DELAWARE-LEHIGH AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC. W3OK

W3OK CORRAL
D.L.A.R.C.
KA3TTY DICK

SPECIAL SERVICE CLUB
ARRL Affiliated Club

CHRISTMAS CITY 1996 BIG SUCCESS

Ins & outs of portable operations for PAQSO party

The **January 2nd** meeting of the Delaware Lehigh Amateur radio club will feature Ray **Bilger, W3TDF** who will speak on the ins and outs of portable operations in the PAQSO party.. He will tell us some interesting tales and details he experienced in finding the "right spot" and the right county to operate from, how he got permission to operate at these locations, and how he set up his county winning one-man stations with towers, antennas, etc. In a short time before the PAQSO parties began.

Ray knows what he is doing... he holds the records for about 5 or so counties and each year he seems to add a new notch to his rig, not only winning a new county, but setting a new county record!**Scores for clubs (December 1996)**

Club	No.	Score
Delaware-Lehigh ARC	43	**2,444,860**
Radio Assoc. of Erie	31	**1,092,110**
Murgas ARC	45	**1,023,026**
Outlaw Wireless League (OWL)	11	**891,813**
Weekend Warriors	9	**798,117**
Penn Wireless Assoc.	16	**795,627**
Dauberville DX Association	9	**626,257**
Endless Mountains ARC	6	**466,072**
Exeter ARS	5	**380,270**
Reading Radio Club	18	**323,498**
Scranton-Pocono ARK	19	**321,151**

WX3MAS 1996

de Ray, W3TDF



First off, I want to thank the Christmas City ARC for allowing us, the Delaware-Lehigh Amateur RAdio Club ., to use their club call, **WX3MAS,** for our annual Special Event operation. Also, I must mention here, that the entire membership of the Christmas City ARC, were on hand at the kick-off on Saturday morning, Dec.14, to wish us success.

Altogether there were 30 members of DLARC who participated in one way or another, according to my records. They were; **K3YD, W3JD,N3UBT, WD8SCX, N3XGE, KA3MOU, KA3OEG, N3EBH, AA3JU, N3SWA, KB2BLW, N3GXW, N3PNT, WA3BOM, KA3JWE, KE3AW, N3VUO, N3LLL, N3NXF, NU3L, W3PYF, N3NLA, WA2ZGO, N3JGX, AA3IX, N2OTI, N3IYX, K3ZTJ, W3FYK, and W3TDF.**

Not all actually operated, but there was lots of supportive help needed to make the operation a success.

There were a total of 534 QSO's made; 70 of em on 20 and 40 CW, and 464 on SSB on 10, 20, 40, 80 and 160. There were 47 of the 50 states contacted, 8 provinces of Canada, and 8 DX stations. One of the stations contacted, remembered having a QSO with the original temporary WX3MAS, way back when! He assured us he will send a copy of that QSL card. Hope all have had an enjoyable Christmas, and a prosperous New Year is in store for you.

January meeting in Kiva Hall

Lightning Strikes

Distributed by the Virtual Publishing Company.

by Richard Perez richard.perez@homepower.org

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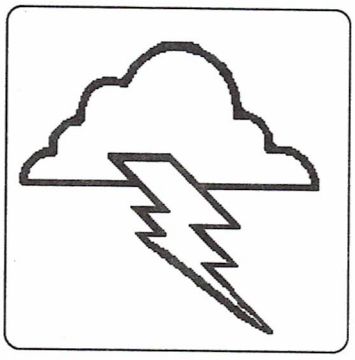
On July 29, 1996 a severe lightning storm ran rough shod over our neighborhood. It was early evening. Karen and I were visiting with my brother, Craig and his wife Charlotte, and my sister Nina and her son Taylor. Craig and Charlotte had flown out from Atlanta, Georgia and Nina and Taylor from Arivaca, Arizona. We were having a family minireunion for the first time in years. We were a happy chattering crew - the tequila flowed and the stereo blasted out the Grateful Dead to accompany our festivities. We were having such a good time that the massive buildup of thunderheads went unnoticed.



About 6 PM, just as the Grateful Dead launched into the song, "Fire on the Mountain," I saw that large thunderheads covered the sky. A hard rain, blasted by gusty high winds, riveted everything around us. Thunder and lightning exploded with a continuous roar. Like most woodsie folks, we reflexively counted the seconds between the flash of lightning and its report. This was a big storm and it was right on top of us!

We heard our neighbor, Jim Murdock (WD6EEY) calling us on the 2 meter ham radio. He'd seen a big tree take a direct hit less than a mile from his house (and about two miles from our place on Agate Flat). This hit had started a fire. My brother, Craig, HP crewmember, Ben Root, and I gathered up the shovels, the 2 meter handitalkie, and roared off in the truck to fight fire.

