



# PCARA Update



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## Ride the wild waves

*“Q-R-Zed, this is Whiskey Two November Yankee Whiskey. Please copy Two Alpha, Eastern New York, Echo November Yankee.”*



Yes, it's that time of year again! Field Day 2008 will be held on the weekend of June 28-29, 2008. PCARA will be participating in Field Day 2008 from Walter Panas High School in Cortlandt Manor. Joe, WA2MCR has obtained all the neces-

sary paperwork and registered our entry on ARRL's Field Day Station Locator (<http://www.arrl.org/contests/announcements/fd/locator.php>), so we're good to go! **Will you be joining us this year?** For complete details, come to the June 1<sup>st</sup> meeting at Hudson Valley Hospital Center.



The team of Mike N2EAB and Joe, WA2MCR was the first to find the Fox in the May 10, 2008 PCARA Foxhunt! Malcolm, NM9J had hidden himself along the roadway leading to the new development on top of Jacob's Hill, off Route 6 in Cortlandt Manor. Runners-up were Ray, W2CH and Marylyn, KC2NKU. Congratulations to all!

The **pcara.org** domain name should be working again shortly. A new web hosting service has been chosen and should be online within the next couple of weeks, once your webmaster has designed a new set of web pages. Your patience is greatly appreciated.

Our next meeting is June 1, 2008 at 3:00 PM at Hudson Valley Hospital Center. Come join us, sign up for PCARA Field Day 2008, and as always share your



*Field Day 2008 will be held at the same "public place" as in 2007, in the grounds of Walter Panas High School.*

thoughts and ideas! I look forward to seeing each of you there.

- 73 de Greg, KB2CQE

## Net night

PCARA's weekly net takes place on **Thursday** evenings at 8:00 p.m. You can call in to the net on the 2 meter repeater, 146.67 MHz, -0.6 MHz, 156.7Hz PL. Who knows, you might "win Karl's voice on your home answering machine." (That would be Karl, N2KZ).

## PCARA Officers

President:

Greg Appleyard, KB2CQE, [kb2cq@arrl.net](mailto:kb2cq@arrl.net)

Vice President:

Joe Calabrese, WA2MCR; [wa2mcr@arrl.net](mailto:wa2mcr@arrl.net)

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# Adventures In DXing

– N2KZ

## It's Getting Closer

A new era in radio history is being born. Internet radio has taken another step forward. Fellow blogger Fred Jackson has successfully traveled all across America listening to e-radio in his car. Since Wi-Fi coverage is incredibly spotty and unreliable as a mobile transport medium, Fred cleverly hooked up his Sprint cell phone to his car stereo and the results were spectacular.

Fred recently drove from New York City to the Washington, D.C. area happily listening to Internet audio streams with very few dropouts. He claims the coverage is at least as good as XM or Sirius. Right out of the box, with no modifications, Fred uses a Samsung a920 music phone with Sprint PowerVision 3G service, and for about \$15 a month for unlimited non-stop data service, a whole new world of radio is his!

Fred suggests using an interesting Internet audio browser website to access your tunes. Check out



[www.tuner2.com](http://www.tuner2.com) and enjoy a wide collection of new and interesting audio sources collected for your convenience. You can watch a video of Fred's car installation at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wx1kELNi5dI>. In the next few years, systems like Fred's will probably be integrated into cars without the need for external wiring. Welcome to the next generation of listening! The entire world can now be yours!

## Radio Heard Here

The National Association of Broadcasters, representing AM, FM and TV station owners (your parents remember AM, FM and TV, right?,) have begun a new public awareness publicity campaign with the theme: **Radio Heard Here**. The NAB plans to "ignite new interest" in old-fashioned radio and create an exciting and irresistible identity for seasoned old-school broadcasters, setting them apart from innovative Internet program producers. Younger generations simply don't acknowledge terrestrial radio and are not acquainted with it. This is what the NAB has set out to cure.

After a couple of decades of listener abuse, featuring endless commercials, Morning Zoo programs with banal humor, and a universal playlist of about 200 songs total, the traditional radio industry is decaying rapidly. Inexpensive personal music players and free access to fresh and diverse Internet-delivered program-

ming accelerates radio's continuing decay. I think the NAB now (rightly) fears that the end might be near.

