



The official newsletter of the Straight Key Century Club

Volume 7 Issue 2

July, 2016

SKCC at Hamvention 2016, by Ron Bower, AC2C

This year marked the SKCC's fifth "official" appearance at the Hamvention held in Dayton each May. Prior to 2012, most SKCC members attending the Hamvention found the tailgate spot used by Karen, W4KRN, and her OM Jim, K4JJR. They often took and posted a group photo.

It all started in 2012 when I, with some encouragement from Urb, W1UL, decided to see what arrangements we could make with the convention organization. For non-profit clubs, the Hamvention organizers would provide left-over booths - but, we needed to wait until just a few weeks before the convention to know whether or not we would have a booth or where the booth would be. I handled the arrangements in 2012 and Scott, N3JJT, handled the arrangements in 2013.

Even though the booth was provided free of charge, we were charged "a la carte" for the table, chairs, table cover, table skirt, admission pass, and parking pass. By 2014, the Board made the decision to just reserve and purchase our booth. We also purchased our own table covers. Sure, the cost is higher, but we can make plans far enough ahead of time to make sure we have everything covered. We have continued to reserve and purchase the booth space for 2015 and 2016.

We have now gotten into a basic routine. We drive from Maryland to Dayton on Wednesday, setup the booth on Thursday, and attend the show on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Setting up the booth only takes a few hours and we usually visit the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB during our spare hours on Thursday. Neither Larry nor I can make the trip every year so we need to rely on someone else to keep the booth materials - banners, handouts, table covers, etc. - that task has fallen with Ted, K8AQM, since after the 2013 Hamvention.

Another regular contributor is Curt, WA2JSG. Curt can be relied upon to staff the table the first couple hours of each day. Curt also brings a large set of Award Certificates for display at the booth. Many thanks to Ted, Curt, and Scott for all their time and support to the club. We are also very appreciative of all those members who answered the call to sit the table at the booth. The job is simple - answer questions from visitors, log in members, and tell interested

visitors about the club and our activities. We appreciate the time you take from the show to help staff the table - we could not do it without your help.

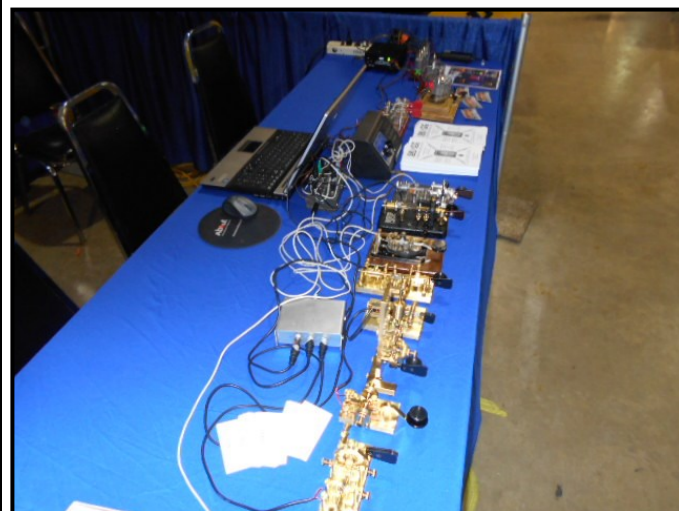
We've also gotten into a regular routine while working the booth. Ted brings a large collection of keys and a CPO (Code Practice Oscillator. It is fun to pick out a callsign of someone walking by, key their callsign into the CPO, and see if there is a reaction. We also run the SKCCLogger on a laptop (also provided by Ted) so we can "log in" visiting members. There are also, of course, some who are members but don't recall their membership number - we can look it up for them.



In 2012, I was interviewed at the booth by HamRadio Now - Episode 150. You can view the episode here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xq286mFFZ8w>. The discussion of SKCC starts at the 23:00 minute mark of the episode. Curt, WA2JSG, and I also did a live interview with Tom Medlin, W5KUB, but we don't believe that interview was recorded.

This year, Karen, W4KRN, and I visited the W5KUB booth and gave Tom an interview to discuss the club.

That broadcast was captured on YouTube and can viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6D8NS7EmzHs&hd=1>.



We have also kept a tradition of taking a group photo on Saturday afternoon - usually around 1:00 PM. I believe that this year's group photo was the largest crowd yet. We divided the group into two sets in order to get a better resolution of the members present. There is a Dayton Activities page on our web page here: http://www.skccgroup.com/outreach/dayton_2016/.

The following pages include pictures from the booth at Dayton and a log of those members who "logged-in" visiting the booth. Better see if your friends where there and if you were there but didn't, stop by next year be sure to do it!Editor



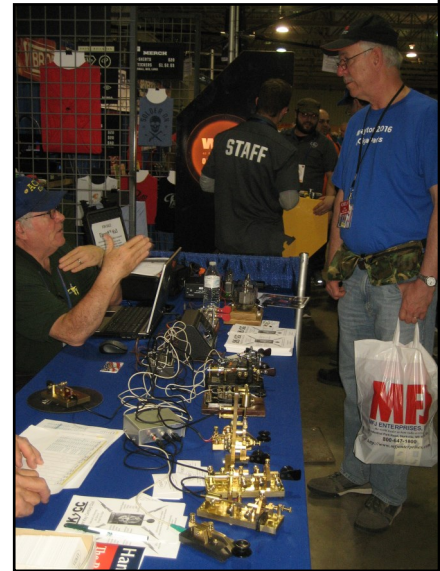
There were so many of us we had to divide the group into two to get everyone in the picture! Join us next year!



K8AQM N3JJT WA2JSG



K9DAC KA8HFN



AC2C promoting SKCC



AC2C and W4KRN
being interviewed



KA8??? And W4RQ

Back L-R W1UL, WA2 JSG N3JJT
Front L-R AH6AX KD8DEU



This year we had a total of 204 members check in at the booth and we logged them in using the SKCCLogger. Here is a list of those who attended:

Login	Callsign	SKCC Nr	Name	City	SPC
1	AB6Z	15632	Tom	Picayune	MS
2	K8AQM	1629S	Ted	Adrian	MI
3	KM4LAO	14766	Ruth	Lawrenceville	GA
4	WA2JSG	3018S	Curt	Carneys Point	NJ
5	AH6AX	11165S	Larry	Sykesville	MD
6	N2JKA	15058	John	Sykesville	MD
7	AC2C	2748S	Ron	Ellicott City	MD
8	N3JJT	255T	Scott	Massillon	OH
9	K3SEN	11463T	Dale	Ashburn	VA
10	N2EI	5246	Skip	Beverly	NJ
11	N8IJG	4797	Bill	Wickliffe	OH
12	AB3ED	15606	Bob	Pittsburgh	PA
13	KD8AZO	2216T	Dave	Coldwater	OH
14	K9DAC	10148S	Tom	Dayton	OH
15	KD8DEU	10232S	Al	Columbiaville	MI
16	K4NYI	14097T	Doug	Acworth	GA
17	K9ZTV	10427	Kent	Jefferson City	MO
18	AA5VE	8863S	Carl	Texarkana	TX
19	K8KZB	5053	Jeff	Columbiaville	MI
21	W4RQ	8699S	Rich	Plantation	FL
22	W8ZJ	14991	Denny	Stow	OH
23	W0FG	13470	Rick	Vinton	IA
24	W9PJ	13425	Paul	Roscoe	IL
25	WB9EGZ	11531T	Dave	McFarland	WI
26	WN8U	10736	Mark	Loveland	OH
27	AC5O	14258	Jeff	Raceland	LA
28	K0NEB	9144	Joe	Lincoln	NE
29	KC4ZA	4421T	Alan	Gainesville	VA
30	KC4ATU	4160	Bill	Gainesville	VA
31	K4DME	9051	David	Emporia	VA
32	K4ZGB	796S	Tom	Birmingham	AL
33	K8FAC	2506T	Frank	Youngstown	OH
34	K1ND	6099T	Jan	Ypsilanti	MI
35	NV9X	1358S	Jim	Blue Island	IL
36	W1RO	1379T	Jim	Las Vegas	NV
37	W5LD	11956T	Dennis	Woodworth	LA

38	N0JOL	13671	Joe	Isanti	MN
39	W1UL	6668S	Urb	Tuckerton	NJ
40	KA0IQT	74	Jim	Tioga	TX
41	WA8IWK	2441	Allen	West Bloomfield	MI
42	NA2R	14008	John	Little Egg Harbor	NJ
43	AC8W	2813	Stan	Marysville	MI
44	AC8KB	9254	Angela	Trotwood	OH
45	NN8B	36T	Don	Hanoverton	OH
46	N0JMS	4575	Jonathan	Grand Forks	ND
47	VE5UO	6963	Dave	Saskatoon	SK
48	WA2ACV	7228	Mike	Barnegat	NJ
49	K8FN	10746	Robert	Tipp City	OH
50	KE4PT	1985	Kai	Coral Springs	FL
51	W2ZDP	7947	Wayne	Clinton	NC
52	W8FA	11544	Rick	Dayton	OH
53	N1CUU	658	Carl	Stratham	NH
54	W8BFT	13629S	Ed	Beavercreek	OH
55	KE5AL	12776S	Jim	Pflugerville	TX
56	WV8DH	4020C	Dave	St Albans	WV
57	KC8LTL	4197T	Ken	Jackson	MI
58	K0IEA	9075	Dave	Forest Lake	MN
59	KI8FV	14717	Steve	McArthur	OH
60	KM1N	723	Bill	Salem	NH
61	KW4MG	14323C	Gary	Plantation	FL
62	W9KMP	549T	Ken	Mount Prospect	IL
63	N8RVE	4811T	John	Lorain	OH
64	KA8WEM	10742	Larry	Beachwood	OH
65	KW4DI	4223	Ken	Paducah	KY
66	KX4P	12556	John	Pittsboro	NC
67	W8SDG	13733	Marc	Grand Rapids	MI
68	KF5PFU	10520	Ryan	Stillwater	OK
69	K8UV	2250T	Rich	Manchester	MI
70	N2CG	10811	George	Saddle Brook	NJ
71	W8UZ	11999	Don	Woodburn	IN
72	AA8MI	8424T	Gene	Perrysburg	OH
73	K8HGX	1417	Jack	Aurora	OH
74	W9KIZ	1888	Bobbi	Indianapolis	IN
75	K3RC	4672	Bob	Stony Ridge	OH
76	W9EFW	9355	Ed	Westmont	IL

77	W8HOG	8775	Gerald	Lynchburg	OH
78	WB9TFH	4211	Gil	West Allis	WI
79	K5MGJ	6218	Mark	Houston	TX
80	WB9TFF	7057	Donna	West Allis	WI
81	KD8APT	15403	Jim	Kettering	OH
82	KC8JW	13941	Tom	Galloway	OH
83	N2SO	7834T	Charles	Yorktown Heights	NY
84	WD0BLR	14705	Lynn	Webb City	MO
85	KA8HFN	2046S	Larry	Wapakoneta	OH
86	KD8DLV	13265	Sam	Bloomfield Hills	MI
87	NR3P	9987T	Paul	Delmar	MD
88	N5DUX	K4BAI	Tommy	Longview	TX
89	K2RP	1912	Ron	Encinitas	CA
90	W8GPF	3413	Jack	West Manchester	OH
91	K4RF	12412	Dan	Greenville	NC
92	K9TM	12335T	Tim	Sylvania	OH
93	W7GM	4389	Ira	Overgaard	AZ
94	WB4OM	8793T	Steve	Port Orange	FL
95	K8MU	14823	Larry	Roseville	MI
96	WA4ZXV	982	Norm	Norcross	GA
97	KE4S	13977	Dave	Leesburg	VA
98	AE0EE	11076T	Bill	Minneapolis	MN
99	W4ALF	14105	Chris	Independence	KY
100	K9US	2834	TIM	Bedford	IN
101	AB8KT	4500T	Ken	Toronto	OH
102	W8DIY	13166	Donna	Britton	MI
103	W8ATE	13165	Stan	Britton	MI
104	WB4ZDU	2688	Ray	Louisville	KY
105	N0WNV	4179	Ed	Troy	MO
106	WB8MPF	12652	Martin	Fairborn	OH
107	K0JVX	11096	John	Olathe	KS
108	KU4V	15042	Wayne	Cary	NC
109	WA9JBR	13182C	Jon	Baton Rouge	LA
110	AC5SH	14843	Tim	Baton Rouge	LA
111	KA2EYH	7098T	Gil	Noblesville	IN
112	K8ZCT	145	Bill	Pickerington	OH
113	AC8JF	10511	Wes	Royal Oak	MI
114	N9OAT	14848	Ralph	Galesburg	IL
115	KG8CO	6362	Brian	Clinton	MI

