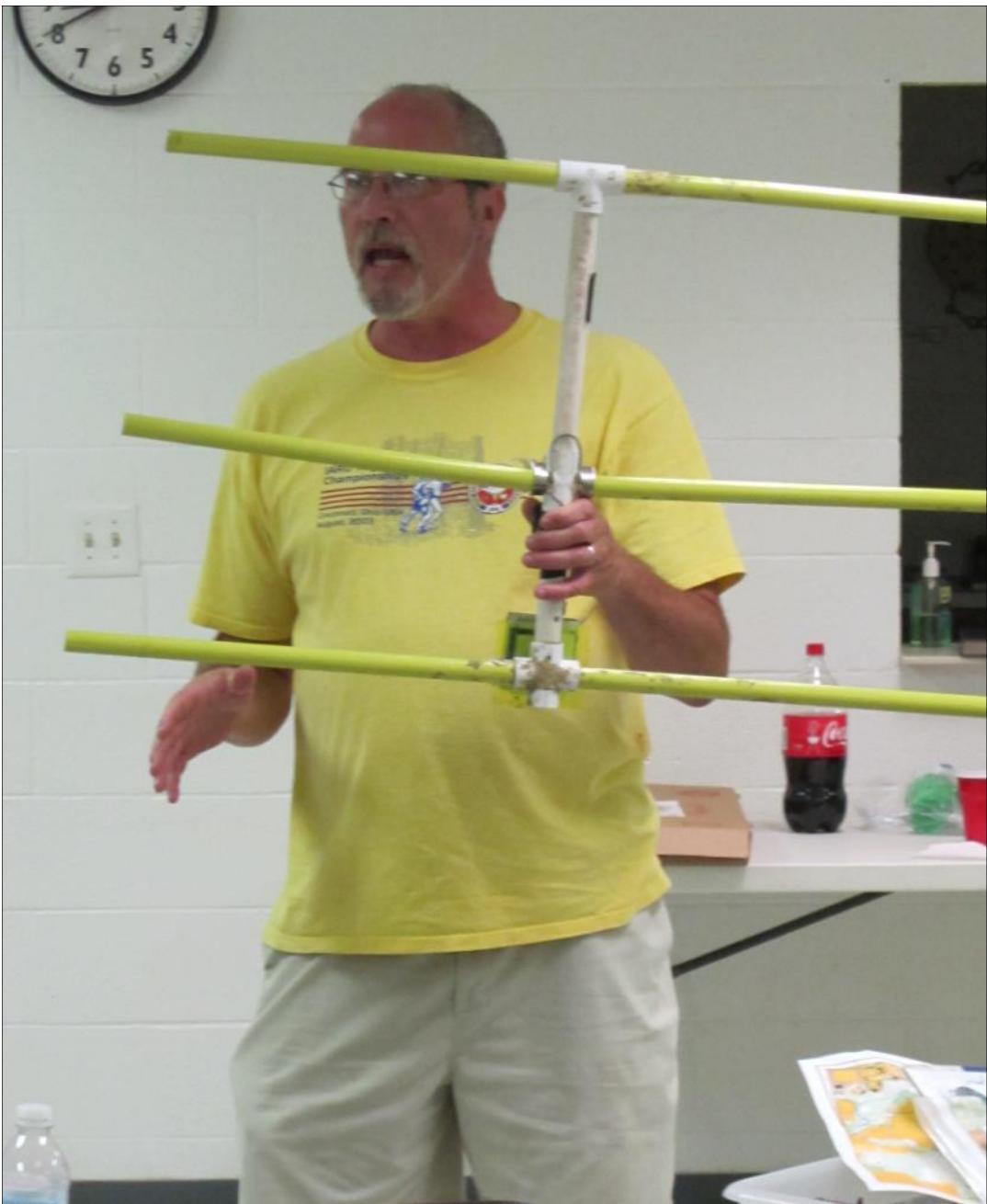


The Feedline



Vol. 2010, #9
September 2010



Brian DeYoung, K4BRI, discusses a home-brew antenna he built for fox-hunting, at the August 9 meeting of the Northern Kentucky Amateur Radio Club.

