

(Ham Tech continued from page 11.)

This is the main prediction screen with the most data. Click the Group By Time button at the bottom of the screen. You now see all of the bands for the same time and can easily see which is most favorable for making a QSO. Remember that the closer the availability comes to 1.0 (100% probability of a band opening) with a S/N of 12 dB (2 S units above noise) or greater with your antenna having at least 0 dBd gain at the listed launch angle, the better the chance of a QSO. What? The QSO is not guaranteed? No! HF prediction is statistical in nature and the values in the table are mean values. For the most part they are better 50 percent of the time and worse 50 percent.

Remember that the signal data in the prediction tables are not corrected for real world antenna gains or losses. Next time, we will dig into antenna predictions and corrections to W6ELProp. In the meantime you can have a lot of fun with this piece of free software and learn a lot. Don't forget to read the help files I identified.

*John Fogleboch Sr. WY2J*

# FLEA-ESTA

## AARC Flea Market

8:00 AM to 1:00 PM, September 8, 2012

Sarpy County Fairgrounds, Springfield, Nebraska

For details, contact Pat Joseph KØCTU, email: [flea@aksarbenarc.org](mailto:flea@aksarbenarc.org)

Or see the link at the AARC web site, <http://www.aksarbenarc.org/>

## GREAT PLAINS SUPER LAUNCH

The twelfth annual Great Plains Super Launch will be held in Omaha, Nebraska on June 7-10, 2012. The GPSL is an annual gathering of Amateur Radio High Altitude Ballooning enthusiasts from around the country to a site in the central US where they participate in technical presentations and a group launch.

Below is the schedule of events. Please check the website below for latest updates:

**June 7 (Thursday):** Early arrivals' events at the Strategic Air and Space Museum in Ashland.

**June 8 (Friday):** Presentations and conference dinner at Arbor Hall (144<sup>th</sup> & Center in Omaha).

**June 9 (Saturday):** Launch day. Primary launch site is the Strategic Air and Space Museum parking lot, but subject to change due to wind forecasts. Final launch site selection will occur on Friday afternoon.

**June 10 (Sunday):** Backup launch day if Saturday's weather is bad.

The GPSL events are open to all interested individuals. For more information, see <http://superlaunch.org> and <http://nstar.org/gpsl2012>. If you have questions, plan to attend, or would like to help, please contact Mark Conner at [n9xtn@arrl.net](mailto:n9xtn@arrl.net) or by phone at (402) 201-4422.

AK-SAR-BEN Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

# Ham Hum

Volume LXII, Issue 5

May 2012

## High-Altitude Ballooning



Mark Conner, N9XTN, of the Nebraska Stratospheric Amateur Radio (NSTAR) group, gave a presentation on high-altitude ballooning. This included a history of NSTAR, the technology used in high-altitude balloons, and slides and videos of past launches.

NSTAR has logged 50 flights since its inception in 1998-1999. Some balloons have reached as high as 20 miles and traveled (horizontally) 136 miles

from the launch site. Mark mentioned that he's attended all 50 launches.

The group uses latex weather balloons capable of lifting payloads between 300 grams and 2 kg (4 lb). Helium has been the gas of choice, but may be replaced by hydrogen in future flights as it is cheaper and provides better lift. In either case, the gas can't be recovered. As the balloon rises, it expands until it bursts, which can be anywhere from 1.5 to 20 miles up.

The typical configuration consists of the balloon itself, followed by a 5-foot-diameter parachute, then a payload (sometimes two) containing various recording instruments. This includes a microprocessor and sensors to process temperature, humidity, and other weather-related data. A video camera may also be on board to broadcast SSTV pictures to the flight, or to make an HD video log of the trip for later recovery. VHSC camcorders were used in early flights, but have now been replaced by digital cameras as the SD cards weigh less and are more rugged.

*(High-Altitude Ballooning continued on page 3.)*

## May Meeting: Space Weather

This month's program will be "Space Weather, the Sun-Earth Connection, and Ham Radio" by Tomas Hood, NW7US. Tom writes the Radio Propagation / Space Weather columns in *CQ Magazine*, *CQ VHF*, and *Popular Communications*. Be sure to attend. Friday, April 13, 7:00 PM, Red Cross Building, 81st & Spring Streets, Omaha, NE.

HAM HUM is the official newsletter of the AK-SAR-BEN Amateur Radio Club, Inc. in Omaha, Nebraska. It is printed monthly and is distributed to members of the club, local disaster officials, local electronics outlets, and editors of other ham radio newsletters.

