

The VHF Journal

Published by the Rochester VHF Group August 2000 <http://vhfgroup.rochesterny.org>

Club Memorial Call: W2UTH

Are we having fun yet?

UHF TEST
August 5-6

RVHFG sponsored
All-Band Sprint
Announcement

10 GHz Shootout
New-England Style:
an exclusive RVHFG report

10 GHz
Cumulative Test
August 19-20

N1BUG's AU notes

16 JUL 2000, 00:43
Summer AU as fine as it comes

THE JOURNAL UPDATES YOU ON
MICROWAVE UPDATE 2000

Summer WEB Issue: Membership \$10 US, \$15 CDN annually

VHFBILL



The Rochester VHF Group

Club memorial call: W2UTH

website @ <http://vhfgroup.rochesterny.org>

Welcome to the third digital-only edition of the Summer VHF Journal.

Well, the first thing I want to say is **WOW what an opening!** I am, of course, referring to the **AU of 15 July 2000**. Four new grids on 220 and lots more on 2m... the only thing that could have made me happier is if many of the 2m ops in those far flung grids had 220... and what would have made the 2m ops happier is if I was running 432 at the time... oh well! Someone e-mailed me an MP3 file of what my sig sounded like... a first for me and it was very nice to hear myself via buzz mode.

The next thing I need to say is **WOW what a PICNIC!** My congratulations go out to **K2AXX and (k2nay)**. What a spread, and what an effort went into the fete down in Livingston County FN12. Of course, **KB2VGH** gets a VERY honorable mention for moving several tons of gravel in the driveway with his own bare hands to make the site presentable for those who would attend. Congrats to all for making the picnic a great success!

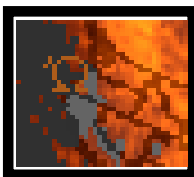
This month we say farewell to Chairman **NS9E**, who has resigned as Chairman and is taking a new position in Reno, Nevada (way out west in Delta-Mexico-Land for those 10GHz ops who need to check their maps). **K2AXX** has succeeded him in the chain of command, and we look forward to his monthly rants from now on.

John Stevens, **WB2BYP** traveled to NEWS-land and came back with this month's report on their 10GHz Shootout- a phot and text extravaganza that will get you primed for the first weekend of the **ARRL 10 GHz cumulative contest on the 19th and 20 of this month**.

A monthly column by **N2JMH** graces our pages for the first time this month. Notes from **N1BUG** and **NA3T** on the recent AU follow herein. No **ADVISOR** this month- the non-ham stuff just got in the way- but we'll be leading you astray again next month, and have a great **JOURNAL INTERVIEW** then too!

We're still looking for good monthly and occasional columns... don't say you can't write 'cuz we know better. 73 es DX2U, EH ...*de* **VE3IEY**

PS: The **Q** runs AU by the seashore! ~~~~~>



To Subscribe: Send your address, call, and \$10 US funds (or \$15 CDN funds) to: The Rochester VHF Group, PO Box 92122, Rochester, NY, 14692

Commentary and articles: via e-mail to editor VE3IEY: tantonr@kingston.net. Use standard ASCII text, Corel's Word Perfect or send as a regular e-mail message.

Photos and drawings: via e-mail, and can be sent in any format that is available (JPG, GIF and TIFF are the most common).

Assistant Editor, printer, membership & data-magician: N2KXS

This publication is Copyrighted by the Rochester VHF Group.

It has been created using Corel's Word Perfect 2000, Adobe Photoshop 5.5, Adobe Pagemaker 6.52, & Image Ready 2.0. It is best read with Acrobat 4.0

Other NFP publications may excerpt articles herein provided credit is given and subscription information to the Journal is reprinted with it.

Our "Who's Who":



Officers:

Chairman: K2AXX Mark Hoffman
(716) 243-5606 mhoffman@greece.k12.ny.us

Vice Chairman: vacant - election in September

Secretary: N2JMH Jim Howard
(716) 637-4554 n2jmh@arrl.net

Treasurer: N2OPW Paul Meyers
(716) 425-1301 N2OPW@qsl.net

Director (Even year): KB2VGH Jeff Luce
(716) 424-8406 kb2vgh@amsat.org

Director (Odd year): K2DH Dave Hallidy
(716) 728-9517 k2dh@frontiernet.net

Past Chairman: NS9E Tim Stoffell
(phone # in flux) lionlamb@servtech.com

Appointees:

Contest Chairman: N2YB Mark Wasserbauer
(716) 242-4574 mwasserb@harris.com

Assistant: K2AXX (see above)

