



Squelch Tales



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for April 2010

Rotor Mast 2-Meter J-Pole

By Bruce Randall, W1ZE

OH NO, not another J-Pole article! Ya'sir, another J-pole "how-to" article.

As many of you know the J-Pole antenna is a simple and effective half-wave antenna and you have seen them made out of CB whips, copper pipe, aluminum tubing, TV twin-lead etc. I just thought I would add one more to the mix. The following J-Pole design is super simple to fabricate and has an advantage over designs by being broad banded.

Back in the late 70s I lived in Huntington Beach, California and had a nice small station set-up in a small second floor room. I operated mostly HF but like everyone else I had two-meters in the shack and in the car.

Several of the hams in the area hung out on 147.525 simplex which was also used as a common inter-tie frequency for all the remote base 440 MHz folks in the southern California. Many of us used J-Poles on our roofs because most of the repeaters were on hills and mountaintops and J-poles did the trick nicely.

In an old VHF/UHF handbook there was a short column on how to use your antenna mast as an effective J-pole. I was in the process of installing a roof tripod tower to support my TA-33JR beam and thought this type of J-pole would work for me and cost little to nothing.

I was using a ten-foot length of 1¼" steel TV mast to support the small HF beam. I was just using a TV antenna rotor for the Yagi which was just about all that rotor would turn.

Using the info from the antenna handbook I assembled a ¼-wave tuning stub (21.25") attaches to a 2 x 3 inch of 1/8" thick aluminum plate, but any metal sheet-stock would do. I attached it to a spot on the mast 57¾-inches down from the top of the mast.



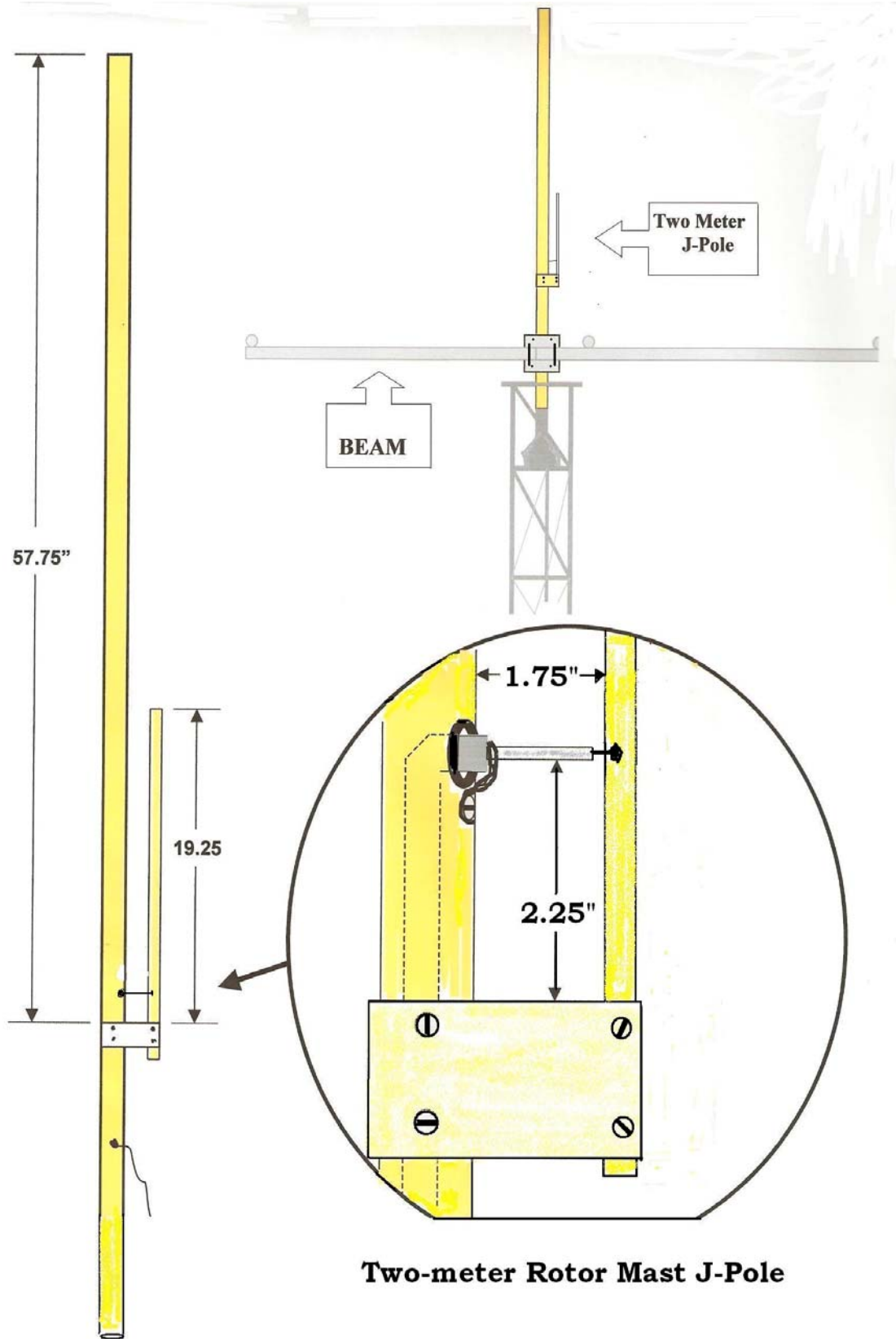
W1ZE (then WA6MUP) & Ed Reinburg, W6JI installing HF Yagi and 2-meter J-Pole March 1977

