

VE TESTING

Contact: Steve Maresso, KB9OLD at 847/ 477-3518

Testing is conducted quarterly at 7:00 PM on the third Tuesday for the months of February, May, August, and November . Walk-ins are welcome until 8:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. Testing requirements:

1. Cost for 2017 is \$15.00 (Cash or check made payable to ARRL). If initial test element is passed, the person testing may continue take the next test element(s) at no extra charge during the given session. Retesting of an element failed during the same testing session will require payment of an additional \$15.00 test fee.
2. Must show original and provide copy of Amateur Radio license and/or CSCE (if upgrading).
3. Must show a valid Government Issued Photo ID (Passport, Driver's License or State ID card) for identification.
4. Social Security or FRN number required.
5. Location: Free Methodist Church, 934 N. Seminary, Woodstock, IL 60098

Wednesday Night 6 Meter Net

Just as a reminder the 6 meter net/forum is held every Wednesday at 7-8:00 pm on 50.130 USB.

See you on Frequency.
Pierre K9EYE
Net Control

STRAY Any day you make a 6 meter QSO is a fantastic day!

[AF5CC](#) de Eham

MEETING NOTICE

August 1, 2017

Socializing: 6:30 PM
Meeting: 7:00 PM

Crystal Lake Bank
5100 Northwest Hwy (Rt. 14)
Crystal Lake, IL 60014

PROGRAM: 2 Presentations !

1. A short (10 minute) 2017 Field Day Wrap Up Summary by Mike , WB8BZK
2. Satellite Operation by JoAnne , K9JKM

ND9G Tower Raising

On Saturday August 29, there was a call on the K9RN Relector for help in getting Mike's, ND9G, 50 ft aluminum tower erected. Besides some friends of Mike's some MCWA member were on hand to help: N9DJ, N7US, N9OK, KD9FML, KG9X, K9DMV, KD9AHQ, & K9RUF. Great to see so many MCWA members willing to help a fellow ham ! Kudos to all who showed up as this is the spirit of the ham radio fraternity.

M.C.W.A.

August 2017



SUMMER DOLDRUMS

At the writing of this article, we have experienced several days of zero sunspots. When a DX station from Portugal or Mexico gets a pile-up from North America, we are in the doldrums. Yes, these are somewhat desperate days. Over the last two days, 20m and up have been inactive for the most part.

Recently, I received a batch of QSL's from the bureau that reminded me of exotic DX catches from the peak days of cycle 24. We were working Asia on 10m with little effort with S9 plus reports. The good ole days! Summer 2017 has been less exciting. Having said this, there have been some pleasant surprises from time to time. On July 15 around 0430UTC, the world was available on 20m. I worked Russia and New Zealand easily on 20m. It was good catching up with Ed on the South Island.

To make up for some of the lackluster of recent days, we enjoyed favorable conditions during Field Day. Many have enjoyed working the many special event stations such as The Thirteen Colonies, AO110DD and VX7510. The Route 66 crew will be on the air soon. In addition to these memories, 6m has been more open this summer. I have been able to log some new grid squares out of Canada, the US and the Caribbean. Some club members logged a contact or two with Europe on 6m.

Some experts believe we are already transitioning into the influence of cycle 25. This will be interesting to track in the days ahead. Some of these speculations are based on what is observed with activity on the various regions of the sun. Speaking of the sun, there will be a major solar eclipse on August 21 and hams will be observing propagation in various ways, including a Solar Eclipse QSO Party. Go to the ARRL site to learn more about these events. By the way, as a teenager I did my own propagation experiment during an eclipse on the SW listening bands. During that observation the night bands were greatly enhanced. I will be looking forward to the August eclipse.

Across August look for such calls as JD1BOI, 4L0GF, ZD8RA, TX5EG, A35JP/p, KH9 calls, V7 calls, ZA calls, V63KS and YJ0AT. With a little perseverance during these summer doldrums, you will be able to work some DX. Also, since we are in a declining period of solar assistance, August is a good time for installing some low band antennas for the days when the higher HF bands are minimal in the colder months ahead.

I have learned to treat the doldrums as a time of challenge. If you want to work DX, you will find it. It's harder but it's possible as you learn the characteristics of our many frequency bands.

73 Dave KA9OZP

Entry Level Radios

Paul Allen (ZR1PJA) on July 18, 2017

I have been a ham since 2003 and maybe because I have entered the hobby where transceivers are more advanced and easier to operate.

