

The NEWSLETTER

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Mercury Amateur Radio Association - MARA
North America - North East



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DI-DAH-DI-DAH-DIT

- WE'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUR INFORMATION - MUA-HA-HA-HA!!



OTHER STUFF

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*Links that will take you to web locations referenced in this newsletter are shown in **italicized blue text**.*

Past issues of the MARA NE NEWSLETTER may be viewed at <http://ne.mara.net/newsletters.htm>

Probably best viewed in Internet Explorer. Chrome and others may not display some of the graphics in the correct places.

E-mail your comments, ideas, or submissions to MARAnet@mara.net or to VE1VQ@eastlink.ca

Grandma Mara's RAMBLINGS...

W didn't realize just how much we appreciated home until we got back from our travels. The sleeping arrangements in the RV weren't *uncomfortable*, just not as *comfortable* as at home. The same with meals and cooking. Much easier to eat healthy when we are at home with a full size kitchen. On the road, we tended to eat at irregular times when the fancy struck us, and the menu was more toward quick and easy.



Not that we regret our recent summer travels. Not at all! In fact, we are already looking at where to go next year; "good Lord willin' and the creek don't rise"¹! Canada might be a good place, especially if our dollar stays high relative to theirs.

But in the end, it is nice to be home, with our family and our friends. They are so much more important than the aforementioned bed or kitchen or any and all of our *comforts*.

As usual for this time of the year, before cold weather sets in, Walter is busy checking the outside part of the station. Each antenna comes down to be physically inspected and repaired if necessary. The coaxial cables are also closely checked. Then, once hoisted back into position, the electrical measurements are done and compared to known previous years working readings. Preventative maintenance must be a good thing as we have almost zero antenna/feed-line failures over the winters.

Have you checked out the price of copper wire or aluminum tubing these days? After a visit the other day to one of the big chain hardware emporiums, Walter was complaining how much these items have gone up over the last few years! Not much you can do to substitute, either. He was fortunate to have picked up a small trailer load of rolls of stran-

ded #14 and #12 THHN covered wire from a going-out-of-business electrical supplier years ago. He says it's like money in the bank, at today's prices.

And my 'baby bird' has flown the nest, so to speak. Wendy has left for the west coast to study engineering at a prestigious California university

Her boyfriend will soon be packing his bags for a temporary move to the MTC in Provo, UT, on his way to the Russia St. Petersburg Mission for two years.

These are going to be two mutually lonesome people! I hope that individually, they can keep focused on their respective work, remembering that the time will pass quickly.

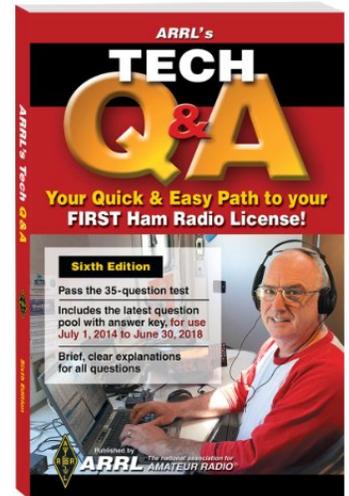
Wendy has promised to e-mail me regularly, but I know how intensive academic life can become, so I told her I wouldn't hold her to it.

We had a Saturday afternoon and evening open house get-together before Wendy's departure. Her mother held it together quite well, but her dad must have had something in his eyes, 'cause he kept wiping at them. I noticed Walter, and some of the seniors from the center, had the same problem. Must have been something in the air.

Red was there at the farewell, along with her mom. You might remember that *they visited our Field Day operation* in

June. In the past several months, Wendy has become something of a hero and a mentor to her. I overheard her telling Wendy that she had all of the code characters memorized and that she had been working her way through the ARRL's Tech Q & A book. She wasn't sure what she would do or who she would call now, if she got stuck on a question in the book. She brightened up when Wendy told her that Walter had offered to 'take over' from her.

Walter has that 'helpful grandfatherly effect' on the female portion of the population!



¹ <http://www.worldwidewords.org/qa/qa-god1.htm>

SQUID POLE VERTICAL ANTENNA MOUNT - THE FINAL CONSTRUCTION DETAILS + ONE

When I build something, and especially once I start using it, I can see where changes and improvements can be made.

