



## Big Fish

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much pick whatever you want. What plaques would you like to see MRRRC sponsor? Bring your ideas to the next meeting or drop me an email (or send a note to the MRRRC reflector!)

Speaking of the reflector....there have been days where I've wondered if it was broken. Our membership is spread out over a large area. We try to hold meetings in strategic locations at strategic times of the year. Yet, its not feasible for everyone to make all the meetings, especially those that are some distance away. But we do have a very useful tool at our disposal to keep in touch with everyone on almost a daily basis....a virtual meeting, if you will. It will never replace in person, up-close-and-personal kind

of gatherings, nor would I want it to. But it's the best way we have to keep everyone up to speed on our activities. I for one would like to see more chatter amongst the membership. You put up a new antenna? Tell us about it! Got a new member for the club? Introduce him/her! There are regional groups of ops. Send a post and let us know where you have your monthly lunch gathering, etc. Just worked your last zone for 5BWAZ? Let us know about it! You found an interesting low band opening? Tell the rest of us about it!

Who are the RTTY ops in the club? I have to plead a bit of ignorance here as I've never made a RTTY QSO (I've seen 'em made!) and I don't recall much post contest chatter on the reflector after the RTTY events. Let us know who you are! A new

mode, perhaps a New Years resolution for some of us?

Coming up January 3 is the annual K8AZ/K8MR bash. If you've not attended in the past, its highly recommended that you try to work it into your calendar. There should be more details elsewhere in this issue.

The second half of the contest season is just around the corner. ARRL RTTY Roundup, NAQPs, VHF SS, CQ 160 CW, Sprints and thats all within the first few weeks of 2004! Further out are ARRL DX, WPX, etc. All of these have team/club participation. Stay tuned to the reflector for more details.

Hope Santa brought you a bunch of new goodies to try out in the upcoming events! Good luck and see you on the bands!

Mad River Radio Club  
Treasurers Report  
December 14, 2003

Balance Forward	\$1033.22
Dues collected this period	\$195.00
OCT / NOV FLASH	(\$35.64)
Balance	\$1192.58

Please note that our account is still holding \$480 for the MiQP plaques until payment is due. MRRRC will also contribute \$60 for the plaque we sponsor and the upcoming "expense" for MiQP plaques will be \$560 plus shipping.

The first 10 badge blanks have been paid for. Please see Sean/K8KHZ for details. New name badges are \$15.00. Please make your check payable to Mad River Radio Club

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dennis Ward, KT8X

## Results

### 2001-2002 MRRRC Challenge

By Dennis Ward, KT8X

The final results are in for the 2001-2002 MRRRC Challenge, which recognizes the on-air achievements of club members over a contest season. While 2001-2002 seems like a long time ago, the results of the last few applicable contests were just published.

*Note: For the first time, we have a number of members who have dual membership with another club (in most cases NCC). For the purposes of the Challenge, all activity attributed to a member is counted, whether the score actually went to MRRRC or the member's other club.*

Over the 2001-02 contest season, 61 members submitted scores in the contests covered by the Challenge, which is roughly 75% of the club. What are the rest of you doing?

This years winner of the MRRRC Challenge is our current 'Big Fish', **Mike Tessmer, K9NW**. Mike's total was the result of participation in a number of world-class multi-op efforts plus single-op efforts using the station of K9UWA in Indiana. Congratulations on a job well done!

In second place behind Mike was **Ken, W8MJ**

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# MRRC Challenge

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who combined a number of winning single op efforts from home with scores from being part of the multi-op teams at K8CC.

Third place goes to **Jim, K8MR** whose secret to success is "operating every contest", or even "operating multiple times in a contest", such as his multiple operations in SS CW.

Congratulations to everyone for their successes in 2001-2002.

