

# The Nursing Home Loop

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This past summer I installed a Carolina Windom across my yard with the vertical part of the feed line dropping near the edge of my roof and about midway along the back of my deck. My XYL objected to that “ugly wire” hanging over her head and so, to keep peace in the family, I spent \$1100.00 on an awning to cover the deck and hide that “ugly wire” from view.

I also opted to take down my other wire antennas and my vertical to gain even more favor from the XYL, thinking the Windom would cover everything I needed. Well the Windom is a fine antenna, but I have three radios and switching the antenna from one to the other got to be too much fuss, besides I sometimes like to have two radios on at the same time on different bands. Also, the Windom needed to be grounded when not in use in case of electrical storms.

My solution was an indoor antenna. I first thought of the attic, however, my house is a ranch style with very little room above the ceiling, so after some thought I came up with what my ham friends like to call (because of my age, I suppose) the Nursing Home Antenna. It consists of a length of wire stapled on top of the trim molding on the walls just a couple inches down from the ceiling. It's not too noticeable and when I find some paint the same color of the walls, it will be completely invisible (Photo 1).

My shack is a small ten-foot square room, so the total wire length was forty feet. The loop is fed at the center of one wall with 300-ohm TV wire, as shown in the circled area in Photo 2. It is terminated



**Photo 1—The loop runs around the perimeter of my 10 x 10 ft. ham shack at the top of the walls, near the ceiling.**

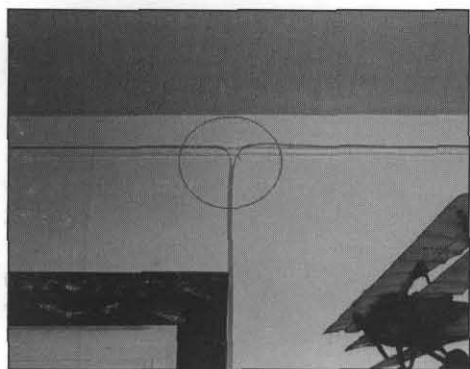
at my Elecraft K1 by connection to a BNC/dual binding post connector—detailed views are in Photos 3 and 4. The K1 loads perfectly on all four bands (15, 20, 30, 40) with the internal tuner and without a balun. I'm not worried about feedline radiation or loss, since the length of the 300 ohm feedline is quite short.

At first, I was doubtful about the performance of such a small antenna, especially being inside of a room. My fears were put to rest quickly, however, as my very first contacts on 15 meters were with stations in Italy and England! I have since worked Ireland, Germany, France, and a couple more Italian stations, besides making a number of stateside contacts—all

using 5 watts. I was also pleasantly surprised at the reduced QRN on 40 meters using this antenna.

My friends were only teasing when they named this the Nursing Home Antenna, but it would certainly be an option for someone in a situation where erecting an outdoor antenna was prohibited. That includes a nursing home, of course, but this antenna could also be a good “stealth” alternative for condos, apartments or covenant-restricted homes. I think all hams like to experiment with antennas, and I have had many a bright idea crash and burn—but this one is a definite winner.

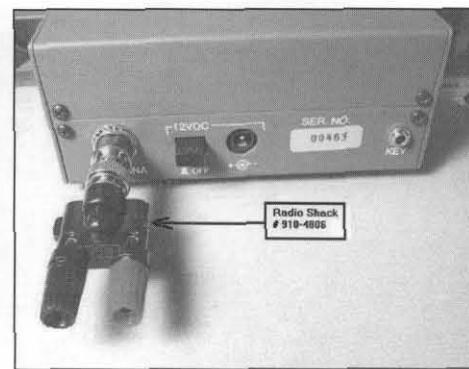
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**Photo 2—The feedpoint is located in the center of one wall.**



**Photo 3—The antenna is connected to the K1, which tunes it without a balun.**



**Photo 4—The connection is made with a binding post to BNC adapter.**