



WASHFest 2007:

Three Weeks & Counting!

Listen to the conversations of any gathering of crusty, curmudgeonly hams and you'll undoubtedly hear them collectively decry "Hamfests are dying, just like the hobby. They're just not worth going to anymore." Well folks, I'm going to quote a very well-known octogenarian by the name of Harry Morgan who portrayed the gruff but loveable Col. Sherman Potter on the TV show M*A*S*H. One of Sherman Potter's most famous euphemisms was Quote: "Horse hockey!" End quote.

While I won't belabor the point that the supply of surplus military radio gear and bargain-priced Collins gear have long been relegated to the foggy recesses of our collectively failing memories, I will take exception to the general statement that hamfests in general are dead or dying. Hamfests are NOT dying, not by a long shot. What hamfests are doing however, is EVOLVING.

A case in point: In the early 1960's, it was still possible for a teenaged ham to tramp through a local dump, or a genuine "military surplus store" (remember them?) and plunk down a significant portion of his paper-route income to buy that "mint" WWII BC-610 transmitter and then pair it up with that homebrew receiver his "Elmer" helped him build. Well, by the 1980's, that wasn't happening much anymore. The hobby evolved around the dwindling access to such gear and a whole new generation of increasingly sophisticated commercial ham gear hit the shelves. Seemingly overnight, the Drake twins superceded the surplus "bargain-bin" gear, only to be replaced a little while later by the Kenwood 520, the Yaesu FT-101, the Icom 740, and so on. Now we are seeing the latest versions of microprocessor-controlled rigs such as the Icom 756 Pro II, Yaesu FT-897 and even newer gear hitting the hamfest tables, only to be scooped up by buyers every bit as eager as those of 40 years ago. At half the original sale price. At a hamfest.

And once one adjusts the sale prices for inflation, you get the feeling that ham gear, especially USED ham gear has NEVER been more affordable than ever before. Likewise, computer gear, now present in just about every ham shack is even cheaper yet, thanks to Microsoft's planned obsolescence policies and a virtual market saturation for home PCs. Last years' killer PC and software can often be found at a mere fraction of laast year's new sales price. At a hamfest

The Hamfest is far from DYING my friends, it is simply EVOLVING.

This is something that just amazes me; hams as a group are notoriously stingy with a buck. Yet many, if not most of our fellow hams just haven't figured out that they can get more bang for their buck today, than they ever could before. Yes, at a Hamfest. (And if they come to the WASHfest, they can drink FREE coffee all day while they try to wait out the seller of that precious horde of rare vacuum tubes over in the

Continued on Page 3

Presidential Words

Where do I begin...**February Fun:**

There lots of things happening this month:

- On February 23rd, the FCC, as predicted, will lift the Morse code testing requirement for HF Privilege license classes.
- On February 25th, we have our annual



WASHFest at the Castle Shannon Volunteer Fire Department Memorial Hall. With an increase in Main Prize money and our usual turn out, it should be a lot of fun!! So make sure you spread the word around to everyone. The more people we have come, the more money we raise. Members

that normally "Help Out" at the Ham Fest, will need to contact Steve, W3SRL to let him know you will be helping out with and what times you will be available. I would like to get a list together so we can post it on the website.

- Did I forget to mention Contests? Some of the big contests come up this month, and I would like us to work these as a club. "As a club" meaning when we turn our logs in, under "Club" we choose Wireless

(Presidential Words Continued on page 2)

Inside this

Amateur Radio Calendar	2
WASH Club News	3
AMSAT Symposium Planning	5
All Aboard!	6
ARRL vs FCC on BPL (again)	7
DX News Briefs	8
FCC News	9
WASHFest Announcement	10

Next Meeting: February 8th, 2007

The next monthly meeting of the **WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS, INC.** will be Thursday, February 8th, at the **Peters Township Library**, 616 East McMurray Road, McMurray, starting at 7:00 PM.

WASHFest 2007, the 2 Meter Contest, the Tower Trailer project (Phase III), and Field Day 2007 will be amongst the topics of the evening.

Talk-in on the 146.955(-) N3RNX/R and 443.650(+) N3FB/R Repeaters (131.8 PL). All members, guests and interested parties invited!

Presidential Words (continued from Page 1)

Association of South Hills; you still operate using your own call sign however. The contests are: **Breeze Shooters CW Contest (local club contest, February 17, see www.n3sh.org for details)**, North American Sprint – SSB, CQ WW RTTY WPX Contest, North American Sprint – CW, North American QSO Party – RTTY, and the biggest of all, the ARRL International DX Contest – CW.

For dates, times and rules on these contests, please go to <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html>.

