

# The W.A.COM HAM



September 1996

Editor: Kevin Smith

Washington, PA

## Time to Gear Up For Fall Events

### *5K Classic - Pumpkin Festival - Hamfest*

The lull since Field Day was interrupted by the American Cancer Society's annual Labor Day Classic 5K run held on Labor Day, September 2. As always, WACOM provided communication support.

WACOM club members who participated include: Walt N3BKW, Russ N3NEL, Joe KA3MZS, Judie KA3RMN, Ted WB3BZK, Jim KA3KSP, Jim KC3HW, Steve KA3UDR, and Jim NW3X. Over 375 runners and walkers covered the route between Washington Park and Washington High School.

Jim Graziulis, KA3KSP will again take charge of the Houston Pumpkin Festival Special Event Station (October 12 & 13). The club callsign, KB3BHS will again

be used. A change this year for the Pumpkin festival should mean greater traffic flow by the special event station. The entire festival will be located in the field behind the American Legion. Maybe this will curtail the helicopter noise. Let us hope. The special event station will operate both Saturday and Sunday if enough operators are available.

WACOM wraps up the fall with our annual Hamfest and Computer Fair. Steve Elliott, KA3UDR is chairing this year's



event and as always, is anxious to hear from members about getting involved in the planning and execution of the event. A not so little change for this year is that the hamfest will be Sunday November 10, 1996 at the Chartiers-Houston High School. This is a full week earlier than normal. This scheduling was due to another group committing to use the High School on the weekend before Thanksgiving, our normal weekend for the hamfest.

It is obviously not clear what impact the change in date will have for the success of our hamfest. One thing has not changed. The membership needs to get involved. Steve Elliott will be glad to hear from you!

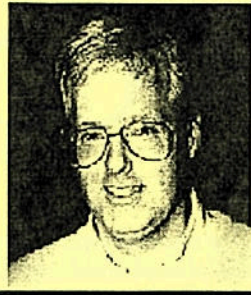
## CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Dave DeMotte, N3IDH and his wife Jerrie, on becoming grandparents for the first time. Their daughter Kim gave birth to James Todd III on August 12, 1996.



# Speaking Out

by Kevin Smith, N3HKQ  
Newsletter Editor



*In response to last month's lead article in the WACOM HAM, I was asked to publish my personal letter that I wrote to the FCC concerning the threat to the 2 meter and 70 centimeter bands posed by the commercial satellite service. The following is my letter that was sent to the Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D.C. 20554.*

To Whom It May Concern:

I write as a member of several amateur radio organizations namely the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), the Radio Amateur Satellite Corporation (AMSAT), and Washington Amateur Communications

(WACOM). I have learned from the above organizations about the threat that exists to radio frequency allocations assigned to the amateur service from commercial low earth orbit mobile satellites ("Little LEO's"), specifically the 2 meter and 70 centimeter bands. The above organizations have urged their members to write to the FCC in regard to this issue, and so I submit my comments.

You have received many messages from radio amateurs who have expressed more eloquently than I, points for not considering recommendations made to the industry working group

IWG-2A that include allowing the 2 meter and 70 centimeter bands to be used by the "Little LEOs". I can only echo what has been mentioned already. What I would like to do is explain how the radio frequencies in question are utilized in the southwestern Pennsylvania county of Washington where I live.

WACOM is an ARRL affiliated club based in Washington County who have members that are trustees of several 2 meter and 70 centimeter repeaters. These repeaters are used by WACOM members to provide community service to several events throughout the year. These events include coordination of the local March of Dimes "WalkAmerica", 5K runs, Annual Christmas parade, participation in simulated emergency drills conducted by local and state agencies, providing emergency communications to towns that had telephone service interrupted on two different occasions in the last 12 months, and SKYWARN nets.

I believe the above examples of service to the local community demonstrate that local radio amateurs are good stewards of the valuable spectrum that includes 2 meters and 70 centimeters. Arguably, the above could be said to be duplicated in practically every county in the United States. This along with the technical innovation that pours from groups like AMSAT and TAPR, justifies I think, protecting radio spectrum assigned to the amateur service from commercial groups such as the commercial mobile satellite service. A group I might add, owes its existence to the technology developed by radio amateurs.

