



The W. A. COM Ham

Volume 1 Issue 8 September 2008

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

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Presidents Corner

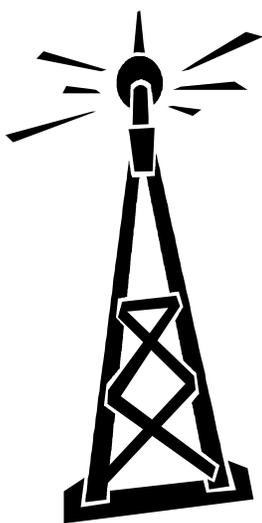
I hope everyone had a great time at our WACOM picnic 2008. I think we had a great time and every one sure had plenty of food to enjoy. It's always fun when we have events and we all can discuss ham radio especially over great food.

We need to start working on our Ham fest 2008. It is just around the corner. We will be planning some meetings very soon that can help make it another great Ham fest for our club.

In case you forgot the PA QSO party is coming up and I feel WACOM needs to again have a club station. I will make my QTH open again this year for the event. Please contact myself if you want to help work the event at my QTH.

Also our club will be setting up an emergency drill very soon. Check with Dave, N3IDH, or BOB, KB3IN. We are in the planning stage now but it sounds like a great test of our club's abilities.

73 Bud N3TIR



PICNIC



WACOM'S ANNUAL PICNIC WAS HELD ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 7TH. AS ALWAYS IT WAS WELL ATTENDED WITH THE WEATHER COOPERATING, AND ALL SEEMED TO ENJOY VISITING FOR SOME TIME AFTER EATING. NEEDLESS TO SAY, THERE WAS LOTS OF DELICIOUS FOOD. THERE WAS A VERY INFORMAL MEETING SO THERE ARE NO MINUTES TO POST. THANKS TO ALL WHO CAME AND TO THE FIREMEN FOR AGAIN ALLOWING US TO USE THE SHELTER.



Photo © Susan, KB3JHQ



Susan, KB3JHQ and Norma, N3YJJ

Photo © Jacque, N3ZEL



Photo © Jacque, N3ZEL



Randy, N3ZK with son Mason and daughter Kaitlyn. Behind Randy: Ed, N3ZNI, Dave, N3IDH and Alan, KB3EUQ



Ken, AA3GM, and Fay, KA3VOM

Photo © Jacque, N3ZEL

Volume 1 Issue 8

CONTESTING....

We all know about the troubles with propagation these days, sun spots or the lack thereof, and generally the frustration when we get on the radio and hear.....static. But sometimes things work out for us. Here is the latest award that Bill, KB3LIX, has received. Wow, now THAT'S a certificate! Congratulations Bill!!! Keep up the good work. Slowly but surely the good conditions will return and we can get out there and join you.

From Bill, KB3LIX:

In the ARRL International PHONE DX Contest

I ended up at the following scores/ranking:

Final score was 92,820 points with 241 Q's and 130 Multipliers.

Out of all categories and power levels:

514 out of 2129 total entries

In the single operator- Low power category:

68 of 605 total entries (all sections)

3 of 37 in the Atlantic Division

(one entry in New Jersey and one entry in Maryland were higher)

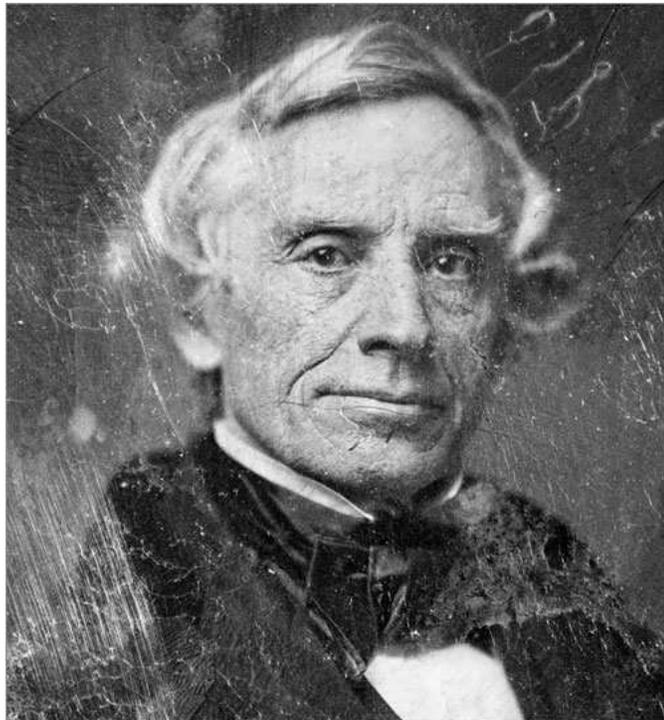
1 of 5 in the Western Pennsylvania section

Another certificate, one of these days it will show up.



