



REMARCS



ELECTIONS AND AUCTION HEADLINE JANUARY MEETING

Licensed members will find an election ballot in this issue of the newsletter. Instructions for how to cast your vote are shown on the ballot page. Ballots will be counted and the results will be announced at the January 15 club meeting. **Bob W3SA** handled the nominations process this year and deserves our thanks . . . this is not an easy job.

In addition to doing your democratic duty, you can have a lot of fun at the January meeting. That's our annual junkie auction, presided over by **Bart KC3BP**. The ground rules for the auction are simple (1) Only MARC members may offer items for sale (no dealers). (2) Ham and ham-related items only. (3) MARC receives 10% of the sale price of each item, or \$10, whichever is less. (4) Tag items with your name/callsign, what it is, and (if any) the minimum acceptable price. (5) Take home any unsold items. (6) All items are sold as-is. MARC gives no warranties or guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding items offered for sale. The club and the auctioneer(s) will not be liable for any problems arising from

1998 Board of Directors Slate

President:	Tom Porett N3JMA
Vice President:	Russ Hamilton K3RH
Secretary:	Steve Haly KD0VA
Treasurer:	Janet Vann KA3VTQ
Membership Services:	Kay Craigie WT3P
Program:	Dennis Silage K3DS
Public Relations:	Bill Owen W3KRB
Public Service:	Bob Palin N3JIZ
Technical:	Jeff Chapman WA3RIZ
Member-at-Large (1998-99): Chris Culver N3VXB	

sales. (7) Bring no more than 3 items for sale, so all can have a chance to participate.

Best bets for sale items are small stuff and bargains. Bring some small bills or a checkbook to handle the 10% donation. Direct any questions to President **Bob W3ZQN**.

NEW INTERNET ADDRESSES FOR MARC

On the recommendation of Webmaster **Steve N3ORH**, the Board voted in November to move the club's Internet activity to a different service provider and to register our own domain name.

<http://www.marc-radio.org>
wb3joe@marc-radio.org

This was a telephone / e-mail vote, because timing was critical to securing the most favorable price for the new service and no in-person Board meeting was held in November because of the Thanksgiving holiday.

This change not only eases some operational burdens on Steve but also allows the club to do a better job serving members and promoting MARC and ham radio to others who use our Web page. Please note the new Web URL and club e-mail address.

We appreciate Steve's work in setting up the new system.

147.06 REPEATER MOVED TO NEW SITE

145.13 Move to Follow

On November 22, MARC's flagship voice repeater, 147.06, moved from Cabrini College in Radnor to Newtown Square. We had been invited by station management to occupy a spot at 225 feet up on the Y-100 broadcast radio tower, a great deal higher than the Radnor antenna location. The work party consisted of **Jeff WA3RIZ** and **Jeff WN3A**.

The principal reason for the change was to improve the repeater's coverage. Coverage dramatically improved to the west, where '06 had been hard to use with a mobile antenna and impossible to use with an HT. However, access in the Norristown / King of Prussia area became worse than before. Many members live in that area, too.

The Board approved further changes which should remedy the problem. The 145.13 repeater will be moved from Bryn Mawr Hospital to Cabrini College. The BMH site has been unsatisfactory for several years: there is non-Amateur noise in the area which can only be cut out by using CTCSS on the input, the hospital never installed a control phone line as we requested, and an elevator tower blocks signals coming in from some users. We will use the BMH site for other things, but not for 145.13 any more. Once relocated at Cabrini, '13 will be linked with '06, providing a system all members can access easily.
[continues on page 3]

SILENT KEY
Jack Ditton W3KQJ



REMARCS

FIELD DAY: JUNE 27 - 28

"Field Day is a crock. A joke. Just another dumb contest. Nobody does emergency communications on HF any more. Nobody does emergency communications from /ash-up stations way out in the sticks. Field Day is a stupid waste of time."

So I've been told by hams in the last few years. Everybody's an expert. But I can introduce you to dozens of hams from upstate New York who say it ain't so, Joe.

When the ice storm struck up there this winter, hams providing emergency communications for government and relief organizations discovered that HF communications were required. Even though not all the repeaters were taken out by the ice, officials needed comm that could only be done on HF. Most installed HF antennas were ruined. Hams pulled out their stored Field Day antennas and slung them up however they could. They had to know how to improvise, how to color outside the lines.

When the ice, or whatever, is hitting the fan, you don't just ring up HRO's 800 number and order stuff ready-made. Part of the experience that allowed hams up there to get the job done well had been acquired at good old Field Day. That well-known stupid waste of time!

So if you believe that all you need to know to do emergency communications is how to turn on your HT, I beg to differ. At MARC Field Day, we have a whale of a lot of fun. Good

fellowship is a lot more important to us than racking up a big score. Learning is a lot more important to us than showing off what hot shots we are. Everybody who wants to operate can operate, no matter what class of license they have. In the background of all the joshing, goofing around, and fun, however, is the fact that the skills we are learning and practicing could be no joking matter, one of these days.

Please come to Field Day, whether you are a new ham or part of the "been there, done that" population. Set-up will start around 10 AM on Saturday, June 27. We'll be taking it down in mid-afternoon on Sunday. Operation is around the clock, rain or shine. We will have both phone and CW.

MARC Field Day is on Egypt Road in Audubon, PA. A map is on the last page of this newsletter. Guests are welcome. Small children will require constant supervision for their safety. Everyone should wear shoes and socks, because there is some poison ivy on the property. Some gallon jugs of clean tap water are always useful for the porta-potty.

Carter N3AO is Field Day captain. If you can bring equipment (rigs, tents, etc.) please contact him at 610-993-9623 or ccraigie@msn.com. Anyone who wants to set up a whole station should contact Carter well in advance, because this may affect the overall configuration on the field and the instructions given to operators.

BASEBALL TICKETS . . . GET IN THE ON-DECK CIRCLE NOW!

The weekend after Field Day, MARC is going to the Phillies game. The Friday, July 3, baseball game against Milwaukee features spectacular fireworks after the game. You're allowed to go down on the field to see better. We'll be going with the Holmesburg ARC. Family members and friends are welcome.

Game time is 7:05 PM. Seats will be I Section 354, rows 1-5. The cost is \$14 per ticket, plus whatever you spend for

parking, food, and souvenirs. Tickets are sold on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please do it NOW, by contacting **Bob WA3PZO** (215-624-6450, bjosuweit@aol.com).

Members who went last year had a really good time. We can't promise the Phillies will win, but you can't lose on the fireworks some of the best in the city. See you there!

MARC INFORMATION LISTSERVER

Send e-mail to remarcs@bfdin.com

Title = single word SUBSCRIBE (text may be left blank)

MAY / JUNE, 1998



REMARCS

HAMFEST JULY 12

Nobody in his right mind would pay \$50 a year dues to a local ham radio club. Come to think of it, nobody in his WRONG mind would do that. But this is what we would pay to have the club we now enjoy, if we did not have the income from our hamfest. We don't put on a hamfest because we have nothing better to do with our time. We do it for the life of the club.

People have been planning the 1998 hamfest since shortly after the 1997 show ended. Putting on a hamfest like ours is not something you can toss together at the last minute like a salad. Thanks to much good work by chairman **Mike N3IRZ**, assistant chairman **Travis N3YLI**, and about a dozen other people, the pre-event planning has gone smoothly.

Now, it's your turn. Only you can make the hamfest a success!

There will be a table at which members' ham stuff can be sold. **Gene WB3FTJ** and **Judy N3MBW** will manage it. Tag the stuff with your name, what the gear is, and the price. There is no required commission for the club, though you may make a donation from your proceeds if you want to. Please take unsold items home. The club takes no responsibility for your stuff after the hamfest closes. Sales at the club table are as-is, caveat amateur.

- ◆ **Talk up the hamfest**
- ◆ **Come to the hamfest**
- ◆ **Bring friends to the hamfest**
- ◆ **Buy stuff from our vendors**
- ◆ **Thank vendors for coming**
- ◆ **Volunteer to work an hour or two**

We will also have an ARRL publications sales table, managed by **Carter N3AO**. Stop by early, before the popular books sell out. If you want to buy a table to be an indoor vendor, contact **Bob W3SA** now (610-293-1919). Indoor table sales are first-come, first-served. Tailgate spaces are not sold in advance. We do NOT offer license exams at the hamfest.

Set-up of the indoor tables and layout of the grounds will be at 1 PM on Saturday. On Sunday, volunteers are needed well before the crack of dawn and throughout the day. Last of all, we need workers to collect trash, make sure the rest-rooms are clean, and leave the fairgrounds in even better shape than we find them.

Clean-up crews should bring supplies (brooms, mops, work gloves, buckets, rags or paper towels, cleansers, trash bags, etc.). **Ron WA2SJW** has offered his truck for cleanup.

