



SWOT BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
SIDEWINDERS-ON-TWO RADIO CLUB

PROMOTING SSB, CW & DIGITAL OPERATIONS ON 144MHz AND UP

VISIT US ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB AT :

www.swotvhf.org

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sidewindersontwo>

BULLETIN # 289

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S.W.O.T. GENERAL INFORMATION

- Send renewals and new applications for membership to Howard Hallman WD5DJT (See address above). Please make all checks payable to SIDEWINDERS ON TWO. Include your SWOT # for your renewals.
- Send your SWOT "Members Worked" from your log to, SWOT Awards manager, Wade Massey, 1016 Weiss Ave, Princeton TX., 75407 \$1.00 fee for certificate and your certificate number would be appreciated, also SASE.
- E-Mail all articles and reports to the Editors' Web addresses listed above or you can mail them to Art Jackson KA5DWI, 6516 Simmons Rd., North Richland Hills, Texas 76180-4243.
- **MERCHANDISE:**
Decals and listings available for \$1.00 each for shipping and handling from the Secretary/Treasurer.
SWOT PATCHES ARE AVAILABLE AT PRICE OF \$4.00 EACH + \$.50 FOR MAILING
Badges are available from "The Sign Man", Rick Pourciau NV5A, <http://www.thesignman.com/menu.html>

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2003 Officer Elections for SWOT

Voting for the 2003 SWOT Officers will begin on March 16.

The Deadlines:

All Email votes will no longer be accepted after March 31. Mail in votes must be postmarked by March 31.

Final results will be announced around April 8.

The ballot with instructions is available on the SWOT Homepage: <http://www.swotvhf.org/ballot.html>

Also in the "Files" section here on Yahoo:

BallotSWOT.txt file

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sidewindersontwo/files/BallotSWOT.txt>

You can print it, vote then mail it.

Or save it, vote and Email it.

The Voting Email address is:

voteswot@swotvhf.org

File Attach your ballot.

The ballots will be hand counted. Unless I find a volunteer, I will be counting the votes. I will solicit a SWOT member who is not a candidate to verify the results.

For fairness, I have asked that all voters place their Call and SWOT number on the ballot. This is to deter multiple and false voting. I pledge to you all that your votes will remain private and confidential. If you have any problem with this, and you are not a candidate, you could volunteer to do the tallying for the club. That would be the best alternative.

Still, please vote. It is very important to do so.

Voting is to be allowed by any Amateur Radio operator that holds a SWOT number. You do have to be a current paid member. Obviously the paid members have the advantage since they receive this bulletin. We feel it is important for everyone that has been involved with SWOT to have a say. Make the ballot available to others if need be. The Ballot is located on the last page of this Bulletin.

If you have questions or concerns please express them on Yahoo the Sidewindersontwo Group page. We will answer them as best we can.

2003 SWOT Radio Club Officer Nominees

Call, Name, SWOT# and Home QTH is listed for each nominee.

For Chairman:

KA5DWI Art Jackson #2497 EM12 N. Richland Hills, TX

For Vice Chairman:

KM5ES John Petersen #3331 EM25 Stidham, OK

For Secretary/Treasury:

N5TIF Lee Kemp #3319 EM12 Joshua, TX

WD5DJT Howard Hallman** #893 EM12 Lancaster, TX

For Board Member(Four selected):

NE0P John Geiger #3390 EM04 Lawton, OK

W6OMF Larry Hogue** #155 CM98 Vacaville, CA

KH6BZF Lee Wical #88 BL11 Kane'ohe, HI

W5FKN Bob Landrum #3152 EM13 Decatur, TX

K5LOW Don Simonton #3194 EM22 Tyler, TX

KA0JLF Don Pfister #3409 EM28 Prairie Village, KS

W5PJB Paul Binyon #3155 EM13 Chico, TX

** - Incumbants

From the Nominees:

KA5DWI for Chairman:

Hello everybody. This is Art Jackson, KA5DWI and I have been nominated for the position of Chairman.

First of all, I wish thank all of the other candidates that have responded and submitted a narrative about themselves and what you would do for our group.

Now a little about myself.....

I have been a Ham for 24 years and have been active on 2 Meter Sideband for 20 years. Although I have been active in many phases of Ham Radio, there is nothing that gets me more excited than a 2 Meter Sporadic "E" opening.

Over the years, I have always operated with a modest and simple operation. I owe much of my success on 2 Meters by being a student of propagation and knowing how to be there at the right time (2 Meter VUCC#237 April 1988). I believe that anyone can have fun on 2 Meter Sideband without making a dent into the national deficit, but we should thank the "Big Guns" out there that allowed us to "tail-end" them.

