Delaware - Lehigh Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

W3OK Corral NEWSLETTER

July, 1998

Find out what you want to know about your ARRL

Club meeting on July 9th

Kay Cragie, WT3P to be speaker

This meeting will give all a chance to find out how much our **ARRL** is doing for the amateur community. Kay, who is director of the Atlantic Division of the American Radio Relay league will tell all of the activities at **ARRL** headquarters and in our division. The meeting will be held in the same room as it was held for the June meeting in the **Northampton Community College Center Room 190.**

The meeting will begin at 7:30 pm and if talk in is needed, use the 146.70 repeater.

Busy schedule for July

by Clarence, W3PYF

Public Service, the thing that keeps amateur radio in with all the other activities will be hot and heavy during the month of July.

Beginning first with the Easton Heritage Day on **July 12**, help which we have doing for last three years, will need about 3 or 4 members to help with the lost child location. The county Com Van will be there with KA3MOB at the controls.

This will be followed by the Red Cross River Run: and The Derriere in the Delaware safety watch on **July 19th.**

Annual Red Cross Run

by Ami, KD3TI

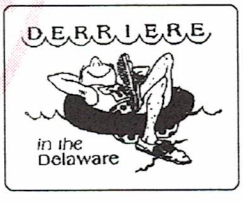
The annual Lehigh River Relay Run will be held on **Sunday July 19th**. As in the past, the run will be along the canal between Allentown Canal Park and Easton's Eddyside Park. The Red Cross has again asked that DLARC provide safety communications for the runners. We need **10 to 15 operators to cover the route.** Interested hams, please contact **KD3TI, Amy on the 146.700 repeater,** phone **(717)-386-3513**, or via **e-mail kd3ti@ptd.net**. Thanks to all for your support.



de Ami, KD3TI

Derriere in the Delaware

Beginning just about the time that the Red Cross run is completed, we will need about 10 people to cover the safety watch along the Delaware River as we have done for years. We will have contact with the Water Rescue people and all the officials of the Kiwanis Club who is the sponsor for the city of Easton Recreation Board this year.



Contact either me, **W3PYF** or **Dick, KA3MOU** if you can help.

MS 150 story on **Page 10** of this issue. Contact **N3QZT** if you can help on either or both of the days **July 25 and 26.**

Just the minutes

by John, WX3TAX, Secretary

The June meeting of the **Delaware-Lehigh Amateur Radio Club** was held in Room 190 at the Community College Center. The meeting was called to order at 7:35pm by the President, Joe Chuk, W3JD. There were 55 members and guests present. Joe announced that the July and August meeting will be held in the same room.



The May Meeting minutes were approved as written in the newsletter with Josh, N3VJA, making the motion and Malcolm, N3XRL, seconding.

Dick, KA3MOU, gave the Treasurer's Report. Beginning balance was $4,494.19. Expenses for the month were $683.81. Total income was $147.00. Ending Balance, as of May 31, 1998, is $3,957.38. Len, N2BSC, made the motion to accept the report with Amy, KD3TI, seconding.

Barry, N3NVA, informed everybody that the 440 machine is still down for repair. Parts have been ordered.

Bob, WF3H, talked a little about the MS 150 PA Dutch Bike Tour that will take place on the weekend of July 25 and 26. If you are interested in helping out, contact **Jeff, N3QZT.**

Joe, W3JD, had a request from Clarence, W3PYF. Clarence needs more Net Controls for the Sunday Net. There are only 4 Net Controllers right now, and he would like to have one or two more. If you are interested, contact Clarence, W3PYF or Dick, KA3MOU.

The Club Picnic is scheduled for Sunday, August 16 at Hacketts Park. Josh, N3VJA, has volunteered his efforts in coordinate it this year. Contact Josh to let him know what you are bringing. He needs to keep a list of what is going to be brought so that there is a variety of foods.

There were three new applications for membership. Two were for reinstatement and one new person. They were:

Joe Brue, N3MKZ

Richard Dean N3RBL

Jim Hogarth, N3DFF

Motion to accept Joe, N3MKZ, was made by Josh, N3VJA, seconded by Barry, N3NVA. Motion to accept Richard , N3RBL, was made by Ray, W3TDF, and seconded by Bruce, KA3TIU. Motion to accept Jim, N3DFF, was made by Len, N2BSC, and seconded by Dan, W3ZF.

There was a lengthy discussion on how we should handle bringing in new members. Joe, W3JD, informed everybody present that there is a committee looking into this matter. This committee will probably have everything in order by August or September.

