



The W. A. COM Ham

Volume 1, Issue 1 FEBRUARY 2008

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From "Bud" Plants, N3TIR, President....

We all have hobbies that come and go. But Ham Radio is for a lifetime. Maybe it's because you EARN your license. Maybe there's just too much to do with ham radio – a whole world (and more) to experience. But it lasts a lifetime.

Young people may be attracted to the excitement of EmComm. Later they might become involved in the newest developing technologies. Older folks often like the ability to just chat with friends around the world. Ham radio may fade in and out of people's lives as they grow, but it never goes away and always has something new and interesting at every age."

So there are three main interests....

The hobby / chatting side

The Emergency response side

And the technology side

Which we will emphasize in 2008

Bud Plants

N3TIR

WASHINGTON COUNTY ANNUAL SPORTS SHOW AT THE WASHINGTON CROWN CENTER

Once again WACOM attended the annual Sports Show, operating a Special Event Station under the call sign W3C. The show ran from Thursday, January 31st, through Sunday, February 3rd. Additionally, with Technician Level Licensing Classes coming up in April, this show provided an excellent opportunity to spark interest. Quite a few people stopped to visit; several signed up to receive more information on the Technician

licensing class, several also expressed interest in the General Licensing Class planned for this fall. A few hams stopped and got on the air and made contacts, others just came to visit and enjoy themselves for a while talking about the hobby. This year we operated not only SSB but also PSK31 and CW, and despite some poor propagation, we had very few quiet spells. See you next year!!!

The Amateur's Code

The Radio Amateur is



CONSIDERATE...never knowingly operates in such a way as to lessen the pleasure of others.

LOYAL...offers loyalty, encouragement and support to other amateurs, local clubs, and the American Radio Relay League, through which Amateur Radio in the United States is represented nationally and internationally.

PROGRESSIVE...with knowledge abreast of science, a well-built and efficient station and operation above reproach.

FRIENDLY...slow and patient operating when requested; friendly advice and counsel to the beginner; kindly assistance, cooperation and consideration for the interests of others. These are the hallmarks of the amateur spirit.

BALANCED...radio is an avocation, never interfering with duties owed to family, job, school or community.

PATRIOTIC...station and skill always ready for service to country and community.

--The original Amateur's Code was written by Paul M. Segal, W9EEA, in 1928



Bill's Contest Corner



I got an interesting envelope in the mail from the ARRL. Seems that in the 2007 ARRL International DX contest, I took first place, phone, single operator, low power in the Western

PA section. That was an unexpected surprise! I also got the J5C (Guinea-Bissau) DXPedition on 40 meter phone. I really got them 7 times: 15 PH & RTTY, 17 PH & RTTY, 30 RTTY, 40 PH & RTTY. Worked the Mexican RTTY contest and ended up with a total of 143 Q's (big deal!) but it was a good warm up for the CQ WPX RTTY contest coming up next weekend.

Until next time, 73 de Bill, KB3LIX

WHY AN AMATEUR RADIO OPERATOR IS CALLED A *HAM*

Have you ever wondered why we radio amateurs are called *HAMS*?

Well, it goes like this: the word Ham was applied in 1908 and was the call letters of one of the first amateur wireless stations operated by some members of the Harvard Radio Club.

They were **Albert S. Hyman**, **Bob Almy** and **Peggie Murray**. At first, they called their station **Hyman-Almy-Murray**. Tapping out such a long name in code soon called for revision and they changed it to **HY-AL-MU**, using the first two letters of each name.

Early in 1909, some confusion resulted between signals from amateur wireless **HYALMU** and a Mexican ship named **HYALMO**, so they decided to use only the first letter of each name and the call became **HAM**.

In the early pioneer unregulated days of radio, amateur operators picked their own frequency and call letters. Then, as now, some amateurs had better signals than some commercial stations. The resulting interference finally came to the attention of congressional committees in Washington and they gave much time to propose legislation designed to critically limit amateur activity.

In 1911, Albert Hyman chose the controversial Wireless Regulation Bill as the topic for his thesis at Harvard. His instructor insisted that a copy be sent to Senator David I. Walsh, a member of one of the committees hearing the bill. The Senator was so impressed, he sent for Hyman to appear before the committee

He was put on the stand and described how the little amateur station was built and he almost cried when he told the crowded committee room that if the bill went through, they would have to close down the station because they could not afford the license fees and all the other requirements which were set up in the bill.

The debate started and the little station HAM became a symbol of all the little amateur stations in the country crying out to be saved from menace and greed of the big commercial stations who didn't want them around.

Finally, the bill got to the floor of the Congress and every speaker talked about the poor little station **HAM**.

That's how it all started. You will find the whole story in the Congressional Record.

Nationwide publicity associated station HAM with amateurs. From that day to this and probably to the end of time, in radio, an amateur is a HAM.

● * *

This was sent in by Bud, N3TIR, he cites the ARRL website for the sources. There are a lot of versions to be found on why a Ham is a "Ham." If you find another one somewhere and would like to send it in, please do so. We'll share each with the rest of the club.

Ask the Technician

Here is this month's question, and is an oldie but goodie:

"What can you tell me about dummy loads? I'm feeling rather dumb about these and their proper use. Is this something that I will use often or is it something that is only used when setting up an antenna / radio combination? Should I purchase one? Borrow one? and can I make my own?

Thank you.

Ham in need of education."

A dummy load (also known as an RF Load), is a substitute for an antenna used for testing or tuning of a transmitter. The reason they are used is to prevent harmful interference while adjusting or repairing a transmitter.

