



CHEESE BITS

W3CCX
CLUB MEMORIAL CALL

ARRL
Affiliated
Club



Volume LVII

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Number 2

PREZ
SEZ:

Greetings from sunny FL, I have added to the Packrat contingent that spends some winter time in the Sunshine State and am finally getting around to setting up my radio gear. Should have a local

situated remote station going soon. And next year I plan to operate my home station remote from down here if all goes well. Flex delivered my Maestro (remote control console for the 6000 series radios) within an hour of my arrival down here. The UPS truck was driving by and stopped at my place; it was hard to believe the timing of the arrival. This year I'll communicate near EL88 and next year I'll be communicating on all bands from FN10 with operation from EL88.

Leading up to the contest we had great activity on the nets and microwave sessions. Everyone was checking out their station. I constructed a new tower top box for 2304 and in cold temperatures installed it in place near the 10g dish, but could not manage to get it working, even with an additional trip up the tower in freezing temperatures. That's now a project for spring. I will be back working on that box and also new boxes for 3456 as well, for use in June.

The contest was tons of fun this year, especially since I was not sick like last year. But many other features made this year fun, not the least of which was the addition of assistance to the contest mix.

Our rovers were out in force. I worked K1DS, NN3Q, W3ICC, K0BAK and W2MC rover from quite a number of grids. This contributes such a boost

to the overall club score and it's great fun to get eleven bands sometimes from a single grid encounter.

This year, once again, 24GHz was an outstanding performer. From all four grids that I worked K1DS on that band, the signals were stronger than 10GHz and in some cases even stronger than 5GHz. I wonder what additional contacts are possible when the dew point is so low. We need more stations on to keep this band (24GHz) active.

What effect did assistance have on your score this year? My perception is that there was a greater amount of activity, which will be borne out by the data as all of the scores are evaluated, but I am confident that assistance played a part in what might be a resurgence of activity in the January VHF contest. I know that I still haven't come up to the scores that I was able to produce over ten years ago with a much less capable station; all due to activity.

With the telnet session providing contacts in the "Available Window" in N1MM I could easily see who was on and from where (grid of origin) the contact was spotted; extremely valuable information. When times were slow it was good to get on the chat page and see who was active there to make more long range contacts. This year also it was acceptable to find contacts on meteor scatter and EME chat pages. I added several new grids by doing this.

Was there any repeater traffic that generated contacts? I didn't use repeaters and am interested to hear if anyone did use them. Likely my best use of assistance was the self spotting permission. Several times I found a busy CQ channel by having myself

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PACKRAT BEACONS - W3CCX/B

FM29jw Philadelphia, PA
50.080 ~~144.284~~ 222.062 432.290 903.072 1296.264 ~~2304.043~~
3456.200 ~~5760.195~~ 10,368.034 MHz (as of 1/16)

MONDAY / TUESDAY NIGHT NETS

VHF/UHF Monday:

<u>TIME</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>NET CONTROL</u>
7:30 PM	50.145 MHz	N3RG FM29ki Ray
8:00 PM	144.150 MHz	K3GNC FN20ja Jerome
8:30 PM	222.125 MHz	KB1JEY FN20je Michael
8:30 PM	224.58R MHz	W3GXB FN20jm Bob
9:00 PM	432.110 MHz	WB2RVX FM29mt Mike

Microwave Tuesday:

7:30 Coordinate QSO's on 144.260 for all Microwave bands you'd like to work. Also setup Q's at w4dex.com/uhfqso

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

spotted. To do this, of course, you must be calling cq (highly recommended) and commit to a time when you will not be running the bands and not available to those responding to the self spot.

All in all I thought it was a great contest and most importantly, I had fun. I hope everyone had fun.

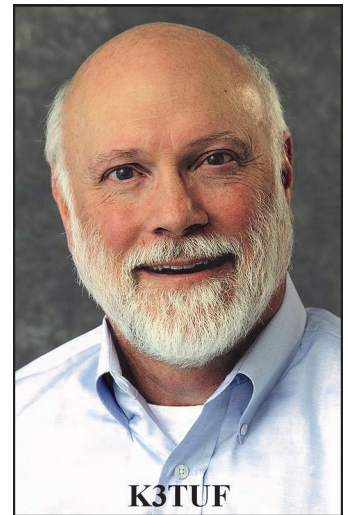
Unfortunately I will not be able to make the next meeting but it's everyone's opportunity to tell the story of their adventures.

The March meeting is the home brew night, and time to bring your latest project to show off. Then the big event of the year and perhaps the decade; the VHF Super Conference. This is a must attend event, there will not be another conference in the area at all this year and this event is close enough for a short drive, and larger than any other conference in a long time.

The registration site is up and running and shows who has registered. Please get your registration in early and also register with the hotel.

I wish I could say, "lets work on lots of bands" but I know that's not possible now. So until next time, work as many as possible on lots of bands.

Phil, K3TUF



CONTEST COMMENTS

From WA2FGK

Thanks to everyone who turned their antennas up this way over the weekend. I was running low power in this contest, and used CW for 2/3 of my QSO's. Conditions were totally flat, but I wound up having a decent score due to my large arrays on 2 and 432. My six meter antenna stinks. The 432 array is very low and aimed through trees, but with no leaves, it worked pretty good. I did miss quite a few club members, who I heard, but seemed to be more interested in working stronger stations locally. My three band low power score is 42,672. I will send a Cabrillo to the club this week. Again thanks to everyone. Herb at WA2FGK

From W3KM

Ah, yes - CW.

I use a lot of CW. With low power and small antennas that is the only way to work the further out grids. Plus on CW with headphones, I don't bother family members. My 2M amplifier quit on Sunday, but was still able to make 20K points. I recently replaced the rotor, so my score is better than the 4-8K points in the past several years when the rotor was stuck to the SW.

From NE3I

Contesting "fun" when you are deed restricted and getting a little impatient and grouchy with "strapping that stuff together" for VHF contests requires a "the glass is a quarter full" accomplishment perspective. In other words, take that it is a wonder when you work anyone at all. Except for my new R8 vertical on 6 Meters, all antennas for operations from the home QTH were simple dipoles in the attic, a ground plane and the powerhouse 4 element vertically polarized 220 yagi FIXED in the direction of the Packrat repeater. None the less 3 hours of operation on Saturday from the home QTH yielded **490 points**.

Sunday proved to be a very nice day. I put the mag mount 2 Meter Squalo on the trunk and using the HV7A vertical for 6, set out and headed West.

Temperatures were in the 50s. It was clear and dry. Dodging horse and buggies and the evidence they leave behind is always interesting. Snow was still piled everywhere. It was impossible to find a safe place to pull off of the road in many high spots. Had a nice visit with Len and the guys at N3NGE's World Class Station. The 50 mile trip to spots at 1000 feet on Sandmine Road and another on Gault Road in the Southeast corner of FN 10 proved to be disappointing due to **apparent low activity** and dense woods. (I was able to work N3NGE on all 3 bands after they returned to the air from what must have been a very enjoyable lunch and/or nap, hi hi.) Likewise, didn't hear or work much from the shopping center at the intersection of Route 10 and Route 30 in FM 29, elevation 660 feet though, surrounded by ridge lines. I returned home to FN20 to walk the dog and then out for another hour on "Five County Ridge" next to the Methacton High School Q'ing some locals. Summary results for Rover Operations are **760 points**.

