

SHACKNEWS

HIGHVELD AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

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FEBRUARY 2006

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Sunday morning BULLETINS - 145.7875 MHz &

70620

tz @ ±08h45.

COMMUNICATION IS THE NAME OF THE GAME

Meeting. The first meeting of the new year did not see a large turn out of members. One point that was raised was the use of improper language on the repeater during the Porky Club session in the mornings. A reminder to operators to be aware of the Amended Radio regulations No. 27258 dated 4 Feb 2004. Section B3 Sub section (2) refers. Remember this is our repeater and what ever is said and transmitted is a reflection of **amateur radio**. You never know who is listening.

SUBS R70.00 for the 2005/2006 year.

SSC meeting was held at the QTH of Berridge, ZS6BFL. Thanks to all those who attended.

---oooOOOooo---

An elderly gentleman had serious hearing problems for a number of years. He went to the doctor, and the doctor fitted him with a set of hearing aids that permitted him to hear 100%. The elderly gentleman returned to the doctor a month later. The doctor said, "Your hearing is perfect. Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again."

The gentleman replied, "Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to their conversations. I've changed my will three times!"

INVISIBLE ANTENNAS

You can put up a HF antenna, almost anywhere!

How to get on the High Frequency (HF) bands when you live in a flat, townhouse or retirement complex? . Ideas for reduced space, compact, or invisible antennas for this kind of dwelling have been numerous and interesting

First, let's remember that the name of the game here is to put radio frequency energy into the air. Never lose sight of that. How we do it is secondary. How we hide the antenna is limited only to the imagination. With a good antenna tuner, almost anything metallic will work. But remember this, your bandwidth is very narrow. Usually, if you vary your frequency more than ten kilohertz you will have to re-tune

Your First Concern

Always remember that when you are in the apartment/condo environment, you have lots of neighbors, so be a good one. After you assemble your antenna, tune up your radio and antenna and transmit briefly while your spouse or a friend is listening to the TV and stereo. If you get any kind of interference, quit and work on the problem. Low-pass filters often help for these kinds of problems. Running reduced power helps for other interference problems. Grounding your radio is an absolute must. A good ground in an apartment/flat etc. is often hard to get, but if you can find a copper cold-water pipe in your apartment, that is a good first step. Use a "saddle clamp" to get a good connection.

What Next?

Refer to one of the many radio publications and look at the block diagrams for "Connecting Radio to VSWR meter to Tuner to Antenna". After you are sure you have this right, look at the construction details for dipoles and random wires.

- **Invisible Random Wire:** A length of small-gauge enameled wire between a window and any nearby structure or tree. This will work with modest success. The longer the better, but "space available" is what you use. Remember that this type of antenna will come down in a stiff breeze so be prepared to replace it often.
- **Gable Dipoles:** Wire dipoles stapled along the gable of a house or an apartment work quite well. An antenna with traps is hard to hide, so a dipole antenna per band with a quick-disconnect connector like a BNC is a must. Choose an insulated wire that matches the colour of the wood trim of your apartment or house.
- **Copper Tape Antennas:** These usually work quite well but can be hard to hide. The wide copper tape is just too obvious. If you promise to paint over it when you have it mounted, you can be in DX Heaven. Several different manufactures make these and you have to follow the instructions exactly. Don't read anything into the instructions. Just follow them to the letter.

- **Slinky Antennas/Dryer Duct Antennas:** Dipoles made of Slinkys or out of flexible clothes dryer ducts can be supported on monofilament fishing line. A hallway or unused wall can be used for this kind of antenna. Again, follow the construction details for a dipole. When making the solder connections to these devices, be sure and scrape the insulating material well and make sure that the solder connections are solid.
- **Mobile Antennas:** Mobile Antennas such as the Hustler or Outbacker brands can be used in apartments
- **Screen Doors, Gutters and Railings:** Prior to trying to use these, first check to see if you have a resistance path to ground. If you see even a slight resistance to ground, give up the idea: an antenna doesn't work if it is grounded. If, however, you don't see any resistance to ground, give it a try and slowly increase your power.
- **The DOOR Antenna:** This reduced-space antenna has the advantage of being somewhat directional. If you have an unused door to a room in your apartment or condo, start by making an "X" with masking tape from corner to corner. Mark the tape every 13mm from the outside edges. Using pushpins place a pin at every mark on the "X". You have now made a form for the antenna.

