

Richmond Amateur Telecommunications Society
SOLID COPY
OCTOBER 1999

Friday, October 15, at 8:00 PM, Welborne United Methodist Church, Maybeury Drive at Patterson Avenue.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

It's time to renew your annual membership. Remember to send in your notice enclosed in this issue of Solid Copy and your check made payable to RATS. Membership expires on September 30th each year; payments not received by November 30th must be accompanied by an new membership application and processing fee.

ELECTION RESULTS

Newly elected RATS officers and directors are:

- ✂ Marie Long, KF4UUI, president
- ✂ J. T. Flannery, KF4ONR, vice president
- ✂ Andy Anderson, KB4JXS, director
- ✂ Guy Carlson, K4CNF, director

Officers and directors are elected for two-year terms, with half of the positions elected each year. All of the officers and directors appreciate your support.

The proposed amendments to the by-laws were adopted.

VE EXAMS

Monday, November 1, 1999 at 7:30 PM & Monday, December 6, 1999 at 7:30 PM at the C. E. Curtiss Elementary School, 3600 W. 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

Saturday, October 9, 1999 9:00 AM & Saturday, December 11, 1999 9:00 AM 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. Pat's test information web page is: <http://www.mcws.net/pat/hamtests.htm>.

RULES & REGS

News from the ARRL and FCC

TEN-METER ENFORCEMENT NEXT

The encroachment of unlicensed persons into the 10-meter band and a crackdown on illegal RF amplifiers will be the next area of enforcement. Loud applause followed this announcement by Riley Hollingsworth at the Shelby, North Carolina Hamfest. During a later interview, Hollingsworth elaborated on his comments. "We're coming on to ten months of rejuvenated amateur enforcement now, and two issues are clear--two areas we need to really crank up on next year," Hollingsworth said. "One is the incursion into 10 meters by unlicensed operators--CBers and so forth. The other is sales of illegal equipment on the Internet and at hamfests." Hollingsworth spotted more illegal equipment at Shelby than he had seen at Dayton this past May, he told those at Shelby. Shelby is better known for its flea market than its forums, but Hollingsworth drew a standing-room-only crowd, causing Hamfest organizers to hurriedly schedule a second forum and rearrange the room for more seating. --John Kanode, N4MM, provided some information for this report

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, September 17. 1999

SPREAD SPECTRUM RULES RELAXED

The FCC has relaxed rules governing the use of spread spectrum techniques by radio amateurs and opened the door to the possibility of international spread spectrum communication. The Report and Order in WT Docket 97-12 adopted August 31 concludes a proceeding that originated with an ARRL petition in December 1995 and has been pending since 1997. The FCC adopted rules that will allow amateur radio stations to transmit additional spread spectrum emission types. Once the new rules become effective November 1, hams will be able to use techniques other than frequency hopping and direct sequence spreading. In addition, the new FCC rules will permit US hams to use spread spectrum techniques to communicate with amateurs in other countries that permit SS. Spread spectrum communication has been limited to

stations within FCC jurisdiction. The new rules require that spread spectrum stations running more than 1 W incorporate automatic transmitter power control. Amateur stations using SS are restricted to a maximum power of 100 W. Stations employing spread spectrum techniques will remain secondary to--and must accept all interference from--stations employing other authorized modes. The FCC declined to authorize the use of spread spectrum techniques on additional bands or frequencies. A copy of the FCC's complete Report & Order is available at <http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/wt97-12> .

A reminder: The fee to apply for an Amateur Radio vanity call sign increased from \$13 to \$14 effective September 14, 1999.

FUTURE TECHNOLOGY PROPOSALS

If you have an idea or proposal for new technology moving Amateur Radio into the next century, the ARRL Technology Task Force wants to hear from you. The Task Force and companion Technology Working Group, created last January, will work together to identify, evaluate and promote the most promising 21st Century technologies for amateur radio. The Technology Working Group will evaluate technical proposals and make recommendations to the Technology Task Force, which, in turn, will make specific policy proposals to the ARRL Board of Directors. Information and concepts which could improve amateur radio and to promote what the FCC calls "continuation and extension of the amateur's proven ability to contribute to the advancement of the radio art" will be useful in formulating League policy recommendations. Amateurs are invited to complete the form on ARRLWeb at <http://www.arrl.org/news/ttf/> , send e-mail to the Task Force at ttfinput@arrl.org, or offer your ideas by mail to the ARRL Technology Task Force, c/o Ed Hare, W1RFI, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111. Suggestions are requested by November 30, 1999.

