

THE eQRM

MARCH 2018



March is here. Is it time for you to put up a modest little new antenna or two?

The BVARA in Beaver County Pennsylvania

Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association

W3SGJ

Repeater 145.310 PL 131.8

On the cover:

2017 CQ WW CW SO4M Amateur Radio Contest Station Poland :

This is a collective effort by 4 operators and 1 station owner - hence the call sign SO4M - Single Owner 4 Men. The station is located near Olsztyn in NE Poland. This area of Poland is known for lousy propagation all year round and nasty weather during the cold months. This is the SO4M contest site antenna farm; on the left a 14 MHz tower, next a 3 L 40 m Yagi, further 15 and 10 meter antennas. There is a vertical directional array for 80 and 160 on the right also. The SO4M Poland Amateur Radio Station Antenna farm—Nothing modest here, Very Nice!

Get ready !



BVARA event in May.

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Check into our nets

Wednesday 2 Meter

8:30PM on 145.310 MHz PL 131.8

Wednesday 10 Meter

9:00PM on 28.470 MHz

The eQRM is a publication of the Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association (BVARA) and is Copyright 2010 - 2017. All material presented in this publication is not necessarily the views of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), BVARA, or members of the said organizations. If you would like to contact the editor of the eQRM, please email David at kc3bxc.73@gmail.com. Please visit us online at www.W3SGJ.org. To subscribe to our newsletter, please visit W3SGJ.org/newsletter.php

Who We Are

2018 BVARA OFFICERS

President: Jack Spencer, KZ3Z

Vice President: Mark Kavic, KB3LED

2nd Vice Pres.: Rob Miller, N3OJL

Treasurer: Pam Spencer, W3PMS

Secretary: Norm Trunick, K3NJT

Director: Bob Winkle, N3AZZ

Director: Bob Croft, KB3RHN

Trustee: Rich Soltesz, K3SOM

MONTHLY MEETINGS

E-Board meetings are now held the Saturday before the monthly club meeting.

VE testing begins at 5:00 PM.

Regular meetings are at 6:30 PM

All meetings are held at the
Beaver County
Emergency Services Center
351 14th Street
Ambridge, PA 15003
on the second Thursday of every month
(unless otherwise stated).

2018

Mar 08

Apr 12

May 10

Jun 14

Jul 12

Aug 25 Corn Roast

Sep 13

Oct 11

Nov 08

Dec Christmas Party TBA



This Month

BVARA Club Feature Presentation *This Month:*



Speaker:

Rich Soltesz
K3SOM

Topic:

All Those Knobs and Buttons – What Do They Do?

Including:

Continuing with our BVARA Presentation Series this year, our topic this month deals with a problem that always confounds new hams or hams with new radios. What do all of those controls do? How do I find out the optimum setting for each one? Do they interact with each other? Why do I need so many? Why is there no remote control for the radio? Good grief, this one is actually two controls on a concentric shaft! You get the idea, complexity without sensible ergonomics, or perhaps complexity as a marketing tool to gain a competitive sales advantage. And we haven't even talked about the 'menu' system!

We'll begin by taking a look at a high level to just categorize which ones work on transmit and which ones work on receive. Next, we'll develop another high-level list of basic functions that we want to do, for example, how do we turn the thing on? Before we do that, we need to connect an antenna and maybe an external speaker if no internal speaker is provided. If we plan on transmitting, a microphone or a key for sending Morse Code is required. Digital modes normally require a computer and an interface, but that will come later. Now we're on a roll!

But wait, there's more! We'll demonstrate many of the effects of each control with recorded sound files and some diagrams where appropriate so that you have a better understanding of what that control is doing, what it is changing, and so much more. If you are a new ham or have purchased a new radio, this is one exciting presentation that you won't want to miss.

Rich's Background:

Extra Class Ham, Licensed since 1962, VE,
B.S. Electrical Engineering



More this Month

Weekly

The Freedom Square Diner in Monaca has a great wait staff. Come let them take your order.

Thursday Morning Breakfast
(or you can have lunch)



The BVARA meets every Thursday at the Freedom Square Diner in Center Township, just to the right of the Cinemark Center Township Marketplace at 09:30 AM. All radio amateurs and those interested in amateur radio are encouraged to come join us at our Thursday morning breakfast.

See you Thursday at



The eQRM urges all Beaver County licensed amateurs to participate in the County's RACES and ARES programs.