Trailer Update:

As of January 15th, 2007 we have purchased the trailer from Storage In Motion, LLC in Houston, PA. The trailer is safely stored at a club member's home next to the tower. So, what's the next step? It's to meet up with "engineers" to figure out the best and safest way to mount the tower to the trailer. Also, we will need to figure out the "out rigger" solution. Once we have this figured out, we will need to purchase the materials to do so. As of January 23rd, 2007, we have \$107.85 in the Tower Trailer Fund. I am estimating a cost of about \$200.00 to \$500.00 for Out Riggers, Guy wires and safety accessories. This may be high, but we will not know the actual cost until we can figure out what we'll need.

The 1000' spool of 9913 coax has arrived as well.

The project is moving along, but now we need not only financial support, but "all hands in" support. This project will sit here if we don't have any help. I can't do it all!!

As for Roadway Express, I'm sure by now they know they delivered our missing package (*editor's note: are you sure?*).

Some Plans for Early This Year:

Speaking of the Code Test Drop that will be effective on February 23rd, I would like to have a lot more VE sessions, just over the next several months. Now is the time to get new members. Not only to gain new members, but help to people that have their Novice and Technician licenses to upgrade. There is no reason now that they can't! We have a club copy of Ham University now, and it is available for sign out.

At the next meeting I will go over the following items: VE Sessions over the next few months, creating more involved committees for things such as Activities (Activity Night), Upcoming Contests, and a committee to fix / clarify the rules for next years WASH 2 Meter Contest. We will also go over this years Field Day, as Rick has reserved Shelter #9 for us at Mingo Park from 8:00 am Saturday June 23rd until 6:00 pm Sunday June 24th, with our overnight requirement approved by the director. More information on Field Day to come in the next few months.

Speaking of activities, I am working with Mark, N3RDV on trying to secure a location for activity night(s). This is not in stone until I am told. If we can't secure a fire hall, does anyone else have any ideas on where we could go. Larry, K3VX is brewing up some great ideas for the activity nights.

Let's make this a great year. If there is something you want the club to do, participate in or try something different, let me know. More ideas, plans and fun next month.

— 73, Randy George N3ZK
President, Wireless Association of South Hills
N3SH WA3SH NP2SH

WASH 2007 OFFICERS**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

President	Randy George N3ZK
VP / Secretary	Frank Bobro KB3FZU
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	Randy George N3ZK
Quartermaster	Harold Rosenberger K3HCR
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 N3ZK

CLUB-AFFILIATED REPEATERS, BEACONS, & DIGIPEATERS:

Mt. Lebanon	N3RNX / R	146.955 MHz (-)	PL 131.8
Mt. Lebanon	W3SRL / R	442.550 MHz (+)	PL 131.8
Canonsburg	N3FB / R	443.650 MHz (+)	PL 131.8
St. Johns, VI	NP2SH / B	28.276 MHz	Propagation Beacon
Canonsburg	N3SH	144.390 MHz	APRS Digipeater

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!

THE LEGAL STUFF

"The WASHRag™" (formerly **"The Mariner™"**) is the Official Newsletter of the **WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS, INC. (WASH)**

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The **WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS, INC.** was founded on August 23rd, 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 N3FB/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 Glen Roberts KE7FD of The Internet Guild for his assistance in providing space on-line for our website for back issues of **"The WASHRag™"** which can be found at www.washrag.info

WASH Amateur Radio Club News Briefs

Next WASH VE Test February 24th

The Next WASH VE exam sessions will be Saturday, February 24th, 2007, 1:00 PM, at the **EOC Center, Washington County Building**, 100 West Beau Street, Washington, 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

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: (tentative)
 Thursday, April 19th, 2007
 Thursday, July 19th, 2007
 Thursday, October 18th, 2007
 Thursday, January 17th, 2008



So what was so special about Saturday, January 27th, anyway? Beats us, but when we walked into **The Beach House** in Finleyville just before 8 to join up with the **WASH Breakfast Gang**, we found the restaurant unusually empty except for the corner we occupied. Three tables pushed together (the waitress wouldn't allow any more, go figure) plus another four table occupied; it might be a record! Members present and accounted for included N3DFK, W8LEV, K3VX, KB3FNM & Mary Lou, WB4GCS, KC4WTT, KB3NAF, N3HKQ & Peg, W3VFA, KB3GMN, N3SBF, K3HCR, N3FB, KB3GMN, W3WN, W3LE & K3SGT — whew! Topics of the morning included *War Games*, old technology, PDP-8/e & PRIMOS, the 2 meter contest, satellite tracking, server deployments, software development, PSK, new jobs, propagation, kits, building old Heathkits, working split with an SB-301/401, cascading interrupts, job hunting, Port Authority transit cuts, COBRA payments, Field Day, **WASHFest**... and a heck of a lot more that got overlooked.

