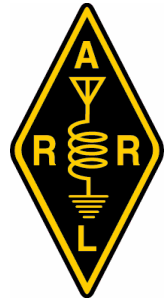




CHEESE BITS

W3CCX
CLUB MEMORIAL CALL

ARRL
Affiliated
Club



Volume LV

February 2014

Number 2

PREZ SEZ:

The 2014 January Contest is over, and we're all facing new challenges with the weather. Weather for the contest this year was a gift. No significant issues with roving, but **no special propagation either**. I know there are some excitement filled stories being prepared for the upcoming crying towel meeting. Some folks started to allude to the troubles during the wrap up, but we tried to have them save the details for the meeting.

We had another successful club showing with nearly 70 logs and north of 2.2 million points! What a great job. Everyone is to be commended.

What has the weather done to the outdoor part of your station? I for one have been plagued with ice now for several days. I've lost my wire antennas, but of course they are not involved with VHF/UHF. I just pray the ½ inch of ice on the tower and antennas does not do the damage that it did on the wire antennas. **Hopefully we all survive this spell with minimal damage.** With Spring only about 45 days away, there is hope, and an opportunity to fix any anomalies caused by the weather.

Our beacon committee is now in place and starting to plan for the new set of beacons. We look forward to renewing this prime function of the club and want to take the time to make the beacons top notch. A tall order!

Thank you to those who contributed their expertise to the early stages, and speaking of contributing, we already have monetary contributions to the Beacon Fund. Our treasurer has carved out a separate fund to track independent contributions that will exclusively go to funding the new beacons. If you want to join those who have already contributed, just get the money to W3KM and mark it "Beacon". Dave will take care of the rest. You don't have to be a member to contribute.

A quick reminder: you can get some good CW practice during this month's ARRL CW DX contest from the 14th to the 16th and have a lot of fun doing it.

The next VHF on air events are the Spring Sprints. These are a great way to tune up your station and have fun at the same time. Some think the four hour mini contest is too short and some think it's just right. However you feel about the time, it's a nice way to activate the air waves, and work stations without having to worry about getting to another band. The dates are published in this issue, so make sure you mark your calendar to get on for each of the five events. The first one is two meters and remember, you can have fun by using the external reflectors to set up contacts in real time. That way the far stations are actually looking your way at the same time you are looking their way.

What a concept?

The next VHF in person event (besides our meeting) is the Eastern VHF/UHF Conference being

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PACKRAT BEACONS - W3CCX/B

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

MONDAY NIGHT NETS

TIME **FREQUENCY**
7:30 PM 50.145 MHz

NET CONTROL

8:00 PM 144.150 MHz
8:30 PM 222.125 MHz
8:30 PM 224.58R MHz
9:00 PM 432.110 MHz
9:30 PM 1296.100 MHz
10:00 PM 903.100 MHz

K3EOD FM29II
WA3QPX FM29di
N3ITT FN20KI
KB1JEY FN20je
W3GXB FN20jm
WB2RVX FM29mt
K3TUF FN10we
WA3SRU FN20le

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

held again this year in Hartford at the Baymont Inn and Suites. This year once again I plan to take convenient Amtrak transportation. Last year the ride was most pleasant with the journey starting in Harrisburg, stopping in Lancaster. Then Philadelphia 30th street and depositing us in downtown Hartford, just a short inexpensive cab ride to the Baymont. The schedule is perfect for the event. With all the traffic reported by those who drove last year, I can't imagine a good reason not to use the train; if we get enough riders, we can occupy our own car :-)



It's time to think about June plans. This year the contest falls a little later in the month, on the 14th and 15th. Remember to mark Friday and Monday for setup and tear down.

If you are a glutton for punishment, or enjoy hearing about others woes, then you won't want to miss this month's meeting where we will award the coveted "Crying Towel" to the one who has the saddest story regarding preparations and operations before and during the January VHF Contest. Also remember the runner up gets the not as popular (but coveted by some), crying tissue. It's a fun time where you can tell of your experience. I know we have some special guests coming, so be sure and be there. And remember the dinner portion of the meeting which starts at 6 PM in our Packrat dining room at Giuseppe's on Street road right in front of the Ben Wilson Center.

'Till next month, lets work on lots of bands,

Phil K3TUF

Editors Note: as usual for the February editions of Cheese Bits, there was an over abundance of material and I couldn't fit it all in. Rest assured the remainder will appear soon enough in upcoming issues. **Please keep the articles coming!!** I, and more importantly, your fellow 'Rats will benefit from it. **Thanks to all the contributors!!!** 73, W2BVH

JANUARY CONTEST

COMMENTS

Here's what some of your fellow 'Rats had to say about the January contest. The really sad? Stories should be heard in person next Thursday at the annual Crying Towel meeting. Practice moping around now and you may bring home the COVETED TOWEL or not so coveted tissue. The full scores grid will be available in the March issue. If you haven't sent your log to Dave, please get it in to him so he can whip the data into a form that I can use. —W2BVH

From John, K3MD - Very bad condx Saturday night, picked up Sunday. The good news was the 6 M linear did not blow up.

