



CHEESE BITS

W3CCX
CLUB MEMORIAL CALL

ARRL
Affiliated
Club



Volume LXIX

February 2026

Number

2

PREZ

February 2026

SEZ: January was a challenging month. A big snow and freezing rain event during the VHF Contest created difficult travel and operating situations for the rovers, and iced-up antennas for stations in the more northern grids. The next weekend was even worse. I expect there will be a bumper crop of Crying Towel stories at this year's wrap up meeting at W2SJ's QTH and at the general club meeting event in a week or two.

But Pack Rats are resilient. Early logs indicate that around 63 club member calls were on the air during the contest. Results that I have seen online or heard through casual conversations appear to show that scores were pretty much inline with last year and in some cases higher due to the increased rover and microwave activity over the VHF contest weekend. Be sure to make a list of what went right and what needs to be fixed or completely changed before the summer contest season arrives. It may be a few months before you see the lawn again and try to remember what you swore you would fix after January.

The February issue of QST contains the summary results of the ARRL 222 and above contest and the 10 GHz contest. There were plenty of Pack Rat member calls listed on the various 10 GHz and higher microwave band leader boards. Congratulations to all the members that participated and ran up those impressive score results. While the 10 GHz and higher band entries continue to grow, 222 and above contest participation has been gradually shrinking. I suspect that

HOA restrictions are a leading cause. The 902 and higher bands require tower height, big antennas, and power. At least two of those ingredients are becoming exceedingly scarce in modern housing developments. The Pack Rats took the lead in the Club Competition for this contest but it did not take a huge effort. This is one area where digital modes may be the best answer to reinvigorating these bands.

The upcoming February club meeting is our traditional Crying Towel contest. It is almost always the most entertaining program of the calendar year. Tell your tale about the trials and tribulations and partial disasters that occurred as you pounded away on the contest. Bring photos and props showing the causes of your frustrations. The best story will take the coveted Crying Towel for 2026. Kleenex will be available for the runners up.

Lastly, the ARRL has recently informed the members of the Atlantic Division that our long time Director, Bob Famiglio K3RF has effectively resigned his position. Bob was an active, hands-on leader who served the Atlantic Division well. He was always available to take your call or attend your meeting or special event whenever possible. The Mt. Airy VHF Radio Club would like to thank Bob for his service to the many radio clubs including ours within the Division and wish him all the best in whatever function or challenge he decides to pursue next.

C U on the Bands.
Phil WA3NUF

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Pack Rat Web Site: <http://www.packratvhf.com>

SUBSCRIPTION/ADVERTISING MANAGER:

Bob Fischer, W2SJ 23 Morning Glory Circle, Mullica Hill, NJ 08062 (609) 440-2916 bobw2sj@gmail.com

EDITOR:

Tom Frederiksen KA3FQS
cheesebits@packratvhf.com

WEB PRESENCE:

Bill Schaffer WS3O
webpresence@packratvhf.com

TRUSTEE OF CLUB CALL - W3CCX

Mike Gullo WB2RVX
(609)-743-6643 MGullo3@comcast.net

W3CCX QSL CARDS:

Bill Shaw K3EGE

PACKRAT 222 MHz REPEATER - W3CCX/R

222.98/224.58 MHz (PL 136.5) Hilltown, PA

OFFICERS 2024-2025

PRESIDENT WA3NUF Phil Miguelez

president@packratvhf.com

VICE PRES: WA2OMY Gary Hitchner

vicepresident-at-packratvhf.com

CORR. SEC: WA3EHD Jim Antonacci

correspondence@packratvhf.com

REC SEC: WB2RVX Michael Gullo

secretary@packratvhf.com

TREAS: W3KM Dave Mascaro

DIRECTORS:

K3TUF Phil Theis	2 Year Director
WX3K Stephanie Koles	2 Year Director
W2SJ Bob Fischer	1 Year Director
K1RZ David Petke	1 Year Director

PACK RAT COMMITTEES

January Contest	N3RG, N2NC, W2SJ, AA2SD
June Contest	N3YMS, WA3YUE, W2SJ
Fall Sprints	WA3NUF, W9KXI, WA3EHD, WS3O
Pack Rat Awards	WA3EHD, W2SJ
Quartermaster	Vacant
Membership:	Ray N3RG, W2SJ, WA3GFZ

PACKRAT BEACONS - W3CCX/B

144.300 (FN21be), 222.060 (FN20tk), 432.300 (FN20tk), 903.300 (FN21be), 1296.300 (FN20dh), 2304.300 (FN20tk), 3400.300 (FN20dh), 5760.300 (FN21be), 10,368.300 (FN20tk) See <https://www.packratvhf.com/index.php/on-air> for details

MONDAY NIGHT NETS

VHF/UHF Monday:

TIME	FREQUENCY	NET CONTROL
6:45PM	224.580 MHz	KB3MTW Michelle
7:00 PM	Packrat Talk Group	KA3WXV George See Packratvhf.com ON AIR for details
7:30 PM	50.150 MHz	N3RG FM29ki Ray
8:00 PM	144.245 MHz	W2KV FN20ok Dave
8:30 PM	222.125 MHz	KC3BVL FM29jw Jim
9:00 PM	432.110 MHz	WB2RVX FM29mt Mike

Visit the Mt Airy VHF Radio Club at:

www.packratvhf.com or www.w3ccx.com

PACKRAT E-MAIL REFLECTORS

The Pack Rats have an E-Mail reflector that is open to Pack Rats and friends of the Pack Rats. The intent of this E-mail reflector is to have a convenient means of reaching list members on subjects of general interest to the VHF/UHF and Microwave community.

Packrats@mailman.qth.net

The Pack Rats also have a **Members Only** reflector. This list consists of, and is for the use of, **only Pack Rat club members**.

Packrats-members@mailman.qth.net

See the W3CCX Web page for specific information on joining.

Packrats on Facebook

Use the browser link "www.facebook.com/PackRatVHF", or within Facebook search for the name "Mt Airy VHF Radio Club".

January Meeting

The January meeting was held using Zoom so there are no pictures. In retrospect I should have taken a screen capture, maybe next time. The program consisted of two presenters. The first presenter was Dave, K1RZ, who spoke on how to use the W3SZ/K1RZ Packrat finder. A lot of interesting features were explained. The second presenter was Phil, WA3NUF, who spoke on the proper way to set up WSJT-X for a VHF contest. A collection of power point slides for Phil's presentation can be found on the Packrats website.

Notice

Dues are due for 2026 club membership.

To pay your dues go to

https://www.qsl.net/w3km/MtAiryRC_Dues.htm

The January VHF Contest

The January VHF Contest has just completed and several members have shared their experiences with Cheese Bits. There was a good turn out of Rover Stations and most of those have contributed stories of their adventures. After reading their stories I was happy that I had an indoor shack with heat and that no ice formed on my antennas.

My score was lower than I had hoped. I had intended to work only analog but I was tempted by K8GP who was in a grid that I didn't have. Working them on two bands and an additional tag along were my only FT8 contacts. Thanks to all who worked me. Here is a summary of the log I submitted.

2026 ARRL JANUARY VHF CONTEST				KA3FQS	FN20			
SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH				EPA	Section			
Band	QSOs	X	pt =	QSO pts.	X	Grids	=	Points
50	35	1		35		5		175
144	44	1		44		6		264
222	33	2		66		8		528
432	38	2		76		8		608
903	8	4		32		2		64
1296	16	4		64		2		128
2304	4	8		32		2		64
TOTALS				178		349		11517
Claimed score = 11517								

Club participation ? Yes No
ARRL Affiliated Club: Mt Airy VHF Radio Club

The following several pages contain reports from other Pack Rats.

AA2SD/R Completes The Jan VHF 2026 Contest Rove Visiting Grids FN20, FN10, FM19, FM29 and Local South Jersey Pack Rats During Wintry Conditions



AA2SD/R Scott, K2EZ/R Andrea, KG6CIH/R Chris meet up at the Morgantown Diner with Len N3NGE and Bill K3EGE before the contest start

AA2SD/R Rover - November 17th -18th Jan VHF Contest - Early morning driving out to the Morgantown Location FN20 on the PA turnpike the snow and icy mix started, and at times the Turnpike was down to a crawling 15-20 MPH, as I made my way to meet up with the other Rovers. This was an early indication of weather and things to come for this weekend. Saturday Morning I set up at FN20 Sunnyside overlook at 800 ft with (3) Rovers, W3ICC/R Paul and Drex, K2EZ/R Andrea and K0BAK/R Pete. KG6CIH/R Chris was simultaneously set up on FN10 across from us at the start of the contest. KE5NJ/R Chris had to cancel due to the flu and was missed.



