

The Monitor



August 2004

Upcoming Events

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

TSRC Meeting September 11, 2004, 9:00am
EBAs, Hanover, NH

Message from the President:

Since my last message, there have been more bombings in Iraq, more strife in the Middle East, more AIDS deaths in Africa and more indictments of major corporate figureheads. We have read about a local plane crash, the busting of a major local drug ring and the suspicion of a sexual slavery operation in a local community. We see new radio towers appearing and hear rumors of more to come. The Democrat national convention has come and gone, Sandy Berger found some classified documents in his pants pockets and no one (yet everyone) is responsible for the events of September 11, 2002. I have a new radio and have admired some of yours. In short, things are constantly changing. In fact, things are changing so fast it is impossible to keep track of them.

For the most part, change is a good thing. Obviously, terrorism and disease are not changes we would wish on anyone. New administrations, fresh regimes, advanced technology, miracle cures and other changes are good, though. Catchy bromides like, "You snooze, you lose" come to mind. "The only thing that never changes is the fact that things always change" is another. Change is good; stagnation is bad. Change is refreshing, revitalizing, interesting, exciting and often challenging. It is also necessary – necessary to keep up with the times, to maintain interest and to define both our options and our limits. With that in mind, I invite our members to think about change in the Twin State Radio Club.

What do you like about TSRC? What keeps you interested and willing to commit the time for monthly meetings and other club events? Just as important, what do you find boring, unexciting or otherwise annoying or useless to you personally? What changes would you like to see? What new activities would you like TSRC to sponsor or participate in? What public service activities would you like to be engaged in? What training would you value and what form should it take? What "plain old fun" things would excite your interest (the now dormant "fox hunts" come to mind)?

In a nutshell, I am asking for your help in keeping things fun, fresh, interesting and exciting. I hope to entice new members to join TSRC and former members to return to the group. I hope to hear new ideas from current members about different ways of doing things or about doing things we currently aren't. The phrases, "it's always the same" or, "it's always the same few people" shouldn't be part of any discussion involving Twin State Radio Club. I would like to see all

our members fully involved in planning, implementing and enjoying the activities of TSRC.

Our vice President, Ed Feustel (N5EI), is already forming a speaker committee whose members will seek out and invite interesting and knowledgeable people to join us during club meetings to offer presentations, training, slide shows and so on. I believe that is exactly the kind of change that will pique interest in our club, encourage new members to join and enhance the experience for all of us. I ask all of you to think about what changes you would like to see and to mention them to any of the officers in person or by email so they can be presented to the membership for discussion and consideration. By the same token, please let us know what you like about TSRC and would not like to see changed. With a lot of cooperation and a little luck, we will end up with the best of both and will enjoy a vital and exciting Twin State Radio Club for many years to come.

73,
Charlie Wilber, N1AOK
President
Twin State Radio Club



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TWIN STATE RADIO CLUB FIELD DAY 2004 A SUCCESS AND LOTS OF FUN!

(Dave Walton KU1R and Bill Burden WB1BRE- co-chairs)

When we first discussed volunteering to co-chair Field Day for 2004, we had some concerns about taking on such a significant club effort. We decided early on that we would focus on a combination of making contacts and having fun for the 2004 effort. This meant that we would likely not finish as high in the national standings as previous years, but we felt that reestablishing the teamwork and good feelings about the field day effort were at least as important as getting a high score.

We ran a quick survey of club members to see how you felt about the emphasis of field day and the response indicated that we were on the right track. So, we jumped into the effort with both feet (actually all four feet) and spent the last few months planning, begging for volunteers for the various tasks, making phone calls- mostly by Dave, and making sure that all bases were covered.

The various functions in preparing for FD were set up with teams. Each team handled it's tasks pretty much independently and Dave and I provided any support, information, or other help needed.

We were again fortunate to have access to the Kimball-Union Academy athletic field for our setup. Many thanks to KUA and to Doug N1KDV for providing the site! We learned early that the plumbing pipes in the brick building had frozen and broken last winter and water and toilet facilities would not be available. Fortunately, thanks to the efforts of Verne N5IEP, our outgoing president, the plumbing was given a temporary fix, including replacement of the cracked toilet, and we had basic "services" for FD. On Friday, June 25, a large number of club members/team members met in Enfield for lunch and then moved to World HQ to gather in and transport all the materials need for FD. After loading antennas, rigs, coax and all the other vital parts of the FD operation, we caravanned to the FD site in Meriden.

