

THE eQRM

THE HISTORY OF THE BVARA

THE 1980s

BY RICH SOLTESZ, K3SOM

THE eQRM

OCTOBER 2013



5 THE HISTORY OF THE BVARA, PART 7: THE 1980s

This month, our journey finds us in the 1980s. By Rich Soltesz, K3SOM

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CHECK INTO THE NETS

Wednesday 2 Meter
8:30PM on 145.310 MHz

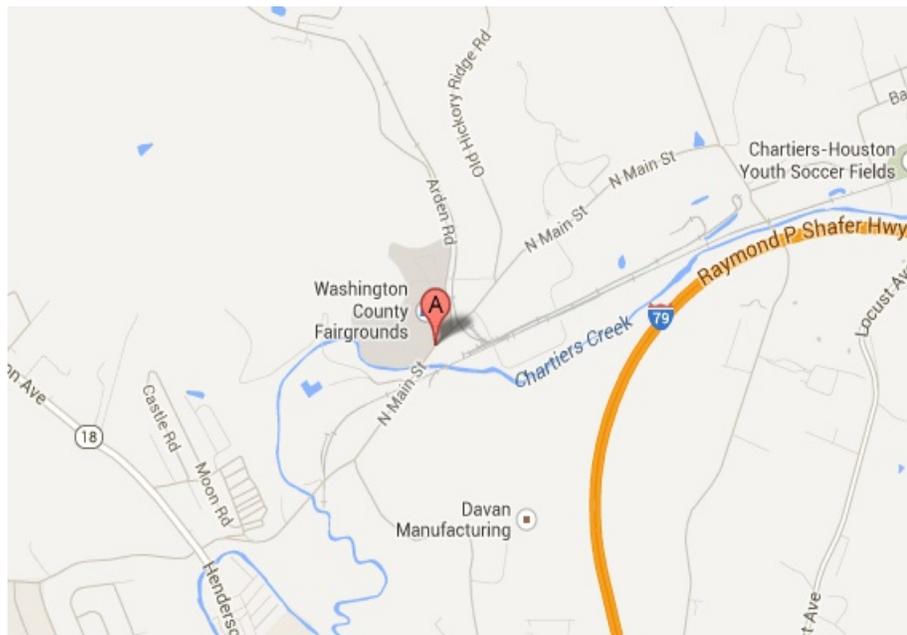
Wednesday 10 Meter
9:00PM on 28.470 MHz

Bulletins

HAMFESTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS / CLUB NEWS

Hamfest/ WACOM Hamfest

Sunday, November 3, 2013. 8AM - 3PM



The Facts:

Date: Sunday, November 3, 2013

Time: 8AM - 3PM

Admission: \$5.00

Location:

Washington County Fairgrounds
2151 North Main St.
Washington, PA 15301

Talk-In:

146.790 MHz (no PL)

Top Prizes:

Ameritron HF 811 Amp
Large Screen HDTV
MFJ 266B Analyzer

Sponsored By:

Washington Amateur Comm.

Announcement/ Say "HI" to Juno

Wednesday, October 9, 2013. 8AM - 3PM

NASA's Juno spacecraft will fly past Earth on October 9, 2013 to receive a gravity assist from our planet, putting it on course for Jupiter. To celebrate this event, the Juno mission is inviting amateur radio operators around the world to say "HI" to Juno in a coordinated Morse Code message. Juno's radio & plasma wave experiment, called Waves, should be able to detect the message if enough people participate.

For more information and further instructions, visit <http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/hijuno/>

The Facts:

Date: Wednesday, October 9, 2013

Time: 18:00 to 20:40 UTC

QSL Card: If you participate and would like to receive a QSL Card, email juno_outreach@jpl.nasa.gov with your call sign and mailing address after the event.

The Month Ahead

Contest Information, VE Testing and Presentation Series

CONTEST



PA QSO Party

October 12-13, 2013

OBJECTIVE: Pennsylvania Amateurs try to contact as many other amateurs in Pennsylvania, the United States, Canada and the world. Pennsylvania Amateurs receive multipliers for each Pennsylvania county, US and Canadian section, and one multiplier for DX entities.

BANDS: 160, 80, 75, 40, 20, 15, 10, 6, and 2.

