

The WACOM Ham

It's Time To Get Ready for Field Day

June 24—25 at Mingo Creek County Park

WACOM 2023 Field Day will be held June 24-25 at the Washington County Public Safety Training location at Mingo Creek Park and preparations are underway for making this one of our best. Anyone interested in helping out should contact **Tom N3WS**. Come early Friday by 5PM for setup and bring your camping gear for overnighing. Antennas for designated bands will be positioned for hooking up your own radios and, in the cabin just below the Observatory, there will be stations with laptops. If planning to work inside, bring headphones since cabin space is limited. Those interested in beefing up their skills in setting up /manning the 92-10 command vehicle should let Tom know and make plans to help facilitate its setup, operation and/or shut down. We encourage members to get unlicensed people to visit us sometime over the weekend to help us make contacts at our get on the air station (GOTA), each of those contacts are worth 5 points and will help the clubs score. Fox Hunt and other activities will be held before the event officially kicks off at 2PM on Saturday. Those who can't make it to Mingo can work on 2 meter simplex or 10m/6m from home or mobile. As Field Day approaches look for more information on our reflector (groups.io) or, even better, come to our next meeting.

Winter Field Day 2023 was rainy and cold, typical of late January in Washington County, but still a lot of fun for those hams who came out. The cabin was colder than the outside so they had to open the windows to warm up and although the fireplace was only a replica, the group plugged away braving the cold. Successfully operating QRP, draining the battery wasn't an issue as anticipated. On HF, voice contacts were made on each of the bands 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meters using 10 watts max, even reaching Hawaii, and with CW and digital, contacts were made on 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meters using 5 watts max. They were able to reach almost all 50 states as well as establish contacts in Canada and Belgium.



(continued on next page....)



A 501-C3 Tax Exempt Organization



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

QSO, QSO...the spotlight is on you!! Send your submissions, thoughts, ideas, pictures and news to share with WACOM members. Email Kathy WA3FXN thru the reflector or at dhamu@hky.com.

Upcoming Events

- May 25 - Board Meeting
- June 1 - Membership Meeting
- June 3 - Run for Alex
- June 10 - Junetenna
- June 24-25 - Field Day
- June 29 - Board Meeting
- July 6 - Membership Meeting
- July 30 - WACOM Hamfest

Winter Field Day (continued)



As an added treat, Tom N3WS led the group in exploring satellite communications, trying to earn the extra 500 points a successful connection would earn the group. Mike AB1A gave a tour of the observatory . Mike even stayed up all night making contacts even after Tom retreated to what he described as his "nice, warm truck."



Mike mentioned that "we had a pair of home built Endfed antenna (Orange line) with 49 to1 Baluns (that were) good 80 thru 10 meters. One was mounted totally horizontal with some slope and the other had a "L" shaped with the balun about 6 +/- feet off ground. The 3rd backup antenna was a store bought MJF Off Center Fed Dipole (yellow) only tuned for 40, 20, 10 & 6 meters ."

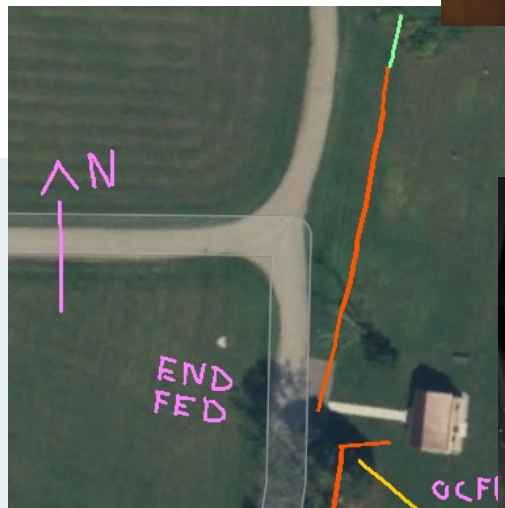
Pictures are from Tom's Winter Field Day 2023 YouTube recap you can watch at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JVVSIYHd4Ik>



Why a Winter Field Day?

"The Winter Field Day Association passionately believes that ham radio operators should practice portable emergency communications in winter environments, as the potential for freezing temperatures, snow, ice, and other hazards present unique operational concerns. WFD is formatted to help increase your level of preparedness for disasters and improve your operational skills in subpar conditions."

-From arrl.org



Antenna layout - Mike AB1A



Attempting Satellite Connection from the truck in the rain....