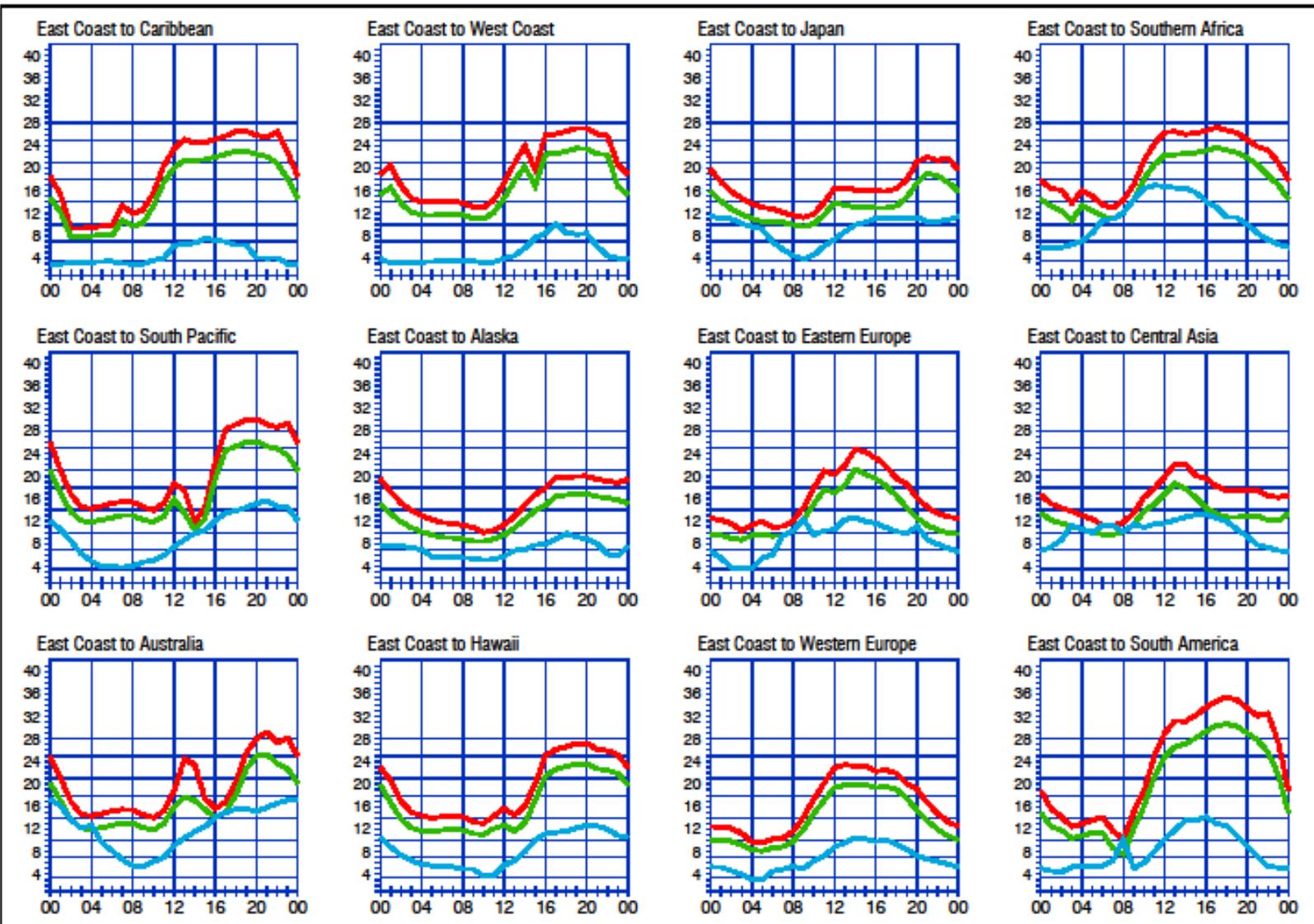
Any Beaver County Amateur that is interested in participating in the RACES/ARES programs can do so by checking into the Beaver County Public Service Net which meets every Monday evening at 8:30 PM local time on the N3TN 146.850 MHz repeater (131.8 PL)

RACES / ARES

The eQRM Urges All County Hams to Participate.



Propagation



When are the bands open? These charts, generated using CAPman, show probabilities for average HF propagation in the month of **March** for the paths indicated. The horizontal axes show Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), and the vertical axes frequency in MHz. On 10% of the days of this period, the highest frequencies propagated will be at least as high as the upper red curves (HPF, highest possible frequency) and on 50% of the days they will be at least as high as the green curves (MUF, classical maximum usable frequency). The blue curves show the lowest usable frequency (LUF) for a 1500-W CW transmitter. For SSB or a lower transmitter power, the LUF will be somewhat higher than the blue curves indicate. See Oct 1994 *QST*, pp 27-30, and Feb 1995 *QST*, pp 34-36, for more details. The predictions assume an observed 2800-MHz solar flux value of 73. This is a Very Low level of solar activity. See the detailed propagation tables on *The ARRL Antenna Book CD-ROM*.

PROPAGATION

The East Coast propagation chart listed here is for March 2018.

If you would like more information in general, please visit <http://www.arrl.org/propagation>

Get your License or Upgrade

If you are interested in getting your first FCC license or upgrading your current amateur radio license, the Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association holds VE Test sessions (Volunteer Examinations) the second Thursday of each month at the Nine One One center in Ambridge Pennsylvania prior to our BVARA Club meeting. If there is no meeting there is no test session. Please come take your test with us!



