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## Hamfest 2024 Sponsors Lining Up

With EGARA's annual Hamfest coming up on June 2nd, a number of sponsors have signed on for the event and have donated a wide range of Amateur Radio products to be given away as prizes to those who attend. In addition, the club will offer first, second and third, cash prizes of \$250, \$100, and \$50.

The 2024 Hamfest sponsors include Radioddity, which has donated a premium 10 watt mutli-function HT radio with APRS and GPS capabilities, a total of five "E-Z Way" Ham eBooks are being provided by KB6NU, DX Engineering is once again offering a \$50 gift certificate, as is RT Systems, which produces radio programming software. BTech is donating a tri-band HT radio, while N2FJP software is giving the club a \$60 gift certificate for its logging software.

MFJ is also returning again this year as a sponsor, despite announcing it's shutting down production in May (see story on page 7). The company, which offers a wide-range of Ham equipment, antennas and accessories, has donated a number of items, including a compact SWR meter that is perfect for mobile use. In addition, as an ARRL sanctioned Hamfest, it will be providing \$50 and \$25 gift certificates for League merchandise. Several additional sponsors are also expected to sign on.

KJI Electronics also plans on attending the Hamfest, offering its usual big selection of radios, antennas, connectors, shack accessories and Amateur Radio publications. Club members who are interested in a particular radio or piece of gear should email club President Bryan Jackson at [W2RBJ@outlook.com](mailto:W2RBJ@outlook.com) so that he can give KJI the opportunity to have it on hand at the Hamfest.



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### Feiden Appliance Helps Update Club Meeting Space with New Fridge

Earl B. Feiden of Latham has graciously donated a new refrigerator/freezer to EGARA, updating the 1950s fridge that was in the kitchen area of the Rensselaer County Search & Rescue Building. Feiden also donated a full one-year warranty on the 18 cu. ft. Frigidaire model.

"Feiden's support of our club signifies their long-standing commitment to helping non-profit organizations," said EGARA President Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ. "I would urge our members to show their support in return by considering Feiden's when they are in the market for household appliances."

Because EGARA is recognized as a 501c3 charity, donations made to the club are fully tax deductible for full market value.

# Seven is the Lucky Number for EGARA's Test Session

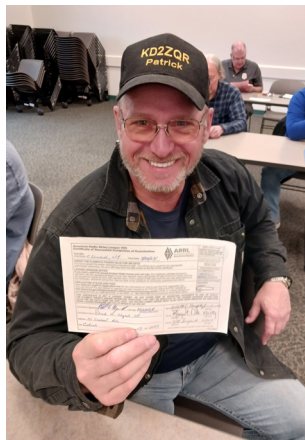
With the Extra class question pool set to change some July 1st, several area hams decided to take advantage of EGARA's licensing test session on April 20th. Meanwhile, several others used the opportunity to get their Tech license or upgrade to a General ticket. One applicant, Bruce Shattuck of Valatie, was even able to score both his Tech and General during the test session.



Three club members, Matt Saplin, W2SAP, and Board member Pat Negus, KD2ZQR, both earned their Amateur Extra licenses, while Richard Beauchemin, KE2CES, scored his General. Meanwhile, Katherine Gould, KE2CRY, upgraded to a General license, after first getting her Technician ticket during the training session EGARA held last February for ten members of the Capital District Jeep Wrangler (CDJW) off-roaders club.

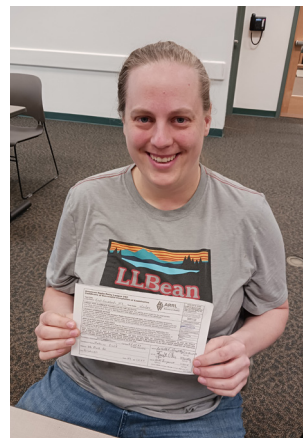
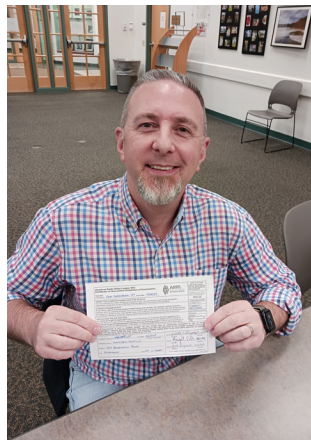
"It was a great day," as succinctly put by Steve VanSickle, WB2HPR, who helped administer the tests as a Volunteer Examiner. Others who staffed the session included Peggy Donnelly, KD2LMU, Walt Snyder, N2WJR, Don Mayotte, KB2CDX, Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ, and Bill Surprenant, W2SUR. Within two hours after the test session was completed, all of the necessary paperwork was scanned and sent electronically to ARRL for processing. Generally, the new licenses are posted in the FCC database with two to three days and ARRL had everything completed the following Monday, April 22nd.

Here they are holding their well-earned "Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination."



