

Newsletter

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Experimental Broadcaster's

One can get a great deal of enjoyment out of just sitting back and observing the idiocy in "radio". I suppose the theme of this month's EBN is based on that very thought as it applies to the games that Governments and people play. So much could be accomplished if people could work together. Just look at some of these examples:

The AM stereo bit has become a gigantic fiasco. Years of planning and development has not brought us much closer to AM stereo reality. Bickering among opponents, FCC feet dragging, and the costs of manufacturing tooling have kept this new medium from the public for 10 years. Who says these entities are concerned about the public? (See Kahn et al)

Cat and mouse, Government and Pirates - its all the same. The mice taunt the cat, the cat tries to catch the mouse. They both have rules they play by - no one really wins and the public loses. Low power stations continually fight to serve the public (albeit illegally) while power stations "serve the public interest" as giant "juke boxes". The right to air what you like versus what the audience wants or what some "think" they want.. (See Pirate Problems)

And yes, politics play a very important part in these games. Everyone has an opinion of what's right and what's wrong for the public. Most of us believe that we all have a right to express our opinions. Except sometimes when a person or group feels his/their philosophy or opinion is MORE right than someone else's. It would seem the NAB knows what's best for the public and low power stations are certainly not in their plans. And what if you think you're more right than the other guy? - simply beam your philosophy at him with a few hundred thousand Watts. Be careful though, he might beam back! (See What's New at the FCC)

My opinion? There's a lot of idiocy in radio. Reading the philosophy (opinion) of at least one DIY (do it yourself) broadcaster (Page 7) reminds me of a scene in Star Trek IV. It was when Spock and Kirk were riding a bus in San Francisco and a Punk Rocker had his ghetto blaster full-on. Kirk asked him to turn it down a bit and received an obscene gesture in reply. Spock took the situation in hand by applying a Vulcan shoulder nerve-block rendering the Punk Rocker (and his ghetto blaster) inoperative. The whole bus cheered! Where is Spock when you really need him?

What's New (and old) at the FCC

Apparently some of the public is aware of the FCC "indecency rules" and are on the look out for violators. Complaints were made against WBAI (New York) for a reading of James Joyce's "Ulysses"; WTAM (Charleston) for a political ad; and WTRG (North Carolina) for song lyrics. The FCC wrote letters to each of the complainants noting that charges were not supported by sufficient evidence.

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Class A FM stations are fine for smaller towns but they may be on their way out in large cities. Many Class A FM stations have found they can no longer serve their intended coverage area because the coverage area (city limits) have grown so much in the last few years. Because of this the FCC is considering a new classification, C3.. It would allow some class A FM stations to upgrade to a higher power (larger service area). The spacing between other Class A, C2 and C stations would be more critical however.

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This last March the FCC placed a freeze on new FM translator applications. At the same time they voted on allowing noncommercial translators to be fed by other than "over-the-air" transmission from the originating station. In part this latter decision was a result of Moody Bible Institute requesting permission to feed their translators by way of satellite and microwave links. The NAB (National Association of Broadcasters) however doesn't like that decision and is asking that the FCC reconsider. The NAB is afraid that such a move would proliferate "low-power FM broadcasting" and limit spectrum space for other (and perhaps more powerful) noncommercial stations.

Back in 1978 the FCC acted on a proposal to discontinue the class D station (10 watt noncommercial FM). Existing 10 watt stations either had to upgrade to a higher power or have their weak signal buried by bigger stations. It appears this is truly a Nation where "big bucks", "bigger is better" and "more is marvelous" prevails. What ever happened to the "little guy's rights?".

AM broadcasting is really a mixed bag these days. The NAB submitted a proposal that the FCC place a freeze on new AMs and changes to existing AM stations. On the other hand several broadcasters oppose the proposal. They feel that freezing AM changes would hurt the already depressed AM industry. At the same time the FCC has granted authorization for testing of synchronous AM transmitters but no affirmation of AM stereo. A study is being done to affirm the Commission's AM allocations are outdated. Another report will deal with "how much interference AM listeners will tolerate". The proposed FM2 band might also attract a lot of the dismayed broadcasters away from the AM band. What with Freezes, AM stereo delayed due to legal battles between Kahn and Motorola, the enticement of the FM2 band, tolerable interference standards and bigger and better FM stations, AM radio may be headed for an early demise.

