



The GroundWire

Confessions of a Low Bander

Looking through a recent issue of QST at the Contest Corral section, I noticed the ARRL 160 Meter contest was coming up on 02 Dec thru 04 Dec. Having worked only one DX entity on 160, I was curious how I could do in a mainly domestic contest without a good transmit antenna. I've used my 40 meter $\frac{1}{4}$ wave vertical as the basis for a Inverted L previously when I worked 4A4A – Revillagiedo several months ago. An inverted L on 160 should be as tall as possible, with the balance of the antenna strung out horizontally from the top of the vertical section. The overall electrical length should be around 135' or so. My $\frac{1}{4}$ wave vertical on 40 meters is a mere 28' tall. So, I laid the vertical down, and added a horizontal element to it. Using my chimney as the end point, I attached a pulley and rope to raise the wire and pull it taught. After measuring and trimming, I finally got it to resonate at 1.820 Mhz. But, how would this thing perform? Perhaps it would make a good cloud-burner!

I managed to work the contest for a couple of hours off and on, Search and Pounce method only, and of course CW mode. Started at the low end of the band, and slowly worked my way up. In the end, I put 26 states in the log. Not too bad for a mediocre antenna and 100 watts output (more like 20 watts radiated). I found that Top Band operators are a pleasure to work, most would QRS to copy a slower station, and have great "ears" and a lot of patience. I also noticed that there was not much blind calling in an attempt to work a station. Callers would standby waiting for QSO's to complete before sending their call. 160 meters really is the "Gentleman's Band".

I now have a new goal – 160 Meter QRP WAS. With a very modest setup, I can work this difficult band, and so can YOU! Crank up your transceiver, modify an antenna, and give 160 meters a try. Who knows, you might just become addicted to the Top Band too.

73,

Mike
K5MMH

ISSUE 2012-01



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Patience Pays Off



On many days, my trusty K2 scans the bands looking for contacts. While I am busy working for my employer, it remains happy moving from band edge to band edge, stopping only briefly at signals. Since Solar Cycle 24 is on the move up, I will select a higher band and see who shows up. 1Ø meters has been open every day to distant lands and QSO's covering 9ØØØ miles or more are possible. Today would be no different. The K2 stops scanning at what sounds like a pileup. I decide to investigate. Moving down from the pileup, I come across a rather high speed CW signal. There is a flutter to the sound (a good indication of DX) and his RST is about a 579. After listening for several minutes to get his complete call, I finally copy 3DAØNW. Swaziland would be a new one for me, so I decide to try him. I set up for split operation, with VFO A on 28ØØ1.ØØ and VFO B on 28ØØ3.25 – about the middle of the pileup. With the power set at 1ØØ watts and the keyer speed matching that of the DX, I begin transmitting after the DX completes his current QSO and signals UP.

So the game begins. Send one call and listen. He works some else. Send one call and listen. Again he works some else. The good news is he is working US stations, so propagation is good in both directions. The bad news is he does not hear my signal. Occasionally I switch to VFO B to find the frequency of the station worked by the DX. The DX is moving his receive up and down between 1 and 4 megahertz up from his transmit frequency. I prefer to keep my transmit frequency in the same place and not “follow the pack” as some hams tend to do. The combination of many callers, my non-directional antenna, power output around 1ØØ watts or so, and lack of luck finally take their toll. After trying for about 1.5 hours, the DX goes QRT for a dinner break. He signals that he will be back in a while. What's a DX'er to do?

I decide to take a break as well, but leave the radio set as is except I move my transmit frequency down to 28ØØ2.1Ø. From listening to DX enough and playing the game, I've learned that a lot of DX stations will start listening 1 megahertz up from their transmit frequency. So with the headphones unplugged, and the speaker volume up, I go to the kitchen for lunch.

About 45 minutes go by, and I hear 3DAØNW calling CQ right where he was before. I run back to the radio, and listen as he QSO's with someone. After he signs, I transmit. Like music to my ears, I hear K5MMH 5NN . After sending back 57N TU, I sit back and reflect on the whole event. Being there before the next pileup started put a new one in the log.

73

Mike
K5MMH



What is it??

Send your guess to info@swdcarc.org.
Winner will be revealed next month.



