

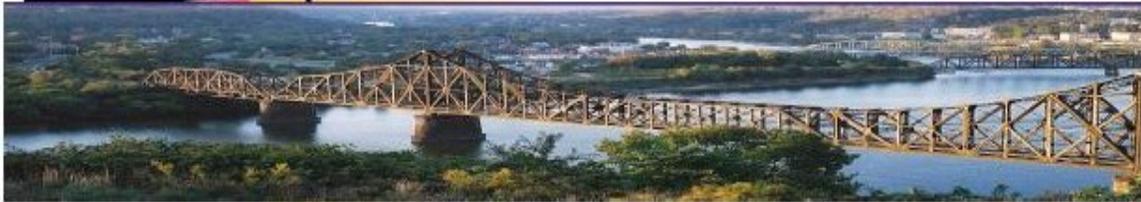


THE BEAVER VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION
 WWW.W3SGJ.ORG
 BEAVER COUNTYS ONLY 75 YEAR ARRL AFFILIATED CLUB!

The eQRM Newsletter

Home of W3SGJ/R
 145.310- 100 Hz PL

Volume III, Issue 11
 March 2010
 Grant, KB3QFQ, Editor



Looking Forward to 2010

Even though it is already the third month of 2010, I'm still looking forward to this year. Why? Because we have quite a lot of events lined up, most including involvement with Explorer Post 73 and Boy Scout Troop 405.

We are introducing more people to amateur radio; TechFest 2010, which had approximately 200-300 attendees, was a step in the right direction. Jack, KZ3Z, is teaching a Technician License Class at the Baden American Legion every Wednesday, which he has been doing for the past two years. This was the first step, and is another step in getting more youth interested in our hobby. While I am still (very) new to amateur radio, I think our club is providing an excellent outreach to the community and Boy Scouts.

Upcoming events, like the Pittsburgh Marathon, where we will be helping to provide communications; ARRL Field Day 2010; the annual Corn Roast at Brady's Run Park; Campaganza 2010, an event of epic proportions that will have approximately 10,000 Scouts attending, and where we will be the only group showcasing amateur radio; Jamboree on the Air (JOTA), an annual Scout Jamboree that is held on amateur radio; the BVARA Christmas Party; and more, showcase that our club is interested in introducing the youth of today to ham radio, and is doing something to accomplish that goal. They also show that our club is actively participating in amateur radio events.

Here's to 2010.

Check us out on the web by clicking the links below



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[Geocaching](#)

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What would you like to see added to the newsletter?

Would you like to help, but don't know how?

Email me at
KB3QFQ@W3SGJ.org
 and let me know!!

We need YOUR opinions!

Just email me your thoughts on anything that we have posted, blogged, wrote or did, and it will be **PUBLISHED IN THE NEWSLETTER!**

Letters and Emails to the Editor – Please email KB3QFQ@W3SGJ.org

The eQRM welcomes letters/e-mails to the editor. Letters must be signed and contain your contact information for verification prior to publication. Preference will be given to letters of 200 words or less. Letters are subject to editing. Unused letters will not be acknowledged or returned.

The BVARA 10 Meter Net Lunch group will be meeting every Thursday at Rainaldi's in Center Twp at 11:00 AM. All area amateurs are invited and encouraged to attend the Thursday Morning Lunch.

VE TESTS are held by the BVARA VE Team at the Beaver County Emergency Operations Center in Ambridge. IF YOU DESIRE TO TAKE A TEST, CONTACT CHRIS, W3OUF, FOR THE DATE OF THE NEXT TEST SESSION.

All tests will begin PROMPTLY AT 6:00PM. Information and registration on a test session can be obtained by contacting the VE Team Coordinator, Chris Moratis, W3OUF.

