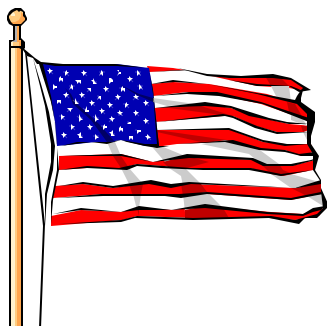


Sparks



Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society
December, 2004--Vol. LVIII, No. 12

TARS Website: <http://www.w9og.netorg> **Club repeaters:** 146.79 and 147.15
Say "Hello" at the weekly Tri-State Emergency Net, 8:00pm Wednesdays on 146.79

The President's Corner

First off I would like to invite everyone to the next TARS meeting on Thursday Dec. 9 at 6:30, to be held at Stoll's restaurant on Hwy. 41 near I-64. We will have good food, a couple of games, and a wrapped ornament exchange for anyone that would like to participate.

The meeting for January will be the annual club auction, so dust off that stuff cluttering up your shack, and put a few bucks in your pocket.

Since this is my last installment of the President's message, I would like to thank everyone who has helped to keep the club moving this year. The officers and volunteers are what keep the club alive, and I am confident that I am turning the reigns over to capable hands. Right now there are several new things in the works, and with more new ideas coming to the table in 2005, it will be a fun year. We are going to have a number of operating opportunities, we are starting work on a portable shack, and there will be general fun activities.

One last thing, TARS is seeking board member nominations for a special election in January. This

will be a one-year term to fill the position left open by Joanne's (KB9LXZ) election to Secretary. If interested let any officer know.

73 Chris KE9YK-

TARS Officers for 2005

The annual election of TARS officers and members of the Board of Directors was held at the November meeting. Here are the winners, and the positions to which they were elected (includes continuing Board members):

President--Herb Alvey KB9MZH
Vice President--Bill Hilyerd K4LRX
Secretary--Joanne Alexandrovich KB9LXZ
Treasurer--Leonard Schmitt N9QVQ
Board Member--Bob Pointer N9XAW
Board Member--Noah Elsroth KC9BUG
Board Member--Terry McCrarey WB9KQF
Board Member--Dave Vogel WA9C (continuing)
Board Member--Jay King WB9ICL (continuing)
Board Member--open for election in January

Calendar

DECEMBER

- 1 Tri-State Emergency Net (Leonard, N9QVQ)
- 2 TARS board mtg., new Red Cross Bldg., 7:00pm
- 8 Tri-State Emergency Net (Leonard, N9QVQ)
- 9 TARS club mtg., Stoll's Restaurant (near the State Police Post on North US-41), 6:30pm
- 15 Tri-State Emergency Net (Norm, W9AU)
- 18 ARRL exam session, 9:00am, EVC Emergency Management Bldg. on Stanley St. (just north of Diamond Ave. at Stringtown Rd.); bring photocopy of current license, any previous exam credits, two forms of ID, and \$12.00; contact Terry, AA9MM for additional information (812-401-9632 or tbrooks@sigeom.net).
- 22 Tri-State Emergency Net (Norm, W9AU)
- 29 Tri-State Emergency Net (Leonard, N9QVQ)

JANUARY

- 5 Tri-State Emergency Net (Leonard, N9QVQ)
- 6 TARS board mtg., new Red Cross Bldg., 7:00pm
- 12 Tri-State Emergency Net (Norm, W9AU)
- 13 TARS club mtg., new Red Cross Bldg., 7:00pm, annual club auction
- 19 Tri-State Emergency Net (Norm, W9AU)
- 26 Tri-State Emergency Net (Leonard, N9QVQ)
- 29 ARRL exam session, 9:00am, EVC Emergency Management Bldg. on Stanley St. (just north of Diamond Ave. at Stringtown Rd.); bring photocopy of current license, any previous exam credits, two forms of ID, and \$12.00; contact Terry, AA9MM for additional information (812-401-9632 or tbrooks@sigeom.net).

Ham News

HAM RADIO DELIVERS THE TOYS

With time still to spare and with the help of key "relay" service by local radio amateurs the ARRL holiday toy drive has collected truckloads of toys--1650 and counting. The drive, which is folding into the United Way's White Doves Holiday Project <<http://www.martinvolunteers.org/whitedoves/>>, aims to brighten the holidays for children displaced or left

homeless by the hurricanes that ravaged Florida earlier this year.

