



MINNESOTA MARSGRAM



Information for Minnesota Navy-Marine Corps. MARS Members

December, 2004

Volume 8, Number 12

NNN0ALL Minnesota

by NNN0GAZ Tim

Greetings,

My how things have changed over the past month. As many of you have read here in the newsletter over the past year, amateur radio has been faced with another source of invasion – this time Broadband over Power Line or BPL for short. In late October 2004, the Federal Communication Commission decided to proceed with BPL over the objections of many including broadcasters, NTIA, Defense Department, FEMA, ARRL and the list goes on and on.

My initial reaction was once again American ignorance - at the top levels - shows its true form - while other countries have or are prohibiting this mode of internet access our government officials ignore the obvious and continue to pursue this mode, despite the preponderance of evidence against the implementation of BPL. A few other classics I've shared with some of you are...

“Someone kindly explain to me how we (that is a general term in this case) can be so stupid as to be sold this bill of goods? Is this mode really cost effective for power utilities to pursue?”

“Cable and telephone companies - communication utilities - are currently providing our homes with cost effective broadband signals - reason, they are COMMUNICATIONS utilities and for the most part know how to do it. Now we expect power utilities to add this to their repertoire? While power utilities are good at providing us with power, but for the most part ineffective at responding to noise complaints, the commission really expects them to respond to BPL noise complaints? Who are they kidding?”

I could go on and on with this diatribe, but would that really solve anything, probably not. We mailed, emailed and otherwise buried the FCC in our collective objection to BPL, we were in protest mode, now its time to move to action.

The solution to the issue is not going to come as quickly as the decision did to implement BPL; it is going to take time. Lets look at

one example, those active on HF know the effect of foreign broadcast stations on the 40 meter phone band as one example of the peaceful co-existence policy. This is being resolved but it took decades.

Now, are you willing to give up the small slice of spectrum we use for emergency communications to this peaceful co-existence (non-interference) policy? The decision by the Federal Communications Commission to encourage the implementation of BPL will, no doubt, lead to the loss of HF, VHF, and UHF frequencies due to interference from the BPL systems. We know this for a fact, to date most if not all BPL tests have failed to run full term. The reason for the early shutdown – in those cases where the utility has made the reasons public the overwhelming reason has been the number of interference complaints and in most cases these were filed by amateur radio operators.

Basically, you – the amateur radio operator - have two options available. First, you can sit around and complain about how unfair this is and how the
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MINNESOTA TRAFFIC NETS

Designator	Frequency	Local Times
5G1B	Pri. NCE Sec. NBG Ter. NAR	18:30 Daily

MINNESOTA ADMIN. NET

5G4A	Pri. NCE	19:00 2nd Sunday
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MARS DATA SYSTEM

	Frequency
NN0DVD	NCO AFSK/USB
Intranet site	http://www.communityzero.com/mnmars

GAZ *cont'd from pg.1*

poor Amateur has been squeezed out of the spectrum while BPL systems are installed all around you.

Second, you can get up off your duff and do something proactive! I'm not talking about a letter writing campaign or picketing the local utility. That will not contribute to solving the problem. We (Amateurs) need to demonstrate that we are an asset to our community's disaster response. We need to show that that part of the spectrum we use for emergency communications provides a service more valuable than the revenue from some broadband Internet connections.

How do we go about doing that? Many of you may not like the answer but here it is. Get actively involved with your local emergency communications group. The key work is **ACTIVELY**. You need to resolve to be more than a name on the roster. For MARS members that means checking into nets – state, area, region, emergency, etc. In essence use the spectrum we're given, demonstrate its importance. Every opportunity that you have to participate, take it, even if the participation is only 15 minutes. We're not asking for you to sit at the radio 24x7 monitoring MARS frequencies, we're saying make time to regularly check in, be active, **PARTICIPATE**.

Are you member of an ARES group or other organization that utilizes amateur radio for emergency communications? If so, be more than a name on a roster, actively participate!

What have you done to increase your knowledge and skills in emergency communications within the last year

Completed one of the ARECC courses?

Taken any of the on-line courses to increase your knowledge of the Incident Command System or NIMS? (These are available free of charge at the Dept. of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency's Emergency Management Institute <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWEB/IS>.) Skywarn training?

