# DELTA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

## *SPARKS*
### *Web Edition*

SPARKS P.O. BOX 750482 MEMPHIS, TN 38175-0482 / VOL. 12 / MARCH 1998

W4BS REPEATER SYSTEM

146.82, 147.36, 224.42, 443.2 & 145.03 Packet

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### PRESIDENT'S PAGE

At the February meeting I had to do what every president, be it the President of the United States or president of a club like Delta Amateur Radio Club, has had to do in the early stages of their term, present the operating budget to the membership for their approval. The Board of Directors worked very hard at the January Board meeting to prepare a proposed budget, and in many cases were able to reduce the proposed expenditure amount significantly.

A new twist that I am introducing to the financial side of the club is the preparation of a budget variance report. I want to be able to show the membership what the proposed budget amount is for a specific category, what our expenses have been "to-date", and whether we are over or under the budgeted amount. This way, we will be able to see at a glance just exactly where our actual expenses fall in relation to the budgeted amount at any one time.

To facilitate the ability to provide this information, I have asked Ernie, WA8KOC, our Treasurer, to prepare a budget variance report on a monthly basis and to include this in SPARKS. Now, every club member will be able to tell, at a glance, how well we are doing staying to budget.

In many respects this month is a very important landmark for many members, for it is this month that you have finally got to decide to renew your membership. As in past years, the first three months of the year are considered a "grace period" and all privileges such as autopatch access, and speed dialing are carried over from the previous year. However, this "grace period" is about to come to an end on Tuesday, March 10th. That evening after the meeting the access codes for the 2 meter and 70 centimeter repeaters will once again be changed. Any member who hasn't renewed his or her membership for 1998 will have their "pin number" deactivated.

I would like to encourage everyone who has possibly been procrastinating paying their dues for 1998 to do so between now and Tuesday evening to prevent loosing any privileges you now have.

We were once again honored to have two guests at our Board of Director meeting, but this time they were "XYL" and "OM". The board was very happy to have Wendy, KC5YIX, and Brian, KF4EWO, in attendance. Both Wendy and Brian gave us an update on the possibility of Delta Club being a Special Event Station associated with the Ford's/St. Jude Classic. Unfortunately, the news that they brought to the meeting was not what we had been hoping to hear. If the Delta Amateur Radio Club were to officially align itself with the golf classic it would cost approximately $2,000. As you might expect, the members of the board were spellbound by this figure. We have decided not to align officially with this event, but are inquiring about the possibilities that still center around the annual event. As we get more information, we will update the membership through articles in the newsletter and updates at the monthly meetings.

As you will recall, at the February meeting we had a special election for Director of Meetings & Special Events because Bill Covington, KC4SXT, resigned due to the demands of his job. I was very disappointed to see Bill resign, but am very happy that we were able to find his replacement with very little problem. Regina Graham, KF4HGS, graciously agreed to accept nomination for this position, and was voted into office unanimously in February. However, with this added responsibility, Regina has decided to relinquish her historian/photographer duties feeling that she would not be able to perform each equally well. I have asked Wendy, KC5YIX, to assume these duties. Now, all items surrounding the history of Delta Amateur Radio Club and the maintenance of the photo albums of the club will be Wendy's responsibility. I want to thank Wendy for her willingness to assume these duties, especially when she has young ones at home that are totally dependent upon her.

When I first joined Delta Club almost four years ago, I received a membership card. Not only did this card indicate that I was an active member of our club, but it also had the emergency "speed dial" codes printed on the back. I found this to be very helpful when I needed to contact the Memphis Police Department or Shelby County Sheriff Department. I still have that card and keep it above the visor for easy access. I would like to see our club re-institute this practice, but with a little different flavor. Instead of membership information on one side I would like to have all pertinent data for each of our repeaters listed. I have asked David Pace to design several different layouts and present it to the board at the next board meeting.

