Delaware - Lehigh Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

W3OK Corral NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2003

Meeting on April 3rd at Gracedale

Visit Northampton County's New 911 Communications Center April 3rd

Due to winter weather our March Club Meeting was canceled till April. The April 3rd DLARC Club meeting will be held at the new Northampton County 911 Communication Center.

Before the meeting we will be shown the new center. The center is to open March 26th. Please be there buy 7:30 so we can do the tour then.

Come and see the latest in technology.

Location: On the S/E parking lot of Gracedale Complex. Come in from route 248 to Gracedale Ave. to the new tower there with flashing light.

de Barry N3NVA

Rock Nite a big success

by Lamar, N3AT

Eighteen persons from four area clubs met at the Monroe County Vo Tech School on Wednesday, March 12, to begin construction of the great little Rock Mite kits. In addition to those who were building, there were at least a half dozen "helpers" and several people who just came to watch. The helpers included Jerry, N3SEI from EPARA, Goody, K3NG from CARC, Mike, KB3HMR and AL Owen, from NJQRP, K3NZ from DLARC, and Bill, W3MJ from PARK.. The Director of Vo Tech was among those who came to watch.

The group agreed to meet again the following Wednesday nite to complete the kits by installing them into Altoid mint tins or some other appropriate enclosure. Lamar promised to bake cookies for this second nite as a reward to those who will have completed their rigs.

Dave Benson of Small Wonder Labs, who furnishes the kits, has informed us that the Rock Mite will be featured on the cover of the April issue of QST. And K3NZ, one of our own builders, will be featured in the June issue of CQ magazine. Norm has been making a fantastic record with his 20 meter Rock Mite. Since November he has worked 45 states and 15 DX countries. His pride possession is now a QSL he received from a ham in Australia, whom he worked with his 275 milliwatts of "power"!

The Rock Mite is a complete transceiver with a built-in electronic keyer. It is crystal controlled, hence its name. It is built on a PC board that is 2 by 2 1/2 inches in size. It has become very popular in the QRP world. Close to 2000 of the little rigs have been sold.

de Lamar, N3AT

An Evening of Ice and Adventure

Chris N3SIG to speak

All are invited to this presentation. First, Chris's presentation, "An Evening of Ice and Adventure" will be **Friday April 4, 2003** at the **Lehigh Valley Hospital's auditorium**.

The presentation will begin at **7:30 PM**.

"Why Do You Contest?"

Supplied by Blair, K3YD

This is a fun question. I'm not talking about, "What is it with contesters?", often asked in frustration by someone feeling a bit crowded. But rather, about what draws you to the radio- weekend after weekend - to holler into the microphone or pound on the keyboard in pursuit of...what?

see -- there are the competitors that fight for a spot at the lofty top. They want The Plaque that says "Ultimate Champion". At the very least they want to be in The Box -- one of the Top Ten. They plan, they prepare, they strategize, they fret, they fly great distances, they push the envelope. And by golly, they DO appear in the boxes time after time after time with excellent scores that just seem to get higher every year. These folks are after RATE and MULTS and SCORE and lots of it. Their first question on Monday morning is, "When's the next contest?"

There are the "DX-ers" that use contests as a vehicle to make QSOs that count for any number of awards -- DXCC, WAZ, WAS, IOTA, you name it. They don't mind sitting in a screaming packet pileup for fifteen minutes, because the station in the Italian Virgin Islands is a New One! Many QRP operators LOVE contests for this reason -- the Big Guns are out in force looking for Every Single QSO, including that puny weak cross-continental contact on 80-meters the QRP-er needs for 5B-WAS. The band-mode collector, the Medium Pistol, the wallpaper chaser -- all keep the bands busy.

Casual operators abound. A few hours here, an hour there, they like finding the bands packed and enjoy an afternoon of radio slam dancing. When the dinner bell rings, they're probably through, but in the meantime a hundred or more QSOs went in the logs of other competitors. It's an operating breath of fresh air that fits in nicely with the local club repeater, the weekly emergency services net, and the schedule with Fred in Arizona on Thursday afternoons.

