions below:

<https://hamgear.wordpress.com/2012/04/07/setting-up-and-programming-your-uv-5r/>

If you set the channel to duplex then the offset to off it will apparently block you from transmitting. See:

<http://www.miklor.com/uv5r/UV5R-CHIRPGuide.html>

If you program your radio in chirp and set the duplex mode to off it will prohibit transmitting if the unit is on that channel. I have tested and confirmed this yesterday. Effectively it sets the TX frequency to 000.000mhz. The U-5R nicely error beeps when pressing the PTT button.



## **LAST CALL!!!**

***Rich (WQ3Q) and Leeanna invite you to join us for RTTY in ITALY 2016***

We have reserved VILLA CATOLA in beautiful Tuscany, Italy from September 17<sup>th</sup> to October 1<sup>st</sup> in the village of Bucine, Arezzo, Italy. This is to coincide with the CQ Worldwide RTTY contest for 2016.

Arrangements are being set up for equipment and operating location at this time. We hope to operate at the villa. As the villa reservations run only from Saturday to Saturday and the contest begins on the beginning of a weekend, we will need to plan our arrival the week before, on the 17<sup>th</sup>. To give us time to prepare ourselves.



During that prep time and right after the contest we will experience the fantastic food, wine, culture, history of Italy. As for Villa Catola, [[www.villacatola.it](http://www.villacatola.it)] you will not find a more congenial host than Fabio Catola and his family. Villa Catola has room for 16 guests. 4 full baths (yes they are shared), 1 powder room, a full kitchen and a lovely garden and pool. Bucine is a small friendly village with a modestly-sized grocery store, coffee/pastry shops, small variety stores markets, laundry, and as several restaurants in the area and a Catholic Church.

### **Let's get to the details...**

The cost of the villa will depend upon the number of guests. With a "full house," and assuming the current rate of the Euro, the cost will be approximately \$300-\$325 per person per week. There may be extra charge for heating, but it may not be necessary either. Fabio Catola, our host/landlord, requests that we send a deposit of 50% by April 30<sup>th</sup> 2016. We will need a monetary commitment by then from those who have decided to join us. The final payment (50%) will be due in August of 2016. We would like to have a list of interested people early enough to be able to calculate the amount of the deposits. We also recommend travel insurance. We've never had to use it, but knowing it is there allows us to rest easy about any bumps in the road. Remember this too... my wife and I are not travel agents or a travel agency. We need only those who are truly committed to coming to sign up. Once the deposit is due to be sent to the villa owner, we cannot refund any money. This is just our personal vacation time we are willing to share with anyone who wants to come with us. So please decide carefully. We are basing the costs upon the number of people attending filling the villa.

Your biggest expense will be your flights. Flights run around \$1200 roundtrip/person. There are ways to keep the cost down, like leaving and returning on a weekday instead of a weekend, but you'll need to look into that based on your own preferences. We have flown in to Milan, Rome, Venice and Florence. If you rent a car your drive time to the villa will be approximately 3 hours from all of those destinations, except Florence which is only 45 minutes from the villa. There is a train station in Bucine and you can



use the train system to reach the villa if you prefer not to rent a car. Car rental costs are so varied you'll need to look into that on your own.



Once we're there we'll have many choices for eating. To dine-in, many times we have cooked in the kitchen and have even had a group-cooked dinner. To dine-out though, we can walk to nearby Piero's "Il Paguro" restaurant, just 2 blocks away. Another favorite restaurant about a half mile down the road is "La Vecchia Fornace" and just another mile or two from Bucine in the other direction is "Antica Portale." Prices are reasonable and comparable to what we would pay in the US. This time of year is festival time, so there will be many festivals to entertain us and to sample some great Italian food.

#### **Next will be things to do...**

Remember that while we are going to be doing RTTY on the weekend of the 24<sup>th</sup> we want to take the time to enjoy ourselves in Italy the rest of the stay.

Many of Italy's major cities and sites are but a day-drive or train ride away.

Nearby towns offer shopping and sightseeing opportunities to satisfy your desires as well. The Bucine train station connects to larger cities and is located about 3 blocks from the villa if you choose to use rail travel. Yes even Brescia, Italy (home of Begali keys, Franchi and Benelli firearms.)

There is usually no set schedule of things to do while in Bucine.

People who plan to come should consider paring up or be independent and go out on your own.

Everyone travels on day-trips by themselves or in a small group. We are able to plan some day trips for groups that might be interested. Possibilities include a hot springs spa, a cooking class/dinner, winery tours, historical sites, etc. Fabio himself can take us on some sight-seeing trips.

There is no obligation to do these activities but we have had fun doing some special side-trips with our friends. Many other things can be done but space just doesn't allow for us to list them all. Besides the adventure is seeking out things to do or see.

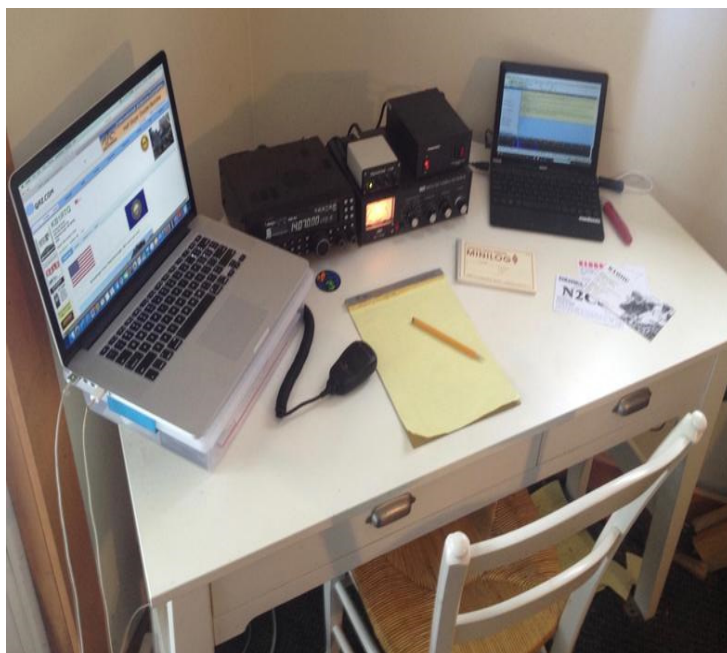
We hope you will consider joining the fun September 17<sup>th</sup> to October 1<sup>st</sup>. 2016.