Because the inner diameter of the PVC pipe I had available for the project was much larger than the outer diameter of the fiberglass kite pole, there is a lot of room for the pole to wander around in the wind. Ideally, if I had a lathe, I would machine an insert to fit at the top of the pipe with a hole the size of the pole. Not having access to one right now, I went for plan B and bought another pipe cap identical to the one screwed to the bottom of the bucket. Then I cut

a hole in the middle of it to match the outer diameter of the pole section at the top of the pipe. The pole outer diameter was 1 13/16 inches but there was a fastening clip on one side of it for a kite string. This clip required that I file a notch on one side of the cap opening to accommodate it.



The kite pole has a screw-on cap at the bottom larger in diameter than the pole section. The solution here is to put the pole in first and then install the three-inch cap on over it.

Once in place, a slight twist of the cap either way firms the antenna pole in place, likely because the hole is slightly out of round. Nice feature anyway!.

Perhaps this will be something you may find worthwhile adding to your build.

very
A GOOD (BUT  DISTURBING) BOOK TO READ

I happened to be in Chapters recently (probably

the largest book store chain up here in Canada) to order a book on playing the flute. I used to play the instrument years ago and wanted to start again. But that's not the book this scribbling is about. I guess you could describe a book on flute playing as 'good' but hardly as 'disturbing'! Bagpipes yes, flute no.

To pay for the above mentioned book, I had taken a fist full of gift cards family members had given me for birthdays and Christmases. Since I had some cash still remaining on them after the initial transaction, I wandered over to the computer section to browse. The one that caught my attention was one titled "The Art of Invisibility: The World's Most Famous Hacker Teaches You How to Be Safe in the Age of Big Brother and Big Data" by Kevin Mitnick.

The following description is from Chapters.ca...

Your every step online is being tracked and stored, and your identity literally stolen. Big companies and big governments want to know and exploit what you do, and privacy is a luxury few can afford or understand.

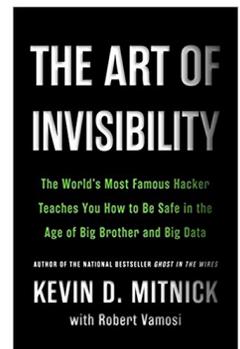
In this explosive yet practical book, Kevin Mitnick uses true-life stories to show exactly what is happening without your knowledge, teaching you "the art of invisibility"- online and real-world tactics to protect you and your family, using easy step-by-step instructions. Reading this book, you will learn everything from password protection and smart Wi-Fi usage to advanced techniques designed to maximize your anonymity.

Kevin Mitnick knows exactly how vulnerabilities can be exploited and just what to do to prevent that from happening. The world's most famous--and formerly the US government's most wanted--computer hacker, he has hacked into some of the country's most powerful and seemingly impenetrable agencies and companies, and at one point was on a three-year run from the FBI. Now Mitnick is reformed and widely regarded as the expert on the subject of computer security.

Invisibility isn't just for superheroes - privacy is a power you deserve and need in the age of Big Brother and Big Data.

I'm only a few chapters into it (as I write this) and already I've made changes to the security settings on my laptop, my cell phones and my on-line banking web sites.

Buy it or borrow it, read it and heed it.



FEATURE ARTICLE

SLO-O-O-W WINDOWS

by a contributor, who for personal reasons, requests anonymity until retirement (and perhaps even after!)

One of the vexing problems with Windows for years now has been a propensity for the hard disk drive read accesses slowing down the machine. Typically the CPU cycles approach 100%, as does DISK IO. If your machine periodically grinds to a halt and your web browser seems to stop dead in the water at varying times and situations, check Windows Task Manager to determine if your hard drive and CPU are being heavily utilized. If one or both, especially if the hard disk is being driven to the limits, you can frequently deactivate Windows Search to solve the problem. That may sound like a dodgy solution, but it only deactivates Windows searching when it decides to catalog everything on the machine. When you manually run Windows Search looking for a file, it will take a bit longer than you might expect, as Windows will not have recently cataloged every file and address on the drive. Since your search will start at the beginning of the drive, the search is not normally overly long as Windows stops once you click on the file being sought. Thus, it does not catalog the entire hard disk due to only using about 20 to 25% of the beginning of the drive typically.

If you are not familiar with opening Task Manager follow the steps below:

(1) Press the left Windows Key (it is in the lower left row on your keyboard) and the 'X' key. This will open a menu on the lower left of the screen. Scroll up the menu until you see Task Manager in the list.



