

Hello fellow DXers.....

VE6WZ will be QRT from HF bands above 160m.

I wanted to share with you guys that on Tuesday Aug 27, I suffered a main lift cable failure on my crank up tower that destroyed all of my Yagi's and the US tower. At the time of the failure, I was beside the tower (doing work) in my man lift while it was going up. The tower was almost at full height (at 100') when the main lift cable broke. About 400 pounds of Yagis came crashing down almost instantly from 100'. I was in the manlift, and my reaction was to "go down" into the man basket when I heard the crash. This is what saved me. The man basket was somewhat damaged and bent. I am totally ok, with not a scratch, but the cage of the man basket protected me. There was debris, bolts, brackets, tubing, pieces of the booms flying everywhere, but somehow, the man lift was not knocked down. After the collapse, one of the 80m Yagi elements was laying on the man basket, but I was able to push it off, and lower the man lift to get out. The tower, my 80m-40m Yagis are completely destroyed. Unrepairable. The high band Optibeam is probably repairable. See photo below.

Why did this happen?

It was my mistake.

I am building a 4 element 160m, 6 direction parasitic array and needed to modify the shunt feed for the US tower crankup. The crankup is the driver for the parasitic elements. I clamped brackets to the outside of each section to support shunt-wire standoffs. These clamps were working well, but after high wind, some of the shunt wires moved and caused the support arms to bend inward. This bending shifted one (or more) of the brackets to bend INWARD into the inner moving sections, then toward the main lift cable and basically sliced the main lift cable. The point is, this failure was not something that would have happened normally, but only because of my poor engineering/ modifications.

So, going forward I have decided to "simplify" my remote operation (for now) and focus on 160m. I plan to remove (and sell for scrap) the 2,000 lb US tower, and replace it with another 90' irrigation tubing vertical to complete my 4 element triangular 160m TX array. Someday I may add an 80m vertical TX array. Or even some high band stuff. The fact is, as some of you may know, I have been marooned on 160m anyway, rarely TX above 40m, let alone 80m.

I have owned the US tower crankup for 26 years, (beginning at my city QTH). The 80m-40m 2 el Yagis have been in service for 22 years and I have had great enjoyment using them. On 40m I have worked DXCC Honour roll, 336 confirmed, and have 293 DXCC confirmed on 80m. I really wanted to make it to 300 DXCC on 80m, but maybe that will encourage me to build a vertical array. I have decided not to replace the tower. I want to simplify my remote station, and looking back over the last few years, I have been almost exclusively active on 160m. I also want to thank Don ve6JY for introducing me to MW BCB DXing. That has been great fun, and quite enjoyable to see what AM BCB DX I hear using the Perses radios recording each night.

Anyway.....a long story, but I wanted to share this with the "local" community since the VE6WZ remote station will be taking a different direction.

Steve, VE6WZ.

Steve has done a 14 minute video about the collapse and his plans for the future (160m array):
<https://youtu.be/6tHo59XKHkA?si=YIIyKhIYpwzaCIVl>