Hams Servicing the County: Spring S.E.T. April 1 at the Airport



Members of WACOM took part in the **Spring S.E.T.** at the Washington County Airport on April 1. **Tom N3WS**, the **ARRL ARES Emergency Coordinator for Washington County**, led the group in prepping the truck, including setting up antennas and masts, and assembling connections necessary to activate the emergency generator powering the county command and communications vehicle.

An actual SKYWARN net was activated at the time due to severe weather warnings in the area and the K3PSP repeater system was utilized by net control from within the vehicle, along with simplex frequency 146.52.

Tom gave a brief introduction of the Winlink application to the group during a lull in activities and many of the

hams onsite were appreciative of the brief walkthrough. Winlink software enables hams to send emails without the need for an internet connection and amateur radio operators active in emergency support find this appealing as an additional avenue of communicating.

The Washington County EOC was also successfully activated and voice communication was established along with some brief digital communication using FLDIGI software and sent emails with Winlink.



Eight participants were onsite to help and other hams called in with weather reports. Fortunately severe weather stayed away until

later in the day.

Watch Tom's recap at <https://youtu.be/uDM4TPV8D4o>

Follow Tom at <https://www.youtube.com/@TangoOscarMikeN3WS>

"'Rabid Raccoon Run' sounds like a fictional event..." - chatGPT

What is the Rabid Raccoon Run?

I'm sorry, but as an AI language model, my knowledge cutoff is September 2021 and I don't have the ability to browse the internet. However, I can tell you that "Rabid Raccoon Run" sounds like a fictional event or a potentially problematic event as rabies is a serious disease that affects both humans and animals. It is important to take measures to prevent the spread of rabies, such as vaccinating pets and avoiding contact with wild animals. If you can provide more context or information about the event, I may be able to provide a more specific answer. — ChatGPT

It's Non-Fiction: "Rabid Raccoon Run"

Members of WACOM can attest to the truth that the "Rabid Raccoon Run" is not a fictional event and not a problematic occurrence of rabies as AI ChatGPT posited online recently. Rabid Raccoon 100 takes place in Raccoon Creek State Park which spans Hanover and Independence Townships in Beaver county. The course follows a single track of mostly unpaved trails travelling over hills, across streams, and around Raccoon Lake. Since there is only

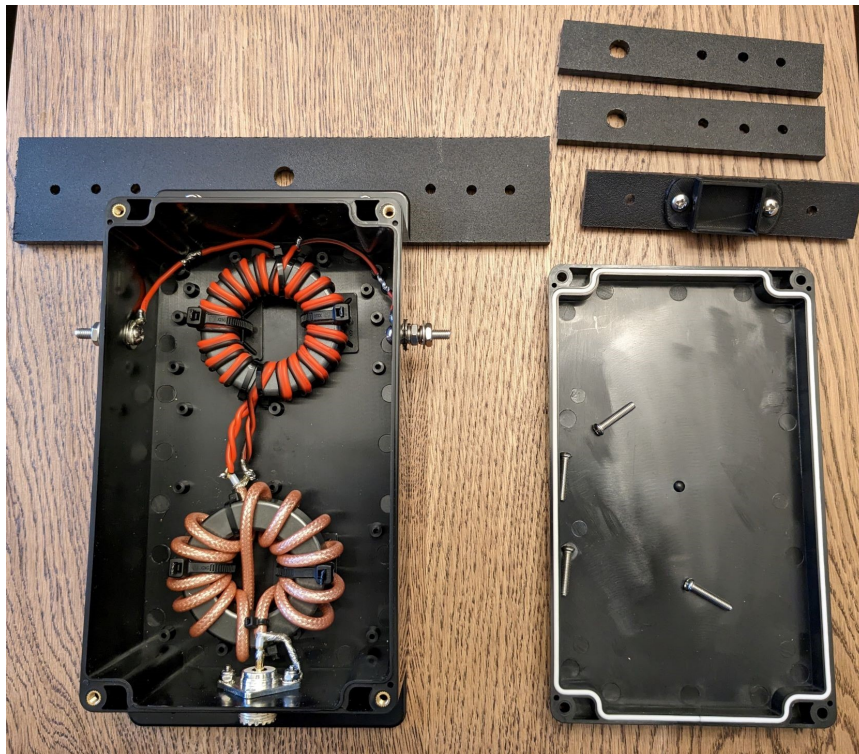


spotty or no cell phone service in most areas, Amateur Radio support is critical to ensure the safety of the runners. The hams who helped out took shifts that ran anywhere from 7-10 hours, some thru the overnight hours.