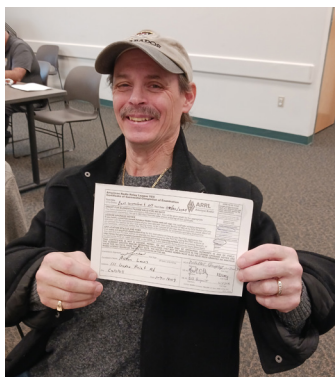
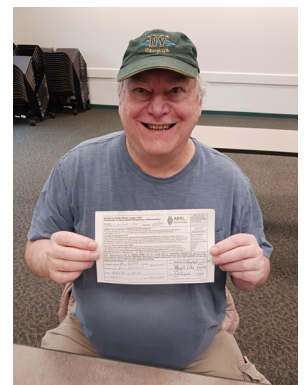
**Pat Negus, KD2ZQR, got his Amateur Extra**

**Matt Saplin, W2SAP, moved up from General to Amateur Extra**

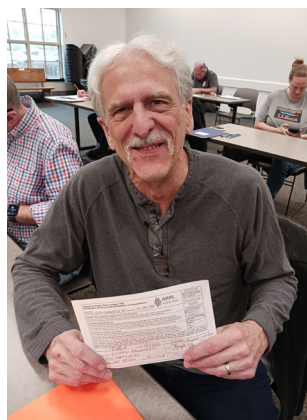


**Katherine Gould, KE2CRY scored her General ticket**

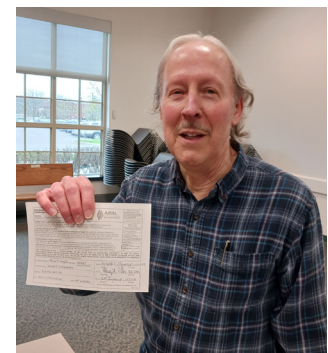
**Bruce Shattuck, KE2DFW, went from zero to General in just 90 minutes!**



**Aaron Lewis, KE2DET, got his Tech with a perfect test score!**



**Richard Beauchemin, KE2CES, is now a General**



**Mark Creighton, KC2QP, graduated from Advanced to Amateur Extra**

# On the Beam

## News & Notes

### EGARA FCC Exams Sessions Get Another *Green Light* from ARRL

EGARA will no longer have to send paper copies of FCC test session results to ARRL for processing because of its solid record of filing them electronically. It had earned the right to file electronically earlier after its hard copy test filings were found to be consistently accurate. ARRL has also allowed EGARA to be “field stocked”, giving it the ability to keep test materials on hand and eliminating the need to request them each time it holds a Volunteer Examiners (VE) licensing exam.

Club members who participate as Volunteer Examiners receive credit for each session they administer. Here they are ranked in order of sessions completed:

| Name                | Call Sign | Test Sessions Administered |
|---------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| • Tom Scorsone      | KC2FCP    | 83                         |
| • David Williams    | N2VLQ     | 65                         |
| • Peter Sochocki    | NY2V      | 48                         |
| • Steve Van Sickle  | WB2HPR    | 39                         |
| • Russ Greenman     | WB2LXC    | 26                         |
| • William Leue      | K2WML     | 21                         |
| • Bryan Jackson     | W2RBJ     | 21                         |
| • Peggy Donnelly)   | KD2LMU    | 18                         |
| • Ridge Macdonald   | KB2HWL    | 16                         |
| • Bob Stark         | KA2EXK    | 10                         |
| • John Fisher       | W2JSF     | 9                          |
| • Walt Snyder       | N2WJR     | 6                          |
| • Hisen Zhang       | KD2TAI    | 5                          |
| • Michael Shanahan) | WO2H      | 4                          |

### *A Cleaning We Will Go!*

Several EGARA members turned out for the initial cleaning of the Rensselaer County Search and Rescue Building on April 23rd. As part of its arrangement to use the facility, the club agreed in return to clean the building and help maintain the grounds. The first round included sweeping and mopping the floors, cleaning all of the tables and chairs, as well as the kitchen. As part of the effort, the club invested in cleaning supplies, mops and a new shop vac.

In addition, club members were on hand to take delivery of a new refrigerator, which was donated to the club by Earl B. Feiden Appliances of Latham. The donation also included a one-year warranty. Soda and water were loaded into the fridge for use by both the club and the Search and Rescue members. The cleaning crew also removed the old inoperative stove from the kitchen. The club is now seeking the donation of a new electric oven to replace it.

Future cleaning sessions will be announced by group email and members who are available to help are always welcome. The group usually follows the work parties with lunch at a nearby restaurant.



The EGARA cleaning crew stands in front of the new refrigerator donated by Feiden Appliances.

They include (L to R) Frank Cavaliere, KE2ATD, Tim Antonacci, WA2WDX, Walt Snyder, N2WJR and Dave Smith, WA2WAP. Taking the photo is Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ.



## User Review -- The XHDATA D-808 Synthesized Receiver

Steve VanSickle / WB2HPR

I recently had the opportunity to test the XHDATA D-808 portable synthesized multi-band receiver. This latest version incorporates some changes to the original model. This little receiver (157mm x 92mm x 32 mm) weighs in at 265 g, (just over 9 oz.) with the included 2000 mAh battery.

All of the controls are tactile pushbutton variety, except for the tuning control (a knob actuated 20 position rotary step switch with positive detent) and the volume control (a thumb wheel actuated variable resistor). The tuning control also acts as a multifunction control to make other adjustments. Adjacent to the tuning control there is a thumb wheel step actuated control switch that performs as a fine tuning adjustment.

