

The Official Newsletter of the Kansas City DX Club

KC DX NEWS

ABØX-EDITOR

KCDXC Website: <http://www.kcdxclub.com/>

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IN THIS ISSUE:

Club News-ABØX

KCDXC DXCC Honor Roll-ABØX

The Asterisk Year-KØCS

Horsing Around with Antennas-WDØBWM

WØAR DX Challenge Scores-NØAG



NEXT KCDXC MEETING: OCT. 24 - NEW LOCATION!

MEETING MOVED UP ONE WEEK EARLY!!

The next Kansas City DX Club meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 24th, in Suite 100 of the Prudential Kansas City Realty Office Building, 8101 College Blvd., Overland Park, KS. The building is easy to spot, on the south side of College Blvd at Hardy St., about a block east of Antioch. The parking lot and main entrance are on the south side of the building. Please try to arrive between 6:15 and 6:30. The main entrance is open until 7:00 p.m., but the Prudential Kansas City Realty office on the first floor, is locked after 5:00. Someone will wait at the door until 6:30, so if you are late, call me on my cell phone: 913.908.6906. Meetings run from 6:30 - 8:30 PM, with a gathering after the meeting for pie and coffee. We look forward to seeing you there! -DE KØVBU

W7FB will present a program on Transmission lines at the meeting!

KCDXC DAYTON HOTEL ROOMS: The KCDXC has one room left available at the Crowne Plaza for Hamvention weekend in 2012. It is for 3 nights, starting on Thursday and checking out on Sunday. Contact ABØX at mcrabtree@kc.rr.com, if you are interested in the room. No more additional rooms will be added as we have in the past because of the new reservation system used this year.

NOMINATIONS FOR KCDXC OFFICERS: At our Oct. meeting, the nomination of members for club officers will begin. Make sure you attend this important meeting!

KC DX CLUB DXCC HONOR ROLL

Call	Mixed	CW	Phone	RTTY	IOTA	160	DX Challenge
W0NS	357						
K0CS	356	314	349			232	2197
N0XA	356	353	355	276		314	2993
AB0X	356	352	335			218	
W0JLC	353	351	331			102	
AK0A	353	343	346	308			
N0RB	350	336	346				
N0CWR	349	347	349			130	2623
K0CA	349	343	342	313		75	2575
W0JM	345	337	343			100	
K3PA	348	341	337	226			2224
NX0I	347	340	342			196	1416
K0RWL	341	337					
KS0DX	344	250	344				
AC0A	340	231	338		450		1629
K0GY	340	334	340	204			1905
K4SV	333						
KB0X	336		322				
K0THN	313	297	256	128			1586
KR0I	332	302	265				1037
AA0MZ	295	268	282	154	471	44	1669
KG0UA	283	277	116			4	
K0VXU	247	218	194	45			914
K0RU	195	190	88	88		12	612
K0OU	171	145	140			27	
WD0BWM	108						
W0DR	83						
KU0G	70	68	14			4	146
WD0SRI	69	23	57			2	

THE ASTERISK YEAR: In this issue we have a unique article written by former KCDXC President, K0CS. Steve describes one of his first real contest experiences back in his youth that had long term effects on his attitudes and approaches to contesting and ham radio. It deals with the only year the ARRL Sweepstakes results had an asterisk in the score box for the winning score. SS ops will especially enjoy reading this great article which is laced with typical K0CS humor but realistic analysis of the “state of the art of contesting” in the 1970’s. Read K0CS’s article below:

THE ASTERISK YEAR BY KØCS

When I was recovering from my stroke in July of 2010, I had a lot of things going through my mind and one of them is the list of things that have affected my life over the years. I'm not talking about stuff like academic achievement, career advancement or winning a lottery, I am talking about stuff that has rocked my world - the real bad stuff. The soul draining stuff that you read about in books by Stephen King. As you can imagine, the stroke itself was #1 on the list, as it has limited my capability both physically and mentally, and I can no longer be in the running for the "smartest guy in the room".

