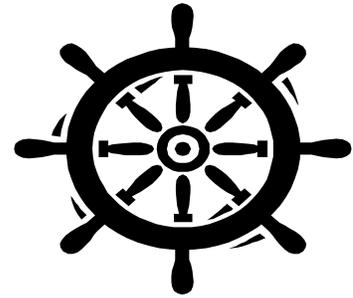


December 1998



THE MARINER™

N3SH Radio Club

The Original South Hills Amateur Radio Club
Pittsburgh PA

CHRISTMAS PARTY THURSDAY DECEMBER 10TH!

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The next monthly meeting of the N3SH Radio Club will be at the John McMillan Presbyterian Church in Bethel Park on Thursday, December 10th starting at **6:00 PM** (not 7!) until whenever. The big event is our annual Christmas Party. If you have not already called Carol Danko to let her know you're coming, put down this newsletter, pick up the phone and call her at 412-884-1466. The deadline was November 30, but don't let that stop you! All N3SH RC members in good standing, new members, friends, and guests are welcome!

We're raffling off an Icom Q7 handheld at the party! Covers 30 MHz to 1.3 GHz receive coverage, with a 300 mw 2 meter & 70 cm transmit coverage. Tickets are \$1 each, and you must be present to win. (W3SRL promised he's not buying any tickets, either!)

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There will also be a contest & prize for "**Best Looking Ham Shack!**" Bring any photo of your station setup, any size. Only rule: YOU must be in the picture!

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There will also be a few pieces of club business to finish up, specifically the second vote on the new legal name for the club, and the usual end of year odds & ends.

See you at the party!

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The 4th Annual South Hills Hamfest is coming up February 28th, and it promises to be the best one yet. We need the help of all hands to keep this premiere event going! The time is NOW to contact Steve W3SRL (ex N3RNY) to see how you can help.

Remember: If you operate in the BreezeShooters Groundwave contest on February 27th, take a moment to encourage all contacts to come to the South Hills Hamfest & compare notes... and maybe brag a little bit too!

December 1998

Schedule of Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4 ARRL 160 m	5 ARRL 160 m
6 ARRL 160 m	7	8	9	10 N3SH XMAS PARTY 6 PM	11	12 ARRL 10 m
13 ARRL 10 m	14 SCARC VE Test, Carnegie PA	15	16	17	18	19 PCH Farewell Croatian CW Contest
20 PCH Farewell Croatian CW Contest	21	22	23	24 XMAS eve	25 XMAS day	26 Stew Perry Topband Challenge
27 RAC Winter Contest	28	29	30	31 SKN		

- **December 10** – N3SH Christmas Party, 6:00 PM at the John McMillan Presbyterian Church. We did mention the HT raffle, didn't we? Must be present to win!
- **December 12-13** – ARRL 10 meter contest. The band is open... so many stations, so few Breezeshooters...
- **December 31** – Not just New Year's eve, but the annual Straight Key Night! How's your glass arm doing? (Mine's terrible)
- **December 19-20** – PCH Farewell Special Event ; see the article on Page 4.
- **Sunday Nights 9:00 PM** N3SH Weekly Net 146.955 Repeater

1999 OFFICERS

Elected:

President Ron Notarius WN3VAW
 VP/Secretary Steve Lane W3SRL
 VP/Treasurer Mark Stabryla N3RDV

Appointed:

N3SH Trustee Steve Lane W3SRL
 VE Team Liason Bob Sanford AA3FI
 N3SH Net Manager Don Vollant N3KEH
 South Hills Hamfest (formerly SHARCfest)
 1999 Chairman Steve Lane W3SRL
 2000 Chairman (Open)
 Field Day 99 Chairman (Open)
 PA QSO Party Chairman (Open)
 N3SH Chief Operator
 ARRL DX Contest (Open)
 CQ WPX Contest (Open)
 Club Repeaters: N3RNX/R 146.955-
 N3SH/R 442.550+
 (Both with PL tone of 131.8)

N3SH Net, the weekly on-air net of the N3SH RC, meets every Sunday Night, 9:00 PM ET, on the 146.955 repeater. All radio amateurs are welcome!

THE LEGAL STUFF

"The Mariner" is the Official Newsletter of the **N3SH Radio Club**. This issue is © Copyright 1998 by the **N3SH Radio Club**. Editor & Publisher: Ron Notarius WN3VAW

"The Mariner", SHARCfest, SharkFest, South Hills Hamfest, N3SH Radio Club, & N3SH Net are ™ trademarks of the **N3SH Radio Club**. And isn't it a shame that we actually have to print this notice?

