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WAVELENGTH

OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE SCARBOROUGH AMATEUR RADIO CLUB INC.

January 2008 Volume 2 Issue 1

President:	Bernadine Dinnard-Williams VE3YDB Tel: (416) 750-9885 x 231
Vice Pres.	Bert Almemo VE3OBU Tel:
Past Pres.:	Bill Catlender VE3ILE Tel: (416) 439-1891
Secretary:	Ray Chow VE3ZXC (416) 443-6230
Asst. Secr.	Rudy Toroian VE3OUA
Treasurer:	Lambert Philadelphia VE3LYP (416) 750-4727
Membership:	Joe Ditta VA3JDX
Communications:	Open
Field Day:	Roderick Long VE3SOY
Education:	Ralph Muecke VE3CIW
Archives:	Gord Hogarth VE3CNA (416) 266-6734
Elmer:	Tony Fegan VE3QF
Security:	Gord Gault VE3UFF (416) 447-2285

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SARC Nets:

Sunday: 28.730 MHz.
CW 10:00 AM
SSB 10:30 AM
Tuesday: 147.060 MHz.
Thursday: 28.730 MHz.
SSB 07:00 PM

Everyone is invited to check in on CW before the nets start.

These are open nets. All licensed Hams are always welcome. Come and join us.

We also want to emphasize that 28.730 MHz. is our calling frequency. Please monitor and/or call your friends. 19:00 hrs is a good time. Normally we have 6 to 8 check-ins every evening.

Dan KB6NU, will be writing a monthly column that may be used by Club Newsletters. Here is the first one I received. It is a big help. Thanks Dan.

Tubs of Tubes

by Dan Romanchik, KB6NU'

The other day I got a call from a guy whose website I'm working on. He says he's calling from the Ann Arbor Re-use Center and that they have two tubs full of vacuum tubes there. He asked, "Do you know anyone who might want them"?

"How much are they asking for them"? I reply.
"Ten cents a piece."
"How many are there"?
"I'd guess about two hundred."

"Well, tell them I'll give him 20 bucks for all of them."

He tells them that I'll give them $20 for the lot. I hear some mumbling. He comes back on the line and says they're negotiating. After a minute or two, he says, "OK. You got them. How do I get to your house"?

I gave him directions, and in about 15 minutes, he pulls up to my house, gets out, opens the hatch, and pulls out two plastic tubs and a cardboard box with vacuum tubes in them. I can tell he was way off in his estimate. There must be at least 400 tubes in all.

There's nothing really exotic--most of them seem to have been taken out of old TV sets--but I did find a couple of 6J6s. These are the tubes used for the single-tube transmitter I have been thinking about building (see http://wv7g.home.mindspring.com/jones_6j6.html for more info). In one of the tubs, there was even a socket for the 6J6.

There are also a bunch of 6KS7s. According to the RCA tube manual, these tubes were often used as RF or IF amplifiers. That sounds like the beginning of a receiver project, doesn't it? In fact, 6SK7s were used in the receiver section of the ParaSet (http://www.mines.uidaho.edu/~glowbugs/paraset.htm), a "spy radio" used during WWII.

And, of course, there are a bunch of rectifiers to make a power supply. Now, all I have to find some cheap transformers. Anyone know a good source for them?

When he's not wondering what he's going to do with more than 400 vacuum tubes, KB6NU works CW and PSK on the HF bands and blogs about ham radio at www.kb6nu.com. You can reach him by e-mail at cwgeek@kb6nu.com.<end italics>

SB PROP @ ARL $ARLP001
ARLP001 Propagation de K7RA

ZCZC AP01
QST de W1AW
Propagation Forecast Bulletin 1 ARLP001
From Tad Cook, K7RA
Seattle, WA January 4, 2008
To all radio amateurs

SB PROP ARL ARLP001
ARLP001 Propagation de K7RA

It's a new year, and now time to review 2007 sunspot cycle progression. In 2006 there was a consensus that solar minimum would occur in early 2007, but we actually may not be there still. The latest projection in the Weekly Preliminary Report and forecast (see

1. http://www.swpc.noaa.gov/weekly/ and page 8 in the January 2 issue)
shows the bottom of the cycle between December 2007 and April 2008. Note the two predictions for the next cycle, a high estimate and a low estimate, reflecting the split consensus for the Cycle 24 prediction.