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Fun and International games department. It seems the FCC is trying to do something about interference to our AM band by Cuban AM stations. Part of the problem perhaps lays on two of our government agencies having different priorities. It seems the Voice of American (VOA) program Radio Marti is a Spanish Language program beamed at Cuba. Congress has made funds available to study a plan of a TV version of Radio Marti. The Cubans of course wish to retaliate with English speaking programs beamed at the United States.

AM STEREO - Kahn et al

You have to admire the tenacity of Leonard Kahn. He won't go down without a fight. The FCC's non-committal attitude regarding an AM stereo standard has not slowed him down. The giant Motorola Corporation has not chilled his fervor. Undaunted he is now challenging General Motors on the basis of patent infringement of compatible AM stereo receivers. The patent described dates back to 1977.

Kahn claims in his recent law suit against GM that the chip they use in their AM receivers (Delco DM-235 also known as Motorola MC13020P) uses a noise reduction system which he invented. His suit also charges that GM's use and infringement has induced other automobile receiver manufacturers to do the same.

Apparently this suit is not aimed at stopping the production of the chip or the manufacture of AM stereo receivers. Instead Kahn is seeking a royalty of 1.5% of a receiver's selling price or 25 cents, whichever is greater. Of course a court-ordered injunction while all this is being sorted out delays acceptance of an AM stereo standard even more.

New Publications

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS TECH NEWS is a newly released publication by New Signals Press, PO Box 435, Falls Church, VA 22046 (703) 532-4253. "TechNews" covers FCC consideration and actions regarding spectrum allocations including those for computer radio data links, mobile radio, satellites, experimental, and Part 15 revisions.

REMINDER: New EBN subscription rates are \$20.00/year, \$18.00 for renewals, \$12.00 for 6 months. A gift subscription from a current subscriber may be had for \$18.00

LETTERS

Dear EBN,

Last fall in the publication "Radio World" which I receive, they had an article on scrounging for parts. In that article they named a few places you could obtain parts and equipment. The first place mentioned was the old reliable garage or garbage sale. Here you could possibly find that inexpensive monitor in the form of a discarded stereo which may only need a new power cord or a volume control replaced. I have picked up some real good stuff at these sales. Most of it was just needed a little cleaning here and there and resoldering some wires and the unit was as good as new. You can also pick up speakers for a song along with other items such as VU meters and studio furniture. An old B/W TV might work for a computer monitor, etc.. Next time the wife wants to stop and look take a peek also. If you find something interesting but don't like their price make an offer, more than likely they'll come down.

The next place is the good ol' flea market. Here is a place you just have to go in and blunder around and see what's there. Flea markets vary in items as fish in the sea. More than likely it will be worth the stop.

Another stop would be at a "Ham Fest" or ham meet, here you will find mostly what you're looking for, radio-related Parts and Equipment! Warning: buy only what you can use there will be a lot of good deals hard to resist.

Although these are good sources there are some that RW didn't mention which can actually be a gold mine of parts. If you build most of your own equipment chances are you are always in search of and parts suppliers. If you're a true scrounger you can visit your local electronics store's dumpster. There you'll find last year's wholesale catalogs. You can obtain a current catalog merely by writing to those companies. Request the new catalog AND current price lists. Make sure you use letterhead paper as they may not honor private inquiries. These dumpsters also occasionally have discarded parts and chassis'.

Another possible source is the local telephone and cable TV companies. When the telephone company get phones that are inoperative or install new or updated systems they often throw away the older stuff. The discards may contain switches, relays, wire, components, or chassis or enclosures you can use. You might even supply the phone and cable companies with some sort of container in which to toss their discards. You could offer them 5 cents a pound or something like that to give them a reason to work with you.

A person can save a lot of money just knowing where to look and possibly make money by selling good but unneeded salvaged items.

Harvest Productions

PIRATE PROBLEMS EVERYWHERE

**Pirate radio is still going strong in Great Britain as evidenced by recent clips sent to the EBN.
Our thanks to Jim K. for the input.**

**Wellingborough Leader, Thurs. 21st April 1988,
By ANN ROBERTS**

A PIRATE radio station has pulled the plug after Government inspectors started breathing down its neck.

Wellingborough Local Radio has enjoyed four years on the air and claims that hundreds of listeners tune in each Sunday

But in its latest clamp down the Home Office warned the illegal broadcasts would have to stop.

SILENT Now the disappointed enthusiasts have decided to stay silent until the Government's promised reforms for new community radios are put into action.

A shroud of secrecy has been thrown over the broadcasters, who risk heavy fines and jail if the radio investigation squad catches up with them. But one of the broadcasters, who is also involved with another pirate station, Wellingborough's Falcon Radio, said "It really is not worth the risk of being caught. We knew the inspectors might be on to us but it wasn't until we read it in the newspaper that we realised they were that close."