His address, email and phone number are as follows:

**Chris Moratis, W3OUF
1199 Highland Avenue
Ambridge, PA 15003
PHONE: 724-266-2866
cjmoratis@verizon.net**

**2010 BVARA
Officers & Directors**

- President: Jack Spencer, KZ3Z**
- Vice President: Robert De Marco, WA3ZRM**
- Second Vice President: Evan Finkelstein , KB3QFR**
- Secretary: Norm Trunick , K3NJT**
- Treasurer: Pam Spencer, W3PMS**
- Director: George Caffro, N3HOJ**
- Director: Chris Moratis, W3OUF**
- Trustee: Dick Hanna, K3VVY**



BVARA Meetings

**E-Board meetings are held at 6:30,
Regular meetings are at 7:30**

- March 11 - Ambridge 911 Center**
- April 8 - Ambridge 911 Center**
- May 13 - Ambridge 911 Center**
- June 10 - Ambridge 911 Center**
- July 8 - Ambridge 911 Center**
- August - None, Corn Roast at Brady's Run**
- September 9 - Ambridge 911 Center**
- October 14 - Ambridge 911 Center**
- November 11 - Ambridge 911 Center**
- December - None, Christmas party**

RACES & ARES

eQRM Urges ALL Beaver County Amateurs to Participate



As a matter of editorial opinion, the eQRM urges all Beaver County licensed amateurs to participate in the County's RACES and ARES programs.

Any Beaver County Amateur that is interested in participating in the RACES/ARES programs can do so by checking into the Beaver County Public Service Net which meets every Monday evening at 8:30 PM local time on the N3TN 146.850 MHz repeater (88.5 PL).

PITTSBURGH AREA HAM RADIO CALENDAR

From the Greater Pittsburgh VHF Society

March

- 6-7:**ARRL Internation DX Contest (SSB mode)
- 9:** Two Rivers ARC Amateur Radio Exam Session (note 2a)
- 13:**Two Rivers ARC "Hams n Eggs" Breakfast (note 3)
- 14:**Foothills ARC Hamfest-Greensburg VFD Hose Company
#1-10 McLaughlin Drive-Greensburg, PA
More Info: 724-989-0462/Email: n3flr@arrl.net-Talkin: 147.18
MHz (131.8 hz tone)
More Info: <http://www.w3lww.org/>
- 16:**Two Rivers ARC Club Meeting (note 1)
- 20:**Breezeshooters "Ground Wave Contest"-7 pm to Midnight
local time-10 meter band (Phone Mode)
More Info: <http://www.breezeshooters.net>
- 27-28:** CQ Worked All Prefix Contest "WPX" (SSB mode)-More
Info: <http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com>

April

- 10:** Two Rivers ARC "Hams n Eggs" Breakfast (note 3)
- 10-11:**Foothills Amateur Radio Club, W3LWW. "50th Anniversary
of FARC".-1400-0200Z- 7.180.
QSL Card: Foothills ARC, PO Box 236, Greensburg, PA
15601. www.w3lww.org
- 10:** Breezeshooters "Ground Wave Contest" (All Contest Logs
Must Be Submitted By This Date)
- 18:** Western Pa Repeater Council Meeting (note 5)
- 18:** Cuyahoga Falls Amateur Radio Club-More Info:
<http://www.cfarc.org/hamfest2010.html>
- 18:** Tri-State Radio Fest-Center Stage Banquet Hall-1495 Old
Brodhead Rd-Monaca, PA 15061
Flea Market & Auction-More Info:
<http://www.pittantiqueradios.org> - Phone: 724-942-1113
- 20:** Two Rivers ARC Club Meeting (note 1)
- 25:** Two Rivers ARC Hamfest-The Boston Spectrum-6100
Smithfield Street-Boston, PA (McKeesport suburb)
More Info: 412-664-1683- Email: hamfest@tworiversarc.com -
Talkin:146.73 Mhz-<http://www.tworiversarc.com>
* VE Testing Available: (note 2a) *

May

- 2:** Pittsburgh Marathon-ARES Communication Event (150
operators needed)
More Info: <http://marathon.central.org> - Allegheny County
Public Service Net (note 12)
- 8:** Two Rivers ARC "Hams n Eggs" Breakfast (note 3)

14-16: Dayton Hamvention-Hara Arena-Dayton, OH-More Info:
<http://www.hamvention.org/>

18: Two Rivers ARC Club Meeting (note 1)

