

# **Loose Gravel**

**Newsletter of ROADs**

**Volume 1, Number 6**

AB7X~Editor

**Last month was the SwaptoberFest event at the Polk County Fairgrounds, and I trust all who attended had as good a time there as they possibly could. Several of us stood watch at the ROADs table, and our proceeds were enough to cover expenses and then some. I don't have the exact figures, but one will be able to query Bob B. at the dinner meeting tomorrow night. I'm sure he has the latest info. A large thank-you to W7LOU, W7NLI, W6SVP, K7QXG, K7IJK, KW7DSP, and anyone else who ventured too near the back of the table. Our banner was very noticeable from anywhere in the main room, thanks again Feryl! We should plan to have a table or two at the event next February at the Salem Hamfair at the same location.**

**Last month's presentation was given by Mark O'Malley and Dan Kierns from the Portland office of the National Weather Service. I thank them again for being available on such short notice. They covered aspects of Skywarn and procedures for observations as a Severe weather Spotter, and signed up a few Spotters on the spot after the meeting was adjourned. Attendance was good and I appreciate all who came for making our guests feel welcome. This month is our semi-annual [?] dinner meeting, and it**

**takes place at Farrol's Restaurant by the Polk County Fairgrounds tomorrow night at 6:00 PM. Let's fill the room!**

**An offering from Ron, KK7UU, and I quote from his email:**

**I (KK7UU) will be operating W6OI Special Event Station on November 26th and 27th, for the "7" Call area on 28.345 or 28.350.**

**10-10 International will be operating W6OI Special Event Station on November 26th and 27th. W6OI will be operating simultaneous in each of the US Call areas over the two days event (separate operator in each of the US call areas). We have been asked to operate between 28.340 and 28.400 during the special event.**

**Special QSL cards are available for each of the call areas. You can collect as many as you can work.**

**Stations working W6OI in all US call areas will receive a special certificate.**

**The purpose of the Special Event is to celebrate 10-10 International and to have fun operating on 10 Meters. You do not need be a 10-10 member to work the Special Event stations. Everyone is welcome.**

**Thanks very much and hope to work you during the Event.**

**Ron KK7UU**

**Special Event QSL for W6OI  
QSL to:  
Jack Moore K5CC  
371 Ridge Creek Ln  
Bulverde, TX 78163**

**Be sure to specify which Call areas you are reporting QSO with.**

**Thank you Ron, for your contribution!  
Next from Dave, KD7VLP, who has been wonderful  
about digging for the Truth and coming up with some  
great tidbits for us:**

## HOW FRS RADIOS SAVED MY MARRIAGE

Yes...I know that we are all licensed by the FCC to operate grownup radios.

Yes...I know that FRS radios are not grownup radios.

Yes...I know that to some people, no names at this time, consider FRS radio users to be less than human.

Now that we have that out of the way, let me tell you how FRS radios saved my marriage and made me a more caring husband who stopped thinking of ways to have my wife committed.

My wife has some physical limitations that prevent her from walking as fast as she used to. When this began, maybe ten years ago, I stepped up to the challenge and began to go shopping with her to help her out. Good husband...right? But, I found out, at this time, that she apparently had psychic powers that she had been hiding from me.

We are avid shoppers at Costco and we used to live in another location that had a Costco that was at least half again as big as the one in Salem. It was huge. Well, we would go to Costco and she would push the basket and I would walk along with her and pick up stuff and put into the basket, as she directed. Usually, a time would come that I might look at a book, for maybe ten seconds, and then upon turning around would find her gone with a wisp of lavender smoke curling around where she had been. She had disappeared. With her limitations, I would think she could not have gone far, and it would be a simple matter of performing a quick grid search in the vicinity and I would find her in a matter of minutes.

Not so...sometimes it would take me a half hour to search the store, from one end to the other, before I would find her blithely wandering along an aisle, seemingly not even aware I was not with her. I would ask her in a soft and reasoned voice "Sweetie, where were you, I could not find you after you wandered off?" To which she would reply " I was right here...where did you disappear to?"

I forgot to mention that another dear trait of hers is that she loves to shop. Which means that she would have to touch each and every item in the store and this was not just at Costco. This would irritate me, to put it mildly, since my idea of going to the store is to purchase necessities and only those necessities and then go home. So there we would be, even at the times when I could keep her in sight, spending literally hours in a store "shopping". Did I mention that walking at her pace screwed up my hips and I would be in a bit of pain by time we left the store.

You get the picture, I wanted to help my wife and make her life a bit easier, but this scenario would repeat it self to the point getting ready to go shopping with her became a nightmare to me.

I thought of getting one of those kiddie leashes like you see on the toddlers in a store, but she would not even consider this idea.

The concept of a shopping list and focusing on that list and going home when the list was taken care of seemed alien to her. "How can I tell what is in the store and if we need it if I don't look at it and touch it to determine its quality?" I swear if there is ever a major terror incident in a store where she has shopped and the Police take fingerprints and DNA samples to find the terrorist, she will be toast since her traces will cover everything.

Finally, I looked at FRS radios. They seemed to be a potential solution. I researched and purchased a pair of good quality Kenwood radios. I enlisted her to help me get familiarized with them so she saw their utility around the house and such. When I suggested that they might be useful at Costco, she was not able to see how, but was willing enough to give it a try.

The Kenwoods were a success!!!!

