



CHEESE BITS

W3CCX
CLUB MEMORIAL CALL

ARRL
Affiliated
Club



Volume LVI

February 2015

Number 2

PREZ
SEZ:

What a great January Contest! In spite of down conditions the club has rallied nearly 70 logs at this time and from the talk at the wrap up, everyone had a good time.

That is what it is all about! If you can't have fun, then you shouldn't bother getting on the air.

At the wrap-up, we forbid talk that was more appropriate for the crying towel. I took 24 results summaries, so I know we had a great turnout at the home of KA3WXV. And of course, there was plenty of good food.

We spent a lot of time at the wrap up meeting talking about strategies for maximizing results from the new rules that take effect with the next contest.

We'd like to see our rovers outfitted with APRS tracking / location devices, then all of the fixed stations will know which way to point and when to call rovers when they arrive at each new location.

Another tool that will help activity is the use of the existing DX Cluster to point out where the contacts are at any time; provided of course that they are spotted. We're going to be taking steps to integrate this network into our plans for increasing activity. I believe it is possible to significantly increase our club score by using these new rules in the best way; just as they were intended to perform.

In April we can pursue this even more when Matt Wilhelm comes for our ARRL night.

Also in April there will be a workshop presentation given at the N.E.W.S. Conference. Lets keep the ideas coming on how to use the rules to promote activity. The first time we can use them is June.

Of course the Sprints have utilized assistance provisions for several years now; the first one this year is April 13 with the 144 Sprint. Get on and try assistance, see how it works for you.

What was the most exciting thing that happened during the January Contest? **Remember to save the hard times for the upcoming February meeting Crying Towel.** My most exciting activity was the super 24GHz conditions that existed primarily due to the low dew point. Signals on that band were significantly stronger than either 5 or 10GHz. I ended up working four grids on that band. I used the unlimited category, a new category that only existed for this past January VHF Contest.

With not many contributions to the spotting assistance network, I found very few situations where I could take advantage of spots. We need to fix that situation for VHF contests now that it's a part of the contest landscape.

Thinking ahead to March, start preparing for your latest home brew project. We want everyone to bring one of your home made contributions to your operating station. We sure hope that by March the cold weather will be abating and we can start to consider antenna projects once again.

In April, things really start happening. We have the

Pack Rats **CHEESE BITS** is a monthly publication of the
Mt. AIRY VHF RADIO CLUB, INC. —Abington, PA.

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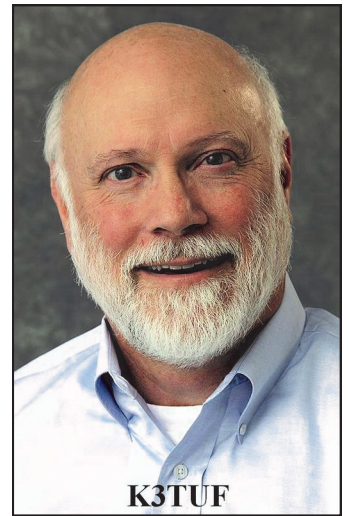
FM29jw Philadelphia, PA
50.080 144.284 222.064 432.286 903.072 1296.245 MHz
2304.043 3456.207 5763.196 10,368.062 MHz (as of 1/08)

MONDAY NIGHT NETS

TIME	FREQUENCY	NET CONTROL
7:30 PM	50.145 MHz	K3EOD FM29II WA3QPX FM29di
8:00 PM	144.150 MHz	N3ITT FN20kl
8:30 PM	222.125 MHz	KB1JEY FN20je
8:30 PM	224.58R MHz	W3GXB FN20jm
9:00 PM	432.110 MHz	WB2RVX FM29mt
9:30 PM	1296.100 MHz	K3TUF FN10we
10:00 PM	903.100 MHz	WA3SRU FN20le

Visit the Mt Airy VHF Radio Club at: www.packratvhf.com or
www.w3ccx.com

Trailer Clean Out party (April 11) at my QTH, followed by the first, second, and third Spring Sprints (April 13, 21, 29). Then there's the monthly meeting featuring ARRL night (April 16); and two conferences on the last two weekends: NEWS Conference and the SVHFS Conference. Full month, great activities. That will take your mind off the cold weather. (I'll be in FL for some of Feb, that's what I'm doing to take my mind off the cold!)



I can't finish this piece without calling attention to the major event of our year, the June VHF Contest on Camelback. Save the dates June 12-15.

Did you work K1N? They're on the isle of Navassa until the 15th of the month.

Lets work on lots of bands,

Phil, K3TUF

Editors Note

At the last meeting I announced that “the cupboard was bare” as far as material for the February Cheese Bits goes. I had a picture in my mind of a February issue with Bert's (always interesting) Wayback Machine article and the January Contest results grid and nothing else. Well as you'll see plenty of material came through since then.

THANK YOU!!!

In fact, I've got plenty of photos from K3JJZ, WA3SRU, KB3MTW, W3ICC and others that will have to wait until the March issue.

Please keep the material flowing in! This is your newsletter and it's really written by you!

73 & hope to see you next week at the meeting,

—Lenny W2BVH

Mt. Airy VHF Radio Club, Inc.
'The Pack Rats'
January 2015 VHF Sweepstakes Contest

Total Logs: 68

Club Claimed Score: 2,065,073

Here's the results of the January Sweepstakes as compiled by W3KM. How did you do? Check it out below. What can you do to improve for next year? Start planning soon!

