The August Program:

This Is Tajikistan Calling
The Saga of EY2A

A former Republic of the Soviet Union, Tajikistan sits at the crossroads of intrigue bordered by Afghanistan, China and Pakistan. Join noted photographer Art Goddard, W6XD, for a tour of this mysterious country and learn about meeting the challenges of DX radio-contest operation.

See Program on Page 7

Visit Our Web Site at:

http://www.w6ze.org

August 2001 - RF Page 1
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Monthly Events:

General Meeting:
Third Friday of the month
at 7:30 PM
American Red Cross
(near Tustin Ave & 4th St)
Santa Ana, CA

Club Breakfast:
First Saturday of the month at 8:00 AM
IHOP
1001 E. 17th Street
(west of Lincoln)
Santa Ana, CA

Club Nets (Listen for W6ZE):
Wednesday Evenings
28.375± MHz SSB
7:30 PM - 8:30 PM
Bob AF6C, Net Control
146.55 MHz Simplex FM
8:30 PM - 9:30 PM
Bob, WB6IXN, Net Control

VISIT OUR WEB SITE
http://www.w6ze.org
for up-to-the-minute club information, the latest membership rosters, special activities, back issues of RF, links to ham-related sites, vendors and manufacturers, pictures of club events and much much more.

Club Dues:
Regular Members ...$20
Family Members* ...$10
Teenage Members ...$10
Club Badge ...$3

Dues run from January thru December & are prorated for new members.
*Additional members in the family of a regular member pay the family rate up to $30 per family.
There is a $1 charge if you'd like to have your badge mailed to you.

August 2001 - RF Page 2
A California amateur is to stay off repeaters for the next two and a half years as part of an agreement with the FCC. But, if Technician licensee Lester M. Killingsworth, KE6WSC, of Hollywood, violates the agreement, he could face license revocation proceedings.

FCC Special Counsel for Amateur Radio Enforcement Riley Hollingsworth wrote Killingsworth on June 15, outlining alleged violations monitored May 17 on the W6NUT repeater system in the Los Angeles area. The letter included a transcript of some of Killingsworth's transmissions, which, Hollingsworth said, contained obscene and indecent language.

Killingsworth replied to the FCC inquiry by telephone in early July, and his response is "under review," Hollingsworth said. In the meantime, Killingsworth agreed to the suspension of his repeater privileges, and Hollingsworth said the FCC will hold any enforcement action in the matter in abeyance.

If there are no violations, Hollingsworth said, the repeater prohibition will expire automatically at midnight January 21, 2004.

FCC Levies $10,000 Fine for Unlicensed Hamming:

The FCC has levied a $10,000 fine on an East Palo Alto, California, man for transmitting without a license on amateur frequencies. Earlier this year, the Commission had proposed forfeitures totaling $17,000 in the case of Joshie Yasin Nakamura Sr, who also is known as "Mervyn Ehambrave" and "Marvin Eugene Barnes." The FCC’s Forfeiture Order, released July 6, offered no explanation for the discrepancy in the figures. The fine stemmed from complaints about Nakamura to the FCC that date back to late January through March of 2000. The Commission says it heard from the amateur community and from members of the ARRL Amateur Auxiliary that an unlicensed station was operating on several amateur frequencies. Nakamura reportedly is being detained by state authorities on unrelated felony charges and did not respond to the earlier FCC notice.

From The ARRL Letter Vol 20 No. 31

Wednesday W6ZE Club Nets:

Have you checked into a club net lately? The nets are there for you. Meet other members. Find common interests. Ask questions. Get answers. Check your equipment. You’re missing a big part of the club if you don’t ever check-in. There are two nets so every class of license can participate. The 10-meter net starts at 7:30 PM, followed by the 2-meter net which starts at 8:30 PM. - many people check into both!

The Westlink Tape, current ham radio news, is transmitted each week as part of the 2-meter net by Bob - KD6BWH.

Don’t let the word “net” keep you away. These are very informal nets; the net control station is there just to keep things in order. Check-in and join in the fun. If an emergency hits our area you’ll know where to meet and coordinate efforts.

Check out WB6IXN - Bob Evan’s Net News on our web page for the details of what’s been happening on the nets. J ust go to the home page and click on Net News; the link is too long to publish in RF. Here’s a list of our check-ins for July:

WD5AGCI/Ø, KD6BWH, AF6C, K6CD6, KD6CFE, K6G6TL, W6HHC, WB6IXN, KQ6JD, KF6LEX, K6LNX, KF6REU, KE6UCH, W1VDE/Ø, K6VDP, KE6WII, KD6XO, WB9YGCJ/6

August Board Minutes:

Due to the number of people on vacation, no board meeting was held at the August 3rd club breakfast.