Lets look at how the list developed.

1. *The Stroke of 2010.*
2. *The Kennedy Assassination in 1963*
3. *The Asterisk Year of 1971.*
4. *September 11, 2001 Attacks.*
5. *The Red Headed Majorette of 1965.*
6. *Car Wreck in Emporia, Kansas of 1978.*

The top six are listed here and you must notice that when you have "skin in the game", the effect is felt in a more serious manner. I will not discuss #2 or #4 because they were events that were International in scope and are most likely on everyone's list.

The #5 position is pretty obvious, when I was dumped by this red head girl my Junior year in High School and later became a big fan of the late Sam Kinison, who seemed to portray my feelings quite well. *Wanda, after 40-years, has accepted me as a friend on Facebook.*

These events were all serious to me and have affected me both psychologically and emotionally. You will notice that the Vietnam War was not listed. That is because when I was drafted in 1971, I had Gout, and was excused as 4-F by the Doctor who was on duty at the base, across the Ohio River, near Cincinnati, that I reported - ie., no "skin in the game".

Vietnam War would be #7 because it was simply a lie and I had a couple of friends lose their lives in it.

I mentioned the Vietnam War, out of respect for my friends who served in it, but also to show the seriousness of the list itself. The Asterisk Year is more serious to me than the Vietnam War and I believe that the term should be known to all Ham Radio enthusiasts.

The #6 Car Wreck in 1976 was almost forgotten, when I slammed into a guardrail on I-35 and dislocated my hip and was on crutches for about a month. This occurred as I was returning from a business trip to Liberty Distributing in Wichita, Kansas, my first year in WØ District.

So what is #3, The Asterisk Year of 1971? That is the purpose for writing this article. I want to confront what was a very dark period for me as an amateur radio operator, WB8IAY, in Dayton, Ohio. Read carefully - there will be a quiz at the end.

The Asterisk Year is a term used by the Mad River Radio Club, of Ohio, to denote the famous Sweepstakes race for the Gavel in 1971.

I participated in the event as WB8IAY, in the 150 watt and under category with a score of WB8IAY - 32,120 - 230 QSO'S - 72 Districts Worked - 18 hours of operation. If you have access to the scores, that are available on a CD, from the ARRL, I am listed on page 93. The second time my call ever appeared in a QST contest event. When I tell this story at 2:00 am in the KCDX Club Hospitality Suite, I have tended to exaggerate a

bit and would usually say, I contributed a 100K score with a Clean Sweep, but I will stand with the 32K, as reality is clear now.

The reason that I was interested in this Sweepstakes enterprise was simple - I wanted to be known as a winner, and the plan formulated by Dick Bennet, K8EHU, was brilliant. He was going to utilize the 175 mile rule to establish a club that was based around the 175 mile radius from the 90 minute market that defined the market for the Dayton Hamvention. The hams from Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit, Indianapolis, Cincinnati and Lexington would be eligible to compete in this event and the Dayton area was right in the middle of the action. At the time, I was walking distance from HARA Arena, living on 1740 Shiloh Springs Road and had made some progress with my Heathkit station, an SB-301 and SB-401 and my new TH6-DXX Thunderbird for the HF Bands. I also used Inverted Vee's on the 40 meter and 75 meter bands, on a 50 foot high tower.

