

*The content which follows is a transcript of the Practical Amateur Radio Podcast hosted by Jerry Taylor, KD0BIK. This monthly version of PARP is typically released the last week of each month.*

The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast – Episode number 38.

From the ham shack of KD0BIK, located in Colorful Colorado, this is the Practical Amateur Radio Podcast.

This is show number 38, volume number 3 with a release date of April 18 2010.

Hello everyone. My name is Jerry Taylor; my amateur radio call sign is KD0BIK and welcome to the Practical Amateur Radio Podcast...Creating Elmers One Podcast at a time. Amateur radio or ham radio is what this podcast is all about. If you are currently studying for your exam or have been in ham radio for years....I'm hopeful this podcast will help you. If it has helped you, I hope you will continue to listen and I also hope you'll tell others. Also, in keeping with our Creating Elmers one podcast at a time philosophy, if you learn something from our podcasts....please share that knowledge with others.

Welcome back to another episode of The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast, I'm so glad you've returned. The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast, a proud member of the Tech Podcast Network. If it's tech, it's here.

So what is the Tech Podcast Network. Well, the tech podcast network is a network of both audio and video podcasts or media content from dozens of individual podcasters and new media producers like myself. You can visit the Tech Podcast Network by visiting [techpodcast.com](http://techpodcast.com). On TechPodcast.com you'll find podcasts divided into these primary categories of Apple, Gaming, How to, Linux, Tech Chat, Tech News and Tech Business.

I've had my RSS feed pointing over the Tech Podcast Network website for several months and it's really paid off. Not only has the stream of new listeners been healthy, some really cool stuff has happened which I'm going to tell you about now.

If you follow me on twitter or facebook, or if you visit the HamRadioForum.net, eham or qrz forums in the last few days you might have noticed the announcement I made regarding the Roku and Boxee set-top boxes. If you're not familiar with either the Roku or Boxee devices. Basically these are just little black boxes which connect to your internet and your TV. They allow you to stream various content (some free some pay-per-view) right on your TV. Some of this content includes titles from the Netflix instant queue, Youtube and of course, the Tech Podcast Network is also available.

So this means the Practical Amateur Radio Podcast can also be heard on these devices. Boxee also has a Mac, PC and Linux application which allows you to stream the full suite of Boxee aps on your computer.

Now, I know the practical amateur radio podcast is a specialized podcast. If you're not into amateur radio, you probably won't find much interest in the content. Most of you who listen and have listened to the podcast, learned of the podcast through some type of amateur radio channel such as a ham radio related forum, twitter or facebook following etc. Or perhaps it was from the article in CQ magazine last year or maybe you met me last year at the ARRL Rocky Mountain convention in Estes Park last year. You also may have heard about the podcast from a fellow amateur. In any event...I'm thankful you are all here...but you more than likely heard about the podcast through one of those methods.

The relationship between The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast, MyAmateurRadio.com and TechPodcast Network and Boxee and Roku only involved a little effort. No money....it didn't cost me anything to do this other than time and if I may say, having a quality show helped. What I'm hopeful for with this relationship is for it to expose the practical amateur radio podcast and MyAmateurRadio.com to a wider audience and in the hopes of attracting new members to our wonderful hobby.

Time will tell and I'll monitor the stats closely. But this market is growing and growing fast. It's estimated that over 1 million subscribers are already on board with the Boxee and Roku devices. The Tech Podcast Network is planning on expansion into other devices like game players and such which are already capable of streaming (as an example) Netflix content. But again...time will tell if this is successful. I'll be certain to update you in future episodes on how effective this partnership has been.

OK...almost done then we'll get started with the show. Do you use iTunes? If so, would you be so kind as to find The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast and rate and review the podcast? All you need to do is through the iTunes client, go to the podcasts directory, search for practical amateur radio podcast, drill into PARP and you can rate and review the show. The reason I'm asking you to do this is to just help bring more attention to the show via the podcast directory. So that new hams looking for amateur radio content will find the show. While you are in iTunes, if you listen to any of the other fine amateur radio podcasts like teen radio journey, Soldersmoke, Resonate Frequency, Linux in the Hamshack, HamRadioPodclass, ICQ Podcast, Low SWR podcast, Hambrief.TV etc. Please consider doing the same for them. There is no competition among us amateur radio podcasters...we're all doing what we do for the good of the hobby. I really appreciate you taking the time to do this.