A Shout Out to the following volunteers from WACOM for their help in supporting the Rabid

Raccoon 100 : **KC3JSE** Mike Sosak, **KC3EDQ** Brad McCarrell, **N3WS** Tom Wright, **WF3S** Jim Johnson, **K8DRH** Doug Hayward, **KC3TBI** George Brecosky, **KC3VHD** Nathan Oest, **KC3AJM** Bob Fischer



Radio Projects & More

- ⇒ The WACOM website has additional projects of interest. Look for those at <https://wa3com.com/links.html>
- ⇒ Joe N3XE has a website that lists projects he's worked on over the years at <https://www.n3xe.com/home>
- ⇒ WACOM lists past meeting presentations at <https://wa3com.com/archive.html>

WACOM Build Project - Off-Center-Fed Dipole Balun Kit

During the April and May meetings, Joe N3XE gave in-depth presentations of the results of what can only be described as **extreme testing** to determine the optimum configuration for a Balun for an Off-Center-Fed Dipole.

Joe will delve into the details of what he found in later newsletters (Hint: "I've gone down quite the rabbit hole " he's said, but he's emerged with some great plans).

Past reports from other hams using other WACOM Group-built Baluns confirmed the quality of the work Joe puts into these. The build promises to be a worthwhile and cost-savings experience.

When location was discussed, it only made sense to turn it into a party— a QRP Party for WACOM members at Tom's (N3WS) place. Details are on the right.

The kit includes:

- Type 43 Ferrite Toroid & Wire for 4:1 Transformer
- Type 31 Ferrite Toroid & RG400 Coax for 1:1 RF Choke
- SO-239 Connector
- Gasketed ABS Enclosure
- Mounting Bracket for Enclosure
- End Insulators
- Loading Capacitors with Strain Relief Insulator
- All required hardware (Ring terminals, Stainless Steel Machine Screws, Washers, etc.)

Note: mounting bracket, insulators, and strain relief are made from 1/4" thick Marine Grade High Density Polyethylene.

WACOM JUNE 10-NA

**QRP/portable Party
and
Antenna build**



Weather
dependent



Special members only event

HOSTED BY N3WS
117 PERRY ROAD, BURGETTSTOWN,
PA 15021

1 PM - ?

OFF-CENTER FED DIPOLE BUILD*
PORTABLE STATION CHALLENGE
THROWLINE CHALLENGE
FOX HUNT



*ANTENNA BUILD
COST IS \$50

*BRING YOUR OWN
136+ FEET OF WIRE
FOR THE ELEMENTS.

Contact: tom.n3ws@protonmail.com

WACOM HAMFEST IS BA-A-A-C-C-K !! July 30

WACOM Hamfest is back! On July 30th we'll converge at the Washington Crowne Center Mall parking area for a memorable tailgating experience. The event is open to everyone. There is NO charge for admission or setup. Bring your old radio equipment to sell or browse around for some good buys. Or just spend the time making connections and maybe even showing the public what hams do.

Hours are 8AM to 1PM. Come early to get the good deals. Food, refreshments and restrooms are just a quick stroll away inside the mall. At noon there will be a raffle to win a Yaesu FT-710 base transceiver, a FTM300DR mobile unit or an FT5DR handheld. Winner need not be present but we'd still love to see you and meet you.

Tom N3WS is chair of the 2023 WACOM Hamfest.

Hamfests & Events

- ALL year long—[VOTA](#)
- June 3-4 - [International Digital Contest](#)
- June 4—[Breezeshooters Hamfest](#)
- June 10-12—[June VHF Contest](#)
- July 30 – WACOM Hamfest
- Aug 12 – [Uniontown Gabfest](#)
- Sept (TBA) - Labor Day Run
- Sept 10 – [Butler Swapfest](#)
- Sept 24 – [Cleveland Hamfest](#)
- Oct (TBA) - S.E.T.
- Oct 14-15 - [67th PA QSO Party](#)

Contests can be found at ARRL at [2022-2023 Arrl Contest Calendar](#)

