



News from

The GLORIOUS SOCIETY OF THE WORMHOLE

April 2023

Hello Worms

OK, I am guilty. I forgot this Saturday is the first Saturday in April. The newsletter is rather sparse this month but no time to look for interesting articles so here it is.

I understand there is a Skywarn class in Pinellas County somewhere but I can't seem to find the information. If you miss that one and you want to travel a bit there is another Skywarn class in the Hillsborough County EOC on April 29 at 0900/ All are welcome.

The Florida QSO Party is also on the same weekend, April 29 and 30. Go to the website at <https://floridaqsoparty.org/> for all the information.

Hillsborough County ARES/RACES has an amateur radio class on May 13 and 27. Go to the website for registration at <https://hillsboroughares.org/events/month/2023-05/>. Technician or General license classes.

We will broadcast the meeting on the repeater and Zoom video. I am moving the directions to the meeting place and Zoom to the end of the newsletter, you all have seen them enough.

We will have donuts, water and soft drinks (probably only root beer). Bring, your coffee and lunch if you want! We will not be cooking but we have access to the Chamber of Commerce kitchen which has a microwave and a toaster oven so you can heat up/cook what you bring.

MAKING A SMALL CURRENT REGULATED POWER SUPPLY

Ralph Bilal

Last article was about making a simple voltage regulated power supply. The device used are the LM78xx or LM79xx series device. An inexpensive component that is easy to make use of. The "xx" refers to the voltage desired.

This is good for a good clean constant voltage. However, what if we want to regulate the current so it does not exceed a certain value?

This device will also do this.

For example, you may want to charge a battery, but do not want to exceed a current value. You may want to connect a string of LED's, all with the same current rating.

Below is a schematic of how to change the voltage regulator into a current regulator. Which regulator would you choose?

For a + current above ground, you can use any of the LM78 series. Voltage does not matter. For a - current in respect to ground, use the LM79 series.

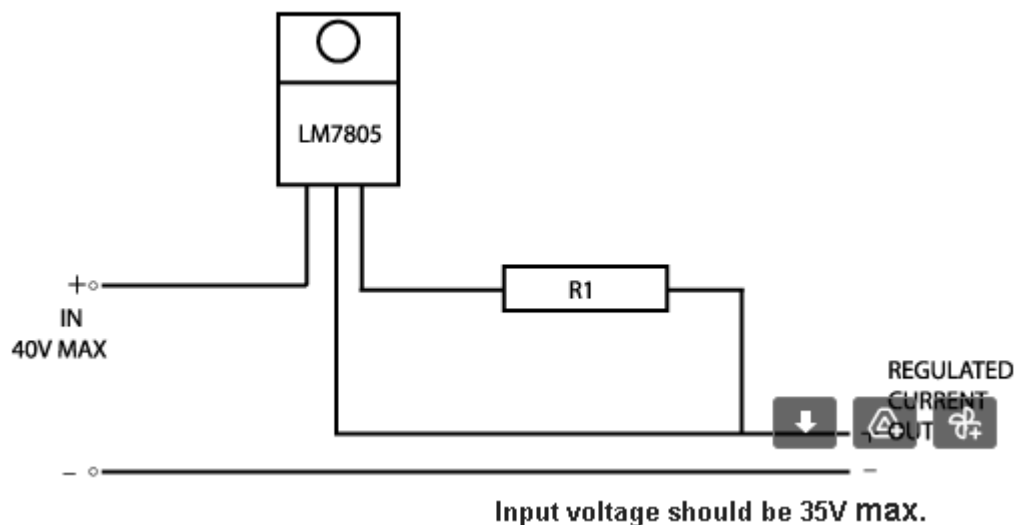
Below is a LM78 device. R1 determines the value of the current limit. Using a LM7805 regulator with R1 at 250 ohms, the maximum current will be about 20 milliamps. This is ideal for a small LED. If you put more than one LED in series, the regulator will maintain 20 ma. It will adjust the voltage to deliver the 20 ma current and no more to light all the LED's.

