



SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2001

REMARCS

www.marc-radio.org

HAMFEST 2001 IS A GREAT SUCCESS!

Thanks to perfect weather, a lot of publicity, a slight price increase, reduction of costs, and support by first-rate vendors, the 2001 MARC hamfest made the most money of any hamfest we've held in Kimberton.

The gross receipts were \$5,489. The expenses were \$1,938.79, leaving a profit of \$3,550.21. It's been a long time since we did that well. Donations to the club from the members' sales table added up to \$86. We very nearly sold out the indoor tables.

We received significant help from our neighbor clubs and local ARES/RACES/MARS groups. They publicized the hamfest in their newsletters and e-mail bulletins, and some bought tables to promote their organizations. We sincerely appreciate the coop-

eration of our friends. A good regional hamfest makes ham radio stronger and, in the long run, benefits everyone.

We appreciate the gracious assistance of ANRO, Inc., of Devon, PA, who did our printing and mass mailing.

Unfortunately, we did not get a reliable list of the workers this year. **Gene WB3FTJ** and **Judy N3MBW** managed the members' sales table. **Carter N3AO** and **Bob W3ZQN** handled the PA announcements. **Dieter WB3JWU**, **Foster K3FXS**, and **Bob KB3FSQ** did talk-in. **Branin N3SAM** and **Carter N3AO** put up the road signs. **Bill W3KRB** managed vendor table sales. **Bob N3JIZ** helped transport stuff from the storage locker to the ham-

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ELECTIONS TO BE HELD AT SEPTEMBER 18 CLUB MEETING

An Important Position Has No Candidate!

Annual elections for the MARC board of directors will be held at the club meeting on September 18. If you receive *REMARCS* on paper, a ballot is enclosed. If you receive the newsletter electronically, a ballot in PDF format is attached to a separate e-mail. Only licensed members of the club may vote.

Members may vote by bringing ballots to the September meeting. If you can't attend, you may mail your ballot to the club's post office box so that it arrives not later than September 18. Voting by e-mail is not valid under the club By-Laws. Ballots will be counted and the results announced at the meeting.

The slate is printed here for the record. You will notice that Programs has no candidate. The Programs was vacant during the preceding term, also.

During the past term, other members of the board pitched in and arranged programs ... which meant that they did their regular duties plus setting up programs.

Do you think it is right and fair for board members to have to continue doubling-up, doing their elected jobs and setting up programs, too? Or would it be acceptable to you, as a MARC member, to have no programs at meetings?

A "let's you entertain me" philosophy has led more than one nice ham radio club to the implosion point. In fact, it wouldn't be a terribly risky bet to say that a lack of people willing to do the leadership tasks has knocked off as many clubs as conflicts and feuds have done. Maybe more.

Write-in votes may be cast in MARC elections. If you are willing and qualified to serve on the board, especially for Programs, you can tell your friends in the club and ask them to write you in. Please do not start a write-in campaign for someone without that person's permission.

This is your club. Please think hard about what you want its future to be, and then do what's necessary to make that happen. We've already seen some members stand up and take the lead for next year's Field Day. How about some of the same spirit for next year's club meeting programs?

2001 — 2002 Board of Directors Slate

President:	Steve Maslin N3ORH
Vice President:	Bart Feroe K4BF
Secretary:	Bob Haase W3SA
Treasurer:	Carter Craigie N3AO
Membership Services:	Kay Craigie WT3P
Programs:	<i>No candidate</i>
Public Relations:	Bob Weiss KB3FSQ
Public Service:	Bob Palin N3JIZ
Technical:	Dennis Silage K3DS
Member-at-Large (to 9/30/2003):	Gene Hoenig N3HG

(Callsign trustees are not elected. The other Member-at-Large position term runs through 9/30/2002.)

PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

October 28 - Wyeth-Ayerst Run benefiting the American Lung Association. Meet in the lower parking lot of the Radnor Township administration building (where our club meetings are held) at 8 AM. We need a really good turn-out of operators to underscore our role as an asset to Radnor Township.

