

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

It's hard to believe that we are almost half way through 1999. In a couple of weeks we will once again be gathering for that annual event called Field Day. However, just a couple of weeks prior to this event, Delta Club is going to have an event of their own, a Special Event week-end. On Saturday, June 12th, we will be setting up a station at the Navy base. Thanks to Dick Cookenham, K3ORS, and Ed Trammell, KF4QFW, we will have our second consecutive Special Event. This is a perfect time for those of you that have an interest, or may be just a little mystified about HF operation to get your "hands wet" so to speak. There are no contest rules to worry about, no need to try and make as many contacts as you can, it's an opportunity for you to sit down at an HF rig, spin the dial, make a contact or two, and enjoy the camaraderie of other amateurs. It's a time to "ragchew" both in person and on the air.

To make this even more exciting, Dick and Ed have made arrangements to have our Special Event listed in the June issue of QST. There are a lot of amateurs out there that thoroughly enjoy working different Special Events, in fact many of them try to get worked All States (WAS) by working only Special Event stations. So, if you have an interest, or you want to hone your operating skills in preparation for Field Day, then come on out to our Special Event Station on June 12th. For more information about the event, contact Dick, K3ORS, or Ed, KF4QFW, I'm sure they will be happy to sign you up to operate. Also, if you don't have an interest in operating, we could use all the help we can get to setup and tear down the trailer and station equipment. We won't turn anyone away.

As I headed to earlier, Field Day 1999 comes right on the heels of our Special Event. From the reports that Tom, K4TTA, has made at our Board of Director meetings and e-mails that I have received from him in the interim periods, this is going to be one Field Day we won't soon forget. I'm not going to steal all Tom's thunder, but he has made some mighty nice improvements to this years Field Day event. As most of you recall, we have always setup in the park area across from the Pig N Whistle restaurant, and every year we complain about the heat and lack of shade. Well, "Tom to the rescue." If those of you that came out to our Special Event station last year will recall, we setup in the gazebo which was in the shaded area of Freeman Park. This year we will be closer to the facilities, no longer will you be closer to a canteen of water, put on your hiking shoes, and trek across "no man's land" to get to the rest rooms. Now the facilities will be just a stone's throw away from where we will be operating. Just one last comment about Field Day and I'll move on. As we all know, when operating VHF/UHF the key to getting a good signal out is how high you can get your antenna. Well, without giving anything away, let me say that this year's VHF Station's antenna is going to be mounted on something that is taller than a breadbox, but lower than a FedEx MD-11 flying at 35,000 feet. And this is just one of the new twists that will be at this year's Field Day.

So, mark the last full week-end in June on your calendar, start oiling up that CW Fist, brush the cobwebs off the HF rig and start honing up your HF skills. We're going to have one mighty fine Field Day operation come rain or shine.

At the May Board of Director's meeting one of the topics of discussion was the annual Delta Club picnic. For those of you that are new to the club, each year in the month of September we all gather at a site in Shelby Farms to enjoy the culmination of Summer, learn ours, or our spouses culinary skills, and just enjoy a week-end afternoon talking with friends, operating a little QRP on 20 and 40 meters, playing volleyball (you better watch out for Nancy Morrow, cause if you thought the NBA had a draft, your ain't seen nothing until you see Nancy recruit you to play volleyball!!!!!!). It's a time to bring the rest of the family out to meet those folks that you get up at the crack of dawn to drive to Jackson, MS or Huntsville, AL to a hamfest.

As we get closer to September, and plans are finalized, we'll be putting more information in SPARKS so that you let you know where and when we're having our annual Delta Club picnic.

During the month of May, I received an e-mail from an amateur from the UK, Robin Harris, G4GIY. He indicated that he was going to be in Memphis on business, he works for Smith-Nephew, and he would be spending about two weeks every month here for the next six months. I was interested in attending any club events we had going and wanted to meet some of the amateurs in the mid-south. I made arrangements to meet Robin at the "Candy Store on Saturday, May 15th. That Saturday Kathy and I spent the entire morning talking with Robin and introducing him to a number of amateurs, the "Saturday Regulars". We talked about our various interests in amateur radio and he indicated that he was very interested in QRP operation. Of course names like Jim Cissell, K1H4, and Mike Cloud, KR4IT, were mentioned to wet his whistle just a bit. And my eyes lit up when he said that he was an avid CW buff.