Now if I rattled off a podcast or two that you are not familiar with and you are not currently listening to, please head over to MyAmateurRadio.com and scroll down and look to the left hand side. You'll see a menu simply titled Other Amateur Radio Podcasts. These are all the amateur radio podcasts that I'm aware of. I've added a few new ones to the list including HamCast which is a podcast based out of Germany. I know we have many listeners from Germany, and I'm sure you are already aware of HamCast, but if not....please give them a try.

The second new addition to this list is QTC Brazil. Like Germany, we also have many listeners downloading or streaming the practical amateur radio podcast down in Brazil and I hope you'll check out QTC Brazil Podcast.

Again...speaking for myself and The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast, there is no competition (or certainly shouldn't be) between those of us podcasting on the subject of amateur radio. If you know of an amateur radio based podcast which I do not have listed on MyAmateurRadio.com, please contact me and I'll add it.

Finally, one of my un-mentioned or un-publicized New Year's resolutions was to find a way to produce a little more content than just once per month. Ever since the almost 2 month hiatus back in September/October of last year I've been trying to get back to a 2 episode per month schedule. Well...I can check that off my list now. I released episode 37 on April 1 and this episode, episode 38 is coming approx. two weeks later.

Now please don't schedule the parade and award ceremony just yet. I need to be able to sustain this schedule and my hope is I can. But of course, it has to still fit into all the other things I have going on and still allow time for me to get in the shack for radio fun.

Now back in February, I was talking to my wife. She listens to an episode here and there. As I've stated many times, my wife is VERY supportive of my hobby and everything that goes along with it. She asked me if I thought it would be a good idea to add some news to the podcast. I explained to her my hesitation of doing this.

I didn't want to fill up precious time on a podcast episode of information that a month, 6 months, 1 year or longer is no longer useful. Or worse, they listen to an old podcast but several months later or longer, rules change or something like that. The listener doesn't hear the rules change and well.....not a good thing.

So I thought about it and thought about it and came up with the concept of a weekly podcast. So sometime back in late February (during a snow storm I think) I began sketching out what this version might look like, or sound like as in the case of an audio podcast.

On April 7. The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast – QRP was born. As I described in that debut episode, the QRP name is sort of a play on words in how one could reference the differences between the two podcasts. This type of episode is a full 100w version which is packed with educational content with multiple segments. It isn't as time/date sensitive. The QRP version is much, much shorter in length and really contains news and information specific to a short time period.

In my sketching back in March, I thought I could keep it to around 5 minutes. However, after producing two episodes....this will be hard and therefore I'm not going to stress over it. I'm sure most episodes will range in the 10-15 minute range.

Much of the information I provide in the QRP version of the podcast is simply to bait you into going and finding out more if you are so interested. I could probably produce a much longer show and read you all the news, word by word, but there are already podcasts that do that and do it very well. My main focus will be to try to encourage each and every one of you to get on the air.

I'm almost done. If you are behind on episodes...you do not need to do anything special to listen to the QRP version of the podcast. If you subscribe via iTunes or any other podcatcher type process....these episodes are mixed right in with everything else. If you listen via MyAmateurRadio.com....well....the episodes are right there.

I've received a lot of wonderful comments about The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast – QRP version and I hope to continue to bring it to you each and every week. You can expect the QRP version to be made available on Wednesday of each week.

OK...this is a big show today with all segments jammed packed with information....so let's get started.

Today I would like to talk to you about a digital mode that I really love operating. Now, unlike PSK-31, RTTY or Hellschreiber...this digital mode is not really a QSO type mode. Meaning, you don't have actual QSO's or exchanges of information with this mode. Once installed and configured...this mode is fully automatic.

Of course, the mode I'm talking about is Whisper. Whisper is a 4-letter acronym spelled out WSPR (Whiskey, Sierra, Papa, Romeo) and stands for Weak Signal Propagation Reporter. Think of it as a beacon network.

