

W7TCK News

Capital City Amateur Radio Club

May 2007



From The President...

Tod Glen, N7WD

The Governor's Cup – a great opportunity

As we enter May, we start getting ready for one of the clubs major events of the year – the annual governor's cup. This is one of the great opportunities to interact with the communities and demonstrate what Amateur Radio can do, as well as fulfill our mandate as a public service organization.

But the Governor's Cup is more than that. Like Field Day, it is a great chance to get others involved in Amateur Radio. This year, I would like to encourage every ham who will be at the governor's cup to bring along a non-licensed friend. Don't forget that any licensee can act as a control operator. Let your friend get on the radio and participate. There's nothing like actually doing to interest people in the hobby.

Most hams get into the hobby these days because they know someone who is a ham. The Governor's Cup, followed by Field Day, is a great opportunity to get new people involved in our hobby.

See you all at the race.

73
Tod, N7WD



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Tod Glen, N7WD

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From The Editor

John McDougall, K7JM

It is May; summer is just around the corner. The busy time of the year is rapidly approaching. Governor's Cup, Field Day, Glacier-Waterton Hamfest, and all the rest of an active Ham's summer. Get ready for some FUN!

It is also the time for our open house at the May meeting. Be sure to give a good welcome to all and any visiting hams that may come to the club meeting. We have developed a couple of resources that will be available at the club meeting encouraging new Hams to get involved and encouraging all Hams to join the club. New hams can learn from the wealth of experience that seasoned veterans have, and those seasoned veterans have many talents and skills that can be shared with the newer or less experienced hams. Each and every one of us can learn from others with more experience and mentor someone along in a skill we have been gifted with.

If you know of anyone, Ham or future Ham, that might be interested in this great multi-versatile hobby, give them a personal invite. Male or Female, 10 or 100 years old, it is a hobby for all.

73 and blessings to all of you this month,

John, K7JM - Editor



Life With a Toddler

John McDougall, K7JM

Life is very busy at this house. We have a very rambunctious three year old boy that loves to get into any and everything. He is Mr. Houdini. There is not a child proof device that can keep him out. Shampoo is a regular staple of his diet. If it has a lid, he will take it off and pour out whatever is in it. He turns on faucets, empties drawers, unlocks doors, and destroys toys.

A couple of months ago, the hard drive crashed in our old computer. Fortunately, I had recently backed up all of the data (do you do that??). I purchased a new hard drive and installed it into my old computer. It was up and running for a few days when my wife gave me a call at work and said the computer was making a terrible noise. She promptly shut it down. Upon arriving at home that evening, I turned on the computer and it did indeed make a terrible noise. The system would not boot up and would not even go past the boot screen. That raised some flags in my brain because even if the hard drive was kapoot, the system should display the boot screen since it is all in EPROM (permanent hardware memory). I took the case off the computer to check everything out. The sound was not coming from the hard drive, or fans, or anything else I could see. A light bulb turned on in my brain and I pushed the CD eject button. It reluctantly opened. I then pulled TWO CD's out of the drawer! The BIOS (program in the EPROM that runs on boot-up) was being hung up trying to get a response out of the CD drive. I pushed the power button again and the system came alive. Life is exciting at this QTH.

For Sale

Following are the items I have for sale:

FOR SALE

1. ICOM-706 HF/VHF Transceiver with Voice Synthesizer
2. Antenna Tuner plus Smart-Lock Remote
3. Yaesu FT-530 En/Dec Dual Band Hand-Held Paging Transceiver with Quantum Ham Battery plus various accessories
4. Kachina 505DSP2 Computer-Controlled HF Transmitter
5. Vibroplex Twin Paddle plus Morse Code Cassettes
6. Uniden UST-705 (Automatic device to raise and lower an antenna)
7. Portawattz 140 Power Inverter
8. Kam Plus with Pactor built-in
9. Rigblaster
10. Texas Radio Bugcatcher HF Mobile Antenna

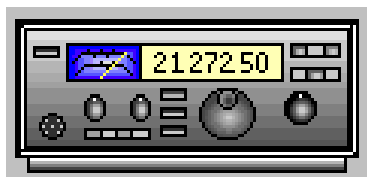
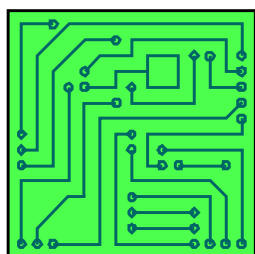


11. Butternut HF2V Antenna

Best offer considered.

Phone: 406-443-1752 after May 4.

Sharon Henderson



Parts suppliers

John McDougall, K7JM

Recently, a fellow Ham asked where I get my parts from for my projects. This request gave me the opportunity to put an actual list together. Here are some of my favorite suppliers. If you have a favorite supplier that is not listed here, send it to me so it can be shared with others.

buxcomm.com Parts for rig to computer interface, lots of different connectors, etc.

danssmallpartsandkits.net Dan's Small Parts and Kits in Missoula, MT. Misc parts and parts kits. Have fun trying to find something on this site. It's very unorganized. :)

elexp.com Electronics Express. Inexpensive test equipment, workshop stuff, parts, and kits. I've ordered from these people several times but it usually takes a long time and they don't ever respond to e-mails.

qrpkits.com Hendricks QRP Kits. As the name says. I haven't ordered from them yet.

mouser.com Mouser Electronics. They have most anything you can imagine.

oselectronics.com Ocean State Electronics. I've ordered from them several times and always had good service, but a lot of people have been complaining about them lately. Lots of hard to find ham parts.

partsandkits.com Toroids at good prices. I haven't ordered from them (yet).

powerwerx.com Powerwerks. This is where you get all your Anderson power connectors and cables for your rigs. I've ordered from them a couple of times.

jameco.com Jameco Electronics. I've

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ordered from them off and on for the last 25 years.

mcminone.com MCM Electronics. Test equipment for cheap. Lots of stuff. I've ordered from them a couple of time.

digike.com Digikey Electronics. They are big like Mouser and have lots of stuff.

byonics.com Byonics. This is where you get the "TinyTracker" for APRS tracking.

amqrp.org American QRP Club. I've ordered several kits from them. They come out with great stuff and are very inexpensive since they are not in it to make money.



