

Anchorage Amateur Radio Club

General Meeting Friday September 4, 1998

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AARC web page & Email contact addresses:

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 membership to frederickson@iname.com
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News Letter Submissions, Information or corrections:

Submissions must be received 2 weeks before meeting
 Email: johnlynn@gci.net Facsimile: 907-338-4791
 Mail: 7013 Trafford Ave. Anchorage 99504

KL7G CODE PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Schedule: 7:00am, 10:00am, 4:00pm, 7:00pm, 10:00pm
 AK time, every day Frequencies: 3575 KHz and 145.35 MHz
 Sending Speeds: 22 wpm, 15 wpm, 7 wpm

Nets in Alaska:

The following nets are active in South-central Alaska:
 Alaska Sniper's Net 3.920 MHz 7:00 PM daily
 Alaska Bush Net 7.093 MHz 8:00 PM daily
 Alaska Motley Net 3.933 Mhz 9:00 PM daily
 Alaska Pacific Emergency Preparedness Net 14.292 MHz 8:30 AM M-F
 QCWA net 146.97/.37 repeater Sundays 8:00 PM local
 850 No Name Net 146.85/.25 repeater Sundays 8:00 PM
 Son of Sideband Net 144.20 USB Mondays 9:00 PM local
 Big City Simplex Net 146.520 FM Tuesdays 8:00 PM local
 ARES net 147.30/.90 Mhz Thursdays at 8:00 PM local
 PARKA net 147.30/.90 Mhz Thursdays at 9:00 PM local

Anchorage & Mat Valley Area Repeaters

KL7AA systems at Flattop Mt., 2,200 ft
 146.34/94 Mhz, 80 watts, autopatch, 100/141.3 Hz PL
 223.34/224.94, 25 watts, no patch, no PL
 444.70/449.70, 25 watts, autopatch, 100/141.3 PL
 KL7ION at Mt. Gordon Lyon 4,700 ft
 147.30/90 Mhz - 80 watts, no patch, no PL
 KL7AA, Mt. Alyeska, 2,400 ft.
 146.16/76 Mhz, 25 watts, no patch, 141.3 Hz PL
 KL7CC, Anchorage Hillside, SCRC club
 146.97/.37 Mhz, autopatch, 103.5 Hz PL
 KL7DJE at Grubstake Peak, 4,500 ft.
 147.09/.69 Mhz, 25 watts, no patch, 100 Hz PL
 444.925/449.925, 10 watts, no patch, 141.3 Hz PL
 KL7JFU, Palmer, MARA club
 146.85/.25, autopatch, no PL
 KL7AIR Elmendorf, EARS
 147.27/.87 no patch, 107.2 Hz PL
 KL7G West Anchorage & Events
 449.65/444.65 Mhz, patch, no PL

Anchorage & Mat Valley Simplex Frequencies

146.52 Mhz Calling and Emergency frequency
 147.57 / 447.57 (crossband linked) HF spotters & chat
 146.49 Mhz Anchorage area simplex chat
 146.41 Mhz Mat Valley simplex chat

This Month's Speaker

At the time of printing there was no information. It will be a surprise so come one come all to see what wonders Mr. Lynn has cook up for us.

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EVERYONE IS WELCOME: You don't need to be a member of the club to attend the meetings or any other AARC events, although we do encourage any non-member to join our group. See THIS MONTH'S EVENTS for the location and time for the meeting and other events.

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~~~ **707 LINKS** ~~~

Internet Web links, the favorites from our readers

AARC <http://kl7aa.akconnect.com>

SCRC <http://www.servcom.com/worcester/scrc.htm>

EARS <http://ww2.customcpu.com/kl7air/default.htm>

KL7J <http://www.alaska.net/~buchholz>

Fairbanks AARC:

<http://ffdlm1mac.uafsom.alaska.edu/aarc/aarc.html>

Yukon Amateur Radio Association:

<http://www.klondike.com/yara/index.html>

HAARP Project:

<http://server5550.itd.nrl.navy.mil/projects/haarp/>

<<Amateur Radio Reference Library>>

<http://www.area-ham.org/library/libindex.html>

Hamradio: <http://www.hamrad.com/>

Solar Terrestrial Activity <http://209.130.27.95/solar/>

ARRL <http://www.arrl.org/>

Propagation Report Recording 566-1819

*please let us know if there are other club pages or good starting points that should appear her*

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## VHF NETS ABOUND

All of you new HAMs take note: there are lots of nets and nice folks to visit with. The Son of Sideband Net runs each Monday night at 9:00 PM local on 144.200 Mhz USB with a 6 Meter extension on 50.200 Mhz USB. On Tuesday night, the Big City Simplex Net operates on 146.520 FM at 8:00 PM local. On Thursday the ARES net starts at 8:00 PM on the 147.30/.90 repeater with Amateur News line followed at 9:00 PM by the PARKA net. On Sunday there are two nets at the same time. In Anchorage, the QCWA net runs at 8:00 PM on the 146.97/.37 repeater (103.5 Hz PL) and in the valley the 850 No Name Net runs on the 146.85/.25 repeater. We are starting an informal net during the morning and evening drive times on 146.52 Simplex. All are welcome to check into what we are calling the "Stuck in Traffic Net". The object is to share traffic information, handle emergency

traffic, and have a nice visit on the way to work. Net control will hand off until everyone is at work or safely home.

