

THE FLASH

BIG FISH

WOW! A real train ride...I wonder why the conductor didn't punch my ticket? Maybe it's good for the whole year...? I thank you again for your support. Joe did a great job as Big Fish; I only hope I can swim against the current as well as he has done. Special thanks to Jeff KU8E, Dave K8CC, Bill N8ET, Don WA8MAZ, & everyone else who helps in some way to keep MRRC working as a club. The effort & support from everyone will surely make my work a little easier. Special thanks to Alan N8BTU, for his willingness to hold our financial purse. And, by the way, DUEs were "due" at Dayton. Please remit to Alan if you didn't do so at the Hamvention.

SWEEPSTAKES

It's official--MRRC won the Medium Club Gavel. The gavel will look great on the wall of W8LNO's new shack in San Diego. Let's keep the 1987 SS in mind & show other contest clubs our victory wasn't a fluke!

DAYTON

Another great Hamvention! I met lots of interesting people, spent all my money, & drank a lot of beer. What more can I say? Chris N8DET outdid himself again with suite organization. Too bad he had to move to FL just before the Hamvention. Dave K8CC did great filling in. I received several compliments about our suite, & pass them along to the members of MRRC & SOMC who made it all happen. Well done!

FIELD DAY

Ahh yes, this annual event will soon be upon us. Make plans to work toward our club plaque for best 1A Emergency score. This award has been more-or-less permanently fastened to K3LR's wall, but, this year Tim & Jim won't be together, so give it a serious go. And remember: send in your score!

RADIOSPORT

This is the second year of this event in the new 24-hour format. Here's a good opportunity to check your antennas & keep your operating skills polished for the really big tests in the fall.

de N8CXX

Calendar of upcoming events...with ham radio in mind.

June--Field Day; July--Radiosport & Michigan meeting at K8CC's; August--Ohio meeting at Warren Hamfest; September--Ohio meeting at Findlay Hamfest; October--contest season arrives; November--SS & QRM reappears; December--a little less QRM & Santa arrives; January--New Year's & K8MR's annual fling.

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EDITORIAL

It's with a certain amount of sadness that I report on the situation here in Athens. Proposed plans to create a new faculty position have fallen through, so I'm looking for work again. Such are the vagaries of academic life. I plan to return to the professional side of film & video production again. Naturally, this will require a move to a more urban area. Presently, it looks like I'll be returning to the Charlotte, NC area once more. While this means I'll be the hired-gun at N4ZC in contests, which is a great, personal job, it'll also mean that I will have to give up the editing work here on The Flash.

Flash pages are already formatted & printed up--to continue the layout & design which I'm currently using. Basically, anyone with a word processor (or good typewriter) could "fill-in-the-blanks" with the requisite information & then have the printing done. Or the whole thing could be re-designed.

Naturally, if anyone here in Ohio-land needs an experienced Director/Director of Photography in fiim/video, please write to me at the address on the masthead. Otherwise, come July, I'm afraid I'll be returning to the "new South."

I've had a swell time doing The Flash, & meeting some of you. I hope this club continues to grow & prosper; it's been a highlight in my own, personal ham radio career.

Vy 73 de Don WA8MAZ

gossipgossipgossipgossipgossipgossipgossipgossipgossipgossip

The moving van is scheduled for Saturday 27 June at K8MR. So much for FD! K3LR is in the final stages of acquiring a house with 10 acres on a hilltop in West Middlesex, PA. W8KIC got his zoning variance & will be putting up a 70 ft tower & TH7DXX.

| President | Treasurer | CAC Representative | Editor |
|---|--|--|---|
| John Tymensky N8CXX 12333 Sandy Bottom Dr South Lyon MI 48178 313 437 4388 | Alan West N8BTU 28472 Cleveland Livonia MI 48150 313 427 8197 | Randy Farmer W8FN 8115 South Palmer Rd New Carlisle OH 45344 513 845 3331 | Dave Pruett K8CC 2727 Harris Rd. Ypsilanti MI 48198 (313) 481-0755 |

TS-830S VBT FIX

My TS-830S, like some others I've seen, developed an intermittent touch in the VBT control. At times it just couldn't decide what the bandwidth was supposed to be. This control is a dual pot with a detent mechanism on the rear. After several years of sitting in mostly the same position, it simply needed a good cleaning. However, this is more easily said than done because the pot is not readily accessible to a spray can nozzle. Here's how to do it.