This sounds like a lot of work, and it is. But if a lot of people give even an hour or two each, nobody has to go home feeling like something the dog chewed up. Believe it or not, working at the hamfest is fun. It's a good way to meet other club members and get to know them. Please contact **Travis N3YLI** (610-933-4970, amy-and-travis@juno.com) to find out what jobs need to be done and how you can help.

FIELD DAY FUN

Friday before Field Day was hot, dark, and stormy, with high winds, lightning, power failures, pounding rain, and all sorts of bad stuff. But Saturday was clear (albeit windy, which made tent construction entertaining) and not ferociously hot. In all, the weather was fine on Field Day weekend in our area.

We operated **W3NWA** in class 3A . . . three transmitters in simultaneous operation, independent of commercial power. We had 3 HF stations, plus a VHF station on 6 meters that doesn't figure in the transmitter count. About 50 people showed up at one time or another. Having all those hands for set-up and tear-down made a big difference. We had a nice mix of experienced operators and newcomers. Here's hoping that everyone who wanted a chance at the mic or key had enough opportunity. See the rough scores on page 5.

Janet KA3VTQ and **Rob W13S** did an excellent job with the food, with special thanks to **Josy WQ3E** for bringing fresh fruit. **Bob W3SA** arranged the field and the generator. When the

dining fly was in danger of collapse, **Steve N3LJZ** made a special trip to get us a much nicer enclosure that can be used for the hamfest, too. **Bob N3JIZ** supplied the VHF station. **Mitch N3BGA** came all the way from north Jersey to operate. George N3ORC brought his nice camper for one station. **Ron WA2SJW** brought his truck to transport stuff back to storage. **Steve K3KFD** let us use his tent, though he couldn't attend.

The prize for most unappetizing task goes to **Carter N3AO**, who washed feedlines and other gear with detergent and Lysol on Friday. Tent pole bags were also laundered with Lysol. Stuff was soaked in mouse urine and feces, a disgusting, unsanitary situation if there ever was one. New storage bins were purchased to replace those which don't close tight. We're going to look into alternatives for storing the Field Day equipment, so this won't happen again. Nobody's scared of the occasional Mickey or Minnie, but this is a potential health hazard. Anybody's garage or basement could have the same problem . . . its time we found a better plan.

ABOUT MARC

wb3joe@marc-radio.org
http://www.marc-radio.org

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

3rd Thursdays, 8 PM, Memorial
 Library of Radnor Township,
 Wayne. Guests welcome. Smoke-
 free. Handicapped-accessible.

BOARD MEETINGS

4th Thursdays, 7:30 PM, Paoli
 Hospital. Members may attend
 as observers.

SYSTEMS

145.13/R, 147.06/R, 224.42/R
 WB3JOE packet BBS 145.090
 Packet sysop and Webmaster:
 Steve N3ORH (610-313-8080,
 smaslin@bellatlantic.net)

NETS

Club Net, Sundays, 8:30 PM
 Traffic net, M/W/F. 8:30 PM
 All nets on 147.06/R
 Net Manager: Carter N3AO
 (610-993-9623, ccraigie@msn.com)

DUES

\$15 Full (licensed Amateurs)
 \$5 Associate (unlicensed persons)
 Family rate \$5 per ham after first
 member pays full dues.

NEWSLETTER

REMARKS is published in the odd
 months, edited by Kay WT3P
 (610-993-9623, wt3p@msn.com)

**BRING A FRIEND
 TO A MARC MEETING!**

SHORT CIRCUITS FROM THE EDITOR'S SHACK

You can understand why broadcast advertisements related to awkward functions of the human body are Euphemism City, but what is it with the weather report?

You know what I mean. "Warm" really means 10 degrees hotter than the fire under Hitler's behind. "Chilly" means your brass monkey is in big trouble. "Breezy" means Lucy the Margate Elephant is taking off on runway two. "Drizzle" means Noah's Ark is now boarding rows "Warthog" through "Zebra." And "flurries" mean we better send for Sgt. Preston and Yukon King!

I thought about this foolishness while driving on the Baltimore Beltway through a blinding downpour that a local radio station news-blabber kept calling "light drizzle" instead of "raining cats and dogs."

The purpose of my travel during this monsoon was to attend a hamfest near the Chesapeake Bay. one of those little ones where commerce takes a back seat to shmoozing. As part of the fun, they hold a QLF contest. Originally a telegrapher's Q-signal for an op whose fist is so bad it sounds as though he's sending with his left foot, QLF later became a game in which people actually compete at sending Morse code with their left feet.

At this hamfest, they have a code practice oscillator attached to a regular-size straight key that is nailed to a plank. They hand you a slip of paper with a text that you must send for one minute. Shoe on or off, as you prefer. The idea is to send fast, but you lose points for mistakes and unintelligibility. It looks hard, and it is even harder than it looks.

Yes, I was shanghai'd into playing the game. To my surprise, I won third place. Could have taken second, but I messed up on a comma. (*Competitive? Who, me?*)

As doing dopey things in public go, I'd much rather be seen thwacking a Morse code key with my foot than be on the 11 PM news telling people it's going to be "chilly," when the truth is that it's going to be ten times colder than brass underwear. I'll go for the good *honest* foolishness of ham radio every time!
 -- 73 de Kay WT3P

VANITY CALLSIGN FEE TO DROP IN SEPTEMBER

The FCC will decrease the application fee for a vanity callsign from \$50 to \$13, effective September 14, 1998. The term is still ten years. The FCC has said they do not plan refunds to people who apply between now and September 14. The fee is determined on the basis of how many applications the FCC predicts will come in during the fiscal year; this time, they're guessing 10,000 applications. The fee jumped from its original \$30 to \$50 for FY 1997. There is still no fee for renewing a license where no vanity call is involved. Do not pay somebody money to file a license renewal for you . . . it gains you nothing whatsoever!

JULY AND AUGUST CLUB MEETING PROGRAMS

Most of us can only dream what it would be like to be on a DXpedition. Well, stop dreaming! On July 16, we can experience the VP8SSI South Sandwich Islands DXpedition (at least on video tape!). Afterwards, we'll discuss the "local" versions of DXpeditions: operating from "rare" Maidenhead grid squares and county hunting. The South Sandwich Islands are not your local delicatessen, folks. They're a pile of Antarctic rock with vicious winds that nearly swept the hams into the ocean. What the video doesn't tell you is that those so-cute little seals and penguins do major quantities of reeking poop and also bite chunks out of visiting hams. I've

seen this video . . . its a winner . . . and the sight of all that ice and snow will cool off a hot July night.



On August 20, its "Show Us Your Keys and Mics Night." Because we never throw anything away, most hams have a collection of microphones and Morse code keys. Bring the best, worst, and most unusual from your shack to the meeting. We'll discuss straight key, bug, and paddle designs; various kinds of elements, and the manufacturers past and present. We'll be looking for the oldest, oddest, and most stylish versions of these essential devices in the ham shack.



REMARCS



LICENSE COURSE VIDEOS AND MANUALS FOR LOAN TO MEMBERS

The club has purchased a set of ARRL's video courses to be loaned to club members if they or their family want to earn a license or upgrade. At the present time the Novice/Technician and Advanced class video courses are ready to lend, along with an Extra class study manual (there is no Extra class video course). The General class video course has been ordered and will be available soon.

Members will be asked to sign for the materials and will be requested to return them in a month. If no one is on a waiting list for the video course or book you're using, it will be possible to keep the material longer than that. Despite the fact

that the video courses cost about \$100 each, the Board has decided that no money deposit will be required for the study materials. We'd rather assume that people will be considerate and honest until forced to decide otherwise!

Membership Services chairman **Kay WT3P** has custody of the study materials and will be happy to hear from you (610-993-9623 or wt3p@msn.com) if you'd like to sign them out. For more information on how MARC encourages learning and upgrading, please turn to page 3.

PROGRAMS FOR THE FALL SEASON

by Dennis K3DS

September 17: Jeff WA3RIZ, MARC Technical Committee Chair, will discuss the equipment and operation of the repeater system. Did you ever wonder how the repeater can connect a high power transmitter and a sensitive receiver to the same antenna or how linking is accomplished? We'll have an opportunity to discuss coverage areas and future plans for the repeater system.

October 15: Tom WA3RXE will demonstrate the AEA HF and VHF/UHF antenna analyzers. These instruments frequency

sweep, excite an antenna, and display a VSWR plot. We'll test their performance on a UHF Yagi and a dual band 144/440 MHz rubber duckie and a few mobile antennas.

November 19: Carter N3AO will narrate a MARC Field Day 1998 slide show. We'll discuss setup and operation of the Field Day site. If you were at Field Day, please come and add your stories and comments. If you didn't get a chance to attend FD98, this will almost be like being there.

