



The Blurb



*Newsletter of The Phil-Mont Mobile Radio Club
Public Service Since 1949*

Volume 72 Number 11

www.phil-mont.org

Making 'DO'

**Phil-Mont is making radio happen
on the air and on the ground!**

- Antenna Build Event Story and Pics - Page 6

Phil-Mont's DBJ-1 (or 2!) Antenna Build at Ridley Creek State Park

Phil-Mont'ers got 'Old School' and came together for an in-person build event and had a great time playing radio and learning from each other.

It was a cool, cloudy Sunday morning this October 10th. The air was still and humid signaling Fall was here in southeast Pennsylvania. Braving the chill air members of the Phil-Mont mobile radio club met at Pavilion 14 at Ridley Creek State Park to have an in-person, old-school ham radio build session. Some came to learn, some came to teach, and everyone came out

to have some hands-on fun building a base station or roll-up dual band antenna.



Pavilion #14 at Ridley Creek State Park waiting to be occupied

The design is the popular and effective Ed Fong variation on the traditional j-pole. The benefit of Ed's design is it is equally effective on both bands instead of favoring one or the other. This makes a very useful antenna for everyday home use or in your emergency bag for extending the reach of your HT or mobile rig. Plus, it's relatively easy to build with a few feet of ladder and some bits of coax and connectors. Nothing to it!

The event was hosted by Dan Wagaman - W4GMN, who kicked off the build with an overview of how a j-pole works and how that understanding

makes the build process easier to adjust. Everyone was given a kit of parts for the antenna that they wanted to build, the base station or portable version, and formed small groups of new and experienced builders to start the job.

Many of our club's new hams were in attendance. The first goal of many newly licensed operators is getting an effective 2m/70cm station up at the QTH making this project a natural first build. And for nearly every seasoned ham it's a project long since finished, making for a natural

partnership

between those looking for answers and Elmers with experience to share.

Jeff Golas - KC3GJX and Jim Fisher - AJ3DI went the extra mile to get the power flowing for this fun day. Thanks to their help we had power and work lights hung in the pavilion ready to power a half dozen soldering irons and give everyone a better view of their work on a cloudy Fall Day. Without their help there wouldn't have been much soldering being done at Pavilion #14.



Peg Daly - N3PEG and AJ3DI stop chatting for a moment and smile for the camera.



James Walston- KC3NVS, Jim McCusker - K3YO , and Steve Davidson - K3FZT happily talking shop before starting their antennas.

At around 10:00 AM the build got rolling, everyone's heads down studying the layout. Frequent calls for tools or advice on where to make a cut were heard going out from table to table. The antenna is a deceptively simple design: Attach the coax feedlines 1 ¼" from the shorted base of the antenna. Cut a notch a little over 12" from the negative feed connection and cut the remaining leg about 2.5' up from there. But that only gets you the 2m version. The builder then needs to add a shorted cos jumper inline to create a choke for 70cm signals.

The reality of it is a little more challenging. Twin lead is not the easiest stuff to work with. Small notches in the insulation must be made near the base without damaging the twisted copper leads. Not so simple. You also need to check the tune of the



The build is on! Phil Zminda – N3ZP, Peg Daly – N3PEG, and Chris Jewell – KC3RNE consider the next move on this DBJ-1.



KC3QFB and Chuck Slotter, KC3SJK working on getting the feed line connected to the antenna body.

antenna as each component is added, which means frequent stops in the work to hang the whole assembly up in the air and check the SWR curve with a NanoVNA. These initial hurdles kept most builders busy for the bulk of the event.

There were groans of frustration, eyes squinted in concentration, and lots of laughs and smiles from the group. There is no better way to learn how something works than to try and build it. Win, lose or draw everybody came away with more experience about ham radio, both the students and the instructors!

Not everyone finished their

antenna before regular life called them back. Two studious operators finished their antennas, and one industrious individual got their antenna up and on the air. Rich, K2RSJ (photo- right) grins from ear to ear after working a repeater full quieting on his brand new DBJ-2 roll-up antenna. He blazed a trail by stripping the entire base of the twin-lead, damning the torpedoes and blazing full speed ahead with his build. By locking in the twin lines back to parallel and taping it up he was able to move quickly to the tuning phase and get on the air. He was so thrilled with his antenna and had so much fun making it he wants to come back and be an instructor for the next session.

And there it is, the virtuous circle of ham radio. We are all the students, and we are all the teachers. Every one of us has a license to learn, and even after decades in the hobby there is always something more to learn. Get together, share ideas and play radio. That's what it's all about. – Dan W4GMN

Rich Roth – K2RSJ has a big smile on his face after finishing his DBJ-2 roll-up

