

telstar



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

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Kentucky Amateur Dies Installing Antenna

Editor's Note: This story points out the need for all amateurs to observe basic safety procedures when practicing our hobby. Tragedy can be just around the corner. Terry K200.

A Kentucky Amateur Radio Emergency Service member died May 20 while installing a 2-meter antenna he'd just bought at the Dayton Hamvention. According to ARRL Kentucky Section Emergency Coordinator Ron Dodson, KA4MAP, Ronald L. Oller, KG4JVT, of Irvington, died when the groundplane antenna he was installing fell onto the overhead electrical service line to his house. He had been a ham for about eight months.

Dodson said Oller and a teenaged friend, John Betner, KG4LHQ, had purchased new 2-meter groundplanes at the Hamvention. The pair already had installed one of the units at Betner's home and were in the process of raising Oller's antenna when the incident occurred. Betner was not injured and summoned help for his friend.

Dodson said Oller had a history of heart trouble but said he did not know if that was a factor in his death.

Dodson described Oller as "one of the most enthusiastic hams I have ever met" and as "a generous individual who



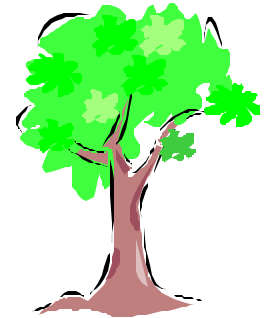
June Meeting

This month's club meeting will begin at 7 PM on Thursday, June 7, at the Hamburg Youth Center (Prospect Ave. at Hawkins Ave.). All interested in amateur radio are invited; neither an amateur radio license, nor club membership are required.

At this month's meeting, we will be discussing our plans for Field Day which will be occurring on June 23-24. This is the largest amateur radio contest of the year. Clubs throughout the United States and Canada will be taking to the field for a 24 hour test of emergency communications. Everyone can participate and learn from this experience.

Even those without HF privileges can participate under the supervision of those with higher class licenses.

John KA2RFT will be covering STARS plans for operating Field Day from the Nike Base this year.



loved to be helpful in spite of his heart ailment." Earlier in the weekend, Oller had traveled to Dayton Hamvention on a chartered bus with other amateurs from Kentucky's Meade, Breckinridge, Jefferson and surrounding counties.

Oller got his license last October and became involved in public service and, as AAT4YQ/T, in the Military Affiliate Radio System. He also had "elmered" the 16-year-old Betner when he studied for his license.

"It can happen to any of us at any time," said Dodson, who advised caution when installing antennas. "It's too late to help Ron, but, please, let's not lose anyone else to such a terrible tragedy."

A memorial service for Ron Oller was set for May 27.

The ARRL Letter 5/25/01

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 WB2EZU Memorial HF net meets at 10 AM local time on Saturdays on 3.925 MHz +/- QRM.

STARS VHF net meets on Wednesday at 7:30 PM on STARS club repeater WB2ELW 147.09/ .69 output/input— PL of 107.2 Hz).

From Your President

There is good news for a change, after months of talking with the Erie County Fair people we have finally come to an agreement. STARS will be hosting the Amateur Radio Exhibit again this year. We are going to need everyone to help out this year because of the lack of renewals and people finding other interests 'a.k.a.' the Internet. Keith KC2DGC has stepped up and agreed to Co-chair the Exhibit with me. We will start taking names for volunteers at the June 7th meeting, then we will start looking to other Clubs. If you want to get a prime shift now is the time to act. I want to show Ham radio as a more modern hobby with PSK31 demos and satellite communications. Also home brew QRP equipment as well. Got any ideas of your own, E Mail them to me or Keith.

Next up is Field Day. As last year, we will be manning the Nike Base. John KA2RFT will give us a run down on Field Day and the how to stuff at the June meeting. We have a work party scheduled for the Nike Base the weekend of June 9th. We will be replacing coax and repairing any antennas that need work. I will do most of the tower work, but we will still need plenty of ground people to help out.



I have a couple of awards to give out to 2 deserving members at the June meeting. I hope that we have a good turnout for them to show them our appreciation.

The July meeting site has not been set yet. I am hoping to go back up the repeater site again this year. With the construction going on with the new tower and transmitter, it will be interesting to see the changes over the past two years.

