



CAARA Newsletter



AN ARRL AFFILIATED CLUB

JANUARY ISSUE- 2013



President's Corner

by Stan-W4HIX

A sign of a good organization is one that continues to function without its leader. CAARA continues to operate well as I spend an extended vacation to Puerto Rico and Florida.

Jake K1LDL pointed out an article in the latest QST on a cheap software defined radio made from a USB digital TV dongle. The dongle works in Asia and is mass-produced, which yields a price of \$20, which includes a small antenna. This plugs into your computer, and with a bit of effort installing some free software, you have a receiver for 50 MHz to 1.7 GHz. The QST article is interesting because it describes an up converter to shift the HF bands into the range of the receiver.

With an extended time away from my ham shack, and only an HT to play with (and very quite repeaters in Englewood), I ordered one of these dongles, installed the software and started scanning. I picked up two FM broadcast stations (the software demodulates FM stereo) and some odd digital signals around 930 MHz (pagers I'm guessing). A better antenna and isolation from the computer should help. Also, I'm looking at GnuRadio, a Linux based SDR program that allows for some pretty sophisticated signal processing.

If you are interesting in learning more about this cutting edge technology as applied to amateur radio, let Jake or me know—we may create some lectures or projects to advance our state of the art.

As we get into January, the possibility of emergency communications callouts becomes greater. If you are available, get your gear ready and let Curtis or me know. Also, we'll soon start to

talk about Field Day. I'd like to concentrate on antennas this year, so bring your ideas, and let's do some testing in the spring.

73 de Stan, W4HIX

Clerk's Corner

by Dean-KB1PGH



The first order of business is another friendly reminder that the 2013 CAARA Membership dues are now due! If you haven't paid your dues for this new year now's the time to do so. We did not mail out dues reminders and we have transitioned to online dues payment by credit card or Paypal on the clubs website at www.caara.net. It's quick and easy, of course you may still mail your dues check into the clubhouse, care of club treasurer Hank McCarl- W4RIG. The Board would like to thank those members who have already paid their dues and have renewed. Everyone's support financial and otherwise is greatly appreciated. For the second order of business we have the following dates for club activite's, Monthly Emergency Communications Group meeting- Wednesday January 2nd @ 7:00 PM, Monthly members meeting- Wednesday, January 2nd @ 7:30 PM, Monthly Board of Directors meeting- Wednesday January 9th @ 7:00 PM, Monthly ARRL VE/amateur radio license test session- Sunday, January 13th from 10:00 AM to noon and of course CAARA open house every Sunday morning from 9:00 AM to noon and CAARANET every Sunday night at 9:00 PM on 145.130 MHz with no pl tone. In other notes the Board is once again asking the membership to please help out with planning the monthly membership meetings. We need members to make presentations and have guest speakers. If you haven't updated your membership contact information now is the time to do so. If you happened to move in the past year, made a callsign change, or got a new phone number we would like to know to keep all of our club records current. Just go to the clubs website and click on the member's section. There you will see the section

(continued on page 3)

CAARA Newsletter
Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association
6 Stanwood Street
Gloucester, MA 01930

CAARA Newsletter is a monthly publication of the Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association (CAARA). It is the policy of the editor to publish all material submitted by the membership provided such material is in good taste, relevant to amateur radio and of interest to CAARA members, and space is available. Material is accepted on a first come, first serve basis. Articles and other materials may be submitted by internet to Jon at k1tp@arrl.net. If possible, material should be in Word format. Material may also be submitted as hard copy to Jon-K1TP or any Club Officer.

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Jon Cunningham- K1TP Editor
Dean Burgess- KB1PGH Club Reporter

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Welcome to CAARA:

CAARA, an ARRL affiliated club, operates the 2 meter W1GLO repeater on 145.130 MHz with antennas located on the Cingular tower in the Blackburn Industrial Complex in Gloucester Massachusetts. It has an average effective radius of 60 miles, and serves Eastern Massachusetts, Cape Cod, Rhode Island, Southern New Hampshire, and maritime mobile stations. CAARA also operates the W1GLO repeater on 224.900. The former W1RK 443.700 repeater with antennas located in Magnolia is now located at the CAARA clubhouse and has a very limited range.

The Association is one of the few amateur radio clubs that has its own clubhouse. Located at 6 Stanwood Street in Gloucester, it includes a permanent HF station with rotating beam and vertical antenna along with a 2 meter packet station and 2 meter voice and 220 MHz transceivers.

Amateur radio exams are held on the second Sunday of each month at 10:00AM at the CAARA clubhouse. Anyone who is considering a new license or an upgrade, is welcome to test with us. There is no pre-registration necessary. Contact the head of our VE team Bob Quinn if you have any questions about monthly testing.

Monthly member meetings are held on the first wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM except for July and August.

Each Sunday evening at 9:00pm, the club operates a 2 meter net on 145.130. This is an open and informal net which disseminates club news and prepares operators for emergency communications work. All are invited to check into the net as club membership is not a requirement.

Clerk's Corner (continued from page 1)

where you can fill out your new information. For the new hams of the club here's a couple of ideas. Don't forget to use the power of the internet to get all the information you need. The CAARA website is chock full of helpful ham radio related links that will help you get started. Just go to www.caara.net and click on the "Updated club member information link" then scroll to the bottom where you will see "New Ham Info" just click on that and scroll down to the middle of the page and you will see "New Ham links of interest". You can also click on "Club Radio Links" and then click on "Club favorite radio links" and that will take you to another section full of links to interesting ham radio related websites. So remember that the CAARA club website is a nice portal that will take you to a lot of websites that will help you get started in the amateur radio hobby. That's it for now, see you in February!

FITSAT-1 to flash Morse Code from space

On December 12-13 **FITSAT-1** will be using its optical LED beacon to flash a message in Morse Code over the USA and the British Isles/Europe. It may be visible to the unaided eye although binoculars are advised. The FITSAT-1 CubeSat was developed by students at the Fukuoka Institute of Technology (FIT) in Japan. As well as the optical LED experiment the satellite carries several amateur radio payloads: a CW beacon on 437.250 MHz, a telemetry beacon on 437.445 MHz and a high-speed data downlink on 5840.0 MHz. The LEDs were successfully tested on [November 26](#) and it had been planned to flash the LEDs on Christmas Eve, however, the [FITSAT-1 website](#) reports that there will be a Full Moon that night which would make the signals impossible to see. The plan is now to activate the LEDs on- December 12, 6:14:30 GMT over the United States for 2 minutes- December 13, 22:10:30 GMT over Europe for 2 minutes or possibly 4 minutes if tests on December 11 over Japan are successful.

Barcode inventor dies

Norman Joseph Woodland who co-created the barcode using Morse code, has died at his New Jersey home at the age of 91.

He worked with university classmate Bernard Silver to create the now ubiquitous thick-and-thin-line system in the 1940s. The BBC reports that the system was

patented in the US in 1952, a patent that was later sold for just \$15,000 (£9,300).

Barcodes Inc report that Norman Woodland used the Morse code to create the barcode when he "just extended the dots and dashes downward and made narrow lines and wide lines out of them."

