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Summer Vacation Scanning

page 4

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COVER STORY

Summer Vacation Scanning

By Jon Van Allen KF7YN





It is that time of year again when millions of Americans hit the highways and byways for summer vacation. Many of us go to the beaches, head for the mountains, forests, deserts and National Parks. I am one of those who loves to camp and explore the expanses of our great country. Of course my scanner goes with me to keep up on events going on around me. I cannot think of a better way to add to the enjoyment and safety of summer activities than taking your scanner along. There are so many reasons for needing to hear what's going on including severe weather, fire, and other related broadcasts that you will find in virtually all National Parks.

Due to space limitations it is not possible to cover every recreational frequency so we will concentrate mainly on US National Parks. Things have changed in recent years, many of these frequencies have been updated and most listed here have been verified but there may be a few outdated listings. Keep in mind federal frequencies are in a state of change to new narrowband frequencies and P25 digital, budget cuts notwithstanding.

Notice 166.325 is a very common frequency used Nationwide. Also check 530 kHz and 1610 kHz for Travelers Information Service (TIS) stations. These low power stations have good information about local road and weather conditions, points of interest and other information pertinent to your visit. I highly recommend you to monitor NOAA Weather channels for last minute weather information before heading out on your daily excursions. If you are heading out on the water, be sure to take a Marine Band VHF radio or at least monitor that band, I also recommend taking a pair of FRS, GMRS or MURS radios along to keep in touch.

COVER STORY

Please check laws concerning mobile and handheld scanners in those states. For example, mobile scanners are illegal in South Dakota but the law says if you have a ham license, you may legally monitor. Word on the street is that SD law enforcement is not out looking for violations so discretion is the best approach.

Be prepared! If you are using a handheld scanner, I suggest taking along plenty of fresh batteries or a way to recharge your scanner's batteries. Expect to pay high "tourist" prices for batteries while you are in and around our National Parks. I have a car charger for AAA and AA cells, so I can recharge on the go. But I also bring along fresh alkaline cells just in case. Costco, Sams and other membership clubs offer batteries in bulk at reasonable prices.

Signals in some of these remote and mountainous areas can be weak so always take a better antenna than the rubber duck that came with your handheld scanner. I like to use a collapsible antenna so that I can adjust the antenna for the frequency of interest. I also recommend the Diamond RH771 or RH77CA antenna for greatly improved reception. A mobile scanner and external antenna are even better.

What you can expect to hear: Most National Parks broadcast some sort of daily report with weather forecasts, campground info, fire conditions, planned events, etc. These are usually broadcast in the morning between 8-10 AM and / or afternoons before 5 PM. There is a wealth of information about local conditions and events in these broadcasts so try to monitor the main dispatch channel at these times. Some Parks are using P25 digital (and occasionally encryption). I have monitored digital in Yellowstone, Zion, Arches & Canyon lands and others. Some

Continued on page 6







COVER STORY cont.

parks such as Grand Canyon are reportedly all digital now. A digital scanner is becoming a must in many places.

US National Parks (listed alphabetically)
Acadia National Park 164.175, 164.425, 164.725, 165.0875
Arches & Canyon lands National Parks 166.325, 166.925 171.700, 172.600
Badlands National Park 169.400, 170.050, 169.600
Biscayne National Park 172.675
Big Bend National Park 163.725, 166.375
Blue Ridge National Parkway 172.725, 173.7625, 172.450, 172.750
Bryce Canyon National Park 172.500, 172.550, 168.575, 169.550, 170.100
Capitol Reef National Park 168.575, 169.550
Carlsbad Caverns National Park 164.9875, 164.800
Channel Islands National Park 171.700, 166.7875, 171.675 Tac
Crater Lake National Park 170.100 West, 169.925 East
Death Valley National Park 170.100, 163.100, 168.350
Denali National Park 166.300, 166.350, 166.900, 411.825, 417.825
Dry Tortuga National Park 171.2625, 168.550
Everglades National Park 172.525, 171.775 Fire Net, 172.775
Glacier Bay National Park 166.950
Glacier National Park 166.2375, 166.375, 167.025, 170.100, 162.1625, 163.7125, 170.025
Grand Canyon National Park 171.5375, 171.650, 170.3875, 172.1125, 172.525,
Grand Teton National Park 171.675, 172.425
Great Basin National Park 164.800, 171.3875
Great Smokey Mountains National Park 166.875, 167.150, 168.200, 169.0875, 169.550,169.725, 170.100, 170.3375, 170.3875, 170.5125, 170.875, 171.0625, 171.1625, 171.750, 172.500
Guadalupe National Park 164.425
Haleakala National Park 169.550, 170.100
Hawaii Volcanoes National Park 168.550, 169.400
Hot Springs National Park 166.325
Isle Royale National Park 169.675
Joshua Tree National Park 171.150, 172.675, 171.675, 168.350, 163.100
Katmai National Park 164.425, 164.9875, 172.625, 406.250
Kenai Fjords National Park 166.750
Lassen Volcanic National Park 172.4625, 172.4375, 168.350 Tac-1, 163.100 Tac-2, 169.7875, 169.8125, 168.6125
Mammoth Cave National Park 171.725, 172.500, 169.550
Mesa Verde National Park 170.050, 172.500 Fire, 169.775
Mount Rainier National Park 172.450, 168.6125, 171.775, 169.725
Mount Rushmore National Monument 169.400, 170.050, 172.625
North Cascades National Park 166.750
Olympic National Park 168.525
Petrified Forest National Park 170.050
Redwood National Park 165.1625, 165.3125, 166.350
Rocky Mountain National Park 171.750, 171.5375, 170.3875, 166.300, 172.400, 166.350, 168.6125, 164.425, 173.9875
Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks 164.800 South, 164.750 North, 171.025, 168.575, 168.5625, 171.1625, 168.6125
Shenandoah National Park 166.900, 171.700, 172.650, 172.675, 173.675, 173.7625







Theodore Roosevelt National Park 166.375, 164.575
Voyageurs National Park 166.900
Wind Cave National Park 169.400, 170.050
Yellowstone National Park 166.325 North, 165.5875 South, 167.150, 166.375 Lamar, 166.875 West, 172.500 Fire Cache
Yosemite National Park 166.300, 172.650, 172.775 Fire, 168.6125, 168.5625
Zion National Park 166.325, 171.6125, 169.7125 Law, 168.350 (Tunnel)

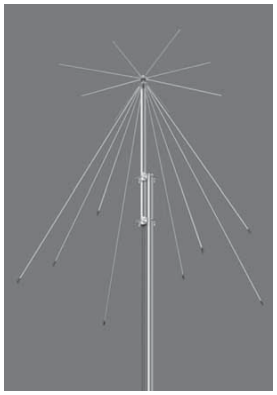
I hope everyone is having a great summer! Feel free to drop me a line and be sure to write 'Nat Com' in the subject line. My email address is kf7yn@yahoo.com

Until next time, happy scanning!



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ICOM AH8000



The **Icom AH8000** is a multi-purpose discone antenna that receives solid from 100 to 3300 MHz! It can also be used for transmit on 144, 430, 1200 and 2400 MHz ham bands (under 200W). This omni-directional antenna is 3 feet high and attaches to any 1-2 inch standard mast with two supplied U-bolts (mast shown is not supplied). 2.1 lbs. Comes with a preassembled 49 foot coaxial cable with N connectors.

AH8000 *Order #1945* **$269.95**

This adapter converts the N male to a BNC male.

UG-349/AU *Order #4571* **$4.95**

This adapter converts the N male to a PL-259.

UG-83 *Order #1384* **$4.95**

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COMET DS150S



The **Comet DS150S** discone antenna receives solid from 25 to 1500 MHz and can be used for transmit on 50, 144, 430, 900 and 1200 MHz ham bands (under 100 watts). This stainless steel antenna is 4.6 feet high and attaches to any standard mast (not supplied) from 1.2-2.4 inches with the supplied U-bolt. Weight is 3.2 lbs. Terminates to an SO-239 and comes with a 65 foot RG-58A/U PL259 to PL259 coax cable.

DS150S *Order #3587* **$94.95**

R6



The **Icom R6** covers 100 kHz to 1309.995 MHz (less cellular gaps) in: AM, FM Narrow and FM wide. Enjoy local VHF-UHF coverage plus international shortwave broadcast. 1300 memories store: frequency, mode, step size, duplex, CTCSS, tone squelch and skip settings. Other features include: attenuator, LCD lamp, AM ferrite bar antenna, auto power off, CTCSS decode, weather function and battery save. You can put the world in your pocket for under $200.00.

Call or visit website for price.

R20



The **Icom R20** covers an incredible 150 kHz to 3304.999 MHz (less cellular) with 1250 alphanumeric memories, bandscope and SSB/CW. It has: two VFOs, dual watch, voice scan control, NB, large two line LCD and CTCSS/DTCS/DTMF. A built-in IC **audio recorder** can record up to 4 hours of reception! With charger, Li-ion battery, belt clip and strap. **Call for price.**

DIAMOND ANTENNA RH77CA/SRH77A



The **Diamond RH77CA** is a popular 2M/440 transceive HT antenna. It is also immensely popular with scanner users because it can additionally receive very well on: 120, 150, 300, 450, 800 and 900 MHz. This thin, flexible, black antenna is 15 inches and terminates to a 50 ohm BNC.

RH77CA *Order #2368* **$21.95**

The **Diamond SRH77CA** is similar, but terminates to an SMA.

SRH77CA *Order #0491* **$19.95**



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LEDs Like You Have Never Seen Before

By Gordon West, WB6NOA

…..A roll of waterproof and / or submersible LEDs is the latest way to illuminate your shack or mobile…..

As a radio communicator, you know the frustration of a burned out grain-of-wheat incandescent bulb causing a scanner

or two-way radio's LCD display panel to go blank! Those pesky tiny illuminators are usually imbedded so deep within your radio's display that it ultimately becomes an expensive factory fix.

