



THE COMPASS



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT SOUTH BAY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

VOLUME 32 ISSUE 1

“..serving the community through Public Service.”

January, 2004

GSBARC 2004 OFFICERS

President: Walter Wenzel, KA2RGI
Vice Pres: David Wandell, N2UHR
Treasurer: Tom Carrubba, KA2D
Corr. Sec.: Scott Verity, KC2FBV
Rec. Sec.: Steve Schwenker, K2JY
Dir. 2004: Charles Rousselet, N2MZK
Dir. 2004: Jay Eichner, N2PIK
Dir. 2005: Dom Stengele, WA2UJI
Dir. 2005: Robert Smithline, N0UH

Upcoming GSBARC Events

Board Meeting – 2nd Thursday 8:00 PM

February 12
March 11
April 8

VE Session – 4th Sunday 12:00 PM

February 22
March 21
April 25

General Meeting – Last Thur. 8:00PM

January 29
February 26
March 25
April 29

Open House 12:00 – 2:00PM

Every Saturday @ Town Hall EOC

NETS

Newsline Report -

Monday 7:00 PM 146.685/R

Club Info Net -

Monday 7:30 PM 146.685/R

DX/Contest Info -

Monday 8:00 PM 146.685/R

TOBARES Net -

Monday 8:15 PM 146.685/R

Swap ‘n Shop Net -

Tuesday 7:30 PM 146.685/R

10 M Net -

Tuesday 8:00 PM 28.320

REPEATERS

2 M 146.685/146.085 PL 110.9
1 1/2 M 223.860/222.260 PL 131.8
70 CM 440.850/445.850 PL 114.8

President's Message

By Walter, KA2RGI

JANUARY THAW?

I hope everyone is surviving this years winter. Record cold and much snow. I can not wait until Spring. How about you.

BUDGET AND EXPENSES

This month we have to go over the budget for the upcoming year and also present some potential expenses to the membership. Please plan to attend the meeting and we will go over the items.

HELP WANTED

We have a few open positions for club members to assist with:

- 1) Dave, N2UHR is looking for a person to share the net control duties for the weekly Club Info Net and Newline Report. His job commitments have been conflicting with his ability to handle to nets on a regular basis. Help out by being a backup Net Control.
- 2) Field Day Coordinators: We need a few people to voluteer to assist with the coordination of this years Field Day.
- 3) John, KB2ZGS has requested that someone take over the refreshments committee. He has been unable to make complete the task because of recent health issues.

PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

Please remember to add to your events calander that the Suffolk County Half Marathon is March 28th this year and we do need your assistance. Last we were short a few people and had a couple of issues with the coverage. So if you can assist please plan to participate.

We have also been notified that the Special Olympics has moved their office from Brookhaven to Babylon and thus we will be tasked with the coordination duties for those events also. More information to follow as we get them.

Happy Birthdays For Jan. 2004
Another year older, Another year smarter

KB2RZY, Lee
N2OCK, Ed
WA2PJF, Vito
KA2YMQ, Jonathan

If your birthday is not listed we may not have all the info in our database



News of Interest

Editors Note

If you have any topics or websites of ham or computer related interests you would like to see appear in the newsletter please email me at ehowley@optonline.net



WebSite of the Month

Radio or computer related

Something To Warm Your Ham's Ears On Those Chilly Winter Days by Scott KC2FBV

Have you ever manned a special event or contesting station in the dead of winter and wished that someone made a set of headphones that fit in a pair of comfortable earmuffs?

Well, someone has. Although designed with MP3, CD, & cassette players in mind, there's a product by 180s that does exactly that. They're a pair of stereo headphones that fits comfortably inside their warm fleece ear warmers. The Ear Warmer wraps around the back of the head. This allows the wearer to wear additional winter gear (hat & scarf) or to pull up the hood on a parka.

With a simple adapter (available at your local Radio Shack) to fit the headphones plug into your favorite HF rig, your ears are ready brave a cold, windy special event station.

