

The e-Dipole

Radiating the News of the Marple Newtown Amateur Radio Club

September 2006

Next Club Meeting: Thurs. Sept. 7th, 7 p.m. at The Gauntlett Center

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THE INTRODUCTION TO THE e-DIPOLE AND MEETING NOTICE

This is the premier edition of a new venture for the Marple Newtown Amateur Radio Club. This will be a short edition, one that is abbreviated because of the transitional process. In the future, there will a return to more information and a return to the use of color images to help in the monthly sharing of information and data.

The process of finalizing the format and distribution of this cost-conscious electronic version is almost complete.

WHY AN ELECTRONIC PUBLICATION. The costs and logistics of preparing a print communications are escalating. That concept, along with the ability to be fresh and current is but a few of the ingredients in the decision to "go electronic."

WHAT HAS NOT CHANGED. The meetings will continue on the first Thursday of all but the summer months. As an example of this ongoing practice, the date of the upcoming meeting is Thursday, September 7, 2006. Continuing the previous process, the location continues to be the Robert Gauntlett Center, West Chester Pike and Media Line Road, Newtown Square.

The topic of this first meeting of the 2006-2007 year is a timely review of the recent, Delaware County Field Day experience. The collection of images from this recent educational event is being electronically processed and they will populate the next edition of *eDIPOLE*.

As a part of this abbreviated issue, there is a presentation of observations and suggestions volunteered by veteran Field Day operator Jim Miccolis, N2EY. Each reader is encouraged to read his list and come to the meeting with your own observations, comments, and suggestions

Continuing the past practices, the meeting will begin at 7 p.m. Prior to President Faust's (N3FXR) introductory [attempt at] humor, early attendees are invited to participate in the social period and exposure to the "best cookie bar in the east."

ANOTHER PART OF THE FUTURE. Plan your next construction or cleanup sessions with the reminder that the November 2006 Auction meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 2.

MARPLE NEWTOWN AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
c/o The Gauntlett Center
20 South Media Line Road at West Chester Pike
Newtown Square, Delaware County, PA 19073

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The Dipole

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Meetings, Nets, and Packet BBS

Monthly Club Meetings: First non-holiday Thursday,
7:00 p.m. at the Gauntlett Center in Newtown Square,
Delaware County. Talk-in: 147.195 repeater
Daily Weather and Information Net: Every morning at 8:30
a.m. on 147.195 repeater
Club Web Page (including online version of The Dipole):
<http://www.community.delconet.com/mnarc>
Delaware County ARES Net: Every Wednesday at 19:30 local

Minutes of the June 1, 2006 Meeting

Meeting was opened at 7:20 PM by President
Walt Faust N3FXR.

Hoagies were served prior to the start of the
meeting.

Nat W3JS Gave the Treasurers report
Neil W2GTV Missed some days on the net
due personal and work problems. Will try to
run the Net during the summer. Continue to

need Net controllers one day or more a week.
Net starts at 8:25 AM. Anyone can start the
Net if Neil is not available. Neil has John
W3KG phone number.

Walt N3FXR The Pack Rats Camel Back
weekend this weekend.

Nat W3JS Had a slide show of his trip
to South America.

Joe N3BAM Talked on 2006 Field Day
being held this month.

John WA3KFT Covered the equipment
scheduled to be used. Number of
transmitting stations. Antenna locations are set.
Amy N3RLX and Fred N3OFR are the cooks
for Field Day. Saturday food coffee and donuts
and Dinner 5:00 to 6:00 PM.
Sunday breakfast, coffee and donuts. Lunch-
leftovers.

Roger W4RFJ Logging software at all
stations. System easy to use.

Need filters for next year's Field Day.

Neil AA3AO Talked about filters.

50-50 winner Peggy KB3MOX

Attendance 37

Meeting was closed at 7:55 PM.

Bill N3ZAV

The Announcement of e-Dipole

QST QST QST

This is the first edition of the new *eDIPOLE*.
This format for the monthly publication of the
Marple Newtown Amateur Radio Club is an effort
to provide a more up-to-date publication of this
regional organization. Exit the print edition of this
longstanding voice for Amateur Radio. Enter a
contemporary method of sharing information.