Incandescent meter bulbs also get hot, turning white meters background to an ugly yellow with a possible brown burn spot.

In our communications van, every amp counts. Those automotive incandescent hot bulbs draw over an amp each. For our comm van, it was a no-brainer switch-over. Remove the white plastic lens cover, pick out the old incandescent bulb, and snuggle in a 12 volt LED cluster to run every living light inside the van, with a total current draw of far less than an amp!





Yes, LED technology encountered the "Blues" when it first hit the market two years ago, but now LED manufacturers offer various color-producing temperatures; so now the LED clusters can now glow soft-white, just like your old filament incandescent bulbs. The LEDs themselves run stone cold and their associated circuit-board-mounted components may get warm, but never red hot.

THE LIGHT EMITTING DIODE

The LED is forward biased and operates at 1.5 volts, around 10 mA, where current consumption DROPS as voltage drops, allowing the LED – or a string of LEDs- to give off light from a nearly depleted tiny battery source.

The common LED gives off a pure, bluish tint, and a mixture of other semiconductor materials

may influence the LED color from a brilliant red to a more pleasing yellow-warm white.

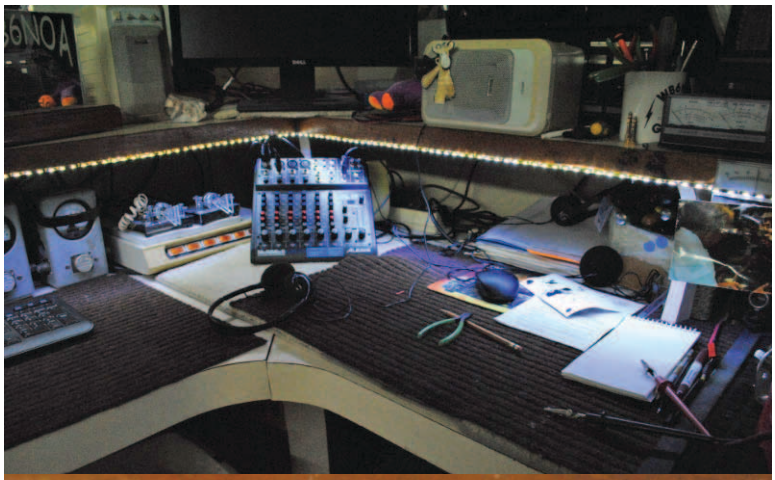
We have seen LED flashlights for nearly a decade, and it was the C.Crane Company who brought in the cool white "GeoBulb" household light bulb to replace the older incandescent 60 watthot bulbs with even more downward lumens from warm LEDs using only 7 watts of power.

I have several varieties of C.Crane LED bulbs running in household lamp fixtures and I wouldn't go back to a conventional filament light bulb for any reason.

C.Crane Company (CCrane.com) also came out with dimmable home LED bulbs, in case you run the radio room with a Triac-type dimmer.

At the large RV stores, LED replacement clusters are now a common commodity, but be sure to check which color the LED cluster will glow. Some are pretty stark blue. I really prefer the warm white. Again, although each individual LED gives off cold electroluminescence, the associated circuitry on the small flexible PCB

Continued on page 10



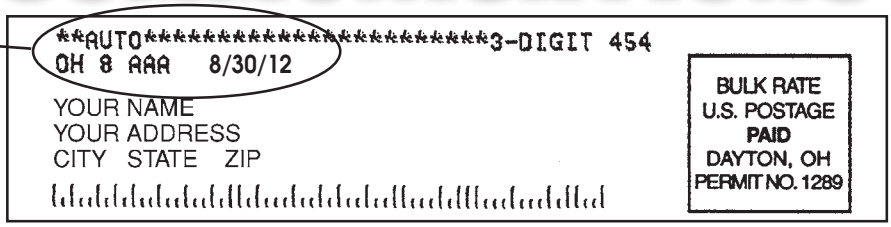


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LEDs Like You Have Never Seen Before

continued

(printed circuit board) will get warm.

LEDs on a ROLL!

At the recent Consumer Electronics Show, two vendors of mobile electronics were showing every conceivable style of 12 volt LED lamp assemblies in just about any color of your choice.

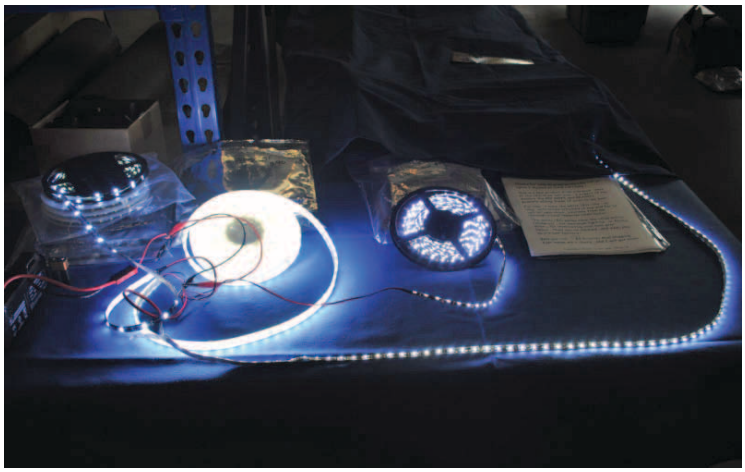
www.LEDpost.com

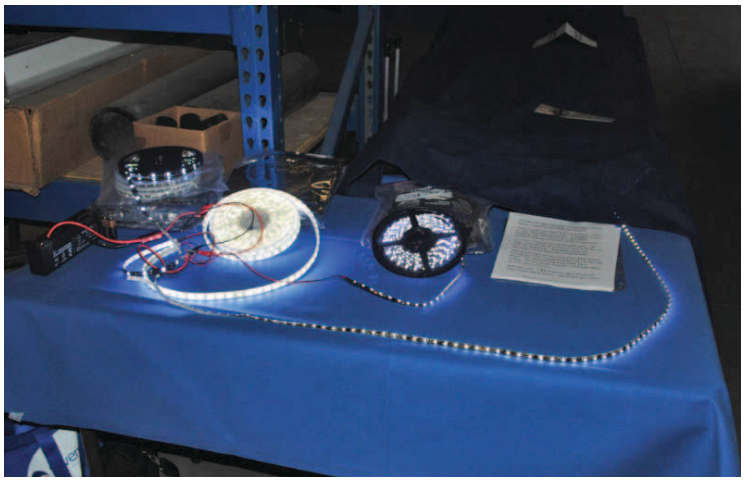
www.cablejohn.com

The two companies sell to automotive store retailers, and they will not sell DIRECT. If you drop them an email based on this article, ask them for their local retail seller.

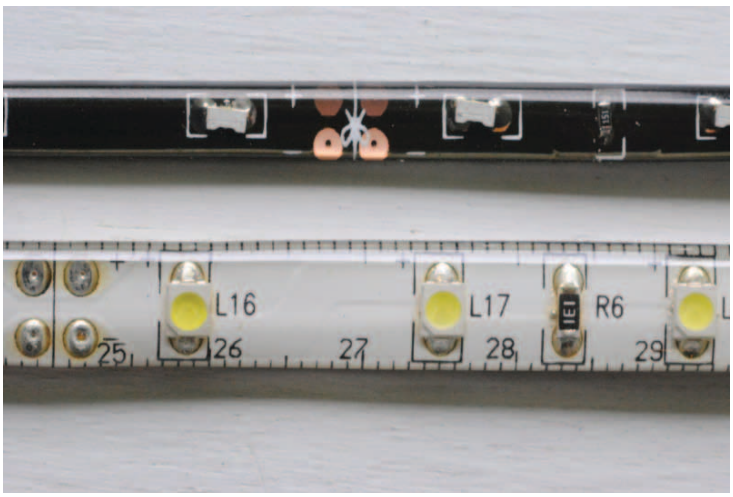
Most interesting is their LED light strip, 16 feet in length, containing 300 individual LEDs on the roll, in blue, green, red, yellow, and WHITE.

These rolls are rated IP 65 waterproof, so they can survive a rainstorm when mounted on the outside of your vehicle. They also sell a submersible 16 foot strip,









rated IP 68, advertised to run in your pool or hot tub.

The 16 foot strip of #335, 300 count LEDs, draws only 2 amps with all 300 LEDs at full brilliance. Run this same strip on a common transistor radio 9 volt battery, and you get a dandy usable glow that will play for 5 days continuously! And, for the much brighter, almost blinding, white light from #5050 LED type, 300 blazing away will easily light up the campsite next to your RV, pulling about 5 amps, perfect for an outside command post with plenty of paperwork.

Most interesting is the 300 LED SIDE strip that, when mounted with the strip vertical, shine down. This is what

LEDs Like You Have Never Seen Before continued

I run in my radio room, and, on a 9 volt battery, there is plenty of light to see my log book. The lights shine straight down without the LEDs blasting me in the face. This is called the "side view strip" and is only available in LED type #3528, medium intensity.

The LEDs are configured on these flexible rolls with "cut here" indicators in case you need a shorter custom length. The full roll comes with red and black 12 volt wires attached, so once you start cutting, you will need to do your own delicate solder job.

