

# The Road Report

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## RADIO OPERATORS ASSOCIATION OF DALLAS OREGON



### Prez Sez

HELLO EVERYONE are you ready for another great Swap Fest?

On **Saturday Feb. 18, 2017 at the Polk County Fair Grounds in Rickreall** we will have another Swap Fest. Hope to see you all there. Doors open at 9:00 am, tickets are \$10 at the door. Come enjoy the fun. This Swap Fest is sponsored by the Salem Repeater Association. They could use your support. They maintain the repeater that we commonly use on Laurel Mtn. 147.020, along with several other local repeaters.

Our last club meeting was in January, we also had a board meeting in January. At that meeting the board discussed, and voted, to raise the club dues from \$15/ yr. to \$25/yr. A discussion was held at our Jan. meeting, and the membership will vote on this at our Feb. meeting.

The board also discussed the revision of the ROADS by-laws regarding Article V Membership Section 1 and Section 2. Please read the minutes published in the ROADS Report and come to the meeting for any further discussion, and to vote on these two topics.

The board also discussed a 50/50 club raffle to be held at our meetings. There was a discussion about this at the meeting and voted on by the membership to proceed with the raffle. Our first raffle will be at the Feb. meeting and tickets will be on sale prior to the meeting for \$1 each.

The board also planned some of our club social events and here are the dates and planned events, to date. Please mark your calendars to attend.

**NEW CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2017 AS FOLLOWS:**

**February 18th.** Swap Fest. 2-tables & 2- door passes.  
**March 16th.** Spring Social 6pm Rockin' Rogers on Hwy. 99

**June 23** Field Day - set up.

**June 24** Field Day - operation mode. Club Potluck Dinner in Park 6pm.

**June 25** Field Day - Clean Up - Take Down Antennas  
**September 21st** Picnic Potluck in Park Gazebo.

**October** Swap Fest in Rickreall date to be announced when known.

**December 21st.** Christmas Dinner Social.

ROADS CLUB meeting to remain on 3rd Thur. of each month at 7pm.

We will be placing our ROADS CLUB hat order after our meeting on Feb 16th. So please bring your \$15 if you would like to get a hat.

If you have any items to sell at the Swap Fest on the 18th. please get in touch with me, so some arrangements can be made for pickup or drop off. The fee for selling items at the ROADS CLUB table was also modified by the board at our meeting in January. The fee to sell items is 10% of the sale price up to a max of \$50. This fee is for each item sold.

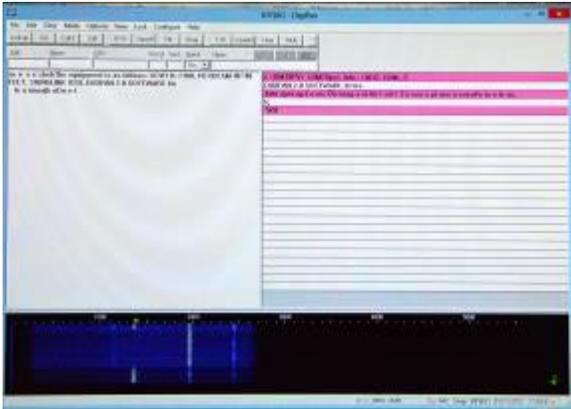
Join in on the 10-10 net on Sundays, 12 noon on 28.330. ALL TECHS ARE INVITED TO JOIN IN. If any Tech or General would like to join in, but do not have a radio set up for 28.330 please contact me and we can find an Elmer for you to join in with on their radio to get you started.

