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Quarterly Radio Newsletter

W4DUG/N4TP TARC Tampa Amateur Radio Club Inc.

The Official News Publication of the Tampa Amateur Radio Club, Inc. July 2003

Highlights:

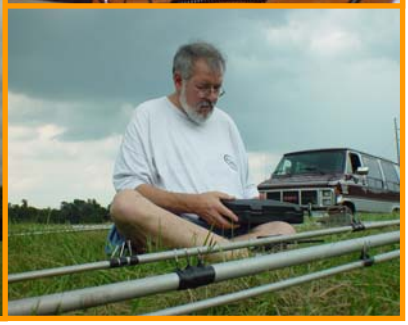
What's Inside:

Weekly Meetings

1st Monday	HF Council
2nd Monday	VHF Council
3rd Monday	Program Night
4th Monday	General
5th Monday	Clean Up

Repeaters

VHF	147.105
UHF	443.025



About the Cover

Left – The MAC trailer. 100 feet of crank up tower with generator and its own A/C radio room. However, we did use the RV to have a place to sit.

Top – The Satellite station of AA4MD. Check out the dish inside this newsletter.

Bottom – TARC Chairman of the Board, Biff Craine – K4LAW as he works on the Force 12 antenna, getting it ready for deployment.

All photos were taken the weekend of Field Day 2003 in the fields surrounding the TARC club house.

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Officers of TARC

Chairman of the Board.....Biff Craine – K4LAW
HF Director ..... Jim Gerhart – WA3DIT
HF Vice Director ..... Wes Jones – K4NQ
HF Treasurer ..... Kathy Pence – KG4WKN
HF Secretary .....Bill Bode – N4WEB
HF Trustee .....Warren Elly – W1GUD
HF Corporate Representative ..... Mike Powell – KF4TWB
HF Corporate Representative .....Biff Craine – K4LAW
VHF Director .....Bruce Orand – N4ZXI
VHF Vice Director .....Bart Houser – AF4TK
VHF Treasurer ..... Kathy Pence – KG4WKN
VHF Secretary .....Joe Booker – KF4MJO
VHF Corporate Representative..... Brian Wenholz – AF4SR
VHF Corporate Representative..... Ron Morgan – KC4HAY
VHF Trustee ..... Mike Fletcher – NI4M

Other Positions

Computer Technical Committee.....Keating Floyd – KC4HSI
Newsletter Editor .....Bruce Orand – N4ZXI
Web / Mail Administrator.....Bruce Orand – N4ZXI
Public Information Officer .....Bruce Orand – N4ZXI
SSB Station Committee .....Warren Elly – W1GUD
CW Station Committee.....Biff Craine – K4LAW
GOTA Station Committee .....Bill Bode – N4WEB
Satellite Station Committee .....Jim Huhta – AA4MD
Power "60 Cycle" Committee ..... Mike Fletcher – NI4M
APRS/Packet & ATV Committee . Gary Sessums – KC5QCN

Letter from the Chairman – Biff Craine – K4LAW

By Biff Craine, K4LAW

Thank you. Everyone did an outstanding job for TARC during Field Day 2003. It is no secret that I predicted that we would finish in first place in the 2A class for FD 03. I said it lots of time to lots of people. And I said it with confidence because I know the talent and dedication that our members have.

Now we do not know the results from the 500 plus entries in 2A for FD 03, but we know just about how we fared. At press time for this month's issue, our best estimate of the N4TP point total for FD 03 is around 12,500 points give or take a dupe here or there. This represents about a 900-point increase over our 3rd place finish from 2002. This also represents about a 900-point lead over the Sarasota Emergency Radio Club/Florida Contest Group entry this year. We have been chasing SERC's FD effort for several years not out of some misguided sophomoric rivalry, but due to the deep respect we have for the quality of their operators, many of which are world-class contesters. Last year we thought we had a shot but they added a transmitter and moved to 3A and got more points than we did with our 2002 2A effort. This year, we eclipsed their 3A effort of 11,268 and we did not even have to leave 2A to do it. Even though it will be several months until the scores are all reported in QST, there is little doubt in my mind that the 2003 TARC Field Day effort produced the most qso's and the most points in the West Central Florida Section and the State of Florida, regardless of category.

There will be plenty of time to celebrate when the scores are reported in November, however we did some celebrating after Field Day was over, knowing that we had all been a part of something special. Never before in the Tampa Amateur Radio Club's rich 81 year history had some many of its members worked so hard, focused on a project such as you did this year for Field Day. Some efforts are particularly noteworthy.

First, I want to thank Warren Elly, W1GUD, for his guidance as Field Day Chairman and SSB station commander. When we discussed our aspirations with the HF and VHF Councils, Warren wanted to make sure that the club supported our efforts to take first place in the 2A category. There was not a single member who did not fully support that goal and everyone who worked hard to make it happen, whether they were on the air or on the ground made it possible to improve our performance over last year, despite band conditions that reduced Field Day to a 40 and 20 meter effort on HF, crushed my personal dream of hundreds of qso's on 6 meters and limited scores throughout the country. Throughout the months of planning, Warren was always at the helm steering us in the best direction. Truly, he deserved the "coach's shower" that he got at the end of the exercise.

Next, I want to recognize the hours of work that Jim Gerhart, WA3DIT, put in during the planning phase of Field Day.

Jim was at every meeting and contributed his vast years of hamming experience to help us lay out the site, and marshal our resources to maximize our effectiveness. Jim, too, was confident in our performance to the extent that he placed a wager on the outcome of FD 03 with a cousin in New England who was operating with W1FN. W1FN is the call of the Twin State Radio Club, a perennial top ten finisher in FD, normally operating in the 4A category. This year W1FN dropped in to the 2A category, which led to the wager of lobster that Jim will soon enjoy. They did not even come close, suffering from the bad conditions that plagued the spectrum Field Day weekend.

Perhaps no one contributed more the TARC effort this year than Larry Gispert, KR4X. We had been bugging Larry for years about a generator and this was the year it came to pass. Through his efforts, a 15 KW generator is now deployed at the clubhouse to facilitate our operating capabilities during an emergency or an emergency exercise such as Field Day.

One day I got a phone call from Larry who was sitting in his office at the Hillsborough County Emergency Operation Center with our Emergency Coordinator Gary Sessums, KC5QCN. Larry called to ask if we could use the Hillsborough County Mobile Command Post for Field Day. The answer was yes even before the question was completed. The Mobile Command Post provided power and comfortable operating facilities for our CW position in a self-

contained package. We even had to commandeer the Mobile Command Post's laptop when last minute technical problems made use of one of the Windows XP machines a problem. He was there for set up and take down in addition to doing a grueling 5 hour shift on 40 meter CW which started at 1 am. And he did a damn good job of keeping up our rate.

Gary Sessums, KC5QCN, made arrangements to get several pieces of heavy artillery for Field Day use. Gary coordinated the use of the ARES/RACES trailer (that tower on a trailer that has seen more than a few mobile deployments and is famous for snapping cables and sending antennas to the ground) and the MAC Unit, the 100 foot tower and generator that was used for the VHF station. Gary also was instrumental in getting all of our demonstration modes up and running, along with Dan McDonald, KA2TOC, who wrapped up operations on the SSB station. Remember all of the hard work that Gary does for the club, not just at Field Day, when he asks our membership for help for emergency exercises.

And while we are on the subject of VHF, a special thanks goes to Keating Floyd, KC4HSI and Scott Seehawer, KC4VI. Keating and Scott took charge of making our VHF effort one of the best in the country. Our original plan was to use the MAC unit for VHF and put up 5 elements on 6 meters and 13 on 2 meters. When Scott got involved the antennas suddenly got much bigger and the equipment got much better. Regrettably, the VHF bands were not cooperative; however, between Scott and Keating they were able to collect 135 VHF qso's even with reluctant conditions. Had we had propagation on those bands, or even on 6 meters, I am certain they easily would have worked a thousand contacts on VHF. Scott is an accomplished contester that works both SSB and CW and Keating has distinguished himself in SSB operations in past contests. It took a special dedication to listen to static for 24 hours to squeeze out those 135 qso's.

While we are talking about that part of the spectrum, give a big hand to Dr. Jim Huhta, AA4MD, who brought the dishes that we used to serve the Big Fat Turkey. The dishes he brought were satellite dishes along with much of his own equipment to supplement the club's Icom 910H. The Big Fat Turkey was Jim's rival station in Huntsville, Alabama, K4BFT (Big Fat Turkey). In addition to providing the bonus points for the first satellite qso from the Field Day site, he contributed 175 qso's, including working Japan on the birds! Last year in the AMSAT standings, Jim's FD Satellite effort finished 2nd in the nation. Look for improvement in that finish.