From Joe, WA3SRU - Had a good time once I got on at 6:15pm. Heavy duty antenna work the week prior to the contest. Antenna mast snapped and all antennas were hanging upside down. On the Monday night net, **all said I sounded good for upside down antenna's**. Tuesday the bucket truck removed all antenna's and the Rohn 25g tower. Wednesday I made up patch cables to connect new tower to operating position. Thursday I got everything together I would need to transfer antenna's to the new tower. Friday I worked on rotor & mast mounting and centering. Got all antenna's layed out on ground. Made necessary repairs to them. Had a few bent elements and several broken loops on the looper antennas for 903 & 1296. Saturday mounted all antennas and routed coax feeds down mast. Put arms on tower to hold cables. Raised tower and connected all cables. Pre-tested all bands and everything appeared working. Found two bad N connectors and replaced them. Waterproofed all connections and raised tower to full height. Started contest. Probably lost a lot of contacts that first 4-1/4 hrs. Also took off 3 hrs on Sunday for grandkids Pinewood Derby event. Overnight I got a good 8 hrs sleep as I was **totally worn out**. Hope never to have to do that again right before a contest!!!!

From Joe, K1JT - At K1JT I was on for about 16 hours, using only 6 and 2 meters. I had extremely bad locally generated noise (source presently unknown) on 2 meters, making much of the band unusable for most of the contest. It's time for me to do some neighborhood DF work. I also operated W2PU, the Princeton University Amateur Radio Club station, for about 2 hours each on Saturday and Sunday evenings. We were set up for just one band, 432 MHz -- we're slowly building toward EME capability on this band. Right now we have a TS-2000X at 50 W and a pair of 15-element yagis. I worked 45 x 8 claimed score 720. For the club score, **every little bit helps...**

From Ken, K2WB - I operated with a 3 watt HT from the 4th floor of the Hotel in CM88. On the air only 2 hours made 5Qs and 2 Grids = 10 Pts. better than ZERO. Because I was 3000 miles away from the club center I don't think I can put my score towards the club score.

From Herb, K2LNS (WA2FGK) - What a disappointment on Saturday morning when I started testing the equipment, and found out a lightning arrestor on a pole in front of my house had broken. The utility company had done repairs on this back in November not only once but twice. I was ready to pack it in, but felt I needed to give out FN21 on the upper bands. Six meters was being blasted to the NE-E-SE and even a higher level than normal in every direction. Thus every contact I made on six meters had to be with my antennas facing S-SW-and West. The last several years 50 Mhz has been my best band for QSO's but I wound up calling many more CQ's on 2 meters. I did wind up with a list of corrections that need attention during this cold weekend. On 432 Mhz I had to use an antenna that was only 25 feet off the ground, which I felt I missed some contacts. My 903 receive is very poor. I believe since we are only 1,000 ft from a cell site, we have to change our 900 MHz filter. The current filter is getting rid of junk, but also signals. For the first time I used a K3 on 144 Mhz. It's certainly has a different sound in the ear phones, but this radio is tremendous if you have an overload problem. Something for stations in a densely populated area to look into. I bought a bare bones kit and am using the 28 mhz split port, to drive my DEM transverter. I did see one problem on 2 meters during Saturday evening late. FSK stations were operating down around 144.115 - 144.130. Have no idea who, but it certainly had a reflection on the EME community. The sequences are different and nobody could enjoy this bedlam. I had hoped for 500 contacts but wound up having a steady hand on Sunday and wound up with 623 QSO's and a final score of 160,356. Not having 5 and 10 ghz probably had a negative effect on my score to the tune of about 30,000 points. **Well that's it from Bear Creek.** Lots of repairs to make from this brutal winter so far, but glad we were able to work old friends and welcome newbies to our contest community. I promised Phil I would make the next meeting unless weather doesn't cooperate.

From N3NGE crew - Of the 1,232 total QSO's made at N3NGE this past weekend, 326 were made with 68 different Packrats. This includes four 10 band runs with NN3Q/R (from grids FN20, FN10,FM19 and FM29). This means that over 25 percent of our QSO's came from Packrats. Thanks to all. **WAY TO GO PACKRATS!!!!** Bill K3EGE

From Doc, W3GAD - Got to spend a lot more time in the chair rather than at the bench Only had one -- minor repair during the contest. Missing a lot of grids due to low north east activity and poor timing. Living in the shadow of a "Big Gun" surely added a few occasional challenges. Overall I'm pleased with the results here without the 2.3GHZ available. Claimed score:30282. Much Better than 2013. Hope to See you all at the Crying Towel.

From El, K3JJZ - "For those of you who say I never crank up the tower" K3JJZ



From George, WB3IGR - I didn't have 1296 or 2304 this year, or W3VVP (SK) to guarantee FM 28 on all bands, but we did better than I expected with 6, 2, 222, 432, 903, and Laser. 22,168 points. I didn't expect to go over 15,000 without the other 2 bands, and thanks to all the Packrats who pointed their antennas south. I worked a lot of club members this year!!!

From Joe, KC2TN - W2MC "roved" to my house to give me a laser contact! I entered him as W2MC\R. I then decided to travel with him to my nearest ham neighbor WB2RVX. While there I worked, VIA LASER, both Mike and Bert - K3IUV who was there also ! They both entered me as KC2TN\R since I "roved" there! I had to enter the contacts into N1MM and edit the frequency to 300000000 and 8 Points since the mode was not listed in my database. There may be a way to set this up differently but I didn't see any! At home, everything held together this year. The additions and upgrades worked fine! Only minor glitches; more like annoyances! **NO Crying Towel this year!**

Joe sent this picture with the following suggested caption: A recently added operating position aid to assure max time in the seat during the contest!
Joe - KC2TN



From Steve, N3FTI - First test after putting the new antennas up at the new QTH. Single op low power 22,971 Points. About 12 hours of operating time. All the equipment worked fine, no failures. Looking forward to more bands and power for next year. Thanks to all who worked me.

