

Richmond Amateur Telecommunications Society
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AUGUST 2000

AUGUST MEETING

Friday, August 18, at 8:00 PM at the new location on Atlee Road. The building is just north of Old (or Business) Mechanicsville Pike. There is a RATS sign at the entrance to the parking lot, courtesy of Jay, N9WMU.

Ballots should be returned by mail before the August meeting, or brought to the August 18 meeting.

VE EXAMS

Saturday, October 14, 2000 9:00 AM at J. S. Reynolds Community College, 1651 East Parham Road, Building B, Room 201. Pre-registration required with Pat Wilson, W4PW at 932-9424 or email at w4pw@arrl.net . Pat's web page is: <http://www.w4pw.org>

MESSAGE FROM PAT

Hope this issue of the newsletter finds everyone doing well after all these hot days.

Just wanted to let people know that my website has changed and I now have a registered domain name and new location. The new site is <http://www.w4pw.org> and I have redesigned the website completely. Take a gander and see the field day page and the pictures. I had another entire disk of pictures, but evidently it was lost somewhere in Amelia.

I am also taking electronic registrations on the site and that should ensure that folks wanting to take a test get to take what they want.

Hope you will take a look around and see what's out there.

Remember to vote. It's election time again and the count will be done this meeting.

73, Pat, W4PW (former K4OW)

RULES & REGS**News from the ARRL and FCC****NOTES FROM THE ARRL BOARD**

QST, the most visible feature of ARRL membership, will now be more colorful with a unanimously approved resolution from the Board of Directors. "Color communicates better than monochrome," said ARRL Publications Manager Mark Wilson, K1RO, adding that the additional cost would work out to "pennies per issue."

President Jim Haynie's "Big Project" got a stamp of approval from the Board. This is the ambitious undertaking to implement an Amateur Radio curriculum in American classrooms. Given the title "The ARRL Amateur Radio Education Project", the project will offer a curriculum and equipment that schools can incorporate into existing curricula. Funding will come from corporate and foundation donations.

The Board also gave approval to spending up to \$1,025,000 to develop a new information technology platform for ARRL Headquarters. This new software and hardware will help with updating membership information and accounting and enhance the ARRL's e-commerce capabilities. It will eventually enable electronic QSLing, near real-time updates of DXCC listings, and expanded, detailed contest results.

The National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators has voted to set up revised standards for the administration of Morse code examinations in the US. The move at the NCVEC's July 21 meeting in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, comes in the wake of the FCC's December 30, 1999, action to establish 5 WPM as the sole Amateur Radio Morse code requirement.

Under the revised standards, examinees would have to show 25 character-count solid copy on their test sheets or successfully answer seven out of 10 questions of a fill-in-the-blank quiz on the sent text. The plan would bar the use of multiple choice tests for Morse code testing.

Morse examinations would specify use of the Farnsworth method, where characters are sent faster than the overall speed and additional spaces added between characters, words and sentences. Farnsworth "character speed" would be in the range of 13 to 15 WPM at an audio pitch of between 700 and 1000 Hz. Standard 5-WPM tests with 5-WPM character speed could be administered only as a special accommodation.

The new Morse testing standards are to be in effect by next July 1, but VECs may implement them sooner. FCC statistics presented during the session show that Technician and Tech Plus licensees still make up nearly one half of the US amateur population, which totals 710,626--including expired licensees within the two-year grace period. As of July 18, there were 209,550 Techs and 121,175 Tech Pluses. Reflecting the shift in license class because of restructuring, Extras now number 92,165 and Generals 134,015--both up by more than 20% over year-earlier figures. There are 93,834 Advanced ops, and the Novice population remains at just fewer than 60,000.

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, July 28,2000

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