



THE COMMUNICATOR

Newsletter of the TAMAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Incorporated 30 November 1984 – Venice, Florida
Mailing Address: 1419 E. Manasota Beach Rd., Englewood, FL 34223-6341
Web Site -- <http://tamiamiarc.tripod.com>
W4AC Repeaters – 146.805 MHz(-), 444.100 MHz(+) both w/100 Hz PL



-- FEBRUARY 2007 --

-- PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE --

The fog lifted Saturday morning, January 20, and I had a very pleasant drive down to the Ft. Myers Hamfest. As was the case last year, the weather was ideal and, although this even was not a large one, it was nice to get to see a little equipment for sale and to trade some tall tales. The Florida Hamfest season is definitely here, and I hope you all are able to take in a few of these enjoyable gatherings.

The TARC 2-meter net activity is growing, and the Tuesday night Simplex Net, in particular, has had a lot of participation. For some strange reason, I'm able to copy our Net Manager, Bob Murphy-WA1UHG, better direct than through the repeater. If you haven't done so lately, check into our nets and join the fun. It's a good way to keep the dust off the rig and to test your emergency preparedness.

VY 73 de Konrad-WA3RRS

-- LEARNING ABOUT DSP --



Jon Hamlet-W4ZW had an attentive audience at our January meeting, as he explained how digital signal processing (DSP) works—not only in modern transceivers but also in some everyday audio applications.

“The tyranny of the many would be when one body takes over the rights of others, and then exercises its power to change the laws in its favor.” – Voltaire (1694-1778), “Philosophical Dictionary,” 1764

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-- AIRWAVE MISSIONS --

Airwave Missions was founded some two years ago by Marcella and David Haag-W4HAG for the purpose of providing communications to the people who live in the remote highlands of Indonesia's Papua Barat Province on the island of New Guinea. The couple has already made two trips to that area and are planning a third, extended visit in the near future. In consideration of the charitable aspects of their efforts, the TARC presented a \$500 check to Airwave Missions at our January meeting.



David thanked us for the donation, stating that it would purchase a radio and solar panel for one station; the village will purchase the battery and small hardware.

Airwave Missions is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Contact David at davidhaag@win.net for further information.

-- FEBRUARY MEETING --

Our next TARC meeting will be at 7:00 PM on 08 February 2007 in the Community Room of The Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice, 601 South Tamiami Trail (Business US 41), across from the Venice Regional Health Center. Following the business meeting, Stew Haag-W4MO will offer a discussion and demonstration of Software Defined Radio (SDR). There is a SDR in service at our W4AC Repeater site, so this isn't an inaccessible technology. Come out, learn something, and show support of your club.

TAMIAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Minutes of the Meeting

11 January 2007

President Konrad Owens-WA3RRS called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM and led the pledge of allegiance. Marcella and David Haag-W4HAG were recognized as visitors. Introductions were then made all around.

MINUTES – Konrad asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the 14 December 2006 meeting as published in the January 2007 issue of *The Communicator*. Croft Taylor-VE3CT so moved, seconded by Diana Gregory-KI4GRF, and passed.

CORRESPONDENCE – Jack-W4JS stated that a letter was sent 18 December 2006, transmitting \$80 to the Friends of the Library in appreciation of our use of the Venice Public Library for our VE sessions. This money comes from \$2 being held back from every exam fee. Jack also reported sending an e-mail to all those who had received free membership as a result of receiving their first license at a TARC VE session. This was to correct an item in the January issue of *The Communicator*, regarding the terms of such membership.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Treasurer Don Gray-WD7A reported that the 14 December starting balance was \$5362.88. Receipts were \$28.00 from the December 50/50 drawing, \$165.00 from renewal dues from 11 members, and \$80 from withheld VE fees, totaling \$273.00. Expenses were \$600.00 for 2007 tower lease, \$95 for 2007 membership in Venice Area Chamber of Commerce, \$80.00 for donation to Friends of the Library, \$3.43 for newsletter printing, \$39.95 for one month's Internet service at the W4AC Repeater site, and \$61.25 for Annual State Corporate Report, totaling \$879.63. The 11 January ending balance, disregarding income and expenses at tonight's meeting, is \$4756.25. Charlie Covell-W4DB moved acceptance of the report, seconded by Jim LaCourse-K4IH, and passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

SUNSHINE – The passing of Dorothy (Dot) Kay, wife of veteran TARC members Dil Kay-KB8YLK was noted with sorrow. A card has been sent.

