



WASHRAG™

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VOLUME 14 ISSUE 10

OCTOBER 2012

N3SH
WA3SH
NP2SH/B

Wireless Association of South Hills

First Annual WASH

GeoCache Triathlon

Sunday September 16 was a beautiful day for the WASH club annual picnic held at the Harbor Grove pavilion at South Park. It was nice to see many spouses attending along with their children (Future Amateur Operators I hope!). After a brief business meeting and a bountiful assortment of culinary delights meant to please any palate the group was assembled for the "BIG" event – The first "WASH Annual GeoFox Triathlon". And what is this you might say? Well let me expand.

One of the many aspects of being an Amateur Radio Operator, or "Ham" for short, is that of being ready and able to provide emergency communications when called upon. Being "able" covers a lot of ground but in most cases knowing how to use your radio, how to listen and take precise directions, how to confirm receipt of directions, and in some cases knowing how to locate positions via GPS coordinates when doing field work such as site inspections and reporting. The GeoFox Triathlon was meant to bundle practical exercises together in a fun way, provide some light-hearted competition, and permit not only Hams but their spouses, children and guest to participate.

This year the focus was on practicing elementary skills; Taking precise and specific directions, Participating in a net to relay precise information, Keeping transmissions short and to the point, Locating monuments using GPS coordinates, and locating the "Fox" (hidden radio transmitter) using radio direction finding (RDF) skills.

Three teams were formed: Fox 1, Fox 2, and Fox 3 – very unique names aren't they! Each team was charged with locating two hidden items via GPS coordinates, answering one first aid question, and locating one Fox. Of course it wasn't exactly that simple as the transmitters were disguised as other animals not a fox. All monuments and the fox were within a 2,500 foot area of home base (the food).

Competition was fierce as everyone had seen the massive trophy that was to be awarded to the winning team. Each team

**Continued
on page 7**



Carol's Comments

Can you believe 2 more months and it will be 2013. Just goes to show you that time does not stand still for any one.

It seems like we just did Pa QSO Party, and hear we go again. I can't wait because it is my favorite contest. I certainly hope I will be talking to some of you this weekend, October 13th & 14th.

As you know we will be up Clarion County (camp) again this year. Haven't decided on which call we will use yet, but regardless we will have a good time.

Then there is the **WACOM** Hamfest November 4th, and I will be looking forward to seeing a lot of our friends there. It will be the last hamfest of the year.

If you plan on attending the meeting Thursday, remember our fund raiser for the club. We will have 2 tables at the **WACOM** Hamfest. If you have anything for the club table, bring it to the meeting. Just a little something you won't miss. All proceeds will go to the club.

And before you know it, the 2 Meter Simplex Contest will be here on January 12th, and then **WASHFest**, February 24th, 2013.

See you at our meeting on October 11th.



— 73. Carol Danko KB3GMN
President, Wireless Association of South Hills
N3SH / WA3SH / NP2SH

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Next Meeting: October 16th, 2012

The next monthly meeting of the **WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS, INC.** will be on Thursday, October 11th, 2012, at the **Crossroads Ministries Church**, 88 Walter Long Road of f Route 88, Finleyville PA, starting at 7:00 PM.

Pa QSO, the Christmas/Holiday Party, the 2 Meter Contest, & **WASHFest 2013** will be amongst the topics, along with 2013 **WASH** Officer Nominations

Talk-in on the 146.955(-) N3SH/R and 443.650(+) N3FB/R Repeaters (131.8 PL). All members, guests and interested parties invited!

"Seen" at the WASH August Picnic



Photos courtesy of and ©Copyright 2012 Ron Notarius W3WN



WASH 2012 OFFICERS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

President	Carol Danko KB3GMN
VP / Secretary	Glen Roberts KE7FD
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	(vacant)
NP2SH 2009 QSL Manager	Carl Schroeder K9CS
VE Team Liaison	Bud Plants N3TIR
Webmaster	Randy George N3ZK
Asst. Webmaster	Sean Sleeman N3NWR
Quartermaster	Harold Rosenberger K3HCR
WASH FM Net Manager	Kevin Smith N3HKQ
WASHFest 2013 Committee	Kevin Smith N3HKQ, Chairman
Activities & Operating Events	Carol Danko KB3GMN, Co-Chair
Ways & Means	Bob Timmins AB3ED
Field Day 2012 Coordinators	Carol Danko KB3GMN
	Larry Comden K3VX
	Rick Bell KB3IAC

CLUB-AFFILIATED REPEATERS, BEACONS, & DIGIPEATERS:

Mt. Lebanon	N3SH / 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)**

Published Monthly with occasional Special Editions as warranted.

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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 N3SH-W3SRL 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.

WASH Amateur Radio Club News Briefs

Next WASH VE Test November 4th

The Next WASH VE exam sessions will be **Sunday, November 4th, 2012, 10:00 AM & Noon**, at the **2012 WACOM Hamfest**, 2141 North Main Street, Washington, PA. Talk-in on the 146.79 MHz repeater.