Dick, K8EHU, used a Gulf Oil Company Eastern USA Map that had the image of his vision on a poster and he carried it around the Biltmore Hotel Suites, and recruited stations, who were in the 175 mile circle. I missed the Biltmore session, but heard about the Mad River Radio Club Net, on 3.907 MHz, when Frank Schwab, W8OK, from Dayton told me about the project. Frank Schwab, W8OK, was the Dayton Amateur Radio Association's (DARA) most influential ham in 1971 and he was all for giving the Mad River Radio Club a go on both CW and SSB in the event. Frank became a silent Key in 2003. A few of his accomplishments are listed below:

Francis J. "Frank" Schwab - *1925-2003* W8OK - W8YCP - Co founder of the Dayton Ham-Vention and founder Dayton Sky-Warn - Frank's wife a retired nurse said "Frank a U.S. Navy radio operator stationed on the Destroyer USS Ingersoll during World War II" - At the end of the war he continued his love affair with radios and from the first day I met him he has been totally involved in that wonderful world. Frank was a well known top flight contester and CW operator, around Dayton he was known as the "Father of the Hamvention or Mr. Hamvention." He earned his first ticket in 1946 as W8YCP and his considerable CW skill (could copy 55 WPM) Soon rose to the top of the DXCC ranks and eventual membership in the CQ DX Hall of Fame. He was a veteran of ARRL Field Day, an event in which he'd participated for 52 consecutive years. After a tornado ripped through Xenia Ohio in 1974, Schwab was instrumental in setting up the ham radio emergency network that helped keep the community in touch with the outside world. Our subject was credited with establishing the Skywarn program in the Dayton area. The annual event, Dayton-Hamvention which Frank was a part of from the ground floor, began with a convention of 600 radio operators at the old Biltmore Hotel downtown well over half a century ago. The operation has grown so much that final year Frank was alive, the Hamvention weekend of more than 30 thousand ham radio enthusiasts from around the United States and more than 30 countries descended on Hara Arena for the 2003 Hamvention. Carolyn our subject's wife of 56 years continued "Frank is such a family man and so devoted to his children and to me. He taught his kids honesty, hard work, loyalty, compassion. He always has such wonderful sense of humor about things. "I think he is quite an inspiration to his kids and his 30 grandchildren."

Schwab has been honored for his ham radio work and was presented the top DX Hall of fame award years ago. Schwab lead the world with radio contacts in 376 countries. Mr. Schwab a retired printer, age 77 gave it his valiant battle at the Dayton VA hospital in the hospice unit. He expired 30 May 2003 after a lengthy illness. Survivors include Frank's wife, Carolyn, 12 children, 30 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren. Four of his family members are ham radio operators. They include his daughter Joanne Hubbard, N8QMP; grandchildren Bobbie Anderson KC7RWX; Sarah Anderson KC7MRO and son-in-law Jack Hubbard NI8N.

Frank W8OK is known to have said and appreciated the statement "CW is an art...be an artist!" Information provided by NI8N and ARRL Web services. W8SU 2008

Another formidable amateur, who I knew in 1971, was Doc, WA8ZDF, a dentist, from Columbus, Ohio, who had a reputation for competition and he was eventually going to contribute huge scores to both modes. Doc was more of a SSB person, like me, and he had a guest operator, WA8RWU on CW, contribute 107K points, which nosed out K8EHU with 106K. Frank, W8OK, was still very competitive on CW and turned in 91K points - but only operated 19 hours. Veterans, Vince, W8DB and Bill, WA8MCR, of the Miami Valley Amateur Radio Contest Society, also participated. The recruitment by Dick, K8EHU attracted 174 entries. The W8SH (Al, K7NHV op.) from Michigan State, in East Lansing, Michigan, actually won the W8 region in both modes in 1971 - trust me, if you beat WA8ZDF on SSB you were world class. The station from Michigan W8SH (op: K7NHV), led the MRRC in both modes for the club, which today makes a statement for the resolve the club had for victory. Historically, the States of Michigan and Ohio don't have a reputation for working together, on anything.

