



The QUARAE



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July 2015

Prez Says....



Summer has officially arrived and the Public

Service activity has picked up the last month or so. So far we have helped at the March of Dimes Walk, The Freedom Challenge Walk/Run (a new event this year), Edinboro Triathlon (new organizer) , the MS Society Bike Ride (814 bicycles) and the Bay Swim (284 swimmers). We still have five or six events left on our schedule so if you can help out please let me know. There is a schedule of events on the w3gv.org website so check it out.

I received an Email from Mike Cidor who is the Senior District Executive for the Boy Scouts. He is also a new ham KC3FCF. He is looking for our help with the JOTA this year. They are planning on events in McKean this year on October 16 & 17. I have talked to Mike on the Ragchew Net and told him we are interested in helping and also invited him to Field Day to discuss the event and he is also interested in becoming a member of RAE.

I also received an Email with an offer of custom license plates with the RAE Logo and our callsigns. If we have an order of ten or more he will give us a price of \$8.50 instead of the usual \$12.00 If you are interested please let me know and I will get in touch with him with an order.

I hope everyone had a chance to visit or participate in the annual Field Day and that the band Gods were with us. As usual we operated at the clubhouse as a 4A Club station.

Don't forget to check in to the various nets that are available. Check the w3gv.org website for a list of net times and frequencies.

73, Doug AD4UL

A conscience is what hurts when all your other parts feel so good

Wattsburg Wirelss Club - NWPA Hamfest

Date: July 11th, 2015

Time: 7:30 am to Noon (Rain or Shine)

Where: Green Township Municipal Building
933 Tate Road, Erie, PA 16509

Cost: Entrance \$5 per person (Kids under 16 are free)

Tables: \$5 per table (Bring your own tables)

Talk-ins: on 147.315 (No PL)

Main Prize: MFJ 994BRT Automatic tuner

Talk-in prize: \$75 dollar gift certificate to AES.

Door prizes: drawn every hour

Contact: hamfest@wattsburg-wireless.

Amateur Radio - Computers, Electronics, Tailgating - Vendors



**Radio Association of Erie
Club Meeting at the Club
House on Wagner Rd
Thursday July 2. 6PM
Hotdogs 7PM Meeting**

**Program: Antique Wireless
Association Museum in Bloomfield,
NY**

- Prizes - Food - Restrooms - Off street parking - Fun - Fellowship - Outdoor picnic area & grills - Large playground for kids - VE Exams - Sponsored by Wattsburg Wireless Association (An ARRL Sponsored Event)

WORKING QRP DX

By Craig Hill K3PLV

I recently picked up a FT-817. It's a nice little radio that covers 160 through 70 cm. It has a battery pack that fits in the bottom of the radio and many people use it for backpacking. It runs a maximum of 5 watts. I thought it would be fun to work some QRP. I have people tell me that the only reason I work some of the countries I do is because I run a thousand watts and have a good antenna.

I worked 80 countries in 10 days. That's doesn't mean I spent many hours at the radio. I would spend an hour or two a few evenings and 15 or 20 minutes some afternoons. I worked about thirty five countries during the CW WPX contest and the rest I worked by answering CQs or tuning across the band. Some QSOs were short, but I had some where we ragchewed for 15 to 20 minutes. For instance I talked to a station in Bulgaria and he said I was a true 5 db over S-9. He then dropped his power down to 5 watts and we chatted for about 20 minutes. Some reports I received were 5 by 3, 5 by 5, and 5 by 7. But many others were much better. One station in the Ukraine said I was extremely strong. This was all done when the solar flux index was under 100.

I worked some stations that although not rare were still good catches such as Montenegro, New Caledonia, Tunisia, Lebanon, Oman, Svalbard, Saint Helena, Gibraltar, Fiji, and Iceland. I also worked Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and Hawaii. The Australia station was over 10,000 miles away. I also received an email from a QRPer in Australia who heard me working Fiji. He said he enjoyed QRPing and had worked about 180 countries QRP.

Someone will say that since I have a TH7 antenna that is the reason I had good results. But if someone runs 100 watts with a lesser antenna, they should have at least as good results. I think timing in the pileups and operating procedure is much more important than a large signal. Actually I don't think that, I know it as I have been on the other end of a pileup. You can have 15 people calling and you work a much weaker station than the others because he calls at the right time.

Since I wrote this article I now have 96 countries on QRP in less than one month. These include Wallis Island, North Cook, South Cook, Market Reef, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. Some of these were worked through pileups.

So why not try QRP. There are many inexpensive QRP radios and many kits available. Give it a try. I think you will enjoy it.

When everything is coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.

What Would You Do?

