

# THE eQRM

FEBRUARY 2019



## The BVARA in Beaver County Pennsylvania

Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association

W3SGJ

Repeater 145.310 PL 131.8

**On the cover:** A cold February 2019 afternoon in Western Pennsylvania. The temperature is only 15 Fahrenheit . Hang in there, March is coming and with it warmer weather. I hope.

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### Check into our nets

#### Wednesday 2 Meter

**8:30PM on 145.310 MHz PL 131.8**

#### Wednesday 10 Meter

**9:00PM on 28.470 MHz**

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# Who We Are

## 2019 BVARA OFFICERS

President: Jack Spencer, KZ3Z

Vice President: Dan Grazulis, KB3VSP

2nd Vice Pres.: Doug Hanna, N4YKQ

Treasurer: Pam Spencer, W3PMS

Secretary: Norm Trunick, K3NJT

Director: Tony Pavilonis, W6PEF

Director: Bob Winkle, N3AZZ

Trustee: Rich Soltesz, K3SOM

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

E-Board meetings are now held the Saturday before the monthly club meeting.

VE testing begins at 5:00 PM.

Regular meetings are at 6:30 PM

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

2019

Feb 14

Mar 14

Apr 11

May 09

Jun 14

Jul 11

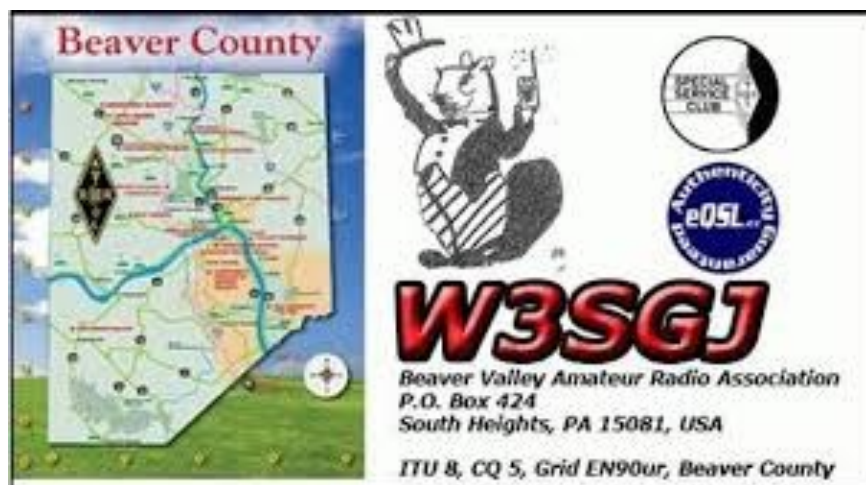
Aug 24 Corn Roast

Sep 12

Oct 10

Nov 14

Dec 07 Christmas Party





# This Month

## *This Month:*

### *Speaker:*

Rich Soltesz  
K3SOM

### *Topic:*

ICOM IC-7300 Impressions Update

### *Including:*

Continuing with our BVARA Presentation Series this year, our topic this month deals with an update to our initial presentation and hands-on demonstration of the very popular ICOM IC-7300. Why is it so popular? Because it is an incredible value for under \$1,000! The IC-7300 was ICOM's first offering of an amateur radio transceiver that moves away from the traditional double and triple conversion architecture to utilize Software Defined Radio (SDR) architecture.

As before, we'll begin by taking a look at both triple conversion and SDR block diagrams to help understand what has changed. Then we'll discuss why roofing filters are no longer needed. Brick wall filter selectivity? It's in there! Real-time spectrum scope and waterfall? Included! Touch screen? Yes! Quality transmit and receive audio that gets noticed? But of course!

Since that initial presentation, several 3<sup>rd</sup> party companies have introduced several extensions to this radio that make operation even more enjoyable. We'll talk about these and show you how one of them can make contesting much easier and enjoyable. If you are a new ham, or have wanted to operate on the HF bands, this is one radio that you will need to examine much more closely.

But wait, there's more! We'll demonstrate how easy it is to operate in any of the digital modes. Changes to specific internal parameters that enable easy digital operation and enable an easier-to-read spectrum display will also be covered. Split operation, transmitting a recorded CQ, recording a QSO, save touch screen display as a graphic file, and so much more. This is one exciting presentation that you won't want to miss.