What I find a little odd and maybe not correct is when the term Entry Level is used.

Most so called Entry Level radios are far more advanced than those rigs of old.

In this computer age where youngsters are so advanced it hardly takes a few hours to get familiar with these new rigs.

The term Entry Level should be replaced with the word Affordable.

Those Affordable rigs are top quality and good value for money. I used an Icom IC-718 with a good antenna and got better reports that the guy down the road on 500w.

Affordable and Practical should rather be used instead of Entry Level.

Many shacks only have affordable and practical rigs and nobody complains that it is not a USD \$1500 rig.

An affordable car is driven on the sane roads and freeways as an expensive car.

I believe that more affordable rigs will lead to more hams instead of discouraging people to join the fraternity because of perceived high costs of initial investment

STRAY An Amplifier is not a substitute for a poor antenna system.

KI7DG de Eham

Many Special Events Will Be on the Air to Mark the Total Solar Eclipse in August

07/21/2017

Radio amateurs from several states will gather in southern Illinois on August 17-21 to operate special event station [W9E](#), leading up to and during the 2017 solar eclipse on August 21. W9E will operate from Marion, Illinois.

“This will be the first total eclipse on American soil since 1991, the first on the mainland United States since 1979 and the first to sweep across the entire country since 1918. It will be an event you do not want to miss!” the W9E announcement said. “The far southern tip of the state of Illinois is the only place viewers can see the totality of the eclipse.”

W9E plans to operate on 80, 40, and 20 meters (and perhaps other bands, if conditions permit), on CW, SSB, and digital modes (JT65, JT9, and PSK31). All amateur operators visiting the area for the eclipse are invited to visit. A copy of your license and photo ID are required to operate. Amateur Radio license testing also will be offered during the event.

While the W9E special event is under way, organizers are planning a joint exercise with ARES® Illinois District 11 Emergency Coordinator W. Bruce Talley, WA9APQ, hoping not only to assist with local communication during the eclipse but to coordinate with other ARES groups as the eclipse travels from northwest to southeast.

“Our plan is to be proactive and ready to respond, as needed,” said Talley. “Local volunteers and those from outside the area are welcome to [sign up on the database](#). We are especially interested if you are coming to the area to view the eclipse and know where you will be stationed.”

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M.C.W.A.

August 2017

Eclipse - cont'd

Solar Eclipse QSO Party

The Solar Eclipse QSO Party ([SEQP](#)), sponsored by [HamSCI](#), will take place on August 21, 1400 to 2200 UTC. As the QST article "[The Solar Eclipse QSO Party — Are You Ready?](#)" explains, "The objective...is to flood the airwaves with contacts, all measured by the automated receiver networks of the Reverse Beacon Network, PSKReporter, and WSPRNet. When those observations are combined with the logs from individual stations, the result will be one of the largest ionospheric experiments ever performed."

Other Total Eclipse Special Events

The South Dakota's Black Hills Amateur Radio Club in South Dakota plans to operate [special event K0E](#) on the day of the eclipse, August 21, 1500-1930 UTC, from Harrison, Nebraska. Operation will be on 20 meters (14.260-14.280 MHz) and on VHF and UHF. [Contact](#) Bob Ewing, W0RE, for more information.

The Near Zero Sunlite, Great American Eclipse N0S special event will take place August 20-22, 1400-2200 UTC, in Crystal City, Missouri, sponsored by the [Jefferson County Amateur Radio Club](#). Operation will be on or about 3.850, 7.250, and 14.300 MHz. QSL with SASE to Jim Berger, WA0FQK, 131 Ozark Dr, Crystal City, MO 63019.

K7E will be on the air for the Great American Total Solar Eclipse 2017 special event, August 21-22, 1500-0300 UTC, from Laramie, Wyoming, near the path of totality,

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Eclipse - cont'd

Laramie, Wyoming, near the path of totality, on or about 7.183 and 14.256 MHz. QSL [Perry Lehman](#), N7FST, 19828 N. 78th Ln, Glendale, AZ 85308.

The North East Wyoming Amateur Radio Association ([NEWARA](#)) will field special event W7S from historic downtown Gillette, Wyoming, August 19-21, 1200-0600 UTC, on or about 3.945, 7.265, and 14.265 MHz as well as on 147.360 MHz. QSL to [Garth Crowe](#), WY7GC, PO Box 2208, Gillette, WY 82717.