For the past few weeks the poll question listed on MyAmateurRadio.com has been Do You WSPR? The choices read as follows: Yes – I love to WSPR, NO – Not yet, but I want to learn more and start. No – I don't get the point and finally Huh? What is WSPR?

The results have been interesting. Of site visitors who visited and voted the poll, Only 1 voted No, I don't get the point. But....certainly good timing for this episode, 40% voted Huh? What is WSPR? And 35% voted No, Not yet, but I want to learn more and start. 22% of you are already WSPR'ing on the bands.

I learned about WSPR through Twitter from Marty Wittrock, KN0CK. Marty had mentioned in some of his tweets about his 5w signal being heard all across the country and the world. Like many of you, my station (especially in relationship to my antennas) is rather modest. Some hams have big antenna farms....me, I suppose I would be classified as just a garden window. I have my Hustler 6BTV and my 20m ham stick dipole. That's it in relation to HF.

So while I've worked some DX on PSK31 and Side Band, I am always curious to know how well my system is performing. WSPR is that tool that confirms this information for me.

WSPR was developed by Joe Taylor, K1JT. Joe is a Nobel Prize winning Princeton Physicist. WSPR was first released in April 2008. WSPR uses a transmission mode known as MEPT-JT. The JT is Joe Taylor's initials and MEPT stands for Manned Experimental Propagation Transmitter.

In order to operate WSPR you will need to download the WSPR client. As always, just look to the show notes for this episode (episode 37) for the URL's. A new version of the WSPR client (version 2.0) was released in November 2009. The new client introduces a number of new features from the older version including a user-friendly setup screen with drop-down selection of audio devices and also rig-control. Additional features include support for compound callsigns, fine selection of the fractional time for transmitting and a tune button.

WSPR 2.0 is available for Windows and Linux operating systems and can be compiled for FreeBSD and the Mac OS X. Again, please check the episode 37 show notes for the URL.

Once installed, WSPR functions like other digi modes you might operate. Basically, if your system can operate PSK, then it should be able to operate WSPR without any issue. Meaning, if you are currently setup to operate a digi mode like PSK31 with a soundcard interface etc. Then WSPR should work without major headache. Or another way to look at this. If I can set it up, then you can too.

The setup and operation process is covered quite well in the user guide and again I'll provide a direct link to that document in the show notes section. I'll leave you to read or at least quickly review that guide and won't go into all the details.

As I mentioned earlier, WSPR is a fully automated/automatic mode. You turn on your computer, turn on your transceiver, turn on your soundcard interface and launch the WSPR application and decide what band you want to operate on. Really from that point forward, WSPR does everything else for you.

Now having said that. Does it mean you can then just walk away? Well...perhaps if you disable transmit. But remember...as licensed amateurs, we are the control operator and the control operator should be present in his or her shack and in control of his or her station. You'll notice stations running WSPR for many, many hours....perhaps 24 hours or longer. At some stage I've gotta think they must sleep at some stage. Right??

As I read somewhere when doing research for this episode, Just how "hands-on" you are when operating WSPR is between YOU, your license authority and your conscience. I'll provide more thoughts on this in just a minute.

So how does it all work? Well once the software is installed, configured and running. WSPR handles it all. You determine the band you want to use. The choices include 2, 6, 10, 12, 15, 17, 20, 30, 40, 60, 80 and 160 meters. So there really is something for every license class (at least here in the US) for all hams. Of course, any US ham class could setup WSPR, Receive and upload spots, but certainly research the band plan and know where you are and what you can operate.

By the way, this reminds me. Do you have a copy of the band plan hanging in your shack? Or a copy easily accessible from your operating position? You certainly should. I'll post a link in the show notes for US amateurs. There is a nice color version that can be printed from the ARRL website. Please, take the time to print a copy or two or three and hang it on the wall. There is absolutely nothing wrong with needing to reference the band plan from time to time.

<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/bands.html>

OK..back on track. While WSPR signals might be heard on any of the 12 bands I mentioned just a few minutes ago, the most active at this time is 30m. So if you're just starting out on this mode and have the privileges to operate on 30m, then start there.

