Scuttlebutt

April 2008 **Issue 194**

Next Meeting:
Saturday, April 5, 2008, 1PM-5PM
Holiday Inn, Marlborough, MA

Captain's Cabin

First let me congratulate the entire YCCC team for making such a huge effort in the ARRL International DX Competition! It was no small feat to deliver the points to the YCCC table this season. You have just experienced (ARRL SSB) probably the worst HF conditions many of us have ever experienced and that in itself is pretty amazing and something for our respective history books! We all have horror stories to share – bring them to the meeting on April 5.

Our last General Meeting was held at the ARRL HQ in Newington, CT – it was another fantastic gathering with close to 70 members attending from as far away as WNY. We might just make this a recurring event – plan at least one meeting per year to be held at the ARRL. The staff that supported our meeting was outstanding – the YCCC covered the entire cost but it was the personal support on a SATURDAY that really made the difference. We had a demo in the lab of the CW Skimmer (thanks N1MM), the K3 on the air at W1AW, ARRL Bookstore was open and the YCCC Youth Scholarship raffle drawing (congrats W1QA on winning the K3) and just a boat load of contest talk and the introductory meeting of Sean, KX9X who shared his plans for the contest desk. Great stuff for all! Thanks to the everyone that bought a raffle ticket – we raised $2100 after expenses! We will be contributing the full $1500 to the program and the balance goes toward next year's scholarship program.

The April meeting will be highlighted with our own Eric, K3NA who will share his experiences during the Ducie Island VP6DXexpedition and we may have two other speakers too (Ed, N1UR – Spratley Island; and Ann, WA1S and her trip to the Clipperton Atoll, TX5C – now confirmed). Talk about an exciting line up – we have got it!!

And it is our election meeting – please bring a nomination or two to make it an exciting race this year! We have a lot of talent in this club – look around and talk to fellow member, see if you or another might be interested in helping to drive our success in the coming season. We have a great mentoring program for new officers to help you with the transition. And come early and get your dues paid too. Checks payable to the YCCC or cash too!

Thanks in advance for making the trip to Marlborough this time – another good time for sure!

Good contesting!

73, Mark, K1RX

Meeting Agenda:

- Eric, K3NA discusses the recent DXpedition to VP6DX - How did they do it?
- Ann, WA1S on TX5C DXpedition
- YCCC Elections
- The Year in Review - Scores, Station Improvements, YCCC Stars

Yankee Clipper Contest Club

President (603) 778-1222	Mark Pride, K1RX President@YCCC.org
Vice President	Art Holmes, W1RZF VicePresident@YCCC.org
Activities Manager	Jerrry Muller, K0TV K0TV@arrl.net
Secretary	George Harlem, W1EBI Secretary@YCCC.org
Treasurer	Ed Parish, K1EP YCCC-Treasurer@YCCC.org
Scuttlebutt Editor (413) 593-6554	Steve Rodowicz, N1SR Editor@YCCC.org
Scuttlebutt Publisher	Ken Miller , WB1DX Publisher@YCCC.org
Webmaster (315) 829-5291	Mike Gilmer. N2MG Webmaster@YCCC.org
Scorekeeper (978) 443-3603	Dave Hoaglin, K1HT Scores@YCCC.org

Holiday Inn, Marlborough

Located in the northeast corner of the intersection of I-495 and US-20.

CREW NEWS

New Crew:

Dec Meeting	Allen Singer, N2KW, New York, NY
	Sergey Krasnov, NW2Q (ex-KB2WJY), Brooklyn, NY
Feb Meeting	Nick Thomas, NT1A, Hampton Falls, NH
	Charles Coldwell, W1CMC (ex-AB1HF), Somerville, MA
	Bob Giuliani, W1RPG, Shelton, CT
	Jason Gallicchio, KB9ZZU, Cambridge, MA
NYC-LI Mtg	Peter Portanova, WB2OQQ Massapequa, NY
	Mike Lisenco, N2YBB Brooklyn, NY
	Steve Hass, WB2ZHB Merrick, NY
	Arthur Bernstein, N2KA Massapequa Park, NY

Returning Crew:

W2FX - Leonard Battista, Islip, NY

Area Managers

ME	Mike Russo, K1EU	(207) 883-9524	k1eu@maine.rr.com
ENH	Glen Whitehouse, K1GW	(603) 673-6290	glenw@pinnaclewireless.com
WNH/SVT	Ed Sawyer, N1UR	----------	Sawyered@earthlink.com
NE MA (978)	Scott Andersen, NE1RD	----------	ne1rd@arrl.net
SE MA (508)	Greg Cronin, W1KM	(508) 428-4205	w1km@capecod.net
Boston (617/781)	Joe Fitzgerald, KM1P	(617) 325-6767	jfitzgerald@alum.wpi.edu
WMA (413)	Tom Homewood, W1TO	(413) 743-7342	w1to@arrl.net
CT (860)	Dick Pechie, KB1H	----------	kb1h@arrl.net
CT (203)	Dave Arruzza, W1CTN	----------	Darruzza@adelphia.net
	& Mike Loukides, W1JQ	(203) 458-2545	MikeL@oreilly.com
RI (401)	OPEN	----------	
NNY	John Bradke, W2GB	----------	W2gb@arrl.net
NYC/LI (718)	Tom Carrubba, KA2D	(631) 422-9594	ka2d@arrl.net
SNY/NJ/PA (914)	Hank Kiernan, KF2O	(914) 235-4940	hankkier@aol.com
NVT (802)	Al Frugoli, KE1FO	(802) 893-8388	frugoli@worldlinkisp.com

