

Richmond Amateur Telecommunications Society
SOLID COPY
AUGUST 1999

RADIOACTIVITY

AUGUST MEETING

Friday, August 20, at 8:00 p.m., Welborne United Methodist Church, Maybeury Drive at Patterson Avenue.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is that time of year again when we have elections. For this years elections, we need volunteers for the following positions; President, Vice President, and three Directors. We will take nominations from the floor during our August meeting, as well as nominations submitted to any of the officers of the club. If you would like to run for one of these positions and are not sure of what the responsibilities are, any of the current officers would be happy to let you know. If you have never held a position in the club, you can be sure that the current and soon to be past officers would be happy to lend some guidance. Ballot cards will go out in the mail shortly after the August meeting and will need to be returned before the September meeting where the results of the election will be announced and at the end of that meeting, the new officers will be sworn in. Remember, without you, this club cannot continue.

Thank you,

Seth Rosenthal, KF4DJX

VE EXAMS

☞ Saturday, August 14, 1999 9:00 a.m.

☞ Saturday, October 9, 1999 9:00 a.m., at J. S. Reynolds Community College, 1651 East Parham Road, Building B, Room 201. Pre-register with PAT WILSON, W4PW at 932-9424 or email at pw@i2020.net. Pat's web page is: <http://www.mcws.net/pat/hamtests.htm>.

☞ Monday, September 6, 1999 7:30 P.M., -- Location TBA

☞ Monday, October 4, 1999 at 7:30 P.M., at the C. E. Curtiss Elementary School, 3600W. Hundred Road (Route 10), Chester, VA. Pre-register with TONY AMATO, KR4UQ, at 717-5237. Tony's web page for test information is: http://www.kr4uq.org/Pages/ve_exams.htm.

Roanoke Valley Hamfest and Computer Show

August 21, 1999 - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

William Byrd High School - Washington Avenue - Vinton, Virginia

Sponsored by the Roanoke Valley Amateur Radio Club

Talk-in 146.985 (-600) W4CA Repeater

Advance \$5.00, at the door \$6.00

Free Parking

Contact for the Hamfest - Mike Marsh, mikekf4mub@aol.com or 540-389-3056

RULES & REGS

News from the ARRL and FCC

ARRL BOARD ADOPTS

NEW LEAGUE IDENTITY

The ARRL Board of Directors unanimously approved the use of a new identity for the League at their July meeting, accepting the ARRL Executive Committee recommendation to emphasize the initials "ARRL" along with the tag line "The national association for Amateur Radio." The new identity--which is not a legal name change--will appear on League publications and correspondence. The traditional--and legal--name will be retained but de-emphasized; a new ARRL letterhead design includes "American Radio Relay League" at the bottom.

The ARRL Board also approved a proposal to hold a Hiram Percy Maxim 130-year anniversary on-the-air event in September, marking the

130th anniversary of Maxim's birth, September 2, 1869. It will take place September 2-11.

In other action, the Board directed Executive Vice President David Sumner, K1ZZ, to study development and implementation of electronic QSL submittals for ARRL-sponsored awards.

It also directed Sumner to develop and implement strategies to induce developers "and others who have influence in these matters" to relax restrictive covenants pertaining to Amateur Radio and antennas "so that Amateur Radio activities might be broadly accommodated."

Additional details and complete minutes of the July Board meeting will appear in the September issue of QST.

TNX ARRL Letter Online, July 23, 1999

ULS HAM RADIO PHASE-IN

PERIOD BEGINS AUGUST 8

The FCC begins phasing in the Universal Licensing System for the Amateur Service August 8 at 4 PM Eastern Time. That's when the FCC stops accepting new or upgraded licensee data from VECs under the current amateur licensing system. A "universal" Form 605--primarily designed for electronic use but also available on paper--will take the place of the familiar FCC Form 610 series

Starting August 16, hams registered in the ULS may file the new FCC Form 605 electronically at any time of day, seven days a week, for license renewals, modifications, vanity call application, cancellations, application withdrawals and amendments, requests for duplicate licenses and administrative updates (i.e., a change of address or other clerical license modification). Applications for new or upgraded licenses will continue to be filed through a VEC.

Automated processing of electronically filed applications will occur nightly each business day, but five days a week instead of seven. The FCC has warned that applicants should anticipate processing delays during the first couple of weeks the ULS is in effect.

Among the advantages of the ULS, the FCC says, are fast and easy electronic filing, improved data accuracy through automated checking of applications, and better electronic access to licensing information. One feature of the new ULS is a renewal reminder sent 90 days prior to a license's expiration date. ULS also will simplify the process of submitting fees to the FCC, and the FCC said it anticipates that the ULS will be capable of accepting credit card payments on-line in the near future.