"Radio Heard Here" is part of an initiative called Radio 2020 – a grandiose plan by the NAB to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of radio broadcasting in the year 2020. I can only wonder what state over-the-air broadcast radio will be by then. I never thought I would live to see the day when an advertising campaign would be necessary to introduce people to radio. That day has come!

If you miss the good old days of AM and short-wave radio, a visit to [theradiokitchen.net](http://theradiokitchen.net) might just be the cure. It's just loaded with nostalgia and artifacts collected by "The Professor." The current headline is a dusty and kooky audio file of a long-lost LP called "Long Live Shortwave" including interval signals and everything else you need to know to become a good radio DXer in the year 1979. I highly recommend this site. It's a great place to have some fun!

## Miracle Broadcast Tuner

A few months ago I wrote about a \$15 Sony Walkman radio that received AM and FM better than units costing hundreds of dollars. Sony has pulled another rabbit out of their hat with the newly released model XDR-F1HD. It is an AM and FM tuner, complete with HD Radio capability, designed to be a stereo system component. Weighing just over two pounds, it is another entry into today's new and amazing era of



*Sony XDR-F1HD radio tuner.*

super tuners. The Sony XDR-F1HD exceeds the performance of legendary tuners from Carver, Denon and Sequerra with selectivity and sensitivity previously only found in units modified by knowledgeable DXers. You no longer need to add tight crystal filters to slice away interference. Now, for about \$100, you can enjoy razor-



*"Radio Heard Here" billboard*

sharp selectivity and sensitivity right out of the box.

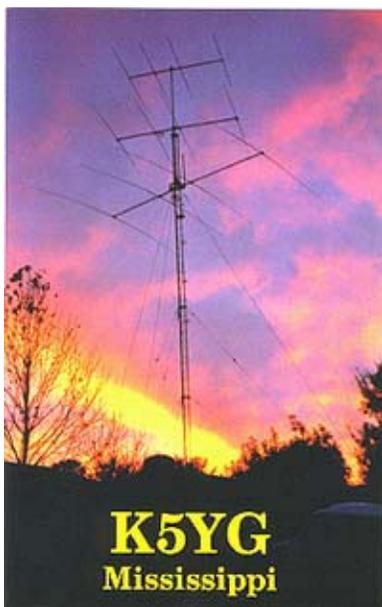
If this news were not enough, the XDR-F1HD does one other thing that no other radio can do: It decodes HD radio signals with grace and style. HD signals no longer require huge stable signals to resolve. Its AM HD decoder actually works well and is capable of nighttime DX. The XDR-F1HD also reads RDS data. Unfortunately, it does not decode analog Motorola C-QUAM AM stereo signals or analog FM SCA carriers. Have a look inside the receiver at: <http://www.ham-radio.com/k6sti/xdr-f1hd.htm>.

### CU on 6

Now open for business: 6 Meters! Sunspots or no sunspots, the time of the year is near for activity on amateur radio's magic band. Six Meters is open for business, on a fairly regular basis, especially during mid-mornings and a few hours before darkness. Since my last column, I have pulled in another couple of new grid squares. I'm nearly at the half way point to my VUCC award requiring 100 grid squares verified. Keep an eye on two sites: The 50 MHz propagation logger at <http://dxworld.com/50prop.html> and the V-U-SHF DX-Spot QSO database lookup at <http://www.vhfdx.net/spots/>

. The best advice is simply to monitor the most common voice calling frequency, 50.125 MHz USB, whenever you are home! Should CW be your forte, visit 50.098 MHz.

Try to expand your horizons this summer and also look for TV E-skip, especially channels 3 and 6 in the New York City area. This will be the very last summer to enjoy this kind of propagation. Starting February 17, 2009, almost all TV stations broadcasting in analog NTSC will sign off the air. For TV DXers, all rules will change during the DX season of the summer of 2009. With the lower VHF TV band nearly empty, broadcasts from Canada, the Caribbean, Mexico and afar will have no competition with domestic fare. Huge arrays, with powerful preamplification, will become the standard. For the first time in our lifetimes we will be free to see the deepest and rarest TV DX possible. It should be a



*QSL card from one of Karl's recent catches on 6 meters — while running just 10 watts.*

truly amazing experience.

Until next month, stay resonant and get on the air! Happy Field Day! 73 de N2KZ Karl "The Old Goat."