I have been a SWOT member (#2497) since 1983. I have been a Backup Net Control for the old Saturday Morning Headquarters Net in the late 1980's, and more recently have subbed for Don, K5LOW's Pineywoods SWOT Net. Of course my most recent and significant contribution has been your Editor of the monthly SWOT Bulletin the last 18 months.

As your Chairman, I plan to work closely with the Board and Officers in increasing our paid membership and rejuvenating participation in SWOT. I will always be open-minded to new ideas and thoughts and will always appreciate your opinions. With the development of equipment, plus a downward Solar Cycle, we have grand opportunity to revitalize our club. It is time to set goals, alliances and associations. I believe we have fun doing it as well and it will be a rewarding challenge.

On the personal side, I am a retired Banker who is becoming a full-time college student. So do not expect me to do this alone. I will solicit your help when no one volunteers.

I thank you for your support. Be sure to vote.
73's Art Jackson

KM5ES for Vice Chairman:

Greetings fellow SWOT members:

My name is John Petersen my callsign is KM5ES. My SWOT number is 3331. I am 44 years young live in a small town named Stidham in East Central Oklahoma. We live on a small farm. My family consist of my wife Judy and 2 step-children Ryan and Lisa. My stepson Ryan 21 is also a ham KC5YEC. I have one daughter, Amy who is 16 years old.

For the past 3 years I have served as Chairman of SWOT. I have been instrumental in bringing the organization out of the dark ages. I believe that SWOT is an organization that will continue to grow. In the past 3 years we have added new Nets, a website, and made SWOT more noticeable in the amateur radio community.

I am active on 2 meters and check-in to our nets regularly. I am also active on HF and Meteor scatter on 2 meters.

I would appreciate your vote for me as vice-chairman for SWOT due to my familiarity with the organization.

One other note if you would like to know a little more about me go to

<http://www.km5es.com>

Thanks for your vote.
John Petersen KM5ES #3331

N5TIF for Secretary/Treasurer:

Hi all:

My name is Lee Kemp. My call is N5TIF, SWOT # 3319. I have been part of the club for little over 3 years. My Family consists of my wife Teresa and my two children Olivia 10 and Jacob 7 none of them are hams.

For the past 3 years I have given small articles to Art for the newsletter, as well as check in on the nets on a regular basis, attend a few meetings formal and non formal and help with some net controls when the NCS is out.

As Secretary/Treasurer I would like to balance the books and give club members a look at what is going on, a brake down on what is coming in and what expenditures that we have. This I would publish in the Newsletter every 6 months, or if club members would like to see it more, publish it once a quarter.

So, I would like your vote for Secretary / Treasurer Lee Kemp 3319. Please Vote "THANKS"

LEE N5TIF 73
SWOT #3319 VUCC 6M #1114

W6OMF for Board Member:

Good Day to all...

This is Larry, W6OMF running for SWOT National Board member and current NORCAL SWOT Sec/Treasurer.

I can only tell you its still fun and we have some great members. I will continue to do the best I can with your concurrence and hope you will do the same. My home page should introduce you to a bit of my hobbies and interest and I'll find a picture and let you admire me... hi hi again thanks to all and have a great VHF day... Larry

Homepage:

<http://users.cwnet.com/w6omf/w6omf.html>

Picture of Larry W6OMF #155 and Sue K6SUE #162



NE0P for Board Member:

My name is John Geiger, call NE0P I have have been nominated for the SWOT board. I am very honored by this nomination, and would like to share a little about myself with the SWOT members. I joined SWOT

at Hamcomm last year, and my membership number is 3390.

My current QTH is Lawton, OK, and I work as a professor of psychology at Cameron University. Neither my wife, nor my daughter is a Ham (she is on 2 1/2 months old, haven't made test that easy yet). We moved here in August 2001 from Davenport, IA (Grid EN41). I also have lived in Dekalb, IL (Grid EN51) and have 6 meter VUCC's from all three locations. I recently applied for my 2 meter VUCC and am awaiting the certificate from the ARRL. I am active on HF, 6 meters, 2 meters, 70cm, and satellites. On 2 meters, I do SSB, CW, FM, PSK31, and high-speed meteor scatter. Since Labor Day 2001 I have worked 39 states and 111 grids on 2 meters.

I first got interested in VHF propagation through TV DX'ing, and later from Tropo openings on 2 meter FM. My introduction to 2 meter SSB came through my friend Dave, KA0GOA, who bought a FT221R in 1984, and we ran some VHF contests as a Multi-op setup. I didn't get my own 2 meter SSB station until 1997, when I bought a Kenwood TS-9130. My current station consists of a Yaesu FT100D, a KLM 170 watt amp, and a Cushcraft 13B2.