Awards manager: N2JMH Jim Howard

(716) 637-4554 n2jmh@ibm.net (see above)

Banquet Chairman: WA2ZNC Len Gessen

(716) 229-5470 wa2znc@juno.com

Picnic Chairman: AA2WV Scott Ballou

Newsletter Editor: VE3IEY Tom Richmond

(613) 634-1855 tantonr@kingston.net

Newsletter Publishing: N2KXS Judy Stonehill

(716) 582-2074 jstonehi@frontiernet.net

Membership Manager: N2KXS (see above)

Internet Webmaster: N2KXS (see above)

Mailing list Majordomo in charge: KB2VGH (see above & below))



Jeff, KB2VGH sez:

"There is only *one* mailing list [you'll ever need...]

Rvhfg@vhfgroup.rochesterny.org

It is setup to broadcast to all RVHFG members

Photo, artistic, text credits and apologies (where not otherwise noted):

T. Richmond, Peter Aschwanden, NOAA,
NASA, UA Canopus, NEWS,
Packrats Cheese Bits, NA3T

THIS PUBLICATION was compiled edited and typeset on Amherst Island, Ontario, Canada (FN14pd)

It was published in Rochester, New York, USA (FN13)

The World's Image Capital

VE3CRU SK

Report from Peter Shilton, VE3AX

Just got back from CSVHF in Winnipeg and picked up my e-mail. I don't think this was posted to the W6YX reflector or Moon Net so am doing it for the group. Several of you were asking how Hans was doing.

Hans Peters, VE3CRU, passed away Saturday after a long but courageous battle with cancer. Hans was an avid EME'er, and stood at 48 states worked on 432 Mhz. He was also a key figure in the VE3ONT Algonquin EME expeditions in 1992-95 and graciously provided the 432 Mhz equipment for that adventure. He was the first person to make a QSO from the big dish.

More notably, Hans is remembered for his contribution to the 220 Mhz ops in North America. After establishing a Microwave Modules distributorship in Toronto in the late '70's, Hans recognized the need for a 220 Mhz transverter similar to the MMt 144-28 and MMt 432-28 which were so popular at the time. Microwave Modules was reluctant to provide transverters for a band that was not available in England so Hans started modifying the 144-28's to 220 Mhz and selling them. After some time he was finally able to convince MM to provide bare boards for the 220 Mhz program - it was easier than converting them!

I understand there are several hundred of Hans 220 Mhz "MMt 220-28's" out there - I only sold mine last year after upgrading. It served me well and I hope there will be many others in service for years to come. I ask you to remember the fellow who made it so easy for us to get on that band.

Good VHF DX'ing Hans!

PICNIC POOH-BAH REPORT and 10GHZ PEP-TALK

Hi All,

Thanks to all who were able to make it to the picnic and making it a great event ! It was a real nice mix of activities and also a lot of fun to help put it together. Hats off to Mark and Renee Hoffman for opening up there home and their wonderful hospitality.

All right then, is everyone ready to play 10g ? If not, let it be known right here, right now. I'm sure we can all pool together to fill in gaps in peoples systems and do any final set-up and testing. We all worked very hard building our transverters and also invested tidy sums of cash in the process so.....LETS PLAY!!!! Fruit can't be enjoyed unless you pick it from the tree.....I think it's harvest time !

Past Picnic-Pooh Bah
Scott AA2WV

"OUTSIDE OF A DOG, A BOOK IS MAN'S BEST
FRIEND. INSIDE OF A DOG, IT'S TOO DARK TO
READ"

GROUCHO MARX

WEAK SIGNAL NEWS

... de N2JMH

Tom Whitted **WA8WZG** reported a microburst at his QTH on the 14th of July with extensive damage to his antenna farm. As you will see from the picture I have included it is a catastrophe and everyone in the RVHFG wishes him a speedy recovery. More pictures are available at <http://www.wa8wzg.com/>



The weekend of July 15 & 16 brought a major Aurora opening stretching deep into the south. Brian **W3EME** reported working 110 qsos with 27 states and 68 grids on 2 meters. K5SW also reported 37 qso's 19 states and 34 grids with his best DX being **K1TEO** (who is that) at about **1240 miles**.

Rumor has it that Walter **NQ2O** has put up some serious new aluminum at his QTH. A pair of 17b2s, a pair of 28 element 432, a 20 el 222 and a pair of 55 element 1296 loopers all with elevation control. He needs it at his QTH of 200 something feet above sea level. Hope to have pictures for next months journal.

