



www.marc-radio.org

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REMARCS

March/April 2008

VOX

Please give a nice welcome to new MARC member **Jim Creasy K3JJC**! Jim has been a local ham in the Phoenixville area for many years and is one of the Rooster net control ops that some of us check in with.

Thanks To:

- Our friend **Gisele K3WAJ** for donating the videos that were shown at our January and March club meetings.
- **Dennis KA3QOT** for distributing our hamfest flyers recently at the Timonium, MD hamfest.
- **Dan KA3KHR** for generously donating a dual-band HT to the club.

Please mark your calendars with dates for the following:

1. **Field Day 2008**, June 28-29th, Audubon, PA
2. **MARC Hamfest**, July 13th, Kimberton, PA

Note: MARC needs help for the set up and running of Field Day and Hamfest. To help, please contact **Dieter K3DK** at 610 489-1920 or DHauer@gis.net for Field Day and, **Mike KF3CD** at 610 935-4429 or KF3CD@ARRL.net for Hamfest.

A nice photo of **Carter N3AO** and **Kay N3KN** can be found in the February 2008 issue of QST Magazine (page 12). They participated in the 2007 Skwarn Recognition Day event from Blacksburg, VA. **Lou WX3I** also participated and activated the Mt Holly, NJ weather station on HF for this event.

We extend our condolences to **Bob W3ZQN** on the passing of his father.

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THANKS K3DS!

Dennis Silage K3DS introduced and provided a demo of the EZNEC antenna modeling software. He showed how this neat tool is used to design and model various antennas that you may want to build this spring.

Additional information on this tool can be found at:

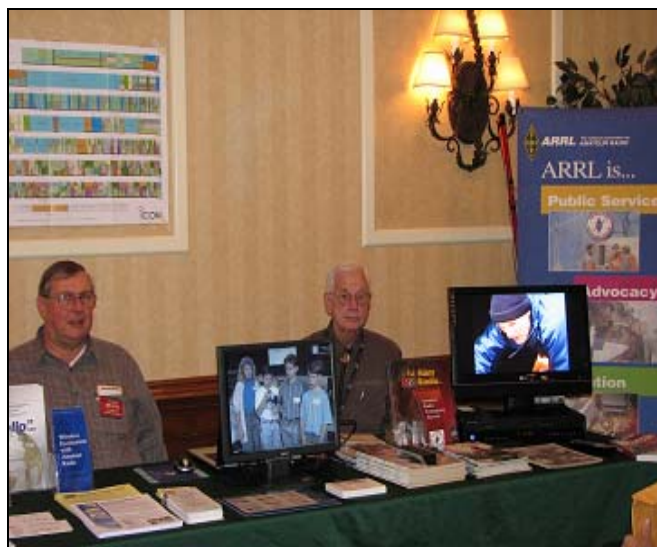
<http://www.eznec.com/>

MARC PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

Providing radio communications and assistance for public service events is what helps to justify the frequencies that we get to enjoy. Would you be interested in helping out with one or more events in 2008? It doesn't require much of your time and it's fun to volunteer and work with other MARC members.

Please contact our Public Service Chairman **Bob Palin N3JIZ** at 610 687-4587 or n3jiz@marc-radio.org for additional info on these upcoming events and how you can help:

1. **Multiple Sclerosis 5 K Race – April 27, Sunday**
Volunteers Assemble at: 9:00 AM
Location: West Goshen Park – West Chester
2. **Radnor Memorial Day Parade – May 26, Monday**
Volunteers Assemble at: 8:00 AM
Location: Micro Center Parking Lot – Radnor



ARRL Section Mgr. Eric Olena WB3FPL (left), & Ben Johns K3JQH at the SWLfest - Kulpville, PA, March 8th

MARC INFO

wb3joe@marc-radio.org
<http://www.marc-radio.org>

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS -

3rd Tuesdays, 7:30 PM
Tredyffrin Twp. Bldg.
Berwyn, PA – Guests Welcome
Smoke Free, Handicapped-accessible.

BOARD MEETINGS -

2nd Tuesdays of even months, 7:30 PM
Paoli Hospital, Willistown Meeting Room
Members may attend as observers.

