



# SWOT BULLETIN

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

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

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**BULLETIN # 284**

**SECRETARY-TREASURER.**

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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.
- Send all applications for County Awards and County Awards correspondence to the SWOT VUCA Awards Manager, Len Parsons W5AL, 11361 Tascosa Rd. FM 1061., Amarillo, TX. 79124
- E-Mail all articles and reports to the Editors’ Web addresses listed above or you can mail them to KA5DWI, 6516 Simmons Rd, NRH, TX 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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## **Plea from the Editor**

I have worked extremely hard to give the SWOT membership a full and informative Bulletin. So far, I have had good feedback of my efforts. It continues to make me work even harder.

The drawback is that the Bulletin is now much larger and more expensive to ship by normal mail. It costs almost 90 cents to print and ship. Your annual dues now barely cover printing and postage costs.

We ask of all of you that if you have EMail, we send to you via this method instead of regular mail.

It can be sent to you as a Microsoft Word Document or as an Adobe Acrobat PDF file. The latter is smaller in size, plus the viewer is freeware from Adobe.

Also, the Bulletin is available in the Members Section of the SWOT Website immediately after it is completed.

Please email Howard Hallman WD5DJT at: [wd5djt@swbell.net](mailto:wd5djt@swbell.net) to change to Email.

Your help is most appreciated.

## **The Chairman's Corner**

**By John Petersen "KM5ES"**

October is here and the change of seasons. We are in the last couple of months before snow falls and colder weather. Check those antennas and feedlines while you can.

Also, we are planning for the Oklahoma, Texas and surrounding states a "grip and grin" at the Lake Texoma Hamarama on the Oklahoma/Texas border just west of Durant Oklahoma. I hope to meet a few of you there. Howard, WD5DJT will have a table there and plans to meet with the group around 10:00 AM.

Also, I have been in touch with Larry W6OMF on HF on 18.160 kHz and we discuss issues concerning SWOT. We monitor 18.160 on 17 meters in the afternoon and also will be on 1.982 kHz evenings when not on the area SWOT nets at 9 pm Central Time.

Remember that in the change of weather conditions with fronts coming through, look for some possible Tropo ducting.

Until next time, hope everyone has a nice Halloween and hope to see some of you at Texoma.

73 John Petersen KM5ES #3331

## **From the Editor's Desk**

**By Art Jackson "KA5DWI"**

Things are returning to a little normal around here. The largest home improvement project in the free world has been going on all month. We added a nice new dining room to our house and most important, I am finally putting up a tower. Nothing fancy, but I have had way too many metal masts spread around the backyard. Hopefully the tower will be up by the end of November.

This has not been a very good month for us. Propagation continues to be a bit lousy down here in Texas and darn it I missed the only one good opening. The sun has also been a bit active and hasn't helped much either, Aurora just doesn't make it the far South. So goes the band.

Last but not least, we have lost a couple of SWOT members too early in their lives. Both N5HOJ #2799, Joe Fobbs and W5FR #2853 Harold Wilson passed away. This month's member highlight section contains their obituaries and some brief comments.

This month's issue is quite a mixture of articles about different aspects of this hobby. I had to lessen the font size to 11 to fit it all. Again, I cannot produce a good bulletin without your contributions. Thank you for them all.

73's

Art Jackson KA5DWI, SWOT #2497

## **Meet the Members, Officers and Net Control Operators for SWOT**

The section will highlight two of our fellow members that we lost this month. Since many of you do not have Internet access or do not visit the SWOT websites, I felt it would be best to print the obituaries of our two lost friends.

**N5HOJ SWOT#2799 Joe Fobbs Jr.**



Joe Lloyd Fobbs Jr., 58, a teacher at Trimble Technical High School, died Sunday, Sept. 15, 2002, at a local hospital in Fort Worth, Texas .

Memorial services were on September 20 at the Brown Memorial Chapel and September 21 at the Fobbs Memorial Friendship Victory Garden. The burial was private.

Joe Fobbs was born March 11, 1944, in Fort Worth to Helaine and Joe Fobbs Sr. Joe attended James E. Guinn Elementary School in Fort Worth.

At age 12, Joe moved to Illinois where he attended Urbana Middle School, then Urbana High, both in Champaign, Ill. He completed his education at the University of Illinois. In 1963, Joe was blessed with a daughter, Kira, from his first wife, Andreen.

Joe was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 30 years, Pollie Fobbs (KB5UQM), in 1998.