I would like to welcome one of the newest members to the RVHFG. John Lamb **N3XJX**. John is an active VHFer and a personal friend. His current bands include ABCD with E by the September contest. I have visited his QTH in FN10 and he has a nice hill top location and his January score reflects that. Welcome onboard John, and look forward to seeing you at a few meetings.

Upcoming weak signal events for August start early in the month with the **ARRL UHF contest being the weekend of the 5th and 6th**, 1800 UTC to 1800 UTC. The third full weekend of August and September are the 10ghz and up cumulative contest. The **September ARRL VHF QSO Party is the second full weekend of the month, the 9th 11th**. Don't forget that September is a club competition and everyone's participation is appreciated.

The 26th Eastern VHF/UHF conference is being held August 25,26& the 27th at the Radisson Hotel in Enfield, Ct. Further information can be found at <http://uhavax.hartford.edu~newsvhf/vhfconf.html> or by contacting Bruce Wood at bdwood@erols.com

That is it for this month. If you have news you would like included please forward it to n2jmh@arrl.net and I will include it in my monthly news article

2000 RVHFG FALL ALL-BAND SPRINTS ANNOUNCEMENT

... de Jim Howard <n2jmh@arrl.net>

OBJECT: 1) To work as many stations as possible on our VHF allocations in a 5 hour period.

2) To have fun!

DATE: Thursday, November 09, 2000

TIME: 7 PM to Midnight local time. Stations within 50 miles of a time zone boundary may adjust their operating time to that of the adjacent time zone if they wish. You may operate all 5 hours of the event.

BANDS: All above 50 MHz, including laser.

CLASSES: Single-op, all band only. While there is no rover class per se, a station may change grids, and submit a separate log for each grid operated from.

SCORING: 1 point for contacts on 6 and 2 meters.

2 points for contacts on 222 and 432 MHz.

4 points for contacts on 902 and 1296 MHz.

8 points for all bands 2304 MHz and above.

Multipliers are 4 digit maidenhead grid squares.

(January VHF sweepstakes scoring.)

OTHER RULES: All other rules are the usual rules for VHF contests (Note to those outside the US: use ARRL January VHF SS rules for all classes worldwide).

AWARDS: Certificates will be issued to the top 5 finishers at the National level. We are open to alternative award ideas for next year!

REPORTING: Logs are due three weeks after the contest date.

Electronic: Submit log and a suitable summary sheet to:

vhf@vhfgroup.rochesterny.org

Log should be in ARRL standard file format.

Mail: Log and suitable summary sheet to:

Rochester VHF Group, P.O. Box 92122, Rochester, NY 14692

WESITE ADDRESS OF THE MONTH

<http://www.qsl.net/w8wn/>

use this site for great links to High Speed CW
and High Speed Meteor Scatter info.



**Two rovers meet on the road-
N2GKM and some other guy, FN30,
Pallisades Interstate Parkway,
west of NYC about 4 miles.**

The Editor's closing notes from the land of real beer and real cigars

Well, that's it for another summer WEB issue- next month we're back to print!

If folks could let me know how their downloads have been going it would be a great help- I just keep shrinking stuff smaller and smaller hoping to keep downloads at 28.8 to less than 3 minutes... but of course resolution of the pictures begins to degrade at some point too.

The way the JOURNAL is set up now, **I can take ANY format picture known to mankind** and get it into print here. Some degrade more than others in the conversion, of course... two of the worst at this point are HTML and, believe it or not, PDF. Since these are modes primarily used for viewing ON SCREEN at about 72dpi, when I get 'em into the journal, put them on a page, they just end up so TINY that I have to enlarge them to make them look reasonable next to other photos... and there's the problem.

Hence the "fuzzy" print on the Picnic directions last month (it was one giant PDF file)... but everyone got there, so it must have worked out anyway.

It's YOUR JOURNAL- so if you don't find anything interesting in it, it's YOUR fault. **Remember, we DO have an ARTICLE OF THE YEAR AWARD to give out next April, so get writing, eh!**

abciey (aka abciey)

N.E.W.S. GROUP 10 GHZ SHOOTOUT- 15 JULY 2000

Exclusive report to the RVHFG Journal by John Stevens, WB2BYP

The attached pictures were taken at the "10 GHz Narrowband Shootout, held under the auspices of the North East Weak Signal group. Good info can be obtained at <http://uhavax.hartford.edu/~newsvhf/welcome.html> about the group and their activities. Alternatively, search on the key words "N.E.W.S."



