

JUNE 2008



KANSAS CITY VHF GRID BANDITS

COMING TO A GRID SQUARE NEAR YOU!



Volume 2 Issue 5

1 Jun 2008



JUNE 14-16 ARRL JUNE VHF QSO PARTY
JUNE 28 — 29 ARRL FIELD DAY

GOTA
GET ON THE AIR
FIELD DAY

Well it's hard to believe but June is just around the corner. June gives us not one but two chances to have fun on VHF/UHF. Last year we had propagation into West Virginia and contest group K8GP. We can only hope that this happens a second time. Even if you don't plan to compete seriously, get on the band and make a few contacts. Activity can be contagious. Bill/K5YG will be operating at the K5QE Contest site in Hemp-hill, Texas. Good luck Marshall and Bill. Rules can be found at the following links:
<http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2008/june-vhf.html>
<http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2008/fd.html>



Get Out of the Tent if Lighting Is Near



A Mountain Top Can Sure Help Your Score



Field Operations In the Country

Inside this issue:

Upcoming Contests	1
The Forgotten Band	1
K5YG Ant Update	2
Stacking Antennas	2
SCAF-1 Filter	3
Antenna Restrictions	3
South Dakota Run	4

IN NEXT MONTHS ISSUE



- A LOOK AT OTHER VHF CLUBS
- VHF/UHF BASE ANTENNAS
- JUNE CONTEST FOLLOW-UP
- MENA AR PLANNING UPDATE
- KYOO STATION MOVE

222 MHZ- THE FORGOTTEN BAND

The history of the 1.25 meter band can be traced back to the Cairo Conference in 1938. It was there that FCC gave U.S. amateurs two "new" VHF bands: 2.5 meters (112 MHz) and 1.25 meters (224 MHz). Both bands (as well as the 440 MHz Band) were the natural harmonics of the 5 meter band. The 2.5 meter band was later reallocated to 144 - 148 MHz when the original allocation was used for aircraft communication during World War II, becoming the modern-day 2 meter band, while the 1.25 meter band grew to be 5 MHz wide, spanning 220 - 225 MHz. **Enthusiasts of the either the 2 meter and 70 centimeter bands cite** characteristics about one band that makes them prefer it to the other. Many 2 meter enthusiasts like the longer distance propagation and lower susceptibility to multipath as compared to 70 centimeters while 70 centimeter enthusiasts like the better building penetration characteristics and the lower noise floor level as compared to 2 meters. Since the 1.25 meter band is situated right between 2 meters and 70 centimeters in the radio spectrum, many amateurs like to say that 1.25 meters offers the "best of both worlds". This means that 1.25 meters offers a taste of the more desirable characteristics of both the 2 meter and 70 centimeter bands. On one hand, if one assumes that the transmitting antenna's wavelength, height above average terrain and effective radiated power is equal, to a transmitted signal on 1.25 meters will, usually travel equally as far as that same signal would if transmitted on 2 meters as well as an equally low susceptibility to multipathing. On the other hand, the wavelength of 1.25 meters is closer to that of 70 centimeters, thus it tends to have building penetration and noise floor characteristics that more resemble those of 70 centimeters. Since the band is allocated only in ITU Region 2, the major equipment manufacturers, do not offer transceiver models which cover the frequency range. This helps continue the lack of usage of the 1.25 meter band, though the equipment manufacturers argue that when they have produced equipment, it hasn't sold well as compared to other products. In the 1980's, UPS had well publicized plans to use the band to develop a narrow-bandwidth wireless voice and data network. In 1988, over the objections of the amateur radio community, the FCC adopted the 220 MHz Allocation Order which reallocated 220 - 222 MHz to private and Federal Government land mobile use while leaving 222 - 225 MHz exclusively for amateur use. UPS eventually pursued other means of meeting their communications needs. Today one has to find an older model radio with 222mhz or purchase a transverter to experience this band!

