



REMINISCENCES

WA8YCD



It's true. I admit to being an O.F. after all, I *am* a pentagenarian. And a life member of QCWA.

The recent loss of our friend W8GUL got me thinking about the olden days. That happens more often now that it used to. Maybe it's because there are more and more olden days to recall as time passes?

I saw on the internet a reference to the Knight T-60 transmitter, the first transmitter I had as a Novice.

In 1967, the MWA was holding license classes at the YMCA on Fayette Street. Jim taught the Novice class for the club in 1967.

We had several starting out, but not everyone took the test. Of 9 or 10 who came to the class initially, we ended up with just five: Mike Furfari WN8YCC, Bob West WN8YCD, Terry Feck WN8YCE, "Butch" Paugh WN8YCF and Bill Jacobs WN8YCG. Of those, Mike, Bill, and I eventually upgraded and "Dropped the 'N'" changing our calls to "WA8". In later years, Mike moved to 3-land and got a new call, K3FH. So, now Buzzy Bill and I are the last of the group.

The phrase "Dropped the 'N'" in those days referred to when calls went from WN8 to W8 or KN8 to K8. By our time, even though the WA8 calls had been nearly depleted, we still called it that.

What we had were the old 1-year, non-renewable, 75-watt, crystal-control Novice privileges. You had one year to get your code speed up and study for the written test.

If you got on the air and had one or two QSOs every night, by the end of the year you could make it.

QSOs were special in those days. There was a certain ineffable element to it. I've heard it called "Magic".

I started building my Knight T-60 the day after I took my Novice Test. I had Jim check it out and he said it was a pretty good job except for one or two sloppy solder joints. He had me come over and we reworked them.

My receiver, was a beat-up old Hallicrafters S-38. It had a main tuning dial and a band-spread dial. On the main tuning dial the 80-meter Novice segment was less than a needle width. On the band-spread dial it was about 1/2 inch on the scale.



Cont. on page 4

MWA Meeting info

- April 17, 2007
- Third Tuesday of month
7:00pm
- Refreshments at 6:30pm
- Red Cross office
White Birch Towers
3rd Floor
- Talk in 145.43 MHz
(304) 216-1726
- Meeting topic
- Don't know
- ARES Quarterly meeting
after the meeting
- Equipment set up
assistance

"It is not the class of license the Amateur holds, but the class of the Amateur that holds the license."

MWA INFO

President

Bill Harris – N6XAK

Vice President

Randy Crowe – N8OZY

Secretary/Treasurer

Bob Steele – N8HGL

ARES Mon. County Emergency Coordinator

Bob Steele – N8HGL

Web Administrator

Roger Neptune – KC8YNZ

<http://www.gsl.net/W8MWA>

Fellowship Liaison

Wick Kirk – KC8RHO

304-983-8050

Editor

Rick Heis – N8PDQ

RadarRick@atlanticbb.net

(304) 864-6356

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

De **N6XAK**

I am really hoping that by the end of this month I will be able to have some normalcy around our house. We have finally finished the two rooms that were holding us up from moving the rest of our furniture in. Maybe now, I can get down to business the way it should be. I need my radio fix. Boxes and boxes full of STUFF are being ignored.

For those of you that don't seem to think I am moving quite fast enough in working to put this club back on its feet, please remember, anything worth while takes time. Right now the focus is on giving this club an identity. Everyone works so hard at what they do, that, you deserve to be noted for who you are. People should know who is giving them a hand instead of just referring to you as the radio club from Morgantown. We have interviewed a couple of people so far for wares for the club and there is at least one more to come unless someone has another that we do not know about. Please come and see what these folks have to offer. It's you club and you should be the ones to decide on what we want to wear, especially if we decide on an "official jacket or hat". This is only fair to all the members. Can we get a couple of people to design a club pin? I'm sure there must be some talented doodlers out there. Bring it in quick and perhaps we can get them done thru a vendor at Dayton.

According to the bylaws, Leroy (past president) is forming a committee to review the constitution and by-laws. If you have any suggestions, please let him know. It is required by our constitution that we review this matter on a regular basis. I'm sure he would value your input.

I still have not heard if there is any interest this year in field day. I myself and several others will not be here for the occasion, so if you are interested, please speak up and I and others will be glad to help in any way I can up until the time I go on job assignment in June.