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**NEWSLETTER ARTICLES;** All articles from members and interested persons are very welcome. If you wish to submit any articles, jokes, cartoons, please have it typed or neatly handwritten. It can be submitted by computer disk, fax, or E-mail to the newsletter editor at the address listed on the cover. Submissions must be in the hands of the editor at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

## Regular HAM Gatherings:

\* **Tuesdays, 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM:** Join the gang for lunch and an eyeball QSO at the Royal Fork, Old Seward,

**Saturdays, 7:30 AM:** Here is a great way to get started on the week-end come and meet with some of the locals and have a great breakfast at Phillips Restaurant, at the corner of Arctic and International. Great Fun.

### **ABACUS RADIO REPAIR**

Factory authorized service for: Kenwood, ICOM, Yaesu, Alinco, Amateur radio equipment.

Call Jim Wiley, KL7CC (907) 338-0662

## THIS MONTH'S EVENTS

**October 2: ARRC general meeting at 7:00 PM** Carr-Gottstein Building APU Campus. Talk in on 146.94 repeater

**October 7: VE License Exams 6:30 PM** Carr-Gottstein Building, APU Campus. Bring photo ID, copy of license (if any) and any certificates of completion.

**October 10: ARES Planning Committee 9:30 AM.** Conference Room at BP Exploration. Everyone welcome. Focusing on preparedness and training.

**October 10: VE License Exams.** Hope Cottage Offices, 540 W. International in the Board Room. At 2:00 PM. Be sure to bring photo ID, copy of license (if any) and any certificates of completion.

**October 9: SCRC general meeting at 7:00 PM** room 220, Business Ed. Bldg., UAA campus. Talk in on 147.57 simplex.

### AARC Club Jackets de John/AA0NN

It's that time of year again to take orders for club jackets. Same as last year, there will be two models: the baseball-style jacket and the longer one that covers the hips, both with



fleece lining and embroidered with the club logo on the back. Member's name and callsign will be embroidered on the front. Price is \$50 for club members. I will take orders this month. After that it's all over until next year.

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### MIR packet frequency:

MIREX reports the packet system frequency for Mir's PMS system is again 145.985 MHz. Until September 2, the crew had been using 145.940 Mhz.

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### **Mexico may sell spectrum** *CGC Communicator, Newslite*

Mexico may be contemplating the reallocation of spectrum adjacent to 2 Meter and 70 cm Amateur Radio bands and then selling the spectrum to the highest bidder.

According to Bob Gossett's CGC Communicator, Mexico will be auctioning 148-174 Mhz and 450-470 Mhz and other key frequency bands during 1998. CGC says it also appears as if Mexico had planned to auction off the 440 to 450 Mhz amateur band and the spectrum from 485 to 495 Mhz during 1997. the latter spectrum overlays TV Channels 16, 17 and 18 in whole or in part.

All of this and more can be found at the following Mexican government web site at [www.cft.gov.mx/html/f\\_submain2.html](http://www.cft.gov.mx/html/f_submain2.html).

One word of caution here: unless you read Spanish, go to the bottom right portion of the page and click on the button labeled "English version."

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### **Russia will auction radio spectrum** *Newsline*

Russia has decided to follow the lead of the FCC. Its telecommunications authority has been told to auction off radio spectrum and this could be bad news for Amateur Radio operators.

The Russian government decided to charge mobile communications companies for the use of radio spectrum as a way to generate some cash for its strapped space program. Two government decrees, released on June 25th, listed the communications services for which providers will have to pay for use of radio frequencies. The decrees set rules for holding auctions to determine who gets the licenses for cellular telephone systems in Russia.

The Russian government indicates that it will also sell off part of its reserved spectrum for licensed civilian operations. It says it will review current usage of all other spectrum used for any purpose with an eye at generating even more revenue. This might even include some of the bands now used by Russian Hams.

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### **RESTRUCTURING** *David Sumner, K1ZZ*

Nothing else in the history of Amateur Radio matches the controversy that has surrounded changes in the structure of license classes, requirements, and privileges. Emotional debate preceded the introduction of the Novice, Technician, and Extra Class licenses in 1951, and the elimination of any differences between the privileges of General, Advanced, and Extra licensees that took effect in 1953. The pattern was repeated in the mid '60s with the resumption of so-called incentive licensing, which would have gone much more smoothly had it not been applied retroactively. The FCC eliminated the code test for the Technician license in 1991 in the face of considerable opposition. So, it should surprise no one that new proposals for changes in the FCC amateur licensing structure are also proving to be controversial.

Ideas ranging from minor tweaking of the licensing structure to fundamental changes in its philosophy are forever circulating in the amateur community. In January 1996, the ARRL Board noted that various concepts for simplification of the amateur licensing structure were being discussed and created a committee to solicit membership opinion on the issuer. In December 1996, the committee reported to the Board the results of a survey of members and non-members amateurs. The survey results were summarized in February 1997 *QST*. The committee also offered recommendations for changes in the licensing structure at the entry level, reflecting the fact that, like it or not, the Novice license is no longer the path of choice into Amateur Radio. The Board received the report at its January 1997 meeting and ordered that the committee's conclusions and recommendations be published in *QST*, but took no position on them. At the July 1997 and January 1998 meetings of the Board, neither the committee's recommendations nor any variation thereon attracted majority support of the Directors. Members continued to comment, and Directors continued to ponder the matter.

In February, the need for action became a bit more urgent when the FCC released a list of 31 "regulatory review proceedings" that it intended to initiate this year. The FCC is mandated by the Communications Act to review some of its regulations every two years, beginning in 1998. Late in 1997, FCC Chairman William Kennard had decided that the first biennial review should be the occasion for a top-to-bottom review of the Commission's rules, with the objective of deregulating and streamlining wherever possible. One of the 31 proceedings was described as: "Streamline Amateur Radio Service. Seek comment on amending Parts 0, 1, and 97 of FCC Rules to privatize further the administration of the Amateur Radio Service and to simplify the licensing process." At first it seemed that the Commission's proceeding would focus on an overdue cleanup of numerous pending petitions for rulemaking, including several from the ARRL. However, as time went on we began to hear that it would include a proposal to streamline the amateur licensing structure itself. Having an FCC proposal on the table as the only restructuring



proposal offered for discussion did not seem to be desirable; the ideas of the amateur community itself needed to be on the table at the very outset of such a proceeding. Even so, as the Board members gathered in Connecticut for the July 16-18 meeting and with release of the FCC proposals reportedly imminent, there was no assurance that there would be majority Board support for any particular alternative.