As we crested the steep lip of Agate Flat we could see the smoke. The fire was about 300 yards off of the road. We ran out and attacked it with shovels. A bolt of lightning had stuck a 60 foot tall Ponderosa Pine tree and french fried it. The bark on the tree was split and charred. Fire had spread for about ten feet around the tree and we attacked it with the shovels. With a large crew, Jim, his wife, and two of his teenage children, and the Agate Falt crew of three, we soon stopped the fire from spreading on the surface. A large dead snag beneath the tree was well aflame and the the fire was spreading through the tree's roots beneath the ground. I called Karen on the ham radio and asked ner to telephone the local fire fighters. We needed water and lots of it. Karen reported that our radiotelephone was dead - no dial tone. Jim Murdock's phone, which is a hardline system, not a radiotelephone, was also dead. As luck would have Kathleen Jarschke-Schultze (KB6MPI) was returning from a trip to Ashland and heard our chatter on the ham radio in her car.She stopped at the California Department of Forestry (CDF)office in Hornbrook and reported the fire. CDF dispatched a fire truck and a crew.

Meanwhile we had manged to contain the fire, but not to put it out. We dug around its periphery swatting fires speading underground in the tree's roots, all the while making jokes about who brought the marshmallows and burgers. About sundown, the CDF crew arrived with water and we left the fire to professionals.

We returned home, smelling of smoke and covered with soot, to a fine dinner prepared by Karen, Charlotte and Nina. All in all, we were pretty proud of ourselves - we had fought the fire and beaten the storm. Little did we know

The next morning we awoke to more thunder and lightning and once again, it was right atop us. I had sprained my ankle on a talus slope beside the fire and hobbled dwonstairs to view the unusual,early morning thunderstorm. The first thing I noticed was that neither of our two axis electric Wattsun trackers were facing where they should be facing. The early morning storm started several fires in the immediate neighborhood and the fire fighters were promptly all over them. Being laid up with an ankle that looked like a grapefruit, I passed the time by summing up the damages.

A quick test of the radiotelephone (R/T) system showed me that our base unit, located at the telephone line six miles from Agate Flat, was not working. Ben and Karen jumped in the truck and went to Stan Krute's homestead where the base R/T is located. As soon as they opened the R/T shed, they knew that the situation was serious. The unmistakable aroma of crisply fried electronics wafted from the shed's open door. Yep, it's dead all right. There were components blacked into soot on the circuit boards and it looked like the entrance point of the lightning transient was the telephone hardline.

continued on Page 3

Continued from page 2

A quick check, via ham radio, of the neighborhood began locating more bodies of dead phone equipment. At Jim Murdock's house, the lightning had fried just about everything that was even vaguely connected to the telephone hardline. Jim lost a modem, the 486 computer connected to the modem, and a FAX machine. Stan Krute and Bob-O Schultze lost a modem each.

Three Wattsun trackers, two at Home Power and one at Jim Murdock's, had dead control heads. We checked the fuses in ours, the flat plate array had blown fuses and reblew fuses when we eplaced them. The Midway had good fuses and still refused to track. We used our remote Wattsun steering box to position the flat plate array south. Since the Midway is a concentrating rray it requires constant tracking to function. We drove the Midway north and parked it - no power here until the control head was fixed.

And home power systems were not the only ones effected by this storm. There is a large, approx. 150 kV, power line crossing Agate Flat. Evidently, this power line took a direct hit. Several wooden power poles were charred and smoldering. Pacific Power went out a crew and determined that overall 13 poles had been damaged by the strike and the bill to fix them would be in the neighborhood of $250,000. I didn't feel so bad about our damages.

We bundled up the dead equipment and shipped it back for repair. Many thanks for the fast service from Carlson Communication. They fixed our dead OptaPhone (as in very dead - $750 dead) and returned it to us in less than a week. Special thanks also to Ron Corrio at Wattsun for promptly fixing all the dead control heads in the neighborhood. Jim got his back in a couple of days, while we waited a bit longer because our Wattsuns are ancient (one is serial number 3 and had performed flawlessly since 15 May 1991). We've sutained many lightning storms here on Agate Flat, but this was the worst and the only one to destroy any of the neighborhood's electronics. I'm proud of the OptaPhone and Wattsun folks. They fixed our stuff promptly while we're still waiting for any action from the larger companies that made the modems.

All this has spurred my interest in lightning protection. Lightning contains unimaginable power. While I know of nothing that fully protects us from a direct strike, there are many things we can do to make that strike less likely and to protect ourselves from near strikes. To this end, please find an article follwing this one, by Mike Abraham, [Surge Arrestors for Lightning and EMP Protection, Home Power issue #55, pp. 72-74] about some things we can all do to minimize lightning damage.



Please consult the HP In- dex and read all articles about system grounding. Lightning protection begins with good grounding.

One abiding lesson of this series of storms and fires is the importance of independent, portable communications. During times of danger requiring immediate action, you can't beat radio. Every rural neighborhood should have some sort of local radio network. It could be Citizen's Band (CB), or as in our case Amateur (Ham) radio. What is important is that the network be used (as in monitored) all the time and that the network be independently powered (all radios up here run on PV/battery systems).

Without Ham radio we would not have been able to call in our local fire fighters. Without our radios we would have had no communications for days while the phone company fixed the lightning damaged lines.

