

## Repeater Fund Help Needed!

The tower supporting our 146.76 repeater is to be replaced soon. We want to replace out antenna system and feedline, looking at a cost of up to around \$2,000 to do this. Contributions to the fund are welcome from TCARC members and others who use the repeater. So far, we have a few hundred dollars donated to the cause. Please help! Make your check payable to TCARC and mark it for the repeater and mail it to our PO box on the return address of this newsletter. We have had contributions from \$20 to \$200 from individuals so far. Replacing the antenna system will take care of a lot of our noise problems at the repeater. Please help now!

## VE Exam April 17

Our next VE Exam Session is Sunday, April 17 at the UI Fire Institute. Starting at 1:00 p.m., all elements for all license classes are available. No advance notice is required to take the exam, but Debbie Fligor, N9DN, our head VE, would like to hear from those planning to take the Morse Code element. The cost of taking the exam, as set by the ARRL/VEC, is \$14.00. Positive identification is required, including a picture ID, if possible. If no picture ID is available, then other items may be used such as library cards, other ID, or mail addressed to the individual. Examinees may take any or all elements for the \$14 fee. However, retakes upon failure of an element will cost another \$14. This is the ARRL/VE policy.

## ARRL Club Commission

You can help your club by joining the ARRL or renewing your membership through TCARC. We retain a commission of \$15 for each new ARRL member and \$2 for each renewal. Any membership lapsed for more than 2 years is considered a new membership! Please submit your application for membership or renewal along with your check, payable to TCARC for the total amount, to the club at the PO Box address on this newsletter, or give it to Milt, K9QZ1, Treasurer. Please allow enough processing

time, preferably a month or so. Renewal notices are sent by the ARRL about 3 months prior to expiration. Processing through the club won't cost you any more, but it does provide a little extra income for the club.

## AES Superfest Report

By K9QZ1

I attended AES Superfest both days, Friday and Saturday. It was similar to past years, but there seemed to be a little less attention to detail this year. Most of the regular manufacturers were well represented as usual, with the exception of Kenwood. The equipment was shipped to the show, but no one arrived to set it up and manage the booth. Thus, Kenwood was not represented. Yaesu, Icom, and Alinco all had booths. A couple of outside vendors set up shop in the display area. One sold software and the other made nametags. I questioned the manager of AES and he said he just wanted to fill space as long as they were not selling any products sold by AES. I am a little disappointed to see outside vendors, as the show has been a time to learn what is available from manufacturers and buy from AES. Several clubs had tables in the second room, as always.

There were supposedly special prices on many items for the weekend. However, I could find no listing, as had been the case in the past. When I inquired, I was told, "you have to ask us". I did not see that as a positive response. I guess we were supposed to ask for a product, then ask if there was a special price. I had intended to take the special pricelist with me to the hotel overnight, look at it, and possibly purchase some items from it. I purchased nothing during the show.

The main reason I attend Superfest is the seminars. I have enjoyed most of them in past years. This year was worth the trip, but I saw a decline in attention to details related to the seminars. The first one scheduled on how to restore antique radios was cancelled at the last minute. The story was that the person presenting it ended up in Florida. I find it hard to believe that

this was a last minute cancellation. The seminar room was very cool. I had to get my jacket from my car after the first couple of hours to remain somewhat comfortable. I don't know if AES was trying to save on heat or what. Then there was the computer projector problem. There was no red channel. There seemed to be difficulty in connecting to some computers. The AES manager looked at it, but indicated he did not know much about it. The lack of red did spoil a couple of presentations where we needed to see color. It is disappointing to attend a function where equipment is not checked out and no one is around to assist those presenting. Late in the afternoon, a presentation listed as "Radio Software" turned out to be different. The speaker even announced that he did not know how that title was determined. It was on circuit design software. I was looking forward to the radio software. He ran over his time limit by about 15 minutes, making Gordon West's presentation late. The West show was the last of the day. Gordon talked up several of the displays in the main room and encouraged us to visit certain ones before we left. However, when his presentation concluded, most of the displays had closed and packed up. The final major prize drawing was held at the end of Gordon's talk. This was a good move. As always, Gordon's presentation itself was worth the trip to AES. He spoke mainly about our hobby and emergency service. He did seem a little rushed, possibly due to the late start of his segment.

Overall, Superfest was interesting and informative. I do hope the attention to detail in the seminars is corrected next year, and, if special prices are offered, a listing is provided again.

## Hamfests

It's almost time for the warm weather tailgate hamfest season again! As usual, we have a lineup of area events to attend. Our local season begins with the MARK Hamfest in Arthur on April 24, and the Decatur hamfest on May 1. Both are excellent to meet your friends from around the area and attend a good flea market. Dayton is

May 20-22. After that, watch out for a few changes in schedules. On the weekend of June 4-5, a conflict is creeping in. The Springfield IL hamfest is Saturday June 4. The Starved Rock Radio Club Hamfest at Princeton has always been on Sunday. However, this year, they are claiming 2 days that weekend, making a direct conflict with Springfield as Princeton is June 4-5. It is unfortunate that a club would move in on a date already scheduled by another club in the area. The Kankakee Radio Club changed their date to avoid the July 4 weekend this year. It is now July 17 at Peotone, IL. Peoria and Radio Expo are still on the same weekend. Neither has been able to change dates since Radio Expo signed a contract for the wrong date a few years ago.

Dayton is getting organized. Everything is slow from there this year. Outside Vendor and Inside Vendor applications were sent out late and the outside spaces have not been confirmed yet. The committee assures everyone that their orders are ok and will be processed as requested. There does not appear to be a shortage of space, so if you applied, you should get a space.

## New License Requirements

We are all waiting to see what the FCC determines as our new licensing requirements. The announcement is expected sometime soon, but no one is sure just when. At the AES Superfest, Gordon West gave his thoughts on the subject based on what he has heard recently. He said the announcement should come this spring or early summer. He hopes it will be at the Dayton Hamvention. However, he indicated that they could make an announcement at Dayton stating that they will announce the rules at a later date. As for changes, he expects the Technician question pool to be reduced from around 500 questions to about 200, and possibly a reduction in test questions from 35 to 20. Probably the General Class will go to no code. He expects the code to remain somewhere, probably for the Extra Class. These are Gordon West's thoughts and not official.