VE TESTING – Jack-W4JS reported that at least candidates are expected at the 13 January VE session. Due to the Orlando HamCation, there will not be a February VE session. Notice of this cancellation has been given to ARRL and the Florida Ham Radio News web site of Bill Britton-KB4VOL.

REPEATER/TECHNICAL – Stew Haag-W4MO reported that the WiFi Internet access offered by EWOL is deteriorating. A new WiFi system is being installed on site by DayStar, a division of the Suncoast Media Group. DayStar will offer TARC three

months' access to T-1 service at no cost on a trial basis, after which a contract could be arranged. Stew will utilize this offer and continue negotiations with DayStar.

CLUB PROPERTY – Stew-W4MO advised that some additional tuners and power supplies had been donated to TARC. These items will be offered for sale at upcoming regional hamfests.

PUBLICITY/MEMBERSHIP – Konrad remarked that we are now a member of the Venice Chamber of Commerce, which we hope will give us better exposure to hams moving into the area. We are also listed with the Internet club directory of the *Herald-Tribune* and, for apparently the first time, notice of tonight's meeting was in today's issue of the *Venice Herald-Tribune*.

EMERGENCY COORDINATOR – Peter-N4RD commented that more people are needed for participation in the DARN activities. The Catholic Diocese is buying 60 radios to be used by DARN, but licensed operators are needed to utilize these radios. Peter added that trainees are needed as net control operators.

NET OPERATIONS – Net Manger Bob Murphy-WA1UHG commented that net participation has been improving on both our weekly nets. Bob could use more net control operators, however.

PUBLIC RELATIONS – Diana Gregory-KI4GRF commented there was currently little activity, however, she and Bob Sullenberger-KG4VDU planned to visit some local schools to talk about ham radio.

LIAISON TO EARS – Marty Horowitz-N4FA reported on the EARS Christmas Dinner, which was also the December meeting of EARS. EARS will have its annual election of officers at its January meeting and Marty is the candidate for Vice President.

LIAISON TO QCWA – Jack-W4JS reported that 25 Suncoast Chapter 53 members and friends attended the 03 January luncheon meeting held at Denny's on Bee Ridge Road, Sarasota. The informative program was presented by Bob Avrutik-N1RA, who told of his service with Armed Forces Radio in India during WW II. Hans Napfel-WB2ZZB will give the February program, including his experience in a hot air balloon, and all are invited to attend. Croft-VE3CT commented that Hans will be giving his program on the "Black Box" at the Sun City Chapter lunch in Apollo Beach next week, and extended an invitation to all.

OLD BUSINESS – Discussion was held regarding several pending items:

- Orlando Hamfest Charter Bus – Matt Klapp-W2EQV reported that only about 17 people have