The **N3SH Radio Club**, founded in 1993, was originally known as the **South Hills Amateur Radio Club**. It is not in any way affiliated with the "South Hills Amateur Radio Club Inc." and is not responsible for that group or it's actions in any way shape or form.

Our thanks to the owners of the N3RNX Repeater System for permitting the N3SH Radio Club & it's members to use their repeaters for club purposes.

And I thought last month was strange and unusual...

First, let me thank everyone for electing me President for 1999. I'm really looking forward to working with the entire group this coming year. We have a lot to do, and we can have a lot of fun doing it together!

As you know, this should be the last month that we're "officially" being known as the original South Hills Amateur Radio Club. In some ways, the passing of the name is a sad event, as we say goodbye to a chapter in the club's history. But... we're still here, and as we fine-tune to get things right, we need to look ahead to a whole new radio club with a fresh start & fresh attitude for 1999.

If you have an email address that I was aware of, you've already gotten a few messages asking for suggestions & input for the coming year. (If you didn't hear from me, then make sure your up-to-date email address is on your 1999 membership renewal!) One of the biggest consistent pieces of feedback I got was about the business meetings. Too long, too dull, and too often the only reason we'd get together once a month. Agreed! So what do we do about it?

Well, we're going to make a real effort to start the meetings on time this year. And while we can't just drop the business part of the meeting, we're going to make a real effort to keep it short & focused. Unless we have some pressing concerns that really require a large amount of debate, I see no reason why we can't get the business part of the meeting done & over with in 20 minutes to a half hour max. Related to that, we're strongly considering moving the minutes and some committee reports into the newsletter. This lets any detailed explanations go into print where you can read it at your leisure, rather than drag on at the meeting.

And the meetings have to be more than just business meetings! Steve has volunteered to double (triple?) as our Activities Chairman to ensure that we have a topic or purpose for each meeting besides business. He's looking into speakers, projects, and anything else that makes sense. What do YOU want to see at an upcoming meeting? Let Steve know. If you don't speak up, we might not get your favorite topic on the boards.

Related to that, we have a little survey stashed away in this newsletter too. One of the purposes of the club is to serve some of the needs of the members. But if we don't know what our members are interested in, then how can we provide for those interests?

Next: the 4th Annual South Hills Hamfest on February 28th. We have about two-and-a-half months as of this newsletter's printing. It's not as far away as it seems! Steve needs help in all areas. We know everyone will pull together just as they have the last few years, but still, let Steve know as soon as you can what you can do & when you're available to do it!

Come March, we're going to revive our Amateur Radio classes. I'm looking forward to teaching again, it's been awhile. Right now we need to line up a classroom once a week for about 8 weeks. If you know of something available, contact me. Also in March are the ARRL DX Contest Phone & CQ WPX Contest Phone. We've talked for awhile about an N3SH multi-op effort in a major contest. Any volunteers to put together a crew & loan us a shack? Looking further ahead, we need a 1999 Field Day chairman, and the 1999 PA QSO Party is coming up in the fall. Have I missed your event? Tell me about it!

These tasks can be daunting if you try to do them as one-man shows. We pull together, things get done quickly, and suddenly we're all having a lot of fun together. After all, isn't that why you joined a radio club?

And THAT is the question to ask yourself. Why did you join a radio club, and why did you join N3SH RC? We have always tried to do things a little differently, and maybe a little better. I hope you (still) feel that way, and will stick with us for the coming year and for years to come. If you dropped by the wayside, take a good look at us now. Things change, we've changed, and if we didn't fit the bill before, just maybe we do now — or we're heading that way. (If we don't, tell us why — you never know what might happen.)

See you at the Christmas party!

WEBLOS MEET 2 METERS!

DR. JOHN BENITEZ KE3XB

Last Tuesday night, December 1st, I had the privilege to talk to about 12 Webelos Cub Scouts in the North Hills area about amateur radio.

We discussed radio theory, licensing, and they got to view some equipment. I think they greatly enjoyed it and hopefully some will develop their interest in radio in the near future.

They are planning on building a crystal radio set during their meeting in January.

The Cub Scouts operated on 146.955 repeater using 20 watts into a 4 element yagi that they helped set up, and on HF on 10m and 20m on an antenna they also helped set up.

This would not have been possible without the help from several of our club members. If I have forgotten anyone, I'm sorry - I didn't write down all call signs, and possibly I didn't hear you on the radio. Regardless, THANK YOU from me and from the Webelos Den!

