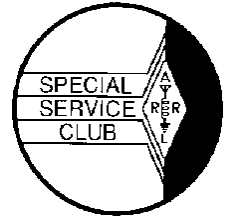


The Repeater

Monthly Newsletter of the Arkansas River Valley Amateur Radio Foundation



June 2007

Ask 10 hams what Field Day is and you will get several different answers.

“It’s an emergency exercise”.
“It’s a public information event”.
“It’s a contest!!”

The first Field Day in 1933 had as its stated purpose to “test portables”. Hams had so much fun it became an annual event. Rule changes encouraged activities that would help inform the public about ham radio and prepare for emergencies, but ham radio fun was and still is the reason for its popularity.

Field Day is not an emergency exercise. We have several of these exercises each year. Many of us have participated in literally hundreds of true emergency exercises in our lives and have no guilt about having fun at Field Day. HOWEVER – the skills we learn by “testing portables” are invaluable in emergencies. By setting up effective stations in the field, we are learning the very skills that we need to deal with different situations no matter what happens.

Is Field Day a contest? Most people don’t treat it as a “win at all costs” contest. However, setting up effective stations and antennas provides more learning, more experience for emergencies, and lets the public see us making contacts all over. I’ve seen groups go out poorly equipped and forget power supplies, coax, bug spray, lights, etc. That’s not fun and the public or any visiting emergency management officials probably aren’t impressed. Groups should be well organized and operate within an agreed-on plan. Field Day is not a bunch of individuals showing up and doing their own thing – it is a team effort. For those not into group activities, there are classes for individual stations. However, a large part of the fun of Field Day is the fellowship of operating with a group. Seeing and trying new things and learning from each other is a valuable opportunity, and we ALL have something to learn and something to share.

Most groups try to improve on past efforts, try a new classification, or have a friendly competition with a neighboring club. This competition is tempered by the spirit of Field Day. Everyone must get a chance to operate at Field Day, not just the “fast, experienced” operators. I’ve seen many new (and not-so-new) hams make their first HF contact at Field Day, with the help of several “Elmers”. When you see someone’s face light up after making that first QSO, you know your Field Day effort was a “winner”.

73,
Dennis W5RZ

ARES / RACES

At our May ARES/RACES meeting, Charles Shingleur, K5CS, gave an excellent program and demonstration on APRS (Automatic Position Reporting System). APRS uses packet radio and GPS to transmit position reports for fixed and moving objects. It has many interesting capabilities and has been used to show a graphical position map for weather spotters, race officials, participants and travelers on the highway, etc. APRS reports go into internet gateways and anyone can track the location of a given station by logging into the internet.

Gary Moles took a "Pocket Tracker" unit and walked and drove around while we watched his position on the map. We had fun and learned something and it doesn't get any better than that.

We will not have an ARES/RACES meeting in June. Instead, you are encouraged to participate in Field Day on June 23 and 24.

73,
Dennis W5RZ

THE ARVARF 10-METER NET

The 10-meter net has been meeting on Thursday evenings at 7 p.m. on 28.415 MHz with an average of three check-ins each session. We will continue to hold the net, even though the sunspot cycle is still descending. This is a real challenge to communicate on a band which has such poor propagation that it is difficult to communicate more than 10 miles. We need some innovative antennas. The best, so far, is the "Hentenna" that Michael, KE5EIY built. Of course, Dennis's, W5RZ, 3-element beam works well, also.

Aulton N4OWB

The May Elmer session at Dennis and Melissa Schaefer's house was successful. We built an antenna and tested it, worked some DX, and some made their first HF contact.



The theme for the June session will be Field Day preparation. We will build antennas needed for FD and get familiar with the computer logging program. If you want to bring antenna wire or coax, that is fine, but mainly just bring yourself. The session will be Friday, June 15th. We will start at 6:30 but you can drop in anytime. The address is 181 Schaefer Dr. Anyone is welcome to come, particularly if you will be participating in Field Day anywhere. We'll keep a rig on 146.82 in case you need help finding the house. Call 967-4372 or send e-mail to dennisw5rz@gmail.com if you need directions.