29-30:CQ World Wide WPX Contest (CW Mode)-More Info:
<http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com>

June

- 5:** Atlantic Division Convention (Rochester Hamfest)-Rochester
Amateur Radio Association
More Info: <http://www.rochesterhamfest.org>
- 6:** Breezeshooters Hamfest & Computer Show-Butler Farm
Show Grounds-627 Evans City Road-Butler, PA
More Info: 412-366-0488 Email:
hamfest2010@breezeshooters.net - Talkin: 147.30 MHz
More Info: <http://www.breezeshooters.net>
- 12:** Two Rivers ARC "Hams n Eggs" Breakfast (note 3)
12-14 ARRL VHF Qso Party-More Info:
<http://www.arrl.org/contests/calendar.html>
- 15:** Two Rivers ARC Club Meeting (note 1)
- 18:** Western Pa Repeater Council Meeting (note 5)
- 19:** ARRL Kids Day Activity-More Info:
<http://www.arrl.org/contests/calendar.html>
- 22:** Two Rivers ARC Amateur Radio Exam Session (note 2b)
- 23-28:**Boy Scouts of America, KA3PMW and N3TRF, W3S.-
Amity, PA-1800 to 1800z-Field Day at Camp Anawana for the
100th Anniversary of Boy Scouts. 28.400, 21.300, 14.200, 7.200
Mhz. QSL:Dave Alexander, PO Box 153, Marianna, PA
15345-0153. Troops from SW PA will be participating and
cooking for the hams. www.w3sfieldday.com

26-27 ARRL Field Day

NOTES:

- 1:** Time: 7:30 pm-McKeesport Area High School-South Hall Cafeteria-
Eden Park Boulevard-McKeesport, PA
More Info: <http://www.tworiversarc.com> -Email:trarc@tworiversarc.com
- 2:** (a) All exams will be held as noted below, except for exams at the Two
Rivers ARC Hamfest. 48 Hour Preregistration-Please contact the
coordinators for more information:412-664-1683/412-678-1206/
Email: veteam@tworiversarc.com
- (b) McKeesport Area High School-South Hall-Room 112-Eden Park
Boulevard-McKeesport, PA
6:30 pm-48 Hour Preregistration-More Info:
412-664-1683/412-678-1206/ Email: veteam@tworiversarc.com
3: Time: 9 am - Kings Restaurant-Corner PA 48 & U.S.30-
North Versailles, PA
- 4:** Time: 10 am-Blue Flame Restaurant-PA Route 51-Large, PA (near
Southland Shopping Center)
More Info: 412-384-8012/
<http://swppg.zelie.com> / Email: geno570@verizon.net
- 5:** Time: 1:30 pm-Meetings are held at various locations in the ARRL
defined W.Pa. section.
More Info: <http://www.wprc.us> Email: wprcemail@yahoo.com



BY BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE BVARA, YOU CAN HELP SECURE THE FUTURE OF AMATEUR RADIO IN BEAVER COUNTY. ADDITIONALLY, THE BVARA RECEIVES A PORTION OF EACH ARRL AND/OR WORLD RADIO SUBSCRIPTION YOU PURCHASE!

Join the BVARA, ARRL and World Radio

Sign up for:	Price	Quantity
<input type="checkbox"/> BVARA FULL MEMBERSHIP	20.00	
<input type="checkbox"/> BVARA STUDENT MEMBERSHIP	15.00	
<input type="checkbox"/> BVARA ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP	10.00	
<input type="checkbox"/> BVARA SPOUSE/CHILD MEMBERSHIP	5.00	
<input type="checkbox"/> ONE YEAR ARRL MEMBERSHIP	39.00	
		Subtotal: _____
ARRL MEMBER ?	YES NO	Donation _____
		Total: _____

Your License Class (if any):

- Novice
- Technician
- General
- Advanced
- Extra

Name _____
 Address _____

 Phone _____

Your Call Sign: _____ Exp. date _____
 Signature _____

Make Check or Money order payable to:
 The Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association, P.O. Box 424
 South Heights, PA 15081

STUDY GUIDES BEING USED IN BVARA LICENSE CLASSES

Technician Class—*The No-Nonsense, No-Code Technician Class License Study Guide* is based on a method developed by Bruce W8BBS. What he did for the earlier question pool is to rephrase each question in the form of a statement and then organize the statements to make them readable. Bruce was unable to update his manual for the question pool that went into effect in July 2006, so he gave us permission to do it.