Barcodes Inc

<http://www.barcodesinc.com/articles/morse-code-alphabet.htm>

Barcodes Turn 60 - Westlakes Amateur Radio Club newsletter

<http://www.vkradio.org/pdf/Warc%20Nov%202012.pdf>

Boeing uses potatoes to test aircraft Wi-Fi

The BBC reports that US planemaker Boeing is using potatoes to test the propagation characteristics of Wi-Fi on a plane.

Passenger seats on a decommissioned plane were loaded with huge sacks of the tubers for several days as signal strengths were checked.

The company's researchers say that potatoes "interact" with electronic signals in a similar way to humans.

HAM RADIO OPERATOR WALKS AWAY FROM CHOPPER CRASH

Call it a Christmas miracle. This with word that a Minnesota ham who crash landed his helicopter on his sons back yard helipad has walked away with only minor injuries.

The pilot was Trygve Svard, KD0PNQ, of Plymouth, Minnesota. According to news reports Svard was in the process of landing his personal helicopter in the yard of his son's home in the rural city of Corcoran at around 10:30 a.m. on Sunday morning, December 23rd. This as he had done many times in the past. But something went wrong as the chopper began to spin with its tail rotor hitting a near-by trailer.

News reports go on to say that Svard's son Stefan was watching his father land the Robinson Model 22 chopper when the accident occurred. The younger Svard ran out with a fire extinguisher. Stefan got his father safely out of the helicopter before a major fire erupted. KD0PNQ reportedly suffered only a scorched arm and singed facial hair but thankfully was otherwise unscathed.

The news report about the crash describes Svard as being a very skilled pilot. The FAA and National Transportation Safety Board are investigating the incident.

Hams ready as typhoon hits twice

The powerful Typhoon Bopha that killed at least 600 people and left many missing in southern Philippines last week, made an unexpected U-turn to hit the northern part of the archipelago.

Active during both disasters were the planned ham radio networks, organised through the national IARU society, the Philippines Amateur Radio Association (PARA).

When the typhoon was first seen on the weather radar heading for the southern island of Mindanao, PARA was hosting its 80th birthday celebrations in Manila. Almost immediately it asked for the nets to be activated on VHF and for long haul traffic 7095 kHz, echo-link and Facebook.

What unfolded was an outstanding effort for the amateur radio community that included evacuations of riverside and low-lying communities and coordination of rescues including those at sea.

The networks played an important coordination role in the south with the Disaster Response Team of the Philippine Red Cross, Delta Fire Volunteers, and the Coastguard.

Among the action was DX5RAN, the District 5 Radio Amateur Network. That net worked with the City Government of Tacloban and the City Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council. There were many other radio amateurs involved.

Rescuers there were faced with rocks, mudslides and rubble where houses once stood. More than 1,000 were injured and about 370,000 are in temporary shelter areas.

The Philippines is counting its huge economic losses in the south, including the loss of valuable export banana plantations at Mindanao.

Humanitarian agencies estimate 5.4 million people affected by the typhoon urgently need food, drinkable water and shelter after Bopha wiped out 90 per cent of houses in the worst-hit towns in Compostela Valley and Davao Oriental.

In the north last weekend the typhoon did a U-turn, and although downgraded to a tropical storm hit a country already having 16 severe weather incidents in the past year.

The emergency nets of PARA were again active as heavy rains and wind came ashore at North Luzon. The Vice Chief Operating Officer of PARA, Ramon J. Anquilan DU1UGZ, said both nets were now closed. He thanked the worldwide community for their

assistance in coordinating the activities so that the calling frequency was not burdened by superfluous transmissions.

WORLD BEAT: ZIMBABWE THREATENS TO JAM SHORTWAVE BROADCASTS

The South African nation of Zimbabwe thinks it should jam shortwave broadcasts from outside that nation's borders.

Newzimbabwe.com reports that at a recent Zanu PF party conference it was proposed to jam the signals of foreign-based radio stations such as Voice of America's Studio 7, Radio Voice of the People and South West Radio Africa that ruling party officials accuse of pushing a Western-backed regime change agenda in Zimbabwe.

But critics say such a move would deny the majority of people access to important alternative sources of information to make informed decisions. They argue that

President Robert Mugabe's party wants to continue its domination of the airwaves in order to maintain the status quo. But Zanu PF officials maintain these radio stations are breaking the Zimbabwe law and should be jammed. More is on-line at tinyurl.com/zimbabwe-jamming-threats. (Newzimbabwe)

ON THE AIR: NEW SUPER LOW POWER 80 METER BEACON FROM ITALY

On the air, keep an ear open on 80 meters for a new QRP level propagation signal. The Irish Radio Transmitting Society reports that a new European low power beacon is transmitting on 3574.5 Kilohertz using only 300 milliwatts.

The callsign is IZ3NYT with diagrams and pictures at iz3nyt.altervista.org/gallery. Text is in the Italian language. QSN reports go to IZ3NYT using eQSL or direct. (IRTS)

Retired Detective Is Lifelong Ham

Union area resident Jim Glasscock has binders in his “man cave” that help tell the tales of his life.

One binder is filled with newspaper clippings, photographs, commendations and even some cartoons he drew while with the St. Louis Police Department. In another binder are a collection of QSL cards, which are mementos from the people he has met while an amateur radio operator, also known as ham radio. Glasscock, who turns 78 in December, is a St. Louis native who graduated from Southwest High School. After he graduated from high school, he attended classes at Washington University, first in the fine arts school, and later in the business school.

Neither of those areas worked out for Glasscock. He already was in the U.S. Naval Reserves and asked to be put on active duty.

He had first been stationed at Lambert Field and later was transferred to Oceana, Va., where he was stationed for two years.

“I was in Cuba a few times, and Gitmo,” Glasscock said. “I also flew out of Massachusetts for a while.”

After serving, he joined the police department in Norfolk, Va., and that was his first step toward a lifelong career in law enforcement.

His brother served on the St. Louis Police force, and after talking with him on the phone, Glasscock realized that he could make better money back home in St. Louis.

That was when he and his wife, Delores, made the move.

Police Work

After graduating from the academy, Glasscock was hired onto the force and first was in a “scout” car.

“Then they handed me a nightstick and told me to start walking the beat,” he said. “I walked it for two years.”

It was five years after he was with the department that Glasscock got a big break.

His captain told him to take an old, green undercover car and bust some juveniles who were breaking parking meters and stealing change.

“They would get 35-40 cents in change, sometimes a buck, and do \$50 in damage,” he remembers.

Once Glasscock and another officer were on the case for about three weeks, they had deterred the thefts.

“Every time a meter broke, we had the guy locked up — the juveniles were afraid” he said. “The captain was impressed.”

After those arrests, Glasscock’s captain told him to use

the undercover car and try to find a man who had been burglarizing area homes.

Glasscock said the man would wait for residents to leave their homes in the morning and would kick in the front door “as soon as they pulled away from the curb.”

After getting the assignment, Glasscock joked with his captain that he would have the burglar arrested by noon.

As soon as Glasscock drove into the area, he saw a man carrying several items, including a shotgun, walking along the road.

“The guy was weighed down in loot,” Glasscock said.

“I jumped out of the car, he dropped everything and started running.”

After an extensive foot chase, Glasscock eventually caught the man. They suspected he was responsible for 16-17 burglaries.

“We recovered a lot of loot,” he said. “It (his home) looked like a Famous-Barr warehouse.”

