WIRELESS HILL BEACON

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Meeting – June 12th 2013

The regular monthly meeting will be held at 7:30 PM on Wednesday, June 12th, at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, on Upper Ferry Road at Wilburtha Road in West Trenton. The site is easy to reach from I-95 or NJ-29. Talk-in is available on the 146.67 (PL 131.8) and 442.65 repeaters. The directors meeting is 1 hour earlier at the club shack.

Meeting Minutes

Directors and General meeting minutes May 8, 2013

There was a discussion about the lock on the shack door and possibly replacing it when the club has sufficient funds.

In the general meeting and directors meeting the Triathlon money was discussed for the event in the 3rd week of July. The directors discussed ways to punish members that did not help with this event.

At the directors meeting it was discussed about getting new members living in the area from the ARRL and sending them letters about the club. Gary K2GW graciously offered stamps for this effort.

Directors meeting hardship rates as well as half year were discussed.

Directors and general meeting repeater status: an attempt was made to tweak the receive (RX) side, however test equipment was not available. The noise issue appears to be random. Only when RX is open the noise is heard.

Directors discussed repeater coverage. The possibility of using an omni were discussed. As it was suggested that any people having problems accessing the 2m repeater to try the 440 MHz repeater as this repeater has great coverage.

Cracks were discovered by Frank in the three support legs on the south crank up tower. Frank plans to clean the surfaces and weld support brackets. Frank also graciously built and installed a winch on the south tower to assist in lowering the south tower. If was discussed that crank up towers are not meant to be up full time. High winds most likely created the severe cracks in all three legs.

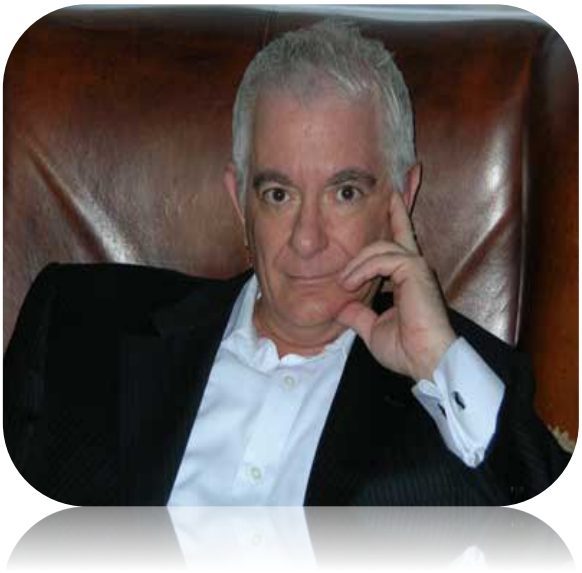
Outdoor lighting was discuss in the directors meeting. Hy reported that the lights we have now are good and estimated to consume 70 W. LED lighting would be too expensive, and Hy said he had bad luck with the reliability of motion detection lights. We are still looking at ways to reduce the power usage. Possibly solar? We could unscrew the lights not required.

The directors discussed a new idea on possible associate repeater members. They would have no shack, no membership benefits, or no voting rights. So it would only allow repeater use only, possibly $26 per year.

Painting of the shack was discussed as well as a donation for paint supplies from participating members.

Minutes by Mike AB2IO for Cal

BALANCED LINES 2013 Installment 6
by Bob Schroeder, N2HX



GOT INTEROP?

Prior to the 9-11 attacks, most people had never heard of the term *interoperability*. It's a technical term that describes whether or not dissimilar devices or electronic equipment will effectively work together. The word can apply to the physical attributes of the equipment itself, or to the results or effects of the equipment. For example, will an Icom microphone work on a Kenwood radio? The answer is no. On the other hand, can an Icom radio communicate with a Kenwood radio? The answer is yes.

There is a recent book on this very complex subject. It is entitled *Interop: The Promise and Perils of Highly Interconnected Systems* by John Palfrey and Urs Gasser. The term "interop" is but a slang term used in technical jargon. As I'm often called upon to do, I have written a review of this book for the IEEE's *Technology and Society* magazine. The reason I'm sharing it with you here is because communications interoperability has been a bugaboo even before the events of 9-11.

