

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
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PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Each year, about this time, the Club needs to begin the search for the next year's leaders. It is very common in every organization, that only a very few members actually do the organizational work, and the rest of the group help out or merely participate. This is not a negative statement. We need all three types of members. An organization will get bogged down if there are too many chiefs, will become overworked and burned out if there are not any helpers to assist with the details, and will certainly fade away quickly if there are no participants to appreciate the end results of all the efforts put forth.

Frequently, it is the same individuals who year after year, step forward and graciously accept the responsibilities of an office. This is okay, if that person enjoys the "doing" aspect of the hobby. However, it can very easily result in getting tired of the Club, or even the hobby, and this is not okay. No one should feel obligated to take an office just to keep the Club going for one more year. It serves no purpose to have a ham leave the hobby because he or she got so frustrated, tired, or bored, by staying on the Board too long.

I imagine also, from my side of the podium, that the membership must be getting tired of seeing the same people get up in front of them each month, even each year.

Delta Amateur Radio Club has about 300 members on its rolls. Some of those members are inactive, some are family members and not too terribly involved with the hobby, and some have joined the club to support the repeater but don't join in on the activities.

BUT THAT LEAVES THE REST OF YOU. Oh, I can hear you now. "Yeah, but I'm one of the helpers." Or, "I'm too new to the hobby." How about this one. "I don't have enough HF experience." "I can't be sure I can make each meeting." "No one knows who I am." "I'm just a General class ham." Or, heaven forbid, "I'm just a Tech Plus!" I won't print my responses to those statements!

My other half, Ben, KU4AW, about six years ago, told me we were going to attend our first Delta Club meeting. I replied that I would go to one meeting, but if I didn't like what I saw, that meeting would be my last. Well, you all can work out how that turned out. I found I enjoyed learning about the hobby, but I really enjoyed the hams involved with the hobby. For the first time I began to think, "I would like to help out with this."

This is one of those times I am calling upon you to return some of that which you have received from the hobby and even the club. Whether you have been a ham for a short time or for many years, I hope you have enjoyed the hobby as I have, and enjoyed the hams you've come in contact with. But it is your responsibility of transmitting on the air for fun doing CW, DX, packet, PSK31, Ares-Races, MARS, message traffic, or community service. It is your responsibility to maintain the integrity of the hobby, as well as pass on to new hams or new club members your enthusiasm for amateur radio. In this manner, you guarantee the prosperity and future of amateur radio, not only for yourself, but for all the other hams as well.

You can do this by offering to be one of the officers of the club. If I can do it, you can do it. No excuses accepted. Well, maybe just one or two....There are some criteria that must be met. You must be a current Delta Amateur Radio Club member. You must be a licensed ham. You must have attended 50% of the previous 12 club meetings. Anyone can nominate you, but out of courtesy, you should be asked first if you're willing to accept the nomination.

No one on the Board of Directors does his or her job alone. We are not asking for credentials, only that you're interested and willing. This is a team effort, with as much help from each other and the membership as possible. If you are interested let me or any Board member know. If you think someone would be good for a position, suggest it to one of the Board members. Our phone numbers and email addresses are posted in every SPARKS.

73. Kathy, KE4UYU

SEPTEMBER MEETING: RF SAFETY

The September meeting of the Delta Amateur Radio Club will be on Sept. 12 and will feature RF Safety. That is a subject most of us know about as little about as any subject in Ham Radio. This is unfortunate because of the consequences that do befell us because of it. Embarrassingly, I have been guilty of transmitting on the low power, fortunately, with my mag mount dual band in the floorboard of the front seat or the back when I'm in the Bronco. It won't fit in the garage without removing the antenna and I forget to put it back occasionally and will do that until I get to a handy place to stop and put it on top. Dumb but what you don't see or feel, you think is safe----WRONG!!!!!!

We are fortunate to have Paul, WMSQ, who does this for a living. He works at Brother and RF safety is what he is responsible for. Paul is an excellent teacher and from the time I have had the pleasure of spending with him, an unbelievably knowledgeable Ham. His electronic knowledge extends far beyond our hobby but our main gift from him will involve our hobby. Paul has extensive experience on commercial radios which are only "the low end of our hobby". Just kidding Paul. Please don't back out on me now.