From K2TXB

Just my poor report on the contest. As usual, only on two meters this year, with low antenna (at 25 feet) that I use for EME. On Saturday things went pretty well although conditions were basically flat. After the activity died down I slid down the band and tried a little meteor scatter. I managed to tail end a contact with K2DRH out in EN41 and then the moon came up. I figured I could enhance my poor 16 grids a little and at first it was working as I worked a station in Russia and another in Italy. But then my antenna decided it did not want to go any higher than 27 degrees. I could not see anything wrong so I played with it a bit and finally got it up where it needed to be. I was hearing K5QE real fine and started calling. But something was wrong and when I looked at the amp, two red lights were on! **The tube had flashed over** and when I hit the reset button

the power supply just groaned and the lights stayed red. Well that was almost certainly a bad tube or else a short in the amp, so I **turned everything off** and went to bed (it was 3:30 AM anyway!).

Sunday morning I slept in and finally got around to working on the amp around noon. After tearing it all apart I found no visible problems so I replaced the 8877. I have several spares but all in unknown condition. I tried the one that looked the newest. Then I remembered that those tubes require a long burn in time when they have not been used for years. I powered up the filaments and blowers and then went upstairs and played video games until the XYL says it is time to go celebrate her son-in-law's birthday. Arriving home around 1830, I decide to try the amp even though I really should wait at least 24 hours. Well it flashed over twice (not unusual for even a new tube), but then was solid. Not only that but it makes 1500 watts with less than 40 watts of drive. The old tube was getting lower and lower on gain and at the end required 80 watts to get even close to 1.5k out. So, happy, I got back into the game.

I was working a few stations but could not figure out what was wrong with my receiver. Most of the signals sounded distorted and difficult to copy. I struggled along for an hour, playing with the settings on the TS-2000 and wondering if I would have to reset the processor. Finally I took off the headphones in disgust and rubbed my ears - I was getting a headache. That is when I realized that I had never taken off my hearing aids after dinner! Those things did not like the loud noise and hiss so close and they were vibrating and resonating. The louder the signal the worse it sounded! After that I was back in business...

At the end I had 152 Q's on 2, and 23 grids (that's right I got 4 new grids at the end - FN43, FM09, FM16, and FN01). Total score is 3496. Not my best by far but not bad for being off the air most of the day on Sunday!

Thanks to all who contacted me, especially the rovers.

Very 73 - Russ K2TXB

From K1JT

I operated on 6m (CW only) for two hours on Saturday. Then 2m (EME only) between 2:30 AM and 05:00 AM, followed by a bit of meteor scatter on 6m. Finally, 30 minutes on 6m SSB and 30 min on 2m SSB between 8 and 9 PM Sunday evening. **Peculiarity: Worked more Europeans (12) than FN20's (9) on 2m.** Finished with 74 x 19 on 6m and 48 x 27 on 2m, claimed score 5612. Better a low-show than a no-show, I guess. 73, Joe, K1JT

Comment by W1SMS

Fred N1DPM made a similar declaration a few years back saying "There is more daily 2m activity off the moon than terrestrial".

From W3HMS

Had problem one with a mike/phone adapter made by Mississippi's Finest Junk which keyed the rig all the time and then "where is the hand mike" was a short -lived issue. Problem two was more severe in that the usual logging program did not work with WIN 10. A hasty look in N1MM+ found a logging capability for this contest never used so it was a **"learn to fly while in the air by the book"** kind of operation. The bands seemed on the dead side so much of the time although I worked more Packrats than expected. I confirmed once again that a 50 ft tower, modest beams, and low power do not make but minimal score. Only some distant grids at the end got us above 6000 points with 107 QSOs so my "glass ceiling" of under 10k persists. I even looked on the EME logger and saw no 23 cm activity on Sunday morning. Next year may find a new 6 m. beam and easier switching between radios. We may even use the Flex 6300 on 6m. 73, John, W3HMS

From K3MD

Without too much editorial comment, I fixed a PL-259 which had pulled out of feed for the 6M yagi at the antenna 3 weeks before contest. The 432 preamp (SSB model with VOX, DEMI sequencer) worked FB. The 2M SSB sequencer kicked out at on Sunday so I moved to the third sequencer after the second sequencer also kicked out and I regained the main band (2M). Score: 20,160

From WA3QPX

I had an enjoyable contest. Score was almost exactly the same as last year with no observable enhancements and with a lot of noise on 6. I put the new Flex 6300 on 222. The waterfall was much improved from the 5000 as well as the ability of putting the rig on a station. The waterfall was much more defined. All that was necessary to do was click on the stations frequency above waterfall on the lower side of the signal for upper sideband to **listen without retuning**. With the low activity on 222 all I had to do was look at the screen and not have to tune the band for activity saving time and allowing me to call cq elsewhere. Tnx all, Paul WA3QPX

From KB3MTW

Not even ranking anywhere with the big boys and all their toys, but **an improvement**. Hopefully by adding 222 SSB we can up the score. I am even thinking of going up another band too. After that I might have to look into putting all the antennas on tiny crank-up tripods or towers and raising them in the cover of darkness above the roof line.



Maybe even burning incense and chanting a few prayers and offerings to the contest Gods to up the score. Oh and Neil - W2GTV participated. Last years score was 70 contacts. This year he got 176 contacts, 19 grids and a total score of 5,643 going to the Warminster Club. He enjoyed it, but will have to learn how to work the radio equipment and the logging program better so I can concentrate on the contest. 73 all, Michelle London - KB3MTW
Neil Griffith - W2GTV

Comment by W2SJ

Great effort! Each year you and Neil improve something, add another band, equipment, etc and

your score gets better. Way to go...Can't wait to see your score next year!

From W2SJ

I had a great time in the contest. All the hours designing and building my new antenna system paid off. My last score from home was 17520 with the halos, squalos, and discone, so I am a happy camper :-)) Thanks to all who worked me this weekend! 73, Bob W2SJ

From K3IUJ

Hope the gang and the club did well. I read the several comments already posted. Sounds like the usual recent poor conditions! I listened a bit down here in XE land on 2-meter FM, but heard no activity. 73, Bert, K3IUJ

From K3IPM

The microwave bands really worked super with no equipment or antenna problems this year. 596 Q's, 80 Grids - 93,920

From N1XKT

My contest highlights include: Setting up my antennas with a rotor on my deck where it actually makes a difference! From the bottom up I had a 222FM vertical yagi, 144 5 element beam, 432 yagi, and 6M moxon. Another highlight was getting my 5 year old daughter to make one of my contacts. I claimed 3,905 points from only the bottom 4 bands. Yay! I really appreciated the ability to contact others



(phone / text) prior to working them.

I absolutely enjoyed the ability to receive a text telling me where to point my antennas and what frequency to be on to work a rover station immediately. Text messages worked great for this and so would a Packrat online chat room or better yet for those with smartphones a "whatsapp" chat group would be ideal. In fact, whatsapp is being used to facilitate a transatlantic QSO on 144. See <http://qrznow.com/trial-for-transatlantic-vhf-qso-this-weekend/> We could make one rover group on what'sapp where rovers post once they are at a spot. Also whatsapp can be used from a internet connected web browser after a person has registered on whatsapp. Currently whatsapp will only accept accounts that originate from smartphones.

