



MAY / JUNE 2001

# REMARKS

[www.marc-radio.org](http://www.marc-radio.org)

## FIELD DAY FUN HAPPENS ON JUNE 23 — 24

MARC Field Day is "go." Thanks to **Carter N3AO** and **Steve K3KFD**, the leadership vacuum was filled and we will be on the air in Audubon, PA, signing the club call **W3NWA**.

The field and the generators, provided at no charge by volunteers from Verizon, were arranged by **Bob W3SA**. A number of club members have agreed to share the leadership tasks. In the past much of the work fell to a few people, who just weren't willing to carry the whole burden any more. The new way distributes the work over a larger number of people, so no one should be overburdened. After all, this is supposed to be fun.

Field Day combines an emergency preparedness exercise with a 24-hour contest and is the most popular ham radio operating event in North America. Information is in the May issue of *QST*.

All club members are invited to participate, regardless of license class and operating experience. We will probably have two HF stations on the air ... one for SSB and one for CW / digital

modes. We may have a VHF station, too. This is somewhat scaled-back from previous years, but so what? The point is to learn stuff and build skills, have fun, and get to know each other better through working together. Keeping it simple keeps it fun.

Field Day goes on rain or shine, and it can get hot. Please be prepared for any weather and bring some drinking water. Shoes and socks are recommended, to guard against injury and poison ivy. Gallon jugs of tap water for the chemical toilet are helpful. If you come over at night, please bring a good flashlight and drive very cautiously in the field area.

Guests, including children, are welcome at Field Day. Children must be supervised by their adults at all times for their safety!

Colorful Field Day pins will be available at the event for \$5 each. Priority on pins will be given to people who work (set-up, operate, cook, etc.) at Field Day.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## MAY AND JUNE PROGRAMS

### Meet Our ARRL Section Manager and Take PSK31 "101"

The May 15 program will be given by ARRL Eastern PA Section Manager **Eric Olena WB3FPL**. From Mohnton, Berks County, Eric is a past ARRL Section Emergency Coordinator and a retired Pennsylvania State Police officer. What's going on with the ARRL in Eastern PA Section now? What volunteer opportunities are there for you? Come meet our new SM and find out.

Our June 19 program is the result of a member's suggestion to discuss the basics of getting on PSK31. **Dennis K3DS** will tell us about "Soundcard Digital Modes: Getting Starting with No Hassles." Using a computer's soundcard to generate the tones for digital modes is one of the hottest topics in ham radio today. We can all do it, and Dennis will show us how.

## PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS NEED YOU!

**May 28 - Radnor Township Memorial Day Parade, Wayne.** Arrive at the Micro Center parking lot at 8 AM, with talk-in on 147.06/R. You need a 2m hand-held, and you really need an earphone to be able to hear over the parade noise.

**June 9 - Tel-Hai 5 Mile Run, Honey Brook.** Arrive at 7:30 AM. Yeah, ouch, but it's over by lunch time.

Public service communication is how we earn the privilege of using billions of dollars' worth of radio spectrum. Bringing it closer to home, MARC is federally tax-exempt as a community service organization. We need to live up to what we tell the IRS.

Public service events are not hard to do. They don't take all day. You don't need any previous experience, and you don't need to have been licensed a long time.

Contact **Bob N3JIZ** (610-687-4587) for more information and to sign up for participation. Also let Bob know if you're aware of any events that might be able to use Amateur Radio safety communications.

## NEW ELECTION CYCLE TO BEGIN SOON

Under the new By-Laws adopted last fall, our club election cycle begins with the appointment of a nominating committee at the board meeting in May. The committee can consist of up to 3 members. If you're interested in serving on the nominating committee, please contact **Steve N3ORH** immediately.

Official solicitation of nominations will be made in the July/August newsletter, and nominations will close on the date of the August club meeting. The slate will be published in the September/October newsletter. Ballots will be distributed at the same time as the newsletter, and the votes will be counted at the September club meeting. The new board takes office on October 1.

Any licensed member of the club may run for any office on the board except for club callsign trustee. The trustees of WB3JOE and W3NWA are not elected positions.

It's possible that some current board members may decide not to seek another term. Or what if we actually had a contested election?! Please start thinking about how you might be able to contribute to the leadership of MARC.

## ABOUT MARC

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

## MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays, 8 PM, Radnor  
Township Building, St. Davids.  
Guests welcome. Smoke-free.  
Handicapped-accessible.