Recently I heard from a few folks about the net on Wednesday nights. I myself am "very" pleased with the way things are working out. As with all projects, it will take time to get the bugs out. Again, this is your opportunity to speak up. Is the net to your liking? Are you getting out of it what you want and need to know? Is there anything you would like to see added or taken out? Please let Jim know as he is the net director and is doing the best of his ability to make sure you have the best.

For fun this month, look to the heavens on the 22nd and you may see the meteor shower that will present itself. If you have never tried, this would be a good time to try to work a little meteor scatter. And, if you are into moon bounce, this is not the night to try.

And remember...

When you come to the end of all the light you know, and it's time to step into the darkness of the unknown, faith, is knowing that one of two things shall happen: either you will be given something solid to stand on or you will be taught to fly.

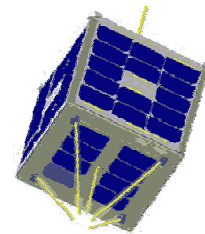
Bill Harris 73



SKYWARN Training that was scheduled for Tuesday April 24 has been **CANCELLED**. We will reschedule as soon as possible, probably this fall. Instructor health concerns.

BIRDWATCHING 101

by Bob West, WA8YCD



On Thursday, March 22, Tech Class 2007 had a special class in *bird watching*... Not the feathered kind, but the high-tech, high-flying kind - an Amateur Satellite! AO-51, sometimes known as "Oscar Echo" is a Low-Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite with a 2-meter/70 centimeter FM repeater on board.

Part of the effort to do more than "Teach The Test", the class has been attempting to bring in demonstrations and presentations to show the various things that can be done with a Technician Class License. A lot of new licensees get on 2m FM and the local repeater, and that's it. There's so much more they can do, like Packet, APRS, SSTV, FSTV, EME, and Amateur Satellites.



March 22, 2007 - KZ8E Assembles Antenna and Checks AOS, TCA, and LOS Directions.

Jeff Woods KZ8E stepped up and volunteered to show the class how to use their Technician Class Privileges to operate the most popular current Amsat-Oscar satellite, AO-51. Jeff ran the prediction programs and determined that on March 22 at about 8:40PM, the satellite would pass over Morgantown. The rise in the southeast, peak at about 45 degrees in the northeast, and set just west of north.

The satellite would be in V/U mode, with uplink on 145.920MHz/PL 67.0, and downlink on 435.300MHz. The repeater on board AO-51 is sensitive enough so that an HT and handheld yagi can be enough to make a QSO. Jeff used his Arrow Antenna beam, and Icom ICW32A HT.

Jeff also prepared two slide shows for the class, one on satellite operations, and one on EME (Earth-Moon-Earth) or Moonbounce.



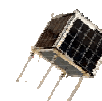
March 22, 2007 - KZ8E signs his call on 145.920

After the slide show presentations, the group adjourned to the parking lot for the live demonstration. Everyone watched and listened while Jeff acquired the satellite's signal and we heard several stations very clearly from Florida and Georgia.

A couple of calls got no results before the signal was lost, but at the Time of Closest Approach (TCA) the signals were full quieting!



March 22, 2007 - KZ8E Acquires AO-51



Cont. from page 1..... I had very little idea what frequency I was actually tuning. I could hear WWV most nights and knew that it was on at 5000 kHz. I had a crystal calibrator (maybe an AMECO?) and could count "birdies" every 100 KHz down to 3700 kHz, so I knew just about where the bottom end of the Novice band was. I eventually got the idea to mark on the plastic dial cover where the needle should be.

I strung up an 80-meter dipole in the back yard. It was only about 15 feet above the ground at the highest point and drooped horribly. It was fed with RG-58, and I cut a piece of 2x4 to hold the window up enough to bring the coax in. In the colder weather, I stuffed the space with some old rags.

Someone in the club gave me a crystal for 3743 kHz. I found another one at Jackson's Mill for 3721 kHz, and a one each for 40m and 15m some time later.

My first real QSO was Jack, K8SDI from Martinsburg. Not all that far, but to me it might as well been the Moon. I was thrilled. It was sheer magic. And that got me hooked. I was on every night for the rest of the summer. When school started up in the fall I couldn't put in as much time as I wanted.

