

B-Plus

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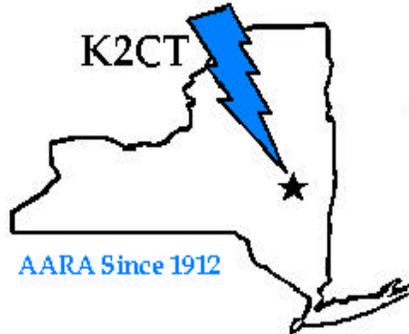
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AARA

Meets at the

Colonie Community Center

1653 Central Ave. Colonie

Friday Sept. 10

Social Hour 6:45 PM

Board Meeting 7:15 PM

Meeting 7:45 PM

refreshments

K2CT repeater
Talk-in repeater 145.19 (-) MHz

Sept. Meeting

Fred Lass, K2TR, will speak about
digital TV and HDTV.
The next era in TV. You won't want
to miss the discussion

This will also be a combined AARA and YCCC
meeting. That's Yankee Clipper Contest
Club.

Learn some hints and tricks of contesting,
propagation, station setup, antenna, and
filters.

PUBLIC SERVICE

The next event will be the HMRRC marathon on
17 October. It goes from Schenectady to Albany
ending at the Corning Preserve, involving both
SARA and AARA.

Following that, of course, will be the Pumpkin
Patrol, **Oct 30 and 31**. Mark your calendars
now! Anyone interested in working an event,
please contact me

Contact Laurie by email at n2osb@arrl.net, or by
phone at 872-9056.

Laurie M. Warner, N2OSB
Public Service Coordinator

Pay your 1999 Dues \$15/year
Checks should be made out to AARA and
sent to: Saul Abrams, K2XA, 307 Maple Rd.,
Slingerlands, NY 12159

AARA Web site

<http://www.qsl.net/k2ct>

Solar stability?

SEATTLE, WA, Aug 27, 1999--All solar indices were up this week, but so were geomagnetic numbers. This meant that although there was more ionizing radiation from the sun to produce a reflective ionosphere for HF signals, proton activity from flares and coronal holes kept conditions unstable.

When protons strike charged particles in the ionosphere, their positive charge neutralizes the negative ionization. In addition, the lower D layer, which tends to absorb HF radio signals expands, and there is increased absorption in the polar regions as well.

Sunspot number averages for this week were up over 20 points compared to last week, and solar flux averages were up by over 43 points. The only really quiet day in terms of geomagnetic stability was August 21, when the planetary A index was below 10 and the K index over most periods was only 2. The worst days were August 20 and 23, when the A index was 33, and the K index was 6. As one moves higher in latitude, these effects get worse, and the College A index from Alaska on those days was 65 and 67, with K indices as high as 7. This is a severe geomagnetic storm toward the polar regions.

Unsettled conditions are forecast for the next few weeks. There are frequent periods when the A index should be above 10, and around September 12-16 an A index of 20 is predicted. We have been in a period of rising solar flux, and the values for August 27-29 are forecast at 220, 215 and 215. Flux values should stay above 200 through the end of August, then drop to below 170 around September 3. Solar flux should bottom out around 125 on September 9 or 10, then rise up above 170 by September 18. Of course

conditions could get better if new sunspots rotate into view.

On August 21 at 0737 UTC KH6HME worked W1LP/MM on 2 meter SSB, a distance of almost 3,000 miles. W1LP was in grid DL51CE. From ARRL extra

Amateur solar observer Tad Cook, K7VVV Seattle, Washington, provides this weekly report on solar conditions and propagation. This report also is available via W1AW every Friday, and a somewhat condensed version also appears in The ARRL Letter. Readers may contact the author via k7vvv@arrl.net.

Upcoming Events

Sept 11	Saratoga Hamfest Balston Spa , NY
11-13	Sept. VHF QSO Party rules QST Aug 99
25-26	CQ/RJ RTTY WW Contest QST Sept 99
Oct. 2-3	SET QST Sept 99
9	Hosstraders Hamfest Rochester, NH

FCC Tackles VEC Application Backlog

NEWINGTON, CT, Aug 26, 1999--As the transition to the new Universal Licensing System completes its second week, the FCC has notified Volunteer Examiner Coordinators to forward their backlog of new and upgrade Amateur Radio applications. Since the ULS went on-line August 16, the FCC had been accepting and processing only a handful of the many Amateur Radio new and upgrade applications. The ULS Task Force had expected to be able to attack the VEC application logjam last week. ULS staffers were on duty over the past weekend, and some applications were processed.

"At present we are holding 200 sessions with 554 applications--data ready to be transmitted," ARRL-VEC Manager Bart Jahnke, W9JJ, said this morning. Those applications--some dating back as early as August 7--now have been submitted to the FCC for processing. Jahnke said the ARRL-VEC is still processing paperwork for another two dozen or so sessions representing an additional 75 applications. These will be forwarded to the FCC as soon as they are ready for transmittal.

Since the advent of ULS, the ARRL-VEC was only able to transmit 119 applications from 32 exam sessions. The FCC has already processed 113 of those applications. Not all VECs are set up to file under the new system.

Apologizing for the problems and pleading for patience, the FCC says the Universal Licensing System "is currently operating" and that "performance problems with ULS have been repaired," although some amateurs still report occasional difficulty accessing the system. The FCC says the ULS will be down for a system upgrade from Friday, August 27 at 5 PM Eastern until Monday, August 30 at 8 AM Eastern. The FCC plans to deploy the ULS for the Microwave Service on Monday.

While it's been deploying the ULS for the Amateur Service, the FCC has not processed any vanity call sign applications, although the ULS will accept vanity applications for filing and has inaugurated on-line fee payment by credit card. The last vanity call sign processing run was August 4.