Newly licensed operators are continually discovering the sport and working up the nerve to push the mike button and call Mr. Big Gun 40-over-9 200-per-hour. Yikes! He answered! It's like getting a handshake from Tiger Woods. Send a QSL? You bet! He's where? I talked to what? There may be only ten QSOs in that contest log, but you can bet that each one was an accomplishment.

The strange thing about radio contesting is...those operators are all in there TOGETHER. No other sport puts all levels of competitors in the same arena at the same time and requires them to cooperate. In fact, in no other sport are the competitors measured by their ability to cooperate. To be sure, there is competitive pressure -- just try to get a frequency within 20 kHz of the band edge -- but the competition is to see who can cooperate the best, the fastest, the most-est. Weird, huh?

No matter why you do it -- as a Major Dude or on the What-Do-I-Say-Now level -- your presence is required and accepted. I have been all of the above kinds of contester (although my plaques are few) and have never been made to feel anything but welcome on the air. I admit, some of the welcoming takes place in about 10 microseconds, but by golly, my QSOs add to a score just as much as from somebody in the Hall of Fame and we all put our antennas together one element at a time.

When I was helping to host the first WRTC back in 1990 and all these famous callsigns were showing up at the various functions, my wife asked me how long I'd known these guys. My instant answer was, "Years!" Even though, on reflection, our cumulative interaction probably totaled no more than five minutes and our scores couldn't have been farther apart, I felt like each one was a trusted friend. Hey, they're contesters, right? I guess that's why I contest.

TECHNICAL & TECHNIQUE

This issue's T&T section is packed full of good information and ideas from the denizens of the TowerTalk reflector (available via http://www.contesting.com).

For the climbers...

Two tool pouches (bolt bags) on your belt - one for tools and the other for parts and hardware

Use two lanyards on your climbing belt so that one can always be attached to the tower.

Always take along a roll of electrical tape...even if the job doesn't require it, there is always at least one thing on the way down that can always use a quick wrap or two.

Have an HT, cell phone, or FRS radio for communications to the ground crew or to call for help

Carabiners and slings are good for lifting just about anything and are also useful for temporary holds

Always bring up extra fasteners for the job

Hold a safety meeting before work commences

Go to the bathroom before you go up the tower.

You were born tied off, stay tied off.

For the ground crew...

Learn how to tie a bowline

When using tape to hold stuff together to go "up the tower", fold the end of the tape over in a "flag" so that the tower workers can just grab and pull the tape off.

Mate the tower sections on the ground (rotating for best/easiest fit) before they go up in the air and mark the legs so that the rope/cable is attached to the correct leg..



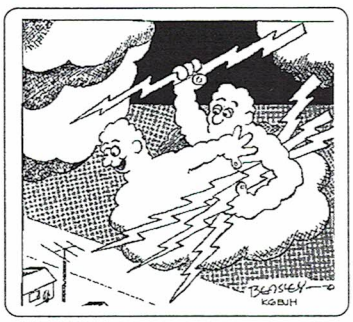
Weather Wonk

by Gene, W3ZXV

OK, look, I admit it, I'm a weatherholic.

We watch the **Weather Channel** constantly and know all the meteorologists by name. I even get Christmas cards from Jim Cantori.

We have a collection of weather instruments at home where I can tell you the wind speed, barometric pressure, relative humidity, dew point, and indoor and outdoor temperatures – in either Fahrenheit or Celsius.



I can measure rainfall in hundredths of an inch and I will tell you with virtually no provocation at all how much precipitation we've had in the past hour, the past 12 or 24 hours or the totals by the week and the month.

We even have a lightning detector that can warn us when there's a lightning strike within 40 miles of the house.

For the past twenty years at least, I've tracked every Atlantic hurricane with pencil and paper and, in more recent years, by computer. I even keep an eye on Pacific typhoons, El nino and the current path of the jet stream across the North American continent.