Dave KU1R focused on the antenna installation and I worked all the other issues involved in setup. Dave and Mike N1MS worked on installing two 160 M loops, one with ladder line feed and the other with coax feed. The idea was to get a comparison of performance with different feeds (results indicate that the ladder line feed consistently outperformed the coax feed). In addition, we had four tower/antenna assemblies distributed in a line across the field running roughly North/South with as much separation as we could get across the field. The antennas included three tribanders and one 40 M yagi. Installation went smoothly with teams doing the tower assembly and erection and other groups assembling antennas. Most antenna work was done by early Saturday morning and allowed ample time for setup and checkout of the four HF stations and the GOTA station. We opted to focus on HF operation this year and did not setup an extensive VHF/UHF operation.

The computer logging design and setup was handled by William N8RPD this year with the CW stations in the club van at the far end of the field and the SSB stations in the brick building. The logging computers were RF-linked and worked very well- thanks, William!

Generators were provided by Verne N5IEP, Dave KE1IW, and Alan N1YMQ. Our FD Culinary Team for 2004 was Alan N1YMQ and Carol Bradford, who provided a great spread of BBQ delights for the Saturday evening meal as well as munchies and cold and hot drinks throughout the FD exercise. Fortunately, the weather was cooperative this year and while we did have a light rain on Saturday morning as we completed the setup, the rest of the weekend was rain free and the temps were reasonable.

Mike K1IH submitted press releases to various media prior to FD and we had an initial article in the Valley News on Friday. This seemed to trigger a media "frenzy" as we were visited by two (!) reporters from the Valley News at different times on Saturday. The first was the photographer who was with us for about three hours and took dozens of pictures of the setup, tower assembly and people. Then a second reporter arrived in the afternoon interviewing many of us and taking more notes. We have never had so much coverage on FD and it was great to then see a front page article in the local section of the Sunday paper with two pictures and a very accurate description of Ham Radio and the Field Day operation.

Well, how did we do this year?? We had a total of 1334 contacts with 163 CW and 1171 phone. In addition we claimed 1100 bonus points for emergency power operation, media publicity, setup in a public place, operating an information booth, an NTS message to the NHSEC, 5 natural power QSO's, a site visit by a served agency official, and a demonstration of ATV by Dave N1HAC. Our claimed total score for 2004 is 2994 points.

We were a 4A operation with at least 26 participants and a dozen operators. There were many interesting events and highlights during the weekend, including a visit by Dave Shaw WB1ABB, who lives in Thetford and saw our FD mailing. Dave arrived on the site with keyer in hand and spent several hours operating CW. And many thanks to Casey Jones N1ROC for his persistent efforts on the GOTA station. With four HF stations operating, there was always an opportunity for any visitor to sit down at a station and operate and many did.

Many Hams contributed to the effort this year and we thank everyone who helped make this a successful and fun event. In thinking back over the event, we did accomplish our initial goals of making points and having fun. In the process, we checked out our emergency operations and setup and our operating capabilities. Twin State Radio Club members again showed that we can provide large scale emergency communications support without relying on commercial power and that we can sustain an operation for 24 hrs. We hope that we never have to use this capability, but it is good to know that we can do it!

Dave KU1R
Bill WB1BRE

W1FN FIRST IN VERMONT IN THE JANUARY VHF SWEEPSTAKES!

On the cold, wintery weekend of January 24-25, 2004, an intrepid little band of TSRC members gathered on a windy mountain top to brave the elements. With frozen fingers and lips, they frantically made call after call on the Amateur VHF frequencies, piling up score in the January VHF Sweepstakes contest.....

Well, not really-- actually after finishing the installation of two antennas on Friday, we all spent the weekend in my warm and well lit shop at our home on Old City Falls Rd in Strafford. Club members and area Hams involved in the activity were Ken AC1H, Dave WA1ZCN, Dave KU1R, Chip W1AIM, Rex AA1KL, Rich W1HZN, Bill WB1BRE, Dot KA1LDS and Mary Ann N1DMW.

The contest runs for 24 hrs and we operated from 2 PM on Saturday till almost 6 PM on Sunday. Operators included AA1KL, WB1BRE, AC1H, WA1ZCN, W1AIM and KU1R. Actually the weather was not bad with sub-zero temps but little wind, so the occasional outside trips were not as painful as in some previous years.