The editorial deadline for the Scuttlebutt is the 10th of every odd month.

Flotsam & Jetsam

Barnacle Jack Schuster, W1WEF **w1wef@arrl.net**

Ahoy!

Let's hope we've experienced the last of the worst conditions ever and we'll have plenty of good spots in the next contests…ie sunspots. According to propagation guru, Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA, Cycle 24 has begun and March 2008 was the solar minimum. Carl further says that Cycle 24 will probably ramp up in late 2008 (World Radio April 2008).

K1NQ found this free software for home use that detects and blocks those trying to steal your wireless internet www.mywifizone.com Oh well, it was nice while it lasted…BJ could park his RV outside a condo complex and get on line anywhere.

Randy, K5ZD found this in one of the contest reflectors: from W9WI, it lets you add extra keys to your computer through a USB port. http://www.xkeys.com/xkeys.php Check it out! BTW, for those who don't know W9WI he is a perennial top scorer in the Dayton CW pileup contest sponsored by Kansas City Contest Club.

Bruce , W1CSM, uses an Icom756Pro3. "I find that I have been riding the RF and AF gain controls much more in the last few contests. I also found that the controls are somewhat awkward to get at when I have the keyer and phones plugged in. They were both connected with the "old fashioned" straight ¼ inch plugs and extended out a good inch and a half. I have switched to 90 degree adaptors from Radio Shack. They are 1/8 inch input, but that matches my phones directly, and I just rewired the paddle to use a 1/8 inch plug. The 90 degree adaptors only protrude about a half inch and I now have much easier access to the AF/RF controls."

Dave, N1IX sends this along relating to controls on his Yaesu rig: " I'm not sure if this is common knowledge or not but a coax connector protector (usually comes on pre-made cables) fits perfectly on a Yaesu clarifier knob. This makes the knob easy to adjust without bumping the knobs next to it."

N1IX also passed along remarks from Eric Scace regarding K3 DSP and AGC . As you know, Eric was part of the recent Ducie expedition team which used K3's at all stations. Eric's detailed remarks were on the Elecraft email list, and can be accessed through the Elecraft web page http://www.elecraft.com in archives around Mar 13.

Shortly before ARRL CW, high winds stressed my 160 Inverted L and the 10 ga wire broke near the strain relief insulator at the base. I spliced it with a " split bolt connector." A few weeks later, high winds resulted in the splice coming apart at the split bolt connector, leading me to think of this as a mechanical fuse! I'd rather have it let go near the ground as it did, than at the 90 ft level. I normally leave slack in the antenna when I'm not using it, but forgot to do so.

Here's an interesting letter from Marty Durham, W1MD, in our Southern YCCC Division:

It's not strictly ham related...but some folks asked me to describe the night shuttle launch that I took my two children (10 and 14) to Monday night/Tuesday morning 2:30 am .The launch (night launch) is simply indescribable...but I'll try. The closest that the general public (by purchasing a ticket) can get to view the launch is about 6-7 miles away on the Banana River Causeway. The view looks across the river to the launch pad so you have a great view of the shuttle sitting on the pad. And being a night launch they've got it lit up with plenty of spot lights...so there sits the shuttle with nothing but black sky all around it. As ticket holding viewers you ride a bus to the causeway...getting there from 1-2 hours prior to the launch. They have some tents set up with food/drink vendors and a sound system which broadcasts live launch control information. You can hear the control room as they progress through checks etc.. And you can hear if any last minute 'hold' situations arise.

Once the clock gets to the 9 minute point (pre-programmed hold that restarts countdown at T-minus 9 Minutes) and they restart the clock it is a pretty good bet that the launch is a GO. At T-minus 1 minute the arm that reaches out to the nose of the liquid fuel tank retracts...and you can see this with the naked eye for night launches even at this distance...now everyone is getting excited... At t-minus 31 seconds the countdown becomes computer controlled and it's GOING unless there is an extreme issue that occurs. At T-minus 10 seconds the igniter sequence starts (if you've ever seen a close up of the engines in video on the

news...you see a bunch of sparks shooting back and forth under the main engines...these 'sparks' ignite the liquid fuel when they turn the flow valves on) and at t-minus 6 when the main engines light it's like someone just lit off a HUGE spotlight pointing up...the whole sky is now lighting up (and with the low cloud cover at 5500' it was even more brilliant). At t-minus 0, LIFTOFF, the main engines are going and the solid boosters are lit...the shuttle which was surrounded by the light of the main engines is momentarily shrouded by a huge 'cloud' which is not smoke, but steam from the water that they dump onto the platform just before the engines light.

