



# *The Heterodyne*

Bulletin of the West Valley Amateur Radio Association  
An Affiliated Club of the American Radio Relay League

West Valley Amateur Radio Association, W6PIY — <http://www.wvara.org>  
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March 2008

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., March 19, 2008 at the American Red Cross, 2731 North First Street at Plumeria (between Trimble and Montague Expressway) in San José.  
**Speaker:** Jim Brown, K9YC — Subject: "RFI Ferrites for VHF/UHF and HF Ham Radio Systems"

**Club Net:** Tuesday, 8:30 p.m. on our club repeaters:

WVARA Repeaters (W6PIY)			
Band	Frequency	PL	Status
6 meters	52.580-	151.4 Hz	Operating
2 meters	147.39+	151.4 Hz	Operating
1.25 meters	223.96-	156.7 Hz	Operating
.70 meters	441.35+	88.5 Hz	Operating
.23 meters	1286.2-	100 Hz	Operating

**Affiliated Club Coördinator:** Bill Ashby, N6FFC, is now the Affiliated Club Coördinator for the Santa Clara Valley Section of the American Radio Relay League. You may contact Bill at [n6ffc@arrrl.net](mailto:n6ffc@arrrl.net) or by landline at 408.267.3118.

**June is Volunteer Month at WVARA** This year our slot in the Associated Silicon Valley Amateur Radio Organizations (ASVARO) Flea Market happens at a great time on June 14 — just two weeks before Field Day! This is prime positioning for providing parts to "last minute shoppers". The Flea Market is one of WVARA's major funding sources and needs volunteers to run smoothly. Ralf Erickson, WA6CQA has once more volunteered to be in charge of the event. Please help Ralph support the by stepping forward!

**Thinking about Field Day 2008:** Unlike WVARA's slot in the ASVARO Flea Market, Field Day always occurs at the same time, on the fourth full weekend in June. Each year we need people to be responsible for a station, to operate, to help set up, to help tear down and clean up. This year the rules have shifted slightly. There will be an education component to replace the "demonstration modes". Stay tuned for a message from Jim Peterson, K6EI and the Field Day Committee on what you can do to help.

**June is National Simplex Month:** For all you VHFers, National Simplex Month is sponsored by The Simplex Preservation Society. To participate, all you have to do is practice direct communication during the month of June: no repeaters, no IRLP, no Echolink, no satellites, etc. Antenna-to-antenna communications only! If it's worth doing for a day or a week, it's worth doing for a month. National Simplex Month is not a contest, so it doesn't matter how many contests are happening in June. Field Day won't affect it one bit. One does not interfere with the other. I would guess that 99.999% of VHF contests are simplex events anyway. I haven't heard of a repeater or Echolink contest, but tomorrow is another day! A series of special events will also be associated with National Simplex Month. The details of these events will be announced in the near future. Check [www.73SPS.com](http://www.73SPS.com) frequently for updates. If you like the idea of amateur radio operators practicing direct communications for a month, then spread the word. 73, WF5TX, [maynardh@hotmail.com](mailto:maynardh@hotmail.com).

**KE7PMY seeks advice:** From the Ogden (Utah) Amateur Radio Club, Nov. 5, 2007:

I'm taking back the Diamond K412C mount and Comet SBB-5 antenna. I think the best thing to is to get a Larsen NMO2/70BK antenna/coax setup and the TMB34D antenna mount for my Dodge.

I'm also thinking of trading in my Yaesu VX-6R HT for a Kenwood TH-F6A HT. I think I'd rather have the dual receive capability of the TH-F6A. I want to monitor 146.52 on one band and scan the local repeater frequencies (2m, 220MHZ, & 440MHZ) on the other. Unfortunately, when powered with the Li-Ion battery, the Tx wattages are 5w, 0.5w, and 0.05w. The VX-6R on 2m/440 is 5w, 2.5w, 1.0w, and 0.3w. Jumping from 5w to 0.5w on the Kenwood is kind of lame. If I get the THF6A, I can put off the mobile purchase for a while longer, that is as long as I can scan 440MHZ frequencies on one band while monitoring 146.52 on the other. This will be a tough decision.