## BOARD MEETINGS

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

## SYSTEMS

145.13/R, 147.06/R, 224.42/R  
Webmaster: Steve N3ORH  
(610-313-8080, smaslin@fast.net)

## NETS

Club Net, Sunday, 8:30 PM, 145.13  
Traffic net, M/W/F, 8:30 PM, 147.06  
Net Manager: Carter N3AO  
(610-993-9623, n3ao@arrl.net)

## 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@arrl.net)

BRING A FRIEND  
TO A MARC MEETING!

## LICENSE TESTS ON MAY 5

MARC will give exams on Saturday, May 5, at Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, on Montgomery Avenue in Bryn Mawr. Arrive by 9:15 to fill out the forms.

You need photo ID, your ham license and a photocopy of it, and the originals and photocopies of any certificates needed to document your current status.

If you're applying for the paperwork-only upgrade from Tech + HF to General, ask out contact person exactly what proof you need to bring to show that you qualify.

The test fee is \$10, but paid-up MARC members can do one test session per year at no charge ... MARC pays your fee.

For directions, details, and pre-registration contact **Bob W3ZQN** (rjlees@aol.com, 610-265-6032). If no one pre-registers, the session will be cancelled to avoid wasting the examiners' morning.

## VOX

Welcome new members **Jack KB3GDC** and **Robert N2IGU**, as well as returning members **Carole KA3UUQ** and **Richard KC2EFA**.

Past MARC board member **Tom K3YPO** ("Tom in Ardmore") became a Silent Key on April 21 at age 75. **David KA3HBK**, now living in Colorado, was among the MARC members at his memorial service. **Tom W3BED** became a Silent Key on March 1. He was a member of PARA and QCWA, too. **Peter K3ZFG**, MARC's first president, became a Silent Key more than a year ago. Peter was a very private person, making it difficult to be certain of the facts. We regret the delay, but *REMARCS* does not print unconfirmed Silent Key reports.

**Jenny KA3WVD** has moved to Virginia for grad school at Radford University in the fall. **Mitch W2MBH** is moving back to Pennsylvania (yea!) from Noo Joizy, but (*rats!*) not to our area. **Dieter WB3JWU** gave a ham radio demo to a group of Scouts. **Bill W3IGU**, age 90, celebrated his 53rd wedding anniversary in March and still does his own income tax! **Bob N3JIZ** and **Bill N3NUL** brought their dad who's a pilot to hear the aviation expert's talk at the April meeting. **Susan K3SUE** has qualified for DXCC and worked the International Space Station.

## BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

At the March 22 meeting, the board discussed the hamfest, public service events, and future meeting programs. They talked about what's needed in order to link the '06 and '13 repeaters and other repeater matters. MARC's ARRL Special Service Club status has been renewed. Membership renewals are progressing on schedule. No one has volunteered to organize a licensing class. The member who had volunteered to chair Field Day will be unable to do it. Designating an official club 2m simplex frequency is still under consideration; no action was taken. The auction was discussed, and it was noted that the limit of 3 items per person is no longer needed. The treasury balance was \$9,204.08.

At the April 26 meeting, the board discussed Field Day, the hamfest and future meeting programs. They decided to look into the possibility of setting up a 440 MHz repeater. It was agreed that restoring the link between '06 and '13 is a higher priority than enabling the autopatch on '13. An alternative to the storage locker was discussed. The board voted to require use of membership forms for renewals so that the club's records can be kept accurate. It was also voted to donate \$100 in memory of **Tom K3YPO** to the Salvation Army, the charity suggested by Tom's family. The board approved plans to hold Sunday nets on '13 and traffic nets on '06, until the link can be restored. The treasury balance was \$8,891.15

## SELL YOUR OLD STUFF AT THE MARC HAMFEST

You have surplus ham radio, computer, SWL, CB, or other high-tech equipment and accessories that you'd like to sell, but standing all day long at a hamfest tailgate spot isn't your trip. Here's a no-hassle way to dispose of all that old stuff.

Bring the stuff to the club members' sale table at the MARC hamfest! **Gene WB3FTJ** and **Judy N3MBW** do a great job managing the table. Stuff can be brought to hamfest set-up on Saturday or to the hamfest on Sunday. Some members pocket the cash, while others decide to donate all or part of their proceeds to the club. That is entirely up to you. More info will be in the next newsletter.

