

The Starved Rock Radio Club (SRRRC) meets on the first Monday of every month, unless otherwise scheduled, at 7:00 p. m. at the SRRRC clubhouse in Leonore, Illinois. Club nets are held on the SRRRC repeater (W9MKS) every Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m. The W9MKS repeater is located at the SRRRC clubhouse in Leonore, Illinois, and it operates on a frequency of 147.120 MHz (+103.5 PL). The Starved Rock Radio Club was organized in September of 1933, and has remained an ARRL affiliated club since 1934.

The mission of the Starved Rock Radio Club has continually been to give faithful, co-operative service and assistance for the betterment of amateur radio, in the promotion of interest in amateur radio communications, for the advancement of the radio art, for the use of amateur radio for public service and welfare, and for the maintenance of fraternalism and the promotion of good fellowship along with a high standard of conduct. Visit us on the web at www.qsl.net/w9mks

ARRL to Propose New Entry-Level License, Code-Free HF Access

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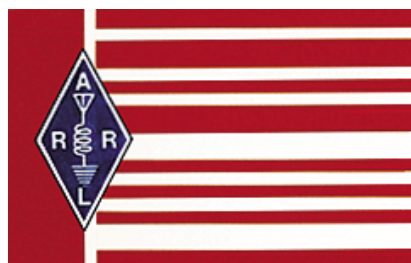
NEWINGTON, CT, Jan 19, 2004--The ARRL will ask the FCC to create a new entry-level Amateur Radio license that would include HF phone privileges without requiring a Morse code test. The League also will propose consolidating all current licensees into three classes, retaining the Ele-

ment 1 Morse requirement--now 5 WPM--only for the highest class. The ARRL Board of Directors overwhelmingly approved the plan January 16 during its Annual Meeting in Windsor, Connecticut. The proposals--developed by the ARRL Executive Committee following a Board in-

struction last July--are in response to changes made in Article 25 of the international *Radio Regulations* at World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 (WRC-03). They would continue a process of streamlining the amateur licensing structure that the FCC began more than five years ago but left unfinished in the Amateur Service license restructuring *Report and Order* (WT 98-143) that went into effect April 15, 2000.

"Change in the Amateur Radio Service in the US, especially license requirements and even more so when Morse is involved, has always been emotional," said ARRL First Vice Presi-

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Officers

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| President: | |
| Steve Michalski | KB9UPS |
| Vice President: | |
| Kurt Clausen | KB9RKU |
| Secretary: | |
| Frank Carraro | KF9NZ |
| Treasurer: | |
| Francis Kmetz | WB9VLW |
| Directors: | |
| Nick G. Sotiriou | KB9PUT |
| Mark Gebhardt | K9ZQ |
| Eldon Akers | KB9PZA |
| Static Editor: | |
| Dirk Wolgast | W9QA |

KF9NZ Meets With New La Salle County Emergency Manager

On Monday morning, Jan 5th, I met with Mr. Mike Jobst at the Ottawa EOC. He is a little overwhelmed with all he has to deal with, and does not know much about amateur radio, but he is learning, and he welcomed me and our participation with open arms. We will take part in the March 10th FEMA/NRC emergency drill. One thing we will have to do is to take the participant training from IEMA. This is scheduled for February 25th at

1:00 PM. There will probably be an evening session too. We will need several Operators to help out on the 10th. It is not known at this time what outlying points will take part in the drill, so we don't know how many Ops we will need. More info as son as I know.

Another item under the same general heading - RACES. You may recall that KF9NZ was appointed County Races Officer by

Emerson Tidd shortly before he retired. Mr. Jobst will re-confirm that appointment, so organization of the RACES may continue. If you are interested, live in LaSalle County (sorry - them's the rulez), are willing to have a police background check, have never been convicted of a felony, but especially if you ARE interested, call KF9NZ and get a RACES member application.