### *Rich's Background:*

Extra Class Ham, Licensed since 1962, VE,  
B.S. Electrical Engineering



# More this Month

## Weekly

The Freedom Square Diner in Monaca has a great wait staff. Come let them take your order.

Thursday Morning Breakfast  
(or you can have lunch)



The BVARA meets every Thursday at the Freedom Square Diner in Center Township, just to the right of the Cinemark Center Township Marketplace at 09:30 AM. All radio amateurs and those interested in amateur radio are encouraged to come join us at our Thursday morning breakfast.

## See you Thursday at



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)

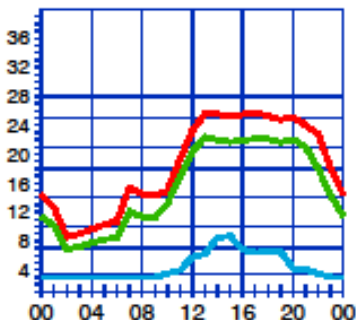
### RACES / ARES

The eQRM Urges All County Hams to Participate.

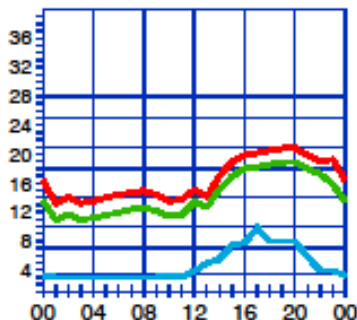


# Propagation

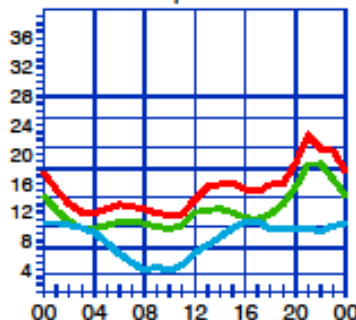
East Coast to Caribbean



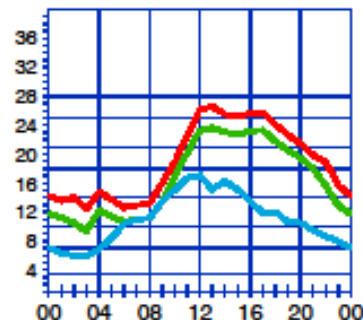
East Coast to West Coast



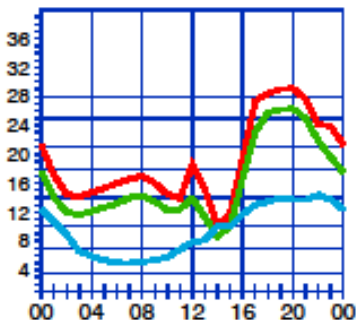
East Coast to Japan



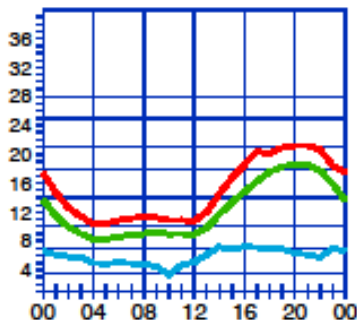
East Coast to Southern Africa



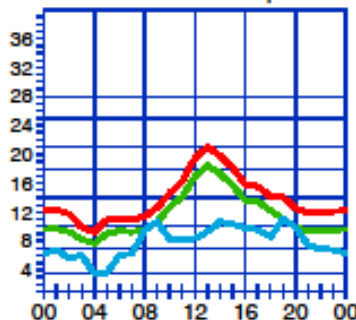
East Coast to South Pacific



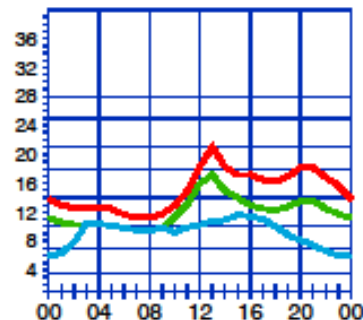
East Coast to Alaska



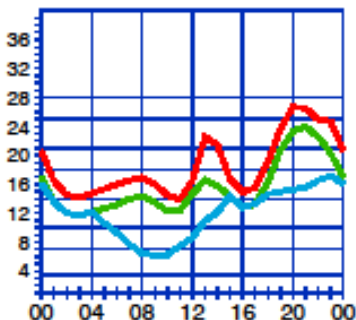
East Coast to Eastern Europe



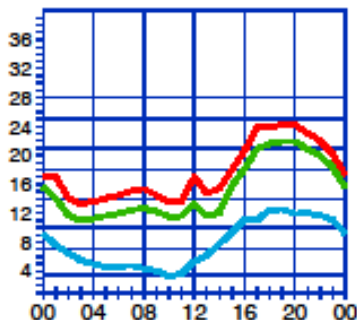
East Coast to Central Asia



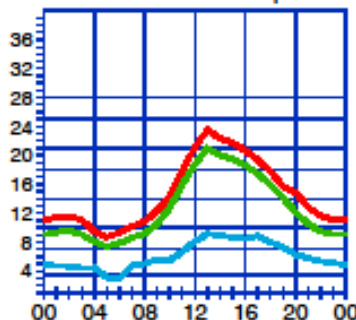
East Coast to Australia



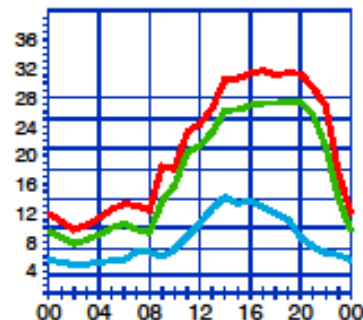
East Coast to Hawaii



East Coast to Western Europe



East Coast to South America



**When are the bands open?** These charts, generated using CAPman, show probabilities for average HF propagation in the month of February 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 66. This is a Very Low level of solar activity. See the detailed propagation tables on The ARRL Antenna Book CD-ROM.

**ARRL**  
The national association for  
