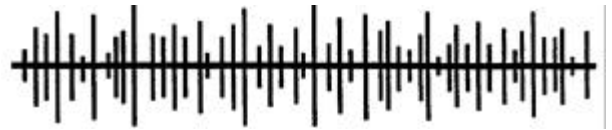


WHITE NOISE



Volume 10, Number 3

March, 98

TOTO WE'RE NOT IN FLORIDA ANYMORE

by Doug Welcker WB4KGY

Maybe you saw the OSCARS Monday evening also and during the review of the past sixty-nine years of OSCAR winning movies was Judy Garland and that famous quote. Or did she say Kansas? This got me thinking about what a great lead-in for this month's topic.

You may think you are stuck on the local LAN or within the range of a few LAN's connected by local backbone. Well "TOTO" you may be surprised to find, like Dorothy, that there are a lot of wide open spaces at the end of your fingertips. Since the completion of the cross state backbone which allowed access into the Tampa LAN you have access outside the State of Florida. That includes those of you from Broward to Vero, here on the east coast, or just about anywhere else you have ROSE/FPAC access in Florida.

Where can I go you say, or how do I find out where I can go. Well those of us on the West Palm LAN, K4PKT-9, only need to do a Fast Connect, "C K4PKT-5", from the "Cmd:" prompt as discussed in last months "WHITE NOISE" and you're off and running. If you reside in Vero and have access to the ROSE Network, enter "C INFO V W4OT-3, 813555". (Anywhere else substitute your local Switch callsign for "W4OT-3"). This connects you to the information file in Tampa at K0ZXF-9. There you will get a list of other information files available in Florida and other States. After disconnecting, chose the state you want get information from then connect using the proper area/nxx code. What is interesting is that the system is setup something like a tree directory on

your computer. Once you get to one area you will find a whole new set of areas you can get to. For instance, say you connect to the Dallas INFO file, you will find more sites available in Oklahoma, Minnesota, Arkansas, Louisiana, Illinois, and the rest of Texas.

If you want to poke around in one of these areas, connect to HEARD, you will get a current list of stations that are or have recently been using the system. Connect to one of those stations and you may get a BBS but if you keep trying you'll end up with another keyboarder. For those of you familiar with operating in a NODE environment, many of these sites list the local NODE. From there you can continue your search through the unknown.

Who knows, you may end up in Kansas with Toto.

APRS/MIR PACKET TEST

11 March 1998

by Bob Bruninga, WB4APR

On 11 March 1998 a special MIREX/APRS test was conducted via the packet system on the Space Station MIR. The test was to show possible methods for improving the visibility of MIREX communications to students and schools.

APRS/MIR TEST: Since the Mir packet system has been operating well the last few weeks, Dr. Larsen (N6CO) of the MIREX group suggested the APRS/Mir test be conducted as soon as possible since precession was taking Mir passes earlier every day and it would soon be out of view during school hours. He authorized the APRS/MIR test on only

two orbits on the 10th of March. Unfortunately the MIR packet system went off the air on these two orbits, so the test was extended to the next few orbits over the USA. The test was limited to the USA only because it had the largest numbers of existing APRS ground stations ready to test in sufficient numbers to fully load the system. But the delay further complicated matters since the next orbits over the USA were between 0230 AM and 0400 AM local time. As a result, the test was extended for a full 5 orbits to allow testers to choose a pass and still get some sleep.

To make Mir appear to move on all ground station maps, three special tracking-uplink stations beamed the moving position of MIR via the MIR digipeater. One from California using the callsign MIR-6, one from Michigan using MIR-8, and one in Maryland using MIR-3 to match their callsign areas. West coast stations typically saw the moving MIR-6, midwest stations typically saw the incoming MIR-6 change to a MIR-8 and then east coast stations saw the moving ICON on their maps change to a MIR-3.

To inject the downlink from Mir into the Internet, a few of the normal APRS I-Gates tuned their radios from the normal APRS frequency to the Mir downlink frequency. These Mir packets were intermingled with the normal stream of APRS packets into the APRServe Internet system. Although they would be seen on the main www.aprs.net maps they would be hard to distinguish from the usual 1000 to 1200 or more APRS stations on the air. To provide a unique display of the APRS/Mir packets alone, a special WEB page was designated to filter out only the APRS/MIR packets and display them separately to users. During the day of the event there were over 11,000 hits on the server system representing a peak load of 150 simultaneous users and as many as 1000 users.

CONCLUSIONS: The test was completely successful in meeting all of the original objectives.

White Noise is published by the Palm Beach Packet Group, Inc.