## 2001-02 MRRC Challenge Scores

Call	Score	Call	Score
K9NW	4576	AC8W	533
W8MJ	3255	KW8W	513
K8MR	2768	AD8P	489
K8CC	2542	AF8A	465
K8GL	2143	K8LN	398
K5IID	2065	W8WTS	357
K9TM	2058	K8KHZ	332
K8AZ	1968	K8MV	326
W8CAR	1905	WD8S	324
K8ND	1798	W8RZ	304
N8EA	1669	K8MK	298
N8TR	1511	W8DRZ	294
N8KM	1507	W8UA	286
KU8E	1485	K8MM	248
WX3M	1462	KI8IZ	226
NU8Z	1454	N8CQA	224
W8AV	1001	K8AA	220
K8JM	859	N8NX	215
W8RU	840	AC8E	212
N8KR	803	KE8OC	193
K8NZ	789	K8SIA	170
K8GT	788	N8MG	138
KT8X	766	NT8V	135
K8AQM	692	N8RHV	134
ND8DX	689	WZ8P	114
K8DD	685	NX8C	93
K8AAX	659	K8KS	93
N8ET	646	K8UP	88
KW8N	577	K8WMW	68
N8VW	559	W8XI	36
		W9CEO	6

# K8MR Christmas Party/MRRC Meeting K8AZ Open House/NCC Christmas Party

Continuing an MRRC holiday tradition, the 28th annual K8MR Christmas Party and MRRC meeting will be held on January 3, 2004 in the eastern suburbs of Cleveland, OH. That same weekend, MRRCCers are invited to the K8AZ Open House/NCC Christmas Party.

The K8AZ Open House begins around 3:00 PM with refreshments, snacks and pizza. Around 7:00 PM, the migration begins for the twenty minute drive to K8MR. The festivities at Jim's culminates in a MRRC meeting around 10:00 PM.

Printed below is a map showing both the K8MR and K8AZ QTH's, coming from I-271 which runs north-south along the eastern edge of the suburban Cleveland. Here are the specific addresses and info:

**Jim Stahl, K8MR**  
**30499 Jackson Rd**  
**Chagrin Falls, OH**  
**216-831-6954**

**Tom Lee, K8AZ**  
**7275 Surrey Lane**  
**Chesterland OH 44026**  
**440-729-8104**

There are other "unofficial" activities that same day. Some MRRCCers intend to make the rounds of Samsel Marine Hardware in downtown Cleveland around 10:00 AM, then on to Electronics Surplus, and finally lunch at the Hooters in Mentor, OH around 1:00 PM. Details and times are still being worked out, but if interested, contact K8CC at k8cc@comcast.net



## CQWW SSB From Nova Scotia

By Dave Pruett, K8CC with photos by Tim Mitchell, K9TM

The last weekend in October saw a team of MRRCCers in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada for the 2003 CQWW SSB contest. The trip was the result of an invitation from Jim Fisher, VE1JF for MRRCC to bring a team of ops and operate his station for the contest. The offer had a certain appeal; while Canada is not rare country-wise, VE1 is closer to Europe than W8 and VEs can work W/VE stations in CQWW (keeps the rate up). Furthermore, VE1JF is a very well-equipped station and we would not have to bring any radio equipment. After checking air fares (~\$350 round trip on Continental through Newark) the invitation was accepted.

The MRRCC team consisted of Dave/K8CC, Tim/K9TM, Ken/W8MJ and Dennis/KT8X. All had operated from a DX location before with at least one other team member; Dave and Tim together at WP2Z, Ken and Dave together twice at WP3X, and Tim and Dennis together at P40P. As our travel plans to NS started to take shape, Dennis decided to go by way of Maine, where he was stationed in the Air Force a decade ago. One of his old friends he intended to visit was Joe/NY1S, a fellow contester who agreed to join the team. While Dave, Tim and Ken would fly from Detroit to Halifax, Dennis would fly to Maine then drive with Joe to Halifax.

VE1JF is a very well-equipped station. Inside, there are two operating positions: a Yaesu FT-1000MP Mk5 with an Alpha 87A auto-tune amp, while the second station is an FT-1000MP with another 87A. The stacked arrays are selected using Array Solutions StackMatches, and band selection is with an Array Solutions SixPack. Each station has a Dunestar six-band bandpass filter to protect the receivers and cut down on inter-station interference.

Outside, a single 110' guyed Trylon tower supports three Force12 "multi-monobanders" - a C51XR @ 110', a C31XR @ 70' and another C51XR at 35'. These antennas are essentially interlaced monobanders with separate feedlines, so the end result is 2L/2L on 40M, 3L/3L/3L on 20M, 4L/4L/4L on 15M and 7L/7L/7L on 10M. All three beams rotate—the top with an Orion 2800 rotator, while the middle and lower antennas are on TIC RingRotators. For 80M, VE1JF has a four-square array using half-size Force12 linear loaded verticals, while the 160M antenna was a full size inverted-V at the top of the 110' tower.