But there's one weather statistic that the weather mavens keep sticking in my face: the "wind chill" temperature. It's apparently calculated by some mathematical manipulation of the real temperature and how fast the wind is blowing.

From what I can tell, it's supposed to be how cold it "feels".

How cold it feels to whom?

How cold it feels where?

Suppose it's n-degrees outside and the wind is blowing from the north at x mph. What happens to the wind chill when I am standing on the north side of the house and duck around to the lee side of the house? Can I make the wind chill drop by 30-degrees simply by getting out of the wind?

Is it how cold it feels if you're running around in shortsleeves or how cold it feels if you have long johns on under your mackinaw? Hat on or off?

I know people who run around all winter with just a light sweater on and I know people bundled up in so many clothes that they can't pull their arms in to their sides. So, to which person should we turn to ask, "How cold are you 'feeling'?"

Wind chill seems to me like a highly subjective, completely unscientific and totally useless statistic so don't insult my intelligence by quoting this silly number.

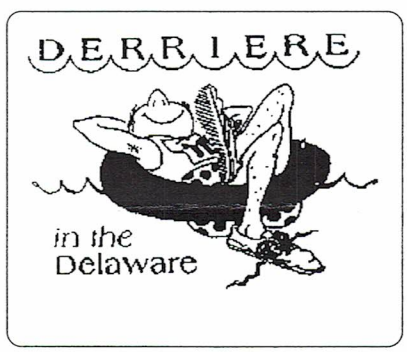
Real world numbers can be measured by real instruments calibrated against known and recognized standards. Wake me when you discover a wind chill meter and I'll listen to you when you tell me what the wind chill is today.

de Gene W3ZXV

Derriere in the Delaware

by Dick, KA3MOU

DLARC members please mark this date in your book for a very important event coming up in July.



Hi fellow DLARC members; **On July 20, (Sunday)** the **Derriere in the Delaware** tube float will take place in downtown Easton. We will be needing between 10 and 14 volunteers to help in keeping an eye on the people in tubes on the river. As in past years we position ourselves at strategic points along the river to watch for any trouble.

The event usually kicks off after the Lehigh River Run, about 10:00 am and ends at about 4:00pm. Hams that volunteer will be provided with a box lunch and also a T - Shirt. You might want to bring along some additional items including Sun screen (very important), binoculars, a folding chair, and maybe some additional food and drink (it can be very hot).

If you would like to help, please contact me or **Jeff, N3QZT** on the repeater or e-mail or on the phone. Thanks and I look forward to seeing you on the 20th of July...

de Dick, KA3MOU

DLARC does it again

by Dick, KA3MOU

On **Sunday February 16,** Mr. Nick Tylenda called me to get a list of volunteers with 4 - wheel drive vehicles for transportation of hospital staff.

I compiled the list and later that day I called Mr. Tylenda back to let him know we were ready to transport those who needed us.

Monday morning, around 6:30 am, the first transportation of hospital staff started. I would like to thank the members who used their vehicles to transport staff to hospitals. Bill, W3BBX and his wife transported staff to Easton and Warren Hospitals.

Bill Bigg, KA3RBH and his son **Philip, KA3HMK,** transported staff to St. Luke's Hospital. **Robert Barrall, KB3HHG,** transported staff to Muhlenberg and Warren Hospitals.

Joseph Moskalski, KC2IRV, transported staff to Warren Hospital. **Jim Mahoney, KB3BYU**, transported staff to St. Luke's Hospital.

These members were on standby for transportation: **Barry Vogt, N3NVA, Daniel Hornan, KA3ZAT, Ray Bilger, W3TDF, Bob Puharic, WF3H and Mark Staller.**

Thank you all for volunteering your services. I have heard from many of these hospitals and they were very grateful that we could provide this service. There were others that we could not help because of their locations. We did not have people available near these locations. Again we thank you for going out in such inclement weather.

de Dick, KA3MOU

Amateurs in York PA respond to PA Big Chill

Amateur Radio Emergency Service/Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (ARES/RACES) team members in southern York County, Pennsylvania, activated March 3 after a natural gas shutdown forced residents to evacuate their homes to escape winter's chill.

