



# REMARCS

**JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 1987**

**It's time to pay dues again, old darling! Check your newsletter mailing label for your membership expiration date. If it says 1987, we'd like to receive \$10 from you before March 1. You can pay at a club meeting or by mail. No separate renewal mailing is sent. We'd rather spend the club's money on things that are interesting, fun, and/or useful, rather than on mailing tedious reminder notices asking if your dog ate the checkbook. So be a sweetie and save your club some money. Renew now!**

## **ELECT YOUR 1987 OFFICERS**

**If you receive REMARCS as a club member, your 1987 ballot will be stuffed in the newsletter. If you are, but it isn't, contact KAY KC3LM immediately so a ballot can be sent to you. All positions have the option of a write-in. Your ballot may be turned in at the club meeting, January 15, or sent in by mail. Mailed ballots must be in the club P.O. box on the morning of January 15 to be valid. In any case, do not write your name or call on the ballot itself. Votes will be counted and results announced at the January meeting.**

**Thanks are due to GENE WB3FTJ for handling this year's nominations, and of course thanks go to all those who agreed to run for office. Several individuals who've been on the Board are not offering for re-election, so let's pause to give them a hat-tip: BART KC3BP (former Secretary and VP), DAVID KA3HBK (former Projects Chairman), GENE WB3FTJ (former Policy Chairman), PETER N3DXY (former Technical Chairman), CARTER KA3IME (former Public Service Chairman, Policy Chairman, and President). It's worth noting that 3 of the nominees have not served on the Board before.**

## **PACKET BBS ON THE AIR**

**The WB3JOE-9 packet BBS went on the air in November. Effective January 1, its call sign changes to plain old WB3JOE. JOHN WB3ELA has kindly brought the board up temporarily on his own computer while we await delivery of an IBM clone. Now here's the pitch. The Board has authorized \$400 towards purchase of this \$800 computer. GENE WB3FTJ has generously advanced the money for the computer. If the membership contributes the remaining \$400 through voluntary giving by February 1, the computer becomes MARC's. If not, it will be Gene's computer and he can do with it as he wishes. Plant an avocado in it, maybe, or toss it off the Walt Whitman. The Board felt that this was the fairest method to pay for a system that relatively few in MARC are currently interested in using. The suggested contribution is \$25. If you want to be part of this expansion of MARC's activities and services into the digital realm please contribute -- whether you are now on packet or not. The membership renewal form on page 5 includes a line for your packet contribution.**

**The next club meeting dates are January 15 and February 19. Program topics are not known at this time, but you can bet it's something interesting. Be sure to come and bring a friend. Please remember to welcome visitors at the meetings and not leave them standing around like unplugged lamps.**



## TRAFFIC TRADITION CONTINUES

Holiday traffic from Bryn Mawr Hospital, a long MARC tradition, was relayed on December 21. Stations at the hospital were CARTER KA3IME, RAY N3BPJ, CAROL AD1P, HARRY WBKCD, BART KC3BP, and JIM N4IQR. Stations taking traffic at home were TOM KA3FXX, ANDY N3AZW and EPAEPTN Net Manager JIM WA3EHD. Thanks to excellent cooperation this year by the hospital, we moved about 200 pieces of traffic -- compared to 38 last year, that ain't liverwurst! We used both club repeaters and 220 MHz simplex. Our main problem area was having enough stations at home with HF traffic experience to take and move the messages. An improvement at the BMH station end would be knowledge of how NTS is organized, so that messages can be grouped for transmission by NTS area, region, and section. This will make HF relay stations' lives vastly easier. To learn what the NTS areas and regions are, look at the cover of the ARRL Net Directory. You know, the Directory is more than a list of nets. It also contains basic instructions on traffic handling. The Directory costs \$1 and can be purchased at nearly any hamfest and many radio gear stores.

Everyone is welcome to check into the Sunday ARES nets and the tri-weekly traffic nets. These nets are a good chance to meet others, learn a little about formal traffic handling, and become better prepared for emergencies. MARC's nets are local affiliates of the National Traffic System. MARC is known all over the Delaware Valley as the premier traffic handling club. Even if you aren't sure you want to do traffic yourself, check into a net this month just to be sociable!