WB3JOE REPEATERS (CTCSS or PL = 131.8 hz) -
145.130 - / 147.060 + / 224.420 - / 445.675 -
The 2 meter repeaters are linked.

WEBMASTER -

Foster Schucker K3FXS
k3fxs@marc-radio.org 302-363-7347

2 METER NETS -

Club Net, Sunday, 8:30 PM
Traffic Net, M/W/F, 8:30 PM
Roundtable, Thursdays, 8:30 PM

These nets occur on linked 145.13 - R / 147.06 + R

1.25 METER (220 MHz) NET –

Club Net, Sunday, 7:30 PM

This net occurs on 224.420 - R

NET MANAGER –

Sam Mitchell WA3LGL
wa3lgl@marc-radio.org 215-530-2151

DUES -

\$15 Full (licensed Amateurs)
\$5 Associate (unlicensed persons)
Family rate \$5/ham - after first member
pays full dues

NEWSLETTER -

The REMARCS editor is Dieter K3DK
610-489-1920 k3dk@marc-radio.org
Do you have anything for REMARCS?
Please let me know.

MEMBERSHIP DUES -

Yearly membership Dues are now due. You may mail in payment or, see **Lou WX3I** our MARC Treasurer and pay in person at the next club meeting if desired. A final reminder will be sent out in mid-April. Thank You

If you have already paid your Dues, you may ignore this notice.

HAMFEST SCHEDULE FOR 2008

Date:	Location:
April 12	Georgetown, DE
April 12	Toms River, NJ
April 19	York, PA
April 20	West Windsor, NJ
April 25-27	Trenton, NJ
May 4	Wrightstown, PA
May 9-10	Kutztown, PA
May 25	West Friendship, MD
May 30-31	Henrietta, NY
June 14	Bloomsburg, PA
June 15	Frederick, MD
July 4	Bressler, PA
July 6	Wilkes Barre, PA
July 13	Kimberton, PA *
July 20	West Friendship, MD
August 9	Sinking Spring, PA
August 17	Westminster, MD
Sept 6	Stroudsburg, PA
Sept 21	Mullica Hill, NJ **
Sept 28	Wrightstown, PA
Oct 4	Brownstown, PA
Oct 5	West Friendship, MD
Oct 19	Sellersville, PA

* - MARC Hamfest – Hope to see you there!

** - Tentative

Please Note: The above schedule may be subject to change without notice.

UPCOMING CLUB MEETINGS

On **April 15th**, MARC will hold its annual **Junque Auction**. Please bring only ham radio or ham radio related items for sale at the auction. Any unsold items must be removed by the seller. Leave the expensive, high-end equipment at home and sell it later at the MARC hamfest or on the web'. Our auctioneer will be **Dennis Silage K3DS**. Please refer to the Auction Rules on page 7.

On **May 20th**, there will be a presentation on **Radio Direction Finding**. **Bob Rex K3DBD**, from the Pottstown Area Amateur Radio Club will discuss and demonstrate DFing and answer your questions.

NEXT AMATEUR TEST SESSION

The next amateur test session will be held on Saturday, May 3rd at the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church. You must contact **Bob Lees W3ZQN** if you are interested in taking a test. He may be reached at 610 265-6032 or RJLees@aol.com.

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To 9/30/2008 -

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- W3NWA

Dieter Hauer K3DK

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AMATEUR RADIO NEWS

Here are some sources for catching up on Amateur Radio news.

WB3FPL Repeater on 147.180 (PL 110.9 hz) – Monday evenings, after the 8 PM EST ARES/RACES net is completed. **Note:** Edited version of Amateur Radio News Line & edited version of ARRL Audio News Letter is played.

WBCQ SW Station on 7.415 MHz – Sundays, at 4 PM EST.

www.arnewslines.org

www.arrl.org/arrlletter/audio

FROM THE EDITOR'S SHACK

By Dieter Hauer, K3DK

Well, Spring is finally here and with it, decent weather for building and repairing antennas. Some of you may be stringing up a fresh dipole, window or long wire. Others will be working on bigger projects involving a large HF quad or yagi that may be mounted on a tower.

