
Washington Amateur Communications



PICNIC AUGUST 7TH AT 6:00 P.M.

The W. A. COM Ham

Volume 1 Issue 7 August 2008

From "Bud" Plants, N3TIR, President....

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Presidents Corner

Hello all

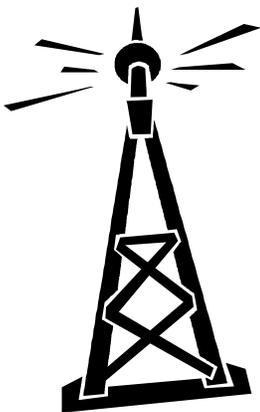
Now that Field Day is over and again I want to thank every one for a great club effort to make 2008 Field Day another great event. I hope everyone can attend the WACOM picnic at our next regular meeting we always have a great time.

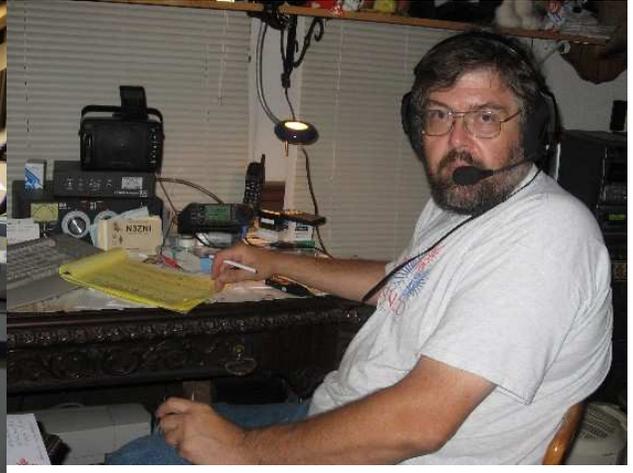
We should also be thinking about any repairs that will be needed on our stations before winter. I suggest making a plan of what needs done and bring it to the picnic or the next general meeting and we can see if we can find you some info and some help on your station goals before bad weather gets here.

I hope to start a new meeting format after the August meeting to have something new and interesting about ham radio at each meeting. We have a lot of knowledge in our club and you may find a different aspect of the hobby to try.

Remember we have the annual West Alexander Fair coming up and it 's a great small town fair to attend over the Labor Day week.

I also encourage you to look around and see if you have a friend that may want to join in our hobby. I discovered that my own brother in law was interested in becoming a ham but thought the code was making that dream impossible. Now with a little work Tom Dames is one of ham radio newest techs.





Above: L to R: Dave, N3IDH; Kevin, KB3JHO; and Bud, N3TIR at Dave's QTH for the Pittsburgh250 Event. **Below:** Bud, (left) N3TIR, and Dave, N3IDH hunting for contacts. Photos © Kevin, KB3JHO

Ed, N3ZNI operating the Pittsburgh250 Event from his home QTH. Photo © Jacque N3ZEL

WACOM Pittsburgh 250 Summary



WA3COM/250
N3TIR 20m 105
N3IDH
 20m 101
 40m 10
 10m 2
 2m 1
N3ZNI ? 189
KB3LIX
 20m 14 32
 30m 8
 40m 36
 80m 1

Ed 's numbers are not broken out by band, but I honestly don't see that as a necessity at this juncture.

Here is the final count:

Phone RTTY PSK31
 Totals by mode: 408 14 77

Combined Total: 499

bill KB3LIX

(One MORE WOULD have been nice !!!! But Oh well !!!)

~~~~~  
 Don't forget, if you have a question you'd like to have the Tech answer, just email Joe, WA3WMB,  
 at [j\\_furjanic@verizon.net](mailto:j_furjanic@verizon.net)  
 ~~~~~

On Antenna Legislation

Bud, N3TIR, forwards this from Atlantic Division Director Bill Edgar N3LLR:

This will be a good chance to discuss the pending antenna legislation. I recently received this from a fellow ham and I think it does a great job at expressing what both Pa. section managers have been trying to convey. Please follow the ideas and contact your senators and representatives to get this bill passed. The "model antenna bill, "PRB-1" is languishing in the PA state legislature despite passage by 26 other states. Time for you to get off the sidelines and take action before it dies with this session. The Senate voted SB 884 out of committee on June 25 and laid on the table the same day. The House Bill, 1777 remains in committee and has not moved from the Local Government Committee since August 2007. The Legislature is in summer recess until Sept 15 when it reconvenes for a short pre-election session, then a brief "lame duck" session. If it does not pass this session the process must begin anew. Time to contact your Senators and urge the bill be moved to the floor for a vote. Remember, the House must do the same so there is a long way to go. Be a squeaky wheel and write, phone visit your State Reps. You can find them easily by going to

<http://www.legis.state.pa.us/> Go to the house and senate tabs and enter your zip code. (Note, you can also find the bill (s) from this webpage.) Be sure to ask them to contact their colleagues to move these bills forward before they die with the session. If you have friends in other clubs in the state, it would be a good idea to ask them to do likewise.

<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/hender.pdf>

All Gran Prix Photos are courtesy of and © to Bob Timmins, AB3ED, The Radio Op at Corner 8.



2008 Vintage Grand Prix by Bob, AB3ED

The event was held on July 19 and 20, 2008, in Schenley Park in Pittsburgh.

Notes from a first-time volunteer ham...

Time Trials were held on Saturday, July 19. Six classes of racers participated in 20-minute practice sessions on Sunday morning, followed by the official car parade at noon. This was a wonderful opportunity to ogle Aston Martins, Ferraris, Lamborghinis, Jaguars, Mini Coopers and numerous brands that one does not see on a regular basis (at least not in my neighborhood). Racing commenced after lunch for the 6 classes. Imagine nearly 5 hours of historic cars like the ones in these photos racing past you. Then think of the brand-



spanking new RED Ferrari that swept the race course moments before the start of each race. That Ferrari was driven far, far, far above the posted 25 MPH speed limit. The new Mercedes SL Roadster that served as pace car was probably the least expensive vehicle on the course.

A large number of area Hams provided track-side communications. They were stationed at the start-finish line, in the pits and at each of the turns on the race course. Race Control choreographed the event on the designated 2 Meter simplex frequency: each corner checked in just before the start of each race. Wipe-outs and breakdowns were reported to Race Control as they occurred. I was fortunate to be teamed with Randy N2QIV. He has volunteered many times. His experience and patience made him a true Elmer in Corner 8. Thank you!

What do you need to participate? A 2-meter HT, speaker mike, in-ear head phone and gun muffs will get you through the day (a long with a folding chair, cooler, water jug, snacks, etc).

Lunch is provided.

The Vintage Grand Prix supports the Autism Society and Allegheny Valley School. More information is available online at: <http://www.pvgp.org/pvgp>

Contact Corky at (724) 217-5458 if you would like to volunteer as a ham for next year.

Gotta go now..I looking for a hood scoop and racing exhaust for my Hyundai Elantra.

Bob Timmins, AB3ED

All Gran Prix Photos are courtesy of and © to Bob Timmins, AB3ED, The Radio Op at Corner 8.



WHERE WE'VE BEEN AND WHAT WE'VE DONE....

**NORTH HILLS
HAMFEST**

Left: WA3NB, Nick & Bob, AB3ED. Right: Bob, WC3O.