**Call us for more information 724-337-8372, or email us [rybar@nb.net](mailto:rybar@nb.net)**

**If you wish to do a virtual visit of VILLA CATOLA online, go to [www.villacatola.it](http://www.villacatola.it)**

## Skyview Member Ham Shacks Au Naturel

This is a newsletter idea from Jody K3JZD and the hope is that there will be a series of pictures of the Skyview member's Ham Shacks. None are too big to show off. None are too small to show off. The only rule is: they have to be au naturel. No cleaning up allowed – we want to see them as they. Just grab a camera, take a few pictures, and email them to the editor. Easy to do with a smart phone or digital camera, so do it! One member's ham shack will be featured each month. Send Pictures to [K3STL@arrl.net](mailto:K3STL@arrl.net) with the subject line "Ham Shack"



What the XYL thinks it should look like . . . . . (Only says nothing should not overhang the desktop!!!)



What we all think it should look like. . .

**This month, we will feature Jody, K3JZD's au naturel Ham Shack:**

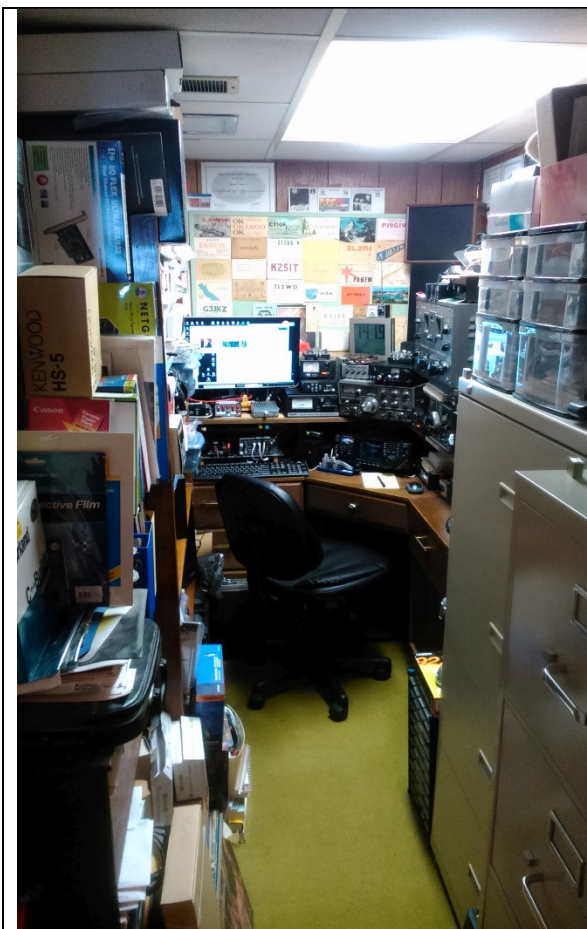


# SKYVIEW

Skyview Radio Society, K3MJW

K3MJW

2335 Turkey Ridge Road  
New Kensington, PA 15068



**No room for a party in there!!!**



## Summits on the Air (SOTA)

By: Richard Jones – N2GBR

### Purpose:

“The purpose of SOTA is to encourage Amateur Radio based activity from the summits of hills and mountains in countries around the world and to provide an award system for Radio Amateurs in all DXCC Entities. The Program is intended to encourage activity from clearly defined peaks, including major mountains. To enable participation in the Program to be as wide ranging as possible, lesser peaks may also be included. An incremental scoring system recognizes the higher peaks accordingly. The Program is intended for portable operation (/P) and does not accept operation from a motor vehicle. The Program provides for participation by Activators who make QSOs from the Summits, Chasers who make contact with the Activators, and Short

Wave Listeners. In addition to Amateur Radio Awards, the SOTA Program encourages activity in amateur radio operation, increasing knowledge and skills in the use of equipment, particularly in antennas, as well as encouraging new skills, for example, in operating CW and data modes (for those who do not already possess them).”



The Program started around 2002 and now has +50 Associations, ~45,000 summits and several thousand active users. There are awards for Activators (those who ascend summits) and to Chasers (who remain in the warmth of their radio shacks!).

### Activity:

I have been actively involved in SOTA for the last couple of years. While living in NJ I have been actively operating QRP in the North-West area and completed a few of the NJ summits. In NJ there are only twelve actual SOTA summits.

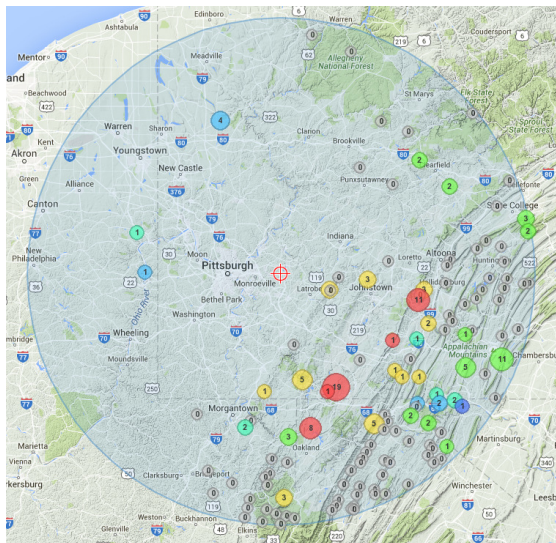
PA is split into nine regions (Figure 1: Table detailing the description of the nine PA SOTA Regions):

Region	Manager	Summits
CR - Capital Region	WA3WSJ	3
ER - Erie	WA3WSJ	1
PD - Pennsylvania Dutch	WA3WSJ	36
PH - Philadelphia	WA3WSJ	4
PO - Pocono	WA3WSJ	32
PT - Pittsburgh	WA3WSJ	9
PW - Pennsylvania Wilds	WA3WSJ	68
SV - Susquehanna Valley	WA3WSJ	56
WE - Western	WA3WSJ	14

Figure 1: Table detailing the description of the nine PA SOTA Regions



In Figure 2: Summits within a 100mile radius of Murrysville PA below you can see the 126 qualifying peaks within 100miles of Murrysville, PA. This figure also shows the number of activations of each peak. An “activation” is recorded when a SOTA participant has uploaded / recorded his log on the SOTA web-site note that there are 223 peaks across PA.