The final abiding lesson is never listen to the Grateful Dead's "Fire on the Mountain" during thunderstorms.

The ARRL Letter
Electronic Update
November 15, 1996

W1AW schedule change:

Starting January 1, 1997, W1AW will offer morning code practice and bulletins on Thursdays and Fridays only. Starting times will remain the same: code practice starts at 1400 UTC; the CW bulletins start at approximately 1500 UTC; and the RTTY/AMTOR/ASCII bulletin session starts at approximately 1600 UTC.--

de Joe Carcia, NJ1Q

AEA For sale but still in business

The ARRL Letter Electronic Update

Advanced Electronic Applications Inc--better known as AEA--is on the market and is no longer handling customer service requests, as callers to the company's Lynnwood, Washington, headquarters discovered this week. Telephone calls to AEA now are being answered by a machine. A recorded message says:

"We are in the process of selling the company and are not able to take your call. If you need further information regarding service, we would suggest that you contact the ARRL in about a month, as they will be kept aware of any purchase arrangements."

The League was unaware that it would be listed as a contact point. Those seeking customer service assistance should not call the ARRL to request it. The League has no information in this regard and cannot help AEA customers. However, the ARRL will inform the ham radio community of new developments via The ARRL Letter and QST.

Earlier this year, company chairman Mike Lamb, N7ML, took over day-to-day control of AEA, following the hasty departure of former president Rod Proctor, KI7ZI. Lamb had hopes of turning the company around and had introduced several new products on the Amateur Radio market, including the long-awaited DSP-232 multimode TNC, a 6-meter halo antenna, and a dedicated 9600-baud packet transceiver. In recent weeks, Lamb has made no secret of the fact that he has been seeking a buyer or new investors for AEA; over the past two months, the company has laid off most of its employees. While the company no longer handles customer service requests, Lamb said this week that AEA still is taking orders and even continues to manufacture some items. AEA products also continue to be available from some dealers. The company's three product lines include antennas, test (analyst) equipment, and data products/software.

For Sale

Kenwood R-5000 Receiver in mint conditions with manual and HS-5 Headphones $400.00 or best offer. Call Richard N3HPW 395-6439

FAR offers scholarships for hams

The ARRL Letter Electronic Update

The nonprofit Foundation for Amateur Radio Inc--an ARRL-affiliated federation of more than 75 radio clubs in the Washington, DC, area--plans to administer 60 scholarships for the 1997-98 academic year to help licensed radio amateurs with their post-secondary education. Five of the scholarships are fully funded with income from grants and the foundation's annual hamfest in Gaithersburg, Maryland. FAR administers the remaining 55 scholarships without cost to the donors.

Licensed hams are eligible to compete for these awards if they plan to pursue a full-time course of study beyond high school and are enrolled or have been accepted at an accredited university, college or technical school. Awards range from $500 to $2500, with preference given in some cases to those pursuing certain courses of study or to residents of specific geographical areas (Delaware, Florida, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia and Wisconsin). Application forms and additional information are available by letter or QSL postmarked prior to **April 30, 1997,** from FAR Scholarships, 6903 Rhode Island Ave, College Park,MD 20740.

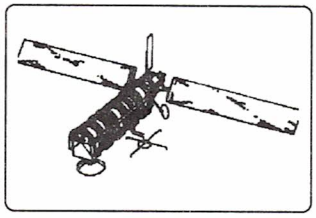
The future

...in 2013, the world will look like this:
** The United States will be led by a ball-point pen, referred to as Mr Scribble.
** The French will have the universal right to walk up to anyone they want and tell them to do anything they want them to. Their first move will be to establish cheese as the universal currency.
**Trains will all run on time, but they will be invisible.
** You will be able to buy briefcases in six-packs.
** the Soviet Union, after the Purge of 2005, will be run by clowns and giant insects.
Mr Scribble will not like them one bit.....

***73 ** Frank N8UVI ** ***

Amateur radio to have permanent space role

The ARRL Letter Electronic Update November 29,



A foundation has been laid to give Amateur Radio a permanent presence in space. Earlier this month, Amateur Radio delegates from eight countries--Russia, Japan, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Canada, France and the US--met at the NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas, to map plans to include a permanent ham radio station aboard t he International Space Station, to be tended by station crew members.

From the United States, members of the SAREX Working Group, officials from NASA, US representatives of the Russian Mir Amateur Radio experiment and members of the Johnson Space Center Amateur Radio Club attended the meetings November 4 and 5, chaired by Roy Neal, K6DUE. ARRL Vice President Joel Harrison, W5ZN (ex-WB5IGF), represented the League at the gathering. SAREX Working Group member Rosalie White, WA1STO, of the ARRL Headquarters staff, was among those on hand. The delegates jointly developed a draft memorandum of understanding to promote the development of Amateur Radio on the International Space Station--to be known as **ARISS.**

The ARISS group will provide for the planning, coordination and performance of Amateur Radio projects on the space station, similar to the way the SAREX Working Group currently coordinates Amateur Radio activities on many space shuttle missions. AMSAT and IARU organizations in each of the eight countries are to review and consider approving the memorandum of understanding. In the US, this includes AMSAT-NA and the ARRL.