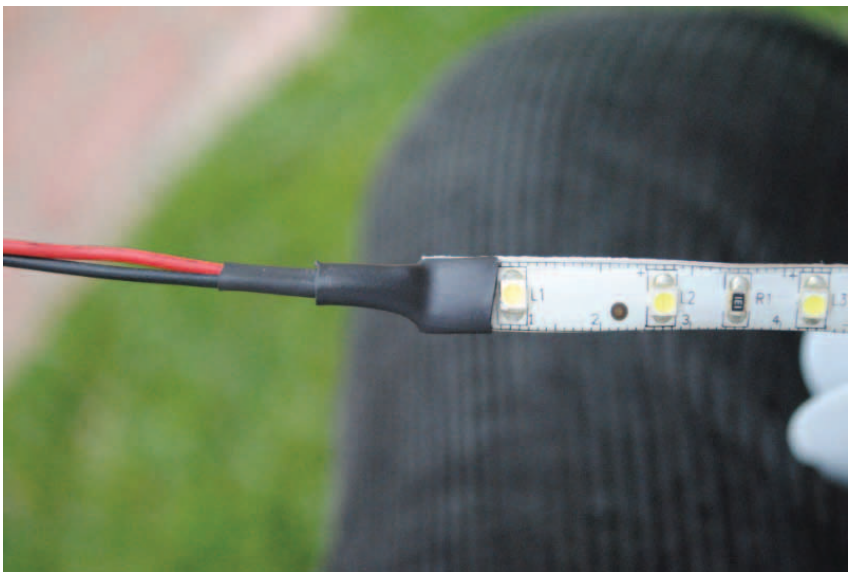
Be sure to seal well that new connection to keep it waterproof.

Each roll has a 3M™ marked "adhesive" on the back. I found this adhesive marginal in stickiness, once the paper strip cover is removed. If you plan an on-vehicle attachment, you can back up the sticky with a dab of flexible sealant.

The 16 foot rolls sell anywhere from $50 on up. You can get multi-color strips, along with a controller, for a party scene, but not very professional for lighting the inside or outside of a base or mobile command post. Stick with white. Also, be aware that 300 LED 16 foot rolls might be found on the internet for a lot less money, but these typically have no weather resistance, nor do they have that same hefty feel that these waterproof rolls exhibit.

On selected rolls, you can even specify the background color of the flexible PCB, too.

But, most amazing, if you buy one of these rolls through an automotive retailer, is their capability of long run life on a conventional 9 volt battery. While not as bright as 12 volts, the 9 volt battery will play continuously for multiple days, or, easily at night for an entire evening of soft illumination. When you really need to kick up the light, put them on 12 volts and stand back!



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The Summer is Bringing Changes to Radio Systems

Schools will be particularly busy while classes are out, moving to narrowband.

By Chuck Gysi, N2DUP



A transportation supervisor uses a two-way handheld radio to coordinate bus transportation at a school. In one state, Illinois, it's state-mandated that all school buses are equipped with two-way radios. These radios are undergoing changes before the 2013 narrowbanding deadline.

This summer will prove to be busy for school districts, private schools and large and small colleges and universities when it comes to their radio systems. Perhaps you have heard about the Federal Communications Commission's mandate that two-way radio systems must migrate from spectrum-clogging wideband radios to new narrowband technology that will allow more radio channels in the same amount of space.

Many schools will be attempting to make the radio switch this summer when classes are out as to minimize potential problems when radios are needed during the regular school year. This will be the last extended period schools have to make the radio switch before the new mandate takes effect the first of next year.

The school district where I live made the switch to narrowband radios last summer, as did most surrounding school districts, too. However, there are many schools that have not made the switch yet, and you can bet they will be making the changes this summer.

What does it mean to you, the scanner hobbyist?

First of all, when the new narrowband radios come on the air, you will notice the audio seems lower. That's because the voice occupies a smaller bandwidth, hence less audio. You will find yourself turning up the volume to hear these new narrowband radios. But there's another possible change. Your local schools may switch frequencies or even add new channels when they install or modify their radios for narrowband use.

A school district near me came up on a new channel for their school buses last fall when they went to narrowband radios. They moved from a frequency that probably was more crowded in the 461-465 MHz band to a quieter one in the 451-453 MHz segment. The only reason I found them was that they used a channel I had programmed in my scanner for another user in another area. I was surprised when I heard them there. They made the change when they switched their radios to narrowband.

You may want to keep an ear on school radio channels throughout this summer. Normally, you won't hear much on them at all when students aren't in class. However, this summer you may hear testing with new radios and hear the radio techs call out when each new radio

Continued on page 14

Uniden

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The Summer is Bringing Changes to Radio Systems

continued



Almost every university and college use two-way radio in various operations, especially security and campus police forces. This is a patrol vehicle at the University at Buffalo in New York State.

or reprogrammed radio is set up. You'll get a feel for what the new radios will sound like. In fact, you may want to disable the CTCSS or DCS tone for the school radio systems you monitor because that could very well change with the new setup since every radio has to be reprogrammed or replaced. For instance, while CTCSS tones are the most popular way of keeping a channel quiet, with only 38 standard tones, it's possible to hear other users on the same frequency if they select the same tone. School buses running on 155.160 MHz with a tone of 136.5 Hz may come to realize that a medical helicopter on the same frequency in an adjacent state causes interference to their operations whenever the helicopter is in the air because it also uses the 136.5 Hz CTCSS subaudible tone. What to do? Well, while every radio is either being reprogrammed or being replaced (older radios need to be replaced while some newer radios can just be reprogrammed for narrowband use), they may switch to a digital – or DCS – tone that will be less likely to have other users on it. There are so many DCS tones that the likelihood of sharing the same tone in the same area is very unlikely and it would be helpful in screening out other users.

While local school districts, school bus companies and private schools will be making the final push to bring their radios into narrowband compliance this summer, also expect the same if you have a college or university near you, too. While some of these radio systems probably get some use over the summer, it's worth keeping an ear on them, too, as they migrate to narrowband.

Colleges and universities use radios for so many purposes, including security, maintenance, emergency call boxes, administration, food service, athletics, sports venues, student housing, hospitals and clinics, and more. It's a good bet that most institutions of higher learning also will be making the switch to narrowband radios this summer and could possibly come up on new frequencies and/or CTCSS or DCS tones.

The Summer is Bringing Changes to Radio Systems

continued

Again, you may find local colleges and universities adding new frequencies or repeaters to their operations mix for radios as they go through the massive radio upgrade. If you no longer hear security on their old frequency, there's a good chance they moved to a new channel. Likewise, if maintenance and security shared a radio channel in the past and all of a sudden all you hear is maintenance units, it's likely that security has procured a new channel for their operations so you may have to search through nearby radio channels to find out where they moved. FCC databases on the web may help you look for the new frequency or frequencies as their license would have been modified in the process for narrowbanding and the new channels.

Write in

Do you monitor school frequencies in your area? What do you hear going on at your local schools, colleges and universities? You can write to me at nat-com@scanning1.com (be sure to put "Nat-Com" in the subject line or your e-mail may wind up in my spam bin). This e-mail address is only for the author of this column. ●



The badge of a school security officer.



A school security guard is equipped with a two-way radio for contacting staff in emergency situations.



A school administrator uses a two-way radio on school grounds to keep in contact with other staff during the school day. Staff use radios not only for administrators in dealing with students throughout the day, but also maintenance and security operations.

Radio Plays a Key Role in Lives



By: Dorothy Rieke

Radio has had a tremendous impact on our society. In fact, it has surpassed print media as it does not need to be delivered before obtaining information. With the turn of the dial, listeners gain speedy access to the latest news including information from all parts of the world. In fact, for some, radio is a "town crier" actually exposing them to the world outside their homes. After the discovery of radio waves, it wasn't long before radio was recognized as an important means of communication changing people's lifestyles around the world. Work, entertainment, health care, education, relationships, travel, and other activities all require moving in the right direction. Radio content not only suggests but guides movements in these areas.

Radio has a reputation of providing up-to-date information through different types of programming. It is a way of communication that generates interest by bringing everyday happenings to our attention while revealing their importance. It broadcasts current city, national, and international news and facts about political happenings, sports, business, education, entertainment, and literature. These facts, affecting our thoughts and actions, often determine how we vote, what we buy, what decisions we make, the values we hold, and the way we perceive reality, can all be attributed to the influence of radio.

Nearly everyone has the desire to know what is happening. Radio answers that desire by representing a "global sharing of knowledge." In fact, some believe that the world has "shrunk" because of world-wide communication that enhances general knowledge.

Because radios are numerous and within the reach of nearly everyone, those listeners who are isolated and unable to attend live music, talk shows, and other programs enjoy unique entertainment focusing on dramas, light comedies, variety shows, gossip chats, live music, talk shows, and other programs. These listeners do not need tickets nor do they have to pay travel expenses in order to be informed or entertained.

Radio also plays the role of educator by distributing information. Radio lets listeners know about events just as they occur. In addition, these broadcasts often are accompanied by experts' views and opinions which generates more interest in events.

Through certain talk shows, listeners are given opportunities to exchange views on a variety of subjects. For example, radio presents the platform to air our social and political views. In this way, listeners present themselves and their opinions to the rest of the world.

Radio can also increase interest in certain fields of endeavor. For example, music heard on the radio can trigger interests in pursuing careers in music. It can increase interests in certain kinds of music giving hours of enjoyment.

In addition, radio gives voice to social issues by increasing listeners' social awareness by changing attitudes and encouraging them to help others with contributions or actions. Listeners also are recipients of programs pertaining to health issues for adults and children.

Through news of candidates' qualifications and their views on certain subjects, listeners develop more interest in accepting responsibility for a democracy by taking an intelligent, knowledgeable interest in the government.

Radio also helps people through educational programs. Listeners learn about their basic rights and how to use them. It serves a link between our government and its people liberating and empowering.

Radio has a long history of use during wartimes. At those times, listeners are anxious to hear news, commentaries, announcements, and important addresses. In addition, radio is the fastest way to issue certain instructions to people telling

Radio Plays a Key Role in Lives

them where to go and what to do during times of disaster. The South African Boer War represented the first time radio was used in a war setting. Even though, kites were used to send antennas high into the sky, and heavy equipment was brought in, these first attempts to utilize the communication properties of radio proved somewhat unsuccessful.

Years later, when equipment was streamlined, armies in the field gained much advantage using advanced radio communication technology. By occupying certain frequencies and using coded messages, battles were won to end wars.

In World War I when the British were intercepting the messages sent from their submarines, the Germans used radio to send secret coded diplomatic messages.