My experience with the help Paul has given me is that this is one Ham that you need to listen to when he helps you. When he speaks, you need to listen because he knows what he is talking about. He is a believer in helping others and is more than willing to do it. He and Arlene have proven themselves over and over again in the short time they have been in our club. He and I talked and the one who Elmered him asked him to help ten other people when Paul asked what he could do in repayment. That is a familiar idea, mine has only asked that I help others as he has helped me. That is what Ham Radio is about and what Delta is about. We should all be glad to have people with that attitude.

Look forward to learning a lot of things you didn't realize about RF safety and come and join us for the sharing of knowledge, fun, food and fellowship. I don't know who made the apple cake at the last meeting but one for the next 75 meetings will be fine, thanks.

73, Freddy
KF4ZGJ

VE CORNER

Congratulations to:

- Paul Baggett Tech KG4IZW
- Rachael Baggett Tech KG4IZX
- James Brown General K4J5N
- Richard Bonds Tech Plus KE4NTI
- Donald Burke Extra K4BEV
- Michelle Cline Tech KG4IZZ
- Gary Dickens Tech KD5LCE
- David Fessime General KG4IRV
- Robert Flinn General K8IHR
- Donald Gentry General KD4SDG
- Suresh Kagoo General N9GSA
- James Knight General KG4J5N
- Michael Marsden Extra AG4BN
- Paul Moore Tech KG4IZY
- Virgil Roberts Tech KG4ITB
- Dennis Wolford Extra AC5ZU

Four of the above licenses were earned at the April 15th session. The other thirteen were earned at the August 8th testing session. CONGRATULATIONS to everyone. To those that are new to the hobby - WELCOME TO HAM RADIO.

Thank you to the following VE's who helped at the last testing session: Don KJ4PO and John WV5J - both helped with the written part of the testing - Jim K4H, Tom K4TTA, and Ben KU4AW who were recruited to help with the CW portion of the testing - and Arlene AASGX and Paul WMSQ who did numerous paperwork and table hunting since their daughter was testing that evening. Without all of your help these sessions would not be possible and the promotion of Ham Radio would be stunted.

If you have read this far please continue to read my other article for upcoming changes in the testing procedures. See you at the next meeting.

73, Joan KN4PM
Delta Division ARRL VE Liaison
k4jpm@arrl.net

UPCOMING CHANGES IN THE TESTING PROCEDURES

On July 27th The National Conference of Volunteer Examiners Coordinators voted to set up revised standards for the administration of Morse Code exams in the United States.

Morse Code exams would specifically use the Farnsworth "character speed" in the range of 13 to 15 WPM with an audio pitch of 700 to 1000 Hz. The ARRL is in the process of deciding which character speed they will be using but the tone will definitely be 720 Hz. These NEW CODE TAPES will be made starting sometime in the spring of the year. As always, there will be two ways to pass the Morse code requirement: (1) with straight copy of twenty five characters in a row - excluding the 6 Vs that start at the beginning and (2) by answering 7 out of the 10 questions correctly. When counting straight copy remember that numbers, punctuation and prosigns count as TWO characters. This can add up quickly - just ask some of the people that took code at the last testing session.

The reason for the change in the code is as follows: Some 11 years ago, the majority of the examination community began using the Farnsworth method of sending the code for Morse tests and for the training in order to encourage the character recognition by sound, rather than by counting the dots and dashes. With the 13 and the 20 WPM tests as a required part of the upgrade regime, choosing a character speed in the mid to upper teens seemed to best serve the people learning the code for the very first time (so that they didn't have to relearn the sound of the characters at each speed increment increase necessary for the higher class license).

In that regard, ARRL chose a character speed of 18 WPM for the 5 and 13 WPM code tests and for the practice tapes and the W1AW transmissions sent at or below 18 WPM. That is the standard being used today. OTHER GROUPS chose character speeds faster than 18 WPM, while others chose 13, and still others 15, and some were even scattered from 5 to 20 WPM. If anything was inconsistent in the Morse testing, it is the character speed used in tests.

