

# THE EAGLE

BULLETIN OF THE  
OTSCHODELA  
COUNCIL  
AMATEUR  
RADIO GROUP



VOLUME FIVE NUMBER 4

DECEMBER 2004

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Scouting hams and hamming Scouters --

Otschodela Council Amateur Radio Group (OCARG) is dedicated to the enhancement of the Scouting program through amateur radio and to the advancement of amateur radio in Boy Scouting. Membership is open to any and all Scouters, amateur radio operators, Scouting and ham clubs and organizations, and all individuals, each with an interest in the Boy Scouts of America and other youth organizations as they relate to amateur radio. While originally intended for Otschodela Council, Oneonta, New York, OCARG has expanded into a worldwide organization with members in more than twenty states and six nations. There are no membership dues, no officers, no constitution, no newsletter charges, no commercial advertisements, and no organized meetings. All communications are via email or ham radio. All that's required to join is an interest in ham-Scouting and an email to [k2frd@arrl.net](mailto:k2frd@arrl.net) requesting membership. OCARG is an FCC-licensed Amateur Radio Club Station with the callsign KZ2BSA.

Copies of the *OCARG EAGLE* are sent to many interested persons in addition to OCARG members. If you feel that you have received this newsletter in error or no longer wish to receive it, kindly sent a message so stating to one of the above addresses.

The online edition of the *OCARG EAGLE* may be found at: <http://homepage.mac.com/k2frd/ocarg.htm> . The *OCARG EAGLE* is mailed only via Blind CC ("recipient list suppressed") to cut down on your header's size and to avoid providing a ready-made list to potential spammers.



GREETINGS OF  
THE SEASON



On behalf of all of us at the Otschodela Council Amateur Radio Group KZ2BSA and the OCARG EAGLE, I would like to wish everyone the best for the holiday season and for the new year of 2005. Or, in the language we all understand, may your DX be long and may all your signals be 599!

73 de Fred K2FRD

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## MORSE CODE TO MUSIC: LEARNING CODE THE FUN WAY - OOPS!

Thanks to everyone who pointed out that I forgot to include the URL last month. By way of an apology, here is the original web address sent by Tony N2GVB: <http://www.philtulga.com/morse.html> and a second sent in by Frank Krizan KR1ZAN: <http://www.cognimetric.com/acrawford/page/morsemusic!Morse%20Music> .

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Tony Masi N2GVB sent in the following URL. For those trying to upgrade and are having trouble learning Morse Code, putting it to rhythm and music may be the solution. Or, if anyone is tired of listening to 800 hertz beeps, here's something different. Note, you'll need to have the latest Netscape 7, Internet Explorer, or Safari browsers for it to work; I didn't try Firefox.

de K2FRD

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## TROOP 99 SIDNEY, NY CONDUCTING LICENSE CLASSES



**ABOVE: Scouts Jesse Hornbeck and Alex Latta attend their 7th of 12 classes in Troop 99's "Radio School".**

Scout Troop 99 of Sidney, NY (Foothills District, Otschodela Council, Oneonta, NY) is holding Technician Classes weekly during the Fall season. Two Scouts are presently averaging 89% on quizzes and one "Trimester test" after 7, one-hour classes. They are hoping for success at their Tech Test sometime during the Christmas vacation. They will then join licensed Scouts Connor Hornbeck KC2JJY and Derrick McHenry KC2JIX as full members of the Troop communications team - "C-Corps".

These future rag chewers have had exposure to the art at JOTA and have been on HF, sending their names "copyable" to listening stations. We have had one "Electronics Lab" at the cost of only one fuse and Alex has built his own audio oscillator. Although CW is not required for Tech-Class License, we are hoping someone will hang in there and learn code.

As an incentive, the estate of one of our "Friends of 99", a recent "silent key", has generously passed on two 2M hand-helds which will be troop property and loaned to new Scout Hams. This way they will have a "Rig" to use right after passing their test until they are able to acquire their own. They will also be available to the Walton Radio Association for similar purposes.

Keep up the fine work, guys.

Troop members are: Nate Curtin, Jordin Fitzgerald, Andrew Fritsch, Tom Haney, Eric Hitt, Conner Hornbeck, Jesse Hornbeck, Ben Howard, Dillon Ives, Ryan Keckiesen, Troy Kiel, Alex King, Alex Latta, Dan Maddalone, Josh

McClenon, Derrick McHenry, Phillip McHenry, Matt Nickell, Bryan Price, Skyler Reithoffer, Andy Searles, Adam Soroka, Chris Volk and Dan Zieno. Our sponsor is the First Congregational Church, Main at Bridge Streets, Sidney. The Troop meets every Wednesday night at the church at 7:00 PM. We greatly appreciate the new facility that the church has provided. Scouting is open to all boys, ages 11 through 17 regardless of previous Cub Scout or Boy Scout experience. Please see the Troop website: <http://www.upstate88.com/99> for additional information.

de Jim LeBaron WA2IAX

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## **WATCHING FOR NEW CALLSIGNS FROM THE FCC**

New Scouts or anyone else who have just passed a license exam may learn their new callsigns from the following FCC URL. Volunteer Examiners now have the option to send license exams electronically to the FCC; most are doing so within a few hours of the exams. The FCC has generally been issuing these new callsigns within two to five days and as soon as they are granted, the callsigns appear in the FCC's database. It takes a few hours up to 24 or 48 hours for the traditional online callbook sites to download the FCC's updated database within their own. By watching this site, a new licensee may more quickly learn that he is now Official!