November 18 - Vietnam Vets Run. Meet at the Norristown Farm Park at 8 AM. The park is located off Germantown Pike and

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ABOUT MARC

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

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

3rd Tuesdays, 8 PM, Radnor
Township Building, St. Davids.
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
141.13 CTCSS 131.8 Hz
Webmaster: Steve N3ORH
(610-313-8080, smaslin@fast.net)

NETS

Club Net, Sunday, 8:30 PM 147.06
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!

VOX

Welcome these new and returning members: **Peter N3DAT**, **Paul WA3YZL** (wa3yzl@arrl.net), **Dan N3LMY** (dcscckp@aol.com), **Susan N3OFF**, **Marvin K3TVI** (mva@del.net), **Paul WE3NUD** (pault@pault.org). **Bob KB3FSQ** is now on e-mail (kb3fsq@netcarrier.com). **Gene N3HG** is the former **WB3FTJ**. **Dan K3OU** is the former **W3LKD**. **Carl WA3ZZU** volunteered on the Merit Badge Midway at the Boy Scouts National Jamboree. **Carter N3AO** and **Bob WR3K** had a QSO in a Spartan Sprint QRP contest. **Susan K3SUE** received QSL cards for working **NA1SS**, the International Space Station. Who's that in the red shirt, with back to the camera, at the left side of the Dayton photo on page 42, August QST?

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BOARD MEETINGS

At the July 26 meeting, Technical Chairman **Dennis K3DS** reported that the new controller for the 147.06 repeater had been received and would be programmed and installed. Several possible frequencies for linking '06 and '13 were received from the coordinators and a selection will be made. Ten-digit dialing on the '13 autopatch was enabled. The 224.42 repeater is working. Club members should try it out. It was voted that the club's packet radio equipment will be donated to Delaware County ARES. Three items of surplus repeater equipment were sold on eBay for \$370. Public service events include the Wyeth-Ayerst Run in October and the Vietnam Vets Run in November. No members expressed interest in club logo apparel. A nominations report was received, along with a report on future programs. The board commended **Mike KF3CD** and all volunteers who contributed to the success of the hamfest. The treasury balance was \$11,137.07.

At the August 23 meeting, the board heard reports on programs, nominations and elections, public service, and technical matters. The new controller for '06 has not been installed because the old one decided to resume working. Control operator codes for the '13 repeater have been provided to the authorized people. The board voted to move the club's storage locker from its present location to a new one that is more convenient and less expensive. Additional signs for directing people to the hamfest and Field Day will be prepared following an inquiry into the costs. The treasury balance was \$11,117.86.

AUGUST TEST SESSION RESULTS

At MARC's August 4 test session, we served 10 candidates. Five of them earned new Technician licenses. One candidate upgraded to General, and unsuccessfully attempted the Extra. One man came in with no license and passed all the tests for his General. There were 2 upgrades to Extra. One person took the Tech test but did not pass. It was fun to have a large group of candidates, including several children.

The examiners at the session were **Bob W3ZQN**, **Bob W3SA**, **Bob KA3NIQ**, **Kay WT3P**, **Dennis K3DS**, **Walt WA3PPW**, **Dick K3ITH**, **Paul NX3Q**, and **Susan K3SUE**. MARC should be very proud of how 'ZQN and his crew conduct these test sessions. The tests are run carefully by the book, but the atmosphere is friendly for the typically-nervous candidates.

The next MARC test session will be on November 3, at the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church on Montgomery Avenue in Bryn Mawr, at 9:15 AM. Pre-registration is advised. Contact **Bob W3ZQN** (rjlees@aol.com, 610-265-6032) for registration and information. Remember that club members can participate in one MARC VE session per year free of charge. MARC pays your fee.

IMPORTANT HAM LICENSE INFORMATION!

If your license is due for renewal soon or if the mailing address on your license is outdated, important information is on pages 89-90 of September QST. Things have changed since you last renewed!

The FCC's Rules require us to have a valid mailing address on file. If you need help finding out whether or not your address is correct, contact **Kay WT3P**. Help is also available for registering in the Universal Licensing System (ULS) if you don't have Internet access.

News flash! After the September QST went to press, the FCC announced it has noticed that most people use Internet Explorer as a web browser, rather than Netscape. They say the ULS web site (www.fcc.gov/wtb/uls) now works properly with Explorer as well as Netscape.