Seeking to make code tests more standardized, the NCVEC has now set the standards. The FCC has had little in the way of Morse testing standards. They merely state that the test message must have an overall speed of 5 WPM, that it MUST contain all 43 required characters (alphabet, numbers, prosigns, punctuation) and that the characters be contained in a message not less than 5 minutes long in duration. (Taken from a letter of Bart Jahnke W9JJ, Manager ARRL VEC)

There is ONE BIG CHANGE though, the written exam will be FILL IN THE BLANK not the multiple choice presently used. All of the above changes are mandated to be in place by July 1, 2001. I do not know when the new codes tapes will be available for our use, but I will most assuredly keep you informed.

This ARRL VE Team WILL, however, start to implement the changes in January by giving fill in the blank tests rather than the multiple choice exams. This has always been an option of the team. We have given the multiple choice exams to keep the testing process similar throughout the city. So keep in mind that in January things will be changing.

I recently was able to visit the ARRL headquarters and was most impressed to find that every written exam paper available was behind locked doors. Even people working within the building were not allowed to step foot within the doors of the VE office (after you came to the locked area). How guarded those exams are - the very reason that I do not have any two exams that are the same.

Since this is rather lengthy I will leave till next month some information on CORES - The Commission Registration System that took place July of this year. I have had a few calls and will provide some information next month. This does not immediately affect the Ham Community (another filing system similar to ULS)

73, Joan KN4PM
ARRL VE Liaison

LOCAL HAMS COME TO THE AID OF A TRAVELER IN NEED

For Matthew Lambert, KC5SSH, a trip cross-country to seek his fortune took a turn for the worse just after he crossed the Mississippi River, entering Memphis, Tennessee on July 27, 2000. Matthew had just graduated from college in Oklahoma and was driving to North Carolina to seek a job. Earlier in the day, Matthew had experienced problems and replaced what he thought to be the cause - a bad battery. At about 6:00 PM, just after Matthew entered Memphis, it became apparent that the battery was not the cause, as his car died on Interstate 240. In Matthew's words: "I thought I was in pretty dire straits until I pulled out my old trusty HTX-202 and searched for repeaters in the area." Luckily for Matthew, he was able to locate one of the most monitored machines in the area, Delta Amateur Radio Club's W4BS 146.820 2 meter repeater. Within seconds of his initial distress call, Leonard Burke, KE4SEF, answered and was able to locate a towing service who could respond quickly, getting a wrecker to Matthew's location within a few minutes. About this time, Tommy Thompson, KD4TJO, who had been monitoring, broke in to ask if he could assist. Matthew indicated that he needed some help locating an inexpensive motel and also a repair shop or an automobile parts place, as he was fairly certain that he needed a new alternator. Tommy suggested to Leonard that he call a few motels in the I-40/Sycamore View area of Memphis, an area that Tommy felt would fill the bill. Tommy knew this area had several nice family-style motels, was on the way to Matthew's eventual destination, and was also near an all-night automobile parts store. Leonard started making calls while Tommy signed off temporarily to attend a meeting. Tommy indicated that he would check back with Matthew when his meeting ended in about two hours and plan a rendezvous to assist him in repairing his car.

After Tommy got out of the meeting, he called for Leonard or Matthew on the repeater with no response. Matthew was been working on an HT with a weak battery so Tommy didn't know if he was even being heard. About that time, David Smith, KF4PFY, came on frequency and told Tommy that he had been monitoring the whole thing earlier and that he thought that he knew where Matthew had ended up. With a phone call, David was able to reach Matthew and both Tommy and David headed to the motel to see what could be done.

Upon their arrival, they introduced themselves to Matthew, who seemed a little surprised at the offer of help, but being on limited funds and a long way to go, he accepted the help. With Tommy and David's help, Matthew was able to pull the old alternator from the car and replace it with a new one. They finally finished the task at about 1 A.M., at which time David and Tommy bid a goodnight to a very tired Matthew and told him they hoped the rest of his trip was uneventful. A very grateful Matthew told Tommy and David that he would email them through the DARC website to let them know he had reached his destination successfully.

