



## RTTY Contesting:

### The W4ZE Experience

Ted Huf W4ZE

RTTY is now the mode of contesting that I enjoy the most. I have been contesting in SSB and CW modes for several years. The more I have operated RTTY the more I got hooked. I still do some of the big SSB and CW, but I operate almost all the RTTY contests.

I have even won a few awards:

- BARTG 2005 HF RTTY – 1<sup>st</sup> North America
- WAE DX Contest 2005 RTTY – 1<sup>st</sup> North America + world record for NA (KB3KGP operating with me)
- ARRL RTTY Round-Up 2005 – 1<sup>st</sup> WPA

For effective RTTY contesting, the good software is key. As far as which software, there a number of good packages available. A newer one is N1MM Logger and it's free. Others that come to mind are MMTTY also free and MixW. I have tried them all, but keep coming back to Writelog.

If you have an Icom radio or another that supports it, I would use FSK rather than AFSK. This does require an interface to your computer's serial port. Most USB adapters will not work for 45 baud RTTY. The RigBlaster PRO fulfills the bill for serial port interfacing. Another approach and the one that I use is the microHAM microKEYER that has a build in UART and Winkey CW keyer and runs off of a USB port. It does audio switching and controls the rig frequency too.

If you are using AFSK, you only need a way to key the PTT and get the audio in and out of the radio.

Before you start the contest, get everything set up. Check your function key memories. I use the same functions keys set up for every contest. For example, F2 is always CQ, F3 is always used to reply to a station, F4 sends "TU DE W4ZE QRZ" and so forth. Check your radio and antenna on all bands and make sure your rig interface is working properly. Set your PC clock to WWV. Read the contest rules and keep a copy nearby. Make sure that you have latest version of your software.

Writelog has a super partial call checker. You can down load a list of known RTTY operator's calls. This is very beneficial, more on that later. Use a DX Cluster, this is great for picking up new stations and multipliers if it is allowed.

Most RTTY programs allow you to mouse click on a call and place it in the log window. With Writelog, the call in the receive window will be highlighted, red for a dupe, green of a new station and yellow for a new multiplier. This is where that super partial call checker file comes in. Writelog has a band map

*(W4ZE RTTY Continued on page 5)*

### Presidential Words

Our annual pizza meeting night took a slight turn when we found ourselves relegated to the second floor reading room of the Peter's Township Library.

That normally is not a problem but for this meeting it was because there was no eating or drinking allowed. Before I knew this I bought the pizza before the meeting in order to serve it at the start.

The one thing we had going for us was the unseasonably warm evening, so we decided to have a tailgating party in the parking lot under the lights. The only thing missing was a keg! The hood of Ed, N3ZNI's truck made for a nice pizza warmer and several truck tail gates made serving easy. It was a great start to the meeting so if you were not there you missed a great night of fellowship.



You may recall that the Amateur Astronomers Association of Pittsburgh requested that we conduct a special event station during some of their 2006 star parties at their Mingo Park observatory. Their schedule begins in April and continues through November. The April and May dates fall on weekends that are not good for us but the rest of the schedule is as follows: June 2 & 3, July 21 & 22, August 4 & 5, August 25 & 26, September 23, October 21, and November 11. What I was thinking of was setting up a simple HF station and a satellite station. The satellite station would not use steer-able antennas, just omni-directional 2-meter and 70-cm antennas FM LEO satellites and the ISS. I am not proposing to be at every star party scheduled but

*(Presidential Words Continued on page 3)*

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### Next Meeting: April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006

The next monthly meeting of the **WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS, INC.** will be Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, at the **Peters Township Library**, 616 East McMurray Road, McMurray, starting at 7:00 PM.

Field Day, Pa QSO Party planning, AAP Star Parties, the tower trailer, and the Breezeshooter's Hamfest club picnic will be discussed, along with other topics.

Talk-in on the 146.955(-) N3RNX/R and 443.650(+) KB3FZU/R Repeaters (131.8 PL). All members, guests and interested parties invited!

WASH FM Net  
9:00 PM ET  
Sunday Nights  
on the 146.955  
and 443.650  
Repeaters

NCS Schedule  
Listed on Page 3

Want to volunteer to be a Net Control Station? Please contact FM Net Manager Kevin N3HKQ for more information.

**LOOKING AHEAD:**

- Dayton Hamvention May 19th – 21st
- Breezeshooter's Hamfest June 4
- ARRL Field Day June 24th & 25th
- North Hills ARC Hamfest July 9th
- Somerset Co ARC Hamfest July 16th
- Butler Co ARC Hamfest September 10th
- Ca QSO Party October 7 & 8th
- Pa QSO Party October 14 & 15
- ARRL CW Sweepstakes November 4 & 5
- WACOM Hamfest November 5th

# April 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<b>1</b> RA Erie VE Test Somerset Co ARC Breakfast NHARC Elmer Net
<b>2 DST Begins</b> Ellwood City ARA Meeting OCWA Pittsburgh Net North Hills ARC Teen Net Somerset Co ARC Net WASH FM Net	<b>3 Opening Day</b> Greater Pgh. VHFS Meeting Breezeshooters Net 2 Rivers ARC Net Triple 'A' ARC Net Beaver Co Public Service Net	<b>4</b> Butler Co ARA Meeting Skyview RS Meeting WACOM Net North Hills ARC Net SATERN Net	<b>5</b> Uniontown ARC Meeting Steel City ARC Social Night Allegheny Co SKYWarn Net Allegheny Co ARES Net Westmoreland Co ARES Net	<b>6</b> WACOM Meeting RA Erie Meeting 2 Rivers ARC Net Uniontown ARC Net	<b>7</b> Elco ARS Meeting	<b>8</b> Skyview RS VE Test NHARC/Breezeshooters VE 2 Rivers ARC Breakfast North Hills ARC Breakfast Foothills ARC Breakfast Quad Co ARC Breakfast
<b>9 Palm Sunday</b> OCWA Pittsburgh Net North Hills ARC Teen Net Somerset Co ARC Net WASH FM Net	<b>10 Bum of the Month Lunch</b> ARL Lawrence Co Meeting Breezeshooters Net 2 Rivers ARC Net Triple 'A' ARC Net Beaver Co Public Service Net	<b>11</b> Foothills ARC Meeting Coke Center ARC Meeting Nittany ARC Meeting Punxsatawney Area ARC Mtg Fort Venango M&K Meeting	<b>12 Passover Begins</b> North Hills ARC Meeting Butler Co PSG Meeting Laurel Highlands VHFS Mtg Steel City ARC Social Night Allegheny Co ARES Net	<b>13 WASH Meeting</b> Horseshoe ARC Meeting Beaver Valley ARA Meeting 2 Rivers ARC Net Uniontown ARC Net	<b>14 Good Friday</b>	<b>15</b> Mercer Co ARC VE Test NHARC Elmer Net
<b>16 Easter Sunday</b> Elk Co ARC Meeting OCWA Pittsburgh Net North Hills ARC Teen Net Somerset Co ARC Net WASH FM Net	<b>17</b> Monessen ARC Meeting Breezeshooters Net 2 Rivers ARC Net Triple 'A' ARC Net Beaver Co Public Service Net	<b>18</b> Steel City ARC Meeting S H B P & M Meeting Tri-County CW ARC Meeting Juniata Valley ARC Meeting Chestnut Ridge ARC Meeting	<b>19</b> Huntington Co ARC Meeting Allegheny Co SKYWarn Net Allegheny Co ARES Net Westmoreland Co ARES Net	<b>20 WASH VE Test</b> Triple 'A' ARA Meeting Somerset Co ARC Meeting Greene Co ARC Meeting 2 Rivers ARC Net	<b>21</b> Quad Co ARC Meeting	<b>22</b> Indiana Co ARC VE Test NHARC Elmer Net
<b>23 WPRC Meeting</b> OCWA Pittsburgh Net North Hills ARC Teen Net Somerset Co ARC Net WASH FM Net	<b>24</b> Breezeshooters Net 2 Rivers ARC Net Triple 'A' ARC Net Beaver Co Public Service Net	<b>25</b> Mercer Co ARA Meeting WACOM Net North Hills ARC Net WACOM Net SATERN Net	<b>26 Admin. Professionals Day</b> Ft. Armstrong WA Meeting Steel City ARC Social Night Allegheny Co ARES Net Westmoreland Co ARES Net	<b>27</b> WACOM Board of Directors Meeting Uniontown ARC Net	<b>28</b>	<b>29 WASH Breakfast</b> NHARC Elmer Net
<b>30</b> OCWA Pittsburgh Net North Hills ARC Teen Net Somerset Co ARC Net WASH FM Net <b>2 Rivers ARC Hamfest</b>	<b>5/1</b> Breezeshooters Net 2 Rivers ARC Net Beaver Co Public Service Net	<b>5/2</b> Butler Co ARA Meeting Skyview RS Meeting WACOM Net North Hills ARC Net SATERN Net	<b>5/3</b> Uniontown ARC Meeting Steel City ARC Social Night Allegheny Co SKYWarn Net Allegheny Co ARES Net Westmoreland Co ARES Net	<b>5/4</b> WACOM Meeting RA Erie Meeting 2 Rivers ARC Net Uniontown ARC Net	<b>5/5 Cinco de Mayo</b> Elco ARS Meeting	<b>5/6</b> RA Erie VE Test Somerset Co ARC Breakfast NHARC Elmer Net

