

telstar

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF STARS (SOUTH TOWNS AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY)

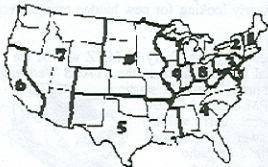
ISSUE 175

APRIL, 1996

Two Counties Returned to WNY Section

The ARRL Executive Committee has voted unanimously to return the New York counties of Herkimer and Otsego counties from the Northern New York Section to the Western New York Section, effective April 1, 1996.

The decision was based on the results of a canvass of affected members which clearly favored the return of those counties to the WNY section.



The committee's action reflects the results of a canvass of ARRL members in three counties that had initially been made a part of the new NNY section.

Of 37 members in Herkimer County, 25 responded; 18 favored returning to WNY, while seven favored remaining in NNY.

April Meeting

The April club meeting will begin at 7 PM on Thursday, April 4 at the Hamburg Youth Center (Prospect Ave. and Hawkins Ave.). All interested in amateur radio are invited; neither club membership nor an amateur radio license is required.

We will be discussing improvements to our repeater, public service events, the Erie County Fair display, and many other topics.

Our program will include two excellent short videos on DXpeditions: "VP8SSI: The South Sandwich Saga" and "Journey to Peter I Island: Close to the Edge." Kash WB2RAJ will host the program.



Of 50 members in Otsego County, 37 responded; 29 favored returning to WNY, six favored remaining in NNY, and two did not reply.

Of 18 members in Schoharie County, only seven responded; one favored returning to WNY, while six favored remaining in NNY. Therefore, in the case of Schoharie County the Executive Committee decided to make no change.

The affected section managers have been notified.

The ARRL Letter, Electronic Edition Update, March 22, 1996

★ STARS ★

STARS & ARRL Memberships

Membership in STARS is open to anyone with an interest in amateur radio; an amateur radio license is not required. Membership applications may be obtained by sending a SASE to Judy Levan N2TEZ, 120 University Blvd., Depew, NY 14043, from the newsletter editor or from board members.

Annual dues are payable on January 1 and are \$21 for a single membership, \$27 for family memberships and \$8 for a student membership (through grade 12). The dues are pro-rated on a monthly basis for new members plus there is an initiation fee of \$5 when first applying to the club. For example, a new member joining in July would pay \$10.50 (6 months X \$1.75/mth) plus the \$5.00 initiation fee for a total of \$15.50.

Applications should be returned to Judy N2TEZ along with the appropriate dues. The applications will be reviewed and voted on by the Board of Directors at their business meeting. The applications are then voted on by the general membership at the next regular club meeting.

Members should send their ARRL renewal memberships to Jack Cullum, Jr. KB2ESM, 6871 Webster Rd., Orchard Park, NY 14127 along with a check made out to STARS. No extra cost to you and STARS benefits!



Club Nets

STARS club nets are open to all to exchange information on local amateur radio activities.

STARS HF net meets at 10 AM local time on Saturdays on 3.925 Mhz +/- QRM. Net control is usually Guz WB2EZU.

STARS VHF net meets at 7 PM on Wednesdays on STARS club repeater WB2ELW 147.09/.69 (output/input). Net control is Tony KB2OUT.

STARS Swap Net meets at 7 PM on Tuesdays on STARS WB2ELW 147.09 repeater. Net control is Marc N2UBT.

Special Net

I would like to say thank you to Kash WB2RAJ for another job well done. Kash was my guest speaker on net Wed. March 13th. He again had all the answers on the wide world of DXing. If anyone has any questions on DXing you can contact Kash, his phone number is in the club roster or drop him a line on packet at BBSVW.

If anyone is interested in helping out with one of my special nets or has an idea on a topic give me a call. I can be reached at 992-2011 in the evening, on the WB2ELW repeater or on packet at BBSVW.

The next special net will be on April 11 beginning at 7:00 PM on the STARS 147.090 repeater. Terry KM4XZ will answer questions on radio direction finding. (See below for details.) Hope to hear you there!

Thank You
Tony B. Jr. KB2OUT
Net Control

Radio Direction Finding

Now that winter is coming to an end, our area radio direction finders will be crawling out of the spots where they have been hibernating and will be eagerly looking for new hidden transmitters to find.

To get you going Terry KM4XZ will be the special guest speaker on the STARS Wednesday night net on April 11 starting at 7 PM on the 147.090 repeater. Terry will try to answer any questions you have on radio direction finding.



Terry will also be providing you with an easy opportunity to practice direction finding skills. Terry will be "hidden" somewhere in an area bounded by Transit Road to the east, Broadway to the north, the 400 to the south and Union Road to the west. Listen for him on the input to the repeater (147.690) and go find him!

If you are interested in more information on local hunts, give Terry a call at 656-0865.

STARS GOSSIP COLUMN

Well, STARS members sure got their money's worth at the March meeting with the nice speaker that we had. It was Jim Cornell, KF2LN Packet Cluster SYSOP.

