

Hamfests

The Bedford, Indiana hamfest was October 8. After a cool night, the weather was excellent. There was a good crowd, but as with most recent hamfests, sales were down for vendors.

The Decatur Illinois hamfest was October 21. The weather was excellent and the crowd was larger than past years. It was well run and an enjoyable event.

It is not really a hamfest, but the annual **ATV Banquet** is November 12 in Litchfield, IL at the Ariston Restaurant. 4 p.m. is the get acquainted hour with dinner at 5. Door prizes abound at the event, and Bob Heil is the guest speaker, describing the Heil display at the Rock N Roll Hall of Fame. Please contact smillick@wamusa.com if you plan to attend.

The Fort Wayne, Indiana, hamfest is November 18-19. All indoors, this is a large indoor hamfest in comfortable surroundings. As with most 2-day hamfests, Saturday is the best day to attend.

Fox Hunt Winners

October 15 found several TCARC members hunting the fox (hidden transmitter) near Marshal, Illinois. Here is a report by Ben, K9BF:

The East Side Outdoor Radio Club held a fox hunt Sunday 10/15 in a state park near Marshal IL. Two sets of hunters from the Champaign area made the trip, Mark KA9SZX and Wayne AB9FJ in one car with Ben K9BF and Mark KC9DUU in another.

Staging was at a picnic area located deep in the park. The Mobile hunt began around 10:30 AM. After about 30 minutes of mobile hunting vehicles were abandoned in favor of a foot hunt into thick woods and brush. The teams wondered around in the thicket for another hour or so until Mark, KC9DUU, spotted the fox. The fox was Jim KD9?? dressed in appropriately colored clothing.(brown) It took another 1/2 hour to find our way out of the woods, but it was a blast.

After a quick lunch, 5 foot hunters set out to locate 5 automated fox boxes that had been hidden during the mobile hunt. Each fox box transmitted its CW id for one minute out of 5 in a continuous manner. Located on each box was a unique number. After some 60 minutes or so, Mark KC9DUU was the first to emerge from the brush. Ben K9BF, Mark KA9SZX and Wayne AB9FJ, followed him.

The weather was excellent for such activity and everyone learned a lot.

VE Exams

Our most recent exam session was October 15. We welcome 3 new Technicians. Also, there was one upgrade. Congratulations to all! Our next session is in January.

FCC Releases Report and Order

From ARRL Letter

Ending a protracted waiting period, the FCC's Report and Order (R&O) in the so-called "omnibus" Amateur Radio proceeding, WT Docket 04-140, was adopted October 4 and released October 10. In it, the FCC adopted nearly all of the changes it had put forth in its 2004 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) in the proceeding. The R&O the FCC released this week does NOT include action on the Commission's proposal to eliminate the Morse code requirement. A Report and Order in that proceeding, WT Docket 05-235, is pending. ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, expressed the League's gratitude to the FCC for acting this week in the wide-ranging proceeding.

"On behalf of the ARRL and the Commission's licensees in the Amateur Radio Service I want to express appreciation for your release yesterday of the Report and Order in WT Docket 04-140 (FCC 06-149) amending Part 97 of the Commission's Rules," Harrison wrote October 11. "The Commission's action in clearing this pending proceeding will assist the Amateur Radio Service in meeting its objectives, particularly with regard to providing emergency and public service communications."

The new rules are expected to become effective later this year. Among the highlights in the October 10 Report and Order, the FCC:

* "refarmed" the current Novice/Tech Plus bands to expand certain phone subbands;

* agreed to allow Novice and Tech Plus licensees to operate CW in the General class CW subbands on 80, 40, 15 and 10 meters.

* implemented rules to discourage multiple vanity call sign filings on the same day from the same applicant;

* permitted auxiliary stations to transmit on portions of the 2 meter band;

* permitted amateur licensees to designate a specific Amateur Radio club to receive their call sign in memoriam;

* eliminated certain restrictions governing the manufacture, marketing and sale of external RF power amplifiers intended for Amateur Radio use;

* clarified that "amateur stations may, at all times and on all frequencies authorized to the control operator, make transmissions necessary to meet essential communication needs and to facilitate relief actions";

* deleted the requirement to publicly announce Amateur Radio examination locations and times, and

* deleted the frequency bands and segments specified for Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) stations.