AA2SD/R experiencing wintry conditions throughout the entire contest

Part One Stop 1 FN20 Sunnyside Morgantown The best plans sometimes don't work, and this proved be the case. We learned quickly that this did not work out well at all, as we overloaded each other, and created a much too aggressive schedule that we could not keep. We made the best of the time at Morgantown and worked with Len N3NGE, Roger W3SZ, Dave K1RZ, Gary WA2OMY and several others. With stop 1 FN20 completed and behind schedule it was dark and cold as I negotiated my way to East Earl township and onto the Shady Maple RV Lot for placement.



AA2SD/R positioned at FN20 Sunnybrook Overlook 800 ft at the contest start working W3SZ

Part Two STOP 2 East Earl Township/ Shady Maple FN10, I found the very back of the RV parking lot to work Roger and several others from this location. W3ICC/R Paul and Drex joined me after some time and set up, and Andrea K2EZ/R joined to make some easy rover to rover QSOs. At this point we were far behind schedule and with the cold and darkness set in it made for a white knuckle drive to my hotel in Strasburg PA. I decided to forgo working stations on the run back to the hotel, and focused on my driving as I experienced black ice and snow fog on the way to the hotel. Upon arriving at 10 PM I called it quits for the day.



AA2SD/R working from the Shady Maple RV Lot Late Saturday evening

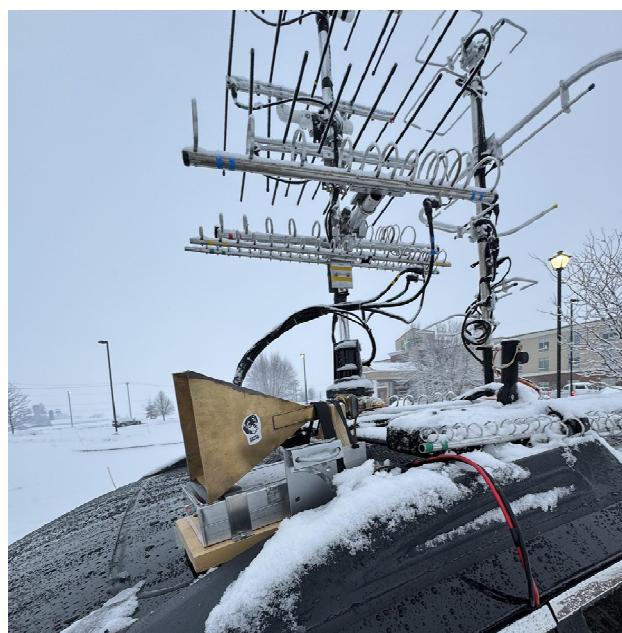
Part 3 Stop 2 FM19 Holiday Inn Hotel Site Strasburg I was meeting Chris Patterson W3CMP rover early Sunday morning to exchange an antenna. We met briefly for the exchange and I thanked Chris for taking the time to bring this over in the snow. I awoke to a driving wet snow in the parking lot and decided to load my recharged LIPO 4 batteries back in the rover after charging and try some parking lot QSO's before Chris arrived. After cleaning the snow from, I discovered to my surprise this parking lot spot played extremely well, I worked several contacts on lower 4 bands and also worked some micros with my shoe box rover set up from the lot. I fished out this spot for over 2 hours and waited for the snow plows to come out on an early Sunday morning, which did not happen. It was time to move South to the new Antenna Site on Truce Road at 900 feet.



AA2SD/R Positioned at Truce Road FM19 900 ft early Sunday Morning working K1RZ

Part 4 Stop 4 Truce Road Antenna Site at 900 Feet FM19 This short drive according to Waze GPS was only 20 minutes totaling 11 miles due south into the rural farm area. Most of the roads traveled early Sunday morning were not treated and it was extremely slow going to stay safe.

Instead this drive took me well over 1 hour 15 minutes of extreme slow going on back country roads that were not treated or plowed. In some cases my tire tracks were the first ones to mark the fresh driven virgin snow. The positive is the Subaru Outback with all wheel drive had no problem handling the snow. I had planned ahead and installed a new set of Michelin Snow Tires called Michelin X-Ice. I read about these tires on Tire Rack, Michelin X-Ice Snow studless, and decided to invest in a set for winter roving. I would recommend these tires for anyone driving in this type of condition.



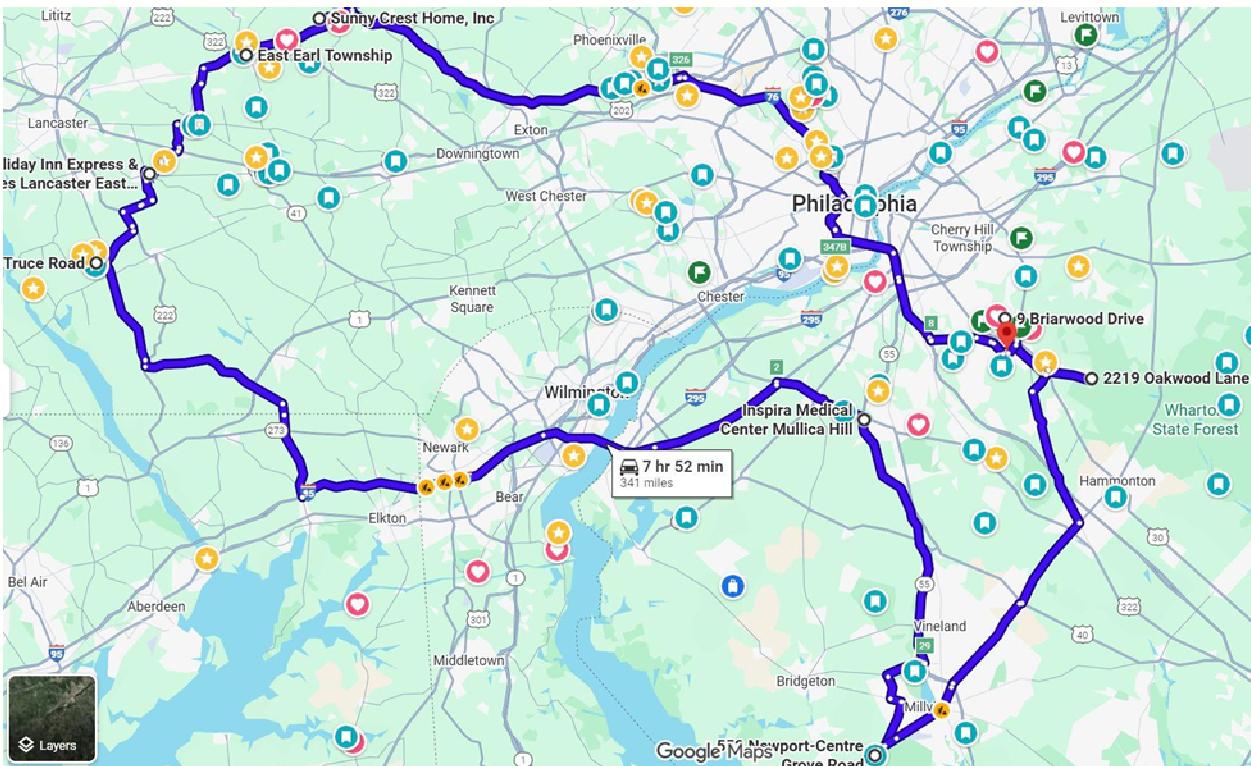
Working N3NGE FN20 Len with a shoe box 10GHZ set up built by Ray N3RG on 10 GHz Sunday Morning from FM19 Hotel Parking Lot

I arrived at the Truce Road antenna site and worked with Dave K1RZ and a few others, but this site did not play out as well as the earlier hotel site. It could have been that it was Sunday breakfast and Church time, and the bands were empty for me, or conditions had changed. I decided that after my long drive here and the bad weather continuing to call an audible and redirect to Mullica Hill NJ to work South Jersey Pack Rats. My country route path took me to a covered wooden bridge with a large “10 Feet Restriction” overhead. Which my rover could not make and had to re-direct again.



AA2SD/R heading to Truce gets turned around due to Antenna Height at this Bridge with only a 10 foot clearance, my antenna touched the wooden warning overhead bar.

This route took me through the tip of Maryland into Delaware and finally back onto 95 North to South Jersey. I switched antennas over to the stacked halos, and worked WA3NUF and several others on the drive back to New Jersey, although the weather continued to be very bad as were the driving conditions.



