THE eQRM

The BVARA in Beaver County Pennsylvania

Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association   W3SGJ

Repeater   145.310   PL 131.8

On the Cover: Here is a great Fall photo of Pittsburgh. Soon, cool Fall mornings will be here. Are you ready for that four letter word? Snow. It is time to finish those outdoor Ham ideas and prepare for the cold months ahead. The photo is from Wikimedia Commons.

Inside this edition

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

Who We Are

2020 BVARA OFFICERS

President: Jack Spencer, KZ3Z

Vice President: Dan Grazulis, KB3VSP

2nd Vice Pres.: Doug Hanna, N4YKQ

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).

Club Meetings 2020

Sep 10
Oct 08
Nov 12
Dec Club Christmas Party

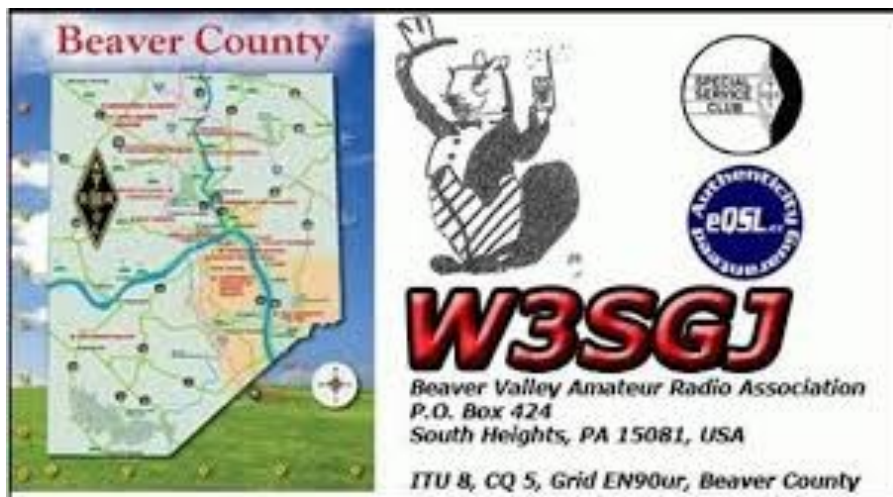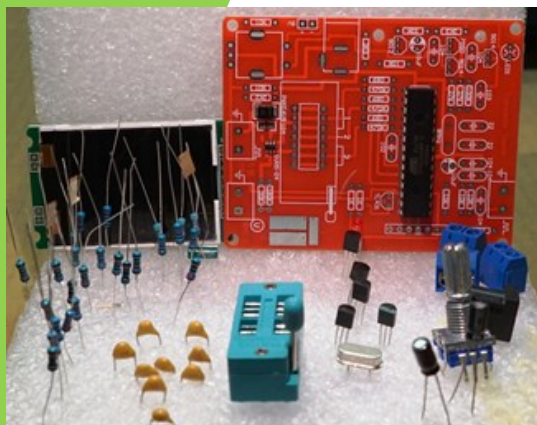Club Meetings 2021
Jan 14
Feb 11
Mar 11
Apr 08
May 13
Jun 10
Jul 08

This Month

This Month:

Speaker:
Rich Soltesz, K3SOM

Topic:
A Transistor and Parts Tester
Including:

Continuing with our BVARA Presentation Series this year, our topic this month began with an interesting mention of an inexpensive testing device that many hams would find to be very useful. Do you have a 'junk box' of parts that you've acquired but don't remember or can't read the numbers on the part?

Perhaps this gadget may be just what you are looking for! This gem is built around an Atmel ATMEGA328-PU low-power CMOS 8-bit microcontroller. Your parts to be tested may include small signal transistors, diodes, resistors, capacitors, inductors, and more. If you plug in a mylar capacitor into the tester, a 16-color TFT LCD display indicates C=236.4 nF, ESR=1.10, Vloss=0.1% and the tester voltage source is 7.7 VDC and is OK. If you plug in an unknown transistor, the test tells you BJT - NPN, hFE=356, Ic=3.2mA, Ube=668mV, ICE0=4uA, ICES=5uA, Pin 1=C, 2=B, and 3=E.

