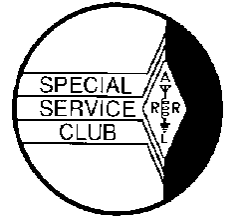


The Repeater

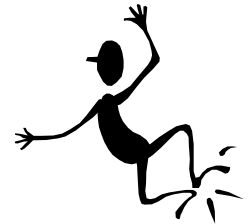
Monthly Newsletter of the Arkansas River Valley Amateur Radio Foundation



January 2007



HAPPY NEW YEAR



Presidents Column

Here we are in 2007! Are you ready? I only hope that I'll be able to fill such big shoes as Sergio's. He did an excellent job as the Club President last year, and imagine he'll do just as great of a job as Vice President this year. I've worked with Sergio on a few activities last year, and think that we can accomplish much together this year to further the success of ARVARF. Thanks to all for the confidence you have bestowed on me to lead such a good group of people.

This year brings some interesting changes to HAM Radio. Element one looks to be a thing of the past as FCC is looking to eliminate Morse code from the "upgrade" requirements. Digital modes of communication are ever increasing. It also seems that the classes at ATU are working well! Starting early we'll be having the annual Ham Fest that Nick Kennedy does a great job of organizing. We will also be doing Field Day in June, and I'm sure Sergio will put in 100% getting that endeavor off the ground. I would like to encourage everyone to continue to participate in the activities and continue to give feedback on them. Also, the Club has a nice web site to keep up with the latest in ARVARF news, and national Ham Radio news. Thanks to Charles Shingleur, and John Evans for their efforts in this venture.

If you have any questions or concerns about the club feel free to contact me. My phone # is 479-641-1899. My E-mail is kd5qjq@centurytel.net.

**Thanks again. 73,
Andy, KD5QJQ**

Election of Officers

At the November meeting, new officers for the club were elected to serve in the year 2007. They are:

President ----- Andy Ward KD5QJQ
Vice President ---Sergio Picado KE5CUY
Secretary -----Sonia Picado KE5EIW
Treasurer -----Glenn Holmes N5KLE

Board of Directors

Steve Green WB5KUT
Clarence Hesselrode KE5EJA
Butch Tatum KC5AHO

Board members are elected to serve for two years. Continuing on the board are:

Michael McAllister KE5EIY
John Evans WB5BHS

The Last Code Test?

As everyone knows by now, announcements about the FCC dropping the code requirement came out on Friday, December 15th. That timing was very ironic because we had a VE test session on the evening before. Steve Felkner, KE5EBC, of Clarksville, showed up and wanted to take a code test. Steve had been working hard. He was not like many others, content to wait until the FCC eventually dropped the code – he wanted to upgrade and was willing to work for it. Steve was like most people taking a code test – nervous! He normally used headphones to practice and knew he would have trouble copying without them. The VE team couldn't locate any headphones, and the only room available for testing also had people taking the written test, so it was not very quiet. We ran to a nearby store and bought some headphones. The trouble had just begun, though. In spite of our best efforts, the tape player would not work. We fiddled with it and finally determined it was broken. Steve had a truck with an extended cab and a cassette player, so he and 3 VE's crowded in and put the code tape in the player. With a VE holding a flashlight and two other VE's in the back seat, Steve took the test. He did OK but was still pretty nervous and didn't quite pass. We asked him if the car starting up right next to us bothered him and he said he didn't even hear it! After awhile to settle down, he wanted to take another test. We went back out to the truck and this time he still fell a little short but did better and made a heroic effort considering the conditions.

We talked to him about what to expect on the test and methods of practice. He was so close and we just knew he would pass at the next test session. We left promising to send him some more tips and make up some practice CD's. It was the next day that I turned on my computer and found that the code requirement is being dropped!

Is Steve happy about this? I don't know, but I'm glad he chose to do the hard thing and learn the code. I feel like he can copy 5 WPM when relaxed and not sitting in a truck in a busy parking lot. Whatever we think about the code, the quirkiness of the VE session and the timing of the FCC's action will be a bittersweet memory for a long time!

