



Di-Dah-Dit

Official Newsletter of the Parkersburg Radio Klub
1733 Githon Rd. Parkersburg, WV 26101

FIELD DAY 2002

FIELD DAY GOING REGION WIDE IN 2002; ON-LINE SOAPBOX AVAILABLE

For the first time in its 69-year history, Field Day officially will expand its scope beyond the borders of the US and Canada to include participation by amateurs in all of North and South America—including the Caribbean. Field Day takes place this year on the first weekend of summer—June 22-23 (Field Day is always the fourth full weekend in June). Following this year's event, clubs, groups and individuals taking part will be able to upload photos and comments to the ARRL Contest Soapbox Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/contests/soapbox/>>.

"We encourage interesting photographs that will give those visiting the site sense of the 'flavor' of a group's Field Day participation," said ARRL Contest Branch Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND. Henderson says he gets "hundreds of photographs" for possible use in QST, which typically has room for about a dozen. "The Online Soapbox gives groups the chance to display their best efforts for FD," he said.

The Field Day Soapbox area will open Sunday, June 23, at 2100 UTC. Anyone may post stories and photos, but these will be screened before posting.

Groups and individuals still are expected to submit Field Day reports—summary sheets, dupe sheets, proofs of bonus, etc.—for the annual QST Field Day report. "Also, we still encourage groups to include their best photographs for consideration for QST," Henderson added. The complete—and official—rules for

Field Day 2002 are available on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2002/rules-fd-2002.html>> and in the May issue of QST (page 108).

Field Day has a long tradition as an emergency preparedness exercise, operating equipment "in the field" using power sources other than the commercial mains. As ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, pointed out in his "It Seems to Us . . ." editorial <<http://www.arrl.org/news/features/2002/05/01/2/>> in June 2002 QST, Field Day also presents an ideal opportunity to showcase Amateur Radio to the general public and to local officials and to convey an important message in the process.

"No matter what, there will be hams and they will be able to communicate with one another. No matter what," Sumner wrote.

While contacts with amateurs around the world always have counted for credit, this year's event will mark the first formal participation by stations outside the US and Canada.

Another significant change this year is the new "Get on the Air" or GOTA station, which replaces the Novice station at Field Day setups. The idea is to give Novice and Technician licensees as well as generally inactive amateurs of any class and even unlicensed individuals a chance to participate—under the supervision of a licensed control operator.

One persistent question Henderson says he's been getting concerns how the Field Day rules define a "generally inactive" licensee in terms of GOTA operation. "We do not want to get into hair-splitting or micromanaging a definition of that term," Henderson said. Instead, he points to the fre-

quently asked questions information in the Field Day packet, which says, "Clubs should use their judgment in determining the operators of the GOTA station."

Examples in the Field Day packet include operators who have never been on HF or who have been off the air for the past couple of years. Any single GOTA operator is limited to a maximum of 100 contacts of the 400-contact for-credit contact total.

The first "International Field Day" was held June 10-11, 1933, billed as "just a test of portable equipment" for US and Canadian amateurs, according to former ARRL Communications Manager George Hart, W1NJM. Hart credits then-Communications Manager Ed Handy, W1BDI, with coming up with the idea of Field Day. It was not until Field Day 1934 that Handy's Field Day writeup in QST raised the aspect of emergency preparedness.

THE PARKERSBURG RADIO KLUB MEETING

The April 8th Parkersburg Amateur Radio Klub Meeting was called to order at 7PM by President Blaine Auville.

There was an introduction of 31 members and guests.

Georgia Milhoan won the 50/50 RAFFLE. (\$16.00)

The secretary's minutes were read and approved.

The President reminded members that April is dues month. Dues are \$16 single and \$24 for a family

living under the same roof. The Secretary collected the dues in the absence of the Treasurer. Carl Long, instructor for the classes said it was time for the tests to be held. It was decided to hold the classes at Emanuel Baptist Church April 23rd at 7PM. Kenny Harris's group will be helping with the tests.

Jerry Wharton --Newsletter editor passed a Roster for e-mail Addresses to be updated for the Newsletter.

