The

W5ES BULLETIN

The El Paso Amateur Radio Club

Editor Clay Emert, K5TRW

January 2009

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Presidents Corner

Top of the line HF rigs at $2500 plus and which one do I want for 2009

If your vision of kit-building requires a soldering iron, the DZ company of Loveland, Colorado, offers what it says is "the only high end true kit, soldering required, on the market." The DZ Sienna covers 500 kHz through 30 MHz on receive and all HF ham bands on transmit. It features 137 memories, an uncluttered front panel, DSP, 10 band graphic equalizer, triple-conversion receiver, 4-khz roofing filter, and capabilities for computer control with the PC on the side.

Flex-Radio Systems is a pioneer in software-defined radios for the amateur service, and the flex 5000 is a high-frequency and 6-meter amateur radio transceiver that follows several years of the several years of the popular Flex SDR-1000. Complete computer control is available with a single Fire Wire (IEEE-1394) connection, and all analog-to-digital conversions are performed internally in the Flex 5000, so no sound card is required.

The Ten-Tec Orion II has a face that any ham will love with symmetrical large tuning knobs, big color thin-film transistor display, and rows and rows of buttons. Ten-Tec sells factory direct and is ultra-responsive to any customer inquiry about any little feature in the equipment. You get immediate attention when you log on or call in to Ten-Tec. The Orion II covers all frequency bands and has a digital AGC (automatic gain control) system where you can tailor AGC response for whichever mode you are using. Power output is 100 watts, and the Orion II receiver includes 600 built-in DSP filter settings, extraordinary dynamic range to cover weak DX signals.

This HF rig would likely require 66 lbs. of $100 bills handed over to Array Solutions for its imported-from-Germany Hilberling HF/VHF transceiver, the PT-8000. It runs a cool 600 watts out-put (model B), covers all U.S. ham bands from 160 through 2 meter, offers two independent receivers, and takes its own transverters all the way up to X band (10 GHz). Ultra-steep front-end pre-selectors and band-pass filters auto-track as you jump around the bands, and three roofing filters keep adjacent QRM out of earshot. The PT-8000 IF filter is a 16-pole, 10.7-MHz, 2.4-kHz band-width filter with a shape factor of 1.3-amazingly steep. Of course, RX and TX DSP equalization are standard. The built-in antenna tuner features very large coils and Gold-plated contact reed relays. The radio is the brainchild of Hans Hiberling, DK7LG, who takes his RF engineering experience and mixes it with ham radio products.

Now you are thinking which rig is best for me? Spending thousands of dollars for big, hefty rig is a great investment if you have the money, a major beam and sky-high tower, and the time to play big-time ham radio and contesting. This is where those major rigs excel.

To the member's at W5ES I wish hope, joy and a Blessed Day everyday in 2009.
73's
Artis Wright, KD5KFY]

A Simple Inexpensive and Effective HF Antenna

By
Bob Beaudet, W1YRC

Have you noticed that our Amateur ranks have grown recently? I'm confident that you've seen and heard the new Amateurs on repeaters, at club meetings, flea markets and VE sessions. Of course, this wave of new hams was at least encouraged if not simply the result of the FCC's action in February, 2007 that removed code testing from any future US Amateur license examination. Many other licensing authorities in the world had previously followed the recommendations adopted at the World Radio communication Conference of 2003 to drop code testing. I was amazed at how many misunderstood the ruling and were telling their friends that FCC had eliminated code authorization and we could never use the mode after a certain date. Of course, that was never true but that's a topic for a different article.

The FCC cited changes in Article 25 of the International Radio Regulations adopted at World Radio communication Conference 2003 (WRC-03) as its primary reason to go forward with eliminating Morse code as an Amateur Radio licensing requirement in the future. Among other changes, WRC-03 deleted testing of Morse code proficiency for any Amateur applicants, leaving it optional for individual countries to determine whether or not they want to mandate Morse testing. Four years later in February, 2007 when FCC's change took place, several countries already had already dropped their Morse testing requirements, so neither FCC nor ARRL were leading the way or setting the stage for others to follow. The FCC was simply complying with what appeared to be all but inevitable.

