



# Di-Dah-Dit

Official Newsletter of the  
Parkersburg Amateur Radio Klub  
P. O. Box 2112 Parkersburg, WV 26101

## Guide to Ham Radio Newsgroups on Internet

(Note: The following is reprinted with the permission of the author.)

This message describes the rec.radio.amateur.\*, rec.radio.cb, and rec.radio.swap newsgroups. It is intended to serve as a guide for the new reader on what to find where. Questions and comments may be directed to the author, Jay Maynard, K5ZC, by Internet electronic mail at jmaynard@oac.hsc.uth.tmc.edu. This message was last changed on 3 June 1992.

### History

Way back when, before there was a Usenet, the Internet hosted a mailing list for hams, called (appropriately enough) INFO-HAMS. Ham radio discussions were held on the mailing list, and sent to the mailboxes of those who had signed up for it. When the Usenet software was created, and net news as we now know it was developed, a newsgroup was created for hams: net.ham-radio. The mailing list and the newsgroup were gatewayed together, eventually.

As the net grew, and as packet radio came into vogue, packet discussion began to dominate other topics in the group and on the list. This resulted in the logical solution: a group was created to hold the packet discussion, and another corresponding mailing list was created as well: net.ham-radio.packet and PACKET-RADIO, respectively.

These two groups served for several years, and went through Usenet's Great Renaming essentially unchanged, moving from net.ham-radio[.packet] to rec.ham-radio[.packet]. Readership and volume grew with the rest of the network.

The INFO-HAMS mailing list was originally run from a US Army computer at White Sands Missile Range, SIMTEL20. There were few problems with this arrangement, but one was that the system was not supposed to be used for commercial purposes. Since one of hams' favorite pastimes is swapping gear, it was natural for hams to post messages about equipment for sale to INFO-HAMS/rec.ham-radio. This ran afoul of SIMTEL20's no-commercial-use restriction, and after some argument, a group was created specifically for messages like that: rec.ham-radio.swap. This group wasn't gatewayed to a mailing list, thus avoiding problems.

While all this was happening, other folks wanted to discuss other aspects of the world of radio than the personal communications services. Those folks created the rec.radio.shortwave and rec.radio.noncom newsgroups, and established the precedent of the rec.radio.\* hierarchy, which in turn reflected Usenet's overall trend toward a hierarchical name structure.

The debate between proponents of a no-code ham radio license and its opponents grew fierce and voluminous in late 1989 and 1990. Eventually, both sides grew weary of the debate, and those who had not been involved even more so. A proposal for a newsgroup dedicated to licensing issues failed. A later proposal was made for a group that would cover the many recurring legal issues - discussions. During discussion of the latter proposal, it became clear that it would be desirable to fit the ham radio groups under the rec.radio.\* hierarchy. A full-blown reorganization was passed by Usenet voters in January 1991, leading to the structure we now use.

### The Current Groups

I can hear you asking, "OK, so this is all neat history, but what does it have to do with me now?" The answer is that the history of each group has a direct bearing on what the group is used for, and what's considered appropriate where.

The easy one is rec.radio.amateur.misc. It is what rec.ham-radio was renamed to during the reorganization. Any message that's not more appropriate in one of the other groups belongs here, from contesting to DX to ragchewing on VHF to information on becoming a ham.

The group rec.radio.amateur.packet is for discussions related to (surprise!) packet radio. This doesn't have to be the common two-meter AX.25 variety of packet radio, either; some of the most knowledgeable folks in radio digital communications can be found here, and anything in the general area is welcome. Cont Pg. 4

## Klub Officers for 1995

President -	Roy Maul N8YYS
1st. VP	Ray Bodie N8TWV
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3rd. VP	Earl Hulce KB8HRG
Sec.	Larry N8TGI
Tres.	Jane McGuffey N8MOW
Sarg/arms	Bob Lyens KB8EFB
NL Ed.	Jerry Wharton KA8NJW
Production	Mary Britton KB8BOA

## THE 1750 METER BAND?

>From: pdh@netcom.com (Phil Howard )  
(KA9WGN)

As promised, here's the summary of the information I requested from the net a couple weeks ago regarding the 1750 meter band.

Does one need a license to operate on this band? No. This means that you can choose your own callsign although callsigns are not required.