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Dates to Remember:

- Sep 11 – [Ohio State Parks on the Air](#)
- Sep 13 – NKARC membership meeting
- Sep 19 – [GCARA Hamfest](#)
- Oct 16 – [KY ARES Conference](#)
- Oct 11 – NKARC membership meeting

The deadline for submissions for the October Feedline is **Saturday, Oct. 2**.

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NKARC Net: Tuesdays, 8:30 PM on the 147.255 repeater

VE Testing: Testing sessions are held by appointment only on the 2nd Monday of each month, prior to the NKARC membership meeting. Testing begins at 6:00 pm. To make an appointment, contact Lyle Hamilton at ab8sh@arrl.net or tel. 513-315-4032

NKARC Web Site: <http://www.k4co.org>

NKARC Membership Meetings: 2nd Monday of each month at 7:30 pm at the [Hilltop Church of Christ](#), 5300 Taylor Mill Rd (Ky. 16), Taylor Mill, KY. Visitors are always welcome!

The Feedline is published monthly by and for the members of the Northern Kentucky Amateur Radio Club. It is distributed via direct email to current NKARC members. **If you are a member in good standing but are not receiving your copy, please notify the Feedline editor.** Permission is hereby granted to any non-profit amateur radio group to quote or reprint from this publication provided appropriate source credit is given. Submissions, ad-

dress or call changes and circulation problems may be sent to the Feedline editor:

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Amok Time

By Ward Silver, NØAX

From the ARRL Contest Update, August 18, 2010

Star Trek fans will recognize the title as that of an episode in which the normally logical, unemotional Mr Spock suffers through pon farr, the Vulcan mating urge. His behavior changes dramatically - even challenging Captain Kirk to a fight-to-the-death and apparently prevailing, to his extreme dismay. But for the subterfuge of Dr McCoy, the story would not have had its TV-style happy ending. Here in real life, we have our own amok times - they are called "election years".

One of Amateur Radio's mantras - not always followed - is to refrain from discussing politics (and religion and sexual topics) over the air. Unfortunately, it's easy to hear what happens when that advice is not followed - the results are generally unpleasant for the parties involved and anyone tuned in. During the political "silly season", we should redouble our efforts at restraint, particularly in such an energetic year as this one is proving to be.

The many off-the-air channels of Amateur Radio - club newsletters, Web sites, on-line forums, email reflectors, etc - are just as worthy of restraint and consideration for the views and feelings of others. It is all too easy to poison the collegial atmosphere of a club with an injection of non-amateur politics. When a member is made to feel uncomfortable, nothing may be said outright, but he or she will often find something else to do on meeting night or find a better use for membership dues. That's a loss to all of Amateur Radio.

The best policy is to "check politics at the door" in any amateur group or forum without an obviously political mission. This suggestion has nothing to do with limiting one's freedom of expression - except to acknowledge the concomitant responsibility to use that freedom wisely and act accordingly. Before pressing that PTT switch or hitting the ENTER key, ask yourself if there isn't a better forum for making a politicized comment.

Does a political signature line really need to be part of emails about electronics or operating? Does a club newsletter really need to include items promoting a particular political viewpoint or issue? There are many alternate forums for expressing political views in which debate is encouraged - use them. Editors, officers, and moderators need to keep a steady hand on the tiller when navigating the rough seas in the political windy season. (See the editorial in August 2006 QST for information on IRS restrictions of 501(c)3 non-profit organizations with respect to political campaigns.)

Amateur Radio and by extension, amateur organizations, should be a refuge from the hurly-burly of politics. That's one of our great strengths - the hobby is open to kings and paupers on an equal basis with many great over-the-air friendships between people from wildly different walks of life. It can remain that way but only if each and every one of us works at it - I'm no different in having to watch out for (and sometimes recover from) the urge to throw in one's two cents. Like Star Trek and elections there's always another episode, but hurt feelings and resentment can last a lifetime.

73, Ward NØAX

August Meeting Minutes

Unavailable at publishing deadline.

August NKARC Net Report

Unavailable at publishing deadline.

Top of the Tower

Unavailable at publishing deadline.

