

# The *Microvolt*

March, 2008



We have a tower.....and a beam....what's missing?



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Prologue

The Utah Amateur Radio Club was organized under its present name in 1927, although its beginnings may date back as early as 1909. In 1928, it became affiliated with the American Radio Relay League (club #1602) and is a non-profit organization under the laws of Utah. It holds a club station license with the call W7SP, a memorial call for Leonard (Zim) Zimmerman, an amateur radio pioneer in the Salt Lake City Area.

Meetings: The club meets each month except July and August. The meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at 7:30 PM in the University of Utah's Warnock Engineering Building in room 1230, The "Duke Classroom."

Membership: Club membership is open to anyone interested in amateur radio; a current license is not required. Dues are \$17 per year, including a Microvolt subscription. The Microvolt and membership cannot be separated. Those living at the same address as a member who has paid \$17 may obtain a membership without a Microvolt subscription for \$9. Send dues to the Club Secretary: Dick Keddington, KD7TDZ, 1933 Woodside Drive, Holladay, UT 84124-1632. ARRL membership renewals should specify ARRL Club #1602.

Contributions: Monetary contributions are gladly accepted. Send directly to the Club Treasurer: Chuck Johnson, 1612 W. 4915 S. Taylorsville, UT 84123-4244. For in kind contributions, please contact any board member to make appropriate arrangements.

Repeaters: UARC maintains the 146.62- and 146.76- repeaters. The repeaters are administered by the UARC Repeater Committee. Comments and questions may be directed to any Committee member. The Lake Mountain repeater (146.76-) has autopatch facilities for Provo which are currently disabled due to abuse and for Salt Lake which is in need of reworking to be compatible with IRLP.

Ham Hot-Line: The Utah Amateur Radio Club (UARC) has a Ham Hotline, 583-3002. Information regarding Amateur Radio can be obtained, including club, testing, meeting, and membership information. If no one answers leave your name, telephone number and a short message on the answering machine, and your call will be returned.

Publication: The Microvolt is the official publication of the club. Deadline for submissions to The Microvolt is the 10th of each month prior to publication. Submissions by email are preferred (uarc@xmission.com), but other means including diskettes and typewritten submissions can be mailed directly to: Tony Naef, 4585 Sunstone Rd. #327, Taylorsville, UT 84123. All submissions are welcome but what is printed and how it is edited are the responsibility of the Editor and the UARC board. Reprints are allowed with proper credits to The Microvolt, UARC, and authors. Changes in mailing address should be communicated to the Club Secretary: Dick Keddington, 1933 Woodside Drive, Holladay, UT, 84124-1632.

UARC 2008 Board

Table listing UARC 2008 Board members and their contact information, including President John Brewer, Executive VP Andrew Madsen, and various other roles.

Committee Chairpersons and Members

Table listing committee chairpersons and members, including "Book Lady" Fred Desmet, Historian Ron Speirs, and various other roles.

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IRLP Information

For information on using the club's IRLP node on the 146.76 repeater, check http://www.utaharc.org/irlp.

For late breaking news listen to the UARC Information Net Sundays at 21:00 on 146.62 or set your browser to: www.xmission.com/~uarc/announce.html

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# The Microvolt

The Official Publication of the Utah Amateur Radio Club, Salt Lake City, Utah  
Volume 51, Issue 3, March 2008

## Latest News

### No Meeting in August

The steak-fry substituted for the July meeting and we don't meet in August, so the next Thursday night meeting will be on September 4. We don't know the program topic yet, but it will be announced on the web site and a future issue of *The Microvolt* (we hope) as soon as available.