CONTEST PERIODS:
1600Z, Oct 12, 2013 to
2200Z, Oct 13, 2013

Log Submission: Must be received by the PA QSO Party 30 days after the contest.

For more information on this contest, please visit <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestdetail.s.php?ref=153>

VE TEST SESSION

The next test session will be at the Beaver County Emergency Operations Center
351 14th Street
Ambridge, PA 15003

Time: 5:00 P.M.
(walk-ins allowed)

Date: Thursday, Oct. 10

All candidates wishing to take the test should bring ALL of the following:

1. Two (2) forms of identification. One should be a Photo ID.
2. A pencil and a blue or black pen.
3. Your original AND a photocopy of your current license (if any).
4. Your original AND a photocopy of any C.S.C.E's (if any).
5. The test fee of \$15.00.

All classes of amateur radio license tests will be administered.

Note: No question pool updates or releases will take place in 2013.

For more information, please contact our VE Test Coordinator:

Chris Moratis, W3OUF
1199 Highland Avenue
Ambridge, PA 15003
PHONE: 724-266-2866
cjmoratis@gmail.com

MONTHLY

Presentation Series

The BVARA Presentation Series provides a vast array of topics and discussions, with a new topic every month at our club meetings.



October 10, 2013 @ 6:30PM

At Beaver County 911 Center, 351 14th Street, Ambridge PA

Speaker: Rich Soltesz, K3SOM

Topic: PA QSO Party: Steps for Preparation and Operating

Including: Our topic this month is a very timely one about the PA QSO Party. This year, Oct 12th and 13th are set aside for this Pennsylvania ham radio classic. We'll look at this contest from many aspects including contest software choices, equipment preparation, reviewing how you did before, setting goals, operating strategies, propagation, specialized antennas, band choices, and much, much more! There's something for everyone, including those that have never participated in a contest to those seasoned veterans out there. This is one presentation you won't want to miss!

Rich's Background: Extra Class Ham, licensed since 1962; Volunteer Examiner (VE); B.S. Electrical Engineering

WEEKLY

Thursday Morning Breakfast

The BVARA meets every Thursday at Steak n Shake in Center Township, by the Beaver Valley Mall, at **10:00 AM**. All area amateurs are invited and encouraged to attend the Thursday Morning Breakfast. See you at Steak n Shake!



THE 1980s

The decade of the 1980s witnessed continuing activity within the BVARA.

The BVAFMA described previously became the Triple "A" Amateur Radio Association (TAARA) with a split of interests and allegiances, thus beginning the separation of these two organizations that together had accomplished so much during the previous decade.

GLOBAL EVENTS IN THE 1980s

The 1980s experienced great social, economic, and general change as wealth and production migrated to newly industrializing economies. As economic liberalization increased in the developed world, multiple multinational corporations associated with the manufacturing industry relocated into Thailand, Mexico, South Korea, Taiwan, and China. Japan and West Germany were the most notable developed countries that continued to enjoy rapid economic growth during the decade.

The United Kingdom and the United States moved closer to laissez-faire (free trade) economic policies, beginning a trend towards neo-liberalism that would pick up more steam in the following decade as the fall of the USSR made right-wing economic policy more popular.

By the late 1980s the Cold War was coming to an end. In the eastern bloc hostility to authoritarianism and the rise of nationalism in communist-led socialist states, combined with economic recession, resulted in a wave of reformist policies in the USSR such as perestroika and glasnost, along with the overthrows and attempted overthrows of a number of communist regimes, such as in Hungary, the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989 in China, the Czechoslovak "Velvet Revolution," Poland and other communist Warsaw Pact states in Central and Eastern Europe including the Fall of the Berlin

Wall.

In 1980 Mount St. Helens erupted, the Pac-Man game was released, and Rubik's Cube became popular. An unsuccessful assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan was made in 1981. That same year millions watched the royal wedding of Lady Diana and Prince Charles of England. The Falkland Islands were invaded by Argentina in 1982. The movie E.T. was released that same year. Cabbage Patch Kids became popular in 1983. President Reagan announced a defense plan called "Star Wars" in 1983. In 1984 the Bell System was broken up. A huge poison gas leak at a Union Carbide facility occurred in Bhopal, India in 1984 with death toll estimates of at least 3,000 to as many as 20,000 people. In 1985 New Coke hit the market and the wreck of the Titanic was discovered. 1986 witnessed two disasters that included the explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger and the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant disaster.

