

telstar



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

ISSUE 268 APRIL 2004

FCC Invites Comments on Amateur Radio Restructuring Plans

The FCC is seeking comment on three plans, one from the ARRL, that would reshape the Amateur Service licensing structure. Each Petition for Rule Making responds to World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 actions last summer that made changes

to Article 25 of the international Radio Regulations. While differing substantially in some other aspects, the three petitions call for modifications at Amateur Radio's entry level and for a three-tiered license system. One petition goes beyond licensing structure to recommend additional changes to amateur testing and HF digital privileges. A fourth petition focuses solely on the Morse requirement. Comments are due by April 24 on all four petitions.

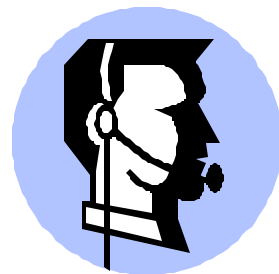


Designated RM-10867, ARRL's petition asks the FCC to create a new entry-level license class--being called "Novice" for now. It would offer limited HF CW/data and phone/image privileges on 80, 40, 15 and 10 meters plus certain VHF and UHF privileges. The League plan also would consolidate Technician, Tech Plus (Technician with Element 1 credit) and General licensees into a new General license that no longer would require a Morse examination. Current Technician and Tech Plus licensees automatically would gain General privileges, and Advanced license holders automatically would be upgraded to Extra without further testing. Applicants for Amateur Extra would still have to pass a 5 WPM Morse code examination, but the

April Meeting

This month's STARS club meeting will begin at 7:00 PM on Thursday, April 1st (no fooling!) at the Hamburg Youth Center (Prospect Ave. at Hawkins Ave.) All interested in amateur radio are invited to attend; neither an amateur radio license nor club membership are required.

STARS Director Jim Sojka WB2TJO will present a demonstration of an emergency communications station and will provide information about how you can become involved with emergency communications including ARES/RACES activities.



STARS News

A new club roster is being issued with this newsletter. It includes everyone who is a member of good standing as of March 27. If you have any changes or updates to your membership data, contact Terry K200 at 656-0865 or e-mail him at k200@bigfoot.com.

Membership cards for 2004 have been distributed at last month's meeting or were mailed. The Board has decided not to change the repeater codes until work can be completed on the repeater and controller. Once that is done, the new repeater codes will be distributed.



In the February newsletter, we asked people to help the club save money by switching to the e-mail version of the newsletter. We received a great response and estimate that we will be able to reduce our printing and postage costs by more than \$250 per year. Thanks to everyone for your help with this!

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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 who are joining ARRL for the first time or who are renewing their membership after a lapse of two years or more should send their ARRL membership forms 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! STARS no longer benefits from normal yearly renewals, so they should be sent directly to the ARRL.



Club Net

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 Information Net is held on the second, third and fifth Thursdays of the month at 7:30 PM on the STARS 147.090 MHz repeater (107.2 Hz PL tone needed).

Hamfest Season Once Again

It always amazes me how magazine and newspaper editors or columnists provide us with new articles to read month after month. Our past presidents have always lived up to this task with their informative columns in the Telstar. As for me, it's a struggle to write about subject matter that would be of interest to you each month so I tip my cap to these people.

In my opinion, the most enjoyable section of these publications would be the letters to the editor where everything thing is debatable. Although these columns may seem at times to repeat themselves year after year, it offers opportunity for the reader to revisit amateur radio topics and to invite his or her own opinion or participation. The amateur community has a wealth of activities that are repeated year after year that continue to be a rewarding experience.

One such activity that offers participation at every level is our hamfest. Most of you have been to them. With the return of spring we also see the return of the hamfest. Some may say that a particular hamfest was not as good as the last one or some are too small, while others may feel they offered more computer hardware than radio. This may be true but they do offer the chance to find that treasure you have been looking for or the customers to buy your gear. Expect to find just about anything you could imagine as well as items you never expected. At one of my trips to Dayton, a gentlemen was wheeling out his new prize possession: a full stack of traffic signal lights. Big, small, PC hardware, radio hardware, chicken dinners, VE exams, and forums all have proven to be a yearly event we never get tired of.

While working the STARS table at the Lancaster hamfest in March, it was easy to see that winter had kept us dormant too long. The place was packed with both buyers and sellers. The event was well prepared and went smoothly. Amateurs from all around western New York were coming together once again buying, selling, shaking hands, laughing, and chatting about the hobby. It was a nice atmosphere; and although we have done it before, it was still refreshing.

With Dayton, Rochester, Butler, and Batavia hamfests just on the horizon the opportunity to enjoy one of amateur radio's yearly traditions is upon us once again. I'm sure I will enjoy them for many years to come.

