

November 2011



## President's Message

The Snowbirds are starting to flock back into the Valley and fall is definitely in the air! I'm pondering where to start with all the news of the month? Art Snow is hopefully doing well with his medical conditions; lets hope the best for him. He has been working hard with Squadron 11 Civil Air Patrol for a long time as well as a Ham Class Instructor. Many of our members belong to both groups. You may have been wondering what's up with the Monday NET night check-ins for the Civil Air Patrol. With his tie to the D-RATS Club, Art is working on improving communications between both groups, ARES and Civil Air Patrol. Stay tuned for some interesting announcements in the near future. Our Technician Ham Classes are back in full swing with 30 plus students this term. We will be giving General Classes after Palm Springs Hamfest 2012 so if you want to upgrade, start studying and put your name on the waiting list for the class. Pass on the news!

If you haven't checked out our Web Site for a while do so as it is

constantly being added to and revised. One interesting link is an interview with Gary KD6QLT by the Eyes on the Desert TV Program. There is a video clip of Gary being interviewed at his mega station. There are great shots of his station in the video and it is good PR for Ham radio too.

Palm Springs Hamfest 2012 is keeping many of us busy already and things are definitely shaping up to a fantastic event. Working together with Quartzfest organizers this year we are working at making these 2 events something special. Go to our Forum at <http://desertrats.x.am> and have a look at the latest news. We have 25 companies and groups setting up booths and demos. More TBA! Unlike other Hamfests, we focus on live hands-on demonstrations throughout the day and raffle draws all day long. In case you have been away, the date is January 28th. We are in need of many volunteers so please sign up on our Web Site to volunteer or contact Gary or Susie Boskovich at 760-328-9662 or signup at Tuesday's meeting. Volunteer with a friend to make it interesting! Even if you can only help for a



**Peter Reinzuch VE7REZ**

short time we will find a job for you. We need operators for our Special Events Station; sign up with Glenn Morrison 760-770-6434 or online in the volunteer section. Our Event is even getting National coverage with Gordon West's upcoming story in CQ Magazine as well as with Amateur Radio Newline.

The meeting on Tuesday November 15th is our Annual General meeting and we will have elections after the Guest Speaker. If you want experience in helping run a Club, this is the time to stand up and volunteer to run for a position with a seconder's support. Tom Avarett is organizing the

Election so contact him in advance or at the meeting. At this point I'm going to announce that I will no longer be President when my term expires at the end of December. After four years I'm going to step aside. It's been a very challenging and rewarding role and I'll likely miss my involvement but will still be on the board as Past President. Come to the meeting on Tuesday equipped with some ideas for your new board of Directors to consider.

For some time now Tom Mclean, the draftsman of the new document, and the current board have been working on updating the Bylaws of the Club to reflect what the Club has evolved to since it was last completely revised in 1999. We are becoming more of a Club with a blend of Snowbirds, members living outside of the area and locals. A growing way the club members interact is online, VHF and HF radio. We have members from all over North America and the ratio is changing to be more electronic and web based than a club where we attend each meeting. Attendance has still been very strong but the future will likely be more virtual than real. We will soon be presenting the new Bylaws to you so let this be the official notice of that.

Membership renewal is coming due so please fill in the renewal request that was sent out by email or go online to our web site and pay using Pay Pal on your credit card. We value each member's participation and dues. The funds are earmarked for the most part to completely replacing our aged Repeaters' hardware and modernizing its capability. Groups like our D-RATS members, ARES,

RACES, Angel View and others benefit from its use as well as guests using it in the Valley. At the meeting we will have some news about potentially expanding its capability if we can generate more funds including some from Palm Springs Hamfest. So please pay your \$15 dues as soon as you can. Our next Club Event is on the November 26th weekend.