For more information, contact :
Rich Soltesz, K3SOM
(724) 847-0610
k3som@arrl.net

VE TEST SESSIONS

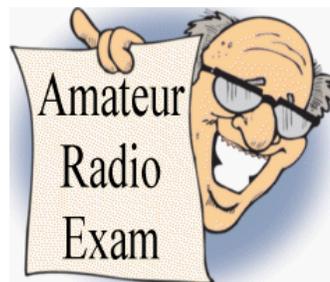
Beaver County Emergency Services Center 351 14th Street Ambridge, PA 15003.
Tests begin promptly at 5 pm on the same day as BVARA Club Meetings
(the second Thursday of the month).
All classes of amateur radio license tests are administered.

ALL candidates MUST bring ALL of the following:

1. 2 forms of I.D. - one MUST be a photo I.D.
2. A pencil AND a pen with blue or black ink.
3. The original AND a photocopy of any valid ham license.
4. The original AND a photocopy of any C.S.C.E.
5. The test fee of \$15 - cash, check, or money order.

New License and Upgrades

BVARA VE Testing



Here's the list of participants in our VE process this past month:

Dave Yessel – KC3KUQ, Freedom, PA Technician*

Tony Salopek – KC3KUR, Pleasantville, PA Technician*

Suzanne McCarey – KC3KUS, Rochester, PA Technician*

Mark Cleveland – KC3KPS, Mt. Lebanon, PA General

Jim Allen - KC3IXE, Chippewa Twp., PA General

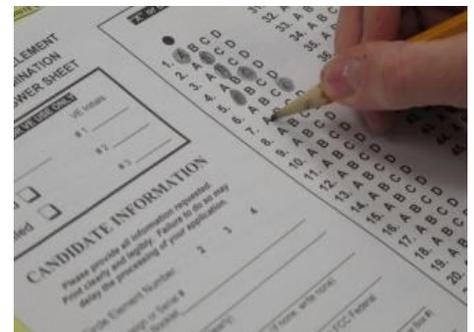
Alex Ward – KC3KPT, Pittsburgh, PA General

*Eligible for BVARA membership at no cost for 2018

Don't miss the



BVARA event in May.



Membership Information

By becoming a BVARA member you help secure the future of Amateur Radio in Beaver County. Additionally, the BVARA receives a portion of each ARRL

membership you purchase!

Join the BVARA and ARRL

Sign up for:	Price	
<input type="checkbox"/> BVARA full membership	20.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> BVARA student membership	15.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> BVARA associate membership	10.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> BVARA Child under 21 at home membership	5.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> One year ARRL membership	49.00	_____
A Club Donation		_____
ARRL Member? Yes No	Total Enclosed	_____

Your License Class (If you have one.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Technician	Name _____
<input type="checkbox"/> General	Address _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Advanced	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Extra Class	Email _____
	Phone _____
	Your Call sign _____
	Your Signature _____

Make check or money order payable to:

The Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association, P.O. Box 424

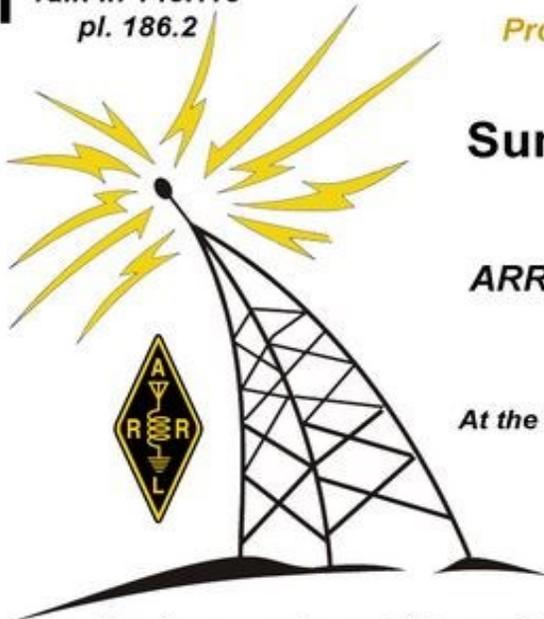
South Heights, Pa 15081

Warren County HAMFEST 2018

Talk-in 145.110
pl. 186.2

Presented by **BSA, Venture Crew 73**

*Providing Emergency & Support Communications
For Community Events.*



Sunday, March 11 8:00am - Noon

**BSA Venture Crew 73 will be hosting an
ARRL sanctioned Hamfest in Youngsville, PA.**

Admission: \$5 donation under 12 FREE

Tables to sell or display items:

Presale \$10 donation per 8' table. (3+ Tables \$8 each).

At the door \$15.00 donation per 8' table. (3+ Tables \$12 each).

Setup 6:00am - 8:00am

**Events include hourly door prizes, VE session,
QSL card checking for ARRL awards.**

Food concessions will be available Starting 7am.