Take advantage of the good weather, a lull in the bands and get a respite from the contests and DXpeditions to assemble and install that copper and aluminum. Inspect the ground systems and feedlines as well and replace accordingly. Exercise caution and use proper safety equipment.

One ham that I know finally got a nice pair of matched final tubes for his amplifier and is now expecting full output and a cleaner signal. I'm sure that his signal will be "armchair-copy" on the low bands. He's learning about "high-voltage".

Last weekend, I visited a friend and we worked on his 160 Meter Inverted Vee that was damaged by a recent storm. A large tree fell onto a corner of his garage roof and worse yet... it snapped one of the legs on the Inverted Vee! Horrors! To repair this antenna, the high-wattage balun had to be carefully lowered to ground level, via the pulley, from its 130 foot apex.

It was neat to see the well thought-out and elaborate arrangement of pulleys and weights that he had carefully installed for this big wire antenna. Wire legs were also connected to the same balun, at 90 degree angles, to create an Inverted Vee for 30 & 40 Meters.

We didn't finish the repair as a climb onto the house roof was necessary and some rain kicked in. However, next weekend should do the trick and he'll be chasing DX again on 160 Meter CW... with a grin on his face.

- 73 Dieter K3DK



A Multi-Band HF Antenna Array at 70+ Feet

AMATEUR RADIO IN DUBAI – Part II

By Doug Wilkens, N3ENU

[Editor's Note: Doug Wilkens N3ENU is a long-time MARC member and is currently residing in the middle-east, in Dubai. Below are additional writings and photos of his personal experiences in Dubai. Thanks again Doug!]

January 19, 2008 – Scout Gathering in Sharjah

Here are some photos that I took at the Scout gathering in Sharjah. In attendance was the ruling Sheikh of Sharjah (the Emirate neighboring Dubai, where the Scout Gathering was held).



Doug Wilkens, N3ENU

Amateur Radio Antennas

Scout Gathering

As always, things are a bit fluid here, so instead of having a station set up in a tent as planned, the equipment was set up in the meeting room. However, the antennas were set up outside in a fashion similar to field day. There was an exhibition set up for the Sheikh in a large tent – and the Amateur Radio Society had an exhibit. There were scouts from 80 countries and each country had an exhibit as well.

I was surprised (and pleased) that the Sheikh indicated considerable interest in the amateur radio exhibit and spent quite a bit of time in the booth. The Amateur Radio Society had made a presentation of a fancy code key for the Sheikh.

There were a number of presentations outdoors. Horse riding, Scout band marching, royal band playing a variety of marches, demonstrations of life safety equipment and procedures, and speeches by a number of Scout leaders, etc.

January 21, 2008 -

I think that ham radio is a novelty to most of the people in the area (other than those that are hams already!), but I am pleasantly surprised to see how open and receptive people are when exposed to this “new thing.” You must remember that most of the local people were quite removed from modern technology not so long ago. How things have changed.

The ones that are hams already seem to have more than enough money to devote to the hobby so they are quite well equipped. It seems that they also are willing to take the time to read QST and CQ – plus various handbooks from the ARRL, so they can learn more.

They have all of the latest software for digital modes as well – and the ones that I watched operating seemed very knowledgeable about the features of the programs (doing macros, etc.).

We could only wish that our US President would indicate an equal interest in ham radio (maybe if Barry Goldwater had been successful in his bid for Prez)!! Sheikh al Qassimi certainly was very interested and spent quite a bit of time in the Amateur Radio Society booth talking to various members of the Society. I should also mention that as the Sheikh was leaving, he promised to donate a new building to the Amateur Radio Society. How's that for being supportive! All good stuff!