WACOM HAMFEST

July 30

8am-1pm

**FREE TO ENTER
FREE TO SELL
TAILGATING**

*Ham radio or electronics related

Raffle

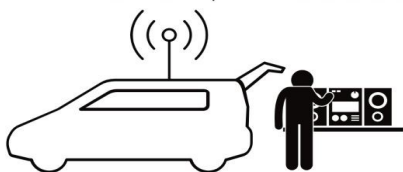
- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Yaesu FT-710 - Base | \$2 each |
| 2. Yaesu FTM-300DR - Mobile | \$5 for 3 |
| 3. Yaesu FT5DR - Handheld | \$10 for 7 |
| * Drawing at Noon | \$20 for 15 |
| * Winner need not be present | \$50 for 40 |
| | \$100 for 100 |

Tune to 147.54 simplex for on-site announcements



Talk-In on the K3PSP Repeater System
146.790- No Tone, Washington
147.285+ 131.8 Tone, Scenery Hill
145.250- 131.8 Tone, West Alexander
147.390+ 131.8 Tone, Smith Twp
147.315+ 131.8 Tone, Waynesburg

Contact Info
Hamfest Chairman:
Tom Wright, N3WS;
tom.n3ws@protonmail.com



Dayton Hamvention May 19-21 Hours

Fri - May 19 - 9AM – 5PM
Sat - May 20- 9AM – 5PM
Sun - May 21- 9AM – 1PM

Location:

Greene County Fair and Expo Center ; 210 Fair-ground Road, Xenia 45385

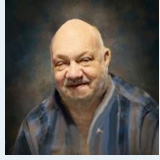
Coordinates are 39.702 N – 83.9420 W

Get Hamvention Alerts:

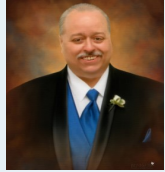
text:Hamvention21 to 888777

Did you know that Hamfests are called "Rallies" in the UK?

Silent Keys



**KB3IN -
Robert Ketzell**



**KC3EKZ -
Randy W Kief**

KB3LIX - Bill Sheehan

Congressional Proposals Supporting Ham Radio

Two proposals related to Amateur Radio were submitted in the House of Representatives to review in the 2023-2024 session. The bills focus on improving antenna restrictions and HF digital operations.

* **HR-9670** - Sponsored by Bill Johnson of Ohio - The "Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act" presents changes to allow antennas shorter than 1 meter, antennas part of a flagpole, and wire antennas. This is an effort to prohibit the application of certain private land use restrictions to amateur station antennas, and for other purposes.

* **HR-9664** - Sponsored by Debbie Lesko of Arizona - to "eliminate the current Symbol Rate Limit set by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and replace it 3 with a 2.8 kilohertz (kHz) bandwidth limit. The bill brings regulations up to speed with modern technology advances in amateur radio" per Congressman Lesko.

Let your congressional representative know if you support these measures.

Run for ALEX Needs Your Help - June 3

The 18th Annual "Sarris Candies Run for Alex" will be held in Bentleyville on June 3, 2023. The run includes a 5 mile run, 2 mile run and 1 mile fun walk. All races will begin and end in front of the Bentleyworth High School (150 Bearcat Drive, Bentleyville PA 15314).

Volunteer hams are needed for supporting strategic communications points around the race course, as well as a net control based in the county command/communication vehicle that will be set up at the high school.

Since the race starts at 9AM, volunteers would need to be in position by 8am when they begin to close the roads and access to the race sites.

You can support this event with a 2 me-

ter radio although a few areas would benefit from a mobile radio and improved antenna.

Tom N3WS asks volunteers to sign up at <https://forms.gle/nK9SipddxwBfg5St6>



New WACOM ARRL VE's



Joe N3XE held a one evening Volunteer Examiner (VE) training class in March. Many in the group completed their applications and have reported that they are officially accredited by ARRL. Congratulations to those hams and special thanks to Joe who led the session.

Net Controls | Find Net Controls | Get Our Great Results Today

<https://www.searchresultsquickly.com/net-controls>

We couldn't find a net control searching the internet so volunteer today! NC's are needed for each of our nets plus having available backups would help ensure they run smoothly. A special thanks to those hams already helping out.