Again, WSPR handles everything for you. It will automatically receive and it will automatically transmit. Your interaction with the WSPR client is pretty much finished after you launch the application.

You can determine what percentage of time you want WSPR to transmit versus receive. For me personally, I have mine set for 20%. The transmit cycle is 2 minutes and again it's all controlled through the WSPR client. One word of advice in relation to time and transmit cycle. WSPR and your success in

using WSPR depend on accurate time. Meaning, the clock on your PC needs to be in sync and accurate. If you remember back in episode 35, I kicked off a new segment titled “featured gadget segment” and in that segment debut I provided information for Karen’s Power Tools and specifically the Time Sync application. Just visit karenware.com and look for time sync. You can customize this time sync app to automatically sync your PC time as frequently as you need. For my shack PC which runs WSPR, I have it sync every 2 hours.

So you’ve installed and configured WSPR, your PC time is accurate. Do you crank up the power on your transceiver to 100 watts and let'er fly? No....remember what WSPR stands for. Weak Signal Propagation Reporter. Weak Signal....

You’ll find WSPR users running anywhere from 1w up to 10w. The majority of the stations I receive seem to run 5w. In my ham shack, I have my Yaesu FT-897 dedicated to the digi modes. The lowest power setting for the 897 is 5w. So I run WSPR at 5w most of the time. I have once or twice, connected my FT-817 and operated WSPR. The Yaesu FT-817 is a QRP rig. It operates at a max power of 5w, but is adjustable down to half a watt in increments of half a watt, 1 watt, 2.5 watts and 5 watts.

A little more about the transmit cycle. During the 2 minute transmit cycle, WSPR is sending your callsign, your locator and transmitter power (all the variables you configured at time of setup). If and when your signal is heard, the station receiving you or more accurately, the WSPR client on that receiving station will upload the data to the WSPRnet website. By the way, the same happens with your receiving station.

You can visit the WSPRNet website or go direct to the WSPRNet database which is what I like to use. Yep, a link will be in the show notes section. This database allows you to search by band, call, spots heard by call and date.

If I want to see who has heard my call, I type KDOBK in the search for call field and click GO. If I want to view the call signs my station has received, I can type my call sign in the Show spots heard by and click GO.

When searching the database you’ll see results listed by date, call, frequency, signal to noise ratio, drift, Grid Square, Power in both decibels and watts, who is reporting the spot with their call sign and locator and the distance based on locator to locator displayed in both kilometers and miles.

Another cool way of viewing the results is on the WSPRNet website and clicking on Map. Plug in a few options and you can easily see everything in a global, map perspective.

So how does Jerry use WSPR. Well...I work from home 1-2 days a week and yes, while I’m at home...I am working. I have a lot of tasks that make up my job description. I have created a bit of a schedule and structure to how I do my job and while some aspects are hands-on, I can on a good week manage those tasks on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday schedule and work from my home office on Wednesday and Friday. During the Wed and Friday work at home days I’m on conference calls and doing other documentation or knowledge writing tasks.

In my new shack layout, (discussed in episode 36) my home office area is next to my radio setup. I usually start work on my work from home days just after 7 AM and wrap up a little after 5 PM. Yes, work from home days are often just as long as office days...but that is just the way it goes.

When I arrive in my home office with coffee in hand, I generally switch on the HF rigs and while I’m getting my work laptop connected to VPN and launching email etc. I’m also getting WSPR fired up and also launching Ham Radio Deluxe. If I’m not on conference calls, I may have my FT-950 on and tuned around on 20m. Since I have a dedicated 20m hamstick dipole and my 6BTV that means I can run WSPR on 30m and keep the 950 on 20m.

Anyway.....long story short is WSPR runs pretty much all day. I bounce around between bands when time permits...but mostly run 30m. Now...I’m in my shack and can keep an eye on my radio (the 897 for WSPR) even while I do other things. I will look at the stats every hour or so. But I’m there. If I break for

lunch I usually take WSPR out of transmit mode. The point I'm trying to make is while WSPR is fully automatic...I'm there no more than about 4 feet away to shut it down if need be.