The concept of "up-to-date" has multiple
meanings. One form of being "up-to-date" has as
its focus the concept of the use of available
technology. Another concept of the "up-to-date"
goal is the ability to provide the most current
information. As a bonus, should there be what
some may consider to be "breaking news," the use
of the Internet adds this capability.

One of the decisions that were instrumental in this change in formats is the concept of finance. The cost of reproduction and the anticipated increase in mailing costs could not be ignored. Another consideration is the better utilization of personnel and their available time. The flexibility of an electronic version of the Marple Newtown Amateur Radio Club voice of information successfully addresses this economy of energies and scheduling.

This change of format in no way diminishes the hope for input from both members and other readers of the *eDIPOLE*. With the increasing availability of affordable and higher-pixel digital cameras, it is hoped that there will be an increase of the submission of story information and images that will come from the recipients of the *eDIPOLE*.

This concept also incorporates some other changes. To avoid the possibility of the *eDIPOLE* being falsely judged as Spam, we are also transmitting our publication in a way that avoids this identity. A lot of growing is in this progress. Members of the Marple Newtown Amateur Radio Club are invited to become partners in each of elements of this growth.

Rules of the Air

John Malarkey, W3SMT, known for his many contributions to The Dipole, has brought his "sights" down from his favorite topics of astronomy. This contribution has to do with the flying of manned aircraft.

The Rules of Safety

1. Every takeoff is optional. Every landing is mandatory.
2. If you push the stick forward, the houses get bigger. If you pull the stick back, they get smaller. That is, unless you keep pulling the stick all the way back, then they get bigger again.
3. Flying isn't dangerous. Crashing is what's dangerous.
4. It's always better to be down here wishing you were up there than to be up there wishing you were down here.

5. The ONLY time you have too much fuel is when you're on fire.
6. The propeller is just a big fan in front of the plane used to keep the pilot cool. When it stops, you can actually see the pilot start sweating.
7. When in doubt, hold on to your altitude. No one has ever collided with the sky.
8. A 'good' landing is one from which you can walk away. A 'great' landing is one after which they can use the plane again.
9. Learn from the mistakes of others. You won't live long enough to make all of them yourself.
10. You know you've landed with the wheels up if it takes full power to taxi to the ramp.
11. The probability of survival is inversely proportional to the angle of contact while landing. Large angle of arrival, small probability of survival and vice versa.
12. Never let an aircraft take you somewhere your brain didn't get to five minutes earlier.
13. Stay out of clouds. The silver lining everyone keeps talking about might be another airplane going in the opposite direction. Reliable sources also report that mountains have been known to hide out in clouds.
14. Always try to keep the number of landings you make equal to the number of take-offs you've made.
15. There are three simple rules for making a smooth landing. Unfortunately no one knows what they are.
16. Good judgment comes from experience. Unfortunately, good experience usually comes from bad judgment.
17. It's always a good idea to keep the pointy end going forward as much as possible.
18. Keep looking around. There's always something you've missed.
19. Remember, gravity is not just a good idea. It's the law. And it's not subject to repeal.
20. The four most useless things to a pilot are the altitude above you, runway behind you, a tenth of a second ago, and fuel left on the ground.

A Collection of Wisdoms

The nicest thing about the future is that it always starts tomorrow.
 Money will buy a fine dog, but only kindness will make him wag his tail.

If you don't have a sense of humor, you probably don't have any sense at all.

Seat belts are not as confining as wheelchairs.

A good time to keep your mouth shut is when you're in deep water.

How come it takes so little time for a child who is afraid of the dark to become a teenager who wants to stay out all night?

Business conventions are important because they demonstrate how many people a company can operate without.

Why is it that at class reunions you feel younger than everyone else looks?

Scratch a dog and you'll find a permanent job.

No one has more driving ambition than the boy who wants to buy a car.

