



FEEDBACK



Warminster Amateur Radio Club Web Page www.k3dn.org

February 1999

President's Message

Congratulations to Bob Phillips (KA3VKU) (reelected) and George Brechmann (N3HBT) on their election to the Board of Directors at our January meeting. As members of the Board, they will contribute their time and talents to help our club become an even better organization. We had a slate of three very qualified candidates for the two elected board positions- let's hope the interest our members have in running for elected positions continues as we approach our annual May election of club officers. A sincere WARC thank you goes to outgoing Director Steve (KA3ZLY) Larson (who chose not to run again due to his work schedule) for his contributions over the past year; Steve will continue as co-chair of WARC's Youth Programs committee.

THE ANNUAL CLUB AUCTION will be the February general meeting program, and it's always lots of fun! Come see the talents of our immediate past president and auctioneer extraordinaire Tom Michaud (WA3TQJ). Bring stuff to donate and money to buy more stuff. Please support our efforts to make a significant deposit to the club's bank account (and make our Treasurer, Al Folsom (KY3T) an even happier person!).

Our Constitution Review Committee, under the leadership of Tom Michaud (WA3TQJ) has worked hard to make some important changes to WARC's constitution. In accordance with our current Constitution, changes were reviewed at our December 17 Board meeting and presented at our January 7 general meeting. Copies of the proposed changes have been on our WEB site since December (thank you Al, WI3Z) and it was unanimously voted at our January 7 meeting that we present the proposed amendments to our Constitution and By-Laws for adoption by the club (copy with proposed changes highlighted is enclosed in accordance with our current amendment procedures). Assuming we have a quorum (20% of our voting members), we'll put this matter to a vote at the March 4 general meeting.

I'm writing this just before the January SS contest weekend- finding the time wasn't easy with all the last minute "stuff" I've had to deal with to get my station operational! I know I'll work many of our club members in the contest and, like the last two years, look forward to hearing about how much fun they had. As a general purpose club, one of WARC's goals is to encourage our members to operate this event. The only way the ARRL can keep track of participation is the NUMBER of logs they receive. As you may be aware, the League has canceled its sponsorship of the VHF/UHF Spring Sprints for lack of participation. A lot of hams who operated that event failed to turn in logs- especially if they didn't have a lot of contacts or work multiple bands. **NO MATTER WHAT YOUR LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION WAS, PLEASE BRING YOUR LOGS-** a paper log or printout (if you used a computerized logging program), along with dupe sheets (if you used them)- to the February 4 meeting so Joe Bagnick (N3EMA) and his committee can put together a club score and submit them to the League.

de Bill , K3MFI

UPDATED MEMBERSHIP LISTING AT FEBRUARY 4th MEETING

Our latest update will be available at the February 4 General Meeting- please check for accuracy and give additions and corrections to Membership Chairperson Don McCunney (KA3N) or reach him by e-mail at dmmccunney@njaost.ml.com or by telephone (215) 364-7891 so we can make corrections for the next listing. If you have a new or updated e-mail address, please let him know (and e-mail club WEB master Al Konschack (WI3Z) at k3dn@voicenet.com).

KIT BUILDING NIGHT RETURNS FEBRUARY 11

To encourage more "homebrew" equipment construction, WARC will again sponsor organized sessions starting on 7:30 pm on Thursday, February 11 at the Ben Wilson Senior Center. So bring those (aged) TenTec 6 meter transverter kits in or anything else (amateur radio related) you want to build or get working. Looking for something simple- how about putting together an antenna? Lots of help and expertise will be available- past building experience is not a criteria for joining the group. Timing is great- something fun to do over those cold winter months and the possibility of winning a prize at homebrew night at the club's April 1 (April fools day) General Meeting.

JANUARY VHF CONTEST

Thanks to everyone who participated this year. I'll have some information on club participation and individual scores for March FEEDBACK. If you have any "war stories" about your efforts, please get them over to me (either at the February 4 meeting or by e-mail at jbagnick@aol.com).

Please bring your log or printout (if you used a computerized logging program), along with dupe sheets (if you used them)- to the February 4 meeting so we can put together a club score and submit them to the League.

