

# LINE OF SIGHT

## A Message from the Editor

### Gordon West, WB6NOA, Ham of the Year

**G**ordon West, WB6NOA, *CQ VHF* magazine Features Editor, has been selected as the 2006 Dayton Hamvention® Ham of the Year. He will be honored later this month at the convention.

A licensed ham radio operator for more than 40 years, Gordo (as he prefers his friends call him) is best known for teaching ham radio classes and publishing study guides. An ARRL Certified Instructor and Instructor of the Year, Gordo has been responsible for thousands of amateur radio operators obtaining their licenses. He is also a Radio Club of America fellow.

Gordo has been teaching ham radio classes for nearly 40 years. In the 1980s, Gordo and his wife Suzy, N6GLF, began team teaching their classes under the name Gordon West Radio School. These classes include night and weekend sessions on college campuses, in county and city government buildings, and even at marinas. Wherever interested persons gather, be it 75 or 200, there is Gordo promoting the hobby. He also teaches classes for Commercial Radio operators, as well as providing free Technician Class amateur radio license training for youth and certified emergency responders for community emergency response teams (CERT).

Gordo also teaches ham radio classes annually for the Northern California Handiham Radio Camp. In addition, he volunteers with the American Red Cross communications team in Orange County, California. Commenting on these volunteer activities, Gordo says that it is his way of giving something back to a lifetime hobby that has meant so much to him.

Gordo has published hundreds of articles on amateur radio, commercial radio, and CB radio. At one time in the late 1970s, Gordo was the editor of *CB Magazine*, succeeding the late Leo Sands. A bit of trivia that Gordo doesn't remember is that once, while serving as editor of *CB Magazine*, he sent me a rejection letter.

The reverse has never been the case with me as the editor of *CQ VHF*, however. I am happy to have Gordo as one of the feature editors of this magazine. He has contributed at least 20 articles and shorts to *CQ VHF* since its rebirth four years ago at Dayton.

Gordo lives in Costa Mesa, California, where he has stations operational from 3.5 MHz to 10 GHz. A recent tornado, a rare

occurrence in the area, damaged his towers and beams, but that hasn't deterred Gordo from spending at least a couple of hours a day encouraging new hams to get on the air via the many nets that he runs.

We at *CQ VHF* magazine join with scores of ham radio operators around the world in congratulating Gordo on this fine recognition of all that he has contributed to the survival and future of our hobby.

#### In This Issue

From bottoms to tops: From the bottom of the sunspot cycle to the top of the sky, this issue contains articles that appeal to both extremes of our niche in the hobby. Regarding the bottom of the sunspot cycle, Lance Collister, W7GJ, writes about the many considerations for a successful 6-meter EME station, concluding that it is not an impossibility for the average operator to be on the moon on this band. Also pertaining to the bottom of the sunspot cycle is the Propagation column by Tomas Hood, NW7US, who writes about the prediction that the next solar cycle will be a dandy.

Regarding the top of the sky, the husband-and-wife team of Jerome, K5IS, and Bobette, N5IS, Doerrie write about how to achieve a wider (albeit temporary) coverage of 2-meter communications from the relatively flat lands of the northern tip of the Texas panhandle by way of a surplus weather balloon. Also writing about the sky is Airborne Radio columnist Del Schier, K1UHF, who covers radio systems in model aircraft.

Going even higher in the sky, all the way up to the International Space Station, is Keith Pugh, W5IU, who writes about the first dual-orbit ARISS QSOs that took place in February and involved a school in Dale, Oklahoma on the first orbit and an elementary school in Dallas, Texas on the second orbit. Keith also covers the latest activities from space in his Satellites column.

Even higher up, Antennas columnist Kent Britain, WA5VJB, writes about constructing antennas for GPS receivers. Going into deep space is Paul Shuch, N6TX, who again covers the search for extraterrestrial intelligence. A bit closer to home is a new column that Paul is starting with this issue. Entitled The Orbital Classroom, in this column he explores ways in which amateur radio communications in space can be used educationally to encourage

young people to become part of our hobby.

From the bottom to the top of the microwave bands is Steve Hicks, N5AC, who writes about bandswitching across the microwave spectrum while contesting as a rover. Also on top of the microwave bands is Gordon West, WB6NOA, who tells how to encourage the FM operator to consider operating on 10 GHz.

Speaking of contesting, Kevin Kaufhold, W9GKA, writes about the historical trends of *CQ* magazine sponsored VHF contests. The statistical model that he uses is detailed in a paper entitled "A Statistical Model of VHF Contest Activity," to be published in the 2006 Conference *Proceedings* of the Central States VHF Society.

Somewhere in the middle of the VHF spectrum is Joe Moell, K0V, who writes in his Homing In column about pulsed emitters near 220 MHz. Speaking of homing in, Joe recently announced that the OH-KY-IN Amateur Radio Society is conducting a special hidden-transmitter hunt championship for blind and visually impaired persons during the Dayton Hamvention®. For more information on this unique T-hunt visit the website <<http://www.ardfusa.com/>>.

Speaking of the bottom, this time meaning the ground, Larry Higgins, W5EX, and Joe Jankowski, W5KTX, tell how to get a good ground in rocky soil by literally connecting wires to rocks. When it comes to getting a good earth ground in the boonies, there is no more pounding rocks for these two hams.

Regarding far-out digital communications, HSMM columnist John Champa, K8OCL, tells of the 6-meter experiment now under way that pertains to the long-range transmission of digital data on that band. Also pertaining to digital communications, ICOM's Amateur and Receiver Products Division Manager, Ray Novak, N9JA, reveals how D-STAR was used successfully by the US Army and FEMA in field tests earlier this year.

There you have it: From top to bottom and from cover to cover, in your hands is another great edition of the magazine with the best coverage of our niche in the wonderful hobby of amateur radio. Perhaps the next issue will contain a contribution from you. If so, I look forward to receiving your query about writing for *CQ VHF* magazine.

Until the next issue...

73 de Joe, N6CL