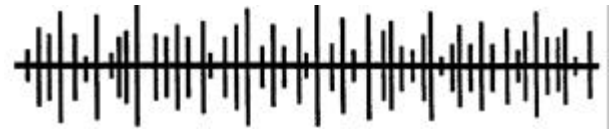


WHITE NOISE



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May, 98

MAYTON DAYTON

By Terry J. Taylor, W5JFM

Where else can you throw a hot dog up in the air, and have it cooked before it hits the ground? Yep, Dayton. With over 30,000 people, and most all of them with HT's, the RF environment is fairly well saturated. Clear frequencies are hard to find, if not impossible. The middle of May trek to the world's largest gathering of hams was a perfect time of year. Since the Dayton Hamvention moved from the end of April to the middle of May because of 4 straight years of bad weather, it has been totally successful with beautiful weather. The date change was just a few years ago, and everyone seems to be happy with the May date. The weather was great all three days with full sun and low humidity.

Living in the Cincinnati area now, the drive to Dayton is fairly short. I used to envy those that lived so close and didn't have to find a hotel room, or ride the busses. Having a rental car during those times made things a lot easier, but having a personal car is even better. The Hamvention is still located up on the NW side of Dayton at the Hara Arena Conference & Exhibition Center. There is a large mall close by, and the Dayton Airport is about 20 minutes away by auto. The arena itself is much larger than a gymnasium with seating all the way around the floor area. One corner takes up the entire prize area. Vendors donate to the Hamvention all of the prizes, with none being purchased. The prize value is over \$100,000. Alnico donated over \$23,000 in prizes. The top prizes were the Kenwood TS-870S, FT-847, Japan Radio Company JST-145 HF transceiver, Yaesu FT-920, Icom IC-756, 746, 706, Alinco DX70TH and Cushcraft X9 Big Thunder. There is a huge drum

where all of the ticket stubs are thrown in hopes of winning a prize.

And guess who won an hourly prize? I saw my number, 18561, up there on one of the numerous TV monitors and was shocked. Could it be a new radio, or just another ARRL book? Don't get me wrong, as ARRL books are very nice and well written and quite useful – but I was hoping for a new toy – you know! I made my way up to the prize booth, signed my ticket, and got a plastic bag with a few things in it. Well, let's see. First there was a CD, and it was the October '97 HamCall from Buckmaster. I later went by their booth to see if I could pay a few dollars for an upgrade, but no deal. They wanted the full \$50 for the new one, so I wondered if the \$50 value sticker on my prize was really worth \$50. Oh, well. The next item in the bag was the TAPR book "Packet Radio: What? Why? How?" It is a \$20 value, and since I already have one, I'll send it to the PBPG. My last little goodie was a \$20 gift certificate to Bill Barrick parts. This is a vendor with all sorts of little parts like led's, resistors, sockets, etc. I picked out a few things like tie-wraps, needle-nose pliers, and fuses. I thanked these prize vendors for donating to the Hamvention.

In the other corner opposite from the prize booth was the huge Icom booth. They have a "ton" of equipment on display for everyone to play with. They usually have a new slant every year, and this year was no different. Several people were scattered around the booth elevated and behind the displays. They had boom microphones and all that was being said was broadcast over a small PA system. This way people standing around could hear the explanations of how the equipment worked, plus the

answers to the numerous questions. This was an effective way of getting more information to more people. In other parts of the building, Yaesu and Kenwood took a different tack by using what I would call mini-theaters. Here, you could sit down and watch a video tape on a large screen TV delineating the various products. Maybe the folks sitting down and watching were really interested, or maybe just taking a load off their feet.

In yet another corner of the arena was Cushcraft. They always bring a huge antenna array and stack several antennas on a pole that goes up pretty high into the air near the ceiling. It must be pretty tough to get all that up, but it is impressive. Elsewhere on the arena floor is MFJ, with numerous displays of their various products, and Kantronics showing their new KAM '98 which isn't quite into production.

There are other vendors on the main arena floor which could take up hours of your time visiting. Walking through the arena tunnel on the east side, you'll find yourself in a maze of huge, connecting buildings that house even more vendors. You'll find PacComm, TAPR, AMSAT, APRS, the ARRL, Kachina, and you'd think a zillion more. Plus there were numerous computer equipment dealers, food vendors, CD-ROM dealers, etc. Just about anyone who is anyone in amateur radio was there. All of the flea market was outside the buildings in spaces that went to over 4000. It is huge to say the least.