One result of the change was positive is that it boosted our ham population with 7,000 new Technician class operators becoming licensed since February, 2007. By now, many of those new Techs have upgraded to General and Extra and are actively looking for HF equipment. They've created a new hot market for used HF gear. Many have been searching for an HF antenna on the Internet, talking with sales people at their favorite radio candy store or by talking with their friends, who probably knew as little as they did about antennas. Some folks bought the Buckmaster off center fed (OCF) Windom http://hamcall.net/7bandocf.html, some others bought the B&W folded dipole http://www.bwantennas.com/ama/fdipole.ama.htm all band antenna.

The prices of these highly promoted packaged antennas run from below $200 to nearly $500, depending on options according to their websites. Of course, a great many have bought the time tested G5RV package for about $100. They're all advertised to perform miraculously on multiple HF bands and in truth, some of them do perform quite well. The Buckmaster and B&W claim that you don't need to use an antenna tuner with their antennas.

It should be quickly noted that the Buckmaster is simply a Windom antenna, a fine time tested multiband antenna design but hardly worth the price that they ask for it, despite the fact that they build it extremely well. On the other hand, the B&W folded dipole specifications are absurd, in my humble opinion. Sadly, B&W appears to be counting on the fact that their customers won't know fact from fiction and will send their big checks for their magic antenna in the hope and expectation that their new B&W folded dipole will do everything that its specs claim. They will learn an expensive lesson, "if something appears too good to be true, it probably is."

A simple half wave folded dipole is a very good single band antenna. But in B&W's folded dipole, the non-descript little box at the top of the antenna is possibly nothing more than a resistor, making the thing an expensive dummy load. Try loading up a large light bulb to see what I mean. It presents a perfect 1:1 VSWR reading on any HF band and doesn't need a tuner. But, it's not much of an antenna. Please do yourself a big favor and keep that antenna money you've saved up in your pocket. A far simpler, more efficient and effective antenna may be constructed by virtually anyone who can use a tape measure, side cutters, wire strippers and ability to use the formula:

$$\frac{468}{\text{freq (Mhz)}} = \text{feet}$$ (*to determine what a ½ wave dipole needs to be*.)

A basic dipole is a half wave antenna for one band, fed in the center with 52 or 72 ohm coaxial cable, either directly or through a 1:1 balun transformer. It requires no antenna tuner and will load up quite easily and radiate efficiently on the band for which it was cut. Some will claim that a tuner is necessary to make a dipole "look" resonant over the entire 80 meter band, especially if it was cut to favor either end of the band, CW or phone. Well, that's true but again the topic for a different article. Surely, no tuner is necessary on 60, 40, 30, 20, 17, 15, 12 or 10 meters.

There's nothing unique about a fan dipole. Two, three, four or more basic dipoles, cut for HF bands from 160 through 10 meters, are measured in the conventional manner and layered one atop of the other and fed with the same coaxial feedline. You do not need to switch your feedline between the different dipoles. The RF will naturally seek the dipole that is resonant. All the others will be ignored since they appear as very high impedance to the RF being driven into the array, hence all but the resonant antenna will be completely invisible. Therefore, your transmitter's RF will instantly find the properly matched dipole element without using a switch, if of course you included a dipole for that band in your array when you built it. You may correctly say that your fan dipole has automatic switching built into it. If I were marketing this antenna, that feature could be highlighted and add $50 to its price. But please pardon me, I'm off topic again.

Cut each measured dipole in half and connect each of the resulting pieces to each side the center feed point, separating the other ends of the wires out either horizontally, vertically or if you wish, diagonally. Just keep them apart from one another. The article referenced later in this piece suggests an end separation of 38 inches for antennas up to 18 MHz. The article also suggests vertical separation at the feedpoint of 5.5 inches, but I tie all my wires together and it seems to work quite nicely for me. The choice is yours. I don't imagine that separating the feedpoints as they describe will do any harm and could help, possibly it's similar to eating chicken soup when you have a cold.

