

New Product Review

Thought this product review might be interesting to many F'L readers...

Over the holidays I obtained a new Radio Shack 7 channel Weatherradio with SAME alert (Radio Shack #120-0249). The big difference between this weather radio and the previous generation of receivers is the NWR-SAME alert (NOAA Weatherradio Specific Area Message Encoding) capability. Essentially, the way this works is that when NWS puts out a watch, warning, or advisory it sends a digitally-encoded packet on its current weather frequencies which contains the type of alert, the counties involved, and the alert's expiration time. Weather receivers which can decode this information, of which the Radio Shack unit is the first I've seen, can be set to only trigger on certain counties, and can digitally display the type of alert.

The Radio Shack unit features a smallish LCD display and 3 LEDs. When a warning is issued it lights a red LED and displays information about the type of warning on the scrolling back-lit LCD display. Of course, it also will sound a siren (loudly!) and can be set to play the audio portion of the broadcast just like a conventional radio. The LED and display will continue in this mode until the warning expires. The unit can remember up to three different alerts. Watches are handled just the same way, except that a yellow LED lights. Advisories light a green LED, and instead of sounding a siren will sound a series of beeps (also very loud! You can turn down the amplitude both the siren and beeps independently of the audio volume, but can't turn it down as much as I would prefer). Of course, the scrolling LCD can

display all kinds of information, including if the alert is a tornado, thunderstorm, hurricane, snow, blizzard, nuclear attack, etc.

The best part of the unit involves a small keypad which is hidden behind a small plastic door on the top of the unit. Using this keypad you can program in information about the location of alerts you would like to listen to. Each location is designated by a six digit number: Wake County's number 037183. The 37 indicates the state (North Carolina) and the 183 indicates the county (Wake). The first digit ("0") will eventually be used to further subdivide larger counties, but currently is 0 nationwide. The Radio Shack unit can be programmed for up to 15 of these codes, so you could set the unit up to sound the alarm for alerts for both Durham and Wake counties, for example. It should really be nice not to wake up to alerts from some of the outlying counties!

Other than these features, the receiver pretty much works like any other conventional weather radio. It does run off 120 VAC, and has a 9-volt battery for those situations when the power is off. Reception seems pretty good, and is certainly better than the Uniden I replaced. There is an output jack on the back which can be used to trigger remote devices upon an alert, and a second RCA jack that can accommodate an external antenna. Price class for this unit is \$79.99.

In our "line of work" you can never have too much information.

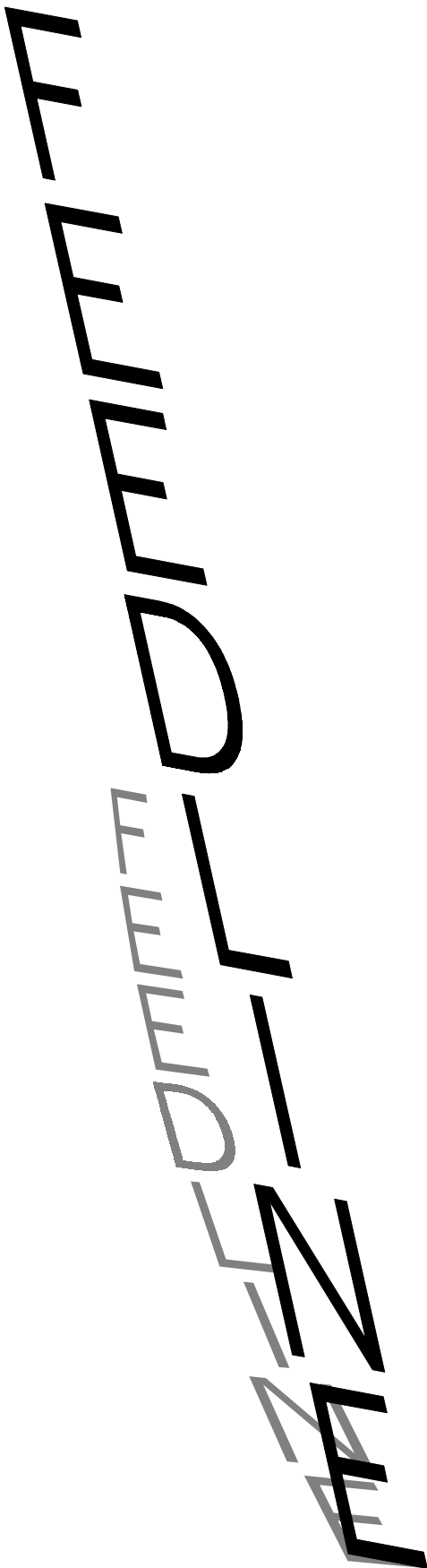
73 de N9CGD

Hey! Know-it-all!...Yeah you.