For those in the metro, what about the AERO Basic Operator's Course?

What have you done to increase awareness within the community of the role amateur radio can play in special events?

Have you suggested to event organizers that ham radio could improve public safety at the local summer parade, fun run or marathon by assisting with communications?

Have you helped out with an Amateur radio display at the local civic celebration?

Do you participate in a CERT team as an ARES communicator?

The future of amateur radio is literally up to you. The time for grouching and complaining has passed. The time for action is here. Are you willing to accept your role and fight for the spectrum?

-BT OVER



NECOS Wanted

There will be a openings for NECOS duty over the next couple months as some of our members head to snow-less areas of the country during the coming cooler season here in Minnesota. Let NNN0XYA know

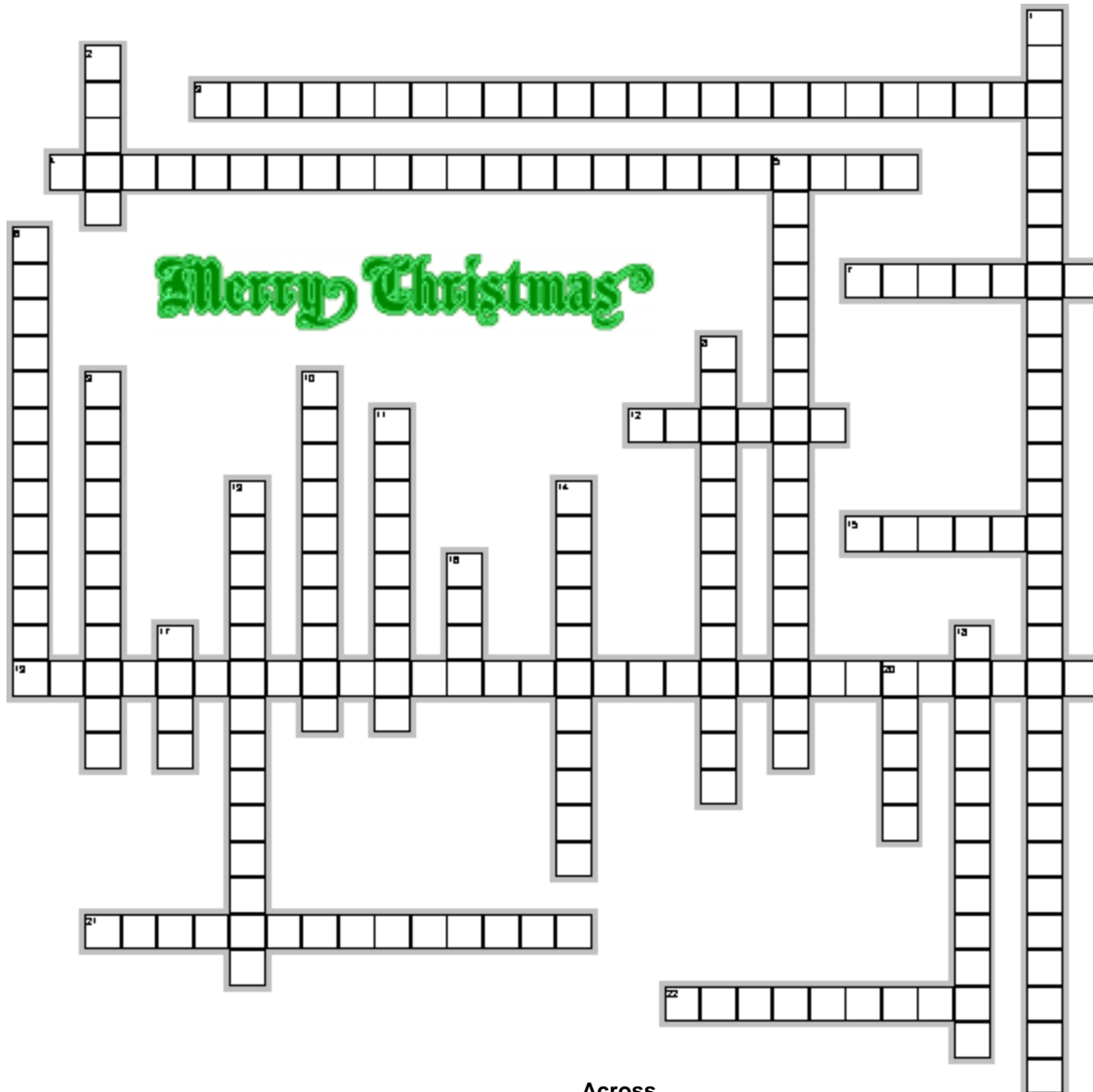
which dates you can fill in as NECOS.
Fridays, December 17 – January 31.