Some two dozen amateurs took shifts to assist the American Red Cross, staff the local emergency operations center and provide other necessary communication. ARRL Eastern Pennsylvania Section Manager Eric Olena, WB3FPL, reports that Amateur Radio involvement in the gas emergency ended around midday on March 5.

York County ARRL Emergency Coordinator Kerry Smeltzer, KA3KAR, says the problem, reportedly the result of a regulator failure, cut off the main natural gas supply serving the communities of Red Lion and Dallastown. Estimates vary as to the number of residents directly impacted by the gas failure, but they ran anywhere from 5000 to 10,000. Red Cross "mass care" facilities in two local schools let residents take advantage of heated facilities and hot meals. Smeltzer and his family were among those taking refuge.

In addition to the ARES/RACES teams activated in York County, Smeltzer said, ARES teams in surrounding counties and from nearby Maryland were on standby for the duration in case needed. ARES/RACES used two local VHF repeaters for most communications. Smeltzer said that the Baptist Men's Kitchen was on site to provide meals.

The Civil Air Patrol also responded.

via the ARRL Letter



John, Jack Smith 82 became a silent key on March 5th. Born in Easton, he was one of the first membes of the DLARC when it was formed.

editors note: When I needed to upgrade it was Jack who helped me with the CW. (W3PYF)

Telephone Scam

by Val,W3EFL

The Facts About The **809 Area Code** Scam Fraudsters have been distributing bogus emails through the Internet that are purported to come from AT&T.



The topic, a phone scam involving the 809 area code. The scam itself is real, however, the email and warning contain erroneous information. AT&T would like to set the record straight and separate fact from fiction. The 809 area code scam first surfaced five years ago and continues to victimize consumers on occasion, although much less frequently than in the past. And there have been far more inquiries recently than consumers actually being victimized.

How the Scam Works: In most cases a message is left on an answering machine or pager requesting the recipient call a number immediately for one of several reasons. The most common involves calling for information about a relative who has died, been arrested or injured. When consumers fall prey and call the number, the scam artist attempts to keep the caller on the line for as long as possible to increase the caller's long distance calling charges.

The bogus email claims the 809 area code sends calls to the British Virgin Islands, when in fact 809 is the country code for the Dominican Republic.

The email also warns consumers that dialing the 809 area code will result in charges of $2,400 per minute. That simply isn't true. The basic rate for a call to the Dominican Republic is less than $3 a minute although some 809 numbers terminate with paypercall services that permit the levy of additional fees. Since numbers located offshore are not subject to U.S. laws, there are no legal requirements that consumers be informed in advance of the extra charge.

And lastly, the email purports to originate within AT&T's corporate offices and includes the name and partial telephone number of an imaginary employee.

Defense:

To avoid falling prey to the scam, AT&T recommends consumers know where they're calling before they dial. When consumers receive such a message from someone they don't know they should simply disregard it.

Consumers should also be aware that it is usually necessary to dial 011 to reach an international location. However, there are some locations outside the United States, such as the Caribbean and Canada, whose telephone numbers resemble domestic long-distance calls, but carry a higher international rate.

If a consumer isn't familiar with a certain area code, they can visit www.consumer.att.com to look up any area code or country code in the world.

http://www.att.com/fraud/home.html#zero.

Astronaut Fits in Same-Day Chats with Students on Both Sides of Atlantic

It was an Amateur Radio two-for-one special March 7 when International Space Station Science Officer Don Pettit, KD5MDT, spoke with students at technology-oriented schools in Italy and in Texas.

The contacts with NA1SS on board the ISS were arranged as part of the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) program. Questions from students at the Istituto Tecnico Industriale Malignani (IV3FLG) in Cervignano-del-Friuli, northern Italy, covered many topics, such as use of radio frequencies on the station and traveling in space in a 10-minute QSO, said ARISS Mentor Peter Kofler, IN3GHZ.