AFFILIATED CLUB SCORES - Top Ten ARRL Affiliated Club Scores

Club	Score	Entries	SSB WINNER	CW WINNER
Mad River Radio Club	9,960,874 (*)	174	W8SH	W8SH
Potomac Valley Radio Club	8,792,822	133	W3MVB	K1LPL/3
Murphy's Marauders	7,364,568	116	K1VTM	W1FBY
Minnesota Wireless Association	2,811,532	46	WA0VKP	K0IJL
West Valley Amateur Radio Club	2,316,123	35	W6HX	W6MAR
Radio Club of Tacoma	1,461,060	47	W7RM	W7RM
Boeing Employees Amateur Radio Soc	1,378,961	54	WA7JBM	W7VMF
Richardson Wireless Klub	914,616	14	WA5JMK	W5ONL
128 Contest Club	914,409	11	K1EUF	W1PBW
Northern California Contest Club	812,087	13	K6EBB	K6EBB

(*) At publication time the validity of the score of the Mad River Radio Club is under challenge concerning the eligibility of some of its members to participate in the club aggregate score. The matter is now being examined with final disposition to be determined at a later date.

Even with the rather ominous asterisk announcement, the ARRL, Assistant Communications Manager, Al Noone, WA1KQM, had a number of positive developments to chronicle if you peruse the Sweepstakes results from 1971. The emergence of Chip, K7VPF, who won the event from Rush Drake's station at W7RM, in both modes is one of them. The details of the W7RM station are amazing, particularly the photo of the stacked 15 meter beams at 120, 80, and 40 feet, with a 6 element 15 meter yagi above the stack. This was a Stateside event and the west coast stations were intrigued with the competition between W6HX and W7RM.

The Mad River Radio Club recruiting at the Biltmore failed to attract some of the other Ohio Clubs, as the West Park Radiops, Canton Amateur Radio Club, Indian Hills Radio Club, Evendale Amateur Radio Society, and the Massillon Amateur Club preferred their own identity, rather than join in on what would have been a more decisive victory for the MRRC.

If Dick, K8EHU, would have been successful in attracting just these Ohio clubs the score would have been more decisive - as seen below.

AFFILIATED CLUB SCORES - Ohio ARRL Affiliated Club Scores
(Not involved with the Mad River Radio Club)

Club	Score	Entries	SSB WINNER	CW WINNER
West Park Radiops	329,012	10	W8KZH	WB8FNE
Canton Amateur Radio Club	269,094	10	K8YQW	K8YQW
Indian Hills Radio Club	224,698	6	-----	W8AEB
Evendale Amateur Radio Soc.	185,533	7	K8HBN	K8HBN
Massillon Amateur Club	172,921	10	WA8VEV	W8VYU
Total for Ohio non MRRC	1,181,258	43		

The revised results with these independent Ohio Clubs are presented below and are rather dramatic.

AFFILIATED CLUB SCORES - Top Ten ARRL Affiliated Club Scores
(With independent Ohio Clubs added to the Mad River Radio Club)

Club	Score	Entries	SSB WINNER	CW WINNER
Mad River Radio Club	11,142,132 (*)	217	W8SH	W8SH
Potomac Valley Radio Club	8,792,822	133	W3MVB	K1LPL/3
Murphy's Marauders	7,364,568	116	K1VTM	W1FBY
Minnesota Wireless Association	2,811,532	46	WA0VKP	K0IJL
West Valley Amateur Radio Club	2,316,123	35	W6HX	W6MAR
Radio Club of Tacoma	1,461,060	47	W7RM	W7RM
Boeing Employees Amateur Radio Soc	1,378,961	54	WA7JBM	W7VMF
Richardson Wireless Klub	914,616	14	WA5JMK	W5ONL
128 Contest Club	914,409	11	K1EUF	W1PBW
Northern California Contest Club	812,087	13	K6EBB	K6EBB

The analysis does not take into account the West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana and Western Pennsylvania stations located within the 175 mile radius of the Mad River location, that was to the east of HARA Arena on the map.

The ARRL issued their decision in the following June Issue of QST in a STRAY on page 110 and the Mad River Radio Clubs decisive victory was disallowed .