ANSWER: Yaesu FT-101E

November's Winner is John Langridge (KB5NJD)

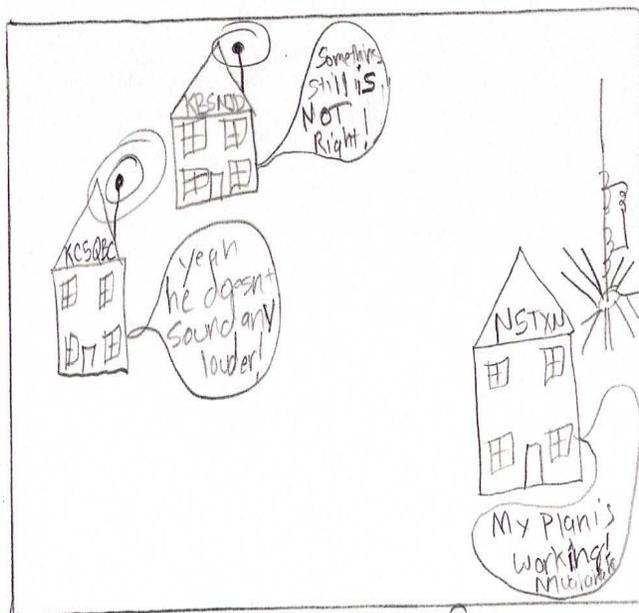
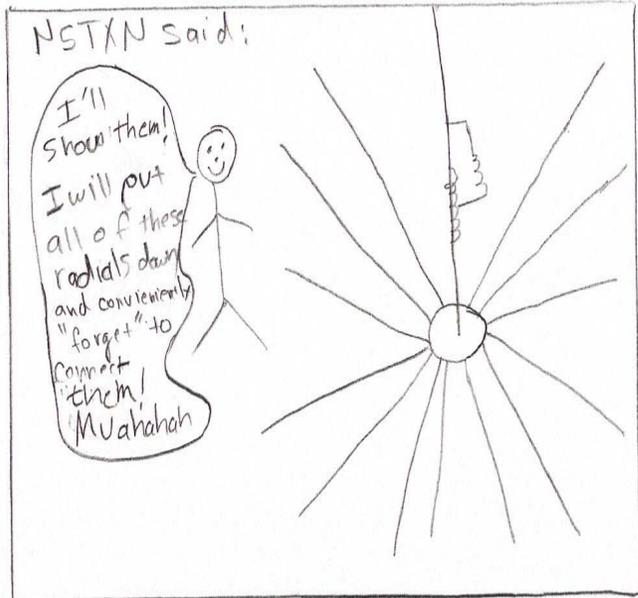
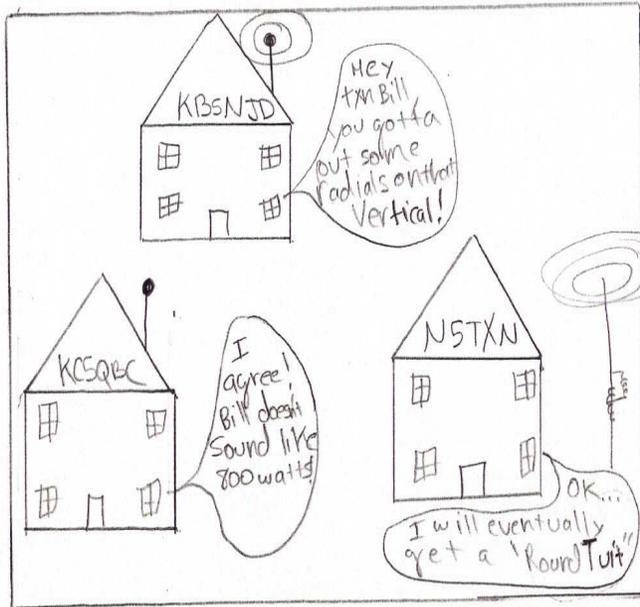
Here is December's mystery ... What Is It??



3608 $\frac{1}{2}$ America's Frequency



The World according to 3608 $\frac{1}{2}$ KHz ...



The moral of the story: It's all fun and games until TXN Bill forgets to tighten the wing nut connecting the radials!

Financial Report ... December 2011



December-11	Income	Expense	Balance	Petty Cash
General Fund				
Beginning Balance 12/1/11			\$1,860.46	
INCOME/EXPENSE				
Dues Income-2012	\$110.00			
Transfer From Matl. Property				
Transfer Petty Cash income				
TOTAL INCOME	\$110.00			
EXPENSES				
Windsor Park Baptist Church Ck 2007		\$300.00		
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$300.00		
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE	\$110.00	\$300.00		
Ending Balance 12/31/2011			\$1,670.46	
Special Events Fund				
Beginning Balance 12/1/11			\$125.14	
INCOME/EXPENSE				
Trans from General Fund				
TOTAL INCOME	\$0.00			
EXPENSES				
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$0.00		
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE	\$0.00	\$0.00		
Ending Balance 12/31/2011			\$125.14	
Material Property Fund				
Beginning Balance 12/1/11			\$2,064.90	
INCOME/EXPENSE				
Dues Income-2012	\$110.00			
Transfer from General Fund				
TOTAL INCOME	\$110.00			
EXPENSES				
Telephone Pymt. 02Dec.		\$39.34		
Transfer to General Fund				
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$39.34		
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE	\$110.00	\$39.34		
Ending Balance 12/31/2011			\$2,135.56	
December Balance	\$220.00	\$339.34	\$3,931.16	