Articles about activities of members are solicited. The subject matter must be of general interest to radio amateurs and be understandable to a significant portion of the membership. No payment will be made to contributors and submissions will be subject to the usual editorial review. Articles containing statements that could be construed as libel or slander will not be accepted. No guarantee can be made that an accepted article will be published by a certain date. Send your contributions to Ham Hum, P.O. Box 24551, Omaha, NE 68124-0551 or email [hamhum@aksarbenarc.org](mailto:hamhum@aksarbenarc.org). Please contact the editor for permission to reprint anything appearing in the Ham Hum.

### Club Officers & Board Members

President	Mary Joseph	NØTRK	402-492-9156	<a href="mailto:n0trk@arrl.net">n0trk@arrl.net</a>
Vice President	Scott Avery	KA4ZZQ	402-880-9246	<a href="mailto:scott@averysgk.com">scott@averysgk.com</a>
2011-2012 Secretary	Bill True	WA9ASD	402-426-2813	<a href="mailto:williamtrue@aol.com">williamtrue@aol.com</a>
2011-2012 Treasurer	Marvin Taylor	AEØEG	402-556-3668	<a href="mailto:AE0EG@arrl.net">AE0EG@arrl.net</a>
2012 Director	Adam Kavan	KDØMMG	402-598-1521	<a href="mailto:akavan@gmail.com">akavan@gmail.com</a>
2012 Director	Dave Rice	NØJSB	402-571-8915	<a href="mailto:davegr@netzero.net">davegr@netzero.net</a>
Immediate Past President	John Gebuhr	WBØCMC	402-932-3443	<a href="mailto:wb0cmc@cox.net">wb0cmc@cox.net</a>

### Club Committees

Courtesy Committee	Bill McCollum	KEØXQ		
Education	Mary Joseph	NØTRK	402-492-9156	<a href="mailto:n0trk@arrl.net">n0trk@arrl.net</a>
Field Day	Rob Buchholz	KCØOYT	402-964-9960	<a href="mailto:kc0oyt@arrl.net">kc0oyt@arrl.net</a>
Membership	Mary Joseph	NØTRK	402-492-9156	<a href="mailto:n0trk@arrl.net">n0trk@arrl.net</a>
Monday Night .94 Net	Rich Swig	WAØZQG	712-256-7774	<a href="mailto:wa0zqg@yahoo.com">wa0zqg@yahoo.com</a>
Prizes	Rollie Miller	ABØNN	402-333-1606	<a href="mailto:ab0nn@arrl.net">ab0nn@arrl.net</a>
Public Service/Emergency	Jim Harper	KCØSHZ	402-659-0102	<a href="mailto:kc0shz@yahoo.com">kc0shz@yahoo.com</a>
Publications	Bill Wilkinson	KCØSVZ	402-397-8803	<a href="mailto:kc0svz@yahoo.com">kc0svz@yahoo.com</a>
QSL Manager & Technical	Ed Edwards	KØIL		<a href="mailto:k0il@arrl.net">k0il@arrl.net</a>
Special Events Coordinator	Pat Joseph	KØCTU	402-492-9156	<a href="mailto:ppjoseph@cox.net">ppjoseph@cox.net</a>
Web Services	Mary Joseph	NØTRK	402-492-9156	<a href="mailto:n0trk@arrl.net">n0trk@arrl.net</a>

### Repeater Committee

Chairman	John Gebuhr	WBØCMC	402-932-3443	<a href="mailto:wb0cmc@cox.net">wb0cmc@cox.net</a>
Vice Chairman	Steve Schmitz	NØUP	402-306-2972	<a href="mailto:n0up@arrl.net">n0up@arrl.net</a>
Control Operator	Mary Joseph	NØTRK	402-492-9156	<a href="mailto:n0trk@arrl.net">n0trk@arrl.net</a>
Club Callsign Trustee	Corby Krick	KØSKW	402-540-5483	<a href="mailto:k0skw@k0skw.net">k0skw@k0skw.net</a>

### Other Contacts

ARRL Midwest Director	Clifford Ahrens	KØCA	573-221-8618	<a href="mailto:k0ca@arrl.org">k0ca@arrl.org</a>
ARRL Midwest Vice-Director	Rod Blocksome	KØDAS		
EC Douglas County	Steve Schmitz	NØUP	402-306-2972	<a href="mailto:n0up@arrl.net">n0up@arrl.net</a>
EC Sary County	Dennis Mitchell	KCØYKN		
Exams/Vol. Council	Brian Zdan	KMØY	402-553-2610	<a href="mailto:bzdan@novia.net">bzdan@novia.net</a>
NE Section Manager	Art Zyguelbaum	KØAIZ	402-421-0839	<a href="mailto:K0AIZ@arrl.org">K0AIZ@arrl.org</a>
Official Observer Coordinator	Bill McCollum	KEØXQ		

### Address Change?

If you've changed your mailing address, or would prefer to receive the Ham Hum via email, please contact Mary NØTRK (Membership) or Bill KCØSVZ (Publications) with your new information.