CONCORDE'S LAST FLIGHT



The Concorde ceased operations on October 24, 2003 with the final three British Concorde's arriving at London's Heathrow airport within ninety seconds of each other. The transatlantic flight is shown here in these pictures as she is escorted into British air space by the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team, The Red Arrows. The Red Arrows are Britain's version of the United States Navy's Blue Angels.



Down

1. What Emmy Award winning cartoon was based on a newspaper editorial?
2. In It's a Wonderful Life, what kind of spirit is Clarence?
5. What parade was first held January 1, 1886?
6. Elvis Presley recorded what sad song in the fifties?
8. In Tchaikovsky's ballet "The Nutcracker", who is the nutcracker's main enemy?
9. In "Winter Wonderland" the lovestruck couple pretends a snowman is who?
10. Lost \$8000 in "It's a Wonderful Life"
11. In It's a Wonderful Life, what part of George's house is always broken?
13. Biggest selling Christmas single of all time
14. On every street corner you hear what song?
16. How many times is the name of Santa Claus used in "The Night Before Christmas"?
17. What piece of heavenly apparel does the Littlest Angel not wear correctly?
18. In It's a Wonderful Life, who starred as George Bailey?
20. In Sweden, a common Christmas decoration is the Julbukk, a small figurine of a goat. Of what material is it usually made?

Across

3. What carol is known as the counting song?
4. What carol demands figgy pudding?
7. In the Christmas Carol, who said "God Bless Us, Every One!"?
12. What glittery bits of metal are hung on a Christmas tree?
15. What is the name of the first reindeer Santa calls in The Night Before Christmas?
19. Started in 1921 by F. Melius Christiansen, this holiday tradition is one of the oldest and most prominent celebrations of Christmas in the United States.
21. Saturday Evening Post artist was known for his whimsical pictures of Santa Claus
22. What popular Christmas toy is based on a 1903 political caricature?



Drive Capacity Discrepancy

By Neil J. Rubenking

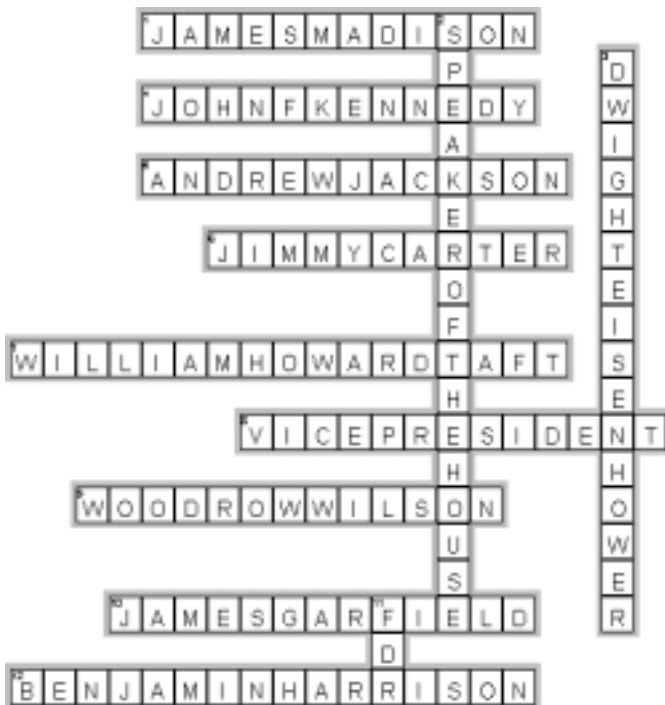
Q: I was wondering if you could tell me what's up with hard drive capacity. Mine, for example, was advertised as a 20GB drive, but when I look in Properties, I see only 18.6GB. I've also been shopping around for a new computer for some time, and I have seen a discrepancy of as much as 40GB in the larger drives. I've heard this is because of the operating system, but I can't believe 40GB is taken over by the OS. Jerry F.

