

DELTA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

SPARKS Web Edition

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W 4 B S R E P E A T E R S Y S T E M

146.82, 147.36, 224.42, 443.2 & 145.03 Packet

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

This month I have some very sad and disturbing news to share with you, the future of the 146.82 repeater is in jeopardy. During the week of August 17th, Tim Morrow received notification that the WPTY tower had been sold and was scheduled to be dismantled sometime during the month of November. The new owners have instructed us to make arrangements to remove our equipment, antenna and heliax, by September or early October, in other words as soon as possible. They further instructed us to arrange for a professional tower climber to remove our equipment or they would remove it for us when they come down to take all the other equipment off the tower, that we could not use someone from the club to perform this task. We do not know at this time whether they expect to charge us for taking it down, should they do the work. I have been talking with several members of the Repeater Committee about the future of the 146.82 repeater and they have several ideas. First and foremost, we need to locate a site that we can install the repeater as an interim location. Several suggestions have been made but the most logical and readily accessible is Methodist Hospital – North. We currently have the 220 machine at this location and could possibly put the .82 machine here as well. As for the future permanent site of the .82 Repeater, there are several possibilities. WPTY has been a long time supporter of the club and the 146.82 repeater. A few years ago, they sold the tower and the land to a communications company that leases tower space. The buyer honored WPTY's commitment to provide us with tower space, and WPTY told us that if they ever put up their own tower, we would be able to put our equipment on their tower wherever it might be. As of this article, we have not been able to formally contact WPTY to inquire as to what their plans are or whether this offer is still valid. If it is, rest assured that we will be moving the .82 to the new WPTY tower. Other possible sites that have been suggested so far are the Channel 3 and Channel 50 towers. One other possibility is on the TVA tower. In conversations with Joan, KN4PM, I learned that an individual who recently obtained his No Code Tech license had mentioned that he might be able to arrange us access to the TVA tower here in Memphis. If you have some suggestions of potential sites for the .82 repeater, please contact Tommy (KD4TJO), Tim (AB4NH), Gary (WA2IQC) or myself. The more choices the better. We need to make sure that the 146.82 repeater remains the best repeater in the mid-south.....

The Memphis Hamfest is right around the corner and Delta Club is playing an important role this year. First and foremost we have been asked to use the 146.82 repeater as the "talk-in" frequency. When we agreed to use our repeater we were unaware of the sale of the WPTY tower. We are still moving forward with our decision to use the .82 repeater, but we may not have the same coverage that we would have had had it still been at 500 feet. While attending the Huntsville Hamfest I heard numerous comments made that the Memphis Hamfest had been cancelled. This is not the case, the Memphis Hamfest is in its 39th year and will be another success like last year.

Now for some good news. The one meeting of the year that everyone remembers is the November meeting. This is the meeting where over \$1,500.00 in prizes are handed out to lucky winners. And, like in the past, there is one major prize. Again this year we will have a dual band Kenwood radio as the major prize. We will have the radio at the September meeting for you to scrutinize, and drool over. So if you're in need of a dual band radio, or just want to get one, come to the September meeting and buy tickets. Remember that you can buy as many tickets as your pocketbook can stand for this prize.

Well, that's about all I have for this month. Remember, the Delta Club meets the second Tuesday of the month. I look forward to seeing a lot more members at the September meeting. The programs for September is sure to be a good one, so don't miss it.

Best 73

Ben, KU4AW

SECRETARY'S REPORT

SECRETARY'S REPORT We have three new members to welcome on the repeater this month: Freddy Bratton, KF4ZGJ and his son Keith, KD5ESS, and Bob Shaeffer, KF4ZDQ. Be sure to give them a friendly hello when you hear them on the air.

Don't forget to buy tickets at the door when you come to the meetings. The November meeting is fast approaching when we have our grand drawing for the Kenwood 'cool blue' dual band radio, as well as many fun and handy prizes. We always have a lot of goodies on the refreshment table and a lot of fellowship in the room. Don't miss it!

73,

Kathy

DARC Annual Picnic

Be sure you put the date of September 13 on your calendar so you don't miss out on one of the favorite events of the year. Again the picnic will be held at the same site as past years, Plough Park. Contact Melinda, KE4DXN for more details on what to bring. The club will provide hamburgers and hot dogs. Everyone in attendance should bring something like chips, soft drinks or deserts.

Last year we hoisted a dipole up in the trees and did a little HF operating during the afternoon and even drew a few looks from other people in the park interested in what we were doing. For those more athletic members or just those that need to work off the calories that all the good food provided, there's always the ever-popular volleyball game. There is playground equipment for the smaller members so bring the family for an afternoon of fun and relaxation.

SEPTEMBER

CLUB MEETING

7365 HWY. 70

BARTLETT, TN

MEETING STARTS AT 7:00 PM

QRP OPERATION BY KI4I

September Program

Don't miss this month's meeting, as Jim, KI4I will be explaining, demonstrating and bringing us up to date on QRP operation. For those of you not familiar with what QRP is, it is a popular form of HF operating using low power HF transmitters, generally 5 watts or less. Jim will have an operating station there for demonstration purposes and who knows, you might get to make a long distance contact on very low power. But you can't do it if you're not there. This program should fit right in after last month's program on CW. See you there.