73, Doug N3ENU

72

HiHo, HiHo, Another QSO On Dipoles, Vee's, Feedlines, SWR, Baluns, and Tuners



By Bob Woish, WB3T

It was December of 1975, and each day after work I'd dash through the door to my apartment complex hoping the mailman had delivered my Novice ticket. I had spent the summer learning code from a set of old military surplus LP records and drilled Novice theory into my head from the Radio Shack instructional book "5 Watts to 1,000 Watts." My Elmer, Fred (W3NHS) had steered me toward the initial steps in becoming a ham and administered my Novice test. I had ordered an MFJ40T QRP transmitter and picked up an old Heathkit HR-10B receiver as a start. Being an apartment dweller, I had to think creatively to erect some sort of antenna that would get me going. And as a young dad, I was on a budget.

Back in those exciting early days, there was no Internet, in fact it wasn't even a glimmer in Al Gore's eye ;) Information was still transmitted via snail mail and you didn't even know if you had passed the test until the mailman brought the news. But there it was – WN3BBT was stamped on my license and I was nearly ready for my first QSO.

Do you remember the excitement you felt the day you were first licensed? I couldn't get on the air fast enough. Truth be told, I really had no idea what to expect, minus what I had copied on the air during the studying and waiting periods. I was still figuring out why everyone kept saying "CUAGN," and "UR." I just couldn't figure out how to pronounce these strange words. "Coo-agan?" "Oohr?" Q signals, de, and RST were clearly explained in the ARRL manual, but there was no mention of these pre-text message abbreviations anywhere to be found. As time passed and I began to hear them in my own QSOs, I figured it out. But back to the antenna issue...

There was plenty of information on how to construct a resonant dipole for any HF band, and they were quite inexpensive to build. Since my transmitter operated on 40m, I cut two 33-foot lengths of #18 wire and connected one to the coax center conductor and one to the shield. I was sure I had measured right and there was no need to invest in an SWR meter. I secured one end to the ceiling in my bedroom, ran the cold end around into the living room, and anchored

the hot side to a fencepost outside. It looked quite impressive to a new ham. Finally, after six months of studying, testing, shopping, and preparation, it was time to fire up.

I nervously grasped the key and began to bang out, albeit slowly – "CQ CQ CQ de WN3BBT..." Nothing. "CQ CQ CQ de WN3BBT..." Nothing. "CQ CQ CQ de WN3BBT..." Nothing. "CQ CQ CQ de WN3BBT..." Nothing. After a few hours of this I gave it up and went to bed disappointed.

What could be wrong? Using crystal control, I knew I was sending out my call on a proper CW Novice band frequency, and my receiver was tuned to the same. I could hear my beat note in the headphones and there were plenty of CW QSOs on adjacent frequencies, so I knew the receiver was ok. A week. A month. Nothing. Hmph.

Tuning your antenna not only allows the transmitter to develop full power, but the radiating efficiency of the antenna at resonance goes up tremendously.

I began to wonder if 5 watts really was enough. I spoke with Fred and he assured me that it was – in the old days he used just a handful of watts and worked all over the country on 80 and 40 meters. It had to be something else. Receiver, OK. Transmitter, OK. Antenna... should be but I don't really know. With February upon us my then-wife asked if there was anything in particular I'd like for Valentine's Day. That was probably the easiest question she'd ever ask me. Trust me, the rest were far tougher than that! I hinted at the SWR meter at Radio Shack.

Well it turned out that the SWR on my carefully measured Half-In, Half-Out dipole was off the scale. Didn't make any sense to me, so I started reading up and sure enough, there was this little bugger I was previously oblivious to called "proximity effect." The building materials in the apartment, including the metal casing around the window through which the hot side of the antenna passed, were largely metal and were detuning my dipole! Hooda thunk? So I trimmed and I measured and I trimmed. Finally, the SWR needle was barely moving in the reflected power position and I tried again.

"CQ CQ CQ de WN3BBT..." After a few tries, I almost could have sworn I heard a 2-lander answering my call. HOLY GUACAMOLI HE WAS! I could barely tap out a response I was so excited. It was a brief QSO and he faded into the noise, but the ice was broken. That day I went on to hold several complete QSOs with hams in Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio, and New York. Witness the power of the SWR meter! Tuning your antenna not only allows the transmitter to develop full power, but the *radiating efficiency of the antenna at resonance goes up tremendously.*

In 1976 I moved to a bigger apartment and I took my HiHo with me. (That same year, the FCC did away with WN calls and I became WB3BBT, *continued on page 6...*)

which might sound sort of familiar now!) I operated a used homebrew 40-meter tube transmitter with 40 watts out, and cross-country QSOs became possible. In 1978 I used the HiHo from a 4th floor apartment and the extra height paid off even more. I had proven the worth of the HiHo in three different locations, with more to come.

