



The WACOM HAM



<http://www.wpol.com/wacom>

August 1997

Editor: Kevin Smith

Washington, PA

Mark Your Calendar for Upcoming Events

American Cancer Society 5K Run - Club Picnic - Hamfest - Pumpkin Festival Make for a Busy Two Month Period.

Story by Kevin Smith, N3HKQ

WACOM has a busy two month period coming up beginning on Labor Day and continuing through October 11 and 12, 1997. Information can be obtained on the club's VHF/UHF Net conducted each Tuesday evening at 8:30 PM on the W3CYO repeater system. If you don't hear the information you want, just ask. Here is the run down of each activity:

American Cancer Society's Annual 5K Run



As usual, this event takes place on Labor Day morning, September 1, 1997. WACOM will again provide communication support to the 5K Run staff. Amateurs will be stationed along the route

and participate in a net until the last runner finishes. After the run, net participants usually congregate at a local eating establishment. Dave DeMotte will have more information.

WACOM's Annual Club Picnic

Once again members and their families are invited to the annual picnic to be held at the South Strabane #2 VFD picnic grounds on Saturday afternoon, September 20, 1997. As usual, WACOM will supply the meat and beverages. Members are asked to bring a side dish or desert.



Tenth Annual Tri-State Hamfest & Computer Fair

This year's hamfest has a new chairman, a new date, and a new

location. Dave Martin, N3VBU is overseeing this year's hamfest being moved to a new date, Sunday, October 5, 1997 and a new location, the Washington County fairgrounds.

The new date and location are promising for the event because the weather will still be warm and the fairgrounds allow tail-gating similar to the Butler Hamfest to take place. The word needs spread and Dave needs the memberships help. Be sure to listen for more details.

Houston Pumpkin Festival Special Event Station

For a change, the Houston Pumpkin Festival Special Event Station will wrap up WACOM's fall schedule of events. KB3BHS will once again go on the air to hand out contacts and our unique QSL card to lucky amateurs. This year the Special event station will be operated on Saturday, October 11 and Sunday, October 12, 1997. Operators are always needed and its fun.



Speaking Out

by Kevin Smith, N3HKQ
Newsletter Editor



This column is going to sound a lot like one given by Jim McNutt three years ago and for some of the same reasons as well as others. The last issue of the WACOM Ham that I will publish will be December's. My work is placing demands on my time that require me to eliminate something, so that sanity can be maintained in my family and church life. My activity with WACOM and all that goes with it is least important, and therefore must be curtailed.

I am not losing interest in amateur radio. I still want to put together a killer satellite station and participate in some public service activities once in a while. I have enjoyed publishing the WACOM Ham, but as you have heard me complain before, it is easier and more enjoyable when there are contributions made by the general membership. It is a real chore when I have to single handedly prepare an entire newsletter. Thank goodness for the internet because if it were not

for that, there would be months with either no issue at all or a two pager at best.

Another thing that doesn't make for good copy in a club newsletter is that the activities of WACOM are becoming fewer and more modest. Perhaps its a cyclical thing that any organization experiences. Certainly I don't have the monopoly on being busy.

There have been a few consistent contributors - namely Ken and Dave Frankenberg. I want to thank them both for offering interestingly written articles on DXing, 6 meter operation, and lately DXpeditions. Ken, I still have a few more issues to publish, so think about writing on your recent DXpedition to Newfoundland. Walt Piroth, Dave DeMotte, and Bob Ketzell also deserve thanks for contributing articles from time to time.

I will offer the next editor of the WACOM Ham all of the past issues as well as the club roster on diskette. If you use MS Word and Publisher, you will be in business right away.

Well enough of that for now. I still have four more issues to put out. Speaking of that, I am scheduled to be out of the country twice this fall. Early in October (including hamfest weekend) and later in November. Both trips will affect the timely mailing of the newsletter.