If you are on packet and like to handle traffic, here are some BBS commands you should know about. LT causes the BBS to list NTS traffic. In the "to" field, you may see "NTSEPA," meaning NTS traffic for Eastern PA Section. In the message title field, you will see something like "QTC 1 HAVERTOWN, PA." This means 1 piece of traffic for Havertown. If you can deliver or relay Havertown traffic, use the R command to read the traffic, capturing it to disk or on your printer. To zot the message now that you've taken it, use the KT command: kill traffic. To send formal NTS traffic, use the ST command. Put NTS + the destination ARRL Section in the "to" field and describe the traffic in the message title field: how many pieces for what town. Don't mix towns in one message. If, say, you have 2 for Chicago and 1 for Milwaukee, put them in separate messages, not glopped together because they're all west of Pittsburgh.

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### MARC MEMBERSHIP FORM

☐ Licensed = \$10      ☐ Associate = \$5

Contribution towards the MARC packet bulletin board computer (\$25 suggested). Contributions are not required for membership.

\*\*\* Amount contributed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ CALL \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIPCODE \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PHONE (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Okay to publish phone in club directory? ☐ Yes ☐ No

ARRL member? ☐ Yes Expiration date \_\_\_\_\_ ( N o )

Checks payable to MID-ATLANTIC AMATEUR RADIO CLUB. Send to P. O. Box 352, Villanova, PA 19085. The membership year begins March 1. Please renew promptly. Thanks!



# REMARCS

**MAY/JUNE, 1987**

## **FIELD DAY JUNE 27-28**

Last year we had vicious homicidal weeds at Field Day. The botanical equivalent of "Jaws." This year, we've been promised that the killer veggies will be nuked, or something, but you should still wear shoes and socks in case any poison ivy survives. The site (and the generator!) are ours once again courtesy of Bell of Pennsylvania and contacts made by BOB WBSA. The date is June 27-28, and CARTER KD3AO is this year's chairman. If he doesn't buttonhole you first, let him know what band/mode you'd like to operate. We will have "facilities" (the WBDZI Memorial Throne Room), and you can bring your cook-out stuff and picnic food. Novice and Tech operators are especially welcome. Even if you have never been on the air, don't stay home. We'll have experienced operators assigned to help you get into the swing. See the map on the outside back cover. Set-up starts at 10 AM

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Have you written to FCC arguing against the proposal to take 220-222 MHz away from the Amateur Service? Whether or not you use this band, you cannot be complacent about loss of any Amateur spectrum. The deadline has been extended to May 21. See the April QST for how to file -- or speak to KC3LM Today!  
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STAN WA3JMW gave another of his rock-em-sock-em talks in March, covering digital voice and what it takes to get a radio past military scrutiny. RUSS K3RH, who works for PECO, explained in April how the juice gets from the generator to your shack. Two club members, two excellent programs. In May the scheduled speaker is SR. BERNADETTE KA3PXA, talking about her operating experiences overseas. Contact PAUL N3DTY with your ideas for future programs. Volunteer yourself!

The Board has authorized the purchase of a 220 MHz repeater to make our club more attractive to Novice operators. A frequency pair has been specified by T-PARC frequency coordinators. The location and other details are still being worked out at this time.

A 10 Mbyte hard disk for the packet BBS has been donated by DON N3FDE. That's a handsome gift and I'm sure all the other MARC packeteers join me in a grand Salaam to Don for his generosity. Thanks to NAT WBJ5 and WALT WA3BDP for donating to the packet BBS fund. It's not too late to make a contribution towards the price of the computer. The BBS is working out nicely thanks to principal sysop JOHN WB3ELA and his helpers. Nationally, packet usage is doubling every five months. In our area, packet operates from 144.930 through 145.090. Voice operation in that area both experiences and causes considerable QRM, so it's better for everyone if fone chats take place somewhere else.



## BULLETIN BITS

The weekly bulletins have been a MARC service for many years and are tuned in by many hams who aren't club members. Our current bulletin station is BART KC3BP. If you have information appropriate for a bulletin announcement, you can mail it to Bart at his callbook address or packet it to him on the WB3JOE PBBS. Producing a good weekly bulletin is not as easy as falling down the stairs -- thanks, Bart!

## NEWS FOR THE NEW

Here are a few ideas for new 'fone ops. You worked hard for that callsign, so speak it plainly over the air. None of that "This is K-A-3-gargle-fuzzy stuff! When operating in a net, we still have to follow identification rules. To satisfy the "every 10 minutes and at the end of the communication" bit, we usually ID when turning the frequency back to net control after passing traffic or making comments.

On the other hand, there's a tendency to over-identify in normal QSO's on FM -- it really isn't desirable to end and begin every transmission with "N3QRZ this is KA3ZOT." In fact, the habit drives many people nuts.

