

RECOLLECTIONS

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**Years ago . . . 1989 . . . in
REMARCS . . .**

MARC's first year in the PA QSO Party club competition (109.5k points) . . . PHIL NC3C made Worked All Zones on CW . . . WB3JOE packet BBS's computer was giving us fits . . . Hams gained access to the 18 MHz band . . . the meeting program was about the Apollo 10 spacecraft recovery mission . . . Nobody ran for program chairman, and the slot remained vacant all year.

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**Year ago . . . 1984 . . . in
REMARCS . . .**

STEVE WA3EYD upgraded to General . . . Traffic Net certificates were awarded to members such as CARTER (pre-KD3AO) KA3IME, BART KC3BP, KEVIN K3NTD, BOB WA3PZO, and TOM K3YPO . . . New officers were AL W3DZI (President), NED KA3EQT (pre-WQ3Z, Vice-Pres.), BART KC3BP (Sec.), BOB WA3PZO (Treas.). 145.13/R came back on the air after a long down-time.

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**Years ago . . . 1979 . . . in
RADNOR REPEATER
NEWS . . .**

New officers were PETE K3ZFG (Pres.), JOHN WB3ELA (Vice-Pres.), BOB WA3PZO (Sec.), and MARLENE WA3UOC (Treas.) . . . "MARC will be running a hamfest in the summer. Interested in helping? Please contact JOHN WB3ELA" . . . The meeting program was on AMSAT . . . Meetings were at the Metropolitan bank at City Line and Haverford Aves. in Overbrook.

Does anyone have copies of a MARC newsletter for April, May, or June 1979? No copies are in the archive, and no issues may have been published . . . but if you have any of them, please contact KAY WT3P. DON WB3AYT and JERRY WB3FPU kindly donated many of the copies now in the newsletter archive.



COMPONENTS

The Radio Craftsman is a new bi-monthly newsletter dedicated to home-brewing and kit-building. For a free sample copy, send an SASE to *The Radio Craftsman*, P.O. Box 3682, Lawrence, KS 66046-6682. The subscriptions price is \$15 for 6 issues.

Senator Harris Wofford (D-PA) recently became a co-sponsor of S.J. Res. 90, The Amateur Radio Service Joint Resolution. Yes, it is an election year for the Senator, who did not answer letters about this legislation sent to him when it was NOT an election year. (*Cynical? Who, me?*) Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA) couldn't find a pencil, either, by the way.

Major shake-ups on the local ham store scene! Ham Radio Outlet (HRO), a nationwide chain of ham gear retailers, will open a large store in the Wilmington area in March. The store will be in the Parkway Plaza on U.S. 13, near I-295. BOB PENNEYS WN3K will be in charge.

Delaware Amateur Supply (DAS) is getting out of the ham gear business. Knowledgeable sources claim the store might not have lasted much longer in the ham business with or without the added competition from HRO.

The arrival of HRO in this market will make life interesting for other ham gear stores and for comparison-shopper hams. Interesting times ahead....

TECHNICAL HELP

➔ Technical questions on Amateur Radio and RFI/TVI problems can be sent to DENNIS WB2LGJ @ WB3JOE or (215) 204-6761. Dennis is ARRL's Technical Coordinator for Eastern PA. He and his fellow-volunteer Technical Specialists will research your question and help you find a solution. Of course, there is no charge for this ARRL volunteer service.

FLEA MARKET

FOR SALE: AT&T PC6300 computer, mono monitor, 5.25" floppy, 26 meg HD. Needs repair. Offers? Also Okidata Microline 192 printer, \$50. Contact DAVE K3NGN (9839950).

LEARNING CW

Want to learn Morse code but don't have time to go to a class?

MARC still has copies of "Super Morse," a share-ware program for IBM compatible computers. Copies are available for members on 5.25" or 3.5" disks at MARC meetings. A 50¢ donation for the cost of the disk is optional.

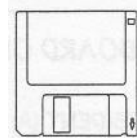
Here are some code learning tips: DO practice about 15-20 minutes at a stretch, twice a day if possible. Practicing longer is usually frustrating and counter-productive.

DON'T use visual dot-dash charts to try to learn the code, and DON'T write down dots and dashes. Hear the sound patterns and write the characters, without going through any confusing and time-consuming intermediary translation into visual dots and dashes.