Some of you are in a position where a full-size Yagi or vertical might not be a practical solution. MARC has many members who live in apartments, condos, and otherwise antenna-restricted communities. Even as a homeowner, I am still in that group. I have mentioned in previous articles that I still use HiHo dipoles and inverted Vee's, so allow me to outline for you the practical construction of this workhorse antenna.

Use the dipole formula – $468/f$ where f is your operating frequency in MHz and the resulting antenna length is in feet...

First of all, you need to decide whether your sky hook will be easily deployable when you want to use it (as with my first HiHo), or permanently installed (as in my battery of current HiHo's). Remember the old tire commercial that used the slogan "where the rubber meets the road?" Antennas are much the same – the more conductor surface interfacing the surrounding space, the more energy will transfer to the air. So if you don't mind slinging up your antenna each time you want to use it, and forgoing "invisible antenna" status, use as large a wire gauge as is practical. 12 – 16 gauge is great, 18 – 20 is fine and a little easier to work with.

My antennas are made of #24 gauge magnet wire. There are actually several advantages to this thinner wire. It is for all intents and purposes invisible. I leave my HiHo's up full time and nobody has detected any of them. They are also lighter, which translates into less self-destructing stress during windstorms. I had one antenna at my old apartment made of this same gauge and it stayed up for several years through some of the nastiest storms the east coast has ever seen. They just don't pull on themselves very hard even while thrashing around in high winds. They are also very inexpensive. A roll of wire long enough for a hundred HF antennas costs around \$15.

Use the dipole formula – $468/f$ where f is your operating frequency in MHz and the resulting antenna length is in feet. This formula is good anywhere in the HF region. However, leave the antenna about a foot or so longer to allow for pruning and tuning. Now cut the length in half and connect any length of 50-Ohm coax – center conductor to one half, braid (shield) to the other. An egg insulator or better yet, a 1:1 balun can be used as the center structure. A balun will choke off any RF floating on the shield of your coax cable due to standing waves. And even if small, there are always standing waves that can play nasty tricks on your equipment, radiation pattern, and nearby appliances. If you use a center insulator, weatherproofing your solder joints and the end of the coax at the braid with silicon glue is a great idea to keep moisture out. Moisture in the feedline will affect impedance.

You can fashion a homemade choke balun by simply making

15 - 20 turns of the coaxial feedline, 8 inches in diameter, just before the antenna connection point. Use tie-wraps or electrical tape to keep the turns intact. As always, duct tape works well also. This will also choke off stray RF on the coax shield. Somehow this was left out of the "365 Uses for Duct Tape" desk calendar, go figure.

Erect the antenna with the hot side (connected to the coax center conductor) outdoors and the ground reference end (connected to the coax shield) indoors. Tune in place... please note I said "in place." The importance of this is evidenced by my early struggles. Proximity effect will detune your antenna and you will need to adjust the length. Prune in small steps, a few inches at a time at first, smaller yet as you approach 1:1 on the SWR meter. Patience really pays off here – if you go too far you'll be un-installing and resoldering, then deploying again for the next round of tests. Prune in equal portions from both sides of the antenna. You'll want to end up with very nearly equal-length sides when finished, or a good SWR won't be in the cards. And remember to use the minimum transmitter power that the SWR meter requires for full-scale deflection in the forward direction with the sensitivity control full clockwise. This is important for accurate SWR readings.