The memorable TITANIC tragedy proved the importance of radio communication on the high seas. Without radio communication to alert nearby ships, those survivors in boats would have perished because once other ships realized what was occurring by radio communication, they rushed to the scene aiding those in lifeboats.

Diplomatic messages are frequently sent over radio waves. President Woodrow Wilson sent his Fourteen Point Document to Germany by way of radio in 1918.

A more recent use for radio is RADAR (Radio Detection and Ranging). This is used to detect ships and aircraft which cannot be detected with human eyes.

Radio has the ability to shape public opinion. During the 911 attacks and aftermath, huge coverage informed and shaped public opinion against terrorism and terrorists.

Listeners are brought closer to society through this medium's influence on their daily lives. In some instances, radio has made a major transformation in how listeners think and what they do. It shapes and sometimes dictates or dominates our culture and interests resulting in a direct impact on society.

Because of radio, our world has become a global village. Within a few minutes, radio informs about any part of the world with knowledge, information, and news. Radio goes on picnics, accompanies workers to and from work, resides in homes, travels with us on vacations, enriches our leisure time, and is the daily companion that divulges all. Indeed, radio continues and always will play a key role in our lives.

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A Taste of CB

Did you know that some things we enjoy today seem to have roots in citizens band radio?



It's funny how this trucker makes a statement about Twitter, which actually has its roots in the lore of CB radio!

By Chuck Gysi, N2DUP

I was doing some thinking about citizens band radio recently when it occurred to me that things in this day and age actually have some roots in CB – or at least the very culture.

Citizens band radio has been around technically since the late 1940s, but it was a short-range business-type UHF radio system in those days. Later, in the 1950s, the Federal Communications Commission took the 11-meter band away from hams and channelized a new citizens band that offered businesses and citizens a longer-range radio system. The radios at that time were bulky tube sets and CB really didn't start to get a kick in the pants until the 1960s when electronics store chains such as RadioShack and Lafayette Radio Electronics started selling their own branded CB radios to the mass public.

While the 1970s really characterized CB what it is today, the genesis of the legacy of citizens band really started in the 1960s. It was then that CB radio morphed from more of a business radio system to a band really desired and used by average citizens, to the point of becoming hobby in nature.

At that point, the use of FCC-issued call signs started to wane and while FCC rules prohibited hobby chatter on CB back then, average citizens learned they could talk with other CB radio owners about anything and everything … kind of like a large shared party line, if you will.

With CB radio becoming more of a hobby, persons on the air concocted funny nicknames to refer to themselves on the air and these became known as handles, which is just another word for name. The first CB handles were simple phrases like Mustang or Turtle. As the hobby evolved, handles became more convoluted such as Midnight Reporter or Tuscaloosa Tornado.

It is those very handles that we see in society to this day in other places. Think about email addresses. Have you ever seen someone with an email address of something like RatchetJaw101@ …? It kind of started with the online services in the 1990s such as AOL and GEnie where your account name was handle-ish to allow some anonymity while on the Internet. That just carried over into email addresses and continues to show the same to this day. Have you ever thought that CB radio is rooted in many people's email address names to this day? Perhaps your email address is your CB handle, too!

Another place you may see CB-like handles today is on peoples' Twitter account names. Twitter is a form of social media like Facebook, however, it's almost CB in itself! You can join in a large conversation, for instance, commenting on a ball game or TV show, with everyone reading and sending messages at the same time over their smart phones or computers. If you were on the air, it would be like everyone around town on Channel 25

Continued on page 20



Here's a Twitter account shown on the web that offers information to CBers. Twitter conversations are public and can be likened to CB chatter because it's public and anyone can join in.

making comments about a similar topic. Twitter indeed is very CB-like in a new digital form today.

Internet chat rooms can be very CB-like, too, with the use of handles providing anonymity and a constant flow of conversation, much like talking on a CB channel in your area.

As you can see, the roots of CB radio can be found in modern new forms of communications, too. Have you ever thought about it, too?

CB in the news

I'm surprised that CB radio still makes headlines today. People say the radio service is on the decline, but I still see stories about CB radio appearing in newspapers and on TV news reports.

Several readers sent me a recent story that reported a trucker in the Chicago area heard an airplane pilot call out on a CB channel that he was about to make an emergency landing on water. The Coast Guard came out to check the report, but eventually nothing was found and the search was called off. If you think about it, there really would be no reason for an airplane to be using CB radio and I can't say I have ever heard CB being used in a plane. My guess is that the report was bogus.

Another recent CB radio news story sent here to Nat-Com deals with a CB dealer in the Sioux City, S.D., area who says that while his business has become diminished, 97 percent of his customers are truckers today. It makes you wonder who the other three percent of his CB customers are!

CB shack contest

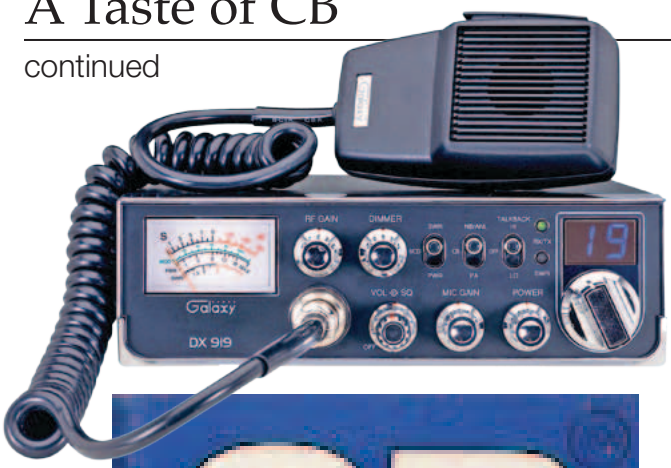
We really want to see your CB station here at Nat-Com! Some CB stations are elaborate, some have the most equipment, and some are built for comfort, while others are just basic.

While we don't have anything to give away, we do want to publish a photo of your CB shack here in the pages of Nat-Com. The winners get to see their very own CB station in the pages of a national hobby radio publication. Now, that's cool!

Here's how you can enter: We prefer digital images of your CB station. Send your shack's photo as an attachment in an email to the author of this column at nat-com@citizensband.net (be sure to put

A Taste of CB

continued



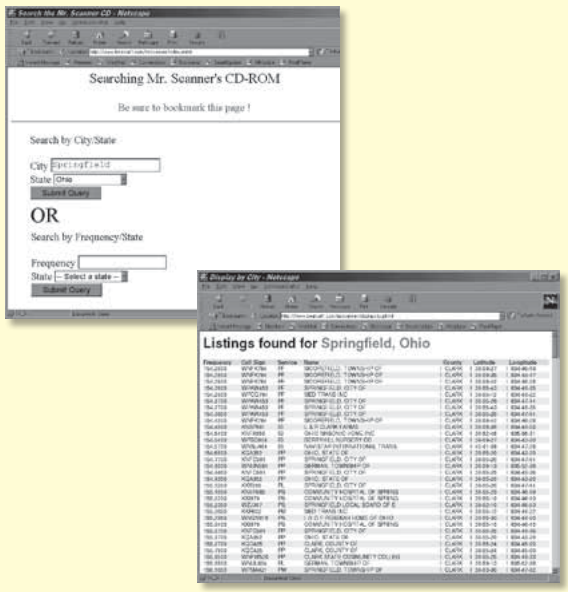


Back in the heyday of CB radio in the 1970s, this publication listed thousands of CB handles that one could look through and pick to use for themselves on the air. Today, people make up their own CB-like handles to use online for email addresses, Twitter accounts and in chat rooms.

"Nat-Com" in the subject line or your email may get lost in my spam bin). Tell us a little about the radios in your station and be sure to tell us your handle and a little about the hobby for you, such as how long you've been a CBer and who you like talking with.

We look forward to seeing your CB radio shack photos soon!

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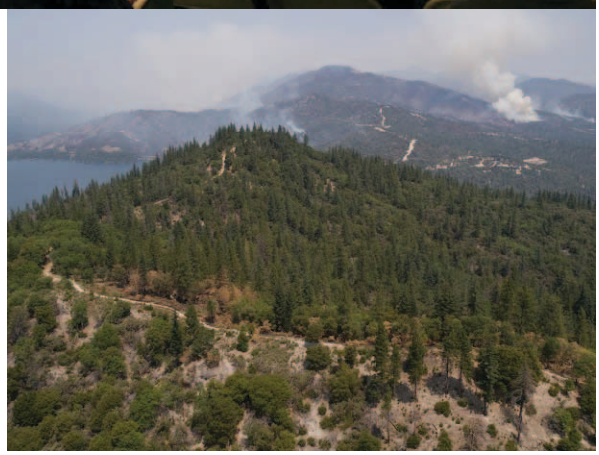
- Log on to www.bearcat1.com/free.htm
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- Click on the "Search the CD Rom" link next to the photo
- On the next screen (first time) pick register for CD, (subsequent times) pick search
- When the form comes up fill it out with the exception of the credit card information. Be sure to include an e-mail address so we can send your user name and password back to you
- Pick Option #4 and insert your member number (which can be found on your mailing label) e.g. OH 8 AAA

Generally within the next 24 hours your user name and password will be e-mailed back to you and you will be ready to search for frequencies.

2012 NIFC Fire Scanning

By: Jon Van Allen KF7YN





The 2012 fire season is well underway and plenty of fire activity has been reported in many states. Frequencies continue to change due to the federal mandate to move to narrowband frequencies so we will have a look at these updates. Due to space limitations, it is not possible to list frequencies for each area but the information listed here will cover a good part of what you need to get started.

The National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) based in Boise Idaho is a combined fire resource organization of several federal agencies such as Bureau of Land Management (BLM), US Forest Service (USFS), National Park Service (NPS) and others. BLM and USFS have many frequencies of their own in addition to NIFC frequencies. In other words, NIFC provides common frequencies and resources for agencies involved in firefighting which includes radios, firefighting equipment and other resources. It also includes federal frequencies for federal fire agencies. These frequencies are utilized with NIFC permission, for example when interfacing with US Forest Service on a command incident.