But wait, there's more! Two terminals measure AC frequency up to 25KHz, two more terminals output a square wave and PWM at predefined frequencies, and two more terminals will measure voltages up to 50 VDC. A full self-test with calibration can also be selected.

The price is too low to include here, so plan on coming to our meeting for more information and a demo. This is one exciting 'hands-on' presentation that you won't want to miss.

Rich's Background:
Extra Class Ham, Licensed since 1962,
VE,
B.S. Electrical Engineering
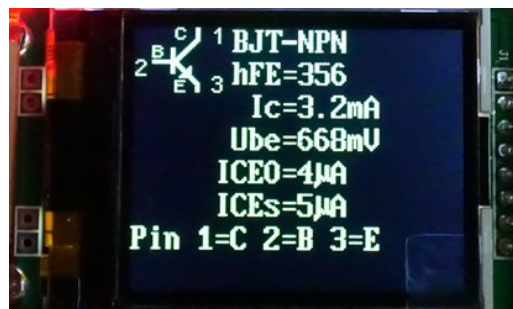
More this Month

Weekly

Thursday Morning Breakfast

(or you can have lunch)

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

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 WW3AAA 146.850 MHz repeater (131.8 PL)

RACES / ARES
The eQRM Urges All County Hams to Participate.

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 Beaver County Emergency Services 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.

ARRL Amateur Radio

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.
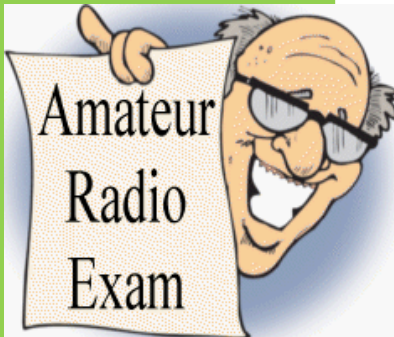
Testing this month :

You're invited, come test with us in September!

August VE Test Session Results

* Because of our Club Picnic there was no testing for August.

All of our testing would not be possible without the help of the following Extra-Class VE Team members:

Reg Genola – W3REG,
Tony Pavilonis - K3AHP,
Bart Stack - KB3NFM, and
Bob Winkle - N3AZZ

73 from:
Rich Soltesz - K3SOM, VE Liaison

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**

○   BVARA full membership   25.00   _____

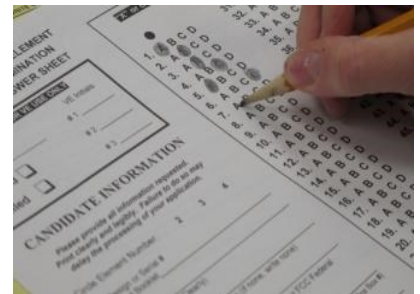○   BVARA student membership   15.00   _____

○   BVARA associate membership   10.00   _____

         BVARA Child under 21 at home membership   5.00   _____

         One year ARRL membership   49.00   _____

         A Club Donation   _____

ARRL Member?   Yes   No   Total   Enclosed   _____

○ Your License Class (If you have one.)

○   Technician   Name   _____

○   General   Address _____

○   Advanced   _____

         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

CANCELED - BCARA Swapfest

HAMFEST/CONVENTION

09/13/2020

Start Date: 09/13/2020
End Date: 09/13/2020
Location: Unionville Fire Department
102 Mahood Road
Butler, PA 16001
Website: http://www.w3udx.org/
Sponsor: Butler County Amateur Radio Association
Type: ARRL Hamfest
Talk-In: 147.36 (PL 131.8)
Public Contact: Dale Riley , KC3GYU
234 Whitmire Road West Sunbury, PA 16061
Phone: 1-724-831-8629
Email: kc3gyu@yahoo.com

This Hamfest has been Cancelled

Bits and Pieces

Hello all,

Ham radio comes through again… I was recently driving North on highway 279 when the right hand lane was blocked by a large piece of a car. This thing was about four feet tall and seven feet wide. The entire back end of a minivan was in the right hand lane of the road! I think it may have fallen out of a truck that was hauling car parts. This would certainly cause an accident. I was able to move over with no problem. I do not have a cell phone. I do have a 2 meter mobile in my vehicle so I put out a call on the BVARA repeater. No one responded. I put out the same call on the TAARA repeater. Sean Schwartzmiller, K3UKE and Mike Leasure, AA3WV responded. My signal was too weak for Mike to copy. Shawn was also mobile and relayed to Mike, at a base station, my report of danger. Mike contacted the authorities from his home phone. This was a great use of the amateur airwaves. Their help in this situation could very well have saved lives. Great job you gentlemen Hams! I stand and give a thank-you salute to Mike and Shawn for their professionalism and assistance.

