

The Monitor



January 2007

Upcoming Events

TSRC Meeting January 13, 2007, 9:00 am
EBA's, Hanover, NH

TSRC Meeting February 10, 2007, 9:00 am
EBA's, Hanover, NH

Message from the President

It's been an exciting month for amateur radio. The elimination of any Morse code requirement is arguably the biggest change to Amateur Radio in my lifetime. Even though an effective date has not yet been established, sales of test materials and HF gear have increased dramatically according to industry sources. While there seems to be no shortage of opinions on the positive or negative impact of this change, the reality is that it will happen shortly and we as hams should embrace this opportunity completely. I say "opportunity" because that's precisely what it is: a chance to herald in a new era of growth among our ranks. We can make the most out of this by becoming even more open and generous with those new and upgrading hams that will now make their way into the General and Extra license classes. If we do this without rancor, we will create the kind of future we want: a growing and vibrant amateur community based on the tradition of Elmering that has served us so well throughout our history. I know we can do it.

On a more personal note: my own involvement with CW has previously been limited to studying for the 5wpm test I took in 1991 and then almost nothing for 15 years. Once it became obvious that the code requirement was on the way out (and I passed the Extra exam) I became interested in CW operation purely for my own satisfaction. I've been operating CW for several months now and I have to say I had no idea how much fun it would be! Perhaps we will see more CW ops that, like me, want to do it for purely personal reasons. I hope so.

What you missed

Last month's club meeting included a presentation by David Landry (Dave #1) on his shack setup and the art of DX'ing. I learned a great deal and felt the presentation was excellent. Thanks to Ken Tentarelli, AC1H, for the photos that he took at Dave's house and thanks to Dave for sharing his considerable knowledge with us.

Dave McGaw, N1HAC has accepted the position as Repeater Manager. Given his long involvement with the maintaining of our repeater I am certain he will do a great job. Please feel free to attend any or all of the committee meetings in upcoming weeks. Your participation is more than welcome. We are also looking for a new newsletter editor. The editor is currently also responsible for maintenance of the club website but this could perhaps be a separate responsibility.

Mike Maynard has done a wonderful job for a very long time and he would like to groom a replacement for himself. If you or someone you know has skills in the desktop publishing/graphic and web design area, please contact Mike or myself.

See you at the club meeting!

73 de KX1Y
William Daugherty, TSRC President

ARRL VHF SWEEPSTAKES 2007- JANUARY 20-21!

VHF Sweeps time is here again! As in past years, Dot and I want to invite any club member or area Ham to join us in the "contest room" at our home in Strafford, VT.

The last two or three Januarys have seen moderate weather, making any time outside much easier for all. It looks like we will have snow on the ground (?) again this year, but we have plenty of parking space and some space for anyone who wants to stay over on Saturday night.

But enough about the outside environment of the ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes! We have continued to make minor changes in the setup over the past year to make the contesting experience more fun including better "seating". For newcomers, this contest concentrates on VHF, UHF and Microwave bands for contacts including 6M, 2M, 222 Mhz, 70 Cm and up. We generally concentrate on SSB with some FM and CW contacts. SSB operation provides greater ranges than FM, something very necessary on the higher frequencies. Generally, power levels exceed 100 wts and we use high gain Yagi antennas for enhanced performance.

The contest begins at 2PM local on Saturday, January 20 and ends at 11:00 PM on Sunday, January 21. Since contact rates are much lower than HF contests or FD, there is more time for QSO's and some ragchewing. For this contest, use the club call sign W1FN. We have a competitive operation, having come in first in our operating class in Vermont in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, and 2006 and first in Vermont in 2003.

This year we will be operating 6M, 2M, 222, 432 Mhz and 902 Mhz station for contacting mobile operators and fixed stations. The operating positions are in my shack/workshop in the garage in a 225 sqft room with heat, lights and comfortable seating.

The five operating positions are on bench tops around the perimeter of the room as well as a wrap-around console on my desk. I have three towers, each with a rotor and control box in the shack. With this arrangement, 2M, 6M and 432 are on separate towers, controlled

independently. The 222 Mhz operation is planned, at this point, to be FM with a vertical Yagi on the same tower as the 432 antenna. The 902 antenna pointed south in a fixed position. All contest antennas, except 222 Mhz are fed by hard-line. I hope to have hard line on the 222 antenna by contest time. (There are vertically polarized yagis for 2M, 440 and 6M, as well).