I feel that the biggest challenge for SWOT in the upcoming years is getting people active on 2 meter SSB/CW. I don't like using the term "Weak-Signal" modes, because what new ham wants to spend money for a rig and antenna just to be a "Weak-Signal"? 2 meter activity should have exploded with the availability of rigs like the Icom 706, Yaesu FT100D, Yaesu FT817, Yaesu FT847 and the like, but it hasn't, at least not in my part of the country. Most hams still view 2 meters from the "Shack on the belt" viewpoint, where DX is working outside your own country. We need to repeatedly stress how the real action on 2 meters is outside of FM, because the ARRL doesn't seem to be doing that for us.

We also need to educate current and prospective users of 2 meters about technical issues, antenna fundamentals, and propagation characteristics. Maybe a monthly column in the newsletter can help. If you listen to your local repeater, you probably hear a lot of misconceptions being spread about the above issues.

We also need to get the message out that getting on 2 meter SSB is cheaper and easier than ever before. Used 2 meter rigs can be found for \$150 or less, and a 5 or 10 element beam will make a great starter antenna, at a cost of \$50 or less. I think many hams look at 2 meters and think they need hardline, stacked

antennas, etc to be successful. Those things help, but anything is better than nothing. I am living proof. I am using 9913 coax that I purchased online for \$25, and a 13 element yagi (for \$75) mounted on the roof of my house.

These issues are some of the things I will try to help SWOT deal with if I am elected. I hope we can increase the amount of activity on 2 meters, and thus increase our membership.
73s John NE0P

K5LOW for Board Member:

Fellow SWOT Members,
My name is Don Simonton and my call is K5LOW. I have been nominated for one of the board positions on the upcoming ballot. Some of you may know me as the net control operator for the Saturday morning net...also known as the Pineywoods net. I have been net control for about four years and have been a SWOT member since 1997. My SWOT number is 3194. I was elected Vice Chairman two years ago and reelected to that position last year. I chose not to run again for the position because I think there are a lot of talented people in the organization who can take up where John and I left off and make this an even better group.

I will continue to support the activities on the SSB portion of the two meter band and will appreciate your support.

Thanks & 73,
Don Simonton k5low

KA0JLF for Board Member:

I have been nominated for Board Member:
One of my stories/articles has been published in the SWOT newsletter.

I haven't written anything here, yet, I did post a couple of pictures. The first is with Cris, my wife, N0XZB at a JCRAC meeting a few years ago. I'm usually behind the lens, unless someone else takes the picture.



My photos, name, callsign, and group(s) have been in a few magazines, the last issue (Winter 2002) of ATVQ has several pictures. A quick search on my callsign will locate many web pages, several with photos that I have been involved with.

I've been active in ARES for years, make that decades, :-) as well as High Altitude ballooning and public service events. My photo is even on last years RAAM (Race Across AMerica) bike racing page.

KA0JLF is my original NOVICE ham license, way back before all the N calls. :-) I have been continuously licensed since - over 20 yrs.

I have been an officer in many clubs and groups. I have helped start several groups.

73's

Don KA0JLF

W5PJB for Board Member:

Hi to all my fellow SWOT members

My name is Paul Binyon, W5PJB. SWOT # 3155

I have been nominated for Board Member.

I live in the big city of Chico Texas EM13 and you might have heard me fill in for Bob W5FKN on the Wednesday Net.

I will do all I can to help the club grow and make the SWOT club fun.

My first goal is to put a KW in every members shack.

73 Paul W5PJB

Others:

Not everybody had the opportunity to say something here. Be sure not to forget their major contributions to SWOT over the years. Make sure you consider them in your decisions.

The Chairman's Corner

By John Petersen, KM5ES

Well another year has come and gone and election time is here for SWOT members. I hope that everyone will use their privilege to vote. We are including all individuals whom have a SWOT# to vote. Please vote for someone you believe can do a good job for our organization.

I appreciate all of the assistance I have gotten from the members the past 3 years as your chairman and I hope

and pray that the new incoming chairman will get the same or better assistance that I have received. I thank everyone for letting me be your chairman and I hope that our organization will continue to grow with the new leadership and ideas of the new officers.

I noticed that within the last few days here that some Tropo has been creeping in. Need to watch the bands for openings especially early in the AM. Remember, March thru June is the best months for openings on 2 meters.

73 and God Bless

John R. Petersen KM5ES #3331

From the Editor's Desk

By Art Jackson, KA5DWI

This column will soon disappear!!!

Looks like unless a large write-in vote takes place, I will be writing the Chairman's corner and this one will be put to rest.

Anyone out there wish to write a monthly column?

Come on ... it is time to try your writing skills. We have a tremendous group of individuals that belong to the club. I am sure you got some stories to tell and things to share. Get in touch with me and let me know if you are interested.