AA2SD/R Total Rove of 370 Miles completed during the Jan VHF Contest 2026 including a Southern New Jersey drive way microwave rove for locals.

Part 5 Stop FM29 South Jersey Mini Rove Mullica Hill, Millville, Atco and Voorhees NJ change the Playbook to a Driveway Rover for Microwave contacts Driving fatigue was starting to set in and I decided to have lunch at a deli, and re-direct to South Jersey, I now had a goal to finish early, have dinner with my XYL at 5PM and call it quits. The inclement weather played a big part in delays, and I personally had to re-direct my schedule to stay safe, I decided to change the playbook and become a driveway Rover taking the lead from Pete K0BAK. I personally visited WB2RVX, N3RG, KC2SGV and KC2TN for some great driveway microwave contacts. This strategy worked very well as I worked all stations on their available microbands, with Ray I worked him from a tree farm in Southern New Jersey at 3 miles.

Summary of the Jan Contest 2026 I clocked a little over 370 miles driven in 2 days all in very poor conditions. Fortunately I planned ahead for these driving conditions. I decided to use only a rooftop antenna set up, with no antenna mast set up. This proved to work very well, as I deployed double stack halos for 222, 432, and 2 M, and single halo for 6 M.

I did use 3 small ELK beams for 222, 2 Mtrs and 70 cm which played well with a rotor. During this rove I tested (2) 100 AMP LIPO 4 batteries and (1) 35 Amp AGM battery, along with a newly installed DC to DC charger which allowed me to charge on the way from the car alternator. Also the lighter batteries are easy to handle and came out to be charged in my hotel room. I can now eliminate the heavier AGM Batteries. I did experience a lot of N1MM connection issues for logging and CAT control with my PC which made logging QSOs challenging. This must have been from RF in the vehicle, and I need to correct this or add toroids to the USB connections to the PC.

I also learned that you can make 10GHz and 5GHz microwave contacts from the roof rack with small horns. This strategy worked very well. I added longer IF cables and power cables for quick setup. I can improve on this for the next contest. I was manually switching BNC connectors which can easily be corrected with a switch.

I would like to thank all of the Pack Rat Rovers and Operators that participated in this "test case" of having multiple Rovers in one location at FN20 during the first day of the VHF contest. I was glad I stayed in the contest with some changes due to the weather conditions, and achieved my best score yet as a Rover with 10 bands. I look forward to collaborating with the Rovers, and make improvements and adjustments as needed for the next contest.

Most importantly, I gained some additional microwave operating experience and had fun. For me personally it's not about the score, it's the personal challenge to operate from each new location, support other weak signal operators, and making new friendships in the hobby.

It's a testament to this Club, to have such an active base of operators and committed rovers in support of the Mt Airy VHF Club.

Look for me During the Spring Sprints Roving During 2026 !

View pictures here <https://photos.app.goo.gl/q8CDbu7mGRrXkTsH8>

ARRL Section : SNJ					
Club/Team : Mount Airy Pack Rats					
Email : scottdantis@gmail.com					
Software : N1MM Logger+ 1.0.11067.0					
Band	Mode	QSOs	Pts	Grd	Pt/Q
50	CW	1	1	0	1.0
50	USB	21	21	4	1.0
144	CW	1	1	0	1.0
144	USB	36	36	5	1.0
222	CW	1	2	0	2.0
222	USB	29	58	4	2.0
420	USB	28	56	4	2.0
902	CW	1	4	1	4.0
902	USB	13	52	3	4.0
1240	USB	17	68	3	4.0
2300	USB	11	88	3	8.0
3300	USB	7	56	3	8.0
5650	USB	7	56	2	8.0
10000	CW	1	8	1	8.0
10000	USB	8	64	2	8.0
Total	Both	182	571	35	3.1
Score : 19,985					
Rig :					

73
AA2SD/R
Scott



AA2SD/R Scott with Mike WB2RVX makes his last set of contacts with 10 bands at the contest end with Mike



AA2SD/R making a lunch stop in MD at a local deli in route to Delaware and New Jersey



W3ICC/R Paul and Drex operating during the evening from FN10 with Microwave



K2EZ/R Andrea working stations from FN20 during the contest start



Sunday morning started early with Snow and Ice at FM19, I worked several Pack Rats from the Holiday Inn Parking Lot early morning before moving on.



Pre Contest Rover Meeting - Saturday Morgantown PA Andrea K2EZ/R, Bill K3EGE, Scott AA2SD/R, Chris KG6CIHR/R and Len N3NGE meeting at the Morgantown Diner before the contest starts. Pete K0BAK/R also participated with his drive way rover set up. W3ICC/R Paul and Drex also joined us at the FN20 Start. **A special thanks to all that help with the coordination of the Rovers to Bill and Len, and the Pack Rat team effort from all Rovers participating with our inclement weather.**

K0BAK/R January Driveway Rove

This January contest was the first in about 8 years where I had 10 QRP bands all on SSB, with 10G and 222 transverters being my newest upgrades. Thanks again to Ray N3RG for helping me get my 10G installed, and to Gary OMY for the club's 5-band box and checking all my bands on a record-setting 10 days before the contest. Laser contacts are no longer attempted due to ARRL rule making shenanigans raising the minimum equipment capability beyond the tested distance of most PackRat laser communicators.



Because of cold weather and a couple unexpected medical tests, I wimped out adding any long-distance capabilities on 6m & 2m as I have in the past. Although as it turned out my schedule was full enough and weather challenging enough that I wouldn't have had much opportunity to operate that way anyway. Weather was a major part of rovers' challenges this year, with a significant snowfall continuing through the 2 pm start, another snowfall overnight, and a third round forecasted to start then intensifying during my scheduled drive home Sunday from southern South Jersey. I did have a good vehicle for snow though, a new Subaru Outback AWD, and a determination to visit my South Jersey friends after missing several years due to Covid, foot infection, and weather.

Saturday

This year's interesting challenge was a meeting of 4 Pack Rat rovers (I think it was originally 5?) organized by our Master Rover Coordinator Bill K3EGE and enthusiastic rover AA2SD. As designated in Bill's schedule, I started at N3NGE's superstation. After a stress-reducing dog petting session, at 2 pm we ran the bands quicker than in any previous contest.

Proceeding from Len's just a few minutes up to the Sunny Crest facility overlooking the farms north of Gap, I found AA2SD/R, W3ICC/R (with my old van), and super-rover K2EZ/R already setting up on the



snowy unplowed parking lot. Drex was already making contacts while Paul was adjusting microwave antennas, and Andrea was climbing up to her roof balancing on about a 1x2" door latch (I hate seeing you do that Andrea!).

With only short-distance capabilities, I was not participating in the schedule with the other rovers to work fixed stations together. Giving priority to their operations so I did not interrupt, but I think the period designated for the 4 rovers to work each other was delayed and thus compressed. Contacts between us were chaotic, prompting a regretful expression of frustration when I felt I was being left behind on band changes. The arrival of their next schedule period with fixed stations forced the other rovers to abandon the rover-to-rover work.

After that disappointment, I was glad to find highly successful 10-band rover Chris KG6CIH at the Shady Maple complex after a brief search. When I arrived, he said he had 10 minutes until his next sched; we made 10 contacts within 5 minutes followed by 5 minutes of chatting. I was grateful for Chris's contacts since with K3TUF off the air, these would be my only FN10 contacts.



Earlier that day as I was driving to my first operation, Roger W3SZ texted me to recommend skipping my scheduled trip up the steep single-lane driveway to his hilltop station. I easily agreed because at that point even flat State roads were slippery and snow was still falling. But when I completed my rendezvous with KG6CIH, I looked around the Shady Maple complex to see sun and significant melting. While the flat lowlands there would be much different from the winding hilly roads leading to Roger's driveway, I thought it would be a plausible trip now. I called Roger to say I was going to try to at least get to the entrance to his long driveway and try making contacts from there if I couldn't get all the way up his hill.

Driving up toward Roger's I found road conditions getting worse as the elevation rose. When I got to Roger's driveway entrance, I was surprised to see it had been roughly plowed with a remaining layer of snow but seemingly below the clearance of my car. I decided to proceed up the driveway, briefly regretting my decision as I made the second turn to face the steepest part, though the Outback's AWD handled it like a champ. After a short tour of his impressive station which I always enjoy along with Roger's hospitality, we easily made 10 contacts with only a bit of trouble on 3400.

Driving up the steep part of the driveway was one thing, but going back down is quite another. Switching to "manual" transmission 1st gear, keeping my feet off the brake and accelerator, and most importantly using Subaru's X-Mode feature, let me crawl down the hill without pinballing through the close trees on both sides. The driver was in full pucker mode during the descent.