I respectfully ask that my comments be entered into the record and considered when the time comes to debate this issue further.

Sincerely,

Kevin J. Smith, N3HKQ

## WACOM Committee Phone Directory

A.R.E.S.	Walt Piroth, N3BKW	746-2327
RACES	Bob Ketzell, KB3IN	228-0425
EMA	Dave Smith, N3LIK	225-0346
President	Bob Ketzell, KB3IN	228-0425
Vice President	Joe Musante, WB3GTE	223-0897
Secretary	Jarred Stanko, N3TKR	746-2156
Treasurer	Cheryl McGrevin, N3PYC	225-9545
Education	Jim Burtoft, KC3HW	228-0546
2mtr Net Mgr.	Dave DeMotte, N3IDH	228-8178
10mtr Net Mgr.	Joe Musante, WB3GTE	223-0897
Newsletter	Kevin Smith, N3HKQ	258-4153
Repeater	Sam Mayberry, W3CYO	222-0367
VE Testing	Stan Cole III, NX3P	223-0104



## VANITY FILING GATE 2 OPENS SEPTEMBER 23, 1996

The FCC has announced that vanity call sign filing Gate 2 will open September 23. Under Gate 2, Amateur Extra class licensees may request a vanity call sign on or after that date. File requests on FCC Form 610V. Legibility is critical! If your application is not legible, you could experience a delay in processing, lose the opportunity to obtain a requested call sign or even obtain a call sign different from what you want.

Under Gate 2, you must hold an unexpired Amateur Extra class operator/primary station license to request a vanity call sign for your primary station. To request a vanity call sign for a club station under Gate 2, you must also hold an unexpired club station license grant listing you as the license trustee. Applicants should refer to the licensee database to verify that a requested call sign is not already assigned. A call sign is normally assignable two years following license expiration, surrender, revocation, set aside, cancellation, void ab initio, or death of the grantee.

Using Form 610V, provide a list of up to 25 call signs in the order of preference. The first assignable call sign on the list will be assigned to your station. Remember: When requesting a call sign under Gate 2 for your primary or club station, the call sign must have been unassigned for at least two years. As an Amateur Extra class operator, you may request a call sign from any group, A, B, C or D.

Any call sign requested must be one designated for the region of your mailing address. i.e. One of the contiguous 48 states: Regions 1 to 10.

For explanations of Groups A, B, C and D and the geographic Regions, see Fact Sheet PR5000 Number 206-S, Amateur Station Sequential Call Sign System (or see The ARRL Letter Electronic Update, August 16, 1996, available on the ARRLWeb at <http://www.arrl.org/>). For more information on the vanity call sign program, see Fact Sheet PR5000 Number 206-V Amateur Station Vanity Call Sign System.

A \$30 fee is required with

your FCC Form 610V application. Payment of fees may be made by check (payable to FCC), bank draft, money order or credit card. If paying by credit card, you must also complete and submit FCC Form 159 with your FCC Form 610V. Do not send cash. Send your application package to: Federal Communications Commission, Amateur Vanity Call Sign Request, PO Box 358924, Pittsburgh, PA 15251-5924.

If you do not qualify under the above eligibility standards, your application will be dismissed. For further information, contact the Consumer Assistance Branch at 800-322-1117.

Advanced, General, Technician Plus, Technician, and Novice class operators are not yet eligible to request by list. Advanced class operators will be eligible at Gate 3. Others will be eligible at Gate 4.

A separate Public Notice will be released providing guidelines for the implementation of electronic filing procedures for FCC Form 610V.

