

**Richmond Amateur Telecommunications Society**  
**SOLID COPY**  
**JUNE 1999**

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**JUNE MEETING:**

**CHANGE OF LOCATION**

Friday, June 18, at 8:00 PM, **Welborne United Methodist Church on Maybeury Dr at Patterson Ave.** . Maybeury Dr is 2 traffic lights west of Parharm on Patterson Ave. There will be a special talk in on the 88 repeater beginning at 7:30pm.

This month's program is a Fox Hunt. Before the hunt, we will have a brief lesson on how to hunt the fox. There will be a prize for the winner of the Fox Hunt. There will also be a great door prize this month

**PROPOSED BY-LAW AMENDMENTS**

The Board of Directors has voted to place before the membership several changes to the by-laws to be discussed at the June meeting and voted on at the July or next regular meeting. These changes eliminate any suggestion that a monthly meeting is required and modify other language relating to dues and committee reports. The specific changes will be available in typed form at the June meeting, and they involve Article II, Sec 5, Article III, Section 2, Article IV, Sec 4 and Article V.

Pursuant to Article VII the amendments require a 30 day period between discussion and voting and a two thirds vote of the members voting.

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**FROM THE PRESIDENT**

**To the membership:**

Once again it is that time of year when we need to have a nominating committee in place. The main purpose of this committee, which is made up of at least three people, is to find members who wish to run for positions that are soon to be vacant. As usual, we cannot find just three

people to take on this minor task. This leads me to believe that we will have an even harder time finding people to fill the positions that are about to become vacant.

As many of you know, this is the first time I have been President of the RATS. I will say that I have no regrets about running for the position, or about how I handled the position. The position of President, as well as other positions in this club, do require some time from the individual. However, I can assure you that the job is easier with the backing of the membership. All I can say to you is try; don't let there be just one thing you do for this club. As there were people to help me with getting aquatinted with the position of President, I too will be there to help the next one, as I am sure others will help with the other positions. Remember, if there is something you want out of this club, then you need to come forward and be willing to work to get it.

Thank you,

Seth Rosenthal, KF4DJX, President

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## VE EXAMS

**Saturday, June 12, 1999 9:00 AM**

**Saturday, August 14, 1999 9:00 AM**, at J. S. Reynolds Community College, 1651 East Parham Road, Building B, Room 201. Pre-register with PAT WILSON, K4OW at 932-9424 or email at [w4pw@arrl.net](mailto:w4pw@arrl.net) . Pat's web page is <http://www.mcws.net/pat>

**Monday, August 2, 1999. 7:30 PM** Aunt Sarah's, I-95 & Willis Road Exit Pre-register with TONY AMATO, KR4UQ, at 717-5237. Tony's web page is <http://www.kr4uq.org> .

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## RULES & REGS

News from the ARRL and FCC

## STATES - WIDE RADIO

## FCC CALL SIGN

## ALERT SERVICE

Chris Davis, KB0WWP, offers a new free service via his Web site that will alert users automatically that a pending FCC Amateur Radio transaction has occurred. It's at <http://davisfamily.nu/hamcalls/mailinst.htm>. Instructions are on the page. Say you just passed your Amateur Radio examination or put in for a vanity call sign and are waiting for that brand new call sign to pop out of the hopper at the FCC. Register and you'll be alerted by e-mail when it happens. Users also can register via e-mail to be notified, so Web access is not a necessity. To register, provide the following six lines of information in the body of a message to hamcalls@davisfamily.nu: e-mail address; last name; first name; city; two-letter USPS state abbreviation, five-digit ZIP code. Davis says e-mails will be kept private, are not used for any mailings, and will be deleted after the transaction occurs or after 60 days. --Chris Davis, KB0WWP

*TNX ARRL Letter Online, June 4, 1999*

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## **W1AW CODE PRACTICE**

### **NOW ON THE WEB**

Now you can access W1AW Morse code practice via ARRLWeb using RealAudio files. Visit <http://www.arrl.org/w1aw/morse.html>. A single click on a file name starts the practice. You'll need RealAudio (available free at <http://www.real.com>) to listen to these files. The practice files come from QST, the same source used for W1AW's regular code practice transmissions. The files are updated after W1AW broadcasts them. The Standard method is used for code speeds above 18 WPM. For code speeds below 18 WPM, Farnsworth method is used. The Web Morse practice follows the same format used by W1AW code practice. --Joe Carcia, NJ1Q

*TNX ARRL Letter Online, June 4, 1999*

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## **WORLD AMATEUR RADIO CORNER**

### **GREAT BRITAIN**

#### **ANNOUNCES CHANGES**

The Radio Society of Great Britain and the Radiocommunications Agency of the United Kingdom have announced expanded privileges for Novices in the UK. In addition, a new license class is in the works offering full HF at low power with a 5 WPM Morse code test.

Starting sometime this summer, Novice licensees in the UK will be permitted up to 10 W output and access to 2 meters. Novices who have passed the 5 WPM code test also will gain more mode privileges in wider HF segments. Under the expansion, Novice Class A licensees in the UK--who have passed a 5 WPM Morse code test--will be permitted to operate CW, phone, RTTY, and data on 1950-2000 kHz; CW and data on 3550-3600 kHz; CW, phone, and RTTY on 3600-3650 kHz; CW on 10.110-10.140 MHz; CW and phone on 28225-28500 MHz; and CW, RTTY, and data on 21.050-21.149 and 28.050-28.190 MHz.