The Board already had committed some time to a strategic planning review in conjunction with its July meeting, so the meeting schedule was even more crowded than usual. The Board meeting went into recess on Friday night with virtually all of the formal business completed, except consideration of restructuring. An informal session on Saturday morning revealed that while there was near-consensus in favor of structural simplification, opinion was much more divided as to whether there should be three or four classes of license. Following an afternoon devoted to strategic planning, Board members reassembled after dinner to continue their discussions. The proposal has been submitted to the FCC in the form of a letter to Commissioners. Additional information can be found at the ARRL Web site, <http://www.arri.org>.

Two principles guided the Board: No present licensee should lose privileges, and present licensing standards should be maintained. The ARRL proposal calls for combining the present six classes of license into four similar to the present Technician, General, Advanced, and Extra; reaffirming of the Novice bands to put those valuable portions of the HF spectrum to more effective use; and maintenance of present licensing standards by coupling a reduced emphasis on higher Morse code speeds with improvements in the written examinations. Full access to the HF bands would require Morse proficiency at 12 words per minute, similar to most other countries, but meaningful HF access would be available at 5 WPM.

Some members, we know, do not like the Board's decision on restructuring. Some oppose any change; others oppose change that doesn't go as far as they might like. Many say they like the basic idea, including some who have suggested minor changes. Whatever your own opinion may be, bear in mind that we're a long way from a final resolution of the matter. The next step should be the release of an FCC Notice of Proposed rule Making on the subject, with a window for public comment. As soon as there is further news, we will share it with you.

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**ARRL President on restructuring**  
*W6ROD, Newsline*

The President of the American Radio Relay League defends and explains the League's proposal to restructure Amateur Radio. In a letter that he is sending out in answer to queries from concerned Hams, Rod Stafford, W6ROD, says that Hams have been slipping farther and farther behind the

technology power curve and that others outside of Amateur Radio are taking note of that.

Stafford points to the primary modes used by Hams. He notes that SSB, CW and FM have each been around more than half a century. Stafford says that we have to change people's perception of Amateur Radio being a pursuit involving seventy-year-old communications techniques.

Regarding the Morse code, Stafford says there is no move on the part of the ARRL to eliminate it. Rather the League wants to put it into proper perspective as we move into the new century. He also believes that the Morse will be around for a very long time. But the ARRL leader also says that as an examination element CW carries much more weight than it should at the present time.

Stafford also says Amateur Radio sits on some very valuable radio real estate that we essentially use for hobby purposes. He says that in recent years it has become very difficult to justify our retaining and defending our spectrum from commercial interests. These are companies who make very good arguments as to why they shouldn't be permitted to use our spectrum for endeavors that will generate jobs and utilize cutting edge communications technology. These organizations, says Stafford, are willing to put the spectrum to use for commercial rather than hobby purposes.

Stafford also cites some of the same alarming slow growth statistics we have presented on *Newsline* several times in the past. He says one need only look at the numbers to realize the average age of most active Hams is up near 60. Also, there is an under two percent annual growth rate in service. The ARRL leader says the argument that Amateur Radio needs to retain spectrum for growth is unconvincing to the FCC and other interests who take the time to read the numbers.

Rod Stafford says taking these factors into consideration, that Amateur Radio is now viewed as a group of aging radio hobbyists. We are also viewed as hobbyists who use less than state-of-the-art communications technology. This makes us vulnerable to spectrum challenges from other sectors of the communications industry.

President Stafford says the changes being proposed by the ARRL are not a complete solution to any of these problems but that they are a start. He says Hams still have to make an effort to move to more advanced communication technology and to do so quickly.

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**Former ARRL President on restructuring**  
*George Wilson, W4OYI*

Former ARRL President George Wilson, W4OYI, is not happy that the League preempted the FCC by issuing its own Amateur Radio restructuring proposal before the FCC had a chance to make its own ideas public. The former ARRL leader says that there was no compelling reason for the League to get out in front of the FCC on this issue.



Wilson also says that the ARRL was presented with an opportunity to at least try to undo some of the harm done to Ham radio and to the League by incentive licensing. This W4OYI says, was not even paid lip service.

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**Spectrum Bill Gains Cosponsors as Congress Ties Up Loose Ends**  
*Steve Mansfield, NIMZA*

As of September 1998, HR.3572 had 56 cosponsors, plus the original sponsor, Michael Billiards (R-FL-9th), with several more indicating they were prepared to sign-on. But as the House tries to tie up its loose ends and get home to campaign before the November elections, it is likely to focus on completing budget bills and other large pieces of legislation, leaving the smaller bills for reintroduction next year. To help ensure that HR.3572 moves as far as possible through the legislative process, ARRL members are encouraged to write their members of Congress to urge them to cosponsor the bill. A sample letter, a backgrounder and other information can be found on the ARRL Web site at <http://www.ari.org/govrelations/hr3572.html>.

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**Should I Write? Call? E-Mail? None of the Above?**  
*QST*

Do letters to Congress make any difference? You bet they do. Thanks largely to the letters of individual ARRL members, HR.3572 has remained "on the radar screen" in the House of Representatives and has given us a chance to tell the Amateur Radio story during in-person visits to more than 200 Congressional offices so far this year.