Joe worked for General Electric for a number of years and then began a teaching career. Joe substituted many years and had been a major part of a new Fort Worth I.S.D. program (permanent substitutes) at Trimble Tech for three years. Being consummate musician, photographer, jewelry designer and avid gunman were only a few of Joe's passions. He worked as vice president of the Near Southwest Neighborhood Association, Fairmount's the Southside Preservation Hall, the Near Southeast CDC, the Democratic Party and James E. Guinn Alumni Association. He was an avid gunman and member of the National Rifle Association.

Joe was ham radio operator (N5HOJ), and was president of the Kilocycle Club ARC.

Joe Fobbs spent most of his time helping, loving and assisting his friends and neighbors. More than anything, he was a true dear friend to all he know.

Survivors: Father, Joe L. Fobbs Sr. of Washington, D.C.; mother, Helaine L. Moody-Eubanks of Urbana, Ill.; daughter, Kira A. Fobbs of Madison, Wis.; brother, Steven Fobbs of Washington, D.C.; sister, Donna Fobbs of Atlanta, Ga.; uncle, William H. Berliner of Mesa, Ariz.; and fiancée, Sadie Allen of Fort Worth.

*From the Editor:*

Joe was the Net Control for the Saturday Morning Headquarters SWOT Net primarily during the 1990's. Joe had not been active for a few years. Joe attended the

SWOT meeting at Hamcom this year. He recently had returned to 2 Meter SSB and had checked in to a few SWOT nets recently.

Joe was a great volunteer. He was always one to help out when few others offered. He will be missed by many of us.

**W5FR SWOT#2853 Harold Wilson**



Harold David Wilson, 57, who was employed the past five years as supervisor of the asset evaluation department at EMC Mortgage Corp. in Irving, passed away at his home October 2.

The funeral was on October 6 in Camden, Ark and he was buried in Stephens, Ark.

Memorials can be made to the North Texas German Shepherd Rescue Club, in care of Wendy Wilson, 9-95 W. Highway 199, Poolville, Texas 76487.

Mr. Wilson was a 1967 graduate of Henderson University in Arkadelphia, Ark., a 30-year member of Mason's Magnolia Lodge 60 in Little Rock, Ark. and had an "Extra Class" amateur radio operator license for 15 years.

Harold's career in the mortgage loan industry included positions as vice president and commercial loan officer for 16 years at First Commercial National Bank of Little Rock and seven years at Republic Bank in Irving before he moved to EMC Mortgage Corp.

Harold's parents were Emerson B. and Gladys Faye Wilson, both from the Camden, Ark. area. Survivors: Wife, Carolyn Wilson, his "child bride" of 38 years; sister and brother-in-law, Betty Owings and Orville Owings; sister-in-law, Gladys Burton; niece, Tonya Burton; and numerous aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

*From the editor:*

Harold was Net Control for the Wednesday Night Headquarters SWOT Net during the late 1980's and early 1990's. Many remember him as KB5RF (*call has been re-issued*). Harold loved to DX on all the amateur bands and was one heck of a late night rag-chewer (I don't think I ever went to sleep before midnight back in the 80's). He had quite a sense of humor. He would kid you on about anything, have a funny story to tell everyone or something amusing to say about his dog.

## **HABITAT Skylab Balloon Launch**

**By Don Pfister, KA0JLF**

Herington, KS. September 7, 2002 10:00 a.m. the launch clock had been put on hold with T -5 minutes. Last minute work on the capsules, at a feverish pace, was causing the delay. While the instrument capsule was prepped and sending valid data. The communication test capsule was not completely ready to go, on it's high cold trip.

Both capsules on the HABITAT SkyLab system would travel to near space (last recorded altitude would be 89,631 feet) and back. The success or failure of the mission would depend on these two small capsules.

Unknown to mission control, ham radio operators all across the central US were standing by to participate in this simple experiment. At the last minute, the mission "GO" notice was sent to several email lists and on various nets. Would the hams be there?

Various team members were completing their tasks so the launch countdown could resume. The Project Traveler team and their capsule were ready. Since it was going to be a dual launch, neither team could launch until both teams were ready.

Activities were taking place all around the Herington Airport. The Open House had caused quite a crowd to join the festivities. The spectators knew the one launch crew was late, and wondered how long before lift-off.

At one point a small commotion caused me to lift my head from the capsule to see a sky diver landing near bye, with another higher in the air above him. No time to enjoy the activities outside launch prep. Back to the capsule...

Charlie was finishing up the insulation experiment on the coaxial cable from the MFJ rollup J-Pole antenna connected to the communications experiment capsule. We had encased the same type antenna in Teflon tubing to protect it from the harsh environment we were about to subject them too. Our coax had suffered damage in the past, we wanted to try and, minimize if not, eliminate it this time.