**AMATEUR RADIO**

## PROPAGATION

The East Coast propagation chart listed here is for February 2019.

If you would like more information in general, please visit <http://www.arrl.org/propagation>

# Get your License or Upgrade

If you are interested in getting your first FCC license or upgrading your current amateur radio license, the Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association holds VE Test sessions (Volunteer Examinations) the second Thursday of each month at the Nine One One center in Ambridge Pennsylvania prior to our BVARA Club meeting. If there is no meeting there is no test session. Please come take your test with us!

For more information, contact :  
Rich Soltesz, K3SOM  
(724) 847-0610  
k3som@arrl.net



## VE TEST SESSIONS

Beaver County Emergency Services Center 351 14th Street Ambridge, PA 15003.  
Tests begin promptly at 5 pm on the same day as BVARA Club Meetings  
(the second Thursday of the month).  
All classes of amateur radio license tests are administered.

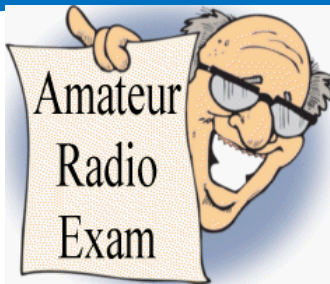
ALL candidates MUST bring ALL of the following:

1. 2 forms of I.D. - one MUST be a photo I.D.
2. A pencil AND a pen with blue or black ink.
3. The original AND a photocopy of any valid ham license.
4. The original AND a photocopy of any C.S.C.E.
5. The test fee of \$15 - cash, check, or money order.

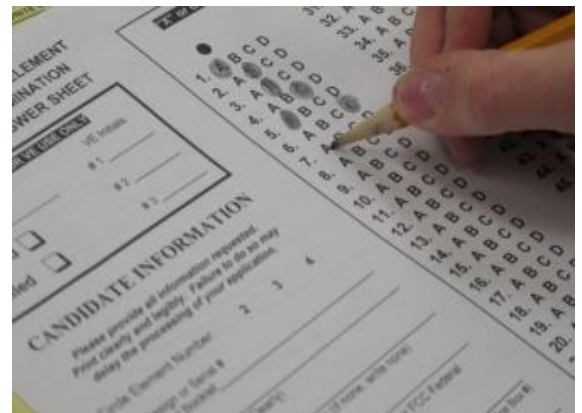


# New License and Upgrades

BVARA VE Testing



The partial Government Shutdown has affected the FCC and our ability to get call signs for those that passed their tests. We will post them as soon as the FCC is back up and running.