Carl, AA3IX, brought in Hamfest fliers to be passed out. He also had a sign up sheet for helping out with the Hamfest. If you are interested in helping with making our club Hamfest a success, contact Carl, AA3IX.

Blair, K3YD, was not able to put on a demonstration of contest logging because of his work schedule. The program in Blair's place had to do with specific preparations for Field Day. The Club this year wanted to make Field Day FUN. There is scheduling of operators so that there will be an experience operator with a less experienced one. We want to make sure that every time period and position is covered. Come out and see what FUN is.

de John, WX3TAZ

How did you do?

These are answers to the quiz in the June issue from John WX3TAZ

1. 26 Letters of the Alphabet
2. 7 Wonders of the Ancient World
3. 1,001 Arabian Nights
4. 12 Signs of the Zodiac
5. Cards in a Deck (with the Jokers)
6. Planets in the Solar System
7. Piano Keys
8. Stripes in the American Flag
9. Degrees Fahrenheit at which Water Freezes
10. Holes in a Golf Course
11. Degrees in a Right Angle
12. Dollars for Passing Go in Monopoly
13. Sides on a Stop Sign
14. Blind Mice (See How They Run)
15. Quarts in a Gallon
16. Hours in a Day
17. Wheels on a Unicycle
18. Digits in a Zip Code
19. Heinz Variety
20. Players on a Football Team
21. Words that a Picture is Worth
22. Days in February in a Leap Year
23. Squares on a Checkerboard(or Chessboard)
24. Days and Nights of the Great Flood

R0MIR-1 MAILBOX INFO

downloaded and submitted by KA3ONZ

There have been alot of requests of information on HOW TO WORK MIR? I have sent out MANY bulletins on this, and Miles Mann WF1F has done the same. We don't know if it is because it isn't posted enough, or if all the MIR users just climbed out from under a rock. We have NO IDEA!


Soviet spacestation MIR

So.... here it is again, but in a different "SIMPLE" format.

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DO's---_____

1. DO be courteous of "other" HAMS on frequency wanting to work MIR.

2. DO WAIT for others to "finish" with their connection to MIR.

3. DO be patient, as others will wait for "you" to finish your connection.

4. DO youself a favor. BE PREPARED!

5. DO use MIR's "PERSONAL" mailbox to send "informational NEWS" to the crew.

6. DO one to "others" as you would expect to done to "you".

7. DO "listen" to packet or VOICE on MIR's frequency. (with a speaker)

8. DO "wait" for a D frame to the connected user. eg. R0MIR-1>WA6LIE <<D>>

9. DO use the MCOM ON paramater in your TNC to see <<D>> frames etc!

10. DO your operations (if possible) when users in your area are alseep.

11. DO be "familar" with "your" packet station and ALL of it's operations!

12. DO use satellite tracking software to know when and where MIR is!

13. DO use a pre-amp and a satellite type antenna if possible.

14. DO send this information to ALL interested in the R0MIR-1 PERSONAL mailbox.

15. DO "REQUEST" additional information if this isn't enough!!

DO NOT's_____

1. DON'T Connect to R0MIR-1 "just to do it".

2. DON'T use MIR as a digipeater to connect to another station(s).

3. DON'T "beacon" on MIR's frequency. (having MIR in your digi unproto path)

4. DON'T continue to send packets on frequency when the crew is on VOICE!

5. DON'T make "blind" calls to the crew on VOICE.

6. DON'T send "personal" messages to your friends on MIR "just to do it".

If you attempt so, you will get a message like this: **MESSAGES MUST BE ADDRESSED TO THIS STATION**

Note: All 3rd party messages are NOT ALLOWED! This because the crew is NOT familar with TNC/PACKET operations, and can NOT maintain the mailbox.

This requires alot of TIME! Who ever does it! The "old" pacomm TNC had less than 32k memory, and it would fill up in 1 day! Therefore, the MIREX SYSOP has to do this. On 2 meters, and on "your" time to maintain the mailbox. This was a TOTAL MESS and was ABUSED! It is typical for the SYSOP to take 2 passes just to maintain the mailbox! This means there are 2 passes LESS that users might get to use! Anyway you look at it, only ONE USER AT A TIME can be connected to R0MIR-1.

