

WHITE NOISE



Volume 10, Number 6

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THE PALM BEACH PACKET GROUP HAS A NEW QTH!

Doug Welker WBKGY
Bill Manley KB4XE

The transferring of operations from the old to the new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has brought about a set of circumstances which no longer are compatible with the meeting schedules of the Palm Beach Packet Group. Beginning with the August 13 meeting, we have a new site. The new location is the Piccadilly Cafeteria located in the Polo Grounds Mall.

If your coming up/down I-95 exit at Southern Boulevard West to Military Trail and turn left (south) to the second stop light. The Piccadilly is located on the north-east corner of Military Trail and Summit Blvd in the north part of the mall. The meeting room is at the head of the food service line with enough room to accommodate about 40 people. Meeting time, 7:30pm, and date, second Thursday, remain the same. Come early and enjoy a good dinner with your fellow amateurs. We are also encouraging you to bring your wife/girl friend (maybe only one at a time) to participate in this social setting and get to know each other. If you have any questions please call Doug WB4KGY at (561) 686 3747.

The Palm Beach Packet Group is grateful for the long standing hospitality of the EOC administration and staff. As amateur radio operators we share the goals and objectives of the emergency operations team. We look forward to continuing that relationship.

SOUTH FOR THE WINTER

By Doug Welcker WB4KGY

See.....You didn't even miss me last month and I want to thank Terry Taylor (W5JFM), Marvin Kaskawits (KD2CK), Mike Michaels (K2GPI) for filling these pages with fine articles. As usually happens in May, I'm off somewhere on vacation. Kind of beat the rush this way as there is no problem with high ticket prices or reservations. This year was my wife's choice for a destination and she suggested a trip home to see mother, brother, and as many other relatives as possible. I agreed as we haven't been Brazil for four years.

Now you have to realize this isn't to some city you have ever heard of but into South-Central Brazil to a place called Rolandia which just happens to fall on the Tropic of Capricorn (22.5 degrees South Longitude). Interestingly Roland was named for a German war hero from the 16th Century and as you might guess there are a large contingent of Germans present. Today they are mostly second generation as their parents arrived shortly before the start of WWII and

literally cut their farms out of the jungle. But were getting ahead of ourselves so lets back up and get there first.

Actually it is quite simple - well almost. No problems with getting plane reservations. We decided to fly VARIC this time as we had flown it once before and were quite satisfied with the service. The most interesting part is obtaining the Visa. When you call the embassy in Miami and after fighting the automated answering service a real person with a less than polite manner indicates that the Visa is free but it costs \$45.00 to process!

Not only that but if you come to their office which is open only two days a week the application won't be processed the same day. "Come back in two days and it may be ready but DON'T call to see if it is ready." We gave up on that idea quickly and let the travel agent use her courier take care of the problem. Still the application goes to the third degree in the information that they want and by the way don't forget to include a copy of your return ticket (as if I would want to stay there). The application went well with the travel agent as it

took only a couple of weeks including Fed Express over night!

But it gets better. Really. Rented a car here in West Palm to get to the Miami airport and left about 4pm for our flight at 10pm. Finally on our way cruising down the Turnpike when suddenly I realize we don't have the camera bag. Exit at the Pompano, U turn and back we go. Well that only wasted an hour but we had plenty to spare so we soldier on through the rush hours to Miami. Actually it wasn't bad for a Friday as most of the traffic was heading north. Drove the car to ALAMO drop-off where the check-in gentleman, while trying to decide in what language to speak, used his wireless remote computer to complete the transaction. The receipt came from a whirring little printer on his hip. Very nice - Very quick. Carried the bags a few meters to bus pickup and in a few minutes we were deposited at the VARIC entrance at MIA.

Now it gets interesting. We had only two medium bags to check and two small bags to carry on. After only a few minute wait in line and after having our tickets, passports, and visa checked, we were at the counter. Heft the bags on the scale and after the counter girl tried to decide in what language to speak, we handed her the paperwork (My wife speaks to them in Portuguese and I use English). She gave us the strangest look. OH NO what now! "Is this all your baggage?" She looks at our paperwork. "Oh I understand - Your not Brazilian" (More on this later). After a few moments we were processed and had hours left to wait.