The AMSAT-NA Board unanimously approved the memorandum of understanding at its November 11 Board of Directors meeting in Tucson, Arizona. Once the memorandum is finalized, AMSAT-NA President Bill Tynan, W3XO, has been given authority by the board to sign it. AMSAT-NA Vice President for Manned Space Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, congratulated the international ARISS team for a job well done. "We look forward to a truly cooperative international venture on the International Space Station," he said.

via –AMSAT News Service.

Contest Calendar

by Barry, KU3X Contest Editor

Jan 4-5	ARRL RTTY Roundup
	North American CW QSO Party
Jan 10-12	Japan Int'l Low Band CW Contest
Jan 11-12	Lions in the Air Contest
	HA DX Contest
	North American SSB QSO Party
Jan 17-19	YL-ISSB CW QSAO Party
Jan 18-19	ARRL VHF Sweepstakes
Jan 24-26	CQ WW 160 M CW Contest

Exchanges:

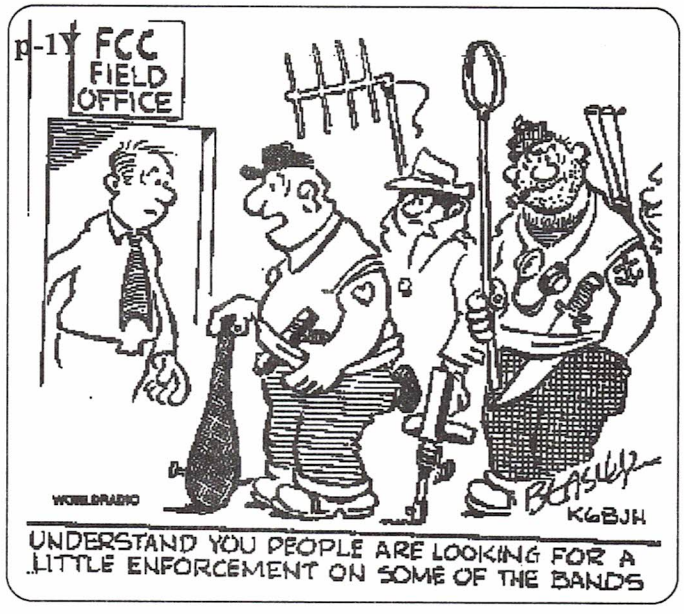
HA DX Contest: RST and serial number

YL-Int'l CW QSO Party: RST, state, name,

ISSB number if member, and DX-W/K partner if any

CQ WW 160 Meter Contest, SSB: Signal report and state

de Barry, KU3X



To join ARRL or renew, contact treasurer, Dick Dech. Make check payable to DLARC and Treasurer Dich, will send it in for you. The club benefits from this.

How cold is it?

Downloaded via packet by KE3AW

A Fahrenheit annotated thermometer for all outdoor enthusiasts:

60° Californians put on sweaters (if they can find one in their wardrobe!).

50° Miami residents turn on the heat.

40° You can see your breath. Californians shiver uncontrollably. Minnesotans go swimming.

35° Italian cars don't start.

32° Water freezes.

30° You plan your vacation in Australia. Minnesotans put on T-shirts.Politicians begin to worry about the homeless English cars don't start.

25° Boston's water freezes.Californians weep pitifully. Minnesotans eat ice cream Canadians go swimming.

20° You can hear your breath. Politicians begin to talk about the homeless. New York City water freezes. Minnesotan residents plan vacations further south.

5° French cars don't start. You plan a vacation in Mexico. Your cat insists on sleeping in bed with you.

10° Too cold to ski.You need jumper cables to get the car going.

5° You plan your vacation in Houston,TX American cars don't start.

0° Alaskans put on T-shirts. Too cold to skate.

-10° German cars don't start. Eyes freeze shut when you blink.

-15° You can cut your breath and use it to build an igloo. Arkansans stick tongue on metal objects. Miami residents cease to exist.

-20° Cat insists on sleeping in your pajamas with you. Politicians actually do something about the homeless. Minnesotans shovel snow off roof. Japanese cars don't start.

-25° Too cold to think. You need jumper cables to get driver going.

-30° You plan a two-week hot bath. The mighty Monongahela freezes. Swedish cars don't start.

-40° Californians disappear. Minnesotans button top button. Canadians put on sweaters. Your car helps plan trip south.

-50° Congressional hot air freezes. Alaskans close the bathroom window.

-80° Hell freezes over. Polar bears move south.

-90° Lawyers put their hands in their own pockets. *Attributed with thanks to Don Haugen of the Pensacola Austin-Healey Club.*

(Just think yourselves lucky that it's not in Celsius!)

