

IN-SERVICE

Fall Volume 86 November 2003

A New Antenna for LARA

On Saturday, August 30, members of the Lamoni Amateur Radio Association (LARA) installed a new HF tri-bander on the tower on top of the Science Hall on the campus of Graceland University in Lamoni. The antenna had been donated by Muir Robinson (W8QK). In the August IN-SERVICE, you may recall seeing pictures and reading the article concerning this antenna being assembled.

Graceland's Dean of Faculty, Steve Anders, runs a crane business as his "hobby". With three cranes, Steve raises the word, "hobby" to an all-new level! With his crane, Steve offered to help us put up the antenna, assisted by his sons Brian (age 13) and Kevin (age 19). To provide the necessary "reach" from the ground to the top of the tower, Steve parked as close as possible to the north side of the Science Hall, and installed a jib and extension, totaling 80 feet in length.

Larry Oiler (HØBGG) has had a chance to briefly test the new antenna. The rotor is not yet connected, and the antenna is pointed just south of east. Larry made several contacts, with signal reports consistent 5-9! This antenna is going to be a terrific addition for the Graceland Ham Club!

Bob Farnham - KGØII

The crane was backed close to the north side of the Science Hall, providing the shortest reach to the tower.

Graceland's Assistant Professor of Computer Science Bob Farnham (KGØII), with Steve Anders and his son Brian, installing the jib on the boom of the crane.

Left - Bob Farnham (KGØII) and Steve Anders's sons Kevin and Brian dangle 70' overhead! What a ride, and a great view besides!

Right - Steve Murdock (NØZY) and Kevin Anders installing the tri-bander on the mast. This sure beats hard-packing the antenna up the tower!

Larry Oiler (NØBGG) holds a guy rope for the platform, to keep Steve Murdock and Kevin Anders from swinging to-and-fro in the breeze.

Bike Ride Assistance

On Saturday, September 6, the Lamoni Amateur Radio Association (LARA) provided communication assistance for the Southern Iowa/Northern Missouri (SIANOMO) bike ride. The scenic fun ride offered riders three routes from which to choose. The first was a relatively short 12-mile ride from the Lamoni Welcome Center to the Andover Community of Christ just south of town, and back to Lamoni Central Park. The second was a longer 30-mile ride from the Lamoni Welcome Center to Nine Eagles State Park, east of Lamoni, and back to Lamoni Central Park. The third, and longest route, was a 52-mile ride from the Lamoni Welcome Center, past the Andover Community of Christ, over the steep hills between Blythedale and Cainsville, Missouri, north to Nine Eagles State Park, and back to Lamoni Central Park. The Decatur County Cattlemen treated riders to broiled hamburgers at Lamoni Central Park.

LARA members Jon Barney (AAØOS), Mitch Blakesley (KBØRHF), Bob Farnham (KGØII), Larry Oiler (NØBGG), Lila Oiler (NØVWS), and Bill Raiser (NØESY) were located at various checkpoints along the routes to count incoming and outgoing cyclists. Jon was located at Cainsville, Missouri at a refreshment stop there. Mitch was located at Nine-Eagles State Park, Bob was located at the Lamoni Welcome Center, and then moved to Central Park as net control. Larry was located at the Andover Community of Christ. Midway through the morning, once all riders had passed his checkpoint, Larry became the mobile "sag" wagon. Lila was located at Davis City, counting riders returning from both the 30- and 52-mile routes. Bill was located in Blythdale, Missouri at a refreshment stop there.

Being mobile enabled the LARA members to track the progress of the lead riders, as well as those struggling behind. One rider had planned to take the second route to the state park and back. But once at the park, felt good enough to attempt the 52-mile trip, albeit in reverse direction! It turned out to be a good thing that we were tracking this rider, because her bicycle developed a flat tire. We worked with her to get her bicycle mobile again, and she was determined to finish the course. But eventually, Jon picked her and her bicycle up. Another rider, who was having some derailleur gear problems even at the beginning of the tour, eventually became dehydrated, and Mitch was able to deliver water to him.