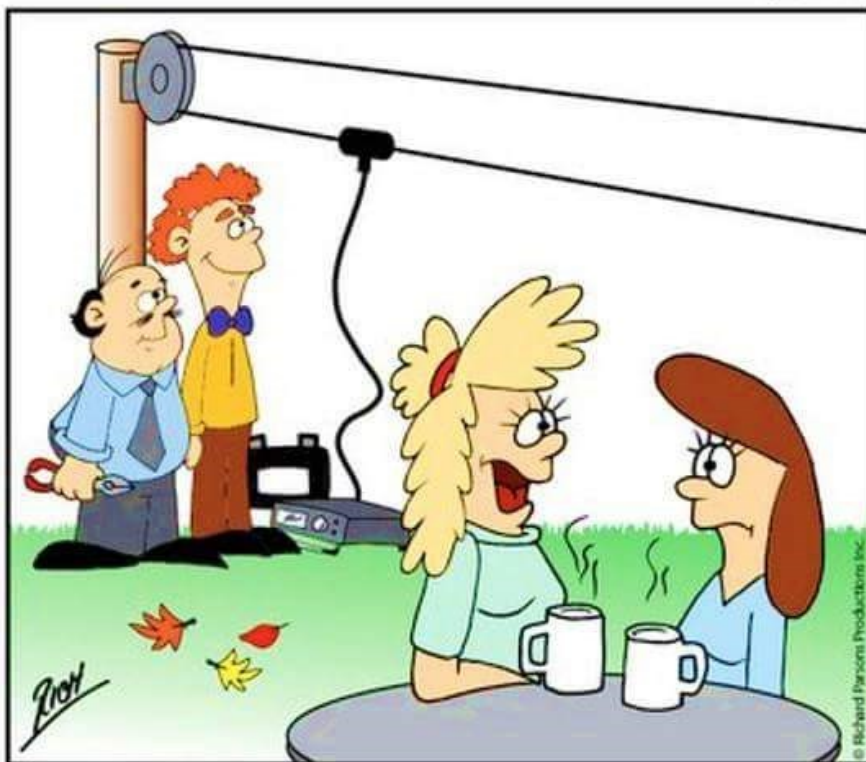
115	KG8CO	6362	Brian	Clinton	MI
116	NU8Z	11237	Mark	Tecumseh	MI
117	N8CC	7541	Jeff	Nashville	MI
118	K8QKY	7552	Steve	Ann Arbor	MI
119	K8XXX	8577T	EMC Club	Adrian	MI
120	W8TQE	2944T	AAR Club	Adrian	MI
121	K8PRC	14046T	PAR Club	Canton	OH
122	WS8KCC	12000T	OM CW Club	Defiance	OH
123	KT8X	7556	Dennis	Ypsilanti	MI
124	NN4ZZ	4225	Al	Loganville	GA
125	N9SE	12753S	Marty	Sharpsville	IN
126	WP4N	14785	Carlos	Carolina	PR
127	N8KC	7649T	Ken	Shelby Township	MI
128	K3NG	12482T	Goody	Jim Thorpe	PA
129	N0KSF	11830	Jack	Jefferson City	MO
130	AC8FT	4922	George	Madison	OH
131	N0SAP	287	Dave	Nixa	MO
132	KC8RLP	349	Jon	Marion	OH
133	AA8CS	11342	Gary	Copley	OH
134	KB9IVA	3612	Bob	Granger	IN
135	K8WZY	6280	Mike	Toledo	OH
136	N8BWB	12350	Larry	Milford	MI
137	K2HAT	14037	Lee	Rensselaer	NY
138	K9ZU	253	George	Brunswick	MD
139	KW1L	10700	Paul	Ann Arbor	MI
140	NB8F	13949T	Andy	Howell	MI
141	W8JPF	13604	Joe	Columbus	OH
142	K8KS	4444T	Kaz	Ann Arbor	MI
143	W2SH	1777	Charles	Millington	NJ
144	AD9Z	10002	Dave	Toulon	IL
145	K3EW	10605T	Phil	Gaithersburg	MD
146	KD8BBK	2443T	Tony	Louisville	OH
147	AK4SQ	9398	Dan	Lynchburg	VA
148	KD4EE	11016S	Scott	Bellevue	KY
149	KC8TVW	13101	Steve	Toledo	OH
150	W8FHF	753T	Sonny	Norwich	OH
151	K8PRG	14553T	Rick	Toledo	OH
152	KC8ZKD	6810	Walter	Garrettsville	OH
153	K8AG	7445T	JP	Warren	MI

154	KC0GP	10937S	George	Hamilton	MO
155	W8FAX	3063	Alan	Fairborn	OH
156	K7CHL	9322	Ted	Coldwater	MI
157	W8CNJ	2310	Roger	Perrysburg	OH
158	WW0E	2413	Jerry	Davenport	IA
159	K7HIL	12229	Michael	Tucson	AZ
160	KF0AF	7713	Ray	Middletown	OH
161	N8DAH	12155	David	Garden City	MI
162	WF7T	4682C	Brad	Nashville	TN
163	N8UDL	3335	Dennis	Canton	OH
164	N8XE	3806T	Jason	Hilliard	OH
165	WM3O	7950	Steve	Millersville	MD
166	W8WTS	6359C	Jim	Auburn TWP	OH
167	NN7X	10655	Lee	Gladstone	OR
168	W8IQ	7557T	Kurt	Toledo	OH
169	NZ4Z	13001	Steve	Harrodsburg	KY
170	NO8C	7239S	Mike	Miller City	OH
171	K6LPQ	11196	Don	Salem	WV
172	KE4KY	2622T	Glenn	Fisherville	KY
173	WD9JEN	11921	Mark	Arlington Heights	IL
174	W0QL	3525	Mark	Foxfield	CO
175	KC8IOC	1588	Jeff	Dayton	OH
176	N8AMM	3198T	Don	Morenci	MI
177	VE3KCY	12112	Ken	Alma	ON
178	K5FSE	14329	Jack	Cumming	GA
179	WA0ETE	1219	Roger	Omaha	NE
180	W8TY	1989	Jon	Elida	OH
181	AC8NS	11501	Hop	Dayton	OH
182	AD4CJ	2687	Tim	Brentwood	TN
183	W9JN	1415	John	Junction City	WI
184	K8EIJ	9313	Jim	London	OH
185	KB9ORH	4913	Kerry	Crown Point	IN
186	W9CTW	9942	Craig	Pleasant Plains	IL
187	VE3RDE	13907C	Roger	Ottawa	ON
188	WB4FDT	2773	Pip	Baltimore	MD
189	K1GTS	12729	Greg	Epping	NH
190	W9GOC	1899	Fredrick	Mount Horeb	WI
191	N8IVE	12669	Dennis	Cortland	OH
192	AE4FH	14423	Faith	DeLand	FL

193	WX4TV	14424	James	DeLand	FL
194	WB9LPU	317	Rich	Speedway	IN
195	WP4F	2873	Danny	Toa Alta	PR
196	KP4TC	12087	PETER	Mayaguez	PR
197	KI8JY	10751T	Dave	Beavercreek	OH
198	NM8W	7136	Craig	Bowling Green	OH
199	KB8TXZ	4846	Jim	Orion	MI
200	N3IOD	10942	Bill	Frankford	DE
201	W3YX	139T	Scott	Erie	PA
202	W6VM	3331	Steve	Akron	OH
203	KA3LUN	15025	Bryan	Greenville	PA
204	N4TIA	162	Alex	Brooksville	FL

SUCH A HAM

SH-005



Ron and Larry have been working all day on installing my clothesline. Isn't that sweet of them?

Seriously, Ron AC2C, and Larry AH6AX do a great job of securing our booth and scheduling ops to man the booth. Curt WA2JSG, brings a great collection of SKCC awards for display.