On Sunday afternoon Robin came over to our shack and we sat down and spun the dial on my Kenwood TS750 and listened to 15, 17, and 20 meters to see what activity might be out there. Well, the bands were in relatively good shape and so I never had the opportunity to hear what the HF bands sounded like from this side of the "big pond."

Before Robin returned to the UK, we made plans for a Sked on 17 meters for Saturday, May 22nd. Unfortunately, I can't tell you if we were successful in hooking up with each other since this article was written the day before, but I know that we will be having a regular Sked with Robin from here on out. I sent out an e-mail with the date, time, and frequency that we were planning to work. So in the future I will do that again. Anyone out there that's interested in getting involved with working a station from the UK just let me know. The more folks we can get on the air with Robin the more fun it will be.

Well, once again I have rambled on and on. It's time to bring this months article to a close or Tommy, KD4TJO, will have to have SPARKS bound because of the size. There's a lot of activity coming up in Delta Club and we're going to need a lot of help. I look forward to seeing a lot of you at the Special Event station, Field Day, the picnic, and at the monthly meetings.

73.
DE
Ben, KU4AW

From The Vice President

From the VP

I just wanted to thank everyone who bought Cokes and coolers last meeting and made donations. We netted about \$50 and plan to have this as a permanent fundraiser, each meeting. For those of you not there, ice cold Cokes are \$1 by themselves or \$2.50 with a holder/cooler. Please continue to support this effort!

I would also like to thank those who brought forward ideas for fund-raisers last meeting. They were all great ideas and we will be seeing some of these as the months progress. In addition, I need to thank everyone in DARC for intensifying their efforts toward fundraising and utilizing to its fullest extent our classification as a charitable organization.

Lastly, I would like to encourage everyone to "keep your eyes open" for fundraising opportunities. You never know when one of these may really pay off. Also, please get me names at your place of work for a contact person for solicitation letters. I won't use your name, and it is an easy way to get bucks without coming out of your pocket! Thank you.

Kurt, KU4NH

Editors Note: The following article was unintentionally left out of last months newsletter.

CQ FIELD DAY FROM WHISKEY FOUR BRAVO SIERRA

Field Day plans continue to develop. I've been in contact with WREG, Channel 3, and they have expressed interest in possibly doing remote weathercasts from the FD site. Negotiations are in progress. In case you missed it last year, WREG gave us some really fantastic coverage on the Saturday 6 O'clock news, about five minutes worth - and Delta Club was the lead story.

At the June meeting, Mike - KG4BVK, Food Chairman will have some signup sheets for those planning on eating Saturday Supper at the FD site. If you can't get to the meeting, but are planning to eat with us, please get in touch with Mike on the air, telephone (386-6268), or email at KG4BVK@arrl.net. We need to know how many to plan for.

There will be another phone operating training session at the June Special Event Station at Millington. See Dick, K3ORS, or me for further information.

We are planning to form three teams for phone operation, with each team being responsible for two four-hour blocks of time. The teams will be headed by KB4KA, AA0BA and K4TTA. We'll have more on these assignments as things continue to develop.

ARRL has announced that Field Day participation pins will be available for \$5.00. They request that we place one order for all that we want, so if you want one, see K9DM, K3ORS, KE4UYU or K4TTA. We will have a sign-up sheet at the May and June meetings.

CQ FIELD DAY -- PART 2 -- PARTICIPATION

Field Day is a unique event in the amateur radio year. It is one of only two major contests during the summer and it is the only major contest each year, which stresses club participation operating under simulated emergency conditions. Field Day also provides a fantastic opportunity for learning more about our hobby.

At the Field Day site, Delta Club will convene and employ most of its accumulated knowledge about amateur radio operations. What better opportunity will you ever find to acquire "hands-on" learning about so many different facets of amateur radio?