It was just a few days later that Glasscock was promoted to detective.

Glasscock was with the detective bureau for 16 years.

He worked, and solved, hundreds of cases. He also was recognized for many high-profile arrests.

In 1980, Glasscock was promoted to sergeant and transferred to head up the “liquor and morality” division. He was there for more than eight years.

The cases he was in charge of included major prostitution rings that made the headlines of St. Louis newspapers.

After the “liquor and morality” division, Glasscock was transferred to work in the crime prevention division. There, he helped businesses prevent crime through education and the installation of alarms.

His final transfer took him back to where he started — working the streets.

“I stayed there until I retired,” he said. “I always enjoyed it. I liked being in the streets. That’s where the fun is.”

Glasscock retired from the force in 1991.

Ham Radio

Glasscock has been operating a ham for more than 50 years, and he had talked to hundreds of other ham radio operators across the world.

“I’ve talked to somebody everywhere that can take a (signal) transfer,” he said, “people all over the world and places that you have never heard of.”

Glasscock is a “DX (or distance) chaser” — someone who seeks out hams operating across the United States

and other countries all over the world.

He's collected QSL cards from ham stations all over the world including North Korea, Malta, Tanzania, Libya, Malawi and Jamaica. These post card-sized cards feature images and all of the pertinent information for that ham.

"That is part of the fun," he said.

Glasscock's station is W0FF, and he is a member of the Zero Beaters ARC.

For ham radio users, English is a universal language, so Glasscock is able to communicate with hams in other countries through traditional conversation.

However, for the small percentage who don't speak English, Glasscock communicates with "Q signals" derived from Morse Code to ask questions.

There is a major conference for ham operators each year in Dayton, Ohio, where Glasscock has met people he had spoken to face to face.

Jim and Delores have been married 55 years. They moved to the Union area in the early 1990s.

The couple have three daughters and one son, as well as several grandchildren.

Glasscock turns 78 in December, just before Christmas.

"I get a sock for my birthday and two days later I get another sock — that makes a pair," he jokes.

CAARA and NSRA helps out Santa in Gloucester Christmas Parade!

CAARA and NSRA hams helped Santa Claus navigate the streets of Gloucester during the Christmas Parade on Sunday,

November 25,

2012. Several

amateur radio

operators were

dispatched

throughout the

course which

started at the

State Fish Pier,

then went along

Main street, and

ended up at Kent

Circle for the

Christmas Tree

lighting. Eric

Horwitz,

KA1NCF was

net control and in

the trail car was

Tony- N1JEL.

Chuck- N1OCT

was in the lead

vehicle and the

following hams were spread out along the parade route to report traffic and health and welfare situations to

net control: Dean- KB1PGH, Sandy- KB1PVN, Sue- N1XQW, Ron -N1RJB, Rick- KB1LYJ, Kathy-

KB1LPW, Curtis- AA3JE, and Ruth- WW1N.

There were 20 hours total of contributed volunteer time from the amateur radio community during this event.



Dear Future Master CW Operators:

You all are invited to participate in the exciting world of CW, the elite of the Ham Radio Service . This is a low key, easy going way to learn. Operators at ALL levels learn together, coaching each other with no pressure but to have fun.

Over the year past twenty plus years of classes, new CW operators have progressed from zero to twenty words per minute at their own pace, some over years and others quicker. Experienced operators have increased their speeds and comprehensions while supporting the learning of others.

We will kick off the 2013 Winter CW class on Saturday January 19th. The class will go from 9:30 – 12:00. The class will run through May 1st. The goal is to get everyone to the level of proficiency *of their own choosing*.

We normally have 8 to 20 participants, *attending when they can*. We will begin at the most basic level and progressively increase speed and comprehension as is comfortable for each person. We normally try to do a bit of operating at the end of each class.

Become excited about learning this new language and eventually being inducted into the elite CW Operators Society.

To sign up please email me at rmaybury@ppg-i.com. I create an emailing list and will communicate directly to the group saving the remainder of the club from having to receive needless communications.

The following rules will apply for every class:

- **HAVE FUN!** The class will use a variety of learning techniques to help individuals with different styles. In past classes we have laughed a lot, enjoyed each others' company while taking the process serious enough to get good at this stuff.

- **Be patient with yourself.** Code for some, (me included!....just ask WV1A, K1MB or W1RK), is not easy at first. The pace that people learn the characters, begin to hear the characters and get to the point to process whole words is different for each person. Everyone has the ability, time and practice are the **ONLY** keys to becoming a successful CW operator.

- **BE CONFIDENT.** You **WILL** be successful. If you attend class every week and do the practicing during the week, you will become part of the elite CW operators club . Good attitude is 80% of the effort.

- **Help each other.** The learning model will include lots of working with each other, practice and getting on the air. Be patient and supportive of your friends during the class. Makes a big difference.

There will be four levels of achievement with “official certifications” and awards:



· **Certified Novice CW Operator – 5 words per minute:**

Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association Ham University Certified Novice CW Operator. A certificate is awarded that is nice enough to be framed.

· **Certified CW Operator – 12 words per minute:** *Cape*

Ann Amateur Radio Association Certified Ham University CW Operator. A t-shirt with the CW symbol and “Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association Certified General CW Operator”.

· **Certified Advanced CW Operator – 20 words per minute:** *Cape Ann Amateur*

Radio Association Ham University Certified Advanced CW Operator. An embroidered collared shirt with the following: *Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association Ham Radio University, Certified Advanced CW Operator.*

· **Certified Master CW Operator – 20 words solid copy:** The

main prize is the coveted blue sandwich cap, with a specially designed embroidered CW patch that says **Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association Ham Radio University** along the outer circle and a picture of the traditional straight key on the inside. In bold letters on the cap is: **CERTIFIED MASTER CW OPERATOR.**



In addition, the newly minted Master CW Operator will receive a hooded sweatshirt with “**Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association Ham Radio University**” on the top and underneath: *Certified Master CW Operator.*

· **Special Elmer Award.** For those class participants who are especially helpful helping others, as voted by the class members, will receive a t-shirt with: **Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association Ham Radio University** on the top and underneath “**CW Elmer**”.

Please bring with you to class pens, paper and a practice or electronic keyer if you have one. Donations of practice keys would be welcomed.

Looking forward to seeing you all there!

Classes will be held at 101 Western Avenue, overlooking beautiful Gloucester Harbor.

Coffee and snacks will be served. For those who stay a bit longer to practice on the air, pizza is available for lunch.

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72,
WZ1B

SK
Best,
Rick Maybury

WHAT COULD GO WRONG? by Jon-KITP

As a few of you know, I just moved into a new “old house” which my wife will operate as a guest house. We previously had an 18 room inn and we decided to downsize to two guest rooms. The days of annually grouting 18 bathrooms were behind me, I was overjoyed.

I left behind a ham shack second to none, I had two QRO HF stations and antennas for every band. This all changed with the move. I moved to a neighborhood that will frown on a tower with a hexbeam proudly swaying in the breeze and I might be lucky to get away with a 75 meter dipole.

I began the day with thoughts of shooting a line over a few trees in the backyard with my homemade air canon and stringing up a 75 meter dipole but my wife asked me to do just one simple chore before I headed out. “Could you just change a toilet seat before you go out?” How could I say no?

