OUR NEXT BUSINESS MEETING: DECEMBER 18TH AT THE CLUBHOUSE. MEETING STARTS @ 8:00PM. C U THERE!!

KiloWatt Harmonics

SCARC W3KWH

Check us out on the web: www.w3kwh.com

December 2007

Editorial Ramblings

Well, another year is coming to a close. Hard to believe that Christmas is less than a month away already. Now with the winter doldrums upon us, it's a good time to sit in front of the radio and make some new friends. Lots of contests too, to keep us busy thru the cold season ahead.

Have you seen our new driveway in person?? Now is the time to check it out. Lots of important stuff has been going on at the club the past few months; stuff you may have missed out on. I know I sound like a broken record month-to-month, but we'd like you to consider getting active in YOUR club again. Come on up and participate in operating events like contests and special events and such, not to mention the weekly social night and the monthly business meeting. With the new road fully operational, no more broken car parts coming up the hill!!

We just had our successful 50th anniversary special-event station wrap up this past weekend. Hope you put W3KWH into your log during the weekend of Thanksgiving. **(see page 2 for details)**

Don't forget about my request/plea for newsletter articles. I'm constantly on the lookout for articles and pictures. Your contribution is greatly appreciated at: **<KQ3DX@hotmail.com>.**

I recently took a look at the printed versions of the monthly newsletter. I thought that the print might be hard to read; therefore I've changed the print to a bold–type font. I hope that you find it a little easier to read and enjoy.

CUL, thanks/73 de KQ3DX et al.

New Officers Elected For 2008

Congratulations to all of our Officers-elect for the year 2008: **For President: Mike, WA3TTS (who won in a secret ballot vs. WB3HDI),** VP: Mac, W3MAC, **Treasurer: Walt, KA3YNO,** and Recording Secretary: Joe, WA3FWA. Special congratulations go out to our **new Corresponding Secretary, Sue, KA3JKS.** Other than the Presidents position, all nominees for these offices ran un-opposed. These terms will be effective on January 1st, 2008. Congratulations and good luck to all, and please give them the support they deserve as they continue to make the club an A-number 1 organization!!

Local News/Club Stuff

- From Mike, WA3TTS comes the following: There is talk on the microwave list page of hams hearing the newly launched Japanese Lunar Orbiter with simple antennas such as a three-turn helix on 2263.602 MHz. If you have a scanner that works that high or can scavenge an old S-band converter somewhere it may be fun to tinker with this. A more complete list of aerospace frequencies is available at: <http://www.uhf-satcom.com/sband/>

- **W3KWH 50TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL EVENT STATION**

This was only the second "special event" activity that I know of, that was ALL SCARC. In October of '01 we celebrated 60 years of STEEL CITY ARC and now we celebrate 50 years in our "new" clubhouse. A few years ago we did "lend" the W3KWH facility to the "Breeze Shooters" to celebrate their 50-year anniversary, a noble cause indeed.

This special event operation started on November 24th and we closed down operations on the 25th. Operating times each day were approximately from 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM or so in the afternoon. Obviously, the stations were not continuously "on air" in that block of time.

We operated 75, 40 and 20 meter SSB. We accumulated about 200 "Qs" in the event. Twenty meters was the most productive with forty showing a pretty nice amount of interest and 75 being the least productive. I suppose there would have been more of a Q count if we had loggers to assist and even more with relief operators. There is no doubt in my mind that there were many callers that moved on rather than "wait in line" to get a response. In a contest atmosphere there is the rapid exchange and you move quickly to the next contact. But . . . this was NOT a contest! In our case people wanted to talk a bit about our activity and of course, there was the "script" that we recited explaining a little about the club and the certificate procedure etc. I could tell the decline of calling stations as I signed with one station and the QRM level decreased as those folks abandoned their effort and moved on. However, there seemed to be a genuine interest in some of the club history and it deserved some attention and explanation. I got a call from an OE2 station, Gert in Austria, and that contact went on for 15 minutes. He was quite interested in the club. When I stood by for more calls the "beehive" QRM had diminished considerably. Callers went on to other stations. Had we been operating in a contest mode we would have had double the contacts but, as I said, the callers deserved the courtesy of our time and I appreciate and respect their time and interest to look us up and make a QSO of it. I like to think that we spread the word of the Steel City ARC a bit, and that's a good thing.

Many thanks to Chuck, N3UUZ, for being the primary twenty meter operator for both days. Chuck is still "Da Man!" Other ops: Sue, KA3JKS; Joe, WB3AGB; Bob, WB3HDI; Art, WA3BKD and . . . I apologize to the participants that I didn't list. Thanks to ALL who operated or gave us some support in the activity. And thanks to those that are helping with the certificate artwork and responding to the incoming QSL card requests. Thank you too to our technical committee, the clubhouse committee and the officer corps, past and present.

It's such a treat (too often taken for granted) to be able to walk through the front door, turn up the heat, start some coffee, light up the computers, patch in the antennas, turn on the radios and . . . . .*EVERYTHING WORKS!* Even, (maybe especially) the plumbing! I've been around here long enough to remember when ALL of the above was a "I hope" at any given time and we dragged equipment to the club for any serious operations. Three cheers for the new road too. "You've. . . . WE all have come a long way, baby!" Life is indeed good in the fast lane.

I think it was a worthwhile effort, its not often that you get to celebrate a fifty-year anniversary of . . . . . ANYTHING and brag about it around the world!

73 and thank you all de W3SVJ **(see the pictures on the back cover)**

- Mark, AI3J is recovering from minor surgery. Best wishes from the club for a speedy recovery!

Happy Birthday, Hams!!

The following members celebrate that milestone this month:

Walt, KA3YNO, 12/13   Carol, KB3GMN, 12/15

Mike, KØBUD, 12/17   Joe, KA3JQA, 12/16

Joe, WA3BHW, 12/21   Sarah, KE3UBP, 12/22

Lloyd, KA3MSE, 12/30

Happy Birthday to all of you, and a very

MERRY CHRISTMAS to you & all our members!!