From Ray, N3RG - Had a few minor setbacks this year but managed to get on and have fun. Didn't get the equipment up and running for 5.7ghz and 10ghz but I'm getting closer! Lost the 222amp in the first hour so ran barefoot (25w) and worked almost everything I heard! The station worked well... the operator had a few failures! 78,800 Points.

From Jerome, K3GNC - Since the following grids are totally blocked by buildings at my location: fm07, fm08, fm09, fn00, en90, fn11, fn01, fn02, fn03, fn04, fn12, fn13, fn14 ... I began the contest with little hope of decent results. The power of the Packrats changed my opinion fairly early. The activity was low for non Packrats, but since almost all Packrats I worked had several bands, it was possible to get a good qso total. With a dipole on 50mhz, and 4 ele cushcrafts on 144 and 222, my largest antenna was a 5 foot m2 on 1296, but I managed to work all the grids available with my setup. I Worked 44 Packrats for 162 qsos. 26,826 Points total.

From Mike, WB2RVX - Flat condx observed here in Southern NJ. 47 min into the contest I had a problem topside on 6m which required taking the tower down for repairs and being off the air until dinner time. More details to follow at the crying towel meeting. Otherwise the test went smoothly. Big thanks to all the rovers who went out to brave the elements.

From Al, N3ITT - My percentage of 'Rats: of 299 QSO's made here, 192 were made with 53 different Packrats, almost 60 percent of my log! WAY TO GO PACKRATS for sure!!!!

From Phil, K3TUF - Set out to have fun, and it was fun. Score was down from last year, couldn't break the 700 qso mark like I did last year. Actually on Sunday afternoon I thought I might miss the 600 mark, but fortunately the evening was quite busy. Thanks to all the rovers who braved the elements and went out to give out points. Managed to work 52 members. They were responsible for 44% of my contacts. Thankful that the equipment all worked solid, but there just weren't as many contacts as I would have liked. My usual 24GHz contacts were either out of town or out of commission.

Stan, K3IPM - K3IPM station in Ambler, as set up for this January's contest. Remember, Stan sets this up from scratch, just for the contest (including the antennas and tower trailer - not shown in the picture). 6-meters through 10-GHz. Then he heads back to FL the next day. Quite an effort to support the club. Pic & text from K3IUV



From Russ, K2TXB - Well I was with the grandkids all day Saturday and worked Saturday night. Church with XYL on Sunday and brunch. Then a long afternoon nap Finally got on about 7 PM, after finding and fixing a few problems with the gear. Foot switch would not work and darned if I can figure out the wiring (so far). Since I only have 2 meters and 25 foot high antenna, I was able to work 1106 points. I quit a little before 10 PM when my logging and antenna control computer crashed for the third time during the 3 hours I worked the contest. Gotta get a new power supply for that beast! But it was fun, hope I can do better next year.

From Michelle, KB3MTW - PackRats worked 45, Packrat Qs 144 PR Qs 4,466 points total. Much better than last year. And this year with about 7 on 1296, that's a lot of multipliers. Again now I see how horizontal polarization is the best. We will be working on that to better our score next year. Neil added 70 contacts and many were Pack Rats. Looking forward to seeing our total CLUB score.

From Michael, KB1JEY - I reviewed, checked, and analyzed the KB1JEY ARRL January 2014 VHF SS log tonight in preparation for submitting it to the ARRL, W3KM. Looking at the reports from other Packrats on the reflector got my curiosity up. I had QSOs with 77 different stations. Of those stations, 43 [56%] were Packrats.

From Griff, NE3I - Perhaps, in the tradition of those Packrats who, proximate to the Contest are, "still strapping stuff together," **beginning Friday evening and continuing into Saturday morning**, I endeavored to **construct a reduced size, 3 element quad for 2 Meters, 222 and 432**. By Saturday afternoon, I got as far as the photo shows. (There was only one NE3I "polarity" issue during construction when, after carefully laying out the dowel cross arms in order, I inadvertently reversed

the 36 inch wooden boom on the work bench and began inserting, gluing and nailing the dowels in place. Got about half way along before I noticed the error. - Pulling the finishing nails out was a little frustrating but, got 'er done.) Construction had to be terminated in order to comply with social commitments. **What is it about Contest weekends** and the coincidence of must attend social and family events? Is there some correlation between Contest Weekend, the full moon, comets, Fibonacci charts or bio-rhythms? Anyway, by Sunday morning, I had neither the planned "Scrunched Quad" for the Rover, nor the disposition for Rover road rally operations. So, I went out for some hot soup, found a hill top parking lot near my home and called CQ.



The NE3I "almost" Quad

Worked a few Qs with perennial professional contest team N3NGE, a couple with W3SZ and, inter alia, N3ITT and W8GP (in FN20)? Total, 5 2m Qs, 2 on 6m and 1, (with N3NGE) on 432. All Qs were via the mobile vertical. Saw no shooting stars and experienced no meteor scattering or Sporadic E this year. Typing the information into and submitting a Cabrillo log to the ARRL, post operations, required 3 attempts. (Sorry Dave.) Notwithstanding (legalese for Ron) the errors with the log submission and the quad project, "If ya don't try, then ya don't learn nuthin."