Registration in the ULS is required. Applicants should use FCC Form 606 for both electronic or manual filing. To register online, visit <http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/uls/> and click on "TIN/Call Sign Registration." A paper FCC Form 606 is available at <http://www.fcc.gov/>

[formpage.html](#) or from the FCC's Forms Distribution Center, 800-418-3676.

The FCC will not process future license grants, upgrades, modifications or renewals for any applicant not registered in the ULS. Individuals eligible to hold a Social Security

Number must provide this number to the FCC in order to be registered in the ULS.

A copy of the July 23, 1999 Public Notice is available at <http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/uls>. Additional information on ULS will appear in the Washington Mailbox column in the September issue of QST.

TNX ARRL Letter Online, July 30, 1999

NEW, IMPROVED FCC WEBSITE

The FCC's Web site has a completely new look to go along with its move to The Portals. The new site, still at <http://www.fcc.gov>, features an image of the FCC's new home and logo and contains more graphics. Current news "headlines" are in a highlighted box that runs down the middle of the home page, while the left-hand part of the screen is devoted mainly to comments (a video clip also is available) by FCC Chairman William Kennard. The right-hand side of the screen focuses on "major initiatives," such as the V-chip, area codes, "parents, kids, and communications," and other hot topics. Clicking on the associated image or headline takes you to a page on the subject. Unchanged (so far at least) is the FCC's Amateur Radio page at <http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/amateur/>. Comments and suggestions on the updated site go to Sheryl Segal, ssegal@fcc.gov.

TNX ARRL Letter Online, July 16, 1999

ANYBODY HOME?

The FCC wants to know who was the control operator and where he or she was when it visited a station K1MAN, in Belgrade Lakes, Maine, in mid-May and failed to find anyone on the site. Attempts by FCC engineers from the Boston office to visit K1MAN, then transmitting on 3.975 MHz. on May 14 were unsuccessful. FCC personnel say they were unable to find anyone--either at the station or at the nearby residence--and, "there were no vehicles on the premises." Ditto the next day.

In addition to the name, address, and phone number of the control operator on those two occasions, the FCC also wants to find out where the control operator was, and at what times and on what frequencies K1MAN transmitted on May 14 and 15, 1999.

Hollingsworth also asked for lists of all control operators of K1MAN during the hours of operation listed on the owner's Web site · details and a copy of the control circuit if any portion of K1MAN transmissions are automated.

the programming schedule for K1MAN for the period of January 1, 1998 through June 1, 1999, and dates, times and frequencies, as well as the name, address, and telephone number of the control operator for each of those transmissions.

- if automated tape control devices were utilized from January 1, 1998 to June 1, 1999, and, if so, on what dates, times, and frequencies.
- all dates, times and frequencies that K1MAN has transmitted without a control operator being present since the inception of the license term on October 17, 1995.
- if K1MAN has been controlled remotely since the inception of the license term on October 17, 1995, and, if so, dates, times, frequencies. Hollingsworth's letter also requested a "detailed schematic of the control circuit configuration."

The FCC letter gave 30 days to provide the requested information.

TNX ARRL Letter Online, July 16, 1999

OPERATING ILLEGALLY? FINE!

The FCC has levied a \$20,000 fine on a Florida man for violations stemming from alleged unlicensed operation on Amateur Radio frequencies. The FCC's Tampa Field Office has sent a Notice of Apparent Liability to a resident of Jupiter, Florida, accusing him of willful operation of an unlicensed radio station on 28.375 MHz, willful and malicious interference with ongoing Amateur Radio communications, and failing to let FCC representatives inspect his radio equipment. All of the alleged violations are said to have occurred June 8, 1999.

For nearly two years the FCC's Compliance and Information Bureau has been investigating complaints from hams in the Jupiter area. Hams identified a CB operator known as "Rabbit Ears" as the source of intentional interference to ham communication on 10 meters as well as on a 2-meter repeater. Local hams also provided audio tapes and the results of close-in monitoring and direction finding. The month following receipt of an FCC warning, the CBer denied allegations in the warning letter. Hams in the Jupiter area said the intentional QRMing ceased for a while.

When renewed complaints from hams arose this spring, an FCC agent traveled to Jupiter to investigate. Use of direction-finding techniques determined that intentional interference was occurring from the CBer's residence.

The FCC says the agent monitored and heard taped portions of a 2-meter ham radio net earlier that day being replayed on top of amateur communications on 10 meters " in an attempt to intentionally disrupt and interfere with those communications."

TNX ARRL Letter Online, July 16, 1999

WORLD AMATEUR RADIO CORNER

German Radio Amateur

Sparks Italian Sea Rescue

FRANKFURT, July 27 - An amateur radio operator scanning the airwaves from his home in Germany launched a sea rescue off Sicily when he picked up a distress signal by chance on Tuesday, police said.

