

# The COMMUNICATOR

The Tamiami Amateur Radio Club • Venice, Florida

# COMMUNICATOR

FEBRUARY 2004

## -- PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE --

I had a rather interesting RFI experience in the summer of 1975. It was my routine back then to play music in the local clubs in Medicine Hat on the weekends until about 1:00 AM. Then I would go home and unwind by getting on the HF radio. The morning after one of those Friday night sessions, I was in our music/electronics store when I walked a man and his wife. They both appeared to be in their 60s. They walked up to me and asked if I could help them with a problem with their stereo. In our conversation, they mentioned a few things I must tell you about to properly set the scenario.

They had just moved into a new apartment building, and hadn't yet sorted out any of their belongings such that everything was still in boxes. The only thing they had set up was the bed. These folks had just retired and moved into town. They said they loved the new apartment, but they were a bit uneasy when they learned that a funeral home was formerly on the site of this new building and that their suite was in the exact location of the original morgue.

After they had gone to bed that Friday night, they were awakened by a voice coming from their living room. Upon investigation, they found the voice to be coming from their stereo. The husband said, "No problem, I'll just unplug the stereo and the voice will go away." Wrong! The stereo wasn't plugged in! They just freaked out!!

On hearing that they had just moved into a new apartment building on the site of a former funeral home, I figured this must be the property next to our house. Sure enough. On checking their address, I was correct. My HF radio and I were the culprits!!

I explained to them that the cause of the strange voice was my Ham Radio, and that I would be able to easily solve their problem. With the use of a couple .01 mfd capacitors and two toroids, I did just that.

However, I guess the whole experience and the thought of living in a "morgue" proved to be too much for them, and they moved out the following month.

73 de John-VE6AIV

*"If everything seems under control, you're just not going fast enough." - Mario Andretti*

## -- FEBRUARY MEETING --

The February TARC meeting will be at 6:00 PM on Thursday 12 February 2004 in the "Community Room" of The Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice (formerly The Venice Foundation), 601 South Tamiami Trail (Business US 41), across from Bon Secours Hospital. After the business meeting, our guest speaker will be Darrell Davis-KT4WX, Technical Coordinator and ARES Emergency Coordinator for the West Central Florida ARRL Section. Come on out and see what you can learn.

## -- 2004 TARC DUES ARE NOW DUE --

Just another reminder that it's time again to renew your TARC membership. (This applies to those members whose dues card is not marked "2004".) Annual dues are still \$15.00 for individual membership and \$18.50 for family membership. Treasurer Bob Officer-WA6WAY will gladly take your dues payment at our meeting, or you can mail your check to Bob at:

Bob Officer - WA6WAY  
1241 South Venice Blvd.  
Venice, FL 34293

Please renew your membership as soon as possible, such that an updated, accurate roster of the 2004 TARC members can be prepared by Don Fontaine-N4ET without unnecessary delay.

## -- ARRL PROPOSES NEW LICENSE --

During their Annual Meeting 16 January 2004, the ARRL Board of Directors approved a proposal that would create a new entry-level license and consolidate all current licenses into a total of three classes, retaining the 5 wpm Element 1 Morse requirement only for the highest class (*emphasis added*).

ARRL First VP Joel Harrison-W5ZN stated that Morse is an emotional subject, commenting, "In fact, without a doubt, Morse is Amateur Radio's 'religious debate'." (*Only in the USA, apparently.*)

For want of a better word, the ARRL resurrected the name "Novice" for their proposed entry-level license. After passing a 25-question written exam, the new "Novice" could operate Phone/image and CW/data modes in restricted segments on the 75-, 40-, 15-, and see NEW LICENSE, page 3

# TAMIAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

## Minutes of the Meeting

08 January 2004

President John Fyke-VE6AIV called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Jim Frey-W8ISZ led the pledge of allegiance to the US flag. Bob Schneider-KC9AYW of Venice, Lee Darby-K4GCY of Sarasota, Richard-WD9EZO and Jan Butler-WD9EYP of Osprey, Alan Stock-AG3W of Venice, and Jay Godfrey-W4NUT of Venice were recognized as visitors. Bob-KC9AYW and Lee-K4GCY subsequently joined TARC during the meeting.