I made my fan dipole out of insulated #14 stranded wire, spaced to make certain that the wires don't touch and short one another out. Any sort of non-conductive spreader will do the trick. It isn't critical, relative to size, strength, test voltage, etc. A plastic drinking straw will do the trick if it's strong enough. I use ½ inch OD PVC pipe from the home supply outlet about 12-15 inches long to keep the wires apart and wanting to wind around one another in windy weather. Home Depot and Lowe's carry 5 ft lengths of ½ inch OD PVC and sell them for about $2. Drill small holes through each end of the short lengths of PVC (or ??) to run the wires through and secure them, once you have them adjusted to where you want them to be, with a small dab of hot glue on each end of the PVC piece. It's

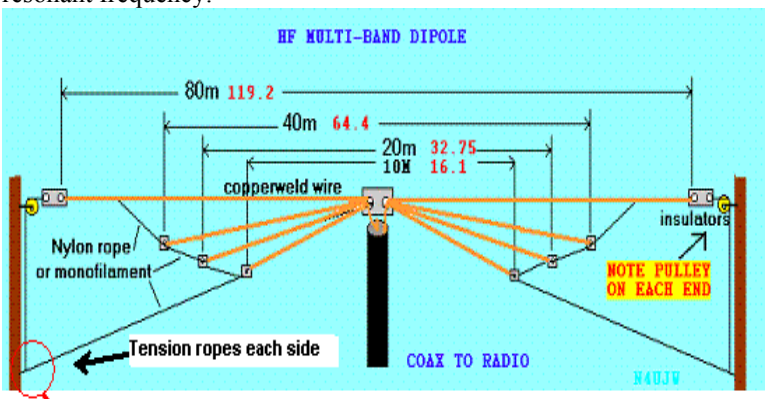
also best to tie down the bottom (shortest) dipole with a Dacron line to prevent the fan array from wrapping around itself in the wind. Short pieces of this small PVC pipe may also be used to make your end insulators on the longest dipole. No show stopping need to spend store prices of $2-3 each for fancy and pretty ceramic insulators.

The features I like most about this fan dipole antenna are that it's cheap, simple to make, uses a single feedline, uses no switches, coils, traps, etc. and best of all, the thing works really well. Mine is 65 ft high at its center and has an 80, 40 and 30 meter dipole connected to a common feedpoint which is a 1:1 B1-5K balun transformer from Radioworks. I've worked DX in all parts of the world on each of the bands I have; 80, 40 & 30 meters. I used to have it mounted at 85 ft on the tower but lowered it and improved its performance. That's correct…I lowered it. The extra height seemed smart at the time but being at ¼ wave above ground (65 ft) proved optimum and improved my 80/75 meter performance notably. Sometimes a smart idea doesn't win a fight with the laws of physics.

A nice bonus to anyone including a 40 meter dipole in his/her system is the fact that a 40 meter dipole also "looks like" three half waves in phase on 15 meters to the RF being fed to it. Being an odd number of half waves (3), the center of the single half wave 40 meter dipole is also the center of the center half wave dipole of the 15 meter array. Naturally, both center feed point impedances are 50-70 ohms. So, you get a bonus high performance DX antenna for no extra cost or effort. Cool! That's my kind of deal.

The article referenced below on the hamuniverse website suggests that the 80 meter antenna will also perform on 30 meters, but I don't accept that idea since the bands are not harmonically related and the corresponding centers for each of the two bands are not at the same point on the wire, unlike the common configuration we find with 40 meters (7 MHz) and 15 meters (21 MHz). So, I'd suggest that you simply add another dipole to your array just for 30 meters. After all, it's only another 46.3 feet of wire. Following the article's technical reasoning, three half waves at 30 meters equals 138.9 ft which would also make a resonant dipole at 3.38 MHz which is well below our 80 meter band. That's not a very good antenna for 80. Following the same logic, a half wave dipole cut for the center of 80 meters (3.750 MHz) provides a three half wave antenna at 11.3 MHz, well **above** our 30 meter band. Also not good at all! So, splurge for 46.3 ft more wire and add a separate 30 meter section to your array if you want to operate on the 30 meter band. You'll be very happy with the results. I did and mine works great. Below is a drawing of a fan dipole. This variation uses nylon rope rather than PVC tube to keep the wires apart. I prefer small PVC pipe but either will work fine. Please note to tie down the lowest (shortest) dipole to prevent the array from winding itself into a tangled mess in strong winds. As mentioned earlier, I use a 1:1 balun at my coax center feed point instead of just feeding the coax directly to the dipole, as shown in the illustration. Either method will work so it's your option of which way to go. Hanging more than four dipoles tied to the common feed point could become problematic however; trying to properly solder or mechanically connect several wires to each side of the dipole terminal point plus of course, supporting the weight of all the wire and maybe coaxial cable hanging from its center. Of course, you could support the weight of the entire system from a strong Dacron line strung tightly between supports. But in my opinion, the best way to do the job is to hang the center of the array from a standoff arm on your tower or hanging from a tall tree branch. That will remove the weight of the balun and coax cable from the wires and their connections.