As the shuttle climbs into the sky there is this flame almost twice the length of the shuttle and tank/SRB's combined...and it is as bright as the sun. (I think if we were a little closer you could probably even feel some heat...). The first couple of seconds that the shuttle is in the air and moving it is still 'quiet'...the sound has not reached us yet. Now the shuttle is accelerating and you see it moving faster on a huge flame and column of smoke (from the SRB's...solid rocket boosters...the main engines produce almost no smoke). Because the clouds were so low for this launch we only get about 15 seconds of view before it punches into the clouds..momentarily lighting up the cloud cover like a huge spot light in the clouds...then it's gone...but NOW the sound comes...and at 2:30am when it is dead calm and there is no wind to dampen the sound it is AWESOME. It starts out as a rumble and quickly builds into a crackling roar that you can feel in your whole body. That lasts for about 30 seconds...and then it's gone too. With the clouds there is nothing more to see so everyone re-boards the bus. At a day launch my son and I went to in August...everyone stays glued to the view for probably 3-4 minutes...even after SRB separation (about 2 minutes in I think) you can see the three main engines burning like the brightest star you have ever seen...

See you in Marlborough at the meeting…. BJ

NYC-LI Area Meeting
Bethpage, NY - March 14, 2008

Meeting Location
Briarcliffe College
1055 Stewart Ave.
Bethpage, NY (Room 10 in the Huntington Hallway)

Meeting stated at 8:15 PM. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves with a brief history of their amateur radio experience and station capabilities. As this was a join meeting hosted by Long Island DX Assc (LIDXA), John W2GW president of LIDXA ran a business meeting and then turned the floor over to YCCC representative Tom KA2D. KA2D did an introduction of YCCC followed by a presentation of the commonalities between Dxers and Contesters followed by Q&A. Veteran YCCC members N2GA, K2DO and N2FF added additional YCCC information.

Meeting closed at 9:45 PM.

We would like to thank John W2GW and LIDXA members for hosting this meeting. We signed up four new members, one former member.

New YCCC members	WB2OQQ - Peter Portanova
	N2YBB - Mike Lisenco
	WB2ZHB - Steve Haas
	N2KA - Arthur Bernstein
Returning	W2FX - Len Battista

Submitted by
Tom Carrubba KA2D
YCCC
NYC/LI Area Manager

Getting a Big DX Signal on 160-10 m from One Small, Low Antenna

Chuck Counselman, W1HIS <ccc@space.mit.edu>

I live on a small lot in a dense, inner suburb of Boston and Cambridge. To support an antenna, I have no tower, and only two trees that aren't too close to a house. These trees are only 70 ft (21 m) apart, and too small to support anything higher than 33 ft (10 m) above ground. And they are at the bottom of a hole, at the deepest spot in a freshwater pond that was drained in 1952. The terrain slopes upward in all directions from my antenna! DX contesting from my QTH is a Sisyphean challenge.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sisyphus#.22Sisyphean_task.22_or_.22Sisyphean_challenge.22>

If you are similarly challenged, read this article. It describes *the best* small and low antenna for HF DXing that I have found in decades of searching, studying, and testing. Fitting within my 70-ft horizontal and 33-ft height limits, above my very poor ground (s = 0.0015 S/m, typical of Middlesex County, MA), this antenna kicks the butt of an equally high, full-size, half-wavelength, horizontal, broadside dipole on every band from 160 through 10 meters.

At 1.8 MHz, its power gain is 11 dB greater than the dipole's at low elevation angles (for DX). At 3.5 MHz, its gain is 3 dB higher. At higher frequencies, up to 30 MHz, its gain matches the dipole's. However, this antenna is better for contesting because its azimuth pattern, on every band from 160 through 10 m except 30 m, is cardioidal. That is, the pattern has one null, or notch. Except for this notch, which is in the same direction for every band, this antenna's gain is substantially uniform around the entire horizon.

A horizontal dipole, on the other hand, has two relatively broad nulls or notches, one off each end; and, if an ordinary dipole or "doublet" is used above about 2.5 times its half-wave-resonant frequency, its pattern has additional notches. The directions of these notches vary with frequency, so different directions are unworkable at different frequencies — bad for contesting!

I directed my antenna's single notch at the U.S. 2nd, 3rd, and 4th call districts, because much QRM and few DX signals come from this direction. I can still work XE on all bands, because the distance is short, so ionospheric propagation involves few hops and high angles.

I feed my antenna with 45 ft (13.5 m) of open-wire line, from a balanced L-network tuner. I can transmit legal-limit power on 160 through 10 m without overheating or breaking the tuner.