See you at the meeting Feb 16th. 7pm in Dallas at the Court House

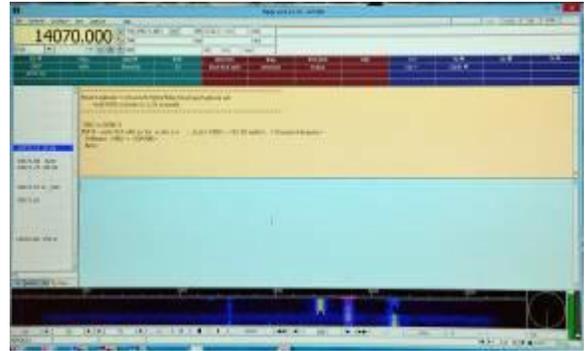
73' Warren W7KBR

## Here 'n There

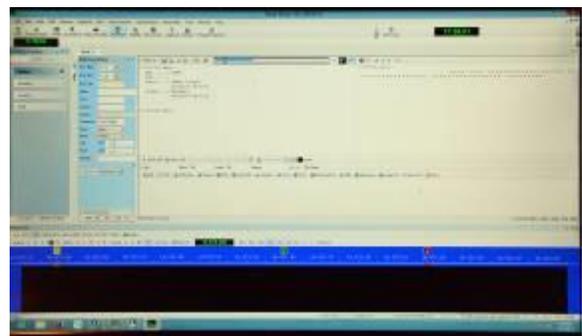
I've had several inquiries about digital software and the various digital modes with the focus on BPSK31. So this month the column will be about the more popular software in use for operating PSK31 (BPSK31).



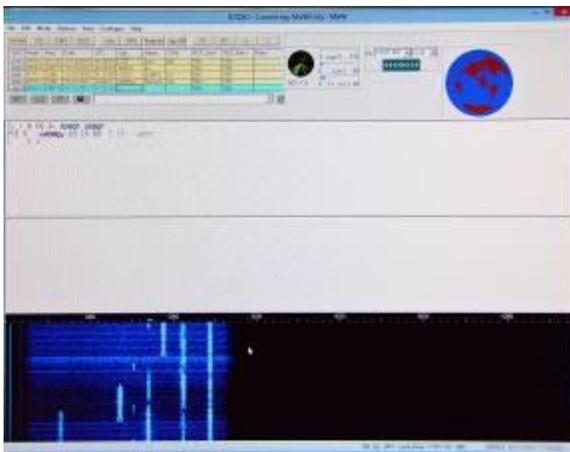
**DIGIPAN**



**FLdigi**



**HRD+DM780**



**MixW**

The above screen shots tell us that the user interface becomes more complex with an increasingly difficult learning curve as we ask the software to do more for us.

**RECOMMENDATION #1:** Start with Digipan, even if you are a seasoned operator or computer guru. You will be less likely to embarrass yourself on the air. After a few days of making PSK contacts, install and move up to software that offers more modes and functions, even though it may be learning intensive. That brings us to **RECOMMENDATION #2:** MixW is the next easiest to use, but it costs \$50! If you now feel comfortable with PSK31, and know a bit about computers, you can try FLdigi. It is FREE and has a superb operating manual. This

is the software I presently use for several modes.

What about the “King” of digital software – HRD-DM780, which costs over \$90? I have it on the PC, and had used it for nearly two years when it died on me. It caused me lots of grief as I spent 5 days trying to get it to receive. I gave up and began using FLdigi, and I am very happy I did. I have revived HRD+DM780, but still prefer many aspects of FLdigi.

**INTERFACES** really are the heart and soul of digital. Some require use of the PC sound card, which presents configuration problems. However, if you use the really expensive ones from MicroHam, you will have configuration headaches that would challenge a NASA engineer. I recommend a USB type, such as **SignalLink**. This is a very popular interface and more than 70% of the hams I work on PSK are using *SignalLink*. See photos below of *SignalLink* and RigBlaster plus. I have used different versions of RigBlaster for more than 16 years. My present one still works, but it has 6 cables on the back and one up front. That means everything must be plugged into the proper PC sockets and you must use the PC soundcard. *SignalLink* now comes with USB cables designed for your specific radio and has its own sound card built in.

**AE7OA** uses *SignalLink* and has only one cable going to a USB on the PC, and one cable going to his Data/Packet Port on his FT-2000.