The Prez sez

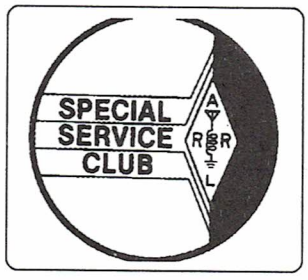
by Tom, N3LLL, President

The club received its new license for the Christmas City special event, **WX3MAS** just in time for the 1996 special event. I bet the pile ups were 6 feet deep. I would like to thank all the clubs members who participated In this event and made it the success that it was. A request was made, at the club meeting, to study ways to improve the clubs station and antenna system to better support events like Christmas City. I will ask the board to assemble an ad hoc committee to study the alternatives and make a recommendations.



I would like to thank **Joel / K9TBD** for presenting the December program on such short notice. Certainly creating plasma in a four foot chamber with 20 kilowatts of power on a frequency near 20 meters was interesting. I will be looking at the hamfests for those industrial surplus amplifiers.

I received notice from Kay, WT3P our Atlantic Division Director of the ARRL, that the club has received the ARRL Special Service Award in recognition of 50 years of significant contributions to the Atlantic Division and the Amateur radio community. Congratulations to the club. My thanks to Kay and the rest of the Atlantic Division for the honor.



I hope all of you enjoy the holidays and I wish you a great new year.

de Tom, N3LLL

Come join our nets on Sundays at 0930 and Wednesdays at 1900 hours.

For Sale

from Estate

Heath .VFO Model HG10B
Heath Final Amplifier Model DX-60B
SWR Meter Breaker Model 13-500
Precision Multiple Power Supply Model RS24
2 Manual Code Key senders
Gentronics CB Model GTX23
National NC300 receiver (all band coverage)
Entire batch.. Total $150.00.

Contact W3PYF for info.

MC-50 Desk Microphone.....**$20.00**
Butternut Vertical HF6V 10-169 includes 12 & 17 meter coil..... .....**$90.00** complete with manuals

Call Charlie, K3BCV @432-2805

From estate of W3EGY

Yaesu FT-757-GX transceiver good condition
Dentron MT3000A Trans Match
Astron RS20A Power Supply
Dentron CMU 160m,80,40,20,15,10
Icom IC28A VHF FM transceiver
Icom HM14 Scanning Microphone
Eico VFO

And much more including test equipment, Commodore computer with drives, printer and monitor.

Contact is Conrad Clark, W3ZMN @694-0180
Call him for prices.

35' TV type tower----------**$25.00**
Super Scanner 11mt directional ant./papers, you convert it to 10mt.....exc. condition----.....**$45.00**
Wilson 3 element Yagi ant for 10 mt. ---------**$40.00**
Big Boomer 2mt 8 element Yagiant./papers-**$45.00**
Will make deal for a large 70cm Yagi

Contact Barry, N3NVA 610 863-7204

Do you have an email address that you have not advised us of?
If so email John, N3IGA, Secretary n3iga@juno.com or place on the W3PYF-3 BBS on packet. We would like to have a full list of members addresses.

Classic Christmas poem

K3SLJ'S Version



'Twas the night before Christmas, and all thru our flat,
Not a creature was stirring, not even a rat.
My stocking was hung by the chimney with care,
In the hope that Old Santa Claus soon would be there.
The gift that I asked for, was not very big,
Just a synthesized, solid state, 2 Meter rig.
Just after midnight, to the window I went,
To watch the arrival of the Jolly Old Gent.
And then to my wandering eyes did appear,
A tiny old sled, pulled by tiny reindeer.
I noticed that Santa was taking a snooze,
In his hand was a half-empty bottle of booze.
With no one to guide them on this cold winter night,
The reindeer just staggered, first left, and then right.
They headed for my house, and I wanted to screem,
The sled just knocked over my 2 Meter beam.
The racket they made, as they land on the roof,
Just managed to waken that Fat Little Goof.
When he stepped from his sled, he fell flat on his face,
And scattered the presents all over the place !
He picked out a package, intended for me,
Containing a 23 Channel CB.
I shook my fist at him, as he drove out of sight,
Merry Christmas, Good Buddy, 10-4, and Good Night.

Happy Holidays from K3SLJ (John Smith from Pottsville)

submitted by Ann, KO3M

If you change your call with the vanity system, be sure to notify Dick Dech, so that our club records will be correct.

Surfing across the pond(s) on packet

by Bob, KE3AW

Is anyone out there getting tired of waiting for consistent band openings to Europe, Australia, etc.?



Well, while you are waiting for some solar activity to help with the HF propagation, why not visit some of the packet sites around the world, like London, England; Antwerp, Belgium; Moscow, Russia; Perth, Australia?

I initially struggled to find some packet connections to get to England and Europe. Now, connecting to stations there is done within a minute or two, even though I'm still a packet novice.

Why not give DX packeting a try? I think you will find it an interesting aspect of amateur radio, one you can do just about any time of the day or night, independent of HF conditions you might experience.