**MINUTES** - Bob Avrutik-N1RA moved to forego reading of the minutes of the 11 December meeting which were published in the January issues of *The Communicator*, seconded by George Kurhajec-N0IW, and passed.

**CORRESPONDENCE** - Secretary Jack Sproat-W4JS displayed hamfest flyers for the 10 January Fort Myers Hamfest and the 14 February Orlando HamCation, and reminded members of the Foundation for Amateur Radio scholarships being made available. Jack advised he had sent TARC newsletters and letters of invitation to Carl Johnson-W0JL and Robert Young-KA1BJQ, both of Venice.

**TREASURER'S REPORT** - Treasurer Bob Officer-WA6WAY reported the 28 November 2003 bank balance was \$3,403.50, with subsequent expenses of \$58.79 for printing and postage, \$47.45 for roses for the ladies attending the TARC Christmas Party, and \$106.25 for materials for the new repeater. Income of \$183.50 was realized from 2004 dues payments, bringing the 08 January 2004 treasury balance to \$3,374.51.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**SUNSHINE** - Bill Rockwood-KE4ZAK fell and injured himself earlier in the week, such that his report was given by Pete Pesa-KG4MOB. In response to a TARC Christmas card, former member Bob Alexander-KD8YC advised Don Fontaine-N4ET that his wife had passed away last March. An e-mail from Bob Marchese-K1NOK advised that Bob King-W9RKT had passed away in October. Bob was a long-time member of TARC and had donated a considerable amount of ham gear to last year's auction. Ken Truran-KC8BI had another chemo treatment on Tuesday and is doing fairly well. As Ken's immune system is very low, he cannot associate with anyone. Ken's wife, Julia, is experiencing blood loss, which is causing great concern.

**VE TESTING** - Jack-W4JS announced that there were two potential candidates for the 10 January TARC VE session.

**LIAISON TO FGARC** - Charlie Larson-KD4FZ reported no recent feedback from the Hamfest sponsors.

**REPEATER/TECHNICAL** - Eddie Palmer-K4JP

advised that two electrical circuits have been installed in the transmitter building for the TARC repeater and the SERC ATV repeater. As the TARC antenna will be at the 300' level on the new tower, we need an additional 100' of 1-5/8" hardline and appropriate hardware, which would exceed the \$500 previously allocated, according to Eddie. John Miller-WA9YHW moved and Pete-KG4MOB seconded that the allocation be increased to \$1000, with the motion passing. (*Note: Refer to Minutes of 09 April 2003 to realize that \$3000 was allocated for installation of the repeater system. As the 1-5/8" hardline was obtained from Comcast for \$700 and all expenses to date total \$806.25, there is still \$2193.75 available from the original allocation. Therefore, the foregoing motion and vote tonight was unnecessary.*)

**CLUB GRANTS & DONATIONS** - Eddie-K4JP reported that he, Bob-WA6WAY and Jim Frey-W8ISZ had attended a Sarasota County grant application workshop, where they learned that TARC could apply for financial grants up to \$12,000. It is required that the money would be spent in a manner which would benefit the public at large. It is also mandatory the grantee match the financial grant with an equal sum of money or with voluntary man-hours at the rate of \$12/hour. With a 09 February filing deadline, the initial goal is for HF and VHF/UHF rigs and a 5kw generator. Bob-WA6WAY, Eddie-K4JP and Charlie-KD4FZ volunteered to prepare a grant application. John-WA9YHW moved and Eddie-K4JP seconded a motion that TARC prepare a grant application for purchase of mobile emergency communication equipment.

**LIAISON TO SERC/ARES/RACES/RED CROSS** - Jim Frey-W8ISZ reported that Bob Officer-WA6WAY is the new Red Cross Communications Director. Jim also stated that several antennas donated to TARC had been donated to the Red Cross.

**LIAISON TO QCWA** - Jack-W4JS reported that 30 members and spouses attended the 07 January luncheon meeting of Suncoast Chapter 53, where Bob-N1RA gave a presentation on his experiences operating HF ham radio from a cruise ship in European waters.