**What is the best way to learn to use digital modes?** A ROADS meeting program would only allow enough time for a brief overview, which won't help much. I strongly recommend a visit to a station running digital so you can see firsthand what the units look like and get a glimpse



of the configuration involved. If a quick look at the configuration doesn't send you running, then you are ready to try the digital modes.

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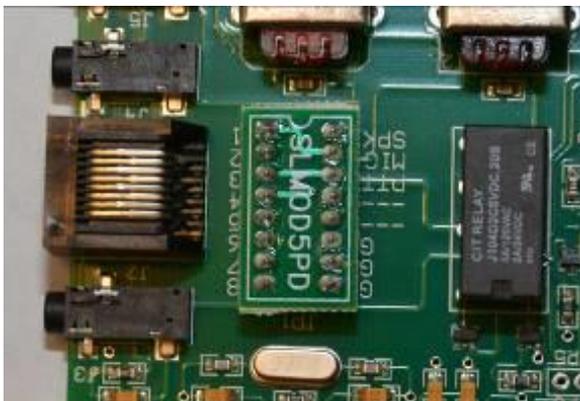
### Digital Epilogue

Shortly after writing this column I fired up on PSK 31 and made several contacts on PSK and RTTY, including Haiti and the Azores. Later in the evening, I received an email from a TA1 station (Turkey) who had seen my signal! Amazing! I used FLdigi for the QSOs and it performed flawlessly. The next day I made several contacts on 20 Meter PSK, and then finished up the day with a RTTY QSO on 15 Meters with North Cook Island. For everyone who says the bands are dead, it isn't so. You need to use many different modes and spend some time checking out the bands. QSOs do not come easy during the down side of the sunspot cycle, but with some effort they are there for those who are willing to seek them out.

- Bob K7QXG

# Signalink 1 - 2 – 3 !

This brief technical article will describe an interface that allows you to use many of the digital modes. Detailed instruction is not provided because the Signalink USB unit comes with ample detailed instructions for installing and using the unit. These days the hard work has been done and you can nearly use Plug & Play methods to get the unit up and running. First, let's see what we get in the package when it arrives from the Tigertronics distribution point in Grants Pass, Oregon.



The Signalink unit is about the size of two decks of cards. A mini DVD contains numerous software apps for operating PSK, RTTY and other digital modes. Shown are two cables. One connects to the digital/packet port on my FT-2000 and the other connects Signalink to my PC. Ample instructions are found in expansive directions. Not shown is the Plug & Play jumper module that I have already installed in the unit.

Ample instructions are found in expansive directions. Not shown is the Plug & Play jumper module that I have already installed in the unit.



**Plug n Play module ready for install.**

**Plug n Play module installed on board.**

The module is inexpensive, and eliminates the need to install several jumper wires that make the Signalink compatible with your specific brand and model of transceiver. It is a real time saver and prevents installation errors.

This unit is now ready for Stage 2 of the installation, but that is covered in detail in the Tigertronics directions. Perhaps a future article will cover the ins and outs of getting it all to work with a Microsoft OS.

- Bob K7QXG

**Minutes of ROADS meeting Jan 19, 2017**

Meeting was called to order with the flag salute by President Warren W7KBR at 7 pm.

The treasurer's vote was read, moved and seconded and approved.

The secretary read the minutes of the board of directors meeting which included the bylaws change. This is the first reading of the bylaws change. There was much hotly debated discussion of the reason for and member's thoughts on the dues increase. Nate W7NAT expressed concerns that this would be the highest club dues in the valley and that the amount might be a reason for members to drop out of the club, he might be one out of principle. Dave, WA7MZM, moved, Steve, KG7OXU, seconded, "announce to membership of dues increase to be discussed at the next meeting that the board has recommended \$10.00 increase for the upcoming year. Membership passed the motion. Hollis, WB7IEO moved and Richard, N7ATQ seconded to accept the minutes of the board meeting. The secretary will ask the newsletter editor to one, have a special announcement about the dues increase and two, print the bylaws change.