The display is a luminous amber LCD variety, displaying all the parameters of operation and is easy to read. The included battery is charged through a micro USB connector via a USB cable (included) which may be plugged into any USB power source. A USB wall wart is not included. There is provision for plugging in an external antenna and stereo headphone via the side-mounted 3.5 mm jacks. There are also three antennas: the built-in ferrite bar antenna for the broadcast band, a two foot telescoping whip for FM, SW, AIR and a 10 foot long wire antenna is supplied for use on the SW and HF bands in place of the telescopic whip. Attached to the left side of the case is a non-detachable hand strap. A rear kick stand allows the radio to rest at a convenient viewing angle while in use, although the bottom of the case includes rubber feet for vertical orientation – a change to the original model. The unit was well packed in three separate nesting corrugated boxes with bubble wrap and a plastic foam slip cover.



The supplied 10 page instruction booklet is rather brief, and highlights most of the basic receiver operation. It is adequate to get the operator acquainted with control operation, but an on-line, third-party version covers many details that are not mentioned in the supplied booklet. The frequency ranges are: FM 87.5-108 MHz, MW 522-1620 kHz, LW 150-450 kHz, and SW 1711- 29999 kHz -- better known to Amateurs as the 160-10 meter ham bands.

Feature rich, this little unit allows reception of AM, CW and SSB on the HF amateur bands. In addition to receiving capabilities, there is a built-in thermometer, alarm clock, and auto-off timer. RDS is the data stream broadcast by commercial FM, and is displayed on the LCD. The display will also show the received signal strength and signal to noise ratio. While no lab testing was performed, my experience with this little gem has been completely positive. The audio output is crisp and loud, all the controls act as they should, and reception range (sensitivity) is pretty good, although SW reception is challenging when used indoors. The included wire antenna is a big help on the SW band.

The tuning control has three modes: Fast/Slow/and Lock – selected by a short press of the tuning control knob. The tuning knob also acts as a squelch control, actuated by a long press of the tuning knob. I spent several occasions testing the D-808 at various times of day to get a feel for its operation and I am totally satisfied. It's a nice way to gauge band conditions quickly prior to firing up the "big rig" and is useful for catching the latest news and weather, or just about any casual listening. Or select one of the 500 available memory locations to tune in world-wide SW stations – or WWV! (favorite frequencies can be stored manually or automatically). USB or LSB is selected by a separate button. The fine tuning control allows vernier tuning of stations – just like RIT on most modern transceivers. Another application is to use the radio to track down noise interference. Or listen to aircraft as they approach or take off. The squelch control is very helpful when listening to Albany approach – eliminating static between transmissions.

There are no perfect designs, and the one feature I would like to see in this radio would be coverage of the NOAA weather frequencies. Perhaps a future version will add this to the next edition – but for all it does do, I feel it's a great bargain – priced under \$100, and can be easily packed along on your next trip. The provided soft vinyl carrying pouch should provide ample protection on your next adventure. So, I like the little XHDATA D-808, and found it a pleasure to use. I highly recommend it to those who may want an additional receiver for on-air W1AW code practice, WWV, broadcast or just snooping the airwaves for international news events.

## EGARA March Meeting Minutes

- The April EGARA Meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM (EDT) by President Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ at the Rensselaer County Search and Rescue Building. There were 17 members and 0 guests present. After a round-robin introduction, a raffle was conducted and several nice prizes were given away.
- President Jackson gave his monthly report. He announced that The Extra Class Question Pool would be changing on July 1st, 2024. He also noted that he was speaking with a 5G WiFi company that would sell the Club a Hotspot to install at the RCSAR Building in order for both clubs to have 5G Internet onsite. The company, TechSoup also provides Security Cameras in addition to Hotspots. It was noted that both EGARA and RCSAR were interested in having cameras given that both clubs had a considerable amount of equipment stored onsite that they wanted to protect. In addition, TechSoup also offers Website Management Services through Wix.com which could possibly save the club money on these services.
- Outgoing Treasurer, Don Mayotte stated that \$27 had been taken in by the raffle, and that \$10 had been taken in for membership dues.
- One VE Session was scheduled for April 20th, 2024 with the possibility of an additional VE Session for June 29th, 2024, prior to the Extra Class Question Pool changeover. Member Dave Smith, WA2WAP suggested that the club team up with the Troy Club (TARA) for VE Sessions. Member David Jaeger, K2DEJ stated that he would speak with TARA to see if they would be interested in teaming up with EGARA.
- There was no Old Business to discuss.
- New Business: Bryan noted that both EGARA and RCSAR had discussed the possibility of replacing the older kitchen appliances (Oven, Refrigerator) at the RCSAR Building with newer ones.
- The 2024 EGARA Hamfest was announced to be held on Sunday June 2nd, 2024 at the Phillips Road Fire House in East Greenbush as it had been in years past.
- Field Day 2024 was announced to be held at the RCSAR building on June 22nd and June 23rd, 2024. David Jaeger suggested teaming up with TARA for Field Day and noted that President Jackson should reach out to TARA's president, Mike Shanahan, WO2H and Karen Smith, KS2O to coordinate the possibility of a Joint Operation.
- Jim Pendolino stated that RCSAR approved the storage of EGARA's antennas at the SAR Building along the North wall of the SAR garage and added that EGARA was approved to construct a shed onsite for storage. Jim noted that since the shed would be on RCSAR property, the Town of East Greenbush waived the permit fee for the construction of the shed. Don Mayotte suggested that the Club could get a trailer instead of a shed to store equipment in order to more easily transport it if desired and as an alternative to going through the Building Permit Process with the Town.
- Bryan noted that if EGARA and RCSAR were interested in locating funding sources for projects or vehicles, Congressman Paul Tonko's office had federal grants available that could be applied for before 2025.
- The 2024-25 club election was held, with all offices except for Treasurer and Secretary were represented by the current slate of officers. Running for Treasurer was Member Peter Brickman, KD2YLG. Running for Secretary was Member David Jaeger, K2DEJ. A motion was made to accept all nominees running for office. The motion was seconded by Member Pete Sochocki, NY2V. The motion was unanimously approved;
- The membership meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.
- Minutes recorded by Secretary David Jaeger, K2DEJ.