In the meantime, amateurs wanting to check on the status of applications filed via the ULS can do so via the ULS home page, <http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/uls>. Clicking on "Application Search" or "License Search" and plugging in the applicable call sign should yield the desired information.

Once the ULS is working as planned, automated acceptance and processing of electronically filed applications--including vanity--is supposed to occur nightly each business day. There will be no weekend processing under the ULS, as there was under the former licensing system. The built-in lag of at least 10 days between vanity applications and grants will remain, the ULS Task Force says.

For now, the ULS does not accept any club station applications, and amateurs registering for the ULS should register only their personal call signs. Trustees and custodians of club, military recreation, and RACES licenses should continue to use the old Form 610B to file applications for those stations and should not use their personal Social Security Number as the TIN for these licenses. Club station trustees and applicants should contact ULS Technical Support at 202-414-1250 to obtain an Assigned Taxpayer ID Number for each club license and provide it on the Form 610B.

To date, it appears that upwards of 15,000 amateurs already have registered in the ULS. The FCC encourages all licensees to register now, even if they have no immediate need to file an amateur application. On-line registration is available on the

ULS home page, <http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/uls/>. This site includes complete registration and connection instructions.

Applications filed on-line by anyone not registered in the ULS will be dismissed. Applications filed through a VEC automatically register the applicant in ULS, as do paper applications mailed to FCC that include the applicant's Social Security Number. Manually-filed FCC Form 606s go to FCC, Information Technology Division, ATTN: Kathy McLucas, 1270 Fairfield Rd, Gettysburg, PA 17325-7245.

Amateurs having ULS problems or questions should contact the FCC's ULS Technical Support staff at 202-414-1250 or ulscomm@fcc.gov from the ARRL extra

Phase 3D Satellite Completes Vibration Testing

Phase 3D on the vertical "shake table" at Goddard GREENBELT, MD, Aug 26, 1999--The Phase 3D team apparently got the "Good Vibrations" it was hoping for when the next-generation Amateur Radio satellite underwent vibration testing earlier this month at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center here. "P3D performed very well in the vibration testing," said AMSAT Phase 3D Lab and Integration Manager Lou McFadin, W5DID. "This is another milestone on P3D's journey to flight."

The Phase 3D satellite was scheduled to arrive yesterday afternoon back at the Integration Lab in Orlando, Florida. "The next step is examine P3D carefully and verify that all systems are still functional and ready for flight," said McFadin, adding that the examination and tests will be completed in the next few weeks.

"Preliminary examination during preparation for shipment to Orlando showed no major problems," he said.

The Phase 3D satellite, which arrived here earlier this month, had to cool its heels at Goddard while NASA was preoccupied with higher-priority projects including the Hubble Space Telescope repairs and the Earth Orbiter-1 satellite.

The spacecraft was subjected to a preselected vibration scenario in each of the three axes. The testing was intended to simulate the vibrations the satellite will encounter during launch. During vibration testing, the satellite's fuel tanks were filled with isopropyl alcohol

to simulate the 200 kg of hydrazine that it will carry when it's launched.

Last fall, the satellite successfully completed thermal-vacuum testing, enduring nearly a week in a vacuum and alternately warming and freezing in a test chamber at the Orbital Sciences Corporation test facility in Germantown, Maryland. During that testing, Phase 3D was subjected to a maximum temperature of 45° C and a minimum of -20 C over five tests cycles.

Once it's checked out at Orlando, P3D will be shipped to the as-yet-unnamed launch site. Work continues on preparing the space frame and ground support equipment for shipment once the launch is announced.

An announcement at the Dayton Hamvention from Phase 3D Project Director Karl Meinzer, DJ4ZC, raised the possibility of a P3D launch as early as October. McFadin said recently, however, that no contract has been signed and negotiations continue.

AMSAT has declined to name the launch agency or vehicle, and AMSAT-NA officials have cautioned that the October date is very tentative and just the opening of a launch window.

For more information and photos, visit <http://www.clark.net/pub/tac/p3d.htm> and <http://www.amsat.org/amsat/sats/phase3d.htm> from the ARRL extra

Sat Sept 11 Saratoga Hamfest at the Saratoga County Fairground Balston Spa, NY Exit 15 off the Northway

Albany/Troy Volunteer Exam Team

1999 Examination Schedule

Date	Day	Doors Open	Exam Time (Doors will Close)
September 29, 1999	Wednesday (evening)	6:20 PM	7:00 PM
November 13, 1999	Saturday	9:20 AM	10:00 AM

ATVET CONTACT: Nels Williams, WB2SBO at 439-7357 or wb2sbo@aol.com

ATVET LIAISON: Bill Eddy, NY2U at 273-9248 or ny2u@n2ty.org

General E-Mail can be sent to atvet@n2ty.org

ATVET will be holding their exam sessions in the C.I.I. Building (Center for Industrial Innovations), Room 3051, on the Campus of R.P.I.. Examination room doors will open at 9:20 AM, with exams starting at the times indicated above. NOBODY will be admitted into the exam room after the starting time.

ATVET never requires any pre-registration for any of their exam schedules. A test fee of \$6.45 either cash, or check, is required for those taking any elements above Element -2 or Element -1A.

Make sure you bring two proofs of identification, with one being a picture ID. Also bring all of your original documentation (current license, CSCes...etc.), along with photocopies, calculators, pens and pencils to the exam session.

Anyone needing special handicap arrangements is asked to call in advance.

The CII Building is handicapped accessible. Cancellations if needed will be announced on both the Capital District Repeater Net (Nightly on 146.94MHz at 6:30 PM) and WGY - 810 AM. Talk-in on 145.17/R .

B-PLUS Oct. article deadline is Sun, Sept 26th.

Are You Changing Your Address:

Please contact Bill with your address corrections write to

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