

Natural Radio

News, Comments and Letters About Natural Radio

December 2003

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A happy and peaceful holiday season and also happy New Year wishes to everyone. Christmas lights were going up all over the neighborhood this weekend, and our week of balmy weather in the sixties ended abruptly overnight and there was a light dusting of snow on the ground this morning as I drove to work.

This past month has had major solar and geomagnetic activity, with a record setting solar flare and two extreme geomagnetic storms. There are still large sunspots capable of producing more strong activity in the next few weeks. I missed the auroral activity from the first storm due to heavy cloud cover here in the Midwest, and the second storm occurred early in the day and the IMF had shifted northward by nightfall so there was no aurora visible even though we didn't have cloud cover. My listening activities during the first storm didn't produce much, just a little chorus – that seemed to be the case with most of the reports I heard over the web. I didn't make it out during the second due to a hectic schedule at work.

INSPIRE Ends Coordinated Observations - This month's issue of *The INSPIRE Journal* announced the end of the semi-annual Coordinated Observations and the beginning of a new field observations program.

“In an effort to increase the level of participation in natural radio observations, the Coordinated Observation program is being concluded. While it may seem contradictory to cancel an existing observation program, it is hoped that by de-emphasizing observations on just two weekends each year, more INSPIRE participants will take the opportunity to make Field Observations and submit data tapes for analysis. Of course those who wish can still observe on the Coordinated Observation schedule (third weekend of November and fourth weekend of April)”

New Version of Audacity – Audacity is an excellent freeware program for recording, filtering and editing Natural Radio files as well as encoding them to .MP3 for distribution over the web. Version 1.2.0-pre 3 is available for download at <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/> . Audacity will run under Windows, Mac or Linux operating systems. The filtering capabilities of the program allow you to remove hum and noise, and the Nyquist programming language lets you develop your own filtering. The recorded file can be displayed in waveform or spectrum mode. While the spectrum mode is not as versatile as some of the other spectrum analysis programs, it is quite useful for a quick look at you files while you are editing.

Parts For Building It Yourself - For ferrite rods and toroids try Ocean State Electronics at http://www.oselectronics.com/ose_p88.htm or Surplus Sales of Nebraska at <http://www.surplussales.com>. Ocean State also has a good selection of JFETs.

Space Weather Forum – Check out the Solar Terrestrial Dispatch site at <http://spacew.com/> for lots of useful information. They also have a discussion list, with much of the discussion directed at auroral observation. To subscribe to this list, send an e-mail to: majordomo@spacew.com and include the following command in the BODY of the message: subscribe forum