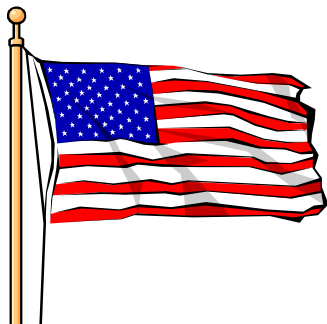


Sparks



Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society
August, 2002--Vol. LVI, No. 8

de KE9YK

Thanks to George Lynn for his presentation at the July meeting on the "new" REACT. There may be opportunities for cooperation between our groups. The August meeting will feature Sherman Greer, and our own Adam Groupe, KB9SXX, of the Evansville-Vanderburgh County Emergency Management Agency, who will have a PowerPoint presentation on current emergency preparedness activities. They will discuss the expanding CERT (Certified Emergency Response Team) program. CERT may be the wave of the future in citizen emergency preparedness and response, and RACES members are certain to play an important role. In light on the 9/11 attack and the on-going war on terrorism, this will be a timely program as we approach the one-year anniversary of that event. These recent and current events show the importance of the continuing need to be prepared. We will be the ones who are uniquely equipped to help defend the homeland by guaranteeing that public officials can communicate no matter how much of our communications infrastructure is damaged or overloaded. See you there!

Also, remember that the September meeting will be a cook-out. We will meet at a shelter house in Wesselman Woods this time. The exact location will be listed in next month's issue of Sparks. As usual, the

club will supply meat, buns, and drinks. If you can, please bring a side dish, chips, dip, etc., or a dessert.

73 Chris KE9YK

Calendar

AUGUST

- 1 TARS Board meeting, Red Cross Bldg., 7:00pm
- 7 Tri-State Emergency Net (Leonard, N9QVQ)
- 8 TARS club meeting, Red Cross Bldg., 7:00pm
- 14 Tri-State Emergency Net (Joanne, KB9LXZ)
- 21 Tri-State Emergency Net (Joanne, KB9LXZ)
- 28 Tri-State Emergency Net (Chris, N9JCA)
- 31 ARRL exam session, 9:00am, Red Cross Bldg.; bring photocopy of current license, any previous exam credits, two forms of ID, and \$10.00; contact Terry, AA9MM for additional information (812-401-9632 or tbrooks@sigecom.net).

SEPTEMBER

- 4 Tri-State Emergency Net (Chris, N9JCA)
- 5 TARS Board meeting, Red Cross Bldg., 7:00pm
- 11 Tri-State Emergency Net (Blanche, KA9EIV)
- 12 TARS club meeting-picnic at Wesselman Woods, 7:00pm
- 18 Tri-State Emergency Net (Blanche, KA9EIV)

- 25 Tri-State Emergency Net (Jim, W9NJE)
- 28 ARRL exam session, 9:00am, Red Cross Bldg.; bring photocopy of current license, any previous exam credits, two forms of ID, and \$10.00; contact Terry, AA9MM for additional information (812-401-9632 or tbrooks@sigecon.net).

Weather Meters Available At Reduced Prices

Gary Williams, N9UT, has a one-time opportunity to obtain Kestrel pocket weather meters at half price (plus shipping). These highly portable units would be ideal for weather watchers, to use either from home or mobile. Units available at these prices include the Kestrel 1000, 2000, 3000, and 4000.

The Kestrel 1000, selling for \$89.00 (the special price is therefore \$44.50) is just a wind meter; it measures current wind speed, maximum wind speed, and average wind speed. The Kestrel 2000, selling for \$119.00 (\$59.50 special price) measures the same wind values, plus temperature and wind chill. The Kestrel 3000, selling for \$179.00 (\$89.50 special price) measures all those values, plus relative humidity, heat stress index, and dewpoint. The Kestrel 4000, selling for \$329.00 (\$164.50 special price) measures all of the previous values, plus wet bulb temperature, altitude, and barometric pressure. Ricky Shanklin at the Paducah National Weather Service office endorses use of these units. They are also ideal for hikers, campers, boaters, farmers and gardeners, rock climbers, runners, skiers, hang gliders, pole standers, and whatever else you TARS people like to do. I know I wouldn't be caught cliff diving without one! If you are interested, e-mail Gary at <g.d.williams@aes.com>.