Kenny Harris announced upcoming events:

Athens Hamfest April 28th
Jackson County May 5th
School Boy Regatta May 18
Smoot Fun Run May 27
Half-Marathon Aug. 17th

Kenny also said meteorologist Dan Bartoft would like to have A SKYWARN class

The President announced that FIELD DAY will be the weekend of June 22 and 23. Blaine said the KLUB needs people to help set-up and people to transmit from 1:00PM Saturday to 1:00PM Sunday.

A motion was made by Curt Fouse the RAFFLE tickets be sold for ~1 for a dollar OR 6 for \$5.00 It was seconded by Jerry Wharton. Motion passed by the KLUB.

Jerry Wharton-motioned we adjourn at 7:45. Curt Alias JEP seconded, Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted,
Georgia Milhoan

PARKERSBURG AMATEUR
RADIO KLUB

The May 13th meeting of the Parkersburg Amateur Radio Klub was called to order at 7PM by President Blaine Auville. Blaine asked for an introduction of 35 members and guests. The 50/50 reffle was won by Blaine Auville (\$26.50).

The Secretary's minutes were ap-

proved after a correction. The date of our annual FIELD DAY is June 22 and 23.

The Treasurer's report was given as \$3,095.81.

Carl Lon gave a report on tests that were given on the 23rd of April. He said Carol Myers aced her test.

Judy Peterson said Dan Bartoft will hold a SKYWARN class at 7PM at the 911 building on May 23rd.

The President said the REPEATER SITE needed mowed. Jim Palmer Curt Fouse, Blaine Auville Ray Bodie and Dan Betts will meet at 1:30 Wednesday, May 15 and Mow the site.

Connie Hamilton presented a list of people whose license's are expiring.

The Dayton HAMFEST is this coming weekend May 17, 18, and 19.

The people who will be helping set-up and transmit during FIELD DAY are Blaine Auville, Lloyd Boston, Carl Lang, Paul Anderson, Curt Fouse, Dan Betts, Jerry Wharton Ray Bodie, Stephanie Adams and Ron Hinton (with help from Lloyd).

Jep motioned and we Adjourned at 7:45 PM it was seconded by Bill Thomas

Restfully submitted
Georgia Milhoan, Secretary

==>OUT-OF-THE-ORDINARY INTERFERENCE CASE RESOLVED

In what FCC Special Counsel for Enforcement Riley Hollingsworth called "a textbook example" of FCC-ARRL cooperation, a case of strange interference involving a power company and an AM broadcast station has been substantially resolved. As a result of their follow-up investigation, six Cincinnati-area amateurs were awarded the ARRL Certificate of Merit.

In January, the FCC wrote Cincinnati AM radio station WLW

and Cinergy Corp--the electric utility serving the region--to help resolve the unusual and long-standing interference situation that was affecting local amateurs. Apparently spurious signals associated with WLW transmissions had been monitored over a wide area and frequency range and were severely affecting some amateur bands.

The investigation focused on utility towers carrying 345-kV lines in the vicinity of the WLW broadcast tower. Jay Adrick, K8CJY--a member of the amateur team involved in tracking down the problem and one of those honored--explained at the Dayton ARRL Forum earlier this month that the primary problem seemed to stem from so-called static lines on the towers, which do not carry electrical power. The static lines, he pointed out, were not sufficiently RF-bonded to the tower structure. "They're actually loose-fitted," he said. "At 60 Hz, it's a reasonable ground." But at RF, it acted as a non-linear junction, and the static wires acted as a huge antenna. The result was something that sounded a bit like a spark gap modulated by WLW's audio on several amateur bands.

Success did not come easily, and mop-up operations continue. Hollingsworth called the situation "a history-making RF interference case" that generated more investigative analysis than any other case in his years with the FCC.

Ohio ARRL Section Manager Joe Phillips, K8QOE, said the local amateurs brought the matter to the FCC's attention after working with WLW and Cinergy for almost two years to pin down the cause of the spurious signals.

