

ROADs REPORT©

Newsletter of ROADs
(Radio Operators Association of Dallas)

MAY 2009

PRESIDENT'S SCREED...

Another month...where does the time go? As for me, I know that time flies when I go down to be with my leader Arnold. Seems like the week or so I am down there is gone before I know it and I have not completed everything on my to-do list. Oh well...maybe I will get paid anyway!

Don't forget the next meeting on the 14th at the Polk County Courthouse at 1900. Bob W7LOU has persuaded Northwest Batteries to present a program about batteries...bring your questions.

Elections are coming up soon...think about if you want to vote the current rascals out of office and vote in your rascals to run the club YOUR way. Just a suggestion.

Better start thinking about Field Day...it will be here before you know it. We need to plan ahead and do a better job of making the public know what is happening and get them to come out to the Dallas Fire Department training facility to see what we do. Maybe it won't rain this year???

Anyone familiar with a Motorola Motrac two-way VHF radio? I fell heir to one while down south. It's "portable". See attached photo. I think it is at least 20 years old and probably works...

You may remember a month or so ago, that I inserted a request for some help putting up an antenna that was down...well I received an email from Earl KA7FJF with a progress report...

Hi, I would just like to report that Mike, KA7HBB came over a couple of times, surveyed my antenna situation and came back with some wire to splice my G4

antenna for a temporary antenna and it is up but I have not run with it yet. I am sure it will work just fine. He pulled some magic in re-threading the end on my 2x4 antenna pole up about 40 feet, it was magnificent work. Earl KA7FJF

Good work Mike...

And finally, a word to the wise...avoid computer jokes in the vicinity of K7QXG...

PRESIDENT	DAVID	KD7VLP
VICE PRESIDENT	BOB	W7LOU
SEC/TREASURER	IRENE	K7IJK
DIRECTOR (1yr)	ABE	W7ABE
DIRECTOR (2yr)	DON	KX5W

Check out our web page WWW.W7ORE.COM

ROADs CALENDAR

MAY 14	Meeting--Field Day Committee Report, Nomination Committee Report
JUN 11	Meeting--Field Day Final Plans, Elections
JUL 9	Meeting--Dinner Meeting – Murphy’s Grill

DX COMMENTARY by Doc KX5W

If anyone hears the station from Bangladesh, S21UGZ, who is supposed to be on through June--blow me out of bed or whatever as I haven't worked a new country since Christmas of '07 and am getting tired of the poor propagation as are other DXers.

Other announced DX Peditions during May include:

Fiji 3D2 3D2ZW;

W Malaysia 9M2 9M2MRS is PA0PRS who moved there permanently;

Morocco CN CN8VO is using the special event call 5F1ROM for the FIA Touring Car Grand Prix;

Ethiopia ET ET3BN in Addis Ababa;

Turkey TA TA3J/7;

San Marino T7 T70A;

Indonesia YB YC0IEM in Borneo.

Bob K7QXG, a good cw and digital operator, represented Polk County in the 7QP contest, and I represented Benton Co and we worked each other Saturday morning May 2 on 40 cw, not DX, just some club activity to report!!

DX tip: Don't rely so heavily on the DX cluster. By the time you see a DX station listed on it there are hundreds of stations calling and all you have going for you is either good propagation or blind luck. I look away from contests, like if there is a cw contest going on I hunt in the phone band and get away from the heavy QRM, or during phone contests I hunt in the cw bands. That's how I got East Timor, a 4W, on 10 meters when the band appeared dead, he was a 5 by 1 and calling, begging for a contact !! Always try something different, think out of the box !!

C U next meeting !!

MAY 9th VE Testing Report

Even with the beautiful sunny warm weather day we had 8 individuals attend this session of Saturday, May 9th, 2009. With folks coming from as far North as Forest Grove and South as Central Point.

We had 100% of those in taking exams that walked away with a new license or upgrade.

Joe Christian - Extra
James Dunning - Tech
Robert Robison - Tech
Dennis Fischer - General
Jennifer Robison - Tech
Jerold Martin - General
Zachary Olsen - Tech
Mike Nason - Extra (yes KA7HBB did it)

I have already heard from three of them indicating that they will be back for to upgrade next session (two General and one Extra).

Many thanks to the VE Team that helped today. Great Job everyone.

Ron W7HO
ROADS Team Liason

**Why Digital?
or
Look What You're Missing!**

Yes, most of you flinch every time you hear the word "digital". You cringe, your stomach goes into convulsions, and you have recurring nightmares. Why?

For the last 9 years I have operated digital in many different forms. I have learned some very important things about digital operations, and I'll offer you a brief insight into this strange world where a computer sound card does all the talking for you.

First, the vast majority of hams on PSK-31, (the most used mode) are over 50 years of age, and nearly 75% of those are over 65. That means you are in good company, and you will almost always have something in common to chat about.