Free license exams will be conducted at 9 am by the Laurel AHRA VE team. Additional tests may be held as needed during the day to accommodate those unable to attend the 9 am test session.

Things you will need to know and bring to your exam.

1. A legal photo ID (driver's license, passport). When no photo ID is available, two forms of identification must be presented:

- a. Non-photo ID/driver's license (some states still have them).
- b. Birth certificate (must have the appropriate seal).
- c. Social security card.
- d. Library card.

e. Utility bill, bank statement or other business correspondence that specifically names the person; or a postmarked envelope addressed to the person at his or her current mailing address as it appears on the Form 605.

2. Students may bring any of the above items and/or a school ID, minor's work permit, report card, or a legal guardian may present a photo ID.

3. Provide your Social Security Number or FRN (FCC Registration Number).

If you do not want to disclose your Social Security Number at the test session you will need to obtain an FRN from the FCC in advance. Those who already have a license issued by the FCC have an FRN (it's on your license). You can obtain an FRN by registering your SSN with the FCC at its website: <https://apps.fcc.gov/coresWeb/publicHome.do>

The instructions are easy to follow. Just click on the "Register" button and follow the instructions.

4. If upgrading your current license.

- a. Bring a copy of your current license for our records. Original or reference copy.
- b. Original and a copy for our records any unexpired Certificate of Successful Completion of Exam (CSCE) indicating which credit(s) you've earned.

For more information or table reservations Contact:

Russ Bush - N3YD
n3yd@usa.com
814-564-9202

Tim Sampson - K3TMS
k3tms@usa.com



Youngsville Vol. Fire Department

222 East Main Street,

Youngsville, PA 16371

**Use Orchard St. Entrance next to
Post Office, Parking in rear of YVFD**



Contest Corral

March 2018

Check for updates and a downloadable PDF version online at www.arrl.org/contests.

Refer to the contest websites for full rules, scoring information, operating periods or time limits, and log submission information.

