

DELTA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

SPARKS

Web Edition

SPARKS P.O. BOX 750482 MEMPHIS, TN 38175-0482 / VOL. 13 / MARCH, 1999

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 don't have an awful lot to write about. As many of you already know, Kathy's (KE4UYU) father passed away on Monday, February 15th. Throughout most of February we have been totally involved with his welfare and finally his funeral. As a result, I have not had an opportunity to hold a Board of Director's meeting when this article was written.

However, I have been to work on a couple of things that affect the club. We have discussed at a couple of board meetings this year and several meetings last year about having someone assume the responsibility of Membership Chairperson. This individual will be responsible for contacting members who haven't renewed and reminding them to do so; to determine, if the member chooses not to renew, why they are taking this action; and to coordinate the distribution of new member packets to new members. I have asked Ben (KF4GNB) and Eloise (KF4GNC) to assume this responsibility, and they have graciously accepted. In the very near future, probably by the March meeting, I will be able to outline more specifically what duties Ben and Eloise will perform.

I have talked with Ernie (WAGKOC) with regards to the Packet BBS and he is make headway in getting this aspect of amateur radio and Delta Amateur Radio Club back in operating order. He has indicated that he has to upgrade the existing computer to a 486 capability or at the very least increase the amount of RAM in order to accommodate some of the ideas that he has in mind for it. Fortunately, he may have some old RAM chips that can be used to accomplish this task. Unfortunately, work on this project will be on hold for a couple of weeks as Ernie and Pam (KF4NDD) are driving out to the West Coast.

I'm sorry for such a short article this month, or maybe this is the way they should all be! However, events in our family have negated any time to spend on Delta Amateur Radio Club or amateur radio.

I have been very surprised at the attendance at the first two meetings of the year. There appears to be more people attending than there has been in the past. Let's keep increasing the numbers! One last comment, or request, please bring some type of snack to the March meeting so that at break everyone has something to eat while they "tagchew" about the meeting, the program, or the latest DX contact they made.

Ben 73

Tom, KU4AW

Vice Presidents Corner

HAMPAIGN '99

Unfortunately, there is no good news on the fundraising front this month. Not a single person has contacted me with a name at their company for me to send a fund raising letter! Only one additional person has come forward with a charitable contribution. I have had a number of people come forward with some good, ongoing projects that can be good money makers with little effort. Until the board meets and considers these it's not fair to publish the specifics.

I do think, though, that this is a good time of year to emphasize our value to the community with weather related issues. I plead again to ask around at your place of work to try to find the best person to contact for charitable contributions. I'll do the rest (and won't even tell them how I got their name). If I don't hear from folks by this time next month, I'll need to send out letters anyway. I'm going to try to remind everyone by making sheets to pass around and give me that information at the next meeting, but everyone will need to do their "homework" to have that helpful.

Remember, just a \$5, tax deductible gift (?skip lunch?) each month to the club by everyone would more than pay for a new repeater and hardline!

Lastly, most of our funds come from dues. If you have not renewed, or know people who could be encouraged to renew, or become new members, please do! It not only helps our financial situation, but helps the hobby thrive!

73,

Kurt Schropp
Vice President

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The following members renewed their memberships this month (if you haven't, your time is running short!):

- John Parish, KD4EJZ
- Darryl Herrington, KC5WMX
- Rosevelt Moore, K4MPO
- John Blackwelder, WD4FHD
- Jay Mintz, KF4IWM
- Steve Kellert, KF4SJU
- Vester Moore, WD4MXT
- Robert Emms, KD4SKT
- John Lefflar, KE4AQY
- Michael West, KD5DCJ
- Jimmy Tate, AF4AI
- Dal Doyle, KN4AN
- Bill Seiler, KS0QB
- Tommy Thompson, KD4TJO
- Melinda, KE4DXN
- Lesleigh, KF4SRU
- Lauren, KF4JZM
- Stirke Cline, KB4LO
- Bill Rodgers, AC4PU
- David Albert, NSCOO
- Richard Babm, KD4RPY
- Richard Bruce, N4CTX
- Jim Stiggins, KE4HTI
- Art Stauffer, KS4TZ
- Mike Richardson, KG4BVK

This brings our count up to 226 members so far. That's all for now, folks. See you at the March meeting. Kathy, KE4UYU

MARCH 9

CLUB MEETING

7365 HWY. 70

BARTLETT, TN

MEETING STARTS AT 7:00 PM

NTS TRAFFIC HANDLING

by Dave, W4OGG

DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS

Since the end of my "sabbatical" (as KG4BVK so aptly termed it!) and beginning to cause QRM from 160 through 2 meters again after about 20 years, my primary impression has been HAVE THINGS EVER CHANGED!!! No more BIG radios with lots of knobs and switches, but busy-busy radios with lots of menus seems to be the norm. What does this have to do with the March program, you ask? Read on...

