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XYL's ham dictionary (continued from inside)

By no means do I mean to belittle the amateur radio world. As I said at the outset, it is a worthwhile hobby. But to the YLs and the XYLs of amateur radio operators, I just wanted to say that I am with you and please treat your amateur radio operator kindly and realize that his little idiosyncrasies are not his alone.

Even if you don't aspire to become a dyed-in-the-silk ham-type XYL, you can become a "quasi" ham by assimilation. You do this by learning his language. Here are a few of the trickier terms:

- **Hamshack:** Not to be confused with the tool shack. The hamshack is usually resplendent with radio gear, most of which is in various stages of modification or repair.
- **Gear:** Not to be confused with a gear in a car or watch. Gear in this case means anything having to do with radio equipment, from the tiniest part to the biggest tower.
- **Ham:** Not to be confused with the meat. This is of the two-legged variety and should be given encouragement if he looks puzzled.
- **Auction:** When this word is mentioned by a ham, it means an auction where absolutely worthless radio gear is sold.
- **OM:** Name given to a male type person who is involved with amateur radio.
- **XYL-YL:** Name given to a female type person who is either married or not married to an OM.
- **Modify:** Usually means, according to Webster's: "To change somewhat to form of qualities of." However, in ham language, it means to change beyond all recognition.
- **Tinkering:** The beginning stages of modification.
- **Static:** Secret code that only a true ham can communicate with
- **Goody:** Something usually without worth, bought at an auction.

Coming up soon

Next MCARA meeting is March 25 at the Community Baptist Church , 777

Salerno Rd, Stuart 34997 at 7PM ALL are welcome.

General License Upgrade Class begins **Saturday April 10th with testing on Tuesday May 11th.** Call **John Bower** at **772-463-7547** you can find flyers to distribute at <http://www.MCARAWeb.com/>



Martin County Amateur Radio Association

presents the

2010 Stuart Hamfest



and ARRL Southern
Florida Section
Convention

Program Souvenir

Our 35th consecutive annual event

Understanding Your Amateur Radio Operator – XYL's ham dictionary

Joan Fury, XYL of Art WA6JLJ
Reprinted from 73 Magazine, 05-71

Many articles have been written on how to build amateur radio equipment, how to put up an antenna, how to this, how to that, but few- if any, have been written on understanding the amateur radio operators themselves. So I thought that I would undertake this task.

There are many advantages of having a hobby of amateur radio. They are (1) educational, from the stand point of gaining technical knowledge regarding radio; (2) social, from the stand point of family picnics, dinners or a night out with the boys and (3) civic minded -just take the case of hurricane Camille and others. *(continued inside)*

XYL's ham dictionary— *continued*

However, with all the good qualities; there are some idiosyncrasies involved with the world of hamdom which I am sure most wives of hams will recognize as I set them out. Before I start, I realize there are many female ham operators, and to these, I give a hearty "Bravo!" But this article is specifically written for the rest of us females who are really not so inclined as to take up ham radio as a hobby.

Having been married to an amateur radio operator for about eight years, I feel qualified as something of an "expert" on the subject. I remember how excited my OM was when he installed his first radio in the car and how he wanted me to speak into the microphone to the unseen body at the other end. He was the only one who seemed to hear a voice. All I heard was some type of mumbling and static at the other end. Later, it was explained to me in much detail, as to how the radio needed to be "tinkered with" and then it was really going to be something. This should have been my first clue -the idea of "tinkering ...". If your husband is a true ham, as mine seems to be then you know exactly what I mean. They are forever tinkering with something, working ever so hard to get something right, only to trade it for something that doesn't work quite well -and so the cycle continues. An interesting thing to note: If this breed of ham does buy a new piece of gear, nine times out of nine he has to modify it.

My OM's shack first began in our card table, along with the entire lower portion or a sliding cabinet in the living room. It has now grown to one bedroom filled with test gear, radios, etc., and one entire wall of the garage. But I really don't mind because my OM has "seen the light" in the reasoning of keeping things neat. We have plastic shoe boxes and plastic cabinets filled with things and stuff.

I spoke before of test gear, and I would like to expound on that subject a bit. One day I ventured into the shack and found my OM working on a piece of gear with schematics all around. Upon asking what he was doing, I got the reply that he was building a piece of test gear (let's call the piece of gear "A") so that he could test another piece of gear that he was working on (let's call it "B"). It seems that in the middle of building "B", he ran into a snag and had no way of testing it so he had to stop building "B" and start building "A" SO he could test "B". At which time, I patted him on the head and left the room before the unknown "C" came into the picture.

A true ham has the instincts of a pack rat. No doubt you know that a pack rat collects shining objects with which to feather his nest. A ham also collects shining objects to feather his shack with, such as transistors, resistors -and the list is endless. A Playboy calendar might also be found in the shack from time to time. And of course, there are the boxes and shelves of transformers which weigh a ton, or seem to.

There is one saving feature: auctions! An auction is an occasion when an item is finally sold, much to the pleasure of the wife, but somehow or other the ham feels he has to come home with some goody, thus continuing the cycle. I remember my first auction; it was held before we were married, and went to it as a Friday night date. When I heard my husband-to-be was taking me to an auction, I thought how nice and was looking forward to it. (I thought it was going to be a real auction -you know the kind with antiques, furniture, etc.) Anyway, when we arrived at the auction, I do not think I have to tell you what I saw – anything but antiques as I know them.

I have been tempted to get into ham radio several times, but just as I am getting enthusiastic, "we" get another piece of gear, and somehow my enthusiasm wanes, and I go back to sewing and cooking. (*continued on rear page*)

ARRL Forums

Room A

9:00 AM *National Weather Service Forum*, Scott Spratt, NWS

10:00 AM *ARRL Southeast Division forum* presented by Jeff Beals
WA4AW, Southeast Division Vice Director

11:00 AM *ARRL Southern Florida Section forum with Sherri
Brower, W4STB, Southern Florida Section Manager and Karen
Briggs, K8KB Southern FL Amateur Radio Emergency Service
(ARES) Section Emergency Coordinator*

1:00 PM VE Amateur Radio License Test Session

Hamfest Activities

Room B

9:00 AM *Safety and Lightning Protection* Bill Sandel, N4JFP

10:00 AM Quarter Century Wireless Association forum

11:00 AM *Florida East Coast DX forum*, Norm Alexander, W4QN

12:00 PM Contesting –Florida Contest Group

1:00 PM *Building a PIC-a-Star Software Defined HF transceiver*,
Bill Laakkonen, N4BKT



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