I'm still unsure which mobile to pickup. I want a quality radio with cross band repeat for as little money as possible, so I'm leaning towards the Kenwood TM-V71A and the Yaesu FT-8800R. The Kenwood allows remote control of the unit with my DTMF capable handheld. Nice feature. Although, I've heard the Kenwood has had some issues with low Tx audio. Yeah, I know, I can download the software and change the setting to High, but it sounds like the radio has a design flaw. You'd think you should have to close mic with the setting on Low, the normal 2 - 3 inches away on Medium, and use High if you spray it while saying it and want to avoid saturating your mic. This will also be another tough decision. Can anybody lend any advice? Roy - KE7PMY

**ARRL gearing up for Dayton Hamvention:** ARRL EXPO returns to DaytonHamvention, to be held May 16-18, 2008 at the Hara Arena in Dayton, Ohio. The huge ARRL exhibit area is a showcase of displays, activities and program representatives to enhance your ham radio experience. The ARRL EXPO is open to all Hamvention attendees. Meet ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, other ARRL officials, volunteers and staff. Among the highlights of the exhibit space will be a card checking area for operating awards, activities for young hams, the ARRL bookstore and more. ARRL Membership Manager Katie Breen, W1KRB, is the ARRL EXPO coordinator. "We are looking at some new and exciting venues within EXPO, but I'm not ready to spill the beans quite yet! We are focusing our attention this year on the theme of technology and on Hamvention's theme celebrating ham radio fellowship — stay tuned for more news. We sincerely thank the 2008 Dayton Hamvention Committee and their volunteers for all they do to make this a signature convention; we are so pleased to participate." Keep an eye on the ARRL EXPO Web site <http://www.arrl.org/expo> for updates.

**Wisconsin hams assist injured driver:** On Wednesday, February 27, Brian Sprecher, KC9LCC, of Prairie Du Sac, Wisconsin, received a radiocall on the 147.150 Madison repeater requesting emergency help. Robert Stout, WB9ECK, of Monticello, Wisconsin, told Sprecher that a vehicle had gone off the road through a guard rail, stopping short of a creek. The driver was injured and trapped in his vehicle and an ambulance was needed at the scene. Sprecher called the Dane County sheriff's office to relay the information. Stout, via the repeater, kept Sprecher apprised of the driver's injuries; Sprecher, in turn, updated the sheriff's dispatch with the information. Stout remained at the scene providing aid until local police arrived. Sprecher relayed all information to the dispatcher until local authorities arrived and assumed control. "It sounds like the guy drove off the road through a guard rail and may have not been found had it not been for WB9ECK. It was also unknown how long the driver had been over the embankment before being found. This could have been a lot worse had WB9ECK not become involved," Sprecher said.

**500 kHz distance record broken again:** On February 21, Neil Schwanitz, V73NS/WD8CRT, on Roi-Namur in the Marshall Islands, received a signal from experimental station WD2XSH/6. This experimental station, operated by Pat Hamel, W5THT, is located in Long Beach, Mississippi – 6679 miles away from the island in the Kwajalein atoll. This contact breaks the previous record for the longest 500 kHz contact. That record, set in January 2008, was for a distance of 4737 miles from Cottage Grove, Oregon to Roi-Namur. An article on Hamel's station appears in the March issue of *QST*. The ARRL 500 kHz experimental license, WD2XSH, was issued in September 2006 and has 20 active stations. Fritz Raab, W1FR, of Vermont, serves as experimental project manager for The 500 KC Experimental Group for Amateur Radio <http://www.500kc.com>. Additional information can be found at the experiment's web site and also in the July/August 2007 issue of *QEX* <http://www.arrrl.org/qex/2007/07/raab.pdf>.  
— Information provided by Fritz Raab, W1FR

**The glory of QSLing:** Here is a story that actually happened to your editor, Loren, AD6YU. Thirty years ago, his call sign was WA6ENC and he operated QRP on 40M running a Ten-Tec Power-Mite PM3A at 5 watts on CW. He then lived in a house in Blossom Valley in south San José, and had room for a 40M dipole that ran in a southwest to northwest direction. Working stations broadside to those directions was easy, and QSOs with Colorado and other states in the Ø call area were routine. On May 9, 1977 at 0602 GMT, a band opening to the East Coast occurred, and Loren worked Karl, WA2KBZ in Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey on 7037 kHz. Loren gave Karl an RST 369, and Karl gave Loren an RST 229 signal report. QRPers are known to be hardcore operators, and will slog through QSB, QRN, and QRM to make a QSO. The QSO lasted for 8 minutes until band conditions changed and arbitrarily ended the conversation.