My last two Saturday stops were to the two Pack Rats closest to home, Bruce WA3YUE and Gary WA2OMY. Both stops' contacts went quickly and smoothly as expected, getting all Bruce's 8 bands and Gary's 10—with 10G being new from Gary. Walking and driving hazards increased suddenly though, with the partial melt of the afternoon rapidly refreezing to especially slippery ice soon after sunset. I drove well out of my way from Gary's to my home to stay on major roads and avoid the shaded hilly route directly between our houses.

Sunday

I awakened Sunday to more fresh snowfall than I expected and my street unplowed. It was only uncharacteristic optimism that had me slide down our driveway and proceed to my traditional first Sunday stop at 9AM with Tom KA3FQS. I found remarkably varying road conditions, ranging from well plowed and salted roads allowing speed limit driving on straightaways, to unplowed connecting streets where I had to attempt to keep my tires in ruts from other drivers. Tom has always been one of my easiest smoothest stops, which was true this year as well, even though he apologized a couple times for being slow to change bands—which I estimate added almost 4 seconds to our normal pace. 😊

My next two stops were to Phil WA3NUF and Jim WA3EHD. At Phil's we tried hard to make 5G contacts without success, but ran his other 9 bands easily. Jim had problems this year which only allowed him to operate on the low 4 bands. I had to miss Jim's home several times in previous contests, so I was happy to show up this year even with just 4 bands.

The next leg was the longest to Mike WB2RVX through the unpleasantness of Northeast Philly streets

across the Tacony-Palmyra into the endless branching of central NJ roads. I got to see Mike's superstation equipment in his basement versus his upstairs operating position. Mike remains my fastest 10-band run partner. His wife Janet KA2NYF just arrived home as I was leaving, so I was also able run 10 bands with her, an unexpected bonus.

Joe KC2TN's home in the Pinelands is relatively close. Joe was having antenna problems on microwave bands, but we were able to make contacts through 3.4G by Joe using the same type of tiny PCB log periodic antennas as I was using. Joe had to move his little antenna between his transverters one after the other. Thanks Joe for making that extra effort.

My next scheduled stop was to Bob W2SJ, but W3ICC/R was scheduled to be operating almost directly along the route from Joe's to Bob's. I was happy to get a call from Drex when they were heading to their operating location, and with lucky timing I would arrive just as they were ready to operate. We made low bands without problems, but I was confused a couple times hearing Drex's IF signal, even though in retrospect I should have been able to figure it out. Paul had to operate their tripod-mounted 10G horn outside in the cold rain under a transparent tarp, and we had considerable problems logging a contact. But Paul stuck with it in the cold and after a time we were able to make the Q.

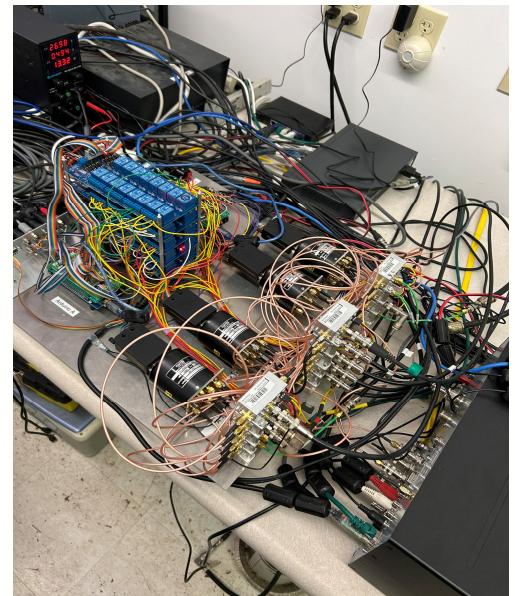


Bob W2SJ was a very short drive away. He also had issues this year on higher bands so we were only able to do 4 low bands plus 1.2G. I had already made a 2m contact from W3ICC's location by tail-ending their contact, which shows how close we were to be able to make an easy contact with my <2 watts into a single non-resonant 2.5-foot wire inside my car.

My last rove stop was Ray N3RG. I was happy to quickly make all 10 bands with Ray including my new 10G that Ray helped me install on top of the club's microwave box. Ray is always welcoming and friendly even in the midst of a contest, but I had to cut my usual visit time due to weather concerns.

Along the routes leading to the Commodore Barry Br., snow started falling and progressively got worse and started to make a slippery coating. I drove as fast as I could stomach on the long flat road segments, being desperate to cross into the heavy snow-slowed traffic I knew was coming on the Pennsylvania part of my return trip. Indeed, traffic was slow and visibility shortened on the way home, but I was happy it at least kept moving. As on Saturday, I was only able to make it up our driveway and into our garage due to the hard work of my wife clearing snow and salting.

P.S. I am writing this the weekend after the contest, from our annual Florida getaway, aware that the weather conditions we rovers faced were nothing compared to what you're all facing on and after January 25.



Roger's switching network

A beginner tries roaming during the ARRL January VHF Contest

I got my first license way back in 1983. Then, life happened—I got married, had two kids, and ham radio took a backseat. I finally retired.

During the Covid times, I picked up an extra class license and got an ICOM-7300. I put up at least three wire antennas, but no matter what I did, I could only get the eastern part of the US. I managed to get as far west as TN and OH. I even looked into getting a hex beam or similar HF antenna, but those things are huge and expensive.

Then, I had a light bulb moment—VHF/UHF! Much smaller antennas! Problem solved.

And who's better at VHF/UHF than the Pack Rats? I've started the process of joining.

Santa gave me an ICOM-9700 for Christmas. Ray N3RG also gave me two great antennas—a six-meter antenna and a 2-meter/70 cm yagi antenna. Thanks again, Ray! (Just last week, Al W9KXI gave me a 23 cm antenna! Thanks again, Al. Can't wait to try it out.)

I started putting the antennas together, but I couldn't find the reflector for the 2m antenna. I told Phil and Ray repeatedly that it was missing, but they kept saying it was there. I finally found it, though. It wasn't the same diameter, aluminum tubing as the other elements, so I didn't recognize it at first. But it was right where they said it was. This was just after I cut part of an aluminum clothesline pole and mounted to the boom.

Since it wouldn't be easy to mount these on my QTH roof due to the weather, I decided to try roaming. How hard could that be? Just hop in the truck and drive.

I already have a Tundra wired up with 12V for my ICOM-7300. I got some advice from Scott AA2SD. I bought some antenna mast bases—the kind you drive onto. I found a pipe in the garage. A rotator? To paraphrase a great film, I don't need no stinking rotator! I'll rotate it by hand.

Scott AA2SD suggested a certain antenna mount. He told me to put it together and have it welded. I didn't have it welded.

The day before the contest started, I made QSO's with Ray N3RG on 2 meters and 70cm from my driveway. All set now.

My wife and I were planning a trip to visit friends at their cabin in Pike County, grid FN21il, which is about 35 miles east of Scranton, nestled in the woods. Every morning, we'd see 7 or 8 deer showed up, hoping for breakfast. I think there might be more deer than people in FN21il!

I was all set to go. On Saturday morning, it was cold, snowing, and windy. I set up my antenna and got into the truck to stay warm. I heard Keith KC3NDU, who was about 6 km west of me. I tried to contact him after he finished his QSO, but no luck. Keith was the last person I heard. I got out of the truck to re-orient my antenna.

See photo. The mast mount broke apart exactly where Scott said it would. At that point, I was completely lost in the middle of nowhere. The closest hardware store was about 45 minutes away (one way). The wind was blowing snow and sleet into my face, and it was freezing cold.

The cabin was recently bought, and they haven't moved in completely yet. The owner didn't have any

tools or even duct tape! What real man doesn't have duct tape?

Well, my friend had a simple structure to protect his firewood from rain and snow. It had wooden posts holding up a roof. I decided to attach the antenna to the wooden post. Remember my earlier comment about not having duct tape, etc.? After searching the cabin and truck, I took a long extension cord and tied the antenna to the wooden post.

But there was only one problem left. I couldn't orient the antenna. If I turned the mast, it just went back to its "home" position, where the coax wanted it to be. Like a good VHF/UHF operator, I was using a very thick coax that was about half an inch in diameter. It was rigid with the cold and had a memory of its own.

I tried to use the W3SZ map and ON4KST.COM. Funny how you think you know stuff until you actually have to use it.

All the while, the snow and sleet continued to blow.