ARRL members who want to help out in this effort often ask, "should I write? Call? E-mail?" the answer is, do whatever you're most comfortable with. However, from a purely practical point of view, the written word, on paper, still tends to carry a bit more weight in Washington. E-mail can be accidentally deleted, and you can never be fully confident that when you call a congressional office to register your concerns, the receptionist who says "I'll pass that along to the Congressman" will really follow through. Unlike phone calls and e-mail, paper letters have a way of creating piles members of congress can actually see, and remaining visible even when they are faxed, photocopied or put in filing cabinets. "Grassroots" experts say that every letter received by a member of Congress is considered to represent the views of about 50 constituents. If 100 hams in your club write, it could be "counted" as 5,000 letters. So, writing is worth the effort. But remember that HR.3572 is a House bill, and so be sure to write the Representative from your congressional District, not your US Senator. If you don't have the time to draft an entire letter, you might be interested in the fact that some creative hams have written a

few words expressing their views right on a QSL card and mailed that to their members of Congress. Our advice? Whether it's a long letter or a short QSL card, spend the 32 cents.

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**ARRL Calls for Removal of 70 cm Proposal from LMCC Petition**  
*Steve Mansfield, NIMZA*

the ARRL called on the Land Mobile Communications Council (LMCC) to withdraw its request to reallocate segments of the 420 to 450 Mhz band to the Private Mobile Radio Service (PMRS), or for the FCC to dismiss those portions of the petition altogether. The ARRL's suggestion is contained in reply comments filed July 16 with the FCC in response to the LMCC's petition for rulemaking filed earlier this year. Amateur Radio shares the 70 cm band on a secondary basis with the federal government. The LMCC seeks to reallocate 420 to 430 and 440 to 450 Mhz to the PMRS. Amateurs would, presumably, continue to share the band, but many critics of the proposal fear that amateurs would eventually be driven off by commercial interests.

Interestingly, another commented, the Industrial Telecommunications Association (ITA), which would likely benefit from a favorable decision on the LMCC petition, acknowledged the validity of Amateur Radio Concerns:

"Because current spectrum management policies have promoted commercial allocations and auctions to the exclusion of nearly all other services and licensing schemes, a spectrum crisis has developed. In the commercial services, there is a tremendous surplus of spectrum, while the private services, as well as the amateur community, continue to struggle to sustain both credibility and unfettered access to their existing allocations..."

ITA noted that "consensus between the amateur and private communities can be developed during this full airing of all of the relevant policy and spectrum issues raised in the petition."

The ARRL reply comments noted that comments from Amateur Radio operators - the vast majority of those filed in response to the LMCC petition - establish that the LMCC proposal for a PMRS allocation in the 70 cm band "was ill-conceived." Hams told the FCC that the band is heavily used and vital to amateur public service activities. The ARRL noted "a complete absence of support" for the 410 to 450 Mhz reallocation issue, while one LMCC member, the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials-International (APCO), actually opposed any reallocation in the band.

The ARRL urged the FCC to pay close heed to the comments of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. The NTIA said national security and other federal interests would preclude sharing on the band. Those comments, the ARRL noted, were "clearly



protective of its own use of the 420 450 Mhz band, and that of the Amateur Service as well."

The ARRL said the LMCC has failed to justify a 420 to 450 Mhz reallocation and suggested that comments filed so far disprove both the LMCC's "rank speculation" about possible federal reductions in the use of 420 to 450 Mhz and its representations about amateur use of the band. "The record that has been developed shows that there is no compatibility between incumbent Federal and amateur facilities and new PMRS facilities," the ARRL said, but said it has no quarrel with LMCC seeking to open discussion on the general issue of PMRS allocation needs.

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### **FCC blasted for air-wave giveaway** *Newsline*

The FCC has been blasted in congress over the way it has handled the dispersal of new and reassigned spectrum. According to Mary Shea writing in the *CGC Communicator*, the Chairman of the House Commerce Committee said the FCC appeared to have "manufactured" a national security need to justify its allocation of a valuable airwave spectrum to a private company without a public proceeding. Details on this story are available at a special website at [www.zdnn\\_smgraph\\_display/0,3441,2124765,00.html](http://www.zdnn_smgraph_display/0,3441,2124765,00.html).

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### **Restructuring Amateur Radio Service licenses** *Jack Kelleher, W4ZC*

This month the hot news is the license restructuring proposal adopted by the ARRL Board at its July meeting, and subsequently sent to the FCC. Here is some vackground on other recent, related events which may help you better understand what's going on, and why.

Possible restructuring of licensing in the Amateur Radio Service has been on the Agenda of the ARRL WRC-99 Planning Committee from its inception in 1996. During the ensuing period proposed restructuring has undergone much discussion and revision.

The March 1, 1998 issur of the *W5YI Report* highlighted several ongoing FCC actions pertinent to a biennial review of all of its regulations applicable to licensees to determine whether certain rules are no longer necessary. (The Telecommunications Act of 1996 requires such a reiew in every even-numbered year, with the objective of eliminating or modifying regulations that are overly burdensome or no longer serve the public interest. FCC Chairman Kennard announced in November 1997 that the FCC had begun the 1998 review, and this "is a key time for the Commission to take a serious top-to-bottom look at its rules.")

The FCC released a list of 31 proposed initiatives to be explored as part of the biennial review. One of these

concerned the Amateur Service. The FCC said that it was looking toward streamlining Part 97 Amateur Radio Service Rules, and that it would seek comment on amending the FCC Rules to privatize further the administration of the Amateur Radio Services and simplify the licensing process.