Local News (con't from page 2)

JOHN RODGERS TAKES OVER AS NEW SECTION MANAGER

This will be the first of my monthly section news reports. I want to thank Larry O'Toole for his dedication and service to Western Pennsylvania and wish him well as he continues to recoup from his illness.

I am looking to speedily get some action going in many areas that are of importance to the members. When I attended the WACOM hamfest last weekend I talked with many individuals that expressed concern about generating interest in the ARES program as well as the need to put new life into the clubs of our area. One of the first things that we will be working on is a combination of the section plans for Eastern and Western Pennsylvania. A sort of generic plan that will then be modified with details for the individual sections but will combine the resources of the two sections should the need arise. A committee is being formed for this purpose and I will be looking for one individual to serve on that team. We will then form a team to detail the Western Pennsylvania plan. We also need individuals to step up and be willing to accept the position of Emergency Coordinators for their individual counties. While some are on record we need to work to get a leader for each county. We also are in need of District coordinators for the four regions. Individuals with a desire to serve in this capacity are asked to contact myself at <n3mse@arrl.org> or Kathleen Peca at <arrl.sec.wpa@comcast.net>. One important aspect of the job is the filing of monthly reports to the SEC. Failure to do so could result in the cancellation of the appointment.

November report: Total number of ARES members: 493, change since last month: -1, in counties reporting: # of DECs/ECs reporting this month: 9, # of ARES nets active: 33, # with NTS liaison: 2. Calls of DECs/ECs reporting: KA3EJV Drew McGhee, DEC South 2 and EC Blair County, N3OGT Andy Ketner, EC Huntingdon County, K3NPX David Leiser, EC Beaver County, KA3YCB Kevin Snyder, EC Jefferson County, KA3CUA Gary Trivelpiece, EC Bedford/Fulton County, KB3JOF Robert Zugates, EC Indiana County, N3IDH Dave Demotte, EC Washington County, K3CWP Carmine Prestia, EC Centre County, WX3E David Wellman, EC Erie County.

Number of drills, tests and training sessions this month: 8, person hours: 68.5

Number of public service events this month: 1, person hours: 1, total number of ARES operations this month: 9, total person hours: 69.5

Another area we feel needs help is the club program. We are looking at a one day meeting to develop methods to interest new members and to get current members of clubs to become more active. More information on this will be forthcoming. Another program which is being developed is a method for

clubs to share the information in their club newsletters with other clubs to help develop ideas for meeting programs and other activities. Bob DeMarco, WA3ZRM is interested in establishing a club newsletter and information exchange program. Bob is the Vice President of the Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association (BVARA) and a retired educator. Any club interested in participating in such a program is asked to e-mail him at <wa3zrm@yahoo.com>. Bob can also be reached by phone at 724-378-7070 or on the 145.310- (100Hz PL) repeater. Interested clubs can also subscribe to the BVARA's eQRM newsletter by either visiting the club website at <www.w3sgj.org> or sending Bob an e-mail with the subject line: SUBSCRIBE.

The Western Penna. Phone and Traffic net meets daily on 3983 KHz. There is always a need for individuals to check in and help deliver traffic. It is easy to do and you will get help from the people already on the net. We do not want to return traffic as undeliverable because we do not have an outlet for someone to make a call and deliver the message. Due to propagation the net is currently beginning at 5:30 PM for the winter months.

My schedule is rather flexible at this time for me to attend meetings and club activities to speak to your group. Contact me at <n3mse@arrl.org> to schedule a visit.

73, John Rodgers, N3MSE, WPA. Section Manager

♦ There is a new loafer beacon in town in Monroeville PA, signing A3O, owner is Mike WA3O, who is a Skyview ARC member. Frequency is 182.895KHz (that's KHz, not MHz) plus or minus a few tens of hertz as per my FT-847. I am hearing it around 20db above the noise as per the waterfall program for WSJT. Good to have another beacon in town. 73, Mike, WA3TTS

Credits/Thanks

This month's newsletter was brought to you by:

WA3TTS, W3SVJ, & ARRL

Thanks for your contributions. They make the newsletter a much better read for all.

All contributions to the 'KiloWatt Harmonics' newsletter are most welcome. Send your articles/pictures to:

<KQ3DX@hotmail.com>

That's it for this month, CU next time around!!
73 de KQ3DX et al.

DX News & Views

♦ **OPERATIONS APPROVED FOR DXCC CREDIT**

ARRL DXCC Manager Bill Moore, NC1L, announced earlier this week that all operations from Vlad Bykov's, UA4WHX, last trip have been approved for DXCC credit.

These operations include, but may not be limited to, the following: 5X1VB -- Uganda; 9U0VB -- Burundi; 9X0VB -- Rwanda; D20VB -- Angola; D60VB -- Comoros, and J20VB -- Djibouti.

Other operations include: 3DA0VB -- Swaziland; 5R8VB -- Madagascar; A25VB -- Botswana; C91VB -- Mozambique; ST2VB -- Sudan; Z2/UA4WHX -- Zimbabwe; V51VV -- Namibia, and OD5/UA4WHX -- Lebanon.

If you have any questions concerning these operations, or any questions about the ARRL DXCC program, please e-mail the DXCC Desk <DXCC@arrl.org>.

♦ **HURRICANE DEAN WIPES OUT AVES ISLAND, YV0**

Want to see the destructive power a hurricane really has?? Check out the before-and-after pictures of Aves Island on the link below. Aves Island, YV0, took a direct hit from Hurricane Dean on August 17, 2007 and 90% of the island disappeared.

<http://www.yx0a.info/dean/dean.html>

♦ Look for JA6GXK to be active from Minami Torishima from December 12-27. He will be active especially on the low bands. Plans are to put up a 160M vertical, plus a 80/40M dipole. He requests that cards be sent to the JARL Bureau. However if you need a card direct, send it to JD1BMM, listed on <QRZ.com>. Do not send green stamps; use IRCs instead. He also plans to be back on Minami Torishima late-February through mid-March 2008.

