

ROADS REPORT

June 2010

Vol 3 No 6

ROADS OFFICERS

Pres. KX5W Doc
V.P. WA7IBW Dean
Secty/Treas K7IJK Irene
PIO KY0TE Harry

Dates To Remember

Next meeting: Thurs. June 17

Field Day: June 26 & 27

VE Testing: July 10 Courthouse

Have you paid your dues?

**K7IJK needs your check
now!**



The Prez Sez.....

Well it's nearly time for Field Day again which is usually our biggest club event for the year. Thanks to Abe for obtaining the State application form for Helmick Park, signed, sealed and delivered !! Good job Abe!!!

Abe will be bringing extra copies of the signed form giving ROADS permission to be there Friday evening thru Sunday afternoon, in case anyone questions our being there.

At our next meeting we will not have a regular program but rather discuss in more detail -- equipment; antennas; food; setup/teardown; logging; who's planning on coming; generators; RV's; and more. We hope to have our best Field Day yet.

The other agenda item for our next meeting is our annual election of officers. Not hearing a resounding charge of folks rushing to become the next President, Vice P, Sec-Treasurer, or Director, we will have to open the election to nominations from the floor. We should have a good turn out because if you don't come we may elect you to something!! Slots who are not filled by present folks include a

Director, and Dean would like to decline as Vice President. Anyone interested in either of those positions or any of the other positions, let us know at the meeting or let Bob W7LOU our nominating committee know. It would be nice some year to have two nominations or more for each position and have a real election but guess I might be dreaming !!

So let's have a good and productive meeting--it's Thursday June 17 at the Court House at 7 pm. See you there !!!!!

VE Test Schedule

The next Amateur Radio License Exam session sponsored by the ROADS will be held on July 10th, 2010 at 9:00 AM in the Council meeting room of the Polk County Courthouse.

If you want more information about the event, there are several places to look:

1. Statesman Journal Events Calendar section for July - "Search on Amateur Radio License Exam"
2. ARRL Web site under VE session and look under Oregon.
3. Send the ROADS VE Team Liaison an email at W7HO@arrl.net.

Thanks and see you there

Ron Schlitzkus W7HO
ROADS VE Team Liaison

THE FOLKS ATTENDING THE MAY 8TH VE TESTING SESSION WENT 4 FOR 4.

We had 4 eager individuals attend the May 8th VE testing session sponsored by ROADS and all four of the folks left with new licenses or upgrades.

Ed "Spike" Smith, KB7TNJ, from Philomath, got his Extra License. He is also a VE and has offered to help in the future.

Scot Morse, KF7JFN, from Albany, is now the proud owner of a new General license.

Stephen Romig from Salem is now a new ham with a new Technician license.

Tom Turnbull from Independence also passed Element 2 and will shortly join the ranks of fellow hams as a new Technician.

Congratulation to all of those that came to the session and walked away with smiles on their faces.

I want to thank my VE team for the great job that they did. John - KE7JNT, Bob - K7QXG and myself.

Remember we have another session coming up on July 10th. So if you want to upgrade your license, or know someone that would like to get their license, please let them know about the session.

We are now also published in the event section of the Statesman Journal.

Thanks and 73s
Ron Schlitzkus - W7HO
ROADS VE Team Liaison

Antenna Anchor



I'm not sure whether this was designed to keep the antenna on the pickup or whether it was meant to keep the rear wheels of the truck on the highway.

This triple magnet mount on the top of WA7MZM's pickup keeps the antenna fixed solidly to the vehicle, even if Dave is driving around in a tornado. Dave is in the process of selling his home, and this is his

only means of "getting on the air" for the Sunday Oregon Trail net on 10 meters.

The rest of Dave's mobile station will be featured in the July issue of the ROADS Report.

Where Has The Propagation Gone?

The answer, in part, is found in the April issue of ScientificNews. This informative journal paints a rather bleak picture for us if it is true that we must rely upon sun spots for communication.

The article correctly states that the appearance of sun spots for Cycle 24 is at least 18 months behind schedule. It explores the reason in scientific terminology that is clearly over my head, yet I was able to glean an important fact: Cycle 24 has been very slow in arriving, and may continue to drag its heels for months to come. That paints a gloomy picture for those who thrive on the DX chase, but it need not spell doom and gloom for the rest of us.

The ROADS Fishing contest is a good example of the fun that can be had with operation on HF bands by local hams. A much better version of the Fishing Contest will be proposed for late this fall. If approved by our club officers, this event will offer some local activity despite poor propagation. Perhaps we could open it to other clubs as well?

Now, how do our DX enthusiasts deal with the issue of no sun spots? With tongue in cheek, I suggest they buy a few plane tickets and go to the countries they need. Without those reflective ions from old Sol, you will have a hard time working California on 20 meters, much less Saudi Arabia.

ScientificNews had no prediction of an end to this malaise, and I don't have one either. I have been a ham for 49 years and this is the first time I have seen poor propagation last for such an extended period of time.