7. DON'T ** SEND MAIL TO THE CREW FOR QSL REQUESTS!! ** (see QSL info below)

8. DON'T continue to send connect requests to R0MIR-1 when a user is connected.

9. DON'T "expect" to be sucessful if you aren't PREPARED. (see below)

10. DON'T "expect" return Mail from the crew! (out of XX msgs sent, 0 returns)

11. DON'T Send Bulletins to R0MIR! eg. SB R0MIR Please don't do this!

12. DON'T be afraid to "ask" myself or any other MIREX board member for info!

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Here is the Help information given out by R0MIR-1 (Command:

H) *** PLEASE DON'T download this information from R0MIR-1. It is "HERE"!

B(ye) PBBS WILL DISCONNECT

E(dit) n [BPTYNFH] [>tocall] [<fromcall] [@BBS] "old" "new"

J(heard) CALLSIGNS WITH DAYSTAMP

J S(hort) HEARD CALLSIGNS ONLY

J L(ong) CALLSIGNS WITH DAYSTAMP AND VIAS

L [x [y]] [;] LIST MESSAGES x THRU y YOU CAN READ

L <|> call LIST MESSAGES FROM OR TO CALL

LB LIST BULLETINS

LC [cat] LIST CATEGORIES

LL n LIST LAST n MESSAGES

LM(ine) LIST UNREAD MESSAGES ADDRESSED TO YOU

LO [+|-] LISTING ORDER

LT LIST TRAFFIC

LTn DISPLAY LOCATION TEXT n=1-4

K(ill) n DELETE MESSAGE NUMBER n

KM(ine) DELETE ALL READ MESSAGES ADDRESSED TO YOU

R(ead) n DISPLAY MESSAGE NUMBER n

RH n DISPLAY MESSAGE n WITH HEADERS

RM(ine) READ ALL MESSAGES ADDRESSED TO YOU

S(end) call SEND MESSAGE TO callsign

S[B|P|T] call SEND BULLETIN, PRIVATE, or TRAFFIC----------SUMMARY

The MIR Space Station is orbiting the earth at about 240 miles above us, and traveling about 17,000 MPH! This covers alot of ground pretty fast! An average pass for a "non satellite"- average VHF 50 watt HAM station will only be able to use 4-5 minutes out of a 10 minute pass! Therefore, it is important that you are prepared. Those that choose to keep trying to connect to R0MIR-1 while a (one) user is connected

Continued on page 4

continued from page 3

already, you are just causing "INTERFERENCE" to other radio amateurs, and ethically is wrong. So, Please be aware of what you are doing, and it will make it easier on ALL others that cooperate and show some respect for their fellow amateur. If you are NOT decoding packets from MIR Don't try to make a connection! **ONLY ONE (1) USER AT A TIME CAN BE CONNECTED TO R0MIR**

R0MIR-1 is "intended" for use by the "crew". It is a PERSONAL Mailbox. It is "just like" your own mailbox on your TNC at home! A PERSONAL mailbox! Think about it.....----------HAM STATION INFORMATION

Callsign: R0MIR (keyboard- nobody there. You will get disconnected! OK for QSL) Mailbox Callsign: R0MIR-1 (Personal Mailbox) Frequency: 145.985 World Wide (FM only) Mode: AFSK 1200 baud AX25 packet (KPC-9612 1200 baud only!) Mode: FM Voice (Any MIR crewmember at any given time! HINT: Listen first!)----------QSL REQUESTS USA and WW except Europe:

Dr. Dave Larsen POB 1501 Pine Grove, California 95665 USA

Please Include a SASE (Business Size Envelope) and one IRC for International. If you are sending an IRC, Please make sure it is dated 1998, beacause the post office will NOT accept an IRC dated over 1 yr old! For USA HAMS, "green stamps" are apreciated!- N6CO/K6MIR----------

We are sorry if this offends anyone, but it apears that one must be BLUNT and to the POINT! I hope you can understand, so you can teach others! That is what HAM radio is about! Learning/Teaching correct Amateur techniques!

73, Scott WA6LIE

Reply Mail:

wa6lie@juno.com wa6lie@wa6lie.#wcca.ca.us.noam.

So You Want to be a Member of DLARC, huh??

by Dan, W3ZF

At the June club meeting, I tried to solicit the feelings from the membership about ways to entice some of our inactive members to become involved with the club. I suggested that maybe, just maybe, enforcing some meager requirements on ALL club members would be the answer. Well, from the ensuing discussion, it was clear that the membership misunderstood what I thought would be acceptable to fulfill this well-intentioned decree. All I was looking for was ideas of what members could do so support the club in some subtle way.