Start Date-Time	Finish Date-Time	Bands	Contest Name	Mode	Exchange	Sponsor's Website
3 0000	4 2359	1.8-28	ARRL International DX Contest, SSB	Ph	RS, SP (WVE) or power (DX)	www.arrl.org/arrl-dx
3 0000	10 2359	3.5, 7, 21, 28, 144	Novice Rig Roundup	CW	RST, QTH, name, class	novicerigroundup.com
3 0600	3 0800	7-14	Wake-Up! QRP Sprint	CW	RST, serial, suffix of previous QSO	qrp.ru/contest/wakeup
3 1800	4 1359	1.8-28	Open Ukraine RTTY Championship	Dig	State/province/canton, serial	krs.ho.ua/openrtty
4 0700	4 1100	3.5	UBA Spring Contest, CW	CW	RST, serial, UBA Section (if UBA)	uba.be/hf/contest-rules
4 1200	4 1400	7	SARL Hamnet 40-Meter Simulated Emergency Test	Ph	RS, serial	www.sarl.org.za
4 1200	4 2200	3.5	NSARA Contest	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), county (if Nova Scotia)	nsara.ve1cfy.net
5 2000	5 2130	3.5	RSGB 80-Meter Club Championship, Data	Dig	RST, serial	www.rsgbcc.org/hf
6 0200	6 0400	3.5-28	ARS Spartan Sprint	CW	RST, SPC, power	arsqrp.blogspot.com
6 1900	6 2100	3.5	AGCWYL-CW Party	CW	RST, serial, name	agcw.org/index.php/en
7 1800	7 2200	28	NRAU 10-Meter Activity Contest	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), 6-char grid square	www.nrau.net
7 2000	7 2100	3.5	UKEICC 80-Meter Contest	Ph	4-char grid square	www.ukaicc.com
7 2300	11 2300	7-14	AWA John Rollins Memorial DX Contest	CW	RST, eqpt type, eqpt year	www.antiquewireless.org
10 1000	11 1000	3.5-28	RSGB Commonwealth Contest	CW	RST, serial	www.rsgbcc.org/hf
10 1000	11 1000	50-1296	SARL VHF/UHF Analogue/Digital Contest	Dig	RS, 6-char grid square	www.sarl.org.za
10 1200	11 1200	3.5-28, 144	F9AA Cup, SSB	Ph	RST, serial	www.site.urc.asso.fr
10 1200	11 1200	28	South America 10-Meter Contest	CW Ph	RS(T), CQ zone	sa10m.com.ar
10 1200	11 2359	1.8-50	SKCC Weekend Sprintathon	CW	RST, SPC, name, mbr or "none"	www.skccgroup.com
10 1400	10 2000	3.5-28	AGCW QRP Contest	CW	RST, serial, class, mbr or "NM"	agcw.org/index.php/en
10 1500	11 1500	1.8	Stew Perry Topband Challenge	CW	4-char grid square	www.kkn.net/stew
10 1500	11 2000	3.5-50	Oklahoma QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), county or SPC	k5cm.com/okqp.htm
10 1600	11 1600	3.5-28	EA PSK63 Contest	Dig	RSQ, EA province or serial	concurso.ure.es/en
10 1800	11 0559	3.5	Tesla Memorial HF CW Contest	CW	RST, serial, 4-char grid square	www.radiosport.org.rs
10 1800	11 1800	1.8-50	QCWA QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	Year licensed, name, SPC or QCWA chapter	www.qcwa.org
10 1900	11 1900	1.8-28	Idaho QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), county or SPC	idahoarrl.info
10 2200	10 2300	1.8-28	QRP ARCI Spring Thaw SSB Sprint	Ph	RS, SPC, mbr or power	www.qrparci.org
11 0000	11 0400	3.5-14	North American Sprint, RTTY	Dig	Other's call, your call, serial, name, SPC	ncjweb.com
11 0700	11 1100	144	UBA Spring Contest, 2 Meters	CW Ph	RS(T), serial, UBA Section (if UBA)	uba.be/hf/contest-rules
11 1800	11 2200	3.5	WAB 3.5 MHz Phone	Ph	RS, serial, WAB square or country	web.intermip.net
11 1800	12 0100	All	Wisconsin QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	County or SPC	www.warac.org
12 0000	12 0200	1.8-28	4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint	CW Ph	RS(T), SPC, mbr or power	www.4sqrp.com
13 1700	18 1700	3.5-28, 144	CLARA Chatter Party	CW Ph	RS(T), name, SPC	www.clarayl.ca
14 2000	14 2130	3.5	RSGB 80-Meter Club Championship, CW	CW	RST, serial	www.rsgbcc.org/hf
17 0200	19 0200	3.5-28	BARTG HF RTTY Contest	Dig	RST, serial, 4-digit UTC time	www.bartg.org.uk
17 1200	18 1200	1.8-28	Russian DX Contest	CW Ph	RS(T), 2-char oblast or serial	www.rdxcc.org
17 1400	17 1800	144, 432	AGCW VHF/UHF Contest	CW	RST, serial, power class, 6-char grid	agcw.org/index.php/en
17 1400	18 0200	1.8-144	Louisiana QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), LA Parish or SPC	laqp.louisianacontestclub.org
17 1400	18 2359	All	Virginia QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	Serial, VA county or SPC	www.qsl.net/sterling
17 2000	17 2159	1.8-28	Feld Hell Sprint	Dig	RST, mbr, SPC, grid	sites.google.com/site/feldhellclub
18 0700	18 1100	3.5	UBA Spring Contest, SSB	Ph	RS, serial, UBA section (if UBA)	uba.be/hf/contest-rules
19 0100	19 0300	1.8-28	Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	CW	RST, SPC, mbr or power	qrpcontest.com/pigrun
19 1800	19 2059	3.5-7	Bucharest Contest	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), serial, sector or country code	yo3test201x.blogspot.ro
22 0030	22 0230	3.5-14	NAQCC CW Sprint	CW	RST, SPC, mbr or power	naqcc.info
22 2000	22 2130	3.5	RSGB 80-Meter Club Championship, SSB	Ph	RS, serial	www.rsgbcc.org/hf
24 0000	24 2359	1.8-VHF	FOC QSO Party	CW	RST, name, mbr (if any)	g4foc.org/qsoparty
24 0000	25 2359	1.8-28	CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB	Ph	RS, serial	www.cqwpw.com
25 0600	25 1000	50	UBA Spring Contest, 6 Meters	CW Ph	RS(T), serial, UBA section (if UBA)	uba.be/hf/contest-rules
28 0000	28 0200	1.8-28	SKCC Sprint	CW	RST, SPC, name, mbr or power	www.skccgroup.com
28 2000	28 2100	3.5	UKEICC 80-Meter Contest	CW	4-char grid square	www.ukaicc.com
31 1200	1 1159	1.8-28	Russian WW MultiMode Contest	CW Ph Dig	RST(Q), 2-char oblast or serial	www.rdrclub.ru
31 1200	1 1200	3.5-28	UKEI DX Contest, CW	CW	RST, serial, UK/EI district code, serial	www.ukaicc.com

All dates refer to UTC and may be different from calendar dates in North America. No contest activity occurs on the 60-, 30-, 17-, and 12-meter bands. Mbr = Membership number. Serial = Sequential number of the contact. SPC = State, Province, DXCC Entity. XE = Mexican state. Listings in blue indicate contests sponsored by ARRL or NCJ. The latest time to make a valid contest QSO is the minute listed in the "Finish Time" column. *Data for Contest Corral is maintained on the WA7BNM Contest Calendar at www.contestcalendar.com and is extracted for publication in QST 2 months prior to the month of the contest. ARRL gratefully acknowledges the support of Bruce Horn, WA7BNM, in providing this service.*

Bits and Pieces

The March Spring weather here in Western Pennsylvania has been quite changing. Rain one day, snow the next, sunny & bright just a little the next. Do not fret! Nice Spring weather is on the way. Sooner than you know it will be nice, clear, sunny and warm. Have you got that warm-weather ham project planned and ready? You still have time.