The theme was one of testing equipment in anticipation of the summer contest activity, and a number of participants brought 10 GHz narrowband equipment and lined up under a pavilion. That's K2RIW under the umbrella briefing the troops on the comms plan. W1GHZ Paul Wade is in the white shirt and hat. Paul has been involved in this type of drill for many years, having been the person responsible for the East Coast Antenna Measuring Contest back when he was formerly known as WA2ZZF. Still known as K2RIW, Dick Knadle has also been involved in this sort of testing for a long time, and is a wealth of knowledge and opinion.

The dish on the far right is the BYP rig. Periodically I embarrass myself by bringing equipment in front of this austere group. Equipment is a Frankenstein of DEM pieces and QUALCOM parts. The exciter is a FT-290, the bi-directional mixer is a module from an old spectrum analyzer, the LO is partly home-brew and uses a multiplier from a beta version of the DEM transverter. Preamps are N1BWT style, with a hot HP FET in place of the MGF-1302 and snowflaked into submission. A QUALCOM rx piece is used as a gain block. Another QUALCOM hunk is used for TX to about 1/2 Watt output.

My first contact with this rig was via rainscatter, between Hogback Mountain in VT to AF1T on Mt. Greylock. Not that many miles, maybe 40, but it was not LOS due to terrain blockage.



A signal source and a spectrum analyzer was placed in a tent down-range. K2RIW ran the signal generator and analyzer while in squad radio contact with W1GHZ. The object is to set a signal level that everyone can hear, then reduce it until below discernible. At the point where the signal was really weak, they moved frequency, and the objective was to re-acquire signal. This was to really separate the men from the boys and the women from the girls. It worked pretty well. The RX test was run twice. Absolute magnitude at the signal generator was used as test data. WB1FKF and AF1T were tied receiving a signal of -103 dBm. WB1FKF had the best signal transmitted and received at the tent analyzer. His rig had 3 Watts output. A total of 12 stations data were taken. All I will admit to is that I learned a lot about my feed efficiency in comparison to other prime focus systems. I have some work to do....I was many dB down from the big dogs.



WA1HOG with his system. Dennis received at -99 dBm for comparison purposes. His TX results were in second place relative to WB1FKF.



WA1VVH with his system, which measured out as -97 dBm. I sometimes see him on Mt. Greylock in the 10 GHz Cumulative Contest.



N1EKV with his setup. This is another offset feed system that did very well. -91 dBm for comparison purposes.



W1VT system without Zak Lau on camera. -87 for comparison purposes. This is a very portable system that Zak has been extremely successful with mountain-topping throughout the Northeast.



Dale Clement AF1T with his prime focus system. His IC202 crapped when the TX test evolution occurred. His 1 Watt on TX should have been heard pretty well. I've heard him on Martha's Vineyard when I was on Mt. Greylock.

Some conclusions can be drawn from this kind of testing (though a rigorous comparison is not realistic, with all systems spread out horizontally, and with clutter and reflection from the fence in the path). It

is not unlike the luck of the draw that you get on a mountain-top. It did provide a good opportunity to set up and exercise signal acquisition skills, frequency calibration, drift comparison, and make some size-and-weight considerations.

I was on the lookout for feed horn ideas that better illuminate a deep dish. Consensus has it that a "Chaparral" type waveguide feed is best for my $f/d=0.27$ dish Vs the waveguide flange that I am using. I was able to pick one up that can be modified to adapt to $3/4$ " copper pipe. This will allow the changeover relay and preamp to be placed out at the feed, instead of a dB down stream via a coaxial jumper to the back of the dish. The compromise that I thought I was making by keeping the feed blockage and scatter potentials to a minimum, does not seem to outweigh the need to get the preamp right next to an optimized feed. Most of the system improvement to be had is in feed illumination efficiency.

If anyone has any comments or questions, I'd be glad to respond. My email is jws08@frontiernet.net or phone (716) 342-6964. Anyone interested in doing some rig bench evaluations or on-the-air shakeouts, feel free to call or write.

John Stevens - wb2byp FN13ff

DATE CHANGE for Buffalo Hamfest

...de Irv Goodman <af2k@localnet.com>

Take Notice: Due to circumstances beyond their control, the Buffalo Hamfest / ARRL Western New York Section Convention at Erie County Fairgrounds in Hamburg, NY has been changed to SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16th, 2000 — NOT the 23rd.

(Advance sale registration and flea market tickets available. Information. . . www.buffalohamfest.org)

WANTED

Hey Gang!

I'm looking for the following items, let me know if you are willing to part with them.