Currently, no-code Novice B licensees in the UK are restricted to 3 W output (or 5 W input) in the 6 meter and 70 cm, 23 cm, and 3 cm bands. Novice A licensees also enjoy access at the same power level to segments of the 160, 80, 30, 15, and 10 meter bands, including phone on 160 and 10 meters.

In the autumn, the UK will introduce a new class of license called "Full A/B." The written examination will be the same as for the present Class A or B license, but with a 5 WPM code test. In addition to full privileges above 30 MHz, the new license class will convey full frequency and mode privileges below 30 MHz with a maximum output power of 100 W. A new series of M5 prefix call signs will be used.

The move to a Full A/B license follows an announcement last spring that the RSGB would seek such a license as well as reconsideration of the IARU policy supporting mandatory Morse code testing for access to Amateur Radio HF bands. RSGB General Manager Peter Kirby, G0TWW--a former professional CW operator--has said that Morse requirements are hampering growth in the hobby. An RSGB survey released earlier this year indicated 70% support among UK operators for the 5 WPM license proposal, although comments raised paralleled those often heard in the US on the Morse issue. The RSGB says that if the World Radio Conference in 2002 or 2003 agrees to delete requirements to demonstrate Morse proficiency for HF access, the existing UK license structure will be replaced with an incentive-based system.

For many years Great Britain had two classes of amateur license--Class B with privileges above 30 MHz, and Class A with full privileges. The only difference was a 12 WPM Morse code requirement for the Class A ticket.

In 1991, Novice licenses with simpler examinations were introduced. With the introduction of Novice licenses, the original Class B and Class A licenses became known as Full B and Full A respectively.

*TNX ARRL Letter Online, June 4, 1999*

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## **DITS 'N DAHS**

A column about miscellaneous topics

## **MORSE CODE DEBATE**

## **HITS WALL STREET JOURNAL**

Hams checking the prestigious Wall Street Journal for the latest business news and stock quotes June 2 also found some Amateur Radio news--smack in the middle of page 1 and above the fold. A story by Staff Reporter Lee Gomes headlined "TO HAM OPERATORS, MORSE CODE TEST IS LIKE LATIN EXAM; Does It Keep the Barbarians At Bay, or Is It Fueling The Decline of a Culture?" discusses the current code versus no-code debate in Amateur Radio. "Morse Code is a dying language in the Digital Age, but it's still required reading for amateur radio buffs," Gomes' story begins. His report outlines the broad strokes of the controversy and the impending FCC streamlining that is expected to address future Morse code requirements for amateurs. It also quotes the FCC's Bill Cross, W3TN, as "the FCC's lead staff person on the question," and reports that the FCC "is contemplating relaxing the Morse Code requirement."

Gomes cites Bruce Perens, K6BP, of No Code International, who--in Gomes words--considers Morse code "an antiquated technology" and "a turnoff for young people." "Perens is in the minority," Gomes asserts. "Most licensees don't want any change in the requirement--especially since they have already passed the test themselves."

Taking the opposite viewpoint in Gomes' article is Nancy Kott, WZ8C, of FISTS, which Gomes describes as a "militant pro-Morse group." Gomes says Kott "all but accuses the no-coders of taking bribes from ham radio makers" and claims they want the code requirements dropped to attract more hams and sell more equipment.

Gomes reports that FISTS members fear a lot of bad, on-air behavior "without the screening provided by the Morse Code requirement." Perens, Gomes says, is not concerned about a "post-Morse ham world inhabited by barbarians." Perens points out for the article that applicants still will have to pass "rigorous tests" to get a ticket. Besides, Gomes quotes Perens as saying, "The riffraff have no reason to leave the Internet."

The article is silent on the issue of ITU regulations requiring a demonstration of Morse proficiency for HF operation and on the fact that a codeless class of Amateur Radio license already exists. And, at one point it refers to Morse code as "dits and duhs."

In the course of researching his article, Gomes contacted the ARRL for background information. The complete article is available via the Web for fee to registered users of the Wall Street Journal's interactive page <http://www.wsj.com>.

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## INTERNET InSITEs

Amateur Radio, Electronics, and

Technology Related Websites

[http://www.imo.net/radio/questions\\_answers.html](http://www.imo.net/radio/questions_answers.html) **Questions and Answers about Radio Meteor Observing.** Forward scatter, what transmitter/receiver, eliminating interference, how meteors reflect radio waves,...

<http://fs1.ilc.de/sites/gap/> **MeteorScatter, Make More Miles on VHF** Short- & long-term solar, geophysical, atmospheric and meteorstream events, links to websites of interest to VHF radio amateur hunting dx via Es, tropo,- aurora- & meteorscatter.

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The purpose of Solid Copy is to provide club information and amateur radio news to members of the Richmond Amateur Telecommunications Society. Information or articles for inclusion must be received no later than the first of the publication month. Submit via the Internet at [solidcopy@rats.net](mailto:solidcopy@rats.net). Opinions expressed in Solid Copy do not necessarily represent the views of the officers, directors, or members of RATS, Inc. Material in this data file may not be reproduced or distributed IN ANY FORM without express written permission from RATS. Inc.

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