

I hope the shock of receiving a new column from me is not too great for our esteemed web-master. But, finally I have something to say: persistence pays off! Not so much my persistence. Rather that of my friends. I have a tendency to find reasons to put things off. And apparently I'm pretty good at it. However John NP2B, and George K2DM, Tony K4QR, Don W1EJM, Bob WA3EWK, and many more are even better at moving me along.

The last time I wrote this column I had some equipment but still hadn't put together an HF station. That has changed. With a lot of help from John and George, and useful suggestions from Don and Tony I now have a flagpole antenna firmly planted in my back yard. Dorothy, my XYL, agreed to it as long as it came with some landscaping. Have to agree – it looks pretty good. But even more important, it works!

Add almost 100 ft. of coax, a 10 ft. ground rod, 30 lengths of wire making a high quality ground plane, an antenna tuner, a power supply, an HF transceiver, and an SWR/Wattmeter and you have the makings of a ham station.

Well, I got all of those things and my fellow hams helped me to put them together and learn how to use them (actually I'm still learning how to use them). The thing I was most worried about was the antenna. You can have a great radio, but if you don't have a decent antenna, the signal isn't going far.

Last Monday NP2B came over to show me how to use the antenna tuner. He christened the system, making contact with a station in Slovenia on 20 meters. I'm sure I was more excited than he was. Early Tuesday evening I finally made my first contact: KM4RE on 40 meters. She was an elementary school student and the school ham club in Savannah Georgia was doing some sort of contesting.

It's taken a long time, but, with a lot of help, I'm up and running. I've said it before, but it bears repeating: If I can do it so can you. Just don't be afraid to ask for help.

A few other things:

Tom NV1U, has volunteered to head up Radio on the Square again this year. If you were there last year you know that he does a great job. But he can't do it all by himself, so please sign up and give him a hand. The event will take place on Nov. 24, from 9am to 3pm, at Lake Sumter Landing. It's fun and a great way to meet other hams and perhaps even your neighbors who might be interested in amateur radio.

John NP2B, has agreed to again head up the nominating committee. Yes, elections will be coming up in another few months. The Board of Directors is composed of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. And you get to elect them. If you think you would be interested in being on the Board, I'm sure John would be glad to hear from you.

Don't forget that the 2018 Holiday Party is coming soon – Dec. 20, 6pm to 9pm. More details coming at a later date.

Our thanks to Neil KN4KPD, and his crew for another successful Technician class. A job well done.

Thanks also to Rich ND4G, and his Volunteer Examiners. This is not a club function, but they serve us well.

That's it.

73

Ron K4YCW