In response to an ARRL Petition for Rule Making, the Commission agreed to "refarm" the HF segments currently authorized to Novice and Technician Plus licensees. The reallocation will expand the phone subbands for General, Advanced and Amateur Extra licensees, although not all commenters agreed with the idea.

"We are persuaded, however, by ARRL's contention that increasing the amount of spectrum for voice communications will reduce interference among stations using voice communications," the FCC said in its R&O, "thereby benefiting all licensees." The FCC said authorizing more phone spectrum would "more closely reflect licensees' operating preferences" and mean more efficient spectrum use.

On 75 meters, the FCC went well beyond the modest expansion the ARRL had proposed and the FCC had tentatively adopted in its 2004 NPRM. Generals will be able to operate on phone from 3800 to 4000 kHz, Advanced class licensees from 3700 to 4000, and Amateur Extras from 3600 to 4000 kHz – greatly reducing the amount of 80-meter spectrum available for RTTY and data (the only segment where automatically controlled digital stations may operate on 80 meters is 3620 to 3635 kHz).

The FCC said the amateur community wanted as much phone spectrum as possible. "Indeed, a number of commenters argue that the NPRM proposal to increase the amount of spectrum permitted for voice communications would still not meet the demand for voice communication spectrum in the HF bands, particularly in the 80 meter band," the FCC said.

On 40 meters, Advanced and Extra Class licensees will be able to operate phone from 7125 to 7300 kHz, and Generals from 7175 to 7300 kHz. On 15 meters, General class operators may operate phone from 21,275 to 21,450 kHz.

The FCC affirmed its intention to permit Novice and Tech Plus (or Technician with Element 1 credit) licensees to operate

CW in the current General exclusive-CW allocations on 80, 40 and 15 meters and CW/data on 10 meters, where the FCC provided an additional 100 kHz for Novice/Tech Plus licensees. Novice/Tech Plus licensees still may run no more than 200 W PEP, but the Commission has done away with Novice band power limitations for higher-class licensees.

The FCC revised its vanity call sign rules to discourage the filing of multiple applications for the same call sign on the same day, and many commenters supported this concept. As implemented in §97.19(d)(1), if the FCC receives more than one application requesting a vanity call sign from a single applicant on the same receipt day, it will process only the first application entered into the Universal Licensing System. "Subsequent vanity call sign applications from that applicant with the same receipt date will not be accepted," the rule concludes.

"We are persuaded that we should adopt rule amendments to discourage multiple vanity call sign applications," the FCC said in the R&O, "and we believe that a one-application-per-day-per-applicant rule, as requested by ARRL and others, will eliminate multiple applications requesting the same assignable call sign on the same day." The FCC concedes that its one-application-per-day rule "will not prevent an individual from requesting multiple vanity call signs per se," because an applicant may request up to 25 call signs at a time.

When the FCC receives multiple valid applications from several individuals requesting the same vanity call sign as a first choice on the same day, it uses a lottery system to decide which application to process first.

The R&O also affirms changes to Part 2 and Part 97 rules the FCC had proposed regarding the manufacture, marketing and sale of external RF power amplifiers. Current FCC rules prohibit commercial manufacturers from marketing RF power amplifiers capable of transmitting on the 12 and 10 meter bands. The rules were put in place as a way to prevent use of such amplifiers by Cbers.

"We agree with ARRL that the requirements imposed on Amateur Radio operators by the current rule are unnecessary because, under the present rules, the equipment, once authorized, can be modified to transmit on all amateur service frequency allocations," and that revising the rule "will enhance use of the 12 and 10 meter amateur bands," the FCC said.

To prevent the use of Amateur Radio amplifiers by Cbers, the FCC says manufacturers of Amateur Radio amplifiers must design their products to avoid operation between 26 MHz and 28 MHz. They also must certify that amplifiers are not easily modifiable to operate between 26 MHz and 28 MHz prior to a grant of equipment certification.

The various rule changes become effective 30 days after their publication in the Federal Register