From Lenny, W2BVH - A good contest here in central NJ. New England didn't start to come in until late Saturday which had me concerned for awhile. Was happy about being able to dig out LOTS of very weak ones. Some glitches with the 432 transverter and 6M power amp, but I coped ok. 18000+ Points with 4 bands.

From Jack W3TMZ/4 - Warren and I ended up in the same grid, about a mile apart so I went to meet him and Sue. Here is his antenna set up. Wish I had a better camera. I have taken all of my home station down and the only way to participate is using my portable/rover. The Jan, VHF contest was my first attempt in FL. A very simple setup on four bands, 144,432, 2304 and 10G. The 10G gear is all tripod mounted. Unfortunately, a DC supply wire broken for the 10G station thus no chance to work anyone. I was not prepared even with a clip lead. Lesson learned. I tried four grids which were pretty close by for a first time out of the box (EL88,89,99 and 98). Very simple station, two Yaesu FT-100D (one for IF for 2304 and 10G) and the other for 144 and 432. The 2304 transverter is HB and it runs 20W out.



Warren WB2ONA & Sue in EL99aa

FROM THE RF DECK OF NN3Q/R

The January VHF 2014 contest was the first contest the NN3Q/r rover van had full automated band switching functions on the microwave station. A yeoman job by Russ (the NN3Q namesake) to blend a number of major components, and a work week to rival the most ambitious, resulted in a virtual push-a-button-and-talk system. For those who are not familiar with our rover van we run 50 MHz to 10 GHz in the size of a large closet with two operators. We have a permanent desk fitted with two Elecraft K3's, one for the lower four and one for the microwaves. The lower four uses the Elecraft 144, 220, and 432 transverters. To protect their delicate front ends from overload, when idle, we use the Elecraft KRC2 to **switch the idle transverters to individual dummy loads**. The KRC2 activates switching relays mounted on a board below the operating table.

A few years back I became the owner of a very well built manual band switching arrangement for 903 to 10 GHz. This system used the DEM 28 to 144 transverter to get the IF up and useable for the microwave transverters, and **numerous switches to route IF and PTT to the intended transverter**. Russ took this basic design, and added and modified the system, and in concert with a second KRC2 we became able to switch all the DEM microwave transverters by simply pushing the K3 band switch. This greatly simplified the operation from our previous Yaesu FT100 and manual switch. One of the greatest side benefits was **the microwave station could now be driven by N1MM logging program**, and therefore we did not have to manually change the frequency in the logging program as we ran the bands. Wonderful simplification but an array of electronic wizardry.

Our roving venture to FN10, FM29, FM19 and FN10 was a repeat of our rove in 2013, but did not yield the number of multipliers from 2013, so our scoring will be in the low 70K's (as of this writing we did not yet review the log). **The station was flawless** and we worked a lot of stations up the bands, but not as far as we thought we could based on last years experience. Use of 144.260 as a "home base" worked well. This was the first year this system was used extensively and was used by many to find us and help coordinate the band runs on the microwaves.

The van (a 2003 Ford Club wagon) ran well but developed a strange exhaust smell toward the end of the second day. This forced us to cut short our last grid and head for the home QTH.

We thank all those many stations we worked to help make the weekend a fun operating event. We especially like the special thrill of going from 50MHz to 10GHz.

73 AI K3WGR Russ NN3Q

KB1JEY CONTEST PREP AND RESULTS

Here are a few quick notes about my contest efforts while I'm waiting for relatives to arrive for Carol's service. About a week before the contest, I had just two bands [2 meters and 222 MHz] up and running. I thought a bit and realized that all I had to do was run the remainder of new 432 MHz feedline [9913F7 for those who care] from the base of the tower, along the bushes, and into the shack window to get back on that band.

The 6 meter situation was a little bit trickier. With help from George KA3WXV and El K3JJZ, I had put my new RAI beam, previously at the stations of N3NGE and W2SJ, up on tower. However, it needed some tuning that I was unlikely to get done by contest time. So I put out a call to the antenna doctor, Dr. Rick K1DS. "Help!!". Rick called me back and said "Stop by my QTH and pick up my Moxon before I leave on my next trip. George and I caught a respite of decent weather on the Friday before the contest. We put the Moxon up on the tower and ran a piece of coax to it from the shack. I was now back on the lower four.

My contest efforts, considering my distractions, were decent: 6573 Points

These were nearly a copy of my 2013 results. I had a few more Qs on 6 meters so unless Dr. Rick stops by between his travels to help me with the RAI beam, it could be a while before he gets his Moxon back <hi,hi, just kidding you, Dr Rick>. I also had more Q's on 432. Maybe they were due to using my 432 transverter instead of a borrowed rig and my new feedline [9913F7 works great for me].

In the 2012 contest, I scored almost 10,000 points. That year, I had put up a temporary tower and operated on 1296, 2304, and 3456 MHz in addition to the lower four. So my work is cut out for 2014/15. Get my four microwave loopers up on the tower; finish interfacing my uWave transverters to the Flex 1500; and move the transverters from the shack to the shed.

