



“From the Shack”

April 2021 Newsletter



“There is a transmitter out there somewhere and it is teasing you, taunting you, daring you to find it! Your stop to get your bearings. Where is the signal strongest? You head that direction.

Another hunter appears in the distance. She turns her antenna slowly and then, suddenly she stops. Does she have the fix too? You’d better get moving or you’ll come in second place...or worse! Your heart is pumping like a jackhammer as you hurry toward the signal source. Where is that “FOX” hiding?”

Amateur Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) is the sport of finding radio transmitters that are hidden by a licensed operator. These transmitters are usually referred to as “Foxes”

Every weekend, in cities, towns and communities all across the country, ham radio

THE CHASE IS ON!

operators gather for a special kind of contest, The Fox Hunt. A small, low power transmitter is hidden and the rest of the crew tries to find it.

Sound Simple? It can be very challenging and a whole lot of fun. The practical use is learning to find disrupting radio signals, repeater blocking or lost hiker.

The hunt can be done either on foot or by car or a combination of both, depending on the contest. It can be as simple as one single transmitter or having several transmitters that need to be located in an organized pattern. It may be done in a limited area such as a park or in a larger area such as open fields, populated community areas or in wooded terrain.

The “fox” owner is responsible for that transmitter and must be a licensed radio operator. It is the owners call sign that is broadcast as part of the transmission. Those looking for the “fox” are just receiving and do not need a license to find the “fox”. NOTE: If

they talking to others by radio, then they do need a license.

ARDF joins orienteering skills like the proper use of topographic maps, compass skills, and some type of attenuator is often used to help define the location of the signal.

For the past several months, the Taylorsville Amateur Radio Club has been sponsoring a monthly "Fox Hunt" to help participants

develop their interest and skills in this unique aspect of amateur radio. We hope each of you who have participated have gained experience from this activity.

If you have not yet joined us, please consider participating in this fun aspect of amateur radio.

Information about the hunt is on our website.

www.taylorsvillehamnet.org

PUSH TO TALK



Do your P's "Pop"? Do your cough's crunch? Does your breathing cause condensation on your mic? You're probably too close and too direct!

Even though good microphone etiquette and technique has probably been beat to death, it is worth covering again for new operators and perhaps old ones who are not educated on the subject.

Change Your Angle:

The idea behind NOT addressing the microphone head-on is keeping the "plosive" energy ("P" percussion) and highly concentrated air from ever reaching the microphone element. This massive pressure change is normally beyond the SPL (Sound Pressure Level) rating of any microphone and will result in a "Pop" sound.

Some microphone manufacturers recommend that you speak at an angle of at least 20 degrees from straight on. Many radio manufacturers will tell you to talk "across the mic" or at nearly a 90 degree angle. Whatever angle you choose you will most likely find that it makes a difference.

Try it—you may find that will improve your readability to those listening.

We are an unusual bunch, aren't we?



As I drive around the valley, I find myself constantly looking for signs of the HAM enthusiast. On cars and trucks, it's the dead giveaway when you see the Call Sign license plate. But if they do not advertise by plate, you have to look a little harder to see the obscure and small mag mount antenna.

On homes it may be the simple wire antenna stretched from a tree limb to a pole. And then you have the proud 16 x 10 foot beam mounted high in the air! Or it is the simple antenna mast made from a length of pipe to the Rohn 45G tower with low flying aircraft warning lights mounted on the top.

And, of course, there is our way of talking! Someone asks—How do you spell vacuum and most people say—V-A-C-U-U-M. But HAM's say—victor-alpha-charlie-uniform-uniform-mike. Yes, we do things differently!

We are in good company however! Internationally, you will hear much of the same disciplined responses in communication. The military also uses much of the same language we do over their radios.

At least we don't (or shouldn't) hear such jive as "Hey K7XXX, you got your ear's on? Or calling K7XXX, "you out there good buddy"? I don't think I have ever heard anyone say "Hey, we got us a HAM radio convoy! I have heard a little bit of crossover from the CB era but for the most part HAM's like to do things properly.

So—Let's keep our unique but proper way of doing things.

OH WOW, look at that big SCREWDRIVER antenna on the back of that car! I hope it doesn't flip the car over! YES, we are an unusual bunch!

CALENDAR ITEMS

- **Our April "Fox Hunt" will be held on the 10th, beginning at 0800 hours local and running until 1200 hours local. Frequency information is on the event calendar and our website.**

Locate the fox virtually from your location, by triangulation, or drive and walk to locate the fox. Your choice. Send your results to our email address tville.hamnet@gmail.com

Our April in person Zoom meeting” on Antennas & Repeaters is on Wednesday, April 14th beginning at 6:30 p.m.

The May “in person zoom meeting” on Solar Power will be on May 12th beginning at 6:30 p.m. [There is a possibility we will be able to have a “limited” in person meeting at city hall] More to follow as we get closer to that date.



- Time for the broken record again -- Please volunteer to call the net. We really need your participation. Let us know when you can be “net control”. by email at tville.hamnet@gmail.com Website address www.taylorsvillehamnet.org

photosinabox.com

73

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