



SHORT SKIP

Volume 65 Issue 1

January 2017

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REPEATERS

| Freq | Location |
|---------|--------------|
| 147.000 | Merrillville |
| 147.240 | St. John |
| 442.075 | Merrillville |

All Lake County ARC Repeaters are open to all amateurs. All repeaters must have a PL of 131.8 set in order to access.

From The Parade Stand

by Tim, N9CA, LCARC Vice-President



Hi Everyone. I certainly hope that your Holidays were both Merry and filled with Good Cheer. As I read about the World each day, I have come to believe we are all truly blessed. We need to pause and reflect.

Speaking of blessed, I want to take a moment to thank LCARC Officers and LCARC Board members who served the Club in 2016 who are "stepping down" for a well-deserved break.

Marve Boetcher WV9O..... Immediate Past President - current LCARC Advisor

Andy Finick W9FXT..... Immediate Past Board Member

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2017 Officers;

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The program for January's Friday the 13th program "Flight Simulator Programing" will be given by Bill Leming N4GIX. Bill's day job is writing flight simulator programs for commercial airline pilot training and for amateur gaming. Very interesting! By the way, Bill is also very "radio-active".

Please pass the word about our free Ham Radio Technician Licensing Class starting January 3rd at the Lake County Library Merrillville Branch. 6:30-8:00 pm - Room "C" downstairs - handicapped accessible. All of you are welcome to "pop" in during class. Also, if you are monitoring our repeaters during class time, it would be cool if we had a short QSO. Please pretend that you know me!

Tim/N9CA

Ham Radio Technician License Class

Six consecutive Tuesday evenings: 6:30-8:00pm — Starts: January 3rd 2017

At: Lake County Public Library - Merrillville Branch (off Route 30), 1919 W. 81st, Merrillville, IN, 46410

Downstairs Meeting Room "C" Handicapped accessible

ARRL Instructor: Tim McGillen/N9CA 219-769-0673 tim2020@sbcglobal.net

Required: On-Line Course or ARRL "Ham Radio License Manual" item #0222 (arrl.org or amazon.com)

Class Cost: FREE!!!

Meeting Minutes

December 9 2016

- Called the meeting to order at 7:30PM
- Introductions were made with 16 attending meeting
- Minutes were and accepted as read.
- Dan read report on net with Nov. 17 had 5 check-ins and December 1 had 13 check-ins and that started the WACM contest. Have received logs from members with contacts.
- DX report from Tom is a lot of Dexpeditions going on now. Activity is out their with Tom working toward 100 DX contacts on 160 meters. Even with no sunspots the DX activity is still out their and with a simple wire antenna can work DX.
- New officers and board welcomed and a thanks to outgoing officers and board members.
- Program on digital radio with cake and coffee afterwards. A raffle was held afterwards giving out items from the club.
- Meeting adjourned at 8:38PM

New Creative QRM Box Wildly Popular

By WBØRUR, on the scene

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WELLSBURG, Missouri – In the wake of overwhelming sales response to the recently introduced “Peanut Whistle 250” transmitter and the “Gary Coleman QSO Machine,” amateur radio equipment manufacturer “Peanut Whistle Inc.” is announcing a new line of ham radio station accessories designed to enhance your operating experience.

“Our new equipment is designed to satisfy a unique ham radio need,” says Erastus Pflemming, Director of Peanut Whistle marketing. “We realize there may be times you want to transmit – but don’t want to make QSOS.”

Peanut Whistle will unveil the “Mother-In-Law’s Voice Box” at the upcoming Radio Consumer Device Show in Las Vegas, Nevada. (RCDS is the largest gathering of niche technology providers in the United States.)

The “Mother-In-Law’s Voice Box” seamlessly integrates with your transceiver’s audio connections and transmits randomly generated pronouncements of QRM. “We’re really taking the idea of a voice-keyer to the next level,” says company president Macy Blixton. “If you’re listening to a DX pileup with hundreds of stations calling, you may at first be puzzled about how to join in. Now, you can participate in the chaos and QRM with nothing more than the push of a silky-smooth momentary switch.”

Operated by a 10-key remote control pad, the base unit comes supplied with 25 pre-recorded audio messages – recorded by top industry voiceover talent – ranging from profane to simply irritating.

Continued on page 4

FishFAR on DMR

Fishfar has got 442.975+ Chicago DMR online, Color code 4, part of Chicagoland Control Center

For more info on the ChicagoLand Control Center visit their web site at <http://chicagoland-cc.org/index.html>. Here you can find programming information for your radio.

ARES Lives on DMR!!