CU on the air. Michael, KB1JEY

I ran 222 only during the contest and here are a few observations

I only made 25 contacts on 222 but I also was doing other things whilst operating too so I am happy with the 25 contacts that I made BUT... If I had been operating using just a brick TX/RX and not a poor man's Flex set up then I would have made 3 contacts on 222. I would have sat on or around 100 and been turning the dial up and down searching for stations. Here is why this would not have been successful. Most of the other 22 stations that I worked I spotted were band hopping and they were only on 222 for 1 or 2 overs each side of the QSO. Having SDR Console I could see the change in the waterfall colour and click on the screen in order to change frequency. **Even then I was often too slow and the stations had already moved on to higher things before I arrived. Without SDR I would not have even known that they existed.** Indeed even once on their frequency I often only saw the change in colour and had to swing the beam around before I could actually hear audio to go along with the colour change.

I think that if the band hopping stations **had taken a few seconds more to call out and ask if anyone else was there** then they may have made a few more contacts, or made the contacts they had easier. Just a thought, not a criticism or moan. After all it has been a very long time since I have done any serious contesting. Paul N1RJX / G6YZC

W2PU 432 MH EME PROGRESS REPORT

I'm delighted that some other 'Rats have stepped up to the plate and contributed very impressive scores for the January contest!

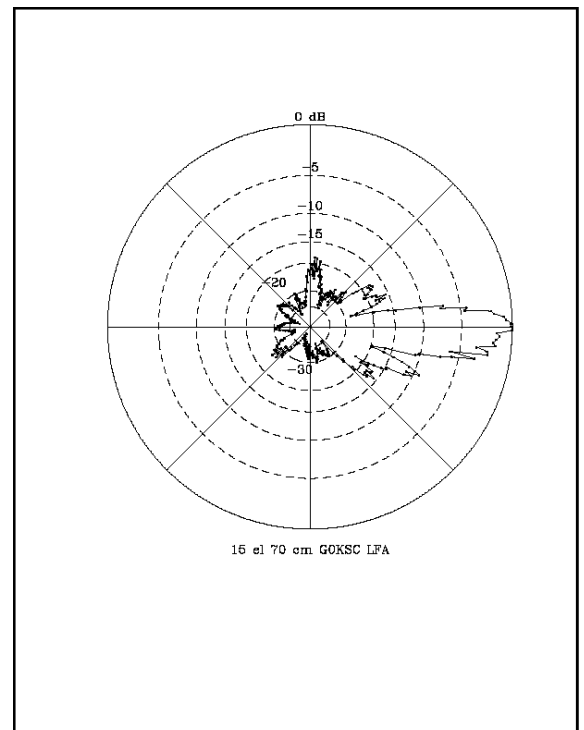
My own contest effort this year was very modest, but club members might be interested in one of the projects I've been working on. We're busy building an EME-capable setup on 432 MHz for W2PU, the Princeton University Amateur Radio Club. The present antenna on the roof of the Physics building is a pair of dual-polarization, 15-element yagis, as shown in the photos. The design is by Justin Johnson, G0KSC, of the British firm InnovAntennas, with some tweaks of our own. Present plans call for two more antennas, to make a 4-yagi array. Already with the 2-yagi setup we are copying a number of 432 MHz EME signals.



Several things are special about these yagis. Dual-polarization or "xpol" yagis have become very popular for EME on 2 meters, in part because they work so effectively with my MAP65 software. but they are **hard to make with good performance at 432**. It's necessary to keep everything very symmetrical, and it's hard to fit the feedlines and necessary connections into the space around the driven elements. The photos give some clues on how this has been done. These innovations, along with a superb design based on NEC4 simulation, have produced antennas with extremely low side- and rear-lobe responses. As illustrated in the photos, **rear-mounting is essential**.

Accurate measurements of antenna patterns are difficult without a proper antenna range, and especially difficult at levels more than 20 dB below the main lobe. I made measurements for the attached polar plot by using the W3CCX 432 MHz beacon signal. The largest (and asymmetric) sidelobes are the result of reflections from a tall building adjacent to the physics building. Even so, the pattern is excellent, and it makes for an extremely low-noise antenna for EME. We hope to have W2PU "on the moon" with high power in the reasonably near future.

73, Joe K1JT



K8GP Contest Write-Up

A quick thanks to all who worked Terry and I over the past Jan VHF SS contest. I spent the last week pulling together our log, media and some tools and wrote a lengthy article covering our preparation and weekend experience. It seems I **spent more time doing this than operating**, but I really enjoy the Radiosport and hope to share some of the experience and excitement with newcomers and old timers alike. I'm celebrating 35 yrs on V/UHF this year after making my first VHF SSB/CW contest QSOs back in 1979 as a young WB1ALW and KA1GD.

For the all encompassing article with pictures, video, audio and analysis go here:
<http://www.k1ra.us/roving/k1ra-k8gp-rover-arri-jan-vhf-ss-2014>

For those who just want to view our pictures see our album here:
<https://plus.google.com/photos/111732104190190963283/albums/5971764652805581137>

For a slide show and video clips check out the 20 minute stream here:
http://youtu.be/g8w_Bo1kycE

And for those who are interested in log analysis see my visualization tool here:
<http://goo.gl/PQmnij>

I'd be interested in hearing any comments or feedback, especially on the log tool and if others would like to view their logs this way too.

73 & enjoy

andyz - K1RA @ K8GP / Rover

KB3BUX Contest Results

Just had Dave (W3KM) look over the log from KB3BUX station at the Ivyland Fire Dept. All ok so I will submit to the league today. The operators on hand last weekend were Ben (K3JQH), Alex (KB3SYY) and myself were running my FT-736 thru a triplexer to a triband vertical -- Comet Cx-333 -- up about 25ft. Also had a dipole on 6m. Big thanks to our host at the firehouse, fellow Bcares member Dave Sharp (KA3YSD) -- we may do this again for other contests later this year. Would be nice to install a more permanent antenna at this location.