This VHF contest is a little bit like a "winter Field Day", without the mosquitos and terrible heat (??). We hope to give Hams the experience of VHF/UHF contesting where the pace is slower than HF contests and Grid Square hunting is a big factor. We also plan to have computer logging at each operating position to simplify the logging and contest entry process.

One major activity must not be overlooked--- the turkey dinner on Saturday evening (with all the fixings!!!) This had become a tradition and we do great damage to a 20 lb plus turkey each year. In addition, participants bring their favorite and special "pot-luck" offerings-- Dave KA1UAG's chili is a chili-lovers delight and even works well for breakfast on Sunday morning- for some!! Even though the contest doesn't start till 2PM on Saturday, we have a pick-up lunch around noon as some folks arrive early for setting up computers and equipment.

We anticipate that there will be little or no antenna/tower activity during the contest-- a great disappointment I'm sure to those of us who thrive on near frost-bite and other winter hazards!

Veterans and new Hams- put the contest on your calendars and get ready for a great Ham Radio weekend of contesting and conversation in our comfortable 70 degree contest room, while winter does it's worst outside. I'll provide directions to our QTH and notes on "what to bring" as we get closer to the weekend. If you are interested in doing an "overnight" please drop me a note.

73, Bill WB1BRE

FOR SALE

Icom IC-970A VHF/UHF all mode base rig

2M/440MHz all mode transceiver (CW/SSB/FM)

Dual Rx, UHF/VHF simultaneously

Output power adjustable 1-25W, each band

Internal PS-35 120V power supply, will also run from 12V

99 memories per band, plus 10 satellite mems and calling channels

Optional modules (not included): 1.2GHz, 2.4GHz, 50-905 MHz GC RX, narrow CW filters for main/sub band

This is a large radio, the same size as the IC-781/7800. It's panel is well laid out, with large knobs, and is easy to operate. It was designed with many features to make satellite operation easy. Many features, too numerous to mention. It has better receiver performance than any of the currently produced offerings. Probably the best performing satellite radio ever produced. It also has provisions for computer control. This radio is in very good condition, and has been checked to be fully functional. This is my second one, just excess to my needs. Asking \$1200. For more info or pix, contact Bruce N1RX at n1rx@arrl.net

Bird watching anyone?

This sounds like a great project for the winter to make more people aware of Amateur Radio and what we can do!

73, Bill WB1BRE

Subject: HAM frequencies for eagles

Hi Brian,

This year Vermont Fish and Wildlife Dpt placed 5 radio transmitters on young birds released from Addison, VT. We have 5 frequencies and were hoping that the HAM operators around the state, and/or New England, would be willing to monitor those frequencies for us. If you detect them we ask that you contact us here at Dead Creek in Addison so we may follow through on tracking down the birds, especially during the winter months. Currently, we only know the location on one bird, so it would be very helpful to have people on the lookout for others.

There are 2 signals which you could hear - the first (and ideal) signal is a slow beep, indicating the bird is alive and in your area. The second is a rapid beep indicating the transmitter has been motionless for 8 hours or more.

If there is any chance you could help us out with this, please let me know. Ideally, we would like to have folks throughout New England monitoring the frequencies, as the birds are likely to travel.

Please contact me anytime this week to confirm your interest. After the new year, please contact David Sausville whom I have cc-ed on this email. The frequencies are listed below.

Thank you very much!

167.106

167.133

167.928

167.979

167.995

Amy Alfieri

Hack Site Coordinator

VBERI

Dead Creek WMA

966 Route 17 West

Addison, VT 05491

(802) 349-8805

From: Sausville, David

To: william_a_burden@valley.net

Sent: Friday, December 29, 2006 10:43 AM

Subject: FW: Eagle tracking

Mr. Burden

I have an email into the company that produced our transmitters for answers to your questions. The company representatives are on extended holiday vacations until January 2nd. I will forward

the information as soon as I receive it. Not being an amateur radio operator I will give you the information I have and maybe some of it will be helpful. The eagles are carrying backpack style units that weigh 76.6 grams and have a 12-inch cable antenna straight down the back, I call it a whip antenna. The unit is powered by lithium batteries, I believe AA style that have a life span of 1080 days, plus or minus 30%. The frequency stability is +/- 2.5 kHz. I was told that the units have a ground reception range of 1-3 miles depending on topography and out to several miles from the air. The obvious limiting factor here in Vermont is our topography. I hope some of this helps. Thanks again for your help and support.