There are two positions on the board that I think make or break how successful a president's term is, and they are the Director of Programs and Director of Training. If you aren't sure of this fact, turn on your radio after the meeting on Tuesday, March 10th and listen to the conversation. I don't think you will hear people talking about how well the business portion of the meeting went, but you will have people talking about the program. In the February issue of SPARKS, I commented about the outstanding job that Ben, KF4GNC, has been doing with the programs that he has planned. If his programs for future meetings stay at the same level that they have been for January and February, Ben will either be nominated to fill this role again, or the new person will have a very difficult job surpassing Ben's efforts.

The other position that determines how successful a president's term is the Director of Training. Last year, we had more training programs offered than I can remember and I didn't think it was possible to match what Bill, WA4MJM, had accomplished. Well, I think we're on to setting a new level of excellence under to tutelage of Melinda, KE4IDXN. We have only been in office two months and already we have a No Code Tech class for children up and running, but we also have a CW class currently underway. In addition, Melinda has organized a CW Net and is working with Alex, KE4GYR, to develop a Net Control training session. There seems to be no end to the energy this lady has in organizing training classes.

If you haven't had the opportunity to either listen or check-in to the CW Net you ought to take the time. We have seven different members who prepare a CW practice session that coincides with the CW training program being taught by Jimmy, N4ZCO. I find it fun to listen to members wishing to upgrade check in to the practice net using none other than CW. If you're not busy at 7:30PM each evening, turn on your 2 meter rig to the 146.82 repeater and listen to the code practice, it's outstanding. I want to thank all those individuals who are CW Net Control operators for taking the time to devote to this aspect of our hobby.

Well, I better bring this to a close. I look forward to seeing more and more people at our meetings, especially when the days get longer and the weather gets warmer. Also, remember that with spring comes our severe weather period. That means more and more Severe Weather Nets. If you're interested in the Basic Spotter or Advanced Spotter classes, contact Tommy, KD4TJO to find out when and where they are being offered.

73,

Ben, KU4AW

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### Secretary's Report

As you will undoubtedly see in other parts of this newsletter, the deadline for renewal of your Delta Club membership will be at the close of the March membership meeting. We have had an incredible response from many of you so far, and we don't want to lose any of you but we have not yet renewed. We have a lot of wonderful events in the works and we need all of you to make these events spectacular. Delta Club still has the best repeater system in the Mid South area and we have a lot of good hams working to make it even better.

Delta Club offers a vast range of activities to participate in: UHF/VHF, packet, HF, DXing, QRP, Field Day, classes to upgrade, elmering, community service, ARES, RACES, Skywarn, teaching, just to name a few. Not only can you draw from the Club's resources, but you as an individual can offer your skills and knowledge to someone newer in the hobby.

The atmosphere of family and community within Delta Club is invaluable. We want you to be a part of it.

The following hams have renewed their memberships since the last issue of Sparks: Michael Murphey, KF4SJY, Winford Bruce, II, N4CTX, Dean Honadle, N2LAZ, Steve Stewart, KT4TK, Brenda Stewart, KF4IWL, David Chipman, KF4GLM, Carol King-Chipman, KF4KYR, Jerome Hines, KA4UGM, David Hicks, KC5IYZ, Steven Hicks, AB5ZW, Adella Hicks, KC5VIB, David Sykes, K4CII, Paula Sykes, K4QLW, David Corbett, KB3RIL, Loretta Corbett, KC5RQR, Dal Doyle, KN4AN, Steve Kellett, KF4SIU, Richard Rahn, KD4RPY, Jimmy Pierce, N4ZCO, Herb Pfoch, W4HXZ, Michael Dobson, WA0WQI, Jim Cissell, K4H, Ann Cissell, WB4HAA, Ben Cissell, KC4VRS, Tim McNeill, KF4DNA, Jim Watson, KE4OKM, Jean Watson, KE4OKN, Mark Shute, KE4LDX, James Tate, AF4AI, Robert Ennis, KD4SKT, Marc Guin, KB4ZMU, Aaron Guin, KB5ARZ, and Jamie Guin, KC5AZC. We have one new member: Michael West, KD5DCJ from West Memphis. Be sure to say hello to him if you hear his call on the air.