For the last few months, the ARRL propagation charts have not been available for the eQRM. Here is the ARRL's recommendation of a new propagation method called *VOA Cap Online* it is available online. It is much better . . .You can put in many specifics that pertain to your particular amateur radio station. The chart is custom-rendered according to your input statistics. Give it a try and let me know what you think. See page 12 for more information.

I was day dreaming… back, way back when you could go to a hamfest. I sure have missed all the comradery of hamfests this year. I also miss the fun of finding that certain something I just can't live without and purchase it. I can hardly wait 'til this Covid 19 pandemic is over and we can return to some kind of normal.

One last thing, I hope you are beginning to wrap up your outdoor radio projects. Did you inspect your connections, coax, antennas, your grounds, guy wires and anything else that needs to be maintained? Now is a time to get to it before old man winter comes back. The nice cool Fall weather should help make working outside very pleasant.

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

Till next month, 73 KC3BXC.

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

MINI60S Antenna Analyzer

My *MINI60S* Antenna Analyzer, a Chinese clone of the *Sark 100*, works fine on my Android phone device, but will not connect via USB to a Windows 10 PC due to the Chinese manufacturer using a counterfeit FTDI Chip for its USB connection.
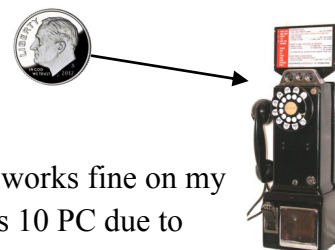
I started my Internet search for a solution by searching for *Sark 100.* The search process finally landed me at http://radio.denied.org.ua/index.php?dir=SARK-100/ where I found the software for both my Android and my Windows 10 PC. The Android software ends in .apk and the Windows software ends in .exe.

Because my desktop and laptop PCs both have Bluetooth, here is how to connect the Mini to the PC software:

- Start the PC software for the Sark 100. It defaults the USB to COM6. You can check in the Device Manager under the Ports (COM & LPT) tab to be sure that the COM Port says: "Standard Serial over Bluetooth Link (Com6)". This is the ONLY port that is installed and works on my computer.
- Place the Mini60 Analyzer in "PC Link" Mode. Do this by pressing the "Set" Button twice and the "Down" button once. "Waiting Link" will be displayed.
- Click the "Connect" Button on the software and wait about 4 seconds and it should change to 'grayed out' status and the Mini60 should show "PC Link" is now "ON".
- You are good to go!

If you have an antenna connected, try one of the preset "Band Quick Setup" selections. The scan should start.

I hope this helps you in finding an alternate connection method when FTDI problems occur.

73

Reg, W3REG

Of Interest to All

In previous issues of the eQRM Newsletter, we used to include propagation charts from the ARRL. They are no longer available. Here is the ARRL's recommendation to get the propagation information that you need:

https://www.voacap.com/hf/

Below is an example of a prediction for September 17th at 02:00 UTC, for 20-meter FT8 worldwide propagation. Dipoles at 30 feet have been selected from a pull-down for both locations and 50 watts was selected. You now have much more control over the information that you need for normal conditions for the season, the frequency, the mode, the antennas, etc. for this point in the sunspot cycle.