We will again have our "RATS in the Desert Antenna Camping Event and Picnic". Let me know if you can attend as I'll again be doing a deep fried turkey for the Saturday afternoon portion of the long weekend. Some of us will camp from Thursday till Sunday; others plan to just attend the Saturday picnic. Bring a friend, the Scout Troop or the Family. Information will be on the web site as to exact location. It will again be approximately 2-3 miles east of Salton City but at a slightly different location that is more suited to our antenna experiments. That would be just over an hour drive from Palm Springs. ATV's welcome.... Let me know at [ve7rez@desertrats.am](mailto:ve7rez@desertrats.am) if you will attend or want more information so we can vary the menu or just drop by and bring something to the Potluck event. Bring your own radio and antenna setup if you can or we will have a radio available to use so you can try some HF contacts and get some instruction about what configuration of antenna we are experimenting with. It will be something we normally could not do at home so this will be a fun experiment. I'm sure it will be a lot of fun as were the last 2 events. We are doing this again by popular demand! It is a dry camp so be prepared

accordingly. I hope to see you there!

As always we'll look forward to you again being part of our Monday night Net on 146.940 – PL 107.2 at 6:30 PM for Amateur Radio Newline and 7PM net. Our digital PSK125 or Olivia, or SSTV Net happens after the Voice Net if there are enough participants.

I guess that's it for news and other stuff for this edition; see you at a meeting or on air! Thanks for the great support and friendship shown to me and Regina over the past 4 years; it's no fun without you! I hope you'll give our new president and board the same consideration.....

We sure have a great group of Desert RATS members, eh! 73 's Peter Reinzuch VE7REZ



## Club Nominations and Elections • November 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting

Well it's that time for elections, and you are invited to make nominations for officers. So far I have Glenn Morrison for President, Tom McLean for Vice President, Christi DeRouen for Secretary, and Pat Case for Treasurer. Any other nominations need to be in by the next meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nov. So come on out to the meeting and let us know who you want in office. If you think you're too small to have an impact, try going to bed with a mosquito in the room. See you at the meeting . Tom AE6WL

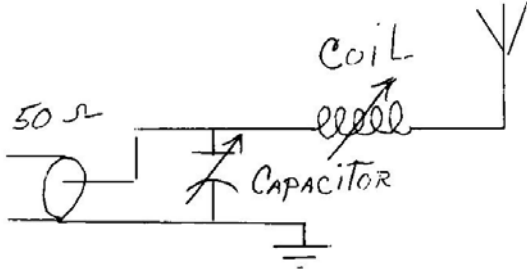
# Is Your Antenna...

We are looking for a RLC (resistor, inductor, capacitor) matching network.

The network provides the complement of the antenna impedance.

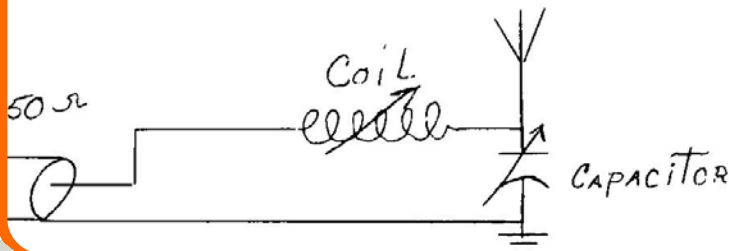
## TOO SHORT

By adding series inductance (a coil) in the feed line to the antenna it will become inductive. Input capacitance is added until the antenna is no longer inductive and you have a balance between inductive reactance and capacitance reactance.