What would Field Day be without Kathy and Mark Cruder, KG4KYJ and N4SEX? They both contributed heavily to the Field Day effort, not only by feeding everyone several times during the 24 hour period, but Mark lent his call and his wife to the effort for the GOTA station this year. That was our secret weapon for GOTA this year. This year it took 8 hours less to reach the 400 qso plateau for GOTA. N4SEX and our phone (N4)SEX operators Kathy Pence, KG4WKN, Kathy Cruder, KG4KYJ, Irene La Follette, and Skye Floyd (Keating's daughter) reached 400 qso's shortly after 1 am. In fact, they did not stop there. 706 N4SEX qso's were logged. Kathy, KG4KYJ certainly made her case for playing with the big boys next year with SSB rates as high as 90 per hour. We may have lost a cook, but we found another contester.

Mike Fletcher, NI4M, Bart Houser, AF4TK, John Ritter, W4MQB, and Bill Anderson, KC4JQH, better known as the Power Company (TARCO?) provided uninterrupted generated AC round the clock. Working with a generator that was probably cranked for the first time during the Vietnam War, they kept it purring through the night. I would not be the least bit inaccurate to state that they were vital to our success this year since they powered three of our five stations and kept the other two filled with diesel.

Bruce Orand, N4ZXI, the TARC Public Information Officer, got the whole thing on video, or at least most of it. The pictures were on the club website (www.hamclub.org) before I got home on Sunday. Great job, Bruce! Look for a picture compilation to be available in the near future.

I know there are things that were done and people that did them that are not reflected here, in part because I missed a lot of the goings on due to my shifts on the CW station and as a logger on the GOTA station, and in part because it would be too embarrassing for me to thank Danny Conner, KD5UJ, for unwrapping the 40 meter dipole from around the axel of my car. A blanket thanks to all of you for all of the work you did to make FD 03 the best ever…and probably the best in 2A.

We also accidentally started a new and wonderful tradition for TARC Field Days. At the end, at 2 pm on Sunday, we all gathered together in the clubhouse for lunch together, to review the many successes and few failures of our efforts.

There was something very special about that time together, right after having slugged it out for 24 hours on the bands with crappy conditions and thunderstorms that reduced other Field Day sites to rubble. In that moment we all learned that we had gone out and outperformed our past efforts significantly and together we could all bask in the glow of what we had accomplished. It was a special moment.

Thank You.

Biff, K4LAW

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From the HF Director – Jim Gerhart – WA3DIT

A few weeks ago I received an email from my brother Carl (N3ZZK) informing me of the death of Jim Stone – W3FIE. It was Jim who got me interested in ham radio in the first place. While I knew that Jim had been sick for some time I was happy to hear that the assisted living facility he had been staying at had allowed him to have an antenna for two meters right outside his window along with a radio on his bedside stand. Perhaps this is something that all of us need to check out for the future. Put it in writing to our children that if they ever have to put us in an assisted living situation that we're allowed to bring our radios with us. I'm going to make sure that Tommy finds a place for me that will allow at least one fifty-foot tower outside my window. Yeah, I can hear it all ready; "Please stand by OM the nurse has to change my Depends!"

I had sent off an email to Jim's daughter and got a reply back. She told me that she had made sure that there were two items placed in his coffin. One was a Catholic Rosary. The other was his QSL card.

As is my custom, when I am unable to attend a funeral, I will spend an hour during the day of the funeral to read through the Episcopal Burial Office as if I had been present. During that time I am able to remember what it was that that person had done to make my life different. With Jim it had been ham radio. As a young teenager I really hadn't been all that interested in radio. It was just by chance that I had been over to his house on that fateful day that he was in his shack. That first impression is what sparked my interest and has remained all these years. I can not tell you the number of "stupid" questions that I had asked and he quietly, without judgment, answered. One time I asked him if he would come over and look over my station because no one was returning my CQ's. He very patiently explained to me that the knife switch that I had put in line with the coax in order to satisfy my mother's fear of lighting hitting the antenna was causing a high SWR. (I didn't even know what SWR meant back then let alone what to do about it) That wasn't to be my last blunder with the technical end of the hobby. I always knew that I could go to him with a question and not be treated as if I was stupid or uninformed and this was and still is very important to the new ham.

It's important because we always need to keep in mind that we weren't born with technical knowledge. Somewhere along the line we too had to learn. It's important to remember this because when people come to the Club or we talk to them on the repeater, we must treat their questions as if **we** were asking them for the first time. I know that if Jim had answered my questions (and some of them were truly dumb) with an air of superiority or disdain I would never had stayed in the hobby and would be instead collecting shrunken heads or something like that.

There is no question that can be asked that is unimportant enough for us to give of our time to answer in a manner that educates rather than puts down. In reality one of the best answers we can give is: "I don't know but I'll help you find out".

Let all of us take the time needed to help those who are interested and new to the hobby. After all, they'll be the one who come to visit us when we can't get around anymore.

Hello, radio!

From the VHF Director – Bruce Orand – N4ZXI

Wearing multiple hats has become a common past-time in amateur radio. I, for example, have had multiple positions in TBARS and now TARC, including, Digital Chairman, Packet Trustee, Vice-President, President, Director at large, Newsletter editor (QSP and now QRM/QRN), and now Director of the VHF Council of TARC. But it does not end there! I am also the guy responsible for those annoying tornado graphics on the Hamclub.Org web site as well as the mail administrator for the HamClub mail server. It does seem, sometimes, that it just does not end. But with all the things I am into, there are others that do a great deal more, and my hat is off to them.

I am always amazed on how composed and calm some of the club officers remain, and having such a diverse board of directors has been a blessing to our club, and to me, too. Working with such a team has some real benefits.

Something that a number of people seem not to recognize is we are still in a hobby. This is supposed to be fun, enjoyable, and technically challenging. We have a common goal and mind-set. The growth of TARC to become the biggest and bestest ham radio club that ever dit the dahs.

As you will read on the next few pages, we have done a great deal to achieve greatness, especially when it comes to Field Day. I am glad that I have "aligned myself with the winning team."

As you will read in subsequent articles, a common theme is Field Day 2003, and the various perspectives of the stations involved. But I'm sure you have that impression already. So, sit back, grab your favorite beverage and enjoy the next several pages as TARC presents to you the happenings and goings of the club and mostly what was done and accomplished during

Since everyone else will be focusing on Field Day, that leaves me with reminding you all about NEXT MONTH!

TARC FEST X

On August, 23, 2003, TARC will host its 10th semi-annual TARC Fest on the TARC Clubhouse grounds. As usual, we will have hundreds of people buying and selling and eating. And this year I am proud that we finally coordinated with the Florida Blood Services' blood mobile and they will be there from 7am until 1pm to accept any donations they can get.

It did not take a lot of convincing, since we, the amateur community, are typically very public service oriented, and this is just another way that we can help out.

If you are wondering where TARC Fest is, probably because you new to the area or maybe just live under a rock? ☺ Anyway, TARC Fest X will be held on the TARC grounds located 7801 N. 22nd Street. That's 11 blocks North of Sligh Ave on 22nd Street.

Tail-gate set-up time starts 7:00am and general patrons can come in at 8:00am.

Kathy Burgers, Mark Dogs, and other assorted foods will be available. If you don't get anything else, get one of those great burgers.

Admission is $2 per person, and an additional $3 for tail-gating.

If you want a table inside, they go fast by the way, then contact Biff Craine, K4LAW@Hamclub.org, and he will hook you up.

We all look forward to seeing you there for a great Saturday morning. And you just might find that special piece of gear you have been looking for all these years!

And if you don't make it, we'll have to send Mr. Bunny after you.

TARC Field Day 2003 – SSB: 2,000 Claimed QSOs in 2A

By W1GUD

Never say never! That's what our field day motto ought to be! The weather threatened us. A solar watch-a-ma-call-it reared its ugly stuff. The media thought we were in Spring Hill! I mean, what else could have gone wrong?

Instead… the generator and the q's never stopped. Never.

It didn't even rain until Padre WA3DIT left the clubhouse late Saturday night.

Dan KA2TOC setting up the SSB station.

It was identical to the CW station, except that SSB used a Force 12 C4s, while the CW ops worked with a Force 12 C3E. The difference is boom length (the c3e is longer and hosts an extra element on 10 meters) and one other very important thing.

The C4S is the urban guerilla antenna…On a very short boom. With the secret weapon, a linear loaded rotatable 40 meter dipole on the same boom. Electrically the 32 feet of aluminum for 40 is 64 feet…a half wave on 40.

That's force12 main man Danny Conner KD5UJ, the graveyard SSB man. We haven't broken the rates, but this guy kicked butt overnight.

Also the Cookie Man doing what he always does…getting the job done.

Our CW brothers, using B&W and home brew dipole (not sure if it was home brew) reported disappointing results. On 40, unlike on 20, they told us they were being chased off their own frequencies. Because we took extra time to carefully tune that 40 meter element (the bandwidth is narrow), SSB ops were able to more than hold their own on 40. (Take a note- 40 meter kit needed for field day force12's owned by club). Brian AA4SR is the proud owner of the C4S we used…

It was very rewarding to have pileups on 20 meters and on 40 meters that were so huge we had to wait until the pile died and listen for second calls to work folks…you just couldn't hear a thing a lot of the time and it wasn't QRM or interference from one of the other stations. The pileups were just that huge!

We were so loud on 40 and 20, that we worked the 24 hours with only four or five band/frequency changes.