WACOM Committee Phone Directory

A.R.E.S.	Dave DeMotte, N3IDH	228-8178
RACES	Bob Ketzell, KB3IN	228-0425
EMA	Dave Smith, N3LIK	225-0346
President	Paul Plants, N3WMV	225-8637
Vice President	Joe Musante, WB3GTE	223-0897
Secretary	Patty Marshall, N3XAR	225-8637
Treasurer	Kevin Smith, N3HKQ	258-4153
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10mtr Net Mgr.	Joe Musante, WB3GTE	223-0897
Newsletter	Kevin Smith, N3HKQ	258-4153
Repeater	Sam Mayberry, W3CYO	222-0367
VE Testing	Open	

Astronaut Michael Foale Grateful for Ham Radio on Mir

From ARRL Headquarters
Newington, CT
July 11, 1997



To all radio amateurs:

In a packet message to Dave Larsen, N6CO, of the MIREX support team, US astronaut Mike Foale, KB5UAC, expressed the gratitude of the Mir crew "for all the good wishes and interest over the world, in our troubles and tribulations." The MIREX support team--Miles Mann, WF1F, and Larsen--has been handling family traffic for Foale via ham radio and attempting to help him with his radio problems (the Mir's transceiver was cutting out on high power because of a circuit overload). Foale singled out for special mention "the few hams who work tirelessly on our behalf" to pass personal messages. Foale said that he and his wife were "extremely grateful to those hams who pass our messages for us." After the Mir's collision with a Progress cargo rocket, Foale said, "it was impossible to get any personal news of our well-being to our families" via the official communication channels. "Ham

radio allowed us to fill the gap."

"We are particularly interested in longer contacts, than simple QSO exchanges," Foale said. "It is good to tell people about our life here on Mir, and our problems, but the lives of hams on Earth are also interesting to us, and I hope more hams will take the time to tell us about their QTH and surroundings also," he concluded.

Ham radio has served as a convenient "chat" medium between the US space shuttle Columbia and the troubled Russian Mir space station in recent days. Last weekend, shuttle Commander Jim Halsell, KC5RNI, had two short, direct 2-meter contacts with Foale aboard Mir. The first ship-to-ship SAREX/MIREX contact happened Saturday, July 5, during a Mir/Columbia "conjunction" over the Indian Ocean. The contact lasted less than a minute. A little while later, with both spacecraft over the Pacific Ocean, another 30-45 second contact took place, according to Will Marchant, KC6ROL, of AMSAT. "The shuttle crew was pretty excited about their contact," he said. But the best QSO was yet to come. On Tuesday, July 8, 1900 UTC, Foale contacted W5RRR, which patched him through NASA's communications circuits to the space shuttle, enabling Foale to speak at length with the Columbia crew. During the ten-minute contact, Foale filled in his fellow astronauts about the situation aboard Mir, where a Progress supply rocket had just successfully been docked.

"We'd like to invite you to visit Mir," Foale said to the shuttle crew, which respectfully declined. Foale said the arrival of the Progress was "almost like Christmas." He said his personal items still in the damaged Spektr module had been replaced, along with a videocassette player. Foale told Halsell the Mir crew enjoys watching American movies when they have the time. He also told his fellow astronauts aboard the Columbia that he had not had a chance to see any of the pictures from the Mars Pathfinder mission as yet. Foale said the Progress carried tea, coffee, chocolate and even fresh food.

Other Columbia-Mir conjunctions will be possible through the mission but whether another contact is attempted depends on the Columbia and Mir work schedules.

On July 10, Foale told N6CO in another packet message that the crew was "extremely busy, trying to crawl through all the bags unloaded from Progress." Foale said the crew will do a training run on July 15 prior to the space walk to attempt to repair the damage and restore power to the space station. Foale will sit out the space walk in the Soyuz vehicle.