### Snowbird Repeater Back On

The popular Snowbird repeater on 147.18 MHz returned to the air on June 21 ending a long absence. The controller failed last fall, apparently from a lightning-induced transient. Repair was accomplished months ago, but reinstalling it became a problem. Access to this repeater, at the top of the tram at the Snowbird ski resort, is normally accomplished by riding the tram. As Murphy would have it, a series of problems got in the way of tram access at the times when John Lloyd, K7JL, who maintains the repeater, was available to visit the site. There was a period between the fall season and the winter season when the tram simply did not run. During the winter, several trips were aborted when high winds made tram operation unsafe. Other trips were canceled for lack of help carrying test equipment. More recently, the tram was shut down entirely for maintenance. Finally, on the 21<sup>st</sup>, there were favorable omens and the trip was accomplished.

The Snowbird site is the hub for the Intermountain Intertie which connects repeaters in Idaho and Wyoming with those in northern and southern Utah. Sometimes stations in Montana and Nevada can also access the system. During the outage, stations along the Wasatch Front could access the southern leg of the intertie, but not the northern end.

### 2-Meter Code Practice Available

Lou Berry, AD7HD, informs us that he will be sending code practice on 2-meter FM, 146.58 MHz. From July 19 through August 3, he will transmit every night at 9 P.M. Starting August 4, he will send slow-speed code on Mondays at 7:30 P.M., and intermediate speeds (10-13 wpm) on Thursdays at 8 P.M. Those who would like to learn the code or improve their proficiency are invited to tune in.

**For Sale:** Cushcraft A-4 four-element tri-band beam (20, 15, and 10 meters), \$100. Contact Wally Hebertson, AE7Y, 768-3636, or Wesley Carlson, WA7YZR, 687-1947 (cell) or 768-8795 (home). (Phone numbers are in Lehi.)

## Field Day Fans Find Friendly Field

(UARC's 2008 Field Day Effort)

by Gordon Smith, K7HFV

It was time for the big event: Field Day, amateur radio's biggest operating event of the year. (As far as we can tell, this operating event is very similar to a contest.) At least one ham, Scott, K7DXZ, had been camping on the site of the UARC entry for a full week prior to Field Day weekend, June 28 and 29. By Thursday night there seemed to be more than a smattering of tents and trailers sprouting odd antennas in the clearing just south of Payson Lakes.

Now it was Saturday morning, time to set up stations in order to be ready to operate by noon. Despite the early morning sighting of a bear near the southwest corner of the clearing, everyone was ready to get underway. We had the tower and the beam ready, but one item seemed to be missing: the rotor. This was to be the first of several manifestations of "Murphy's Law," the rule which states "If anything can possibly go wrong, it will." Andrew Madsen, AC7CF, had (perhaps by undisclosed torture threats) agreed to be Field Day Chairman this year. Fortunately, Andrew had a friend coming in from Logan who could stop by the club's storage shed and perform a last-minute rescue by bringing up the club's rotor.

Murphy seemed to have intervened in other areas too. There had been no one able to carry up a second tower for the second Yagi, there weren't enough stakes for one of the operating tents, the CW computer interface that had worked fine in 2007 refused to repeat the feat in 2008, and there was no balun for one of the antennas fed with window line. But, hey, isn't Field Day all about improvising? What better simulation of an emergency could we have?



WA7X's "Bottle Balun" for balanced lines

Traditionally, the CW station is the big point-getter on Field Day, not only because CW contacts count twice as much as phone contacts, but also because it just seems possible to make the QSOs faster. But part of the efficiency comes from being able to use the same computer to log and to send code, so fixing the computer interface delayed our getting on by at least a couple of hours. It turned out that Andrew had an NPN transistor and Glen, WA7X, had a 1K resistor, and that was all we needed to replace the relay circuit with an all-electronic version. (Fortunately, there were no grid-block-keyed rigs this year.)

Glen also helped out solving the balun problem by winding a bifilar coil on a water bottle. We don't know if the brand of spring water is important, but the device seemed to work just fine. (Perhaps the "Bottle Balun" will appear in future editions of the ARRL *Handbook*.)