The decision to close down came just hours after the broadcasters read about the Government's threats in the Leader's sister newspaper the Wellingborough Evening Telegraph on Friday evening.

The radio appealed to different cultures and its broadcast was a blend of music and interviews.

"We believed we did a good job and it is just a shame the Government has taken so long to sort out community radioes," he said.

FORCED

"But because of the publicity we have been forced to close down. Who knows how long we will have to wait before Wellingborough's truly local radio station is back on air - most likely it will be the next century before anything's done." Falcon is also off the air.

**EASTBOURNE HERALD, 23rd April 1988,
By HEATH JEFFRIES**

PIRATE radio operators from Eastbourne's ABC Radio were again chased off the airwaves by Department of Trade and Industry investigators on Sunday.

The raid followed a similar late night pounce by the DTI on April 2 when the investigators used a tracking device to find ABC's location near Beachy Head.

The group of law-defying radio fanatics were broadcasting from Fire Beacon near Lewes when DJ Andy Ellis spotted the men creeping towards them. He said, "We were doing a pre-recorded show that went out late in the evening.

"We were sitting round the transmitting equipment, and we have lookouts every three or four hundred yards.

"When I spotted the DTI they were about 100 yards away from us. We switched the equipment off so that they lost their tracking signal.

"Then we packed everything into a wheelbarrow and just pushed the gear away.

"We were all wearing balaclavas so they could not see our faces. We walked past them, told them that one day they would get us, and said good night.

"They were so close to us that we were lucky to get away.

"We are having a little break for a while but we will be back on the air in two weeks time." added Mr Ellis.

In the meantime, ABC radio will be out raising money for the Guide Dogs for the Blind by taking part in the Langney Shopping Centre 10-mile walk on Sunday.

Mr Ellis added. "The DTI think we are winding them up because of the work we do for the community, and it makes them more determined to catch us."

Pirate Problems, Continued

THE BEDFORD HERALD, 7th April 1988,
Exclusive report by ANTHONY ABBOTT

DJ TRIO SET UP PIRATE STATION

A PIRATE RADIO station set up in the spare bedroom of a house in Bedford hit the airwaves for the first time at the weekend.

Fresh FM put out an 18 hour programme of specialist soul music on both Saturday and Sunday.

The brains behind the illegal venture are popular DJs Martin Day and Shaun Vincent, who could each face a maximum of two years in jail if they are caught red-handed.

But 22-year-old Martin - a former Chiltern Radio presenter and well-known face behind the turntables at Bedford nightspot Sweetings - is no stranger to prosecution.

He was landed with a £500 fine when Radio Jackie, a pirate station operating in London for which he worked, was raided.

"I couldn't believe it when I came to Bedford and there was no pirate radio. When I left Chiltern I decided to set one up. I much prefer doing radio," said Martin.

"Obviously we will get busted eventually and probably have all the equipment confiscated, but they have to actually catch you at it.

"I might think twice about doing it again though if I went to jail. I think I'm just hoping the bust won't happen."

Martin and Shaun have set up £500 worth of their own equipment at the secret location, including the all important transmitter.

Martin bought that for £200 from a contact in London - where pirate radio is big business with 16 stations currently operating.

Martin, Shaun and the third jock on the team, Chris Pearce, each did a three hour spot on Saturday followed by the same again on Sunday.

They even did a 15 minute phone-in request spot by using a telephone box in the town to take listener's calls.

"We had a really good response. Calls were coming in every minute. We had to go off the air for about an hour on Saturday night because we were getting interference. That meant we had to put the aerial up a bit higher," Martin said.

He hopes that after this weekend's programme of shows Radio Fresh will really start to take off.

A Government spokesman said that although many see the problems of pirate radio as unimportant they become serious when emergency services are involved.

"There are many cases of fire, police and air navigation broadcasts being interfered with, and here there is of course a potential for danger," he said.



Martin, Shaun and Chris of Bedford

More on page 7.....

Pirate Equipment & News from England

Sound Broadcast Service, 42 Grenville Road, London, N19
4EN Phone: (01) 281-1367

A catalog is available which lists:

Variable power, broadband FM exciters and transmitters
Broadband FM power amplifiers Studio transmitter links
Stereo encoders Limiters and compressors Studio Equip-
ment Simple equipment for small budgets Year warranty
on parts and labour

Phoenix Communications 11, Barclay Oval, Woodford
Green, Essex, IG8 0PP, England Phone: (01) 500-0890

Catalog available. Consulting service Equipment of all
kinds Mobile transmission system for hire in U.K.
"Specialists in small scale and community broadcasting"

The Weekly Report - ANORAKS PO Box 539, Blackpool
FY1 4RE, England

Pirate activity news in England and Europe.

