

GEORGE WILNER, K2ONP
279-4025
*PRESIDENT and
TRUSTEE of K2CT*
k2onp@arrl.net

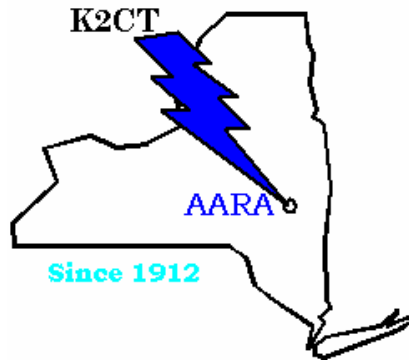
FRED FITTE, WA2MMX
784-3861
VICE-PRESIDENT
wa2mmx@arrl.net

SAUL ABRAMS, K2XA
439-5700
TREASURER
k2xa@arrl.net
6

BILL NETTLETON, K2BX
283-6167
SECRETARY
k2bx@arrl.net

SEYMOUR MILLER, K2XF
286-1328
DIRECTOR
k2xf@arrl.net

GUY HOOSE, WK2H
371-3008
DIRECTOR
wk2h@arrl.net



SUE ROTHSCHILD, N2LBR
456-3637
DIRECTOR
sue.walt@verizon.net

JOHN PRITT, N1JP
753-6231
DIRECTOR
n1jp@arrl.net

MIKE BERGMAN, WD2AJS
489-3110
B-PLUS EDITOR
wd2ajs@arrl.net

Affiliated with the American Radio Relay
League
An ARRL Special Services Club

AARA

DINNER

Friday April 7

Cash Bar starts at 6:00PM

Shaker Ridge Country Club

AARA Annual Dinner

April 7, 2006

Shaker Ridge Country Club

802 Albany Shaker Rd.

April 7, 2006 – cash bar cocktails
and soft drinks at 6:00PM,
Dinner at 7:00 PM

K2CT Repeater

Talk-in repeater

145.19 (-) MHz

pl tone 103.5Hz

or

444.30 (+) w/pl tone 100.0Hz

**K2CT Repeater 145.19
w/pl tone 103.5Hz**

AARA Dues

Dues are \$15 with
B-PLUS available at the K2CT Web page in
.pdf format www.k2ct.net

OR \$20 for first class mailing of the
newsletter Checks should be made out to
AARA and sent to: Saul Abrams, K2XA,
307 Maple Rd., Slingerlands, NY 12159

AARA CONTESTERS ON THE AIR

2006 CQ 160-METER PHONE CONTEST RESULTS

STATION	CATEGORY	QSOs	MULTS	CLAIMED SCORE
K2XA	SO (H)	503	69	84,318
N1EU	SO (H)	229	47	24,910
W2GDJ	SO (H)	123	40	11,160
K2ONP	SO (H)	137	33	10,131

2006 ARRL DX CONTEST -- CW RESULTS

STATION	CATEGORY	QSOs	COUNTRIES	CLAIMED SCORE
N1EU	SO (H) A	1328	397	1,581,648
K2ONP	SO (H) A	1048	266	836,304
N2LBR				
(+WA1KKM)	M/S	931	271	756,903
W2GDJ	SO (H) A	850	293	747,150
K2BX	SO (H) A	677	284	576,804
K2EP	SO (H) A	513	249	383,211
WK2H	SO (H) A	468	190	266,190
WF2B	SO (H) A	160	112	53,760

2006 ARRL DX CONTEST -- PHONE RESULTS

STATION	CATEGORY	QSOs	COUNTRIES	CLAIMED SCORE
K2XA	SO (H) A	1084	359	1,167,468
W2GDJ	SO (H) A	811	270	656,910
K2ONP	SO (H) A	674	274	554,028
N2LBR	M/S	621	238	443,394
(+WA1KKM)				
N1EU	SO (H) A	419	312	392,184
W2AU	M/S	508	222	338,328
(+W2GB)				
K2BX	SO (H) A	503	208	313,872
WB2KLD	SO (L)	416	176	219,648
KM2O	SO (L)	190	106	60,420
K2EP	SO (H) A	177	104	44,824
WF2B	SO (H)	140	79	33,180
WA2MMX	SO (H) A	99	41	12,177

Please send your contest scores to us at:
sue.walt@verizon.net

73, Walt, WA1KKM and Sue, N2LBR



FOR SALE: Jack Donnelly, WB2YBM's tower and antennas



AARA 2006 Field Day Foxhunt!

Last years foxhunt was a lot of fun and a good learning experience, especially for me! I homebrewed a UHF flea power transmitter, using an ISD voice recorder chip to play an endless loop for the modulated CWID. Once this thing was hidden somewhere in the park, the participants were gathered at the pavilion at 4pm. The transmit frequency was announced and everyone was sent out to find the fox! It was interesting to observe folks going in different directions at first. But eventually they began heading in the direction of the fox. Bryan KC2NIF was the first to find it, with Nathaniel KB2HPX locating it second. Scott N2MQQ informed me that he found it third. It was then that I noticed something very strange happening; the remaining participants were migrating back to the pavilion! The fox signal was very loud in my own radio, which was also in the pavilion. It was then that Scott informed me that he had brought the fox back with him to the pavilion! One by one the remaining participants all came back to the pavilion and found the fox. Which really worked out great since dinner was about to be served! Matt N2SQT, Dave KM2O, Rick N1BOI, and Bud WF2B also participated and were able to track the fox even when it had walked away!