## Unruly URL

Greg KB2CQE and Ken K1KHL have been working on fixing PCARA's domain name: [pcara.org](http://www.pcara.org). Meanwhile, if you are having problems reaching PCARA's web site, <http://www.pcara.org>, try this alternate address: <http://www.geocities.com/pcara2000>.

## Fox in the wood(crest)

On Saturday May 10, competitors gathered once again at the Beach Shopping Center for PCARA's Spring foxhunt. The weekend of May 10-11 also happens to be the CQ World-Wide Foxhunting Weekend, so we were sharing this

same activity with many other groups around the world. Check-ins at the Beach were handled by Ray, W2CH and Marylyn KC2NKU.

At 3:00 p.m. the first transmission was heard, with a bearing to the east. As soon as the transmission was over, the hunt was on.

Mike N2EAB and Joe, WA2MCR set off toward

the junction of Rt 202 and Bear Mountain Parkway to get a cross-bearing. They followed Locust Avenue to the top of the hill to take another bearing.

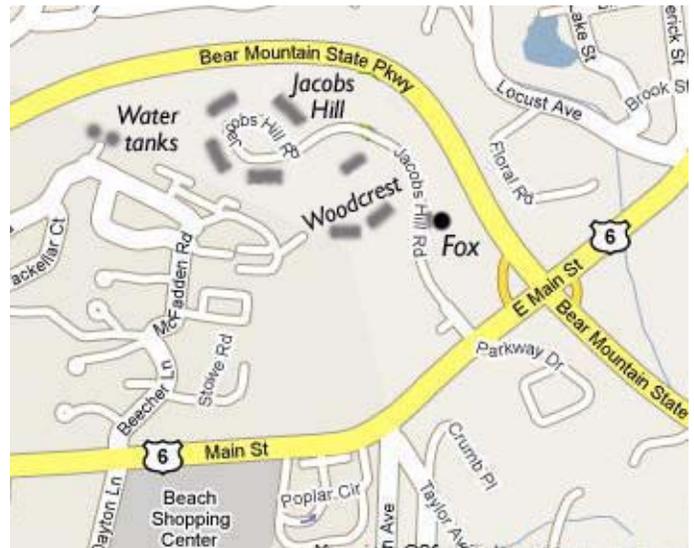
Meanwhile, Ray and Marylyn followed the bearing of due east and decided to check out the new development at Jacob's Hill Road, just off Route 6. They drove up to the 600 foot summit, but found no foxes up there



*Mike N2EAB and Joe WA2MCR prepare for the hunt. [Photo – W2CH]*

– so they drove back down to Route 6 and continued east to Van Cortlandtville Elementary School, opposite the Cortlandt Town Center. By now, the bearing had reversed to west, so they came back via the Westbrook Community Center, Circuit City and ShopRite. Signals were very strong at ShopRite, where they carefully searched the car park on foot. Little did they know that the fox was only half a mile away with a direct line-of-sight through the trees.

The fox had been handing out clues along the way. Newspaper articles described affordable housing in Westchester and mentioned two projects approved by Cortlandt Planning Board – a 103 rental apartment building called Jacobs Hill Village and 58 condominiums named Woodcrest at Jacobs Hill. The 2004 article described how development company Wilder Batter



Map of Jacobs Hill showing location of the fox.

the hunt had taken them straight past the pump station as they went up the hill, and the return trip should have given them a good view of the NM9J vehicle on the way down... but they had the feeling that since Greg KB2CQE had offered to assist the fox, a different vehicle might have been in use. Incorrect!

Both teams also reported some rather odd bearings — this effect may have been caused by signals from the quarter-wave horizontal antenna, bouncing off the adjacent hills.



The fox was hiding just behind the pump house.

would spend \$1.6 million to realign the project’s intersection with Route 6 and pay for a traffic light. The developer would also give the town a 0.4 acre property for construction of a municipal water tank and pay \$750,000 toward the construction cost.

Mike and Joe triangulated the fox and came across NM9J at 3:58 p.m. The actual location was the parking lot for the walking trail that leads to the top of Jacobs Hill. This parking lot sits on Jacobs Hill Road behind the new pump station and can be difficult to see as you drive up the hill. In fact the road above the pump station is private and restricted to “Community residents only”.

All others are expected to walk! The road is relatively new and does not appear on street maps yet. Instead, the original short road into the strip mall is shown on older maps as Pike Plaza.