In addition to the big antennas, the most striking aspect of the VE1JF station is the location, which is on the edge of a 350' high bluff overlooking the Bay of Fundy. (Nova Scotia is for all practical purposes an island running NE/SW, although it is actually a peninsula). The view is breathtaking, but the great takeoff radio-wise is to the west and northwest, which might be great for SS.



**The MRRCC team on the porch at VE1JF**

Towards Europe (a 60° heading from VE1JF) the shot is over irregular ground with rising peaks on many beam headings. The impact of this was confirmed through our experiences with the stacked antennas. On headings off the cliff we'd see little or no difference between the lower and higher beam, but on headings to Europe or Africa over the island, the top antennas were clearly superior.

Another station aspect which has to be considered these days are logging computers and packet spotting access. VE1JF has one desktop computer and a laptop (with external monitor and keyboard) which are networked together with Ethernet and run WriteLog logging software. Since none of the operating team had any experience with WriteLog, we decided to bring our own computers. For logging, we commandeered a pair of small Acer desktops from the K8CC station. These fit into our carryon bags along with nice IBM keyboards, and were used with VE1JF's monitors. Dave also brought along his trustworthy six-year old Dell laptop as a third computer for off-duty ops to monitor the action. The three logging computers ran NA and were linked with loop-style network using COM ports. For packet, Jim has a Compuserve dial-up connection. Dennis brought his IBM laptop running K1TTT's WinTelnetX which captured the packet spots from one of a number of on-line clusters and sent these to the logging computers via a COM port.

The week of the contest, Dennis flew out to ME on Monday evening to meet up with Joe, then they would drive to Halifax on Friday. Dave, Tim and Ken flew out Thursday morning to Halifax via Newark, NJ. Once we arrived in Halifax, we still had a 150 mile land trip in a rental car from the city to VE1JF. How non-typical of DXpedition travel - both groups spent as much or more time in car as they did on planes!

We arrived at VE1JF just before dark. After a quick tour of the antenna farm and Jim's beautiful home, we

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## CQWW from Nova Scotia

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sat down for dinner, after which we started re-arranging the station for the multi-2 operation we planned.

The VE1JF operating desk is only about 6' wide, so we had to give some thought how to establish some sort of physical isolation between to two positions. As shown below, the rotator control boxes, four-square control box, SixPack control for band-switching, and StackMatch controllers were located in the middle of the table for access by either operator. The small Acer computers sat on the shelf above and behind the desk with the Alpha amps and other accessories. The radios were pushed to the side edges of the desk, with the monitors placed on top. Overall, the layout worked satisfactorily with workable levels of audible interference between stations.



**Multi-2 Operating Positions At VE1JF**

One problem with the VE1JF setup we discovered when we arrived had to do with the bandswitching of the Dunestar filters which were being controlled by AlphaPower controllers driven off the amps. The amps change bands when drive power was applied and the filters would follow, however the filters were preventing drive power from getting to the amps (since the band had not been changed yet) so nothing would happen! Fortunately, Jim had a pair of TopTen band decoders on hand and after a lot of convincing he let us re-wire everything. With Tim's familiarity with the TopTen decoders we soon had the Dunestars following the radios.

By Friday morning everything was hooked up and running so we spent most of the day testing the station and wringing out small problems. Around 2 PM local, we looked out the window over the cliff and saw the St. John's ferry coming into the harbor. Dennis and Joe were on the ferry, and about an hour later they arrived at the station. In short order Dennis had his laptop connected to the Internet via Jim's Compuserve connection and had DX spots flowing to the logging computers.

Our operating plan was to team Dave and Ken on one

radio, with Tim and Dennis on the other. Joe's role would be spot relief and monitoring the packet connection. We worked a schedule with one hour rotations during the day to keep fresh ops on the radios. At night, the schedule shifted to four hour rotations to allow the ops a chance to get some sleep.