Participants included:

N3KEH (Don), N3SBF (Richie),
N3ZCG (Jacqueline) N3RNX (Pete).

Again thanks to all who participated or tried to participate!

1998 PA QSO PARTY RAW N3SH RC SCORES

INFORMATION COURTESY OF
DOUG MADDOX W3HDH & THE NITTANY ARC W3YA/K3HKK

Here are the preliminary results for N3SH RC members gleaned from the 1998 PA QSO Party Web Site. Check out the web site itself for more details:

<http://members.aol.com/dougHDH/paqsoparty/narcweb.htm>

WN3VAW	30,520	Allegheny County 6th Place
N3WAV	19,632	Westmoreland County 6th Place
K3WR	14,564	Westmoreland County 7th Place
W3RJM	6,771	Allegheny County 14th Place
N3KEH	5,300	Allegheny County 16th Place

Not a bad showing considering, but let's try to generate some really stiff intra-club competition next year. Take a look at how few entries there are from Washington, Greene, Fayette, Somerset, Armstrong and other nearby counties... we can really do well with a little group effort!

PCH SK SPECIAL EVENT

TOM ROSNER DL8AAM VIA INTERNET

For 94 years Scheveningen Radio (call sign PCH) has operated a radio service in the Netherlands for maritime radio stations all over the world. With its roots in the earliest days of wireless communication it is the longest established maritime radio service in the world. Sadly, as communications technology has moved on over the last century, so have the needs of PCH's largest group of users.

So, from January 1st 1999 the station is closing down permanently. As a last event, especially for radio amateurs the world over, Scheveningen Radio PCH will be holding a radio amateur 'farewell day' on its 94th anniversary.

From 0800 UTC on December 19th 1998 until 0800 UTC on 20th December 1998, we're inviting radio amateurs to contact the station on several bands (frequencies shown below). All these bands will be monitored by our radio operators, throughout the day. There will be also CQ calls on the following channels (giving full information about all frequencies currently in use, dependent on atmospheric and propagation conditions).

The Farewell day is has been specially approved by the Dutch Radiocommunications Agency. Radio amateurs outside The Netherlands should check the conditions under which their license has been granted. In some countries this cross band operations could be prohibited. It'll be a day to combine both sadness and fun. We look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards, All at Scheveningen Radio/PCH

80 metre band

Frequency : 3687 kHz
Time : 0800 UTC 19/12/98 until 0800 UTC 20/12/98
Mode : voice LSB
Call sign : PA6PCH

Shortwave telegraphy

Frequencies:

<u>PCH TX</u>	<u>PCH RX</u>
PCH20 (4250 kHz)	3525 kHz (+/- QRM)
PCH41 (8622 kHz)	7025 kHz
PCH51 (12799.5 kHz)	14050 kHz
PCH61 (17198.9 kHz)	18085 kHz

Time : 1500 UTC 19/12/98 until 0700 UTC 20/12/98
Mode : CW
Call sign : PCH

HF MOBILE ADVENTURES

DR. JOHN BENITEZ KE3XB

I wrote a while back about my experiences and my setup for going HF mobile.

One of my problems with going mobile is that I like to continue to keep a log. Unfortunately, this means writing down info on a notebook as I am driving. I try not to look down at the notebook, but my writing then looks horrible (worse than it is) and frequently I write over other existing writing. This results in my not being able to read my own writing at the end of the road and fill in my log and send out QSL cards. What to do?

Enter the digital voice recorder! I bought a 90 minute capacity (expensive, and don't really need 90 minutes) recorder with 4 data banks. I use the first bank to record the voice of the transmitting station's ID so I can play it over and over till I can understand it, instead of having to wait for his next ID. In the second bank I record the frequency and any information from the QSO (name, signal report, etc.).

The voice recorder automatically date and time stamps it! And if you keep UTC time on the recorder it's all ready for you to put into your computer or paper log. The chore at the end of the road is to play the recorder and transcribe the info.

Much simpler and MUCH SAFER!

Well that's all for now, and keep driving safe.



N3SH RC ARRL VEC EXAM SESSIONS 1999 VE TEST SESSION SCHEDULE

BOB SANFORD AA3FI VE TEAM LIASON & TEST COORDINATOR

Our next VEC exam session is scheduled for **Thursday, January 21, 1999, at 7:00 PM**. It will be held at the *John McMillan Presbyterian Church in Bethel Park, PA*. Talk-ins will be available on 146.955 MHz. All examiners are ARRL affiliated. Morse code exams are multiple-choice. Walk-ins are welcome.