This year we will have a 2m foxhunt. All you need to participate is a 2m HT with a signal strength meter. The event will start at 4pm with participants gathering at the pavilion. The transmit frequency will be announced at that time. I don't know if the fox will walk away again, but there could be some interesting twists this time!

73 de KB2HPW

Product Review - Big SteppIR Vertical by Bruce, WA3AFS

I chose the Big SteppIR as it looked like a quick and neat way to get on several bands (40M - 6M) with ¼ wave verticals quickly after moving. Unfortunately, when I ordered in mid-December, they said it would be about 6-8 weeks before shipping. My credit card was

not charged until the day before shipment. Shipped in 6 weeks and was emailed when the shipment occurred with the UPS tracking number.

The antenna parts were well packed (critical items and the ends of each part were wrapped with many, many, many layers of plastic wrap which took a while to remove) and I was very surprised as I had ordered the required 4 conductor control cable from SteppIR and the cable came with the proper connectors already installed! Nice (but also meant that I had to drill a larger hole (3/4 inch) to get the cable from my shack down to the basement and then outside!).

The instruction manual is a little confusing and the pictures are not sharp, but after several readings the parts went together logically. It would have been nice if each part was marked with some sort of notation to correspond with the descriptions in the instruction manual. One part (the telescoping fiber glass rods) turned out to be defective and threw me for a loop for a while. I finally called SteppIR and it was quickly determined that a metal collar was missing from the upper end of the largest telescoping fiberglass poles. SteppIR said that they would ship me the replacement fiberglass parts. I figured that I had lost a week (and the weather was so nice), but was really surprised when SteppIR emailed that same evening with the UPS tracking number for a 9 pound overnight AIR package from Oregon!

The antenna went together in little more than an hour. There are lengthy instructions on weather proofing the connections between the element sections. Both electrical tape and silicon vulcanizing wrap were included. Construction took about an hour and a half and the actual installation did not take very long as I was able to dig an 18 inch hole (in February!!!!), place a fairly flat rock in the bottom and set in the 2 foot bottom pipe and refill with some larger rocks and dirt. The antenna only weighs in at 15 pounds with the majority at the bottom. It was easy to place the antenna on the mounting pipe without any assistance. I chose to use 3 guy ropes (guy ring provided) to provide an additional 20 mph wind survivability (to 80 mph). The day

after installation, I am sure that we had 50 or more mph wind gusts without any damage.

No mention was made in the instruction manual about the balun that was required for the Big SteppIR, so I used one set of nuts/bolts (4 sets were included) to mount the balun on the motor box of the vertical. Not elegant, but seems to work.

The advertisements imply that 4 14 foot radials would work. There is detailed information on radials (both ground mounted and elevated) and recommends a zillion radials for best results if using ground radials. I quickly went from 4 radials to 9, then 15, and now have 25 with two being 35 feet as an experiment. At this point I have not stapled the radials down as the ground presently is not agreeable with having anything poked into it! Will staple those down that go into the grassy areas using aluminum fence ties when the ground is a lot softer (I have learned the hard way that it is not worth the effort to bury radials; just staple them down and they will bury themselves in a month or so during growing seasons). Once I find/obtain additional wire for radials I will continue to add more radials; some of which will be cut for each band.

Connecting the radials is a little tricky as there is only 1 bolt provided and it is on the bottom (facing downward). I have dropped the brass nut a couple of times already and it has hidden itself among the leaves a couple of times!

SWAP SHOP

Send items to B-Plus editor, Mike, WD2AJS at wd2ajs@arrl.net or call 489-3110

I have for sale one 60 foot tower, Rohn 25, steel, with tip over base. Includes the working rotor and a tri-bander antenna. It has to be taken down in June. I am moving to North Carolina around that time period. Jack WA2YBM - 869-1074 photo on page 2

The antenna works by extending a metallic tape up and down within the hollow antenna shell. For the ham bands, there is a button for each band along with up and down buttons to move the element up or down 50 Khz..

Changing bands is not instantaneous, but tolerable. The worst case is going from retracted to the lower end of 40M which takes 48 seconds. Going from 40M to 20M takes 28 seconds. The instruction manual recommends that the antenna element be retracted when not in use for both lightning protection as well as for protection if the upper fiberglass sections are damaged by wind. The fiberglass is relatively inexpensive while the actual antenna element/motor are very expensive.

Of course, the main question is: Does the Big SteppIR work? So far I am pleased with the antenna. It met my goal of getting on the air on multiple bands quickly. It does not perform like a beam or my phased verticals from my former QTH. I have made QSOs on 40M, 20M, 17M, and 15M so far. My signal is not a pile-up buster, but I have already made QSOs with most of the continents. 40M appears to provide the best signals. The propagation generator for 10M appears to be defective at the moment so that band has not been tried yet. The one time I looked, there was no activity on 6M.

73, Bruce, WA3AFS

Public Service:

Volunteer CONTACT John, WE2F at 283-4304
AARA WE Need YOU to Volunteer AARA

Are You Changing Your Address: Please contact Bill, K2BX with your address corrections: Bill Nettleton, K2BX 7 Frederick Pl., Troy, NY 12180 or e-mail at k2bx@arrl.net
B-PLUS May deadline is April 29th

edited by Mike Bergman, WD2AJS, 45 Swartson Ct., Albany, NY 12209 489-3110. **Articles** and B-PLUS **Swap Shop items** accepted and solicited via mail, phone, or e-mail to wd2ajs@arrl.net Permission to reprint is granted if credit is given for article source as "Albany Amateur Radio Assoc. B-Plus"; and credit for specific bylines to the author when so identified. The contents of this publication are copyrighted in all other respects.