The original plan had been to operate in the "3A" class (i.e. using three simultaneous transmitters), but when the antenna situation (one missing tower) was assessed and the number of potential operators counted, it was decided that 2A would be just fine. That gave us one phone station, one CW station, and one (free) "Get on the Air" (GOTA) station for new, potential, or inactive hams.

Once the CW station was going full-bore, another Murphyism appeared. When the phone and CW stations were both operating on 20 meters, they caused considerable mutual interference. Apparently the stations and/or the antennas were too close together. It's bad enough putting up with the QRM from other stations without having to generate your own, so we moved the phone station to 40 meters.

By dinnertime, things were running reasonably smoothly. Then, the miracle occurred. Despite the fact that only about a dozen potential operators had been found, the group was able to consume roast beef for 75 with no trouble at all. One of the long-standing traditions at UARC Field Days is that when it's dinnertime, the CW operator is the

last to know. This tradition was followed closely this year until Glen, WA7X, had mercy on the author and brought a plate over to the operating tent.

Despite the fact that Saturday temperatures in the Salt Lake Valley approached the 100 mark, it gets chilly at the 8000-foot level after the sun goes down. Achim, NC6X, had come straight from a company party. He bravely operated CW for an hour or so in shorts and sandals before making a hasty retreat to warmer climes. Lonny, K7LO, fired up a robust propane heater in the phone tent, but the CW operators braved it with just the finals to warm things up.

When it was dark enough, Ron Speirs, K7RLS, the club historian and photographer, put on a slide-show featuring Field Days from several previous years. It's always hoped that the current situation won't seem as bad as we look at Murphy appearances from the past.

Operation continued through the evening and into the wee hours. There seemed to be many more class "D" and "E" stations (home stations) than we remembered from previous years. Perhaps a result of fuel prices? One station sent us his class as "23A." Twenty-three simultaneous transmitters? We don't doubt it, but still would like to know where they found 23 productive bands.

Andrew, AC7CF, undoubtedly was responsible for more contact points than anyone else, doing the lion's share of the CW operating. Clint, KA7OEI, operated the SSB station from about 3 A.M. to 8 A.M. at a good clip, making the most QSOs of any phone operator.

John Hardy, K7ALA, was the leading GOTA operator, easily making 50 percent more than the required 20 contacts for 20 bonus points.

We're not entirely sure who all operated the GOTA station. We would like to credit everyone in the log we submit. Anyone who operated (or whose children did) but did not put his name in the log, get in touch with K7HFV (582-2438).

Operators were even more scarce on Sunday morning than they had been on Saturday, but there were enough to keep on the air until the final gun at noon.

Lots of folks pitched in for the tear-down, and their efforts were greatly appreciated.

When it was all over, the author got to experience a new facet of Field Day — towing one of the porta-john trailers back down the canyon, one with a flakey hitch. With visions of the trailer breaking loose and passing me on one of the switchbacks, I hardly dared race down at great speed, especially on bumpy turns. I led a caravan including UARC President John Brewer, N7MFQ, with his motor home, and Susan Brewer, N7OVG, towing the

