

# ROADS Report

August 2010

Vol 3 No 8

## ROADS Officers

President KX5W Don

Vice President N7WWH Jim

Scty/Treas. K7IJK Irene

Directors K7CIE Mike

KG7G Kelly

## Coming Events

**August Meeting** 19th at Abby's Pizza in Dallas. Bring a guest.

**VE Testing** Sept. 11th

**Dec. 16th Christmas Dinner**

At the Christmas Dinner, a \$50 gift certificate will be a door prize



## The Prez Sez ....

We had a good meeting and program in July. Mike Shelby W7RIS showed us his home made air compressor that he used to put up lines over 100 feet in the air on field day. He showed us detailed plans and drawings and a lot of data. Good job Mike !! We all want one !!

We'd like to welcome Roger KB7ARN and Doris KB7ARA by way of our 10 -- 10 group and the Monday morning group, both consisting mostly of ROADS members locally. Roger and Doris were on the nets and are worth a gazillion points (32,000+ and 22,000+) for those collecting them on 10 -- 10.

Bob, K7QXG opened up his home to host their visit--thanks Bob & Shirley--and I guess they are back again today, August 1, and to the breakfast Monday the 2nd. Welcome !!

I handed out the plans/schedule for this year--dates, programs, future

plans, etc. at our last meeting. We have all of our regular offices filled except we need someone to step up to be our Public Information Officer.....getting the word out to the Statesman Journal and Itemizer Observer about two weeks before our meetings, VE testing and activities like Field Day. Any volunteers??

I'm sure I must have missed something here, but our next meeting is at 6 pm at Abby's Pizza here in Dallas. The reservation is under the name Doc Bowers--we'll probably have the big long tables in the middle like we did for Archies birthday party last year. Spouses, significant others, guests and any interested party is welcome as this is just our social gathering, no technical radio program that night. I hope to see you all there and try to bring a guest or a ham that hasn't been in for awhile.

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## How's DX?

### By KX5W

I'm half way thru Bob Locher's autographed new book called "A Year of DX," where he lets us look over his shoulder winning the CQ DX Marathon for 2009. Bob, W9KNI is probably the biggest gun in Oregon working DX. He worked 281 countries in 2009 from the Grants Pass , Oregon QTH, during this time of poor propagation.

There's a good article in the August CQ Magazine on Sunspot Cycle 24 that's quite interesting; pages 97 to 99. It shows a way of forecasting and a couple of ways of measuring sunspot activity that I had not heard of before. It also compares 2009 months with ours now in 2010 and it shows a steady increase in sunspots this year over last, even though it doesn't feel like it on the air. See the article for a lot more detail.

Locally I heard Ron W7HO working Montenegro on 20 cw. Good job Ron !! Even though the conditions are poor and my station is quite modest (as you'll see in a future issue of this newsletter) I was able during the month of July to work Tahiti; Nigeria; Bulgaria; Philippines; Israel; Aland Island; Burkina Faso; Mongolia; Macao and last but not least, Lou, EA3JE with his 6 over 6 over 6 elements, stacked beams from Barcelona Spain at 20 over S9 on July 31. I asked him if he'd trade me his antenna for my little A3--all he did was laugh

and say "no thanks."

There are not many announced DX Peditions for August. The few of note are Croatia 9A/VE3IK; Zambia 9J2KK; and Djibouti J28RO. Coming up in the fall and winter are Sable Island; Jarvis Island; Kermadec; Spratley and Jan Mayen. Good DXing !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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## Station Of The Month

N7WWH



Everyone should recognize this good looking gentleman, Jim Campbell - he is our new Vice President! He is also one of the two driving forces behind the success of our Field Day expeditions. Jim set a fast pace at the onset of Field Day with a quick 60 plus contacts on 10 meter SSB.

Jim has been a ham since 1992 and lives in Falls City with his wife Ruth. Their new grandchild is a frequent visitor to the household - and has been seen accompanying Jim to the Monday coffee roundtable at the Steak House.

Jim operates SSB - no CW or PSK - using an Icom 718, and a Heath SB 200 at 600 watts when needed. At present he uses a 160 meter windom and a 10 meter dipole for antennas. He puts out a good signal on 10 meters and is often Net Control for the Oregon Trail 10-10 net held every Sunday noon.

The station you see above has been setup in Jim's trailer and the photo was taken at Field Day in Helmick Park. As you can tell, Jim like to operate in comfort on Field Day - none of the old tent and campfire stuff!

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## VE TEST Session Report

by Ron, W7HO

An Amateur Radio License Exam (VE Session) was held on July 10th at 9:00 AM in the Polk County Courthouse conference room.

We only had one individual for the session and he tried for his General license. While he only missed passing by one question, we later found out that he had only started studying the Tuesday before. He said he will be back for our September Session and I am sure that he will pass the test at that time.

I want to Thank the following VEs for helping with the session: John KE7JNT, Mike K7CIE (our new VE), Bob W7LOU, and Alesa KA7UGQ.