Here are some connections I've found to be very reliable, using **144.990** and either **Clarence/W3PYF's EBA** (Easton Bethlehem Allentown) node or **Don/KA3JWE's MH** (Morgan Hill) **digi.**

<C NNJW V EBA> or **<C NNJW V MH>** then when connected

<C NYCITY> then when connected

<C LONNY> (for LONdon-New York) WA2DNV-2 courtesy **ABC**

or **<C IPBBC>** (GB7BBC> courtesy of amateur radio operators at **BBC-NY>**

or**<C MOTTHM>** (Mottingham, a suburb of London <not Nottingham>)

At each step of the way you can find out about the station with **<I>** for information and with **<?>** to get a defined menu the station uses. Just don't move on too fast, as some stations want you to register your name and QTH on the first contact. When you get the menu, try **<N>** to list nodes available.

For instance, in Mottingham (G1HSN-1) you can type and then list and respond to some of the interesting messages floating about Great Britain and Europe. Caution: There are THOUSANDS of messages on this and similar BBSs, so be sure you request a certain limited number, such as , or you may never get through all of them! Leave messages the same way you do locally.

I have been trading messages for some time now with **Richard/G7GLW** outside of London. He operates his node as **<EMRALD>** , so if you want to connect to his BBS from, say the Mottingham node, type **<C EMARLD>**, then when connected, type, in **<PMS>** his case, for Personal Message Service **(?).** Then you can drop him a message. I think he will be happy to reply.

When you are finished, "back-out" with a **(Bye)** from each connection. Confirmation will usually be given telling you that you have disconnected with that station and now you are back to XYZ station.

If you find a node with **SWGAA** available, try . It usually has interesting stations such as **<MOSCOW>** and **<PERTH>** (Australia) to stop by to read the BBSs, or list their nodes available with **<N>.** I tried to packet around the world using the chain just described -- to Australia, then from Perth to Calgary, Canada then to Toronto. Almost made it 'round the world and back home, but the connections dropped too frequently while connected to Toronto.

From **NYCITY** node, incidently, you also can connect to **<BURBNK>** (Burbank, California) or **<ELPASO>** (Texas) as well on a number of other nodes. It's "surfing fun" for some cold winter days/nights, using the wireless!

I hope I'm not the only club member doing DX packeting. I think it would be interesting to hear other members' experiences and paths that have been found to be interesting, even if not reliable. ***de Bob, KE3AW***

December 6, 1996 VE session

At this session, eight candidates took a total of sixteen elements. There were two new licences and two upgrades...

Francis A. Lisicky, W3IYG upgraded to Extra

David Zernhelt, N3VAB upgraded to General

Daniel J Dougherty new Technician

Gregory P. Semanco new Technician

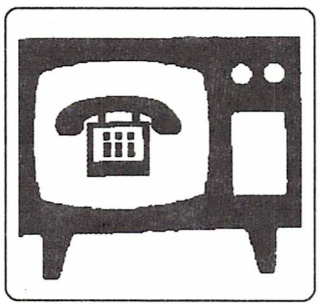
The VE's at this session were: **Gary, N3PNT; Tom, N3EBH; Van, K3CP; and Robin, WA3T.**

The next test session will be on Friday January 3rd; at the usual time and place.

New media systems
A digital truce

By Joe Chuk, W3JD

Although a compromise on technical standards for digital television (DTV) seemed highly unlikely as recently as early November, the feuding parties surprised many when just such a compromise was announced on November 25. Representatives of the broadcasting and computing industries came to an agreement by simply removing the disputed elements from the system.



The "Grand Alliance" system (named after the coalition of companies who worked to develop it) not only determined how sound and video are to sent out over the airways as compressed digital data, but it also specified 18 different picture formats that could be sent through the DTV system. It was those formats that were the focus of the computer industry's opposition, since they include interlaced versions that were incompatible with current computer video display systems. Removing all picture format specifications from the system left a set a compression and transmission standards that everyone could agree on. The absence of picture format standards, however, means that marketplace will have to determine which systems will prevail. It also means that digital television receivers will need both the hardware and the software to decode any picture format that it receives over the digital data stream. This could raise prices above what they would have been for receivers designed for the limited group of formats in the DTV system as originally proposed. Also, since consumer choices are influenced by a multitude of factors, the most popular picture system or systems may well not be the best from a technical standpoint.

Along with not specifying picture formats, the FCC is also being asked not to include specific picture dimensions in the new digital standard. The Grand Alliance system had proposed a picture 9 units high by 16 units wide (or 3 by 5.333). This was a wider picture than the current 3 by 4 NTSC aspect ratio, but still not wide enough to preserve the original proportions of theatrical films -- a major point of contention with the motion picture industry. Representatives of that industry are still not happy with the proposed silence on picture proportions, since they wanted a prescribed standard that would guarantee the manufacturing of television receivers capable of displaying films in their original aspect ratio.

Among the happier participants in the discussion are the FCC commissioners, who had disagreed among themselves on the wisdom of determining a set of standards in a technology that experiences almost daily development and innovation. The commissioners are unanimous in calling for quick action in approving the now stripped-down DTV specifications. They hope to approve standard itself by the end of the year and all the necessary rules for stations by April.