**Figure 2: Summits within a 100mile radius of Murrysville PA**

**How to Activate a SOTA Peak** (majority of this text shamelessly stolen from... “SOTA Activation Guideline” Revised 27 Sept 2011, Guy Hamblen, N7UN)

This documentation effort is intended to outline some of the primary steps to take in "activating" a SOTA Peak. It includes some of the planning steps, the activation, and post-activation steps. This outline is designed to serve as a general guideline for SOTA Activators and is based on my experience and therefore is NOT a comprehensive list of requirements. Hopefully, this document will become more complete as Activators participate in SOTA activations. SOTA is becoming more popular in North America partly because it combines outdoor activities and hiking with ham radio. Beware, SOTA activity can be contagiously fun!

Pre-activation Activities:

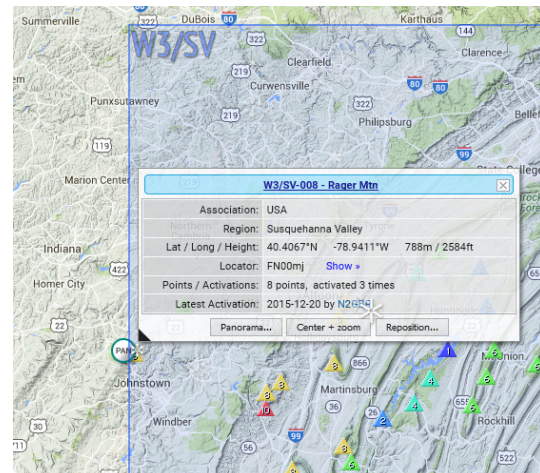
1. Go to the <http://www.sota.org.uk/website> and read through each of the tabbed sections from "Home" to the "About SOTA" in order to get the "big picture" of SOTA and the organizational structure of the program.
2. Open a <http://www.sotadata.org.uk> account. Click on the "Logon/Logoff" tab to register. Secondly, open a <http://www.sotawatch.org> account. These two accounts will give you access to valuable SOTA websites necessary for the following activities.

3. The first effort is to read the ARM (Association Reference Manual) for your Association which can be a State or a FCC Call Area (W1, W2, etc). You can download a copy at:

<http://www.sota.org.uk/Associations>. Scroll down to find the Association that you are interested in for further detail. The ARM docs are in .pdf format and contain valuable information about SOTA rules and requirements but also specific Peak information including the Peak Reference Number (ex: "W2/EH-001"), Lat/Long data points, and in some instances the six-place Grid Square ID.

4. Once a SOTA Region of interest is identified and using the Region Identifier (ex: W7/NC-xxx), look at: <http://www.adventureradio.de/mapview/index.php>. At the bottom of the page, from the dropdown menu, select the Region of interest and click OK. A map of available peaks will then display. You can "zoom in" as necessary for the appropriate detail. Clicking on any one of the tags will display that Peak information and links to SOTA resources specific to that peak. This SOTA and Google Maps "mashup" is a very easy way to "find" peaks on a map and plan your proposed Activation.

5. By then clicking on the hot link in the upper left corner of this "popup" of Peak information, a webpage will open with specific data about this Peak including a Google Map view as well as "near by peaks" that might be of interest. At the bottom of the Peak data window, you can select "Google Maps" for more road and terrain detail. Selecting the "SOTAwatch" link takes you directly to the SOTA database information for this Peak. You can read any documents or links posted by previous Activators that might assist in your planning.



6. Check with any governmental agencies that might have specific information such as road outages or maintenance detours, trailhead access information, or other restrictions that might impact your Activation. Usually the Forest Service has up-to-date information about road or trail access information. Generally the ARM document will have specific links or phone numbers for your State or Region for local weather or road reports. In the summer time many backcountry roads are closed either for logging, fire restrictions, or maintenance.

7. Other very good Peak information resources include:

a. <http://listsofjohn.com/>

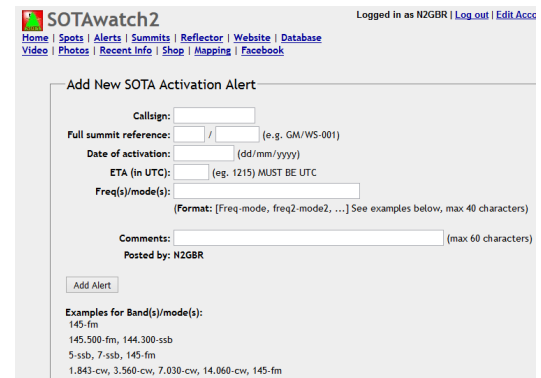
b. <http://www.summitpost.org/>

c. <http://peakbagger.com/>

8. Check the weather forecast appropriate for your State or Region and plan accordingly. Remember, if you get wet, hypothermia is a very real problem especially if the wind is blowing or the ambient temperatures are less than 60 degrees. Always pack rain gear. You never know when your Activation may get prolonged for whatever reason.

9. If you have any general questions about the Activation process, join <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nasota/whichis> a Yahoo reflector for all SOTA activities in North America. There is a wealth of SOTA experience on this reflector with folks very glad to help or answer questions.