Does anyone have a better idea? Maybe we could implement some of these things for July. Now all



that's left for me is to find the time to take down those antennas.

73's N1XKT

From KA3FQS

I want to check the log but these are the results for the time being. I missed some microwave contacts due to full schedules at some stations. My 2 m transverter died Sunday afternoon. In spite of this and the fact that the XYL moved the cat's litter box into the shack I had a good time. Score 18,833. Tom

From KB1JEY

In 2012, I had all four uWave transverters operating [903, 1296, 2304, and 3456]. In 2015, I cobbled the 903 transverter up to a log periodic.

This year, I just didn't have the spare time to put the uWave transverters back online so the 2016 score was just the lower 4 plus a laser QSO with K1DS/R. What did I do this year to nudge the score up? I skipped the MFJ voice keyer and called CQ via voice [what an old school technique !] and worked the four evening activity hours on Saturday to best effect. On Sunday, I did benefit from phone "spotting", both from my calling or using text messages and receiving requests from Packrats who did not catch me on Saturday.

What about 2017? Next shack project is to assemble my Elecraft K3S and P3 kits. I will switch to the Elecraft for the lower four bands [with transverters]. uWaves will be moved over to my Flex 1500. Most important, during a slow moment in the contest, I figured out how to relocate the monster file cabinet out of the shack so I can set up a wider radio bench, support all of my new equipment, and improve the ergonomics of my cramped shack. 73, Michael KB1JEY

From WA3GFZ

These are my totals for this weekend's contest. Thanks to the rovers for their efforts and the visits I got from Rick, Pete, Russ, and Al. The score would have been much lower without them. I missed a lot of good stuff, but made sure I contacted as many Packrats as possible. I found the text messages received from Drex and Paul to be the most useful and effective. I had spotting in use but found that, due to rapid band hopping, stations were gone by the time I got there. **Even if they were only one minute old.** I was able to work 46 Packrats. Seems everyone was active and dedicated for the entire contest. Thanks for a fun weekend. Score 72432 Paul

From K3TUF

Greetings all from Sunny FL. Several hours after the end of the contest I was enroute to Zephyrhills, FL with RV in tow. We have safely arrived and I have finally gotten around to summing up my contest information. Submitted my log before the contest ever ended. This was better than last year for many reasons. First of all I had my health, as last year was encumbered by a nasty cold. Next, I entered in the "assisted"

category and few others did. Now this year, many more were on board with assistance.

Note that despite a low score, I took the entire category nation wide last year. I didn't find any enhanced conditions and wonder if anyone else noticed any. I was also struck with my second 2304 system not working; a real bummer. I need to get that fixed for sure. It was really nice to have our rovers out there producing the 10/11 band contacts. I really appreciate that. And it is **always nice to have Stan, K3IPM** make the trek up from FL to get his powerful station on the air. This year he improved the microwave stack by using a lift; sounds like next year might involve two lifts. Another **highlight was Pete, K0BAK** who drove his rover out to near my location with the pipsqueak microwave station. Always good to work so many of the Packrats, over 50, and I wonder who I missed. Score = 219,675 . 73, Phil K3TUF

From N3RG

Thanks for a lot of fun over the weekend and to the Rovers who make scores possible. I'm **especially thankful to Pete, K0BAK/R** who braved the elements and made a trip south all the way to Cape May. I had a great weekend and enjoyed working all the Packrats I could hear. Thanks to everyone who worked me this weekend! Score 109080 73 de, N3RG - Ray

From WB3IGR

To all that helped me or tried to help me with this past contest, here is a break down of what I did with only an off center fed dipole at 20 feet and a dual band vertical antenna at 25 feet: Score of 1,449. I had contacts as far north as FN 31 CT. and south to FM27 VA. **THANK YOU** and C U from FN10 next year!!!! de George & Kathy WB3IGR & WB3LTH

From KC2TN

Almost a carbon copy of last year – Same number of contacts, a few less grids but with one eye closed! Thanks for ALL the help from: “You Know Who You Are!” Maybe the 3rd year will be a charm with 2304 and 3456! CU next year! Or at the conference! Score 30,186. Joe.

From WB2RVX

Added new rule to contesting - do NOT travel abroad before test. Missed time in the chair on Sat and rebounded on Sun. To be continued at Feb meeting. Tnx to the rovers for another fine job. Score 156530 Mike - WB2RVX

From K3GNC

With 222 useless except for close in contacts, 6 meters working poorly, and my newly installed 3456 antennas pointing god-knows-where, I was dusting off a space on Saturday for my crying towel award. Two meters, 432 and 1296 setups were working well, but frustration quickly grew when I couldn't move any distant station through the lower four bands because of 6 and 222 problems. Near midnight Saturday night I questioned continuing on Sunday, **but knew I had to** for the club. The contest high point was working FN44 on my three good bands - 144, 432 and 1296! Final tally: 48,977 pts. 73, Jerome - K3GNC

FROM WA3SRU

I was not able to get on for the full contest. On Tuesday, before the contest, my wife Marie, had pains across her back. I took her to Doylestown Hospital. They checked her out, especially her heart. They determined that she had a gall bladder attack. They removed the stone later in the week. She felt much better after that. A day later they took out her gall bladder. She came home Saturday around 2:45 and I got her settled. I made my first contact at 3:22 pm. I worked until 4:30 pm when I stopped and made dinner. I got back on around 8 pm until 9:30 pm. On Sunday I operated pretty much from 9:45 until the end. All in all, I did pretty good considering my time on. I decided that it is now time to do a rewire of my operating position. I need to get rid of all the switches, knobs, headsets and foot switches to a more modern single button approach. Sure will save a lot of time switching bands and missing a switch or two. Hate when that happens. Will probably be looking for suggestions on how to accomplish this task. 73's Joe WA3SRU

From K3MF

Just a note on my activity during the contest. High gain, narrow beamwidth EME antennas do not work well for local contacts. Used a 130 foot open wire fed dipole on 6 meters. It worked fine as long as the lobes lined up with the other stations. Also being **70 feet below average terrain** with antennas 10 feet off the ground does not help, but it was still fun! Should have two of my three towers, HDBX 40 and 70 feet Rohn 25 up by the end of summer. Score 5,250 73,
Wayde K3MF

From KA2LIM

Band conditions were less than desirable to say the least. But we have a great bunch of operators that do their very best to work the weak ones and get them in the log. The Grand Prize this time goes to AI-W9KXI who worked a station on 2M who was in FN20 running 5 watts and then when AI was at the 432 position, he worked AF1T in FN42 who was running 12 watts. **This is what makes it FUN.** The only hiccup occurred at 0730 local time on Sunday when we suddenly lost all power. Went to check



the generator and found the main breaker tripped and could not get it back in to working position. Went to start the back-up generator and the on/start switch was broke. It, worked fine 2 weeks before that. Tried the main breaker on the big generator again and it engaged and we were back on the air. First time that ever happened, who knows why. Got a new switch ordered for the back-up unit. The last contact went into the log at 5 minutes before the end of the contest. We wound up with 661 Q's which will drop a few when the dupes are removed. Final score was 127,600. Operators on hand were AI-W9KXI, Gregg-NX2W, Walt-N2IK Rob-KB2YCC, Larry WA3CSP and Ken-KA2LIM. Another good contest where we all had fun. See you in June 2016. Ken – KA2LIM