Proof that it works

Why should you believe my claims for this antenna? Here are three reasons.

1. NEC-4 calculations

The Numerical Electromagnetics Code, v. 4.1 ("NEC-4") <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Numerical_Electromagnetics_Code> is the computer software used by most antenna professionals to simulate and calculate the performance of MF and HF (and other) antennas near lossy ground, and its accuracy is well established. Ask me and I will send you, *via* e-mail, a NEC-4 input file that you can input to NEC-4 or EZNEC Pro/4 <http://www.eznec.com/eznecpro.htm> to calculate the current distribution, feedpoint impedance, power gain, pattern, etc., of my antenna for any frequency. (The more primitive NEC-2 or EZNEC programs can read this file and may also be able to calculate gain etc. with useful accuracy. However, Mike Loukides W1JQ has found that some versions of NEC-2 are unable to handle the large number of wire segments and/or the small angles between some of the wires in my antenna. Ask me and I may be able to help you get useful results from NEC-2.)

2. Contest results

My antenna has been up for 14 months. In this time I have used it for four DX contests: 2007 CQWW (SSB & CW) and 2008 ARRL (SSB & CW). My results in these contests are tabulated on the next page. Before looking at these results, you need to know that I am an unskilled, novice contester. In my entire life, I participated in only one 'phone and two CW DX contests before these. I am barely able to use a logging program; I have no DVK; and my Morse code speed is pathetic. So, unless you're also a novice, don't compare my results with yours. Instead, compare them with what you'd expect from an inexperienced and unskilled operator using a single, low, wire antenna for all bands and all directions, with very poor ground and adversely sloping terrain. I've included no 10-m results here because prop. was so bad, my numbers were insignificant.

	160-m QSOs	80-m QSOs	40-m QSOs	20-m QSOs	15-m QSOs	160-m MULTs	80-m MULTs	40-m MULTs	20-m MULTs	15-m MULTs	Claimed Score
CONTEST											
'07 CQWW SSB	0	68	95	196	209	0	37+16	53+17	83+20	71+19	493,592
'07 CQWW CW	15	158	130	168	78	7 + 6	61+18	58+19	70+20	47+19	497,448
'08 ARRL SSB	14	69	112	193	58	12	47	48	64	25	261,072
'08 ARRL CW	17	128	190	261	66	13	51	59	64	36	442,878

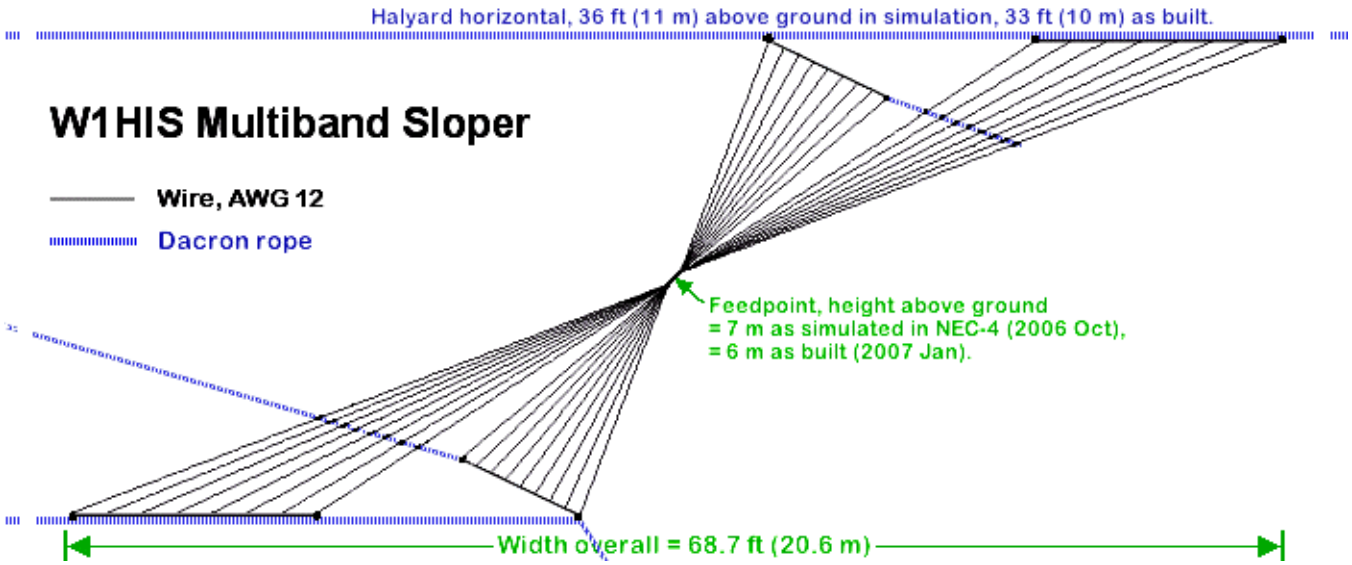
3. Unsolicited comments by DX ops in these contests