Friday night was the AMSAT dinner which was located at the Amber Rose near downtown Dayton. The food was outstanding, as it was last year. I enjoyed sitting at the table with Keith Baker, KB1SF, VP of AMSAT, who likes to talk about the "Mother of all Heathkits", meaning Phase 3-D. Also at the table was Barry Baines, WD4ASW (Anti-Submarine Warfare) from Jacksonville who led a very interesting discussion on trains. He works for CSX.

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The PBPG can be reached by mail at

Palm Beach Packet Group
PO Box 16471
West Palm Beach, Fl. 33416-6471

The officers of the PBPG with their packet address and phone numbers are:

Doug Welcker, President
WB4KGY@WB4MOZ
(561) 686-3747

Mike Michaels, Vice-President
K2GPI@WB4MOZ
73754.3116@compuserve.com
(561) 967-0478

Bill Rabun, Secretary
KE4GUM@WB4MOZ
(561) 688-2088

Marvin Kaskawits, Treasurer
KD2CK@WB4MOZ
kd2ck@ibm.net
(561) 683-2930

John Green, Director
WB4MOZ@WB4MOZ
wb4moz@maco.net
(561) 793-6093

Bill Manley, Director
KB4XE@WB4TEM
bmanley@gate.net
(954) 752-3908

Saturday provided a nice day for just browsing. There is so much to see that time actually goes by quickly. I ran into Marvin, KD2CK, and his wife Bernice, KD2CJ from the PBPG. The chances of running into someone you know are very slim due to the vast number of people. However, I saw Marvin and Bernice 3 or 4 times. We even took a picture at the Kantronics booth.

There are numerous forums going on at one time and last all day long. I was impressed with the Youth forum. Colorado has been particularly active in getting young people in the hobby. There are several groups out there, and a few of them spoke at the forum telling how they were getting more young people involved. There is even a project sponsored by NASA going on in Lexington, KY, whereby numerous students are busy polishing mirrors for a satellite that is to be launched. It is called Project Starshine. Another forum was on Spectrum Management by Paul Rinaldo, W4RI, who works for the League in Washington, DC. Many people don't realize the extent to which the ARRL represents the amateur interests not only in Washington, but worldwide. These efforts are excruciatingly important to the future of amateur radio. Paul and Larry Price, W4RA, plus others are traveling to meetings in Geneva and South America to further the worldwide interests that US Amateurs have. They keep a finger on the pulse of activities and report back to the League for action. It is an ongoing effort to protect our frequencies. If for no other reason, this is an excellent reason to belong to the ARRL and support these efforts. No one else is doing it.

Saturday night was treat. The Convention banquet is relatively new to me having gone just last year, and now this year. Last year was really super with Ron Parise, WA4SIR, a payload specialist on the shuttle, giving a talk and showing slides of his mission. Particularly interesting was an audio tape of what he was listening to when he operated 2M and everyone was trying to call him at once. Unbelievable cacophony. I was even fortunate to sit with him at the head table along with Dick Miller, N8CBU, General Hamvention chairman. This year the banquet moved from the downtown convention center to the Nutter Center located at Wright State University. The reason for this was a concert put on by Ronny Milsap, WB4KCG. Tickets were sold to the locals that were admitted to the Center after the

banquet meal. Ronny put on a great concert and talked about ham radio. It was really awesome, whether you care for Milsap or not. Plus the food was good, too. No, I didn't get to sit at the head table this year, nor would I have wanted to. There was a massive speaker "farm" located all around the stage, and I took pity on about the first 10 rows of tables. I think I sat in the 11th row, which was about right. Of interest to packet radio operators, Bob Bruninga, WB4APR, received the Technical Excellence Award and was given five minutes for a short speech. He brought out an egg timer and set it on the podium remarking that he wasn't going to bore the crowd more than his allotted time, which drew laughs from the more than 1000 people present.

All in all Dayton is huge. The annual budget is now over \$700,000 for the three day weekend. There are about 750 volunteers on 28 committees. Security is tight with some guys arrested by the FBI last year for selling illegal contraband out in the fleamarket. The convention is well organized, and well run, and a whole lot of fun. If you manage to get caught up in the activities such as the numerous forums, and the 24 or more Unofficial functions listed in the printed program, you can't help but enjoy your Dayton Experience. The year 2000 will be a granddaddy of all Dayton's when the Hamvention will join the ARRL for a National Convention. This will be a first. I would imagine that strategic plans are already being made. Two weeks after this Hamvention, committees will form and start working on the '99 Hamvention. It takes time to plan and run such a huge operation – and nobody does it better than the Dayton Amateur Radio Association (DARA)!