- HAM-II or HAM-III rotor & Control Box
- TS-830 (for use as an IF)
- Rotor plate for Rohn 25

Jeff Luce <kb2vgh@amsat.org>

"I STAND BY ALL THE MISSTATEMENTS
I HAVE MADE"

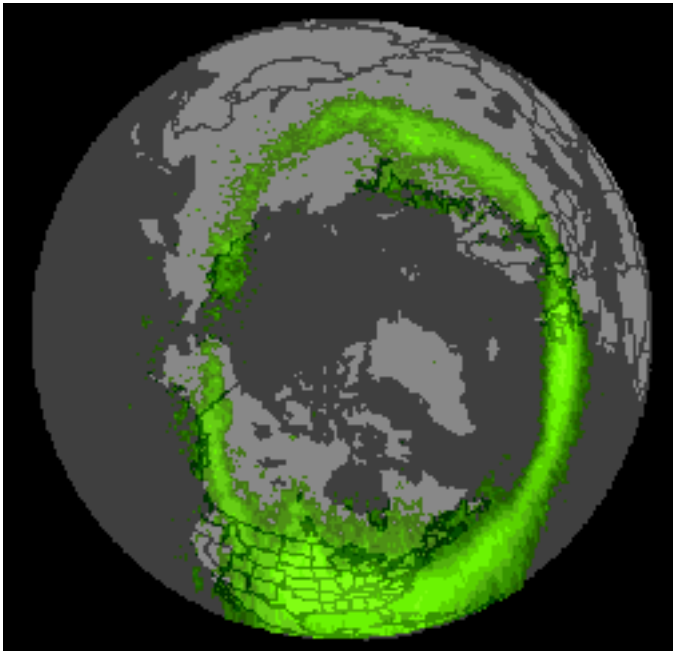
DAN QUAYLE

Interesting data from the July 15 2000 Aurora

Paul Kelley <n1bug@mint.net>

Here are two images that may be of interest. These are from the Visible Imaging System (VIS) on the Polar spacecraft. The first one shows the position of the auroral oval at 16 July 0026Z:

ftp://eiger.physics.uiowa.edu/storm/vis001980001_green.gif (shown below)



The next one is for 16 July 0043Z, as it was retreating northward.

<ftp://eiger.physics.uiowa.edu/storm/vis001980110.gif>
(shown on the cover of the August VHF Journal)

Note: these images are of the VISIBLE aurora - not necessarily the same as radio aurora! A pretty amazing event, though.

Editors note:

please visit N1BUG's Aurora monitor website:

<http://www.mint.net/~n1bug/prop/aumon/aufr.html>

It should be **everyone's** homepage (unless yours is the RVHFG's website, of course!)

Looking for Au Logs!

Joseph Mack NA3T <jmack@wm7d.net>

Dear OMs,

I have found you through your postings to prop logger and e-mail addresses in qrz.com. I would like to make maps of the Au opening on July 15, 2000 like:

http://www.wm7d.net/az_proj/images/fs_qso_elev_144_99.png

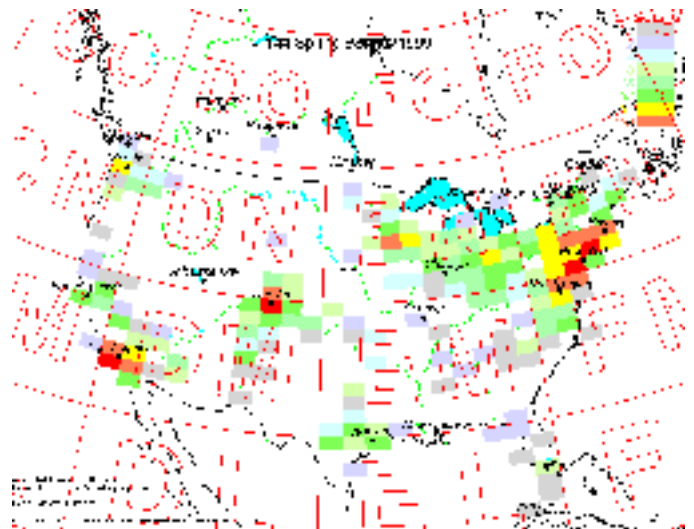
I would like your log entries indicating band, UTC, both grids. I don't need calls if this is a privacy issue. Please send to: jmack@wm7d.net

The map will be publicly distributed.. I will map the total period and hourly qso's, so the start and end of the opening should show up (and presumably the peak). If the Au moved, this might be seen also if there are statistically enough contacts to show it.

I will post maps (or their location) to the original mailing list and to the usual reflectors (will be at least 2 weeks).