Looking at the radio belly up in front of you, remove C1, the capacitor immediately to the left of the VBT pot, on the small PC board on which the VBT and IF shift pots are mounted. This may be easier if you unscrew the AF-AVR board (including the heatsink) & swing it out of the way toward the right. (I had already done this while searching for the solution.) If you do remove the AF-AVR board, be very careful to save & replace any star washers. If your rig does not have star washers, install them when you replace the boards. They guarantee a good ground which is essential for frequency stability.

With the capacitor removed the VBT pot can now be easily spray cleaned. Remember to clean both sections. Reinstall the capacitor & the AF-AVR board, & enjoy a new-sounding VBT control!

73 de Jim K8MR

ANTENNA HINTS FROM DR. J. R. SHELLER KN8Z

(Ed Note: Steve WD8IXE forwarded these from Doc. We're offering them here for the benefit of the entire club. All good, solid hints.)

1. ALWAYS use stainless steel hardware on your antennas, even if the antenna did not come with it.
2. ALWAYS use an "anti-seize" or "Penetrox" type compound on all aluminum tubing, again, even if none came with the antenna. (Electrical supply houses carry this conducting grease; it's used to prevent oxidation between aluminum & copper wires. Ed.)
3. ALWAYS use Scotch-brand "88" tape. Nothing else. (And Scotch-brand "33" is not the same as "88.")
4. ALWAYS put rope inside aluminum beam elements to dampen vibrations caused by the wind. Use sisal or heavy nylon rope, & make sure it is free to move around inside the element.

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5. ALWAYS use "Loctite" on ALL screws, bolts, & nuts. Basically, remember that anything that can vibrate loose, probably will, so use "Loctite" on everything. Do not use bathtub caulk. (Anything which says something like: " releases harmful vapors while curing" is to be avoided. Those vapors contain acid & will literally eat hardware while keeping the weather off. Ed.)
6. ALWAYS clean the aluminum elements & boom with a pocketknife and/or steel wool before assembly. Never assume that the factory did this.
7. ALWAYS install the antenna with drain holes on the bottom side of the elements. If your antenna doesn't have them, drill some 1/16 or 1/8-inch holes, & orient them correctly during assembly.
8. ALWAYS assemble the antenna & then let it SET for a week or so...then come back & re-tighten everything, & put the sealants on. THEN put it up!
9. ALWAYS measure everything 3 times. Have someone else check your measurements.
10. Antennas with insulated spacers like KLM should have the spacers locked in place with both Scotch "88" & epoxy glue. Otherwise, they'll move, & give you problems.
11. ALWAYS inspect everything twice before assembly. A lot of junk gets shipped these days.
12. NEVER be afraid to make mechanical and/or structural changes to your antennas. (BUT make sure you know what you're doing. Over-build everything, & you can't really go wrong. Ed.) It's too late to make changes when the antennas are up in the air--hopefully over 100 feet.

(There's a wealth of good information here. Mostly, I've found that hams under-build antennas, usually for budgetary reasons. But, really, your money is never more well-spent than it is for your antenna installation. Check your local library for a copy of the Machinist's Handbook or spend some time reading & re-reading the section in the ARRL Handbook on towers & rigging. Doc's notes also help guarantee a safer installation, something, again, often taken too lightly. Ed.)

(And the following bibliography may help.)

"Secrets of Guyed Towers," WB3BQO 73 July, 1979

"So You Want to Raise a Tower," WA7DPX 73 July, 1979

"Put that Tower Up to Stay," K5NW CQ September, 1981

And, of course, check the catalog from Rohn; it contains a wealth of good, technical information, applicable to any tower installation.

Operating from JA...reciprocally

During my recent foreign assignment in Japan, the reciprocal license agreement between the US & Japan was signed. After debating for a couple of months if it would be worth doing, I decided to apply for my own license. I sent away for the forms, filled them out, sent them along with 10,000 yen (about \$50 at that time) to the JARL. Basically, there are three license classes available in Japan, with certain restrictions for novices & technicians. My Tech license allowed me to operate all modes on all bands except 20 & 30 meters, with 10 watts. Generals & Advanced can run 100 watts, with the license cost being 13,000 yen; Extras are allowed 500 watts, for 15,000 yen. These licenses are good for a year, & are renewable. After a month, I received a telephone call from Joe 7J1AAA, saying the JARL had gotten my application & were submitting it to the local communications bureau for processing, & that I should have my license with the call 7J4AAA in about two months.

The next step was getting a radio. I didn't bring mine, since there wasn't an operating agreement when I left. Being temporarily incredibly rich (the foreign service is a good deal), I went to Tokyo & purchased a Kenwood TS-940S. A quick trip to the roof of my apartment building told me the only antenna I could erect would be a vertical. I found a 5-band trapped vertical at the local ham store & installed it by U-clamping it & a 10-ft mast to the guardrail. John, KN8S brought my homebrew keyer & paddle on one of his visits, & I was ready to go on the air. (Are there any film jobs in this foreign service? Ed.)

