

The Framingham Circuit

Newsletter of the Framingham Amateur Radio Association January 1999, Vol. 67, No. 1

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President's Message

If you're reading this, I guess we made it through the most over-hyped event in the millennium. If not, well, then I hope ham radio made a difference. I'm probably still skiing, so I'll only find out when the toll booths on the NH turnpike won't take my tokens.

Speaking of tokens, the board has been discussing the club finances, and we have come to the conclusion that the "token" \$10 FARA dues is not paying for all our activities. The picnic, pizza nights, newsletter and Field Day, all cost a tremendous amount of money. We also have equipment expenses. Flea market revenues have been falling, and postage and telephone costs have been rising. Sumner will be giving a rundown of where all the money goes, and what we need to do.

In spite of the challenging financial issues, FARA's members have been rising to support the club. Yes, folks, we have noticed those extra dollars in the can at the shack, and the donations at pizza night. They are much appreciated, and have actually kept us afloat when we would otherwise have been "under water". The board feels that, in addition to making our operation more efficient, we need to ask you all to shoulder a bit of the load.

If you look at the dues being charged by other ham clubs, you will see numbers in the \$20 to \$35 range. Some of these organizations run several repeaters, and charge even more for a family membership. FARA is certainly a bargain, and we intend that it should remain that way. We will be discussing and voting on changes to the dues structure at the January meeting, so I encourage you all to attend, and consider what changes we could make.

73 and Happy New Year,

Peter, KA1AXY

The VP's Report

By Bob, W1RH

Actually, I don't see this as a regular column in the Circuit.....The newsletter editor called with a request for material and I answered!

The Club has sold its two basket case linear amplifiers. Both were up for bid during the month of December. Martin (AA1ON) was high bidder for the Heathkit Warrior. Martin hopes the amp, which uses four 811A's will be capable of supplying 600-700 watts as a backup amplifier for his contest station. He may also use it as an amplifier for a second station and also plans to modify the amp for 160 meters. I was the successful bidder for the Club's SB-201 which currently puts out zero watts. I vow, however, to have this amp, which uses a pair of 572's, putting out 700 watts in the year 2000. I plan to use the amp as a backup for the ham shack and as a dxpedition amplifier for future trips I may take or club members may take. Proceeds from the sale of the amplifiers will go towards a new, higher power, WORKING amplifier for the Club shack.

Speaking of the Shack, we encourage everyone to drop by on Saturday mornings or Wednesday evenings. Saturday mornings should offer hot 10 meter DX for several months. The Europeans love to rag chew and are always looking for Stateside QSO's. The 3 element beam has been rebuilt and works better than ever. Technician's don't shy away because your license privileges prevent you from

using the HF bands. As long as there is a qualified Ham in the shack, you can feel free to operate the Club station and get a taste of the HF bands.

Thursday, Jan 6

This Month's Meeting

Need something to do with those HRO holiday gift certificates? Ham Radio Outlet's Peter Cantara, KI1M, will be here to talk about some of the new ham equipment on the market.....and he's bringing some toys with him.

Submitting Material to the Circuit

Material may be submitted for publication by sending it directly to the editor. This can be done by phone, by US Mail, or via the Internet (preferred). The deadline for each issue is the *Wednesday*, one week before the monthly meeting.

by phone

Home:

(508) 435-2055 (before 9:00PM please!)

College:

(508) 910-5296

by mail

Robert Hess, N1UVA

1 Cold Spring Brook Road

Hopkinton, MA 01748

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A committee has been formed to manage the FARA flea market this year. Ed(KB1CQI), Bev (N1LOO), Peter (KA1AXY), Spencer (N1JWB), and I make up the committee. Our plan is to go all out to make this spring's flea market seller friendly as well as buyer friendly. We are also planning to do serious promotion and make a grand prize available to attendees. The flea market will be in March. Watch the Circuit and FARA web site for more information.

FARA board meetings are on the last Monday night of the month. Any member is welcome to attend a board meeting, which makes you a voting board member. Meetings start at 7:30 PM and last about an hour.

A special note about this month's meeting. Peter Cantara, KI1M, from Ham Radio Outlet, will be here to discuss new toys and ham radio in general. He will be bringing a few radios and accessories with him. I asked Peter to bring a FT-100 transceiver. You can also ask Peter to bring down a particular radio or accessory you would like to look at. Just email or phone me and I'll pass on the request, or you can phone Peter directly. Peter is definitely not here to do a sales pitch, but I did ask him if he could sell any of the items he brings with him. He told me he has never done that at a radio club meeting but there is no reason why he can't bring a few sales slips with him. Peter also mentioned to me that he will hand deliver anything a member might want to order in advance of the meeting. Just call Peter at HRO before the meeting and he will deliver your order in person. You can also email him:

ki1m@hamradio.com

FARA Horizons

Jan 6: Club Meeting

Jan 24: Board Meeting

Mar 17-19: License in a Weekend

FCC CREATES THE MEDICAL IMPLANT COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE ("MICS")

CGC Communicator

By Report & Order, the FCC has established the Medical Implant Communications Service operating in the 402-405 MHz band. This will permit the use of ultra-low power radio-controlled devices such as cardiac pacemakers and defibrillators.