Of course this months issue is focused on the election. I ask everyone to vote. It is very important to do so. If for any reason you get the bulletin late and are late with the vote, let me know. We will hold up the final results in order to get everyone a chance to vote.

Thanks to Don Ross for his article. Also we have more WSJT stuff to excite the Digital folks.

Everyone needs to keep the rig on now. With spring just starting we are seeing some improved conditions. We have had two good Tropo openings in one week here in North Texas. Also meteor activity will start picking up in the next two weeks.

Big News!!!!:

We will meet at **Ham-com/The ARRL National Convention** on Saturday June 21 between 1 to 2 P.M. This will be an informal and I hope informative meeting for us. Please make arrangements to attend. This is a great chance to let everyone know we are still here.

Catch you all next month.

73's Art Jackson KA5DWI #2497

Two Meter “Paper Chasing”

By Donald Ross, NL7CO

Congratulations to John, NE0P, on finishing up his 2m VUCC and submitting his paperwork to the ARRL for the award.

As I pondered his accomplishment, I wondered how many of you realized just how significant his accomplishment is and just how rare it is. This led me to wondering how many of the more "prestigious" awards have been earned by 2 Meter operators. A couple of calls to the ARRL and some e-mails to the CQ Awards managers yielded the following information.

The first significant award most 2 Meter operators go after is the VHF/UHF Century Club (VUCC). The requirement is sounds quite simple: confirm two-way communication with 100 grids that are two degrees of longitude wide and one degree of latitude high. It's so simple that in the twenty years of the award, only 613 total awards had been given out as of 26 February 2003. Endorsements are earned for every 25 confirmed grids above the basic 100. Right now, the largest 2m VUCC endorsement according to the ARRL web site (<http://www.arrl.org/qst/worldabove/grid-chase.html>) is 525 confirmed grids by K9MRI. With the growing acceptance of WSJT and other digital modes, I expect the number of VUCC's to climb significantly in the next couple of years.

The next award most of us think about is the Worked All States Award (WAS). On 2 Meters, 149 stations have earned the award, with the most recent one being issued in July 2002. The requirements for a 2m operator are exactly the same as their HF cousins, but you're not getting this one with a simple wire dipole in the back yard. To work this one, you're going to have to go to the moon for a little EME work. Again, the growing use of digital modes that operate right at the noise level are going to make this one a little bit easier, but not much.

Think that no one has managed to get a DXCC, the most prestigious of all of the ARRL's awards on 2 Meters? Dave, W5UN, has 2m DXCC #1 and 11 others have managed to also reach this lofty plateau. Again, you're only going to get a 2Meter DXCC by going to the moon. Also unlike the previous two awards with their 50 mile radius requirement, the DXCC can be worked from anywhere in your DXCC entity.

CQ Magazine maintains several awards available to the amateur community, two of the most popular with VHF-ers are the County Hunter Award described by Mike, WO7GI in another part of the newsletter, and the

Worked All Zones (WAZ) Award. Like the DXCC, the WAZ award can be worked from anywhere within your DXCC entity, but unlike the DXCC, there is no 2 Meter specific WAZ.

The closest one is the EME WAZ (remember you had to do EME to get your WAS and DXCC) and none of them have ever been issued to this date. Who will get EME WAZ #1?

Sidewinders On Two (SWOT) also issues a specific 2m award for county hunting with the initial award given for 100 confirmed counties and thereafter in increments of 100.

The Central States VHF Society has a rather unique award that they issue every year called the States Above 50 MHz Award. While not specifically, a 2 Meter award, I try and make the minimum cut-off of 30 band-states on 2 Meters only. So far, I have only been successful once, but will continue to try doing it only with 2 Meters. For more information, see <http://www.csvhfs.org/CSTEST1.HTML>.

As you can see, a decision to only work 2 Meters, does not necessarily limit your chase of awards.

Way to go John!!

WSJT Random QSO Activity Periods C/O Tip WA5UFH

The Saturday “Unassisted QSO Hour” has been modified and a new activity period (KAOS) has been added for Tuesday nights.

Please review the activity formats and make plans to participate. The Activity Periods are printed below and also can be found at www.qsl.net/wa5ufh . If you have any questions, please direct them to one of the below contact persons.

Terry ... wa3ltb@juno.com

Bruce ... bbrackin@bellsouth.net

Tip ... wa5ufh@ykc.com

Activity Periods For FSK441 (North American) “Random QSO Hour” (Unassisted Hour)

Purpose: Designated “focus times” for making random (unassisted) QSO’s using FSK441 with emphasis on bands.