Thanks to Philip Chien, KC4YER, Pat Kilroy, WD8LAQ, Frank H. Bauer, KA3HDO, Dave Larsen, N6CO, Matt Bordelon, KC5BTL, and Rosalie White, WA1STO, for their contributions to this bulletin.

August Western Pennsylvania VE Test Opportunities

(A) = ARRL/VEC, (L) = LAUREL/VEC, (M) = MOUNTAIN/VEC,
(5) = W5YI/VEC, *P* = Pre-registration requested, *N* = No walk-ins, WI = walk-ins

Date	Location	Time	Club	Contact	Telephone
2	Erie		RA of Erie	Norma Vanderhoff	814-665-9124 (A)
9	Butler	9 AM	Butler Co ARA	Gerald Wetzel	412-282-6777 *N* (A)
16	Beaver Falls	8:30 AM		Thomas Peluso	412-843-6560 *P* (A)
16	Erie	12:30 PM	Gannon Wireless Soc.	John Duda	814-734-4260 (A)
16	Mercer	9 AM	Mercer Co ARC	Dennis Gregory	412-347-5960 (A)
23	Pittsburgh	noon	North Hills ARC	Bud Wasser	412-366-5206
28	New Castle	6:15 PM	Lawrence Co ARA	Fred Van Natten	412-667-9451 (5)
30	Pittsburgh	10 AM	WPA Hilltoppers	Dennis Tanner	412-885-8073 (A)

ELECTRONIC VANITY APPLICATIONS TO GET PRIORITY

From the ARRL Letter

When vanity call sign Gate 3 opens on August 6, 1997, the FCC will process electronic applications ahead of paper applications each day. Previously, the FCC did not distinguish in how it handled electronic and paper Form 610V applications. In recent months, the FCC has been receiving more electronic applications than paper applications. The FCC says it will process electronic applications, then paper applications received on any given day.

The FCC also has established a firm deadline for receipt of application fees to accompany electronic applications. After Gate 3 opens, fees for electronic applications must be received by the FCC's fiscal agent, Mellon Bank, within 10 days of the date of application or the application will be dismissed. The fee will remain at \$30 for the ten-year term until September 15, 1997, when it will increase to \$50 for the ten-year term.

Applicants can find the electronic Form 610V on the FCC's Web site at <http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/amradsrv.html>. Electronic applications require a Form 159 for any method of payment. Mail payments accompanying electronic applications to Federal Communications Commission, Box 358994, Pittsburgh, PA 15251-5994.

Paper applications require an FCC Form 159 if payment is by credit card or if the application package contains multiple applications being paid for with one check. Individual applications do not require a Form 159 if payment is by personal check or money order. Send paper applications containing payments to Federal Communications Commission, Box 358924, Pittsburgh, PA 15251-5924.

To avoid processing delays, applicants should make sure the information on their license is up to date. If you have changed your name or address, you must file Form 610 with the FCC to request modification of your license to show the correct information. In the case of a club station, you must file Form 610B.

Gate 3 opens the vanity call sign program to Advanced class amateurs. The FCC has not said when it will open Gate 4, for General, Technician Plus, Technician and Novice class operators. For more information, call the FCC's toll-free Consumer Information line at 888-225-5322 (CALL FCC). Please note the 888 area code!

PHASE 3-D LAUNCH UPDATE

AMSAT NEWS SERVICE
BULLETIN 208.01
FROM AMSAT HQ
SILVER SPRING, MD, JULY 27,
1997

On Wednesday July 16 a meeting was held in Marburg, Germany between Dr. Karl Meinzer, DJ4ZC, the Phase 3-D Project Leader and AMSAT-DL President, and Werner Haas, DJ5KQ, AMSAT-DL Vice President; and officials of the European Space Agency (ESA). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the launch schedule for Ariane 502, on which the Phase 3-D spacecraft is to fly. At this meeting, the ESA officials reiterated their intent to launch A-502 at the end of September and said that the launch campaign for this flight has already begun. They stated that, as part of this launch campaign the Phase 3-D spacecraft must arrive in Kourou by August 10th.