10. The <http://www.sotawatch.org> website is both a "spotting" (where your Activation is spotted, similar to the DX cluster) and an "alerting" capability where your planned Activation is posted prior to the Activation. Click on the "new Alert" hotlink and enter your specific information for your planned Activation. All times are in UTC and the SOTA "activation day" is 0000 UTC to 2359 UTC. Many



SOTAwatch2  
Logged in as N2GBR | Log out | Edit Acco

Home | Spots | Alerts | Summits | Reflector | Website | Database  
Video | Photos | Recent info | Shop | Mapping | Facebook

Add New SOTA Activation Alert

Callsign:

Full summit reference:  (e.g. GM/WS-001)

Date of activation:  (dd/mm/yyyy)

ETA (in UTC):  (eg. 1215) MUST BE UTC

Freq(s)/mode(s):   
(Format: [Freq-mode, freq2-mode2, ...] See examples below, max 40 characters)

Comments:  (max 60 characters)

Posted by: N2GBR

Add Alert

Examples for Band(s)/mode(s):  
145-fm  
145-500-fm, 144.300-ssb  
5-ssb, 7-ssb, 145-fm  
1.843-cw, 3.560-cw, 7.030-cw, 14.060-cw, 145-fm

"Chasers" actively monitor this webpage in order to make contact with you.

Generally, "no alert, least number of qso's" is a guideline.

11. Determine local 2m FM repeaters that have coverage for your Activation Peak. In the USA, there are very few locations without coverage. Introduce yourself on the repeater as many locals will be very interested in your activity plus it becomes a "safety net" in case you or others you meet on your hike need any kind of assistance. If you have APRS capability, announce your SSID and links to <http://aprs.fi>.

12. Post your planned Activation information on any number of websites or reflectors dedicated to field or portable operations. Some favorites are the QRP-L reflector, HFpack, SOTA NA, etc. Shamelessly promote your Activation with your local hams! Remember, qso's via repeater are not allowed for SOTA points but certainly use a local repeater for safety communications and "spotting" purposes.

#### Activation Activities:

1. Be safe! An Activation is for your enjoyment and should not be regarded as a requirement. Many Activators do turn back if an "obstacle" occurs such as weather (rain, cold, windy, hot, etc) or access is denied, unsafe, or unavailable. Do not feel obligated to push forward because of all your preparations. Having said that... be prepared.



Figure 3: N2IEL under the tarp on a wet and snowy NJ SOTA expedition



Figure 4: Watch out for the locals!

2. Give yourself plenty of time both before starting your hike and certainly for your return. Plan for "stuff" to just happen which will delay your Activation.

"Murphy" enjoys these trips also!



Figure 5: N2GBR operating

3. Log (somehow) your qso's. Date, time, call, Freq. etc. You will need this log later for SOTA documentation and the Awards program information. A pencil and a small spiral notebook are favorites for manual logging. Once you get back home you'll need to log these again on the SOTA website to confirm your activation and get those points to your chasers

## QRP Calling Frequencies

	CW		PHONE	
BAND	(MHz)	Notes	(MHz)	Notes
160m	1.810		1.910	
			1.843	Europe
80m	3.560		3.965	
	3.710	Novice	3.690	SSB Europe
40m	7.040		7.265	
	7.030	Europe	7.090	SSB Europe
	7.060	Europe		
	7.110	Novice		
30m	10.106			
20m	14.060		14.285	
17m	18.096			
15m	21.060		21.385	
	21.110	Novice	21.285	SSB Europe
12m	24.906			
10m	28.060		28.885	
	28.110	Novice	28.985	Novice
			28.960	SSB Europe
6m	50.060		50.885	
			50.285	SSB Europe
2m	144.060		144.285	SSB
			144.585	FM

8 + 3 POINTS			
W3 / SV-008 Rager Mtn			
FN 00 m			
8 points			
40.4067N 78.9411W			
788 m / 2584 ft.			
3pm ?		FTB17 / LNR MTR.	
		14.285 (12-20-15)	
1 V02MO	ERIC	CANADA	5/9 9/9
2 W4DOW		VA	5/9 5/5
3 ND0C	RANDY	MN	5/7 5/5
4 VX			
5 N4EX	RICH	NC	5/9 5/7
6 W0MNA	GARY	KS	5/5 5/7
7 W0ERT	MARTHA		5/9 5/7
8 N1GB	GEB	VERMONT	5/7 5/5
9 KGS EIU	DAND	MAINE	5/7 5/7
10 K14TRN		E-PA	5/9 5/5
BROWNS MECH			
11 W9MRH			5/9 5/6
12 W4ET	ERIC		5/9 5/7
13 W7RV	TOMMY	AZ	5/7 5/3
14 K14SYM	PAT		5/9 5/5
15 K4MF	CHARV		5/9 5/5

Figure 6: Simple Paper Log from a successful SOTA peak activation

4. A 4-QSO minimum is a SOTA requirement within the "Activation Zone" for the Peak. See your ARM document for specific information for your Association concerning the Activation Zone. Note that the Activation Zone is defined as vertical feet/meters below the actual summit peak. This generally gives you a lot of location setup choices to either avoid other hikers or to get out of windy conditions. Most Activators call "CQ SOTA" on or near the traditional QRP or VHF calling frequencies.



Figure 7: Bare essentials for operating

5. SOTA operations are on the "honor system" to adhere to the minimum number of Rules and requirements for an "Activation". Please note any unsafe conditions encountered and please report them to the Association Manager.

#### Post -Activation Activities:

1. Part of the appeal of SOTA is the Awards program. Both Activators and Chasers accumulate "points" which allow each group to be eligible for specific Awards. See <http://www.sota.org.uk/Awardsfor> more information.

2. Go to <http://www.sotadata.org.uk/> and login. You will need to register one-time for an account on this SOTA database prior to entering your QSO information for your Activation. You can either manually enter the data under the "Submit Log" tab or upload a larger log via CSV or TSV data formats. Excel is a good program to build the upload file. Be sure to save the file in a CSV format.

3. Return to the Peak Information database from Step #3 under Pre-Activation activities for your specific Peak. Upload your Trip Report so other future Activators can benefit from your experiences. A good example of this is at:

<http://sotawatch.org/summits.php?summit=W2/EH-002> Your Activator callsign will then show up on the Activator Roll of Honor at <http://www.sotadata.org.uk/> under the "View Results" tab.