The more open DTV standard allows computer manufacturers to lobby for other picture formats than the 18 in the original standard. It also paves the way for marketing computers with digital television tuners built in, bringing together the home computer and the traditional television set -- a type of PCTV. Agreements between the broadcasting and computer industries on programming and information content will provide services that neither side has even thought of yet.

Just as computers are expected to be able to display digital television programming, television sets will be capable of providing computer-type data. Equipment manufacturers are expected to begin selling digital TVs in 1998. With standards and broadcasting rules in place by the first quarter of 1997, those sets will be able to pick up signals from the earliest stations to begin broadcasting in the digital standard on new channel assignments dedicated to DTV service. The full change-over to DTV (and the retirement of the 55-year-old NTSC standard) currently is expected to take about ten years -- but it's anyone's guess how accurate that prediction is in an industry marked by unpredictable advances.

de Joe, W3JD

CHECK YOUR MAIL LABEL

DLARC dues are due, if the expiration date is 12-31-96. Get your money to Dick Dech, KA3MOU as soon as possible.

His address is listed elsewhere in this issue

PA-QSO Party NOSTALGIA

de Ray, W3TDF

10 Years ago, the **1986** Party shows 29 members active out of 223. Delaware-Lehigh Amateur Radio Club, **DLARC** placed 5th in the Club competition.



Radio Club of Erie took the trophy with just over 1.1Mil aggregate. There were only 7 entries from Lehigh Co. with Bob KU3K winning the county with a mere 16,608 Pts! Northampton had 18 entries with former member KJ3R winning, 188K.The 'results' summary from Nittany, stated, (in part), "There was a real donnybrook for the third place with Penn-Wireless just nosing out a new club entry, Mercer County ARC by 56 points, both over 700K.While both Mercer and Penn-Wireless have less than half the members of Erie and Murgass, they have some tricks up their sleeves for next year."

1987 shows the **DLARC** dropping back to 9th place with only 524K from 25 members out of 242. The top 3 clubs had over 1.1 Mil. Again, quoting from the 'summary results', "The club competition was the most heated in several years. Erie again took top honors and set a new club record with over 1.5 Mil. Word has it though, that Mercer is still just warming up, and has big plans to 'capture the flag' next year." And, "Outstanding showings were also made by Dauberville, Nittany, Reading,Penn-Wireless and the DLARC."

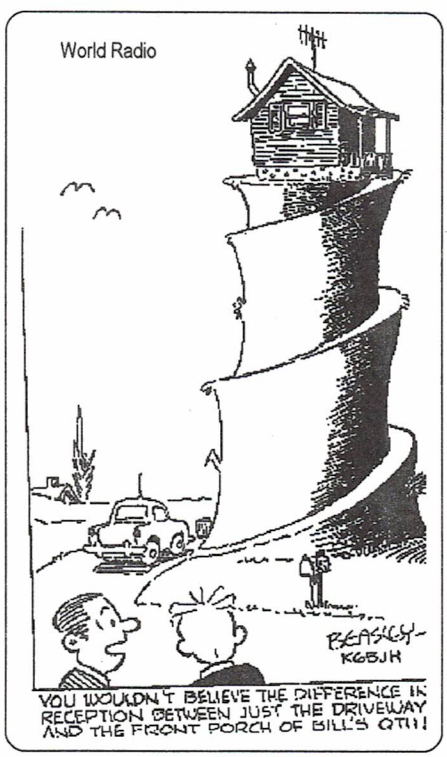
In **1988** the **DLARC** moved up to 3rd place, behind Murgas (1.2 Mil), and Dauberville (988K). We had 952K, from 33 entries. Erie slipped to 7th place. From the Nittany 'results' we find the following, "Murgas found the right stimulus to get 39 members on and recapture the club trophy. But, look out Murgas! The 2nd place club, Dauberville, is knocking at the door. With 18 of 36 members active they could be a real contender for top honors next year. The third place club, **DLARC**, with a marked increase in score this year, had 33 stations active, with 5 of them DX-peditions to rare counties."

Now we come to **1989**, when we first won the state trophy with almost double the aggregate score of the 2nd place Murgas club, with 31 entries. We had 61. Erie slipped to 7th place. (They have gradually moved up, reaching 2nd place in **1995** with 1.1 Mil, as opposed to our 2.4 Mil). And, quoting from the 89 results, "The club competition was good and we have a brand new winner with a new record. The **DLARC** took top honors with 1.6 Mil. The race for the small club gavel was won by 3rd place club, Dauberville. Outstanding showings were also made by Murgas, Reading and Penn-Wireless."

The **DLARC** has won the trophy every year since, except for **1991**, when Dauberville nosed us out with 33 of their 40 members active and an aggregate of 1.988 Mil. We had 1.899 Mil from 55 entries. From the contest results we read, "In an EPA shoot-out, Dauberville rose to the challenge and outscored the **DLARC** by almost 90K. In the nine plaque divisions open to PA stations, Dauberville had nine top-ten finishers. The magnitude of the DDXA win is amplified when you consider that the **DLARC** had 15 top-ten finishers."

