



SIGNAL



February 1997 Volume 6 Number 2

Presidents Letter February 1997

I expect that most of us are sick of winter by now. It's time to start thinking about spring and what you will be doing. Give some thought to public service events.

The annual Groton Road Race will be held on April 27 (my birthday ☺). We will be needing more radio communications this year because the event has been expanded to 3 events, a 2K, 5K and the major event, the 10K. If you would like to help, please contact me before I contact you ☺.

On another vane, the elections are coming up. If you would like to see changes, improvements or have ideas, jump in and join the leadership team. Here is your opportunity to get into the game, from the inside.

I look forward to seeing you all at the meeting on Thursday.

Erik

Special Notice on the Club Call

N1NC

I spoke to Bruce Saturday night and he informed me that we had received our first choice of N1NC as a club call. Stan

This Months Meeting

This months speaker is William K1WD. He will speak on operating HF from a mobile and apartment setting. Both of these situations present considerable challenges to good performance.

At The Last Meeting

At the January meeting Ralph KD1SM and Stan KD1LE showed the equipment they

use in fox hunting. They had Doppler DF gear, Yagi antenna, maps, GPS equipment and computer mapping equipment.

The follow up (February meeting) was a full presentation on Radio Direction Finding covering the different types of equipment from the simplest and cheapest to the most complex and expensive. They also covered the strategies they use when fox hunting and some of the problems that you may run into.

This presentation was given at both the MARA Club in Fitchburg and NVARC. As a follow up, Ralph and Stan organized a fox hunt. This hunt was run February 1st on the input of the 145.45 Fitchburg machine. The boundary on the hunt were defined to be a 20 mile radius from the repeater site. The repeater is located at Burbank Hospital.

Three hunters from MMRA came up to join us. There were two hunters from MARA and one from NVARC.

After all the hunters found the fox we moved off to a local restaurant for lunch and to talk over the hunt. There was much discussion about the problems locating the fox and what might have been the causes.

Ralph and I have been hunting regularly on Saturday mornings after the breakfast meeting. If anyone is interested in joining us give us a call or join us for breakfast. We head off to the MMRA hunts about nine o'clock and return to the area about noon if we don't stop for lunch.

INFO...

Next weeks fox hunt by the MMRA will be a mobile fox hunt. That sounds like the normal thing where the hunters are mobile right. Well the fox is going to be mobile for this hunt. I don't have all the information yet but stay tuned. In order to be effective at this type of hunt all of the hunters will be coordinating on some frequency and working together. If you are interested in joining us or setting up another team let us know.

Stan

QRZ For Sale

The December 1996 QRZ CDROM is now in production. Any



member interested in purchasing a copy at the club discounted price should contact Ralph KD1SM.

E-mail Addresses

From time to time it would have been nice to be able to get in touch with as many members as possible at the last minute. For example, to let everyone know who/what the topic for the club meeting was, when we didn't know at the time of publishing the newsletter. For this reason I am adding E-mail addresses to the roster. If you have a regular E-mail address please give it to Ralph or me and we will add it.

Stan

ARRL Bulletin ARLB005

ARRL members are being invited to add their ideas, comments and recommendations to those of the ARRL WRC-99 Planning Committee, which has suggested sweeping--and potentially controversial--changes to the Amateur Radio licensing structure in the US. On the table for open discussion and debate are proposals that include: elimination of the Novice license creation of a new Intermediate license to replace the Technician Plus greater hf privileges for intermediate licensees than for the existing technician plus, including phone on 160, 75 and 15 meters a 10-wpm General CW test (with more stringent testing standards for all CW exams) expanded phone privileges for General-class and higher licensees.



Details of the plan, discussed during the recent ARRL Board of Directors meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, will appear in March QST. The Board says it seeks comments from members to ensure that before any plan goes forward, it enjoys broad support from the ama-

teur community. The Board will not act on the issue at least until its July meeting.