Ham News

CC&R Bill HR 4720 Gains Additional Cosponsors

The bill now in Congress aimed at providing relief to amateurs faced with private deed covenants, conditions and restrictions--CC&Rs--in erecting antennas has gained additional cosponsors. Freshman Rep Steve Israel (D-NY) introduced the "Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Consistency Act" on May 14. The measure--HR 4720--would require private land-use regulators--such as homeowners' associations--to "reasonably accommodate" Amateur Radio communi-

cation consistent with the PRB-1 limited federal preemption. PRB-1 now applies only to states and municipalities. Rep Greg Walden, WB7OCE (R-OR) and Rep Pete Sessions (R-TX) signed on as original cosponsors of HR 4720.

Since its introduction, the bill also has attracted several additional cosponsors. These include Representatives J.D. Hayworth (R-AZ), Patrick Tiberi (R-OH), Patsy Mink (D-HI), Ken Calvert (R-CA), Rick Boucher (D-VA), Joseph Hoeffel (D-PA), John Duncan Jr (R-TN), Dennis Moore (D-KS), Charles Stenholm (D-TX) and David Price (D-NC).

Visit the US House of Representatives "Write Your Representative Service" Web page, www.house.gov/writerep/ for information on how to contact your representative. The ARRL requests those writing or e-mailing members of Congress--whether or not they are supporting this legislation--to copy ARRL on their correspondence--via e-mail to ccr-bill@arrl.org or via US Mail to CC&R Bill, ARRL, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111. Correspondents should include the bill number, HR 4720, as well as their name and address on all correspondence.

ARRL Receives Homeland Security Training Grant

The ARRL will receive a \$181,900 homeland security grant from the US government to train Amateur Radio operators in emergency communication. The League was among several dozen nonprofit organizations designated to receive some \$10.3 million in federal money to boost homeland defense volunteer programs. The grant, from the Corporation for National and Community Service special volunteer program, will provide free ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course training to 5200 volunteers nationwide, starting in 2003.

"ARRL is the national association for Amateur Radio and is the national leader in emergency communications by volunteers who operate their own equipment on their time at no cost to any government, organization, or corporation," said the announcement July 18 from Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge. The ARRL plans to revise and update the emergency communications curriculum to incorporate additional elements of emergency preparedness and homeland security.

ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, said, "This adds legitimacy to the public service work Amateur Radio has been doing for years." ARRL Chief Devel-

opment Officer Mary Hobart, K1MMH, applied for the funding in May. "I think this is an extraordinarily exciting day for Amateur Radio that the role of Amateur Radio in homeland security is recognized at the highest levels of government," Hobart said upon learning of the grant. Citing Amateur Radio's response in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks, Hobart said the federal grant "will help continue our work in providing public service and to protect lives, homes, businesses and our frequencies, as we have for decades."

The grant announcement said that "expanding the opportunities for Americans to participate in meaningful volunteer service" is at the heart of President George Bush's USA Freedom Corps, of which the Corporation for National and Community Service is a part. "We are deeply grateful to Tom Ridge and to the Corporation for National and Community Service for providing Amateur Radio with a unique opportunity to serve our country," Hobart said.

Rocket Boys and Girls Set Their Sights on Space

If all goes as planned, a group of amateur radio operators and amateur rocket enthusiasts is poised to make aerospace history this summer by putting the first amateur rocket into space. The Civilian Space Xploration Team (CSXT) is hoping the suborbital vehicle will carry its amateur radio payloads to an altitude of more than 60 nautical miles. "Space" is defined as 50 nautical miles. The team is aiming to attain an altitude of 62 nautical miles with its rocket--the Primera Spaceshot 2002. (Primera Technology is a primary sponsor for the project and is helping with support and materials, Knight says.)

"Amateur radio is central to the whole flight," said Eric Knight, KB1EHE, of Unionville, Connecticut--one of the hams involved. He explained that the rocket's Automatic Position Reporting System (APRS), amateur TV and packet telemetry gear will enable the team to document its success.

In all, Knight says, 16 key people--including spouses--have immersed themselves in the rocket project. Among them is a real rocket scientist, Jerry Larson, an "almost ham" and an engineer with Lockheed Martin in Colorado. The team has built the vehicle itself, right down to the solid-rocket propellant grain. Funding for the project has come from team members' pockets.