The contest started with a whimper on 20 and 40 with only 15 QSOs in the first ten minutes on both radios total. Europe was just not runnable, so after a few minutes of DXing, first Tim on 40 then Dave on 20 discovered that the USA was definitely runnable with the antennas turned around. For the next couple of hours both bands were running over 100/hour apiece. Around 04Z Dennis went to 75 where he ran hours of 61/71/101 working mostly EU split-frequency and put many mults into the log. During this time 40 was very poor, with lots of flutter and rates in the teens while sharing time with 160.

160 was the biggest surprise of the weekend - a surprise in the bad sense, that is. Jim's 110' high inverted-vee heard fairly well, but nobody could hear us. Caribbean stations were very difficult to raise and HC8N (who was clearly copiable) CQ'd in our face after working VB2C relatively easily. Condx were so bad we even had to repeat our call to VY2ZM several times!

After spending most of the night scraping for QSOs on the low bands, 20 and 15 became runnable to EU around 1045Z. By 12Z we had 1600 QSOs in the log, and average of 133 QSOs/hr between the two radios. Fifteen minutes later the first 10M QSOs went into the log and we were instantly running EU.

One undeniable advantage that Canadian stations have over Americans (at least in phone DX contests) is the ability to operate below the US phone bands. When running EU, we consistently took advantage of this as competition up in the US bands was fierce. Not that clear frequencies were plentiful down below - we were constantly crowded by the rude Europeans, but for the most part we could hold a frequency within 10-20 KHz of the US band edge. On 10 we found we could run just as well in the lower part of the US band.

Around 1830Z EU dried up on 10 for Tim. While taking a break to chase some mults on 20, he discovered the band was really good to EU, so the station stayed on 14147 for three straight hours and made 557 QSOs. The other station on 15 made a seamless transition from Europe to stateside but by 20Z the rates had dropped to the 60-80 per hour range so some time was spent grabbing up multipliers on 15 and 10. At the end of the first day, there were 4503 QSOs in the log.

As the second day began (contest-wise) 10 was long gone and 15 followed around 0030Z. 20 was good for a while longer, tallying 373 QSOs from 00-03Z before dropping out for the night. 40 offered two choices: beam

## CQWW From Nova Scotia

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to Europe and run slow, or beam stateside and run fast. By 04Z even the stateside runs had tapered off and the first night pattern of scrounging for QSOs had begun. The highlight of the second night was finding G13OQR on 160 at 0654Z who was S9+20dB on the FT-1000MP's S-meter. Needless to say we had little trouble working him. However, we couldn't raise one of the big Belgian multis shortly thereafter, despite being S3 and perfectly copiable.



**KT8X (foreground) and  
K8CC (background)**

One problem which was becoming evident was the deteriorating condition of Dennis' voice. He had been struggling with a cold since the beginning of the trip, and despite having voice keyers for CQing, by Saturday night his voice was shot. At this point, Dennis and Joe reversed roles with Joe sharing the second radio with Tim and Dennis as supervisor of the Internet connection.

Around 10Z, and we started working our way back up the bands. Rates were obviously slower from the first day, but from 13Z-18Z 966 QSOs went into the log between the two rigs, all on 15 and 10. Europe was still good, but since not much stateside had been worked on 10 the first day, the W/K/N crowd were a gold mine to keep the rate up. Around 1830Z 10 was finished up, so again one station's focus shifted to 20 and never left, making 547 more QSOs in the last six hours. The station on 15 kept at it until 21Z, then was forced to chase mults on 15 and 10 before dropping to 40 for the last two hours and 83 QSOs.

As the clock rolled over zero zulu, this is what NA's score window showed:

band	QSOs	zones	ctys	
160	61	7	13	
80	424	16	75	
40	1053	25	96	
20	2416	35	122	
15	2305	31	125	
10	1418	28	119	
Total	7677	142	550	= 12,957,008

Before the contest, we felt we would do well to make 4000-6000 QSOs, depending on how disturbed the bands were. We were somewhat flabbergasted to see almost

7700 QSOs in the log. We felt we had done a pretty good job covering the bands and making the rate/mult tradeoff and were quite pleased with the score.

The contest ended at 8:00 PM local time, and after a light dinner, we tore down the station. Everything was packed (or ready to be) in little more than an hour, and five tired ops headed for their respective beds.

