

THE eQRM

NOVEMBER 2018



The BVARA in Beaver County Pennsylvania

Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association

W3SGJ

Repeater 145.310 PL 131.8

On the cover: The Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association wishes you and yours a very Happy Thanksgiving.

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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

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Who We Are

2018 BVARA OFFICERS

President: Jack Spencer, KZ3Z

Vice President: Dan Grazulis, KB3VSP

2nd Vice Pres.: Doug Lawrence, K3GTX

Treasurer: Pam Spencer, W3PMS

Secretary: Norm Trunick, K3NJT

Director: Tony Pavilonis, W6PEF

Director: Bob Winkle, N3AZZ

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

Nov 08

Dec 08 Christmas Party 7 PM
(No Club Meeting)

2019

Jan 10

Feb 14

Mar 14

Apr 11

May 09

Jun 13



This Month

This Month:

Speaker:

Fred McMullen, Warning Coordination Meteorologist
National Weather Service, Pittsburgh, PA

Topic:

Winter Forecasting and Skywarn

Including:

Continuing with our BVARA Presentation Series, our final presentation of the year is about a topic that everyone loves to talk about: the weather. Joining us this month is Fred McMullen from the National Weather Service Office in Moon Township. For those of you who joined our Field Trip to his office in April 2018, you experienced some of the many services that they provide as well as a better appreciation of how difficult forecasting in Western Pennsylvania can be, given the many factors involved.

Fred plans on presenting a number of topics of interest to our members. He will describe their Skywarn Program and how you and I can become a part of that effort. Winter warning support presents much different issues that do not exist at other times of the year. Ice storms, freezing road conditions, and heavy snowfall predictions are just a few of the concerns of the National Weather Service. Not all snowfall amounts are the same. Fluffy snow or wet snow pack differently so consistent measurement of snow depth can present a different challenge than rainfall measurements and forecasting.

But wait, there's more! Fred is an interesting speaker who welcomes questions and easily adapts his presentation to his audience. You will begin to have a better appreciation of weather forecasting and the role that ham radio can play in making those forecasts even better. This is one presentation you won't want to miss!

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.

