

Washington Amateur
Communications, Inc.
c/o Ed Oelschlager N3ZNI
60 Carl Avenue B-2
Eighty Four, PA 15330-2829

The WACOM

HAM

SEPTEMBER
2006



Pa QSO Party 2006

The 49th Annual running of the Pennsylvania QSO Party will be coming up in about 6 weeks, the second weekend in October, the 14th & 15th.

More information about the contest, and complete up-to-date rules for 2006 can be found at <http://www.nittany-arc.net/paqso.html>. There are many changes and updates this year, including the addition of RTTY and PSK-31 modes!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

The Special Event (or Bonus) Station for this year's contest is N3SH, one of the club calls for the neighboring Wireless Association of South Hills. WASH will be operating multiple N3SH stations from multiple counties in order to maximize the number of potential bonus points available to everyone in the contest (each contact with N3SH is worth a 200 point bonus, and you can contact N3SH once per band/mode/county combination... it can add up quickly!). At present, there are plans to operate N3SH from Washington, Allegheny, Fayette, Clarion, Venango and Erie Counties, and there will also be N3SH Mobile running around too (operated by Ed N3ZNI and Dave K3LGM). Many of the N3SH stations will be operating on the new digital modes, and on VHF too. Certificates will be available for those contacting multiple N3SH stations, along with other memorabilia. A good time is planned for by all!

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Interested, but don't have a lot of time that weekend, or not familiar with contest and/or HF operating? Not to worry... WASH is inviting any interested member of WACOM to join them in operating some of the N3SH stations, especially the Washington, Allegheny and Fayette County stations. There's plenty of room for everyone, so if you're interested, don't feel left out!

More information on the N3SH operations and on contacting the Team Captains for each station can be found on the WASH web sites, www.n3sh.org and www.washrag.info, or contact Ron W3WN at (412) 572-6723, wn3vaw@njdx.org.

UPCOMING MEETINGS!



Next WACOM Monthly Meeting:
Thursday, September 7, 2006, 7:30 PM
Room 103, Washington County Building,
Downtown Washington.

Next WACOM Board of Directors Meeting:
Thursday, September 28, 7:30 PM
Krispy Kreme, Washington

All Welcome!

KB3FZU/R Shack Repair

Frank Bobro KB3FZU

On Saturday, August 18, 2006 Randy, N3ZK, Brian, KB3IFR, and I went to the 443.650 repeater shack with the intention of re-facing the left side and front exterior walls. Randy and I had done the right side last fall and I expected the job to take about 4 hours as Randy has all of the right tools to make a job like this go well. We started working at 3 PM. In a short amount of time we had the left face removed and replaced. Lori, KB3GMU, decided that the job would go quicker if we had pre-painted lumber, so while the T-11 siding was laying in storage she painted it! That helped tremendously.

Cue Mother Nature with the rain; a perfect time to break for dinner. When we returned, it was still threatening but we pressed on and removed the front of the shack. A cell phone rings and Brian needs to leave to attend to a problem. Randy removes the front and we notice that it is rotting about one foot up from the bottom. I decided that the best course of action was to completely rebuild the front wall. Randy told me that the door had seen better days ☺ and it would be much easier just to replace it. We called the local home improvement mega store and arranged to have a door waiting for pick up, as it was now nearing closing time (9 PM).

Randy stayed at the shack and continued demolition as I made the drive to pick up the materials. It was about this time that I realized we were going to be late. I called my newly licensed brother, Dave, KB3NCD, and had him drive to the shack to lend an extra pair of hands. He and Brian were on site when I returned, and Randy had made short work of the demolition. Randy also noticed that the front



part of the floor was beginning to rot and it would need to be replaced.

We cut out all of the rot and began the re-assembly process. With all of the help and some light that Randy and Brian provided, we were able to rebuild the front wall. We finished the job at 1 AM, just as it started to sprinkle. Mr. Murphy was definitely present on this job and the square time rule also applied.

I would like to thank Randy (and especially Mrs. Randy), Brian for staying with this project until it was done, and Dave for walking into this cold and staying until we had it under control.



Photos Courtesy of & © Copyright 2006 Frank Bobro KB3FZU

I will never forget the first day with the new Technician license.

With gleeful anticipation, I proceeded to the two-story shed out back. I picked out the perfect spot just above the ladder in the upper floor; this in an effort to keep the cables as short as possible. My genius was to put a table under the ladder with a chair on top and use the upper floor for the ham desk.

This worked great until winter came to Minnesota. I built an insulated walled-in platform on top of the table with a door. I built a wall across the upper floor that stretched to the ceiling.

I added electrical outlets and an electric heater. I was in my glory while I figured out how to get a 2nd hand computer to control the FT-847 and the Yaesu 5500 rotators.

I must have climbed the ladder 1000 times in an effort to get the long yagi's and 2.4 GHz dish pointed in the right direction.

On January 2nd 2004 I made my first contact on AO-40. Then I heard it; the scratching sound in the ceiling of my newly insulated shed.

In the middle of my first Satellite QSO a Giant Squirrel dropped right into my lap!

I immediately stood up in a space that was too small to stand straight up. As my head crashed thru the sheet rock every nut the squire had squirreled away for the last three months rained down on my feet.

Realizing this squirrel was as big as a cat and not happy, I decided it was time to be somewhere else.

In my haste to leave the area I slipped on the nuts and smashed the wooden chair I had been sitting on with all my 280 lbs of self.

I was still able to scoot through the door that I had to kneel down to get in to faster than any other man alive.

My foot missed the 5-gallon bucket I was using for a step. I landed flat on my back on the floor. The Giant Squirrel ran across my chest and burst through the heavy insulated shed door held shut with a bungee cord.

It was then I realized 3 things:

1. I was still wearing my headphones.
2. I still have a QSO in progress.
3. I just got my butt kicked by a squirrel.

WACOM Hamfest

Sunday, November 5th 2006, 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Washington County Fairgrounds, Washington, PA

For More Information contact Ed Oelschlager N3ZNI at n3zni@arrl.net or (724) 746-9235

www.wacomarc.org

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

Upcoming Events

September 10 — Butler Co ARA Hamfest & WPA Convention

October 7 & 8 — California QSO Party

October 14 & 15 — **49th Annual Pennsylvania QSO Party**

October 28 & 29 — CQ World Wide DX Contest SSB

November 4 & 5 — ARRL Sweepstakes CW

November 5 — WACOM Hamfest, Washington Co Fairgrounds

November 18 & 19 — ARRL Sweepstakes SSB

November 25 & 26 — CQ World Wide DX Contest CW

December 1, 2 & 3 — ARRL 160 Meter Contest

December 9 & 10 — ARRL 10 Meter Contest

December 31 — Straight Key Night

JOIN WACOM ON THE AIR

2 meter net: Every Tuesday at 8:30 PM on the W3CYO repeaters, 145.49 and 443.30 MHz

YL Net: Every Wednesday at 7:30 PM on 146.79 MHz (OM's are welcome too!)

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

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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.

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PLEASE SEND YOUR 2006 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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60 Carl Avenue B-2

Eighty Four, PA 15330-2829



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@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