**OLD BUSINESS** - None

**NEW BUSINESS** - In response to the request of John-VE6AIV for club activities, several comments were offered. Stew Haag-W4MO stated that he has a Kenwood TS-480 that can easily be set up as a computer controlled remote HF station. After a show of interest and discussion, it was agreed that use of this remotely controlled station would be made available to TARC members only, with approval of individual operators at a club meeting. Stew asked that TARC pay approximately \$7 each for two ISP connections, such that the EchoLink system and the remote HF station could operate independently. John-WA9YHW

see MINUTES, page 3

**MINUTES, from page 2**

moved approval of such payment, seconded by Eddie-K4JP and passed.

Pete-KG4MOB suggested that some TARC members attend an activity scheduled by the new North Port ARC to see if we could follow suit with similar activities. John-VE6AIV and Pete proposed such a visit. Pete also suggested that TARC get involved in a blood drive at some future date.

An e-mail query from Ken-KC8BI suggested that TARC consider returning the dues to \$10 per year, in consideration of our financial stability. No motion was offered to that effect.

Jack-W4JS stated there is presently no club policy regarding dues for persons who join during the calendar year, and suggested that those who join TARC after 30 June pay \$8.00 to cover the remainder of the year. Eddie-K4JP so moved, seconded by Bob-N1RA and passed.

George Kurhajec-N0IW offered comments on the Corridor Systems BPL technology that uses frequencies in the GHz range, thus avoiding interference with HF broadcasting and reception.

**ADJOURNMENT** - Motion to adjourn at 7:14 PM was made by Eddie-K4JP, seconded by Bob-WA6WAY, and passed. Thirty members and four guests were present.

**PROGRAM** - Martin Horowitz-W4MHH and Jack-W4JS discussed the use of either the Internet or paper forms in license modifications and applications for a vanity call sign.

Jack Sproat-W4JS - Secretary

**NEW LICENSE, from page 1**

10-meter bands, as well as on 6 and 2 meters, and on 222-225 and 430-450 MHz. Power output would be restricted to 100 watts on 75, 40 and 15 meters, and to 50 watts on 10 meters and up. Current Novice licensees would be grandfathered into the new entry-level class. ARRL CEO Dave Sumner-K1ZZ said, "We're trying to recapture the magic of the old Novice license, but in a manner that's appropriate for the 21st century." (*Yep, sure nothing like perpetuating/promoting 168-year-old technology into the 21st Century.*)

The current Technician, Technician+ and General would be merged into a new General Class license that would not require a Morse examination. Current Tech and Tech+ license holders would gain current General Class privileges without additional testing.

The Board saw no compelling reason to change the Amateur Extra Class license requirements. The ARRL plan would combine the current Advanced and Extra class licensees into Amateur Extra, as the technical level of the exams passed by these licensees is very similar. New applicants for Extra would have to pass the 5 wpm Morse exam, but the written test would remain unchanged.

The ARRL also proposed revising/expanding the Phone Subbands on 75, 40 and 15 meters for the new Extra and General Class licensees, in addition to the limited segments for the new Novices. Proposed frequencies are as follow:

Phone/Image HF Subbands

80 Meters

Extra: 3.725-4.000 MHz (gain of 25 kc)  
General: 3.800-4.000 MHz (gain of 50 kc)  
Novice: 3.900-4.000 MHz (new)

40 Meters

Extra: 7.125-7.300 MHz (gain of 25 kc)  
General: 7.175-7.300 (gain of 50 kc)  
Novice: 7.200-7.300 (new)

15 Meters

Extra: 21.200-21.450 MHz (no change)  
General: 21.275-21.450 MHz (gain of 25 kc)  
Novice: 21.350-21.450 MHz (new)

10 Meters

Extra: 28.300-29.700 MHz (no change)  
General: 28.300-29.700 MHz (no change)  
Novice: 28.300-28.500 MHz (no change)

CW/Data-Exclusive HF Subbands

80 Meters

Extra: 3.500-3.725 MHz  
General: 3.525-3.725 MHz  
Novice: 3.550-3.700 MHz

40 Meters

Extra: 7.000-7.125 MHz  
General: 7.025-7.125 MHz  
Novice: 7.050-7.125 MHz

15 Meters

Extra: 21.000-21.200 MHz  
General: 21.025-21.200 MHz  
Novice: 21.050-21.200 MHz

