

Natural Radio

News, Comments and Letters About Natural Radio

November 2000

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It's hard to believe that with this issue I've been writing this column for a year. Thanks to all of you for your support, good wishes and monthly correspondence that helps me fill a blank page when my mind is also blank.

If you can find the time over the next few months, drop me a line and let me know what type of things you'd like to hear about over the next year. I usually write about things that are of interest to me, but I realize that there are topics that I am missing that may be of interest to many of you, so let me know.

Although only four of us sent in reports for the coordinated monitoring, there were some really significant results which are discussed below that makes it all worthwhile. Let me know what might be good dates for another event – if there is any interest at all, I'll publish the dates.

Coordinated Monitoring A couple more reports came in over this month. Shawn Korgan was monitoring in the Mountains of Colorado and made some very interesting observations that he was able to coordinate with Mike Mideke's. Shawn prepared an excellent article for the *Inspire Journal* that describes the event that he graciously gave me permission to print here. It's interesting and exciting information, so rather than being excerpted in this column, it is included in its entirety elsewhere in this issue.

Unfortunately, Frank Carson (N3OCW) was listening on the second weekend when not much was going on. He writes – "I monitored on the morning of September 23 from 0603 until 0715 local time (Maryland). During that time all I heard were 'sferics. It was kind of interesting - I'm an accident reconstructionist for the Prince George's County Police, and I was on call that weekend. I decided to put my Kiwa monitor and antenna in my police car, in case I got called out and wasn't home to monitor. Well, sure enough I got called out at about 0030 hours, and was on my way home around "monitoring" time. I went to a park that I know on my way home, and listened for about an hour. I figured, why not? Besides, who would bother a police officer in a park at 0600 hours? <BG> Anyway, I'm just sorry that it wasn't more interesting on the radio."

Poor Man's Chart Recorder The long awaited first installment of Jim Stoughton's construction article also appears elsewhere in the issue. The problem is that Jim designs a lot faster than I write, so there have been three sets of design revisions incorporated in what you see here as I have been poking along for the past three months to get this article to press. Warm up your soldering irons, and build this recorder to keep tabs on your ELF monitoring. This month we'll detail the design of the electronics with the mechanical details next month, and some interesting additions in the issues that follow.

Commercial Whistler Receivers Thanks to Jon Wallace for sending me a ferrite loop receiver built by Brian Lucas. I'll be trying to do some comparative listening on it over the next month before I return it to Jon.

I found a tiny piece of solder in the wrong place in my Inspire VLF-2 receiver. Removing it removed the intermod from the front-end. It is now working well, but seems to be less sensitive than my home brew receiver, although they recommend at least a 20 foot long antenna and I was using my standard 60 inch whip. Again, I hope to do some comparative listening this month in a situation where there are whistlers or chorus.

Receiver Front-End Design I have been corresponding with Scott Fusare (N2BJW), this past month discussing some of his ideas for receiver front-end design. Scott has been doing a lot of testing on a new design this past month. Rather than giving a hacked up version of his thoughts here, I'll let him tell the story in a separate article in the months ahead.

How To Haul Your Monitoring Equipment Ron Brown (KB7RUE) writes - "In reference to your article on traveling with radio gear, and needing a good case for it. I have found a beat up ice chest, works very well and is not at all interesting to thieves. We have a station wagon, and having to hide my gear was a pain, no worry now"