Also in late 1997 the FCC took a step toward implementing its new Universal Licensing System (ULS). Ultimately, the ULS will give Hams and other licensees on-line access to make license updages and renewals, eliminating the need for hardcopy forms like the venerable Form 610. An FCC Public Notice said the ULS is aimed at combining the 11 different licensing systems the Bureau now uses, including Amateur Radio, into a single system.

The Annual Conference of VECs (Volunteer Examination Coordinators) took place at Gettysburg in eary July 1998. VECs indicated an interest in learning more aoubt rumored restructuring of the Amateur Radio Service (e.g., reducing the nubur of license classes, and reducing code speed requirements). Answers to their questions were not conforfing.

This background let to the decision by the ARRL Board to promptly publicize the League's proposals for restructuring, and to present them to the FCC (in a letter dated July 22) which said in part:

"It has come to the attention of the American Radio Relay League, Incorporated, the national association of Amateur Radio operators in the United States, that the Commission is presently consideriang a draft item pursuant to the 1998 Biennial Review process which relates to Amateur Radio Service.

"The League's Board of Directors, which constitutes the most representative body of Amateur Radio operators in the country, has studied the amateur licensing structure for the past two and one-half years.

"The League wishes to present for your consideration a copenhensive restructuring proposal for Amateur Radio licensing. the purpose of presenting this to you now, by letter, is not a forestall or preclude the Amateur Radio Biennial Review item, but rather to complement the considerable work that we understand has already been performed by your Wireless Telecommunications Bureau staff. it is hoped that the instant proposal is timely in view of the draft now under consideration."

How this will all sort out is anyone's guess. Stay tuned.

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### **FCC releases "streamlining" proposal** *Rick McCusker, K06DJ*

The FCC released its proposal to streamline the Amateur Radio service license system, August 10, 1998. the proposal offers the US Amateur Radio operators the chance have a major part in how the license structure will changed.



The FCC has made it known in this measure that they want to eliminate the Novice and Technician Plus license classes. The Novice class is no longer the entry level license in Amateur Radio, having been replaced by the Technician class. Novice applications in 1997 numbered less than 1,000 while there were nearly 21,500 Technician applications. The FCC says the two license classes are "an unnecessary overlap between the Novice, Technician, and Technician Plus" licenses, with Technicians and Technician Plus licensees "predominantly" using FM and packet radio on VHF and UHF bands.

If implemented, Novice and Tech Plus licensees would keep their current privileges, but no new Novice or Tech Plus licenses would be issued. Theory examination elements 2 and 3A would be pooled together in a new element 3A.

There is major confusion about CW requirements for HF privileges. The proposal effectively eliminates the 5 wpm Morse code test, while retaining the higher speeds for General and above. This means an applicant would have to pass 13 wpm to enter the HF arena. However, the FCC is asking for comments from amateurs on what CW code speed requirements for each license class should be. By taking this track, the FCC has clouded the issue of Morse code testing for amateur licenses. Exactly what they are asking remains unclear.

It appears the issue of eliminating Morse testing altogether will be shelved until the ITU makes a decision on several petitions to eliminate CW requirements as an international requirement for HF amateur operation. The FCC also wants our input about more theory questions on newer technology as a trade-off for reducing Morse speed requirements. Do we want tougher questions in the theory examinations, in exchange for lower Morse code requirements?

current Novice HF bands are being looked at. As of now, there is a 200 watt power limit on these bands for all license classes. If the Novice license class is phased out, will the power limit will be eliminated? One idea being considered is Novice licensees would be allowed to use CW any-where in the CW portions of 80, 40, 15 and 10 Meters at 200 watts. This is one area that needs clarification.

If implemented, this would reduce the license classes from six to four. Immediately after the ARRL issued its proposal, Hams were concerned with renaming the classes "A, B, C and D." At the ARRL Southwestern Division Convention ARRL President Rod Stafford, W6ROD, said the "A, B, C and D" titles were never meant to be the official names of the license classes, but were used by the ARRL board to differentiate between the classes in their paperwork. With the FCC proposal, the classes will remain as Technician, General, Advanced and Amateur Extra.

The Volunteer Examination program is also being scrutinized. At issue is the method used by VEs to administer the Morse code examinations. Should the test be confined to one minute of solid copy, a multiple choice exam or both methods? Currently VEs can use any of those methods. do we

want there to be one, and only one method used? Under the proposal, Advanced class VEs would be permitted to administer tests up to and including General class and General class VEs would be allowed to administer Technician class examinations. VEs would be limited to giving tests they themselves have passed. These changes would allow more VE participation in the testing process.

One very controversial issue is the abuse of Morse code examination waivers for the 13 and 20 wpm test. There is a growing problem with the use of "medical waivers" and the ARRL had proposed each applicant had to try to pass the test at least once before a waiver would be considered. Additionally, the ARRL asked for the FCC to allow VEs access to information regarding the applicants waiver. The FCC ruled access to such information would "place an unfair burden on examinees with disabilities, and raise serious privacy and confidentiality concerns."

How will this all turn out? It all depends on Hams sending in their comments to the FCC. There are several issues to be resolved, and by sending in our **POSITIVE** comments and suggestions, we have an opportunity to shape the future of Amateur Radio. The FCC has opened an unusually long comment period for our input, with the closing date of December 1, 1998. Reply comments will be allowed until January 15, 1999.