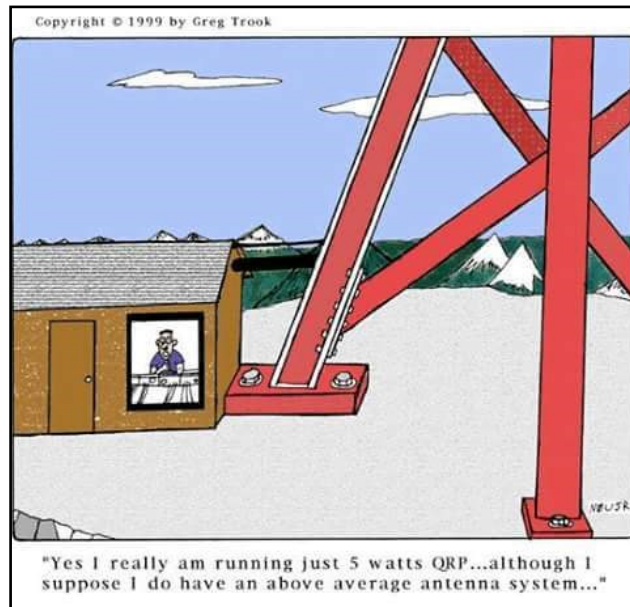
It's a great place to stop-by, enjoy a good conversation, meet friends you have had QSOs with and to sit and relax. Join us next year!

QRO and QRP

If you want to start a heated discussion just make it QRO vs QRP. We each have our own feelings on this topic and it's very doubtful any of us can be swayed from our view (in this case, choice of power). I have operated both modes like most of us; worked my QRP WAS, WAC and DXCC. I also have WAS, WAC and DXCC with QRO. You hear the arguments:

QRP guy: "I worked DL7UX with just 5 watts on 40m!"

QRO guy: "Yes, DL7UX has a 6 element 40m yagi at 200 feet and hears well!"



Good ears, good propagation, great location and outstanding gear...does it really matter? As long as you're in the log of the station you're trying to work, that's what counts! We seem to get lost to the fact that making the contact is what counts, not whether you did it QRP or QRO. Perhaps we spend too much time on what "we" did rather than giving credit to the guy at the other end of the QSO who made the QSO possible.

I have heard people complain regarding DXpeditions, "poor ops, never stood by for QRP stations" or "darn DX, spent too much time trying to work QRP stations." Like wise, "great ops pulled my

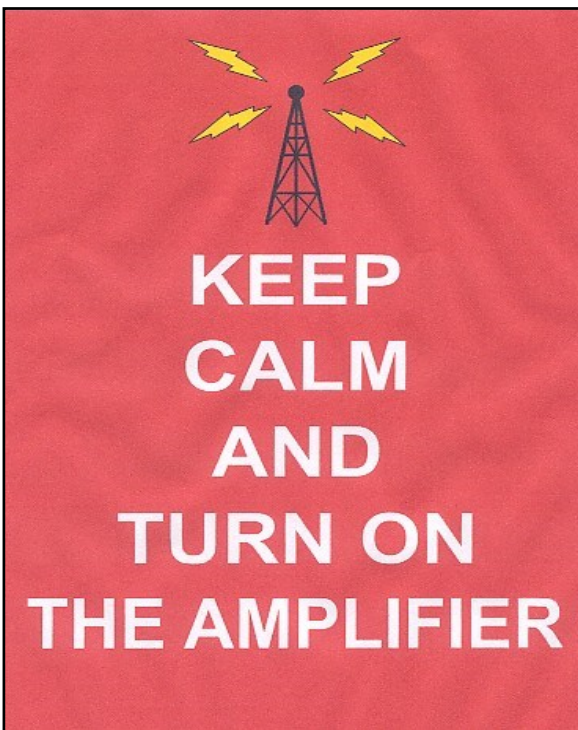
QRP station out of the pileups" is also heard and "booming DX signal, my KW just blasted through to them." All of these comments don't take into consideration propagation, equipment and existing conditions at the DX end.

Next time you work "a good catch" (DX or contesting) whether it's QRP or QRO on your end, give credit to the station and op at the other end that truly makes your QSO possible. You need to be in "his" log to make it a QSO!

We'll keep arguing QRP vs QRO but it's just an argument, it's the QSO that counts!

These are just my humble opinions as one who has operated both QRP and QRO, been one calling and been the DX others were seeking.

73,
Ted K8AQM 1629S



A Not Very Common Meeting

As a young radio officer in the early nineteen-seventies, times when cargo ships still had shapes that deserved feminine names I visited San Juan and Ponce on Puerto Rico. Memories of that visit blurred with the time. Thirty years later on board *Sea Cloud*, one of the most beautiful four masted barques ever built, I roamed the Caribbean waters for a few months. All those famous islands and places remained only in binocular proximity. The demanding passengers required an ever present radio officer. It looked like I will never really see those places.

So it did not require much pushing when my wife started to mention a Caribbean cruise. This February we then decided for a round trip aboard M/S Carnival Liberty starting in San Juan, PR. Not to fly so far in the last moment, thus allowing some time to adapt to time and climate changes, we booked a room in San Juan four days ahead of the cruise. I sent a word of our arrival to a few SKCC members with whom I had QSOs. Pablo, KP4SJ was the one who immediately responded with a warm invitation.



Pablo showed up at our hotel on the second morning of our Puerto Rican stay. After several SKCC QSOs, comment exchanges on K3UK SKED page and all the e-mail prior to our arrival it was already like meeting an old friend. And what a great host he was! Accompanied by Julio, NP3CW he drove us for two days all across the eastern part of the island. At La Marquesa Forest Park in Guaynabo we made friends with colorful parrots. El Yunque Rain Forest surprised with its lush greenery, lively streams and waterfalls. A few rain showers just confirmed accurately chosen name. We tasted delicious lunch-

eon, Puerto Rican style roast pork, on the so called Pork Highway in the mountainous town of Guavate from where we returned along the endless Atlantic beaches. For dinner Pablo's XYL Letty treated us with more Puerto Rican delicacies in a warm homey atmosphere. A cute addition was a small guitar and cuatro (a Puerto Rican string instrument) concerto by Pablo's grandson Josue.

What about ham radio, one will ask. Sorry, too little time. With myself restricted to the apartment balcony and the two funny spirals protruding from it, I first admired Julio's antenna farm and then Pablo's tower with the beam and wires. From Pablo's shack I made one single 20 m QSO. The victim of my rather nervous keying



was Mike, K5MP #1537T. Although it was a pleasant surprise that Carnival Cruise Lines permit amateur radio equipment on board, I never seriously thought of borrowing a small portable rig for a single week packed with daily land trips.

Thanks Pablo, thanks Julio, hasta la vista Puerto Rico, good by Caribbean!

Vince, S52CC
SKCC # 5011T



N3JJT...A Very “Neat” Station but....

My friend Scott N3JJT #255T, sent this very neat picture of his shack. My grandfather use to say, “a place for everything and everything in its place.” He would definitely approve of Scott’s station! However, I have often seen signs in similar situations of “neat shacks” that said something like, “a neat shack is a sign of a sick mind!”

I checked with Scott’s good friend Tony KD8BBK #2443T, and Tony says that in Scott’s case there is far more than a grain of truth to that old statement about shacks and sick minds! So “I’m just sayin’.....”