On August 2, Tommy received an email from Matthew indicating that he made the trip without further incident. His email said, in part: "I've never seen such compassion from strangers and appreciate it a lot." ...' And if you ever think ham radio is going the way of the dinosaur cite this. Here's a young ham who appreciates all you guys who stayed tuned."

Matthew has now found a job in Wilson, NC and is getting settled in. You can email Matthew if you wish at: matt_lb@hotmail.com.

CLUB BLENDED ANNUAL!

The picnic Delta Amateur Radio Club family picnic will be Sunday, September 17th, from noon on! It will be held at Ellendale Park at the park pavilion. We will have the advantage of approximately ten picnic tables to be concrete and completely covered. Weather won't be a factor as has been the possibility in the past. There are plenty of tall trees and we will easily be able to string up some wire antennas and enjoy some HF while we enjoy fellowship among ourselves.

The park is located adjoining Singleton Community Center in the Ellendale section of Bartlett. It is only a long walk from our monthly meeting place. Let's give a try on directions. We will start as if we were going to the monthly meeting. Let's head east on HWY 70 (Summer Avenue) from Hwy 64 (Stage Road). We will now be heading in a westerly direction toward Ellendale Church of Christ. Before we get to the church we will see a street sign for Oak St. We will turn left (North) and we will pass the following cross streets on the way. First will be Andrews, next will be Deerfield and third will be Whitebridge. Oak will bear around to the right and we will follow it. Do not go straight and cross over the railroad tracks. Bear to the left and follow the road around. The first right will be Third Road. That is the street Singleton's front entrance faces. Turn right there. The first right off of Third Road is Greenleaf, turn there and it leads you directly to the park. We have the only pavilion so it won't be hard to find us. We will also be using our 146.82 repeater for talk in. In the unlikely event the 82 repeater is down, when you get to Hwy 70 and Oak, go to 146.46 simplex and we will be in easy simplex range there.

The main fare will be fried chicken and we will also grill hamburgers and hot dogs. These will be furnished by the Delta Club. The club will also be providing the cups, napkins, plastic ware and colas. The rest of the meal is up to us. Each attendee please bring a vegetable or dessert dish. Terry Edwards KD5JTY and Freddy Bratton KF4ZGJ will be coordinating the event. Please reply by e-mail with what you will bring. We will need dozens of sweetened and unsweetened iced tea. The club will provide colas but may prefer tea so we will need several jugs of that. The e-mail addresses are as follows: Terry is jarnsd@blyonline.com and Freddy is fbbratton@jcsx.com. We will have our monthly meeting the Tuesday before the picnic and will put the final touches on what is committed and what is left to be provided. Please mail your choice of dishes so we will be far ahead of the game. We have the pavilion until 6 PM, so we will have plenty of time. The pavilion is reserved and we have a letter from the Bartlett Parks and Recreation commission so we won't have to worry about problems securing the site. We look forward to your attendance and a chance for all of us to have a family event with fun and fellowship for all.

Freddy
KF4ZGJ

WHEN YOU USE THE REPEATER....

It has been a long while since there has been a review of rules and etiquette for using Delta Club's repeaters. We have many amateurs who are not only new to DARC, but new to the hobby as well. Sometimes it is good for us "old timers" to review the rules as well. This will be the first in a series of articles discussing various aspects of repeater operation, instruction, rules, and etiquette. If you have any questions about the correct way to use the repeaters, please feel free to ask our Repeater Trustee, Bill, WA4MJM, or any of the board members, on the air, by telephone or email, or at the meetings.

Listen for 30 seconds or so before you key the mike to see if someone is already in a QSO or conversation with another ham. If the frequency is available, when calling someone, say that ham's call first, followed by your own call sign. If no one responds, try one more time, but be sure to clear off the repeater with your call sign to indicate to other hams that you no longer need use of the frequency.