The Editor's Shack

Try as I might, I can't really think of a good topic for an editorial this month. Now that winter has finally hit us, as every die-hard Midwestern ham knows, its time to start getting all those antenna projects started.... at least time to start planning them anyway. Speaking of weather, or more correctly severe weather: now's the time to renew your spotting skills by attending the training provided by the NWS. There are several classes in the works – see the listing elsewhere in Static. KB9EZZ has also provided information on classes offered by the American Red Cross. And of course, there is CERT training. All of these wonderful opportunities for enlightenment are free, so take advantage of them!

The ARRL has finally come out with its proposal on a licensing structure that mostly eliminates the code re-

quirement. Whether the FCC will adopt this, or take any action to get rid of the code as a test element remains to be seen, but I think the handwriting is on the wall. At least the ARRL's concept gives hope to those of us that want to see a CW requirement stay on the books. Now, I don't particularly enjoy operating CW; the last time I copied code for any length of time was way back in the early 80's when I nervously sat in front of an FCC examiner in St. Louis and made it through the 13 wpm test during my Advanced exam. And I'm not trying to be elitist, either. Just because I had to do it, doesn't mean everyone should have to.

But earning a ham license (notice I said *earning*), especially at the highest grade, is a privilege and should require a substantial effort. CW operation is part of the program, just like all the other modes. I remember a lot of ques-

tions about advanced operating modes and VE testing procedures on the Extra exam. We had to learn that to pass the exam, but lots of Extras never make a contact via satellite or work a VE session. Mastering the code at the 5 wpm level really isn't that hard, but if you can come up with another means of evaluating just how much effort one is willing to expend to earn the right to use the valuable frequencies we have, speak up now.

Finally, we added four new members at this month's club meeting, and I'd like to welcome them all: KC9BKS, Chris Kennell of Yorkville; James Clapp, of Oglesby; KC9EGB, Tom Chromzack, of Tiskilwa; and KC9BQO, Ronald Barrett, of Ransom.

73, W9QA

From the President's Desk

Steve Michalski, KB9UPS, SRRC President

The new year is here and we have many projects planned. I believe that a club's president is only as good as its members and our members are the best! I feel that with all your participation and suggestions, together we can make 2004 one of the best years the Starved Rock Radio Club has ever seen. We have our work cut out for us this year. We have a "new to us" tower to erect as one of our first goals this spring; all those that can help make ready the tower please schedule times with Kurt.

It's time to look forward to this year's activity, starting with storm season and training seminars. Jim, N9PLM, has put together a storm spotter class for February 17, 7pm, to take place at the Bruce Township hall in Streator. Hope



Steve Michalski KB9UPS

K9JKW photo

you can come and bring a friend. Also,

we have the LaSalle Station emergency drill coming up March 10th, which Joe, KB9EZZ, has worked hard on. Other activities include Kids Day, Field Day and Jamboree on the Air.

I ask that every member put their two cents worth in, as **your** comments are valuable to our club's future. If you can not attend a meeting or must leave early and do have something to bring up, please drop me a line and I will bring the issue up in your behalf. **We are a team** and we can't make it to our goals without all of our players. I'm looking forward to this year as your president and fellow member. Together, lets make the Starved Rock Radio Club stand out from all the others.

73 's

January Meeting Notes

Frank Carraro, KF9NZ - SRRRC Secretary

Steve, KB9UPS presided at his first meeting and survived quite well. He made his Committee appointments and there are no surprises. Nick, KB9PUT agreed to take the Activities position, so we finally have a name in that slot.

The big garage building directly across the main street from the clubhouse was being emptied out by the owner, and we acquired a quite nice steel office desk for free.....Well, we had to take two big plywood shelving sets, but maybe we can make use of them too.....firewood anyone?

KB9RKU set this Sunday, the 11th

after 1:00 PM to do work on the back room. He is going to try to get the beams in place under the floor and jack it back up. There are three large floor joists that are split and the floor in that area is just hanging there.

We have acquired the ARRL CD's and Joe is having video tape copies made. If you know anyone wanting to study for their license, you can borrow a set. EZ Joe is still working on getting CERT training going. He needs volunteers to take the course to train the trainers. (got that?)

