

The Monitor

Voice of the Twin State Radio Club

June 2009



Message from the President

June's meeting will hold our annual election for club officers so please plan on attending.

With Field Day 2009 fast approaching, I'm delighted to report that the comm trailer will have the new bench/countertop/thingy nearly completed in time for the big day(s). Much thanks goes out to Dave, WA1ZCN, Matt, W1SKE, Alan, N1YMQ and Bill, KB1EOF for the considerable time and effort that has gone into this project.

We will be holding the event at Storr's Hill as we have in the last several years so we can look forward to the same great setting we've enjoyed previously. I will be asking for specific volunteers both via email and at the June meeting so please take a moment and consider what you can contribute. Friday setup will begin with Lunch somewhere near World Headquarters in Canaan followed by a visit to WHQ to pick up towers, feed-line, radios, antennae, etc. We will then adjourn to Storrs Hill for setup.

Upcoming Events

TSRC Meeting	June 13 2009, 9:00 am EBA's, Hanover, NH
Field Day	June 26-28, 2009 Storrs Hill, Lebanon, NH
TSRC Meeting	July 11, 2009, 9:00 am EBA's, Hanover, NH

I am very excited at the prospect of having some of our newly minted hams on hand. Please think of guests that you can invite. Last year we had several people show up after hearing about it from local media outlets so it is certainly a great opportunity to show who we are and what we do.

This month's newsletter has an article on the new sun cycle, and a field day guide from ARRL, both of which should be of interest.

Don't forget: Dick, WC1M, will be showing us CW Skimmer at the meeting Saturday so you won't want to miss it.

See you at the meeting!

William Daugherty
KX1Y



Dave, WA1ZCN, grinding welds on the trailer bench frame

Disclaimer

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==> ARRL FIELD DAY TIPS AND TECHNIQUES THAT EVERYONE CAN USE

Many amateurs treat ARRL Field Day (June 27-28) as a contest, even though it isn't one <<http://www.arrl.org/fieldday>>. But if your idea of Field Day fun is to go for the highest score possible, ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X, offered the following suggestions at the ARRL Field Day Forum at the 2009 Dayton Hamvention.

1) You will get many more stations in your log by calling CQ than by tuning the dial and answering CQs; however, if you're calling CQ and not getting any replies, keep calling. Most major contesters call CQ for several minutes at a time before giving up. Giving up after three or four CQs is giving up too soon.

2) Keep your CQs short and to the point: "CQ Field Day, CQ Field Day, Whiskey-One-Alfa-Whiskey, Field Day." Wait about 5 seconds between CQs -- this gives stations enough time to answer you.

3) Use standard phonetics. "Cute" phonetics don't always get through and they can confuse newer operators.

4) When working a station, you should give your exchange information only once and keep it simple. "Whiskey-One-Alfa-Whiskey, copy three Foxtrot Connecticut, QSL?" If they didn't get all of the exchange, they will ask for a repeat.

5) If you are running a pileup: Once you have pulled a call out of the pileup, give your exchange information first. Here's an example: "Whiskey-One-Alfa-Whiskey, copy 3F Connecticut, QSL?" Don't ask for the calling station's information first -- this will reduce any sense of rhythm and timing in the pileup.

6) If you get a pileup of stations and can't make out an entire call, listen for one letter and ask for it specifically: "The station with Delta only, go ahead."

7) When you get the other station's information, keep your acknowledgment simple. "QSL, thanks, QRZ Field Day from Whiskey-One-Alfa-Whiskey."

8) Find a comfortable pace for you and maintain that pace. You will tire quickly if you are screaming into the microphone or trying to work stations too quickly. This leads to inefficiency.

9) Use a headset with a boom microphone and a foot switch -- this frees up your hands to log QSOs. Writing or typing with a mike in your hand slows you down.

10) Go for as many bonus points as you possibly can. Numerous opportunities exist, from copying the Field Day message to sending traffic to using natural power for QSOs.

These tips should help maximize your score on Field Day. Remember: No matter how you choose to enjoy Field Day, maximize your fun, however you define it.

QST de W1AW
Space Bulletin 004 ARLS004
From ARRL Headquarters
Newington, CT June 2, 2009
To all radio amateurs

SB SPACE ARL ARLS004
ARLS004 NASA Releases New Predictions for Solar Cycle 24

An international panel of experts -- led by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and sponsored by NASA -- has released a new prediction for the next solar cycle: Solar Cycle

24 will peak in May 2013 with a below-average number of sunspots. "If our prediction is correct, Solar Cycle 24 will have a peak sunspot number of 90, the lowest of any cycle since 1928 when Solar Cycle 16 peaked at 78," said panel chairman Doug Biesecker of NOAA's Space Weather Prediction Center (SWPC). This report clarifies a NOAA report from earlier this month that stated that Solar Cycle 24 would bring "90 sunspots per day on average."

The latest forecast revises an earlier prediction issued in 2007. At that time, a sharply divided panel believed solar minimum would come in March 2008 followed by either a strong solar maximum in 2011,

or a weak solar maximum in 2012. "It turns out that none of our models were totally correct," said Dean Pesnell of the Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) and NASA's lead representative on the panel. "The Sun is behaving in an unexpected and very interesting way."