There is a tremendous amount of knowledge spread among our membership. Field Day is your opportunity to learn by doing many of the tasks inherent in operating an amateur radio station. Everybody from the newest of licensees to the most experienced Extra class operator can learn something at a good Field Day. We have some incredibly talented folks in our club and someone with expertise in just about every area of ham radio. Field Day is the one event when all of this comes together in one place at one time. Come join in; help out; learn something; and be part of this year's Delta Club team.

THINK FIELD DAY!

73, K4TTA

JUNE 8

CLUB MEETING

7365 HWY. 70

BARTLETT, TN

MEETING STARTS AT 7:00 PM

As with all June programs this month's is on FIELD DAY!

THINK FIELD DAY!

As in the past, our June program will be the membership meeting for our final planning for Field Day 1999. Be sure to do your best to attend, as this is the Field Day Captains' last chance to try to tie up all the loose ends and get the last "odds and ends" that we will need for this year's event.

C U there,
K4TTA

Public Service Update

In following last month's article, I'd like to thank those members that assisted with the 1999 Memphis in May Triathlon. The date was Sunday May 23 and it started pretty early for those that helped.

Our volunteers began assembling at Edmund Orgill Park in Millington about 6 am in preparation for a 7:30 am race start. For those that aren't familiar with the Triathlon, the Memphis in May event starts with a 1.5K swim then transitions to a 40K bike course and finishes with a 10K run. Anybody want to sign up for the event next year? Not me!!

We set up a net control station with a j-pole about 20 ft. up and a 2 meter mobile rig on a marine battery. Conditions were very good that morning for working the event on simplex. As Tom, K4TTA was taking a radio check roll call, he had a station from Alabama check into our race net...not bad. Tom's always looking to work a little DX. We had a very good event with minimal numbers of injuries to the participants or their bikes.

The first male participant finished the course in 1:49:31 while the second place was taken by a local gentleman from Cordova, TN in a time of 1:49:42 and the first female athlete finished with a time of 1:58:29 but all these folks are considered "pros."

The "pros" for amateur radio communications support were:

Sylvia Greene, KE4WOT
Robert Greene, KE4HHH
Dan Hoffman, N4VWM
Bill Covington, KC4SXT
Tom Richardson, K4TTA
Ned Savage, KA4BL
Joe Lowenthal, WA4OVO
Terry Cox, KB4KA
Rick Bonds, KE4NTI
Mike Richardson, KG4BVK
Bob Holdford, KF4NDH

Thanks to all these folks for their time and talents....

73 de

Tommy, KD4TJO

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.

The British Are Coming

Well it seems like history is repeating itself. A little over 200 years ago we had to run them off and now they are back to see what all the hype is about when it comes to something they don't have. That something is severe weather.

Actually, by the time you read this, they will have come and gone. The BBC, British Broadcasting Company, has been in the area with three crews doing a story for The Discovery Channel on Storm Chasing and the SKYWARN program. One crew was contacted with a Brit that went on a trip with a Storm Chase Tour company in Oklaboma, one crew went with VORTEX99, the NSSL chase teams, and one was in the Mid-South due to all the severe weather we had over the last year.

I was contacted earlier this year to talk to them about Storm Chasing in the Mid-South. The ARRL's Cloud does a story similar to this every year and I think it is an honor that they wanted to do the SKYWARN part of the story in the Mid-South. I think that their decision was based a lot on how our Skywarn program is structured and how successful it operates. I have been chasing storms for almost 12 years now. During that time, I have been chasing in many areas of the United States and I can truthfully say that we have one of the best SKYWARN programs in the Country. I have chased all over the "alley", listened to many nets, and called in reports to most of them, so I can speak from experience.

A few years ago I got out of radio for other reasons and since I have gotten back in a lot has changed. A long time ago, most of the people outside of Shelby County felt like their reports were not welcome into the Shelby County SKYWARN Net, but now again it is a lot different. I can truly say and I am glad to be a part of the program.

