

telstar



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

ISSUE 292 APRIL 2006

Hamfest Season is Near!

With spring arriving, many hams will be thinking about hamfest season. Here is a list of some of the WNY section hamfests coming up this year, courtesy of ARRL WNY Section Manager Scott J. Bauer W2LC:

WNY Hamfests 2006

1 April 2006. Drumlins Hamfest, by the Drumlins Amateur Radio Club at the Marbletown Firehall in Newark NY. 7AM for vendors, 8AM for public. Talk-in 146.745-. <http://www.drumlinsarc.com/hamfest.htm> for more information and directions.

22 April 2006. PROS Hamfest, by the Pioneer Radio Operators Society, at the Sardinia Historical Society Building, 12070 Savage Rd in Sardinia NY. Talk-in 145.390-.

6 May 2006. Owego Hamfest, by the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association, at Marvin Park (Tioga County Fairgrounds) in Owego. Talk-in 146.76-. For more info see <http://www.wtsn.binghamton.edu/bara/>

2,3,4 June 2006. Rochester Hamfest, Computer and Hobby Show, at the Monroe County Fairgrounds, in Henrietta NY, sponsored by the Rochester Amateur Radio Association. Talk-In 146.28- (PL110.9), contact K2HC for more information or visit www.rochesterhamfest.org.

22 July 2006. RadioCom 2006 (Utica Hamfest), by the Utica Amateur Radio Club, at the Herkimer County Fairgrounds in Herkimer NY. Talk-in 145.45-.

April Meeting

This month's STARS club meeting will begin at 7:00 PM on Thursday, April 7 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.

Our special guest speaker for this meeting is Bill Edgar N3LLR, ARRL Atlantic Division Director. Bill will be presenting an ARRL Update.

This is a wonderful opportunity for hams in WNY to hear directly from and to talk to a voting member of the ARRL Board of Directors.

Bill lives in Bradford, PA and is a former STARS member. He has served the ARRL previously as Western Pennsylvania Section Manager and Atlantic Division Vice Director. He also has held positions as Section and District Emergency Coordinator, Official Observer and Public Information Officer, Bill is a Volunteer Examiner, an ARRL Registered Instructor and an ARRL Emergency Communications Mentor/Instructor. He also has held leadership positions in his local Red Cross chapter and the Allegheny Highlands Boy Scout Council. Bill holds an Extra Class license and enjoys contesting, DXing and public service communications.

Bill is a financial executive at an international company and has served on local and national trade group committees and boards.

STARS invites all local hams to come to this meeting and hear this exceptional speaker!



**Bill Edgar N3LLR,
ARRL Atlantic Division
Director**

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 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!



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. Bob Lehning WA2YSJ is usually the net controller.

From Your President

This year is flying by, and it is April already (No Fooling!). Anyway, as most of you all know, I recently retired from the auto manufacturing industry,. As you can see in the newspapers, things are not all that smooth in that industry.

In my new endeavor (part time 42+ hours last week), I'm quite involved in the amateur radio and electronics markets. Thankfully, there still seems to be growth in the Ham Radio ranks, and let's hope it continues.

This month's club meeting will begin at 7 PM on Thursday, April 6th at the Hamburg Youth Center (Prospect Ave. at Hawkins Ave.). Our special guest speaker will be former STARS member Bill Edgar N3LLR, ARRL Atlantic Division Director. He will present an ARRL Update and is open to feedback from the amateur radio community. This is open to the general public and is a great opportunity to be talking about public service efforts involving amateur radio including ARES/RACES and traffic handling. All interested in amateur radio are invited; neither club membership nor an amateur radio license is required.

Amateur Radio Events in April

4/18/06 World Amateur Radio Day

4/29-30/06 ARRL VEC Amateur Exam Day

Bob (KA2WYE) Koster
STARS President

"Hello"...

Did you realize that people have been saying "hello" to each other over the radio for 100 years? The ARRL is using this fact to base their most ambitious public relations campaign in years. This will involve print, audio and video media.



You can learn more about this by going to the new website at www.Hello-Radio.org. This site talks about 100 years of people using voice over radio worldwide. It also tell people about What Is Ham Radio, "Why I Love It", and Becoming a Ham. The "Hello" campaign is aimed at recasting amateur radio in light of the 21st century. There are very nice pictures on the website showing lots of different people using ham radio in fun and exciting manners.

RAWNY Flea Market

The Radio Association of Western New York (RAWNY) will be holding their Eighth Annual RAWNY Flea Market on Tuesday, April 11th, 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.

Refreshments will be available.

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 11 at the Grace Lutheran Church in Hamburg.