♦ ZS6WLC will be active from the South African Antarctica base, SANAE IV Vesleskarvet as ZS7BYRD during January and February 2008. Look for activity on 14180KHz SSB and 14280KHz AM. QSL direct to: Dr. Ludwig Combrinck, ZS7BYRD, P.O. Box 443, Krugersdorp 1740, South Africa.

♦ ROTUMA ISLAND, 3D2. Tony, 3D2AG expects to be QRV from December 3 to January 20. QSL to home call.

♦ BURKINA FASO, XT. Michael, F1IQH will be QRV as XT2WC from Bobo Dioulasso from December 5 through early January 2008. QSL to home call.

♦ **CLIPPERTON ISLAND 2008 DXPEDITION ANNOUNCED**

This press release formally announces the 2008 DXpedition to Clipperton Island. The DXpedition will be led by N6OX with N7CQQ and K4SV as the management team. The goal is to make 100,000+ contacts, including working as many European, Mediterranean and African stations where Clipperton is high on the most wanted list. Departure date is February 28, 2008, arriving on Clipperton on March 4+/-. The team plans to operate 12 to 14 days, depending on conditions, using the call TX5C.

Currently, Clipperton is ranked 35th on the most needed countries list worldwide. The team of 22 or so amateur operators look forward to meeting or exceeding the performance expectations of modern DXpeditions. In addition to the ham activities, there will be a series of scientific studies done by the team.

Clipperton Island (French: ÃŽle de Clipperton and as the real French name ÃŽle de la Passion) is a nine-square-kilometer coral atoll in the North Pacific Ocean, southwest of Mexico and west of Costa Rica, at 10°18"N, 109°13"W. It has no permanent inhabitants. It is an overseas possession of France administered by the Minister of Overseas France.

More information about this expedition, including details of the scientific studies, ways you can help support this expedition financially, bios on the operators, a sponsor list and history of this DXCC entity, can be found at the teams web site: <http://www.clipperton2008.org>. While checking out the web site, be sure to visit the TX5C STORE.

♦ Look for E4/OM2DX to be active from Palestine December 14-22. This will be a group of 4 OM ops from Slovakia, operating on all bands 160-10M, CW, SSB and RTTY with special emphasis on the low bands. Plans are to have 2 stations QRV at all times. Online logs will be made available at their website:

<http://www.om2dx.com>

QSL this operation via OM3JW

♦ ARUBA, P4. K6TA is QRV as P40TA until December 18. This includes an entry in the ARRL 160 Meter contest. QSL via WM6A.

♦ ANDORRA, C3. Salvador is QRV as C31CT and has been active on 40 meters around 2330z. QSL via EA3QS.

(Information gleaned from the ARRL DX Bulletin, various issues)

November 2007 Business Meeting Minutes

Meeting was called to order by the President WA3TTS, Mike at 8 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and followed by a moment of silence for our Silent Keys. 21 members and 3 guests answered the Roll Call. The minutes of the Oct. meeting was accepted as published in the Nov. newsletter. Treasurer KA3YNO, Walt who reported dues payment to the Repeater Council, which is necessary for our frequencies to be registered and accepted by the FCC, gave the Treasurer's report.

Committee Reports

Technical: Several members reported untraceable and intermittent noise on the 2 meter repeater. Mike said that the beacons are working OK.

Membership: WA3BKD, Art gave the 2nd reading for N3GHT, Bill Powers and the 3rd for WB3IKJ, Ron who was then accepted into the club by the membership.

Ways And Means: WA3FWA, Joe will hold the 50/50 raffle after the meeting.

Contest: Mike reported the CQWW DX CW contest this weekend, Nov. 24 & 25 and the SCARC 50th clubhouse anniversary special event to run 9 AM to 5 PM Sat. & Sun. The ARRL 160 meter CW contest will run on Dec. 1 & 2.

Volunteer Exams: AI3J, Mark said that the next session would be held in June, 2008.

Old Business: K3LAB, Doug is recovering from back surgery. N3EQP, John explained the features needed for a locking cabinet to house the proposed library books. He would be the acting librarian to check out books on social and meeting nights. WB3CRC, Dale was assured that the ditch along the edge of newly paved club road would be filled in with the proper drainage material.

Nominations: Art held nominations for the 2008 officers. Mike and WB3HBI, Bob were nominated for President and a secret ballot decided Mike to retain that office. KA3JKS, Sue was nominated unopposed for the vacant Corresponding Secretary post.   The remaining offices were re-nominated unopposed.   The results for the 2008 officers are:

President……………………..WA3TTS Mike

Vice-President………………..W3MAC Mac

Treasurer……………………..KA3YNO Walt

Corresponding Secretary…….KA3JKS Sue

Recording Secretary………….WA3FWA Joe

Motion to Adjourn by Mike.

50/50 Raffle won by WB3HDI, Bob

Minutes submitted by Recording Secretary WA3FWA, Joe.

The Steel City Swap 'n Shop

Mike, KD0AR has a Gap Titan DX Vertical antenna for sale. It is approximately one year old, or so, and has a couple of the interconnecting wires broken that connect the stub rods. He indicates that this is not a major repair. The antenna itself is sound. Parts are readily available for this antenna from the GAP website. This is a $300.00 antenna new, and Mike is asking only $50.00 for it. If interested, contact Mike at:

<KD0AR@sbcglobal. Net>

BTW: Check out Gap Antennas website for more info on this antenna: <http://www.gapantenna.com>

FCC/Regulatory Matters

(Articles that appear in the FCC /Regulatory Matters column are gleaned from various issues of the ARRL Bulletin, among other sources. Thanks to the ARRL for their permission to reprint.)

♦ **500 KHz EXPERIMENT ENTERS SECOND SEASON**

Fall has brought lower static and good propagation, making excellent conditions for the 500 kHz experimenters. The ARRL 500 kHz experimental license, WD2XSH, was issued in September 2006 and has 19 active stations.

Project Coordinator for the ARRL-sponsored 500 kHz experiment Fritz Raab, W1FR, said, "We have been joined by a second US experimental license, WE2XGR, with five participants, as well experimenters in the UK, Germany, Sweden and the Czech Republic; operating modes include CW, QRSS, PSK-31, and others. Contacts have been achieved at distances up to 1234 miles. Signals have been received all over North America, Alaska, and Hawaii, and trans-Atlantic reports are not uncommon."