Dave, N9ZXL #7114T Is At It Again!

Several issues back I ran an article about the keys being made by Dave N9ZLX and ran several pictures of keys Dave has made including a bug shown at this past Dayton. Dave made a key called the “Dub Bug” and it had two separate bugs mounted on one stand and each bug could be adjusted separately for a different speed, thus you could have one bug set for slower speeds and one set for a higher speed; switching between the two was just a matter of moving your fingers from one to the other.

Although running across Dave on 40 cw, I really hadn’t heard much from him. But, just checkout Dave’s latest creation.



That’s a folded back-on-itself bug! I didn’t get any dimensions from Dave but I suspect this bug could be made quite small and might be perfect for those who do backpacking and field operations and want something a bit better than a straight key.



The bug here shows some fine craftsmanship and it would no doubt please anyone to have a bug made like this sitting on their operating table.

It never seems to stop amazing me at the talent within SKCC when it comes to crafting

“manual operating” telegraph keys. If you have a “crafted” key please consider sending a picture to the “Rag Chew,” I am sure others would like to see your work too. Dave, keep up the good work and let us see other fine crafted N9ZXL keys!

Thanks es 73,



SKCC at Visalia...2016

Living in the Midwest I can make it to Dayton in 2.5 hours, no sweat, but getting to the International DX Convention in Visalia, CA is entirely different matter! This year I got to go to Visalia and I announced my trip on the reflector and wondered if any other SKCC types would be there. Kelsey, KK6AW #2806S responded he'd be there. We agreed to meet and I had a great time "rag chewing" with Kelsey who I had had many QSOs with through the years.



We spent a good two hours talking radio and other interests we both have. I couldn't think of a better way to pass a pleasant afternoon at the convention than chewing the fat with Kelsey!

I traveled with AC8W Stan, #2813, and



before long Stan ran into Todd KH2TJ #6691. Todd and his wife are back living stateside but decided to keep the KH2 call (who can blame him!). That's AC8W Stan on the left and KH2TJ in the middle. We had a great talk about DX and operating SKCC. Todd is a QRP enthusiast.

It was a great trip out west to visit the "mecca" of DX conventions and meeting a couple of SKCCers just made it that much better! Thanks Kelsey, Todd and Stan for the great time.



AM QSOs

Grab that cup of coffee early in the morning....Saturdays or before work...and head for the shack! You'll be surprised at the number of SKCCers that can be found on 40 and 30m calling CQ and enjoying a QSO and coffee to start their day. I admit summer is a bit rough and fall and winter are better times for 40 and 30m, but there is plenty of SKCC activity to be found during the summer season.

It's a pleasure to hear a JA or VK coming through the QRN early on 30 or 40m and it just might be that "last one" you need for that SKCC award. The bands are open, make that call and enjoy a great start to your day!

Tech Review: LD-5 HF Ham Radio QRP Transceiver

James Hannibal - KH2SR

20591 Canyon View Dr.

Saratoga, CA 95070

USA

shootanyangle@yahoo.com



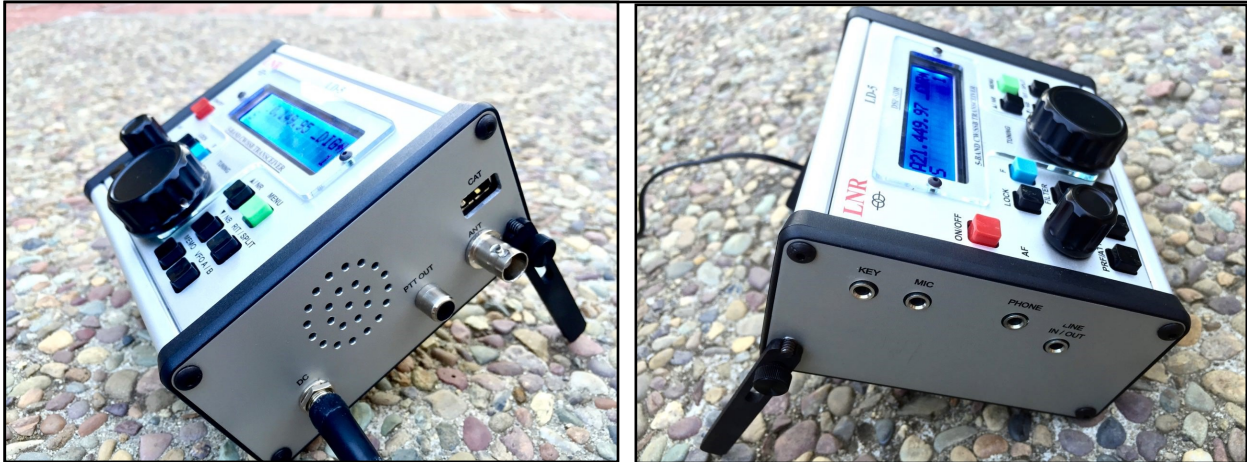
The LD-5 made in USA, by LNR Precision Inc. is an amazing little QRP 5 band SSB/CW Amateur Radio Transceiver that's small and light enough to fit in just about any backpack, thus making this one of the most portable SSB multi-band HF rigs currently on the market. Not only is the LD-5 small in size at 4.724"L X 3.937"W x 1.957"H, it is also very lightweight, weighing in at only 1.19 pounds (without microphone, antenna, or battery).

The LD-5 covers the following HF ham radio bands: 40m, 30m, 20m, 17m, & 15m.

One of the features of the LD-5 I have really enjoyed is how each of the 5 bands has its own independent dual VFO. This really comes in handy when switching back and forth between bands/frequencies and really sped up operations for me compared to other QRP rigs I have used. I found the receiver to be exceptionally sensitive and able to pick up the weakest of signals.

There are a few features that you typically wouldn't find on most QRP HF rigs that the LD-5 has, such as CW/SSB VOX, noise blanker, notch filter, noise reduction, PRF/ATT (Pre Amp/Attenuator) and even speech compression. Based on my testing, I found all of these features extremely effective at improving my ability to hear and be heard by other hams. I am convinced that several of the contacts I made would have been impossible if I didn't utilize the various filtering, noise reduction, and speech compression capabilities that are built into this amazing little radio. As far as I know, the LD-5 is the only 5 band QRP SSB HF ham radio with all these features that is sold new for under \$600.

The LD-5 is capable of much more than just SSB and CW. It is also capable of various digital modes such as PSK, RTTY, SSTV, and even HF APRS when used with the proper TNC/modem and computer with sound card. The menu system contains nearly two dozen settings that allow you to custom tailor the LD-5 to suite your specific needs and preferences. Luckily, there are also 13 buttons and 2 knobs on the LD-5 that allow you to manipulate many features without diving into the menu system. The tuning knob also has a really good sturdy feel and smooth movement while tuning. I especially enjoyed the bright and high contrast display with its power saving auto off feature for the backlight.