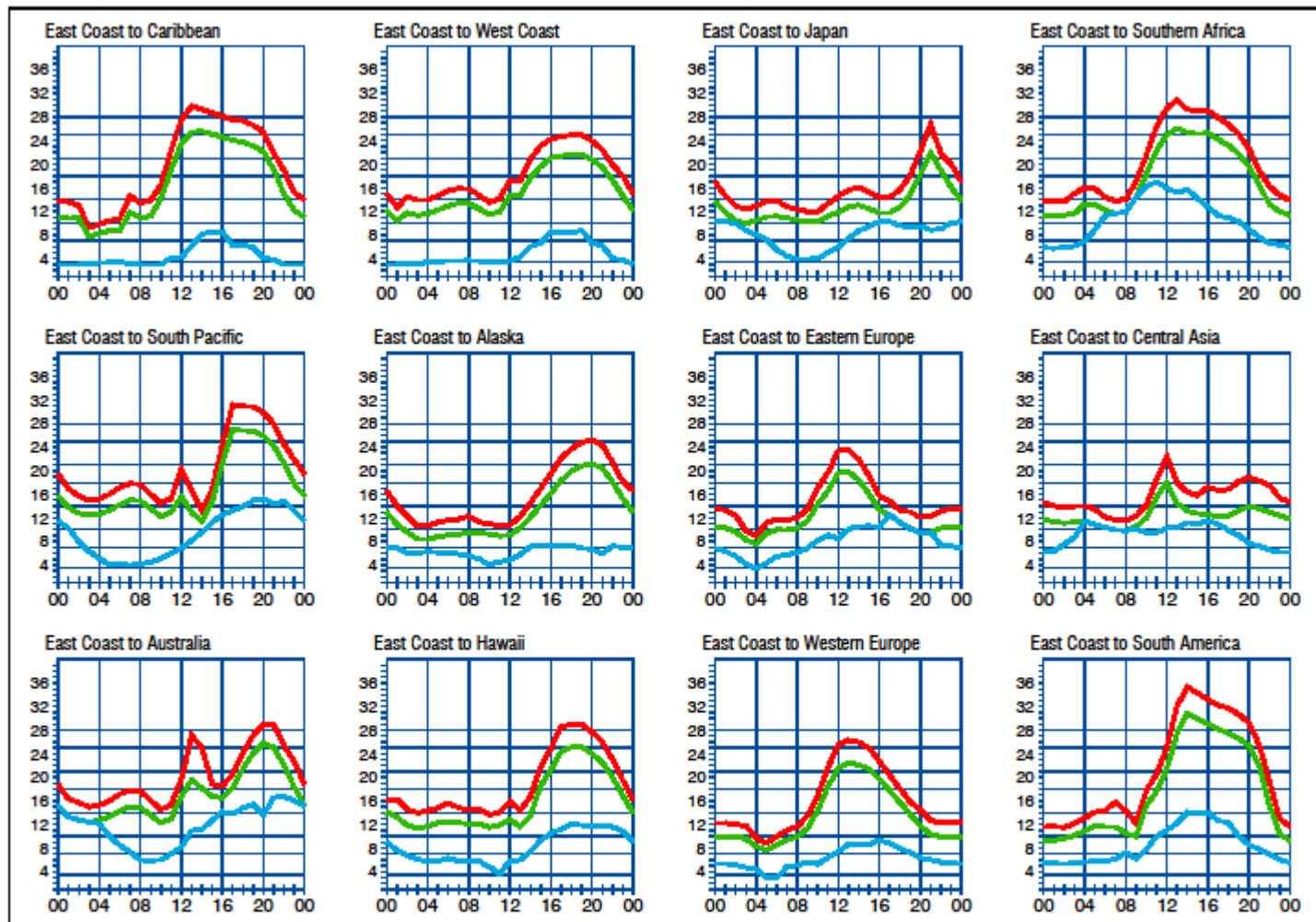
Any Beaver County Amateur that is interested in participating in the RACES/ARES programs can do so by checking into the Beaver County Public Service Net which meets every Monday evening at 8:30 PM local time on the N3TN 146.850 MHz repeater (131.8 PL)

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 **November** 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 71. 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 November 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

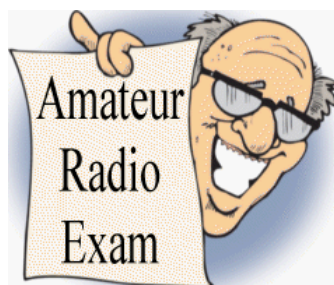
Beaver County Emergency Services Center 351 14th Street Ambridge, PA 15003.
Tests begin promptly at 5 pm on the same day as BVARA Club Meetings
(the second Thursday of the month).
All classes of amateur radio license tests are administered.

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.

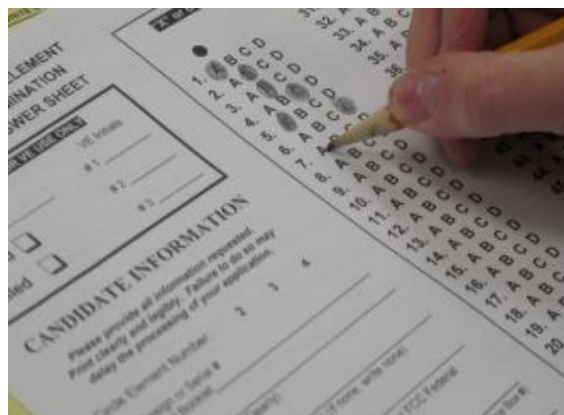
New License and Upgrades

BVARA VE Testing



At the October BVARA Club Meeting, we had one candidate who took his General Exam and passed it successfully.

