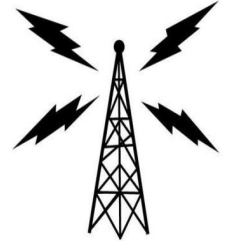




DFARG Signal



Let's Get Portable!



A generation ago, Ham radio equipment was still heavy, bulky, and fragile. Nowadays, the advent of lightweight, rugged transceivers and equally light batteries makes it possible for hams to operate from virtually anywhere, hence the popularity of events such as National Parks on the Air, and organizations like Summits on the Air, World Wide Flora and Fauna on Amateur Radio, and as many other "Places" on the Air as you can imagine. If you are already operating portable in the wild, you understand the excitement of setting up and operating a station in a remote, scenic area. If you are not, you should know that putting together a portable station can be relatively inexpensive and tons of fun! The three major components of the portable station are transceiver, power supply, and antenna. While it is possible to find lightweight, rugged radios capable of putting out 100 watts,

such as the Yaesu FT-857D, you should know that even the current revolution in battery weight and efficiency make continuous operation at that power an expensive proposition in weight, vol-

ume, cost, or all three. For that reason, many portable set-ups use multi-band, multi-mode QSO transceivers such as the Elecraft KX-2 and the Yaesu FT-817 and 818, which allow for all-day operation on a single, small battery. These transceivers are lightweight, with the former weighing in at 13 ounces and the latter at 2.6 pounds. If you want to restrict yourself to CW operation, LNR Precision's Mountain Topper series can weigh as little as 9.5 oz. Costs for these three transceivers ranges from about \$400 for the 5-band version of the Mountain Topper, to around \$600 for the FT-818, to over \$1,000 (well over \$1,000 with all available options) for the KX2. For power, the choice really comes down to a 12-volt, deep cycle, lead acid

or lithium ion battery. There are advantages to each choice. The main advantage to lead acid batteries is price. The batteries themselves are cheap, starting around \$30 for a 7 amp hours (AH), and the chargers are cheap, too, at as little as \$10. The disadvantage is weight. A 12v, 7 AH deep cycle lead battery is going to clock in at about 5 pounds. A lithium ion battery of similar capacity will weigh a third less, around 1.5 pounds. The disadvantage of lithium ion batteries is cost. 12v, 6 AH Li batteries start around \$60 and require dedicated charges starting around \$25. This disadvantage is slowly eroding, however, as technology improves and competition increases. A favorite of many hams is the Bioenno Lithium Ion Phosphate 12v 6 AH battery which comes with Anderson Power Poles already attached, and with charger, for about \$95. The final major component is the antenna. I most often use an inverted vee dipole, though I have also used a homebrew QRP loop and lately have been trying the MFJ 1820T and 1840T base-loaded whips.

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January 14, 2020

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Monthly meeting is January 16 at the shack in Little Mountain. This month Kevin Nason will discuss making vertical HF antennas work,

Upcoming Regional Hamfests and Conventions

01/17/2020 | [Southwest Florida Regional Hamfest](#)
Location: Fort Myers, FL

01/18/2020 | [GARS TechFest](#)
Location: Lawrenceville, GA

01/25/2020 | [DeSoto County Hamfest](#)
Location: Arcadia, FL

02/01/2020 | [CARS Hamfest and Computer Show, ARRL SC State Con-](#)

[vention](#)
Location: North Charleston, SC

02/01/2020 | [FrostFest, ARRL Virginia State Convention 2020](#)
Location: Richmond, VA

02/07/2020 | [Orlando HamCation, ARRL Northern Florida Section Convention](#)
Location: Orlando, FL

02/15/2020 | [Brooksville Hamfest](#)
Location: Brooksville, FL

02/21/2020 | [6th Annual TECHCON](#)
Location: Punta Gorda, FL

02/21/2020 | [Dalton Hamfest](#)
Location: Dalton , GA

03/07/2020 | [Cave City Hamfest](#)
Location: Cave City , KY

03/07/2020 | [Charlotte County Hamfest](#)
Location: Punta Gorda, FL

Regional Net Schedule

All Times in Eastern Time Zone

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	South Carolina SSB Net 1900 3.915						
	Coastal Carolina Emergency Net 1900 3.907						
	South Coast Amateur Radio Service 0800-1100 7.251						
	Intercontinental Amateur Traffic Net 0700-1100 14.300						
	Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network 1100 14.265						
	7240 Club 1000-1200 7.240						
		- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -
		- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -
		- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -
1930		Little Mountain 147.210 + T156.7					
2000		Kershaw ARC 146.775 - T156.7	Sandlapper SSB 50.250		Calhoun ARES 146.670 - T 156.7		
2030	Columbia ARC 147.33 + T 156.7		Lexington ARES 147.000 + T123.0	Columbia ARC 147.33 + T 156.7			
2100	Ridge ARC 146.550 Simplex				Greenwood 147.165 + T 107.2		Ridge ARC First Saturday 3.959
	Ridge ARC 147.255 + T123.0 after simplex						