CLUB MEMBER TO DEMO HAM RADIO ON TV

Catch Lee KB3BUO on Channel 17

One of our younger members, **Lee KB3BUO**, will be featured on channel 17's "Teen Extreme" program on September 12 at 7:30 PM. The show spotlights interesting activities for young people. Lee talks about ham radio and does some operating.

You know, a lot of people would rather be hung by the thumbs than speak in public, let alone go on TV. We're pleased to hear that Lee isn't one of them and that he grabbed this opportunity to present the hobby to fellow teens.

PROPOSED TREDYFFRIN ORDINANCE EXEMPTS HAM TOWERS

Thanks to W3SA!

What was it the man said about eternal vigilance being the price of liberty? There's a fresh outcropping of ordinances seeking to regulate wireless communications service towers. People want their cel phones, PCS phones, pagers, etc., but they don't like those big tacky towers ... "not in my back yard" ... and some are scared of anything they suspect of emitting RF. Thing is, we hams DO want towers in our back yards, and the FCC has RF exposure guidelines we use to safeguard ourselves and our neighbors. Thanks to **Bob W3SA**, who

keeps a keen eye on local government affairs in Tredyffrin Township, Chester County, the township's new proposed communications antenna ordinance contains language specifically exempting Amateur Radio and Citizens Band antennas. Every ham in the township owes Bob thanks for getting this exemption written-in from the start.

You can see it pays for us hams to monitor what's going on before something creeps up and bites us!

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wb3joe@marc-radio.org
http://www.marc-radio.org

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145.13 and 147.06 are linked
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smaslin@bellatlantic.net)

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Club Net, Sundays, 8:30 PM
Traffic net, M/W/F, 8:30 PM
All nets on 147.06 + 145.13
linked repeater system.
Net Manager: Carter N3AO
(610-993-9623, ccraigie@msn.com)

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BOARD MEETINGS

At their July meeting, the Board discussed the hamfest at length and decided that a hamfest must be held in 1999. For more on this subject, please turn to page 5. A letter was read from Holmesburg ARC thanking MARC for the recent donation and inviting MARC members to use the HARC repeater at any time.

Jeff WA3RIZ asked to be recorded as opposing the donation. Use of the license course videos was discussed. **Bill W3KRB** will write to area schools about ham radio. Purchase of a club banner for public events was discussed, but no decision was made. There was a report on the status of the repeaters. No treasurer's report was available.

At their August meeting, the Board discussed guidelines for use of the license videos. They received an update on the display at the Radnor library. It was noted that a reporter will attend the September club meeting. Responsibilities of some Board positions were also discussed. The treasury balance is \$7,843.72. MARC is holding an additional \$294.36 in the Nick fund.

RADNOR LIBRARY DISPLAY COMING SEPTEMBER 17

Bill W3KRB arranged a ham radio display in the lobby of the Memorial Library of Radnor Township, our meeting site. Beginning September 17, patrons will be shown ham radio past, present, and future in the glass case everyone must pass to enter the main library. Bill received assistance from club members and the staff at ARRL HQ in preparing the materials. Since September 17 is our meeting day, we can take a look at Bill's handiwork before coming downstairs for the MARC meeting.

VOX

Chris N3VXB has a new phone number: 610-825-2129. **Carter N3AO** took 2nd place in the Homebrew category of the First Annual QRP Telephone Area Code Contest, sponsored by the QRP Society of Eastern PA and the Eastern PA QRP Club. **Branin N3SAM** and **Scott KB3CSB** have joined the Chester County ARES/RACES emergency response team for Paoli Memorial Hospital. **Steve K3KFD** placed 5th in his category in the 1997 CQ World Wide SSB contest ... nice going! **Jenny KA3WVD** has been chosen as secretary of the student senate at Guilford College for this academic year. Please keep a good thought for **Janet KA3VTQ's** father, who has been ill. Congratulations to **Alex AA3RM** (ex-N3LCT) and **Pete AA3RE** (ex-N3WUM), on their upgrade to Extra. **Mike N3IRZ** says he's shooting for Advanced class.

A few QSL cards were received for Field Day contacts with **W3NWA** this year. The QSL's were from **KS4YX** (South Carolina, 15 SSB), **AC5OC** (Arkansas, 15 SSB), **KA4JZS** (Florida, 10 SSB), **W4MT** (Virginia, 20 SSB), and **K3BSA** (Spark Lodge Scouts, Pennsylvania, 15 SSB). All have received QSL cards in return.

LIGHTNING HITS BOB W3SA'S TOWER

But His Rigs Aren't Crispy Critters

Lightning hit **Bob W3SA's** tower in August, possibly frying a trap or two on his beam. Indoors, however, his ham gear was unharmed. For one thing, his feedlines were disconnected.

Also, Bob had installed high-quality surge protectors, purchased from Radio Shack, which evidently did their job. A lightning stroke that close can produce substantial electromagnetic pulse (EMP) on power lines into your home

... enough to damage unprotected plugged-in electronic devices. Cheap-o surge protectors may not have a clamping time fast enough to safeguard against the wallop of a lightning strike. Economizing here may be not so smart.

Talk to Bob to find out the details of how he protects his equipment. Many of us tend to gamble with our expensive ham gear in this regard, and maybe we shouldn't.

FROM THE EDITOR'S JUNK BOX

Diners were a new experience for me when I moved here from down south. They just don't exist below the Washington Beltway. My local diner is the real ex-train-car McCoy and not one of those cutesy knock-offs with fake 1950's memorabilia. The coffee's good, you may have to eat some cigarette smoke along with the home-made pie, and there's no air conditioning.

But it's the clientele that fascinates. At any given lunchtime, I see all manners and conditions of people. Here is an elderly Main Line couple with expensive hair and perfect pastel clothes. Beside them is a family that doesn't speak English. Next to them, a table full of nuns. The next table has a group of young business types talking the stock market. Here's a table of teenagers in full mall-rat and skater-dude get-up. There's a cop, here's a letter-carrier, over there's a guy in riding britches who could probably buy all of us twice, and next to him is a trio of workmen whose grimy clothes and rough hands prove they don't spend their day any place near the executive conference room.

Everybody's in there scarfing up the meat loaf, creamed chipped beef, rice pudding, BLT's, and absolutely non-Mexican chili. Bantering with the waitresses, who'd never in a million years call themselves "servers." Looking out the window where the Beamers, Mercedes, and Grand Cherokees sit peacefully among the panel trucks, aging Toyotas, and downright pieces of ... junk.

When I try to understand why I enjoy the diner, apart from the fact that I prefer food which doesn't seem to have been squeezed out of a plastic tube and that I never met a french-fry I didn't like, I believe the answer is this counter-intuitive socioeconomic mish-mash. These people at the diner should be too busy snobbing and reverse-snobbing each other to eat up their chicken fingers. But it ain't so.

It's like one of the main reasons why I enjoy ham radio ... there are all sorts of people in ham radio today, and most of us are willing to give each other an even break most of the time. We have engineers, doctors, lawyers, business big-shots, school kids, maintenance workers, machine operators, teachers, homemakers, police officers, fire-fighters, salesmen, auto mechanics ... you name it. Even the occasional philosophy major!

There are some radio clubs bitterly split by snobbery and prejudice of one kind or another. That's somebody's idea of fun, but not mine. Me, I'd rather belong to a club like MARC where we are more like the folks in my local diner. I say "potato" and you say "potahto" ... but we're both pretty keen on the home fries. — **73 de Kay WT3P**

LEARN AND UPGRADE WITH MARC

SuperMorse Available Free

SuperMorse is a share-ware program for IBM-compatible PC's that helps you learn Morse code and improve your copy speed. As a service to members, MARC offers copies of the program free. Please contact **Kay WT3P** to request a disk.

Informal Morse Code Class Starts September 8

Again this fall, **Carter N3AO** will teach Morse code informally at his home for anyone who wants to learn code for the first time, re-learn it after a hiatus, or increase speed for an upgrade. Class will be 7:30 - 9 PM, Tuesday evenings. For more information and directions, contact Carter at 610-993-9623 or ccraigie@msn.com. Everyone who took the class last

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 1998

PRESIDENT

Tom Porett N3JMA 610-896-8413
tporett@aol.com

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Russ Hamilton K3RH 610-687-5245
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PROGRAMS

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MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

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rhaase@bellatlantic.net
Chris Culver N3VXB 610-825-2129
crculver@aol.com

CALLSIGN TRUSTEES

WB3JOE: Al Maslin W3DZI 610-446-4936, amaslin@earthlink.net
W3NWA: Kay Craigie WT3P 610-993-9623, wt3p@msn.com

spring passed the test! Carter enjoys Morse code, so you'll be learning from someone with a really positive attitude, not somebody who views code as the moral equivalent of a dose of castor oil: supposedly good for you but hard to swallow.