Originally I ran the RG-8 coax to the J-Pole taped to the mast but later drilled a small hole at the J-pole feed-point and ran a RG-58 pigtail inside the mast. (See the following drawings)

I tuned the J-Pole on the ground before installing it on the roof. I fabricated the tuning stub out of a 22-inch length of 3/8-inch copper pipe, but ¼-inch would have been OK. It did not take long to find the feed-point sweet spot where the SWR was 1.1:1 at 146.5. The shield of the coax was attached to the main mast with a stainless sheet metal screw and the center conductor was soldered to the copper pipe matching-stub about 2 ¼"-inches above the cross connecting mounting plate.

On the ground the bandwidth was very broad. The SWR never got above 1.6:1 across the entire band, and that was at the low end of the band. This did not change when it went up on the roof. I was able to talk simplex all over the LA and Orange County area and hit all the two-meter repeaters. Oh yes, I only run ten watts.

(cont.)



Two-meter Rotor Mast J-Pole

FCC Seeks Comments for Blanket Waiver to Allow Ham Radio in Hospital Emergency Drills

From ARRL HQ Newington CT. 3/12/2010

In February 2010, the American Hospital Association (AHA) filed a request with the FCC for a blanket waiver of Section 97.113(a)(3) of the Commission's Rules "to permit hospitals seeking accreditation to use Ham Radio operators who are hospital employees to transmit communications on behalf of the hospital as part of emergency preparedness drills."

On March 3, the FCC issued a *Public Notice* - WP Docket 10-54 - seeking comments if the Commission "should grant AHA's request for a blanket waiver of Section 97.113(a)(3) to permit amateur operators who are hospital employees to participate in emergency drills that are conducted by hospitals for accreditation purposes and that are not government-sponsored. "Section 97.113(a)(3) specifically prohibits amateur stations from transmitting communications "in which the station licensee or control operator has a pecuniary interest, including communications on behalf of an employer."

Given the public interest in facilitating government-sponsored emergency disaster drills and preparedness, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau have provided a process for requesting a waiver of Section 97.113(a)(3) to permit named Ham Radio operators to participate in specified government-sponsored drills by transmitting messages on behalf of identified employers. The waiver must be requested prior to the drill, and employees may not transmit amateur communications

on their employer's behalf unless the waiver request has been granted by the FCC.