### AARC on the Web

**Club Web Site:** <http://www.aksarbenarc.org/>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/aksarbenarc>

**Yahoo! Groups:** <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AKSARBENtalk/>

*(Ham Tech continued from page 8.)*

Click on the **Frequencies and Constants** tab. This window allows you to select the HF (3 to 30 MHz) bands that you use and adjust for your transmitter power on a per band basis. 0 dB is 100 watts, +10 dB is a kilowatt, -13 dB is 5 watts QRP level and so forth. You could also include antenna gain in dB above a free-space dipole, but remember from last month's column that this is not a constant but varies with the launch angle that is determined by the ionosphere. I don't advise it. Be sure to save your selections on each screen.

Click on the **Prediction Parameters** tab. Enter the minimum useful elevation angle for your antenna. If you don't know it, enter 5 degrees. The noise bandwidth is determined by your rig and is a function of mode. I use 2400 Hz for SSB, 300 Hz for CW and 60 Hz for PSK-31. For **Signal Level Suppression Threshold**, enter - 10 dB. This prevents signals that are too low to be useful from filling up your screen. The **Man-Made Noise Environment** selection is a guess. Pick **Residential**, you can change it later. Tick the **Suppress Zero-Availability Predictions** check box.

Click **User Preferences** tab. For **Primary Solar Index** select **Solar Flux**. For **Primary Signal Display** select **S/N Ratios**. You can easily change it on the user screen. It is your choice of UTC or ULT for **Time Display**. I recommend UTC but you need a UTC clock. **Set Map Auto Upgrade Interval** to 3 minutes and **Frequency Map Resolution** to **High (877 areas)**. Click **Save My Settings and Exit**.

You can start to use the program after you get some up-to-date solar data. Enter the following ftp address into your web browser and save it as a favorite as you will use it every time you start up W6ELProp: <ftp://ftp.sec.noaa.gov/pub/latest/www.txt>

This site will give you the solar flux (SF) and the geomagnetic indices A and K. You need to enter the SF and K but not A into the prediction window. Click the **Predictions** menu, select **On Screen...** and enter the Solar Flux (**Solar Index**) and **K Index** values.

Your QTH should be identified as Terminal A. Select the **Prefix or Locator** field for Terminal B and then click the **Select from Atlas** button. Enter w5 (Dallas, TX) and click **OK**. Then click **OK (F9)**. The resulting screen will give you some stats on the path from your QTH to Dallas. Click **Show Predictions**. You'll get a table with the MUF, S/N, and Availabilities coded as A through D for each frequency band and for every half hour in the day.

Select the **Graphs** menu (upper left) and click **Signals**. The data in the previous table is now plotted. You can easily see the D layer absorption on 40 and 80 meters during daylight hours. Close the graph and click **Advanced**.

*(Ham Tech continued on page 12.)*

## Silent Key – Steve May WA0ASM

The AARC is saddened to hear of the passing of WA0ASM. Steve (Dec. 21, 1945-Apr. 12, 2012) was a great friend to the Club over the years.

## Omaha MS Walk

On Saturday morning, April 14<sup>th</sup>, a few of us provided communication assistance for this year's Multiple Sclerosis Society fund raising walk. If there are any problems out on the route we can alert the rest stop volunteers and the walkers about it and divert the walkers around the problem area. We can also help the organizers with any logistical problems, such as keeping tabs on the refreshment supplies.

The 2012 MS Walk used a new 3 mile route, starting at the Century Link Center. Mary NØTRK and I parked near the beginning at 13<sup>th</sup> and Mike Fahey Street. The route took the participants to the first rest stop at 16<sup>th</sup> and Chicago where Tom KDØLXG was stationed. Dan KD7GSW was waiting for the walkers at the intersection of 17<sup>th</sup> and Burt, while George KBØZZT was keeping track of them at 24<sup>th</sup> and Burt.