Nr	Call	QSO's	Total-Grids	Score	6M	2M	222	432	902/3	1.3 GHz	2.4 GHz	3.4 GHz	5.7 GHz	10 GHz	24 GHz	Laser
1	WB2RVX	679	133	230356	153 26	163 34	81 15	111 19	38 8	46 8	31 7	21 5	17 5	16 5		2 1
2	K3TUF	462	114	132582	90 18	117 24	66 16	76 17	28 8	30 8	20 6	5 4	15 5	11 4	4 4	
3	WA3NUF	552	99	123156	123 17	153 23	76 14	90 16	30 7	31 6	18 5	13 4	6 3	8 2	2 1	2 1
4	N3RG	442	101	108070	112 19	112 19	45 14	66 13	27 8	31 9	19 7	11 5	11 4	8 3		
5	K3IPM	532	84	88788	154 16	151 22	58 11	84 12	27 8	26 5	14 4	12 3		5 2		1 1
6	K1DS/R	464	59	87497	56 4	99 7	69 5	79 5	32 5	32 5	25 5	20 5	15 4	18 4	7 3	12 3
7	NN3Q/R	349	65	71565	47 5	78 11	49 9	49 8	31 5	26 5	23 4	14 4	15 4	15 4		2 2
8	WA3GFZ	363	77	67375	69 13	94 15	49 12	63 13	26 6	28 6	16 4	5 2	4 2	7 2	1 1	1 1
9	WA3DRC	356	58	59218	44 3	95 14	46 7	57 10	27 5	32 5	20 5	16 4	9 2	8 2		2 1
10	W3SZ	238	59	45784	43 8	45 8	31 7	29 7	17 5	21 5	17 5	14 4	10 4	9 4	2 2	
11	N3FTI	436	75	40950	211 29	115 19	50 13	60 14								
12	K3GNC	355	62	38254	82 10	113 17	52 13	67 13	9 2	27 5	5 2					
13	KC2TN	332	64	35904	83 12	106 19	48 12	52 9	20 6	23 6						
14	W0RSJ	331	60	35700	115 13	78 11	40 10	53 10	19 6	17 5	6 4	3 1				
15	WA3QPX	230	82	33128	53 10	93 40	26 9	27 9	11 5	13 5	6 3	1 1				
16	WA2OMY	273	45	28620	48 5	84 13	41 9	37 3	22 3	17 3	10 3	9 3	5 3			
17	W2SJ	220	61	27816	36 9	68 14	35 10	41 12	16 5	14 5	8 4	2 2				
18	N3YMS	215	64	24832	46 11	62 14	36 12	38 12	14 7	19 8						
19	KA3FQS	289	44	21868	69 9	84 12	43 8	57 9	15 2	21 4						
20	K3MD	213	71	21513	73 18	76 20	23 11	28 14		13 8						
21	WA2FGK	234	71	21016		172 49		62 22								
22	K1JT	157	84	13188	25 5	132 79										
23	W3GAD	239	27	12258	52 5	60 6	41 5	46 5	19 3	19 2						2 1
24	K3IUV/R	105	29	10672	6 2	32 5	15 2	10 2	7 2	7 2	6 2	6 2	3 2	5 2	1 1	7 3
25	W3ICC/R	225	33	10428	64 7	70 9	42 6	49 6								
26	W2BVH	206	36	9792	55 8	85 17	30 5	36 6								
27	W3KM	203	33	8613	63 9	82 12	35 7	23 5								
28	W2TAG	172	33	7722	59 10	51 11	26 5	36 7								
29	KB1JEY	203	25	7300	68 7	60 7	31 5	37 4	7 2							
30	KB3MTW	212	20	6780	62 6	61 6	31 2	39 2	12 2	7 2						
31	K0BAK/R	140	36	6480	48 8	52 10	11 4	29 7								
32	AA3GN	134	25	6250	20 3	70 10	17 3	9 2	9 3		5 2	4 2				
33	KA3WXV	169	24	5400	56 6	57 8	19 3	37 7								
34	K3JJZ	128	24	5112	37 5	48 5	7 3	23 3	5 2	4 2	2 2	1 1				1 1
35	W3HMS	82	29	4669	15 4	22 5	13 5	15 5	7 4	10 6						

Mt. Airy VHF Radio Club, Inc. `The Pack Rats` January 2015 VHF Sweepstakes Contest (cont'd)

Total Logs: 68

Club Claimed Score: 2,065,073

Nr	Call	QSO's	Total-Grids	Score	6M	2M	222	432	902/3	1.3 GHz	2.4 GHz	3.4 GHz	5.7 GHz	10 GHz	24 GHz	Laser
36	AA3JH	161	18	4032	61 7	37 5	29 3	34 3								
37	K2TXB	167	22	3674		167 22										
38	KB3XG	106	26	3458	32 8	47 11		27 7								
39	K2WB	125	20	3220	38 5	51 10		36 5								
40	WA3RLT	137	19	3116	58 5	52 9		27 5								
41	N2DEQ	129	20	3080	42 5	62 10	5 2	20 3								
42	K1DS	110	15	2520	27 3	35 5	17 2	26 4		5 1						
43	NE3I	82	21	2247	24 5	33 8	12 4	13 4								
44	K3VEQ	106	17	2227	35 5	46 6	12 3	13 3								
45	N1XKT	119	13	2171	37 4	34 4	23 2	25 3								
46	WA3ELQ	102	13	1651	41 6	36 3	17 2	8 2								
47	K3EBZ	83	14	1638	28 4	25 6	12 1	16 2		2 1						
48	K3DMA	53	10	1540	5 1	11 2	14 1	7 1	4 1	4 1				1 1	1 1	6 1
49	WA3NFV	109	11	1507	42 4	39 4	11 1	17 2								
50	W2MC	77	13	1417	17 2	28 5	14 3	18 3								
51	K3EGE	21	14	784		6 4	6 4	5 4	1 1							3 1
52	K3IUU	70	8	744	16 2	31 3	11 1	12 2								
53	K3BPP	31	18	576	18 8	12 9	1 1									
54	KB2AYU	18	13	481		5 4	6 4	6 4								1 1
55	WB2VLA	32	13	481	16 5	11 5	3 2	2 1								
56	K3BFS	46	8	448		36 5		10 3								
57	W3GXB	34	10	400	7 1	21 8	6 1									
58	WA2DTW	36	8	376	10 2	15 2	5 2	6 2								
59	W1SMS	32	10	320	11 3	21 7										
60	W3CMP	22	11	242	8 4	14 7										
61	W3FEY	17	7	182	8 3		9 4									
62	WB2ONA	19	6	144	5 2	9 2	3 1	2 1								
63	N3EXA	4	4	60		1 1	1 1		1 1							1 1
64	WA3WUL	2	1	16												2 1
65	K3MF	1	1	2				1 1								

Multi-OPS

Call	QSO's	Total Grids	Score	6M	2M	222	432	902/3	1.3 GHz	2.4 GHz	3.4 GHz	5.7 GHz	10 GHz	24 GHz	Laser
N3NGE	1239	201	507726	341 42	359 46	148 32	199 32	49 12	52 11	33 10	21 5	18 5	14 5		5 1
Ops: N3NGE K9PW K1WHS K3EGE WA3WUL N3EXA KB2AYU															
WA3EHD	338	54	41256	57 8	105 14	50 8	59 10	22 4	16 3	13 3	11 2		2 1		3 1
Ops: WA3EHD K3DMA															
WB3IGR	172	53	14681	45 14	52 12	31 10	31 11	12 5							1 1
Ops: WB3IGR WB3LTH															