4. Submit your Trip Report, if desired, to any of the websites or reflectors dedicated to field or portable operations. This helps SOTA to grow as readers want to be participants, either as an Activator or as a Chaser.

5. Post questions or concerns to the SOTA NA reflector so others can potentially benefit from your experience.



## Equipment

I use an FT817ND, LiPO battery packs, LNR END FEDZ antenna or simple Dipole.



I have made most of my activations/contacts with an LNR PAR-ends EF-10-20-40-QRP it's not as light as the MTR... but I have one of those too and I'd say it's a bit FRAGILE... if you're going End-fed... I recommend the LNR. When you get it.. tune it per the instructions. I put mine on a 17ft fishing pole as an inverted V and tuned it for 20 and 40M... I've not used it on 10M. Once you have the thing tuned.... always use it the way you tuned it and leave your tuner at home! don't be tempted to put it up higher.

I also have a link-dipole for 20M/40M. This works as a 40M NVIS set-up mounted about 7 ft. I have a reflector to place on the ground also... haven't used that yet.

Prepare a throwing weight and line.... I had a nice Arborists weight until someone got it stuck in a tree during field day set-up.... I made a temporary with a sock, duck-tape and pennies.... been using it for about 15months now!!

Think about your kit and how you're going to access/pull it from your back-pack and use it during your activation... throwing weight.... antenna, feed-line and then radio... battery etc.

Get yourself something to sit on... I use the equivalent of a gardeners kneeling pad..

Depending on how keen you are.... bad weather... in the hills... Outer water-proofs... I have some lite-weight Gortex from Cabelas that has been excellent.. you also need shelter of some sort... I always carry a tarp and some line.. plus a bivy, some food, head-lamp, whistle etc.. usual 'stuck in the woods stuff'.. when it's cold out I take a flask of Coffee!... make sure that everything important, not IP67 rated, has some sort of waterproof bag/case or ???... it will rain on you eventually.

Recently I used a Gust-buster 62" golf umbrella for shelter during an activation, and it was perfect... snuggled under it out of the rain and wind with my radio still in my pack.. worked great.. light weight and quick to set-up!



Go the extra-mile and get yourself a LiPo battery pack.. for the FT817ND I use 4cells 26650 type and a pack will run for 1.5-2hrs... plenty long enough! it weighs about 10oz, compared to about 4lbs for the SLAB!



Use RG8X COAX... don't skip on that... you'll have enough problems using only 5w without robbing power to the antenna with thin lite-weight co-ax!

The Activation zone. It's a self-policing thing. In the spirit of SOTA you need to be within 125ft of the top. So that allows you to pick a good spot that suits the antenna and the wind. I like to use my GPS and know exactly where I am, eliminates the guess work. I have a Garmin GPSMAP 64 with the NE Topo Maps and all the summits programmed as way-points, you can download them from the SOTA site. I can recommend that GPS.... the receiver works great even in the spring when the tree canopy is full with leaves and sometimes wet.

When I Log I use a note-pad / Pen... I put the location at the top of the sheet with the Lat/long, maidenhead locator, height, radio/antenna/battery, location, Temperature, etc.etc and anything else interesting... make sure you ask people if you've been spotted if not ask them to spot you... I had 63 QSO's at a SOTA activation last year... close each call correctly with theirs and then your Call-sign so that people get plenty of chances to hear yours. and the SOTA peak information. Generally after placing an alert on the SOTA website 24hrs ahead of an activation, I will record somewhere between 20 and 40 QSO's on 20M and 40M... so expect to be operating for about an hour.

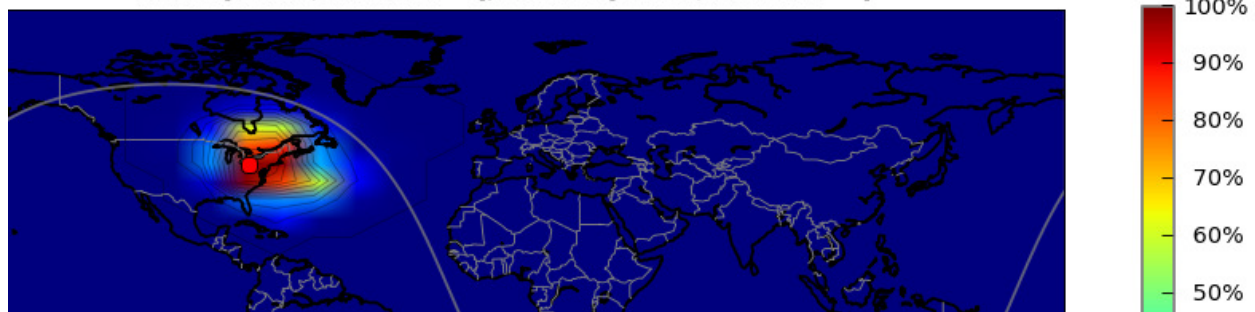
First summit.... go somewhere where a previous activator has left a log about the access and activation... for an outdoor "dry-run" ... go to a park with a bit of a history to "talk to" prepare some interesting facts and spot yourself.... make it a bit interesting like a landmark and you'll soon get some QSO's in the log. Make an equipment check-list

Make sure you have a Back-up plan in-case there is an access issue especially for your first summit effort.

Also check VOA Cap... sometimes there's little point going on 20M ... go straight to 40M .. "there's always an opening to somewhere on 40M)..

Example below is for 40M NVIS setup.

Pittsburgh PA (40.40N, 80.00W), Dec, 19 UTC, 7.100 MHz, 4 W, SSN 46, Mode: SSB  
TX Ant: [voaant/d10m.ant ], RX Ants: [voaant/d15m.ant ]





Don't forget a Pre flight-check: Make sure your radio, antenna, batteries with radio power-cable are in your bag... (I keep my SOTA backpack ready-to-go all the time).

Good luck and have fun!