Interop is a great read because the authors cover a variety of different aspects of its effects in modern society. As you will learn, interoperability isn't just about different tools or systems working together, it's about the consequences of privacy (e.g. Who can share my personal data and with whom?) and about the legal issues of ownership (e.g. When I rip a CD and load it onto my iPod, who really owns the music?) Because interoperability is nearly inescapable in today's society, this book brings some eye-opening facts to light.

Unfortunately, this book doesn't go into sufficient detail about communications interoperability and emergency management, so I'll discuss it a little bit here. Vis a vis the events of 9-11, most hams have read the success stories and the horror stories about emergency communications. Post 9-11, if you wanted to write a successful application to obtain FEMA grant money, all you had to do is mention the term "interoperability" once or twice and you'd get all the money you want. Having spent nearly forty years in the land-mobile communications business, specifically in the emergency communications sector, I can tell you that communications interoperability is a real cash cow because commercial radio manufacturers make absolutely sure that their radios won't work with anybody else's. This gross incompatibility reared its ugly head during hurricane Floyd, 9-11, hurricane Katrina, and most recently, hurricane Sandy. After all these years, you'd think that these communications glitches would have been solved. Not so.

During Sandy, for instance, emergency responders who came to New York from nearby districts could not communicate with NYFD. Even though the FCC allocated nationwide VHF and UHF frequencies specifically for this purpose more than forty years ago, apparently nobody used them. By stark comparison, Amateur Radio emergency communicators have always been able to liaise with other towns, states, and regions using the ARES and RACES system. No matter what brand of radio hams use, they have always been able to communicate with each other. Why can't commercial radio systems do this?

WHAT YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT NICOLA TESLA

Were you to look up the word "enigma" in the dictionary, you might expect to find a picture of Nicola Tesla. If you don't know who he was, don't worry. The link below will take you to a very interesting 45-minute video about Tesla. Noted actor Dean Stockwell narrates the video. (Stockwell played the character of Dr. Yueh in the original version of *Dune*.) Like most geniuses, Tesla was an eccentric, *par excellence*. Although he had more than his share of critics, the U.S. government made no bones about purloining some of Tesla's patents and using them for military projects, some of which you may have heard. I hope that you find this video interesting.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DkNmvZpxpY&playnext=1&list=PL66A5AA45D3BB7E16

T-ROC TOUCHSCREEN GLOVES

If you've ever tried to work an iPhone or any other device with a capacitive touch screen while wearing gloves, you know that it won't work. The screen requires actual contact with your finger- a low impedance path. With so many Smartphone apps on the market, you might find yourself using one while wearing gloves. Let's say you're working on your vehicle and you're wearing gloves to keep your hands clean, while at the same time you're trying to operate an OBD scanner or a tune-up app on your iPhone. The problem is that gloves insulate your fingers from the glass. Here is a product that lets you operate your Smartphone and at the same time keep your hands clean.

http://www.magidglove.com/ROC-Touchscreen-Glove.aspx

All for now.
Comments invited.

Bob Schroeder, N2HX
Past President, DVRA

Radio Review Baofeng UV-5R

I was pricing out an additional battery pack for my VX-6R and was surprised at the cost – about $80. I have seen several of the cheap Chinese radios advertised for around this price or even less. A quick look on Amazon revealed that the Baofeng UV-5R dual-band was less than $40 – delivered. So I ordered one figuring if it was a complete piece of junk, I would only be out 40 bucks, not too bad. This was about half the cost of a battery pack for my other HT, so I took the gamble.

About 3 days later it arrived on my doorstep.

Picking up the box from Amazon was a bit of a shock as the box felt like it might be empty. After opening the (non-empty) box, I realized that it was an exceptionally lightweight radio. Taking the 'who needs directions' approach, I inserted the battery and set up the charger without looking at the manual. After setting up the unit to charge, I started to read the manual in order to figure out how to program in a few local repeaters. The included manual is probably the worst set of instructions that I have ever seen anywhere. Next step, open the laptop and go to google.com in order to search for Baofeng UV-5R programming instructions.

