
WHITE



NOISE

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The New White Noise

Bill Manley KB4XE

Introducing our new format....

The *White Noise* is now available on our internet web page as well as snail-mailed hard copy.

Previously the *White Noise* was printed in a two-column format. This provided easy reading for readers of the hard copy. However it is very uncomfortable for a reader viewing on a computer display. The limited length of a display presentation requires scrolling up and down. Thus we are now offering this single-column format which is readable both in hard copy and on the computer screen.

Using the internet makes it feasible to present the *White Noise* in color. Our header is colored and photography, when it is available, will be presented on the web in color. During the past year we have experimented with including photographs in the printed *White Noise* but we have been disappointed with the limitations of black and white reproduction as well as poor resolution in the printed version. Black and white images will be continued in the hard copy version but we are betting that readers will prefer the internet version with its high resolution color.

OUR MASTHEAD

We've adopted a new masthead as part of the *White Noise* remodeling. We want to draw your attention to the "TELETYPE" typeface selected for the title. It seemed appropriate for a newsletter devoted to digital communications.

The internet copy is being presented in PDF format. It requires a free reader which is available from Adobe Acrobat. Just click on the link on our web page to download your copy. Both Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Explorer browsers will automatically decode a PDF file if the Adobe Acrobat Reader is installed and properly linked. You may have noticed that a web page appears differently depending upon the browser used to view it. The advantage of PDF is that the copy is the same regardless of the media.

We are interested in your opinion. Whether you are reading this on the web or hard copy, please take the time to send us your comments and suggestions.

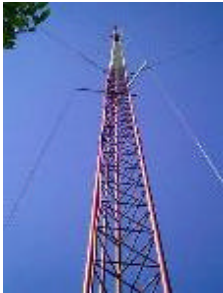
(Note: The Palm Beach Packet Group web site can be found at <http://www.qsl.net/pbpg>. Printed *White Noise* is provided to members via snail-mail.)

PBPG APRS EXPANSION

Doug Welcker (WB4KGY)

Have you been reading the fine print hidden away in the *White Noise* some months back? I know a few of you have from the comments I have received talking to you on the Hamfest circuit this winter. Well here is a explanation on what has been happening and what is in store for the near future. Now I know not all of you are devotees of APRS but APRS is growing and more and more people are being attracted to this digital mode. The good news is that manufactures are building new equipment specifically for users in this mode. Look at the new hand held from Kenwood HT-D7A Data Communicator. Here is a dual band (144/440) hand held that not only talk analog voice but also AX.25 APRS. It will also send/receive SSTV images with the VC-H1 accessory package and or those of you always wanting to get on high speed packet it does 9K6 baud. Enough about this and back to the story.

The same problem that nodes/switches had for years, West Florida not talking to East Florida and Central Florida not talking to South Florida, continues to plague APRS. The PBPG has been looking for a Switch site between West Palm Beach and Ft. Myers for some years. At the Melbourne Hamfest an old friend of mine mentioned to Marvin (KD2CK) and I that he has available a currently unused commercial DB Products DB-212 on top of a 320 foot tower feed with 1/2" heliax. WOW! It is not all gravy though. The site is a 1Kw AM broadcast station buried in an overgrowth of Florida Holly in a swamp with four engine mosquitoes.



So here is the deal. We can use the antenna but we have to provide the transmission line from the tower to the transmitter building. No problem - Remember all that transmission line the club was donated a few years ago? We still have several long pieces (hint - need some: give me a call) of 7/8" transmission line with connectors. This antenna was installed some years ago for doing remote broadcast at various events around the south side of Lake Okeechobee. During these events APRS will need to go off the air while the antenna feeds the remote receiver for remote pickup. Not a problem (does anyone know of a spare wide space duplexer available? The remote receiver is on about 168 MHz). For now we will just use a good quality RF relay actuated by the broadcast stations controller over the phone lines.

At this point it was decided that a sight survey would be in order to try and keep the surprises to a minimum. On the 22nd of February Marvin and myself were accompanied by the station co-owner to the transmitter location. He opened the equipment room door, asked us to just lock up when we leave and gave us free reign to the site and headed back to the studio. Marvin brought his digital camera which certainly works better than future reference. Keep an eye out on the Web site survey we fought our way to the base of the far enough the canopy of brush leaves the fight the branches. As this is was once a swamp water during the wet season. This means getting season arrives. Needing to know the hundred foot tape in as straight as line a possible shack. Found the required length to be 260 feet and the club just happens to own a 265 foot piece of hardline.