General Class—*The No-Nonsense, General Class License Study Guide*. This is the study guide for those taking the General Class license exam after July 1, 2007. It follows the same format as the Technician Class Study Guide. Note, though, that there are more questions in this pool, and in general, the questions are more technical than the Tech Class, so be prepared to study longer and harder than you did for the Tech test. Visit: <http://kb6nu.com/techmanual/> for more info on these guides.



Interested in becoming an **amateur radio operator**?
 Want to upgrade your license?

Jack Spencer, KZ3Z is **hosting a class** for just these reasons. For details, please contact Jack at 724-869-2429 or visit www.W3SGJ.org

FEATURE STORY

A Fading Hobby... Until Emergencies Hit

Ham radio is still as relevant today as it was a half-century ago.

By Anika Myers Palm, from the [Orlando Sentinel](#)

At the National Weather Service, meteorologists are surrounded by some of the most up-to-date technology, which they use to track weather systems and dangerous storms.

But when the computers go down, forecasters may have to depend on hundreds of Central Florida hobbyists who use a method widely perceived to be decidedly less technologically advanced: amateur radio.

"Each individual county has one or more individual ham groups that can provide backup communications," said Scott Spratt, warning-coordination meteorologist at the National Weather Service in Melbourne. "We have about 20 groups we interact with."

Amateur, or ham, radio is a method of using wireless-radio communications devices to talk with other radio operators using frequencies set aside by the Federal Communications Commission.

The technology became popular in the early part of the past century as radio technology was developing. As early as 1914, hams were communicating nationwide, according to the American Radio Relay League, a national ham-radio group. Hams are required to take tests and are licensed by the FCC.

In the Orlando area, hundreds of hobbyists speak to other hams near and far for fun, while others, such as law-enforcement and emergency-services personnel, use the technology as part of their jobs.

Amateur radio operator Dick Jansson, KD1K, pictured below.
(Image credit RICARDO RAMIREZ BUXEDA, ORLANDO SENTINEL / January 22, 2010)



About 17 groups of ham-radio enthusiasts are in the region, including chapters in The Villages and Daytona Beach.

Contrary to popular belief, they're not socially awkward shut-ins without access to cell phones and more current technology. Hams are police officers, engineers, city officials, teachers and even young students who just enjoy radio.

They're also able to help during natural disasters in other parts of the world.

In the wake of the devastating Jan. 12 earthquake in Haiti, hams in Florida, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Puerto Rico and other nearby locations rallied to listen for emergency communications from the devastated island nation.

A group of hams coordinated the collection and transport of supplies for a school in Port-au-Prince,

Haiti, entirely by amateur radio on Jan. 30, according to Dan Fisher of the Platinum Coast Amateur Radio Society.

Hams also gather each year at an event called Hamcation. Self-billed as the premier amateur-radio event in the Southeast, it comes to the Central Florida Fairgrounds for three days beginning Feb. 12.

The equipment doesn't take up much room, and the hobby can be relatively inexpensive.

A beginning ham can buy all the necessary equipment — including a power source and receiver-transmitter — for about \$150, said Jim Stout, a salesman at Amateur Electronic Supply in Orlando, which sells ham-radio equipment.

But some hams estimate they have spent thousands of dollars on equipment through the years — especially because many are longtime

FEATURE STORY

hobbyists. "A lot of old-timers tended to get involved when they were youngsters," Fisher said.

Many took high-school classes that required them to learn about ham radio, while others learned about it in extracurricular groups.

Also, some veterans brought the practice — and Morse code, which no longer is required for ham radio — home with them after returning from the Atlantic and Pacific theaters of World War II.