Our next breakfast hopes to be just as much fun, and will be our "warm up" for **WASHFest 2007**. Don't miss out! Join us for the next club breakfast, on Saturday, February 24th, 8:00 AM at **The Beach House**, Library Road / Route 88 in Finleyville, just south of Trax Farms and adjacent to Mineral Beach. See you there!

www.washarc.org DOA. Early in January, the domain name expired, and with it the link to the old club website. Attempts to access it via AA3FI's old web site address were fruitless, so the old site is gone for good. However, the good news is that you don't have to worry about our old domain name showing up on some adult site, as has happened to others. Randy N3ZK has put us first in line to re-acquire the name (direct this time, not through Hickory Telephone). If all goes well, within a few weeks, the old address will be back — pointing to the new site. (You have checked out the new site at www.n3sh.org, haven't you?)

Attending Dayton 2007? Greg KQ3DX reports that as of deadline, he still has two full rooms at the University of Dayton Lawnview Apartments unoccupied (that's a total of 8 beds, four per room). The cost for each suite has gone up a little... it's now \$93 per suite per night. Split four ways, that's \$23.25 per person, per night. (Figure Thursday, Friday & Saturday, with Sunday AM checkout, will set you back \$69.75 for a fully occupied room). If there are no takers, Greg will turn the reservations back in to U of D for their waiting list! It's a great deal, as anyone who's gone before will tell you! Contact Greg at kq3dx@verizon.net for more information and for details on when he needs the money and so forth!

Don't Forget (how could you?) that we have a little event coming up at the end of the month: **WASHFest 2007**. As of deadline, we don't know if we'll be able to access the hall on Saturday for setup, so we may need to be there at 5:00 AM on Sunday if we can't. Regardless, Steve still needs to hear from you! This is our big annual event, and we need whatever help all members can provide to make it another great event! And please... don't forget your camera! We need lots of pictures for the next issue of the newsletter and the web site!

Continued from Page 1

corner.) Not too shabby for a paltry few bucks' admission price!

So there you have it my friends, there is absolutely no reason to come to the WASHfest on February 25 at the Castle Shannon VFD. However, keep it in the back of your mind that there IS a hamfest that weekend, and it is the FIRST major event of 2007 so when your XYL gazes soulfully into your eyes and murmurs "home improvement project" you can remind yourself that you would MUCH rather install that organizer system in the hall linen closet than hang out with your buds for awhile and sip **FREE** java down at the WASHfest. That attitude suits me just fine. (That just means there'll be one less crusty old curmudgeon there to compete with me for that spotless, vintage Hallicrafters receiver from that estate over on table 39.)

Microprocessors and the Internet ruined hamfests anyway don'tcha know? I couldn't agree more. Talk to you later OM, I need head for the men's room to return some more of that **FREE** coffee, go grab a roast beef sandwich and then haul my new boatanchor out to the car. Say "hi" to the nice folks out at Home Depot for me huh?

— 73, Steve Lane W3SRL
 Founder & Co-Chairman
 WASHFest 2007

WASHNet 2007 NCS Schedule

02/04	Carol KB3GMN	04/29	Paul NØVLR
	or Richie N3SBF	05/06	Frank KB3FZU
02/11	Michael KB3HFP	05/13	Dave N3DFK
02/18	Hank KB3FNM	05/20	Bill W3WH
02/25	Paul NØVLR	05/27	Kevin N3HKQ
03/04	Frank KB3FZU	06/03	Harold K3HCR
03/11	Dave N3DFK	06/10	Carol KB3GMN
03/18	Bill W3WH		or Richie N3SBF
03/25	Kevin N3HKQ	06/17	Michael KB3HFP
04/01	Harold K3HCR	06/24	Hank KB3FNM
04/08	Carol KB3GMN		
	or Richie N3SBF	Alternates	
04/15	Michael KB3HFP		Dave N3IDH
04/22	Hank KB3FNM		Ron W3WN

January 18th VE Test Results

We had 7 candidates at our VE session. Three came in to take Element 3 toward the upgrade to General and all passed to receive that credit. There were 3 new Technicians licensed:

KB3OMG James Garrison
 KB3OMH Adam Quigg
 and KB3OMI Charlene Kasyan

Charlene's father, Mike N3TDV decided to take a stab at the Extra exam even though he hadn't studied. While he didn't pass the exam he did very well for someone who was unprepared. We'll be seeing Mike again soon I'm sure.

Many thanks to the great turnout of VEs who came to help:

Randy N3ZK Paul NØVLR
 Bob AB3ED Bill KB3LIX
 Bob KB3IN Ed N3ZNI.

— 73, Jacqué Gosselin N3ZEL

Congratulations again to Mike K3AIR, who has opened up his new law office in Butler as of February 1st (see his classified ad on Page 9 for his contact information). Although Mike can be contacted for any type of legal issue, he is eager to assist PA amateurs who are running into problems putting up their antennas due to zoning or related issues!

Join WASH or Renew your Membership for 2007 Today! Membership Application on Page 11!

AMSAT Symposium 2007 Planning

Kevin Smith N3HKQ



Rather than taking too much time at club meetings with the organization of the AMSAT Symposium, I would like to communicate to everyone through the newsletter, the reflector and the club forum on the website. When I give a report at club meetings, I will give a quick update and mention where I need help without taking too much time. As things progress, Pat Sanford, KC4WTT has graciously offered to host AMSAT Symposium organization meetings at her home on a regular basis. More on this at a later date.