FN00AJ (40.40N, 80.00W), Sep, 17 UTC, 14.100 MHz, 40 W, SSN: 3. REQ.SNR: 13
TX Ant: D10M.ANT, -1.0°, RX Ants: D10M.ANT. Noise: -145 dBW
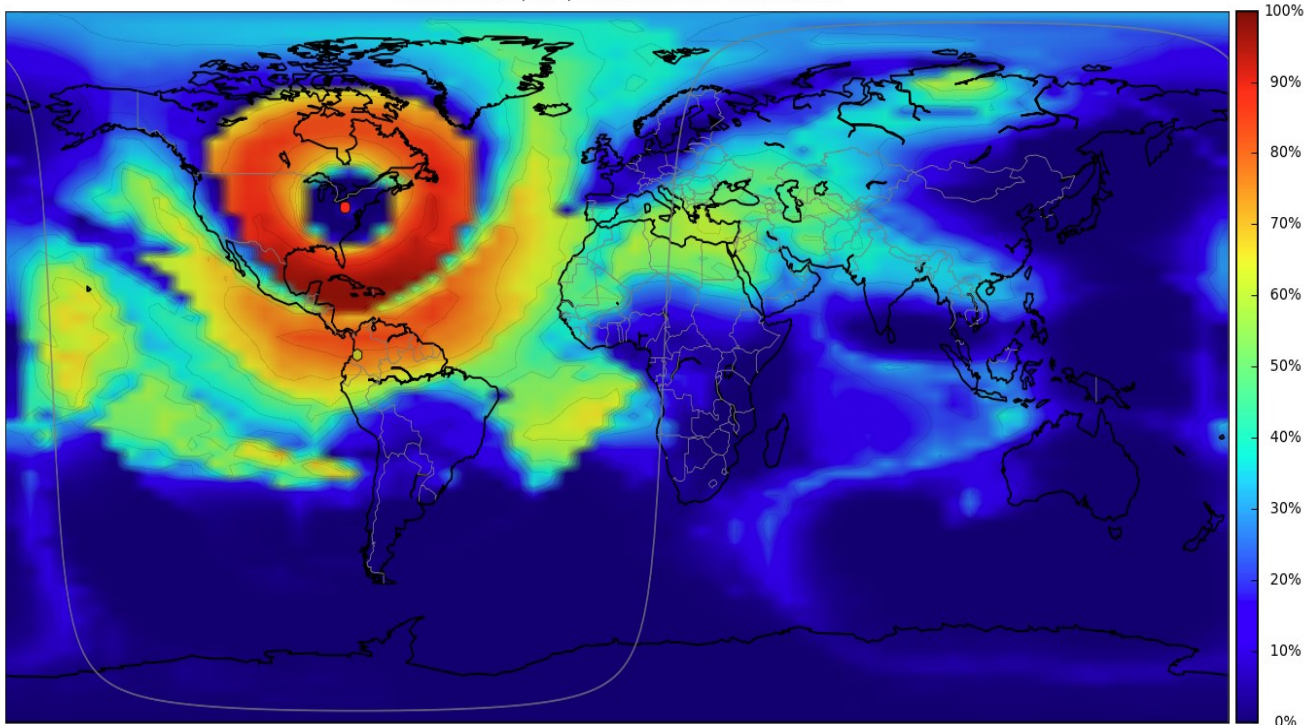
The red dot is Western PA and the blue area around it is where the sky wave signal has skipped over. Where the sky wave first lands is the re-orange 'doughnut'. The next bounce lands just beyond California, covers Ascension Island, most of the Caribbean and Northern South America, and extends upwards in the North Atlantic. The third bounce reaches Hawaii and eastward in the South Pacific towards Chile. Now it gets interesting! The third wave continues on toward North Africa and the Middle East through towards Siberia. That third wave has a 50 to 65 percent chance of a contact under <u>normal</u> conditions. Should conditions improve just a bit, a rare DX contact might easily be made under the given conditions outlined above. Many more graphical and table depictions of forecasts are very easy to pull up.