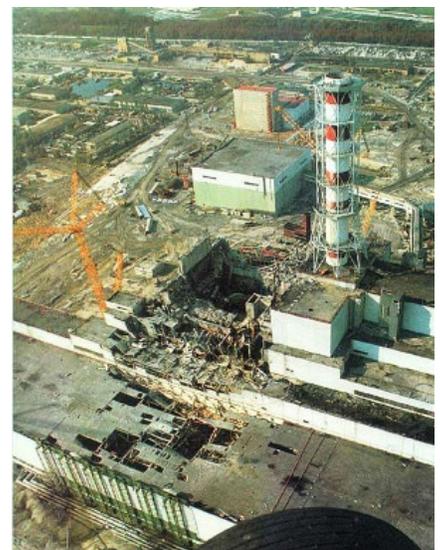
DNA evidence was first used to convict criminals in 1987. That same year the New York Stock Exchange experienced a huge drop on "Black Monday" in a global stock market crash. In 1988 Pan Am Flight 103 crashed when a bomb exploded on board resulting in the deaths of 270 people. In 1989 the Berlin Wall fell, the Exxon Valdez spilled millions of gallons of oil off the coast of Alaska in Prince William Sound, and President George H.W. Bush declared that he



The Berlin Wall just before the fall in 1989



Mount St. Helens erupts



Aerial view of the Nuclear Power Plant Facility at Chernobyl after the disaster

does not like broccoli (not necessarily in order of importance)

TECHNOLOGY EVENTS IN THE 1980s

The IBM PC was launched in 1981 and became the dominant computer for professional users. Meanwhile, Apple Computer phased out their Apple II and Lisa models by introducing the first Macintosh computer in 1984. It was the first commercially successful computer to use a graphical user interface and a mouse. In the early 1980s several companies began selling music synthesizers with a MIDI interface. The Nintendo Entertainment System claimed 90 percent of the video game market by 1989.

BEAVER COUNTY IN THE 1980s

The 1980 US Census reported a total of 204,441 people in Beaver



Yamaha DX-7 Synthesizer with MIDI interface (top) and IBM PC 5150 running MS-DOS 5.0 (bottom)

County for a declining rate of 1.9 percent over the 1970 US Census.

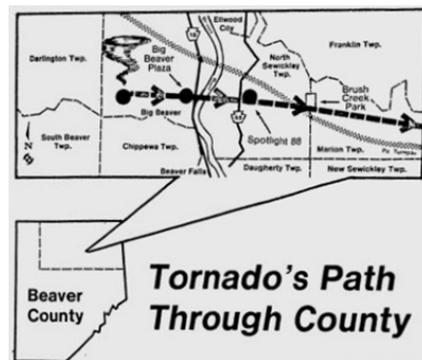
On Friday evening, May 31, 1985 an F3 tornado ripped a 13-mile trail of destruction along the northern part of Beaver County. Three people were killed and 107 people were injured. The tornado leveled the Big Beaver Shopping Center and destroyed more than 200 homes in its path. Efforts were put forth by members of the BVARA and the TAARA radio clubs during and after this crisis situation.

HAM EQUIPMENT, REGULATION, AND TECHNOLOGY

In March 1980, the FCC finally permitted ASCII modes in the US. This coincided with the sudden rise in popularity of affordable personal computers. That FCC decision ignited amateur enthusiasm for packet radio and other digital modes. In Tucson, Arizona, TAPR (Tucson Amateur Packet Radio) was formed. The TAPR group proceeded to produce a line of popular terminal node controllers, further fueling the packet fervor.

Digital activity blossomed on HF as well. In 1982 Peter Martinez, G3PLX, put the power of the personal computer to work, combining the PC with a modified version of the SITOR protocol to create AMTOR—the first amateur HF digital mode that offered error-free communication.

In 1983 the Space Shuttle launch into space included Owen Garriott, W5LFL, an astronaut with the space program. He carried a two-



Path of the F3 tornado through Beaver County on May 31st, 1985

meter rig with him, and completed nearly 300 QSOs from space. Since that time amateurs have been included in the crew of virtually every Space Shuttle launch. In later years the SAREX program (Shuttle Amateur Radio Experiment) has turned out to be a superb tool for helping students throughout the world to develop an appreciation for the wonders of space and the space program. The program has also been a boon for recruiting young, eager, new hams.