10 Meters

Extra: 28.000-28.300 MHz  
General: 28.000-28.300 MHz  
Novice: 28.050-28.300 MHz

(From ARRL Bulletin 3, 20 January 2004 and ARRL Web Site)

*(Ed. comment: The international requirement for Morse Code capability to operate on the HF ham bands was dropped at World Radiocommunication Conference 2003. Several major countries immediately dropped the requirement, with others following suit. Not so simple in the USA, as the FCC sought comments from interested parties, and has yet to make any decision in the matter. Now the ARRL has proposed a new entry-level Amateur Radio license that would include HF phone privileges without a Morse Code exam. The ARRL also proposed a multitude of license classes back in 2000, which the FCC totally ignored in favor of just three levels of licenses. So, let's see how this idea flies!)*

"Virtue is one." - Plato

## -- DIPOLE ANTENNAS --

(The following article is a "nontechnical discussion" which was prepared by Bob Avrutik-NIRA.)

The basic antenna is the dipole. It is used to compare with all other antennas and is probably the simplest to construct and operate. It also produces excellent results.

The normal dipole is a half-wavelength long and is fed in the center. The length is easily determined by the simple formula:  $468/\text{frequency (in MHz)}$ . Cutting a dipole to this length and putting it at a reasonable height will usually produce good results.

There are, of course, many factors which will influence its operation. Some of these are wire size, height above ground, surrounding objects, quality of the ground over which the dipole hangs, feed line, matching means, and symmetry of the two sides. This discussion will not try to explain the effects of each of these, but will try to explain how to put one up and get a good signal out.

First, wire size must be considered for two important reasons:

- (1) The wire must be strong enough to hold the entire antenna in a horizontal position and support the feed line.
- (2) The larger the wire size, the broader the band width. A good practical size is No. 12 or 14 wire. Whether or not the wire is solid or stranded will have little effect except in the ease of handling it and fastening it to the end and center insulators.

The feed line has a few important considerations:

- (1) It must be able to carry the maximum power used.
- (2) It should be weather proof or at least weather resistant.
- (3) Strong enough to support its own weight and easy to terminate.
- (4) Have an impedance which will tend to match the dipole (75 ohms) and the transmitter (usually 50 ohms).

Length of the feed line is not important.

Construction of a dipole is a simple matter. It has an insulator at each end and one in the middle. Each side is one quarter of a wavelength long--center insulator to end insulator. The feed line connects to each side at the center. If coaxial cable is used, the shield connects to one side and the center conductor to the other side. If twisted or parallel pair is used, one wire connects to each side.

To final operation, to compensate for all the considerations mentioned above, is to tune the dipole. This is a rather simple matter if you have a SWR meter. It can be a separate meter, or the one that is installed in your rig. Tuning consists of lengthening or shortening the sides of the dipole at the ends. The most important thing to keep in mind is that both sides of the dipole must always be the same length. Don't try to tune it by adjusting only one side. Tune your rig (using low

power) to the dipole's design frequency and note the SWR reading. Next, shift frequency up and down about 50 to 100 kHz, and again note the SWR readings at these points. The lowest SWR should be at the design frequency. If not, this low point can be attained by shortening or lengthening the ends of the dipole. If the lowest SWR reading is at a frequency lower than the design frequency, the ends of the dipole must be shortened by equal amounts. Try an inch at a time and then recheck to SWR readings above and below the design frequency, note the difference, and adjust accordingly. Conversely, if the lowest SWR is at a frequency higher than desired, then the ends of the dipole must be lengthened. "Trial and error" is the accepted method.

The above is for a single band dipole. It is relatively simple to construct an all-band or multi-band dipole without using loading coils or fancy impedance matching networks. This will be the subject of another column if there is interest in it.