The next morning we finished packing then spent about an hour exploring Jim's beautiful QTH. (Note: it was 65°F that day, in late October no less!) We peered off the cliff over the Bay of Fundy, inspected the antennas one last time and listened to Jim's plans for the future. By late morning, Dave, Tim and Ken said farewell and headed for Halifax in Dave's rented Jeep. After lunch, Dennis and Joe headed for Digby to catch the ferry back to St. Johns across the bay. Upon disembarking they would drive to Joe's QTH in ME, then Dennis would fly back to Detroit the next day. For the other three, the adventure was just beginning as bad weather in Newark delayed their flights and threatened to strand them in Halifax, but in the end they made it home, albeit a few hours late.

The claimed scores posted on the 3830 reflector show us in 9th place world-wide in the multi-two category. We're shown fifth in North America, but three of those are Caribbean stations. However, we didn't even win m/2 for Canada as the team at VE3EJ finished 6th with 14.4M claimed. While we had almost 300 more QSOs than 'EJ (with essentially identical points/QSO), they had 23 more zones and 70 more countries. Indeed, mults may have been our weakness particularly the second day; we worked 615 of our 692 mults in the first 24 hours of the contest. Furthermore, it seemed that working mults in Asia/Pacific was very difficult and we heard VE3EJ work a number of these which we didn't.

In assessing the trip, we were all very satisfied with the results. All of the computers and gear we brought functioned perfectly. Jim's choice of top-notch equipment inside and the station layout we were able to set up worked very well. The Force12 beams acted as separate monoband stacks and offered great flexibility. However, the VE1JF geography to Europe was such that it seemed only the top antennas of the stacked contributed which lessened the advantage in that direction. This factor assumed greater significance when Dave discovered as we were leaving for the trip home that the top rotator indicator was off by 30°-40°.

The team would like to thank Jim Fisher, VE1JF for his hospitality and opening his station to us. Despite the ominous forecast of disturbed conditions, the station and team were ready when the starting bell sounded and the results exceed even our highest expectations. Operating from Nova Scotia provided us all with a valuable experience in our contesting careers.

### ARRL Sweepstakes

#### CW

##### Single-Op

K9NW	179,962
W8MJ	167,480
W8CAR	133,692
W8KW (W8UE)	117,868
AF8A	100,408
NU8Z	94,800
K5IID	84,700
N8EA	80,560
WD8S	73,150
N8IE	62,320
WX3M	58,400
K8MR	53,424
AC8E (K8MR)	52,848
N8TR	46,512
K8AZ (K8MR)	46,340
ND8DX	34,704
K8AAX	27,260
W8AJ (K8MR)	12,272

##### Multi-Op

K8CC	157,368
(+N8NX, WA8RRR)	
K8JM	152,470
(+K8DD, K8MM, K8MV, N8LJ, AC8W)	
W8EDU	120,396

#### SSB

##### Single-Op

W8MJ	183,106
W8DD	159,558
K8MR	117,000
N8KM	111,450
N8IE	70,272
NZ8O (K8CC)	29,158
AF8A	4,800
AD8P	2,756
KP2A (KW8N)	374,932
N8TR	112,160

##### Multi-Op

K8CC	258,804
(N8OS, WX3M)	
N8HR	252,168
(KE8YP, W8FHF, WX8J, WZ8P)	
NT8V	115,654
(+AC8W, K8DD, K8WMW, W8XI)	

**Total:** 3,648,752  
**Entries:** 34  
**Pts/Entry:** 107,316

## MRRC Contest Scores

Collected By Jim Stahl, K8MR

### ARRL 160M Contest

#### Single-Op

W8MJ	218,992
N8EA	146,874
KT8X	77,286
N8VW (@K8MK)	73,000
W8CAR	64,560
K8CC	19,453
K8MR	13,708
K8DD	11,970
N8IE	6,868
N8TR +packet	30,030

#### Multi-Op

K8XXX	321,530
(K8DD, K8KS, N8CC, ND5S, NU8Z)	
K1LT (+NZ8R)	244,020
AD8P (+N8ET)	198,810

**Total** 1,427,101

### ARRL 10M Contest

W8AV	416,994
K9NW	279,740
W8MJ	167,832
W8CAR	156,312
WD8S	55,936
N8EA	38,940
K8MR	30,876
KT8X	14,420
W8RU	13,984
N8VW	5,000
W8WTS	1,276
ND5S +packet	271,590

