Hello again W2DRZ controller users. This is the third Newsletter this month. I don't expect to be sending them this often in the future, but I have been busy with the software this month.
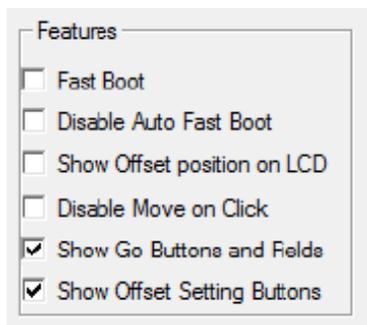
First I'd like to mention that I am now putting all the previous newsletters on our web site in pdf format. They are listed in the frame of the welcome page. So if you did not receive an earlier letter you can read it on our site at: http://www.w2drz.ramcoinc.com.

I have made some improvements and fixed one small bug in DrzTrack, and the new version, 5.12, is now available on the site. You can also download it directly: http://www.w2drz.ramcoinc.com/DrzTrackInstall_512.exe .

There are no firmware changes so you can continue to use firmware version 5.10 – or upgrade to that version if you have not yet loaded it. Remember, you can install firmware updates yourself using the boot loader built in to DrzTrack (if you already have firmware version 5.01 or later). See the boot load information here: http://www.w2drz.ramcoinc.com/DrzTrack-V5/BootLoader.htm .


Tracking Offsets

So what is new? Well, the most obvious change when first starting V5.12 DrzTrack is that the large button labeled "Local Panel" is gone. It has been changed to a menu item at the top to conserve screen space and make room for a new feature. That new feature is called Tracking Offset Setting. This consists of two new buttons that may be used to calculate and set an offset to the antenna position as read by your azimuth or elevation encoder.

Features

☐ Fast Boot
☐ Disable Auto Fast Boot
☐ Show Offset position on LCD
☐ Disable Move on Click
☑ Show Go Buttons and Fields
☑ Show Offset Setting Buttons

However this feature may not be useful to everyone so the buttons are not shown, initially.
You enable them by going into the setup screen and using the checkbox as shown here.
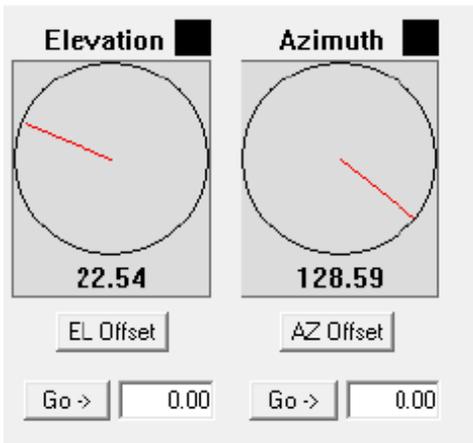
You can also enable or disable the Go buttons here. So you can have Go buttons, Offset buttons, or both. Here what the buttons look like when both are enabled.