After some additional clues, Ray and Marylyn also tracked down the fox. Their initial guess at the start of



Successful hunters L to R – Mike N2EAB, Joe WA2MCR, Marylyn KC2NKU and Ray W2CH.

After the hunt, participants moved on to Applebee’s to compare notes, present awards and have something to eat and drink. Hunting foxes is thirsty work.

Mike and Joe — see you at the next hunt, when it will be your turn to be the target.

– NM9J

# HD Radio report

Ray, W2CH has been receiving HD Radio stations at his home location for some time. Recently Ray expanded his receiving capabilities with a mobile HD Radio set-up. The results are described below.



— . . . —  
I have found now with the JVC HD Radio car receiver that *location* is very critical for HD FM reception in our area. When I am driving higher in altitude — such as near the intersection of Route 6 and Lexington Avenue in Yorktown — I have had successful digital reception of the HD2 multicast channels from VHF stations such as WCBS-HD-2, 101.1 MHz, and on 101.9, now WRXP-HD-2, with their Smooth Jazz format. However, as soon as I travel down Lexington Avenue towards Route 202, I lose the HD2 channels, with reception reverting back to the analog FM of the parent station.

When we recently drove to White Plains, on the Taconic State Parkway, reception on AM and FM improved as we left the Cortlandt Manor area. Further down the road, most of the New York City HD AM/FM stations along with their HD-2/3 counterparts on FM, came in quite well. While driving and parked in White Plains, I received just about every NYC HD FM station and also even WEZN on 99.9 MHz and WEBE on 107.9 MHz from Connecticut.



Ray adjusts his JVC KD-HDR30 CD Receiver with built-in HD Radio.

While driving back up to Cortlandt Manor on the parkway, 101.9 WRXP HD-2, with their Smooth Jazz, was received well until the dip for crossing the Croton Reservoir, and then fairly well again until I was up into the Shrub Oak/Yorktown area on local roads going towards Route 6 near Mohegan Lake.

The worst reception for NYC HD FM stations is right here in our own Cortlandt Manor area. Maybe a little more power for the digital sidebands would help.\*

As far as NYC HD AM reception is concerned, I did receive WFAN, WOR, WABC, and WCBS well. I did not find any other HD AM stations in my tuning around the AM band while in White Plains.

It's really true that in this area the location and height make for such differences in HD FM reception at home and in the car. I am having pretty good results now for HD FM reception at home with my antenna, amplifier and rotator. It's interesting to see that if the HD FM power is increased, there would be an increase in the digital noise on regular stereo signals.\* It would be nice if FM was only going to be HD, like TV, but it's hard to see that many people would adopt HD AM and FM for a long time.

- Ray, W2CH

\* The NAB may request a 10dB maximum power increase for FM IBOC sidebands from the FCC. The intention is to more closely match digital coverage to the analog FM signal without causing harmful interference on neighboring channels. - Ed.

## Time to recycle

One of the best things about hamfests and auctions is the opportunity to recycle equipment. An item that you no longer need might be just what someone else is looking for — and it might have a long, useful life in somebody else's shack. Even if you have to reduce the price significantly, it's much better to find a new home for a piece of unwanted electronic equipment than to throw it in the trash. Electronic equipment disposed of in landfills represents a loss of resources and the possibility of polluting ground water with lead, cadmium and other toxic metals.

But the time may come when old equipment really is at the end of its life and the question arises — what to do with it? In days gone by, you could leave electronic equipment at the side of the road on Cortlandt's Bulk Trash Collection day, but this is no longer allowed. Instead you have to arrange a special pick-up, or drop off equipment Thursdays 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Sanitation Department in Roa Hook Road, at the bottom of the Goat Trail.

There is another option — and that is to take advantage of Westchester County's Household Recycling Days (previously known as House-



This way to Recycling Day.

hold Chemical Clean-Up Day). Household chemicals such as antifreeze, butane, polish, pesticides and pool chemicals are still accepted, but Recycling Day now also accepts “E-Waste”, which includes computer monitors, TVs, computers, printers, faxes, cell phones, radios, stereos and speakers.

My basement contained a selection of bulky CRT computer monitors ranging from a 15" Gateway up to a very expensive for its time 17" Sony Trinitron. I took these along to the May 9-10 County Recycling Day at Franklin D. Roosevelt State Park.