In closing this rambling I would like to stress that storm chasing is dangerous. For those of you who want to see what it's like, I suggest you get with someone that is an experienced storm chaser and someone that you trust for your first few outings. But always be safe and stay South.

73.
Jeff
KB5SFV

Editors Note: Since this issue is in your hands after these folks have come and gone, we hope to have a more detailed article about their visit in next month's SPARKS.

FCC Spikes Restructuring Rumors at Dayton

The big FCC announcement about Amateur Radio license restructuring that many hams erroneously had been expecting at the Dayton Hamvention turned out to be that there would be no announcement. Speaking to a packed house at the Sunday FCC forum at Dayton Hamvention, Bill Cross, WJTN, of the FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau spiked rumors that the FCC would have something substantive to say at Dayton about Amateur Radio restructuring. WT Docket 98-143. "I can confirm without reservation that the rumors that have been flying fast and furious as to what the Commission has decided or will decide are just rumors," he said. According to Cross, the Commission had not decided anything as of May 13.

Cross said the FCC received 22590 comments from the amateur community in the proceeding. Comments have been read and filed, he said. Some comments continue to straggle in, although the deadline passed in January. Cross offered his take on what the FCC might do, inferring that the Commission would propose either three or four license classes, no more, no less.

Based on the comments received, Cross said, many hams believe amateur examinations are not testing on the correct information. He invited hams to suggest questions to the Question Pool Committee; the body that comes up with the questions that appear on amateur exams. Suggested questions go to QPC Chairman Ray Adams, WACPA, 6702 Matterhorn Ct, Knoxville TN 37918-6314. A copy to Bart Jahnke, W9JJ, ARRL VEC, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111, would be appreciated.

Cross said comments on प्रदेश code testing standards "drew the most passionate responses." The League has suggested 5 WPM and 12 WPM testing tiers. Cross said those expecting a new top speed above 20 WPM would be disappointed, but he offered no other predictions on how the Commission might act on the CW requirements issue.

Cross also said the Universal Licensing System would be going into effect for Amateur Radio later this year, and it will incorporate the vanity call sign program. The system will replace the venerable Form 610 series with a new, inclusive electronic document known as Form 605. ULS will permit amateurs to file applications, modifications or renewals via the Internet. Individual hams will not be required to file electronically, however. He encouraged hams to register for the ULS.

League Urges FCC to Expedite Restructuring

The ARRL has urged the FCC to act "without delay" on Amateur Radio restructuring and has suggested that the Commission adopt the League's restructuring plan as its own in order to speed up the process. In a May 19 letter to the FCC, the League said that the state of limbo created by the current FCC Amateur Radio restructuring proceeding, WT Docket 98-143, is stilling Amateur Radio's growth, as current and prospective hams await an FCC Report and Order.

The League asked the FCC to adopt the League's restructuring plan in a Report and Order "at the earliest possible time."

The ARRL told the FCC that its comprehensive plan of four license classes and two Morse code testing tiers--5 WPM and 12 WPM--plus reforming of the Novice/Technician Plus HF CW subbands "constitutes a reasonable middle ground proposal." The ARRL's restructuring proposal reforming using SSB HF subbands. In addition, the League said, reforming "is absolutely necessary to preserve and enhance the incentive self-training program" and to ensure more efficient use of limited HF allocations. Under the League's plan, General, Advanced, and Extra class licensees would get additional HF spectrum for phone operation.

Both the FCC and ARRL proposals would eliminate the Novice and Tech Plus licenses. The ARRL's letter stressed that "reforming" of the Novice class subbands was "the most critical portion of the League's comprehensive plan, or, indeed, of any license restructuring plan the Commission may adopt." The League said reforming was essential to make room for anticipated additional licensees using SSB HF subbands. In addition, the League said, reforming "is absolutely necessary to preserve and enhance the incentive self-training program" and to ensure more efficient use of limited HF allocations. Under the League's plan, General, Advanced, and Extra class licensees would get additional HF spectrum for phone operation.

The League said that adopting its restructuring plan in toto was "the best means of accomplishing increased growth in the Amateur Service" and of continuing Amateur Radio's value as a "cornerstone of telecommunications development."