I am hopeful that we will have a larger attendance at our September session. We are now advertising in the Statesman Journal Event Session, ARRL Web Site, ROADS Newsletter, 5.29 Technical Net, 5.29 Lunch Bunch Net and word of mouth.

Our best advertisement is via our members, so, please, when you are talking to fellow Hams, let them know about our sessions.

We have been talking about doing a post card mailing this Fall to hams in the Dallas area.

Ron W7HO  
ROADS VE Team Liasion

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## Pneumatic Antenna Launching?

What's that again? I can't hardly spell Pneu.... well, whatever it is. This method of launching antennas was the topic of a terrific presentation by W7RIS, Mike, at the July ROADS meeting. For those of you who were unable to attend, the program was fascinating, well done, and a wonderful learning experience. Mike brought one of his own units, along with some accessories, and had a very informative Power Point slide show to tell us all how to "git 'er done!"

Pneumatic Line launching (hereafter called TBPLL - Tennis Ball Pneumatic Line Launching) is a method of using compressed air to launch a tennis ball, with monofilament line attached, up and over trees to hoist up wire antennas. It is very effective, and trees up to 150 feet tall can be topped with ease.

This is a very simple system that uses pressurized gas (usually air) in a tank made of PVC, and which is released using a simple valve and trigger device. The pressurized air forces the tennis ball out the end of a 22 inch long PVC tube at a high rate of acceleration, causing the ball to leap over tall trees just like Superman. Attached to the tennis ball is monofilament fish line of the 20 pound test variety, although other types of line could be used.

Why use a tennis ball? Safety, safety, safety. A lead sinker fired from a sling shot poses a serious health safety risk if it comes down on someone's head. A Tennis ball, on the other hand, is an inherently safe projectile. A bonus feature is that it is large enough to be easily seen.

How high will these launchers reach? 150 feet to 200 feet is easy to attain with a tennis ball while towing a 50 pound test fishing line. I am quick to point out that most trees in our area are much less than 150 feet tall. When ROADS set up their antennas in Helmick Park for Field Day, we used trees that were 100 feet tall, or slightly more, and were able to hoist up several wire antennas to a height of 100 feet.

Are these launchers legal? The BATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms) has ruled that pneumatic launchers are not firearms. However, some municipalities may have antiquated ordinances that will apply. Please note that sling shots and bows are generally prohibited in residential areas, parks and campgrounds.

How much does it cost to build one of these wonderful antenna launchers? The parts can cost \$60 to \$100, provided you have an old open face

spinning reel that you can use. There are launcher kits available for under \$100.

How hard is it to build a tennis ball launcher? There are dozens of web sites with detailed instructions on the construction of these devices. I suggest you start with the following two, or just Google "Tennis Ball Launcher" or "Pneumatic Launcher" : [www.qsl.net/wd6cmu/launcher.htm](http://www.qsl.net/wd6cmu/launcher.htm) or visit [www.antennalaunchers.com/antlaunching.html](http://www.antennalaunchers.com/antlaunching.html).

Good Luck!

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## Position Available

**Public Information Officer.** Our former PIO, KY0TE, has resigned, and we need a warm body to fill this slot. Duties: Simply send an email to the Dallas paper and the Salem paper 2 weeks in advance of meetings and other ROADS events informing the publications of our planned event. KX5W, Doc, has the information about the format to be used and the person to send it to, along with the appropriate email addresses. With a club of our size, there surely must be at least one warm body that can handle this task on a routine basis.

Send me your name, call and email address if you are willing to step up to the plate: [K7QXG@arri.net](mailto:K7QXG@arri.net)

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## Miscellaneous Stuff

**DUES:** Have you paid your dues? If not, you won't be getting this newsletter much longer. (Maybe you'd rather not).

**SPECIAL EVENT:** Do you want another Special like the Fishin' Contest? If not, the Thanksgiving Special will be hosted by the Oregon Trail chapter of 10-10. If yes, you need to let the Editor know. ROADS has first option on this event.

**QUIZES:** These stirred up a lot of interest and there is one in the works for a future issue. Photos of electronic "things" and you identify them.

**DX:** K7QXG broke a pile up to snag the 6L0 expedition on CW! Now where do you think 6L0 is located? Correct answer gets a used pencil.

## Special Visitors

KB7ARN and KB9ARA, well known in 10-10 circles, visited members of ROADS and the Oregon Trail Chapter of 10-10 International at the weekly breakfast at the Steak House in Dallas. Nearly all shown in the photo are members of 10-10, and they meet every Sunday at noon on 28.450. Everyone is welcome, member or not.



L to R: Shirley, XYL of K7QXG, W7KVT, W7HO, N7WWH, W7LOU, W6KXA, WA7MZM, son of WA7MZM, W6SVP, KE7JNT, W7TDN, K7CIE, KB7ARN, KB9ARA, and KG7G. KB7ARN, Roger, and KB9ARA, Doris, were on their way to Reno to celebrate an anniversary. Last year they visited a large 10-10 group in Germany for 6 days. Roger is 86 years old, and still very active. Photo by K7QXG.

\*\*\*\*\* See you next month\*\*\*\*\*