



Central States VHF Society E-Newsletter

Quarter ending June 30, 2002

Milwaukee Conference—Less than a Month Away!

Ken Boston, W9GA, the Badger Contesters, and the conference staff invite you to the annual conference in Milwaukee this coming July 26th and 27th. They've put together an entertaining conference for you. The only thing needed is you!

The Proceedings is on its way to the printer. You will get yours at the conference. For those who purchased proceedings but could not attend, the proceedings will be mailed in the two weeks after the conference.

Presenters are lined up for a variety of presentations. The family program is finalized. The full details of the family program is in the registration mailing and on our conference web page (<http://w9fz.com/milw2002/csvhf02.html>). Also, in addition to the Antenna Range, Noise Figure Table, and Presentations, we'll also have two or more Dealers on site as well as two Party Suites. Come ready to socialize!

If you did not receive the registration mailing contact w9fz@csvhfs.org in order to make sure you receive one. Alternatively, you can download Word .doc or .pdf versions of the registration documents on the conference web-page (down near the bottom of the front page).

Calling All Rovers

One new aspect of this coming conference will occur on Friday morning while the Antenna range is in operation. The Rover Row or Dog Pound will be a special area of the parking lot for just Rovers. We'd like any Rover who is willing to load up their equipment to bring their set-up to show it off during this event. We've all seen basic presentations on how to rove. Now you have an opportunity to show off your "shack". Viewers will not have to look at pictures while seeing how you conquered layout, power, and antenna issues. You don't have to stay by your vehicle all morning. We'll have poster-board so that you can point out the highlights of your shack. Or bring a display with some memorable pictures from memorable locations.

Calling for Prizes and Donations

The banquet door-prize table is a notable facet of every conference. Our own members have been very generous over the years. The conference team is working actively to get good donations from dealers and manufacturers from across the nation. If something you have access to might have value as a "door-prize" please bring it along to the conference or consider sending it ahead to our Prize Chairman kboston@lsr.com.

We are going to continue with something that last year's conference tried—a mid-day Saturday mini-auction. It'll be entertaining and should yield a little money to help offset the conference. If you have something that doesn't sell at the Friday night Flea-market consider donating it to the Saturday auction. Also, please bring along any items you can spare for the auction. Again, please contact our Prize Chairman at kboston@lsr.com.

No Pets at Conference Hotel ☹

Bad news for our conference attendees who travel with pets. Our conference hotel does not allow pets—not even small dogs. While I don't agree with their policy, your conference staff did not consider this issue when contracting for hotels. We will pass this information to next year's staff and hopefully they can avoid this limitation. If this limitation effects you, please contact w9fz@csvhfs.org pronto and I will give you a list of the nearest hotels that DO allow pets. You can then make your decision whether to come to the conference with the most information.

Titanium Antennas?!

While at Dayton, I stopped by a booth that was pushing Titanium Antennas. Or at least they were probing the marketplace to determine feasibility. The major titanium tubing company in the world is in Pennsylvania. They were brainstorming for another product that would use titanium tubing and yet provide a "better" product by being lighter and stronger.

They have a ham in their marketing division and he is trying to get the ball rolling on a line of antennas. They had little 1" samples of titanium tubing for people to take. They had an HF beam hanging above their booth.

The spokesman admitted that titanium tubing would be more expensive—but they feel only 50% above other mainline antennas. So if a ham wants the lower wind-load or the strength of titanium tubing, they are hoping that same ham will spring for the premium of titanium. Interesting to think about the large verticals for HF or the long boom VHF yagi's that might be possible. The spokesman reports that the skin effect of titanium is appreciably no different than aluminum. Yes, titanium is not aluminum—but their point is that it is not significantly different. The one thing I can tell they need is more antenna modeling help.

Their website is down and they are not answering my emails. If I reach them, I'll include follow up info in the next issue.

CSVHFS 2003 Conference is Tulsa

If you can't attend this year's conference in Milwaukee, start making plans to join us in Tulsa in late July of 2003. Charlie Calhoun, K5TTT, and Tommy Henderson, WD5AGO, are your hosts. Start thinking of presentations that you can create for this conference.