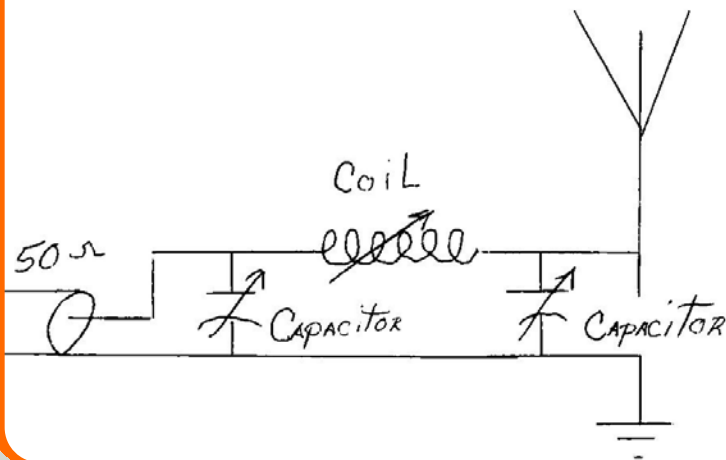


## TOO LONG

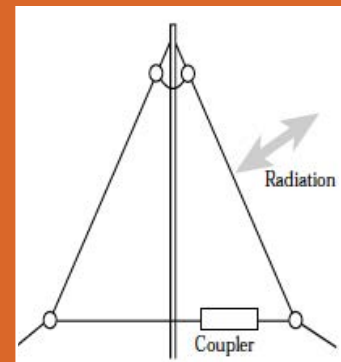
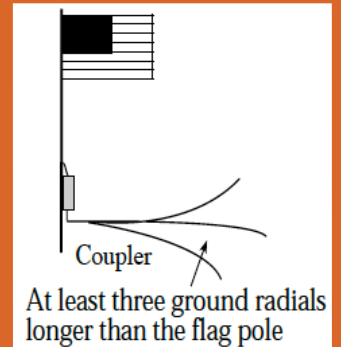
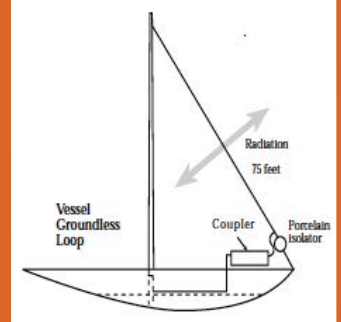
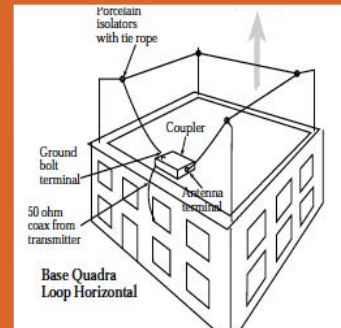
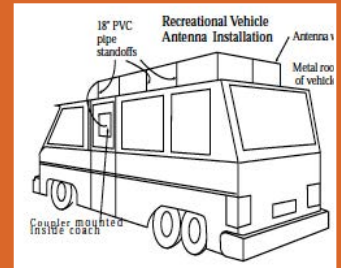
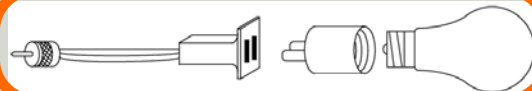
Output capacitance (a variable capacitor) is added until the phases switches to capacitive. At this point series inductance is added until the antenna is no longer capacitive.



If you change bands or move up and down the band your antenna will be too long or too short. You will need to add capacitance or inductance. At this point you put the two scheme together and a tuner.



Light-Bulb  
Dummy Load



## Something for the Technician Class Hams

Many of you pretty much bang around VHF/UHF on 2 meters and up. Well we have just started into sunspot cycle 24 and it looks like it is going to be a Duzie. In case that you have not heard, the 10M band has been wide open to just about all of the world. It took me only about 10 hours of operating time (over 2 days) to work over 30 countries and all continents (plus Australia and New Zealand) on 10M digital, with a wire antenna and using only 50 watts.

This is only just the start on the sunspot cycle. It is supposed to peak in 2 years then go into a slow decline. So we could have over 5 years of some pretty good propagation. This might be a good time to go looking for a used HF radio. Many of the newer ones have coverage up to 6 Meters. That's another fun band. It usually only opens up during the summer months, but you can work a bunch of states with not much power and a modest antenna. You, as a Technician Class ham, have access to those bands and can use voice (SSB) or digital forms of transmission. Remember, the Desert RATS HamFest is coming up on January 28th. You might just find the radio to get you on the air on HF and enjoy some great DX (distant/foreign) QSOs.

What is propagation? It's kind of like the weather. Everyone talks about it, but there is nothing you can do about it. It's fun and interesting to know and try and predict when and where band openings will be. You remember

from your test a little about propagation. There is the D, E and F (F1 & F2) layers in the ionosphere. We have just entered a time of extreme sunspot activity. These sunspots create lots of radiation, mostly forms of X-Rays. These are what excite the ionosphere and create world-wide skip conditions for us hams.

Check out the clubs web site. Ever wonder what that black box with all of the bright colors is there in the lower left? That is what tells us what all of the different radiation factors are that affect our skip.