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 Bud Plants N3TIR:

Telephone (724) 350-6745 or E-Mail: bud@n3tir.com

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 **\$15.00** (payable to: ARRL VEC)

Future test dates:

2013 tentative dates & location to be scheduled

Saturday, September 29th was a cool, crisp, early Autumn morning. As usual, there was **the WASH Breakfast Gang** at it's monthly gathering at **The Beach House** in Finleyville. This month's collection included W9UK, WA4ONC, N3DFK, AE3DL, KB3DCO, N3BPB & W3WN. Hot coffee and conversation commenced, covering 147.09 off the air, airline baggage fees, medical aftermaths, picnic foxhunts, working VK in the AM, network extenders, .955 relocation, being taken off insulin, recruiting, the cost of cruises, Pa QSO Party, past and future Field Day sites, "everything has to be multifunctional", driving down south, the Ten Tec hamfest, and a whole lot more.

October will be in full swing, with the CQ WW ongoing and Halloween coming up. So take those spooky thoughts and float on over to **The Beach House**, Library Road, Finleyville, just south of Trax Farm, on October 27th. See you there!

NP2SH/B: After being operational again for several weeks, the beacon is down again. It appears that the power supply malfunctioned and took it out; N3BSQ indicates that his own beacon may have suffered the same fate. Everything is on it's way back to the Beacon Hospital, and we hope that this hiatus will be very short-term. Needless to say, the next PS will be from a different source (can you say "Astron"?)

Kevin N3HKQ is doing very well in his recovery from the bone marrow transplant; we were all very glad to see him at the club picnic. Here's hoping that he makes a full recovery and can be released from custody of the North Hills soon!

The annual **WASH 2 Meter Simplex Contest** is just a few weeks away. An email was sent out on the club reflector a few days ago, with the rough draft of the updated 2013 rules. We're waiting on input from the club membership for any additional tweaks. Final rules will be printed in the next newsletter.

When you mention the contest, please don't forget to emphasize that **entrants will be required to use ONLY the 2013 forms!** Not just because of scoring changes... but because Ed N3ZNI has moved out west for good. Any entries sent to him, between forwarding delays and such, may not make it back in time for the deadline! Going forward, all contest entries need to go only to Ron W3WN.

The 2013 **Pennsylvania QSO Party** is coming up the weekend after the meeting. We hope to see a lot of club members active during the contest — it's a lot of fun, and it's one of the few times when PA stations are sought after! If you only have a few hours free due to other obligations, contact Ron W3WN — he will be running a multi-single effort, as usual, and all club members who'd like to stop by and operate are welcome to join the effort. (You will have to pet Lucy Furr to gain entry to the shack, however)

Has it been a year already? Well, **2013 Officer Elections** are only a month away. Up for grabs, **WASH** President for 1 year, **WASH** VP/Secretary for a 2 year term. Nominations will open at this month's meeting, and reopen prior to the election next month. So if you can make any meetings at all this year, these are the ones to make... or else you might find yourself nominated for something...

The **2012 WACOM Hamfest** is coming up the beginning of next month. The VE Team will be conducting exams at the event, as usual, which means VE's are needed. If you're going to be available, let Bud N3TIR know and the information will get passed along. Also, as Carol noted in her column, the club will have two tables at the hamfest. We're asking for donations of "stuff" for the club tables, as a fundraiser for future **WASH** activities & events. If you can donate anything, please bring it to the meeting, or contact Carol KB3GMN to make arrangements. And thanks in advance for anything that can be spared!

Can you believe that we're only a few short weeks away from the **WASH Christmas/Holiday Party**, more information will be forthcoming soon. And not much longer after that will be **WASHFest 2013**. Seems like we just had the last ones yesterday... where does the time go? Anyway: Don't forget to mark your calendars!

The ARRL Atlantic Division will be doing something a little different this year — an "online" Division convention. It will take place on November 10th. More information is available at the Atlantic Division web site, <http://www.atldiv.org>

WASHNet 2012 NCS Schedule

01/01/2012	Dave N3DFK	07/08/2012	Carol KB3GMN
01/08/2012	Glen KE7FD	07/15/2012	Bob AB3ED
01/15/2012	Harold K3HCR	07/22/2012	Kevin N3HKQ
01/22/2012	Carol KB3GMN	07/29/2012	Dave N3IDH
01/29/2012	Bob AB3ED	08/05/2012	Sean N3NWR
02/05/2012	Kevin N3HKQ	08/12/2012	Dave N3DFK
02/12/2012	Dave N3IDH	08/19/2012	Glen KE7FD
02/19/2012	Sean N3NWR	08/26/2012	Harold K3HCR
02/26/2012	Dave N3DFK	09/02/2012	Carol KB3GMN
03/04/2012	Glen KE7FD	09/09/2012	Bob AB3ED
03/11/2012	Harold K3HCR	09/16/2012	Kevin N3HKQ
03/18/2012	Carol KB3GMN	09/23/2012	Dave N3IDH
03/25/2012	Bob AB3ED	09/30/2012	Sean N3NWR
04/01/2012	Kevin N3HKQ	10/07/2012	Dave N3DFK
04/08/2012	Dave N3IDH	10/14/2012	Glen KE7FD
04/15/2012	Sean N3NWR	10/21/2012	Harold K3HCR
04/22/2012	Dave N3DFK	10/28/2012	Carol KB3GMN
04/29/2012	Glen KE7FD	11/04/2012	Bob AB3ED
05/06/2012	Harold K3HCR	11/11/2012	Kevin N3HKQ
05/13/2012	Carol KB3GMN	11/18/2012	Dave N3IDH
05/20/2012	Bob AB3ED	11/25/2012	Sean N3NWR
05/27/2012	Kevin N3HKQ	12/02/2012	Dave N3DFK
06/03/2012	Dave N3IDH	12/09/2012	Glen KE7FD
06/10/2012	Sean N3NWR	12/16/2012	Harold K3HCR
06/17/2012	Dave N3DFK	12/23/2012	Carol KB3GMN
06/24/2012	Glen KE7FD	12/30/2012	Bob AB3ED
07/01/2012	Harold K3HCR	01/06/2013	Kevin N3HKQ

Join WASH or Renew your Membership for 2013 Today! Membership Application on Page 11!