Since beginning to participate in the Delta Club Traffic and Information Net about a year ago, I have heard only ONE piece of formal NTS traffic attempted to be passed and that was during the hurricane that devastated the Caribbean. As part of the Net preamble, the net control station asks for formal NTS traffic. I really wonder how many of us know what NTS stands for. Well folks, it stands for National Traffic System. There are hundreds of message traffic nets active each day all over the country and in many other parts of the world and there is a proper procedure for passing message on those nets. The March program will acquaint us with that procedure. Dave Goggio, W4OGG, has graciously agreed to explain proper message handling procedures. Dave is the premier "brass pounder" for message traffic in these parts and a regular participant in the ARRL NTS. Check your QST under the Section News part just about any month and you are going to see W4OGG listed as having been active in passing message traffic.

There are some fairly simple and straightforward procedures that have been well tested and in use for years that are utilized to pass message traffic. Let's all hope that we are never in an emergency situation (e.g., natural disaster) where we have to try to originate, receive and deliver a huge volume of message traffic. But if we are, it might be a good idea to know how to do it properly and to have an understanding of how messages via ham radio are handled.

Come to the March meeting and find out.

73, K4TTA

PS. REMEMBER TO SAVE YOUR "JUNQUE" FOR THE APRIL AUCTION!!!!

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 CORNER

February was a busy session for the VE Team. We administered 5 elements including Morse Code.

Of those five elements 2 were passed. CONGRATULATIONS:

Jonathon Williams, KG4ALR Tech Plus

Welcome to Dick Cookhenham WA2CPY The newest member of the ARRL VE Team testing for Delta Club.

Thank You to :Steve N4SG, Barry N4QW and Tom N4TV for helping at the January session and to Don KJ4PO, Ben KF4GNB, and Dick WA2CPY for their help at the February session.

See you at the March 9th session and club meeting.

73,

Joan KN4PM

W4BS REPEATER SYSTEM

146.82 net 8:00 PM

147.36 tone = 107.2
(BACK ON THE AIR AT A TEMPORARY LOCATION)

224.42 1.25 m rept

BACK ON THE AIR

443.20 patch, 107.2

145.03 packet / bbs

Pie Contest

This month, in addition to the regular treats at the break, we will be having a pie contest. Those members that think they have a great pie recipe, please make and bring one pie (more than one would be ok too!) and enter it in the contest. Judges are still to be announced as several members are in the process of "discussing" who gets to be a judge.

This should be fun for all and the winner will have their recipe published in the April issue of SPARKS.

Ed, KF4QFW

Repeater Update

I thought I'd take this opportunity to bring everyone up to date on the relocation of the 146.82 repeater. As all stands now, we are confirmed to have a spot on the WPTY tower, now under construction in the Brunswick, TN area.

The tower will be 1200 ft. in height. Each side of the tower is 12 ft. wide and will have a small elevator that will allow easier access to different levels on the tower. We will be purchasing a new commercial grade antenna and we are in the process of designing a new mounting bracket for the antenna that will match up with the 6 inch diameter legs that this tower has.

One of the current tenants at the old tower site is currently using 1-5/8" heliax for their system. They have told me that they are going to abandon the feedline and install new heliax at the new site. When asked, they told me that they would gladly donate it to the club. I asked if they would give us a letter stating that they were donating it to us, but they didn't feel that it was necessary. I am still pursuing getting the donation in writing at this time, but I feel that in writing or not, it's a done deal. This will be a major improvement for us, since we are now using 7/8" heliax that has one splice in it. The donated feedline is approximately 800 feet in length. It will take approximately 150 feet of it to get to the tower base from our transmitter location, which would allow us to go to approximately 550 feet above ground on the tower. Considering that the ground elevation at the new site is 50ft. lower than the old site, this would put us at basically the same height overall, that we are at ow. However, with the larger feedline and a new antenna, there should be a lot of improvement in the repeater.

