



FEEDBACK



Warminster Amateur Radio Club Web Page www.k3dn.org

April 2000

Now that spring is here, it is time for WARC to get into high gear. We have numerous upcoming events, but first and foremost is the WARC Hamfest 2000. The hamfest is scheduled for Sunday, May 7th. This is the club's big annual event in which we encourage all members to participate in some fashion. Our hamfest chair, Tony Simek (N3YNH), and co-chair, Roy Conners (K3TEN), have been working very hard on the preparations with the help of Vahan Shahinian (KB3DHU) and other club members. Many hands will be needed Sunday as well as Saturday for setup. If you have not already, please sign up at the next meeting or contact the chairpersons to help make this event a success.

Along the same line, The WARC hamfest has long standing tradition of passing out buttons with an amateur radio related slogan. The slogan contest is now open to all active club members. Selection of the slogan will be by popular vote at the next (April 6th). You may e-mail entries to the club k3dn@voicenet.com or directly to me n3fkr@arrl.net or bring entries in writing to the next meeting. We have a nice prize planned for the winner.

The March of Dimes walks are our next planned public service events. Multiple walks are planned this year all on Sunday April 30th. Since they are on the same day, this will really tax our volunteer efforts. We will need everyone who is available to join in and help out with this worthy cause. This is a low stress, enjoyable morning out. Please contact Doc Whitticar (W3GAD) to sign up for one of the walks.

Saturday June 3rd will mark the celebration of Buckingham's 300th birthday. WARC will be helping out with communication for the 5K run and also staffing a table at the event to promote amateur radio and WARC. If we have the interest, we could set up a station and have live demonstrations. Let me know if you are interested in helping with this event.

It seems WARC members are always in the news. Mike Patton (W3MJP) has been appointed Bucks County Coordinator for Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES). WARC is privileged to have Mike as a member and serve as our ARES Liaison. You may want to check out the ARES web page www.voicenet.com/~ikemay/ares.htm to find out more about this important aspect of amateur radio and how you may participate. ARES is an important part of emergency communications and public service.

If you pick up a March "CQ" magazine you may recognize one of the faces on the cover. Yes, it is former club member and Youth Program Chairperson Steve White (W4SNW, formerly WA3IAO). Steve now resides in Florida and has been appointed ARRL Volunteer Counsel for the Southeastern Division.

Just a reminder that WARC officer elections will be coming up at the June general meeting. If you are interested in serving the club in this capacity, please contact Steve Larsen (KA3ZLY) of the nominating committee to let him know you are interested.

See you at the next meeting,
Rocky, N3FKR

John Dougherty of Bucks County Emergency Management Agency will speak about the county's emergency preparedness and the role of amateur radio operators in those plans. Bucks county is not immune to long duration emergency situations such as the aftermath of Hurricane Floyd last year demonstrated. Natural and man-made situations can arise at anytime. Therefore our best defense is being and staying prepared. Please join us at the April meeting to hear what John has to say.

Another WARC tradition was observed last month, the annual club auction. Club Auctioneer "Col." Tom Michaud, WA3TQJ, always seems to find a home for everything. It seems that more computer related items appeared this year than in the past. Another enjoyable and profitable evening for all who participated.

Sunday, May 7th is the date for our annual hamfest. Each year we have a slogan button (which has become quite a collectors' item) available to attendees. A nice prize will be awarded to the member who submits the winning slogan. Selection will be made at the next general meeting. Entries may be submitted to me by mail or e-mail (preferred) or in writing prior to the start of the April 6th meeting. Please submit to the club address or e-mail, or directly to me:

Rocky Pistilli
209 Twining Road
Oreland PA 19075
n3fkr@arrl.net

Thanks for your input and good luck!

Rocky, N3FKR, President
Warminster Amateur Radio Club

Bucks County ARES

The new Bucks County ARES is up and running. Electronic registration is available to all and if you prefer, we supply "hard copy" registration.

You can find the site by going to :

<http://www.voicenet.com/~ikemay/ares.htm>

Mike, W3MJP
Bucks County Coordinator for Amateur Radio Emergency Service

The top 10 reasons I go to the WARC hamfest:

10. I enjoy watching a sunrise over a field, with wet feet.
9. I can find treasures that I missed at the club auction.
8. I get to see fashions that I could never see in GQ, but could see in CQ.
7. It is the Spring equinox for hams.
6. One of the places where gourmet dining and radio conversation is encouraged.
5. Did I mention the strange attire?
4. It is a place where I can pick up bargains to sell at the auction next year.

3. A place where you can root through junk boxes for stuff that you already have.
2. One of the few places where you can spend money you do not have on stuff you do not need and not feel guilty.
1. The number one reason to go to the WARC hamfest-When you see a guy with a bulge in his pocket, he is not necessarily glad to see you, but his HT has slipped off his belt!

