



Helping people with disabilities get on the air since 1967

handiham world

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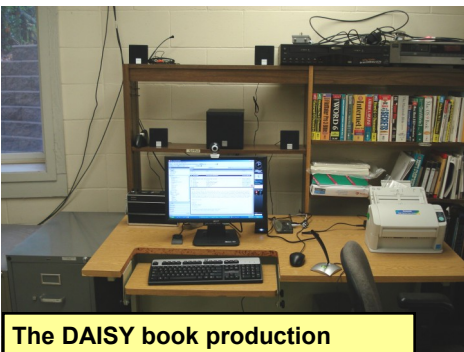
handhams
WØZSW

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Handiham System on the Move

Changes in HQ location, Radio Camp are biggest in years

By Patrick Tice, WAØTDA



The DAISY book production station can produce accessible books for our members who cannot read regular print.

The Handiham headquarters station WØZSW and offices have moved to Camp Courage. Most of the move has been completed, and now we begin the process of getting things organized. Most of our contact information remains the same. The Handiham.org website will be maintained and will have the latest news.

Thursday, October 15 was the "official" moving day, but as anyone who has ever moved an office or household knows, the movers get the boxes and furniture off the truck and into the new space, and then they leave and there you are with the feeling that the real work is about to begin. Besides, the move was really multi-part, since we also had file cabinets and shop tools to move separately, which extended the move into November!

And so it is: You have to get things situated, and with a ham station that means you have to plan for antennas and power. Fortunately, we already had

a station and antenna in place at Camp Courage, and even though it is really not up to the standards we would like, it is a functional installation. When I arrived to meet the movers, I determined that the station would stay in its current location, near some windows with good lighting and proximity to antenna cabling and power outlets.

The antenna is a GAP vertical, and the station transceiver already in place was an old Kenwood TS-430. I quickly decided that a rig without a built-in voice module for our blind users was simply not acceptable. I unpacked and installed a Kenwood TS-570SAT and a Kenwood power supply in short order and situated it on a desktop immediately to the right of our station cabinet, one that is similar to those at Courage St. Croix and Courage North. The TS-570SAT tuned the GAP vertical immediately on 75 meters, which was quite a relief - after all, it was raining and around 45 degrees outside, and I didn't feel like stringing up another antenna.

My first contact from WØZSW at Camp Courage was with Lyle Koehler, KØLR, who was net control for the popular regional net called "PICONET". The net meets mornings and afternoons on 3.925 MHz, and has a long history of collaboration with the Handiham System. Lyle, you may recall, is our volunteer engineer in charge of the remote base station at Courage North. Lyle might have been just a little generous in reporting an S-9 signal from WØZSW, but at least we are able to get out on the GAP, so the station is usable.

Continued on page 2



Handiham members who have used our stations at Camp Courage North and Courage Center St. Croix will recognize this operating cabinet, built especially to both store equipment and provide fast access to a working station. It is part of our new station at Camp Courage and one of three identical cabinets.



No room for an antenna? No problem.

Handiham member rig: The Handiham Remote Base station at Courage North is available 24/7 via the Internet.

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A view of the entrance to the new Handiham headquarters. The large double doors are right at ground level for easy wheelchair access. The windows let in plenty of natural light, and the woodland setting is not only sylvan and restful, but it's also RF-quiet! A GAP antenna is visible at left. Could a 2 meter beam replace that old TV antenna on the roof?

There is no VHF/UHF antenna at Camp Courage, so that is definitely something that needs work. Our location at the Camp Courage Reception Center is a good one, because there is already a TV antenna mast on the building, and we could probably get an antenna on that mast without too much trouble. In the meantime, I was able to check in to the daily Echolink net using a computer. Since Camp Courage is located about 40 miles west of the Twin Cities, the VHF/UHF situation is completely different than it was for us in the metro area.

There is also a working tribander for 20, 15, and 10 meters on a 50 foot tower. The rotor and coax leads are terminated in a different (but nearby) building. This means that a second station can easily be set up in that second building during Radio Camp, and it would likely not interfere with operations on the main station in the headquarters office, which could then concentrate on 160 through 40 meter operation using a wire antenna. Although the GAP vertical does tune 75 through 10, it is not adequate for regional net operation, where higher angle radiation is required. To remedy that problem, I would like to look at a wire antenna, something like a center-fed Zepp, around 250 feet long, to really grab those 160 meter signals! Ideally, we will be able to install a second remote base station for our members at this location, and it will add the "top band" of 160 meters to the frequencies our members can operate.

Several years ago, when the HVAC system was updated at Courage Center, banks of SCR fan motor controllers were installed to make the heating and air conditioning systems more energy-efficient. If the load was light, the AC frequency was varied downward by these controllers. If the load increased, the AC frequency increased. There is an energy savings, but the RFI generated by the system produced noise at S9+10 dB levels on the HF bands. We had to resort to porting the receiver signal in from remote receivers at Courage North or the KOLR station, both of which are located hundreds of miles north of the Twin Cities in quiet RF areas.



View of the new HQ station shows the spacious ham shack with double doors for easy access by our members who use wheelchairs. There is no need for a ramp, as we are at ground level.

Although this worked for some types of operation, it is hardly desirable or practical for working DX or quickly answering a CQ.

