Parkersburg Amateur Radio Klub

Di-Dah-Dit

Official Newsletter of the Parkersburg Radio Klub
1733 Gihon Rd. Parkersburg, WV 26101

KNOW YOUR PRIVILEGES! MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUND REGARDING TECH HF PRIVILEGES

Some Technician licensees who gained new privileges February 23 remain unaware or uninformed as to what they may and may not do on the HF bands, says ARRL Regulatory Information Specialist Dan Henderson, N1ND. In addition to all Amateur Radio operating privileges above 50 MHz, Technicians who never passed a Morse code test now have CW privileges on certain segments of 80, 40 and 15 meters plus CW, RTTY, data and SSB privileges on certain segments of 10 meters. And that's it. "Know your privileges <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/bands.html>," Henderson advises all Amateur Radio licensees. He says some Technicians apparently believe their new HF phone privileges go far beyond what they really have.

"Technicians have no phone privileges on any HF band other than 10 meters, period!" Henderson emphasizes. "That's the bottom line. If you want to operate phone on the other HF bands, you'll have to upgrade to General or Amateur Extra class."

A lot of Technician licensees appear to have done just that, according to statistics compiled by Joe Speroni, AH0A <http://ah0a.org/FCC/Licenses.html>. So far in March, the number of General class licensees is up by more than 2700 over the February figure to 134,173, after hitting a 5-year low of just under 131,000 in January. The number of Technicians dropped by 4655 in the same period to 318,838. Speroni notes, however, that his mid-month figures tend to underestimate actual totals.

Most Technician license holders face a learning curve to take advantage of their new CW privileges on HF, but they no longer have to pass a Morse code examination. Technicians also may use their new HF privileges without having to apply for them first. No other license class automatically acquired additional privileges February 23. The "omnibus" rule changes effective last December 15 did not give Technician licensees without Morse code credit any additional privileges either.

Henderson further warns new Techs not to extrapolate additional phone privileges by misconstruing the FCC Part 97 rules to mean something they don't.

"Calls I've been getting lately indicate that some misinformed individuals believe Technicians may operate 'digital voice' on 80, 40 and 15, where they have only CW privileges," he says. "Not true. Digital voice is really digitized voice, and it's not permitted in non-phone band segments."

Henderson reiterates that Technicians do not have FM voice privileges on 10 meters -- or on any other HF band, for that matter.

The HF privileges all Technicians now have are equivalent to those that Novice licensees enjoy, Henderson notes. "This also means the 200 W maximum power limit still applies, regardless of where you operate in the HF bands," he says. Technicians may operate at up to the legal limit on VHF and UHF, however.

On 10 meters, Technician and Novice licensees have CW, RTTY and data privileges from 28.000 to 28.300 MHz, and CW and SSB privileges from 28.300 to 28.500 MHz. "We're sorry that the sunspots aren't favoring 10 meters at this point in the sunspot cycle, but they will in a few years," Henderson allowed.

In addition, Technicians and Novices have CW -- and only CW -- privileges on from 3.525 to 3.600 MHz on 80 meters, from 7.025 to 7.125 MHz on 40 meters and 21.025 to 21.200 MHz on 15 meters.

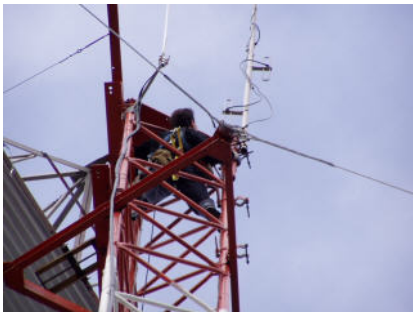
Henderson believes at least some of the confusion may have originated with a few brand-new or inexperienced Technician licensees who heard that the FCC deleted the Morse code requirement to obtain an Amateur Radio license, but paid little attention to the fine print.

"And we all know the devil's in the details," Henderson says. "Remember, the FCC requires you to know where you may and may not operate and with what modes. Stick to the privileges your license allows or risk hearing from the FCC."

Work has been ongoing on the 147.39 repeater building. Warped plywood siding was replaced and a weather-proof covering has been installed. The electrical service line was replaced. Some work still remains, including reinforcing the foundation and replacing the phone line.

Those working on the site include Jep K8BOT, Dave KC8ZZX, Jerry KB8PZR and Ray N8TWV.