The League also took the opportunity to express appreciation for the support for the Amateur Service provided by FCC Chairman William Kennard and WT Chief Thomas Sguree and to thank the FCC for the renewed efforts of Compliance and Information Bureau Chief Richard Lee and CIB Legal Advisor Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH.

From the ARRL Letter, Vol. 18, No. 21 and reprinted here with permission.

73.
Joan KN4PM

AMATEUR PACKET UPDATE....

Amateurs are always looking for new equipment to use in their hobby. Icom has just moved up another level with their new mobile dual band radio. The new Icom IC-2800H mobile has a faceplate that detaches from the radio. While this in itself is not new the display is. The face contains a built in color LCD TV screen.

The radio functions and frequency information is displayed on the small TV. Icom has also included a dedicated packet connection port to the radio. With 50 watts out max on two meter and 35 watts on 440 the rig can work packet or repeaters with the best of other mobiles.

The best thing about the new display is the NTSC Composite Video input jack on the display. This allows putting the packet screen on the display with laptops or home computers that generate a composite video signal. You could also hook up a TV tuner and watch TV or weather updates from TV stations in the field. This is a neat new feature from Icom and will probably be featured on other rigs in the future. If you are looking for a new rig with video display capability check out the new IC-2800H from Icom.

James Butler, KB4JLV

AMATEUR HARDWARE UPDATE....

Many times we can have interference problems with our radio equipment. The problem gets worse as manufacturers of consumer electronics cut cost on their equipment and electronics can generate RF that can get into the AC power lines radiating RF or following the lines right to our radio equipment.

This month's project is the EMI TEST FIXTURE. It uses an EMI filter sold by electronics firms to block RF from entering through the power lines of an appliance. The filter is a LC filter designed to let 60 Hz power through but blocks RF from getting back into the line. The fixture I built allows you to plug in the suspect appliance to check and see if the problem is fixed. A permanent filter can then be installed in the device.

The EMI TEST FIXTURE is easy to build and allows testing and troubleshooting of noise problems. I will have the EMI TEST FIXTURE 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, KB4JLV

VE Report

Memphis in May is just a memory of wonderful tastes, odors, music and fellowship. Field Day is just a few days away and half of the year is gone. Wow, how time flies when you are having fun or working hard. School is almost out and it is time to be aware of all the children in our neighborhoods!

At the May 11th meeting the following VE's were there to give a helping hand: Barry N4QW, Dick K3ORS, Don KJ4PO, Jim N4ZCO, and Steve N4SG. Thank you for your unending giving of time and talent to this service. We administered 8 elements at 14 candidates that evening. Everyone walked away with a CSCE with

only one element not passed.

Congratulations to:

Nicholson Perkins, Jr.
KG4CZI Tech Plus

William Winstead
KG4DDJ General

PLEASE remember to bring copies of your license and CSCE to all testing sessions. With the prolonged time due to cutbacks at the ARRL I try hard to put all sessions in the mail the following day (FedEx mail) and it still takes 10 days before anything is on the Internet - sometimes longer.

See you at the June meeting.

73.
Joan KN4PM

CHRISTMAS???? ALREADY?????

Just to get you thinking early this year about that one really special thing you need to find for your significant other.....

Mary Jamerson has hand stitched a king sized quilt and presented it to DARC for the Christmas Dinner raffle. I cannot begin to calculate how many hours had to have been spent making all the little 'yo-yo's' and small patterns sewn into larger ones, let alone sewing it together. A totally hand sewn quilt normally costs a great deal, but the Club will be offering this quilt to anyone interested for \$5.00 a raffle ticket.

The quilt will be on display at each meeting so you can take a look at it. Tickets will be sold from now until the dinner itself, so there should be plenty of opportunities to get many tickets with your name on them into the drawing. See photo on this page

THE QUIET BEFORE THE STORM....