## W8VM TRANSOCEANIC DX CHALLENGE

The West Park Radiops of Bay Village, Ohio, has announced the W8VM Transoceanic DX Challenge. The idea is to become the first Amateur Radio DXpedition team to establish a two-way QSO over the longest ocean path, which the group estimates at up to 22,000 miles. The end points of the path must be on continents or peninsulas that are part of DXCC countries. The trick is that a line between the two points may not cross land, including large islands or peninsulas. Entry forms and complete rules are available for an SASE from the W8VM crew. Write West Park Radiops Inc, 513 Kenilworth Rd, Bay Village, OH 44140.--Glenn Williams, AF8C



## Western Pennsylvania VE Test Opportunities

Date(s)	Location	ZIP	Telephone	Contact
09/12/96, 10/10/96, 11/14/96	Ambridge	15010	412-846-2667	Mike Emerling
09/14/96, 10/12/96, 11/09/96	N Huntington	15022	412-483-7135	Ricardo Morales
09/14/96, 10/12/96, 11/09/96	New Castle	16102	412-667-1166	Gary Pirkkala
09/15/96	UnionTown	15401	412-246-2870	John Cermak
09/16/96	Oakdale	15071	412-833-6049	Mark Strayer KE3JA
09/21/96, 10/19/96, 11/16/96	Elco	15483	412-751-4373	Charles Furlong
09/26/96, 10/24/96, 11/21/96	New Castle	16112	412-667-9451	Fred Van Natten
09/28/96	Erie	16541	814-734-4260	Dr John J Duda
09/28/96	Greensburg	15601	412-523-4261	Richard Beaver
09/28/96, 11/23/96	Pittsburgh	15326	412-885-8073	Dennis Tanner
10/05/96	New Eagle	15037	412-751-4373	William Cioccio
10/05/96	Pittsburgh	15226	412-563-2379	Jim Cottrill
10/12/96	New Kensington	15068	412-351-1562	Louis H Zimmerman
10/17/96	Pittsburgh	15228	412-922-1257	Ronald E Lentz
10/26/96	Indiana	15701	412-479-8117	Paul Williams NY3T
11/09/96	Butler	16001	412-282-6777	Gerald Wetzel

## FIRST DATV QSO!

Anyone who experimented with a tin-can telephone as a youngster will especially appreciate how tin-can technology has expanded, this time as part of what could be an Amateur Radio "first." As a creative challenge (sparked by a recent QST editorial), Mike McCombs, KM4YW and Ned Mountain, WC4X, recently employed a couple of coffee cans in UHF service to accomplish an MPEG-2 digital TV QSO on 1290 MHz!

The August 1 QSO was

over a 3-mile obstructed path running 32 mW into antennas made out of--you guessed it--coffee cans. An L-band line amplifier was mounted to the coffee can. "Signals were perfect, both directions," said WC4X. Coffee cans aside, Mountain reports the pair "used very new and very expensive hardware." Both McCombs and Mountain live in Georgia and work for Wegener Communications, which makes digital video transmission systems for the

broadcast industry. Even so, Mountain says, the feat is "indicative of where we can go, and as costs come down, what is possible using digital television in the ham bands."

The pair used a Wegener DVT2000 MPEG 2 SCPC encoder/modulator, a Wegener DVR2000 MPEG 2 IRD, and coffee can antennas designed by KM4YW.--Mike McCombs, KM4YW/Ned Mountain, WC4X



## Highlights From The September WACOM Club Meeting

**Field Day** - Chairman Stan Cole III reported that all went well with the weekend, after a "grand canyon" of mud was traversed. He thanked Steve Elliott, KA3UDR for arranging to have water and a Humvee on site for the weekend. Stan said WACOM's score for Field Day is about 2200 points.

**Two Meter Net** - Dave DeMotte, N3IDH is in need of a new net control operator to take Tina Group's place. Jared Stanko, N3TKR volunteered and will be placed in the rotation. Dave also emphasized that anyone can be net control operator if the scheduled NCO is not available. Copies of the two meter net script were handed out.

**Hamfest** - Steve Elliott emphasized that the hamfest is a different week in November due to a scheduling conflict at the CHHS. All major ham publications have been notified. Steve would like to do a mass mailing of a flyer utilizing mailing labels supplied by ARRL. Vendor mailings are scheduled to go out this month. Prizes this year will be an ICOM HF rig and two HT's.