Last Friday (February 2nd) Pat & Jim Sanford, my wife Peg, and I visited The Marriott Hotel near the Pittsburgh Airport to visit with the professional staff that will help us make the AMSAT Symposium happen. It really helps to visualize the rooms and other facilities where things will take place.

Pat Sanford has things well in hand with respect to arrangements with the hotel and has secured the keynote speaker for the Saturday evening banquet. That person is Sy Liebergot, a former EECOM controller responsible for the electrical and environmental systems onboard the Apollo Command Module. He was part of the team that guided Apollo 13 back to Earth following the explosion which crippled the spacecraft. For movie buffs, in the Apollo 13 movie, Sy Liebergot was played by Clint Howard, the brother of director Ron Howard. His website is <http://www.apolloeecom.com/>. Be careful because this website has a virus attached to a banner that pops up.

Seeing how well Pat has things organized so far has inspired me to move on other fronts. First I would like to organize a few sub-committees. They are

Welcome Kit Committee: This committee will obtain items for a welcome kit and put together these kits for each Symposium participant. We should plan on needing up to 200 kits. The welcome kit should contain the following:

- 1) Tote bag - We have several hundred bags compliments of Comcast (guess who got these?)
- 2) Tourist Map of Pittsburgh and attractions.
- 3) Symposium Agenda
- 4) Name tag containing tickets to symposium events (banquet, presentation, etc.)
- 5) Directions to local restaurants and shopping areas.
- 6) Trinkets unique to Pittsburgh.
- 7) Proceedings
- 8) List of prizes.
- 9) One prize ticket.

The Symposium agenda, proceedings, prize list, and prize ticket will be produced by others. Once obtained, all of these items will need to be assembled into a kit to be handed out at the time of registration.

Registration Committee: This team will staff the registration tables during the Symposium, handing out the welcome kits etc. but its work will actually begin months before. We are trying to secure the same registration computer programming and procedure that was used for the 2006 Symposium. This allowed people to pre-register and pay for the event via the AMSAT website. Hotel registration is not part of this. Individuals staffing the registration tables will use a computer to check people in, print their badges, have the correct meal tickets, etc. These individuals will also sell extra prize tickets and keep sold tickets in a squirrel cage, just like at a hamfest. Carol Danko has volunteered to be the prize ticket manager.

Hospitality Suite: There will be a hospitality suite (invitation only) to host very generous donors to AMSAT's Eagle project. We will need a few individuals to watch over the suite before during and after the event and staff the bar.

Prize Committee: Ed Oelschlager N3ZNI and Jacqué Gosselin N3ZEL have volunteered to take care of obtaining all prizes except the big one. AMSAT will obtain a satellite transceiver that usually is the top prize. I provided Ed and Jacqué with a list of prizes and sources from the past two symposiums. We will follow their lead and provide assistance whenever they indicate the need. If you can be helpful to obtain door prizes please let them know.

One thing that was very successful was door prize drawings took place between presentations with the previous speaker picking the winning ticket and the prize awarded immediately. It kept things moving and allowed the next speaker to mic up.

Audio/Visual: Speaking of microphones, we will need a dedicated few to assist with the PA system, wireless microphones, sound mixing, dimming and raising lights, etc. If you have background in this area please let me know. It is very likely that some or the entire symposium will be audio and video recorded for play back on the AMSAT website at a later time. There are individuals in AMSAT who have done this before and may do it again but they will likely need assistance.

AMSAT Sales: Much like you have seen me having an AMSAT booth at hamfests, we will need individuals to staff a table to assist with selling AMSAT stuff.

Computers and networks: We will need to have two computers available for registration that have internet access (through the hotel service) and use a printer or printers. AMSAT has a computer projector but we may need to supply a laptop or two for PowerPoint presentations, etc. There is some uncertainty about this and it will need checked. These will definitely be required for the paper presentations and possibly for the banquet.

Photography: Bob Timmins, AB3ED has volunteered to be the "official" photographer for the symposium. Thanks Bob!

Satellite Station/Talk-in/APRS: We will have our new tower trailer outfitted to be able to communicate with low earth orbit amateur satellites. Also we need a talk-in station staffed on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. How about an APRS station?

Thanks for reading this! This will also appear in the forum section of the club website. If you can fill any of the positions mentioned — and you DO NOT need to be a member of WASH to help out, all help welcome, needed and appreciated! — please email me at n3hkq@amsat.org, or call me at 724-258-4153 after 6:00 PM. I will undoubtedly need help in other areas and will communicate those needs as soon as I have my thoughts organized.