Also note the monthly (even though the URL says weekly) forecast issued on January 2 at, http://sec.noaa.gov/ftpdir/weekly/Predict.txt shows a cycle minimum for February 2008.

Exactly one year ago in Propagation Forecast Bulletin ARLP001 we wrote that 2007 would be "the year we'll likely see the end of sunspot Cycle 23, the beginning of Cycle 24, and the minima between cycles." Now a year later we might say the same about 2008.

The yearly average of the daily sunspot numbers for 1999-2007 were 136.3, 173, 170.3, 176.6, 109.2, 68.6, 48.9, 26.1 and 12.8. Average daily solar flux for the same years was 153.7, 179.6, 181.6, 179.5, 129.2, 106.6, 91.9, 79.9 and 73.1.

Compare 2006-2007 above with the last solar minimum, when in 1995-1997 the yearly averages of sunspot numbers were 28.7, 13.2 and 30.7.

In February 2007 we began calculating and tracking a 3-month moving average of daily sunspot numbers. This was done to try to spot trends. A three month period seemed like it might give us some smoothing of the often volatile daily numbers, but much shorter than the 12-month smoothed values.

Apr 06 38.5
May 06 39.7
Jun 06 28.9
Jul 06 23.3
Aug 06 23.5
Sep 06 21.2
Oct 06 24.1
Nov 06 23.1
Dec 06 27.3
Jan 07 22.7
Feb 07 18.5
Mar 07 11.2
Apr 07 12.2
May 07 15.8
Jun 07 18.7
Jul 07 15.4
Aug 07 10.2
Sep 07 5.4
Oct 07 3
Nov 07 6.9

Why is November the last month on our list? Because it is the center month for the latest 3-month average, which is for October

through December. If we were instead calculating a 12-month moving average, at the end of December the latest number would center on June 2007.

Last week's bulletin reported 10-meter openings, and said that E-skip was unexpected at this time of year. Actually there is a small peak in sporadic-E propagation centered around Winter Solstice, about 1/5 to 1/8 the intensity of the Summer sporadic season. The propagation reported by K7HP occurred just hours from the precise time of solstice.

One of several who spoke up concerning Winter E season in response to last week's bulletin was Bill Van Alstyne, W5WVO of Rio Rancho, New Mexico. Bill said that Winter E-skip is, "more likely to happen during the evening hours than during the morning, while Summer Es occurs during morning and evening about equally -- though that's just percentages and probability. We just had a nice morning Es opening a couple days ago on 6 meters."

Another Winter solstice 10-meter report came from Joaquin Montoya, EA2CCG, who reported working a number of Italian and French stations with his "fishing rod antenna." If you can read Spanish, or even want to try out one of those online language translators, check out his blog at, http://ea2ccg.blogspot.com/.

A December 30 10-meter E-skip report came from Oleh Kernytskyy, KD7WPJ of Saint George, Utah. In the morning he heard a strong beacon signal from K5AB, then he called CQ on CW with no response. He moved to phone and had many contacts, including the states of UT, NM, TX, OK, AR and FL.

See http://www.amfmdx.net/propagation/Es.htm for an interesting treatment of E-layer propagation.

So what's up for the next week? Sunspot 978 reappeared, and the daily sunspot numbers for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday were 11, 13 and 13, while solar flux was 79.4, 79.6 and 79.3. The US Air Force and NOAA Space Weather Prediction Center forecast rising solar flux values of 80 for January 4-5, 85 for January 6-8, and 90 for January 9-11. This is a slight move downward and outward. As recently as two days ago, they were predicting flux of 95 for January 7-9.

They also forecast a planetary A index for January 4-10 of 10, 10, 5, 8, 8, 5 and 5. The next unsettled to active period is predicted for January 13-14 with a planetary A index of 15. After 2100z today look for an updated forecast of solar flux and A index at, http://sec.noaa.gov/ftpdir/forecasts/45DF/010145DF.txt.

Geophysical Institute Prague predicts quiet to unsettled conditions January 4-5, unsettled January 6-7, quiet to unsettled again on January 8, and quiet conditions January 9-10.