License Test Session

The next MARC tests will be on Saturday, November 7, at Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church on Montgomery Avenue in Bryn Mawr at 9:15 AM. Please contact Bob W3ZQN (610-265-6032) for registration and directions. Pre-registration is necessary. MARC members may take one test session a year free of charge as a membership benefit.

UKRAINE CONTACTS CONTINUE

Want to Help?

Mike N3IRZ recently responded to a "stray" in QST from The Young Seamen's Youth club station, UU4JWF, in Crimea, Ukraine. They were asking for parts to complete a PC they were building for their club station. Mike wrote to them and asked what they had and what they needed. They responded that they only had a keyboard, disk drive, and chassis.

Steve K3KFD has donated a complete 486 and color monitor. It is packed and ready to go via a Russian package service. Mike is now trying to raise about \$150 for shipping and insurance. Having a PC will enable this youth club station to operate packet and other digital modes, use computer logging and e-mail, as well access the Internet. Needless to say, computers in all former USSR republics are very rare and

expensive, so this donation is no small gesture. Mike is also trying to collect any ham-related shareware they could use on 3 1/2 inch disks. In addition, he is seeking a set of 1996 or 1997 International and North American callbooks and/or a semi-current QRZ CD ROM callbook and possibly a used SWR/Power meter, a computer modem, and old issues of QST.

No club funds are to be used for this project. If you would like to make a personal donation towards the shipping cost or can donate any of the other items being sought, please contact **Mike N3IRZ** at mpilotti@anroinc.com or 610-935-4429. [info tnx N3IRZ and Paul DeSantis].

FCC ANNOUNCES PROPOSAL TO RESTRUCTURE AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE CLASSES

ARRL and No-Code International Proposals Also on the Table

The last top-to-bottom revision of the USA's ham license structure took place over 30 years ago, with the introduction of so-called "Incentive Licensing." Since that time, the only major structural change was the no-code VHF license added in 1991. This new Technician ticket produced a 6-class system. Demand for the Novice license then virtually disappeared, as the public made clear their preference for a no-code entry into ham radio.

Starting in 1996, the ARRL studied ideas for restructuring the license class system and solicited input from hams using both statistical, scientific opinion polling and self-selected or free-form input. Although it appeared that many hams believe 6 license classes are too many and that 20 wpm is not necessary for full HF privileges, there did not seem to be strong grass-roots pressure for restructuring the whole system. Consequently, the ARRL Board voted in January, 1998, not to pursue the matter any further.

In July, it was learned that the FCC intended to propose restructuring, on their own motion, as part of the Biennial Review of Amateur service rules and regulations. Rumors abounded concerning what the FCC might float. All that could be learned from reliable sources was that the FCC would likely propose 3 or 4 license classes and that they would probably raise the issue of whether Morse code tests faster than 5 wpm are necessary. The code question was

due less to anti-code-requirement sentiments than to hams' complaints about bogus medical exemptions for the 13 and 20 wpm tests. Blocking phony exemptions by tightening requirements for exemption drew heavy fire from advocates for the disabled within the FCC. Another way to stop the bogus code exemptions for 13 and 20 wpm, of course, is to stop testing at 13 and 20 wpm.

Initial indication was that the FCC wanted to fast-track the proceeding, giving only a brief comment period following publication of the Biennial Review. This would have made it impossible to get the word out through magazines such as QST, so hams could know what was up. Fortunately, the FCC instead granted a 90-day comment period ... but nobody knew that until the document was published in August. Going on the assumption that there would be little time to respond, the ARRL Board developed a counter-proposal intended to be moderate and to reflect input receiving during the earlier opinion polling. At the same time, No-Code International, an organization whose Executive Director is **Fred Maia W5YI**, also prepared to express its views.

The historical background for all of this appears in the editorial of the September QST. Also interesting reading is W5YI's column in the August CQ. The League's proposal is available on ARRL's Web site (<http://www.arrl.org/>) and is discussed in September QST. No-Code

International's ideas are published in the August 15 W5YI REPORT newsletter and can probably be located via the Web site at <http://www.w5yi.org>. The FCC's Notice of Proposed Rule-Making is available on ARRL's page and also directly from the FCC Web site in Word Perfect 5.1 and plain text versions as: <http://www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Wireless/Novices/1998/fcc98183.2p> and <http://www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Wireless/Novices/1998/fcc98183.txt>. The FCC document explains how to file formal comments in this proceeding by the December 1 deadline, if you wish to do so. Electronic comments will be accepted.

Restructuring is not the only item covered in the Biennial Review. In dismissing an ARRL petition to create a new mechanism for enforcement of the rules that would by-pass existing black holes with the FCC, the FCC invites input on how to improve enforcement. Other topics include RACES licenses and some administrative topics in the VEC system. Several individuals' petitions deemed repetitive are dismissed.

The Board of MARC has not taken a position on this matter, so no editorial views will be expressed here. It's known that MARC members have a wide variety of viewpoints on what licensing requirements and privileges should be. Fortunately, our club has a tradition of civilized dialogue about controversial issues, and this one should be no different.

HAMFEST MAKES LESS MONEY IN 1998

Deb	AA3HE
Colin	AA3LM
Bart	K4BF
Alex	KA2VLP
Edie	KA3NKP
Janet	KA3VTQ
Kim	KB3COV
Peter	KB3CSY
Steve	KD0VA
Steve	N1HDP
Carter	N3AO
Mitch	N3BGA
Chuck	N3CGT
Mike	N3IRZ
Bob	N3JIZ
Norm	N3KNW
Dave	N3LHY
Judy	N3MBW
Branin	N3SAM
Roger	N3VBZ
Jon	N3VZG
Travis	N3YLI
Bob	N3ZRR
Dan	W3LKD
Bob	W3SA
Bob	W3ZQN
Ron	WA2SJW
Bob	WA3PZO
Jeff	WA3RIZ
Gene	WB3FTJ
Rob	WI3S
Josy	WQ3E
Ned	WQ3Z
Kay	WT3P

The MARC hamfest was not as successful as we hoped it would be. Despite a great deal of first-rate work by many volunteers throughout the year [see the box at left] and excellent weather, attendance was down for both buyers and indoor vendors. The tailgating area did pretty well. What appears to have hurt our business was a big computer show at Valley Forge on the same weekend. If you've ever complained about too many computer vendors and buyers at a hamfest, think about it: their money goes into the sponsoring club's treasury ... and if they don't come to a hamfest, ham radio doesn't benefit.

The profit on the hamfest was reported as \$1,300 to \$1,500. That isn't chicken feed, to be sure, but it also isn't the \$3,000 we used to put in the bank some years ago. The ARRL publications booth sold about \$500 worth of books, gaining the club a 10% commission of about \$50. Over half the inventory of publications was sold. Another success was the club sales table. The stuff was very attractively displayed, and careful records were kept for members who left gear to be sold.

Since we moved the hamfest to the fairgrounds, the number of volunteers has improved greatly. If you helped on the hamfest, and your name is not in the box here, please contact **Kay WT3P**. We want to recognize every member who helped, because everyone's work is important and sincerely appreciated.

Direct-mail publicity this year was increased but costs were kept down. Using ARRL member mailing labels on diskette, our friends at ANRO, Inc., prepared a bulk mailing at a very low postage rate. The club is very grateful to ANRO for all their assistance with the printing and mailing of our hamfest flyers.

The Board has decided that the club must do a hamfest in 1999, because we have no other way to raise enough revenue to keep our reserves up. The club is far from broke. We have plenty of money in the bank. However, if we skipped having a hamfest and lived off our reserves, we would run into trouble in a few years. We are going to control costs extra-carefully, of course, since we don't know what will happen with the hamfest next year. We will also be looking into other revenue sources. If you have any ideas in that regard, please talk to a Board Member-at-Large.

Hamfests in general, all over the USA and even in Europe, are experiencing lower attendance and fewer vendors, so our problems reflect no criticism of the members who organized our show. They worked very hard and did just about everything right. Everyone realizes we'll just have to work even harder and smarter in 1999.

MESSAGE SENT = MESSAGE RECEIVED?

A Meditation from Kay WT3P

If you've been married longer than 15 minutes, or if you've ever been a kid or had one of your own, you know that what we hear is not necessarily what the speaker meant to say. It works the same way in ham radio. There is some weird transformation algorithm that happens when people talk to each other across social divides of one kind or another.

When Bob Extra SAYS to Bill Technician, "How can I help you to upgrade?" he thinks he's offering friendly encouragement, a helping hand. He's miffed and puzzled when Bill frowns and walks away. Bob decides these new hams are a bunch of CB appliance operators who don't want to learn anything.