Minutes, July 12th Meeting

Glen Roberts KE7FD, VP/Secretary, WASH

Editor's Note: There was no formal meeting at the August picnic

Carol KB3GMN called the meeting to order at 19:08 hours. There were 16 members and guests in attendance.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all, followed by introductions.

A moment of silence was observed for recent silent keys and other deserving persons.

A motion was made by Ben KB3ERQ to waive reading of the June minutes as published in the newsletter. Seconded by Larry K3VX and carried unanimously.

Committee reports:

Treasurer (N3RDV): A balance on the bank account was read & accepted.

Secretary (KE7FD): No report.

VE Report (N3ZEL): Next VE session to be held on July 25th at the North Strabane Municipal Building. Bud N3TIR will be running the session.

Repeaters (N3FB): Bill W3WH spoke on the .955 repeater & how to make it more reliable. Frank N3FB says that all we need to do is use remote receivers. Larry K3VX can locate one at his QTH.

Net Report (N3HKQ): On summer hiatus

Contests (K3VX): Field Day:

- 2012 Pa QSO Party coming up.
- Field Day reports have been turned in. Do we want to change our future designation to 3A?
- Discussion on Special Event stations as a launching pad for future Field Day operations.
- Future FD locations to consider: Pa Trolley Museum, Mineral Beach.
- Carol KB3GMN: Had a nice time at FD, but feels that we could have had more participation.

Public Service (N3IDH): Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix weekend in Schenley Park upcoming on the 21st of the month.

Ways and Means: 50/50 tonight, with a bonus drawing.

Newsletter (W3WN): Published. Lots of pictures from Field Day.

President's Report (KB3GMN): Went to the Somerset hamfest, had a nice time.

Old Business: Trailer storage still in the plans

New Business:

- Carol is looking for prize ideas for **WASHFest 2013**, please email her
- Club picnic coming up in September.
- AB3ED is doing better.
- N3BSQ reports that the NP2SH/B Beacon is done & ready to be deployed to the USVI. He brought the rebuilt units to display for everyone. (Thanks Mike!)
- Mark N3RDV requests that all new/renewal applications in 2013 include a membership app.

Blood drive for Kevin N3HKQ on May 26th.

Good of the order:

- W3WH: Very disappointed in the level of participation at FD 2012, but perhaps the OT's need to share their enthusiasm more.
- K3VX: QST reports about the 2011 SEC, 2012 SEC coming soon.
- The ARRL is offering EMCOM training.
- WB4GCS suggested that **WASH** members need to do training for on directed nets, in & out of an emergency, and how to contest.

Motion to Adjourn by Bill W3WH, second by Jan KB3IVX and carried.

Meeting adjourned at 20:01 hours.



WASH Spotlight: Fox 3



Team Fox 3 Proudly displaying their trophy! Who is Team Fox 3? Well, go read the lead article of this issue and all will become clear!

Photo courtesy of and ©Copyright 2012 Ron Notarius W3WN

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 W3WN at [newsletter at n3sh dot org](mailto:newsletter@n3sh.org)

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

AB3ED	KC4WTT	N3UE	WASH FL	WASH VI	Silent Keys
AB3EN	KE7FD	N3YJJ	KA3UPY/M	NP2JF	
AB3KA	KJ3D	N3ZK	W4ZE		
AC4KU	N2QIV	N3ZNI	WASH GA		
AE3DL	N3AWF	W3LE	K3OL		
K3HCR	N3CZZ	W3RWS	KB3JX		
K3SGT	N3DFK	W3VFA	WASH NE		
K3VX	N3FB	W3WH	NØPEU		
KØLIN	N3FPF	W3WN	WASH OH		
KA3TWI	N3HKQ	WA3BOJ	N8DPW		
KB3DCO	N3IDH	WA4ONC	WASH SC		
KB3ERQ	N3KFD	WB4GCS	N3RNX		
KB3GMN	N3NWR	WO3Z	WASH TN		
KB3GMP	N3OVO	Darryn	KE3XB		
KB3GMU	N3RDV	Sleeman	N3YPB		
KB3IAC	N3RHT		WASH TX		
KB3IVX	N3SBF		K3LGM		
KB3MHM	N3TIR		Jane Wagner		
KB3SPD					
KB3SPE					
KB3SRC					
KB3TOA					
KB3WRO					
KB3YCX					

