

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

They say time flies when you're having fun, but is it really February already? Although most of January was a lot of fun, it didn't begin that way. We started the month on a sad note by losing two local amateurs, one a current member and the other a past member of the club. I will not go into details here in this article, but look elsewhere in this issue of SPARKS for more details concerning these silent keys. I would like to say that our hearts and prayers go out to these two families in their time of loss. These two members of the amateur community will be greatly missed.

Things then started looking brighter just about as fast as the temperature has been changing around here. As I'm writing this, the high temperature today was 69 degrees. Less than two weeks ago we were in the single digits with 4 inches of snow on the ground. We had a great meeting in January with a great program presented by Tim, AB4NH and Suresh, N9GSA on the W4BS Repeater System. This is a program that has been presented several times before, but it is always informative, especially for all the new amateurs that are joining the hobby every day. Tim and Suresh, presented some slides and addressed repeater etiquette, something we all need to think about. They also answered several questions, indicating again that there was a program that needed to be repeated. One of my pet peeves, is the "For ID" syndrome. I've heard at least one station do this since the meeting, and I know they were there for the program. As another member stood up and pointed out, there are some bogus call signs out there when you say for example - KD4TJO4ID. Tongue in cheek, amateur call signs only have one numeric character in them and that, I believe, is a question on the Novice test. The meeting was long but we had an awful lot to cover that evening. At the beginning of the business part of the meeting, Dom - AA5N was able to announce to the club that the long awaited IRS 501(c)3 tax exempt status is finally a reality. That's right, anyone now donating anything to the club, not including dues, can deduct the value from their taxes as a charitable donation. Dom has worked long and hard to help us acquire this for the club. He is now challenged with attempting to find ways to make this new status work for the club in a positive way. Thanks Dom for all hard work and dedication of your time.

Something that you haven't seen here in SPARKS for a while is the minutes of the meetings. I have asked Kathy, our secretary to submit these to the Director of Publishing for insertion in the newsletter each month. For those of you who don't or can't make it to the meetings, this will help keep you more informed on the activities of the club and was discussed in your absence. And speaking of your absence, I want to personally invite you to come to the meetings and enjoy the club and fellowship. Some of you have not been active for some time, and I would like very much for that to change. We have a lot of new ideas for the club, and to steal a word from Dom that he used last year, this board is very "focused" on making a lot of new things happen this year. In order to accomplish some of them, we need you to get involved in the club and it's activities. Please consider showing your support by coming to the meetings and saying YES when you're asked to help with a project. I am very excited about the prospects for the club in 1997 and as I stated above, you that voted in November have elected a great board of directors that are dedicated to take the Delta Club to new heights this, year. As your President in 97, I will try to always be available to each and every one of you, should you have a question, problem or would like to submit one of your ideas to the club.

Kathy tells me that a lot of you have renewed already but there are a lot of folks that haven't yet. Please talk the club up to new amateurs and also former members, let them know that there are some new things going on with the club and they should come see for themselves. Don't forget to get your renewals in the mail, or you can bring them to the club meeting. Remember to check all information on your application, i.e. address, license, and birthdays. See you at the meeting on Feb. 11.

73, Tommy, KD4TJO

Vice President's Corner

It was terrific to see a lot of folks at the January meeting. As our Pres says, we're off and running. This year, like years in the past, the Vice President is responsible for fund raising ideas and publicity. Well, I have started working on the fund raising ideas, and mentioned some of them at the meeting, but want to reiterate them here.

When I first joined Delta Amateur Radio Club a little over two years ago, whenever I came to a club meeting I saw nothing but blue jackets, shirts, T-Shirts, and hats. Well, if you look around the room at the next meeting, if you're lucky, you'll see about four or five jackets and or shirts. We need to change this, we need to have a sea of blue at our meetings. In addition, we need to start seeing a "sea of blue" around Memphis. To accomplish this we need to be able to have things like jackets, shirts, hats, etc., available to our members.

I have been doing some research and have found several suppliers that can provide us with the things we need to paint the city of Memphis blue with the Delta Amateur Radio Clubs logo. But we also need to paint it blue with things other than just jackets, shirts, and hats. Wouldn't it be great if you were driving down Union and at a stop light noticed that the car in front of you had a decal of the Delta Club in the back window!!!! Well, that's where I want our club to go. I want to see us have such things as can coolers, key rings, hats, jackets, shirts, magnetic strips and decals that is promoting Delta Amateur Radio Club.