Jerry, here are a couple of pictures of Kevin KC8LNE on the 146.97 tower. 73 Ray



FCC fines shop for selling non-certified CBs as ham gear:

In a Forfeiture Order <http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-07 - 881A1.pdf> released March 2, the FCC has affirmed a $7000 fine it levied on Ben Metzger of Titusville, Florida, doing business as 1 Stop Communications / 1 Stop CB Shop, for marketing non-certified Citizens Band transceivers. The FCC's Tampa Office issued Metzger a Citation in March 2006 for marketing certain Galaxy and Connex transceivers. Metzger has asserted that the units are Amateur Radio transceivers, which do not require FCC certification, not CB transceivers, which do. The FCC says the units are intended for use on CB as well as on amateur frequencies through a simple modification, and it has determined that such dual-use transceivers are CB transceivers under its rules. Metzger told the Commission last May that he'd removed the radios mentioned in the Citation from his store. In June 2006, the FCC declined to withdraw the citation on the basis that the transceivers were marketed as ham gear. Agents from the Tampa FCC office later revisited the shop and were able to buy a Connex CX 3300HP, which they say Metzger modified to operate on part of 10 meters as well as on CB and other frequencies (25.615 to 28.305 MHz). Metzger still maintains that the Connex CX 3300HP is a ham transceiver and that he did not violate any FCC rules, the FCC said.

Do not follow instructions in bogus e-mails:

The ARRL is alerting members-- and especially users of the ARRL E-Mail Forwarding Service http://www.arrl.org/members-only/emailfwd.html> -- about bogus e-mails that claim to be from the "arrl.net user support team." There is no such entity, and the messages do not originate with ARRL but appear to be coming from outside the US. Recipients should not follow the instructions in the e-mail, which reads, "We have received reports that your e-mail account has been used to send a large amount of unsolicited commercial email messages during this week. We suspect that your computer had been infected by a recent virus and now contains a hidden proxy server. We recommend you to follow our instructions in order to keep your computer safe." Following the instructions will have the opposite effect, however, infecting your computer with the MyDoom Trojan worm and making it part of a spamming network. The League urges all members to invest in and use anti-virus software.

FIELD DAY 2007 OFFERS A LEARNING OPPORTUNITY FOR HF NEWCOMERS

Although Field Day 2007 is still more than three months away, many ham radio clubs and groups already have begun making plans for this year's event, Saturday and Sunday, June 23-24. Field Day has always been an ideal time for new hams to become more proficient operators and for prospective licensees to get "bitten by the Amateur Radio bug." That may be even more the case during Field Day 2007, as many radio amateurs gain new HF operating privileges because of the rule changes that went into effect February 23.

"This is an opportunity to get new or upgraded licensees on the air for some active mentoring and active learning," says ARRL Regulatory Information Specialist Dan Henderson, N1ND. "Field Day 2007 will be a chance to learn and grow, but above all, it will be a lot of fun -- and for many there is perhaps nothing more fun in ham radio than ARRL Field Day."

The numbers support that claim. Last June, more than 32,500 operators took part in ARRL Field Day -- some as individuals but many more as part of a club or group. The League saw some 2200 Field Day log submissions for the 2006 event, during which nearly 1.24 million completed contacts went into the log -- not a record but up a little from the previous year.

While no longer a licensing requirement, Morse code (CW) remains a very popular Field Day operating mode, perhaps because CW QSOs are worth twice as much as phone contacts. Last year some 56 percent of Field Day contacts took place on SSB, while nearly 42 percent were on CW (the rest were digital contacts).

Henderson points out two small changes in the Field Day rules starting this year. First, participating stations may only complete one satellite contact for bonus points via a single-channel FM-mode spacecraft (Rule 7.3.7.1), and it must be an Earth-satellite-Earth contact. "This will allow more stations to access this very limited resource," he says.

Second, an individual Get-On-The-Air (GOTA) station operators will earn 20 points for each 20 contacts, up to a maximum of 100 per GOTA operator. Henderson notes that no partial point credit is available, and GOTA operators may not "pool" contacts toward any 20-QSO GOTA station bonus.

"Amateur Radio stands at a juncture where we can embrace both the old and new," Henderson says. He notes, too, that the variety of available operating modes -- traditional and experimental -- contributes toward Field Day's status as the most popular annual operating event.

"Field Day is truly the time where we bring Amateur Radio to Main Street USA -- a great time for 'the Bug' to bite as many people as it can," Henderson says. "Use Field Day 2007 to open up Amateur Radio to the next generation of radio amateurs on your Main Street! It's up to us to make it happen."