The best time to listen is between sunset and sunrise, Raab said. "The operating frequencies are: WD2XSH -- 505.2-510 kHz; WE2XGR -- 505-515 kHz; UK -- 501-504 kHz, and SM, DL, OK -- 505.0-505.2 kHz. Reception reports should be filed at the <www.500kc.com> website so that they become part of our data base." Additional information can be found at the experiment's Web site and also in the July/August 2007 issue of QEX <http://www.arrl.org/qex/2007/07/raab.pdf>.

♦ **MOTOROLA TO ACQUIRE CONTROLLING INTEREST IN YAESU/VERTEX STANDARD**

Motorola USA has announced its intention to launch a tender offer to acquire a controlling interest in Vertex Standard Co, Ltd. Vertex Standard is the parent company of Yaesu. Motorola will own 80 percent of Vertex Standard; Tokogiken, a privately held Japanese company, controlled by current president and CEO of Vertex Standard Jun Hasegawa, will retain 20 percent, forming a joint venture. The total purchase price for 80 percent of the outstanding shares on a fully diluted basis will be approximately US $108 million.

♦ **WRC-07 UPDATE**

The final working session of the 2007 World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-07) in Geneva drew to a close Thursday afternoon, November 15.

According to International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) Secretary David Sumner, K1ZZ, the principal achievements and disappointments, as they relate to the Amateur Services, of the conference are:

♦ **Good:** Maintenance of all existing amateur allocations, including the 7.200-7.300 MHz allocation in ITU Region 2 (the Americas) that had been somewhat at risk in connection

with consideration of additional allocations for HF broadcasting (see below).

♦ **Good:** A new worldwide secondary allocation at 135.7-137.8 kHz with a maximum radiated power limit of 1 W EIRP. (given the low efficiency of practical antennas for this frequency range, this limit is not as severe as it may sound).

♦ **Good:** Inclusion of an item, "to consider an allocation of about 15 kHz in parts of the band 415-526.5 kHz to the Amateur Service on a secondary basis, taking into account the need to protect existing services" on the provisional agenda for WRC-11 (set for 2011).

♦ **Good:** Avoidance of future agenda items that pose serious threats to key amateur allocations.

♦ **Good:** Some improvement in the so-called "country footnotes" that provide for different allocations by country in all or part of the 1.8, 3.5, 50 and 430 MHz amateur bands.

♦ **Bad:** No new allocation for the Amateur Service in the vicinity of 5 MHz, and no agenda item to consider such an allocation at a future conference.

♦ **Bad:** No future agenda item to consider an amateur allocation at 50 MHz in ITU Region 1 (Europe, the former Soviet Union, Mongolia, Africa and parts of the Middle East).

The amateur issues were, of course a minor part of the WRC-07 agenda, but the Amateur Service was involved in one of the most contentious agenda items dealing with allocations between 4 and 10 MHz. A series of European Common Proposals had proposed changes to allow for an increase of 350 kHz in HF broadcasting allocations, with a footnote for administrations to allow the Amateur Service to use 5.260-5.410 MHz on a secondary basis and with a radiated power limit of 250 W; however, HF broadcasting had no support from the other regional organizations and no compromise acceptable to all parties could be found. Ultimately the European administrations had to accept "no change" for broadcasting, effectively scuttling our chances for a 5 MHz allocation.

The IARU had hoped that if an allocation could not be achieved at WRC-07, an appropriate agenda item could be included for WRC-11. The 2007 conference, however, had little interest in taking up HF issues at the next conference, tentatively set for 2011, having little to show for a great deal of effort expended on HF in preparing for WRC-07. The only HF issues on the provisional WRC-11 agenda have to do with oceanographic radar applications and the

Website Of The Month

A monthly feature I dreamt up to inform you, our members of websites related to Amateur Radio, which I hope you'll find interesting and useful.

YE OLDE EDITOR'S DISCLAIMER: I have no interest, either pecuniary or monetary in the websites listed herein. All I wanna do is to make the newsletter more interesting to read. CUL, thanks/73 de KQ3DX

This month's pick:
The DXZone

<http://www.dxzone.com>

No, it isn't a site for DX'ers only. This one is full of information on antennas, rigs, contesting, SWL'ing, propagation, and many more topics of interest to Amateurs. It also has a classified section where you can buy and sell radio-related merchandise. I perused this one and found all sorts of info on just about everything you could think of. There is also a section for the scanner buffs out there too. There you'll find info on monitoring aeronautical, maritime, military, police and railroad traffic, plus many more. Did you lose your copy of your owners manual?? Chances are that you'll be able to find it here. Are you an antique radio collector?? They've got a section for you too. It's also a good site for the DX'ers, as it has links to DX Clusters, Clubs, places where you can rent a shack (hopefully on a tropical island now that winter has arrived here), plus links for all the different digital modes available. Not only that, but there are lots of links available for downloading software for the digital modes, too.

This is a pretty intense website. Lots and lots of stuff available for sale, and a great source for software and reference material pertaining to radios, antennas, etc, etc, ad infinitum. There's way too many items/links on this website to describe here in detail. So, check it out yourself and be sure to bookmark it. I think you'll find that it is one that you'll visit often.

The E-Bay Report

Yet another one of my brainstorms I dreamt up to keep our members informed on some of the more interesting auctions taking place on E-Bay.

YE OLDE EDITOR'S DISCLAIMER: I have no interest, either pecuniary or monetary in the auctions listed herein. All I wanna do is to make the newsletter more interesting to read. CUL, thanks/73 de KQ3DX

This month we have: Pot-Luck: A hodge-podge of various newer/older radios up for grabs on E-Bay.

This first one is for a newer-vintage Kenwood TS-570DG HF Transceiver. This one came with the external matching speaker, a power supply, and an INRAD 1.8KHz SSB filter. From the pics I saw, it looked to be clean and well-cared for. The seller is also throwing in a Heil desktop microphone and cable. The rig and accessories was listed as only having 5 or 6 hours total time on them. A nice little compact radio either at home as a base or mobile unit. Final price: $800.00 for the whole shebang. Again, you can see if you shop a little, you CAN get on HF cheaply.