We all know how terrific this group of amateur radio operators is. We need to start letting the rest of the amateur world know about it. When we go to a hamfest, like the Tupelo Hamfest that's coming up in the middle of April, wouldn't it be great to see a sea of blue walking around!!!!

On another subject, more and more amateurs are getting on "the WEB." And, as more and more amateurs get on "the WEB", more and more clubs are creating home pages. Delta Club is no different, we have our own home page thanks to our Pres. We need to step up the pace a little though. We have a home page but we have to rely on our Pres in order to have it. Wouldn't it be nice if you were surfing the WEB for amateur related topics and there, right in front of you was a note about the Delta Amateur Radio Club's home page. And, wouldn't it be terrific if this home page resided on our very own web site?

Well, we're moving in that direction. We have already contacted an internet provider in Memphis to see what costs we would incur to have our own web site, and we even asked about getting discounted access fees for members of our club. If we get a web site, we're going to need a domain name. Here's your chance to be creative. Your board has thought of domain names like W4BS.org, Delta.org, Delta_ARC.org, and several others. We need your input. Let us know what you think the domain name should be. We're going to have one, but we can't do it without your input.

That's if from the Vice President's corner. I hope that by years end, when we have a meeting, a special event, or any type of activity that involves our club, we can look out and see a sea of blue and know that Delta Amateur Club is present.

73, Ben, KU4AW

SECRETARY'S DESK

The year's off to a good start. The renewals have been coming in bundles. We've had so many that I'm not sure the mail box is big enough to handle the volume.

Now, on a more serious note. We need to update the records of our members. When I look at the records, I see where the license type of a member is a No Code Tech, and today I hear that he's had his general class ticket for almost a year. It's very important that our records coincide with the actual status of our members. The Board of Directors has received numerous comments from members that they haven't received their newsletter. After researching this problem, I find that the address that the newsletter is sent to is not the current address.

If you want to get your newsletter, and any other mail-out from the club, you need to be sure that I have all the correct information. I will have a sheet at the next meeting that you can write your new address on if it has changed. Also, if you have upgraded recently, the sign-in sheet has a column for license class.

I want to extend a special thanks to all those that brought treats to the meeting in January, and a very special thanks to those members that cleaned up after the meeting. Your efforts will help us to continue to use the church as our meeting place.

73, Kathy, KE4UYU

NETS

Don't forget about the nets that are on our 146.82 repeater. The traffic and information net, every night, except the second Tuesday of the month, at 8:00 pm The Friendship Award Net on Sunday nights after the Traffic and Information Net. The Skywarn Training Net, Wednesday nights at 9:00 pm. These nets provide a great deal of information and fun. Just this past Sunday night we expanded the rules a little and allowed more rag-chewing on the Friendship net and had a great time. We had a few more check-ins than we have been having and I think all had a great time. Bill, WB4TJH, checked in and even had an antenna plan to pass on to everyone. So if you have a chance join us....David, KU4AS

W4BS REPEATER SYSTEM

146.82 net 8:00 pm

147.36 tone = 107.2

224.42 1.25 m reprt

443.20 patch, 107.2

145.03 packet / bbs

FEBRUARY 1997 CLUB MEETING

DATE: February 11, 1997 (2nd Tuesday - be there)

PLACE: Ellendale Church Of Christ, 7365 Highway 70, Memphis, Tn.

(2 miles east of Hwy. 64-Stage Rd.)

TIME: 7:00 PM

PROGRAM: Henry Leggette, WD4Q, and Roger Stallings, KC4ZPA, will present an overview of the communications system used at the Memphis Air Traffic Conyrol Center.

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 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.

Explorer Post 903 Happenings

I would like to thank Mary Elizabeth Milek, Exploring Executive with the Chickasaw Council, Boy Scouts of America, for her attendance and brief overview of Exploring at the Jan. club meeting.

I hope we were able to convince a few adults to COMMIT by signing up as leaders and help provide guidance at one of two post meetings each month. Without leadership, the post will die and the young people in our midst will not have this outlet to create new, lasting friendships in a positive atmosphere.

Bill, WA4MJK, recently signed on as an assistant Explorer Post Advisor. His willingness to fill in where needed has been a great help already. We still need more volunteer leaders to register. With Doan, KE4LNC, having moved to Kentucky, we will be looking for someone to take over as the Explorer Post Committee Chairman. Please see me for more information.

Any leader who has not viewed the video on Child Protection, please let me know. As registered leaders, it is mandatory that we be trained on this subject as it provides us as well as the members.