The Lincoln County Amateur Radio Club ([LCARC](#)) will operate special event N7E, August 20-22, 1600-1900 UTC, from Newport, Oregon, on or about 3.820, 7.200, 14.245, and 28.350 MHz. Contact [Michael Eastman](#), N7ONP.

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August 2017

1900 UTC, from Newport, Oregon, on or about 3.820, 7.200, 14.245, and 28.350 MHz. Contact [Michael Eastman](#), N7ONP.

Total Solar Eclipse special event N9E will be on the air on August 21, 1400-2000 UTC, from Hopkinsville, Kentucky, 7.180-7.190 MHz. Contact [Peter Herman](#), KD9VV.

The Lewis and Clark Radio Club ([LCRC](#)) will operate special event K9HAM from Godfrey, Illinois, on August 21, 0900-1700 UTC, on or about 7.225 and 14.280 MHz. [Contact](#) the LCRC for more information.

In North Carolina, the Greater Gaston Amateur Radio Society ([GGARS](#)), will be on the air as N4S from Lexington, South Carolina, on August 21, 0000-1900 UTC, on or about 7.180 and 3.895 MHz. QSL to [Robert Wells](#), W7CSA, QSL. Robert Wells, 409 Elizabeth St, Gastonia, NC 28054.

The Southern Illinois University Amateur Radio Club ([SIUARC](#)) will sponsor W9S, August 18-22, 0000-2359 UTC, from Carbondale, Illinois, CW on 160 meters and all modes on 80 through 10, with a focus on the lower bands. Satellites and 6 meters are also possible. QSL to Martin A Schuette, N9EAT, PO Box 29, Fulton, IL 61252.

Ole Virginia Hams Amateur Radio Club ([OVHARC](#)) will sponsor W4E from Lexington, South Carolina, on August 21, 1500-2015 UTC, on or about 3.810, 7.230, and 14.263 MHz and 146.52 MHz FM simplex. QSL to [Terry Erlacher](#), KC4DV, 10855 Felicia Ct, Manassas, VA 20110.

N4C will be on the air from Franklin, North Carolina, August 13-26, 0401-0359 UTC, with members of the Franklin Amateur Radio Club ([K2BHQ](#)) operating on or about 7.076, 7.180, 14.076, and 14.230 MHz. A certificate and QSL is available. Franklin ARC, 505 North Sugar Creek Dr, Franklin, NC 28734. The special eclipse US postage stamp will be included.

The AA0RC Solar Eclipse Party will take place August 20-21, 1200-1600 UTC, from Mexico, Missouri, sponsored by Audrain Emergency Communications Inc ([AECIMO](#)). Operation will be on 3.970, 3.980, 7.265, and 14.240 MHz. A certificate is available. Mike Wood, WBOIXS, 22374 Audrain Rd 320, Mexico, MO 65265.

The W9J “Historic Route 66 and Solar Eclipse Special Event” will take place from August 20 until August 24, sponsored by Jim Georgias, W9JUG, and Marie Getty Stan, KD9CAE. The event will operate from a state park on US Route 66 near Eureka, Missouri, on the day of the eclipse. Operation will be on or about 7.240 and 14.250 MHz. Operation will be portable and mobile. QSL via eqsl.cc and LoTW. [Contact](#) W9JUG to request a certificate.

This is not a comprehensive list. Search the [ARRL Special Events Calendar](#) for additional total eclipse special event operations.

de ARRL



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

came the National Parks on the Air (NPOTA) with not quite as much interest unless one was chasing counties or grids. . It was fun for a few. Now, ARRL has come up with the Solar Eclipse contest. It might be fun. Can't wait to see what 2018 brings....

Spectrum pollution and intruders put urban radio in doubt

Date : 21 / 07 / 2017

Author : Jim Linton - VK3PC

The International Amateur Radio Union Region 1 told the Ham Radio 2017 Friedrichshafen conference opening ceremony of the need to be more vigilant to pollution and intrusions on our bands. IARU Region 1 President Don Beattie G3BJ, said the pressures are so intense from other radio services that Amateur Radio needs to work very hard to ensure that we continue to enjoy privileged access to parts of the spectrum.

The IARU is the only organisation representing us at the Regional Telecommunications Organisations meetings, and the ITU World Radiocommunications Conference in 2019.