## COME TO HAMFEST PLANNING ON MAY 20

The hamfest planning group will meet at the home of **Mike KF3CD**, 2 PM, Sunday, May 20. The meeting is open to all club members who are interested in helping make the event a success. For directions, contact Mike (610-935-4429, mpilotti@anro.com). If you can't attend, ask Mike what jobs still need doing. The health of our club depends on hamfest income! Please do your part to make the event successful, because we all benefit from it.

## FROM THE EDITOR'S JUNK BOX

*Why are there tanning salons in Florida beach towns? What's next, rudeness academies in New York City? Aggressive driving schools in Atlanta?*

Every time they predict a snow storm, the TV stations send reporters out to film people buying up a month's worth of milk, bread, toilet paper, dog food ... which makes sense, I guess, since they're going to be snowed in for a whole hour or two ... and snow shovels. The hardware stores always sell out of snow shovels every time there is supposed to be a spoonful of snow.

Who are all these people in Pennsylvania who do not already own a snow shovel? Do you want to be driving a car on the same highway as dopes who made it all the way to March, 2001, and just then figured out they need to own a snow shovel?

Speaking of the March blizzard-that-wasn't, the Inky reported that some people actually sent voice-mail death threats and screamed obscenities in public at TV weatherman **John Bolaris** because he hyped up the forecast. When some adults think it's okay to act like mob goons towards a guy from a TV show whom they don't even know, why is anybody surprised that some children decide taking a gun to school is the right answer to being tormented by bullies? How are little children supposed to learn good judgment if they grow up in a nation of knuckleheads?

When we turned the clocks ahead for the summer, we lost an hour of nice comfy snooze time. Don't you wish we could add up our least-favorite 60 minutes and delete them, instead? Telemarketer calls ... cleaning out the gutters ... paying bills ... squashing large spiders ... arguing with your HMO ... having a tooth drilled ... standing in line behind someone who hasn't washed his hair since the Eisenhower administration ... you get the idea. Where's American ingenuity when we need it?

This issue contains a 3-page section highlighting Amateur Radio contesting. What's your favorite ham radio activity? Let me know, so we can organize a spotlight section about it for a future issue of *REMARCS*.

— 73, Kay WT3P

## HF DIGITAL FEATURE FEEDBACK

**Dieter WB3JWU** points out that slow-scan TV can also be done using the sound card. A friend of his recommends software called "MMSSTV." It's free on the Web. This friend downloaded a beta version, installed it, and was displaying pix inside of 5 minutes without looking at the instructions. The URL is <http://www.geocities.com/mmhamsoft/>. There are more links to various SSTV software options from DigiPan's site. Also have a look at "TV on 10" on page 68 of April QST.

**Dave K3DAT** writes, "I would like to suggest that you take a look at the Hamscope program (especially for MFSK16). It's at: <http://users.mesatop.com/~ghansen/>. It seems to be a little more sensitive than Stream. It also does PSK31, RTTY, ASCII, and CW (send and receive). I like to go to this page frequently to see what new stuff (versions and programs) are available for PSK: <http://aintel.bi.edu/es/psk31.html>. Since most new programs also support PSK, it's a good place to start for most new digital modes."

These days, you can find more programs for interesting stuff on HF digital modes than Heinz has kinds of pickles! Keep the suggestions coming.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2000-2001

## PRESIDENT

Steve Maslin N3ORH 610-313-8080  
smaslin@fast.net

## VICE PRESIDENT

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## MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

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## PUBLIC RELATIONS

Bill Owen W3KRB 610-325-3995  
gem@op.net

## PUBLIC SERVICE

Bob Palin N3JIZ 610-687-4587

## TECHNICAL

Dennis Silage K3DS 610-353-4829  
silage@vm.temple.edu

## PROGRAMS

## MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

To 9/30/2002: Al Maslin N3EA  
610-446-4936, amaslin@earthlink.net  
To 9/30/2001: Janet Vann KA3VTQ  
610-384-3163, jvann@ccis.net

## CALLSIGN TRUSTEES

WB3JOE: Al Maslin N3EA  
610-446-4936, amaslin@earthlink.net  
W3NWA: Kay Craigie WT3P  
610-993-9623, wt3p@arri.net

## SUNDAY NETS MOVE TO 145.13/R

Because some members can't get into the '06 repeater, Net Manager **Carter N3AO** tried shifting the nets to the '13 repeater for a week. The result of the brief, admittedly imperfect experiment was that some net regulars couldn't get into '13, and we didn't pick up additional northern-area members ... quite possibly because they didn't know about the shift.