Treasurer's Report

No Treasurer's Report was submitted for December

Cont'd. from Page 1

The problem with the inverted vee, of course, is support. If there are trees about, the simplest method is to use an arborists' throw bag (a small nylon bag filled with lead shot and a steel ring attached) and a length of parachute cord. Whip it up and over a handy branch, and you are in business (this is a bit more complicated than it sounds, and practicing in your backyard is advised). Operating above the tree line or on the beach requires a mast. Fiberglass kite poles, available on Amazon for around \$40 (for the 16' version) are a good choice, unless you need to fly, as they will not compress short enough to fit in luggage. They are also a bit fragile. SOTABeams, which (as the name implies) caters to the Summits in the Air (SOTA) crowd, has produced the Tactical 7000 HDS mast, which extends to 23' but collapses to a mere 23.3 inches, which WILL fit in a suitcase. SOTABeams offers this mast (and their range of Bandhopper wire antennas) for sale in the US via DX Engineering. The 7000HDS is worth every penny of the \$100 it costs. I have had good results from the MFJ 1840T on 40m SSB. My standard set-up now is the 20m inverted vee and the 1840. Because my FT-818 has two antenna connectors, I can have both connected simultaneously, making band changes a cinch. That accounts for the major components, but there are important minor components which bear discussing. If you are using a mast, you will need to guy it. If you do not know how to tie and use a prusik knot, small friction adaptors used for tent lines can be found at sporting goods stores and Lowe's. Use of a padded, weatherproof case is advisable. You can spend a ton on a Pelican case, but unless you are worried about complete submersion, the Apache case line available for half the cost at Harbor Freight will probably suffice. A small clipboard is

Upcoming Contests

January

18-19 [North American QSO Party SSB](#)

February

1 [Minnesota QSO Party](#)

1-2 [Vermont QSO Party](#)

[British Columbia QSO Party](#)

8-9 [OMISS QSO Party](#)

11-15 [ARRL School Club Roundup](#)

16-17 [ARRL International DX - CW](#)

29-March 1 [SC QSO Party](#)

handy for logging. A collapsible campstool is a good idea if you are not spry enough or just do not care to sit on the ground. Probably the most important component of your portable rig, though, is a checklist. The SOTA, POTA, and WWFF Facebook pages are filled with posts of operators who hiked, paddled, or climbed for hours, only to find that they arrived at their desired location missing an antenna, a power cord, or a battery. Effective use of a checklist can prevent you from ending up in that situation!



WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.W4DFG.ORG

Upcoming DXpeditions:

For more information go to <https://www.ng3k.com/>

Start	End	DXCC	Call	Info
Jan03	Jan23	Maldives	8Q7MA	Mahibadhoo and Maafushi Is (IOTA AS-013); mainly 40 20m; SSB, perhaps
Jan06	Jan24	India	VU2RB Q	80-20m; CW
Jan06	Feb29	Belize	V3	CW FT8 SSB; see Web for full QSL and operational details
Jan12	Jan31	Norfolk I	VK9NK	160-10m; CW SSB RTTY
Jan14	Feb04	Costa Rica	TI5	160-6m; mainly digital, perhaps slow CW
Jan15	Jan23	Palau	T8	160-10m; all modes
Jan18	Feb02	Honduras	HR9	Roatan I (IOTA NA-057); 40 30m; CW FT8
Jan20	Feb09	Cocos I	TI9	IOTA NA-012; 160-6m; SSB; 2 stations; 700w
Jan26	Feb02	Montserrat	VP2MC V	HF; CW; mainly FM satellite
Jan28	Feb07	Gambia	C5XW	40-17m
Jan30	Feb13	El Salvador	HU1DL	160-17m, incl 60m; CW SSB RTTY FT8
Feb01	Feb12	Cocos I	TI9A	IOTA NA-012; all bands; all modes
Feb01	Feb16	Ghana	9G5GS	160-20m; mainly FT8 SSB, some QO-100 satellite in USB
Feb02	Feb14	South Cook Is	E51DD G	Rarotonga I; 40-17m; CW
Feb03	Feb08	Martinique	TO3FM	80-10m, perhaps 160m; FT8 (f/h)
Feb04	Feb18	Tanzania	5H	Zanzibar I (IOTA AF-032) CW SSB RTTY, FT4 FT8; HF
Feb05	Feb08	Nauru	C21	160-6m, 2m EME; HF mainly FT8
Feb05	Feb17	Palestine	E44CC	Bethlehem; 160-10m; CW SSB RTTY PSK FT4 FT8
Feb06	Feb18	Tanzania	5H4WZ	Pemba I (IOTA AF-063); 160-10m; CW SSB RTTY FT8
Feb07	Feb12	Azerbaijan	4K6	Baku; SSB FT8 CW; QRV for CQ WPX RTTY
Feb11	Feb17	French Polyne- sia	TX4	160-10m; CW FT4 FT8 SSB; 100w
Feb16	Mar16	Tanzania	5H3DX	Zinga; 40-10m; CW PSK31 FT8, perhaps SSB; 100w
Feb14	Feb21	Micronesia	V63DX	Pohnpei; 160-6m; focus on 160m for EU
Feb14	Feb23	Cayman Is	ZF2AN	Grand Cayman I; HF; CW FT8;
Feb19	Feb24	Maldives	8Q7MK	North Male Atoll; 80-15m; CW, some SSB;
Feb20	Feb25	Norfolk I	VK9NR	160-10m; CW FT4 FT8 SSB; 100w
Feb20	Mar04	Costa Rica	TI5	160-10m; SSB CW FT8, perhaps FM satellite
Feb20	Mar05	South Orkney	VP8PJ	Signy I (AN-008); 160-10m; SSB CW RTTY FT8
Feb21	Feb23	Puerto Rico	KP3RE	Culebra I (IOTA NA-249); 80-10m; CW SSB FT8
Feb23	Mar01	Bahamas	C6AAN	HF; CW FT8

Ham Humor