73,

Dennis Schaefer W5RZ

ARES / RACES

Our ARES/RACES meeting will be January 23rd at 7:00 p.m. at the 911 building. We will start our discussion of digital communication systems. If you have a TNC, software package, etc that you are not sure what to do with, bring it if it is convenient. Maybe you can get some advice and help in getting on the air. Charles Shingleur, K5CS, has experimented with many digital modes, including APRS and D-Star and will give us some demonstrations at upcoming meetings.

Those who took your IS-700 course at the November meeting should have your certificates by now.

Justin Drittler, Asst. OEM Coordinator, will schedule the other FEMA course for us that we need. This course takes several evenings so we will work with the membership and Justin to decide when to present it.

There has been much discussion about ending the CW requirement for licensing. Many of us "old timers" are sorry to see CW testing go away but it seemed inevitable. CW is definitely part of the tradition of amateur radio. It was the very first mode of communication and still provides much fun for those who accomplish learning it. However, we have not attracted many new code operators for years. Probably one in 100 new hams actually gets on the air with CW. Many hams licensed for 40 or more years never used code after they passed the General. I have heard more than one ham say he took his key and threw it as far as it would go after passing the 13 WPM test! Learning the code does not make you a good ham, and being codeless doesn't make you a second-class ham. Character is not defined by learning this skill.

The 5 WPM test requirement was too slow for real communication and most looked on it as drudgery to go through to get a General ticket. Now that the requirement is no longer there, maybe a few people will still learn code because it is fun. Freed from the 5 WPM test requirement, hams may use better methods to learn code at higher speeds. Maybe 1 in 100 will still learn the code. Learning the code is difficult and something to take pride in. I will always admire those who make the effort. Remember, code is digital communication processed by the human brain – no computer required!

Having said that, I want to make clear that code is only one of many things thing I admire other hams for. I respect those who learn how to operate new digital modes, those who learn how to maintain the repeater and who make thankless trips to the mountaintop, those who keep the club running and do those tasks that aren't so much fun. I admire those who teach classes for new hams and work with youths and new operators. How about those who experiment with EME and weak signal modes on VHF and UHF, who work satellites, and build equipment and antennas? All of these things and many more are in the finest tradition of amateur radio and are worthy of our respect

73,
Dennis W5RZ

A VISIT TO KD5QJQ ANDY WARD'S HAM SHACK



ANDY'S OPERATION CENTER



HF RIG IS A KENWOOD TS 430
UHF/VHF RIG IS A YAESU FT-8100

This month KD5QJQ will be the featured ham and shack snapshot. For those that are not hams he is also known as Andy Ward, our new club president for 2007. Andy has held a Technician class license since 2001, and is working on his General class license. His QTH is on the Atkins end of Crow Mountain which gives him a very good location for the activity that he enjoys most: VHF and UHF. Two meter FM simplex is his favorite activity on the air, with packet and APRS as a second. Not only does Andy have the location but has recently erected an eighty foot tower for a really great look over the river valley.



HF ANTENNA IS A G5RV

UHF/VHF DUAL-BAND
DIAMOND X-50 VERTICAL
ANTENNA ON TOP

THE BEAM IS A HY-GAIN TELEX 8-ELEMENT FOR 2 METERS.
AN ALLIANCE ROTOR & CONTROLLER ARE USED TO DIRECT THE BEAM.

A future activity that is of interest is satellite communication. That will be a secondary aspiration since Andy is working full time and completing a degree in Emergency Management at ATU. His pet project at ATU is to get a club station up and running at the college, as W5ATU.

One QSO that stands out as his best would be an eight hour mobile marathon that stretched from Tulsa to Chicago on 146.52. Other memorable events would be the cram course given by KB8DM and WB5BHS back in the days of the Novice class license. Though he didn't pass the test, it spurred the interest to finally get his Technician license.