Adding some tension in the days preceding the event was the fact that the Lamoni WØSHQ repeater was down. A few days prior, some unknown signal had caused the repeater to kerchunk continuously, so it was downed using touch tone codes. As nearly as we can tell, what should have been the repeater disable code must have either been miskeyed, or misread by the repeater controller, as a master disable code. The repeater transmitter and receiver were still fully functional, so we were prepared to provide coverage using a control operator at the WØSHQ transmitter site, taking needed advantage of the 400-foot

tower facilities there. Fortunately, Larry discovered the Master Enable, and WØSHQ is again fully operational. (EchoLink stations connecting to WØYO Link during the time the repeater was down may have wondered what was wrong.) Larry has now configured the repeater controller to require at least a one-second input before transmitting, which will prevent kerchunking in the future.

Bill Morain, SIANOMO coordinator, says he was losing much sleep prior to the event, mostly for fear of safety of the riders. Knowing that we would be there enabled him to enjoy a peace of mind. He said he very much appreciated us being there. And we feel we made a significant contribution to the event, notwithstanding our assistance to the two riders mentioned above. For future events, having a mobile operator in the sag wagon throughout the event will improve service as well as our usefulness. Also, better procedures for counting incoming and outgoing cyclists to the various checkpoints will provide better information as to the location of cyclists who may be needing assistance. LARA President Bob Farnham says we will definitely plan to be involved again in next year's SIANOMO event.

Bob Farnham - KGØII

Some of the members of the Lamoni Amateur Radio Association at their monthly meeting. Left to Right Barbara Lee Collins W6RWE, Mitch Blakesley KBØRHF, Tony Crandell KØISA and Bob Farnham KGØII.

ASCRA Membership Meeting

Saturday, March 27, 2004
Independence, MO
10 a.m. to 12 Noon

Board of Directors Meeting
2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Location and program to be identified in next newsletter.

73,
Michael Hahn

CALLING all ASCRA members

This message is being sent to all ASCRA members. It was previously sent to those for whom we have a valid e-mail address.

Most of you MAY recall the previous items in the IN-SERVICE that have addressed the possibility of linking ASCRA members together with voice over IP technology. Work with that technology has continued with the primary ASCRA effort being made at Graceland University through WØYO and its affiliated local two meter repeater WØSHQ/R.

Bob Farnham, KGØII, has setup an EchoLink system (WØYO-L) linked to the Lamoni ASCRA repeater. It is now possible for several to CONNECT to the repeater via EchoLink and monitor not only the Lamoni repeater, but also speak with each other through the link.

A few weeks ago, several ASCRA stations, VK3AQN, NØBGG, W6RWH, W6LMJ, VE3SCP, KGØII and myself among others were able to communicate with each other via EchoLink and WØYO-L. The software is a free download and easy to install. Please join us this coming Sunday 8/31/2003 at 2030 UTC on EchoLink if you can. I suggest you install the software, register your call, and practice using it for a day or so before the scheduled net. It can be a bit tricky to use the first time you try it.

By going to: <http://www.echolink.org/>

You can download the software to join us. We are still testing the Graceland Repeater capability for a conference or Echo Link Net.

After you download the software and receive your authorization, you only need to make the connection to:WØYO-L That is Whiskey Zero Yankee Oscar dash Lima. No extra card other than a sound card with speakers and microphone is required for your PC. Only amateur radio operators are allowed to use the software. Access is controlled by a screening process which only allows ham radio operators to participate.

There are several features that you can read about while you are waiting for the authorization to be approved. It is a little out of the ordinary to find the PC volume control for both the mike and speakers to make it work.