Knight says the rocket was to have flown last September 26, "but then September 11 happened." The

team lost its Federal Aviation Administration authorization to launch; it was only reinstated this spring. The team also has made the necessary FCC notifications. Once the vehicle attains maximum altitude, it will be split into two pieces, and parachutes will deploy to carry them back to Earth.

There used to be a \$250,000 prize to put the first amateur rocket into space, but it expired in 2000. "There's no prize or reward whatsoever," Knight said, "only the historic recognition of being the first amateurs to build and launch a rocket into space." More information on the rocket project is on Knight's "Spaceshot 2001/Spaceshot 2002" Web site <<http://www.remarkable.com/rocket>>.

[These reports are modified from The ARRL Letter, published on-line by the American Radio Relay League.]

One Man's Opinion

Every year in June, Field Day rolls around. I look forward to it even if the weather is hot and humid, and band conditions are poor. Additionally, there is a good likelihood of thunderstorms. This year's venture to Garvin Park proved once again TARS can function as a group to provide emergency communications when the need arises.

A few Kudos are in order for those who worked hard to make Field Day 2002 a success. This year we were looking for an energetic volunteer to come forth and accept the responsibility of Field Day chairman. Chris Matthews, N9JCA, raised his hand and offered to accept the responsibilities of organizing the operation, obtaining a site, and rounding up radios and other equipment, plus the manpower to set up the operation on site. I do not think most people are aware of the amount of work that goes into a Field Day operation. We need to tell Chris how much we appreciate his efforts and enthusiasm in making this year's FD a success.

Thirty-seven club members attended at the Garvin Park site, and nineteen of us operated three phone stations and one CW station, amassing about 600 contacts in the twenty-four hour period. Of course, I must emphasize that the three CW operators tallied up 340 contacts while the numerous SSB people made the rest.

A few old faces appeared on location, one being former President of TARS Randy Jobe whom I have not seen for a couple of years. It was good to renew

old acquaintances and see how people are doing these days.

Afterwards, our meeting on July 11th produced even more benefits from our Field Day Chairman. As promised, all those who participated in Field Day as set up and tear down crew were eligible for a drawing--the prize was a new two meter radio contributed by Chris himself. Our man Norm King, W9AU had the lucky ticket and I am sure he will be able to put this rig to use in RACES applications, or for his own use [*Editor's note*: Bill is exactly right. I plan to use that radio as a back-up unit or one that can be set up as a portable base station for emergency communications, for every-one's benefit in the community.]

We certainly do not expect the Field Day Chairman to give away gear at his own expense every year. On the other side of the coin, as a club we might consider offering a prize in the same context as Chris did on his own initiative. For one thing, it encouraged many to come out and contribute to the activity. And who knows, next year perhaps a newcomer might learn something or even win something to get him or her really going in ham radio.

For every Field Day in the future, I believe we should have a prize offered to all who donate their time. Maybe some gift certificates to the Ham Station, perhaps a free licensing exam, a mobile antenna, even a free code course. Someone just might get the right encouragement.

We have another year to improve, refine, recruit, and put the plan into action. We have learned just how well things come together when the group functions as a well-oiled machine.

Kudos again to Chris, N9JCA, and to all who made Field Day 2002 a success--those who gave TARS and ham radio the positive publicity we so much need. We did very well this year. Let's keep up the good work! This is of course, One Man's Opinion.

73 **Bill** K4LRX

Member News

This month's request from the Treasurer: Please check out our new web page, <www.W9OG.org>. Thanks to a generous donation and Terry's (AA9MM) hard work, our club now has a new website. I will be updating it soon. If you surf the web, please check out the site and let me know what you think about it. Any suggestions, especially ideas about content and style,

are greatly appreciated. E-mail your thoughts to o3office@evansville.net.

ARRL Memberships: TARS will receive \$15 for any new (or rejoining after 2 year lapse) membership to the ARRL that is processed through the club. Contact Joanne (KB9LXZ) at 963-5872 or at o3office@evansville.net for forms and additional information.

Changed e-mail addresses:

Our President Chris - KE9YK can now be reached at: clantaff@sigecom.net

August Birthdays: 5 Adam KB9SXX, and 23 Douglas N9WYL.

Treasurer's report

[Note: The Treasurer's report and Secretary's report are not included with complimentary issues of Sparks.]

Secretary's Report

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