After its research revealed that as many as three Novices in four are inactive, the committee concluded that the Novice license is no longer useful. Although the committee would end the Novice license, its plan provides current Novices with an easy means to upgrade (via an open-book test) to the new Intermediate class license, which would replace the current Technician Plus. All present Tech Plus licensees would become Intermediate licensees. The Basic license would supplant the Technician license--now the hobby's most-popular entry-level ticket--with no changes in privileges. In addition, the committee's plan would phase out the current Novice and Tech Plus bands on 80, 40 and 15 meters, and replace them with new Intermediate-class allocations. The committee's consensus plan for Intermediate-class licensees calls for new CW bands on 80, 40 and 15 meters starting 25 kHz up from the lower band edge, digital and phone-band privileges on 75 and 15 meters and a 50-kHz phone or CW segment at the top end of 160 meters, plus expanded Novice and Tech Plus CW and phone allocations on 10 meters.

According to the proposal, Intermediate CW bands would be 3525 to 3700 kHz, 7025 to 7050 kHz, 21025 to 21150 kHz and 28050 to 28300 kHz. Digital operation was suggested for 3600 to 3625, 21100 to 21125 and 28100 to 28189 kHz. Phone privileges would include 1950 to 2000, 3900 to 4000, 21350 to 21450, SSB from 28300 to 28500 and FM from 29500 to 29700 kHz. Transmitter power for Intermediate-class licensees would be limited to 200 W PEP output (other licensees using these bands would not be limited to 200 W, however).

General-class and higher amateurs also would benefit from the plan, if it's adopted according to the committee's outlines. General-class hams would get additional phone privileges 3800 to 3850, 7200 to 7225, and 21250 to 21300 kHz; Advanced-class hams would add 3725 to 3775, 7125 to 7150 and 21175 to 21225 kHz; Extra-class hams would also have 3700 to 3750, 7125 to 7150 and 21150 to 21200 kHz.

With the exception of 40 meters, where Novice and Tech Plus licensees already have privileges, the committee suggested no changes on the hobby's narrowest and most crowded bands--including 20 meters and the narrow WARC bands at 30, 17 and 12 meters.

The Intermediate CW test would be 5 words per minute (the same as the current Tech

Plus requirement), but the committee proposed that the General class CW requirement be set at 10 wpm. There still would be no additional CW exam for the Advanced ticket, nor would there be any change in the 20-wpm requirement for the Extra. Exams for all classes would include a return to a sending test and the requirement for one minute of solid copy during a five-minute test--instead of the current method that tests on the content of the CW text.

Right now, these major changes are only in the talking stage. "Let us be very clear about this," said ARRL Executive Vice President David Sumner, K1ZZ, who characterized the committee's proposals as a starting point for discussion, not a done deal. "The changes are not ARRL policy; nothing has been proposed to, or by, the FCC, and the ARRL Board is committed to making no decision before its July 1997 meeting." Sumner said there is no timetable to complete the process. Only after there is an opportunity for in-depth consideration and discussion by the membership will the ARRL Board consider taking the next step--to approach the FCC with a rulemaking proposal--a process that automatically invites additional comments and suggestions.

Between the time they receive March QST and the end of May, members are asked to voice their opinions on the committee's suggestions to their directors, whose postal and e-mail addresses are listed on page 10 of QST. All suggestions and comments--positive and negative—are welcome.

ARRL ARLS003/MIR

US ham-Astronaut Jerry Linenger, KC5HBR, has been granted permission for general QSOs and scheduled school radio contacts with unlicensed students and a control operator.

Getting permission involved approval by authorities in the US, Russia and Germany. Miles Mann, WF1F, Director of Educational Services for the Mir International Amateur Radio EXperiment (MIREX), and Dave Larsen, N6CO, director of the MIREX board, signed an agreement on behalf of MIREX, while Sergei Samburov, RV3DR, chief of the Cosmonaut Amateur Radio Department, signed for the Mir Amateur Radio EXperiment (MAREX), and Joerg Hahn, DL3LUM, international coordinator, signed for the German Space Amateur Funk EXperiment (SAFEX) group, which provided the ham equip-

ment aboard Mir. The FCC also has given approval for Linenger (and for Astronaut Colin "Michael" Foale, KC5UAC--who will take Linenger's place in May) for general QSOs and third-party traffic with schools, family and friends. Linenger recently arrived on Mir via STS-81.