The following instructions are for Microsoft Windows users. If you right click on the speaker icon in the notification area on the right-hand side of the task bar at the top or bottom of your screen, it will open a context sensitive menu, and select VOLUME CONTROLS. (If you don't have a speaker icon, then open the Control Panel window from the Start menu, and open the Sounds and Audio Devices control panel. Click on the Volume tab, and then click the Advanced button.) Either way, a Play Control window will appear with slider controls for various audio output devices. EchoLink uses the Wave device, and the Play Control slider serves as a master level control. You will probably want to start with the Wave device at maximum. Set the Play Control for a comfortable listening level in your PC speakers.

(You may also have some kind of speaker volume controls on your keyboard, which will also adjust the Play Control level.) Then select Properties from the Options pull-down menu. In Properties, select the Recording audio button, make sure Microphone is selected in the checkbox, and click OK. Another set of sliders will be displayed. EchoLink uses the Microphone input, so make sure it is selected in the check box. Set its level initially at maximum. Then in EchoLink, select Connect to Test Server from the Station pull-down menu. (You must be connected to the Internet for this test.) The Test Server will record your transmission and play it back to you, to assist you in setting levels before connecting to WØYO-L or another station.

In the Tools -> Preferences, Connections tab of EchoLink, you can set your Location Description for when you are Free or Busy. We suggest you include ASCRA in both dialog boxes, such as, "ASCRA: Lamoni IA" for Free, "ASCRA: busy or away" for Busy, or whatever is appropriate for you. Then it will be possible to more easily search for ASCRA stations that are online. Do a search for ASCRA from the Station -> Find pull down menu to see how other ASCRA stations have implemented this suggestion. (Notice that you can also find WØYO by searching for ASCRA in this way.) An ALARM feature in EchoLink allows you to select a few addresses that you want to check on when you sign on to see if they are active. This saves having to remember the call signs and selecting out of the geographical listing which is a laborious approach. When the software opens, that window can be displayed automatically allowing you to select the stations you want to chat with. A "Favorites" window accomplishes much the same thing, but Alarms will beep your PC speaker when one of your preset Alarm stations changes status; i.e. comes online, goes offline, becomes free, or becomes busy.

You can check into the repeater in advance if you are new to the program to try and get things working. Once your Recording and Play Control levels are set using the EchoLink Test Server, hams in Lamoni will be monitoring the WØYO-L link through the Lamoni WØSHQ/R repeater and will be happy to assist you to adjust our audio.

Currently there are about a dozen ASCRA stations that I am aware of using the software. I am trying to set up an address list for those that wish to continue receiving info on ECHO LINK so we don't continue to bother others with a total ASCRA E-MAILING. Please respond to this via e-mail if you wish to be included in the list.

Your suggestions on how ASCRA should use voice over IP are welcome. The concept of an ECHO LINK NET is being CONSIDERED now. The current thinking is for the echolink net to be after the 20 METER net on Sundays. This would allow those on the west coast to be home after church, Fred in Australia to sleep longer and Mark in the UK to join before he goes to bed. This needs more discussion. Send me an E-MAIL if you are having trouble and I'll ask some of the experts and get back to you.

Ernie – WB2UJL - erniemiles@aol.com

EchoLink

ASCRA members,

We have an EchoLink radio interface operational in Lamoni. If you are running EchoLink software, feel free to connect to us and try it out! The ID is WØYO, which is the Graceland Ham Club station. (We used these call letters because the link radio and computer are in my office at Graceland University.) At the current time, the link radio is operating on 146.52 simplex. We're still working on the repeater interface. The current interface seems to work well for computer to radio communication. We'll look forward to hearing from you! 73 de kgØii

Bob Farnham
farnham@grm.net

Using EchoLink

We also invite any ASCRA stations to join the Lamoni Amateur Radio Association in our Sunday evening 2-meter net via EchoLink. The net is held at 00:30Z each Sunday evening. To participate in the net, connect to WØYO-L as instructed below. We will look forward to hearing from you!

73 de kg0ii
Bob Farnham

Echolink works best between multiple stations when it is used through a link or linked repeater. I have access to WØYO-L an Echolink repeater at Graceland University. WØYO-L
ASCRA: WØSHQ/R Lamoni node# 127318
If you haven't been able to coordinate for another links use, please consider using WØYO-L. It normally has only light use and should be able to serve well for an Echolink element of the HWN. Its normally users are faculty members at Graceland and service oriented.

