



Radio Klub

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE PARKERSBURG AMATEUR RADIO KLUB  
P.O. Box 2112, Parkersburg, WV 26101

# Di-Dah-Dit

## Be prepared for the next step: digital *everything*?

**T**here's more to going digital than having a frequency display made with LEDs.

The new generation of HF radios are all hawking the benefits of DSP (digital signal processing) and the makers of TNCs have a few new digital modes up their sleeves to tempt you with. They have digitally remastered all of your favorite tunes from the Andy Griffith Show theme music to Grand Funk Railroad's greatest hits.

Radio and TV broadcasters see thousands being spent on new equipment that will allow them to broadcast digital signals.

What about ham radio operators—where does this digital revolution leave them? Right on the leading edge—that's where.

DSP will soon be as common on HF rigs, and about every other piece of gear you can think of, as a RF gain control.

What about the digital modes? TNC manufacturers are dueling it out to see who gets the biggest slice of the pie right



**Look before you step out into the digital world**

now. Kantronics introduced G-TOR a year or so ago and now AEA is preparing to market PACTOR II. Kantronics has offered the G-TOR license to all TNC manufacturers for a mere \$2000. MFJ has taken them up on the offer. But AEA seems to have balked. Why? They seem

to be travelling "the road not taken." (sorry Robert Frost) PACTOR II seems to be where AEA is heading.

So what's the big deal? Well for you it may mean upgrading your present TNC or taking it to the next hamfest and getting enough cash to buy you a new  
see "digital duel" page 3

## **Congratulations to the Klub's Raffle Winner**

A nice size tavern ham and \$100 worth of groceries was awarded to Kam Lawson at the December meeting and family Christmas party at the Char House Restaurant.

Kam is the daughter of Curt, K8UC and Irene, N8KYP, who put Kam's name on the winning ticket. Congratulations to the winner and special thanks to our sponsor, Ralph Looney, and his staff at Ralph's Market, 2108 Pike Street, Parkersburg. Thanks to all who bought and sold tickets.

## **Klub Notes**

submitted by  
Connie, WD8MIO, secretary

Notes from Nov 95 meeting:  
29 people attended  
balance in Klub treasury \$2913.81  
Audit by WA8CRW/K4BDI shows all correct and current  
Ham radio classes will start in April and conclude in May  
A contest committee was appointed K5IID/N8YYS chair this committee  
Some repeater needs and projections were made by Dave, WD8CYV  
Connie, WD8MIO needs some help reconnecting antennas  
Look for a new Klub roster from Mary, KB8BOA (will be included in a newsletter)

## **Atta' Boy, Roy!**

What's the difference between being the president of the Klub and The Ham of The Year?

For Roy Maul, N8YYS, it was a matter of months. He has taught classes for novice and tech, enjoys riding in his motor home, bowling and workin' the Rat's Nest (RTTY net) on MARS.

Like Roy, I have jumped in to ham radio with both feet. But I couldn't have done it without the help and encouragement of my husband Dave, WA8KAN and many of you all.

The fellowship of ham radio and the goodwill that's promoted is probably the best by-product of the hobby and the Klub.

Roy and I were given the office of president early in our pursuit of the hobby. The first reaction is one of humor, "Boy, we railroaded you into that."

But really, deep down inside, whether it's openly communicated or not—you all have said, "You may be new, but we want you to have the knowledge and enjoyment that we have with our hobby."

Some clubs and civic organizations are not as willing to welcome new people. With that thought in mind, we are looking down the barrel of 1996 and that means it's soon going to be Ham Radio Class time—Talk it Up!

## **President's Corner**



*Lydia White, AA8UL*

Think of those whom you work with, are related to or just know, who would enjoy getting to know great people like yourselves and having the opportunity to "get-on-the-air." Classes will be on an accelerated schedule this year—more on that later.

For now, thanks for your support and 73—God bless all.

(tnx Curt, K8UC, for H.O.Y. plaque)

Larry, KF8NW has a Knight Kit T-60 (circa 1964) for sale. This is a tube-type rig with "old standard" ham bands—plus six-meters. Uses Xtals or VFO. Would like a small mobile-size tuner or sell for \$45 OBO—863-0073

## **Parkersburg Amateur Radio Klub 1995-1996 Officers and Staff**

Lydia White, AA8UL, President  
Earl Hulce, KB8HRG, VP  
John McGuffey, N8NBL, VP  
Dave Thompson, WD8CYV, VP  
Connie Hamilton, WD8MIO, Sect.  
Jane McGuffey, N8MOW, Treas.  
Jerry Wharton, KA8NJW, Ed.  
Larry Dale, KF8NW, Ed.  
Mary Britton, KB8BOA, Printer

# "Pooter" Patter

## What is Pooter Patter?

Well it's not someone who swats you on the rump.