## WASH 2006 OFFICERS

## THE LEGAL STUFF

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

President Kevin Smith N3HKQ  
VP / Secretary Paul Lusardi NØVLR  
VP / Treasurer Mark Stabryla N3RDV

**AND WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT:**

N3SH / WA3SH Trustee Steve Lane W3SRL  
NP2SH Trustee Paul Jordan NP2JF  
N3SH / WA3SH / NP2SH QSL Manager Ed Oelschlager N3ZNI  
VE Team Liaison Jacqué Gosselin N3ZEL  
Webmaster Bob Sanford AA3FI  
Quartermaster Harold Rosenberger KB3CPI  
WASH FM Net Manager Kevin Smith N3HKQ  
WASHFest 2007 Committee Steve Lane W3SRL, Chairman  
Carol Danko KB3GMN  
Bill Hill W3WH  
Kevin Smith N3HKQ  
Activities & Operating Events Larry Comden K3VX  
Ted Huf W4ZE  
Ways & Means Carol Danko KB3GMN  
Mobile Tower Project Paul Lusardi NØVLR  
Randy George KB3KGP  
Allegheny Co ARES Representative (open)

**CLUB-AFFILIATED REPEATERS & BEACONS:**

Mt. Lebanon	N3RNX/R	146.955 MHz (-)	PL 131.8
Mt. Lebanon	W3SRL/R	442.550 MHz (+)	PL 131.8
		Echo Link #26861 (courtesy W3SRL)	
Canonsburg	KB3FZU/R	443.650 MHz (+)	PL 131.8
St. Johns, VI	NP2SH/B	28.276 MHz	

N3SH/WA3SH WASHNet, the weekly on-air net of WASH, meets every Sunday Night, 9:00 PM ET, on the 146.955 & 443.650 repeaters. All radio amateurs, WASH members or not, are welcome to join in!

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The WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS, INC. was founded on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1993, as the original SOUTH HILLS AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, and operated under that name through 1998. WASH was also known briefly in late 1998 as the N3SH 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, it's members, or it's actions in any way, shape, or form.

As always, special thanks to the owners of both the N3RNX/R Repeater System and the KB3FZU/R Repeater System for permitting the WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS, INC. and it's members to use their repeaters for club purposes. Special thanks also to our webmaster, Bob Sanford AA3FI, and to Shawn Djernes NØPEU for providing space on-line for back issues of "The WASHRag™" which can be found at [www.washarc.org](http://www.washarc.org) or [www.djernes.org/washrag](http://www.djernes.org/washrag)

## WASH Amateur Radio Club News Briefs

### Next WASH VE Test April 20<sup>th</sup>

The Next WASH VE exam sessions will be **Thursday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2006, 6:30 PM**, at the **Peters Township Library**, 616 East McMurray Road, McMurray, PA. Talk-in on the 146.955 MHz and 443.650 MHz repeaters. All examiners are ARRL VEC affiliated.

Walk-ins are always welcome, but if you plan on attending the test session, please contact VE Team Liason Jacqué Gosselin N3ZEL:

Telephone (724) 746-9235 or E-Mail: [n3zel@fyi.net](mailto:n3zel@fyi.net)

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 **\$14.00** (payable to: ARRL VEC)

Future test dates: Thursday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2006  
 (tentative) Thursday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2006  
 Thursday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
 Thursday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007



March 25<sup>th</sup> was a beautiful crisp Spring morning, and despite it being the first full day of the CQ WPX SSB contest, it brought a nearly full compliment of the **WASH Breakfast Gang**, at **The Beach House** in Finleyville. Squeezing in to a full restaurant (the place was close to packed that morning) were W4ZE, N3HKQ and Peg, KB3CPI, KB3GMN, N3SBF, N3DFK, KB3FNM and Mary Lou, KB3WAF, W3SRL, W3WH and Linda, and WN3VAW. Topics of the morning (from at least one end of the table) included new jobs, car inspections, knee replacements, W3NO QRV in V31, root canals, sail boat maritime mobile, projects, tripods, PT Cruisers, dog walking, the Pa QSO Party Bonus Station, a Special Event Station for the All-Star Game, vacationing and "don't ask what you're eating!" when in the vicinity of the South China Sea.

And on our way out, we learned that **The Beach House** is about to open "the back room" in the near future... so we shouldn't be so crowded the next time. Want to find out? Then join us for the next club breakfast, on Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2006, 8:00 AM, at **The Beach House**, on Library Road / Route 88 in Finleyville, just south of Trax Farms and adjacent to Mineral Beach. See you there!

**All Star Game Special Event Station?** There was some mention at the breakfast that a local ham was approached about running a Special Event Station this July during the All Star Weekend. This ham had already approached one club which declined, and passed the word on to us and to the Skyview RS. As of deadline, we don't know what Skyview is planning, but if they are going to go ahead with it, a lot of our club members have expressed interest in helping. And if they're not... what do you think?

**Pa QSO Party 2006 Bonus Station:** As of deadline, we still haven't heard which club will be picked to run the Bonus Station in this year's contest. Our understanding from PaQP Chair Mike KB3EIA is that we're one of three clubs in the running for the event, and that a decision is due "soon." Assuming we'd get it, some of the plans tossed around at breakfast included running a dedication station for each mode (CW, SSB, and RTTY/PSK31), and running each station from a different county. Other thoughts were to run our usual multi-county effort, but all under the N3SH call, similar to what W3UU did a few years ago. Either way, W4ZE has offered to run N3SH in the digital modes from his shack. And in addition to 2 or 3 primary stations, some smaller 2 - 4 person operations can activate additional counties or run around in some mobiles. Sound like fun? If you want to help out, or have any other ideas, bring them to the meeting and we'll toss them around!

**Radio Shack Closings:** According to the March 25<sup>th</sup> Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Radio Shack Corp. will close 8 of it's area stores as it starts pruning 700 "under-performing" stores starting in May. Area stores included on the list are 597 Clairton Blvd., Pleasant Hills; 1500 West Chestnut Street, Washington; & 221 Summit Park Drive, North Fayette.

*(Presidential Words Continued from page 1)*

maybe one night in June, July, and August to start and by then we should know if we want to do the fall dates. I would like to get a commitment for volunteers to help me do a June and July date at least by the next meeting so that I can inform the Astronomy club of our intentions. I attended a few star parties last year and they are a lot of fun in their own right and it is a great family activity so consider bringing your kids.

I won't be able to attend the April meeting due to some commitments at my parish that evening so Mark, N3RDU has agreed to conduct the meeting. If you have any questions about the star parties or anything else please drop me an email at [n3hkq@amsat.org](mailto:n3hkq@amsat.org) or give me a telephone call at 724-258-4153 in the evenings.

— 73, Kevin Smith N3HKQ, President  
 Wireless Association of South Hills, Inc.

The FCC wants to reduce the Fiscal Year 2006 fee for an Amateur Radio vanity call sign by \$1.80 to \$20.10 for the 10-year license term. The current vanity call sign fee is \$21.90. If ordered as proposed in NPRM, MD Docket 06-68, the new vanity fee would become effective in the fall. The FCC is obligated to collect nearly \$289 million in regulatory fees during FY 2006 to fund its operations.

### WASH Apparel Updates!

**Dan KB3HVN & OGS Distributing are continuing to work on the upcoming web page link to permit WASH club members to order shirts, jackets, hats, and whatever direct from the club web page.**

**For more information, contact Dan & OGS Distributing at 412-655-8787**

### WASHNet 2006 NCS Schedule

04/02	Bell Family	05/21	Kevin N3HKQ
04/09	Bill W3WH	05/28	Harold KB3CPI
04/16	Michael KB3HFP	06/04	Bell Family
04/23	Hank KB3FNM	06/11	Bill W3WH
04/30	Frank KB3FZU	06/18	Michael KB3HFP
05/07	Paul NØVLR	06/25	Hank KB3FNM
05/14	Carol KB3GMN	Alternate — Ron WN3VAW	
	or Richie N3SBF		

Join WASH or Renew your Membership for 2006 Today! Membership Application on Page 11!

# Minutes, March 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting

Paul Lusardi NØVLR, Secretary, **WASH**

Meeting informally called to order outdoors at 7:05 PM by Kevin Smith N3HKQ. (Due to a conflict, the meeting was moved upstairs to the Recital Room, where no food or drink is allowed. An impromptu outdoor pizza tailgate party ensued for Pizza Night.) The meeting moved indoors and reconvened approximately 7:30 PM (once the pizza was consumed.)

There was a moment of silence for recently departed silent keys, followed by introductions.

Motion to waive the reading of the minutes based on the last newsletter, passed.

## Committee Reports:

Treasurer (Mark N3RDV): Read and accepted. Last call for 2006 dues.

