



# GM Net News

Volume II

Editor: Rick WØPC

August Issue – 2009

## Running Around the Country: by Rick Crockett

This summer's vacation for us was a trip to the San Francisco Bay Area to visit family with a return trip through Lake Tahoe, Carson City, NV, Salt Lake City, UT, Cheyenne, WY on down to visit Art Goodall, WØKG and his wonderful xyl Carol in Estes Park, CO then on southward to Manitou Springs, CO for another's weeks family reunion. The trip took us about 3 weeks and over 1,000 photos. Thanks goodness for digital cameras...at least the film was cheap...Hi Hi.



**RCA Ship to Shore station KPH:** While we were in California, I saw the local Sunday newspaper article saying that radio station KPH out on the Point Reyes National Seashore would be open to the public at 3:00 PM to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of "Night of Nights." Since it's a nice drive thru the mountains to get to the coast, we thought we would go and have a look ourselves. I've driven by there many times going out to the lighthouse to do whale watching. The newspaper wrote about Denice Stoops who was the first woman CW operator at KPH. She learned her CW while in the

Coast Guard and went to work for RCA at the costal station when she got out. She pounded brass there for 18 years... until the station finally closed. We got a chance to meet her at the station. She holds a T1-First Class Radiotelegraph Operator's Certificate and sports a ham call of KI6BBR. What a neat gal and to top it all off, she went on the air and made a repeat commutative message of the last CW message sent from there. It was all caught on a YouTube video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2a4scmlC7tl>).



She makes that bug really sing. The really neat part was that we were there and got to see the excitement. Hams from all over the place were there. I saw at least 6 different states represented there in the parking lot. We



were not the most distant visitors; there was one from Australia there. That was a fun side trip we stumbled across thanks to the Marin Independent Journal's Sunday front page article. The Marin Amateur Radio Club really got some publicity.

Moving right along on our trip, we drove through Lake Tahoe; a beautiful lake and mountain area. There was snow on the mountains... what a sight especially from the top of the Harrah's Casino Hotel overlooking the lake. We've been there enough times I didn't really take the camera out. We got to visit some of our old neighbors from San Jose, California who moved to Carson City, NV. Mike, N6EVG was a neighbor and former student of mine from 35 yrs ago. While we were in Nevada, I got a chance to attend one of their ham club meetings. Nice gang of guys. I also had the opportunity to send some APRS messages back home and check into our local 10 mtr and 2 mtr net back home using my remote base station and the Internet. Speaking of Remotes... I setup up N6EVG's station for remote control so I can check into there local 10 meter and 2 meter nets. That's a neat trick. Maybe some time we can have an article about how to setup a station for remote control.



From Carson City, the Nevada state capitol, we drove across the Nevada desert and through the Utah salt flats to Salt Lake City where it was 99 degrees and snow on the mountains round the city. What a beautiful sight! I wish we had a little more time there. One of our old local club members lives there now (Don, NØDP now W7DEP). We didn't get a chance to give him a call this time... maybe next trip with better planning.

**Estes Park, CO:** From there we scooted across Wyoming to Cheyenne and down to Estes Park, CO to visit Art, WØKG and his xyl Carol and their beautiful

home there. Art uses his old 5<sup>th</sup> wheel travel trailer as his ham shack. It's complete with all the modern convinces including Satellite TV, Internet not to mention a well outfitted ham station with tower and tribander. The Estes Park community is really a nice one and very close to the National Park. I wish we had more time to visit there, but our travel plans were keeping us on a tight schedule. Those snow capped mountain sure are beautiful. There isn't enough room here for pictures that do it justice. No wonder Art heads west in the summer.