That's it for the nostalgia of years gone by. I understand, that, the inter-net shows that we turned in 2.4+ Mil this year, for our 7th win in the past 8 years. Also, inter-net shows only 45 entries, for us, which I believe is a mistake. I am sure we had more than 55.Also noted, the score of our W3OK operation is missing!!!!

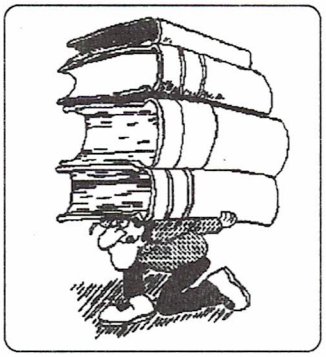
de Ray, W3TDF



Just the Minutes

by John, N3IGA, Secretary

The December meeting was called to order at 7:34 in Kiva Hall by the President, Tom, **N3LLL**. There were 50 members and guests present. The minutes were approved as printed in the newsletter. The motion to accept the minutes was made by Clarence, **W3PYF** with Jim, **N3QZS** seconding.



Dick, **KA3MOU,** gave the Treasurer's report. The ending balance, as of November 30, was $4142.92. The motion to accept the Treasurer's report was made by JP, **N3GWR** and seconded by AMY, **KD3TI**.

There was a special guest present at the meeting. Verne Burden, **N5IEP,** came to thee meeting. Verne, before moving out of the area, was very active in the ARRL and the club. Verne now lives in Vermont.

Bob, **KE3AW**, made the announcement that the General classes will start on January 13 and go for about 6 weeks.

Tom, **N3LLL**, showed the members the new license with the call **WX3MAS** to be used with the Christmas City Special Event station. Since a club can't have two calls, a new club was formed so that we could get the vanity call of **WX3MAS.** The new club is called Christmas City Amateur Radio Club.

Ray, **W3TDF**, said that the Special Event is coming along really well. There may be two spots available which will probably be filled by the end of the meeting. There is a possibility of running two stations for the Special Event. One for phone and one for CW.

Don, **KA3JWE**, explained to members, that were present, the problems with the club's station auto-tuner. The tuner, after years of use, had bad solder joints, bad diode, and a couple of relays that were dirty or scorched from loading with too much power. All the parts are replaced or repaired. A special thanks to Don for getting the tuner back on line in time for the Special Event.

Bill, **K3ANS**, brought up a proposal about upgrading the club station. He recommended that we get better antennas up so the station can be heard and receive equally well. A few members made comments and suggestions. Tom,**N3LLL**, said that there will be more discussion at a later date. He said that there may be a committee formed to look into this.

Tom, **N3LLL**, asked Clarence and Dick if it would be possible to ask Nick Tylenda to come to a club meeting and give us an overview of what is the County's perspective.

Ray, **W3TDF**, was passing out envelopes to members that were present and worked the PA QSO Party when the club won the trophy. In each envelope was a patch that said "DLARC Trophy Winner" and a year hash mark for each year that the member participated when the club won the trophy.

Mark, **KB3AZR**, made the motion to adjourn and Walt, **KE3SP** seconding.

The speaker was Joel, K9TBD. He talked about the fourth state, Plasma. Joel used an overhead projector to put the information across better. It was an interesting subject.

de John, N3IGA

Instruments needed

by Julie, N3CSQ

I am teaching music to elementary students at Donegan School in Bethlehem. Seventy percent of my students live below the poverty line. Musical instruments are out of reach to them and their families. We have 40 instruments currently in use at Donegan, we also have 48 students on the waiting list for any which may become available. Some of the instruments at our school have been in service for more than 15 years,our students are very careful and appreciative of them.

I am asking for donations of old instruments you may have in closets from musical moments in your past. These instruments will be given a home where they will bring opportunity to these disadvantaged children. The school will repair and maintain them as long as it is appropriate. The students will use them during the school year and return them to the school at the end of the term.

If you do not have an instrument to donate and would still like to help, we have a fund for the purchase of new instruments and music instruction books for the students. Any help would be most appreciated.

I thank you for your consideration, and I thank the club for giving me the opportunity to print my request in our newsletter.

de Juli N3CSQ mosc@fast.net

All Amateur Radio Operators are invited to
Participate to the DLARC, RACES & ARES nets
on 146.70 W3OK/RPT with an alternate of W3PYF/RPT 145.11
W3OK trustee Chris Hornaman, NU3L
The Nets are held on Sundays at 9:30 AM and Wednesdays at 7:00PM

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DLARC INFORMATION LINE 820-9110

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==1996-1997==

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CLUB MEETINGS

All regular meetings of the D.L.A.R.C. are held on the first Thursday of each month
7:30 PM at Northampton County Community College
TALK IN ON 146.70
Any comments or articles contributed to this newsletter
should be addressed to *(csnyder@fast.net}* or Clarence Snyder, W3PYF Editor.
717 Porter Street, Easton, PA 18042-1548

visit our web page

http://www.kutztown.edu/faculty/chuk/dlarc/

The W3OK CORRAL

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