It is easy to become confused about common frequencies with differing names. For example, a particular frequency called "TAC" by one agency might be called "Command" by another. In addition to national NIFC, BLM and USFS frequencies, try to find local frequencies used by federal, state and local agencies in your area. I found a lot of new fire-related info for my area by doing a web search and asking people in our scanner club. Also keep on ear on your local fire department frequencies. Local law enforcement may also be on scene for traffic control and/or for the possibility of evacuation. I have personally seen this very scenario play out. It pays to do your homework and be prepared!

When resources are committed to fighting a fire, a "Victor" VHF air band frequency is assigned so pilots can coordinate with other aircraft. You will likely hear a pilot or ground crew specifically ask for a Victor frequency. The "FM" VHF or UHF frequency for NIFC, BLM, NPS or USFS is also given to the aircraft so they can communicate with ground crews. (Since the VHF air band is AM mode, all other frequencies are "FM" to pilots, whether VHF or UHF).



Dispatchers broadcast daily reports for local conditions at the fire such as spot weather forecast which includes primary forecast elements: LAL (Lightning Activity Indicator); Haines Index, Clearing Index, Burn Index, Sky/Weather, Temperature, Humidity and Winds at eye level and 20 foot level, upslope and downslope. All of these elements are important to everyone involved and it pays to become familiar with these and other terms.

Try to find out where the air tanker and smoke jumper bases are in your area. Sometimes they are one in the same, or may be at separate locations. Smoke jumpers often use a separate local frequency for comms on the fire line and switch to a TAC frequency when they need to talk to aircraft or area dispatchers.

Monitoring pilots plan and execute their routes and make their drops has to be some of the most exciting scanning you will ever hear. The aircraft used vary widely from World War 2 vintage birds to huge 747 super air-tankers that can extinguish a half mile wall of flames in one drop! There is no room for error and these pilots are impressive, especially the leader who calls the route and drop procedures. This is exciting stuff!

You should be able to find NIFC related info for your area by doing a web search. I found a whole list of updated USFS and NIFC resources for my area in the form of a PDF file which includes frequencies & tones, available engine types, personnel, reporting forms and a host of other information required by the teams responding to a fire.

Although the US Forest Service no longer allows access to frequencies and other information on their website, that info is available from other sources such as www.radioreference.com and www.bearcat1.com. Two more good sources of information are yahoo groups dedicated to wild land fires in the western US http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Wildland_Scanner and http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/RMS_Scanner/ These groups provide current fire info such as the name and size of the fire, resources assigned (or resources available) and frequencies. This is real-time information you can use now. If it is posted on the websites,







Continued on page 24

2012 NIFC Fire Scanning

continued

someone has monitored and verified the frequencies in use. I highly suggest you check these sites regularly.

If you spend time camping and fishing, hiking or otherwise recreating in an area prone to fire, it is imperative that you have the ability to scan fire frequencies. Take the necessary time to update your frequency database and program your scanner before the fire season begins. If you are monitoring from a campsite or from your car, you might need a preamp and a gain antenna to hear local fire-scene comms. I routinely use my preamp when I am in monitoring fire comms and use the best antenna I can. Often times that is a collapsible whip on my handheld scanner or a gain antenna on my car or RV. This can make all the difference when trying to dig out weak signals in remote areas. It also helps to have the advantage of elevation but that is not always possible or practical.

Frequency Tables:

VHF Air to Air "Victor" frequencies:

122.900 NIFC Aircraft All Com
122.925 Air 1
122.975 Air 2
122.850 Air 3
123.025 Air 4
123.025 Air 5
123.075 Air 6
123.050 Air 7
135.975 NIFC Air Traffic Advisory

Air Command: Command nets are used for administrative comms on an incident. The high-level decision making takes place on the command nets. During large incidents, these will give you a good idea of how the fire is behaving, fire location and other operational information.



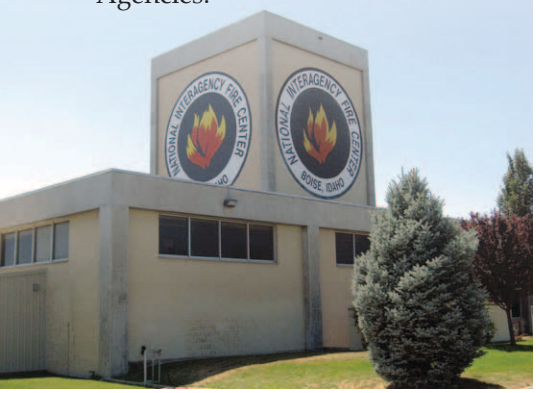




Command 8-12 are part of the Federal Interoperability List. Command 20 and up are used for temporary assignment from other Federal agencies.

163.1000 NIFC All Call 1
168.3500 NIFC All Call 2
168.7000 NIFC Command 1
168.1000 NIFC Command 2
168.0750 NIFC Command 3
166.6125 NIFC Command 4
167.1000 NIFC Command 5
168.4750 NIFC Command 6
162.9625 NIFC Command 7
169.5375 NIFC Command 8
170.0125 NIFC Command 9
170.4125 NIFC Command 10
170.6875 NIFC Command 11
173.0375 NIFC Command 12
166.3125 NIFC Command 13
167.9875 NIFC Command 20
165.4500 NIFC Command 26
165.0125 NIFC Command 27
166.6125 NIFC Command
162.9625 NIFC Command
166.5625 NIFC Command
166.3375 NIFC Command
172.4625 Air to Ground
164.1625 Air to Ground
166.3375 Air to Ground
164.0875 Air to Air

Note: Commands 8-12 are part of the Federal Interoperability Pool and will stay the same across seasons. Commands 20 and up are assigned temporarily from the pool of Federal Agencies.



I hope this information is proves useful. Please feel free to email me with questions or comments. kf7yn@yahoo.com

Until next time, happy scanning!

TACTICAL

NIFC tacticals are used when local tacticals are overwhelmed. As previously mentioned, channel names can vary between regions. For example, Region 5 Tac 1-4 will be a somewhat different than Region 4 Tac 1-4. The important thing is to program all the frequencies and make note of any discrepancies.

168.6250 National Air Guard
168.6500 National Flight Following
166.6750 Air Tac 1
169.1500 Air Tac 2
169.2000 Air Tac 3
170.0000 Air Tac 4 *This freq will be phased out by 2019
167.9500 Air Tac 5

Ground Ops
168.5500 ICS Call Up
168.5500 Smoke Jumpers
168.0500 NIFC Tac 1
168.2000 NIFC Tac 2
168.6000 NIFC Tac 3
166.7250 NIFC Tac 5
166.7750 NIFC Tac 6
168.2500 NIFC Tac 7
163.7125 NIFC Intra-Crew F-1
167.1375 NIFC Primary Initial Attack F-2
168.6125 NIFC Secondary Initial Attack F-3
173.6250 NIFC Tertiary Initial Attack F-4

UHF LOGISTICS
406.4000 Logistics 1
415.4000 Logistics 1 Talk Around
406.5875 Logistics 2
415.5875 Logistics 2 Talk Around
407.7875 Logistics 3
417.7875 Logistics 3 Talk Around
410.2750 Logistics 4
419.2750 Logistics 4 Talk Around
410.7750 Logistics 5
419.7750 Logistics 5 Talk Around
408.8000 Logistics 6
417.8000 Logistics 6 Talk Around
408.5000 Logistics 7
417.5000 Logistics 7 Talk Around
408.9000 UHF Link Special 2
411.2500 UHF Link Aircraft
411.3000 UHF Link Misc
411.4000 UHF Link Special 1
411.4250 UHF Link Misc
411.5000 UHF Link Aircraft
411.5250 UHF Link Misc
411.5750 UHF Link Misc
411.7500 UHF Link Aircraft
411.8000 UHF Link Aircraft
411.9250 UHF Link Aircraft
412.1500 UHF Link Aircraft
412.2000 UHF Link Aircraft
412.6000 UHF Link Aircraft
414.6500 UHF Link Misc
415.5000 UHF Link Misc
417.3000 UHF Link Misc
417.3500 UHF Link Misc
417.9000 UHF Link Misc

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Since anyone can advertise anything within limits and within the categories we provide, the reader should exercise caution with regard to the authenticity of the ads. National Communications can assume no responsibility for the accuracy or validity of the ads. They are reprinted as we receive them.

Scanners. Paul Godshall of Perkasie, Pennsylvania wants his name and address published so other local members can get in contact with him concerning the police 800 MHz trunking system in Montgomery County as well as monitoring the county sheriff, fire and ambulances, etc. Also he would like other local members to contact him concerning monitoring the Bucks County police digital trunked radio system as well as fire, ambulances, etc. Contact Paul Godshall at 301 Route 152; Perkasie, PA 18944.

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Wouxun KG UVA1

Dual Band Commercial Grade Handheld Transmitter

By Jim Sutton, N2OPS



WHAT IT IS

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And the Wouxun KG UVA1 does it with an amazingly petite size. It is a fraction of the size and weight of the UHF handheld I previously used.

SIMPLE TO OPERATE

Our UHF two way radios are used by volunteers in our after school program. Many radios with lots of bells and whistles tend to put team members in a panic mode. The need to make any changes nearly always find the radio handed to me. Otherwise team members use one channel without scanning our other frequencies.

Personally, when I need to focus on a crisis situation I cannot take my radio off my belt to change the channel or make other adjustments.

DOUBLES AS A SCANNER

We monitor our local police calls on VHF high band to know what is happening around us. The Wouxun KG UVA1 allows us to program channels to receive only so we can listen without transmit capability. And with outstanding sensitivity it outperforms any scanner. Now I no longer need to carry a second radio to hear lour local police calls.