The capsules were given one last ground test; by Will, Bob and Andy, to be sure the electronics and communications gear were working. Dean prepared the

mission commander and verified the compartment was secure.

Mission control authorized fuel movement. The vehicles were readied for fueling. Both teams were given the go ahead to begin fueling. HABITAT SkyLab, being the larger vehicle and causing the delay, decided to make up some lost time in fueling. The valves were opened fuel began freely flowing from the few tanks to the vehicle at an accelerated speed. Constant attention focused on the pressure gauges, connections, fuel lines and storage tanks. Project Traveler was also fueling their vehicle.

Final weights and calculations determined there was not sufficient fuel for the HABITAT SkyLab to carry the ATV video equipment. Unfortunately, no pictures from the capsule on this flight. The flight would be limited to the two primary missions, tracking/recovery and communications.

Both vehicles were fuelled, loaded and ready. The announcements rang over the PA system. The launch countdown resumed: 5 4 3 2 1 LAUNCH! Away they streaked into the hot summer sky! Data stations began reporting data from both flights.

"Initial report: about 990 fpm ascent rate" from a voice over my shoulder, a member of the Wichita BEARS. "But for which flight is that?" was my immediate question?

"Project Traveler" was the reply.

"How about HABITAT?"

"I'll run some more calculations and get back to you ASAP" he said matter of fact.

A group of the Wichita BEARS wanting to start their own Near Space program joined the other two groups to see a launch, flight and recovery first hand. They jumped right in and provided valuable assistance. Their efforts made the flight the success it turned out to be.

Wide eyes and excited voices from the crowd followed the two latex weather balloons as they jetted skyward. Both, with their parachutes and capsules suspended under them, drifted north along side the runway.

Immediately after lift off, the communications capsule payload came alive with activity. Launch teams were some of the first to trigger the 2M simplex repeater on the HABITAT SkyLab communications capsule. More and more stations began to ID. More distant stations, farther and farther away, joined in as the antenna was raised into the air.

If you have not experienced a simplex repeater it can be confusing. It is basically a carrier operated digital recorder. When it hears a carrier it begins to record the audio for about 30 seconds maximum. If the carrier drops or the time runs out it then switches automatically to transmit and repeats what it heard. The mode of operation is not a true repeater. Once it finishes transmitting what it recorded it sends a courtesy tone, and the cycle repeats.

If you are close enough to hear the transmitting station, most have a tendency to have a simplex conversation. Distant station only hearing the output from the simplex repeater can not tell when a station is talking. There is silence if no station is talking and there is silence when a station is being recorded. The secret is to think of timing. Once the tone is heard it is ready to record another 30 seconds. If transmissions are kept short, several can get in during a cycle.

It became obvious, if one of the stationary operators could be a Net Control, perhaps more order could be brought to the operation. I requested a volunteer. Brian KS0BS replied and took over. As I listened I remembered one of our objectives was to try and set some of the distance QSO records. I didn't recall what they were but felt sure we could do well enough to be included in them.

I was not able to turn my attention to the flight and start getting ready for the chase and recovery. Will's mobile station was tracking very well. He has a very nice set up. He became our official tracking and recovery team of one. As the other two chase teams in our group worked to overcome equipment problems. Will kept us in contact with our capsules. Bob and Andy were working on Bob's backup computer. His primary suffered a crash.

Dean, Charlie and I worked on equipment in and on our vehicle. Dean drove, Charlie navigated and I worked the radio while trying to get my tracking station online.

The Project Traveler teams began their chase. Some of the Wichita BEARS remained at the airport to provide public information and status. At least one of their chase teams fell in with us to chase our flight. I'm not sure if others joined Project Traveler.

There is something natural about High Altitude Balloons teaming up with General Aviation. We again want to thank the Management and members of the Herington Airport for letting us participate at their facility. Last year during the first Great Plains Super Launch, GPSL 2001, when our capsules became lost, several of the pilots from the Herington Airport conducted searches for our missing capsules. The Airport manager asked if we

could launch a flight for their open house. Weather caused us to cancel, not knowing the facilities and the travel time.

This year when GPSL 2002 needed an alternate launch site due to changing weather, I remembered Herington Airport's support. A call to the Manager got a positive response. We were able to launch 8 balloons from 6 groups across the country this year at the Herington Airport for GPSL 2002. HABITAT SkyLab flew our own balloon, actually two - a tandem arrangement, instead of riding, and falling <smile>, with another group last year (that is how our capsules came to be lost). Meeting and talking with the airport management and people, it was decided we would launch for their open house this year, regardless of weather (within the rules of course). Personally, I think everyone, was glad we did.