David Sausville
Wildlife Biologist
VT Fish & Wildlife Dept.
Dead Creek WMA
(802) 759-2398
David.Sausville@state.vt.us

FCC to Drop Morse Testing for All Amateur License Classes

In an historic move, the FCC has acted to drop the Morse code requirement for all Amateur Radio license classes. The Commission today adopted a Report and Order (R&O) in WT Docket 05-235. In a break from typical practice, the FCC only issued a public notice at or about the close of business and not the actual Report and Order, so some details -- including the effective date of the R&O -- remain uncertain. The public notice is located at, http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-269012A1.pdf.

Also today, the FCC also adopted an Order on Reconsideration, in WT Docket 04-140 -- the "omnibus" proceeding -- agreeing to modify the Amateur Radio rules in response to an ARRL request to accommodate automatically controlled narrowband digital stations on 80 meters in the wake of rule changes that became effective today at 12:01 AM Eastern Time. The Commission said it will carve out the 3585 to 3600 kHz frequency segment for such operations. Prior to the long-awaited action on the Morse code issue, Amateur Radio applicants for General and higher class licenses had to pass a 5 WPM Morse code test to operate on HF. The Commission said today's R&O eliminates that requirement for General and Amateur Extra applicants.

"This change eliminates an unnecessary regulatory burden that may discourage current Amateur Radio operators from advancing their skills and participating more fully in the benefits of Amateur Radio," the FCC said. The ARRL had asked the FCC to retain the 5 WPM for Amateur Extra class applicants only. The FCC proposed earlier to drop the requirement across the board, however, and it held to that decision in today's R&O.

Perhaps more important, the FCC's action in WT Docket 05-235 appears to put all Technician licensees on an equal footing: Once the R&O goes into effect, holders of Technician class licenses will have equivalent HF privileges, whether or not they've passed the 5 WPM Element 1 Morse examination. The FCC said the R&O in the Morse code docket would eliminate a disparity in the operating privileges for the Technician and Technician Plus class licensees. Technician licens-

ees without Element 1 credit (ie, Tech Plus licensees) currently have operating privileges on all amateur frequencies above 30 MHz.

"With today's elimination of the Morse code exam requirements, the FCC concluded that the disparity between the operating privileges of Technician Class licensees and Technician Plus Class licensees should not be retained," the FCC said in its public notice. "Therefore, the FCC, in today's action, afforded Technician and Technician Plus licensees identical operating privileges."

The wholesale elimination of a Morse code requirement for all license classes ends a longstanding national and international regulatory tradition in the requirements to gain access to Amateur Radio frequencies below 30 MHz. The first no-code license in the US was the Technician ticket, instituted in 1991. The question of whether or not to drop the Morse requirement altogether has been the subject of often-heated debate over the past several years, but the handwriting has been on the wall. A number of countries, including Canada, no longer require applicants for an Amateur Radio license to pass a Morse code test to gain HF operating privileges. The list has been increasing regularly.

The FCC said today's R&O in WT Docket 05-235 comports with revisions to the international Radio Regulations resulting from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) World Radio-communication Conference 2003 (WRC-03). At that gathering, delegates agreed to authorize each country to determine whether or not to require that applicants demonstrate Morse code proficiency in order to qualify for an Amateur Radio license with privileges on frequencies below 30 MHz.

Typically, the effective date of an FCC Order is 30 days after it appears in the Federal Register. That would mean the Morse requirement and the revised 80-meter segment for automatically controlled digital stations would likely not go into effect until late January 2007.

The ARRL will provide any additional information on these important Part 97 rule revisions as it becomes available.

Information for Technician Class Licensees

Just got this one from Fred Messer WA1LIE, here in Vt.
73, Bill

From: Somma, Maria, AB1FM [mailto:msomma@arrl.org]
Sent: Friday, January 05, 2007 7:37 PM
To: ve list
Subject: [ve-list:613] Information for Technician Class Licensees

Dear VEs:

The telephone has been ringing off the hook in the ARRL VEC offices. Questions have been streaming in regarding the elimination of the Morse code exam.

We are gearing up for an anticipated avalanche of upgrade applications when the rules take effect.

The following information, provided by the ARRL VEC, offers

Technicians (and VEs) guidance on the new FCC Rules and can be distributed in the field.

Happy VE-ing!

73,
Maria Somma, AB1FM
Manager ARRL VEC
vec@arrl.org

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Technician Class Licensees

FCC modifies the Amateur Radio Service rules by eliminating the Morse code exam requirements.

The effective date of the FCC's action will be 30 days after publication in the Federal Register -- most likely in February.