864 Points

Opinion: EME Band Selection

I think everybody is moving from 2m and 70cm to 23cm.

After my article about eme on 70cm with small antennas a lot of people did write me.
http://www.ok2kkw.com/next/dj3jj_70cm2010.htm

Feedback: For most of them it was less work to become qrv on 70cm than on 23cm. But everybody can read that activity is much higher on 23cm than on 70cm....

23cm did make a big step forward ,since there are nice and affordable SSPA modules available. And due to circular polarization, faraday is no longer a problem..... This makes 23cm more and more attractive to the people.

It's my opinion that these are the main reasons for more and more stations on 23cm and less on 70cm.

Kind regards and hope to work you soon agn via the moon.

Andreas, DJ3JJ

Forwarded to Cheese Bits by AI, K2UYH

ANOTHER MISSIVE FROM SMEL A. RHATT

Could it be possible that so many **Crying Towel situations** developed long before the contest weekend? While Mother Nature was surely showing us what winter is all about in December with three snow storms, and another one with a cold snap in early January, there was much opportunity to get all of our stations working on all of the bands long in advance of the contest.

Yea, I kid you not. This is what planning and preparation is all about, especially for an amateur radio service that is dedicated to support of emergency situations and their communications needs.

So--did you check into the nets regularly, or at all? Did you evaluate the gauge of the mast before it was erected atop the tower? Did you improve your CW skills? Did you download the WSJT suite and practice some meteor scatter or EME? Did you take advantage of the loaner gear? Add a band? Test everything before 2PM on Saturday?

Sadly, we also find ourselves in this season with hamstrung beacons. But alas, there is a plan --at least on paper.

Might I suggest that the VHF Contest chairmen start their captains and teams in March, and **rotate the efforts** of those who capably climb towers, put connectors on cables professionally, use the proper test gear to check rigs, rf/i.f. switching, feedlines, and antennas **so that by November we are not waiting for those last freezing days with unpredictable weather** and other unforeseen circumstances that reduce our operating time, station capabilities, and spirit.

Perhaps we can regain some of what is lost if we assure that there are no NIL (NOT IN LOG) findings when the ARRL checks our club's members' scores.

Let the tears flow at the Crying Towel.
73's Until then---Smel A. Rhatt

Save the Date! Mid-Atlantic States VHF Conference

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Hosted by the Packrats

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rick1ds@hotmail.com

Comment by WA3QPX

W3GNQ was operational from FM28. He was on with a big signal on 6 and 2. I'm sure with his background laser would be no problem. He is in Lewes Delaware which is a straight shot over water North. WY3P was active 6,2,220 and 432 in FM27. W3GNQ IS 142' from me. WY3P was on Chintoteque Island about the same direction. These guys had trouble working stations to the North since most stations do not look South let alone East of South. I feel their pain. Thanks to those of you who did look South.

73, paul, wa3qpx

Mystery Ham

When Lenny sent the January Cheese Bits, I just glanced over it the other day. When I saw the mystery ham picture I said, "well that's no mystery, it's Leon with one of his rover antennas"! I guess this proves that the 'tree doesn't stand far from the apple'.

73, Bob W2SJ

Unusual Q Codes

Some interesting and fairly obscure Q-codes can be found at various places on the internet. For instance at <http://www.zerobeat.net/drakelist/missingq.html>

Here are some samples:

QBA? - How big is your antenna

QBA—My antenna is BIG

QBO? —Buddy can you spare some soap?

QBO—Don't sit next to that guy at the meeting

QET?-Has anyone called from another planet?

QET-Phone home

...continued

Ice, Ice, Ice and Snow

This is the Radio Shack Discone we use for 1296 MHz operation, covered in ice.

Enough already!!!

Hope your antennas are surviving.

73, Michelle KB3MTW



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CSVHFS is pleased to announce the following dates for the 2014 Central States VHF Society sponsored Spring Sprints:

1. **144 MHz:** Monday, 4/7/14 from 7 - 11 PM local.
2. **222 MHz:** Tuesday, 4/15/14 from 7 - 11 PM local.
3. **432 MHz:** Wednesday, 4/23/14 from 7 - 11 PM local.
4. **Microwave,** 902 MHz and up: Saturday, 5/3/14 from 6 AM - 1 PM local.
5. **50 MHz:** Saturday, 5/10/14 from 2300z until 0300z Sunday, 5/11/14.

Rules for the 2014 Spring Sprints will be posted on the following web sites:

<http://www.3830scores.com/index.php>

<https://sites.google.com/site/springvhfupsprints/>

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

The Spring and Fall Sprints are a great way to interest new hams in the world of VHF and above operating!

73, Kent O'Dell

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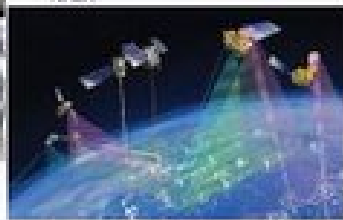
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Friday March 14, 2014, 8:30 am — 5:00pm**
Continuing as part of TCF's Saturday Talks.
For Conference Info and Fees See
<http://princetonacm.acm.org/tcfpro/>

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

For additional TCF'14 Info,
directions and advance tickets:
www.tcf-nj.org

DOOR PRIZES

Integrated STEM Education Conference (ISEC)**
Saturday, March 8 - 9:00 am — 5:00 pm
at Friend Center, Princeton University, NJ
Designing Pathways to STEM Success
Info: <http://ewh.ieee.org/conf/stem/>

The 2014 Trenton Computer Festival™ is sponsored by The College of New Jersey and its School of Engineering.