N3H RC VE Liaison / Contact Coordinator is Bob Sanford, AA3FI
E-Mail: sanfordb@access.hky.com or (724) 356-4020

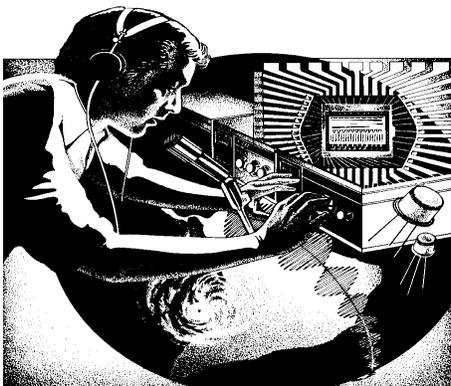
Note: If you plan on attending the test session, please drop us a quick note just to let us know you are coming and the exam elements you plan to take. Thanks!

Please bring the following to your test session:
Picture ID or other suitable identification (2 forms of ID required)
Pen / Pencil / Calculator
Original FCC license plus a copy of license (if upgrading)
Original CSCE plus a copy of CSCE (if upgrading)
Check or Cash in the amount of \$6.45 (payable to: ARRL VEC)

Note: Novice written (element 2) and 5 wpm (element 1A) code exams are free.

We will also be holding exams on the following dates in 1999, at the same time & location unless otherwise announced:

April 15th
July 15th
October 21st



- * Your definition of high fashion is a baseball cap with your call on it
- * Your shack actually begins to look like one
- * At a party, after you tell a joke, you say "hi hi"
- * Your idea of sightseeing is checking rooftops for antennas
- * You check your packet messages before you check your answering machine
- * You think carrying a HT is more of a status symbol than a cell phone
- * The only time you get up at 6:00 am is for a hamfest
- * You know you can run all your home appliances on your personal backup power
- * You have breakfast every morning with a guy in England
- * Your RACES/ARES bags are always packed
- * The cute girl with a KISS T-shirt ask what bands you like and you answer "two and twenty"
- * A clerk asks you to spell your name and you do it phonetically
- * In a conversation, you wait for the courtesy tone before speaking
- * You hear a scraping sound when you go through the fast-food restaurant's drive-up lane
- * A band opening is more important than a grand opening
- * You envy your neighbor's back yard for it's unobstructed view to the North East
- * You started developing counter-arguments to your neighbors' TVI complaints before you bought the linear
- * You say "73" to your mom when hanging up the phone after your yearly Mother's Day call
- * The first words your baby says are not "Ma ma" or "Da da" but "Q-S-L, 5-9"

The Insurance Claim Urban Legend

This started out as a piece of fiction in the 1950's if not earlier (anyone know who the original author was?) and has been floating around in one form or another for years. And now it's an official Urban Legend listed on the Urban Myths web page!

An Insurance company asked for more information regarding an accident claim. This was the response:

I put "poor planning" as the cause of my accident. I am an amateur radio operator, and was working on the top section of my new 80 foot tower. When I had completed my work, I discovered that I had brought up about 300 pounds of tools and spare hardware. Rather than carry the materials down by hand, I decided to lower the items using a pulley. Securing the rope at ground level, I went to the top of the tower and loaded the tools into a small bucket. Then I went back to the ground and untied the rope, holding it tightly to ensure a slow descent of the 300 pounds of tools. You will note in block 11 of the accident report that I weigh 155 pounds. Due to my surprise of being jerked off the ground so suddenly, I lost presence of mind and forgot to let go of the rope. I proceeded at a rather rapid rate of speed up the side of the tower. In the vicinity of the 40 foot level, I met the barrel coming down. This explains my fractured skull and broken collarbone. Slowed only slightly, I continued my rapid ascent, not stopping until the fingers of my right hand were two knuckles deep into the pulley.

I regained my presence of mind, and was able to hold onto the rope in spite of my pain. At the same time, however, the bucket of tools hit the ground and the bottom fell out of the bucket. Devoid of the weight of the tools, the bucket now weighed approximately 10 pounds. I refer you again to my weight in block number 11. As you might image, I began a rapid descent down the side of the tower. In the vicinity of the 40 foot level, I met the bucket coming up. This accounts for the two fractured ankles, and the lacerations on my legs and lower body. The encounter with the bucket slowed me enough to lessen my injuries when I fell onto the pile of tools, so only three vertebrae were cracked.