The walkers turned south at 24<sup>th</sup> Street and climbed the hill to the second rest stop near 24<sup>th</sup> and Cass Street where Russ NØMNW was assisting. On the last half of the walk, Bob NBØB at 20<sup>th</sup> and Chicago, and Greg WØAAI at 12<sup>th</sup> and Capitol, were watching over the walkers.

Omaha Police provided escort for the entire route which made it easy for us to determine where the last walkers were. They also closed down some of the intersections to traffic so that the walk could use the streets instead of the sidewalks. This allowed the event to move along quickly. The walk began at 9 AM and was finished by 11 AM.

Our thanks go out to SWIARC for allowing us to use the 146.82 repeater for the event.

Pat KØCTU

## Saturday Night Coffee

AARC members met for coffee and food at Perkins Restaurant on 108<sup>th</sup> & L Streets in Omaha at 6:00 PM, March 17<sup>th</sup>. Attending were Joe KØNEB, Claudia K1AUD, Dick KBØKJV, Bill KCØSVZ, Sean KDØQQZ, and Christina NØRIS.

The events of the get-together would have been lost to history, as your correspondent forgot his word processor (i.e., pencil and paper). As a result, the other attendees thought that they'd be able to speak freely, but KDØQQZ happened to have a pen and sheet of paper he could spare. Thanks, Sean!

Congratulations also go to QQZ for recently passing his General Class license. It was only a couple of months ago that he was awarded his Technician ticket.

As usual, the topics of discussion during the course of the evening were interesting and varied. This included the technical details of NEB's Prius (operating HF is difficult, VHF is okay), kit building, WebSDR and Linux, Echolink and Walt Disney, chocolate chip cookies, text-to-voice readers, restaurant jokes ("Wanna box for the leftovers?" "No, but I'll arm wrestle you for it."), and others.

The Club informally meets for good food, coffee, and conversation on the third Saturday of the month. See the *Club Calendar* in this issue for details.

Bill KCØSVZ

(**High-Altitude Ballooning** *continued from page 1.*)

In addition, the payload includes GPS equipment to track the flight path, rate of ascent/descent, altitude, and horizontal distance. This information is sent to the ground crew using APRS on 144.39 or 144.36 MHz. A program provided by Near Space Ventures (<http://www.nearspaceventures.com/>) helps compute the landing location. Though the balloon may travel several miles, the group can follow it and be within 60 feet of its touchdown point. Receiving the data is usually not a problem. At 1000 feet up, the transmitter has a 400 mile radius.

Despite the altitudes reached and distances covered, NSTAR doesn't need permission from the FAA to launch a balloon. Nevertheless, the group notifies them of a launch and selects a site well away from airports.

Mark stated that—so far—a payload hasn't dropped on anyone, but one did come down on a power line, which cost the group \$150 to get the local power company to come out and retrieve it for them.

Note that NSTAR is hosting the Great Plains Super Launch being held in the Omaha area and the Strategic Air and Space Museum next month. See page 12 for details.

Bill KCØSVZ

## April Door Prizes

Door Prize Chair Rollie, ABØNN, announced that the door prizes for the April meeting were two socket sets (metric and standard) and a screwdriver set. There was neither a Brown Bag Prize nor Mr. Reeh Prize this month: Due to a severe brown bag shortage in the midwest, there were no brown bags in Omaha to wrap the Brown Bag Prize in. Also, Mr. Anton Reeh, UNIQUE, was out of the country on an adventure, so no Mr. Reeh Prize.

Mary, NØTRK, volunteered to draw the tickets as she was not participating in the contest this time. The standard socket set went to Adam KDØMMG, while Scott KA4ZZQ was awarded the metric version. The lucky winner of the screwdriver set was Marvin AEØEG.

Note that the proceeds for each month's tickets go for buying next month's prizes. Each month's tickets are kept and included in the Grand Prize(s) drawing in December. The more tickets you buy each month, the better your chances of winning at the end of the year.

Bill KCØSVZ

**Summer Reading Department:** Bill, WA9ASD, recommends *Zen and the Art of Radiotelegraphy* by Carlos Consoli, IKØYGJ. It's worth checking out if you're interested in learning Morse code, or even seeing the practice from a different angle. It's an ebook in PDF format and may be freely downloaded from the web site of Dan KB6NU ([www.kb6nu.com/zen-and-the-art-of-radiotelegraphy/](http://www.kb6nu.com/zen-and-the-art-of-radiotelegraphy/)).

**April Issue Department:** Okay, KA4ZZQ's excellent article, *Subterranean Dipole Net News*, in the previous issue may have been driving a tack with a sledge hammer, but did anybody wonder at some of the numbers in *The Kilo-Cycle*? There was a clue on the front page.