You might not realize it when looking at it but the LD-5 is actually an SDR (Software Defined Radio) with a software platform that was created exclusively for the LD-5. It uses only one Kenwood driver for CAT system fast connectivity.. When I asked LNR for more details on this being an SDR, they quickly gave me the following very detailed response:

“It combines a powerful low internal noise schematic of a DSP and a special differential algorithm is applied for IQ processing of the channels with phase suppression of the unwanted side-band channel. Balancing ADC and DAC gives additional noise floor reduction and the receiver can handle interfering signals that are 100 dB stronger than the desired signal at a frequency separation of 10 kHz, and is about 130 dB stronger at 50 kHz separation. As the receiver and transmitter are using the same DSP channel, there is no gap between the receiver performance and the transmitter performance. So, there is a clean neighborhood on the bands. At the development stage, our intentions were motivated by the TX sideband noise of existing SDR manufacturers, so our aim was, to fully equalize our transmitter to have noise performance that is compatible with the best modern receivers, or even better. After an arduous year of development , we think we achieved it.”

A nice assortment of input and output ports allow you to widely customize the way you use the LD-5. These include jacks for: line in/out, phone out (headphones/speaker), mic in, key (CW straight key or iambic paddles), PTT out, BNC antenna connector, 12 volt DC power input, and even a USB/CAT port. The built-in USB port is another stand out feature on the LD-5. Not only will the USB port allow you to update the radios firmware, it will also allow you to interface the LD-5 radio with your computer, which allows you to use Mac/PC ham radio software programs such as N1MM, MiXW, Fldigi, and more.

During my field testing of the LD-5, I brought it along on a road trip up and down the California, Oregon, & Washington coastline. When stopped long enough, I would set up the EFT-MTR 40m/30m/20m 65' QRP End Fed antenna made by LNR. On one occasion, I was fortunate enough to stay on the second floor of a bed and breakfast situated on a hill. This allowed me to drape the 65' EFT-MTR End Fed antenna out

the window and down the roofline in somewhat of a sloper configuration, which worked quite well with the LD-5.

During shorter stops at various beaches and state parks along the coast, I set up the LD-5 with my “Wonder Wand” and “Miracle Whip” antennas, which sets up in seconds, packs up small enough for most backpacks, and doesn't require any masts, ropes, tripods, clamps or long wire. Both are all band 52” vertical telescopic whip antennas with a built-in dial for tuning to each band. These antennas work fairly well with the LD-5 and I have been able to make contact with hams that were within a couple hundred miles away while using them.



During another trip, I used the same 65’ End Fed EFT-MTR from LNR in a sloper configuration with a 22’ collapsible fiberglass mast while camping on a beach near Santa Cruz, CA. With that particular setup, I made SSB contacts on 20m & 40m at 573 miles into Oregon, 676 miles into Washington State, 202 miles into Nevada, 657 miles into Idaho, and 860 miles into Montana. With each of these contacts, I was only using 4 Watts of RF power output.

A couple of my longer distance SSB contacts using the LD-5 included several different contacts that were 1,352 miles away in Kansas on 20 meters while using only 5 watts. My longest distance contact with the LD-5 so far was a 2,349 mile contact on the 15 meter band made to New York, again with only 5 watts of output power. The antenna I utilized to make these contacts is my Carolina Windom 40 off center fed dipole, which is up around 30 something feet off the ground in an inverted V configuration.

The LD-5 is known for being able to make much long range contacts than I have made with it so far. For example, my contact at LNR Precision Inc. informed me that while conducting a demo of the LD-5 at the Huntsville, AL Hamfest this year, a customer made contact with a fellow ham operator located on Rodrigues Island in the Indian Ocean while using a simple 20 meter end fed antenna oriented vertically which is made by LNR. That’s an impressive 10,330 miles! Not too shabby for a 5 watt radio that can fit inside a kid’s lunch box.

As far as the performance of the included microphone is concerned, I think it works great. It produces clean and clear audio without any noticeable over modulation, even when talking quite loud into it. A small speaker is built into the right side panel of the radio. The speaker produces decently clean audio but is a little on the weak side when it comes to audio volume output, especially when there are background noises such as road noise, wind, or waves breaking on a nearby beach. If you are in a nice quiet spot, the speaker works great, but if there is any background noise, I recommend using headphones or an external amplified speaker.

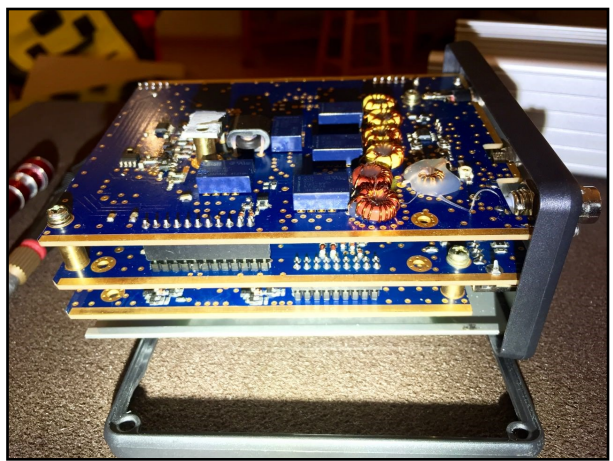
Even though the included mic works great, in my opinion, it's not the best fit for this radio. Considering this radio is designed to be compact for portable use such as backpacking, I find it odd to include a microphone that takes up nearly the same amount of space as the radio itself when packed. Luckily, the included mic can be unplugged and replaced with whatever kind of mic you prefer to use. I plan on modifying a MFJ-285 mini HT speaker microphone to work with the LD-5. These little inexpensive HT mic's are roughly 1/4 the size of the included mic and might be better suited for QRP backpackers with limited room in their packs.

A power plug and cable with bare ends is also included for you to connect to the battery or power supply of your choice. The LD-5 is designed to be powered from 10.5 volts to 15 volts DC. I happened to have 2 fairly compact 12 volt batteries on hand. One is a SLA (Sealed Lead Acid), the other is a LiPo (Lithium Polymer). The LD-5 worked flawlessly with both types of batteries. If you plan on carrying this radio around in a backpack, I highly recommend going with a small 12v lithium battery since they weigh around 1/3 the weight when compared to an SLA battery of comparable power capacity. You might also want to consider a small lightweight folding solar panel so you can keep your battery topped off when operating from the great outdoors.

I was fortunate enough to have a spare small waterproof foam padded hard case



that is not much bigger than the LD-5. There was just enough room in the case to also cram in a lithium battery, power cable, mini straight key, headphones, counterpoise, small logbook, mini pencil, and a printout of the ARRL band plan for good measure. This allowed me to pack the LD-5 into a backpack and hit the trail without worrying about it getting banged up against my other gear. Protective cases such as this are in my opinion a necessity and can be easily found in a wide variety of local and online stores.



One of the really nice finishing touches on the LD-5 isn't high tech at all. It's the little fold out legs that allow you to conveniently prop up the radio at a much more comfortable viewing angle. So many QRP radios and kits out there just don't come with a stand/foot and it can really impede your ability to use the radio. To me, this simple feature is the icing on the cake for this radio, making it a real pleasure to use.