Adam Stauber – KC3JCH, Enon Valley, General



Membership Information

By becoming a Member of the BVARA, You can 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	Quantity
<input type="checkbox"/> BVARA FULL MEMBERSHIP	25.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> BVARA STUDENT MEMBERSHIP	15.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> BVARA ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP	10.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> CHILD UNDER 21 IN HOME	5.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> ONE YEAR ARRL MEMBERSHIP	49.00	_____
	DONATION	_____
ARRL MEMBER ? YES NO	TOTAL	_____

Your license class (If you have one)

Technician Name _____

General Address _____

Advanced _____

Extra Email _____

Phone _____

Your Call sign _____ Exp.date _____

Your Signature _____

Make check or money order payable to:
The Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association, P.O. Box 424
South Heights, Pa 15081

NEW UPDATED LOCATION

Largest Indoor Hamfest in TRI-STATE AREA 19,000 Sq. Ft. under one roof

WACOM 2018 HAMFEST

Washington Amateur Communications Inc.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4th 2018

The Printscape Arena at Southpointe

114 South pointe Blvd. Canonsburg Pa 15317



Exit 48 off Interstate 79

8:00 A.M –3:00 P.M—Admission \$5.00

Doors open early for **VENDOR SETUP** Saturday Nov 3rd 6:30 p.m.

Talk in on 146.790 City-147.285 East-147.390 North-145.250 West -147.315 South- All PI-131.8

MAJOR VENDORS

Largest Indoor Hamfest in TRI-STATE AREA 19,000 Sq. Ft .all under one roof

KJI ELECTRONICS- -QUICKSILVER RADIO –RW ANTENNA STORE

MAIN PRIZES

- 1ST** Icom IC-7300 HF + 6m Multi Mode Transceiver
- 2nd** YAESU FTM-3200DR 65w 145MHz C4FM/FM 2/ FM mobile
- 3rd** YAESU FTM-3200DR 65w 145MHz C4FM/FM 2/FM mobile
- 4th** YAESU FTM-3200DR 65w 145MHz C4FM/FM 2/FM mobile

BLACK BOX PRIZE'S ONLY 50 TICKETS Sold

MAIN DRAWING AT 1:30 P.M. NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN

CONTACT FOR HAMFEST TABLES **N3TIR** bud@n3tir.com 724-350-6745

Vendor Forms located at www.wacomarc.org under Hamfest tab

We will sell out ALL TABLE SPACE PLEASE CALL EARLY

8Ft TABLES SUPPLIED, cost \$12.00 ea. ADMSSION is not INCLUDED ON TABLES

VE TESTING TIME 9:00ARE

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH WILL BE AVAILABLE

DOOR PRIZES—YL PRIZE—DX CARD CHECKER

THE MEADOWS CASINO & Tanger Outlets less than 2 miles Now Hotel next door

Send all vendor payments to address below for tables

Please include vendor form and make checks payable to

WACOM c/o Norma Plants N3YJJ

236 Chambers Ridge Road West Alexander, Pa 15376

Radio Sport

Bruce Draper, AA5B, aa5b.coral@gmail.com

Contest Corral

November 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 - Finish Date-Time Date-Time	Bands	Contest Name	Mode	Exchange	Sponsor's Website
1	1800 1 2200	2B	NRAU 10-Meter Activity Contest	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), 6-char grid	www.nrau.net/activity-contests
1	2000 1 2200	1.8-28	SKCC Sprint Europe	CW	RST, SPC, name, mbr or power	www.skccgroup.com
3	0600 3 1900	3.5-28	IPARC Contest, CW	CW	RST, serial, IFA state (if any)	www.iparc.de
3	1200 4 1200	1.8-28	Ukrainian DX Contest	CW Ph	RS(T), 2-letter oblast or serial	urdx.org/rules.php?english
3	2100 5 0300	1.8-28	ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, CW	CW	Serial, precedence, your call, check, section	www.arrl.org/sweepstakes
4	0600 4 1900	3.5-28	IPARC Contest, SSB	Ph	RST, serial, IFA state (if any)	www.iparc.de
4	0800 4 1200	Any	EANET Sprint	CW Ph Dig	RS(T)	fedea.org/news
4	0900 4 1700	3.5-28	High Speed Club CW Contest	CW	RST, mbr or "NM"	www.highspeedclub.org
6	0200 6 0400	3.5-28	ARS Spartan Sprint	CW	RST, SPC, power	arsqp.blogspot.com
7	2000 7 2100	3.5	UKEICC 80-Meter Contest	Ph	4-char grid	www.ukaicc.com
10	0000 11 2359	3.5-28	WAE DX Contest, RTTY	Dig	RS, serial	www.darc.de
10	0000 12 2359	1.8-7	PODXS 070 Club Triple Play Low Band Sprint	Dig	RST, SPC	www.podxs070.com
10	0001 11 2359	2B	10-10 International Fall Contest, Digital	Dig	Name, mbr or "0", SPC	www.ten-ten.org
10	0700 11 1300	3.5-28	JIDX Phone Contest	Ph	RST, prefecture number or CQ zone	jidx.org/jidxrule-e.html
10	1000 11 1000	50-1296	SARL VHF/UHF Analogue Contest	CW Ph	RS(T), 6-char grid	www.sarl.org.za
10	1200 11 1200	1.8-28	OKOM DX Contest, CW	CW	RST, 3-letter district code or serial	okomdx.orl.cz
10	1200 11 2359	1.8-50	SKCC Weekend Sprintathon	CW	RST, SPC, name, mbr or "none"	www.skccgroup.com
10	1900 12 0500	1.8-432	CQ-WE Contest	CW Ph Dig	Name, location code, years of service	cqwe.cbah.org
12	0100 12 0300	1.8-28	4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint	CW Ph	RS(T), SPC, mbr or power	www.4sqrp.com
12	2000 12 2130	3.5	RSGB 80-Meter Autumn Series, Data	Dig	Other station's call, your call, serial, name	www.rsgbc.org/hf
16	1600 16 2200	3.5	YO International PSK31 Contest	Dig	RST, serial, county or country	www.yo5qrq.ro/rules.htm
17	1200 18 1200	3.5-28	LZ DX Contest	CW Ph	RS(T), 2-letter district or ITU zone	lzdxbfms.org/rulesen.html
17	1600 18 0700	1.8	All Austrian 160-Meter Contest	CW	RST, serial, district code (if any)	www.ovsv.at
17	1700 18 0100	1.8	REF 160-Meter Contest	CW	RST, serial, department code	concours.r-e-f.org
17	1900 17 2059	1.8-50	Feld Hell Sprint	Dig	RST, mbr, SPC, 4-char grid	sites.google.com/site/feldhellclub
17	1900 17 2300	1.8	RSGB 2nd 1.8 MHz Contest, CW	CW	RST, serial, district code (if any)	www.rsgbc.org/hf
17	2100 19 0300	1.8-28	ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, SSB	Ph	Serial, precedence, your call, check, section	www.arrl.org/sweepstakes
18	1300 18 1700	3.5-7	Homebrew and Oldtime Equipment Party	CW	RST, serial, class	www.qppcc.de/contestrules
19	0200 19 0400	1.8-28	Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	CW	RST, SPC, mbr or power	qrpcontest.com/pigrun
21	2000 21 2130	3.5	RSGB 80-Meter Autumn Series, SSB	Ph	Other station's call, your call, serial, name	www.rsgbc.org/hf
22	0130 22 0330	3.5-14	NAQCC CW Sprint	CW	RST, SPC, mbr or power	naqcc.info
24	0000 25 2359	50-1296	ARRL EME Contest	CW Ph Dig	Signal report	www.arrl.org/eme-contest
24	0000 25 2359	1.8-28	CQ Worldwide DX Contest, CW	CW	RST, CQ zone	www.cqww.com
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	www.ukaicc.com
29	2000 29 2130	3.5	RSGB 80-Meter Autumn Series, CW	CW	Other station's call, your call, serial, name	www.rsgbc.org/hf
30	2200 2 1600	1.8	ARRL 160-Meter Contest	CW	WVE: RST, section; DX: RST	www.arrl.org/160-meter

All dates refer to UTC and may be different from calendar dates in North America. Contests are not conducted on the 60-, 30-, 17-, or 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

Hello everyone,

It is hard for me to believe it is November 2018; this year is passing by quickly. The warm weather seems to be over. Are there any last minute outdoor Ham projects you didn't get finished? We may get some mild weather yet. If there is that last "thing", I would plan it in detail to be ready at the first nice break; we may yet get a day here or there. Get it done quickly! Winter is right at our doorstep.



