

Kilowatt Harmonics

April, 2012



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Ye Olde Editor Says...

Spring has sprung! We indeed are seeing a spring rebirth at the 'KWH clubhouse. The HF studio renovation is nearly complete and we had our new operating tables delivered. This issue is cram packed with all kinds of good articles for your reading pleasure, so sit back and enjoy. I had several members submit articles and pictures, for which I am extremely grateful! I welcome your submissions – remember this is YOUR newsletter! I would not be able to produce a monthly newsletter without your input (in the form of your submissions)! Until next month, enjoy this issue and please let me know what you think of the newsletter (both good and bad!).

73 de Ye Olde Editor

Skype Meeting with K9EID, Bob Heil

Bob Heil, K9EID, will be having a “town hall style” meeting with the club on Thursday, May 10th at 8 PM via Skype from his online meeting room. I was indeed fortunate to get SCARC on his schedule as he is a very busy man! I will bring my laptop and projector to the clubhouse so we may all partake of the online meeting. Don't forget to catch Ham Nation on TWIT TV Tuesday nights at 9 PM! You may catch past episodes on the TWIT TV website and on You Tube.

Meet the President...of the WASH Club

.Our own Carol, KB3GMN, is the President of the Wireless Association of the South Hills for 2012. She made club history being the first woman president of WASH since the founding of the club in September, 1993. We here at SCARC wish her much success with her presidency!



Check Your Connections! By Joe, WA3FWA

I wanted to enter this year's BreezeShooters CW Ground Wave Contest using my newly acquired Yeasu FT-450D. The rig had been working just as it should into my 4-BTV trap vertical. But at the start of the contest I found that the FT-450D would not tune with its internal tuner on 10 meters, nor would it tune on any band or even into a dummy load. But putting my old Kenwood TS-520 S on line, it would tune and I was able to work the contest. Strange. The TS-520 S has tube finals and it has tune and load functions. Although the settings were somewhat different than what I was used to, that rig transmitted fine. Since the FT-450 D would not tune, I was all set to return it to Yeasu under the 1-year warranty. As a last thought, I disconnected the rig from all of the connections and fed it directly to the antenna coax. Lo and behold, the Yeasu tuned just as it should! It seems that I had too many connections between the radio and the antenna. The rig was connected with coax to a rotary switch, so I could select different rigs. Then it went through a Heath amplifier, with another length of coax. From the amplifier, the signal would travel into a low pass filter, which is connected to a SWR pick up, and then into another rotary switch to take the signal to a selectable antenna. That rotary switch is connected to yet a third switch, which goes to the dummy load and to a ground. I tested the internal tuner in the Yaesu by adding one component at a time to the line that the signal had to travel. I found a bad connection at the switch where the coax goes to the antenna. The switch had a right angle connector going to the antenna coax, which was covered internally with a white powdery substance, probably corrosion. This connection had been in place for some 30 years without being checked. That connector was removed from the signal's path. At one time I had the vertical, a tri-band beam, 40-meter dipole and a trap 40-80-160 dipole all connected to that rotary switch. Only the vertical remains. Even after finding the bad connector, the FT-450D would not tune because one of the connections was loose. The rig's auto tuner is now working perfectly – problem solved! Moral of the story: always check your connections and make sure they are clean and tight – mine are!

(Editor's note: article was lightly edited. Thank you for the submission Joe! In my many years of repairing and building computers, one thing I learned time and again is that most problems were caused by something simple about 90% of the time. Clean connections are most important! Also, do not forget to weatherproof and seal your outdoor connections with a good quality coax seal to keep the water out! A light coat of dielectric grease on your outdoor connections is a good idea as well.

Trip to AES Cleveland

On Saturday, April 21st, Skyview is having a multi-club event with a trip to the Cleveland AES store. I will be joining them to pick up a couple of quick things. I meet up with their convoy at the Beaver Valley Turnpike Exit on Route 18 in Big Beaver about 8:45 AM (I wait for them to let me know when they are near the exit at Giuseppe's Restaurant near the interchange). We go up to "kick the tires" and eat lunch afterwards at the Willoughby Brewery right down the street. All from SCARC are welcome to join in on the fun! If you have any questions and/or interested in going, please let Ye Olde Editor know so I can look for you in Big Beaver at our meeting place above. We usually use 146.52 simplex for communications on the way up to Cleveland.

HF Room Renovation

The HF Room at the clubhouse has been undergoing extensive renovations since late February – early March. The club voted to have a contractor come in to tear down the old paneling, do a “nip and tuck” on the interior mortar joints, insulate the interior wall, install new paneling, and give the remainder of the room a fresh coat of paint. Nate, W3SVJ, and his crew are putting the finishing touches on the electrical system as we speak. A ground system is in place for the radios. Art, WA3BKD, is currently updating the patch panel as I am writing this. In addition, two new tables arrived on Good Friday, which will give us a total of 5 operating positions. These tables are on wheels, allowing them to be moved around if need be.



Picture courtesy of KB3VHT – thank you!



Picture courtesy of KB3VHT – thank you!