I have used several different portable HF QRP rigs now and even built a few myself. Out of all of them, the LD-5 from LNR is by far my favorite. I found its ability to filter noise and pick out those weak signals very impressive. It has tons of great features, quick to setup, easy to operate, reliable, and just plain fun. Its compact size and lightweight construction make it an ideal radio for portable operations such as camping or backpacking. I can tell that LNR takes great pride in their work based on the build quality of their products as well as their staffs willingness to happily help you out with any questions or problems you might possibly encounter. I highly recommend this radio for anyone who is interested in operating portable QRP in the great outdoors without breaking the bank.

Made in USA

Price: \$575

For more info, please visit the following website: www.lnrprecision.com



Christmas in July?

Sure it's July but why not begin that campaign for a new rig for Christmas now? With lots of new gear hitting the market there are plenty of facts and figures to check before you seriously consider (whine) for a new rig to operate in the 2017 K3Y event. They say, "the early bird gets the worm" so begin your campaign now! Remember too, it doesn't have to be "brand new," rigs with "experience" are proven and can provide a tremendous amount of pleasure!

Instructions for WW I 1911 Military Spark Gap Transmitter

Key: Should be worked with a play of not less than three thirty-second's inch. There is a tendency for it to stick, and this should be met by grasping the knob and working with an upward as well as downward stroke. When the interrupter sticks or flames badly the key should not be touched until interrupter is adjusted.

Via Rich K8UV

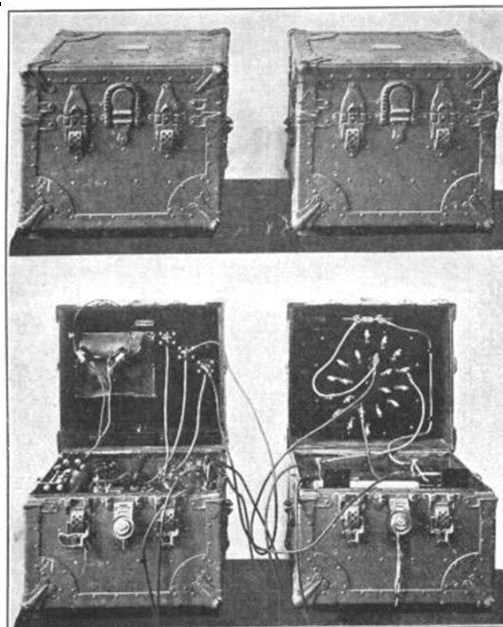


Fig. 108.—U. S. Signal Corps pack sets shown open and closed. Receiving apparatus on the left.

Why I Couldn't Make Dayton This Year

There are several reasons people give for not making Dayton. The most common one, the lower right hand corner, "the wife wouldn't let me!" Yup, had that happen in 1991, wife said, "you can't go to Dayton, we're living in Japan!" Didn't seem like a good excuse to me but I decided not to make her angry!

The second most common reason is "couldn't afford it!" Well, on the left side is a pretty good budget to use in your defense. Note the "\$0" spent on "Chicken Band" gear, always a good thing to point out. 42 miles walked certainly improves your physical well being. The "band booster support should go over big for those of you with children in band! Only 19% of any money spent on food, coupled with the 42 miles walked of course your health will improve!

Pont out all these favorable spending and health figures and maybe you will be able to attend Dayton next year and visit us at the SKCC booth...we do have chairs for relieving those aching feet doing the 42 mile walk! See you there in 2017!

Hamvention Facts

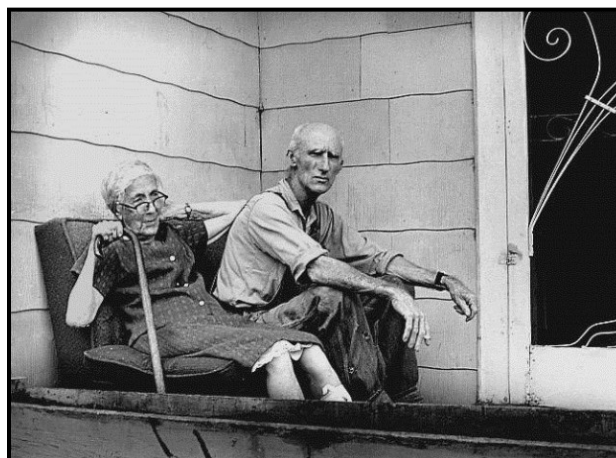
Serving Size 3 days

Amount Per Serving

Miles walked	42	Cash spent	\$800
% Daily Value*			
Boat anchors	99%		
Collins	80%		
Hallicrafters	59%		
Chicken Band	0%		
Useless trinkets	62%		
Handheld Rigs	35%		
Yaesu, Kenwood, Icom	35%		
Alinco, Chinese & FRS	22%		
High school band booster beer	100%		
Greasy burgers	9%	Intermod	99%
Hara dogs	10%	Fun & friends	100%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a typical ham.
Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your personality and if you are a tool or not.

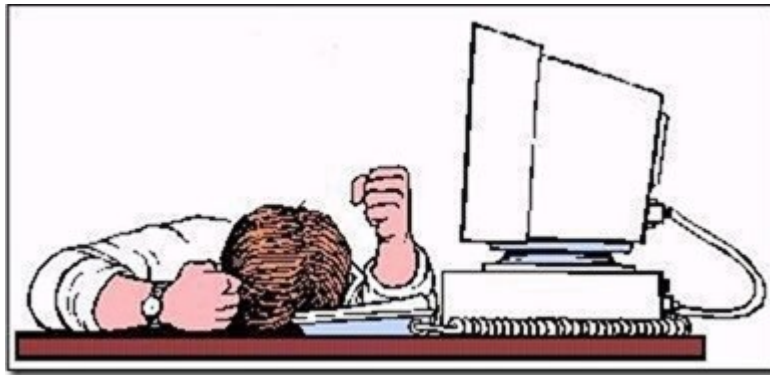
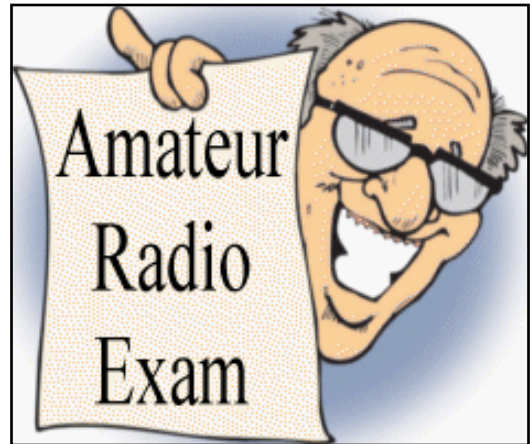
© www.Hamvention.com



W1UL's Study Course

In the last issue of the "Rag Chew" Urb W1UL, presented a study guide link for upgrading through the various license classes. During the past three months I am happy to report that four Generals using Urb's study guide upgraded to Extra class in my area. The candidates didn't pass on their first try but were extremely close and felt that Urb's study guide was extremely helpful.