This month I spoke to Jeff Waite, K3SLK, General Class. The time I spent with Jeff will be one of my most memorable visits. Jeff has such a wonderment of all radio in general, amateur radio in particular. Jeff has that fresh childlike wonderment when it comes to radio. I could feel this by the way he spoke of radio and the answers he responded with. For Jeff it's all about radio. He conveyed his love for rag chewing and talking to people from other countries. He has an infectious excitement about radio that just made my day...

So Jeff can I interview you? *Why?* It is for our Club monthly newsletter. It won't take long and it won't hurt, much. Jeff "Okay"...

I never built a crystal radio but I had one when I was a kid. It was a store bought one that came with a Million Dollar Man kit my folks got me. I could hear radio stations and it didn't need batteries! It was cool! CB radio, yes I used it to keep track of my father. Dad flew ultra-light aircraft; we used CB radios to keep in contact. I started into amateur radio as a Boy Scout. Scouting teaches being prepared. I think having a Ham radio will keep me informed if something went wrong, a natural disaster or worse. When I passed my General exam, I borrowed a radio from the BVARA, Jack Spencer KZ3Z built me a 'dipole' for ten meters. It worked great! Since then I got my own HF radio, Denny KR3DX and I built another antenna that I can tune for more than just ten meters.

I don't care for ARRL, radio, club politics. I just enjoy radio. It's all about enjoying the frequencies of radio for me.

My favorite answer from Jeff; So where do you see Ham radio in ten years... Waite for it, Waite for it... "Just like it is now! I am keeping my current Ham radio till I die!" I just had so much fun talking with Jeff K3SLK I know you will too! If you see him or hear him on the air be careful you just might catch his "love for radio" infection. The good news is it won't make you sick, you will just enjoy the radio hobby more.

Be courteous on the air, be safe and have fun with your hobby.

Till next month, 73 KC3BXC.

Interview with a Ham

Monthly Interview with a Ham operator

Name : *Jeff Waite*

Call sign : *K3SLK, General Class*

Year of first FCC License : *July14,2011*

Did you ever make a crystal radio? *No, but I had one. It was purchased.*

Did you ever listen to short wave radio? *No, but I did use one to diagnose a noisy transformer that was causing interference.*

Did you ever use CB radio? *Yes.*

How did you get interested in Ham Radio? *I was in scouting, they always taught us to be prepared. My brother had his license and a two meter handheld.*

Did you ever build a ham radio? *No.*

What was your first radio? *A Wouxun 2m / 440cm handheld, first HF was a Kenwood TS 520.*

What was your first antenna? *The Wouxun rubber duck, then for HF, a wire and coax 10 meter dipole.*

What is your current antenna & radio? *A 50 foot dipole and a Ten Tech Omni A radio.*

What is your favorite mode to operate? *Voice on HF SSB.*

Your most memorable contact? *Russia, from my house!*

What was your most fun contact? *Talking to Denny, KR3DX.*

What part of the hobby interests you the most? (field day, home brewing, contesting, Hamfest, restoring old radios)

Rag chewing with someone I never met usually overseas. I like to compare "How life is" where they live.

Have you ever been on a fox hunt? *No, but it sounds like fun.*

Do you use a logging program? (what is it) *Net Book, QRZ.*

Would you purchase a Software Defined Radio? *Yes, I have considered a Flex radio.*

Do you use automation with your ham radio? *No.*

If you had a magic wand and could change ham radio what would you change and why? *I would keep the desire for social power out of the ARRL and Ham clubs (no politics), let it be about radio.*

Where do you see ham radio in ten years? *Exactly as it is now, I am keeping my current radio till I die.*

It's Your Dime

Remember back when you could communicate by “Pay Phone” for ten cents? This page is for anyone who wants to communicate with the BVARA community and beyond. Please send me your article that you would like posted on this page. Please, only topics and language in good taste. As the editor I reserve the option to post it or ignore it. Send your dime to me at: kc3bxc.73@gmail.com

Amateur Radio is Not for Talking



When the topic of ham radio comes up with normal people (that is, non-hams), I usually get asked the question “Who Do You Talk To?” I always come up with some vague and lame answer like “people all over the world” that gets me by.

I finally figured out what the problem is: amateur radio is not for talking to people. At least not for me. If you just want to *talk to someone*, there are much better ways to do it, such as the telephone... or [Skype](#). There was a time long, long ago when one of the hooks for ham radio was “you can talk to a family member” when telephone service was not available or too expensive. Those days are gone. Back in the 1970’s and 1980’s, the hook was often “make mobile phone calls via the repeater autopatch.” That was cool stuff that mere mortals could not do. With everyone and their dog now having a cell phone, those days are gone, too.