A: This question comes up fairly frequently, and it doesn't have anything to do with the operating system. The problem is this: In Windows Explorer and other software applications, terms like megabyte and gigabyte refer to powers of 2, while in the hardware industry they tend to refer to powers of 10. One kilobyte in software is 2 to the 10th power, or 1,024 bytes. In hardware it's 10 to the 3rd power, or 1,000 bytes. The discrepancy mounts as sizes go up, as the table shows.

Take away 6.87 percent of your drive's stated capacity of 20GB and you get 18.6GB. If you could purchase a 1-terabyte drive, its actual capacity would be short by nearly a tenth of the capacity it would have had if measured in binary terabytes. BT OVER



The November Crossword Solution



Augustana College Students, Faculty Learn About Navy Life



By Journalist 2nd Class Devin Wright, Commander, Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii (NNS) — Navy Region Hawaii hosted 84 students and faculty of Augustana College's East Asia Overseas Term program to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, Nov. 19.

During their visit, the students had the opportunity to tour USS Crommelin (FFG 37) where Sailors told the students about the Navy and its various missions.

"I think it's common knowledge that the Navy fires missiles into enemy territory," said Lt. Kim Mitchell, operations officer aboard Crommelin. "Hosting a tour like this with so many college students gives us the opportunity to showcase and get the message out that the Navy also does counter drug operations. We also answer at sea distress calls."

"So, we don't just launch missiles, we also save lives," she said. "We're glad this ship was asked to give a tour to these students because we are proud of our recent success on our latest deployment."

For many of the students, the chance to get to know the Sailors on more of a personal level than what they have seen on television was fascinating.

"This visit is so important," said Tim Brinkman, a junior at Augustana College. "With the war going on all we hear about is what the media reports. This opportunity puts us face to face with the troops. It's comforting to know that our military doesn't really feel a sense of urgency. It's just business as usual. These guys are my age but you can tell they've been around and really know their stuff," he added.

The Pearl Harbor visit also included a tour of the USS Arizona Memorial, followed by a Ford Island tour.

For Maggie Hassler, a sophomore at Augustana College, the visit hit home. "My grandfather was a Sailor during World War II," said Hassler. "I don't think I ever thought of it until I came here but he could be entombed in the Arizona. I realized how young he was and that I'm only here because he survived. It is important for us to see firsthand the history and life in the Navy so we can pass that information on. I really respect these Sailors because I don't think I would have the courage to do what they do." BT OVER

Military Radio Signals Could Jam Garage Door Openers

Coming soon to dozens of military bases around the country: radio signals strong enough to jam nearby garage-door openers.

Between now and 2008, the military is supplying a new radio system to roughly 125 bases that uses the same frequency as the one relied upon by more than 90 percent of the remotely operated openers, Pentagon and industry officials say.

The military radio signal is sometimes so strong that it overpowers the opener's signal, preventing the door from opening. Or it can also vastly reduce the opener's range, forcing the user to walk close to the garage before it will open.

Unless another solution is reached, the consumer will either have to live with the inconvenience or pay to fix the problem.

The cheapest fix would be to manually replace parts of the opener so it will use a different frequency - probably a \$60 job, said Mark Karasek, technical director of a manufacturers' group formed in response to the military radio rollout. Calling a technician to do it for you will probably run double that, he said.

"These things are generally in a relatively small radius around military facilities," said Michael D. Gallagher, chief of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, which oversees government use of the airwaves. "The period of inconvenience is generally around when they start up the system. Generally consumers can try again after letting a short pause go by."

Linton Wells II, Pentagon acting chief information officer, predicted the effect will only be noticed within 10 miles of a base. But Karasek said interference may be felt as far away as 50 miles. He estimated that at least 50 million garage-door openers in the United States use the same frequency as the new radios.