—
Joseph Mack NA3T EME(B,D), FM051w North Carolina
<mailto:jmack@wm7d.net>

azimuthal equidistant map generator at <http://www.wm7d.net/azproj.shtml>



Perseids Packet Experiment 2000

...Ev Tupis (W2EV) <propnet@greecenyc.com>

First, a bit of levity :) _____

'Tis the middle of summer and all 'round the house
the honey-do list includes pool decks to douse
with cleaner and stain to keep looking new;
the Amateur pleasures are seemingly few.

Yet here's an event that's certain to please
It comes every August; you work it with ease.
The Perseids meteor shower can be
worked on a Packet, auto-ma-ti-ca-ly.

Assemble your station and just let it run
and check it with every new rise of the sun.
What distant new icon appeared overnight?
Each new occurrence a wonderful sight!

Experiment, have fun and share summer joy,
Imagine the uses this tool could employ
For the amateur scientist that's in us all:
Take no time from family and come, have a ball!

The Perseids have begun to fall (this event peaks on August 12th, but is a fairly broad event, starting and ending +/- 2-weeks from that date). The most usable portion of the event for amateur meteor scatter is August 8th to 16th for 6-meter operators, and August 10th to 13th for 2-meter operators, as this is the most dense part of the meteor trail.

A large number of true experimenters will be attempting meteor-trail communication using FM packet radio again this year. An advantage of FM packet is that it can run 24/7 during these types of events. The operator simply checks the computer screen periodically to see what may have been caught! Because operation takes place on 53.53-MHz and 147.585-MHz 24/7 operation probably won't interfere with SSB/CW attempts that one may wish to make simultaneously.

Last year, successful participants needed ERP's of 100 watts and 500 watts for 6-meter and 2-meter operation, respectively. Don't let that discourage you, if your power level is less...but please allow it to motivate you to use an amplifier if you have one! Part of the experiment is to help determine the power budget needed for this type of operation!

All you need is a packet TNC, computer, transceiver/antenna and software. This year, we are featuring software called "UI-View" for Windows computers and APRSDos for MS-DOS computers. Note: this is *not* APRS (which is a service that runs on 144.39). APRSDos simply includes a Meteor Mode

which is useful to our purpose.

This year, we are using the "Quadrant" MS method. The continent is divided into four parts. NE transmits continuously for the first 15 seconds of each minute. SE takes the 15-30 second slot, SW takes 30-45 and NW takes 45-00. During the "other" 45-seconds, your station listens for folks in the other three quadrants. The software controls the timing for you...it's one 15-second long transmission (not a ton of small T/R cycles for 15-seconds).

Intrigued? Care to join us? Visit <http://go.to/BEACONet> and select the hyperlink for Meteor Scatter Operations. You can get the UI-View software and configuration information right there! The whole process, from cold start (no software) to participating (everything configured and functioning) is less than 90 minutes! Best of all, once it's done, the software remembers its' configuration so all you do is power-up and start operating!

Last of all (and probably as important as everything else), join the eMail remailer that these experimenters use. It is low volume, but quite high quality...chock full of information as meteor events come and go. You won't regret it. Joining instructions are on the BEACONet website, too.

While general follow-up announcements will be made on other remailers, the remailer noted on the BEACONet website will be where details and specifics will be discussed.

By the way...the BEACONet website (<http://go.to/BEACONet>) is still under development. Don't fret, though. It's being added to every day.

Join us! Have a ball!



**N3EMF EXTREME ROVER
in FN30 for FD 2000**

MICRO- WAVE UPDATE 2000

BE THERE OR BE SQUARE

(EDITORS NOTE: This is always the PRIMO VHF/UHF/UW gathering in the world... but having Microwave Update in conjunction with the Packrats Hamarama is just a mind-blowing concept. If you have never gone to Philly for this event, DO SO THIS YEAR or be destined to listen to the tales for years to come!!!!) Yo, KB2VGH and N2JMH- this means YOU!

Microwave Update 2000 will be held on **29 through 30 September 2000** at the Holiday Inn Select, Bucks County just north of Philadelphia, PA.

This year, Microwave Update will be hosted by the Mt. Airy VHF Radio Club, Inc. ("The Pack Rats"). The Holiday Inn Select, Bucks County will be providing accommodations for the event. This is a 215 room full service hotel with a restaurant, lounge, indoor pool, fitness room, etc. It is centrally located between the Bucks County countryside and historic Philadelphia. We will have full use of the conference center Friday and Saturday. Two smaller meeting rooms will be available for the evening flea market(s).