Earlier, ESA had informed AMSAT that, following analysis of data from the Ariane 501 flight, they had significantly increased their estimates for the acceleration and vibration environments which spacecraft riding on Ariane 02 are expected to encounter. As a result of this new information, AMSAT has been re-evaluating the structural capabilities of the Phase 3-D spaceframe. As a part

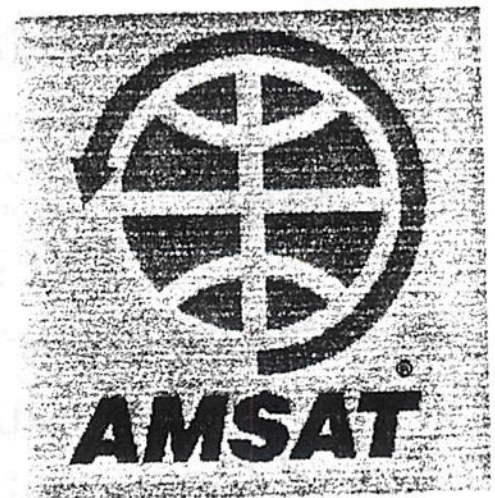
of this effort, an independent structural engineer was brought in to review the spacecraft's design and construction. His conclusions were recently presented to Dr. Meinzer and AMSAT-NA people.

His report stated that, in order to be confident of surviving these increased launch environments, a number of modifications must be made to the spacecraft. Since that report was presented, substantial effort has been taking place at the Phase 3-D Integration Laboratory in Orlando, Florida to manufacture and install the recommended structural parts necessary to increase the spacecraft's vibration and acceleration capability.

At the Marburg meeting, Dr. Meinzer made it clear to the ESA officials, that this work, made necessary by ESA's new environmental information, would prevent AMSAT from delivering the spacecraft to Kourou by the specified August 10th date. Thus, it was the conclusion of the meeting that, as a result of these ESA specification changes, the Phase 3-D schedule and that of ESA for Ariane 502 are not compatible. Thus, unless, something changes, which ESA does not presently contemplate, Phase 3-D will not be able to be launched on Ariane 502. Furthermore, in order to maintain the planned mass characteristics of the Ariane 502 vehicle, AMSAT must supply a mass simulator representing the Phase 3-D spacecraft to be sent aloft on the flight. This must be in Kourou by September 5th.

Despite, this very bad news, Dr. Meinzer and other AMSAT officials expressed some degree of confidence the Phase 3D may yet fly on Ariane 502. They based this on a number of activities taking place in the preparation of the launch vehicle that, they believe, could cause a slip in the currently published ESA schedule. The ESA officials attending the Marburg meeting said that, if a slip should occur, which they do not currently contemplate, which, results in the two schedules again becoming compatible, efforts would be made to substitute the Phase 3-D spacecraft for the mass simulator. Therefore AMSAT is continuing in the work of completing the necessary structural modifications to the spacecraft, and conducting environmental testing.

[ANS thanks Phase 3-D Project Leader Dr. Karl Meinzer, DJ4ZC, and AMSAT-NA President Bill Tynan, W3XO, for this information.]



Operating Events Not to Miss!

by Rosalie White, WA1STO

K2BSA at Jamboree

The Boy Scouts' K2BSA will be on the air from the National Jamboree starting July 28, when some 35,000 Scouts are scheduled to arrive at Fort A. P. Hill in Virginia. The ARRL's Larry Wolfgang, WR1B, is among the 34 adult ham Scouters on the Jamboree staff, along with Ray Moyer, WD8JKV, the BSA National Coordinator, Mike Brown, WB2JWD the overall coordinator, and William Burns, WA6QYR the Radio Merit Badge coordinator. In addition, there are seven Scout youth staff members who are licensed amateurs. "We have been busy building K2BSA this week," Larry reports. "Right now we

have a packet station operating in the traffic-handling area and one HF station operational as of noon Friday (July 25)." During the Jamboree, K2BSA will have at least three HF stations operating, plus a satellite setup and a station devoted to digital modes and SSTV. "The traffic-handling station will be another big part of our operation, as we take messages from Scouts to send home as well as receive incoming traffic for the Scouts," he said. A 2-meter repeater (145.17 MHz) is also on the air and fully operational.