As I stated, I do look at the stats as that is the satisfaction of running WSPR. I'm always amazed when I see a station in Australia has heard my 5w signal. It's also cool to verify that you heard their signal as well. Now while there is no QSO mode as stated before and these are not contacts you log in your logbook or exchange QSL cards for. There is still a huge feeling of accomplishment when you see a new country show up in the database.

While I'm not going to tell you that you shouldn't run WSPR 24 x 7 ....I will just state again what I said a few minutes ago. Just how "hands-on" you are when operating WSPR is between YOU, your license authority and your conscience.

OK...well another episode with a lot of content....while practical....I know I've given you a lot of information. Please take time to visit the show notes for this episode, episode 38 on myamateurradio.com for links to where to download the WSPR Client, the user guide and all the other links I've mentioned.

Specifically to those who participated in the poll and selected Huh? What is WSPR? I hope I've provided you with enough information that now you understand more about the mode and are willing to try it.

To those who selected No – Not yet, but I want to learn more and start. I hope this episode has provided the additional info you needed and I hope you'll give WSPR a try very soon.

To the one who selected No – I don't get the point. If after listening you still feel the same way about WSPR...that is OK.

In closing, WSPR is not for everyone. While I enjoy this mode, just because I like something doesn't mean you must like it to. But...if you are already setup for the digital modes and have the investment in computer and soundcard interface etc. I hope you will try it.

<http://wsprnet.org/drupal/>

<http://www.physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/K1JT/>

<http://amateur-radio-wiki.net/index.php?title=WSPR>

[http://www.physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/K1JT/WSPR\\_2.0\\_User.pdf](http://www.physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/K1JT/WSPR_2.0_User.pdf)

<http://wsprnet.org/olddb>

### **Featured Website Segment**

And now for our Featured Website Segment. It was a no-brainer for this month's featured website segment. Of course, it's [www.ARRL.ORG](http://www.ARRL.ORG)....I love it. What about you? Now I know I saw some grumbings on Twitter and other amateur radio forums. I read statements like "Why did the ARRL need a new website" or "the old site works just fine, why change it". That last statement was actually true...but I think the ARRL is trying to claw their way into the here and now and I applaud them for their effort.

A website....any website. It could be the website for The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast and MyAmateurRadio.com, it could be the website for your favorite news organization, and it could be a website for a company look at Oracle.com as an example. In today's world....the website serves the purpose that the big lit sign out in front of a company HQ said 20 years ago. It is the open all hours, ready to serve you online home of whatever it is the purpose of the website serves.

In the case of the ARRL...what this new website is saying is Amateur Radio is Resilient, Relevant and Ready. Where did you hear that from? I told you about this from HamCon Colorado last May. Now if I may step up on my soap box just a bit.

All of you know my passion for amateur radio. You also know that I care very much for preserving the past. However, this hobby and those of you participating in this hobby need to embrace the future. We must embrace the future.

A challenge I once issued to the youth of our hobby was to protect the history of ham radio but to also pioneer their way into the future. Yes I know the new ARRL website will be met with much of the same criticism as Echolink, Winlink, D-STAR and Twitter has. But If we want this hobby to continue to appeal to the youth of today and tomorrow, we must embrace this change. We must make it appealing to future generations. Ok...I'm stepping down from my soapbox now.

The new ARRL website represents our future. It's sharp, it's snazzy and it is also functional. It's all the things that a young person (and even a 40something person) expects from a website....and from an organization. I'm so proud of the ARRL for putting together such an awesome web presence.

The site is awesome and to quote my friend and fellow Oracle colleague, Gerry Jurrens N2GJ, "The new ARRL site Rocks!". I encourage everyone to go and visit the new ARRL website. If you're already an ARRL member, sign into the site and check out the features available to members only. If you're not an ARRL member, first...please consider becoming one. But you can also sign up for a free 90-day trial account. Details are available on the website. With access to the site you can update your profile, post some pictures etc. Use the site...after all...it's your website.

Now I was going to share more of the features of the new site with you and to be honest I just haven't had that much time to play around. But I encourage you to login and play around. You'll figure it all out without me having to tell you what to do. Really the key thing is once you login, just select edit your profile. You can add your avatar and upload other photos. On the edit your profile page you can click all the check boxes for things that apply to you and your interests in amateur radio. If you want to share your profile with others so it can be searched for and viewed by others, then make sure you click the check box for "Allow ARRL to show my profile on the website

When you do that, others can add you as friends etc. Feel free to add me as a friend. You can find me by searching for my call sign. KD0BIK in the member directory.