Beyond issues of convenience and cost, his group raises safety concerns about people who don't carry house keys being locked out of their homes.

The garage-door opener frequency at issue - 390 megahertz - has belonged to the military since around 1950. Openers have legally operated at that frequency since at least the early 1980s, Karasek said.

U.S. law allows low-power electronic devices to operate on military frequencies if they don't cause interference. It was a good frequency for garage-door openers because transmissions can penetrate the doors.

Also, until recently, the military did not employ it often, so

the industry did not have to worry about interference.

Garage-door openers are too low-powered to have any effect on military communications.

It is unknown how many garage doors are close enough to one of the 125 bases to be affected, and Pentagon officials refused to list which bases would receive the new radios. A spokesman said large bases are among those receiving them.

The interference was first discovered in recent months in two areas where the new radios were tested: Mechanicsburg, Pa., and Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

In Florida, 127 people living within seven miles of Eglin complained of interference, officials said. In Pennsylvania, where a few bases started using the radios, more than 100 people contacted the local congressman, Republican Rep. Todd Platts, about the problem, an aide said.

All bases are getting new radios, with 125 receiving those that function at the frequency of garage-door openers. The radios are used for routine and emergency communications and training purposes.

The Defense and Commerce departments, the Federal Communications Commission and industry are starting discussions. Base commanders will be instructed to inform nearby communities the interference is coming.

Karasek said a solution may be for the military to program its radios to skip the garage-door opener frequency. Manufacturers may also have to start building garage-door openers that work on a different frequency, or are less susceptible to interference.

BT OVER



Hunting License?

The game warden stopped a deer hunter and asked to see his hunting license...
 "This is last year's license," the warden informed the hunter.
 "I know," replied the hunter, "but I shouldn't need a new license because I'm only shooting at the deer I missed last year."



Twas The Night Before Christmas

Attributed to a Marine stationed in Okinawa, Japan

Twas the night before Christmas,
he lived all alone,
in a one bedroom house made of
plaster and stone.

I had come down the chimney
with presents to give,
and to see just who
in this home did live.

I looked all about,
a strange sight I did see,
no tinsel, no presents,
not even a tree.

No stocking by mantle,
just boots filled with sand,
on the wall hung pictures
of far distant lands.

With medals and badges,
awards of all kinds,
a sober thought
came through my mind.

For this house was different,
it was dark and dreary,
I found the home of a soldier,
once I could see clearly.

The soldier lay sleeping,
silent, alone,
curled up on the floor
in this one bedroom home.



The face was so gentle,
the room in such disorder,
not how I pictured
a United States soldier.

Was this the hero
of whom I'd just read?
Curled up on a poncho,
the floor for a bed?

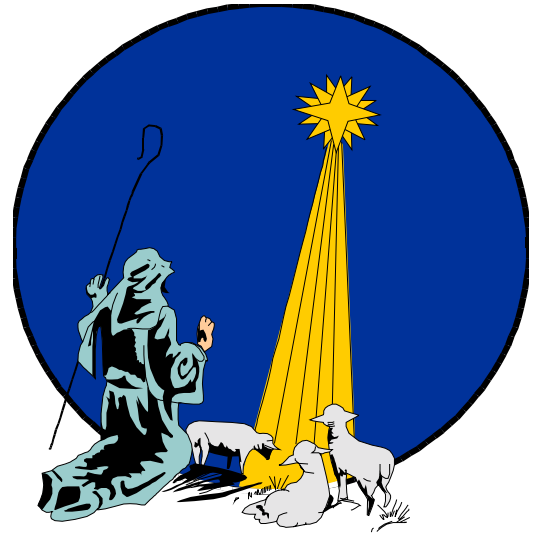
I realized the families
that I saw this night,
owed their lives to these
soldiers
who were willing to fight.

Soon round the world,
the children would play
and grownups would celebrate
a bright Christmas day.

They all enjoyed freedom
each day of the year
because of the soldiers
like the one lying here.

I couldn't help wonder
how many lay alone
on a cold Christmas Eve
in a land far from home.

The very thought
brought a tear to my eye
I dropped to my knees
and started to cry.