In the MAY QST SS writeup, the score of the Mad River Radio Club was listed as the winner of the affiliated club competition, with a footnote indicating that it is under challenge and being investigated. After careful consideration of all facets, on recommendation of the Contest and Awards Committee, this score has been disallowed. Therefore, the Potomac Valley Radio Club is declared the winner of the Affiliated Club Aggregate Score SS Competition. The decision was based primarily on interpretation of the rule regarding attendance of meetings by members between 50 and 175 miles from the affiliation location.

The aftermath of this ruling was interesting, and was not what I expected. One would have expected a huge confrontation by the Mad River Radio Club and the ARRL, at the Dayton Hamvention of 1972. Instead, the club responded with stoicism and there was a serenity that to this day amazes me. I would have preferred a brawl, but maturity prevailed.

The Dayton Hamvention was not "sanctioned" by the ARRL at the time and any friction that might have existed between the DARA volunteers who worked at the Hamvention before the SS, would have been aggravated.

I realize now that contesting was not a major component of the hobby in 1971 and was probably just tolerated by the leadership of both the organizations of the ARRL and HAMVENTION, who were appeared to be generalists at the time.

In 1971, the ARRL seemed to be into 2-Meter Repeaters, Slow Scan Television and frankly - this was not the issue.

The Potomac Valley Radio Club, who eventually won the gavel from the ARRL, does not appear to be the strongest source of criticism of the Mad River Radio Clubs

victory. Sources from this group, including Gene, W3ZZ, say that the club was rather casual in the protest, and the real serious complaints came from the group from Connecticut, known as Murphy's Marauders.

After 40-years, many of the principles from this episode in the hobby are Silent Keys, and I discovered that Doc, WA8ZDF, a cofounder of the Mad River Radio Club, became a Silent Key, just 3-days after I contacted him, requesting the email address of K8EHU, the originator of the MRRC concept, that produced this article. His Obituary is listed below, from the *Columbus Dispatch*:

SHELLER Dr. John Richard Sheller, DDS, age 68, of Wetmore, Inwood Township, Michigan, formerly of Canal Winchester, Ohio, went to be with the Lord on Monday, September 12, 2011 at the Munising Memorial Hospital, Munising, Michigan. Born December 26, 1942 in Detroit, Michigan to the late James Richard and Katharine (Schmid) Sheller, also preceded in death by son David Scott Sheller and wife Sharon L. Sheller. He was a 1960 graduate of Wooster High School, attended Fenn College (now Cleveland State Univ.) from 1960-61, Univ. of North Dakota from 1961-63, and graduated from the Ohio State Univ., College of Dentistry in 1968. He enjoyed membership in the TKE fraternity during college. He operated a successful dental practice in Groveport, Ohio from 1968 until his retirement in 1997, and he and his wife moved to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in 1999. Member of the Columbus Dental Assoc., Ohio Dental Assoc. and American Dental Assoc. He was a volunteer police officer for the Groveport Madison Police Dept. from 1969-82, and was a volunteer for the Madison Township Fire Dept. from 1969-75; he was elected to two-terms with the Madison Township School Bd. from 1977-81, and was President of the School Bd. in 1981. His passion was amateur radio, where his call-sign was K8RR, he enjoyed electronics, building his own radio-stations, studying history and astronomy, riding his snowmobile, auto racing, and politics. Member of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), Columbus Amateur Radio Assoc., Co-Founder of the Mad River Radio Club, Co-Founder of the Central Ohio DX Radio Club, former Chairman of ARRL, DXCC Advisory Committee, he held the #1 position in the ARRL, DXCC Honor Roll, active in contesting, public (radio) service, founded Design Electronics, founded DOCS High Performance, he raced cars from 1957-64, and competed at the National Championships in Indianapolis in 1964, member of the Schoolcraft Snowmobile Assoc., and was member of the MENSAs Society since 1973. He attended Groveport Presbyterian Church, Grace Bible Church in Canal Winchester and currently attended Munising Baptist Church. Survived by loving wife of 24 years, Brenda (Marchington); son, Jack Richard Sheller; grandsons, Nathan, Devin and Caleb Sheller; mother-in-law, Corabelle (Brooks) Marchington; sisters-in-law, Debra Marchington, Teresa Hicks and Tonita Abel Milliser; nieces and many dear friends, and his golden retrievers "Shelley" "Meggie" and "Flag" were his dear companions. Friends may visit Friday from 12Noon-8 p.m. at the DWAYNE R. SPENCE FUNERAL HOME & CREMATORY, 650 W. Waterloo St., Canal Winchester 43110, where funeral service and celebration of life will be 11 a.m. Saturday. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service on Saturday. Rev. Curtis Emerson officiating. Donations may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, 4899 Belfort Rd., Jacksonville, Florida 32256 in his memory. Online condolences available at www.spencefuneralhome.com