Another Letter

Dear EBN,

Here is the low-down on the studio at Harvest Produc-
tions. The mixer is a Realistic four channel stereo, the
reel-to-reel is a mono Webcor RD-173b/UN military
unit, tape decks are two Realistic SCP-30 playbacks
and one Realistic LAB-30 turntable, Two Realistic car-
dioid microphones, One Realistic SA-173C amplifier
and a modified set of watt meters by, of course, "Realis-
tic".

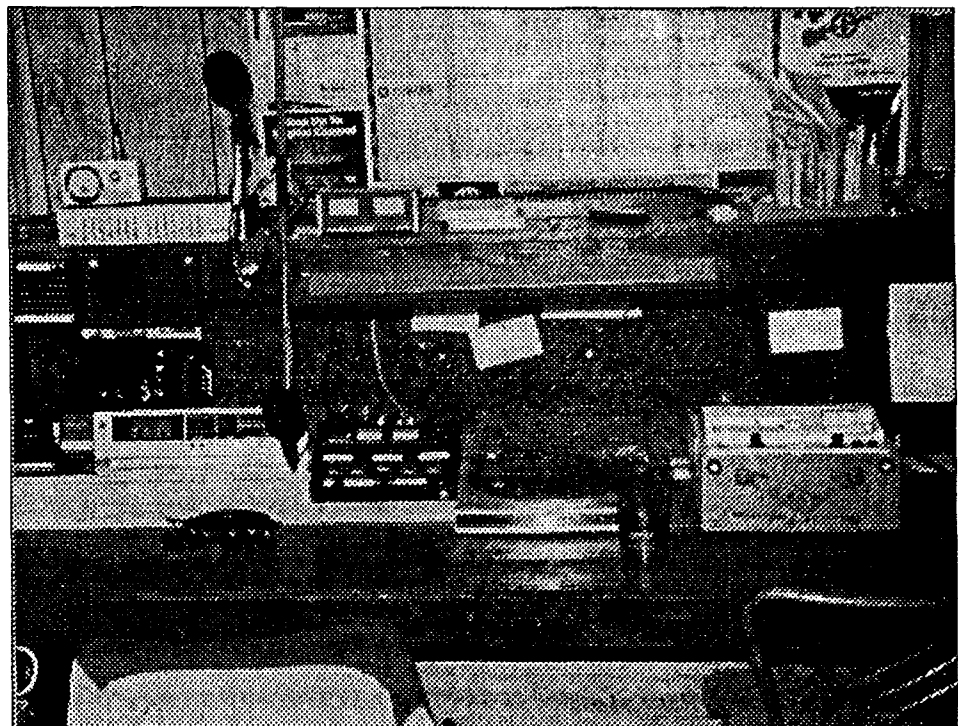
I've done some alteration to the setup and will send a
newer picture as soon.

Concerning operations here, I produce contemporary
Christian music programs with artists such as: Petra,
Amy Grant, Michael W. Smith, White Heart, Benny
Hester, Greg X. Volz along with many others. A FREE
one hour sample program can be obtained just for the
asking. Normally it's \$5.00 for four tapes a month (this
is to cover postage and tape costs). I also do promo's
and spots.

When I first started out my intention was to go AM at
five watts but things didn't turn out that way. I have
enough fun doing this.

Doug B.

Harvest Productions



Pirate Problems, Continued

A viewpoint taken from DIY RADIO, c/o Raven Press, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2BU, England

With the glorious exception of Peelie, not one DJ on the national airwaves is satisfactorily wired into hardcore/thrash happenings at the moment. Unlike America, which can boast whole networks of regional college/independent/hardcore stations.

However, thanks to some crafty Mancunians with an admirable sense of adventure, and taste buds acutely tune to our favourite crud, crash and roaring thrash, the 'times-they-are-a-chingin'! Their project is an open access pirate station called DIY radio and they carry out their Devil's work on 104.7 FM, spreading musical filth over 15 square miles of Manchester for two hours a night, four nights a week.

"The Stupids should be regularly on daytime radio"

Previously a two-show hardcore station which started in October 1987 with the British premier performance of the famous San Francisco radio show Maximum Rock 'n' Roll, cast has now blossomed into 11 presenters with a disarmingly broad cut-up of hardcore (three shows), industrial, hip-hop, noise and straight indie rock.