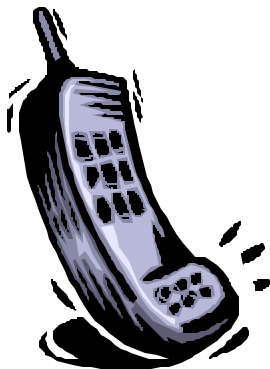
Do not forget about the Rochester Hamfest This month and the Batavia Hamfest next month.

Sincerely,
Gary KB2YJ
President

ARRL Asks FCC To Investigate Long-range Cordless Telephone Sales

The ARRL has asked the FCC to investigate and "take appropriate action" against several companies it alleges have been marketing so-called "long-range cordless telephones" via the Internet. The ARRL took the action in the wake of an interference complaint and numerous reports from the amateur community about sales of the devices, some operating on amateur VHF and UHF frequencies.

ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, said the League was seeking the FCC probe because the apparently uncertificated devices operate on amateur bands and are capable of interfering with amateur communication. He also noted that the devices are not likely to meet maximum permissible exposure levels for RF.



"ARRL has not been able to locate any FCC certification for these devices and, based on the advertised frequency bands and ranges, it is believed that none of these devices could be certificated, or legally marketed or sold, under FCC rules," Imlay wrote. The League said some of the companies may be selling similar wireless products that may operate on amateur or restricted bands.

The letter was addressed to FCC Enforcement Bureau Chief David Solomon as well as to Raymond LaForge of the FCC's Office of Engineering and Technology's Equipment Authorization Division and to FCC Special Counsel for Amateur Radio Enforcement Riley Hollingsworth.

Imlay said the ARRL also is looking into the marketing of products such as 434-MHz video surveillance equipment and other "apparently non-certificated devices" that use amateur frequencies but are being marketed in the US to non-amateurs.

The ARRL was able to obtain one of the long-distance cordless telephones for testing. The device, made in China and bearing no FCC identification number or label, operates near 147 MHz with an output power greater than 3 W. Other such phones are advertised as having ranges of up to 100 km operating at power levels of up to 35 W on VHF and UHF.

ARRL Lab Supervisor Ed Hare, W1RFI, said he's received at least one report of actual harmful interference from a long-range cordless telephone to amateur communication.

The amateur reporting it tracked the telephone to the home of a neighbor, who said he'd bought the device on eBay.

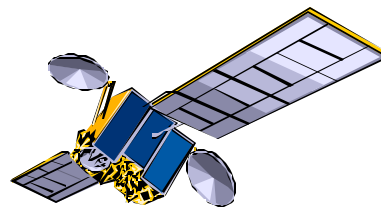
Hare said some long-range devices are legally certificated to

AMSAT President Lauds AO-40 Success, Looks Toward New Project

With a modicum of success already assured for the troubled Phase 3D/AO-40 project, AMSAT-NA President Robin Haighton, VE3FRH, says his organization already is looking toward its next bird. Haighton said AMSAT's newest satellite project could be up and running within three years, possibly sooner.

In an interview with the ARRL, Haighton lauded the "fantastic reports" and "great worldwide coverage" of the AO-40 satellite. Until this week AO-40 had operated its transponders in an experimental mode with uplinks at 435 MHz and 1.2 GHz and a downlink and beacons in the 2.4 GHz band.

AO-40 ground controllers have shut down the satellite's transponders in preparation for raising AO-40's perigee by about 200 km. AMSAT-DL President and AO-40 team member Peter Guelzow, DB2OS, said transponders will remain off "until further notice." The RUDAK beacon and the 2.4 GHz middle beacon will remain up, however.



Haighton said this week that it's hoped the a slightly higher perigee will eliminate the effects of what he described as "a mysterious force" that alters the satellite's attitude when it comes through perigee.

While AMSAT continues dealing with AO-40, Haighton said it's also looking ahead to its next satellite, and design work is expected to get under way in earnest by this summer. "We would like people in apartments to have access to satellites with relatively small, easy compact equipment and not have to swing large antennas around," he said. "We're looking at our next satellite to provide that."