Honored with certificates at the ARRL Forum in Dayton in addition to Adrick were team leader Bob Reiff, WA8ULW; Ted Homan, WB8WFG; Herb Nichols, W3EOA; Geoff Mendenhall, W8GNM; and Paul Jellison, WD8KMX. Jellison is regional engineering manager of Clear Channel Communications which owns WLW. Also honored were non-amateurs Jeff Antoni and Kelly McMahan, both of Cinergy Corporation.

The certificates were signed by ARRL Great Lakes Division Director George Race, WB8BGY, and ARRL Lab Supervisor Ed Hare, W1RFI, who assisted in the efforts to resolve the interference situation. The amateurs were cited for "creating an example of longtime and continuing corporate-amateur radio cooperation in an interference abatement of high power RF signals."

Though some interference remains, Phillips said, the local amateurs and both corporations discovered many possible sources of trouble and have established a working procedure for clearing them up.

"Saying the interference is all cleared up would be foolhardy given the complex nature of the engineering involved," said Phillips, who recommended the awards, "but the two words that describe this historic work would be 'patience works.'"

Under FCC Part 15 and Part 73 rules, incidental noise radiated by power company equipment or spurious emissions from a broadcast transmitter must be corrected if they cause harmful interference to radio communications.

NEW MEXICO AMATEURS CONFRONT ANOTHER WILDFIRE EMERGENCY

Amateur Radio operators in New Mexico once again found themselves on fire-related duty during May. On May 23, an incident command post was set up in Española in response to a so-called "sleeper fire"--a lightning-caused fire that smolders before bursting into flame--near the village of Truchas in north-central New Mexico. Over the Memorial Day weekend, more than 250 residents were evacuated from their homes in Truchas and the nearby village of Cordoba.

"Some residents were bused back into the area May 24 and given five minutes each to collect any medications and other important items they left behind and a chance to retrieve pets and livestock," said New Mexico Section Emergency Coordinator

Bill Kauffman, W5YEJ.

Rio Arriba County Emergency Communications Manager Lonie Scott, AH2AZ, activated amateur communications support. Amateurs were dispatched to Red Cross shelters set up at two elementary schools in Chimayo, and The Los Alamos Amateur Radio Club's W5PDO provided support. By late on May 24, the wind had shifted, and the fire was burning away from Truchas. Residents were able to return home starting at 9 AM the next day. Kauffman said the incident command post and the shelters closed later that day after all evacuees had returned home.

While the amateur turnout was not an official Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) activation, Kauffman said that Los Alamos County District Emergency Coordinator Bill Boedeker, NM5BB, and Santa Fe County DEC Alden Oyer, AG5S, did monitor the residents' return and remained available to provide additional resources if needed. "We're working on establishing an ARES group in Rio Arriba county but the amateur population is somewhat sparse so we'll continue to support that county from adjacent counties even when they get organized," he explained.

Kauffman said the fire was still burning as of May 29 in the Pecos Wilderness of the Santa Fe National Forest, but was not considered a threat to any homes or structures. Reports indicate the fire is nearly two-thirds contained and has burned more than 12,000 acres. As tinder-dry conditions persist in New Mexico, amateurs there have continued to be involved in efforts to deal with a number of other smaller fires.

COMMISSION'S ROLE IN HAM RADIO "PRETTY MINIMAL," FCC FORUM IS TOLD

At a well-attended FCC Forum at Dayton Hamvention, the FCC's Bill Cross, W3TN, attempted to dispel the myth that the Commission is at the center of Amateur Radio. Nothing could be further from the truth," he said.

The reality is that thousands of amateurs are voluntarily self-training "simply because you want to learn more about something that is of interest to you," he said.

Beyond enforcement, maintaining the licensee database and administering the rules, the FCC's role in Amateur Radio "is pretty minimal," Cross said. Cross also discussed various Amateur Radio-related petitions now before the FCC as well as the recent NPRM proposing new LF and HF bands and making Amateur Radio primary at 2400-2402 MHz. He repeatedly made the point that the FCC prefers not to "micromanage" the rules, and he cautioned against asking for rule changes that could have unintended consequences.

FCC Special Counsel for Enforcement Riley Hollingsworth said Amateur Radio operators "have a lot to be proud of." Amateurs have the "only fail-safe system" of communication, he said.

