



## Repeater Corner

Many thanks to all members who have enthusiastically and generously supported the new 2m repeater and remote receiver projects. Despite my accident and lack of spare time, we're almost ready to give the new repeater a whirl, due to a great team effort from Roger K2SLZ, Tom KF2VX, and Dave KB2YTC

The Kenwood repeater, Link controller, modem, MastroII amplifier, and power supply are now housed in a four foot tall rack mount cabinet donated by Moog Inc. through Roger and Tom. There's also space inside for the receiver voter, link receivers, packet gear, and the future digital voice recorder.

An 18 dB attenuator was designed and built to take the 15 watt minimum output from the repeater down to 0.25 watt in order to drive our stand-in 100 watt MastroII amplifier. Of course, all the RF, digital, AC and DC cables had to be assembled to wire together the repeater, controller, amplifier, power supplies and cooling fans.



We also had to punch several more large holes in the cabinet for better cable access, and added several shelves to hold equipment.

Final programming of the controller is now being done and should be finished soon. Any changes to how repeater functions are used will be published to all the membership. A new feature will be an off-the-air record and playback of our received voice for a signal check instead of the S-meter.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## April Meeting

The monthly club meeting will begin at 7 PM on Thursday, April 3, 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 getting an update on the new repeater/controller project from our Repeater Chairman Paul WA2IJW.



Our featured speakers will be STARS members Greg KE2VW and Kash WB2RAJ discussing the STARS KE2VW packet radio BBS and the DX PacketCluster. These are two of the leaders in WNY in packet radio and DX'ing and are sure to be very entertaining and educational.

## Repeater Fund

As you can see from the Repeater Corner article in this issue, we are well on our way towards having a new 2 meter repeater system. Like everything else, there is a bill to pay for this. We have been very pleased with donations that we have received from members so far, but we still have a long way to go.

If you would like to make a donation to the repeater fund, please send them to Jack Cullum KB2ESM, 6871 Webster Road, Orchard Park, NY 14127.

If you have any radio or computer equipment or other items you would like to donate to the club for the repeater fund, please contact Tony Balas, Jr. KB2OUT at 992-2011.

## STARS & ARRL Memberships

Membership in STARS is open to anyone with an interest in amateur radio. A 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 per month) plus the \$5 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 the 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 usually Tony KB2OUT.

STARS Swap Net meets at 7 PM on Tuesdays on STARS WB2ELW 147.09 repeater. Net control is usually Leo KB2TTY.



## Repeater Corner

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We'll be able to easily change the controller's programming via phone line and modem. Dave donated the modem and cooling fans and used his computer expertise to debug and test the modem hookup.

Roger quickly and professionally assembled and tested the remote receiver voter kit, which now awaits the rest of the remote receiver system. A 2m to 440 crossband transceiver, antennas, and several miscellaneous items are next on the agenda for that project.

My work schedule now allows me to attend Thursday evening meetings again, so I'll see you then.

## RS-16 Satellite In Orbit

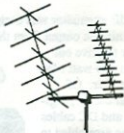
According to sources at AMSAT, a new Russian Amateur Radio satellite, designated RS-16, has been launched from the Svobodny Cosmodrome as part of a Zeya satellite package. RS-16 reportedly has an average orbital altitude of 276 miles, producing a footprint some 2000 miles in diameter on Earth.

On March 4, 1997, 1614 UTC, Jim White, WD0E, reported hearing strong signals from the RS-16 CW beacon on 29.408 MHz.

Others in the US and Europe have reported strong signals on 10 meters. The transponders are not yet active. The twice-delayed launch had

been expected as early as December. RS-16 is expected to be a Mode A (2 meters up/10 meters down) satellite, like RS-10 and RS-15. It's the first Russian satellite to have a 70-cm beacon, but it is not yet operational. Beacon frequencies are 29.408, 29.451, 435.504 and 435.548 MHz.

When the transponders are operational, the RS-16 frequencies are expected to be: uplink, 145.915 to 145.948 MHz, downlink, 29.415 to 29.448 MHz. Orbital elements and additional information will be announced as they become available.



# STARS Gossip Column

Well, March 1997 was another red letter month for STARS. As far as records show March 1997 was the first VE session that had twenty people to take their radio examinations. It was a smooth and well versed session. This is only March; what will be the next surprise for STARS? Joe KB2JDB was instrumental and their were no surprises. We all thank you Joe!

Well, now there is a repeater to get into operation. Hope it goes just as good as the rest of the action.