Below Left: Gary, AB3HO & Ed, N3ZNI

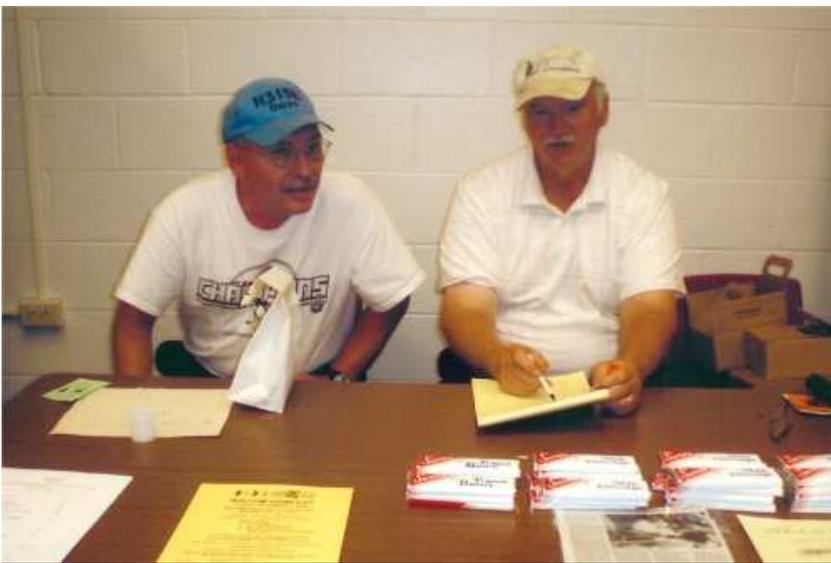
Below : Vendor Area and Food Sales

Photos © Jacque N3ZEL



SOMERSET HAMFEST

↓ Dave, N3IDH and Bud, N3TIR manning the WACOM table. Photo © Dave DeMotte, N3IDH



WACOM MEETING JULY 3, 2008

↑ Bill, NY9H from Deerfield, Illinois was in town for the holiday and stopped in to visit the WACOM meeting. Bill was showing Bud, N3TIR his home-built radio. It really sounded good in the Pittsburgh250 Event! Photo © Dave DeMotte, N3IDH

Classified

FOR SALE CUSHRAFT 26B2 STACKED 13 ELEMENT BEAMS
\$300.00

26B2 - 26 Element Wideband Boomer

This antenna offers the highest gain of any 2 meter FM antenna in the world. The 26B2 includes two complete 13B2 antennas, stacking boom and phasing harnesses.

Model 26B2

3dB Beamwidth, Degrees E-Plane 2x 18

3dB Beamwidth, Degrees H-Plane 2x 9.5

Boom Length ft.(m) 15(4.57)

Electrical Wavelength 2.2

Forward Gain, dBi 18.8

Frequency, MHz 144-148

Front to Back Ratio, dB 26

Longest Element in(cm) 39.75(101)

Mast size range, in.(cm) 1.5-2(3.8-5.1)

No. Elements 26

Power Rating, Watts PEP 2000

Side Lobe Atten., dB, E-Plane >60

SWR 1.2:1 Typical 2:1 Bandwidth, MHz >4

Turning Radius ft(m) 10.4(3.18)

Weight, lb(kg) 21.5(9.75)

Wind load ft (m) sq 4.84(.45)

Bud Plants, N3TIR

FOR SALE: 2-meter, 80 watt Amplifier. \$100.00 Contact Ed, N3ZNI n3zni@arrl.net

FOR SALE: The following older CB Radios. Contact Nick Samila at 724-222-5244 if interested.

Regency CR 123B : Regency CR 123 : Old Johnson Messenger 2, 10 Channel



All Gran Prix Photos are courtesy of and © to Bob Timmins, AB3ED, The Radio Op at Corner 8.

Minutes of the General Membership Meeting July 3, 2008

General Membership Meeting July 3, 2008

Minutes of June meeting distributed

Mot to accept: N3ZNI Sec: KC3HW

Treasurers Report: Read at the meeting.

Mot to accept: KB3IN Sec: KB3JHO

Newsletter: NEED INPUT !!!!!

Repeater: OK

RACES/ARES: Nothing

Nets: OK

By Law Committee: Need to schedule a meeting

Pittsburgh250: Bud and Dave to coordinate event

Candy Sales: Slow due to season

West Alex Fair: Bud will have booth again this year. Club welcome to set up and operate

Flag Pole: Complete except for cleat

FD: What to donate to Sportsmen 's Association? Decided by show of hands to double

Donation to \$ 100.00

Picnic: August 7, 2008 at 6PM at South Strabane FD Pavilion

PA QSO Party: 2nd weekend of October

Mot to adjourn: N3IDH Sec: KB3IN

Attendance: KB3IN, KB3JHO, KB3KXM, N3WMV, N3XAR, W3CYO, N3YJJ, AB3FQ, N3TIR, KD8IMH, KA3VOM, N3ZEL, KC3HW, AB3HO, N3ZNI, NW3X, KB3JHQ, KB3EUQ, KB3LIX

Bill

KB3LIX

Dennis Johnson N3PBR, sends us this article from the Wireless System Design web site.