<http://gullfoss2.fcc.gov/cgi-bin/ws.exe/genmen/licensee.hts>

HINT: Unless one knows the exact name under which a callsign is applied, it is easier to enter only a last name (unless it is a very common last name) and scroll through the list for the new Scout-ham.

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## **MINI-EDITORIAL: DONATE YOUR RIGS TO A SCOUT UNIT**

In the above article about Troop 99's license class, there is mention of a Silent Key ham who donated two HTs to the Troop as part of his estate. This got me to thinking about what's going to happen to all my gear after I've gone on the Greatest DXpedition Of All.

There's nobody in my family who is even remotely interested in ham radio. My local radio club already has plenty of spare equipment and really has little storage capability anyway. Sure, somebody might get a few bucks for the gear by sales on eBay or to a local ham, but the money so generated wouldn't be anywhere near what the radios are really worth. What might be the best and most valuable use for this gear?

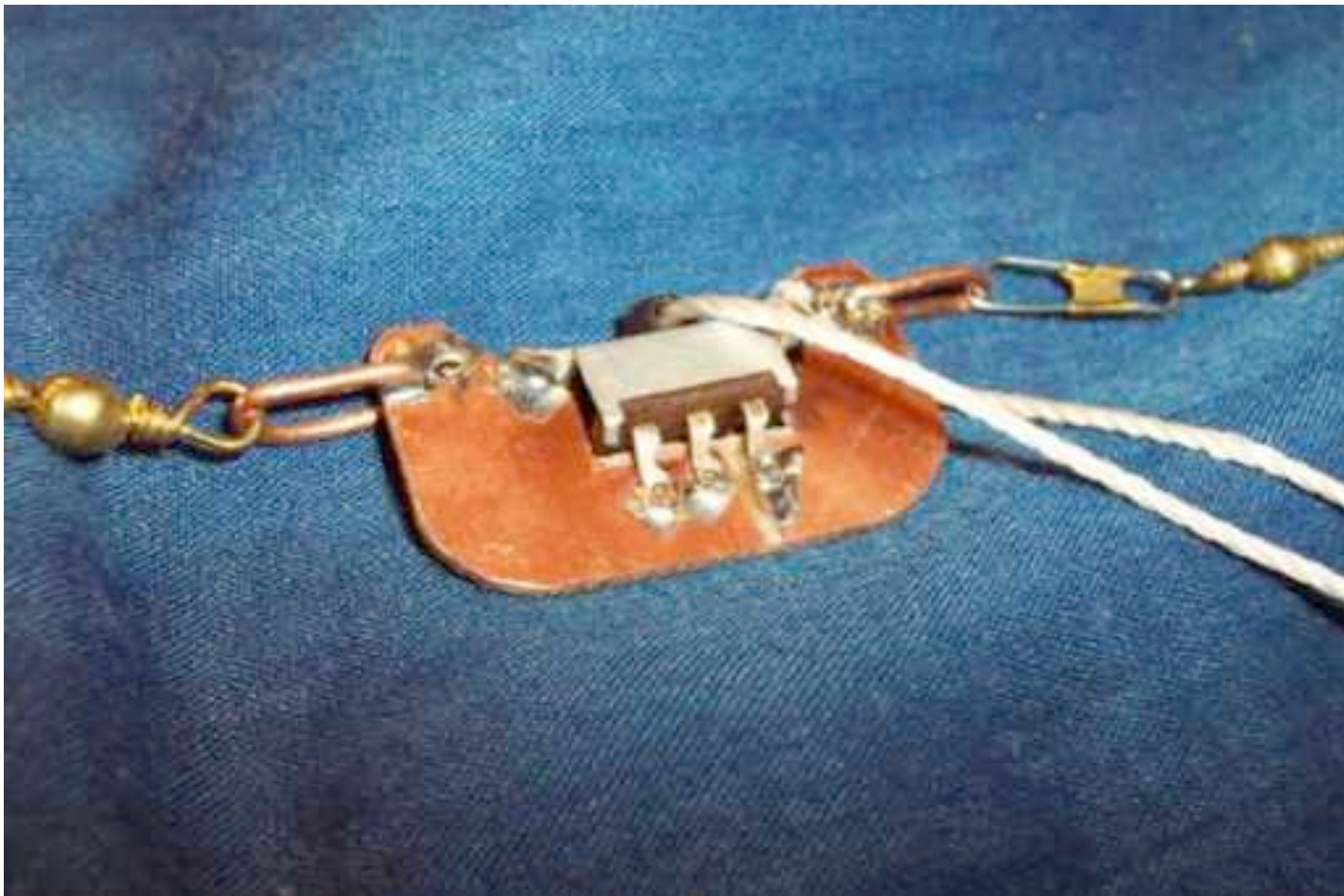
Answer: Donation as an estate gift of the radios and auxiliary equipment to a Scout unit which is active in ham radio. Within the readership of this newsletter, there are many such units; Troop 99 of Sidney is only one that is local to me. There is also Troop 73 of Voorheesville, NY which likewise is a very active ham-Scout Troop. In my observation, the Scoutmaster or Post Advisor of an active ham-Scout unit is a licensed ham, is the driving force behind the unit, and is in it for the long haul. I would be willing to bet a fair penny that most Councils in the U.S. have at least one unit which is strong into amateur radio and would be happy with the donation of a shackful of radio gear. It never hurts to ask at the Council Office who and where these units might be; almost certainly the office can send you in the right direction.