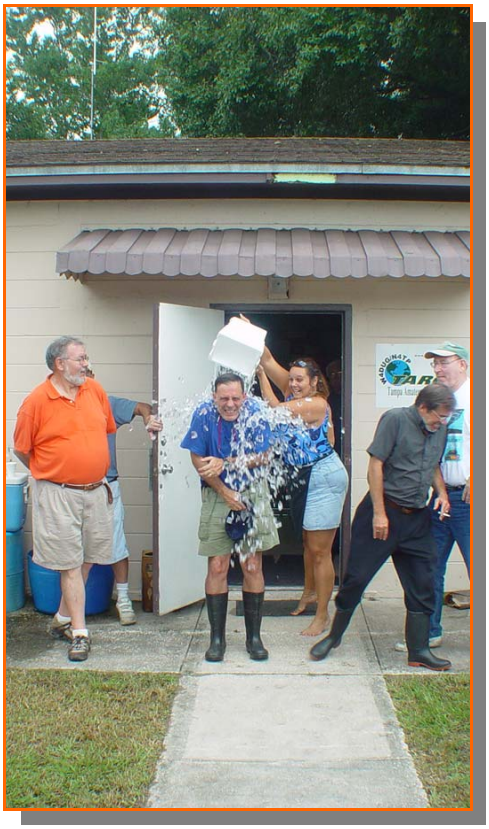
Conditions did stink. As Biff said, it was pretty much a two band (20 and 40) contest for everybody. But we also had a top notch satellite, GOTA and vhf (weak signals) station. That's the stuff we think few of the others had.

I'm hoping we achieved our goal. I know we will never say it wasn't worth the effort.

But I have to admit, what I'll remember most about TARC Field Day 03 is running stations on AO-40 (boy does Doc AA4MD have some hot earth stations, all homebrew save the radios).

Of course the coolest part of the whole weekend was that shocking and refreshing ice cold rush I got when we posed for our "group" picture!!! Thanks guys!

WA3DIT, N4TTJ, KD5UJ, KA2TOC, W1GUD OPS



A Touch of History

SK- Wesley C "Wes" Randles W4COW

Wes was living in Gulfport, Fl at the time he got his Amateur license in 1933. He was very active in Boy Scouts and rose to the rank of Eagle Scout though he never got a radio badge. During his years as a boy scout he and one of the other scouts carved a totem pole. This pole is now on display in the museum in Gulfport along with his sash with all the badges and his Eagle Scout badge. It was as a result of his activity in scouting that working as a volunteer at Radio Station WSUN when it was out on the pier. During this time and in 1933 he got his Ham ticket with the original call of W4COW which he held the rest of his life. This year he received his 70 year certificate.

He worked at WSUN until 1941 and in 1940 he and I were married in what was then called Turners Sunken Garden. I do not know when he joined the Tampa Amateur Radio Club but I do remember that use to go with him when he went on some of the hidden transmitter hunts. I was not a ham at that time as I did not get my license until 1954 but I enjoyed those hunts very much. A couple years later he was offered a job with Raytheon Co. And we moved to Massachusetts. He continued to work for Raytheon for 38 years until his retirement in 1980.

After his retirement we spent our summers here in Massachusetts and our winters in Tampa and Wes again joined Tampa Amateur Radio Club.

He was very active in ham radio, belonged to QCWA and served 14 years as Treasurer after which he was historian until his death. He belonged to many Amateur nets on 2 or 3 different bands. His biggest pleasure was going to Hamfest and meeting friends from all over the country as well as meeting new friends. He very often could be found working a QCWA table at the Miami Hamfest, the Clearwater Hamfest or several of them here in Mass.

We became SK on May 19, 2003 at the age of 86 and just 2 weeks short of our 83rd wedding anniversary.

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Blanche Randles, W4GXZ

More Power Scotty! Aye, Captain!

Mike Fletcher – NI4M

Several weeks ago Larry Gispert, Director of Hillsborough County Emergency Management was notified that a surplus generator on long term loan from the county was being returned to the EOC. The first call was to TARC who had been requesting a generator for several years. Well finally it has arrived. Larry re-assigned the generator to TARC for our use in emergency communications. This past weekend provided the first HOT test of the generator and it performed well. We now have a 15 KW 3 phase diesel generator for our use. In the week before Field Day the plant was equipped with a distribution panel and various outlets to support the field day stations. The SSB, GOTA and Satellite stations were powered from the generator during the Field Day operation. The generator was fired up at 1330 on Saturday and shut down at 1500 on Sunday and provided reliable power throughout the 24+ hour exercise. Thanks to the Power Committee Wes K4NQ, Bill KC4JQH, Bruce N4ZXI, Bart AF4TK, John W4MQB, and Mike NI4M all 3 generators in use at Field Day were up, running and fueled for the entire exercise.

Future plans call for the generator to be mounted to a dual axle trailer with lockers for lights, cables and outlet boxes. This will allow us to deploy the generator at any emergency site where we may be called upon to provide commo such as the fairgrounds or any other power challenged location. Other ideas include a crank up tower to provide a mobile antenna support for emergency use. With the addition of this generator, one more piece of the TARC pie falls into place and makes us better equipped to serve the community when called upon.

Ham Radio Operators Become Asset to Homeland Security

BY CHUCK McCUTCHEON

After February's space shuttle Columbia explosion, emergency workers in East Texas trying to locate the debris quickly learned that the easiest way to communicate wasn't by e-mail or cell phone -- it was ham radio. Rescuers in New York had made the same discovery after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Now, emboldened ham operators want the rest of the nation to stop thinking of them as geeky basement hobbyists and start regarding them as valued assets to homeland security. They are lobbying successfully for federal funds and recognition.

"We're not a hobby. We're an amateur radio service," said Jim Haynie, president of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), the Connecticut-based national ham operators' group.

Unlike cell phones and the Internet, ham radios can handle massive surges in traffic and rarely succumb to technical glitches. Users are experienced and enthusiastic, always willing to volunteer during disasters as a backup when other methods of communication fail.

But they complain that their efforts often go overlooked.

"Amateur radio's been in the shadows for 75 years," Haynie said. "We always did our thing and then went home; we are own worst publicists. But I've been spending a lot of time in Washington trying to get us recognition and legitimacy."

Haynie's efforts appear to be paying off. His group received a rare $181,900 federal grant last year to expand emergency training for homeland security volunteers.

And the Homeland Security Department recently signed a formal agreement with the group to work on ways to expand ham radio's popularity as a public safety resource. The agreement calls for the agency and radio league to collaborate on raising awareness about amateur radio, to provide training and accreditation for users and to form local Citizen Corps volunteer councils to support rescue efforts.

"We're very dependent on ham radio folks," said Ron Castleman, chief operating officer for the Homeland Security Department's Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate, formerly the Federal Emergency Management Agency. "When something adverse does happen, they're first to keep the information flowing, often without electricity."

As part of this summer's annual Field Day preparedness exercise, local ham operators around the nation are looking for closer relationships with city and county emergency operations centers, who they say sometimes regard ham radio with suspicion.

All too often during emergencies, those officials "want to be in control of everything, especially the police," said Agoura Hills, Calif., Mayor Jeff Reinhardt. "Some of them have had to relearn that they can indeed be in control and still depend on the volunteers. But they've got to nurture those relationships."

Reinhardt, a ham enthusiast for 12 years who is active in ARRL affairs, said he hopes such efforts can help enhance ham radio's image. "A lot of folks don't understand what we do. There's been a tendency to lump us in with geeks," he said. "We come from all walks of life."

Ham radio operators use a console and a microphone to transmit short-wave signals -- either voice or Morse code -- that "bounce" off the ionosphere from their home, boat or car transmitters to receivers' antennas.

Around 835,000 licensed hams are in the United States, with around 160,000 belonging to the ARRL. They own equipment ranging from $150 walkie-talkies for neighborhood use to ultra-sophisticated and powerful sets that can communicate worldwide and cost upwards of $5,000.

After the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, New York officials found that ham radio was the only way they could coordinate the sharing of information among firefighters, medical examiners, health and technical workers. At the Pentagon plane crash, hams also provided help in ensuring that rescuers could talk to each other.

"It would have been a mess there if we hadn't gotten involved," recalled H.D. Scott of Cheverly, Md., a volunteer with the Prince George's County Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES), a ham emergency group in suburban Washington.

As soon as they heard the news about February's Columbia explosion, hams from around Texas converged on Nacogdoches County, one of the counties where debris landed. With cell phone coverage sporadic in the hilly terrain, every search-and-recovery team took at least one operator on its missions.

"We got a lot of kudos and pats on the back," said Tim Lewallen, a manager at a Nacogdoches computer company and ham operator. "That's the only pay we get."

Haynie believes the time has arrived for federal officials to provide some funding. He noted that ham radio operators tend to be middle-aged -- their average age is 52 -- and that they need to start expanding their training programs for schoolchildren.

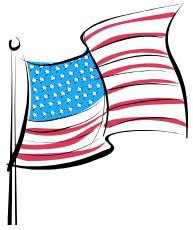
"If I had a magic wand and I could get from the Education Department or National Science Foundation a million-dollar grant where the proceeds and interest would fund these school programs, I could make a difference," he said.