A word on feedline and impedance – 50 Ohm coaxial feedline should be used and an inverted vee configuration is a good match for this. A flat-top dipole will resonate at 75 Ohms, and you could use 75 Ohm feedline to match it, but modern transmitter final circuits are optimized for 50 Ohm output. A mismatch of 1.5:1 will result at the transmitter unless you use a tuner to mop up the difference. This is not a big deal. A 1.5:1 mismatch will reflect 4% of your radiated power back into the radio to be dissipated in the output circuit as heat. A 2:1 mismatch will reject 10% of your power in the same way. Above this mismatch things get worse very quickly. Below 2:1 is acceptable. Modern rigs will also fold back output power if you exceed 2:1, making your 100 watt rig a 50 watt rig or lower – then subtract reflection losses. Ideally, close to 1:1 is best and that means inverted vee and 50 Ohm feedline. Any length coax up to 100 feet is fine. At HF frequencies, most coaxial feedline will attenuate your signal only a small fraction of an S-unit, *but this is true only at low SWR*. I use RG-8X. It's low loss (3 dB per 100 feet at 100 MHz and far less at 28 MHz and below) and quite workable. Not too rigid for those runs back to the shack.

And now a word on tuners. Remember – a tuner is a matching circuit that will convert a range of impedances to the 50 Ohms preferred by the transmitter. But it will not resonate an antenna. It will present a resonant circuit to the transmitter, but the antenna is now only a small electrical part of that circuit. The RF losses in the tuner itself are costly. A tuner is a means to an end and often the least of all evils as a *tradeoff*, especially in a multiband small space installation. But, it is not a magic box that will turn a non-resonant radiator into a resonant one. The best antenna is naturally resonant. The lower the SWR au natural, the more efficient the radiator, by a large margin. This is why resonant dipoles and inverted vee's are so effective and so popular.

I currently have HiHo's set up for 75, 40, 30, and 20 meters. 75 and 20 on one feedline, and

continued on page 7...

72 continued from page 6

40 and 30 on another, so that I can run the feedlines to different rooms. I use 1:1 baluns at the feedpoint. My attic has a gable fan at one end of the house and I use the louver to route the hot sides out of the building on insulated wire to improve reliability through the louver, then interface to magnet wire for nearly the entire length. Light gauge fishing line, also practically invisible, secures the far ends to fence posts, creating an inverted Vee configuration. The cold sides are routed through the attic as far away from each other as I can manage. My attic is 20 x 50 so I need to bend and route to fit. And of course, my trusty SWR meter is indispensable for resonating each antenna. In some installations, depending on the bands connected to a common feedline, you may experience interaction between antennas while tuning. Tune the lowest frequency antenna first to minimize the need for going back and forth during the tuning process.

Results? In a word, YEE-HAH! I limit my magnet wire antenna power to 100 watts or less and QRP is common for me. I have worked around the world at 100 watts and halfway around the world on 2-3 watts. 30 meters is a great band for QRP DXing and 40 is perfect for stateside QRP ragchews. I can also work DX on 40 at 100 watts. My 75 meter signal reports run 10-20 over S9 with good consistency. My neighborhood's antenna restrictions do not restrict my HF activity at all.

So the lessons learned in those early days have stayed with me and my love for RF communication has not dwindled. Dollar for dollar, I can't think of a better antenna.

72/73,
Bob, WB3T radioWB3T@aol.com

Hams Come to Rescue in Utah

From ARRL HQ - (Mar 31, 2008)

Eldon Kearl, K7OGM, of Fish Haven, Idaho, was driving in the Logan Canyon, Utah area when he came upon a driver who lost control of her truck in the snow. Her truck fell more than 100 feet over a cliff, and two of the three passengers were thrown from the truck.

Witnesses tried to call for help on their cell phones, but the closest cell coverage was more than a 30 minute drive away. Kearl, however, had a radio in his car and was able to get a hold of another ham, Roger Ellis, KE7HTE, of Logan, Utah.

Kearl relayed to Ellis information about the accident scene and Ellis called 911. First responders were on the scene within half an hour.

Although the driver and passengers in the truck suffered only minor injuries, a spokesman for the Utah Highway Patrol said that if Kearl and Ellis had not responded in getting help so quickly, the injuries could have been much worse.