This could not take more than ten minutes, I chuckled to myself. I grabbed a pair of slip joint pliers and got down on the bathroom floor and peered up at the bottom of the toilet seat. I couldn’t see a darn thing. I got up and searched for a flashlight, finding one after another with dead batteries. I finally resorted to my trusty Coleman Lantern and fired it up and headed back to the bathroom. I crawled under the toilet again and I could see the bolts were rusted from years of condensation and the nylon nuts were frozen in place. “I can do this job in ten minutes” immediately rang through my head....

Back to the basement I went to find a chisel and hammer and put this job to rest. I found a suitable weapon and dragged myself under the toilet with renewed optimism. I banged and whacked and finally removed the dreaded nylon nuts. I pulled off the old seat and installed the shiny new toilet seat.

Finally I was in the basement looking for my compressor to blow up the air cannon to get this overdue antenna project underway when I heard my wife screaming, “water is leaking everywhere.”

WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

I ran upstairs and shut off the water to the tank. I could not see where it was leaking so I turned the water on and flushed the toilet. Water everywhere! Upon closer

examination, I had damaged the porcelain with my fine chisel work removing the nylon nuts. Now I had to replace the whole toilet and I was the designated plumber. My son is a master plumber but I could not possibly tell him what I had done.

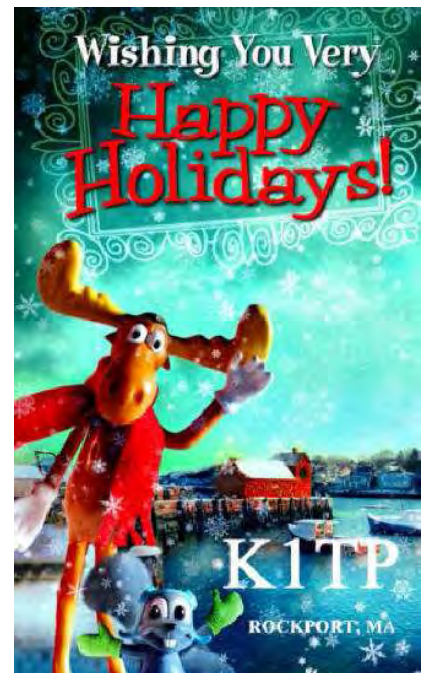
Off to Salem Plumbing supply I went to pick up a new Toto super toilet, wax ring, and flexible water line. I paid the clerk and made him promise not tell my son I had bought a toilet today.

“I can do this job in one hour”, I confidently said to myself. I removed the old toilet and realized the cast iron mounting flange was rusted out. A few choice words and another trip to Salem Plumbing supply to buy a new flange replacement.

I installed the new mounting flange without any problem. I brought the new Toto toilet base into the bathroom for installation and immediately saw a problem. The person who previously installed the linoleum floor had not removed the toilet but instead cut the linoleum around the toilet base. My new toilet base was not the same size as the old one, so now I have yet another problem. I now need to rip up the old flooring and install a new floor to make things look right.

The new toilet is installed and works brilliantly. The **unplanned** bathroom renovation will take place in the spring and will involve installing a new ceramic floor, bathroom vanity, and ceramic wall tile.

The antenna is still not up but I swear that I will never say “I can do that job in ten minutes again!”because I can answer “WHAT CAN GO WRONG!”Lot’s of stuff! Believe me...



CAARA CHRISTMAS PARTY WRAP UP !!

The Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association holds it's 2012 Christmas party on Saturday December 8th from 6 to 8:30 PM at St John's Episcopal Church Hall on 48 Middle Street In Gloucester. The night started with a delicious pot luck dinner with 25 members in attendance. After dinner there was a 50/50 raffle with a \$50.00 prize which Jake K1LDL took home. Then the always fun Yankee Swap was held which included lottery tickets, flashlights, batteries, the famous cow creamer and a Baofeng UV-5R which was swapped many times. After the Yankee Swap there was a door prize raffle which included 2 ARRL Books and another Baofeng UV-5R which was won by Dean KB1PGH. The CAARA Board of Directors would like to thank all of those who helped in set up and break down and all the work in the kitchen. The Board would also like to thank all those who bought raffle tickets as the club netted about \$110 in raffle proceeds which goes back into the club treasury.



Jake-K1LDL won the 50/50 raffle for \$50.00



The always fun Yankee Swap was held which included lottery tickets, flashlights, batteries, the famous cow creamer and a Baofeng UV-5R which was swapped many times. Dave Surroneen- KB1KR shows off the infamous cow creamer which seems to make a comeback every year during the CAARA Christmas Party Yankee Swap.



Jen Downey, Sue Downey N1XQW and Sandy Lawson KB1PVN with Daniel Joseph Lawson "K1BABY"



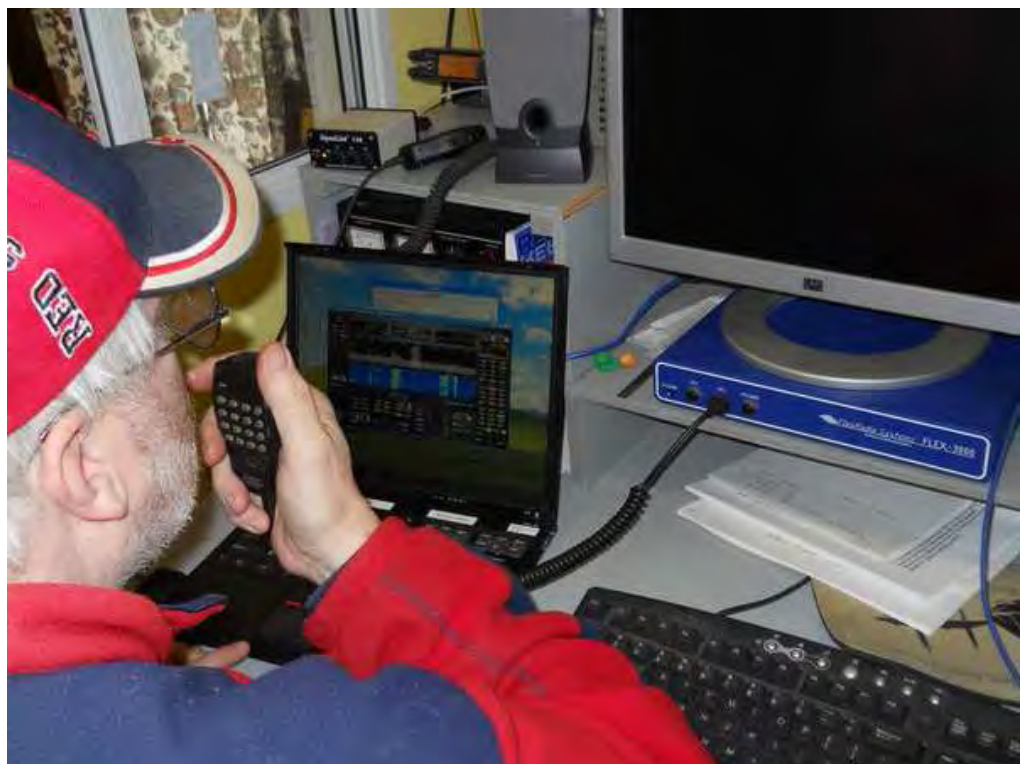
Door prizes which included a ARRL Public Safety Handbook, a 2013 Operators Manual and a UV-5R handheld transceiver.