This diagram below appears on the website http://www.hamuniverse.com/multidipole.html along with some construction tips. The article suggests length deviations of -4% from the formula derived length for the lowest frequency antenna and +1% for the highest. It also suggests separation at the feed point as well as at the ends of the antenna. I cannot recommend any of these points except keeping the ends apart from one another. I've found over years of making different antennas that the formula 468/freq does not always produce a perfectly resonant antenna at your intended frequency. This is mainly due to variables in your specific locations; trees, buildings, power/telephone lines, ground conditions, etc. However, the formula provides a good start point and it's always a good idea to add a few inches to the calculated length. It's simple to trim a little bit of wire off but very tough to add it back. Use an antenna analyzer or SWR bridge to determine where your antenna is resonant and to help you trim your antenna to reach the desired resonant frequency.



Tension rope is not tied to pully rope in picture. It is tied near location of pully rope down on supports within easy reach. It is tied last after final SWR adjustment and the antenna is in it's final position.

Suggested total lengths:
80 meters - 120 feet
40 meters - 65 to 66 feet
20 meters - 34 feet
10 meters - 17 feet
These lengths are not exact. Some tuning may be required. Use the standard formula 468 / freqmhz for total feet for each band (freq) of interest. Adjust each length longer or shorter as needed.

Our RI Technical Coordinator, Rob Vincent K1DFT, has suggested that I include a caveat statement in this article. Although everything I've stated in this article is truthful, if the array you make has too many harmonically related dipoles connected, strange "product" impedances could be presented at the coaxial cable feedpoint. It isn't likely to happen but possible, so in fairness, I must include a warning. I'm told that if you include a 20 meter dipole along with several others, you could have some issues. For example, if you make a fan dipole for 80, 40, 30, 17, you should be OK, but if you add 20 and 10 meters to this combination, it's possible to cause an issue. But, I have checked with users of such combinations and they report no apparent impedance problems.

So there you are. All you need is some wire, a few insulators, a couple of hours of time, possibly solder, hardware and some Dacron line plus sufficient space in which to hang it when it's completed.

You should try to get it up about ¼ wave length above ground at your lowest dipole band, 65 ft for 80 meters, 33 ft for 40, etc. for optimum performance. Good Dxing to all and save your money by building your own multi band antenna, one that will actually work well. Except for the coaxial cable, a three or four band fan dipole shouldn't cost more than $25-35. If you have a supply of "junque" in your garage as most old timers have, your cost could be zip or very close to it. Of course, the best part of this project is that the fan dipole that you made with your own hands will almost certainly perform as expected, unlike some of the highly marketed expensive systems.
Happy building and 73,
Bob Beaudet W1YRC

<♦>

EC Bulletin

WL2K Update
These past 2 months have been productive for the El Paso Winlink Team. The K5CW-10 Radio Message Server (RMS) came online on the west side of El Paso. The KB5HPT-10 RMS located in Northeast El Paso had a face lift by getting a new KPC-9612+ TNC. Both RMS stations are on the air 24/7 offering 1200 baud and 9600 baud capabilities. The 1200 baud frequency has moved from 145.030 to 145.070 MHz, and the 9600 baud is on 439.010 MHz. The ever reliable KE5APX-10 TelPac Gateway has been repackaged into a portable configuration for easy deployment to where ever we might need it. Warren, KE5APX and, Doug, AE5HE have been busy working on getting the computer sound card technology ready for use with the Winlink system. At the time of this writing one of the models is working on both 1200 and 9600 baud. More testing and tweaking will be done to be sure the virtual TNC will be a reliable substitute for an actual TNC.