If you're so smart, tell us the full names of these awards....

WAN WANA RAGD QRP TOR TORA TOP BAL WACO

Send your answers with proof of purchase to KM4LB or see page two for solution.



Note: January meeting translocated in both time and space - details inside.

Feedline

Feedline is a member-supported publication of the Cary Amateur Radio Club and is published monthly. Deadline for submissions is the second Thursday of the month.

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Cary, North Carolina 27511

Cary Amateur Radio Club

The Cary Amateur Radio Club meets on the fourth Thursday of the month, **7:30 p.m.** in the lower level of the Christian Life Center of White Plains United Methodist Church. The June, November, and December meetings are held off-site. Call for location of those meetings.

Next Meeting: January 22

1997 Officers

KE4ZEQ	Frank Lynch	217-1999
	President	
KE4CDI	Charles Nichols	639-1049
	Vice-president	
K4IWW	Will Harper	467-0224
	Treasurer	
W3HL	Herb Lacey	467-9608
	Secretary	

HerbLacey - W3HL

1997 Wrap-up

There were no meetings in November and December. The annual Holiday Dinner was held at Glenaire. The evening was a good opportunity for the attendees to meet families of our fellow members.

Thanks to Jerry, KE4TTS, and his Dixieland gang from Fuquay-Varina. TXN OM UR 20 OVR!

The Christmas Project at the Cary Towne Center was the usual moderate success. We don't count messages sent as the criterion. We do count the number of people who get to find out what Amateur Radio can do for them is a better measure.

The Charlotte, NC, Hamfest is March 7-8, 1998. CARC already have reserved two tables for CARC members and friends to use as a center of operations at Charlotte. At the January meeting, we will, again, have a group purchase of Charlotte tickets. This will save you the postage both ways, \$2 per ticket, and the frustration of standing in line the get a ticket.

Wrap-up (cont.)

Bring a check to the January meeting for \$6, times the number of tickets you want. Make the check out to: Charlotte HAMFEST. We will have the tickets for distribution at the February meeting. We will do the same thing for the Raleigh ARS Hamfest at the February meeting. Details later. All the best for a great 1998.

W3HL

JanAvinger N4UTT

Congratulations to Bill, **W4FNB** and his wife Marge, who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this past December. No doubt this qualifies Marge for sainthood. Reminds me of a story about *The Old DXer.....*

The sunspots were roaring and the Old DXer was working DX night and day. The faithful XYL had had it with his QRZ-ing and blew her stack.

"DX DX DX - that's all you ever think about!" she groaned, "Why I'll bet you don't even remember our wedding date!!"

"I mostly certainly do" was the immediate reply. "It was June 14th, 1958 That's the night I worked the XT1, the CRØ, and the AC6!!"

Best wishes Bill and Marge from all of us!
N4HOOEY?

"Programs, get yer programs, can't tell yer friends without a program."

Herb, formerly N4UE, is now **W3HL**. (That's W - 3 - H - single hockeystick.)

No official word on the reason for the change. There is some speculation it has something to do with the federal witness protection program.

Programs II

The January 22 meeting will be held offsite, courtesy of WRAL's very own Charles, **WA4OSS**. The meeting will be held at the WRAL transmitter site on Rt 70. Talk-in on 147.15. Some hams plan to hit the buffet at Pizza Inn (Cary) before heading out to the site. Plan on being at the transmitter site by 7:00 p.m.

If you show up you'll get to see WRAL-TV, WRAL, FM and WRAZ-TV ers

Awards Quiz Answers

WAN -- Worked All Neighbors
WANA -- Worked All Neighbors Again
RAGD -- Raised All Garage Doors
QRP -- ESP QSO With A W6
TOR -- Timed Out Repeater
TORA -- Timed Out Repeater Again
TOP -- Timed Out Propagation
BAL -- Bored All listeners
WACO -- Worked All Club Officers

Worth Repeating

transmitters. If we're lucky, the WRAL-HD demo equipment might be on site for viewing.

1989 was the year of the "Tower Collapse" -- caused by a severe ice storm. After the storm on December 10, 1989, warm temperatures caused uneven thawing of the estimated 40,000 pounds of ice that accumulated on the WRAL-TV5 transmitting tower's supporting wires. The tower fractured and fell.

In 1990 a new 2,000-foot tower, was completed. WRAL-TV5 began broadcasting from its new 2,000-foot tower on October 25th.

This structure is vastly more stable and registers as the heaviest transmitting tower in the world. The new tower tips the scales at about 723 tons, as much as 452 automobiles. And more than seven miles of guy line (wrist-thick cables) support the tower. 2,000 feet is the equivalent of a 200-story building or stacking the Washington Monument on top of the Sears Tower in Chicago (if it was possible)!

