



CHEESE BITS

W3CCX
CLUB MEMORIAL CALL

ARRL
Affiliated
Club



Volume LIX

July 2018

Number 7

PREZ SEZ:

Dayton was great this year. Oh, did I mention it rained. But, this did not seem to dampen the enthusiasm of the over 28,000 attendees. This time of year in the Ohio Valley it always seems to rain at least sometime during the event.

Next I want to thank all the Packrats who looked for and worked us on Camelback in the June contest. We operated out of two air conditioned trailers; one for 6 and 2 meters and one for 222/432 and all the micros. So the things to remember when you think about **if you should come up next year** are - great equipment, great location and air conditioned operating positions!

This June we had some new faces to help set up and take down the equipment and that makes it easier on the whole gang and was much appreciated. Our tower specialists have been looking at ways to decrease setup time and effort. This year they supplied a military surplus "rocket launcher" tower for the 222/432 station. This worked out well. Len did a great job again with food this year! Meals were hearty, satisfying and on time. Coordination and assistance was used as much as possible and I think it showed in the final score. The weather also cooperated this year. Were there problems? Yes, but plans are already afoot to work out the kinks and make next year even more successful!

On Field day, "Team VHF" (some Packrats and friends) joined the WARC club at Our Lady of Czestochowa by adding a 6 and 2 meter station to the mix. There was some intermittent Sporadic E into

Florida and the mid west including Nebraska. As luck would have it, propagation seemed to get even better just as the contest ended.

Don't forget, the White Elephant Sale will be held at the QTH of Bruce, WA3YUE on July 19th, our normal Thursday meeting night. Come about 7 pm to check out the tables and plan your bidding strategy. There will be hoagies and refreshments. This is always a fun night

The annual Packrat Picnic will be at Michael's QTH on Saturday, August 11th at 2 pm. Rain date is Sunday, the next day. Bring your significant other, the kids, and a covered dish. Hot dogs and hamburgers will be supplied by the club. Let Michael know your coming and what dish you would like to bring. Don't forget Michael has a pool, so bring your swim suit too!

Two great contests are just around the corner. The August UHF and September VHF and up contests. They're only 24 hours long and lots of fun. Be sure to look for W2EA from High Knob in the Poconos. They will be on all bands from 6 through 10 GHz.

The Packrats are hosting the Mid Atlantic States VHF Conference on September 28, 29 and 30th. The location is at the Holiday Inn near the Parx Casino, same as last year. You can register on the Packrat web site. Special room rates are now also available. The Conference starts Friday afternoon with some special seminars. Friday night there will be a Hospitality suite. You can find many more details on the Packrat web site. Rick K1DS is looking for additional speakers, and from what I have seen, there are many

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222.98/224.58 MHz (PL 136.5) Hilltown, PA

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PACKRAT BEACONS - W3CCX/B

FM29jw Philadelphia, PA
50.080 144.300 222.062 432.290 903.072 1296.264 **2304.043**
3456.200 **5760.195** 10,368.034 MHz (as of 1/17, red = off the air)

MONDAY / TUESDAY NIGHT NETS

VHF/UHF Monday:

<u>TIME</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>NET CONTROL</u>
7:00 PM	224.58R MHz	WR3P FN20kb Ralph
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
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 or **Packrat Chat Page W3SZ.COM**
Visit the Mt Airy VHF Radio Club at: www.packratvhf.com or www.w3ccx.com

successful Packrat projects that need to be shared with the VHF community. Consider being a presenter.



The last few days have been very hot and sticky – too hot for working on towers and antennas. But, this gives us the opportunity to start planning those tower and antenna projects for the fall. Time to find that hard to find hardware, time to buy a replacement (fill in the blank). The days are already getting shorter and fall is just a few months away!

Bottom line, have some fun, learn more. Build something!

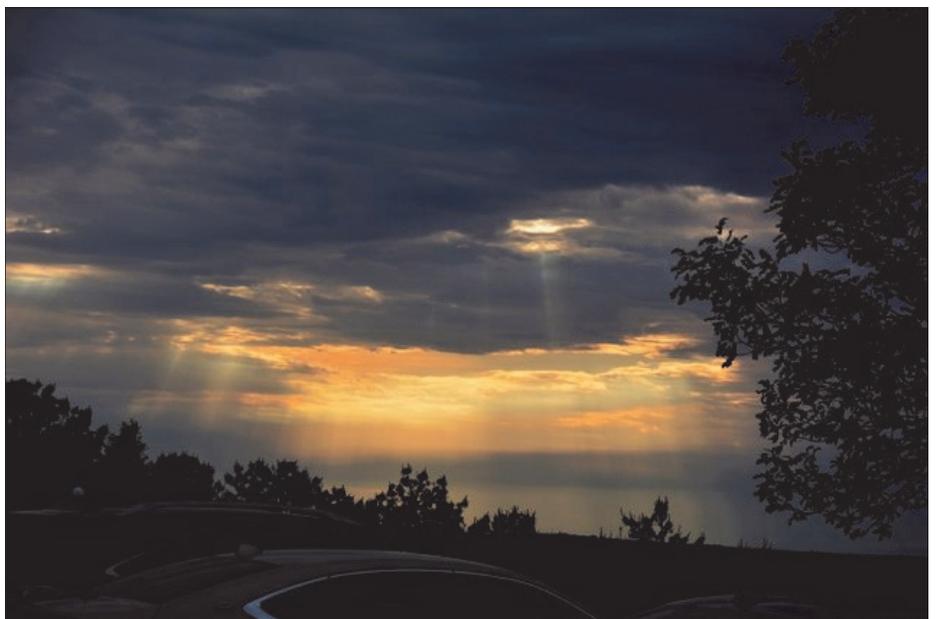
73, George KA3WXV

JUNE MEETING PICTURES



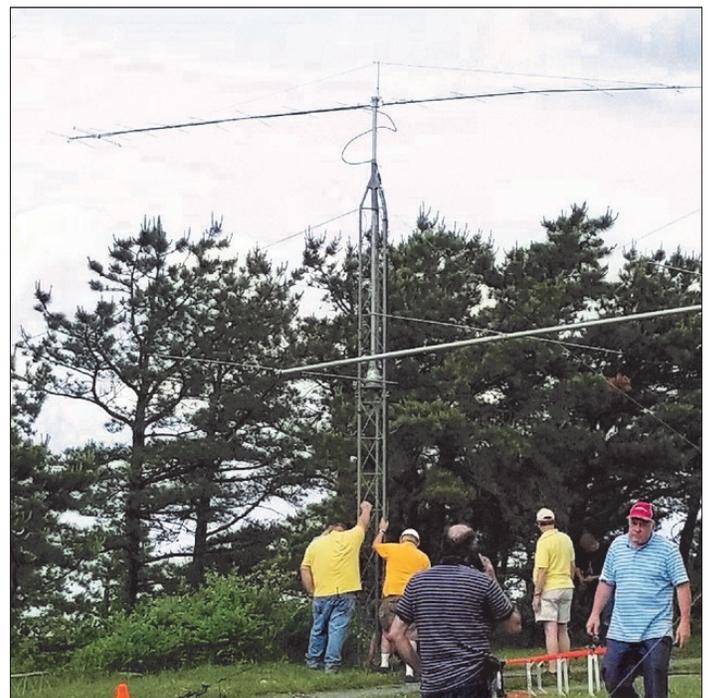


CAMELBACK 2018 PICTURES



Tnx to EI K3JJZ, Ken K2WB and John K3MD for great pictures!. There were many more. Just wish there was more room this month. -- W2BVH





NN3Q/R June Rove Report

As June rolled around, preparations were made to populate the rove van. Normally after each contest the K3's, computers, and large monitor are removed from the van. Not so much a security issue but more of a protection issue as the van is parked outside and the interior of the van experiences large temperature swings. This may not be the best environment for these sensitive electronic devices. The installation went well and the radio checkout was nominal. Microwave offsets were noted, and recorded.