73, Kathy

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### REMINDER.....

Club membership expires on Dec. 31 of each year. The club has always extended a grace period of three (3) months. Anyone that has not renewed as of the March club meeting, Tuesday, March 10, 1998, will have their pin numbers turned off, not allowing you access to the auto patches on 146.82 and the 443.2 repeaters, also you will not receive a newsletter after the March issue. Please check the date on your mailing label when you get your March issue of Sparks, if you have already renewed it will say current Year 1998. If you have not renewed it will say Current Year 1997. We hope to have all members renew.

**PLEASE SEND THOSE RENEWALS IN SOON.**

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## MARCH

## CLUB MEETING

## 7365 HWY. 70

## BARTLETT, TN

## MEETING STARTS AT 7:00 PM

## THE W4BS REPEATER SYSTEM

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### March Program

Since our yearly project for the 1998 year is to update our repeater systems, this month's program will be especially interesting to all Delta Club members. It will cover the operation of all Delta Club repeaters.

73, Ben, KF4GNC

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### VE Liaison

Thanks to the following VE's who helped at the last testing session of February 10:

Jim Cissel K4H Frances White WA4ZYN Don Cook K4HPO

Congratulations to Nancy Bain on completing the elements for the Technician license.

Unfortunately the FCC computer went down on Feb 10th, the very day of our testing session. As of today, Feb 21, the system is still not up and running. Worse yet, the FCC HAS NOT processed ANY applications since the computer went down, so I do not have a call sign for Nancy. Hopefully the problem will be corrected soon.

Sorry for the inconvenience, but, we have been asked not to file any applications until the system is fixed. I guess we are back to the days that many of us remember -- the wait - 6 to 12 weeks sometimes - for our license to arrive (it is said that patience is a virtue and that with the wait comes a better appreciation of the license that was earned).

73, Joan KN4PM VE liaison

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## 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.**

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### REMINDER:

Please remember to keep the FCC aware or any change in name and address, they do have to be able to get in touch with you should there be any problems that arise.

As of January 1st the old 610 forms will no longer be accepted for any reason.

The new 610 dated September 1977 will be the only form available for renewal or upgrading that is accepted by the FCC. The reason for this is the new inclusive phrasing that all must sign:

I certify that:

- The construction of the station would NOT be an action which is likely to have a significant environmental effect (see the Commissions Rules 47 C.F.R. Sections 1.1301-1.1319 and section 97.13(a);

- I have READ and WILL COMPLY WITH SECTION 97.13(c) of the Commission's Rules regarding RADIOFREQUENCY (RF) RADIATION SAFETY and the amateur service section of OST/OET Bulletin Number 65.

These new forms can be downloaded from the FCC site or I do have some forms available.

73, Joan KN4PM

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**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 reptr**

**BACK ON THE AIR**

**443.20 patch, 107.2**

**145.03 packet / bbs**

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### 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

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### AMATEUR HARDWARE UPDATE .....

Many Amateurs operating morse code still like to put down their lambic Paddles and computer keyboards to run a straight key like the old days.

This month's project is a straight key for code work or just practice with a code oscillator. The key is made out of a surplus computer mouse. Open the mouse and isolate one of the mouse buttons by cutting PC board traces going to it. Then pick two of the wires in the mouse cable and solder them to the switch. Cut the connector off the mouse and strip back the two wires you hooked to the switch. By hooking these to the key input of the radio or code practice oscillator you are ready to use the key. A surplus or non-working mouse can be bought for a couple of bucks. By hooking up two of the mouse switches you can also make it work like a paddle key. This key is easy to make and fun to play with.

I will have the MOUSE MORSE KEYER at the meeting to show and answer questions for those who wish to make their own.

SEE YOU AT THE MEETING .....

James Butler, KB4LJV

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### AMATEUR PACKET UPDATE ...