Mt Airy VHF Radio Club Current + Previous 6 Years Scores by Station

Call	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
N3NGE	507726	541680	591832	541722	541944	735885	575424
WB2RVX	230356	203592	199056	65892	119103	153360	109863
K3TUF	132582	229330	272384	340091	229425	195295	236082
WA3NUF	123156	118085	132496	147854	156604	142040	101970
N3RG	108070	78800	91000	106236	46588	8	24486
K3IPM	88788	82160	87480	111760	66276	77028	46004
K1DS/R	87497		100548	136242	112320	157612	139656
NN3Q/R	71565	76096	110228	42552	79900	51675	
WA3GFZ	67375	75768	68526	26049	16215	25434	468
WA3DRC	59218	68839	94400	73100	81004	83585	69207
W3SZ	45784	33480	185725	83066		148821	55722
WA3EHD	41256	34680	45980	52399	33372	8234	35828
N3FTI	40950	22971	1862	931	3660	1026	3920
K3GNC	38254	26826	34048				
KC2TN	35904	37855	15720	28832	5564		
W0RSJ	35700	28408	50544	43512	46000	44979	48380
WA3QPX	33128	54366	27840	247	31376	35642	31120
WA2OMY	28620	44347	53392	57532	15171	20430	
W2SJ	27816	17520	15470	24	88764	125370	54126
N3YMS	24832	44148	0	69286	33441		
KA3FQS	21868	3859	5140	5136	276	20007	10179
K3MD	21513	12744	15433	11948			
WA2FGK	21016	184426	116242				
WB3IGR	14681	22168	28560	26670	28535	27720	6720
K1JT	13188	16714	25728	65940	111899	130509	105780
W3GAD	12258	30576	26688	19823	18040	45880	10626
K3IUV/R	10672	10425	10920	7935	8257	9775	3615
W3ICC/R	10428			7521			
W2BVH	9792	18432	14288	16014	13489	20460	8322
W3KM	8613	11016	14523	4104	17388	31744	17591
W2TAG	7722	869		4788	1344		
KB1JEY	7300	6573	6279	9126	6510	4656	4318
KB3MTW	6780	4466	1960	795	1040	1920	
K0BAK/R	6480						
AA3GN	6250						

Mt Airy VHF Radio Club Current + Previous 6 Years Scores by Station (cont'd)

CALL	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
KA3WXV	5400	3043	3819	7830		4746	1230
K3JJZ	5112	11296	14245	22736	16212	15785	9579
W3HMS	4669	6464	6688	10868			
AA3JH	4032	7020	4437	10640	2325		
K2TXB	3674	1106		495	1680	9024	
KB3XG	3458	900	4075			2560	
K2WB	3220			1872			
WA3RLT	3116	1110	8704	14872	8576	14352	9930
N2DEQ	3080	3500		5452	5070	3888	3087
K1DS	2520		600	423	1176	133	486
NE3I	2247	27		5510	8844	4176	7582
K3VEQ	2227	3591	3630	6120	2736	2489	1708
N1XKT	2171			50		10040	1750
WA3ELQ	1651	2496		4536	3363		2715
K3EBZ	1638					3248	
K3DMA	1540					1450	
WA3NFV	1507						
W2MC	1417	1932		6984			
K3EGE	784		328		84	913	408
K3IUV	744	3553	3553	5170	3247	2716	7980
K3BPP	576	756		1672	286	450	
KB2AYU	481	6804	90	315	15	45	90
WB2VLA	481	910	638	2262	705	1848	2040
K3BFS	448	222	140	913	880	432	
W3GXB	400	1649	828	744	1275	1854	912
WA2DTW	376	864	441	3509	1710		2128
W1SMS	320			84		2	
W3CMP	242	240					
W3FEY	182	217	2352	1241	1344	3828	2240
WB2ONA	144			9165	819	3444	1534
N3EXA	60	198	115	325			
WA3WUL	16	24	48	16	24	8	
K3MF	2			3038		16131	

January Contest Comments

From Rick K1DS/R:

Considering the weather, I did not get up to FN30 and I ended Sunday eve at about 7PM so that I could make it home by 8 before the evening snow. Got the rover disassembled and back into storage. TNX for all your QSOs. Sorry that we sort of had a block of propagation N & S.

From Rick K1DS (Home):

I have a completely different home station and was glad to give out QSO points for so many in just a few short hours that I was not on the road in the rover.

From Herb K2LNS (WA2FGK):

I operated for about 8 hours over the weekend. One thing I must admit, I was saddened I could not help stations on the microwave bands, giving them FN21. But life rolls on. My only bands were 144 and 432 mhz. Conditions seemed fairly good with many contacts to the west. EN72 was the furthest but I was also able to work EN83 and EM79.

With my EME array on 432 looking into trees my furthest contact was N1JEZ in FN44. I worked 234 stations total, 52 grids on 2 meters and only 19 on 432. I did miss quite a few grids on 432 because I was not asking stations to QSY. Total points were 21,300. At the end of the contest I checked out my E mail and saw I won a bid for a Ten Tec amp, #425. Hard to believe I was the only person who bid on a factory rebuilt amp using a pair of 3CX800's. Looking forward to the big array this spring on 40 through 10 meters

From Joe K1JT:

Just for fun, my first 72 QSOs and 66 multipliers were worked by EME only. Then I went to SSB for a couple of hours to work all the 'Rats I could find. First QSO with FN20 was contact #76 (and grid # 70) in the log. Not a good way to make a score, in this contest, but it was fun nevertheless.

Mt. Airy VHF Radio Club January VHF SS Previous Aggregate Claimed Scores

Year	Logs Submitted	Score
2015	68	2,065,073
2014	68	2,277,747
2013	65	2,659,242
2012	77	2,491,702
2011	67	2,156,784
2010	70	2,699,809
2009	58	1,891,225
2008	63	2,232,731
2007	63	2,055,259
2006	57	2,724,560
2005	53	1,459,052
2004	56	2,856,837
2003	61	3,127,678
2002	49	2,113,624

January Contest Comments

From Bill K3EGE:

Hope all of you who operated had fun in the contest Had the usual blast at N3NGE's QTH. I used the Packrats To Look For list at the end of the contest and found we had contacted 61 Rats in the contest Nice!!! Another great showing by the Packrats. Well done!!!!

From John K3MD:

Full effort. Was in shack after 7PM Sun., but too wiped out to mop up.

January Contest Comments

From George W3FEY:

The CATEGORY-ASSISTED tip was the clue to success. Almost the lowest score I ever had. 223.500 and 223.580 produced more Qs and more grids than six meters. Too many broken antennas! I heard more stations on 223.500 than I worked because of the traffic jam and stations zipping off to work other bands. K8GP/R must have been running a lot of power on 223.500 as I heard him very well and called many times to no avail. I was pleased that 223.500 took on a new life in this contest.

From John W3HMS:

Worst ever for me in several years yet the best equipment ever. Had but 82 QSOs and 4669 points including two EME QSOs for the rare grids. Indeed, I often ran two CQs at a time: CW on 6m es SSB on 2m using K3 DVR. Called lots of CQs in SSB and CW. It was like antennas fell down! I worked few Packrats even though antennas were pointed to PACKRAT territory most of the time!! CW participation was super low. I did work 10 QSOs on 1296 though, and 902/3 worked well. And the first time I submitted, I got robot log rejection. No wonder contest participation appears down.

From Walt K3BPP

Thanks to all of the stations that I was able to work during the contest. I have come to realize that I need more soup to get peoples attention to turn their antennas to FM18 vo . I managed to make a 222 contact, first on that band in about 40 years.

From Bob W2SJ:

I had an absolute blast working the contest from FM28 this year. Thanks to Ray, N3RG for the use of his RV and modification of his H-Frame for the Micro antennas. **The only visit from Murphy** to the shack was W0RSJ on 4 bands. I was lucky to have all my antennas and equipment function flawlessly for the entire contest. Only a handful of operator mistakes made a few of you wonder, "What's wrong with Bob"! I can now appreciate the rover stations that go to locations that are just a few feet above sea level and in the direction of due south for many creating havoc with those of you with south centered rotors. Last year from

home with my compromised antennas I did about 15K. This year I was able to improve my overall score for the club as well as providing the elusive FM28 grid square on 8 bands. My apologies for anyone I could not hear and thanks to everyone who made the effort to work the station.