Seven candidates showed up for testing, and four qualified for new Technician class licenses.

An unusual circumstance occurred at this session. Team Liaison Terry Rockhold K2OO was sick and had to remain in his car in the parking lot. Fortunately, Jim Livingston N2SKT, Scott Barto KB2KO and Judy Levan N2TEZ were all

experienced VEs and were able to pick up the ball and smoothly run the session.

The next STARS VE team session will begin at 9:00 AM on Saturday, May 13 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.

Injured Miner Randy McCloy KC8VKZ Goes Home

Randy McCloy, KC8VKZ, the sole survivor of the January 2 Sago Mine disaster in West Virginia, left a Morgantown rehabilitation center March 30 and returned to his home on newly named Miracle Road in Simpson, West Virginia.

"I'd just like to thank everybody for their thoughts and prayers," McCloy remarked on his departure. Neurologist Julian Bailes told reporters that he believes McCloy, 26, has a great potential for "a possibly complete" recovery. McCloy did require some assistance walking as he left the Morgantown facility.



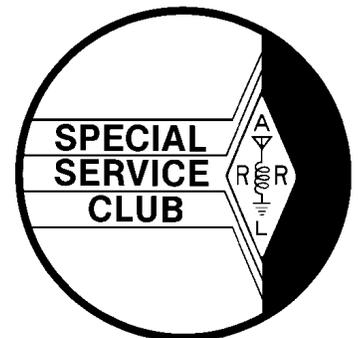
Randy McCloy
KC8VKZ

West Virginia Gov Joe Manchin announced the new street name at a press briefing this week, and he presented McCloy with a Miracle Road street sign. Earlier this month McCloy visited his home in for the first time since the mine tragedy.

On March 2, McCloy's wife Anna told CBS The Early Show co-anchor Hannah Storm that her husband has told her he remembers "bits and pieces" of the mining disaster that left 12 of his co-workers dead of carbon monoxide poisoning. McCloy this week told the Associated Press that he doesn't understand why he was the only one to survive. He also said he will not go back to work in the mines.

Well-wishers have been sending cards and QSLs to McCloy at PO Box 223, Philippi, WV 26435. A fund has been set up to accept donations for McCloy's benefit: The Randal McCloy Jr Fund, c/o Clear Mountain Bank, 1889 Earl Core Rd, Morgantown, WV 26505.

The ARRL Letter 3/31/06



Canada Looks at New Entry Level Certificate

The Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC) is Canada's largest national amateur radio society, similar to the ARRL in the US. They have appointed an advisory committee to study whether they should ask Industry Canada (Canada's equivalent to the FCC) to establish a new entry level certificate (license) for the Amateur Service in Canada.

The committee is considering the success of the entry level Foundation license which has been implemented in the UK, Australia and Gibraltar to encourage youth to take an interest in science and radio and to promote growth in amateur radio. The RAC panel is seeking input from Canadian amateur radio operators as to what should be done in Canada.

The scope and details of the committee's work is outlined in an excellent article titled "The Foundation License Concept" which is available on the RAC website at: <http://www.rac.ca/news/foundation.pdf>. The article is too long to include in this newsletter, but I will try to include some of the highlights.



Around the year 2000, studies in Great Britain indicated that their amateur radio population was ageing and there were not enough new candidates coming in to keep the numbers constant, much less to promote growth in the hobby. There was worry that in a few years there might not be people taking the test to warrant maintaining a formal examination process. In 2002, they introduced the Foundation license. Within a year, there were over 4000 new licenses (25% of them going to candidates under 21 years old) which represented an 8% growth rate in UK amateur radio operators and the growth continues.

What is the UK's Foundation license? It is based upon the practical rather than the theoretical. Candidates must complete a 10-12 hour course which is taught by experienced amateurs and is based upon a "knowledge of" rather than a "mastery of" radio technology. It is designed to give them a level of knowledge that promotes safety and enables them to avoid potential interference. The study guide was written so that it could be used and understood by young people.

The candidates must demonstrate setting up a radio transmitter/receiver and using proper operating procedures. These items must be assessed by a registered assessor who

may also be the tutor. Then the candidates must pass a 25-question, multiple choice written test.

Foundation license holders are allowed access to all UK ham bands and modes, from 135.7 kHz to 440 MHz, except for the 10 meter band.

Their power levels are limited to 10 watts to reduce the potential for interference and to promote safety. Their callsigns are distinctive and carry the number 3 in the prefix, such as M3AA and MM3ZZZ.