Mir back on the air

As US astronaut Mike Foale, KB5UAC, bides his time aboard the troubled Mir space station, he has been active on 2-meter packet and FM voice. Harry Mueller, KC5TRB, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, reports working Foale July 21 on 145.985 MHz FM voice. KC5TRB responded to KB5UAC's CQ. Mueller reports

that Foale said he was disappointed that this crew would not get to make the needed Mir repairs, but that he was in "good spirits." Mueller said that Foale "sends his best wishes and a big thank you to the Amateur Radio community" for its support during the Mir crises. From Melbourne, Australia, Chris Edmondson, VK3CE, reports connecting with the R0MIR packet system July 22 on 145.985 MHz and "good copy for the entire high pass of almost 14 minutes." Foale told MIREX CEO Dave Larsen, N6CO, on July 21 that he was having frequent problems with the TNC and messages. "Sorry. No supply at hand," Foale quipped, he was getting ready for the next Mir crew to arrive on August 7. (Note: Mir also uses 145.800/200 MHz--Ed.)



For Sale
Butternut HF6V Vertical
Antenna
6 Bands - 10, 15, 20, 30, 40 &
75/80 Meters
Stub-Tuned Radial Kit
Included
Good Condition - Asking \$125
222-4037

**Free to a
good home:**

*Astron RS-35A
Power Supply
Needs Repair
(powers up but no
voltage indicated)*

258-4153

*If no answer, leave
message.*

10th Annual

Tri-State

Hamfest & Computer Fair

**New Date
New Location**

Sunday 8 AM - 3 PM

October 5, 1997

**VE Session
Walk-ins allowed**

**New this year - Tailgating!
write or call for details**

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

Washington County Fairgrounds

5 minutes from the Meadows Racetrack

Exit 8 on I-79

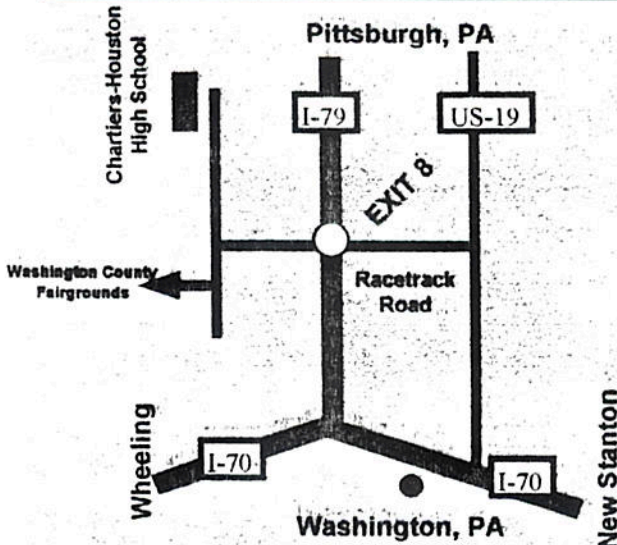
Watch for signs.

For more information contact:

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WACOM VHF/UHF Net
145.49/224.4/443.3 Mhz
8:30 PM Local Time

Date	NCS
August 5	WO3X
August 12	N3IDH
August 19	N3HKQ
August 26	KA3KSP
Sept. 2	WO3X

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

Date	NCS
August 5	KA3VOM
August 12	KA3KSP
August 19	WB3GTE
August 26	W3WH
Sept. 2	KA3VOM



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