



N.E.W.S. LETTER



The Publication of the North East Weak Signal Group

MAY 2003

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ISSUE THREE

President: WA1MBA, Tom Williams
V P: Stan Laine, WA1ECF

CURRENT OFFICERS

Secretary: N1GJ George Jones
Treasurer: N1DPM Fred Stefanik

NEXT MEETING

OUR NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON SATURDAY, MAY 10TH, 2003 AT THE
RADISSON HOTEL IN ENFIELD.

MIKE N1JEZ WILL TALK ABOUT HIS 24 GHZ DEVELOPMENTS FROM THE
NORTHERN REGIONS OF OUR MEMBERSHIP.

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PREZ SEZ **DE WA1MBA**

Now that we all feel thawed out, its time for our May meeting. Don't forget to bring your duct-tape items for the auction. We had some very interesting finds at the last few meetings, so bring a few bucks in case that gem you must have shows up duct-taped to something you didn't know you needed.

This meeting will have a very interesting talk by Mike N1JEZ who will be telling us all about his 24 GHz developments from the northern regions of the membership. Mike and I managed 205 kM on this band during last summer's 10G + cumulative. I was using one of Don W1FKF radios with about 100 microwatts of RF output and a poor noise figure. Clearly Mike has an excellent station to make this long haul possible.

Yes - we have a winner! Brian, WA1ZMS is the recipient of the Worked All Bands award, number 1. We are presently working on a layout for the award certificate and plaque. Brian, as some of you know, is one of the leaders in pioneering work on the EHF bands, recently completing activity on 241 GHz. He felt that laser, although sufficient for the 300 GHz + band, would not be in keeping with his microwave work, so he completed a contact on 320 GHz instead of using laser to work that band.

We still have to complete some of the offices that remain vacant, so there will be additional nominations and elections at the May meeting. If you have any interest in serving, please speak up - it can be fun and rewarding.

See you on Saturday.

Tom WA1MBA

SECRETARY'S REPORT OF THE NEWS **BOARD MEETING OF 15 MARCH** **2003**

The NEWS Board meeting was called to order by VP Tom Williams, WA1MBA, since The president, Paul, W1GHZ, was not in attendance. The secretary, George, N1GJ, was also not in attendance, so notes were taken by Del, K1UHF. Election of officers for the remainder of 2003 and other topics were discussed in general by those attending the Board Meeting. A general outline for the main meeting was agreed upon. The Board Meeting was closed by Tom, WA1MBA.

SECRETARY'S REPORT OF THE NEWS **MEETING OF 15 MARCH 2003.**

The general meeting of the NEWS Group was opened by VP Tom Williams, WA1MBA, acting for President Paul Wade, W1GHZ.

The first item of business was election of officers for the remainder of 2003. The floor was opened for nominations for president and vice president. Tom Williams, WA1MBA was nominated for president and Stan Laine, WA1ECF, was nominated for vice president. No other nominations were received at this time. Secretary, George Jones, N1GJ indicated earlier that he did not intend to run for reelection but since he was not at the meeting, no further action was taken on a nomination for secretary. The vote was unanimous for Tom, WA1MBA, as the new president and Stan, WA1ECF, as the new vice president. Del, K1UHF, agreed to take notes for the remainder of the meeting so there would be a report available for the next NEWS Letter.

Meeting dates for the May, July and November NEWS meetings were discussed. It was agreed that 10 May, 19 July and 15 November would be the dates for the next three regular meetings. We need to inform the Radisson of our planned meeting dates. The NEVHF Conference is planned for late August.

Brian Justin, WA1ZMS, has officially submitted his QSL's for the NEWS Group WAB (Worked All Bands) award. The club needs to design and order a plaque to be presented to Brian. Stan, KA1ZE, offered to purchase the plaque but will need someone to come up with the design.

Del, K1UHF, opened a discussion of the continuing lack of activity on the VHF/UHF bands. We all need to do more to encourage activity. The club should advertise more widely, information about activity nights, nets and regular operating groups. Del will try to compile a list of activities to be included in the NEWS Letter. Maybe we should use e-mail and the internet more to get out the word.

Since contest results are no longer listed in QST, a discussion ensued about where such results could be found. It is not clear if you have to be a member of the ARRL to get all of the results. This will be discussed further at the next NEWS meeting. This is a problem that needs to be looked into by all VHF/UHFers.

Members comments were received. Art, W1TDS, asked for help in finding transistors for his Yaesu FT-736. A web search for the part number was recommended. Ron, WZ1V, wanted to know who, besides himself, did not receive the latest NEWS Letter, either electronically or by snail mail. Anyone needing a hard copy, should contact Fred, N1DPM, and those needing an electronic copy should contact Del, K1UHF.

The meeting was closed for a break at 2:15 PM. A Duct Tape Auction was planned for after the break.

Tom, WA1MBA, did an entertaining job of running the Duct Tape Auction. Lots of good junk changed hands, including a W1RIL machined box and W1JR 144 and 220 linear amps with crystal excitors. The meeting concluded with a talk by Steve, KF6AJ, on the industrial non-radiating uses for RJ.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.

THE BATTERYRUNNER PAUL WADE W1GHZ ©2003

The RigRunner from West Mountain Radio (www.westmountainradio.com) is great for 12 volt DC power distribution for rovers and in the hamshack – I have one for the operating table, one for the workbench, and one in the back of the pickup for roving. All the rigs plug in interchangeably, and I haven't run out of Powerpole outlets yet.



and cut with an X-Acto knife. I only nicked one finger while shaping the holes for the PowerPoles. The photos show the pieces during fabrication, and the final assembly together with another distribution box using the small PowerPoles.

The assembly isn't really attached to the box, just jammed in place with hunks of Styrofoam. There aren't any fuses or LEDs in this version, but a big fuse somewhere in the line is a really good idea.

I prefer something heftier for large batteries. The small Anderson PowerPole connectors (www.andersonpower.com) in the RigRunner are rated at 40 amps, and most of the cable ends at 30 amps. However, they do have big brothers, similar in appearance but much larger. I like the 75 amp version (www.powerwerx.com) with #8 wires for power distribution, and even bigger ones, rated at 125 amps, on the batteries. I don't expect to need that much current (except when the truck needs a jump start), but they provide really solid, low voltage-drop connections that won't pull apart by accident. They are also big enough to find and connect in the wet and dark with gloves on.

What was missing was a distribution box, like the RigRunner, on the battery end. I've made my own version using a PC board for the small PowerPoles, but high currents should have a real buss bar. The inspiration was remembering that the 75 amp PowerPoles have several sizes of contacts, for 6, 8, and 10 gauge wire. Both are the same size, but the latter one has a smaller hole, so the metal wall is much thicker – thick enough for screw threads. Even better, the hole size is exactly the right size for the tap for an 8-32 thread. I tapped threads in several, inserted long brass screws, and soldered the screws in place (threads don't make great contacts). The other end of the screws is bolted to brass buss bars, made from a strip of thick hobby brass.

A trip to the local electronics emporium located a box made of ABS plastic – a metal box would have no real advantage. ABS is a tough plastic, used for football helmets, but is easy to drill

Copying this box exactly isn't necessary – I'm sure hams can take an idea and adapt it to fit.

Of course, you don't have to use quality connectors and fancy distribution boxes. Here are some things I've seen other successful microwavers using on mountaintops:



A long time ago, I used clip leads for portable operation, until the inevitable happened:



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(4) 19 elem. 432 RIW yagis @ \$75 each, buy all 4 get a free power divider.
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North East Weak Signal Group

c/o N1DPM
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