

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

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Friday, September 17, at 8:00 PM, Welborne United Methodist Church, Maybeury Drive at Patterson Avenue.

New club officers will be installed. Be sure to bring your ballots with you if you did not mail them.

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**VE EXAMS**

Monday, October 4, 1999 at 7:30 PM 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](http://www.kr4uq.org/Pages/ve_exams.htm) .

Saturday, October 9, 1999 9:00 PM 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 [w4pw@arrl.net](mailto:w4pw@arrl.net) . Pat's web page is: <http://www.mcws.net/pat/hamtests.htm> .

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**VIRGINIA BEACH HAMFEST & COMPUTER SHOW**

September 18 & 19, Saturday 9 am - 5 PM & Sunday 9 AM - 4 PM at the Virginia Beach Pavilion. Tickets are good for both days-- \$5.00 in advance & \$6.00 at the door For information call 757-426-3378 or visit [www.vahamfest.com](http://www.vahamfest.com)

- Amateur Radio & Computer Forums both days
- FCC Enforcement Chief Hollingsworth
- ARRL VE Exams Sat. from 3 to 5 --

pre-registration required

Call Ed 757-898-8031 or

Email kf4ow@juno.com

· Outdoor Flea Market

· Door Prize

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### IT'S BACK TO SCHOOL TIME

YOU are invited to enroll in a 10-week course of study for the NOVICE license. Also, TECHNICIAN and GENERAL CLASS license preparation may be offered. Registration Fee: \$10.00. Textbook: NOW YOU'RE TALKING (Note: Books may be available at orientation)

- ✂ Registration/Orientation: September 9, 1999
- ✂ Schedule: Tuesdays & Thursdays 7 PM-9 PM
- ✂ Place: Richmond Community High School  
(Formerly Westhampton School)
- ✂ Location: 5800 Patterson Avenue (at Libbie)
- ✂ For more information, call:
- ✂ Mike Ratcliff KC4AHE, 272-7167
- ✂ Ray Roberts W4MYI, 740-5850

Sponsored by the RICHMOND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Club Meetings 8 PM Second Fridays, Bon Air United Methodist Church, 1645 Buford Road. Visitors Welcome

TNX Guy, K4CNF for the information

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### PROPOSED BY-LAW AMENDMENTS

The Board of Directors proposes several amendments to the by-laws as follows:

**Article II, Sec. 5, Dues:**

- ✍ Amend the second sentence by deleting "equal to one-half the annual rate" and inserting "lower" before "rate" at the end of the sentence.

**Article II, Sec. 2, Regular Meetings:**

- ✍ Delete the word "monthly" preceding "meetings" in the sentence.

**Article IV. Sec. 4, Procedure for Election:**

- ✍ Paragraph 1) Change the last two sentences by deleting "the" preceding "July" and deleting "edition of the newsletter" in both sentences.
- ✍ Paragraph 3) August: Delete "monthly" preceding "meeting"
- ✍ September: Delete "September" and "regular monthly" and insert "the next membership" preceding "meeting".
- ✍ Article V-Standing Committees: Delete first sentence relating to written biannual and annual reports of committees.

The Board believes that these changes will provide additional flexibility to the meeting procedure and eliminate unnecessary requirements pertaining to dues and committees. It recommends *approval* of these changes by the membership. Pursuant to Article VII, a two-thirds ballot vote is required.

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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

To the Membership,

I would like to take the time to thank the membership for its support during my term as club president. The last two years have given me very good insight as to what it takes for this club to exist. I have to say that at times there was more than I could handle, but there were plenty of people willing to help me.

There was one person who was asked to do more than he was responsible for, and when asked, that person did what was asked and did not complain-- from the very first meeting, when I asked him to run the meeting so I could learn what was needed, to filling in for me when I could not attend. The person I am talking about is Dan Anderson, WU4U. It is with my deepest appreciation that I thank Dan for the hard

work he has done.

I would also like to thank the other officers and directors for their patience and understanding. And lastly, I would like to thank the membership for supporting me as club president, one who has never held a position in this club before.

At the time of this letter, there was no candidate for club president, and I am unable to continue in this position. My reasons for not running for president again are personal, but I assure you, they are not because of the presidential requirements. While I would have liked to work my way up to president, I can assure you, that in a few years, you will see me run for an office in this club. Until then, I will continue to participate and do what I can to help the club along. I am proud to say that I am a member of the Richmond Amateur Telecommunications Society, and hope to see this club prosper.