We kicked around the idea of having

VE test sessions at the hamfest. We are still kicking it around. We may have a travel trailer near the gate to house the sessions. Stay tuned for the next episode of this one.

Both antennas for the repeater that were in trouble have been fixed, and the voter adjusted and working well. I am writing a short report on the repeater for publication elsewhere in this issue.

Nick, KB9PUT is having the flyers overprinted at a cost of \$170.00.

Repeater Status Report

By Frank Carraro KF9NZ



The repeater is now working fairly well - considering the limitations of site and tower height, it is doing quite well now that both antenna problems have been fixed. There are a couple of things everyone should be aware of.

First the PL decode problems. In order to be able to turn the PL off or on without going to each site, the decoding is done by one PL circuit board at Leonore. That means that the PL tone has to be able to pass through the remote site (or "sites" we hope to have). Most receivers filter the tone out after they "decode" them. In our repeater the tone passes through the link - another transmitter and receiver and then the voter where it is decoded. It works OK, but if a really loud signal comes along, the decoder loses the PL tone for a fraction of a second on the voice peaks. This is why you may hear what seems like a very good signal start to "chop". Just don't shout, and don't try to eat the mike!

Another problem you may hear is what

sounds like a signal that can't break the squelch, and then the repeater sings or howls. This is due to transmissions on 146.52. There is a weird situation involving images from 146.520 Mhz (The 2M simplex calling freq). Someday I will explain it all to everyone - when I remember how it goes.

We need to get the new tower UP!! It does no good lying in the grass. It will cost somewhere around \$500.00 to acquire the re-bar, bolts, concrete and miscellaneous stuff needed. Then there will be the cost of some high class coax and fittings to put the antennas on the tower. We also need to get at least two more remote receive sites going. This will take more money. Now, there is a possibility we may have some help to pay for some of this. It seems like the Leonore cable TV system may be interested in having an antenna up around 90 feet. They are looking into providing internet service. To do this they want to get a SHF link to the area of Oglesby.

We may even be able to get free high speed internet service too. Hmmmm. Echolink anyone? Don't start counting any chickens yet, but maybe, just maybe....

CHAPTER 10 – Beyond The Crystal Sets

Excerpted from *Voices in the Air—The Fascination of Radio* © Robert Bonebrake

Reprinted with permission of the author, Robert Bonebrake, W9GCQ. This 174-page book is available at the Streatorland Historical Society Museum or from Francis Kmetz, WB9VLW, at \$12.95 each. The club has a copy at the clubhouse, which can be checked out. It is enjoyable reading.

I visited Charlie Burt at the store several times during the next few months. He was my first source of shortwave radio information on a person-to-person basis. The first thing I learned was what "shortwave" really meant. Charlie reminded me that the first time I heard him and other similar radio stations was when I turned the dial on my radio past the highest numbers at one end of the dial. This meant that I was hearing higher "frequencies" than the dial normally includes. All radio waves have a certain wavelength, which is related to the frequency: The higher the frequency, the shorter the wavelength. Thus, the term "shortwave" refers generally to radio stations that operate at frequencies higher than the regular broadcasting stations.

I also learned that operators like Charlie did not call themselves "shortwave operators" as I thought, because there are many different kinds of shortwave stations such as commercial broadcasting, police, aircraft, and others. To distinguish themselves from these other stations, operators like Charlie call themselves "Amateur Radio Operators".

Not all amateur radio operators talk into a microphone, Charlie told me. He said some of them like to use Morse code and use a "key" to send the code into the transmitter. I had not heard Morse code on any of my radios, but I knew something about it. I still had my telegraph code set that I got from Tom Mix for sending him two Ralston cereal box tops and twenty-five cents. It had

two units, each consisting of a key and a buzzer. We could connect the units together with two wires and send secret messages from one room to another. Tom had used telegraph sets like these on one of his radio programs to send a message to the "Old Wrangler", letting him know which way the bad guys went. When we used the code sets we had to write down the dots and dashes and then decipher them by comparing them to a chart that showed which letters they represented. Tom Mix and the Old Wrangler must have had the chart memorized, otherwise the bad guys would have had time to get away.