I want to brag a bit. I am not full of pride, I am grateful. I got a much higher antenna connection point (a tall telephone pole) put up recently. I am blessed to have an antenna so high up in the air. I look forward to hearing what voice contacts I make this winter season! I also want to see what effect this new antenna has on my ability to make FT 8 contacts. I think I will always have room for improvement.

Last month, I got to participate in the Pennsylvania QSO party. I had an opportunity to use an ICOM-7300 SDR radio with a panadapter. Really Cool! There was great food, brilliant comradery and plenty of radio sport. I also got to use a radio with SDR technology that I never used before! I was part of a pile-up. Everyone wanted to contact me. Things sure got busy in a hurry!!! I wasn't sure how to handle it! What a fun part of the hobby. I need more practice. I enjoyed my first QSO party. Things like this keep my interest in the hobby fresh and growing. Someday I may get a radio with a panadapter.

I may get my antenna higher; a full wave length off the ground would be next, it would be fun to get a different antenna to try, get an antenna tuner, get an amplifier... I just keep dreaming. I hope you have some future enhancements you dream about to improve your station too. Christmas is just around the corner. Now is the perfect time to write your letter to Radio Santa. Keep your dreams alive and work to accomplish those dreams.

WACOM will be having their hamfest November 4th at a new location in Canonsburg Pa. This is the last Western Pa hamfest for 2018. The next fest will be in February at WASHFEST 2019. I encourage you to get to this one and have some fun. Is there something you would like to purchase from a vendor there or a face to face QSO you would like to make? It is always fun to see what is for sale. It will be a while before the next hamfest in western Pa, get out to this hamfest and have some fun.

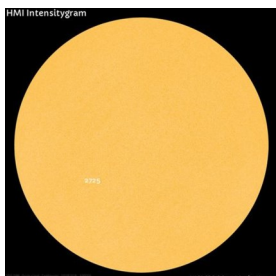
I will be licensed in this hobby three years come March. Woops, I will have been licensed for four years! Time flies when having fun. I keep trying new things and having fun. I have many things I can do to improve my station. There are so many ways to transmit (CW, straight key, bug, the JT digital modes, RTTY, mobile, 2 meter contacts and the list goes on) I haven't tried yet. There are new radios and accessories. I enjoy dreaming. Maybe someday I will have some more of my dreams come true. I am not in a rush. I have my life time. Getting my license was just the start. I encourage you to get your first license too! Maybe you are already licensed and can work to upgrade your class license. Dream big and keep trying "new to you" amateur radio techniques. Have a Happy Thanksgiving.

Till next month 73 KC3BXC clear but I'll be listening...

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

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



From Gerald Youngblood, K5SSDR

FT8 – Tipping Point for Ham Radio?

This is a view from NASA of the sun today, October 9, 2018, and I am making *10m DX* contacts one after another. *Zero sunspots* but working DX on FT8! Is FT8 creating a "tipping point" for amateur radio at the very bottom of the solar cycle?

Several years ago, I was captivated by a book written by Malcolm Gladwell called, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*. Merriam-Webster defines tipping point as, "the critical point in a situation, process, or system beyond which a significant and often unstoppable effect or change takes place." In his book, Gladwell describes how, "The tipping point is that magic moment when an idea, trend, or social behavior crosses a threshold, tips, and spreads like wildfire." He shows us how the phenomenon applies to everything from flu epidemics to the explosion of new technologies.

Does the FT8 mode included in WSJT-X software constitute a tipping point in ham radio for good or for harm? There are many ham radio opinion blogs on the Internet that strongly or sometimes sarcastically take one or the other stance. There is even an Internet poll asking, "Is FT8 damaging amateur radio?" At this moment it is 52% yes, 45% no and 3% undecided.[1] All of the articles and videos I have seen agree on one undeniable fact – FT8 has since its introduction in June of 2017 achieved "killer app" or tipping point status. Some think it will kill amateur radio and others believe that such innovations give the hobby new life.