Enthusiasts say that the fun of the hobby is in reaching out to people all over the world and talking with them, using technology that some liken to an oral Internet chat. During the day, users can speak with people within the United States. At night, their reach is virtually unlimited. Users in Central Florida routinely talk with people on other continents and beyond.

"We've talked to ships at sea; we've talked to pilots flying across the U.S.," Fisher said.

Even astronauts, all of whom are required to learn ham radio, get involved.

"When those guys are in space and have the time and get bored to tears,

"We're always looking for new recruits... It's not your grandfather's amateur radio anymore."

they get on the frequency and start chatting to us down here," said Stephanie Phillips, a ham in Titusville.

Astronauts on the International Space Station even speak with ham-radio groups in schools in a bid to increase interest in science and math.

Despite the excitement of speaking to people in faraway places, attracting new hams isn't easy. People who don't know about ham radio often think it's old-fashioned technology and don't see much use for it.

"We wish we could encourage more people to get involved," said Gil Chapin of the Orange County Communications Auxiliary, a volunteer group that assists county agencies with communications during disasters. "We're always looking for new recruits, and it's not your grandfather's amateur radio anymore."

Although the death of ham radio has been forecast many times, Chapin thinks the advent of the cell phone — which allows people to speak across long distances at low cost — has done more to tamp down enthusiasm about ham radio than anything else.

But during a natural disaster, cell phones and other communications may not work when ham radio still will. Witness the aftermath of the Haitian earthquake.

That's why hams think their hobby will never die.

A ham-radio operator was responsible for restoring communications between a National Weather Service in Louisiana and the National Hurricane Center in Miami during Hurricane Katrina.

Hams also have helped ships stranded at sea, and traditionally head for Red Cross shelters during hurricanes to serve as backup communicators in case other methods fail.

"If a hurricane came and caused significant damage and toppled our antennas and towers, we have a simple wire antenna we have available," said Spratt of the National Weather Service. "We'll string that wire antenna up between the two tallest points we can find and operate the radio, and we would have ham-radio communication."

Hams also can send information to meteorologists and emergency responders to let them know about conditions on the ground and at shelters during dangerous weather.

For the past 11 years, the National Weather Service has acknowledged its ham operators with Skywarn Recognition Day. Skywarn is a program involving nearly 300,000 volunteers with communications devices such as ham radios that serve as severe-weather spotters and can send information back to weather-service offices.

They're especially useful to the local weather-service office during hurricane season, Spratt said, but even though hurricane season is over, the service still sees some use for hams before the next season begins in June.

"Based on what we're expecting for the El Nino tornado season," Spratt said, "we can't emphasize enough how important backup communication is in times of disaster." +

*Did you like or dislike this article?
Please email me your comments at
KB3QFQ@W3SGJ.org!*

RADIO IN DISASTERS

Ham Radio Keeps Communication Open

By Eric Lindberg, from the [Daily Sound](#)

Before Facebook, Twitter and text messaging, there was radio.

And when a major disaster knocks out the power, cuts off access to the Internet and scrambles cell signals, radio is once again king.

Using battery-operated transmitters and a generator-powered station, a local crew of ham radio aficionados keep the lines of communication open when no other options are available.

“We are the last stand of communication worldwide,” said Mike Wapner, a director and member of the Santa Barbara Amateur Radio Club (SBARC).

A group of local radio operators manned roadblocks during the Zaca fire several years ago and helped pass along messages between fire officials in rugged backcountry areas with no cell service.



They also participate in emergency preparedness drills and practice setting up radio communications between different local agencies.

Beyond emergency response, the club also provides communications during local events such as marathons, bike races and Fiesta parades, and its members meet up on specific frequencies to chat on topics ranging from aviation and maritime activities to shopping and nature.

“It’s a hobby, it’s a way to get to know the community, it’s a way to give back,” said Bob Pizzi, the club’s vice president of education and training.

Despite the rise of social networking technology, the club has seen a resurgence of interest in recent years and is holding an upcoming series of training courses in amateur radio operation skills.

The introductory class runs for a week and trains participants in the basics of owning and operating an amateur radio station, culminating with a technician class licensing test. Those who successfully complete the course are able to communicate with other ham radio operators in the region.