Terry - W6LMJ

About 16.28 local - August 14 2003

Hello -

Just had to tell you - only a minute ago I completed a contact with Larry NØBGG and Lila NØBWS via the Lamoni repeater! It was about 0115 Lamoni time and Larry happened to have stayed up to fix a problem in a car and heard my call through the repeater. I had read Bob's comments in his email and in 'In Service'; thought I'd give it a try and that was the result.

Lila was using a handheld - this must be for ASCRA perhaps the longest distance covered so far using a 2m handy and Echolink.

Noticed that on the screen here the repeater is identified as WØYO-L while the code and voice identifier is WØSHQ-R.

Great Stuff!! And they say it's not amateur radio.

Fred – VK3AQN.

Recognition for Terry

A quote
from the Wellington Radio Club Newsletter
**TERRY W6LMJ – NET CONTROLLER
EXTRAORDINAIRE!**

During most of Hurricane Isabel, the 20 meter Hurricane Net seemed to be a beehive of activity. With large numbers of stations checking in and a high volume of traffic, the management of the Net was crucial.

Listeners to the Net had to be impressed by Terry W6LMJ of Lake Worth. He spent many hours as Net Control keeping the net organized, accurately relaying traffic, and pulling weak stations out of the noise. At times the pace was hectic and the traffic urgent, but Terry always kept his cool. He served as a great role model.

Terry and his fellow Net Controllers, and all check-ins, deserve our admiration and thanks for a job well done.

Terry's Response

I was very active with the Hurricane Watch Net (HWN) while assigned to the United States Southern Command, in the Republic of Panama. From there I had excellent propagation to most parts of the USA for at least a portion of every day. Oklahoma also proved to be a useful location for supporting the Net. But here in Florida I am more likely to be a station reporting hurricane weather first hand, than being able to relay it to the National Hurricane Center which is just 67 miles to the south of me. From this location I have had very few opportunities to assist with the net. However, during the land fall of Isabel, I just happened to have the best propagation into the effected area - so I held net control for an extended period of time.

Terry

E-mail Addresses

Our database is woefully deficient in e-mail addresses. Anyone who has an e-mail address in the database should have received an e-mail message from me in September. If you have an address to be added to the list please send it to me.

frtroeh@iastate.edu.
NØELM

New IN-SERVICE Editor

With this issue of IN-SERVICE, Fred Troeh, NØELM, will begin serving as editor. We appreciate Fred's willingness to take on this responsibility. Fred brings his own unique gifts and talents to this task and we would ask all ASCRA members to make an endeavor to support Fred as he directs the continued publication of In Service. News of those activities you are involved in in your own community or local ham club as well as a letter to the editor or even a full article would be most welcome as additions to the newsletter.

We also express to Hale Collins, W6RWH, the outgoing editor our thanks and appreciation for his dedicated service to ASCRA. He has brought a level of consistency to the publication of In Service and has worked hard to make sure there was interesting and informative information contained in each issue. We invite you to share your appreciation to Hale for a job well done.

Michael Hahn - KGØXU
Executive Director

This is the first issue edited by Fred Troeh NØELM. As the past editor I am happy to turn over the job to Fred after five years as editor. He has my best wishes and full support if he ever needs it.

I appreciate the support that many ASCRA members have given me by writing articles and passing along tips that have helped improve the newsletter. Keep sending your articles and suggestions to Fred. A file full of potential articles sure makes the job easier.

Thanks to ASCRA for giving me this job. I have enjoyed it.

Hale Collins - W6RWH

As noted above by Michael and Hale, the time has arrived to give Hale a well-deserved rest from the IN-SERVICE editorial duties. Our thanks go to him for a job well done. That means that someone else is needed to be the editor. Since I was the only volunteer, I won the contest.