In 1984 the FCC approved the highly successful Volunteer Exam Coordinator program. In addition, PRB-1 was issued by the FCC which provided some measure of protection for hams from the arbitrary action of community planning commissions.

HAM CLUB AND MEMBER ACTIVITIES

The 1980s began with the 3rd Annual BVARA Hamfest in July 1980 at the CCBC campus in Monaca. Mobile check-ins, free parking, food and refreshments, as well as some excellent prizes were advertised. The 1st place prize was a Kenwood TS-520 SE transceiver.

BEAVER COUNTY HAMFESTS

The BVARA held many events throughout its history, including this 1980 BVARA Hamfest at the CCBC campus.

Ribbon Committee of Beaver County. In August 1985 the ARRL renewed the BVARA designation as a Special Services Club. In March 1985 the BVARA filed for incorporation in Pennsylvania.

During 1985 efforts were begun to accumulate funds for the purchase of a BVARA clubhouse. Unfortunately, that initiative was unsuccessful and was later abandoned. That same year the BVARA sponsored a large Hamfest at Quigley High School in Baden with a Kenwood TS-130 SE as the 1st place prize.

In 1984 the BVARA supported the Olympic Torch Relay event as it passed through Beaver County with volunteers and communications support through use of the "31" repeater. The BVARA Mall Show with displays and ham operation was conducted in September 1984. The BVARA provided much appreciated flight-line communications and some fund raising club efforts at the 1985 and 1986 Air Shows at the Beaver County Airport. The Bee Keeper's Festival at Brady's Run Park received communications help from the club in September 1985. Back-up communications support was provided at the River Regatta once again in August 1986.

In the fall of 1982 the BVARA put together a two-meter club repeater in North Sewickley Township on 145.310 MHz at the site of the township water tanks. The "31" installation included a four-bay dipole antenna, Sinclair Labs Filter Duplexers, a Maggiore



3rd Annual
Beaver Valley
HAMFEST



Sunday, July 20, 1980 ~ 9 AM to 5 PM
Community College of Beaver County, Monaca.

Sponsored by the Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association, Inc.



Mobile Check-in: 146.25-85 WR3AAA
223.26-86 WR3AAA
Mobile prize awarded. 146.52 SIMPLEX

Free parking in CCBC's paved lots.

Registration \$2.00 each or 3/\$5.00.
Children under 12 admitted free.

Food and Refreshments:
Fine eating for the whole family and the prices are right.

Free indoor vendor space and paved outdoor flea market.

Main prizes: (Drawing at 4:00 PM.)
Door prizes all day!
1st prize: Kenwood TS 520 SE Transceiver
2nd prize: Kenwood TS 2400 ^{synthesized} Hand-Held
3rd prize: Cushcraft ATB-34 Tri-band Beam

For further info. & advanced reg., contact:
WB3FKE Gary Mohrbacher
3417 47th St.
New Brighton, Pa. 15066
412-843-9546
WB3JZN Adam Horniak
182 Edgewood St.
Alliquippa, Pa. 15001
412-378-9667

The BVARA garnered a number of certificates and plaques during the 1980s. In December 1982 the ARRL presented a plaque to the BVARA for 50 years of continuous charter affiliation with the ARRL. In June 1984 the BVARA applied

for and was granted a Charter from the Boy Scouts of America for Post 730, Rochester, PA. The 730 represented ham radio's "73" salutation. In August 1984 the BVARA was presented with a lifetime membership to the Blue

CLUB EVENTS IN THE EIGHTIES

In addition to other events, the BVARA hosted Field Day at Brady's Run Park (pictured above, mid-1980s) and volunteered at the Air Show at Beaver County Airport (below, late-1980s).



"Hi Pro Mark I" repeater and a Midland (Maggiore) autopatch.

That site is still in use today because of the excellent coverage of

the surrounding area for radio communications, although the original equipment has since been replaced and upgraded. Thom Peluso, KF3V, Jack Spencer, now KZ3Z, Paul Hecker, now K3ZW, Bob DeMarco, WA3ZRM, and many others helped to make that repeater a reality.