Amateur Radio Still Going Strong Dayton's Hamvention reveals latest products and activities.

By [Louis E. Frenzel](#)
June 9, 2008

The [Dayton Hamvention](#) is one of the longest running continuous amateur radio conferences in the world. This year was the 56th installment of the event and it was held in its usual place, the Hara Arena in Dayton, Ohio, May 16-18. I haven't been to the event since I worked for Heathkit back in the late 1970s and early 80s. With a major article on amateur radio and the latest equipment facing me, I thought I had better take a look to see what is going on in this amazing hobby. I was not disappointed.

With nearly twenty thousand in attendance, the conference gave a clear view of the latest activities and products. What struck me immediately is that the predominant hair color was gray. Suffice to say you wouldn't mistake this event for a youth rally or science fair. I do not know what the average age was, but it had to be about 50 or so. Though, there were many younger folks there and many women—wives and girlfriends, I guess, with the occasional enthusiast mixed in. Walking around the exhibits and taking in latest in hardware, it is clear that this hobby is dominated by the commercial transceiver makers, mostly Japanese, such as AOR, Icom, Kenwood, and Yaesu. There are still some U.S. manufacturers of transceivers such as TenTec, Elecraft, and FlexRadio. Mostly, the hobby involves choosing one's transceiver then getting on the air. There is very little actually home brewing these days. Even the simpler QRP (low-power) transmitters and receivers are available in kit form. It is amazing how popular this QRP movement is. There is just something challenging and thrilling about making a very long distance contact with just a couple of transistors and a piece of wire. Despite the fact that I have a nifty high-priced Yaesu transceiver, I recently built a kit receiver and transmitter (Ramsey) for 30-meter CW. It is still more fun (to me at least) playing around with the low power stuff.

THE FLOOR

Visually the dominant theme in the exhibits was the antennas. They were everywhere. Everyone needs a good antenna, and it is certainly one of the few things that hams actually still build for themselves and experiment with endlessly. I can attest to that personally. Endless varieties of verticals and beams were on display. And along with the antennas, there were a huge offering of tuners. Some of those being older manual types of tuners with large capacitors and tuning coils, and others of the automatic ilk, offering continuous adjustments to maintain a good impedance match and low SWR between transmitter and antenna. Most of these tuners switch capacitors and inductors with reed relays in some kind of closed loop control circuit while monitoring output power and SWR.

The movement to more software-defined radio (SDR) products was also evident. Most of the main transceiver manufacturers already incorporate some form of DSP filtering but the trend to more SDR is clear. Several new companies are offering SDR receivers and transceivers including FlexRadio, Perseus, and WinRADIO. The Tucson Amateur Packet Radio (TAPR) group pioneers in digital packet radio. It had an impressive array of high performance SDR kits on display and more on the way. I will be reporting on that movement in my article in the August 14th issue of *Electronic Design*. One of the most interesting exhibits was from AMSAT, the amateur radio satellite organization that builds the ham satellites and promotes satellite communications. This is certainly not a new thing but I was again impressed by what you could do with simple equipment to work through the satellites. They gave a great demo of SSB voice communications with one of the low earth orbit (LEO) satellites with a 146-MHz uplink and 440-MHz downlink. LEOs have such high speed and short period that their visibility is only up to about 10 minutes or so from horizon to horizon. So you have to have a pretty good tracking antenna array to do any good. In this demo, the tracking was manual with a couple of hand-made Yagis, but nonetheless very effective. Several contacts were made from coast to coast right from the Dayton Hara Arena parking lot with 5 W of power. Not bad.