The technical team of a local amateur radio club set up a satellite station and implemented two amateur television links on the 23-cm band with two other schools in the area to increase the audience from 100 students to a total of about 600.

That same morning, kids in Texas also were able to quiz Pettit via Amateur Radio. At Krueger Middle School of Applied Technologies in San Antonio, 10 students asked two questions each of Pettit via the school's club station, KD5OMG.

"It couldn't have gone better!" exclaimed Coordinating Teacher James Goslin, KJ5QB.

Pettit fielded questions about living in space, solar energy and plant biology experiments.

via ARRL bulletin

Upgrade?

by N3MX (as told to K3YD)

1. I have a computer running Windows95 (or Windows98) and it's working just fine. Why should I upgrade to a newer operating system?

If everything is working the way you want it...then why indeed? As with anything in technology, things keep improving. Are you still satisfied with your old Heathkit or Collins gear? Then why buy a new ICOM 756 PRO II???

2. If I upgrade to the newest operating system, how much RAM will I need? How much space on my Hard Drive? How fast a CPU? (i.e. my shack computer has 64 meg of RAM, 2.1GB hard-drive and a 233 MHz CPU. Is this enough computer for the most current operating system?)

This is right off Microsoft's website:

Here's What You Need to Use Windows XP Home Edition PC with 300 megahertz (MHz) or higher processor clock speed recommended; 233-MHz minimum required;* Intel Pentium/Celeron family, AMD K6/Athlon/Duron family, or compatible processor recommended 128 megabytes (MB) of RAM or higher recommended (64 MB minimum supported; may limit performance and some features) 1.5 gigabyte (GB) of available hard disk space.* Super VGA (800 × 600) or higher resolution video adapter and monitor CD-ROM or DVD drive Keyboard and Microsoft Mouse or compatible pointing device

Short and sweet...You do not have what it takes to run Windows XP...

3. I log with CT (or NA) which runs in a DOS window, or else I re-boot to DOS. I hear that the new operating systems don't have any DOS functionality. How do I continue to use my favorite, familar logging program?

You could run CTWIN but you will not have full functionality as with the DOS version. NA forget it! Writelog would be the better choice!

4. Many of the new computers seem to only have USB or "Firewire" connectivity. Can I use one of these forms of communication to key (CW) a radio or to control operating frequency? How?

Most new computers do have at least one Serial port and a lot have two. However, as we all know that is not enough for Amateur operators. So your options are: USB to Serial Port adapters or PCI cards with additional serial ports. I have both and they both work great...I currently have 7 serial ports! Also, there is software available and some logging programs that allow you to continue to use LPT ports as well. The best thing about all this is now you no longer have to manually configure IRQ's or worry about running out of resources the operating system does it all for you! How does 10 or 20 serial ports sound to you?

Dr. Computer is more commonly known as Steve, N3MX. He has ten years of total experience in various areas of the computer field,mainly in hardware, Operating Systems, and Networking and holds various certifications from CompTIA and Microsoft. Steve currently works as an IT Analyst for Moravian College in Bethlehem PA. Amateur radio is his main pastime with DX chasing & Contesting as his focus. Steve has been a ham for 11 years and currently holds an extra class license. (e-mail: n3mx@arrl.net).

Contester's Rate Sheet 12 March 2003

TECHNICAL & TECHNIQUE

submitted by Blair, K3YD

If you build stuff with some kind of analog control for audio, attenuation, or the like, it's tough to make the dial markings look good. In fact, it's tough to make them not look horrid. No more! I was alerted to DIAL.EXE, a program by John McDonough, WB8RCR. It's on his QSLMaker website - **http://hfradio.org/wb8rcr.** Click on "Panel" at the left side of the page. He also has a QSL design and panel layout program on the same site. You can print the resultant dial scale and copy it onto heavy paper or clear plastic and have a snazzy-looking layout. (Thanks, John NA8M)

Here's a nice, one-page reference sheet for the important characteristics of many types of coaxial cable

http://www.thewireman.com/coaxdata.pdf.