After the contest wrapped up, Phil 'NUF mentioned, "January roving is the most challenging activity event you will ever experience." Thanks, Phil! Did he say that to me before the weekend? No way! But I have to admit, he did give me some great advice before the weekend.

Lessons learned:

1. I need to get a better antenna mount or weld the one I have.
2. I should buy a rotator and a better mast.
3. I need to learn better ways to use internet resources, especially W3SZ map and ON4KST.COM.

I've got a lot to learn by June!

Wayne N3DRV



**N3FTI - High Power Single Op
6M Single Band
295Q x 90Mults = 26,550 pts.**

Station Equipment Run Down-

Flex Radio Flex 5000A SDR
LARCAN 1.5KW 50Mhz SSPA
6 Element LFA Yagi at 45' (on Rohn 45)
6 Element LFA Yagi at 30' (on 2" Aluminum Mast)
50MHZ LNA (at the receiver)
DEMI 50MHz COMB filter (Post LNA Filter)
Home Brew 50mhz Antenna Stack Switch (A, B, A+B)
Software used: VHF Log, WSJT-X,

Earlier in 2025 I planned to add additional bands (144, 222, and 432 MHz) to my existing 6M station. As the summer went on I purchased some new antennas and planned to install them in the fall. As fall came and went I still did not get them installed. Knowing this would be my last January contest with 6M only I decided to make it a maximum effort to see just how big a score I could amass. In the past 4 years of the January contest I have been successful in being the top scoring single op 50 MHz station (i.e. Band Leader) each and every year. Could I do it for five years in a row?

My strategy was to focus on working every multiplier (new grid) I heard. If calling CQ and hearing a new multiplier also calling CQ, I would immediately call them. Not just calling them once and giving up, but rather to call that station at least three times. If I did not hear them reply, I would go back to calling CQ. If I received a reply, I would take as many cycles as it took to work them (sometimes as many as 10 times!). Many times stations I had not completed with would continue to call me and as the conditions changed for the better we would be able to complete. **Never give up!**

I live north of Kutztown PA (FN20cn) in the heart of Pennsylvania Dutch country. My neighbors are farmers, and I do not have the typical RFI from computers and other electronic device that many other face these days. That being said, I have mitigated noise from my own station computers by using extensive grounding and ferrite core chokes on all my transmission line entering the shack. **You can't work them if you can't hear them!**

You won't find huge towers at my station. In fact my only tower is only 40' tall, the second antenna is mounted on a 30' aluminum mast. The big advantage of having two antennas on a Stack Switch is the ability to point one antenna one direction with the other pointed in a second direction and being able to switch directions instantly. I usually keep the main antenna from 0-180 degrees while the second antenna is used from 180-360 degrees. This drastically reduces the time required to point at any given direction. The second advantage is having the flex ability to phase the two antennas together to increase gain. Many times during the contest, stations that were too weak to copy on a single antenna popped right out of the noise when using both antennas. Both antennas are identical six (6) element wide spaced Loop Fed Arrays (LFA) that I purchased new from Innovate Antennas in the UK. I feel the LFAs are superior to a traditional gamma matched yagis, both in that they have extremely low received noise and their driven element is connected to the feedline without a matching device, only a coaxial ferrite choke balun. While many reported high SWR with the snow and ice, my antennas were not affected. To turn each antenna I use Yaesu G-800 rotors with two Green Heron RT-21 digital rotor controllers. I utilize Andrew 7/8" hardline to feed both antennas, and use LMR-400 Ultraflex for the rotor loops and jumpers. Thanks to all that worked me during the contest, now to start planning for January 2027!

73

Steve Kerns, N3FTI

Was the Juice Worth the Squeeze?

A week prior to the January VHF contest, George WA2VNV and I met to plan the weekend operation at the **N4BRF** Boca Raton Amateur Radio Association. I had already brought my microwave gear to the club and set the gear into a rack that also housed the 2m and DMR repeater, erected a 3' dish with a feed that supported 600MHz-6GHz on a rotor, but never got to do any testing with a local ham who has bands through 10GHz because he had to do tower maintenance and all of his antennas were on the ground.

We decided to add my TS2000X so that we could do digital QSOs on 1296 and I also brought my IC-375 which is a multimode 222MHz rig so that we could do digital and FM on that band. I added my 3 walkies so that if we had any visitors to the shack, they could add a few points. To support the equipment, we added two NOMIC Rigblasters, two laptops, a 120 W SSPA for 222 and a 35A Astron PS. We have an IC-7610 and an Elecraft KW with a 7-element beam for 6m, and that was probably the busiest of the bands for the contest.

As we were testing things, we found that there was a break in the coax to the 222 beam at the top of the tower that cured itself when the stack was pointed to the south, and to a few points north. When we tried to set up the Rigblaster with the newly acquired computers at the club, we couldn't get audio coming and going properly from the radio to the computer and finally realized after many plug-ins and plug-outs that the bargain mini-computer had the audio in-and-out jacks reversed.

During the contest afternoon Saturday there were some modest 6m openings from Florida to the northeast and we worked a few of the Packrats on FT8, added many of the FN and FM grids. I did make 3 CW and 2 SSB QSOs, the rest all digital. K4KZM also joined us for a few hours on Saturday evening to work 6m. Things were slow on 2m and up with only a few contacts on 2m and 432 and only one on 1296. Sunday morning, I got to the shack before 9 AM and got a call from George that he had a flat tire and would be late, so I tried to raise some activity on 2m and found AB4AB in EL95 who I was able to easily work SSB on all 5 bands. Six was slow, but a few QSOs each hour until I left the station and George took over and enjoyed an opening to the mid-west and a few QSOs in South America, plus a few contacts I had made in Puerto Rico. The final analysis was: 165 QSOs and 72 grids for a score of 13,320.

73, Rick K1DS

50:	124 QSOs	62 Grids
144:	25	4
222:	1	1
432:	13	4
1296:	2	1

W9KXI January Contest Summary

This is what I have to say about my January contest experience.

January 2026 ARRL VHF contest.

Here was my final tally:

QSOs in Log: 190

	Q's	Grids
6M	84	34
2M	72	25
1.25	18	13
70cm	15	11
1296	1	1

Raw Score sent to the ARRL: 220 Qpts x 84 Mults = 18,480

My objective this year was to: #1 Have Fun and #2 Beat last year's score.
Mission accomplished.

When contesting with my 5 bands, my small radio room becomes very congested.

For this contest I utilized:

> 4 computers (3 Win11, 1 Win10)

> 8 Monitors

> 4 radios

> 4 Lunar-Link amplifiers

> 3 very different CW keys.

In addition to the radio equipment, I share the room with the furnace. I have barely enough room to pivot the chair around. To operate this contest, I have to take the door off its hinges and take it out of the room.

All of these modes were used. Digital, SSB and CW.

AI – W9KXI

FN12ne

Additional comments:

I am writing this in EL98rc and can't edit the line spacing or the Font. Please feel free to edit it as you see fit.

AI O

My First Winter Field Day

I'm sure you are all having a laugh because I worked the 2026 Winter Field Day from Florida, while most of you were blanketed by a huge winter storm. Since there were few BRARA members that were interested in a full WFD effort, I decided to try my hand at a simple solo QRP battery-operated outdoor activation. My 20AH LiPO battery was able to handle the QRP power. Following the rules, I deferred set-up until after the start time and I raised my 40m inverted V dipole in the afternoon and sat outside with the TS2000X making a few CW and SSB QSOs on 40m and 15m. Operating QRP was a challenge to have anyone hear me, but sometimes it's strange how a weak signal can be heard well with the right propagation. I attempted to get on the LEO satellites with my Baofeng walkie and homebrew satellite antenna for passes of SO-124 and the ISS. I was able to make 2 very brief contacts as one of the wires of my mini-diplexer popped off its connection. I was more successful on RS-44 using both the TS2000x and my FT100D on both SSB and CW. The WFD bulletin was broadcast on both CW and Phone and I managed to scribble down the code at 20WPM to get the essence of the message—staying warm, avoiding frost-bite, working EU stations on 10m during this sunspot cycle.

Although I wound up with only 38 QSOs, 6 on the satellites, 20 CW and the rest on phone, it was a challenging experience to get everything set up and operating. I may try this again in June using my 2KW generator and a bit more power.