Some terms:

**Coronal Mass Ejections:** Ejections of large mass of plasma, including electrons, which are mostly caused by large solar flares. Solar Flares are large eruptions of energy and charged particles from the sun's surface.

Sunspots are small spots on the sun's visible surface where magnetic flux lines converge. All of this and more affect radio propagation. For a more detailed look at propagation check out <http://ecjones.org/propag.html>

On the chart there are "A & K" number. The higher these numbers the more unstable propagation will be, to the point of being wiped out.



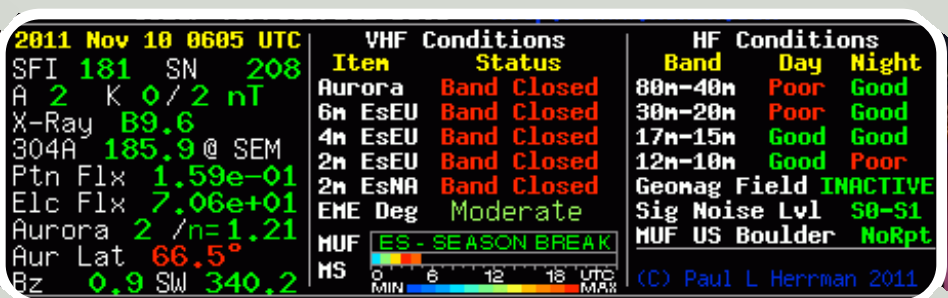
**Glenn Morrison, WB6RLC**

At the top is SFI: Solar Flux Index. It is the amount of radiation on the 10.7cm band. It relates to the amount of ultraviolet radiation which is needed to create an ionosphere. The lowest number is 63.75. Single hop skip starts at about 70. World-wide long distance propagation may start at about 120. For 10M, 15M and 20M to start hopping we need an average number of 170. It's been over 180 for awhile now.

All of that said, look at the next little box and it kind of gives you a summery of how the bands are doing for skip.

Like I said, this might be a good time to invest in a used HF rig and enjoy some good DX.

See ya on the bands • Glenn • WB6RLC





**Susie Boskovich KD6TVO**

**Tidbits**

This weekend there are two (2) tall ships in the San Diego Harbor. They are the HMS Rose and the Bart Star. Those that are able to may want to go and visit them. Those that cannot visit may be interested in listening in or talking to their Special Event Stations. The Frequency is 14.275 and the call will be N5ASOI. It is something unusual to try out.

Reminder to everyone that we are having a campout over Thanksgiving weekend. Saturday will be the picnic. Contact Peter for additional information and let him know if you will be able to attend. Peter will coordinate food and supplies.

Our Ham Radio Technician Class is going very well. We have 26 students and will have our 4<sup>th</sup> class on Monday, November 14. The class is very enthusiastic and interested. Look forward to more hams in the desert real soon.

Hamfest is around the corner, so we need lots of volunteers. We will be sending around a sign up sheet again at the next meeting. If you have not already signed up, please do so, or sign again. Last year we had about 42 volunteers and we need at least that this year. The more we have, the less each of you will need to do, so you can spend time visiting the exhibits and booths and visiting with friends. We have about 25 vendors so far and still working on

**DESERT RATS  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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**Monday Evening Net  
Newline • 6:30 pm  
Regular • 7:00 pm  
146.940 PL 107.2**

**ARES Digital • 7:30 pm  
144.435 Simple**



getting a few more. Our expanded facilities will help. Also, if you know of anyone that wants to dry camp, have them contact us at [sboskovich@dc.rr.com](mailto:sboskovich@dc.rr.com).

## November 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting Guest Speaker Marty Woll N6VI

Do you know how to determine the total power requirements for your home, mobile or portable station? Do you know what types of batteries are available, their strong and weak points and what will work best for your situation? Got an RV? Listen up. This will apply to you too. I just bought a small camping trailer that I want to set up a portable station in for when I go camping. I will be all ears. Thinking about buying a generator? How big?

Marty's talk will help us learn how to determine our power requirements for electrical and electronic equipment (like our Ham gear) that will be run independent from commercial mains. He will cover how to qualify available power sources and how to develop a power budget to more closely match your needs and the sources you have. Marty will also address safety measure of portable power sources and briefly discuss alternative energy sources, like solar power.