From Joe KC2TN:

Favorite contest of the year! Not too many problems that affected my operation this year! I did lose my 902 and 1296 amps before the contest started but that did not affect me too much. My 1296 came back in the mail on Monday! LOL Mainly computer issues with occasional crashes - Not sure of the causes yet??? Persistence problems with SDR with RF levels jumping to full power causing my 2m amp to self protect! Lost LAN connection several times and always at the most inopportune time!



Joe with his Flex Radio Headset

From Ray N3RG:

First time on ten bands! Love the micros. Daytime six and two meters, too much QRN from local source. Better than last year's score. Better plan, better score. Bottom line... HAD FUN

From Paul WA3GFZ:

Band conditions were better than last year, but still not great. It made the contest more fun for me and everyone else. It was great working NG4C near the end of the contest for a few more quick grids.

January Contest Comments

From Michelle KB3MTW:

Last year I had 209 contacts 3 less than this year, with a claimed score of 4466. This year with only 3 contacts more my claimed score was 6780. I was on 6 bands this year and only 5 last. There's the difference!

Right now the 6 bands are temporary, but over the next year will be acquiring equipment to make 6 bands permanent. I hope with practice on the Monday night nets and the contests I work on getting heard and being heard.

From Mike WB2RVX:

After waking up Saturday morning and seeing frozen precip on the antennas, I feared a repeat of the great ice contest a couple of years ago. This was compounded by the pics of ice encased antennas people were sending me via email. This year was going to be different. By noon, the temp climbed to 36 and defrost began. I fired up the radios and, to my surprise, all the SWR's were normal. The contest went well with no equipment failures this year which was much better than having to take the tower down at the start of the contest last year. No Es were observed at this QTH and condx were generally fair to poor. Hats off to all of the rovers that ventured out to provide the many grids. They all deserve a medal for their efforts. Catch all during the next test.

From Jerome K3GNC:

I enjoyed the 2015 edition of the January VHF sweepstakes. I think activity was down but intensity was up, meaning the people who were on stayed active for most of the contest. Thanks to borrowed 903 and 2304 gear I was QRV on seven bands. Unfortunately I had no time to test the equipment so each attempted contact was OJT. My goals, like most Packrats, was to help boost the club's score and beat last year's personal effort. I am limited by not being able to access southwest through northwest contacts, due to blocking buildings, but with the extra bands I was able to surpass last year's score. Totals: 355 QSOs and 62 grids, for a score of - 38,254.

From Griff NE3I:

I was on for about 8 hours. I built a 5 element wire yagi for 432 on a 3 foot piece of 1x1 wood based upon a link Lenny W2BVH provided for "Controlled Impedance Cheap Antennas" by WA5VJB. I had a 2 element homebrew Hamstick yagi on 6, 4 and 5 elements on 2 and 222 and the homebrew 5 element on 432. All were fixed position and pushed up on a telescoping fiberglass pole attached to the back of my deck. With a **single feed** from the shack, I used **2 duplexers** to split out to the separate yagis. Heights were probably only about 25-28 feet. Periodically, I would armstrong the mast to point the antennas in desired directions. It all came down and apart in about 30 minutes. Not the best system for the home QTH but, it gave me a prototype configuration for possible future rover operations. The wire yagi matched well and was easy to build. Thanks to Lenny for the link and to all for the QSOs. Sorry to have missed working more of you.

From Steve N3FTI:

First contest with the Flex-5000A. Nice to have the very selective receiver and band scope.

6M 1.5Kw Alpha 8406 5 Element Yagi
2M 170W RF Concepts 9 Element Yagi
220 120W RF Concepts 13 Element Yagi
432 160W TE Systems 22 Element Yagi
All on a 40' tower. Each year the score keeps getting higher! Hope to have 903, 1296 & 10GHz for next year.

From Lenny W2BVH:

I was hobbled quite a bit by the version of the flu you get when you've had a flu shot. Not fun! Propagation into New England was not what I've seen in past contests and I was disappointed not to have heard very many of the MA/NH/VT stations that are a slam dunk in most years. My just-in-time built 902 setup proved to be not ready for prime time and on top of that I ended up transmitting into the receive IF amplifier. NO Q's on 902. UGH. I still managed to log 207 Q's and ~9700 pts. Hope to do better next year with one or more new bands.

...Continued on p. 11

The Tournament of Procrastination

By Ken K3WB

There is nothing like the last minute to get something done. In order for the K2WB station to get on all 4 lower bands I needed to make one more 12ft jumper. I already did the antenna work in the fall of 2012 on the tower. But my work took me out of town and I was unable to finish off the last few things.

How long does it take to make a coax jumper? In real time maybe 15-20 minutes if you took your time. So naturally it did not make the list of important items to do. Long story made short, in my typical chaotic life, I got called away. And as my luck would have it the contest coincided with mother's 80th birthday. So between Family and Work I never got the cable made in time for the contest.

So again, how long does it take to make a coax jumper? If you have the materials it is not a problem. One of my failed base assumptions is that I have the parts. In fact I do I have the parts and they were not at my QTH. Funny how fast parts become made out of Unobtainium.

Finally, the list of priorities allowed me to participate in the contest. This is where I noticed that I did not make the cable to connect the 220 MHz Antenna to the rig. Rather than spending my time being frustrated, I decided to just go on the lower 3. I was a victim of my own procrastination but it did not stop.

The good news is that I have almost 305 days to get the cable made. There is always next year!

This is why besides the crying towel, the club should offer a certificate for the most successful procrastination outcome.

W2SJ January Contest Report– FM28MW

-Or-

*“On The Way To Cape May...I Bent My
Loopers Up”*

Due to some unexpected complications, I was not able to install my new tower this year so my contest plans looked bleak. Enter my good friend Ray, N3RG who said, “Not to worry, you can use my RV, take it to Cape May Point, and use your equipment on 50-3456 MHz”. So, **3 weeks before the contest** I disassembled and packed up my **entire station** to set up in Ray's RV. After that we installed my antennas and tested them on the Monday night nets.