So now what. How do we get the transmission line into the building? The same way the owners got theirs installed. Since the building is supported off the ground several inches with concrete block just drill a hole in the floor and push it through then seal the hole with Foam-O-Fill to keep out the bugs and animals. One more thing we do need is provide lightning protection as we are the top antenna. Lucky for us, several years ago PolyPhyaser donated to the club several protectors for transmission lightning protection one of which will be installed there. Anything else? Not much, just fabricate an equipment mounting shelf, modify and install a radio and a TNC, locate a power supply and a backup battery, build a power line transient filter and find the time to get out there...Not Much. Look for your new sight soon.



APRS EMERGENCY CALL BRINGS HELP

Marvin KD2CK

When Scott Ratchford, KC5JGV, witnessed a bad accident during a snowstorm on Pennsylvania's I-76 recently, he immediately grabbed his cell phone and called 911. When that--and several other possible combinations--failed, he tried an emergency call on 2-meters. Again, no luck. Two people were trapped inside an overturned vehicle, and Ratchford was getting desperate. "Here I am in the middle of who knows where, a huge snowstorm, a serious accident, folks needing help, no one answering on .52!" he said in a March 8 posting about the incident on the APRS Special Interest Group. "So, I switch the MIC-E to 7, and hit the button." This sent an emergency mike-encoder signal out over the Automatic Position Reporting System.

Ratchford's emergency beacon was spotted by several stations who immediately contacted the Pennsylvania State Police. But the cops "don't do latitude and longitude," said Dan Velez, W4DJV, in Virginia, one of the stations monitoring the call. Clay Owen, AA3JY, in Pennsylvania, had better luck. He also called the state police and was able to give them references to exits and route numbers, thanks to APRS+ and the Delorme Street Atlas. "I also gave them the name of the individual to be contacted, thanks to QRZ built into this program," he reported.

APRS developer Bob Bruninga, WB4APR, was among those noting the emergency call in the Pennsylvania-Maryland-New Jersey area. Bruninga notes that APRS-DOS will display the nearest mile marker on interstates but "apparently I missed I-76 in the database."

Unknown to Ratchford, the message was received and understood. "Little did I know that the APRS message was received, as a trooper had arrived within minutes of my transmission," he said. Only when the trooper asked for him by name as he was about to leave did Ratchford learn that APRS had delivered the message and that someone had called the police. "I left the scene feeling very happy about our hobby and especially our interest in APRS," he said.

FLORIDA QSO PARTY

Abstracted From The Florida APRS Listserver

(aprs-fl-980N@lists.tapr.org)

by Ron Wetien WD4AHZ

A reminder for all Florida amateurs ...

The Florida QSO Party is just around the corner, April 24 & 25. With input from last years participants, we've made a few changes to the rules.

Several significant changes for 1999:

- 1) The operating periods are now 1600Z-0159Z Saturday and 1200Z-2159Z Sunday. This should allow for more high-band contacts, including many more DX contacts.
 - 2) No more 80 Meters, only 10 thru 40.
 - 3) QRP entrants will multiply their total score by 3 this year.
 - 4) Several Florida County abbreviation changes.
 - 5) The new Canadian territory of Nunuvut, VY0, will count as NWT.
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To make the log checking easier and quicker, we encourage logs and summary sheets (callsign.LOG and callsign.SUM files) to be submitted in computer readable format (via e-mail or diskette). Commercial logging software, such as NA, WriteLog, and TR are known to support FQP. A new updated version of CT (9.40?) which will support FQP, is undergoing beta-testing. Updated files for NA and WriteLog are available on the FQP Web Site. Files for TR will be updated shortly.