The Wayback Machine

Gleaned from the pages of
Cheese Bits, February 1964
(Vol. VI Nr. 11)

(Authors comments in *italics*)

- Cover featured one of Helen's cartoons, highlighting Feb events: The 12th, Lincoln's B'day (a log-splitter); the 14th, Valentines Day (a cupid) and the 22nd, Washington's B'day (a cherry tree and axe!).
- Harry Brandt, K3LOM, chairman of the June QSO party operation, exhorted the members for more participation in this event. He pointed out the need for more equipment, noting that the only club owned equipment at that time was a 5-element Telrex for 6-meters (*contrast that with today's club inventory, over 200 items including towers, antennas, transmitters and other accessories. Our numerous computers didn't even exist then!*). He also noted that **the club was #1 in the Atlantic Division in June of 1962 and 1963.**
- 6-meter report. Rich, K3ACR provided status of a number of 6-meter operators in the area. He also noted quite a few morning schedules, and a number of sporadic-E contacts being made. (*Rich was heard and worked in this years Jan contest, still on VHF 50-yrs later*).
- Technical article. Advantages, construction details and schematics

were provided; describing conversion of a crystal oscillator to a variable Capacitor tuned Clapp Oscillator for use as a VFO. The article was penned by K3IUV (*this author*).

- Comedy. Since this was the issue following the January contest, the crying towel entry of EI, K3JJZ was published. Two columns, 8-12" x 14". An hour by hour chronicle of the disasters that befell him (*many*) during the contest. Included was a visit by K3EOD, looking for a replacement tube (*remember them?*), a fallen mike stand resulting in a failed mike, blown fuses and smoking power supplies and a report of hum on his 2-meter signal. The incidents are too numerous to include here. If you want to have a relaxing read, and a good laugh, read the original article in the issue posted on the W3CCX.com website. (*If the truth be known, EI may have had as many incidents in the latest contest, 50 yrs later?*).
- Antenna damage. W3SAO, Frankie, reported that strong winds in January knocked his tower and antennas down over 3-roofs. Repairs to be slow during the winter! (*Sounds like WA3SRU's recent problem?*).
- The Phila. ARPSC (Amateur Radio Public Service Committee) announced they would be supporting the 1964 Boy Scout Jamboree. Details included a lengthy list of frequencies used to support this and other public service activity. The article cites a number of recent emergency support

operations, and included calls of Packrats in the activities.

- Another bit of humor described the car breakdown of K3GAS, Doc, on the way home from the Board of Director's meeting in Feasterville with W3CL and W3SAO. Near the intersection of Philmont and Pine, the car sputtered to a stop. Under the hood, they found a leaking radiator hose had sprayed water over the ignition coil and plugs. As reported, "This is a lonely stretch of road, no houses for at least 2 miles". Unable to raise anyone on their mobile rig, a scout went walking in search of a gas station, found about 1-mile away. A pay phone (10-cents) permitted a call to AAA. More anecdotes contained in the original article. Seek it out yourself. *(We note the location indicated is now very heavily populated, with houses and businesses within 100'. Progress?)*
- Swap Shoppe ad. A listing by K3HWZ, "Grandpop Bill" (Club President at the time) included 7 different Heathkit items. These included an assembled and tested Seneca xmtr, a new-in-box kit of the same model, and several items of test equipment (example: 5" Oscilloscope - \$20). *(Heathkits were a mainstay of the construction crowd in the 60's. I still use my 221 VTVM with its associated HV probe.)*
- ARRL Bulletin Nr 931. Colombia has been added to the existing FCC list of 19 countries with which third party traffic could be exchanged. *(What's the number today?)*

- This issue consisted of seven (7) sheets, double-column format, printed double-sided on heavy stock legal size paper. ***(Postage 4-cents. Too bad they didn't issue "forever" stamps back then!)***

(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 details, visit www.W3CCX.COM and read the full issue posted there by our Webmaster, Ron, W3RJW).



**—Thirty—
K3IUV, Bert**

... Unusual Q codes cont'd

QBS? - Did I tell you about the one that got away?

QBS—Buddy its getting deep in here

QHI?-Are you leaving after only 1 transmission?

QHI - Just a quick hello and then I'm QRT

QWC?-Do you have to go to the bathroom?
QWC-I have to go bad

QNB?- How many buttons does your radio have?

QNB— My radio has ___ buttons and I know what ___ of them are used for

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Events

For inclusion, please direct event notices to
the editor.

Trenton Computer Festival Conference --
March 14/15, 2014. TCNJ Ewing NJ. See <http://tcf.pages.tcnj.edu/> for details

Spring Sprints—Contest Early April to early
May 2014. See information on page 12 of this
issue for details.

Eastern VHF/UHF/Microwave Conference -
April 11-13, 2014 Baymont Inn, Manchester, CT
See information on page 12 of this issue for
details.

SVHFS Conference—April 25-26, 2014. Atlanta
GA. See <http://www.svhfs.org> . Conference chair
Bob Lear, W4ZST

ARRL June VHF QSO Party - Contest June
14-16, 2014. The annual Camelback trek.
Details to follow.

