

# The Monitor



March 2005



## Upcoming Events

- TSRC Meeting      March 12, 2005, 9:00 am  
DHMC Cafeteria, Hanover, NH
- TSRC Meeting      April 9, 2005, 9:00 am  
Location TBA

## Message from the President:

Are we becoming too comfortable with our hobby's security?

The protections afforded Amateur Radio by the FCC and its various rulings stem from the perception that Amateur Radio offers an essential service in times of disaster, war or other national crisis. Along with the privilege of using the frequencies allocated to Amateur Radio comes a responsibility to maintain our expertise and our equipment in a state that will enable us to provide emergency communications in times of crisis. It is that ability that secures our right to use the Amateur Radio frequencies and justifies our activities on those bands. The Amateur Radio community is also expected to use its frequency privileges to experiment and to "advance the art" of radio communications but our primary claim to the frequencies is to enable us to provide communications when no others can.

I suggest to my fellow TSRC members that these frequencies and privileges are under increasingly determined attack by those who would share or appropriate them. Radio frequencies in the usable spectrum are a finite resource and an extremely valuable (and often profitable) one. For many years, the Amateur Radio community was in the forefront of wireless communication innovation and invention. At one time, we represented the vanguard of ingenuity and improvisation. Sadly but inevitably, those days are gone. Business and government have taken over much of the experimentation and innovation now being undertaken and we find ourselves unable to keep pace with technology that has become steadily more expensive to pursue and to advance. I have become increasingly concerned about our ability to protect "our" frequencies and our privileges.

Various organizations such as ARES, MARS, RACES and others spend many hours training, maintaining equipment, providing public service for various events and, in many other ways, representing our hobby admirably and effectively. These and other groups expose the public to our capabilities and our dedication. However, despite determined efforts, I see the pendulum of public awareness and appreciation swinging away from Amateur Radio. I am concerned that the day will soon come when those in a position to encroach on and endanger our frequency allocations will be unmoved by our long history of public service, innovation and dedication. As times change, our hobby must change with them or risk fading into invisibility and irrelevance.

Granted, Amateur Radio continues to innovate and to stretch the envelope of technological advance. However, that innovation must be accompanied by widespread awareness of and appreciation for the things that we do and that only we are able to do. Without such grassroots support, recognition and appreciation, we will be severely handicapped in our perpetual struggle to preserve our frequencies and privileges. It is not enough that we are aware of our unique value and capabilities. It is essential that our friends, neighbors, colleagues, officials and lawmakers recognize them as well. If we do not provide that visibility, we might soon see our hobby become invisible to the point of extinction.

Field Day, public service events, demonstrations and emergency drills and exercises all provide some measure of exposure to the general public. However, we are in competition with extremely well-funded interests who covet the same bands that we operate on and who have ready access to an FCC that has seemed increasingly unsympathetic to Amateur Radio. As evidence of this, I refer you to that body's BPL (Broadband Over Powerlines) decisions of the past year or so that have essentially discounted concerns expressed by Amateur Radio operators and the ARRL in favor of well-financed commercial entities who see a huge pot of gold at the end of the BPL rainbow.

The past few years have seen major changes in our federal agencies and the creation of some new ones. It is difficult to keep all the players straight and the changes are still underway. We have a new transportation safety agency, a new intelligence agency and a new "homeland security" department. Where does Amateur Radio fit into all of this? One thing I believe is that if we do not define our part in all of this, nobody will and we will lose our privileges by default. In other words, we have to ensure that we are visible to as many people as possible in as many ways as possible.

As the public becomes more aware of the fragile state of our security, they become more willing to support high-profile agencies with increased funding. As those agencies receive more money, they are able (and usually willing) to spend some of that money on enhanced communications systems. As they become more self-sufficient in that regard, the value of Amateur Radio becomes less clear to them and to the public. Without any specific effort on anyone's part, Amateur Radio could easily become irrelevant by default. If that ever happens, there will be many interests waiting to take over our frequencies. Once lost, those frequencies will never be returned to us.

Preaching doom and gloom carries with it the obligation to offer some solution to the unwelcome predictions. Having watched the FCC and others take what seem to be unsympathetic positions on Amateur Radio over the past few years, I can offer no silver bullet for protecting and preserving our hobby. I sometimes wonder if even the ARRL is interested in much more than selling magazines, manuals and coffee mugs. At the same time, the one thing that seems to remain true is the old aphorism that "the squeaky wheel gets the grease."