73's

Ben Barth, KF4GNC

PO Box Problems

Shortly after our Special Event Station, we encountered an unforeseen problem with the Post Office in that they could not confirm that we had paid our box rent, closed the box and returned a lot of mail, most of which was probably QSL's from the event. If you hear anyone on the air that had their SASE's returned please ask them to send it back to the PO Box. The unfortunate situation has been resolved and the box is now open once again. We apologize for those that had their mail returned.

VE TESTING:

Don't forget the monthly Volunteer Examiner testing session. Registration begins at 5:30p.m. and testing begins promptly at 6:00p.m. Please remember to bring two forms of identification the original and copies of any existing licenses or CSCE's you might have. Please be on time for registration, as you will not be allowed to enter the testing session after 6:00 p.m., so our volunteer VE team can finish in time to attend the club meeting. Call Joan Thorne 366-9722, if special testing arrangements are required.

VE REPORT

This month saw a wealth of activity at the monthly VE Testing session. With July having no candidates August was a pleasant surprise with 6 people testing. At this session, Francis WA4ZYN, Bill WA4MJM, Don KJ4PO, Ben KU4AW, and myself administered 12 elements of which 8 were passed.

Congratulations to:

Gregory Mann Tech KF4ZTI
Donald Burke General KF4ZTJ
James Shaeffer Tech Plus KF4ZDQ

Both Greg and Don came to our session with no exams under their belt. Congratulations to all. Remember to watch the FCC web site for upcoming changes in the license structure.

PLEASE... It is announced and in the newsletter to bring a COPY COPY COPY of your license and any CSCE's to the testing session. These have to be mailed with all exams to the ARRL headquarters. If you do not want proof of your license for about 2 weeks then feel free to bring only your original with you to testing sessions.

See you next month September 8th.

73 Joan KN4PM
VE liaison

W4BS REPEATER SYSTEM

146.82 net 8:00 pm

147.36 tone = 107.2

224.42 1.25 m reprtr

443.20 patch, 107.2

145.03 packet / bbs

AIRWAVES

The radio program "Airwaves" has moved to a new time and day. Airwaves is now broadcast on WYPL-FM, 89.3, on Monday evenings from 8:30 to 9:00 PM. The format has changed, and is now devoted to only amateur radio.

Tune in, and enjoy.

73 Dom, AA5N

VICE DIRECTOR's NOTES

Since the Board of Directors Meeting, I have been extremely busy writing, answering e-mail and answering telephone calls. I hope my remarks or comments have helped some of you understand what happened at the meeting.

Let me attempt to make three items more clear. The proposal as written on the ARRL Web Site and other sources said, reply to your Director as if the Board was making an attempt to make an initial proposal to the FCC. Fellow amateurs, that is the proposal that was submitted to the FCC. There will be a comment period prior to rule making and the FCC will allow for comments. Secondly, we the Board received inside information that there would be a drastic change in the amateur radio license structure. This was to occur in thirty to sixty days. We had to do something quickly in order to have any input. Thirdly, the nine Directors that voted for the proposal and six that voted against it is not the way one may foresee by reading the minutes.

Initially, we felt that the FCC was leaning toward a three tier system with 5 wpm morse code or a three or two system without any morse code. The six Directors that voted against the proposal were for the three tier system with 5 wpm morse code. Rick Roderck, K5UR, Joel Harrison, W5ZN and myself came up with a four-tier alignment obtaining the same code requirements. That was voted down! It was compromised for 12 wpm and 5 wpm morse code in order to retain the four tier system.

Fellow amateurs, I know most of you are very comfortable with the present system and would prefer no change. I am afraid we didn't have that as an option. The options were to do nothing or submit a change. We submitted a change that would have the least impact on amateur radio. I am not sure that the FCC will accept our proposal. Finally, prepare your comments for the FCC during the comment period.

Henry R. Leggette, WD4Q
Vice Director, Delta Division ARRL

AMATEUR HARDWARE UPDATE

Many times when building equipment we need a speaker to hook up and check for proper operation. An amplified speaker is also nice to increase the audio level of home brew equipment from earphone levels. Many new multimedia computers come with speakers for the sound card. Many times these are discarded and replaced by more powerful units for the computer. These small and cheap (under \$10.00 for a pair speakers) are mounted in a small cabinet. They also have a small amplifier with a volume control. With the amplifier turned off the speaker is directly connected bypassing the amplifier.

This month's project will modify one of these small speakers so we can use it to test equipment. By cutting into the wiring from the case we can solder our own test clips for quick hookups to our projects. With the amplifier turned off we get a small external speaker. By hooking up a power supply to the unit the built in amplifier can be used to increase the signal. The unit I have even has a volume control and bass and treble boost switches. The COMPUTER TEST SPEAKER is handy to have around and makes a nice addition to your test bench. I will have the COMPUTER TEST SPEAKER at the meeting to show and answer questions on for those who wish to build up their own units.