73, Rick K1DS



Mt. Airy VHF Radio Club
‘The Pack Rats’
2026 January VHF Contest

Total Logs: 59

Club Claimed Score: 1,760,407

Call	QSOs	Grids	Score	Contacts and Grids per band											
				6M	2M	222	432	902/3	1.3GHz	2.3GHz	3.4GHz	5.7GHz	10GHz		
K1TE0	731	233	315948	236 71	206 44	77 30	106 35	24 14	31 14	30 11	9 5	6 4	6 5		
WN3A	625	182	140140	265 79	229 53	61 25	63 21		7 4						
K1RZ	364	123	105903	57 20	90 21	62 19	75 21	24 11	26 12	12 7	5 4	5 3	8 5		
W3SZ	335	105	84525	110 41	67 18	36 8	40 10	18 5	27 7	11 4	2 1	10 5	14 6		
WA2OMY	349	88	69960	81 16	104 28	42 12	49 11	13 5	26 6	12 4	8 2	6 2	8 2		
WB2RVX	342	87	68817	121 28	42 9	47 14	57 14	13 3	32 7	2 1	9 4	10 4	9 3		
WA3NUF	372	95	66120	114 25	100 26	46 12	59 15	14 5	24 4	9 4	5 3		1 1		
N3RG	271	93	54591	96 33	51 16	34 9	38 9	11 5	19 8	2 1	5 4	7 4	8 4		
WA3DRC	324	103	50779	118 34	99 26	42 16	46 15	3 3	10 4	2 2	1 1		3 2		
W2KV	293	75	35775	60 14	101 25	46 12	60 18		26 6						
N2SCJ	340	72	32760	127 29	122 26	19 2	60 13		12 2						
W3ICC/R	248	40	26760	40 4	49 6	45 6	47 6		35 5	19 5			13 4		
N3FTI	295	90	26550	295 90											
KC2TN	288	69	26082	120 28	104 27	25 5	32 5	2 1	2 1	2 1	1 1				
WA3GFZ	243	70	24430	110 34	61 18	30 6	27 5	3 2	11 4	1 1					
N3ITT	242	81	22356	137 45	75 21	23 12	5 2		2 1						
AA2SD/R	182	39	22269	22 4	37 5	30 4	28 4	14 4	17 3	11 3	7 3	7 2	9 3		
WA3YUE	225	60	22200	85 26	63 16	28 6	27 5	7 3	9 2	4 1	2 1				
W9KXI	190	84	18480	84 34	72 25	18 13	15 11		1 1						
WX3K	206	77	18172	115 39	61 24	13 5	17 9								
W2SJ	213	53	17914	75 16	49 13	34 9	37 9		18 6						
K0BAK/R	130	33	17886	15 3	15 3	15 3	15 3	11 3	16 3	15 3	12 3	7 3	9 3		
KC3NDU	190	76	16416	63 28	103 33		23 14		1 1						
W3KM	212	66	15180	121 39	73 23	8 2	10 2								
K3MD	185	75	14625	101 38	74 28		10 9								
W2BVH	160	56	14560	51 14	59 19	14 6	17 6	5 4	11 5	3 2					
WB3IGR	136	58	12006	35 10	52 22	20 11	18 7	4 3	7 5						
KA3FQS	178	33	11517	35 5	44 6	33 8	38 8	8 2	16 2	4 2					
K2EZ/R	114	32	11008	16 4	20 4	18 4	20 5	10 3	12 3	10 2	8 2				
N3YMS	166	36	8928	34 6	58 14	30 7	40 7		4 2						
NA20	139	50	7550	98 31	33 15		6 3		2 1						
WA3QPX	119	57	6783	80 37	39 20										
W3JG	145	37	6697	76 17	45 13	7 2	11 3		6 2						
KC3BVL	109	24	5544	19 3	24 3	20 5	22 5	7 3	15 3	1 1		1 1			
W3HMS	107	42	5460	54 19	36 12	7 4	7 5		3 2						
N2DEQ	116	35	4970	52 12	44 13	6 3	11 4	1 1	2 2						
KB2AYU	125	19	4332		44 6	31 6	39 5		11 2						
K3JJZ	127	24	4080	47 9	37 6	20 4	23 5								
W3GAD	59	17	2091	13 3	12 3	12 3	11 3	4 2	5 2	2 1					
WA3EHD	104	14	1988	26 3	40 5	17 3	21 3								
WB20NA	67	21	1785	23 6	26 6	5 4	13 5								
N2CG	68	26	1768	63 23	5 3										
KB3MTW	94	12	1752	28 4	26 2	16 2	18 2		6 2						
NN3Q	74	20	1480	74 20											
K3GM	68	13	1313	14 2	29 5	11 2	10 2		4 2						
KC2SGV	63	14	1302	21 2	18 3	10 3	11 3	2 2	1 1						
W3RJW	57	16	912	57 16											
KA3WXV	57	10	740	22 4	18 4	8 1	9 1								
NE3I	41	10	520	13 3	19 4	3 1	5 1		1 1						
W0RSJ	37	14	518	17 5	20 9										

January VHF Contest Summary Continued

Call	QSOs	Total			Contacts and Grids per band										
		Grids	Score	6M	2M	222	432	902/3	1.3GHz	2.3GHz	3.4GHz	5.7GHz	10GHz		
K3WGR	43	10	430	24 6	19 4										
WA3WUL	24	10	290	9 4	10 2	2 2	3 2								
K2WB	24	10	240	13 4	11 6										
WA3RLT	24	7	238		14 4			10 3							
K3BPP	9	6	78		5 3		4 3								
WF1L	8	4	32	1 1	1 1		2 1		4 1						

Multi-Ops Call	QSOs	Total			Contacts and Grids per band									
		Grids	Score	6M	2M	222	432	902/3	1.3GHz	2.3GHz	3.4GHz	5.7GHz	10GHz	
N3NGE	535	138	168222	143 40	152 34	61 13	67 18	27 7	30 7	21 6	10 3	9 4	15 6	
Ops: N3NGE K3EGE KF3Y														
N2NT	682	159	135468	272 63	240 50	69 23	101 23							
Ops: N2NT N2NC WW2Y														
N3EXA	249	61	21167	78 16	93 25	37 11	31 6		10 3					
Ops: N3EXA KS3Z														

January VHF Contest Summary Continued

Pack Rat QSOs and Pack Rats worked
2026 January VHF Contest
Out of 63 Pack Rats on the Air

Call	Oper Cat	Power Cat	Total QSOs	Total Rats	Call	Oper Cat	Power Cat	Total QSOs	Total Rats
N3NGE	MO	HIGH	277	55	N3ITT	SO	HIGH	83	37
W3ICC/R	RO	HIGH	231	25	K3JJZ	SO	HIGH	82	28
WA3NUF	SO	HIGH	219	53	W3JG	SO	HIGH	79	36
WB2RVX	SO	HIGH	216	43	WA3EHD	SO	LOW	78	27
WA2OMY	SO	HIGH	211	48	WX3K	SO	LOW	76	33
W3SZ	SO	HIGH	211	41	WB3IGR	SO	LOW	71	24
K1RZ	SO	HIGH	188	38	N2DEQ	SO	LOW	61	31
N2NT	MO	HIGH	188	57	W3GAD	SO	HIGH	57	13
N3RG	SO	LOW	170	39	KC3NDU	SO	HIGH	54	31
W2KV	SO	HIGH	158	43	NA2O	SO	LOW	54	34
W2SJ	SO	HIGH	156	44	K3GM	SO	LOW	53	22
AA2SD/R	RO	LOW	154	20	KC2SGV	SO	LOW	48	16
WA3DRC	SO	HIGH	148	43	KA3WXV	SO	LOW	47	19
WA3YUE	SO	HIGH	143	44	K3MD	SO	HIGH	46	28
WA3GFZ	SO	LOW	136	42	WB20NA	SO	LOW	44	21
N3EXA	MO	HIGH	136	45	W3HMS	SO	LOW	43	22
KA3FQS	SO	HIGH	135	32	N3FTI	SO	HIGH	40	39
KC2TN	SO	HIGH	134	47	WA3QPX	SO	LOW	34	25
N2SCJ	SO	LOW	123	44	NE3I	SO	LOW	28	12
N3YMS	SO	QRP	112	33	W0RSJ	SO	LOW	24	14
K0BAK/R	RO	QRP	110	14	N2CG	SO	LOW	22	20
WN3A	SO	LOW	101	41	NN3Q	SO	HIGH	21	21
KB2AYU	SO	LOW	97	32	K3WGR	SO	HIGH	21	16
K2EZ/R	RO	HIGH	94	8	K2WB	SO	LOW	18	14
W2BVH	SO	HIGH	93	32	WA3WUL	SO	LOW	18	9
KC3BVL	SO	HIGH	90	22	WA3RLT	SO	LOW	17	9
W3KM	SO	LOW	86	40	K3BPP	SO	HIGH	9	5