Once again, thank you all. 73's.

Seth Rosenthal, KF4DJX, President

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### **IT'S ELECTION TIME**

RATS officers and directors are elected for two-year terms, with half of the positions elected each year. This year we elect the president, vice president and two directors.

Please mark and mail your ballot as soon as possible, or bring it with you to the September meeting.

Newly-elected officers and directors will be installed at the September meeting.

We appreciate all of the candidates who agreed to run for office. Please support all of your officers by volunteering, or saying "yes" if asked to help. If we all share the work, no one individual will be over-burdened.

### **KF4ONR BIOGRAPHY**

#### **CANDIDATE FOR VICE PRESIDENT**

I am J. T. Flannery, KF4ONR, and I have volunteered to run for the vice-president's position. I have been a member of RATS for two years. I joined the club soon after I received my amateur ticket as a no-code Tech. I still hold that same grade ticket. Except when my work schedule did not permit, I have attended monthly meetings, and have taken part in the Christmas party, the spring party this year, and participated in the FrostFest activities for the past two years. I am a paid up member in (as far as I know) good standing with the club. RATS is the only

amateur club I am a member in, and I would like to see it blossom as the "best" amateur club in the area. I believe our club has a lot of good resources and possibilities, and I would like to be a part of that. I have no experience in club business meetings, but have sat on church board meetings, and am familiar with the proper business etiquette for such meetings. If elected, I will welcome e-mail from club members as to their concerns and questions about club activities-- E-mail me at therflan@aol.com or through the rats.net address.

Elections are being held in September's meeting. Come out and vote for your candidates. When you get your ballot, take time to fill it out and bring it (or mail it in) to the meeting...whichever, but take time to vote carefully. And then make a resolution to yourself to support them while in office. The club is not made up of four or five, but all the members need to be active at some point throughout the year. A surviving club takes woman/man power, not sitting on the couch.

Let's all come together and do our part in this critical time of electing people for two-year terms.

Submitted by J. T., KF4ONR

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## **RULES & REGS**

### **News from the ARRL and FCC**

The ARRL Board also discussed the recent Petition for Rulemaking filed by the Central States VHF Society and plans to file timely comments on the proposal. The petition would amend FCC rules to formally segregate wideband and narrowband modes on VHF and UHF bands to eliminate interference from FM and packet in the so-called weak-signal portions of 6 and 2 meters and 70 cm. The FCC has assigned RM-9673 to the SCVHFS petition. Comments are due by July 28.

The League's comments will support the intent of the petition, but the Board unanimously agreed that the petition, as submitted, "does not sufficiently establish a basis for the regulatory relief requested." As an alternative to the CSVHFS petition, the League will suggest doing a better job of educating the amateur community about ARRL band plans. The League also plans to again try to get the FCC to acknowledge that VHF and UHF operation in accordance with ARRL band plans is "good amateur practice" and will seek supporting compliance efforts by the FCC.

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, August 13, 1999

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## **ULS FOR HAMS BEGINS**

The FCC's Universal Licensing System for amateurs is now in effect, although with some confusion and frustration. On the first day, August 16, no one could access the system; there have been a few brief downtimes since. Some hams reported slow response times accessing the ULS to register or search existing databases, and some were confused by the complexity of the dial-up connection required.

ULS registration is a must before filing an application, renewing or modifying a license or applying for a vanity call. Applications filed through a VEC automatically register the applicant in ULS, as do paper applications mailed to FCC that include the applicant's SSN. Applications filed on-line by anyone not registered in the ULS will be dismissed.

Registration requires first providing your Social Security Number or other Taxpayer Identification Number, then entering your call sign. Applicants also must select a password to identify themselves in future, private transactions with the FCC database. A valid password can be from 5 to 30 alphanumeric characters and is case-sensitive. For additional security, applicants also specify a personal identifier. The FCC and ARRL recommend that applicants not use their Amateur Radio call signs as passwords or identifiers.

Registrants receive a nine-character Licensee Identification Number. Amateurs may use this number in place of a SSN in future dealings with the FCC. Those filing a paper ULS Form 606 by mail will not receive an acknowledgment from the FCC. Paper filers can obtain their FCC-generated Licensee ID Number from ULS Technical Support at 202-414-1250.