From K3WGR & NN3Q

Thank you all who we worked. What an enjoyable weekend with lots of activity. We wanted to work many of you on more bands, but sometimes our rover site was not optimal in all directions. It's the life of a rover. This was the first year out of three the planets and stars aligned and everything came together to allow two full days of winter contesting with the NN3Q/r rover mobile. We were thankful and took advantage of the fabulous weather. Our rove was planned to follow previous January roves and take advantage of working close in to the Packrat territory. The route and timetable were published both on the reflector and on a postcard mailed to most members. This was the first time we were capable of using the self spotting feature now allowed by the contest rules. We activated grids FN20, FN10, FM29, and FM19. For the first time we used the hot spot feature of the cell phone to create a LAN, and also connect to the internet. The feature called tethering worked flawlessly, and the internet access was welcome. We took advantage using Twitter for the first time spotting the rover on the APRS.fi webpage, as well as other spotting nets. We also used other permitted communications to setup those most needed microwave contracts. As we have in past years Russ and I took advantage of the warm weather to reset the antennas and re-check the two K-3 stations. As some may remember the **rover van was whacked pretty good during the August UHF**

contest damaging the microwave array, and cracking the microwave rotor. The repairs necessitated a full disassembly of all the antennas and masts. Working with other Pack Rat stations, prior to the contest, we took short trips in FN10, FN20, FM29 and FM19 to test equipment and look for new rover spots that allowed us to find new areas allowing a clear path between selected stations. W3SZ, Roger, was instrumental in providing a new panadapter system. With the use of SDR software, and other software we created virtual ports to run N1MM logger+, and also have the visual capability of a panadapter. A monitor to display this information was added to the operating table. This system was primarily used for the microwave station, and proved to be helpful. On the air activity was very good. I feel participation was up from previous years, and the microwave bands were hopping. No enhancements for us but then we do not expect any in January. Our log for the ARRL January VHF Contest shows a score of 96512. 73 AI K3WGR, Russ NN3Q

From W2MC

Too much going on to be able to give full attention to the contest this year. Was able to run limited rover in FM29 and FM28. Score 1568. Jon

From K3JJZ

Although I really hate contests I have to say this is the first year in the last 10 that nothing broke down. Score was 3x what it was last year de K3JJZ

From K2UYH

7 Q's in 3 Grids, AI

From W1SMS

Had a great time preparing and operating the contest from this QTH as this has been the 1st time since 2004 that I had a functional station. Nice to re-connect with the regulars as well as hearing some new calls. Spent time working on equipment and operating - perhaps more time on the equipment side. Now have a punch list of the next set of commissioning / augmentation activities. We started off by operating 2M using the 432 antenna - made a bunch of Qs and the discovery was made when I attempted to connect the 432 rig. The good news is that no coax cables failed or got kinked on

the bottom of the new rotating tower. Made up a bungee cord sling to keep the rotor loop away from the tower's turntable. The FO-33 432 antenna @ 145' played well. Ran 50 watts from the shack through 200+ feet of hardline to a (deaf) FT-847. Phase 2 includes installing a DEMI xvtr and amplifier in the transmitter shed by the tower base. The 50MHz station was a barefoot IC-756ProII. Next is to commission the transverter and add the amp in the shed. The 144MHz station included a transverter, Flex 5K & Lunar Link amp - all in the shack. The Flex + xvtr was a joy to operate - great RX performance although I have a bunch to learn about setting up the various parameters. I also took the opportunity to try out a crystal filter. I connected it directly on the xvtr front end to knock out adjacent signal overload/interference. This was acquired from W2PED awhile back and has been waiting patiently in the 2M STUFF box. Need to formalize the station, re-connect my homebrew 5CX1500 amplifier and re-locate out in the shed. The FO-12 144 antenna was a last minute addition to the tower and placed at 55' with a length of 1/2" hardline all the way back to the shack (~160'). Next effort is to get my pair of FO-22 144 antlers up at 110'. Also need to add the FO-22 222 in the middle - all to be fed with 1-1/4" (already in place). The existing FO-12 may have its direction reversed to enable quick switching for those "off the back" Qs. Thanks to Matt KD5CHG for operating at the start of the contest while I continued to connect the station equipment. This contest was the trial run for the newly configured station with the new antennas, to see if it is performing well. Score 7128. 73, Steve

From N3FTI

Many of you may have noticed my **absence** from the January VHF contest. On January 29th I was contacted by my sister in Arkansas, advising me that my 88 year old mother was being hospitalized with heart problems. I immediately flew to Arkansas that afternoon. Although Mom's health seemed to improve in the next couple of days she took a turn for the worse in the latter part of the week and passed away. I have been in a fog since then. With the support of many friends and a tight-knit family I am sure to get through this

difficult time, but as any of you who have lost a parent knows this is only something that time will heal. Thank you for your continued support as part of my extended family. --Steve

From K3HUW

This was my first contest not operating as a rover or portable, so it was nice to be in the relative comfort of my home QTH for the January contest. Fortunately, I had no equipment problems, except for a loose power connector to my 220 MHz HT. I had originally planned on just operating on 144 and 432 with my small beams, but at the last minute I added a twinlead j-pole for 220 FM and a dipole on my roof for 6m and got a few QSOs from them. It's a good thing I live in an area with a relatively dense population of VHF operators and that they have big antennas. Highlights include



working N3RG on 432 (CW), 61 miles away. I know how weak his signal was at my antenna, so he's got good ears to copy my 20 watts on a 8 element beam at 25 feet! My best dx was KA1ZE in FN01xt on 2m (180 miles). In hindsight, I should have spent more time on CW to try and work more grids. I'm also planning on setting up a RTL-SDR "dongle" connected to the IF of my radio for a panadapter, that seems like it would be a very useful tool. I used a new-to-me logging program called Tucnak, and was favorably impressed. It is capable of more integration than I took advantage of. Lots of fun. Marten K3HUW

Comment by NE3I

Marten. Congratulations with your effort and enthusiasm! You were one of the guys that I was able to work multiple times with my deed restricted home and minimal rover station. I know that you will find that the Packrats are very dedicated to mentoring and encouraging interest and improvement in VHF/UHF/Microwave activity. Thanks for the Qs. 73. Griff NE3I

From W2BVH

A very enjoyable contest was cut short at around 4:45 local on Sunday by a serious problem with my new N1MM logger+. I had loaded and tested the logger the previous Friday. Some time during the contest on Saturday, the N1MM logger crashed, but self recovered, leaving me with a QSO entry window that listed only SSB mode. This meant the self recovery was incomplete. But it didn't matter to me; ARRL doesn't look at mode when scoring the log. So I continued contesting with a half-baked logger. At 4:45 Sunday I noticed that the logging computer's system time showed about 10pm, local and that at least some of my logged QSO's were also offset by around 5 hours. I decided the safest thing to do would be to make a Cabrillo file on the spot, print it out and worry about how to make the corrections after the contest was over. My intention was to run the rest of the contest with Dave's VHFLog, using the N1MM logger to find dupes for me. BUT when I went to make the Cabrillo file all my log entries disappeared from the N1MM logger's log window; and nothing I tried would bring it back. This put me out of the contest, with 6 operating hours remaining! Long story short: after 1 1/2 days of work by a very helpful fellow at N1MM support I was able to restore my log. And emails from 11 'Rats with the QSO times from my Q's with them, allowed me to correct the QSO times in the whole log. Thanks 'Rats!! In the spirit of "Aside from that Mrs. Lincoln, how did you like the play": I had a very good time contesting. Running bands went smoothly and there was lots of cooperation in completing weak signal Q's. Conditions were flat, and I missed some routine grids that I probably would have picked up in those last hours of the 'test. Also, my 902 rig was not working and I'll have to attend to that before the spring sprints. Score was around 10.7K. 73, --Lenny