Complete information on Field Day 2007 packet is available on the ARRL Web Site <http://www.arrl.org/contests/announcements/fd/>.

Maine ham radio EmComm volunteer credentialing bill dead:

A bill in the Maine Legislature that would have required credentials for Amateur Radio emergency communications volunteers is dead. Sponsored by State Rep Stanley Gerzofsky of Brunswick, LD 696 received an "ought not to pass" recommendation March 14 from the Maine Senate Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. The committee's action followed a March 7 public hearing. On March 21, the measure was placed in the legislative files, effectively killing it. The bill would have included registered and credentialed emergency communications volunteers among individuals the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) could call upon to help in an emergency or disaster. Before they could be issued a valid MEMA identification card, Amateur Radio EmComm volunteers would have had to meet certain training criteria and other requirements, including certifications from the ARRL and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The measure also would have required EmComm volunteers to undergo criminal history and driving record background checks. Maine Gov John E. Baldacci is KB1NXP.

SUNI WILLIAMS, KD5PLB, A BRIGHT, CHEERY VOICE FROM SPACE

An upbeat Suni Williams KD5PLB, continues to delight students with her unfailingly enthusiastic responses to their questions about life aboard the International Space Station. The Expedition 14 Flight Engineer doesn't even seem to mind when the question is one she's already heard several times already from other youngsters. ISS crew members, many of whom hold Amateur Radio licenses, take time out of their off-work hours to speak with students as part of the educational outreach. During a contact March 16 with students at University School in Shaker Heights, Ohio, Williams talked about some of the things she's missing in space.

"Of course, I miss my dog, and I've talked about that already," Williams told students at the private boys' school near Cleveland, "but secondly, I just miss having a cup of whatever -- milk or coffee or something you can take an Oreo and dunk it into. Just drinking out of a normal cup, rather than drinking out of a bag and a straw, is something that I really miss."

What Williams enjoys, among other activities, is being able to float in microgravity. "It's better than it looks," she told one questioner. Scheduled to remain aboard the ISS until this summer, Williams said there's always something to do aboard the ISS. "It's hard to get bored up here," she allowed. She said she's enjoying taking photos of Earth, enjoying the view from space and keeping in touch with her family and friends via e-mail

Bob Morgan, K8RBV, loaned his call sign and served as control operator for the direct VHF contact with NA1SS. The Shaker Heights school has a full-size space shuttle simulator that includes the flight and middecks of the transporter, as well as a mission control area and a module of the ISS.

On March 19, she chatted about life aboard the space outpost with grade 6-8 students at East Aurora (NY) Middle School. Youngsters there were interested in any precautions the ISS crew took in the event of a solar storm.

"If there are solar storms that are going to have a big effect on us, we will go to a part of the space station that's a little bit more protected -- some of the node areas that have different modules on different sides that would be a little more protected," Williams explained. "And that's tracked on the ground and predictions are made, and they will give us enough time so we'll be able to take cover as needed." Responding to another question, Williams noted that a "solar wind" can actually change the attitude of the ISS.

George "Buff" Hoffman, a retired US Air Force officer whom Williams knows, addressed the students prior to the event. Hoffman's son, Sam, attends the school and took part in the contact. "It was great to hear her voice, and the connection was superb," LTC Hoffman said afterward. "Kudos to ARISS."

Gerald Klatzko, ZS6BTD, in South Africa, served as the Earth station for the East Aurora contact. A Verizon Conferencing teleconferencing link provided two-way audio between ZS6BTD and the school. The event attracted media attention from three TV stations and one newspaper.

ARISS is an international educational outreach with US participation by ARRL, AMSAT and NASA.

CubeSat launch scheduled:

Four CubeSats operating on Amateur Radio frequencies will be among seven CubeSats set to head into space on a Dnepr launcher Tuesday, March 27, from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. CubeSats carrying Amateur Radio payloads are CalPoly's PolySats CP3 and CP4, which will transmit 1200 bps FM AFSK (AX.25) on 436.845 MHz and 437.325 MHz, respectively, under an FCC Part 5 experimental license; University of Louisiana's CAPE-1, which will transmit 9600 bps FM FSK (AX.25) and CW telemetry during opposite 30-second intervals on 435.245 MHz using the call sign K5USL (forward telemetry reports via e-mail <jd.harrist@gmail.com>;), and the Universidad Sergio Arboleda's Libertad-1, which will transmit 1200 bps FM AFSK (AX.25) on 437.405 MHz. CubeSat separation is scheduled to occur March 27 at 0702 UTC with first acquisition of signal over South Africa at 0708 UTC.