Operation of today's medical implant devices requires that they be magnetically coupled to external programmers or readers. This requires very close spacing between the implanted device in the patient and external monitoring/control equipment, often requiring body contact and very slow data rates, sometimes requiring up to fifteen minutes for a data transfer.

APRS at Work

CGC Communicator

When Bill Guthrie, VE6OLD, of Bentley, Alberta, Canada woke up to find his van missing from his driveway, he did one thing before he called the police. Bill ran down to the computer, and had a quick peek. Almost instantly, the APRS beacon in his van told Bill's computer that his vehicle was enjoying a leisurely drive around the town of Red Deer. Then, calmly, Bill picked up the phone and called the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. He reported the stolen van, adding that they could recover it and catch the thieves if they sent some one to the Red Deer location. They did, and the arresting officers got even more than they were looking for. It seems some young teens needed a vehicle to haul their loot from a recent spate of break and enter robberies. Not only did the alleged thieves get caught red handed for grand theft auto, but the stolen goodies in the van tied them to those other crime scenes as well. But that's not all. Obviously, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police wanted to know how the owner of a stolen vehicle could possibly know where it was located. That was the opening for VE6OLD to begin explaining the magic of Amateur Radio's Automatic Position Reporting System (APRS). He also invited some of the officers to his house

For Sale

MFJ-931 Artificial RF Ground \$50

HP Deskjet 540 Excellent Black & White Printer Manual, software new cartridge \$30

*Hal W1TKD
781-440-9708
Email wm1tkd@aol.com*

FARA has for sale:

Telrex TB6EM

*6 element monster tribander
\$350*

See picture in December Circuit and Web Site

Contact Peter, KA1AXY

READ THE CIRCUIT ONLINE...

SAVES PAPER AND POSTAGE

Now available as an Adobe Acrobat file
email fara@fara.org and we'll set you up!

FraminghamARA-L@qth.net

The FARA email reflector is working well. It provides us with an easy way to reach all our members who have email. You have to sign up it will reach you, though. See the instructions on the FARA web page, and remember that, once you sign up, anything you send must come from the address you signed up with. If you change email addresses, you won't be able to post until you repeat the sign up process from your new address.

Membership Dues

Annual membership dues are as follows: (Make checks payable to FARA)

Regular FARA \$10

Student / Retired \$5

Repeater (voluntary) \$10

License Restructuring

CQ Magazine Web site

More than a year after it first proposed reducing the number of amateur license classes and asked hams for input on code speed requirements, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) handed down its restructuring decision on the final business day of 1999. Here is a summary of changes, which are effective as of April 15, 2000.

There will be only three license classes, Technician, General, and Amateur Extra, with a single written exam element for each grade of license.

There will be only one code exam -- at 5 words per minute (wpm) -- for licenses with HF privileges (General and Extra).

No new Novice, Tech-Plus, or Advanced Class licenses will be issued after April 14. However, hams who now hold these licenses will retain all of their current operating privileges, and will be able to modify &/or renew their licenses indefinitely. Tech-Plus hams will be renewed as Technicians, but will retain their HF operating privileges.

There will be no "refarming" of the ham bands as proposed by the ARRL. This means that current Novice and Advanced Class subbands will remain as they are, so there will be no expansion of frequency privileges for any ham without passing an upgrade exam or showing credit for all necessary exam elements (more on this later). There will also be no changes in the callsign groups.

There will be no automatic upgrades, even for hams who qualify based on past credit. Even if no additional exams are required, a ham will have to apply for an upgrade at a VE (Volunteer Examination) session.

There will be only three written exam elements, one for each new class of license. Decisions on structuring the new exam elements will be made by the Volunteer Examiner Coordinators' Question Pool Committee (QPC), which will be given even greater authority in designing and administering amateur exams.

The much-abused disability waiver for 13- and 20-wpm code tests is eliminated (since there will no longer be any 13- or 20-wpm code tests)

The changes will take effect on April 15, 2000. This will give the QPC time to create new exams, and will give publishers time to get new license manuals into print before the new structure is put into place. In addition, it will give tens of thousands of hams with

partial credit toward one of the new license classes the opportunity to pass the remaining element(s) before the new tests begin, possibly requiring re-examination on certain topics.

QSL Card

Submitted by Leo, WA1HAM

Write-up by Bob, W1RH



This month's card comes to us from Canada which is usually the first DXCC entity (country) worked by new hams. At the time of Leo's QSO, Roy, VE7PEI, was located in the Canadian province of British Columbia. VE7PEI's QTH, New Westminster, is a suburb of Vancouver in the southern part of the Province. When you work a VE7, the "7" identifies station location as British Columbia.

British Columbia became a province of Canada in 1871. Prior to that, British Columbia was composed of two British colonies, one on Vancouver Island and the second on the mainland. The colonies were united in 1866 with the capital in Victoria.

Leo worked VE7PEI when his call sign was WA1ETX. Thanks, Leo, for your QSL contributions. We need QSL's for the Circuit! Contact me, Robert (N1UVA), Lee (KA1USL), Sharon (KC1YR) or anyone with a scanner and get your favorite card scanned and emailed to me.

The Circuit is in need of QSL cards!!!

If you would like to share your favorite QSL card, which could be your own, with the club, please send it my way! A caption or story would be appreciated also.

Don't let not having a scanner keep you from sending in your favorite card. Many FARA Members have access to scanners, including Bob, W1RH.