**VE** - Stan Cole III, NX3P will require a 72 hour pre-registration prior to the hamfest. Much confusion has been experienced in recent hamfests and it is hoped to be avoided.

**Shirts and jackets** - Dave DeMotte will again be taking orders for club tee shirts and jackets. If interested in ordering, call Dave at 228-8178.

**WACOM Trailer** - Bill Hill would like to find a storage location, preferably indoors, that is closer to Washington. Currently it is being stored outdoors in New Eagle, PA. Bob Ketzell mentioned that there is no vacancy in any Washington County facility that he is aware of. Dave DeMotte mentioned that the fire department he is a member of has indoor storage available, but that a \$35/month fee must be paid. It was agreed that WACOM's current financial situation does not allow for a monthly fee to be paid. The search goes on.

**Club Dues** - A review of club income and expenses over that last several years by Treasurer Cheryl McGrevin and president Bob Ketzell, indicates that a deficit has been incurred consistently. The club's savings have been used to cover the overrun in expenses. Currently dues are \$12/year for the first member of a family and \$6/year for every additional club member in a family. It was also determined that in comparison to other western Pennsylvania clubs, WACOM's dues are among the lowest. A Finance Committee

consisting of Bob Ketzell, Cheryl McGrevin, Walt Piroth will report their findings and make a recommendation on how the financial situation of the club can be rectified. A simple vote on a motion brought to the membership attending a club meeting is all that is required to change the dues structure. Bob Ketzell stressed that WACOM members who are retired will not be burdened by an increase and that consideration for members from the same family will remain part of the dues structure.

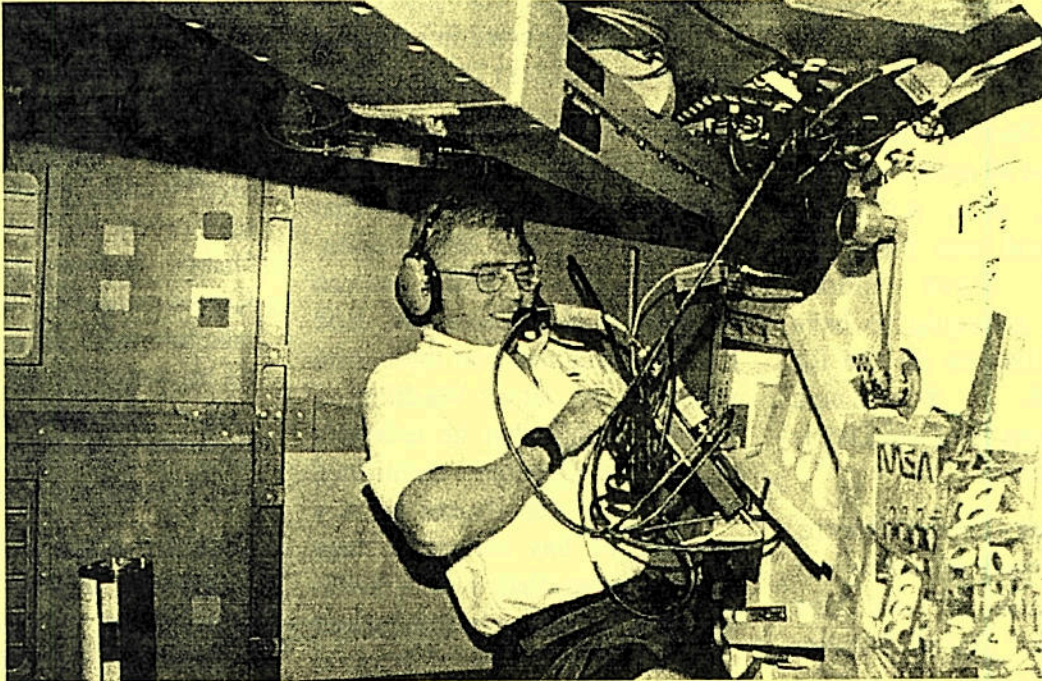
**ARRL International DX Contest** - It was learned that WACOM's own Ken Frankenberry, AA3GM, was the Western PA section contest winner in the QRP category with a score of 10,098 points. Details of his win can be seen in the September, 1996 QST page 109. Congratulations Ken!