In 2007, experts varied in their predictions on when the solar cycle would peak and how strong it would be. In April of that year, NOAA, in coordination with an international panel of solar experts, predicted that the next 11-year cycle of solar storms "would start in March 2008, plus or minus six months, and peak in late 2011 or mid-2012." In the cycle forecast issued in April 2007, half of the panel predicted a "moderately strong cycle of 140 sunspots, plus or minus 20, expected to peak in October 2011. The other half predicted a moderately weak cycle of 90 sunspots, plus or minus 10, peaking in August 2012. An average solar cycle ranges from 75 to 155 sunspots.

The late decline of Cycle 23 has helped shift the panel away from its earlier leaning toward a strong Cycle 24. The group is evenly split between a strong and a weak cycle."

At a meeting of the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco in December 2007, David Hathaway of NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, along with colleague Robert Wilson, said that Solar Cycle 24 "looks like it's going to be one of the most intense cycles since record-keeping began almost 400 years ago." They said they believe the next solar maximum should peak around 2010 with a sunspot number of 160, plus or minus 25. "This would make it one of the strongest solar cycles of the past 50 years -- which is to say, one of the strongest in recorded history." Four of the five biggest cycles on record have come in the past 50 years. "Cycle 24 should fit right into that pattern," Hathaway said.

Right now -- June 2009 -- the solar cycle is in a valley, the deepest of the past century. In 2008 and 2009, the Sun showed some of the lowest sunspot counts on record, as well as weak solar winds and a low solar irradiance, going more than two years without a significant solar flare. "In our professional careers, we've never seen anything quite like it,"

Pesnell said. "Solar minimum has lasted far beyond the date we predicted in 2007."

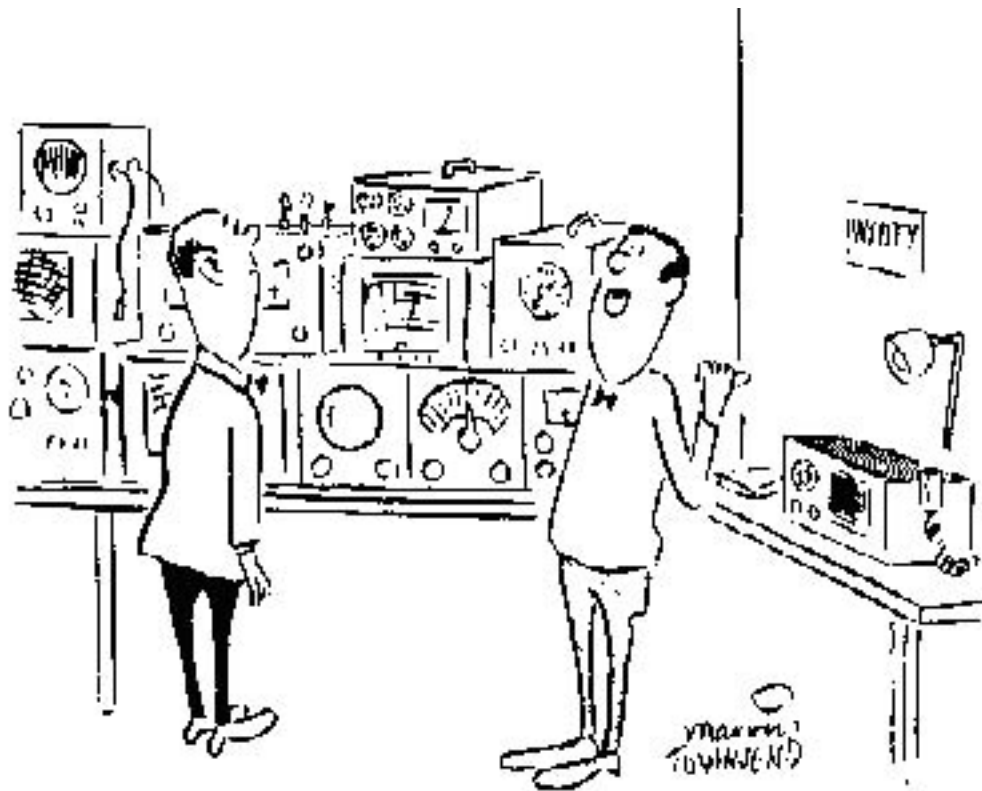
In recent months, however, Pesnell said that the Sun has begun to show some small signs of life: Small sunspots and "proto-sunspots" are popping up with increasing frequency. Enormous currents of plasma on the Sun's surface are gaining strength and slowly drifting toward its equator. Radio astronomers have detected a tiny but significant uptick in solar radio emissions. All these things are precursors of an awakening Solar Cycle 24 and form the basis for the panel's new, almost unanimous forecast.

Pesnell cautioned optimism, telling the ARRL that there is an "error bar of +/- 20." This means Solar Cycle 24's sunspot number could be as high as 110, or as low as 70. "Based upon my own personal research, I don't think we'll see 90 [sunspots in Solar Cycle 24]," he said.

When asked if such a low number foretold the beginnings of a Maunder Minimum, Pesnell said that a Maunder Minimum takes several cycles to appear: "Sunspots [in solar cycles] leading up to the Maunder Minimum took several cycles to disappear. I really can't predict what will happen in Solar Cycle 25. What we're seeing now is something that look likes a sunspot, but it looks as if someone has come along and 'stomped' on it, creating a multitude of little things. We don't have a name for this and we've never seen anything like it before."

There could be more surprises, panelists acknowledge -- and more revisions to the forecast. "Go ahead and mark your calendar for May 2013," Pesnell said. "But use a pencil."

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**"My transceiver is over here.
That's just my testing equipment."**

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Don't forget to check the TSRC Home Page!
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