# Ham Radio Active During Total Solar Eclipse

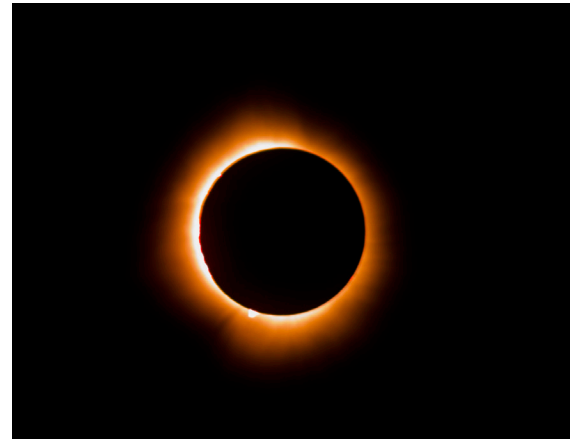
Millions of people across the United States got to see a rare solar eclipse on Monday, April 8th, and Hams had the opportunity to experience first-hand the effects it had on the various Amateur bands.

The path of totality -- the line of darkness where the moon fully occluded the sun -- included a swath of upstate New York, as well as through the South Pacific, Mexico, central Texas, the Ozarks, the Midwest, the Rust Belt area, and to New England through the Maritimes. In all, 14 ARRL Sections were impacted directly and several more were on the fringes of the solar umbra and Hams were active throughout the areas of impact.

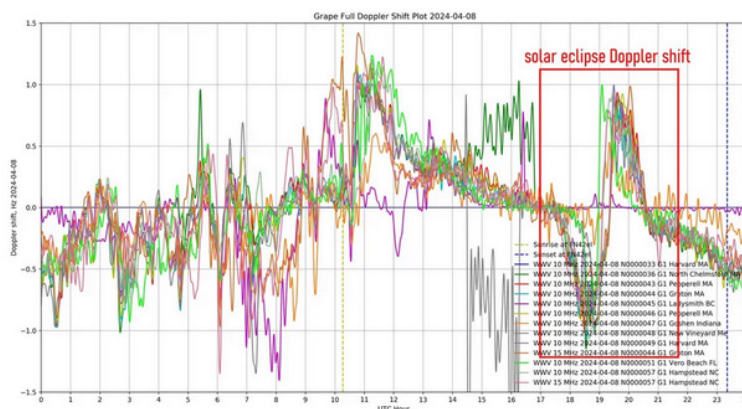
EGARA member Pat Negus, KD2ZQR, was in the Adirondacks at Newcomb where he worked 40 and 20 meters on phone using a Yaesu FT891 and an Atas 120A mobile antenna. He reported that the bands were good most of the day except for a short period at around 50% totality when it appeared the bands collapsed. However, during the total eclipse both bands seemed to be wide open.

However, there was one notable effect during the solar event -- WWV started sending out slightly shifted "time signals" to millions of people across the globe as the moon's shadow altered the upper layers of our atmosphere. However, these altered signals did not actually change the time. The shifted time signals came from the WWV radio station — a National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) facility located in Fort Collins, Colorado, that monitors and broadcasts high-frequency radio waves.

WWV constantly broadcasts a special signal embedded with "digital time codes" to millions of receivers around the world. Devices that pick up this signal interpret the digital codes embedded within the transmission and use them to stay in sync with NIST's atomic clocks, which serve as the gold standard for all U.S. timekeeping. However, in order to do this, the signal must be bounced off the ionosphere — the upper part of the atmosphere between 50 and 370 miles (80 and 600 kilometers) above the Earth's surface, where gases are turned into plasma, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. And during the eclipse, the ionosphere was slightly altered as the moon's shadow raced across the U.S. at more than 1,500 mph.



**EGARA President Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ, captured this shot of the total eclipse as it passed over Scroon Lake**



As a result, the frequency of the signal being bounced off this part of the atmosphere was shifted slightly, Spaceweather.com initially reported. Similar frequency shifts were also seen in other radio signals sent or received by amateur radio operators across the country, HamSci reported.

Luckily, the change to the WWV signal's frequency was so small that the digital time codes transmitted by the radio waves were unaltered, meaning devices that rely on the signal to keep time were unaffected, according to Spaceweather.com.

Across the world, radio amateurs participated in the HamSCI Solar Eclipse QSO Party. It involved operating before, during, and after the eclipse to gather log data which will be studied by researchers in the coming years to further investigate the sun's impact on the ionosphere.

The organizers request that those who operated in the event upload their logs. If you used N1MM+ or N3FJP loggers, there's a setting called Solar Eclipse QSO Party. Participants can also submit a Cabrillo or ADIF file of their activity. All logs should go to <https://seqp.contesting.com/seqpsubmitlog.php>.

# MFJ Shutting Down Production

## Long-Time Amateur Radio Manufacturer to Cease Production May 17th

After decades of service to the Amateur Radio community, MFJ Enterprises has announced it will close its manufacturing production facilities in Mississippi on May 17th. The move affects all of its product lines, including Ameritron, Hygain, Cushcraft, Mirage and Vectronics.