Conference Host 2004 Needed

If your part of the country is ready to show the rest of your society what you've got going on VHF/UHF wise, consider hosting the 2004 conference. From experience, it helps planning this far out in the future. Over the next 3 weeks, please contact your Board of Directors about your willingness to lean forward and show us what your part of the country has to offer. Please make it easier on your Board of Directors by stepping forward early!

Society Database Committee Chair Needed

Your Society has a "Database Committee". This committee maintains the structure of the database containing pertinent information of our members and conference attendees over the years. By having a committee oversee the database, there is continuity from year-to-year as the responsibility for putting on the conference moves greatly in that same period. Our Database has been in Access for a number of years. Lilburn Smith, W5KQJ, 2001 Conference President seriously improved and embellished the input forms and the output queries and reports. However, our Database Committee is without a Chairman. If you have Access skills, and a willingness to be involved with the society's mechanics for a few years, contact your Board of Directors and let them know that you can help out in this way.

CSVHFS Life Memberships

Yes, they are still available. See the <http://www.csvhfs.org/> website and follow the link.

Need Email Addresses for:

If you know any of these current email addresses, please send them along to w9fz@csvhfs.org

AB5IG KE0UQ KA2KQM W8ULC WA4PCS K9JK K0GRM

States Above 50 MHz Award Program 2002 Just Wrapped Up

The 2002 Program just finished at the end of the day on June 30th, 2002. The 2003 Program year has begun! We will learn the results of the 2002 year as the entries find their way to me. I will present what I have at the Conference in Milwaukee. If you're coming to Milwaukee, bring your entries there. If you mail your entries in, take the time to tell me about your use of the program over the past year and highlights for you. An alternative is to email me your comments.

New for the 2003 Program year is the addition of Canadian Provinces. It is unlikely to get a clean sweep on any band—but that is not the point. The point is to use the program as an impetus for increased activity at your shack. Collect as many States and Provinces on each band that you can—July 1, 2002 to June 30th, 2003.

Remember, all your contacts from July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002 count for the 2002 award. It's not too tough to go back into your logs and see what you've worked.

I think some amazing accomplishments occurred this year by people participating in the program. The next issue should have the complete wrap-up and results.

See the website at <http://www.csvhfs.org/> for details on this program and its historical records. You may submit your entries all the way until August 31, 2002 for recognition by certificate and in the wrap-up notes.

CSVHFS Logos – Round 2

Last issue I pointed you towards files that you are welcome to use as you see fit (since you are a CSVHFS member). This issue I was about to solicit for graphics help to create more and better graphics of our logo that will scale well to vary small – for instance for use on your QSL cards. N9UUR, our 2002 Conference A/V wizard, took the initiative and worked with our graphics and created some new versions. The files will

be added to the area below in the next week. You can find the existing files at: <http://www.csvhfs.org/filearea/logos/> If you have graphics skills, and have some improvements to make, work with the files or create new ones and send back the results.

-- Tidbits --

++ Anderson Powerpole Connectors: many hams have standardized on these polarized yet sexless connectors. This brand of connector is sturdy and offers low voltage drop due to plenty of mating surface area on the pins. While still being sexless, you have to make a choice on how you want to configure the connectors. Nationally, ARES has settled on a standard that many hams are adopting.

www.cvrc.net/powerpole.html or www.w3qa.net/powerpole.htm are sites that give good specifics on configuring to stay with what is becoming the standard. Most hams are using the "30" amp connector although there is a fine 75 amp connector also available for the right uses. For procuring Anderson Powerpole connectors, you could go to your local Electric supply wholesaler—but they may not stock them. Coincidentally, West Mountain Radio—home of the RigBlaster—has developed DC bus-bars utilizing Anderson Powerpole Connectors. You can get the connectors and crimping tools from the following:

West Mountain Radio at:

<http://www.westmountainradio.com/>

Power Werx.com at

<http://www.powerwerx.com/>

and my favorite, DC Power (K7WWG)

<http://www.dcpwr.com/>

Trust me, having standardized connectors has been a big help as those of us gather for 10 GHz on hilltops. One guy may have extra gel cells that are already configured with the proper connectors making hook-up a snap.