SOooooo, I came up with a "top ten" list of acceptable things that a member can do to retain membership in DLARC. I hope you agree that this list is not burdensome or time-consuming (with the exception of #9 below). Without further adieu, let me present this collection of ideas that, if done **ONCE** each year by each member of our club, would bring the unity and strength of our club to its highest levels ever! (Remember, doing only **ONE** of these items is all that's required to stay on the club's membership roster).

10) Kerchunk the **W3OK** repeater (through the 440 link).

9) Convince **K3ANS** that working your handheld on 146.52 simplex ***IS*** a form of DXing.

8) Read every other article in the club newsletter

7) Submit a TIMELY article to Clarence (no credit if submitted after the 10th of the month)

6) Surf the club's webpage

5) Call **N3SQD** and borrow ALL of the available club's loaner equipment (at one time)

4) Bring a ham to the club hamfest (preferably one that is low-fat and boneless)

3) Convince your "significant other" to get their ticket and join the club

2) Volunteer to hold a club meeting at your house . . and the Number One thing you can do to retain membership in DLARC

1) Work a DLARC member on phone (the kind with the dialtone:-).

LONG LIVE DLARC!!!!

de Dan, W3ZF

New vanity fee set

The vanity call sign application fee will drop to **$13** effective **September 14, 1998**, according to Terry Johnson in the FCC's Office of Managing Director. The new fee will be for the ten-year term, payable at the time of application for a new, renewed, or reinstated license. The current vanity call sign application fee is **$50.** Earlier this year, the FCC had proposed dropping the fee to **$12.90**. The actual fee was "rounded up," Johnson said.

The FCC says it has no plans to refund the difference between the current fee and the new fee for applicants who submit applications before the new fee schedule goes into effect in September.

The FCC released its revised schedule of regulatory fees for all services for fiscal year 1998 this week, and it's soon expected to be available on the FCC's Web site. The Commission is required to collect almost $163 million during FY 1998.

ARRL asks FCC to deny LMCC 70 CM grab

via ARRL Letter

The ARRL has asked the FCC to immediately dismiss efforts by the Land Mobile Communications Council to gain primary access to 420 to 430 MHz and 440 to 450 MHz as well as other UHF allocations. The LMCC recently petitioned the FCC to reallocate the two 70-cm segments from the federal government to the Private Mobile Radio Service. Amateur Radio enjoys the use of 420 to 450 MHz on a secondary basis. In comments filed on RM-9267, the League said the LMCC proposed the switch "without establishing technical compatibility between PMRS operation and incumbent radio services in any of the bands sought."

The League said that existing federal government use of the spectrum precludes PMRS operation at 420 to 450 MHz. According to the ARRL, the petition fails to demonstrate any basis to withdraw the two band segments from federal use, nor any compatibility between PMRS operation and either federal government or amateur use. In addition, the League said, the petition fails to justify displacing established amateur operations. The League pointed out that the amateur community uses the band for public service and public safety functions and that hams have "substantial personal investment" in equipment that's in regular use there. The ARRL urged the Commission to throw out this portion of the LMCC petition "without further consideration."

The League backed up its arguments by citing documents from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), which manages federal spectrum. "NTIA has made it quite clear that there is no possibility of additional sharing of the 420-450 MHz band, and the unique relationship between Federal radiolocation uses and the Amateur Service cannot be duplicated by PMRS users," the ARRL said.

The ARRL said that the LMCC petition was premature because it did not take adequate account of the benefits of spectrum refarming already initiated. The League suggested that PMRS users adopt available spectrum-efficient technologies to maximize their use of existing allocations before seeking additional spectrum at the expense of other users. The League also said that PMRS users should look into using the Commercial Mobile Radio Service (CMRS).

A copy of the League's comments is available at http://www.arrl.org/news/bandthreat/RM-9267/arrl-cmt.html. Selected comments on RM-9267 also have been posted to the ARRL Web site.

Delaware-Lehigh Amateur Radio Club, Inc. Income & Loss Statement. Balance 4/30/98 **$4,494.19**

INCOME		
Donation Income Fifty-Fifty	41.00	
Dues Arrl Misc	89.00	
Novice Tech Book Sold	17.00	

TOTAL INCOME	**147.00**	
EXPENSES		
Field Day Plainfield Township Grove		125.00
Hamfest Flyers 5000 printed		250.00
Insurance Club Equipment		145.75
Postage		92.75
Refund Dues Overpay		3.00
Renewal ARRL		32.00
Telephone		35.31

TOTAL EXPENSES		**683.81**
TOTAL INCOME - EXPENSES		**$ -536.81**

Balance 5/31/98		**$3,957.38**

Total Membership 353

de Dick, KA3MOU Treasurer

VE Session June 8, 1998

by Mark, K3MP

The following are new amateurs who passed the tests at the June 8 Session.