According to Mann, applications for US school QSOs with cosmonauts are approved by MIREX, based on specific guidelines, before being sent on to Samburov and SAFEX. "The Mir crews have busy work schedules, but our guidelines allow us to arrange--months in advance--school QSOs during crew off hours," he explained. The Cosmonaut Amateur Radio Department gives final approval for all QSOs and reserves the right to cancel at any time. Mir's daily experiments always have first priority over ham radio.

Because Mir crews now include a US astronaut, SAREX and MIREX have begun to work together. Currently the SAREX program has about 80 schools on its waiting list. To get a Mir school QSO application, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Educational Activities Department, ARRL, 225 Main St, Newington CT 06111.

A word on random QSOs with the Mir space station: Mir crews make random voice QSOs only during off hours. Do not ask the crew to schedule QSOs, as they do not have the long-term calendar. The 2-meter Mir frequencies recently were changed: The uplink frequency is 145.200 MHz and the downlink is 145.800 MHz. This change resulted from a recommendation from IARU Region 1 (Europe). Please do not ask the crew about it, as the crew does not set policy on frequencies.

From ARRL DX Bulletins (009)

This week's bulletin was made possible with info provided by Tedd, KB8NW, the OPDX Bulletin, the 599Rpt, Dennis, K7BV, Jack, W1WEF, the DXNL, the Yankee Clipper Contest Club PacketCluster Network, and Contest Corral from QST. Thanks to all.

UGANDA, 5X. Gus, 5X1D, is QRV from here, and can usually be found on 6 and 2 meters. QSL via SM0BFJ.

GHANA, 9G. Steve, PA3GBQ, is QRV as 9G5BQ until early March. Lately, he has been found on 3514 kHz starting at 2200z and was heard as late as 2345z. QSL to PA3GBQ.

MINAMI TORISHIMA, JD1. JG8NQJ/JD1 will be here until April 23. His activity will be limited due to his work schedule, however. Look for him on 40 through 10 meters from 0100 to 0200z, 0600 to 0700z, 0930 to 1100z and 1300z. QSL via Susumu Sanada, 5 4 Shin ei, Toyohira, Sapporo 004, Japan.

ARUBA, P4. Look for P40W to be QRV in the ARRL DX CW Contest as a Single Op, High Power, All Band entry. Check 160 and 80 meters on the hour or half hour.

NETHERLANDS ANTILLES, PJ2. Jack, W1WEF, and John, W1BIH, will be QRV as PJ9C from Curacao as a Multi/Single entry in the ARRL DX CW Contest. Before and after the contest, look for PJ9/W1WEF. QSL PJ9C via K1CPJ. QSL PJ9/W1WEF direct.

ST. KITTS, V4. Alex, W2OX, will be QRV as V47KP from February 13 to early March. He will also be active in the ARRL DX CW and SSB, and CQ WW 160 Meter SSB, Contests. QSL via K2SB.

MICRONESIA, V6. Sam, V63KU, is very active on 20 meters SSB and is usually QRV for a few hours between 14175 and 14200 kHz starting around 2100z. QSL via JA6NL, PO Box 1679, Truk Lagun, Micronesia.

BURKINA FASO, XT. Dan, XT2DP, has been QRV on 80 meters around 3795 kHz at 2000z. QSL via WB2YQH. XT2AR is also QRV from Ouagadougou, and will be here until February 26. QSL via W4BYG.

CAMBODIA, XU. Robert, KE2FB, works at the US Embassy and is active as XU2FB on 80 through 10 meters. He uses CW, SSB and RTTY. He can also be found on 10 meter FM. QSL via N4JR.