The Triple "A" Amateur Radio Association (TAARA) was formed in the early 1980s when the FCC declined to renew repeater licenses. Triple "A" was formed from the BVAFMA in the spirit of keeping part of the WR3AAA license that had been obtained for the "85" repeater during the early 1970s and became a full-service club. Bob McClain, W3VRZ, became the first trustee and continued in that role until his death years later.

This new organization was the catalyst that began the difficulties between the two clubs as there was now a philosophical separation of the two organizations. Field Days began to be separate events for each club with Triple "A" at the Green Valley Park and the BVARA at Brady's Run Park. At one point the Triple "A" club put together an incredible Field Day setup with 17 stations during the 1980s. Triple "A" club membership peaked at approximately 250 during the late 1980s. Meanwhile, the BVARA membership started gliding down to about 100 by the end of the decade. The BVARA continued to have Field Day and Corn Roast events and began to be known as the "low bands club."

THE DAVE LEISER ERA

Dave Leiser SK, K3NPX, became much more influential within Beaver County ham radio circles early in the 1980s. He became president of Triple "A" around the mid-1980s and held that position for 20 years. Many people felt Dave's attitude on many issues was, "My way or the highway!" Leiser could be treacherous and people would treat him with a "long arm" to avoid difficulties. Sometimes one couldn't help but be in the middle of an issue. He contributed to building a wall between the two clubs and eventually was instrumental in driving many hams away from not only the two clubs, but also ham radio. Stories abound of many temper "flare-ups," outbursts, name-calling and other unbecoming behavior by Leiser. Poor judgment and misbehavior sprang up within both organizations to the detriment of the ham radio image within the county. His reputation extended beyond just Beaver County into not only Allegheny County, but also all of Western Pennsylvania.

In 1986, Leiser filed a civil action lawsuit against the BVARA and its president concerning two comments about Leiser which were authored by the president of the BVARA and appeared in the BVARA's newsletter. The judge, after hearing the complaint, wrote a dismissal of the lawsuit. That dismissal was not appealed.

From a more positive perspective, Leiser became the

Emergency Coordinator of Beaver County and served in that capacity for over 25 years along with being appointed in December, 2003 as the Section Emergency Coordinator of the Rapid Response Team representing over 33 Counties in Western Pennsylvania and also on staff at the Beaver County Emergency Operations Center. He owned a 28 foot, completely self-contained and fully amateur radio-equipped Command Center, complete with 2 generators that were used for emergency and public service communication

events of which he claimed to have coordinated and participated in over 396 events.

NEXT TIME

Next time, we'll take a look at what was happening around the globe and locally during the 1990s. The increasing separation of the two clubs caused by strong personalities as well as the beginning of the decline of interest in ham radio because of other technologies helped to fuel the erosion of membership for both clubs. Stay tuned! →