Using small-gauge enameled wire, start at the bottom of the door. Anchor the wire to the outside-most pin. Wrap the wire in a spiral fashion using the pins for guides. When the antenna is finished, you get your directionality by moving the door in and out.

HF antennas in an apartment or condo can be done. Just bear in mind a few things. First, be a good neighbor and if some one has an interference complaint try to solve it. Next, with this kind of set up you cannot be a BIG GUN so don't try to be. You won't make all the contacts, but those that you do will be special. Experiment. Part of this hobby is trying things and learning and having fun.

---oooOOOooo---

Two elderly gentlemen from a retirement centre were sitting on a bench under a tree, when one turns to the other and says: "Slim, I'm 83 years old now and I'm just full of aches and pains. I know you're about my age. How do you feel?"

Slim says, "I feel just like a new-born baby."

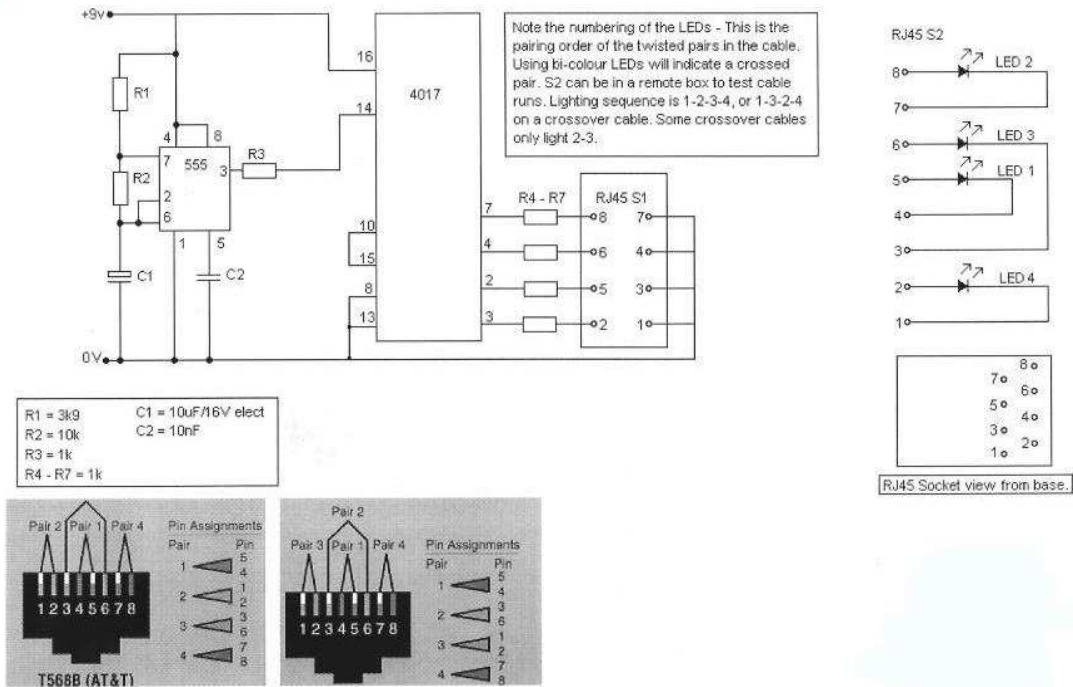
"Really? Like a new-born baby?"

"Yep, No hair, no teeth, and I think I just wet my pants!"

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RJ45 Network Cable Tester

NETWORK CABLE TESTER



For those who have installed their own network I hope the above might be of some use

Thanks to the WWW and e-mails for the inserts in this issue