See MINUTES, page 5

CURRENT/PENDING DX ACTIVITY & PROPAGATION FORECASTS

CURRENT and/or SCHEDULED DX ACTIVITY										
COUNTRY – CALL SIGN	ACTIVITY PERIOD	BEAR-ING	HF BANDS and BEST OPENING TIMES (GMT)							
			80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10
So Shetland Is – LZ0A & VP8/LZ1UQ	Now to 01 Mar	169	01-09	00-10	23-10	21-00	14-00	16-22	17-21	NO
West Malaysia – 9M2MRS	Now to 28 Feb	352	NO	11-12	12-14	14-20	16-19	18-19	NO	NO
Madagascar – 5R8HG	Now to 23 Feb	90	23-03	22-04	22-04	17-23	14-21	15-19	16-17	16-17
Tunisia – 3V8SS	Now to 11 Feb	57	22-07	21-09	18-00	13-19	15-18	15-17	15-17	NO
Samoa – 5W/YT1AD	01 – 05 February	257	05-13	14-14	04-14	17-00	18-23	19-22	19-21	19-21
Cambodia – XY7XRO	01 – 10 February	349	1130	11-13	13-14	14-19	15-19	15-19	17-18	NO
Djibouti – J20M, J20R	01 – 15 February	61	23-04	22-05	21-01	13-23	14-21	15-20	16-18	16-18
Algeria – 7W0JAW, 7W0MH	02 – 10 February	62	22-08	20-09	18-00	13-19	14-19	16-18	16-18	NO
Spratly Is – DX0JP	03 – 13 February	337	10-13	10-14	12-14	14-18	15-17	16-17	16-17	NO
Tokelau Is – ZK3RE	03 – 21 February	262	05-13	04-14	03-15	18-00	18-00	18-23	19-21	19-21
Mauritania – 5T5DY	05 – 15 February	81	22-08	20-09	15-03	13-23	14-21	15-19	17-19	16-19
Aves Island – YW0DX	08 – 15 February	119	21-13	00-24	00-24	12-00	13-23	15-21	15-20	15-20
Norfolk Is – VK9DNX, VK9N	15 Feb – 03 Mar	250	07-13	05-14	05-14	01-02	20-00	22-23	2230	NO
Samoa – 5W0RE	26 Feb – 11 Mar	257	05-12	04-13	03-14	18-02	18-01	18-23	19-22	10-22
Senegal – 6W/DL6CT, DL7CM, DM2AYO	03 – 23 March	87	23-08	21-09	19-11	12-01	13-23	14-22	17-20	16-20

Updated 24 January 2007, based on 24 January 2007 *QRZ DX*, 22 January 2007 *The Weekly DX*, and *K1XN's DX Alert 701-C*

Note: **Time in bold** = Best Band(s) for opening; ??? = Call Sign not yet known; ++ = Phone Only; ** = CW Only; NO = No Opening forecast.
Long Path bearings and opening times are underlined. All forecasts are calculated using *W6ELProp V.1.03* propagation software, available at <http://www/qsrl.net/w6elprop/> by Sheldon C. Shallon-W6EL. Solar Flux and K-index varied in accordance with NOAA 27-day forecast.

-- POSITIVE OUTLOOK FOR CYCLE 24 --

Since the advent of radio, Sunspot Cycle 19, which peaked in October 1957 with a Smoothed Sunspot Number (SSN) of 253.8, has been unmatched in intensity. Evidence is now mounting that Sunspot Cycle 24 is going to be a big one. Following in the footsteps of Mausumi Dikpati at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, solar physicist David Hathaway of the Marshall Space Flight Center agrees that Cycle 24 “looks like it’s going to be one of the most intense cycles since record-keeping began almost 400 years ago.”

Hathaway’s forecast that Cycle 24, due to peak in 2010 or 2011, will be intense is based on historical records of geomagnetic storms. “When a gust of solar wind hits Earth’s magnetic field, the impact causes the magnetic field to shake. (*Ed. note: The intensity of this movement is reported in the 3-hour k-indices and transposed into the A-index, which are reported hourly on WWV.*) If it shakes hard enough, we call it a geomagnetic storm,” Hathaway stated.

Hathaway and his colleague Robert Wilson looked at records of geomagnetic activity going back almost 150 years and noticed the relative amount of geomagnetic activity can forecast what the solar cycle will be like in 6 to 8 years. Using the Inter-hour Variability Index (IHV) from magnetometer data recorded in England and Australia since 1868, they found that the IHV predicts the amplitude of the solar cycle some six years in advance with a 94% correlation coefficient.