The ultimate solution is restoring the link between '06 and '13 for nets and other selected events ... it won't be a 24/7 sort of link. That's still the plan, according to Technical Chairman **Dennis K3DS**.

In the meantime, Sunday nets will be held on '13, while traffic nets will stay on '06. The goal is to allow all local members to participate in at least some of the club's nets.

## FLEA MARKET

**WANTED** — Used 2m mobile radio (read: not real expensive) in working condition; capable of other bands a plus, but not required. Contact **Ned WQ3Z** at [wq3z@arri.net](mailto:wq3z@arri.net) or 215-836-0206.

## REPAIR HELP NEEDED

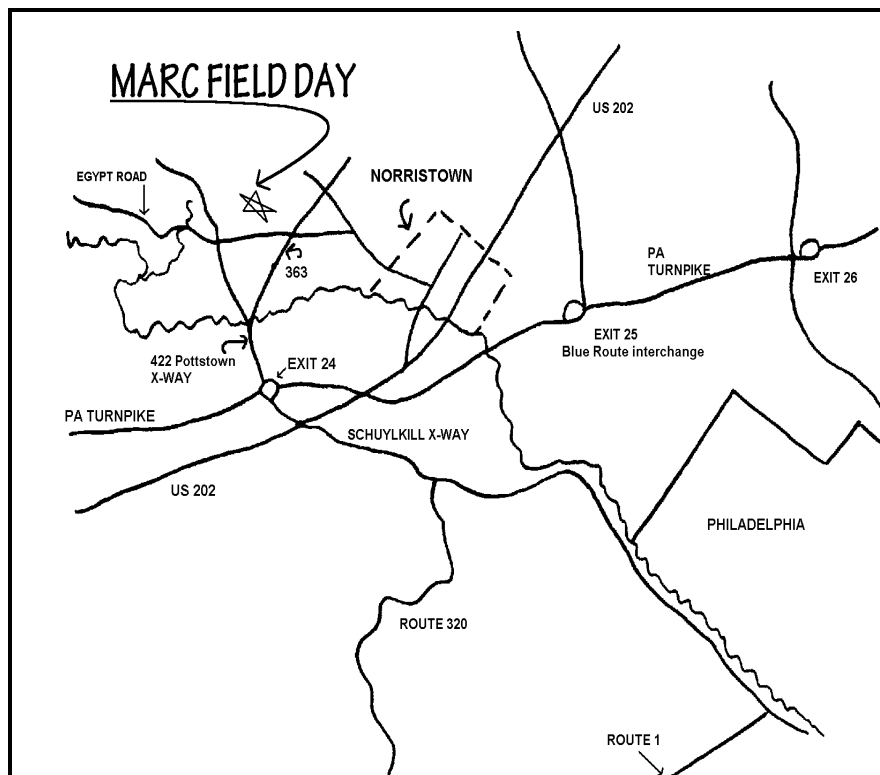
**David KB3CRY** wants to have his Yaesu FT-101E repaired. If you know who could do it, please contact him at 610-630-0129 or [del131@msn.com](mailto:del131@msn.com).

## FIELD DAY JUNE 23 — 24

(Continued from page 1)

This year, ARRL is also offering Field Day T-shirts (see May QST, page 113). MARC members who want a T-shirt can order one directly from the ARRL. You can order one now, by the way. We have learned that the sizes run quite large, so you may want to order one size smaller than you usually wear. Of course shrinkage is unpredictable, but the shirts are a national name brand.

Assuming the T-shirts are popular, the League will probably offer them again in future years. Any club member who is interested in handling a group order for T-shirts in future years, please contact **Kay WT3P**.



## PARAFEST MAY 8, WEST CONSHOHOCKEN

The Philadelphia Area Repeater Association (PARA) is holding an indoor flea market and some demonstrations at their meeting at St. Gertrude's church hall, 209 Merion Avenue, West Conshohocken, on May 8 at 7 PM. There is no admission fee for the flea market. Talk-in is on the PARA 146.76 repeater. Non-members of PARA are invited to attend. In the past, by the way, PARA has taken a table at MARC's hamfest ... promoting their organization while contributing to our treasury. Find out more about PARA and their repeater system on their web page at <http://para.buxcom.net>.