The Indiana Section ARES Net are being held every Tuesday at 6pm central time (5pm local) on the **Indiana Statewide Talkgroup**, #3118.

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES) consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment, with their local ARES leadership, for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes.

Every licensed amateur, regardless of membership in ARRL or any other local or national organization is eligible to apply for membership in ARES. Training may be required or desired to participate fully in ARES. Please inquire at the local level for specific information. Because ARES is an Amateur Radio program, only licensed radio amateurs are eligible for membership. The possession of emergency-powered equipment is desirable, but is not a requirement for membership.

January Program

"Writing Commercial Flight Simulator Software Programs" for January's LCARC meeting.

That is what he does for a "day job". The aircraft manufacturers, commercial airlines, and hobbyists use his software to train commercial pilots and hobbyists purchase the flight simulator programs for home use!!!

Check out the Hoosier DMR Best Practices Guide at <http://tinyurl.com/nbvo7xh>

Is There a Market for a \$400 “prepper” Radio?

by Dan Romancik, KB9NU

A couple of days ago, a reader wrote:

“I would like to know if it would be feasible to build a radio with the following features:

- SSB operation (only SSB is required, CW would be an additional benefit)
- 20 – 50W of power
- Portable-friendly (lightweight, capable of operating at lower voltages from small portable batteries)
- Low receiver current drain
- Coverage of 40m and 80m bands. Very limited coverage is acceptable. Even channelized coverage of a few select frequencies would be acceptable.
- S-meter

“It strikes me that there is a large market for ham radio products for “preppers,” and there has been a lot of interest in the Baofeng line of radios from that market. I think there would be a LOT of interest in a radio that could go far beyond line-of-sight and contact friends or family hundreds of miles away. Preppers would have little interest in contacts more than a state or two away, and no interest at all in novel operating modes. I wonder if a radio that trims away excess features (all-mode operation, wide frequency coverage, high power output, sophisticated audio filtering) could be produced for a lot less cost than currently available HF rigs. If so, and it was paired with a decent NVIS dipole and some General-class study materials and sold as a package deal, it could be a huge hit – Something you could tuck in a bug-out-bag, set up in the field, and use to make contacts in a reasonably local area, or set up in your backyard at home and use minimal power to operate.

“Is there a reason why I don’t see radios like this on the market, some kind of technological limitation that would make this sort of thing impractical? If something like this was built, what kind

of cost and performance would you expect? I’m certainly not expecting any kind of detailed analysis, but even just a speculation about if such a project could be feasible would be appreciated.”

I replied:

“I think one of the reasons you don’t see radios with the feature set you describe is that more full-featured radios are already pretty inexpensive. The Yaesu FT-450D, for example, costs less than \$800 and offers 100W output. The FT-817ND, which is designed for portable operation, costs less than \$700. Is that too much for preppers?

“While it might seem like you could sell a radio with fewer features for less, I think that you hit the law of diminishing returns. At some point, removing features, doesn’t reduce the cost all that much. For example, removing the CW capabilities from a transceiver capable of SSB operation really doesn’t save that much because in a way CW operation is really just a subset of SSB operation. You’ll save the cost of a key jack, but how much is that? Maybe a buck or two. Having said that, it could be that the big amateur radio manufacturers are overlooking an opportunity here.”

We swapped a couple more e-mails about this. He noted, “Most preppers would probably rather buy a high-end AR-15 or several months worth of storage food for \$800 than a radio.” I suggested, “If there was a catastrophic event, and you really needed to communicate, wouldn’t it seem silly to have not spent the extra \$400 on a really decent radio?”

What do you think? Is my analysis a little too simplistic perhaps? Are amateur radio manufacturers ignoring a potential market?

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Dan, KB6NU, is the author of the "No Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides, and blogs about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com. You can contact him by e-mailing cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

Should amateur radio be used for military purposes?

by Dan Romancik, KB9NU

About a month ago, it was reported that amateur radio operators in India had been drafted to monitor the radio communications of suspected terrorist using the ham bands. The report in The Arunachal Times notes:

Suspicious signals in coded Bengali and Urdu languages along the India-Bangladesh border in past few months have raised suspicion over extremists using this unconventional mode of communication, prompting authorities to deploy Ham radio operators on round-the-clock duty.

The incident first came into light in June after amateur Ham radio operators picked suspicious radio signals and unauthorized radio communications in coded Bengali and Urdu in Basirhat and Sunderbans region.

Alarmed over the incident, the operators informed the Centre following which they were called to an international monitoring centre (Radio) and asked to track the signals.

A team of 23 Ham radio operators are now on round-the-clock duty trying to track the exact location of radio signals.