The new location is very quiet. It will be a huge relief to operate without having to deal with all of that interference. We hope to hear you on the air soon!



Pat, WA0TDA, Handiham Manager, teaches online with audio lectures designed for blind users.



Please help us by supporting this work. Call toll-free: 1-866-426-3442

Handiham founder Ned Carman, W0ZSW, now a silent key, understood how amateur radio enriched the lives of our members with disabilities. Your support makes it possible.



The TS-570 & TM-V7A have voice modules to make them accessible for blind operators.

Handiham Net Update, Winter, 2009/2010

The popular Handiham Echolink net has followed the time change back to United States Central Standard Time. We have heard from many net participants, and the consensus is that keeping the net true to local USA time is the best way to go. The net will continue to meet Monday through Saturday at 11:00 Central Time. That means the time shifts one hour by GMT.

Minnesota local time M–Sa: 11:00 AM; or GMT: 17:00 hours
Frequency: 145.450 N0BVE repeater system (Twin Cities)
Internet: Echolink node number 89680

Mid-Week Evening Net on the same frequencies and Echolink nodes:
Wednesdays at 7:30 PM Central Time; 01:30 Thursdays GMT. Join us for a fun, informal net! You need not be a Handiham member - all are welcome.

Radio Camp: It's the experience of a lifetime

Handiham members build operating skills in a fun environment!

We are thankful for our kind donors and volunteers!

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Tom Fogarty, KBØFWQ, accepts the 2009 safety award from Courage Center Risk Manager Arthur Kordus. Camp Courage is recognized for its excellent safety record.



Classrooms are right in the cabins, and there is plenty of space and natural light. Knotty pine woodwork adds that woodland touch!

Inside one of our three spacious new Radio Camp cabins at Camp Courage. Each cabin has a big screen porch, too.

Handiham members study at home, too:

"I could never understand math formulas or algebra or anything like that, but the way that you explained it, it was easy to understand."

"Much moved; never before had such outreach on joining an organization."

"I love your audio lectures and must say they are very well done. I have already gotten my money's worth out of my \$10 membership and it's only been two days!"

"Just wanted to let you know that I passed the Technician test today. I want to thank you for all the nice lectures, and I'm looking forward to hearing you in the General class."

"You are doing a fine job with Handihams. I treasure my time spent with such a fine organization..."



Handiham System nominated for 2009 Arc of MN Bogg's Mitchell Inclusive Recreation Program Award

The Arc of Minnesota advocates for and supports people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities and their families as they choose how they live, learn, and play. Arc is different from other organizations in that it is concerned with the total life of an individual, from birth to death, and with all services or needs an individual and his or her family may have. You can find out more about The Arc of Minnesota at www.arcmn.org.



Goodbye to Courage North
Radio campers pose for our final group photo last August before the big move to Camp Courage.



Chris, KGØBP, & Ken, KB3LLA, discuss the Handiham Radio Club during a break at Radio Camp.

1-866-426-3442 Toll-Free

Radio Camp schedule for 2010: May 21-28 2010

Join us in May for another Minnesota Radio Camp at Camp Courage in southern Minnesota's vacation lake country.

Handiham Radio Camp is a week of fun and learning, a time to make friends while learning the latest in communications technology, all in a setting that is accessible, comfortable, and safe.

There are classes in Technician, General, and Extra licensing, as well as Operating Skills for those who already have their ham radio licenses. Everyone will have time for on the air fun, including operation from our pontoon boats.

Call or write now for an application .



Call Nancy:
1-866-426-3442
toll-free



Learn from the master

The Kenwood TS-480 is a very disability-friendly radio, but because it has a lot of features, it can be a challenge for a blind operator to learn. Why not listen in as Joe, N3AIN, teaches you the radio in a series of audio lectures?

TS-480 tutorials by N3AIN are on the Handiham website:
<http://handiham.org/manuals/Kenwood/TS480/>



Permit number here

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Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5

Making contacts, making friends
Since 1967 ~ 43 years in 2010.



This newsletter is available online in text and streaming audio formats.

Got a new email address? Let us know!

Please donate to help support the work of staff, volunteers, and members of the Handiham System. Just use the easy enclosed giving envelope. Thanks!

It's not always easy in the non-profit world

Please give what you can, as we need you to keep the Handiham program strong! We really need your help this year, more than ever.



As you undoubtedly have read in the news, philanthropy is down considerably from years past due to the current economic conditions, and no relief is on the horizon. Courage Center is being forced by these circumstances to concentrate more of its remaining philanthropy on core services. This means that programs such as ours are being funded less by Courage. We have cut staff hours and cut costs everywhere we can, but we need to build our Handiham endowment fund and cover current costs to keep operating. The endowment fund helps keep our Handiham budget independent of the overall Courage Center budget. When you put the Handiham program in your estate plans or donate to build the endowment, you help make our services more secure far into the future.

Please consider putting us in your estate plans. Be sure the designee in your estate plan is "Handihams". If you are giving to our program, please designate your gifts to "Handihams" so that the Handiham program will be the recipient.



KCØYFV & NØCIC reel in a wire antenna after Radio Camp.

The enclosed envelope is included for your convenience in supporting the Handiham System with your gifts. If you wish to renew your membership or order study materials, please call 1-866-426-3442 toll-free or email: hamradio@couragecenter.org