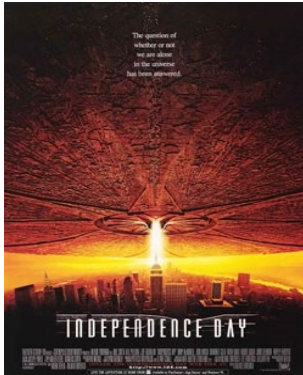
FCC Seeking Comments on Proposed changes to the 60 Meter Band

On April 28, ARRL published notification that the FCC is seeking comments on proposed changes to the 60 meter band. The changes would cause amateur radio operators to lose secondary access to 4 of the 5 existing channels. Power limits would be reduced from 100 W ERP to 9.15 W ERP. Amateur radio would, instead, have access to a new contiguous 15 kHz band that includes one of the current five channels. The [Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#) regarding the proposed changes was issued on April 21, 2023.

For more information from ARRL, go to <http://www.arrl.org/news/arrl-advocates-for-radio-amateurs-as-fcc-proposes-changes-to-60-meter-band>

SPOTLIGHT ON MORSE CODE: Why Bother with Morse Code any more?

We all know that when the aliens come and knock out our satellite communications we can always rely on Morse Code to help save the planet.



As part of the plot of the movie *Independence Day*, aliens, though unable to cause enough RF to knock out communications using Morse, at least have the ability to decimate satellite communications. Only ham radio operators using Morse Code were able to save the planet. ([Independence Day - Morse Code - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBWT8Q6INKY) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBWT8Q6INKY>)

The drum rhythm heard during the invasion scenes near the beginning of the film are Morse Code letters D-I-E.

When SMS text was first becoming a thing on cell phones, the notification sound for an incoming text was actually morse code for SMS, di di dit, dah dah, di di dit

Morse can be a life saver in emergencies since messages can be sent via ham radio with little power while a spoken message with SSB takes about 50 times the transmitting power. It works where there's no internet, satellite or cell phone support. Pilots and navigators still use Morse code to transmit identification letters for station names. It's also been used in unusual but critical situations where other communication is not possible (see the case of Admiral Denton below).

It can really pay to get proficient. You may not save the world from aliens but there's a chance someone may be depending on you to communicate something in an emergency. ARRL has lots of tips and links to help you get going. Check out their site at : <http://www.arrl.org/learning-morse-code>

Do you have a favorite Morse site or tool? A favorite keyer? Send your thoughts in.

Thomas Edison and Morse Code....

- Edison lost his hearing at an early age and relied on Morse code to communicate
- He proposed to his second wife, Mina, using Morse Code: he asked `.-- --- ..- .-. -- ..- --- ..- --- ..- .-. .-. --- -- .`, ("Will you marry me?") to which she replied `-.-- ...` "Yes."
- He taught his wife Morse Code so that they could secretly communicate with each other while her family was around.
- He called his two eldest children Marion Edison and Thomas Edison, Jr. 'Dot' and 'Dash,' respectively.
- The film "Young Tom Edison" (1940) depicted how Edison relied on Morse to help his sister Tannie in school but it's highpoint occurs when he prevented a serious train accident by sending Morse code to his sister by using the train whistle to tell her the bridge they were approaching was out. She hears the message and has the train stopped in time.

Go to '[Morse Goes to the Movies](#)' for a list of movies that used Morse Code.



"Rear Admiral Jeremiah Denton was taken prisoner alongside his bombardier and navigator back in 1965 when his A-6 Intruder aircraft was shot by AA fire, forcing them to eject, during a bombing raid over North Vietnamese territory. Both men were captured.

During his time as a POW over a stretch of around 8 years, he was paraded

through the streets of Hanoi with multiple other POW's as they were beaten by the civilians (1966, Hanoi March). He also witnessed many acts of torture against his fellow POW's and himself.

In the year following his capture, as the highest ranking prisoner they had, he was forced to participate in a televised interview in which he was forced to answer questions. During this interview, he managed to blink the word "TORTURE" through morse code, while feigning irritation from the bright lights. Of course, when this was discovered by the North Vietnamese they uh... Weren't best pleased."
- From Quora.com

My Shack Spot...



This is the place where you can show the world your shack. [Email a picture](#) and a write-up about your shack and you'll find it in a future newsletter. We found the shack at left on the net that a WACOM member posted a few years ago. (Hint: check out [scannermasterblog.com/show-off-your-shack](#) and look for a WACOM member). But that was some time ago and he's promised to share his on-air sanctuary with us in a future issue.

Maybe your shack looks like this mobile one seen on hamuniverse.com. This one just may be sporting a great hooch still somewhere out back. A great spot for our next QRP party.