Now that spring is here, why not take advantage of our Nike Base club room. Even if you are not



## Public Service Events

Volunteers are still needed to provide communications for the March of Dimes WalkAmerica at various sites in Western New York on April 26-27. Contact STARS member Jim Moxon N2OSL at 626-1671 (day) or 685-3067 (evenings).

Contact Ray Baker N2DAY 668-4870 if you are interested in providing communications for the following events:

The Ford Marathon, Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup>.  
The Corporate Run, Williamsville area, Thursday, May 15<sup>th</sup>  
Roswell Bike Trek, Saturday, June 28<sup>th</sup>

## Silent Keys

In the last few weeks we lost two of our STARS members:

Ken Haas K2YKE of Buffalo, NY and James Linnan KA2NQG of West Seneca, NY.

We extend our deepest sympathies to the families of these men. They will be greatly missed by all of our members.



ready to utilize the equipment, why not stop in and say hello to the members, and they will enjoy your company. As a rule, the club room is open on Saturday afternoons from 1 to 3 PM, so listen to the info on our repeater.

Not only that but 1997 will be the tower upgrade year. The paint is there but just waiting for better weather.

You know there are a lot of contests in QST. As a rule, they are on weekends, and you can work the stations as long as a higher ticket is at the controls. So good luck to everyone and remember, we got nine more months to get something done at the base.

Happy Hamming Guz WB2EZU

## New, Improved Transceivers on the Horizon

Yaesu's new FT-920 HF/6-meter transceiver will be available in early May, the company announced this week. The radio already is being advertised for sale in some overseas ham radio journals. Yaesu says the FT-920 will offer 100 W output on all bands; digital signal processing (DSP) in all modes (with auto notch and noise reduction); built-in antenna tuner, memory keyer and RS-232C level converter, and MOSFET finals. It's expected to retail for under \$2000.

ICOM has announced the IC-706MkII, with several improvements and additions to the popular tiny HF/VHF transceiver at the same price as the original IC-706. The MkII will offer slots for two optional filters, a "sub" dial to tune the second VFO or for RIT), 20 W output on 2 meters, a separate band-change key, crossband split, band-stacking register, and better sensitivity outside the ham bands. The MkII should be available in May, according to ICOM. No retrofits are possible for existing IC-706s.

Ten-Tec has announced the OMNI-VI Plus, an upgraded version of its popular HF transceiver. The OMNI-VI Plus includes DSP noise reduction, low pass, auto notch and adjustable CW offset (with tracking sidetone) plus another filter position. A retrofit program is available for current OMNI-VI owners. The OMNI-VI Plus is priced at \$2585.

The ARRL Letter 3/28/97

# ARRL Asks For Comments

ARRL members are being invited to add their ideas, comments and recommendations to those of the ARRL WRC-99 Planning Committee, which has suggested sweeping—and potentially controversial—changes to the Amateur Radio licensing structure in the US. On the table for open discussion and debate are proposals that include:

- elimination of the Novice license
- creation of a new Intermediate license to replace the Technician Plus
- expanded HF privileges for Intermediate licensees, including phone on 160, 75 and 15 meters
- 10-wpm General CW test (with more stringent testing standards for all CW exams)
- expanded phone privileges for General-class and higher licensees

Details of the plan, discussed during the recent ARRL Board of Directors meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, will appear in March QST. The Board says it seeks comments from members to ensure that before any plan goes forward, it enjoys broad support from the amateur community. The Board will not act on the issue at least until its July meeting.

After its research revealed that as many as three Novices in four are inactive, the committee concluded that the Novice license is no longer useful. Although the committee would end the Novice license, its plan provides current Novices with an easy means to upgrade (via an open-book test) to the new Intermediate class license, which would replace the current Technician Plus. All present Tech Plus licensees would become Intermediate licensees. The Basic license would supplant the Technician license—now the hobby's most-popular entry-level ticket—with no changes in privileges. In addition, the committee's plan would phase out the current Novice and Tech Plus bands on 80, 40 and 15 meters, and replace them with new Intermediate-class allocations. The committee's consensus plan for Intermediate-class licensees calls for new CW bands on 80, 40 and 15 meters starting 25 kHz up from the lower band edge, digital and phone-band privileges on 75 and 15 meters and a 50-kHz phone or CW segment at the top end of 160 meters, plus expanded Novice and Tech Plus CW and phone allocations on 10 meters.

According to the proposal, Intermediate CW bands would be 3525 to 3700 kHz, 7025 to 7050 kHz, 21025 to 21150 kHz and 28050 to 28300 kHz. Digital operation was suggested for 3600 to 3625, 21100 to 21125 and 28100 to 28189 kHz. Phone privileges would include 1950 to 2000,

3900 to 4000, 21350 to 21450, SSB from 28300 to 28500 and FM from 29500 to 29700 kHz. Transmitter power for Intermediate-class licensees would be limited to 200 W PEP output (other licensees using these bands would not be limited to 200 W, however).