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

For the past three or four years, I've been threatening to buy a new radio to replace my ICOM IC-746PRO. The IC-746PRO is a great rig, though, and I've had trouble pulling the trigger on a \$3k – \$5k or more purchase. The radio that I've had my eye on is the Elecraft K3. Without a doubt the K3 is a better rig than the 746PRO, and it's certainly worth the price that Elecraft is asking. The question I keep asking myself, though, is, "Am I going to have \$5,000 more fun with a K3?"

To put it another way, the question is, assuming that I have a \$5,000 budget to spend on amateur radio gear over the next year or two or three, what's the best way to spend it? How can I maximize my purchases so that I have the most fun?

At this point, I think that I've decided not to buy that new rig and instead buy equipment that will help me make my own rigs. Some of the items that I have my eye on include:

- * Aoyue 968A+ SMD Digital Hot Air Rework Station (I have actually already purchased this unit.)
- * Rigol DS1102E 100MHz, Dual Channel, 1 GSa/s Digital Oscilloscope
- * Rigol DSA815-TG Spectrum Analyzer
- * A more professional workbench to replace the folding table that I'm currently using.
- * Peaberry SDR V2 Kit
- * More keys! I'd love to get a fancy Begali or N3ZN paddle, and the other day someone told me about the UR5CDX keys, which look like great deals.

Even if I purchased everything on this list, I'll have spent less than \$5,000. One consequence of going this route is that I'll have less time for operating. I'm betting (hoping?) that the extra time spent on tinkering will be just as much fun, or even more fun than I'm having now.

It also means that I'll be going to Dayton with a much different mindset than I have the past couple of years. Instead of spending my time configuring the perfect K3 in my head, I'll be looking for kits and scouring the flea market looking for parts.

I may be overthinking this, but like most amateurs, I have a limited budget to spend on amateur radio. That being the case, making conscious decisions about how to spend that money should help me have more fun with ham radio, and that's the goal, isn't it?

What do you think? Is this the right way to go, or am I going to regret this decision? If you've made a

similar decision, I'd love to hear from you.

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When not making crucial decisions about his amateur radio career, you'll find KB6NU working on updates to his "No Nonsense" study guides, teaching one-day Tech classes, or blogging about amateur radio at www.kb6nu.com.

My mechanic told me, "I couldn't repair your brakes, so I made your horn louder."

May General Meeting Minutes

A regular meeting of the Radio Association of Erie (RAE) was held on May 7, 2015 at the Wagner Rd clubhouse. President AD4UL present, the secretary present, a quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 1900.

Presentation- K5D Expedition Video

Silent Key- John Burkhart Jr KA9ZQK

Secretary- motion to accept the minutes as published; it was seconded, and approved, motion carried.

Treasurers' report- given by N8WXQ

Board- no meeting

Membership- WP4NYQ is mailing out cards.

Public service- May 30th Edinboro triathlon

Emergency Preparedness Expo- attendance was minimal, discussion of next years' event

Website- old QSO's were posted to the website

QUARAE- articles may be sent to jlindvay@msn.com who is desperately looking for something!!!

Clubhouse- upgrades over the winter were commented on. New windows were installed. A

new water tank was installed and insulation was placed in the attic.

Contesting- CQ WWDX coming up. Club house will be open if there is any interest.

Breezeshooters- raffled off tickets and mentioned the date and also gave away Sea Wolf baseball tickets

Open House- cancelled due to lack of interest

Wouldn't it be great if we could put ourselves in the dryer for ten minutes; come out wrinkle-free and three sizes smaller!

July 18 - Batavia Hamfest. Alexander, NY
Sponsor: Lancaster Amateur Radio Club
See <http://w2so.org>

July 18 - North Hills Hamfest. Allison Park, PA
Sponsor: North Hills Amateur Radio Club
See <http://nharc.org>

July 19 – Erie Runners Club ½ Marathon

July 20 thru Jul 26 - Brickyard 400 Special Event
W9IMS, Indianapolis, IN. Indianapolis Motor
Speedway ARC. See www.qrz.com/db/w9ims

Ham Radio Calendar

June 30 thru July 7 – 152nd Anniversary of the Battle of Hanover and Gettysburg, 0900Z-0500Z, W1G, Gettysburg, PA. Bob Hess, WO4L. 21.300 18.145 14.235 7.200 other bands as propagation permits. Certificate & QSL. Bob Hess, 74 Curtis Dr, East Berlin, PA 17316.

July 2 – RAE Meeting

July 4 – Independence Day

July 7 – Corry Amateur Radio Club Meeting

July 9 – Union City Wireless Club Meeting

July 11 – NW PA Hamfest. Erie, PA
Sponsor: Wattsburg Wireless Association
See http://www.wattsburg-wireless.us/Hamfest_2.htm

July 11 – IARU HF World Championship. See www.aeel.org/iaru-hf-championship

July 14 – Wattsburg Wireless Club Meeting

July 18 – VE Sessions at WWA

July 18 – North American QSO RTTY QSO Party.
See www.ncjweb.com/NAQO-Rules.pdf