

The Monitor



July 2004

Upcoming Events

TSRC Meeting July 17, 2004, 9:00am
EBAs, Hanover, NH

TSRC Meeting August 14, 2004, 9:00am
EBAs, Hanover, NH

Message from the President

Please permit me to introduce myself. I am Charlie Wilber (N1AOK), newly sentenced elected president of the Twin State Radio Club. Along with our new vice-President, Ed Feustel (N5EI), our Secretary, Nancy Maynard (N1QW) and our Treasurer, Dave Haseman (KE1IW), I hope to nurture the tradition of camaraderie, respect and mentoring that has been a hallmark of the Twin State Radio Club. Among members of TSRC, I stand out as being one of the relative newcomers. When I received my Amateur Radio license in 1999, one of my first acts was to join TSRC. That turns out to have been an uncharacteristically wise move for me and I have made many new friends, learned a few new skills and assisted in the occasional public service event. It has been a valuable and enjoyable experience for me and I would like to be part of making it the same for others.

I would like to thank our outgoing President, Verne Burden (N5IEP) and vice-President, Dave Colter (WA1ZCN) for their many hours of hard work and effort over the years. Both of these great guys were part of TSRC long before I was even involved in Amateur Radio. I do not kid myself that I have the skills, talent, patience, experience or wisdom of either of them. However, I will do my best to carry on their efforts with the able assistance of Ed, Nancy and Dave. Thank you Verne and Dave for keeping the flame alive, shepherding TSRC with wisdom and foresight and being there to do the dirty work when no one else could be found. I hope you enjoy your well-deserved break from those responsibilities. Thanks also to our long-suffering Webmaster and Newsletter Editor, Mike Maynard (K1IH). I hope you will consider submitting your articles, stories, anecdotes, equipment reviews to Mike for publication in the Twin State Radio Club Newsletter which Mike produces every month.

Of course, there are many others whom have also been essential to TSRC's "health and welfare" over the years. I will not attempt to name those people because I would certainly overlook some and, by doing so, deny them the thanks they deserve along with so many others. I will say, however, that I am very excited about the new spirit of comradeship, experimentation and energy that I have noticed within our club. New members have joined, bringing new ideas into the group. Longtime members have developed new interests and assumed new responsibilities in their communities. Technology continues to charge ahead as always, giving us new ideas and new equipment to try out. This is getting to be too much like fun!

We also live in different times in which we have become vulnerable to the same threats that people in other parts of the world have long taken for granted. Amateur Radio has taken on a new, enhanced importance in today's world. Along with that has come a new visibility, new interest from the public and, I believe, an elevated level of respect from municipal and federal agencies charged with the security of our citizens. These are exciting, possibly dangerous and definitely challenging times. At the same time, our hobby is fraught with more dangers and obstacles than ever before. Commercial entities have designs on our allotted frequencies. Neighborhoods and municipalities are imposing restrictions on antennas and towers. Power companies are experimenting with Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) with apparent disregard for the disruptive effect it will have on Amateur Radio and on other critical radio services. Along with the privileges that accompany our Ham radio licenses comes the responsibility to defend our hobby and our frequencies against these interlopers. I believe that Twin State Radio Club, along with Amateur Radio clubs across the country, have much work to do if the hobby we all enjoy and hold dear is to remain intact, useful and fun. I know that some of our members have been very active locally in those efforts. I also know that a louder voice and a larger presence are needed. I hope to hear some new ideas about how we can have an impact as a group in our local area and as part of a larger, national effort to preserve the legacy of Amateur Radio.

During my relatively brief time as a member of Twin State Radio Club I have been privileged to with many Hams in various public service events. The annual Audrey Prouty Ride, the March of Dimes Walk, the Walk for Diabetes, the CROP Walk in Fairlee and other events have given me the opportunity to make new acquaintances and new friends. It has been, for me, a rewarding experience. I have always been impressed and sometimes been amazed at the dedication, skill and resourcefulness our members have brought to these events. It is a privilege to be a part of such a fine group of people and an honor to serve as your President.

Congratulations to the hardworking group who made Field Day happen again this year. I saw a number of new faces in the various drivers' seats this year and noticed, by their absence, some of the "regulars." The overriding impression I was left with, though, was that everyone had a good time. That has not always been the case in past years and I see this as a sign that we are learning from our mistakes, we are listening to our members and we are getting even better at what we do.