Registration in ULS is mandatory. We looked up the MARC membership and found out that . . .

Thirty-nine percent of MARC's licensed members are not registered in ULS. An easy way to find out if you are registered is to look yourself up on QRZ.COM. When your name comes up on the screen, click on "Detailed Info." If the next screen has a line saying "License ID:" followed by a number such as "L00123456," then you are registered. If there's no such line, then you are not registered and you need to do so now. If you are not on the Internet and need help, please contact Kay WT3P (610-993-9623).

FROM THE EDITOR'S JUNK BOX

There was this survivalist guy at a hamfest who was asking me about becoming a ham so he could have communications after he survives whatever it is that he expects to have to survive. Everything was fine until he looked at FCC Form 605 and saw that you have to register your Taxpayer ID Number (Social Security Number, to you and me) with the FCC. "It's required by the Federal Debt Collection Act," I explained.

"No way," he squawked. "I'll just get some ham radios and use them without a license. The federal government wouldn't bother to go after somebody for such a little thing as using a ham radio without a license."

"Oh, yes they will," said I. "The FCC will track you down and nail you ... and we hams will help them do it."

His eyes widened. "You wouldn't!" "We would." Now his eyes were wide as wash-tubs: "Why?"

"Because we value our Amateur Radio licenses, and we won't allow our frequencies to be used by people who haven't earned the privilege. You'd be very ill-advised to try it."

So he went away mad. This did not, of course, alter my sleep habits even slightly. People's beliefs are their own affair, and I have set land speed records for letting the weird ones go in one ear and out the other. But when people's beliefs make them talk to me with disrespect for Amateur Radio, sneering at the FCC's Rules ... well, then they are messing with Texas. I'm from Georgia, but you know what I mean.

When the Volunteer Examiner system began back in the 1980's, many hams said it would be incompetent and corrupt and would be the death of ham radio. Wrong on all counts. Volunteer Examiners have proved the point I tried to make to Bomb Shelter Boy at that hamfest: Nobody values ham radio more than hams do.

Sure, a few VE's turn out wrong. You'll have that when you work with large numbers of humans. The VE Coordinators, with back-up from **Riley Hollingsworth**, vigilantly weed out the few who are stupid or unethical.

When we reflect on the fun and personal fulfillment that we derive from Amateur Radio, we should be grateful to the VE's upon whose care and integrity the licensing system depends. Without their dedication to administering fair and honest exams, frankly I don't know where ham radio would be today, but the expression ending "without a paddle" comes to mind.

To all the Volunteer Examiners who have worked at MARC's sessions over the last 15 years, thank you! The significance of what you do goes way beyond what happens on four Saturday mornings a year in Bryn Mawr, PA.

— 73, Kay WT3P

PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

(Continued from page 1)

North Wales Road. Both events are rain or shine and will be over well before lunch time. To sign up, get directions, or find out more about what is going to happen, contact **Bob N3JIZ** (610-687-4587).

You don't need any previous public service communications experience. Our job at these events is to help sponsors keep track of what's going on, so lost kids can be re-united with their adults and medical help can be dispatched to people who become sick or injured ... that sort of thing. It's not difficult work, but it is important for the safety of our neighbors.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2000-2001

PRESIDENT

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

VICE PRESIDENT

Bart Feroe K4BF 610-367-4288
k4bf@arri.net

SECRETARY

Bob Haase W3SA 610-293-1919
rhaase@bellatlantic.net

TREASURER

David DePizzo KB3CRY 610-630-0129
del131@msn.com

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Kay Craigie WT3P 610-993-9623
wt3p@arri.net

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

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER
MEETING PROGRAMS

The September 18 program will be given by **Dennis K3DS** as an advanced-level follow-up to an earlier talk on sound-card digital modes. Dennis always has interesting technical demonstrations. This will be an excellent time to bring your techie non-ham friends to a MARC meeting.

The October 16 program will be presented by **Ron K3ZV** on public service scanning, with an emphasis on trunking systems. He plans to bring some of his hardware for show and tell, commenting that the program will be "more of a practical than a highly technical talk."

