

## President's Column

'Tis the season to play with antennas. Conditions on 80 meters have been terrible for the Third Region Traffic Net (SSB) and the Delaware Traffic Net/Delmarva Emergency Net. The Third Region Net is the worst as it is earlier in the day (4pm) and covers a wider area. I frequently cannot hear the net control station and have to rely on a relay to check in. Adding to the propagation difficulties of 80 meter daytime ops is noise, especially lightning crashes. My noise is frequently S7 to S9 or worse.

As a result of the above, I am always looking to improve reception. My latest attempt is an 80m skywave loop about 10 feet above the ground tuned for about 3900 Khz. It is about 275 feet long going around the perimeter of my backyard. I have a 1:2 BalUn between the loop and the 50 ohm coax going to the shack and a SWR of less than 1.2:1. Of course that low to the ground it is NVIS as a "cloudburner". Thus far, my results have been encouraging. My noise is still S5 but that is an improvement and several people have said that my outgoing signal is stronger. Being resonant, I don't have to worry about tuning and also saves some power loss. I'll see how it goes but will continue using it for the present. That's one of the joys of ham radio – the ability to try something new to improve your operation.

Try it!

73,  
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KCARC President