W2SJ's New Tower

To all who have been following my antenna/tower antics for the last 1.5 years...I finally completed the new tower 2 weeks before the contest. Then I installed all of my equipment back in the shack that had been in tote boxes from my January FM28 operation in Cape May last year. This saga dragged on until 2 days before the contest at 3:00 AM! **And now the drum roll...** I could finally operate on 50 through 3456 with a Moxon on 50, a 23 element, 12 ft boom Log Periodic on 144, 222 & 432, and the Micro H-Frame for 903, 1296, 2304, & 3456. I'm still using the Discone on the old antenna stack for the FM bands because Rick, WC2K told me "never put a vertical antenna on top of your main tower as it becomes a lightning rod"!



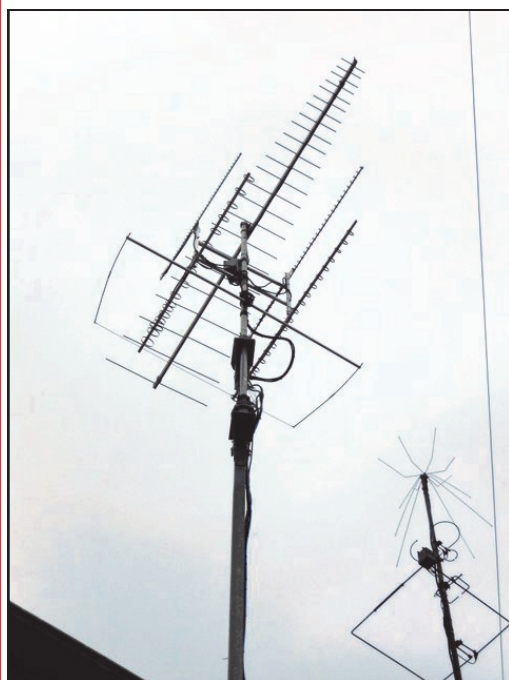
I traveled north of Boston October 2014 to pick the \$500 tower. It is 2 sections approx 22 ft long that telescope much like Stan's tower. 1st section 4.5" OD steel tubing. 2nd section 3" square steel tubing with a 2" pull out pipe about 4 ft long with a rotor plate welded on top of tube. It was designed to mount the rotor to the top plate and use a small 2ft mast out of the rotor to mount an HF tri-band. Not good for us VHF+ guys that like to put up lots of antennas.

I modified it with a special rotor bracket attached to the top of the 3" square tube. Then I pulled out the 2" tube, and modified it with another rotor bracket to hold a Yaesu GS-065 thrust bearing like WA3SRU used on his tower.

My mast is then offset from the sq tube section going thru the thrust bearing and down to the rotor 3 ft below. Finally I fabricated a tilt over tower base made from 2 pcs of 5" Steel U channel 10 ft long; 5ft in concrete and 5 ft above the concrete. Hand winches crank it up and tilt it over to work on antennas from ground level. My top antenna is about 45 to 48 ft above ground. When cranked down its about 35 ft and

can not be seen from the front of the house keeping the neighbors happy in our somewhat restricted neighborhood. This may be good for a presentation at a future meeting if the 'Rats would be interested.

So how did it work? 359 Q's and 61 grids for a score of 51,179 points. This turned out to be **3 times** my score of 17,520 points in the 2014 January Contest with halos, squalos, & a discone. Thanks to all of you who offered ideas, materials, support, and many on air contacts during the contest to make this happen. I had a blast! --Bob W2SJ



KOBAK/R JANUARY ROVE

This was a different kind of rove for me, since I was substituting for Bert, K3IUV's usual rove with the club's quiet microwave box and his laser. The microwave box was secured to the floor of the minivan near the back sliding door, so all I had to do was open the door when I got to a Packrat station. Although I originally wanted to use low band 10' Yagis on a 20+' mast at my first and last stop, there was just too much stuff in the van to manage; also there was **thick snow and ice** at the first stop in Reading that would have made raising the walk-up mast difficult. So, I ended up just using 4 single loops for the low 4 bands, albeit with medium power (350-350-80-180w).

I was concentrating on reaching all the Packrats who said they wanted a visit based on reflector responses in December. One problem with planning ahead was that I made up a spreadsheet with the visit addresses and operator phone numbers in sequence so I could take it on my phone, in order to call ahead and to request contacts. Because I made this spreadsheet using phone numbers from the general Packrat member directory (before there was a packrats-to-look-for list for this contest), I did not have the updated phones for two members whom I might have been able to contact on microwaves from Reading FN20bi. Lesson learned.



Although not contacting Phil K3TUF (maybe) and Roger W3SZ (probably) from the Reading Fire Tower on microwaves was a disappointment, I was happy and even surprised that I stuck to the roving sequence that I published previously, with one exception for a member who dropped out due to home issues. I reached Paul WA3GFZ around 11:30pm (EST) Saturday who kindly stayed up for me, and I got **to bed at home a little after 1AM**. Sunday started badly with me missing the exit to my first stop at K3IPM's temporary station. But I later made up time in the flats of South Jersey, ending up at Ray N3RG's home much earlier than I expected. I then stopped at the Maurice River crossing to try to make 6m contacts in support of the NPOTA event, but no takers. Last stop was in FM28 on the bay at Cape May's Sunset Beach around 10pm; I was pretty disappointed but not surprised at the lack of activity despite spotting myself in that slightly rare grid. Thanks to N3RG for contacting me on the low 4 bands there and for attempting but not completing microwave contacts.

30,240 claimed points with 240 total contacts (incl. 2 dups), 93 of which were tap-ins from members'

driveways or laser. Activated **5 grids** - FN20, FN10, FM19, FM29, FM28. Longest microwave contact set (up through 10g) was from Blue Ball (Shady Maple, yum) to N3NGE at 10.3km from FN10 to FN20. Most distant grid I believe was KA1ZE/3 in FN01xt from FN20hc 294km on 2m. Most thrilling contact was Rob KC3CXK/R, whom I work with and have been elmering about roving ... this was his first VHF contest and he had a clear strong signal from FN20ee to me in FM29In. Doing your first rove is quite an accomplishment and I was very happy for Rob, who enjoyed himself and now has a long list of improvements he wants to make.

The rove was fun and exhausting. My favorite part of this trek was seeing the impressive stations and antennas of so many Packrats, although time pressures kept me from lingering or asking many questions. It would be great to visit you guys again when I don't have a schedule to keep.

238 Q's 40+5 Grids 30240 Points -- Pete K0BAK

Comment from N3RG

Pete,

Congratulations on a super effort for our club and for the visit. You're certainly welcome to come back and spend more time during day in the coming months. My door is always open to you or any packrat who wants to visit. I'd love to spend more time and discuss improving your microwave capabilities... all it takes is a phone call.