Date: Each Saturday

Were: 144.140 & 50.270 MHz

Time: 14:00 to 16:00 UTC (One start time for North America)

Band Emphasis:

For multi-band stations:

(B) Hour ... Two meters 14:00 – 15:00 UTC

(A) Hour ... Six meters 15:00 – 16:00 UTC

Single Band Stations:

Use both A & B hours with emphasis on appropriate "band-hour".

Recommended Exchange: See Unassisted Activity Messages (End of this document)

KAOS on Tuesday Nights (Keep Activity On Scatter)

Purpose: Designated "focus times" for making random (unassisted) QSO's using FSK441 with emphases on "locations and bands".

Date: Each Tuesday evening

Where: 144.140 & 50.270 MHz

Starting Times: (Times varies according to time locations east to west)

EST Zone – Begin at 02:30 – 04:00 UTC

(A) Hour ... Six Meters 02:30 – 03:30

(B) Hour ... Two Meters 03:00 – 04:00

CST Zone – Begin at 03:00 – 04:30 UTC

(A) Hour ... Six Meters 03:00 – 04:00

(B) Hour ... Two Meters 03:30 – 04:00

MST Zone – Begin at 03:30 – 05:00 UTC

(A) Hour ... Six Meters 03:30 – 04:30

(B) Hour ... Two Meters 04:00 – 05:00

PST Zone – Begin at 04:00 – 05:30 UTC

(A) Hour ... Six Meters 04:00 – 05:00

(B) Hour ... Two Meters 04:30 – 05:30

NOTE: Participants should feel free to attempt contacts before and after their location designated times have started or expired. Times are adjusted and overlapped to account for geographic locations east to west.

Recommended Exchange: See Unassisted Activity Messages (End of document)

Unassisted Activity Messages for Saturdays & Tuesdays

- Use 30 Sec TX/RX periods
 - Do not use single tones during the "Random QSO Hour"
 - Send your own call with all RRR and Report Messages
 - Send your own call with all 73 Messages or Start Sending CQ again if you wish to work other stations
- If pointing your antenna West TX second period. If pointing your antenna East TX first period. (Standard Operating Procedure)

At the end of each session report your activity to Bruce ... bbrackin@bellsouth.net for proper reporting to the various meteor scatter reflectors. This is an essential process to track the progress and make adjustments along the way.

Bruce (KD5IUG) Terry (WA3LTB) Tip (WA5UFH)

On the World Wide Web

A few sites Weak Signal operators may be interested in. Send in your favorite sites and they will be listed here.

WSJT Users,

Would you like to participate in the early testing of a new WSJT mode called JT6M, expressly designed for meteor scatter on 6 meters? A beta release of WSJT, Version 3.6.2, is now available for downloading at:

<http://pulsar.princeton.edu/~joe/K1JT>

Look for the Update Link!!!

The download file is about 0.7 MB in length.

I haven't yet written up any detailed instructions for the new mode. However, as an experienced WSJT user you probably won't need any. Here are a few things it will be helpful to know about JT6M.

1. Like JT44, JT6M uses 44-tone FSK with a "sync tone" and 43 possible data tones -- one for each character in the supported alphanumeric set. The sync tone is at 1076.66 Hz, and the 43 other possible tones are spaced at 21.53 HZ intervals up to 2002.59 Hz. The tones are keyed at a rate of 21.53 baud, so each one lasts for $1/21.53 = 0.04644$ seconds. The sync tone is ON during every 3rd transmission interval; tones representing two data characters follow each sync tone. The transmission rate of user data is therefore $(2/3)*21.53 = 14.4$ characters per second. The transmitted signal sounds a bit like piccolo music.

2. Basic operation is very similar to FSK441. Just select JT6M from the WSJT "Mode" menu (or use "Shift-F7") and then proceed as usual.

3. The green line and waterfall display have their usual meanings.

4. The program attempts to decode both single pings and an "average message". The average is the last line displayed during each decoding attempt, and is flagged with an asterisk as in FSK441. The number to the right of the asterisk is the inferred message length (for example, the number should be 10 for the message "W8WN K1JT "). If the program finds the wrong length, the average will be garbled or meaningless. All

message lengths should be even numbers, because odd-length messages are padded with an extra space at transmission time in order to make them even.

5. Clicking with the left mouse button decodes a 4-second block of data near the mouse pointer. The right button uses a longer segment of 10 seconds. Experiment for best decoding when necessary.

6. It pays to set the Tolerance to a low value (say 50 Hz) as soon as the desired signal has been identified. Use RIT, if necessary, to bring DF down to less than about +/- 30 Hz.

7. Default settings for the decoder are $W > 0.4$ s, $S > -12$ dB, Tol=400. "QRN" does nothing in JT6M mode, at present.

8. JT6M should work with signals that are at least 10 dB weaker than those required for FSK441. In the brief on-the-air tests I've made with W8WN, we have both found that mouse-clicking on the smooth green line, even where nothing was heard and nothing can be seen, sometimes causes both callsigns to pop up out of the noise.