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, September 10. 1999

WORLD AMATEUR RADIO CORNER

WORLD AMATEUR RADIO DAY

Celebrating Success in Amateur Digital Communication was the focus of this year's World Amateur Radio Day observance on Saturday, September 18 by the International Amateur Radio Union. The IARU is a worldwide federation of national Amateur Radio organizations representing radio amateurs in 150 countries, and is a Sector Member of the International Telecommunication Union. Radio amateurs began experimenting with packet radio more than 20 years ago. A number of different ways of sending digital data by radio were tried before a protocol known as AX.25 was devised. By the mid-1980s, long before its popularization in commercial and government services, packet radio had become a mainstay of amateur radio communication. Transmitting digital data reliably on HF is a more recent development by amateurs. Because HF communication depends on the ionosphere, which is constantly changing, sending error-free digital signals presents a significant engineering challenge. Digital modes developed by amateurs, including PACTOR, CLOVER, G-TOR, PACTOR II, and PSK31, are recognized as having contributed enormously to HF communication. Radio amateurs commonly use what they have learned through their avocation in contributing to other telecommunications services. The broadcasting, mobile, and satellite services, to name but a few, would be far less advanced were it not for the skills of radio amateurs who happen also to be radio professionals.

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, September 17. 1999

STATES-WIDE-RADIO

Amateur radio response during Hurricane Floyd could be one for the record books. According to North Carolina Section Manager Reed Whitten, AB4W, this was the largest operation for the past several years and possibly ever. It was also the smoothest in terms of amateur mobilization and organization. At one point, over 300 hams were participating. Hams lent their technical expertise as well as their usual help with communications. Amateurs were instrumental in setting up a non amateur UHF repeater system for the Red Cross. "Without Amateur Radio assistance," he said, "this system would not be in place." Whitten credited North Carolina ARRL Technical Coordinator Danny Hampton, K4ITL, with helping to secure a repeater, a site, and installation services, as well as checking out available frequencies. The equipment was installed September 24 near Raleigh at no cost to the Red Cross. As part of the repeater effort, Sammy Simmons, KD4MJO, traveled 50 miles to Emporia, Virginia, to give a Red Cross radio technician the software necessary to program the Red Cross mobile radios. "This system is providing mobile coverage into Raleigh, Goldsboro, Kinston, Greenville and Tarboro, North Carolina," Whitten said. "I think this is an excellent example of ARES operating in an appropriate role as communications consultants."

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, October 1. 1999

DITS 'N DAHS

A column about miscellaneous topics

ARRL HANDBOOK COLLECTOR'S EDITION for 2000

The ARRL Board of Directors has commissioned a limited-run collector's edition of the 2000 ARRL Handbook for Radio Amateurs. This is a casebound (hardcover) edition with leather on the outside and gold-foil lettering. Those ordering by October 31--the deadline for holiday orders--can have their copies personalized with name and call sign, also in gold foil lettering, on the cover. Orders received by October 31 should be delivered in early December. The text of the book is exactly the same as the regular edition. No more than 2000 will be made. Each book will be sequentially issued and numbered. The ARRL Handbook 2000--Collector's Edition is \$75 (plus shipping and handling). Order item 1859. Call toll-free 888-277-5289, Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 8 PM Eastern Time. or visit ARRLWeb, www.arrl.org/catalog/1859/.

W2VU NEW EDITOR OF CQ

Richard Moseson, W2VU, the current CQ VHF editor, will take on the additional duty as editor of CQ Magazine. The appointment was effective September 1, six weeks after the death of long-time CQ editor Alan M. Dorhoffer, K2EEK. Moseson has been involved in numerous projects at CQ Communications, including creation of CQ's Amateur Radio videotape series,

management of CQ's 50th anniversary issue, development of the magazine's various Web sites, and--most recently--the launch of CQ VHF in 1996. He has been with CQ Communications since 1992. Moseson has been an amateur since 1970 and holds an Amateur Extra class license. He is active on a variety of modes and bands on HF, VHF, and UHF. Moseson said one immediate change to CQ will be soliciting "feature articles on all aspects of amateur radio from all segments of the amateur community."

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, September 10. 1999

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE FUNDING BILL CLOUDS ISSUES

Amateur radio-related activities such as SKYWARN could be endangered by a bill providing appropriations for the National Weather Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and other government weather services. The provision, Section 3(c) entitled "Competition with Private Sector", also has triggered concern on the part of some that the bill could reduce the government's ability to monitor and issue severe weather warnings. Some hams already have contacted their Senators requesting them to oppose the measure, HR-1553. Section 3(c) says the NWS "shall not provide, or assist other entities to provide, a service if that service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprise." There would be exceptions if the private sector were unwilling or unable to provide the service or if the service provides "vital weather warnings and forecasts for the protection of lives and property of the general public." The provision is being championed by commercial weather services that provide fee-based "cloudy and warmer"-style and so-called "value-added" weather forecasts, primarily to commercial broadcasters. Some believe the bill could keep the NWS from providing needed weather information, including storm watches and warnings, storm tracking information, and other weather-related data to ARES/RACES organizations or to emergency management officials.