If you need to make a call and someone is already using the frequency, you can indicate the need to break in by just saying your suffix in between transmissions. One of the hams will acknowledge you and give you the opportunity to join in. You can make your call and then clear with your call sign and thanks when you're finished. Or you can just throw in your suffix in between transmissions if you want to join a QSO already in progress.

Remember you need to identify your station every 10 minutes once you begin a QSO, and when you end your first transmission. The FCC regulations require you repeaters to identify every 10 minutes as well, so when you hear the repeater identify, you identify at your next turn in the QSO.

Allow a 1- or 2-second pause between transmissions after the repeater has reset (you will hear a courtesy tone) so that other stations can break in if needed. Please keep your transmissions short. There could be an emergency occurring, but if a ham can't break in to get assistance, matters could go from bad to worse. Remember, if there is an emergency, saying "Break, break" followed by your call sign is the designated way to get everyone's attention and priority on the repeater.

Do not use the autopatch to conduct business of any kind. Calling your work to say you will be running late or you're on the way is business and is not allowed. Calls to place an order for a commercial product must not be made either. Autopatches should be kept as brief as possible; the amateur bands are intended to be used primarily for communication among amateurs.

See you on the repeaters. 73

TRAINING NEWS

Missed Field Day? Now you have another chance...and it won't be 100 degrees in the shade! Delta Club will be participating with the Boy Scouts of America in SCOUTBASE 2000 the weekend of October 20th through 22nd. They are expecting 15,000 Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Explorers to be at the Millington NAS. We've NEVER had a better opportunity to demonstrate our wonderful hobby to so many young people. ALSO, that weekend is the Jamboree On The Air (JOTA) activity. JOTA is a ham radio/Boy Scout combined activity during which hams invite Boy Scouts to their shack and allow them to talk to other Scouts participating in the event. WA4MJM graciously opened the Le Bonheur Hospital club station last year and I shared the privilege and opportunity with him of letting a Cub Scout Pack talk with their Boy Scout troop in North Dakota. Delta Club has participated in JOTA in the past, but this will be our chance to have the BIGGEST JOTA of all. We will be sponsoring merit badge classes for the Scouts who want to get their RADIO merit badge, as well as letting them talk on the air. If you've been to any of our recent meetings and look around the room, Delta Club does NOT have very many young people as members. I think all of us can remember "when the bug bit" and we decided we wanted to get our ticket. Let's give that opportunity to some young folks! If you can help, please sign up at the meeting or contact me. I would like to demonstrate as many modes of ham radio as we can, including satellite, APRS, slow-scan, and PSK31.

Missed the PSK31 program, didn't get K4DIT's handout, and want to try this fascinating mode? Go to <http://www.psk31.com> and download one of the PSK31 programs. Most of us operating with PSK31 locally are using DIGIPAP, North America, and South/Central America sites running about 4000 w/hats. Try it, it's a blast!

I would like to start our "Fall Semester" classes on the Saturday following the September meeting. We'll be meeting at the Ellendale United Methodist Church's Education Building and have several classrooms available. Classes will be from 9:00-10:00 on Saturdays. We will have better than a 90 per cent pass rate for those folks who have completed our courses and these classes should enjoy equally good success. Please sign up at the meeting or get in touch with me. UPGRADE NOW!

73, Tom, K4TTA

PSK31 NEWS

Those of you who were inspired by the presentation at the July meeting to get into this new digital mode may have noticed all of the increased PSK31 activity, especially on 20 meters around 14.070 MHz. It seems that the recent QST articles have sparked lots of interest in this mode. Tom K4TTA, has expressed an interest in starting a weekly 80 meter PSK31 net. If anyone is interested, contact Tom at k4tt@arrl.net, or call him at 386-6268. If you have Internet access, a couple of new PSK31 mailing lists have caught my eye, thanks to K4TTA. Take a look at: <http://www.gsl.net/38cpu/psk31.htm> and also <http://psk31relay.net>. The first list is a general purpose PSK31 information list. The second one was started by a ham who is experimenting with using PSK31 to relay email messages to the Internet. If you haven't taken the PSK31 plunge, come on in! Call either myself or K4TTA if you need help.