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NOTICE

NEW MAILING ADDRESS

**Palm Beach Packet Group
P.O. Box 16471
West Palm Beach, Fl. 33416-6471**

The short notice and early morning hours helped to reduce the number of participants to a nominal 100 stations. We think this number is representative of the nominal number of schools that could be authorized to simultaneously participate in future such Mir experiments. The test demonstrated the value of using a UI frame one-to-all packet protocol to improve the delivery of information to all ground stations. Further, the test demonstrated the value of a few special MIREX ground stations to uplink the moving Mir position reports and to relay real-time MIREX bulletins and announcements that can be received by all stations in the footprint including receive-only school stations. Finally, the test showed the value of multiple internet connected ground stations for not only providing a continuum of data from the downlink across the whole country, but also for providing WEB access to students and schools outside of the footprint or without amateur radio equipment.

All of the APRS stations want to thank the MIREX team and also those normal Mir BBS users who were inconvenienced by this test, for this opportunity to conduct this important experiment.

SOUTH FLORIDA STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN SAREX

A Space Amateur Radio Experiment was accomplished March 23, 1998 involving nine fifth grade students from Westchester Elementary School in Coral Springs Florida and the Russian MIR Space Station.

With the help of the Motorola Amateur Radio Club and the Johnson Space Center Amateur Radio Club, the American Astronaut on board MIR, Andy Thomas, spoke over the ham airwaves, while in orbit, directly with groups of students, thus showing teachers, parents and communities how Amateur Radio stimulates the interest of youngsters in science, technology, and learning. NASA makes

astronauts available for SAREX operations in order to involve the largest possible numbers of people, particularly youngsters, in technology and the US space program with the help of Amateur Radio.

The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) and The Radio Amateur Satellite Corporation (AMSAT) co-sponsor these exciting experiments along with NASA. AMSAT heads up the technical operations of SAREX. Hundreds of Amateur Radio operators work behind the scenes, including those from NASA's Amateur Radio clubs at the Johnson Space Center, Goddard Space Flight Center and Marshall Space Flight Center. The ARRL takes the lead with information and educational support.

On November 28, 1983, STS-9 was launched carrying Mission Specialist Owen Garriott, Amateur Radio call sign W5LFL, and the ham radio constructed by the Motorola Amateur Radio Club located in Plantation, FL, into orbit. For ten days the Space Shuttle Columbia circled the globe, and for the last seven of those days, Hams around the world were energized by the sound of Dr. Garriott's voice as it broke through their squelches and called Earth-bound stations. But that was just the beginning. Amateur Radio had entered the frontier of manned spacecraft. This original radio was present at this contact.

Westchester alumna and presently a tenth grade student at J.P. Taravella High School, Diana Siwiak (KE4QXL), facilitated this radio contact through a telebridge connection to the Johnson Space Center Amateur Radio Club Station (W5RRR). Westchester alumnus and current seventh grade student at Sawgrass Springs Middle School, Joseph Siwiak (KF4JAS) acted as liaison between the Westchester Telebridge and NASA-Houston. Diana earned her Amateur Radio license in the spring of 1994. Joseph earned his Amateur Radio license in the spring of 1996 while he was a student in Mrs. Pump's class.

The application for this contact was made in September of 1995, when Joseph was a student in Mrs. Pump's fifth grade class. At that time, Joseph's mother was a VAST (Volunteers Assisting Students and Teachers) parent volunteer who brought the Young Astronaut program into the classroom every week.

MIR Astronaut

Andy Thomas, ROMIR / VK5MIR

AMSAT Mentor

Kai Siwiak, KE4PT

Coordinating Teacher

Juleen Pump

Amateur Radio Coordinators

Ann Siwiak, KE4IEV

Diana Siwiak, KE4QXL (Westchester alumna)

Joseph Siwiak, KF4JAS (Westchester alumnus)

Westchester Principal

Francine Renguso

Motorola Amateur Radio Club

Bruce Burke, W134YUC

James Goldsberry, KD4GR

Harold Sanderson, KT4XK

NASA Johnson Space Center

Matt Bordelon, KC5BTL

NASA Goddard

Frank Bauer, KA3HDO

Will Marchant

Westchester Students

Tami Alfasi

Steven Baer

Alon Brodie

Joel Lewis

Shawnda Lynn Murphy

Alex Newman Jaimee Schulson

Loree Schulson

Erica Turok

Zoe Young

An enormous debt of gratitude is owed to Mrs. Francine Renguso, whose tireless efforts on behalf of the SAREX program made it all possible. From the initial permission to apply for SAREX through

the many details it took to make it happen, including the school facilities that were the crux of this project, we are most appreciative. A sincere thank you is also extended to Dr. Jeanne Korn of University School of Nova Southeastern University, who allowed Ann Siwiak release time to follow through on this commitment and who wholeheartedly encouraged her to do this for the children of our community.

**From ARRL Bulletin 19
(ARLB019) March 20:**

Some new rules go into effect this year for Field Day. The popular summertime operating event takes place each year on the fourth full weekend in June. This year, it will be June 27-28.