The announcement was made by MFJ founder Martin F. Jue, for which the company is named. His letter is below:



April 25, 2024

Dear Fellow Hams and Friends,

It is with a sad heart as I write this letter

As many of you have heard by now, MFJ is ceasing its on-site production in Starkville, Mississippi on May 17, 2024. This is also the same for our sister companies' Ameritron, Hygain, Cushcraft, Mirage and Vectronics.

Times have changed since I started this business 52 years ago. Our product line grew and grew and prospered. Covid changed everything in businesses including ours. It was the hardest hit that we have ever had and we never fully recovered.

I turned 80 this year. I had never really considered retirement but life is so short and my time with my family is so precious.

I want to thank all of our employees who have helped build this company with me over the years. We have many employees who have made MFJ their career for 10, 20, 30, 40 and more years.

We are going to continue to sell MFJ products past May 17, 2024. We have a lot of stock on hand. We will continue to offer repair service work for out-of-warranty and in-warranty units for the foreseeable future.

Finally, a special thanks to all of our customers and our dealers who have made MFJ a worldwide name and a profitable business for so many years. You all are so much appreciated.

Sincerely Yours, 73s  
Martin F. Jue, K5FLU

MFJ was founded by Jue in 1972 and grew to employ some 150 people with its revenues estimated to be about \$12,000,000 annually. The company eventually became the world's largest manufacturer of Amateur Radio products.

Jue reportedly had been actively looking to sell the company since last Fall. DX Engineering is believed to have made an offer, but nothing has developed to date.

In addition to selling off its existing inventory, sources say the company will continue to sell 3rd party products, most of which are imported and made overseas by Chinese suppliers. These items will reportedly include items such as antenna switchers, portable mobile antennas, power supplies and clocks.

A profile of Martin F. Jue, the company's founder, is on page 8.



## The Man Behind MFJ -- Martin F. Jue

By Dave Jensen, W7DGJ

It was 1948, Martin F. Jue's father moved the family to Hollandale, Mississippi to build a small country grocery store that became the center of his family's life -- and the home to Martin's first ham shack. Martin became interested in radio as a scout, working on crystal radios and reading through old 1930's electronics publications at his school library. One night he was lying in bed listening when a voice came through his radio that sounded as if it were someone in a conversation.

"I had to find out who this guy was that was talking," Martin said. "I tracked him down and found out that it was a Radio/TV repairman who was a ham, and he got me interested. Soon afterwards, I had set up a small station in the attic of the grocery store. I got my station assembled using a surplus 1625 vacuum tube and an old TV set transformer. I strung an antenna using wire from loudspeakers that I had disassembled. It worked! I was able to talk to people all over the world using Morse Code out of that little novice station, KN5FLU."



**Martin F. Jue, the founder of MFJ Enterprises, standing in his office and surrounded by his collection of Amateur Radio gear**

Martin's interest in radio soon had him hooked for a career as well, and he went to Mississippi State and later to Georgia Tech to come out with a Masters in Electrical Engineering. He put in a year designing military electronic circuits in Illinois, but when he got the call to go back to MSU for a PhD, he jumped at the chance to go back home. Even while taking that coursework, Martin operated a small business producing circuitry for the professors and researchers at his school.

"We didn't have a lot of large corporate employers at that time. Most people I knew were in their own businesses. . . bricklayers, shoemakers, grocery store owners and so on. It just seemed natural for me, my next logical step, to have my own business as well," he recalled. "Because I was a ham, I thought of products that other hams might need, and I started MFJ Enterprises out of a room in a run-down motel that I rented for 50 cents a day. I had two little kits for sale, and I had other people help me assemble them so that I could get these out the door for less than \$10."

While teaching classes for his professor at MSU, Martin brought little bags of parts into class and dangled them in front of the students to see if they'd like to get some real-world experience to go with their education. "I offered them the opportunity to help me assemble those kits, for 25 cents apiece -- my first production line. Those two products became the start of the MFJ you know."

Today, MFJ products are spread around ham shacks the world over -- from the MFJ Magnetic Loops, to mobile antennas, tuners, amplifiers and a zillion little gadgets and cables. It eventually made the company the world's largest provider of ham radio products.

"As I look back, I think the most valuable part of my experience at that time was the struggle. Not having anything, just pushing at it, probing to find what works and what doesn't," Martin described. "For me, the most important ingredient in innovation is the "want to" about what you are doing. It has to be something you love. And you've got to get knocked down, so you're confident that you can get back up again and eventually make it work."

"I'm proud of the fact that I started with no cash at all, and only rarely went to the bank," he continued. "But there was a time when I bought buildings and grew too fast, and we couldn't handle that growth out of our turnover. I had to get loans, but once they were paid back, I never did that again," he said proudly. "Most of our lean times were because of recessionary periods. We also found out that you can only sell a limited number of any one ham product, so if you're going to grow, you've got to have many products. Over the years, we have designed and developed a lot of new gear but have always found it to be quicker, easier, and cheaper to acquire companies with existing products. That led us to the point where we have 2000-3000 items for sale."

- continued on page 9 -



## Martin F. Jue... the Man Behind MFJ...

Despite all of the products he designed, Martin seldom patented any of those thousands of products. So, how did he feel about the “copy cat” approach that some companies use when they target MFJ products, especially cheap Chinese knock-offs?