Second, it is easy to operate on PSK-31, or RTTY, if you have a computer available along side your transceiver. All you need is a simple interface between the two so you can use the sound card. Don't want to spend the money? Plans for home brewing a very simple little device abound on the internet. Or, do as W7LOU did, and buy one of the very nice Signalink units. I helped Bob set his up and was very impressed with it and the ease with which we were able to get Bob going on PSK-31. Later we set up W7LOU for RTTY, and it was equally easy.

Third, it is a "gentleman's agreement" that we never use over 50 watts on PSK. In 9 years I have only found 3 stations who used more than 50 watts, and I think they only did it to placate their ego. I use 40 watts on PSK, or less, into a ground plane vertical (one of the three verticals that I have).

Fourth, the majority of the digital operators submit their logs on a monthly basis to eQSL and sometimes to LoTW. That means early and simple confirmation if you are working towards an award.

Fifth, the PSK and RTTY contests are a place to have fun and make lots of QSOs. No one cares if you are a two finger typist. And no one cares if you goof up a bit. In fact, if you use MixW software, you can preprogram the software so you send all your calls and replies with a simple mouse click.

During the recent EA RTTY contest, I operated for a few hours, intermittently, as time and other considerations permitted, on a Saturday. I used only 20 meters and a ground plane vertical. I used 45 watts, but kicked in the amp at 350 watts when I had difficulty with a station that I wanted. I worked the following prefixes during this brief time span: E7, EA, UA3, OK, HA, YU, 5C5, IZ, YT, PA, IM0 (Sardinia), TA, F, JA, VR2, PR, RW0. Sometimes I managed to contact several stations in one country, such as Spain and Italy.

It was a lot of fun and I have already received many confirmations via eQSL.

The bottom line: No matter what kind of antenna you have, and even if you are limited to 50 watts output, you can still find many great QSOs on PSK. Even if 10 and 15 meters are dead, and 20 SSB and CW are barren, there is always someone on 20 meter PSK waiting to chat with you.

Remember, if W7LOU can learn to operate PSK, and he has, then anyone in ROADS can do it.

Bob, K7QXG

Who We Are...Kelly Wilson KG7G

**WHERE-WHEN-WHY-HOW did you get involved in Ham Radio?
Did you have an Elmer to get you started?**

I got involved in ham radio when I was a sophomore in high school and I found a book in the school library that had a simplified explanation of how radio circuits worked. My grandfather who lived

next door to us had a Hallicrafters SX-71 that I used to begin listening to the ham bands. I went to Portland Radio, used to be on west Burnside, and got some books from the ARRL and started studying along with learning and practicing Morse code. I switched schools in the fall and found a friend who was also interested in radios and we encouraged each other and practiced code. We both took our novice tests at the same time in Nov 58 and I was licensed as KN7KJI. By the time my ticket came from the FCC I had built a Heathkit DX-20 crystal controlled CW transmitter to go with the SX-71 and I was on the air. I didn't have an Elmer. Two months later I was down at the FCC taking the General exam. When I went to college the school had a club station with the Collins S line and I was in hog heaven for four years.

What is your current license?

Amateur Extra

Did you, or do you, use radio(s), in some form or another in your work life?

I used radio all the time when I was in the Air Force flying transports around the world. We had two Collins 500-watt HF rigs on every plane with a super antenna tuner that would load our 7-foot probe antenna from 2-30 MHz. All position reports over the ocean were via HF and the command and control of our flights also demanded that one of the pilots monitor the USAF airways station at all times. Naturally I couldn't help but sneak in a little ham time as aeronautical mobile which always brought a lot of attention on 20 meters. However, I let my ticket lapse during the 70s for about 8 years. The wife didn't want any antennas around the house and I was then flying with the airlines.

Are you active in Ham Radio now? What and how?

I am doing a lot more hamming now that the nasty four-letter word, work, is not in the way. I operate an Icom 706MkII into a Gap Challenger vertical for 80-2 meters. Also there is a 5 band, 20-10 meter hex beam up 40 feet above my hangar. If I need a little extra oomph to contact someone there is an Icom IC-2KL 500-watt solid state amp. Since I moved back to Oregon during the low sunspot cycle I have managed to work over 150 countries, mostly on SSB, but

I also work CW, PSK31 and RTTY. I will go after them wherever they are and whatever they are using.

What does your shack look like? Is it in your garage, the back bedroom or maybe the cab of your pickup?

I can operate VHF and UHF mobile from the truck with an Icom 208H and also HF with the Icom 706. The shack is in the hangar behind my house

What kind of equipment and antennas...etc?

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Any major awards, achievements, coups or contacts that you want to brag about in order to make others feel insignificant?

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Other hobbies or past-times?

I am also indulging my other hobby of flying, by building an airplane, a Van's RV-9A. The wife tells me I need to do less hamming and more building but it will take to the air one of these days. Meanwhile, I do a little instructing and fly my friend's planes to stay current.

Unless your family has lived in Polk County since 1846, how did you end up here in, or around, Polk County?

In 2000 I came out to Oregon for a high school reunion and a friend told me about the Independence Airpark for a possible retirement spot. I checked it out and bought a lot there. After retiring we moved back to Oregon in October of 2005 and here we are.