Teresa Homan, KB3CSQ

Thalia Twaddell, KB3CSR

Bob Esch KB3CSS.

VE's N3QQ Bob, AA3IX Carl, K2YIY Cary and Mark K3MP

de Mark, K3MP, Team Liason



DX Column

by Bill K3ANS, DX editor

DXing is not just an exchange of calls, phony signal reports, QTHs, and names. If the DX stations and you have the time, engage them in conversation, "rag chewing". Ask them about their families, jobs, homes, schools, sports, other hobbies, stations, antennas, trains, buses, etc. Ask the questions which you wonder. If they do not speak fluent English or you do not speak the foreign language expect them to beg off. You do not want to embarrass them or shame them because they do not speak fluent English. I always compliment them on their English, especially since I am a typical American who does not speak their languages. I did learn Latin and Spanish in high school, which was a chore, but it is a help in DXing. Keep a translation dictionary and an Atlas near by. I like to look at the geography around them, and ask about the nearby rivers, lakes, and mountains. We often discuss fishing and hunting. You can hear the excitement in their voices when they proudly describe their homes and regions . Why? Because almost nobody asks them.

AA3JU is a fast track DX and contest student. Since George is a chef he likes to ask them what they had for dinner last night. I tried it. That makes for a great conversation opener. But how do you respond to the Norwegian who tells you he went to Mac Donalds? I was expecting him to describe fine seafood! Another time I had a long rag chew with a commercial fisherman in Norway, who quit being an electrical engineer in a big factory to start commercial fishing. You thought that happens only in America? We discussed the custom fishing and hunting knifes made in Norway and exported to US.

We used to ask Soviets where they "bought" their radio gear, parts, and accessories. Those answers were classic tales about obtaining surplus equipment through their employers. Sakhalin is a major navy base for the Russian Pacific Fleet. It is a peninsula north of Japan. I have spoken to the same hams there for many years, before and after the Soviet break up and fall of Communism. The conversation opened up dramatically afterwards. One day I asked the "club station" operator how many seamen, ships, planes were stationed there. Do you think he answered me? Amazingly, yes he told me a lot about it! They are just as hungry for international dialogue as we are.

Some of my American ham friends have become pen pals with the Russians, sending gifts and souvenirs. Sometimes they arrange important transfers, such as medical gear, special drugs, old QST and CQ magazines, clothes, toys, etc. Eventually we become so friendly, we forget that they are foreigners, the other side. Then they visit us, and perhaps we visit them. I have lost track of all the DX operators who I have met in the US, some at home, many at the Dayton Hamvention, and some at FRC meetings. For example, as I write this column, U5WF from Russia is scheduled to be at a picnic at K2JV. He is a World War II veteran. I can tell that from his call. Otherwise, it would be UA5WF or RA5WF.

I spoke dozens of times with UZ4FWD, "Alex" Sergei Gordienko, a contester in Penza, Russia. One day he was visiting WA2VUY near Long Valley, NJ. Then he moved to the USA, married a American who is now a ham. Next he worked for ARRL. Now he works for a computer software company in CT and his new call is K1PI.

VU2WAP was coming from India to stay with W9NGA/2 in Flemington, NJ and attend the Dayton Hamvention. JA3CZY from Japan regularly attends Dayton and stays in EPA with N3MKZ, K3NZ, K3OO, etc. We have warm annual reunions, and chat on 15 and 20 SSB frequently. Many of the DXpedition operators go to Dayton to speak and show pictures about their trips and operations.

We usually see over 200 countries represented! What a worldly party! As you chase the DX you will learn their habits and methods for successful QSOs. You do not need 1.5 KW and large beams, although they certainly make DXing easier and quicker. Many DXers operate 100 watts with modest antennas. Some use QRP (less than 5 watts). To me, life is too short for QRP. If I have already worked that rare DX station on a certain band and mode with 100 or 1,500 watts, I might later try working him again QRP. But I will not risk missing the station completely if I need it for an all time first for the band. I recently had a SSB QSO on 20 meters with a station in Nepal, central Asia. He ran only 100 watts into a low dipole. Yet he was 59, so clear I could hear his kids screaming, laughing, and talking in the background for several hours.

