

February, 1998

I hope this issue of the Newsletter finds one and all having a great time on their favorite bands / modes / radios. I recently had an eye opening experience when I checked the WY0B Logbook. I found out that except for a few contests, I only had 3 casual contacts in the log for all of 1997. I knew it seemed like I haven't had the time to operate as much as I would like, but this is ridiculous ! I really enjoy turning on the rig and seeing what I might stumble onto. I got on a couple of weekends ago and put 14 into the log for '98. I guess I can relax now, as I have more than quadrupled my recent annual total Hi. I had such a good time that I pushed the keyer aside and started using the straight key. I also made a SSB QSO with W6RO, the amateur station aboard the Queen Mary (I'll be sure to chase the QSL for that one, as I've seen the FB card the Club received from that station about 10 years ago.) So now, the closest thing I've had to a New Year's Resolution is to spend more time in the shack enjoying some honest to goodness HAM RADIO. Two meter FM and packet are both FB modes, but to me there is no thrill in amateur radio as great as working some truly rare DX with my Little Pistol station or getting into a good CW ragchew with someone I haven't met before and finding out we have a lot of common interests or that we have both been to the same places, etc. I make a lot of interesting acquaintances on the air, and lots of new friends !

January Meeting

The elections were held at the January Meeting, and the results are listed above. Thanks to last year's Officers for their time and efforts, and here's hoping for the best for the present slate ! Also at the last meeting, 2 people passed their Novice written tests. Congrats to Helen Enger and Joel Sommer. Hope we see some more activity at the next VE session. Also, accepted into the Club were Andrew Lawler, Daniel Watkins (W3DW), and Kris Rice (N1XLX). Welcome to the group !

February Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 10th, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of Boone Electric on Range Line Street. A VE session will follow the meeting if there are any takers and three VE's available. Also, WY0B will give a small presentation on the new RF Maximum Permissible Exposure (MPE) Guidelines from the FCC. As Amateur Radio Operators, we are all responsible for the compliance of our stations with the new MPE regulations, and we will need to indicate our understanding of the regs when we send in any Form 610's (for renewals, QTH changes, etc.) By the way, only one 610 Form is accepted now. The correct version form has a reference to the new regs, so if the form you are using doesn't, you have an old form.

Club Breakfasts

The turnout for the January Club Breakfast was a fairly light. I thought we would have a better turnout, since it wasn't a holiday weekend or a hamfest weekend. I guess a lot of us either forgot it was coming up or weren't hungry Hi. The next one will be held on Feb. 28th at 8:00 a.m. at Country Kitchen Restaurant on Providence Road. Mark your calendars.

Classes

The dates for the General Upgrade Classes are finally shaping up. We are planning on holding them at Boone Hospital (in the cafeteria area) at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday evenings. The first class will be held March 17th. We will begin the classes working on the theory portions, and then spend some time on the Code. After we get our feet wet with the code, we will start holding practice on the '76 repeater. This should be a great chance to upgrade, if you have been looking for that little extra motivational push to get started. Let me know if you are interested, or if you need a copy of the study guide.

Net Control Stations

Dewey, WM0H, is still looking for new Ops that would like to be Net Control Stations for our weekly Wednesday Night Nets. It is a lot of fun being the NCS, and the experience may be invaluable sometime down the line when your station or abilities are called upon in time of disaster.

St. Charles Hamfest

I had a good time at the recent hamfest in St. Charles. The only things to that had to follow me home were some Win95 software CD's, but I had fun visiting lots of people I hadn't seen in a while. They had pretty good attendance, as well as lots of commercial exhibitors. I was surprised to not see any used HF antennas for sale, but they usually go quick or get stuffed under the tables and are hard to spot. Oh well, there is always the next hamfest.

From the Magazines

QST had a few interesting articles this month. There is an item on economically converting some surplus gear to work on the 2.4 Ghz band, another one about using the Internet Receivers, and one about some of the things to look at when building up your own super computer with some of the goodies available at most hamfests. Perry, N0NMC, has made what looks like another version of the 2.4 Ghz article available on the CMRA homepage. The online photos seem to be better than the ones in the QST article.

There were also several interesting pieces in the February issue of 73, including items on a Basic Universal Interface Circuit (BUIC) for interfacing your rig to your pc, one on a 17 Meter X-Beam antenna that can be adapted to other bands, one on Emergency Preparedness (we can never be too ready), another one on a Delta-Loop antenna, and a very interesting article on the Ten-Tec 1210 T-kit, which is a transverter kit to allow you to operate on the 2 Meter band using all the bells and whistles of your HF rig. The cost is pretty good (\$139.00, including the case and all) and it sounds like a great project. They also mention that you can drive it using a 10 meter only rig or a converted CB. Sounds like a pretty cheap way to start using other modes on 2 M besides FM, and have some fun building something to boot. This additional capability would come in handy working the Hamsats. I haven't gotten all the way through the NCJ yet, so it may also hold some interesting reading. (I don't take CQ magazine, anymore, so if you see something in there that should get mentioned in the Newsletter, be sure and let me know.)

Interesting Web Pages

Here are a few of the more interesting World Wide Web pages I've recently visited:

CMRA:

<http://www.qsl.net/cmra/>

The Club's homepage, maintained by Perry, N0NMC.

MFJ:

<http://mfjenterprises.com>

(Usual offerings from a commercial site, plus manuals on their products and lots of good links.)

ARRL:

<http://www.arrl.org>

Lots of good info on all sorts of amateur radio related topics.

Ten Tec:

<http://www.tentec.com>

Not too much here, but short write up on their kit I mentioned earlier.

Radio Direction Finding:

<http://members.aol.com/homingin/>

Joe Moel's extensive page on things near and dear to the T-Hunter's heart.

Solar Activity:

<http://www.dxlc.com/solar/>

A nice graph of present / recent solar activity. N0EG told me about this one, and it is a FB way to keep track of propagation.

PC's:

<http://www.daileyint.com/hmdpc/pclinks.html>

Lots of good links about building / maintaining personal computers.

Let me know of any pages you think should be mentioned here.

Upcoming Contests

A quick peak at the contest calendars shows the following major contests approaching:

NA Sprint (CW)\tab 2/8/98\tab 0000-0359Z
ARRL DX(CW) 2/21 0000Z - 2/22 2400Z
ARRL DX (SSB) 3/7 0000Z - 3/8 2400Z
CQWWPX(SSB)3/28 0000Z-3/29 2400Z

That's a whole bunch of HF fun coming up, so hope to hear you on the air ! If anyone is interesting in forming an assault from the Club Station for one of these, bring it up at the February Club Meeting.Later

Well, that just about wraps it up for this time. I hope to get the Newsletters out a little earlier than last year, but time still has a way of slipping on by unnoticed. Don't forget that Club dues (\$15.00 individual / \$20 family) were due as of 01/01/98. One more thing comes to mind. The '76 repeater activity has been picking up lately, at least during the commute times. If you took your mobile out during quieter times, you might want to knock the dust off it and put it back on the air. It's always more fun when the local activity level increases !

73, es CUL, de ... WY0B / Jim