What Bill Technician HEARS is "If you're satisfied with a Tech license, then there's something wrong with you. Real hams, like me, are on HF." Bill decides these long-timers are a bunch of old poops who can't wait to point out to new hams how superior they are to you. Who needs 'em?

Any time we offer someone an opportunity to expand his horizons in the hobby, we risk implying that his present way of enjoying ham radio is all wrong. On the other hand, if we perceive in every offer of help a hidden agenda to make us

feel inadequate, we risk missing something (and someone) we might really enjoy.

Look, there are knuckleheads in every license class, but most of us aren't in ham radio because we have no other way to make life miserable. For that we have bosses, in-laws, taxes, traffic jams, and Bill Gates. We're in ham radio to have fun, make friends, serve our community, and share knowledge.

Maybe the key word is "share."

Maybe we geezers should take the time to get to know new hams better, to find out what they can teach US, at the same time we offer to help THEM. Maybe then it would seem more like a relationship between equals, and less like "Here, let me help you, poor little thing that you are."

Maybe we born-yesterdays shouldn't assume that every outstretched hand bears an up-raised digit. We might offer to share our ways of enjoying the hobby with the fossils, while we relax, already, and let them show us what they think is fun.

And maybe we might all just lighten up some. It's worth a try!

1998 HAMFEST SCENES



Dan W3LKD, Gene WB3FTJ, Judy N3MBW, and Carter N3AO set up the club sales table



Spiffy banner at the club sales table



Indoors at the hamfest

Photos by Bob W3SA



Outdoors in the flea market



Harry W3FM was a happy vendor



Bart K4BF anchors the info table



Another view of the flea market



Janet KA3VTQ counts \$\$\$... not as much as we hoped for.



Doug W3CF (ex-N3ADL, at left) stops by for a chat with Kay WT3P, while Carter N3AO sells ARRL publications



Deb AA3HE, Edie KA3NKP, and Ned WQ3Z collect the money

THUNDERSTORM AND LIGHTNING SAFETY ... TIPS FROM NOAA, FEMA, AND THE RED CROSS

- ⌘ If you can hear thunder, you're close enough to the storm to be struck by lightning. Seek safe shelter immediately. Go indoors or get into a car. Keep car windows closed.
- ⌘ Get away from open water.
- ⌘ If caught outside, get away from metal objects such as golf clubs, golf carts, lawn mowers, bikes, etc. Avoid isolated structures in open areas (trees, telephone poles, small sheds)

- and also conductors such as telephone lines and wire fences.
- ⌘ Get out of open fields. If caught in the open, do not lie flat on the ground! Squat, to make yourself a smaller target. Find a ravine or low area, but be alert for flash-flooding.
- ⌘ In forests, find a low area under thick growth of small trees.
- ⌘ Don't let kids beg "just one more minute" in the pool or on the ball field.

FLEA MARKET

For Sale: Hewlett-Packard Scanjet 3p flat-bed scanner, black & white, with SCSI interface, cable, and driver software, \$50 or make offer. Contact **Kay WT3P** (610-993-9623, wt3p@msn.com).

Members' for sale / trade / want to buy notices for ham gear, computers, and related equipment can be published in a future newsletter. The next edition will be November / December.

JAMBOREE ON THE AIR OCTOBER 17-18

JOTA introduces ham radio to youth every October. If there's a Boy or Girl Scout Troop (any age group) in your neighborhood, this is the time to invite them to your shack. If that's not possible, then get on the air and work the JOTA stations, so those kids have someone friendly to QSO.

Information about JOTA and how you can become involved appears on page 90 of September QST. The ARRL has literature you can order to use with your Scout demo. Also, club member **Rick WB3BSA** is deeply involved with Scouting. Contact him for ideas and encouragement.

PENNSYLVANIA QSO PARTY OCTOBER 10 - 11

The biggest, best state QSO party of them all is the Pennsylvania QSO Party. It has something for both the die-hard contester and the newcomer to competitive operating. In fact, many top Pennsylvania contest ops got their start in the party.

It's fun. Kind of like Field Day, without the mosquitoes. The exchange (what you send and copy) is a sequential serial number (001, 002, etc.) and your county. Non-Pennsylvanians substitute their ARRL Section.

MARC tries to have a club competition entry each year. Last year, we didn't have enough scores submitted to qualify. For information about the event, contact **Steve K3KFD**, or **Kay WT3P**, or check the contest's Web page at <http://members.aol.com/dougHDH/paqsoparty/narcweb.htm>.

Several Philly-area counties are fairly rare in the contest. You could become a very popular person if you can get on HF that weekend.

For Sale: Alex **KE3DF** has the following ham gear for sale. Contact him at jdaawa@aol.com, 610-591-9268 (days), or 610-964-8621 (evenings).

2 Meters

ICOM 1C-2AT - \$50
Realistic HTX-202 w/manual, charger, auto adapter, extra battery - \$150
Firerod antenna - \$8
Kenwood TR-7950 - \$150
Homemade 2 meter ground plane - \$5

HF

ICOM IC-725 w/manual - \$400
Antenna tuner - B&W VS300A, w/manual - \$25

Packet

Kantronics KPC-3 - \$50
Packet modem Ramsey kit, assembled \$5

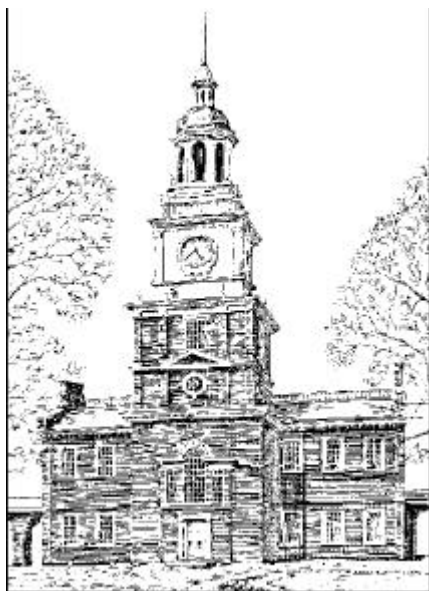
Computer

Gateway 2000 25DXC486 w/color monitor - \$200

Miscellaneous

12 Volt Die Hard marine battery w/case and trickle charger \$5
Magnet wire #8 - partial spool)
RG-213/u - partial spool) make offer
Various assembled coaxes)
Various dipole antennas)

Hy-Gain 18 AVT 5 band HF vertical - \$15
Hy-Gain 14 AVQ 4 band HF vertical - \$10



"PENNSYLVANIA 67" AWARD OFFERED BY MARC

MARC sponsors an award for confirmed contacts with all 67 counties in Pennsylvania. To open the award to all license classes, rules permit use of repeating devices (including moon-bounce) as long as contacts are 2-way and made in real or near-real time. It is for QSOs, not exchange of messages through bulletin board networks.

Applicants must have the QSL cards in their possession but are not required to submit them to the award manager. A verified list of contacts is required, along with \$1 (1 IRC for non-USA applicants) and a self-addressed envelope large enough to hold an 8 1/2 x 11 inch certificate.

Information about the award is posted on MARC's Web page and is also available from the award manager, **Kay WT3P**. Very few MARC members have earned the award! The Pennsylvania QSO Party is a great opportunity to work and confirm counties.

The line drawing of Independence Hall that's used on the certificate was found on the QSL card of club member **Mike WB3JHX**.

Please help spread the word about this award.



REMARKS



NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR 1999 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Radio clubs don't run themselves. People have to accept leadership roles and contribute more than our \$15 a year dues. Elections for the MARC Board are held at the January meeting each year, and nominations are sought now for the 1999 term. The nominations are being chaired by **Chris N3VXB**, the Member-at-Large who isn't up for re-election this year.

Board members' responsibilities include doing their individual jobs plus attending monthly Board meetings. At the Board meetings, decisions are made that affect the whole organization. All offices except Member-at-Large carry a one-year term. One Member-at-Large will be elected for the 1999-2000 term. Callsign trustees are not elected.

Nobody owns any office. It's been a long time since we had a contested election in this club. How about this time around? Some Board members will seek re-election, but others will probably not.

Any licensed club member may run for any office. How long you've been a member, how long you've been a ham, how old you are, or what license class you hold, etc., do not matter. To find out more about serving on the MARC Board and what the positions' responsibilities are, contact Chris, talk to the person who holds the office now, and/or consult the club By-Laws.

HOLIDAY PARTY WILL BE DECEMBER 17

The annual holiday party replaces our December meeting. Starting at the usual time, 7:30 PM, the holiday party features snacks, desserts, and good fellowship. Members are encouraged to bring their family members ... there will be no business meeting or technical program.