Because of its popularity, Charles cannot guarantee it will be available, but we might get to see the HD-TV demo equipment. What is HD-TV???

•Digital Technology •Sharper Picture / Smoother Motion •Wider Picture / 16:9 Aspect Ratio •CD Quality Sound

The picture is brighter, clearer, more colorful, and more realistic than the TV picture you watch today. HDTV will do for pictures what Compact Discs (CDs) did for sound.

C'mon down!

See YA!

During the October 3rd RAGS meeting at the Museum of Science & Technology, a group gathered around the computer at the VHF/TJHF operating position which was running

STSPPLUS satellite tracking software. We spent about 15 minutes checking out the features of the program and it's various displays, with comments such as "I've got to get a copy of that software." being frequently heard. For the RAGS members that weren't at the meeting, here's some information on how you can track satellites in the comfort of your home, using your 386DX or better PC.

STSPPLUS is a DOS-based computer program that will also run under Windows. It reads orbital information (called Keplerian coordinates) on various satellites from a data file and uses this to predict the position of the satellite at any time - past, present, or future. It has some really neat graphics that show the location of the satellite relative to any location on earth (even Syracuse), the sun's position, the gray line, and so forth.

In the words of Dave Ransom, the program's developer: "The program is intended for use during Space Shuttle missions and for general satellite tracking using NASA/NORAD 2-Line Orbital Elements. One primary satellite and up to 32 additional 'static' or 'real time' satellites may be simultaneously tracked in real time on most computers. Both orthographic and rectangular VGA color map projections are available, displaying the Earth as a 'globe or the more traditional 'flat map.' A new "night Vision" mode shows the maps in red to protect the user's night vision, great for color laptops! Tabular line-of-sight satellite pass predictions may be made from within STSPORBIT PLUS and passes of interest may be easily displayed. STSPPLUS is widely used throughout NASA and USAF as well as by thousands of just plain folks worldwide. STSPPLUS was seen operating on the Russian Mir Space Station on NASA Television during the Oct. '97 STS-86 mission."

HOW TO GET STSPPLUS:

STSPPLUS can be downloaded from <http://www.dransom.com>. The download is free (to you but not to Dave) but a donation of \$15 is suggested if you decide

Orbital information looks like this:

MIR:

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16609U 86017A 97273.50724588 -.00015209 00000-0 -17644-3 0 6644  
16609 SI. 6542 276.5765 0005514 174.3677 185.7381 15.60286167663465
```

This info carries the name of the satellite on the first line, and the next two lines contain the Keplerian information that means so much to STSPPLUS, if not to me.

to use the program. Dave also has several support files that can be downloaded. What you get are two files, that uncompress to about 2.2mb.

HOW TO GET ORBITAL INFORMATION:

Some satellites, especially those in high orbits, have Keplerian coordinates that change little with time. Other satellites, including MIR, that are in lower, slowly decaying orbits, have Keplerian coordinates that should be updated every week or so. And finally, satellites that do a lot of maneuvering, such as the Space Shuttle,

have coordinates that change rapidly. If you're interested in tracking the Space Shuttle, you should get an update every hour or so. Dave's web site will allow you to download current orbital data on satel-

lites of interest to Radio Amateurs.

Or you can subscribe to the ARRL's

"WIAW Letter" which includes weekly Keplerian updates. To subscribe to the e-mail version of the WIAW Letter, send an e-mail to "wlaw-list-request@arrl.org". In the Subject field, put: "SUBSCRIBE e-mail address" (without the quotes, of course), where "e-mail address" is where you want the electronic bulletins to be sent.

Bob Lukaszewski K4HA
Cluster

Sysop W4MR DX Packet

Out with the old....

W4DW packet cluster is now off the air. It has been replaced by the W4MR DX Packet Cluster located in south Raleigh. Several changes have been made to the existing network and more changes and enhancements are in the works.

If you have never logged into W4MR please do so to establish your home node as well as filling out the registration information for the cluster records. To log into the cluster here are a few of the entry points.

144.93 C DXAPEX then C W4MR (located in Apex)
145.67 C DXCLAY then C W4MR (located in Clayton)
144.99 C DXOCRA then C W4MR (located in Chapel Hill - W4UNC)
147.57 C K4HA-2 then C W4MR (located in N Raleigh - 6 Forks)

These frequencies are 1200 baud operation.

There is a UHF 9600 baud frequency in the works but has not been picked yet until all the equipment is in place.

Come and try it out. This is not a place for the faint at heart, or the meek person who just wants to play a bit with packet radio. That's the domain of the BBS Frequencies.

If you have any further questions please feel free to give me a call, or send me some email questions. My number is 833-0199 and my email address is

k4ha@mindspring.com.

Thanks and good DX.

Bob K4HA

As some of you probably know, in the last few months I have really become interested in DX. The internet features dozens of interesting pages for the DXer, and this month's column will share a few with you.

A great overall source for DX links is located at AC6V's web site <http://pw2.netcom.com/~ac6v/index.html>. It features hundreds of interesting links. Included are telnet sites for dxclusters (see DX spots at your desk and wish you were home to work them!), sites for dx newsletter information, sites for news of DX expeditions, sites for online QSL manager information, etc., etc. One of the pages is full of links for amateur radio software for DX, including logging programs, great circle map software, packet cluster programs, gray-line prediction software, etc.

The site must be seen to be believed! There are 70 pages and over 2000 links to DX and Ham sites!

The main page (url listed above) includes the following subpages: (1) Index; (2) On the Bands; (3) DX Newsletters; (4) QSL Information; (5) Operating Aids; (6) DX Software; (7) Prefixes, Frequencies, Countries and Zones; (8) Operating Modes; (9) Awards; (10) Great DX and Ham Links; (10) Mega DX and Ham Links; (11) Contesting; (12) DX and Contesting Clubs; (13) DX Packet Clusters; (14) Licenses Abroad and US; (15) On the Other Bands; (16) WWW Repeater Guides; (17) Antique Radios; (18) Manufacturers and Sales; (19) Technical Reference; (20) Fun Stuff; and many more.

With each page containing hundreds of links you can see that this is just an unbelievable resource guide!

For those new to DXing who wish to get some pointers about QSL cards, two sites of special interest are <http://www.qsl.net/k7on/dx/dx.htm#QSLing> and <http://www.catalina-inter.net/mgauthier/Successful%20%20QSLing.htm> both of which include dozens of valuable hints about qsl design, qsl managers and bureaus, etc. etc. Terrific!

Of course, every DXer quickly becomes interesting in propagation (at least enough to answer the question "What do all those funny numbers listed for WWV spots mean on the cluster?"). A valuable and interesting resource for radio propagation is located at <http://www.rnw.nl/realradio/solar.html> where "The Solar Guide - Edition 3" is maintained. I think most hams would be very interested to learn some of this information!

73 de N9CGD

QRZ FROM DX21DX
 (BIG PILEUP)
 THE YL STATION - GO AHEAD
 DX21DX THIS IS WØW
 WØW -- NICE SIGNAL -- WHAT'S UR
 NAME AND QTH
 I'M IN SAN DIEGO AND THE
 NAME IS DESIREE
 WELL DESIREE -- I'LL BE RETURN-
 ING TO SAN DIEGO -- YOU A SIN-
 GLE LADY
 NOPE - BEEN MARRIED FOR 27
 YEARS
 UR 59 DESIREE QRZ FROM
 DX21DX

**Never hold discussions
 with the monkey when
 the organ grinder is in
 the room.**

Winston Churchill

FrankLynch KE4ZEQ

President's Column

Hello, my name is Frank Lynch, KE4ZEQ, Cary Amateur Radio Club president for 1998. Myself, along with Charles, KE4CDI, Will, K4IWW, a Herb (now W3HL) hope that 1998 will be a great year for the club.

We have an exciting meeting and tour of a major broadcast facility arranged for our January meeting, (more about this elsewhere in the feedline). The February meeting will be an interesting program by Jack Davis, WA4OOD on RF Safety and Exposure Rules.

Will Harper has agreed to lead us to victory at Field Day this year. Thanks Will. I'm still looking for a volunteer for Swapfest CZAR. If you're interested please contact me.

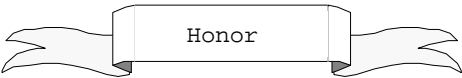
I hope to see many of you at the next meeting.

73 de KE4ZEQ

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 ke4zeq@sera.org

217-1999 H
 905-2934 W

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- ★
- ★ **Amateur Night**
- ★ **at the Movies**
- ★
- ★ Pileup On The Orient Express
- ★ Gone With The Wind -- A Yagi Story
- ★ KING/KØNG (Skull Is. Dxpedition)
- ★ Butch Cassidy And The Sundance Lid
- ★ The Maltese Falklands
- ★ To Live and Let Diode -- ØØ73
- ★ CasaBlanker
- ★ Silence Of The Hams
- ★ M1SH MASH -- With RF Burns
- ★ Gone With The Windom -- The Sequel
- ★ Nightmare On Elmer Street (JA1SON)
- ★ VERTICLE!! Dir By Alfred Switchbox
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Thanks for taking the time to write for FEEDLINE. Your work was greatly appreciated.

AB4S K4RKI K4HA
 KC4TOI KE4DNK KE4RHO
 KM4LB KM4SX N9CGD
 W3HL W4FNB WA2MYZ

KM4LB, Editor