I received an email from Don, K9DM last week advising me that he was able to "rescue" some parts out of the dumpster at his work that we might be able to use at the new site. It just so happens that some of those parts happen to be about 50 hangers for 1-5/8 heliax. How lucky could we be? I'm not sure yet how many hangers we'll need, but that is certainly at least half of them, which will save the club a lot of cash. Thanks Don.

I have been in regular contact with Mr. Steve Pickle, Chief Engineer at WPTY to negotiate and coordinate our move to this great new site. Mr. Pickle has been very supportive of our club and it's repeater for many years and has been behind us gladly donate it to the club. I asked if they would give us a letter stating that they were donating it to us, but they didn't feel that it was necessary. I am still pursuing getting the donation in writing at this time, but I feel that in writing or not, it's a done deal. This will be a major improvement for us, since we are now using 7/8" heliax that has one splice in it. The donated feedline is approximately 800 feet in length. It will take approximately 150 feet of it to get to the tower base from our transmitter location, which would allow us to go to approximately 550 feet above ground on the tower. Considering that the ground elevation at the new site is 50ft. lower than the old site, this would put us at basically the same height overall, that we are at ow. However, with the larger feedline and a new antenna, there should be a lot of improvement in the repeater.

Even though this tower has an elevator, and climbing won't really be an issue, insurance regulations will not permit anyone other than certified tower climbers to go up the tower. Since we have limited personnel with these credentials, I am working with Mr. Pickle to have the feedline removed from the old tower and installed at the new site by his tower company that is building the tower and disassembling the old one. Due to this, we will more than likely have to move the repeater to an interim site for a few weeks while this work is done. During this time, we probably won't have overtop capabilities on the 82 machine. Sorry, but it just won't be worth having the phone company move the lines twice.

The 146.82 repeater and the Delta Club have built a reputation as always making themselves and their equipment available to the community in times of need, whether it is a public service event, severe weather or a disaster. During this move, we are striving to make the 82 machine even better than it is now in order to better serve not only our members but also the citizens of the Memphis and Mid-South area.

I will keep you informed as things progress on this project. Keep in mind that what I perceive to be already "in the can", like the heliax donation, it could still fall through and we may have to purchase the new feedline. Please go back and read Kurt's article in last month's SPARKS and be sure to read this month's as well. Thanks to those that have already contributed to the repeater relocation.

73,

Tommy, KD4TJO

PUBLIC SERVICE UPDATE

It's that time of year again when the Memphis community service organizations turn to amateur radio operators to assist with communications for their events. These groups have come to depend on amateur radio and especially the membership of Delta Club to come through for them each year.

The first public service opportunity this year is the March of Dimes WalkAmerica held annually at 5:30 am of April. This year's walk will be held on Saturday April 24, 1999 at the Fairgrounds. Unfortunately for some, this event starts rather early with the some amateurs having to be at the fairgrounds to set up net control among other things around 5:20 am. Everyone else will need to be there by around 7:30 am. This time will be nailed down in the next few weeks.

We need approximately 25-30 amateurs for this first off really well. In the last couple of years we have fallen a few short of our needs. I encourage all the new hams out there to give this event a try. It's a great way to use your privileges to assist your community. We had a new couple help for the first time last year and before they left the fairgrounds they were saying "sign me up for next year now", we had a blast. I will be taking a list of volunteers starting immediately so see me at the meeting, catch me on the air and listen up on the nets, to volunteer. March of Dimes needs your help.

Shortly afterwards (about 3 weeks) is the Memphis in May Triathlon. This only requires about 10 amateurs, but unfortunately is also an early morning event. This one is held at Edmund Orgill Park in Millington. More on this one in next month's SPARKS.

Thanks in advance,
Tommy, KD4TJO

VE Notes

FCC SAYS DELAWARE HAM MUST RETEST OR LOSE TICKET

The FCC has notified a Delaware ham that she must take her Amateur Radio examinations again or lose her license. The FCC's Rley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, says "questions were raised" about how Sheila Bowden, N3QQS, of Millsboro, upgraded to Extra, and said the FCC is requesting that Bowden start from scratch and re-take "all the elements." Bowden was notified February 16 in a letter from Hollingsworth. The FCC has the authority under Part 97 to re-administer exam elements previously administered by VEs. The FCC may administer the exam itself or designate a VEC or VE to administer the retesting session-- typically employing a VEC that's different from the initial testing session. The FCC told Bowden that she must re-take the Amateur Extra Class examination series at an ARRL VEC session before March 19 or lose her license. "You will be granted an Amateur Radio license consistent with any elements that you pass upon re-examination," Hollingsworth's letter said. Hollingsworth said the FCC plans to call in "25 to 50 more" amateur licensees for retesting in the near future. Those individuals have not yet been notified, however. In all of those cases, Hollingsworth said, the FCC has reason to suspect the integrity of the examination process. "The ham community needs to have a sense of confidence in the examination system," Hollingsworth said, adding that enforcement must not focus solely on operating violations. "his is a critical link in the chain."