Send the URL's of your favorite ham radio related web sites to Kay WT3P (wt3p@arri.net) for listing in future newsletters.

W1AW CODE PRACTICE ON THE WEB

Thousands of hams over many years have passed their Morse code exams thanks to the code practice transmitted by W1AW. No computer programs, audio tapes, or CD-ROM's to buy (and memorize!), just free transmissions of text from back issues of QST at rates from quite slow to quite fast. You didn't need an HF transceiver; a shortwave receiver would do the job.

The only problem was that the practice schedule might not fit your life. Then you had to hassle with a tape recorder and timer or bother a friend to tape the practice for you.

Today, that problem is solved. From the ARRL Web site, you can use the ARRL code practice runs whenever you want them. In MP3 format, the transmissions can be received as streaming audio in real time or downloaded to your computer as a file for later use at your convenience. All you need is an MP3 player (Windows Media Player, RealPlayer, etc.).

If you are learning the code, or helping someone else learn, check out the possibilities at <http://www.arrl.org/w1aw/morse.html>.

SCOUTS GET RADIO-ACTIVE AT SPARK LODGE By Rick Blank WB3BSA

SPARK is an acronym for Scout Practicing Amateur Radio Knowledge. The SPARK Lodge ARC holds the club callsign K3BSA. So if you hear K3BSA on the air, try to work them. There may be Scouts looking to talk to someone on the air. More information about SPARK Lodge is available online at <http://www.k3bsa.org>.

This summer, SPARK Lodge members were busy with hands on demonstrations of Amateur Radio. Scouts at two Scout Camps talked to other Scouts and hams on the radio and learned Morse code. Cub Scouts and their families participated at Camp Delmont on the Musser Scout Reservation in Marlborough Township, Montgomery County, PA. Boy Scouts participated at Big Springs Camp on the Resica Falls Scout Reservation in Middle Smithfield Township, Monroe County, PA.

Cub Scouts at Camp Delmont talked to Scouts and hams in other parts of the Country, learned Morse code, and wired up door bells. Boy Scouts at Big Springs had an opportunity to earn the Radio Merit Badge and listen in on the BSA National Jamboree's contact with the International Space Station. Several Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts became interested in getting their tickets. Scouts at both camps talked to Scouts at the Boy Scouts of America's National Jamboree in Fort A. P. Hill, Virginia. *[Check out the Jamboree and Scout info page at <http://www.bpmlegal.com/k2bsa.html>]*

This fall, SPARK Lodge will continue its weekend programs at Camp Delmont. SPARK Lodge ARC will be cosponsoring an Amateur Radio Licensing Course beginning in September. Computers, Radio, Electricity and Electronics Boy Scout Merit Badges are on the schedule for October and November. Cub Scout advancement opportunities will also be available. Hands-on demonstrations will take place every weekend. SPARK lodge will also be participating in the Annual Jamboree-on-the-Air the third full weekend of October.

HAMFEST CALENDAR

Sept. 8	Eastern PA ARA/Pocono ARK, Bartonsville, PA
Sept. 15	Delaware-Lenigh ARC, Schnecksville, PA
Sept. 15-16	York Hamfest Foundation, York, PA
Oct. 14	Pack Rats Hamarama, Wrightstown, PA
Oct. 21	RF Hill ARC, Sellersville, PA

For more information about these and other hamfests, check the ARRL on-line hamfest calendar at www.arrl.org. MARC 2002 hamfest flyers need to be taken to these hamfests. Contact **Mike KF3CD** (610-935-4429, mpilotti@anro.com) to get some. Attend our neighbor clubs' hamfests and talk them up on the air ... the same way they helped us.

HAMFEST SUCCESS STORY

(Continued from page 1)

fest site, repainted the road signs, and worked on flea-market space marking. **Susan K3SUE** brought her truck for clean-up. **David KB3CRY** handled the cash. A lot of people worked on indoor set-up, including **Bob W3SA**, his daughter **Lois**, and his son **Bob N1RH**. Other workers included **Ned WQ3Z**, **Ron W3ZV**, **Steve N3ORH**, **Mitch W2MBH**, **Dan KA3KHR**, and **Steve KD0VA**. **Mike KF3CD**, of course, captained the whole show. If you're not mentioned here, please know that your work was important and appreciated all the same. Next year, we'll do a better job with the volunteer sign-in sheet.