Haynie also wants to ensure that operators have enough broadcast spectrum on which to operate. In the last 15 years, he and others said, the frequency bands allocated by the Federal Communications Commission to amateur radio have been substantially reduced.

In Congress, a bipartisan group of lawmakers in the House and Senate are sponsoring legislation that would ensure there is adequate spectrum available to amateur radio operators.

Meanwhile, ham operators in New York and other states are lobbying officials to pass legislation that would continue to give them the right to set up radio antennas.

(Chuck McCutcheon can be contacted at chuck.mccutcheon@newhouse.com)



Field Day 2003 – CW Operations

By Biff Craine, K4LAW

The excitement of FD 2003 lingers long after the final QSO is entered into the log. This year, without question, the effort was unparalleled. On the CW side we were blessed with the best operating team ever assembled for field day operations here at TARC, yet we were cursed with poor band conditions.

Conditions were so bad on HF that FD ended up to essentially be a two band contest - 20 meters and 40 meters. At our operators meeting on Tuesday before FD it seemed as if that was going to be the case. We reviewed the propagation forecast and it looked very bleak for operations on 10 and 15. The strategy was set based on those projections to start on 20 meters, run it until nighttime and move to 40 for the overnight. From all indications, HF conditions were bad throughout the hemisphere so we will likely not suffer disproportionately from others.

This year we were blessed with an abundance of excellent CW operators, the best group ever. Blake Meinecke, N4GI; Rich Reed, KA1CI; Larry Gispert, KR4X; and me were the ones that were going to go up against bad band conditions and high expectations. Just in case we had several folks clearly of equal skills who were nearby in case we had an operator failure. It was a real relief to not have a situation like last year where Warren, W1GUD and I were the only CW operators at Field Day. Last year Warren worked on SSB and when he got relief, he would relieve me on CW. Operator fatigue was a factor in our performance last year. I know that for a fact because I fell asleep at the keyboard last year. No kidding.

Our just in case operators included Pat Durning, N4TTJ, Danny Conner, KD5UJ, Warren, W1GUD, all first rate operators, and as if sent from heaven above, Merrill, WK2M who has just moved to the area and is an accomplished CW contester from up north.

We finished with setup on Friday and all that had to be done was to program the exchanges into TR, our logging software and start running. Well, Saturday was without stress until I hooked up the computer and found that Windows XP has an awful fist. This would never do. But there was a good hour left before the contest so we had time to correct the problem by changing back to the old faithful IBM ThinkPad.

It took a while to locate the ThinkPad but soon the Floyd boys, Keating and Pico were on the case with the ThinkPad in hand with thirty minutes left to start. Plenty of time to program the exchanges and settle in on the band on a frequency we could call our own as long as we wanted. But there was a bit of a problem with the ThinkPad. The screen was about the size of a postcard and when you did the Alt Enter thing it go the size of a postage stamp. In the drawer of the Mobile Command Unit was another laptop which was quickly loaded with TR and given over to me to program exchanges with seven minutes until the start of the contest. Crisis? What crisis?

When the starting flag dropped I started somewhere around 14.030 and stood my ground for 4 hours of non-stop contacts. It was late in my first 4-hour shift that Blake came into the station, headphones in hand looking like he was pumped and ready to go. I looked at the clock in TR and it indicated that it was about 5:15 pm and my shift ended at 6:00 pm, still Blake was inching ever closer to the radio. I looked over at the clock on the 756 ProII which told me it was in fact 5:58 pm – TR had lost 45 minutes. No wonder my rates seemed so high!

Blake eased into the operating chair just as I was confirming qso number 295 – a rate of 74 per hour for the first 4 hours. TARC FD 03 was off to a good start. Blake's 4-hour shift yielded similar results and towards the end of the shift it became obvious that the 20 meter band was waning and it was time to change to 40 meters. Rich made the transition to 40 and quickly found that we did not have the commanding signal that we had with the Force 12 C3E on 20 meters, but he held his ground and put some solid numbers in the log before being relieved by "Ironman" Larry Gispert who fought all night on 40 through QRM, QRN, thunder and lightning and the weariness that comes during the wee morning hours. Nonetheless, when Larry turned the rig over to me at 6:00 am it was clear from looking at the numbers that he had more than done his job, he had kicked some major overnight butt. The dilemma was what to do for the next 4 hours of my morning shift.

The past several years, 15 meters has been the Sunday morning jackpot with rates in the high 70's and low 80's from 6:00 am until 9:00 am. Not so this morning. Not a creature was stirring on 15, well a few were, but less than 20 signals on the whole CW portion of the band. The decision was made to stay on 40 and continue to slug it out. The rates were OK for a while but the signals started getting closer (Georgia, Alabama, Virginia) and fewer and farther between. Finally, after rates were just about toast, it was back to 20 meters.

Rich was eager to take another turn in the operating chair so I gave him my last half hour, then Blake came in to finish up with a great run on 20, and similar impressions of 15 meters, despite some mixed success on 15 meter SSB by the phone guys. I cannot tell you what a wonderful thing it is to have enough skilled CW operators around to where you can kick back a little early.

When the last qso was logged, there it was, despite poor conditions and limitations to two bands, we had bested last year's score. The CW effort accounted for 1,375 of the 4,085 qso's made on Field Day 03. Thanks to everyone who got us on the air, kept us fat and happy and to everyone who helped to tear down.

We don't need to change much for next year. We are planning on going to Writelog, a windows based contest program and that will be soon so we can work on learning the program. We also need a commanding signal on 40 meters. The dipole just didn't get the respect that you need to hold a frequency for 8 hours. And it looks like we will have more operators for CW than we have had in recent memory.

In all, it was a great operation and a whole lot of fun (and points).

Field Day 2003 – VHF Rock Tossing

By Keating Floyd – KC4HSI

Field Day. The words wring emotion from everyone, even non-hams. 'You're going to have a field day in New Orleans!' 'You went to the mountains for the summer'

What a field day THAT must have been! On the last full weekend in June 2003, what a Field Day was had at the Tampa Amateur Radio Club (TARC).

When great things happen, everyone involved is swept along, and really becomes part of that moment, no matter who is the driving force. The VHF station was poised for greatness. The equipment was perfect, the operators ready. All that was needed was an opening.

The VHF station included 2-meter gear, although it focused on Six Meters. The Magic Band. Openings on Six make grown men scramble for the microphone. Ordinarily complacent people get a wild look in their eyes when the Magic Band gets discussed. 'Would Six open for Field Day?' was the question on every lip. If it did, we all knew that this station would absolutely light up the airwaves.

The station was top-of-the-line, all around. There was an Icom 746Pro (love that noise blanker) and an Icom 756Pro with built-in voice keyer, both provided by Scott Seehawer, KC4VI. TARC's 746 was ready if needed. The beams were a 7-element M2 for 6-meters (also provided by Scott, on a 30' boom!) and a Cushcraft 17B2 (TARC's own) for 2-meters. The tower, delivered through the efforts of Hillsborough County ARES/RACES, came in on one the State of Florida Fire Marshall Mutual Aid Communication (MAC) trailers. At 100 high, this is a towering beast! The coax was brand new, purchased recently by our own K4LAW at the Dayton Hamvention. The air conditioner, in the RV trailer brought in by Wayne, KE4MVT, worked beautifully.

The operators, an Uber-Op in one case (Scott, KC4VI), were ready and willing to rack up the points, smash through pile-ups, and work stations up and down the VHF bands on both SSB and CW. This fabulous setup even made the Channel 13 10:30 news.

Stories don't always end the way they ought. Much as we wished, hard as we hoped, the Magic Band stayed closed for all but a half-hour on Field Day. The VHF station had 135 contacts, at rates generally in the 2- to 4-per-hour range. The Magic Band did not work magic this weekend.

Greatness did happen at the TARC VHF station on Field Day.

The 'Uber-op' showed his mettle in many ways. In bad conditions, with no opening, he tossed signals as far as that 100' tower and 30' boom would let him, not missing a trick for getting contacts logged. 'Do you have 2-meters?' was a regular question. 'This station can do CW at any time,' a familiar chant. He worked those contacts for all they were worth, readily sharing his experience with the other VHF station operators. Our moment had arrived.

What a Field Day we had!

Uncoordinated Thoughts

by Sandy Donahue, W4RU

Vice Director, Southeastern Division

ARRL

When I was Section Manager for the League in Georgia I started touring several Field Day sites in the north part of the state. The idea was to take note of how different clubs prepared for the event, as well as sample the food being offered. Now as Vice Director of this division, touring Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands is impractical so I just concentrate on where I expect the best operation as well as the best food.

First off, the official spin of the League is the Field Day is NOT a contest. It is an operating event in which we keep score! The fact that it is administered by the contest dept at HQ and that the scores are listed in QST in descending order does not make it a contest. It would be a contest, I guess, if they awarded plaques and certificates, which they don't. So contest or not, it is the biggest event that the ARRL sponsors, with thousands of participants spread out all over the country: and the best opportunity for public awareness for our hobby. (Oops, our public service).