I am always looking for new sources for Amateur equipment. I was checking out the new 1998 Radio Shack catalog the other day when I noticed they have started to carry more Amateur Radio Equipment. They now carry Hy-Gain antennas. They also carry Vectronics tuners, TVI filters, and even an electronic keyer. Radio Shack also continues to carry their own line of Amateur radios and accessories. They also have a large selection of shortwave receivers for monitoring the bands. Don't know the brands they carry show as RSU code in the catalog. RSU stands for Radio Shack Unlimited and allows you to have these items shipped directly to your door via UPS. Check out the new 1998 Radio Catalog to see what's new for 1998.

James Butler, KB4LJV

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### From the Editor

The format of the newsletter has not changed and at this time I do not plan on changing the layout. I am trying to include as much information as I can squeeze in it. Last month you saw two articles I reprinted from World Radio that tied in directly with the efforts Melinda has going with the CW class and practice net and the Traffic and Information Net on the 146.82 repeater every night.

Melinda has informed me that she has a Net Control training class scheduled for Saturday March 14th. Listen for the time and place on the Traffic and Information Net.

In keeping with this idea of importing more information that would be of interest to the Amateur community, I have been doing a whole lot more reading. I will be using any and all articles that I can find that I think will be of interest to you. However you can help me.

If you see an article that you would like to be reprinted in Sparks, or if you would like to write an article, PLEASE let me know about it. Either e-mail it to me, call me and read it to me on the phone (if you can find me at home), or type it up and mail it to me the old fashion way, better known today as snail-mail.....

David, KU4AS

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### From our Past President

After two months of retirement from writing newsletter articles and a little coaxing from our new President, my keyboard is active again. Ben has charged me with a couple of tasks this year, those being working towards obtaining a location for the club to have as a "headquarters" and to coordinate the club's efforts in helping with public service events in the Memphis area.

As I understand it, The City of Memphis has, in the past, leased vacant homes and businesses to non-profit groups, like the Jaycees, for a nominal fee (like one dollar a year). I hope to be able to obtain something along the same lines for the club, either from Memphis, Shelby County or preferably the City of Bartlett. It may not be large enough for us to hold club meetings but we could use it for storing club owned equipment, build a club station, have a location to build, test and repair our repeaters and hold small meetings like board meetings and training classes. I will be working on this project throughout the year so if anyone has any information that would be helpful in this endeavor, please let me know. If you happen to know someone who owns a building that they are having trouble keeping rented, please let me know. It just could be that we could help each other.

As far as public service events, the first thing that usually comes around in the spring is the March of Dimes WalkAmerica. This event is typically in late April and is followed shortly by the Memphis in May Triathalon. I will be asking for volunteers from the membership for these events soon. Please keep these times in the back of your mind so that you can plan to help ahead of time. We always seem to have enough volunteers but we can't get commitments from some people until about the night before the event. That makes those planning the amateur communications a little nervous, so please plan now to help show the event officials, the other volunteers, and the City of Memphis officials that amateur radio operators are always there to help when we are needed. Listen to the nets, check out the April issue of Sparks and look for information on the club website for dates and times of the events. I am counting on all of your support to make these events successful.

Thanks and 73,

Tommy, KD4TJO

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### From Our Director of Training

There is so much to learn and so little time. Every day I realize how much more there is to learn about this hobby. I want to especially thank all of the Net Control stations for the CW practice net. They are really doing an outstanding job. Not only are they helping us to learn and practice the code but they are truly enjoying themselves as well. Have you listened to these guys yet? You can't tell me that these guys aren't having fun! While we are talking about CW let me tell you a little about the code class that is going on. Jimmy Pierce, N4ZCO is teaching the class in his home every Sunday afternoon. I can't begin to thank Jimmy enough for not only opening his home to us but also for doing such a great job of teaching the class. We have not had anyone to drop out of the class. That is really something. Normally there are some that for one reason or another will disappear. That is certainly not the case here. That, in my opinion, says something for the wonderful job that Jimmy is doing.