Please email me with your experience in using the new mode. Of course, all suggestions for improvements are very welcome!

-- 73, Joe, K1JT

Email: k1jt@arrl.net

DX Reports February 15 – March 15

By Art Jackson KA5DWI

Aurora:

Reported on 02/27 & 03/04.

Meteor:

Sporadic E:

As expected, none reported. A couple of Aurora induced Es occurred on 6 Meters. May will be here soon!!

Tropo:

As we approached Spring, we started to see better enhancement and a couple of good openings.

Best Openings:

One event occurred on Friday and Saturday, March 07-08. A small upper air high pressure ridge developed over the Gulf of Mexico and helped enhance conditions from East Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi to Alabama.

Report from Lee Kemp in EM12:

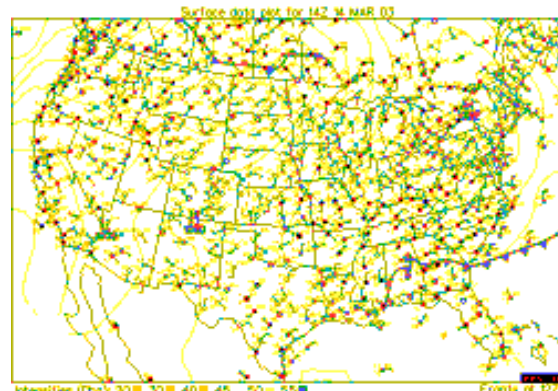
Here is the info on the opening. W5DAS 14:16 EM42, W5ZN 14:24 EM45, W4ZRZ EM63 14:34, W5RCI 16:01 EM44. I heard W4LIA grid unknown mobile, no contact.

Less than a week later on Thursday evening and Friday morning March 13-14, a good Southern Plains Tropo opening occurred. Good conditions from Texas to Iowa and everything in between.

The weather patterns for this one approached what could be called Classic.

First Chart- Surface Map:

The surface high-pressure ridge extended from New Mexico to New York!!!



Second Chart 500 Mb Height/Temp (Higher elevation approx. 18K feet.):



The upper air high-pressure ridge extends from Minnesota to New Mexico. This was the area of opportunity. In the late morning, conditions actually improved as the fog was burning off in the Central Plains.

What to expect March 16-April 15:

Propagation is picking up now!

Meteors:

The slowest period each year for meteor scatter has now past. Although no major showers occur through this period, we begin to see heightened activity particularly from the Virginids region. Burning the midnight and early morning oil should produce good results. Again, WSJT contacts should be reliable during this period. 03/16-21 and 04/05-08 should be good periods. Remember that the April Lyrids begin on 4/19 and peak on the 4/22.

Aurora:

NASA has predicted an active periods from March 29 till April 2. Therefore, be sure to monitor *Spaceweather.Com* for possible events.

Tropo:

Mid-March is the beginning of the Tropo season. The contrasts in weather systems we see this time of the year help provide us the opportunities. As mentioned last month, look for an upper air high-pressure system to develop over the southern Gulf of Mexico as a good omen. Cold systems as they move in from Canada will stall as they run in to it. Also, as a series of Pacific systems move in from the west coast, look for a bell-shaped formation in the jet stream between them. This is indicating an upper air high. Again, look for paths on the western and northern portions of the upper air high-pressure system as it moves across the US. The slower these move, the better possibilities. The El Niño is still a little active and may adversely affect Tropo. More the reason for us to be on the alert. These opportunities may be far and few between and of short duration.

E-Layer Propagation:

“E” possibilities are still a ways away. Keep an eye for some activity beginning on 10 and 6 Meters towards the end of this period. Remember that disturbances in the Sun can set off a surprise opening. “E” propagation should begin its return around May 1.

Moon:

Best days: 03/15-17

Good days: 03/18-20, 04/10-15

Bad days: 03/24

Based on low sky noise and path loss readings (DEGR) less than 3dB. Bad days are those with a 10db plus reading.

Lunar, Solar and Astronomical Events

Lunar: Perigee – 03/19, Apogee – 04/03

Full Moon – 03/18, New Moon – 04/01

Highest Declination (Elevation):04/08-09

Lowest Declination (Elevation):03/24-25

Solar: Overhead 03/16: - 1.8°S, 04/15: -9.7°N

Spring Equinox 03/21 @ 0100UTC

USAF Predicted Solar Flux Average:

03/16-04/15: 129

(No Change from prior month)

Meteors:

All Showers: 03/15-03/31, 21 Active, 12 Peak

04/01-04/15, 22 Active, 8 Peak

More meteor info at:

<http://comets.amsmeteors.org/meteors/calendar.html>

Event & Contest Calender 2003

Announcement:

The Southeastern VHF Society invites you to join us in Huntsville, Alabama April 25 & 26, 2003 for the Seventh Annual Southeastern VHF Society Conference.