'07 CQWW SSB	'08 ARRL SSB	'08 ARRL CW
80 m, LN9Z: "Fine signal." 80 m, F6CTT: "Very good signal." 40 m, AO8A: "**Booming** signal." 40 m, HC2AQ: "Very good signal." 40 m, HB0/HB9AON: "**Fantastic** signal." 20 m, M4U: "Good signal." 20 m, OM5CD: "Big signal." 20 m, TM6M: "**Very booming** signal."	80 m, VP9/W6PH: "Big signal." 40 m, IO3O: "Big signal." 40 m, NP2I: "Nice signal." 40 m, OE9MON: "**S 9 plus plus**. **About 40 over**. **Really good** signal." 20 m, TM2B: "**Beautiful** signal." 20 m, VP9/W6PH: "Big signal." 20 m, 5C5W: "Very nice signal." 20 m, TG9ANF: "**25 dB over 9**."	80, 40, 20 m, OE4A (op K5ZD): "**The most surprising signal of the weekend** during my OE4A operation. I knew what you had as an antenna, yet you were well above average every time you called in." 80, 40, 20 m, EE5E (op K1DG): "**Same thing from EE5E**. Chuck was **surprisingly loud**…. Near the end of the contest, we were running on 40 and getting our ducks in a row for a last band-change to… 80, and there was Chuck on 80, big as life, running Europeans. I told the EAs that [W1]HIS' antenna is only 6-7 meters high, and they didn't believe me." 160, 80, 40, 20 m, VP9/W6PH: "I had **the same experience** with W1HIS from Bermuda. Pretty big signal. We moved from 160 to 80 to 40 m…."

The Antenna

Here's how it looks from a ground-floor window of my home during a snowstorm. (Snow sticking to the wires made them more visible. Normally, it's hard to see.)

The photo is hard to understand, so here's a scale drawing. The black lines represent wires, and were drawn by the NEC-4 auxiliary program NECPLT. The thicker, blue lines represent Dacron rope halyards and were added by me. For scale: the antenna's overall width is 68.7 ft (20.6 m); the height difference between its top and bottom is 26.2 ft (8.0 m); and the longest wire is 35.8 ft (10.9 m). As erected in 2007 January, the center is 20 ft (6.0 m) above ground. I plan to raise the antenna by several meters this summer.



As you see, the antenna is a sloping, center-fed, doublet. It has 180° rotational symmetry about a horizontal axis through its feedpoint (perpendicular to the plane of this drawing). It would be electromagnetically balanced, except that one end (on the left in this drawing) is closer to ground. Like a single-wire, half-wavelength sloper, it radiates more strongly toward the horizon in the direction of its lower end, and less toward the horizon in the opposite direction.

But a single sloping wire does not work at all well as a multiband antenna. At higher frequencies, its radiation pattern breaks into multiple lobes, and little radiation may go in the desired direction, *i.e.*, toward low elevation on the lower (left) side. Whereas, at low elevation, *this* sloper has maximum gain toward the horizon on the lower side on all bands, 160 through 10 m, except 30 m.

In this sloper, the shorter and more nearly vertical triangular fans of wire carry more current and radiate more on the higher frequency bands, 20 through 10 m. The longer fans carry more current and radiate more on the lower frequency bands, 40 through 160 m. However, it is important to understand that this antenna is a low-Q structure. It does not exhibit sharp resonances. It is easy to match. I retune when I change bands, but not within a band except on 80 m and 160 m. In a CW contest, I do not retune within 80 m, and I would not retune within the 160-m band if I stayed within, say, the bottom 30 kHz.

My upper halyard is fastened to the tree on the right. It passes through a pulley fixed to the tree on the left, to a free-hanging weight that maintains tension in the halyard and allows both trees to sway in the wind. The lower horizontal halyard and the sloping halyard on the left pass through similar pulleys to similar but smaller weights. The short halyard that runs off the bottom of the drawing near the center is fastened to a stake in the ground. The two sloping ropes nearly collinear with the end wires of the short fans are fastened to all of the wires in the long fans, in order to maintain their spacing.

For further information…

I have asked YCCC Webmaster Mike Gilmer, N2MG, to link an extended version of this article in the "Antennas…" section of the Articles page <http://www.yccc.org/Articles/articles.htm>. Look there for plots of my antenna's power gain *vs.* azimuth at 10° elevation, elevation cuts in the plane of the antenna, and feedpoint and tuner impedance data for all bands 160-10 m, as calculated by NEC-4; also for a copy of my NEC-4 input file, and for construction details, including a list of all wire lengths. In addition I will describe common-mode chokes suitable for the open-wire feedline and able to handle legal-limit power on all bands 160-10 m.