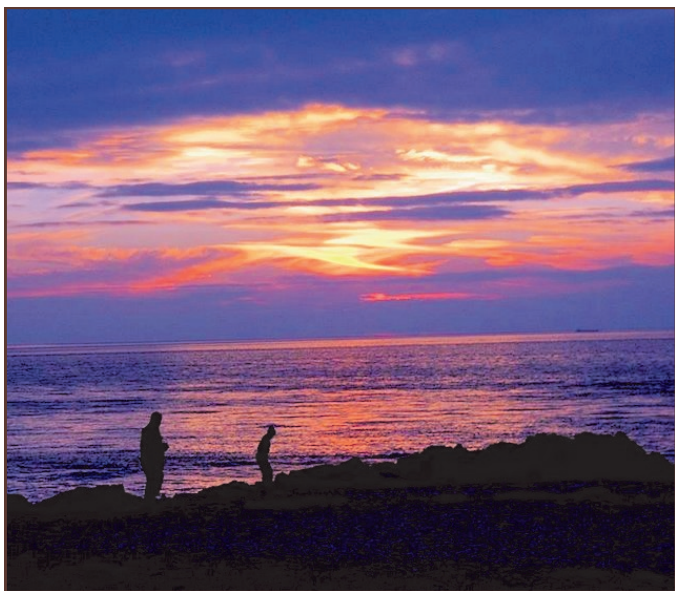
...W2SJ cont'd

Late Friday afternoon before the contest, we drove the RV to Sunset Beach, Cape May Point, NJ and set it up for the weekend. Ray went home and we ran the bands and also worked K1RZ



through 2304. So, how did it all work out during the contest? 220 Q's and 61 grids for a score of 27,816 points! 35 Pack Rats and many other stations were able to put the elusive FM28 into their logs on as many bands as possible. I hope it was as much fun for everyone as it was for me.

Sunday night after the contest, I packed up the station equipment and Ray arrived Monday at 7



AM to help lower the antennas to drive home. Almost home we stopped to fill up the RV with gas. Glancing up at the antennas we noticed the first **10 or 12 loops on the 2.3 & 3.4 loops were folded back to the boom.** One picture I took with a telephoto lens during the contest told the story: Yes, a laughing Murphy was hanging from a tree limb on the way into the site for set up after dark. The damaged 2.3 yagi allowed 8 Q's in 4 grids but the 3.4 only allowed 2 Q's in 2 grids. Other lessons learned about portable operation: Have lots of power on 2 meters to attract attention and publish a frequency to be on at the top of each hour to make the station easier to find.

73, Bob W2SJ

... contest Comments cont'd

From Phil K3TUF:

Discovered the affects of the snow on the lower frequency antennas was going to keep me off 6 and 2 for the first hour. So I did search and pounce with low power until the reflected power came to a reasonable level. The next several hours were reasonable, but still at a lower rate than in the past.

This year with the advent of a one time Unlimited category I decided to try it. Didn't get much from the assist, perhaps one or two contacts. There just aren't that many spots generated for this purpose. Hopefully with all future contests going that way we can all start hooking into the dx cluster for spotting during contests like on HF.

We had a good number of Rover's in the area and I had some 11 band runs with them. But for me the contest wasn't going to go very far as I had contracted a cold and it seemed to degenerate when the contest began. My voice did somewhat hold out, but I had to take time off for rest periods. I ended up with only 16 hours of contest time; and a lot of that was sporadic. Collapsed into bed at 7PM for an early end, missing the normal flurry of activity that Sunday evening always provides. Equipment wise I only had one malfunction on 3456 where the amp apparently stopped working; fortunately several stations were able to hear the bleed through rf and I made more contacts on that band.

Conditions were considerably down likely due to the weather. For example, we normally do SSB during regular 432 Wednesday evening nets but could barely work EM95 on CW; not a chance on the next higher bands which are normal for the January VHF contest.

See everyone for the Spring sprints and from W3CCX in June.

My First Packrat Rove

By Pete KOBAK

My third VHF rove (and first as a Packrat) featured a new band (222 MHz), completing the 4 bands in the Limited Rover category. Changing radios and headphones to go to 222 was awkward, but it was nice to have another 2-point band. The biggest changes from the summer were: traveling with 3 10' beams and a 6m Moxon up all the time, and using a much beefier rotor on the bottom of the mast rather than a consumer rotor at the top.

Weather was a big factor for the rove, but not fatal. I had to clear the driveway first, then I had to load the minivan and **install antennas in the cold drizzle**. Having 4 fairly large antennas up while driving was a little scary, especially given my mechanical design and construction skills. But they stayed up the whole time, avoiding the horrible accident my natural pessimism imagined. The only antenna incident was on Sunday. I had to fix the Moxon on the top of the mast when it apparently snagged a branch.

After a bit of operating close to home, I took the back way to the fire tower at Reading to avoid tight steep hills. A little after sunset, super rover K8GP/R showed up. I took a brief tour of their impressive van, then headed off to Gap PA to get contacts from FN10, FM19, FM29. I dealt with

lots of nighttime icy patches on the roads on the way to Gap, especially in the flat farm areas. I had lots of problems with USB cables pulling loose. This temporarily killed 222 (USB to Flex1500) and also stopped frequency changes to N1MM (USB to IC7100). The next day, I had no such problems. I'm not sure what changed to fix things

On Sunday, I drove 55mph on the Jersey Turnpike for the first time, on the way to the Palisades overlooking the Hudson river, hoping for New England contacts. The **scariest drive** was from a park overlook in FN30 to an old Nike missile site in FN31 at the highest point in the Palisades. The last few miles was a very narrow residential road cut into a steep hill with lots of low branches, low power lines, and nowhere to fix something without blocking traffic (see picture). I doubt I would do that drive again.

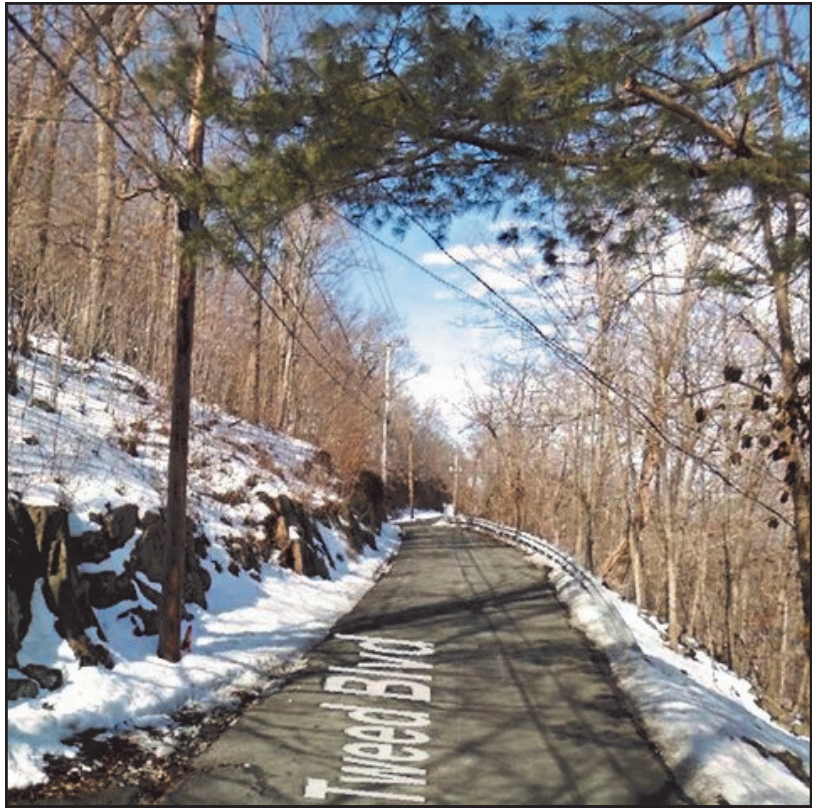
On the way west I headed toward Hazelton, and made an unplanned stop at a shopping center on a hill, just after crossing into FN21. The road and stop light design caused heavy traffic, making this a unfruitful stop. I'm still, glad I did it since I snagged a couple stations from FN21 before the



impending snowstorm forced me to abandon Hazleton and head home early. Unfortunately, this meant no activation of FN11 or operating from a 1900' FN20 location with good visibility to the north and west.