According to their analysis, Cycle 24 should peak around 2010 with a SSN of 160 ± 25 , making it the strongest solar cycle in the past fifty years.

(From “Scientists Predict Big Solar Cycle,” *Science@NASA*, 21 December 2006)

-- JANUARY SOLAR ACTIVITY --

During the first 28 days of January, the Solar Flux ranged from 76 up to 89, with a mean value of 76.5 (vs. 83.5 for January 2006 and 102.5 for January 2005). The A-index was ≤ 10 on 18 days.

Solar activity was very low to low. Earth’s geomagnetic field was at quiet to active, with periods of minor to major storms 01-05, and 15-21 January. Solar winds varied from a low of 300 km/s on 08 January to highs of 720 km/s on 03 and 17 January.

-- FEBRUARY PROPAGATION --

Solar activity is expected to be at very low to low levels during February. No proton events are expected at geosynchronous orbit.

The greater than 2 MeV electron flux at geosynchronous orbit is expected to be at high levels through 10 February and again 14-19 February.

The Earth’s geomagnetic field is expected to be quiet to unsettled through 10 February. Unsettled to minor storm levels are expected 11-15 February due to recurrent coronal hole high speed stream. Quiet to unsettled conditions are expected 16-19 February. The Solar Flux should range from 75 to 85 during February.

(From NOAA *Weekly Highlights and Forecasts*, 23 January 2007 and NOAA *27-day Space Weather Outlook Table*, 23 January 2007.)

-- MARK YOUR CALENDARS --

The 2007 TARC Christmas Dinner will be held at 6:00 PM on Wednesday, 19 December at Troyer’s Dutch Heritage Restaurant, 3713 Bahia Vista St., Sarasota. Cost will be \$18.00 per person, which includes all you can eat buffet, beverage, dessert and gratuity. More details as the date gets closer.

CONTESTS & ACTIVITIES

Contest/Special Event	Begin-End Times/Dates	Bands/Modes	QSO With	Exchange
North American Sprint	0000Z 04 Feb 0400Z 04 Feb	80, 40 & 20 Meters Phone Only	Anyone, Anywhere	Both Calls, Name, Serial #, State
Mexican International RTTY Contest	1800Z 03 Feb 1759Z 04 Feb	80 – 10 Meters RTTY Only	Anyone, Anywhere	R/S/T + Serial Number
North American Sprint	0000Z 11 Feb 0400Z 11 Feb	80, 40 & 20 Meters All Modes	Anyone, Anywhere	Both Calls, Name, Serial #, State
CW Worldwide RTTY WPX Contest	0000Z 10 Feb 2400Z 11 Feb	80 – 10 Meters RTTY Only	Anyone, Anywhere	R/S/T + Serial Number
Dutch PACC DX Contest	1200Z 10 Feb 1200Z 11 Feb	160 – 10 Meters Phone & CW	Dutch Stations Only	R/S/(T) + Serial Number
ARRL International DX Contest	0000Z 17 Feb 2400Z 18 Feb	160 – 10 Meters CW Only	DXCC Entities	R/S/T + State
Belgian UBA DX Contest	1300Z 24 Feb 1300Z 25 Feb	80 – 10 Meters CW Only	Belgian and EU DXCC entities	R/S/T + Serial Number
REF French DX Contest	0600Z 24 Feb 1800Z 25 Feb	80 – 10 Meters Phone Only	French Stations, including Overseas Territories	R/S/ + Serial Number
Russian PSK Worldwide DX Contest	2100Z 23 Feb 2100Z 24 Feb	80 – 10 Meters PSK 31 Only	Anyone, Anywhere	R/S/T + Serial Number
North American QSO Party	1800Z 24 Feb 0600Z 25 Feb	160 – 10 Meters RTTY Only	Anyone, Anywhere	Name + State

From February 2007 issues of *QST* and *WorldRadio*

-- JANUARY OPERATION OF 1A4A --



Magistral Villa of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta

The 02-08 January 1A4A operation from the SMOM took place from the grounds of this villa.