This time when she disappeared in a puff of lavender smoke, I merely rang her up and asked her where she was. She responded and I went directly to her location. We only had to do this three

times on that first trip. Amazing. My attitude was much improved, to the point where she commented on it. "You seem different today. Whenever you wandered off you were very good about calling me to find out where I was and then coming to where I was."

The radios worked so well that we eventually began to exploit their utility in other ways. Sometimes she would give me a shopping list in the store and we would go our separate ways. I would obtain everything on the list then call her to find a place to meet, for example at the dairy case. This allowed her to "shop" while I was tracking down the list items at my usual walking pace.

My hips felt better.

She was able to shop and "touch" things to her heart's content.

We even went so far as dropping her off at a craft store (shudder...mega-shopping/touching orgy) and I would wander the city doing other errands. When I was through with my errands, I would return to the craft store and call her as I entered the parking lot. She would then go the checkout stand and exit the store. I did not have to enter that shopping/touching place. Thus we were able to multi-task and meet both of our needs to the point of having a pleasant afternoon in the big city.

So...you see how FRS radios saved our marriage. I have returned to my sweet self, the same sweet self that I was when we married. I do not fear and loathe (as much as I used to) going shopping with her any more and am able to be a helpmate as all husbands should be. She says that now she does not fear and loathe (as much as she used to) going shopping with me.

The perfect marriage again.

--

dm

facienda fient

**I love it! Perhaps some of the rest of you will not be so shy, and send in some interesting items to post in upcoming newsletters?**

**It would appear that the Hurricane season is nearing an end, but the Tornados go on and on! I feel fortunate not to have to live where those are regularly scheduled events! These last two weeks we in the Pacific Northwest have experienced the regular Autumn winds, rains, snows, freezes, floods and all else that escapes the Nightly News Nauseum. Here is an item that recently found its way into my Inbox, and although I cannot attest to its veracity I believe it to be accurate enough to noteworthy. From Scott Gray, W7IZ, Section Traffic Manager:**

**“(For those of you who are not aware, North Dakota and southwestern Montana got hit with their first blizzard of the season a couple of weeks ago)**

**This text is from county emergency manager out in the western part of North Dakota state after the storm.**

## **WEATHER BULLETIN**

**Up here in the Northern Plains we just recovered from a Historic event --- may I even say a "Weather Event" of "Biblical Proportions" --- with a historic blizzard of up to 24" inches of snow and winds to 50 MPH that broke trees in half, stranded hundreds of motorists in lethal snow banks, closed all roads, isolated scores of communities and cut power to 10's of thousands.**

George Bush did not come....  
FEMA staged nothing....  
No one howled for the government...  
No one even uttered an expletive on TV...  
Nobody demanded \$2,000 debit cards.....  
No one asked for a FEMA Trailer House....  
No news anchors moved in

We just melted snow for water, sent out caravans to pluck people out of snow engulfed cars, fired up wood stoves, broke out coal oil lanterns or Aladdin lamps and put on an extra layer of clothes.

Even though a Category "5" blizzard of this scale has never fallen this early...we know it can happen and how to deal with it ourselves.

Everybody is fine.”

**And there it is folks, what is gone un-noted is often times the best insight into the way the media and the government operate. The 'show' must go on, and with all the glory and advertisements the 'news' teams can muster in the face of great odds. I wonder where I can get one of those nifty hand-held wind gizmos? That, and a good Category 5 raincoat, would probably qualify me to be a news anchor, and then I could have my very own two-hour news movie! (Hold the makeup, I feel a story coming on!)**

**The Great CW Debate continues, and I will not belabor the topic any more than to say: I believe that the CW element should be retained for the Extra**

**Class requirement, and since the FCC has not seen fit to create a new 'entry-level' license class it is only reasonable to propose expanding the Technician Class privileges into more of the HF spectrum. We have had a fine tradition of setting example for the world, and Gods forbid we should do any different now! What is important is not all the in-fighting over moot points and class distinctions, but that we preserve the quality of the Amateur Radio experience for all those who come after. The notion of letting the Next Generation 'take care of' all our mistakes is very foolish, since they will be the ones who decide who stays, and who goes, and where. The voice of the HAM operators is a meager one at best, and is reflected in the poor showing of comments to the FCC. Of the tens of thousands of license holders in this country, only five thousand or so even bothered to take the time to write with an offer of any opinion or solution at all! Why did we go to all the time and trouble to get our licenses? To just sit around and complain that nothing goes our way? Lets see some activity!**

**I remind all who have not currently paid their dues, to do so and therefore support our club. We enjoy not having to pay homage to anyone but ourselves, and this is a benefit by itself. Participation at meetings and events is important too, and it just may be that the diversity of our membership is the glue that binds us together and keeps it interesting?**

**As Autumn unfolds into Winter, I find my bonsai forest in the nude and wanting the protection of cold winds and freezing temperatures. I shall move them off the shelves and into a more safe location. Time to protect your perennials!**

**A parting quote:**

"Whether the weather be fine, Whether the weather be not, Whether the weather be cold, Whether the weather be hot, We'll weather the weather, Whatever the whether, Whether we like it or not"

--Anonymous

**A parting shot (self-portrait), from a cousin in Canada, who predicts a very cold Winter...**



**Thank you all for allowing me into your day...and for my contributing correspondents for providing fresh input. See you all at dinner tomorrow night!**

**AB7X~Coyóte**