## Solar Panels Emergency Backup Power

Jerry WY7JB (Solar Presentation at Quartz Fest 2011) Jerry has a source that is now selling 195 watt to 225 watt panels for .98 per watt through SUN Electronics at: <http://www.sunelec.com/>

TEMPERATURE RATINGS OVER 90%  
Maintaining up to 4% higher output than most other crystalline silicon panels under hot conditions.

Minimum order is 20 panels. If Clubs members buy solar panels as a backup emergency power source and don't know how to install them they can participate with the Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon in a Saturday or Sunday workshop to learn how to do their solar install.

Steve KO4QT • Vice President • Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon • (619)733-2320

## CALENDAR

### November 15, 2011

Desert RATS meeting, 7:00 PM Palm Springs City Yard Conference Room Elections • Guest Speaker: Marty Woll, N6VI presenting power requirements

### November 25, 26, & 27, 2011

(Thanksgiving Weekend) Camping at the Salton Sea With picnic on Saturday Details will be announced

### December 3, 2011

Testing for all Classifications for Licensing Palm Springs City Yard Conference Room 9:00 AM

### December 2011

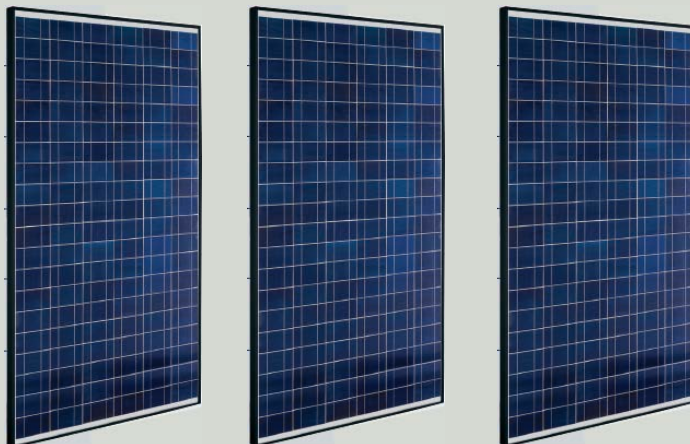
No meeting due to the holidays.

### January 18, 2012

Desert RATS Meeting 7:00 PM Palm Springs City Yard Conference Room  
Last meeting before Hamfest

### January 28, 2012

PALM SPRINGS HAMFEST  
9:30 – 4:30 ALL ARE WELCOME



Plan on attending...

**ARRL Sanctioned:**

## PALM SPRINGS HAMFEST January 28

Over 25 Commercial Vendors such as HRO, CQ Magazine and Manufacturers like Alinco ; large Swap Meet, Consignment sales bring your surplus gear and we'll sell it off for you at our Second Hand Store...Food Concession...How to Demos... guests like Gordon West ...Last year over 700 Happy Hams attended come join us under the Palm Trees.....

\*\*..we have a few commercial spaces and lots of swap meet space still available book early



An official Sanctioned Event

# HAMFEST!

for more info

[PalmSprings.hamfest@gmail.com](mailto:PalmSprings.hamfest@gmail.com)



Presented by the  
Desert RATS Club

visit our Web Site  
<http://www.desertrats.am>

Twitter: [hamradio](#)

**Jan 28, 2012 follow the rat @desertratsam**

Talkin 146.940- PL 107.2 in Palm Springs or 146.520 on the road  
Convoy of RV's from Quartzfest on January 27th led by Gordon West!



Get all the updated information on our Forum <http://desertrats.x.am>

tell your friends & Club about it next meeting or NET night



Event Coordinators Gary Boskovich KD6QLT and Susie Boskovich KD6QVO 760-328-9662 [sboskovich@dc.rr.com](mailto:sboskovich@dc.rr.com)

RSVP: RV Dry Camping reservations for vendors: [sboskovich@dc.rr.com](mailto:sboskovich@dc.rr.com) Vendor Set-up time 7:00-9:00 AM

Hotels Nearby check early to get reservations! **LOCATION:** 4193 Matthew Drive, Palm Springs, CA

**MAKE** this a reunion of on air buddies or Ham Club outing!