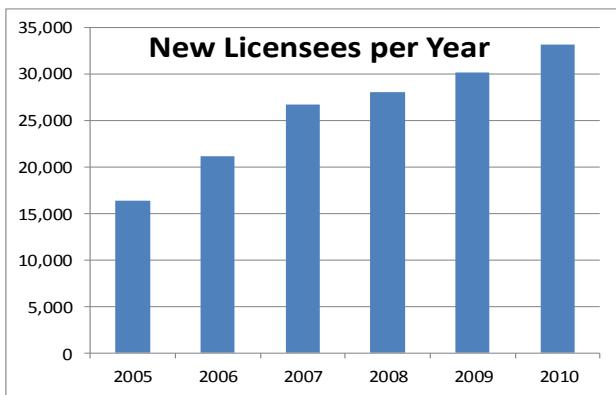
Mark's Mutterings

Numbers Don't Lie

If I had a dime for every time I heard or read that "Ham Radio is dying!", I'd probably be able to retire today instead of having to work for another 10 years. Now, I've only been an active ham for a short six years, so I can't compare today's activity levels with what they were back in the 60s or 70s, but a number of facts and personal observations seem to give the lie to this assertion.

First, the FCC database shows 690,000 active Amateur Radio licenses, and this number has been holding steady or growing for the past [13 years](#). Since licenses last for ten years, it's hard to know how many of these actually belong to active hams, but even if only half of them do, that hardly points to a dying hobby!

A more interesting statistic, in my view, is the numbers of new licenses granted in recent years. The chart below show that new licensees have doubled in the past six years! (The numbers come from an ARRL [article](#).) Now, some of this can be attributed to the surge in upgrades from Technician to General that resulted from the dropping of the code requirement, but that surely does not explain all of it.



The "gloom-and-doomers" point to the fact that teenagers have too many other entertainment and communication options to be interested in Ama-

teur Radio. I don't disagree with this, but this does not spell the demise of the hobby! As a volunteer examiner for the past several years, I have seen that it is mostly males in their 30s, 40s and 50s who are coming in to take the tests. By this age, they have (hopefully!) stopped chasing girls and have more disposable income to spend on radios.

Does this mean that it is a waste of time to try to interest youngsters in the hobby? Of course not! We just have to accept that we are planting seeds that may take several decades to germinate. Patience is a virtue.

Another quantifiable indicator of the health of our hobby is the steady, year-by-year increase in the numbers of logs submitted for radio contests. I find it more than a little ironic that the first people to complain about "all the dang contests" are often the same people complaining that the hobby is dying. I think that what they are really complaining about is the fact that the hobby is evolving, just as is always has. If [RadioSport](#) is helping to bring new blood into our ranks, then I say, "bring on the contests!".

Forty years ago, the majority of hams had technical backgrounds. Today, these seem to be in the minority. I've had enjoyable contacts with hams from all walks of life, from optometrist to lawyer, from policeman to watermelon farmer. I think this diversity strengthens our hobby. Instead of berating hams who ask basic technical questions, those of us with backgrounds in electronics need to show patience in mentoring those who simply want to improve their skills.

73,

Mark Volstad, AI4BJ

Weaver's Words

Summertime (phew!)

Jim Weaver, K8JE
Great Lakes Division Director, ARRL
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Ohio State Parks on the Air, 2010

The annual Ohio State Parks on the Air contest will be Saturday, September 11, 2010, from 1600 UTC to 2400 UTC. The prime purpose of the contest is to promote public awareness of ham radio. I suspect the second purpose is for everyone who enters to have fun.

Portable and mobile stations, individual or club will operate from as many of Ohio's 75 state parks as possible. Forms and all official information, are on the OSPOTA web page at <http://parks.portcars.org>. OSPOTA is sponsored by the Portage County (Ohio) AR Service.

Cover Plaque Awarded to former Division Member

Jim Garland, W8ZR has been voted to receive the QST Cover Plaque award for August. The award resulted from his construction article, "The StationPro Master Station Controller." These awards are made based upon the vote of ARRL members via the QST Cover Plaque Poll Web page on the ARRL web site.

Jim is the retired President of Miami University in Oxford, OH. He moved to Santa Fe, NM after retiring from MU. He is an avid designer and builder. This is not his first QST Cover Plaque

award. More importantly, he is a great ham and great person. Congratulations once again to Dr. James C. Garland, aka Jim in Amateur Radio circles.