As Kearl said, "It all worked out pretty good." Kearl and Ellis have never met, but live relatively close to each other; they plan on meeting each other in person soon. -- *Information provided by KSL-TV, Salt Lake City, Utah*

AUCTION RULES

The following rules pertain to the upcoming Junque Auction:

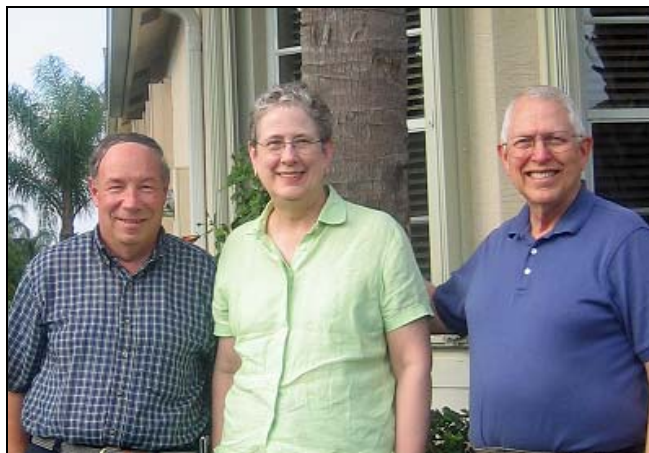
1. Ham and ham-related equipment only. No limit on the number of items.
2. Please tag all items with your name and callsign, a description of the item and your minimum acceptable price.
3. Only MARC members may offer items for sale. If you are selling items for a non-MARC member, that's ok. Non-MARC members can attend and buy (no dealers please).
4. MARC receives 10% of the sales price or \$10, whichever is less.
5. All items are sold "as-is". MARC gives no warranties or guaranties, implied or otherwise, regarding items offered for sale. The club and auctioneer(s) will not be liable for any problems arriving from sales.

Please bring coins and bills smaller than \$20's because we have limited ability to make change. Please be prepared to pay in cash since we can't guarantee that sellers will accept personal checks. Unsold items may **NOT** be left behind.

CERT IN VALENCIA SHORES, FL

By Al Maslin, N3EA

Remote MARC members **Carter N3AO** and **Kay N3KN** recently visited with another remote club member **Al N3EA** and **Nina** (his wife), down in Lake Worth, Florida. They received a tour of the area by Al and Nina.



(left to right) Al N3EA, Kay N3KN and Carter N3AO

Al is very active with **CERT** in the community of Valencia Shores. **CERT** is: **Community Emergency Response Team** and just about every housing development down there has one.

CERT is comprised of volunteers that will perform needed emergency services immediately following a disaster, such as a hurricane. These volunteers are trained in: first aid and triage, firefighting and search and rescue, etc. **CERT** exists because if the disaster is really bad,

continued on page 8...

then, it is likely that the police and professional fire/rescue personnel may not be available for a while. There are 80 CERT members in our development.

One of CERT's functions is communications and there is communications between each section of the development (there are 15 sections). The immediate development has its own Emergency Operations Center and right now communications is being done via CB radio because there are not enough hams to handle that task (we're working on that). CERT also communicates with the Palm Beach County EOC and Fire/Rescue and this is done by ham radio on 2 meters. So, our community has purchased a 2 meter/440 rig and an antenna for it.

The county people, particularly, fire/rescue have VHF/UHF amateur radio equipment at each of their facilities that will be manned by one of the professional fire/rescue people. They have had several classes so that these folks can become licensed Amateur Radio Operators.

We are hoping that in the near future the HOA here will allow us to put up an HF antenna so we can contact Tallahassee if we need to in the event of an emergency.

The hams that live here in our development, now numbering 13, all belong to the Valencia Shores Amateur Radio Club which I founded and am president of (figures, doesn't it??). These people, some who are CERT trained, like me, will participate as the CERT ham radio operators if the need arises.

There is even a 2 meter repeater near here that is dedicated to CERT use. It's also available for general amateur use during normal times.

Of course, many of us also belong to ARES/RACES here in Palm Beach County. The county officials take ham radio very seriously.