We successfully set new distance records on this flight. We are recorded in second place (1st for a simplex repeater) with a distance of 478 miles. Also we are in third place at 460 miles. I think this qualifies as a great success. The fourth place record is like 322 miles, so we got a pretty good showing for it, even delayed, short notice and all.

I think you will find working the simplex repeater, or any of the balloon radios, not only fun, but challenging. While our antennas were supposed to be vertical, they change a lot. Due to capsule spin, swing, and the changes that does to the antenna, not to mention the weak signal (we normally use about 300 mw radios), I wonder about the similarities to other weak signal work. I have not worked Meteor Scatter myself but have heard recordings of it.

The thought comes to my mind; why not PSK or other modes? I am not experienced in these modes either but would be interested in discussing it. Or just experiment. Since the simplex repeater is a digital recorder, we have successfully worked packet though it. Perhaps on a future flight we could dedicate a time slot for other modes than voice. My radios, right now, are FM. If there is interest maybe we could set up like the first 10 seconds of a minute to say CW, that would be 20 second - 10 XMIT 10 RECV or some combination that makes sense. Then perhaps a segment of PSK plus the remainder voice.

I think if we would plan this and then get the word out early we should be able to have even more fun!

Currently we are planning a flight in October. Please let me know if you would be interested in participating in a future flight.

Both groups successfully flew and recovered their capsules safely on September 7, 2002. More info on this and other flights can be found on each teams web site. HABITAT SkyLab maintains it's own private email list for notices and other flight information. We will soon be adding a section for the mission commanders. Glory volunteered, and served proudly, for this mission in honor of the upcoming September 11, 2001 memorials.

Currently a few pictures and other data is online from this flight. Soon an audio recording of the record QSO(s) will be online as well as a log of the stations that checked in. Unfortunately net control had a computer malfunction that lost some contact information. If you made contact but don't see you info let me know and I'll get it updated.

73 de Don

Founder HABITAT SkyLab (High Altitude Basic Investigating Testing And Tracking)

web: <http://habitat.netlab.org> or email: [ka0jlf@earthlink.net](mailto:ka0jlf@earthlink.net)

## **Multimode Contesting on 2 Meters**

By Donald Ross, NL7CO

Like many, my prime interest in contesting is to maximize the number of contacts and grids worked. Unlike most, I am only interested in doing that on 2-Meters.

To maximize my chances for good scores on 2 Meters, I monitor both SSB and FM and I keep a key handy so that I can switch to CW. The problem with this is the interference to one radio while transmitting on the other and it is a problem that will get worse with my change of category from single operator low power (SOLP) to single operator high power (SOHP) in the coming months.

For SSB and CW, I run the excellent M2 2M18XXX at a height of approximately 50' and on FM, I run a Cushcraft AR-2B Ringo Ranger Vertical separated as far as possible given my small city lot and single story abode.

Unfortunately, this is not far enough to have them not interfere with each other while transmitting. I have always been told that the minimum separation should be twelve wavelengths, which at my frequency of choice would be 78 feet ( $468 \div \text{frequency} = \frac{1}{2} \lambda * 24 = 12 \lambda$  or in my case:  $468 \div 144.200 = 3.25' * 24 = 77.89'$ ). Not even counting the overhead electrical lines, I don't have the 78' available for separation. So much for Plan A.

What about coaxial shorting stubs? They work fine for eliminating or attenuating out of band signals, but just are

not sharp enough to work "in band". Plan B also dies a fiery, but glorious, death.

That leaves notch filters. I already own a DCI 145 filter and it worked well when WO7GI and I were running a "multi-op" several years ago, but they are only rated for 200 watts and again are not sharp enough for in-band usage. Plan C also appears headed for a shallow grave in an out of the way area.

When all else fails, try the Internet reflectors that are dedicated to out portion of the spectrum. Specifically, I posted my requests for information to the Sanford VHF Reflector and the VHF Contesting Reflector.

All told, I received 15 responses to my plea for help and they fell into three categories:

- Those that felt that I was doing something illegal, unethical, immoral, and possibly fattening by listening and possibly transmitting on two frequencies in the same band. While transmitting on two frequencies simultaneously, regardless of band or bands, is illegal for SOLP/SOHP, monitoring is not.
- Those that were curious about the topic and wanted to know what I found out.
- The vast majority (10 replies) were informational and in some cases very helpful. Several of these responses were not applicable in my situation at this time (most of these involve transverters), but there was one that I will have to learn more about and experiment with – cavity filters.