People often ask if I know of any other club like TARC. The answer is no. There is a club that meets every week, Huntsville Alabama on Fridays, but they don't have a club house. There are several clubs with club houses that are close to lean-tos or closets and don't do half the activities of TARC. So, you guys are unique.

At TARC we all dined on fried turkey and chicken wings. I traveled across the bay to the St Pete and Metro club field day for ribs. I went to Brandon for the BARS/STARS combined FD. Breakfast was steak and eggs.

While I am at it congratulations to the club for achieving the status of Special Service Club. The SSC program was created to recognize affiliated clubs for the extra work they do to promote and maintain the hobby. Hard work and effective leadership are key to obtaining and keeping SSC status.

At the end of the week, we should know about what is going on at the conference in Geneva that so effects our frequencies. The WARC-2003 conference ends Friday. It looks like the international requirement to require CW proficiency will go away, and the FCC may move quickly to remove the requirement in the U.S.

The 40 meter harmonization issue is still up in the air (so to speak). It may happen that we will move the broadcasters out of the band and let the hams in Europe and Asia have the same 40 meter band we do, but it may take as long as 30 years to do it. Or there may be no change. Stay tuned.

The Southeastern Division convention is in Gainesville, Ga this year. July 12-13. You are all invited. This URL works for more info. http://www.lanierlandarc.org/hamfest.htm

Finally, Director Frank Butler, W4RH and I will be flying north to Hartford for the semi-annual meeting of the Board of Directors. There must be a reorganization of staff and board functions as we try to find ways to make the ARRL more functional and efficient. In my next report for this publication, I will report on happenings at the BoD meeting.

Thanks again to members of TARC for their hospitality and especially to your chairman, K4LAW, who allows me to stay in his guest bedroom when I am in town. (A BWB--bed without breakfast)

Hams Petition to Outlaw HI-FI SSB

--Dirty, splattering signals also hit;
--Implications for contesters seen as well
--Hollingsworth clarifies basis for earlier advisory letters/NEW

WASHINGTON (QRZ.com) -- On-air experimentation with so-called High Fidelity or Enhanced Single Sideband transmissions could be outlawed if the FCC adopts a proposed rules change requested by two radio amateurs on opposite sides of the country.

A petition for rulemaking was sent to the FCC and accepted by the agency May 27th. It was not immediately issued a Rulemaking Number so it was hard to find in the public record. However, copies that directly circulated among amateurs reveal that the proposal calls for what many would consider severe bandwidth limitations on HF phone.

A copy of the petition has since been posted at:FCC Electronic Comment Filing System

http://gullfoss2.fcc.gov/prod/ecfs/retrieve.cgi?native_or_pdf=pdf&id_document=6514183790

The petition asks for a federally mandated bandwidth limit of 2.8 kilohertz for SSB, which is well below the extended bandwidth needed for what has been called enhanced audio.

One of the two hams who submitted the petition told the FCC they are motivated by interference problems caused by two groups of single sideband operators. These groups are portrayed by the petitioners as, in both cases, having cast aside traditional voluntary limits on bandwidth of roughly three kilohertz. The petition therefore asks that these voluntary limits be made mandatory to provide a clear enforcement mechanism for regulators.

The petitioners, Michael Lonneke WØYR of Virginia, and Melvin Ladisky W6FDR of California, said hams from one of the groups come on during radio contests, and are found tweaking their transmitters to splatter purposely to provide elbowroom on a very crowded band. The two men characterize the other group as those who experiment with high-fidelity audio, apparently trying to replicate the sound of FM Broadcast stations.

QRZ.com and Newsline have recently reported on advisory letters sent out by FCC Enforcement Counsel Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, who wrote to several members of the enhanced SSB group telling them the agency had received interference complaints. The letters did not validate nor dispute the complaints, but warned the stations that if such complaints continued, the unresolved friction could trigger petitions for rulemaking.

One such petition is now at hand.

A Newsline reporter spoke with Lonneke, who declined an early request to provide a copy of his petition for this report. He said he and Ladisky hold the same views on the matter of excessive bandwidth causing interference, and that they teamed up on the petition to add strength to their call for regulatory intervention. Lonneke declined further comment, and said the petition will speak for itself if the FCC chooses to assign it a rulemaking number and put it to public comment.

Ladisky, upon hearing this report on the latest edition of ARNewsline, contacted this reporter and said they did not want to file such a petition but were left with "no choice" after a failure to solve the problem through goodwill and tolerance. He said:

"We don't oppose good audio or good sounding ssb only the utilization of excessive bandwidth to accomplish this thereby causing interference to other amateurs trying to enjoy their contacts on the crowded ham bands below 30Mhz. It makes no difference how the excessive bw is achieved; by improper operation of equipment or by choosing to xmit wide....the result is the same.

Members of the enhanced SSB group have told QRZ.com and Newsline they believe their experimentation with improved audio is totally in line with the spirit of ham radio, and that when conducted under appropriate conditions, is justified in its consumption of bandwidth as would be any other spectrum-intensive activity, including contesting.

NEW:But the FCC's Hollingsworth, reacting to such comments, disagreed. Wednesday, June 25th, he questioned the manipulation of an SSB signal to see how wide it can go. Yet, website descriptions and on-air discussions show it is such manipulation that forms the basis of many of the activities of the "hi-fi SSB" group now drawing fire from the Petitioners and others.

Hollingsworth spoke in a brief interview seeking clarity for this report. He has not suggested the mode of SSB was primarily commissioned for the amateur service as a spectrum conservation mode, but agreed this was one of the reasons it rose to popularity for mainstream "phone" use on HF, along with improved circuit efficiency and its suppressed carrier.

Hollingsworth would not comment on the proposed Petition, and another FCC official also declined to comment ahead of when and if the agency assigns a Rulemaking (RM) number to the document to officially further it for public review and comment..

The petition, while primarily expressed as a complaint against overly broad SSB activity, also mentions the legacy mode of AM, and said it "does not create the same problems that the burgeoning use of so-called 'Hi-Fi Single Sideband'

HI-FI SSB - continued

creates." The document goes on to affirm Amplitude Modulation as an activity "that provides a large number of amateurs with an avenue for experimentation and development."

Nonetheless, the petition asks the FCC to impose a 5.6 kilohertz bandwidth limitation on AM, alongside the proposed 2.8kHz restriction on SSB, and that the constraints apply to all amateur phone bands below 28.8 megahertz.

Speaking generally, and not in relation to the Petition, Hollingsworth said AM operators do not appear to be deliberately broadening their signals.

In comments posted to the bulletin board at the site www.amwindow.org, the FCC official said *"from an enforcement/complaint standpoint, we have absolutely no problem with AM operators. They are a great bunch, generally they know radio, and they just want to work AM and don't seem to be concerned with "how wide is wide".*

Hollingsworth continued *"I have nothing against AM except that I don't have enough time to operate it. I paid a king's ransom to have my Valiant totally refurbished (and it was worth every penny--it's beautiful) and what I need is time to use it. In this whole enhanced single sideband issue, I see no threat to or complaint about AM from an enforcement standpoint. I just wish I had 1% of the knowledge about radio that AM'ers seem to have.*

POSSIBLE RISK for COMPETITIVE RADIO OPERATORS?

In proposing a rigid standard of bandwidth to be used as a yardstick for enforcement, the contest and DX communities may also face stricter punishment. The petition specifically requests enforcement against "splatter from broad and over modulated signals."

Consequently, it is conceivable that the proposal, with its brick wall bandwidth standard, may raise the number of complaints from people who receive interference during such spectrum-intensive, competitive radio events.

It is well known that during the excitement of a contest or a DX-pileup, stations may exceed "proper" modulation levels, creating spurious signal products that cause interference on nearby frequencies. The impact on adjacent operators is made worse with amplified signal levels and high-gain antenna arrays. Additionally, the receivers in some contemporary rigs have AGC settings which may inadvertently make a received signal seem broader than if measured to a laboratory standard.

The petition suggests, but does not demand the installation of audio filters on all amateur SSB equipment capable of exceeding the proposed bandwidth.

Previous regulatory proposals based on bandwidth have failed, including Docket 20777 from the mid 1970s. The conclusion then was that having loosely-defined technical standards allowed the greatest range of experimentation in ham radio, as long as such signals are clean. Present-day violations of splatter, overdriven amplifiers, and poorly administered audio lashups can already trigger enforcement action under existing FCC rules governing the purity of signal..

At press time the petition by WØYR and W6FDR has not been assigned a Rule Making number designation. More on this story in future reports here, and on Amateur Radio Newsline, W5YI, www.amwindow.org

Disclosure notice:

This report is prepared for multiple internet and audio outlets serving the amateur community. References to other outlets are made with the permission of those responsible.

The author of this report, WA3VJB, is active primarily on AM.

Field Day 2003 – Satellite

By Jim Huhta – AA4MD
Tampa Bay AMSAT Coordinator.