Mt. Airy VHF Radio Club
January VHF Contest
Previous aggregate claimed scores

Year	#logs	Score
2026	61	1,760,407
2025	57	1,351,560
2024	57	1,330,662
2023	52	1,337,804
2022	59	1,370,915
2021	60	1,499,501
2020	70	1,260,661

January VHF Contest Summary Continued

January VHF previous claimed scores

	2026	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
K1TEO	315948	122031	285048	311808	322185	370744	
WN3A	140140	104576					
K1RZ	105903	104780	62750		145068	190806	85767
W3SZ	84525	28490	43946	19398	1368	83628	11250
WA20MY	69960	32775	30686	41464	39390	29205	23892
WB2RVX	68817	78890	47840	6496	16290	9744	40887
WA3NUF	66120	63963	69500	43967	78090	44506	59428
N3RG	54591	62526	50374	70850	52640	78210	35471
WA3DRC	50779	47700	57672	41395	37389	19240	46425
W2KV	35775	14893	20130	19045	18467	20888	20280
N2SCJ	32760	29540	18644	25976	31464	14440	
W3ICC/R	26760	6392		30080	21566	25536	24432
N3FTI	26550	22080	8040	8771	24414	1743	
KC2TN	26082	17841	25842	11184	52689	43758	33330
WA3GFZ	24430	22875	27820	35443	8022		29150
N3ITT	22356	12042	4125	8580	6422	2025	72
AA2SD/R	22269	2682	8184				
WA3YUE	22200	15386	12740	8967	12593	8816	6665
W9KXI	18480	17596	17082		2952	6625	2079
WX3K	18172	4275	1922	7987	6776	160	7304
W2SJ	17914	9570	24720	28160	11052	41920	33609
K0BAK/R	17886	7784		4305			11424
KC3NDU	16416	11523					
W3KM	15180	17690	13328	14514	19980	19275	4887
K3MD	14625	7248	6624	13298	12935	13104	8415
W2BVH	14560	15235		21460	16632	20648	19264
WB3IGR	12006	11800	11078	8550		4454	4182
KA3FQS	11517	9570	17712	16544	15618	15912	14911
K2EZ/R	11008	64124	30810			279882	111199
N3YMS	8928	7164				3450	
NA20	7550	1541					
WA3QPX	6783	21216	18063	8120	15640	19762	15813
W3JG	6697	13254	6624				
KC3BVL	5544	12376	15800	14696	1656	8910	6650
W3HMS	5460	5796	5166	7866	13734	7650	6480
N2DEQ	4970	8240	10707	8604	13019	8126	8340
KB2AYU	4332				7280		
K3JJZ	4080	1755	2158		6399	6525	6900
W3GAD	2091	138	11653	5508	5825	25218	18964
WA3EHD	1988			3979	23424	48970	25872
N2CG	1768				1748	3382	2162
KB3MTW	1752		1911	935	3094	3262	3705
NN3Q	1480	1738					
K3GM	1313					784	4064
KC2SGV	1302	1261	1358				
W3RJW	912	1026	570				
KA3WXV	740	156	3002	1170	1540	3249	3380
NE3I	520	120	490	506	96	504	765
W0RSJ	518		10650	21411	26944	26136	28426
K3WGR	430						
WA3WUL	290		45		36		8
K2WB	240	2020	3534	4410	6195	1440	5432
WA3RLT	238	320	72			8	225
K3BPP	78						312
WF1L	32			435			
N3NGE	168222	124581	126456	118800	56529	34510	285196
N2NT	135468	132150	131664	161595	145503	128979	121693
N3EXA	21167	10841		25674	10138	12887	

Mount Airy VHF Radio Club, Inc. Warminster, PA.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Call N3DRV	Class EXTRA	License Expiration date 5/17/34	Application date 10/19/25
Name WAYNE CAMPBELL		E-mail address	
Address 1234 Lynda Lane		Spouse Name*	Call*
City Warminster			
State Pa	Zip 18974	*(optional)	
Phone		ARRL Member? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Life	(check one)
Business		Other Radio Clubs Philmont & Warminster	
Bus. Addr.		Other Hobbies* Hiking / Back Packing	
Cellphone		Grid Locator: FN20kf	(6 digit)

Station Equipment

Band MHz	Radio	Output power	Antenna
A 50	Icom 7300	3 ~ 100	3 ele yagi
B 144	Icom 706MKIIG	5 ~ 50	5 ele yagi
C 222			
D 432	Icom 706MKIIG	2 ~ 20	5 ele yagi
9 903			
E 1296	Icom IC 9700		
F 2304			
G 3400			
H 5760			
I 10368			
Low Band			

Applicant's reasons for joining this club:

I want to work VHF & UHF, I want to rove in contests

Reasons for Sponsoring

I have communicated with Wayne a few times since he showed interest in the club and I'm convinced he will be a good fit. He has been checking into the 2M net with an Icom 7300 and rumor has it that he has an Icom 9700 on order for the upper bands. Yes, the bug has bitten another VHF & up operator who would like to become a rover for the club during contests.	Wayne has been licensed for over 40 years primarily operating the HF and satellite bands. He is now anxious to pursue VHF and above challenges. Wayne has added a new ICOM IC-9700 to his arsenal and now has Yagi antennas for 6, 2, 432 that he plans to use for portable outings until spring when he can put them on the air from his home station. Wayne is local to the club meeting site , an ARRL member, and interested in roving opportunities. He is a good candidate for Pack Rat membership.
Sponsor 1 call & initials R.L.F. W2SJ	Sponsor 2 Call and initials WA3NUF Phil Miguelez

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

ACTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOD approved application 1/8/2026

February

2026

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
2	3	4	KC3BVL 1296 Net	5	6	7/8 Contest Wrap Up Feb 7 <i>Super Bowl Sunday</i>
Pack Rat Nets	222 Activity Night				KC3BVL Lower Four Nets	
9	10	11		12	13	14/15 Hamcation Orlando, FL <i>Valentine's Day</i>
Pack Rat Nets	222 Activity Night	KC3BVL 1296 Net			KC3BVL Lower Four Nets	
16	17	18		19	20	21/22
Pack Rat Nets	222 Activity Night	KC3BVL 1296 Net <i>ASH Wednesday</i>		Pack Rats General Club Meeting	KC3BVL Lower Four Nets	
<i>President's Day</i>						
23	24	25		26	27	28/Mar 1 EME Conditions Good / Very Good
Pack Rat Nets	222 Activity Night	KC3BVL 1296 Net			KC3BVL Lower Four Nets	
Mar 2	Mar 3	Mar 4		Mar 5	Mar 6	Mar 7/8
Pack Rat Nets	222 Activity Night	KC3BVL 1296 Net			KC3BVL Lower Four Nets	

Regularly Scheduled On The Air Events

VHF/UHF Monday - Every Monday except holidays and contest nights the following nets are held, 224.58 MHz FM Repeater at 6:45, Packrat Talk Group DMR net at 7:00 PM, 50.150 MHz USB NCS N3RG FM29ki at 7:30 PM, 144.245 MHz USB NCS W2KV FN20os at 8:00 PM, 222.125 MHz USB NCS KC3BVL FM29jw at 8:30 PM, 432.110 USB NCS WB2RVX FM29mt at 9:00 PM.

1296 MHz Activity Night—There's an informal 1296 activity night in the NY/NJ/PA/CT region (and beyond) every Monday night starting around 9:30 pm (or so) on 1296.110. No coordination, just jump in and say hello .

222 MHz Activity Night—There's been an informal 222 activity night in the Northeast (and beyond) every Tuesday night starting around 7 pm (or so) Eastern Time. ON4KST is being used by some to coordinate Q's when direct CQ's are weak.

KC3BVL UHF+ Wednesday Net—Packrat, Jim KC3BVL conducts a Wednesday night net with schedule as follows: 7:30PM—903.100, 8:00PM—1296.100, 8:30PM—2304.100.

KC3BVL VHF Friday Net—Packrat, Jim KC3BVL conducts a Friday night net with schedule as follows: 7:30PM-144.160, 8:00PM-50.160, 8:30PM- 222.150, 9:00PM-432.160

Upcoming Events

49th EASTERN VHF/UHF/MICROWAVE CONFERENCE:

April 24-26, 2026

Hilton Garden Inn (860)-688-6400
555 Corporate Drive, Windsor, CT 06095
(I91 exit 38 to Day Hill Rd.)