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#### **RAC requests 10 Meter band for Basit + 5 WPM** *Jack Kellecher, W4ZC*

Radio Amateurs Canada has asked Industry Canada to permit holders of the BASIC and 5 Word Per Minute Morse certificates to operate in the 10 Meter band. RAC says it believes his proposal is an important step for the growth and stability of the Amateur Radio Service, by offering amateurs who now meet basic international requirements the opportunity to operate on a worldwide DX high frequency band during the upcoming favorable sunspot cycle years. The request by Radio Amateurs Canada was a result of requests from amateurs at club meetings and at hamfests across Canada in support of such an upgrade in privilege.

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#### **Scanner proposals could hurt Hams** *Jack Kellecher, W4ZC*

The ARRL has told the FCC that some of its recent proposals to tighten scanning receiver rules "constitute severe regulatory overkill" and could harm law-abiding amateurs. The League made the comments in response to last month's FCC Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ET docket 98-76).

The ARRL said it's "sensitive" to the FCC's concern that devices not be able to readily intercept cellular calls. But, the League added, some of the FCC's proposals could result in "insufficiently defined regulations" that would



prohibit or unreasonable restrict the making and selling of Ham and test gear. Some product lines could become prohibitively expensive or prohibited altogether by the proposals, the League asserted.

Among other things, the League asked the FCC to avoid requiring scanning receivers in Ham equipment to block access to frequency-control circuits, and to not entirely prohibit frequency converter or transverter kits for use in the Amateur Service. The League said the net effect of the kits ban would be to prohibit any frequency converters, even through they would not be used or useful for cellular reception, and asked the FCC to create an exception for Amateur Service frequency converters.

The league also asked that amateur receivers not be required to undergo potentially expensive direct-pickup immunity testing, and it urged the Commission to more clearly define its proposed rules to avoid unintended consequences that could adversely affect Hams.

The League agreed some extended coverage Ham transceivers have image responses that make them able to receive cellular signals. But the League said this is not widespread and "largely not an issue in the Amateur Service," because the transceivers are not made, marketed, bought, or used for cellular image reception. Manufacturers could configure products to preclude cellular image frequency reception, the ARRL said.

The League said current language banning the manufacture or sale of scanning receivers that are "capable of readily being altered" is sufficient. But the ARRL said requiring tuning and control circuits be made in accessible would be "an overbroad requirement," and potting or encapsulating frequency-control hardware "is simply unnecessary for most amateur equipment." The League said such a requirement would limit the ability of Hams to legitimately experiment with or to even repair their own equipment and could needlessly drive up the cost of Ham gear and make repair expensive or impossible. "The potting requirement is severe regulatory overkill and should not be enacted," the League said. "There are sufficient, less burdensome regulations now in effect and as proposed."

The League also called the FCC's proposed definition of test equipment "unreasonable limiting" and advised the Commission to correct the problem by eliminating the word "professional" from its definition.

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### **FLORIDA HAMS AWAIT GEORGES; CARIBBEAN RECOVERY BEGINS**

Hurricane Georges spent the week wending his way through the Caribbean islands, leaving death and destruction in his wake. By week's end, hams in Southern Florida were ready along both Florida coasts to deal with the storm's anticipated effects. The likely track September 25 put the brunt of the storm over the Florida Keys. From there, forecasters believed, it could move on to trouble the Gulf Coast, the Florida

Panhandle, and perhaps other Gulf states. Mobile home residents in the Broward County-Fort Lauderdale and Miami-Dade County areas were evacuated. As many as 1-million people in low-lying areas were urged to seek shelter on high ground. Two hams were reported ready to stand their ground on Big Pine Key, despite the evacuation.

Southern Florida Assistant SEC Jim Goldsberry, KD4GR, scheduled morning and evening sessions of the Southern Florida ARES Net on 3940 kHz. Arrangements were being made September 25 to possibly declare a communications emergency. Southern Florida Section Emergency Coordinator Manny Papandreas, W4SS, said SKYWARN nets were ready on both Florida coasts to track any tornadoes Georges might generate.

The Broward County emergency operations center was activated September 24. ARES and RACES members were ready to assist at shelters and provide communication for local EOCs. Hams also coordinated with the Red Cross. In addition, Broward County EC Harold Sanderson, KT4XK, held special sessions of the Broward County Emergency Preparedness Net to keep area hams informed and ready. Hams also were reported in active preparations in other coastal counties. But Georges was pretty much of a bust in the Ft Lauderdale area, reports League member Charlie Geib, N4AV. While the storm generated lots of rain, he said damage appeared to be minimal.

Since Georges arrived in the Caribbean, the Hurricane Watch Net has run continuously on 14.325 MHz to coordinate storm reports with W4EHW at the National Hurricane Center. Another net has been handling health and welfare traffic on 14.283 MHz. Hurricane Watch Net Manager Jerry Herman, N3BDW, says the net got good reports from Caribbean hams, including Cuba's Arnie Coro, CO2KK. "Arnie, was passing radar data and observations that the Hurricane Center was not getting from official sources," he said. (Arnie Coro, CO2KK, also was interviewed by CBS Radio about the storm situation in Cuba.)

Oscar Morales, CO2OJ, said the storm took out power and telephone service in some provinces. "More than 200 hams worked with the Civil Defense authorities all around the island and played an important role in communications during the disaster," he said. Morales said he was gratified at the level of cooperation among hams in working together to exchange information on the storm. "I'm really proud of being a ham radio operator!" he said.

Hams in Puerto Rico are assisting in the aftermath of Hurricane Georges, which inflicted heavy damage in parts of the Commonwealth earlier this week. "Hams have made a difference here," reports Rafael Medina, NP3HA, in Guaynabo. Medina used a local UHF repeater to contact another ham with HF capabilities who, in turn, contacted Medina's relatives to inform them his family was okay. With



widespread telephone outages, Medina says ham radio is being used to keep contact with the center of the island to gather information and needs from the counties there.