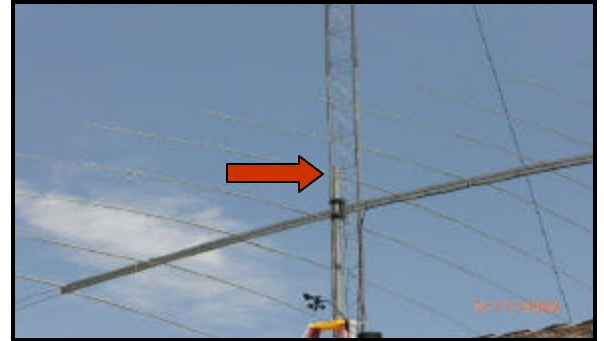


KILO FIVE YANKEE GOLF
K5YG
 Bandit#54 MISSISSIPPI EM50

K5YG EM50 ANTENNA UPDATE

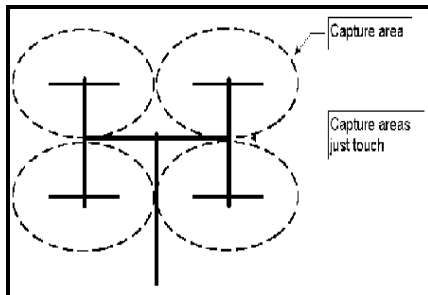
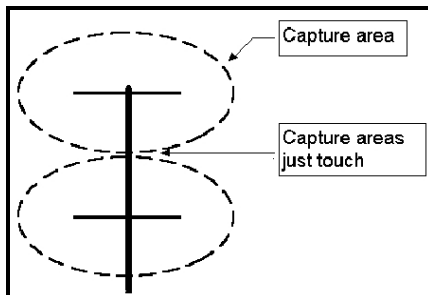
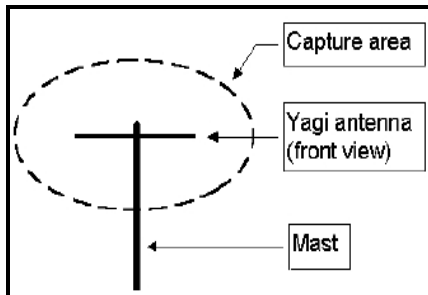
On 15 May 2008, Bill/K5YG e-mailed me with the unfortunate news that his station 2m/6meter antennas had broke off at the mast just above his T-10 Log Periodic Antenna for HF. Bill had just finished a 4 hour period of working on his antennas when winds over 40mph came thru causing the failure. The HF antenna caught and cushioned the falling antennas on the way down. Some elements were bent but he was able to straighten them out without breaking. The failure occurred where Bill had a 12 ft extension mast coupled to the HF mast. He admits now, that he had more separation on his 2 and 6 meter antennas than

he probably needed. The extension mast was a scrap boom from a 20m beam left over from Katrina. Bill commented that he felt like a bird who had lost his feathers, by not being able to get on 2 and 6 everyday. I have had the pleasure to work Bill on 2 meters twice now He's a very good operator and works the weak signal bands daily. We hope to hear Bill back on the air soon, calling CQ, better and stronger than ever!

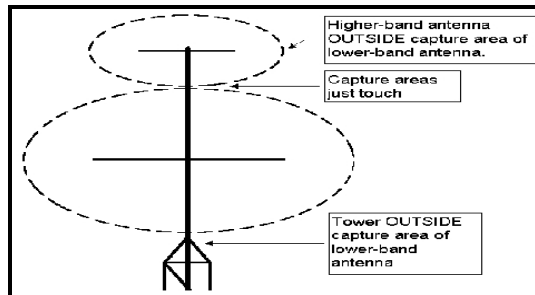


The Red Arrow Marks the spot where the extension mast was attached. Bill plans to replace the mast with a 2 1/4 1026 High Carbon Steel mast. Also on order is a new 100 Watt TE 432 Amp and an M2 432-9WL..

Stacking Multiply Band Antennas



At some point most weak signal operators are faced with which way to go to improve station performance with antenna size or numbers being the first step. Some, choose to go with more antennas by stacking while some just go with a longer antenna. We are also faced with the dilemma of how many bands we can get on one tower without any pattern degradation. The main thing you must consider is the "Capture Area" or "Effective Aperture" of your antennas. The bigger the capture area of any antenna, the higher it's gain. The fundamental principle of antenna stacking is to space the antennas so that their capture areas just touch. This maximizes the capture area of the whole array. If the spacing is too small, the capture areas will overlap and the array won't be as effective. While these rules have no hard physical boundaries, they help to understand what one is trying to achieve. There are rules for same band as well as different band antenna arrays. I have posted PDF Files on the Bandit Web Site if you need more information.



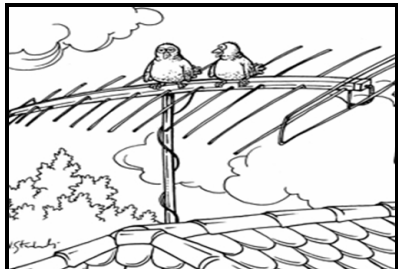
Who Did You Hear This Month?

