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WAVELENGTH

Official bulletin of
 Scarborough Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
www.ve3we.org

PARTICIPATE – LEARN – ENJOY

April 2008

Volume 2 Issue 4

- President: Bernadine Dinnard-Williams VE3YDB Sunday
- Vice-President: Open
- Past President: Bill Catlender VE3ILE Tuesday
- Secretary: Ray Chow VE3ZXC
- Treasurer: Lambert Philadelphia VE3LYP Thursday
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- Archives: Gord Hogarth VE3CNA
- Elmer: Tony Fegan VE3QF
- Security: Gord Gault VE3UFF

SARC Nets

- 28.730 Mhz
- CW 10:00 AM
- SSB 10:30 AM
- 147.060 MHz (VE3RPT) 7:30 PM
- Alternate frequency 146.520 MHz simplex
- 28.730 MHz
- SSB 7:00 PM

Everyone is invited to check in on CW before the nets start.

These are open nets. All licensed hams are welcome. Come and join us.

We also want to emphasize that 28.730 MHz is our calling frequency. Please monitor and/or call your friends. 7:00 PM is a good time.

SARC 62nd Anniversary

Anniversary Night for the Club is slotted for **April 28th (please note date change)**. This is a very special event - please plan to attend.

No Electronics Magazines? Think Again.

by Dan KB6NU

Many old-time ham radio operators grew up with magazines such as Popular Electronics, Electronics Illustrated, and Radio-Electronics. Sadly, these magazines are gone now, but there are still electronics magazines out there that can help you keep up with what's going on in electronics. These magazines are written for practicing electronics engineers, so many of the articles will not be relevant to amateur radio or written in such a way to be nearly incomprehensible to electronics hobbyists, but you can't beat the price. They're free!

The magazines I'm referring to are electronics engineering trade magazines. These magazines are sent out free to electronics engineers and others working in the industry, and are supported by the advertisers. You're not an electronics engineer? Don't worry. If you e-mail me, I'll tell you how you can qualify.

Let me give you an example of the good stuff you can find in these trade magazines. In the December 2007 issue of High Frequency Electronics (www.highfrequencyelectronics.com), there is an article titled, "Quartz Crystal Basics." Written by an engineer for a manufacturer of crystals, crystal oscillators, and crystal filters, this article describes how crystals are made and gives some tips on designing your own crystal oscillators.

Also in this issue is the article, "Power Combiners, Impedance Transformers, and Directional Couplers." This is the first of a series of articles to discuss these circuits. Amateurs frequently use transmission line impedance transformers (think baluns) to match an antenna system to the 50-ohm output of a transceiver.

The new products section includes items on RF parts and test equipment, as well as book reviews. You probably will not be purchasing the new Boonton 9103 7.5 GHz Portable Spectrum Analyzer (\$11,000 and up), but you might be interested in the book RF Circuit Design (\$41 at Amazon).

As you can see, there's plenty of useful and interesting information in these trade magazines. In addition to High Frequency Electronics, you may also want to check out:

- RF Design (www.rfdesign.com)
- Microwaves and RF (www.mwrf.com)
- EE Times (www.eetimes.com)
- EDN (www.edn.com)
- Test&Measurement World (www.tmworld.com, I used to write for this magazine)

If you don't care to sign up for the print version of the magazine, you can always visit their websites and sign up for their e-mail newsletters. These newsletters will keep you informed of new articles and product information on the websites. You can then choose which ones you want to read.

When he's not trying to get free subscriptions to electronics magazines, Dan blogs about ham radio (www.kb6nu.com), teach others about ham radio, and is working to set up an amateur radio station at the Hands-On Museum (www.aahom.org) in Ann Arbor, MI. You can e-mail him at cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

SARC 62nd Anniversary

April 24, 2008 is our Anniversary and Awards Night. 62 years is quite an accomplishment. Hope to see you there.

Do you have equipment to sell?