73,
Dennis W5RZ

HOW A SIMPLE PROBLEM ENDED WITH UNEXPECTED RESULTS

This month, instead of sharing with you the featured “Hamshack of the Month”, I want to tell you a little story of how, in amateur radio, to expect the unexpected.

It begins with the most simple of things, a three volt battery. My Kenwood TM-701A was having problems with retaining memory after you shut it off. In today’s radios that can be very annoying. Not only did I have to remember which repeaters were in the twenty memory slots, there were the blasted tones so you could talk on them. It is just one of those little hassles you have to face in 21st century communication. Like most of the newer rigs, the battery is modular in a sense, having the positive and negative leads permanently attached to the battery and then soldered directly to the board. There didn’t seem to be a problem there since I had a few battery holders that would mount directly on the board and then pop a battery in to correct the problem. Some problems are unexpected and sometimes the simple things lead to other things. In this case that is what happened.

There is an old saying “Pride goes before a fall”, and I was plenty proud of getting this little annoyance behind me, then came the fall. After assembling the rig, hooking it up and ready to insert those pesky tones back into the radio, I turned it on and NOTHING. It was dead as a hammer so to speak. In fact a hammer, if properly thrown at the correct take off angle, could get a response from someone if it landed close by, though probably not the one you intended. Refraining from epitaphs that would be a little unbecoming, I proceeded to try to find out what the problem was, to no avail.

On to step two, the radio was taken to KC5LVW, owner and operator of Razorback Radio (shameless plug for you, Jon) to see if he could figure it out. Giving it his best try without a schematic or service manual, he couldn’t resurrect it from dead. So he gave me the name of a bonified, (he had a piece of paper that said so), factory trained technician that might be able to help.

So far you are probably wondering where this story is going to. To muddy up the waters just a little I have to get in the time machine and transport you back thirty seven years to what seemed like another life. In fact not only was it another life but I was changed into another life form. The date was 1970 and a distant uncle of mine sent me a letter giving me the opportunity of a life time to come stay with him for a couple of years; his name was Sam. He seemed very determined that I not miss this opportunity and made it very clear of the consequences if I didn’t take him up on the offer. Being the type of twenty year old that I was, how could I refuse. It was a life that had all my needs taken care of on a daily basis. There were the luxurious accommodations, sumptuous meals, daily recreational activities and lets not forget the broadening of intellectual pursuits. The thing that my Uncle saw about me was that I had this inclination of being good with radios. Seeing that, he proceeded to instruct me on the fine points of CW, typing, and humping a radio through the woods on my back. During this time in my life in some parts of the world humping a radio through the woods, jungle, whatever, was not very healthy.

Valuing my health, I studied real hard to impress Uncle, getting 19/19 qualified on CW and being proficient enough to type sixty words a minute. Seeing that I was becoming good at being another form of life, I was given the opportunity to broaden my radio education by being sent to RTTY School. I really enjoyed this training because instead of the radio back pack, the operating station was inside a heated/air conditioned comm van. Life was good. Another thing was that all my cousins were pretty good guys.

One that I would like to mention was Clif. Uncle Sam, not wanting to break up the family, decided that the vacation to exotic destinations he had in mind for us would be to the same place. Ah, Korea, there was an exotic place. There was nothing like the smell of kimchee in the morning to get you up and moving. Our new home was the 226th Signal Company, which was attached to the 4th Missile Battalion (tactical nukes), Camp Page. It was located way up in the mountains just south of the DMZ, a sort of secluded get away.

After many amusing adventures, Clif and I got our chance to become another life form, NCOs. We both had a couple of radio vans, a supply truck, generators and three or four of our junior cousins to run amok with around the countryside, seeing who and where we could talk to, you know just in case. Clif, a couple of other NCOs and I shared a room on one end of the Signal Quonset hut with the other guys living in back. All things must come to an end and Uncle decided that he didn’t need us anymore, sending us home.