Published in *The Columbus Dispatch* on September 15, 2011

CONCLUSION - Mike, AB0X, Editor, has asked me for some additional comments to let you know how I really feel about the 1971 Sweepstakes Asterisk Year, so I will continue my thoughts on the Asterisk Year Topic.

1. From a personal standpoint, I was 23 years old and just starting my professional career at the Inland Division of General Motors then. I was making an

entry level salary at the time and was simply trying to establish myself in the corporate culture. Hobbies were considered important then and I was trying to establish myself as a competent participant in Radiosport. When word got out that the Mad River Radio Club effort would be disallowed, by the governing authority, the ARRL, the feeling that senior GM management had about my participation in the hobby changed. I was working in a Methods and Work Standards Lab in those days, that used to be one of the Wright Brothers Hangers and all I can say is the management was very conservative. Inland employed 10,600 people at its peak.

2. The other negative result for me was the talks I would have with my stepfather, a no nonsense Supervisor at Kaiser Aluminum, in Ravenswood, WV. He was not an amateur radio enthusiast, but supported me during my early years in the hobby as WN8OEU. I remember the times my kits were delivered by rail to the Baltimore & Ohio Station and dad taking me to the station to pick up the KnightKit R-55 Receiver and then the KnightKit T-150A Transmitter. He was impressed that I was able to build both of these units and did not understand why I would sell them to buy the HeathKit twins for my journey to Dayton. If he would have been told that the MRRRC efforts were disallowed by the ARRL, he would have been embarrassed for me. When he would ask me about my hobby, I would simply change the subject.

3. My response to the Asterisk Year during the Hamvention was to not go inside at all in 1972, 1973 and 1974. I would walk into HARA Arena, put my ticket in the hopper, turn around and spend 3-days in the Flea Market. The Hamvention Commercial Displays was not the place to be when your salary was less than \$1,000 a month and you truly develop your street smarts in the Flea Market. Since I lived so close to HARA Arena then, the ritual of the Biltmore was not even considered. My strategy was to avoid the competition and I did this for 3-years.

4. Asterisk Year was not the end of WB8IAY. I moved to Huber Heights in 1974 after GM had a series of bad years, something about OPEC as I recall. Anyway, I had managed to get a stake together and bought a house in an all brick community about 5-miles from HARA Arena. The terrain was perfect for HF, as the property was on a plateau. One of my neighbors was Bernie, W8IMZ, a retired Air Force Sergeant and the new manager of the CQ WPX Contest. Bernie was really an inspiration to me and his enthusiasm for the WPX event was inspiring. W8IMZ would check the hand written logs for accuracy and would mail postcards to DX Stations as reminders to participate in the event. Bernie was a popular man and one of the rituals that developed was having people like Frank, W1WY of the CW WW DX Contest visit during the Hamvention. Frank had been around the hobby for years and I was honored to get to compare notes with him on topics like the Martti Laine, OH2BH DXpedition to Albania, that defined Martti during his early years in the 1970's.