Listening to only the very basic local frequencies helps ensure the scanning won't be on activity not pertinent to our location. 16 channels is a perfect number for us. Channels 1- 7 are covered by our licenses WNUH604 and WQOS202. Channel 8 is covered by my ham license N2OPS. Channels 9-16 are programmed as receive only. Since the ham conversations are quite lengthy channel 8 is not included in the scan sequence.

When our team members call me the priority channel zeroes in to the message, even when the scanning is stopped on another channel, and I just press the push to talk button to reply. When the conversation is complete I just press the scan button below the PTT button and the flashing green LED on the top of the radio indicates it is once again scanning.

Continued on page 28

Channel	Use	Frequency
01	Itinerant	464.550
02	GMRS A	462.600
03	GMRS B	462.600
04	GMRS Area	462.675
05	Shared Repeater	462.000
06	Shared Repeater	464.225
07	Red Dot	151.625
08	Ham Repeater	147.030
09	Sheriff	155.595
10	Local Government	158.760
11	Village Police	155.490
12	College Police	155.745
13	Park Police	159.315
14	Park Police	155.430
15	Village DPW	158.775
16	SP car to car	154.665

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- One large electronics retailer used to program scanners for "free" in the stores, but not any longer.
- A large scanner manufacturer charges big $$ to program a radio for you. We can program your radio for your local area quickly and efficiently and at the lowest cost anywhere.

If you want to be able to program your radio on your own, then we can help you with that as well. We have the largest amount of frequency resources on the internet. Yes, the ***LARGEST***. More than any other web-site, ***ANYWHERE***. We have frequencies, talk group ID's, radio codes & signals Scancat .RSD files and much more. There are literally millions of frequencies from across the USA, Canada, UK, Australia and many more.

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Wouxun KG UVA1 *Continued*

Water jets	Water projected by a nozzle (6.3mm) against enclosure from any direction shall have no harmful effects.	Test duration: at least 3 minutes Water volume: 12.5 litres per minute Pressure: 30 kN/m² at distance of 3m

COMMERCIAL GRADE

Our after school program has lots of kids and kids mean noise, lots of noise. The Wouxun KG UVA1 has the audio I need to hear over the kids. With the deluxe speaker mic right by my ear I can hear better than ever before.

It even has an IP55 waterproof rating (see above chart).

With the Wouxun KG UVA1 on my belt I am able to access my local repeater with the same quality as I could with the Motorola MT1000.

2 METER AND 70 CM AMATEUR RADIO BANDS

The Wouxun KG UVA1 will operate in the 144-148 2 meter and 420-450 70 CM amateur radio bands making it a great unit for ARES and RACES teams. Unlike modified ham radios the Wouxun KG UVA1 is FCC Part 90 certified for commercial use.

I can program our youth ham club 70 CM repeater into the Wouxun KG UVA1 as well as our local ARES 2 meter repeater. All in one radio!

CUSTOMER SERVICE

On every occasion where I email a question to Powerwerx I always get a prompt, courteous reply. Their website is http://www.powerwerx.com/wouxun-radios/

VOICE PROMPT

The Wouxun KG UVA1 can be programmed to indicate via voice what channel the scanning has stopped on or the channel selector has been turned to. Also it will indicate when scan is started or stopped. The synthesized voice is exceptionally clear. The voice prompt will cover the first part of the transmission so I decided to take it out.

PROS

FCC Approved
VHF high and UHF in one unit
Narrow band capable for 2013
Great TX and RX audio
Handy LED flashlight.

Full size belt clip that will last which a welcome change from the whimpy clips I've seen on many other radios.

CONS

Hangs up my computer even with CTCSS (taking the squelch up two settings in the programming software solved the problem)



FM BCB

Cannot see FM BCB frequency
Cannot have scan and FM BCB together

SOFTWARE

The Wouxun KG UVA1 software can be download free from their website.

This software is a delight to use! I programmed it in record time. The download time is just as amazing.

This is a valuable tool for search and rescue teams, ARES groups, or any other organizations that need to be able to program radios in the field with ease.

ACCESSORIES

Speaker Mic
AA Pack
Group chargers for 6 radios
Mobile antennas
BNC and SO239 antenna adaptors

DELUXE SPEAKER MIC

It's not just any old speaker mic. The heavy duty speaker mic is truly deluxe. A 3.5 mm headphone jack in the op of the speaker mic allows the user to listen on a headset.

Wouxun has earned my respect in an area that should put other manufacturers to shame. They do not gouge you on the accessories. I remember many times getting a great price on a radio only to end up paying greatly inflated prices on the accessories.

Be prepared to be delighted at the reasonable prices of the Wouxun accessories.

WHAT I'D LIKE TO SEE IN THE UPGRADED KG UVA1

Option to select what is voice and what is not.

Individual squelch settings per channel.

Ability to program the desired FM BCB frequency with the software.

Shift the UHF range to cover up to 512 MHz, or have a second unit available, for areas of the US that have the T band..

Stereo earphone jack in the top of the speaker mic so that stereo headphones would hear on both sides.



OTHER WOUXUN MODELS

Wouxun has two other FCC approved commercial model handhelds. The KG-833 a UHF only 16 channel unit and the KG-UV6X Dual Band, 200 channel handheld is a deluxe unit with an alpha display.

Additional Wouxun amateur units are available. And coming soon is the KG-UV920R commercial dual band mobile transceiver.

Continued on page 31

Flexible modes (VHF/UHF, VHF/VHF, UHF/UHF)	Windows PC programmable.
Selectable high/low power settings (VHF: 5W high/2W low) (UHF: 4W high/2W low)	Radio to radio cloning with optional cable
Includes 1700 mah Li-Ion Battery	Same channel: VHF TX & UHF RX or UHF TX & VHF RX available
Includes intelligent desktop 3-4 hour rapid charger	105 groups DCS/50 groups CTCSS
Loud speaker audio output (500 mW)	DTMF encoding and decoding
Bright flashlight illumination function	CTCSS encode/Decode (no decode delay)
Meets IP55 waterproof rating	Low battery prompt
English voice prompts enable non-sighted operation (can be turned off)	Busy channel lockout
16 memory channels	Selectable transmit over timer (from 15 to 600 seconds)
Digital FM radio (76-108MHz)	Selectable step sizes of 5, 6.25, 10, 12.5, 25, 50 or 100 kHz
Wide/narrow bandwidth selection (25 or 12.5 kHz)	Multiple scan modes
	VOX Function (adjustable level)

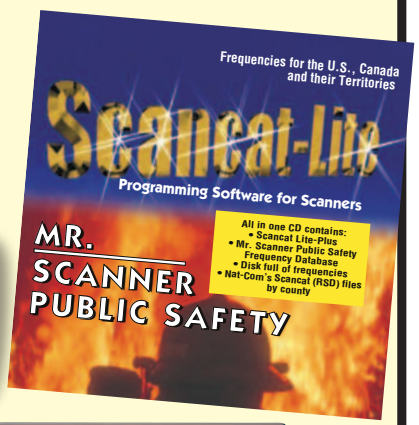
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Wouxun KG UVA1 *Continued*

LINKS

Powwerwerx
http://www.powerwerx.com/wouxun-radios/kg-uva1-dual-band-vhf-uhf-commercial.html
The Wouxun KG UVA1 Manual
http://www.powerwerx.com/download/KG-UVA1-UserManual.pdf
Model Comparison Chart
http://www.powerwerx.com/wouxun-radios/model-comparison.html
KG-UVA1 Features (from the Wouxun website)

INEXPENSIVE IMPORTS

Many inexpensive two way radios from China are flooding the market. Few are FCC approved for use in the US. Take great care in choosing a radio. Read the reviews for the radio as well as the dealer. If it is not FCC approved your illegal unit may cause interference on other frequencies and you will risk a hefty fine.

IN CONCLUSION

I instantly fell in love with this little radio! You cannot beat the Wouxun KG UVA1 for quality and the price of only $129.95.My Motorola MT1000 is now retired. We hope to replace all of our team radios with these units.

Until next time may your signals be strong, your static be few.





Specifications	KG-UVA1
Frequency Range RX/TX	VHF: 136-174 MHz UHF: 400-470 MHz FM: 76-108 MHz (RX)
Memory Channels	16 channels (shared)
Operating Voltage	7.4 VDC
Operating Temperature	-22°F to 140°F (-30°C to +60°C)
Dimensions (W x H x D)	2.4 x 4.8 x 1.6 inches (61 x 121 x 39.5mm) (with 1700 mAh battery pack, without antenna)
Weight	9.4 ounces
RF Carrier Power	VHF: 5W high/2W low, UHF: 4W high/2W low
Audio Output Power	500mW maximum
Waterproof Rating	Meets IP55 waterproof rating
Frequency Stability	±2.5ppm
Antenna Impedance	50Ω
Sensitivity (12dB SINAD)	0.16 µV
Receive/Squelch Sensitivity	≤0.2 µV
Audio Distortion	≤5%
Audio Modulation	+3dB (pre-emphasis by 6dB between 0.3-3KHz)
Audio Response	(300-3,000Hz) +1 to -3dB
Performance of Amplitude Limiter	≤3
Effective Radiation Power (ERP)	≤±7.5dB
Maximum Frequency Deviation	25KHz ± 5KHz / 12.5KHz ± 2.5KHz
Inter Modulation Attenuation	≥40dB
Modulation Distortion	≤10%
Co-channel Rejection	≥-8.0dB
Adjacent Channel Selection	25KHz ≥ 70dB / 12.5KHz ≥ 60dB
Inter-modulation	≥ 65dB
Spurious Radiation	≤-30dBm
Spurious Radiation	9KHz to 1GHz ≤ -57dBm / 1GHz to 4GHz ≤ -47dBm

Standard Horizon HX280S Marine Band HT

By Ed Muro K2EPM



For those living in an area surrounded by water, such as the New York Metro Region, the marine band has always been a hotbed of scanning action. The band is busy year round with commercial vessel traffic in the winter months and then on top of that you can add the weekend warriors with their recreational boating in the summer months.