Through July 19TH, 2012

List compiled by

Mark Stabryla N3RDV, Vice President/Treasurer

2012-2013 WASH Upcoming Events Calendar

Meeting Topics & Other Significant Club Events — Subject to Change

October 11 th	WASH Meeting	@ Crossroad Ministries Church
October 13 th & 14 th	Pennsylvania QSO Party	http://www.nittany-arc.net/PAQSO.html
October 15 th & 19 th	ARRL School Roundup	http://www.arrl.org
October 20 th & 21 st	BSA Jamboree on the Air	http://www.k2bsa.net/jota/
October 27 th & 28 th	CQ World Wide DX Contest SSB	http://www.cqww.com/
November 3 rd & 4 th	ARRL Sweepstakes CW	http://www.arrl.org
November 4 th	WACOM Hamfest	http://www.wacomarc.org/hamfest.html
November 8 th	WASH Meeting	@ Crossroad Ministries Church
November 17 th & 18 th	ARRL Sweepstakes SSB	http://www.arrl.org
November 24 th & 25 th	CQ World Wide DX Contest CW	http://www.cqww.com/
Nov 30 th —Dec 2 nd	ARRL 160 Meter Contest	http://www.arrl.org
December 8 th & 9 th	ARRL 10 Meter Contest	http://www.arrl.org
December 13 th	WASH Meeting	@ Crossroad Ministries Church
December 16 th	ARRL Rookie Roundup CW	http://www.arrl.org
December 29 th & 30 th	Stew Perry Topband Challenge	http://jzap.com/k7rat/stew.rules.txt
January 10 th	WASH Meeting	@ Crossroad Ministries Church
January 12 th	WASH 2 M Simplex Contest	http://www.n3sh.org
January 25 th — 27 th	CQ 160 Contest CW	http://www.cq160.com
February 14 th	WASH Meeting	@ Crossroad Ministries Church
February 16 th — 17 th	ARRL DX Contest CW	http://www.arrl.org
February 24 th	WASHFest 2012	http://www.n3sh.org
March 2 nd & 3 rd	ARRL DX Contest SSB	http://www.arrl.org
March 14 th	WASH Meeting	@ Crossroad Ministries Church
March 30 th & 31 st	CQ WPX Contest SSB	http://www.cqwp.com
April 11 th	WASH Meeting	@ Crossroad Ministries Church

13th Annual Ten-Tec Hamfest

Bill Hill W3WH

Sevierville, TN, September 28th & 29th, 2012 — Following World War 2, there were a plethora of domestic Ham Radio Equipment manufacturers. There was Drake, Hallicrafters, National, Hammurland, Heathkit, World Radio Labs, Atlas and more. In 1968 Ten Tec arrived on the scene. Today they and Elecraft are the only major US firms in the ham business. There are several "boutique" firms making QRP gear and amps, but no one else domestically is manufacturing Ham transceivers. Both Ten Tec and Elecraft are proof-positive that the USA can compete successfully against Yaecomwood.

For the last 13 years Ten Tec has been hosting a Hamfest at their factory. I've been anxious to attend for several but not until this year did the schedule work out to allow it. It is a two day affair held on Friday and Saturday at the end of September. On Friday there is no tailgating; activity is limited to Factory tours and a chance to inspect and operate all of Ten Tec's current product line and this year to operate their new QRP/Amp combo the Argonaut 6.

My XYL thinks I have a lot of wire around my QTH. I wish she had seen the "doublet" farm that Ten Tec had installed for the occasion. There were at least 6 ladder line center fed Zepps, in addition to their Tri-band beam. I also noticed a Butternut HF9V on the roof above their repair shop.

I took the factory tour which was hosted by Stan Brock, Ten Tec's Sales manager. I learned that they start with metal sheets and build everything right there in Sevierville. They do purchase transformers and PVC boards which they then populate in the factory. They buy parts from all over the world to build their radios. They do all the design and engineering work on premises and Stan says it takes from 3 to 5 years to bring a product from an idea to reality. I was quite impressed with the operation and the tour alone would have made attendance worthwhile.

On Saturday I arrived a little before 7:00 AM. I was amazed to find that the tailgating area was almost completely populated and it was still pitch black. There were hams scurrying around the tables with flashlights looking for that special buy. It reminded me of looking at my backyard when the lightning bugs are out on a summer evening. As to the size of the tailgating area, I'd say it was probably a bit larger than Butler but not much.

One thing that was surprising to me was that there wasn't that much Ten Tec equipment for sale. I guess that's because once people have a Ten Tec radio they like to keep them. Another interesting thing was that IMHO the attendees at TT had even more big bellies than the guys around here.

There were a few commercial vendors (certainly not many) such as The Wireman and Eagle One Vertical antennas. I really didn't find anything I had to have other than two packages of ring terminals @\$1.25 each.

Would I go back? Yes, if I was in the neighborhood for another reason, but I don't think I'd make a special trip just to attend the hamfest.

All in all I'm happy I had the opportunity to attend and I'm really proud of Ten Tec a uniquely American Company.



One of the factory repair benches (W3WH)



Rig Assembly Bench (W3WH)

Saturday's Hamfest Flea Market (W8BVH)



Ten Tec had tents set up with multiple operating positions, so that attendees could operate their equipment, including the new Argonaut VI. Word is that 25 prototypes of the Argonaut VI are being sent to beta-testers within the next few days, and the radio should be going on sale very soon.

Photos courtesy of and copyright © 2012 by the photographers, Bill Hill W3WH, Doug Obenchain W9NWN, and Ralph Howes W8BVH. Our thanks to W9NWN & W8BVH for the use of their pictures.



The new Argonaut VI & 418 Amplifier (W9NWN)

First Annual WASH GeoCache Triathlon

Continued from Page 1

bolted from the starting line and the race was on. Within an hour we had a winner!