Walter Beach, VE3FJC writes:

I will purchase used Ham Radio Equipment from Hams or Widows who may be leaving the hobby. I will pay FAIR prices so that no one gets ripped off. It would mean that ONE person would come to their home NOT 8 or 10 coming at all hours. I can be reached at 905-429-2498 in Oshawa or ve3fjc@sympatico.ca 73 Walter Beach ve3fjc

Hamfests/flea markets

[CNIB Hamfest](#)

Toronto's only hamfest, sponsored by CNIB Amateur Radio Program

Date/Time: Saturday, May 24, 9:00 AM

Location: CNIB Headquarters, 1929 Bayview Ave, Toronto, north of Eglinton Ave and south of Lawrence Ave. Directly south of Sunnybrook hospital. Exit Bayview #369 from the 401 and head south. TTC route 11 from Bayview or Davisville subway, or 124 from Lawrence subway.

Admission \$5. Talk-in: VE3NIB 443.500(+) (PL tone 103.5), VE3RPT 147.060(+), 146.520 simplex

SARC will have a table at the CNIB Hamfest to promote the club and we will have space for members who wish to sell items. If you would like to help out please let Bernadine or Ray know as soon as possible.

[Central Ontario Hamfest](#)

Sponsored by Guelph ARC and Kitchener ARC

Date/Time: Saturday, June 7, 9:00 AM-12:00 PM

Location: Centre Wellington Community Sportsplex, 550 Belsyde Ave E, Fergus. 10 km north of Guelph, just off Highway 6.

Admission: \$7. Talk-in: VE3ZMG 145.210(-), VE3KSR 146.970(-) (PL tone 131.8), 146.520 simplex

Of course, don't forget the [Dayton Hamvention](#). May 16-18

Field Day Update

Rod VE3SOY advises that he has booked the Open Acres area at Bruce's Mill Conservation Area for the weekend of June 28-29. This should give us more room for operating, especially if more people attend.

As in the last few years, we are able to arrive on Friday night for setup on Saturday morning and take-down Sunday afternoon.

Bruce's Mill is located at Warden Avenue and Stouffville Road, east of Highway 404. For directions please visit the [Toronto and Region Conservation website](#).

Feed Us!

Wavelength is your newsletter. We need your articles and ideas for stories. Send them to Bob (ve3iel at aol.com) or Ray (ve3zxc at gmail.com). Deadline for next issue is May 8.

DX News

QST de W1AW
DX Bulletin 17 ARLD017
From ARRL Headquarters
Newington CT April 17, 2008
To all radio amateurs

SB DX ARL ARLD017
ARLD017 DX news

This week's bulletin was made possible with information provided by IZ0FKE, MW0USK, N0AX, NC1L, OK1WCF, QRZ DX, the OPDX

Bulletin, DXNL, 425 DX News, The Daily DX, Contest Corral from QST and the ARRL Contest Calendar and WA7BNM web sites. Thanks to all.

SPRATLY ISLANDS. Operators Halvard, LA7XK, Just, LA9DL and Erling, LA6VM are QRV as 9M6/LA7XK, 9M6/LA9DL and 9M6/LA6VM, respectively, from Layang Layang, IOTA AS-051, until April 25. Activity is on the HF bands using CW, SSB, RTTY and PSK. QSL to home calls.

GERMANY, DA. Operators Helmut, DL1ECU and Rolf, DK1DN will be QRV as homecalls/p from Hallig Langeness, IOTA EU-042, from April 22 to May 3. This includes activity from lighthouse WLOTA LH-1245. QSL to home calls.

IRAN, EP. Hamid, EP4HR has been QRV on 17 meters around 1500 to 1600z. QSL via I2MQP.

FRANCE, F. In celebration of the 150th birthday of German physicist Max Planck, special event station TM2MP is QRV until May 1. QSL via F6KTN.

SAINT BARTHELEMY, FJ. Juergen, FJ/DJ2VO will be QRV from April 19 to May 8. Activity will be on 40 to 10 meters, and possibly 80 meters, using CW. QSL to home call.

SAINT MARTIN, FS. John, K9EL will be QRV as FS/K9EL from April 24 to May 4 while on vacation. He will be active on 80 to 10 meters using mainly CW and SSB, and possibly RTTY, in his spare time. QSL to home call.