CAARA gets a Software Defined Radio !!

The Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association was graciously donated a FlexRadio 3000 by club member Curtis Wright AA3JE. In the photo you can see Bill Poulin WZ1L using this 100 watt software defined transceiver which is housed in the blue metal case. Bill was talking on 20 meters during the Sunday morning I.O.O K. net.

This radio will be a great learning tool for all club members who want to know how to operate HF in this latest cutting edge technology. There will be a future members meeting where Stan-W4HIX will demonstrate what this radio is capable of to the membership.

The Board of Directors would like to thank Curtis for this gift to the club membership.



New York City Ham Wins Appeal, Can Keep His Tower

In September 2010, Paul Isaacs, W2JGQ, of New York City, obtained a building permit for his Amateur Radio antenna support structure, comprised of a 40 foot tower topped by a Yagi antenna. Isaacs installed his antenna system on the roof of his four story brownstone — 58 feet above ground — in lower Manhattan.

Almost four months later — months after the erection of the system — the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) declared its intention to revoke Isaacs' properly attained building permit, claiming that his Amateur Radio antenna system was not, in the Department's opinion, "an accessory use." Isaacs appealed the decision through the Department's bureaucracy, and when that didn't reverse the decision, he had a series of hearings before the New York City Board of Standards and Appeals.

In November 2012, the Board ruled that though perhaps uncommon, an Amateur Radio antenna system is indeed an accessory use under New York City's zoning ordinance and the building permit was properly granted. "The Board agrees with DCP [Department of City Planning] that the size of a use can be relevant to whether it is 'incidental to' and 'customarily found in connection with' a principal use," the Board wrote in its decision. "However, it finds that in the case of Amateur Radio towers, unlike cellular [towers] and certain other uses, there is no articulated standard to guide DOB in determining at what height a particular radio tower becomes a non-accessory."

Isaacs was represented by attorneys Fred Hopengarten, K1VR, Stuart Klein and Chris Slowik.

Proper Kerchunking

Recently, on one of the email reflectors associated with repeater owners, someone asked how to deal with kerchunkers on the repeater. The term *kerchunk* means to key up the repeater to see if it is there. It just takes a quick push of the Push-to-Talk (PTT) button on the transceiver to bring up most repeaters, resulting in a kerchunk sound.

It seems that this repeater owner had someone that was kerchunking his repeater on a regular basis and it was making him looney. This led to the usual discussion of whether kerchunking is acceptable, legal or moral and whether it should or should not be considered a capital offense.

Clearly, some radio amateurs have not been schooled in the proper way to kerchunk a repeater. The proper method for kerchunking is to key the transmitter and say your callsign, followed by the word "kerchunking". This simultaneously identifies your station and indicates the purpose of your transmission.

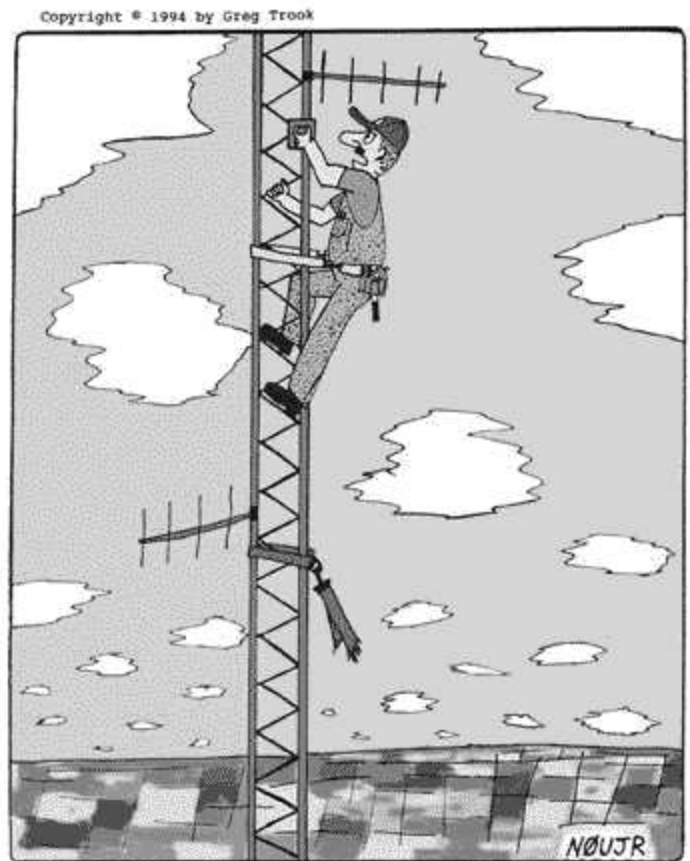
To make the practice of repeater kerchunking even more efficient, I am proposing the adoption of these new Q signals:

QKC: *I am kerchunking the repeater*

QKC?: *Are you kerchunking the repeater?*

Thank you for your attention to this important topic concerning good amateur practice.

73, Bob K0NR



"So Bob...why did your ex-wife give you a new climbing belt for Christmas?"

A review of Ten-Tec's Argonaut VI QRP transceiver, Model 539



Argonaut VI: first impressions

The Argonaut VI is an attractive, simple, sturdy little radio. It reminds me a great deal of the Ten-Tec Scout outfitted with its simple front panel. The front features two knobs: one controls the AF gain, while its outer ring controls RF gain; the other controls the bandwidth, while its outer ring controls the pass band. There is also an appropriately-sized display panel, quality tuning knob, four multi-function buttons, and a three-position toggle switch.

The TMB switch is a simple and effective way of giving the Argo VI's four function buttons multiple assignments.

A *toggle* switch? I can't think of a recent front-panel radio in production that has had a proper mechanical toggle switch. On the Argo VI, this makes for a simple method to give the four function buttons a total of three one-push functions, each, for a total of twelve functions. Ten-Tec refers to this switch as the "TMB" (i.e., "Top-Middle-Bottom") switch.

Tuning knob

This is the best tuning knob I've ever used on a QRP rig

Perhaps I place more emphasis on a tuning knob than other hams. I liken it to shutting the door on a quality car: you want the door to shut solidly and feel substantial. But it may be more like a car's steering wheel—after all, the tuning knob is how one interacts with the radio. To me, the tuning knob is often a measure of a radio's overall quality, in my humble opinion. As for the Argonaut VI? Here's the answer: I was so impressed with the tuning knob on the Argonaut VI that I actually confirmed with Ten-Tec that the beta-unit's tuning knob would also be used on production models. In short, the Argo VI's tuning knob is heavy, perfectly-sized, has a light tactile grip, and is silky-smooth to operate. There is no play *whatsoever* in the action. I like the adaptive tuning, too—when you tune slowly, you're changing the frequency by hundredths of a kHz; spin the knob quickly and

you've just shot across the band. After tuning the Argo VI for a bit, other small radios' tuning knobs begin to feel cheap.