Cavity filters are commonly used in repeaters and have a steep "notch" that attenuates all but a very small portion of a desired band. Since 2m repeaters commonly have a "split" or only 600 KHz and use two sets of cavities to achieve the desired separation of transmit and receive, it appears that they will work fine with my spit of 2350 KHz.

The next step is to learn more about cavity filters from my friends who run repeaters and then see if they will handle the power ranges that I am looking for.

Looks like Plan C may still be alive.

Until next time ...  
NL7CO/EM04

## **Technical Tip**

By Bob Cumming, W2BZY  
C/O Larry Hogue, W6OMF



## Power Supply Voltage for Your Relays

Do you use an Astron or similar supply for your 13.8 in the shack?

If so, open the cover and take a tap off the + side of the filter cap and wire it to a jack of your choice on the back of the supply (a fuse in line is a good idea). This will give you about 21V unregulated that should pull in most 28 volt relays and hold them just fine.

Some relays might not work - but try yours. I have been using this to switch my 903 and 1296 relays for over 3 years now with no problems.

VR Y 73

Bob Cumming W2BZY  
QRV 160m-13CM (3CM soon)  
From EL98hr

*From the editor:*

If you have a tip to share with everyone, email it to me and we will put it in the Bulletin

## 2002 Leonids Predictions

C/O Shelby Emnis W8WN HSCW Website

Last year's Leonids Meteor Storm was outstanding. It is believed that this one will be as exciting. It will not be a good visible one because of the Moon's brightness. But, for random SSB QSO's it should be every bit as productive. Hope that there is not another Trans-Atlantic 6 Meter opening at the same time. Be sure you look at "What to Expect" section for best directions and times.

The latest predictions for 2002:

November 19, 0400 UTC, 7-revolution 1766 trail, 3000-4000 per hour (for Africa, Europe - radiant at or below horizon for North America, but earth-grazers possible for eastern NA).

November 19, 1030 UTC, 4-revolution 1866 trail, 2500-3500 per hour (for North America, usable in western Europe).

The predicted time of the half strength for each peak is approximately two hours (which means that conditions could still be exceptional for about 4 hours or more during each peak).

The November Sky and Telescope is now available, with another excellent article by Joe Rao. It is recommended that you pick up a copy for further study. For still more, see below.

SOME DETAILS -

Here are the various predictions, as summarized by Jure

Atanackov, with updates.

1. Asher & McNaught: (They popularized the now-famous "dust trail" model that has been so successful).  
Nov 19. 03:53UT 7-rev 1000-3000  
Nov 19. 10:29UT 4-rev 3500

2. Lyytinen and van Flandern: (Their predictions were within 1 to 11 minutes for the several peaks in 2001!)  
Nov 19. 04:02UT 7-rev 3500  
Nov 19. 06:45UT 5-rev 160?  
Nov 19. 10:44UT 4-rev 2600

3. Jenniskens:  
Nov 19. 03:58UT 7-rev 4000 +/- 1000  
Nov 19. 06:22UT 5-rev 40?  
Nov 19. 10:36UT 4-rev 5000 +/- 2000

4. Marco Langbroek:  
- - 7 revs trail ZHR 2500 minimum to 7100 maximum  
- - 4 revs trail ZHR 3000 minimum to 6500 maximum

Note the consistency of the times and expected rates of all of these predictions.

For more, see the links to the visual observer pages at the bottom of this page. Lots of excellent sites!  
Be sure to obtain a copy of the November Sky and Telescope (now available).

The Leonid radiant rises about local midnight in the mid-Northern Hemisphere. At the 0400 UTC peak time it will still be below the horizon in North America but well placed for Europe (though "earth grazers" are likely for eastern North America, especially New England and the Canadian Maritime Provinces). However, the 1030 UTC peak will find it in an excellent location for North America. There is always the possibility of other submaxima between these peak times, and it is possible that the "background" count will be elevated between the peaks.

Which is better during the Leonids - SSB or HSMS? This depends not only on the number of meteors, but also upon the amount of ionization they produce, which is determined by their mass. Interestingly, many felt that the "fireball storm" of 1998, even though it had a lower rate of "only" a few hundred meteors per hour, produced better MS conditions than did the much higher rates (but with smaller particles) of the next years. While the Leonids are typically composed of rather small particles, several researchers believe that the 7-revolution (0400 UTC) trail will have a larger population of larger meteors than the second peak. Thus it is impossible to say which -

SSB or HSMS - would be more effective! Best guess - HSMS before and between peaks, SSB during the peak times. What about the possibility of extreme DX via the Leonids? One of two things would be required (in addition to a very high rate): Either large particles, producing a large amount of ionization (because of the loss involved in double-hop), or ionization at an extreme altitude - or both.