What is this band for? Experimentation mainly. It is especially fun to attempt QRP operation and one respondent said that given the right type of modulation and antenna setup, signals can travel 1000 miles or more with just under one watt output! Lots of folks use CW beacons and there is a radio club called The Lowfers (Low Frequency Users, presumably). Be aware that this IS NOT a ham band although several LF receiver manufacturers boast that their units can "receive the 1750-meter ham band". You will not find discussion of this band in the ARRL publications BECAUSE it is not a ham band. Perhaps some of the confusion here arises from the use by LF operators of ham radio callsigns. Many hams also operate in this band and use their own calls for identification, even though, as mentioned above, a callsign is not required here.

What is the frequency limits of this band? The 1750 meter band spans from 160 to 190 KHz.

What types of modulation may be employed? You may use CW and AM voice. You may be allowed others (FM, RTTY, etc). But the data I was able to gather was sketchy on this point. One person though said that there are no restrictions on modulation methods.

What are the legal power limits and other transmitter-related restrictions? Transmitter power is limited to somewhat less than one watt output. The maximum power INPUT to the final should not exceed one watt. The length of the antenna added to the length of the feedline MAY NOT exceed 50 feet. Spurious emissions outside the band must be 60db below the signal strength at the carrier frequency.

Who may use the band? Anyone, so long as they comply with the above regulations.

Where can I get more definitive and detailed information on this band? The band is discussed in Part 15 of the Code of Federal Regulations which you can pick up at your local library (assuming it is a fairly big library), or you can order it from the nearest US Government Bookstore. If anyone knows where such a store is, please post its location. I'd like to snag a copy of Part 15 myself.

Thanks to alan@dsdes.com,  
kludge@grissom.larc.nasa.gov,  
kc2wz!bob%fdurt1@uunet.UU.NET,  
brown@hpspk1a.spk.hp.com,  
markz@ssc.wa.com, and gary@ke4zv.uucp  
for all the information they provided.

You can join the Longwave Club of America, which was organized in 1974 to promote DXing and experimentation on frequencies below 550 kHz and activity on the 1750 meter band. Membership in the LWCA and a one-year subscription to The LOWDOWN is \$12.00 by First Class Mail. Please make all remittances payable to the Longwave Club, and mail to LWCA, 45 Wildflower Rd, Levittown, PA 19057. [Direct quote from the LOWDOWN] Happy Lowfering! :-)

## HAM OF THE YEAR!

The Ham of the Year for 1994 was named at the Christmas dinner on the 17th of December. And the winner is ? Dave Thompson WD8CYV. the committee felt that Dave had contributed to the betterment of Ham Radio not only in the past year but also for as long as anyone could remember. Curt prepared and presented Dave with a nice plaque that I am sure will grace the wall of Dave's shack. Dave said "I always felt that I should carry my end of the ladder."

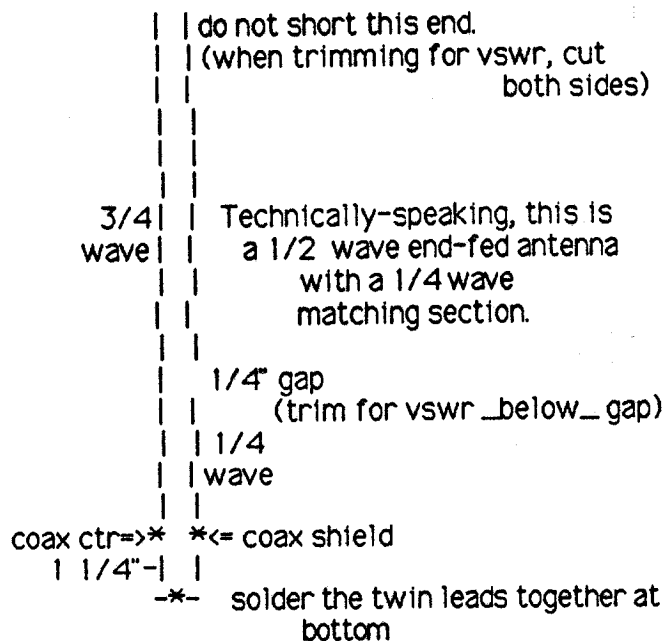
## CHRISTMAS DINNER

The Christmas Sinner was a big success. When we gathered at the Washington Community Building on December 17. The weather was great and the food was beyond compare. More than 60 people attended the Dinner and a great time was had by all. Santa even made an appearance. The entertainment was top notch with a couple of guest appearances, Andra Stanley and Jonika Dale. As Larry said "THAT'S MY DAUGHTER!!!"