*Westchester County Household Recycling Day at FDR State Park. This was the line for E-waste.*

The directions are to drive into the park at the Taconic State Parkway entrance, then drive clockwise past the picnic areas into the recycling area. You need to pick the line for either E-waste or household chemical recycling. There was a short line of cars, followed by instructions to “stay in the vehicle”. County employees open the car doors, then take away all items that are to be disposed of. It’s as simple as that!

Hint, don’t leave anything else in the trunk, or you might find your latest purchase going into the recycling as well!

I had a bunch of old lead-acid gel cells that no longer held a charge, as well as some very elderly NiCd AA batteries that were in my very first 2 meter handi-talkie. Disposing of the gel cells had proved problematic, but the good news was that Recycling Day was happy to take them all, along with other rechargeable batteries and button cells.

The next County Recycling Day takes place on June 6-7 at Westchester Community College in Valhalla. The full Recycling Schedule along with detailed instructions is available at: <http://www.westchestergov.com/recycling>.

- NM9J

## Field Day FAQs

At the May meeting, the following topic came up: How can we maximize bonus points for Field Day 2008? Here are some answers.

**Where can I find the rules?** You can find the Field Day Rules and download a PDF copy of the Field Day package at the following web page: <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2008/fd.html>.

**What’s a GOTA station?** In past Field Days, our neighboring clubs have benefited from GOTA stations. GOTA stands for “**Get-On-The-Air**” and is an effort to encourage newly licensed and inactive amateurs to get their feet wet and their hands dirty by having some actual contacts on a real radio.

**Could PCARA have a GOTA station?** Yes, Field Day stations in class 2A (or 2F) or higher can operate one additional GOTA station without changing class.

**Who can operate the GOTA station?** The station may be operated by anyone licensed for less than one year, with any class of license. It can also be operated by any Novice or Technician or any “generally inactive” licensee. ARRL defines “generally inactive” as any

licensee who has never made HF contacts or someone who has made no QSOs in the last two years. Non-licensed personnel may also participate, but only under direct supervision of somebody with the appropriate class of license for the band and mode. Operating a GOTA station *this* year would disqualify you from GOTA operation *next* year.

**Which bands can the GOTA station operate?** The GOTA station can operate on any of the bands authorized for Field Day. In 2008, this is expanded to also allow the VHF bands.

**Could we combine the GOTA station and the VHF / UHF station?** No, the GOTA station and the “Free VHF station” are quite distinct. We could substitute the GOTA station for the VHF station, but there are some drawbacks — the main one is that only Novices, Technicians and the generally inactive are allowed to operate the GOTA station. And the GOTA station must use a single, separate call sign from the main 2A stations.

**How many points could we earn with a GOTA station?** The GOTA station can make up to 500 QSOs for scoring purposes and these regular points are added to the score of the primary stations. In addition, each GOTA operator can score a 20 point bonus for every 20 QSOs he or she makes, up to 100 QSOs per person. For even more points, we should ensure that a “GOTA coach” is present whenever the GOTA station is on the air – the coach would not operate – he or she would mentor the GOTA operators and double the GOTA bonus points.

**Are there any disadvantages to having a GOTA station?** All stations for Field Day must



operate from within a 1000 foot diameter circle – so the GOTA station might contribute additional interference to the primary stations, especially if it strayed into the same band as another station. Setting up and supervising the GOTA station would place an extra strain on resources.

**Could we claim the “Alternate Power” bonus?**

PCARA has successfully claimed this 100 point bonus in the past. All we would have to do is make at least five QSOs without mains or petroleum-driven generator power. ARRL suggests solar, wind, methane or water power. Batteries can be used provided they are charged from a source of alternate power.



*Alternate Power: Mike N2HTT runs QRP off a solar powered battery for extra bonus points at Field Day 2003.*

as much power as the primary stations (up to 150 watts if we keep to the 2x power multiplier). But QRP operation may provide the easiest way to avoid mains or petroleum generator power sources, for example using batteries charged by solar energy. Dry cells are not permitted.

**Could we use one of the existing stations for “Alternate Power”?** That would be possible. Back at my old club in Illinois, we changed one station over from the generator to a 12 volt battery charged by pedaling a stationary bicycle. (It takes a **lot** of energetic pedaling to generate a couple of hundred watts!)

**How could we earn the Youth Participation bonus?** This is another bonus that PCARA has claimed in the past. All we need is one or more participants aged 18 or younger who would complete at least

one contact. Each youth participant then earns a 20 point bonus. For those of you with younger family members or friends – bring them along, and supervise their operation!



