

Portable “Go-Kit” Display Opportunity at the 2018 Communications Academy

In keeping with this year’s theme, **Don’t Panic!**, we are offering interested attendees an opportunity to showcase their individual or group technical proficiency, scientific knowledge, tactical fluency and all things that operate or support the utilization of the radio frequency spectrum for communications.

*“He was staring at the instruments with the air of one who is trying to convert Fahrenheit to centigrade in his head while his house is burning down.”**

Background

Emergency communications requires portable equipment that can be brought into position and made quickly operational. The effectiveness of this equipment is a combination of ease/speed of deployment, the capabilities (bands/modes/power) and the skills of the operator to make the system reliably perform under less-than-ideal conditions (wind/rain/cold/heat). A well designed portable package will offer power versatility, flexibility in transmission modes (voice, digital), multiple antenna options and be simple to operate.

*“Nothing travels faster than the speed of light with the possible exception of bad news, which obeys its own special laws.”**

A Contest of Sorts:

In an effort to encourage amateur radio creativity and preparedness, a “contest” format has been created to allow hams to display their creative solutions to their fellow humans.

Although many of these packages will be designed to solve specific needs, there should be some common areas that can be judged. Ideally, each designer will see features in other designs they will want to incorporate (read, blatantly copy) in future revisions before it’s too late for all of us.

*“Funny,” he intoned funereally, “how just when you think life can’t possibly get any worse it suddenly does.”**

All units should be on display throughout the Saturday program (April 14th – 8:30am – 4:00pm) to allow time for all attendees to view them and vote.

Although all entries should allow power input from batteries, generators, geothermal, nuclear, solar, cosmic rays, or AC mains

*“One of the greatest sources of power in the universe is Restaurant Math.”**

power supplies and batteries need not be displayed unless they are integrated or part of the portable system. Antenna systems should be displayed or be shown in pictorial form

Photos of the unit deployed in the field, feature descriptions and construction notes are encouraged but be aware space will be limited. A single or two page “flyer” would be ideal. Any included documentation should have the name and callsign of the entrant, the goal of the project, a description of how it meets the judging criteria below and any other interesting project notes (such as package cost, time to build, etc.).

*“A common mistake that people make when trying to design something completely foolproof is to underestimate the ingenuity of complete fools”.**

Rules:

- 1. Don't Panic!**
- 2. Always carry a towel**
- 3. All entries will be scored by viewing attendees. There will be no “official” judges**
- 4. Ballots will be accepted until 4:00 pm Saturday to allow tabulation and a prize to be awarded during the Sunday morning General Session**
- 5. No “Goldfish” may be eaten in the display viewing area – no matter how tasty they might be**
- 6. No one over the age of 5 is allowed to put the goldfish in their ears.**

*“Protect me from knowing what I don't need to know. Protect me from even knowing that there are things to know that I don't know. Protect me from knowing that I decided not to know about the things that I decided not to know about.”**

Judging Categories:

Scoring will be based on the following categories:

- Capabilities vs. size/weight of package
- Ease of deployment and use
- Clever features and design
- Professional construction and layout
- Robust design
- Inclusion of at least one element based on “The HitchHiker’s Guide to The Galaxy

Judging Process:

- Each attendee entering the Go-Kit viewing area will receive a cup with forty-two (42) Goldfish crackers
- Each Go-Kit display will have a bowl labeled with the call sign of the owner
- Attendees “vote” by placing the number of “Goldfish” crackers they feel the entry warrants
 - An attendee can place from 0 to 42 of their “Goldfish” in any display’s bowl
 - Attendees can “vote” as they like until they run out of “Goldfish” crackers
- The “Winner” will be determined by the absolute number of “Goldfish” crackers in their bowl

Official Judges:

- **Chief Judge - His High Judgmental Supremacy, Judiciary Pag, L.I.V.R. (the Learned, Impartial, and Very Relaxed)**
- **Associate Judges:**
 - **The Slightly Less Judgmental Communications Academy Board**

Entry:

- **An Entry Form must be completed prior to the event.**
- **The entry form must be turned in on-site at the time of your set-up in the display area.**

**Communications Academy 2018
Go-Kit Display Entry Information**

Name: _____ Callsign: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please describe the purpose of the package and how it meets these criteria. Feel free to include any other information of interest, such as build time and cost

- A. **Capabilities vs. size/weight of package**
- B. **Ease of deployment and use**
- C. **Clever features and design**
- D. **Professional construction and layout**
- E. **Robust design**
- F. **Inclusion of at least one element based on “The Hitchhiker’s Guide to The Galaxy
*SHHHHHH....Don’t tell anyone***

Purpose of Project:

Example: *Portable cross-band repeater for Search and Rescue work. The goal is to be able to drop it at a convenient location and have it operate as long as possible unattended in any weather conditions.*

Capabilities Available in Package:

Example: *The Alinco DJ-580T has a 5-watt full-duplex cross-band feature. The package includes a half wave telescoping magnetic mount antenna to mount on the top of the box, two 7Ah gel cell batteries locked in place by removable shims, power cables to charge it or use it as a power source for other devices and a cable lock to lock it to a tree as a simple anti-theft device.*

Deployment Process:

Example: *The unit can be charged enroute with the included power cord to insure the battery is topped off. When arriving at the location, the radio can be configured with input/output frequencies and tones. The lid is closed, the unit can be secured to a tree with the cable and antenna connected.*

Design Features:

Example: *The Alinco DJ-580T has a 5-watt cross-band capability. It normally heat sinks through the metal belt clip. The belt clip mount was used to attach the radio to the metal lid to provide a larger heat sink surface area. The case color was chosen over the original olive drab to minimize heat buildup inside if the unit is exposed to direct sunlight.*

There are male and female cigarette lighter cables included with an adapter to the coaxial power jack on the box. All these are terminated with Anderson Powerpoles to provide maximum flexibility and compatibility with other devices. A coaxial power jack was used on the box because it can be made waterproof.

All box penetrations are sealed, and the lid is gasketed. Both a BNC and PL-259 connection are available on the box to allow the portable antenna or a larger antenna to be used without needing additional adapters in the field. The internal jumper can simply be moved to the appropriate jack to make that external antenna port live.

Additional Comments:

Example: *All the required accessories (power cables, gain antenna, batteries and cable lock) are designed to be stored and transported inside the case with no additional support required. Connectivity to other power sources and antennas is provided.*

***Quotes taken from Douglas Adam's Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy (1979)**

Assistance was given (and is much appreciated) by Scott Honaker (N7SS)