A more advanced class is also offered that allows participants to gain the skills necessary to interact with other amateur radio operators around the world, in addition to passing the general class licensing test.

Pizzi, known to other radio operators by his identifier AC6PZ, said more

“It’s a hobby, it’s a way to get to know the community, it’s a way to give back.”

people are getting involved in ham radio, particularly those who became upset with the flow of emergency information during the recent wildfires in Santa Barbara.

His crew of trainers, known as the HAMigos, only covers the basics during the introductory course, and technophobes should not shy away.

“Setting the time on your VCR is more difficult than using this thing,” Pizzi said, holding up his handheld transmitter, a gadget slightly larger than the standard cell phone.

And unlike in many other countries, where knowledge of Morse code is still a requirement to getting an amateur radio license, local residents can ignore the dots and dashes.

Wapner, known on the airwaves as K6QD, prefers using the code and said he can communicate much faster than anyone using text messages.

He should be pretty polished by now — he’s had an interest in amateur radio since 1956, when he was 12 years old. Wapner recalled taking the bus from North Hollywood to take licensing classes at the Federal Communications Commission offices

RADIO IN DISASTERS

in downtown Los Angeles. As a teenager, he handled thousands of phone patches for soldiers calling from Vietnam to family and friends in the United States.

When he sailed to the South Pacific a few years ago, Wapner stayed in touch with his wife by running a similar phone patch through another local amateur radio operator. He also chats frequently with people around the world, such as a dentist in Japan.

“I talk with him at least once a week,” he said.

Pizzi, on the other hand, has several buddies on a net — jargon for a group of operators who meet up on a specific frequency at scheduled times to chat — that centers on Australia, New Zealand and Africa.

And the club recently went beyond intercontinental communication by hooking up a group of local Boy Scouts with a direct connection to the International Space Station for a brief chat with astronauts.

“There are so many facets to this gem, there’s something for everyone,” Pizzi said.

The local amateur radio club traces its history back to 1919, when an Air Service radio officer named J.C. Lewis came to Santa Barbara and formed a club with a few local ham operators. By 1924, the club had more than 200 members.

Pizzi said the current club roster includes about 100 members, and he is hopeful the upcoming training sessions will get more community members involved in the pursuit. +