With the prices of electronic devices at all time lows it has never been more affordable to own a marine band transceiver and a few months back I thought it was high time that I invest in a marine band specific radio. I had wanted a marine band specific radio for a number of reasons including the fact that I always found band-specific radios to have better sensitivity than a multi-band scanner. Also, living on the coast my monitoring shack is in such a position that if I had transmit capabilities on the marine band I could be an extra set of ears in the summer months and possibly offer communications support to those in need. Finally, we do our fair share of recreational boating and many of my friends are either mislead or just plain-ole stupid in believing that cell phones are a replacement to having a VHF Marine Band radio mounted in their boats. I started my search for a Marine HT on EBay but wound up reading about the HX280S on a retailer's website and made my purchase through a traditional retailer.

The FCC no longer requires recreational boaters in US Waters to maintain a ship radio station maritime license. However, the Coast Guard recommends that boaters use their boat's registration number and state of registration issuance when issuing a distress signal. Keep in mind that the FCC allows the use of VHF marine Band radios in water areas only. If you are on land and are found interfering with others communicating on the marine Band you could be fined up to $10,000.00 for the first offense!

With a street price of just under a hundred bucks the Standard Horizon HX280S is an inexpensive entry level handheld marine band HT. The unit features a tough polycarbonate case that measures 2.3 inches wide by 5.3 inches tall and 1.2 inches deep. For a size reference, I have included a picture of the HX280S sandwiched between the Yaesu VX-3R Amateur Radio HT and a GRE PSR-800 multi band scanner. The fit and finish on this radio is excellent, it fits nicely in the palm of your hand and feel natural. It feels like a professional radio and the belt clip is spring loaded and secure. The belt clip is the same clip that is used in the Vertex VX-920 line of commercial radios.

Included with the HX280S is an automatic AC charger that requires just seven hours to fully charge the 1650 mAH lithium-ion battery

Standard Horizon HX280S Marine Band HT continued



pack. The AC charger indicator light shows red while charging and change to green when the battery has fully charged. A DC charger cord and spring loaded belt clip is included too along with a 43 page owner's manual. While the manual is 43-pages long, the radio is rather simple to operate as long as you don't over think things.

All functions of the HX280S are controlled with nine front-mounted push-buttons. A knob on top of the radio turns the HX280S on or off and adjusts the audio volume. The push-to-talk switch is side-mounted in the natural position.

One button control is available for transmitter power selection, channel changing, weather channel selection, a preset channel change, quick selection of channel 16 or 9, and various scanning options.

Scan modes include dual watch, memory, or priority.

Dual Watch is a familiar mode with owners of Yaesu, Vertex, and Standard-Horizon branded radios. Basically, it allows you to monitor between two channels. This could be a valuable mode for a number if situations including keeping an ear on the International Emergency Channel, Channel 16, while operating on your local Harbor Master's frequency.

When using scan the HX280S can be set to monitor from 2 to all the channels. The radio scans in memory mode it scans in numerical order. The SCAN mode is pretty simple but this is one area where over thinking can foul you up. It is a little quirky because I had assumed I would just hit the SCAN button on the front keypad and it would scan the entire band…not so. You first have to manually scroll through each channel you want to scan and then toggle the MEM button in order for that channel to be included in the SCAN bank. Once all of the channels you want to listen to are toggled ON you then hit SCAN and the radio will SCAN those channels.

The Priority mode scans between the priority channel and each set channel just as any scanner does.

The HX280S operates on all Canadian, International, and US marine VHF channels and NOAA weather channels. The preset key is used to store and quickly recall up to ten of your favorite channels. Each successive press of the preset key switches to the next favorite channel.

The display screen on the HX280S measures about 2-inches wide by 1-inch high, as an orange colored back light, and is easy to read. It uses large segmented numbers to display the selected channel and does display the alpha designation on the appropriate channels.

A single sliding scale on the left of the screen shows the current squelch level. The Squelch is set by pressing the SQL button and then pressing the up or down arrows to increase or decrease the squelch threshold level.

The battery level icon appears on the top right part of the screen and empties as the battery is depleted. As I said earlier, it takes about 7-hours to fully charge the FNB-V105LI battery. The HX280S turned in an excellent performance in our battery life test by lasting 15+ hours. However, one accessory that might be worth considering as an item to keep in your go bag "just in case" is the FBA-40 replacement battery pack which houses six AA-sized Alkaline batteries. Name brand, unused Alkaline batteries are known to have a shelf life of several years and the last thing you need in an emergency is a dead rechargeable battery pack.

The amount of transmitter power output selected is shown on the screen with an L for low power (1 watt) or an H for high power (5-watts). When transmitting, an onscreen TX icon appears, a BUSY icon shows when the unit is receiving a signal. The WX icon indicates a weather channel selection has been made.

The HX280S passed both our drop and submersion tests with no glitches. The radio is waterproof and carries an IPX7 rating. This means it can be submerged to a depth of 1 meter (about 3.3 feet) for 30 minutes without sustaining any damage.

The unit is available in both black and white and it carries a 3-year warranty on the radio with a 12-month warranty on the battery. Because the HX280S is built better, it's backed by the manufacturer better than most radios. If your Standard Horizon HX280S ever fails for any reason including water damage during normal use in the first three years, STANDARD HORIZON

Continued on page 34

Standard Horizon HX280S Marine Band HT continued

will repair or replace it free, without hassle or charges… period! If it fails thereafter in normal use it for the life time of the product it is covered by Standard Horizon's Lifetime Flat Rate Service Program. That sounds good to me!

The Standard Horizon HX280S is inexpensive yet performed superbly in all of our testing. I'd rate this radio a best buy for any boater whether it is a back up for your permanent mount full power marine radio or your only form of communications when operating near the coast line.

Let's look at the channels / frequencies that are of interest to the recreational boater. These are comprised of the 7 non-commercial, 10 weather, 8 public correspondence, plus a number of the special usage frequencies.

Features at a glance:

Submersible JIS-7 / IPX7 (3.3 feet for 30 minutes)

Slim, form fitting case design

More than 13 hours of battery life

Selectable 5 and 1 Watt transmit power output

Supplied with a 1650mAh Lithium-ion battery, 110 VAC and 12 VDC chargers and a cradle

Huge channel display

All USA/International and Canadian Marine Channels

Programmable Scan, Priority Scan and Dual Watch

NOAA Weather channels and Weather Alert

Key lock

Squelch level on display

Low battery indicator

Preset key used to recall up to 10 favorite channels

Optional FBA-40 Alkaline Battery tray available

3 Year Waterproof Warranty



Non-Commercial Frequencies and Usage		
Channel	Use	Types of Transmissions
06	Inter ship Safety	Ship to Ship Safety & Search and Rescue
09	Hailing Frequency	Calling Channel.
13	Bridge to Bridge Navigation	Traffic must be about vessel navigation.
16	International Distress, Urgency, Safety, & Hailing	
22A	Coast Guard Liaison and Safety Information Broadcasts.	Use this channel to talk to the Coast Guard.
24 - 28 84 - 86	Public Correspondence	Marine Operator.
68	Non-Commercial.	Routine Traffic.
69	Non-Commercial.	Routine Traffic.
70	Digital Selective Calling Only, No Voice Communications Authorized.	
71	Non-Commercial.	Routine Traffic.
72	Non-Commercial.	Routine Traffic.
78A	Non-Commercial.	Routine Traffic.
79A	Non-Commercial (Great Lakes Only)	Routine Traffic.
80A	Non-Commercial (Great Lakes Only)	Routine Traffic.
WX-1 -- 10	Weather Radio	Receive Only.

Five Bad Guys From the files of the FBI

Eric Juston Toth.



Eric Juston Toth has often been described as a computer "expert" and has demonstrated above-average knowledge regarding computers, the use of the Internet, and security awareness. Toth has the ability to integrate into various socio-economic classes, and is an expert at social engineering. He possesses an educational background conducive to gaining employment in fields having a connection to children. Toth may advertise online as a tutor or male nanny.

Toth attended Cornell University for a year and transferred to Purdue University, where he graduated with a degree in education. Since June of 2008, Toth is believed to have traveled to Virginia, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Toth is believed to have lived in Arizona in 2009.

Toth is described as a White male with brown hair and green eyes. He is 6' 3" tall and weighs 155 pounds. He has a mole under his left eye.

Eric Justin Toth, a former private-school teacher, is wanted for allegedly possessing child pornography in Washington, DC. It is alleged that in June of 2008, pornographic images were found on a school camera that had been in Toth's possession. Toth also allegedly produced child pornography in Maryland.

The FBI is offering a reward of up to $100,000 for information leading directly to the arrest of Eric Justin Toth. He should be considered dangerous and may be suicidal.

If you have any information concerning Toth, please contact your local FBI office.

Jason Derek Brown.



Aliases:

Jason D. Brown, Derek Brown, Greg Johnson, Harline Johnson, Greg Harline Johnson, John Brown, Jay Brown

Brown speaks fluent French and has a Masters Degree in International Business. He is an avid golfer, snowboarder, skier, and dirt biker. Brown enjoys being the center of attention and has been known to frequent nightclubs where he enjoys showing off his high-priced vehicles, boats, and other toys. He has been described as possibly having bisexual tendencies.

Brown has ties to California, Arizona, and Utah. In the past, he has traveled to France and Mexico. Additionally, he may be in the possession of a Glock 9mm and a .45 caliber handgun. Jason Derek Brown is wanted for murder and armed robbery in Phoenix, Arizona. During November of 2004, Brown allegedly shot and killed an armored car guard outside a movie theater and then fled with the money.

The FBI is offering a reward of up to $100,000 for information leading directly to the arrest of Jason Derek Brown. Brown should be considered armed and extremely dangerous.