Another time I ran a phone patch for an American in Nepal to his mother on her birthday in a Trenton, NJ residential care facility. Now that was a brag because most hams have never even heard Nepal, let along had a QSO. The most famous Nepal operator was 9N1MM, Father Moran (SK). He was an American native, whom K3CP claims he knew when Father Moran was an alter boy. A memorial club station is being planned in Nepal using the call 9N1MM.

Recent DXpeditions by FO0MIZ and FO0FI on Marquesas Islands in French Polynesia, FO0MIZ and FO0FR on Australs Islands in French Polynesia, and H40AA and H40AB in the Temotu Islands in the Solomon Islands drew tremendous pile ups and QSO totals. All three groups of islands are being proposed as new entities for DXCC, separate from their parent island entities. "Entities" are the new politically correct name for "countries" under DXCC. They became eligible when the DXCC rules were changed May 1, 1998, Output aborting...

See you on the lower 25.. .

de Bill, K3ANS

Val Sez

by Val, W3EFL

How to Write Better

1. Avoid alliteration. Always.

2. Never use a long word when a diminutive one will do.

4. Employ the vernacular.

5. Eschew ampersands & abbreviations, etc.

6. Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are unnecessary.

7. Remember to never split an infinitive.

8. Contractions aren't necessary.

9. Foreign words and phrases are not apropos.

10. One should never generalize.

11. Eliminate quotations. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know."

12. Comparisons are as bad as cliches.

13. Don't be redundant; don't use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.

14. Be more or less specific.

15. Understatement is always best.

16. One-word sentences? Eliminate.

17. Analogies in writing are like feathers on a snake.

18. The passive voice is to be avoided.

19. Go around the barn at high noon to avoid colloquialisms.

20. Even if a mixed metaphor sings, it should be derailed.

21. Who needs rhetorical questions?

22. Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.

23. Don't never use a double negation.

24. capitalize every sentence and remember always end it with point

25. Do not put statements in the negative form.

26. Verbs have to agree with their subjects.

27. Proofread carefully to see if you words out.

28. If you reread your work, you can find on rereading a great deal of repetition can be avoided by rereading and editing.

29. A writer must not shift your point of view.

30. And don't start a sentence with a conjunction. (Remember, too, a preposition is a terrible word to end a sentence with.)

31. Don't overuse exclamation marks!!!

32. Place pronouns as close as possible, especially in long sentences, as of 10 or more words, to their antecedents.

33. Writing carefully, dangling participles must be avoided.

34. If any word is improper at the end of a sentence, a linking verb is.

35. Take the bull by the hand and avoid mixing metaphors.

36. Avoid trendy locutions that sound flaky.

37. Everyone should be careful to use a singular pronoun with singular nouns in their writing.

38. Always pick on the correct idiom.

39. The adverb always follows the verb.

40. Last but not least, avoid cliches like the plague; They're old hat; seek viable alternatives.

submitted by Val, W3EFL

editors note... I too am looking for #3



World Radio

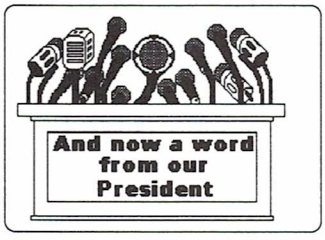
It's that time of the year again... Keep every thing grounded or disconnected when not in use.

The Prez Sez

The Meaning of Club Membership

By Joe Chuk, W3JD, President

Although it was a bit of a challenge to find the room at Northampton Community College assigned for our club meeting, we eventually got the meeting started with a good attendance. We'll be meeting in that same alternative location, by the way, (College Center Room 190) for July and August.



What was intended as a short business meeting took on a life of its own with a discussion of how we bring new members into the club. Two of the three applicants presented for a vote were absent from the meeting. Although, in this instance, both were applying to re-activate lapsed memberships, it has been common in the past for new (and perhaps relatively unknown) applicants to be presented for membership in their absence.

Because this has been a concern in the past, a subcommittee of the Board of Directors was formed two months ago and is currently drawing up a policy for accepting and acting on membership applications. Since our by-laws simply require that applicants be accepted by "a majority vote at a regular meeting," a more specific policy would have to be adopted if we want to require that the applicant attend the meeting at which his or her application is presented for a vote. The subcommittee is considering just such a requirement, with appropriate allowances for special circumstances in particular cases.

The question was also brought up of what expectations for participation in club activities should be placed on members. This, too, is being explored by the subcommittee. Opinions aired at the meeting ran the gamut from simply requiring payment of dues to mandating attendance at a minimum numbers of meetings or participation in one or more club-related activities per year. While there is much to be discussed, the recommendations of the subcommittee are expected to be finalized and voted on by the Board in time to be presented to the membership at the September meeting. Any policies adopted will then take effect in October, to coincide with the beginning of the new term for the club officers.