# Membership Information

By becoming a BVARA member you help secure the future of Amateur Radio in Beaver County. Additionally, the BVARA receives a portion of each ARRL membership you purchase!

## Join the BVARA and ARRL

### Sign up for:

### Price

- |  |       |       |
|--|-------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BVARA full membership                   | 25.00 | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BVARA student membership                | 15.00 | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BVARA associate membership              | 10.00 | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BVARA Child under 21 at home membership | 5.00  | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> One year ARRL membership                | 49.00 | _____ |

A Club Donation \_\_\_\_\_

ARRL Member?      Yes      No

Total    Enclosed    \_\_\_\_\_

### Your License Class (If you have one.)

- |                                      |               |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technician  | Name _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General     | Address _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced    | _____         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extra Class | Email _____   |

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Your Call sign \_\_\_\_\_

Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Make check or money order payable to:

The Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association, P.O. Box 424

South Heights, Pa 15081

# Hamfests & General Announcements



## WASHfest 2019

The South Hills Hamfest — Now in our **TWENTY FOURTH** big year!  
Sponsored by the WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.

Sunday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
8:00 AM until 3:00 PM Rain or Shine (or Snow!)

### Home Economics Building, South Park

3735 Buffalo Drive, South Park Township, PA 15129  
Behind the Allegheny County Police Station on Brownsville Road  
Talk-In on 146.955(-) and 443.650(+) 131.8 PL  
Donation \$5



(800) 545-8881

Breakfast & Lunch will be  
available!



FREE Coffee for the entire Hamfest  
courtesy of HAM RADIO INSURANCE ASSOCIATES  
of Canonsburg, PA

### MAIN PRIZES — You've Got to Play to WIN!



First Prize: ICOM-7300 100 W HF+6M Transceiver  
Second Prize: Comet Antennas CAA-500 Mark II Antenna Analyzer  
Third Prize: Buddipole Whip

Additional Hourly Door Prizes! 2 Special Black Box Prizes (Separate Drawing)!

Main Prize tickets are \$2.00 each, 3 for \$5.00, 7 for \$10, 15 for \$20

All Prizes Subject to last-minute changes

For Table Reservations, or More Information, Please Contact:

Carol Danko KB3GMN at (412) 884-1466 [n3sbf@comcast.net](mailto:n3sbf@comcast.net)  
E-mail us directly at [washarc@yahoo.com](mailto:washarc@yahoo.com) Check out our website too! [www.n3sh.org](http://www.n3sh.org)

**Please Note:** Early Table  
Reservations must be paid in full  
on or before January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019.  
Reservations received after  
February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 must include  
payment in full.  
Reserve now... we have sold out  
in advance nine years running!

Hamfest Table Reservation Form—Please PRINT LEGIBLY ALL INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Call Sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Tables WITH Electricity: \_\_\_\_\_ X \$15.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Tables WITHOUT Electricity: \_\_\_\_\_ X \$12.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

5 Or More Tables w/o: \_\_\_\_\_ X \$10.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Please make all checks payable to:  
WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS  
PLEASE MAIL RESERVATION TO:  
WASHFEST 2017  
c/o CAROL DANKO KB3GMN  
4246 Seton Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15227-1244

We reserve the right to resell any tables not occupied by  
8 AM, unless prior arrangements have been made!

Bruce Draper, AA5B, aa5b.coral@gmail.com

## Contest Corral

## February 2019

Check for updates and a downloadable PDF version online at [www.arri.org/contests](http://www.arri.org/contests).

Refer to the contest websites for full rules, scoring information, operating periods or time limits, and log submission information.

Start - Finish Date-Time	Finish Date-Time	Bands	Contest Name	Mode	Exchange	Sponsor's Website
2 0000	3 2359	1.8-UHF	Vermont QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), county or SPC	<a href="http://www.arn.org/vtqso.html">www.arn.org/vtqso.html</a>
2 0001	3 2359	28	10-10 International Winter Contest, SSB	Ph	Name, mbr or "0," SPC	<a href="http://www.ten-ten.org">www.ten-ten.org</a>
2 1200	3 1159	1.8-28	Black Sea Cup International	CW Ph	RS(T), club/org abbreviation or ITU zone	<a href="http://bscc.ucoz.ru">bscc.ucoz.ru</a>
2 1200	3 1200	3.5-28, 144	F9AA Cup, CW	CW	RST, serial	<a href="http://www.site.uro.asso.fr">www.site.uro.asso.fr</a>
2 1200	3 2359	3.5-28	Mexico RITTY International Contest	Dig	RST, XE state or serial	<a href="http://www.ruttydme.mex">www.ruttydme.mex</a>
2 1400	2 2359	1.8-28	FYBO Winter QRP Sprint	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), SPC, name, power, temperature	<a href="http://arizonasqptions.apple-land1.com">arizonasqptions.apple-land1.com</a>
2 1400	2 2359	1.8-28	Minnesota QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	Name, county or SPC	<a href="http://www.mnqso.org">www.mnqso.org</a>
2 1600	2 1900	3.5	AGCW Straight Key Party	CW	RST, serial, class, name, age	<a href="http://agcw.org/index.php/en">agcw.org/index.php/en</a>
2 1600	3 2359	1.8-28	British Columbia QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), BC district or SPC	<a href="http://orcadxoc.org/bcqp_rules.html">orcadxoc.org/bcqp_rules.html</a>
2 1700	2 2100	3.5-28	FISTS Winter Slow Speed Sprint	CW	RST, SPC, name, mbr or power	<a href="http://fistsna.org/opening.html#sprints">fistsna.org/opening.html#sprints</a>
3 0000	3 0400	3.5-14	North American Sprint, CW	CW	Other station's call, your call, serial, name, SPC	<a href="http://ncjweb.com/Sprint-Rules.pdf">ncjweb.com/Sprint-Rules.pdf</a>
4 2000	4 2130	3.5	RSGB 80-Meter Club Championship, SSB	Ph	RS, serial	<a href="http://www.rsgbc.org/hf">www.rsgbc.org/hf</a>
5 0200	5 0400	3.5-28	ARS Spartan Sprint	CW	RST, SPC, power	<a href="http://arsqp.blogspot.com">arsqp.blogspot.com</a>
6 2000	6 2100	3.5	UKEICC 80-Meter Contest	Ph	4-character grid square	<a href="http://www.ukicc.com">www.ukicc.com</a>
7 1900	7 2200	28	NRAU 10-Meter Activity Contest	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), 6-char grid square	<a href="http://www.nraunet/activity-contests">www.nraunet/activity-contests</a>
7 2000	7 2200	1.8-28	SKCC Sprint Europe	CW	RST, SPC, name, mbr or power	<a href="http://www.skccgroup.com">www.skccgroup.com</a>
9 0000	10 2359	3.5-28	CQ WW RITTY WPX Contest	Dig	RST, serial	<a href="http://www.cqwparty.com">www.cqwparty.com</a>
9 1000	10 1000	1.8-28	SARL Field Day Contest	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), number of transmitters, category, QTH	<a href="http://www.sarl.org.za">www.sarl.org.za</a>
9 1100	9 1300	7, 14	Asia-Pacific Spring Sprint, CW	CW	RST, serial	<a href="http://jalc.org/apssprint/aprule.txt">jalc.org/apssprint/aprule.txt</a>
9 1200	10 1200	1.8-28	Dutch PACS Contest	CW Ph	RS(T), Dutch province or serial	<a href="http://pacc.veron.nl">pacc.veron.nl</a>
9 1200	10 1200	1.8	KCJ Topband Contest	CW	RST, Prefecture or continent code	<a href="http://www.kcj-cw.com">www.kcj-cw.com</a>
9 1200	10 2359	1.8-50	SKCC Weekend Sprintathon	CW	RST, SPC, name, mbr or "none"	<a href="http://www.skccgroup.com">www.skccgroup.com</a>
9 1400	11 0200	1.8-UHF	YLRL YL-QM Contest	CW Ph Dig	Serial, RS(T), SPC	<a href="http://ylrl.org/index.php">ylrl.org/index.php</a>
9 1500	10 1500	1.8-28	OMISS QSO Party	Ph	RS, SPC, mbr (if any)	<a href="http://omiss.net/Facility/qso-party.php">omiss.net/Facility/qso-party.php</a>
9 1700	9 2100	3.5-28	FISTS Winter Unlimited Sprint	CW	RST, SPC, name, mbr or power	<a href="http://fistsna.org">fistsna.org</a>
9 1900	9 2300	1.8	RSGB 1.8 MHz Contest	CW	RST, serial, UK district code or serial	<a href="http://www.rsgbc.org/hf">www.rsgbc.org/hf</a>
10 1300	10 1700	3.5-7	Balkan HF Contest	CW Ph	RS(T), serial	<a href="http://arabih.ba">arabih.ba</a>
11 0100	11 0259	3.5-14	COC Winter QSO Party	CW	RST, SPC	<a href="http://www.coloradoqpcclub.org">www.coloradoqpcclub.org</a>
11 0100	11 0300	1.8-28	4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint	CW Ph	RS(T), SPC, mbr or power	<a href="http://www.4sqrp.com">www.4sqrp.com</a>
11 1300	15 2359	All, no WARC	ARRL School Club Roundup	CW Ph	RS(T), Class (VGS), SPC	<a href="http://www.arrl.org/school-club-roundup">www.arrl.org/school-club-roundup</a>
13 0130	13 0330	3.5-14	NAQCC CW Sprint	CW	RST, SPC, mbr or power	<a href="http://naqcc.info">naqcc.info</a>
13 2000	13 2130	3.5	RSGB 80-Meter Club Championship, Data	Dig	RST, serial	<a href="http://www.rsgbc.org">www.rsgbc.org</a>
14 0000	14 2359	1.8-7	PODXS 070 Club Valentine Sprint	Dig	Name, OM/YL, SPC	<a href="http://www.podxs070.com">www.podxs070.com</a>
16 0000	17 2359	1.8-28	ARRL International DX Contest, CW	CW	RST, SP or power	<a href="http://www.arrl.org/arrl-dx">www.arrl.org/arrl-dx</a>
16 0800	16 1000	7	SARL Youth Day Sprint	Ph	RS, age	<a href="http://www.sarl.org.za">www.sarl.org.za</a>
16 1200	17 1159	1.8-28	Russian PSK WW Contest	Dig	RST, 2-letter oblast or serial	<a href="http://rdclub.ru/russian-ww-psk-contest">rdclub.ru/russian-ww-psk-contest</a>
16 1900	16 2059	1.8-28	Field Hell Sprint	Dig	RST, mbr, SPC, 4-char grid	<a href="http://sites.google.com/site/fieldhellclub">sites.google.com/site/fieldhellclub</a>
16 2300	17 2300	1.8-14	AWA Amplitude Modulation QSO Party	Ph	Name, SPC	<a href="http://www.antiquewireless.org">www.antiquewireless.org</a>
18 0200	18 0400	1.8-28	Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	CW	RST, SPC, mbr or power	<a href="http://qrpcontest.com/pigrun">qrpcontest.com/pigrun</a>
20 1900	20 2030	3.5	AGCW Semi-Automatic Key Evening	CW	RST, serial, year first used a bug	<a href="http://www.agcw.org">www.agcw.org</a>
22 2200	24 2200	1.8	CQ 160-Meter Contest, SSB	Ph	RS, SP or CQ Zone	<a href="http://www.cq160.com">www.cq160.com</a>
23 0600	24 1800	3.5-28	REF Contest, SSB	Ph	RS, Department or serial	<a href="http://concoours.r-e-Longloontest">concoours.r-e-Longloontest</a>
23 1300	24 1300	3.5-28	UBA DX Contest, CW	CW	RST, serial, province (if ON)	<a href="http://www.uba.be/en">www.uba.be/en</a>
23 1500	24 0159	1.8-50	South Carolina QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	RS(T), county or SPC	<a href="http://sqso.com/rules">sqso.com/rules</a>
23 1800	24 0559	3.5-28	North American QSO Party, RITTY	Dig	Name, SPC	<a href="http://www.ncjweb.com">www.ncjweb.com</a>
24 0900	24 1700	3.5-28	High Speed Club CW Contest	CW	RST, mbr or "NM"	<a href="http://www.highspeedclub.org">www.highspeedclub.org</a>
24 1400	24 1700	3.5-14	SARL Digital Contest	Dig	RST, serial	<a href="http://www.sarl.org.za">www.sarl.org.za</a>
24 1400	27 0800	1.8-144	Classic Exchange, Phone	Ph	Name, RS, SPC, rig model	<a href="http://www.classicexchange.org">www.classicexchange.org</a>
24 1500	25 0059	3.5-144	North Carolina QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	County or SPC	<a href="http://ncqso.org/rules">ncqso.org/rules</a>
27 0000	27 0200	1.8-28	SKCC Sprint	CW	RST, SPC, name, mbr or power	<a href="http://www.skccgroup.com">www.skccgroup.com</a>
27 2000	27 2100	3.5	UKEICC 80-Meter Contest	CW	4-char grid square	<a href="http://www.ukicc.com">www.ukicc.com</a>
28 2000	28 2130	3.5	RSGB 80-Meter Club Championship, CW	CW	RST, serial	<a href="http://www.rsgbc.org/hf">www.rsgbc.org/hf</a>

All dates refer to UTC and may be different from calendar dates in North America. Contests are not conducted on the 60-, 30-, 17-, or 12-meter bands. Mbr = Membership number. Serial = Sequential number of the contact. SPC = State, Province, DXCC Entity, XE = Mexican state. Listings in blue indicate contests sponsored by ARRL or NCJ. The latest time to make a valid contest QSO is the minute listed in the "Finish Time" column. Data for Contest Corral is maintained on the W7BNM Contest Calendar at [www.contestcalendar.com](http://www.contestcalendar.com) and is extracted for publication in QST 2 months prior to the month of the contest. ARRL gratefully acknowledges the support of Bruce Horn, W7BNM, in providing this service.

# Bits and Pieces

So here it is February 2019 and I am chomping at the bit to get a new antenna up. I wonder if any of you are ready for some new addition to your station? I am excited to think of what the new antenna will bring in as well as let me contact. The thoughts of new contact locations are intriguing! I am always interested in hearing what the eQRM readers are doing with their radio hobby. Send me a story of your latest Radio Adventure.



For my birthday last year my family helped me install a tall pole to raise my antenna higher than it has ever been. I had a really interesting set of contacts. One morning I was just tuning through the 40 meter band and heard a very busy pile up. I listen patiently to hear what the excitement was. It turned out to be a group putting "Light Houses on the air" off the coast of Massachusetts. They were moving from lighthouse to lighthouse by boat. That was really interesting to me. That meant they had to set up, tear down and motor boat about every 30 to 60 minutes. As the on air pile ups got quiet they would inform listeners approximately how long 'till their next lighthouse would be on the air. There were a lot of hams listening because each new location got a huge pile up. My station puts out 100 watts on a folded dipole antenna. I could hear many of the stations calling with a lot more power and very clear signals. I waited till things got quiet and transmitted my call sign "KC3BXC". The light house group returned my call each time. My signal reports were not the best. But I got to make the contacts. It showed me you don't have to have the highest antenna, most expensive, fanciest, biggest, most powerful station. I just had to wait 'till conditions made it possible for me to be heard. This was quite exciting for me! They most definitely heard me. This day I had my very first contact with a lighthouse. Turns out this was a group that planned to put seven different lighthouses on the air that day (I found this web page a few days later <https://w1sye.org/?p=4126> ). I was just doing some house chores and could listen for them to boat, set up and transmit from the next lighthouse. Each time there would be a huge pileup! I just waited until the frequency got less busy and put out my call. They came back each time. I got to make all seven lighthouse contacts. This is one great day of radio I will long remember!

So what about you? Did you have something fun you got to do with your radio hobby this winter? Share it with me. I would be delighted to hear from you and share your fun with the rest of the eQRM readers.