To register electronically, visit <http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/uls/> and click on "TIN/Call Sign Registration." A paper Form 606 (TIN Registration Form) that can be mailed to the FCC is available from the FCC's Forms Distribution Center, 800-418-FORM(3676) or at <http://www.fcc.gov/formpage.html>. Paper forms may be faxed (717-338-2693) or mailed to the FCC, 1270 Fairfield Rd, Gettysburg, PA 17325-7245.

While amateurs can use a Web network connection to register or to search the ULS for individual call signs or application status, applicants must use a toll-free telephone connection to the FCC's Wide Area Network in order to actually file an application on the new ULS Form 605. Complete connection instructions are on the FCC's ULS home page, <http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/uls>, under "Connecting to ULS." Connecting to the ULS requires Netscape 4.5 or higher.

The ULS phase-in created a backlog of new amateur applications, resulting in a wait of perhaps several days before new call signs are issued by the FCC. Also, the FCC processed no vanity call applications. (A reminder: The fee to apply for an Amateur Radio vanity call sign increases from \$13 to \$14 effective Tuesday, September 14, 1999.)

The FCC says that anyone who fails to register in the ULS will be unable to receive services from the FCC. This means the FCC will not process future license grants, upgrades, modifications or renewals for any applicant not registered in the ULS. The FCC recommends that all amateurs register now, even if they have no immediate need to transact business with the FCC.

Amateurs having ULS problems or questions should contact the FCC's ULS Technical Support staff at 202-414-1250.

Among other things, the ULS features a renewal reminder sent 90 days prior to a license's expiration date. The ULS also simplifies the process of submitting fees to the FCC. The FCC said it also anticipates that the ULS will be capable of accepting credit card payments on-line "in the near future."

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, August 13 & 20, 1999

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## **WORLD AMATEUR RADIO CORNER**

### **ECLIPSE PROVIDES RARE DX TREAT**

The near total eclipse on August 11, the last total solar eclipse of the 20th century, opened the 160-meter band to summertime daylight DX for a few hours. The trajectory of the moon's shadow carried it across Central Europe, Turkey, the Middle East, Pakistan and India. Scientists had theorized that the absence of sunlight in the ionosphere could affect D-layer propagation. NASA had called on hams and SWLs to monitor shortwave signals from Europe before, during, and after the eclipse and report their findings.

Luis Mansutti, IV3PRK, has logbook evidence that enhanced D-layer propagation did in fact take place.

"It has been a great experience, enjoying such beautiful conditions at noon in the month of August on 160 meters!" he said in a posting to the Topband and Low Band Monitor reflectors. Mansutti--a DXCC Honor Roll member who now DXes exclusively on 160--reports that the eclipse began at his QTH in JN66ne at 0918 UTC, reached a maximum of 96% of totality at 1042 UTC, and was all over at 1206 UTC.

Mansutti started hearing signals from the path of totality as the eclipse began. After working a German station, he called CQ and worked more than two dozen stations in 13 countries between 1020 and 1130 UTC, including the UK, France, Sweden, Romania, and Turkey. QSO times roughly tracked the path of the eclipse. His best contact was with a GM station, some 1740 km away.

For the record, IV3PRK typically runs 600 W to a shunt-fed 29-meter tower that's top-loaded with beams. He receives on a four-square phased mini-array.

NASA reports that a special broadcast of the BBC World Service on 7.325 MHz was beamed

toward the US on August 10 and 11 to test shortwave radio propagation conditions during the eclipse. An eclipse-related anomaly in the radio broadcast appears to have been detected on August 11. On August 10, the day before the eclipse, the BBC signal from Rampisham, England, was undetectable from the Marshall Space Flight Center in Alabama due to D-layer absorption over England and the Atlantic. On August 11--the day of the eclipse--the radio signal came in clearly as the moon's shadow crossed the Atlantic.

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, August 20, 1999

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### **SALVATION ARMY HELPS WITH COMMUNICATIONS FROM TURKEY**

The Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network--SATERN--is running a health-and-welfare traffic operation as a result of requests from individuals in the US seeking information on friends and relatives in earthquake-stricken Turkey. The earthquake, described as one of the most powerful this century, left upwards of 10,000 people dead, injured many thousands more, and has disrupted normal telecommunication systems. The quake measured 7.4 on the Richter scale.

