



## August/September 2009 Newsletter

### MEETING NOTICE: SATURDAY October 17, 2009, High Noon, Ryan's Family

Hello fellow QCWAer's,

I do hope no one got flooded out with our rain event. Here, up on the hill, water ran down the hill but no home damage. My tomato plants and some flowers drowned, but that was all the problem we had. The Saturday morning QCWA nets on 75M have been going well. Hopefully, all your summer travels went well and Hamfest visits yielded many new treasures. This summer we stayed close to home and it was uneventful. I only lost 1/2 of an antenna when we had 60MPH winds that caused 2 pine trees to go in opposite directions at the same time. the 650 pound support rope shredded... Must have been a "good pull" on the rope. As soon as the leaves fall, it will allow the raising of the antenna leg. We are quickly approaching the antenna season, before the February snow or ice storm of the year. So planning your antenna projects and other construction projects for the winter months has arrived.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you at the meeting. For now, 73, and save room for lunch at RYANS.

73,  
Jerry Lofstead  
W3CDE  
Chapter 49 President

#### August Meeting:

As you know we spent a fair amount of time trying to decide on a location for the August meeting. August was pretty darned hot! The Chapter 49 Board was searching for a location that met the following criterion:

1. Air Conditioned
2. Central location that was easy to find
3. Air Conditioned
4. Food with no hassles

Yup, as advertised in the last newsletter we ended up back at Ryans. Ten QCWA Chapter 49 members and friends gathered for camaraderie and stories. We welcomed Terry Sanders, WA9NE to the Chapter 49 family. Traditionally we do no business at the August meeting but I can tell you thanks to the report from our erstwhile membership manager, Dave Bruse, W4DTR, that our balance as of 8/21/2009 was \$602.27. Thank you to everyone for keeping your dues current.

Speaking of dues I got the following message from QCWA National:

“Due to an error by the mailing vendor, a June database, rather than the one for September, was use in the most recent dues notice reminder mailing. A corrected batch is currently in the mail. Please assure your members that the office database is correct and the expiration date shown on their member card, or Journal label, is correct. This additional mailing is being done at no cost to QCWA.

Chuck, K1IGD, QCWA General Manager “

Bottom line, if you got a mailing from QCWA National with expiration dates that don't match your Membership Card or the Mailing label on the Journal, please disregard the mailing and just press on.

I have acquired the QST collection from Carl Montgomery. These were collected by his dad, W4BFR, and go back to 1937. They reside in 9, 450 pound bankers' boxes in the "Radio Dungeon" as my kids call my ham shack. Now I know that all of the content is available on-line if you are an ARRL member but there is something about thumbing through a magazine from January 1937, that is kind of special. I will bring some of the old ones to the meeting for you to review. Please, no chicken gravy on the pages!

It is still not to late to volunteer to become an officer of QCWA Chapter 49. If you have any interest, please let Jerry, W3CDE, know. Our Bylaws require the Board be elected every two years and that will be the one piece of business we need to do at the December meeting. Some of you may recall that the role of Program Chair fell to the Secretary, yours truly, kind of by default. If someone would like to take that role on for next year the help would be appreciated. We generally go for 4 programs per year – February, April, June and October. August is the Summer Get Together/Picnic and Christmas is the Holiday Party. Give a shout if you have an interest and are willing to volunteer.

I will admit to being a fan of TenTec gear and so a couple of weeks ago I headed up to Sevierville, TN, for the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual TenTec Hamfest. The first thing I learned was it is pronounced "Sever Vulle." I could have guessed the last part this being south of the Mason-Dixon line but the first part was always a mystery to me. Just in case you have never been there it is just outside of Knoxville in the heart of Dolly Parton country. The factory tour was very interesting. Turns out TenTec started out as a

the machine shop for Electrovoice (remember them?) who were located right across the street. The machine shop is still there and very much in use as is an injection-molding machine for making various parts that first saw life prior to WWII. We were told it works just fine and when it breaks the machine shop just makes a new replacement part. Talk about a long useful life for a complicated tool!

The second thing I found interesting was their commercial/military division that is in the same building. We were shown a computer-controlled receiver good from DC to 3 GHz with just incredible specs. At \$7,000 a pop they don't think the amateur radio market will be too interested but it was reassuring to know that kind of expertise is behind their ham gear,

The bone yard was the last interesting area. It was interesting to me in that they make sure that it is used for the exchange of amateur radio related items only. They didn't have long rows of flashing lights and way out of date boxes of software. What was there was in good shape and going for reasonable prices. Most unique piece of gear I saw – a Hammerlund HQ-105TR in great cosmetic and electrical shape. Hammerlund didn't make too many of these as far as I can tell. Basically, it was an HQ-100 with a 5-watt crystal controlled transmitter for 10 meters added in. No, I didn't buy it but I sure was tempted!