Did I tell you about the three volt battery in my radio...? Well, as Paul Harvey would say, “and now for the rest of the story”. That technician that Jon told me about, well his name was Clif, Clif Holland KA5IPF. Because of a little battery, a friendship from thirty five years in the past had been renewed. Isn’t Amateur Radio great?

PS: The radio is repaired!

Glenn, N5KLE



This is a photo of my son, David, or "Big Dave" as he is known to his co-workers at the Arlington Hotel in Hot Springs. He has been working at the Arlington for 13 years, and his outgoing personality has made him many friends in Hot Springs. He started there in 1994 as a dishwasher, then became the maintenance man for the kitchen, then dishwasher supervisor. When things got pretty busy in the kitchen, he was called upon to help the various cooks. Two years ago he was promoted to cook, which really pleased him. He got sick in March and began a series of tests at a medical clinic. After a long series of tests, it was determined that he had schlerosis of the liver and the liver was "weeping" into the abdominable cavity.

On May 25th, he became very ill and was rushed to St. Joseph's ER. The next day, one lymph node was surgically removed and found to have lymphoma, and David had contracted hepatitis C. His cancer physician said he was very near death when he was brought in to the emergency room. He has been in St. Joseph's Mercy Health Center for 20 days as of June 13. He has had one dose of chemotherapy. The doctor expects to have the infections cleared and the cancer under control within another week, and send him to a nursing home. His continuing chemotherapy will be administered as an out-patient. David called me on June 2nd and told me he had cancer. I didn't even know he had been sick. He's always been "head-strong", and wants to do everything his way. He just turned 50 in April, but he now looks much older. His upper body is thin and bony, and his lower body and legs are swollen.

David is an alcoholic----he's not proud of it, and neither am I, but it's a sad fact. It started many years ago with a cold beer to relax after a day's work, and progressed to more and more. The heavy drinking led to the damaged liver, which led to his present condition. To my knowledge, he was never seen drunk in public. He was a "loner", and drank in private. He went through the twelve-step program in Alcoholics Anonymous-----several times, but when he got to feeling well, he'd have "just one little drink", to help him relax, and he was hooked again. An alcoholic can't have just **one** drink.

David is my only son, and he's my youngest offspring. I have two daughters who are older than David. I love David very much, and his present suffering breaks my heart.

Your prayers for his recovery are sincerely appreciated.

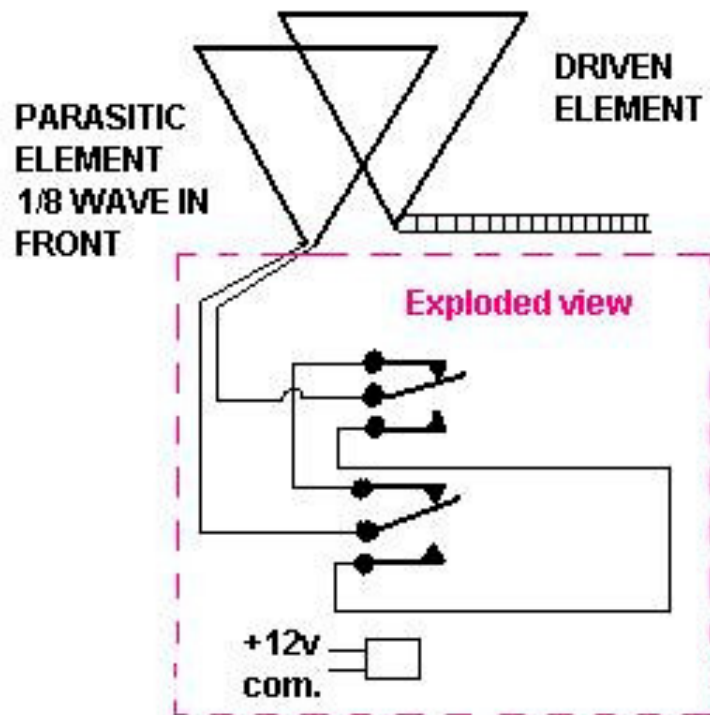
Aulton White, N4OWB

DELTA LOOP ARRAY (QUAD)

