Editorial

I must first of all thank our President Pertti EA7GSU / OH1SH for the confidence he had in me when he assigned me the job as your Editor. I must also thank all the other Officers of ROAR, especially Webmaster Bill VK4ZD and his XYL and former Editor Diane VK4KYL for their support, by way of advice and materials. Former Editor Don Cliffe G0JWE gave me his valuable suggestions for the production of the magazine.

With all these I am now presenting to you my first issue of ROAR Communicator. I have tried to keep this as simple as possible, for better readability and layout. I hope you enjoy reading this as much as I enjoyed making this. I wish I could use more stories and pictures. But alas, I did not have many !

With the fast development of technology and the vast amount of information available on these advancements, on the internet and elsewhere, it is not a tough job to fill up the pages of a magazine like this. But then, our aim is not to produce a literary masterpiece on technology.

The ROAR Communicator is your magazine. More than anything else, we want to carry the stories of our members, far and wide, off and on the air, for the information of everyone, their activities related to Amateur Radio, or still better Amateur Radio and Rotary. Such information is not available on the internet or elsewhere. That is available only with each one of you. We therefore, depend upon you to provide us with articles and manuscripts and photographs to publish, and, to that end, I am asking for your assistance. Please send me your stories (editor@ifroar.org), however short or long they may be, and I will find a way to put them in.

73,

Yours in Rotary,

Rtn James Kalassery VU2ARL,
(RC Cochin Midtown, India),
Editor, ROAR Communicator.

Thank you ...

When I look back over my just completed term as the ROAR President, I can tell you I had a great time, got to meet and then know Rotarians I probably would have never known, got my picture in the "Rotarian" magazine, and worked to make ROAR a stronger organization . . . and all because I said I would help Laszlo, AD6XX put together a station for the 100th Anniversary Rotary Convention in Chicago (USA). We are all communicators of one sort or another, all of us are Rotarians, and as such, we all serve our fellow women and men. My only regret is that propagation keeps many of us from communicating via our radios. In the meantime, we can stay together via the Internet. Let's all contribute something that let others know something about you, your family, and/or your Rotary Club.

After moving from Dallas, Texas to Cincinnati, Ohio I hope I've convinced necessary people that my antenna won't adversely affect their property. I do hope to be on the air before the end of the year.

I wish to thank and acknowledge all who helped me to make this such a memorable three year period in Rotary. Together Everyone Achieves More (TEAM).

73,

Yours in Rotary,

Rtn John Maier W8AUV,
(*RC Sarasota Gulf Gate, USA*)
Imm. Past President, ROAR
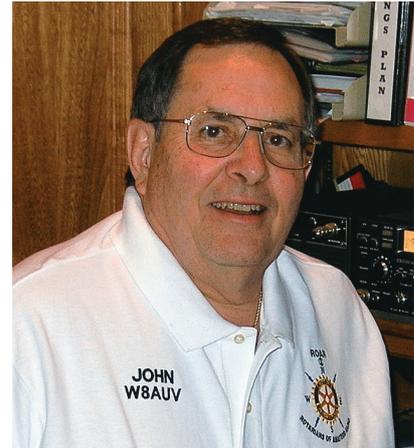
Reverse Beacon Network (RBN)

A handy tool/concept for DXers as well as our Net Controllers to check out propagation conditions on a regular basis. Call a quick CQ and see how strong you are with any or many of the reverse beacons hearing you.

Normal beacons actively transmit signals and if you hear them you know the band is open to that side. But then, you have to listen for so many beacons to get an overall picture of the propogation.

RBN works the other way around. A network of stations are listening on the bands and they report what stations they hear, how strong and when.

The network consists of wideband CW receivers in different parts of the world that feed spots of DX stations as heard at their side. This information is continuously updated into a database. The spots displayed on the database give you the callsign of the receiver (called a Skimmer), the callsign of the DX station spotted, the frequency, the SNR in dB, CW speed and timestamp.

For more details, visit http://www.reversebeacon.net/

Make a few CQ calls on CW from your QTH and chances are that one of the many receivers out there will hear you and post a spot on you. And there you are !

(Try this out to see how well this works and helps, and send us some reports, for the next edition of ROAR Communicator - Editor.)