"The toy drive has snowballed and taken on a life of its own," says ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP, who spearheaded the ham radio effort. "Hundreds of groups, clubs and individuals have responded with such energy and cheer that it's already a great holiday season. People just kept going past Thanksgiving and provided more help for the kids than initially imagined for such a simple enterprise." Pitts says the effort generated a lot of goodwill for the Amateur Radio community as well.

Boxes full of toys from radio amateurs nationwide have been pouring in to the United Way of Martin County office in Stuart, Florida. As of November 23, more than 190 clubs, groups and individuals had contributed either toys or checks. Cash donations total nearly \$5000, and even more toys and contributions continue arriving daily.

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) members have helped transport toys from the United Way office to a storage area at the Martin County Fairgrounds. There, volunteers will sort the toys for distribution to needy families on December 20 and 21.

"We continue to be overwhelmed by the generosity of the ham radio operators," said Carol Hodnett, director of the United Way Volunteer & Community Resource Center, which coordinates the White Doves Holiday Project. "We cannot thank ARRL and its members enough for choosing to support White Doves and the children it serves."

ENHANCED COOPERATION FOCUS OF ARES-RACES-MARS MEETING

Enhancing cooperation among Amateur Radio's emergency service organizations was the subject of a groundbreaking conference November 20 in Castle Point, New York. On hand were Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) and Army, Air Force and Navy-Marine Corps Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) leaders.

While informal cooperation is nothing new to ARES, RACES and MARS members--many of whom participate in all three organizations--the focus of the Castle Point gathering was on launching more formal regional and national collaboration. ARRL Field Organization/ Public Service Team Leader Steve Ewald, WV1X, said he was pleased to be able to participate.

Keynote speaker was Army MARS Eastern Area Coordinator Robert Hollister, AAA9E/N7INK, from Ft Huachuca, Arizona (and the author of "A Portable NVIS Antenna," which will appear in the January 2005 QST). He expressed the hope that MARS management and ARRL would join forces to pursue the goal of interoperability. To jump start that initiative, Hollister provided an overview of the US Department of Defense (DoD) MARS program and its emphasis on providing emergency communication support to a wide variety of military and government response agencies.

In September, Hollister asked MARS stations and nets to coordinate with ARES/RACES and local ham radio operators to assist in handling hurricane-related health-and-welfare traffic. Amateur Radio and the military already collaborate informally each May during the Armed Forces Day communications tests, when hams and military stations engage in crossband contacts. Several pilot operations also have employed ARES/RACES members in past Army Reserve exercises at the local level.

Among proposals was a suggestion to seek FCC permission to conduct year-round interoperability training and emergency operation. It also was proposed that the amateur community assist MARS in providing early warning notification of emergency situations--so-called "Essential Elements of Information" messages--for relay to the DoD and the Department of Homeland Security.

Following Hollister's briefing, MARS Eastern Area Emergency Operations Chief John Scoggin, W3JKS, of Wilmington, Delaware, discussed last summer's nationwide Grecian Firebolt 2004 (GF-04) Army Signal communication exercise--the biggest MARS drill ever. At Pertgen's suggestion, Meirowitz tested the feasibility of MARS-ARES-RACES collaboration during GF-04, and ARES volunteers from eastern New York took part in the exercise, which involved a homeland defense/ homeland security scenario. Meirowitz called it "a small but successful joint effort." Ewald noted that the Grecian Firebolt exercises were similar in nature to the ARRL's Simulated Emergency Test each fall.

Hollister suggested that ARES/RACES participation in the next annual Army Signal exercise be worked out on a state-by-state basis. Also proposed was the designation of additional MARS-ARRL liaison officers at the state level.

ALLEGED ILLEGAL "AMATEUR" TRANSCIVER MARKETING DRAWS HUGE FINE

The FCC has proposed fining Pilot Travel Centers LLC \$125,000 for allegedly marketing unauthorized RF devices--specifically, transceivers labeled as Amateur Radio Service (ARS) equipment but intended for use on both Citizens Band and amateur frequencies. CB transmitters must receive FCC certification--formerly called "type acceptance." Amateur Radio equipment does not require FCC certification. The Notice of Apparent Liability (NAL) released November 22 asserts that Pilot continued to market CB transceivers labeled as amateur gear despite multiple citations and warnings.