“I never went much for patents, although we have a number of them. Patents are very expensive, and the whole process takes a lot of time. For us, it is important to get the product out there as quick as possible and then to greatly outsell our competition. I don’t worry about copy cats because our whole concept from day one was to come up with something unique, something that no one else had, and then to do so much advertising that no one could catch up and customers would buy our brand,” he stated.”

And as anyone who has ever picked up an issue of a radio hobby magazine will agree, MFJ does not hold back when they’ve got something they want to pitch.

“A good example of how innovation happens at MFJ is how our first antenna analyzer came into being. It was a Sunday afternoon. I was trying to develop an RF resistance bridge, and I couldn’t quite get there, but I had the basics of something else that I thought could be interesting. That afternoon our first device in that category was developed. It was copied by everyone in the world and sold like crazy. On the business innovation front, we had earlier introduced full page advertising and we were also the first company to have toll-free phone lines. For example, in one November, we advertised a new antenna tuner and sold more tuners than the entire previous year because we had run those full page ads supported by toll-free order lines.”

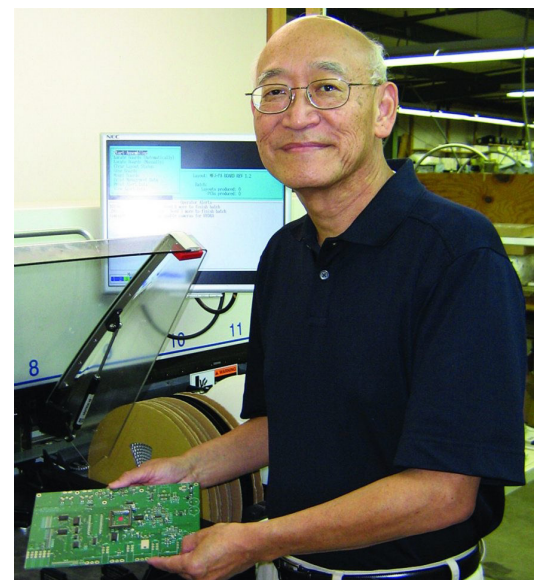
He also addressed the issue of product quality, admitting that MFJ did have problems as it grew and introduced new items.

“Much of the lingering perception of our quality control is from years past and with far less concerns in the last few years. When you grow fast, a lot of the issues you face stem from new employees who are not familiar with your production procedures, and we’ve made big improvements there. There’s now more training, with better quality checks on our procedures. Automated equipment has made a difference, as well, but even there, you can have issues when a product is put into a box.”

“As an example of what we now do differently, for HyGain, Cushcraft and MFJ antennas, we use what we call shadow boards. They have outlines of each part that goes into the box. Visually, the person packing the product can easily see that all the parts are included. And for smaller parts, like screws, bolts, nuts, brackets and so on, they’re placed into bags and weighed. They must conform to the standard on a precise scale. Later, it’s checked again for that exact weight by the shipper in the warehouse.”

“I think that the ham radio hobby will be with us for a long time because it is a social and technical hobby that keeps people interacting with each other and challenges the mind. As technology changes, ham radio changes. Technology enhances ham radio as evidenced by how FT8 and other digital modes enhanced radio, and how computers have now become radios,” Martin said enthusiastically. He carries this enthusiasm into some classic advice for those who are out there now, wondering (as he did) how to build a company with their stamp on it.

“First, find something you love, an aspect of the hobby that you can contribute to, and don’t start out thinking you’re going to get rich. I’ve never worked a day in my life, and I’ve been doing this for fifty years. In the end, it will work out for you if you do things right, from your gut. If it’s not right, keep working on it. One of my secrets of problem solving has always been that I keep thinking and thinking about it until I find a solution, and it always comes. That’s what you need to do . . . never quit thinking. Never say you can’t do it because you can. Instead of looking at the reasons you can’t do something, spend that time thinking about how it’s going to be done. With hard work and good problem solving, nothing can stop you.”



**Jue showing a circuit board manufactured using modern surface mount technology**

## EGARA Members Elect New Officers

Three new club officers were elected during the April membership meeting, with Dave Jaegar, Jr, K2DEJ, taking on the role of Secretary and Peter Brinkman, KD2YLG, signing on as Treasurer. The posts were previously held by Steve VanSickle, WB2HPR and Don Mayotte, KB2CDX, respectively.

Also elected was Pat Negus, Sr., KD2ZQR, who secured a three-year term on the club's Board. He replaced Russ Greenman, WB2LXC, whose term expired. Meanwhile, Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ, was re-elected to another term as President, while Walt Snyder, N2WJR, was returned to the post of Vice President.

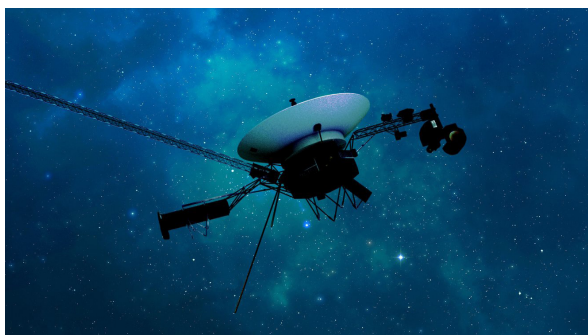
Also serving on the Board are Steve Vansickle and former club president Tom Scorsone, KC2FCP, both of whom are in the midst of serving their three year terms.