CW QSO Frustrations

Submitted by Ci Jones, WU7R

This was an actual posting on the QRP-L mail list.

CW QSO frustrations

Posted by: "Scott" clydeguy@msn.com

Date: Wed Apr 4, 2007 5:06 pm ((PDT))

Hello folks,

I am a new ham and for HF only use an HW-8 therefore I am QRP and CW only. The problem I am having is during QSO's when the speed of the other party seems as fast (slow) as what I can copy using G4FON's program (20wpm character, 12wpm spacing). I get into the QSO and end up not being able to copy half of what I am hearing. The combination of QSB and a ton of QRM is frustrating me and forcing me to end the QSO almost as soon as it

begins. I plan on installing a CW filter within the next month or 2 to take care of a lot of the QRM but that aside, is this normal? Maybe it is just my nerves...I don't know but I end the QSO and feel guilty putting it in my log because of my poor performance. Should I continue on the air or just stick with the G4FON?

Thanks,
Scott – VE3VVF

Hello Scott et al;

First, let me say welcome to HF and to CW. It is really a lot of fun, but as you say, it can be frustrating at times! HI HI

There is nothing quite like having a real time, real life QSO. There are no training programs that can match it. G4FON's Koch method is one of the best programs out there for learning the code. It has all the bells and whistles that can be imagined to help make it sound more like the real thing.

However, it always sends perfect code. Even if it is set to have QRN, etc., in the background, it still will send perfect code. If a mistake is made by the person practicing, the program can be halted or restarted.

Not so with a real life QSO. Not every one sends perfect CW. The program cannot just be turned off and restarted at will. The QSO continues and letters, words, or complete phrases will be missed. It is just a bit more daunting talking with a live person than it is listening to a generated signal. If the CW is faster than what can be copied, don't be afraid to send PSE QRS. That means please send slower. Most hams

will oblige.

In my case, and I would imagine in most every one else's case, I would freeze up. I would miss complete blocks of sent messages. I would get the call signs mixed up. I had to ask for repeats. If that were not bad enough, when I started to send, I made even more mistakes. My hands would start sweating. I would grit my teeth. I would tense up. My wrist would stop working. I would end the QSO.

Is that all behind me now? I am glad you asked. For the most part it is. However, there are still times when I choke. I still miss letters, calls, and sometimes entire blocks of messages. Of course, it doesn't happen as often as it used to, but yes, it still happens. Only difference is that now, I just keep going. I get through it.

Scott, you mention that sometimes you don't want to claim the QSO. That is up to you, but if you exchanged calls, names and QTH, that was a good contact, and should be claimed. You mention that you only run QRP. That is great, but it can become frustrating at times. I enjoy QRP, but I am not afraid to crank up the power when it is needed. A CW filter really, really helps when working QRP. It eliminates a lot of the background noise, making the signal more clear and easier to copy.

Some good advice has been given about not sending faster than can be received and deciphered. If I hear a CQ at 20 wpm, I tend to answer at that speed. (I wish! HI HI) If I hear one at 10 wpm, I answer at that speed. I have found that most folks send at a rate they

can copy. When I send CQ, I send at a speed that I can realistically receive at. Most hams will accommodate and answer at the calling speed. There are a few that seem to have to answer faster, but that is not the norm.

Other good advice that has been mentioned is to both practice with a trainer and to get on the air. Yes, mistakes will be made. Hands will sweat. Nerves will be shot. Fills will be needed. But with persistence, CW can be accomplished and a whole new world of amateur radio enjoyment will be had. There is no practice better than to have a real life on air QSO.

So in closing, enjoy this great hobby. Take your time. Use the practice programs. Get on the air a few times a week, even if it is only to listen to others. Write down what you hear. It is amazing how much can be learned by just listening. When you send, try to send as perfect letters as possible. Don't get fancy and put a 'swing' into what you send. If a mistake is made, send a few 'dits' in rapid succession to let the other op know it was a mistake and just continue with the QSO. Everyone I know makes mistakes. That is part of being human.

Have a good day es vy 73,

de KC5GXL
Dan Harriman
Orange, Texas



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Capital City
Amateur Radio
Club



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CCARC Regular meetings are at 7:00 pm on the first non-holiday Monday of each month at the Salvation Army Church 1905 Henderson.

VE exams are offered monthly, just prior to the regular CCARC meeting, but on an appointment only basis. If no appointments are made, VE exams will not be scheduled for that month. Those wishing to take an exam should contact John Geach, KS7R, 442-7107 at least two days prior to the CCARC meeting to schedule an exam.

W7MRI Repeater: 147.82 (-offset)
Net every Tuesday at 7:30 pm local time on the 147.82 (-offset) repeater.

May 2007 Meeting
Monday, May 7
Salvation Army Church
1905 Henderson
7:00 PM



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All expressions of opinions and all statements of supposed facts are published on the authority of the author and are not to be regarded as expressing the view of CCARC.

Biscuits and Gravy

Come to Hardee's on Saturday. Every Saturday morning between 9:30 and 11:00, as many as twenty hams show up for "EYEBALL" QSOs.

COME JOIN THE FUN!

First Class Mail