The 1st Place Team for the event was "Fox 3" consisting of Ben, Maureen, Hannah, Stephen, and Seth Williams along with Gary Robbins. Fox 3 had an elapsed time of 56 minutes from start to finish. They found the first monument, a neck lanyard, in 14 minutes. With speed and precision they proceeded to track down the next monument, a Pirates key chain, deviously hidden in a Hawthorne bush. With two down and one to go – the dreaded first aid question was relayed over the airwaves – "What are the A, B, C's of first aid? Without any hesitation – Airway, Breathing, Circulation was screaming from the Net Control radio. And now their final challenge to find the fox as Net Control relayed the beacon frequency of their "Fox". And they were also given their first clue "Mr. Ed". With lightning speed Fox 3 dialed in the beacon frequency on their hand-held radio and off-to-the-races! Nineteen minutes later they found the..... "A horse is a horse of course of course" fox, which by now turned out to be a horse not a fox. Victory!

Fox 2 consisting of Sean, Darryn, and Lucas Sleeman along with Fred and Patsy Beighley claimed the second place spot with a respectable elapsed time of 78 minutes. Fox 2 located both monuments and also recovered their fox.

Fox 1 with Carol and Ritchie Danko assisted by Mike Lazaroff had a few "technical" difficulties during their valiant effort to overtake Fox 2. They were able to locate the first monument and needed a little "help" on the second monument – but the fox was very evasive and escaped capture.

Needless to say a "Good Time" was had by all.

In interviewing the teams after the event an interesting fact surfaced. "The men folk were very intense in fiddling with their radios and gadgets and GPS locators..... but it was the ladies in the teams that actually FOUND the items."

And "That's the way it is" as Walter Cronkite would say.....

— 73, Rick Bell KB3IAC



Photos courtesy of and ©Copyright 2012 Ron Notarius W3WN



My Foray into Ham Radio

JGB courtesy of www.eham.net

Gardiz, Afghanistan — I got my start in Ham radio as a 27 year old when deployed to Afghanistan on my third tour. During my second tour I brought a Grundig G3 globe traveler which I used regularly to listen to BBC World Service. During my third tour I decided to buy an HF radio. I have had a interest in electronics for years and via my military service had worked a great deal with radios from HF to SHF but I had never had any experience with amateur HF.

After reading and deliberating for a few months I took the plunge and bought an FT-817ND, MFJ 971 and Rig Blaster Plug n' Play. The major appeal of the radio was its small size, relatively low power consumption, battery operation and capability for digital modes. I don't really need a true portable radio per-se but traveling extensively it would be easier to have a compact radio with external tuner, and external amp if need be. My interest in the digital modes which I assumed would be the focus of my operation was the DX capability of those modes as well as compatibility with QRP operation. I knew I would be in for a challenge operating a 5w radio from a remote location and hoping to make DX contacts but I was up for it.

A big appeal of HF amateur operation for me is historical. As a child during the end of the cold war I have always had a fascination with that era. Reading about numbers stations, agent radios, burst communications and low power operation to avoid detection was enthralling. I wanted to emulate some of that style of operation to live and understand it better. The military uses HF radio for secure communication over long distances with limited probability of detection by operating with 20 watts or less. So I knew lower power operation was possible with the right equipment.

I have heard both sides of the debate over whether digital modes have a place in amateur radio. My counterpoint is that despite all of the other digital communications we have available today HF is the only long distance option we have that makes the user self sufficient. For example here in Afghanistan civilian internet is slow and expensive. Most soldiers pay \$100.00 a month for two hours a day at 56k. The systems are not terribly secure, rely on bulky satellite uplinks and price gouging contractors. If it is possible to send a simple text based e-mail several thousand miles to reach the internet using 15 lbs of equipment that I control I want to do that. The ability to be self reliant, to operate as part of a peer to peer mesh network without satellites, fiber optic back bones is the appeal.

Don't get me wrong about technology. I think tube amplifiers and transceivers are awesome. As technological art, functional history they are truly important to the hobby. I am working on learning CW as it is a simple reliable fall back. However the capabilities offered by digital modes, solid state amplifiers are robustness, reliability, compact size and low power draw.

Did I mention I am operating my station 100% from solar power? I use a 62 W solar panel connected to a Solex 10 amp charge controller, 120 Ah AGM battery, MFJ super battery booster to run my radio, laptop and an LED light.

When I received my boxes from HRO I couldn't wait to get them open. I spent considerable time getting a good ground set up because the soil here is dry and rocky. My antenna is a broadband 100ft dipole 60ft above ground in an inverted V configuration. Getting the Rig Blaster working with my Macbook Pro was a little tedious.

It took a few days to get the configuration right but now it works great. Because of where I am most of my contacts come from Europe which is minimum 1600 miles. On the PSK31 hangouts at 14070 & 21070 kHz I was hearing a lot of signals but not getting out. I had to adjust my antenna a little, initially it was about 20 ft lower. I built a tower on top of a building to get the additional height and then I was able to start making contacts, averaging 2500 miles distance on 5 watts!

My furthest contact so far has been Madagascar 3600 miles south west. It felt like a true achievement to get that 599 from that distance. Since I am using three conductor electrical wiring as a feed line I am hoping when I get a hold of some ladder line I will have even better success.