HAM HOCKING

The highlight of the Dayton show is the flea market. Hams who want to sell their old gear set up tents and tables or just open the trunks of their cars. Thousands of hams flock to the entire Hara parking lot each year for this circus. What I saw was lots of surplus gear (WW II even) and junk but there were probably some jewels out there. Lots of antique radios which get more scarce each year as collectors buy them up. And tons of used and new vacuum tubes were up for grabs. I didn't buy anything but there were lots of guys hauling off major purchases in kid's wagons and loading dollies maybe to be resold at next year's event.

Continued on Page 10

Washington Amateur Communications

Club Officers

President: Bud Plants, N3TIR;
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n3zni@arrl.net

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 Director: Jim Burtoft, KC3HW;
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n3idh@hotmail.com
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joecaldwell.jc@gmail.com
 Editor: Jacque Gosselin, N3ZEL
n3zel@fyi.net

We're RadioActive!!!

We're on the Web
www.wacomarc.org

**Have you been a radio amateur for 25 years or more?
 Were you originally licensed 25 years ago or more,
 even if not continually?**

Well then please join us at the Quarter Century Wireless Association, Chapter 6 quarterly luncheon at Rocky II's. Located on PA Rt. # 51, just north of McKees Rocks, in Stowe Twp. at the Fleming Park bridge.

Join our members who are like you, the foundation of amateur radio. There is much we can learn from them and from each other. And it's fun too.

No reservation necessary.

Our next quarterly luncheon will be in June, 2008, so you have lots of time to plan ahead to join us.

Contact Jacque, N3ZEL at n3zel@fyi.net for information.



YLS AND XYLS

There is an organization for you. It's called the
 Young Ladies Radio League.

Come join other Lady Hams and enjoy the fellowship.

See all we have to offer at

www.qsl.net/yrl/index.html or contact Jacque,

N3ZEL at n3zel@fyi.net

HAMFESTS

August 24th 2008 ARRL Section Convention!

Skyview Radio Society 48th annual Swap N Shop! Location: Skyview Radio Society clubhouse grounds. 2335 Turkey Ridge Road. New Kensington, PA 15068. Talk-in: 146.640 - 131.8pl. Contact: Robert Boehmer, KG3F at SkyviewHamfest2008@verizon.net Map and directions at www.skyviewradio.net Breakfast and lunch served

August 30th 2008

Uniontown ARC Gabfest. Location: Uniontown ARC club grounds, on Old Pittsburgh Road just off of Rt. 51 and Rt. 119. Talk-in 147.045+ 131.8pl. Contact: Tony Alviar, KA3VOR (724) 430-1277 (M-F 8-4); newsletter@w3pie.org www.w3pie.org Breakfast and lunch served, free admission

September 7th 2008

Butler County Amateur Radio Association BCARA Swapfest: Unionville Firehall, Butler, PA. Time 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. See flyer included in this newsletter.

November 2nd 2008

WACOM ARC Hamfest. Location: Washington County Fairgrounds on Main Street Extension. Talk-in 145.490- 131.8pl. Contact Ed Oelschlager, N3ZNI (724) 986-9371 or n3zni@arrl.net Free coffee all day, breakfast and lunch available. Map and directions at www.wacomarc.org

Amateur Radio Still Going Strong

Continued from Page 8

My main impression was that ham radio is definitely alive and well and just as much fun as ever for us geeky radio guys. It is a great way to play around with the latest technology. Too bad more young people aren't interested.

There are still about 600,000 or so hams in the U.S. today, and the number has been increasing, slowly. Recently, the FCC changed the long standing requirement needed to pass a code test to get a license. Dropping that requirement caused a mini-spurt in new licenses, but that seems to have tailed off a bit. I will be getting a more accurate count on the ham population later in the month when I talk with the ARRL (American Radio Relay League).

Speaking of the ARRL, they had the largest exhibit at the show. It was a display of all the services and publications this great organization has. I did meet their CEO, David Sumner, K1ZZ. I will be interviewing him later this month for my forthcoming article on SDR in amateur radio for the August 14th issue. The ARRL has about 150,000 members and is a major force in fighting for and keeping spectrum space and ham rights in general. They do a good job, and their magazines like QST and QEX are world class.

Visit the ARRL at: www.arrl.org