Morse Code Exams Now History- As New Ham Radio Rules Go into Effect

A new Amateur Radio Service regime now is in place. The requirement to demonstrate Morse code proficiency to gain HF privileges officially disappeared from the FCC's Part 97 rules February 23 at one minute past midnight Eastern Time. At the same time, some 200,000 Technician licensees without Morse code exam credit acquired HF privileges equivalent to those available to Novice licensees. The League is marking the occasion with a W1AW special event aimed at welcoming newcomers to the HF bands. The "W1AW HF Open House" has included exam sessions under both old and new rules. ARRL Chief Operating Officer Harold Kramer, WJ1B, points to the still-growing number of ARRL Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (ARRL VEC) test sessions now on the schedule across the US as evidence that the rule changes will provide a shot in the arm to Amateur Radio.

"ARRL VEC has been extremely busy scheduling new exam sessions," Kramer said. "We normally coordinate about 5500 sessions per year, but we've already scheduled close to 5000 sessions and it's only the end of February."

ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM, reports some 175 ARRL VEC test sessions are on the schedule through the February 23-25 period, "and these are just the ones that have registered with us," she added. Two dozen applicants showed up at League Headquarters, either to sit for an exam or apply for license upgrades.

"I was surprised at the number of people who wanted to take the test at 12:01 AM," Somma remarked. All but two test applicants took their exams under the new rules. "After people took their exams, some went over to W1AW to use their new privileges," she added.

First out of the gate at the League's 12:01 AM test session was Joshua Rozovsky, N3YAR, of Bloomfield, Connecticut. He upgraded from Tech to Amateur Extra.

Despite snowy New England weather, a few applicants traveled some distance to take their exams. "A nice young couple that drove in from Rhode Island joined ARRL while here," said ARRL Membership Manager Katie Breen, W1KRB. "They thought this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to take their upgrades here at HQ."

Breen, who upgraded to General at the February 23 exam session, has been tracking W1AW Open House events in near-real time on an ARRL Web site blog <http://www.arrl.org/blog/W1AW%20HF%20Open%20House>. She's also posted some videos to YouTube.com.

Somma says her department now is bracing for an anticipated application avalanche as paperwork from initial sessions shows up. She and Kramer predict test demand will surge even further in the days and weeks ahead. Not only has the number of test sessions increased dramatically, Kramer pointed out, the number of applicants at each session is up as well. To keep up with demand, ARRL VEC has hired additional help. Staffers from other HQ departments also have been lending a hand.

March QST includes an eight-page "tearout" section "Now, New Opportunities for Every Ham!" between pages 48 and 49. <http://www.arrl.org/HFWelcome/Welcome.pdf>. It focuses on various topics of interest to those gaining new HF privileges through upgrading or owing to the new rules as well as to veteran licensees. Among other things, it covers mentoring -- or Elmering -- newcomers, "The Top 10 Reasons to Try Morse Code," earning ham radio operating awards by using Logbook of the World (LoTW) and a "Welcome to the fascinating world of high frequency (HF) radio!" by ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ.

"The FCC's decision to eliminate the Morse code examination as a licensing requirement opens the door to HF for all amateur licensees," Sumner points out in his remarks. Sumner also addresses the topic in his "It Seems to Us" editorial in March QST (page 9).

"As these new HF operators join us on our favorite bands, we old timers need to set a good example and to be patient, welcoming and positive," he writes. "Let's all remember how little we knew when we got started, and honor those who helped us along the way by doing the same for others."

The March QST special section includes a new ARRL band chart <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/bands.html>. (See "Revised ARRL Band Chart available" below.)

The new rules seem to be driving greater enthusiasm for ham radio in general. There's been an uptick in ARRL publication sales, particularly in licensing manuals and licensing guides, and enrollment in the online ARRL Ham Radio License Course (EC-010) <http://www.arrl.org/cce/Tech.html> is at an all-time high. Additionally, Kramer notes, DXCC applications are up by 350 from last year, while LoTW has exceeded 121 million QSO records.

"W1AW HF Open House" operation continues through the February 24-25 weekend, with primary activity from 10 AM until 5 PM Eastern Time (1500 until 2200 UTC) or later, depending on interest, propagation and participation. ARRL Publications Manager Steve Ford, WB8IMY, will compete in the North American RTTY QSO Party from W1AW.