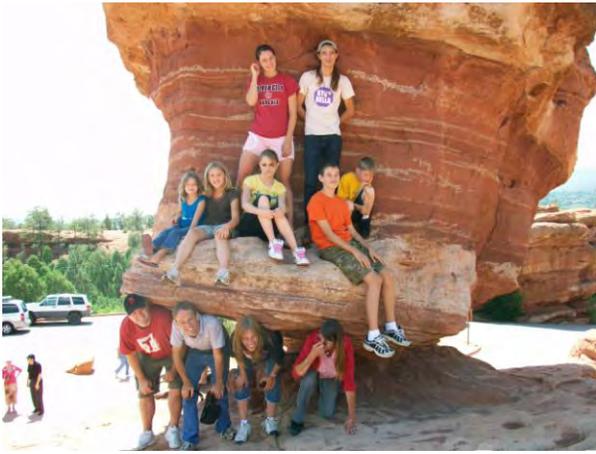


**Manitou Spring, CO:** Our travel schedule forced us back on the road heading to Helen's family reunion. The next stop was Helen's brother's house just south of Denver then on to Manitou Springs which is just on the west side of Colorado Springs right at the base of Pike's Peak. There is no end to the beauty of the mountains! It's breath taking...literally



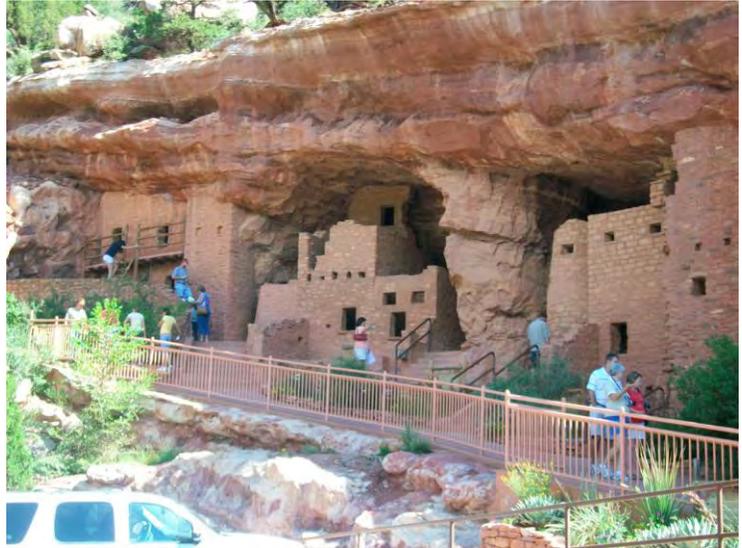
from the top of **Pike's Peak** at 14,110 feet elevation...cold too! What a blast, nearly all 43 of us went up the cog railway to the top of the mountain. You can see 5 states from the top of the mountain on a clear day.





The **Garden of the Gods** is also right there in Manitou Springs, it too is a very nice park to see and hike in. The grandkids really loved getting out of the car and climbing on the rocks especially the Balance Rock. My APRS beacons were getting out from there and I was able to get messages back home to the St. Charles area, bragging about how nice it was in Colorado.

The next day's adventure took us to the old Indian **Cliff Dwellings** which also is just outside of Manitou Springs. The parking lot is right up next to the dwelling so it didn't hurt us old guys too much...Hi Hi. Unfortunately, after 5 days of the reunion, it was time to head back home. I hated to come home but glad to be back...for a little while that is.



73 de WØPC (Rick)

### **Staying in touch:** by Dan, AD9I

Good morning,

I have made a few changes here in W. Bloomfield. I have removed my 2m/440 vertical from the top of my tower because it was interacting with my 13B2. Now I am using my 13B2 for 2 meter FM and SSB. I still have a rotor mounted in the center of the boom of the 2m 13B2 for vertical and horizontal polarization. I have also added a Cushcraft A505S (5) element yagi antenna for 6 meter SSB. I have been receiving good signal reports on 2 meter and 6 meter SSB. I enjoyed working the CQWW VHF contest on July 18th and 19<sup>th</sup> using 2 and 6 meters SSB. I managed to make a few contacts. One was NP4A in Puerto Rico on the 6 meter band.