Loren QSLs 100%, and saves every QSL card he receives. He keeps them in scrapbooks just like photographs in a photo album. Well, imagine his surprise at the end of last year (2007) when one day he received a QSL card in the mail from Karl for the QSO the two of them had back 30 years ago! Here's the story. Loren sent Karl a card, and Karl reciprocated immediately. Karl then used Loren's card as a bookmark, and then put the book back on the shelf and forgot about it. Three decades and several moves later for both of them (Karl now lives in Jefferson City, Missouri; Loren moved twice within San José during that time), one day Karl decided to crack open that book to re-read it. Whoa! He thought he had forgotten to send Loren a QSL, looked up his current QTH on [www.qrz.com](http://www.qrz.com), and sent a "belated" card 30 years later! Since Loren keeps all his old logs as well as QSL cards, upon receipt of Karl's 2007 card he sent Karl a letter by conventional (USPS, "snail") mail saying not to worry, but thanks for 2 QSL cards for the same QSO sent over a period of 30 years! It is a story such as this that makes amateur radio such a special and endearing hobby.

**Good Words for the Day:** "N9BOR said, 'If God had intended us to talk on SSB, he would have given us one nostril.'" — Steve, N8CPA, Straight Key Century Club #8

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**For Sale by Mike, K6QFO, San José, CA— 408.374.6876, [K6QFO@sbcglobal.net](mailto:K6QFO@sbcglobal.net) :**

**MFJ HT Power Meter with Adaptor**

I have a MFJ-840 Handy Talkie power meter with a BNC-to-SMA adaptor if needed.  
This meter is in good condition and has its original box and instructions.  
I am asking **\$24** for this complete system.

**Radio Shack Powered Speaker System**

Great for HT, mobile radio or scanner use.  
I have a Radio Shack cat. #21-541 black powered speaker system.  
Speaker size is approx. 4 ¼ x 4 ¼ x 2 ¾ deep.  
The speaker system requires 12 volts external power.  
I am asking **\$20** for this system.

**Astron SL-11a Power Supply**

This power supply is in like-new condition and needs a new home.  
You can not have too many back up power supplies !  
I am asking **\$55** for this power supply system.

**W6PIY Net, Tuesday, March 4, 2008, 2030-2040 PST:** AD6YU, net control. Check-ins:

AD6YU	KK6VF	W6HOC	AB6XS	AD6CL
KG6BKI	WB6KHP	KG6MYR	KF6UTE	KI6NZB

**Question and Answer:**

Q. — I need to convert a 5-MHz sine wave to a 5-MHz TTL signal. Is there an IC that would do the job?

A. — Take a look at some comparators. There are lots of slow ones, but you'll want one with delays less than 15 ns. The LM360/LM361 is fast enough. But you can pick one that gets along with your existing power supplies such as an LMV7219.

— Robert A. Pease, National Semiconductor Corp., Santa Clara, Calif., [rap@galaxy.nsc.com](mailto:rap@galaxy.nsc.com)

[**Note:** This material appeared in the February 28, 2008 issue of *Electronic Design*, p. 56.]

**ARRL "antenna expert" to retire:** R. Dean Straw, N6BV, best known to amateur radio operators as the "ARRL antenna expert," has announced his retirement, effective March 31. Straw's main responsibility at ARRL has been shepherding and shaping *The ARRL Antenna Book* since he took over as editor in 1993 from Jerry Hall, K1TD....

While at ARRL, Straw specialized in antennas, transmission lines and propagation. "I have been able to utilize my training as an electronics engineer in other areas where I could help out. I've enjoyed being associated with some remarkable people at ARRL -- folks who are truly dedicated not only to preserving the legacy of Amateur Radio, but to taking Amateur Radio forward in the 21st century...."

In his 15 year tenure at ARRL, Straw served as Senior Assistant Technical Editor in the Publications Group. He was Editor of the *ARRL Antenna Book* for five editions (17th-21st editions), editor of the "ARRL Antenna Compendium" series (v olumes 4-7), as well as several editions of the *ARRL Handbook*. He was co-author of *Simple and Fun Antennas for Hams* with Chuck Hutchinson, K8CH....