Medina said Civil Defense used hams to operate a VHF repeater to gather information from different regions of the island. Hams also were assisting police and medical services, he said. Medina said government agencies took advantage of communication capabilities provided by ham repeaters that have remained up. Power was knocked out over much of Puerto Rico, and telephone service remained spotty at week's end. Water service also was disrupted over much of the island. ARES member Victor Madera, KP4PQ, said that during the storm, local hams made use of KP4ES at the National Weather Service. Hams also activated SKYWARN and ARES nets.

According to Internet reports, Hurricane Georges took out five ham radio towers at the QTH of well-known contester Pedro Piza, NP4A.

Tens of thousands of Caribbean residents took refuge in shelters. Even so, more than 200 deaths were reported throughout the Caribbean, many of them in the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

In the Netherlands Antilles, Don McGehee, PJ8DM, reported a 175 MPH wind gust on Saba when the storm passed over. Both Saba and St Eustatius were hit very hard by the hurricane, but there were no casualties. Power and telephone service are out over much of the Netherlands Antilles. "The only communication with the outside world is via radio," said Jacobo Oduber, P43P. He said the Aruba ARES repeater was being used to maintain communication among St Maarten, Saba, and St Eustatius. Some damage was reported in the British Virgin Islands, but the US Virgin Islands reportedly suffered only minimal damage. Virgin Islands Section Manager John Ellis, NP2B, said power was knocked out, and long-distance phone service went down. "We passed about 100 messages to the states," he said. Phone service to St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. John was fully restored by week's end, but phone circuits remained busy.

Virginia ARES was activated to provide communication support for American Red Cross Headquarters near Washington, DC. As part of the callup, hams monitored various emergency nets and reported relevant information through Virginia ARES to the Red Cross. The Red Cross used the information to plan its disaster response.

The Red Cross lifted its normal 48-hour moratorium on health-and-welfare inquiries for immediate family only on Puerto Rico, St Thomas/St John, and St Croix on September 24. Inquiries must be submitted on ARC Form 2079 (rev. 8/95). Forms should be faxed to 800-782-7060.

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## FCC ADOPTS UNIVERSAL LICENSING SYSTEM

Amateurs can say good-bye to the FCC Form 610 series in a few months. The FCC has adopted its long-proposed Universal Licensing System, which replaces Form 610 with a new, electronic Form 605, the Quick-Form Application for Authorization in the Ship, Aircraft, Amateur, Restricted and Commercial Operator, and General Mobile Radio Services. Applicants may continue to use the old forms for six months after the new rules go into effect, however.

The FCC also adopted proposals to permit automatic reciprocal licensing of foreign hams wishing to operate in the US, pursuant to recent international reciprocal operating agreements.

The FCC said the ULS will "fundamentally change" the way the Commission receives and processes wireless applications and makes licensee information available to the public. The rules adopted September 17 will--in the FCC's words--"consolidate, revise, and streamline" license application procedures for radio services under the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau. The FCC last November began initial collection of licensee data to populate the ULS. Using the ULS, applicants and licensees will be able to file, modify, and renew electronically. Access to the ULS is via <http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/uls/>.

When the FCC first aired its ULS plan, some licensees expressed concerns because ULS registration would require applicants to provide a Taxpayer Identification Number, typically a Social Security Number. In its public notice, the FCC assured that "all TIN information will be kept confidential."

The FCC's action consolidates 40 existing forms into four ULS application forms, including the new Form 605. Electronic filing in the ULS will not yet be mandatory for individual amateurs. Hams will have the option of filing electronically or on paper. However, electronic filing via the ULS will be required for Volunteer Examiner Coordinators in the Amateur Service. Mandatory electronic filing requirements go into effect July 1, 1999 or six months after the use of ULS in a particular service--whichever is later.

An official Report and Order detailing the FCC's actions is expected to be released soon. The FCC's Public Notice is available on the FCC Web site at [http://www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Wireless/News\\_Releases/1998/nr\\_w18040.html](http://www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Wireless/News_Releases/1998/nr_w18040.html).

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## JAMBOREE ON THE AIR '98 IS OCTOBER 17-18

On the third weekend of October, more than 400,000 Scouts around the world are expected to get together on the air



during the 41st international Jamboree On The Air (JOTA). The annual event gives ham radio veterans a chance to plant the seed of ham radio in the minds of Scouts gathered at stations set up in fields, parks, mountaintops, or even at the veteran op's own shack, to participate.

Remember your first ham radio contact? Experienced hams can give that feeling to future ham radio operators during JOTA by showing Scouts the fun they could have if they embark on a "hobby of a lifetime." JOTA runs from Saturday, October 17, at 0001 local time to Sunday, October 18, at 2359 local time. This means activity continues from Friday to Monday, because of the time differences. During JOTA, participating Scouts not only get a chance to talk to other Scouts in their community or state, but they might even be able to chat with Scouts in different countries!

The radio station of the World Scout Bureau, HB9S, will be on the air from Geneva, Switzerland. HB9S will operate almost continuously, but will take breaks during the night in Europe. Groups can contact the station via packet at [HB9S@HB9IAP](mailto:HB9S@HB9IAP) or via e-mail to Station Manager Yves Margot, [jota@world.scout.org](mailto:jota@world.scout.org). Operators at HB9S say they will do the best they can to make contact with Scout stations worldwide and speak to scouts in as many languages as possible.

JOTA can be a club activity or an individual project. Individual hams who want to get involved should make arrangements with Scout leaders a few weeks in advance (to get contact information, call the local Scout office and make yourself available to your local Cub Scout Pack, Girl or Boy Scout Troop or Explorers). The ARRL Educational Activities Department offers a JOTA information package on the ARRL Web at <http://www.arrl.org/ead/jota.html>.