History

Satellite amateur radio and field day is a great combination. As one of the newer modes in ham radio, satellite radio offers the chance to have a large number of specialized hams operating in a relatively short period of time. My first satellite field day was in 1991 in Delaware with the radio club there. Operating AO-10 and AO-13, both mode B satellites, was possible with rigs for two meter SSB and CW uplink and 70 cm down link. Other low orbit satellites have been available over the years since then including the RS satellites which were two meters uplink and 10 meters downlink, and the Fuji satellites which are SSB/CW with a two meter uplink and a 70 cm downlink. The low orbit birds (as satellites are called) have a pass time of 10-15 minutes and require tracking of the satellite trajectory. In that year, there were three digital satellites available for field day (UO-22 made in England, and KO-23 and KO-25 made in Korea. AMSAT satellite competition during field day dates back to the beginning of AMSAT and the scoring has historically rewarded any CW or digital contact with three points while SSB QSOs score one point each. Using a primitive DOS computer and a Kansas City Tracker to control the Az-El rotors, I used a TS-790VHF/UHF transceiver which could also be controlled by the computer to change the transmit and receive frequencies according to the calculated Doppler shift during the pass. Small crossed Yagis on two meters and 70cm provided circular polarization for transmit and receive RF. Left and right hand circularity switches are used to change the polarity during a pass to optimize either the transmit or receive signals. Without automatic tracking, the field day station requires at least three operators to work a low orbit pass: one to move the antennas in azimuth and elevation, one to tune the receive and transmit frequency of the transceiver, and one to talk or key and log contacts.

In the five subsequent years I joined Bob's Mob at the site of K3OPE my next door neighbor. Each time, we set up a tripod, azimuth-elevation rotators and used 2M and 70 cm antennas. Total numbers of QSOs were 50-80 for the entire weekend. After moving to Tampa, I went out twice with Brandon radio club and both times we achieved 60-70 QSOs. In 2001, I operated the satellite trailer on emergency power with Rich KG4ITU. We made 40 contacts with most coming from the digital satellites.

AO-40

The opportunity for more QSOs came with the successful launch of AO-40 in x of 2000. After the successful commissioning of the satellite, the transponder consisted of 250 kHz with a downlink of 2.4 GHz(Mode S). Both 1.2 GHz (mode L) and 70 cm (mode U) uplinks are turned on simultaneously during specified portion of the orbit. AO-40 is an inverting transponder so that finding the downlink requires that the transmit signal be increased to decrease the receiving frequency. The AO-40 transponder has a central main beacon which passes telemetry and the SSB is above the beacon and the CW portion is below it. Using satellite orbit prediction software (I use WISP and NOVA) the angle of the satellite antenna with the earth can be calculated. This angle is called the squint angle and the conditions are outstanding when the angle is less than 10 degrees. My first year with TARC, Field Day 2002, we made 119 contacts and made 2nd in the country in the AMSAT competition. We were beat by K4BFT, Big Fat Turkey in Huntsville Alabama working 7A. The antenna we used was a barbeque dish mounted on the satellite trailer crank up tower.

FD 2003

This year we were committed to going for first in the satellite competition. The B-mode satellite birds were not functioning well and all the digital birds were down. I opted to work AO-40 only since other available satellites would be low yield in terms of number of contacts. To get the most out of the transponder on AO-40, the receiving equipment had to be optimized. The quality of receiving on the 2.4 GHz downlink of AO-40 is markedly enhanced with the use of a dish. Starting last year, I built two dishes with patch feeds. The 81/2 ft dish belonged to KC4HVD Bobbie and I had taken it to the Miami and Orlando hamfests earlier in the Spring. The 7 ½ ft diameter dish was motorized ala W0LMD (see his web site ultimatecharger.com). The majority of stations on AO-40 operate with a 70 cm uplink using a circularly polarized crossed Yagi but we used the L band uplink with an average power on the 1.2 GHz uplink of 1-4 watts using the 8 ft foot diameter dish. This had the advantage of not having to be limited by Leila (an automatic alarm signal which sound on your frequency when you get signal strengths into the transponder of greater than two S units below the beacon. We used a PCR-1000 spectrum analyzer to monitor the beacon strength and ensure that our signal was always more that 6 db below the beacon strength.

For FD weekend we started tracking the bird overhead and it moved westward until it was over the mid-pacific. The bird footprint was over Tampa from 1800 UTC at the beginning of the contest until about 2100 UTC. We worked a number of western stations and Japanese during the last part of the pass. This showed the advantage of having a dish which will track all the way to zero angle elevation to the horizon.

Sunday morning, the bird was over Europe and coming toward the US. Many Europeans called in Field Day contacts to help our SSB and CW total. Warren, W1GUD took the mike during the morning hours of Sunday and showed that the voice and the etiquette do make a difference in how many people call you!

Our total this year was 175 QSOs. About one third were CW. Concerning the AMSAT competition, we wait…. submissions are due in August and the winners will be invited to the Toronto AMSAT yearly meeting to receive a plaque.

Amateurs 'First of the First Responders,' DHS Official Says:

from The ARRL Letter,
Vol 22, No 26
Website: on June 28, 2003

Amateurs 'First of the First Responders,' DHS Official Says:

ARRL now is an official affiliate program of Citizen Corps, an initiative within the Department of Homeland Security to enhance public preparedness and safety. ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, signed the formal Statement of Affiliation between DHS and ARRL during the ARRL 2003 National Convention June 21. Chief Operating Officer of the Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate (FEMA) Ron Castleman represented Under Secretary for Emergency Preparedness and Response Michael D. Brown at the signing. Citizen Corps Liaison to the White House Liz DiGregorio called ham radio operators the "first of the first responders."

"You are there. You are part of that very, very first response when it happens locally," especially in the initial stages of an emergency or disaster, DiGregorio told an overflow audience. She urged amateurs to explore ways to expand their role in the community beyond being the last resort when other communication systems fail. "You need to show your community that you're engaged," she said. "They need to know as a community that ARRL is there."

Castleman said his agency really needs Amateur Radio's help. "Hams have a long and distinguished history of assisting and cooperating with FEMA," he said. He said FEMA wants to continue to work with Amateur Radio operators as partners and expand hams' community safety role. "We also want to help prepare every citizen across our country before disaster strikes," Castleman said.

The League joins the National Safety Council, Points of Light Foundation, National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, National Volunteer Fire Council, National Fire Protection Association, Save A Life Foundation and The Jaycees as Citizen Corps affiliate programs.

The SoA calls on DHS and ARRL to raise public awareness of Amateur Radio as a safety resource. "That's what you are all about, and we need a safer America," DiGregorio said.

In addition, DHS and ARRL will cooperate in providing training and accreditation for Amateur Radio emergency communications. They also will work together to promote the formation of local Citizen Corps councils and assist them with education, training and volunteer service opportunities "that support first responders, disaster relief organizations and community safety efforts." As an affiliate, ARRL will be linked from the FEMA and Citizen Corps Web sites.

"We need you, and you need us, and we want to work together with you to make this all happen," DiGregorio concluded, "because we all share the same goal, and that goal is a better, stronger, more secure America."

The ARRL National Convention 2003 was held in conjunction with Ham-Com http://www.hamcom.org in Arlington, Texas. FEMA announced the SoA signing on its Web site http://www.fema.gov/nwz03/nwz03_138.shtm.

Source:

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Field Day Revisited

By: Larry Gispert/KR4X

I have been a member of T.A.R.C. since the early 70's when I came out of the service (Coast Guard). When I first got active with T.A.R.C. the average age of the membership was in the high fifties and most of their time was spent telling war stories. The big event of the year was manning a radio message booth at the Florida State Fair where taking over 3,000 messages was not uncommon. As a young pup (barely 25) I was appointed the Field Day Chairman. In years past they had either not done field day at all or worked from the clubhouse with no emphasis on emergency setup. I immediately started the plan to actually go out into the field and do the emergency setup drill (start at 2pm on Saturday). A club member had some property up near Rome Avenue and Fletcher Avenue (near Hamner Fire Tower) with a house, a lake and a gazebo at the end of a pier. We setup field day with only two stations, one was a cw station under a dining fly tent and the other was a ssb station setup out in the open air gazebo. Needless to say we weren't very competitive but had a hell of a lot of fun. I participated in every field day with T.A.R.C. up until 1988 when a job change mandated my full attention. I have just recently got interested back in the hobby, thus my presence at recent club meetings and this field day.

I now offer my observations on the club and the recent field day activities. It is a joy to see the T.A.R.C. so active. I understand we have over 100 dues paying members and seem to get at least 25 or so out for most meetings. I was surprised to see the large turnout for field day. Since only a relative few can actually operate the stations I did not expect such a large and cheerful support group. The presence of wives and children indicate a healthy respect for families and of course the good chow indicates, as always, hams still enjoy loading their final amplifiers. When the Saturday evening thunderstorm really blew through I expected everyone to whither away to the safety of clubhouse and drink beer until the skies smiled again. But, low and behold everyone stood their ground and continued to operate because we were all unified to the cause of bettering last year's performance. Biff/K4LAW performed as a proper leader by setting an achievable but tough goal and continually inspired all to obtain it. Warren/W1GUD performed in stellar fashion as the assistant field boss and insured all was erected at the appropriate time. Jim/WA3DIT maintained communications with the Big Control Operator in sky and as he so eloquently stated, the weather did not inhibit the setup, the operation or the tear down so his job should be considered successfully completed. Finally, to all good hams I say FB, 73's and just wait till next year……Larry/KR4X

Field Day 2003 – GOTA
AKA – Amateur Phone N4SEX

GOTA station is what they called it at TARC... When you ask me I would say GOTO even though I was corrected about 20 times through the day...It goes to show you, if you do really well, It wouldn't of mattered how I said it or spelled it, the end results was 706.....