Brown was born on January 1, 1969. He has blond hair and green eyes with a light complexion. He stands 5' 10" tall, weighing in at 170 to 180 pounds with a medium build. He has held a job as a golf equipment importer.

JOE LUIS SAENZ.



Aliases:

Joe Luis Saenz, Gabriel Saenz, Gabriel Luis Saenx, Gabriel Luis Saenz, Louie Luis Saenz, Louis Joe Saenz, "Zapp", "Smiley", Peanut Joe Smiley, "Honeycutt", Jose Luis Saenz-Honeycutt, Giovanni Vasquez, "Toro", Giovanni Velasquez, Giovanni Gonzalez, Giovanni Torres, "Peanut", Peanut Saenz, Peanut Smiley, Louie Sanez, Garbiel Sanez

On July 25, 1998, Joe Luis Saenz allegedly shot and killed two rival gang members in Los Angeles. Less than two weeks later, on August 5, 1998, Saenz allegedly kidnapped, raped, and murdered his girlfriend. Saenz allegedly murdered a fourth victim in October of 2008 in Los Angeles County.

Sanez was born on either August 4, 1975; October 1, 1975; December 31, 1975 or May 1, 1976. He has brown hair and brown eyes with a medium complexion. He is 5' 11" tall to 6' 0" tall and weighs 180 pounds with a medium build Saenz has tattoos of the words "Natalie" and "Cuatro" on his left arm, "Flats" on his right arm, and "In Memory Serelone Flew" and "Flats4" on his back. He also has a tattoo on his chest, and a pierced ear.

Monitoring New England in Year Gone by

by Bob Leddy

Monitoring police and fire calls on scanner radios isn't just a hobby for me, it's also a habit. Not surprising, since I've been listening to emergency bands here in Providence, R.I. (pop. 178,042) since I first went to work on the statewide newspaper, The Providence Journal, nearly 50 years ago! A decade after my retirement from the paper hasn't stemmed my interest in knowing what's going on around me. Police and fire calls are - in a metaphoric sense - the pulse of a city. Working at the paper allowed me to not only understand how vital such radios are to a news operation, but to see how the technology worked in the early 1960s - long before the advent of scanners and digital communications.

Our radios were located at the heartbeat of the newsroom, the City Desk. Actually, the radio setup consisted of two specially designed elements: a bank of speakers at the Desk, and, in another part of the newsroom, a metal floor cabinet that housed vacuum tube, crystal-controlled units for each frequency; all of it tied to ground-plane roof antennas. There were radios for city police and fire, and the R.I. State Police. (Back then, Providence police operated on two high-band VHF frequencies: one for base, the other for cars. The fire department was also on a single high band channel, and the state police dispatched over a low-band frequency). All traffic came through the long speaker console.

At the sound of excited chatter emanating from any given department, the city editor would crank up the volume on that speaker. Like metal filings drawn to a magnet, reporters would gather around the radio console, ears alert, notepads in hand. If the situation was serious enough (a police pursuit, a working fire), the editor would alert another reporter driving the newspaper's radio car to get to the scene for preliminary reports. Later, the cumbersome tube sets were replaced with smaller transistorized Sonar units (also crystal controlled.) Nowadays, with the advent of digital communications, the newspaper - and local TV stations - utilize Bearcat scanners.

And so, as a young man in the newsroom back then, I became fascinated with those city desk radios. Of course, I couldn't just go out and buy some elaborate unit, or have one built for me. But Radio Shack at the time did make a battery-powered radio that could be hand-tuned to emergency frequencies (subject, of course, to signal drift common to FM communications).

Enter a man named Merrill Budlong, and my experience with police/fire radios (that is, my ability to own such units) took a dramatic turn. Mr. Budlong - who was well into his 90s when he died about five years ago, was a longtime ham with the call letters W1MB, a prestigious handle earned after decades of service, beginning with the Civil Patrol during World War II. His radio shack was in the basement of his home, from which antennas of every size protruded. His workshop was a cacophony of ham, police and CB radio traffic, with the addition of Mr. Budlong working a speed key for Morse. As a sideline, he also sold CB radios, ham rigs and Sonar crystal-controlled police/fire radios that carried six low or high-band frequencies. A channel changer knob, similar to that on an old fashioned TV set, let you switch frequencies. I purchased my first Sonar from Mr. Budlong for home and car use. (I was a member of a "fire buff" club at the time). If I wanted a new frequency, I'd bring the rig to Mr. Budlong's shop, and he'd pull out a crystal plug, and replace it with another. Eventually, Sonar manufactured 10-channel scanners, and I bought one for our State Police (which had switched from the one low-band frequency to a half-dozen on high band). Later, I owned one of the prototypical Bearcat eight-channel scanners. When the Providence police and fire departments went from analogue to digital signals, the Bearcat 996XT fit the bill.

Listening to these calls from the comfort and security of the home is one thing; witnessing emergency situations first-hand another. I happened to get stuck in traffic recently while the State Police were making an arrest. A half-dozen police cars appeared, seemingly from nowhere, sped around me, blocked off the street and had three suspects handcuffed in minutes. I could have been listening to all this at home with a cold beer, I thought, and yet there I was, an unwitting spectator. I'll choose listening every time, but always with the realization that what I hear through these radio speakers is real, not Hollywood, and that police and firefighters are worth every nickel they're paid.

Bob Leddy, of Providence, R.I., is a retired Providence Journal reporter and copy editor.

CLOSING COMMENTS



By: Norm Schrein, KA8PGJ

Gloom and doom and something new I have been here before, so gloom and doom is nothing new and it always seems to show up in the end as a sunny warm day.

I recently attended the Dayton Hamvention (something I have been doing for over 30 years), and noticed something very new. While there were lots of people walking about and talking and enjoying themselves, the dealers I spoke with were not enjoying themselves nearly as much. The reason? People were just not buying. I hope that this is a temporary thing and that it can be blamed on the economy and not a larger issue.

The ranks of the US amateur radio community are growing, but money is tight so there are not the expenditures on some of that must have equipment as there was in years past.

I can remember having to throw myself out into the isles of people and just move with the flow, but now that had changed as well. The large crowds of people in the isles just were not there any longer. Also, it was very common to see people carrying packages or large hunks of gear through the isle. Now, the majority of people I saw had brochures or the Hamvention directory in their hands, but no bags.

Another thing that I noticed was that many of the "large" retail dealers were no longer in attendance. Last year RadioShack dropped out this year long time attendee, Ham Station, was missing. There were scores of other retailers no longer at Hamvention.

Over the years I have attended many of these amateur radio shows and before that it was CB Jamborees. The Jamborees are now a thing of the past, and many of the amateur radio shows I once attended are gone as well. Hamvention, the largest of this type of radio show, is starting to show its age and the effect of a sour economy and perhaps the effect of the internet.

On-line someone can simply order what he wants from the comfort of his home and many times also avoid paying sales tax as well. He also avoids the admission ticket to a ham fest, and paying for parking, food and lodging.

Is internet shopping gloom and doom for the electronics retailers? Not necessarily, many have adapted their sales technique to make themselves available on the internet as well as having a walk-in store. However, if the sales at a hamfest fall short, they are now deciding to avoid attending such events and put their efforts on something that will pay off -- i.e. the internet or perhaps in-store sales.

On a side note, I have also been able to speak with the publishers of the major radio electronics magazines and many of them are switching their product to the internet. It seems that printing a magazine or paper has become quite expensive and the numbers of people subscribing is also dwindling. Placing the magazine or paper on-line has the advantage of substantially reducing the cost of producing the product. Eventually, on-line is how we will all start to read our newspapers and magazines.

That may not be such a good thing for those who do not own computers, but it may be a necessary evil as the technology evolves. Before there were printed papers, people would get their news face to face. Now that has changed, first it was newspapers, then radio news. Now we have TV news programs and of course, news on-line. Less face to face news leads to less socialization and the ability to get to know our fellow men.

So, is it the economy, or the internet, or something else? Our lives and ways of communicating with each other have changed, and will continue to change. People just don't go out to visit any longer, it is way easier to call on the phone, or send a text or email. More people are sharing the significant and insignificant aspects of their life on Facebook or Twitter or whatever the next technology may be, rather than sharing these events in person.

So, gloom, yes maybe, but take a look on the bright side with the Hamvention crowd. True they were not buying, but they were communicating in person, either by one-one contact, or by attending the various forums. As long as we have the ability to communicate, we will. It certainly will not be the way our parents or grandparents did, but we will still communicate. We will keep in touch with our family members by new means rather than the old. So, while we may view this as gloom and doom, our children and grand children may, in fact, be keeping in better contact with their friends than we were able to do. They just are using a new technology to do that communication in real time and not face to face.

Last Page Out



Dayton Dragons Baseball Fans View





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Tune to RadioShack for Digital Scanners.

The latest in digital scanner technology is as close as your nearby RadioShack store. Let our friendly associates show you all that's available, like these 39,600-object models in your choice of handheld or desktop styles. Each includes Flex-BNC antenna, separate alkaline and rechargeable battery trays, owner's manual, preprogrammed 100-city trunking list and step-by-step instructions to help you access and load your system.

Other features include:

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- Intuitive "Object Oriented" User Interface design
- Preprogrammed with 100 of the USA's most popular analog and digital trunked systems
- Automatic CTCSS and DCS decoding
- NOAA Weather Alert with SAME
- Skywarn Storm Spotter functionality
- Computer interface built in; works with 3rd-party scanner programming software and cable
- Both models clone with PRO-96 or with the mobile/desktop version, our PRO-2096
- Extended frequency coverage now tunes new 700MHz digital bands, 25-54MHz, 108-174MHz, 216-512MHz, 764-960MHz (except cellular bands 824-848 and 869-893.9)
- Service search, limit search – program up to 50 undesired signals to skip over during a search
- Long battery life; extremely low power consumption
- Backlit keypad display

Mobile use of scanners may be unlawful or restricted.



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