During the 1998 and 1999 Leonids, Dr. Noah Brosch and his team claimed to have observed a population of Leonids at twice the expected burn altitude (~250 km)! However, there were no reports of extra-long-distance signals, and many feel that this was an artifact of the radar system. (If you have information on any contacts beyond 2500 km, please let us know, as Dr. Brosch has made a specific appeal for any reports). For more, see Dr. Brosch's abstract, and be sure to follow the links.

So, is extreme DX possible during the Leonids this year? Nobody knows. It would be difficult. But it is very unlikely unless someone tries! (There was a near-miss 1617-mile (~2603 km) during the Perseids, on a 90-second burst - see the Archived information). Note the expected peak times (above), use OH5IY's MS-Soft program to determine the most suitable direction, and set WSJT to save everything received during your DX schedules.

This is expected to be the last year for a Leonids storm in our lifetime.

## Reports from Our Members

### September ARRL VHF QSO Party Reports:

**Gene Vantrees, WD5FDL** attempted a portable effort on top of Chalk Mountain in EM02. This well arranged station didn't produce good results because the generator failed to operate. Gene will replace it with another manufacturer for the next one. Some pictures:



### From John Geiger NE0P:

Well it was a very good weekend for VHF awards. At Saturday's breakfast I turned in my cards for checking to Claude, KD5RQ, for my 6 meter VUCC. That will make my third 6 meter award (others from EN41 and EN51). Then on Sunday evening I worked KD5EJO/R from EM16 on 2 meters, which gives me 100 grids worked on 2 meters!

I added EJO from EM06 later for good measure. I started my grid hunt in the 2001 Sept contest, so I took just over a year to work 2 meter VUCC. Might take a couple of months more to get cards in to push me to 100 confirmed on 2. Lets hope for a good Leonids!

Conditions for the contest were average, with a little enhancement Sunday evening, but nothing to write home about. Meteors were almost non-existent, and the storms that came through Saturday night caused some nice static on 6 meters which hurt meteor skeds there.

Here are my contest totals:

Band	QSO	Grids
50	17	6
144	44	20
222	6	1
432	18	8



1296 3 1

Total 4248 points

Worked 2 new grids on 2 (em06, em16) and 1 new grid on 432 (em22). Thanks to all of the rovers: AB5SS, AF5Q, KD5EJO, KD5TPV, N5PYK, and the others I couldn't hear.

73's John

## On the World Wide Web

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

### **From Joe Taylor, K1JT:**

Version 2.3.0 Released

This release of WSJT is the first to include the EME Echo mode. This mode allows you to detect and measure your own lunar echoes, even if they are far too weak to hear. The mode can be highly useful for evaluating your station performance, even if you prefer to use CW rather than JT44 for your EME QSOs.

If you are a present user of WSJT with no interest in detecting and measuring your EME echoes, you will find no significant advantages to upgrading to WSJT Version 2.3.0. With the exception of a minor bug fix, the FSK441 and JT44 modes are essentially unchanged.

You can download the upgrade from the WSJT home page:

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

and soon also from the European mirror site

<http://www.qsl.net/dk5ya>.

To upgrade an existing WSJT installation of Version 1.9.4 or later you should download and execute the file UPD230.EXE, which will replace your existing files WSJT.EXE and WSJT1.DLL with new files of the same name.

### **New Yahoo Group:**

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PSK\\_VHF\\_UHF\\_HAMRADIO/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PSK_VHF_UHF_HAMRADIO/)

This Yahoo Group started for Central Area States to experiment with digital modes like PSK31, HELL, MFSK16, SSTV, JT44 (etc.) on VHF/UHF but, ALL ARE WELCOME. Messages, Files, Photos, Bookmarks, Polls, Databases, and Calendar. An "official" PSK mark for VHF/UHF. We are on 144.150 USB PSK 9pm to 10pm CST so join in! Low wattage and simple antennas might surprise you. Any stations be it a big gun station to simple stations welcome. Try FM PSK31/SSTV for those without an all mode rig. If you want to experiment with

digital modes on VHF/UHF...JOIN! Any subject format is welcome (VHF/UHF digital main focus of course).