Radio Sport

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

Contest Corral

September 2020

Check for updates and a downloadable PDF version online at **www.arrl.org/contest-calendar**.
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
2	1700	2	2000	144	VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest	Dig	4-char grid square	ft8activity.eu/index.php/en
2	2000	2	2100	3.5	UKEICC 80-Meter Contest	Ph	4-char grid square	ukeicc.com/80m-rules.php
2	2300	4	2300	3.5-28	G3ZQS Memorial Straight Key Contest	CW	RST, SPC, name, mbr or power	www.fistsna.org
3	1700	3	2100	28	NRAU 10-Meter Activity Contest	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), 6-char grid square	nrau.net/activity-contests
3	1900	3	2100	1.8-50	SKCC Sprint Europe	CW	RST, SPC, name, mbr or power	www.skccgroup.com
5	0000	5	2359	1.8-28	CWOps CW Open	CW	Serial, name	cwops.org/cwops-tests
5	0000	6	2359	3.5-28	All Asian DX Contest, Phone	Ph	RS, 2-digit age	www.jarl.org/English
5	0600	5	0800	7,14	Wake-Up! QRP Sprint	CW	RST, serial, suffix of previous QSO	qrp.ru/contest/wakeup
5	1300	6	0400	1.8-UHF	Colorado QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	Name, CO county or SPC	ppraa.org/coqp
5	1300	6	1259	1.9-28	IARU Region 1 Field Day, SSB	Ph	RST, serial	darc.de/der-club/referate/conteste
5	1300	6	1300	3.5-28	RSGB SSB Field Day	Ph	RS, serial	www.rsgbcc.org/hf
5	1400	6	1400	145	IARU Region 1 145 MHz Contest	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), serial, 6-char grid	iaru-r1.org/on-the-air
5	1600	5	1900	7	AGCW Straight Key Party	CW	RST, serial, class, name, age	agcw.org/index.php/en
5	2000	6	2000	3.5	PODXS 070 Club Jay Hudak Memorial 80-Meter Sprint	Dig	RST, SPC	www.podxs070.com
6	1000	6	1400	144	WAB 144 MHz QRO Phone	Ph	RS, serial, WAB square or country	wab.intermip.net
6	1800	7	0300	1.8-UHF	Tennessee QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), TN county or SPC	tnqp.org/rules
7	1900	7	2030	3.5	RSGB 80-Meter Autumn Series, SSB	Ph	RS, serial	www.rsgbcc.org/hf
7	2300	8	0300	1.8-50	MI QRP Labor Day CW Sprint	CW	RST, SPC, mbr or power	miqrp.net/contest
8	0100	8	0300	3.5-28	ARS Spartan Sprint	CW	RST, SPC, power	arsqrp.blogspot.com
9	1700	9	2000	432	VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest	Dig	4-char grid square	ft8activity.eu/index.php/en
12	0000	12	2359	3.5-28	Russian RTTY WW Contest	Dig	RST, oblast or CQ zone	qrz.ru/contest/detail/93
12	0000	13	2359	2.3 GHz +	ARRL EME Contest	CW Ph Dig	Signal report	www.arrl.org/eme-contest
12	0000	13	2359	3.5-28	WAE DX Contest, SSB	Ph	RS, serial	darc.de/der-club/referate/conteste
12	1000	13	1000	1.9-28	SARL Field Day Contest	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), number of xmitrs, category, province or "DX"	www.sarl.org.za
12	1200	13	2359	1.8-50	SKCC Weekend Sprintathon	CW	RST, SPC, name, mbr or "none"	www.skccgroup.com
12	1400	12	2200	3.5-28	Ohio State Parks on the Air	Ph	Park abbreviation or "OH" or SPC	ospota.org
12	1400	13	2000	1.8-UHF	Texas QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), TX county or SPC	www.txqp.net
12	1500	13	0300	3.5-28	Alabama QSO Party	CW Ph	RS(T), AL county or SPC	alabamaqsoparty.org
12	1500	13	0959	3.5-28	Russian Cup Digital Contest	Dig	Serial, 4-char grid square	qrz.ru/contest/detail/96.html
12	1800	14	0300	50 +	ARRL September VHF Contest	CW Ph Dig	4-char grid square	www.arrl.org/september-vhf
13	0000	13	0400	3.5-14	North American Sprint, CW	CW	Other station's call, your call, serial, name, SPC	ncjweb.com