I made a few contacts on the NE Extension on the way home, traveling with the beams pointed toward Philly. Probably not smart to make contacts mobile, but I was frustrated at coming home early.

Thanks to N3NGE for lots of contacts, especially my only ones from FN10 Saturday night. The FN31 site only had 180 degrees of visibility to the east, with about 100' of hill to the west, yet still N3NGE came through from the west. I was somewhat disappointed in not making more New England contacts; thought my FN30 and FN31 sites overlooking the Hudson would be great for hearing them. I missed hearing K3TUF, and in the previous contests I got a lot more contacts from K2LIM. **All in all very good first Packrat rove!**



KIDS/R & KIDS CONTEST OP

Jani and I flew up from our winter vacation in Florida for the VHF SS and family visits. With a break in the weather on Thursday, I set up the antennas on the rover van and used a roll of Scotch 33 to seal the connectors as we were facing a winter storm. The beacons were checked through 1296 from the driveway, in hopes that everything else on the microwaves was working. Saturday found 2-3" snow on the van, but the antennas were dripping as the temperature rose. I decided to modify my travel plans. Rather than head to Morgantown, I would stay closer to home in Newtown Square FM29hx and Montgomeryville, FN20jf. At the Community Center parking lot in Newtown Square, I checked the 3G and 10G beacons, and they sounded fine. Once the action started, it ran non-stop for the first 2 hours, mainly on 6 & 2. Then as things slowed a bit, we did some runs through 3G, and one through 10G with WB2RVX. My 5G frequency calibration was off, so we missed that band.

Traveled back home for dinner with the XYL and a change of shoes and socks, as the slush in the parking lot soaked my feet. By 7:15PM, I was in position at the bank parking lot in Montgomeryville, enjoying a nice run during activity hour, when there was something flashing through the windshield of my van. Was it another rover coming to give me a LASER Q? No, it was the township police--coming to check on me, as a passing motorist called them to check me out. The young officer looked over my set-up, and vaguely remembered that we encountered each other on a different occasion while I was contesting. Then his supervisor pulled up also--I guess it was a slow night for them. I gave them my tri-fold informational handout--and naturally, they had to run my driver's license and license plate through their computers. Nothing is safe and sacred after 9/11. When I got back into the van, the 2m run was gone. Moving up a band now to try the next activity hour. Some of us still try to honor activity hour,

searching out those in all directions who might be available. For rovers, this is a bit unusual, because we generally stay in a grid for an hour or so---so this was a treat to score with all the available Packrats, and others who knew the activity hour sequence.

By 11PM, things were quiet, and I headed home to get some K1DS home station time and also some Z's. I used my TS2000x and an old Midland 222FM rig. Plenty of locals were available between 11 and midnight and I put 1000+ points in the home station log. In the morning I added a few more Q's from home and then headed out in the rover to make a few LASER Q's. Ran the bands including 10GHz and LASER with WA3EHD, and then had several FM Q's with K3DMA. Next I headed out on the Turnpike to Morgantown to the fertile corner of FN20, FN10, FM19 and FM29. The roads were clear and dry and I was at the N3NGE superstation at 10:30 and ran the bands there, and caught several additional QSOs, even a bunch on LASER. Had a short chat with Linda, Len's XYL and with a fresh cup of coffee, I set out for the rest of the day. The Church parking lots were full on this Sunday AM, so I found a convenient spot nearby and worked K3TUF through 24G. Put a few other contacts in the log and then moved to FN10, with for runs through 10G with N3NGE and through 24G with W3SZ and K3TUF. **Now the points were really starting to build. NN3Q/R was also in the area**, and we had a few contacts with Al & Russ.

With the afternoon ticking away, I made the decision to continue on to FM19 and 29, rather than drive all the way up to FN30 in Seabright, NJ, as the forecast was for the blizzard to start by 8PM Sunday. Retrospectively, I made the right choice.

Zig-zagging on 897 between Shady Maple and Gap, PA is a fun drive. The bucolic countryside is amazing, even in winter. Lots of horse-drawn carriages, farmhouses and barns, complete with the scent of manure.

Grabbed a burger lunch at Mickey D's and then positioned myself in FM19xx for some more runs with those big local stations.

I looked out after 30 minutes and saw a young lady pull in next to me to take pictures. Pictures of my rover? No! Pictures of the great landscape. She was a local from Paradise. For those who have not been to the Lancaster region, that's the name of one of the towns nearby--also Blue Ball, Bird-in-hand and other cutesy monikers. Just as I was about to head to the next stop, NN3Q/R pulled up so that we could complete our run with some LASER Q's. Russ and Al are great rovers and have a great set-up. Of course, we have matching Ford vans, and that makes for an interesting photo.

Last stop, while it's still daylight is just up the road in FM29ax to complete through 24G + LASER with WA3GFZ. I made it home by 8PM, disassembled the antennas stored the van and had a bite of dinner and then did another hour on the home station. I broke the 2000 point mark by 10:30 and added a few more.

Again, I feel grateful for all the excellent QSOs and patience of the stations who stood by to work me while I was making some runs with others. My favorite motto, which applies to this rove is, "No runs, not hits, no errors." The gear seemed to work, the drive was reasonable, and the results were good. **No raccoons or tree creatures were harmed during the making of this rove.** We're done and relaxing and catching up on articles for Cheesebits and QST. 73, Rick, K1DS



41st ANNUAL EASTERN VHF/UHF/MICROWAVE CONFERENCE

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Banquet \$28. Must order banquet before April 10.

Send presentation proposals to Paul
W1GHZ@arrl.net

Talks and papers, both long and short, are
needed. Please tell us about what you have
been working on. Operating, contesting,
construction, homebrewing, microwaves,
whatever. Please let me know if you are
considering something. A commitment by the end
of February would be appreciated, with a
deadline of 18 March.

See <http://www.newsvhf.com/vhfconf.html>
for details

Mid Atlantic States VHF Conference

The Mid-Atlantic States VHF Conference will be
held on the weekend of October 2-3-4, 2015.

It's not too early to get your thoughts in order to
make a presentation for Saturday, October 3.

Papers are also welcomed for publication in the
conference proceedings disc.

Please contact rick1ds@hotmail.com with your
topic/presentation or paper title.

Rick, K1DS

AL K3EOD, RON W3OR, SK

Fellow members, it is with a sad heart that I tell
you that K3EOD is now SK. He will be severely
missed by many of friends around us.