For the June contest our 6 meter station was made FT8 capable. Certain software additions had to be made and with the help of Roger, W3SZ, all necessary software was added to the computers, allowing WSJTx to log directly into N1MM. The microwave station had an addition of a HSDR allowing much better resolution to see weak signals on the large monitor.

Planning the rove, we decided to visit FM08us, the famous Hogback Overlook (3400+feet ASL) inside the Shenandoah National Park, Skyline Drive. We would then rove back to PA and stop at a new FN10 site just east of Harrisburg. On Sunday we planned to follow our normal routine of FN10 (Pismire ridge), FN11 (solely to work W3CX), FN20bi (Reading), and finish in FN10xi.

My calculations for the drive to FM08us were off by about 45 minutes, and we arrived after the two pm start on Saturday. After a quick setup we were on the air and it was **fantastic!!** After experiencing how great this site works, our rove plans for the day were changed. Hogback mountain **produces contacts almost at will**, and is all that you can anticipate as a rove. We parked on this little hill for 3 1/2 hours until the clock made us migrate to the valley below. Our roving plans were changed, and while in motion Russ operated, as best that could be done from inside a noisy (mechanical and electrical) moving van. The drive back to the home QTH was late in coming and two tired ops poured from the van to regroup Sunday morning.

FM08 allowed us to work many stations, with a great run of all ten bands with the W3CCX crew (sort of mountaintop to mountaintop). K1RZ also gave us a great run on 10 bands with his super station.

All week leading up to the contest we kept hearing conditions on 6 meters were very good, and we observed those conditions during the contest and took advantage when the opportunity presented itself. Being a rove is fun but it sometimes lacks the advantages of fixed stations.

It was not until late Sunday afternoon that we began working "unique" grids (those outside our normal line of sight range). While in FN20 six meters finally opened for us and the many EL, EM, and EN grids populated the log. This continued for a long timeframe up to the time we pulled the switch around 8:30 pm. We did not work any stations into New England, or Canada.

Our submitted score was just above 40k (257 Q's / 91 mults)

To all we worked, making this an enjoyable weekend: Thank You!

73 AI K3WGR, and Russ NN3Q

I DIDN'T ROVE THIS JUNE

I now understand better how some other hams in the club who were remarkably active on the air have faded into noise. Spending almost 7 months in Florida in retirement has changed my perspective on my future hamming. In Florida, I did set up a temporary mast and antenna in my yard and operated some 432MHz EME on two separate weekends. I listened for a local 6 meter beacon as a test, and ran a few bands with K3IPM as a test. I joined the local Boca Raton Radio Club and attended a few meetings, gave a talk on VHF Contesting and EME operations. I visited their station on a few occasions but mostly to chat with the gang, not to operate. Jani and I also went to their annual holiday party.

Much of our time when we returned to PA was spent completing medical and dental appointments and catching up with family and friends. I have also been in selling mode for much of the ham gear that I feel I no longer will need. So what would I be doing for the June ARRL VHF Contest? I still have several radios, a limited home antenna with a log periodic in the attic and a G5RV 40m dipole that I can barely load on 6m. But I do make QSOs. I also have my rover radios for 6 through 1296 but the van is gone. I checked out and charged my batteries, borrowed a drive-over mast base from KB1JEY (it's actually mine, but on permanent loan to him) and thought I get out in the SUV and do a 5-6 band rove in 2-4 grids.

But then there was a posting on the reflector for additional 6 & 2 meter ops on the mountain. It was thin staffed this year, and I felt that the club was better served by having a full complement of ops on Camelback. I signed up for a 4 hour stint on 2m from 6-10PM on Saturday. As I summited Camelback, I was greeted by several members of the club. It was nice to see all the antennas in the air, although the 2 meter station antenna, one of the backbones of the entire operation was merely about 25 feet in the air and close to the few sparse trees on the mountain. A far cry from the 4 long Yagis on an H-frame that we have had in the past. I pulled out my LASER and made a few QSOs with the club station and others who had their communicators with them. I was concerned that the 2m beam did not seem to be tracking with the rotor control indicator. We asked Nick to reposition the beam while we reset the controller to north. Lo and behold, when he ascended the 20' tower, he found that none of the bolts that were holding the antenna mast had been tightened, and the antenna was basically free wheeling. Once he ratcheted down and repositioned, we were much better at directing our CQs to areas of ham population. I took over from Bruce WA3WUL after watching and learning the rig, control and logging. There was a terrible intermod whenever the 6m station transmitted, and once I turned off the rig's internal preamplifier, it greatly improved. The bands was relatively slow, making a few phone and CW QSOs periodically while slowly working the antenna around the entire compass. I asked every station I worked for other bands and sent many to the 222 and 432 station, using the N1MM logger info to give the proper frequencies. One thing we did not plan on was a handshake from the spot receiving station to verify that they had seen the spot and were ready to contact the station moving up the bands. I did catch a break for the great chicken dinner that Len N3NGE had prepared, and I especially loved the rhubarb pie that his XYL Linda had prepared. The highlight of the shift was working the VE3 rover in FN04 and another station down in EN97.

By 10 PM, my relief op was ready to take over and I said my farewells. I drove down the hill only to find the gate across the road with the lock in place. Try as I could, the combination of the lock, bar and wrapped chain had me stuck. I headed back up the hill, making calls to Bob W2SJ and getting George KA3WXV involved, George joined me in the SUV and we headed back to the gate. Mechanical genius that he is, George figured out the way to open the gate, moving the gate arms downhill, rather than uphill as I had tried. I delivered George back up to the hill and then was able to exit myself. It's always interesting to see the deer, fox and even a porcupine out dining themselves in the night.

On Sunday I fired up the home rig, put about a thousand points in the log, but was too unmotivated to submit it. So let's think about the upcoming CQ WW VHF and the 222 and Up AARL events...