Other News
I hope that everyone had a happy and enjoyable holiday, and that 2009 will be prosperous. Packet nets are being held in conjunction with the Thursday Night Multiplex Net. We are meeting on 145.010 MHz. The net begins at 8 PM and will run as long as the voice net. Anyone with a TNC is welcome and encouraged to get on the air and check in with us. At the present time I am acting as Net Control for the packet net. Connect to KB5HPT-3 and let us know you are out there. We will ask you for your comments in the order that you check in. If someone wants to get on the air for the first time be sure and let us know. This is a great way to learn how to operate packet. We will be glad to help those who want to learn. If you want to use the sound card technology in stead of a TNC we can give you the options that are available for that. The sound card method is less expensive than buying an external TNC. However, some assembly is required. Send me an email to the address shown below. In the "Subject:" line be sure to use "//WL2K Packet Radio" (without quotes) or call me at the number shown below.
Questions and comments are welcome and encouraged concerning the content of this article. Send an email to the address shown below. In the "Subject:" line be sure to use "//WL2K EC BULLETIN" (without quotes).
Lew Maxwell, KB5HPT
ARRL Emergency Coordinator, El Paso County
kb5hpt@winlink.org
(915) 449-5277

"No Mark went to the ham auction this afternoon, to get rid of a couple old radios that were cluttering up the place...Oh I think I hear him pulling in now!"

<♦>

Stolen Equipment

I had the following equipment stolen on December 13, 2008. Ruidoso New Mexico, case # S08001176 and the Officer In Charge of this case is: Police Officer Chris Bryant, his phone number is 575-258-7365.

Yaesu FT-1500M 2 meter transceiver, this radio is quite small but has an exterior metal casting that makes it heavy for it's size.
Mirage Communications 160 watt amplifier
Diamond X-700HNA dual band 2 meter/440 random type vertical antenna, this antenna is 24 feet in length.
Astron RS-50M power supply.
Kenwood TS-850AT transceiver with the PS31 speaker, and the PS52 power supply.
50 feet of Beldon 3913 50 ohm cable with 259 connectors on both ends.

If any of this equipment shows up in Albuquerque let police know immediately.

Thanks for your interest and help, George Limacher, K5YQ, telephone: 575-623-3934

CHARLIE'S WHISTLE

By

Bob Beaudet, W1YRC

One of the standing traditions that Mary and Charlie have is to regularly go out to dinner with close friends at Christmas time. During the time between Christmas and New Year's, they went out with Charlie's friend Mike and his wife Marlene to an old country inn up on the ridge across the valley from their home on DX Hill. It's about an hour's drive but according to critical reviews and what friends in the ham club, Mary's crafts club and their church have reported, they would not be disappointed.

Mike is Charlie's friend of a few decades who owns a barn full of old Collins equipment and always is turning up attractive deals. He also frequents flea markets to buy and sell equipment. He also participates in government auctions and often lands great deals. A couple of years ago, he was high bidder on a pallet full of HF amplifiers that were designed for our State Department and destined for shipment overseas. Charlie and Mike opened the Cosmoline packed crates and discovered several gorgeous commercial Collins amplifiers that were capable of full legal power all day long from 1.5 to 30 MHz. Charlie obtained two of them for his station, Mike kept a couple for himself and he sold the rest to individuals. He made a considerable profit on that deal.

During the week between Christmas and New Years, the four drove through the valley and to the inn. They enjoyed one another's company as well as the beautiful lights on houses and trees along the way. When they reached the inn, the scene that greeted them could have been on a Christmas card. A little snow had fallen and the old place was decorated to the nines. Smoke was rising from the huge field rock chimney. Mary and Marlene may have described it best by saying it was the kind of place you can only imagine going to during the Christmas season with friends.

Mary is, as you all know, a very good cook. Julia Child once brushed off someone calling her America's Chef by saying that she was just a good cook. Similarly, Mary has admitted when asked to be one of the best cooks on DX Hill. Charlie and many others certainly would agree.

Being the good cook that she is, she knows food preparation and offered suggestions to the others and the waiter how something should be prepared. Charlie only advised the waiter that he'd be wise to follow Mary's suggestions. The waiter was quite courteous and noted everything Mary suggested and promised to pass it along to the chef.