At this point, I could go on and tell you more about my evolution as a DXer and SSB Contester, as I actually moved on from the despair of Asterisk Year and developed into a competent Radiosport Participant - which was my original goal. What is critical to my assessment is that as far as the ARRL Organization was concerned - I was still perceived as a MRRRC punk, or more correctly, that perception is what I felt, whenever I would attend any hamfest or social gathering of any kind. This was a stigma that stayed with me until I came to Kansas City and met Lee Bergren, W0AR. Lee told me a lot of things about ham radio and he seemed to have a unique point of view, regarding the ARRL.

One's self perception can change rapidly when you win the ARRL DX SSB Multi Single Contest World Championship and the KCDX Club's trip to Belize in 1980 at VP1A did just that. For the first time in my life, I could attend the Hamvention and hang with the folks in the DX Suites. I was no longer a Sweepstakes loser, but a legitimate champion.

I made more QSO's in one hour from Belize than 18 hours from WB8IAY in the Sweepstakes of 1971.

So what do I want to see happen after telling you my life story? I would hope that Asterisk Year gets into your head and when you are asked about it, mention the Mad River Radio Club and the 175 mile Rule. That would be my minimum goal - as pragmatism is a handy policy to utilize. Now lets get creative.

If you look carefully at my list at the start of this article, you will notice one thing that is common to every item on the list is - they are all evil. Every single one of these items are EVIL. We can't solve the Kennedy Assassination, reset the clock for 9/11 or even get Wanda back in line. But in a perfect world:

The ARRL has a real opportunity for showing some class, by awarding the 1971 Sweepstakes Gavel back to the Mad River Radio Club, Dick Bennett, K8EHU, at a suitable venue at the 2012 Dayton Hamvention. The Potomac Valley Radio Club people do not have to participate, but if they were asked, I am sure they would find it agreeable. My choice for the ARRL officer to handle the proceedings would be either Dave Sumner, K1ZZ, or Kay Cragie, N3KN. Dave, K1ZZ, was around in 1971 and was on the cover of QST that year. Kay has coordinated the ARRL activity at the Hamvention in recent years and the new ARRL EXPO presence has been noticed by all. The ARRL sent 150 members of their staff to Hamvention this year. In 1971, I doubt if there were a dozen ARRL staff personnel present.

The Dayton Hamvention provides many opportunities to present an award, the Contest Forum, The DX Forum, the Southwest Ohio DX Association Dinner, the Contest Dinner or even one of the Contest University Sessions.

Life is finite - you don't get many mulligans!



Photo by W3LPL

Horsing Around with Horse Fence Antennas BY WD0BWM

I thought I would let you all know about another dipole antenna I'm currently "horsing" around with to see how it works that I found at <http://kf4bwg.com/> . The pictures might help some too. I bought this in the 80M length just before Field Day. We used it successfully on 80M at the Pilot Knob ARC Field Day. The antenna wire is 2" wide with 14 small wires weaved into the mesh according to my old eyes. You will note the shorting bar on both ends to make all wires active when transmitting. The antenna center isn't a balun and the antenna will handle 2kw of power. I have had no RF back on the coax shield that I had with my other 40M dipole in a previous article.

The antenna is made out of electric horse fence, and like a horse it will still bite you if given the chance. It has a lot of strength, about 1000 pounds breaking strength, as many horse fences are 1/4 mile long or more. And horse fence is made for outdoors, so this will withstand the weather. So if you happen to be wandering around in the country, and see a long fence like the antenna, don't let it bite you.

I'm using my trusty borrowed MFJ-259B analyzer as I play with this antenna. I have a lot of Sharpie marks on the antenna for the various bands as I "horse" around.

The wider the antenna tape with the built in wires, the wider the band width on any band as a result. I put it up at 10' high at the calculated length in the pics on 20M so I can work on it just with an 8' step ladder. Of course, on my postage stamp lot, I started with 20M. I also had to shorten the antenna at this low height per the numbers on the trusty 259B. The antenna has a wide frequency range of 1.0:1 SWR so the center at the calculated length originally was about 13.900 MHz

What you see in the pic is reading on the 259B a 1.00:1 SWR with an R=57 and X=0. A perfect 50 ohm dummy load will read L=50 and X=0 connected to the 259B. That's a pretty efficient and well tuned antenna. For those of you not familiar with the 259B, the L= is the resistive part of the load impedance and X= is the reactive part of the load impedance. I'm not going to get into an electrical theory course here, that's Jeff's, AC0C job in his great meeting presentations.