73, Rick, K1DS

June Contest Results at K1RZ

A June Contest with some E-Skip. Plus WSJT-x. Plus Rovers! And then throw in a few thunderstorms with close by lightning. Quite a combination. All considered, it was great fun! But then EVERY contest on VHF is great fun!

The first few hours were spent working all bands 6M through 10 GHz, chasing Rovers (WA3PTV/R, KD3PD/R, NN3Q/R, K2EZ/R, W3ICC/R, N2XRE/R, KF2MR/R, calling CQ, tuning the bands, shutting down when the lightning got close, turning back on, moving stations up the bands. In other words, normal operations. I spent time reaching out to the multi-ops where possible and bouncing to FT8 for short periods.

Starting at 2047z for half an hour I worked KE4AZZ, N2RM, K5RQ, K1KNQ, N4TWX and AC4TO on 6M phone in EL87 / 88 / 89 / EM70...thinking "OK - IT is starting", like it had earlier in the week. But the "IT" didn't start at that point. I continued with normal non-E Skip regional operations. Later at 2316z I worked K4QD on FT8 but no other distant stations. I then returned to local operations running the bands, etc. At 2355z I worked K1TO and WB4TDH (both EL87) on phone, and then WB4TDH (EL87) on CW. In next few minutes there was K2PH (EL98) and WD5F (EL87) on CW and then WD4AB (EL95) and KG4QIV (EL86) on 6M Phone. Still wondering if the "IT" was here yet. No - not yet. Worked more fixed stations and multiops W3RFC, W3CCX and the Rovers, now with VE3SMA/R all in the region. There were reasonable tropo conditions to Stephen VE3ZV (EN92) and Peter VA3ELE . I worked both through 2304. I also picked up local station Chip WA4VHF with 8 bands using vhf rigs, mixers, amplifiers and broadband antennas, off his deck, looking down at me at 42km.

W3CCX - **thank you Packrats** for bringing it all together again on Camelback FN21hb. Sorry for not getting up there, but glad we could work you easily on the ten bands. And we completed with an 8 band run from 222 MHz to 10 GHz in only 10 minutes! You guys are outstanding on passing stations up the bands.

Just after midnight local I switched to MSK144 on 6M and 2M and picked up some distant grids through the morning hours. Enjoyed running into the regulars on that mode. About 1300z back on 2M on FT8 picked up KE1LI (FN41), VE3WCC (FN15), W2SZ (FN32), and both KV1J and N1JEZ (FN44). Then Bill W2RMA/R from Pittsburgh checked in to say there was an intense storm front over the Allegheny mountains. I checked K0SM's rainscatter program and there was graphical analytics, pulling in the various NOAA weather radars showing we had an excellent chance for rainscatter on 10 GHz. I worked Bill easily on 10 GHz Rainscatter for EN90xh (267 km's distance). K0SM's rainscatter program showed several other locations in the region could have also been worked. [This summer Bill and I decided to test Rainscatter between ourselves and with our GHz neighbors, every time we see storm fronts in the region]. I worked W2RMA/R again through 2304 from EN90xh. Worked more Rovers K2EZ/R and WA3PTV/R. Worked regular contact Paul K1GX through 2304. Paul had extra duties, as he was filling in for Jeff K1TEO who lost a tower and all antennas in May to a micro-burst type weather event. Jeff was back on 6m, but I missed him.

Then at 1747z I returned to 6m with friend W3HMS (FN10), finishing a 5 band run, and there was N7VD in DM43, with my antenna still to the north to work John! This WAS "IT"! The elusive "IT". I turned west and stayed there rest of the afternoon. Mostly phone, and a few CW contacts, and a few FT8 contacts when things slowed for a few minutes before the 50 MHz came back strong again. Breaking every so often - K2EZ/R (thanks Ria N2RJ, and Andrea), and thanks W3ICC/R (Drex and Paul W2PED). Thanks W4IY multiop - you are always there for FM08. Thanks W3SO multi-op in FN00. We all appreciate the massive efforts you use to bring your stations on the air for these contests. Thanks K2LIM multi-op in FN12mg, Ken, Al, and others, plus guest op Ray N3RG. You guys have been solid for years. Will miss you all beginning in 2019.

Switched to 6m FT8 at 1924z as could see PZ5RA (GJ25) and VP9I (FM72) on DXMaps. My only DX.

I could see incredible station density across the whole central and eastern part of the country solidly represented on the DXMaps.com map. I should have used DXMaps more often. I heard others say Europe was in, but I did not work any.

At 2016z took short break to work Bob W2SJ thru 3456 and Mike N2DEQ thru 902, both stations in FM29. More Q's with Rovers W3ICC/R, VE3SMA/R and K2EZ/R. And then back on 6M as it was still solid with signals, starting with N4OGW (EM53), N9UDO (EN53), KY00 (EM29), and more central US. Worked Jerome K3GNC through 2.3 GHz, plus others in the region. Then it was back to 6M at 2243z starting with KP4TR (EL87), AF4K (EL98) and K4EA (EM74) to end my E-Skip operations for the contest at 2245z.

I was able to do 2 more grids with Drex and Paul W3ICC/R and K1KG (FN42) thru 902. N1JEZ (FN44) on 222 and 432. Then my neighbor Maurice through 10 GHz. Worked my close neighbor Ed W3EKT, now with the addition of 5 & 10 GHz, for ten bands. Glad you guys were on. Finished 6 bands with close neighbor Mike W3IP. Mike thanks for your help earlier this year to get my 222 and 432 xvtrs stabilized to effectively work FT8 on those bands. These mods allowed me to complete FT8 contacts with Ken KU8Y in EN51 on 222 and 432 under extremely unstable atmospheric conditions across the region.

Thanks Lenny W2BVH (FN20up) for working me through 1296. Always good to get to talk with you. Good to finish off the bottom four with you Bill AA2UK (and Bill, thanks for all the wisdom and advice you bring to us all with regards to finer points of FT8, and MSK144). And thanks Terry W8ZN and Margie K4MEP for working me through 3.4 GHz. You guys are awesome! I know you will soon be on as beacons from your new QTH at FM09te. Also glad to hear you Brian K3MEC (N3IQ) as you continue to build your mountain station, close by at FM09. Mike WB2RVX, thanks so much for connecting with me right at the end to work all our bands through 10 GHz. Thanks Ken KU8Y (EN61uw) for 144 (CW), 222 and 432 (both FT8) for contacts near the end. And finally Glenn WB2JAY (FN30), your patience got us the 222 contact! Next time we start 1 minute earlier for the 432 contact. Thank you Glenn.

Finally I am so glad we all have ON4KST 144/432 Region 2 chat page to set-up these contacts. Those folks are amazing for facilitating this essential chat page.

See you in the ARRL 222 and Up Distance Contest first weekend in August, and the 10 GHz and Up contest in August. I'll be at FN41ee with Dale AF1T and Mickie W1MKY. 10, 24 and 47 GHz times 3.