There are no new sins ... the old ones just get more publicity.

There are worse things than getting a call for a wrong number at 4 a.m. It could be a right number.

Think about this ... No one ever says, "It's only a game" when his team is winning.

I've reached the age where the happy hour is a nap.

Be careful reading the fine print. There's no way you're going to like it.

The trouble with bucket seats is that not everybody has the same size bucket.

Do you realize that in about 40 years, we'll have thousands of old ladies running around with tattoos?

Money can't buy happiness -- but somehow it's more comfortable to cry in a Corvette than in a Yugo

Strange Word Fun

- a.. A man's home is his castle, in a manor of speaking.
- b. Dijon vu - the same mustard as before
- c. Practice safe eating -- always use condiments.
- d. Shotgun wedding: A case of wife or death.
- e. Those who jump off a bridge in Paris must be in Seine
- f. Beauty is only skin deep, but ugly is to the bone.
- g. A hangover is the wrath of grapes!
- h. Does the name Pavlov ring a bell?
- i. Acupuncture is a jab well done.
- j. Reading while sunbathing makes you well red.
- k. When two egotists meet, it's an I for an I.

- l. A bicycle can't stand on its own because it is two tired.
- m. Definition of a will: A dead give away.
- n. Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.
- o. She was engaged to a boyfriend with a wooden leg but broke it off.
- p. A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.
- q. If you don't pay your exorcist, you'll get repossessed.
- r. With her marriage, she got a new name and a dress.
- s. When a clock is hungry, it goes back four seconds.
- t. You feel stuck with your debt if you can't budge it.
- u. Local Area Network in Australia: the LAN down under.
- v. Every calendar's days are numbered.
- w. A lot of money is tainted - It taint yours and it taint mine.
- x. Once you've seen one shopping center, you've seen a mall.
- y. Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead-to-know basis.
- z. Santa's helpers are subordinate clauses.

Idle Thoughts

Idle Thoughts of a Person Whose Mind Wanders

When reviewing this collection of the thoughts of a person whose mind was said to wonder, one might have the idea that this person spent too much time in the sun during the summer.

- I planted some birdseed. A bird came up. Now I don't know what to feed it.
- I had amnesia once -- or twice.
- I went to San Francisco. I found someone's heart. Now what?
- Protons have mass? I didn't even know they were Catholic.
- All I ask is a chance to prove that money can't make me happy.
- If the world were a logical place, men would ride horses sidesaddle.
- What is a "free" gift? Aren't all gifts free?
- They told me I was gullible... and I believed them.

Teach a child to be polite and courteous in the home and, when he grows up, he'll never be able to merge his car onto a freeway.

Two can live as cheaply as one, for half as long.

Experience is the thing you have left when everything else is gone.

One nice thing about egotists: they don't talk about other people.

A flashlight is a case for holding dead batteries.

My weight is perfect for my height -- which varies.

I used to be indecisive. Now I'm not sure.

The cost of living hasn't affected its popularity.

How can there be self-help "groups"?

If swimming is so good for your figure, how do you explain whales?

Show me a man with both feet firmly on the ground, and I'll show you a man who can't take off his pants.

Is it my imagination, or do buffalo wings taste like chicken?

Random Field Day Thoughts

While his work and family responsibilities have a priority in his life, Jim Miccolis, N2EY, has an impressive collection of Amateur Radio activities. In this list is his history of Field Day sites, with his first being in 1968. He has not missed a Field Day since that initial event.

This list includes his participation with the following groups: ARTICS, Southern Chester County, Marple-Newtown, Villanova, Drumlins (New York), DCARA, and the multi-club efforts of recent years.

His list includes a collection of small groups of just a few amateurs, as well as some solo efforts.

This year, both his CW expertise and his long-time operational expertise were a part of the multi-club activities in Delaware County. Borrowing from his occupational analytical skills, Jim has volunteered a collection of his observation from Field Day 2006.

As some background, Miccolis was first licensed in 1967 at the age of 13. With his first call, WN3IYC he hit the air on 80 CW with a homebrew 10 watt CW transmitter. He volunteered that he learned the code on a homebrew two-tube regenerative receiver.