Plans for the 2002 hamfest are already under way. We already have some hamfest flyers printed. If you are going to any fall-season hamfests, please get in touch with Mike and pick up some flyers to take long. See you in Kimberton on Sunday, July 14, 2002!

Pictures from MARC's 2001 hamfest are on-line at
<http://home.earthlink.net/~wt3p/MARC2001.HTML>
Images by Bob W3ZQN, Dick K3ITH, Kay WT3P

UNDER THE CAUTION FLAG

Someone stole **Carter N3AO's** credit card number and it was a pain in the backside getting VISA to take the bogus charges off the bill. It's smart to be prompt in checking your credit card statement against the receipts, so you can flag anything squirrely as fast as possible.

And you do know better than to answer those e-mails asking you to help launder money from third-world countries? These thieves want your bank account information so they can steal all of your money, not give you some of theirs.

FLEA MARKET

For sale: Two HT's in excellent condition. Kenwood TH-G51A, dual band (144/440), hi-power models (5 watts). Complete with manual, wall charger, original box, and spare battery. With spare PB-39 9.6v 600 mAh battery pack, \$165.00. With spare PB-38 6.0v 650 mAh battery pack, \$150.00. Original price was \$370 without spare battery pack. Contact **Ed W3BNR** (610-933-4020, w3bnr@arrl.net).

WORK WORLDWIDE DX ON VHF/UHF USING THE IRLP

by Jack Keidel KB3GDC

The Internet Radio Linking Project (IRLP) is now active in the Philadelphia area. What is the IRLP? It's a network of transmitters, fed by computers with tailored LINUX software, located all over the globe and linked together via the Internet using very high speed interfaces. They may be operated on a simplex frequency or on a repeater frequency.

For example, a repeater station or node, say in Denver, may be connected to another specific node, perhaps the one in Sidney, Australia. Such a connection would enable point-to-point communication between hams in each of these two areas who are able to access the repeaters in question.

Also, a number of nodes may connect into a "reflector," which produces a digital party line. Reflectors allow hams to have multi-QSOs with other hams at other nodes connected to that same reflector.

Most of the early development work on the IRLP, starting in 1997, was done by **David Cameron VE7LTD** in Canada. The first link connected Saint John, New Brunswick, with Vancouver, British Columbia. Currently (late August), there are 150 total nodes worldwide, but only a dozen or so may be active at any given time.

Four Philadelphia area IRLP nodes are noted and defined on the IRLP website. The information given on these nodes are:

1. **N3IO** in Philadelphia, PA, at 443.1 MHz (plus standard offset) with PL of 131.8 Hz.
2. **KA3VMA** in Drexel Hill, PA, at 145.450 MHz (no offset) with PL of 131.8 Hz.
3. **KA2JZO** in Browns Mills, NJ, at 147.490 MHz (plus 1 MHz offset) with PL of 127.3 Hz
4. **NJ2FM** in Hopatcong, NJ, at 448.675 MHz (minus standard offset) with PL of 136.5

Of the four, my experience indicates that the Philadelphia repeater at 443.1 MHz is by far the most active. I have heard on the ham bands that KA3VMA will become more active in the Fall, since its QTH is at a Drexel Hill area high school. I have no experience with either of the NJ nodes.

What stations might you hear and work when you tune in an IRLP link? VE1s to VE7s (all across Canada) seem to be the most popular. Remember that they were the first to become involved. Other potential contacts, to name only a few, include: Sheffield, England; Roseau, Dominica; Sidney, Australia; and Honolulu, HI. In the lower 48 states you may contact such links as Denver, Atlanta, Helena, Los Vegas, Orlando, San Diego, Seattle, Portland, Tucson, Rochester, Houston, or closer to home, Washington, DC.

To date, the author has worked many of those noted above including Sheffield, England; Roseau, Dominica; Melbourne and Ipswich, Australia; many Canadian stations, and about a dozen links in the lower 48 states. Hardly any effort was required, but more to the point, the key word on the IRLP is "courtesy." That is, waiting your turn, or stepping in politely when you get a chance. Hopefully, you would work them the same way you would any repeater.