JOTA can sometimes be an outdoors activity like Field Day. The occasion gives veteran hams a chance to set up antennas and demonstrate different modes of radio communication, including packet, RTTY, SSTV, and HF digital modes, as well as voice.

JOTA activity on HF will center around 3740 or 3940, 7290, 14290, 18140, 21360, 24960, and 28990 kHz on SSB or 3590, 7030, 14070, 18080, 21140, 24910, and 28190 kHz on CW. For more JOTA information, see <http://www.scout.org/jota/>. —Jean Wolfgang, WB3IOS; Frank Krizan, KR1ZAN

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## SOLAR UPDATE

Solar savant Tad Cook, K7VVV, in Seattle, Washington, reports: Solar activity was up somewhat over the past week. Average sunspot numbers increased by almost 27 points, but solar flux was up by just under three points. The geomagnetic field was quite a bit more active this week compared to last due to solar flares and coronal holes. The day with the most geomagnetic activity last week was September 18, when the planetary A index was 20 and the K index went as high as 6.

The trend for the short term is for more activity. Solar flux for September 25-27 is expected to be 150, 155 and 155, while the major geomagnetic storm is expected to continue with planetary A indices of 25, 30 and 20. As this was being written on September 24, the Boulder K index is 6, indicating a major storm, and the planetary A index for the day was 28. The high latitude A index was 51.

Solar flux is expected to peak around September 29 and 30 at 165, then drop to 150 by October 3, and bottom out around 120 from October 12-14.

This solar cycle is continuing its upward climb. A nice graph which shows the general trend over the past year can be seen at the Northwest Research Associates site at <http://www.nwra.com/nwra/spawx/ssne-year.html>. Recent and predicted short-term 10.7 cm flux is graphed at the same site at <http://www.nwra.com/nwra/spawx/f10.html>.

The most important event for the last week affecting HF propagation was the passage into the fall season, which always means an improvement in high frequency propagation. The other important news was the resurrection of the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory which is again facing the sun. Until recently the outlook for SOHO was bleak, but now scientists hope to restore much of its capacity for solar observation.

Sunspot numbers for September 10 through 16 were 123, 134, 118, 111, 106, 71, and 86, with a mean of 107. The 10.7-cm flux was 141.7, 138.6, 134.9, 130.7, 121.8, 117.3, and 118.7, with a mean of 129.1. The estimated planetary A indices were 5, 5, 12, 6, 6, 7, and 4, with a mean of 6.4.

Sunspot numbers for September 17 through 23 were 100, 106, 133, 130, 151, 154, and 162, with a mean of 133.7. The 10.7-cm flux was 117.4, 122.5, 126.9, 132.1, 138.3, 141.1, and 143.2, with a mean of 131.6. The estimated planetary A indices were 7, 20, 12, 8, 14, 10, and 14, with a mean of 12.1.



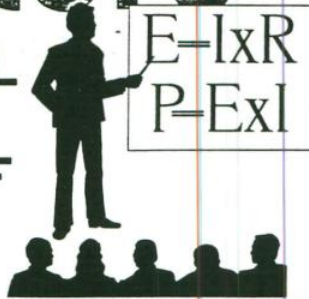
# HAM RADIO CLASSES

## Anchorage Amateur Radio Club

### Instructors

Lil Marvin NL7DL

Rick Marvin KL7YF



Novice - Technician  
-General-  
Classes begin



September 29, 1998  
6:00 to 9:00 P.M.

### REQUESTED STUDENT MATERIALS :

NOVICE: 0-5 WPM ARRL or W5YI Code tapes or equivalent

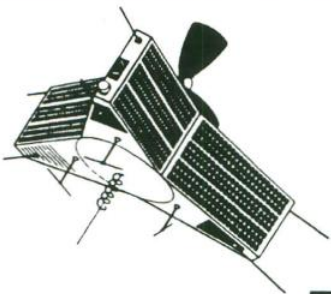
TECHNICIAN: Gordon West's New No Code Book, or equivalent

GENERAL: Gordon West, ARRL or - General Class Manual + 13WPM code tapes.

Fee : \$35.00

TO REGISTER

C A L  
2 7 7 - 6 7 4 1

An illustration of a telephone with a keypad and a coiled cord.

Contact the instructors or get materials at the Hamfest Sept 19th & 20th at Kincaid Park Outdoor Center.

**Begin practicing the code now!!!**

Classes will be held at Red Cross Bldg (2nd Floor)  
8th and Cordova



**The Anchorage Amateur Radio Club News**

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ARRL Bulletin 79 ARLB079  
From ARRL Headquarters  
Newington CT September 27, 1998  
To all radio amateurs

SB QST ARL ARLB079  
ARRLB079 Communications Emergency

UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF SECTION 97.401 OF THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION'S RULES AND REGULATIONS, 47 C.F.R. PART 97, A COMMUNICATIONS EMERGENCY IS DECLARED TO EXIST IN THE MISSISSIPPI, LOUISIANA, AND TEXAS AREAS, REQUIRING THE PROTECTION OF AMATEUR EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION FREQUENCIES. AMATEURS ARE REQUIRED TO REFRAIN FROM USING 7285 AND 7290, DAYTIME, AND 3873 AND 3935, NIGHT TIME, PLUS OR MINUS 3 KHZ UNLESS THEY ARE TAKING PART IN THE HANDLING OF EMERGENCY TRAFFIC. THIS ORDER IS EFFECTIVE 1100AM CENTRAL STANDARD TIME ON SEPTEMBER 27TH, 1998 UNTIL RESCINDED.

NNNN  
/EX