# Club Meeting Minutes – April 13, 2012

Scott KA4ZZQ, Vice President AARC

Mary, NØTRK, called the meeting to order at 7 PM. Pledge of Allegiance. Roll Call.

Secretary's Report - Pat, KØCTU, moved the minutes from the February meeting be approved as printed in the *Ham Hum*. Motion seconded and approved.

Treasurer's Report - Marv, AEØEG reported that the total of all club accounts is \$22,804.65. Motion made to accept and seconded.. approved.

President's Report -Mary, NØTRK reported that the Club trailer is being stored at the home of Bill, WA9ASD.

Vice President's Report - The program for tonight's meeting will be the Central Plains Super Launch, by Mark, N9XTN.

Public Service - ARES/SATERN/Community Events

- ARES - Steve, NØUP reported that there will be new requirements for ID Cards for storm spotters.
- April 28th Safety Fair with AARC providing assistance to program weather alert radios (NØTRK).
- April 14th MS Walk
- May 18/19 NSAA State Track Meet (KØCTU).

Education Committee - Mary, NØTRK reported that they are looking for time for another class. A few more helpers would be appreciated.

Membership Committee - Mary, NØTRK reported that membership cards not done due to website crash. They will be mailed.

Publications/Web Services - Bill, KCØSVZ reported that *Ham Hum* is OK. Web Services - Mary, NØTRK reported the website crashed due to lack of space. Undergoing reconstruction.

Repeater Committee – No news.

Field Day Committee – Rob, KCØOYT is Field Day chair.

QSL/Technical Committee - No report

Courtesy Committee - Bill, KEØXQ reported that he sent a card to KØFQ upon the death of her sister and to the family to NØUCK.

Public Awareness - Mary, NØTRK reported OSFEST, Sci-Fi convention in July.

- Nebraska QSO Party April 28<sup>th</sup>
- Safety Fair April 28<sup>th</sup>
- Jamboree on the Air – Boy Scouts

Flea Market - September 8, Sarpy County Fairgrounds

(Meeting Minutes continued on page 5.)

# Contest Calendar

## May 2012

ARS Spartan Sprint	0100Z-0300Z, May 8
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z, 1900Z-2000Z, May 9 & 0300Z-0400Z, May 10
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, May 11
EUCW Fraternalizing CW QSO Party	1000Z-1200Z, May 12 & 1800Z-2000Z, May 13
CQ-M International DX Contest	1200Z, May 12 to 1159Z, May 13
VOLTA WW RTTY Contest	1200Z, May 12 to 1200Z, May 13
FISTS Spring Sprint	1700Z-2100Z, May 12
Nevada Mustang Roundup	1700Z, May 12 to 1700Z, May 13
50 MHz Spring Sprint	2300Z, May 12 to 0300Z, May 13
SKCC Weekend Sprintathon	0000Z-2400Z, May 13
WAB LF Phone	1000Z-1400Z, May 13
NAQCC-EU Monthly Sprint	1800Z-2000Z, May 14
RSGB 80m Club Championship, Data	1900Z-2030Z, May 16
NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint	0030Z-0230Z, May 17
His Maj. King of Spain Contest, CW	1200Z, May 19 to 1200Z, May 20
Feld Hell Sprint	1600Z-1800Z, May 19
Baltic Contest	2100Z, May 19 to 0200Z, May 20
Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	0100Z-0300Z, May 21
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z, 1900Z-2000Z, May 23 & 0300Z-0400Z, May 24
RSGB 80m Club Championship, CW	1900Z-2030Z, May 24
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, May 25
CQ WW WPX Contest, CW	0000Z, May 26 to 2359Z, May 27
SARL Digital Contest	1300Z-1600Z, May 27
QRP ARCI Hootowl Sprint	2000 local - 2400 local, May 27
MI QRP Memorial Day CW Sprint	2300Z, May 27 to 0300Z, May 28

## June 2012

NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Jun 1
HA3NS Sprint Memorial Contest	1730Z-1800Z, Jun 1 (80m) & 1800Z-1830Z, Jun 1 (40m)
10-10 Int. Open Season PSK Contest	0000Z, Jun 2 to 2400Z, Jun 3
Wake-Up! QRP Sprint	0600Z-0800Z, Jun 2
SEANET Contest	1200Z, Jun 2 to 1200Z, Jun 3
Maritime QSO Party	1200Z, Jun 2 to 0300Z, Jun 3
Alabama QSO Party	1600Z, Jun 2 to 0400Z, Jun 3
RSGB 80m Club Championship, Data	1900Z-2030Z, Jun 4
ARS Spartan Sprint	0100Z-0300Z, Jun 5