Results: 650 Q's, 273 Grids, 286,650 Pts

NE3I/R FUN THROUGH SIMPLICITY

My objective this June was to Rove again, avoid frustration, fatigue and injury, visit the W3CCX site and have fun. Deployment began at Camelback. After checking out the always impressive operation and obvious camaraderie there, I made multiple Laser and lower 4 band Qs with W3CCX and other autonomous and gourmet operators there and at large. I decided to reposition to the area of Little Gap to look for possible rover sites there. Winding my way on unfamiliar roads and passing through the thriving mini-metropolis of Little Gap, (essentially an intersection), I crossed over a covered bridge, (twice, because I made a wrong turn), and found the road over Blue Mountain. To my surprise, at the top of the ridge, I found the Blue Mountain Resort. At 1250 Feet, with plenty of parking, it had an unobstructed view Northwest through Northeast particularly, line-of-sight to Camelback and W3CCX, approximately 16 miles away (see photo). Camelback is on the horizon to the far right. From there with only the verticals, I worked W3CCX on four bands and other stations in FN21 and FN11. I had dinner on the southern slope at the Blue Mountain Drive Inn and, from its parking lot, worked stations on 6 Meters in FN20, FM70, EL87, EL98 and EL99. On Sunday I operated from some spots near home in FN20 and again with the vertical, worked, inter alia, stations on 6 Meters in DM54 and DM32. 67 Q's, 26 Grids, 2600 Pts. Thanks for the Qs.



Impressions of June on Camelback by a New Packrat

Here is a write up my recollections of the mountain.

Having been inducted into the club 3 weeks prior to the contest, inspired me to help set up Friday, operate the contest from home and help pack up on Monday.

My motorbike drive up Friday was uneventful compared to last year when the clutch cable broke at the base of the mountain and I had to retreat back to Philly traffic without the clutch. Drove up with gf and car the next day... I was sorry to miss WA3LBI and K1DS EME stations who had already packed up. That was then, this was now.

Friday's first sight of the mountaintop station-staging was an eye full. Lots of people doing lots of stuff. I was one of many there to assist others who knew what help was needed. I operate on the bottom four VHF bands so was glad to observe/assist Ed in setting up the 902 and 1296 stations. To help adjust the feedpoint of a variety of antennas, Ed's small network analyzer was frequently used. The mountaintop was a hard place to leave Friday evening an hour or two before sunset. The work was not finished,



the weather was perfect, the camaraderie was contagious, the motorcycle hesitated to start, (puffing smoke by the time i got home)...

I awoke at home Saturday well rested and ready to operate. Early in the contest, I distinctly remember working W3CCX on 6 meters but apparently never logged it. By Sunday, chasing 6 meter multipliers on phone was my strategy. This was the first contest I submitted a log for and I learned some of the pitfalls of logging by hand.

Monday saw me return to the mountaintop in my lovely gf's car and by 8 am, the pack up was well under way. The weather was even more perfect than for the set up Friday afternoon. A thick fog had crept 2/3 way up the mountain. Had I camped on mountaintop, the fog would have been enjoyed during the part of the time I spent driving. I provided some random disassembly assistance with extra interest in Ed's packing procedure. Camping on the mountain would have reduced my commuting in half, would have allowed me to operate the various contest stations, would have provided the opportunity to be rained on, struck by lightning, bitten by mountain lions, bears, rattlesnakes and deer ticks. It was fun and I will plan to camp next year.

Jim KC3BVL

June VHF Contest Reports

From John K3MD

Fun!!!!

600 plus Q's on 6... 120-130 mults

I operated 15 hrs

From Michelle KB3MTW

Not much, but almost 1000 points submitted for the club.

41 Q's 17 Grids 986 Pts

From George WB3IGR

I didn't go to the mountain, But I put up a temp 903 station and worked W3CCX with just 9 watts an a 33 element loop yagi at 12 feet. I also worked W3SZ. I wasn't able to turn the beam, but did go up the stairs and outside to manually turn it.



From N2NT (N2NT, N2NC, WW2Y Ops)

Another fun VHF/UHF weekend from N2NT. No major equipment problems this year. We had an issue with WSJT-x transmit audio on one of the two operating positions. Resolving this took about an hour of troubleshooting at 1:00 AM the first night. That could have been avoided by checking everything before the contest. Lesson learned. 6m was in pretty good shape on Sunday and at times the band was very crowded. That was great! Nice to see a packed CW band as well as a packed FT8

band. I think we are all learning how to get the most from all available modes as conditions change over the contest period. Peter, WW2Y, bought over his Henry 432 MHz amp for the weekend. 500 watts definitely helped speed up our QSOs on that band. As always, thanks to Andy and his XYL Bonnie for letting N2NC and WW2Y invade their basement for the weekend. 1029 Q's 248Grids 293,136 Pts

From Lenny W2BVH

With company over the house and with a cold limiting operating time I feel like I did OK. There was plenty of single hop Es to keep me busy on FT8 and phone. Highlights for me include a 7 band run with W3CCX, working K2LIM on 1.2G and a 6M Q to DM32 (AZ). Something I learned: WB2JAY was inaudible on 902 until I put a cavity filter in-line, after which he was coming through at 539! You live and learn. As for FT8 ops: it's very well worth using this mode. I had many Q's that would not have happened with phone (and likely not even with cw). I think after the novelty has worn off we will see fewer q's that would be a slam dunk on phone taking place with FT8 and it will be used as intended, to get weak signal q's that can't be gotten any other way. As always it was a FUN 'test.

126 Q's 59 Grids 10,266

From Ken K2WB

29 Q's 13 Grids 468 Pts

Larry K1IED, SK

My memories of Larry, K1IED, go back to the early 1960's when he was in the service and stationed in Norfolk, VA. He had an 829B 2M amplifier and 2M yagi at his barracks and was on 144 MHz almost every night. He was real DX for me in Connecticut. During the summer, tropo late at night would bring his AM signal out of the noise and delight all the 2M ops in New England and the NYC area. K1IED/4 was a fixture on the band, and it was always fun to think about those days. His Dad, Leon was a Connecticut Mobileer and had a great QTH in Bethlehem, CT. His Goonie box heard everything! I recall going to a hamfest/ flea market at their CT QTH in the early 60's. Great memories that I will never forget. We will all miss Larry on the bands. RIP.

Dave K1WHS

MUD 2018 Call for Papers

Microwave Update 2018
Dayton, Ohio, October 11 – 14, 2018
Holiday Inn, Fairborn, Ohio
www.microwaveupdate.org

Microwave Update (MUD) is an international conference dedicated to microwave equipment design, construction, and operation. It is focused on, but not limited to, amateur radio on the microwave bands. The Midwest VHF/UHF Society is pleased to host this year's event. The conference will be held at the Holiday Inn, 2800 Presidential Drive, Fairborn, Ohio 45324.

Call for Presentations and Papers: The program committee is calling for papers and presentations on the technical and operational aspects of microwave amateur radio communications. Tell us about your latest project, design or operating adventures. Please e-mail your proposals, questions, and submissions to John Ackermann, N8UR, at jra@febo.com. Don't wait until the beginning of September to let us know what you're planning!