Secretary (Paul NØVLR): Discussion of the AD8J packet node & antenna situation. Frank KB3FZU will contact Pete N3RNX re: new location of a repeater

Tower Trailer (Randy KB3KGP): An additional \$500 & \$50 donated. Force 12 Hitch Mounted Tower is not a feasible option. Total raised to date \$1400

VE (Jacqué N3ZEL): No Report

QSL Manager (Ed N3ZNI): Logs in from the Montserrat Dxpediton, 300 cards already s ubmitted! 64 countries contacted

Webmaster (Rick KB3IZC): New website to be up soon.

**WASHFest 2006** wrap-up (Steve W3SRL): Discussion

Repeater Committee (Pete N3RNX Steve W3SRL Frank KB3FZU): Electric bill for KB3FZU/R of \$26.14 submitted. PGH receiver is taking intermod

Club Net (Kevin N3HKQ): No report

Public Service (Mark N3RDV Dave N3IDH): No report

Contests (Ted W4ZE): British Amateur RTTY Breezeshooters Groundwave Phone upcoming

Activities (Larry K3VX): 3 million points and 3700+ in the contes t

Quartermaster (Harold KB3CPI): No report

Newsletter (Ron WN3VAW): No report

Pa QSO Bonus Station (Ron WN3VAW): No decision from Nittany ARC yet.

Ways & Means (Carol KB3GMN): 50/50 after meeting, show me the money!

President (Kevin N3HKQ): AAAP 2006 Star Party schedule is out, they request our assistance with a possible special event station

Old Business:

New Business:

Good of the Order: 2006 Field Day Discussion

Meeting adjourned

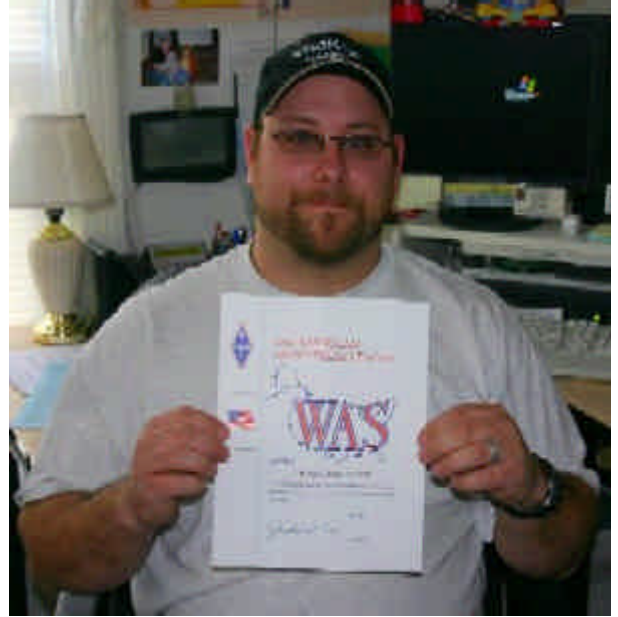
Presentations followed with pictures of the Montserrat DXpediton, N3HKQ X-Band transverter project, and the K3VX bias T project

## Great Ham Lies

courtesy of [www.ac6v.com](http://www.ac6v.com)

- I only own one radio!!
- Ur 599 (ur call again please).
- Your QSL is in the Mail
- I'll Never Build Another Kit Project
- I bought my mint TS-950SDX for \$300.00.
- I worked 'em on the first call.
- I never worked DX on a net!!
- I'm just running a few watts! (Oops, there goes the circuit breaker!)
- I usually copy code around 40 wpm but have an ear infection so using phone now.
- Love code but had my Vibroplex stolen so have to use phone

# WASH Spotlight: KB3KGP



Congratulations to Randy on achieving his WAS!

Photo courtesy of Paul Lusardi NØVLR, and ©Copyright 2006 Randy George KB3KGP.

Every month we're going to feature a **WASH** club member, something about them, something they're involved in or a club-related activity that we're involved in, in the **WASH Spotlight**. Submissions for the Spotlight should be sent to Ron WN3VAW at [wn3vaw at yahoo dot com](mailto:wn3vaw@yahoo.com)

## Monthly WASH Breakfast

Please join us for the next **WASH** Breakfast! We usually get together on the LAST Saturday of every month for a chance to informally sit down, shoot the breeze, compare notes, drink lots of coffee, and just have a good time!



Join us this month at **The Beach House**, on Route 88 in Finleyville, just south of Trax Farms and adjacent to Mineral Beach. Start time is about 8 AM until ????? Monitor 146.955 & 443.650 for talk-in or any last minute changes.

All are welcome, **WASH** members or not, amateurs or not!

## Wireless Association of South Hills Membership

2006	N3AWF	WA3JPP	KB3LIX	WASH /MM	Silent Keys
K3LGM	N3CZZ	WA3WMB	KE8RN	KA3UPY	
K3VX	N3DFK	WA3YFQ	NØPEU	WASH GA	
K3WJL	N3HKQ	WB4GCS	N3BSQ	K3OL	K3EED
KB3CPI	N3IDH	WO3Z	N3PN	KB3IJX	KB3ENX
KB3FNM	N3KFD		N3RHT		KB3FQT
KB3FZU	N3QMV	2005	N3RNX	WASH NE	N3FZ
KB3GMN	N3RDV	K3JDS	N3TBK	NØPEU	N3KEH
KB3GMP	N3SBF	K3PCF	N3VEH	WASH NY	N3OBD
KB3GMU	N3UE	KA3NMG	N3ZCG	KE3XB	N3SKR
KB3KGP	N3XI	KA3TWI	W3GEL	N3YPB	N3SRC
KB3KOT	N3ZEL	KB3DCO	W3HND		N3XFE
KB3MRT	N3ZNI	KB3EPI	W3JAF	WASH OH	W3ZLK
KB3NAF	W3RJM	KB3GUZ	W8LEV	N8DPW	
KC4WTT	W3RWS	KB3HVN	WA3RVD	WASH TX	
KE7FD	W3SRL	KB3IAC	WN3VAW	K3LGM	
NØVLR	W3VFA	KB3IRQ		WASH VI	
NØWVY	W3WH	KB3IVW		NP2JF	
N2QIV	W4ZE	KB3IVX			

Through March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2006

List compiled by

Mark Stabryla N3RDV, Vice President/Treasurer

(W4ZE RTTY Continued from page 1)

window that shows spots and calls that you have worked. It is laid out like a slide rule radio dial. You can click on a call, put it in the log window and automatically tune the radio to the frequency. You can see a window that shows your contact rate and score. There are many more windows and functions, but they are beyond the scope of this article.

Now for a little on the operating technique that I have found to be successful. When I start, on a new band, I first tune the band and pick up new stations. As I tune, if I print a station that I have already worked, I manually add his call to the band map. This way as I tune again, I don't have to wait to receive his call to know that he is a dupe. The tuning the band or search and pounce (S&P) will produce a rate of about 20-30 QSO per hour. Note I said rate not total QSO per hour. Writelog gives you the rate for the last 10 and 60 minutes.

When I think I have worked most of the new ones. I find a place to call CQ. The band map helps find a clear spot. I hit rates of 50-70 QSO per hour when calling CQ early in the contest or on a new band. Later when you have worked a lot of stations, the rate will drop. I can't speak enough about the importance of calling CQ, but if your QSO rate drops, go back to S&P or change bands.

I try to understand when and where the bands should be open. I use W6ELProp, a free program, to print reports for various parts of the world and plan my operation based on them. It does not always work out, although it is a good starting point.

Later in the contest, I concentrate on picking up new multipliers and will jump from band to band using the cluster spots on the band map.

To really increase your score, try SO2R, that is single operator two radio. Writelog supports this very well. I have only done this on one contest and it takes a bit of getting use to. When I used it on the last contest, 15 meters never really opened so all day I was stuck with 20 meters and did very little SO2R. I did use in the even on 80 and 40 with some success. The idea here is to call CQ on one band and S&P on the other. I found that if I was hitting rates of 50-70 per hour on my run (CQ) radio, I could not handle much of anything else so I just ignored the other radio. AA5AU, Don Hill in Louisiana always runs SO2R and holds numerous world records. You may want to check out his web site at <http://www.rttycontesting.com/> for much more on RTTY contesting.



W4ZE in SO2R mode. Photo courtesy of and ©Copyright 2006 Ted Huf W4ZE

## Why Ground?

There seems to be a lack of understanding about the importance of a ground, why or when it's needed, or what constitutes a good ground.

The concept for the requirement for the need for a good ground goes back to the early days of radio. In those days, radio was primarily below the broadcast band and ground wave. That meant very big antennas of which a very good ground was an imperative. remember the Hertzian antenna.

If all of the antenna is there, like 1/2 wave dipoles, grounds are not needed. The whole antenna is there. One might argue that a good A/C ground might be smart as a safety, and secondarily to get rid of certain audio noise.

I don't believe in the use of a ground if I don't have to have one. All of my antennas are designed to be ground independent, even my Carolina Window knock off. I use loops and the Window. The Carolina Window is a coax fed system that is designed to have a portion of the feed line radiate. A ferrite choke is inserted 10-22 feet below the feed preventing any further radiation of the coax. No ground should be needed.