For details, check: <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/index.html>

## Amateur Radio License Class

The Ak-Sar-Ben Amateur Radio Club will be conducting a course preparing individuals to become licensed ham radio operators. The course is held from 6:30 PM to 9 PM on Mondays starting on June 18<sup>th</sup> and will run for 7 weeks. The Class will be held at the Heartland Chapter House of the American Red Cross 2912 S 80<sup>th</sup> Ave in Omaha. The course is free of charge and the course text book is available for a discount via the Ak-Sar-Ben Amateur Radio Club.

Advanced registration is required by going to [www.aksarbenarc.org](http://www.aksarbenarc.org) or by calling (402) 915-3494.

Mary NØTRK

# HAM TECH v2n3: HF Propagation and Antennas

By John Fogleboch Sr. WY2J  
Email: wy2j@arrl.net

(Reprinted from the South Jersey Radio Association <<http://www.sjra.org/>>  
newsletter, Harmonics, Ted Groke, W2TAG, Editor.)

[This is Part 2 of 3. The first part appeared in the March, 2003 issue of Ham Hum. Note that the program described in this article, W6ELProp, is a Microsoft Windows application, but will run under Wine 1.2.2 (and above) on Linux systems —KCØSVZ]

This month we dig into the W6ELProp software and learn what else it will provide, where we get the values that are required to run it and how to set up the variables. But first I am going to fix the typo and errors that crept into last month's article. The typo is in the URL in paragraph 2 (March 2012 *Ham Hum*, pg 5). The correct URL is: [www.qsl.net/w6elprop](http://www.qsl.net/w6elprop).

The errors are in paragraphs 5 (pg 5) and 10 (pg 11)<sup>1</sup> and are the result of my trying to make last minute changes to the manuscript to add information, in this case S units to the signal levels in Tables 1 and 2 and change the weight of each S unit from the 5 dB used in the W6EL PROP software to the more universally used 6 dB. Believe me, this kind of rushed back-of-the-envelope math will just get you into trouble every time. In paragraph 5 change 0.05 microvolts to 0.5 microvolts and replace the text in the parenthesis with the following. (S 2.33, 40 dB below S 9 on a properly calibrated S meter). In paragraph 10 make the same change from 0.05 to 0.5 microvolts and change the S value in the parenthesis from S-6 ½ to S-8.8.

Now let's move on to the real subject for this month's column. (Note: The following instructions apply to W6ELProp ver. 2.70—KCØSVZ)

Download a copy of W6ELProp at the URL listed above and open it. Go to the **Help** menu, click and scroll down to **Contents** and then to **Fundamentals of Ionospheric Propagation** and print it out. Read it thoroughly as it contains a good summary of how HF propagation works and the terms used. It is only 3 ½ pages and well worth your time. While in the Contents section find and print out the following files:

1. **The W6ELProp Maps>Frequency Map.**
2. **W6ELProp Propagation Predictions>On Screen>WellProp Prediction Window.**
3. **Options>Frequencies and Constants**
4. **Options>Prediction Parameters.**

Items 1 and 2 describe the two main ways that you use this program, and items 3 and 4 give you some of the major variables that you will change frequently. But as a starting point you have to do some initialization first.

You are going to need the latitude and longitude of your QTH for the initialization process. Great accuracy is not needed so here in South Jersey you can just enter 40 00 for latitude and 75 00 for longitude. Start up W6ELProp and click the **Options** menu. Enter your call sign and your latitude and longitude. This is terminal A.

(Ham Tech continued on page 11.)

(Meeting Minutes continued from page 4.)

Old Business – None

New Business – New Members: Stephanie KDØQVC, Patricia ACØYZ, and Kevin KDØOII. John, WBØCMC, moved to accept. Steve, WØUP Seconded, approved.

Announcements - The next license testing session will be May 29, 2012 at the Red Cross at 6:30 PM.

Meeting adjourned.

Scott KA4ZZQ, Vice President serving as Secretary AARC

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You may be a ham radio operator if: Your teenager has refused to ride in your car because it looks like a porcupine.

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## Mailing Lists, Blogs, and Podcasts

By Dan Romanchik KB6NU

*Mailing lists, blogs, and podcasts are good sources of ham info*

Whether you're a newcomer or an old-timer, the Internet is possibly the best way to learn as much as you can about amateur radio. On the Internet, you'll find many, many ham radio mailing lists, podcasts, and videos. In essence, these resources give you access to hundreds, if not thousands, of Elmers.