With my station set up by mid-January, I was hoping that the license would come in time for ARRL's DX Test. Well, the weekend arrived & still no license. I was starting to get depressed, but there it was in Saturday's mail: officially 7J4AAA! I was able to make the opening to the US on 40M cw that Saturday evening, with my first QSO being WA6DBC. I worked six more W6s that evening, then the band seemed to close. The next night brought seven more contacts, again on 40, and all but the last one with 10 watts. I tried to work K5LZ0 several times with no luck. I truly wanted to work somebody outside the state of California, so I reached for the power knob. That brought the expected results. Then the band died. Each night's opening only lasted for about an hour. I was apprehensive about running more power than I should, but found out after the contest most hams run the "Tokyo Ten Watts," which is whatever the rig will do.

Unfortunately, my QST stopped coming, so I didn't know about any other contests. I did work the fone WPX test without knowing what it was, or even realizing that I would be a welcome multiplier. I just tuned up & down 15 and answered CQs for an hour or so. I was puzzled at the "thanks for new multiplier" comments, figuring no one knew I was just another JA. It was thrilling to call KH6XX & have him respond: "The DX station please come back..."

Without a lot of operating experience, or lots of time to operate, I did listen a lot, make a few DX contacts, mostly with VK, UA, DU, YB, & ZL, all of which were easy to find. Oddly enough, it was hard to work other JAs, because the band always seemed long, & only Okinawa & Hokaido were heard. Most of my air time was on 15 fone, & I did occasionally find a European opening. After two months, my stay was cut short, & I came home. In retrospect, I feel it was worth the effort; the experience was something I will always remember.

73 de KA8LPH/7J4AAA

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"FLASH" NOTES - de K8CC

Here we go again with another editorial change at the "FLASH". MRRC has not had much luck recently, losing W8LNO to CA, N8DET to FL, and WASMAZ to NC, all three due to career changes. All were active MRRC members - they will certainly not be forgotten, and hopefully we will still butt heads with them in the contests.

I have volunteered to edit the "FLASH", returning to the task which I relinquished when I assumed the editorship of the National Contest Journal. Most of you have heard that the NCJ is now published by the ARRL, with Randy Thompson, K5ZD as editor. I am now the Associate Editor, and will also edit the Antenna Column. However, not being the primary editor will allow me to get back into MRRC activities, which I am looking forward to.

This issue may appear to be a hodgepodge, due to most of it having been written on WASMAZ's Apple, and the rest on my IBM PC. The next issue will be more organized, and hopefully, more timely. I apologize for the delay in getting this issue into your hands. I won't bore you with my reasons (excuses) - suffice to say that trying to finish a home, build a large station and still bring home the bacon has put me behind in all my activities.

As always, we are looking for articles! It has been my observation that in general, current MRRC activity is at a low, brought on no doubt by the sunspot minimum. Nonetheless, the grapevine hums with reports of stations being built, antennas going up, and plans being made. Why not let the rest of us in on what's going on? Technical articles are always of interest to the membership, and operating tips and techniques can help us all as we prepare for the fall contest season. Which reminds me, SS is only three months away! We are the defending champs in the Medium Category, and now is the time for us to plan this year's strategy for defense of our honor.

I know that several members have acquired computers with word processing capability. A few have mentioned that they would like to help with the production of the "FLASH". If you are interested, get in touch with me.

Hope to see everyone at the Michigan and Findlay meetings!

73 de K8CC

MRRRC NEWS

FORMER "FISH" MIGRATES: Outgoing MRRRC Prez W8LNO has recently been sighted in the vicinity of W6. Joe reports that he and Jane have purchased a house on three acres about 25 miles north of San Diego, and has been working JAs on 40m with 100w into a quarter wave vertical. Of course, you might not have recognized Joe, since he has traded in his W8 Liver NOse callsign for one more suited to a Californian - AA6CV. He seems to be well settled into the laid back W6 lifestyle, and can be reached at his new QTH:

Joe Warden AA6CV
P. O. Box 314
Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067
(619) 756-1092

MRRRC DAYTON CHIEF HEADS SOUTH: Most of you know Chris Kinzel, N8DET, who for the last two years ran the MRRRC hospitality suite at Dayton. Chris moved to Jacksonville, FL the week after Dayton, to assume a new job with Toyota USA. He reports the purchase of a QTH with a 100'x200' lot and hopes to be QRV for SS in November.