According to what Charlie had said, amateur radio operators had the chart memorized too, because they could understand Morse code by just listening to it and not writing down anything at all. In fact, they had to pass a test that included sending and receiving code in order to get a license to operate their radios. I learned that this test was administered by the Federal Communications Commission and also included a written test about transmitter and receiver circuits and FCC regulations. It all sounded very difficult and I remember thinking that a person must have to be very smart in order to be an amateur radio operator.

Another thing I learned from Charlie was that radio people don't use the term "aerial" any more. They call their wires "antennas". I didn't want to be old fashioned, so I added "antenna" to my radio vocabulary.

I asked Charlie why I had never heard amateur or other shortwave radio stations on any of my crystal sets. There were two reasons: One was that the variable condenser and coil combinations in the crystal sets were designed to tune in just the regular broadcasting station frequencies - approximately 540 to 1600 kilocycles (now called "kilohertz"). The second reason was that most shortwave stations were ei-

ther too far away or did not have enough power to be picked up on a crystal set.

I wanted to be able to hear more shortwave stations than I could pick up on the radio that Cyril Girard gave me. It tuned only slightly beyond the 1600 kilocycle end of the regular broadcasting band. Charlie said that I would have to build more elaborate radios than the crystal sets I had previously made if I wanted to hear shortwave stations on home-built equipment. These other radios could pick up higher radio frequencies (shorter wavelengths) where amateur and other stations operated. They would also produce louder sound than my crystal sets, maybe even operate a loudspeaker so I wouldn't need to use earphones. Crystal sets have no source of power other than the power coming through the air from the transmitting station itself. They have no means of amplifying these weak signals, but the more elaborate radios would be powered by batteries or house current.

Charlie Burt told me about a book I could get that would give me information on the kind of radios he was talking about. It was called *The Radio Amateur's Handbook*, and was published by an organization of radio amateurs called the "American Radio Relay League". I needed to find out more about these other kinds of radios, but I decided that I would make another trip to the library first to see what Alfred Morgan had to say about them in his *First Radio Book For Boys*.

ARRL, continued from page 1

dent Joel Harrison, W5ZN, in presenting the Executive Committee's recommendations. "In fact, without a doubt, Morse is Amateur Radio's 'religious debate.'" The plan adopted by the Board departs only slightly from the Executive Committee's recommendations.

The "New" Novice

The entry-level license class--being called "Novice" for now--would require a 25-question written exam. It would offer limited HF CW/data and phone/image privileges on 80, 40, 15 and 10 meters as well as VHF and UHF privileges on 6 and 2 meters and on 222-225 and 430-450 MHz. Power output would be restricted to 100 W on 80, 40, and 15 meters and to 50 W on 10 meters and up, thus avoiding the need for the more complex RF safety questions in the Novice question pool.

"The Board sought to achieve balance in giving new Novice licensees the opportunity to sample a wider range of Amateur Radio activity than is available to current Technicians while retaining a motivation to upgrade," said ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ. "It was also seen as important to limit the scope of privileges so the exam would not have to include material that is inappropriate at the entry level."

As an introduction to Amateur Radio, the Novice license served successfully for most of its 50-year history. The FCC has not issued new Novice licenses since the 2000 license restructuring, however. Under the ARRL plan, current Novice licensees--now the smallest and least active group of radio amateurs--would be grandfathered to the new entry-level class without further testing.

Anticipating assertions that the new plan would "dumb down" Amateur Radio licensing, Harrison said those currently holding a ticket often perceive the level of complexity to have been greater when they were first licensed than it actually was. "Quite frankly," he said, "if you review the questions pre-

sented in our license manuals throughout the years, you will be surprised how they compare to those of today."