73 my friend,
de, N3RG - Ray

Comment for KB3MTW

Pete,

It was a pleasure having you stop by. Wish you could have come up, but it was not a social visit. Sorta like Santa Claus, drop off presents (contacts) and then leave. Santa w/o the cookies or milk. When your reindeer bring you by my QTH again please stop by. You can better see how this antenna restricted cave dweller operates.

73

MichelleKB3MTW

JANUARY CONTEST AT KB3MTW

As usual the anticipation of the contest seems to start out with a thud. Thanks to Doc - W3GAD, who helped by installing a switch box to the Yaesu 857 where the 903 transverter is and eventually the 222 transverter will be connected. We purchased a new 45 amp, metered switching power supply and a duplexer to split my dual band 2/70 squalo/halo from 1 coax into 2 for the back of the Kenwood 2000X.

I turned on the Kenwood and tuned in 6 meters. Nothing. Oh no, now what. It's 2:00 pm and the bands should be filled with guys giving out their call signs. Looked at the 9913 coax which is screwed into an antenna switch which allows the antenna to be used by 2 HF radios. The switch was set for my radio. The jumper then goes into a Jetstream SWR meter and then another jumper to the Kenwood. No time to figure what may be screwed up so I unscrewed the coax from the antenna switcher and connected it directly to the Kenwood. Lo and behold, a plethora of voices shouting out call signs and grid squares. Now we're cooking.

Grab my mike. Computer sitting patiently waiting for the first contact. Within minutes I had a bunch of contacts. Now I was feeling satisfied. Over the next 33 hours with Neil in and out of the house and 9 hours of laying in bed (I don't get to sleep too late and I take advantage of it when I can get it). I made about **31 more contacts than last year**, but we had the same number of grids. Neil, on the other hand, had about **100 more contacts than last year**, but because he is not a good typer and I had to keep assisting him I can't say how ...cont'd p.15

On The Road Again

I flew up from Florida to rove again in Packrat territory, as Stan, K3IPM has done many times over the years. I note that snowbirds Elliott K3JJZ and John KB3XG were also on the air for the contest. I am most proud of my harmonic Leon N1XKT, and my granddaughter Aleah, who with coaching and supervision made **her first contest QSO**.

The weather cooperated as we flew in after the big snowstorm and the roads were clear, winds were down and the sun was shining.

I got the "Great White" out of the storage garage at my daughter's home and drove it home and then to my mechanic for its annual oil change, inspection and stickers. It was ready early, so I drove it home, and with the warmth of the day, it was easy to get all the antennas and cabling in place. I knew that the power switch of the FT736R was getting a little touchy, but I wasn't prepared for the switch to misbehave now. After a dozen push-on-push-offs, I saw the frequency display light up and the rig came to life. My thoughts immediately went to how I can possibly get a replacement switch for this 30+ year old rig. But it seemed to be OK: I heard the beacons, so I charged all the batteries and got everything else ready for Saturday.

I posted my route and cell phone number on the reflector and readied everything for departure to Morgantown by noon. Ten minutes out from the house, I remembered that I forgot to take my cell phone. Back to the house and turned around again, this time, as a creature of habit, I wind up on the Blue Route, where I usually head and miss the entrance to the Turnpike. I make it out to Len's to start the contest by running the bands out there and adding that LASER QSO before I leave.

Ten contacts in the log and I'm off to the Mennonite Church parking lot to find K3TUF and W3SZ to run the bands from FN20, a few miles away from the N3NGE QRM. We complete those contacts through 24GHz, as the humidity is real low, with the signals on 24GHz almost better than they were on 5GHz.

Once we're done, I head to Blue Ball elementary school to do the same run of QSOs, adding whoever else I can, and then drive to Gap before sunset as the 897 road has plenty of right angle turns and Amish buggies on it.

My usual FM19 spot on Rte. 30 is clear enough to pull in and run the bands again through 10GHz with N3NGE and through 24GHz with K3TUF and W3SZ. Up the road a half a mile to FM29 and another



I put the 24G dish on wrong in FN10. Sigs so strong on 10 and 24 that it hardly mattered where I pointed.

...K1DS/R cont'd

fine run through the microwaves and a few others in the log, with enough time to get to WA3GFZ's driveway and run the bands with him through 24GHz also +LASER. Home by 11PM to put in an hour at the home station and add another log and 700 points for the club score.

Sunday morning came quickly and I decided to swap out the FT736R with another FT736R that the club now owns. The power switch was too unreliable, and even when it connected, the power level to the oscillator was giving me distorted audio. The new rig has a 1296 module, rather than the 6m module in my rig. I get it all hooked up, but when I get on the air, I realize that there is a 432 problem. I realized that it went away when I turned off the amp, and I will troubleshoot this later, but likely that the accessory plug that keys the various amps when different bands are selected is different for each of the rigs. I operated from the bank parking lot at 309 and Stump road and added a lot more 'rats in the log with completed 9 or 10 band runs with WA3NUF, WA3DRC, K3IPM and WA3EHD.

I made Rover-Rover Q's with W3ICC, NE3I, NN3Q and K0BAK. Final score is 303 Q x 48 mults = 52.3K with 9 Q's on 24GHz in 3 grids.

As planned, the rover van was disassembled at 1PM, back in storage by 2PM, and I was on the road again to Baltimore. **TNX to all for QSOs**, patience, and if I missed you, apologies!! 73, K1DS/R

... cont'd from p.13

accurate his log will be.

Next year I will have to come up with some rules. I make contact first and while I'm doing that this will give him a few extra seconds to make sure the call sign and grid square are accurate and then pass the mike to him. I'd like to keep it as streamlined as the husband and wife couple out of NJ who contest together.

As for next year, I will have 222 SSB on the air.

Don't know where the 222 squalo or whatever low profile horizontally polarized antenna I get will go, but that should up the score.

My biggest problems are that the multi-directional below the roof top antennas don't allow us to get out much past a small radius where we live. So we will always have a challenge, but I am a glass half full kinda gal so I look at it this way. We live in an antenna restricted condominium and yet we have 40 meters to 1296 MHz. Not too bad!!

73 de Michelle – KB3MTW
and Neil – W2GTV



Here's a pic of the operator that many of the Packrats worked at the K2AA/100 station!

The SJRA thanks everyone for participating and spreading the news of their 100th Anniversary.

The op was Rich - KV2R

Joe - KC2TN

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

(Nibbles from January 1966. Vol. VIII
11)

de Bert, K3IUUV (*author's comments in italics*)

- **“Our Prez Sez”**. Prez K3GAS, Doc reported: 1. He mourned the death of member Al, K3LBT, during the contest. Al died at the controls, on Sunday afternoon. 2. Polish your stories for the crying towel session in January; and 3. A committee was appointed to select the first “Pack Rat of the Year” Award winner (*Period Jan 65 – Jan 66*).
- **ARRL Bulletin Nr.4 0**. 12/29/1965. K1YPE/XV5 has permission to operate from Vietnam. Thus, the FCC noted that US Amateurs may contact him, and third-party traffic is permitted.
- **ARRL Bulletin Nr. 41**. 1/6/1966. ARRL frequency measuring test on 2/10/1966. Hone your measurement skills. Each participant will receive a report of their accuracy.
- **Oscar IV**. Numerous reports of beacon (*telemetry*) reception on 431.962. Several stations have heard their own FSK signals through the transponder on two meters.
- **1966 Contest report**. The Packrats submitted **93 logs** to the ARRL, with club participation of 90 members (**100% of the membership!**). A table of members scoring over 10,000 points shows the club leader as Stan, K3IPM (*Remember this was 50 years ago. Stan is still going strong and operated this January through 10-GHz*). El,

K3JJZ also made the list (*and still on this January*).