MRRRC PACKET ACTIVITY: More and more MRRRC members are QRV on packet radio, which is proving to be real useful for keeping in touch with other members, both local and distant. Most of the MRRRC activity is clustered around Cleveland (K8AZ, K8NZ and K8MR), Findlay (N8ET) and Detroit (K8CC, W8UA, K8JM and NA8V). I have also received packets from N4TY near Lexington, and also K3JT near Columbus where MRRRC alumni AD8I runs a BBS. N8ET near Findlay has a dual frequency BBS going on 145.01/.05 which is often accesible from both Cleveland and Detroit when the QRM is down.

On a Michigan note, K8CC and W8UA are finding 144.95 to be very useful and are QRV most evenings. NA8V is working with them to improve coverage and allow direct connects between the west and east sides of Detroit without BBSs or digis. K8CC is considering putting on a MRRRC BBS for DXers and testers in the Detroit area. He has the software and is willing to devote a computer to run it if there will be enough interest. Plans will be discussed at the Michigan meeting in August.

Most of the Cleveland MRRRC members can be reached thru the KB8CI BBS, the Detroit gang at either WA1LRL or WA8OOH. If any other MRRRC members are QRV on packet, let me know your call and local BBS and we will publish a directory to help us all keep in touch.

DAYTON REPORT de K8CC - The MRRC Dayton Hospitality Suite was a success again this year. The abrupt departure of suite chairman N8DET left the show in the inexperienced hands of K8CC - however, for the first time in our history, the suite made a profit! This was in no doubt due to the tremendous turnout, plus the generosity of the MRRC membership. Particular thanks is due to K3TUP for his contribution to the beverage fund, and also to the N8CXX operating crew (N8CXX, N8BTU & K8JM) who provided the first night's beer. Expenses totalled \$532, receipts totalled \$543. Eight extra six packs of pop were shipped home with K8CC, to be replaced at the Michigan meeting.

DAYTON PLANS FOR 1988 de K8CC - I have volunteered to be responsible for the MRRC Hospitality Suite at Dayton 1988. It was apparent to me in my dealings with the hotel this past year that Stouffer's gives no significance to a large group room reservation. In fact, the logistics of handling a large group is what causes many of the mixups we have experienced. For this reason, I will not be responsible for making room reservations for MRRC members in 1988. My advice is to contact the hotel RIGHT NOW and make your reservations. You are on your own.