I think maintaining the viability of amateur radio is important. My journey has been a great educational experience and will continue to be for years. I know that wherever I am in remote places I will always be able to reach out across the world. As a new generation of operators take up the hobby the bridge between digital technology and radio is the one we cross to join the network.

If it were not for the digital modes I probably would never have gotten into this hobby, though I hope to one-day have my own boat anchor. I think my journey will be one of reverse evolution from digital to analog. I hope the older enthusiasts will remember that .

DX News Briefs



A group of German & Polish amateurs will be QRV from the Solomon Islands **H44**. The main operation is scheduled 8 - 25 March. Part of the group will also operate from Temotu Island **H40** 12 - 23 March. Calls to be announced. There will be several stations on 160 - 6 on CW & SSB, one station from each location will be dedicated to RTTY, PSK-31 & SSTV. More info at <http://www.d17df.com/h4/index.php> . QSL via DL7DF — DL7DF

G3SWH & G3RTE will be QRV from Guadalcanal OC-047 as **H44KW** 18 - 28 February. 80 - 10 CW only. QSL via G3SWH. More info at <http://www.g3swh.org.uk/h44kw.html> — G3SWH

DL2GAC will be QRV as **H44MS** 17 October - 10 December, 80 - 6 M SSB only. QSL via DL2GAC — DL2GAC

A team will be QRV from Macao 18 - 29 October, all bands. Calls include **XX9TFR**, **XX9TBM**, **XX9TEX** & **XX9TPX**. QSL all via EA7FTR — EA7FTR

IK7YTT will be QRV as **XX9TTT** from Coloane Island AS-075 26 - 29 October. During the CQ WW contest, he will be 15 M single band only, other bands before & after the contest. More info at <http://www.mdx.org/xx9ttt/> QSL via IZ8CCW — IK7YTT

The Radio Syd Contest Group will activate C5A during the CQWW SSB contest 27—28 October. QSL via OM2FY. More information at <http://www.om0c.com> — KB8NW

IK7JWY is organizing another trip to Djerba Island AF-083, Tunisia, 27 April - 4 May, as **TS8IT**. Those interested in joining the team should email ik7jwx2003@yahoo.it -- IK7JWY

Team F6KOP will be operating from **5X Uganda** 6 - 18 February. Call TBA. QSL via F1NGP. More info at <http://www.5x2013.com/> — F6KOP, DX World

KG4KL will be active 13—27 October; QSL via KN4KL. **KG4WV** will be active 11 -17 October; QSL via K4WV — KB8NW

Look for **3A/ON5UR** & **3A/ON8AK** from Monte Carlo 9 - 17 November. At the moment, they have permission only for one station but hope to get a second. They will be QRV 10 - 80 SSB only. QSL via MØURX — DX World

ZS6AYU will be QRV as **9J2JGF** 19—22 October from Livingstone. He will then be QRV as **Z21GF** 22—25 October from Victoria Falls. He will be on all HF bands. QSL both via ZS6AYU — ZS6AYU

HB9OAU will be in the Maldives as **8Q7AU** 26 November—11 December. He will be QRV 10 — 80, SSB only. QSL via HB9OAU — HB9OAU

JA1XXI is currently active as **9M2/JA1XXI** through 15 October, "holiday style" on 20, 15, 10 & 6 CW & SSB. QSL via JA1XXI — KB8NW

QSL Routes

4JØSFR via 4J5T — KG4W	J28NC via F5RQQ — F5MBF
4L1MA via ON4RU — KG4W	KH6/WG6O via JK1KSB — JA1HGY
4S7KKG via DCØKK — DCØKK	KH8RRG via N7RO — JA1HGY
5D7AT via ON4LO — ON4LO	MXØDLG via MØURX — MØURX
6W7SK via F6BLP — KB8NW	NHØJ via JJ2VLY — JJ2VLY
5R8UI via IZ8CCW — KZ2I	OHØJV via DL7RV — KG4W
5TØJL via ON8RA — KG4W	P41HQ ia I2MQP — KG4W
7Z7AB via 7Z1CQ — 7Z1CQ	PJ4D via W3HNK - NØVD
9J2JA via JA7SBV — JA1HGY	PJ4X via PE2MC — PE2MC
9M6XRO via MØURX — TA3J	R11ANF via RK1PWA — AA5AM
A45WW via EA5ZD — W3AWU	RJ1FJA via RX3MM — KG4W
C6AVA via N6AWD — K6VVA	SU9VB via UA4WHX — W4WN
CP6XE via IK6SNR — W3AWU	T88HK via JE6DND — KG4W
CY9M via MØURX — G4GED	TJ3AY via FZ3EC — TA3J
D9K via DS4NYE — KCC	VK8MM via VK4FW — W3AWU
E4ØVB via UA4WHX — W1ZD	XX9E via EB7DX — JA1HGY
H44MS via DL2GAC — DL2GAC	
H44UD via UT6UD — W3AWU	
HBØ/HB9AON via DJ2YE — KG4W	
HBØ/PA4N via PA4N — PA4N	

Thanks to the NJDXA DX News & DX Chat Reflectors, the DX-QSL Reflector, 425 DX News, OPDX News, DX World.Net, 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 courtesy of the American Radio Relay League

Newington, CT, October 8th, 2012 — On October 2, the FCC released a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)* in WT Docket No. 12-283 that seeks to change the Amateur Radio licensing rules, especially as they concern former licensees. Acting upon an **April 2011**