I am sorry to report, however, that as I lay on the tools, in pain, unable to stand and watch the empty bucket 80 feet above me, I again lost my presence of mind, and let go of the rope...

BOB LIVRONE N3WAV, WPA SECTION TRAFFIC MANAGER

The National Traffic System (NTS) is a system of traffic nets and relays used to move traffic (messages) across the country and even to and from foreign countries. Passing traffic is as old as Amateur Radio itself. The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) was founded by Hiram Percy Maxim (W1AW) as a way of passing messages by way of a series of relays.

Although e-mail has taken a lot of traffic out of the system, it is still alive and quite active. There are many areas in the Western PA Section that are not represented by traffic handlers. We are looking for hams to get involved in handling traffic.

Currently there are 5 NTS traffic nets in Western PA, and one Independent traffic net:

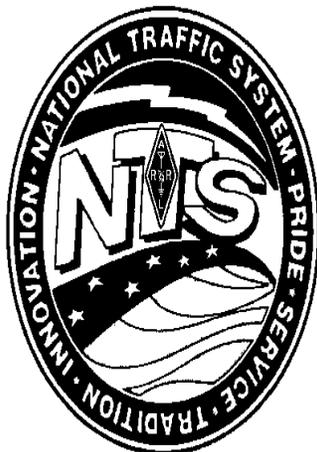
Net Name	Meets	Time	Frequency	Coverage Area
Pennsylvania Phone Net (Independent)	Daily	1730	3.958 MHz	State of PA
Western PA Phone & Traffic Net	Daily	1800	3.983 MHz	WPA Section
Western PA CW Traffic Net	Daily	1830	3.585 MHz	WPA Section
Erie Area Mailbag Traffic & Info Net	M – F	1900	146.70 MHz (-)	NW PA area
Western PA 2 meter Traffic Net	Daily	2000	146.88 MHz (-)	SW PA area
Northwestern PA 2 meter Traffic Net	Daily	2100	145.13 MHz (-)	NW PA area
		(all times Eastern)		

Handling traffic is not hard. It is no harder than taking a phone message. The leaders and members of each net will help you take, send, and originate traffic. Most amateurs pick up the system by simply listening for several nets. Please monitor one or more of these nets and see if you might enjoy traffic handling. Also, the nets are very friendly. Even when no traffic is passed, there is lots of other information and conversation.

How about starting a net yourself? Several areas of the section are not covered by a traffic net. The Centre County area could use a net of their own. Also, the Southeastern district (Somerset, Bedford, etc.) could use a net. I would be glad to help you get a net started.

I'll be looking forward to hearing you on the traffic nets!

Editor's Note: Bob may not be aware that at one time there was also an afternoon WPA afternoon NTS traffic net, the Keystone Phone Net (KFN) which was successful for over three years. (Why "Keystone" for a WPA net? It was named in honor & remembrance of the old WPA CW training net, the Keystone Slow Speed Net.) So if your schedule doesn't permit you to participate in the early evening nets, give him a shout anyway; it wasn't a lack of interest that killed KFN, it was politics and a lack of an available net manager! — de wn3vaw



POTPOURRI

The 1998 & 1999 officers of the N3SH Radio Club want to pass along a special note of thanks & appreciation to the Steel City ARC for their friendship & hospitality by putting up with us for a few hours on the night of November 25th. The birthday cake for W3SVJ was pretty good, too! Thanks guys!

And speaking of our friends in neighboring clubs, the North Hills ARC will be hosting free amateur radio classes for the Novice & Technician licenses as well as 5 wpm Morse code classes starting Tuesday, January 12th at the Pine-Richland High School in Gibsonia. Classes will run Tuesday evenings through May, advanced registration is urged but not mandatory. The only expense involved for students is the cost of instruction materials. For more information or to register, contact Bob Ferrey N3DOK at (412) 367-2393 or Bill Kristoff N3BPB at (724) 935-3466. (Thanks to NHARC **Static** for the information)

Do you have envelopes on file with the Incoming DX QSL Bureau? Remember that domestic postage rates are due to go up early next year, so make sure you have enough postage on file. And if you're sending out SASE's to stateside QSL managers, which sometimes takes a few weeks to turn around, make sure you've got enough postage to cover those envelopes too.