In it's basic construction, a dummy load is generally a 50 ohm resistance constructed to allow easy connection to a radio, and is shielded to prevent radiation and accidental contact, as they get hot while in use. The resistance dissipates the RF energy by converting it to heat. At broadcast stations, they are generally water cooled to handle the power in excess of 25KW.

Generally, with the state of today's equipment requiring no tuning, dummy loads generally are not used as often as they once were, except by people that tend to repair or modify their equipment. Historically, the main use of the dummy load was to tune your transmitter into the load, then switch to your antenna. While the dummy load was a 50 ohm pure resistive load, it would allow you to tune the final amplifier to the desired operating frequency, and usually only the coupling adjustment would need 'tweaked.'

Should you buy one? My gut reaction is yes, but you may already have one. For example, my MFJ-989 antenna tuner has a 100W dummy load built in. The problem with this load, however, is that it won't handle the power from my amplifier, so I have an external higher power one as well.

If you want to make your own, you certainly can, **BUT**, you're **NOT** going to do it by going to Radio Shack to buy parts. Most high power resistors are wire wound with a ceramic coating. These work great for power supplies or at audio frequencies, but at radio frequencies look more like inductors than resistors (look back at the Ask the Tech about antenna tuners), thus defeating the purpose. This effect is more pronounced as the frequency goes up. I'd recommend watching your favorite auction site online or a hamfest near you for a commercially made unit.

73, and thanks for your question.

WA3WMB

Minutes of the General Membership Meeting January 2008

General Membership Meeting January 3, 2008

Meeting called to order at 7:30pm.

Minutes of December meeting distributed

Motion to approve Dave N3IDH Sec Kevin KB3LHO

Treasurers Report: None available

Repeater

All OK, next meeting of Western Pennsylvania Repeater Council will be January 20, 2008

In Washington PA. Meeting in EOC.

RACES/ARES:

Dave N3IDH encouraged participation in upcoming WASH 2 meter contest

Bob KB3IN: Nothing

Question posed about training on NTS traffic message handling, expect to hold class after the 1st of the year.

Nets: Discussion on 2 and 10 meter nets

Candy Sales: Candy available if anyone wants any

Licensing Classes:

Bob KB3IN: 2 rounds of classes are going to be scheduled.

Round #1 will be for general public. Tentative dates are: April 19,20, 26 with VE test on the 27

Round #2 will be held for first responder's dates: April 9, 16, 23 with a VE test on April 30th

Classes to be held from 6-10pm each evening and will be teaching test material only.

Education Committee Meeting necessary to prepare for next round of classes

By Laws

Dave N3IDH Most recent copy of by laws located

Most recent copy read at meeting

The plan is to present & read this month and next month, then have membership vote on by laws.

Once approved, then revision committee will attempt to revise as necessary

Audit Committee No report

Old Business:

Sportsmen's Show

Signup sheet passed around

Trailer will be needed. Adam reports more work necessary to get lighting up to standard.

BOD Meeting:

Nominations needed for board member to take space vacated by Bud Plants

Joe WA3WMB Motion to open up BOD nominations Sec Jim KC3HW

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Nominations for BOD

Ed N3ZNI Nominates Joe WA3WMB

Norma N3YJJ Nominates Bob KB3IN

Motion to close Sam W3CYO Sec Alan KB3EUQ

New Business:

Bud N3TIR Recommends we begin a program to help other with antenna repairs or other Maintenance items.

Newsletter

Discussion ongoing about newsletter status

Monk is skilled at signmaking if anything needs to be done, he is willing to help.

Sam W3CYO

Have 4 cartons of "stuff" from Tom Fox. Need someone to look at items and sort.

Dave N3IDH & Bob KB3IN

N3IDH Wants to buy a table at WASH hamfest to sell some of the Fox stuff and candy.

Ed N3ZNI

Hamfest coming up in 10 months. He is not going to Dayton this year, so time to begin thinking about next years prizes.

Motion to adjourn

Sam W3CYO Joe WA3WMB



Sunday Afternoon at the 2008 Sport Show, Left to right: Ed, N3ZNI; Jim, KC3HW; Bob, KB3NUQ; and Bob's friend Tim, a prospective ham.

Washington County Sports Show 2008



Left: Bill, N3BPB dropped in to visit and operate SSB with Susan, KB3JHQ doing the logging.

Right: Joe, WA3WMB at the radio Saturday. Do notice his new Vibroplex key, a Christmas gift from his wife Sue. And yes, he did make good use of the key, making CW contacts later during



Left: Kevin, KB3JHO, brought his computer loaded with "Hello" videos from the ARRL.

Representative Tim Solobay stopped by the table to visit us twice during the show.



Right: Jim, KC3HW is becoming hooked on PSK31—that mode seemed to work well for us when the SSB shut down. By the way, Kevin, KB3JHO, above, is getting quite interested in this mode himself.



Washington Amateur Communications

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We're RadioActive!!!

We're on the Web
www.wacomarc.org

Right: Randy, N3ZK, visits and promotes Amateur Radio at the information table. Randy's an avid contester and particularly RTTY events.



Below: Ed, N3ZNI (left) chats with Gary, KB3QHE, just licensed at a VE session on Jan. 17th, came by for a taste of HF operation. From unlicensed to General in one sitting, Gary is looking forward to getting on the air. Listen for him on the bands soon!



Below: Ed, N3ZNI; Jim, KC3HW; and Bud, N3TIR at the beginning of the station operations on Thursday.