As editor, my job is to organize the material that the members submit and publish it in four issues per year. This issue is composed mostly of material that was submitted to Hale and forwarded to me. Items for future issues can be submitted directly to me. E-mail is a good way to do that for those who are on line. My address is frtroeh@iastate.edu. If you prefer to send hard copy, please address it to Fred Troeh, 4117 Quebec St., Ames, IA 50014. If you lose the address, don't use that as an excuse. Just contact Hale, Michael, Ernie, or Terry and I am sure they would forward your article to me.

Now that this issue is in print, it is time to think three months ahead to the next issue. The deadline for it is in mid-January, but I will be happy to store items that arrive early.

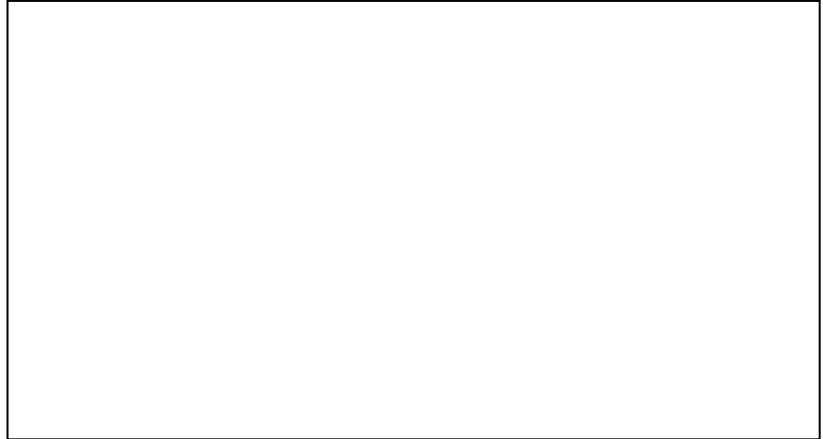
Fred Troeh – NØELM

20 Meter Net

The following checkins were recorded from 7/20/03 to 10/26/03.

Ernie - WB2UJL

KIØAD, James George
WDØARL, Ed Gordon
NØBGG, Larry Oiler
KØBKZ, Gene Chadwick
WBØBQV, Dave Ashby
NØDQU, Ken Renquist
NØELM, Fred Troeh
WAØFGW, Randy Bronson
WAØIBS, Andy Ferrar
KGØII, Bob Farnham
KCØLSE, Joe Andrews
WAØLVG, Mike Morris
KCØMRJ, Carole Stanton
WRØS, Warren Holcomb
KBØVRN, Allen Gross
KØWTU, Joseph Mangum
KGØXU, Michael Hahn
WØSHQ, Robin Cross, Doug Shaw - Guest operators
WBØWWU, Ed Morris
NØWZH, Steve Hampton
WØYO, Graceland Club Station
VE1ALG, Bill Crawford
N1HV, Andy LeDeay
K1NQM, Tom Gomberg
WW1HH, Warren Hurd
HP1XBQ, XXXXXXXXXXXXX
WB2UJL, Ernie Miles
W2TFT, Tom Thatcher
VA3RZ, Ray Else
VE3SCP, Scott Price
HP3XUD, Denny Weldon
N4DOA, Bob Hedrring
W4RBI, Gary Johnson
KG4WHC, Elvis Denham
WB5BRD, Ray Hooper
N5COO, Dave Albert
N5ECP, Jeff Salmons
W3HEN, John Seither II
N5LCL, Dave Gates
N5MOK, Michael Wuench
KB5SOE, Ron Mounce
W6LMJ, Terry Redding
W6RWH, Hale Collins
VE7DXZ, Tony XXXXX
K7NCG, Jim Fish
WA7TBP, George Needham
KA7VMA, Dick Wynes
K8QA, Mike Oiler
W8QK, Muirl Robinson
AA9EQ, Bradley Lietz
KC9GG, John Smith
KB9JLC, Ken Collard
WA9YWK, Keith Peterson



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