

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



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The WACOM HAM

OCTOBER 2004



Ed N3ZNI and I joined Bud, N3TIR, at his booth at the West Alexander Fair and set up the WA3COM station. Three of us represented the club. We were visited by a number of hams from West Virginia and Ohio and had some very nice visits with them.

Despite a very high noise level (neon lights, motors and generators on the rides, etc) we did manage to make contacts to Texas, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Kansas, Florida, and Louisiana.

It was a lot of fun and we hope to do this again next year.

— Jacqué Gosselin" N3ZEL



UPCOMING MEETINGS!



Next WACOM Monthly Meeting:
Thursday, October 7th, 2004, 6:00 PM

Next WACOM Board of Directors Meeting:
Thursday, October 28th, 7:30 PM

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

All Welcome!

The 47th Annual Pennsylvania QSO Party 2004

Sponsored by the Nittany Amateur Radio Club, State College, PA

OPERATING PERIODS - 1600Z October 9 to 0500Z October 10 and 1300Z October 10 to 2200Z October 10

FREQUENCIES

- **SSB:** 1850, 3980, 7280, 14280, 21380, 28480, 50.125, 146.55 (12,17,30 meter and repeater QSOs NOT permitted.)
- **CW:** 40 KHz up from the bottom and 1810 KHz.
- **160 METERS** - Try at 0300Z Sunday. Follow 160 Band Plan, CW - 1.800-1.830, SSB - above 1.850
- **HIGH BAND ACTIVITY PERIODS** - Saturday & Sunday: 10m - 1800z, 15m - 1900z, 20m - 2000z, SSB on the hour, CW on the half hour.
- **MOBILE WINDOW** - 5 KHz below listed frequencies. **KEEP CLEAR FOR WEAK MOBILES.**

EXCHANGES - Sequential SERIAL NUMBER plus COUNTY or ARRL or Radio Association of Canada (RAC) section. Stations on county lines will give out ONE serial number per contact but all counties may be counted as multipliers. Work stations once per band and once per mode. Work mobiles and Rovers again as they change counties.

SCORING - QSO POINTS - CW QSOs on 160 and 80 - 2 points, Other CW QSOs - 1.5 points, SSB/FM QSOs - 1 point

MULTIPLIERS - Pennsylvania Stations: ARRL sections + RAC sections + PA Counties + 1 for DX. (152 total)
Out-of-State Stations: Pennsylvania Counties (67 total)

FINAL SCORE - Total Points X Total Multipliers

QRP BONUS MULTIPLIER - Multiply your final score by 2 if less than 5 watts output.

NOVICE/TECH BONUS MULTIPLIER - Multiply your final score by 3 if a novice or tech.

PA MOBILE BONUS POINTS - If mobile, add 500 points for each county operated from (10 QSOs Minimum).

PA ROVERS BONUS POINTS - Add 500 points for each location operated from (10 QSOs Minimum).

MOBILE & ROVER DIVISIONS - Mobile stations must be truly mobile. Rover division stations MUST use a portable antenna and must travel more than 5 miles between stops. 500 point bonus for each county/location with at least 10 QSOs. Submit summary for each county as well as an aggregate summary. Stations should identify by using /M or /R on CW and by adding "ROVER" or "MOBILE" on SSB. Only single transmitter entries eligible for awards. Remember, many county lines are on tops of mountains.

BONUS POINTS STATION - Each year, a different Pennsylvania Club will set up and operate a special event station as part of the contest. The Harrisburg Radio Amateur's Club (HRAC), W3UU, is this year's special event station. W3UU will operate on 160 through 10 meters from members' homes in several counties. Add 200 points to your final score for each QSO with W3UU after all other bonuses have been taken.

ENTRY DIVISIONS - Single op medium power (150W), Single op QRO, QRP (5W); CW ONLY (single op, 150 watts max); Multi-single, Multi-multi, Portable (single op or multi-single only), Novice/Technician, Mobile, Rover. NOTE: QRP is defined as all contacts on any radio running 5 W or less. NOTE: Single ops and multi-single - ONLY ONE SIGNAL on air at one time!

