



MARCH 1994

Di-Dah-Dit

The Official Newsletter of the Parkersburg Amateur Radio Klub
P. O. Box 2112 Parkersburg, WV 26101

ARVSA of 1993

EH? What is that? ARVSA stands for Amateur Radio Volunteer Services Act of 1993. The ARRL saw the need for a bill to limit the liability of people in volunteer programs established by the government for the benefit of amateur radio. The measure, HR 2623 would amend the Communications Act of 1934 to allow the inclusion of amateur radio volunteers. Hams have been sued in connection with their volunteer activities and this act would limit your exposure to a lawsuit.

The VE system and the Volunteer Monitoring program have seen and increase in liability in our lawsuit-happy nation of lawyers. The VE and the VM programs were established under Public Law 97-259, The Communications Amendments Act of 1982.

The Volunteer Monitoring program is a group of amateurs who operate under the FCC as ~~Official~~ Observers. They monitor the amateur frequencies for rule violations and report to the FCC. They are used as witnesses if the FCC goes to court. The Volunteer Examiner program is set up to use teams of three amateurs to oversee examinations for Amateur Radio Licenses. Both of these groups often find it hard to recruit members because of the fear of lawsuit. With all of the new "accommodations" that are required in testing, any VE is at risk if there is a dispute about what is, "reasonable accommodation." Also any legal action that the FCC takes are sure to be appealed in court.

This Bill will eliminate that threat of personal financial risk to the volunteer, if he or she acted in good faith.

What can you do? You can write to Rep. Alan Mollohan at the House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 or at his local office at Federal Building in Parkersburg, Room 1117. Our other Reps. Wise and Rahall have already signed as cosponsors to this bill. (good for them, (NJW)

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS:

The Net Roster is now being revised. If you are interested in running the net for one or more weeks, please call Rory at 295-9537. He will be available evenings from 6:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. We need to know those members who are interested in helping to keep this vital link open

Klub Officers for 1993-94

Parkersburg Amateur Radio Klub

President - Rory Hughes KB8MDN

1st. VP- Roy Maull N8YYS

2nd. VP- John McGuffey N8NBL

3rd. VP- Earl Hulce KB8HRG

Sec.- Tom Jones N8NMA

Tres.- Jane McGuffey N8MOW

NL Eds- Jerry KA8NJW

Russ N8FID

Prod/printing- Mary KB8BOA

Solar Flux

Solar flux is an index of energy from the sun that correlates with the density of ionization in the ionosphere. In simpler terms, a higher flux value usually translates into a higher Maximum Usable Frequency (MUF) and better HF propagation. Solar flux roughly corresponds to a sunspot number, which is based on the size and number of sun spots on the visible solar disk.

The A and K indices have to do with geomagnetic disturbances. Higher A and K values correspond to greater absorption of radio waves, rather than refraction. This is bad news for HF propagation. When conditions are stable, the K index may get as low as one or zero. When conditions are truly awful, it may reach five or even seven. A change of one point in the K index is significant.

The A index is also a measure of geomagnetic stability, but a change of one point is not significant. It is based on the K index for the previous 24 hours. When the K index is three the A index might be ten. A change of a point or two in the K index may send the A index to 20 or higher. When a severe geomagnetic storm appears and the HF bands shut down, the A index may reach 35 or more.

High A and K indices are typically a result of solar flares or coronal holes on the sun's surface. Both may shoot protons at the earth, which neutralize the desirable ionization of the ionosphere, cause the geomagnetic field to become unstable and increase absorption of radio waves. To span great distances, you want your radio waves to be refracted (bent) by the ionosphere, not absorbed!

Solar reports are transmitted regularly by W1AW and by "time" stations WWV and WWVH. If you have packet radio capability and a DX PacketCluster network nearby, you may find solar reports there as well. just connect to the system and send the command: SHOW/WWV. (Our thanks to Ted Cook KT7H, for supplying this information.) VIA QST

Less Conflicts

TSRAC, in its Feb. ARNB stated, reports are in that say there is a positive reaction to the so called "business rules" on the Amateur Radio HF bands. Apparently some practices had been questioned in the past and conflicts had ensued. Seagoing Amateurs can now order spare parts and have them shipped to a port for pick-up or missionaries can now contact their church headquarters here in the states and be legal. Yes, an amateur can now order fast food. One can make an appointment with the doctor using the "auto patch" or in the case of "JRM" without the auto patch.

A good guide would be , If the rules do NOT PROHIBIT the type of communication then it is permitted.

NEW 610

The FCC is in the process of sending out a new crop of 610's. These forms are totally different from the old versions and are geared to the new data system that the FCC is installing. These form are NOT TO BE USED until the new system is on line. At that time the VE's will be notified and no old forms will be accepted. The FCC is reducing paperwork by using the front of the 610 for the name, address, element passed, and using the back for a doctor's statement concerning 13 and 20 WPM code tests. I have been told that a list of the accommodations available will also be listed. Wonder if it will still be tan? (NJW) Flash! The new forms are out and ready for use as of 3/1/94

(See Minutes for further information.)



Klub/ARES Net on
146.970
Tuesday's at 9 p.m.
Valley Girls Net
146.970
Thursday's at 9 p.m.