General-class and higher amateurs also would benefit from the plan, if it's adopted according to the committee's out-

lines. General-class hams would get additional phone privileges 3800 to 3850, 7200 to 7225, and 21250 to 21300 kHz; Advanced-class hams would add 3725 to 3775, 7125 to 7150 and 21175 to 21225 kHz; Extra-class hams would also have 3700 to 3750, 7125 to 7150 and 21150 to 21200 kHz.

With the exception of 40 meters, where Novice and Tech Plus licensees already have privileges, the committee suggested no changes on the hobby's narrowest and most crowded bands—including 20 meters and the narrow WARC bands at 30, 17 and 12 meters.

The Intermediate CW test would be 5 words per minute (the same as the current Tech Plus requirement), but the committee proposed that the General class CW requirement be set at 10 wpm. There still would be no additional CW exam for the Advanced ticket, nor would there be any change in the 20-wpm requirement for the Extra. Exams for all classes would include a return to a sending test and the requirement for one minute of solid copy during a five-

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## STARS Board of Directors

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## AMATEUR RADIO EXAMINATIONS

STARS will hold a test session on 5/10/97 at the Grace Lutheran Church (McKinley and Newton Roads). Walk-ins should arrive by 9 AM and pre-registered candidates should arrive by 9:45 AM. For information on STARS test sessions, contact Norm Jones KD2KK at 824-1148.

Lancaster ARC will be holding test sessions on 4/16, 5/21 & 6/11 during 1997 at the Aurora Middle School, Lancaster, NY. For information on Lancaster ARC exams, call Chuck Koester WD2AIK at 937-3592.

ARATS will be holding test sessions on 4/5, 5/3 & 6/7 during 1997 at the North Tonawanda Fire Headquarters at 495 Zimmerman St. For information on ARATS exams, call Vern Siegel AA2AC at 693-5977 (days) and 634-5276 (nights).

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

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## ARRL Proposal

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minute test—instant of the current method that tests on the content of the CW text.

Right now, these major changes are only in the talking stage. "Let us be very clear about this," said ARRL Executive Vice President David Sumner, K1ZZ, who characterized the committee's proposals as a starting point for discussion, not a done deal. "The changes are not ARRL policy; nothing has been proposed to, or by, the FCC, and the ARRL Board is committed to making no decision before its July 1997 meeting." Sumner said there is no timetable to complete the process. Only after there is an opportunity for in-depth consideration and discussion by the membership will the ARRL Board consider taking the next step—to approach the FCC with a rulemaking proposal—a process that automatically invites additional comments and suggestions.

Between the time they receive March QST and May, members are asked to voice their opinions on the committee's suggestions to their directors, whose postal and e-mail addresses are listed on page 10 of QST. All suggestions and comments—positive and negative—are welcome.

## Ham Radio Role in WB Movie

Some ham radio paraphernalia supplied by the ARRL will appear in the upcoming Warner Brothers' film, *Contact*. The League loaned the moviemakers vintage QSTs and other publications and maps for use in the production. Mike Gastaldo of WB's props department said the radio shack scenes "happen in the first 15 minutes of the film. You can tell people to go for the ham radio scenes and stay for the astrophysics."

Gastaldo expressed thanks to the League for "helping us to portray Amateur Radio in as realistic and positive a way as possible." The movie is scheduled to open July 11.

## Late News

As we went to press, we received word that Norm Jones KD2KK had been hospitalized at Our Lady of Victory Hospital. No further information was available.



# STARS



## CLUB REPEATERS

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

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

The club UHF repeater is located near Hamburg (442.325 MHz with a PL access of 151.4 Hz.)

## CLUB PACKET

The STARS KE2VW BBS, located in Colden, NY is accessible on 145.71 MHz (direct) or on 145.61 MHz or 145.65 MHz (indirect) by typing: C BBSVW, using 1200 baud. Or connect using 19.6K baud on 441.050 MHz (direct)

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 Ave. at Hawkins Ave.) at 7:00 PM. Everyone is welcome.

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 Road 1.75 miles east of Route 20 next to the Hamburg Town Arena. The station is operated on most Saturdays between 1 and 3 PM local time. A second club HF station is located at the Hamburg Youth Center.

## CLUB WEB PAGES

The club has a home site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.cmp-express.com/stars/>

# STARS

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