Regardless of the changes we make in the process of considering applicants for membership, our focus has to be not on technical requirements for membership, but, rather, on the spirit that we hope every member, in his or her own way, brings to the DLARC. While there are some members who are more active than others, everything we do as a club is a group project. There are always several activities being planned, end every one of them needs the cooperative efforts of a number of people for them to work. A good part of our meetings is spent describing upcoming events and asking for volunteers to help with them. A meeting doesn't go by when at least one sign-up sheet (in addition to the attendance roster!) is passed around. Unfortunately, there often are fewer volunteers than are needed -- and that's something that each club member can help change.

We have a large club and good attendance at our meetings. We have active, useful repeaters. But being a DLARC member involves more than attending the club meetings and using the repeaters. It's also working together on public service activities, helping with (and enjoying) Field Day, the club picnic, or the club hamfest, operating in the PA QSO Party (either from home or at W3OK), operating WX3MAS, helping with license classes, taking part in VE sessions, and more. So, when the call goes out at a club meeting or in the newsletter for help with club activities, don't wait to see if enough other members volunteer -- be among the first to volunteer. The most effective way to get more members involved in club activities is to involve that one member over whom you have the most control -- yourself!

There's probably no person better suited to bring home the importance of active involvement in the club than our July speaker, **Kay Craigie, WT3P. As Atlantic Division ARRL Director**, Kay will, I'm sure, have much to say about what is going on in Amateur Radio both in the division and around the country. But I also have no doubt that she will, as she has in past visits, both commend us for the high level of activity in our club and encourage us to maintain and increase that activity. Let's be ready to hear that message and to act on it.

Remember that, because of the July 4th holiday weekend, the meeting will be on the second Thursday of the month -- **July 9th.**.

New Media Systems

Setting Up the Set-Tops

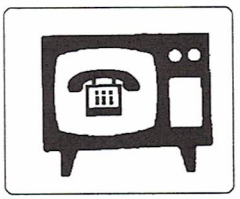
By Joe Chuk, W3JD

A couple of months back, this column dealt with the problem that cable subscribers (who are the majority of television viewers) could have in trying to get signals from the new digital television (DTV) stations that will begin regular broadcasting this Fall. Even with new digital TVs in their homes and a station broadcasting HDTV or some other digital programming in their area, cable customers will only be able to enjoy that new form of television technology if their cable provider delivers the digital signal to their homes. And that signal has to go through a tunable interface between the cable company and the television set -- a set-top box.

Today, cable customers who subscribe to anything more than the basic or expanded basic tiers of service have to use some sort of a converter to "descramble" the services for which they are (or should be!) paying an additional fee. As more pay TV -- actually "pay more" TV -- services are made available, the concept of a "cable-ready" TV becomes less and less accurate. The TV sets are actually ready for very little of what cable has to offer.

The problem with current cable converters is that, although they are all made by a small group of manufacturers, each cable company has its own proprietary scheme for blocking pay services from non-subscribers. You can't simply take a converter used by one cable company to provide access to HBO and Cinemax, for example, put it on another cable system and expect to receive the same pay services on the second system. Another big reason why you cannot make such a switch is the fact that you don't own the converter box. It belongs to the cable company, as is so painfully obvious each month as you pay the rental fee for the box, in addition to the programming fees.

The good news is that this situation is going to change. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 requires that consumers be allowed to purchase their own set-top boxes -- and not just from the cable companies, but from retailers like Best Buy and Circuit City. Sections 304 and 629 of the Act provide for the "commercial availability of navigational devices" to be used for multiple channel systems, which include not only cable television but also direct broadcast satellite (DBS) and multichannel multipoint distribution service (MMDS or "wireless cable") systems. By this summer, the Cable Services Bureau of the FCC hopes to have a set of rules implementing these portions of the Telecom Act ready for commission vote.



Cable converters, therefore, are going in the same direction taken by the telephone companies in the 1980s when they moved away from the equipment renting business, and consumers could buy their phones in K-Mart. Just as any telephone sold has to meet certain technical requirements to keep from damaging the telephone network, though, the television set-top boxes to be placed in the consumer market will have to be designed not to cause interference that could disrupt the cable system, and they cannot have the ability to breach the system's security.