—PhilK3TUF

Despite horrible icing conditions on Sunday
January 18th, the Pack Rats were well
represented by the "southern contingent" of Ray-
N3RG, Joe- KC2TN, Bruce- WA3WUL and
Adriane, Bob- W2SJ and Barb, and Elliot, K3JJZ.
Over an inch of heavy downpour at the time of his
service. The family was very appreciative of all
the club and individual efforts to help Al, our friend
enjoy his hobby for so many years. May he rest in
peace. It was graveside at the Alliance
Cemetery, Norma, NJ.

Some of you have asked where to send
expressions of sympathy, etc to Al's family:

The Allen Boblitt Family
c/o Mark Fox

1880 Princess Ln
Vineland, NJ 08361

—Bob, W2SJ

Sorry to hear of the loss of these long time
Packrats.

— Paul W2PED

Very sad to learn this about two Packrats.

Enjoyed operating at Al's station as well as his
hospitality and hot roast beef sandwiches. Al had
such a devoted and indomitable attitude about the
Packrats and participating in the contests. A sad
day.

—Griff ne3i

Despite the fact that Ron was in decline for
several years, he was a significant contributor in
the past, providing his "rare" grid to many
Packrats. He also has a superb collection of ham
call license plates from all 50 states, and likely
Canada, and he updated it with 2 letter call sign
plates over the years, including the K1DS one I
gave him from my car in RI.

—Rick K1DS

Note: Al's Obit at [http://m.legacy.com/obituaries/
TheDailyJournal/obituary.aspx?n=Allen-
Boblitt&pid=173864194&referrer=2614&preview=True](http://m.legacy.com/obituaries/TheDailyJournal/obituary.aspx?n=Allen-Boblitt&pid=173864194&referrer=2614&preview=True)

The Wayback Machine **In CHEESE BITS, 50** **Years Ago**

(Nibbles from February 1965. Vol. VII # 11)
de Bert, K3IUV (*author's comments in italics*)

- “Our Prez Sez”. Prez K3GAS, Doc, reports on a suggestion by W3LHF (*later W3ZD*), Dave. Dave noted the abundance of “bad signals” during the Jan contest, and suggested we form a “Quality Control” committee to “straighten out the offending rigs (*or operators!*)”. Blessed by the board, and with the aid of the club Technical Committee. “Don’t be surprised when the QC committee visits your shack. Your rigs will be gone over, and you’ll be pleased with the result”. (*Note to the current board. Time for this again?*).
- AREC (Amateur Radio Emergency Corps). On 2/3/65, their regular meeting had just started when a call alerted them to a 3-alarm fire at 21st and Berks St. They responded to the scene and joined with the Red Cross Disaster service in evacuating residents of 11 homes at that location. (*Our club member K3KTY, John was the EC of the AREC at that time.*).
- ARPSC (Amateur Radio Public Service Committee) members arranged for several families to talk via Amateur radio to their children who were hospitalized in the Shriners hospital. A portable station was set up at the hospital using the call **K3JJZ**. (*Yes, our own Packrat, El*). Other Packrat members transported families to nearby fixed stations, to enable the

communications. The Evening Bulletin stationed a reporter at the QTH of member K3WEU. The Daily News called to interview W3ELI, and radio WIP recorded parts of the conversations for subsequent broadcast on their station. (*A good deed by the Packrats and their friends.*).

- KUI, by W3HKZ, Ed. Ed provided details on the use of TV Horizontal deflection amplifier tubes for Amateur service. While not initially designed for this service, Sylvania labs recently tested and characterized a number of these tubes for use at 50 and 144 MHz. Design data was included in Ed’s article. (*A number of stations were shortly using these tubes on 6-meters, your author included.*).
- Scores for the Jan 1965 contest were included. K3IPM/3, Stan was in 3rd place, bested only by our own W2EIF and another unmentionable station. The contest chairman noted later that Stan was mountain-topping as usual (*Bowman’s Hill, Stan?*), and was forced off early by the heavy snow that started to fall! *Other still active club members seen in the 50 years ago list were W3GXB, K3IUV and K3JJZ.*). Club statistics: **94 logs submitted**; Total score 646,292 (*Remember this was when score was “contacts x sections worked”*); and total average hours worked per member was 16.7 (*sounds like someone was doing Ben’s job of crunching statistics!*).
- More KUI by Ed. The 17.5 mile long Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (*longest in the world until the 20.2 miles long Chinese Donghai Bridge was completed in 2005*) was just fitted

with a system to provide broadcast reception on car radios. Receiving antennas at each end fed amplifiers, which in turn fed the broadcast signals to antenna cables running the length of the Bridge Tunnel. These cables were originally installed to provide communication with emergency vehicles. *(Reminds us of the current retrofit on many of our tunnels, to permit continuous use of the ubiquitous cell phones.)*

- Ladies Night. An early announcement of the affair, set for April, at the Buck Hotel. Dinner choice, Roast Beef or Chicken. Cost \$6.00!!
- Technical Topics. A schematic, parts list, description and construction details were provided for a 6-meter transmitter using an 829-B as the Amplifier tube. Operated with a 600-vdc supply, the unit would put out about 90-watts. *(Many of us later used a 5894 output tube to build a similar unit for 2-meters.)*
- Swap Shoppe item. For sale, 1949 Chevrolet sedan, extra tires, \$65 or swap for Ham gear. The seller? K3JJZ, EI!
- New Products, by W3NSI, Lynn. 1) RCA announced the 8426, a new conduction cooled amplifier that needs only 1-second warm-up for full power operation. Capable of 110-watts output on 6-meters, and 85-watts at 450 MHz. 2) The Bodine Co. announced availability of a "Tran-Cal" unit for automobile use. This unit permitted the use of 30-watt fluorescents from a 12-vdc supply.
- Two-Meter Report. W3LHF, Dave reported many members worked K1APA/1 for a New Hampshire contact in the contest. He also noted a number of stations worked from W. Mass and E. Mass *(Still sometimes a bit hard to find*

today.). Dave also offered to help anyone having trouble putting their rig on CW, as "I have an easy scheme for keying almost any rig".

- Helen apologized for the shorter Cheese Bits this month, blaming it on a QTH move, and running out of "Stencils". *(Look it up if you don't know what they were.)*. Actually, the paper was still 9 pages long, and mailed for 4-cents!
- February meeting announcement. The speaker will be our own W3LHF, Dave. His topic: Modulation techniques.

As in previous editions, many "folksy" comments about members, their families, and activities were included in this edition of Cheese Bits. If interested, or for more detail on the above items, visit www.W3CCX.COM and read the full issue posted there by our Webmaster, Ron, W3RJW).

*thirty, de
K3IUUV*



Interesting Web Site

For those who are unfamiliar with it, check out <http://www.minikits.com.au/eme3400.htm> for all kinds of neat stuff (mostly VHF+). They're in VK-Land mate.