Call for Papers: Anyone wishing to present and/or submit papers equipment design, construction, and propagation at frequencies above 900 MHz for inclusion in the printed copy of the proceedings should contact John Sortor, Conference Chairman at JohnKB3XG@aol.com. The deadline for papers is Monday, August 7, 2000.

For those of you that are unfamiliar, the Pack Rats are a group of VHF and Above enthusiast's with a 44 year history. The club was started by a small group from Philadelphia with the sole

purpose of promoting VHF activity. The club has sponsored one of the area's best hamfest (Hamarama) for the past 28 years and has hosted the Mid Atlantic States VHF Conference since 1975. The Packrats provide beacons on 10 VHF/Microwave bands from 50 MHz through 10 GHz and are active in all VHF contests.

Room rates will be in the low to mid \$80's. There is no additional charge for double occupancy. We have blocked out 100 rooms under the key code "Microwave Update" which will be held for us until September 7th. This might sound like a lot of rooms but don't wait until the last minute to make your reservation. This is a busy area.

Holiday Inn Select, Bucks County
4700 Street Road, Treose, PA 19053
(215) 364-2000 or (800) HOLIDAY
www.basshotels.com/holiday-inn

In addition to ham activities we are tentatively planning some extra curricular activities for stranded ham family members. Most attractions can be reached in less than 1 hour. A list of activities will be included with the registration package to see who might be interested in what:

Atlantic City Casino bus trips; Franklin Mills Outlet Mall; Liberty Bell & Old Philadelphia NJ State Aquarium; Philadelphia Park Race Track; Sesame Place; Valley Forge National Park

Of course it wouldn't be Microwave Update without the surplus tour. There are more new and surplus houses within a 50 mile radius around the Holiday Inn than you will be able to visit in one day. I said new equipment because Down East Microwave Factory Tours will be on the list. There will be evening flea markets at the hotel and don't forget Hamarama on Sunday. Please add flashlights to your packing list. **The doors to the Pack Rat hamfest (Hamarama) open Sunday at 8 am but Hamarama has always been known for the "Flashlight Shoppers."**

Noise Figure testing will be provided as well as an equipment tune-up clinic.

Advance Registration is \$40.00 with forms available at the web site below. Send registration to Microwave Update, PO Box 682, Hatboro, PA 19040. Hamarama and Dinner tickets will be available at the door.

For more information contact JohnKB3XG@aol.com and visit the Packrats web page for the latest news on Microwave Update 2000 at:

http://www.ij.net/packrats/MUD_2000/mud.html

A lesson in life

...Forwarded by WD2AKA Karyn M. Blodgett
<tblodget@frontiernet.net>

The older I get, the more I enjoy Saturday mornings. Perhaps it's the quiet solitude that comes with being the first to rise, or maybe it's the unbounded joy of not having to be at work. Either way, the first few hours of a Saturday morning are most enjoyable.

A few weeks ago, I was shuffling toward the basement shack with a steaming cup of coffee in one hand and the morning paper in the other. What began as a typical Saturday morning, turned into one of those lessons that life seems to hand you from time to time. Let me tell you about it.

I turned the dial up into the phone portion of the band on my ham radio in order to listen to a Saturday morning swap net. Along the way, I came across an older sounding chap, with a tremendous signal and a golden voice. You know the kind, he sounded like he should be in the broadcasting business. He was telling whoever he was talking with something about "a thousand marbles." I was intrigued and stopped to listen to what he had to say.

"Well, Tom, it sure sounds like you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. Hard to believe a young fellow should have to work sixty or seventy hours a week to make ends meet. Too bad you missed your daughter's dance recital."

He continued, "Let me tell you something Tom, something that has helped me keep a good perspective on my own priorities." And that's when he began to explain his theory of a "thousand marbles."

"You see, I sat down one day and did a little arithmetic. The average person lives about seventy-five years. I know, some live more and some live less, but on average, folks live about seventy-five years."

"Now then, I multiplied 75 times 52 and I came up with 3900 which is the number of Saturdays that the average person has in their entire lifetime. Now stick with me Tom, I'm getting to the important part."

"It took me until I was fifty-five years old to think about all this in any detail, " he went on, "and by that time I had lived through over twenty-eight hundred Saturdays. I got to thinking that if I lived to be seventy-five, I only had about a thousand of them left to enjoy."

"So I went to a toy store and bought every single marble they had. I ended up having to visit three toy stores to roundup 1000 marbles. I took them home and put them inside of a large, clear plastic container right here in the shack next to my gear. Every Saturday since then, I have taken one marble out and thrown it away." "I found that by watching the marbles diminish, I focused more on the really important things in life. There is nothing like watching your time here on this earth run out to help get your priorities straight."