Presentations selected for the technical program may be given in person or by proxy. Please send an abstract and expected duration no later than August 25, 2018 so that we can determine and announce the program agenda the following week. Ideally, send your draft presentation by the same date. We encourage presenters to submit a companion paper for publication in the proceedings book. This paper would ideally be text based and expand on the presentation slides, but a simple copy of the slides is also okay. Either way, this material must be received no later than September 1, 2018 to be included in the book. Additional material (presentation slides, schematics, source code, more text, background info, etc.) to be included on the proceedings CD must arrive no later than September 25, 2018. All conference attendees will receive a copy of the book and CD.

Full details, including suggested topics, paper guidelines, schedule, and hotel information can be found on the MUD website:
www.microwaveupdate.org.

Registration is now open at the web site

Mid-Atlantic States VHF Conference Call for Papers

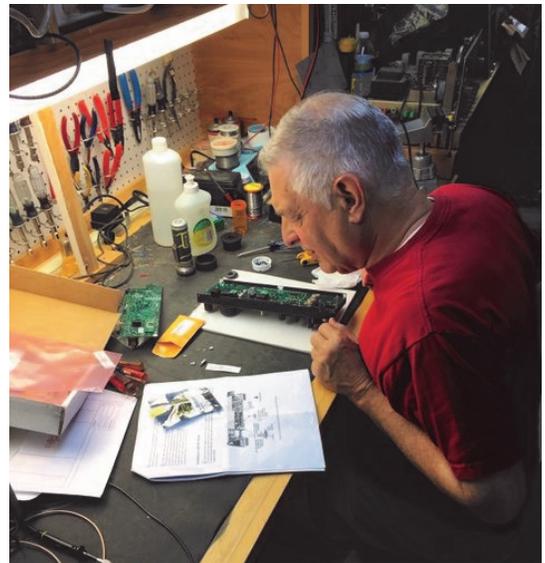
The 2018 Mid-Atlantic States VHF Conference Sept 28-30 sponsored by the Packrats will again be held at the Holiday Inn Bensalem-Philadelphia.

We are accepting papers and presentations on any topics related to VHF and above. Please contact rick1ds@hotmail.com with your topic or title.

Conference features Hospitality, Table-top selling, Papers and Presentations, Technical testing room, Banquet, Door Prizes, Outdoor mini-tailgate-fleamarket.

Holiday Inn Bensalem-Philadelphia conference rate is \$105 +tax mention "VHF Conference." Rate includes buffet breakfast for 2 room occupants.

Our President Hard At Work



George was putting a voice recorder and a transverter interface into the K3 he got at the Hamvention

Packrats Attend Ham Social At IMS

Packrat members were fortunate to have an invitation to the International Microwave Symposium. Marc N2UO, a Packrat now living in North Carolina managed to arrange visitor passes for any members of the club who were interested.. The pass enabled the user to attend the Tuesday evening amateur radio social and also to gain entry to the exhibition floor. Several of us took the opportunity to meet at the Philadelphia Convention Center in the mid-afternoon to visit the booths prior to the social.

We gathered at the corner of the floor at the Mini-Circuits booth and Paul WA3GFZ, Phil K3TUF, Joe K1JT and Rick K1DS all got to say hello to Walt Mcnutt. Walt is one of the Mini-Circuit gang who has been supporting our VHF Conference for many years, both with his attendance and door prize contributions.

We headed in different directions to see the exhibitors and their wares. The convention center room is about 2 acres and there were hundreds of booths featuring all sorts of microwave technology. A prominent theme seemed to be 5G (that's fifth generation,



not 5GHz) complete with all the transmission gear on 24GHz. There were demonstrations of microwave antenna patterns, big power SSPAs on the microwaves, and a myriad of manufacturers for cables and connectors. Unfortunately, the only samples available were candies and pens and catalogs. I did manage to find one booth with some boxed "Experimenter's kits" and they will find their way to the door prize table for the VHF Conference.

Joe Taylor, K1JT spoke at the Ham Radio Social. Attended by almost 200 hams and friends, he reviewed the basics of FT8, the newest mode of the WSJT-X communication software program. The program will celebrate its first birthday this month, and its use has seen a meteoric rise in popularity since its release. Based on the web reporting information, it accounts for about **50% of all the QSOs** being made today, including all other modes. He hinted at a revised version that will add a few characters to the message size to include the 4 digit grid locator in addition to the signal report so that there might be less confusion among contacts with contesters.

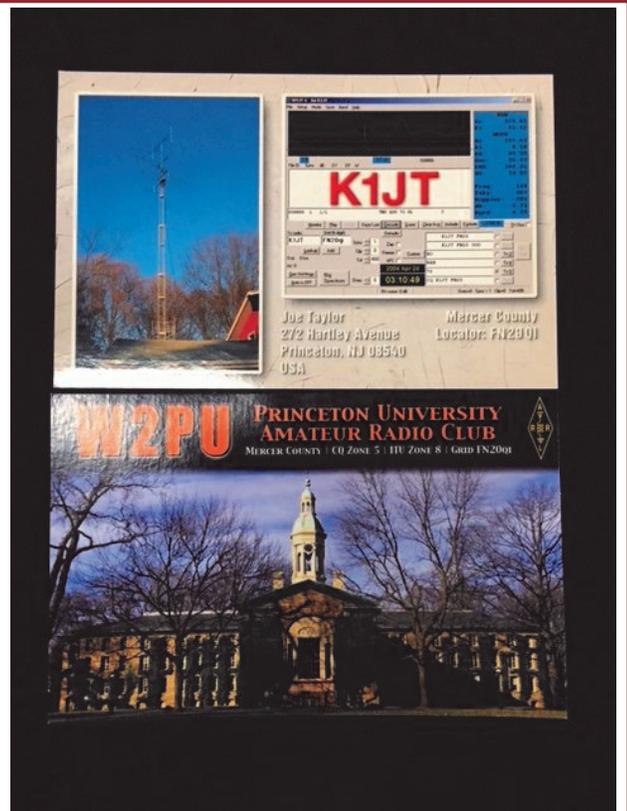
Some of the Packrats and other attendees brought items for the show and tell table. Pictured (p. 16) are the QSL cards from Joe and the Princeton University station. A multiband microwave transceiver by Paul WA3GFZ will also be the topic of a presentation at the Mid-Atlantic VHF Conference. A LimeSDR USB was displayed by K1DS along with his miniature memory keyer and a broadband PGA preamplifier designed by G4DDK and WB5VJB that covers 144MHz-2GHz.

I was wearing my Packrat shirt with the ARRL 100th Anniversary patch that drew some questions and conversation from the exhibitors. Having given a presentation this past year at the Sci-Tech Club in my Florida development entitled, "Ham Radio in the 21st Century— not your grandfather's Morse Code," I was well prepared to explain how the hobby has evolved and expanded to include computers, the internet, digital communications and satellite technology.