June 20, 1840: A Simple Matter of Dots and Dashes

By Tony Long  06.20.08



In addition to his work in telegraphy, **Samuel F.B. Morse opened a portrait studio in New York City and taught the daguerreotype process of photography.**

Courtesy Library of Congress

1840: Samuel F.B. Morse receives a U.S. patent for his dot-dash telegraphy signals, known to the world as Morse code. The code Morse devised in partnership with [Alfred Vail](#) uses a system of dots and dashes to represent letters and numbers. It went into practical use in 1844, after he and Vail produced a working electromagnetic telegraph transmitter. Vail worked on various refinements to the transmitter before leaving the business altogether in 1848, feeling that he was being low-balled on his salary. Some scholars argue that it was Vail, not Morse, who actually came up with the dot-dash system. He did hold a small piece of Morse's patent but didn't get rich from it. Regardless of who devised it, the original code was a little different than the one in use today. What we recognize as Morse code is actually an international variation of the original, or "American," code. The American code contained

not only dots and dashes, but also spaces in five letters: C, O, R, Y and Z. (C, for example, was rendered like this: . . .) The numbers 0-9 were also different. The international version, known as [Modern International Morse Code](#), was introduced at a conference in Berlin in 1851. The American code remained in widespread use until the 1920s, when everyone finally lined up behind the international version.

1840 was a busy year for Morse. An accomplished, respected painter trained in Photography, he opened a portrait studio in New York. Morse had met Louis Daguerre in Paris the previous year, and in New York he taught the daguerreotype process to several photographers -- including [Mathew Brady](#), who put it to pretty good use during the American Civil War.

Following a failed run for mayor of New York, Morse turned his attention in earnest to telegraphy. With Vail, he finished up work on the first telegraph transmitter. He spent several years trying to drum up interest in his telegraph, which was met with initial skepticism, both official and unofficial. When he finally received a patent for the telegraph itself, it came first from the Ottoman [Sultan Abdulmecid](#) in Constantinople (now Istanbul), who personally tested it and gave it his blessing. Others, notably Englishmen Charles Wheatstone and William Cooke, had patents on similar (and some say, superior) hardware, but Morse eventually triumphed in the legal battle. His adept promotion, one-wire transmission system and simple software -- the Morse code -- won the day.

Morse code has now been in use for more than 160 years. It still has practical applications in the modern world because almost anything can be used, from telegraph key to flashlight to pencil to fingertip, to tap out or flash a message. Severely disabled people even use Morse to communicate, sending out the code by eye movement or puffing and blowing.

Source: Various

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

SKYVIEW HAMFEST AND WPA SECTION CONVENTION



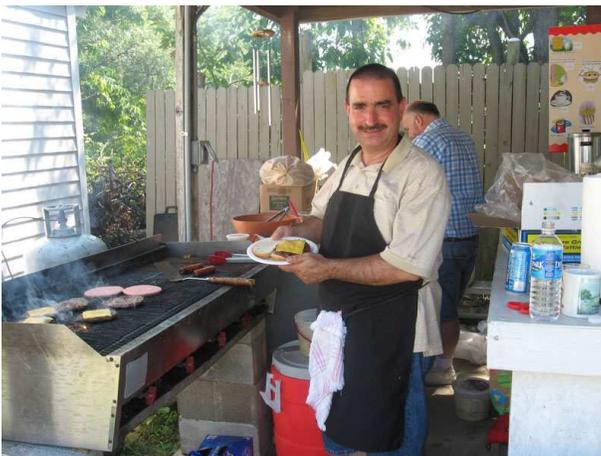
L to R: John Rodgers, N3MSE, WPA Section Manager; Katie Breen, W1KRB, ARRL Membership Manager; and Bill Edgar, N3LLR, Atlantic District



ABOVE: Eric Olena, WB3FPL, EPA Section Director. RIGHT: John Szwarz, N3SPW, WPA Emergency Coordinator.



Larry O'Toole, K3LBP, and his wife—good to see him out and about!



LEFT: Bob Bastone, WC3O, chef extraordinaire at the Skyview Hamfest.