Here's the part I like. The above numbers stay as they are with little or no variation across the ENTIRE 20M band. This antenna is very broad, actually extremely broad. The numbers will vary only a minute amount well below 14.000 MHz and well above 14.350 MHz.

One thing I noticed using calculations and real trials, moving that outer shorting bar even an inch on 20M will move the whole SWR curve (if you can call a flat SWR on the entire band a curve) a significant amount.

I have also had this same antenna up about 20' high on 40M. The SWR curve and 259B readings were virtually the same. It is harder for me to get to where I had it installed and I didn't keep tweaking until it was perfect, but the SWR was flat on 40M also.

Norris Price, KF4BWG designed, builds, and sells these antennas. I called him because I want to try something and wanted some input. He said he has sold these antennas in most every state and in several foreign countries already. The 80M model is plenty long enough to make a fan dipole for both 40M and 20M. The 160M model is long enough to make a triple fan for 80M, 40, and either 30M or 20M I think. Norris actually has a fan dipole for 160M and 80M up at his QTH and says the results are virtually the same as long as they are oriented 90 degrees from each other. Only one coax is needed. The upper fan dipole halves are in a east-west orientation and the lower fan is in a north-south direction. The antennas are too broad banded to orient both antennas in the same direction. Both bands remain very broad in band width also. He said to tune the upper 40M one first, then the lower 20M unit. I want to try this and see what the 259B will say trying to tune it on 15M as well.

Now for 80M, hearing wide, very wide bandwidth on 80M is something that perks up my ears. At the PKARC Field Day, the antenna was installed high at the center and near ground level at each end. The length had to be adjusted a bit from calculated numbers. It was still considerably broader compared to conventional 80M dipoles---almost half of the band under 2:1 SWR. Since I have no antenna for 80M on this peanut lot, I may try an “extreme” 80M fan dipole with one cut for lower end and one cut for the higher end of 80M. These too must be 90 degrees from each other. I may start at 3650 and 3850 and should be able to cover the whole 80M band with low SWR. Or at least where the internal tuner on my rig will handle. So listen for me on 80M before too long.

Norris told me on the phone that the antennas can be bent less than 90 degrees on the end and work as if they are straight. He has one bent for testing also as well as one on 160M. After some more “horsing” around with 80M, I’m ready to try 160M on the tiny lot. Stay “tuned” for that later. He also mentioned that all antennas will easily tune from 80M-10M.

You hams with vast real estate holdings and horses, this antenna could do dual duty as a fence and an antenna. Just don’t install it too high or the horse may disappear. Something to think about maybe.





NEW MEMBER INTERVIEWS

The KCDXC has had several new members join our organization in the last few months. AC0KN has sent out his Interview Survey to all of them. Because of the size of the newsletter this month I will have to postpone printing them in this issue. Watch for several of them next month.-AB0X-Editor

W0AR DX CHALLENGE SCORES AT HALFTIME!

CALL	COUNTRIES	ZONES	SCORE	CLASS
NORB	257	40	10,280	High
KOVXU	232	40	9280	High
ABOX	165	39	6435	High
ACOC	95	30	2850	High
KOCS	36	20	720	High
ABOX	164	39	6396	Low
KSODX	157	35	5495	Low
KOVBU	128	34	4352	Low
N0AG	76	30	2280	Low
K0THN	125	34	4250	Low/Wires
WA0WOF			1000	Rookie/Low
ABOX	85	27	2295	QRP
W7FB			968	Rookie/QRP

Compiled by N0AG