



# Monitoring Times

Vol. 30 No. 11 November 2011



## Cover Story ..... 8 2012 Annual Radio Buyer's Guide

This month *MT*'s third annual *Radio Buyer's Guide* looks at some of the things that make our shacks click: scanners, accessories, antennas and a new crop of shortwave radios.

In addition, some of our regular columnists have chipped in and examined other products of interest to readers. For example, Kirk Kleinschmidt NTOZ looks at the subject of amateur radio antenna rotators, what works, what doesn't; Dan Farber ACOLW reviews the stealthy Chameleon VI 80-10 meter vertical antenna that proves to be inexpensive and effective; Bob Grove W8JHD looks at the Sangean ATS-909X shortwave portable as well as the Jetstream power supply, and Ken Reitz KS4ZR looks at two inexpensive, amplified TV antennas that actually work.

And, as usual, there's plenty more to pique the interest of every radio enthusiast from radio restorations to plumbing the depths of longwave; chasing new HF digital signals to working the oldest AMSAT still circling the globe.

### On Our Cover

This month *MT* looks at radio accessories for your shack. Tokyo Hy-Power solid state linear amp (Courtesy: Tokyo Hy-Power); Heil Pro Set Plus (Courtesy: Heil Sound); Ten-Tec 715 speech processor (Courtesy: Ten-Tec); ALS-600 linear amp (Courtesy: Ameritron); GHD single-lever paddle key (Courtesy: Tohiko Ujiie JA7JHD); Alinco DX-R8T (Courtesy: Alinco); AOR 2300 screen (Courtesy: AOR); AOR loop antenna (Courtesy: AOL); ATS-909X (Courtesy: Sangean)

## MT's Guide to Buying a new Scanner ..... 6

By Larry Van Horn N5FPW

Product models for scanner enthusiasts in the market for a new scanner have never been better. The latest crop of scanners can put you in the middle of the action with little or no effort. But, such convenience comes with a price. And, while this new generation of public service band radios is more capable than ever, there are tradeoffs to consider. It all comes down to frequencies and what's happening where you live. Larry looks at conventional analog, trunk-tracking, APCO25, civilian and military capable receivers, and guides you toward a decision that will be useful now and in the future.

## Taking Shortwave Listening to another Level ..... 10

By Ken Reitz KS4ZR

Rising sunspots lift all SWLers' spirits, but to really enjoy HF to its fullest you may need to take your listening to another level. Ken looks at three recently introduced radios spanning the price point range. Sangean's new ATS-909X proves to be a capable and portable shortwave, AM and FM receiver; Alinco's DX-R8T delivers a solid table-top performance with pluses that include DRM reception at a reasonable price; and, for the SWL who needs an all-in-one HF to UHF top shelf performer, AOR's AR2300 is just a credit card swipe away.

## The Quest for Power, the "Keys" to Success, and the Accessories of Life ..... 12

By Kirk Kleinschmidt NTOZ

There's nothing like being able to put a little steam into a frequency when band conditions get rough, that's the attraction of linear amplifiers. While Kirk is an old school QRP man, he understands your quest for more power and brings his veteran operator insights to the question of which amp is right for you. Here he examines the pros and cons of low-end to high-end linear amplifiers.

Kirk also examines other accessories that have long attracted hams, including outboard speech processors, after-market microphones, antenna rotators, and special CW keys. There are dozens of brands of each product on the market vying for your hard earned dollar and Kirk makes it a little easier to find just the right product to help you decide.

## Finding the Perfect Antenna (it's not that easy!) ..... 16

By Bob Grove W8JHD

Without an antenna your radio is just a curiosity on a shelf. *MT* publisher and antenna guru Bob Grove W8JHD looks at some of the most important aspects of radio antennas: size, frequency, design and feed. In this in-depth analysis, Bob examines vertical and horizontal antennas, mono-elements and beams, ground-planes and log periodic dipole arrays with examples and prices for some of the best available. If you're a ham, scanner enthusiast or shortwave listener, Bob will help you find the perfect antenna for your radio shack.

## R E V I E W S

## Sangean ATS-909X Portable SW and Two Jetstream Power Supplies ..... 70

By Bob Grove W8JHD

Sangean has a new portable shortwave radio and *MT* founder Bob Grove W8JHD puts it to work in his listening post. Find out why Bob calls it "a good example of superior performance from a modern compact portable at a lower cost." Bob also looks at two versatile power supplies from Jetstream.





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