This story was also reported in India’s Press Trust of India News and FirstPost.

While I’m all for ham radio being used for emergency and public service communications, I’m not so sure that I agree with this particular use. I would be OK with this if the amateur radio operators in question were actually drafted into the military and used military equipment to monitor these transmissions, but I’m not sure that as amateur radio operators they should be taking part in these kinds of operations.

What do you think? If you lived down near the U.S.-Mexican border or the U.S.-Canadian border, and the Border Patrol or Army asked you to listen for potential terrorist communications, would you do so?

RFinder - The World Wide Repeater Directory kicks BrandMeister up a notch. DMR without CodePlug

RFinder - The World Wide Repeater Directory kicks BrandMeister up a notch. DMR without CodePlugs!

RFinder has worked with the DMR network BrandMeister to create new usability enhancements. The new dashboard just released includes coverage maps generated by RFinder using CloudRF technology created by Alex M6ZUJ...These maps get generated in real-time as BrandMeister repeaters get added to the system and Sysops add coordinate information to their repeater listings in BrandMeister.

RFinder now includes a daily data feed from BrandMeister. This includes repeaters and talkgroups. DMR machines are now categorized in RFinder by the network they are on...ie DMR/BM and DMR/MARC, etc. RFinder's apps on Android and iOS and web.rfinder.net/routes.rfinder.net now are the easiest way to find BrandMeister machines worldwide.

RFinder's new Android DMR Radios (<http://www.androiddmr.com>) take advantage of BrandMeister technologies by providing a point and click real-time programming function in the RFinder Android Radio H1. There is also a new DMR hotspot function to allow easy point and click programming...this can be seen on RFinder's videos on YouTube...https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=RFinder+DMR. These features will be included in the new RFinder Android Radios being released in time for Christmas, the M1 and P12 as well as the H1x models. We will have availability on the new models in early December

RFinder is the world's largest repeater directory which has over 60,000 repeaters in over 170 countries. Annual ~\$9.99US

subscription to RFinder provides access to repeater data through its collections of Apps on Android and iPhone, RadioBuddy on iPhone, web, RT Systems and CHIRP radio programmers. RFinder's new feature of repeater routing (<http://routes.rfinder.net>) allows finding of repeaters over routes worldwide. One subscription, access to repeater data worldwide, from any computing device on Windows, Mac, Linux, Android, iPhone and popular GPS systems. Real-time radio programming on Android and iPhone is provided by the open source RFinderPi, which is based on the Raspberry Pi. RFinder is tightly integrated with EchoLink both on Android and iPhone, providing one-click connection to repeaters worldwide from the directory! Now one click goes into the radio with RFinder Android Radios...visit <http://androiddmr.com>.

"The RFinder team has been excited to work with BrandMeister. BrandMeister's strong and flexible architecture empowers users of their system," says Bob Greenberg, W2CYK, creator of RFinder. "Brandmeister's power and flexibility has provided several epiphany moments that have driven new capabilities into the RFinder Android Radios."

"RFinder's mashing up technologies from its new Android DMR Radio and BrandMeister is a real game changer," says Rudy, PD0ZRY developer in the BrandMeister team..."Point and click DMR is a revolutionary step in DMR development for the Amateur Community."

BrandMeister is one of the technology leaders of DMR in Amateur Radio. More info at <http://www.brandmeister.network>.

Subscribe or renew RFinder at <http://subscribe.rfinder.net>

Third Hand /Tip

Mark, K9MQ



One night N9QLS and I were talking on Gary local about Harbor Freight. We started talking about vises and he was mentioning how he thought a drill press vise would be handy on the electronics bench. I had a drill press vise that I

bought several years ago but never used with the drill press. I had to solder up a bunch of PL259's to RG8 and found that the vise worked great for holding the cable into place while I solder it. The vise was also very stable and didn't "flip" on me.

They are currently \$16.99. You can further reduce that amount by watching for sales and using the 20% off coupons they have.

<http://www.harborfreight.com/4-inch-jaw-capacity-drill-press-vise-30999.html>

QRM Box

from page 2

A sample of the 25 included messages:

"HELLO HELLO HELLO HELLO HELLO"

"YOU ARE A SON OF A #@%&!"

RANDOM WHISTLING

THE ENTIRE PREAMBLE TO THE U.S. CONSTITUTION
(Read by Hal Holbrook)

For a limited time, the company is including "The 1970's: Slang" voice module on the first 100 units sold. This provides the user 10 additional pre-recorded messages ranging from J.J. Walker's "DY-NO-MITE!" to former President Richard Nixon stating "I AM NOT A CROOK."