To vote for an article in QST to receive the monthly Cover Plaque award go to the QST Cover Plaque Award Poll at <http://www.arrl.org/cover-plaque-poll>.

Kentucky QSO Party in November



The 2010 running of the Kentucky QSO Party will be from 1400 UTC Saturday, November 13 through 0200 UTC Sunday, November 14. The object for stations in the Commonwealth is to contact as many stations in any location as possible. Stations outside Kentucky contact as many stations inside the Commonwealth as possible. The full rules and additional information are at <http://www.wkdxa.com/mainsite/>. Click on 2010 Ky QSO Party Rules at left of page.

The KYQP is sponsored by the Western KY DX Association.

The New ARRL Web Site

As I mentioned last month, the new web site is coming nearer to completion. Difficulties remain with a few features. These are being addressed by Fathom, the web site contractor. Once these problems have been resolved, a few tweaks will probably need to be applied here and there as well. These tweaks are likely to include alterations in page layout and presentation as HQ learns mem-

bership preferences.

If you run across a glitch in navigating the site, please take a few minutes to report it to Katie Glass, KB1ULQ at kglass@arrl.org. It is most helpful to report where you were (the internet address or page name), where you wanted to go and specifically what you did to get there (e.g. clicked on link XYZ) when you ran into the problem. Include any error message (or screen shot of it) you received wherever you ended up, and its internet address. Doing this will give Katie the information needed to get the problem fixed by the correct person in the shortest possible time. Saying, for example, “there is a problem in getting to the membership database” is generally not helpful.

Ohio Section Manager Frank Piper, KI8GW Elected to Own Term

The election of Frank Piper, KI8GW as Ohio section Manager puts him in the position of having his own term in office. Piper, who won a strongly-contested race with Tom Sly, WB8LCD, had been appointed by Membership and Volunteer Programs Department Manager Dave Patton, NN1N to fill the vacancy caused by the death of long-time SM Joe Phillips, K8QOE. The margin of victory was 91 votes.

Of his appointment as Ohio SM, Piper had said, “I had 3 goals, keep the Section running, keep the Section smooth, and keep the Section quiet.” In noting the closeness of the election he commented, “... it sends to me (there is, ed.) a clear picture that maybe the Ohio Section does not want the status quo.”

To Frank, good luck in your full term as SM. To Tom, thanks for your knowledgeable competition to make the election a true race. It is through friendly competition that ARRL grows stronger.

For your information, Section Manager elections will take place for Kentucky in early 2011 for a term beginning April 1, and for Michigan in late 2011 for a term beginning January 1, 2012. The next elections for Great Lakes Division director and vice director will be in late 2011 for terms beginning 2012. As a reminder, SMs serve for two years. Directors and vice directors serve for three years.

What's On The Air

This is not a statement. It is not a question. It is the name of a former magazine about broadcast radio in the US and Canada. It was “The Magazine for the Radio Listener.” A non-ham friend loaned me a copy of the April, 1931 issue. This was issue No. 6 which suggests the monthly magazine was introduced in November, 1930. It was published by the What's on the Air Co., Cincinnati, Ohio.



What's on the Air (WOTA) magazine is interesting partly because it attempts to cover nearly everything the listener may want to know about . . . well . . . Listening. This issue devoted a 14" x 11" page to the Federal Radio Commission (FRC). It was written by G. Franklin Wisner, the chief of Press Service of the FRC. The article discussed “Controlling Radio’s Traffic Lanes.” The FRC recognized that doing this related to “... a world problem of momentous proportions” because airwaves are not limited to national borders. Of course, Hiram Percy Maxim, aka W1AW today, had arranged in 1925 for the founding of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) because he recognized the same fact.

In 1931, NBC and CBS existed. WOTA listed their programming as well as contained photos and articles about their personalities. The truly inter-

esting part of the magazine is its listing of all BC stations with power rating of 100 watts and over. Of these, Kentucky had 5 stations, Michigan had 14 stations and Ohio boasted a great total of 19 stations.