GUERNSEY ISLAND, GU. A group of operators from the Barry ARS will be QRV as GB0U from April 19 to 26. Activity will be on various bands and modes. QSL via GW0ANA.

ITALY, I. Members of the Noantri Radio Club will be QRV as IE9N from Ustica Island, IOTA EU-051, located in the Tyrrhenian Sea, from April 24 to May 1. Activity will be on all bands and modes, with a 6-meter beacon active as IE9N/B. QSL via IZ0FKE.

AMERICAN SAMOA, KH8. Gavin, AH8/W9EYE will be QRV from Tutuila, IOTA OC-045, from April 21 to 27, while on business. Activity will be in his spare time on 80 to 10 meters using SSB and RTTY. QSL to home call.

WESTERN SAHARA, S0. Mohamed, S01MZ has been active on 20 meters around 1700z. QSL via EA1BT.

BANGLADESH, S2. John, KX7YT is QRV as S21YV from Dhaka in his spare time until April 21. QSL to home call.

TUVALU, T2. Udo, DL9HCU is QRV as T20HC. The length of his stay is unknown. He is generally active on 20 meters around 0500 to 0800z and 17 meters around 0800 to 1000z. QSL to home call

TURKEY, TA. Special event station TC57A will be QRV from April 22 to 26 to commemorate the battle of Gallipoli, which took place in 1915 on the Dardanelles strait. Activity will be on 40 to 15 meters. QSL via TA1HZ.

MEXICO, XE. In celebration of "World Amateur Radio Day" on April 18, DXXE members are QRV as XE83IARU until April 20. Activity is on 160 to 6 meters using CW, SSB and RTTY. QSL via N7RO.

SYRIA, YK. Saad, N5FF will be QRV as YK1BA from Damascus from April 21 to May 2. Activity will be on 80 to 10 meters using CW, SSB and RTTY mainly from 2000 to 2300 and then from 0200 to 0500z. QSL to home call.

ALBANIA, ZA. Franck, ZA/F4DTO will be QRV from the city of Elbassan from April 22 to May 3. Activity will be on 20, 17 and 10 meters using SSB. QSL direct to home call.

OPERATIONS APPROVED FOR DXCC CREDIT. The following operations are approved for DXCC credit: Uganda, 5X1NH, 2007 operation; Burundi, 9UXEV, 2008 operation; Saudi Arabia, HZ1PS; Western Sahara, S05A, 2007 operation; and Syria, YK9G, 2008 operation.

Propagation Forecast

QST de W1AW
Propagation Forecast Bulletin 17 ARLP017
From Tad Cook, K7RA
Seattle, WA April 18, 2008
To all radio amateurs

SB PROP ARL ARLP017
ARLP017 Propagation de K7RA

We saw a string of zero-sunspot days over the past couple of weeks, but this week saw a brief but significant sunspot lasting only a couple of days. Sunspot 990 emerged as a tiny speck over April 14-15, but it was a real live solar Cycle 24 spot. Not only was the polarity of this region correct for the new cycle, but it was far north above the Sun's equator, which is what we expect for a sunspot from an emerging solar cycle. The only previous Cycle 24 activity was close to the solar equator.

For some unknown reason there were no mid-latitude geomagnetic readings from the Fredericksburg Virginia magnetometer on April 10, so I estimated the A index for that day as 6. This was done by looking at the Boulder Colorado readings for April 9-11 and the Fredericksburg readings for both April 9 and April 11.

Fredericksburg is about 1500 miles east of Boulder, and about 2.4 degrees south in terms of latitude. Each location produces a mid-latitude K and A index. The Fredericksburg numbers are reported at the end of each ARRL Propagation Forecast Bulletin, and the Boulder numbers are what you hear on WWV at 18 minutes after the hour when they give the Geophysical Alert Message.

You can see the current message at, <http://www.swpc.noaa.gov/ftpdir/latest/wwv.txt> and look through an archive of them at, <http://www.swpc.noaa.gov/ftpmenu/forecasts/wwv.html>. NOAA predicts quiet geomagnetic conditions over the next few days, with geomagnetic upset occurring on April 23. The chance of returning sunspots increases beginning

April 20, and the best bet for more spots is April 26-28.