Keith Patterson KC2DGC
STARS President

RAWNY Flea Market

The Radio Association of Western New York (RAWNY) will be holding their Sixth Annual RAWNY Flea Market on Tuesday, April 13th, at the Church of the Nativity, on the corner of Thorncliff Road. and Colvin Blvd one block north of Sheridan Drive, in Tonawanda, NY.

Doors will open at 6:30 PM.

There is a \$1.00 donation which enters you into the drawing for door prizes.

Tables for selling items are limited and are available for \$4.00 for a 6 foot table and \$5.00 for an 8 foot table. Call Kevin WA2FKV at 693-3917 days or 834-3042 nights or email wa2fkv@arrl.net.



VE Session

The STARS VE team held an exam session on Saturday, March 13 at the Grace Lutheran Church in Hamburg.

Two candidates showed up for testing, and one qualified for a new Technician class license.

VE's who assisted with the testing were John Crawford Sr. KB2VWC, Jim Livingston N2SKT and Terry Rockhold K2OO.



The next STARS VE team session will begin at 9:00 AM on Saturday, May 8 at the Grace Lutheran Church at the corner of McKinley Parkway and Newton Road. For information, or to pre-register, call Terry K2OO at 656-0865.

ARRL International DX Contest (Phone)

STARS Nike Base Club station was activated March 5-7 so members could participate in the 2004 ARRL International DX Contest (Phone). This is one of the big international contests of the year where US and Canadian hams try to work as many amateur stations in as many DXCC countries as possible on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meters.

STARS members who participated in the contest included: Bruce KC2GJX, Scott KB2KOL, Jack KB2ESM, Rich KI2X, Bob WA2YSJ, Keith KC2DGC, John K2CF and Terry K2OO.



Unofficially, the team scored 87,075 points on 225 QSO's. The breakdown of the QSO's was 11 on 10 meters, 82 on 15 meters, 94 on 20 meters, 26 on 40 meters and 12 on 80 meters. The team worked a total of 67 different DXCC countries. The breakdown of countries worked was 8 on 10 meters, 39 on 15 meters, 53 on 20 meters, 18 on 40 meters and 11 on 80 meters.

Some of the countries worked included: Morocco, Niger, Mongolia, Belize, Cayman Islands, Japan, Costa Rica, Galapagos Island, Barbados, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Ecuador, Luxembourg, Czech Republic (Dom's home country!), Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Grenada, Belize, Hawaii, Cuba, Canary Islands, Madeira Island, Kyrgyzstan, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and many, many more.

A great time was had by all. Why not come out and join in on the fun with the next contest?

Donation to STARS!

A big thanks go to STARS member John Maloney, Jr. WA2SWK for donating old equipment that he had to the club.

John Dilivio K2CF picked up the equipment and took it to the Lancaster Amateur Radio Club's Winter Hamfest on March 7th to sell it. After the hamfest, John was able to give Treasurer Jack KB2ESM a total of \$450 for the club's treasury!

STARS Raffle

A new STARS raffle is beginning to help raise funds for the club.

There will be two winners each receiving a \$150 gift certificate from Wal-Mart.

Tickets will \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. Packets of tickets to sell will be provided to members at the April club meeting and will be mailed to others.



The drawing for the prizes will be held at STARS Field Day site at Glen Meadow Park in Hamburg on Saturday, June 26, 2004. The winners do not need to be present to win (but we want people to come and join us for the fun!).

EchoLink Fun

Do you have an amateur radio license but don't have HF privileges or don't have an HF station? You still can talk to hams across the country and around the world if you have a computer and an internet connection.

The answer is a free program called EchoLink. You can download a copy of the program and find out more information about the program at: <http://www.echolink.org/>.

EchoLink is designed to run on all recent versions of Microsoft Windows (Windows 95 and above).

Not only is the program free, but there is no charge to connect to the servers and use the program to talk to people. To use EchoLink, you must hold a valid amateur radio license.

You can call people who are logged on or you can wait for someone to call you.

Who will call you? Well, you never know. Sometimes it is someone who belongs to your club across town. Sometimes it is a ham living elsewhere in the US who used to live in Western New York.

Recently, I received a call from a ham who was mobile. Big deal you say? Well, he was mobile in Japan! He told me about his home area in Japan and wanted to know more about the Buffalo area. I also recently received calls from two different hams in South Korea.

Last week I got a call from Flis S52BT in Slovenia and gave

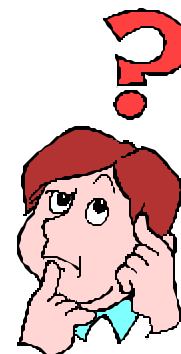
him a little help locating a source for parts for his rotator. He had pictures of his home QTH, radio equipment, antennas and family on a website that I was able to view.

EchoLink is a great fun! Give it a try!

73, Terry K200

Forget Your CORES/FRN Password?