Convention – from page 1

"QRP - Putting the fun back in Ham Radio" Doug Hendricks, N6DS, President, NorCal "Building Simple Baluns that Work" Jim "Dr. Megacycle" Duffey, K6MC/5 "Manhattan construction and the MH 101 project" Chuck Adams, K7QO "QRP kit design" Wayne Burdick, N6KR, or Eric Schwartz, WA6HHQ, of Elecraft "Reverse RFI - Interference to Amateur Radio Equipment" Ed Hare, W1RFI, ARRL Lab Supervisor "Fun on the Waterfall - Operating PSK-31" Barry Geipel, AD6HR, Lake Perris QRP Society "Hamming in Hotel Rooms", Vern Wright, W6MMA, Super Antennas, Inc.

These, in addition to the regular features of the convention, such as:

"Satellite Workshop" Steve Bible, N7HPR "Antennas, Feedlines, Grounds, SWR and Other Mythical Creatures" Ed Hare, W1RFI "Battery Care, and How to Choose the Right Charging System" Robert Syms, K06ZL "J-Pole Antennas" James Pike, KB6WHT "On the Trail to Adventure" Cynthia Wall, KA7ITT "Building and Using Unusual Antennas" Chip Margelli, K7JA will make it a must-attend event for Southern California Hams. Registration and other information can be found on the SW Division’s web site at:

http://www.qsl.net/arrl-2001swdc

Hope to see you there!

Tnx: Bill Phinizy, K6WHP

Net News
Coaxial Connectors: (Part I)

The antenna feed line is an important part of the amateur station. While twin lead offers low loss and high SWR handling capabilities, coax has become the feedline of choice for most hams because of its ease of installation, inherent self-shielding, weather resistance and low impedance. Therefore it is appropriate to spend a few Tech Talk sessions discussing the various types of coaxial cables and the connectors that are used with them. Since QST recently published an article on coaxial cable, let’s start with the numerous types of connectors that are available and usable for ham radio installations.

Coax is not just used for the antenna feed; it is often used to interconnect equipment, as test leads for test equipment and also to internally connect signals from one part of a circuit to another in your equipment. If you build your own equipment you are probably no stranger to coax. Since coax has so many uses it is no wonder that there are so many different types of connectors available. Connector series that hams use or should be familiar with include the UHF Series, “HN” Series, BNC Series, RCA Phono Series (Yes, these are used for RF by some low-cost manufacturers), “F” Series, Mini-UHF Series, SMA Series, TNC Series, FME Series and MMCX/MCX Series. There are many other connectors that are less common that will be mentioned in a future Tech Talk article including 1.6/5.6 Series, SMB/SMC Series, “C” Series, “HN” Series, and APC 2.4/3.5/7 Series.

Depending on the part chosen, assembling the connector to the coax involves crimping, soldering and/or clamping. Usually the center contact is either soldered or crimped. The connector body is either soldered, crimped or clamped. Connectors are often listed by how they are assembled: (i.e. crimp – crimp, clamp – solder, solder – solder, etc.) Crimping requires rather expensive crimping tools. They are great if you are attaching many connectors, but are not cost-effective for most amateurs. The exceptions are the “F” and BNC connectors that have inexpensive crimping tools available. The more expensive crimping tools will do a much better job.

Before looking at specific types, let’s look at the important properties of the typical coaxial connector. These properties will then be used to compare some of the more common types listed above. Each type has its advantages and disadvantages and the trick is to choose the connector that is most advantageous for the job at hand while minimizing the impact of the disadvantages. Here are the major coax connector properties:

**Impedance:** Coaxial connectors can be either constant impedance or non-constant impedance. Constant impedance connectors are carefully designed to have an impedance that is the same as the coaxial cable the connector is designed to work with (50 ohms and 70 ohms are common values.) The outside diameter of the inner conductor and the inside diameter of the outer conductor are chosen (in conjunction with the dielectric the connector uses) to appear as a length of coax at the proper impedance. Non-constant impedance connectors exhibit an impedance “bump” at the point of the connector along a feedline.

**Size:** Depending upon your use, size can be important. Do you need a micro-miniature connector for a GPS receiver or are you connecting 7/8-inch cable to your antenna? Relative size will be given on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being large.