Most of us hit the computer generated tests on the computer hoping that "familiarity" with taking lots of tests and then seeing the correct answers will eventually give us the success on the real test at our



the web site Urb has for his study guide.

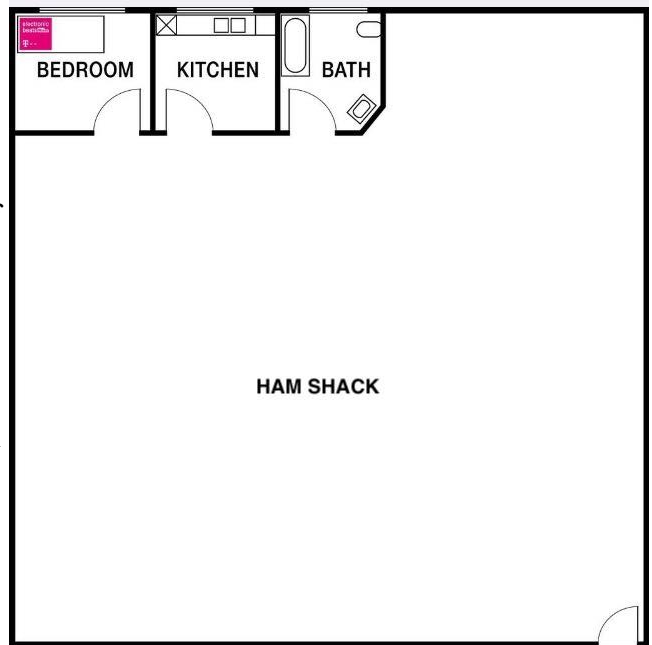
local radio club's VE testing. As Urb says, "why study four possible answers when only one is correct?" As a former teacher Urb is right, don't waste time looking and studying incorrect answers, study only those that are the right answers!

It appears to me that if you're thinking of upgrading you might want to seriously check-out

KD8VSQ's New Home Floor Plan

Got this floor plan from Jeremy KD8VSQ #13072 for his new home. What do you think, I think he has it about right! It seems that no matter how much room you allow for radio in a home/shack, it never is enough room! The more room we have the more "goodies" we seem to fill it with and of course it is all absolutely necessary and needed (that's what I tell the XYL anyway).

I need to talk with KD8VSQ to make sure that he builds this "dream" home/shack on at least 120 acres so he can erect an appropriate antenna farm. It wouldn't be worth the investment to build this dream home on a 1-2 acre lot! What applies to the size of the shack also applies to the size of the area needed for antennas!



Halifax, NS ARC's "Down East" Flea Market

VE9CB Dave #12520 (W8SR) attended the Down East Hamfest and Flea Market where he ran into VE1JG Jim Gilford (aka...VE1KEY). Dave made an appeal to Jim that he ought to consider joining SKCC and perhaps I should drop Jim a line and encourage him to join SKCC. Well, by the time I sent Jim an email (one day later), Jim had joined SKCC! The following is a note I received from Jim and several pictures taken by VE9CB of Jim's Speed-X collection of keys. On the second page are pictures of a Speed-X key Jim has been unable to identify. Perhaps someone in the club can provide him with information on this key? You can contact Jim at: jimguilford@gmail.com

I am a member of SKCC and my # is 15746. I am registered under VE1KEY which is the call sign that I use only when using a straight key. I joined SKCC four days ago and intend to get busy on the air when I can find some spare time!

I'm treasurer of the HARC and involved with the club at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. We staff the wireless room and have on site a fully operational CM-11 transceiver which I used when a young fella in the navy. My collection of straight keys is in excess of 150 and also have a number of MacElroy keys but of the straight variety. I display a part of my collection every year at Halifax, Moncton and Greenwood flea markets. This year, as you know, I'm displaying my collection of Speed-X at all three events and next year plan on showing my collection of MacElroy keys.



Speaking of Speed-X, I have a Speed-X that I have been unable to track down. I have never seen one like it and don't know anyone that can identify it - perhaps you, or someone you know can help?



Anyone in the club know about this key? If you can help Jim provide information on this model I'm sure Jim would enjoy hearing from you. Jim can be reached at:

jimguilford@gmail.com

Junker

My friend and SKCCer Brian, KG8CO #6362 recently went to the big German hamfest In "Friedrichshafen" (Brian has been to Visalia, Dayton and now Friedrichshafen all this year!).



Just off the top of my head I said, "Brian, if you see a Junker, pick it up for me." Darn if he didn't find one so now I own a Junker! Some say it's the best straight key even mass produced, I'll give you my opinion after I try it out for awhile. Goes to show, if you don't ask, you'll never know ...thanks Brian!

Ted K8AQM 1629S

KD8DEU

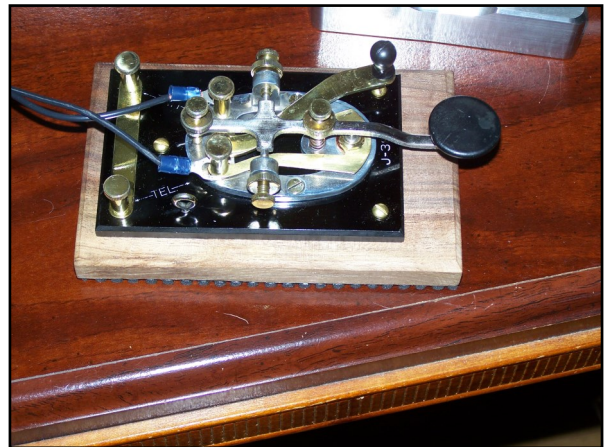
KD8DEU Al, #10232S sent these great pictures of his station. Al recently acquired an old J-38 and had it refurbished and added to his collection of keys. You can see in the picture it is a beauty. Al sent along a message about a bit of the history of the key:



"It was given to me by my son-in-law, Jeff Pender K8KZB and it was given to him by John Kroll, K8LJG. Guess I could always return it to Jeff if a nice Lionel or McElroy comes along.

Dad never talked about the war much. I remember him mentioning wires in trees and static. Have pictures of many countries in Western Europe with his troop. He never played ham radio here in the states . . . probably too painful of a memory."

But the J-38 isn't Al's only key, that's a "Begali Sculpture Arrow" there in the center, an awesome straight key! Along with that K3, scope and auto tuner Al makes and will be making many more QSOs with both the J-38 and the Begali Sculpture Arrow! ...great station Al!



HAM RADIO OPERATORS



ICE CREAM TRUCK

Summertime!

Yes it's summertime, hot weather, blue skies and bright sun, that means the "ice cream truck cometh." Children look forward to the arrival of the ice cream truck and if you believe this picture then I suspect most of us would look forward to this "ice cream" truck arrival!

There are many "flavors" offered by the "ice cream" truck and antennas, rigs, keys computers and monitors are among my favorites. Why just the other day the "ice cream" truck delivered five new monitors and a used two element 40m yagi here! Life is good in the summertime and especially when you have a ham radio ice cream truck in your neighborhood!