None of those running for the open positions faced any opposition, so a motion was made for members to elect the slate of candidates by acclamation. That motion was seconded and unanimously passed by those in attendance.



**Pete Brickman, KD2YLG (L), and Dave Jaegar, Jr., K2DEJ (R)**

## NASA's Voyager 1 Resumes Sending Engineering Updates to Earth



For the first time in several months -- and after some inventive sleuthing -- the Voyager 1 mission team can check the health and status of the most distant human-made object in existence. The probe and its twin, Voyager 2, are the only spacecraft to ever fly in interstellar space -- the space between stars.

Voyager 1 stopped sending readable science and engineering data back to Earth on Nov. 14, 2023, even though mission controllers could tell the spacecraft was still receiving their commands and otherwise operating normally.

The Voyager engineering team at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory confirmed that the issue was tied to one of the spacecraft's three onboard computers, called the flight data subsystem (FDS). The FDS is responsible for packaging the science and engineering data before it's sent to Earth.

The team discovered that a single chip responsible for storing a portion of the FDS memory — including some of the FDS computer's software code — had stopped working. The loss of that code rendered the science and engineering data unusable. Unable to repair the chip, the team decided to place the affected code elsewhere in the FDS memory. But no single location is large enough to hold the section of code in its entirety. So they devised a plan to divide the affected code into sections and store those sections in different places in the FDS. To make this plan work, they also needed to adjust those code sections to ensure, for example, that they all still function as a whole.

A radio signal takes about 22 ½ hours to reach Voyager 1, which is over 15 billion miles (24 billion kilometers) from Earth, and another 22 ½ hours for a signal to come back to Earth. When the mission flight team heard back from the spacecraft on April 20, they saw that the modification worked. For the first time since last fall, they have been able to check the health and status of the spacecraft. During the coming weeks, the team will relocate and adjust the other affected portions of the FDS software. These include the portions that will start returning science data.

Launched 46 years ago, the Voyager 1 and 2 spacecrafts are the longest-operating and most distant spacecraft in history.



# A BLAST FROM THE PAST... 1925





## Active Hurricane Season Predicted for 2024

Colorado State University (CSU) hurricane researchers predict an active Atlantic hurricane season running from June 1 to November 30 in their initial 2024 forecast.

ARRL Director of Emergency Management Josh Johnston, KE5MHV, recently attended the National Hurricane Conference in Florida, where the CSU prediction was issued. "The common discussion at the National Hurricane Conference this year was the potential for a very active year, and the forecast from CSU enforces that thought," said Johnston. "Several of the forecasters were pointing to indications that we are moving from an El Niño to a La Niña and that could potentially cause a more active season."

The CSU Tropical Weather & Climate Research team predicts 23 named storms during the Atlantic hurricane season. Of those, researchers forecast that 11 will become hurricanes and five will reach major hurricane strength, as measured by the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale, with sustained winds of 111 mph or greater. The prediction is above the 30-year average for hurricanes and storms and is above the total of 20 storms, seven hurricanes, and three Category 3 or higher hurricanes in 2023.

Senior Research Scientist in the Department of Atmospheric Science at CSU and the lead author of the report Phil Klotzbach said, "So far, the 2024 hurricane season is exhibiting characteristics similar to 1878, 1926, 1998, 2010, and 2020. Our analog seasons were all very active Atlantic hurricane seasons."



**Amateur Radio operators were the only reliable emergency communications in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria wiped out regular telephone, Internet and cell systems.**

The team predicts that 2024 hurricane activity will be about 170% of the average season from 1991 - 2020. By comparison, 2023's hurricane activity was about 120% of the average season. The report also includes the probability of major hurricanes making landfall, including a 62% probability for the entire US coastline.

The average landfall from 1880 - 2020 was 43%. The report also indicates increased landfall probabilities of 34% for the East Coast of the US, including the Florida peninsula (the average from 1880 - 2020 was 21%); 42% for the Gulf Coast, from the Florida panhandle westward to Brownsville (the average from 1880 - 2020 was 27%), and 66% for the Caribbean (the average from 1880 - 2020 was 47%).

The National Weather Service (NWS), National Hurricane Center (NHC), and Hurricane Watch Net (HWN) are prepared for an active hurricane season. Amateur radio operators can take part in activations on 14.325 MHz during the day and on 7.268 kHz at night. As propagation changes, the HWN may operate both frequencies simultaneously.

At the Florida conference, Johnston also highlighted the relationship between ARRL and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as well as ARRL's position as a net control station within the SHARED RESOURCES High Frequency Radio Program (SHARES) managed by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency.

"Now is the time to prepare for emergencies of any type by building relationships, training and refreshing skills, and testing and preparing equipment," added Johnston.

## User Review...

### Radioddity QT60 Review - A Great Radio for Your Ham Shack

Ham Talk, Product Review by E.T. Bryant



This is my Radioddity QT60 10-meter transceiver review. Let me start by saying that I love everything about this radio. I liked the style when I first saw it. It doesn't have the same retro look as the QT40, its appearance is more like the modern mobile radios on the market today. I prefer the QT 60's smooth lines and its large display. Of course, it also has more transmission power than the QT40.

I have tested the radio with two external antennas, an end-fed and a 10-meter dipole. I have used the QT60 on both antennas and it was able to pick up and contact Ham radio operators as far away as Japan and Australia. To find out the stations that are transmitting and their frequency I use the [dxheat.com/dxc](http://dxheat.com/dxc) website. It is a great resource to find out who is on their radio at any time.