We are happy to announce our latest member to join the post. Lauren Thompson, KF4LZM, joins our two charter members, Matthew Kreth, KT4CG and David Wilkins. David is a student at Overton High School and is presently working on his license to operate.

We need at least 2 more youth to join the post so we can recharter. If you know of an interested young person between the ages of 14 and 20, please invite them to our next post meeting at 6:00 PM, February 20, 1997, at the Ellendale Church of Christ. Our meetings are held the hour preceding the monthly Delta Club Meeting.

It is my sincere hope that the membership will take to heart what we are trying to accomplish with this program. I appreciate Henry Leggette, WD4Q, Vice Director for ARRL Delta Division, for his comment that we must keep our young people active in worthwhile organizations such as Exploring.

Barry, KE4KAG

Past President's Thoughts

I am now the Past-President of the Delta Club, and I want to share with you some of the impressions that I have of our new board.

I attended the second annual brainstorming session of the board, and was very impressed with the good attitude, excellent ideas, high energy, good interactions, and the exciting plans for 1997. Tommy ran a good and focused meeting, and a lot of ground was covered.

The board meetings are always open to the members, and we always urge attendance. In 1996, we always had several members who attended board meetings. Some wanted to visit and see what was done, and others had a presentation. Tommy and Melinda have a beautiful and large meeting area, so space is not a problem

On another matter, the 501(c)3 application has been approved. Therefore, we will now benefit from that tax-free status.

Dom...AA5N

E-MAIL US.....

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Ben TroughtonVice President.....bktrough@mem.net

Kathy Troughton.....Secretary.....ktrou@nb.utmem.edu

Dan Hoffman.....Treasurer.....dhoffma@bellsouth.net

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David Pace.....Dir. of Publications.....ku4as@bellsouth.net

Suresh Kagoo.....Dir. of Programs.....skagoo@msn.com

Tim McNeill.....Dir. of Meetings & Special Events.....tmcneill@tscc.com

Dom Desiderio.....Past President.....ddesiderio@utmem1.utmem.edu

Joan Thorne.....VE Liaison.....joant@mem.net

Hardware Update

Many Amateurs monitor different radio frequencies. We listen to the Amateur radio nets, Shortwave programs, and commercial broadcasts. Sometimes we would like to record these activities for information or later reference. The problem is that normal cassette recorders only allow for a maximum of 1 hour per side recording with a C-120 cassette tape. Some companies offer special long play recorders for this purpose. These special recorders cost from \$159 to \$350 dollars. They sure look nice but it's a lot of money. This month's project makes a long play recorder from a surplus portable cassette recorder. The recorder modified was a old Radio Shack CCR-81 computer cassettes recorder. These cost \$ 20.00 to \$ 35.00 net, and used go for as low as \$ 5.00. Opening up the unit revealed a small D.C. motor for moving the tape. The speed at which the tape is run will determine how long it will last. On a C-120 cassette at 1 7/8 inches per second (standard cassette speed) you get 1 hour per side. By adding 2 diodes in series with the motor the voltage the motor received was lowered and tests show the speed was cut in half giving 2 hours per side recording time. By then adjusting the speed control resistor on the small motor control P.C. board I was able to get stable operation and slow the tape down even more to give more than 3 hours recording time per side on a standard C-120 tape. This is similar to the record times for the S 150 units. The modification makes it possible to record nets and commercial broadcasts without using lots of tapes and allows much longer recording times without having to change tapes. This modification should work with other similar recorders and simple enough to change back to standard if needed. I have used the modified recorder with good results and it makes a nice addition to the radio shack . I will have the LONG PLAY RECORDER at the meeting to show and answer questions on for those who wish to do their own units. SEE YOU AT THE MEETINGJames, KB4LJV

Packet Update

Many of us have had our Packet systems up and running for while. The average packet station consists of a lot of equipment. The computer with case, keyboard, and monitor, the TNC, Radio, Antenna and all connecting cables. Now is a good time to organize and clean up the shack to avoid problems with your Packet station. Use a mild detergent to clean all surfaces. Check cables to make sure they are not frayed or crimped behind the desk. Check all connectors to make sure that they are in good shape and plugged in all the way. Make sure cables are properly routed. Clean off the case of the TNC so it can get rid of heat it generates while running. Don't forget to check that TNC battery that stores setup parameters. Check the SWR's of the Antenna system to make sure it is operating properly. With a little work now you can keep your Packet Station up and running and avoid problems. James Butler KB4LJV