MARCFEST 2007 Sponsored by the Monessen ARC W3CSL

Sunday, March 4th, 2007, 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Elizabeth VFD, 107 Market Street, Elizabeth PA — Just off PA Route 51 — Talk-In on 147.225 & 443.350 MHz

For information or reservations contact John Graham N3OVO john-ovo@n3ovo.com or call (412) 287-8291

More information on the MARC web site at www.k3eko.com/w3csl

All Aboard!

Ward Silver NØAX courtesy of the ARRL Contest Rate Sheet via Larry Comden K3VX

So the FCC has dropped CW testing and we're all going to die, or at the least be turned into slobbering idjits, and civilization as we know it will come to An Ignominious End. Oooooh-kay. As I sifted through the embers, I re-discovered a common thread that weaves much of the warp and woof of hams and ham radio.

Regardless of whether you're a seasoned veteran of many sunspot cycles, just coming off your first solar minimum (hang in there, it won't be long now, keep the faith), or are still wondering what all the fuss is about, hams like to think their license Means Something. And it does! How many other folks on the block have a federal license requiring a competency exam on technical knowledge and know-how? Not too many, I'll bet! Passing the entry-level Technician license exam alone puts you in pretty rarified company, if you care to consider the numbers involved.

Never mind all that - within the Tribe of Hamster there must be a pecking order, just as with about all other human organizations. And what drives the pecking order? Recognition! Yes, just the simple recognition of your peers that you have Done Something Of Merit. That's why we wear Honor Roll pins and put 473-Band/Mode WAS on our QSLs and strive to put our calls in the Top Ten boxes year after year. That is what underlies a great deal of the angst surrounding the post-CW age. Because the achievement of learning the code is no longer certified by the FCC, a big chunk of recognition has crumbled like dry and brittle leaves.

Well, boo-hoo. Yes, I will miss it. Yes, I passed the 20 wpm test under the dreaded glare of a real, live, short-sleeve-white-shirted-crew-cut-bow-tied FCC Inspector of Doom. OK, I'm over it. Now what? I have a modest proposal here.

Recognition is a Good Thing, absolutely it is. We need more of it! I have promoted wider recognition in contest reporting; regional analysis, sortable scores, club challenges and rankings, contests-within-a-contest. These are all examples of how to give personal recognition that counts. It comes from your peers and keeps you going year in and year out even when propagation isn't going your way and you feel like roadkill on the Band Map Of Life.

So let's extend and collect and publish that recognition! Who says contesters are the only hamsters with incentives? They're not! DXers are certainly visible examples and with a big overlap into the contest community. Award chasers and county hunters and island loggers like to see those totals going up, up, up. QRPers like to see big miles-per-watt numbers. Traffic handlers number each message for more reasons than traceability!

My proposal is derived from scouting's rank and merit badge system. To progress from Tenderfoot to Eagle or from Junior to Gold, boy and girl scouts must log a wide swath of achievements from personal growth to technical abilities. As rank increases, the breadth and depth of the achievements also keeps increasing. Merit badges recognize specialized effort and achievement. Adding patches of rank to one's uniform and wearing a sash festooned with round merit badges is a great source of personal pride and public recognition.

Why shouldn't ham radio have a similar system of recognition, especially of the so highly prized CW abilities signifying the well-rounded amateur? No, we don't need uniforms and patches. Besides, many of us are too well rounded to get into a sash anyway. But we DO need a common way of acknowledging the accomplishments of others - both as a personal incentive AND as an incentive to others to broaden their radio skills. Not only does this lead to personal achievement and recognition, it also promotes awareness and understanding of other parts of the Amateur Service.

There is nothing preventing someone, some group, some organization from linking the public database of ham call signs to a page on which individual hams can check off their accomplishments. There is nothing preventing the creation of a list of recognized achievements; license class and years held, major awards, contest certificates, official positions, even, dare I say it, Code Copying Proficiency. If the achievements are publicly verifiable, no additional verification or certification needs to be done because we can all go to the appropriate Web site or handbook and corroborate it ourselves. If I want to see how NØAX stacks up, then I enter the call sign and out pops the record. There could even be cute icons for each accomplishment, just like merit badges! And Mom wouldn't even have to sew them on for you!

Let's not make this too hard. What categories should be used? How about those mighty five of the Amateur Service's Basis and Purpose, Rule 97.1? Emergency Communications, Technical Skill, Operating Skill, Training, and Goodwill - if it doesn't fall into one of those categories, amateurs shouldn't be doing it anyway. Come up with a list of accomplishments in each of those areas, starting with license class. Achieving one in each area gets you started as, hmmm, how about First Level Amateur?

And knock it off with the hazing rituals, let's help people get on board and moving! Brush the rust off of your own long-disused skills! Built anything lately? Held a club or Field Service appointment? Written anything for the club newsletter? Gotten your VE certification? No? Well, now is a good time to start

Speaking of starting, don't wait for "somebody else" to get this rolling. Your own club could run a trial program - pick your categories and some reasonable accomplishments. Let the members go through their files and find out how many they can claim. Recognize your rookies and your heavy-hitters. Tell us how it worked out! Share, build, and improve.

