

The WACOM HAM

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REMINDER

The next WACOM Board of Directors meeting is **Thursday, September 25th at 7 PM** at the WACOM Club room.

All are welcome!

JOIN WACOM ON THE AIR

2 meter net: Every Tuesday at 8:30 PM on the W3CYO repeaters 145.49 and 443.3 MHz

10 meter net: Every Tuesday at 9:00 PM at 28.340 MHz

Washington Amateur Communications, Inc.
1696 East Maiden St.
Washington, PA 15301

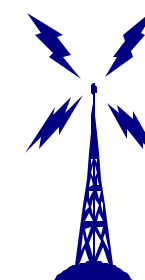


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SEPTEMBER 2003



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County



Coming Up July 19 & 20!

Washington Amateur Communications, Inc.
1696 East Maiden St.
Washington, PA 15301

DX News & Notes

The Wireless Association of South Hills will be sponsoring its first Dxpediton from October 4 through October 12, operating from St. John's in the US Virgin Islands. The group will be operating under the call **NP2SH** from the home of NP2JF, a former resident of Allegheny County. In addition to NP2JF, scheduled operators include W3WH, W3SRL, K3VX, NØVLR and W4ZE. The group plans to be active on all bands and modes as time & antennas permit, and plans also to mount a major effort in the N3ZNI; the NP2SH operators request that no cards be sent via the ARRL Incoming USVI bureau, and requests that an SASE be included with each QSL request. On-line logs are planned, and more information about the Dxpediton can be found at www.w3srl.com, or email them at np2sh@yahoo.com — W4ZE

TZ6L is being operated by XE1L. He plans to have QSL card printed after his return to Mexico. QSL via WA3HUP — WA3HUP, K17WO

CQ3U is a special call being used by CT1AHU from the Island of Port Saint, Madeira Islands (IOTA AF-014) through September 9. QSL via CT1AHU — CT1END

On line logs for the recent Dxpediton to Lesotho & Swaziland are updated and now available at www.k4sv.com/index.html — K4SV

DJ9ZB, EA5BYP, EA5FO & EA5YN, will be active from **3C0 Annobon Island** in October. Call sign to be announced along with other complete details (bands, modes, dates, etc). QSL via DJ9ZB - EA5YN

The ARRL has denied the petition of JA1BK & WA2MOE to remove the existing **4W Timor Leste** (ex UNAET) entity from the DXCC ranks. The existing entity remains unchanged, so if you worked a UNAET 4W6 station during the period of UN control, it will still count for Timor Leste. — ARRL

Monk Apollo is continuing to request DX'ers petition that the Greek government stop assigning the **SY** prefix anywhere except in **Mount Athos SV/A** — VK6APK

The 51st Annual W9DXCC convention will be held September 19 & 20 at Rolling Meadows, IL. Banquet speaker will be the ARRL/IARU's K1ZZ. More information available at www.w9dxcc.com — W9VA

K5LBU is seeking operators for a Dxpediton to Swaziland and/or Mozambique in the neighborhood of Thanksgiving and/or Christmas. For more information contact Frosty at www.k5lbu.com or www.dxsafari.com — K5LBU

ZL2III will be in Fiji on a work assignment & active as time permits as **3D2II** through early September. He plans to be on 40—10, mainly CW QSL via ZL2III - ZL2III

PLEASE SEND YOUR 2003 DUES AND APPLICATION INFORMATION

Annual WACOM membership dues are only \$15. A couple pays only \$22.50.

Send your check payable to WACOM to:
Ed Oeschlager, N3ZNI,
Washington Amateur
Communications Inc.
1696 East Maiden St.
Washington, PA 15301



Check out the
WACOM website
at www.wacomarc.org

Upcoming Events

September 7 — Butler County ARA Hamfest & Third Annual WPA Section Convention

September 14, 15 — ARRL VHF Contest

September 19,20 — W9DXCC Convention

October 5, 2003—WACOM Hamfest 2003
Washington County Fairgrounds

October 4 – 12 — NP2SH Dxpediton

October 4, 5 — California QSO Party

October 11, 12 — Pennsylvania QSO Party

October 25, 26 — CQ Worldwide DX Contest SSB

November 1, 2 — ARRL Sweepstakes CW

November 15, 16 — ARRL Sweepstakes Phone

NEW! WA3COM Reflector

A new e-mail reflector has been set up for WACOM members.