- **XYLs report on Contest**. Helen penned a tongue-in-cheek article describing the support role of an XYL for the thirty hours of the contest. In the vein of some of El’s articles, it starts with “Prepare a 30-cup coffeepot”. Read the full article for a few laughs.
- **Two Meter Report**. W3ZD, Dave, reported good activity from the S during the contest, but “New England was weak” (*nothing new?*). He encouraged more CW activity for “the weak ones” (*nothing new*) and talked about low-cost antennas.
- **State Supreme Court rules against Amateur 50-foot tower**. In a case similar to the recent one, W3HJ from Lancaster lost his appeal to the PA Supreme Court. He was appealing the local court decision that his tower violated the deed restrictions in his “Golden Acres” community. His appeal was supported by the ARRL who brought in special counsel from Washington. This was a precedent setting case according to the ARRL. (*This Covenants and Restrictions issue is on-going today. Have you written your representative to support the current bill to overcome these restrictions?*)
- **A Repeater Report**. Member George, W5NFD reports from his temporary location in Texas “A local Ham working at a TV station installed a 2-meter repeater on the station tower. It works like a charm, transponding FM signals”. (*This must have been one of the earliest ones*).

- **Next Meeting.** A NASA film showing of the Gemini 6 & 7 missions.
- **New Product Announcement.** Eico announced a new Nuvistor preamp. Using a 6CW4 Nuvistor, it is available for 6 or 2 meters. Price \$5.95 (wow!).
- **Swap & Shoppe.** The monthly column by W3ZRR. Wanted by W3AJF, an R-48 receiver, and a Barry rig. (These were the military surplus rigs used by the club for our 220 "Intercom" frequency of 221.4).
- **New Members.** W3FGQ, Walt Williamson from Morton, PA was elected to membership.
- **Jan Contest.** A full list of members, with their # of contacts, # of sections and Score was included. In the list were current members W3GXB, K3IPM/3, K3IUUV/3 (*my early rover activity*) and K3JJZ. Sadly, most of the others are now SK.

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

VHF Super Conference Call for Papers

First Call for Papers and Presentations for the Super VHF Conference, April 15-17, 2016, near Washington, DC. Jointly sponsored by Packrats, NEWS Group, and SVHFS.

details at <http://vhfsuperconference.com/>

Looking for presentations or papers on VHF, UHF, microwaves, and higher. All aspects welcome - operating, contesting, homebrewing, software, EME, surplus, antennas, test equipment, amplifiers, SDR, 47 GHz superregen, whatever.

This is the first call, so you have time to think about it, heat up your soldering iron if needed, take pictures, win the January contest...

N2CEI and W1GHZ will be coordinating the Proceedings. Details for submission will be on the website soon.

Picture from KB3MTW's living room out to her deck after the snowstorm.

A LOT of snow!



The First Ever, VHF SUPER Conference

will be held at the **Holiday Inn Washington-Dulles International Airport,**
Sterling, VA, April 14-17, 2016.

If there ever was One VHF Conference to go to –This Is IT!

The Southeastern VHF Society (SVHFS), North East Weak Signal Group (NEWS) and Mt. Airy VHF Radio Club (Packrats) have come together to sponsor this VHF “**Super Conference**”. It is being hosted by the Grid Pirates Contest Group (K8GP) and Directive Systems and Engineering.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE GO TO VHFSUPERCONFERENCE.COM. THIS IS A RARE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH AND HEAR FROM SOME OF THE TOP OPERATORS AND TECHNICAL MINDS IN VHF AMATEUR RADIO TODAY ALL IN ONE LOCATION. DON'T MISS IT!

Thursday, April 14: 10am-6pm Guided Bus Tour (3 hrs) of Washington DC, and afternoon stop at Smithsonian Area Museums 7pm-Hospitality Suite & Swap

**Friday, April 15: 8am-5pm Presentations, Vendors, Lunch with Speaker, Auctions
9am-4pm Washington DC Bus Transportation to Smithsonian/US Capitol/National Mall/Botanic Gardens area
7pm-Hospitality Suite & Swap**

**Saturday, April 16 8am-5pm Presentations, Vendors, Lunch with Speaker, Auctions
7pm-Banquet, Speaker, Awards, Door prizes**

Sunday, April 17 8am-11am Swap & Vendors

Special \$89+tax Hotel rate includes breakfast on Friday & Saturday. The \$89 rate is available from Tuesday, April 12 through Tuesday, April 19. Must confirm on-line or telephone reservations for “VHF Super Conference” using group code “E06” to get the discounted rate + Fri/Sat Breakfast.

Registration includes Lunch and all day beverages for Friday and Saturday!

Register before March 15 and **save up to \$30 each person**, on Registration, Banquet, and DC bus transportation total!

This is a beautiful time to visit the Washington, DC area with Warm Spring Weather and Cherry Blossoms!

Free Hotel shuttle to and from Dulles Airport & the Udvar-Hazy Air & Space Museum available daily.

Mark, K1MAP

Contacts for the VHF SUPER Conference: SVHFS: N2CEI, W8ZN, K4MEP Mt. Airy/Packrats: K3TUF, K1DS
NEWS: K1MAP, W1GHZ, WZ1V

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Chris Brogan,
CEO and Founder,
AssureNet,
speaks on

**“The Driving
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Focus on Starting Your Own Business/ Entrepreneurship



Featured Speaker: Alfred Poor,
Publisher of Health Tech Insider,
on “7 Success Secrets That Startups
Can Learn from “Breaking Bad”.

Craig Wentzel, Senior VP,
Ridgetop Group, Inc.,
Conducts a Half-Day
Workshop on
“Starting Your Own Business”

**Admission: \$12.00 (advance)
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www.tcf-nj.org

at The College of New Jersey, Ewing, NJ
Saturday, March 19, 2016

9:00 am — 5:00 pm

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



Apple's Dave Marra
Conducts an Apple Track
(OS X, iOS, etc.)



Author Barry Burd Speaks on
Android Phone Apps and
Developing for Amazon Echo

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one day at TCF! Cram begins at 9 am.

Arduino Developer/User Tutorial/Workshop
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IEEE/ACM IT PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE

Friday March 18, 2016, 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'16 info,
directions and advance tickets:
www.tcf-nj.org

TCF Saturday Banquet with Door Prizes.
See TCF Web Site to Buy Tickets.

IEEE Integrated STEM Education Conference (ISEC)**
Saturday, March 5 – 8:00 am — 5:00 pm
at Friend Center, Princeton University, NJ
Theme: Promoting a Community of STE(a)M Learning
Info: <http://ewh.ieee.org/conf/stem/>

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

The 2016 TCF™ is sponsored by The College of New Jersey, its School of Engineering and supported organizations.

2016-03-19

Events

For inclusion, please direct event notices to the editor.