It was standing room only, and Jim sure gave us a nice demonstration of the packet cluster and how to get the most out of it. The big screen 5 foot by 5 foot sure helped to make it clear and easy to follow. So now Western New York has got KF2LN Jim's packet cluster and KN2M Dave's packet on line.

The STARS KE2VW BBS can be used for some of this also. Get in touch with one of the regular users.

To use the KF2LN packet cluster, you can use either C KF2LN or C DXBFLO on 144.93 MHz. Please do not be in a hurry as sometimes it takes a while to operate properly. When you

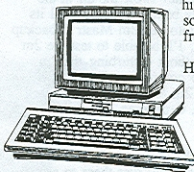
are accepted, use the SH/DX command to get the DX stations listing. I wish to caution you that you can listen but must have a General license or

higher to talk on some of the frequencies listed.

Hope all our members are taking advantage of the classes and VE sessions that STARS has operating all the time to give you a

chance to upgrade. Our board of directors have all the info to make it easy. So please remove the "T" and put a "G" on your ticket, OK?

Happy Hamming Guz WB2EZU



From the Prez

This month's presentation will include two short videos on DXpeditions. The first is "VP8SSI: The South Sandwich Saga" and the second is "Journey to Peter I Island: Close to the Edge. The later was the 3Y0PI operation where 9 hams from 4 countries made nearly 60,000 contacts from one of the most isolated places on the earth.

Our business meeting should prove interesting, with the new proposals we have to consider regarding the repeater, and the BBS. You won't want to miss that part of the meeting!



Our EC Fair committee, whose first meeting was Saturday, March 30, is up and running again. It's hard to believe it's time to start planning ahead for that event. We need a few volunteers, to chair sections of the exhibit, during the planning phase. This is not going to require any amount of work, just some thought ahead of time, as to what you would like to see new/changed/kept the same at the exhibit. We need as many as can come to the committee meetings to give us their ideas on the exhibit.

Let's build upon the past two years experiences, and plan for an even better exhibit!!

With hamfest season soon upon us, it's time to start thinking of new projects. Along with hamfest season comes the lightning season as well! How are your grounds? Is EACH leg of your tower separately connected to its own grounding rod (a minimum of 8' in length)? Are these each bonded to a low impedance ground?

Is your coax grounded at not only the bottom of the tower, but the top as well? (mine was bottom only, hence the lightning damage last year.)

Is there a separate ground for your shack, for dc/rf? Remember there are three types of grounds: Lightning/DC/Rf. You need all three taken care of to avoid hazards to yourself/your dwelling.

Are the center feeds of your coax cables grounded to pass thru connectors located OUTSIDE of your dwelling?

Be safe, to enjoy a long life, and years of enjoyment of the hobby!

73, Greg KE2VW

Repeater Corner

Here's an update on some recent repeater happenings.

The 440 Mastr II repeater is off the air at the Nike base. It's on my bench while I install its RC-1000 controller into our 2m Mastr II backup repeater. Once done, I'll be able to test the 2m Mastr II at Colden without disturbing the 2m Mastr Pro and RC-85 controller. Eventually, we'll replace the old 2m Mastr Pro, possibly with the 2m Mastr II, depending on how the tests go.

We had some fireworks at the Colden site on March 20. Too bad nobody was there to see it. Lightning sent a huge surge onto the phone line going into the controller and fried an RJ11 connector, leaving us with a dead autopatch. The surge went through several connections, including an identical RJ11 just inches before the one it fried—why it picked on that one, we'll never know.

The controller was unscathed, and autopatch was working as soon as the connector was replaced. The RC-85 controller has a built-in gas discharge tube, so I guess it did its job against any surge that made it past the arcing. For insurance, we'll be adding an additional surge suppressor external to the controller.

Besides the autopatch problem, that date's Wednesday night net was kaboshed by the 2m repeater's sensitivity dropping way down all of a sudden. Later that night, a check showed our 2m preamplifier having no effect on input signals. They were the same with it online or bypassed. Suspecting it was bad, I took it home to be checked.

Well, it tested OK on the bench (over 20 dB gain)! After putting it back in place Thursday morning, the repeater was back to normal. It's a mystery why it was apparently not working Wednesday night. Some connection with the lightning surge? Or could it have been the little spider's nest I cleaned out of the inside? Probably neither—just the ordinary, everyday repeater gremlins.

73's, Paul, WA2IYW.

Repeater Control Operators

My name is Tony KB2OUT, I'm one of the three control operators of the WB2ELW repeater. The other two control operators are Paul WA2IYW and Ken KB2HRZ.

If anyone hears of any misuse on the WB2ELW REPEATER give one of us a call. Some examples of misuse or times when you should notify a control operator are: unidentified kerchunking, phantom touch toning, vulgarity or unacceptable language on the air, malicious interference, etc.

As control operators we have several options at our disposal to deter the offender or offenders. If you should come on the air and find that the courtesy tone is not there please don't keep kerchunking your mic. Chances are the repeater may be in zero hang mode (NO TAIL) or in one of the other modes due to misuse.

