

Rob Sherwood, NC0B

Ham radio began for me in 1961 in Cincinnati, Ohio, as both a novice and general-class operator. After graduating college in 1969 with a degree in physics, I moved to Denver and worked for KOA radio as an engineer until 1987. While at KOA, I maintained their 50 KW AM and FM transmitters, microwave links and studio equipment.

1974 saw the beginning of Sherwood Engineering, offering roofing filters and upgrade kits for the Drake R-4C. In 1976 I started measuring receiver performance on dozens of radios, since reviews in QST did not correlate with actual on-air observations at crunch time in CW contests. In 1977 "ham radio magazine" published the first of several of my articles on receiver problems and cures, vertical antenna ground systems and mobile antenna efficiency. Those articles are available on my web site as PDF files. Receiver test data is now web based with over 100 transceivers included at www.nc0b.com/table.html.

In the 80s I was invited to be a forum speaker at the Dayton Hamvention on several occasions, discussing both receiver and antenna performance issues. In 2004 I returned to the Dayton Contest Forum, giving a talk on the status of receivers both old and new, with special emphasis on the Orion and the Icom 7800. In 2007 the Drake Forum had me present a talk on the pros and cons of the new batch of DSP transceivers. In 2009 I made a presentation at the Dayton Hamvention Antenna Forum on ground systems for vertical antennas.

2016 included a presentation at the Visalia DX Convention. In 2017 I spoke at ARRL Hamcon in Cody Wyoming, and a second appearance at the Duke City Hamfest in Albuquerque, NM. Contest University 2019 was my 12th annual wrap-up presentation at this event.

Other speaking invitations at ham events have included W0DXCC, W9DXCC, W4DXCC, YCCC, New Orleans, Austin, Huntsville, Tucson & St. Louis. Locally around Colorado I have discussed receiver performance at the Boulder Amateur Radio, Northern Colorado Amateur Radio, Colorado QRP & 285 TechConnect Radio Clubs.

Thirteen years ago, my XYL encouraged me to build my dream contest station on 10 acres east of Ft. Collins, Colorado on the Pawnee Grassland. This has made it possible to evaluate top transceivers in major contests in a real-world environment to augment my laboratory data. This rural setting has allowed me to focus my interest on effective antennas. Six towers support 9 mono-band HF agis, plus 6 and 2 meters, and several wire antennas on 160, 40 and 30 meters. A 70cm yagi was added in the fall of 2019.

My most recent new project has been making contacts on the new 630m band with a transverter from Australia. An IC-7300 on 160 meters handles receiver and transmit on 630m. I use my 160-meter Marconi T antenna with a separate tuner.

My log includes 32 states, including Hawaii, Alaska and Maine using WSJT X mode JT9. My best DX on 475 kHz is over 8000 miles between Colorado and Australia, working Roger VK4YB three times.