The soldier awakened
and I heard a rough voice
Santa don't cry....
This life is my choice

I fight for freedom,
I don't ask for more
my life is my God,
my Country, my Corp."

The soldier rolled over
and drifted to sleep;
I couldn't control it,
I continued to weep.

I kept watch for hours
so silent and still
and we both shivered
from the cold nights' chill.

I didn't want to leave
on that cold dark night
this guardian of honor
so willing to fight.

Then the soldier rolled over
with a voice soft and pure
whispered "Carry on Santa,
it's Christmas day; all is secure."

One look at my watch
and I knew he was right
"Merry Christmas my friend,
and to all a good night."

5G1B Net Schedule

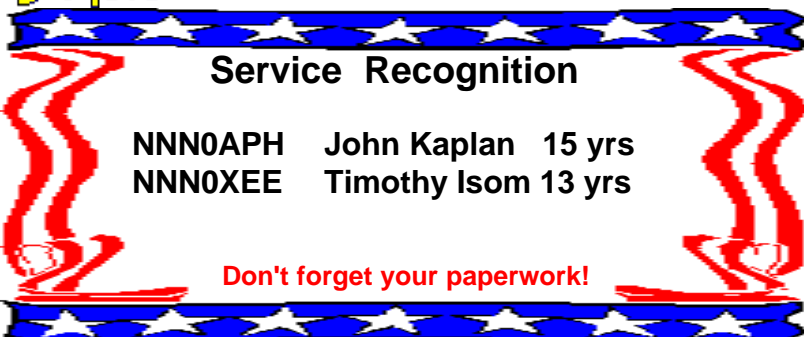
6:30PM 4007 kHz USB

Day	NECOS	Tfc Rep
Sun.	XYA	XEE
Mon.	KZC	KZC
Tue.	XEE	XEE
Wed.	BQH	BQH
Thu.	SXU	SXU
Fri.	ACY	OCF

Sat. Rotating Duty (see right)
 Don't be bashful, if the net has not been called by the net control station within 2 minutes, jump in and start things rolling.



NNN0OCF Paul Leska 12/5
 NNN0OCE Joel Jensen 12/17



Service Recognition

NNN0APH John Kaplan 15 yrs
 NNN0XEE Timothy Isom 13 yrs

Don't forget your paperwork!

Saturday NECOS / TREP Schedule

	NECOS	TREP
Dec 4	XYA	XEE
Dec 11	KZC	KZC
Dec 18	XEE	XEE
Dec 25	BQH	BQH
Jan 1	SXU	SXU
Jan 8	Open	Open
Jan 15	XYA	XEE

Share the Christmas Spirit!



Digital Comms?

Chief Quartermaster Charles Baker sends signals via signal light from the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) to Quartermasters aboard the conventionally powered aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67).

The November Test Answered

Divide a sheet of paper into eight parts. Number them on one side as in the diagram. The problem is to fold the paper (along the lines) to form a packet (like a folded map) with No. 1 face-up on top, followed by the other numbers in order.

7	4	3	2
6	5	8	1

Answer: First turn the paper over so that the number 1 is face-down on the lower left. Then fold the right half of the paper onto the left half so that the back of the 6 is against the back of the 1. Then fold the lower half of the paper onto the upper half so that the front of the 6 is against the front of the 7. Now it gets tricky. Clasp the inner 6 and 7, then fold them up together so that the back of the 6 is against the back of the 5. (This actually tucks the 6 and 7 behind the 8.) Now clasp the outer 1 and 2, then fold them back together so the front of the 2 is against the front of the 3. And, finally, turn the whole thing over. The number 1 will be face-up on top, followed by the rest of the numbers in consecutive order.

Test Your Analytical Skills

Christmas Money

Courtesy of *The Electron*, Cleveland Institute of Electronics.

Went Christmas shopping to the mall. Spent 1/3 of my money on Chelsea in the first store, then 1/2 of what I had left on Haley in the second store, and finally 1/4 of what was left over in my wallet on Estelle in the third store. On passing the Salvation Army Bell-ringer I deposited \$2.00 in his kettle. In checking my wallet, I noted I had \$28.00 left. How much did I start with?

Answer in the next issue of the Minnesota MARSGRAM