USA QSL Bureau

The USA QSL Bureau will mail out all of your USA and DX QSL cards for 5 cents per card. That rate is excellent now that postage is 20 cents. The ARRL has a QSL bureau that many hams use for DX QSL cards. The USA QSL Bureau states that "The final courtesy of a QSO is a QSL", and that statement sounds like a fine attitude for QSLing. The address for the bureau is: USA QSL Bureau, P.O. Box 814, Brewer, Maine 04412-0814. The bureau is operated by Bill, AA1MF e-mail 102452.2315@compuserve.com. I became aware of the bureau when I received a card that was sent to me by a regular user of the bureau. Give it a try, it is convenient. Dom. AA5N

Education Plans 1997

This coming year will see a shift in emphasis for Delta Club's educational goals. There is no doubt that additional Novice/Technician level classes are needed to recruit into the ranks of amateur radio, and these level classes will continue to be offered at least two to three times during the year.

However, the success of our Club's education program over the past few years points out a need to get along with several upgrade classes as well, and this is the major goal for the coming months. At least one General class upgrade program and at least one Advanced class upgrade program will be in the offering if there is sufficient interest from the Club's membership. The caveat here is that the General class requires 13 wpm Morse code speed, so that a new class has to be part of the offering. Plans are being made now to conduct both the 5wpm and a 13wpm class in the near future.

A word about cw. IT IS POSSIBLE! What it takes is a lot of practice. Accordingly, I have been several ideas expressed so that you can get the kind of practice you need, on the air, at a comfortable speed, and in a "forgiving" environment. There are several "CW Buddy" relationships developing where one experienced "Elmer" works with the "aspiring young ham." If this route appeals to you, please contact me and I will seek out an "Elmer" for you.

Other cw options may vary well amount to placing your tone oscillator next to the mike on your VHF or UHF rig and tapping out the code through the repeater in a slow cw net. Also, KE4TY/AA reports an active cw meeting several times after the Traffic and Information Net at 28.200 MHz.***speed adjusted to accommodate. As you can see, there are several options.

Now, the fly in the ointment is this...I can not do this alone. I need volunteer instructors to assist with all levels of class offerings. I do have commitments from two recently advanced Advanced (is that redundant?) class operators to teach the General level classes, but the Novice/Tech classes and the Advanced class are instructor-less at this time. If you have thought about teaching, but never made the leap there are some opportunities in which we will train the trainer to teach the material. Additionally, the ARRL has extensive material available as training aids. If you are interested in becoming an ARRL certified instructor, please see me.

Speaking of training material, I am requesting of the Board an allotment to purchase several training items to be placed in our inventory, notably some of the video instruction tapes put out by the ARRL/King schools, thus making them available (with a security deposit) for checkout by the membership.

This will be a good year, educationally speaking. I am looking forward to it. For now, 73 es cu in class.

Bill, WA4MJM

VE Report

I think that I have mixed up Barry's call as many ways as you possibly can. This month I am trying very hard to get it straight. I want to apologize to Barry and thank him for countless hours of teasing.

The last testing session of your VE team was held on January 14, 1997. The following VE's were able to help me at that session: Tim-AB4NH, Steve-N4SG, Barry-N4QW, Jimmy-N4ZCO. I want to thank you all for unselfishly giving of your time and efforts. At that session 10 elements were administered and 5 were passed. We have 3 new Advanced class hams in our midst. Congratulations to all.

Our next testing session is before the February meeting. Be sure to bring COPIES AND THE ORIGINAL OF ALL CSCE'S that you have earned. This is printed in the bulletin monthly and announced on the nets nightly and I still find people not bringing copies. Starting at the February meeting there will be an additional charge of \$1.00 for all copies that we have to make the night of the exam. If you must, please stop at some copy place on your way to the meeting.

73 Joan, KN4PM

SILENT KEYS

This past month we have lost 2 members of our Ham community. It is with great sadness that I have to write this column, but I would like to mention a few things about these hams who have graced our hobby thru these years.

Jill Doeschel, KF4HCC, became a ham in February of 1996, and as soon as she got her call sign she hit the airwaves running. Jill had spinabifida since birth, having 29 surgeries and a steel rod for a back bone she did not let this stop her from being a very productive person during her years with us. Jill was a speech Language Pathologist teaching at Arkansas State University. She did rehab work with adult stroke patients with learning disabilities. Jill authored children books, and a text book "How To Care for Patients With Traumatic Brain Injuries", that is still used in classrooms at this time. Upon getting her ham license, Jill became very involved with Packet from her bed. Thanks to her husband Gus, KF4FPT, Jill sent out a few messages on packet and before you knew it she was making friends all around the world. Gus tells me that ham radio had become a very big part of her life since getting her ticket. Gus is still getting messages from hams all over the world. Gus told me that one ham from Switzerland sent flowers to Jill's funeral. Through her years Jill had impacted many peoples lives, and because of ham radio she had impacted many people throughout the world these last few months. Ham radio made a very lasting impression on Jill and we will all miss her dearly.