Ok, so how do the offset buttons work? Well you may recall that in the Position Offset tab of the setup dialog there is a section for tracking offsets per band. The new buttons do the same thing, except that they can calculate the offset automatically and you do not have to go to the setup screens to do it. This can be handy if you are in the middle of a contact and discover that you need to apply a new offset. Simply stop automatic tracking and manually adjust so you are pointing at the moon. Then click the Az or El Offset button to apply the offset.
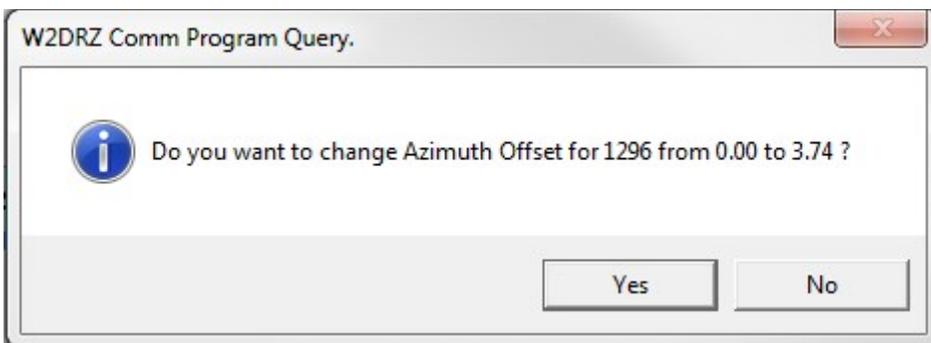
You will get a warning message like this. Once you confirm the message the offset will be applied and you can go back to automatic tracking. When you do this, the black numerals in the compass will show the corrected position. There will also be red numbers that show the actual position of the mount as read by the encoder.
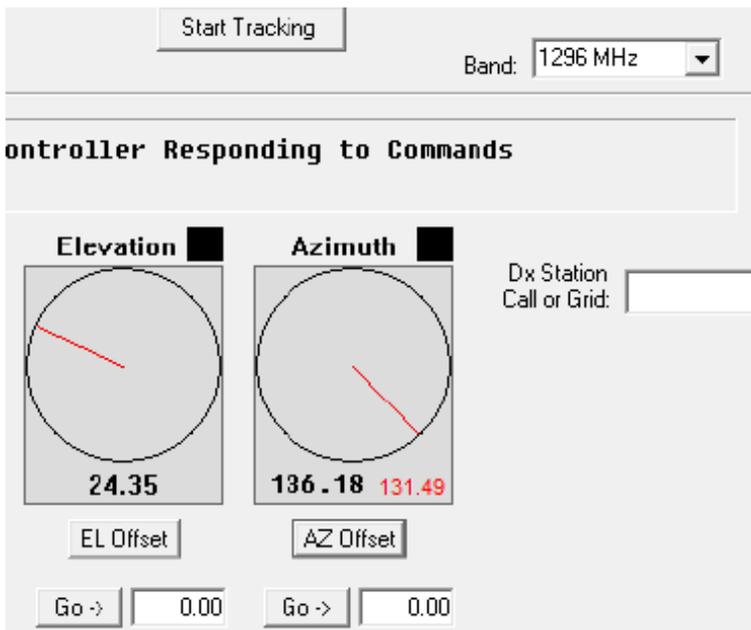
It looks like this. Here you can see that the azimuth has been offset but not the elevation. 136.18 degrees is the actual direction of radiation (to the moon). The red numbers show that the azimuth encoder is reading 131.49 degrees.

If you need to adjust the offset again, just realign the antenna correctly and click the offset button again. If you want to totally remove the offset, it is easiest to go into the setup dialog, Position Offsets tab, and set the offset for the band to zero.

More Call3.txt Issues

Ok, that's it for the new offset buttons. Next, there was a small bug in DrzTrack version 5.11. When it was initially started the path to the Call3.txt file was not set. So callsign lookup would not work. Once a correct path was entered, the path would be saved correctly and future restarts would be ok. That is fixed in version 5.12. The path is set to ".\", That tells the program to look for Call3.txt in the DrzTrack installation folder. You will most likely want to change that path to match the copy of Call3 that is used by WSJT or another program that may use the file. For more details see newsletter number 1.

Keyboard Issues

A certain well known EME operator was having problems with DrzTrack. Periodically it would simply disappear from his screen. The problem was finally discovered to be that he occasionally hit the escape key when trying to use another program that was also on his screen. If the focus happened to be on DrzTrack, then DrzTrack would shut down – as that is the default behavior of the escape key in Windows. I suspect this problem might plague others as well, so in version 5.12 the escape key function has been removed. Now you must use either the Exit button or the 'X' at the top right corner to close DrzTrack.

That's it for now. Because of the bug in version 5.11, it has been removed from the web site download page. Use version 5.12 instead.

Very 73 – Russ K2TXB