Time to eat. Hours and what seems miles later we arrive at the we arrive at F concourse to find the gate has already been change and the flight time departure has been pushed back an hour. This is an introduction to Brazil. No Brazilian has ever been able to be on time - its in the genes and it drives the northern Europeans crazy!! If the plane left on time it would be less that half full but when they call for boarding by seat numbers they all want to get on at first. In this case it is a real crowd as we are flying a 747. Now it gets better. As we board, there is a cart with major newspapers from the larger cities waiting. I pick up a copy of "ESTADE SAO PAULO" which includes a section of the "WALL STREET JOURNAL" South American version. When we get to our seats, neatly folded blankets and a pillow are waiting. Sitting next to my wife is a middle aged female business journalist - her friend is sitting two rows ahead and is already anxious about her next cigarette as she is sitting in the non smoking section and we haven't left the ground yet. I think the clouds of pollution we saw in the large Brazilian cities were from the continues puffers and not from the auto truck/bus exhaust. (Remind me to buy more Philip Morris stock)

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Finally we are in the air. Seat belt light stays on, smoking light goes out. In seconds she is walking back into the smoking section with a cigarette already in her mouth and lighter in hand. First comes the drinks - I ask for Guarana - its the Coke of Brazil but better and not a cola, next a package consisting of a comb, toothbrush and paste, and a few other odds and ends. Now dinner and it was pretty good, more drinks and of course coffee cafezinho. Its coffee about a double thimble in size, half sugar and black like tar. (Don't take a shot if you want to sleep in the next twelve hours). Now for the neatest display - probably is common but as I

don't fly international a lot I hadn't seen it before. They have a projection TV system that continuously displays in multiple screens a map of where you are in varying degrees of zoom which includes ground speed, altitude, and time till arrival in both metric and English systems. Now the movie came on - Jack Nicholson and Helen Hunt and I went to sleep.

Awoke the next morning and the sky was just getting light and the attendant was asking what I wanted for breakfast. I get a choice - how novel. Now the lines to the bathrooms were backing up the isle, I knew I should have got in line sooner. Too late. "Seats in the upright position" Look out the window and all I see is roof tops of red tile. Thump thump and we are on the ground and driving around the tarmac. Now we are stopped and the pilot announces that all gates are taken and we have to wait 15 minutes. This is a big, fairly new airport spread over more area than MIA, Guarulhos about twenty mile outside Sao Paulo.

Finally we deplane, walk forever to the baggage claim and after a short wait load our baggage on the free carts provided by the airport authority. Now 400 plus people with baggage head for one exit door. My wife now understands why she left the country. This is worse than Times Square at rush hour! After much aggravation and jostling we emerge. Poof - all I hear is the click of lighters as no the NO SMOKING signs are gone. Next you head down a isle with a traffic light - full size but with no yellow. If it turns red when you walk by the guard he directs you to customs inspection. Lucked out. Now off we go to check in for our next flight. The information lady says to go to the VARIC information counter. Hummm Interesting Turns out to be a bureaucratic trap. It seems that airport taxes are not included in the departure ticket price. \$18.00 later we have a red stamp on our ticket for the next leg of the flight to Londrina (Brazilian spelling of London - was settled by the English when they were putting in the railroad in the late 1800's). At least they took our bags and checked them no gratuity expected.

Can you believe it - we left on time after being bused out to the plane parked on the tarmac. I suspect we left on time because the overbooked passengers hadn't got their yet! Flying to Londrina takes about an one & a half hours in a 737 (full again) and you land on top of hill that has been shave flat. It looks like the flight deck of an aircraft carrier and the pilot treats it that way. Down quick and hard with max reverse thrust before the front wheel hits the ground! We deplane into cool (low seventies) sunshine, low humidity and light breezes with frantic well-wishers waving and whistling. Wow What a reception.

Whoops...Turns out it was for someone else behind us as Julie's Mother, Brother, and Nephew are all to be recognized. In a few minutes we have the luggage loaded in the car and were off for home.

(to be continued)

The Dayton Hamfest and Packet Radio

by Marvin Kaskawits KD2CK

This article is the second in a series of three, each one is with a different manufacturer of TNC's. In this interview, Bernice KD2CJ and Linda are together in the photo showing off PacComm's newest entry for 9600 bps.