## KNOW ABOUT FREE / SHAREWARE LOG PROGRAMS?

**Mike KF3CD** writes: "Can you recommend any good but basic freeware or shareware logging programs for Win 95? I am in the final setup of the PC for **Nick UX0ZZ**. It has progressively improved from Win 3.1 486/DX66 to a Pentium 1 Win 95, 75 MHz with 72 megs of RAM, 2.1 gig HD, CD drive, sound, etc. Quite a nice machine! Also looking for a *Windows 95 for Dummies* book."

If you have a copy of this book to donate or can help Mike find a logger for our Ukrainian friend, please contact Mike at 610-935-4429 or [mpilotti@anro.com](mailto:mpilotti@anro.com).

## SITES TO SEE

### Amateur Radio RF Safety Calculator

Use it to help determine if your station meets the FCC's RF exposure rules. Don't wait until your paranoid neighbor starts screaming bloody murder.

<http://n5xu.ae.utexas.edu/rfsafety/>

### 3rd Call Area Incoming QSL Bureau

User guidelines and information about how much postage to affix to your SASE's.

<http://homestead.juno.com/wa3hup/PADXA.html>

### USA Spectrum Allocation Chart

Get the big picture of how the spectrum is divided up among the various services.

<http://www.ntia.doc.gov/osmhome/allochrt.html>

### Contesting Information

Everything about competitive operating, including links to sites for logging programs.

<http://www.contesting.com>.

### Handi-Hams

Handi-hams provides fellowship and information for hams and prospective hams who have disabilities and special needs.

<http://www.mtn.org/handiham/>

### Vanity Callsign Headquarters

This site has all sorts of useful information and advice about applying for a vanity call.

<http://www.carroll-usa.com/vanity/>

### Heathkit Virtual Museum

Whether you were a ham during the Heathkit era or not, this one is fun ... like the advertisements in the old QST's on CD-ROM.

<http://www.heathkit-museum.com/>

### Propagation & Earth-Sun Events

Practical daily info plus ways to learn more science about earth/sun interactions.

<http://www.spaceweather.com>

<http://dx.qsl.net/propagation/>

## EUROPE ADOPTS 5 WPM

The Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) has effectively lowered the Amateur Radio Morse code test speed to 5 WPM for all European countries. The CEPT Radio Regulatory Working Group (WGRR) adopted a revision of Recommendation 61-02 to include the 5 WPM standard. The revision, which establishes requirements for the issuance of a Harmonised Amateur Radio Examination Certificate (HAREC), reduces the Morse requirement from 12 WPM.

## ME? A CONTESTER? NEVER! WELL, MAYBE A LITTLE...

By Carter N3AO

Don't you just hate it when you settle in on a Saturday morning before your favorite rig in the old shack, and your chores are all done, and it's time for some quality rag-chewing, only to find there seems always to be ANOTHER CONTEST on the air waves, and right where you want to have a nice little QSO! Ugh!

Why do they have to have contests? And why on your favorite frequencies? These are meaningless exchanges of set information, nothing like the pearls of wisdom you had hoped to lay before some appreciative fellow ham. And they're everywhere, all the time, all weekend long! "Boring!" as JoAnn Worley used to say on Laugh-In!

Now, as you may know, my wife is a contesteer, big time! For the four BIG 48-hour-long contests, she sits at her basement radio shouting "Whiskey Tango Three Papa" for the 2 SSB events, and she uses the electronic keyer activated from the computer's function keys for the ones on CW. She hardly ever gets up from her chair; I bring her lunch and a little supper. The dogs and I go for long walks! What's the fascination here? What keeps her in that chair?

Well, recently I have begun to change my opinion of contesting — a little! I have been building some QRP transceivers, little jobbies that whack out a whopping 5 or 10 watts. Now that's not much ERP, compared to Kay's 200 watts. So imagine my delight when I sneak in my callsign on the second day of one of those BIG contests — and some DX station comes RIGHT BACK with "599 good luck in the contest!" Hmmm, I say to myself, and then think Hmmm again.

I try it again — and it works. And I try it again, and again, all with the same result. Wow! These ops are hearing my little tin whistle, and way over there — you fill in the place. And they're hearing a rig that I

built myself. No small measure of pride starts creeping in. This is starting to be fun!

Now, to tell you the truth, I don't do this much. I operate only when Kay takes those few little breaks, since trying to use two radios from the same QTH is asking for overload disaster. So instead, what I've found are short, fun-filled QRP contests. No achy-breaky butt for me, sitting all day long wondering whether my bladder will go another half hour before you know what happens!