MINUTES FEBRUARY 14 1994 P A R K Meeting

50/50 drawing of \$9.50 was won by Mike Criss (N8HHT)
The President Rory Hughes (KB8MDN), called the meeting to order at 7:12 PM.

The Secretary was not present to read the minutes of the last meeting.

The Treasurer, Jane McGuffey (N8M)W, Reported that the ending balance for this last month is \$2819.25.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

The repeater committee needs finger stock to complete the repair of the old duplexors (cavities). Curt (K8UC)

Net Control is available for any and all who wish to try their hand. Contact Rory (KB8MDN) and he will put your name on the roster. We will add a Net Control information sheet with the next newsletter that will help keep the procedures the same.

Larry (KF8NW) will see to getting the net reports to Dwayne (N8LDM).

OLD BUSINESS: Class Report - Roy (N8YYS) has 16 persons enrolled in the class. Five of which are upgrading to Tech. (from Tech.) or perhaps General, if the code speed gets hectic.

Earl (KB8HRG) will need some husky help in the near future to move some new batteries into the .97 site and the old batteries to the .39 site.

Jane (N8MOW) is accepting all dues "donations".

NEW BUSINESS: Curt (K8UC) has received new form 610's from the FCC with instructions that the old forms are not to be used any more. Make sure that you have the new form before sending anything to the FCC.

Larry (KF8NW) reports that the ARRL is starting a National Test Day to be held twice a year. The first was held last year in October, and next will be in May. We may want to coordinate the class next year, so that the testing falls on the national testing day.

Jep (K8BOT) moved to close the meeting, Curt (K8UC) seconded. The meeting was closed at ? Roy N8YYS acting Sec.

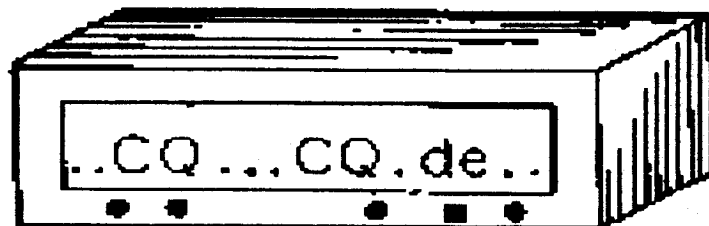
TSRAC NOTES

Here are a couple of stories from the January Triple States Radio Amateur Club that may be a lesson for all.

The first concerns the case of Chris Boyer KC6UQG. He operated on a police frequency because he needed help for an injured friend. He could not get any help on Amateur Radio or even on a cellular phone due to being in a ravine. He called the police on a converted Amateur Radio HT, this is not good. The Sheriff's Department called him in and to avoid a major offense, he turned in his converted HT. TSRAC notes that this served a purpose to bring amateurs up-to-date on a mistaken idea that in an emergency, anything goes. Not so says the FCC. They reported that this all changed in 1988 when they changed the rules. Literally anything goes now in an emergency if you are licensed for that band but not in any other service or band. They feel that you should not have converted equipment and thus not have to make the choice of weather or not to transmit. If you are thinking of converting a HT you might wish to reconsider. (NOTE - If a life was in danger I would still use the radio even if it required losing the equipment, KA8NJW)

Another story from the same issue of TSRAC should also serve as a reminder to anyone who would like to have some fun on VHF bands. Terry Van Sickle WB5WXI pled guilty to "playing games" with McDonalds Restaurant radio ordering system. TSRAC reports that he pled guilty and is throwing himself on the mercy of the court because he found out that the penalty for his "fun and games" was a \$100,000 fine and a prison term. The fact that the prosecution had a fellow ham as a witness, who would testify against him, brought forth the guilty plea. He gave up all of his equipment and was to be sentenced on January 12.

TNX January TSRAC ARNB



LOG IT QST 1/94 p72

Back in the old days (not all that long ago!), the FCC required every amateur to keep a detailed station log. (In addition to regular QSOs hams had to log even unfruitful CQ calls.) And although we're not required to keep a log nowadays, an accurate station log is useful not only today, but tomorrow, too.

We all have things that we like to keep track of: states and countries worked and confirmed; information for awards; or the names and addresses of our on-the-air friends. A well kept station log is invaluable in your quest for the WAS or the DXCC awards. In addition of keeping a running list of the states and countries, your logbook is the perfect place to keep detailed on a wide range of subjects.

Your logbook is a good place to keep note of modifications to your equipment. Not only will the information be easy to find for future reference, it will be easier to note the effects of such changes by referencing contacts before and after.

The article goes on to note that you can keep track of:

- changes to antennas

- best times to work DX

- license upgrades

- new equipment

That way, a few years down the road, you can look back on all of your QSOs as if they were just yesterday.

Within the last few years computers have become popular for keeping track of station contacts. I would like to inject a word of caution about using computers for record keeping, always keep back-ups, always keep back-ups, ALWAYS KEEP BACK-UPS. If you are like me (NJW), you will fail to do this often enough. You will get burned by a disk crash or a dumb mistake. I also feel it would be wise to keep a hard copy of your log.

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