For higher currents, reduce the size of R1. R1 does not need to be a high power resistor, 1/4 to 1/2 watt is fine.

When R1 equals 10 ohms on a LM7805, the current limit is about .5 amps. You can increase it, but the LM7805 has a maximum rating of 1.5 amps.

If the device is used as a current regulator, you can actually short the output leads together without damaging the device.

Some applications will require a definite voltage value. Then, the voltage regulator circuit is what you want. However, if voltage is not critical, but you would like to protect the circuit from damage, the current regulator works well.



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73,

Ralph WD0EJA

BILAL COMPANY

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AMAZON'S ALEXA LOSING \$BILLIONS

arsTECHNICA by RON AMADEO - 11/21/2022

Amazon is going through the biggest layoffs in the company's history right now, with a plan to eliminate some [10,000 jobs](#). One of the areas hit hardest is the Amazon Alexa voice assistant unit, which is apparently falling out of favor at the e-commerce giant. That's according to a report from [Business Insider](#), which details "the swift downfall of the voice assistant and Amazon's larger hardware division."

Alexa has been around for 10 years and has been a trailblazing voice assistant that was copied quite a bit by Google and Apple. Alexa never managed to create an ongoing revenue stream, though, so Alexa doesn't really make any money. The Alexa division is part of the "Worldwide Digital" group along with Amazon Prime video, and Business Insider says that division lost \$3 billion in just the first quarter of 2022, with "the vast majority" of the losses blamed on Alexa. That is apparently double the losses of any other division, and the report says the hardware team is on pace to lose \$10 billion this year. It sounds like Amazon is tired of burning through all that cash.

The BI report spoke with "a dozen current and former employees on the company's hardware team," who described "a division in crisis." Just about every plan to monetize Alexa has failed, with one former employee calling Alexa "a colossal failure of imagination," and "a wasted opportunity." This month's layoffs are the end result of years of trying to turn things around. Alexa was given a huge runway at the company, back when it was reportedly the "pet project" of former CEO Jeff Bezos. An all-hands crisis meeting took place in 2019 to try to turn the

monetization problem around, but that was fruitless. By late 2019, Alexa saw a hiring freeze, and Bezos started to lose interest in the project around 2020. Of course, Amazon now has an entirely new CEO, Andy Jassy, who apparently isn't as interested in protecting Alexa.

The report says that while Alexa's Echo line is among the "best-selling items on Amazon, most of the devices sold at cost." One internal document described the business model by saying, "We want to make money when people use our devices, not when they buy our devices."

That plan never really materialized, though. It's not like Alexa plays ad breaks after you use it, so the hope was that people would buy things on Amazon via their voice. Not many people want to trust an AI with spending their money or buying an item without seeing a picture or reading reviews. The report says that by year four of the Alexa experiment, "Alexa was getting a billion interactions a week, but most of those conversations were trivial commands to play music or ask about the weather." Those questions aren't monetizable.

Amazon also tried to partner with companies for Alexa skills, so a voice command could buy a Domino's pizza or call an Uber, and Amazon could get a kickback. The report says: "By 2020, the team stopped posting sales targets because of the lack of use." The team also tried to paint Alexa as a halo product with users who are more likely to spend at Amazon, even if they aren't shopping by voice, but studies of that theory found that the "financial contribution" of those users "often fell short of expectations."

In [a public note](#) to employees, Jassy said the company still has "conviction in pursuing" Alexa, but that's after making huge cuts to the Alexa team. One employee told Business Insider that currently, "There's no clear directive for devices" in the future, and that since the hardware isn't profitable, there's no clear incentive to keep iterating on popular products. That lack of direction led to the internally controversial [\\$1,000 Astro robot](#), which is basically an Amazon Alexa on wheels. Business Insider's tracking now puts Alexa in third place in the US voice-assistant wars, with the Google Assistant at 81.5 million users, Apple's Siri at 77.6 million, and Alexa at 71.6 million.