The group began the end of June 2002. It is now totals 368 members!!!

### **From Bruce, KD5IUG:**

Greetings WSJT users - Just quick note to encourage/remind WSJT users to enter and/or update callsign, grid, name, etc for callsign.txt file in WSJT package. Ever entered a callsign in to "TO RADIO" box and everything comes up blank?

Lee, AA1YN, has site set up to take the data. Direct URL is <http://www.aa1yn.com/wsjt/>

There is also a link to AA1YN's site off "PJ" page. Lee's database is the source of data provided in callsign.txt file that is part of full WSJT download.

### **From the ARRL:**

ARRL VHF/UHF Contesting and Awards Survey

With a higher proportion of VHF-only licensees than ever before, one might expect that VHF/UHF contesting would be experiencing a surge in popularity. To the contrary, while the total QSOs being made in the multi-band contests seems steady, the number of logs - and thus the number of serious participants - has fallen off considerably since 1996. This has led the ARRL to ask you for your thoughts on why this might be happening and how to best address and reverse the trend. We'd also like to hear from you about the ARRL VHF/UHF awards program in general.

The survey is the result of a request from the ARRL Board to look into ways to increase participation. It is being sent to a random sample of regular top-scorers and average participants, regardless of their score, plus clubs that regularly participate in VHF/UHF club competitions. Our interest is in gathering information we can use to improve the participation and quality of both the various ARRL VHF/UHF contests and the ARRL VHF/UHF awards programs. The detail and quality of information in your answers is especially important to us.

The Survey -

The survey is organized into several areas of inquiry. The first group deals exclusively with contesting:

Existing contests - how can their formats, rules, or reporting be improved such that activity and log submissions are increased? This survey refers to the following ARRL sponsored contests: January VHF Sweepstakes, June & September VHF QSO Parties,

August UHF Contest, 10 GHz and Up competition, and the Oct/Nov EME Contest

New contest formats - are there new formats that would be attractive to the existing contest community?

New participants - what improvements or additions to VHF/UHF contesting would attract more operators to the sport? How can these operators be reached?

A second area of interest is the ARRL VHF/UHF awards program and increasing the level of interest and participation. The existing awards such as VUCC, WAS, and DXCC, are derivatives of the HF awards program. There is some concern that these awards either have too high an initial qualification level or may be missing some interests of VHF/UHF operators. There are two groups of questions:

Existing awards - how can their rules or categories might be improved so that more activity is encouraged?

New awards - are there new award programs that would be attractive to VHF/UHF operators?  
Responding

Each topic has a series of questions related to either VHF/UHF contesting or awards. Please select the answer that best matches your position or situation. Please feel free to extend your remarks (use additional pages if necessary). Your detailed comments are very important.

The survey is downloadable as an Adobe Acrobat file on the web at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/announcements/vhf-survey.pdf>

It should be completed and returned by regular mail to: VHF/UHF Survey, attn: Wayne Mills, N7NG, ARRL, 225 Main St, Newington CT 06111. We would like to have the returned surveys by October 31st. You may copy the blank survey and distribute it to other amateurs, particularly to operators that may not be active in VHF/UHF contesting now. A summary of the results will be available in the future.

Thanks and 73

Dan Henderson, N1ND

ARRL Contest Branch Manager

## **DX Reports September 16-October 15**

**By Art Jackson KA5DWI**

Each month we will attempt to let you all know what has been going on 2 Meters and give you an idea what you can expect in the next month.

Please Mail or email your DX reports to me and we will get them in the newsletter.

### **DX Reports**

All dates are based on UTC.

#### **Meteors:**

No major showers.

#### **Moon:**

The number of hams using WSJT JT44 continues to increase.

#### **Aurora:**

10/1: Eastern half of US from NC north.

10/2-4: Off and on Midwest, NE and NW U.S.

10/7: Light AU in Midwest

10/8: NW U.S.

10/14: Great Lake States

#### **E Propagation:**

##### **I spoke to soon again!**

10/6: FL, GA to NY, NH, NJ and VE3.

Triggered by a short CME. Definite solar wind pattern happens in these types of off-season openings. FAI???

##### **Tropo:**

09/15: Midwest

09/16: East Coast

09/17-18: Great Lake States

09/20: East Coast, Hawaii to California

09/21: NE U.S. to Nova Scotia

09/24: Central Plains

09/30: Mississippi River Valley

10/05-06: Southeastern corner U.S.

10/08: Central Plains to SE U.S.