Ergonomics/Usability

When I first played with the Argo VI at the Ten-Tec hamfest, I was impressed with the simplicity of the front panel. This is an important factor because I simply won't use a radio that isn't pleasant to use/control, and I find that too many front buttons and general visual fussiness can be a distraction. To illustrate my point, when the Yaesu FT-817 hit the market over a decade ago, I was among the first to purchase one. I liked the idea of a small transceiver that I could tuck in my carry-on and take with me as I traveled. But I ended up selling the FT-817, however, because I hated the ergonomics and multi-function buttons. Button spacing was too tight for my larger hands, important multi-functions seemed to overlap, and menus were buried too deep for convenient operation. The FT-817 had a profound impact on all other buying decisions I've made since, and taught me that too much can simply be...too much.

The red dot in the Ten-Tec logo is actually a red LED that lights up on ALC peaks and CW transmit. Happily, on the Argo VI the most often used transceiver functions have dedicated buttons/knobs, and the display includes everything I need. Clean, clear, straightforward—this rig provides a pleasant operating experience.

For basic operations like rag-chewing, scanning the band, switching modes, switching bands, adjusting RF/AF/BW and PBT, you'll be pleased, too. None of these operations require calling multi-functions or toggling the TMB switch (assuming you're already in the "M" position).

But after spending some time on the air, I realized that there is a bit of a learning curve you'll have to overcome before front-panel operations become entirely fluid and intuitive. To change RIT, you need to toggle the TMB switch to "B", then press the RIT (BAN) button to toggle RIT on and off. If you hear DX working split, you'll need to move the TMB switch to the "T" position, then set the A/B and SPL buttons; if you need to change modes or turn on the pre-amp, then you'll have to move TMB back to "M."

In the first few hours of testing the Argo VI, I found it easy to forget that I had the TMB switch set to a certain position when pressing a multi-function button, thus I was sometimes not receiving the response I expected. Several times I intended to change the band, but had the TMB set to "T" and resultingly opened the output power setting, or pressed the MOD button only to find that TMB was set to "T" as I toggled A/B VFO

While this was distracting at first, I soon became accustomed to changing the setting, then moving the TMB back to the "M" setting afterward. Now I find I very rarely make a mistake.

On the Argo VI, all of the buttons and knobs are adequately spaced. You could operate this rig outside with lightweight insulated gloves on, should the need arise.

All in all, the ergonomics are excellent on the Argonaut VI.

Performance

Before I begin talking about this little transceiver's performance, I want to point out its two most obvious shortcomings:

- The Argonaut VI lacks 12 and 60 meters (*ouch!*)
- There is no internal ATU (auto antenna tuner), nor is there an option for one

If those two negatives are deal-breakers for you, I could certainly understand. You might want to consider a basic KX3 with ATU (\$1070 unassembled, \$1170 assembled) or a K2/10 with ATU (\$1280 unassembled), instead.

The Argo VI has a relatively small footprint on my radio shelf.

But if, like me, you use neither 12 nor 60 meters very often, you may not miss them. Admittedly, the lack of 12



meters is unfortunate because it's such an ideal band—when conditions are right—for easy QRP field operation. However, I am very pleased the Argo VI has 160 meters.

An internal ATU—or the option to have one installed later—is certainly a negative for those of us who like a simple Field Day radio set-up. From my point of view, other than my Elecraft KX1, I've never had a radio with an internal ATU; I have two portable tuners (the LDG Z11 Pro and Elecraft T1) that work wonders. The way my shack is designed, I have a remote auto-tuner outside at the feed point of my antennas and thus have no tuner in my shack—so if I had an internal ATU, I'd have to turn it off 95% of the time. If your shack is set up similarly, you might not mind *not* having an ATU.

If you're concerned about the performance of the Argonaut VI, let me assure you now: *you will not be disappointed*. Indeed, ***the receiver in the Argonaut VI must be one of the best I've ever heard in any radio—especially in this price class (\$1000)***. It is truly remarkable. I'm eager to learn how [Rob Sherwood](#) rates the Argonaut VI, but I suspect it will rank among the top few.

What is most impressive in the Argo VI is its incredibly effective variable DSP filtering. I experimented with the variable bandwidth and pass band during crowded CW conditions, and found that each and every time I could zero in on one QSO and block everything else.

It's also highly effective when used with SSB. Based on the reviews I've read of the Eagle, this is obviously derived from its DSP architecture and has similar performance characteristics. [*Future Argo VI owners, I eagerly welcome A/B comparisons of the Eagle and Argo VI—please comment!*]

You'll be happy with both the Argo's sensitivity and its ability to reject adjacent signals. Compared with my Elecraft K2/10, the Argo VI's sensitivity had an edge in every band I tested, and to my ear, the noise floor is lower on the Argo VI as well. Most noticeably, however, is the Argonaut's audio fidelity, which is far superior to that of the K2. Whether using headphones

or using the built-in top mounted speaker, you will be pleased. The speaker delivers an impressive sound for its size. I tend to hook up external speakers to my smaller transceivers, but in this case I never felt I needed to. With headphones, the audio is even more impressive. I do wish the headphone jack was on the front panel instead of the back, though.

Though I haven't spent enough time with the KX3 to compare audio fidelity, I imagine the KX3 and Argonaut VI would be a fair contest.

I can say that audio fidelity is the primary reason I continue to turn to Ten-Tec for transceivers and receivers. In my opinion, like Kenwood, Ten-Tec invests more resources into insuring superb audio fidelity—even at the cost (in this case) of uber-low current drain numbers (although the 550 mA drain on receive must be the lowest Ten-Tec has ever produced in a digital transceiver). The Argo VI's audio is rich, inviting enjoyable listening for hours on end. It would certainly be a great pick for long-haul events like Field Day or 24/48-hour contests.



SSB/CW

But how does she sound on the other end? Immediately after unpacking the Argonaut VI, I caught band openings on 10, 15, 17 and 20 meters. Though I was only running 7 watts at the time (production units run a full 10W) I received great

audio reports on SSB and was even heard through a pile-up on 17M. Though I believe the default settings would have worked well, setting up the mic gain on this rig is also very easy and straightforward.

As for CW, reports have also been very positive. CW ops will be happy to note that the Argonaut VI has Ten-Tec's silky-smooth QSK. Frankly, I expected nothing less.

Since I don't operate digital modes often, I did not test the Argo VI in this capacity. I imagine reviews will emerge soon, but I expect them to be positive as several beta testers were impressed.

Summary

When I begin a radio review, I keep a checklist of pros and cons as I discover them to remind myself of my initial discoveries. Here's my list from the Argonaut VI:

Pros

- Excellent top-of-the-line audio fidelity
- Extremely effective DSP variable bandwidth
- Silky smooth QSK
- All mode with optional AM
- Easily accessible primary controls
- Uncompromised ham band performance (see con)
- Quality tuning knob and adaptive tuning rate make for easy band scanning
- Simple front face and comfortably spaced buttons/knobs (see con)
- Undoubtedly the best receiver of any QRP rig produced by Ten-Tec
- Comprehensive and detailed owner's manual
- Made in USA
- Ten-Tec's US-based customer support, a major plus over many foreign manufacturers

Cons

- No 12 nor 60 meters
- No internal ATU, nor option for one
- No internal battery nor option
- Headphone jack on rear panel
- Not general coverage (see pro)
- Learning curve when using multi-functions (see pro)
- Price of

\$995 is a little steep

- RX current drain is high when compared with Elecraft K1/KX1/ K2/K3 or KX3, or the Yaesu FT-817

To buy, or not to buy...