Technicians and Generals

The middle group of licensees--Technician, Tech Plus (Technician with Element 1 credit) and General--would be consolidated into a new General license that no longer would require a Morse examination. Current Technician and Tech Plus license holders automatically would gain current General class privileges without additional testing. The current Element 3 General examination would remain in place for new applicants. ARRL already has proposed additional phone privileges for Generals in its "Novice refarming" petition, RM-10413, but the FCC has not yet acted on that petition.

Morse Code Testing Retained for Extra

At the top rung, the Board indicated that it saw no compelling reason to change the Amateur Extra class license requirements. The ARRL plan calls on the FCC to combine the current Advanced and Amateur Extra class licensees into Amateur Extra, because the technical level of the exams passed by these licensees is very similar. New applicants for Extra would have to pass a 5 WPM Morse code examination, but the written exam would stay the same. The League's plan calls for current Novice, Tech Plus and General class licensees to receive lifetime Element 1 (5 WPM Morse) credit.

"This structure provides a true entry-level license with HF privileges to promote growth in the Amateur Service," Harrison said. "It also simplifies the FCC database by conforming to the current Universal Licensing System (ULS) structure and does not mandate any modifications to it."

Sumner concurred. "The Board started out by recognizing that three license classes was the right number when looking down the road 10 or 15 years," he said. "We need a new entry-level license."

"On the other hand, there's nothing particularly wrong with the existing Extra

class license," he continued. "The change in the international regulations notwithstanding, the Board felt that the highest level of accomplishment in the FCC's amateur licensing structure should include basic Morse capability."

Sumner and Harrison say the current Technician entry-level ticket provides little opportunity to experience facets of ham radio beyond repeater operation. "The quality of that experience," Sumner said, "often depends on the operator's location."

Among other advantages, Sumner said the plan would allow new Novices to participate in HF SSB emergency nets on 75 and 40 meters as well as on the top 100 kHz of 15 meters. The new license also could get another name, Sumner said. "We're trying to recapture the magic of the old Novice license, but in a manner that's appropriate for the 21st century."

Proposal Includes "Novice Refarming" Band Plan

The overall proposed ARRL license restructuring plan would more smoothly integrate HF spectrum privileges across the three license classes and would incorporate the "Novice refarming" plan the League put forth nearly two years ago in a *Petition for Rule Making* (RM-10413). The FCC has not yet acted on the ARRL plan, which would alter the current HF subbands. The Novice refarming proposal would eliminate the 80, 40 and 15-meter Novice/Technician Plus CW subbands as such and reuse that spectrum in part to expand phone/image subbands on 80 and 40 meters.

The ARRL license restructuring design calls for no changes in privileges for Extra and General class licensees on 160, 60, 30, 20, 17 or 12 meters. Novice licensees would have no access to those bands.

Training Opportunities

Listed below are the currently scheduled classes for severe weather spotting. Remember, the National Weather Service recommends that spotters receive training at least every two years. You can check for schedule changes and additions by logging onto their website at : http://www.crh.noaa.gov/lot/spotter_talks/2004_spotschd.php

February 17 7:00 PM
Bruce Township Office
218 N. Sterling, Streator, IL
815-673-1752

February 18 7:00 PM
Location TBD in Sandwich, IL

February 19 7:00 PM
Elgin Community College
Corporate Center
630-208-8911

February 23 7:00 PM
Location TBD in DuPage County

February 25 7:00 PM
Lemont Village Hall
418 Main St., Lemont
708-865-4766

February 26 7:00 PM
Naperville City Hall
400 S. Eagle, Naperville
630-420-6660

March 3 1:00 PM and 7:00 PM
Melrose Park Civic Center
900 N. 25th Av., Melrose Park
708-865-4766

March 6 8AM – 4PM
Advanced Spotter Seminar
Wheaton College
Edmond Chapel
630-682-7925

There is a fee for this seminar, and reservations are required

March 8 1:00PM and 7:00 PM
Gurnee Fire Station
6581 Dada, Gurnee
847-377-7100

March 9 1:00 PM and 7:00 PM
Lake Co. Emergency Management
1303 N. Milwaukee, Libertyville
847-377-7100