I am still using my DXCC inverted V antenna for the HF bands and have been working mostly 80 and 40 meter bands. I have also registered with the ARRL Logbook of the World. I will see how well it works out for QSL's.

I have attached to this email a photo of the new antenna configuration.

Have a good day and I'll talk to you soon...



## **N3FJP Logging Program:** From the desk of AD8I.

In the past I have used Prolog logging software and it is a good program, but since I am retired now it has gotten just bit to expensive to maintain. So I have recently downloaded and I am using the following logging software from N3FJP's software web site.

Amateur Contact Log.  
Field Day Contest Log.  
VHF Contest Log.

Now these programs do not have a lot of the features that Prolog has, but they seem to work fairly well. I would like to see some improvements in these programs, but I am not going to get into these details at this time.

I would like to thank the members of the OCARS that brought the Field Day Contest Logging software to the OCARS meetings and Field day that got my attention on this subject.

On another note:

Field day 2009 and the CQWW VHF contest was a lot of fun! I worked the 2 meter and 6 meter bands in the CQWW VHF contest. The bands were not great, but I did manage to make some good contacts. Hi.

PS.

I have recently uploaded 80 contacts for the HF and VHF bands to The Logbook of the World.

Have a great day...

## **QRZ.COM Tips and Tricks:** From the desk of Dan AD8I,

Here is a bit of information that you and the rest of the GM group may be interested in looking into and may be something for the GM net news letter.

At the QRZ web site you can adjust your latitude and longitude on the grid map for your call sign under more details. To do this, you have to be a registered member of QRZ, you will have to be logged in and go to edit record. Just click on Explore on grid map when the map comes up, zoom in as close to your location as you can. At this point you should be able to drag and drop the red pointer to your proper (exact) location. Don't forget to save when you are done.

You can also click on Show Hams and it will show all the Amateurs in your grid square.

Have a good day and enjoy Amateur Radio...

## **Tech Tips from Geeks.com**

By Scott Nesbitt - August 2, 2009

Computer [hard drives](#). They're an essential component of your computing experience. While they're not as fragile as they were even 10 years ago, they're often one of the weak links in the chain of hardware that makes up a [desktop computer](#) or a [laptop computer](#).

**“Professional data recovery can cost anywhere from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars. And there's no guarantee of success.”**

When something goes wrong with a hard drive, you can be in a lot of trouble. Especially if you haven't backed up your data recently. If you need that data – whether it's office documents, photos, videos, or all of the above – right now it can cost you. Professional data recovery can cost anywhere from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars. And there's no guarantee of success.

But before going that route, you might be able to do the job yourself if you're willing to get your hands dirty. How? All you need is a [blank CD](#), a [USB flash drive](#), and some [Linux Live CD](#) software.

### **More than just for a test drive**

As discussed in a [previous TechTip](#), Linux Live CDs are a great way to take Linux for a spin without installing it on your computer. But there are other Live CDs that perform special jobs.

What kinds of jobs? How about trying to fix a computer that's not playing nicely.



### **The situation**

A few months ago, my wife's laptop (which ran Windows XP) wouldn't start properly. It would power up, then display a screen which informed her that the last shutdown wasn't completed properly. There were several boot options presented. But no matter which one my wife chose, Windows would try to start then the laptop would suddenly reboot. With the same message as before.

Nothing my wife or I tried worked. Instead of doing something drastic, like trying to reinstall Windows or Linux, or reformatting the hard drive, I tried starting the computer in safe mode, without the option to reboot automatically on an error. When I did this, the boot up stalled when XP was trying to load a driver called mup.sys. I did some research, and learned that mup.sys can get corrupted or infected with a virus. As it turned out, there was more to the problem than that.

I got the feeling that I might be able to salvage the hard drive. If nothing else, I figured I could get the most important files off that laptop.

**To do that, I decided to turn to a Linux Live CD for help.**

### **Getting the Live CD**

In this case, the Live CD was actually a rescue CD. I looked at several, and on the recommendation of a couple of techie pals, I got my hands on one called [SystemRescueCD](#).