"Pooter" is slang for computer. Patter is defined as language not generally understood by outsiders. (It also means a person who pats) I guess one could be said to pat the keys of the keyboard when using a computer—so the term seems to fit in both instances.

We'll begin by asking the most often asked question. What kind of computer should I buy? Good question. There is no stock answer to this question, except maybe, "Which ever one you want."

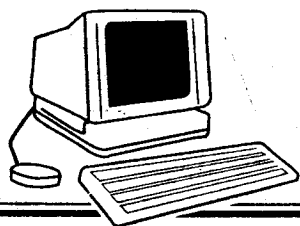
MACs and "others" that would be useful in the home and in the hobby of ham radio.

Many people make the decision to buy used "pooters." This is usually a safe thing to do. Used computers will range in price from \$10 to thousands of dollars. A Radio Shack TRS-80 can be bought for as low as \$10. While a used 486 PC or MAC may cost better than \$2000.

Remember this, if you plan to use the computer for ham radio—you can go cheap and then upgrade if you want.

Usually the "other" category is where you will find the lower priced units. Some

Is there one of these in your shack's future?



It doesn't have to cost a lot to offer a lot of fun and new horizons in ham radio.

First, you don't need a big expensive computer with CD (compact disk player) ROM (read only memory) or 32 megs of RAM (ready access memory) or even a hard drive (a device inside or outside the "pooter" used to store programs, systems, data and other software(s) and devices).

If you have read this far in this article maybe you're interested in getting a computer. There are many brands out there, but for sake of space we'll narrow the field down to PCs,

names to look for include TRS-80, Commodore and VIC-20.

The "other" category is really where ham radio programs were first introduced. Many programs still exist for these computers which allow you to operate PACKET/RTTY/CW. The more exotic modes, i.e. PACTOR/G-TOR/AMTOR and others are less compatible with the "other" category of "pooters."

*(next month a little more on PCs and Macintosh, and a thing called a dumb terminal)*

*"digital duel" from page one*

TNC. The PACTOR II mode will require a new TNC. Instead of offering upgrades that would "fit" into existing TNCs, AEA is banking on PACTOR II being popular enough to prompt everybody to buy a new TNC. Oh! Yes. CLOVER is being resurrected too—but the upgrade for CLOVER is something that will "fit" existing hardware.

In the January issue of QST, the Packet Prospective author, Stan, WA1LOU, has heralded 1996 as the Year of 9600. (That's a faster way of sending packet.) For those of us with 1200 baud TNCs that means we'll have to upgrade our existing gear.

The WA8OMR BBS in Moundsville has put a questionnaire out on the BBS's MBX (MOUND) about existing stations with the higher speed capability and the fact that they will soon offer a port out at 9600 baud.

What does this mean for you? If this is the year you've decided to take the step into digital anything, shop around and ask lots of questions.

The Klub offered an introduction to packet radio at the its meeting last November. (*special thanks to Arch, W8GWR and Ken, WA8LLM*)

Write to or call retailers and factories and ask for the latest specs and advertisements on all of the new radios that are popping up with DSP. They'll usually send this stuff to you free.

Look before you step.

## What it takes to be a know code

**M**ost CW operators agree, the best way to learn the code is to get on the air and work other stations or listen to W1AW's practice sessions.

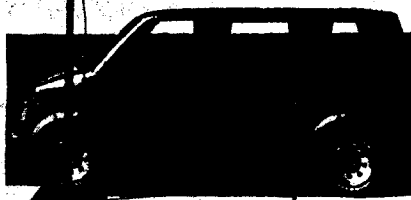
There are secrets (other than using your computer) to being a good CW operator. It usually shakes down to putting in the time to learn the similar characters and then listening and writing it down—without trying to anticipate the words.

Even on the air the person starting out can be intimidated by CW-lingo (i.e. es=and, tx=thanks, cul=see you later) With a little commitment on your part and some "stick-to-it-iveness" you'll be ready when test time comes this year.

PARK will conduct two test sessions in 1996 in conjunction with the ARRL National Exam Days. One on April 27 and on September 28.

*Klub/ARES Net on  
146.970  
Tuesdays at 9 p.m.*

**HURRY  
UP**  
TELESCOPING MAST



A company from the Buckeye State has introduced the Hurry Up Telescoping Mast.