Reported By W3KM

TCF™@40

The College of New Jersey Hosts
The 40th Anniversary of
THE ORIGINAL PERSONAL COMPUTER SHOW

TCF™@40

Trenton Computer Festival™



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Technology Journalist
and Award-winning
Writer,
Wearable Tech Insider,
speaks on
“Approaching
Singularity”



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Saturday, March 21, 2015

9:00 am — 5:00 pm

Registration/Flea Market open at 9 am, Talks start at 10:15 am.

- Internet-of-Things
- Android Wear talk by author Barry Burd
- Project Tango • Android/iPhone Apps
- Raspberry Pi Tutorial and Projects



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Friday March 20, 2015, 8:30 am — 5:00pm**

Continuing as part of TCF's Saturday Talks.

For Conference Info and Fees See

<http://princetonacm.acm.org/tcfpro/>

For additional TCF'15 info,
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www.tcf-nj.org

DOOR PRIZES

IEEE Integrated STEM Education Conference (ISEC)**

Saturday, March 7 – 8:00 am — 5:00 pm

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Creating a Culture of Achievement

Info: <http://ewh.ieee.org/conf/stem/>

**The IT Pro (Friday) and ISEC Conferences require separate registrations.

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Events

For inclusion, please direct event notices to the editor.

Trenton Computer Festival - Conference & Swap March 21, 2015. 40th annual conference. Multiple tracks of presentations all day and an indoor flea market. See www.tcf-nj.org for more details.

Spring Sprints 2M—Contest Monday, April 13, 2015 from 7 - 11 PM local. See <https://sites.google.com/site/springvhfupsprints/home/2015-information> for details

Eastern VHF/UHF/MICROWAVE Conference April 17 - 19, 2015. Manchester CT. Sponsor N.E.W.S. Chairmen W1GHZ, WZ1V, K1MAP. Details to follow.

Spring Sprints 222 MHz—Contest Tuesday, April 21, 2015 from 7 - 11 PM local

Spring Sprints 432 MHz—Contest Wednesday April 29, 2015 from 7 - 11 PM local

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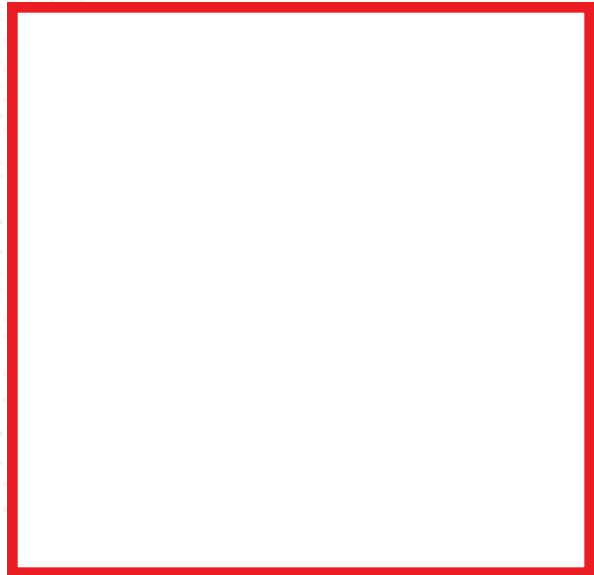
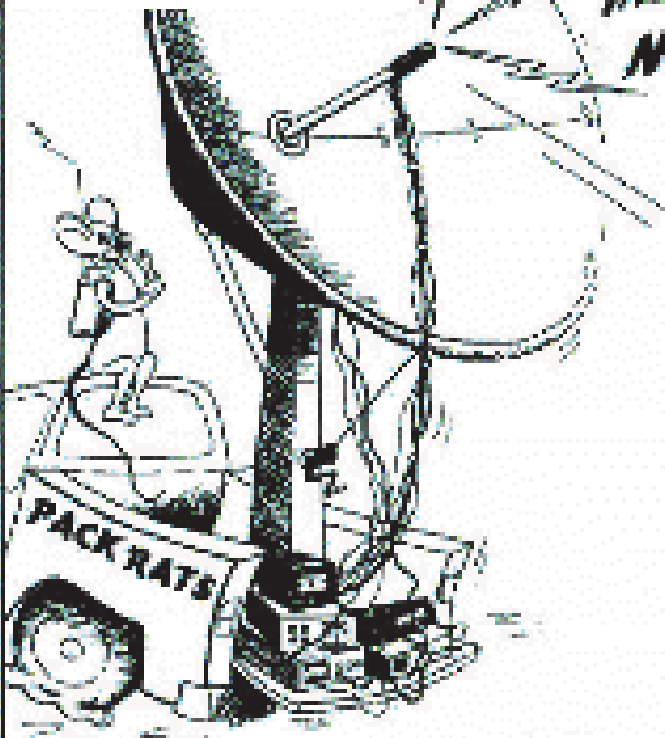
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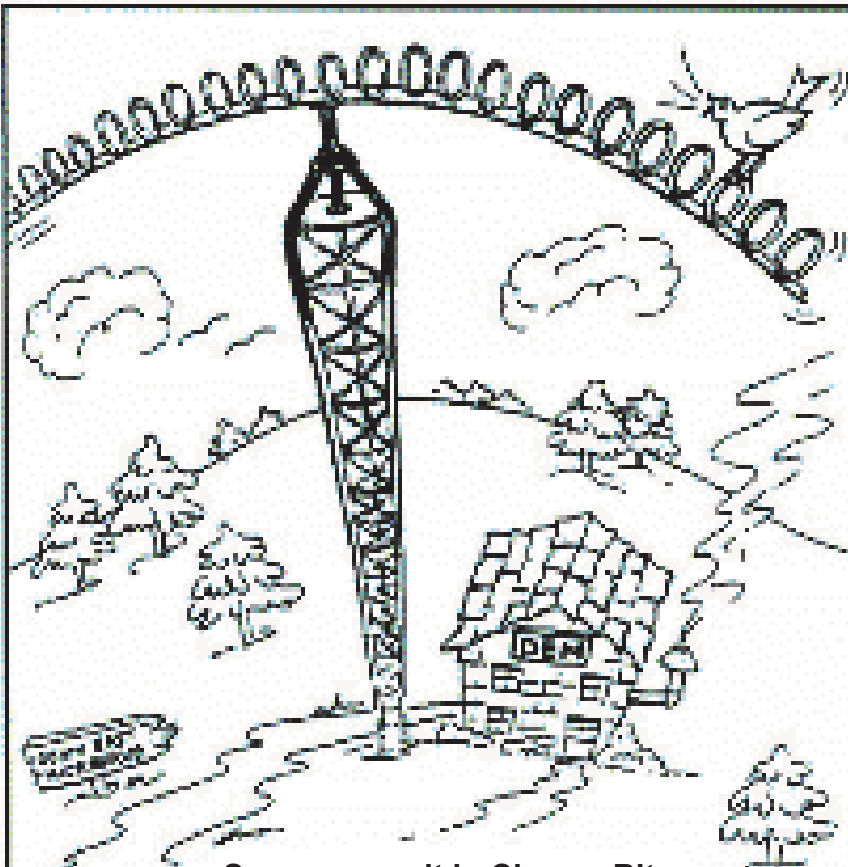
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