++ Matt NM9H, and Sean KX9X accomplished their grid DXpedition to DN95 in Campbell County, South Dakota. This was on June 6 to June 14, 2002, and included a Limited Multi-op entry in the ARRL VHF QSO Party. Their full report will be on their website in time. They came back from their trip to some surprise work and family crises. Please visit their DN95 DXpedition web site. It is at: <http://www.cahcare.com/dn95> They report:

"Over 650 QSO's on 6m. Over 50 QSO's on 2m. 2m WSJT skeds went far beyond our expectations (successful out to 1300 miles, 15 successful 2m WSJT QSO's) 220/432 antennas were destroyed in a massive thunderstorm Saturday night during the contest. We never made a single QSO on either band. We are still designing the QSL card. Please be patient. You WILL get a QSL from us. We will be back next year to a different rare grid. Currently accepting suggestions for

our next June destination. We are seriously looking into boosting the 2m station to make EME more possible."

++ Ham products from Wisconsin: One of this year's conference presenters is Gary Sutcliffe W9XT. He has created a small family of products that you might find interesting. Contesting was his original focus but there are two products that I get good mileage from in the VHF world. First is his XT-4 memory keyer. It's small and has four memories. Perfect for a rover. He's modified the software so that it can beacon too. I use mine on my 10GHz setup. Next is his XT-4 beacon keyer. It's PIC based, small, easy to program, and doesn't seem to draw much current. You can check out his website at: <http://www.qth.com/w9xt/>

++ Ham Products from Illinois: K9LU makes a line of tiny CW keys/paddles called Bulldog Iambic Keys. I use the BD-2 Bulldog on the magnetic base for the same 10 GHz setup mentioned above. It's tiny and stays put. His products are visible at:

<http://www.amateurradioproducts.com/>. This same little Bulldog Key is perfect with a Yeasu 817 as well.

++ Tom, AC5TM, in Louisiana reports;

"Did a moonrise attempt with DL5MAE he has a really good station on his end. Used the W5GAD station using a single 2M5WLC with a ICOM 820H no preamp and a Johnston 6N2 Thunderbolt with 600 watts out. I was unable to hear him but he reported to me in an email later he could hear me weakly. Now to add a good preamp and start to see if I can hear others off the moon."

++ John, W5UWB, from near Houston, TX has given WSJT a try and reports the following: "I am still chasing single yagi qso's on 2 meters and watching for E's (very poor this year downhere!), but decided to try a little digital mode communications. Got going with WSJT441 the 12th of May and with very little operating time (weekends only) have had so far 15 initial qso's on 144 and 2 on 222. Some with rather low power and small antennas. Best DX would be N8OC in EN83 (1330+ miles) last Sunday morning. Admittedly he runs power (1.5kw) as do I, but I still consider it remarkable for randoms. (Beta-Taurids might have given a bit of a boost)." I recall working John, W5UWB, the old way from EN-43. I want to give this WSJT a try!

++ John, KØPW, from the Twin Cities of Minnesota is active on 2m (including EME) and has had lots of fun added to his operations by use of WSJT. He reports the following: "I won the 2002 North American High Speed Meteor Scatter Rally for 2M unlimited power category. WSJT is a powerful MS mode that is vastly under-utilized in the U.S. I just completed my 1 year anniversary of activity using WSJT (FSK441) on 2M. Here is what I got for my effort:

130 Initial contacts on 2M

90 Grids on 2M

42 States on 2M

Best WSJT 2M DX: KD4ESV / EL87 / 1351 Miles”
Impressive John! We need all give WSJT a try and benefit from the fun and achievement it will bring.

++ KB9UMT, Don, in Central Illinois is doing testing of PSK31 on 2m. He’s looking for people within 500 miles that want to experiment over time to watch variations on paths and what lower power levels will still support PSK31 QSO’s over your path to Central Illinois. Contact Don at kb9umt@arrl.net . Already there are 10 to 15 guys working with him finding that they can reduce power to 25 watts and still complete PSK31 QSO’s even at the 350 mile range.