It was very nice of Linda to take the time away from the busy booth to pose with us. Some of you that have not had the pleasure of having met and spoken to Linda at the PacComm booth during the many Hamfests they attend. You have just missed out on an opportunity to learn about what makes the little box do all those fantastic digital things to enhance our hobby. Linda is a businesswoman that is the brains and beauty behind PacComm, which just happens to be, located over in Tampa, Florida. In the picture, Linda is holding the high performance Packet Controller Sprint-2.

The Sprint-2 is the ideal TNC for 9600 and faster packet operation for BBS, satellite and NODE use. This TNC is built for reliable high, yet is very affordable. It uses reliable, tested technology (G3RUH modem, TNC-2 CPU architecture) with large-scale programmable logic circuits to reduce cost for solid, reliable performance. It is compatible with, TheNet X1, Rose, and Texnet ready.

It's digital features are 512kbit (64k Byte) EPROM 128k RAM provide 64k of Personal Message System storage and large send and receive buffers. The TNC-2 compatible design works with any TNC-2 EPROM. Major RS-232 and radio lines and power feed are protected against power spikes with on-board surge suppressers (Transorbs). Two independent modem transmit and receive filter sections to allow jumper selection of either of two radio baud rates with optimum transmit and receive filtering for each.

Included with the Sprint-2 are the operating manual, hardware manual, computer cable for 9-pin PC serial port, and an unterminated radio cable. The price for this little beauty is something to take note of. The Sprint-2 Standard Model with 9600 modem filters included is only \$239.00.

For more information:

PacComm Packet Radio Systems, Inc.

4413 N Hesperides Street

Tampa, Florida 33614-7618

Toll Free Order Line: 800 486 7388

Email: sales@paccomm.com

Browse their on line catalog: <http://www.paccomm.com>

In the next issue of "White Noise" will be a review of another manufacturer. That will be the third in a series of three articles that contain interviews done at the Dayton Hamfest.

20th Anniversary Of Amateur Packet Radio May 30, 1998

By: Burt Lang VE2BMQ

At around 9 pm on May 31, 1978 the first transmissions of packet over Amateur Radio were sent. The place was the upstairs banquet hall of Bill Wong's Restaurant on Decarie Blvd. in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. The event was a special meeting of the Montreal Amateur Radio Club (MARC) called to discuss and debate proposed changes to the Canadian amateur frequency allocations that were being contemplated by the Dept. of Communications.

In attendance were several DOC officials from Ottawa, including the Director General - Regulations, Dr. John deMercado. Dr. deMercado is considered by some to be the "father" of amateur packet radio due to his persistant pressure to open up an exclusive portion of amateur band to experiment with the new mode, and due to his early experience on the ALOHA project in Hawaii. Others take a less charitable view of his role in this matter.

The first packet message was reported to have been "From John deMercado to the Montreal group - Bravo, well done!" or something like that. As is common with many historical events, the participants did not bother to record the particulars and memory now is less than perfect.

The Montreal Packet Net group consisted of:

Bob Rouleau,	VE2PY
Norm Pearl,	VE2BQS
Fred Basserman,	VE2BQF
Bram Frank,	VE2BFH
Jacques Orsali,	VE2EPH
Ted Baleshta,	VE3CAF
Ian Hodgson,	VE2BEN
and others not mentioned.	

A detailed description of the Montreal Protocol and hardware used in the experiments is given in the TAB book #1345 "PACKET RADIO" by Bob Rouleau and Ian Hodgson published in 1981. An interesting note is that the Montreal Modem design used the Exar XR-2206/2211 chip set. I am told that a sample of the Montreal Modem was sent to the Vancouver Group (VADCG) in the fall of 1978 and it is probably no coincidence that the same chip set appeared in the TAPR TNC modem of which Doug Lockhart of VADCG had a hand in designing.

It is ironic that none of the original Montreal Packet Net group are presently in Amateur Packet Radio. After a initial spurt of activity in amateur packet, Bob Rouleau and several others in the group turned to commercial applications for packet. The resulting company, DataRadio Inc., today is building and marketing commercial packet radio systems around the world. A recent application is the Canadian Weather Radio packet service introduced several years ago using DataRadio 9600 bps equipment.

We should congratulate these early pioneers in amateur packet radio for the work they did in getting the hobby started. It is through their early efforts that today's worldwide packet system has grown, often chaotic, seldom planned but with a continuous forward progress due to the efforts of countless others in the intervening years to advance and refine the technology. In the words of the first packet message:

BRAVO, WELL DONE!!!!!!!!!!