I do not advocate evangelism to the point of being obnoxious, although that sometimes seems to work very well. On the other hand, I do believe that a certain amount of “blowing your own horn” is sometimes necessary to avoid death by invisibility. I think it is essential to the continued health of Amateur Radio that the general public be made aware of our existence, our capabilities and our unique value. I also think it is incumbent on those of us who love the hobby to see that it is brought into the public eye, not just during hurricanes and ice storms, but in the everyday consciousness of the general public. I believe that in order to survive, Amateur Radio must be clearly visible on, not below, the general radar. It must be an awareness, not an afterthought. It must be a recognized and valued element of our society, not just a novelty. The question, then, becomes how to make that happen. I offer the following suggestions:

1) Set a world record or two. That is always good for some exposure. Talk around the world on a nine-volt battery. Contact a mountaintop from Death Valley. do anything that would make an interesting story, then write that story, then do it again. Is Amateur Radio mentioned anywhere in the Guinness Book of World Records?

2) Identify and cultivate friends in the media. Use them to publicize Amateur Radio related stories, particularly “human interest” type events. Let them get to know Amateur Radio as a good source for interesting columns on slow news days.

3) Look for opportunities to showcase Amateur Radio equipment, stories and history in local venues such as museums, exhibits and so on.

Some of these probably sound naive but that is where you come in. Develop your own ideas, then share them with the rest of us and put them into action. This year, for the first time, I plan to request an Amateur Radio license plate. I’m not a big fan of vanity plates but I figure this might help in some small way to make people ask questions about the license plate, then about Ham Radio, then about how they can become involved with it. At the same time, it will remind the State of New Hampshire that those pesky “Hams” are even a small revenue source. It sounds silly, but who can say which ripple on the pond will become a wave on the shore? I promise to do my part. I ask you to do yours.

73,  
Charlie Wilber, N1AOK  
President, Twin State Radio Club

## Visitor

Russ Santos, K1TSV, will be joining TSRC for our monthly club meeting this Saturday. Russ hopes to present his qualifications for the position of ARRL Section Manager for New Hampshire. His website, <http://www.robski.com/k1tsv> has his bio and some plans to better the NH section.

## Disclaimer

Opinions expressed in The Monitor are those of the individual authors and do not reflect the opinions or policies of The Twin State Radio Club, Inc.

## DUES ARE DUE!!

TSRC 2005 membership dues are due as of Jan. 1st. You should have received a dues notice in the mail. Please correct the information where necessary, particularly your email address, and return to the secretary.

## Problems with delivery of ARRL e-mail often on recipient’s end

ARRL has been hearing from more and more members who are not receiving The ARRL Letter, W1AW/ARRL bulletins, membership renewal reminders and other automatically delivered e-mail products they’ve subscribed to. More often than not, the problem is on the recipient’s end, not at ARRL’s. For example, members with new e-mail addresses must update this information via their Member Data Page <<http://www.arrl.org/members-only/memdata.html>> (users must first be logged onto the site). Click on “Modify Membership Data.” While on the Member Data Page, make sure you are subscribed to the e-mail products you want and that you have not inadvertently checked the box “Temporarily disable all automatically sent email.” ARRL has determined that another culprit is spam filtering or software employed by the user’s Internet Service Providers (ISP) or installed on the user’s computer. Some ISPs have been known to block or trap all messages from ARRL as suspected spam. If you’re no longer receiving e-mail products or notices from ARRL that you’ve signed up for, a call to the ISP’s customer service department may reveal that the League’s e-mail messages have indeed been delivered to the ISP’s mail server but not to the member’s mailbox. Request the ISP to permit your account to receive e-mail messages from ARRL. Subscribers to The ARRL Letter should e-mail <[letter-dlvy@arrl.org](mailto:letter-dlvy@arrl.org)>. ARRL if the problem persists. Report other delivery problems to ARRL Headquarters, [hq@arrl.org](mailto:hq@arrl.org).

## FCC MORSE, RESTRUCTURING PROPOSALS COULD HIT THE STREET BY MID-YEAR

The FCC continues to work toward developing a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) that will spell out what the Commission has in mind with respect to possible changes in the current Morse code requirement and Amateur Radio licensing.

A total of 18 petitions have been filed, including one from the ARRL, seeking Part 97 rule changes addressing the future of the 5 WPM Morse requirement (Element 1) and revisions to the overall Amateur Radio licensing structure. The FCC is planning to tackle all 18 rulemaking petitions within the framework of a single proceeding.

As far as the code issue is concerned, petitions--and comments in response to them--run the gamut from retaining or even beefing up the Morse requirement to eliminating it altogether. (The ARRL’s

proposal would retain the 5 WPM Morse examination for Amateur Extra class applicants only.) The League and others have also put forth proposals for a new entry-level Amateur Radio license class.

At this point, personnel in the FCC Wireless Telecommunications Bureau are continuing to review the thousands of comments filed on the 18 petitions. While the FCC appears unlikely to release an NPRM any sooner than mid-2005, the issue still may be a major discussion topic during the FCC Forum at Dayton Hamvention, May 20-22.