DO realize that people learn at different rates. Be patient with yourself. This is not a race. DO use sending practice as well as receiving practice. If you don't have a CW practice oscillator, you can tap your fingers or a pencil on the desk. Although you will not be tested on sending, many people find that practice on sending texts selected from books and magazines reinforces the mental connection between characters and sound patterns.

Once you have learned the characters, how do you practice for the 5 wpm test? Audio tapes are good up to a point, but nearly everyone memorizes them before the desired speed level has been attained. Computer programs randomize the drill, making them very good for practice. If you have a short-wave receiver or HF ham rig, you can also use the W1AW code practice transmissions from ARRL HQ. Schedules are published in QST.

Above all, don't be afraid of not passing the test. This is not school! Many hams don't pass tests on the first try, and some try many times before they pass. No real ham, and certainly no Volunteer Examiner, laughs or sneers at someone who tries but comes up short. They'll sympathize and urge you to try again.



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THE PRESIDENT'S REMARCS**by TOM N3JMA**

Just a quick note concerning some ideas that I would like the membership to think about that may increase what the club means to each of us. Our pre-meeting session (starting usually about 7:30 PM), as well as the break, are perfect times to share interesting experiences with new equipment, antennas, projects you have built, or articles that you have come across. Please bring in any equipment or information you would like to share with other club members.

These kinds of informal sessions are often as interesting as our programs. It's amazing the kind of crowd you can draw with a show-and-tell about some arcane new gadget that you picked up at the latest hamfest.



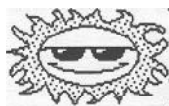
Also, as spring is upon us, is there any interest in some activity such as a day of biking or hiking? If so please contact the Members-at-Large or any of us on the Board with your suggestions.

And finally as always, if you have ideas for programs you feel would be of interest to the club please contact Gary KE3BU, our Program Chair, with suggestions and if possible a telephone number of a contact person who can offer a program.

PROGRAMS

In March, TOM N3JMA, DAVE N3LHY, and DAVE N3MDG demonstrated digital modes used on the HF bands. April's program was given by ARRL Atlantic Division Vice Director KAY WT3P (who?), bringing an update on ARRL and FCC doings,

May's meeting will feature BILL N3LPX's talk and slide show about radio communications on his sailboat trip across the Atlantic Ocean. A summer program is in the works from the Pack Rats, showing what's on the ham bands above 30 MHz besides FM repeaters and packet. You won't want to miss that one, especially if you operate entirely on VHF.

FROM THE EDITOR'S JUNK BOX

The Miami *Herald* has a Q & A column called "Why Things Are." In the April 3 issue appeared this question: "Why are sunspots on an 11-year cycle even though they're supposed to be storms?" The question is a little wiggly, but you could sort it out for the inquiring mind that wants to know.

Well, find a chair and sit down. The following, so help me Hiram Percy Maxim, is a direct quotation of the first sentence of the columnist's answer: "As you know, every 11 years there is a sunspot eruption, which causes static on CB radio, now commonly known as Internet." . . . SAY WHAT?

Americans are utterly dependent for survival on science and high technology that most don't comprehend any better than a chicken understands Chinese. Forget sunspots -- the majority of Americans in a recent poll admitted they can't program their VCRs to record a ball game or a soap opera.

We are not just talking about knuckleheads who couldn't pour water out of a boot with instructions printed on the heel.

Among the technologically-clueless are millions of reasonably-intelligent people who finished school and vote and do business and pay taxes . . . and, obviously, write newspaper

columns. Fact is, if scientific and technological literacy were clothes, most Americans couldn't go out in public.

Now, some long-time hams are angry about the recent growth in the Amateur population, because they supposed it would attract a (*probably mythical*) horde of scientific geniuses with four-digit IQs into our ranks. Instead, it has brought in all kinds of people . . . a fair number of computer and electronics experts, a few Beavis-and-Buttheads, and a lot of regular people from all walks of life. Some of the latter, to return to my earlier metaphor about scientific literacy, first open their license manuals wearing not much more than their socks.



I am living proof that more than a decade in ham radio will not turn scientific late-starters into Edwin Howard Armstrong. It will, however, turn them into citizens who are much more literate in science and technology, much better able to make informed decisions about science-related issues in our society, and much less vulnerable to whatever superstition, pseudo-science, hogwash, and whitewash may come along next.