(2) Click on Task Manager

(3) When Task Manager opens it can be in one of two modes. One mode is a minimalist display. The second mode will display a Row of tabs across the

top of the pop-up window and a listing of processes or files which are open. The latter view is the desired view. If the minimalist view is displayed look at the lower left of the pop-up window and click on the displayed 'More Details' button.

(4) The row displaying the tabs will be labelled CPU, Memory, Disk, and Network. Any or all of the utilization indicators above the labels may be maxed or nearly maxed out. If memory is nearly or totally maxed out, kill running programs until memory utilization is lowered to about 75%.

(5) If Disk utilization continues to remain high, continue as directed below. If it drops below 50% then watch carefully for continued decrease in utilization. If it continues at elevated levels then proceed to the next steps.

(6) Press the Windows key and the 'X' key again. This time, scroll up to the 'Command Prompt (Admin)' item in the list. This will open an old style DOS window where you type in commands instead of selecting icons.

(7) When you see the command prompt which will look like

C:\Windows\system32>

type the following text with the keyboard:

NET STOP "Windows search"

(8) It will take a few moments but the display will return text in the Command Prompt screen saying:

The Windows Search service is stopping.

The Windows Search service was stopped successfully.

(9) The Disk % utilization should start to decline. Within 15 seconds the utilization should drop below 10% and other indicators such as CPU, Memory, and Network, if previously elevated should also drop dramatically.

(10) Shutting down the Search Service works only until rebooting. If it solves your problem you can make it permanent as detailed below.

(11) To make Windows Search deactivation permanent, press the Windows key and the 'R' key. This will open the 'Run' field. Type **services.msc** into the run field and click on 'OK'.

(12) A new pop-up window will open with the label 'Services'. Scroll down the window until you see 'Windows Search'.

(13) Double click the line 'Windows Search'. Another pop-up window will open labelled 'Windows Search Properties'. About midway down there will be a field labelled 'Startup Type'. It normally is set to 'Automatic (Delayed Start)'. Left click with the mouse the 'Service status' field and select 'Disabled'. Then click 'Ok'.

(14) Close out the rest of the pop-up windows.

Hopefully this will solve your slow, lethargic, or stopped machine. In some tougher cases you may need to try other solutions.

Next month we will look at another common Windows solution for the above symptoms. 

DON'T FORGET THE ANNUAL MARA NORTHEAST MEETING ON SKYPE ON SATURDAY OCTOBER 7th (THIS IS A CHANGE FROM THE ORIGINAL DATE OF SEPTEMBER 30th) at 10 AM (EASTERN). SEE THE RELEVANT INFORMATION ON THE REFLECTOR OR CONTACT WD4HXG VIA E-MAIL (wd4hxg@icloud.com) FOR THE HOW-TO DETAILS.

YOU MUST BE A MEMBER IN ORDER TO VOTE. SEE THE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION PAGE AT <http://ne.mara.net/join.pdf>

AGENDA FOR THE 2017 ANNUAL MEETING

ACCEPTANCE OF NEW MEMBERS

If there have been applications made by individuals wishing to join us, they will be presented for acceptance or rejection.

AMALGAMATION

It is proposed that the Mercury Amateur Radio Association Midwest (MARA Midwest) and the Mercury Amateur Radio Association Northeast (MARA Northeast) join together to become a single group, to be known as the Mercury Amateur Radio

Association - Northeast and Midwest (or Mercury Amateur Radio Association - Midwest and Northeast, or some such catchy variation to be decided upon.

Vote by Midwest. Vote by Northeast.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

When MARA Northeast was originally created in 1997, the term of office of President and the terms of office for the Vice President and Secretary were set to expire in alternate years to allow for some sort of continuity.

Our past president, Bob Anderson, N3TS, had to step down prematurely because of ill health, before his term expired this year (2017). Bruce, N3IA, offered to fill the remainder of Bob's term.

Therefore, the position of President is open for another term of two years expiring in 2019.

Since we did not have an annual meeting last year (2016), when the offices of Vice President and Secretary were up for election, it is proposed that they remain in office until 2018 at which time those two positions will be up for a vote.