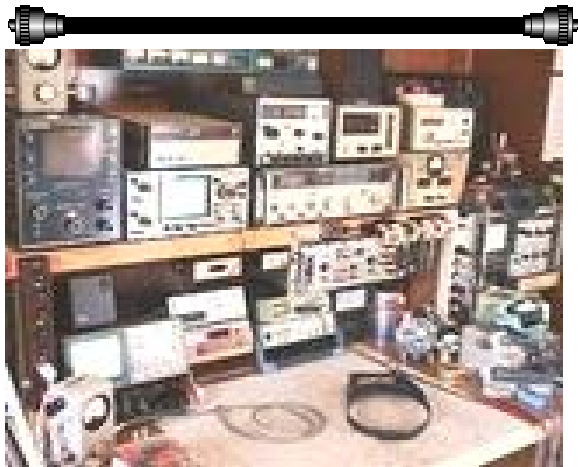
According to AHA, waiver relief should be available for these non-government-sponsored exercises "because it is in the public interest to ensure that hospital communications operate effectively during emergencies." The FCC noted that in its blanket waiver request, the AHA also stated that requiring separate waiver requests would be administratively burdensome on hospitals and the Commission. "AHA thus requests a blanket waiver for hospitals seeking Joint Commission accreditation, until such time as the Commission adopts a final order in response to a forthcoming Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that will seek comment on potential changes to Section 97.113(a)(3)," the FCC said.

"AHA states that hospitals seeking accreditation from the Joint Commission (formerly the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations) must prepare an emergency operations plan setting forth how the hospital will communicate during emergencies, and establish back-up communications links (which, among other means of communications, may include amateur radio stations) to communicate essential information if primary communications systems fail," the FCC pointed out in its *Public Notice*. "AHA states that hospitals seeking accreditation also are required to test their emergency operations plans twice annually."

As such, the FCC has opened up the matter for public comment. Not only are comments in favor of or against the issue of amateur operators -- who are hospital employees -- to participate in emergency drills conducted by hospitals for accreditation purposes that are not government-sponsored welcomed, the Commission is also seeking comments addressing "whether, if blanket relief were

to be granted, there would be some benefit from requiring hospitals to provide notice to the Commission concerning emergency drills they perform, and what such notice should entail."

Comments are due by Friday, April 2; reply comments are due no later than Monday, April 19. All filings should reference the docket number of this proceeding, WP Docket No 10-54. In the Public Notice, the FCC noted that this proceeding has been designated as a "permit-but-disclose" proceeding in accordance with the Commission's *ex parte* rules: "Parties making oral *ex parte* presentations in this proceeding are reminded that memoranda summarizing the presentation must contain the presentation's substance and not merely list the subjects discussed. More than a one- or two-sentence description of the views and arguments presented is generally required." Instructions on how to paper file or file electronically are listed in the *Public Notice*.



Radio equipment repair station found in Maine

By Bruce Randall, W1ZE

Last October I was chatting with John, K2LOT and told him I was going to get my old workhorse IC-736 transceiver fixed because the 15 to 22 MHz band segment

would transmit or receive. He said he had used a fellow ham in Fairfield, Maine that had done some equipment repairs for him and was quick, knowledgeable and honest, and I should give Mike Nadeau, N1EQ a call and see if he could fix my Icom.

A few days later I attempted to find a telephone number for Mike without success. I checked his call sign on QRZ.COM and it said his email address was **mike@n1eq.com**. I sent Mike an email and within an hour I got an email back from him advising that yes, he did equipment repair and all his communications and payments were done online. I explained the problem I was having with my Icom and he said he had a pretty good idea what the problem was. He advise that it was OK to ship it to him early the next week and he would get on it. He further advised that pricing; shipping instructions were on his web site, <http://www.n1eq.com>.