One mailing list that I always suggest to new hams is the HamRadioHelpGroup (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HamRadioHelpGroup>). The purpose of this group is to help "those who are interested in getting started in Amateur Radio or upgrading their license." This mailing list has a good mix of beginners and experts, and most questions are answered quickly and correctly. One thing that I really like about this group is that the moderators do a good job of keeping the discussions on track, and will squelch them when they stray off topic or threaten to turn into flame wars.

In addition to the HamRadioHelpGroup, you might also want to join a more targeted mailing list. For example, if you're interested in learning Morse Code (hint, hint), you might join the SolidCpyCW list (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SolidCpyCW/>). If you just bought a Yaesu FT-60 handheld transceiver, you might want to join the FT-60 list (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FT-60/>). Chances are that no matter what your interest, there's probably a mailing list to discuss that interest.

I'm subscribed to a lot of amateur radio mailing lists and could probably spend most of my day just reading and replying to them. In order to get the most out of them, without them taking away from my on-air time, I only read those threads that I am really interested in, and even then, I quit reading them once they have started to drift off-topic. I also un-subscribe myself from lists that cover topics that I'm no longer interested in.

(Mailing Lists, Blogs, and Podcasts continued on page 6.)

<sup>1</sup> These two corrections were already made in the March 2012 issue of the *Ham Hum*.

**(Mailing Lists, Blogs, and Podcasts** *continued from page 5.*)

*Blogs, podcasts, and videos*

In addition to getting on a few mailing lists, you might want to read a few blogs and subscribe to podcasts. These are also great sources of information about amateur radio. I blog about amateur radio at [www.kb6nu.com](http://www.kb6nu.com), and lots of hams find it a good source of information. You can find a list of other ham radio blogs that I'd recommend on my home page.

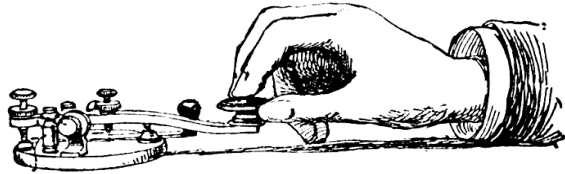
Podcasts are also a good source of information. One podcast that you might want to check out is the Practical Amateur Radio Podcast (<http://www.myamateurradio.com>). Since 2008, Jerry, KD0BIK, has been producing PARP, and currently has more than 50 different episodes online. For other podcasts, consult the list on Jerry's home page.

Finally, there are literally thousands of amateur radio videos on the net. On YouTube alone, there are approximately 32,000 of them. The American Radio Relay League has its own channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/ARRLHQ>), but perhaps the most popular amateur radio video channel is the K7AGE channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/K7AGE>). K7AGE has more than 6,200 subscribers and his videos have garnered more than 2.1 million views!

Whatever source or sources of information you select, remember to not let them take up too much of your time. Ham radio is about more than just reading, listening, or watching. It's about doing!

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*When he's not answering yet another e-mail, Dan blogs about ham radio at [www.kb6nu.com](http://www.kb6nu.com), teaches ham classes, and ragchews on 30m and 40m CW. You can e-mail him with comments or questions at [cwgeek@kb6nu.com](mailto:cwgeek@kb6nu.com).*



**Want Ads**

For Sale Rig Blaster USB. I have a Rig Blaster USB interface for ICOM. Used once. Asking price is \$50.00 or best offer. Contact: Bill KEØXQ. Email: [ke0xq@cox.net](mailto:ke0xq@cox.net)

For Sale SkyWarn Signs (used). I have a pair of magnetic SkyWarn signs. Price \$10.00. If interested, send me an email. Contact: Bill KEØXQ. Email: [ke0xq@cox.net](mailto:ke0xq@cox.net)

For Sale Yaesu FT-757GX 160-10 all-mode, 100-watt transceiver with FC-757AT automatic antenna tuner. Includes MH-1 hand mic and MD-1 desk mic. Also Astron RS-20A power supply. Full output on all bands. Includes required cables and manuals. from the estate of WØJFO \$650 or best offer. Contact Bill True WA9ASD (402) 426-2813 evenings.