Bedford Mitchell, AD4EM has been a long time member of the ham community here in Memphis. Bedford was a past member of Delta Club and was currently on the Board of the MARA club. I understand he was also very active in the Air Force Mars program here. Bedford was also instrumental in the Hamfest activities here in Memphis for a long time, and served many long and hard hours working for the hobby. Bedford held an Extra Class license, along with his wife Susie. I had the pleasure of speaking with Mrs. Susie and she told me how she and Bedford got involved with Ham Radio. On Aug. 10, 1990 Mrs. Susie had a traffic accident at Poplar Pike and Riverdale, and of all the people to have been behind her was a ham radio operator. That ham phone patched the Police and Fire Dept. and stayed and helped Mrs. Susie until help arrived. The Fire Dept. had to cut her out of the car. She told me had it not been for that Ham she would not be with us now. She has asked many times for that ham to step forward, but no one has.

Bedford was also an avid Golf player and played in many tournament. He was also very active with the Men of St. Augustine Catholic Church. Bedford enjoyed working with children. Our hearts and prayers go out to these two families.....

From Tim...KF4DNA

To all Delta Club Members..... As the Director of Meetings and Information for the coming year, I am really looking forward to the coming year. In last months Sparks, Tommy, KD4TJO, mentioned that he would like to see 1 maybe 2 special events stations set up. Well, I would really like to shoot for at least 4 events where the club can use the new tower trailer. However, I have a few ideas of my own and I need your help coming up with some more . Any ideas, thoughts and or suggestions will be welcomed with open arms. I can be reached on the telephone listed here in Sparks, or E-Mail via the Internet at...tmcneill@tscc.com

Thanks and 73 Tim McNeill, KF4DNA

ATTENTION LADIES

There will be a "Planning Re-meeting" for all the ladies involved with the Delta Club. The meeting will be at 7:00 pm, Monday, February 24,1997. The Meeting will take place at Luby's in the Perimeter Mall, Summer and I-240. Please come with plenty of ideas for the remainder of the year.

This is an open invitation to all ladies (with or without a call sign). This will be a good opportunity for all of us to become better acquainted, and at the same time see what ideas each of us have for the women in the Delta Club.

If anyone has any questions or needs any information, please give me a call at 363-1198. I would also appreciate it if you can let me know if you will be there.

73, Melinda, KE4DXN

EDITORS NOTES.....

I want to thank everyone for the kind words expressed after last months newsletter was received. Again I would like to thank Ray, AA4UK, and Tommy, KD4TJO, for all their help in getting this put together and to the printers. Ray even came over to my QTH late on Sunday night and helped me get the sorting done for the Post Office. Let me again say we welcome any and all club members to submit articles to be published in the Sparks. Remember the deadline for submitting articles for the newsletter.

Starting this month I will be including 2 calendars a month for the clubs benefit. I have been able to tap into quite a bit of information of upcoming events, but as stated earlier in this newsletter, we need current information on all of you. Please check your address, (ZIP CODES PLEASE, IF YOU KNOW YOUR 4 ZIP CODE PLEASE GIVE IT TO US). Please remember to include information such as license class, any family additions. We still get complaints of members not getting their newsletter but find out they have not changed their address.

On another note. As was announced at last months meeting , we are asking all hams in the area that have E-mail addresses to send them to either Ben, KU4AW, or myself. Our E-Mail address can be found on page 5 of this newsletter. There you will see a new E-Mail address for me. When this newsletter goes to the post office I will change my E-mail address to reflect my new call sign.

Speaking of new call signs, you have noticed in the last few months quite a few hams have taken advantage of the vanity call sign program. Also in this months VE report you'll see 3 of us upgraded to Advanced Class and received new 2 by 2 calls. It will take us awhile to get used to our new calls, so please indulge us for a while.

I would like to reiterate Bill's sentiments of his training plans for the upcoming year. I hope to see all who want to, up-grade during this year. I may not be the greatest teacher but I plan on helping in anyway I can. Good luck to all who try to upgrade, and remember we are all with you.

73....David, KU4AS

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