DAYTON HAMFEST AND PACKET RADIO

Marvin Kaskawits KD2CK

The Dayton Hamfest and Packet Radio By Marvin Kaskawits KD2CK Well after one whole year of planning and looking forward to the big day the gates finally opened at the outdoor flea market at 8:00 AM and the crowd just swarmed in. It was a feeding frenzy. There were over 2400 vendors in the Flea Market area according to what I heard on the TV news. You name it in electronics and it can be found somewhere in the ocean of vendors. At 12 noon the four buildings opened and they were just loaded with displays of Manufacturers, and new parts dealers. If it is ham radio related, it is there and the movers and shakers of the companies were also in attendance. Most of the National and International radio organizations were also represented. So you can see there were enough interesting items to satisfy the most demanding Ham.

Our first visit was over at the Kantronics booth. And low and behold who do we meet but none other than Terry Taylor W5JFM. Certainly a driving force in the Palm Beach Packet Group, having served as past officer of the club and is currently writing very interesting articles for the rest of us to enjoy. Joining us in the picture is Bernice Kaskawits KD2CJ who graciously filled in on modeling duties.



Bernice and I did make two rounds of PacComm and Timeworks and those two reviews will come to you in a three part series. We missed seeing the MFJ booth simply because we ran out of time. You remember what the Brooklyn Dodgers always said, wait until next year.

But, I had the pleasure of meeting Cheryl Selwald who is in charge of Business Development both Regional and International for Kantronics. When I asked her what's new this is what she showed us. Kam '98 a single port Multi-mode Digital Controller that can be used on HF or VHF frequencies. HF operators can now enjoy 1200bps communications on 10 meters, or copy WEFAX feeds without cable swapping. Telemetry and remote control operations are now possible, through the use of two A/D inputs accessed through an AUX port and two control line outputs. In the Kam '98 list of operations here is what it does: GTOR, PACTOR, AMTOR, ARQ, FEC, SELFEC, CCIR 476 & 625, PACKET 300 or 1200 bps, RTTY, NAVTEX/AMTEX, ASCII, WEFAX, WMWIN, HF E-mail, CW, GPS NMEA-0183 compatible, TELEMETRY, REMOTE CONTROL, REMOTE SYSOP ACCESS, HOST Mode, and KISS.

This new modem, will be available in late June or early July and therefore no price was available. While including all the HF modes of the KAM Plus, KAM '98 utilizes a new HC11 heavy duty microcomputer, 128K RAM standard and expandable to 512K all squeezed into 1.2" X 6.7" 6.9" (HWD).

The next is for all of you 9600 baud fans and you can include me. A number of third-port modems are planned for the KPC-9600 Plus: 1200 baud, 9600-38K4 and a HF modem. Any one of these modems may be plugged into the internal header (connector) on the 9612 Plus printed circuit board at a time, creating a three-port KPC-9612 Plus. If you plug in the 9600 baud modem, you create a 1200, 9600, 9600 TNC, and so on. Pricing and availability for these add-ons is not set yet. They anticipate that

the add-ons will cost about \$100.00. They are currently in "beta" test and may be available by mid-June or early July. Next month we will visit with PacComm and view the NEW Spirit-2.

THE CLIFF EFFECT

Mike Michaels K2GPI

Doug is away on holiday; we all wish him a pleasant trip. He has put on me the task of writing this month's column. This club, although primarily for the purpose of promoting Packet, is also dedicated to all digital communications modes. I've been retired from working at Broadcast TV but am still interested in the medium and try to remain somewhat 'current' with the rapid advancements being made. Recently I came across a new term that is being bandied about it is 'Cliff Effect'.

If you haven't as yet, I'm sure it is something you will encounter very soon. With the advent of digital television (and its myriad of standards) we will see the screen go blank unless the signal strength is above a certain threshold and it may go blank if the channel spectrum is not flat because of multipath reception and it may go blank if we are living in the middle of a large city and cannot put up an outside antenna and have to resort to 'rabbit cars'. Supposing you have trees outside your house and are receiving a decent signal through them, what happens when it rains? There is no way of knowing until the event occurs. You have had a good picture on the old TV but you want one of those new high definition TV sets; well, you won't know until you plug it in at home whether you will have satisfactory reception. The networks and some 'local' stations with sufficient funds are showing some activity to get on the air.

I can't wait to see what happens.

PALM BEACH PACKET GROUP MEETING MAY 15, 1998

OPENING AND REPORTS

The meeting was started @ 17:30 hrs. by Vice President Mike (K2GPI) Due to the absence of our President Doug (WB4KGY). No Smoking policy in county buildings was issued and introductions were made.