The FT8 digital mode is the latest in a series of weak signal applications for amateur radio. Conceived originally for enhancing esoteric propagaint modes such as high speed meteor scatter and moonbounce, Joe Taylor (K1JT) developed a series of applications including FSK144, JT6M, JT65, and JT9. When FT8, jointly developed by Joe Taylor and Steve Franke (K9AN), was announced it was described as being designed for, "multi-hop Es where signals may be weak and fading, openings may be short, and you want fast completion of reliable, confirmable QSO's." [2] Being a 6 meter fan, that resonates with me.

What happened to take an esoteric mode designed for multi-hop E skip on VHF and overnight turn it into a worldwide phenomenon across all bands from 2200m through 70cm? In other words, what makes FT8 a killer app? Here are a few of my observations:

- FT8 counters the current dearth of sunspots
- FT8 opens "dead bands"

It's Your Dime

- FT8 is addictive – see em, click em, work em... Boom!
- FT8 lets little pistols work DXCC like a big gun
- FT8 lets you work the world from small or deed restricted lots
- FT8 is a weak signal – not a low power mode (power works the really weak ones)
- FT8 lets you work DX on 6m when there would be none
- FT8 is suddenly dominating VHF/UHF contesting
- FT8 lets you work weak signal DX without proficient CW skills
- FT8 decoding to -20 dB SNR is like turning 100W into 10kW
- FT8 is like having constant DX beacons on every band
- FT8 puts the DX, WAS, WAZ, etc. on the air when they might not be
- FT8 lets you work DXCC on 160m without a big station
- FT8 lets you call CQ and become the DX
- FT8 is amazing literally space age technology

FT8 is probably other things I haven't realized yet but some of you have

So, will FT8 kill ham radio as some have posed? True, it is mostly automated. True, it reduces the skill required to make DX contacts. True, it removes conversation from the QSO the same as is true of most DX chasing contacts on any mode. True, it removes some of the human factor. But does that make it bad for amateur radio's future?

In my humble opinion, FT8 is at the very heart of what amateur radio has been about from its inception – amateurs who love the art of radio enhancing the art of radio. The FCC in Part 97 of the rules lists the following as second in the list of five tenets that define amateur radio:

“Continuation and extension of the amateur's proven ability to contribute to the advancement of the radio art.”

In my humble opinion, what will ultimately kill amateur radio is not FT8. To the contrary FT8 is an example of what will keep it alive and relevant. What will kill amateur radio is if we cease to innovate, become old and grumpy, and no longer bring new blood into the hobby. I received my novice license over 50 years ago (rock bound CW on a 6L6) and still find new and exciting things to peak my interest. Frankly, technical innovation in amateur radio directly led to my career in technology just as for many of you. I hope that continues long after I am gone.

Amateur radio is alive and well. FT8 is one just one element of keeping it that way. Hope to work you soon on FT8, some other new mode, or maybe a ragchew on SSB when the sunspots come back.

73,
Gerald, K5SDR
CEO, FlexRadio

[1] <https://dx-world.net/yes-or-no-a-poll-on-ft8/>

[2] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WSJT_\(amateur_radio_software\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WSJT_(amateur_radio_software))

Of Interest to All BVARA Members

1. The **BVARA Christmas Party** will be **December 8, 2018 at 7 PM**. There is no set menu, order what you like. This is a “pay for what you order” meal. It will take place in the back room of **Yolanda’s Italian Restaurant** at 2228 Darlington Road, Beaver Falls (**Chippewa**). See Norm for more information.



2. BVARA Club **Dues** is going up next year. A **one-year membership** will now be **\$25**. All membership fees can be paid in January or earlier, but the membership fee will be due no later than February 01. A \$5 fee will be required for any previous-year member who fails to pay current dues by the deadline. Any new members wanting to join later in the year will be charged a pro-rated fee based on the full months remaining in the year. The first approval was received at the September 2018 meeting. In accordance with our club bylaws, these changes require approval at two consecutive meetings. This change was approved again in the October 2018 regular club meeting and posted here in the Newsletter twice.

**MEMBERSHIP
RENEWAL**
Annual Dues