The conference will be held at the Huntsville Marriott, 5 Tranquility Base, next door to the US Space and Rocket Center. Mention the SVHFS Conference when calling the Marriott Reservations Department, toll free, at (888) 299-5174 on or before the cut off date of April 3, 2003 in order to receive the special rate of \$75.00 per night single or double. The local phone number for the hotel is 256-830-2222, the FAX number is 256-895-0904.

The Huntsville Area Young Ladies Amateur Radio Club is organizing the family program. There will be lots of things to do that will keep the family busy and happy during the weekend. More information will be forthcoming concerning the family program as plans take shape.

As in years past, we will have an exciting program with presentations from accomplished VHF+ amateur radio enthusiasts from around the country. We will also have antenna gain measurements (including the 1296 back scratcher competition), pre-amp gain and noise figure measurements, the Friday evening flea market with vendor displays, the Saturday afternoon auction, and of course, the Saturday evening banquet, which is open to everyone. Drawings for the notoriously enviable door prizes will follow the banquet.

New this year is a FREE surface mount technology soldering workshop for Friday (time to be announced). Steve Costro N2CEI of DEMI has graciously offered to conduct the workshop. It will be "hands on" with a chance for the participants to learn and practice proper techniques for soldering SMT devices. The class is limited to 15 participants on a first come first served basis.

We will also be having a 1296 homebrew antenna competition based on the "Mouser Electronics" back scratchers that were given out at the 2002 Conference Banquet. Gain will be confirmed on the 2003 Conference Antenna Range. Rules for the competition are posted on the website.

Dick Hanson K5AND is our Program Chairperson for the conference. He can be reached via k5and@adelphia.net.

Our website has been just been updated and the registration form is now available. If you register in advance by April 3rd you will be eligible for our advance registration prize drawing. The advance registration prize is a new Bird Wattmeter courtesy of Bird.

For further information and updates please check the SVHFS website at <http://www.svhfs.org/>

73 & thank you for your time,

Greg Robinson KB4NVD

Rover@wireco.net

SVHFS Conference Publicity Chairperson

Calendar:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Event</u>
March	29	Weak Signal Gathering Fresno CA
April	04	144 MHz Sprint
April	05	Ham Expo 2003 Hamfest Belton, TX
April	12	222 MHz Sprint
April	19	432 MHz Sprint
April	25-26	SE VHF Society Conference Huntsville, AL
May	03	Microwave Sprint
May	10	Reno NV Area Metro Simplex ARC Spring Ham Swap
May	10-11	50 MHz Sprint
June	14-16	ARRL VHF QSO Party
June	20-22	ARRL National Convention Ham-Com Arlington TX
June	21-22	SMIRK QSO Party
July	19-20	CQ WW VHF Contest
August	2-3	ARRL UHF Contest
September	13-15	ARRL VHF QSO Party

Send me dates important to you all.

New SWOT Members

#3423 N0XUK Howard Hollensteiner, Montgomery City MO, EM48

#3424 KB5RLJ Bob McAlister, Lipan TX EM02

Thank you for joining.....

SWOT Net Announcements and News

Jim Kennedy, W5SSG has **discontinued and re-continued** being the NCS for the **Southwest Oklahoma SWOT Net**. 7:30PM Central from EM04. Everyone make an effort to listen in and keep this Net going.

From Karl N7DMA in Arizona:

The Thursday night Net is going very well. The list of check-ins has been climbing each week. Last night I had 12 check-ins, mostly from Tucson, one from Kearney (about 50 miles north of me), and another from Mesa (a Phoenix suburb, about 110 miles north). It seems like there is a good deal of interest in a mid-week SSB net.

I try to post to the ArizonaHams yahoo group each week, to try to generate more interest, and also announce the net on the SWOT net on Sunday mornings.

On a side note, I had the privilege of calling the SWOT net last Sunday morning.

73,

Karl N7DMA

www.n7dma.com

SWOT Net Reports

Here are the net reports for February and March. The first figure listed for each date is the number of check-ins and the second is the number of grids.

Northern California (Sunday)

Month of February:

17 different grids.. DN12 to DM13 North and south...
And DM09 to the east...

02/02- 93

02/09- 92

02/16- 87

02/23- 87

397 (KC7GLR) miles on the furthest North, 401(N6EQ) miles on the furthest South, and 140 miles to the East....