Cabin Fever Hamfest - Hamfest - March 12, 2016. Tech Night Amateur Radio Club. Pocono Manor, PA. See <http://www.arrl.org/hamfests/cabin-fever-hamfest-6> for details.

41st Trenton Computer Fair - Convention - March 19, 2016. Dozens of presentations on all sorts of technology plus a technology flea market. Hosted by The College of New Jersey and organized by AI, K2UYH. See info elsewhere in this issue.

Penn Wireless Assoc - Auction - March 21, 2016. See <http://www.qsl.net/w2vtm/hamfest.html> for details.

2M Spring Sprint - Contest - April 11, 2016, 7 - 11 pm local time. See <https://sites.google.com/site/springvhfupsprints/home/2016-information> for details.

VHF Super Conference - Conference - April 15 - 17, 2016. See additional details on this page and <http://vhfsuperconference.com/> for details.

222 MHz Spring Sprint - Contest - April 19, 2016, 7 - 11 pm local time. See <https://sites.google.com/site/springvhfupsprints/home/2016-information> for details.

432 MHz Spring Sprint - Contest - April 27, 2016, 7 - 11 pm local time. See <https://sites.google.com/site/springvhfupsprints/home/2016-information> for details.

WARC Hamfest - Hamfest - May 1, 2016. See <http://www.k3dn.org/hamfest.htm> for details.

902 MHz and up Spring Sprint - Contest - May 7, 2016, 7 - 11 pm local time. See <https://sites.google.com/site/springvhfupsprints/home/2016-information> for details.

June VHF - Contest - June 11 - 13, 2016. Details to follow.

K3IPM's Second Contest "Tower"



2016 EME Conf Web Page

August 19-21, 2016. Venice Italy. Additional info will be added here as it becomes available.

<http://www.eme2016.org/>

--Info from Rick, K1DS

National Parks On The Air

Pete, **KOBAK**, is mentioned in the March QST issue as an early activator of 10 or more units in the ARRL's National Parks on the Air event. Although he is unwisely taking time and attention away from VHF activities, Pete's goal is to activate all the possible National Park Service units in ARRL sections EPA, SNJ, and NNJ.

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Gravity Wave Observatory

Here's an interesting article on how scientists are attempting to make direct measurement of gravity waves, postulated by Einstein around 100 years ago.

<http://arstechnica.com/science/2016/02/after-100-years-scientists-are-finally-closing-in-on-einsteins-ripples/>

By the way, these measurements if they are successful will be a more direct result and an extension of what Taylor & Hulse did in the 1970's. Taylor, of course is Packrat K1JT

---Tnx to W3KM for the URL

Microwave Mortuary

A collection of pictures and stories about microwave (and other electronic) hardware failures.. If you like mayhem...

<http://www.microwaves101.com/encyclopedias/microwave-mortuary>

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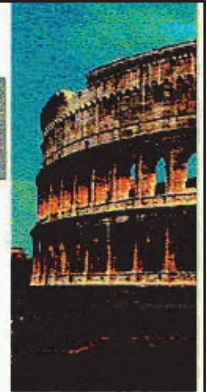
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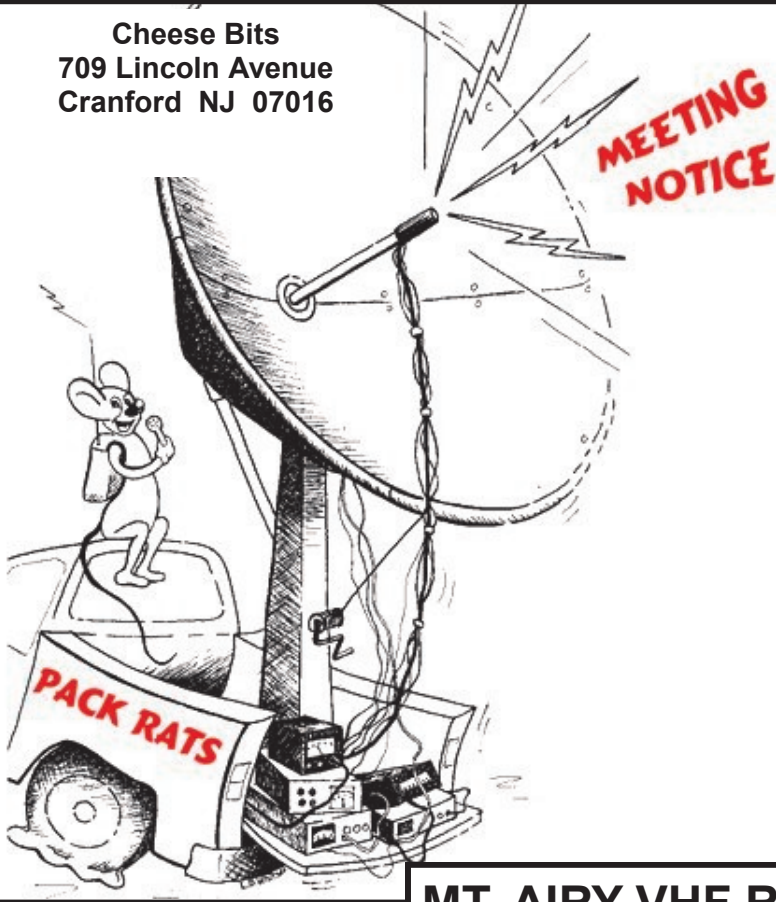
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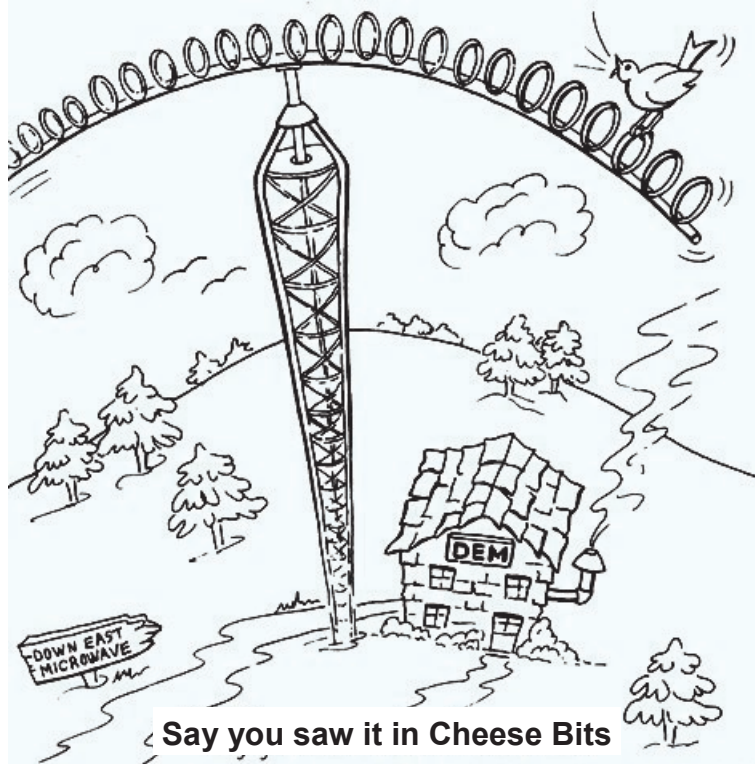
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