Ain't ham radio a marvelous hobby? If you're not chasing DX, you're chasing RF!

— Barry Lazar K3NDM courtesy of the Ten-Tec Reflector

I use code for concentration developing exercises for recovery from depression, and I am so thankful that Gene, K3QLZ, introduced me to code. That's mostly all I operate with now. I never dreamed I would be using code. But my ham radio dream is even sweeter accomplishing it by using code.

Don't knock code until you have tried it. The concentration and focus skills will create for you your own private world in which you can excel and be proud of your accomplishments, even only at 15 wpm like me.

So if you hear me on the air with code, I ask you to be a part of helping me to realize my dream to become a ham radio operator  
— John Klokis KB3HQH

## Total Number of US Licensed Amateurs

Statistics Courtesy of George McCouch K3UD and [www.qrz.com](http://www.qrz.com)

Based on data gathered by Joe Speroni AH0A

As of May 14, 2000:

- Novice 49,329
- Tech/+ 334,254
- General 112,677
- Advanced 99,782
- Extra 78,750
- Total 674,792

As of March 30, 2006:

- Novice 25,719
- Tech/+ 318,984
- General 133,846
- Advanced 72,910
- Extra 107,760
- Total 659,219

Total all Classes (4/21/03): 687,860 (all time high)

Total loss of 28,661 licensed amateurs since that time

## Triple Crown Special Event Stations

Harry Gross KC2FYJ courtesy of [www.qrz.com](http://www.qrz.com)

Carroll County Contesters and the Long Island Mobile ARC are teaming up to operate a special event station from each of racing's "Triple Crown" races this spring.

Look for the following stations this spring:

- **K4D** for the Kentucky Derby
- **K3P** for the Preakness
- **K2B** for the Belmont Stakes

Most operation will be concentrated in the General portion of 20 and 40 meters, but check each club's web site for specific information as the events approach. See [www.wy3p.net](http://www.wy3p.net) and/or [www.limarc.org](http://www.limarc.org) for more details.

QSL K4D and K3P via CCC, K2B via LIMARC. Please send SAE with \$1 and/or IRC.

A "Triple Crown" certificate is also being offered for anyone contacting all three stations. More information on the certificate is available at the club web sites.

# The VP2M Dual Vee Beam

Lee Barrett K7NM

## Design Criteria

Dayton 2005 was a special event for me. I present a Saturday forum on "The C-Match Method of Phasing Vertical Antennas" which was attended by my original "Elmer", Larry Comden - K3VX. I had not seen Larry in 39 years. After our reunion during the forum we joined several of Larry's associates for lunch. The conversation quickly focused on a DX-expedition to Montserrat for the 2006 ARRL CW Contest that they had been hatching over the previous several months. Before long they also had me convinced that I would a disgrace to "ham-dom" if I did not join them on this adventure. It would be tough duty – but someone had to do it!

Having committed to the trip, I was immediately preoccupied with various ideas for antennas. We were to stay in a villa called Gingerbread Hill that is located on a 3 acre parcel of ground. None of us had ever been there and no pictures seemed to be available. Without this type of intelligence, one could only formulate the design criteria of a good DX antenna by retreating to the following basics:

- The antenna must cover as many bands as possible due to limited time, space and feed lines
- The antenna must exhibit a low SWR on as many bands as possible so that bands can be changed rapidly and without the losses incurred through a tuner
- The antenna needed to produce reasonable gain to overcome our transmitter's 100 Watt power disadvantage
- The antenna must be as light as possible and occupy minimal space for the trip to and from Montserrat

## Selecting the Vee Beam

A number of antenna ideas were constructed over the intervening 9 months before the trip. A wire Log Periodic for 80m was constructed from the ARRL Antenna Book – which didn't work and was abandoned after two attempts.

An idea for a variable height vertical was converted to reality by the threading and tapping 5/8 inch solid aluminum rod lengths by a machinist.

This system met with reasonable success using a "C-Match" tuning system<sup>1</sup>. However, the great hope that this antenna would be peerless on 80 and 40 meters was crushed when the "beam strength" of the metal proved to be that of aluminum spaghetti. With extreme care, a 30 meter band vertical could be erected – but nothing taller. This antenna idea was also abandoned.

My final, successful attempt to build an antenna that would meet the listed criteria led me to the short Vee Beam. The idea of using long wires to obtain gain might be "just the ticket" – taking advantage of our 3 acre location. Figure 1 illustrates the layout of a typical short Vee Beam.

I built a spreadsheet to calculate the physical lengths of the antennas' wire legs for each frequency band at odd multiples of a Quarter Wave (QW). My first criteria was that each antenna must have some gain so 3 QWs on each leg was the shortest length considered.

The length of the legs, in concert with the included angle of the Vee, develops gain along the bisector of the included angle. Figure 2 shows the optimum included angle for maximum gain as a function leg length. Figure 3 shows gain as a function of leg length when the antenna is installed at the optimum angle from Figure 2.

In my spreadsheet I began to experiment with CW frequencies and their relationships. A match was found in the lengths for the 30, 20 and 17 meter bands. The frequencies of 10.060 MHz, 14.080 MHz and 18.110 MHz all resulted in a common leg length of 122.3 feet (37.3 meters). This length also met the minimum 3 QW gain criteria – it is 5 QWs on 10.060 MHz, 7 QWs on 14.080 MHz and 9 QWs on 18.110 MHz.

From Figures 2 and 3 it can be seen that the optimum angle for each of these leg lengths is quite different. I chose to use the optimum angle for the middle band to average the antenna gain performance over all three bands. At 20 meters, the optimum angle for 7 QWs is 90 .

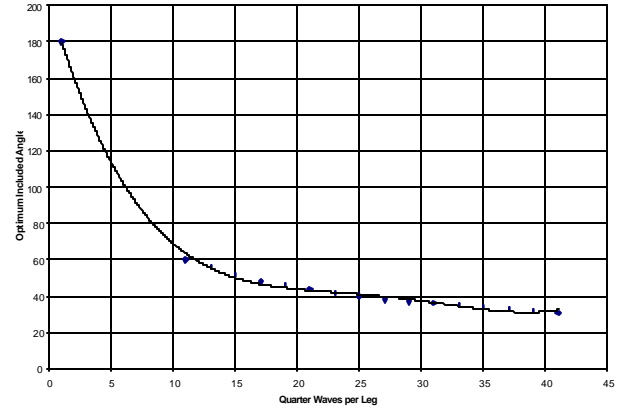


Figure 2. The optimum Included Angle for maximum Vee Beam gain along the angle bisector as a function of Vee leg length.

The physical realization of this antenna was accomplished by a trip to the Home Depot store. A 500 foot (152.4 meters) roll of AWG #14 insulated solid copper wire costs around \$20 US. Couplings for 3/4 inch (19.1 mm) diameter PVC sprinkler pipe were purchased for end insulators for the wire at a few cents each. To maximize the bandwidth of the antenna, a Van Gordon 4:1 balun was used to feed it at the center. The antenna was fed with 100 feet of RG8X coax. The balun and

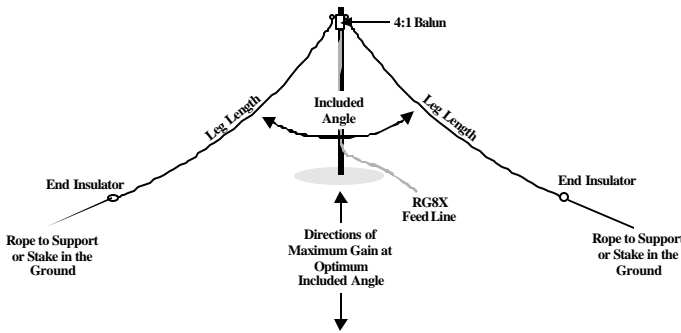


Figure 1. The layout of a short Vee Beam showing the Included Angle and the directions of maximum gain if the correct Included Angle is achieved for a given leg length.

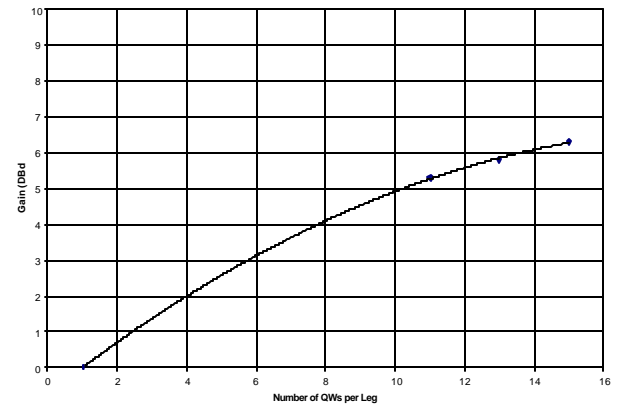


Figure 3. Vee Beam gain as a function of leg length.

the coax (with connectors) were purchased from radio part suppliers for \$45 US.