**Pumpkin Festival** - Chairman Jim Grazulis mentioned that this year's Houston Pumpkin Festival will be on October 12 and 13, 1996. On Saturday, the Special Event station KB3BHS will be on the air from 10 AM till 4 PM. On Sunday, the station will operate from 12 noon till 4 PM.





## From recent SAREX mission aboard STS-78



Aboard the middeck of the Earth-orbiting Space Shuttle Columbia, astronaut Charles J. Brady, mission specialist and a licensed amateur radio operator or ham, talks to students on Earth. Some of the crew members devoted some of their off-duty time to continue a long-standing Shuttle tradition of communicating with students and other hams between their shifts of assigned duty. Brady joined four other NASA astronauts and two international payload specialists for almost 17-days of research in support of the Life and Microgravity Spacelab (LMS-1) mission.

### Code Class Sponsored by SCARC

The Steel City Amateur Radio Club is sponsoring a course in learning Morse code at speeds up to 5 wpm, that is open to anyone interested in learning. The first class will begin on Monday, October 21, 1996 at 7:00 PM in the SCARC club house located off the Parkway West. Classes will be conducted from 7:00 till 8:00 PM and continue on subsequent Mondays and Thursdays. For more information, please call Art Mueller, WA3BKD at 412-356-7381.

### For Sale

ALINCO DR-130T

Mobile Radio - 50/5 watts

Asking \$200

Contact Bob Ketzell, KB3IN

228-0425

## ARRL UHF Contest September 14 & 15, 1996



**9th Annual**

# Tri-State

**Hamfest & Computer Fair**

**New Date**

**Sunday 8AM - 3PM**

**November 10, 1996**

**VE Testing 9AM**

**No Walk-ins**

**72 hour Pre-reg. Required**

**Contact Stan Cole III, NX3P**

**412-223-0104**

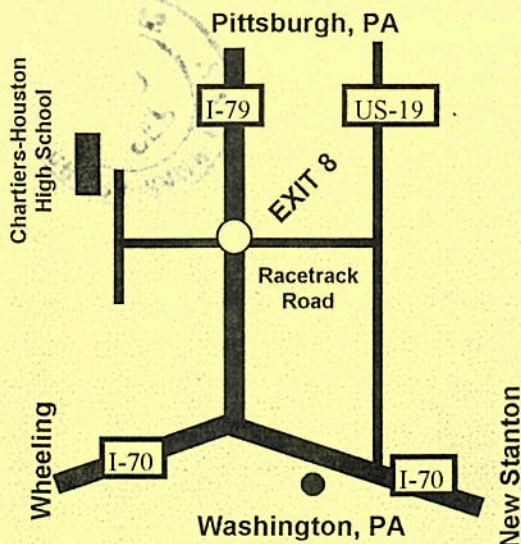
**Admission \$4.00**

**children under 12 are admitted free**

**Main prize tickets**

**\$2 each or 3 for \$5 or 7 for \$10**

**Main prize winners need not be present**



**Chartiers-Houston  
High School**

**1.5 miles from the Meadows**

For more information contact:

Ted Lockman  
412-222-6473

Bill Hill  
412-746-5944

FAX  
412-746-4374

**Sponsored by WACOM Box 1386, Washington, PA 15301**



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 Secretary: Jarred Stanko, N3TKR

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**2 Meter Net**  
**145.49 Mhz**  
**8:30 PM Local Time**

September 3	N3HKQ
September 10	N3IDH
September 17	KA3KSP
September 24	N3TKR
October 1	N3HKQ

**10 Meter Net**  
**28.340 Mhz**  
**9:00 PM Local Time**

September 3	KD3VX
September 10	WB3GTE
September 17	KA3KSP
September 24	WB3GTE
October 1	KA3VOM

# The W.A.COM HAM

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