While waiting for dinner to be prepared, the discussion between Mike and Charlie invariably got around to ham radio. But, since Mary and Marlene are not hams, they respectfully restrained them selves from going into full ham dialogue. But Mary could easily tell that something was bothering Charlie, so she gave him the opportunity to clear it up before dinner was served. She asked Marlene, "Would you care to freshen up before dinner?" Of course, Marlene got the message and the ladies departed.

Charlie asked Mike, "Is it just me because I'm getting older or do the new operators miss the point that attracted us to this hobby?" Mike rubbed his chin and nodded, "No, I think you're right. I've seen the same; especially since this new batch of no code folks have become active on all the bands." Mike quickly added, "I'm really happy that we've attracted more hams but they aren't the same as the ones we've seen in the past." Both thought for a moment and then Mike offered, "You know Charlie; I don't think it's because of the no code thing. In trying to attract younger hams, I think we've also attracted their twenty and thirty something habits, customs and priorities, which are very different from ours. They're used to instant messaging on their Blackberries and all the other devices that they use every day. Everything is done for them and is easy enough for a three year old. Absolutely no skill required. They want ham radio to be the same."

Charlie rubbed his chin and then wagged his finger at Mike, "Yep, you're probably right, Mike. You know last year, I spoke to our club about the instant gratification problems that I saw with the new DXers who were upset that they couldn't get DXCC in a year. Some were upset that they couldn't work a hundred countries in a contest weekend." Mike grinned and said, "Is that because you can do it, Charlie? Is it a personal thing?" Charlie knew that his old friend was kidding but he also knew that Mike was stating a very valid point. Why does Charlie get bothered over these "kids" who feel genuinely upset that they can't work a hundred different countries in a weekend? Why doesn't he simply look past their habits and ignore them?

This strong desire has driven some new generation hams with software savvy into creating programs that would search the DX Cluster for new entities and sound alarms when it detects one. With something called rig control, the program can tune the transceiver to the DXer's frequency, turn the beam toward him and will log the contact, make out the QSL card and mailing label. They have also created programs that can copy and send code at very high speed. There's nothing stopping these clever software designers from producing a program that combines all these things into one super program so that all the operator needs to do is sip his coffee and watch. Its small wonder why Charlie is upset, being the very proud traditional skilled legacy ham that he is.

Charlie said something unusually strong for him, being such a normally gentle person. "Mike, I don't like what the new technology is doing to our hobby. We're supposed to be experimenters, operators, designers, builders and public servants. I can guess that the new hams would feel that they're serving all of those goals with their automated programs but not to me. I don't believe that the end ever justifies the means, in most anything. These new hams, by using automated methods to find, work, log, QSL and record their DX are

losing the sense of how important it is for all Amateurs to become skilled and competent operators. By sitting back with their feet on the desk and watching their programs have all the fun, they don't learn the basic skills of a DXer or a contester. They're just lazy."

Mike replied, "Charlie, a few weeks ago, I participated in the ARRL 160 CW contest. It was on CW and many stations were ripping along at 25, 30 wpm and more. When I search and pounce, I always call stations at the speed they are sending and in more than half the cases, they couldn't copy my call until I slowed way down and repeated it once or twice. I know very well that I was being heard but these guys just couldn't copy my call at the speed they were using. I had never seen that to be so prevalent before that contest. This new wave of guys who learn CW after getting their licenses must be entering contests now. I can hardly wait for the ARRL DX and WPX contests."

Charlie added, "These folks use CW Skimmer and other software to decipher the code, rather than try to learn the code themselves. In my view, these wanna-be's will never become real hams as long as they refuse to actually learn code and become respectable operators. Those other guys you worked may just need some Elmering to tell them to slow down a bit until their copying skill catches up closer to their ambition. They'll be OK if they slow down a bit and actually learn the skills to become a good operator. The real problem is with these make-believe hams who refuse to learn code and spend their time using their software tools to copy and send for them is that they're not advancing themselves as Amateurs. I just find that disgusting. If they just tried to learn, I think that I'd feel much differently about them."