It's possible to reset your CORES/FRN (Commission Registration System/FCC Registration Number) <https://svartifoss2.fcc.gov/cores/CoresHome.html> password via the FCC Web site for electronic application filing.



This might come in handy if you have forgotten your password, need to change it to another password or were automatically registered for CORES through a Volunteer Examiner Coordinator and don't know your password.

Visit the secure "Forgot your Password" <https://esupport.fcc.gov/password.htm> Web site and complete all the required fields. You will need to supply your FCC Registration Number (available via ULS or through many on-line call sign servers, such as ARRL's) as well as your Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN), typically your Social Security number. Applicants also will need to supply name, e-mail address and telephone number.

The ARRL Letter 3/26/04

STARS Board of Directors

President	Keith Patterson	KC2DGC
Past President	Bob Koster	KA2WYE
Vice President	Scott Barto	KB2KOL
Treasurer	John Cullum, Jr.	KB2ESM
Fin. Secretary	Judy Levan	N2TEZ
Secretary	John Crawford, Sr.	KB2VWC
Director	Jim Sojka	WB2TJO
Director	Bruce Settlemyer	KC2GJX

AMATEUR RADIO EXAMINATIONS

STARS will be holding test sessions on 5/8 and 7/10 in 2004 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 Terry Rockhold K2OO at 656-0865.

Lancaster ARC will be holding test sessions on the third Wednesday of each month at the Lancaster ARC Club House, 525 Pavement Road, Lancaster. For information on or to pre-register for Lancaster exams, call Peter Orendorf AB2KG 662-0096 or e-mail him at fourz1@aol.com. Pre-registration is required.

ARATS will be holding test sessions on 4/3, 5/1 and 6/5 in 2004 at the North Tonawanda Fire Headquarters at 495 Zimmerman St. For information on ARATS exams, call Vic Gadzik K2YW at 694-9738.

PROS normally holds test sessions at 10 AM 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 NW2I at 652-8178.

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

FCC Invites Comments

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General and Extra written exams would stay the same.

A news report "ARRL to Propose New Entry-Level License, Code-Free HF Access," <<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2004/01/19/1/>>, has further details. Frequently asked questions (FAQs) are addressed on the ARRL Web site, <<http://www.arrl.org/news/restructuring2/faq.html>>.

In a wide-ranging petition designated as RM-10868, an "unincorporated grassroots organization" calling itself the Radio Amateur Foundation (RAF) has asked the FCC to modify the Technician ticket to allow limited HF phone, image, data and CW privileges. HF phone/image privileges would be restricted to portions of the 160, 15 and 10-meter bands.

The group also proposes retaining the 5 WPM Morse Requirement for General and Amateur Extra applicants, upgrading Advanced class holders to Extra and Novices to

Technician. The Radio Amateur Foundation said it sees no need to change licensing requirements for General or Amateur Extra applicants.

The RAF also wants to scrap existing Amateur Radio question pools and start over from scratch, keeping the question pools out of the public domain and requiring a 10-day waiting period before retesting. In addition, it would permit only Generals and Amateur Extras--or Technicians licensed more than two years--to request vanity call signs.

The RAF has further asked the FCC to permit digital experimentation from 29.0 to 29.3 MHz at bandwidths of up to 15 kHz.

In his two-page petition designated RM-10869, Ronald D. Lowrance, K4SX, calls on the FCC to retain the 5 WPM Morse code requirement for General class applicants and to raise the Morse requirement to 13 WPM for Amateur Extra class applicants. He called Morse code "the most reliable mode of communication" in an emergency. Lowrance would make no change in Technician licensing requirements.

The National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (NCVEC) wants the FCC to establish a new "Communicator" entry-level license. Its petition, designated RM-10870, reiterates the NCVEC's call--first made last fall in RM-10787--to altogether eliminate the Morse code testing requirement.

The NCVEC petition would upgrade all current Novices to Communicator class, all current Technician and Tech Plus (Technician with Element 1 credit) licensees to General and all Advanced class licensees to Amateur Extra without further testing. Once the Morse requirement goes away, the NCVEC said in its filing, "there will be no effective difference between the Technician and General class licenses."

The new Communicator ticket would permit a power limit of 100 W on bands below 24 MHz and 50 W on all frequencies above 24 MHz. Communicator licensees would have to use commercially manufactured equipment (or gear built from a commercial kit). Communicator licensees could operate both voice and digital modes on 80, 40, 15 and 10 meters plus VHF and UHF up to 70 cm.

All three license restructuring plans call for changes to the present HF subbands.

Interested parties may view and comment on these petitions via the FCC Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) <<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>>. When entering the RM number in the ECFS "Proceeding" field, RM must be in capital letters and the hyphen must be included.

The ARRL Letter 3/26/04



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). Use a PL of 141.3 Hz for the Nike Base remote receiver.

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 7:30 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. A second club HF station is located at the Hamburg Youth Center.

STARS

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