The Kenwood TS-570DG package deal as described above.

Next up, we have a Hallicrafters SX-100 receiver. Clean boat anchors like this are getting harder and harder to come by these days. This one looks like a real gem. Completely restored inside and out, this one even had ORIGINAL Hallicrafters tubes in it. This particular unit was the later production Mark 2AB, which had some improvements over the earlier models. Final price: $1324.99. A real find in this condition.

To the left and right, are pictures of the Hallicrafters SX-100 as described above

The Beginner's Help Desk

In this month's installment, we continue our talk on going digital. In this issue, we'll talk about installing and configuring sound card interfaces.

There are lots and lots of digital sound card interfaces out there available for your use. Buying one is like buying a car: you can buy a Cadillac or you can buy a Yugo. Question is, how do I know which one to buy?

Ye olde editor uses many different ones in his shack. I currently have a Tigertronics SignaLink USB interface, and the West Mountain Radio RigBlaster NoMic interface. We'll talk about interfacing these, as these are 2 popular models in widespread use. (Our article this month will deal ONLY with the RigBlaster/Tigertronics units.)

These are 2 nice little units that don't take up much space on your operating desk, and they won't empty out your wallet either. The Tigertronics unit sells for about a hundred bucks direct from the manufacturer, and I bought the RigBlaster at Dayton for about ninety bucks. So, as you can see, you can get on the digital modes VERY cheaply. There are also units available from MFJ, Timewave and Kantronics. However, the Timewave/Kantronics units are very expensive ($300-$500). But, they do offer features such as DSP filtering, and mailbox capability for storing messages (such as mail from HF Packet), so again, it's the Cadillac vs. Yugo thing. I'll try to run a feature on comparing data controllers (Timewave, Kantronics) vs. the sound card interfaces (RigBlaster, Tigertronics) in a future issue.

The nice thing about the RigBlaster/Tigertronics units, is that they come with all the cables you'll need to hook it up and go. About the only thing you'll need to know is the type of cable you'll need to plug in to your rig. These units plug into the front of your radio, so take a look at the microphone plug on your rig. Chances are that it will probably be either a 7 or 8 pin plug. So, when ordering it, specify the manufacturer of your rig, and the number of pins on the microphone jack.

Interfacing these units is a very SIMPLE process. The first thing you'll need to do is to open up your interface and configure it to use with your particular radio. This simply involves positioning little jumpers inside so it will work with your rig. Whichever interface you decide to use, instructions are provided on how to accomplish this. Once you have done this step, go ahead and plug the interface into an available USB port on your computer. Then, simply plug the mic cable into your radio.

HOW TO CONFIGURE THE TIGERTRONICS INTERFACE

I have a Ten-Tec Omni VI radio. All I did after completing

the steps above was to send receiver audio directly to the computer, just like we did last month. When plugging the interface into the computer, the computer will automatically recognize it as a new device and configure it as a sound card. BTW: It is possible to have more than one audio device configured on your computer; I have 3. I added an external sound card, in addition to the internal one. Your computer will configure the Tigertronics unit as an additional sound card.

In my case, I ordered the interface with a cable with no ends on it. I then got some RCA Phono Plugs from Radio Shack, and soldered them onto the cable and plugged them in to the back of my radio where appropriate. All I needed to connect to my radio from the interface was 'Audio In' and 'PTT'. 'PTT' stands for 'Push To Talk'. This is how the interface automatically keys the rig on and off. The other jack I needed to wire was 'Audio In'. This jack will send transmitter audio from the interface to your radio.

With the way I wired my rig as described above, I was able to leave my microphone plugged in at all times, and feed audio from my interface into the back of my rig. Also, I split the 'PTT' line on my cable and am feeding it to the CW Key jack on the back of my rig; that way, it'll key the radio in the CW mode. MFJ manufactures a microphone/TNC switch, so you can switch between your mic or your sound card interface, thereby leaving your mic plugged in all the time. However, this might involve some modifications to the MFJ switch, such as cutting off the connector on it and soldering your own connectors on. These switches are really designed for the Timewave/Kantronics controllers, as well as MFJ's own line of controllers. My recommendation: simply unplug your interface and plug in your mic when you are using voice. You can only use one mode at a time anyway, and it just takes a few seconds to do so. My setup was special; if you have an Icom, Yaesu or Kenwood rig, you'll receive the cable pre-wired when you order your interface.

If you are feeding audio directly to your computer, and are using the MultiPSK program as described last month, you will need to configure your audio settings. You can do this on the MultiPSK introduction screen, on the top menu bar where it says 'Sound Card Audio Input' and 'Sound Card Audio Output'. Under the 'Output', you'll see 'USB Audio Codec' listed; this is your Tigertronics interface. So, go ahead and select that for your output device. Under 'Input', select your computer sound card as the input device; this way, you'll be able to hear receiver audio thru your computer's speakers. Under 'Com Port' on the program, select 'None'; this way it'll key your rig thru the sound card output.

The E-Bay Report (con't from page 7)

This next one is for another Kenwood rig; this time it's the TS-450SAT transceiver. This was the successor to the very popular TS-440 (which was ye olde editor's first rig). This one is just as popular; you'll still hear a lot of these on the air today. This particular specimen appears to be in very clean shape; no scratches on the top or front of it. Comes outfitted with the internal automatic antenna tuner, the power cable, manual, and the original hand mic. I like to show these radios here because, if you've browsed thru a radio catalog, you've probably become disillusioned with the high prices new HF rigs today command. Again, as seen here you can indeed get on the HF bands without spending a fortune. Final price for this little beauty: $521.00, plus an extra $16.00 to ship. Another compact little rig you can use either at home or mobile, or on a DXpedition.