The station lineup was:

6M- A 1KW station driving a 6 element yagi

2M- An FT847, TE Systems amplifier delivering 300 watts to an 11 element yagi.

222 Mhz- An FT 817 driving a 222 transverter and amp delivering 75 watts to a 16 element yagi

70 Cm- An FT736 to an RF Concepts amplifier at 100 watts to an 18 element yagi.

We used hardline on the 6m, 222 and 70 Cm stations.

Propagation seemed to be down and we noted that our contact rate on 6M was lower than last year. We weren't sure if this was due to a general propagation problem or something specific to this location. There is some indication that we may not have been at the optimum height above ground.

If you haven't done a VHF/UHF contest, it is a slower paced activity and very dependent on band conditions. There are little bursts of contact runs, but there is a lot of calling "CQ contest" going on! The multiplier in the scoring is based on the grid square count and we reached in to the midwest and down south on 6M for some number of contacts.

On Saturday evening we had a roast turkey dinner served in the shop and drinks and snacks were available during the weekend. I think everyone had a good time and we went through the contest weekend with no rig or antenna problems, which was a big plus! Many thanks to all who operated or helped with the contest operation and who supplied antennas and rigs!

The results are posted on the ARRL website and, surprise!-- we came in first in Vermont in spite of a much lower score than last year, and we were 21st out of 81 entries in New England. Second in VT was Mike N1JEZ and the South Mountain Contest club and KA1BSZ was third.

W1FN	12,702 points,	198 QSOs and 58 multipliers
N1JEZ (+KT1VT)	12,352 points,	109 QSOs and 32 multipliers
KB1BSZ	25 points,	5 QSOs and 5 multipliers

FCC SAYS NEW VANITY FEE REALLY GOES INTO EFFECT TUESDAY, AUGUST 10

Hold the phone! The FCC apparently can preempt The Federal Register when it comes to setting effective dates for orders. Commission personnel have clarified that the new Amateur Radio vanity call sign regulatory fee of \$20.80 for the 10-year license term actually will become effective Tuesday, August 10, not Friday, August 6 as ARRL and others had announced based on information in The Federal Register.

A staff member at the FCC's Gettysburg office told ARRL that the Commission's computer system has been programmed to accept the new fee starting August 10. A management-level staffer in the FCC's Office of Managing Director explained that the Commission was not necessarily bound by the August 6 effective date The Federal Register indicates, which is 30 days after publication of the order containing the new fee schedule.

Applicants for amateur vanity call signs will continue to pay the \$16.30 fee per vanity call sign application until the new fee goes into effect. All applications received at the FCC on or after Tuesday, August 10 must be accompanied by the new, higher fee.

NOGZ TO KEYNOTE DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE

Noted engineer, entrepreneur and radio amateur Ken Kaplan, NOGZ, will be the banquet speaker at the 2004 Digital Communications Conference September 10-12 in Des Moines, Iowa. The ARRL and TAPR--Tucson Amateur Packet Radio--will co-host the 23rd annual gathering.

In 1977, Kaplan and a colleague from Drake University started Microware Systems, a small company capitalizing on the then relatively rare field of designing microprocessor-based products. Microware soon developed a real-time operating system called OS-9, especially designed for embedded microprocessor-controlled products. The company also offered software development tools as well as professional services for contract research and development.

Until Microware Systems' acquisition by Radisys Corporation, Kaplan served as the president and CEO of the company. He was vice president and general manager of Radisys's Microware Division until his retirement in 2002.

An ARRL member, Kaplan is an avid Amateur Radio operator who was first licensed in 1967 while in high school. His favorite ham radio activities include UHF communication and building his own equipment.

The TAPR/ARRL Digital Communications Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Des Moines-Airport and Conference Center, 6111 Fleur Drive, Des Moines. Conference registration details and updates are available on the TAPR Web site <<http://www.tapr.org/dcc>> or by contacting conference organizer Steven Bible, N7HPR, n7hpr@tapr.org; 602-502-4808.

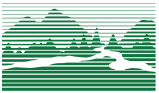
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Part 97 <http://www.arrl.org/field/regulations/news/part97/>

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<http://www.w1fn.org>



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