Like I said, it's far too easy, but it does promote the spirit of ham radio in many respects. In addition, it allows hams, such as apartment dwellers, with limited transmitting range, or those with limited license privileges, to make a some DX contacts and obtain related

QSL cards. Don't expect to use these QSL cards for ARRL awards, however. [see note, below]

IRLP stations are not 24 hour operations. Links are turned on and off, using DTMF tones, by their control operators at their discretion. You can listen for them, or check their current status at the IRLP website listed below. Their status is updated every 60 seconds at this site. Mornings and late in the day periods seem to be popular times. To learn more about the IRLP, scope out www.irlp.net on the web. It includes just about everything you would want to know about the IRLP. For example, it lists node status, history, operation, node locations (with maps), how it works, IRLP stories, etc.

You don't need an abundance of knowledge to enjoy the IRLP. Here are two general rules that will get you by just fine. First, wait for the carrier to drop, then after two or three seconds actuate the PTT switch and begin speaking. Second, keep the mic several inches away and talk normally — not loud. Sound levels can be critical and over modulation is often a problem. Also, expect a few holes due to packet drop-out in any given transmission, although a fair percentage of QSOs are 5-9.

OK, now you have the basics. To enjoy, find an active IRLP link, wait your turn, then just squeeze that push-to-talk switch and "DO IT!"

[Editor's note: Jack's right. Contacts using IRLP are not valid for awards offered by ARRL and other major award sponsors. Some awards accept QSL's for Amateur Radio satellite contacts, but contacts involving other repeating devices such as FM repeaters and non-Amateur systems such as the Internet are not acceptable for awards such as DXCC, Worked All States, Worked All Zones, Worked All Continents, etc. Enjoy IRLP for what it is ... a creative blend of ham radio and the Internet. Growth of IRLP is moving fast. Between the time Jack first submitted this article and the day we went to press, we did several revisions to reflect appearance of many more new nodes and the disappearance of a few others.]

Use the MARC 222 MHz repeater on 224.42 MHz (input 222.82, no CTCSS)

Work the Scouts Jamboree on the Air, October 20 & 21. Check out the JOTA information on page 48 of September QST.

MARC's November meeting program will be presented by Vic Tenaglia N3IO, about the Internet Radio Linking Project.

PA QSO PARTY OCTOBER 13 & 14

By Kay Craigie WT3P

Did you enjoy operating at Field Day? Then you'll really enjoy operating in the Pennsylvania QSO Party. Lots of stations to work (just like Field Day) but no mosquitoes, a real toilet, etc. Regardless of what the Californians may say, the PAQP is the biggest and best of state QSO parties.

The event starts at 1600 UTC on Saturday and goes to 2200 UTC Sunday, with a mandatory break from 0500 to 1300 UTC on Sunday. People operate phone, CW, or both. The exchange is simple. Pennsylvania stations send a serial number and their county. There are official 3-letter abbreviations for each county in the state to speed things up. Out-of-state stations send a serial number and their ARRL Section. You can work a station again when you change bands or modes.

Believe it or not, several Philadelphia area counties are not that easy to log, so you could become the most popular kid on the block. Most operation is on 40 and 80 meters. Serious competitors also call CQ on 10, 15, and 20 meters to pick up more ARRL Sections, and late on Saturday night you'll hear activity on 160 meters.

It's a great way to sample competitive operating and to start making friends with hams all over the state. People take the contest seriously, but they are friendly to new hams and considerate towards less-experienced contesters. For example, when I called top-gun contester **Bud Trench AA3B** during one of my first efforts at CW competition, he immediately cranked his speed back to something he figured I could copy. No need for a "QRS" from me. That's class.

Paper logs are accepted, but lots of people use computers now. The popular WriteLog program is an excellent contest logging program that fully accommodates the somewhat-unusual PAQP multiplier and scoring system. There are several programs written just for the PAQP, too. They cost less than WriteLog, but they only do the one contest.

You can find out more about the contest at the official web site, www.qsl.net/narc/paqso.html. Another useful site for PAQP statistics is www.qsl.net/kd8mq/paqso/paqso.htm. There is an e-mail reflector on which people discuss the rules and announce their plans for operating from rare counties. The contest is sponsored by the Nittany ARC of State College, PA, but of course the actual work is done by just a few individual hams.