ITEM OF INTEREST

An *Introduction to Packet Radio* by Larry Kenney, WB9LOZ is a series of twenty articles was originally written in 1988 to appear in *Nuts & Volts*, the newsletter of the San Francisco Amateur Radio Club.

The series has been widely distributed since then, with revisions issued in 1991, 1993, and 1995. Now that the series appears on the Web, it is continuously updated, as needed, at this site.

Larry is the primary sysop of San Francisco's packet radio bulletin board system, W6PW-3, and is the owner of the BERKLY:WB9LOZ-2 node in the Berkeley Hills east of San Francisco. He continues to write monthly articles for *Nuts & Volts*.

(I've downloaded this complete series. It is too voluminous to include in the mailed distribution of White Noise, but reproduced copies will be available for handout at our regular PBPG monthly meetings - KB4XE -ed.)

WHOOFS WE SLIPPED!

Bill Manley KB4XE - ed.

I'm sure that you noticed that this is a combined June/July issue of the White Noise. Due to circumstances beyond our control I became unavailable to pull the pieces together for the June deadline.

We regret the delay and plan to continue with regular monthly issues.

PALM BEACH PACKET GROUP MEETING JUNE 11, 1998

OPENING / REPORTS

The meeting was called to order @ 1935 hrs by President Doug Welcker (WB4KGY). Welcome / No smoking Policy / Introductions of Members followed.

The Treasure's report was not presented, due to Marvin (KD2CK) being out of town. The report will appear in future issue of WHITE NOISE. The technical report was given by DOUG (WB4KGY), as follows: The APRS radio was found to have very short range due to very low (<1 watt) of power. This radio was replace with the spare Alinco 3000. The receiver selectivity was so poor that a bandpass cavity filter was installed. At the same time if was found that the

diplexer exhibited a very high SWR. Temporary on site repair was made by JOHN (WB4MOZ). Quick Connect (K4PKT-6) to DX Cluster being installed by John (WB4MOZ) with assistance from Terry (W6LMJ). This allows connection to N4TL through Terry's cross frequency connect by only doing a "C K4PKT-6". The FPAC Switch, K4PKT-9, has experienced no problems this past month.

OLD BUSINESS

In the continuing effort to connect the INTERNET Gateway, JOE (WB4TEM) found computer serial port dead. FAU techs are to repair/replace the computer. WHITE NOISE was mailed June 9th. Three Packet books are available for lending. See KE4GUM.

An APRS book has been added to the library.

The PBPG is still looking for Bel Glade replacement site. If you have any suggestions or possible locations along the south side of Lake Okeechobee, please contact a club officer. Handout include: ROSE Switch/Node's list, ROSE users guide, FPAC users guide.

NEW BUSINESS

Doug (WB4KGY) reports of an assault on 420-450 band by the Land Mobile Communications Council to gain commercial use on this band. Among the many who responded, FADCA added it's concerns before the June 1st closing date. Also AAA has given misinformation to its members regarding this matter. ARRL Executive Vice President David Sumner took them to task and insisted that the situation be corrected. (For more information see July QST pg 9)

The PBPG was invited to participate in Field Day. The CLUB is evaluating the situation, and will make a determination on it's actions. ART (WA4DBA) informed the PBPG that novice radio course will be taught at Santaluas high school, beginning this fall. He requested assistance from members of PBPG. Orders for PBPG polo shirts are being taken. Please submit you order on the form from previous WHITE NOISE issues. The club could use your help. Please step forward and offer your talents.

ADJOURN/BREAK/WORKSHOP

Workshop program: What is the future of Packet Radio? Panel discussion including BillyBob (KE4GUM) and Henry (W4UJ) with audience participation.

The meeting was adjourned @ 2136 hrs.

Respectfully submitted,
Wm. H. Rabun (KE4GUM)
rm

PALM BEACH PACKET GROUP MEETING JULY 9, 1998

OPENING / REPORTS

The meeting was called to order by President DOUG (WB4KGY). The abbreviated report was given by MARVIN (KD2CK) as follows:

As of May 31, 1998, Bank reports; saving account \$ 4,196.59, includes interest of \$ 10.67, checking account \$ 393.08. A complete report will appear in *White Noise*.