Petition for Rulemaking filed by the Anchorage VEC to give permanent credit to radio amateurs for examination elements they have successfully passed, the FCC proposes to revise Section 97.505 to require that Volunteer Examiners (VEs) give examination credit to an applicant who can demonstrate that he or she formerly held a particular class of license. In addition, the Commission seeks to shorten the grace period during which an expired amateur license may be renewed and to reduce the number of VEs needed to administer an amateur license examination. In response to a **Petition for Rulemaking filed by the ARRL in March 2011**, the FCC looks to amend the Amateur Service rules to allow amateur stations to transmit additional emission types in order to permit Time Division Multiple Access (TDMA) in the Amateur Service. But in doing so, it denied the League's request for a blanket waiver pending the resolution of the rulemaking proceeding.



Comments on these proposed rules changes will be accepted until 60 days after the *NPRM* is published in the **Federal Register** (this can take up to six weeks after release of the *NPRM*). Reply comments will be accepted until 90 days after publication in the *Federal Register*.

Licensing Issues

Examination Credit

To be issued a new or upgraded amateur operator license, a person must pass an examination or otherwise receive credit for the examination element(s) required to qualify for the relevant license class.

Applications for new or upgraded licenses must be filed through a volunteer-examiner coordinator (VEC), which obtains the applicant information from VEs, who in turn administer examination sessions and issue a certificate of successful completion of an examination (CSCE) to an examinee who scores a passing grade on an examination element. A person also receives credit for an examination element if he or she presents either a CSCE for that element that was issued within the previous 365 days or an unexpired (or expired but within the grace period for renewal) amateur operator license for a license of a class that required passage of that element.

In its *Petition*, the Anchorage VEC asserted that it was unfair that after the grace period for renewal of an Amateur Radio license ends, a former licensee "loses all credit for any elements passed, and must start all over if they want to continue their Amateur Radio activities. Does the passage of time somehow invalidate a person's knowledge? We think not. We believe that any applicant who can demonstrate that they have passed certain elements at some previous date or who have held a license grant for a particular class of license, again on or before various applicable dates, should not have to be re-examined on those elements before a new license can be granted. It seems unfair to allow some applicants to claim element credit for items previously passed and not others."

The FCC stated in the *NPRM* that it recognized that the rules treat a former licensee differently than a licensee who passed the same examination(s) but who continuously renewed his or her license: "We also agree with Anchorage VEC that the fact that an individual allowed his or her license to expire more than two years ago does not necessarily mean that the person no longer possess [sic] adequate knowledge of the subject. That a license was continuously renewed does not establish that the licensee remained active in the Amateur Service, for amateur licensees are not required to operate their stations in order to remain licensed."

In 1997, the FCC addressed a similar proposal. At that time, commenters generally opposed allowing examination credit for expired licenses, and the FCC declined to take action. "The Commission noted [in 1997] the opposition to the proposal to allow examination credit for expired licenses, and concluded that requiring licensees to either renew their licenses or retest before they may reenter the Amateur Service does not impose a hardship," it stated in the *NPRM*. "While we continue to believe that requiring licensees to either file a timely renewal application or retake the necessary examination before they can be relicensed does not impose an unreasonable burden, we are skeptical that it is actually necessary to require former licensees to retest."

With this in mind, the FCC is proposing to revise **Section 97.505** to require that VEs give examination credit to an applicant who can demonstrate that he or she formerly held a particular class of license: "We believe [amending Section 97.505] will encourage former amateur operators to become involved again in the technical self-training and

Continued on page 10

The BSA Jamboree on the Air will be taking place October 20th & 21st. The North Hills ARC, Skyview RS and Steel City ARC are going to be involved in activities assisting local troops and Scouts.



This will be a great time to get on the air, contact some Scouts, help them earn their merit badges, promote Amateur Radio, and show those scouts how much fun Amateur Radio can be!

More information on JOTA and JOTA activity can be found at <http://www.k2bsa.net/jota/>

Has Roadway found the tower yet?

WACOM HAMFEST 2012

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2151 North Main Street, Washington PA

Sunday, November 4th

8:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Setup at 6:30 AM

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VE Testing at 10:00 AM & Noon

First Prize:
Second Prize:
Third Prize:

Ameritron 811 HF Amplifier
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ICOM IC-V8000 VHF FM Transceiver

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Check www.wacomarc.org for Updates

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Reserve your tables early — Table Deadline October 24th

FCC News

continued from Page 9

public service communications opportunities provided by the Amateur Service. It also could reduce costs (in time as well as money) incurred by former licensees seeking to reenter the Amateur Service. We ask commenters to address these costs and benefits."

With one narrow exception -- expired Technician Class operator licenses granted before March 21, 1987 -- element credit is *not* given for an Amateur Operator license that has expired *and* is beyond the grace period for renewal. The grace period for renewal of an Amateur Operator license is two years, which is also the period of time after which the call sign associated with an expired Amateur Operator license becomes available for reassignment through the vanity call sign system. "We seek comment on whether we should retain this rule," the FCC stated. "While we are not reconsidering the Commission's conclusion that those former licensees should receive credit for the written examination required for a General Class license, we question whether the rule still has any practical effect. That is, are there any remaining holders of expired pre-1987 Technician Class licenses who intend to seek General or Amateur Extra Class licenses, or can we streamline the rule by deleting this provision as obsolete? Similarly, we seek comment on whether Section 97.505, as proposed to be amended in this proceeding, should make provision for expired Conditional Class licenses, which were phased out by renewing them as General Class licenses beginning in 1976."