As plans now stand, the new satellite would --at least in a pinch--accommodate VHF users with omnidirectional antennas at perigee, plus users with good antennas at UHF as well as L band and S band. It also might employ digital modulation capabilities that, Haighton said, could make the new satellite "probably at least 10 dB better than anything we're currently using."

eQSL - The Final Courtesy

by Dave Morris, N5UP, Founder and Webmaster, eQSL.cc
February 5, 2001

The world's first and only eQSL exchange centre, www.eQSL.cc, started the year 2001 with a bang. Only a few weeks earlier, on the first of December, it had blown through the 1 million card mark, and now 2 million cards were in the central database. But instead of slowing down, the rate increased as thousands of eQSL cards were uploaded every hour.

The eQSL.cc site was launched in April of 2000, and included about 1500 hams who had been part of an earlier experiment in an electronic QSL card exchange. The "big" idea was that eQSLs should not be sent around from person to person via e-mail, but should be available at any time through a web-based exchange system and a central database.

Other concepts using e-mail or by posting one stock QSL card on a web page and calling it an eQSL were not satisfactory, because security could not be guaranteed, e-mail addresses had to be looked up, and the sender had to laboriously design his QSL card using graphic design software.

So, we used our 25 years of software development and database design experience to develop a site where each user could guarantee his identity with a scanned image of his ham license, could lay out an eQSL card design using simple point-and-click forms, and could upload logbooks either one-at-a-time, or by uploading an entire ADIF format log file at once. The concept is such a breakthrough, we have patents pending on its technology.

To retrieve one of these eQSL cards, the recipient only need enter the callsign, date, and band of the QSO he wants to retrieve, and if the other ham has entered that QSO into the system, up pops the complete eQSL card, ready for printing on a local printer. Furthermore, if the recipient registers his callsign with us, he can get a listing of all incoming eQSLs, and can just point and click to print each card received. Sending a reciprocal card back is a matter of clicking a button!

Apparently, most everyone else thinks this is the right way to do it, too. Another six weeks after hitting the 2 million card mark, it appears the number of cards will double again to 4 million.

Many of the members of the eQSL.cc site are using stock images for their eQSL card designs. But since it is possible to upload a graphic image to use on one's card, there are

many custom cards online as well. Users are signing up from over 180 countries all over the world. In many places, a stack of 500 traditional QSL cards might well cost the average ham operator and entire year's salary. On eQSL.cc, 500 beautiful full-color cards can be sent for free!

In an era when "dot coms" are failing left and right, it is noteworthy that the eQSL.cc site, which is supported almost entirely through voluntary donations, has been operating in the black since Day One. Since the site runs virtually without any human intervention, the only ongoing expenses are for development of new features, and for continually increasing disk space, processor power, and bandwidth. A small amount goes to answering the questions and suggestions that come into the webmaster's office by e-mail. In most cases, replies are returned within the same day.

Not everyone agrees that eQSLing is the way to go. Some people like to get their hands on that stiff cardboard with the exotic stamps that spent months in transit from the jungles of some island that is only above water for 3 weeks out of the year. Others are bothered that some amateur organizations still have "no electronic transmission" clauses in the rule books for their awards. Others still are spooked by the privacy issues that this interconnected new world brings up.

But it's very difficult to argue - as the saying goes - with success. And 4 million cards is success by anyone's measure. At the present growth rate (with the number of eQSLs doubling every month), eQSL.cc could be home to virtually all of the world's amateur radio operators within a couple of years. Contest "big guns" will be able to "QSL 100%" within a matter of minutes, saving hundreds of hours of time and thousands of dollars in the process. DXpeditions will be able to "QSL 100%" on the spot, whether it be from that desert island with a dial-up Internet connection, or when the crew gets back to "civilization". It's just a quick log file up-

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STARS Board of Directors

President	Gary Zanghi	KB2YJ
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Fin. Secretary	Judy Levan	N2TEZ
Secretary	Keith Patterson	KC2DGC
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Director	Terri Karr	KB2TRS

President Gary Zanghi KB2YJ may be reached at Kb2yj@aol.com or by calling 549-8476

AMATEUR RADIO EXAMINATIONS

STARS will hold test sessions on 7/14 in 2001 at Grace Lutheran Church (McKinley Pkwy. and Newton Road) in Hamburg. All candidates should report to the church by 9 AM. Walk-ins are allowed, but pre-registering will reduce time at exams. For information or to pre-register for STARS tests, contact Tony Balas, Jr. KB2OUT at 992-2011 or Terry Rockhold K2OO at 656-0865.