The technical report was presented by DOUG (WB4KGY). Henry (W4UJ) and Charlie (K2GNZ) volunteered use of a 2M/440 diplexer to replace the damaged/intermittent unit used on the APRS and 440 backbone antenna. FPAC "Quick Connect" for the DX Cluster was removed due to a problem in the FPAC software not allowing the connection. Upgrade of the VERO SWITCH to FPAC is planned for mid July. John (WB4MOZ) is testing the computer at his house under the call sign of WA4SBD-8/9 (his wife's call).

OLD BUSINESS

White Noise June issue was not mailed, due to illness of Editor Bill (KB4XE). Combined June/July issue will follow. BILL is out of the hospital after a short stay.

Joe (WB4TEM) is reported to still trying to solve computer problem at FAU, so we might establish gateway for internet connection.

Packet books are available from PBPG library.

NEW BUSINESS

Doug (WB4KGY) informed the group, that Time Wave Co. has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. It is regret that it was announced that FRED LINK (W2ALU) was a SILENT KEY. He was the founder /developer of FM Radio as we know it today.

Please be advised that this meeting was the last to be held at EOC. Our next meeting will be held at the Piccadilly Cafeteria, located at Polo Grounds strip mall, at Military & Summit Blvd. August 13th. @ 7:30 PM. Please step forward to assist your Club.

Doug (WB4KGY) gave a "GREAT PROGRAM", Getting around with FPAC.

Meeting adjourned @ 21:20 hrs.

Respectful submitted,
Wm. H. Rabun (KE4GUM)

Broward Amateur Radio Digital Society May 23, 1998 Bob, N4CU

The meeting started with introductions. There was one new attendee, Norm, W4QN.

The first subject was a short report on the Dayton Hamfest by Bob, N4CU and Carl, W9ZGU. Several items were discussed but the most interesting was the proposal by the Land Mobile Communications Council to use portions of our UHF bands. There have been several descriptions of this problem and the ARRL's suggested action by hams interested in leaving our UHF band as it is. Check the ARRL web site if you need information.

The program was by John, KN4HX. He demonstrated antenna design software written by Roy Lewellen, W7EL, named EZNEC. John showed us the 4 element 20 meter Quad which is part of the demo provided with the software. The program produces a set of data that is read directly by MicroSmith demonstrated by Bob, N4CU at the last meeting. MicroSmith is an antenna matching program that then allows you to match the antenna you have designed.

Once again, these programs shown on the big screen provides a very a very interesting aspect of amateur radio technical aspects. Thanks to John for an interesting and informative program.

Carl, W9ZGU, will give next month's program. He will demo an MFJ 224 signal analyzer. This analyzer will check the deviation on your radios. This device provides a final step in this antenna design series as it will measure the relative field strength, front to back ratio, and feedline loss.

ADJOURN/BREAK/WORKSHOP

Broward Amateur Radio Digital Society

June 20, 1998

Bob, N4CU

The meeting started with introductions. There was one new attendee, Michael Maassel, WD0DVM. Mike's packet station is in transit but he is on VHF

Carl, W9ZGU, gave us a demonstration of the MFJ 224 FM Signal Analyzer. He checked the deviation of a radio held by John, KN4HX. Carl has made up a carrier containing the Signal Analyzer, a MFJ 259 HF/VHF SWR analyzer, a battery powered o-scope, and other equipment. The Signal analyzer will also measure relative field strength. Carl showed how the field strength reading could detect and measure excessive loss in old co-ax.

Dave followed up with a preview of some of the planned field day activities. He has a balloon and it will be used on Saturday for a high flying digi platform. It will also be used to pull up a long wire antenna. He has a Kite to be used on Sunday to pull up an antenna on the beach.

ARTICLES FOR *WHITE NOISE*

The Palm Beach Packet Group accepts articles from other clubs and individuals wishing to have them published in the *White Noise*. This is offered as a gratis service for those not otherwise having publication services at their disposal. Article content should be amateur radio related, including all operating modes, applications including computer, experiences, announcements and reports of meetings. Advertising is not accepted.

We reserve editorial privileges regarding content, spelling, punctuation and structure as well as the decision to publish or not. Articles can not be returned.

Send your copy to:

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