SCARC VE Session 4/3/12 - by Bob, AD3Q

The first VE test session of the year was held on Tuesday, April 3rd. We had a total of five candidates take six exams. Four exams were successfully completed with the following results:

- Christopher Umbel passed his Technican Exam (call unknown at present).
- Lonnie Wibberd passed his Technician Exam (call unknown at present).
- Paul Byers, N3LQE, passed his General Exam.
- W. Roger Parry, KB3DUV, passed his Extra Exam.
- While the fifth candidate was not successful, we encouraged him to stick with it.

All candidates were told about the advantages of joining SCARC and were invited to attend both regular and social meetings. Our next test session will be on 7/3/12 at 7 PM.

I want to thank the following VE's for serving at the session:

- Jim Datillo, KJ3D
- John Simpson, N3EQP
- Rich Danko, N3SBF
- Tim Marsh, W3WTW
- Mel Ruble, WA3RVD
- David Huston, WQ3T

Editor's Note: article was lightly edited. Thank you for the article, Bob! I checked the FCC database. Chris is KB3YLN and Lonnie is KB3YLO. I graduated from high school with Chris – small world!

SCARC VE Session 4/3/12 - by Bob, AD3Q (continued)



Exams Being Graded
by the SCARC VE Team



Jim, KJ3D, presenting CSCE to Roger, KB3DUV



Mel, WA3RVD, presenting CSCE to Paul, N3LQE



Rich, N3SBF, presenting CSCE to Chris, KB3YLN



Tim, W3WTW, presenting CSCE to Lonnie, KB3YLO



The SCARC VE Team

Upcoming Public Service Events

2012 Pittsburgh Marathon – Sunday, May 6th – contact Jeff Hutzelman, N3NHS – (412) 401-8348

Komen Race for the Cure – Sunday, May 13th – contact Ye Olde Editor – (412) 279-9016

Both events need operators – please consider volunteering for these events - you get the best seat in the house! Several SCARCers have already volunteered for the Race for the Cure – I thank you for your help!

St. Patrick's Day Parade

This is a follow up article that appeared in the last newsletter. As you probably know, we had several SCARC members volunteer for amateur radio communications in the St. Patrick's Day Parade last month. I received several pictures from Mike, WA3PYU, and Kathy, KA3VXM (below). Thank you for the pictures!



Miss Smiling Irish Eyes



St. Patrick

Shack of the Month

I decided to bring back a feature story that appeared in previous newsletters, "Shack of the Month". To that end, I will start the gauntlet around and share my shack pictures with you folks. If you want your ham shack to be featured, please send me an e-mail. My contact information is on the last page.



ICOM 208H and Yaesu FT-450AT with Rig Blaster Plus digital interface. Backup power provided by two 12V marine batteries. I have additional power cables for each radio for that purpose, permitting a quick transition for power switchover when the lights go out, hi!

Shack of the Month - Continued



Full Size OCF Carolina Windom 160 Dipole
(Antenna Works)



Endpoint for long end



Endpoint for Short End



Gap Titan DX Vertical

Shack of the Month - Continued



2 meter/440 and 6 meter J-poles.
6 meter dipole is homebrewed.

Club Corner – By Ken, KB3REE



Club Planning Meetings

Our club president, Art, WA3BKD, wants to remind the club that he will be holding club planning meetings the first Wednesday of each month during our social nights. All are welcome to attend and offer their input to help guide the future direction of W3KWH.

Projects for 2012 – by Art, WA3BKD

1. Rebuild HF Room. Status: 75% complete.
2. Scrap out old antennas and towers lying on the ground. Waiting for Boy Scout response. April 15, 2012 deadline. Status: Scrapping party on April 21, 2012. All are welcome to come out and help.
3. Clean out clubhouse attic and storage shed. Status: Attic complete, Shed 50% complete.
4. Paint outside of clubhouse. Status: outside walls being prepped for painting.
5. Bathroom vents.
6. Rebuild/Replace porch lights.
7. Plants for front of clubhouse for sprucing-up purposes – ivy, etc.
8. New concrete pads for repeater antenna and HF Hy-Tower base.
9. Social events:
 - a. This summer, I want to have an open house. Invite local clubs, scout troops, CB'ers and the general public.
 - b. Annual corn roast and picnics to be scheduled.
10. New equipment:
 - a. Hy Gain Hy Tower Vertical.
 - b. Emcomm operating position in HF studio with necessary equipment.
 - c. New 2m/440 repeater antennas and tower.

(Editor's Note: article lightly edited.)

Upcoming Hamfests

4/29/12: Two Rivers Hamfest – The Spectrum in Little Boston - <http://www.trarc.net>
5/18/12 – 5/20/12: Dayton Hamvention – Hara Arena – <http://www.hamvention.org>
6/3/12 – Breezeshooters Hamfest – Butler County Farm Showgrounds –
http://www.breezeshooters.net/html/our_hamfest_2012.htm

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The Steel City Amateur Radio Club (412) 787-0777
2M Repeater: 147.030/147.630MHz (123.0 hertz PL tone)
70cm Repeater: 444.450/449.450MHz (103.5 hertz PL tone)

Club Officers

President, Art Mueller, WA3BKD

Vice-President: Richie Danko, N3SBF

Treasurer: Walt Atkins, KA3YNO

Recording Secretary: Joe Mielnicki, WA3FWA

Corresponding Secretary: Sue Rackiecz, KA3JKS

License Trustee: Karl Pastorak, WA3XVJ