DIRECTIONS & RESERVATIONS

Coming Soon

Questions? Contact one of the conference Co-Chairmen:

Paul Wade, W1GHZ, (presentations, proceedings)
Mark Casey, K1MAP, (hospitality, hotel, swaps/vendors)
cell 413-777-9828, home 413-566-2445.

[PackRats-Members]

Pack Rats 2026 January Contest Wrap-Up meeting-10:00 AM Arrival Saturday February 7, 2026

**Members, Guests, & Volunteer Drivers,
Come one, come all to the Pack Rats 2026 January VHF Contest Wrap-Up Meeting!**

As you arrive, there will be regular and decaf coffee, tea, munchkins, eclairs & cream puffs. After the wrap-up discussions, presentation of the club scores, and ideas for next year have been completed, Lunch will be served. This will include a return from the past of Barb's famous "Sloppy Joes" requested by quite a few of you last year, and of course a large pot of Krissie's now famous "Vegetable soup" requested as a repeat for this year! Beverages including soda, water and a small selection of Pack Rats 807's (Yuengling & Miller Lite). If you prefer something else, feel free to bring your favorite.

Please RSVP ASAP via email or phone by Saturday January 31st, 2016 so we can plan properly.

Tnx es 73,
Bob Fischer, W2SJ
23 Morning Glory Circle
Mullica Hill, NJ 08062
Phone: 609-440-2916
email: bobw2sj@gmail.com

Most GPS devices or Phone Apps work well with this address. For those without GPS please see directions below:

From the North take Walt Whitman Bridge:

Cross the Bridge and follow signs for Atlantic City. This will put you on Route 42 South. Take Rt 42 to Rt 55 south. Take Exit 50B, Route 322 West (Richwood/Mullica Hill). Follow 322 a short distance passing Dunkin Donuts, & CVS on your left. Look for Heritage Winery on your left. After the Winery go down the hill and make the first left on Bishop Rd. Then make a left at Shady Lane and then a left on Morning Glory Circle to # 23 (on Mailbox), 2nd house on left. It's OK to park in the street. Please do not park on the grass as my son-in-law has placed Steel barrier rods at the edge of the grass! Entrance for the meeting will be through the Garage via 5 or 6 steps with sturdy handrails. Just walk in...And the fun begins!

From the South or Delaware County PA area take the Commodore Barry Bridge (W2SJ QTH approx 16.6 miles from bridge):

Take Interstate 95 to Commodore Barry Bridge Exit. Cross the bridge and follow signs for Route 322 East. Continue on 322 East past Route 295 and the NJ Turnpike. You will come to a traffic light at Route 45 (Harrison House Diner on left). Continue straight through the traffic light onto Rt 322 Bypass. At the end of the Bypass turn left onto the old Rt 322, go past Griffin Rd on right and turn right onto Bishop Rd. Then a left at Shady Lane and then a left on Morning Glory Circle to # 23 (on front of Mailbox), 2nd house on left. It's OK to park in the street. Please do not park on the grass as my son-in-law has placed Steel barrier rods at the edge of the grass! Entrance for the meeting will be through the Garage via 5 or 6 steps with sturdy handrails. Just walk in...And the fun begins!

Microwave Update 2026

— SAVE THE DATE —

Friday October 23 – Saturday October 24

DoubleTree by Hilton – 1111 Jefferson Road, Rochester, NY 14623

Group Rate of \$159 per night - Reservations currently being accepted

Call 1-800-774-1500 for hotel reservations

Group Code - RVHFG 2026 Microwave Update

Conference registration, events, and Thursday arrival details coming soon!

Check the website in February

www.MicrowaveUpdate.org

Questions? Email: MicrowaveUpdate2026@gmail.com



DESTINATIONS TRAVEL

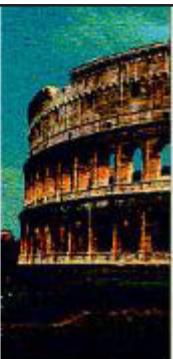
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(609) 440-2916**Editor's Notes**

Tom KA3FQS

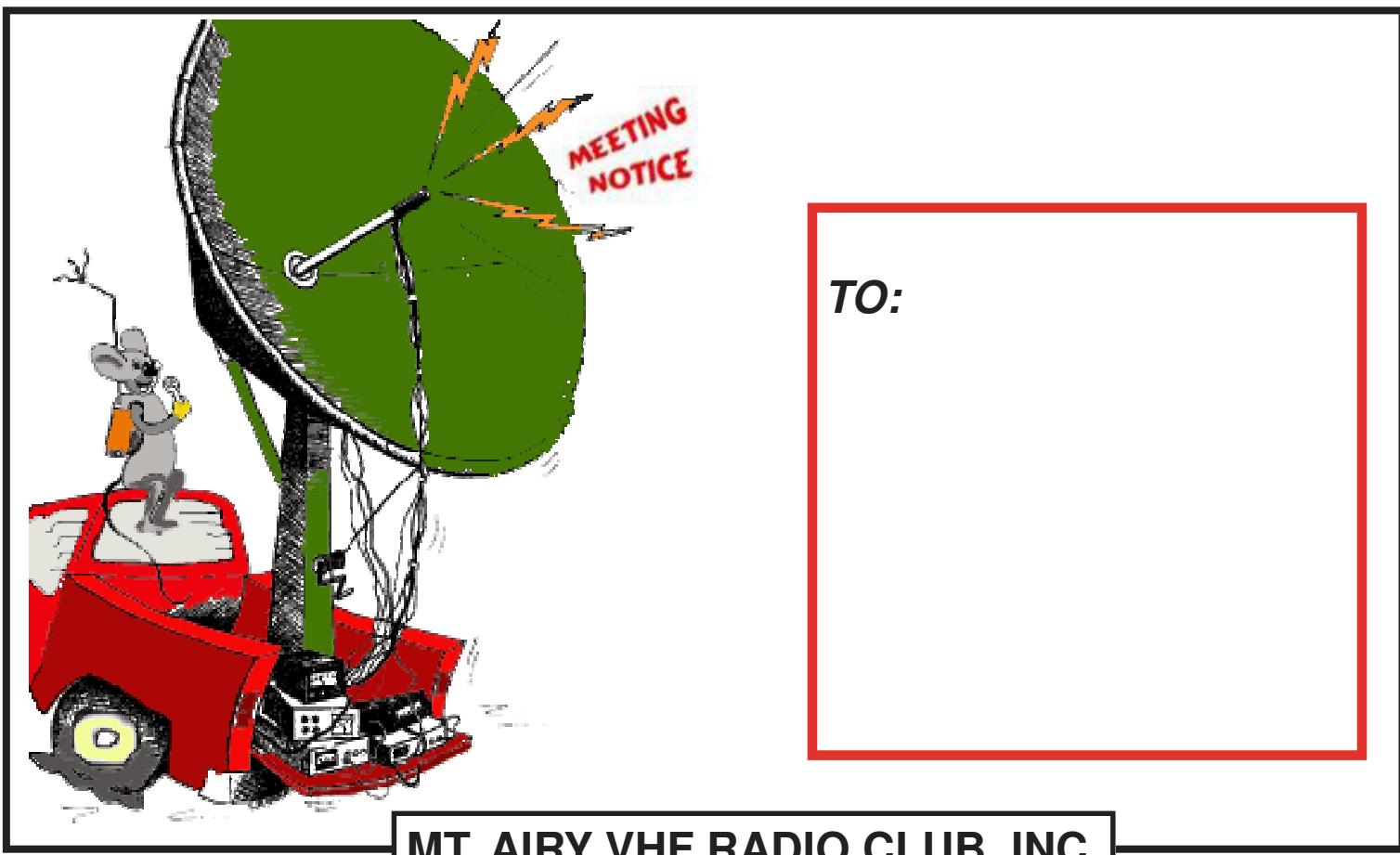
Thank you all who have submitted material for this edition of Cheese Bits. The preponderance of the submissions had to do with participation in the January VHF contest and most of those submissions were from rovers that braved the horrible weather.

No detailed logs were published as these take up a lot of space with details that many would not read. In the future please submit only summaries of the log and your soapbox comments.

A few months back an attempt was made to resurrect the Swap Shop column. Postings were solicited and a couple of people submitted listings for things they would like to sell. To the best of my knowledge only two SMA relays sold in that time. As such the Swap Shop has been removed from this edition and will not appear in future editions of Cheese Bits unless a specific request is made to post an item. It seems that today things for sale or trade are posted on the email reflector making postings in the Cheese Bits obsolete.

This is one of the larger editions of Cheese Bits since I took over as editor. Melanie will be busy proofreading it. Thanks. Good thing that I got her some new red markers for Christmas.

73
Tom



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