A second part to the IARU core work is spectrum protection. Don G3BJ said he is "deeply concerned about our ability to maintain a usable radio spectrum in some parts of suburban Europe." Amateur Radio spectrum allocations are of little value if they are "made unusable by the presence of multiple sources of interference - be it electrical interference or intruders". Don G3BJ said the IARU is deeply involved in the work of the international standards organisations, arguing for common sense in the setting of emission standards for electrical and electronic devices. He highlighted major concerns facing the IARU being solar photovoltaic arrays, wind generators, digital devices, VDSL+ and wireless power transfer technology. "Some would say that even with the work we are involved in on standards, much of the radio spectrum is becoming unusable in the suburban environment," adding he personally has sympathy with this view. He also praised the work of the IARU Monitoring System but more intruder watch observers were desperately needed.

Retirement The announcement in the June issue was not a sur of the moment decision . It was something that has been kicking around in the head for almost a year. Decision was based on all the other volunteer stuff I was doing : the ARRL Incoming QSL Bureau (W9 "D" suffix cards) , the 5-6 reflector moderator gigs, long time involvement with 10-10 Net International Secretary & Directorship, and a few other things. It all weighed heavily on me and it was time to set these things aside and just enjoy life.

PSK31 & Other Digital Modes Don't know how many spent time on these modes, but it seems that lately we hear a lot of stuff on these modes that shouldn't be coming out of operators radios. Often one can tune through the bands (notably 20m) and hear voice transmissions and all sorts of Windows sign-ons. It's thought that much of this is caused unintentionally from "newbies" who don't realize they are doing it. The solution is simple a dedicating a computer ONLY to radio operations. Simplex fix, but most 't care or don't want to spend money on another computer. Most digital stuff seems to run well on good old XP. Bargains can be found on Ebay and hamfests.

ARRL Contests ? Many of us had fun working the ARRL Centennial contest and it helped us with WAS on many bands/modes. Then , along

HF J-Pole

By Mike Higgins – K6AER



I left my Colorado QTH and until I could erect a tower and beam at my new home, I decided to use the very tall trees at my new QTH. I placed a dipole up at 40 feet and it works well. I miss the DX that the beam would bring in and with the Sun Spot cycle heading to the bottom, 20 and 40 meters are the new, DX money bands. I decided to put up a wire J pole for twenty. I used one made from metal pipe back in 2001 and it worked very well.

There is nothing special about a J pole, it is an end fed $\frac{1}{2}$ wavelength vertical radiator that needs no radials. Just like its 2-meter brother but on 20 meters it is ten times larger. The bottom $\frac{1}{4}$ matching section is fed with 50-ohm coax. Bottom of the antenna is shorted and the coax attaches at the 50 ohm point in the matching transformer. The higher the attach point attachment, the higher the feed impedance. The antenna is shorted at DC and thus, P static is never an issue. I ran a nylon line over the top of the tree and the antenna is held vertically by the tree limbs. Leaves seem to have no effect on the radiation at HF. The long side is $\frac{3}{4}$ wavelength and the matching side is $\frac{1}{4}$ wavelengths

The 6 inch spreaders are made from $\frac{1}{2}$ inch PVC and spaced about every 2 feet for the parallel matching section. Drill the spreader and feed the wire through the holes on each end. Spreaders are held in place on the wire with good old vinyl electrical tape. The top of the matching section is tied to the radiator with parachute cord to hold up the matching section. Fifty-ohm coax is attached about 8 inches from the bottom with the center conductor connected to the long side and the shield attached to the short matching side. 2:1 VSWR is about 4 % of the Frequency. Also, the antenna can be grounded at the center of the shorting section for a lightning ground.

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HF J-Pole - Cont'd

To tune the antenna just move the attach point up and down for lowest VSWR. Match should be 1.0:1 with ease. I used THHN 14 gage wire to build the antenna. I don't have \$10 into the whole project. The antenna will handle 2KW easily. Mind you if you are running power the voltage at the top will be very high. Try to keep the last 10% in the clear and away from anything conductive.

In typical operation, I find the antenna to be 1-2 "S" units better on overseas DX. On stations, closer than 1500 miles the dipole generally works better. I was so impressed with the operation on 20 meters I built one for 40 meters. Now that antenna is almost 100 feet long and my tree is only 80 feet high. So, the last 20 feet bends over the tree top. No problem. The VSWR is flat and it too is terrific for DX.

Dimensions for the 20 and 40 meter antennas are shown below.