A side note bears more bad news: About 9 months ago I watched a fascinating program on the History channel. Two well known scientists discussed all the ramifications of low sunspot activity. Did you know that prolonged absence of sunspots actually affects our weather? Maybe that is why this beautiful May day is drenched with rain and the forecast is for more of the same.

In spite of all of this, I did have a bright spot to chase away the weather and propagation blues: I received my QSL card from ST2AR. What made me feel even better is that I worked the station on 17 meters...on CW...using a home brew vertical with just 4 radials that I designed and built myself and mounted on the roof in ground plane fashion. Contacts like that, with home brew antennas, mean more to me than those made when propagation is red

hot and rolling and I'm using an antenna designed and built by someone else.

So keep a positive attitude, and vary your operating style to include more of the local home grown activities. Things are sure to get better.

de your Editor

What to do on a rainy day when there is no propagation

1. Try to find the first QSL card you ever received.
2. Go through your logs and select 10 stations to send a QSL card to and send them one.
3. Go to QRZ.com and upload a photo of you in your station.
4. Go to QRZ.com and clean up your bio.
5. Make a list of antenna improvements you would like to make this summer when the weather is nice.
6. Check your antenna supplies and see if you have what you need to make the improvements.
7. Get rid of out dated catalogues.
8. Clean and resupply your soldering equipment.
9. Call a fellow ham and complain about the lack of propagation (misery loves company)
10. Write an article for the ROADS report.
11. Go to Café 22 for lunch
12. Go to Taters for lunch
13. Go to North Dallas for lunch.
14. Go to a ROADS member's shack, and see if they invite you to stay for lunch. (Doesn't always work.)
15. Learn how to use PSK 31.
16. Help your wife with her chores.
17. Study for a license upgrade.
18. Go to Ham Radio Outlet and spin the knobs on all the new equipment.
19. Leave Ham Radio Outlet and go to Macaroni Grill or Claim Jumper for lunch (you won't be sorry)
20. If none of these work, then you are in the wrong hobby.

Lunch Revisited

I must be getting hungry Again!

I'm writing this in Sutherlin, Oregon, in an RV park named HyWay Haven. It's a nice place, and Shirley and I have stayed here before. This time we are here with a Good Sam group from Coos Bay, OR and we will be going back to Dallas in a couple of days. We like this area, and found a great place for lunch a few years back in the nearby town of Oakland. The name is Tolly's, and its an early 1900's soda fountain and eatery. The milkshakes are outstanding, and the sandwich fare is always good, although their home made french fries leave much to be desired. It is about a 6 mile drive from here along some scenic rural roads.

Normally, we would be headed there now, but we are having a horrible rain storm here. It has been going on since 3 AM and its nearly lunch time now. Every now and then a blast of wind hits and the rain sounds like a burst of machine gun fire on the side of the trailer. I don't even want to go out to the pickup and turn on the mobile unit to see if any of the bands are open. I fully expect to see my pickup go floating by the window at any moment.

Years ago (about 1992) I let my dear wife talk me into buying a trailer and "goin' RVin". We have had some great times, but I would have had a better time with 5 acres, a 90 foot tower, and 3 monoband antennas stacked on it. An Alpha amplifier with the DX9000 would round out the station rather nicely. Instead, I have this home on wheels and I get to visit old places like Tolly's in Oakland, OR.

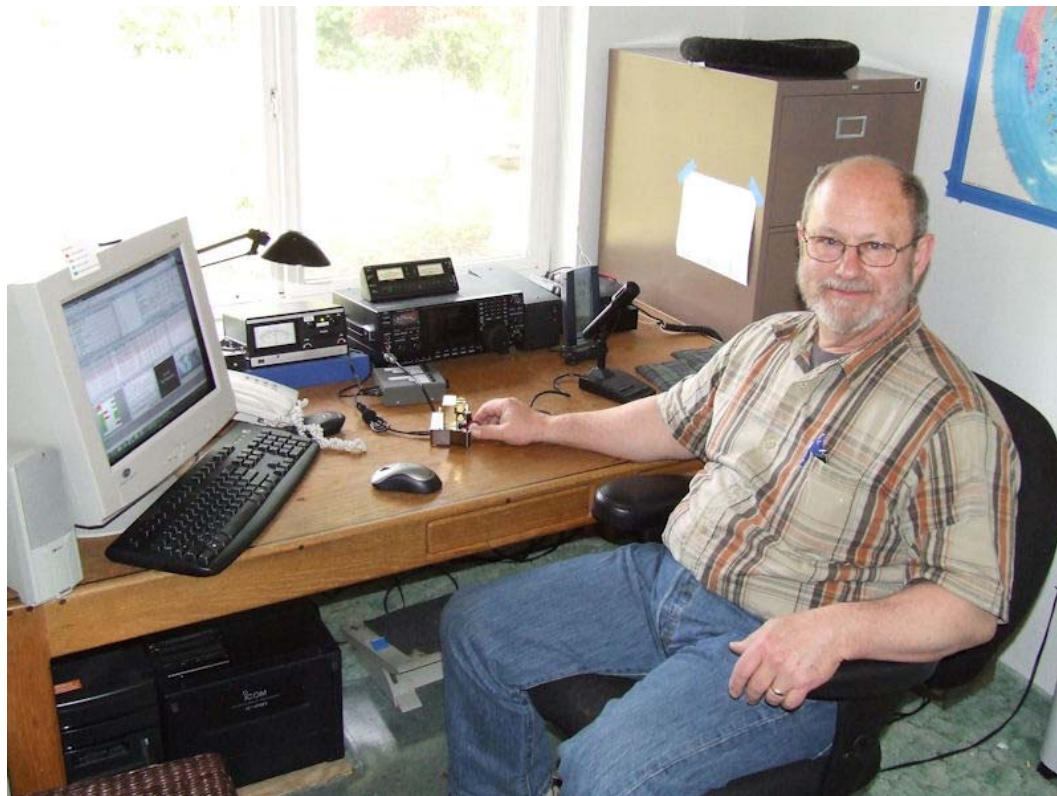
Hmmmm, that sounds darn good right now. Time for lunch folks, rain or no rain. Wonder what the soup of the day is?