The Kenwood TS-450SAT

For my next pick, I picked one of my favorite radios of all time; the Hallicrafters SX-28A Super SkyRider. I featured this model a few months back. This time around, I found one that was completely restored, inside and out. The face-plate was professionally restored and re-lettered, and the inside also had a complete makeover. Old caps, and any other parts that were suspected of being out of tolerance were replaced. This is an old, old pre-World War II boat anchor, weighing in at around 75 lbs or so. Chuck Dachis, in his excellent Hallicrafters book, describes this as the epitome of a classic boat anchor receiver, and he's right. Big, heavy, impressive with lots of knobs. There's nothing better than using an old boat anchor like this to heat the shack on a cold winter's night. This rig was for pickup only; the owner mentioned in the auction that he would rather not ship it, and understandably so, given it's fine condition, weight, and the possibility of damage during shipping. Final price for this restored beauty: $565.00. The beat-up SX-28 listed in the August newsletter sold for $221.50, and I said that these rigs restored could go for 2 or 3 times that price. Looks like I was pretty close in my estimate.

The Hallicrafters SX-28A. A nice, clean restoration job. Look at the face-plate: Not a mark on it!!

Last up, we have another collector quality boat anchor. This time, it's the Collins KWM-2A transceiver. This one is a very late 1977-model production, just before Rockwell took over, and is in immaculate condition. I wish I could own something like this, but alas, I just don't have this much bread to spend on a rig right now. Maybe after I get some overtime at work under my belt, things'll be different. The nice thing about Collins stuff, is that most of it is in fine condition just like this beauty. Final price for this gem: $2550.00. As you can see, Collins gear is like a fine wine: It appreciates with age.

That's it for this month. Thanks for reading!! 73 de KQ3DX

The Collins KWM-2A transceiver. This is about as good as it gets. Any cleaner, and it would still be in the box unopened.

Shack-Of-The-Month

I've been asking for pictures of club members' shacks for some time now, so I thought I'd get the ball rolling by featuring my shack for this month. This is my Ten-Tec Omni VI operating position. The computer is a Compaq Presario laptop, 1.4GHz Intel Celeron processor, and next to it, of course is my Omni VI. I have the computer sitting in one of those notebook desktop adapters, allowing me better versatility in viewing and interfacing components with it. If you look real close, between the rig and computer is a Tigertronics SignaLink sound card interface, as described in this month's 'Beginner's Help Desk' article on page 8. That's a Ten-Tec Model 329B Antenna Tuner on top of the rig, with a wireless keyboard in front of it. On the right, just out of view, is a Heil Goldline microphone on a boom mount. You can see the boom mounted next to the rig. That's a Daiwa 2KW SWR meter you see between the rig and the computer. With this setup, I can work all modes running 100 watts max. I run a Butternut HF9V vertical, a half-wave inverted-vee on 40, 80 and 160M in the winter, and a Hy-Gain TH5DX 5 element Triband Yagi up 50' from this position. Out of sight to the left is a Kenwood TH-215 2M handheld I use for local repeater chatting. I also have this configured as a remote-base setup; therefore, I can access this station and use it when I am away from home thru an Internet link. (Something else I will describe in a future issue.) It's a compact little setup which works just fine for me. I've worked the world from this modest setup with nothing more than my vertical and 100 watts; so as you can see, you don't need a roomful of equipment to get started on HF.

Feel free to send me pics of your shack; I'd love to feature it here. I like to see other members' shacks; what works for them and what doesn't in terms of setup and equipment layout. I also like to see what other members choices are for equipment. Send your Shack-Of-The-Month submission to: <KQ3DX@hotmail.com> CUL, thanks/73 de KQ3DX.

The Beginner's Help Desk (con't from page 8)

On the front of the unit is 3 knobs: 'Transmitter'; this adjusts the input audio level to your rig: 'Receiver'; this adjusts the receiver audio level (I do not use this since audio goes directly to my computer); and 'Delay'; this adjusts the 'hang time' of your transmitter after clicking to the receive mode in MultiPSK. All the way clockwise, and it will immediately switch to receive when selected; turning the knob clockwise will increase the switchover time from transmit to receive.

On the back is a 'Mon' jack; I have a pair of headphones plugged into this so I can listen to TRANSMITTED audio. You will not be able to hear receiver audio here, only transmitted audio. There is also an 'Aux' connection; you can plug speakers into this to hear receiver audio if you wish.

The best way to test your setup out, is to do it on-air with a friend. Have them monitor your signal to make sure it is not 'dirty'. (I would be happy to help out on this end. E-Mail me: <KQ3DX@hotmail.com> if you need help testing or setting up.)

Lastly, you can download the instructions from the Tigertronics website BEFORE you buy it. Follow this link to download: <http://www.tigertronics.com>

On the left side of the webpage you'll see 'Support'. Click on 'SignaLink', then under 'General' click on 'Online Installation Manual (PDF format)'.

Remember; your setup may differ from mine. Follow the manual and you should have no problem setting it up and configuring the unit for use.

HOW TO CONFIGURE THE RIGBLASTER NOMIC INTERFACE

This unit is relatively straight-forward and easy to set up. It is much the same setup as the Tigertronics unit, however, when you plug this unit into your computer, it will configure it as a 'COM' or 'serial' device, not a sound card. Again, when you order this from the manufacturer, specify your rig type and number of pins of the microphone jack, and they'll send you the proper cable, ready to plug into your rig.

On the RigBlaster unit, you will need to feed audio from your soundcard to the interface. This will be audio out to your rig. So, you'll have to plug a cable into your 'Speaker' or 'Line Out' jack on your soundcard, and then into the 'Audio In' jack on the RigBlaster interface. I bought a splitter jack from Radio Shack; all it is, is an adapter with a single male 1/8" plug on one end (this end plugs into the soundcard), and 2 each 1/8" female receptacles on the other end. Into one of these you'll plug your cable to your interface, and the other you'll plug in your computer speakers. These come in stereo or mono; I used the stereo one. These just cost a few bucks and are available at your local Radio Shack store. Then simply plug in your microphone cable and you're ready to go.

To use with the MultiPSK program, you'll need to set up audio input/outputs and select a 'COM' device. This is a very simple process; under 'Sound Card Input' and 'Sound Card Output', select the computer's soundcard as the input and output device, and then go to the 'Com Port' selection on the top menu bar, and select your com port. You may need to experiment with this one if you have more than one com device on your computer (such as a modem).