At this time the repeater is still functioning and can be used. You should try to familiarize yourselves with your 2 meter repeater user instructions booklet just in case the repeater has to be put into the SLEEP MODE (Touch Tone access Mode). At this time you will have to know the code to wake up the repeater in order to use it. When you are done using it you enter another code to put it back to sleep. In extreme cases the repeater can be shut down completely (TURNED OFF).

If anyone has any questions at all please feel free to call me at 992-2011 or you may call one of the other control operators.

Thank You, Tony B. Jr. KB2OUT
Control Operator

STARS Board of Directors

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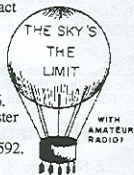
Amateur Radio Examinations

STARS will hold a test session on May 11, 1996. Location of the exam is being determined. Walk-ins should arrive by 9:00 AM and pre-registered candidates should arrive by 9:45. The tests start at 10 AM. For information on STARS test sessions, contact Norm Jones KD2KK at 824-1148.

Lancaster ARC will hold test sessions on April 24, May 15, and June 12, 1996. For information on Lancaster ARC exams, call Chuck Koester WD2AIK at 937-3592.

ARATS will be holding test sessions on April 13, May 4, and June 8, 1996. For information on ARATS exams, call Vern Siegel AA2AC at 693-5977 (days) or 634-5276 (nights).

Most sessions except for STARS non-hamfest exams do not allow walk-ins, so call ahead and make a reservation.



Commercial Radio Examinations

Examinations are being given monthly for the following commercial radio licenses: General Radiotelephone Operator License; Marine Radio Operator Permit; First, Second and Third Class Radio Telegraph Operator's Certificate; Global Maritime Distress and Safety System Operator's License; Global Maritime Distress and Safety System Maintainer's License; and a radar endorsement for the above licenses.

Exams are held at the Aurora Middle School, 148 Aurora Street, Lancaster. For information and registration contact Vern Siegel at 634-5276 and Chuck Koester 937-3592.

The exams are scheduled for April 17, May 8 and June 5, 1996.

Letter to the Editor

Hi Terry,

Thank you very much for the kind words in the TELSTAR and your excellent support for the past many years. Because of an excellent working relationship, Kay and I have been able to effect a very smooth transition. In our new positions, we will continue to serve the radio amateurs and especially our friends in New York.

73, Hugh Turnbull W3ABC
Vice President, ARRL

Congratulations

STARS held a VE test session on March 16 at the Moose Lodge in Hamburg. Four candidates attended, and all left with a new license or an upgrade!

William Swartz qualified for a new Technician class license, and Andrew Palmer for a new Technician Plus class license. STARS member John Hasselback WA2DRG upgraded to Advanced class. John Birkby N2QLT upgraded to Extra class. Congratulations to all!

VE's administering the exams included Woody AA2TL, Tony KB2OUT, Bob WA2ABN, Fred AA2VZ, Norm KD2KK, Guz WB2EZU, Joe N2BGJ and Terry KM4XZ.

Public Service

Lots of opportunities to use your radio skills to help out worthwhile charities.

The March of Dimes walkathon will be held at various sites on April 27 and 28. Contact Jim N2OSL at 685-3067.

The MS bike trek will be held on June 22-23 and will include a ride from Chestnut Ridge Park to St. Bonaventure and return. The American Lung Association will host a one-day ride on Aug. 17. For more information, call Terry KM4XZ at 656-0865 or Tony KB2OUT at 992-2011.



STARS



Club Repeaters

The club repeater (WB2ELW/R) is located near Colden, NY (147.09/.69 output/input). Auto-patch privileges are available to club members.

The southern club repeater (KE2VW/R) is located in Perrysburg, NY (146.97/.37 output/input, with PL access of 151.4 Hz).

The club UHF repeater is located near Hamburg. (442.325 MHz w/ PL of 151.4 Hz.)

Club Packet

The STARS KE2VW BBS is located in Colden, NY. On 145.71 MHz; C. BBSVW. If that fails, on 145.61 MHz, C. BBSVW. On 446.825 MHz, you can connect using 9600 baud directly to BBSVW.

Using a telephone modem you can reach the STARS KE2VW BBS by calling 537-9334.

Club Meetings

Club meetings are normally held on the first Thursday of the month at the Hamburg Youth Center (Prospect and Hawkins Aves.) at 7:00 PM. Everyone is welcome; neither club membership nor an amateur radio license is required.

Board meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month at the Nike Base Club Station at 7:00 PM and are open to all club members.

Club HF Stations

The club Nike Base HF Station (WB2ELW) is located on Lakeview Rd. 1.75 miles e. of Rte 20 next to the Hamburg Town Arena. The station is operated on most Saturdays between 1 and 3 PM local time and is a great DX station. All are welcome.

A second club HF station is located at the Hamburg Youth Center.

STARS

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