The party is chaired by **Edie KA3NKP**, who has done a superb job many times in the past.



If you're involved in any kind of artistic hobby, you're invited to bring a sample of your art to display at the party. We know there are photographers and wood-workers in the club, for instance, and who knows what other artists may have work that members would enjoy seeing. Don't be shy!

Also, if you have CD's of holiday music, feel free to bring them. Be sure to put your name on the cases.

LOANER EQUIPMENT LIST GROWS

A Kenwood TS-520 transceiver and accessories have been donated to MARC by a ham who wished to remain anonymous. The equipment was checked out by **Bob W3ZQN** who used it to work Japan. MARC already owned a Kenwood TS-520 donated to us in the past.

These rigs may be borrowed by club members. So far, the original 520 has been used by some of our younger club members to get started on HF. As the sunspots return and some people are becoming interested in HF for the first time, the availability of these loaner rigs is a particularly nice club resource.

The 520 is a good, reliable rig with a tube final. Tube rigs are not a big scary deal, once you get the hang of tuning up. Just as there's something to be said in favor of knowing how to drive a manual transmission, it's also handy to know how to operate a tube rig as opposed to a no-tune solid-state transceiver.

If you might be interested in borrowing one of the 520's for a while, please contact a member of the Board. It's possible that one of the rigs may be sold and the proceeds used to purchase a piece of test equipment for loan to members, but that hasn't been decided yet.

MEETING REFRESHMENTS ... SOLUTION TO THE SNACK SNAG

Many members like a doughnut or cookie and soda at the club meeting. Few members have been willing to volunteer to bring the snacks. Usually, one individual has gotten stuck with the job for months or years on end. Something's wrong with this picture, isn't it?

From now on, if no one volunteers to bring refreshments the following month, we aren't going to have any. None.

People who enjoy the refreshments and want to have them in the future can make it happen by contacting Member-at-Large **Chris N3VXB** to sign up for a month in 1999.

ABOUT MARC

wb3joe@marc-radio.org
http://www.marc-radio.org

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

3rd Thursdays, 8 PM, Memorial
Library of Radnor Township,
Wayne. Guests welcome. Smoke-
free. Handicapped-accessible.

BOARD MEETINGS

4th Thursdays, 7:30 PM, Paoli
Hospital. Members may attend
as observers.

SYSTEMS

145.13/R, 147.06/R, 224.42/R
145.13 and 147.06 are linked
WB3JOE packet BBS 145.090
Packet sysop and Webmaster:
Steve N3ORH (610-313-8080,
smaslin@bellatlantic.net)

NETS

Club Net, Sundays, 8:30 PM
Traffic net, M/W/F, 8:30 PM
All nets on 147.06 + 145.13
linked repeater system.
Net Manager: Carter N3AO
(610-993-9623, ccraigie@msn.com)

DUES

\$15 Full (licensed Amateurs)
\$5 Associate (unlicensed persons)
Family rate \$5 per ham after first
member pays full dues.

NEWSLETTER

REMARCS is published in the odd
months, edited by Kay WT3P
(610-993-9623, wt3p@msn.com)

BRING A FRIEND
TO A MARC MEETING!

VOX

We have a bunch of new members to welcome: **Bob AA3RK**, **Mark KE3XY**, **Marco KB3CXS**, **Brian WD0HBG**, **Dave W3ITK**, **David KC8IUA**, **David ("Wojo") KB3CXU** and **Sean KB3BGF**. Please give them a warm hello when you hear them on the repeaters. **Steve N1HDP** and **Jon N3VZG** took part in a Scouts Jamboree on the Air event at Hibernia Park (*story on page 7*).

Harry W3FM was surprised to receive a phone call from a collector of Collins radio gear. Seems a transceiver he sold 35 years ago came into this collector's hands. Harry's name was written in the manual, and the collector tracked Harry down for a chat.

Several MARC members played in the PA QSO Party. **Steve K3KFD** and **Bob AA3RK** were in Montgomery County. **Carter N3AO** did a solar-power QRP portable operation in Delaware County, with logistical assistance from **Bart K4BF**. **Kay WT3P** worked from Chester County.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Earlier this year, we published a membership opinion / interests survey. The plan was to tabulate the results and print them, but only 3 members responded. Maybe that tells us your opinion of and interest in surveys! The Board thanks the members who gave their input.

FORMER MEMBER DIES IN FAMILY TRAGEDY

Authorities found former member **Ron Dudek K3LIC** and his wife dead in their King of Prussia home on October 5. Ron was seated in a chair beside his wife's bed. Police found no signs of a break-in or other foul play and believed that Ron took his own life with a gun after shooting his chronically-ill wife.

They say (*whoever "they" are*), that life never gives us a greater burden than we can carry. Sometimes, your editor believes, "they" do not know what they are talking about.

LETTERS SENT TO AREA SCHOOLS

Public Relations chairman **Bill W3KRB** wrote letters to 40 science teachers and club advisors at area high schools. He introduced them to ham radio, using some brochures from the ARRL, and offered MARC's help in mentoring their students in electronics, computers, Morse code, etc. A sign-up sheet was circulated at the October meeting for volunteer mentors.

Members who signed up included **George N3ORC**, **Chris N3VXB**, **Bill W3KRB**, **Carter N3AO**, **Harry W3FM**, **Gene WB3FTJ**, **Dave N3LHY**, **Steve N1HDP**, and **Jon N3VZG**. If you would be willing to mentor a young person, please phone or e-mail **Bill W3KRB** and let him know what subjects you can do.

And let us all take our hats off to Bill for his effort and initiative in this outreach to area schools!

Report
Card

A+

HAMFEST PLANNING BEGINS FOR 1999

Mike KF3CD (ex-N3IRZ) hosted the first planning meeting for the 1999 MARC hamfest (July 11 ... write that down!) at his home on October 18. In attendance were **Gene WB3FTJ**, **Judy N3MBW**, **Kay WT3P**, **Carter N3AO**, and **Bob N3JIZ**. We reviewed input received about the 1998 hamfest and brainstormed some ideas for the '99 show. **Dave N3LHY** is working on the first edition of the 1999 hamfest flyer.

We developed several good plans, including recruiting a commercial ham gear vendor to come and reaching out to computer hobby clubs in the area.

We also decided to offer a special deal to other ham radio clubs in the region, hoping to benefit all the organizations, and to work on bringing in displays and demonstrations of interesting ham radio subjects.

SHORT CIRCUITS FROM THE EDITOR'S SHACK

Carter N3AO ran solar-power QRP in the QSO Party. This was not facilitated by the weather, which was gloomy and inclined to rain on Saturday. You know, we had zero rainfall for months on end ... then the Pack Rats hamfest was a near-washout one weekend and Carter's solar panels were photon-starved the next. Sometimes, life is a rhymes-with-*"rich,"* ain't it?

AI W2GPY discovered that you can load up a big metal tea-pot and use it for an antenna. Did somebody say that hams aren't inventive any more? I guess nobody told AI! I run into a lot of hams who're in the glum-and-grumpy configuration ... it's a pleasure to talk to some others who are having fun at playing radio.

The *INQUIRER* ran a story about researchers who proved that brain cells continue to grow in adults. Well, there goes THAT excuse!

When you're listing things to be thankful for, prefatory to chowing down on the turkey later this month, please remember to include ham radio. — **73, Kay WT3P**

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BOARD MEETINGS

At the September 24 meeting, the Board learned that the hamfest profit was \$2,021.48, better than originally reported. The meeting room at the library has been reserved for next year. Phone service to the repeaters was discussed. Although we may have to change Field Day sites next year, it's believed that this will not cause a problem. Other topics of discussion were refreshments at meetings, public service events, the outreach to area schools, and the upcoming hamfest planning meeting. The treasury balance was \$7,738.06.

At the October 22 meeting, the Board approved funds for the holiday party and authorized ordering an attractive cloth banner for use at club events. Future program topics were announced and discussed. Because the 147.195 repeater has been down recently, several nets have been using the MARC repeaters. The Board agreed that use of MARC repeaters for such nets is acceptable if the situation is temporary, if MARC nets are not displaced, and if MARC members are not complaining about being unable to use the machines. MARC repeaters are open repeaters, and the Board wants our club to be a good neighbor ... we just want to make sure that things don't get out of hand. The Board discussed possibly selling one of the two Kenwood 520 HF rigs donated to the club and using the proceeds to buy a piece of test equipment for loan to members. Also, the Board suggested creation of a list of members who have test equipment they might be willing to loan to fellow members. No treasury report was available.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 1998

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tporett@aol.com

VICE PRESIDENT

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rusham@compuserve.com

SECRETARY

Steve Haly KDOVA 610-527-4062

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crculver@aol.com

CALLSIGN TRUSTEES

WB3JOE: Al Maslin W3DZI 610-446-4936, amaslin@earthlink.net
W3NWA: Kay Craigie WT3P 610-993-9623, wt3p@msn.com

NOVEMBER PROGRAM: FIELD DAY SCENES ... by Carter N3AO

LICENSE TEST SESSIONS IN THE WESTERN 'BURBS

MARC will offer license tests on Saturday, November 7, at 9:15 AM at the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church in Bryn Mawr. Pre-registration is required. Contact **Bob W3ZQN** (610-265-6032). MARC members get one test session free per year. Marple-Newtown ARC will test on December 12, at 9 AM in Newtown Square. Contact **Walt Faust N3FXR** (610-622-2200).