SOLAR UPDATE

Propagation prognosticator Tad Cook, K7VVV, Seattle, Washington, reports: Spring is here, and 10 and 12 meters are the place to be. A high solar flux and shifting seasons are again producing conditions where low power mobiles can work the world on the highest HF bands.

Last year at this time, the average solar flux for the week was 147.5. This week it was 207.8, much higher, and almost 13 points higher than last week's average. A steady upward recent trend can be seen in the graph at <http://www.dxl.com/solar/>.

Geomagnetic indices have been quite low, but this should change. Active conditions are predicted for the next few days, due to recurring coronal holes and some recent flare activity.

Weekend conditions for the CQ Worldwide WPX Phone Contest could be stormy. The predicted planetary A index for the next five days, Friday through Tuesday, is 25, 30, 20, 10 and 10, so it looks like the best contest conditions may be on Sunday. On March 31 and April 1 conditions may be unsettled or active again, but should be quiet until April 18. Solar flux predicted for the next five days is 230, 240, 245, 245 and 235. Flux values are expected to bottom out around 185 on April 12 or 13, then peak near 250 around April 22 or 23.

Sunspot numbers for March 16 through 22 were 138, 152, 142, 208, 240, 191 and 212 with a mean of 183.3. The 10.7 cm flux was 184.4, 192.4, 194.8, 208.2, 210.3, 230.5 and 233.8, with a mean of 207.8. The estimated planetary A indices were 4, 6, 7, 8, 8, 6 and 11, with a mean of 7.1.

FCC: HOLD THE PHONE ON CORES AND FRN

The FCC has rescinded a March 16 Public Notice that announced implementation of the FCC's agency-wide Commission Registration System (CORES) and the issuance of an FCC Registration Number (FRN) to each licensee. The new system, which would supplant Universal Licensing System registration for Wireless Telecommunications Bureau-administered licensees, was to have gone into effect next Monday, March 27. Some key FCC personnel said they were unaware of the new system until they saw the Public Notice on the FCC's Web site.

This week, the FCC said it was delaying implementation of CORES and FRNs and suspending the March 27 effective date "until further notice." The FCC said it plans to soon issue a new Public Notice "clarifying certain issues about the new program and providing a new effective date for implementation."

CORES registration is expected to replace ULS registration within a year and possibly as early as six months from now. Information provided to the ARRL by FCC officials indicates that a new CORES registration form will take the place of the ULS Registration Form 606 when the new system goes on-line. Once in place, CORES will assign a new 10-digit FCC Registration Number, or FRN, which will replace the Licensee ID Numbers now issued by ULS for WTB licensees. Most FCC licensees are handled by the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau.

The ULS--which covers Wireless Telecommunications Bureau licensees and applicants--became effective for the Amateur Service last August, and the FCC still has not removed all the wrinkles from the system. Most hams have yet to register in ULS. Those who have automatically will be registered in the new system.

NEW MEXICO HAMS STAY ON AIR AS MOST OF STATE GOES DARK

New Mexico suffered what could be the largest power loss in the state's history March 18. Amateur Radio operators stood by to fill the communication gap as the outage that resulted from a grass fire left thousands without power.

"We had done our Y2K exercises well, and it paid off," said New Mexico ARRL Section Manager Joe Knight, W5PDY. Knight says smoke from a large grass fire caused the large insulators on a major power line to arc, shutting down the line. Three major power lines from the

Public Service Company of New Mexico's Four-Corners Power Plant followed suit. The outage subsequently took out a major power generating unit. "In a domino effect, most of the state of New Mexico, a small part of southern Colorado and part of El Paso, Texas, were out," Knight explained. Thanks to emergency power, hams and repeaters remained operational.

"Needless to say, there were no cell phones, and the 911 system was jammed," Knight said. ARES/RACES was activated and in full operation through both local and linked repeaters throughout the state. "Operators were cautioned to transmit only for emergency traffic in order to conserve our battery power on the linked repeater system. Since the shopping malls, grocery stores, restaurants, filling stations and traffic lights were down, it made for a real Y2K emergency."

Knight says the linked system was able to help keep the public up to date on what was happening. In addition, 21 battery-powered HF stations checked into the New Mexico Roadrunner Traffic Net and were on standby until the power was restored to most of the state. Two broadcast radio stations, KOB AM and KDEF AM, were on the air using emergency power generators. Knight said the New Mexico State Emergency Operations Center and the Albuquerque EOC also were on line using emergency power.

"There were several traffic accidents and a few burglaries, but the hospitals all operated on emergency power," Knight reported. Approximately 1.3 million people were without power for about three or four hours following the outage, which began around 4:30 PM Mountain Time. In Las Cruces, officials had to halt the state's high school basketball playoffs when the power went out in the arena.

"It was certainly a wakeup call for amateurs in the affected areas," said Knight.

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