There were antenna horns of all shapes and sizes. Stuff I would have loved to have, but they weren't giving out any samples!

There were many neat things to see on the exhibitor floor. It would have taken a full day or two to visit all of the booths and chat with the manufacturers and designers. There were many printed circuit antennas of every dimension and frequency. Connectors for every conceivable application, even many that can easily be used for a game of chess.

--Rick K1DS



VHF EXCITEMENT ON FIELD DAY

I made it a point to visit the K3DN Warminster Field Day site and the K2AA Southern NJ FD site. As I am fading out of the rover role, I'll likely be operating a bit from home, or more likely from some of the multi-op stations that are available during contests. I made my way up to the Shrine of Czestochowa for the first time since living here in PA and was surprised to see all the cars, people and activity on a dreary Saturday afternoon. Since none of them has call-sign license plates or antennas on the roof or bumper, I drove a little further up the road beside the shrine to a field where I spotted the 6m and 2m Yagi antennas on the modest aluminum tower that I had resurrected from K2TXB and rebuilt for such occasions. It's now on permanent loan to George



KA3WXV. Michael, George and Guy and another Warminster member were relaxing in the VHF GOTA station tent with a pair of FT857 radios and catching a few contacts here and there. The HF stations were doing some modest activity with a vertical antenna and another wire antenna strung into a nearby tree. Due to the rain and thunderstorm forecast, operations were limited to 2A.



I tooled around in my car, making a few contacts on 146.52 direct, including a chat with NE3I. That was a 1C operation. I got home and that evening I decided to take my one remaining Marine battery and hook it to the TS2000x and then to the venerable TS-850SAT where I operated 1B, making PH and CW contacts on 20m, 40m and one QSO on 6m with W2MMD, operated by AI KB2AYU.

I was out the door Sunday AM at 8, but the tire pressure indicator showed a problem. Sure enough, the left rear wheel had a huge nail stuck in it. Not a good idea to drive to Marlton, NJ this way. I left the car home and opted for my wife's auto, making it out to the SNJ FD site in an hour. All I can say in a word is IMPRESSIVE! The huge fields used there were ideal for spreading out HF stations and having seven towers worth of antennas, including beams on 40m through 10m. I found Packrats K2WB, W2TAG and N3RG in various activities--my favorite was seeing Ken with his grandson in special FD T-shirts, and the little one asking if he can get another sticker for working another QSO! The CW trailer was especially a treat as I watched three stations on the air and working Q after Q at a nice CW speed. It was nice and quiet and air-

conditioned and not a note of interference. They made their satellite QSO, did PSK and other digital activity besides. The hospitality table was full of goodies, and a few late breakfast arrivals were enjoying fresh made blueberry pancakes.

I am sure that I'll have plenty of opportunity to get in the action in the future, even though I am no longer roving. **73, Rick, K1DS**



Packrats in QST

The June edition of **QST**, World Above 50 MHz column, has a discussion of using aircraft scatter for Ham Radio communications. Part of the discussion quotes information from our own W3SZ, Roger, and references his website for more information, including software.

Additionally, a customized and optimized software mode is described (*ISCAT-A*) and identified as part of the K1JT, Joe Taylor, *WSJT-X* suite of programs.

If you haven't read the column, I suggest you do.

And, congratulations to both of them for their contributions.

Bert, K3IUV

The Wayback Machine In CHEESE BITS, 50 Years Ago

Nibbles from June 1968. Vol. XI Nr. 7
de Bert, K3IUV
(*author's comments in italics*)

“Our Prez Sez”. Dave, W3LHF (later W3ZD) commented: 1) “The June QSO party is over with another **smashing victory** for the Pack Rats.” (*His words, not mine!*). 2) Next event is the Pack Rats Picnic in Flourtown. Make a note of the date so that no conflicts are planned by the xyl! Renew your friendships with buddies up and down the coast (*We did get attendees from New England to MD*). 3) Elections were just completed so please give your support to the new officers (*New Prez, Charley, K3HSS*).

Constitution and By-Laws. W3SAO, Frankie, continued his informative column, discussing sections of the Packrat Constitution and Bylaws. This month he listed the 4 “Requirements for membership.” (*Do you know them? Do you know where your copy of the C and B is? If you do not have a copy, request one from the Board (or me.) Each member received (or should have) a copy of the current version.*) .

ARRL Bulletin 169, 5/16/68. The FCC has authorized Advance and Extra Class license tests to be administered to Shut-Ins. Effective June 17th (*my birthday!*).

ARRL Bulletin 170, 5/24/68. US Amateurs operating from a US base in Barbados were added to the list of third party traffic countries.

ARRL Bulletin 171, 5/29/68. The FCC

concluded a reciprocal operating agreement with Guyana, effective May 13.

ARRL Bulletin 173, 6/13/68.

Announcement from the ARRL that VS9H, Kuria Muria (*anyone ever heard of that?*), and ZC6, Palestine will be deleted from the DXCC list. “The Palestine listing comprised of the UN Truce Area bordering on Israel, no longer exists.” These will both be deleted from the DX honor roll. (*Interesting.*)

Two Meter Activity Report. W3LHF, Dave (later W3ZD) noted that his friend Dave, K1WHS (*recognize the call?*) reported a good opening to the West, just before the contest, with K2HLA in Long Island working W0MQS in Iowa (*Remember, this was well before the “digital” contacts now being made*). He also mentioned that his two-meter station was used at Hilltown, and resulted in 271 contacts in 20 “sections”. He closed with “Try a bit of cw, or just plain calling CQ on AM (*AM??*). You may find some better contacts than you thought possible. “

June QSO Party Results. The contest chairman, K3IUV, Bert (*that's me*) reported that a total of 40 club members participated in the club contest operation at Hilltown. Contacts and sections worked, by band, were as follows: 50 (336 / 35); 144 (271 / 20); 220 (64 / 13); 432 (39 / 12); 1296 (4 / 1); 2300 (1 / 1). But the Crown Jewel was the “DX” contact on 1296, working K3DYO in Feasterville, 17.5 miles from Hilltown. (*More on that later*).

Contest Dissertation. W3SAO, Frankie, provided a page (14”) of details about

the contest preparation and activity. Entitled "My Lost Weekend of June 7-8-9th, 1968." Written in a slightly humorous vein, I would heartily suggest you read the full article at W3CCX.COM. Some highlights follow: "Arrived at the QTH of W3LHF at 7:05 am on Friday. Went to work with him in his red beetle, but left at 11:30 to load up his station wagon. ... Dave picked up a TV truck and returned to his QTH where K3DLS and I helped load his monster 2-meter rig. We then proceeded to the QTH of K3UJD, Mario, the Ivyland Kid, (*Mario was the namesake of our door prize table*) where we put 2 sections of tower, masts and gear on the roof of the truck. .. We arrived at Hilltown at 2:50. (*He then listed 19 members [including K3JJZ] who arrived to help set up the gear*). 7 others arrived that evening. On 432, Mario had his tower up before any of the others. Watching the great Mario erect his monster with a gin-pole and winch was a beautiful sight. Beam was a 32-element quad, built by W3KKN. Next up was 144, with a 28-element quad antenna by W2EIF. 6-meters followed with a 5-element Telrex donated to the club by K3IPM (!). On 220, W2EIF installed the 28- element quad on a 20' ladder. After an overnight campout (*just like today*) we returned to the W3LHF QTH to await the arrival of K3IUUV, Bert, who drove up with a 6-ft., 1296 dish on the roof of his car. .. We were ready at the start of the contest and ran until 7:00 pm Sunday. Our score, 828 points and 82 sections was the 2nd highest total ever made in a June VHF QSO party." "See you next

year when we will better the score."

