

Newsletter of ROADS

MARCH 2008

After a long hiatus, this is the first issue of what is expected to be the resumption of the ROADS newsletter. Hopefully we can keep it going on monthly basis. However, we need some help. Doc KX5W has promised to contribute some commentary on DX, which should be interesting and useful to new operators as well as the old timers. Ron W7HO contributes the VE session results. I will include news to keep members updated on what is going on with the club. Of course QRK stuff will be included when I can find some appropriate material. We will try to keep the page numbers down to a minimum.

We can do more if our members help. Contributions to Loose Gravel can be almost anything related to radio or members. How about a 10-10 report? HOW-TO articles for new operators? Suggestions for meeting programs? News concerning members? How about some of the old-timers telling us how it was back in the days of steam powered radio? Would you like to see a resumption of the WHOWHATWHEREWHEN member profiles? Let us know. I can be contacted at: KD7VLP@ARRL.NET

PRESIDENT'S SCREED...

Where is everyone? The last several meetings have been notable for the lack of members. I think there were 12 members at the February meeting. The weather was not that bad. I know gas is getting expensive, but how about car pooling (Doc KX5W brought Fred W6KXA to the last meeting). Anyway, we need participation in the club to keep it going. Do we need to do something different at the meetings? Suggestions are accepted. What do you want to see when we have programs? Do we have to lure you in with doughnuts? Dancing girls? What???

Next ROADS Meeting April 10th, 2008 at 7:00PM
Program: Electrical Safety by a representative from Consumers Power

Next VE Session May 10, 2008 at 9:00AM

We meet and test at the Polk County Court House in Dallas
Check out the web page WWW.W7ORE.COM for details

PRESIDENT	DAVID	KD7VLP
VICE PRESIDENT	MIKE	KA7HBB
SEC/TREASURER	IRENE	K7IJK
DIRECTOR (1yr)	HARRY	KY0TE
DIRECTOR (2yr)	SCOTT	N7TMB

VE SESSION REPORT: W7HO

At the recent VE session March 8, 2008 seven took the exam and all passed.
New licensees and changes in status:

Elaine Cock	General - Salem
Morris Montgomery	Tech - Monmouth
Ken Armstrong	General -
Mathew Shuman	Tech - Corvallis
Rod Quiring	Tech - Salem
Chris Weaver	General - Scott Mills
Kaitlyn Crockett	Tech - Salem

FIELD DAY...

At the February meeting (2/14/08), we discussed plans for the next Field in June. We had such a good time last year; we plan to go back to the Dallas Fire Department training area. Chief Hahn has promised to bring out one of his big trucks to help string antennas. Be sure and plan on coming out and participating...or come out and see what goes on. We will continue our planning in the meetings leading up to the event. There was some talk about a possible work session to put together some antennas.

ROADsHOUSE Update

No progress has been made since the last update. We are waiting for a better feel for where the Fire Department will be settling on a training area. We plan on meeting with Chief Hahn to develop a MOU in the next month or so.

DX COMMENTARY BY KX5W

What appears in the newsletter in future issues on the subject of DX will be expected stations, their callsigns, locations and when they should be on the air, and any local member's activity with DX as reported to me at BDocBowers@cs.com or via 2 meters on 146.86 MHz.

So what is DXing for you new to it or who haven't gotten the bug yet? It is working distant and rare countries all over the world on hf ham frequencies. The ARRL publishes a booklet called the ARRL DXCC List, for a mere \$3 and it lists all of the current 338 possible countries to contact using any mode in ham radio, as SSB, cw, rtty, etc.

What we usually do is call CQ DX and have a DX station call us, or more commonly, hear one on working other stations and we call them and exchange at a minimum your call sign and a signal report. Some DX stations will rag chew-- talk about lots of things, but most won't, as there is a big demand for them,

especially from the large ham population countries as Japan and the US. We work them, log them in our logbook and send them a QSL card. When we get one back, we then have that country confirmed. Work them first, then get the QSL card. My current count is 318 worked and 315 confirmed. The cards are submitted to ARRL by certified mail or registered mail, so your collection doesn't get lost and the ARRL in a few weeks to months sends you back a complete computerized list and report on your totals by country and even which bands you work them.

So today is a brief intro to DXing. 20 meters is usually the hottest band, but anything from 80 to 10 meters counts for DXCC, which is working and getting cards back on 100 countries, hence the DX Century (100) Club certificate is issued to you; then you submit more QSL cards over time for endorsements for more countries, over the years.

I'd encourage you with hf stations to listen at sunrise and sunset, good times for DX. 10 thru 30 meters tend to be day bands and 40 and 80 meters tend to be best at night.

This DX news will hopefully inform you of upcoming DXpeditions--where hams travel overseas to some rare island or country--set up a portable station, much like we do on field day, and work thousands of us crazy DXers all over the world. Plus this column will report DX stations heard, when and where, not just DXpeditions.

So what's going on now?? Clipperton Island TX5C and Ducie Island VP6DX are both finished. A DX country can be an island or a political country. Yugoslavia has broken into several political countries; Slovenia, Bosnia, Croatia and now Montenegro are all DX countries, for example. You get pretty good at geography looking all these up on a map when you work them.

What's on this week or month is Rwanda 9X0R in Africa; Swan Island HQ8R off the coast of Honduras; 3W3M in Vietnam; and the newest DXCC country--any call you hear with a /FJ at the beginning or end of their regular call sign.

The best technique is to listen a lot and not talk too much, until you hear one you'd like to call. Tuning up and down the bands you'll find DX even in this low part of the cycle. I usually use 100 watts to a windom (like a dipole) so you don't have to have a super station to work dx. Persistence helps; keep calling if you first don't succeed. Happy hunting !!!

QRK de KD7VLP

We are bit thin this month...out of practice I guess. However, I found this bit of information that, while a bit late for the season, may be useful next winter.

Strength of Ice

Thickness	Strength
Two inches	Will support a man
Four inches	Will support a man on horseback
Five inches	Will support a battery of artillery, with carriages and horses attached
Eight inches	Will support an army, an innumerable multitude

Hill's Manual of Social and Business forms. A guide to Correct Writing

---Moses Warren & Co 1880

I will leave you with this thought to ponder:

It has not been easy for humans to face time. Some, in recoiling from the fearsome prospect of time's abyss, have toppled backward into the abyss of ignorance.

-- Claude Albritton

Until next month...KD7VLP