Book Wanted (buy or borrow) Biography of Leo Meyerson (S.K.) In Tune With Leo, by Leo Meyerson, WØGFQ, and Jim Musgrove, K5BZH. Contact Dennis Condon, KØLGI. Email: [de.k0lgi@gmail.com](mailto:de.k0lgi@gmail.com)

**Club Calendar**

- May 9** 7:30 PM Lincoln Amateur Radio Club Meeting. 4647 Superior St, Lincoln, NE.
- May 11** 7:00 PM AARC Meeting. Red Cross Building, 81<sup>st</sup> and Spring St, Omaha, NE.
- May 12** 11:00 AM Midwest Home Brewers & QRP Group, Bredeaux Pizza, Ashland, NE.
- May 12** 7:30 PM Bellevue ARC Meeting. 1908 Franklin St, Bellevue, NE.
- May 18-20** Dayton Hamvention. HARA Arena, 1001 Shiloh Springs Road, Trotwood, OH
- May 18-19** NSAA State Track Meet. Contact KØCTU. Burke High, Omaha, NE.
- May 19** 6:00 PM AARC Coffee. Perkins Restaurant, 108<sup>th</sup> & L Streets, Omaha, NE.
- May 24** 7:30 PM Southwest Iowa ARC Meeting. 705 N 16<sup>th</sup>, Council Bluffs, IA.
- May 25** 7:30 PM PARC Meeting. 1900 E. Military Ave, Fremont, NE.
- May 29** 6:00 PM AARC VE Session (license exams). Red Cross, 81<sup>st</sup> & Spring, Omaha.
- May 29** 6:30 PM AARC Board Meeting. Village Inn, 7837 Dodge, Omaha, NE.
- Jun 7-10** Great Plains Super Launch. Omaha and Strategic Air & Space Museum, Ashland.
- Jun 8** 7:00 PM AARC Meeting. Red Cross Building, 81<sup>st</sup> and Spring St, Omaha, NE.
- Jun 9** 11:00 AM Midwest Home Brewers & QRP Group, Bredeaux Pizza, Ashland, NE.
- Jun 13** 7:30 PM Lincoln Amateur Radio Club Meeting. 4647 Superior St, Lincoln, NE.
- Jun 16** 6:00 PM AARC Coffee. Perkins Restaurant, 108<sup>th</sup> & L Streets, Omaha, NE.
- Jun 18** 6:30 PM Ham License Class. Details in this issue. Red Cross bldg. Omaha, NE.
- Jun 22** 7:30 PM PARC Meeting. 1900 E. Military Ave, Fremont, NE.
- Jun 23-24** Field Day.
- Jun 28** 7:30 PM Southwest Iowa ARC Meeting. 705 N 16<sup>th</sup>, Council Bluffs, IA.
- Jul 14** PARC 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Flea Market. 8<sup>th</sup> & Locust St, North Bend, NE.
- Sep 8** 8:00 AM AARC Flea-esta. Sarpy County Fairgrounds, Springfield, NE.
- Oct 13** Hamboree 2012 (Iowa State Convention). 903 Topaz Drive, Sergeant Bluff, IA.

For more details and the latest updates, see the *Upcoming Events* section of the AARC web site (<http://www.aksarbenarc.org/>).

**Area Nets**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>
<u>7:00 PM</u> 145.290 South-West Iowa ARES Glenwood, IA.	<u>7:00 PM</u> 147.360 QCWA Hams who have been hams for at least 25 years.	<u>7:00 PM</u> 146.670 Dodge County ARES Dodge county, NE.
<u>7:30 PM</u> 145.130 Boyer Valley ARC Missouri Valley, IA.	<u>8:00 PM</u> 50.200 6-Meter SSB Net.	<u>8:00 PM</u> 145.310 Saunders County ARES Saunders county, NE.
<u>8:00 PM</u> 146.940 AARC Social Net. Ak-Sar-Ben ARC Omaha, NE.	<u>9:00 PM</u> 145.310 Washington County ARES Washington county, NE.	<u>9:00 PM</u> 146.820 Pottawattamie County ARES Council Bluffs, IA.
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
<u>8:00 PM</u> 144.250 2-Meter SSB Net.	<u>12:00 PM</u> 146.82 Swap Net Council Bluffs, IA.	<u>8:00 AM</u> 3.902.500 Swap Net.
<u>8:00 PM</u> 146.360 Heartland DX Association.	<u>8:30 PM</u> 3.921.000 QCWA Chapter 20.	<u>8:30 AM</u> 3.896.000 3900 Club.
		<u>8:30 PM</u> 443.925+ (103.5 tone) IRLP Net.
		<u>9:00 PM</u> 146.940- Douglas County ARES net, KØUSA repeater.

Please let us know of any updates or corrections to the above.