Photos by Andy.
Article by Glenn
Holmes, N5KLE.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Arkansas River Valley Amateur Radio Foundation
Monthly Club Meeting
Western Sizzlin' Restaurant
December 19th, 2006

Sonia read the minutes of the November meeting. Clarence made a motion to accept the minutes of the November meeting. Seconded by Butch, motion passed.

Sergio said that an organization that helps disabled people is looking forward to visiting our club and us. He said that he would contact them again soon.

Wayne thanked everyone who helped make his Technician license class a success. Congratulations to our own Michael McAllister, KE5EIY, will now have a general license. On January the 18th there will be a new class. It had not been decided yet if it will be a Technician or a General licensing class. The class will be held in the same room as in this fall semester in Room 150 at the Ross Pendergraft library.

Sergio brought up that starting in February there would be no Morse code requirement for the General license.

Andy has told the club that the Emergency management course at Tech would like to have a 3-day crash course of the Technician license class during the summer. If you would like to help, please contact Andy Ward.

Dennis Schaefer announced there will NOT be an ARES/RACES meeting this month.

Sergio talked about how we as a club need to get involved with the students at Tech. We need to encourage unity and friendship with the people who will be a big part of our community.

Andy asked if we would like to use his spare echo linknode on our repeater. Since the majority of the club thinks that the repeater is still having problems, we need to fix that before we put something on it.

Dennis announced that Ham Fest is coming up soon and the club volunteered Nick to be the chairman and to be in charge of the whole thing. John mentioned that we need to spread flyers around because some other ham clubs didn't know where it was held or when.

And since we were going to play Dirty Santa right afterwards, the meeting was cut short. Glenn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Steve, the meeting was adjourned.

Sonia Picado - KE5EIW Secretary

Building an Emergency J-Pole

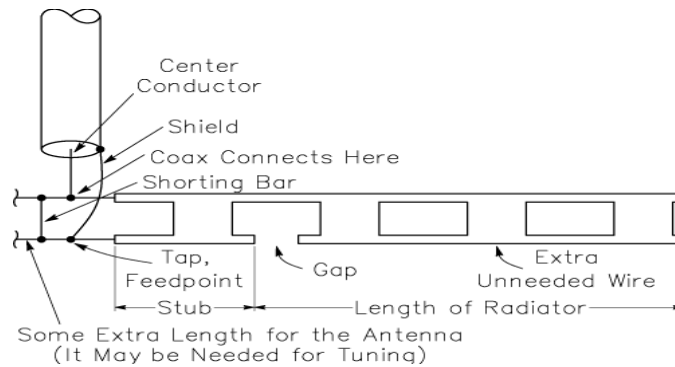
By Phil Karras, KE3FL

June 15, 1999

(From QST archive)

If you look at the antenna, it is a 3/4-wavelength radiating section attached to the matching stub by the shorting bar; all together it looks like the letter J, hence the name J-pole.

Read all of these instructions before beginning your construction project. Nothing is more frustrating than doing something, only to find a hint afterwards that would have made the project go smoother.



Using "ladder line" is a bit different than using solid-dielectric TV twinlead. Before cutting, stretch out the wire so that you can position the proposed cuts at a position that has a center plastic support, and not at a position that has no center plastic. This may not be possible for both the 1/4-wavelength section and the total length position. If it comes down to a choice, I recommend selecting the support at the top. This plastic melts well and can be melted back together. I have had to melt sections back together in both locations, and the antennas work just fine and hold up to field rigors.

Select the bottom of the antenna and strip off about 3 to 3-1/2 inches of insulation from both wires. Tack solder (temporary solder joint) a piece of wire as a shorting bar about 1 inch from the bottom of the antenna (this bar may need to be moved).

To start with, the coax will be connected about 1-1/4 inch from the shorting bar. This connection and the shorting bar connection may need to be moved in order to achieve the best SWR and frequency match.

Measure 17 inches up from the shorting bar on /one end only/ and cut a 1/4-inch gap in the wire at this position. (You can melt the plastic back together at this location if needed.)

Now measure 52-1/4 inches up from the shorting bar. If this location has no center plastic support, try to remove as little insulation as needed in order to get at the wire and snip it. Cut out at least one inch of wire, then melt the plastic back onto the locations where you removed it.