I interrogated one of their ilk, an unassuming young fellow called Pik. So why is the radio underground flourishing?

"The problem, quite simply, is a demand is not being met by 'popular radio', which is infested with personality jocks who seem to care more about soap star gossip columns than about records.

"It seems that most records on radio are chosen on the basis of pressure from record companies. Anything that's played can't be too raw, it's got to be safe. Nothing with any dodgy connotations or else some people might write in and complain. In my view a band like The Stupids should be regularly on daytime radio."

But doesn't DIY receive many complaints from listeners about noise (ie hardcore) or 'language'?

"No, not at all, although we've had people complaining that we're too tame - and they demand more thrash."

DIY believes there's a shortfall in the coverage of all forms of independent music. And far from keeping their radio expertise to themselves, they are keen to share their knowledge, proving you don't need a powerful businessman behind you to set up a station, since nowadays you can setup for a little as 100.

So has DIY got political connotations?

"Yes, it is political, but political with a small 'p'. We're not pushing any philosophical view, we're just promoting good music. It's a matter of people getting up and taking control of their own entertainment, not just being mindless consumers."

And your view of hardcore in this country at the moment?

"It's a bit like the kitchen of a party, where everybody goes through it once, a lot of very interesting bands have developed through hardcore...Husker, Du, Sonic Youth, Swans, The Beastie Boys...even the Sugar Cubes!!"

Occupy the studios! Liberate the airwaves!

Unclassified, Barter, Trade, Bulletins

WANTED: Help is needed in locating a schematic and manuals for MEISEI ELECTRIC Model CF-533D 10 Watt AM transmitter and the CF-811 distribution unit. I have access to several, but none work. I'll photocopy and return any material you can supply or pay for copy charges. Scott Welch, 252 Star Hill Rd, Woodside, CA 94062

WANTED: Low power AM or FM transmitter in good condition. William Livingston, PO Box 562, Saluda, SC 29138

FOR SALE: (Cleaning Shop) Sprague TelOhmike capacitor analyzer. Finds Capacitance value of unmarked or unreadable caps as well as leakage checks. Covers 0 to 200 uF, \$35.00. / VLF (1750 Meter) prototype receiver-transmitter (TR1750), \$40.00. / Two SONAR VHF 25 watt mobile transceivers. Operate from 150 to 175 MHz FM business band. Probably could be made to work on 2 Meters (144 MHz). Both need work, \$35.00 each. / ICOM 45A 430 MHz mobile amateur band transceiver in original carton - used 1 hour. No time for hamming these days, \$250.00. / Supplies for PC board layout - trace tape, pads, dry transfer lettering, etc., the whole lot for \$20.00 (\$100.00 value). / 30 each PC boards for IGOR-4 (IGOR50) 50 watt peak linear amplifier. Two traces wrong (which can be easily corrected with jumper), \$30.00 for the lot. / Hewlett-Packard heavy duty regulated (switching type) power supply. Set for 2 or 5 volts at 50 Amps now but has documentation and parts for conversion to 12 volts at 40 Amps or better, \$60.00. Shipping included. Contact "Ernie" at PANAXIS, (916) 534-0417

FOR SALE: RCA BTE-15A FM exciter, 107.7 MHz, w/SCA module and wide-band input modules, manual, good operating condition. \$800.00. R Roisaland, KEWI PO Box 4407, Topeka KS 66604 (913) 272-2111

WANTED: 10 Watt exciter in good working condition for non-profit FM. Jim Klauck, WSAM, 200 Bloomfield Ave W Hartford, CT 06117 (203)726-9083

FOR SALE: Collins 310Z-2, 20 watt FM exciter, like new, used for R&D only, \$2800. J Sze, Orban Assoc. 645 Bryant St. San Francisco, CA 94107 (415) 957- 1063

FOR SALE: Moseley LPE-10 10 watt exciter, SCG-3 stereo generator, \$500.00. G Kenny, BMA Inc PO Box 817 Neosho MO 64850 (417) 451-1440

FOR SALE OR TRADE: 25 watt LPB AM transmitter with A.C. line coupler, excellent conditon. Tune to 1570 kHz. Will trade for working 10 watt nFM exciter/transmitter. Mike Gehring, 7 Crestview Dr, Oil City, PA 16301

FOR SALE: 1 Realistic mic/line reverb unit, cat # 273-1110 New \$35.00 with AC adapter. Write Harvest Productions, PO Box 463, Kadoka, SD 57543