

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 158 transceiver and receiver listings.

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 & 2023 I spoke at ARRL Hamcon in Wyoming. Also I gave two presentations at the Duke City Hamfest in Albuquerque, NM, and Winterfest in Collinsville, IL.

Contest University 2026 will be my 19th annual presentation at this great event.

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

I have had the pleasure of presenting ten Zoom presentations in the UK, and most recently in January 2026 the Dutch RF Seminar in Europe with 147 attendees.

Nineteen years ago, my XYL encouraged me to build my dream contest station on 20 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 Yagis, plus 6m, 2m and 70cm, and wire antennas for 160, 80/40 and 30 meters.

In the fall of 2023 I installed a north east terminated Beverage 425 feet long and suspended 5 feet above ground for 160m. The feed point is located 800 feet north of the house using a DX Engineering transformer, and common mode chokes on each end wound on a ferrite type 43 2.4 inch core with RG-174 coax.

I use WSJT X on the 475 kHz band with a 630 meter transverter manufactured in Australia driven with an IC-7610. I use my 160-meter Marconi T antenna with a separate tuner on 475 kHz.

My 630m log of 38 states, including Hawaii, Alaska and Maine using JT9 & FST4. My best DX on 475 kHz is over 8000 miles between Colorado and Australia, having worked Roger, VK4YB, three times when we were at sun spot minimum. That is not possible with the current near sun spot maximum.