Figure 4 illustrates the layout of this short Vee Beam while it was being tuned. The center was approximately 50 feet (15.2 meters) off the ground while the ends were guyed to the ground using sufficient rope and distance to keep the leg ends approximately 12 feet (3.7 meters) high. The included angle was set at 90 .

The antenna legs were originally cut to 125 feet (38.1 meters) – longer than the calculated of 122.3 feet (37.3 meters) specified in my spreadsheet. This was so the antenna could be incrementally shortened to set the precise resonant frequencies.

I used an MFJ-259B RX bridge to tune the antenna. As expected the first measurements showed the antenna too long on each leg. The antenna was tuned by shortening each leg by 1 foot (0.3 meter) on each side at a time. The excess on each leg was wrapped back along that leg so if too much was removed the legs could be lengthened. However, no more than 1.5 foot (0.46 meter) was back wrapped at any time – the excess was cut off symmetrically from each leg. Smaller length changes than 1 foot (.3 meter) were made as resonance was approached. Care was taken to make sure both legs remained

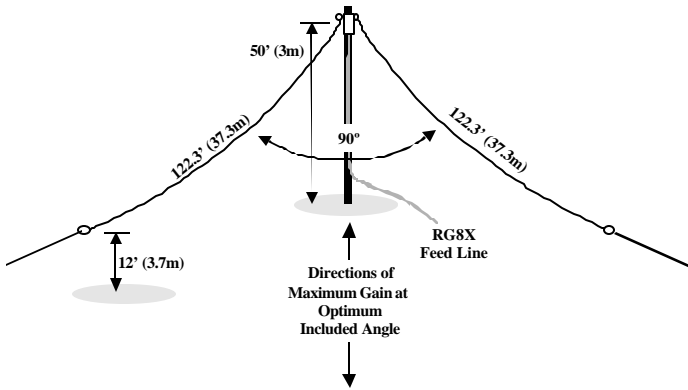


Figure 4. The first successful short Vee Beam for the 30, 20 and 17 meter bands – truly an excellent performer through several tests.

symmetric.

As expected, soon the RX bridge indicated a resonance on all three bands – and exactly where expected. The minimum VSWR measurements on each band were as follows:

10.080 MHz	1.8
14.060 MHz	1.5
18.100 MHz	1.3

The VSWR on 30 meters was a little higher than anticipated. However, when the coax was connected to the radio the internal VSWR meter indicated 1.5. The MFJ-259B was found to consistently read a higher VSWR than that displayed by the radios used. The transmitter produced full power on all three bands without a tuner!

Since the other fellows from our Montserrat DX-pedition live across the country from me (I live north of Salt Lake City, UT and three of them live in the Pittsburgh, PA area), they were excellent test subjects and critics to evaluate this antenna's on-air performance. The first test was during the Pennsylvania QSO party. I hung the antenna in the local city park where it had been initially tuned and pointed the included angle of the Vee to the East. Amazingly, within the first half-hour of listening I found my friends on 20 meters and they reported the antenna produced an excellent, 599 signal. Further testing demonstrated that the antenna tuned the entire 20 meter band with a VSWR below 2.

With 20 meters successfully tested, I moved to 17 meters and easily made contacts across the country – again receiving excellent 599 signal reports. Again, the entire band could be used with a VSWR well below 2.

As I made the switch to 30 meters for the final test, the weather turned poor with cold wind and light rain mixed with snow. Being outdoors and wanting to keep the radio dry, my one contact on this band was kept short. It was with a Canadian station in Ontario. He reported a 579 from my 100 watts. This band yielded VSWR measurements between 1.5 and 1.9.

This Vee Beam underwent a second trial in October 2005 as part of the Boy Scout International Jamboree On The Air (JOTA) exercise. During this trial, the Vee was installed with the included angle to the Southwest. Immediately, 17 meters was a hot bed with several QSOs logged from Hong Kong, Japan and the Northwest Territory of Canada. All of our reports were S9 or better. Glenn Dixon, AC7ZN, speaks Japanese and had a couple of impressive phone QSOs into Japan with little effort. Later contacts on 20 and 30 meters confirmed that this antenna performed well – a true “killer antenna” to take to Montserrat.

**The Second Generation**

The success of the first Vee Beam was not repeated when a second one for 40 and 30 meters was constructed. My spreadsheet showed that a leg length of 173.1 feet (52.76 meters) would have a resonance at 7.105 MHz (5 QWs) and 9.950 MHz (7 QWs), respectively. When this antenna was deployed, it was found that a SWR of no less than 2.2 could be achieved on either band.

These results seemed strange so the balun was tested by connecting a 220 Ohm, non-inductive resistor across the balanced, high impedance terminals. With this 4:1 balun, the MFJ-259B connected to the low impedance port should read near 50Ω + j0Ω. To my surprise, the balun didn't do well under this test condition except between approximately 6.6 MHz and 21.5 MHz. Though the balun's characteristics appeared good on the 40 and 30 meter bands, there was enough of a “question mark” over the situation that two much better baluns were purchased from The

Radio Works. They were similarly tested and found to be very close to 50Ω + j0Ω across the bands of interest.

Rather than rebuild the Vee Beam for 40 and 30 meters, it was decided to try a third Vee Beam for only 80 meters. Made from AWG #18 automotive wire (to keep the weight and sag minimized), this Vee Beam measured 210.6 feet (64.2 meters) on each leg with a 3 QW resonance at 3.505 MHz. Much more rope and space were required to field this design! The performance was disappointing. Due to the physical size of the antenna, the wavelength and its proximity to the ground, it was not possible to obtain a VSWR less than 2.3 at resonance – even with a good balun.

It seemed at this point that the lower bands of 40, 80 and 160 meters would have to be covered by dipoles for the Montserrat expedition. These antennas would lack gain but put us on the air. I was out of ideas with the expedition only a couple of weeks away. In a final attempt to nail down a gain antenna for at least the 40 meter band, I again stared at my spreadsheet. One possibility was noted. A second Vee Beam could be constructed with 105 foot (32 meter) legs that would be 3 QWs on 40 (7.030 MHz) & 9 QWs on 15 meters (21.080 MHz).

It was noted that the 122.3 feet (37.3 meters) leg length of the 30, 20 and 17 meter Vee Beam is not harmonically related to the 105 foot (32 meter) leg length for the 40 and 15 meter Vee Beam. Therefore, it should be possible to feed the two Vee Beams with the same center 4:1 balun if the ends of the individual Vee Beams were sufficiently separated. It was expected that there might be some interaction in the tuning of the two Vee Beams - but that could be

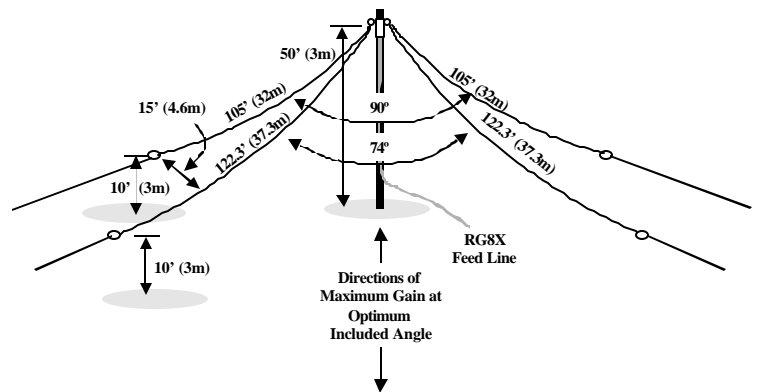


Figure 5. Two non-harmonically related Vee Beams are fed with a common 4:1 balun. This Dual Vee Beam operates on the 40, 30, 20, 17 and 15 meter bands without a tuner. It also works well on the 160, 80, 12 and 10 meter bands with a tuner.

accommodated. Figure 5 is a drawing of the second generation Dual Vee Beam that actually went to Montserrat.

Paul Ducharme, W7COH, helped me roll the wire out and cut it in a winter blizzard. It was hard to imagine that within weeks these antenna legs would be blowing in the 80 degree temperatures of the Caribbean. As before, the legs were cut approximately 3 feet (1 meter) longer than the calculated lengths so they could be trimmed to resonance.

A Radio Works model B4-1.5K (4:1) balun was used as the center insulator and common feed point for both Vee Beams. Another trip to a local city park was required to tune the total antenna. The center was hoisted to the 50 foot (15.2 meter) level after connecting 100 feet of RG8X to the balun. The shorter Vee was positioned with a 90 included angle between the legs. The 90 angle was a compromise of the 140 optimum angle for the best 40 meter gain at 3 QWs and the 75 angle required to optimize gain on 15 meters at 9 QWs. Rope attached to each leg was used to pull out the lend insulators until they were about 10 feet (3 meters) above the ground when these ropes were tied to wooden stakes driven in the ground.

Once the shorter Vee was in place, the longer Vee was raised inside the angle formed by the outer Vee. This longer Vee was positioned so that each wire leg passed inside the end insulator of the outer Vee with a spacing of approximately 15 feet (4.6 meters). This placed the inner Vee angle at approximately 74 . This angle turned out to be optimum for 17 meter operation at 9 QWs. Again, lengths of rope were used to pull out the legs of the inner Vee until the insulators were 10 feet (3 meters) off the ground when the ropes were tied to wooden stakes driven into the ground.