Several MARC members participate as individuals, and if we have enough individual members submitting entries, MARC can be listed in the club competition. If you'd like to know more, talk to me or **Carter N3AO**. We can make you a copy of the official paperwork when it's mailed out.

They call it a party because it's fun. You can do this. Come to the PA QSO Party this year!

The CQ World Wide DX contest, SSB, is October 27 — 28. The contest and days preceding it are a great time to work DX. Your contest exchange is "Five-nine-oh-five" ... that's signal report (59) and your CQ Zone (05). Fun!

DELAWARE COUNTY ARES / RACES

By Dan Amoroso W3DI

[Editor's note: For reasons beyond hams' control, ARES/RACES in DelCo lagged behind other metro counties. That was then, this is now. REMARCS invited the county's ARES Emergency Coordinator to give us an update. MARC encourages all club members to be active in the ARES/RACES organization in your county.]

The ARES/RACES of Delaware County ("ARDC") is alive and well. We already held Skywarn training in the Delaware County 911 building. ARDC has been given a new separate room in the Delaware County 911 building. A 55-foot tower has been erected at the site with VHF, UHF, and HF antennas. Several operational control centers will be located within the ARES/RACES room, each having different capabilities.

Delaware County now has 3 Assistant Emergency Coordinators. They are **Walt Faust N3FXR**, **Jim Biddle W3DCL**, and **Joe Rzucidlo K3CGA**.

Once the furniture and equipment are completely installed in the room (approximately September), ARES/RACES nets will be held weekly from the 911 center. We have also been offered use of the training facilities to hold emergency communications training on site. We plan to hold an open house once all equipment is operational.

I have recently completed the ARRL Emergency Communicators on-line course, Level I, and highly recommend it to any ARES/RACES member.

There will be a Skywarn training session in Delaware County on Wednesday, September 19, at the Delaware County Emergency Services Center in Sharon Hill. The training will begin at 7:00 p.m. and will be a two hour session. It's recommended that Skywarn training should be refreshed every year.

JOINING ARES / RACES

For information about joining the group in your county, contact the following MARC members.

Chester Co: **Carter N3AO** (610-993-9623, n3ao@arrl.net)
 Delaware Co: **Dan W3DI** (610-566-2187, nm3s@prodigy.net)
 Montgomery Co: **Bob W3ZQN** (610-265-6032, rjlees@aol.com)

If you live elsewhere, please ask **Kay WT3P** (610-993-9623, wt3p@arrl.net) for help in finding a contact person.

HAM RADIO AT CHANNEL 10'S "TECHFEST"

The ARRL will have a booth promoting Amateur Radio at NBC 10's "Techfest" event on October 20-21 at the Philadelphia Convention Center. Several MARC members will be among the League volunteers staffing the booth. The TV station expects ten to twenty thousand people to attend the exposition, which is admission-free.

Dennis K3DS, **Bob WA3PZO**, and **Kay WT3P** will be at the booth, along with Eastern PA Section Manager **Eric Olena WB3FPL** and other volunteers.

Keep an eye on the TV station's web site at www.nbc10.com for further information about the event.

USING THE DX PACKETCLUSTER

By Kay Craigie WT3P

There are many ways to find DX. DX bulletins from newsletters, magazines, and the Internet are valuable aids, and serious DXers pay close attention to them. But you're sitting at your rig right now wanting to have some DXing fun. How do you know who's where on the air right now and what bands are open?

To answer these questions, many DXers turn to the DX PacketCluster, a real-time DX spotting network on VHF/UHF packet radio. The cluster consists of a group of linked packet stations called "nodes." We users connect to a local node, and the fun begins. To use the PacketCluster, you need a packet radio terminal node controller (TNC), 2m or 440 MHz FM capability, and a computer running some kind of terminal software. Many logging programs have a built-in packet radio terminal window for monitoring the cluster.

Locally, the DX PacketCluster is sponsored by the Frankford Radio Club. Any ham can use the FRC cluster — you don't have to be a Frankford member. The FRC system is linked to other systems up in New England and down in the Washington, DC, area. That adds up to a lot of hams tuning the bands and calling out DX for you to chase.