The Delta Loop Array, commonly called a "Quad", will add 3 dB of gain to your antenna, plus it will make it directional. Build another delta loop that is 5% shorter than the driven element and hang it approximately one eighth wave in front of the driven element. Optimum gain will be between 0.12 to 0.2 wavelength spacing, depending on frequency, type of ground, height above ground and proximity to other structures. You can set the spacing for optimum gain or optimum F-B ratio; they don't coincide. To maintain the spacing, it is recommended that you cut three nylon strings a little longer than the desired spacing, to provide enough string for attachment and knots, and tie the three corners of each antenna to the other. You'll need two more strings and some tent stakes to tie the bottoms to the ground, so they don't wave in the breeze.

You'll need a small plastic project box, a 12 volt dc double-pole, double-throw relay(available at Radio Shack), a single-pole, single-throw switch, an in-line fuse holder, and a length of wire long enough to make the parasitic element 5% longer than the driven element. You will need to drill 4 small holes in the project box, two for the + and - of the 12vdc wires, and two for the parasitic antenna wires. Cut the parasitic element at the apex and pull the wires into the box. I use slide-on connectors crimped to the wires to connect to the relay terminals. Connect as shown in the exploded view. Seal the project box and all wire entry holes with hot glue to protect the relay and terminals from the rain.

Attach the positive relay energizing lead to a line fuse and then to one side of the spst switch in the ham shack. Attach the other side of the switch to the positive terminal of your 12vdc power supply. Attach the common lead to the common terminal of your 12vdc power supply. When the relay is de-energized, the parasitic element is a director and the wave-front will be in the direction of the parasitic element. When the relay is energized, the parasitic element will act as a reflector and the wave-front will be in the direction of the driven element. Not only will you have another 3 dB of gain, but the front-to-back ratio will be on the order of 20 to 25 dB.



Aulton, N4OWB

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Arkansas River Valley Amateur Radio Foundation Monthly Club Meeting Western Sizzlin' Restaurant May 15th, 2007

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

Since Andy was missing, Sergio took over. Sergio talked about the Field Day. He gave us a list of parks that are in the area so that we could choose one.

The options were Washburn Park, Nebo, the B.A.T. tower, the Hughes Center Park, and Caudle. The club voted and the Field Day site this year will be at the Washburn Park.

We briefly discussed about whether we would like to be 3A or 4A.

Mike said he'll try and bring the generator.

We talked about the software used to keep the logins. John Evans will be the computer Guru.

Steve Felkner will be the Safety Guru.

Steve, seconded by Clarence made a motion for funds available to someone who will get the food.

Dennis talked about perhaps we could get the EOM maybe coming out to Washburn like last year.

Dennis announced that the ARES/RACES meeting will be May 19th at 7:00pm at the 911 building.

Wayne talked about the upcoming fall license class at Tech.

Rich made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Steve, the meeting was adjourned.

Sonia Picado - KE5EIW Secretary

Here are the numbers for the ARVARF 2m nets on 146.82 MHz for May:

01 May, 07: 13 check-ins.

08 May, 07: 17 check-ins, 1 from Van Buren due to Sporadic E.

22 May, 07: 11 check-ins

29 May, 07: 13 check-ins

I hope this is of interest to the members. Maybe it will remind more members to check in on Tuesday evenings.

73, Aulton, N4OWB

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ARVARF meeting at Western Sizzlin'

Tuesday, June 19th
 . 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:

June--Glenn Holmes, N5KLE

ARVARF Board Meeting:

ARES/RACES Meeting:

No meeting this month.

ARVARF web page:

www.arvarf.com

Arkansas Section Web Domain:

www.arkansashams.org

ARRL web page:

www.arrl.org



"No one is useless in this world who lightens the burden of it for anyone else.."
 ---- Charles Dickens

FOR SALE

Yaesu VX-150 2 meter HT, new, never out of box. \$90.00.
 Dennis Schaefer 479-967-4372 or
dennisw5rz@gmail.com

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	KE5EII
	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

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