Let me give you a sample of what I mean here. Once a month, on the first Monday

year's event has a Star Trek theme.

The EPA QRP Club runs their annual TAC ("Telephone Area Code") contest in June, this year on June 2. You try to get as many telephone area code numbers as you can; each new one becomes another new multiplier!

Many state QSO Parties have a QRP Division, and no state QSO party is better than the Pennsylvania QSO Party, held this year Oct. 13-14. Yes, I know it's a 2-day affair, but it's the nation's best QSO party, so one long weekend a year (besides Field Day) is worth it!

Then there is FYBO in February. "Freeze Your Butt Off" is another of these outdoor affairs (one afternoon only), and it uses the *lowest* temperature you operated at as your score multiplier.

The colder it is, the higher your final score! So see if you can reason out the title of another 'test, BUBBA, a summertime sprint event, this year on Sunday, August 26. I think it starts sorta like "Burn Ur Buns...." On this one you use your *highest* operating temperature when calculating your score. All these contests, by the way, use the honor system for reporting; they don't do any cross checking to see if you are telling the truth. And aren't we all honorable?

Other contests have fanciful names and fun multipliers: "Flight of the Bumblebees," "Running of the Bulls," "Summer Daze," "Hoot Owl Sprint," and so forth. I find I enjoy these little contests now. I never ever thought I would like them; I actually look forward to them now.

So, I hope you can catch some of the humor and some of the fun in QRP contesting. Most are CW only, but these are some on SSB too, so no one should feel left out. Join me in these events. You'll be glad you did.

### FUN WITH AMATEUR RADIO CONTESTING

More information and links at

<http://home.earthlink.net/~wt3p/contests.html>

evening 9:00 to 11:00 p.m. our time, there's a QRP contest called the Spartan Sprint. It's only for CW stations running 5 watts or less, and it's basically US and Canadian stations. Last month I hit my best ever score: 48 QSOs! Now the fun part comes in the scoring, all done on-line on the Adventure Radio Society web page. The lighter (in pounds) your station (rig, P/S, paddles, headphones) the higher you place in the Skinny Division; and there is a Tubby Division too! My station weight last time using my Elecraft K1 was 3 lbs, and I wound up in 6<sup>th</sup> place.

And then NorCal runs a contest for ops who like to go out of doors. Recent QRPTTF ("QRP To The Field") annual themes include things like "Run to the Borders," where extra points are awarded for taking your station to border lines of states and countries. **Bart K4BF** and I went to the PA/DE line for this one. Another year they gave a bonus if you set up in sight of a Taco Bell restaurant; last year's extra points went to those who operated /maritime mobile: canoes, kayaks, john boats, U.S.S Olympia, etc. This

**If you don't enjoy contesting, remember that there is no contesting on 12, 17, and 30 meters. Most contests are single-mode, so if SSB is busy, there's always CW and digital. Finally, if every operating activity that somebody considers stupid and annoying were banned, we would all be off the air.**

### FIVE STATE QSO PARTIES COMING IN MAY

On May 5 and 6, Indiana, Connecticut, and Massachusetts QSO Parties will be on the air. The Oregon and Nevada QSO Parties will be May 12 and 13. Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Nevada mention modes other than phone and CW in their contest announcements. Two of those states are among your editor's last 3 needed for Worked All States on digital modes ... state QSO parties can be a good way to log contacts for awards, even if you don't keep score in the competition.

## STEVE K3KFD WINS MONTGOMERY CO. Official PA QSO Party Scores Announced

As reported previously, **Steve K3KFD** won Montgomery County in the 2000 PA QSO Party and also won the MARC club top single op score. In addition, he finished fifth in EPA Section among high-power entries. The Chester County multi-operator single-transmitter entry of **N3AO**, run by **Carter N3AO** and **Kay WT3P**, won the county for their category and also finished third state-wide among the multi-singles.

The Murgas ARC of Wilkes-Barre won the club trophy with 1.87 million points and 36 entries. Warminster, Penn Wireless, and RF Hill clubs had more entries than MARC but fewer total points. MARC was 13th among club entries with just two scores adding up to 299,498 points. Imagine what we could do if more members participated!

The next PA QSO Party is October 13-14, 2001. It's a great way to sample ham radio contesting, to find out if this part of the hobby might be for you.