I did attend a discussion with their head of marketing and he was asked if they were going to make a radio without knobs. He smiled and answered the question by saying we already did – the Pegasus – and went on to note the first thing they were asked to do was make an “add-on knob” for it! My hunch is this is kind of a “Ford and Chevy” issue: some people like knobs and some people don't. Either way works if it works for you and it is kind of senseless to argue it back and forth. I choose to split the difference – I use HRD (no knobs) with my Orion II (knobs) so I can do what works best for me. Mostly, old dude that I am, I use the knobs.

It is a nice and well-attended hamfest and worth the trip. You can take the kids or the grandkids and hit Dolly World at the same time if you need an excuse!

Our President, Jerry, graciously provided the Amateur Radio story in this issue. And an interesting story it is. Much of the talk these days is of stealth antennas and working with/around/through restrictive CCR's. Who would have thought the same issues existed in the 1950's? But read on.. We'll be looking for someone to volunteer a story for the next newsletter – I suppose we could just draw names from a hat.

See you all in a few days.....

Respectfully submitted  
John Kludt, K7SYS  
Secretary, QCWA Chapter 49

## Upcoming Programs

October 17 – Rich Arland, K4SZ, “QRP and Military Radio”

December 5 – Annual Holiday Gathering

### **THE MIDNIGHT ANTENNA VENTURE**

**By Jerry Lofstead, W3CDE**

It was a very cold, 0 degrees F, night. The wind was blowing at about 25-30MPH, snowing at a blizzard rate. Ah, an excellent night for antennas... at least that is what my friends thought!

It was about 1 AM and I heard yelling and snow balls hitting my bedroom window and wall. I was wondering what kind of nut was out there making all the noise. I got up and looked out the window and low and behold, two people were out in the back yard waving their arms and yelling for me to come downstairs. I finally figured out who it was and went downstairs. I opened the side door, next to the garage and low and behold, Bucky Lewis and John Fetko (both hams) were standing out in the knee-deep snow. After some quick conversation, the informed me they needed to borrow our 28 foot wooden extension ladder. This is one of those HEAVY wooden ladders made in the late 40's or early 50's. I told them they could borrow it IF they got it back before daylight, so no one in the house would know what was happening. They agreed and I let them in the garage and out the back garage door they went, lugging the ladder through the snow. I was sure glad it was them and not me!!!

Well, for some background, Bucky lived in a US Government housing project. The long concrete block buildings had a NO ANTENNA or anything else on the roof sign!! This has never held back an enterprising ham. The project was about a mile from my house so they had a long COLD walk back to the proposed antenna sight. Luckily they had planned ahead and had sufficient antenna materials and they needed all of the parts they had! No parts houses to go to in a town of 1700 people, especially in the middle of the night. They had several “opportunities” while installing the antenna. Supports that had looked like they were going to be good to anchor to were not. However, they were successful about 5 AM and finished before anyone in the project was off to work and being able to see the “illegal” activity of the night. By 6 AM, they had the ladder back in the garage and went back home.

Later that night, I got a call that the operation was a success and got the particulars on how they did it. A good job, because you could not see any traces of it from the street. They were also successful in getting a contact with the new antenna..

One other fact with Bucky was, he was colorblind! And none of us knew it. We finally concluded that he was colorblind when nothing he built worked!!! When we finally checked his construction, we kept asking why he used the resistors he did.

Then the discussion of color codes and what he saw and what the color actually was. WALLA!!! AH HA!! He was colorblind. We ended up helping him in his future building projects and they would work as expected.

Obviously, we had all kinds of fun as new/young hams doing our own thing. It was the mid 1950's and life was easy and great. Or at least we did not know any better.

Bucky ended going into the Air Force (his color blindness did not keep him out), John went into large commercial Air Conditioning and cooling systems at oil refineries and I went on keeping on with the electrons, having a shocking experience at times. At first I worked for Lafayette Radio in Jamaica NY, where I designed the 22 Chanel CB radio they sold and some of the test equipment they sold. Then to Columbus Electronics in Yonkers NY, where I designed a new concept for 200-500 MHZ transmitters with a circular hairpin tank coil which had great efficiency. Then off to TMC I Mamaroneck NY where I worked on Dual Diversity receivers for the Navy. Then off to the "REAL" AT&T Long Lines. AH!! A career that I can look back on with wonder, amazement and fond memories. I quit working when working quit being FUN!!!

By the way, I turned down a job as Chief Engineer for Continental / Sprint Telephone Cellular Service. I just knew that no one would be crazy enough to want to carry around a telephone!!!

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2007-2009 CHAPTER OFFICERS

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Net Manager Jerry W3CDE using the K4VN Chapter 49 Club Call

Chapter 49 QCWA HF Net Saturday 0900 3.8575 Mhz.

Chapter 49 QCWA VHF Roundtable Wednesday 2000 145.410(-) MHz (MATPARC repeater)