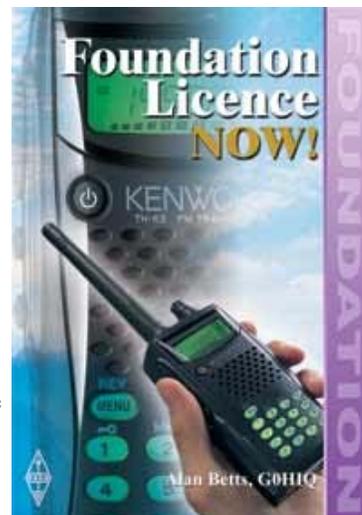
Like Great Britain, Australia has seen a significant decline in the number of candidates wishing to obtain their amateur radio license. This decline was slowed somewhat by the dropping of the Morse code requirement at the beginning of 2004, but the number of

candidates was still declining. In October of 2005, Australia adopted a entry level license similar to the British Foundation license. They now have over 35 clubs in the country offering training and assessment for the new license.

Candidates for the Foundation license in Australia must demonstrate to the assessor an ability to perform a number of tasks which are critical to safe and correct operation of an amateur radio station. They must also pass a written exam.

Australian Foundation license holders have access to all amateur bands from 80 meters to 70 cm except for the 20 meter band. They are allowed to operate AM, FM, SSB and

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**Foundation License Now!
The British Foundation
License study manual**

STARS Board of Directors

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AMATEUR RADIO EXAMINATIONS

STARS will be holding test sessions on 5/13/06 and 7/8/06 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 Hal Cameron NH7R at 832-0031. Pre-registration is required.

ARATS will be holding test sessions on the first Saturday in the month (except when falling on a holiday weekend, when they will be on the second Saturday) starting promptly at 10 AM at the North Tonawanda Fire Headquarters at 495 Zimmerman St. Walk-ins accepted, pre-registration is highly recommended. For information on or to pre-register for ARATS exams, call Vic Gadzik K2YW at 694-9738 or e-mail k2yw@hotmail.com.

PROS holds test sessions as needed at 585 North Star Road, East Aurora. For information, contact Pat Murray NW2I at 652-8178.

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

Hamfest Season is Near!

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29 July 2006. Batavia Hamfest, at the Alexander Fireman's Grounds in Alexander NY, sponsored by the Genesee Radio Amateurs. Talk-In 147.285+ (no tone), contact KC2MHH for more information or visit www.hamgate.net/~gram/.

12 August 2006. Western New York Section Convention, at the Main and Transit Fireman's Hall in Williamsville NY, sponsored by the Lancaster Amateur Radio Club. Talk-In 147.255 (PL 107.2), contact WV2NY for more information or visit gbbamfest.hamgate.net.

Canada Looks at New Entry Level Certificate

(Continued from page 4)

hand-keyed CW at a maximum power level of 10 watts.

Canada has also experienced a reduced interest in obtaining an amateur radio license and a decline in the activity of amateur radio clubs. The RAC Board of Directors felt a need to address this disturbing trend. In February of 2006 the established the advisory committee mentioned above to study and report on concept of restructuring amateur radio in Canada with the possibility of including a Canadian Entry Level Certificate. They are now seeking input on the subject from Canadian amateurs.

How would the idea of a Foundation type entry level license be received by hams in the United States? I'm sure that there would be some who would immediately say, "There they go again; trying to 'dumb down' the tests. They should be making the tests even harder." This would be fine if you don't mind the lack of new people coming into the hobby. The fact of the matter is that many clubs now only have a half to one-third of the numbers of members that they had in the mid-90's. From this article, you can see that other countries are having the same problems.

The Foundation license is offering beginning hams a chance to experience both HF and VHF/UHF communications, but at greatly reduced power levels. Of course, QRP enthusiasts would tell you that you can do a lot with 10 watts. That's "high power" to them!

It is interesting that the Foundation license requires something that even the Extra class license in the US doesn't require. You must be able to do a practical demonstration in front of an examiner showing that you can safely put the equipment for a station together and that you can use proper operating procedures. In the US, if you can answer the technical questions on the written test, we assume that you will figure out the practical aspects of how to use your equipment properly. When I first got my Technician class license (old style), I set down in front of my new 10-meter radio. I had studied about the single side band mode. What I didn't know was, do you use upper or lower side band for 10 meters? The switch was there, and I didn't know which way to turn it!

In 2005, the FCC rejected a proposal by the ARRL for a new entry level license in the United States. Since we are experiencing many of the same problems that Canada, Great Britain and Australia are, it will be interesting to see what direction amateur radio licensing in the US eventually takes.

73, Terry K2OO



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 STATION

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.

STARS

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