A vote was taken to discontinue the practice of reading the applications of new members twice. The measure passed and now the applications of new members can be read and approved in one meeting.

### TV Twin-lead J-pole design

The following is a description of a J-Pole antenna made from 300 ohm TV twin-lead. They have quite a few advantages which include improved performance for HTs, portability, and low cost.



For a center frequency of 146 MHz:

1. Start with @54" of TV twin lead (flat, NOT foam core)
2. Strip 1/2" of insulation at bottom and solder wires together.
3. Measure 1 1/4" from soldered wires and strip insulation on both sides. This is the solder point for a coax feedline.
4. Measure 16 3/4" from coax shield solder point and cut out 1/4" notch.
5. Measure 50 1/3" from coax center conductor solder point and trim off twin lead at that point.
6. Feed with a length of RG58U coax. Tape coax at feedpoint to the twin lead for strength and seal coax for weather protection.

To get the best possible match, in step three above simply MARK the "solder points" and measure from the mark for step 4 and 5. Now solder straight pins to your conductor and your shield. Insert the pins at the marked point and test for VSWR at the design frequency (146MHz). If necessary, probe up or down till you reach 1:1 (close as possible). Solder at the best points. To

try this, you may want to start with the twin lead a little long and trim down to resonant length - note: you'll need to trim in a 3:1 ratio to maintain the 3/4 to 1/4 wave.

It has been noted that this design can lead to rf coupling onto the feedline. To avoid, put ferrite beads on the coax at the feedpoint, or use 3-5 turns of coax (1"-2") taped together at the feedpoint. You may attach an alligator clip to the plastic on the top of the antenna in order to easily hang it. Alternately, punch a hole near the top and use a length of fishing line to hang.

This design appears on many BBSs, in club newsletters, and in books; the earliest reference that I know of is a Jan. 1984 D.A.R.C. antenna article by James Burks, KA5QYV. This antenna is relatively broad-banded and will be more than adequate if simply built as noted in steps above.

FYI, the 1/4 wave sections for other center frequencies are:

144 MHz = 17 inches, 145 = 16.88, 146 = 16.75, 147 = 16.65, 148 = 16.54

I usually just go ahead and solder the coax in place and trim down to as close to 1:1 vswr as I can get. I use the MFJ vhf antenna analyzer and a frequency counter then afterwards test with a radio and in-line swr/power meter. When done, the antenna should also present 1:1.2-3 vswr in the center of 444MHz band as well (demonstrated on my dual-band meter and Alinco DJ-580).

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PARK/ARES NET  
Tuesdays at 9:00 pm  
146.970

The swap group is now rec.radio.swap. This recognizes a fact that became evident shortly after the original group was formed: Hams don't just swap ham radio gear, and other folks besides hams swap ham equipment. If you have radio equipment, or test gear, or computer stuff that hams would be interested in, here's the place. Equipment wanted postings belong here too. Discussions about the equipment generally don't; if you wish to discuss a particular posting with the buyer, email is a much better way to do it, and the other groups are the place for public discussions. There is now a regular posting with information on how to go about buying and selling items in rec.radio.swap; please refer to it before you post there.

The reorganization added two groups to the list, one of which is rec.radio.amateur.policy. This group was created as a place for all the discussions that seem to drag on interminably about the many rules, regulations, legalities, and policies that surround amateur radio, both existing and proposed. The neverending no-code debate goes here, as does the New Jersey scanner law, the legality of ordering a pizza on the autopatch, what a bunch of rotten no-goodniks the local frequency coordinating body is, and so on.

The other added group is rec.radio.cb. This is the place for all discussion about the Citizens' Band radio service. Such discussions have been very inflammatory in rec.ham-radio in the past; please do not cross-post to both rec.radio.cb and rec.radio.amateur.\* unless the topic is genuinely of interest to both hams and CBers - and very few topics are.