The kid's class is making lots of progress. These kids amaze me each week. You should have seen these kids learning the principles of Ohm's law and working the mathematical equations. Keep in mind these are kids are just now starting to learn about multiplication in school. They haven't even gotten to division yet. They are just doing a great job and always manage to really make my day each Saturday. Listen for some great things in the future from these young people.

For anyone who was not at the meeting last month I passed around a list to sign for those interested in being an alternate net control station for either the CW net or the Traffic and Information net. If you would be interested in doing this, please give me a call and I will be happy to add you to the current list and will get either or both preambles to you as soon as possible.

Speaking of Net Control Stations. We will be having a training class for ALL net control stations in March. I URGE ALL net control stations to try to make this class. It will be held on a Saturday morning for the biggest part of the morning. We will go into a good deal of detail on the National Traffic System and handling NTS traffic. There will be quite a bit of helpful information passed along at this class. Alex Graham, KE4GYR will teach the traffic handling section of this class. Alex is very active in several of the traffic handling nets. He is also very active in the Hurricane nets when they are in session. Alex has had so much experience in this area and we certainly do appreciate his willingness to help out. There will be a different teacher for each class session. I hope everyone is taking advantage of the code practice on the air so that at the end of the theory class we will be ready to upgrade to that General Class license and do some HF work. One note about the General theory test, the question pool will be changing on July 1, 1998. We should take advantage of this opportunity before the new test goes into effect.

73,

Melinda, KE4IDXN

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### VICE DIRECTOR'S NOTES

I recently went to Hartford, CT. for the 1998 Annual Meeting of the ARRL Board of Directors on Friday and Saturday, January 16-17, 1998.

Expressing confidence in the League's leadership team, the ARRL Board of Directors has re-elected all current officers. Among those tapped for a new two-year terms was President Rod Stafford, W6ROD (a new call sign on the block). Also re-elected were First President Steve Mendelsohn, W2ML; Vice Presidents Joel Harrison, W5ZN, and Hugh Turnbull, W3ABC; International Affairs Vice President Larry Price, W4RA, Treasurer James McCobb, W1LLU, Executive Vice president and Secretary David Sumner, K1ZZ, Chief Financial Officer Barry Shelley, N1VXY, and all current Executive members.

For several hours on January 16, the Board deliberated under emergency lighting because of a power outage caused by an ice storm.

The League ended 1997 in the black and in overall sound financial shape, as the Board was told. That was a dramatic improvement from 1996, when the League finished the year in the red ink. The Board okayed the appointment of up to 15 members of the President's Roundtable, a group of influential amateur radio leaders and strong League supporters to guide development and endowment activities. The League plans to launch a "vigorous program of education on planned and deferred giving." Approved by the Board were the rules changes for the DXCC program that had been recommended by the DXCC 2000 Committee. Under the new criteria, no countries currently on the DXCC list will be removed. The ARRL Board voted to present the 1997 ARRL International Humanitarian Award to Al Burke, W3VR, and Mae Burke, WX3TL (SK), in recognition of their lifetime of public service of traffic handling "and for their unique dedication to this facet of Amateur Radio. On an II-4 vote, the Board voted to not draft a petition to the FCC to simplify the Amateur Radio license structure and to increase HF privileges for Novice and Technique Plus licenses. In general, the plan would have asked the FCC to halt the issuance of the new Novice licenses while continuing to renew existing licenses. The Board defeated a motion on a 10-5 vote to refer to the Executive Committee for study a proposal to ask the FCC to reduce the number of license classes to three. The ARRL Headquarters will have an Audio News Service that can be downloaded and played back over a neighborhood repeater in order for our technician classes operators the line of communication to the League.

The Minutes of the meeting should appear in the March 1998 QST.

* It is a pleasure to bring back to you some of the things that happen at the Board of Directors meeting.

Henry R. Leggette, WD4Q

Vice Director, Delta Division

American Radio Relay League

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