All aboard! The train to Ham Radio Future is about to depart.

Word from the MV Voyager

Al Herle KA3UPY / MM

We had a great time cruising in Maine last summer but had more than our fair share of problems heading south. In Annapolis, we were out of the water for about five weeks while we repaired our rudder. It broke a hinge on its lower edge and then leaked like a sieve where it moves thru the hull. We thought that Precious was urinating in the aft stateroom. We kept yelling at her and cleaning with Clorox and enzymes. Needless to say, we finally figured out that it was the water coming in through the rudder bearing. Naturally, we found a few other problems and after about five boat units (boat = break out another thousand), we were on our merry way again.

We knew that if we could make our way to the ocean, we could arrive in the West Palm area for Thanksgiving. My Father and other relatives were all having dinner at my brothers' home. We made Cape Lookout, (Beaufort or Moorhead City, SC) just before a nasty front. We decided to tie up at a marina to sit out the front and then use the four day window that followed to get to Florida. That would put us into West Palm in time for Thanksgiving.

There was one bolt of lightning in the storm. It found us and cost us another five boat units. Need I say that this type of hemorrhage cannot be tolerated by our organism. Both Carol and I are working this winter. I am working part-time for West Marine. Retail sucks. It is enjoyable helping boaters. Our experiences have put us in a position where we can be a true resource in many areas. Other than the enjoyment of assisting others, retail appears to have many who are clawing their way up and all others are simply a resource to enhance their movement. "Petty politics!"



Amateur Radio Day at PNC Park?

It's been quite a few years since **WASH** members spent a fun day at a Pittsburgh Pirates baseball game — the last time was at 3 Rivers Stadium!

We're looking to see if there's any interest in the club heading back over to the ballpark for a game this year, and while we're at it, inviting any other interested amateur radio operator to join us!

The tentative date picked is **Saturday, June 30th**, the last Saturday in June, one week after Field Day, and the start for many of a long Fourth of July weekend.

If you're interested, call the Pirates Ticket Office at (412) 325-4488. Ask for Paul Klein (he's usually there on Tuesday & Thursdays), and tell him his other dad the radio nut sent you!

Paul will also be at **WASHFest 2007** selling tickets and packages for this day and other events. And yes, he's bringing some door prizes too! (He'd Better!)

Add Some Washer Fluid to That Antenna, Sir?

Bill Lauterbach WA8MEA courtesy of www.gham.net

The December 1st ice storm took down the 75-meter antenna...and ALMOST the tower. But the garage broke the tree's fall.

This past week, we were nailed again here in southern Michigan. But I have NEVER had ice caked onto antennas like this before. Not even the March storm of eight years ago.

This storm took down ALL of my HF wire antennas. -- From 160 to 20 meters. They were easy enough to put back up. Some required just a little solder splice. Others just needed a new bungee cord to replace their stretched-to-the-breaking-point predecessors.

But what I didn't expect was the "dead short SWR" of 3:1 once I put the critters back in the air. What happened? I was using insulated wire. Perhaps the wire stretched to the breaking point underneath the plastic insulation? A continuity test proved that theory wrong.

Upon further review, I noted each and every center insulator was INCASED in a block of ice! No wonder we're showing a "dead short"!

With the forecast looking as if we wouldn't thaw until April, I began to panic that I'd be stuck on two meters or Echolink for the remainder of Winter, '07!

Then I did a little searching on the net...No, not Google...Can't stand 'em. I use "Clusty.com," it's a great group of regular guys and gals located in blue-collar Pittsburgh. Anyway, I looked for defrosting ideas for satellite dishes. Somebody mentions windshield washer fluid. GREAT idea! I've used that "hurry up" concept on my frozen car windows on many a cold Michigan morning!

Now for the delivery method for defrosting my antennas. I talked it over with some ham friends. Al suggested getting one of those tree pruners with the telescopic pole. He mentioned something about duct taping a cup to one of the blades so the cup would pour when the rope was pulled.

Nah, too much work and not very much fun.

Then it hit me. The kids "Super Soakers!" But alas, like most of their toys they were busted.

So off to the toy stores. It is VERY hard to find a "Super Soaker" in the middle of winter! But the local "Toy House" in Jackson, MI had a dandy! -- A GUARANTEED stream of 35 feet! Yeh!

That morning we were showing 7 degrees above. That kind of temp might even freeze windshield washer solvent. So I warmed a batch on the stove. Poured it into the "Super Soaker" and proceeded to soak each insulator. Boy, what a blast! And the added steam from the single digit air made the experience even more fun!

One word of warning: DO NOT heat the fluid too much. No, I didn't burn myself. But the fluid was warm enough to melt the glue around some of the seams of the "Super Soaker". Easily repaired with a little "Super Glue." But it's still better to avoid that problem in the first place. So just heat your fluid to lukewarm. It will be enough to do the trick.