### **Our Fellow Amateurs**

It's time for Our Fellow Amateurs segment. A little over 3 months ago I learned of a plan this amateur had about trying to earn a spot during an upcoming presentation to talk about amateur radio. I began tweeting to my over 1200 followers about this exciting news and asking each of them to do me a personal favor. That personal favor was to read an article I posted on myamateurradio.com and to then go and cast three votes for this individual. My followers did just this and as a result it earned Andrew Herron, K8DJK a speaking spot during the 2010 Ignite Detroit event.

Yes, our fellow amateur for episode 38 is Andrew Herron, K8DJK. Allow me to tell you a little about Andrew and then I'll tell you how you can view his Ignite Detroit presentation on amateur radio.

Andrew was first licensed in 2005 and upgraded to General in 2008 and then Extra in 2009. He has been involved with RACES and Skywarn in his county for approx 4 years and he now coordinates Skywarn efforts for his local county. Andrew is one of four hams in his family with his brother, father and grandfather all being involved in amateur radio.

I really got excited for Andrew when I learned about his opportunity to speak at Ignite Detroit. After all...I pretty much remind every listener on every podcast episode to take what you learn and go share it with someone else. What Andrew did through his presentation really helps signify what "Creating Elmers one Podcast at a time" means to me.

Of course, I'm not sure if Andrew would have had the opportunity to present the topic of amateur radio if it hadn't been for all of you who listen to this podcast and follow me on Twitter. You all helped Rock the Vote as they say and Andrew did a fine job with his presentation.

Please visit MyAmateurRadio.com and in the show notes for this episode, episode 38 you'll find the link to view Andrew's Ignite Detroit presentation.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/DetroitUnspun#p/c/25A7E7BF1B9A9F05/11/xprLStBac8U>

### **Featured Gadget Segment**

Amateur Radio is all about gadgets. One might even just say that ham radio as a whole is just one big gadget. Many of the gadgets that make our hobby so enjoyable can range from a price of free all the way up to hundreds, if not thousands of dollars. Through this segment I hope to introduce you to many gadgets that hopefully will enhance your enjoyment of this wonderful hobby.

Our featured gadget for episode 38 is the Kill-A-Watt. Not the kil-O-watt which refers to 1000 watts, but the Kill-A-Watt Spelled (Kilo, India, Lima, Lima – ALPHA – Watt (whiskey, alpha, tango, tango)

The Kill-A-Watt is a neat little device and I've owned one for about 2 years. The first of these that I ever saw was in my Uncle's shack while I was visiting one year. I returned back to Denver and picked one up at my local HRO. But I've seen these nifty little devices sold at the big box hardware stores and you can find them online at retailers like Amazon.

The Kill-A-Watt is made by P3 International and again distributed through many different retail avenues. Basically it is a small device that plugs into your electrical outlet. On the front it features an easy to read LCD readout and 5 function buttons. Below that is an outlet where you connect whatever you want to analyze and calculate your costs.

The LCD provides cumulative kilowatt per hour monitoring and also displays Volts, Amps, Watts, Hertz and Volt-Ampere.

I personally use the device all over my house. I enjoy putting up Christmas lights in two trees in the front of my house. I plug the kill-a-watt into an outlet in my garage and then run an extension cord to the tree.



Another use is anytime I run my small generator when operating portable. I position my generator somewhere as far away from my operating position as I can and run a heavy duty extension cable from the generator to my operating position. I connect the kill-A-watt to that extension cable and then plug a fused power switch into the kill-a-watt. I then connect the power supply to that power switch. I can keep an eye on the kill-a-watt just to make sure the voltage coming from the generator is what I need it to be. It comes in handy because if you're sitting there with a pair of headphones on, you might not be able to hear the generator running. You'll be able the status of your genny and keep on operating.

Visit MyAmateurRadio.com for the link to the P3 International website where you can read the FAQ's, download the manual and learn more about the Kill-O-Watt.