So where does that leave us? Back where we started: the [Universal Purpose of Amateur Radio](#) is to *have fun messing around with radios*. Of course, this takes many different forms: public service, emergency communications, chasing DX, chasing counties, competing in contests, building kits, running QRP...to name just a few.

Now you will hear actual conversations on the ham bands but if you listen closely they usually have a radio underpinning to them. Hams are always talking about their equipment, signal strength, why their antenna is so great, why their antenna fell down, etc. It is kind of like making a telephone call where you talk about the quality of the phone line, the type of telephone being used and potential improvements to your home phone system.

Wait, you say, what about those guys on 75 Meters every evening talking about their medical conditions and complaining about the government? Aren’t those guys actually talking to people?

Those guys — I can’t explain.

73, Bob K0NR

This blog from Bob was published on March 7th, 2011 and can be found at: <http://www.k0nr.com/wordpress/?s=amateur+radio+is+not+for+talking>

I’ve struggled with these kinds of questions from non-hams for years. Bob’s clear writing style and ‘dead-on’ analysis stated what I needed to know: The Universal Purpose of Amateur Radio.

Thank you, Bob for a great article!

Rich – K3SOM



Some Interesting Links



Five reasons you may want a Ham Radio <https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/5-reasons-may-want-ham-radio-home/>

Amateur radio news line <https://www.arnewsline.org/>

Amateur radio satellites <https://www.n2yo.com/satellites/?c=18>

The Amateur Radio Lighthouse Society <http://arlhs.com/>

Over six hundred Ham related links <http://ksarrl.org/deeplink/>

Radio Manuals http://www.hamradiomanuals.com/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIwtHS6ODT2QIVAh-GCh2WsQ-VEAMYASAAEgJzB_D_BwE

Amateur radio WIKI http://www.amateur-radio-wiki.net/index.php?title=Main_Page

*** BVARA Upcoming Field Trip :** Please reserve April 23rd from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm for a Field Trip to the National Weather Service in Moon Township.

Details will follow.

What's new at your shack

The Ham bug may be stalking you next...

So the other day I got the “I need a new antenna bug”. I decided since Spring is just around the corner, that means warm weather, I would/should start planning what kind of antenna I want. I want to DIY-build my new antenna. I want to be able to brag a little about the antenna “I” built and put up. With preplanning & prebuilding I could be ready to put it up on the first warm day... I have several good books on wire antenna building from the ARRL. Simple.

Most Amateur radio operators have a place to call their own. Most Hams have a place for all their ham stuff; a basement, an attic, a room, a building, the garage, a closet or just a box. I have a closet with my Ham Stuff in it. All my ham stuff fits in there, well mostly. If I need wire, a connector, something to solder with, cables, or any other ham related stuff it's in my ham closet. If I have “one”, it is in my ham closet. This includes my ham books.

So I look in my very organized ham closet to find my antenna books. I know I have at least ten books. So I open the ham vault to secure the specialty books I need to plan my Spring endeavor. I dodge a few things that fall out of my very organized “Fibber McGee closet”. I go straight to the book shelf where I know the books are and... ? NO! Not one antenna book! Now I know I would have put them right here on that very shelf! Yes, I am sure. Well let me think about it. Oh, I remember I took a couple of the books with me to Ham Breakfast one Thursday... I wanted some input by a few Elmer's on the antenna I was thinking of building this spring. Why take the long way around when they could help with good advice and have a great DIY antenna that works the first time. I think I may have lent the books to one of the Elmers. I call a couple guys I would have lent the books to... Nope, no luck. How could I lose over ten books? I decide to go on a serious ham stuff book hunt. I turn the whole house upside down! No antenna books. I did find some other Ham Stuff and placed it in the ham closet where it belongs. I also promise myself I will better organize my ham closet. Now this isn't funny! I have over ten books missing. How is this possible?

Okay enough fooling around!!! I call in the specialist, my XYL. Yep, I admit defeat. She will put an end to this silliness. She is the expert on lost stuff. We raised three kids. They always lost stuff and the all-knowing all-seeing Mom can find anything! She has lots of practice and special “Mom Powers”. I bow to the superiority of the Mom-finding-powers. After she comes into the search I will be paging through my antenna books in no time. I can hardly wait! She will help; all will be well and my Ham universe will be restored to normal.

In the pages of wire DIY antennas I will find the one, the magical antenna that can do it all! I will be getting supplies together for the build before evening...

All righty, so the XYL is at the ready and the search begins. The end is in sight! She looks in my ham closet right on the book shelf where I have looked twice. No antenna books. She looks on another shelf with non-ham books, again no antenna books. She looks on our shared book shelf in the living room. No ham books of any kind. She looks in our bedroom where I probably was reading them before I went to sleep. No ham books there either. After a very extensive search in the whole house she is unable to locate my missing books.

This will be fun !



In May.

What's new at your shack

What is going on? How could the Mom Powers fail?