Specifications: (As Provided By The Manufacturer)
34 mm deep to better deliver bass quality.
Frequency Response: 20-20,000 Hz
Sensitivity: 103 db/mW
Cord Length: 1.1 m/43"

Retail Price:

Head Warmers: \$25.00 UPC# 6-46912-70047-0
(Purchased at Kohl's for \$12.50)
Stereo Head Phones: \$20.00 UPC# 6-46912-70000-5
(Purchased at Kohl's for \$10.00)

For Additional Information on these headphones & ear warmers, please see <http://www.180s.com/> (or <http://www.kohls.com>).

THE \$4 SPECIAL

by Joe Tyburczy, W1GFH

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING
BABYLON TOWN HALL EOC LINDENHURST, NY

Thursday December 18, 2003
No Minutes were taken because of end of year party.



MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
BABYLON TOWN HALL EOC LINDENHURST, NY

Thursday January 8, 2004
Minutes were not submitted by deadline.



Sure, you can find "all-band wire antennas" for sale in the back pages of Ham magazines costing \$150 or more. But beware: *Marconi spins in his grave everytime a ham buys an aerial instead of building it!*

Look, the plain and simple truth is that wire antennas for the HF bands were intended to be *hand-made* and not store-bought. Untold generations of intrepid Radio Hams have fashioned their own equipment out of spit and baling wire. In this world of microprocessor controlled micro-rigs, this may be your only chance to build something and actually see it work on the air. Think about it.

Another bonus of "rolling your own" antenna is that it costs you next to nothing. Don't be intimidated by SWR, either. Your rig will not blow up and kill you. Most modern rigs will politely refuse to transmit into a really bad match. A perfect 1:1 SWR is for sissies, anyway. All *real* hams have conducted perfectly good QSO's at 3:1, and even 10:1 at some time or another. Anyhow, I recommend a tuner. This, you can buy over the counter with a clear conscience.

I am a big believer in balanced line vs. coax. The basic "W1GFH \$4 SPECIAL" shown below is a variation of the type of exceptional skyhook I've been using for years. I've tried the commercial 450-ohm ladder line, but prefer 300-ohm TV twinlead, and the cheaper the better. Forget all that crap about impedance, wavelength, and velocity factor. What you really need to concentrate on is getting an interesting set of *antenna insulators*.

Back during the disco era when I first got on the air, I got a pair of really cool antique *pyrex antenna insulators* from a flea market table in Derry, NH for 25 cents each. They looked like the kind Hiram Percy Maxim used in 1910, and seemed able to pull in exotic

DX all by themselves. The other day I found out that Radio Shack wants \$5 apiece for insulators made from some kind of white plastic crap. So I improvised my own by sawing up pieces of an acrylic adjusting rod from a discarded miniblind. I think Hiram would've been proud of me.

The tuner was an MFJ-949C I got at a swap meet for \$15 a long time ago and has connections for balanced lines on the back. A link-coupled balanced tuner arrangement like the Johnson Matchbox would be better, but use what you have. The idea is to *get on the air with a decent signal for cheap*, just like they did in the early days of ham radio!

I had a 65ft. per leg version of this antenna working in Massachusetts, and it'd tune up on all bands 80-10. At my Burbank, California QTH, I used a 35 ft. per leg version, and it tuned up on 40-10. By the way, you'll notice it's an inverted vee --- a real advantage if you don't have room for a full-on dipole in your yard. If you still don't have room, bend and angle the legs to fit the space you've got. Antennas gently bent into Z-shapes still work fine!

THE *MAGIC* OF TWINLEAD

The feedline comes straight in thru a window sash. The nice thing about the 300 ohm twinlead is that the small stuff only needs about 2" separation from metal objects in its path. (OK, so TV Twinlead won't take a kilowatt, but the 450 ohm stuff you can obtain at ham stores will. You just need to be more careful with routing it)

You can get a 4:1 balun to make the transition from the balanced line to a length of coax, so you can bring the coax into the house via a properly sealed-up feedthrough hole to avoid winter drafts if you'd like. If you really want to get nutty, try using 110VAC lamp cord ("zip" cord) as a feedline. Yeah, it'll work as a crude balanced line, believe it or not. Impedance varies, but is usually "close enough" to work. *Improvise. Experiment. Play.* Take notes of what works and what doesn't. This is what ham radio is all about.