The man heard a shortwave signal from a yacht with engine failure drifting close to a rocky coastline just after midnight. He contacted the local police in his home town of Esslingen near Stuttgart who notified the German Interior Ministry.

The message was quickly relayed to Italian authorities and some 25 minutes after the signal was picked up, coast guard boats sighted the yacht and rescued the crew.

The "Nostalgia" had suffered engine failure and lost its aerial in a storm several days before, but a crew member managed to send distress signals via a small shortwave transmitter.

Police said they did not know how many people had been on the yacht.

Reprinted with permission from Reuters News

Submitted by Seth L Rosenthal, KF4DJX

AMATEUR RADIO ON SHUTTLE COLUMBIA A SUCCESS

Shuttle Columbia mission STS-93 was an Amateur Radio success story. During the short mission, crew members completed Space Amateur Radio EXperiment contacts with five schools plus a contact with the cosmonauts aboard the Mir space station.

Launched July 23, STS-93 marked the 25th time the SAREX payload has flown on a shuttle mission. It also likely will be the last SAREX shuttle mission as future ham radio efforts in space will focus on the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station--or ARISS--project.

Lucky students at schools in Virginia, California, Texas and Florida had officially-scheduled QSOs with the astronauts. All contacts eventually were successful, but not without a few glitches. The ham gear was deployed early in the mission, and during a pass over Houston, the SAREX Team--using the Johnson Space Center Amateur Radio Club's call sign, W5RRR--attempted a test pass that failed. Throughout the mission, John Nickel, WD5EEV; Karen Nickel, WD5EEU; and Gil Carman, WA5NOM, led the SAREX volunteers at the Johnson Space Center.

After troubleshooting during several Houston passes with STS-93 Commander Eileen Collins,

KD5EDS, an orbiter power receptacle was found to be faulty. Meanwhile, the first scheduled school QSO with Buzz Aldrin Elementary School in Reston, Virginia, had audio on only one end of the contact, so the SAREX Team negotiated a new time slot for the school sked.

The next scheduled school QSO, with Harbor View Elementary in Corona Del Mar, California, was much more successful. Eight students interviewed the astronauts. When asked about the food aboard the shuttle, Collins replied, "The food is quite good--really! Today I had rice and there are plenty of food items to choose from, including snacks."

Yet another problem: Just before the Osceola (Florida) Elementary School's QSO, SAREX relay station operator Gordon Williams, VK6IU, in Australia, discovered "unbelievably, some Australia birds had pecked through Gordon's coax!" John Nickel related after speaking with Williams via telephone. VK6IU wound up climbing his tower in the rain early Monday, changing out the cable just in time to handle the SAREX relay.

On Monday evening, the Buzz Aldrin and Awty schools were rewarded for their patience with completed QSOs, delighting the students.

Amateur Radio garnered some good PR as the Los Angeles Times ran an article about the Harbor View Elementary School contact.

The Columbia-Mir QSO also was a huge success and in three languages--English, Russian and French, as parties on both sides enjoyed their time on the air. "You could hear it in their voices-- they were smiling ear-to-ear," John Nickel said.

AMSAT's Pat Kilroy, WD8LAQ, reported that the Columbia-Mir QSO was "tricky" to complete, because of the timing. "Both crews had to be awake, and Mir had to pass over the horizon in Houston, where SAREX team member Brian Zemba, N1WSO, was waiting at Johnson Space Center Amateur Radio Club's station, W5RRR," he said. "Shuttle Columbia was almost half a world away."

To listen to the exchange, click on NASA's .wav file at <http://shuttle.nasa.gov/gallery/audio/>

shuttle/sts-93/wave/congrats.wav.

TNX ARRL Letter Online, July 30, 1999

2 METER QSOs ACROSS THE POND?

An effort to make the first transatlantic QSO on 2 meters has come up dry. The attempt by teams in Newfoundland and Scotland to confirm a transatlantic contact on 144 MHz and secure the Irish Radio Transmitters Society's Brendan

Trophies ended a day early on July 3. The attempts began June 26.

"We operated until Saturday July 3 as the UK team wanted to get their gear down as bad weather was setting in," said Paul Piercey, VO1HE, leader of the Newfoundland team. "There was nothing heard, but a couple reports of others listening were received." Piercey's group operated from St. John's, Newfoundland, using the call sign VO1AA. The station was set up in Cabot Tower, where Marconi received the first transatlantic signal in 1901.

The Scottish group, led by Bill Ward, GMOICF, operated from Ardnamurchan Lighthouse on Ardnamurchan Point--the most westerly point in the mainland British Isles. The group used the call sign 2SOICF/P.