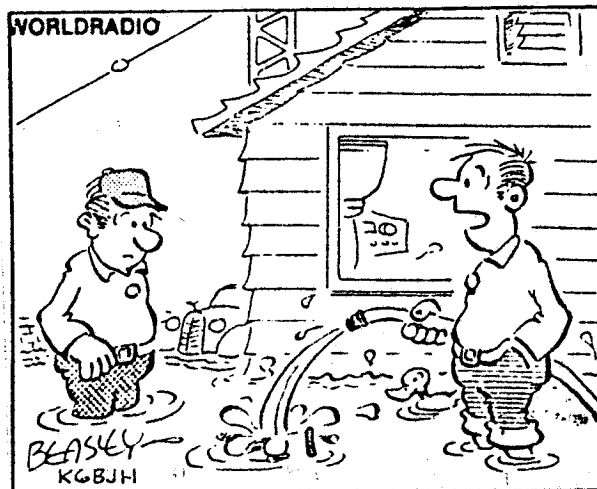
Whatever whatever- yea I'd be glad to help on the patch but I gotta water the lawn, wash two cars, spread fertilizer, cut the grass, and the beeper is about to go off anyway, but if ya remind at the right time-

The rec.radio.amateur.misc, .packet, and .policy groups are available by Internet electronic mail in digest format; send a mail message containing "help" on a line by itself to listserv@ucsd.edu for details. You can also post to rec.radio.swap by sending email to rec-radio-swap@ucbvax.berkeley.edu; if you do it this way, be sure to include an address for responses by electronic mail, as the gateway does not automatically do so.

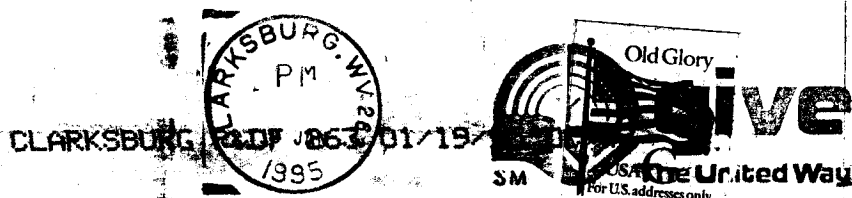
#### A Note on Crossposting

Please do not crosspost messages to two or more groups unless there is genuine interest in both groups in the topic being discussed, and when you do, please include a header line of the form "Followup-To: group.name" in your article's headers (before the first blank line). This will cause followups to your article to go to the group listed in the Followup-To: line. If you wish to have replies to go to you by email, rather than be posted, use the word "poster" instead of the name of a group. Such a line appears in the headers of this article.

Jay Maynard, EMT-P, K5ZC, PP-ASEL



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PHOTO 1. George is typing rtty to himself but thinking- "If I could get rid of these guys I could go out and water the lawn".

An interview with K8VAH (Very Active Ham) by Curt K8UC

Curt: "When did you first get interested in ham radio George?"

George: "Well, about 1956. I was taking a course in radio and tv repair. Someone gave me a big old short wave radio, and I got to listening around on the short wave bands, heard the hams etc. but nothing materialized at that time. Then in 1959 we got a group together, let's see, Woody, Cliff, John Cox (that had the tv repair on 7th St.), Morris can't think of his first name, and later we were joined by You Curt, Jerrold Van Oster, and Bill Harris."

Curt: "Do You remember who gave You your novice exam?"

George: "Yea, it was that funny looking old guy out on 7th St. K8BOT wasn't it? He also gave us the Tech test before the year was up."

Curt: "What was the first station equipment You got on the air with?"

George: "Well I think it was a Globe Chief 90 transmitter, and a National 125 general coverage receiver. We used folded dipoles made out of TV twinlead. They worked good. I lived over on 15th Ave. in South Parkersburg. I had all my TV repair stuff, the ham radio station, and Ruby had a washer and dryer all in a little room about the size of a bath room. A little later I picked up an old 522 surplus transmitter when we got to getting on to two meters AM. That was about all the stuff I got until we moved up here in 1962."

With the previous background conversation in mind I will bring you up to date on this interview. George had the week of Dec. 4 off for vacation. I asked him if I could come up for a visit. He said: "Well the place is pretty cluttered up. Just use the monitors that are on the floor as stepping stones and wade on in." It was about that bad. He had just brought in a new load of

computer related "Junque" that he had extorted from Bob, KB8EFB.