Many of you will recognize this antenna as the venerable "double zepp" aerial, a variation of the "end-fed Zepp" -- the skyhook responsible for the dramatic

Hindenberg tragedy in Lakehurst, NJ. It seems the blimp's radio op decided to work a little DX while waiting for landing clearance. He sent out a few CO's. Unknown to him, the ladder line had twisted in the breeze, shorting the bare conductors. A brilliant spark flared up, and...well, that's another story altogether.

To see an "end-fed Zepp" version of this antenna, click here.

Alas, I never had the height to make this antenna perform the way it should. The one in Mass. was up 50 ft. and worked terrific DX. The one I have now is only up 30 ft. and gets average results. It won't outdo a yagi at 100 feet, but what will?

And for \$4....who can complain?!

ADDENDUM: November, 2002

Since writing this article, I've gotten a lot of questions. Many are curious about the end-fed Zepp. I suggest you go to L.Cebik's fine page on this subject for an explanation of the practicalities of such an antenna:

<http://www.cebik.com/gup/gup12.html>

The other question deals with feedline lengths. Is there any 'ideal' length? Yes and no. Some feedline lengths will present an extremely high impedance to the tuner on certain bands. Each installation is different, but here are some rough guidelines that may help:

Start by trying a feedline listed in the lengths below. It may take some trimming or adding of feedline to work well on the range of bands you want to cover. The worst possible feedline lengths are shown in brackets:

If Ant is 120 ft per leg it will cover 160 thru 10 meters. Feedline of 40-70 or 150- 190 feet suggested. [Avoid lines around 120 or 240 ft]

If Ant is 65 ft per leg it will cover 80 thru 10 meters. Feedline of 25-40, 80-100 or 140-160 feet suggested. [Avoid lines around 60, 120, or 180 ft]

If Ant is 33 ft per leg it will cover 40 thru 10 meters. Feedline of 40-50, 70-80, 100-110 or 130-140 feet suggested. [Avoid 30, 60, 90, 120 ft]

GSBARC 2004 VE Schedule

Jan 18 **NO VE** – Session @ HRU 2004
Feb 22 **Babylon Town Hall EOC – 12 Noon**
March 28 **Babylon Town Hall EOC – 12 Noon**
Apr 25 **Babylon Town Hall EOC – 12 Noon**
May 27 **Babylon Town Hall EOC – 12 Noon**
June **NO VE** - Field Day -6/26-6/27Babylon Town Hall
July 25 **Babylon Town Hall EOC – 12 Noon**
Aug 22 **Babylon Town Hall EOC – 12 Noon**
Sept 26 **Babylon Town Hall EOC – 12 Noon**
Oct 24 **Babylon Town Hall EOC – 12 Noon**
Nov 28 **Babylon Town Hall EOC – 12 Noon**
December **NO VE** - *Season's Greetings*

Committee Chairpersons

Club Apparel – Robert, N0UH
Club Station/Equip – Walter, KA2RGI
DX/Contesting – Tom, KA2D
Education – Walter, KA2RGI
Hamfest – Walter, KA2RGI
Library – Dom, WA2UJI
Membership – Tom, KA2D
Newsletter – Gene, KB2TXZ
Home Page – Tom, KA2D
DX Cluster – Tom, KA2D
Repeaters – Walter, KA2RGI
VE Sessions – Tom, KA2D

CLUB NET SCRIPTS

If anyone is interested in a copy of the basic 2 meter Monday night net script for GSBARC give Dave, N2UHR a call on w2gsb/r, home: 631-842-6340, or via email at: n2uhr@arrl.net, or contact Walter, KA2RGI, 631-957-0218, or via email at: ka2rgi@arrl.net.

'73 de Dave, N2UHR!

Great South Bay ARC
P.O. Box 1356
West Babylon, NY 11704-0356