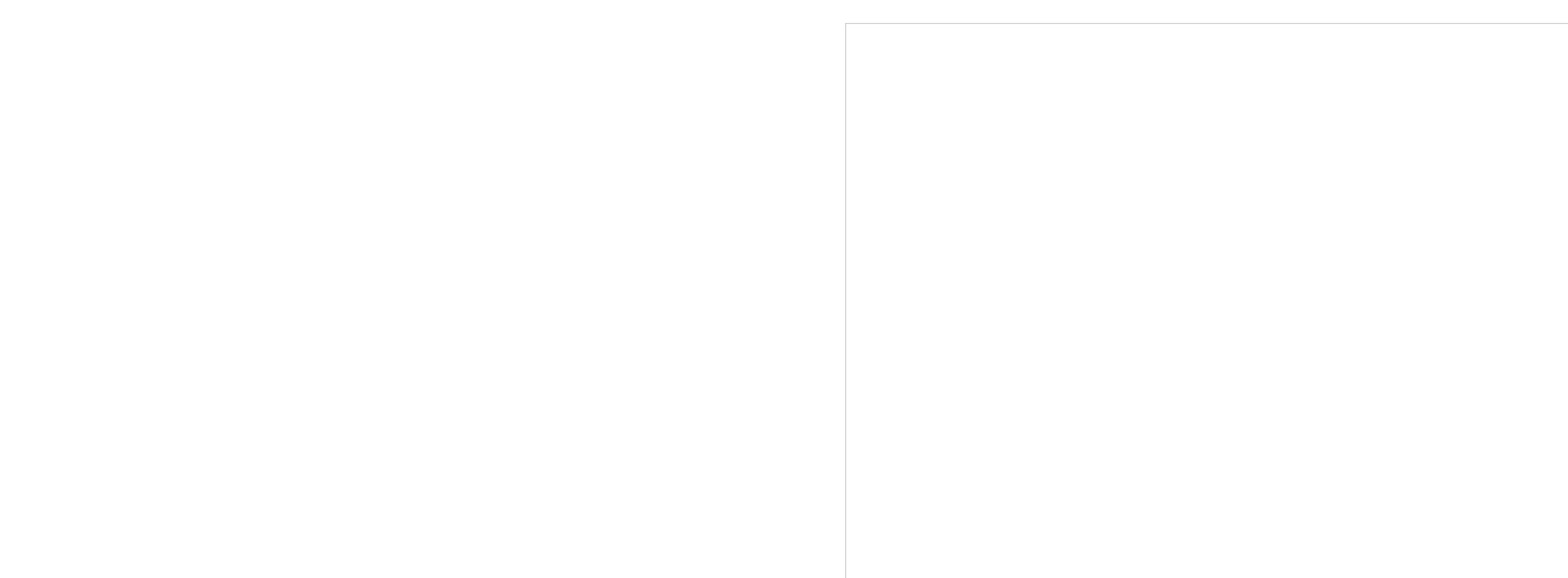
SEE YOU AT THE MEETING....

James Butler KB4LJV

AMATEUR PACKET UPDATE

Packet manufacturers are always coming out with new products for Amateurs. One new unit to come out is built by PacComm. It is a small TNC designed for portable use. The tiny 2MK-2/GPS Tracker as the name implies is a small full function TNC with a built in GPS system. The GPS unit is located inside the TNC. A separate magnetic mount Trimble GPS antenna is also supplied for mounting on the roof for best reception of the GPS satellites. This means less wiring in the car and one less piece of equipment to keep track of. If you're looking for an all in one compact design for portable packet with GPS check out this new one from PacComm.

James Butler KB4LJV



Yagi antennas don't play well when mounted close to the ground. Quads are mechanically complex and hard to homebrew. So, why not a Delta loop? They will work well a 1/2 wavelength above ground to as high as you can get it! For 10 meters, a six foot boom allows a 0.17 element spacing (0.10 to 0.20 will work fine), and the side elements are about 12 feet long. Tubing can be found at the local hardware store, or old CB antennas can be recycled. The top element is 12 ga bare wire.

Weight is less than 16 pounds, allowing use of a light-duty TV rotor. Several feed methods will work, but a gamma match is simple and easy to adjust. Performance is the real test of an antenna, and the Delta loop is a winner here. Bandwidth is better than one MHz for a 2 to 1 VSWR. Rather than try to impress you with gain and F/B ratios, I'll let you model the antenna using EZNEC by Roy Lewallen or any other good modeling software. What you'll find is good gain, with a low take-off angle even at low mounting heights. The F/B is fantastic, and side rejection is much better than a yagi.

If I've caused you to consider building a Delta loop, great! I have two under construction--one for 10 meters and a second for 20 meters--24 feet on each side. That is one large antenna! Specific dimensions were not given as this is not a construction article, but if you want info or would like to hear what they sound like when I finish, drop me a note.

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