A major change this year is the elimination of bonus-point credit for packet and VHF/UHF contacts. Field Day stations no longer will be allowed to count contacts via digipeaters, packet nodes, or similar arrangements. Class 2A and higher Field Day stations still may operate a "free" transmitter exclusively for VHF or UHF operation (i.e., above 50 MHz) without changing their basic entry classification, but not for bonus points.

"It's better than bonus points, and groups are likely to spend more time on VHF and UHF because of that," predicted ARRL Membership Services Manager Chuck Hutchinson, K8CH. As in the past, crossband and repeater contacts other than via satellite do not count for Field Day credit.

Field Day stations now can earn point credit for digital (i.e., non-CW) contacts on each band. The phone, CW, and non-CW digital segments are considered separate "bands" in the Field Day rules. This means, for example, that you now may work the same station for point credit on 40 meters three times: once on SSB, once on CW, and once on

RTTY, packet, or one of the 'TOR modes. SSB contacts count one point, and CW and non-CW digital contacts count 2 points apiece, so adding non-CW digital capability presents a real opportunity to rack up substantial additional points. "We're expecting an interesting year because of the digital modes," Hutchinson said.

The complete, official Field Day rules will appear in the May edition of QST. Basic Field Day rules have remained unchanged for several years now. The new rules undoubtedly will generate a flurry of computerized contest logging program revisions as developers scramble to incorporate the changes into their software.

**From ARRL Space Bulletin 6 (ARLS006)
February 27:**

A ham radio package will be aboard the shuttle flight that carries US Senator and astronaut John Glenn into space this fall. Word from NASA this week was that the Shuttle Amateur Radio EXperiment or SAREX payload would be carried on STS-95 when it flies in October carrying the 77-year-old space pioneer into orbit for the first time since the early 1960s, when Glenn became the first US astronaut to orbit the Earth.

Two hams--US Astronaut Scott Parazynski, KC5RSY, and European Space Agency astronaut Pedro Duque, KC5RGG, of Spain-- will be among an international crew aboard STS-95. The launch date for the only other SAREX mission scheduled for 1998--STS-93--has slipped from August to December. Glenn already has begun his astronaut training, but it's not yet known if he plans to get his ham ticket before his return to space.

IT'S COMING BACK

Bill Manley KB4XE

The new sunspot cycle is gathering steam and it appears that the 10 meter band is coming back. The following CW was heard on 28.220Mhz at Coral Springs on March 10, 1998 at 2035UTC:

W8MI/B 500MW PO BOX 343 MACKINAW
CITY MI 49701

The message repeated continuously. The beacon read S4 on my meter (whatever that means!). There was some QSB.

**FCC CERTIFICATION/AUTHORIZATION
NUMBER DATA ON THE WEB**

The Federal Communications Commission has tied a search engine to its Equipment Authorization Database to produce a very useful tool. According to Don Hobson writing in the CGC Communicator newsletter, you can specify various search parameters and uncover a wealth of information.

The URL is a simple one. Its at:

www.fcc.gov/fcc-bin/ead

(Via CGC Communicator)

FROM THE HUDSON LOOP

The FAA is working on its year-2000 problem, in which a Glitch will cause computers to think it's 1900. "If they don't fix it, however, air traffic controllers will have to start diverting flights to Kitty Hawk." -- Gary Easley

**PALM BEACH PACKET GROUP
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
FEBRUARY 28, 1998**

The meeting was brought to order by President Doug (WB4KGY) @ 14:15 hrs. Members present were Bill (KB4XE), John (WB4MOZ), Marvin (K2BK), Bill (KE4GUM).

AGENDA ITEMS:

YEARLY TREASURE'S REPORT FOR 1997

Discussion about update and unresolved category of expenses and deposits. (Doug worked with Marvin the next week and resolved the uncategorized items) Also the PBPG accounting matches with the last credit union statement.

USES FOR E-MAIL ADDRESSES.

Meeting notifications:

Should E-MAIL be implemented along with distribution of *WHITE NOISE* / Special updates ?. (note: *WHITE NOISE* can't be distributed on email due to its size and format.)

INTERNET ACCESS:

PBPG will continue to research possibility of establishing a gateway for Packet use on the internet.

HAMWEB by WAOTPV:

Technical committee will investigate possibility if this mode is compatible with local BBS systems.

WHITE NOISE ARTICLES:

PBPG directors will encourage members to submit articles to the editor, for publication. Bill encouraged (Strongly) for other BOARD OF DIRECTORS members to regularly submit articles. They need not be packet related.

LOSS OF BELLE GLADE SITE:

PBPG has lost it's site in Belle Glades. Efforts will be made to obtain another location. Henry Felton

has been contacted and will forward information about availability of sites.

ASSIGNMENT OF PRESENTATIONS:

Directors will attempt to assign Directors topics to be presented to the group meetings. Members will be asked to participate.