Warning:
Don't fix your antenna after dark !

At approximately 8:40 PM on Monday, October 12, a man, woman and their 15 year old son were killed while trying to erect a 50 foot vertical antenna at the home of the man's mother, Barbara Tenn, KJ4KFF, in Palm Bay, Florida. The deceased were not licensed amateurs.

"It happened in an instant," Palm Bay Fire Marshal Mike Couture said in a statement. "It is an unfortunate set of circumstances that led to the most tragic result."

According to police reports, Melville Braham, 55, Anna Braham, 49, and their 15 year old son Anthony were putting up an antenna — Tenn's second — at night when they lost control of the antenna and it crashed into nearby overhead power lines. The impact sent 13,000 volts of electricity through the pole the three were holding. A family friend, a 17 year old boy, was on the roof at the time of the accident. He and the couple's daughter, who was in the house at the time, were not injured.

The mother was pronounced dead at the scene. When paramedics arrived, the father and son were not breathing; rescue crews immediately tried to resuscitate them. They were transported to a hospital where they later died.

Neighbor Jim Vallindingham told television station WFTV that he called 911 when he saw the fire in the back yard and then he ran over: "I had no idea it was electrical until we got over there and saw the three people laying on the ground. So I called 911 a second time to tell them there were casualties. You know, there were people on the ground. So [the 911 operator] told me that's electric, you back away don't touch anything."

Couture said that night was not the best time to be attempting to put up an antenna. "It wasn't the best time, meaning it was night time. Obviously, in darkness, and trying to do something like this and not being keenly aware of where the power line is in the backyard, [was not a good idea]," he said.

Neighbors said that Tenn, an ARRL member, used Amateur Radio to talk with her family in Jamaica. — Thanks to WFTV and Central Florida News 13 for the information.

Source: http://arrl.org

ROAR Nets around the World

Day/Time	Frequency	Area	Net Controller
1st SUNDAY			
02.00 UTC	14.292 Mhz.	India	
07.30 UTC	7.090 Mhz.	South Africa	
08.00 UTC	14.300 Mhz.	South Africa	
EVERY SUNDAY			
07.30 UTC	14.293 Mhz.	Europe - VK-ZL [November - March]	G4YZE / VK2GWK/VK4ZD
06.30 UTC	14.293 Mhz.	Europe - VK-ZL [April - October]	G4YZE / VK2GWK/VK4ZD
08.00 UTC	3.692 Mhz.	Inter - UK [Summer]	G4HMG, G4FTA, G3JJR, G3LUW
09.00 UTC	3.692 Mhz.	Inter - UK [Winter]	G4HMG, G4FTA, G3JJR, G3LUW
09.30 UTC	3.630 Mhz.	New Zealand	
10.00 UTC	14.293 Mhz.	Australia - New Zealand	
11.30 UTC	14.293 Mhz.	International	
18.00 UTC	14.288 Mhz.	North America - Trans. Continental	
18.00 UTC	3.692 Mhz.	Inter - UK [Summer]	G4YZE
19.00 UTC	3.692 Mhz.	Inter - UK [Winter - not Dec & Jan]	G4YZE
22.00 UTC	3.955 Mhz.	U.S. Mid States	
EVERY FRIDAY			
09.00 UTC	14.282 Mhz.	UK - Spain [Summer]	EA5ALK
10.00 UTC	14.282 Mhz.	UK - Spain [Winter]	EA5ALK
11.30 UTC	14.293 Mhz.	International	
EVERY DAY			
22.30 UTC	7.0775 Mhz.	Japan	
DAILY EXCEPT SUNDAY			
07.30 UTC	7.0775 Mhz.	Japan	
12.30 UTC	3.935 Mhz.	North Carolina - USA	

Use 14.293 MHz and 21.403 MHz as our calling frequencies.

A lot of people think that with the advent of internet and its kind, amateur radio is losing much of its usefulness and relevance. But, the ground reality is different, as seen from the article "A Cyber-Attack on an American City" by Bruce Perens K6BP. (Excerpts reprinted with his permission).

"Just after midnight on Thursday, April 9, unidentified attackers climbed down four manholes serving the Northern California city of Morgan Hill and cut eight fiber cables in what appears to have been an organized attack on the electronic infrastructure of an American city.