On a related subject, due to space constraints, I'm not able to participate on the construction of my Rocket-20 PSK31 antenna this month. Watch for it next month!

73, Ken, K4DIT

Volunteers Needed For Siren Testing

Memphis/Shelby County Emergency Management - Ares-Races will conduct Saturday testing of the Outdoor Emergency Warning Siren System, "tornado sirens", this summer on Saturday's at 12 noon - WEATHER PERMITTING. If any amateur would like to volunteer to observe a site - they may call Robin, KE4GPR, either on the air or at 754-7683 from 5pm to 7pm Thursdays and Fridays, or they may call Bobby, KG4CMA, either on the air or at 872-6127. We definitely appreciate all those who do volunteer and those who have volunteered in taking time out of their Saturday to help with testing.

From: The ARRL Letter Vol. 19, No. 32 August 25, 2000

FCC TURNS DOWN CB DX PETITION

The FCC has denied a petition that would have amended the FCC's Part 95 rules to permit DXing on the 11-meter Citizens Band. The petition sought to amend 95.413 of the rules that prohibits communications or attempts to communicate with CB stations more than 250 km away and to contact stations in other countries.

Designated RM-9807, the petition was filed by Popular Communications Contributing Editor Alan Dixon, N3HOE. Dixon's request is inconsistent with the purpose of the CB Radio Service and could fundamentally alter the nature of the service, the FCC said in turning down the petition. The FCC action was adopted August 18. The Order was released August 21.

The FCC said CB operators generally supported the FCC's position and that the present rule was unenforceable. The ARRL commented in opposition to the petition. "The Amateur Radio Service is the proper forum for the desired long-distance communications sought by the Dixon petition," the League told the FCC.

The National Association of Broadcasters also opposed Dixon's petition. The NAB said that the restriction was necessary to deter CBers from operating at excessive power levels and that consumers must be protected from illegal CB transmissions that interfere with radio, TV and other consumer electronics.

The FCC agreed with the ARRL and said it did not intend to create a service paralleling the Amateur Service when it authorized the Citizens Band Service. "Amending the rules to permit long-distance and international communications would undermine the purpose of the CB Radio Service rules and compromise one of the core distinctions between the CB Radio Service and the Amateur Radio Service," the FCC concluded.

PACKET UPDATE

Many amateurs are now getting started in digital modes. If you have a newer model radio wiring up a TNC to the radio has never been easier. Manufacturers have come out with an accessory port on their new radios. These are located on the back panels and consist of an 8 or 13 pin connector. These have PTT, Audio in, and audio output needed for TNC operation on them. MFJ has just come out with a new line of prewired accessory port to TNC cables. With these cables you just plug the accessory port on the radio and your TNC and you are ready to go. They offer several types for Icom, Kenwood, Yeasu, and Azden radios to hook-up to popular TNCs on the market. These cables are available for under \$20.00 and make it easier to get on the air. If you have a new rig and want to get into Packet look into these new cables from MFJ.