Bob-N1RA

## -- UPCOMING HAMFESTS --

- 7-8 Feb Dade Radio Club of Miami "Tropical Hamboree" at Dade County Fair and Exposition Center, 10901 SW 24th St. TI: 147.00, Info: Evelyn-W4WYR, 305-642-4139
- 13-15 Feb Orlando ARC "HamCation" at Central Florida Fairgrounds, 4630 W. Colonial Dr. (SR 50). TI: 146.760, Info: Cindy-KD4NLV, 407-273-1406
- 21 Feb Brooksville ARC at Hernando County Fairgrounds, US 41, 2 mi. S of SR 50. TI: 146.715, Info: John-WB4NOD, 727-856-2568
- 21 Feb Sebring Hamfest at Highlands Agri-Civic Center, 4505 George Blvd. @ US 27. TI: 147.045, Info: Ben-KA6R, 863-314-0963
- 22 Feb Zephyrhills Hamfest at Lions Club, 5827 Dean Dairy Rd. TI: 147.135, Info: Ron-N8VFE, 813-782-1602
- 06 Mar EARS/PRRA Charlotte County Hamfest, Charlotte County Fairgrounds, El Jobean Rd (SR 776), 2.4 mi W of US 41. TI: 147.255(+), Info: George-KA4JKY, 941-697-3445

(From Website of Bill Britton-KB4VOL, <<http://bell-southpwp.net/k/b/kb4vol>> and February 2004 QST)

## -- CLASSIFIED - FOR SALE --

GAP Titan vertical antenna; covers all bands, 80-10 meters plus it will also work on 2 meters. Tuned for the phone bands, and still assembled for easy erection. For complete specs go to <[www.gapantenna.com](http://www.gapantenna.com)>. It's yours for \$160. Call Hermann Rieper-VE3IRX at 475-3785.

# CURRENT/PENDING DX ACTIVITY and HF PROPAGATION FORECASTS

CURRENT and/or SCHEDULED DX ACTIVITY									
COUNTRY - CALL SIGN	ACTIVITY PERIOD	BEARING	HF BANDS and OPENING TIMES (GMT)						
			80	40	20	17	15	12	10
Solomon Is - H44MS	Now Active	275	07-13	<b>06-13</b>	13-15	1400	20-21	NO	NO
Senegal - 6W/LX1DA	Now Active	87	22-08	<b>21-10</b>	<b>13-00</b>	14-23	<b>15-21</b>	17-19	19-20
South Shetland Is - HF0QF	Now Active	169	00-09	<b>23-11</b>	<b>20-01</b>	19-00	15-22	20-23	NO
South Orkney Is - AY1ZA	Now to 29 February	163	00-09	<b>23-10</b>	<b>21-01</b>	21-23	22-23	NO	NO
Dem Rep of Congo - 9Q0AR	Now to 20 March	80	23-05	<b>22-06</b>	<b>18-00</b>	17-23	14-21	16-19	17-19
Easter Is - CE0/KOHML	08 - 12 February	208	02-12	<b>00-14</b>	<b>13-01</b>	14-00	<b>15-23</b>	17-21	18-21
Svalbard Is - JW5HE	12 to 18 February	13	23-12	<b>21-14</b>	13-18	14-15	NO	NO	NO
Tokelau Is - ZK3???	13 to 25 February	262	05-13	<b>04-14</b>	23-02	18-00	<b>19-23</b>	19-20	19-20
Ascension Is - ZD8A, ZD8R, ZD8Z	13 to 17 February	108	23-08	<b>21-09</b>	<b>13-00</b>	14-22	<b>15-21</b>	17-19	19-20
Aves Island - YV0???	??? March	119	<b>22-12</b>	<b>00-24</b>	<b>14-23</b>	16-20	19-21	NO	NO
Revilla Gigedo - XF4IH	03 to 17 March	259	<b>00-13</b>	<b>00-24</b>	<b>14-02</b>	15-00	<b>16-22</b>	17-21	17-21
Togo - 5V7C	06 to 12 March	87	23-07	<b>21-08</b>	<b>12-01</b>	13-00	14-21	17-19	17-19
Brunei - V8???	08 to 15 March	330	11-12	10-13	<b>12-19</b>	13-18	14-18	16-17	NO
Clipperton Is - FO???	08 to 18 March	242	<b>00-13</b>	<b>00-24</b>	<b>13-02</b>	14-00	15-23	17-21	17-21

Updated 28 January 2004, based on 28 January 2004 *QRZ DX*, and 26 January 2004 *The Weekly DX*

Notes: ??? = Call sign not yet known, ++ = Phone Only, \*\* = CW Only, NO = No opening forecast, **Time in bold** = Best Band(s) for opening  
Long path bearings and opening times (if any) are underlined. All forecasts calculated via *W6ELProp V.1.03* propagation software  
 (<<http://www.qsl.net/w6elprop/>> by Sheldon C. Shallon-W6EL) with Solar Flux and K-index varied in accordance with NOAA 27-day forecast.