**Total:** 1,452,900

### CQWW DX

#### SSB

K9NW	2372-141-441	3,728,296	
N8IE	651- 65-227	512,751	QRP
N8TR	1432-139-492	2,520,845	SOA
K8AZ	2834-158-585	5,808,031	m/s
VE1JF	7677-142-550	12,957,008	m/2 K8CC, K9TM, KT8X, W8MJ
VB2C	9517-152-535	14,941,563	m/m w/AC8W, K8DD

#### CW

K8CC	1892-140-450	3,161,220	SOLP op. DL2HBX
K5IID	956-109-332	1,177,911	
N8ET	876-110-322	1,054,080	QRP
N8EA	492- 78-224	419,780	
K8GU	103- 28- 76	30,264	
K5ZG	340- 80-167	241,101	SOA
K8AZ	3690-185-615	8,410,400	m/s
			+K8MR, W8CAR, W8KIC, WT8C
K8JM	1326-146-467	2,256,453	m/s
			+AC8W, K8DD, K8MV, KT8X
W8AV	3936-171-592	8,563,149	m/m
			+AF8A, K4LT, N8IW, W8RZ

## Mad River Radio Club

2727 Harris Road  
Ypsilanti, MI 48198



### January VHF SS

By Dave Pruett, K8CC

Last year, MRRC finished 11th of 24 clubs in the January VHF SS Affiliated Club Competition with only three entries. Could we do better this year?

Several MRRC have been gradually adding VHF/UHF bands to their stations. Others have recently acquired radios with two or more VHF/UHF bands. If we could get everyone on for the VHF SS, we could have quite a score.

The VHF SS, being in January, has the reputation of being the least-interesting of the VHF/UHF contests, since there isn't usually

the sporadic-E of the June or September contests. However, that doesn't mean that there isn't any enhanced propagation in January.

There are at least three good reasons to get on for the contest. First of all, it's fun, particularly if you're trying something new.

Second, any QSOs you make with MRRCers benefits the club doubly; the points they get from working you and the points you get from working them both contribute to the MRRC club score.

Finally, we all have our niche contests that we enjoy. Some guys like digging DX out of the low band QRN, while others like to pull DX out of the VHF noise floor. As

club members we should support for each other's activities. Work a VHFer on 2M CW or 6M SSB, and he'll be more likely to work you on 1833 KHz on the appropriate weekend.

To show what clubs activity can do, three clubs from MN/WI (hardly centers of population) together totaled 53 entries and over two million points last year. They *created* significant centers of VHF contest activity where there might not have been any.

MRRCers, we're wedged between the W9/WØs and the high-population East Coast. With regards to VHF/UHF, we are the "black hole". Whaddaya say we do something about it?

## Club Resources

The Mad River Radio Club is an ARRL affiliated club of amateur radio contesting enthusiasts. The club is centered near Findlay, OH and serves Ohio and the surrounding States. Membership is open to anyone.

The *Flash* is the official newsletter of MRRC and is published six times per year. Submission of material for publication is welcome. It may be sent to the editor at the postal or e-mail address shown at right. The *Flash* may be reprinted in whole or in part provided proper credit is given.

Club dues are \$12 per year, payable after the 1st of May each year with a grace period thru 31st of July each year. Members of the same family living at the same address may elect to receive a single *Flash* for one set of dues. Fulltime students are eligible for dues at half price. Dues are to be paid to the treasurer at the address shown above. Please make checks payable to *Mad River Radio Club*.

The club roster appears annually in the October/November issue of the *Flash*.

The Mad River Net is held on Monday nights at 8:30 PM Eastern time on 3825 KHz.

The MRRC web site is <http://www.mrrc.net>.

Keep up with MRRC happenings by subscribing to the MRRC Internet Reflector. To join send an email to [mrrc-re-quest@contesting.com](mailto:mrrc-re-quest@contesting.com). The body of the message should include "subscribe mrrc yourcall".

K8MAD is the club callsign of the Mad River Radio Club.

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