Further links and Reading:

1. <http://www.sota.org.uk/>
2. Yeasu FT817ND, FT857ND
3. Elecraft KX3
4. LNR precision

References (Text shamelessly stolen from):

- i. SOTA Activation Guideline Revised 27 Sept 2011, Guy Hamblen, N7UN
- ii. W3 Association handbook



Richard Jones / N2GBR



## **When amateurs began experimenting with radio more than a century ago.**

**By: Terry Long K3JEL**

When amateurs began experimenting with radio more than a century ago, they had no choice but to build everything they needed. Some went on to become successful entrepreneurs, selling their creations to fellow hobbyists who were more interested in operating radios than in constructing them. Others built their own receivers and transmitters either from economic necessity or for the fun and satisfaction of being able to say, "I did it myself."

After World War II, the market was flooded with surplus electronic components that could be bought in bulk for less than the cost of manufacture. The Heath Company parlayed these riches into a successful business by designing kits that could be built at home by anyone with simple tools and a soldering iron.

Step-by-step instructions virtually eliminated the risk of failure. No one embraced Heathkits more enthusiastically than the amateur-radio community. At the time, electronic manufacturing still involved point-to-point wiring and was very labor intensive, so hams could buy a kit for less than the cost of an equivalent factory-assembled unit and — as a bonus — experience the joy of putting it together. Other companies also offered kits, but Heathkit is virtually synonymous with the era.

The advent of solid-state devices, printed circuit boards, and automatic parts insertion removed the price advantage that kits enjoyed. By the time the Heath Company closed its doors in 1992, most amateur-radio equipment was being manufactured in Japan.

But Heathkit's demise did not spell the end of home construction in amateur radio. Anyone who has ever made a two-way radio contact with simple equipment they built on their own workbench or kitchen table will tell you that it's a thrilling experience. One of the many thriving subcultures in amateur radio is the QRP community, named for the international Morse code signal for "decrease power." QRPers pride themselves on being able to communicate all over the world with less than 5 watts of transmitter power, often with homemade gear. Their clever equipment designs — offered as kits by clubs and small businesses — have led to a renaissance in kit building. There are so many kits available from so many suppliers that, if you set out to build them all, you would never finish!

Today, the fruits of a kit-builder's labors can be slipped into a backpack, along with a battery and a roll of wire for a day of hiking, with space left over for lunch. At a nice spot along the trail, one end of the wire gets tossed into a tree and the other is connected to the radio for a couple of hours of surfing the ionosphere in search of contacts with other hams near and far. You might (or might not, depending on where you are) be able to get a signal on your smartphone, but it is truly liberating to be able to communicate using equipment you've built yourself — using just the natural phenomenon of radio-wave propagation and without a trillion dollars' worth of telecommunications infrastructure.

Radio amateurs don't develop radio-communication skills and capabilities just for ourselves. We want to be of service to our communities and country. Public service and emergency preparedness are important ways to give back for the privilege of accessing the radio spectrum. The more we know, the more capabilities we develop by doing it ourselves, the more valuable we can be when we're needed. And we will be needed. Society relies ever more heavily on a fragile telecommunications infrastructure that is susceptible to overload and outright failure. We can't substitute for all that infrastructure. But we *can* communicate, no matter what.

## *Random Happenings*



**Rich N3GBR and Dave K0JRS  
in the Skyview Radio Room**



**Bob WC3O, Mikey N3MRU, and Pat NK3P  
at the Skyview Banquet**



**Captain Jack KA3HPM is ready to work some DX!**



**DeWayne KC3EVT getting some Elmering  
from Capt. Jack KA3HPM and Dave N3TIN**

## Ham Trivia - There is a DX-20 in the George Jones Museum

By: Jody Nelis - K3JZD

I recently did a fast tour of the George Jones Museum in Nashville. George Jones (1931-2013) was a very accomplished country music singer and songwriter. From what I have been told, just about everything in that tribute museum consists of personal artifacts from George's home that were donated to the museum by George's widow.

One of the things that they had setup in this museum was described as a personal recording studio. It was a little strange though, as it was really just a few old microphones and a collection of rather dated components like reel-to-reel and cassette tape recorders. One of things included in this recording studio display area that caught my eye is shown in these photos



Yep - that is a vintage HeathKit DX-20 Transmitter. Not really part of any 'recording studio'. But I guess it looks pretty impressive to those who have no idea what it is.

I checked several of the lists of Famous Hams that are out there on-line, like this one:

<http://www.qsl.net/w5www/famous.html> but did not find George Jones listed anywhere.

From what I learned in the museum, it did not appear that George Jones was a stage name, but I checked some stuff on-line anyway to see if perhaps it was and he had been licensed under a real name <http://georgejones.com/wired/> Nope, everything I read said that was in fact his real name, and not a stage name. So, I never found any record of him ever being a ham.



If you check that Famous Ham list link, you will see that many of the country music singers that run around the country in their well outfitted tour busses are hams, and will pass the time away during their city-to-city travel and between performances by running mobile rigs from those tour busses. I have seen more than one of those big deluxe tour busses out on the highway with an HF antenna bolted onto the back of them. Their busses are usually unmarked, so I have no way of knowing who it was that I saw going by.



George had a bit of a bad-boy history and was often referred to as 'No-Show George' because whenever his bus arrived at the venue, George was often in no shape to perform. Whenever George began to market his George Jones White Lightning signature brand of Moonshine in 2012,

He said "Alcohol has owned me and controlled much of my life. Now is my time to own it." So, I have to wonder if maybe one of those other country music singers who was a ham had tried to get George interested in the hobby to give him a better way to pass the time while in his tour bus. And if they had given him some get-started stuff (which if that included this DX-20, sure would have been long, long, ago).

Guess I will never know the background on this transmitter and how it got into this museum, but nonetheless, I thought it was an interesting discovery. (And yes, I did buy some of that George Jones White Lightning Moonshine).

Jody - K3JZD

## Skyview Radio Society is on Facebook!

Give us a "Like" and stay updated  
on the latest club news and events!