What's a reflector? It's a mailing list which lets you send one e-mail message to the list address — wa3com@yahoogroups.com — and have it "reflect" to all members of the list. Unlike a personal mailing list, you don't need to know all of the e-mail addresses for every single member of the list. Only group members can send e-mail to other members of the reflector — no spam allowed!

E-mail reflectors are being used by many area Amateur Radio clubs as a means to facilitate news and information at a moments notice. Yahoo! Groups (formerly eGroups) provides this service for free to anyone who wants to avail themselves of their list server. Yahoo! also provides calendar, file storage, & additional services.

To join the WACOM reflector, simply send a blank e-mail to:

wa3com-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

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ON THE WEB AT FYI.NET

MENTION THAT YOU ARE A WACOM MEMBER FOR A SPECIAL PRICE OF \$18 / MONTH.

NEXT WACOM MEETING:

Thursday
September 4, 2003
Monthly Meeting

7:30 PM

South Strabane #1 VFD
1696 East Maiden Street
Washington, PA 15301

All Welcome!

WPA To Get New Section Manager

John Rodgers N3MSE has resigned as ARRL Western PA Section Manager, effective September 8, 2003. He will be succeeded by Assistant SM & former Section Emergency Coordinator Rich Beaver N3SRJ of Jeannette.

John is stepping down for "personal reasons" but will remain in office through the WPA Section Convention September 7.

Rich can be reached via email at n3srj@arrl.net.

Our thanks and best wishes to N3MSE, who has been the WPA SM for the last 3½ years since replacing Bill Edgar N3LLR on his appointment to Atlantic Division Vice-Director

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The editor welcomes articles and timely information of interest to members and the general amateur community.

W4E Eagle Special Event

W4E was operated this summer by members of the US Power Squadron Radio Net aboard the USCG Tall Ship Eagle, down at the Battleship USS North Carolina, last July. WACOM members involved included Mac KA3YTS, Don N3HOW, and Marjie N3HOZ. Also involved were Ed KG4SZJ, Carl W2PTZ, and Roger KE4HZ.

These pictures of the event are courtesy of and ©Copyright 2003 Don Stark N3HOW.



Above: posed in front of the Eagle, L—R: KA3YTS, N3HOW, N3HOZ, KG4SZG, W2PTZ, KE4HZ

Below: N3HOZ & W2PTZ operating from aboard the Eagle



So, What's a QSO Party, Anyway?

So, you've seen it on the calendar, you've read about it here or there, you've heard some guys on one of the repeaters talking about it... and you're wondering, what the heck is a QSO Party anyway, and what specifically is up with the Pennsylvania QSO Party coming up in mid-October?

Good questions!

Well, a QSO Party is a specialized type of contest. It usually targets a specific group, mode, or geographic area, and rarely runs for an entire 48 hour period — 6, 12, 24 hour periods are very common. Most importantly, while it's a contest, it's also supposed to be a very fun operating event (hence the "Party" in the name) so that those who want to sit back, relax, and enjoy their operating can do so. It's not at all unusual to hear competitors in a QSO Party tip each other off to where a rare multiplier is located, or to stop and chat (either on the air on eyeball) right in the midst of things!

The Pennsylvania QSO Party is just such an event. Sponsored by the Nittany ARC up in State College, this year will mark the 46th Annual running of the event, making it one of the premier State QSO parties around (only the California and the Florida QSO Parties even come close to the prestige of the PA event!). It's designed to highlight operating by amateurs in and around the state, and it's meant to encourage activity from every one of the 67 counties in PA. During the weekend, you will hear stations running from home, stations running portable (often with as little as a rig, a car battery, a tuner, some wire, and a card table & chair!), and stations running mobile. You'll hear them on voice and on CW. And listen carefully, because you'll hear them having a blast!

The PA QSO Party has never, for some odd reason, been a real big event in Southwestern PA, and that's a shame. You'll hear a lot of activity and friendly rivalry from clubs and club members in Central, Easter, and Northwestern PA, all looking for bragging rights over their fellow clubs, all seeking to improve the Club Aggregate Score (the sum of all club member's and club station's score). Some of the groups up in Erie and out in & around Philadelphia, Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, and Harrisburg real go all out. They all try to improve their scores from years past and put it over on the other guys — and not just for the plaque from NARC but over, sometimes, who buys who dinner at the next hamfest!

