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# From the



# President's Desk

I wonder how the fall and winter seems to come around so often? At least this year we were fortunate enough to enjoy some late year hamfests before Covid round two became widespread. The owner of Moderna says this should finish up in another year. But change channels and you get a story about even another variant of the virus. History says there has been pandemics in the past and they were brutal. We were able to partially escape many of these, but millions died in other world areas. Even today the "Flu" is an annual occurrence and the vaccine is the best guess of those in the labs. We have had seasonal, avian, swine and even influenza in animals just to mention a few. All of us have lost friends and many have lost family. The rest of us have been richly blessed.

Our coordinators in the eight SERA states speak of the digital modes and their continued growth. Fusion, MMDVM, P25 and especially DMR is expanding rapidly. A large analog FM group had been using analog UHF frequencies to link several entire states, but are now starting to convert those to DMR because of the ability to tie many repeaters together and extend hospital and other emergency communications in state and across state lines. Many DMR coordinations are now mixed mode DMR and NB FM.

With a few good band openings on HF recently, it was hard to believe the number of FT-8 and BPSK31 stations, not to mention an assortment of almost fifty other digital modes. One fellow on FT-8 bragged of setting up his station with a short message, ids, either calling or answering CQ and then going to Walmart to get groceries. When he returned, he had a page full of successful contacts. One ham said he had worked 48 states in two days. But I prefer actual keyboard to keyboard contacts, so BPSK31 is an enjoyable mode. Years ago, you had to have a fairly elaborate setup for SSTV. Today, software programs such as Ham Radio Deluxe has simplified sending pictures, RTTY, and Keyboard CW. And the waterfall displays are unbelievable. I sit and watch about a dozen stations scrolling across the monitor at the same time.



But after being awed by the advancement of our hobby, I request a grilled cheese sandwich from the XYL, (notice I said request), lean back in my chair, eat the sandwich and drink the diet drink, while I slowly tune around the bands. With my mouth full, I suddenly tune in an expedition in the Artic calling CQ. Almost falling out of my chair I reach for the mic and answer. Of all the many stations calling him he answers me. We exchange niceties and I think he is glad to hear an American voice. I didn't hold him long but wished him and his group well and yielded to another anxious station. The moral to that story is I talked to this gentleman on an aging transceiver and a piece of wire. I didn't have time to turn on and tune the trusty amplifier and still made the contact. I grabbed the other mic and keyed up the local repeater. My friend answered immediately and I told him about the contact. He immediately signed off telling me that dinner was ready. I think he might have heated up the large glass tubes and starting searching the band.

With my luck changing to good, my supervisor came back in the shack with another sandwich and a small piece of homemade cake, I bragged to her that I had just talked to a station in the Artic. She pretended to be impressed and asked if it was cold there? The bad thing is I know there is some blackberry cobbler in the kitchen and a half gallon of vanilla ice cream. Should I stop tuning around and head to the kitchen? Decisions, Decisions. And suddenly I get another chance when the granddaughter comes in. I explain as pitifully as I can, that my sugar level is low and I badly need that cobbler with possibly two scoops of ice cream. She is a sweetheart and heads to the kitchen.

The effects of two sandwiches, cake, cobbler and ice cream soon takes hold of me and I lean back in my chair. Understand I only need to rest my eyes for a minute! We will continue this soon..... Being a Repeater Operator, Owner, Trustee or what-ever is a tough life! hi hi

Take care and stay safe my friends and the best 73's  
Roger