The Ten-Tec Model 539 Argonaut VI

I really think the Argonaut VI is a streamlined Ten-Tec Eagle, and a very good rig. Its DSP architecture is based on the Eagle's (in beta, we even used the Eagle software for the frequent firmware updates).

When I ask myself, "Who will buy the Argonaut VI?" I believe the answer is anyone who wants a QRP radio with the performance and interface we've come to expect from Ten-Tec.

If you can live without 12 and 60 meters, then you will be buying a rig that does not compromise on performance. The Argonaut VI is not a QRP radio designed for backpacking like the KX1 or KX3, but it would hang with the best in a QRP contest or on Field Day; operators would experience little to no listening fatigue with this smooth rig.

The Argo VI comes factory-assembled, warrantied, and ready to go, right out of the box. There's nothing to put together nor configure.



More Digital Folly by Dr. Curtis Wright-AA3JE

Usually, at Christmas, I decide it is the time for antenna work. There is something about clutching wire and soldering while hanging off a ladder in a driving wind and rain that makes me feel a little like Scott crossing the ice, or Byrd in his ice cave, slowly suffocating from carbon monoxide poisoning. Heroes all.

Unfortunately, this year, the antenna is working fine, (rats) and I needed another diversion. Fortunately, my interests are broad, and I can find many safe and productive interests to occupy my time. I just wish I did those things, rather than the things I think of doing. Oh how I do wish I did those safe and productive things.

This time it didn't seem too risky. I had been reading the story of the Enigma machine, the German WWII rotor-based cipher machine that the British "broke" in a secret establishment called "Bletchley Park" (no, I did not make that up). I had read the story before, but I never really understood it all. I ended up with some vague idea that the German coding machine really, really twisted up the message, and it had to be "untwisted" just right, using several different kinds of "keys" if it was ever to be successfully deciphered.

But I was curious. (Note to self, curious==dangerous). I really wanted to know how it worked. But I had a problem. Several problems actually.

#1- A working WWII enigma machine costs about \$15,000-\$30,000

#2- Some of how it was done is still classified TOP SECRET by the British

#3- There is only one working ENIGMA decoding "bombe" in existence (and it doesn't work yet).

These were mere bagatelles, compared with the big problem. All the books available were of three kinds, operating at three different levels.

Level ONE is "This is Dick. See Dick encrypt. Encrypt, Dick, Encrypt." Nice pictures, large print, not helpful. Plastic cover easy to clean when I spilt my chocolate milk.

Level TWO is a thick hardback with small print published by the "Really Esoteric Mathematical Publishing Company", with a title like "Finite Computational Mathematical Basis for Solution of Progressive, Low Repetition Polyalphabetic Cipher Systems."

Level THREE is a personal polemic written by an angry British WWII veteran and consists of a 300 page rant about "I was the one who really did it all, chaps, and all those other authors are effeminate poseurs!!" Entertaining, but not helpful.

I kind of thought I should try to read the second level, (I already read the first and it was easy to read, but not useful). I never got beyond the first sentence,

"Imagine an N-tuple vector space with a transform T which maps the natural language subset (S) into a finite but large cipherspace set (C) using a member of a n-dimensional key space (K)."



Not so good. Fell asleep every time.

So I did what we all do, these days, and began to troll the Internet. Wow, what a strange place I wandered into. It seems that there are a significant number of distinct on-line communities interested in this topic.

There are people like me interested in the good old days when all we had to deal with were fanatical Japanese kamikazes and jack-booted Nazis. There is a strange cluster of individuals from the Electronic Freedom Foundation who are hostile to the idea of the NSA reading their email, and there are paranoid, strange and spooky people I don't want to be anywhere near that seem to be doing things that are not exactly legal (I think).

But I eventually found the American Cryptogram Association (really nice and harmless people) who had a good set of tutorials. After working my way through their training, which would serve as basic crypto training in anyone's army, I learned that the Enigma machine was a "multi-rotor enciphering system utilizing a progressive series of cypher alphabets with a long period of repetition, simulating a "one time pad" enciphering but subject to poor implementation.

I also learned that it would have been a nearly invulnerable cipher system, unbreakable by the British, except for the following:

1. Polish cryptanalysts gave the British a working copy of an Enigma machine.
2. Polish intelligence obtained all the rotors and passed them on.
3. A German diplomat sold the operational keys for the machine to the Allies.
4. British Naval forces seized a few more German Enigma machines and keys.
5. German commanders sent many, many long messages.
6. Luftwaffen code techs received very poor training.

Much to my sorrow I also found out that all current "fooling around" with Enigma is done on personal computers. And all the websites for such hobbyists assume that one owns a computer, and knows how to run a simple program on it.

Now I used to do this, but it was 30 years ago. I also learned that all, (All?, yes ALL) of the computer languages in use back then are now totally obsolete and not used anymore (or even available). They all recommended I learn a new one. A simple one. An easy one.

Something called "Python" after "Monte Python's Flying Circus".

So I bought "Python Programming Manual". Too bizarre for words.

"Python Self-Taught." Lots of strange complex topics.

"Python for Dummies." Also too complex.

"Python for Absolute Beginners." Hard.

"My First Steps in Computer Programming." Easy, nice pictures of doggies and kitties. Bit thin on content, recommended for ages 6-10. Nice plastic cover, easy to clean.

I also decided that in the spirit of family togetherness, I would use the laptop in the TV room for my practice, so I was sitting next to "She Who Must Be Obeyed" when I started.

Now I did learn a lot. Mostly I learned that computer languages are really deceptive. They pretend intelligence, but are actually as stupid as a slightly dead cockroach. Put a period, or parenthesis, or a

quotation mark in the wrong place, they get snotty.

“Syntax error, line 23.”

“Syntax error?” What did the stupid thing mean? I look in the manual, and no help. I look in the books, no help. I sort of move some punctuation marks around, but it doesn't help, (but generates lots of new error messages). I rewrite the whole thing. Now it says it can't find the file. Finally, with much effort, I get it to run. Once. Then it gives up and spits out sixteen error messages.

“Frang-nabit, frit, frit, frit. Beluga stink, frang-nabbit!!!!”

“WHAT'S WRONG DEAR?”

“Fringing program ran once, now says that the index counter is out of range and it's sulking.”

“I THOUGHT YOU WERE DOING IT FOR FUN.”

“I AM!”

“DOES NOT SOUND LIKE FUN TO ME.”

Finally, after several days of fooling around, the program worked, and I felt a short lived sense of triumph. I had finished Lesson One. There are thirty five lessons.

If anyone ever finds out how the Allies broke the Enigma cipher, and what it was that a “bombe” machine did to secure a working key, please let me know. I'll be in the TV room with my computer, quietly cursing.....

Review Wouxun KG-UV920R

The long (very long!) awaited KG-UV920R finally hit the stores. I was able to get hold of a review sample, which was kindly supplied by Bamiporto.nl. This is the European version, which means that TX frequency range is limited to EU amateur bands, e.g. 144MHz – 146MHz and 430MHz – 440MHz. After a week of clinical stuff (measurements) and a few days of real life playtime, I decided that it was time to put some things on paper, make a few pictures and dump spectrum analyzer images onto a USB stick.