I used the MFJ-259B to adjust the Vee lengths using the resonances of the lowest operational bands. The shorter Vee (for 40 and 15 meters) first tuned at

## *The VP2M Dual Vee Beam* (continued from Page 7)

6.718 MHz while the longer Vee (for 30, 20 and 17 meters) tuned at 9.622 MHz. Both antennas were too long. The short Vee was trimmed first and the resonant frequency of the second Vee was then re-checked.

Surprisingly, the shortening of the outer Vee had no effect on the inner Vee. In fact, there was no interaction between either of the Vee Beams at all!

Tuning became quick and easy. When both antennas were brought to resonance and the lowest VSWR measurements taken with the MFJ-259B resulted at the frequencies shown below:

Short Vee Beam (Outside)		Long Vee Beam (Inside)	
7.030 MHz	2.0	10.050 MHz	1.6
21.130 MHz	1.3	14.060 MHz	1.5
		18.112 MHz	1.5

### *Montserrat Performance*

When we arrived at Montserrat, the Dual Vee Beam antenna was installed with the center balun approximately 40 feet (12.2 meters) above the ground. This was done using a mast attached to the roof of the villa.

Due to the heavy foliage of banana trees and other tropical plants it was not possible to install this antenna with the same geometry as when it was tuned at our local park. The included angle of the outer Vee was around 85° and the inner Vee angle was approximately 70°.

From the charts in Figures 2 and 3, we find that close to the optimum angles were achieved for the 20, 17 and 15 meter bands in this configuration. This should have resulted in a theoretical gain on 20 meters of 3.7dBd and gain on 17 and 15 meters of about 4.5dBd. Gain should still have been achieved on the 40 and 30 meter bands - but without the optimum angle, the direction and amount of gain were unknowns.

It was not possible to elevate the end insulators on one side of the Dual Vee Beam to more than 6 feet (1.8 meter) above the ground - due to the physical layout of the site. The other ends were fixed at about 10 feet (3 meters) above the ground using long ropes into the foliage to convenient trees. The terrain also falls away from the villa toward the ocean with a gentle but reasonable slope. This Dual Vee Beam antenna was installed preserving the best possible geometry considering the landscape. The bisector of the Vee angles was pointed to the northwest - the United States mainland - for best performance in the contest.

After installation, it was found that the VSWR measurements actually improved over those measured in the park when the antenna was tuned. Below are representative values indicated on the radio VSWR meters:

Short Vee Beam (Outside)		Long Vee Beam (Inside)	
7.030 MHz	1.3	10.100 MHz	1.6
21.130 MHz	1.0	14.060 MHz	1.3
		18.112 MHz	1.0

### *Operational Results*

With the first "CQ" on 17 meters with the Dual Vee Beam, we knew this was the "killer" antenna we had hoped for. The original team goal for the contest was to make at least 1000 QSOs. The final tally was close to 3700 QSOs and the Dual Vee Beam contributed heavily to it. Pre- and Post-contest operations yielded incredible signal reports from all compass points including Europe and the South Pacific on all bands.

These reports were somewhat surprising considering our meager 100 Watt transmitter power and that the angles of the Dual Vee Beam could not be optimized for all of the bands. But we could not argue with the success.

We also discovered another side benefit of this antenna. With the tuner in the TS-570, this antenna easily loaded on 160, 80, 40 and 20 meters thereby facilitating operations on all bands. At night, with the Montserrat S0 noise floors on 160 and 80 meters, a number of pile-ups were worked on these bands with this antenna with excellent signal reports received.

Band conditions were not overly great during this expedition due to the low solar activity. Regardless, the Dual Vee Beam antenna functioned flawlessly. It offers five band operation with low VSWR and varying levels of gain based on frequency and geometry. With a tuner, operation on four additional bands is possible with great signals.

For the cost, ease of construction, size, weight and effectiveness, this antenna is a definite must for the DX-expedition equipment list!

### *Special Thanks*

Thanks to Aaron Barrett (KC7RJA), Spencer Barrett (KD7AEW), Judy Barrett (ex-WB7BRN), Paul Ducharme (W7COH), Glenn Dixon (AC7ZN), Larry Comden (K3VX) and a number of other non-hams (including Marlon Maturro, Doug Cox and Richard Santhon) for their assistance in building and testing these Montserrat DX-expedition antennas and/or reviewing this article.

### *Notes*

1. The "C-Match" refers to a matching approach for vertical antennas outlined in the book **The C-Match Method of Phasing Vertical Antennas** by Lee Barrett, K7NM. This book is available from Lee directly (see [www.qrz.com](http://www.qrz.com) - K7NM) or from Universal Radio (see <http://www.universal-radio.com/catalog/books/0147.html>)

# *Two Rivers ARC 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Hamfest & Computer Show*

**Sunday, April 30<sup>th</sup> 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM**

**The Spectrum in Boston, PA**

**6001 Smithfield Street, Little Boston, Elizabeth Twp, PA 15135**

**Talk-In on 146.730 — Mobile Check-In on 146.520**

**Breakfast and Lunch will Be Available**

**VE Testing Available (48 Hour Pre-Registration Required)**

**Admission \$5.00**

For more information, call (412) 664-1683 [w3oc@arrl.net](mailto:w3oc@arrl.net) or [judyfinkle@verizons.net](mailto:judyfinkle@verizons.net)  
On-Line [www.qsl.net/w3oc](http://www.qsl.net/w3oc)



## Atlantic Division News

Bill Edgar N3LLR and Tom Abernathy W3TOM

On Saturday, March 18, the Atlantic Division leadership held the division cabinet meeting in Frederick, MD. In addition to the Atlantic Division Director and Vice Director and the speakers, attendees were:

- ◆ Frank Filipkowski AD3M — Delaware Section Manager
- ◆ Eric Olena WB3FPL — Eastern PA Section Manager
- ◆ Jim Cross W13N — Maryland/DC Section Manager
- ◆ Tom Valosin WB2KLD — Northern NY Assistant Section Manager
- ◆ Ralph Ofchinick Jr, W3ZPI — Western PA Official Observer Coordinator
- ◆ Lloyd Caves N2PU — Atlantic Division Assistant Director
- ◆ Al Nollmeyer W3YVQ — Atlantic Division Assistant Director
- ◆ Gene Pressler W3ZXV — Atlantic Division Assistant Director
- ◆ Debra Johnson K1DMJ — ARRL Development Office

Presenters and topics were:

- ◆ Bill Edgar N3LLR — Atlantic Division Director: Atlantic Division Priorities — Grass Roots, Increased Member Contact and Education.
- ◆ Mary Hobart K1MMH — ARRL Chief Development Officer: Why Development and What It Does For Us.
- ◆ Chris Imlay W3KD — ARRL Corporate Counsel: Amateur Radio Regulation, What's on the Plate this Year?
- ◆ Bob Josuweit WA3PZO — ARRL PR Committee Member: Field Day is Not Enough, PR tools and opportunities to tell our story.
- ◆ Al Nollmeyer W3YVQ — RadioEmail Overview.
- ◆ Doug Lindsey KB3HER — Maryland/DC Section Emergency Coordinator: RadioEmail Demonstration.

Atlantic Division Assistant Director, John Rodgers N3MSE, was scheduled to give a presentation on Atlantic Division Educational programs but was unable to make it due to the birth of his first grand-child. Congratulations to parents, Mike and April N3PPU. Parents and daughter, Paige, are doing well! We'd like to thank each of the speakers and the attendees for

making this cabinet meeting such a success.

The Atlantic Division has several new ARRL Banners in use at conventions, hamfests and meetings where the Director and Vice Director are. These colorful banners have plenty of punch and pizzazz — they emphasize the four basics of the ARRL.

Congratulations are in order to the Mt Airy VHF Radio Club for their 50th anniversary!

Good job to the hams in Laurel, MD for getting their ATV operation broadcast on WTTG-TV FOX5 in Washington, DC on Monday, March 6, 2006!

Tip of the hat to Ron Polityka WB3AAL for his picture and an article about hams helping out in the local newspaper on January 27, 2006.