Northern Missouri (Monday)

02/03... 28/13 02/10... 27/16 02/17... 27/15

02/24... 30/17

Central Louisiana (Tuesday)

02/18... 14/13 02/25...14/11 03/04... 18/13

03/11... 19/13

North Texas (Wednesday)

02/19... 30/16 02/26... 35/22 03/05... 35/22

03/12... 33/15

Southwest Oklahoma (Thursday)

02/20... 04/03 03/13... 06/01

East Texas Pineywoods (Saturday)

02/22... 10/06 03/01... 11/07 03/08... 14/08

03/15 ... 16/08

SIDEWINDERS ON TWO" ENROLLMENT OR RENEWAL FORM

NOTE: Though your membership and number are good for life you must renew annually to receive the newsletter and stay on the active list..

Enclosed find check/MO. to: New member---\$12.00_____ Renewal----\$12.00_____

Howard Hallman WD5DJT, Sec.Treas.

3230 Springfield Lancaster, TX 75134-1214

New Member. I have worked the following members:

Call: _____ SWOT No. _____ Call: _____ SWOT No. _____

Renewing: My SWOT No. is _____

Name: _____ Call _____ Grid Square _____

Street address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone Nos. _____ E-mail _____

SWOT NETS

Day	Local Time	Area	Net	Frequency	Net Control Station
SUN	8:30A	TUCSON AZ	ARIZONA	144.250	N7SQN AL
SUN	8:00P	VACAVILLE CA	NORTHERN CALIFORNIA	144.250	W6OMF LARRY
SUN	9:30P	HOLLAND MI	MI SWAM	144.155	K8NFT
MON	7:30P	ALBUQUERQUE	NEW MEXICO	144.200	N5XZM BOBBY
MON	8:00P	COLORADO	ROCKY MT. VHF +	144.220	N0VSB W6OAL N0POH
MON	8:00P	N. CENTRAL MO.	N. CENTRAL MO.	144.250	N0PB PHIL KB0PE DAVE
MON	8:00P	SANDUSKY	E. MICHIGAN VHF	144.250	W8IDT BART
TUE	8:00P	CA.NO CTYS	NORCAL	144.250	KF6BXH BILL
TUE	8:00P	EM31 LA.	CENTRAL LOUISIANA	144.250	K5MQ DAVE
WED	8:00P	IA-MO-IL	TRI STATE	144.250	WZ9D N9CXO
WED	9:00P	NO TEXAS	NORTH TEXAS	144.250	W5FKN BOB
THU	8:00P	CA SO CTYS	NORCAL	144.250	KA6CHJ PAUL
THU	7:30P	DUNCAN OK	SOUTHWEST OKLAHOMA	144.250	K5WPN WADE
THU	9:00P	TENNESSE	UPPER CUMBERLAND	144.225	N2BR BOBBY
SAT	7:00A	EAST TEXAS	PINEYWOODS	144.250	K5LOW DON

2003 SIDEWINDERS ON TWO RADIO CLUB OFFICER BALLOT

For Chairman (Vote for one):

Vote	CALL	Name & SWOT #	
_____	KA5DWI	Art Jackson #2497	_____WRITE IN
_____	_____	_____	_____

For Vice Chairman (Vote for one):

Vote	CALL	Name & SWOT #	
_____	KM5ES	John Petersen #3331	_____WRITE IN
_____	_____	_____	_____

For Secretary/Treasury (Vote for one):

Vote	CALL	Name & SWOT #	
_____	N5TIF	Lee Kemp #3319	
_____	WD5DJT	Howard Hallman #893 (Incumbant)	_____WRITE IN
_____	_____	_____	_____

For Board Member (Vote for Four):

Vote	CALL	Name & SWOT #	
_____	NE0P	John Geiger #3390	
_____	W6OMF	Larry Hogue #155 (Incumbant)	
_____	KH6BZF	Lee Wical #88	
_____	W5FKN	Bob Landrum #3152	
_____	K5LOW	Don Simonton #3194	
_____	KA0JLF	Don Pfister #3409	
_____	W5PJB	Paul Binyon #3155	
_____	_____	_____	_____WRITE IN
_____	_____	_____	_____WRITE IN

SUBMITTED BY:

CALL: _____
SWOT#: _____

To Vote for a Candidate:

Place an "X" in the space provided to the left of the candidate of your choice.
"Write Ins" are only allowed if known by the person you are voting for.

Mail to:

KA5DWI
Art Jackson
6516 Simmons Rd.
N. Richland Hills, Texas 76180-4243

Or,

Go to www.swotvhf.org
Go to the ballot on the homepage.
Save the text file. Votes and save the file.
Email the saved text file as an attachment to:
voteswot@swotvhf.org

Be sure that your Call and SWOT Number is on the ballot or it may not be counted.