"While not profane, they remain very annoying and a GREAT source of QRM," says Blixton. Pflemming expects the "Mother In Law's Voice Box" to be in high demand. Adding, "the device has been beta-tested for several months on 14.313 MHz with great success."

(Editor's Note: The Mother-In-Law's Voice Box may be ordered from your favorite ham radio retailer; M.S.R.P \$149.99. After the introductory offer has expired, you may order the 1970's Slang module as a \$25 option. DON'T BE A JIVE TURKEY! ORDER TODAY!)

NOMOROBO

FINALLY! O MORE ANNOYING ROBOCALLS AND TELEMARKETERS

By Mark, K9MQ

Are you tired of hearing “Hi, this is Rachel from Cardholder Services calling about your credit card account” or from other solicitors when answering the phone? A service called Nomorobo can reduce and or eliminate having to answer these calls.

In fall of 2012, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) challenged innovators to come up with a solution to handle illegal robocalls with the winner receiving up to \$50,000. One of the winners was a service that is now called Nomorobo.

When your phone rings, Nomorobo compares the number against a black list of known robo and soliciting numbers. Robocalls from legitimate sources such as your doctor’s office and schools are on white lists and will not be blocked. On the first ring, if one of these numbers is detected, Nomorobo simply answers the call on your behalf and your phone no longer rings. If your phone rings more than one ring, then this is a legitimate call that you should answer. You also have the option to block political robocalls.

Nomorobo relies on a feature called “Simultaneous Ring” that must be available from your telephone provider. Generally, most phones that are Voice over IP (VOIP) based such as Comcast Xfinity or AT&T Uverse provide this service for free. After signing up for Nomorobo, you go to the web control panel for your telephone service and add the Nomorobo number as one of the simultaneous ring numbers. Nomorobo will also place a test call to your phone to verify that the number that you had signed up with, belongs to you.

When Nomorobo answers a call from a known robo or solicitor number, there is always a chance that it could be a legitimate call. To help validate this, the caller is presented with an audio “captcha” to respond to. The caller then must respond by pressing a couple numbers on the DTMF keypad. If the correct number is entered, the call is forwarded back to your phone and it rings. If no response or the incorrect number is entered, the call is ended. Nomorobo is not guaranteed to be perfect. If a robo/soliciting call slips thru or a legitimate number say from your doctor’s office got blocked, you can submit it so that is added to the appropriate black or white list.

My experience with Nomorobo has generally been positive. I first heard about it from an email from my landline phone provider, Comcast announcing that they have teamed up with Nomorobo. I have been using this service since October, and it has worked perfectly with blocking robo/soliciting calls. I have not had any issues with receiving legitimate incoming calls.

One issue that I do experience, is when a blocked call comes in, Nomorobo answers the call too fast. My landline phones will only ring approximately a half a ring. When this happens, nothing comes up on the landline phone caller id. The only way for me to see what number was blocked, is thru the Xfinity push notifications on my cell phone or to logon to the Comcast website. While I have not had any issues with Nomorobo blocking legitimate calls, I still want to monitor the incoming numbers just in case.

Nomorobo is free for landline numbers, and a paid monthly service for mobile numbers. If you wish to learn more or to sign up, go to <http://www.nomorobo.com>

75 Meter Hams Vow to Take Back Title!!

By WBØRUR, on the scene



BURBANK, Ariz. –The group of n’er-do-well hams who call the 75 meter band home (and fill the airwaves with disgusting sounds, comments and vulgar language) have vowed to take back the title of “Most Vile Ham Radio Operators” after relinquishing the honor to relatively new upstarts.

“We really have let our standards slip,” says an anonymous ham – a patron of the 75 meter frequencies for years. “Used to be, a few [REDACTED] and a couple of [REDACTED] and you were golden. But not so much anymore. Nowadays, you really need to be able to insult race and political positions, [REDACTED]. And woe be to the [REDACTED] ham who doesn’t have a quick library of sound effects to draw upon at the push of a button.”

Over the past 5 years, aggressive recruiting of prolific obscenity-prone hams to 14.313 MHz and – more recently – to 7.200 MHz have cut the 75 meter band membership in half.

“It won’t come easy. We’ll have to [REDACTED] rebuild our base. Plans are for several hamfest workshops across the country. These sessions will include curse word workbooks and [REDACTED] laminated quick reference guides that hams may keep on their [REDACTED] operating desks.”

The group admits they may never overcome the 14.313 MHz daytime propagation advantages, but feel they should be able to win strongly in the evening hours as long as those [REDACTED] foreign broadcast stations don’t interfere.

HamHijinks.com