YCCC Regular Meeting, February 9, 2008—Newington, CT

The February meeting was called to order at 12:32 pm by Mark, K1RX, in the main conference room at ARRL headquarters in Newington, CT. Mark turned the floor over to Harold, WJ1B, ARRL Chief Operating Officer and the host for the kickoff meeting of 2008. Harold welcomed the 64 attendees on behalf of the League and announced a special discount coupon for the YCCC members to use in the ARRL store. The attendees also received a free 2008 ARRL calendar. Harold recognized the efforts of staffers Greg and Lisa, who helped with facilities arrangements and picking up the lunch items.

Mark offered membership applications for ARRL and for YCCC to any attendees desiring to join one or both organizations. Mark also reminded all that treasurer Ed, K1EP, was still accepting dues payments and selling tickets to the raffle for the drawing later in the meeting.

After Mark reviewed the agenda and called for a round of self-introductions, George, W1EBI, gave the secretary's report. Active membership as of the meeting date was up to 373, with 275 members current with dues paid to March 31. New members joining at the December meeting, as reported in Scuttlebutt, were KB1ILH and returning former member K1TH George reported that the YCCC entry on the club page on the ARRL website had been updated, showing an increase in voting membership from 332 to 353.

Ed, K1EP, gave the treasurer's report, showing an account balance of $12,977, an increase of $1,227 from the month earlier. Receipts were expected to increase substantially from the sale of raffle tickets to fund the YCCC Youth Scholarship Program.

Club scorekeeper, Dave, K1HT, presented a scores update for 2007. YCCC total reported score for CQWW 2007 stood at 306.2 Meg (132.2 Meg SSB plus 174.0 Meg CW) compared to 313.0 Meg in 2006. Dave was still working to refine the FRC reported totals. In ARRL DX 2007, YCCC had a narrow margin over FRC in reported scores (144.7 Meg vs. 143.0 Meg), but increased the gap after the final scores were published (139.4 Meg vs. 134.3 Meg).

Dave, W1CTN, reported on the club's 30th anniversary celebration in 2007. Certificates, designed by Bill, K1GQ, were issued to any ham who worked ten YCCC members during the year. Dave also offered to create a YCCC member antenna database as a helpful guide and idea source, also in part as a replacement for the late lamented contest station database that was maintained by N4ZR.

Mark reminded all that ARRL DX CW was coming up later in the month, followed in March by the SSB weekend, and exhorted all members to maximize their chair time, get on at local sunrise/sunset and EU sunrise/sunset. Mark said the goal was 100% participation by active members.

YCCC will again sponsor the familiar Saturday Pizza Night at Dayton in May.

The club welcomed four new members:

Nick Thomas, NT1A, Hampton Falls, NH
Charles Coldwell, W1CMC (ex-AB1HF), Somerville, MA
Bob Giuliani, W1RPG, Shelton, CT
Jason Gallicchio, KB9ZZU, Cambridge, MA

Mark introduced the guest speaker, Sean Kutzko, KX9X, the new ARRL Contest Branch Manager and author of the new "Radiosport" section in QST. Sean described his background in contesting and his goals as the chief contesting honcho at ARRL:

-More Elmering for newbie contesters
-Faster log processing
-Faster award delivery
-Tighter coordination of Contest Branch volunteers
-Promotion of the competitive element of contesting as a real sport

Sean had a good Q&A session from the attendees, ranging from QST coverage of contest results to LoTW uploads. He said he will be investigating the possible use of referees to address the growing concern about cheating in contests.

The raffle drawing followed Sean's presentation, with the Grand Prize ticket drawn by another Sean, young Sean Keane, son of Mike, K1MK, and Khrystyne, K1SFA. And the winner of the new Elecraft K3 transceiver was…Dan, W1QK! Other prizes

were donated by ARRL, Heil Sound, International Radio, and Radioware. Winners included K1HT, WW1M, K1HI, W1RM, N8RA, K1QO and WB1EDI. Proceeds from the raffle helped fund the club's contribution to the YCCC Youth Scholarship Program, administered by the ARRL Foundation.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:32 pm, after which members moved on to a tour of the ARRL Lab, a CW Skimmer demo set up by Tom, N1MM, a demo of K1EP's K3, and a visit to HQ station W1AW.

Respectfully submitted,
George Harlem, W1EBI
Secretary

A DXing Weekend in Bhutan….

Conditions in Bhutan where not too good for my 3 day weekend of DXing from Sept 29 – Oct 2. Traveling the country and hiking the lower Himalayas was fantastic however.

The radio set up at A52AA where I operated from was a simple one. An A3S at 25 feet. An A3W at 20 feet. An R8 and a 80M dipole at around 25 feet. The rig was nice, an IC756 Pro II. I was only able to use my keyboard for CW. The noise level at A52AA is high from the surrounding city of Thimphu. A52AA is just up the hillside from the city, about 200 feet above the valley floor. It has a good shot to the North but that is all. EU and the US would come in well if the conditions were good, which most of the time, they weren't. To JA the signal path was terrible which was directly into a mountain with 3000 feet of vertical steep face. Not surprisingly, I worked only about a dozen JAs during the 3 days.