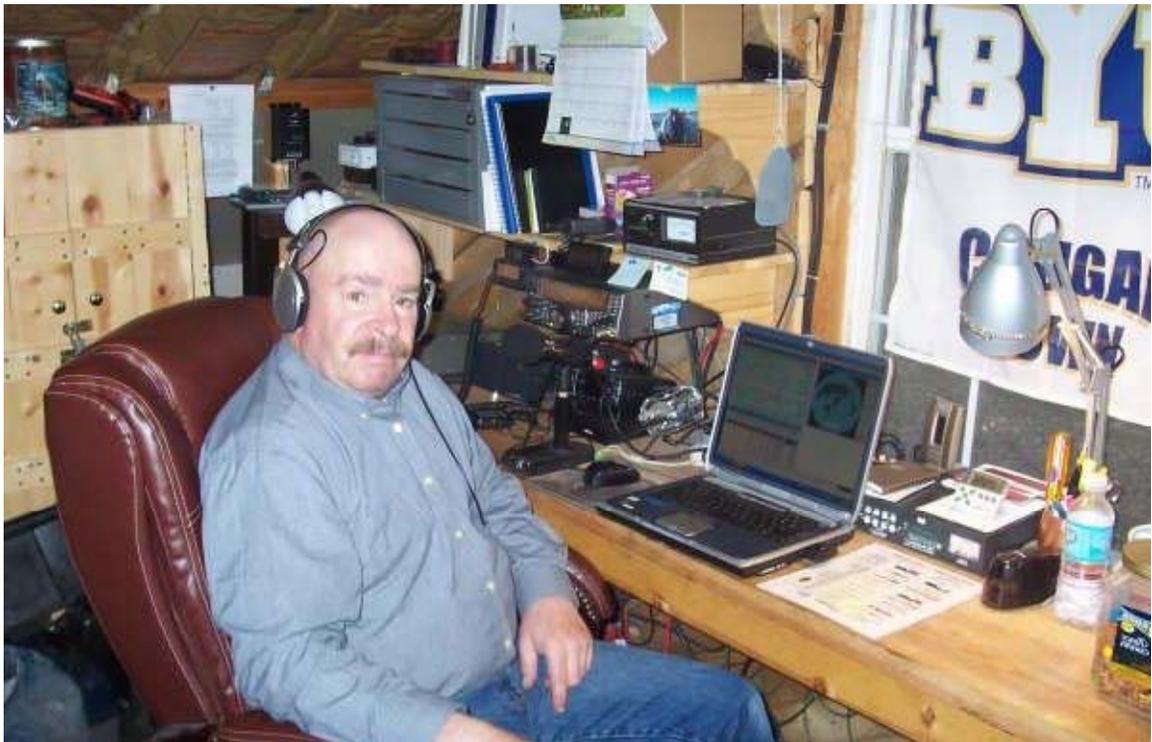
twin to my trailer. I'm not sure if it was the length of our caravan, or the consequences of contacting one of our “special” trailers, but no one seemed inclined to pass us. What the heck; I'd always wanted to lead a parade!

Special thanks should go to John and his family who did almost all the towing, including the “COW” (Communications on Wheels) trailer with the 80-foot tower, and replaced a bad tire and a bad battery on the COW.

Thanks to all who helped and participated in various ways. Help us figure out how to do it even better next year. We don't have the scoring information yet, but will post it on the web site when it is available.

## **Member of the Month**

By Linda Reeder, N7HVF



This month we are featuring Spencer Shields, W7SUR. Spencer has been in amateur radio since

August, 2004. It was the bishop in Spencer's ward who got him into amateur radio. Spencer's bishop

had called him to be the emergency preparedness coordinator in his stake. The Bishop informed Spencer that there was going to be an amateur radio class in Indianola close by where Spencer lives. This was in August, 2004.

Garth Wiscombe, KA7MHN [now W7PS], his wife Diane, and Eugene McWherter and his wife, Carol, decided to go on vacation to Sanpete County and teach an amateur radio class. They took their trailers down and stayed for a while. They had all kinds of amateur radio equipment in their trailers so that their students could have hands-on experience using amateur radio. Spencer said that he didn't have any problem passing the class. He has been in electronics maintenance for 40 years. So he got his Technician license with no problem. He decided to wait on upgrading, because he wanted to learn the ropes first. Spencer received his General license in 2006. He took the test in Manti and shortly after that he obtained his Extra Class license. Spencer took his General test before they did away with the code and was excited about having passed.

What Spencer likes best about amateur radio is DX. He is a member of the Utah DX Association. Spencer loves contesting. He has been really active in PSK-31 and has made lots of contacts all over the world. Spencer had just participated in an ARRL contest the week before we interviewed him and said he loved it. Spencer has a Kenwood 2000 HF rig. He also has an Icom IC-700 low band rig. Spencer told me he has a rare grid square

because he lives up in the mountains and everyone contesting wants to contact that grid.