## WORKING THE HOLMESBURG 2M CONTEST By Bob W3ZQN

I was attracted to this two meter contest for several reasons: It was short, only four hours and that was "do-able" even when one has a busy schedule. Also, it provided a chance to see just what my station could do without using repeaters: how far could I really get. That had value because of my interest in emergency communications. I pushed the contest in MontCo RACES for this reason. I knew that I would recognize a lot of the calls I would hear in this contest and it would be kinda fun to see who participated and who I could hear direct.

My equipment was my Ten-Tec kit FM transceiver set to low power (5W) driving a Mirage amplifier putting out about 50 Watts to a Ringo Ranger about 25 feet high. I used the simplex frequencies above and below 146.52 MHz exclusively.

There were not too many stations competing in the contest. I did not operate intensely for the entire four hours. I tuned the frequencies from time to time listening for calls I had not worked. I called "CQ" very little and mostly just listened and called specific stations.

So how far did I get? Well, I worked four zip codes over in New Jersey even though there is a hill to the east of me. I was pleased with that.

All in all it was a fun evening. The pace was relaxed because there weren't a lot of stations out there; there were even a few QSO's between competing stations to compare notes and pass time. The duration of four hours is just about my limit for a contest anyway, so that was perfect.

I usually work contests not to win, but to search for new grid squares or states or countries and so on. I rarely send in a contest log. But this time I knew I had done reasonably well so I decided to send in the log. Glad I did!

In my opinion, this was a great contest for those who don't do contesting! I hope they repeat it again next year and that more local hams show up for the fun.

## SUSAN K3SUE WINS HOLMESBURG 2m SIMPLEX CONTEST

The first annual Delaware Valley 2 Meter Contest sponsored by the Holmesburg Amateur Radio Club was won by **Susan K3SUE**. Susan had 28 contact points and 21 different zip codes in the simplex contest. She nudged out **Bob W3ZQN** by just one contact. Bob had 27 contact points and 21 zip codes.

Noting that her 6-element quad antenna helped, Susan also says persistence paid off. She scanned the simplex frequencies, called CQ, and worked the whole contest period. Held on a Saturday evening in early February, the contest lasted just 4 hours. Susan says, "I had a lot of fun doing this contest. I think the 4 hour limit was a great idea. I also liked the idea of a local contest. It doesn't get real crazy like the HF contests. Of course if this gets popular, it might. All I can say is I am looking forward to the next one."

HARC President **Bob WA3PZO** called the event a success. "We generated more interest than previous nationally-sponsored 2 meter FM contests and we got people on the air for a short period of time without interfering with other family

## TEN TIPS FOR THE NEW CONTESTER By Steve K3KFD

1. Don't try to win the contest. Set smaller goals for yourself, such as working all 50 states or working 100 countries.
2. Read the rules or listen to other stations first, so you know the necessary exchange of information.
3. Try not to duplicate your contacts. Computer software for contest logging eliminates this problem.
4. Do not try to chat with a contest station. Time is important to serious contesters.
5. Do not give out any information not required by the contest exchange. A contestee is not interested in your name or the local weather.
6. Do not tune your rig on an occupied frequency.
7. Use standard phonetics, not cute callsigns.
8. Don't get frustrated if stations don't hear you. Try later.
9. Be polite, be considerate, but be aggressive.
10. Most of all, have fun. This is not a life or death game.

## WHAT'S AN EXCHANGE?

The exchange is the information that must be sent, received, and logged by both stations for a contest QSO to be valid. It always includes the respective callsigns. The rest of the exchange could be a serial QSO number, RST, state, etc.

At Field Day, we exchange callsign plus Field Day classification. That's composed of the number of transmitters simultaneously on the air plus a letter showing whether we're a club station, mobile station, home station, etc., plus the ARRL Section. If I send "W3NWA 2A EPA," that means W3NWA is a 2-transmitter club / non-club portable operation in the Eastern Pennsylvania Section. Then I log that the other op sends, let's say, "W5JBP 5A NTX." This completes the exchange with this North Texas (NTX) station and the QSO is valid.

Don't worry! We'll have a sign at each Field Day operating position showing exactly what exchange you're supposed to transmit! If you can read, you'll do just fine.





Contest clubs are not for everybody. You don't just sign up, pay dues, read the newsletter, and relax. These

clubs can be intense. They exist to win contests, and every member is expected to contribute points.

The benefits of belonging to a contest club, however, are significant. You rub shoulders with some of the most proficient operators in the world. You're challenged to stretch your personal operating skills and upgrade your station. You enjoy a remarkable kind of fellowship, whether your score is modest or huge.

