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Forgive Me Please.......

.......for this formal reply to your recent inquiry. For going on nearly three years now, I have been providing FREE written personal replies to hobbyists' requests for information, guidance, technical support and other *leisure-time* needs. I know, I offered to do this in my **SCANNER MODIFICATION HANDBOOKS**, and it was good for all concerned while it lasted. This open policy was lucky to have lasted so long! What other authors or leading gurus of their fields offer any such as I have done? Now I know why they don't! My open, come-one, come-all correspondence policy cannot survive in that form any longer. Here's the deal:

In somewhat under three years, I have received and responded to well over 3,000 inquiries and requests for information. The volume of mail has increased to well above this rate, such that one of two things have to happen now: (1) The mail goes unanswered while I perform the work of my livelihood, or (2) I put my livelihood on the "back burner" to answer the mail. A combination BOTH has been the rule for recent times, but its not working and something has to give. The pile of correspondence reached a backlog of something like two months at one point and even now after arduous work to catch up, it's deeper than ever. A change is necessary for the betterment of all concerned.

Please understand that answering a piece of mail to one person is no big deal. The process of typing and researching a reply, addressing an envelope; stamping and sealing; record keeping and mailing easily reaches 30-mins for the typical reply. At 25 to 75 letters a week, it requires only simple mathematics to see that a major block of time is required to answer questions and to make everyone happy. The requirement for a SASE and a loose extra stamp is honored only about half the time anyway, and even if 100%, would not make a dent in the time and expense of my efforts. A change in my correspondence policy is now mandated to relieve stress and pressure and allow us to keep working. *Operation Assist* is hereby changed.

CORRESPONDENCE POLICY NOW CHANGED!

Effective immediately, I cannot personally reply to casual hobby-type inquiries and requests for individual technical assistance, information and other routine, leisure-related hobby matters. At least, I can't do it in the same way as I have been doing it. Instead, I have developed four alternatives by which I can still be of benefit to the Hobby Radio Community, as a whole and to individuals within that community. These options, one of which should be acceptable to the majority of inquirers are detailed as follows. Please read & consider carefully:

1. **MAIL INQUIRIES:** You MUST enclose a Self-Addressed, Stamped Envelope (SASE) and at least one loose extra first class stamp. Your inquiry MUST be phrased in such a way that I can answer your questions with a simple **"yes"** or **"no"**. I can no longer provide detailed discussion, professional opinions and technical assessments or analyses by mail. If THIS is what you need, see the remaining options below. Neither can I provide individual electronic designs, custom variations of my published works nor detailed opinions on various items of radio hardware out on the market. Nor can I provide modifications or modification assistance by mail. Hobby inquiries MUST be answerable by a simple **"yes"** or a **"no"** and there can be no exceptions.

2. **INQUIRIES AT MY COMPUTER BBS**, *The Hertzian Intercept*, will always receive my utmost personal attention, and detailed assistance as necessary. There are three areas where to communicate with me on my BBS: the private SYSOP_EMAIL area; the public RADIO_TEK message conference and the public HB-232_C Technical Support Conference. One should be just right for you. If your inquiry is of general technical interest, please discuss it on the RADIO_TEK conference so that all other hobbyists can benefit from our discussion. If your inquiry is about the HB-232 Scanner/Computer Interface, let's discuss it on the HB-232_C Conference so that other HB-232 users can benefit. If you're not sure or if the matter is private, then leave me a message in the SYSOP_EMAIL area. All the above areas are easily found from the <M>ain Menu by selecting the <M>essage Bases. *The Hertzian Intercept BBS* supports modem speeds from 300-baud to 16,800-baud, and the setup parameters for your telecom or terminal program are: 8-bits, no parity, 1 stop bit or better known as 8N1. After your log on, the BBS is self guiding and at log-off, you will have a final opportunity to leave me a private message. *The Hertzian Intercept BBS* is open to all modem callers between 6pm-1pm, Pacific Times. There is a temporary closure between 1am-2am for network tasks. Otherwise, the realm is yours. Use of the BBS is highly encouraged so that my time can be maximized for the benefit of many. If you ask about a certain modification or technical procedure, many others can see and use my reply, and so my efforts are maximized.

3. **FIDONET SHORTWAVE and SCANRADIO Echoes** are other media where I will provide detailed technical assistance, much like on my BBS. There is little difference, except that you have to connect with a FidoNet Affiliated BBS in your area. When you find one, and there are over 20,000 world wide, then look for the SHORTWAVE and/or SCANRADIO echoes or conferences where I and hundreds of other hobbyists participate every day. If your local Fido BBS doesn't carry the

above echoes, then ask the SysOp to carry them for you. Most of the time, you will be greeted with an affirmative response. Both echoes are networked around the world and literally there are thousands of participants, many of whom are experts in their specialized fields like myself. The FidoNet and its thousands of points of access are ready-made for your hobby information needs not to mention MY NEED to economize on my time and resources by reaching as many people as possible with the effort of one reply.