The last few days have had very quiet with stable geomagnetic conditions. This should correlate with lower absorption of HF signals. You can see interesting very quiet numbers at, http://www.sec.noaa.gov/ftpdir/indices/DGD.txt. Note the planetary A index for January 2-3 was 1 for both days, but all of the K index readings for those days were 0. Contrast that with the high latitude college (Fairbanks, Alaska) readings for January 2. There is just one K index reading of 1, but the A index reading for that day is 0.

KN4LF writes that he has decided to make his daily propagation forecasts free again, and you can see them at, http://www.kn4lf.com/kn4lf6h.htm. He also has a sign-up option there for email bulletins.

Last, today I am buying a used car from a private party found via an online ad. The seller turned out to be the grand-daughter of the original holder of VE7BR, A.J. Spilsbury, a remarkable Canadian radio pioneer who manufactured HF gear for marine and wilderness communications in British Columbia. Spilsbury was also an accomplished painter, photographer, author of several books, and he founded a regional airline. He became a Silent Key in 2003 at age 97. I found information on him by googling his last name alone, or combined with other search terms such as "radio."

If you would like to make a comment or have a tip for our readers, email the author at, k7ra@arrl.net.

For more information concerning radio propagation, see the ARRL Technical Information Service web page at, http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/propagation.html. For a detailed explanation of the numbers used in this bulletin see, http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/k9la-prop.html. An archive of past propagation bulletins is at, http://www.arrl.org/w1aw/prop/. Monthly propagation charts between four USA regions and twelve overseas locations are at, http://www.arrl.org/qst/propcharts/. Sunspot numbers for December 27 through January 2 were 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 11 and 13 with a mean of 3.4. 10.7 cm flux was 72.1, 71.8, 72.7, 75, 76.7, 79.4, and 79.6 with a mean of 75.3. Estimated planetary A indices were 4, 2, 2, 2, 2, 3 and 1 with a mean of 2.3. Estimated mid-latitude A indices were 4, 2, 2, 3, 2, 2 and 1

QST de W1AW
DX Bulletin 1 ARLD001
From ARRL Headquarters
Newington CT January 3, 2008
To all radio amateurs

This week's bulletin was made possible with information provided by F6AJA, NC1L, the OPDX Bulletin, DXNL, 425 DX News, The Daily DX, Contest Corral from QST and the ARRL Contest Calendar and WA7BNM web sites. Thanks to all.

BOUVET ISLAND, 3Y. Petrus, ZS6GCM is QRV as 3Y0E and will be active for the next few weeks. He has been active on 20 meters around 1500 to 1700z. QSL via LZ3HI.

SENEGAL, 6W. Jacques, F6HMJ will be QRV as 6W/F6HMJ from January 8 to 29. Activity will be on 80 to 10 meters using CW, SSB and RTTY. QSL to home call.

ANTARCTICA. Felix, DL5XL is QRV as DP0GVN from Neumayer 2 Base for the next three months while working on setting up Neumayer 3 Base. QSL via DL5EBE.

ST. BARTHELEMY, FJ. Yuichi, JR2KDN and Paul, F6EXV will be QRV as FJ/JR2KDN using RTTY and FJ/F6EXV using CW and SSB, respectively, from January 6 to 20. Activity will be on 160 to 10 meters. QSL to home calls.

MARQUESAS ISLANDS, FO. Jouko, OH1RX, Pertti, OH2PM, Veijo, OH6KN and Juha, OH8NC, will be QRV from Nuku Hiva, IOTA OC-027, from January 9 to 22. Activity will be on 160 to 10 meters using CW, SSB and RTTY with three stations on simultaneously. QSL via OH2PM.

JERSEY, GJ. Sylvain, F4EGD is QRV as MJ/F4EGD and has been active using RTTY on 40 meters around 2230 and 0000z. QSL to home call.

LIECHTENSTEIN, HB0. Tom, DL2OBO is QRV as HB0/DL2OBO from Chalet Barsula until January 9. Activity is mainly on 160 to 40 meters using CW. QSL to home call.

ITALY, I. Operators from Reggio Emilia will be QRV as II4TRI from January 5 to 20 to celebrate 211 years of Trikolore, or the Italian flag. QSL via IK4SWX.