On FM there is nothing gained by shouting into the mic. In fact, very loud speech may cause your signal to break up. A normal, conversational voice is the best choice. This is particularly true if you become involved in emergency communications. Bawling into the mic drives everyone's tension level up and wears you out faster. Rigs aren't all the same. With a friend listening, experiment with your mic until you find how close to your mouth to hold it so a quiet voice will still be easily understood.

Even though you may use cute phonetics in casual conversation, be sure to learn standard phonetics for use in emergency communications, traffic handling, and DX. I've heard too many experienced operators make dips of themselves by using "original" phonetics in the wrong situation.

The best advice for learning to be a good operator is to listen, listen, listen -- and ask questions when you're uncertain about good operating practice. Nobody was born knowing how to do this stuff, and nobody ever knows it all, regardless of what some old goats of all ages may tell you.

## C L A S S I F I E D

FOR SALE: (1) Hallicrafters Skyrider Defiant (modified) low band rcvr. A classic oldie.  
(2) Utica 650 & 6m VFO xcvr. (3) SBE Formula D, 21 ch., Xtal control CB & floor mount.  
(4) Cushcraft 6m 8 element beam Call BILL K3ZLL, 644-1851, after 4 pm

FOR SALE: Kenwood TS120S xcvr, excellent condition. \$375. Call BOB K3QXH (383-4019).

FOR SALE: IBM PC, 2 360K drives, 640K RAM monochrome monitor, some software, excellent condition. Price \$850. Call STAN N3CUS/MARY KA3QOP (527-7734).

## THIS IS A TEST...

Phil-Mnt Mobile Radio Club continues to test on the 1st Monday of the month (except when meetings are moved for holidays) at 6:30 PM sharp at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. Although August tests will be the regular date, their July tests will be on the 13th, while September tests will be on the 14th to avoid holidays. Be there early. Test opportunities also exist in the suburbs. Call KAY KC3LM at 688-5045, or leave me a message on WB3JOE, and I'll find out what's convenient to you.

## AND SO IS THIS!

Novice tests now require two examiners! If you are thinking of giving a Novice test, be sure to have the new, enlarged question pool and a second examiner who must also sign the 610 form. Things may be speeding up at Gettysburg. KEVIN KA3RMD's Novice ticket took just 8 weeks from test day to ticket appearance, while my own recent upgraded ticket was dated 6 weeks, 2 days, from my test day.

## PACKET FORWARDING

Packet has been so often sold as the RF equivalent of instant pudding that many operators don't realize it isn't all done with mirrors. Take, for instance; the matter of forwarding mail to your friend at another BBS. We're not talking NTS traffic, here, just mail. Not long ago some BBS sysops (not ours) were roaring about these lids who don't set it up right and then complain when it doesn't work. I sent one of them a message suggesting that educating the zillions of new packet ops might help solve the problem more effectively than raging at them. Several days silence. Then a "how to" file appeared on one board. As one who urged this approach, I'd like to pass my own version of the "how to forward" advice along to readers of REMARCS.

1. Always fill in the @BBS parameter: S WBPYF @ KB3UD.

Without the @ KB3UD, there's no way the sysop knows where my friend WBPYF hangs out. He might live in Idaho instead of Easton, PA! If you don't know what BBS your friend uses, find out before you send messages -- or use NTS, which doesn't depend on your knowing the destination BBS (but that's another story).

2. Make sure the destination BBS is for real.

If the destination BBS has folded, or is a personal message system like the new Kantronics KAM firmware, your mail probably won't go past the first forwarding hop. Then it will sit and rot until the sysop, now in a bad mood, zots it.

3. Use correct spacing.

If you type S WBPYF@KB3UD or S WBPYF@ KB3UD or something like that, the originating BBS won't be able to interpret it. Your message won't move. Eyeball that address line before you hit the return key. If you still goof it, kill the message and start again.

4. Find out what BBS's your home board now forwards to.

It would be nice if sysops posted a file saying which BBS's are already in the automatic forwarding list, but many don't. So before you blithely expect your @BBS address to work, ask the sysop to send you the current list. If your destination BBS isn't there, send the sysop a message asking that it be added: "Please add KA3ZOT PBBS in East Chickenlips, MD, to the forwarding list."

5. Remember that sysops are volunteers.

There are socially defective persons who actually order sysops to do things. Sysops are under no obligation to put up with rotten manners. So if you ask the sysop to add a BBS to the forwarding list, please don't phrase it as a royal command. You don't have to offer to kiss the guy, just be polite.