> I can perform a database search and produce a list of ALL FidoNet BBS's in your area for a flat $5 cost defrayal. There are 50-100+ Fido BBS's in most US Area Codes. Enclose $5 and the Area Codes (maximum of 3 per $5 charge) for your area of interest and I'll respond with a custom FidoNet BBS directory for your area.

4. The monthly *"WORLD SCANNER REPORT"* is the last, but not the least of the alternatives available to you to meet your needs for technical assistance and information on scanner mods. If your request hasn't already been treated in a back issue of the *WSR* and if it is of general appeal, it may qualify for a detailed reply, either as a feature article or in our *FROM THE READERS* column! More info on the *WSR* is enclosed with this newsgram.

In summary and in conclusion, I regret not being able to give you a detailed personal reply as I used to do. Please consider the information given herein and I'm sure that you'll understand and determine that one of the above alternatives might be quite satisfactory for your needs. **BUSINESS INQUIRIES ARE EXEMPT FROM THIS NEW POLICY.**

OTHER NEWS & INFO

TELEPHONE POLICY: Under no circumstances do I discuss any leisure/hobby related topics nor give out scanner information by telephone. Some hobbyists have obtained my private home phone number and attempt to reach me there. Please do not waste your money; I am not available by telephone EXCEPT to bona-fide clients and ONLY if the call is related to an on-going project. Even then, I am often not available and will have to return such calls COLLECT when I can. Regretfully, the telephone is not an alternative by which to reach me for questions and hobby information. *The Hertzian Intercept BBS* closes down for four hours a day, 1:30pm-5:30pm, weekdays, PST, for voice business that can be handled by our Admin Department, and which includes credit card orders, limited product information; and tracking of shipped orders. I cannot be reached at that number during those hours. Technical assistance is not available by telephone. We are a very small company, holding the line on prices. Spending hours on the phone chatting serves only to raise costs for everyone. We provide the very best of certain products and services at reasonable prices. We do that by working; not by spending that time on the telephone. Feel free to use our business voice line for placing orders or to check on the progress of a current order, or even to complain or brag about our products or services. The telephone is not available for chatting and leisure.

MODIFICATION & TECHNICAL SERVICES: Due to an exceptionally heavy workload, we have suspended most of our technical and scanner modification services for a period of at least

six months. We do not expect to have the time to perform scanner services before about July 31, 1993. There are two exceptions: we do perform HB-232 Scanner/Computer Interface installations to the PRO-2004/5/6 series of scanners, but our bench work is limited pretty much to that effort for the time being. We will be happy to install a few minor modifications in your scanner if it is here ? installation of an HB-232, but this must be cleared and agr? upon in advance. The other exception is that we will perform blocked performance modifications to the PRO-34, PRO-37, PRO-39, PRO-43 and BC-200XLT handheld scanners as well as to most base scanners. The more extensive upgrade services, such as Expanded Memories, S-Meters, etc., are not being performed at this time, as neither are repairs. You can inquire about getting on a waiting list, if you like.

"THE WORLD SCANNER REPORT" has become a natural follow-up and support for my two SCANNER MODIFICATION HANDBOOKS. It is one of the very best ways that I can present new scanner modifications, tips, hints, kinks and to update the information in my books as errors are found or old info becomes outdated by new. I am not presently planning to write a Vol-3 of the Book because the *WSR* is much better suited to convey hot, timely scanner scoop to the Hobby, and when errors are made, it is much easier to correct them in the next issue.

The HB-232 SCANNER/COMPUTER INTERFACE has become the "item" of the era! Support and marketing of the HB-232 are what consumes most of our time at the present time. The HB-232 is such an important advancement to the Scanning Hobby that we are giving it our one and all to ensure that it receives maximum exposure, publicity and technical support. If the HB-232 does not interest you, relax; we're still committed to scanning in general and will be pleased to answer your questions or chat with you on BBS or on the FidoNet as previously discussed. If you take your scanning on the serious side, and particularly if you own a PRO-2006, PRO-2005 or a PRO-2004, then you will want to seriously consider the HB-232. Read all about it in the accompanying literature in this package.

SCANNER MODIFICATION HANDBOOK INFO: Times change, but very little in my books has changed. The following Mods in Vol-1 are cancelled or superseded: Mod-6 is superseded by the better MOD-33 in Vol-2; Mods 12 & 13 are superseded by the superior MODs 25 & 26 in Vol-2 and MOD-17 was never possible to begin with as we suspected. MOD-34 has been changed because of a supply and quality problem with spray shielding.

There are a few errors in the books (none terribly serious) created by the Publisher (not me) and which are discussed in the *"World Scanner Report"*. If you are one of the few who had trouble with one or more of the mods in my books, I'll be pleased to help you as previously discussed herein Vol-1 of my book, written before the PRO-2006 appeared on the market, also applies to the PRO-2006 because it is so similar to the PRO-2004/5 which are well covered in both volumes. Again, you need the World Scanner Report to keep up to date on the books and with the latest scoop.