With his upgrade to Technician (WA3IYC) in the spring of 1968 he then became an Advanced Class license holder in the late summer of 1968 (age 14). With humility, Miccolis added that he failed the 13 wpm code the first time. It was not his code proficiency, but the reality that the FCC examiner could not read his longhand. Proving that stubbornness is not always a bad trait, he went home and taught himself to block-print at 30 wpm.

Jim Miccolis upgrade to Extra has to wait until the summer of 1970 (age 16). This gap was not the result of a lack of skills. In those days there was a two-year requirement that stated that one could not test for the Extra Class license until the applicant had first held the General Class license for two years.

His hobby influenced his academic career. He attended the University of Pennsylvania where he earned his Electrical Engineering Degree in 1976.

The combination of expertise and the high cost of Ham Radio gear in his early days as an Amateur Radio operator, Miccolis had a wide range of homebrew, surplus and used manufactured gear through the years. In describing his Amateur Radio apparatus, he commented, "When building became so much of a habit, I just kept on doing it."

Worked for Conrail in the signal department from 1976 to 1996, he worked mostly in signal system design. This expertise now sees him working with signal design in the railroad supply industry.

With the exception of a two-year period of 1977 to 1979 when he lived in the picturesque Finger Lake region of New York, he has lived in the Philadelphia area. It was this excursion to New York State that spawned his "2-landcall." He retained that call upon his return to this area.

When he heard the comment that home construction was a "lost art," Miccolis volunteered, "It's not a lost art - there are many of us. We just don't get the ink that we used to."

When asked equipment lineup of his pure homebrew construction, he stated. "I have built six HF receivers, six HF transmitters and three HF transceivers.

He added the also constructed a collection of power supplies, test equipment, antenna matchers, control systems, VFOs, etc. This list of home-built apparatus was augmented by

a collection of converted WW2 surplus, kits (including an Elecraft K2), restored/repared manufactured gear, and plain old manufactured equipment.

Anyone witnessing his most recent Field Day activities does not have to ask N2EY, "What is your favorite mode?"

For view of his current setup, Jim Miccolis suggests <http://hometown.aol.com/n2ey/myhomepage/> visiting

With an awareness of how seriously he feels about Field Day, the following are some of Jim Miccolis' random observations on FD 2006, on what worked and what didn't, and what we can learn. Field Day is all about education, right? The items are in no particular order and all are IMHO.

- The FD site has some good features, such as trees, bathroom, adjacent fields for antennas, easy access and the pavilion with commercial power. It's not on top of a mountain but it's not down in a hole like Clayton Park. Its main limitation is that the high part isn't very big.
- More than one transmitter per band greatly limited our results. The 40 CW setup had a TS-450 with internal tuner, a 40 meter coax stub, an external tuner, and a coax-fed OCF dipole (aka Carolina Windom) that was as far from other antennas as possible. Yet when 40 SSB fired up the intermod/noise floor rose to the point that only the stronger signals could be heard. Other stations with less filtering had worse problems. "The band is noisy" comments I heard were probably about overload. It would be great if we could get a pile of Ten Tec Orions or Icom 7800s for next year, but I doubt that will happen, so we should consider a different approach. Filters and stubs will permit a rig to be free from other-bands interference, but same-band interference is another story.
- Except for a few lockups and my own ignorance about how to restart the logging computer and get *all* the features working again, the computer logging worked really well. The only reason I can see for paper logs is if the computers fail.
- Shooting the lines into the trees on Friday really saved time and effort on Saturday.

However, the endless-loop-with-pigtail method is more trouble than a simple halyard when you're working with trees rather than masts. In one case I used the endless loop to pull a new halyard, saving a lot of tangles and cuss words. Only one antenna-end per rope, though!