As most know this was my first time working a contest on the radio. On previous field days you could see me behind the scene or is that behind the grill. Yes I am one of the friendly faces that slave all day long over the flame to keep the Ham's happy and their bellies full, so they can make those QSO's. BUT WOW..... is all I can say.

I worked the NOW famous GOTA, aka-N4SEX station with the other women of TARC. I was very apprehensive to do this, since I have never done this before. I do recall hearing that call over and over and over, whether I was driving to Tampa or to NY as my husband would call out CQ CQ this is N4SEX calling CQ... Just like Santa Claus yelling out to his reindeer, Now Dasher Now Dancer etc. So maybe hearing for about 900 times I guess it was easier than I thought..... I sat down with N4SEX as he was going to log for me, and we started to pounce I guess is what they say in the land of radio. After about 3 contacts I said lets do this... CQ FIELD DAY, CQ FIELD DAY, THIS IS N4SEX CALLING CQ AND STANDING BY.... I did this about 4 times, then BAM!!

The calls started coming in. I did know that before long I was no longer afraid of the mic or the radio and I allowed my good old self to come out... The other stations calling kept asking what is your call? did you say SEX.. was a lot of the responses that I confirmed by saying "roger, roger" . I continued on for the next hour calling out on the air waves, and other stations piling up to get to me. I had a few try to take over the frequency I was on. THAT, was not going to happen. I was having to much fun, until someone said its 7:15 where are the cooks. Well with Mark and I having fun on 20 meters, we forgot about cooking. So it had to come to a end for now, and out we ran from the GOTA station. One Ham (W1GUD) quoted saying KATHY is about 3 feet off the ground right now, She had a rate of 114 going the first time out. Which I didn't know what that really meant. SO after cooking up the turkeys and the side dishes. I went back for more. With MR BIFF (K4LAW) at my side, All I could think of was Oh my gosh this is the big times. I was very nervous to have one of the clubs big contester's logging for me. But soon it was to late I was on the radio yelling out for QSO, and boy did they come in. I think at 11:00 p.m. at night we had every Canadian on the radio, trying to talk to the women behind the N4SEX. We kept calling out I tried to talk to the others between calls and I would see a finger pointing ...GO ...GO... GO.. I was going. I would tell Biff.. I was very relaxed. Enjoying my bottle of SI..... And even getting through the storm. K4LAW won't let me get up to rest , to leave, or even use the ladies room... Just GO.. GO...GO.... SO I went... The Hams in the GOTA station had a lot of laughs with me. or was that at me.. trying to see me get those calls

out correct. And yes who says you don't see octopus at 1 am in the morning with serve thundershowers and lack of sleep. And even with all the DUPES coming back just to hear the call. It was the best fun I ever had with ham radio . K4LAW was telling me 400 and we stop. Well I'm not sure what time we got to that point but we did. As K4LAW was leaving to get sleep he said, "well you can get at least 25 more just incase with made a mistake logging". But I went to bed. After all that talking, I was tired. I do remember the feeling though, laying in bed and hearing calls come in my head. It was like having jet lag and the plane was still moving.

I did get on early in the morning and one person said it was like the movie "Good Morning Vietnam". YES... I was too cheerful even for ME. You would of gotten a cavity I was so sweet to these guys on the radio and they ate it up. This continued throughout the day. They asked when do we want to stop, well I didn't want to. But at 1:30 Bill said ok as we passed 700. I said let go to 706 so at 1:35 we called it 706.

I'm still talking about my experiences to people that know nothing about Amateur Radio.

The whole day was so much more than just making the contacts. We all bonded that night. Made it through the rain, and the rain and some more rain. The late hour laughs and talks. It was so cool... You wanted it to end because you were so tired, but you didn't because you just wanted to hold on to that moment. Everyone smiling from ear to ear...even up to spilling the water on W1GUD.

For all the people who think they at anytime can't do this...YOU CAN and you will enjoy it just like I did. So when they ask next year you want to try it. I SAY GO FOR IT.

And for those 2 men who came up with N4SEX and let women run it...GREAT JOB!!!!!!

Gustnado blows away Field Day site

Extreme Florida weather and high winds will make Field Day 2003 unforgettable by the members of the Clearwater Amateur Radio Society. Tampa's MacDill Air Force Base was just across Tampa Bay from their field day site. MacDill is also home to the NOAA Hurricane Hunters aircraft and it is not unusual to see the big gray planes in the normal air traffic control pattern. In fact several were spotted that day from the field day site. Perhaps this was an omen of things to come.

The club's 5A field day site was setup with 3 RV's, a trailer, 40 foot aluminum tower, a satellite array, four canvas shelters and canvas carport. SEC John Townsley, AE4GB, was working 40 meter phone at the time the storm hit the site at 10:20 PM Saturday evening. Townsley quickly disconnect the twin-line feed to his rig and it was obvious, from the shock he received from the unconnected antenna, that the air was alive with electricity. John moved to the driver's seat of his RV and from there called WX4TBW, the NWS amateur radio station, via the Skywarn net already in progress. John asked if the RVs should be evacuated. Skywarn net control, Paul Toth, NA4AR, was able to quickly consult with the Meteorologist on duty that night. They quickly recommended an immediate evacuation of the RVs and that all should head for better shelter. John donned his rain gear and headed for the 4-H club house rounding up others as he went.

The 25 kilowatt generate was still running with temporary power lines running along the ground to all stations. Electric lines laying in an inch of water, frequent lighting and high winds made for a dangerous combination. Dan Hawthorne, AI4ET, made his way to the generator and shut it down.

During the storm the food station was blown away, all canvas structures were damaged or blown down, RV awnings twisted and ripped, push up poles bent and folded, antennas damaged or destroyed. The aluminum and canvas carport had flown about 60 feet.

All field day logs were totally destroyed. While this site may not be remembered in the Field Day results later this year it will be remember by it's participants forevermore. As SEC John Townsley later surveyed the scene he stated that fear swept over him as he imagined how a hurricane with hours of sustained winds, driving rain, imbedded tornadoes and flooding might compare with this 30 minutes of summer thunderstorm!

ARRL WCF Section Manager Dave Armbrust, AE4MR, was extremely relieved that no one was seriously injured. "Thanks to quick action by John, Paul and Dan, more serious consequences were avoided. These "amateurs" have had years of experience working together as an ARES team, last Saturday that team work and training paid off. The club could not have been in better hands. While there were several heroes that night it was the communications, training and team work that really paid off in the end."

The NWS had reports of measured wind speeds of 63 MPH near by and has been provided photo and text evidence of the damage and is still analyzing it at this time. Given reports of horizontal rotation from those at the site, it would seem this Field Day site experienced a Gustnado, at the very least, and possibly a F0 tornado. The WX4TBW Skywarn Net remained in emergency operation mode for nearly three more hours after the initial incident to provide weather updates and receive SKYWARN spotter reports. Severe Thunderstorm Warnings were later issued for Hillsborough, Manatee and Pasco Counties, as well as Urban Flood Advisories for Hillsborough and Pasco Counties.

[Photos by Pat Bryson-N4RAT]

Article by Dave Armburst – AE4MR

WRC Gets AM Broadcast Out of 40 Meters in 2009

from ARRL News Sources

NEWINGTON, CT, Jul 3, 2003--There's good news from World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 (WRC-03) for 40-meter enthusiasts. In an 11th-hour compromise, delegates to WRC-03, which wraps up officially July 4, agreed to move broadcasters out of 7100 to 7200 kHz in Regions 1 and 3 to make room for the Amateur Service. The agreement eventually will mean a 200-kHz worldwide allocation at 40 meters. Although the change does not go into effect until 2009, that's considered speedy in International Telecommunication Union (ITU) terms. Some of the timelines proposed during discussions on the 7 MHz agenda item would have held off the changes until 2033! The WRC-03 action on 7 MHz makes no change in the exclusive US 40-meter allocation. US amateurs will continue to enjoy the full 7000 to 7300 kHz band they now have.

"History was made today," said International Amateur Radio Union Secretary (and ARRL CEO) David Sumner, K1ZZ, who called the agreement a big change over the status quo. "Never before in the history of radiocommunication has an HF broadcasting band been shifted to accommodate the needs of another service. But that's what happened at WRC-03 this morning."

Sumner said a "carefully crafted compromise" was approved on first and second reading in the WRC-03 Plenary. It calls for broadcasters to vacate 7100 to 7200 kHz by March 29, 2009, and it allocates the band to the Amateur Service from that date forward.