Geophysical Institute Prague predicts quiet conditions April 18, quiet to unsettled April 19, quiet April 20, quiet to unsettled April 21, active April 22-23, and unsettled to active April 24.

Stan Whiteman, W1MDZ of Danforth Maine wrote to say he has set up a telescope with the proper filters for viewing sunspots. Of course, now that he has it finally set up, there were no sunspots to see. Danforth is a community in East Central Maine, across Grand Lake from New Brunswick, Canada. Stan turns 87 this year. Stan didn't mention this, but I happen to know that he was stationed in Japan after World War II, and got to meet Dr. Hidetsugu Yagi, the originator of the Yagi antenna.

Last week we mentioned the storm brewing a couple of months ago when a daily business publication ran an article suggesting the Sun is on the verge of a Maunder Minimum, a many decades long period with very few sunspots. They quoted Dr. Kenneth Tapping of Canada's [Dominion Radio Astrophysical Observatory](#) in Penticton British Columbia -- quotes that he says are incorrect and misleading.

Ken has produced a very good response, complete with graphs demonstrating that this minimum we are currently experiencing between cycles is nothing unusual. You can get a copy via email by sending a request to, SunspotMin@gmail.com. Every email sent to this address, no matter what the content, will receive a copy of Dr. Tapping's report via return email.

If you would like to make a comment or have a tip for our readers, email the author at, k7ra@arrl.net.

For more information concerning radio propagation, see the ARRL Technical Information Service web page at,

<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/propagation.html>.

For a detailed explanation of the numbers used in this bulletin see,

<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/k9la-prop.html>. An archive of past propagation bulletins is at <http://www.arrl.org/w1aw/prop/>. Monthly

propagation charts between four USA regions and twelve overseas locations are at <http://www.arrl.org/qst/propcharts/>.

Instructions for starting or ending email distribution of this bulletin are at, <http://www.arrl.org/wlaw.html#email>.

Sunspot numbers for April 10 through 16 were 0, 0, 0, 11, 12, and 0 with a mean of 3.3. 10.7 cm flux was 67.9, 67.1, 68.2, 69.3, 68.5, 69.2, and 69.5 with a mean of 68.5. Estimated planetary A indices were 8, 4, 11, 7, 2, 5 and 15 with a mean of 7.4. Estimated mid-latitude A indices were 6, 3, 8, 6, 2, 3 and 9, with a mean of 5.3.

You Might be a Ham Operator if...

Author unknown

- A friend remarks that you have a lot of CBs in your vehicle, and it turns into an hour-long rant on how ham radio is not CB.
- Your cell phone ring tone is a Morse code message of some kind.
- You have accidentally said your Amateur Radio call sign at the end of a telephone conversation.
- The local city council doesn't like you.
- You actually think towers look good.
- Your HF amplifier puts out more power than the local AM radio station.
- You refer to your children as your "harmonics".
- You have pictures of your radio equipment as wallpaper on your computer's desktop.
- Every family vacation includes a stop at a Ham radio store.
- The first question you ask the new car

dealer is: "What is the alternator's current output"?

- You buy a brand new car based on the radio mounting locations and antenna mounting possibilities.
- You have tapped out Morse code on your car's horn.
- You always park on the top floor of the parking deck, just in case you might have to wait in the car later.
- When house hunting, you look for the best room for a radio shack, scan the property for possible tower placement and check for CCRs.
- The real estate agent scratches his head when you ask if the soil conductivity is high, medium, or low.
- You have Ham radio magazines in the bathroom.
- You have found yourself whistling "CQ" using Morse code.
- You really start to miss people that you've never met.
- You walk through the plumbing section at the hardware store and see antenna parts.

The Blackout - five years on

At our April 14 meeting we had a discussion about amateur radio during emergency situations, and naturally the 2003 blackout was one of the topics that came up. Thanks to Gord VE3CNA for forwarding this article:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2003_North_America_blackout

The final report on the blackout investigation is available from the North American Electric Reliability Corporation at <http://www.nerc.com/~filez/blackout.html>