SystemRescueCD comes with a number of [utilities](#) for analyzing and diagnosing problems with a hard drive or [system memory](#), and for recovering from failures and errors. While SystemRescueCD comes with a very lightweight graphical user interface, most of the utilities are run from the command line.

If you need help with running the utilities, even if you are an experienced Linux user, then you

should take the time to browse the [documentation](#) for SystemRescueCD.

It helps, believe me.

## Burning the disk image

I downloaded an [ISO image](#), which is literally a snapshot of the contents of a disk – in this case, a stripped-down Linux operating system and a bunch of utilities.

When you have an ISO image, you need to burn it to a blank CD as a disk image. In Windows, you can use a nifty freeware application called [ISO Recorder](#). Just about every CD burning application for Linux allows you to burn an ISO image.

On Mac OS X, just select **Applications > Utilities > Disk Utility**, then choose **Images > Burn**.

## Getting to work

Once I had the CD ready, I popped it into CD-ROM drive of my wife's laptop, and restarted it. Luckily, her laptop was set to boot from the CD-ROM drive. If this doesn't work for you, change this in your computer's [BIOS](#) settings. Depending on your computer, you do this by pressing F2 or ESC or DEL when the computer firsts starts up.

The first thing I did once the Live CD loaded was try to *mount* the Windows partition on the hard drive from the command line.

In Linux terms, mounting merely means getting access to a [file system](#) or drive.

The command I used was:

```
mount -t ntfs /dev/sda2 /mnt/windows -o ro
```

This tells the command to access an NTFS file system (the default used by Windows) via the device /dev/sda2 (which is how the Live CD detected the hard drive), and to let me access the drive using the directory /mnt/windows.

That worked. So, I plugged in one of my [4 GB USB flash drives](#) and mounted that with the following command:

```
mount /dev/sda1 /mnt/usb1
```

This allowed me to get access to the flash drive via the directory /mnt/usb1.



I ran the command **cd /mnt/windows** to change to the Windows drive, and then navigated my way to the folder where my wife kept her files. Using the Linux copy command (**cp**), I then transferred the files over to the flash drive. That took a while; there were about 3GB of files there.



A pair of funny things happened when copying the files. First, some files refused copy over. Second, many of the files had long names. When they were copied over to the flash drive, the names got truncated and the a good chunk of those names were replaced with a tilde (~).

## Trying to save the hard drive

While I managed to salvage most of my wife's files, I wanted to see if I could also save the hard drive. SystemRescueCD comes with a powerful utility that can help determine this called [testdisk](#). Testdisk can

do diagnostics on and recover hard disks. It has a text-based interface. You don't have to type commands, but instead selection option by tabbing, using the up and down arrow keys, and pressing Enter. It's like many DOS programs of yore.

I ran the first check by selecting the **Analyse** option. For some reason the program stalled. After killing testdisk, I looked at the log file that it produced. In the log file was an error message stating that there was a problem with the number of [disk sectors](#). That's not a good sign. Disk sectors store large lumps of data. If they're damaged, a hard drive is usually toast.

Next, I ran a check on the physical [cylinders](#) of the hard drive by selecting the **Deeper Search** option. Testdisk got through about 97% of the deeper search, and it stalled too. That indicated that there was a physical problem with the hard drive and that there was no way I was going to save it.

### Summing up

A Linux Live CD, especially one like SystemRescueCD, can be a good way of recovering your files if your computer starts acting up. A tool like SystemRescueCD is a bit geeky, and can be a tad difficult to use if you have no experience with backup software.