Swap Shoppe. (*Always nostalgia.*) For sale by K2AIQ, Bud. An RDR receiver (military) 225 – 390 MC (sic), \$10; A 220 transmitter (beautiful), \$35; and an Ameco CB220 converter, \$20. Also, an extensive list of equipment from the estate of W3DRC, Tom. Offered by the club, "Please bid by phone or in person. All items priced for quick sale, please be reasonable. Unsold items will be available at the Packrat white elephant sale on July 17 (*just as we still do today*)." Among the choice items were a Saturn 6 Halo antenna and a 12-v. vibrator power supply (*I still have a few vibrators in the basement if anyone needs / wants them!*).

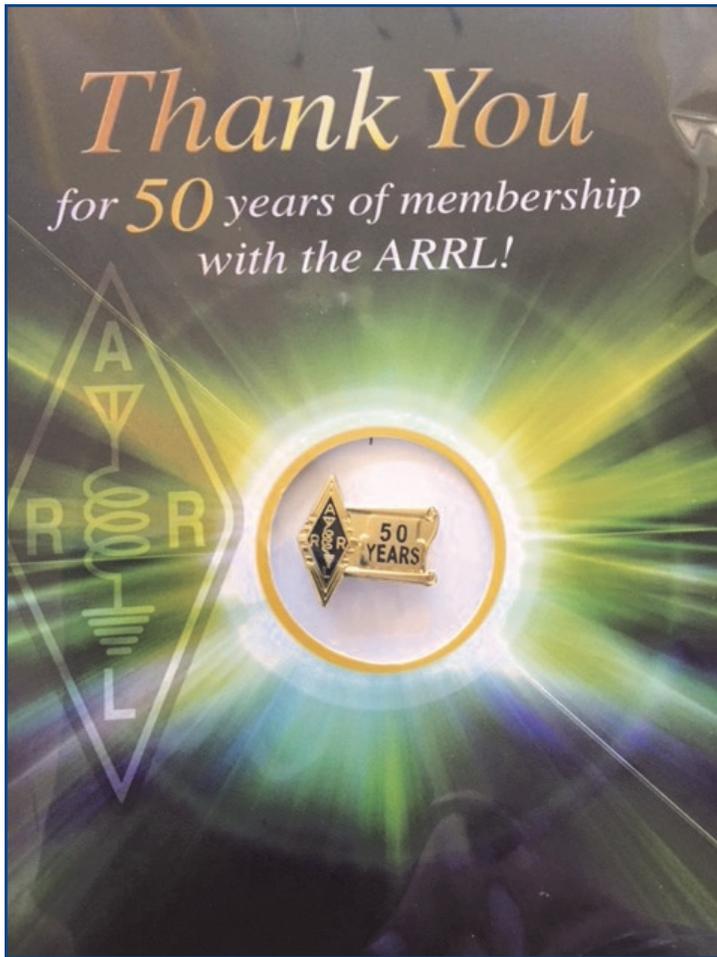
Tidbit. W2AXU, Jack, reported that NJ finally approved the issuance of Ham Radio license plates. (*They were the last state to do so!*)

Miscellany. *Postage for this copy (from W3KKN,) was another nice 6-cent Roosevelt stamp. 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 our website (www.W3CCX.COM) and read the full issue scanned by K3IUUV (me), and posted on the site. Remember, I have also posted the club Officers history, club Membership history, and Packrat Inventory on the W3CCX website. These files are password protected, and only accessible to registered member. Have you registered?*

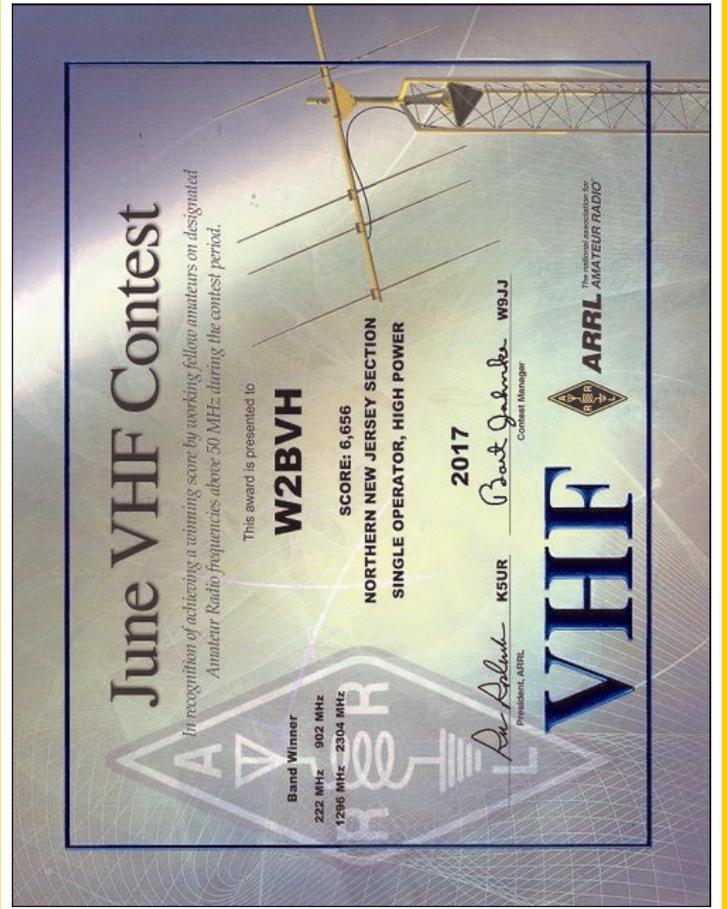


Thirty, de K3IUUV

Recent Mail at the QTH of K1DS

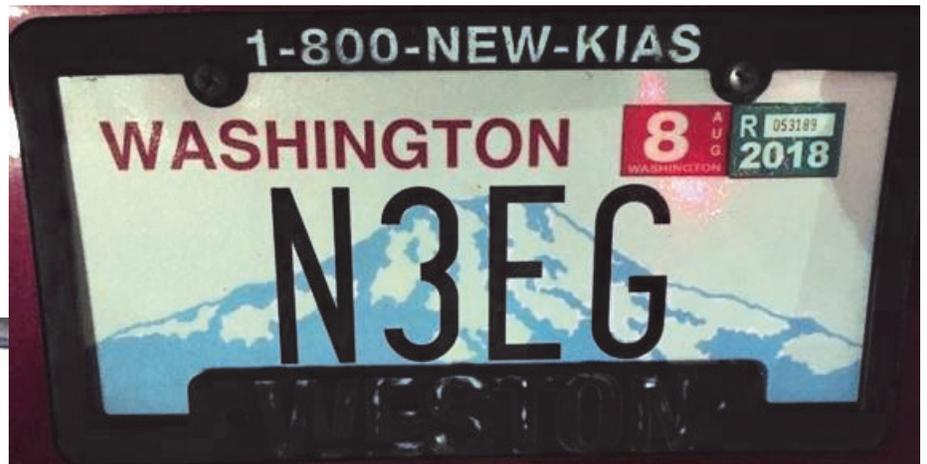


Recent Mail at the QTH of W2BVH



A Visitor from Washington State

Earl visited the club again at the June meeting after a 37 year lapse from his Packrat membership days.