14	0000	14	0200	1.8-28	4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint	CW Ph	RS(T), SPC, mbr or power	www.4sqrp.com
16	1900	16	2030	3.5	RSGB 80-Meter Autumn Series, CW	CW	RST, serial	www.rsgbcc.org/hf
17	0030	17	0230	3.5-14	NAQCC CW Sprint	CW	RST, SPC, mbr or power	naqcc.info/contests.html
17	1930	17	2059	3.5	BCC QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), T-shirt size	bavarian-contest-club.de/2326
18	2100	18	2359	3.5	AGB NEMIGA Contest	CW Ph Dig	RST, serial, mbr (if any)	ev5agb.com/index_eng.html
19	0000	19	2359	1.8-VHF	FOC QSO Party	CW	RST, name, mbr (if any)	g4foc.org/qsoparty
19	0000	20	2359	1.8-UHF	Collegiate QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	School name, RS(T), operating class	collegiateqsoparty.com
19	0600	20	2359	10 GHz +	ARRL 10 GHz and Up Contest	CW Ph Dig	6-char maidenhead locator	www.arrl.org/10-ghz-up
19	1200	20	0800	50,70, 144,432, 1296	SARL VHF/UHF Digital Contest	Dig	RST, 6-char grid locator	www.sarl.org.za
19	1200	20	1200	3.5-28	Scandinavian Activity Contest, CW	CW	RST, serial	sactest.net/blog
19	1200	20	1200	1.8-28	All Africa International DX Contest	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), serial	www.sarl.org.za
19	1400	20	0200	1.8-UHF	Iowa QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), IA county or SPC	www.w0yl.com/IAQP
19	1500	19	2100	1.8-28	QRP Afield	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), SPC, mbr or power	newenglandqrp.org/qrp-afield-2018
19	1600	19	2300	3.5-144	Wisconsin Parks on the Air	Ph	WI park abbreviation or SPC	wipota.com
19	1600	20	0359	3.5-28	New Jersey QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), NJ county or SPC	k2td-bcrc.org/njqp
19	1600	20	2200	1.8-UHF	New Hampshire QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), NH county or SPC	w1wqm.org/nhqso
19	1600	20	2359	1.8-144	Washington State Salmon Run	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), WA county or SPC	wwdxc.org/salmonrun
19	1800	19	1959	1.8-50	Feld Hell Sprint	Dig	RST, mbr, SPC, grid	sites.google.com/site/feldhellclub
20	0000	20	0400	3.5-14	North American Sprint, RTTY	Dig	Other station's call, your call, serial, name, SPC	ncjweb.com
20	1700	20	2059	3.5-28	BARTG Sprint 75	Dig	Serial	bartg.org.uk
20	2300	21	0100	1.8-28	Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	CW	RST, SPC, mbr or power	qrpcontest.com/pigrun
21	1900	21	2300	144	144 MHz Fall Sprint	CW Ph Dig	4-char grid square	svhfs.org
23	0000	23	0200	1.8-28	SKCC Sprint	CW	RST, SPC, name, mbr or power	skccgroup.com
24	1900	24	2030	3.5	RSGB 80-Meter Autumn Series, Data	Dig	RST, serial	rsgbcc.org/hf
26	0000	27	2359	3.5-28	CQ Worldwide DX Contest, RTTY	Dig	RST, CQ zone, US state or VE area (if US/VE)	www.cqwwrtty.com
26	1200	27	1200	1.8-28	Maine QSO Party	CW Ph	RS(T), ME county or SPC	ws1sm.com/MEQP.html
26	1400	26	1800	144, 432	AGCW VHF/UHF Contest	CW	RST, serial, power, 6-char grid	agcw.org/index.php/en
28	1900	28	2030	3.5	RSGB FT4 Contest Series	Dig	4-char grid square	www.rsgbcc.org/hf
29	1900	29	2300	222	222 MHz Fall Sprint	CW Ph Dig	4-char grid square	svhfs.org
30	2000	30	2100	3.5	UKEICC 80-Meter Contest	CW	4-char grid square	ukeicc.com/80m-rules.php

There are a number of weekly contests not included in the table above. For more info, visit: www.qrpfoxhunt.org, www.ncccsprint.com, and www.cwops.org.

All dates refer to UTC and may be different from calendar dates in North America. 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.