The IRTS's Brendan Trophies will be awarded to the first two stations to make a verified contact across the Atlantic Ocean using 144-146 MHz without aid of manmade reflectors, repeaters or moonbounce.

TNX ARRL Letter Online, July 9, 1999

STATES-WIDE-RADIO

BILL SEEKS LOCAL AUTHORITY

AGAINST ILLEGAL CB OPERATION

Legislation to permit local authorities to crack down on illegally amplified CB transmitters is poised for reintroduction in the 106th Congress. According to an early draft of the bill being worked on by Rep Vernon Ehlers of Michigan, the new legislation would permit state or local governments to pass and enforce laws prohibiting unauthorized Citizen Band radio equipment. Direct enforcement of telecommunication matters is usually considered a federal responsibility, and state and local authorities ordinarily don't step in except in particularly serious cases such as interference with aircraft or police and fire communication.

As outlined in Part 95 of Title 47 of the Federal Regulations, illegal equipment would include CB gear that isn't type accepted, that has been internally modified, exceeds transmitter power output limits, or that is equipped with an external power amplifier.

Ehlers says that he became interested in the issue when a group of amateurs in his district complained to him about CB enthusiasts using transmitters equipped with high-power linear amplifiers. The illegally amplified CB radio signals were interfering with legitimate ham radio gear, as well as with televisions, telephones and other consumer electronics. Ehlers' district is in the Grand Rapids area.

The bill is patterned after S. 608 introduced last session of Congress by Wisconsin Sen. Russell Feingold and substantially modified at the ARRL's request to protect law-abiding

Amateur Radio operators. The Feingold bill had been introduced at the request of municipal Wisconsin, who had been unable to stop illegal CBers driving Beloit residents crazy with RFI.

The new Ehlers bill contains provisions specifying that possession of an FCC license in any service--including the Amateur Service--would preclude action by the state or local government. ARRL originally requested that section be added to the Feingold bill so that hams would not be inadvertently targeted by local authorities lacking the technical expertise to differentiate between amateur and CB gear. ARRL also requested that the bill require the FCC to provide technical guidance to states and municipalities and that it outlines an appeals mechanism for individuals affected by such laws. The ARRL changes were included in a draft of the Ehlers legislation League officials reviewed. --Steve Mansfield, N1MZA

TNX ARRL Letter Online, July 9, 1999

DEMAND EXCEEDS SUPPLY

FOR FIELD DAY PINS

The ARRL Field Day 1999 pins have proven to be so successful that the initial supplies were depleted. The original order of 1000 vanished from ARRL's stockroom before Field Day, and another 500 were snapped right up shortly after. Those who have ordered but not yet received one of the attractive FD pins may have a slight wait. The League continues to take orders and will reorder pins after the Field Day log submittal deadline passes on July 27. The pins are \$5.

TNX ARRL Letter Online, July 23, 1999

DITS 'N DAHS

A column about miscellaneous topics

CQ EDITOR ALAN M. DORHOFFER, K2EEK, SK

CQ Editor Alan M. Dorhoffer, K2EEK, died July 19 at age 61 from complications of cancer surgery. Dorhoffer served as editor of CQ for nearly a quarter-century, his entire professional life. He started as an assistant editor in 1964 and became the magazine's tenth editor in 1976. He'd been a co-owner of the magazine since 1979.

A ham since his teenage years, Dorhoffer, who lived in Port Washington, New York, concentrated his activity on his favorite band, 10 meters. At CQ, he tried to focus on the "people" aspects of Amateur Radio. "Ham radio is people

interacting with other people," he wrote in the magazine's 50th anniversary issue, and on the things people do with Amateur Radio. "The act of doing, whether it's contests or awards, that's been my outlook."

Dorhoffer's illness was diagnosed only a week or so before he succumbed to it. He was not married at the time of his death and had no children; but he is survived by an "extended family" of more than a million close friends--the world's Amateur Radio community.

Services and committal were July 22. Sumner, ARRL First Vice President Steve Mendelsohn, W2ML, and ARRL Publications Manager and QST Editor Mark Wilson, K1RO, were among those attending.

Thanks to CQ Communications

TNX ARRL Letter Online, July 23, 1999

TEMPORARY DUTY FOR HOLLINGSWORTH

The FCC's Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, has been temporarily assigned to manage the FCC's National Call Center, 888-CALL FCC (225-5322) at the Commission's Gettysburg office. The assignment will continue until October 1 while NCC Director Cynthia Jeffries is detailed to other FCC duties involving the Y2K issue. Hollingsworth says his Amateur Radio enforcement duties will continue and will "in no way" be affected by his additional temporary Call Center responsibilities.

TNX ARRL Letter Online, July 23, 1999

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