All applicants must bring the test fee, ID, and the original plus a photocopy of your license and any certificates of successful completion. No exceptions can be made by the examiners!

Good luck on your upgrade!

MORE ON FIRE SAFETY IN THE HAM SHACK

By Ron Kenwood WA2SJW

Ron WA2SJW, Assistant Chief of the Lower Providence Fire Department, has another point of view on the ham shack fire extinguisher suggestion printed in a previous edition. Here's what he has to say:

A prior issue of *REMARCS* contained a suggestion to have a fire extinguisher available near the ham shack in case of emergency. This is a great idea, but the type of extinguisher suggested leaves something to be desired.

The recommendation was to obtain a BC rated extinguisher. Here is the short course on extinguisher rating.

Class A - Ordinary combustibles, wood, paper, cloth etc. This is depicted by a picture of a waste paper basket on fire.

Class B - Flammable liquids - Gasoline, alcohol, etc. This is depicted by a gasoline container.

Class C - Energized electrical equipment. All our stuff, plus anything else running on the AC mains or battery. This is depicted by an electric plug.

While the BC choice may at first glance seem logical, most fires in all locations are non-electrical. Reddy Kilowatt takes an unfair amount of the blame for accidental fires. It is therefore important that we have a Class A capable fire extinguisher available. More importantly, if you have a fire that is electrical in origin, de-energizing the equipment turns it into a Class A fire! And I know that we all have a readily accessible, single point of disconnect for all of the equipment in the shack, and the circuit breaker for the shack is clearly marked on the electrical panel.

How do you choose an extinguisher? The A rating of an extinguisher is related to a standard test fire. 1A will put out the standard test fire. 2A will put out twice that. Not very informative! Perhaps a better gauge would be the classic water extinguisher found in all public buildings years ago and now found primarily as lamp bases for hydrant heads like myself. This is a 2A extinguisher. A dry chemical extinguisher (almost universally found these days) rated 2A is the equivalent.



The flammable liquid rating on a Class B extinguisher, such as 10A, indicates the square feet of surface area involved in fire that the extinguisher can handle. 10A is 2 foot by 5 foot. We don't care if the container is 10 feet deep, because only the surface burns.

The Class C capability of an extinguisher is not rated. Remember, if you unplug it, it is a Class A fire. My extinguisher is a 2A, 10B, C rated one. I have a couple around.

If you have a fire, make sure that you sound the alarm, call 911, get everyone out of harm's way and then, and only then, use your extinguisher. You have to be the judge of your chances against a fire. If you have serious doubt of the ability of your extinguisher to handle the fire, or feel your personal safety would be threatened by the attempt, leave it to the Fire Department. Stuff can always be replaced. Not true for good ham operators.

Ron's final advice is what we should all remember: stuff is replaceable ... people aren't. Have you taken a look around your shack lately, with fire safety in mind?

FRANKLIN INSTITUTE STATION SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

The Phil-Mont Mobile Radio Club is looking for hams to help staff its world-class W3AA ham station at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. You do not have to be a Phil-Mont member to apply. Duties include working all bands and modes from 70 cm through 160 meters, working DX, satellites, digital modes, fast and slow scan TV and packet just to name a few. Training is provided. All volunteers must have a ham license, of course.

Volunteers should be prepared to work a 4-hour shift one day per week. You will have the chance to demonstrate Amateur Radio to groups of school children and other museum visitors, using modern gear and fine antennas. In the past, volunteers' parking at the museum garage was free ... we assume that is still true but you should ask. For additional information, please contact Phil-Mont club president **Russ Stafford W3CH** (russ@hdj.com or 610-631-3401 ext. 902).

SOME WEB SITES TO BROWSE

"Ham University" is advertised as a Windows program that prepares people to pass any of the Amateur Radio written exams and gives several ways (including a video game) to practice Morse code. It's inexpensive, and you can find out more on the Web at <http://crick.com/hamu>.

W7FG Vintage Manuals, based in Oklahoma, has a long catalog of manuals for old radio gear, which may be just what you need if you like to collect and restore classic ham stuff ... or if your hamfest bargain purchase needs some work. Their Web site is <http://www.w7fg.com>.

The members-only section of the ARRL Web site is growing in popularity. Get your membership number from a QST label and

register soon. This is not a re-hash of what has already been in QST and other League publications ... it's new information and services, just for members. Start by going to the main ARRL Web page at <http://www.arrl.org>.

Want to see what other ham radio clubs are doing on-line? The ARRL Atlantic Division's Web site has a list of over 100 ham club web sites in the Division, including many from the Philadelphia region. Go to <http://www.resuba.com/arrl> and then click on the "Club Spotlight" option.

Carter N3AO has used a version of "Code Quick" to help dozens of people relax, smile, and learn the Morse code. Find out about the original "Code Quick" at <http://www.cq2k.com>.

FUN ABOVE 30 MHZ

With the growing popularity of transceivers (such as the IC-706) that offer all-mode operation at VHF, many hams are discovering that there is something other than FM above 30 MHz. With a Technician license, you can work all over North America and even farther afield on 6 meter SSB and CW when the band is open, and 2 meters goes a lot farther on SSB/CW than on FM, too, given good propagation.

Once their interest is piqued about what goes on outside the FM voice and packet frequencies, hams may want to find out about experimentation up on the bands where a dipole will fit in your shirt pocket.

Fortunately, we have a world-class experimenters' club here in the Philadelphia area. The Mount Airy VHF Radio Club, a.k.a. "The Pack Rats," inconveniently meets on the same evening as MARC. But you can get in on their nets if you have all-mode VHF gear. The Rats also sponsor a set of propagation beacons from 6 meters through 10 GHz (yeah, that's Giga-with-a-"G"-Hertz).

People who kvetch that hams don't build any more and that there's nothing technical in ham radio any more have definitely not met the Pack Rats. Check 'em out! They have a Web page at <http://www.ij.net/packrats>.

AND HF HAS HOLIDAY JOLLIES , TOO

Ten meters, a band on which modest power and a simple antenna produce a heck of a lot of fun, is coming back to life. As propagation improves, people using a dipole and 100 watts will work the world.

The ARRL 10 Meter Contest on December 12-13, which you can do on phone and/or CW, will demonstrate how the band is coming along. Hearing much of anything outside the Western Hemisphere has been unusual for years on 10m. This year could be different. Check out the rules and how-to on page 111 of November QST.

ARRL suggests that contest ops don't go below 28.350 on SSB in this contest, so non-contesters can have an area of the band for rag chews and other kinds of activity.

Monday Night Pack Rats Nets

Local Time	MHz
7:30 PM	50.150
8:00 PM	144.150
8:30 PM	222.125
8:30 PM	224.58/R FM
9:00 PM	432.110
9:30 PM	1296.100
10:00 PM	903.100

Microwave Activity Night

4th Thursday of the month, 8 PM
To promote activity on 903 MHz and up
Liaison frequency is 144.260 MHz

Pack Rats Beacons

Located atop the PECO building in
Philadelphia (FM29jw)

MHz	Watts
50.080	0.3
144.284	4.0
222.065	4.0
432.295	5.0
903.071	5.0
1296.251	5.0
2304.037	1.0
3456.220	5.0
5760.200	5.0
10368.200	0.5

ANY VOLUNTEERS FOR A SCOUT SUMMER CAMP PROJECT?

Steve N1HDP reports that a volunteer in the Chester County Council of Boy Scouts is trying to re-establish the Space and Science camps that used to be funded by PECO. She came to the JOTA station Steve was operating and asked about radio & electronics.

This woman is looking for volunteer instructors for the electronics, radio, space exploration, and aviation merit badges. The camp runs for one week during the summer, down at Camp Ware, near the intersection of US 1 and the Pennsylvania - Maryland border.

There will be a meeting in early December at the Chester County Council building in West Chester. The woman is trying to get a one-week camp program together for this summer, with plan "B" (if she can't scare up enough corporate donations to fund it) to be the following summer.

Obviously, she needs competent adults who can teach in the middle of the week, and who don't mind a week of camping. If you might be interested in this kind of service activity, please contact Steve now.