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, August 20, 1999

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### **STATES-WIDE-RADIO**

#### **ARIZONA TAX CREDIT BENEFITS SCHOOL HAM CLUBS**

Residents of Arizona can contribute up to \$200 toward extracurricular activities at public schools and deduct the entire amount as a tax credit. This means that if an Arizona taxpayer contributes \$50 to the Amateur Radio club at the local public school, the taxpayer can--within the provisions of the state law--deduct the same amount from his or her total Arizona state tax liability.

Under the Arizona law, enacted in 1997, taxpayers there may claim the \$200 tax credit, in lieu of a deduction, for any fees paid by a taxpayer to a public school for school-sponsored extracurricular activities that require enrolled students to pay a fee in order to participate.

The tax law provision offers new life for activities such as Amateur Radio clubs, providing funds for equipment for a school station, materials for antennas, license study manuals, and similar expenses. Contributions to Arizona schools that meet the law's requirements can be directed specifically to school Amateur Radio clubs and taxpayers will receive a receipt for tax purposes.

The Green Valley Amateur Radio Club sent letters out to 80 club members and the result was \$1900 in contributions to a local elementary school radio club. The contributions surprised school officials who had not solicited them, and were the most collected per pupil of any school in the state.

From the contributions, \$200 was spent on instructional materials, and they are planning to use the rest to purchase a HF transceiver and antenna, and next year possibly purchase VHF gear and kits for the club members to assemble.



Three students have earned their tickets, and the club is working to get others licensed.

Most states do not yet have similar legislation in place, but certain contributions of this type may be deductible as charitable contributions on your itemized federal income tax return. Check with a tax professional.

For a copy of the applicable Arizona tax-credit statutes, contact Dan Miller, K3UFG, at k3ufg@arrl.org, or call 860-594-0340.

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, August 20, 1999

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### **DITS 'N DAHS**

A column about miscellaneous topics

#### **FOR THE WOULD-BE KIT BUILDER**

In the September issue of the QST, I saw a very interesting article for the intermediate kit builder, or the new ham with intermediate kit building skills who would like to try their hand at building their very own home brew rig. I have only had a chance to glance at the article quickly, but it looks very interesting, and a lot less expensive than buying an all-mode 2M rig now. It is a low power QRP unit, but with a small 2M linear, it has possibilities of being quite effective. It is called the DSP-10, and can be found on page 33. It is a multi-part series on the kit that includes detailed instructions and all the resources you need for finding the proper parts. Check it out... QST, page 33.

Submitted by J. T. , KF4ONR

#### **CHANGES SWEEPING IN TO NOVEMBER SWEEPSTAKES**

Starting this year, the ARRL November Sweepstakes exchange will become a bit more challenging with the addition of three new precedence letters to the list. The change means SS ops will have to be sharper than ever--especially on CW--to make sure they copy the entire exchange correctly. All other elements of the SS exchange will remain the same.

In the past, the precedence--the second element of information stations pass to each other--has consisted of a single letter--A, B, or Q--indicating the station's power level. Starting this fall, the precedence also will indicate the station's entry category, and stations can expect to encounter three new precedence letters: U, M, and S.

Under the revised SS exchange, stations will send "Q" for single operator, QRP (5 W PEP output or less); "A" for single operator, low power (less than 150 W PEP); "B" for single operator, high power (more than 150 W PEP); "U" for single operator, unlimited; "M" for multi-

operator; and "S" for school club.

ARRL Contest Branch Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND says the single-op unlimited category lets single operators using packet compete against similar stations instead of against true multi-operator stations where they previously had been listed. There is no power differentiation in the single op, unlimited or for either of the multi-op categories. In another change, the multi-operator category will be allowed unlimited band changes, although it will remain limited to one transmitted signal at any time (i.e., single transmitter).

Henderson said all stations using computerized logging now will have to submit their electronic log files, not just a paper file. "Handwritten paper logs are still okay," he said.

The SS rules also will include some changes affecting the school club category. Only current students, faculty, and staff members of an educational institution may participate in a station entering in the school club category.

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#### **Board of Directors:**

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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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