WILLBURT of Orrville, Ohio has designed this mast for lightweight antenna arrays.

Any ham would be ready in a jiffy for 2 meter SSB or grid chasing on 70 centimeters.

The mast is six feet high when it's collapsed and 25 feet fully extended.

Guy wires are not needed. However in order to anchor the mast—you must purchase a \$25,000 mini-van to park on the plate that attaches to the mast. Even at that, it looks like a good idea that a ham could improve on—maybe get it up to 50 feet.

## FCC says ok to WOWO QRP

WPAR, Parkersburg's name-sake callsign was done away with just before its 50th anniversary (what a shame too).

Now midwesterners and the nation will have to strain to hear WOWO. The 50 kW powerhouse in Fort Wayne, Indiana will celebrate its 70th anniversary—not as a clear channel omni-directional broadcast GIANT—but as a 9.8 kW highly-directional facility.

1190 AM was a favorite spot on the dial for Peter George who led a protest group to stop the downgrade of WOWO. "Right now I feel like a very close friend of the family is dying," he says. His group petitioned the FCC with over 300 letters from the US and Canada. But to no avail.

The owners of WOWO decided to dump the big signal of the Fort Wayne station to make it possible for a power increase on their NYC station WLIB (which is on the same frequency).

Legend has it that WOWO stands for "We're On We're On!"

There was another option the InnerCity Broadcast group could have considered. At night the station could have shifted its operating frequency to 1200 kHz—but they didn't and it won't.

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KA8NJW Jerry Wharton  
1722 20th St.  
Parkersburg WV 26101

## BLANNERHASSETT AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

### --THE BEGINNING--

The reason I remember all of this is because I was there. Also, it's now easier for me to remember 'way back when' than what I had for breakfast this morning. You younguns will understand all this one day.

My dad, Ernie, W8BWT, received his license in January, 1948, after three tries at the 13 WPM. Boy, was he proud! In June of that year, Dupy Hefner, W8MIT, invited dad and me to accompany him and his son Bill (now WA4SPG) to a mountain top in the eastern part of the state to participate in field day. The affair was set up by the radio club that Dupy had belonged to before he moved to Parkersburg.

I remember the food was excellent - the thunder/ hail/ windstorm was horriific - the comradery was unforgettable - and the radio contacts were unending. What fun !

That was the catalyst ! All my dad could talk about on the way home from that first field day was, "We have to start a club - we can have our own field day - on Fort Boreman Hill, maybe" - etc. etc. etc.

Anyway, the club idea was kicked around with Dupy, Ray Smith, W8HUG, Gene Grow, W8BVQ, and sometimes others in the game room at our house until the by-laws were hammered out and a name could be decided upon.

One by-law I remember quite well. You had to be licensed to become a member. What a bummer! I was probably as well prepared as my dad was at the time, because I had helped him study for his ticket for at least a year. But, my major interests at that time were cars and girls (do I have the right order here?). Back to the subject.

Blennerhassett was chosen to be neutral so that all would feel equally welcome to join. It was felt that a city name would be too "local" and that maybe some people wouldn't feel welcome.

The charter members were:

W8BVQ - Gene Grow

W8BWT - Ernie Schauwecker

W8BWU - Jim Smith

W8CNF - Homer Nowery

W8DDE - Vic Randle

W8EMG - Creel Meredith

W8HUG - Ray Smith

W8MIT - Dupy Hefner

W8TM - E.P. "Steve" Stephenson

If there were others, I can't recall. This all occurred in late 1948 or early 1949.

On May 29, 1949, my dad became a silent key. My association with ham radio ceased for nine years. I'm sure there are others still around who might fill in some gaps or continue the story of the Blennerhassett Amateur Radio Club.

## The Bootlegger Gets Caught Red Handed !

One evening, my dad said he was going out for a while, so I hightailed it to the game room to listen on the radio. I wasn't licensed.

After a while, I thought it wouldn't hurt if I turned on the transmitter to tap out a few "TEST TEST TEST DE W8BWT K" on CW.

To my surprise, W8HUG, Ray, came back to me. Ray was a friend of my dad.

I thought I couldn't ignore him --sooo-- I went back to him and said, "HI RAY - THIS IS MARK. DAD ISNT HERE RIGHT NOW - I WILL TELL HIM THAT YOU CALLED. 73 DE W8BWT".

The response came back: "YES I KNOW - THIS IS DAD - NOW QRT. 73 DE W8HUG".

All my dad said when he came home was, "Nice fist". I knew better than to try that again.

73's Mark K4BDI