<http://www.p3international.com/products/special/P4400/P4400-CE.html>

### **Podcast Giveaways**

Our friend, Jim Shryne, N6DHZ owner of The DX Store has come through for us once again with some awesome giveaway items. In the past Jim has provided the podcast with t-shirts and caps.

Jim sent me a tweet a few weeks ago and said he had some awesome swag he wanted to send me. Then a few days after that I received a UPS notice that a package was headed my way. What can Brown do for you?

I received the package yesterday. Jim sent some awesome ICOM and DXStore mouse pads. These aren't the thin cloth type that in time will look like a germ breeding ground. These are heavy and stiff and can easily be wiped down to keep them clean and sharp looking.

So...how do YOU win one of these awesome mouse pads? And I know you need one and I know you want one. Well...I'm going to make you work for it just a little bit. You know that Google Voice line I've been talking about? Well no one has called it to leave me a voice message. So...if you want (and I know you do) one of these very Fine Business mouse pads do the following:

Visit MyAmateurRadio.com. Look on the right-hand side for the Call Me button. You can't miss it. Click that button, it will prompt you for your Name and Telephone number. You can click the checkbox for keep my number private and click Connect. It is just that simple.

OK...now before you go and do that...here is what I want you to tell me on the voicemail. I want you to tell me your name, your callsign and tell me briefly What you love about Amateur Radio. That's all you have to do. The call is absolutely free...it doesn't cost you anything and just as equally important...it doesn't cost me anything either.

Now if you have free nationwide long distance, you can also just call the voicemail line direct at area code 307-200-PARP. Again that is area code 307 – 200 – PARP (Papa, Alpha, Romeo, Papa) (Practical Amateur Radio Podcast) or 7277.

Now...if you're googleing to find out where the 307 area code is because you don't recognize that as being a Colorado area code. No I haven't moved North to Wyoming. When I signed up for Google Voice I wanted a number that ended in PARP and that was the number that popped up.

So to recap. Call my Google Voice line. You can do it via MyAmateurRadio.com free....or if you have free nationwide longdistance or live in Wyoming call 307-200-PARP and tell me your name, your call sign and tell me what you love about amateur radio.

One more thing. You can call at any time as the number goes right to Google Voicemail. It doesn't ring any phone in my house. So if you're listening at 2 AM, call at 2 AM.

Good luck....and if you are on Twitter. Please follow @dxstore and send him a tweet to thank him for his continued generosity to The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast.

### **Mailbag**

Mail goes here

Before I wrap up I wanted to say "Thank You" to everyone for listening to the podcast. This show is about YOU....it's about OUR wonderful hobby. Without YOU this show would not exist and neither would our wonderful hobby.

I also want to personally thank those who contributed donations over the past couple of weeks. In episode 37 I described the financial status of the podcast and explained how much it costs to operate etc. I won't re-hash all that again. But will just state that the budget for 2010 to cover webhosting is \$489.69. As of episode 37, a total of \$47.56 had been raised which is essentially 10% of the total needed.

Well...as of episode 38 I can tell you we have moved the donation thermometer up. We have raised a total of \$189.09 of the \$489.69 needed. You guys ROCK....Thank you.

If you would like to help contribute....any amount is appreciated...please go to MyAmateurRadio.com and look to the right hand side for the YELLOW Donate button. This takes you to Paypal. If you don't want to contribute via Paypal....contact me directly and we can work something out. I appreciate your consideration.

Before I close, I'm already working on episode 39. If all goes as planned you should have that episode sometime around the first of May. May is a big month for the Practical Amateur Radio Podcast. This May we will celebrate our 2nd anniversary of podcasting. May is also an important month for another reason which I'll share with you next time.

And Until Next time.....

Until next time, 73 to all from KD0BIK.

This has been The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast. The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast is written and produced by Jerry Taylor. You may contact Jerry by email at [kd0bik@arrl.net](mailto:kd0bik@arrl.net) or by visiting his website at [www.myamateurradio.com](http://www.myamateurradio.com). The practical amateur radio podcast and myamateurradio.com are protected under the Creative Commons license. Please see myamateurradio.com for details.