As for the other thing I do.....we have a "town watch" type of organization here that is sponsored by the county. It's called Citizen's Observer Patrol, or C.O.P. for short. We each have a 3 hour shift a week and patrol the community in a car that is supplied by the Palm Beach County Sheriff's office. The car is exactly like a Palm Beach County Sheriff's car except it has yellow flashing lights on the top instead of the usual red and blue that the real sheriff's deputies have. Also the car says Citizen's Observer Patrol on it. Otherwise, it looks exactly like a sheriff's car.

The car is equipped with a VHF radio for communicating with the C.O.P. dispatchers and a scanner so we can monitor what the sheriff's deputies are doing.

There's also a VHF handheld we can use if we get out of the car for some reason while on patrol. The C.O.P. members are issued uniforms by the Sheriff's Office so it's kind of neat. By the way, the dispatchers are all volunteers, too, and I just became one recently. So, now I have a commercial VHF rig and power supply as well as a commercial HT that I can use at home.

LITTLE TINICUM ISLAND – PA045R

By Dieter Hauer, K3DK

Historically, many amateur radio operators have enjoyed working new and unique islands – where ever they may be. The **RSGB** (Radio Society of Great Britain) is well known for their **IOTA** Program (Islands On The Air) and that has increased the interest of many operators to chase (and activate) islands.

The **U.S.** Islands Awards Program is separate from the IOTA program, and, it was started to activate islands in the US and generate further interest in working those US islands. USI is open to hams and SWLs. The basic rules stipulate that: an island must be within the 50 states or territories of the US, must be at least 100 feet long in any direction and, located at least 50 feet from the main shoreline when operated from. At least 25 QSOs must be made (including 2 different DXCC entities) in order to activate a new US Island.



PA045R - Little Tinicum Island on the Delaware River, Commodore Barry Bridge on left – photo by KF3CD

Back in late October 2007, **Mike KF3CD**, **Paul WB3CEZ** and **Dieter K3DK** activated Little Tinicum Island on the Delaware River as a new US Island under the USI Program. Mike gets the credit for starting and arranging this neat adventure.

We all got inside Mike's SUV and made the trip down to Tinicum, PA in the morning and met with his brother-in-law **Steve Brown**. Steve is not a ham, but a very good Captain and got us and our equipment safely from the dock to Little Tinicum and back. The Delaware River has very strong currents with commercial and private boat traffic and many tricky, shallow spots near the island. Thanks to Steve, we landed safely on the island.

Prior to the trip, Dieter notified the US Coast Guard and the Tinicum Township police of our pending radio activities – especially since the island is very close to Philadelphia Airport. Contact information was also provided to the authorities and a cell phone actually worked on the island.

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Little Tinicum Island - continued from page 8

Below is a photo of our transportation, prior to leaving the Tinicum boat dock. The 150 horsepower Johnson outboard, cut through the water like a sharp knife, under Steve's expert control.



(left to right) Paul WB3CEZ, Mike KF3CD and Steve

Once we arrived at Little Tinicum Island, we circled around the north end, doubled back, and ended up dropping anchor on the New Jersey side of the island.

From there, we off-loaded the 1.8 KW Coleman generator, radio equipment and other odds and ends. The weather was very pleasant with temps in the low-mid 60's F and sunny with clear skies.



View of Airport Radar Tower

We used Paul's Kenwood TS-180S HF transceiver with a lightweight switching power supply. Mike brought a G5RV dipole and a small hamstick vertical antenna and that set up worked well.

There was a world-wide SSB HF contest active that weekend, so, about 95% of our contacts were foreign DXCC entities! Only a few domestic QSOs were made on... CW.

We easily logged the required number of QSOs to officially activate Little Tinicum as new US Island **PA045R**.

PA is the state where the island is located, **045** is a unique number assigned for the island and **R** designates that this island is located on a river. See www.usislands.org



View of a HUGE Cargo Ship only 400 Feet Away From Our Temporary Station – The Delaware River Is Busy

We spent about 3.5 hours on the island, with set up, operating and packing equipment. This expedition was a success and hopefully, we'll do another one this year!



(left to right) Paul WB3CEZ, Dieter K3DK & Mike KF3CD

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