As I write this clip for SPARKS, Field Day 1999 is 32 days away. Another of the 1999 Delta Club has been lined up, the press releases have been sent out, a training session has been done and another will be June 12th at the Special Event Station at the Millington NAS. About 50 people have signed up to do one thing or another - in some cases, SEVERAL different things, all in an effort to make Field Day 1999 Delta Club's best ever. We have a broad spectrum of participants from the club, from old-timers to new ops; and I want to thank everyone who is a part of the 1999 Field Day effort for all your work, this far.

By the time you read this (if you are in Bartlett, Field Day may have come and gone!!!), your FD captains will have had several meetings to plan stations and strategy. One of the major problems with FD 1998 was the heat. We currently have air-conditioned operating positions for three of our five stations and are working on getting air-conditioned accommodations for our Novice/Tech station also. We have a commitment from the Shelby County EMA for their command post trailer to be there. Morgan Buildings has also agreed to loan us a portable office building, and we also have a commitment from Apple Crane and Rigging to loan us a crane with a 90 foot boom to put the VHF antennas on. We'll have tribanders and towers up for the HF CW, the HF Phone and the Novice/Tech station. Consideration is being given to operating in the high power category as we have some kW amplifiers available also.

If you plan to operate HF phone and need some training in HF contesting, be sure to come to the Special Event Station June 12th. You DO NOT have to be licensed as a General class or above to operate, as we will have Extra Class control ops available at the HF phone station throughout the contest. If you've never tried HF phone, come on and get your feet wet at the Special Event Station.

Even if you can't come out to the Gazebo at Freeman Park for Field Day on June 26th and 27th, you can still help the club effort by contacting the Field Day stations. With an antenna up about 100 feet, and 146.52, 146.49 and 146.46. If you cover all the FCC's geographical area on 2 mtr FM. I hope EVERY club member that does not operate from the W4BS field day stations will contact the VHF station on 2 meters. We will be listening on 146.52, 146.49 and 146.46. If you also operate HF, be sure to listen for us and work us on as many bands as you are capable.

We have the operators; we have the equipment; and we are finalizing the plans to enable Delta Club to have a "Top Ten" finish in Category 2a. With everyone's help and participation, we'll get there.

73 and Think Field Day,
K4TTA

SECRETARY'S REPORT

I want to thank Regina Graham, KF4GFS, for taking over for me and handling everything so well at the May meeting; the welcome table, taking membership and ticket money, taking the minutes, making the coffees, and anything else that might have dropped into her lap. And thanks to Lauren, KF4LZM, and Lesleigh, KE4SRU, for helping out as well.

Delta Club has one new member, Bill Winstead, but he had not received notice of his call as of this printing. Hope to hear you on the air soon, Bill.

And we can add two more names to our rolls as renewed members: Jim Osburn, N4OXY, and Bernie Mintz, KE4IVP.

Hope to see you at the next meeting, at the Special Event this year at the Navy base, or at Field Day. June will certainly be a busy month. Don't miss a minute!

73, Kathy, KE4UYU

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

BK-AC ON THE AIR

443.20 patch, 107.2

145.03 packet / bbs

CONTEST CALENDAR

June 12-14
ARRL VHF QSO Party
1800 UTC June 12 to 0300 UTC June 14
Exchange Grid Square (Signal Report is optional)

June 19-20
Kid's Day Operating Event
1800-2400 UTC June 19
Exchange name, age, location and favorite color. Suggested freqs are: 28.350 to 28.400 and 14.270 to 14.300
No scoring. All participants will receive a certificate.

June 19-20
West Virginia QSO Party
1800-2400Z Jun 19
Work stations once/hand/2 mode, no repeater
QSOs: 160 80 40 20 15 10 6/2 meters.

June 26-27
Field Day
Friends 1800 UTC Saturday, ends 2100 UTC Sunday

For more info on June Contests check out the ARRL website at :
www.arrl.org/contests/hamfest/jun.html

Other Important Contacts

Field Day Chairman
Tom Richardson, K4TTA
386-6268
duffer@ix.netcom.com

VE Liaison
Joan Thorne, KN4PM
737-5795
jtw@men.net

Membership Chairpersons
Ben Barth, KF4GNC
Eloise Barth, KF4GNB
eloiseb@ix.netcom.com

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