HAMS MAY HELP THE HOMELESS

Bob N3ZRR wants to use ham radio to coordinate an activity he's been doing for the last 13 years. This will be a 1 or 2-night project in late November or early December. Hams will provide communications for volunteers delivering warm clothing to homeless people on the streets of Philadelphia. Personal safety of volunteers is safeguarded at all times. The Philadelphia Police Department and the Salvation Army, among other groups, work with this band of volunteers.

Here's how hams can help. Bob says, "Our dilemma involves coordinating supply with demand. One team of volunteers may

have what the other team needs. Team #1 desperately needs men's shoes and socks at Chestnut and Broad, while Team #2 has them, but doesn't know they are even needed, much less at which intersection. Cellulars just don't work in this situation. Can you guess what does? How about a volunteer operator with an HT in each car, using a local repeater."

Would you like to help? Contact Bob by e-mail (quietcam@ix.netcom.com) or phone him at 610-278-0406.

TEST EQUIPMENT DATABASE



Do you have test equipment you might be willing to loan to a fellow club member for a short period of time? MARC wants to create a database of such equipment. By agreeing to have something of your own listed in the database, you are not giving up control of your property. Whether or not you choose to let any particular individual borrow it is entirely up to you. If it is not convenient, or you're planning to use it soon, or you don't know the other person well enough ... then you say "no," and that's that.

Potential borrowers should also understand that their requests can be turned down. Everybody should understand that equipment loans are entirely between the individuals involved ... MARC assumes no responsibility or liability for whatever happens.

(Isn't it too bad we live in an age when a ham club has to put that sort of disclaimer in a newsletter? Well, we do.)

If you'd like to list some test equipment in our database, please send the following information to **Kay WT3P** either by e-mail or snail-mail:

- ◆ The name, make, and model number
- ◆ What order of spectrum it's for (HF, VHF, UHF, etc.)
- ◆ What its outstanding features are
- ◆ If you have a manual to loan with it
- ◆ If you'd be willing to help someone learn to use it

Suggestions are welcome for how to improve this service to members.

WANT TO LEARN HOW TO RELAY FORMAL MESSAGES?

Every ham should know how to send and receive formal message traffic. Period. You simply do not know when the stuff may hit the fan, and you will want to serve your community during the emergency. That is not the time to learn the basics, because people's lives and property are at risk. If you are a member of your county's ARES/RACES group (and you should be), then you should know how to relay formal messages. This cannot be taught in an hour at a club or RACES/ARES meeting. You have to study up and practice.



To support the MARC Traffic Nets, the Board voted to purchase and offer some self-training resources for club members who are new to message-handling. As a membership benefit, any member who is serious about learning to handle messages can request a free copy of the *ARRL NET DIRECTORY* from Net Manager **Carter N3AO**. In this booklet there is a section on how to format, send, and receive formal messages. There is a lot of information about the National Traffic System and other useful data. Of course, there is also a nation-wide directory of nets of all kinds.

Remember, you can't learn to do this from just reading the booklet. But the booklet will help you get more out of the MARC Traffic Nets and, eventually, contribute more to them.

The MARC Traffic Nets (M/W/F 8:30 PM) are a rare thing in this area: traffic nets on VHF repeaters where you can be taught how to send and receive messages, by people who have been doing it for years. They enjoy explaining how to do it and enjoy answering your questions.



Dennis K3DS (left) introduces September speaker Tom WA3RXE

FUTURE PROGRAMS

Dennis K3DS reports that the January program will be the annual Junk Auction. If you're new to the club, be advised this is one of the most enjoyable evenings of the year. Watch for details in the January/February newsletter.

In February, **Bob W3ZQN** will clear up the mysteries of that most fundamental electrical concept in his presentation Ohm's Law and You. If you ever wondered how to charge NiCad batteries, how to use solar cells, or what size wire is appropriate to bring the car battery to your trunk-mounted dual-band transceiver, you need to know about Ohm's Law.

WB3IOG ESTATE SALE

Walt Hoffritz WB3IOG was an early MARC member who became a Silent Key in the fall of 1985, according to the *REMARCS* archive. His family stored his ham gear for years but would now like to dispose of it. Some of the equipment on the inventory includes

- ◆ Tempo 2020 HF xcvr (80-10m)
- ◆ Kenwood TS-700S 2m all-mode xcvr
- ◆ Tempo S5 2m HT
- ◆ ICOM IC-215 crystal-controlled portable 2m xcvr

- ◆ MFJ Versa-Tuner II (MFC-941) antenna tuner/switch
- ◆ MFJ Super Antenna Tuner (MFJ-16010 ST) antenna tuner
- ◆ Assorted power supplies, meters, and accessories
- ◆ Various lengths of coax, most with connectors in place
- ◆ Citizens Band rigs

If you might be interested in any of this gear, please contact **Steve N1HDP** (610-647-0776 days, steve@inkspot.net), who is assisting the family.

JAMBOREE ON THE AIR AT HIBERNIA PARK

By Steve Blatman N1HDP

On the weekend of October 17 - 18, **Jon N3VZG**, **Wade Bartholomew WA3WMG**, and **Steve N1HDP** set up and staffed a JOTA station at the Chester County Council (Boy Scouts) Camporee, in Hibernia Park, in Coatesville. Jon and Wade had separately contacted the Council office and had been asked to operate a station together. Steve went along for the ride.

Wade set up the HF station: a dipole in the trees, a ladder-line feed (complete with a fluorescent tube to flash out the CW at night), and a Kenwood HF rig. Steve and Jon set up on 2 meters, with HT's, an all-mode rig, and a Ringo Ranger on a home-made 30-foot mast, held up, in true Scout fashion, with guy ropes and tent stakes.

Jon showed the Scouts the joys of 2m HTs around camp, and helped them talk to Scouts camping at other Chester and Montgomery County sites via local repeaters. Wade and Steve operated the HF station, and all three explained JOTA and ham radio to all who would listen. We had Scouts talking to

Scouts in England and Europe in the morning, and in the western U.S. in the afternoon.

Our most distant contacts were in Russia & South Africa (15m phone) and Australia (20m CW). Steve had one of our more interesting QSOs in the afternoon, with a half-dozen Scouts from Lionville talking to a special-event station on the U.S.S. Hornet, in Alameda, CA. The operator on the Hornet, Dennis K6DF, pointed out that the Hornet served in WWII and Korea, and was the primary recovery vehicle for Apollo 11. It was neat to see a half-dozen bored adolescents get interested, quickly.

If you've never operated JOTA, give it a try. For us, it was like a Field Day with commercial power and lots of interested visitors.

Any other MARC members who took part in JOTA are invited to send a story about your activities for a future newsletter.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER HISTORY BITS FROM THE MARC ARCHIVES

The following glimpses into club history are taken from back issues of our newsletter. There was no winter newsletter in 1979.

1976 Keystone ARC, renamed Radnor Repeater Group (name soon changed to Mid-Atlantic ARC) formed as a user group for 147.06/R.

1977 **Bill W3YSZ** published a Tiny Basic program for Morse code practice.

1978 **Pete K3ZFG** wrote an article about rabbit hunting (transmitter hunting).

1980 MARC became incorporated.

1981 Local FCC official **Joe Welch K3CT** became a Silent Key. The callsign has been re-issued as a vanity call.

1982 MARC continued the tradition of originating radiograms from Bryn Mawr Hospital.

1983 The Novice course which produced the KA3NK--gang drew to an end.

1984 MARC members were trying to figure out this new thing called the VEC system of license tests.

1985 MARC became an ARRL Special Service Club.

1986 We celebrated the club's 10th anniversary, and the WB3JOE-9 digipeater signed on the air.

1987 **Tom KA3FXX** won the ARRL's prestigious Barry Goldwater Scholarship.

1988 The newsletter noted that 10 meters was jumping like a flea circus ... sigh!

1989 Electromagnetic crud from the hospital was sending WB3JOE packet BBS into paralysis several times a week.

1990 Our new MARC logo callsign badges became available.

1991 We celebrated the club's 15th anniversary, and **John WB3ELA** became a Silent Key.

1992 REMARCS had many features for the new hams joining our club after no-code was introduced.

1993 **Dennis WB2LGJ** (pre-K3DS) was circulating information on DSP via packet radio.

1994 REMARCS discussed computer-controlled HF rigs.

1995 We reported that the ARRL had begun a home page on the World Wide Web.

1996 We celebrated the club's 20th anniversary and applied for Silent Key **Bob Young W3NWA's** callsign for the club.

1997 Members enjoyed a program on radio astronomy by Professor **Frank Maloney** from Villanova.

Happy Holidays to All from the Mid-Atlantic ARC!