The QT60 with its 60 watts of power lets me contact stations further away than my Xiegu G90 which has only 20 watts. As you can tell I am not using the QT60 as a mobile radio but have it mounted to my workbench as a base station, with the bracket that came with the radio. It is an impressive-looking radio with its large orange display. I find the text easy to read for someone who needs glasses to read, like me. I can read the display without my glasses.

I like the ability to adjust the RF receive and the power with a knob on the radio. I have found them to be rather sensitive to the touch though. I also like the Channel Switch Push Key (which is a knob for selecting the step size of frequency or channels) being able to select specific parts of a frequency to adjust by pushing on the knob. Some radios like the Xiegu G90 have a similar tuning knob that will also allow you to select a different part of the frequency by pressing on the knob. I think seeing the frequency makes it easier to tune for me. I prefer seeing the frequency rather than a channel. I downloaded the programming software from the Radioddity website and programming the radio was very easy. You will need to purchase a USB programming cable as that is not included with the radio.

Another reason that I like this radio is that it can also do 11 and 12 meters. 12 meters would have it serve as a CB radio as well. A simple internal modification is all that is needed. While I like the option of having the extra bands it would appear to me opening the radio could void the warranty. Check with Radioddity Technical Support before removing the cover. However, if you do decide to make the modification Radioddity has come through with a zip file that has documents to help you do the modifications. You can count on Radioddity to give you plenty of help when you need it.

There is a very nice manual that comes with the radio, and you will want to keep that in a safe place for later reference. You can also download a PDF of the manual from the Radioddity website. But there are some things the manual did not explain to me. First, when the SWR protect is set to 3 and the radio detects a higher SWR it will present a message SWRHIGH. At first, I did not understand why I was getting this message, since my antenna analyzer was showing a SWR below 2:1. However, the Radioddity Support team helped me to understand why I might be getting the message.

The second item was how to listen to the weather frequency. I was not able to find any reference in the manual about this but by watching a YouTube video they showed that you first hit the Band button, then the Menu button, and finally the Mode button. To change back to the frequency, you just repeat the steps. I think this should be added to the manual along with any messages you might see on the screen.

In closing this is a great radio for someone with just their Technician Class license. However, because of its inexpensive price, it is also a great radio to add to your Ham Shack for any Class operators. I would highly recommend purchasing the QT60. I would also like to recommend the article Everything You Want to Know about 10-Meter Radio from Radioddity's website. You will find there is a very nice chart of 10-meter band frequencies shown in the article. This will show you when you can switch to the different modes.

*Spring Has Arrived!... Time for New Shack Upgrades!  
Get The Gear You Need From a EGARA Hamfest Sponsor!*





# CALENDAR

May 8, 2024 - EGARA membership meeting - 7 pm, Rensselaer County search & Rescue, 16 Neptune Street, Rensselaer. Hamfest Planning.

June 2, 2024 - Annual EGARA Hamfest. East Greenbush Volunteer Fire Department, Phelps Road, Rensselaer. 8 am to 1 pm. Set up at 5 am.

June 22-23 - Field Day at the Rensselaer County Search and Rescue Building.



## GEAR FOR SALE

- **Complete HF Station for Sale:** Elecraft K3 Transceiver, 100W, includes both SSB and CW roofing filters; Elecraft P3 Panadaptor, gives spectrum display; Elecraft KPA 500-watt power amplifier with internal power supply); Elecraft KAT500 automatic antenna tuner; Astron RS-35M linear power supply for transceiver. all needed interconnect cables to integrate units. All original user manuals and custom dust covers included. This equipment originally cost over \$12,000, and is in like-new condition. Asking \$4,000 for the entire set. Prefer to sell the entire set to a single buyer.

Contact: Bill Leue, text to: 518-410-6942.

- **Whistler WS1040 Digital Scanner.** Comes with everything except the box. This digital handheld scanner stores up to 1,800 frequencies and lets you search for nearby frequency transmissions and automatically jumps to a found transmission. Also receives storm reports and more before they are broadcast on TV or radio. \$200.00 FIRM.

Contact info: davidjaegerjr@gmail.com

- Heil RS 1 12' riser brand new \$ 30.00

Contact Walt, N2WJR at N2WJR07@gmail.com

- **VIBROPLEX "Bug" semi-automatic key.** Original "PRESENTATION" Model with Gold Plated baseplate escutcheon. Heavily chromed upper parts, bright red finger pieces, jeweled bearings. Lists for \$350, sell only \$250, plus postage if shipped. Beautiful wood case.

Contact Steve at: (518) 326-0902 or stevewb2hpr@gmail.com

**Sell your unused gear with a free ad in Sidebands!**

**Send details to: W2RBJ@Outlook.com**

### Pro Tip: The KE4PT Rules of Ham Radio

#### Rule 1:

**Please be courteous.**

#### Rule 2:

**Don't operate during an electrical storm.**

#### Rule 3:

**If you ignore Rule 1, please also ignore Rule 2.**

#### The East Greenbush Amateur Radio Association

Organized in 1998, by Bert Bruins, N2FPJ, (SK) and Chris Linck, N2NEH, the East Greenbush Amateur Radio Association, an ARRL affiliate, is committed to providing emergency services, educational programs, and operating resources to amateur radio operators and residents of the Capital Region of New York State. The club station is W2EGB. The club also has several VHF and UHF repeaters open to club members and the public.