## Stop up and see us at Skyview Radio Society!

2335 Turkey Ridge Road  
New Kensington, PA 15068

**Business** meetings on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm.

**Weather Group** meetings on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm.

**Social** meeting on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm.

**Elmer Night** on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm.



## In The Spirit of Ham Radio

By: John Hoffman K3STL

Recently, a co-worker asked me a question regarding soldering and what's the best solder to use. Of course, I have an opinion about what's best, but explained that *my fellow Hams* will have a better answer than me. So the question was posted in the Skyview Yahoo Group and within a very short period of time, many replies were posted. **This is the spirit of Ham Radio....** *Passing on the information you've learned about the hobby!* Some of the replies are as follows:

- The name "Kester" comes to mind, automatically – **Jerry K3FKI**
- There's been a ton of information from Elecraft because of the amount of soldering in the K2. They recommend (as do I), Kester 44 rosin flux. .020" for really small stuff, but .031" is more practical for average ham use. Either 60/40 or 63/37 ratio. The 63/37 has a very narrow "liquid" temperature range, so it solidifies faster than 60/40, but it's a little harder to get a pretty, shiny joint. A one-pound spool is enough for several lifetimes. I probably used half an ounce for my K2.

For surface mount work, nothing beats solder paste. It's pricy, and you practically buy it by the drop, but it makes SMD work almost enjoyable.

I HIGHLY recommend a "real" temperature controlled soldering station. This is one of those times where you really need to not be a cheap ham and spend the money. I think I paid about \$100 for my Weller WES-51. Hakko makes a similar station of equal reputation and quality. There's no need for a digital display unless you have a real requirement to have it calibrated for your job. – **Dave AA3EE**

- Weller is a good brand, but to save \$\$\$ I got my solder station from MPJA:  
<http://www.mpja.com/Solder-Station-with-LED-Display-ZD-929C/productinfo/15845+TL>

Added a handle so I don't have to change tips

<http://www.mpja.com/Solder-Station-15845-TL-ZD-929C-Replacement-handle/productinfo/15846+TL>

And tweezers for surface mount

<http://www.mpja.com/Solder-Station-15845-TL-ZD-929C-Replacement-Handle/productinfo/15846+TL>

Also bought extra tips, etc.

I figure I have \$100 in the entire set up – **Joe N3TTE**

- I have always been fond of Kester 60/40 Lead Tin based solder and for that matter now, any 60/40 I can find! The new lead free stuff is a real pain QRM QRM QRM! – **Bill WB3BUW (aka "Boats")**



**Monday nights at 8:30 PM (local time), WC3O conducts code practice sessions. Anyone at any proficiency can participate in code practice.**



**Think you'd like to give Morse Code a shot? Tune in to the Skyview repeater 146.640 pl 131.8 and/or listen for WC3O on 28.102 MHz.**

## **March W1AW Qualifying Runs**

Evaluate your Morse code ability through the ARRL Code Proficiency program.

Copy one of W1AW's qualifying runs and submit one minute of solid copy (legible) along with your \$10 fee for a certificate to:

W1AW Qualifying Run  
225 Main Street  
Newington, CT USA 06111

Your submission will be checked directly against the official W1AW text and if you pass you will get your initial Code Proficiency certificate.

From then on, \$7.50 endorsement stickers are issued for speeds up to 40 WPM.

The W1AW Code Proficiency Program is open to both hams and non-hams alike. Qualifying Runs will be transmitted on the following dates and frequencies:

March 5 0300 UTC / March 16 2300 UTC

Frequencies: 1.802.5, 3.581.5, 7.047.5, 14.047.5, 18.097.5, 21.067.5, 28.067.5, and 147.555 MHz

## **Check In to the Wednesday Evening MARES Net!**

The Murrysville Area Amateur Radio Emergency Service (MARES) net was established to provide communications for the Murrysville area, including Export, Delmont, Plum and Monroeville, in the event of a communications emergency. The MARES net operates under the umbrella of the [Westmoreland Emergency Amateur Radio Service](#) (WEARS) net, Westmoreland County, PA.

The net uses the Skyview Repeater, 146.640, with a negative offset and a PL Tone of 131.8, every Wednesday at 8:30 pm for its weekly net. Should this net be activated by WEARS, operations would switch over to simplex as it is envisioned that the repeaters would be tied up by other nets. Net control would pass information back and forth with WEARS and, because of its location, Allegheny, Armstrong, Butler and Indiana Counties are easily contacted.

For a list of primary and secondary simplex operating frequencies please contact:

Bernie Savko, [n3xvt@hotmail.com](mailto:n3xvt@hotmail.com)



## *From the Radio Officer*

---

Dayton Hamvention is coming!!!

To our many long-time hams this is nothing new. To many of our newbie hams this might be interesting news. News that they might not fully understand? Dayton? What's up with that?

The Dayton Hamvention is THE largest ham radio convention in the WORLD. People come from all four corners of the planet come to attend the Dayton Hamvention, often simply know as just "Dayton". Dayton is three days long. EVERY vender of ham radio equipment is represented in a massive arena that has more twists and turns than the wildest road race. The location is Hara Arena located a few miles outside of downtown Dayton Ohio. The place is, well, a dump. It is a place in dire need of updates and money invested. But do you know what? It doesn't matter. It's the people that you've come to see. You will get so tired walking around the inside exhibits you'll want to fall over. That's the inside. The outside? A flea market of biblical proportion! There is an old saying, if you can't find it at Dayton – They never made it. Massive.

And to think that this is not the heyday of the Dayton Hamvention. There are around 20,000 attending these days. It was once over 30,000! I was there. It was nuts. I hear people complain that it isn't as big as it once was. Me, I'm glad! Now you can actually see the exhibits without having to rub up against other hams that may not have seen running water in a few days! In my opinion it is WAY better now. It is the absolute high point of my hammy year.

Sound big to you? Oh we're not done yet buddy! Along with the Hamvention proper there are no shortages of peripheral events that are also huge!