QSL ROUTE CORRECTION. It was mistakenly reported in ARRL DX Bulletin ARLD008 that K7BV's zip code was 98704. The correct zip code is 89704.

Upcoming Public Service Events

Apr 13 Boston Multiple Sclerosis Walk. Contact Bob WA1IDA

Apr 19 Manchester, NH. Cub Scout Chuck Wagon Derby. Contact David WB1FLD

Apr 21 Boston Marathon. Contact Bob WA1IDA

Apr 27 The Groton Road Race. Erik KA1RV is the contact for this event.

May 21 Boston Assistive Technology Conf. Contact Bob WA1IDA

Other public service events are listed in the KD1SM/KD1LE Public Service List as they are submitted.

CW Practice Nets

The NVARC Slow Speed Net meets Tuesday and Thursday at 7:30 P.M. on 28.123 MHz. Except the third Thursday of the month, that being the club meeting night.

There is now a CW practice running on the Nashua Repeater (147.045) Wednesdays at 8:00 PM. It will be ARRL Style and the text will be taken from the Nashua Area Radio Club Newsletter. You don't need the newsletter to be able to take advantage of the broadcast.

These are not two way communications like the NVARC net is. They are designed to listen and copy the code. If your license class or equipment limitations prevent you from being on the air then these might help. The best way to get on the air is with a net, like the NVARC Slow Speed Net, and actually send and receive code. At least that's my opinion. Stan

The Helpful Executive

A young executive was leaving the office at 6 p.m. when he found the CEO standing in front of a shredder with a piece of paper in his hand.

"Listen," said the CEO, "this is important, and my secretary has left. Can you make this thing work?"

"Certainly," said the young executive. He turned the machine on, inserted the paper, and pressed the start button.

"Excellent, excellent!" said the CEO as his paper disappeared inside the machine. "I just need one copy."

Board Meeting Minutes

The Board met at Eriks for the 13th of February. Craig N1ABY and Stan KD1LE volunteered to be a nominating committee to seek candidates for the upcoming April elections. So if your interested in trying out a leadership position to direct some of the clubs activities this is the time to speak up and they are the people to see. There was some discussion about the Groton Road Race and the need to start gathering help for it.



Stu reported that he had submitted the required information for the club to maintain its Special Service Club standing.

Stan and Ralph reported on the fox hunt that was cosponsored with MARA on February 1st. Stan

\$The Treasurer's Report \$

February Treasurer's Report

Best wishes for 1997, everyone. Income for the month of January was \$0.00. Expenses were \$19.20 for newsletter postage. Current balances are:

General Fund \$427.44
Education Fund \$448.34

Many thanks to you members who remember to renew your ARRL memberships through the club. Are you thinking of joining the League but haven't yet found that RoundTuit? Well, there couldn't be a better time! 73, Ralph KD1SM



NVARC QSL BUREAU

Bring your cards and a QST label to the meeting or to breakfast and the club will take care of the shipping and bureau fee. Stan

Heard Island Breaks Record

ARLD006 VK0IR breaks record

The VK0IR Heard Island DXpedition is one for the record books. The DXpedition team left Heard island Wednesday, January 29, after racking up more than 80,000 contacts--a new DXpedition record. The VK0IR team was scheduled to leave Heard Island on January 31, but rough weather and high winds (combined with bone-chilling cold) forced an early shutdown. VK0IR hit the bands running on January 14 and didn't stop until January 27--a few days before the DXpedition's scheduled end. The result was excitement on a level rarely seen among the Amateur Radio ranks. Most of the stations worked were in Europe, the Eastern US and Japan. With 80,673 contacts in its logbooks, the widely heralded Heard Island DXpedition appears to have topped the previous record, held by the 1992 4J1FS DXpedition, which racked up nearly 74,500 QSOs in 15 days. (The ZA1A and 3Y0PI Expeditions tallied 69,500 and 60,000 contacts, respectively.)