The Commission alleges that from October 2002 until last July, Pilot, in 47 separate instances, offered for sale various models of non-certificated Galaxy CB transceivers labeled as "amateur radios" that easily could be modified for CB operation. The FCC says in some instances, Pilot employees referred to the units as "Cbs."

Following up on complaints received between 2001 and 2003, FCC Enforcement Bureau field agents visited 11 Pilot retail outlets in Texas, Oregon, California and Nevada. "At these locations, the stores displayed and offered for sale various models of non-certified CB transceivers marketed as ARS transmitters," the NAL said. The FCC's Office of Engineering and Technology (OET) already had determined that the units could be modified easily for CB operation and were subject to FCC certification prior to marketing.

Responding to the citations, Pilot told the FCC that all of the radios in question were "marketed as amateur radios and, as sold, operate on the 10-meter amateur band." Pilot contended the units fell under Part 97 rules and didn't require FCC certification. In January 2002, the FCC Dallas Field Office advised Pilot that the devices referred to in the Citation had built-in design features to facilitate CB operation and that the FCC considered them CB transmitters that fall under Part 95 rules. The NAL says the Dallas Field Office received no further response from Pilot. The FCC pointed out that it requires a grant of certification for any Amateur Radio Service transceiver designed to be easily user-modified to extend its operating frequency range into the Citizens Band.

The FCC said that on three days last December, FCC agents purchased Galaxy transceivers from different Pilot retail stores. The OET subsequently determined that all were non-certificated CB transmitters under the FCC's definition. Those sales provided the basis for

the proposed fine. Ultimately, the FCC alleged that Pilot offered non-certificated CB transmitters for sale on 13 occasions in 2003 and 2004 "in apparent willful and repeated violation" of the Communications Act of 1934 and FCC rules.

Citing its concern with "the pattern of apparent violations" in the Pilot case, the FCC actually adjusted the base forfeiture amount upward from \$91,000 to \$125,000. "We are particularly troubled that Pilot continues to violate these rules despite receiving nine citations for marketing non-certified CB transmitters," the Commission said in the NAL. "Pilot's continuing violations of the equipment authorization requirements evince a pattern of intentional noncompliance with and apparent disregard for these rules." Pilot was given 30 days to respond by paying or appealing the fine.

[These items abridged from the ARRL Letter, published on-line by the American Radio Relay League.]

One Man's Opinion

For the last few months a controversy has raged between Glenn Baxter, K1MAN and Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH regarding violations of FCC rules covering control operator requirements. Just in case you are not familiar with this scenario, Mr. Baxter has a 24-hour bulletin service on 14,275 kilohertz featuring a call-in talk show, various opinions about ham radio developments, and useful technical information.

Hollingsworth has questioned whether this operation is properly controlled. After several notices from the FCC were sent to the Baxter residence Riley felt K1MAN was being evasive about the issue. Riley claimed he visited Mr. Baxter's home in Maine and found no one present, yet K1MAN was on the air and transmitting the usual programming. K1MAN claims he has his station under control via remote means, so his operation is legal.

There are several pros and cons for Baxter's operation. He occupies the frequency for 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Nothing illegal about this! There are no time limits about staying on a specific channel. However, no one owns a specified channel on any ham band, yet he continues to occupy this one frequency. Is he claiming this channel for his operation?

The ARRL transmits bulletins, code practice, and special announcements, all on particular frequencies. K1MAN also provides information about ham radio, there seems not to be any monetary gain from this operation, and although he expresses his opinions in a

somewhat sarcastic tone at times, he has never resorted to profanity. So far, nothing in Part 97 would seem to limit him from exercising his first amendment rights relating to freedom of speech. He has complied with ten-minute identification requirements, makes spectrally pure transmissions, and his speech is not laced with profanity. He has even gone to the extreme measure of previewing his call-in show so if a caller makes a profane statement he can edit it before it is aired.