*Youth participation, FD 2007 – more bonus points.*

**What’s the new “Educational Activity”**

**bonus?** This bonus replaces the “Demonstration Bonus” of past years. We could earn 100 points by organizing a formal educational activity related to Amateur Radio, which is taught during Field Day. ARRL gives some examples such as teaching proper grounding techniques or how to measure, cut, assemble and erect a dipole and feedline. Hands-on type activities are encouraged. Demonstrating an unusual mode would also qualify.

**Could we just read about a new technique?** No! ARRL wants to see a formal activity with interaction between “presenter” and “participants” – rather like the Toolbox Talk on a safety issue prior to a new project.

**Should we make some digital contacts?** Yes please, we could earn more points! Three separate modes are permitted for each band — Phone, CW and Digital. A station can be worked once on each mode, on each band.

**How many points could we earn from digital contacts?** While phone QSOs score only one point, CW contacts and Digital contacts both count for two points each.

**What modes are counted as digital contacts?** RTTY and PSK31 are the common digital modes. But any digital mode not classed as CW or voice is possible.

**What else could we do to earn bonus points?** There are many more bonus activities. Your editor usually takes care of copying the Field Day message from W1AW, arranging a Public Information Table and submitting the entry via the web. Greg KB2CQE usually looks after the points for “Media Publicity”. If you would like to volunteer for one of the bonus activities, such as message handling or arranging a site visitation, put your hand up at the next meeting!

- Malcolm, NM9J

# Peekskill / Cortlandt Amateur Radio Association

**Mail:** PCARA, PO Box 146, Crompond, NY 10517

**E-Mail:** w2nyw@arrl.net

**Web site:** <http://www.pcara.org>

(Alternate address: <http://www.geocities.com/pcara2000>)

**PCARA Update Editor:** Malcolm Pritchard, NM9J

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*Newsletter contributions are always very welcome!*

Archive: <http://home.computer.net/~pcara/newslett.htm>

## PCARA Information

PCARA is a **Non-Profit Community Service Organization**. PCARA meetings take place the first Sunday of each month\* at 3:00 p.m. in Dining Room B of the Hudson Valley Hospital Center, Route 202, Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567. Drive round behind the main hospital building and enter from the rear (look for the oxygen tanks). Talk-in is available on the 146.67 repeater. \*Apart from holidays.

## PCARA Repeaters

**W2NYW:** 146.67 MHz -0.6, PL 156.7Hz

**KB2CQE:** 449.925MHz -5.0, PL 179.9Hz  
(IRLP node: **4214**)

**N2CBH:** 448.725MHz -5.0, PL 107.2Hz

## PCARA Calendar

**Sun June 1:** PCARA meeting, Hudson Valley Hospital Center, 3:00 p.m.

**Sat-Sun June 28-29:** Field Day, Walter Panas High School, Croton Ave., Cortlandt Manor.

## Hamfests

**Sat May 31:** Bergen ARA Spring Hamfest, Westwood Regional HS, 701 Ridgewood Rd, Washington Twnshp, NJ. 8:00 a.m.

**Sun Jun 1:** LIMARC outdoor Hamfest, Briarcliffe College, 1055 Stewart Ave, Bethpage NY. 9:00 a.m.

**Sun Jun 8:** Hall of Science ARC Hamfest, New York Hall of Science 47-01 111th St., Flushing Meadows, Corona Park, Queens, NY. 9:00 a.m.

**Sun Jul 13:** Sussex County ARC Hamfest, Sussex County Fairgrounds, Plains Rd. off Rt. 206, Augusta N.J.

## VE Test Sessions

**Jun 1:** Yonkers ARC, Yonkers PD, 1st Precinct, E Grassy Sprain Rd, 8:30 a.m. Contact D. Calabrese, (914) 667-0587.

**Jun 12:** WECA, Westchester Co Fire Trg Center, 4 Dana Rd, Valhalla NY. 7:00 p.m. Cntct: Stanley Rothman, (914) 831-3258.

**Jun 16:** Columbia University, 2960 Broadway, 115 Havemeyer Hall, New York. 6:30 p.m. Contact Alan Croswell (212)854-3754.

**Jun 20:** Bergen ARA, Westwood Regional HS, 701 Ridgewood Rd, Washington Twnshp NJ. 7:00 p.m.



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