The FCC is also seeking to eliminate the element credit distinction between a person who passed an examination and kept his or her license current, and a person who passed the same examination but let his or her license expire. "Arguably, we should also eliminate the element credit distinction between a person who passed an examination and applied for a license within a year and a person who passed the same examination but did not apply for a license in that time, on the grounds that the passage of a year does not substantial [sic] affect the latter examinee's knowledge," the FCC maintained. "We note, however, that a CSCE also provides temporary authority for an upgrading licensee to exercise the rights and privileges of the higher operator class until disposition of the upgrade application or 365 days, whichever comes first. We are concerned that it may be anomalous or confusing to create a difference between the period during which a CSCE provides temporary operating authority and the period during which a CSCE provides element credit."

Read more at www.arrl.org





WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS, INC.

Membership Application/Renewal for 2012



I would like to join WASH!. I am interested in the following type of membership: **New Membership** **Membership Renewal**

(check quarter _____ →)
(check one !)
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<input type="checkbox"/> (F1) Full Membership:	\$20.00	\$15.00	\$10.00	\$5.00
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Please make your check or money order payable to the club treasurer, Mark Stabryla.
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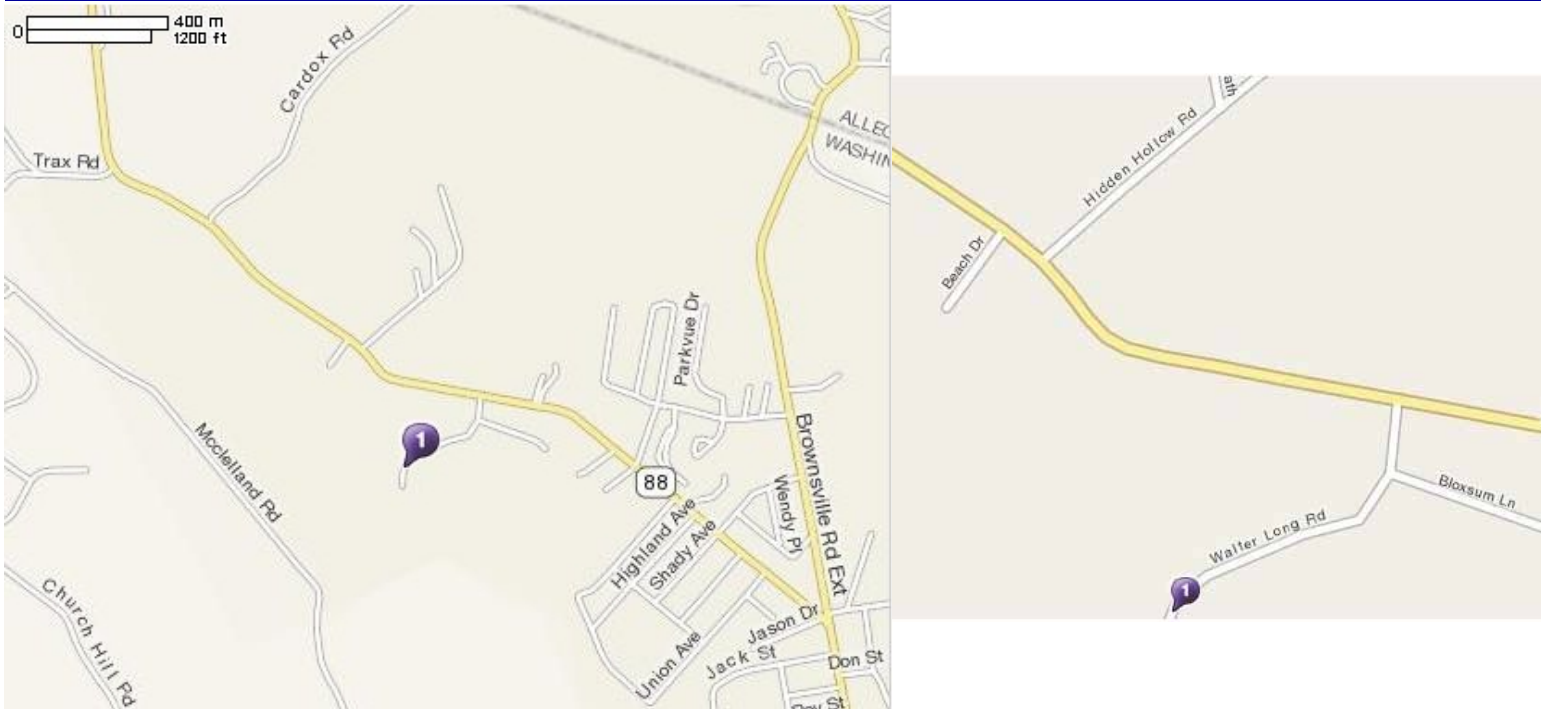
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Directions to Crossroads Ministries Church



Take Library Road / State Route 88 to Walter Long Road (just past Mineral Beach & The Beach House), North of Finleyville. Turn onto Walter Long Road, follow it back to the church (which should be visible from the road).

The *WASH*Rag

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Ron Notarius W3WN, Editor
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