Jeff Newton had been reading the mail and showed up at George's about the same time I got there, and Jeff was bicycle mobile. He either had a shorter trip, pedals real fast, or I have a slow truck. George was talking to himself (rtty mode of course) when we got there. He had one of the new terminals from Bob feeding into his PK232 and reading it out on an ancient Coco Radio Shack set-up, I think.

When I got out my camera for a picture or two, George made a fast trip up stairs to comb his hair. Is that vanity or what?

The K8VAH shack sure has a lot of equipment. Poor Ruby is loosing the war for space in this basement. Most everything George ever had is still there. He mentioned building the Heath Kit Marauder transmitter. "It was suppose to take 60 hours to build. It took longer than that just to chase out all the bugs after it was assembled." I'm trying to recall- was this the transmitter we used one field day and it was transmitting on two frequencies at once? I was thinking that that one was a DX-100.

Answering the Question What was the toughest home brew project he had done? George related the building of a 75 meter ssb mobile transceiver, and adds that this was the one that took 'best home brew project' prize at the 1963 Jackson's Mill hamfest. The prize was a \$5.00 crystal calibrator. Other home brew projects were a kw amplifier in 1969. It uses 4 Grounded grid tubes in parallel. (I think this project was done because a neighbor (WA8CRW) had a bigger signal and was winning too many horse races.)

Then there was the CW Robot project. It worked with the old Radio Shack model I's. An article was written about it in QST. George got with the author for more info, then got into the program to change it some to work the way he liked it to. The Robot would call CQ then prompt the answering station what information to send. If the guy sent fast the robot would speed up and vice versa. There are qsl cards to prove it worked hanging on the wall. Want to work it? It wouldn't take much persuasion to get George to put it on the air again.



Curt: "Where is all your new equipment?"

George: "I really don't have any new equipment. However, starting down here on the right there are the kw amplifiers. The first one in the floor model cabinet is the 4 813's. Remember you bought the cabinet at a duPont sale? It has a big pole pig power supply capable of 5000 volts, but it is adjustable. To the left of it is the Hallicrafters HT 33 amplifier in mint condition. Those gold plated pieces above the HT 33 are home brew CB rigs patterned after International Crystal Executive stuff. It's not used except to help hold up all the stuff on the top shelf. (that stuff is dozens of cassette tapes with programs for the old RS Model I's) Next is a home brew 6 meter transverter using 20 meters as the if frequency. Next are the Kenwood twins I got back in '76. They are all cabled up so all the other stuff can be hooked up just by using switches. Any station to either amplifier. Next is all the computer stuff. Remember when I used to have the old Kleinschmidt rty unit there?" (In this area now is a Radio Shack Model IV, printer, etc.)

"On the upper shelf is the Drake 2B I got from Woody (Woods) back in 1963." I had my eyes on that one for a long time. Then there is the Icom 211 2 meter all mode I got back in 1983 from AES in Florida. It is hooked to a pair of home brew vertical yagis at 70 feet."

"This table (at right angles to the rest. See photos) has my Heath Twins on it. They are the SB300 receiver, the SB400 matching transmitter, and the station control console that has the built in Phone patch, station id timer, etc. and I have the matching monitor scope. All this stuff is mint, doesn't drift, etc. etc.." (I am leaving out about a page of bragging about the heathkit line) One item George is looking for is the DMP 21 desk mike for this station. If You see one let him know.

Curt: (asks dumb question)  
"George is this the only computer you have?"

George: "Well let's see  
(Pause) There are 7 Radio

Shack model 4's, 7 Coco's, 6 or 7 model I's, 3 Commodore 64's, an old Radio shack model 3 or so." "There's more than 25 of em." (And Jeff and I saw them all)

This interview did not include K8VAH's other time killers. George has radio controlled airplanes hanging all over the place. He also spends all the time he can in full scale planes and ultralights. George learned to fly at the old Stewart airport that was where Grand Central Mall is today. There is a boat and bunches of water skis. The new 2 stall garage is totally full. We weren't admitted in it this trip. Since this was in the holiday season, all the Christmas decorations were up. Because of this, George has had to quit mowing and watering the lawn. However he was going out to fluff up the slag after we left.

George works full time + overtime at AGA Gas (air products) plant at Washington, Wv. On the way back down through Vienna Glen, N8LVX asked me if Jeff and I got any ice cream from George. If we had, You can bet it would have been mentioned in the first paragraph of this report.

PHOTO 2. George, K8VAH and some of the goodies in the background.