## A Little Morse for You? From the ARRL Contest Update 7/22/09

Here's a [Morse code tutorial](#) by NØHR for the Pocket PC that will run on Windows Mobile. Just the ticket for code practice while out and about. K7QO's many MP3 files of Morse can also be played back on just about any mobile audio player, as well. Another source of MP3 CW files is this [ebook-to-CW converter](#) software and all [W1AW code practice files](#) are available online as MP3s. (Thanks, Paul AA9GG, Craig KJ4NJJ, Majdi NØRMZ, and Tom WA8WPI)



# August 2009 - GM Net Schedule

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Notes: DF4IZ (Walter), every Tuesday at 1615z on 14.277 + or - 5 kc. No Sunday afternoon or Thursday evening nets, anymore.						1 KC8JLC
2	3 WY8I	4 WD9AIH	5 WA8IHI	6 N8XLS	7 K1RAY	8 KB9VF
9	10 WB8M	11 W0PC	12 K8ACQ	13 K8VW	14 KC8JLC	15 WY8I
16	17 WD9AIH	18 N8XLS	19 K1RAY	20 KB9VF	21 W0PC	22 K8ACQ
23	24 WA8IHI	25 K8VW	26 KC8JLC	27 WY8I	28 KB9VF	29 W0PC
30	30 WB8M	Notes:				

## Net Opening Preamble

This is ( your call ), today's net control. This net is composed of employees and retirees of the General Motors Corporation.

This net meets daily on this frequency for the purpose of getting better acquainted, expanding our knowledge, and improving our operating techniques. We promote friendship among participants in many locations who have many talents and have or have had a variety of work assignments. The General Motors nets are international in scope on some bands, and visitors are always welcome to check in. Please stay carefully tuned to net control at all times. This is ( your call ) ( working for or retired from ) ( your ) Division in ( your city ), ( state ). My home QTH is ( where you live ). My name is ( your name ) and we will now take check-ins, one at a time, please.

# September 2009 - GM Net Schedule

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Notes:		1 N8XLS	2 K1RAY	3 K8ACQ	4 WD9AIH	5 KC8JLC
6	7 KB9VF	8 K8VW	9 WB9YUR	10 WA8IHI	11 W0PC	12 K1RAY
13	14 WB8M	15 WD9AIH	16 KC8JLC	17 N8XLS	18 K8ACQ	19 WB9YUR
20	21 WB8M	22 K8VW	23 KB9VF	24 WB9YUR	25 W0PC	26 WY8I
27	28 WA8IHI	29 N8XLS	30 K1RAY	Notes: Schedule with DF4IZ (Walter) at 1615z on 14.277 + or - 5 kc. No Sunday afternoon or Thursday evening nets, anymore.		

## Net Closing

Are there any late check-ins for the net? (pause for late check-ins). Is there any further business for the net? ( pause for any further business ) Having no further business, we will close the net at this time. This net is composed of General Motors employees, retirees, and visitors. We meet each day, Monday through Saturday, on or about this frequency, at ( 1700z or 1800z ). Thank you for your participation and please return often. This is ( your call ) now closing the net. 73 and Good Afternoon.

The hardest part of being net control is getting started the first time. When you think about it, it's not being sure what to say... Well here is the net opening and closing statements to make it easy.

If you want to get on the list as a regular Net Control Station, Contact George, KB9VF on the net or via email: [kb9vf@comcast.net](mailto:kb9vf@comcast.net). His callbook address or old Firebird Roster address works too.

73 de WØPC (Rick)

## October 2009 - GM Net Schedule

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Notes: with DF4IZ (Walter) at 1615z on 14.277 + or - 5 kc. afternoon or Thursday evening nets, anymore.			Schedule No Sunday	1 WD9AIH	2 KC8JLC	3 KB9VF
4	5 WB9YUR	6 K8VW	7 WA8IHI	8 WB8M	9 K1RAY	10 WØPC
11	12 WY8I	13 N8XLS	14 WD9AIH	15 KC8JLC	16 KB9VF	17 WB9YUR
18	19 K8VW	20 WD9AIH	21 WØPC	22 WA8IHI	23 WB9YUR	24 WY8I
25	26 WB8M	27 KC8JLC	28 KB9VF	29 N8XLS	30 K8VW	31 WØPC