Last month, the FCC dismissed the Extra class license formerly held by Bowden's husband, Wayne, after the Commission discovered "irregularities in the administration of the examination by the Volunteer Examiners." Wayne Bowden, formerly AA3RT, took the complete Amateur Radio examination series at an October 4 W5YI-VEC session. He had not held an amateur license before then. The FCC is continuing its probe into alleged testing irregularities at Pennsylvania W5YI-VEC sessions October 4 and 6, including allegations that examinees might have been coached or given test answers.

FCC SUSPENDS JERSEY HAMS HF PRIVILEGES

The FCC has suspended for six months the HF privileges of a New Jersey ham. The FCC notified Walter P. Miller Jr., W2YEE, of Edison, New Jersey, that his privileges to operate below 30 MHz were being suspended for 180 days. The license-modification letter February 16 from the FCC's Rley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH came in the wake of an earlier warning letter to W2YEE. Hollingsworth alleged that W2YEE's 75-meter operation on the evening of February 4 was contrary to the Amateur Service Rules. Hollingsworth said Miller violated Section 97.1, basis and purpose of Amateur Radio; Section 97.101(a), good engineering and good amateur practice; and Section 97.119, identification requirements. The alleged operation took place on 3901 and 3950 kHz, the FCC said. "Specifically, you were apparently broadcasting and talking to no particular station for several hours, during which time you prevented the use of the frequencies by others and maliciously interfered with other stations attempting to use the frequencies," Hollingsworth wrote. He said the Commission also had information indicating similar behavior occurred the next evening on 75. "Such operation endangers the basis and purpose of Amateur Radio as a service, degrades it for other licensed operators and cannot be tolerated," Hollingsworth wrote.

Section 97.1 basis and purpose. Of the rules discusses the public service value of Amateur Radio, as well as its contribution to advancing the state of the art; expanding the reservoir of trained operators, technicians and technical experts; and enhancing international goodwill. Hollingsworth is on record linking certain types of on-air behavior with a negative perception of Amateur Radio in other countries.

A warning letter had gone out to Miller January 8 regarding similar operation. The FCC informed Miller at that time that he faced license revocation and fines.

Hollingsworth told Miller that the FCC was modifying his Amateur Radio license to prohibit HF operation for 180 days from February 16, the date of the modification notice. Miller has 30 days to formally protest the modification. If he does not protest it, the modification order expires August 16.

73,

Joan, KN4PM
VEC

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Important Information

Have you been receiving your SPARKS after the meeting is all over and done? For your information, SPARKS will generally be mailed no later than one week prior to the meeting date. Most members receive their issues the very next day or no more than the second day after mailing. There may be some zip codes that are slow. If this SPARKS arrived late, you should call Mr. Stanford with the Post Office at 521-2233. The more he hears from us concerning the untimeliness of mail deliveries, the faster he might take action. Or call Kathy, KE4UYU, at 372-8031, and she will make the call.

PACKET UPDATE...

Most of the radios we buy today are made to run on a 12-volt DC power supply. Many manufacturers build these supplies to sell to the amateur community. They are clean low ripple high current units designed for our ham gear. A new power supply is now being offered by MFJ. It has been building radios, antennas, and accessories for years. The new power supply they have is the MFJ 4035MV. This unit has dual lighted meters for current and voltage. The voltage is adjustable by a front panel control. Maximum current is 30 amps continuous. The unit has over current protection. The unit also has a built in cooling fan to keep it running cool. If you are looking for a good 30 Amp power supply for under \$150.00 check out the new 4035MV from MFJ.