Most of the websites that came up mentioned how difficult the radio was to program, but I did manage to find one that had a short cheat-sheet for programming the unit. It really is not all that difficult to do. The required sequence of operations is a bit awkward, and the required menu entries are not in any sort of intuitive order. The menus have voice prompts, so navigating thru them is not as bad as it could have been.

I managed to program both of the DVRA repeaters into the first two memory channels, and was able to hit both repeaters with the included antenna. No answer to my call, but I was able to access the machines from Hamilton. I entered in some other local repeaters and had a few quick QSOs, audio reports were good, and the other hams were surprised that I was using a 40 dollar radio.

I took it to the NAMI walk on May 18th and was using it without any problems. No communication issues with simplex, and was able to reach all of the other operators that were present. I was able to get consistent good audio reports also. Lisa, KC3AHY was present at the walk, with the same model radio -- but in bright yellow, which would make it difficult to misplace.

The SMA connector on the radio is reversed from what other units have (male on radio, female on antenna). I was also able to purchase a dual female SMA adapter for $6.99, and an overpriced $18.95 female SMA to female BNC cable from a local Radio Shack. I have been using the UV-5R with the SMA/BNC cable and a small mag mount antenna on my morning commute, and have not had any problems.

I made a second purchase thru Amazon to get the programming cable (prices range from $8-$15). The downloadable software from the manufacturer is Windows only, and I only have Macs, so I was unable to test it. There is a free open source radio programming system called CHIRP, which supports this and many other radios. Using the CHIRP software made entering several other repeaters easy.

Overall impression, not a bad radio, but it feels cheap. It is very lightweight, and just does not feel solid. It would be a good rig to give to new hams at events, and makes a good backup, but would not want it for my primary and only radio.

PROS	CONS
• Under $40, can't beat that • Dual band, dual watch • Comes in multiple colors (I got the traditional black). The yellow one would be difficult to misplace. • Comes with earbud / mike • Drop in charger included • Multiple colors on screen backlighting • 128 memory channels • Broadcast FM radio receive • Narrow & wide band FM • Built in LED flashlight (very bright) • English (and Chinese) voice prompts in the menu system • Did I mention it costs less than a full tank of gas?	• Might be hard to get serviced if it is ever required, but for $40 who cares. • 'Reverse' sma connector for antenna, you can't use any of your other antennas without some sort of adapter • 4 watts VHF, 3.5 UHF, not the normal 5 & 5 • Feels 'cheap' • No external power connector, you can't get a car charger for it. • Other reviewers claim it is difficult to program • Extremely slow memory scanning • Probably the worst manual I have ever seen • Accessories (antenna adapters, programming cable), ended up costing as much as the radio did.

DVRA Nets
2-meter & 70-cm nets on the club repeaters 146.670 pl 131.8, 442.650 pl 131.8

2-Meter Nets:
The Pepper Net 10:00 PM Daily
Mercer Co. Emergency Net 7:30 PM Tuesdays KB2EGI, coordinator.

Training & Upgrade Classes
Don Wright, AA2F, periodically holds Technician and General classes. Classes are held at various locations. Call Don at 609-737-1723 to register.

Logbook of The World
Mike AB2IO reports that the current W2ZQ LOTW
Latest QSL matches 5/23/2013
5209/16555 = LOTW QSLs/Total worked

9A4KW	2008-03-02 15:29:49	20M	SSB	14.26793	CROATIA
F8CRS	2008-03-02 20:40:49	20M	SSB	14.17300	FRANCE
PA1T	2007-10-28 18:06:16	20M	SSB	14.16670	NETHERLANDS
PA1T	2006-10-29 13:25:02	20M	SSB	14.189	NETHERLANDS

Fame and Fortune Await
Want to become rich & famous – write an article for the DVRA Beacon. Fame among local hams almost guaranteed – fortune is up to you (and your luck in Powerball). Deadline for submission is one week before the monthly meeting (that would make the deadline the first Wednesday of the month). For details contact Alex / AB2RC – ab2rc@ab2rc.net

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