Very handy -- print it out and keep it in the shack or just bookmark the site. (Thanks to The Wireman)

Just for fun, if you like maps and geography, point your browser at NASA's"Where on Earth quiz:

http://www-misr.jpl.nasa.gov/education/whereonearth.html

Every couple of months (although they seem to be busy at the moment dealing with Columbia's aftermath) a new guess-where-this-is picture appears. It's addictive! (Thanks, Nancy W7FIR)

SUPPORT GROWING FOR FAVORABLE 40-METER REALIGNMENT PLANS

With World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 (WRC-03) getting under way in about three months in Geneva, support is growing for two favorable proposals to create a 300-kHz worldwide 40-meter allocation. ARRL and the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) seek a return to the 300-kHz allocation that existed worldwide prior to World War II but that now exists only in the Americas. Delegates to WRC-03 will attempt to address--and possibly eliminate--the overlap on 40 meters between amateurs in the Americas (Region 2) and broadcasters elsewhere (Regions 1 and 3).

"There is encouraging news," says ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, in his "It Seems to Us . . ." editorial set to appear in April QST. He reports that, thanks to the efforts of IARU volunteers and others, more than 30 countries now have gone on record to support either one or the other of two favorable 40-meter realignment formulas. Sumner said more support is needed, but he called the interim head count "a good start."

Most popular among the half dozen realignment schemes outlined by participants at last November's WRC-03 Conference Preparatory Meeting is so-called Method B. This approach calls for a three-stage transition that would begin by allowing Region 1 and 3 amateurs on 7100-7200 kHz on a secondary basis starting in 2005 and end with all ITU regions gaining access to 7000-7300 kHz by the end of 2009--with the top 100 kHz shared with fixed and mobile stations in Regions 1 and 3. Broadcasters would shift upward to 7300-7550 kHz worldwide.

For US and other Region 2 stations, such a change would mean an end to deafening nighttime phone band QRM from broadcasters and the necessity to operate split-frequency to work stations in Regions 1 and 3 on SSB.

Sumner says Method B is now a European Common Proposal with initial support from 17 CEPT administrations. At least three other countries in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific have also expressed support for Method B, he said. The IARU team now is working to gain the support of additional administrations in Regions 1 and 3 either for Method B or for the similar Method A, Sumner reports. Otherwise identical to Method B, Method A does not include any sharing with fixed and mobile services.

In the Americas, a dozen ITU Region 2 countries last month agreed to support an Inter-American Proposal that's virtually the same as the so-called Method D. Proposed by Canada, Method D would provide 300 kHz worldwide for amateurs by shifting broadcasters in Regions 1 and 3 upward by 200 kHz. Region 2's broadcasting allocation would remain unchanged. IARU Region 2 is now working to expand the list of Region 2 countries supporting that plan.

The US so far has taken no position on the 40-meter realignment issue, although it has long supported a 300-kHz worldwide, exclusive allocation for Amateur Radio. The FCC WRC-03 Advisory Committee has recommended that Method A be a US proposal, but the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has not yet agreed.

"Acting on behalf of the federal government users of the radio spectrum, the NTIA has been advocating 'no proposal' from the US, a position that the ARRL is working hard to overcome," Sumner points out. "A small number of federal agencies claim to be concerned that their backup circuits on HF would be affected by an upward shift of broadcasters."

Sumner also calls it "unfortunate" that some broadcasters persist in efforts to link the 7 MHz WRC-03 agenda item with another that deals with the adequacy of broadcasting spectrum between 4 and 10 MHz. Sumner said the broadcasting spectrum item is "a separate issue with an entirely different genesis.

via ARRL Letter



All Amateur Radio Operators are invited to
Participate in the DLARC, RACES & ARES nets
146.70 and 444.90 W3OK/RPT (pl 151.4) with an alternate of W3PYF/RPT 145.11
W3OK trustee Chris Hornaman, NU3L
The Nets are held on Wednesdays at 7:00PM

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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 IU 20 Building in Palmer Township
TALK IN ON 146.70
Any comments or articles contributed to this newsletter
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