For those without logging software, you may log on paper, and submit an ASCII file. Logs must indicate band, mode, date, time in UTC, calls and received exchange, multipliers and QSO points. Multipliers should be marked clearly in the log the first time they are worked. An example of the required information:

00001	04/26/98	2138	20CW	WD4AHZ	599	SAR	K1TO	599	MAN	*	4
00002	04/26/98	2139	20CW	WD4AHZ	599	SAR	W4AU	599	VA	*	4
00003	04/26/98	2139	20CW	WD4AHZ	599	SAR	W9MSE	599	WI	*	4
00004	04/26/98	2140	20CW	WD4AHZ	599	SAR	W2WC	599	NY	*	4
00005	04/26/98	2141	20CW	WD4AHZ	599	SAR	N7JXS	599	AZ	*	4

Complete details on the Florida QSO Party can be found on the FQP Web Site, <http://home1.gte.net/wd4ahz/fcg/ssqp.htm> . Rules can be found in the April issues of QST, CQ, Worldradio, and on several of the Contest Calendar Web Sites.

Thanks to everyone for their support. Have fun, and good luck to all in the 1999 Florida QSO Party!

73, Ron WD4AHZ
VP FQP

(P.S. We'd like to see a great turnout by Florida hams! Please spread the word about the Florida QSO Party at your local club meetings and on your local nets. Contesters and non-contesters can have fun in the FQP. With your help, we can make it one of the biggest state QSO parties in the country!)

DOES THIS SOUND TOO FAMILIAR?

Gleaned from a mailing received from
Joe Loewy W4ERL

"Our staff has completed the 18 months of work on time and on budget. We have gone through every line of code in every program in every system. We have analyzed all databases, all data files, including backups and historic archives, and modified all data to reflect the change.

We are proud to report that we have completed the "Y-to-K" date change mission, and have now implemented all changes to all programs and all data to reflect your new standards:

Januark, Februark, March, April, Mak, June, Julk, August, September, October, November, December

As well as:

Sundak, Mondak, Tuesdak, Wednesdak, Thursdak, Fridak, Saturdak

I trust that this is satisfactory, because to be honest, none of this Y to K problem has made any sense to me. But I understand it is a global problem, and our team is glad to help in any way possible. And what does the year 2000 have to do with it? Speaking of which, what do you think we ought to do next year when the two digit year rolls over from 99 to 00? We'll await your direction."

PALM BEACH PACKET GROUP MINUTES**March 1999**

Burck KC4UEV

BROUGHT TO ORDER

The meeting was brought to order at 19:30 hrs by President Doug (WB4KGY).
Introductions of guests and new members were made and members did self- introductions.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Marvin (KD2CK) reported that as of November 30th, the treasury stood at \$4511.65,
with \$496.83 in the Checking Account

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Doug (WB4KGY) reported no troubles to our knowledge at the West Palm Beach Switch. Doug and John (WB4MOZ) reported happy and successful hunting at the Miami Hamboree, landing a 330 VA UPS which will serve admirably a FPAC installation.

OLD BUSINESS

White Noise was mailed February 10th.

The Polo Shirts have arrived and been distributed. Again , thanks to Marv (KD2CK) for the persistence in getting this job taken care of.

Two more books have been added to our group's lending library, both from the 1980 PLENARY Assembly of the ITT and dealing with Data Communications Networks. This includes X.1 through X.225. Thank you Tom (K4GFG) for the donation.

Doug (WB4KGY) also discussed the APRS Tower Site for Belle Glade. It will require 250 feet of hard line out of club inventory. A TED's shed is there for our use with two feet of rack space. The US Sugar tower in Lake Harbor is delayed due to a serious traffic accident involving the US Sugar VP handling the arrangements.

FPAC Southern expansion, long desired is now in the resurrection process. Doug & John met with Frank (W3AKI) and 10 others on this subject while at the Miami Hamfest. This is looking positive. On Hamfest Sunday, John (WB4MOZ) and Doug (WB4KGY) met with Carl (W9ZGU) and John (KN4HX) who agreed to update the Hollywood Node to FPAC, necessary for the Dade Switch to have backbone connectivity north on the backbone.

WORKSHOP

There was a workshop presented by Mike Michaels (K2GPI), assisted by Bob (WD9ATM) covering early developments in the field of Television.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 20:25 hrs.

Broward Amateur Radio Digital Society March 20, 1999

Bob N4CU

We had a very relaxed March 20 meeting. Most of the regular attendees were at the Stuart hamfest so we elected to hold Jim's Filter Q and A until next month. We sat in the comfortable chairs, chatted, had coffee and adjourned. You can check the February minutes at our web site: <http://www.geocities.com/ResearchTriangle/Lab/7781>. The April 17th program will be the second part of Jim's filter program. This will be the question and answer part of his program. I know I have a few questions.