A huge QRP event known as Four Days In May, FDM. <http://www.qrparci.org/fdim> It is located at a Holliday Inn in a nearby town.

Then there is Contest University at the Crown Plaza in downtown Dayton. <http://www.contestuniversity.com/> You can come learn from THE people that wrote the book on contesting!



There are special interest dinners. The contest dinner, Top Band dinner, various digital group dinners, and much more.

There are great forums during Hamvention right there in Hara. Learn about all kinds of subjects of interest at these very well attended and informative events. Subjects like tower safety, AMSAT, D-STAR, SSTV, Red Cross, Microwave communications, Bicycle mobile, restoring old Drake equipment, digital subjects and much more.

You see people from all over the world including Europe, Asia, India, the Middle East, South America, Africa – You name it.

New products are often introduced at Dayton. Special deals are offered on most products. You can either carry them home or have them shipped to your house and save sales tax.

The flea market? Good Lord! I've seen a real F16 flight simulator shell being sold, fire sirens, kitchen sinks, mail boxes (The kind you might find on a street corner!), broadcast transmitters, you name it. That is naturally in addition the ANYTHING ham radio related! (and I do mean anything)

You get to meet and talk to the folks you have only read about such as Bob Heil, Gordon West, ALL the ARRL higher-ups. Anyone that is anyone in Hammyland is at Dayton. Trust me.

In a way ham radio is a lonely hobby. It's a hobby that the people all around you likely do not know about nor understand. At Dayton, EVERYONE is a ham! Even the waitresses at the local restaurants know what ham radio is.

So the only question is this: What the hell are you waiting for! Make reservations! Make plans! Make haste! Soon I will do a semi-elmer night showing pictures of this blessed event. I think you should be a part of it. You won't be sorry. There is a lot more to the story, but this is all I'm going to tell you for now.

Dayton – May 20, 21, 22 2016

[www.hamvention.org](http://www.hamvention.org)

---



## Ham Radio Wordfind

Try to find 10 Ham Radio Related Words in the puzzle below. Answers are below.

C	X	F	Q	S	S	Z	N	U	P	O	F	A	F	S	Z	H	Q	V	O
V	O	J	O	T	R	S	X	X	H	L	B	N	L	W	W	G	H	K	H
C	T	N	A	R	K	O	E	X	E	W	K	N	O	S	A	J	R	P	P
N	U	X	T	W	U	D	D	A	O	K	Z	E	F	K	A	P	T	P	Z
U	H	W	E	E	I	M	M	N	S	N	N	T	M	Y	H	H	A	R	W
U	K	G	T	R	S	A	S	K	E	X	G	N	X	L	Q	D	X	I	H
T	K	G	S	T	R	T	W	U	I	V	D	A	B	I	E	K	J	Z	I
B	F	U	B	K	C	G	U	L	R	R	A	E	U	N	K	G	A	E	F
U	B	K	E	O	O	C	U	N	W	M	W	W	N	E	B	O	T	S	G
A	O	T	P	R	G	R	E	L	I	P	W	W	O	C	X	H	T	X	G
H	X	E	K	A	F	X	S	D	C	V	R	Z	Q	H	W	Y	X	E	V
Q	P	I	H	S	W	O	L	L	E	F	E	J	L	I	E	I	L	Z	R
Q	E	Z	B	Q	D	Q	D	V	O	K	P	R	E	L	N	Z	Y	J	P
Z	L	M	J	I	S	W	U	Q	H	A	C	W	S	I	L	B	Q	L	L
I	I	F	W	C	A	C	H	U	K	T	C	R	F	I	X	M	T	C	Y
Y	E	E	H	A	W	K	B	C	O	B	A	W	R	C	T	X	Z	N	H
M	G	D	K	K	Y	R	V	A	O	I	Z	Y	X	K	X	Y	X	B	B
Y	D	W	O	Y	R	R	D	L	N	A	O	A	Q	E	B	R	G	W	R

**WORDFIND ANSWERS:** ANTENNA, ARRL, BUSRIDE, CONTESTUNIVERSITY, FELLOWSHIP, FLEAMARKET, FORUMS, PRIZES, RAIN, SKYLINECHILI, VENDORS, YEEHAW



## Reflections

**G'day Old Timer!**

**What's in a name - plenty or nothing?**

By: Terry Long K3JEL

**All through the ages** people have coined nicknames for other people and things. Sometimes they are quite descriptive names, sometimes, just nonsense. What is an 'oozit'? Who is 'what'shisname'? What is a 'thingamajig'? There are many much later names which older people may have never heard.



Names have always been important, for without one we and all objects have no definition and no status. How would you define a cat, or a dog, or a desk if you had no reference point in your language for such objects?

It is the same with people. Our parents gave us a name - Bill, Don, Betty and so on - by which we became established members of society. Sometimes those people will be given different names, for example Digger, Shorty, Macca or names in keeping with their positions or jobs, for example Gopher, Boss, Sparky, and Mr Fixit.

Names have always been important, for without one we and all objects have no definition and no status. How would you define a cat, or a dog, or a desk if you had no reference point in your language for such objects?

Names have always been important, for without one we and all objects have no definition and no status. How would you define a cat, or a dog, or a desk if you had no reference point in your language for such objects?

It is the same with people. Our parents gave us a name - Bill, Don, Betty and so on - by which we became established members of society. Sometimes those people will be given different names, for example Digger, Shorty, Macca or names in keeping with their positions or jobs, for example Gopher, Boss, Sparky, and Mr Fixit.

The term 'Old Timer' could easily conjure up an image of a member of a past generation or someone involved in the early history of Australia. 'Old Timer' in general usage is a friendly appellation not unlike 'Mate' but with reference to someone who is experienced and has been around for a while.



In our hobby of amateur radio, the term 'Old Timer' is a term of respect for one's ability and years of service. It has nothing to do with age.

If you have been licensed for 59 years or more, you earn the name 'Old Timer' because of your years in the hobby. You may not have been very active and you may not be very old, but you have held the license for 59 or more years and gained some experience in that time.