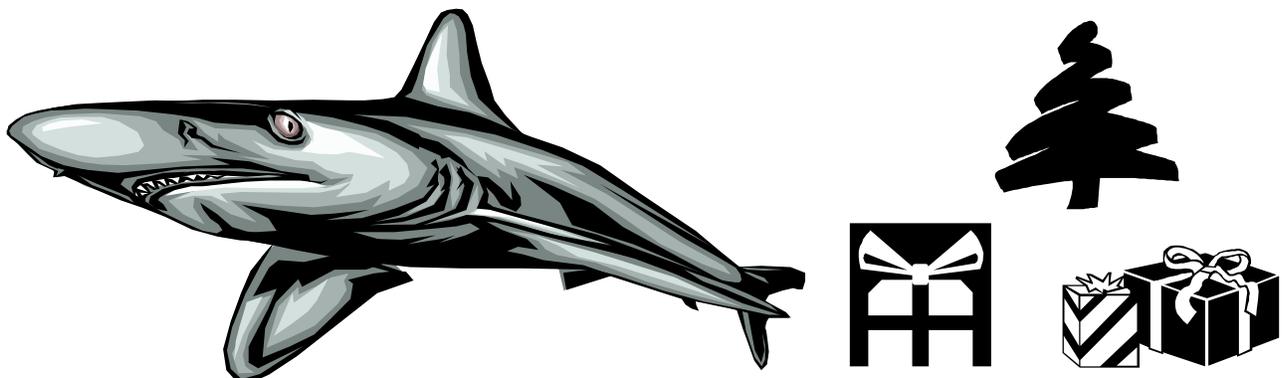
Can't wait until the next N3SH RC VE test session? Steel City ARC is holding a VE Test Session on December 14th at the St. Johns Lutheran Church in Carnegie. Walk-ins are limited, so pre-register to guarantee a test session. Any type of disability must be pre-registered. Call Mark AI3J @ 412-833-6049 for more information or directions.

Again, we've... ok, I've included a brief membership survey as part of the 1999 membership application. (Thanks to N3KEH and others for the suggestion!) One of the hardest parts of putting together an agenda for the coming year is trying to figure out what you, the membership, want. Here's your chance to tell us. Don't pass it up!

You may have noticed that many of the bigger (& pushier) new car dealerships employ a professional Greeter at the door — their job is to size you up & steer you to the salesperson most likely to sucker, er, sell you a new car at a profit. Many organizations have a designated Greeter who does much the same thing — welcomes you and tries to find others in the organization that you have something in common with; again, the idea being to hook you into coming back the next week or month. We've never had an official Greeter, because most of our active members do this automatically. Still, it never hurts to remember that the stranger with the lost look on his face could be the person who's the best thing to happen to the club in years — unless we let him get away by ignoring him. So let's all keep trying to not ignore but to welcome newcomers to our group.

We need a new club logo. Want to take a crack at designing a new one? It should be eye catching, simple to duplicate in print or on T-Shirts, hats, jackets, etc. (which limits the color choices) and it can't look like the old one. See what you can come up with, and send me a copy. We'll start printing them in the Mariner as they come in; once we have a small collection, we'll see which one everyone likes! The winning one will become the property of the radio club as a condition of entry.

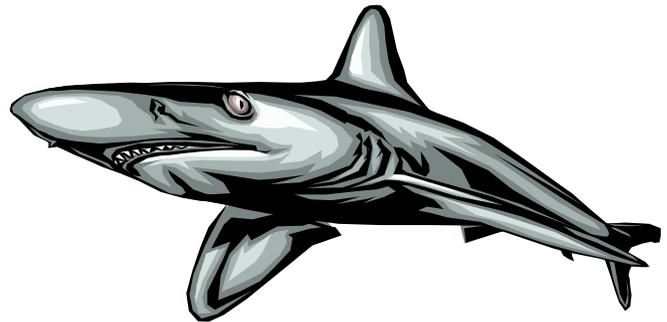
73 & Happy Holidays, ron wn3vaw



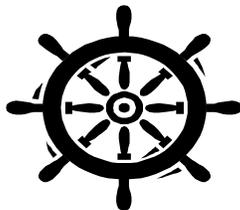
We'd like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy Kwanza, Cheerful Winter Solstice, and/or Happy New Year. However, in these politically correct times, we also wish to avoid offending anyone.

So instead, we wish you the best in celebrating whatever it is you choose to celebrate at this time of the year, however you choose to celebrate, should you choose to celebrate anything at all.

...from the *N3SH* Radio Club



The Mariner of the N3SH Radio Club
c/o Ron Notarius WN3VAW
3505 Rosalia Avenue
Castle Shannon, PA 15234-2317



TO:

