



The *E-VOX*

The Official *On-Line* Newsletter of the *Lehigh Valley Amateur Radio Club - W3OI*



Allentown, Pennsylvania (Lehigh County) - **USA**

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Repeaters

146.340/146.940 (PL 71.9)
147.735/147.135 (PL 167.9)

RACES NET

Every Monday at 7:30 (ET)
146.34 / 146.94 (PL 71.9)
All are welcome !

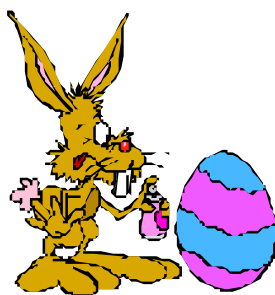


W3OI Home Page: <http://www.w3oi.org>



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There will be NO TEST SESSION IN MARCH, 2005



**The March LVARC meeting will be held on
March 1, 2005 at the Red Cross Building at 7:30.**

Program: Basic Electronics - Part 2

Presenter: Paul Ryan (NOKIA)



LVARC / RACES NET

Don't forget to check into the Monday Night
LC/LVARC/RACES Net on 146.94 (PL 71.9) with an
alternate frequency of 147.735/147.135 (PL 167.9)
The Net begins at 7:30 pm local time (ET).

**Many club announcements
will be heard there !**

Monday Night RACES/ARES Check In Summary - 2005

<u>Month</u>	<u>Number Checkins</u>	<u>Number of Mondays</u>
January	169	5





This Month In Ham Radio

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		LVARC Meeting Red Cross 7:30				ARRL Intl DX Contest Phone QRP Sprint
ARRL Intl DX Contest Phone QRP Sprint	ARES RACES Net 7:30 Mark AK3M					AGCW QRP Contest Virginia QSO Party Oklahoma QSO Party
AGCW QRP Contest Oklahoma QSO Party	ARES RACES Net 7:30 Jim KA3UQP			 St. Patrick's Day	NO VE TEST SESSION IN MARCH	10-10 Int. Mobile Contest Russian DX Contest
Russian DX Contest UBA 6-meter Contest Virginia QSO Party	ARES RACES Net 7:30 Dorian KA3GZW					CQ WW WPX SSB Contest
 Easter CQ WW WPX SSB Contest	ARES RACES Net 7:30 Paul NOKIA					

LVARC Meeting -Tuesday March 1, 2005 7:30 pm at the Red Cross Building

NO VE TEST SESSION IN MARCH

**Minutes of the February 1, 2004 Meeting**

de Phil (KB3HMK), - Secretary - LVARC

**Lehigh Valley Amateur Radio Club (W3OI) Meeting Minutes**

Date: February 1, 2005

The meeting was called to order by President Wolfe at 1930 Hrs, (EST / EDST).

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance, then a moment of silence was observed for Silent Keys.

There were a total of 15 members in attendance, and the club was joined by 6 guests. The following Board Members were present at the meeting: Rod – n3xg, Paul – n0kia, Walt – ke3sp, Robin – kb3gzv, Phil – kb3hmk

Corrections Additions to the minutes: None noted

Approved by: Walt – ke3sp
Second by: Bill – ka3rbh
Carried (Y/N) Y

Treasurer's Report (Paul - N0KIA)
Previous balance \$1,119.38
Ending balance \$1,194.25

Approved by: Bill – ka3rbh
Second by: Mark – n3ulr
Carried: (Y/N) Y

Committee Reports:

Repeater: Rod reports that the 146.94 repeater was causing interference with another repeater in N.J.. The problem was looked into and taken care of. The problem with 147.135 repeater was addressed. There were e-mail correspondents sent and received from both sides. The problem was rectified.

Program: Phil reports that tonight's program will be Paul (n0kia) doing his part 1 of intro to basic electronics. March will be Paul again doing part 2. We will plan to have a dinner meeting in April. The proposed date will be the 19th. The proposed site will be the Friendly's in Whitehall. Phil will send an e-mail out to see what kind of response the club gets. Once it is confirmed, Phil let everyone know.



Volunteer Examiners: No testing was done for January. The club has allowed w3ok to put a link on there website for any members who want to take the tests. Our V.E.s will help out w3ok when possible. The Sunday before the test date will be the cut off deadline to register to take the test.

Field Day: At this time the Board members will divide up the tasks for field day. The club is looking into 3 new sights for this year. A possible sight should be known by next meeting. The club wants to get back to basics. This way, if an emergency arises, we will know what to do.

Web Site: The website is up and running.

Education: The A.R.R.L. took the advice of the instructors and is putting a link on the website for people to look up dates and locations for classes and testing.

Old Business: The board has approved \$200 be allocated for a 501c3. Rod is currently researching it. It will benefit the club. The secretary would like to thank Bob (wa3jse) for the donation of a mini tape recorder. This will help to take notes for the meeting.

New Business: The board met for the new year. They looked into any form of fundraising. The idea for a pre-meeting auction was discussed. The proposed month will be in June. Members can auction off ham related items. The club will then get a portion of the profits. Frank (w3ftu) will be handling it. The W3OI club would like to send their condolences to Frank (w3ftu) for the loss of his mother-in-law. A sympathy card was signed by the members at the meeting and will be sent to him and his family.

New members/Guests: Craig Traverson (n3tsy) – new member
 Dave Marsh (w3amc) – new member
 Bob Yankovich (n3qzr) – guest
 Charlie Lazarchak (w3dea) – guest
 Breanna Lazarchak – guest
 Bryan Williams (aa3wm) – guest
 Ricky Elrod (kb3llm) – guest

New Members Motion to Accept by: Mark – n3ulr
Second by: Mike – kb3lod
Carried (Y/N) Y

The LVARC Monthly Business Meeting Closed at 2000 hrs, EST.

Motion by: Mark – n3ulr
Second by: Dave – w3amc
In favor: Y

Respectfully Submitted de KB3HMK, Secretary.

\$\$\$ W3OI Finances \$\$\$
Balance as of February 30, 2005 - \$1,194.25





Monday Night RACES / ARES Net Control Operators



March 2005

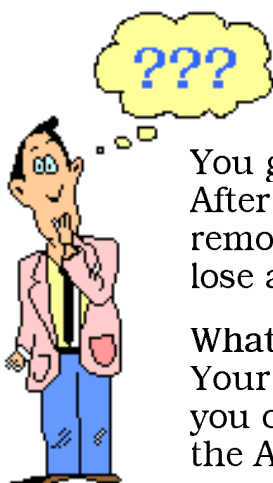
February 7
February 14
February 21
February 28

KA3UQP
KB3GZV/KB3GZW
N0KIA
N3MFT

Jim
Robin/Dorian
Paul
Jeff



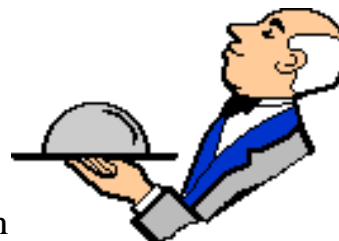
Brain Teaser



You get a flat tire and pull safely to the side of the road. After getting out the spare, jacking up the car and removing all the lug nuts, you accidentally scatter and lose all the nuts (as in the Christmas Story with Ralphie).

What can you do to get *yourself* back on the road again? Your answer cannot include hitching a ride or using you cell phone or HT for help. (The answer will appear in the April issue of the E-VOX)!

The LVARC to Hold Dinner Meeting



The LVARC will be having a dinner meeting in April, 2005. The date, time and place will be announced. Additional information will be heard at the meeting and/or on the Monday Night RACES/ARES nets.



Mark your **LVARC Activities/Events** Calendar

PRINT, CLIP and POST



Tuesday March 1 --- LVARC Meeting - 7:30 PM (Red Cross Bldg.)

Monday March 7 --- LC RACES/ARES Net - 7:30 pm (146.94)

Monday February 14 --- LC RACES/ARES Net - 7:30 pm (146.94)

Monday March 21 --- LC RACES/ARES Net - 7:30 pm (146.94)

NO VE TEST SESSION IN MARCH

Sunday March 27 --- Easter Sunday

Monday March 28 --- LC RACES/ARES Net - 7:30 pm (146.94)

There may be additions and deletions to the above dates. Listen to the Monday Night Net, the newsletter and announcements at meetings for changes.

DON'T FORGET

The LVARC VE program. If you know someone would like to become a ham or if you want to upgrade your license, the LVARC can help!

Contact Mark (AK3M) for details
(610-865-9183 or AK3M@rcn.com)



LVARC 2004 Program Schedule

de Phil (KB3HMK) - LVARC Program Chairman

March - Basic Electronics- Part 2 (Paul - NOKIA)



2005 DUES ARE DUE

(See page 14)



LVARC TO HOLD AUCTION

That's
Fantastic!



The Lehigh Valley Amateur Radio Club will hold its first auction in many years! The plan is to have participants sell their items from their vehicles in June, 2005. This means that we will be using a parking lot for this event. Frank (W3FTU) had volunteered to head this event. **Look for additional information in upcoming LVARC newsletters, meetings and/or listen to the LV RACES/ARES/LVARC Monday Night Net (Mondays at 7:30 local 146.34/146.94 - PL 71.9).**

"Amazing Grace"

Rear Admiral "Amazing Grace" Murray Hopper, USNR (1906-1992)

Who can forget Rear Admiral Grace Hopper, cheerfully teaching computer engineers about the importance of nanoseconds? She was a mathematician, a computer scientist and programmer, and a marketing genius, but mostly, she was a visionary. Even as a child in New York City, Ms. Hopper loved gadgets. Specifically, she loved to take things apart and put them back together, to really see how they worked. Eventually, she found computers, and established a life-long love of the then-new technology. During World War II, Grace became the first programmer on the Navy's Mark I computer. Later, she joined the Harvard Faculty, there helping to develop the Mark II and Mark III computers. It was at Harvard that she traced a now-famous error in the Mark II to a moth trapped in a relay,

and coined the term "computer bug."

She pioneered computer languages through the development of COBOL. Many feel this language was the birth of

modern programming. She was also famous for handing out short lengths of wire at her seminars, to demonstrate the distance electricity can traverse in a nanosecond. Through this simple device, she inspired many generations of programmers and engineers to code and design as efficiently as possible.



From: Jameco Catalog - Fall 2004 vol. 644

Submitted by Frank (W3FTU)



Ham Operator Caught In Tsunami

from the
Orlando Sentinel

By **Rich McKay** | Sentinel Staff Writer

Posted January 1, 2005

The earthquake hit with the popping of concrete, screeching of twisting metal and the thudding sounds of bottles, books and bits of plaster falling from the shelves and walls of Charles Harpole's hotel room.

"I knew that I'd either be dead in a few seconds because the building would crash down or I'd get out and be fine," the vacationing University of Central Florida professor said early Friday. "There was that sense of finality."

Harpole and other members of a ham-radio club were just north of the quake's epicenter on the picturesque Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal between India and Thailand.

It was 6:30 a.m. Sunday, when Harpole was shaken from his bed to discover the walls of his room shaking and the floor turned to jelly.

"I was on the fifth floor, and it was difficult to walk because the floor was shifting. It was either too high or too low," he said in a telephone interview from the home of his wife's family in Samut Sakhon, Thailand.

Harpole said he knew the safest place to be was beneath a doorway, so he made his way to the bathroom doorway and held on for what seemed like six or seven minutes of shaking in the 9.0-magnitude earthquake.

When things finally settled, Harpole got dressed and fled the building, discovering to his joy that everyone in his party has escaped uninjured.

Because their hotel was on a high mountain ridge, Harpole said, it wasn't affected by the tsunami. But as he and his team realized the scope of the disaster, they set up their radio equipment and started relaying messages.

For about 20 hours, the ham operators -- sometimes using car batteries to run their radios -- were the main link between the remote Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the outside world, relaying information about survivors to anxious relatives and friends.

And with most telephone lines down and cell phones scarce, the ham-radio club's efforts proved invaluable as the scope of the disaster increased day after day.

The first messages were to let people on the Indian mainland know that those on the island were safe and unharmed.

A young waiter at Harpole's hotel asked them to get word to his mother in Hyderabad, India, that he was alive and well.



"We found a ham-radio operator on the mainland, gave the mother's telephone number," Harpole said. Within five minutes a ham operator in Hyderabad called the waiter's mother and relayed the message.

"He told us the mother was crying with joy," he said.

Harpole's group cheered and clapped. Word spread quickly across the island, and their work went on for hours and hours.

When Indian government officials learned of the hamradio operators, they relayed messages for official requests for medicines, water and blankets. Several of the radio operators headed south to Nicobar.

Harpole decided it was time for him to head to Thailand for a reunion with his wife and her family who were safely inland.

"I was concerned, that this being an Indian operation and here I was this American, I should step aside," he said.

At his in-laws' house, he had his own radio equipment and has been relaying messages throughout Thailand, India and Sri Lanka.

"People are asking, 'Can you find so-and-so,' and so forth," he said.

Harpole, an amateur-radio enthusiast since he was 14, had been working for years with fellow enthusiasts in India to get permission to set up a station on the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which consist of 572 islands, big and small, inhabited and uninhabited.

Amateur-radio buffs collect calls from geographic zones, trying to reach remote parts of the world and put pins in maps to mark the locations. But because of the Indian government's concern for security, a swath of the globe had been off-limits until Harpole and his friends persuaded the leaders to lift the ban.

About two weeks ago, Harpole and his friends arrived in the harbor town of Port Blair to set up the first ham-radio station and lounge on the tropical, white, sandy beaches.

It was an idyllic holiday until the quake hit.

Harpole, who founded the film program at UCF, expects to be back in Orlando soon. He said that the devastation throughout the Indian Ocean rim is hard to comprehend. The full toll may never be known. That's because many rural island and coastal villages never had a census, and "for some of those places, there isn't anyone left alive to say how many people had lived there," he said.

"Many islands were washed completely over from one side to the other. I've seen horrible, horrible destruction," Harpole said. "It's shocking beyond the telling. Piles of cars, broken buildings and boats where there used to be towns and people. The stories from people being hit by the wave -- so unexpected. People having coffee, and then they're gone."

Christopher Sherman of the Sentinel staff contributed to this report. Rich McKay can be reached at 407-420-5470 or rmckay@orlandosentinel.com.



The Foundation For Amateur Radio, Inc.*



Washington, D.C.

FAR Scholarships
Post Office Box 831
Riverdale, MD 20738
December 1 , 2004

The Foundation For Amateur Radio is accepting applications for 55 scholarships for the academic year 2005-2006. The scholarship program is described in the enclosed News Release. We sent you this news release because you are the editor of an Amateur Radio publication or club newsletter.

We are anxious to reach as many deserving licensed Radio Amateurs as possible who are seeking additional education beyond high school. Please publish this news release in the January and February 2005 issues of your publication.

Besides publishing the announcement in your club newsletters and on your Web pages, we would appreciate your mentioning these opportunities at your club meetings, on your nets, and during your training classes. Please let us know if the News Release should have been sent to a different addressee or if the address label needs correction. Copies of this release can be made available in electronic form upon request to aa30f@arrl.net.

Thank you very much for your assistance and encouragement to the volunteers involved in helping their fellow Radio Amateurs.

73,

~~~

Diane Zimmerman, AA30F Chairman, Scholarship Committee

AFFILIATED

73,

Diane Zimmerman, AA30F  
Chairman, Scholarship Committee



AFFILIATED

**The Foundation For Amateur Radio, Inc.\****Washington, D.C.*

# ***AMATEUR RADIO NEWS RELEASE***

For Immediate Release

THE FOUNDATION FOR AMATEUR RADIO, INC., a non-profit organization with headquarters in Washington, D.C., plans to administer fifty-five (55) scholarships for the academic year 20052006 to assist licensed Radio Amateurs. The Foundation, composed of over seventy-five local area Amateur Radio Clubs, fully funds three of these scholarships. Ten are funded with the income from grants. The remaining forty-two (42) are administered by the Foundation without cost to the various donors.

Licensed Radio Amateurs may compete for these awards if they plan to pursue a full-time course of studies beyond high school and are enrolled in or have been accepted for enrollment at an accredited university, college or technical school. The awards range from \$500 to \$2500 with preference given in some cases to residents of specified geographical areas or the pursuit of certain study programs. Clubs, especially those in Delaware, Florida, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia and Wisconsin, are encouraged to announce these opportunities at their meetings, in their club newsletters, during training classes, on their nets and on their world wide web home pages. Additional information and an application form may be requested by letter or QSL card, postmarked prior to April 30, 2005 from:

FAR Scholarships  
Post Office Box 831  
Riverdale, MD 20738

The Foundation for Amateur Radio, incorporated in the District of Columbia, is an exempt organization under Section 501 (C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. It is devoted exclusively to promoting the interests of Amateur Radio and those scientific, literary and educational pursuits that advance the purposes of the Amateur Radio Service.



## 2005 Dues Are Due

Dues keep the LVARC strong and allow us to contribute to Operation Ho Ho and the ARRL, buy pizza, finance Field Day and more. Dues are one way the LVARC stays "afloat." The good news, is that **dues will REMAIN THE SAME AS LAST YEAR (and the year before)!**

**Regular Dues (includes autopatch) ..... \$17.00**

**Family Dues ..... \$3.00**

**Associate (non-ham) ..... \$5.00**

Send your dues to:

Paul Ryan (NOKIA)  
5814 Lindbergh Street  
Orefield, PA 18069-2250

or pay Paul at an  
LVARC meeting

or pay via the club's web site.

Make checks payable to: *The  
Lehigh Valley Amateur Radio  
Club*

**\*\* Please notify Paul of change  
of address, email or phone  
number(s) \*\***

## Why Join/Renew Membership In the LVARC ?

**Why should you join the  
LVARC? What do you get for  
your membership? What  
does  
the LVARC have to offer?**

You get great programs, a monthly newsletter, dinner meetings, soon to be Tech classes, Field Day, a terrific web site, informative, friendly members, a holiday party, special programs (Operation Ho Ho), participation in community activities, group ARRL purchases, a dedicated RACES/ARES program, pizza meetings, access to an autopatch and **much more!!**

**I'm gonna  
re-new now !!!**







## IMPORTANT LVARC VE TEST SESSION INFORMATION



- (1) There will be **NO VE TEST SESSION IN MARCH, 2005**. The test schedule will resume in April, 2005 on the regularly scheduled third Friday of the month.
- (2) As of January, 2005, **the fee for all tests will be \$14.00**. This is an increase of \$2.00 as regulated by the ARRL VEC.
- (3) As of February, 2005, the **DEADLINE for scheduling a test with the LVARC, will be the Sunday before the Friday test session**. Anyone calling after that date will be placed on the list for the following month.
- (4) The LVARC will accept **EXACT CASH ONLY** for test fees.
- (5) **Contact Mark (AK3M)** for scheduling a test or information about testing. Call **610-865-9183** or email **AK3M@rcn.com**.

### Continued TNX to the LVARC VE Team!!

Mark S. Miller - AK3M  
Frank Unger - W3FTU  
Walt Snyder - KE3SP  
Larry Miller - NR3R  
Rod Wolfe, Jr. - N3XG

Bob Wiseman - WB3W  
John Holmes - WX3W  
Carl Seier - AA3IX  
Robert Smithline - N0UH  
Dick Dech - KA3MOU

"Ah well, perhaps one has to be very old before one learns how to be amused rather than shocked." ---- *Pearl S. Buck, American novelist*



## LVARC TO OFFER BASIC ELECTRONICS COURSES

de Paul (NOKIA)



Greeting to Members and Guests of the Lehigh Valley Amateur Radio Club!

As you may be aware, we've scheduled a series of club meetings to cover the basics of electronics.

Our first presentation is scheduled for February 1st and I'm really looking forward to presenting the class and generating discussion on the fundamental concepts of our hobby.

If you're a new or prospective ham, this is a perfect chance to learn in a non-competitive environment and ask all your questions -- even the "dumb one". If you're an experienced ham, please feel free to add your experience to the presentations. We'll be following each class with a Q&A session and I just might not have all the A's!!

As a general guide, we'll be following a publicly available tutorial called the "Elmer 101" course. The original lessons and slides are available at:

**<http://www.qsl.net/kf4trd/lessons.htm>**

I've checked with Dave Ek (NK0E), and he's happy to see his material being put to good use. Feel free to download and print the appropriate lesson and/or slides before our club meeting. I plan to do the first 6 lessons, one lesson per meeting, spaced over eight months. We'll take a break every two months or so. We'll also reevaluate at the sixth lesson to see if the last few would be useful. That will take use through basic DC and AC circuits and common components and properties of electronics.

**Here's the cool part! We'll also assemble an SW+40 transceiver for our "Intro to Electronics" course.** The lessons actually use this kit for practical labs. I'll bring the kit to each presentation with the parts assembled for that lesson and we'll use the VOM, O'scope, or whatever tool necessary to measure the concepts presented for that lesson. I'll have some additional material available, so we can set up some independent experiments if you wish.

So, for the February 1st, 2005 meeting, you should read the lessons, look at the slides and be ready with questions on series and parallel circuits, basic units like voltage, current, resistance, capacitance and inductance, and have a basic concept of what a "diode" is. If you're planning to stay for the presentation after the business meeting, and are unable to print the slides let me know and I'll bring a copy along for you.





Drive  
Carefully ..

**School Is  
Open!**

Photo from  
Bob Green (KE3AW)



**PIX FROM  
CHRIS**

Mount Erebus in the Antarctic  
(left)

Mystery tracks in the  
Antarctic snow. Do you  
know who/what made them?

(right)





## An Update on the CW Requirement



MORSE REQUIREMENT, LICENSE  
RESTRUCTURING REMAIN ON FCC'S RADAR

The ARRL does not anticipate the FCC will offer up any proposals on the Morse requirement and further restructuring of the Amateur Radio licensing system until sometime in mid-2005, possibly sooner. The FCC Wireless Telecommunications Bureau continues to review thousands of comments it received on 18 petitions for rule making--including one from the ARRL.

The various petitions called for eliminating or altering the Morse code requirement and changing other sections of the Amateur Service Part 97 rules, including further restructuring of the amateur licensing system.

In addition to agreeing on other changes affecting Amateur Radio, World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 (WRC-03), left the choice to require Morse proficiency for HF access up to individual countries, and several already have dropped Morse code as an examination requirement. That has not yet happened in the US.

Before the FCC adopts any changes in the Morse requirement and the license structure, it must complete its comment review, issue a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) reflecting its interpretation of consensus within the amateur community based on comments received and invite further comments on the NPRM. The FCC then will review those comments before issuing a Report and Order that spells out any final rules. The ARRL does not anticipate any changes in the Morse requirement or in other Amateur Radio licensing requirements before 2006, possibly later.

While this rule making process is under way, no changes have been made in the Amateur Radio Service rules. The 5 WPM Morse code requirement (Element 1) to gain HF privileges in the US remains in place, and no proposed automatic upgrades or other rule changes have been put into effect. The ARRL has posted answers to frequently asked questions on its own restructuring proposals.

<http://www.arrl.org/news/restructuring2/faq.html>

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from The ARRL Letter  
Vol. 23, No. 50  
December 24, 2004



## **FCC Chairman Resigns**



### **FCC Chairman Michael K. Powell announced January 21 that he'll step down, effective "sometime in March."**

Nominated by former President Bill Clinton, Powell joined the FCC in 1997 and became its chairman two days after President George Bush was sworn in for his first term in 2001. ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, called Powell's performance "a deep disappointment" after some initial optimism--especially given his unabashed cheerleading on behalf of the FCC's broadband over power line (BPL) initiative.

"It's no secret that we thought Chairman Powell was going entirely in the wrong direction on BPL and dragging the other commissioners and FCC staff along--willing or not--because he was, after all, the chairman," Sumner said. "A new chairman might be a chance for a fresh start."

When the FCC adopted new Part 15 rules for BPL last October, Powell called it "a banner day." While conceding that BPL will affect some spectrum users, including "all those wonderful Amateur Radio operators out there," Powell implied that the FCC must balance the benefits of BPL against the relative value of other licensed services. He listed the FCC's adoption of BPL rules among the "policy highlights" of his tenure.

Possibilities to replace Powell include the other Republican members of the five-member FCC--Kathleen Q. Abernathy, a staunch BPL supporter, and Kevin J. Martin. Speculation also has been raised about various outside candidates. "We look forward to the opportunity to work with the new chairman, whoever that may be," Sumner said.

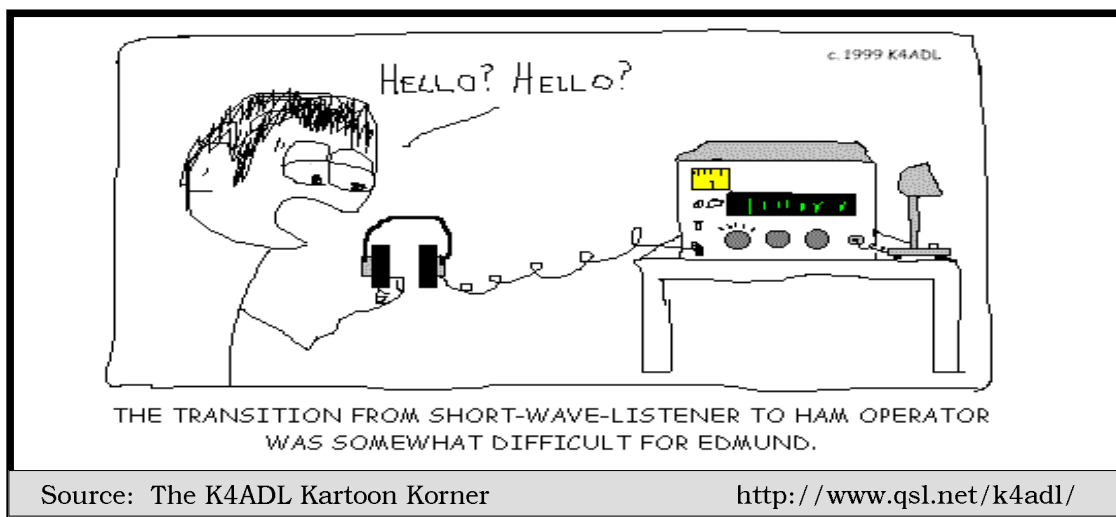
In his announcement, Powell said it was "with a mixture of pride and regret" that he informed the president of his decision to step down. "Having completed a bold and aggressive agenda, it is time for me to pursue other opportunities and let someone else take the reins of the agency," he said. "During my tenure, we worked to get the law right in order to stimulate innovative technology that puts more power in the hands of the American people, giving them greater choices that enrich their lives."

The chairman said the seeds of the Commission's policies under his leadership "are taking firm root in the marketplace and are starting to blossom." He cited the increased use of cell phones, digital TV and other digital technology "increasingly connected anytime, anywhere by a wide variety of broadband networks." Proclaimed Powell, "Our children will inherit this exciting future."

As FCC chairman, Powell also was in the forefront of enforcing the Commission's rules on indecency, largely through imposing huge fines on violators. He also supported changes in media ownership rules that permitted even greater concentration of broadcast station ownership.

From:

QST de W1AW  
ARRL Bulletin 3 ARLB003  
From ARRL Headquarters  
Newington CT January 21, 2005



## FIRST WINTER STORM OF 2005 HITS THE LEHIGH VALLEY

The first major winter storm of 2005 hit the Lehigh Valley on Saturday January 23, 2005. Most of the valley saw 9" to 14" of snow accumulation. Local communications (amateur and public service) were monitored by LV hams but no formal weather net was activated. Snow emergencies were declared for almost all of the LV communities for a day or two until crews were able to make streets passable.





## ***The Complete Ham*** - de Al Gruenke (KB3JPP)

August 10, 2004

Today, I am a complete ham. Or, to be more precise, a more complete ham than I was only a short time ago. Because today, I had a QSO with a rig I built myself!

True, I had some accomplishment in my year and a half as a ham. I passed my General and Extra Class at the age of 60, worked Brazil on 40 meters cw, worked Algeria and South Africa on PSK31, and St. Petersburg, Russia on 20 meters cw. My code is picking up, to the point that I can almost copy W1AW bulletins pretty good.

But it all pales compared to my QSO with WA2FCF with a 500 milli Watt Rock Mite transceiver I managed to build.

The QRP bug bit me December of last year when I had a QSO on 40 meters with KC2KME in Rochester, NY. We both had 599's except I had an ICOM IC-746 PRO, and he had a rig with a total of five transistors. Somehow, I felt I was on the short end of the enjoyment stick.

So, in April of last year, after considerable research, (especially the October, 2003 issue of CQ) I bought a 40 meters Rock Mite transceiver from Small Wonders Lab for \$27.00, plus \$12.50 for the connector kit. The kit comes with a circuit board, a handful of parts, a parts list, schematic, pictorial, and some sparse instructions

I downloaded all the supplementary instructions and bought all the recommended tools from Radio Shack. However, I bought a 15 watt soldering iron instead of the recommended 25 watts. In retrospect, this was a good choice.

The circuit board is a small 2 \_ " by 1 \_ ". A total of 71 components comprising the transceiver are mounted on this. One IC, an SM602A is surface mounted. So the first thing to do is to get rid of the tools you used to install the clothes dryer. This is tiny stuff, so take care. If you have shaky hands, building the Rock Mite may not be for you.



The first extra tool I bought is a self-supported magnifying lamp on a spring mounted arm from Staples for \$19.95. This enabled me to look at my work and keep both hands free. That, plus the 15 watt soldering iron, enabled me to assemble the transceiver with relative ease.

A suggestion for others, and for any other kits I may build is, first check all the parts. It will help identify them, plus ensure that all parts are on hand.

I assembled the transceiver with the photo of the completed Rock Mite on my monitor. It quickly answered some rather simple questions, such as the polarity of the electrolytics and the orientation of the transistors.

At this point I must mention that Dave Benson, K1SWL was always available for assistance via e-mail,

The supposed time for assembling the Rock Mite is three hours. It took me a bit longer, closer to ten hours. I'm not saying that it's impossible to do it in three hours, just that it took me a lot longer.

Then, the magic moment. I connected a 12 volt battery and a headset, and ran a coax extension to my G5RV Jr. Nothing. Deader than a doornail. Nada. Nichts. Nyett. Mafeesh.

So, I got the instructions and started measuring voltages. I quickly found that I had mounted the Zener diodes backwards, which I corrected. Still nothing. Again an e-mail to Dave Benson, and some other suggestions.

Incidentally, using your standard Fluke test probe on a Rock Mite is like using a wash line to sow a button. I recommend using a small jumper and a needle or stick pin as a probe.

Based on all this, I determined that U1, the SM602A IC, was defective. I Googled it, and found a supplier, [www. arrow.com](http://www.arrow.com). The price was reasonable enough, so I bought five IC's, plus the other transistors and diodes. The cost of shipping was only slightly less than the cost of the components.

With considerable difficulty, I replaced the IC, and again hooked it up. I heard some faint dits and dahs, so I connected the computer speakers. And Praise the Lord, I heard the melodious tones of cw, plus a commercial short wave station.



I connected my Vibroplex paddle and a cheap SWR meter, and hit the paddle. The meter moved! Words cannot describe the thrill! So this is what it's all about! Comparing it to King Arthur pulling Excalibur from the stone may be overstating it, but not by much.