Disclaimer

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I must also mention the anticipated but hard-won success of the recent Audrey Prouty Ride, an event that has grown every year and become a fundraiser that generated \$317,000 for cancer research this year. One of our members, Rex Carr (AA1KL), did an incredible job again this year of organizing the communications for this event and was ably assisted by Dave McGaw (N1HAC) who once again served as Net Control for the event. It is always a thrill for me to watch true professionals like Rex and Dave go to work. It is always challenging, always different and always a lot of work but the outcome is never in doubt. Some new ideas were given a workout at this year's Prouty Ride. William Daugherty (N8RPD), for example, spent the night (yes, the entire night) before the Prouty setting up some APRS units so they could be tested during the event. The results were not exactly what had been hoped for but a lot was learned about both the power and the limitations of APRS (Automatic Position Reporting System). Chances are the technology will play a major role in next year's Prouty Ride. Of course many other people donated many, many hours of preparation and work to this event and, as usual, it was a great success.

In closing I would like to invite all of you to join me in exploring the new technologies available to us, meeting our new members, recruiting more of them, sharing new ideas and learning new skills. Most of all, I invite you to enjoy each other's company and have as much fun as you can.

73,
Charlie Wilber, N1AOK
President
Twin State Radio Club

2004 Prouty Ride and Walk

The 2004 Prouty Ride and Walk was a great success! We had 8 SAGs for the Ride and 2 for the walk...Two NCS stations and at one time 8 rovers, which included 2 repair vans. Over 1000 participants...We even got a plug in for TSRC and ARES on the radio station Q106! It was a great team...Dave, N1HAC did a fantastic job of NCS for the ride. We ran an experiment with APRS, thanks to William (N8RPD). It would have helped greatly in keeping track of the rovers, however the hills caused us to be sure that we need more digipeaters to make it viable. 24 hams showed up to help. I think that everyone had a great time...Some of the SAGS were pretty quiet...but the rovers and ride NCS were clearly very busy. The non-repair rovers carried bike repair kits with them this year. It was reported as an ARES event...about 240 man hours. We started at or before 0530 and ended by 1800. The situation was complicated by a the comm van's battery being dead. Many thanks to Charlie (N1AOK) for his invaluable assistance with this and helping me to get the comm van where it needed to be. Some of the participants came from other ARES areas. There were no ham or participants injured this year. There was one 911 call, but it was for a non-ride biker. KF6ACN also helped with a Civil Air Patrol drill... (as a target!) during the event. As last we heard, he made it safely away from the target zone, HI HI. We had increased set-up responsibilities this year.

The participants that I thank so much were:

AA1KL Rex - Liaison and LAC, N1HAC Dave - Ride NCS,
N1ZIH Don - Walk NCS, N8RPD William - APRS manager and

equipment set-up assistant to LAC, KA1IWEY Bill , N1NKC Glenn, K1DKO Bruce , KF6ACN Rob, WB1BRE Bill and KA1LDS Dot, KB1EOF Bill ,AB1CG Kristi and KB1CKT Shawn ,W1KRT Ken , N1AOK Charlie, KA1VJU Dave , N5IEP Verne, KB1IIR Luke, KG4IOG Chuck, N0JSR James, KB1GNI Lee , K1IH Mike , N1UM Dan , N1QW Nancy

73,
Rex G. Carr, M.D., AA1KL
aa1kl@arrl.net

FCC Sets New Vanity Fee Start Date: August 6, 2004

The FCC has announced that the new Amateur Radio vanity call sign regulatory fee of \$20.80 for the 10-year license term will go into effect August 6. Applicants for amateur vanity call signs will continue to pay the \$16.30 fee per vanity call sign application received by FCC until the new fee goes into effect. The FCC says it expects to collect close to \$162,000 from 7800 Amateur Radio vanity call sign applicants during Fiscal Year 2004. See the FCC's annual Report and Order (Docket MD 04-73) on the Web at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-04-146A1.doc for details on their assessment and collection of regulatory fees for FY2004.

AMSAT-OSCAR ECHO SATELLITE LAUNCHED!

A Russian Dnepr LV rocket carrying the AMSAT-OSCAR Echo Amateur Radio satellite and several other payloads launched on schedule June 29 at 0630 UTC from Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. Ground controllers made their first contact with Echo at 1452 UTC and collected some telemetry for analysis before shutting down the 435.150 MHz digital downlink transmitter.

"This achievement is due to many individuals around the world, who have helped in the design, building, integration, testing and launching of this satellite," said AMSAT-NA President Robin Haigh-ton, VE3FRH. "Also the members of AMSATs in many countries who have helped us by funding this 'electronic adventure.' Without your financial support the satellite could not have been completed and would never have been launched. Give yourselves a pat on the back for a job well done."

Jim White, WD0E, of the AO-Echo project team reports that an initial analysis of Echo's telemetry indicates everything is looking good. "The battery, solar panels and temperatures were all as expected," he said. Housekeeping software now is uploaded and running, and the transmitter was left on at a power level of 1.2 W.

Earth stations should not attempt to transmit on the satellite's uplink until checkout and commissioning are complete and AO-Echo has been made available for general use. White says that won't happen for at least one week. AMSAT will release bulletins when the satellite becomes available.