## -- SOLAR ACTIVITY DURING JANUARY --

During January, the Solar Flux ranged from 87 up to 135, with a mean value of 114.1 (vs. 143.9 for January 2003 and 227.3 for January 2002). The A-index was  $\leq$  10 on only 4 days during the month.

## -- FEBRUARY PROPAGATION FORECAST --

During February, solar activity is expected to be at very low to moderate levels, with very low to low conditions through the beginning of the month. Geomagnetic activity is expected to range from quiet to minor storm levels. There is a chance of isolated major storms through 07 February and of active to minor storms 11-14 February. (From *NOAA Weekly Highlights and Forecasts*, 27 January 2004)

Optimum DX propagation should be on 15 meters during daylight hours, with 10- and 12-meter openings into the southern hemisphere. Conditions on 17 and 20 meters will be optimal for an hour or two after sunrise and again during the late afternoon.

During the early evening hours, and to as late as midnight, 15 through 80 meters should be available for DX openings, albeit in opposite directions. Between midnight and sunrise, 20 to 40 meters will be the best bands for DX paths.

Conditions should be *Above Normal* 16-24 February, and *High Normal* 8-9, 14-15, and 27 February.

(From "Propagation", Tomas Hood-NW7US, February 2004 *CQ*)

"Of course, he's a bit undisciplined, but perhaps that's what gives Westerners their charm." - Laura Belle McCanles (Lilian Gish) is "Duel in the Sun"

## -- 2003 MOST WANTED SURVEY --

Worldwide, the 10 "most wanted" entities, as shown in the January/February issue of *The DX Magazine*, are as follow:

- 1 BS7 Scarborough Reef
- 2 VU4 Andaman & Nicobar Islands
- 3 P5 North Korea
- 4 VU7 Lakshadweep Islands
- 5 3Y/P Peter I Island
- 6 7O Yemen
- 7 FR/J Juan de Nova/Europa
- 8 KP1 Navassa Island
- 9 KP5 Desecheo Island
- 10 YV0 Aves Island

There are rumors that Scarborough could come on the air this year, but nothing firm. The last BS7 operation was in 1997, but it was short-lived to avoid diplomatic conflict between the two countries claiming these rocks.

Indian DXers have been working behind the scenes, attempting to get VU4 and VU7 on the air, but no recent updates on those entities.

While the P5/4L4FN operation of Ed Giorgadze (who's now active from Angola as D2PFN) gave North Korea to 12,170 DXers, there is no indication of when this country will be on the air again.

Peter I Island is scheduled for early 2005.

There's nothing likely in the near future from Yemen.

Europa was active in late 2003, with 34,000 QSOs.

There are four or five groups working to get landing permission on KP1 and KP5.

Aves Island is expected to be on in early March.

(From *The DX Magazine*, January/February 2004 and *The Weekly DX*, 12 January 2004)