It turns out there **IS** something sinister at work here. Something terrible, almost un-speakable... it is the Hambug (Not the Humbug, which operates at a whole different capacity measured in Farads). What is the thing that refuses to let the Ham Universe be in order? It's the Hambug, it has attacked and is now in control. Darn Hambug took my books and hid them! I know it! There is only one way to appease the Hambug. I have to operate my radio in a new way. I have to learn something new in my radio hobby. I must spend time on the Air or the Hambug will not let my Ham universe return to normal. This is a good excuse if you need one for spending too much time on the air, I am keeping the Hambug away... I digress.

I make a vow to fire-up my radio and operate using a "new-to-me" digital mode, FT-8. I spend several days learning how to set-up my station for FT-8. I then went on to learn how to operate the software (It helps that Rich Soltesz gave a forum on the subject a few months ago at a BVARA club meeting, I kept the notes he gave us). It takes me several hours just to figure out all the correct settings on my radio. The laptop and the needed software were the easy part. A side note here; I needed more space on the computer display. I learned how easy it is to connect an additional monitor to my lap top. It was so straight forward and intuitive I got it right my first try. I am not a computer wizard. This was a big deal for me! I learned more about computers by my interest in FT-8. This ham radio hobby is great!

Okay so I got the FT-8 all sorted out and operated several different days. I have a good time with this now. I plan on trying some other digital modes soon. Once my station is set-up for FT-8 other digital modes are just a few mouse clicks away. (You should try operating with a digital mode too.)

So back to the book thing; I guess I will just order new antenna books from the ARRL. In the meantime, I look in my ham closet for my book on Extra Class testing. I have a couple of things I want to brush-up on. The knowledge I seek is in that book. You won't believe it. You know what happened? I found the extra class book and all my antenna books!!! right on that same shelf where my wife and I looked. I now feel I am fortunate, the Hambug is once again content. I can now start planning my DIY wire antenna build.

A word of caution here...this Hambug visits the average Ham operator about once a year. When was the last time you learned something new in your Ham radio hobby journey? Are you overdue for a visit from the Hambug? Get busy and learn something! Or suffer the wrath of the Hambug. You will be looking for something and Bam! The Hambug will attack.

How about sharing what you did to keep the Hambug out of your ham shack with me. Send me an article and pictures if you can. I will put it here. You can be anonymous if you like or have me print your name & call sign with your Hambug repellent story. It's up to you. Help me out with a story.

Please email David at kc3bxc.73@gmail.com

For All Radio Operators

Foxes and Hounds — FT8 DXpedition Mode is in the Works for WSJT-X

02/05/2018

Speaking on behalf of the [WSJT-X](#) Development Team, Joe Taylor, K1JT, has issued a progress report on the team's efforts to develop FT8 DXpedition Mode. The new digital mode will include new and innovative features, which are detailed in a draft [FT8 DXpedition Mode User Guide](#), released on February 2. Taylor said the basic goal of FT8 DXpedition Mode is to enable DXpeditions to make FT8 QSOs at the highest possible rates, and the *WSJT-X* Development Team has been working with members of the Baker Island KH1/KH7Z DXpedition team, ahead of its mid-summer operation, to work out the wrinkles.

“Like most major DXpeditions, this one will almost certainly make a majority of its QSOs using SSB and CW,” Taylor said. “However, the group is well aware of the rapid rise of FT8 popularity, and they plan to use FT8 as well. Making FT8 QSOs with KH1/KH7Z will require the DXpedition and everyone trying to work them to use a new, yet-to-be-released version of *WSJT-X*. We have tested the new program features on the air several times, and found them to work well.”

In FT8 DXpedition Mode, a DXpedition stations is the Fox, and calling stations are Hounds. The new mode permits contacts to be completed with as little as one Fox transmission per contact. The Fox also can transmit up to five signals simultaneously, upping the potential contact rate to 600/hour. “With expected signal levels and likely levels of QRM, sustained rates of several hundred QSOs/hour are expected to be possible,” the *User Guide* asserts. The *User Guide* points out that FT8 DXpedition Mode is suitable for use *only* by legitimate DXpedition stations and by those attempting to work them and should not be used for day-to-day FT8 operation.

“Another test run [of the new mode] will probably be scheduled in a month or so,” Taylor continued, adding that others subsequently will be invited to upgrade to a “release candidate” called *WSJT-X* v1.9.0-rc1, “and to join in trying to work one or more specific ‘pseudo-DXpedition’ stations at a certain time and frequency.” *WSJT-X* release candidate versions, identified by an -rcx suffix, are offered temporarily for beta-testing but are not suitable for long-term general use.

Taylor said the Development Team's approach to FT8 DXpedition Mode will continue the process of “shaking bugs out of the program” and generally improve its usability for DXpedition operators and DXers alike. — *Thanks to Joe Taylor, K1JT*

Details coming about the



BVARA event in May!

Courtesy : February 5, 2018 ARRL Web