**Voltage/Power Handling:** Are you handling a kilowatt or just a few milliwatts? If the connector cannot handle the voltage, arcing can result, leading to damage to feedline and possibly the equipment. This property is related to the connector dielectric and size.

**Frequency Range:** Most connectors are good down to DC. At higher frequencies they become lossy and no longer exhibit a desirable impedance. The maximum recommended frequency can vary from about 30 MHz to over 50 GHz.

**Cost:** The price of connectors varies greatly. Items that determine cost include materials used (precious metals) complexity of design and manufacture, the market, proprietary designs, greed, etc. Relative cost will be given on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being least expensive and 5 being most expensive.

**Weather Handling:** For outdoor use it is important to keep water out of connectors and coax. Low-loss foam dielectric coaxial cable is very susceptible to moisture and a good weather resistant connector can help to keep moisture from entering the end of the cable.

The **UHF Series connector:**

**Impedance:** The UHF Series connector is non-constant impedance. Generally it is used with 50 and 72 ohm coaxial cable.

**Size:** Moderately large; 4 of 5.

**Voltage/Power Handling:** 500V peak. It can handle the legal amateur power limit below 100 MHz.
Frequency Range: Up to 300 MHz.

Cost: Typically 2 of 5. Many low-cost no-name types available. Amphenol also carries an RFX series of UHF connectors that are lower in cost with good quality. Often UHF connectors are available surplus.

Weather Handling: No inherent weather protection. Must be protected from the elements. Exposes coax dielectric to the environment.

The UHF Series of connectors is the most common type used in ham equipment below 70 cm. E. Clark Quackenbush of Amphenol invented them for the radio industry in the 1930’s. The military nomenclature of the standard plug is PL-259 and the chassis mounted receptacle is SO-239. The standard PL-259 is designed for RG-8/U cables 8, 9, 11, 13, 63, 213 and other cable with an O.D. of 0.405” to 0.425”. Two reducing adapters are available (military nomenclature UG-175 and UG-176) to fit RG-58/U (0.195”) and RG-59/U (0.242”) sized cable respectively. The UG-176 also works with RG-8X size coax. The UG-111/U is a solder plug for RG-59 that doesn’t require a reducer. Crimp type connectors, right-angle plugs, hoods for the back of SO-239 receptacles (UG-106/U, UG-177/U), elbow adapters (UG-646/U), tee adapters (M358), male-to-male and female to female (PL-258, UG-363/U) adapters are also commonly available. “Between series” adapters are available for most other common connector series.

Since the UHF connector is in such common use, it is available from many sources and in many non-standard configurations. Quality can vary extensively – lower quality is usually evident in the dielectric used, the plating and the machining. Low-loss RG-8/U type coaxial cables such as Times Microwave LMR-400 and Belden 9913 coax have a larger diameter inner conductor than standard RG-8/U. Many newer PL-259 style connectors have a center pin with a larger diameter opening to accommodate this (such as Cable X-Perts’ 401TS PL-259.) These connectors fit standard RG-8/U cable too. Some UHF connectors boast of a gold plated center pin. While this is fine, it isn’t really an advantage over the standard silver pin if the connector is not to be regularly disconnected and reconnected.

Some cautions: Japan has a UHF connector that has a slightly different thread size than the standard SO-239 (which has a 0.625-24NEF-2A thread.) This metric threaded connector is found on non-export Japanese ham equipment. A PL-259 will fit on this connector, but will only thread on for a few turns leaving the shield connection loose and creating an undesirable condition. MCM sells a UHF bulkhead connector (#27-220) with the proper thread that replaces the most common of these bastard connectors.

You install a PL-259 connector by first stripping the cable to the correct dimensions. Some connector dimensions are given in Table one. Dimensions are available from the manufacturer (check his web page) or the place that supplied the connector. While you can often “eyeball” the dimensions on soldered plugs, crimp connectors are more critical. When cutting and stripping coax, all cuts must be sharp and square. Do not nick the braid, the center conductor or the dielectric. Next, slide on the coupling ring. Be sure it is facing the correct way. Use tape to hold it on the cable away from the end where you’re working. Tin the center conductor and exposed shield; be careful not to melt the cable dielectric. Thread the connector body onto the outer insulation of the cable until it bottoms. The braid should be visible through the holes in the connector body and the inner conductor visible in the connector tip. Solder the assembly to the braid through the four holes. A high-wattage soldering gun works well here. The trick is to heat the connector quickly enough to solder the braid without melting the dielectric (Here’s where one learns to appreciate the “N” series connector!) Finally, solder the center conductor by flowing solder into the end of the pin. Trim any excess center conductor that is sticking out past the end of the pin. (There shouldn’t be any if you measured properly.)