WEB SITE:

PBPG needs a Webb Site. We will investigate options. Members are asked to submit ideas that will help in that regard. Bill suggested the PBPG register their Domain Name at \$200. Further investigation in needed before the BOARD OF DIRECTORS decides on registration.

MAIL BOX CHANGES:

We are having problems with the current location of the PO Box as none of the board members live near the location. The BOARD OF DIRECTORS has decided to open a local PB Box for convenience and to be more responsive to the members.

FIELD DAY

The PBPG has been invited by the WPB ARC to participate in this years field day. PBPG accepts this invitation and will assist. Marvin will act as the contact person for the group.

The PBPG wishes to thank MARVIN, for the use of his abode for the meeting.

MEETING ADJOURNED @ 15:15 hrs.

Wm. H. Rabun KE4GUM.

**PALM BEACH PACKET GROUP MEETING
MARCH 12, 1998**

OPEN REMARKS / REPORTS

The meeting was bought to order @ 17:35 hrs. by Pres. DOUG WELCKER (WB4KGY) There was 14 members and guests. Introductions were made.

Treasurer's Report: Marvin (KD2CK) reviewed the Treasurer's report. The report appeared in the February "THE WHITE NOISE".

The Technical Committee report was given by DOUG (WB4KGY). First item on interest was the conversion of APRS to the new frequency. The PBPG intends to convert to the new frequency before the end of March 1998. Crystals have been ordered for Boca Digi KF4DXY-1. Conversion to the new frequency has taken place in the Tampa/Orlando corridor. Southeast coast areas should be completed by April 1998. Doug(WB4KGY) asked if there were any questions concerning operations of the switch since conversion to FPAC. No questions were forthcoming. There has been no outages at the switch in the last month. Tom Ringate of TAMPA LAN, has written additional code for FPAC. This code is under test @ 813962, with no failures as of this date. The PBPG hopes to install this new code, when available.

OLD BUSINESS

PBPG Board Of Directors meeting was held Feb. 28, 1998.

Topics discussed included:

Yearly Treasurer's Report for 1997, uses for member E-MAIL addresses, Internet access, HAMWEB by WA0TPV, "White Noise" articles, loss of Belle Glade site, assignment of presentations, future PBPG WEB site, PO Box relocation, field day participation.

White Noise was mailed on March 4th. It was delivered next day in Okeechobee and West Palm Beach the next day but it had not been delivered after 4 days to Bill (KB4XE) who lives only a few miles from the mailing office! (*Sometimes delivery has taken as long as 3 weeks! - ed.*) PBPG is changing the PO BOX to West Palm Beach since all officers now live in the West Palm area.

Members are encouraged to submit articles of interest for publication in "White Noise". Send them to Bill (KB4XE) or any board member. We were informed that we will lose the Belle Glade antenna site due the tower being removed. HENRY (W4UJ) will look for a different site. Board Of Directors will be assigned topics to be presented to the membership at future meetings.

Packet books are available from KE4GUM.

Handout of:

ROSE switch and Node's lists
ROSE users guide
FPAC users guide

NEW BUSINESS

=====
PBPG Polo shirts group purchase ? We want to know if you want PBPG Polo shirts. An order form will be inserted in the next issue of "White Noise". If you want serve "YOUR CLUB" we could use your help. Memberships are being accepted by KE4GUM.

Interesting BBS subject of the month "SWL Listening". Do "L> SWL" after connecting to your local BBS for list of messages concerning national and international broadcasting.

ADJOURN / BREAK / WORKSHOP

Next meeting April 9, 1998.

A great program was presented by Terry Redding (W6LMJ). "Self Directed Learning and HAMS" He was assisted by his 2 daughters, ages 10-12, both licensed HAMS.

Meeting was Adjourned @ 21:20 hrs.

Respectfully submitted;

Wm. H. Rabun (KE4GUM)

Broward Amateur Radio Digital Society
February 21, 1998

The meeting was again held in the Motorola "Blue Room". Attendees were Jim Goldsberry, Lou Sposa, John Wilson Jim Dahling, Ford Beach, Joe Loewy, Al White, and Mike Kantor. That's, KD4GR, N4ZXZ, KB4FO, N4BVL, and KD4EMI.

The 144.39 crystals finally arrived. It has been about 6 months. The Receiver crystals are about 10 KHz high and are being returned by Doug, WB4KGY. The transmit crystals were OK.

It looks like the Boca Digi and West Palm Switch will be QSYing to 144.39 in April.

After the meeting John, KN4HX, and Ford, KB4WBY had a Nova installation party. Nova is the satellite tracking software demonstrated at the Miami Hamfest AMSAT Booth.

The March 21 meeting program will be an introduction to the Smith chart using the ARRL MicroSmith program.

Bob,
N4CU@amsat.org

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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