The ladies arrived back and Marlene said, "I'll bet you boys thought we had gotten lost. Mary peeked into the kitchen and the chef invited us in. He asked if she were the lady who sent in specific instructions. You know what happened then. Mary had an apron on in a few seconds and he put her to work. After a while, I had to pull her out before they added her to the payroll." Mary added, "It was wonderful! Charlie, you know the way I make my gravy with the butter and cream and not use those yuckie thickeners to give it body? Well, I showed the chef how I did it and he said he had never seen that way of doing it. He was so appreciative that he kissed my hand, said merci mademoiselle and told us that our dinners were on his tab tonight."

Charlie smiled and said, "Well, that's Mike's luck. He was going to pick up the tab tonight. Merry Christmas, Mike." They all laughed. Charlie was kidding Mike and he knew it. Actually, Charlie had planned to do it, so it was he who was lucky. After a short while, the waiter and a trail of others behind him arrived at the table and began filling the table with all sorts of appetizers, salads, soups, a variety of wine and other beverages. The waiter said, "Compliments of the chef. Your dinners will be held until you are ready for them."

Wow! Everyone at their table and several others nearby was astonished. They enjoyed everything from the shrimp cocktail and lobster bisque to the escargot and tropical fruit. There was far too much for them and they knew that they needed to stop before they couldn't possibly enjoy their entrée. After enjoying as much as they dared, Charlie signaled their waiter that they wished to have their entrée's served. The table was cleared and the waiter said that he would prepare two "take home" bags of the remaining appetizers for each couple. How considerate!

Charlie had ordered one of his favorites, a nice medium rare steak with baked potato. Mary wanted chicken l'orange and Marlene asked to have swordfish. Mike couldn't resist the house's specialty item, prime rib which was presented with great flourish by the staff. It's easy to see why this inn has such a wonderful reputation. Everything was prepared to perfection and there was very little talking for the next several minutes while the group worked on their scrumptious dinners. After finishing, Mary proclaimed that the dinner was done to perfection and coming from her, that's quite an endorsement.

During desert, for which everyone selected fruit and sherbet, Charlie dared to add something more to his and Mike's conversation, "Mike, earlier I didn't want to say that all this new technology was bad. In fact, I'm happy to see these new tools come into our hobby but what bothers me is when these 'thirty something' newbies use them to take an easy way to becoming a DXer or contester, they never learn the basics of becoming a considerate and competent Amateur. If they use these tools to help them after they acquire at least moderate personal CW and phone operating skills, I'd be perfectly happy."

Mary just looked at Marlene and said, "Do we need to go back to the kitchen?" They all laughed and Charlie said, "OK, OK. That's all. I just had that final thought in my head from what we were talking about earlier." Mary said she was just kidding and knew that it was hopeless to keep you two from talking about ham radio.

Dinner was wonderful and they groaned themselves away from the table and picked up the two large bags of appetizers from the chef who personally brought them out of the kitchen. He kissed Mary on her cheek and told her she was always welcome to visit his kitchen. They wished the staff a Happy Holiday season and found their way to the car. The hour long ride home through the valley was very pleasant and relaxing. They listened to a nice CD and chatted about their Christmas experiences, their kids, grandkids and dogs. It was a wonderful evening and they agreed to do it again really soon.

Happy Holidays from DX Hill.

January 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
WAE Certificate group meets at 0900 at W5ES 28.440 MHz				**1**	**2** Regular Meeting K5WPH 7:PM	**3** New Technician Class starts at 12:00 PM
4 **WAE Certificate group meets at 0900 at W5ES 28.440 MHz**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9** **Regular Meeting W5ES 8PM**	**10** No Host Ham Breakfast at Tejas Café on Dyer
11 **WAE Certificate group meets at 0900 at W5ES 28.440 MHz**	**12**	**13** **EL PASO GOLD PROSPECTORS 6 :00 PM 2100 San Diego**	**14**	**15**	**16** K5WPH Meeting	**17** 11:30 AM QCWA Luncheon / Meeting at Furr's In Sunrise Center Meeting 12:30 PM
18 **WAE Certificate group meets at 0900 at W5ES 28.440 MHz**	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23** **W5ES Tech-night meeting**	**24**
25 **WAE Certificate group meets at 0900 at W5ES 28.440 MHz**	**26**	**27**	**28**	**29**	**30**	

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