10/10: Great Lake States

10/11-12: Central Plains to Central and West Texas

*Sources: DX World 144 Propagation Logger and SWOT Group Page*

## **What to expect October 16- November 15:**

### **It is time to be alert to produce results.**

#### **Meteors:**

The Orionids show up on 10/19. This shower favors North/South paths from 0200-0500 and 0700-1000 *Local Time*.

Incase the next bulletin is late.....

The Leonids on 11/19 is also a very good North/South path shower. If we have another storm, directions will not matter. The best times are 0200-0600 and 0900-1200 *Local Time*.

It appears that you will need to be on very early on the morning of 11/19. Single sideband will be the most productive mode during a storm.

#### **Aurora:**

Despite a declining number of sunspots now, flares continue to occur in several large groups. Look around 10/27 and 11/03 for an event. The potential source of CME's are coronal holes and an active developing

sunspot. Be sure to monitor *Spaceweather.Com* for possible events.

### **Tropo:**

Look for fronts coming out Canada stalling as they approach the Gulf States as they change from cold systems to warmer ones. We are in an El Nino. This might keep us from having a very good year. Still don't give up. Some great tropo openings occur this time of year.

All tropo conditions result from an upper air high-pressure system capping the release of heat from the surface.

### **E-Layer Propagation:**

E's continue to play with us. We enter into the winter season by mid November. Anything can occur. Keep an eye for "short skip" activity beginning on 10 and 6 Meters.

### **Moon:**

Good days: 10/28-11/04

Best days: 10/30-31

Bad days: 11/08

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:** Apogee – 10/19, 11/15

Perigee – 11/03

New Moon – 11/04, Full Moon – 10/21

**Solar:** Overhead 10/16: - 8.9°S, 11/15: - 18.5°S

Southern Hemisphere E Threshold - 11/03

**USAF Predicted Solar Flux Average:**

10/16-11/15: 163

No change, but current month is down from the prior month

### **Meteors:**

All Showers: 08/16-08/31, 19 Active, 9 Peak

09/01-09/15, 16 Active, 8 Peak

Moderate Showers:

Orionids peak 1440UTC 10/21 +/- 2 Days

Major Showers:

Leonids peak twice 0400 & 1030UTC 11/19

More meteor info at:

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

## **Event & Contest Calender 2002**

October 19	CLARC Hamfest Pineville LA
October	25-26 Texoma Hamarama Association – SWOT Grip & Grin
October	24-27 Microwave Update & Eastern VHF/UHF Conference – Stow MA
October 26-27	ARRL EME Contest
November	23-24 ARRL EME Contest

## **SWOT NET ANNOUNCEMENTS**

N0PB, Phil Baldwin is considering the moving of the Northern Missouri Net to 8:00PM Monday for a number of reasons. Let him know your thoughts.

## **SWOT NET REPORTS**

Here are the net reports for June and July. 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 September**

09/01/02...61 09/08/02...66

09/15/02...63 09/22/02...70 09/29/02...68

127 stations/ 17 grids/ 3 States

### **Central Louisiana (Tuesday)**

09/17/02...No Net 09/24/02...6/6

10/01/02...9/7 10/08/02... 7/7

### **Northern Missouri (Tuesday)**

09/03/02...17/10 09/10/02...29/17

09/17/02...16/7 09/24/02...20/12

### **North Texas (Wednesday)**

09/18/02...29/13 09/25/02...33/17

10/02/02...33/14 10/09/02...43/18

### **SW Oklahoma (Thursday)**

09/19/02...4/2 09/26/02...6/4

10/03/02...6/3 10/10/02...7/5

### **Eastern Oklahoma (Monday)**

No Nets the Past Month

### **East Texas (Saturday)**

09/14/02...17/8 09/21/02...13/5

09/28/02...16/7 10/05/02 7/5

10/12/02...19/8

## 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	WOODLAND PK	COLORADO	144.220	W2CRS WBODOM
MON	9:00P	OKLAHOMA	OKLAHOMA	144.250	WD5GVP ED
MON	8:00P	SANDUSKY	E. MICHIGAN	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
TUE	9:00P	N. CENTRAL MO.	N. CENTRAL MO.	144.250	N0PB PHIL KB0PE 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	LAWTON OK	SOUTHWEST OKLAHOMA	144.250	WH6LR JIM
THU	9:00P	TENNESSE	UPPER CUMBERLAND	144.225	N2BR BOBBY
SAT	7:00A	EAST TEXAS	PINEYWOODS	144.250	K5LOW DON
SAT	9:00P	E. OKLAHOMA	HOOT OWL	144.250	KM5ES JOHN