But, Hollingsworth said, there still are too many amateurs "who want to screw around" on the air. "To the extent that you tolerate these violations, you contribute to the decline of Amateur Radio," he said.

As he's done in the past, Hollingsworth also cautioned amateurs to be aware of how they might sound to others on the air. Paraphrasing the late radio journalist Edward R. Murrow, Hollingsworth pointed out that just because you can be heard halfway around the world doesn't mean you're any smarter than when you could only be heard "down at the other end of the bar."

Behavior such as arguing and infighting on the air "will destroy Amateur Radio a lot faster than any specific rule violation or unidentified jammer on any band," Hollingsworth said. He asked rhetorically if getting in the last word in an on-air argument was "worth taking Amateur Radio one step closer to extinction." Even worse, he added, is that such behavior also distracts the FCC enforcement effort from more substantive situations, such as intruders on 10 meters.

"We're on the verge of great things," Hollingsworth concluded, urging amateurs to not take the naysayers and detractors within Amateur Radio seriously.

FCC RELEASES DETAILS OF 5 MHz, 136 kHz AND 2400-2402 MHz PROPOSALS

The FCC has released the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in ET Docket 02-98, which proposes to create new amateur allocations at 5 MHz and 136 kHz and to elevate the status of Amateur Radio at 2400 to 2402 MHz from secondary to primary. In response to separate petitions filed by the ARRL, the FCC voted unanimously May 2 to adopt the NPRM in ET Docket 02-98.

The Commission announced in a Public Notice released May 9 that it would propose a new, secondary, domestic (US-only) HF allocation at 5.25 to 5.4 MHz and a new LF allocation 135.7 to 137.8 kHz. If eventually approved, the 5 MHz band would be the first new HF allocation since the early 1980s, when amateurs got 30, 17 and 12 meters. The LF allocation would be the first ever for US hams. The FCC said it received 87 comments on the 5 MHz proposal and 32 comments on the LF proposal.

"We agree with ARRL that propagation and interference conditions in the 3500 kHz and 7000 kHz bands could hinder effective amateur HF communications,"

the FCC said in its NPRM. "In particular, as ARRL indicates, the nature of the ionosphere prevents communications during certain portions of the day because of increased atmospheric noise levels at certain times on certain frequencies."

The FCC said ARRL's WA2XSY experimental operation "appears to support its contention" that the band could supplement 80 and 40 meters at certain times.

The FCC has proposed letting amateurs operate at full legal limit on a new 5 MHz allocation, but it left open for further discussion whether to restrict the band to Amateur Extra Class licensees or make it available to General and higher class licensees. The FCC also invited further comment on whether the band should be broken down into mode-specific subbands. The ARRL had proposed opening the entire band to RTTY, data (including CW), phone and image emission types.

Assuming the 5-MHz band eventually is authorized, it could be a few years before it actually becomes available. The band 5.250 to 5.450 MHz now is allocated to Fixed and Mobile services on a co-primary basis in all three ITU regions.

On 136 kHz, the FCC has proposed mirroring technical limits suggested by Canada during World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 preparations to 1 W effective isotropic radiated power (EIRP) and with a transmis-

sion bandwidth of only 100 Hz. The ARRL has asked for than 2 W EIRP and a maximum transmitter power of 200 W PEP.

The FCC proposed no restrictions on antenna size or design, saying it did not want to inhibit experimentation by hams. It proposed to limit access to the band to General and higher-class licensees, as ARRL had proposed.

The FCC said it was reluctant to also propose allocating an amateur band at 160 to 190 kHz--as ARRL had requested--because of concerns about possible interference to unlicensed power line carrier (PLC) systems in that band. The FCC noted it had turned down a 1978 ARRL petition for the same reason.

The FCC said ARRL's request to upgrade the 2400-2402 MHz band "has merit." It did not propose any changes in service rules or operational requirements.

The NPRM is available on the FCC Web site <http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-02-136A1.doc>. The FCC is expected to soon make this proceeding available for comments filed via its Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS). Visit the ECFS site <<http://www.fcc.gov/e-file/ecfs.html>>, click on "Search for Filed Comments" and enter "02-98" in the "Proceeding" field.

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