What else is Riley unhappy about with K1MAN's transmissions? Well, K1MAN has a website giving the schedule of his transmissions, but also advertising various products. Riley claims he is in violation of pecuniary interests using ham radio and profiting with the sale of items on his website. But ARRL and W1AW offer various books, guides, manuals and products for sale on their website as well.

Several people have filed complaints about K1MAN's operation, since he rarely ceases his transmissions. Additionally, on the rare occasions he vacates the frequencies for a short period, hams attempt to use it for normal operation. However, K1MAN returns to the air in total disregard of anyone else using the channel.

Similarly, W1AW starts its code practice, bulletins, and announcements on certain channels at specified times regardless of what is taking place on those frequencies. Occasionally they have started transmitting over contacts already in progress. We have accepted this scenario; stations in contact on a W1AW channel simply move up or down the band and let the ARRL transmissions take place.

So, it appears to me that K1MAN's operation is just as legal as W1AW's, with the exception of the control operator issue. K1MAN claims he has remote control of his station, monitors his transmissions, and does it from his car, or other remote locations. This again is all quite legal under the present rules. You do not have to be physically present at the source of your transmissions.

We also do remote control in the broadcast business. No one is actually present at the transmitter site, and we control all transmitter functions via data links over a microwave transmission system. Hams may use the 220/440/900 MHz bands for data control, and this includes remote controlling your fixed station on any ham frequency allocated to your license class.

Does Mr. Baxter do this? Well, he claims he does, and Riley Hollingsworth wants him to prove it beyond any doubt. Apparently Baxter has not proven his point to the satisfaction of Hollingsworth as of this date. Yet

he continues to transmit his information, call-in show, tech bulletins, and promotions for his A.A.R.N.--that is, his "American Amateur Radio Network!"

I have expressed my opinion about K1MAN in a previous article. I still believe his operation is a bit excessive, but in many instances informative and well meaning. I feel there is a solution to this problem. K1MAN should give Riley the information requested in detailed, clear, precise drawings, and limit his operating to a few hours per day rather than a full 24 hour operation. Continuous transmission is repetitive, and therefore unnecessary, but bulletin services have their place on the ham bands. ARRL and other Official Bulletin Stations and Amateur Radio Newslines provide a service to hams. Why can't K1MAN do so as well?

K1MAN could use "his" twenty-meter frequency a few hours a day, then shift to another band--perhaps the FM portion of the two-meter band, the FM portion of the six-meter band, or the 1.25 and 70 cm bands. Bi-directional stations on each band would gain about a hundred miles, and using the 20-meter band a few hours a day would provide the longer range coverage. This way he could still offer his broadcasts to those interested, and 14,275 kHz would be free most of the time. Additionally, provide Riley Hollingsworth with all the information he requested; let him see the operation if he wants--put it all out in the open.

Inconsiderate transmissions and not cooperating with Riley will make you an unpopular person with fellow amateurs and the FCC alike. By following my suggestions, Riley would be happy, users of 14,275 would be happy, and Glenn Baxter would continue to do what he enjoys--operating his information center.

This is of course, One Man's Opinion.

Bill K4LRX

Secretary's Report

December Birthdays:

WB9QVR Brian Esche (1st)
KB9LXT Gene Forster (2nd)
N9OL John Van Vorst (9th)
KF9RR Ron Goebel (10th)
KB9MZH Herb Alvey (12th)
KB9PAE Beverly Wilson (12th)
W9ADE Don Wade (13th)
KG4AFK William R.(Randy) Carter II (14th)
N9APA Dan Mitchell (16th)
WB9VSQ Elvin Reed (17th)

KG4UZY Larry Green (19th)
W9AJR Dave Wood (26th)

Treasurer's Report

Budget: Not included in complimentary copy

November 2004

Opening Balance:

Receipts:

Expenditures:

Ending Balance:

TARS Elmers

Tom Dickerson, KA9NOO, 985-5854: General stuff

Chris Matthews, N9JCA, 867-7456: APRS, IRLP, computers

Norm King, W9AU, 963-5872: RACES, antennas

Mark Parker, N9NYF, 422-7586: Digital modes, computers

John Small, W9FHA, 867-7058: Antennas (no climbing), kit building, QRP, general and portable operations, contesting

Dave Wood, W9AJR, 867-1200: CW

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