These people may not be capable of engineering the Information Highway, but they ain't gonna be road-kill, either! That's a critical need in this country, and today's ham radio is helping to meet it. --73 de WT3P

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FROM THE EDITOR'S JUNK BOX

At Dayton, I went to see the video and slides from the 3Y0PI DXpedition to Peter I Island off the coast of Antarctica. Until 9 radio Amateurs went to the Norwegian-controlled island last February, more landings had been made on the moon than on Peter I. As expensive as it was dangerous (VERY), the DXpedition made about 60,000 QSOs. I am always amazed that these big-gun DXpeditioners do not look like crazy people, all logical evidence to the contrary.



The next day, with several hours before my plane left for home and a nearly-full tank of gas already paid for, I was not in the mood to hang around a shopping mall or the Dayton airport. What the heck, I thought, I've never been to Indiana before. New York, London, Paris, Amsterdam, Pennsauken . . . but not Indiana. So I pointed the nose of my rented pearl-gray T-Bird west on Interstate 70 and headed for the Central Time Zone.



Well, as risky business goes, my expedition to Indiana doesn't compare to the time a couple of years ago when I stepped into a hotel elevator in York, Pennsylvania, that was cram-full of hairy biker-dudes whose collective breath exuded enough bourbon and marijuana fumes to make a bull dizzy. Though what they were laughing so uproariously about was imperceptible to me, I decided to think it was funny, too. Just a bloomin' howl, man.

Is there a connection between the thrill of imperiling one's neck on a desolate mountain blip in the Antarctic pack ice and my impulse to have lunch in Indiana?

I think so. I think hams need to do what we haven't tried, go where we haven't been. Ham radio offers the willing spirit a great many ways to avoid becoming bored and boring . . . but I don't think I need to become *quite* as interesting as the guys who went to Peter I.

-73 de WT3P

MAY 7 LICENSE TEST SESSION



MARC's VE team gave tests on Saturday, May 7, in Bryn Mawr. The VEs were BOB W3SA, BOB KA3NIQ, DENNIS WB2LGJ, PAUL NX3Q, WALT WB3BDP, CARTER KD3AO, AL W3DZI, HUGH KC3IE, and ROB

WI3S. Six candidates were tested. Although there were no upgrades, certificates were issued for 1 13 wpm test, 1 Advanced theory, and 1 Novice theory.

ARRL/VEC has advised VE teams not to release of names and test results of individuals without their express written consent. Consequently, our VEs cannot provide to REMARCS the names of MARC members who pass tests at our VE sessions.

We still want to honk the horn for you, but you'll have to come to the Editor now with your good news. Please do! News of your success inspires others to keep working on their own upgrades.

The next MARC test sessions will be on August 13 and October 29, and on February 4, 1995. Tests are given at Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church on Montgomery Avenue in Bryn Mawr, with registration starting at 9: 15 AM. BOB W3ZQN (265-6032) has all the details and directions to the church.

We are able to hold our tests at Bryn Mawr Presbyterian through the good efforts of TOM K3YPO, our liaison with church officials.

FIELD DAY: BIG SUCCESS IN 1994

The predicted rainstorms and zero propagation didn't materialize! Field Day captain MITCH N3BGA's rough estimate of the numbers shows 292 CW contacts and 1058 phone QSOs. The total of 1360 QSOs is not a club record but it's close. The ribbon for most contacts per band/mode goes to 80m phone, with about 600 Qs. Over 215 contacts were made on 40 CW. Over 300 contacts on 10/15/20m were made using the club's new beam antenna. About 60 people, including 7 guests, signed the participant log . . . this looks like a new record. Mitch estimates our score to be 3,584 points. Look for more Field Day results in the next newsletter.

SOME FIELD DAY HISTORY

YEAR	QSOS	PEOPLE	POINTS
1994*	1,360	60	3,564
1993	1,097	40	3,180
1992	1,431	40	3,954
1991	1,032	40	3,362
1990	599	32	2,122
1989	908	27	3,136
1988	937	45	3,428
1987	719	26	2,502
1986	394	13	1,624

*Figures are approximate

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY RESULTS

Thirty-five members responded to the questionnaire in the last newsletter. Twenty-five responses were received in time for inclusion in a written report to the Board; the later 10 said much the same things as the first 25. What follows is a boil-down of the report highlights.