## CONTESTS & ACTIVITIES

Contest/Special Event	Times/Dates	Bands/Modes	QSO With	Exchange
CQ World-Wide RTTY WPX Contest	0000 GMT 07 Feb 2359 GMT 08 Feb	80 - 10 Meters RTTY Only	Anyone, Anywhere	R/S/T + Serial Number
Ten-Ten International Winter Phone QSO Party	0001 GMT 07 Feb 2359 GMT 08 Feb	10 Meters Only Phone Only	Anyone, Anywhere	Call, Name, 10-10 # (if member)
North American Sprint	0000 GMT 08 Feb 0400 GMT 08 Feb	75, 40, 20 Meters Phone Only	Anyone, Anywhere	Both Calls, Name, Serial No., QTH
Mexican International RTTY Contest	1800 GMT 07 Feb 2400 GMT 08 Feb	80 - 10 Meters RTTY Only	Anyone, Anywhere	R/S/T + Serial Number
Asia-Pacific Sprint	1100 GMT 14 Feb 1300 GMT 14 Feb	20 and 40 Meters CW Only	Asia-Pacific Countries Only	R/S/T + Serial Number
FISTS CW Winter Sprint	1700 GMT 14 Feb 2100 GMT 14 Feb	80 - 10 Meters CW Only	USA and Canadian Stations Only	R/S/T, Name, FISTS # (if mem)
Dutch PACC Contest	1200 GMT 14 Feb 1200 GMT 15 Feb	160 - 10 Meters Phone and CW	Dutch Stations Only	R/S/(T) + Serial Number
ARRL International DX Contest	0000 GMT 21 Feb 2400 GMT 22 Feb	160 - 10 Meters CW Only	DXCC Entities Outside USA	R/S/T + State
REF (French) DX Contest	0600 GMT 21 Feb 1800 GMT 22 Feb	80 - 10 Meters Phone Only	Anyone, Anywhere	R/S + Serial Number
UBA (Belgian) DX Contest	1300 GMT 28 Feb 1300 GMT 29 Feb	80 - 10 Meters CW Only	Anyone, Anywhere	R/S/T + Serial Number
ARRL International DX Contest	0000 GMT 06 Mar 2400 GMT 07 Mar	160 - 10 Meters Phone Only	DXCC Entities Outside USA	R/S + State

From February 2004 *Worldradio* and February 2004 *QST*.

### -- DXCC CHALLENGE UPDATE --

The DXCC Challenge award is issued to those working and confirming 1000 band-entities on the 6-through 160-meter bands. With 335 DXCC entities and 10 bands, the maximum score is 3,350. As of 30 September 2330, some 1,337 DXers have reached the minimal 1000 level. The top 10 DXers in this competition are:

- 1 Bob Eshleman-W4DR; 3083
- 2 Ken Bolin-W1NG; 3076
- 3 Leif Ottosen-OZ1LO; 3051
- 4 Rick Roderick-K5UR; 3049
- 5 Rys Tymkiewicz-SP5EWY; 3045
- 6 Randy Schaaf-W9ZR; 3042
- 7 Austin Regal-N4WW; 3037
- 8 Fausto Minardi-I4EAT; 3035
- 9 Joe Reisert-W1JR; 3021
- 10 Don Karvonen-K8MFO; 3018

Outside North America and Europe, other continental leaders are Asia's JR3IIR with 2896; LU2NI with 2233 from South America; ZS6EZ with 2221 from Africa; and Oceania's VK9NS with 2046 band-entities. (Now, these are guys who are really active in Ham Radio!)

(From *The Weekly DX*, 26 January 2004)

### -- ARRL MENTORING PROGRAM --

Proposed by the Volunteer resources Committee, the ARRL Board of Directors approved development of a four-level set of Amateur Radio mentoring programs to help new licensees and those seeking to get more out of ham radio.

The "ARRL Club Mentor" will involve the participation of ARRL-affiliated clubs, in cooperation with HQ staff, in "mainstreaming" more people, licensed or otherwise, into Amateur Radio.

The "ARRL Mentor" program will involve individual hams who are ARRL members with an interest in mentoring, or tutoring new licensees.

The "Interactive Mentor" is intended to aid new hams via the ARRL Web site, by providing answers to basic questions.

The "Special Interest Mentor" is intended to match people with specialized ham radio technical interests with mentors experienced in these technologies.

(From *The ARRL Letter*, Vol. 23, No. 04)

### -- ARRL CUTS SENIOR DISCOUNT --

Effective immediately the ARRL membership senior discount was reduced from \$5 to \$3/year. (*Ibid*)

-- BUT WAS IT RADIO? --

(Bernie Holtman-W4GO kindly loaned us a biography of Nathan Stubblefield, whose early wireless inventions have led Murray, Kentucky to claim the title, "The Birthplace of Radio." That biography offered an interesting insight into "wireless" communication experiments in the 19th and early 20th centuries.)

The tombstone of Nathan Stubblefield near Murray, KY states:

"Here lie the earthly remains of Nathan B. Stubblefield

Nov. 22, 1860 - Mar. 28, 1928

Inventor of Wireless Telephony, or Radio"

While the first three statements are correct, the bit about "radio" has been the topic of discussion, confusion and folklore around Murray for over 70 years. The local AM radio station in Murray, WNBS, has used his initials in its call sign since 1948. For the first half of 1902, newspapers from St. Louis to the east coast extolled his exploits and some considered him Marconi's peer. His obituary appeared in the *New York Times*. Obviously Stubblefield had carved out a niche in the field of communications.