AWARDS - Plaques to top scorers in all entry divisions plus single op out-of-state (OOS), Eastern, Central, and Western Time zones, OOS Medium Power and OOS QRP, top Canadian entry, Single op med & high power EPA, single op med & high power WPA, plus others as warranted. Plaque in "Rover", Novice/Tech if enough entries. Certificates to county and section winners. Trophy to Club winner.

SPECIAL PLAQUE FOR TOP FIRST TIME ENTRANT - Intended to

operating briefly at a multi-op station you're still eligible. Attention Clubs, encourage your new members to get on and compete for this plaque. This is not intended for "Big Guns" from other Contests!

SPECIAL PLAQUE FOR WORKING ALL 67 COUNTIES - If you work all 67 counties during the Party, a special plaque will be awarded in recognition of that feat. QSOs will be verified by the committee from log information. To order, submit a special summary sheet (in addition to your entry summary) listing county, call of station worked, date and time of QSO and numbers sent and received. Please enclose a check for \$25.00 made payable to "NARC".

PARTICIPATION COFFEE MUGS - Anyone who makes 100 QSOs during the Party is eligible for a PA QSO Party Coffee Mug personalized with your call. To order, submit your log showing 100 or more QSOs and a check for \$15.00 made payable to "NARC".

PARTICIPATION T-SHIRTS - Anyone participates in the Party in any way is eligible for a PA QSO Party participant T-shirt. To order, submit a log and a check for \$12.00 made payable to "NARC". Be sure to indicate your shirt size.

ENTRY MATERIALS consist of log and dupe sheets and must be submitted with an official summary form or reasonable facsimile. One hundred points will be deducted for each dupe found. All materials can be downloaded from the web site.

ENTRY MATERIALS must be **RECEIVED** by **November 15, 2004** in one of three ways:

- 1- Paper copies of all materials may be sent via US Mail to: PA QSO Party 2004, c/o NARC P.O. Box 614 State College, PA16804-0614
- 2- Materials on IBM formatted Computer Media (floppy disk or CD) may also be mailed to the above address.
- 3- Materials may be submitted Electronically via e-mail to : paqsolog@nittany-arc.net

PA STATIONS MUST submit a completed paper summary form via US Mail regardless of the method used to submit log and dupe sheets. All non-PA stations may submit their summary on paper or electronically.

A DONATION of \$2.00 or more with your entry will help defray the costs of mailing, printing, etc. and would be greatly appreciated.

QSO PARTY COMPUTER LOGGING PROGRAMS

- K3CP (c/o DLARC, KA3MOU, 120 McIlhane Ave, Bath, Pa. 18014) (E-mail: KA3MOU@enter.net)
- KM3D (Box 392, Richland, Pa. 17087) Download: <http://www.km3d.com>
- KA3JWE (Windows version) Download: <http://www.enter.net/~donster/>
- NA - latest version now handles the 1.5 Point QSOs. WriteLog has template. <http://www.writelog.com>
- EQF Software - www.eqf-software.com - E-mail: n3eqf@eqfsoftware.com

PA QSO PARTY WEB SITE - <http://www.nittany-arc.net/paqso.html> - For latest info!

THE PA QSO PARTY REFLECTOR - To subscribe, send a two word message "subscribe paqso" to "majordomo@QTH.net".

Check out the Latest info on portables, mobiles and activity: Friday night, October 8 at 8:00 PM Eastern Time, 75 Meter SSB - 3910 LSB +/-

ARRL Web Extra courtesy of the American Radio Relay League

NEWINGTON, CT, September 30, 2004 — A North Carolina amateur is refuting a clean bill of health the FCC gave this summer to a BPL field trial system in the Raleigh area.

In a Response and Further Complaint filed September 29, Tom Brown, N4TAB, said he was "quite surprised" that the FCC was unable to substantiate his earlier BPL interference complaint. Following up on that complaint, FCC engineers visited Progress Energy's BPL system in June and July and determined that it complied with Part 15 rules — with notched BPL emissions at one site 24 dB below Part 15 emission limits — and that ham band notching was "effective." Brown, who has an extensive background in RF engineering, says the FCC's findings have nothing to do with defining--or excusing--harmful interference.

N3BV/R QRT

After a year of sitting on the fence, I've decided once and for all to pull the plug on the 443.650 repeater. Between financial difficulties, a general lack of interest in ham radio, and the prospect of leaving the area, it's time for me to hang it up.