*Did you like or dislike this article?
Please email me your comments!*

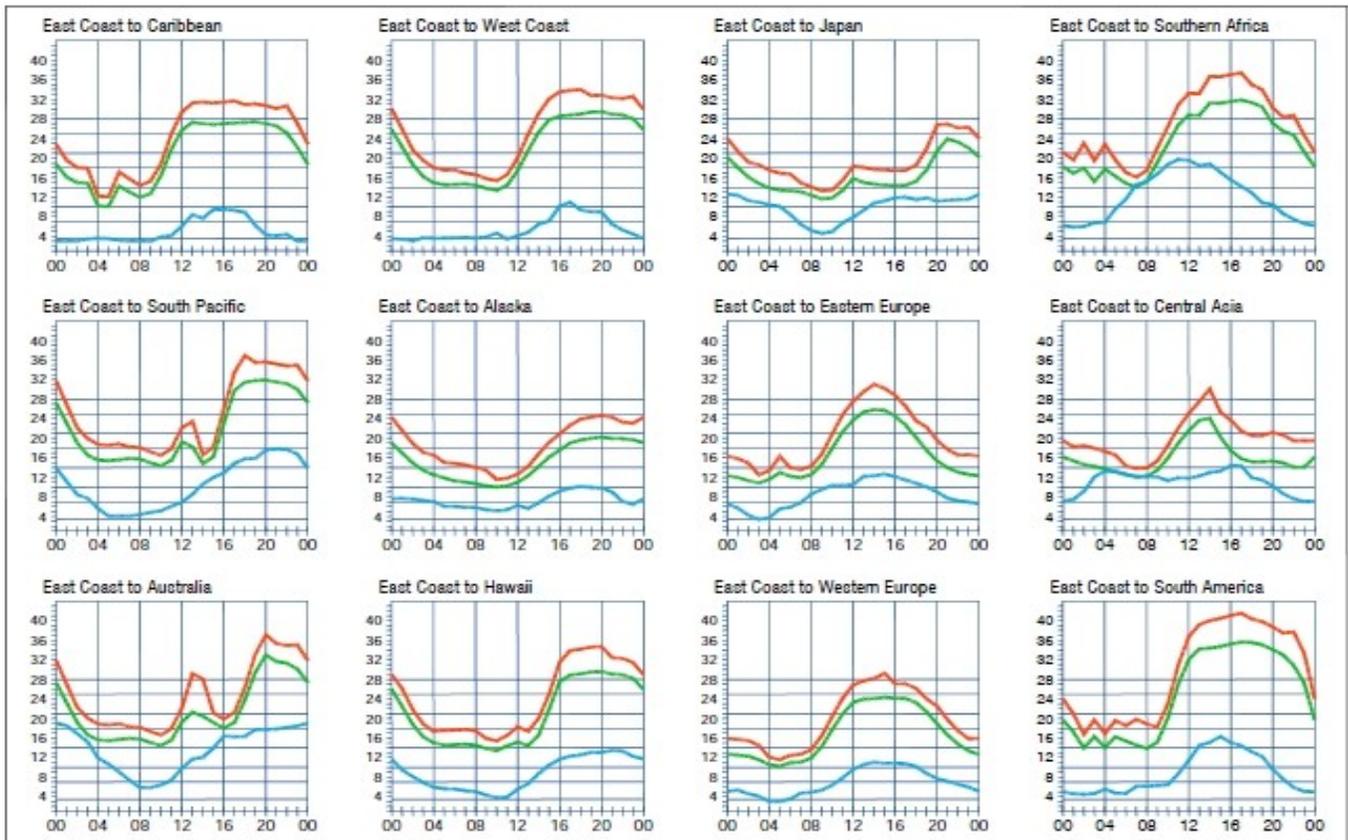
Photos from the TechFest!

Here's a couple photos of the displays and geocaching presentation at TechFest 2010.

Check them all out on our Flickr Photostream at www.flickr.com/photos/W3SGJ



QST Propagation Charts



When are the bands open? These charts, generated using CAPman, show probabilities for average HF propagation in the month of **March 2010** for the paths indicated. The horizontal axes show Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), and the vertical axes frequency in MHz. On 10% of the days of this period, the highest frequencies propagated will be at least as high as the upper red curves (HPF, highest possible frequency) and on 50% of the days they will be at least as high as the green curves (MUF, classical maximum usable frequency). The blue curves show the lowest usable frequency (LUF) for a 1500-W CW transmitter. For SSB or a lower transmitter power, the LUF will be somewhat higher than the blue curves indicate. See Oct 1994 QST, pp 27-30, and Feb 1995 QST, pp 34-36, for more details. The predictions assume an observed 2800-MHz solar flux value of 113. This is a **High** level of solar activity. See the detailed propagation tables on *The ARRL Antenna Book CD-ROM*.

The above chart is for the month of March.

FOR INFORMATION ON HOW TO READ THESE CHARTS, [CLICK HERE](#)

Beaver County

SPECIAL SERVICE CLUB

Authenticity eQSL.com

W3SGJ

Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association
P.O. Box 424
South Heights, PA 15081, USA
ITU 8, CQ 5, Grid EN90ur, Beaver County

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Radio Association and receive an
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**The BVARA
Calendar of Events**

For more information,
please visit www.W3SGJ.org

May 2:
Pittsburgh Marathon
in Pittsburgh, PA

June 25 – 27:
ARRL Field Day
in Brady's Run Park,
Shelter 12

August 7:
Annual Corn Roast
in Brady's Run Park,
Shelter 15

September 24 – 26:
Campaganza
in Moraine State Park,
Butler, PA

October 15 – 17:
Jamboree on the Air
at Fern Hollow Nature
Center, Sewickley, PA

December:
Christmas Party
at the Baden Municipal
Building, Baden, PA