James Butler
KB4LJV

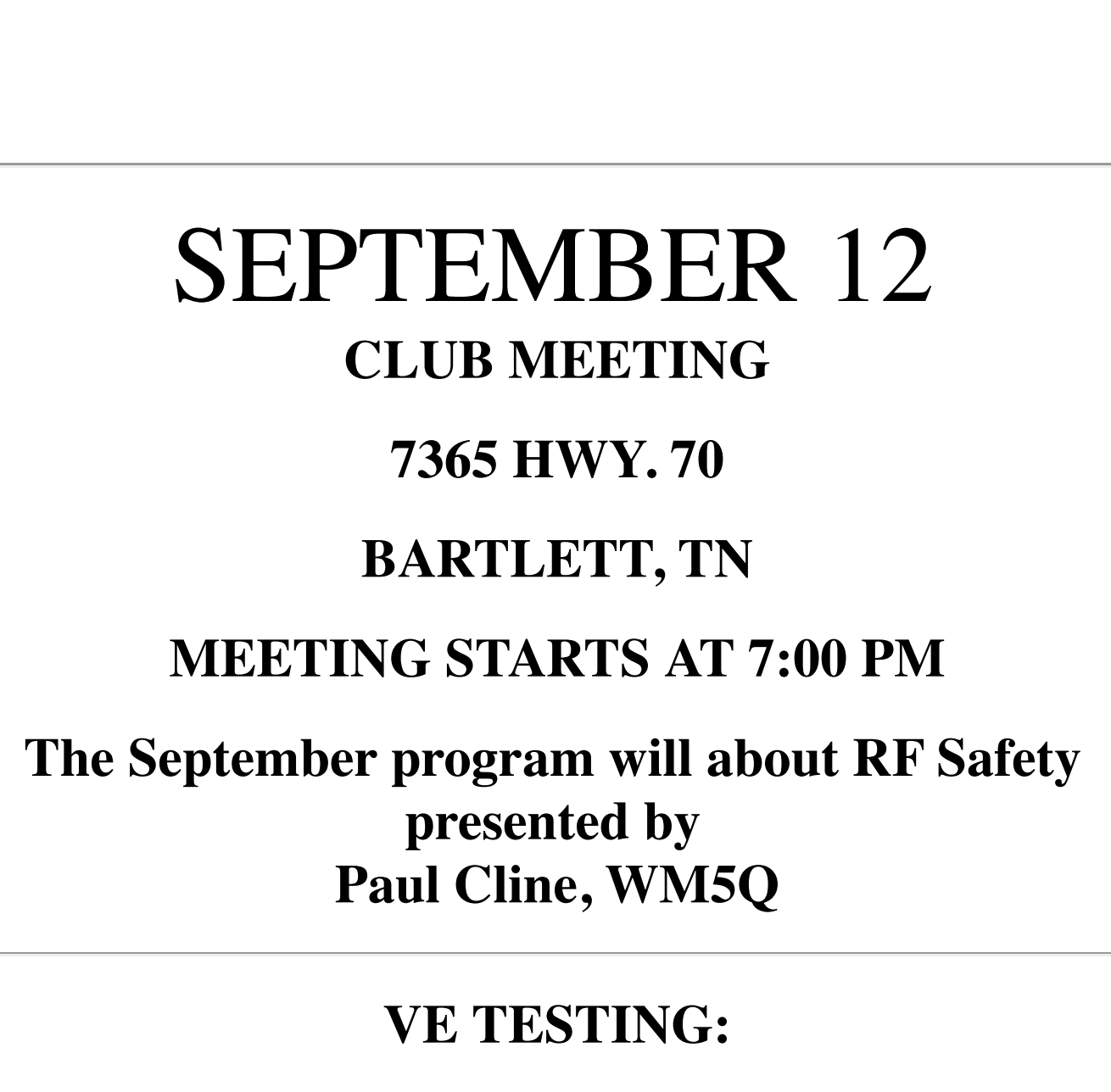
AMATEUR HARDWARE UPDATE

Many times we have interference problems when working the HF bands. Power line interference can cause problems on the bands and make copying impossible. One of the tools to use to hunt down this type of interference is an AM receiver that will receive in the 120 MHz to 140 MHz area. Power line noise generated is localized in this frequency area and many commercial units are sold to hunt down this noise. This month's project is the Ramsey Aircraft receiver kit. It will receive aircraft radio communications but can also be used to track down power line noise. The cost of the kit is under \$30.00 and it is easy to build. The unit is powered by a 9 volt battery which makes it good for portable work. If you want to listen in on aircraft communications and track down power line noise try the AR-1 Ramsey Electronics Aircraft Receiver. Their web address is: www.ramseyelectronics.com

I will have the unit at the meeting to show and answer questions on for those who wish to build up their own units.

SEE YOU AT THE MEETING.

James Butler
KB4LJV



SEPTEMBER 12 CLUB MEETING 7365 HWY. 70 BARTLETT, TN MEETING STARTS AT 7:00 PM

The September program will about RF Safety
presented by
Paul Cline, WMSQ

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 CSE'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.

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

443.20 patch, 107.2

145.03 packet / bbs

Other Important Contacts

	VE Liaison	Membership Chairpersons
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