And amateurs in neighboring states, heck in every state in the country and a good bit of DX too, join in. Working on your WAS? You may just put a good dent in it or even complete it with a little bit of luck in that weekend!

Ever wonder what it feels like to be a rare DX that everyone needs? Travel to a rare or semi-rare county, especially one that everyone needs in the last few hours of the 'test, and you'll find out! Best part is, you won't need a great antenna, nor will you need a linear — barefoot works and works wonders!

Ever wonder how well a mobile can do? You can find out... you re-work mobiles as they cross county lines, and you can hear the difference as they move around. Just ask N3ZNI & KB3GOT what it's like — they did a bang-up job in last year's contest!

The gang up at the Wireless Association of South Hills has been very active in the Pa QSO Party for the last 6—7 years, and the last

few years has also seen some renewed activity from the Steel City ARC and the Greene County ARC. SWPA has been given a spotlight from N3GC, W3KWH, and other club stations — WASH has often run both N3SH and WA3SH from different locations just for fun (and had a lot of it, too!)

Scoring is a lot of fun, too. You get one point for a phone contact, 1.5 for a CW one except on 160 & 80 meters, where CW counts as 2 points (why? A long story, ask W3HDH about it). Multiply that by the number of PA counties and (for PA stations) ARRL sections you work (+1 for DX), and a power multiplier. It's pretty much that simple!

This year, there will be a spotlight on WPA activity. The "special event/bonus" station will be Steel City's W3KWH — that means that every time you work them (once per band & mode) the contact will be worth 200 points! WASH is planning to operate WA3SH from the Westmoreland/Somerset county line again; N3SH will be moving from Clarion to another location still being worked on; and a group (which includes several WACOM members) will be traveling to the US Virgin Islands to activate that rare ARRL section in the contest as NP2SH! A lot of other club stations are expected on the air too, and that includes the WA3COM station. IF there are enough operators. Interested?

OK, you say, but I have a Novice, Tech, or even no ticket, so what? Well, **don't let that stop you.** Hook up with the club station and if you want, we'll get you as involved as you like. There is a Novice/Tech division, and there is quite a bit of VHF & UHF operating (expect to see WA3SH on 2 M & 70 cm simplex). There's even a "rookie" award for someone operating in their "first" contest! Point is, if you want to get involved, a way can be found.

Not sure? Come down anyway and see what it's like. You might be surprised!

Intrigued but can't make it to the WA3COM shack? Turn on your HF rig anyway... or hook up with a mobile or portable setup who might be looking for an extra op.

Got a hunting cabin in Jefferson, Venango, Mercer, Lawrence, Fayette, Greene, or Fulton counties (among many others)? This might be a good time to see how well that rig will work from there... trust us!

The PA QSO Party runs from noon on Saturday, October 11 through 6 PM, Sunday October 12 (with an 8 hour break from 1 AM to 9 AM on Sunday). It's on 160 meters and up (except the WARC bands, 30, 17 & 12 meters). Complete rules and suggested frequencies and times can be found on the Pa QSO Web page at www.nittanyarc.org/paqso.html. You can find links to the history and background of the contest, of the various awards offered, how to join the PaQP reflector for last minute information, and a lot more.

Bottom line: What's a QSO Party? A heck of a lot of operating fun. What's the Pa QSO Party? One of the best weekends a PA ham can have all year.

Don't miss out! Join in on the fun!

WA3COM Field Day 2003 Photos!

Courtesy of ©Copyright 2003 Don Stark N3HOW



More W4E Pictures:

Above: N3HOW operating from aboard the Eagle

Below: Popeye the Ham!

These pictures of are courtesy of and ©Copyright 2003 Don Stark N3HOW.



Sorry... no pictures from the WACOM Picnic came in by deadline, hopefully we'll have those next month!

More Field Day pictures will be available on the web site once N3XE has a chance to post them. No captions were provided with these, so hopefully they will also be available on the web site with the pictures!

Newsletters thrive on input. Want to see more pictures, more articles, whatever? Send them in!