de K2FRD

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CONTINUED ON PAGE FOUR

## REMOTE ANTENNA BAND SWITCHING SWITCH FROM WA2IAX



The never-ending inventive genius of Jim LeBaron WA2IAX proves the old saw, "Necessity is the mother of invention". Here's Jim's latest foray into creative thinking:

When working the recent JOTA with Scouts, the antenna system consisted of a dipole with sections connected with fishing snap swivels; to shorten for higher frequencies, loops of nylon string were snapped in between the snap swivels.

Essentially, for the past 6 years, this, has been the method. Essentially it has meant running in and out of the rain in the dark, untying and tying knots to various bushes, trees or shrubs. No one has been hung by the neck to date, however.

Wouldn't it be neat to be able to switch in/out lengths of dipole without letting the whole thing down? What if you'd only have to run out in the rain a little bit? Let's say you only had to pull on a string [well at least 2 strings] to change bands?

Enter the "High Aspect Switch Gear". [HASG] A cheap DPDT switch has been soldered to a cut-out piece of double-sided 1/16 circuit board. The board has been grooved to isolate the ends electrically. Two #14 solid wire loops have been soldered to the board to give attachment points for the quintessential snap swivels.

Note: The DPDT feature and double-sided board were selected for symmetry and to lend some strength to the assembly; SPST and single-sided board would work OK electrically.

So you rig the things on the dipole, then hoist the whole shebang up in the air and if you want 80M cw you pull all the strings in the direction away from the feedline and then all the sections are connected together electrically. To select 20 M, say [on OUR dipole] you pull the string nearest the feedline inward to disconnect the outer sections leaving the inner sections which are tuned to 20M.

Understand, this is just a proto of the thing. One lesson was learned: not to solder the metal switch housing mounting ears to the board. This shorts out the sections.

It has yet to be field tested. Watch this column for further developments.

It would be appreciated if the readership would like to offer constructive thoughts, suggestions, cat calls etc.

de Jim LeBaron WA2IAX

Editor's Note: Jim may be contacted at: <jlebaron at mkl.com>

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## **HOTMAIL ADDRESS PROBLEMS**

From the number of bounced emails last months from Hotmail.com addresses and from the same problems with various Yahoo Groups email lists I own or moderate, it seems that Hotmail (now owned by Microsoft) has installed an out-of-control spam blocker which is unable to differentiate between legitimate messages and spam. This same problem exists with MSN.com. If those with Hotmail accounts happen to read this article, you might be advised to switch to another web-based emailer such as Yahoo.com (not Juno.com - same problem) or a more standard address or alias such as ARRL.net.

The problem lies less with the spam blockers installed than with the technicians who establish the blocking parameters. Many, many ISPs and emailers are able to block much/most spam without interfering with normal communications.

de K2FRD

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## **UPCOMING VE SESSIONS**

Because the *EAGLE* has an international readership, there is little point continuing to list upcoming Volunteer Examiner sessions only on a local basis. However, knowledge of dates and locations of VE sessions is important to those ham-Scouts and Scouters who wish to earn their amateur radio license or upgrade their present license. For persons in the United States, this information is available at <http://www2.arrl.org/arrlvec/examsearch.phtml> . We will post the comparable website for other countries on a monthly basis if we can locate the URL.

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## **SCOUTMASTER'S MINUTE**

"In Scouting, a boy is encouraged to educate himself instead of being instructed. "

- *Lord Robert Baden-Powell*

Editor's note: These quotes are available from the following sites:

<http://twc-woodbadge.freesevers.com/bpsays.htm>

[http://en.thinkexist.com/quotes/sir\\_robert\\_baden-powell/](http://en.thinkexist.com/quotes/sir_robert_baden-powell/)

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