"Now let me tell you one last thing before I sign-off with you and take my lovely wife out for breakfast. This morning, I took the very last marble out of the container. I figure if I make it until next Saturday

then I have been given a little extra time. And the one thing we can all use is a little more time."

"It was nice to meet you Tom, I hope you spend more time with your family, and I hope to meet you again here on the band. 75 year Old Man, this is K9NZQ, clear and going QRT, good morning!"

You could have heard a pin drop on the band when this fellow signed off.

I guess he gave us all a lot to think about. I had planned to work on the antenna that morning, and then I was going to meet up with a few hams to work on the next club newsletter. Instead, I went upstairs and woke my wife up with a kiss. "C'mon honey, I'm taking you and the kids to breakfast."

"What brought this on?" she asked with a smile. "Oh, nothing special, it's just been a long time since we spent a Saturday together with the kids. Hey, can we stop at a toy store while we're out? I need to buy some marbles."

Give your troubled child a hug, your beautiful wife/husband a compliment, and your aging grandmother a phone call! They will all appreciate the moment and it will be long-lasting!

Be careful out there, we are all losing our marbles.

FOR SALE:

...Leonard M Gessin <wa2znc@juno.com>

-2 meter, 5 el. beam, HB, \$ 50.00

-Mosley TA 31 M, 10/15/20, full size, full power, rotating dipole - \$ 125.00

-Mosley TW 31M, 12/17/30, full size, full power, rotating dipole - \$125.00 (Field day use only, like new, stored inside)

-Whistler, DC to AC inverter, 1500w. cont. 3000w peak, New \$300

-Kenwood TR 7400, 2m mobile, w/manual \$ 75.00

-Standard, SR-C826M, 12 ch. x'tal. 2m, mobile \$ 25.00

**"YOU CAN SAY ANY FOOLISH THING
TO A DOG, AND THE DOG WILL GIVE YOU A
LOOK THAT SAYS 'MY GOD, YOU'RE RIGHT! I
NEVER WOULD'VE THOUGHT OF THAT' "**

SEAN CONNERY

6 Meter Survey Results

Ev Tupis, W2EV <evman@ix.netcom.com>

Recently, I floated a survey, asking for information as to the type of 6-meter antenna (elements, boom length, height) and power used to operate (maximum and typical). I thought it might be fun to learn and compare our own personal situation against other listserv participants. The results were quite interesting.

I received 91 responses. The extremes were:

Category Min Max
 Elements : 1 36
 Boom Len (ft): 4 50 Note: not counting dipole stns.
 Height (ft) : 5 180
 MaxRF (watts): 5 3000 Note: Max=capable not actual used
 TypicalRF (w): 5 1200

Now...including all reporting stations, the average and median was calculated:

Category Avg Median
 Elements 6.2 5
 Boom Len 23.2 24
 Height 52.8 47
 Max RF 514.6 170
 Typ RF 178.7 100

Eliminating any station that used multiple beam antennas in an array (the real big guns), the numbers look like this:

Category Avg Median
 Elements 5.2 5
 Boom Len 22.6 22.5
 Height 50.8 45
 Max RF 463.2 150

Typ RF 186.4 100

As for raw data (not everyone answered every question)...

Antenna Responses

Elements

1	7
2	2
3	9
4	7
5	21
6	14
7	18
8	2
9	3
10	1
11	2
14	1
16	1
20	1
24	1
36	1

Height Responses

<10	1
10-19	3
20-29	13
30-39	13
40-49	12
50-59	11
60-69	8
70-79	8
80-89	7
90-99	1
100+	5

THE ROCHESTER VHF GROUP

INDIVIDUAL \$10 ARRL MEMBER Radio Amateurs of Canada Member
 FAMILY (\$2 per member additional)

CALLSIGN: _____ GRID SQUARE: _____

FOR FAMILY MEMBERSHIP please list callsigns of others at same address: _____

Phone # (____) _____ - _____ PLEASE DO NOT PUBLISH MY PHONE #

Name: _____

Street _____ City _____

State / Province _____ ZIP / Postal Code _____ Country _____

E-mail address (for RVHFG listserv): _____ BANDS: A B C D 9 E F G H I J K L

MAIL: I want to receive the VHF JOURNAL in Black & White by mail.

WEB: I want mine in COLOR! I'll pick it up from the RVHFG website and print it myself.

(\$4 of Web-recipient's dues will be transferred to RVHFG special projects fund)

Mail to:
RVHFG
PO Box 92122
Rochester, NY
14692
USA