*Till next month 73 KC3BXC clear but I'll be listening...*

*Be courteous on the air, be safe and have fun with your hobby.*



# It's Your Dime

Remember back when you could communicate by "Pay Phone" for ten cents? This page is for anyone who wants to communicate with the BVARA community and beyond. Please send me your article that you would like posted on this page. Please, only topics and language in good taste. As the editor I reserve the option to post it or ignore it. Send your dime to me at:

[kc3bxc.73@gmail.com](mailto:kc3bxc.73@gmail.com)



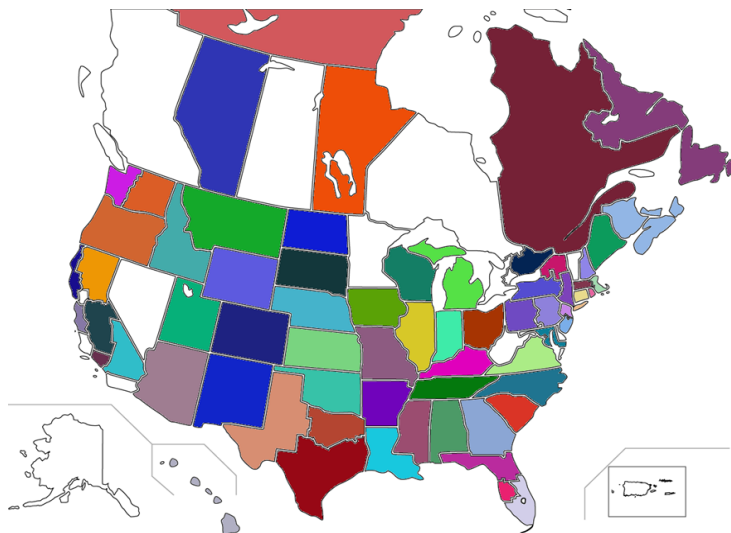
The 2019 Winter Field Day activity for the BVARA was scaled back this year from the last two years based on immediate local events that limited the scope of our activity. Winter was rearing it's ugly head and some home plumbing issues seemed to clog things up as well. But hams like to participate in contests and have begun to embrace this new wintertime activity. No, our members are not UPers (Upper Peninsula of Michigan) or Canadians (who thrive on winter activities and ice hockey) but we do enjoy breaking up the winter months with a fun contest. Fun it was for four of us who congregated at the home of Rich, K3SOM to endure the 'harsh' environment of a heated home with flush toilets in winter, with some lingering plumbing problems, but with some antennas that could be used with the contest 'Home' category with much better results but with a reduced multiplier.

High 'fives' abounded as our elusive ARRL EWA Section was worked. Then the Northwest Territories of Canada, VE8, was entered into our log followed by three Hawaii stations. High 'fives' continued when North and South Dakota, New Mexico, and all of New York and Florida ARRL Sections were entered into our log. We were having fun! It became evident that a budding DXer was among us with contacts on 40 meters with Bulgaria and Poland. The SotaBeams Contest Console was his favorite tool as he would 'lip sync' the words to his pre-recorded melodious version of 'CQ Contest!'

Giant Eagle doughnuts and chocolate brownies, home-made lemon squares, potato chips and French Onion dip as well as DiGiorno Pizza for dinner - the food staples for ham radio contest activity were enthusiastically consumed. To round it out, Ethiopian Mokamba coffee, hot apple cider, and hot chocolate beverages complemented our gourmet palates. No Golden Corral for these hams!

When all of the dust settled, Jim Allen - KC3IXE, Rich Soltesz - K3SOM, Mick Pyzoha - N3OJP, and Tony Pavilonis - W6PEF worked as a team to make 390 contacts on 20, 40, and 80 meters with two SDR radios at 100 watts, a doublet antenna for 40 and 80 meters, and a Yagi beam for 20 meters. Our exchange was W3SGJ, 2H, WPA and we're very proud of it!

Rich - K3SOM



# Of Interest to All Radio Enthusiasts

## TECHNICIAN SEMINAR

**Are you interested in passing your first  
FCC test to get an Amateur Radio License?**



We are taking applicant sign ups for a class March 2019 Technician Class. Classes will be on Saturdays. There is a twenty dollar fee for class materials.

Please contact Jack Spencer at (412) 427-0427