- The food was simply excellent. My hat is off to our chefs.
- All stations should be equipped with multiple sets of headphones, preferably with individual volume controls.
- Generator sound noise is an issue. The neighbors called the police on us! Next year, we should put anything with an engine as far towards the exit as possible.
- Certain band/modes were very underutilized for various reasons (rig failure, poor antenna, etc.) We should not count on using anything that hasn't been tested before FD.
- A few good antennas are much better than a bunch of poor ones.
- All antennas should be coax-fed. All coax should be the best we can get, and the runs as short as possible. Coax loss increases with age, particularly with coax that has a "contaminating" jacket.
- We really went to town on bonus points! About the only thing we missed is a GOTA station.
- ----

Next Year

- Station #1 - 80/40 CW - located in one corner of pavilion, with dipole (trap or windom) in soccer field.
- Station #2 - 75/40 phone/data - located in different corner of pavilion, with dipole (trap or windom) in lower field, separated as much as possible from Station #1. With careful layout, the dipoles can be essentially end-to-end, running north/south
- Stations 1 and 2 coordinate their operation so that they are not both on the same band at the same time.
- Station #3 - 20 phone/CW 5/8-wave vertical antenna with elevated radials and base matching network. Station located so that antenna can be used for natural power station

- or 100 watt station. 5/8 wave at 20 meters is about 41 feet.
- Station #4 - 10/15 phone/CW Located as far from 20-meter station as practical. Beam if possible, simple vertical if not.
 - Station #5 - VHF/UHF. Does not count as a separate transmitter. 3 to 5 element beams if possible.
 - Station #6 - Natural power. One of the other stations (probably 20 meters) is shut down and its antenna used for the natural power station until the required QSOs are made for the bonus.
 - Station #7 - Universal spare. Not really a station, but rather a rig, computer, antenna (G5RV) etc., that can be put to work if any of the above has a problem.
 - All stations equipped with tuners, stubs and/or filters for bands to be used. All stations equipped with fan and two power strips (gen power for rig, commercial power for computer/fan/etc.). All stations equipped with backup paper logs, instructions for setup, scratch paper, headphones, reading lights.
 - It should be no sweat for each HF station in the above scenario to make at least 300 contacts (that's 15 per hour for 20 hours) if weather permits. If the VHF/UHF station can make 100 contacts total, that's 1300 QSOs. With any sort of decent conditions, that's a very low estimate.
 - With only 5 stations, and the computers and accessories on commercial power, a single 5 or 10 kVA generator should easily power the entire setup. We could then place two generators side-by-side at the far end of the site, with one running and the other as backup. When the first one needs gas, the second generator is started and warmed up, the rigs shut down a few minutes, the power cables moved, and the first generator shut down. Refill the first generator when convenient. With a little practice, the power transfer could be done in moments. No hurried handling of gas or prolonged shutdown.

Some may say that going to fewer transmitters isn't as much fun as 8A. But consider:

- Which is more fun - operating a station with a good antenna and no intermod so you work a high rate, or struggling with one that hears poorly because of the other stations at the site, and has a hard time getting out due to antenna compromises?
- Would you rather put in a few hours at a high-rate station or many hours at a low-rate station?
- Forget about how many points are made - which is more *fun*? Which shows off ham radio better?

73 de Jim, N2EY

The Value of Time

If time were not such a precious and fleeting commodity, it would be interesting to change the elements in each of these definitions of time to topics that would be fitting for Amateur Radio. Instead, in the interest of time, this collection will remain in the definitions that came in what has been cited as something that had its original public appearance in a "Dear Abby" column of several years ago.

- To understand the value of **one year**: ask the student who has failed his final exam.
 - To understand the value of **one month**: ask the mother who gave birth to a premature baby.
 - To understand the value of **one week**: ask the editor of a new magazine.
 - To understand the value of **one day**: ask the laborer who has ten children to feed.
 - To understand the value of **one hour**: ask the lovers who are waiting to meet.
 - To understand the value of **one minute**: ask the person who has missed a bus or plane or train.
 - To understand the value of **one second**: ask the person who just missed an accident.
 - To understand the value of **one millisecond**: ask the person who won the SILVER medal.
-