Joe Bagnick ,N3EMA
WARC January VHF SS Chairperson

WARC HAMFEST'99 BUTTON SLOGAN CONTEST

It's that time of the year again- submit your ideas for button slogans for WARC HAMFEST'99 to Tony (N3YNH) at the March 4 General Meeting or March 28 Board Meeting (winning slogan will be chosen then). The winner will get a nice gift from the club.

Heard recently from former members who wrote:

Hi, WARC Members,

I have been working with Lockheed Martin for the last 13 years as a computer tech. I have worked with Chuck Curtis in radio repairs (God Bless His Soul). Chuck was my tutor in communications work, and he is the one who got me started in ham radio. I joined the club, and Dick Comly (N3AOG) taught me the basics and code. I also had a code practice session on the '09 machine at one time. I got married in April of '97, and have two stepdaughters, 10 & 14 years old. I am hoping to have a station set up by summer; I miss the cw and rtty operations. I enjoy rtty very much. Another hobby is music; I play the guitar, and have been since I was 9 years old. I like playing Chet Atkins style, who is also a ham.

Take care,
Joe Toy (KA3JEG)
214 West Ave.
Pitman, NJ 08071

e-mail: toyj@nosc.mil

Hi gang! Ed, K3WST here.

What have I been doing since moving to Florida! Mostly, enjoying it! I use the HT occasionally, and go to just about all the Hamfests that I can. I purchased a used low band rig, a Kenwood TS-520 about 5 years ago (my Swan 350 died!), but have yet to put up an outside antenna. I have a jury-rigged inside antenna which I have used locally, occasionally on 10 meters... checked into the local net a few times. As many of you know, I'm a barbershopper and I sing in a local quartet down here. Sorry to say, I devote more time to that than I do to ham radio. I still have my house in Wildwood, NJ, and go up there every summer. I also belong to the barbershop chapter up there, in Cape May County. Last summer, just about all my time was devoted to raising my house up 8 feet above the ground. Of course, contractors did the raising, footing and block work, but I installed front steps, rear deck, garage door, back door, new floor in the front of the house, etc. so I was busy. Isn't it great to be retired and have nothing to do? Hi Hi! I have a 17 foot boat down here in Florida and get out once in a while, but don't fish as much as I'd like. Back in '92 and '93 I helped build the church we now attend... learned to drive a back hoe, bob cat, ditch witch, and became a manual ditch digger after years of jockeying a desk! My health is good, my wife Ruth has some problems, but we're doing well. Miss you guys, but love getting the feedback every month, and you (we?) have a great web site.
de Ed Lewis K3WST

Getting started with APRS

You have probably heard some conversation on the 09 repeater about a program called APRS. Here is a small article on how to get started. I have enjoyed packet radio until about five years ago when the activity started to drop. I guess the Internet captured the fancy of people who enjoyed sending and receiving messages and files via the home computer. I had a tnc laying around and found that I could put it to use with APRS. Of course the bug bit hard and forced me to purchase a few more pieces of equipment for both a home station and a tracking unit for mobile operation.

APRS is a system that tracks objects using Packet Radio. It uses unconnected packets for transmitting the position and other information about each station or object. APRS receives these packets and displays the objects on a map on your computer screen. Tracking remote stations is not the only thing you can do. You can also track your own mobile station on a laptop while you are driving. You can use it for df fox hunting. Keeping track of weather conditions and set up your own weather station and send out reports. Last but not least you can track propagation and dx spotting.

It's easy to get started in APRS if you already have a tnc, pc and 2 meter radio. If you have a windows type pc I recommend you download WINAPRS. You can get this from the Tucson Amateur Packet Radio (TAPR) website, which is www.tapr.org. Look for WINAPRS and download the latest version of it, which is 2.2.4. While you are at it subscribe to the APRS Special Interest Group (SIG) to see what other people are doing and to ask questions. Be prepared to receive about 30 messages a day from there. Use WINZIP and you should be able to unzip the program into the proper sub directories. I suggest you go to the doc directory and print out the user's guide, which is in HTML format. After you install the program and run the setup facility, if you tune your 2 meter rig to 144.390 simplex, you should start seeing lots of stations.

If you do not have the program Precision Mapping then you can use the maps that come with APRS. I recommend using the one called USAEAST. It's much better to have the Precision Mapping program because it has better detail at the street level. You can order Precision mapping from the author along with the registration. You can use APRS without registering but you will have to run setup whenever you restart the program.