Here are the list of stations in my log for May and active in the following Grids:

W5MRB EM35	WA9HIR EN61
AA9MY EN50	N9SS EN50
W9ZIH EN51	N0YK DM98
AB0DK EN30	W5IB EM22
K9UIF EN61	KI5DX EM23

[Who's active in your area?](#)

"BIRDS OF A DIFFERENT FEATHER" CHARLIE AND MICKEY



Some of the guy's over on Elm St. said they flew by Larry's (NOMST) place down by Joplin last week. So? Well can you believe it, he still doesn't have that big Ariel up in the air yet! It's still sitting on some dumb old saw horses. Man, some people! Can you begin to wonder just how many guys we could get on that thing and shoot the sh**?



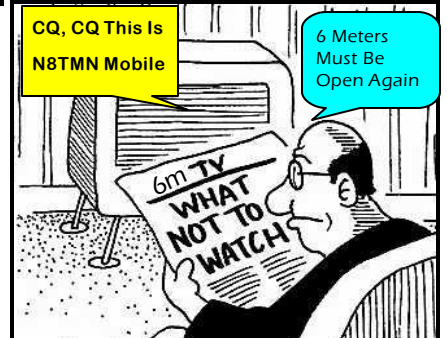
IDIOM PRESS-SCAF-1 FILTER

Cartoon Of The Month

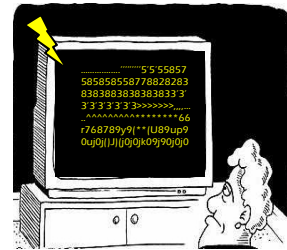
Well if you are running one of the older rigs on weak signal, you'll find the Idiom Press SCAF-1 Filter one more trick to help you get the maximum performance out of your rig. So what does this little box do you ask? Well the SCAF-1 is an active audio low pass filter offering user control of the filter cut-off frequency, yielding a stunning 90db per octave roll-off of signals above the cut-off frequency and no white noise. By turning the single front knob, you set the audio low pass filter cut off frequency anywhere you want it from 450 Hertz to 3.5 kHz. Every signal or noise above the frequency you set is rolled off at 96dB per octave. The unit works well on CW as well as SSB signals, but excels in a CW environment. The unit is offered as a kit or an assembled and tested unit. More about the product can be found at: <http://www.idiompress.com/scaf-1.html>



Final Thoughts: Well after using the unit for the past 30 days I have to give it a thumbs up. It enhances CW signals greatly and pulls weak signals on voice out of the white noise pretty good. Well worth the money.



6 Meter Band Openings Are Great!



Honey, Can You Yell At Old Man Wilson and Tell Him to Point his Thingy the Other Way! He' blanking Out The TV!

SOME WAYS OPERATORS GOT AROUND ANTENNA RESTRICTIONS



This Guy Was Told He Could Only Have One Tower, So He Crammed 17 Bands On It



This Operator Was Told He Could Have No Towers In His Yard, On the Roof They Went

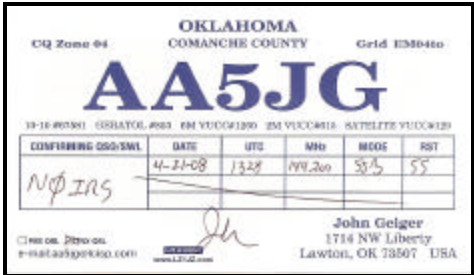


This Operator Was Told He Couldn't Have A Bigger 2M SSB Station Than Walt/W5WSH in Texas, So He Moved Out East To Europe

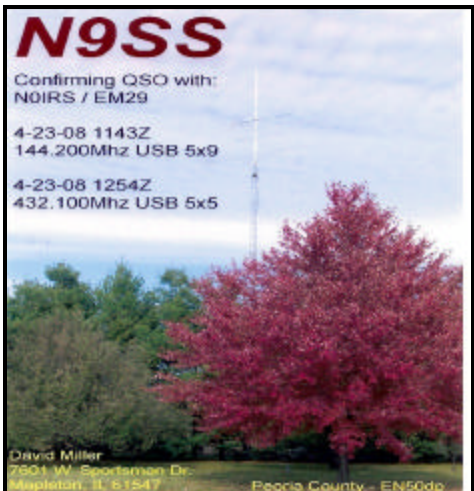


This Guy Was Told He Couldn't Have An Antenna Tower. So He got a permit to drill for Oil and then erected his antennas.