Calls began rolling in, slowly at first, W3DX in Maryland, Delf WA8NDY in Buckhannon, and even WA8YCG. All were patient with a fumbling Novice, and all helpful in encouraging me to keep at it.

In time, I got to know the other Novices who lurked about the band. Manual sending with a straight key is a curious process. You would know the guy on the other end by his fist—his sending style. Some would have less than perfect spacing, some would lean on their DAHs too long, some would change speed in the middle of a word. Some were pretty good, too.

There was a guy in Ontario named Roland, and his fist was as unique as any voice or face. I seem to recall that he ran a Heathkit DX-60, and it was a nice clean, strong signal. He was on almost every night that I was.

I'd tweak the tuning a bit and hear him, then as he finished a CQ I'd just tap out "HI ROLAND" and he'd come back with my call. I guess my fist was unique as well.

Sometimes I wish I still had that old T-60. I've been tempted to watch for one on eBay.

I think I eventually traded the T-60 for a 2-meter AM rig. Anybody remember the Heathkit Lunch Boxes?

I couldn't quite break that 10wpm plateau on the way to 13. In those days, some 20 years before the Volunteer Examiner program, you took your exam with an FCC Field Engineer. They gave exams monthly in Washington DC, but only quarterly at the field office in the Federal Building in Pittsburgh.

I made several trips to Pittsburgh, each time coming home disappointed, so I opted for Technician. That meant I lost the use of HF CW.

Lee Rose gave me the Tech exam at the Engineering Building just about a month before my Novice expired. I spent a couple of years as a Tech doing 2-meter AM (playing chess on the air with Al Wright WB8BMW among other things!) We made several trips to Buckhannon and spent Saturdays with Delf WA8NDY and Mary Jane WA8WCK. Delf was WV-SEC at the time. He ran us through several training scenarios and we would all convene at their house for dinner and debriefing.

I stayed at Technician until my senior year in high school. Peter Popovich (then WN8CGH, now KN4CY) and I challenged each other to listen to W1AW code practice every night and compare notes the next day at school until we could comfortably maintain 13 WPM. If one of us slacked off, the other would harangue him unmercifully, regardless of any reason, real or imagined, such as homework or family obligations. We kept each other going.

When we finally did go to Pittsburgh, we both passed 13 WPM, and took the written exams for General and Advanced Class.

Some of the memorable hams—there have been very many—along the way who have been an influence.

Some are gone now, and some are around somewhere. Besides Jim McEuwen W8GUL, there were Dave Mitchell WA8IMY then, now K8DM; Marty Chittum WA8IMX now W9XN; Charlie Stuchell WA8TGH now K4CWA; Peter Billie WA8TGG and his brother Mike WA8LZC; Marv Born, now K8XU, Hank Gould K4CQA, Bob Harper WA8YSB (SK); Mike Palmer once K8LGS, now well known as K8LG, and of course, Jerry Fanucci, WA8OIS, later K8JOF and eventually K8JF (SK).

There are lots of other names and calls that blur into the shadows of my memory. I suspect discussion with some of the older hands hereabouts will bring forth reminiscences of many of them.

Bob West, WA8YCD

MWA March 2007 MEETING MINUTES

President Bill Harris/N6XAK presiding
Introductions
Pledge of allegiance

Minutes for Feb 2007 meeting read and approved

Treasurer's report given.

Committees were mentioned

Ham class started 15 Feb status given by WA8YCD/Bob

SKYWARN class date and information by N8HGL/Bob (Has been cancelled)

Wick routed a card for K8LG for members to sign.

WVU repeater status report by KC8AML/Aaron

QWCA memberships solicited by WA8YCD/Bob

Meeting was adjourned

CALENDAR OF EVENTS SUMMARY ONLY

Apr 14	Balloon Launch WVU Club Jacksons Mill, WV
Apr 20	MHS Technology Fair Ham Radio
Apr 26	VE Testing, Morgantown WV
May 6	Ripley Hamfest
May 6	Hagerstown area Hamfest
May 12	Armed Forces Day, Crossband
May 18-20	Dayton Hamfest
June 3	Breezeshooters Hamfest
June 9	Aviation Day
Jun 23-24	Field Day
July 1	Triathlon
July 8	North Hills Hamfest
Aug 5	Berryville Hamfest
Aug 25	WVSARC Convention
Sept 1	Uniontown Gabfest
Sept 8-9	Gaithersburg FarFest
Oct 20-21	JOTA

Details see Bob Steele, N8HGL

10 Meter Repeater

There is a fairly new repeater in northern West Virginia. Give it a try if you are licensed to use the frequencies.