ARRL Legislative and Public Affairs Manager Steve Mansfield, N1MZA, says HR 1553, "generally can be construed as supporting the National Weather Service's role in the dissemination of severe weather warnings, because it specifically designates the service as the sole issuer of severe weather warnings." Mansfield notes, however, that NWS and NOAA authorizing legislation hasn't passed the Congress for six years.

Beyond that, the "private sector" provision in Section 3(c) has drawn fire from the White House, which has requested its removal. A Statement of Administration Policy notes that the provision "could create confusion about who is responsible for specific marine and aviation weather forecasts." Mansfield says that even if the bill does make it through Congress intact, he does not believe it will harm SKYWARN's relationship with NWS. HR 1553 has passed the House. Action is pending in the Senate Commerce, Science and Technology Committee, chaired by Sen John McCain.

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, October 1. 1999

STENSAT LAUNCH

Stanford University's OPAL--Orbiting Picosatellite Automated Launcher--experiment is scheduled for launch October 4. The experiment includes the small (12 cubic inch) StenSat Amateur Radio picosatellite. The package is a crossband repeater that will operate much like the

popular AO-27 satellite. StenSat will uplink on 145.840 MHz and downlink on 436.625 MHz. The spacecraft's designers are looking for volunteers to monitor and help control the picosatellite. They are especially interested in getting AX.25 telemetry reports in the hours and days following launch. Interested hams should contact Hank Heidt, N4AFL, hheidt@erols.com, to be added to the StenSat mailing list. For more information, visit <http://www.erols.com/hheidt.--Space> News/ANS

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, September 10. 1999

THE PRICE IS RIGHT

Bob Furzer, K4CY, has made his logging software--appropriately dubbed Logger--available FREE. It is Windows 95/98-based, supports full ADIF imports and exports, and includes PSK-31 software. Version 6.07 is now available at <http://www.guam.net/pub/midxa>. On the main page, click on "Logger". Jim Kehler, KH2D, has offered assistance to users in converting their old logs into ADIF format. Contact him at kh2d@kuentos.guam.net

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, September 10. 1999

HAM RADIO ROLE ON TV?

Amateur Radio may play a role in NBC's new show Third Watch, which premiered September 23 (the show's regular time slot will be on Sundays at 8 PM Eastern). Several months ago, ARRL Media Relations Manager Jennifer Hagy, N1TDY, was contacted by a production company staff member who wanted information on ham radio. At the time, she said that one of the main Third Watch characters would also be an Amateur Radio operator. No word on how large a role ham radio might have.

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, September 24. 1999

INTERNET InSITEs

Amateur Radio, Electronics
and Technology Related Websites

eHAM.net DEBUTS

eHam.net, (<http://www.eHam.net>), an amateur radio "community site", debuted September 2. "eHam.net can best be described as a community of ham radio operators from all over the world," said Bill Fisher, W4AN, one of the amateurs behind the new site. The site gives hams a place to share ideas through a chat program, contribute news, buy and sell, take practice exams, read equipment reviews, and get propagation information and DX spots. eHam.net includes a call sign server. Users will be able to add an e-mail address, Web site address,

personal biography, and picture. Search tools will allow users to find community members with the same ham radio interests. The site also includes an unlimited number of real-time chat rooms. It offers free ads to buy, sell or swap on-line. A search tool lets users find ham radio information on the Web. Users can view DX spots and locate QSL managers quickly. A "Friends Remembered" department lets hams post reminiscences of Silent Keys. The site also includes various Amateur Radio-related links and news items from the ARRL and other sources. In addition to Fisher, others behind eHam.net include Randy Thompson, K5ZD, Garth Hitchens, KG7GA, and Trey Garlough, N5KO.

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, September 10, 1999

QRZ: PRACTICE EXAMS ONLINE

QRZ has announced that free, online practice amateur exams for all license classes now are available at <http://www.qrz.com>. The exams include instant scoring and all images and diagrams from current VEC question pools.--Fred Lloyd, AA7BQ

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, September 10, 1999

BEAM HEADING SERVICE

Mark Downing, WM7D, offers a service that makes it quick and easy to calculate beam headings when working stations in the Continental US and Caribbean. Enter your coordinates on his WM7D.net site at <http://www.wm7d.net/azproj.shtml> and the program will draw a map centered on your QTH and superimpose a compass rose on it. Print the map on any printer--a color printer is best--and you're all set.

Tnx ARRL Letter Online, September 24, 1999

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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. 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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