++ The 432 Mhz and Above EME Newsletter for July 2002 by K2UYH is at <http://www.nitehawk.com/rasmit/em70cm.html>
Read about Al’s experiences with JT44 and a story by W2WD. deW6/PA0ZN <http://www.nitehawk.com/rasmit/>

++ The csvhfs.org website access statistics are viewable at: <http://www.csvhfs.org/usage/>

++ If you are attending the Milwaukee Conference AND going to Oshkosh Airshow on Thursday, Bob Morton, VE3BFM, would love to ride along with you. Please contact Bob at: mortview@csolve.net

++ Paul Goble, ND2X, of San Antonio, TX has an interesting website where he shares what info he has learned about QRO VHF/UHF amplifiers that utilize cost effective Russian tubes. See his site at: <http://www.nd2x.net/index.html>

For Sale

Classy CSVHFS Polo shirts. These great shirts are visible on the web at: <http://www.csvhfs.org/CSVHFSRT.HTML> . They are of great material and are at great prices (for CSVHFS members). We’ve got all four sizes: XXL, XL, L, and M. Buy these shirts!!! Price is \$15 for XL, L, and M and \$17.50 for XXL. Shipping is \$3.50 for one and \$5.20 for two. (Only 4 L’s left!) The conference will be the last chance on these babies.

SETI League News

SETI League Launches Free Web-Based Journal—“Contact In Context” Covers the Latest in Astrobiology and SETI

The SETI League, Inc is pleased to announce Contact In Context, a new peer-reviewed, web-based academic journal intended as a scientific forum for research in astrobiology and in the search for intelligent life in the universe. Contact In Context will cover these disciplines, in the areas of microwave spectrometry, optical spectrometry, electrical engineering, technology development and assessment studies, chemistry, physics, mathematics and statistics. Papers on SETI-related hardware, software, search strategies, and philosophy are also welcome.

One need not be a SETI League member to submit or subscribe. Full details, including submission guidelines for authors, may be found online, at <http://cic.setileague.org>.

Seti League, Inc Wins Grant

The ARRL Foundation, charitable arm of American Radio Relay League, the US national association for amateur radio, has issued a \$3,000 grant to The SETI League, Inc. The funds are being used in the design and construction of a next-generation radio telescope prototype. The Very Small Array (VSA) now under construction combines eight standard satellite TV dishes to form a radio telescope of unique flexibility. There is a good chance that Dr. Shuch will be speaking about this project at the Central States VHF Society Conference in Milwaukee.

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Welcome to Milwaukee

W3SO FN00
By Roy Goshorn

The VHF Contest Station W3SO is located on a three acre mountain top property in Western Pennsylvania, five miles northwest of Altoona in grid square FN00sn. Its' elevation is 2500 feet above sea level in the Allegheny Mountain chain. The installation is the result of the efforts by Marty Johnson, W3YOZ and others, all members of the Potomac Valley Radio Club (PVRC). The shack consists of a permanent, two room wooden building with full bath, kitchen, and operating room for six positions. Accessibility is year-round via paved roads. On the business end of the station, W3SO uses three 1.5 KW Lunar Link amplifiers on 50, 144, and 432 MHz to feed newly installed hardline. The beams are at 70, 75, and 80 feet respectively. 222MHz uses a brick type amp to an antenna at 85 feet. A 146 MHz FM rig feeds a vertical atop a 35 foot telephone pole. Computer logging is with CT. The current operators consist of K4VV, WR3Z, AI3M, K3RUQ, K3IXD, W3PAW, W9NET, W3YOZ and W3TEF. Improvements to the station are always ongoing, a year-round effort with current work-in-progress to improve the tower heights and antenna gain. W3SO participates in the January, June and September ARRL VHF contests in the LM (limited multi-operator) category. In the July CQ VHF contest, W3SO participates in the single operator category. QSL to W3TEF. E-mails can be addressed to K3IXD@arrl.net.