"Within Australia, the term "HAM" is sometimes used as a [backronym](#) for the words Hobby Amateur." - Wikipedia



Amateur Radio Emergency Service®

WACOM is designated by ARRL as a Special Service Club. This is especially notable in its commitment to ongoing training in educating operators in best practices for the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and emergency communications in general. A directed NBEMS training net is held every Wednesday night at 8PM by our members on the K3PSP repeater system and emphasizes proficiency in specific forms of digital communications used by amateur radio operators that support EMS nationwide. This is open not just to WACOM members but to anyone interested in improving or just learning the skills required. The club also trains its members to set-up, work its communications, and disassemble the PA Region 13 Emergency Vehicles 92-2 and 92-10 should an unanticipated emergency arise in the area. Our own Tom Wright, N3WS, is ARRL ARES Emergency Coordinator, for Washington County.

While being a ham can be fun communicating and contesting, you can make a real impact when it really counts by joining Washington County's Auxiliary Communications group. Information is on our website at <https://wa3com.com/emcomm.html>

WACOM Nets

- ♦ **Washington & Greene County 2 Meter Net** - Tuesdays at 8PM on K3PSP Repeater System
- ♦ **10 Meter Net** - Tuesdays at 9:30PM on 28.340 MHz
- * **NBEMS Digital Training Net** - Wednesdays at 8PM on K3PSP Repeater System
- * **SKYWARN Net** - As Necessary

K3PSP Repeater System

- **146.790** MHz (Central, - Shift, No Tone, Washington)
- **147.285** MHz (East, + Shift, 131.8 Hz Tone, Scenery Hill)
- **145.250** MHz (West, - Shift, 131.8 Hz Tone, West Alexander)
- **147.390** MHz (North, + Shift, 131.8 Hz Tone, Smith Twp)
- **147.315** MHz (South, + Shift, 131.8 Hz Tone, Waynesburg)
- **EchoLink** Node: WA3COM-R, Node #4679

Alternate Communications

- **147.54 "TAC-4"** - Washington County (Mbrs of TAC-4)
- **145.53 "ALT-3"** SW District (S1)

Contingency Communications

- **3.983 LSB** - Frequency used by Western PA ARES Net, Western PA ARRL Health & Wellness Net, and Western PA Phone Traffic

WASHINGTON AMATEUR COMMUNICATIONS WACOM

Membership

- WACOM membership is open to anyone
 - Annual Dues:
 - \$20 for individuals
 - \$10 each addtl family member
- Questions? Contact the WACOM club treasurer.

Membership Meeting

- 7:30PM, First Thursday of every month

Board of Directors Meeting

- 7PM, Last Thursday of every month

Mailing Address

WACOM, PO Box 381
Washington, PA 15301

E-Mail wa3com@gmail.com

Website <https://wa3com.com/>

Club Officers

- President:** Joe Caldwell, N3XE; joe@n3xe.com
VP: Patrick Degnan, KB3TFN; pdegan@gmail.com
Secretary: George Brecoosky, KC3TBI; gbrecoosky@gmail.com
Treasurer: Kay Briggs, KC3HBO; glock4kay@gmail.com

Board of Directors

- Director:** Tom Wright, N3WS; tom.n3ws@protonmail.com
Director: Dennis Presky, K3PSP; dpresky@mra1.com
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Newsletter Editor

Kathy Pendracky, WA3FXN;
dhamu@hky.com

How Hams Downsize....



Heard on the Net...

An elderly ham driver was going down the interstate when suddenly his 2 meter rig crackled his call...Answering...he heard a fellow ham's urgent warning....."Hey Elmer, just heard on the news that there's a car going down I-40 the wrong way, please be careful"!!

Elmer replied, "Well I'll declare, it's not just one....."

AI on the air? ... <https://hackaday.com/2023/01/28/the-voice-of-chatgpt-is-now-on-the-air/>

A ham set up an interface to ChatGPT where "...A DSTAR digital voice transmission is received, which is then transcoded to regular digital audio. The audio then goes through a voice recognition engine, and that is used as a question for a ChatGPT AI. The AI's output is then fed to a text-to-speech engine, and it speaks back with its own voice over the airwaves. "

WACOM FieldDay

13 Yrs. Ago.... Found in the ARRL archives



"Students develop an affordable everyday radio telescope..." - <https://phys.org/news/2016-02-students-everyday-radio-telescope.html>

Undergraduate students "from the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) at the College of Engineering in Trivandrum, India, has designed and constructed a portable college-level radio telescope for amateur radio astronomers. " See also <https://arxiv.org/abs/1601.02982>