With the universally available set-top boxes will have to come an inter-operability that will allow the same box to work on any cable system -- with, of course, the opportunity for the cable company to control the flow of premium services. That control mechanism -- a security function -- will have to be unbundled from the digital set-top boxes, to break the proprietary connection that currently exists. A likely method for maintaining security would be for every manufacturer's box to have a common feature that enables it to read a "smart card" issued by the cable system or other multichannel service provider. The card would allow access to whatever services the particular subscriber is entitled. The standardized box could be moved from one system to another, with only a change of cards needed.

The bad news is that the sophisticated tasks expected of these digital set-top boxes will likely make them somewhat expensive. As with any electronic equipment, the boxes with more bells and whistles (like custom channel menus and programmable navigation through the ever-expanding variety of available services) will cost much more than the plain vanilla models. Unfortunately, with the innate complexity of a digital system that allows for 18 picture formats, even plain vanilla could get expensive.

So, as you get ready to explore the wonders of DTV, be sure to have a realistic expectation of the costs involved -- not only for the new TV set, but also, if you're a cable subscriber, for the magic box on top of the TV.

de Joe, W3JD.

We need your help for the MS 150

by Jeff, N3QZT

This is last call to help out at this years Multiple Sclerosis 150 bike tour. The event starts in Morgantown PA and ends up in Kutztown PA and then goes back to Morgantown the next day. It is a long and difficult event for all who help out. But it also offers an excellent chance for us as Hams to put our skills as communicators to the test. It gives us the chance to develop and practice these skills. We usually have a great time doing it while meeting new people and continuing old friendships.

This year the bike tour is being held on the weekend of **July 25 and 26,** so it does not interfere with Field day or any end of the year school events. To do this very large event properly we need to a minimum of 30 ham operators. This will allow us cover all the necessary positions, like Sag buses, Ambulances, Rest stops, and other positions along the tour.

If you would like to help and have not already contacted me now is the time. For those who want to help out both **Saturday and Sunday** room and board will be provided at **Kutztown University.** If you can only help on one of the days that's ok, your still very much needed.

Contact me via e-mail at **jeffk@enter.net** or on the **146.700** repeater. Also my phone number and address are listed in the club roster.

Thanks Jeff / N3QZT

NWSO MEETING

National Weather Service, Mount Holly

John Holmes, secretary

July 17, 1998

Members present were Joe Miketta, Rob-WX3ROB, John-WX3TAZ, Cully-N3HTZ, Boyd-W2HOB, and Dennis-K2DCD. Art,N2QAE, was there as a guest.

Rob, WX3ROB, talked about the progress he is making on his repeater. He is trying to resolve the problems that have come up.

Dennis Dura, K2DCD, and Boyd, W2HOB, gave a great talk on how the New Jersey EOC got the APRS up and running. There was a discussion about the locations of the Wide digis. Dennis explained what was involved with the State in getting the equipment. He said that there is enough equipment to setup 4 more stations.

Art, N2QAE, has been authorized to color the counties in the Mt. Holly Covered Weather Area per Joe Miketta.

It was decided to suspend the Technical Committee Meetings for the months of July and August. This is because of people going on vacations and various family things.

There was a discussion of how to improve the Thursday Night Net. Joe said that he would try to have one of the Hams that works at the NWSFO be there on a Thursday night so that he could be on the Net. There is a need for more Net Controls for the Net. There was a suggestion on having the County Coordinators take the Net. That way you may only have the Net once every three or four months at least.

There was a discussion of how long the certification last before retraining.

Joe said that there are 2300 Spotters in the 34 Counties. There was not an exact time limit decided on. Every two years seemed to be a good idea.

John Holmes, WX3TAZ
Vice Chairman - NEPA
Secretary SKYWARN Technical Committee
NWSFO, Mt. Holly, NJ

The future

in 2013, the world will look like this:

** The United States will be led by a ball-point pen, referred to as Mr Scribble.

** The French will have the universal right to walk up to anyone they want and tell themto do anything they want them to. Their first move will be to establish cheese as the universal currency.

**Trains will all run on time, but they will be invisible.

** You will be able to buy briefcases in six-packs.

** the Soviet Union, after the Purge of 2005, will be run by clowns and giant insects. Mr Scribble will not like them one bit.....

73 ** Frank N8UVI *

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All Amateur Radio Operators are invited to
Participate to the DLARC, RACES & ARES nets
on 146.70 W3OK/RPT with an alternate of W3PYF/RPT 145.11
W3OK trustee Chris Hornaman, NU3L
The Nets are held on Sundays at 9:30 AM and Wednesdays at 7:00PM

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==1997-1998==

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