Straw said, "The Lord has been good to me — how many people can truly say that their vocation has been their beloved avocation too? My wife has consistently maintained over the years: 'You're having entirely too much fun in this job!' "

**From Tyler, N7UWX:**

**You Might be a Ham Operator if:**

1. When you look at a full moon and wonder how much antenna gain you would need.
2. When a friend gets a ride from you and remarks that you have a lot of CBs in your vehicle, it turns in to an hour long rant on how ham radio is not CB radio.
3. When someone asks for directions, you pause, wondering if long or short path would be best.
4. When you can look at a globe and be able to point to your antipode (and you know what an antipode is).
5. Your cell phone ring tone is a Morse code message of some kind.
6. You have accidentally said your amateur radio call sign at the end of a telephone conversation.
7. Your favorite vacation spots are always on mountain tops.
8. You notice more antennas than road signs while driving your car.
9. You have driven onto the shoulder of the road while looking at an antenna.
10. Porcupines appear to be fascinated with your car.
11. If you ever tried to figure out the operating frequency of your microwave oven.
12. When you look around your bedroom of wall to wall ham gear and ask: Why am I still single?
13. The local city council doesn't like you.
14. You actually think towers look pretty.
15. Your family doesn't have a clue what to get you for Christmas, even after you tell them.
16. Your HF amplifier puts out more power than the local AM radio station.
17. The wife and kids are away and the first thing that goes through your head is that no one will bother you while you call "CQ DX" a few hundred times.
18. When you pull into a donut shop and the cops there on their coffee break ask if they can see your radio setup.
19. You refer to your children as your "harmonics".
20. Your girlfriend or wife asks: "You're going to spend \$XXXX on what???"
21. You actually believe you got a good deal on eBay.
22. When you see a house with a metal roof, and your only thought is what a great ground plane that would be.
23. You have pictures of your radio equipment as wallpaper on your computer's desktop.
24. Every family vacation includes a stop at a ham radio store.
25. The first question you ask the new car dealer is: "What is the alternator's current output?"
26. You buy a brand new car based on the radio mounting locations and antenna mounting possibilities.
27. You have tapped out Morse code on your car's horn.
28. A lightning storm takes out a new laptop, plasma TV, and DVD recorder, but all you care about is if your radios are okay.
29. Your wife has had to ride in the back seat because you had radio equipment in the front seat.
30. Your wife was excited when you were talking about achieving that critical angle, but very disappointed when you finally did.
31. During a love making session with your wife, you stop to answer a call on the radio.
32. Your wife threatens you with divorce when you tell her that you are going on a "fox" hunt.
33. Talking about male and female connectors makes you feel excited.
34. You dream of big, comfortable, knobs, but not on women.
35. You always park on the top floor of the deck, just in case you might have to wait in the car later.
36. When house hunting, you look for the best room for a radio shack and scan the property for possible tower placement.
37. When house hunting, you give your realtor topographical maps showing local elevations.
38. The real estate agent scratches his head when you ask if the soil conductivity is high, medium, or low.
39. You have ham radio magazines in the bathroom.
40. When your doorbell rings, you immediately shut down the amplifier.
41. Fermentation never enters your mind when "homebrew" is mentioned.
42. Instead of just saying no, you have said "negative".
43. You have used a person's name to indicate acknowledgement.
44. You become impatient waiting for the latest AES catalog to arrive.
45. You have found yourself whistling "CQ" using Morse code.
46. You always schedule the last full weekend in June for vacation.
47. You walk carefully in your back yard to avoid being closelined.
48. You have deep anxiety or panic attacks during high winds or heavy ice.
49. You and the FedEx/UPS men are on a first name basis.
50. You really start to miss people that you've never seen.
51. Your exercise machine is a Morse code keyer.
52. You walk through the plumbing section at the hardware store and see antenna parts.
53. Your neighbors thought you were nuts when you ripped up your lawn to bury chicken wire.
54. Your next door neighbor thinks that your wife is a widow.
55. Your wife has delivered meals to your ham shack.
56. If you sold all your ham radio equipment, you could pay off your mortgage.
57. Removing snow from the roof of your car requires working around the antenna and wires.

**West Valley Amateur Radio Association**

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**STAMP**

**FIRST CLASS MAIL**

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