QSL CARD CORNER



John Allowed Me To Get A New Grid In April



Dave Made Me This One Of A Kind QSL Card

EDITORS COMMENTS.....



DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE WEB STORE

Current Members = 64 In 10 States
 New Members This Month 7
[Welcome to Our New Members:](#)
 KB0EMB, KDOBNO, NORFJ, NORL,
 K3CWH, KC0KJF and KC0UIB

THE BANDIT'S HAVE A WEB SITE!

Yes, if you haven't heard by now, we have our own website and domain up and running. After talking about it for 6 months this winter I finally purchased some Web design software and taught myself how to build a web site. Over 80 hours later I had something that was worth putting on the internet. Packed with all sorts of multimedia, it also provides us with a place to post newsletters, membership lists and photos/links to other member web sites. Send me your station photos so I can get them on the web.

Our First Annual Grid Bandit Picnic will be held on June 7, 2008 in Odessa Mo. Hope to see you!

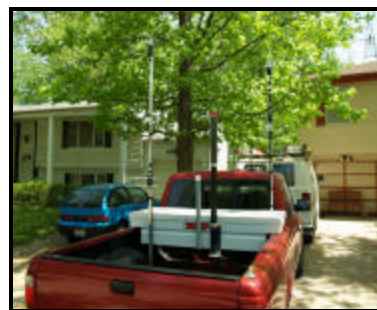


MY GRID RUN UP TO SOUTH DAKOTA EN12

Well another "Mobile Grid Run" is in the books. On 17 May 08, I left KC in EM29 north bound on I-29 at 6:15 p.m.. Freddy/N0DWR and myself moved to 144.220. Richard/WB0NOD, Jim/KOJRD, Billy Joe/KC0CFB, Bruce/KC0PTM and Dave/N0IRC also showed up. I proceeded up to Council Bluffs, IA and Omaha NE keeping in contact with stations back home. The river bottom south of Council Bluffs proved to be a challenge with hills to my south east to KC. After arriving at Council Bluffs I continued up I-29 towards Sioux City, IA. My trip had taken me through EN20, EN21 and EN12. On the way up to Sioux City, I made several contacts in the clear to Bruce/KC0PTM who was running a 12 Element K1FO and 25 watts out of his Kenwood 751a. It always amazes me what can be done with 2m SSB, but you never know until you put yourself in position to push the limits. I arrived up in Sioux City about 10:45 and positioned myself on the overpass at Exit 151 indicated by the redish arrow on the map to the right. I was able to maintain contact with Richard and able to copy and record Dave and Bruce's call and grid. Driving distance was 280 miles from home and about 245 line of site miles to KC. I headed back to KC arriving home at 4:00 a.m. I also worked Richard at over 100 miles on 432.100, which I thought was pretty good. I refueled going up and coming back at Missouri Valley, IA with gas being \$3.79 a gallon. The trip cost me about \$80.00 to make. It was a lot of fun and plan to test other antennas next time. The "Delbert" Loops performed very well and receive was excellent. Thanks K5DDD. Until next time, thanks to all who stayed up and worked me going up to SD EN12! I drove home and everyone else went to sleep! 73 JD



277 MILES TO MY TURN AROUND POINT NORTH OF SIOUX CITY IOWA



2M/432M STACKED "DELBERT" LOOPS

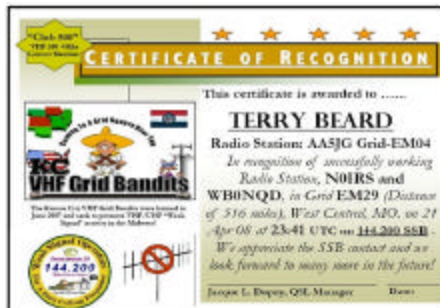


"If You Don't Hear Them, You Can't Work Em"

The Kansas City VHF Grid Bandits Organization was established in June 2007 to promote "Weak Signal" VHF/UHF SSB activity in the Midwest!



CERTIFICATES



Any Station that works at least 2 Grid Bandit Members is eligible for a Certificate of recognition. Certificates are issued for 200 thru 800 mile contacts. Known as "Club" member certificates. A listing of stations will be maintained who have achieved this distinction.

ANNUAL AWARDS

The KCVHF Grid Bandits will each year in November, recognize "Weak Signal Operators" with a plaque in one of three award categories for their dedication, cooperativeness and for furthering weak signal operations within the Mid-West. A Board of three members will meet to select the award recipients based on a predetermined selection criteria. The design of the plaque is currently in development. Stay tuned for more on this program.