Primary operation will be on both SSB and CW. W1AW will concentrate activity on the Technician and General class HF subbands, using its normal frequencies on most bands.

On SSB: 1.855, 3.990, 7.290, 14.290, 18.160, 21.390 and 28.480 MHz.
On CW: 1.8175, 3.5815, 7.0475, 14.0475, 18.0975, 21.0675 and 28.0675 MHz.
On RTTY: 3597.5, 7.095, 14.095, 21.095 and 28.095 MHz.

ARRL INVITES COMMENTS ON NEW HF DIGITAL PROTOCOL

The ARRL is seeking comments from amateurs concerning development of an open-source (non-proprietary) data communications protocol suitable for use by radio amateurs over high-frequency (HF) fading paths. This is not a Request for Proposals (RFP). An RFP may or not be forthcoming depending on evaluation of the information received.

Specifically, the League is asking for comments and information on the following issues:

* Access Method: Is Orthogonal Frequency-Division Multiplexing (OFDM) the best candidate technology, or should other competitive technologies be considered?

* Data Rate and Bandwidth: What data rates/throughputs are achievable at various bandwidths up to 3 kHz bandwidth?

* Adaptivity: What adaptive features should be considered, such as automatic adjustment of transmitter power, modulation waveform and coding, in order to maximize throughput and efficiency in two-way contacts?

* Robustness: What is achievable for reliable operation at power levels typical in the Amateur Radio Service and low signal/noise and interference ratios?

* Error control: What are the appropriate applications of error control suitable for HF channels? For example, how should Repeat reQuest (ARQ) and Forward Error Control (FEC) be applied to two-way contacts and one-to-many (roundtable and bulletin) transmissions?

* Activity Detection: What is an effective method of determining whether a frequency is busy prior to transmission?

* Operating System: What operating systems (such as Windows or Linux) are appropriate for Amateur Radio use with this protocol?

* Hardware: What practical and affordable hardware platforms are suitable for amateur stations? Consider the use of personal computers with or without
sound cards. Provide any information about the need for an additional "box" if needed.

Please provide the following with your response: (1) name of respondent, (2) respondent's contact information, (3) related experience, and (4) type of respondent: (individual, partnership, corporation or group). Do not include proprietary information as part of your response.

Post, fax or e-mail your response by 1900 UTC, May 15, 2007, to ARRL Chief Technology Officer Paul Rinaldo, W4RI <w4ri@arrl.org>;, 3545 Chain Bridge Rd -- Suite 209, Fairfax, VA 22030; Fax: 703-934-2079.

COPY CW ON YOUR OWN TV

Every week on the blockbuster show, JERICHO, a CW message is sent. The message tells what is going to happen on that show! Some of the messages that have been sent are: "There will be a fire!", "Bloodshed" and "One down, two to go!"

The message is sent at the beginning of the show just before the commercial. It is sent about 20 WPM and good code.

They mention Ham Radio now and then in the show. I think a ham is on the staff.

Give it a try and you can tell everyone what is going to happen!!!

Art, W8PBO arte@citynet.net
Please see my for sale items listed next!

Art's Things.

A friend of mine's health is failing and I am selling off this equipment. All is in great shape. I will sell it at Dayton or Ten-Tec Hamfest but you have first chance.

1. Ten-Tec Speaker matching the ORION or JUPITER. New $100 my price $50.
2. Astron 35 amp. Power supply with am./volt meters. New$170 my price $100.
3. Cooling fan that fits most Ten-Tec rigs. NEW $45 my price $30
4. MFJ 2000 watt Tuner (3 months old.) New $320 my price $275
5. Giant SWR/POWER meter. NEW $140. my price $75
6. MFJ Antenna Analyzer New $130 my price $90
7. MFJ Delux headphones New $20 my price $10
8. Heathkit phone patch. $30
9. Coaxual switch $20
10. Heathkit SWR bridge $20
11. D-104 with built in amp. $30
12. D-104 without amp $25
13. Choice of 3 Low pass filters $25 each.
14. CB/SSB rig converted to 10 meters. $50
15. Century 21 CW transceiver with built in power supply $150
16. Ten-Tec power mite QRP rig works great! $120
17. Ten-Tec OMNI A. with all filters. 275
18. Century 21 xcvr. Works well case has bruses. $125

I have tried all of these units out and they work fine. Some were bought and still in the original boxes, unused.

Many more things 15 to 20 different microphones desk and mobile types many name brands.