In an historic move, the FCC has acted to drop the Morse code test requirement for all Amateur Radio license classes. The Commission adopted the long-awaited "Morse code" proceeding (WT Docket 05-235), and released it December 19. The FCC's action will eliminate the Morse code test as a licensing requirement to operate on HF.

Technicians Gain Operating Privileges

Once the changes are in effect, all Technician licensees -- whether or not they have passed a Morse code examination -- will have "Tech Plus" operating privileges. This means you will have all of your current VHF/UHF and above frequencies and also will have access to the Novice/Technician Plus frequencies on HF.

No Morse Code Test to Upgrade

Technicians can upgrade to General by passing the General (Element 3) written exam and to Amateur Extra by also passing the Extra (Element 4) written exam. No Morse code test will be required. Visit the ARRL VEC exam search web page <http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/examsearch.phtml> for test session locations.

Navigating through the Upgrade Process

1. Technician Amateurs who wish to upgrade to General have a couple of options.

a. We recommend that Technician licensees who have NOT yet passed the General written exam (Element 3) wait until the new rules take effect to upgrade. At a session, the candidate must present a photo ID and their current license, pay the \$14 test session fee and fill out the NCVEC form 605. If the Element 3 written exam is passed, the VE team will issue the candidate a CSCE for the upgrade to a general class license.

b. Technician licensees who have already passed the General written exam (Element 3) or wish to pass the General written exam before the rules take effect, will then have to apply for the upgrade at a VE session once the new rules are in place. At a session, the candidate must present a photo ID, their current license and the non-expired CSCE document, pay the \$14 test session fee and fill out a NCVEC

form 605. If the Element 3 written exam credit is valid, the VE team will issue the candidate a CSCE for the upgrade to a general class license. If the CSCE for Element 3 credit has expired (a CSCE is only valid for 365 days), you will have to retake the examination element in order to receive the credit toward your upgrade.

2. Post Session Process

The VE Team must prepare and mail all session paperwork to the coordinating VEC. Once the session arrives at the VEC, in accordance with FCC rules, the VEC staff must verify all session documentation. All 605 forms and CSCEs must have the candidate's signature and 3 VE signatures. The CSCEs used for General written exam element credit must be validated as being passed within the previous 365 days and/or the test documents must be confirmed as being passed. Finally, the session data and information from the 605 forms can then be keyed and submitted to the FCC. The upgrade should appear in the FCC database <http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/> within a few hours and a new license copy will arrive in the mail in 7 to 10 days.

VEC Test Fee

As you can see, much of the same work is involved in both types of General class upgrades, therefore the administrative costs are embedded in the process.

The FCC has mandated that all paperwork only upgrades be done through a VEC via their VE Teams. The processing and administration of FCC "projects" such as this, actually places a greater demand on all the VECs. This is not a special case involving only a few people; we expect to receive a flood of upgrades to General. The paperwork only upgrade is not automatic for the amateur and the forms may not be sent directly to the FCC or the VEC office (again the upgrade must occur at a test session and follow FCC guidelines). The VEC test session fee is regulated (per annual agreement) by the FCC.

A New Era

When the new rules are in place, we hope you explore your new band allocations, enjoy your new privileges and have fun!

73,
Maria A. Somma, AB1FM
Manager, ARRL/VEC
msomma@arrl.org
1-860-594-0300

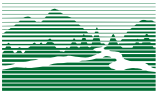
CLUB OFFICERS

President: William Daugherty, KX1Y (603) 359-3745
william@will-do.com
VP: Ken Tentarelli, AC1H (603) 763-9296
Secretary: Nancy Maynard N1QW (802) 295-6080
Lensmaam@mindpictures.com
Treasurer: Chuck Sherman N3WTO (802) 765-9630
chuck.sherman@dartmouth.org
Trustee: Dave Landry KA1CRP (603) 448-5788
daveka1crp@verizon.net
Editor: Mike Maynard, K1IH (802) 295-2650
Lensman@mindpictures.com

ELECTRONIC ADDRESSES

*ARRL Website <http://www.arrl.org/>
*NH ARRL Home Page: <http://www.arrlnh.org/>
*Tom Frenaye K1KI-NE Div. Dir. k1ki@arrl.org
*R. Sterling Eanes, AK1K, NH SM ak1k@arrl.org
*Dale Drake, AA1QD, NH ACC aa1qd@arrl.net
Part 97 <http://www.arrl.org/field/regulations/news/part97/>

Don't forget to check the TSRC Home Page!
Make it your default start page!
<http://www.w1fn.org>



Twin State Radio Club, Inc.
PO Box 5078
Hanover, NH 03755