March 10 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM
Arlington Heights Fire Academy
Dundee and Kennicott, Arlington Heights
708-865-4766

March 11 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM
Location TBD in Will Co.
815-740-8351

March 15 7:00 PM
Bridgeview EOC
6839 Garden Ln., Bridgeview, IL
708-865-4766

March 16 7:00 PM
IVCC Room 316, Oglesby, IL
815-433-5622

March 17 10:00 AM
Location TBD in Will Co.
815-740-8351

March 17 7:00 PM
Plainfield High School
611 W. Fort Beggs Dr., Plainfield, IL
815-740-8351

March 18 7:00 PM
Pontiac Fire Station
413 N. Mill St., Pontiac, IL
815-844-0911

March 24 1:00 PM and 7:00 PM
Lyons EOC
7801 Ogden Av., Lyons, IL
708-865-4766

March 25 6:30 PM
Calumet City Library
600 Manistee St., Calumet City, IL
708-865-4766

March 31 7:00 PM
Bourbonnais Municipal Center
700 Main NW, Bourbonnais, IL
815-937-3929

American Red Cross Disaster Training for Spring 2004 is listed below. This training is open to the public and free of charge. All training is sponsored by the Illinois Valley Chapter ARC at 1605 4th St., Peru, IL. You may call them at 815-223-0922 or contact them by e-mail at: ivarcl@insightbb.com.

INTRODUCTION TO DISASTER SERVICES

Learn about disasters, the community response, and the role of Red Cross Disaster Services. This class is a prerequisite to all other disaster training.

Dates: (choose one)

Thursday, February 12 6:00 – 9:00 pm
Thursday, March 18 1:00 – 4:00 pm

MASS CARE: AN OVERVIEW

Develop a plan of action for matching your skills, interests and abilities for further involvement with delivering Red Cross Mass Care service. Prerequisite for Shelter Operations and Simulation)*

Dates: (choose one)

Thursday, February 26 6:00 – 9:00 pm
Thursday, March 25 1:00 – 4:00 pm

SHELTER OPERATIONS WITH SIMULATION

Prepare to effectively and sensitively manage shelter operations as a team. Simulation offers an opportunity to practice the knowledge and skills needed.*

Operations class--

Dates: (choose one)

Wednesday, March 36:00 – 9:00 pm
Tuesday, April 131:00 – 4:00 pm

Simulation class--

Dates: (choose one)

Thursday, March 116:00 – 9:30 pm
Tuesday, April 201:00 – 4:30 pm

FAMILY SERVICES

Learn about the family service function, and how to conduct an effective interview, fill out the case record and the disbursement orders.

Date: Saturday, February 21 8:30 am – 4:30 pm



The Starved Rock Radio Club

Membership Application

Effective Date: _____

New Member / Previous Member / Renewal / Not Licensed

| | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| ARRL member? | Class of License (for ARRL) | Call Sign | Date of Birth |
|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

County Phone Number

E-Mail Address

Please circle if we can send you Static via e-mail only: YES

List other family members living at above address:

Call and Name: _____

SRRC MEMBERSHIP DUES AND FEES are due in January each year:

Initiation fee for new members is \$5.00 Regular, Non-Licensed and Associate member dues are \$20.00.

Family Member dues are \$25.00 Partial year dues are prorated by month.

Check / Cash Received by: _____ Amount paid: \$ _____

NOTICE: Dues for each member must be accompanied by this form. Funds received without this form are considered donations. Complete rules are printed in the Constitution and By-Laws (see www.qsl.net/w9mks) of the Club and I agree to abide by them.

Signed

Date

Mail completed application to: Francis Kmetz 1004 Park St. Streator, IL 61364, or bring to next meeting

THE STARVED ROCK RADIO CLUB

Post Office Box 198
Leonore, Illinois 61337

General Email: w9mks@qsl.net
Email for *Static* submissions: w9qa@arrl.net