Lancaster ARC will be holding test sessions on the third Wednesday of each month at the Aurora Middle School, Lancaster, NY. For information on Lancaster exams, call Chuck Koester WD2AIK at 937-3592.

ARATS will be holding test sessions on 6/2 in 2001 at the North Tonawanda Fire Headquarters at 495 Zimmerman St. For information on ARATS exams, call Vic Gadzik at 694-9738.

PROS will be holding test sessions on the Third Saturday of the month at the Sardinia Historical Society Building, Savage Road off Rte. 39 in Sardinia, NY. For information, contact Pat Murray at 652-8178.

Some exams do not allow walk-ins, so call ahead and make a reservation.

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load, and they are done!

And eQSLs, unlike their traditional cardboard counterparts, can be verified through automated computer interfaces by amateur organizations wanting to validate award and contest submissions. The presence of a scanned license image on file for each user goes way beyond the simplistic checking that is possible using the older traditional QSL cards.

And now eQSL.cc is also a favorite site for SWLs, because users can identify themselves as either licensed amateur operator, or SWL. The eQSL cards between SWLs and hams are automatically configured to contain proper SWL phrasing, making their lives easier and saving them tons of money.

Complex systems shouldn't be designed in a vacuum, so we have assembled a capable group of hams and SWLs into an Advisory Board. Among these advisors are users with satellite and DX experience, contesting backgrounds, and international origins, as well as technology gurus and people with long-term operating histories. This group discusses current issues and future development plans for the site on a

daily basis. Just another feature of the interconnected world we have entered as the 21st Century dawns.

There were nay-sayers when SSB first began to push CW aside. There were those who thought packet radio was just a short-lived fad. Others thought we shouldn't be wasting money on amateur satellites. And some people think eQSLs are "not natural". But for tens of thousands of hams and SWLs who upload their entire logbooks nightly in an effort to live up to the "100% QSL" promise of amateur radio, the final courtesy of a QSO is an eQSL.

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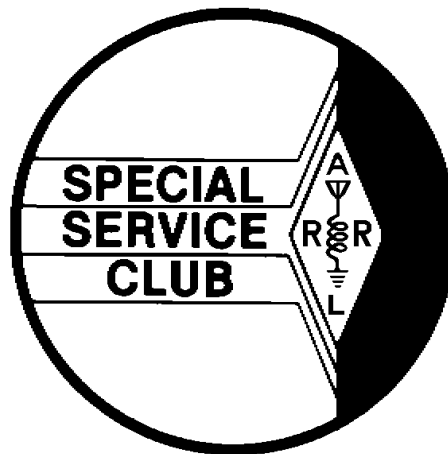
Article submitted by Bob Koster KA2WYE

AMSAT

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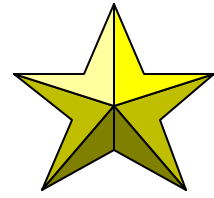
Like AO-40, the new satellite will not be a low-Earth-orbiting bird but have an elliptical orbit that Haighton said would be "very very similar to the current AO-40 orbit." The configuration would provide up to 17 hours or so of usage out of every 24.

"What we're actually looking at is a new class of satellite," Haighton explained. For the time being, the new satellite is going under the name "Project JJ" after the two people who came up with the idea--Lyle Johnson, KK7P, and Dick Jansson, WD4FAB.





STARS



CLUB REPEATERS

The club repeater (WB2ELW/R) is located near Colden, NY (147.09/.69 output/input, with a PL of 107.2 Hz). Autopatch privileges are available to club members.

STARS honorary southern repeater (KE2VW/R) is in Arkwright, NY (146.67/.07 out/in, with a PL of 107.2 Hz).

The club UHF repeater is located near Colden, NY (442.325 MHz with a PL access of 107.2 Hz.)

CLUB WEB PAGES

The club has a home site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.wb2elw.com>

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.

STARS

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