2011 Board Members

President

Scott Crappa (KE5NLK)

Vice-President

Tom Poindexter (KE5GKK)

Treasurer

Mike Harang (K5MMH)

Secretary

Jerry Keltner (KB6OJE)

Directors

Rick Ellis (KJ5UY)

Paul Dryer (KD5IVP)

Lester Wong (K5ITO)

Committee Positions

Repeater Trustee

Johnny Roberson (KJ5LB)

Newsletter Editor

Bill Ellis (N5TXN)

Web Master

Russ Thompson (KX5G)

MN²

Monday Night Net

Net Time 8:00PM

147.060(+) Primary
444.500(+) Alternate

Minutes of Board Meeting ... November 29, 2011



The meeting was called to order by Scott, KE5NLK at 6:30 pm.

Invocation was given by Rick, KJ5UY

Recognized Guests: Johnny, KJ5LB, Pat, KB5YPP, and Bill, N5TXN

Minutes: Approved? Y Motion: Mike, K5MMH 2nd Jerry, KB6OJE

Treasure Report: Approved? Y Motion: Jerry, KB6OJE 2nd Rick, KJ5UY

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Repeater: Both are working.

VE Session: None last month.

EOC: No activity reported.

Membership: Joe Sharp, KD5OZR and Eugene Boulton, KE5PKZ were voted in as members.

Net: There were 10-12 check-ins each Monday this past month.

Web: It is up and working. Rick, KJ5UY made a motion that a link to America Radio 3806.5 be sanctioned by the club and placed on the Web site. It was seconded by Mike, K5MMH. Motion passed.

Groundwire: The December issue is out.

OLD BUSINESS

Nomination Committee: Johnny, KJ5LB, Lester, K5ITO, and Bill, N5TXN were selected.

Ham Of The Year: The voting is in and a winner has been determined. Attend the Christmas Party to learn who is the HOTY for 2011.

Christmas Party: This annual gathering is scheduled for 6 Dec at 6:30 pm at Windsor Park Baptist Church in DeSoto. It is a Pot Luck dinner, so bring your favorite dish to share with members. Don't forget your Spouse and children. Also, bring a wrapped White Elephant gift for the drawing.

NEW BUSINESS

Certificate and Gift Card for Russ.

Donation to Windsor Park Baptist Church. A motion was made by Jerry, KB6OJE and 2nd by Rick, KJ5UY to donate \$300 to the church. Motion passed.

PROGRAM: December Christmas Party is the Program.

ADJOURN: Motion made by Rick, KJ5UY at 7:22 pm.

General Membership Meeting ... December 6, 2011



The meeting was called to order by Scott, KE5NLK at 6:35 pm.

Invocation was given by Pastor Chris, Windsor Park Baptist Church.

The SWDCARC President, Scott, KE5NLK, presented Pastor Chris with a donation to the church.

Recognized Guests: The 26 Club members and Families enjoyed a delicious Pot Luck dinner. There was a great assortment of dishes and was well received by those in attendance.

Minutes: Approved? Y Motion: Rick, KJ5UY; 2nd by Billy, KE5ZZW.

Treasure Report: Approved? Y Motion: Rick, KJ5UY; 2nd by Billy, KE5ZZW.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Repeater: Both repeaters are up and working.

VE Session: There were no VE sessions this month.

EOC: Is ready for activation, but haven't been called up this month. Dallas County and surrounding 4 counties are having a combined ARES, RACES, CERT exercise in May, 2012.

Membership: The Board approved applications from Joe Sharp, KD5OZR and Eugene Boulton, KE5PKZ.

Net: There were 12 check-ins last night.

Web: Web isn't bringing up the Groundwire articles. Scott, KE5NLK, will contact Bruce, KG1BAH, about getting it corrected.

Groundwire: Bill, N5TXN, states that he needs articles for the Groundwire.

CERT: Local CERT has acquired a 24' car hauler trailer and have installed amateur radios in it.

OLD BUSINESS

Nomination committee: The Nomination committee is made up of Johnny, KJ5LB, Bill, N5TXN, and Lester, K5ITO. They asked that anyone interested in holding one of the offices of the club to let them know.

Certificates of Appreciation: Scott, KE5NLK, presented certificates of appreciation to Johnny, KJ5LB, for serving as trustee for a great number of years and to Russ, KX5G, for running/hosting the club's web site for a number of years and also being in charge of the Monday night net.

HOTY: Mike, K5MMH, presented a Power Point presentation on the Ham Of The Year. The HOTY for 2011 is Floyd Rodgers.

NEW BUSINESS

None:

PROGRAM: A "White Elephant" gift exchange that all seemed to enjoy.

ADJOURN: Motion by Rick, KJ5UY