The next day, I mounted the circuit board into a Altoid can which I got from my secretary and tried for a QSO. I heard WA2FCF, and answered. Lo and behold, I got a response, and a very respectable 559 signal report. Two days later I got a 579 from N8IY on Morgantown, West Virginia. Then, I had a 579 QSO with VE1BBM in Port Williams, Nova Scotia. That's 640 miles, for 1,280 miles per watt! Not bad for a li'l old peppermint can.

The Rock Mite was the first piece of ham equipment, either kit or homebrew, that I ever successfully built, so I take special pride in my accomplishment. Ok, it's not a K2 or some other sophisticated rig, but I'm still proud of my Rock Mite. And the Altoid can gives it a certain charm, a personality.

In summary, take your time, and don't be afraid to ask for help. And have patience. I recommend this endeavor for anyone remotely interested in building anything. If a klutz like me can do it, certainly anyone can.

I expect to build a few more kits in the near future. Creating something with my own two hands, that's what it's all about!

My sons bought me a SW 40+ kit for Christmas, and I bought myself a Super PicoKeyer kit for the SW-40+. So, I expect to be busy.





Summary of suggestions for kit building.

- Take inventory of the parts. Identify each component.
- Tape each component to a sheet of paper, and label it.
- Use a 15 watt iron.
- Check the value of resistors with an ohmmeter. Don't try to read the color codes.
- Use clamping pliers for removing components.
- Buy a self-supported magnifying lamp on a spring mounted arm.
- Use a needle or safety pin for a probe.
- After drilling holes in an Altoid can, hammer the bent edges of the hole flat before installing the connectors. If left slightly convex, it will not be possible to tighten the connector mounting nuts.
- Take your time.
- Don't vacuum the carpet until all components are mounted.



The Finished Product!



## Former LVARC Member Makes the News

### Amateur Radio Club members 'HAM' it up

Club uses HAM radio to make contact the old-fashioned way

**By Andrew D. Nealon - The Daily Barometer**  
(Oregon State University Newsletter)



**Erik Geissenhainer, left, president of the OSU Amateur Radio Club and a graduate student in electrical and computer engineering, joins Garrett Rysko, a sophomore in electrical engineering, to put up the club's new antenna on Sunday.**

**Charlie Litchfield**  
**The Daily Barometer**

They call it "the shack," a throw-back to classic HAM radio. But Snell 229 is hardly a shack. Under complex maps of the earth, among tables of wire and antenna, lies equipment that lets the OSU Amateur Radio Club talk to the world.

"I've talked to a guy in Brazil recently, and some kids in California commemorating the Challenger explosion," said station manager Zane Kenney.

"People talk about everything from politics to health problems," explained club president Erik Geissenhainer. "And, it's a common misconception that we talk to truckers. CB and HAM are completely different."

The majority of club members are electronic and computer engineering majors.

"The club offers great practical application experience; that's why I joined," said Garrett Rysko, a sophomore in electrical engineering and club member.

"You could map out equations for this cable all day but not know how to actually put it together," Geissenhainer said. "That's why the club is such a great thing; you can learn here."

HAM radio is still used for emergency contact, but it is now primarily a hobby for enthusiasts.



"It used to be if you were a electronics guy you had to be into HAM, but the Internet and computers have changed that," Kenney said. But computers have not limited HAM radio's popularity within its own circle.

Some HAM radio operators have even used the Internet to complement their hobby, posting pictures and text to Web sites to aid discussion.

"Plus, more people using computers and cell phones to talk opens frequencies for me to use," Geissenhainer joked.

The club has seen hard times in the last few years. Membership has been down, and the primary source of funding is from sporadic donations.

However, the club seems to be moving ahead. Members are committed to their cause and spent last Sunday morning pitching antennas on the roof of Snell Hall.

With a field trip to a HAM radio rummage sale and multiple meetings planned to learn about equipment, the club keeps busy.

"We hope to get some newer equipment at the sale," Geissenhainer said. The club currently works with equipment spanning from the '70s to the mid-'90s, when it made its last radio purchase. But age seems less important to the Amateur Radio Club members, who still express pride in their Morse code skills.

"We have a very hands-on theme; our members are all involved, whether it be on top of the building or just coming in to talk to their families on our radios," Geissenhainer said.

The equipment and techniques offer a unique view of the world before the Internet became the primary method used to transmit information long distance.

The members compare HAM radio to modern-day chat rooms.

They don't feel misplaced among the super-fast world of computers, either.

"We use it to complement our hobby," Kenney said.

"It's just a lot of fun," Rysko offered.

W7OSU, the Amateur Radio Club, meets Wednesday nights at 8 p.m. in Snell 229. All are welcome to attend.

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See: <http://barometer.orst.edu/vnews/display.v/ART/2005/02/01/41ffb8dec4e7f>