For a tracking setup there are a couple of items you can get from TAPR. There is a small gps type engine you can order. There is also something called a mic-e which is a tnc that interfaces with your 2 meter radio through the microphone connector. You can put these items into a small portable package that you can use on a bike or a back pack. Rocky N3FKR uses this type of setup.

I use a KPC3, Garmin 12xl gps, and an ht for my setup. The KPC3 is a Kantronics tnc and is very popular with the APRS people because it is easy to set up. The Garmin 12xl gps is also popular because it has a reasonable price and is very accurate. The challenging part of this setup is connecting the components together. The KPC3 comes with very good documentation that explains how to connect and get this system running. A very useful web site that talks about the KPC3 is the questionable web site, www.dididahdidit.com. Strange address but it is a question mark in cw (of course you already knew that :).

I have just touched on the aspects of APRS. There is a lot of equipment to choose and lots of ways to configure them. I will follow up with more articles and talk about different types of equipment. If anyone has any questions or needs help with getting things working please call me on 147.09 or e-mail me.

de Ron, NY3J
ny3j@home.com

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO PONDER LEAGUE NAME CHANGE

Could the American Radio Relay League enter the new millennium with a new name? The ARRL Board of Directors has asked the League's Executive Committee to develop a proposal to change the League's name to one that more clearly reflects the focus and purpose of the organization to hams and nonhams alike. The Board charged the Executive Committee to develop a name change proposal for consideration by the Board at its July meeting.

The name-change idea is not a new one. A previous proposal was considered by the Board several years ago, but it was set aside.

The now-obscure "Relay" part of the League's name often is the most troublesome to explain nowadays. It refers to the earlier practice, fostered by the League, of relaying long-distance message traffic from station to station in a time when direct contact was not always feasible. The Board's resolution said the League's current name no longer adequately reflects "the breadth of amateur radio" and that the ARRL needs a name that would "clearly reflect our focus and purpose--Amateur Radio--to those both inside and outside our organization."

The Board said the year 2000 would be "a natural point for change." Members who learned of the resolution this week discussed the issue on various Internet reflectors.

Earlier this decade, the ARRL Board declined a suggestion from the Long Range Planning Committee to change the League's name to the American Amateur Radio League--ironically the same name first suggested by ARRL founder Hiram Percy Maxim in 1914. The November 1992 issue of QST broached the subject to the League's members and encouraged them to express their opinions. Directors overwhelmingly--but not unanimously--abandoned the name-change campaign at the Board's January 1993 meeting.

Courtesy The ARRL Newsletter

FCC ISSUES 5-MHZ EXPERIMENTAL LICENSE TO ARRL

The FCC has issued an Experimental Radio Service license to the ARRL to permit two-way tests in the vicinity of 5 MHz, the most likely site of the next amateur HF band. The license, bearing the call sign WA2XSY, was issued January 8. A group of 15 current amateurs in various parts of the US and the Caribbean will conduct experimental, two-way RTTY and SSB transmissions within the band 5.100 to 5.450 MHz. To avoid interfering with existing services, the participants will confine their operations to the least-populated 50-kHz segment.

"The idea is to show that an amateur allocation there will improve our emergency communication

capabilities by filling the gap between the 3.5 and 7.0 MHz bands," said ARRL Executive Vice President David Sumner, K1ZZ. Sumner pointed out that several of the participants are phone net members in the Caribbean and Gulf area who frequently handle hurricane-related traffic and now must alternate between 75 meters and 40 meters. Other participants are members of a nationwide digital data-forwarding network.

The Experimental license is good for two years. Two studies by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) include an allocation at 5 MHz among the future spectrum needs for the Amateur Service. The subject is not likely to show up on the agenda of a World Radiocommunication Conference for several years, however.

Participants in the WA2XSY experiment may run up to 200 W effective radiated power. Similar multiband trap dipoles capable of operation on 80 and 40 meters as well as at 5 MHz will be employed at each station location. Operation by participants will consist of short transmissions to determine propagation characteristics.

Participating stations are located in New Hampshire, Tennessee, Ohio, Florida, Mississippi, Wisconsin, Indiana, California, Utah, New York, Texas, the US Virgin Islands, and Maryland. Courtesy The ARRL Newsletter

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