Ham radio opened in Bhutan to its current level in 2000. From the beginning, Yeshey Dorji, A52AA, has been involved. Originally, the "Ham Centre" was in a building that also housed A52 club activities. Some time ago, around 2002, it moved to Yeshey's house. It will be likely moving again in the next year as Yeshey has sold his house. I tried to give some guidance on noise and QTH sighting for the future.

I elected to do CW only given the combination of conditions, noise level, and signal strength. I was on from 22 – 04Z for Sat/Sun/Monday and 10 – 15Z for the same days. I started on 20M most times and moved to 30/40/80 during the evening. 20M closed down around 1330Z (7:30pm local) each day. It was opening around 01Z each day but never to NA only to UA and parts of Eastern EU.

I made approximately 800 Qs during the period and was glad that my primary purpose for being in A5 was for the touring and trekking which again was fabulous.

I had a number of great pile-ups to EU and the one opening Sunday morning to essentially W1 from 1130Z to 1330Z on Sunday. I elected to stay on 20M even though the rate was slow to see who would come through. Overall, I worked about 40 stations from NA of which 30+ were from the W1/W2 area, all on 20M.

There are some fabulous spots to operate in A52. Most are on the grounds of Monasteries from the 16th and 17th centuries. Even though the temples are sacred ground, the land around them is not. Many have electricity running up to them but are only accessible by pony and hiking. The ponies could easily carry up all the equipment and the tents and fabulously cooked food would be the same as the trekking that Christine and I did. I stayed at one and saw another during our stay that were situated at 10,000 – 11,000 feet and would have been awesome spots. Some are only a 3 – 4 hour moderate hike with ponies carrying all the gear (all we carried was a camera and water bottle). Well worth considering in a couple of years when the sunspots pick up.

A52 is definitely "ham friendly". They just don't really know how to help. But they want to…

It is an expensive place to go due to the government minimum tariff of $200 per day per person. But we literally spent no more than $200 total beyond the minimum for the whole 9 days that we were there. So it does cover everything (except the actual license which was $100 and good for a year).

EVERYONE that we met in Bhutan who had traveled to Tibet and Nepal as well said that Bhutan, was hands down, the place to go for culture, Buddhism history and life, and the Himalayan experience.

QSLs go to K2RET.

Ed N1UR/A52UR

COMMON MODE CHOKE CLINIC

A Hands-On Activity, Immediately After the Formal Meeting

Chuck, W1HIS will be hosting the following clinic immediately after the April 5, 2008 YCCC General Meeting:

Make swept-frequency impedance measurements of common-mode chokes with a fast, software-driven instrument.

Bring a common-mode choke and see how it measures up. Would it work better with fewer/more turns? Different core size/shape/material?

Bring ferrites and cables, make chokes and try them, or kibitz. What's most cost-effective, when/where/why: a straight string of beads; multiple turns on a toroid; or a few turns on a binocular core? What kind of ferrite? What kind of cable? How to use stuff you bought dirt-cheap on eBay?

Learn what NOT to do, when/where/why. Non-obvious but critical "should's," "shouldn'ts," and "gotcha's." How not to waste your time and money.

- -

Sherwood Engineering Presentation on Roofing Filters, IMD & Receiver Performance

Thanks to Bob McGraw - K4TAX on the Ten-Tec-Omni-VII List (March 13, 2008 11:48 PM)

Rob Sherwood recently posted a new presentation on his website called "Roofing Filters, Transmitted IMD & Receiver Performance" in PowerPoint and PDF formats. Also posted is an MP3 audio file. Play the audio and follow along with the PPT/PDF. It's a great presentation that runs about an hour. This was presented to the Boulder, Colorado Amateur Radio Club in February.

The presentation is at http://www.sherweng.com/

At the end of the presentation someone asked about AGC and he talks for another 30 minutes about AGC in modern rigs.

This link provides access to the files of this presentation. The audio runs about 1 hr and is very enlightning. Well worth your time to gain a better understanding on Roofing Filters and how they apply to modern radios. Rob also discusses measurement methods and results. The charts are very informative. The MP3 file is about 21 meg. Download it and then one of the other files and follow along with his presentation.

- -

Peter Dahl Transformers

From Carl Smith's DX bulletin:

Jeff Weinberg, W8CQ of Harbach Electronics, has purchased the rights to the name, the original transformer and choke specifications and designs, and the design equipment.

The transformers will be built by MagCap Engineering using the original PWD specs, and sold through Harbach Electronics under the Peter Dahl name. The transformer and chokes will be FOB Canton, MA and shipped directly to the customer from MagCap.

Jeff should be up and running in a couple months.

This is great news for the Amateur Radio Community and a great way to memorialize the Peter Dahl Company who's innovations and designs have brought so much to our hobby.