One other situation we did discover: Our resonant frequencies moved. Why? Because the ice pulled on the antennas enough to make them S T R E T C H. So a little pruning was in order. (One of the hazards of using stranded copper wire. But I can't stand steel-clad copper! Just too hard to work with...)

W9RPM and KA3FOX are trying to raise funds for Abubaker Assid 5A1A / DL1AL to travel to the Dayton Hamvention this year, as he has very limited resources while in school in Germany.

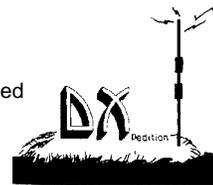
Anyone wishing to make a donation is requested to send it to W9RPM via his CBA. Donations are needed by March 20th so that there is enough time to book the trip and make other travel arrangements.

For more information, please contact W9RPM at john@w9rpm.com, or call him at (608) 787-6004

— W9RPM & KA3FOX

DX News Briefs

IT9DAA reports that the Venezuelan Navy has modified the transport plans for the DX-pedition to Aves Island]. The YWØDX team now expects to be QRV around 16 UTC on 9 February and to leave the island on the 14th or the 15th. — IT9DAA via 425 DX News



Look for ZD8WX and ZD8QD QRV from Ascension Island on 19—27 February. They will be on all bands CW, SSB, PSK-31 & RTTY. QSL ZD8WX via W4WX direct only, ZD8QD via K4QD direct or via buro — W4WX

CT1APE and CT2GLO will be QRV as C98APE and C98GLO 18 — 24 February from Bazaruto Island AF-072, Mozambique — CT1EEB

According to *Detschland-Rundspruch* April 2007 issue, there will be additional prefixes for Denmark and related entities as of 1 March. Denmark will have **OU, OV, 5P** and **5Q** in addition to **OZ**; Faroe Islands will have **OW** in addition to **OY**; and Greenland will again have **XP** in addition to **OX** — DO1DXX

As of January 2007, the **VK1AA QSL Exchange Service** is accepting for processing and forwarding all QSL cards for VK stations. QES will forward cards to it's members monthly, and non-member cards via the National VK bureaus quarterly. There is no charge for using QES to overseas amateurs. Their address is **QSL Exchange Service, PO Box 900, Spit Junction 2088 NSW, Australia**. Please include an email address so that QES can acknowledge receipt of your cards — VK1AA www.vk1aa.com

M5AAV is **no longer the manager** for G6PZ, GX6PZ & GB6MD — M5AAV

The Sir Francis Drake Report: "For those who worked **VK7ZO** on 17 meters CW on 28 January 2007, I'm 99% sure it was Slim, so save your postage and green stamps." (*Paul continues with his reasons at length, including beam heading, time of day, and the fact that the previous legit VK7ZO has moved, changed calls, and is now VK1ZO — ed*) — VE1DX

Logs for the 2006 **8Q7DV** operation are now located at <http://radio-8q7dv.narod.ru> — UA9CDC

TU5KG is currently at sail in the Indian Ocean. He will be sailing in the areas of Kerguelen and Crozet through mid-March. When he makes landfall, he will be QRV at **FT5XQ** and **FT5WM**. In April he plans to be QRV as **FR/TU5KG** from Reunion. While at sea, he'll be signing **TU5KG/MM**. QSL all via F4EFI, direct or via buro — F4EFI via 425 DX News

Look for **J75KG, J79RV, J79XX** and **J79IU** from 10—20 February. They will emphasize 160 & 80 meters but be QRV on all bands. They will also activate the **J70J** memorial call during the ARRL DX CW Contest. QSL J70J & J75KG via KU9C, J79RV via KK9K, J79XX via K1XX and J79IU via W9IU — 425 DX News

QSL Routes

4U1UN via HB9BOU — W3UR	KH8Q via W8QID — W2AY
5H3EE via DL4SM — NA2P	OX3KQ via OZ1LUN — NT5C
5H3RK via VK4VB — EA8BYR	ST2A via T93Y — K3WI
5T5AFF via JA1AFF — N7DC	T32MO via OM2SA — KLØS/4
5X1RI via WD4ELG — WD4ELG	T6X via UA3DX — W2AY
6V7D via KQ1F — NA2P	TK9Z via EA4BT — K3WI
7P8AA via DL7UBA — W9OL	TR8CA via F6CBC — W2IRT
7P8DJ via DL7JAN — N5OK	TZ6RN via G4IRN — K1SEZ
9H3MR via IK1PMR — NA2P	V31LZ via LZ3RZ — RA3SL
9S1X via F2YT — W9OL	V26G via N2ED — KA2AEV
A61Q via EA7FTR — NA2P	V6B via JA7AO — RA3SL
CN2WW via EA7FTR — N5OK	V63JY via JA1JQY — NA2P
CN8KD via EA5XX — W9OL	VU7LD via W3HNC — AB5C
E51PDX via W7Yaq — W2IRT	XX9Y via BA4EG — W2IRT
EX9A via DF8WS — VK1AA	YXØA via KU9C — KZ2I
FH/TU5DX via F5OGL — K14RU	YXØLIX via KU9C — K8AV
FO/KM9D via OM2SA — W2IRT	Z34M via DJØLZ — SV1DPI
HKØGU via DL7VOG — NA2P	Z38N via HA6NY — W2IRT
HQ4R via W3HNC — W3AWU	ZK2PX via AI5P — WD4ELG
JW4GHA via LA4GHA — W3AWU	ZL8R via VE3XN — DO1DXX