Sumner cited "the extraordinary efforts" of Jan Verduijn of the Radiocommunications Agency, The Netherlands, the CEPT Coordinator for Agenda Item 1.23--the 7 MHz issue. "Jan was totally committed to finding a solution, not only for radio amateurs but for broadcasters and the fixed and mobile services as well," Sumner said.

"This provides a worldwide amateur allocation of 200 kHz less than six years from now," noted Sumner, speaking on behalf of the IARU observer team headed by IARU President Larry Price, W4RA. Sumner pointed out that the compromise cuts in half the incompatibility between amateur and broadcasting use of the 7 MHz band and doubles the 40-meter spectrum available to amateurs in Regions 1 and 3.

(L-R) IARU team members Wojciech Nietyksza, SP5FM, Michael Owen, VK3KI, David Sumner, K1ZZ and Robert W. Jones, VE7RWJ. Jones is serving as a consultant to the IARU. IARU President Larry Price, W4RA, heads the IARU observers. [Tim Totten, N4GN, Photo]

While the result falls short of the IARU's goal of a 300-kHz worldwide exclusive band for amateurs, Sumner explained that ITU conference decisions are reached by consensus. "Building consensus requires give and take," he said, "and we didn't have much to give."

Sumner said the historic 7-MHz compromise "took the cooperation of broadcasters and many, many others to enable us to bring this home for radio amateurs." He credited delegates and other conference participants--not all of them radio amateurs and including some who were strongly opposed to the proposal at the start--with making the compromise possible.

A number of countries--mostly in Region 3 and the Arab States--also have allocated 7100 to 7200 kHz by "footnote" to Fixed and Mobile services, shared with amateurs on a national basis. None of the countries is in Region 2.

More than 2600 delegates and other participants have been attending the four-week conference, chaired by Dr Veena Rawat of Canada. For WRC-03, the IARU fielded its largest team of observers at an ITU conference in more than a decade.

"Good ITU compromises--and virtually every decision made here is a compromise--are sometimes described as leaving everyone equally unhappy," Sumner remarked. "Your Geneva team is tired and pretty happy."

Morse Code Requirement Below 30 MHz Up to FCC

By Biff Craine, K4LAW

The 2003 World Radiocommunication Conference concluded its discussions of the issues on its agenda on Thursday afternoon, 3 July, after marathon Plenary sessions that tested the patience and stamina of the conferees. The previous day's deliberations did not end until 3:30 AM; Thursday's business began at 9:00 AM and finally concluded at 3:30 PM without a break, 3-1/2 hours behind the original conference schedule

To no one's surprise, a significant change in amateur radio has been adopted, whereby the Morse Code requirement for amateurs licensed below 30 MHz has been eliminated. With the code requirement gone from international agreement, look for the FCC to take its cue from the ARRL and drop code as a requirement for HF privileges for U.S. amateurs. The text of this change is as follows:

Morse Code

The old regulation that Morse was a requirement for the operators of amateur stations below 30 MHz was found in a provision that read as follows:

Any person seeking a license to operate the apparatus of an amateur station shall prove that he is able to send correctly by hand and to receive correctly by ear texts in Morse code signals. The administrations concerned may, however, waive this requirement in the case of stations making use exclusively of frequencies above 30 MHz.

That was replaced with a provision giving each administration the right to decide whether or not Morse is a required qualification as follows:

25.5 Administrations shall determine whether or not a person seeking a license to operate an amateur station shall demonstrate the ability to send and receive texts in Morse code signals.

The alternative of simply deleting the old provision was rejected because a number of administrations thought that the matter was so important that a positive decision not to require Morse as a qualification was appropriate. The effect is actually the same: Morse code is no longer an internationally required qualification for an amateur license, though an administration may still require it.

CW Reconsidered (Again)

by James W. Nash, K4HMS/V31AW

OK, a lot of us old guys have had crotchety, vaguely reactionary things to say about the fact that new generation hams don't work CW. Why should I be any different? Not long ago, during the CW All Asian (JA) contest, the one in which you use your age as your contest number, I took a survey. Unscientific, but cogent. You can guess the results—most of the US stations were in their mid-50's or older. Most of the JA's were in their forties. Interestingly, the Russian Siberians tended to be in their thirties. The message there was pretty clear.

A week or so ago I started thinking about the CW issue yet again: a well known DX station sent word through the various DX bulletins that he would be operating in the near future without his "interface." Consequently, his CW would be *very* slow. I contemplated that strange statement for a few minutes until it hit me. This man does not actually work CW, except at very slow speeds. He has a CW-reader or something. A keyboard.

I wasn't even sure that was legal. I will tell you that when I worked the guy back last year he was super-fast, but slow picking up callers. Now I understand why.

When the new licensing rules went into effect last year, clearly the FCC made it official that CW was no longer important. Was it possible that sending and receiving Morse code had been declared a meaningless exercise, just as incentive licensing had in essence once again been eliminated? Obviously, the powers believed that to be the case. All you have to do is get an "interface."

The five word per minutes requirement is almost meaningless. The truth is, you can teach a nine year-old five words-per-minute. I've done it. Five words a minute, folks, especially with a multiple choice code exam, is almost a non-requirement. Not to mention the serious reduction in the size of the question pool for the written exam.

Everybody can now be Amateur Extra Class. So in effect, there's no attainment involved. It's no accident I seem to read all the time about eleven year-olds receiving an Extra Class license.

I came up with the great 1950's novice wave. I was licensed in 1955 and found plenty of other normal, healthy, not necessarily nerdy, teenagers (all boys, alas) who were licensed and enthusiastic about radio. We had to learn 13 WPM to get the General or face the "death penalty." We learned by operating CW, not phone. We had no novice phone bands except two meters, which didn't count. Our parents were almost always never hams. We had to scrounge our own equipment and put up our own antennas.

Now we seem to have a generation of mature hams who have never operated CW. I knew a young ham in the late 80's who passed the Extra code test (multiple choice, of course) strictly by studying tapes, and who had never had a CW contact in his life. He probably never will. Now, with minimal effort a sideband DXer can use a programmed keyer to send and answer during a pileup or contest and never touch even a paddle.

It seems that most people, if they don't have to learn CW, won't. This is kind of like the Army. When I was in the Army, there was a draft. Without the draft, I doubt if I'd been in the Army, especially not 1965-1967. So I went the ROTC route. Well, even if it was under semi-compulsion, I've always been extremely proud of my military service. My generation of compelled and semi-compelled soldiers served our nation well under difficult circumstances. CW is kind of that way.

However, my main point is that CW is still an essential mode of communications, and should be required of everyone who wants to be called a communicator. That is, seriously required, as in 13-WPM.

I have my own arguments about the reasons for the vitality of CW, and here's a summary:

It is the consummate great mode for actual difficult communications. When conditions are terrible, when you only have a hundred watt transceiver, when all of your equipment will fit in your backpack, when your antennas are on the balcony (I've been there), when you have just got to get through to somebody, when things are going wrong, CW is most likely to work.

CW is pleasing to the ear. That's right, you ham-licensed cultural and aesthetic illiterates. It sounds absolutely great. I love to listen to all the varying tones and inflections on different DX signals at night. I love to listen to far-off pileups on 20 CW about one a.m. This is especially true during times of ionospheric disturbance. Doubling. Echoes. Auroral flutter. Learning about what causes these sounds and listening to them are a major part of the avocation to me.

CW is a source of pride, just for its own sake. I submit this makes as much sense as any other non-paying avocational pleasure. It's a skill that allows human communication. What could be better?

For me, and a lot of others, it's the only way to work the real DX with 100 watts and a G5RV. After all many of us live in deed-restricted, TVI-prone, regulated neighborhoods. Without doubt, CW is the last resort, down and dirty, best, cheapest, and most satisfying means of radio communications known to man.

As is well known, the use of CW has been severely crippled by past licensing liberalization. First, novices were given ten meter phone. Second, novices were given permanent licenses. Now, incentive licensing has in effect been eliminated. No further real incentives to learn CW seem to exist.

Yes, we have thrown away incentive licensing again, and have thrown CW out totally at the same time. Being perfectly modern as the culture would dictate, we are not forcing people to learn code or much else. A few 50-question exams and you are an expert. Those who never have to operate CW will never learn the joy of ringing tones and frantic, fluttery signals from beyond the North Pole.

However, CW may turn out to be very important to the future of this avocation. It's all in the matter of *technique*. What techniques do we have that can't be surpassed in the future by people driving SUV's and, eyes glazed, talking on cell phones? I think you know.

No certification program will cure the continuing malaise which will result from the present cheap-license situation. Sooner or later, as happened in the thirties and again in the sixties, we will realize again the true value of incentive licensing. We will also realize that what makes a radio operator is facility with CW, not just the push-to-talk button. And we will start the whole cycle again.

So, folks, get that Extra license now while it's cheap. The cycle will recur Incentive licensing will be back once more. CW will live again.

-sk-

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Comments to the author are welcome.

Tampa Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

HF Council W4DUG
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Enter desired password for your HamClub.org e-mail account _____ (already have one)

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