CSVHFS Conference— 48th Annual
Conference July 25-27, 2014 in Austin, Texas.
See [http://www.csvhfs.org/2014conference/
index.html](http://www.csvhfs.org/2014conference/index.html) for details

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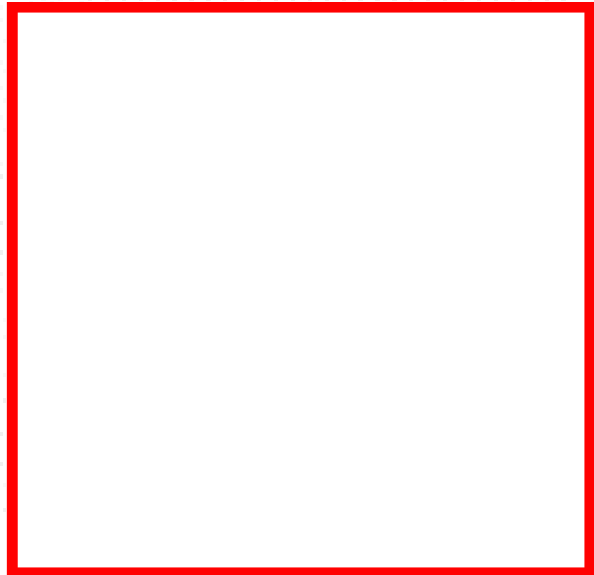
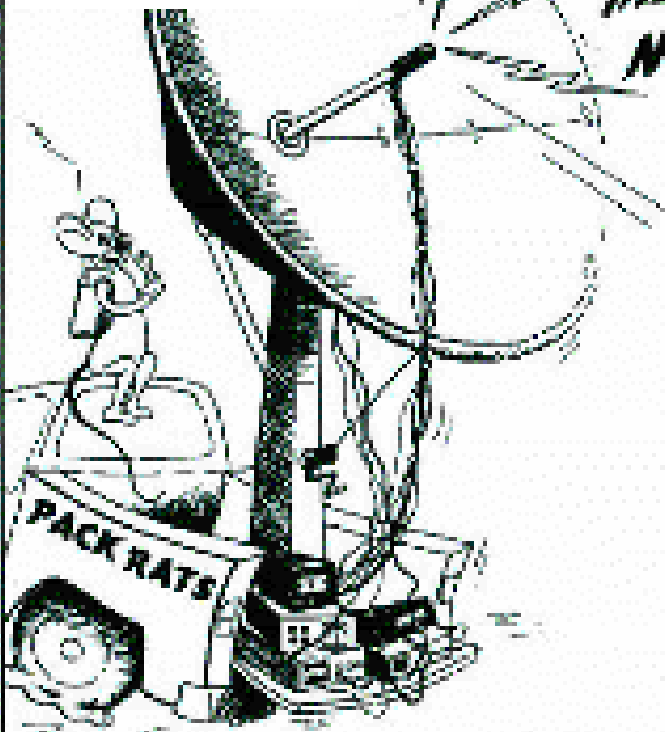
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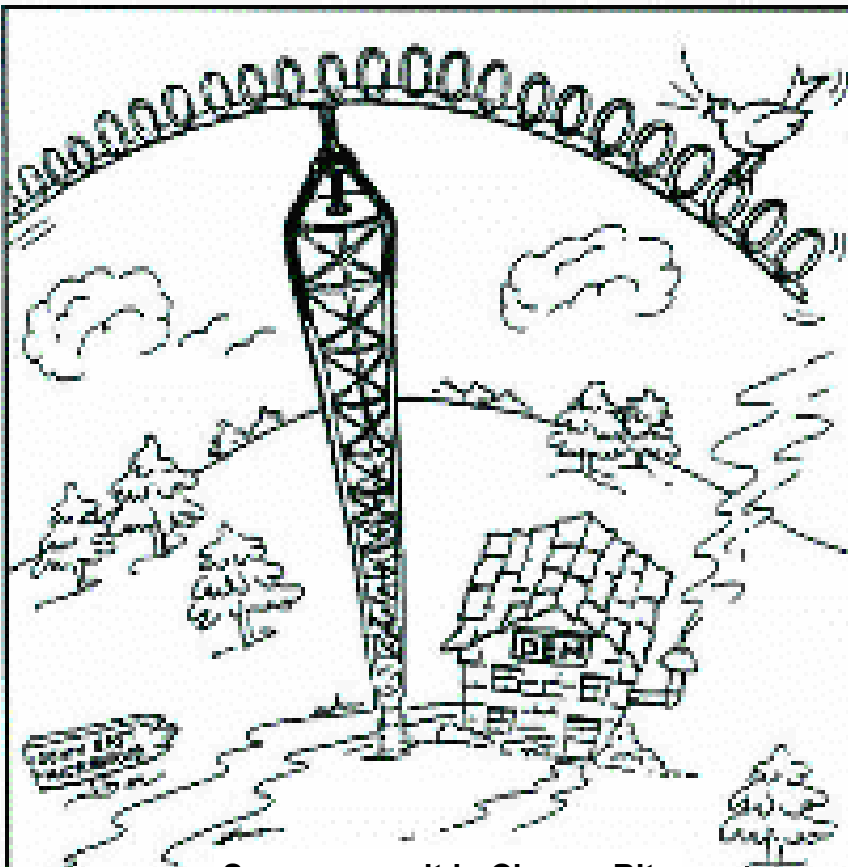
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