Mike, N1EQ in his shack

The following Monday I shipped the radio to him via UPS and the next day he sent me an email stating he had received the transceiver and would get on it. Two days later he emailed again and said he got it fixed and sent me a breakdown what he had done and the parts he replaced. He included what the fee was for parts and labor, which I consider to be very fair and reasonable. I made payment via Pay Pal the same day.

Early the next day Mike emailed me and said he had received payment and was shipping the Icom back to me via UPS and gave me the tracking number.

The following afternoon my friendly UPS driver rang my doorbell and handed me my Icom. I wasted no time hooking it back up and I was very pleased to see it was working as well as it did when I first purchased it back in 1994.

I highly recommend Mike's service. The advantage of a faster turn-around time than some of the other repair stations on the East Coast and mid west with Mikes excellent service is a plus for me. Check out the Ham equipment repair shop reviews on QRZ.COM and you will see that Mike gets a 5 out of 5 average from dozens of reviewers.

73, Bruce, W1ZE



Maine Packet system notes



During the 2nd week in March the W1EMA folks up the Maine coast relocated the ABORN, W1EMA-2 Ka node's antenna up to 100-feet. This relocation has now facilitates those of us on the mid-coast to access packets up into downeast Maine. Prior to the ABORN relocation, connects to packet stations up in Bar Harbor area and places north required a double-hop relay from BRUNS to AUG and then on to ABORN. Now all you need to do is connect to BRUNS then to ABORN. This makes data packets transfer much faster. KUDOS to the W1EMA folks for a job well done.

Plans are to move the BRUNS node antenna up to the 40 to 50 feet level on the repeater tower. That will improve coastal coverage in Lincoln, Sagadahoc and Cumberland counties.

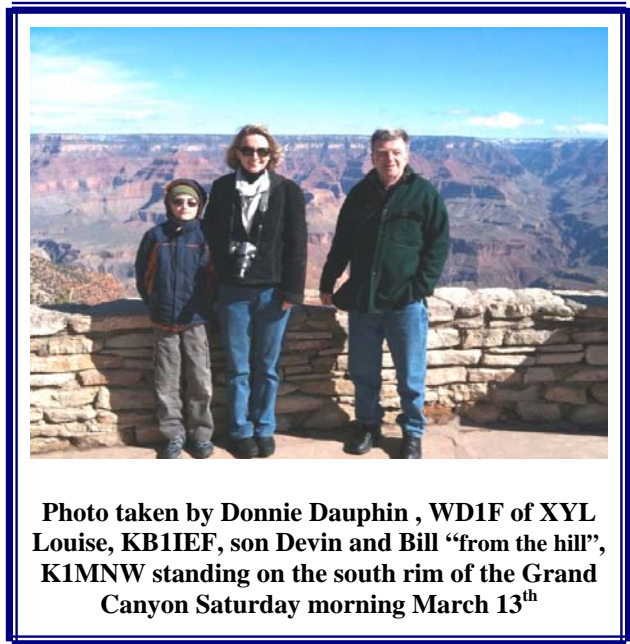


Photo taken by Donnie Dauphin , WD1F of XYL Louise, KB1IEF, son Devin and Bill "from the hill", K1MNW standing on the south rim of the Grand Canyon Saturday morning March 13th

Snowbird Feedback

By Peter Russell, K1MJP
Indian Harbor Beach, FL

Hi to all in springtime Maine, The word I get from some Maine fishermen, i.e. lobstermen, that this may be an early spring. We can only hope



Finally after 4 months, I was able to repair the Gates BSA 250 transmitter (previous photo). This unit was made as a backup for broadcast stations and ran 250 watts perfect for conversion to 160, 75 or 40 meters. It uses two 812A's in the final and two 811A's in the modulator, with a 6146 RF driver and a 6L6GB audio driver, all tubes in the rig are still available. Documentation is available albeit, hard to get the some hams to follow through on their commitment. All the tubes were replaced with new. The low voltage worked but no high voltage. Once the schematic diagram was obtained, the problem was traced down to a spade lug/wire non-connection.