On its final weekend, the team began to dismantle some antennas prior to going QRT. A special effort to give the "small pistols" a chance at putting Heard Island into their logs took a back seat to operator safety and equipment security, as the team awaited the arrival of the ship on January 28. Even so, many US operators with very modest stations enjoyed success. One East Coast station reported working VK0IR on 20 meters with just 4.5 W output. The effort might be considered all the more remarkable because it took place during the sunspot minimum.

The Heard Island DXpedition was reputedly the largest, most well organized and--with a budget of some 320,000 dollars--the most expensive DXpedition ever. Last fall, the ARRL Colvin Award Grants Committee authorized a grant of 5000 dollars for the Heard Island DXpedition.

In a sense, the Internet--often thought of as "competition" for ham radio--has been the medium that helped establish a sense of cohesion and community during the VK0IR operation. The Dxpediton has heavily employed the Internet to promote the DXpedition and to spread the latest word from Heard--a territory of Australia located in the South Indian Ocean. The DXpedition's 'net presence also offered an opportunity for hams to

get a blow-by-blow account of the DXpedition and to post their comments, success stories and gripes. News and pictures of the operation continue to appear in The Heard Island Tribune, edited on-line by Don Greenbaum, N1DG, another of the DXpedition pilots. John Devoldere, ON4UN, moderated the reflector and issued daily postings about the individual operators, changes in frequencies and tips on operating behavior, while the VK0IR home page offered additional general information. Those who worked VK0IR (or thought they had) have used the VK0IR home page to check the DXpedition's logs, which were forwarded via pacsat to servers in the US and in Europe.

An e-mail note received here at HQ from Jon Jones, N0JK, of Wichita, Kansas, summed up the feelings of many grateful operators: "Thanks to the Heard ops, pilot stations, ON4UN and all the other behind-the-scenes support cast for bringing the magic back to Amateur Radio."

The DXpedition team does plan a brief (one-night) stop at Kerguelen Island on its return trip. It is not certain that any radio operation will take place from Kerguelen, but if it does, Devoldere says it likely will be on the low bands only, and mostly--if not exclusively--on CW.

The QSL address for the VK0IR and the preceding TO0R operation from Reunion Island is INDEXA, c/o W4FRU, Box 5127, Suffolk, VA 23435. QSLs for VK0IR and TO0R should be mailed separately to avoid delays. For more information, check the Heard Island home page at <http://www.ccnet.com/~cordell/HI/>.

Car And Computer Developments

When Silicon Valley wants to look good, it measures itself against Detroit. The comparison goes like this: If automotive technology had kept pace with computer technology over the past few decades, you would now be driving a V-32 instead of a V-8, and it would have a top speed of 10,000 miles per hour. Or you could have an economy car that weighs 30 pounds and gets a thousand miles to a gallon of gas. In either case the sticker price of a new car would be less than \$50.

In response to all this goading, Detroit responds: Yes, but would you really want to drive a car that crashes twice a day?

Skywarn Training

The following opportunities are coming up for training in support of Skywarn. These sessions are usually given by a member of the staff at the National Weather Service in Taunton, Ma.

Wed 04-09-97 NWS Taunton, Ma
Contact Glen Field 508-823-1983

Wed 04-16-97 Holy Cross, Hablin Hall Worc
Contact Ted Agos N1SBM 508-865-5613

Sat 05-17-97 Fitchburg Public Library
Contact Jeanine Swick N1QIT 508-582-7351



Nashoba Valley Amateur Radio Club

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V Pres.: Bruce Blain K1BG
Secretary: Stewart Jackson K1YET
Treasurer: Ralph Swick, KD1SM
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PIO: Earl Russell WR1Y

Meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of the month - 7:30 p.m. - Pepperell Community Ctr.
Talk-in 146.490 simplex

This newsletter is published monthly. Submissions, corrections and inquiries should be directed to the newsletter editor. Articles and graphics in most IBM-PC formats are OK.
Packet address: PEPMBX (145.09 MHz)