Spencer's home up in the mountains runs completely on solar power. He has a generator that he uses in the winter, when there isn't much sun, to charge up the system. He says it takes about an hour.

Spencer and his wife, Bonnie, have been married for 35 years. They have six children: two boys and four girls. They are all grown now. One of the boys died when he was four years old. Spencer said his second to the youngest daughter, Jessica, got her Technician license in 2007. Her call sign is KE7NXA. He was very proud that she scored 100 percent on her Technician test.

Spencer worked in the coalmines for about five years. He really didn't like it and decided to stay in the electronic field. He worked for National Semiconductor. He now works as a substitute teacher. He teaches first grade up through high school.

Spencer is the President of the Skyline Amateur Radio Club in Sanpete County. He is a member of the VHF Society, Utah DX Association and UARC.

He loves to come to our meetings even though it is a 200-mile trip. He even attended the steak-fry about three years ago.

Spencer, we wish you the best in all your endeavors.

## **Riley Hollingsworth Retires from FCC**

Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, Special Counsel for Amateur Radio Enforcement, retired from the Commission on July 3, 2008. He was quick to point out that the FCC's amateur radio enforcement program will continue, although his successor has not yet been named.

He had considered retiring in January, but postponed it citing "several issues on the table that I want[ed] to continue to work through with the amateur community."

Hollingsworth said that he has "loved" working for the FCC and has "always had great jobs, but this one involving the Amateur Radio Service has been the most fun and I have enjoyed every day of it. I've worked with the best group of licensees on

earth, enjoyed your support and tremendous FCC support and looked forward every day to coming to work. The Amateur Radio Enforcement program will continue without missing a beat, and after retirement I look forward to being involved with Amateur Radio every way I can. I thank all of you for being so dedicated and conscientious, and for the encouragement you give us every day."

Saying it has been a "privilege to work with and for the Amateur Radio licensees and the land mobile frequency coordinators," Hollingsworth said that he is "extremely fortunate to work for two wonderful groups of people: Those at headquarters in the Enforcement Bureau, and for the Amateur Radio operators."

(Thanks to *The ARRL Letter*, July 3 edition.)

## **License Exam Schedule**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contact Person</b>	<b>Phone</b>
07/16/08 (Wed.)	Provo	Steve Whitehead, NV7V	465-3983
07/16/08 (Wed.)	St. George	Gary O. Zabriskie, N7ARE	(435) 674-2678
07/17/08 (Thu.)	Roosevelt	R Chandler Fisher, W7BYU	(435) 722-5440 <sup>1</sup>
07/29/08 (Tues.)	Salt Lake C.	Eugene McWherter, N7OVT	541-1871 <sup>1</sup>
08/02/08 (Sat.)	Salt Lake C.	Gordon Smith, K7HFV	582-2438 <sup>1</sup>
08/20/08 (Wed.)	Provo	Steve Whitehead, NV7V	465-3983
08/20/08 (Wed.)	St. George	Gary O. Zabriskie, N7ARE	(435) 674-2678
08/26/08 (Tues.)	Salt Lake C.	Eugene McWherter, N7OVT	541-1871 <sup>1</sup>
09/04/08 (Thu.)	Logan	Kevin L. Reeve, N7RXE	(435) 753-1645
09/17/08 (Wed.)	Provo	Steve Whitehead, NV7V	465-3983
09/17/08 (Wed.)	St. George	Gary O. Zabriskie, N7ARE	(435) 674-2678
09/18/08 (Thu.)	Roosevelt	R Chandler Fisher, W7BYU	(435) 722-5440 <sup>1</sup>
09/30/08 (Tues.)	Salt Lake C.	Eugene McWherter, N7OVT	541-1871

Footnote 1: Preregistration is required. Check with the contact person prior to the exam.