THE W3SGJ REPEATER



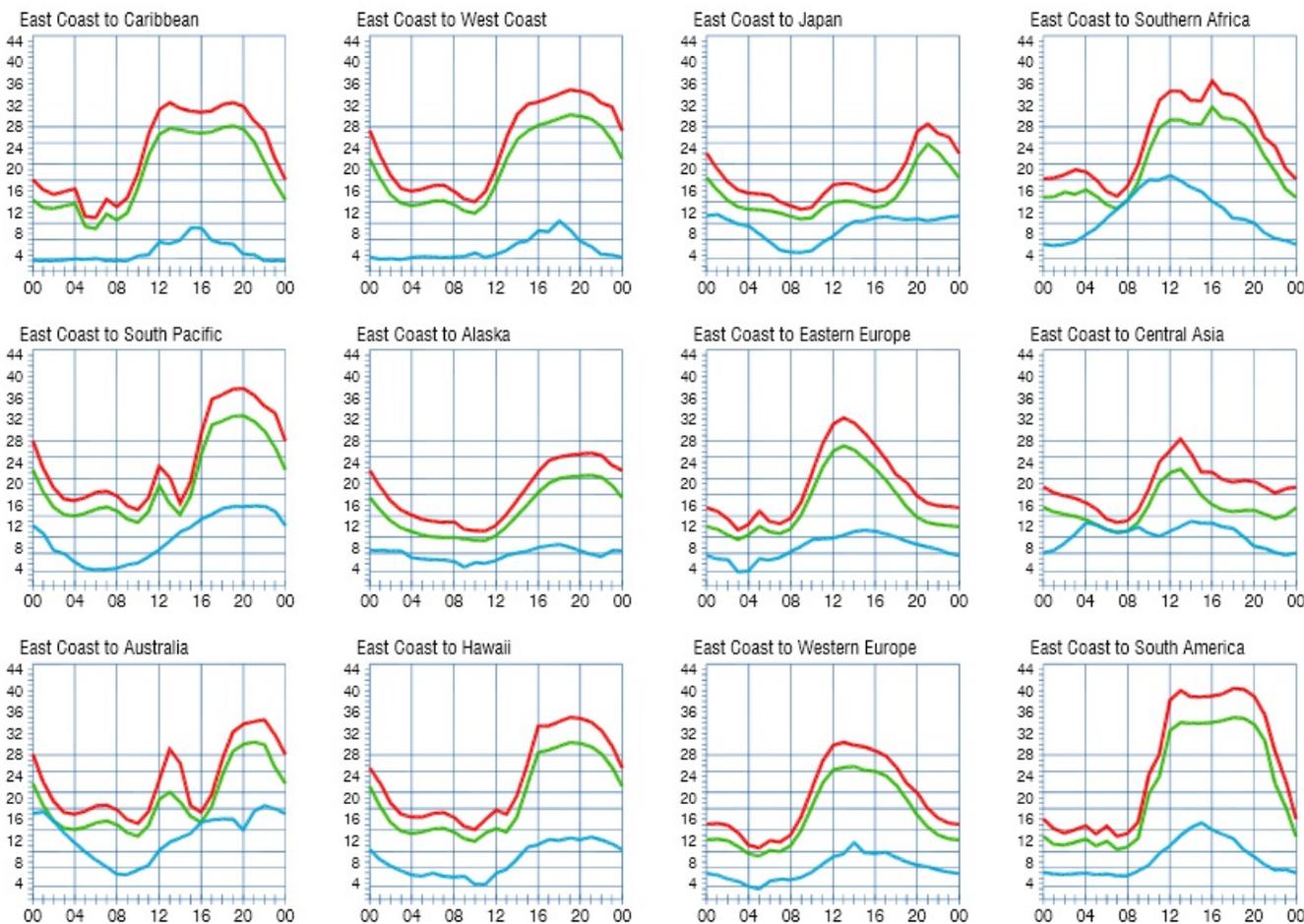
The work crew at the W3SGJ Repeater Site, 1987



Early work on the new repeater with Bob DeMarco, WA3ZRM and Paul Hecker, Jr., K3ZW (formerly WA3EZW)

Propagation Charts

From the ARRL



RACES / ARES

eQRM Urges All County Hams 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 (131.8 PL)

PROPAGATION

The East Coast propagation chart listed above is for October 2013.

If you would like more information on how to read these charts, or for more information on propagation in general, please visit <http://arrl.org/propagation>



Who We Are

Membership Information and Club Officers

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"/> CHILD UNDER 21 IN HOME	5.00	
<input type="checkbox"/> ONE YEAR ARRL MEMBERSHIP	39.00	

ARRL MEMBER? YES NO Subtotal: _____
 Donation: _____
 Total: _____

Your License Class (if any):

- Novice _____ Name _____
- Technician _____ Address _____
- General _____
- Advanced _____ Email Address _____
- Extra _____ 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

2013 BVARA OFFICERS

- President:** Jack Spencer, KZ3Z
Vice President: Jeff Waite, K3SLK
Second Vice Pres.: Mark Kavic, KB3LED
Treasurer: Pam Spencer, W3PMS
Secretary: Norm Trunick, K3NJT
Director: Adam Horniak, KG3L
Director: Denny Herbuth, KR3DX
Trustee: Rich Soltesz, K3SOM
Newsletter Editor: Grant Miller, KB3QFQ

MONTHLY MEETINGS

E-Board meetings are now held the Saturday before the monthly club meeting. VE testing begins at 5:00. Regular meetings are at 6:30.

All meetings are held at
 Beaver County
 Emergency Operations Center
 351 14th Street
 Ambridge, PA 15003
on the second Thursday of every month (unless otherwise stated).