Half the respondents have been club members for 5 years or less, and nearly 1/3 have been licensed for 5 years or less. In terms of license class, the respondents were reasonably representative of the membership.

Members on the Air...

40% are on HF
37% use CW on the air
24 out of 25 are on 2m FM
32% are on 222 MHz
28% are on 440 MHz
44% are on packet

Other band/mode interests mentioned by 3 or fewer people each include HF packet, ATV, RTTY, AMTOR, PACtor, 6 meters, satellite, AM, 1.2 GHz, and weak signal VHF.

On the operating interests check-off list, nearly every item was checked by someone. The most popular interests, checked by 30% or more of the respondents, were DXing (60% marked it), rag chewing (57%), using packet BBSs (35%) public service communications (35%), social/club nets (30%) and contesting (30%).

Most members who answered the questionnaire are active in the club. Club meetings, public service events, and the hamfest were the club activities checked most often.

Nearly half of the respondents said they first heard about MARC from friends. Five heard about the club on the repeaters and 5 via our license courses.

Why are they members? Reasons checked by at least half the respondents were that they like the club meetings and newsletter (18 each), to support the repeaters (15) because MARC members are friendly (15), because they like club activities (12), and because family and friends are members (12).

Nearly all the respondents use 147.06/R sometimes or often, with 145.13/R use almost as common. Not quite half ever use 224.42/R; nobody said he uses it often. Seventy-five percent said they use WB3JOE PBBS sometimes or often.

Suggestions about improving the repeaters included having remote inputs, using PL tones, adding power, better antennas, and softening the courtesy beep on '06. Suggestions for the packet BBS included eliminating the @TRIBBS bulletins and allowing more than 2 simultaneous user connects [See the "Packet Pocket" on page 4].

Most respondents said they get enough information about the club.

Several respondents liked everything about the meetings. The program is the most popular segment, followed by the social break and the business meeting. The business meeting was the only item mentioned as "liked least." However, asked to rate the amount of time spent on each portion, most people felt it was "just right" . . . though the point is well-taken that people want the business portion kept brief and to the point,

Most people preferred keeping the starting time at 8 PM and the ending time at 10 PM. For those who'd like a longer social period, don't forget that many people arrive around 7:30 PM to chat, and some friends even get together for dinner beforehand.

All the listed program topics elicited some interest, which gives a lot of elbow room. Other topics suggested were propagation, antennas, and the new GTOR digital protocol.

About half the respondents check into the traffic and club nets at least sometimes. There was a little interest in having some other kinds of nets (technical Q & A, packet how-to). Interest in CW training on the air was also on the low side.

What other activities would people like the club to have? Most people left this line blank. Suggestions received were to have an annual special event station, Q & A sessions about technical subjects, new-license and upgrade classes, and technical work parties. Any volunteers interested in starting such services

should contact a Member-at-Large.

No strong negative input was received, even though it was okay to answer anonymously.

For most of those who answered the survey, MARC is doing a good job of providing enjoyment of ham radio in a variety of ways. It appears from the input received that nothing much is broken. However, it's always possible to make good things better, and that's what the Board is going to try to do.

A clear strength we can build on is the perception that MARC is a friendly club. We can all try to make sure that friendliness is extended to new faces and voices on the repeaters as well as to familiar ones.

Don't wait for the next membership survey to let the Board know what you think about what our club should be doing. Keep the comments coming.

If you would like a copy of the whole 5-page report, please send an SASE to WT3P's callbook address.

MEMBERSHIP PROMOTION

Sample copies of *REMARCS* with a cover note about the club were mailed to 80 non-members who live in or near Wayne. The note invited recipients to come to meetings and Field Day.

The Buckmaster CD-ROM callbook was used to find these people by zipcode and create mailing labels.

If the project is a success, we'll continue it to additional zipcodes. So far, we've done 19087, 19312, 19333, 19010, and part of 19301.

Several new people came to the June meeting as a result of the mailing. Three copies came back with bad addresses . . . say, does the FCC have your correct mailing address?

The best membership promotion is still inviting our friends to MARC meetings and activities. Who could you invite to the July and August meetings?