If you’re using a reducing adapter for smaller diameter coax, slide the adapter on along with the coupling ring. After trimming the outer insulation, slide the adapter forward and fold the braid back over the end of the adapter. Trim it to 3/8 inch and tin it lightly. Screw the plug onto the adapter and solder the braid through the holes. Solder the center pin and screw on the coupling ring.

When soldering coax to an SO-239 chassis mounted receptacle the cable can often be connected by soldering the inner conductor of the cable directly to the center soder cup of the connector and the braid to a solder lug mounted to one of the connector mounting screws. At higher frequencies and for better

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UHF Connectors - Table 1</th>
<th>Strip Dim, Inches</th>
<th>Conn Type</th>
<th>Cable (RG-8/U)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part #</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-1SP/SP-1050*</td>
<td>PL-259 Plug</td>
<td>8, 9, 11, 213, 214</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401TS**</td>
<td>PL-259 Type</td>
<td>8, 9913, LMR-400</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-822*</td>
<td>PL-259 Plug</td>
<td>8, 9, 11, 213, 214</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-1SP-15RFX*</td>
<td>PL-259 Type</td>
<td>8, 9, 11, 213, 214</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG-175/U***</td>
<td>Reducer</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-168-RFX***</td>
<td>Reducer</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG-176/U***</td>
<td>Reducer</td>
<td>8X, 59</td>
<td>0.750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-185-RFX***</td>
<td>Reducer</td>
<td>8X, 59</td>
<td>0.689</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Amphenol Part #, ** Cable X-perts Part #, *** Reducer used with PL-259's listed above.
shielding a hood should be used. Assembly instructions for hoods are available on the Amphenol website.

**The “N” Series Connector:**

**Impedance:** The “N” Series is constant impedance and is available in 50-ohm and 70-ohm impedance.

**Caution:** the 50-ohm and 70 ohm connectors DO NOT mate with each other!

**Size:** Moderately large, 4 of 5. Slightly longer generally than the UHF connector - similar diameter. Available for large diameter cables.

**Voltage/Power Handling:** 1,500V peak. It can handle the legal power limit to above 500MHz.

**Frequency Range:** Up to 11,000 MHz, with a max. SWR of 1.3:1

**Cost:** Typically 3 of 5. Often they available surplus. Amphenol also carries an RFX series of “N” connectors that are lower in cost with good quality.

**Weather Handling:** When installed properly, “N” series connectors with gaskets are weatherproof.

The “N” series of connectors was developed in the 1940’s by Bell Labs (now Lucent). It was named for Paul Neill, and was the first connector to perform well at microwave frequencies.

The “N” series of connectors is found on higher quality UHF/SUHF amateur transmitters and antennas. At 11 GHz it boasts an SWR of only 1.3:1. The connector is a great performer at HF and VHF too, and is often found on commercial equipment designed for these frequencies. Properly installed, it is weatherproof and protects the coax dielectric from absorbing moisture that can ruin low-loss coax. Because of its weather resistance, it is ideal for outdoor use, and since it exhibits a constant impedance it can be used to implement a low-loss splice in a run of coax. Often belittled by amateurs as being hard to install, it has not gained the popularity it should. Like the UHF series, the “N” series comes in numerous sizes and styles. It is available in clamp and crimp types. Since the braid is clamped to the connector body, only the center pin needs soldering, and heat damage to the dielectric is minimized. If you want to “move-up” the next time you install new coaxial feedline, you should consider using “N” connectors.

**Parts of an “N” connector (Male shown) in assembly order. From left to right: Pin, Body, Clamp, Gasket, Washer, Nut.**

Installing clamp-type “N” connectors can appear overwhelming to the unfamiliar amateur. Four different clamp styles exist: MIL-Clamp, Standard Clamp, Improved Clamp and Captivated Contact (C.C.). Recently many manufacturers have tried to simplify installation by combining styles. If you use older connectors you may still come across these names. Table two gives trimming dimensions for some of the more common “N” connectors; this table is just the tip of the iceberg. It would be wise to check with the manufacturer for the correct dimensions. “N” connectors also are available in many crimp-on styles.