A telemetry decoding program, TLMEcho, is available for those who would like to view and report data from Echo. It may be downloaded from the "Echo Satellite User Software and Documentation page." AMSAT-NA requests that anyone recording Echo telemetry to send the CSV files to Mike Kingery, KE4AZN. A telemetry database has been established and will be tested over the next few days. When testing is complete it will be made available to directly upload telemetry files and query all data.

AO-Echo's sun-synchronous orbit is some 800 km (nearly 500 miles) above Earth. Among other capabilities, the 10-inch-square microsat--equipped with a transmitter capable of up to 7 W output--will allow voice communication using handheld FM transceivers. Echo will feature V/U, L/S and HF/U operational configurations, with V/S, L/U and HF/S also possible. FM voice and various digital modes--including PSK31 on a 10-meter SSB uplink--also will be available.

At last report, the AO-Echo project was still some \$12,500 shy of its \$110,000 fund-raising goal. AMSAT--a 501(c)(3) organization--welcomes additional donations to bridge the funding gap. Visit the AMSAT AO-Echo Web page for additional details.--AMSAT News Service

TEAM USA SEEKING PARTICIPANTS FOR 2004 ARDF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Amateur Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) Team USA is now forming for the ARDF 12th World Championship <<http://www.wch2004ardf.com/>>. The competition takes place September 7-12 near Brno in the Czech Republic. Every two years, hams from around the world gather to see who is best at on-foot hidden transmitter hunting. There are separate events on 80 and 2 meters, each with five transmitters scattered in a forest that can encompass 1000 acres or more.

"The USA has been represented at every ARDF World Championships since 1988, and 2004 will be no exception," says ARRL ARDF Coordinator Joe Moell, K0OV. He urges anyone interested in competing to act now. More than 200 participants representing two dozen or more countries are expected to turn out for the event.

"Each country may send up to three competitors in each of nine age categories--five for males and four for females, in accordance with rules of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU)," he said. Team members are responsible for their own transportation expenses to and from the Czech Republic.

More than a dozen US ARDF enthusiasts already have expressed strong interest in attending. The categories for males between 40 and 59 years of age (as of December 31, 2004) already have three or more signups. Team USA selection in these categories will be made based on performances and standings in USA ARDF Championships last year and this year.

Moell says openings remain for men under 40 and for all women's categories. "So it may be possible for inexperienced radio-orientees

in these age ranges to join the team," he said. "It is also possible to attend as a non-competing visitor, but all visitors must be listed as such on the national team roster."

Moell asks anyone interested in traveling to the 2004 ARDF World Championships as a member of Team USA or a US visitor to contact him via e-mail <homingin@aol.com>. Include your full name and mailing address, home telephone number and date of birth.

For more information on Team USA, radio-orienting in the US and ARDF competitions, visit Moell's Homing In Web site <<http://www.homingin.com>>.

THE FCC TURNS 70!

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) <<http://www.fcc.gov>>, the agency that regulates the Amateur Radio Service, turns 70 years old on Thursday, July 1--the effective date of the Communications Act of 1934. Passed by Congress on June 19 of that year, the Act established the FCC as an independent US government agency.

Although amended since, the Act--all 333 pages of it--remains in effect today and establishes the authority of the FCC to, among other things, issue license grants. It also spells out the official definition of an amateur station: "The term 'amateur station' means a radio station operated by a duly authorized person interested in radio technique solely with a personal aim and without pecuniary interest."

Upon its creation 70 years ago, the FCC directly inherited the personnel, funds and records of the Federal Radio Commission (FRC), then just seven years old. The FRC had shared regulatory duties with the Department of Commerce and the Interstate Commerce Commission. The Communications Act of 1934 put all the responsibilities under one roof. Most of the significant changes the Communications Act of 1934 introduced affected broadcasting.

Directly responsible to Congress and charged with regulating interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite and cable, today's FCC jurisdiction covers all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and US possessions.

When the FCC came into being in 1934, QST expended surprisingly little ink announcing the regime change to the Amateur Radio community.

"The radio part of the law is almost exactly the same as before, and there is no change in any amateur regulation," said a short article in the August 1934 issue. "The League kept in close touch with this legislation as it progressed, and is assured that nothing in the new law adversely affects Amateur Radio."

The original FCC was authorized to have seven members and up to three divisions. Today's FCC has five members--all appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate--and six bureaus.

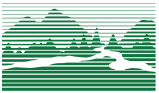
CLUB OFFICERS

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
*Al Shuman, N1FIK, NH SM n1fik@arrl.org
*Dale Drake, AA1QD, NH ACC aa1qd@arrl.net
*Paul N. Gayet, AA1SU, VT SM 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