Events

For inclusion, please direct event notices to the editor.

Valley Forge Hamfest - Hamfest - July 14, 2018. Kimberton Fire Company Fairgrounds, Phoenixville, PA. See <http://www.marc-radio.org/> for details

Sussex (NJ) Hamfest - Hamfest - July 15, 2018. Sussex County Fairgrounds, Augusta NJ. See <http://scarcnj.org/> for details.

CQ Worldwide VHF - Contest - July 21-22, 2018. See <https://www.cqww-vhf.com/> for details.

222 and UP - Contest - August 4-5, 2018. See www.arrl.org/222-mhz-and-up-distance-contest for details.

Reading Radio Club Hamfest - Hamfest - August 4, 2018. Sinking Spring, PA. See <http://www.qsl.net/w3bn/> for details

10 GHz and Up (Round 1) - Contest - August 18-19, 2018. See <http://www.arrl.org/10-ghz-up> for details.

6M Fall Sprint - Contest - (2300Z August 25, 2018 to 0300Z August 26, 2018. Details at http://svhfs.org/2018_SVHFS_FallSprints.pdf

September VHF - Contest - September 8-10, 2018. See <http://www.arrl.org/september-vhf> for details.

10 GHz and Up (Round 2) - Contest - September 15-16, 2018. See <http://www.arrl.org/10-ghz-up> for details.

2M Fall Sprint - Contest - September 17, 2018, 7-11pm local. Details at http://svhfs.org/2018_SVHFS_FallSprints.pdf

222MHz Fall Sprint - Contest - September 25, 2018, 7-11pm local. Details at http://svhfs.org/2018_SVHFS_FallSprints.pdf

EME 2.3 GHz and Up - Contest - September 29-30, 2018. See <http://www.arrl.org/eme-contest> for details.

JA 6-Meter QSO's This Spring

WA3QPX - JE1BMJ

Hello Han-san, Tnx for fb qso. My first contact with JA on 6m. SASE is ok as I do not use digital qsl. Antenna is 2 x 6M7JHV by M2 spaced 24 feet. Gear is Flex 6600 SSB preamp and Lunar Link amp running 600watts It is capable of 1.5W full duty cycle. I have worked many JA on 2m EME and have DXCC #141 on 2m now with 140 entities. GL, Paul WA3QPX

JA (ALMOST!) W2BVH

I thought working JA on 6M was out of the realm of possibility. I haven't done it yet but it may be possible. On a good day (and that hasn't happened recently), band noise at my qth is S6-7. Most of the time it's S8-9. But even in that environment, yesterday I decoded CQ's from JE1BMJ and JG1TSG with FT8. And hearing is more than half the battle right? Given those facts, I decided to see if I was ever heard in JA, using W3SZ's method of querying the PSKReporter web database. I downloaded a file containing all reported decodes of my call for the last 7 days from www.pskreporter.info, and sorted it by callsign. Two JA stations reported decoding my callsign in the last 7 days. So the conclusion is: not there yet, but it's possible!! Maybe even this Es season. If not, well like they used to say in Brooklyn, "wait till next year".

K1JT to 5 JA's + 1 (6/22/18)

I just worked JA7QVI, JM1IGJ, JR1LZK, JR1DQK, and JN1JFC on 50.313, and I'm still CQing... In addition to several dozen stations in Europe, the Caribbean, and South America, on Tuesday this week I worked JA9SJI for DXCC #98 on 6m. Lots of fun! ... and looking for 2 more DXCCs before the Es season is over ;-)

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W3IY Rover Recognition Award

You guys really surprised me with the 2017 W3IY Rover Recognition Award....

Making V/UHF & m/w Qs in Delta Div is quite a challenge & I'm shocked I ever showed on your radar! I'm not sure who all to thank but I hope to live up to the standards set by W3IY/R.

I have always felt roving is a key element to the V/UHF & m/w contests. So many grids near me are idle if I don't go.

Our ranks are shrinking annually so to honor our V/UHF & m/w SKs I give the 10 band rover quite a workout.

73 de AG4V/R

Joel Knoblock W3RFC

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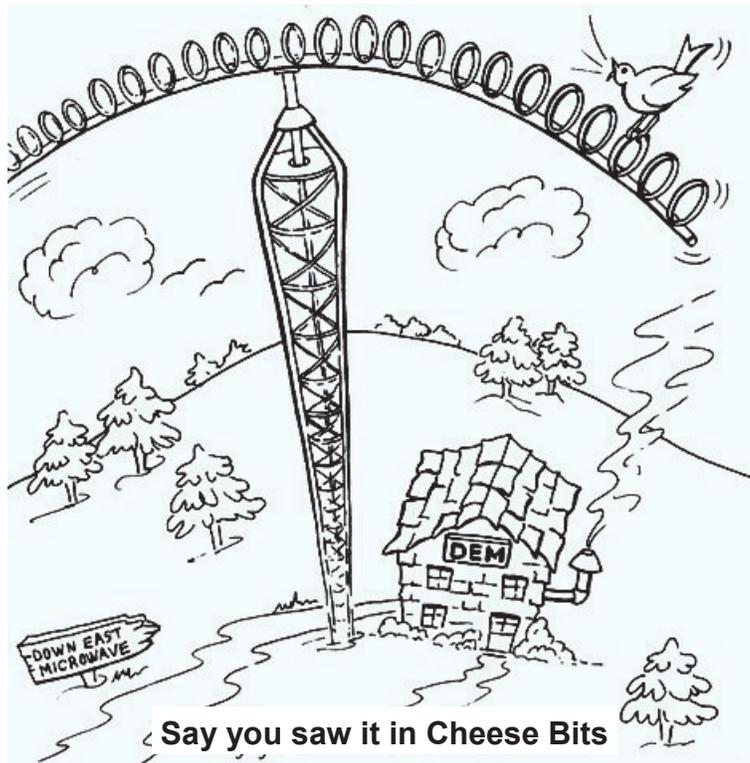
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