By the mid-1880s, telephone service was spreading amongst the urban areas of the US. As the Bell system had a virtual monopoly via important patents for the electrical telephone, to start a local franchise, one had to pay a fee to Bell or invent equipment that didn't conflict with those patents. Stubblefield's first venture into communications occurred in February 1888 when he obtained a patent for an acoustic telephone system. This system, similar to the tin cans and string devices kids once played with, was able to work for a distance of 3/4 mile.

Creating a wireless communications system was a formidable challenge. For a half century, inventors had tried natural conduction, modulated light, induction, and finally electromagnetic waves. The first to utilize natural conduction was Samuel F. B. Morse. In Germany, Sommerling and Steinhilber had shown that earth or water could conduct electrical current. Telegraphers soon replaced the second wire in the system with a ground connection. Following his ill-fated attempt with a submarine wire across New York Harbor, in 1842 Morse submerged plates on opposite sides of a 240' canal and sent an electrical signal through the water.

In 1866, Mahlon Loomis utilized two lightweight metal grids suspended from kites 14 miles apart to transmit electrical signals. Loomis reasoned that the moist upper atmosphere was a superior conductor and the electricity there had an opposite charge from that of the earth.

In 1879, Alexander G. Bell had marginal success sending telephonic transmissions 1.25 miles between boats via the waters of the Potomac river. In December 1880, Bell received a patent for a wireless telephone

which utilized selenium in the receiver to convert modulated light waves into sound waves. A later version of this invention used radiant energy rather than light as the transmission, and a French electrician named it Radiophone--the first use of the term "radio."

Electromagnetic induction was discovered in the 1830s, James Maxwell predicted the concept of frequencies and wavelengths, and these were proven in 1888 by Heinrich Hertz. In 1886, Amos Dolbear received a patent for a wireless telephone based on induction. Dolbear's system utilized elevated, grounded condensers as antennas and actually transmitted electromagnetic waves, lacking only a detector at the receiver to be a complete radio system.

About 1892, Stubblefield had developed a successful wireless telephone using an induction system. Knowing large coils were necessary for long distances, he developed another system. In and around Murray in 1900 and 1901, Nathan and his 12-year-old son, Bernard, gave numerous public demonstrations of a wireless system that utilized a pair of metal rods that were driven into the ground at both the transmitter and receiver sites. On 01 January 1902, some 1000 people watched as Nathan and Bernard transmitted voice and music from the courthouse square to five receivers around Murray--quite possibly the first wireless broadcast.

In February 1902, one Gerald Fennell incorporated the Wireless Telephone Company of America and acquired all of Stubblefield's technology. The company proved to be fraudulent. Nathan Stubblefield died in poverty and as a recluse in 1928. He may be forgotten elsewhere, but to this day Murray, Kentucky recalls Nathan Stubblefield.

"But was it radio?"

(From *Kentucky Farmer Invents Wireless Telephone--But Was It Radio?--Facts and Folklore about Nathan Stubblefield*, Bob Lochte, All About Wireless, Murray, KY, 2001)

-- TARC LICENSE TESTING DATA --

The TARC Volunteer Examiner Team has been holding its own over the past two years. During 2002, team members conducted seven exam sessions, with 11 candidates being examined in a total of 10 elements. During 2003, 13 candidates were examined in a total of 10 elements. In addition, TARC team members participated in VE sessions in Englewood and at the Englewood/PRRA Hamfest in Charlotte County.

The TARC VE Team would welcome other TARC members getting ARRL certification as Volunteer Examiners and lending a hand. If you're interested, contact Jack Sproat-W4JS at 475-1929.

"I like grumpy old cusses--hope to live long enough to be one." - Rocklin (John Wayne) in "Tall in the Saddle"

HF 14.278 10:00 AM 7D Snowbird

7.230 7:00 PM 7D Snowbird

TUES 146.58 730 PM

Thurs 145.13(-) ~~1000~~? 7:30 PM

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