There are three chassis's, with a braided wiring harness between the three, so without the road map, it would have been very difficult to tell the route each took. What is neat with this transmitter is the two primary windings of the H.V. transformer are wired in parallel (at 115 volts) for 250 watts. Putting in a relay that will connect the two windings in series, will give you 125 watts out.

Speaking of AM transmitters, if someone would like to purchase a 1 KW AM unit (*they were setup to run 500 and 250 watts as well*), there is one for sale. I am told it would go for less than \$500 and is located in Maine. It is a CCA 1000D, uses two 4-400's in the final, two 4-400's in the modulator, driven by a 6146 in the RF, and two 12BY7's in the audio. The size is that of a refrigerator, with a switching arrangement, you can replace the 6146 and drive it with a transceiver.

The older ARRL handbooks have many 4-400 amplifier circuits so conversion is straight forward. To see what the transmitter looks like, noting if you remove the transformers in the bottom of the cabinet, the unit fits nicely into the bed of a pickup truck. Go to:

www.qsl.net/VE7KHZ/CCA.html and see

the rig. If you are interested, e mail me and I'll give you the contact information.

Speaking of email addresses, if you are registered on QRZ, and have a listed email address, please go and check it to make sure that it is current and not a old, deleted one. Last week I sent two emails that were bounced back, as the addresses were no longer valid. Are you looking for equipment? Try QRZ.com and QTH.com for items you are interested in. Log in and you are allowed to do a search for specific items.

P.S. There is a ham in Maine that has a Gates BSA 250, not sure if he would sell, but it is in storage. email me (k1mjp@arll.net) and I'll give you the info.



**Were you licensed
prior to 1985?**

**If you were, you are eligible to
be a member of the
Quarter Century
Wireless Association.**



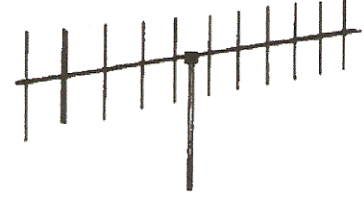
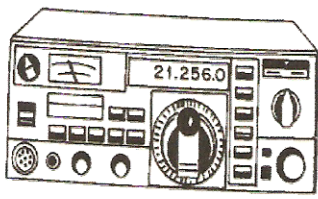
**If you would like more information
about QCWA, go to:**

www.qcwa.org

or contact

Bruce Randall, W1ZE at:

W1ZE@arll.net



Greater Portland Hamfest

Saturday, April 17, 2010 8 am to Noon

American Legion Post 413 Broadway

South Portland, Maine

Featuring -

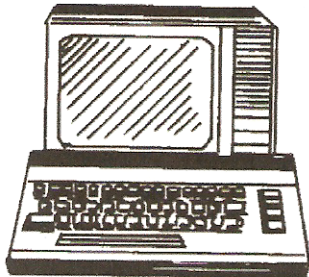
- * All manner of electronics equipment
- * **"Country Store"** (consignment table - for those who have sale items and don't want to get a whole table)
"Enjoy the fleamarket while we sell your gear for you"
- * **Commercial vendors**
- * **Grand prize drawing at Noon**
- * **Exams at 10:00 AM**
- * **Food provided by the American Legion**

Tables - \$ 10.00 each (includes one admission ticket per table)
Tailgating (weather permitting) \$ 5.00 per slot
General Admission - \$ 5.00 (includes one grand prize entry)
Doors open to sellers at 6:30 am and to the public at 8 am

For advance tables or further information contact:

Bryce Rumery, K1GAX
(207) 799-1116
e-mail to: k1gax@juno.com

Directions to fleamarket: Connect to <http://www.pawa-maine.org>



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Sponsored by the
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