Ably assisted by Larry Keller, AB3ER.

And yes, both breakfast and lunch were terrific. Just TRY to wrap your mouth around a Sky Burger... piled high with fries and slaw....



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

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

**Ask the Tech...**

Hello everyone! There was no question for this month, so I have decided that this would be a good time to do some experimenting with travel antennas. Loren, WA3WZR and I are heading to W4 land and will be tinkering with a couple of portable antennas on a 72 ' house boat. I will have a report on what we used and how well it worked in the October issue of the news letter.

73 & CUL

Joe, WA3WMB

~~~~~  
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

More Picnic Photos



**WACOM
PICNIC
AUGUST
7TH
2008**



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

Hypothesis: Doing away with the code requirement last March has completed a rejuvenation of ham radio that was triggered by the World Trade Center attacks and Katrina. I'm looking for reader comments yea and nay.

What set me off: I'm listening on the local 2-m repeater the other week, and there's a QSO in progress. One ham tells the other that he just passed the test for his Amateur-Extra rating, and he's looking forward to learning the code so he can go DX-ing on HF!

(I'm going to do as little translation of ham jargon as possible in this posting, because I'm talking to engineers who have undoubtedly encountered ham radio before and because even the non-hams in this audience ought to be able to figure out what I'm saying from context.)

That said, the one thing that I need to state explicitly is that last March, the U.S. FCC did away with any skill test for Morse code for any class of license, i.e., for access to any ham frequency band, including the ones below 21 MHz that allow easy worldwide communication. (This is consistent with global ham licensing.)

What I'm curious about is whether what I'm seeing in Silicon Valley is representative of what's happening across the U.S. and Canada. So, I'm soliciting your feedback.

The Preparedness Angle

Right here, between the Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association (PAARA) and the Foothill Amateur Radio Society (FARS), we have an incredible concentration of people with ham licenses who were also founders of well-known technology companies (or who are in the process of founding technology companies that are likely to become well known). I don't know the hams across San Francisco Bay as well, but I'm not sticking my neck out very far to say that they're probably as well gifted with gurus ("Elmers" in ham-speak) as we on the Peninsula.

That talent pool wouldn't be worth mentioning, though, if it weren't for the realization that people in the San Francisco Bay Area are living on top of some very squirrely real estate. When the Big One comes, and the Golden Gate and Bay bridges come down, anybody trying to escape from the north end of the peninsula will have to go through San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. Across the bay, all the hospitals sit on top of the Hayward fault, which nobody knew existed when the So a lot of people here are actively thinking about what they're going to do when the worst happens. For me, it started when my wife Vicky started a neighborhood Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). (You need to do this yourselves.) The Sheriff's Department guy who taught our classes is a ham. He turned us on to the local South County Amateur Radio Emergency Services (SCARES) group, which has been planning for decades with local first-responders. (FWIW, my call is NR7X. Vicky's is N7HBJ. We're 7s because we were licensed first in Oregon.)

At every SCARES meeting, there are more and more new hams who got into ham radio because they want to be useful in an emergency. The people who conduct the training courses and administer the testing are inducting 50 or more new hams a month, and if those folks aren't showing up at SCARES meetings, they're showing up at the Red Cross, the sheriff's communication group, and other emergency preparedness organizations.

The Bigger Picture

Wouldn't you know it, there's still interesting non-emergency stuff showing up in ham radio. People get together at club meetings, at flea markets, at the monthly get-together at the Stanford Linear Accelerator (kudos, KE6PFF), and on the air (check out www.9amtalk.net). And that's where people who thought maybe ham radio would be useful for emergency communications meet people who've been chasing rare DX for half a century and get the urge to study for higher grades of license. (BTW, the tests ain't easier just because the code's gone. All that's happened is that the modes have changed.)

At least, that's what it's like in Earthquake Country. Tell me what it's like where you live.

Washington Amateur Communications

Club Officers

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bud@bnelectronics.com

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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 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. Unionville Fire Hall-102 Mahood Road-Butler,PA 16001

More Info: 724-282-9077 Email: dzibrat@zoominternet.net

Talkin: 147.36 MHz Repeater Time 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

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

One more photo from the Pittsburgh 250 Event—

Operating at Dave, N3IDH's station are, Left to Right, Tom Balaban, K3PLM, Dave DeMotte, N3IDH, and Bud Plants, N3TIR.

There have been just over 300 cards sent in, most requesting a certificate, but a number asking specifically for cards.