TREASURE'S REPORT:

Marvin (KD2CK) was out of town and current report was not available. Report will be published in future *White Noise*.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT:

John (WB4MOZ) reported that cable between APRS radio and duplexer, had been replaced. KF4DXY-1 (BOCA) removed from service and aligned frequency about 3KC higher. Call has been changed to KF4DXY-3. K4PKT-9 switch has had no problems.

Doug & John installed FPAC in Stuart on Saturday April 18th. Installed new 2M radio. All is working very well and is extremely fast thru-put from WPB. Vero Beach- 9600 N.G Club was given computer from Vero Beach for FPAC use.

OLD BUSINESS

As per last months BOD meeting, PBPG new address PO BOX 16471, WPB 33416-8471. HAMWEB not adaptable at this time. WHITE NOISE for month of May has been mailed. Three books are for lending, from PBPG library. Club is still looking for Bel Glade replacement site. If you have any leads, please contact Henry (W4UJ) @ 642-7980. Handouts of switch and node's list. ROSE / FPAC users guides was completed.

NEW BUSINESS

Members were encouraged to order PBPG Polo shirts. The club could use your help. Interesting BBS subject of the month. Tampa wormhole, to other cities is being taken down.

ADJOURN/BREAK/WORKSHOP

Mike K2GPI) delivered a talk, with illustrations and photographs, on the history and evolution of television pickup devices.

The above information was provided by Mike (K2GPI).

Respectfully submitted;
Bill (KE4GUM)

BARDS MINUTES
Bob Walker N4CU

I won't send out a minutes report for April. I was out of town (Penang, Malaysia on business) during the meeting and no one "took minutes".

The program was by Carl, an Un-April program. He has done two very successful April Fools meetings so he knew we would be wary. He made this one sound like an April Fool but he "loaded" a tree to a 1:1 SWR and then had everyone go out and he hooked an antenna analyzer to the network he attached to a few turns around a tree and showed us that the tree was the antenna.

Next meeting will be John talking about an antenna design program.

Bob

TREASURE COAST PACKET GROUP
MINUTES of APRIL 11,1998

The Vice President, Joe K1VAO opened the meeting at 9:33AM. The minutes of the March meeting were read by the Secretary, Ladd W2KGV, which were approved on a motion by Bill, N4XEO, with Andy, W8BIX, seconding. The Treasurer Andy, W8BIX reported a \$1419.69 balance. A

motion by Bill N4XEO, and seconded by Tom N4LRV was approved.

The secretary read a packet bulletin advising of the move of the APRS frequency from 145.79, to 144.39 the original frequency was in conflict with the space program.

Bill N4XEO, suggested that we approach the PBPG as to the possibility of their mailing the White Noise to TCPG members at their cost to mail. He was asked to pursue that idea. after a motion to that effect by Bill N4XEO, and a second by Andy W8BIX, passed.

TECH COMMITTEE

Bill N4XEO, has acquired 4 Phoenix radios, 1 for Vero, one for the Stuart switch, and 2 for his BBS. These radios are programmable, therefore no need to purchase xtals to change frequencies. 16 frequencies have been put in Stuart, West Palm, Vero, and Okeechobee among those. He asked for a \$75 check to be drawn. to cover. So approved.

This should place the LAN area in good stead for Vero and Okee. There will also a be cost for connector cables of about \$30.00

Bill also said that he had tried the 4 ports on the computer for the FPAC system that has been installed. Also the suffix for the LAN has been changed to "-9" (K1VAO-9, 561793 for example) no longer "-5", and the digi will be "-8"

Ladd W2KGV reported talking with Doug KB4KGY of the PBPG about the "Burps", and Doug thought it might be a faulty ground connection which would draw more current and unbalance the circuit. When asked if the high power draw of the 440 radio could be causing the problem, he said that the orange pot inside could be turned to lower the output. Ladd W2KGV also said that due to the "Burps", he would have about 20 or more retries. for each packet.

Q and A Period

Denny W9OQN brought up his problem with the audio output of his setup, and received several suggestions from those present.

Tom N4LRV, reported that the money for the upgrade of the Vero switch was voted on and approved, They will obtain the Phoenix radios etc for FPAC at Vero.

There being no new business brought up, the meeting was adjourned at 10 AM

Attending were, N4XEO, AF4CN K1VAO, W9OQN, W8BIX, N4LRV, WA1COA, W2KGV

Respectfully submitted,
Ladd Sajor W2KGV Secy.

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:
bmanley@gate.net
KB4XE @WB4TEM.#BCR.FL.US.NOAM