The receive frequency is 29.670 MHz and the transmit frequency is 29.570 MHz You will have no problems hitting it, and your 'radio shack radio' will work it just fine.

Field Day 2007

Field Day 2007 is Saturday, June 23 & Sunday 24. It's 24 hours long and a ton of fun. Are you ready?

Triathlon 2007

Running, swimming and biking through wild, wonderful Morgantown, West Virginia. The triathlon is Saturday, July 1, 2007. We are in need of many volunteer amateur radio operators. We have to cover the entire race course. Any amateur radio operator is welcome. Contact Bob Steele, N8HGL

HOW TO STRING A DIPOLE IN A TREE

Field Day Primer

One important part of field expedient operations is being able to quickly install an antenna for HF operations. Wire dipole's are compact, yet efficient. It is important to get the antenna as high as possible. A method commonly employed by many groups during Field Day is to use a bow and arrow to position the support lines in a tree. These are tied to the ends of the dipole, which is then raised into position. Here are instructions on the proper method.

1. Find a clearing with two tall trees, one on either side of the area.
2. Check area behind tree to be sure no one is there.
3. Aim arrow toward top of one tree and shoot.
4. Can't find lost arrow, get spare and decide to tie leader line to the arrow.
5. Aim arrow toward top of one tree and shoot.
6. Retrieve arrow from ground in front of you, take foot off of leader line.
7. Aim arrow toward top of one tree and shoot.
8. Find arrow hanging in tree about two feet above your outstretched hand.
9. Jump to reach arrow, land on rock.
10. Wrap ace bandage around sprained ankle.
11. Walk in woods to find a stick to reach arrow.
12. Treat poison ivy.
13. Reach up with bow to snag arrow, pull gently.
14. Find heavier string to replace broken leader line.
15. Go to step 2

APRS Weather Balloon Launch **this** Saturday

The WVU ARC will be launching an APRS Balloon this Saturday, April 14 from Jackson's Mill airport at approximately 9:00am. Everyone is welcome to come and watch.

You can turn on your APRS equipment and follow the balloon as it ascends to space. The APRS frequency is 144.390 MHz and the call will be W8CUL. Last balloon ascended to 118,000 feet.

APRS information can be found at several web sites: (track it on the web)

www.ui-view.org

www.winaprs.org

www.tawg.org

Some programs are free (donations accepted) and some require a fee. Searches for APRS, WinAPRS and UI-View will display many links for information. Maybe some will be interested enough to set up APRS in time to be ready for a balloon launch in the future.

<http://www2.cemr.wvu.edu/~satellite.balloon/>
somewhat dated web site

<http://www.wvnsbg.org>
WVU near space balloon group

VHF NETS

Monday	9:00pm	Monongalia Traffic Net	-145.430 MHz	PL 103.5
Tuesday	8:00pm	Preston ARES Net	+147.000 MHz	PL 103.5
Wednesday	7:30pm	MWA informal fun net	-145.430 MHz	PL 103.5
Wednesday*	7:30pm	Monongalia County ARES Net	-145.430 MHz	PL 103.5
Thursday	8:00pm	HAMTALK VHF state net	+147.075 MHz	PL 103.5
Sunday	9:00pm	Preston Rag Chew net	+147.000 MHz	PL 103.5

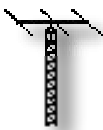
* Monthly on Wednesday following the 3rd Tuesday or the day after the MWA meeting

HF NETS

DAILY	6:00pm	HF Fone net	3865 KHz
1 st Thursday of month following the fone net		Mountain State Emergency Net	3865 KHz

MWA web site <http://www.qsl.net/W8MWA>

MWA Meeting Location – 1299 PineView Drive , White Birch Towers Building
Red Cross Facility, 3rd Floor



Monongalia Wireless Association
PO Box 4263
Morgantown, WV 26504