DJIBOUTI, J2. Mala, F4FMI is QRV as J20MB until the end of March. Activity is on 20, 17 and 15 meters using SSB. QSL to home call.

AMERICAN SAMOA, KH8. Larry, AH8LG has been active on 6 meters between 2200 to 0200z. QSL direct.

PERU, OA. Jorge, OA4BHY, Daniel, DL5YWM, Rene, DL2JRM and Bodo, DL3OCH are QRV as OC1I from Lobos de Tierra, IOTA SA-076, until January 7. QSL via DL5WM.

GABON, TR. Roland, F8EN is QRV as TR8CR from Libreville until January 12. Activity is mostly on 20 meters around 0600 to 0700z. He may try to make a short operation from an island in the IOTA AF-043 IOTA group. QSL via F6AJA.

MARSHALL ISLANDS, V7. Randy, V73RY is QRV from Kwajalein, IOTA OC-028, until May. QSL via N7RO.

ANTARCTICA. Ludwig, ZS6WLC is QRV as ZS7BYRD from the Antarctic base SANAE IV until February. He is usually active on 20 meters using CW, SSB and AM. QSL via operator's instructions.

OPERATIONS APPROVED FOR DXCC CREDIT. The following operations are approved for DXCC credit: Liberia, 5L2MS, 2007 operation; Angola, D2NX, 2007 operation; and Seychelles, S79UU and S79AB, 2007 operation.

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Note the two predictions for the next cycle, a high estimate and a low estimate, reflecting the split consensus for the Cycle 24 prediction.
SOLAR CYCLE 24 BEGINS: Solar physicists have been waiting for the appearance of a reversed-polarity sunspot to signal the start of the next solar cycle. The wait is over. Yesterday, a magnetically reversed sunspot emerged at solar latitude 30 N, shown in a photo taken by Greg Piepol of Rockville, Maryland:

For reasons explained in a recent Science@NASA story, this marks the beginning of Solar Cycle 24 and the first step toward a new solar maximum. Intense solar activity won't begin right away. Solar cycles usually take a few years to build from solar minimum (where we are now) to Solar Max (expected in 2011 or 2012). It's a slow journey, but we're on our way!

Now you know it. Two different versions of Solar Cycle 24. If you are confused, so am I. Just let us wait and see. Hopefully we are on the way up soon.

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First of all, let me wish every one of you a very happy 2008. And let's hope that Solar Cycle finally will start, anyway in the next month or so. It will take a while, about 5 years for it to peak but it seems that it will rise faster than that it fades away. So there will be some very good DX again in a few years.

Now is the time to check all those antennas, tune up your HF gear or start looking at some of the new equipment that is on the market. Congratulations to Tony Fegan, VE3QF on his new Elecraft K3. Hope it will serve you well. This is to remind you all that there still is the Heath DX-100 available. $50.00 or best offer and pick it up at my QTH.
Money goes to the club.

Unfortunately I have to go to Cuba for two weeks, so I will be unable to attend the SARC annual meeting. I do not have a schedule of upcoming events because the new Board has not had a Board meeting yet, and I am short of time.
Don't be jealous about my vacation because the weatherman predicts near spring-like weather for the next few weeks. Saw two crows starting to build a nest in one of my trees here. Do they know something we don't. A bit early, don't you think?

With the permission of the Executive I will be giving a demonstration of my newly aquired "Buddipole" portable antenna the second meeting in February. That should be February 25, 2008. Quite a piece of gear.

Take care, ladies and gentlemen. Enjoy the snow if it comes along. See you next month.

Scarborough Amateur Radio Club Annual Meeting

Monday, January 14, 2008 - 19:30 hrs.

All paid up members are urged to attend. Important decisions are to be voted on like amendments to your Bylaws. Give your new Board the support they need to keep SARC Inc. at the top of the heap.
Thank you in advance.

Club contests

A question was raised during one of our 10 M. round table evening chats why we don't have any club contests going.
Maybe it is a good idea to start one or two contests again. Like who works most stations, any band, any mode in a month or year. Or any variation there of. Let's give it some thought. I am sure the club can donate prizes to the winners. It also may increase the activity. And with the beginning of Solar Cycle 24 starting soon, it could be a lot of fun.

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