... The city of Morgan Hill and parts of three counties lost 911 service,

When everything fails ...

cellular mobile telephone communications, land-line telephone, DSL internet and private networks, central station fire and burglar alarms, ATMs, credit card terminals, and monitoring of critical utilities. ...

... Although they are silent on the topic, I hope those responsible for emergency services, be they in business or government, are learning the lessons of Morgan Hill. The first lesson is what stayed up: stand-alone radio systems and not much else. Cell phones failed. Cellular towers can not, in general, connect phone calls on their own, even if both phones are near the same tower. They communicate with a central

switching computer to operate, and when that system doesn't respond, they're useless. But police and fire authorities still had internal communications via two-way radio.

Realizing that they'd need more two-way radio, authorities dispatched police to wake up the **emergency coordinator of the regional ham radio club, and escort him to the community hospital with his equipment. Area hams dispatched ambulances and doctors, arranged for essential supplies, and relayed emergency communications out of the area to those with working telephones**."

(Read the full article at http://perens.com/works/articles/MorganHill/)
More stories at http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2009/04/15/10771/?nc=1 AND http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/weather/os-amateur-radio-20100203,0,3256144.story

Bruce Perens K6BP is a leader in the Free Software / Open Source community. Today he is most active in evangelizing to government and industry. He has presented at UN, EU, and national government events. He advises local and national governments and a number of "Fortune 100" corporations on Open Source policy.

Perens is probably best known as the creator of the Open Source Definition, which is both the manifesto of the Open Source movement in software and the specification for its licensing. Perens was the person who announced Open Source to the world, and co-founded the Open Source Initiative. He is the founder of the Linux Standard Base, the main standards project for Linux; and Software in the Public Interest.

Perens believes " Amateur Radio is one of the few ways that a student can gain hands-on knowledge engineering real wireless communications systems, including space communications. It's the only system cap- able of worldwide communications without a commercial or government-owned infrastructure.Using Amateur Radio, a student can become a global network operator with significant responsibility. ..."

His website: http://perens.com

What should every ham know how to do?

by *Rtn Dan Romanchik KB6NU (Member, ROAR & RC Ann Arbor, MI, USA)*

On the HamRadioHelpGroup mailing list, there was recently a discussion about using modulated CW on 2m. One writer pointed out that MFJ sold a unit that would do this. When I told him that this box cost $100 and that they could do exactly the same thing with the $18 PicoKeyer from HamGadgets.Com, I got some flack that the PicoKeyer was a kit, and that some people might not be able to build it. I pointed out that a couple of years ago our club held a construction night, and that several people who had never soldered before successfully completed the kit. I also pointed out that even if the ham didn't have the proper tools, he or she could purchase a soldering iron, needle-nose pliers, and diagonal cutters, in addition to the kit, all for less than $100. I don't know if that convinced him, but it got me thinking about what a ham should be able to do.

This is the list I've come up with so far:
1. Solder. Every ham should know how to solder a connection, and by extension, build small kits and cables. Over the course of one's ham career, this skill will save you a ton of time and money.
2. Build a dipole antenna. The dipole is the simplest and most versatile antenna. Knowing how to build one and use one is an essential skill.
3. Check into a Net. Net operation is one of the most basic operating skills.
4. Use a multimeter to measure voltage, current, and resistance and know what those measurements mean. This is the most basic skill used in troubleshooting, and at some point or another, you're going to have to troubleshoot something.

This list does, of course, imply that a ham is physically capable of doing them. I would not expect hams that are physically disabled to be able to do all these !

After I posted this to my blog (www.kb6nu.com), I got several good responses. Jeff said, "I believe hams should know how to install RF connectors, particularly the three most used in our hobby, the PL-259, the BNC, and the N connector." Blair WB3AWI, replied, "Another thing that hams should know how to do is to measure the SWR of an antenna." So, now I ask you, what do you think every ham should know how to do? Feel free to post a comment to my blog or e-mail me at cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

*When not analyzing the abilities of amateurs, Dan pounds brass on nearly all the HF bands and teaches various ham radio classes in Ann Arbor, MI. You can read his other musings on our fine hobby at www.kb6nu.com. ****