Ed. Note: It was Smoked Chicken With Dumplings. I passed on that and settled for the sandwich of the day. It was so big that it should have been called the Sandwich Of The Week because it would take a week to eat the whole thing. The french fries lived down to their reputation.....

Sporadic-E Is Back For The Summer

The 10 meter and 6 meter bands are open nearly every day now, thanks to the annual Sporadic-E propagation. Check 28.400 daily, especially in the evenings between 6 pm and 8 pm! This will end in August.

Station Of The Month: K7CIE



K7CIE, Mike Fuller, lives in the Dallas area, and is usually as relaxed as you see him in this photo. He is retired (He was in IT and is a computer whiz), and spends his time chasing DX and contesting. He presently has 210 countries confirmed out of more than 230 worked. He operates primarily on CW, with a sprinkling of digital, and resorts to SSB when it is necessary. In the photo Mike is tightly clutching his Bengali paddle used to send flawless CW. His equipment is the IC-756 PRO III, backed up with an IC PW-1 Amp running a full gallon if needed. He uses the RigExpert on digital. Mike is a member of 10-10 and checks into the Oregon Trail net on Sundays at noon on 28.450. He also belongs to the Willamette Valley DX Club and has adorned his walls with different awards. 80% of his QSOs are with just 100 watts.



Mike uses a spider beam.... note the two cross beams that support individual wire "elements". In this case there are 3 elements for 20, 17, and 15, but the antenna will load on 10, 12, and 30 meters as well. Mike uses a 30 ft. aluminum tower with 10' of mast to top off at 40 ft.

The photo below is the K7CIE antenna installation.



The elevation at Mike's is over 600 feet, with a fairly clear shot to the NE and an excellent open path to the West.

The K7CIE "Ranch" has lots of deer, turkey and quail. While we were there, it was most impressive to see a wide variety of birds at the feeder outside the radio room window.

This is the kind of location most hams can only dream about.

DX by Doc KX5W

I haven't heard from other DXers in the club this month but can report working Cuba, Ogassawara, the Lima, Peru club station; Bosnia, Virgin Is, Madiera Is, Martinique, Cypress, Nigeria, S Africa, China, Wales, Scotland, Monaco, Greece, Sudan, Israel, United Arab Emerites, Fiji, Kuwait, Thailand several Russians, Europeans and of course skads of Japanese.

Some upcoming DX Peditions include:

VK0/ZL4DB Macquarie til mid August;

ZS8B Marion Is, the op works so he's on occasionally;

E4X Palestine--on now reported on the DX cluster on 40, 20 digital and SSB, 17 cw and 30 but so far he's working Europe and the east coast;

ZK3X Tokelau the first week of June;

VP2MRT Montserrat June 9 to 19.

We sometimes complain of how we have it worse on the west coast (probably true) and how bad the propagation has been (true) but did you notice that a station in Grants Pass, Oregon won the CQ DX Marathon. It's Bob Locher W9KNI, yeah an avid DXer for sure--he worked 281 countries this past year from Oregon. So it shows it can be done with a lot of persistence, sharp listening and patience. Congrats Bob !!!

Best of DX to you !!!

Not Getting QSL Cards?

Times are changing. In the 1960s it was no problem getting a QSL from a sought after state or country. Not so today. There have been several discussions recently by some of our members about the difficulty in getting DX QSLs, and especially when they use IRCs, Green Stamps, and the ARRL DX QSL Bureau. I would like to have your comments for a future article and perhaps we can pinpoint the problem. I do know that foreign post offices are notorious for the theft of mail that has a USA return address. Send me your feedback via email or snail mail. K7QXG@arrl.net

Coming Next Month

Photos of three mobile installations; Election results with a brief comment about the officers for 2010/2011; a review of comments about QSL cards with some interesting statistics on what works and what doesn't; and of course our usual column by the President and the DX feature.

That's all folks!