NEW ANTI-SCANNER LAW TO PHASE OUT SOME SCANNERS? Apparently so! Just passed by Congress and sig? by the President, the FCC Authorization Act may serve to "outlaw" the PRO-2006, PRO-43, PRO-39 and other scanners "easily modified" for cellular coverage! This may be the time to procure that PRO-2006 or PRO-43 you've been wanting!   /Bill Cheek

MODIFICATION HANDBOOK. Its value will not degrade with time; therefore get the backissues if your budget affords so you can stay current with the emerging science and art of Scanner Hacking. I will stock the backissues for as long as there is demand. An Index of the preceding half-year's articles will be in the Jul & Jan issues.

YOUR MAILING LABEL

Check your mailing label for correct spelling of your name and address. Note the upper right corner of the label where your expiration date is printed. That month is the LAST ISSUE you will receive unless you renew your subscription on or before that time. If you're late in renewing, no problem; we'll make sure you get any missed issues after you renew. Also see your subscription number in the upper left corner. Please mention that number if you write to us. This is the computer age, and computers handle numbers. To us, you are a person, a hobbyist and our valued client. Our computer sees you as a number, but WE treat you as an individual. Ok?

TELEPHONE & CORRESPONDENCE POLICY

Please, no phone calls for chatting, questions & answers and general beating of the gums. Phone calls never come when convenient and I can ill afford disruptions to my concentration. My time is rigidly scheduled for survival and existence. I ALWAYS make time to answer the mail so use it, and if you've enclosed a S.A.S.E. and one loose extra stamp (foreign, send two IRC's), your letter will go to the top of the stack for a timely response. The phone is reserved for business.

HACKER INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR SCANNER

I wish it were possible to have a list of twenty mods for every scanner made, but it isn't. I can't count the inquiries I've had over the last year like, "Do you have any mods for my Rattlesnake XR-99 scanner?" No, I don't. Maybe someday, and if so, they'll appear in the "WORLD SCANNER REPORT" or maybe in Vol-3 of my book, if I ever write it. Specific mods for specific scanners are in Vols 1 & 2 of my SCANNER MODIFICATION HANDBOOKs and in these issues of the "WSR". With time, the list will grow. Some of my mods can be adapted to other scanners, but I can't usually take time off to write up every gory detail of a mod for less popular or outdated scanners. As I develop various mods, I will offer suggestions for applying the principles to other scanners. But since I haven't the time or resources to work on every scanner made, there's no way I can do justice to them all. If you ask my help to apply a certain mod to your scanner, you & I both will first have to have the Service Manual, and then I have to have the time. Normally, I will try to make the time if doing so will eventually benefit others, too. That's the bottom line for my being here. For the most part, I have to concentrate on scanners which are hackable to begin with. Older scanners and lower budget models are not highly modifiable. They are bare bones and you can't draw blood out of turnips.

I will try to make time to offer suggestions on how to do certain things to certain scanners but it is essential that I have a complete legible copy of the Service Manual before I can give personalized guidance. If I don't have the Service Manual, (and I have them only for some of the more popular, current models), then you have to provide me with one. My personal assistance requires that you first be able to help yourself. This all begins with us having the Service Manual(s) for your scanner(s).

PLEASE COMMUNICATE

The "WSR" isn't a one-way media. I need to hear from you, especially about what's new. I'm not always the first to catch the latest on what's happening or when something new comes out. Most publishers don't pay attention to the technology of scanners, so lots of ideas, concepts, products, mods and other exciting things could be new on the tech scene and I may not know about them for a time. You might know bits, pieces or even chunks of stuff about which my ignorance would shine. Help me help others by sharing any "inside" scoop about new things, especially products and mods. A small newsletter like the "WORLD SCANNER REPORT" depends on its "reporter network" and you play a strong role in that network.

A QUESTION OF COST

A couple of readers have questioned the cost of the "WSR". Good. It's more costly than other rags because there are hidden costs to the technology on which we focus. You see, our scanner mods and technology can't be found in other rags nor on the shelf at your local radio store. Writing the "WORLD SCANNER REPORT" involves much more than sitting at the keyboard for a few days. Other newsletters require little more of their editors than basic copy-typing. You can't imagine the behind-the-scenes effort required to present a simple modification. It first has to be conceived; planned; developed; built; tested; debugged; perfected and then written. Every step is costly and the freight has to be paid. But think about it; if you do only one mod a year to your scanner you'll probably get your money's worth. No matter; the "WSR" is affordable; it's good, it's rare and unique and it will get better without the price going up on you.

WRITERS & COLUMNISTS WANTED

The "WORLD SCANNER REPORT" is always on the lookout for news and info to pass along to the scanning community. If you have a special interest, expertise, or experience level from which others could profit, then there may be an opportunity for you to launch your writing career for fun, if not profit. The pay is poor (0); the hours are what you set; but the intangible rewards could make your cup runneth over. Free subscriptions and other perks available to those who will commit to regular writing. Subject matter is wide open; not everything has to be a modification! We are conveyors and purveyors of knowledge and information. From a system perspective, no one can do it all; it takes a team of players and you are invited!