Upcoming Atlantic Division Conventions:

- 07/29/06 — MD State Convention, Antietam Radio Assn Hagerstown MD
- 08/12/06 — WNY Section Convention, Lancaster ARA, Williamsville NY
- 09/09-10/06 — MD Section Convention, FARFEST, Gaithersburg MD
- 09/10/06 — WPA Section Convention, Butler County ARA, Butler PA
- 10/07/06 — NNY Section Convention, Northern NY ARA, Lake Placid NY

Upcoming Atlantic Division Hamfests:

- 04/01/06 Drumlins ARC, Marbletown, NY
- 04/02/06 Delaware Valley Radio Assn, Hamilton Twp, NJ
- 04/22/06 PRO's Club, Sardinia, NY
- 04/23/06 York Hamfest Foundation, York, PA
- 04/30/06 Two Rivers Hamfest, Boston, PA
- 05/06/06 Binghamton ARA, Owego, NY
- 05/07/06 Antietam Radio Assn, Hagerstown
- 05/07/06 Warminster ARC, Wrightstown, PA
- 05/13/06 Appalachian ARG, Fredericksburg,
- 05/28/06 Maryland FM Assn, West Friendship, MD

A more complete list of hamfest can be found at: <http://www.arll.org/hamfests.html>

## Amateur Radio Operator Charged After Investigation

Wayne Quesenberry, Reporter, *The Wytheville Enterprise*

[http://www.wythenews.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=SVE/MGArticle/SVE\\_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1137835222265](http://www.wythenews.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=SVE/MGArticle/SVE_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1137835222265)

Wytheville, VA, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2006 — After a month-long investigation, the Wytheville Police Department has charged a 60-year-old Max Meadows man in connection with his amateur radio operation. An officer arrested Dennis L. Alford around 5 p.m. Thursday at the Wytheville Wal-Mart where he works part time as a greeter.

"In a way, it's a relief just to know something," Alford stated later Thursday night. "I don't think the officer should have come to the store."

He is charged with possession of an unlawful communication device, a felony under state law. Alford also faces the misdemeanor charge of unlawful interfering with a two-way radio.

According to Alford, who has no criminal record, he was handcuffed, placed in a police cruiser and taken before a magistrate. He was later released on a \$6,000 personal recognizance bond. Alford is retired from Volvo Heavy Truck Plant in Dublin on disability. He suffers from diabetes.

His arrest stems from a search warrant executed March 8 at his home in the Locust Hill community of Wythe County. Seized were five two-way radios, four scanners, a computer, a power supply, radio tuners and an amplifier.

Alford makes no secret of his interest in two-way radios and is a licensed amateur radio operator through the Federal Communication Commission. He and his wife, Brenda, a registered nurse at Carrington Place at Wytheville

Birdmont Manor, were longtime members of the Wythe County Rescue Squad.

The search warrant was obtained by the Wytheville Police Department after an alleged incident on Jan. 7. Police contend that the department experienced extensive interference with its official radio dispatch.

The interference contained audible clues that the transmissions were coming from the Wytheville Wal-Mart. An officer went to investigate and encountered Alford with radio equipment in his possession.

Alford consented to a check of his hand-held radio. He said he had permission from his employer to have the two-way radio with him.

According to the search warrant, Alford's radio was capable of transmitting on the WPD system and thereby capable of interfering with law enforcement radio transmissions. It also stated that Alford's equipment showed a transmission signature matching a signature from previous unlawful transmission recorded by the WPD.

Because Alford lives in the county, town police were accompanied to his home by officers from the Wythe County Sheriff's Office.

Alford contends that he did not know the hand-held two-way radio had been modified by its previous owner. He also denies making illegal transmissions from any of his equipment. "I think the police went about all this in the wrong way," Alford said Thursday night. "They should have given me a warning. I don't feel like I've committed a crime."

Capt. Rick Arnold of the WPD said Friday that the investigation warranted the charges against Alford, who faces a maximum five-year prison sentence on the felony charge.

Unlicensed users of radio frequencies can jam signals between police, fire and rescue personnel. Just listening on the frequency can cause static or squelch the signals.

Licensed amateur radio operators can dial into any frequency under

*(Ham Charged Continued on page 10)*

### Silent Keys



Paul Flaherty N9FZX, co-inventor of the Alta Vista search engine (and it's still popular "Babel Fish" translation feature, 42, March 16<sup>th</sup>)

## Antenna Causes Stir in South

### Lubbock

KCBD News Channel 11

<http://www.kcbd.com/Global/story.asp?S=4732957&nav=CcXH>

South Lubbock, TX, April 5<sup>th</sup> — Lakeridge Estates is known for its immaculate homes, beautiful landscaping and its prestige, but now residents say all that can be seen is an antenna.

"It's an eyesore," said neighbor Sharan Stephenson. Another neighbor, Sue Garlington agrees, "It's an eyesore." "It's a monstrosity," said Betty Andersen who sees the antenna from her back door. "It's an eyesore and I don't like it," Andersen added.

It's nested at 21 feet, but when raised the tower towers over the neighborhood. Located at the corner of 99th Street and Savannah, it reaches a height of 51 feet.

"Nearly all the subdivision in Lubbock have restriction about antenna that protrude above the roof and that are visible from the street," said Lakeridge developer Ken Flagg. "The city ordinances likewise prohibit high unsightly antennas."

"We had a woman that was driving down the street and she lives two block away. She called and said, 'What's that in your neighbor's backyard?'," said Andersen. Distracting or not, it's legal, even if it's not in compliance with the subdivisions deed restrictions.

"The home owner is registered ham operator with the FCC," said Flagg. As a licensed operator, the owner is, by federal law, allowed to put up the antenna.

The tower owner, Robert Boyd couldn't go on camera with us, but he did say he has been a licensed ham radio operator since 1968.

And for him, it's not just a hobby. Boyd has helped with emergency communication for numerous national and worldwide emergencies. Including the Asian Tsunami, Hurricane Katrina and Rita and even last weekends severe storms that killed 28 people across eight states.

*(Ham Charged Continued from page 9)*

emergency situations and must be licensed. They are unlike people who own a regular scanner which only broadcasts police, fire and rescue calls.

Expressing interest in the case is Fred Weaver, Virginia correspondent for the Repeater Journal, an amateur radio publication. He is addressing the issue in the May edition. Weaver expressed special concern about the state code's definition of an "unlawful device" under section 18.2-190.1. He pointed out that many operators, including himself, have two-way radios that are capable of transmitting into police radio systems.

"I have some concerns about being in possession of a radio that could be considered illegal," Weaver writes in his May article. "This could potentially include every MARS operator and almost everyone who has been on 60M."

In a telephone conversation Friday morning, he noted that amateur radio operators take pride in their status as licensed radio operators. Weaver also said they operate within the FCC rules regulating their service.

"It is hoped that a fellow amateur is not guilty of any form of interference," he commented. "At the same time, amateurs understand that trained, licensed radio operators are responsible for all the transmissions from their stations."

Alford has his first court date on April 24. His arraignment is set for that day.

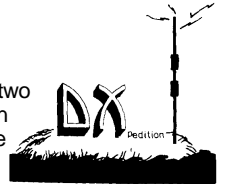
*(Editor's Note: For background, see also previous article located at [http://www.wythenews.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=SVE/MGArticle/SVE\\_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1137834644032&path=](http://www.wythenews.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=SVE/MGArticle/SVE_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1137834644032&path=))*

**In Honor of National Safe Boating Week, the United States Power Squadron's Amateur Radio Net will be operating from the Maxim Memorial Station, W1AW, on June 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

**All are invited to join USPS & ARRL on the air!**

**For more information on this event or on the USPS, please contact Don Stark N3HOW at [stark84@nb.net](mailto:stark84@nb.net)**

## DX News Briefs



The Dxpeditio to **C9 Mozambique** is seeking at least two more CW and one more SSB operators. They will be in country and QRV 29 June through 13 July including the IARU contest, with plans to be QRV on EME, PSK-31 and RTTY as time and operators permit. For more check out [www.tdxs.net/C9](http://www.tdxs.net/C9), information e-mail [frosty1@pdq.net](mailto:frosty1@pdq.net), or call Frosty at (281) 437-1978 — K5LBU / C91CF

**7Q7BP** is still in-country and will answer all direct QSL requests (via his home call, G3MRC) when he eventually returns to England for a "longer period." Please do not send QSL requests via Malawi "because of the flimsy postal system in that country." No word on if or when Bureau requests will be answered — VA5DX

If you are awaiting your **3DAØNW** QSL, K9NW has been on extended business trips but expected to start working on the cards as of the end of March — KB8NTY

Logs for **ZK1EQL** and **CU2/SM7EQL** are now uploaded to Logbook of the World. "Paper" QSL's are going out daily (except weekends when there is no mail service in Sweden) for 2002; 2005 operations are awaiting new cards from the printer. **ZF2QL** cards are being sent daily, but the log is not computerized and will not be on LotW for some time — SM5DQC

"I just finished preparing a box of bureau QSLs for shipment to **W3HNK**. FYI Joe is by far the biggest user of the W3 QSL Bureau; we ship approximately 625 cards to him every two weeks on the average. In sorting out cards for Joe, I find that a few errors are made by DXers regularly enough so I think they merit mention here:

- 1) Joe is NOT the manager for his own Caribbean operations. **FS5/W3HNK** cards go to KU9C.
- 2) Joe is **NOT** the manager for **JT1CO**. Chak QSL's only direct and only when funds for sufficient return postage are provided.
- 3) Joe handles cards for **V44/NC2N**, but NOT for NC2N's stateside ops.
- 4) Be careful when sending out cards for **9Y4W**. That call sign has many different managers depending on the dates of operation. Joe is manager for only certain of those dates. The best listing I have seen of who manages the different dates is on the IK3QAR website lookup."