In addition to DX call-outs, cluster users can also get the last 5 WWV propagation reports, request QSL route information, and read messages posted by fellow users. It's even possible to do real-time keyboard talks with fellow users. For example, when I worked the Trinidad & Martim Vaz station PT0T on 17 meters, my friend **Dallas Carter W3PP** way down in southern Delaware sent me a talk message saying "Nice catch, Kay."

At the present time, there are 16 nodes in the Frankford cluster, with several more on the drawing board. A complete list of these nodes is posted on FRC's web site at www.frc-contest.org. Click on "Member Services" and then on the keystone icon labeled "Packet System."

Most MARC members will be able to connect to one of the following nodes. All are on FM simplex, no CTCSS tone.

W3FRC	Phoenixville	144.930
K3WW	Perkasie	145.530
WT3Q	Narvon	145.570

Connect to the nearest node by the usual *Connect* command syntax (e.g., C W3FRC). Some basic commands you need to get started are

SHOW/DX	Lists the last 5 DX call-outs
SHOW/WWV	Lists the last 5 WWV reports
BYE	Disconnects from the node

A Help file with more commands can be displayed by typing the character H or ?. If you'd like a hard copy of the basic command set, I'll be happy to send it to you.

As long as you're connected, the cluster will send you additional call-outs and WWV reports as they are posted by fellow users. Some days it's slow, with few call-outs. Other days, your screen will fill up like mad. Each call-out shows the DX's call-sign and frequency, the time it was posted, and the callsign of the op who made it. There's also a space for a note which may indicate a QSL manager or what the split frequency (QSX) is.

Always copy the callsign yourself when you work the DX! Typo's and busted calls happen on the cluster, and who's on a frequency now could be different from who was there when the call-out was made 5 minutes ago. If the DX isn't giving the call-sign very often, don't be afraid to ask the operator to confirm it when you make the QSO. This is NOT the same as the appalling lid behavior of braying "Who's the DX?" or the CW equivalent "CL?" on top of others' QSO's.

Keeping the PacketCluster network system up and running requires a lot of volunteers' personal time, plus a bunch of radios, computers, antennas, TNC's, and other stuff. The time is donated; the hardware costs money.

Hams who become frequent users of the PacketCluster are encouraged to help maintain the system by becoming Packet Associates of the Frankford Radio Club. You do this by sending a donation ... whatever amount fits your budget. Packet Associate donations should be made payable to the Frankford Radio Club and sent to **Tom Wall K2TW**, 80 Cherryville Hollow Rd, Flemington, NJ 08822.

Enjoy the cluster and keep doing DX!

DX QUICK QUIZ

Are you on a roll towards the Honor Roll? Try this prefix quiz about club members past and present! Answers are at right.

1. **Tom N3JMA** and **Paul WE3NUD** both hold DX callsigns with a VE3 prefix. What part of what country is VE3?
2. Several years ago, **Dan KA3KHR** was sent by the military to DL, because of trouble in 9K. Where are DL and 9K?
3. During WW2, **Jim KD3NI** (SK) served in the Army Signal Corps in VK, DU, P2, and FK. Where are those places?
4. This summer, **Jen KA3WVD** visited the W0 call area. **Judy N3MBW** and **Gene N3HG** visited the W7 call area. Can you name the states in 0-land? How about 7-land?
5. **Kay WT3P** and **Carter N3AO** are planning a trip to 9A, YU, and I. What countries will they visit?

DX QUIZ ANSWERS

You didn't peek, did you? Here are the answers.

1. VE3 is the province of Ontario in Canada. Paul is **VE3NUD** and Tom is **VE3YTB**.
2. DL is Germany and 9K is Kuwait. We're glad the war ended before Dan got any sand in his boots!
3. VK is Australia, DU is the Philippines, P2 is New Guinea, and FK is New Caledonia.
4. States in 0-land are Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Missouri, and Colorado. The 7-land states are Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and Arizona. The MARC travelers went to Colorado and Oregon.
5. 9A = Croatia, YU = Yugoslavia, and I = Italy.