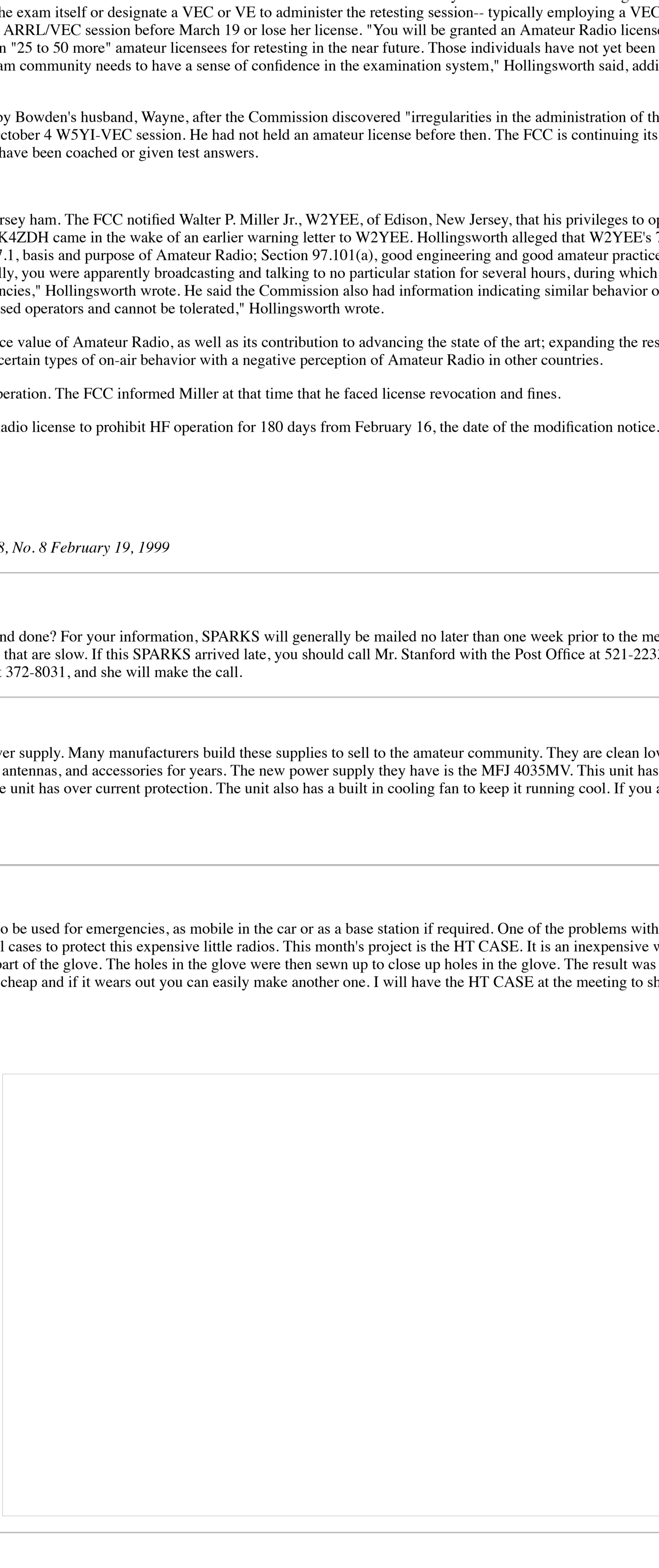
James Butler, KB4LJV

AMATEUR HARDWARE UPDATE...

HTs are very useful in Amateur Radio. Their portability allows them to be used for emergencies, as mobile in the car or as a base station if required. One of the problems with them is they get thrown around and banged up a lot. Vendors have come up with various solutions including custom leather and universal cases to protect this expensive little radios. This month's project is the HT CASE. It is an inexpensive way to protect your HT when it is being transported. While cleaning out a closet I found one winter glove. I cut off the fingers and thumb part of the glove. The holes in the glove were then sewn up to close up holes in the glove. The result was a small elastic pouch that my HT fits in. The HT CASE does a great job and took I found only five minutes to cut and sew up. The case was cheap and if it wears out you can easily make another one. I will have the HT CASE at the meeting to show and answer questions on those who wish to build up their own.

SEE YOU AT THE MEETING...

James Butler, KB4LJV



VICE DIRECTOR'S NOTES

We the members of the ARRL Board of Directors met in Houston, Texas on Friday, January 15 and Saturday, January 16, 1999. Houston was selected in hopes that the January weather would not be cold there. It was great weather in Houston those days.