Add tables of stations and frequencies, lists of what programs were on and where, indication of which programs are “chain” (network) programs, and photos and articles on personalities and other topics about broadcast radio and you have 35 pages (with no advertising) for a cost of 35 cents per issue or a whopping \$1.50 per year

This Month's Final

Great Lakes Division (GLD) members recently received requests to support two legislative initiatives in the US Congress. The first of these requests was specifically related to Amateur Radio. It asked Ohio members to write letters to Ohio's US Senator Voinovich requesting that Amateur Radio mobile activities be excluded from restrictions under national distracted driving laws. The request was for letters to Sen. Voinovich, only, because of his membership on the Senate Committee that is considering these bills. This series of requests went to each state that has a senator on the Committee. Depending on the progress of this legislation, we all may be asked to write to our US senators at a later date.

The second request is not so obviously related to Amateur Radio. It asks members throughout the Division to write their US Representative and US Senators to include an expanded increase in tax deduction for mileage driven while supporting the work of non-profit organizations. Although an increased deduction would benefit amateurs as well as non-amateurs, it is probably not the type of legislation that pops into our minds when we think of Amateur Radio.

The point of this note is that ARRL has become much more active at the grassroots level than in the past in advocating for legislation that favors Amateur Radio. This is true whether the benefit is direct or indirect. Involvement of individual members by following through on requests for letters, for phone calls or for personal visits to legislators is key to the ultimate success of these legislative activities.

It is commonplace for us as individuals to be skeptical that “our” letter will do any good. This is an understandable reaction in modern society. On the other hand, letters from individual members in other organizations are firmly accepted as benefiting their cause. Possibly the best example of this is the National Rifle Association (NRA). Highly restrictive gun laws are few in this country, partly because of the responsiveness of individual NRA members to requests they contact their legislators about legislation.

It is true there are more gun owners in the US than radio amateurs. What this really means is that we hams need to work together even more closely than larger organizations to be heard as a strong, unified voice. When we individual hams come together for a cause we can and will be successful.

Please join the ham chorus when you are asked to make your voice heard.

Tentative Travel, Hamfest and Activity Schedule

Hamfests in the following list have received ARRL sanctioning as of press time. Hamfests and other events for which a Great Lakes Division representative is scheduled to attend are identified with the representative's name. The schedule can be expected to be fine-tuned from time to time.

Patronize ARRL-sanctioned hamfests. Hamfests, conventions, symposia and similar events sponsored by ARRL-affiliated clubs may be eligible to be sanctioned by the League. For information on sponsoring and sanctioning a hamfest or convention, go to www.arrl.org/hamfest-sponsor-support. To have your hamfest sanctioned, go to <http://www.arrl.org/hamfest-convention-application> to apply on line. Hamfests are already being sanctioned for 2012!. Please be sure to read the requirements for having an event sanctioned before submitting a request.

Support our Division hamfests and swaps:

11 Sep: Greater Louisville Hamfest, Shepherds-ville, KY - Jim, John
11 Sep: GRAHam fest, Wyoming, MI
12 Sep: Findlay Hamfest, Findlay, OH - Jim, John
18 Sep: Central KY ARES Hamfest, Richmond, KY
19 Sep: Greater Cincinnati ARA Hamfest, Cincin-nati, OH - Jim
19 Sep: Adrian ARC Hamfest, Adrian, MI
22 Sep: Directors webinar - Jim
26 Sep: Cleveland Hamfest, Cleveland, OH - Jim, John
27 Sep: Adrian ARC meeting, Adrian, MI - Jim
28 Sep: Cherryland ARC meeting, Traverse City, MI - Jim
5 Oct:: OH-KY-IN ARS ARRL Night, Cincinnati - Jim
14 Oct: Mahoning Valley ARA ARRL Night, Youngstown, OH - Jim
16 Oct: Ohio Section Conference, Columbus, OH - Jim
16 Oct: Great Lakeshore Super Swap, Holland, MI

17 Oct: Kalamazoo Hamfest, Kalamazoo, MI
23 Oct: QMN 75th Anniversary Banquet, Owosso, MI - Jim
27 Oct: Directors webinar - Jim
30 Oct: Hazard Hamfest, Hazard, KY
31 Oct: Massillon Hamfest, Massillon, OH
6 Nov: Grant ARC Georgetown, (OH) Hamfest - Jim
20 Nov. A&F Committee meeting., Newington - Jim
24 Nov: Directors webinar - Jim

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**FIRST
CLASS**

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