Some discussion was held as to where to hold next year's Christmas dinner as Warren expressed a desire to have a catered dinner and possible places to hold such an event.

A late starting program was held on DIRT. Very interesting as dirt plays an important part of getting our signal out and what is the optimum height of the antenna.

Continuation of the business meeting. There is a need to prepay for the club hats so that the better quality hats can be purchased. If you signed up for a hat, please prepay Dennis Elson, WB7VAO, treasurer, as soon as possible.

ARRL – The Amateur Radio Parity Act died in committee last year due to a "hold" placed on the bill a member of the Florida congressional committee for no apparent reason. Enough Florida ham radio operators flooded his office with comments that the congressman has relented and the bill has been reintroduced into this year's bills. Please write your congressmen to support this bill. Yes we can change the outcome when we stand together.

Question was asked if the wording of the honorary membership was correct for Irene Boswell. This was tabled until the new bylaws was passed and then compare it to the membership wording in the new section.

It was moved and seconded to pay the bills.

50/50 drawing and other donation income discussed with 50/50 to start in February.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm

## Article V

## Membership

## Section 1

The membership of the Club shall consist of any person who is registered in the official records of the Club and their dues have been paid.

## Section 2

~~All licensed radio amateurs shall be eligible for regular membership. All other persons interested in amateur radio shall be eligible for associate membership. Associate member shall enjoy all rights and privileges, including the right to vote, except they shall not be eligible to hold office.~~

(Replace with)

## Types of members

Regular member - Must be a licensed amateur radio operator. Regular members will have voting privileges and the ability to hold office. Normal dues must be paid to remain a member in good standing.

Associate Member – Any person who expresses an interest in amateur radio. Associate members will have the right to vote but will not have the right to hold office. Normal dues must be paid to remain a member in good standing.

Life member – Will be a regular member who has made a significant contribution or impact on the club or radio community. To become a life member, they must be recommended by the board and successfully voted on by the membership. Dues are not a requirement to maintain a life membership.

Honorary member – Any member who the board or the members feels would enjoy the radio community and would benefit from a membership. To become an honorary member, one must be nominated and successfully voted on by the membership. Honorary members do not pay dues, vote or hold office. They will be added to the membership mailing list and encouraged to attend club functions.

## Section 3

Each applicant for membership must express a willingness to abide by these articles and bylaws and such rules as shall, from time to time, be promulgated by the club. A copy of bylaws will be made available upon request.

## Your 2016 - 2017 Current Club Officers

Position	Name	Callsign	E-Mail	Phone Number
President	Warren Gookin	W7KBR	wlgookin@gmail.com	(503) 787-4018
Vice-President	Mike Shelby	W7RIS	w7ris@arrl.net	(541) 745-7058
Secretary	Dave Goetz	KT7H	dave@begonias.com	(971) 241-9922
Treasurer	Dennis Elson	WB7VAO	dynotime2@gmail.com	(208) 773-4119
Director 1	Jack Schult	W7SCT	jackschult@msn.com	(503) 831-0756 (503) 881-5836
Director 2	Mike Fuller	K7CIE	mfuller@pictishbeast.net	(503) 831-3651

Club Meeting at Polk Country Courthouse at 7:00 PM on Feb 16, 2017

Gathering every Monday Morning at Washington Street Steakhouse & Pub

### VE Testing Polk County Court House

- March 11, 2017
- May 13, 2017
- July 8, 2017
- September 9, 2017
- November 11, 2017

If you have any questions on the VE testing sessions, please contact Ron, W7HO at [W7HO@arrl.net](mailto:W7HO@arrl.net) or 503-585-2136.

- ♦ **The 2 meter ZIP code contest scheduled for February has been postponed until March. Contact K7QXG for details.**