- -

YCCC CLUB RESOURCE INFORMATION

DUES AND MEMBERSHIP STUFF Dues are payable as of the April election meeting, which begins our club "contest year". The YCCC has adopted a multi-tiered membership format as follows: Please note that payment of dues IS NOT a prerequisite for contributing scores to the Club aggregate, but IS for the various YCCC Awards Programs

Full Member - $20 ($35/2 yr) (Eligible for YCCC awards programs and paper delivery of Club newsletter)

Full Member - $15 ($25/2 yr) (Eligible for YCCC awards programs and electronic "Ebutt" delivery of Club newsletter)

Family Member - $0 (Grants full membership to all amateurs residing at one domicile on payment of one member's "Full Member" annual dues and entitlement to one Club Newsletter sent to one domicile or email address. All members of said family are eligible for YCCC awards programs.)

Student Member - $10 (Grants full membership to students at a reduced level. Eligible for YCCC awards programs and paper or electronic delivery of the Club Newsletter.)

Subscription - $** (A "friend of YCCC" - not a member but a possible candidate for future membership. Receives club newsletter only in paper or electronic form. Fee basis is $20 for overseas paper delivery, $15 for domestic paper delivery and $10 for electronic "Ebutt" delivery domestically or overseas.)

Club members who move out of club territory and so are not eligible to contribute to club aggregate scores automatically become subscribers. New members who join at the February meeting are credited with dues for the year beginning the following April. You can tell if you owe dues by checking your 'Butt mailing label. **Mail your dues to the club treasurer, Ed Parish, K1EP, 9 Spoon Way, N. Reading, MA 01864**

SCUTTLEBUTT ARTICLES should be sent to the Scuttlebutt editor, Steve Rodowicz N1SR, preferably by E-mail at **n1sr@arrl.net** or on 3½" disk (in MS-Word format or text file) by snail mail to Steve Rodowicz, 809 Pendleton Avenue, Chicopee, MA 01020. The deadline for each issue is the 10th of the preceding month..

Scuttlebutt Advertising: Nominal Business Card sized ad, $50 per year (6 appearances)

CONTEST SCORES should be sent to the club scorekeeper, Dave Hoaglin, K1HT, preferably by E-mail at **scores@yccc.org**. Please include details such as numbers of QSOs, QSO points (if appropriate), and multipliers (all types); entry category; and power.

CLUB GOODIES

BADGES YCCC badges are available from Ric, KV1W. Send $2, name and call desired on the badge, and your mailing address to: Ric Plummer - YCCC Badge, PO Box 1158, Berlin, MA 01503-2158.

APPAREL Contact Bob Rogers **KB1LN@yahoo.com**

YCCC LOGO ITEMS http://www.cafepress.com/n1ik

QSL CARDS are ordered through Burt Eldridge, W1ZS. To order, send Burt an email at **eldr@adelphia.net**, detailing card information per "QSL Request" form available at http://www.yccc.org/members/yccc_qsl.htm. You will receive a proof by email. Approve the proof, making any corrections, and return to Burt *with payment* (make checks out to Burt, not YCCC). Current price is $35 (delivered) for 1,000 cards.

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER is posed on the YCCC website. Updates are published in 'Movers and Shakers' when members move or change callsigns.

COMPUTER STUFF *INTERNET REFLECTOR* There is an Internet mailing list for YCCC members. To subscribe, send mail to yccc-REQUEST@yccc.org. Insert only the word "subscribe " in the subject of the mail message. (Do not send messages to the reflector that have file attachments, HTML formatting, use boldface or other fancy fonts, etc.)

WWW HOME PAGE Come visit us at http://www.yccc.org Our Webmaster is Mike Gilmer, N2MG.

ADMINISTRATIVE STUFF *The W1 QSL BUREAU* is sponsored by the YCCC. Keep your account up to date by sending a check. Stamps are sold at face value, envelopes are 20 cents each. Address: W1 QSL Bureau, PO Box 7388, Milford, MA 01757-7388. Email address: **w1qsl@yccc.org**.

ARRL COMMITTEE REPS are**:**

CAC: New England Dick Green, WC1M **Hudson** George Wilner, K2ONP **Atlantic** Michael Gilmer, N2MG

DXAC: New England Bob Beaudet, W1YRC **Hudson** John Sawina, NA2R **Atlantic** Chris Shalvoy, K2CS

ARRL LIAISON: Tom Frenaye, K1KI.

Upcoming Meetings

Date	Type	Place
Apr 5	General	Holiday Inn, Marlborough, MA

Next Meeting:
Saturday, April 5, 1PM -5PM
Holiday Inn, Marlborough MA
(Directions on Page 2)

W1HIS COMMON MODE CHOKE CLINIC

A Hands-On Activity, Immediately After the Formal Meeting

The YCCC Scuttlebutt
18 Bancroft Tower Road
Worcester, MA 01609

FIRST CLASS MAIL