I'll be shutting the system down and canceling the electricity account in the next few days.

If anyone is interested in the joys of repeater ownership, I'll turn over the keys to the site...where is, as is for \$2500. Otherwise, it will be parted out on ebay.

— Brett Valentine N3BV n3fp@worldnet.att.net

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 on 28.340 MHz

"I can find no reference that states that equipment operating under Part 15 with an emission level below some specified value is defined as being 'non interfering,'" Brown said, responding to a July 22 letter from Bruce Franca of the FCC's Office of Engineering and Technology outlining the FCC's findings. "This is a subjective leap of judgment that is unsupported under Part 15 rules and without precedent." BPL proponents have touted the FCC's conclusions in the Progress Energy field trial zones to debunk findings by the ARRL and others that the technology can and does generate harmful interference.

Brown noted that §15.5 of the FCC rules requires that "intentional, unintentional or incidental" radiators cause no "harmful interference" and must accept interference from "an authorized radio station." The same section also stipulates that the operator of a Part 15 device be required to cease operating the device upon FCC notification that it's causing harmful interference. That's just what Brown would like Progress Energy to do.

"That Progress Energy Corporation supposed that it might shut down the BPL systems over time is of no consequence," Brown told Franca. "These systems do, today, produce harmful interference and must be shut down immediately." Progress Energy announced ([/news/stories/2004/08/06/2/](#)) in early August that it had "successfully" completed its testing and would wrap up its field trial by the end of that month.

Brown and others report the system remains in operation, however, and that it continues to interfere with Amateur Radio frequencies. He said his own recent series of tests in southern Wake County, using a typical Amateur Radio mobile installation, indicated "offending and harmful interference" on the low end of 15 meters at one point in the system. He told ARRL that the 12 meter band has not been notched at all. Brown says he also monitored BPL interference on 80 and 40 meters. Efforts at notching by Progress Energy and BPL equipment supplier Amperion "are not effective in removing harmful interference" from the BPL system, Brown added. BPL signals he observed were

(BPL QRM Continued on page 4)

Upcoming Events

- October 2 & 3 — California QSO Party
- October 3 — **WACOM Hamfest**, Washington Fairgrounds
- October 9 & 10 — Pennsylvania QSO Party
- October 17 — Jamboree On The Air
- October 23 — WASH VE Session, Peters Township Municipal Library, 6:30 PM
- October 30, 31 — CQ World Wide DX Contest SSB
- November 6 & 7 — ARRL Sweepstakes CW
- November 13 & 14 — ARRL Sweepstakes SSB
- November 27 & 28 — CQ World Wide DX Contest CW
- December 3 — 5 — ARRL 160 Meter Contest
- December 11 & 12 — ARRL 10 Meter Contest

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(BPL QRM Continued from page 3)

at least 14 dB above the average background noise level. Details of his "representative" findings were part of an 11-page package that included his earlier complaint and Franca's reply.

The ARRL also has taken issue </news/stories/2004/07/23/5/> with certain claims made in Franca's July 22 letter. The FCC has yet to respond to the League, however.

Franca, who addressed the United Power Line Council's BPL convention in mid-September, was quoted this week in a USA Today article (http://www.usatoday.com/money/industries/technology/2004-09-28-broadpower_x.htm) saying that the FCC has tried to come up with rules to ensure BPL can be deployed and that licensed radio operators are protected. But, the article by Paul Davidson goes on: "Banning power companies from ham-radio bands outright could reduce the download speeds of the high-speed Internet service or limit the number of customers who could be served, Franca says." Franca also asserted that ham radio mobile stations can "move away from static," the USA Today account said.

Progress Energy has suggested that in the absence of BPL interference complaints from amateur licensees living in the FCC field trial zones, other radio amateurs have driven mobiles into the zones for the express purpose of seeking out BPL interference and generating complaints. Brown says that doesn't matter. He asserts that very few, if any, active amateurs live within the field trial areas, and that his mobile setup served as a "surrogate station" for the lacking fixed stations. In any case, Brown said, he monitored interference at two amateur licensees' locations within the BPL field trial.