POSITIONS ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

There are four positions open on the board of directors. Two for new terms ending in 2021 and two for new terms ending in 2023. Dave, N3GRH, is re-offering for the term ending in 2021, and Charlie, WB4FLM, is re-offering for the term ending in 2023. Barry, N2PCT, does not wish to re-offer for 2021, and Stan, N3HS, is a silent key. So, that leaves two places to be filled, one for 2021 and one for 2023. That does not mean we cannot have others wanting to contest the 2021 and 2023 spots.

If there are contested positions, a voice vote will be called among those who are members of the combined MARA group. If any of the contested positions cannot be decided by this means, voting by e-mail may be required.

NEXT ANNUAL MEETING

A possible date in 2018 for the next annual meeting is September (Saturday) 29th.

If any of this is not clear, post your query on the reflector and we will endeavor to de-muddle it. 

I'M GETTING RID OF IT
and
YOU CAN HAVE IT!

THE WAY IT WORKS IS THIS...

You have to be *a member of MARA NorthEast* to submit an item or items to give away - and it (or they) must be free (except for any shipping costs).

You must be a member of MARA Northeast to claim and receive an item or items.

The two of you will have to agree who is paying for the shipping, if you are not within driving distance to pick the stuff up in person.

Doesn't have to be amateur related. It can be anything you want to get rid of.

No getting it for free and then selling it on E-Bay. You (or a family member) have to personally have a use for it.

Submit your item or items to VE1VQ@eastlink.ca to be listed in the next newsletter.

Provide some text describing what it is and its condition (and a picture if you have one).

The item/s will stay listed for six newsletters (or less, if you notify us that it has been given away).

The MARA NE Newsletter
is always looking for articles
of interest to LDS Hams.

If you have a radio related project,
or simply something you think
might interest the readers, please
contact Dave at VE1VQ@eastlink.ca

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Wife says to her programmer husband, "Go to the store and buy a loaf of bread. If they have eggs, buy a dozen.

Husband returns with 12 loaves of bread.

Unknown

DI-DAH-DI-DAH 𐄂

My purchase of the book by Kevin Mitnick was most likely triggered by the recent hacking of *Equifax*, one of the world's largest consumer and business credit reporting agencies. According to Wikipedia, "Equifax collects and aggregates information on over 800 million individual consumers and more than 88 million businesses worldwide".

The time line being reported by various news organizations is as follows:

A critical flaw in the software that Equifax, and many other financial institutions use, was discovered in early March. It's not clear why Equifax didn't patch its systems at that time, nor why the security company *Mandiant* didn't identify the vulnerability when it was called to investigate Equifax's first security breach that same month.

It's not clear why Equifax didn't patch its systems at that time...

Equifax has said that their breach occurred

in mid-May (failing to mention the earlier one), but that it only discovered intruders had compromised its systems on July 29 — nearly two months later. And for reasons that remain unclear, it took yet another month for the company to publicly disclose the breach.

Bloomberg News was the one who reported that it was actually the second time the company had been breached this year. The prior incident occurred in March according to Bloomberg's sources, with one saying it involved the same intruders as the subsequent hack. Equifax says the two incidents were unrelated, but either way, the company knew it was being targeted as early as this past spring.

The true time line will likely prove very interesting, given that three of the company's executives sold almost \$1.8 million US in shares in the days after the July 29 discovery that the company had been breached. Equifax has denied the executives

knew of the breach when they sold their shares.

Investigators are also looking into an earlier sale by Equifax's CFO of 14,000 shares on May 23.

“Equifax has denied the executives knew of the breach when they sold their shares.”

The above information was gathered from reports by [CBC News](#) and [Bloomberg News](#).

Of course, Equifax is downplaying any responsibility they may have for any data stolen and illegally used (now and future). From the outside, reading the news reporting, it certainly looks like they are as guilty as sin.

How much do you want to bet that [Martha Stewart](#) is closely watching these revelations concerning the sales of the shares?

I'm sure all of this will keep a slew of lawyers busy and billing for many months and probably lots of years. Various government agencies and committees are also busy investigating what happened and when.

What this points out is just how much our personal information is at risk, and how little an individual can actually do to protect it.

“What this points out is just how much our personal information is at risk, and how little an individual can actually do to protect it.”

Doesn't it give you such a warm and fuzzy feeling to know that Big Government and Big Business are watching over you, and your best interests?

If you believe that - have I got a deal for you on a hurricane-proof house and property in Puerto Rico. Just needs a few minor repairs - a new roof, a wall, some windows, some...

Until next month,
VENQ

MARA