Look & Feel

If looks were the most important factor, I would have fallen in love instantly. This radio looks good! There are hard-to-miss signs that the engineers did some serious thinking here. The front panel is detachable and can be mounted under two different angles: slightly upwards and straight. The latter is what we're used to and the best option when the radio is mounted under a shelf. When mounted under a car dash, the tilt option will be great. Completely separating the front panel from the actual transceiver is possible too, and a long extension cable (RJ45 on both sides) is part of the package. Front panel on top of the dash, transceiver in the boot.

There are two speakers built in, one for each VFO. Interestingly, they're not the same size. Two external speakers can be connected at the back, and you might want to give this some thought. Depending on the stations listened to and the volume level, the internal speaker set resonated a bit at times.

When the separation kit is used, both internal and external speakers become either unusable or impractical. That's why Wouxun added a third speaker, which is located at the back of the microphone. Switching from one speaker system to another can be done from the menu. Keeping them all working simultaneously is possible too.

The antenna connector is SO-239, which is surprising. For obvious reasons I would have preferred to see an N-connector here, but I'm pretty sure some users will love it – quite a few people seem to have eternal troubles when assembling N-connectors and revert to using PL to N adapters. Please don't, read this instead.

Buttons & Knobs

Wouxun did their best to squeeze as much 'direct access' buttons on the front panel as possible. I can't fault their arrangement, but the buttons are on the small side. This has implications for the readability of the typeface used to describe the various functions. Even with good eyes it's hard to read what all those buttons do, so memorizing their function is a good idea. Three rotary knobs take care of frequency and audio levels. Most functions can also be accessed from the microphone, and to prevent accidental changes a 'lock' switch is added.

Less bloated, better specs

Wide band receive died during the design process, which saves me a lot of time. Although many potential buyers were specifically interested in this feature, including me, there was a possible downside. Front

ends in such 'I can do it all' radios tend to be rather poor and can turn a ham's life into hell. A good example of a poor front end can be found in the Kenwood TMV-71, a radio which (more or less) can't receive anything under S9 in RF polluted areas. Unfortunately I live in such an area. On the bright side: this QTH is an excellent testing ground for receivers. I could only hope that the Wouxun engineers put some work in designing a good front end. Well, they did.

Receiver

The KG-UV920R is very sensitive, no doubt about that. On 145.000MHz the radio came to life at -128dBm, which is as good as it gets. On 435.000MHz a signal of -125dBm was needed to replace noise by a signal. Sensitivity is generally better on VHF than UHF on most radios, so no surprises here.

Selectivity is better than most of my other radios – both the Kenwood TMV-71 and Alinco DR-635 had to bow to their new master. In situations where a certain amount of splatter was normal, the Wouxun kept its head cool. Only my Yaesu FT-8900R can match this, as well as the FT-7800/7900 series. All the strong out-of band signals present here were handled surprisingly well, and enabled me to hear a distant 70cm repeater which I haven't heard in years. Wow.



Transmitter

If you like radios with sufficient power output, the Wouxun KG-UV920R will neither disappoint nor excite you. Measurements done at 145.000 MHz and 435.000 MHz respectively.

VHF Low: 5.3 Watts, Mid: 28.0 Watts, High: 49.5 Watts

UHF Low: 4.1 Watts, Mid: 25.2 Watts, High: 34.1 Watts

TX audio is fine; listeners noted that there's an emphasis on the higher parts of the audio spectrum. No distortion to report.

Harmonic Suppression

This is the one area where I didn't expect to encounter problems, but did. Not as dramatic as the Baofeng UV-3R, but Wouxun should really have a look at this. They can do much better.

Second harmonic, VHF, ± 47 dB down.

Disappointing.

Third harmonic, VHF, ± 54 dB down. Not good.

Second harmonic, UHF, ± 58 dB down. OK. Third harmonic undetectable.

Other noteworthy features

- Cross-band repeat. Works as advertised, no issues.
- Compander. An interesting system which limits RX noise, and enhances TX audio (compressor) for long distance QSO's.
- Nice FM radio.
- Scan. Finally a scan system with a sufficient scanning speed.
- Optional scrambler. Illegal for HAM use, but could be interesting in other fields of communication.

Bugs

Changing frequency or volume is done by rotary encoders instead of mechanical switches and pots. In theory this system has a lot of advantages, such as precision and lack of crackling noises caused by wear and tear. Unfortunately the encoders used in the KG-UV920R aren't always responding properly. Sometimes they go wild when adjusting the volume, sometimes changing the frequency just doesn't work, or works the other way around. Very annoying. After checking with Ruud from Bamiporto.nl, it seems that it's not just a problem with my review sample. Ruud will inform

Wouxun about my findings.

* Small addition: just before I wanted to repack the radio, I noticed that there's another problem when using the rotary encoders. When changing the frequency on one VFO, audio on the other VFO mutes for a while. No other radio I know does this.

The verdict

The good: user friendly design, excellent receiver, good audio on both RX and TX.

The bad: Harmonic suppression disappointing. Rotary encoders are unreliable.

Bottom line: this radio still needs some work. The KG-UV920R isn't a bad radio, but for 299.00 I expect it to be as good as the competition. That's not the case – yet. If the described problems are solved, I wouldn't hesitate to buy one.

73's, Hans / PD0AC

UPCOMING 2013 CAARA ARRL VE TEST DATES

Here are the following FCC amateur radio license/ARRL VE Test dates for 2013. The easy thing to remember is the second Sunday of every month from 10:00AM to Noon at the CAARA Clubhouse on 6 Stanwood Street in Gloucester, MA. Here are the Sunday dates:

January 13

February 10

March 10

April 14

May 12

June 9

July 14

August 11

September 8

October 13

November 10

December 8

If you plan on taking an exam on one of these dates please remember to bring two forms of ID, One being a picture ID and the other your Social Security number. Please bring \$15.00 as well for the FCC testing fee. You may reserve a spot by e-mailing us at caarave@caara.net and we also welcome last minute walk-in's as well. Submitted by Dean-KB1PGH

Second Floor Renovation News

We have sold considerable 'excess' donated gear on EBAY to clear the way for the second floor remodeling job. We are now ready to move stuff away from the walls and repaint the horrible yellow paint with a more mellow color. At that point we will line tables against the walls and setup different stations for different modes and bands utilizing a new antenna patch box which will be very simple to use.

Which brings me to how you can help out the club. If you could show up at the club Sunday morning coffee hour, you could help us with this project. We need hams to help move stuff, to paint, to just be there for moral support, etc....Please make some time for the club, just paying your dues isn't enough.

Everyone in this club has something to offer the club and it's members.....or something to learn, new ham friends to meet! Please make a New Years Resolution to donate a few hours of your time helping out YOUR club this spring.

Activation of Mawson in Antarctica

Leaving soon on board the ice breaker Aurora Australis for the Australian Antarctic Territory station at Mawson is **Craig Hayhow VK6JJJ**, who will become **VK0JJJ**.

He lands on February the 10th, planning to soon after install the 6m beacon VK0RTM and test the propagation on that band. The main HF rig is a FlexRadio Flex-5000A coupled to an amplifier and feeding a terminated sloping triangle antenna. During the next 12 months Craig VK0JJJ is in Antarctica to work and amateur radio is his leisure time activity

WE NEED YOU