The FCC is expected to consider a draft Report and Order in the BPL proceeding, ET Docket 04-37 when the full Commission meets October 14.

A copy of Brown's filing also went to FCC Chairman Michael K Powell's Legal Assistant Sheryl Wilkerson, with whom ARRL officials met this week on the BPL proceeding. ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, said that one of Wilkerson's "many misconceptions" was that actions taken by BPL systems to resolve any interference, such as notching, have been successful.

Brown said the FCC's July conclusions on the Progress Energy BPL sites "fall short of a scientifically supportable investigation." The FCC has not released detailed test findings. He invited Franca to revisit the Progress Energy BPL test sites to witness his findings firsthand.

"I don't understand how they could look at what I looked at and see something totally different," Brown told ARRL this week. "I just don't understand that."



Jim WB4GCS and Kevin N3HKQ supervising a student asking questions during the ARISS contact. Photo courtesy of and ©2004 Kevin Smith N3HKQ

ISS Astronaut Talks With South Hills Students

ARRL Web Extra courtesy of the American Radio Relay League
NEWINGTON, CT, Sep 3, 2004 — NASA International Space Station Science Officer Mike Fincke, KE5AIT, told students at Upper St Clair High School August 27 that life in space is both fun and, at times, challenging. The Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) school group contact between NA1SS in space and WB4GCS in Western Pennsylvania represented a homecoming of sorts for Fincke, who was born in Pittsburgh and whose parents live in Emsworth, where he grew up. Fincke said problems with an onboard gyroscope system that occurred just as the Expedition 9 crew arrived aboard the ISS presented the most unexpected challenge of his six-month tour of duty.

"Our biggest challenge was to get some spacesuits and get outside and fix it, and it turned out that the American spacesuits were broken, and we had to go to our backup plan with the Russian spacesuits," Fincke recounted. "That took a lot of work. That was a big challenge, but we were successful on the Fourth of July weekend, and we fixed that gyroscope's power source." The challenge aside, Finck said, the experience was "really exhilarating."

While he's missed his wife and children while in space since April, Fincke said he's also enjoying his time aboard the ISS, although he noted, "it's really tough to live with the same person for six months," a reference to Expedition 9 Commander Gennady Padalka, RN3DT.

"We have to work really well together, and I think one of the secrets is that we don't look for fault in each other," Fincke said.

"The most fun I've ever had in space has been every day since I got here," he said in reply to another youngster's question. "I've been waiting my whole life, and every day aboard the space station has been a *great* day. There's always something new, something new to learn, something new to see."

Fincke said the ISS doesn't cost much in the greater scheme of things, and he believes the space station's overwhelming value is as a stepping stone to populating other parts of the universe. "In order to protect the survival of the species, it's better not to have all our eggs in one basket and have humans populate the solar system," Fincke reasoned. "That way, one disaster shouldn't wipe us out."

He also said he'd like to see the human space flight program focus on again landing on the moon, journeying to Mars and eventually to the stars. "We need to explore who we are and our potential as human beings."

Fincke also philosophized in response to a question about the perspective he's gained from living in space. "Every piece of history, everything we've ever talked about, every poem that was ever created, every heart that was broken, every joy that was felt is just on that ball of rock that's below us right now, and that really puts things into perspective."

The Expedition 9 crew is scheduled to return to Earth in about six weeks.

Mentoring the ARISS contact was Howard Ziserman, WA3GOV. Jim Sanford, WB4GCS, served as the control operator. Setting up the Earth station for the contact were the Wireless Association of South Hills (WASH) and [WASHINGTON AMATEUR COMMUNICATIONS](#) (WACOM), with assistance from local AMSAT members.

WACOM HAMFEST

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3RD, 2004
WASHINGTON COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
WASHINGTON, PA 15301

8:00 AM – 1:00 PM

DOORS OPEN FOR VENDOR SETUP AT 6:00 AM

V E SESSION AT 10:00 AM

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We're On the Web!
www.wacomarc.org

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

The WACOM HAM

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PLEASE SEND YOUR 2004 DUES AND APPLICATION INFORMATION

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

Send your check payable to WACOM to:

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Washington, PA 15301



WACOM e-Mail Reflector

An 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@yahoo.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@yahoo.com