The meeting went over great. Several items were discussed in detail. The average age of amateur radio operators is rising each year. Somehow, we need to put a positive spin on this item very quickly and steer away from any negative thoughts. We believe that if our youth continue to be involved here, our amateur radio. The main problem being after becoming licensed, there is no follow up on their status etc. What are your views on this situation? Can you help decrease the average amateur radio operator's age? If you wish to be excited about our great hobby will be less interesting in the future and maybe lose some of our frequencies.

Everyone should keep in mind the ARRL Foundation Scholarship program. This is another avenue to arouse the interest of the younger generation amateur radio operators. The Foundation has money set aside to donate scholarships to younger amateur radio operators annually.

How many of you have written to our ARRL Web Extra for members only. Here is news that you should know about as an ARRL member. It appears that the FCC has begun to enforce the rules after the ARRL Web Extra and General Counselor has complained and wrote letters to the ARRL. The FCC's Radio ID officer, Rley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, turned up at an unexpected place. It January 13, 1999 on 75 meters. A detail report was on the ARRL Web Board for members about this time. I feel the FCC is ready to perform some enforcement activities.

In the near future, there may be some information out about the name change for the American Radio Relay League. It is viewed that the current name does not reflect what the amateur radio hobby is about. What are your views on this subject? Steve Mansfield, NIMZA reports that the "Wireless Privacy Bill was reintroduced on February 10, 1999. The Wireless Privacy Enhancement Act of 1999, HR514, has been introduced by Rep. Heather Wilson of New Mexico. The measure is aimed at amending the Communications Act of 1934 "to strengthen and clarify provisions on electronic eavesdropping, and for other purposes." HR514 is identical to the amended version of HR2369 that passed the House by a wide margin during last congress could give you some information on WT 98-143. We are in the wait status as most of you are at the present time. Personally, I feel that in about the next 30 to 60 days we may hear something.

Henry R. Leggette, WD4Q
Vice Director, Delta Division
American Radio Relay League

FIELD DAY 99

Although Field Day is about four months away, it's not too early to start planning in Field Day. Field Day is Delta Club's primary operating event each year and did we ever have a GREAT one in 1998. Under the able leadership of KU4NH and WA6KOC, we essentially doubled our previous year's effort. Let's do that again in Field Day 99.

I've been in contact with several members about helping with and participating in Field Day 99 and would like to thank (not necessarily in order of importance) KC5YIX, KF4EWO, KI4I, AA5N, KE4GPR, KG4ALR, KG4BKV, KA5JJP, KU44N, KE4UYU, KU4NH, KF4SIW, KB4KA, WA4JMJ, KF4QFW and anybody else that I may have omitted.

I'll have some sign-up sheets at the March meeting and PLEASE sign up. Field Day is the last full weekend in June, so mark it on your calendar. There are several ways you can participate including operating, set-up/take down, site management, and logging, to name a few, and how about this, YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO BE AT THE FIELD DAY SITE TO HELP! We are going to have an active VHF station and an antenna high enough to cover most of our club's geographical area and we will have a station active on 2 meter FM. We can add several hundred points to our total if each member who does not operate the club's Field Day station will contact our VHF station. I really want us to finish in the top 10 geographical in Class 2A this year, and with EVERYBODY'S help and participation, WELL DO IT.

If you have some ideas about Field Day and/or want to sign-up, give me a call either on the radio or at home (386-6268).

73 and THINK FIELD DAY!
K4TTA

CONTEST CALENDAR

Here are a few of the contests coming up in the next few weeks...

- ARRL DX SSB
- 0000Z March 6 - 2359Z March 7
- 160-10M SSB
- 3 pM QSO
- Work stations outside Canada and US only DXCC on two band Exchange RS QTH
- CLARA and Family HF Contest
- 1700Z March 9 1700Z March 10
- 1700Z March 16 1700Z March 17
- 80-10M CW & SSB
- 5p/CLARA member 3p/YL 2p/CLARA family member 1p/OM Exchange Name, QTH, CLARA member?

For more information on current contests please refer to the ARRL website at: www.arrl.org/contests/months/mar.html

Other Important Contacts

Field Day Chairman Tom Richardson, K4TTA 386-6268 duffer@ix.netcom.com	VE Liaison Joan Thorne, KN4PM 366-9722 joan@mcn.net
Membership Chairpersons Ben Barth, KF4GNC Eloise Barth, KF4GNB 363-1286 cloiseb@aol.com	

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