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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FCC News

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

Newington, CT, February 1st, 2007 — The FCC has asked David L. Titus, KB7ILD, of Seattle, Washington, to justify why his General class Amateur Radio license should not be revoked. The Commission Enforcement Bureau's January 30 *Order to Show Cause* in EB Docket No. 07-13 initiates a hearing process to determine whether Titus "is qualified to remain a Commission licensee" in light of a 1993 felony conviction for "communicating with a minor for immoral purposes." According to the FCC order, Titus received a 25-month prison sentence, and the Seattle Police Department identifies him as a registered sex offender. The FCC says the Communications Act of 1934 provides that it may revoke any license if conditions come to its attention that would warrant a denial of the licensee's original application. The Commission said felony convictions, "especially those involving sexual offenses involving children," raise questions regarding a licensee's character qualifications. While Titus's conviction was some 14 years ago, the FCC said, "the nature of his criminal misconduct and the fact the Amateur Radio Service is particularly attractive to children call into serious question whether he should be permitted to retain his Amateur Radio authorization." Titus has 30 days to respond. The burden of proof in a hearing would be on the Enforcement Bureau.



Code-free upgrades to General or Amateur Extra will not be available at volunteer examination sessions until the 5 WPM Morse code requirement disappears from the FCC's Amateur Radio Service rules on February 23rd. ARRL Regulatory Information Specialist Dan Henderson, N1ND, says that, judging from the questions he's been getting, many in the amateur community — including some Volunteer Examiners (VEs) — don't fully understand the new rules and privileges resulting from the FCC's *Report and Order (R&O)* in the "Morse code proceeding," WT Docket 05-235. He stresses that VE teams may *not* accept upgrade applications in advance of February 23rd, then hold the paperwork.

"There will be no instant midnight upgrades February 23rd for applicants advancing to General or Amateur Extra," Henderson explains. "You must make application." He further advises that a Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination (CSCE) valid for Element 3 (General) or Element 4 (Amateur Extra) credit does *not* confer any operating privileges and, lacking Morse code credit, is no good for an upgrade until the new rules become effective.

"Anyone holding or earning a valid CSCE for element credit must wait until February 23rd to redeem it at a volunteer examination session," he says. "You may *not* operate as /AG or /AE until you have upgraded and have been issued a CSCE marked for upgrade." A CSCE is good for 365 days from the date of issuance, *no exceptions*.

Henderson further emphasizes that those who qualified as Technician licensees under the examination regime in place from March 21st, 1987, until April 15th, 2000, do *not* get General class Element 3 credit on that basis. For starters, he says, the "old" Element 3 is not the same as the current Element 3.

"When the Novice and Advanced examination elements went away, the FCC renumbered the elements," he explains. "Those who passed Element 3 from March 21st, 1987 until April 15th, 2000, qualified for the Technician license, and the exam was not the same as the current Element 3 General element test."

Applicants upgrading at a test session on or after February 23rd on the basis of a valid CSCE must present the certificate for element credit, fill out an application and pay any applicable exam session fee, which most VECs charge. Between now and then, Henderson points out, upgrade applicants still have the option of passing the 5 WPM Element 1 Morse code test in addition to the General or Amateur Extra written tests.

Technician licensees who have not passed a Morse code examination automatically gain new privileges on February 23rd *without* having to apply at an exam session. But they're the only ones. On that date, all Novices and Technicians will have equal privileges on HF: CW on parts of 80, 40 and 15 meters, and CW, SSB and data on parts of 10 meters.

Antenna Zoning or PRB-1 Issues? Contact:
Michael S. Lazaroff K3AIR, Esquire

The Ferry Building
 127 S. McKean St.
 Butler, PA 16001
 Phone: 724-431-0400
 Fax: 724-431-0401
Lazaroff@nauticom.net



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Inside This Issue:

- **WASHFest 2007** Coming This Month!
- AMSAT Symposium Plans in Progress!
- ARRL chides the FCC Chairman for his support of BPL... again...
- Super Soak your Antennas?

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



Young Contesters!

Anthony KB3NVM & Michael KB3NVL hard at work during the 7th Annual WASH 2 Meter Contest. Despite having to share the shack with each other and with proud papa Paul NØVLR, both did very well. (Of course, Paul beat both of their scores, showing that he has lots to teach them!)

Photo courtesy of & Copyright © 2007 Paul Lusardi NØVLR

The WASHRag

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