Do you have to own a \$5,000 rig, be able to copy 40 wpm, and have a Roxborough-type antenna farm to enjoy contesting and contribute to a contest club? It wouldn't hurt, but ... NO! You just have to get the most out of what you've got. With prac-

## IS A CONTEST CLUB FOR YOU?

By Kay WT3P

tice, persistence, and the helpful advice of fellow club members, your skills and your scores increase. Soon, "what you've got" is more than what you thought you had.

The Philadelphia area is home base to two world-class contest clubs: The Mt. Airy VHF Radio Club, a.k.a. "The Pack Rats," and the Frankford Radio Club. Both are seeking new members who want the special challenges and rewards these clubs have to offer.

The Pack Rats inhabit the world above 30 MHz. Although they operate a 222 MHz repeater, they are emphatically not an FM-oriented club. They exist to do serious experimentation, design, and building. Their nickname derives from their need to scrounge parts for building projects. There are no commercial ham rigs for a lot of the bands they operate on, so engineering creativity is necessary.

Contesting provides the acid test of their engineering know-how as well as their operating skills. The club regularly wins national contests ... including a winning streak of more than 30 years in the ARRL January VHF contest. Their informative Web site is at [www.ij.net/packrats/](http://www.ij.net/packrats/).

Frankford competes at HF. Members must hold at least a General license and are expected to contribute scores in at least 2 out of 4 specific DX contests: The CQ World-Wide DX phone and CW in October/November and ARRL International DX phone and CW in February/March. You can compete from home or from a multi-operator station (*see the next story*).

If you've contested casually and enjoyed it, maybe you're ready to think about the next level. To find out more about Frankford, let's talk!



## CONTESTING AT A MULTI-OP STATION

By Al N3EA

So you want to get into contesting but you don't have your own super-duper contest station with multiple towers, beams for every known HF band, and a bunch of linear amplifiers. You probably don't have your own computer network running in your shack on which you can watch for DX spots and log at the same time at more than one position. Like many of us, you're pretty sure that your own average-size ham station just won't cut it in the contest world. What to do?

Well, if you don't want to spend big bucks buying new gear for your home station you just might want to try contesting at a multi-op (multi-operator) setup during one of the major contests. Here are a couple of reasons why you might want to do this.

First of all there is the obvious technical stuff. The big multi-op stations have two or more operating positions going at the same time. They also have lots of very nice equipment from transceivers to amplifiers to computers. They also have more than one tower (usually a whole lot higher than the usual 35' or 50' variety) on which are mounted a great array of multi-band and single-band antennas. There are wire antennas for all of the lower bands as well

The operating positions are linked to-

gether by a computer network so that each operator can watch for DX spots from the packet cluster and then log at the same time. Yes, you can even have a computer chat between positions if you need to do that.

Then there is the social and learning part of multi-op operation. Even though the owners of big multi-op stations, like **N3AD**, **N2MM**, **N3RS**, and others, are real serious about competing in the DX contests, they always have time to show you the ropes whether it's about contesting in general, operating particular gear, logging, or whatever. You don't need to be an experienced DX contest operator to become involved in a multi-op operation. The social part is getting to meet and work with some of the best contesters around. What a neat way to make some new friends.

There are two types of multi-op operations that can be used during a contest. One is called multi-multi. This means multiple stations and multiple operators. At this type of operation everyone just tries to make as many contacts with as many multipliers as possible.

The second type is called multi-single. At this type of operation there is only one 'run' or contest station. However, it is per-

missible to have another station set up and this station may only work DX stations for new multipliers. It may not otherwise participate in the contest. Operating at either type of multi-operator situation is great fun.

The scores that are achieved by the multi-op stations become part of a club score. The big HF contest club in our area is the Frankford Radio Club (FRC). Just about everyone who is into contesting belongs to FRC. The scores from the multi-op stations and the scores from those who operate from their home stations are added together to form a club score. The club is competing against other clubs worldwide. There are MARC members who are also members of FRC including **Kay WT3P**, **Josy WQ3E**, **Steve K3KFD**, and myself.

Participating at a multi-op station is great fun. If you're interested in learning more about contesting feel free to contact any of the MARC members who are also FRC members or any FRC members who might come across. By the way, FRC has a repeater on 147.270 MHz and there you can talk to some of the contesters if you would like to learn more.

Join in and have fun!!!!