I use a sharp knife to cut into the insulation and not into the wire. Then I pry the wire out with a pin and snip it or solder it at the correct location.

Preparing the Co-ax

Bend the coax about an inch from the end, and score the insulation with a sharp knife. This cuts into the insulation without damaging the shield if done gently. Then rotate the coax so you can continue scoring the coax until it is cut all the way around. Cut the insulation from the new cut, up to the end of the coax. You should now be able to pull off the insulation with pliers.

Remember to always cut /away/ from yourself!

/Never/ use wire strippers on the large portion of the coax; it only damages the shield. If you have a tool designed for coax, use it.

Prepare the antenna end of the coax: Separate the coax shield and twist it together. Strip off about 3/4-inch of insulation from the center conductor of the coax. (Do /not/ solder at this time.)

You'll install the appropriate connector (BNC, PL-259) at the other end of the coax. Follow the installation directions that come with the connector, or consult /The ARRL Handbook/ for more information.

Connecting Coax to Antenna

Wrap the shield 1-1/4 inch up from the shorting bar around the 17-inch side of the twin lead. Wrap it in such a way that the distance from the coax to the shorting bar is the same for both the shield and the center conductor. Solder the shield to the twin lead.

Wrap the center coax conductor around the longer twin lead wire up from the shorting bar (the same distance that the shield is wrapped to the other wire) and solder it.

Cut off the excess coax wire. Also, cut off all the excess twin lead at the top except for a loop or two. These ladder steps are great for hanging the antenna over a nail or hook, so leave at least one of them.

Your antenna is now ready to test.

(NEXT MONTH "TESTING YOUR J-POLE ANTENNA")

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ARVARF meeting at Western Sizzlin'

Tuesday, January 16th

Regular meeting at 7:00.

Come at 6:00, if you want to eat.

ARVARF Net:

Every Tuesday at 8:00 p.m. on 146.82
(except club meeting night)

Net Control Stations:

Jan -- Sonia Picado KE5EIW

ARVARF Board Meeting:

ARES/RACES Meeting:

Jan. 23rd, 7:00 p.m. at 911 Bldg.

ARVARF web page:

www.cswnet.com/~arvarf/

& www.arvarf.com (New)

Arkansas Section Web Domain:

www.arkansashams.org

A new Technician course will begin on January 18th at 6:30 p.m. local time. The class will meet each Thursday for ten weeks from 6:30 p.m. 'til 9:00 p.m. It will be held in room 150 of the Ross Pendergraft Library on the ATU campus. Registration at the university is \$15 and the textbooks will be sold in class for \$24.95.

At the December 14th Test session, 3 candidates passed their Technician class exam, and 2 other candidates passed their General class exam. One code test failed and one Extra class failed. A total of 7 candidates were examined.

The New Year is Here.

Support your club with your
membership dues.

I am trying to maintain an accurate current membership roster. Please inform me of any changes in your address, phone number and/or e-mail address at n4owb@arrl.net or call me at 479-890-4504.
73, Aulton N4OWB (editor)

ARVARF Officers

President	Andy Ward	KD5QJQ
Vice President	Sergio Picado	KE5CUY
Treasurer	Glenn Holmes	N5KLE
Secretary	Sonia Picado	KE5EIW
Board Members	Michael McAllister	KE5EIY
	John Evans	WB5BHS
	Steve Green	WB5KUT
	Clarence Hesselrode	KE5EJA
	Butch Tatum	KC5AHO
Newsletter	Andy Ward	KD5QJQ
	Sergio Picado	KE5CUY
	Sonia Picado	KE5EIW
	Aulton White	N4OWB

THE REPEATER

P.O. Box 582
Russellville, AR 72811

Editor

Aulton White, N4OWB
n4owb@arrl.net

Columnists

Andy Ward, KD5QJQ
Sergio Picado, KE5CUY
Sonia Picado, KE5EIW
Dennis Schaefer, W5RZ
Glenn Holmes, N5KLE