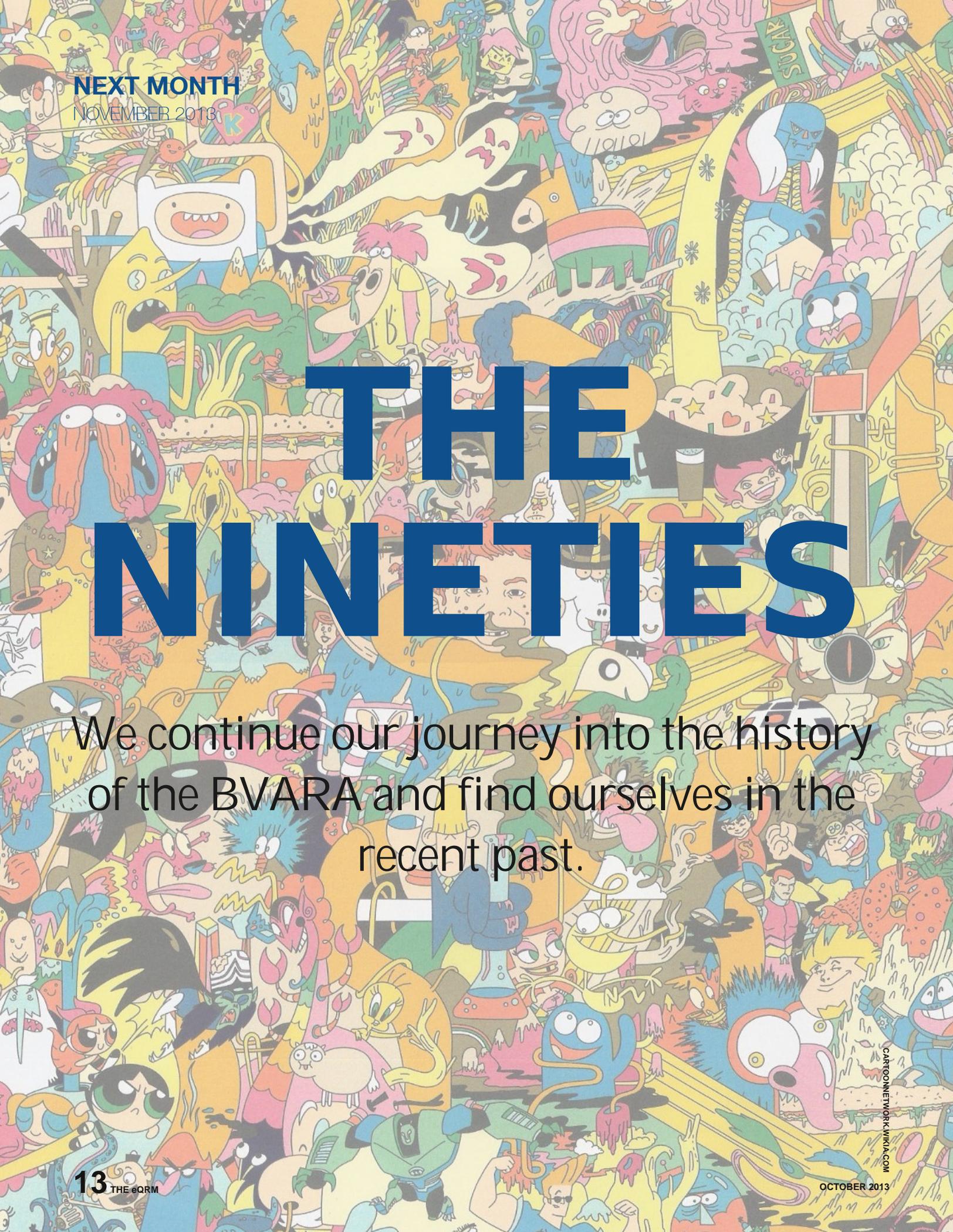
MEETING DATES

- 2013
 October 10
 November 14
 December 7 - **BVARA Christmas Party**

- 2014
 January 9
 February 13
 March 13
 April 10
 May 8
 June 12
 July 10
 August - **No meeting (Corn Roast, Date TBA)**
 September 11

QSL CARD
 Special 90th Anniversary Edition





NEXT MONTH
NOVEMBER 2013

THE NINETIES

We continue our journey into the history of the BVARA and find ourselves in the recent past.