Once public, the NPRM will initiate yet another round of public comments--this time on what the FCC has proposed. An FCC Report and Order to implement any new rules regarding Morse code and license restructuring is unlikely before the second half of 2006, although it's possible the Commission could wrap up the proceeding before then.

## **ARRL SPOTLIGHTS HAM RADIO AT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE**

The ARRL promoted Amateur Radio at the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) Mid-Year Conference February 12-15 in Washington, DC. With help from Maryland-District of Columbia Section Emergency Coordinator Mike Carr, WA1QAA, and Assistant Section Manager and Emergency Coordinator Jim Cross, WI3N, ARRL Emergency Communications Course Manager Dan Miller, K3UFG, staffed an Amateur Radio exhibit booth at the gathering.

"This event provided excellent exposure for Amateur Radio to the larger emergency management community," Miller said. "Interaction with those representing many diverse levels of emergency management is a win-win proposition." Miller said the ARRL's presence further established the League as a national point of contact to answer questions about Amateur Radio's emergency communication capabilities. At the same time, he said, it gave League representatives a chance to hear the concerns of emergency managers for followup with local ARES teams.

The conference also offered an opportunity for NEMA members--ARRL included--to discuss the many challenges facing the emergency management world, to share solutions, grow professionally, network with peers and strengthen relationships with partner organizations. NEMA also shared with federal officials its views on emergency preparedness for all hazards. Individuals and organizations involved in shaping the future of homeland security and emergency management offered presentations and forums.

Miller said many of the nearly 350 attendees representing federal and state emergency management and other agencies around the US stopped by the ARRL booth to complete a short questionnaire and to discuss Amateur Radio--with a focus on emergency communications.

## **ARRL OFFERING FREE BASIC ELECTRONICS PRESENTATION**

The ARRL Education and Technology Program is offering schools and clubs a CD-ROM presentation on basic electronics. The instructional presentation is available free of charge upon request.

"The Basic Electronics Course is intended for teachers and instructors who want a ready resource they can adapt to their instruction of electronics fundamentals," says ARRL Education and Technology Coordinator Mark Spencer, WA8SME. "The materials include a PowerPoint presentation and instructor's script."

Spencer says the course is designed around affordable components, a prototyping board and a volt-ohmmeter (VOM). The recommended text is Understanding Basic Electronics <<http://www.arrl.org/catalog/?category=&words=3983>>.

"The course covers the very basics up to Ohm's Law and then touches on other components like capacitors, coils, diodes and transistors--components common to virtually all electronic circuits," Spencer explains. He says teachers or instructors can use the presentation "as is" with the script or "cut and paste and roll their own" course.

"The course should take on the order of 10 hours to present," he notes. The PowerPoint presentation is on the order of 19 MB, so it is being made available on CD-ROM by request. Spencer has included a parts list and source. Those with high-speed Internet connections may wish to download the PowerPoint presentation

<<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/tbp/Basic-Electronics-for-the-New-Ham.ppt>> and the Instructor's Script MS-Word document <<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/tbp/Basic-Electronics-Script.doc>>.

For ARRL Education and Technology Program-participating schools, Spencer says he's kitted up the necessary parts, VOM, prototyping boards and text. That package is available by request to program schools as part of their progress grants.

For more information or to request a copy of the presentation, contact Mark Spencer, WA8SME, [m Spencer@arrl.org](mailto:m Spencer@arrl.org); 860-594-0396.

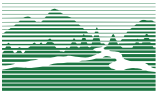
## CLUB OFFICERS

President: Charlie Wilber, N1AOK (603) 643-2914  
n1aok@arrl.net  
VP: Ed Feustel, N5EI (603) 298-5716  
efeustel@direcway.com  
Secretary: Nancy Maynard N1QW (802) 295-6080  
Lensmaam@mindpictures.com  
Treasurer: David Haseman KE1IW (603) 675-2678  
David.B.Haseman@dartmouth.edu  
Trustee: Dave Landry KA1CRP (603) 448-5788  
JDLandry@innevi.com  
Editor: Mike Maynard, K1IH (802) 295-2650  
Lensman@mindpictures.com

## ELECTRONIC ADDRESSES

\*ARRL Website <http://www.arrl.org/>  
\*NH ARRL Home Page: <http://www.nhradio.org/>  
\*Tom Frenaye K1KI-NE Div. Dir. [k1ki@arrl.org](mailto:k1ki@arrl.org)  
\*Al Shuman, N1FIK, NH SM [n1fik@arrl.org](mailto:n1fik@arrl.org)  
\*Dale Drake, AA1QD, NH ACC [aa1qd@arrl.net](mailto:aa1qd@arrl.net)  
\*Paul N. Gayet, AA1SU, VT SM [aa1su@arrl.org](mailto:aa1su@arrl.org)  
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