We have to wonder: Is time running out for Big Tech voice assistants? Everyone seems to be struggling with them. Google expressed [basically identical problems](#) with the Google Assistant business model last month. There's an inability to monetize the simple voice commands most consumers actually want to make, and all of Google's attempts to monetize assistants with [display ads](#) and company partnerships haven't worked. With the product sucking up server time and being a big money loser, Google responded just like Amazon by cutting resources to the division.

While Google and Amazon hurt each other with an at-cost pricing war, Apple's smart speaker plans focused more on the bottom line. The original HomePod's \$350 price was a lot more expensive than the competition, but that was probably a more sustainable business model. Apple's model [didn't land with consumers](#), though, and the OG HomePod was killed in 2021. There's still a \$99 "mini" version floating around, and Apple isn't giving up on the idea of a big speaker, with [a comeback](#) supposedly in the works. Siri can at least be a loss leader for iPhone sales, but Apple is also [hunting around](#) for more continual revenue from ads.

CLUB MEETING and ZOOM

The meeting time is 1100 on Saturday morning at the Lurie Civic Building on the St Petersburg College campus in Seminole. Turn west at the light at 113th St N and about 92nd Ave N. It's the first building on the north side. Here is a link to a Google map: [Google Maps](#). There are a few parking spots in front the Chamber building but double parking is fine since we will be able to find the owner to move his vehicle if necessary. Alternately if you go another 100 yards past you can park in the college parking lot. Below is the Zoom information, same as last month. The ZOOM meeting is limited to 40 minutes so I will start it early and restart it to cover the whole meeting.

Topic: Bill Williams' Zoom Meeting
Time: This is a recurring meeting Meet anytime

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/2737114584?pwd=d1BETHVOQ21vWWZXZ0lYQ0FIWWtldz09>
Meeting ID: 273 711 4584
Passcode: worm

CLUB NETS

Check in on the club net Thursdays at 1930 and 2000 (or at the end of the 2M net). 2M at 146.850 – with a tone of 146.2. Our 6M net runs after our regular 2M net on 53.150 – 1MHz offset 146.2 tone.

LOCAL NETS

MONDAY

1830 147.060+ no tone	St Pete ARC daily net	St Petersburg
1900 144.210 USB	CARS, vertical polarization	Clearwater
1900 147.135 +146.2	Zephyrhills ARC	Zephyrhills
2000 147.165+ 136.5	Brandon ARS	from Brandon
2000 50.135	Pinellas ARK	Pinellas County
2030 NI4CE system	EAGLE Net, NTS traffic net,	NI4CE system
2030 145.450	Pinellas ARK	Pinellas County

TUESDAY

1830 147.060 no tone	St Pete ARC daily net	from St Petersburg
1900 50.200 USB	6M net	Brandon ARS
1900 28.365 USB	10M Net	Clearwater
1900 NI4CE system	WCF Section VHF ARES	NI4CE system
1930 145.170 & 442.4 both pl 156.7	Pinellas ACS net	Clearwater
1930 444.900 +141.3	Sheriff's Tactical ARC	Tampa
2000 NI4CE system	WCF Skywarn net	NI4CE system
2000 147.105+ 146.2	Tampa ARC net	from Tampa
2000 28.365 USB	simplex	Brandon ARS
2030 NI4CE system	EAGLE Net, NTS traffic net	NI4CE system
2100 28.465 USB	10/10 net	from Orlando
1900 146.490 simplex	3 RD Tuesday monthly, Hillsborough Co ARES simplex Net	

WEDNESDAY

1830 147.060 no tone	St Pete ARC daily net	from St Petersburg
1900 147.165 + 136.5	Humpday Net	from Brandon
1930 52.020 simplex	Suncoast 6'ers	from St Petersburg
1930 NI4CE system	WCF Section Digital Info Ne	NI4CE system
2000 147.105 146.2	Greater Tampa CERT net	from Tampa
2000 146.97- 146.2	Clearwater ARS	from Clearwater
2030 NI4CE system	EAGLE Net, NTS traffic net	NI4CE system
2100 NI4CE system	Tampa Bay Traders Net	non-affiliated
0000-2359 HF Winlink	Winlink Wednesday Net https://winlinkwednesday.net/reminder.html	