The RigBlaster interface is a little easier to adjust than the Tigertronics SignaLink interface, as it only has one adjustment on the unit. This is for adjusting transmit audio being fed to your transceiver. Again, the best way to test your setup out, is to do it on-air with a friend. That way, they can monitor your signal, and let you know how good or bad the quality of it is.

As with the Tigertronics SignaLink unit, you can download the instructions BEFORE you buy. Follow this link to download:

http://www.westmountainradio.com/pdf/nomicman4.pdf

SOME THINGS WORTH REPEATING

♦ **Remember: The Tigertronics SignaLink is configured as a sound card device. The RigBlaster NoMic is configured as a 'COM' or 'serial' device. Don't forget to set this up in MultiPSK as such.**

♦ **Most modern day rigs should NOT be run at 100% power when using the digital modes. I run my Omni VI at no more than 50% power. If you run 100% power, you risk damaging the finals in your rig.**

♦ **Have a friend listen to your transmitted audio; that way you'll know how clean your signal is. (You don't want a reputation for splattering your signal up and down the band.)**

♦ **This is just a very basic tutorial on setting these units up. Your installation may differ from mine. The instructions for both are well written and easy to understand.**

♦ **The ARRL's 'HF Digital Handbook' is an excellent reference guide for the digital modes. Now in it's Fourth Edition, it's still only 20 bucks. Money well spent if you think you'll find this stuff interesting enough to pursue.**

♦ **Remember; I'm here to help if you need assistance setting up your interfaces or if you need help setting up your on-air audio. E-Mail me at: <KQ3DX@hotmail.com>**

Dear Santa: For Christmas, I Want…...

JUST A LITTLE HEAPIN' HELPIN' OF SOME OF THE NEW PRODUCTS SEEN AT DAYTON HAMVENTION THIS PAST MAY. FEEL FREE TO DETACH THIS PAGE, AND STICK IT UNDER THE XYL'S (OR OM'S) COFFEE CUP IN THE MORNING FOR SOME NOT-SO-SUBTLE GIFT-GIVING HINTS!! HOPE THERE'S SOMETHING NICE WAITING FOR YOU UNDER YOUR TREE THIS CHRISTMAS!! 73 DE KQ3DX

From top to bottom: The Hilberling PT-8000, the Icom R9500, the Icom IC-7000, the Kenwood TM-D710A, the Yaesu FT-950 and the Ten-Tec Omni VII. I'd like to take this opportunity to say 'Merry Christmas' from ye olde editor to you and your family!! Even if one of these creampuffs isn't under your tree this year, I hope your holiday season is great and filled with good times with family and friends. Thanks for your kind comments about the newsletter this past year and the great reception I've gotten as your new editor. CU in 2008!! (Pictures ©2007, & courtesy of Hilberling, Icom, Yaesu, Kenwood & Ten-Tec.)

The Beginner's Help Desk (con't from page 11)

- **CORRECTION TO LAST MONTH'S COLUMN:** Last month when we set the program up for listening only, I mentioned that when clicking transmit, not to forget to click back to receive when finished; otherwise you would not hear receiver audio. The way we had it set up, that was not entirely true. YOU WOULD hear receiver audio, but the program would not, since it is still in the transmit mode. (See page 16 in last month's issue, down at the bottom, right above the lower picture.) As Maxwell Smart, Secret Agent 86 would say, "Sorry about that, chief."

Don't forget: Our club has the Tigertronics units installed and operational in the HF and VHF studios. Come play with it there before you decide to buy one for yourself.

Hopefully this'll give you a basic understanding of how to set these units up and get on the air. Next time around, I'll explain some of the features of our other fine program described last month, 'MixW', and how to set our interfaces up.

Finally, which one does ye olde editor like best? I would say that the Tigertronics SignaLink interface is a wee bit better. You have more control over the different settings, and I believe it is a little easier to set up. However, either one is a fine choice to get you going digital, and both are easy to set up and use. Thanks for reading. CU the next time around.

- The 'Beginner's Help Desk' is written for the new members/newly licensed ops in our club. If you think you have an article that would be of interest to them, send it to me; I'm constantly on the lookout for material for this column. All I ask is that it is easy to understand. Send it to me at: <KQ3DX@hotmail.com>.

- Ye olde editor's disclaimer: I have no interest, either pecuniary or monetary in the products or manufacturers referred to in this article.

FCC Regulatory News (con't from page 6)

implementation of new digital technologies for the maritime mobile service. The International Telecommunication Union's planning for the next World Radiocommunication Conference begins on Monday in Geneva, with the convening of a two-day Conference Preparatory Meeting for WRC-11. Paul Rinaldo, W4RI, will attend on behalf of the IARU.

FCC ADMONISHES AMBIENT OVER BPL ISSUES

The FCC, in a letter to Yehuda Cern, Chief Engineer for Ambient Corporation, concluded their investigation into whether Ambient's BPL operation caused "harmful interference" to Amateur Radio stations in Briarcliff Manor, New York. The Commission found that "Ambient's BPL operation has violated the radiated emission limits of Section 15.109" of the FCC Rules "and the terms of its experimental license, call sign WD2XEQ." The FCC's letter went on to say that "we hereby admonish Ambient." No findings were made, however, as to whether or not the system actually caused interference to Amateur Radio, and the Enforcement Bureau left open the issue of future experimental BPL operations at Briarcliff Manor.

Still before the Commission is the question of whether or not Ambient's experimental authorization should be renewed for a further period. Ambient has had an experimental authorization in Westchester County, New York since June of 2002. The most recent experimental authorization expired August 1, 2007. On July 24, Ambient filed an application to extend their authorization for an additional two-year period. ARRL filed an informal objection to that application on July 25, arguing that Ambient should be held to the same standard as the other BPL companies that are subject to the rules governing BPL, such as inclusion of the BPL system in the public database, so that victims of BPL interference can determine its source.