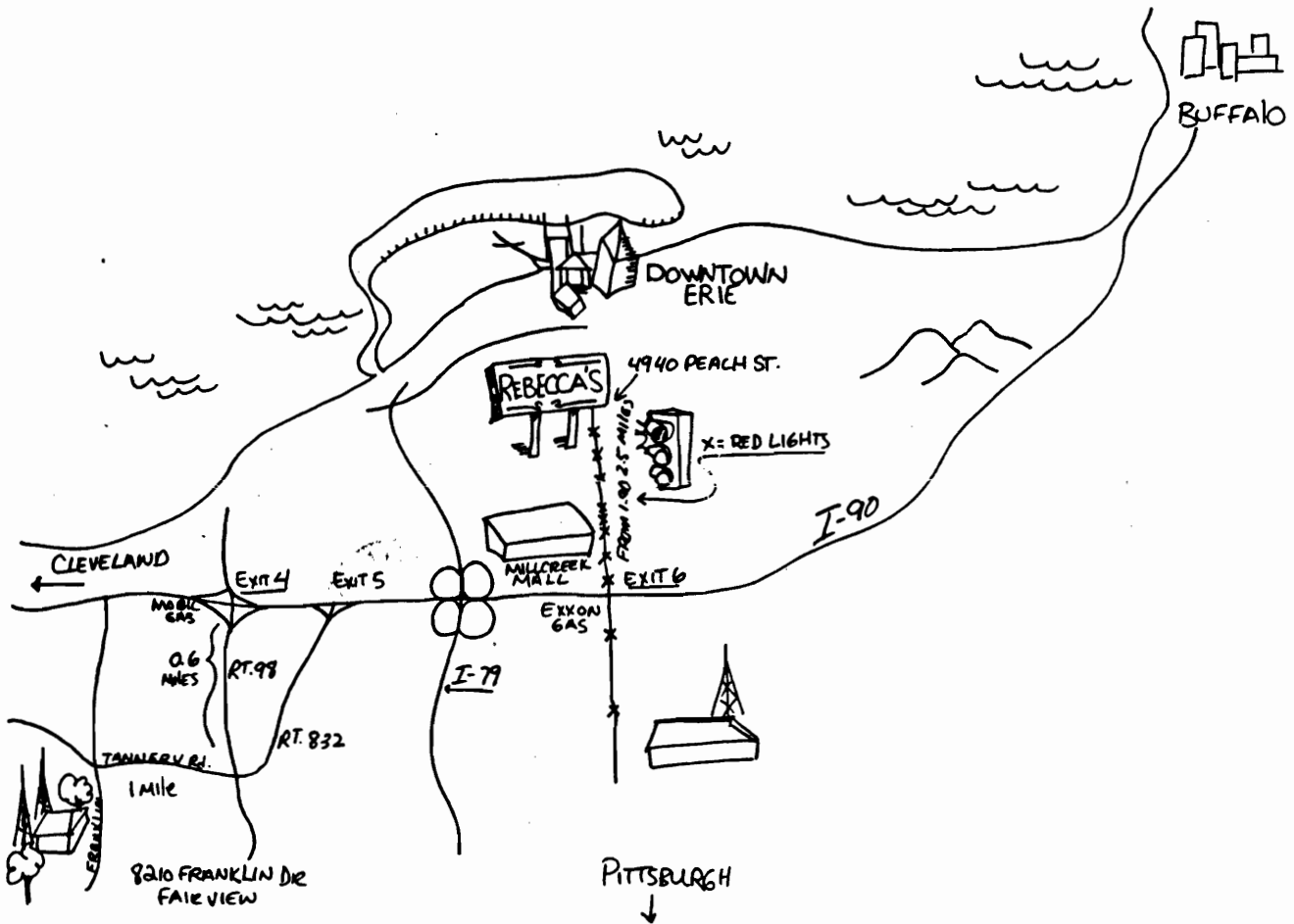
MICHIGAN MRRC MEETING: The next meeting of the Mad River Radio Club will be Saturday, August 8, 1987, at the QTH of Dave Pruett, K8CC. Everyone is welcome starting around noon. Refreshments and cold cuts will be provided. Talk-in will be available on 146.52 simplex, or call Dave at (313) 481-0755 for further information. Directions to K8CC:

From the East: Take I-275 around the west side of Detroit to exit 25, which is M-153 west (Ford Road). After the cloverleaf exit, proceed 4.1 miles from the first stoplight (Haggerty Road) to Ridge Road - turn left. Proceed on Ridge for 1.1 mile to Cherry Hill Road - turn right. Proceed on Cherry Hill for 2.6 miles to Harris Road, which goes only to the left. Turn left on Harris and proceed until you see the three radio towers on the right.

From the West: Take US-23 to M-14 eastbound. Proceed to exit 10, which is eastbound Ford Road (M-153). The third blinking traffic light is Prospect Road, turn right. Proceed on Prospect for one mile to Cherry Hill Road - turn left. At this point you can see the towers off in the distance to the right. Proceed on Cherry Hill for one mile to Harris Road which goes only to the right. Turn right on Harris and proceed until you see the three radio towers on the right.

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PENNSYLVANIA MRRRC MEETING: There will be a Mad River Radio Club meeting on Saturday, August 22, 1987, hosted by John Kanzius, K3TUP, in Erie, PA. The meeting will begin with a buffet at Rebecca's Restaurant in Erie at 1PM, followed by a visit to the K3TUP station. Everyone is invited - see the map for directions. For further information, call John at (814) 474-2402.



1987 MRRRC Meetings: September 1987 - Findlay Hamfest
December 1987 - K8MR Christmas Party

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THE BACK PAGE...

It seems to me that one thing consistently missing from The Flash are Want Ads, or items For Sale. Surely you need an/or want to sell...?

And, N8CXX has suggested a brief biography/description section, on MRRRC members & their stations. It's a nice idea, & John volunteered the following: N8CXX (or NE8T in WPX):

- 1 tower @ 110 feet
- @ 121 feet 5 el 15m beam ca. NBS
- @ 111 feet 4 el 20m beam w/1/2-wave boom
- @ 106 feet 2 el 40m beam
- @ 103 feet inv vee for 75/80 & 160
- @ 72 feet 4 el 10m beam ca. W2PV

The RF for this comes from an FT-102 & an SB-220. Major contests are run Multi-single with the following crew: N8CXX, N8BTU, NE8T, K8JM, & KA8MVV.

My address after 1 July 1987:

Don Daso
3618 Gistar Court
Charlotte NC 28212

Mad River Radio Club
2727 Harris Rd.
Ypsilanti MI 48198
(313) 481-0755



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