To install an “N” connector, first place the nut, washer and gasket over the cable. The threads of the nut and the “V”-groove of the gasket should point towards the cable end where the connector will be installed. Then the outer jacket of the cable should be trimmed to the “a” dimension. Do not nick the
braid. Next, comb out the braid so each strand is straight along the body of the coax towards the end. A good tool for this is a “solder helper” found in many Radio Shack soldering kits (such as 64-2802). Take your time combing out the braid, doing a small area at a time. It is not difficult, but if done too aggressively you can end up breaking off strands. Once the braid is combed out, move it out of the way and trim the dielectric to dimension “c”. Carefully tin only the center conductor. Next, taper the combed braid slightly so it will fit through the center hole of the clamp, and slide the clamp onto the end of the cable; it only goes on one way (sharp edge of clamp towards the back.) It will stop against the cable jacket. Now, fold the combed braid back and over the clamp and trim it carefully so that it ends at the shoulder of the clamp. A pair of sharp scissors makes a good tool to trim the combed braid. Solder on the center connector pin by flowing solder into the hole in the pin. The back edge of the pin should be flush with the dielectric. Finally, insert the cable into the connector body, make sure the gasket seats into the sharp end of the clamp and tighten the nut; the clamp will actually cut the gasket. Examine the connector; the pin should be seated so that its tip is recessed in the inner shield by about 0.05”.

Some things to look out for: Though rare, there are 70-ohm “N” connectors. These do not mate with 50-ohm “N” connectors and damage to the center pin/socket can result. “N” connectors are now available that install like UHF connectors, with the solder holes for the braid. I suggest you avoid them.

Next month we’ll look at the BNC and RCA Phono connectors, and maybe more.

Female “N” Chassis Mount Connector

Program – from Page 1

Art Goddard, W6XD, earned his novice Amateur Radio license in 1956. He worked his way up through the ranks to Extra class. His radio activities include HF/VHF, DX, contests, satellites and digital communications. He has traveled in numerous foreign countries. Equipped with his camera, Art captures the DXpedition spirit to share with fellow hams at club meetings and conventions.

Art is a life member of ARRL, currently serving as Vice Director of the Southwestern Division. He is actively involved in representing and promoting Amateur Radio throughout the region. Professionally, he is a consultant for electronic systems, retired from Boeing (formerly Collins Radio and Rockwell International). Art and his wife Mary Ellen live in Costa Mesa, CA.

“How big is your club station; and do we get DX breaks?”
Minutes - from Page 7

formative and well received by all. All but three board members were present (absent were Bob - AF6C; Chris - KJ6ZH and Larry - K6LDC.) There were 24 people in attendance including visitors – WA4AFG - Gary Sanders; AB8AA - Alan Arnet and his wife K6JAA - Jane; KA6QJU - Mike McCullough; W7KTS - David Mofford and Robin (no call).

TREASURER'S REPORT: The club received a letter from HAMCON 1999 concerning final funds from the event. The club was given a check for $400. There was also a check for $450 from Kei, W6NGO’s trust fund. Moved and seconded to have the secretary send a thank you to Kei’s widow for the donation. Total income this year to the club has been $2,376 and total expenses so far has been $1,100 (all Field Day expenses have not been received as of yet). Total assets of the club are $2,820.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: Two new members have joined: John - N6RUI and Tom - K6CCD. There are a total of 54 members at present.

VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT: The Christmas dinner will be Sunday December 16 at Mimi’s on Brookhurst in Fountain Valley at 6:30 pm. The program for August will be Art Goddard’s Dxpedition to Russia.

ACTIVITIES: Tom, WA6PFA explained the raffle procedures; tickets are 3 for $1. Buy $5 and get an additional $1 of tickets. Tom and Bruce, KC6DLA demonstrated slow scan TV at the Fair, taking pictures of people and then having them come to the booth to see them on the laptop. This program was freeware and Tom has info on obtaining it. CW was also demonstrated, mainly for the younger crowd.

OLD BUSINESS: Bob, KD6BWH reported the Amateur Radio booth at the Fair won three ribbons – 2nd place Best In Show; 2nd place for Staffing and 4th place for Interaction With the Public.

FIELD DAY – Ken has pictures up on the website, there were no problems at the park and the cost was within budget at $170. The club took in donations of $120 toward these expenses. Ken thanked all the band captains, Don - KC6ONZ for the fabulous job with the food and all the club members who participated.

GOOD OF THE CLUB: Frank - WA6VKZ reported on the Dayton Hamvention. Don Hughes, KC6ONZ was the lucky greeter of Mr. RF. (aka KQ6JD) The meeting was adjourned at 2117 pm. Lowell, KQ6JD won the grand prize, an atomic clock.

Submitted by Bob - KD6XO (for AF6C)