The FCC's Spectrum Enforcement Division sent letters to Ambient in March and May 2007, directing Ambient to "provide the results of any measurements made prior to the filing of its February 5, 2007 report to demonstrate compliance with the radiated emission limits of Section 15.109." The Division also directed Ambient to "submit a follow-up report confirming compliance once it had completed any necessary system modifications." The FCC found that Ambient's BPL operation in Briarcliff Manor "has operated in violation of Section 15.109 of the Commission's Rules. Accordingly, we admonish Ambient for violating Section 15.109 of the Commission's Rules and the terms of its experimental license, call sign WD2XEQ." The FCC cautioned Ambient that any violations of future license provisions "may result in additional sanctions."

ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, said, "It is gratifying that the FCC finally has recognized that Ambient's BPL operation in Briarcliff Manor violated both the FCC rules and the terms of its experimental license, has made these violations a matter of public record and has admonished Ambient; however, this action comes three years and one month after the ARRL first brought Ambient's violations to the Commission's attention. This is hardly the speedy resolution that the Commission has promised, and to which its licensees are entitled." ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, concurred with Sumner, saying "The FCC's admonishment to Ambient was 'too little, too late' from the FCC's Enforcement Bureau. "

November 2007

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December 2007

January 2008

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 *ARRL 160M Contest*
2 *WASH Sun. Eve Net ARRL 160M Contest*	**3** *Breezeshooters Net*	**4** *WACOM 10M Net WACOM 2M Net*	**5** *SCARC Social Nite Alleg. Co. ARES Net*	**6** *SkyView 2M Net*	**7**	**8** *ARRL 10M Contest*
9 *WASH Sun. Eve Net ARRL 10M Contest*	**10** *Breezeshooters Net*	**11** *WACOM 10M Net WACOM 2M Net*	**12** *SCARC Social Nite North Hills ARC Holiday Party Alleg. Co. ARES Net*	**13** *SkyView 2M Net*	**14**	**15** *OK DX RTTY Contest*
16 *WASH Sun. Eve Net*	**17** *Breezeshooters Net*	**18** *SCARC Business Meeting WACOM 10M Net WACOM 2M Net 2 Rivers ARC Business Meeting*	**19** *Alleg. Co. ARES Net*	**20** *SkyView 2M Net*	**21** *Winter Begins*	**22**
23 *WASH Sun. Eve Net*	**24** *Christmas Eve Breezeshooters Net*	**25** *Christmas Day WACOM 10M Net WACOM 2M Net*	**26** *SCARC Social Nite Alleg. Co. ARES Net*	**27** *SkyView 2M Net*	**28**	**29** *Stu Perry TopBand Challenge WASH Club Breakfast*
30 *Stu Perry TopBand Challenge WASH Sun. Eve Net*	**31** *New Year's Eve Breezeshooters Net*					

January 2008

December 2007
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February 2008
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 *New Year's Day* *WACOM 10M Net* *WACOM 2M Net* *ARRL Straight Key Night* *SARTG New Year RTTY Sprint*	**2** *SCARC Social Nite* *Alleg. Co. ARES Net*	**3** *SkyView 2M Net*	**4**	**5** *ARRL RTTY Roundup* *EUCW 160M CW Contest*
6 *WASH Sun. Eve Net* *ARRL RTTY Roundup* *ARRL Kids Day* *EUCW 160M CW Contest*	**7** *Breezeshooters Net*	**8** *WACOM 10M Net* *WACOM 2M Net*	**9** *SCARC Social Nite* *NHARC Business Meeting* *Alleg. Co. ARES Net*	**10** *SkyView 2M Net*	**11**	**12** *North American QSO Party CW* *070 PSKFest* *Worked All Britain* *Top-Band Contest*
13 *WASH Sun. Eve Net* *North American QSO Party CW* *DARC 10M Contest*	**14** *Breezeshooters Net*	**15** *SCARC Business Meeting* *WACOM 10M Net* *WACOM 2M Net* *2 Rivers ARC Business Meeting*	**16** *Alleg. Co. ARES Net*	**17** *SkyView 2M Net* *NAQCC Monthly Straight Key Sprint*	**18**	**19** *ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes* *UK DX RTTY Contest* *Int'l United Teenager Contest* *LZ Open Championship*
20 *WASH Sun. Eve Net* *ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes* *UK DX RTTY Contest* *HA DX Contest*	**21** *Martin Luther King, Jr., Day* *Breezeshooters Net* *HA DX Contest*	**22** *WACOM 10M Net* *WACOM 2M Net*	**23** *SCARC Social Nite* *Alleg. Co. ARES Net*	**24** *SkyView 2M Net*	**25**	**26** *WASH Club Breakfast* *CQ WW 160M CW Contest* *BARTG RTTY Sprint* *REF French Contest* *YLI SSB QSO Party*
27 *WASH Sun. Eve Net* *CQ WW 160M CW Contest* *BARTG RTTY Sprint* *REF French Contest* *YLI SSB QSO Party*	**28** *Breezeshooters Net*	**29** *WACOM 10M Net* *WACOM 2M Net*	**30** *SCARC Social Nite* *Alleg. Co. ARES Net*	**31** *SkyView 2M Net*		

The Steel City Amateur Radio Club

(412) 787-0777

2M Repeater:
147.030/147.630MHz (PL 123.0)

70cm Repeater:
444.450/449.450MHz (PL 103.5)

WA3TTS Beacon: 144.300MHz (CW)

ATV Repeater: 426.250MHz (Currently off-line. Contact AA3EE for more info.)
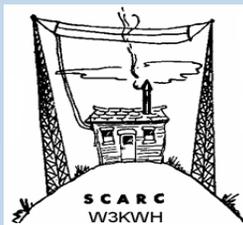
1296MHZ Beacon: 1296.269MHz (CW) 1W

We're on the web!
www.w3kwh.com

The Steel City Amateur Radio Club is an ARRL-Affiliated organization

Three of our finest in action at the W3KWH Clubhouse 50th Anniversary Special-Event Station.

From top to bottom:
Nathan, W3SVJ,
Chuck, N3UUZ,
Joe, WB3AGB

SCARC
W3KWH