— K3ZO, Manager, ARRL 3rd District Incoming QSL Bureau

MØBOX will be QRV as **8Q7BO** 7— 20 April, in his spare time, 40—10 meters. QSL via home call — MØBOX via KB8NW/OPDX

## QSL Routes

3DAØNW via K9NW — KB8NTY  
 3DAØWPX via K4WPX — WW5L  
 3XY7C via DL7DF — RA3SL  
 3V5A via YT1AD — W9OL  
 4A7L via WA3HUP — K3WI  
 4L8A via DJ1CW — N5ZM  
 5D6MC via EA7FTR — N7DC  
 5TØJL via ON8RA — K3WI  
 5U5Z via G3SXW — RA3SL  
 6OØN via I2YSB — KG2V  
 7P8ZZ via K4WPX — WW5L  
 7Q7BP via G3MRC — VA5DX  
 8R1EA via AH8DX — W9OL  
 9G1YR via G4TXA — RA3SL  
 9Y4W via DL4MDO — AD1C  
 A71EM via EA7FTR — N7DC  
 BA7QT via W3HNK — RA3SL  
 C91Z via K4WPX — WW5L  
 CN2WW via EA7FTR — K3WI  
 CN8YR via K4KU — K3WI  
 D2DX via OH2BAD — K3WI  
 EP4HR via I2MQP — W9OL  
 EY8CQ via DJ1MM — W2IRT  
 FW5ZL via FR5ZL — JJ1BDX  
 GUØVVK via DJ8NK — W9OL  
 HK3NR via KB2MS — K3WI  
 HP1XVH via DJØLZ — RA3SL  
 KP5/K3LP via W3ADC — W2IRT  
 KP5/N3KS via W3ADC — KS4YT  
 MUØEXV via F6EXV — HA9PP  
 MW5A via G3TXF — RA3SL  
 P4ØW via N2MM — HA9PP  
 PS2T via W3HC — K3WI  
 PZ5WP via PA7FM — K3WI  
 R1MVV via DK4VW — W2IRT  
 RA6AX via W3HNK — K3WI  
 SU9BN via EA7FTR — N7DC  
 T24DX via EA4CP — RA3SL  
 TL8DPA via IV3OWC — W2IRT  
 TT8M via PA7FM — RA3SL  
 UA2FX via DL4VW — W9OL  
 UP6ØP via UN7PBY — WA3FRP  
 V26VR via G4OOC — W2IRT  
 V31YN via DJ4KW — W3AWU  
 XT2JZ via SM5DJZ — W9OL  
 XZ7C via DL7DF — RA3SL  
 YO9HP via WB9AHM — W9OL  
 YN4MG via WØMM — K3WI  
 Z2ZJE via K3PD — HA9PP  
 ZB2FX via G3RFX — RA3SL  
 ZP3CTW via EA5KB — W2IRT  
 ZS6WPX via K4WPX — WW5L

Thanks to the NJDXA DX News & DX Chat Reflectors, the DX-QSL Reflector, 425 DX News, OPDX News, Diamond DX Club News, ICPO Bulletin, & ARRL DX Bulletin for our DX News information. Thanks also to Bill Moore NC1L / ARRL DXCC Desk, & Bernie McClenny W3UR / The Daily DX for confirmations & additional information.



## WASH Classifieds

Information shown here is as supplied to the **WASHRag**. Condition as stated, and all sales should be considered "as-is" unless otherwise noted. All subject to prior sale or withdrawal from sale at the owner's discretion. All responsibility for this information lies with the source and not the **WASHRag** or the **WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS, INC.**

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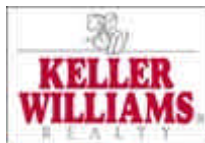
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## FCC News

ARRL Web Extra & ARRL Letter, courtesy of the American Radio Relay League

*Newington, CT, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2006* — The FCC has affirmed a total of \$21,000 in fines it proposed last year to levy on Glenn A. Baxter, K1MAN, of Belgrade Lakes, Maine. The FCC's *Forfeiture Order (NoF)*, released March 29, comes nearly 10 months after a *Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture (NAL)* in the case. The FCC has alleged that Baxter violated several sections of the Part 97 Amateur Service Rules.



"The noted violations of the rules involve interference with the ongoing communications of other Amateur Radio stations, failure to exercise station control, transmission of communications in which Baxter had a pecuniary interest, and transmission of communications that constituted impermissible broadcasting," the FCC said. The *NoF*, which reiterates specific allegations outlined in the *NAL* last June, was released over the signature of Russell Monie Jr, who directs the FCC Enforcement Bureau's Northeast Region office in Boston.

The FCC also has concluded that Baxter "apparently willfully and repeatedly" failed to file required information pursuant to an Enforcement Bureau directive. In two warning notices in 2004, FCC Special Counsel in the Enforcement Bureau Riley Hollingsworth directed Baxter to provide information on how K1MAN was controlled and the identity of the station's control operator.

"The Boston Office found that Mr. Baxter's statements that '[n]o correction actions are necessary' and '[n]o changes are needed with regard to station control' failed to comply with the Bureau's demand for station information, the FCC said in the *NoF*."

Replying to the June 2005 *NAL*, Baxter denied any liability for the forfeiture amount, the FCC said. According to the Commission, Baxter cited the fifth and sixth amendments to the US Constitution and requested "all documentation regarding the alleged apparent liability" and "a trial like hearing before the full Commission." Baxter did not submit "any substantive responses" to the alleged violations recited in the *NAL*, the Commission said.

The FCC denied Baxter's request for a hearing. According to the Communications Act, the FCC said, providing a hearing is at the Commission's discretion, and a hearing is "not normally utilized when only monetary forfeiture matters are involved."

Its procedures, the FCC noted, do not deprive Baxter of his right to due process, because the Communications Act provides that any forfeitures issued in accordance with its procedures are "ultimately subject to a trial *de novo* in federal district court" should Baxter not pay the fine beforehand. A licensee's decision to forego presentation of arguments and evidence in response to an *NAL* "does not create a right to a hearing," the Commission contended.

The FCC further noted that the fifth and sixth amendments to the US Constitution "address the rights of defendants in criminal cases" and said Baxter's reliance on those amendments to support his hearing request "is misplaced."

"Baxter received notice regarding the legal and factual bases for the apparent violations and proposed forfeiture and has been afforded an opportunity to respond 'why no such forfeiture penalty should be imposed,'" the FCC said. According to the *NoF*, Baxter, while denying any liability, "has chosen not to present any specific exculpatory arguments or evidence in response to the violations set forth in the *NAL*."

The FCC gave Baxter 30 days from the release of the order to pay the \$21,000 in fines. If the forfeiture is not paid within that time, the FCC can refer the case to the US Department of Justice for collection.

Baxter's Amateur Radio license expired last October 17, but according to the FCC, he has continuing operating authority since he filed a timely renewal. His renewal application remains under review based on complaints filed and on FCC correspondence regarding the operation of his station over the last license term in general. The forfeiture action is a separate action.

Back Issues of the **WASHRag** can be found on the web at:

[www.djernes.org/washrag](http://www.djernes.org/washrag)

Thanks Again to Shawn NØPEU for providing the site!

# 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual

## Breezeshooter's Hamfest

**Sunday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2006 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM**

**Sponsored by the Breezeshooters**

**Butler Farm Show Grounds / Roe Airport, State Route 66, Butler PA**

(The Farm Show Grounds are West of Butler between Butler and Evans City)

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3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize:	TS-480ST	8 <sup>th</sup> Prize:	Astron RS-35A
4 <sup>th</sup> Prize:	FT-897D	9 <sup>th</sup> Prize:	MFJ-1279
5 <sup>th</sup> Prize:	IC-208H	10 <sup>th</sup> Prize:	Daiwa CN-101

Ten Half-Hour Prizes consisting of Five ICOM IC-V8 and Five Yaesu VX-170 Hand Helds

Prize Tickets \$2.00 Each or 3/\$5.00, 7/\$10, 15/\$20

For more information please go to

<http://www.breezeshooters.net/hamfest/hamfest.htm>

## North Hills ARC 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Hamfest

**Free Admission! Free Parking!**

**Saturday, July 9<sup>th</sup> 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM**

**Northland Public Library, 300 Cumberland Road, Wexford PA**

**Talk-in on 147.090 MHz**

**A Real Old-Fashioned Hamfest!**

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## WACOM Hamfest

**Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup> 2006, 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM**

**Washington County Fairgrounds, Washington, PA**

**For More Information contact Ed Oelschlager N3ZNI at [n3zni@arrl.net](mailto:n3zni@arrl.net) or (724) 746-9235**

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# Inside This Issue:

- W4ZE on RTTY Contesting!
- Did you work the VP2M gang? K7NM details the Dual Vee Beam they used!
- Did you hear about the ham arrested for using his HT at WalMart? (No Joke!)

All this & much more... waiting for your right inside these pages!!!



## Waiting for the Check ?

Some of the March *WASH Breakfast Gang* at the Beach House at Mineral Beach... L—R N3DFK, N3SBF, KB3GMN, KB3CPI

Photo courtesy of & Copyright ©2006 Kevin Smith N3HKQ

## The WASHRag

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