THURSDAY

1800 146.52 simplex	Hillsborough ARES/RACES	North Tampa
1830 147.060 no tone	St Pete ARC daily net	from St Petersburg
1900 444.750 +146.2	Fusion net	from Tampa
1915 224.660- no tone	St Pete ARC	from St Petersburg
1930 146.6385 -127.3	Lakeland ARC	from Lakeland
1930 444.225 + 146.2	Hillsborough ARES/RACES	from Tampa
1930 146.850- 146.2	Wormhole	from Pinellas Co
2000 53.150 -1MHz 146.2	Wormhole	from Pinellas Co
2030 NI4CE system	EAGLE Net, NTS traffic net	NI4CE system

FRIDAY

1830 147.060 no tone	St Pete ARC daily net	from St Petersburg
1900 3.830 LSB	Brandon 80M Net	from Brandon
2030 NI4CE system	EAGLE Net, NTS traffic net	NI4CE system

SATURDAY

0730 3.940 (7.281 Alt.)+/- QRM	WCF Section HF Net	from WCF
1830 147.060 no tone	St Pete ARC daily net	from St Petersburg
2030 NI4CE system	EAGLE Net, NTS traffic net	NI4CE system

SUNDAY

0800 3.933	Florida Traders Net	non-affiliated
1830 147.060 no tone	St Pete ARC daily net	from St Petersburg
1930 NI4CE system	WCF Section Net	NI4CE system
2000 147.550 simplex	550 Simplex Net	Pinellas County
2030 NI4CE system	EAGLE Net, NTS traffic net	NI4CE system
2100 144.210 USB	Clearwater ARS	vertical orientation

FOR SALE / WANTED

Anyone having something for sale or who might be looking for an item let me know. I will not print phone numbers or email addresses unless specifically told to since this newsletter might end up on the web. The exception is when I get the information off the web. If you are a member of the Wormhole then you can ask club members for the persons contact information. If you are not a member ... why not? OK, if you are not a member you can contact me at the email address at the end of this newsletter, I will give you the information to contact the person involved. If you want to see anything here and you are coming to the meeting let the seller know, maybe he can bring it.

FOR SALE,

See Bill AG4QX for the following: most from SK estate, make me an offer.

- *Heathkit HW-101 Transceiver \$40 looks rough
- *Heathkit HD-1215 Phone patch \$15 looks ok
- *Drake WV-5 wattmeter \$90 looks ok
- *Heath Cantenna dummy load, 1 gal oil load, \$50

This stuff is from Ray KD4HUW

- *Icom AH-4 antenna tuner \$175.00
- *MFJ-616 Speech Intelligibility Enhancer \$90.00

Dean W8IM wants to make room in his closet.

352-255-1431 or w8im @arrl.net or the Wormhole and SPA*RC nets

*Meade 2080AT -LNT refracting telescope, little used original owner, original box, tripod, manual, some extra lenses, complete. \$100.00.



HAMFESTS

2023

- April 8** Dade City, EPARS Tailgate, 37745 Church Ave, \$5 buyers, \$10 sellers, talkin 146.880 - 146.2,
- April 15** **TARCFest** TARC Clubhouse, 22nd St at the river, \$5 entry including tailgate, a few inside tables reserved in advance, talkin on 147.105 +146.2, license testing after, more info at <http://hamclub.org/>
- April 29-30** **Florida QSO Party** <https://floridaqsoparty.org/>
- April 29** New Port Richey, Gulf Coast ARC, Millienium 10005 Ridge Road, \$5, talkin on 146.670 - 146.2, contact Al at aj4ja@icloud.com for more info
- May 19-21** **Xenia, Ohio, Dayton Hamfest**, tickets \$30 at the door, tailgate \$30, 10x10 booth \$705
- May 27** **WormFest 2021, Pinellas Park, admission FREE, tailgate free, Freedom Lake Park, 9990 46th St N, southeast corner of US 19 and 49th Street, 33782. Park opens at sunrise for vendor setup, hamfest starts at 0800. Talk-in on 146.850 – 146.2. All FREE! For a map and directions see <http://www.TheWormholeSociety.org> .**
- August 19** **TARCFest** TARC Clubhouse, 22nd St at the river, \$5 entry including tailgate, a few inside tables reserved in advance, talkin on 147.105 +146.2, license testing after, more info at <http://hamclub.org/>
- October 21** Bradenton, MARCIFest 2023, 2113 Morgan Johnson Road, talkin 146.820 – 100.0, for more info goto <https://www.manatee-arc.org/> contact Michael Ryan K4CVL at 941-376-6453

December 8 & 9 **Plant City, the 2023 Tampa Bay Hamfest and West Central Florida Section Convention**, Friday and Saturday, at the Strawberry Festival grounds, admission \$10, 16x40ft tailgate space \$10, electric \$10, for information contact Bill Williams AG4QX, chairman@fgcarc.org or go to <http://www.tampabayhamfest.org> or you can just ask me, Jim or Dee at a meeting ;-)

2024

February 9-11 **Orlando Hamcation**, Central Florida Fairgrounds, 4603 West Colonial Drive, Tickets \$20 in advance, \$25 after Dec 21 and at the door. Talk-in 146.760 - PL 103.5 analog or Fusion. Also D-Star is on 146.820 -, all the information at www.hamcation.com or call 407-841-0874. There is also an AM low power Information Station on AM 610.



Mid January	Adventure Run, Honeymoon Island
Last full weekend January	Winter Field Day https://www.winterfieldday.com/
Late January	Gasparilla celebration
Late February	West Central Florida Tech Conference http://arrlwcfc.org/wcf-special-events/wcftechconference/
March	MS 150 Citrus Tour bike ride http://www.citrustour.org/register.php
March/April	MS Walks
March/April	Mass Casualty Exercises
Late April	Southeastern VHF Society Conference, http://www.svhfs.org
Late April	Florida QSO Party
Mid May	March For Babies (was March of Dimes) https://www.marchforbabies.org/Registration/Events
Mid May	Annual Armed Forces Crossband Test
Mid-May	Florida Hurricane Exercise
Late May	Dayton Hamfest
May, Memorial Day Weekend	Wormfest
First weekend in June	Museum Ships on the Air

Fourth weekend in June	Field Day http://www.arrl.org/contests/announcements/fd/
July 3/4	Midnight Run in Largo http://www.kiwanismidnightrun.com/
Third weekend in August	International Lighthouse/Lightship Week https://illw.net/
September	Run for All Children's
October, 3 rd weekend	JOTA, Scout Jamboree-on-the-AIR (around 14.280MHz)
Early December	ALS bike ride in Walsingham Park
December, Second weekend	Tampa Bay Hamfest http://www.fgcarc.org/



YOUR WORMHOLE OFFICERS

Bill AG4QX is President and editor of this newsletter, the Vice President position is open, Treasurer is Jim KD4MZL, Paul KA4IOX is the Secretary, Dee N4GD is the Repeater Trustee and Mike KV0OOM is our webmaster.

YOUR WORMHOLE REPEATERS

53.150 -1Mz PL 146.2

442.625 +5Mz PL 146.2

146.850 - 600Kz PL 146.2

The Wormhole 2M and 440 repeaters are both now dual mode Yaesu DR-2X. FM analog as always and Yaesu Fusion, a C4FM digital mode.

The Wormhole website is at: <http://www.TheWormholeSociety.org>.

West Central Florida Section website: <http://www.arrlwcf.org/>.

The ARRL website is at: <http://www.arrl.org/>

This newsletter is written for The Glorious Society of the Wormhole, an ARRL affiliated amateur radio club located around the Seminole section of Pinellas County Florida. Anyone wishing to be added or removed from The Glorious Society of the Wormhole mailings please write to me at the address below and thy will be done.

73,
Bill Williams

AG4QX

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