Just what is the SMOM? The Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and Malta, better known as the Sovereign Order of Malta, has a two-fold nature. Founded in Jerusalem around 1050, it is one of the most ancient religious Catholic Orders which has also been recognized as an independent subject of international law. The Order's motto calls for defense of the faith and assistance to the suffering. The Order has diplomatic relations with 96 nations, and issues its own passports and stamps. For some 900 years, the Order has provided humanitarian assistance in its hospitals, clinics and welfare centers in over 120 nations.

The 1A4A operation was also of a two-fold nature. Not only did it activate the DXCC entity ranked #28 Most Wanted, but it did so in an effort to lend financial support in the SMOM's goal of building a school for 100 girls in the Diocese of Rumbek, Southern Sudan. So, if you did work 1A4A, you might consider giving a bit of a donation with your QSL request to the manager, IZ4DPV.

-- TARC WEEKLY NETS --

The TARC Simplex Net meets every Tuesday at 7:30 PM on 146.580 MHz; the TARC Net is held every Thursday, except on meeting dates, at 7:30 PM on our 146.805 W4AC Repeater (- 600 Hz offset and 100 Hz PL tone required). These nets provide a good opportunity to blow the dust from your rigs and check up on the activities of your fellow members. So try to set some time aside each week for our nets.

In addition, the Snowbird Net meets daily on 14.278 MHz @ 10 AM, and on 7.230 MHz @ 7 PM. All are welcome to participate.

-- UPCOMING DARN ACTIVITY --

Diocese Amateur Radio Network (DARN) communications exercises will be on Monday, 12 February. The morning exercise starts at 11:00 AM, and call-ins on our W4AC Repeater follow those on two other machines, so be patient. The evening exercise starts at 7:30 PM and follows the same routine.

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indicated an interest in using the service, if it is offered. With no additional interest, the plan was cancelled.

- Purchase of LCD Projector – Following the authorization at December’s meeting to spend between \$400 to \$600 for a suitable projector, Jon Hamlet-W4ZW tracked one down on the Trading Circuit City auction site and purchased it for about \$400.
- Payment of Repeater Site Lease – Payment was made in December.
- TARC Media Promotion – Jon-W4ZW commented that he had not yet the opportunity to prepare anything.
- Christmas Dinner Venue – Croft-VE3CT suggested the Dutch Heritage up in Sarasota, where the price should be around \$17-18 per person for a buffet style dinner. A show of hands indicated a majority of those in attendance favored the Dutch Heritage over other suggestions. Croft will follow up on possible arrangements.
- Donation to Airwave Missions – Konrad-WA3RRS presented a check for \$500 to Marcella and David Haag-W4HAG. David thanked the TARC for the donation, and remarked that the money would purchase one radio and solar panel, with the intended village purchasing the battery.

NEW BUSINESS – Konrad announced several items of interest:

- TARC Call Sign Badges – It is recognized that a number of members have not received these badges. Konrad reported that a list had been made up, and requested a show of hands by those present to confirm their status. Three members not on the list were noted. Once the 2007 membership has been determined 31 March, an order for all “missing” badges will be placed with the dealer.
- TARC Golf Shirts – When asked how many members would be interested in purchasing these shirts, which had been available about two years ago, ten (10) members indicated interest. The shirts would be priced around \$30 each. Follow up will be made to determine the former source, such that these members could place their individual orders with the supplier.
- Sharks Tooth Festival – The 2007 Festival will be held 20-22 April. Notice of our Special Event Station K4S has been sent to ARRL, CQ and WorldRadio for publication. A total of fifteen (15) members present indicated they would be willing to participate in setting up and operating our station. Reminders will be sent out as the date approaches.

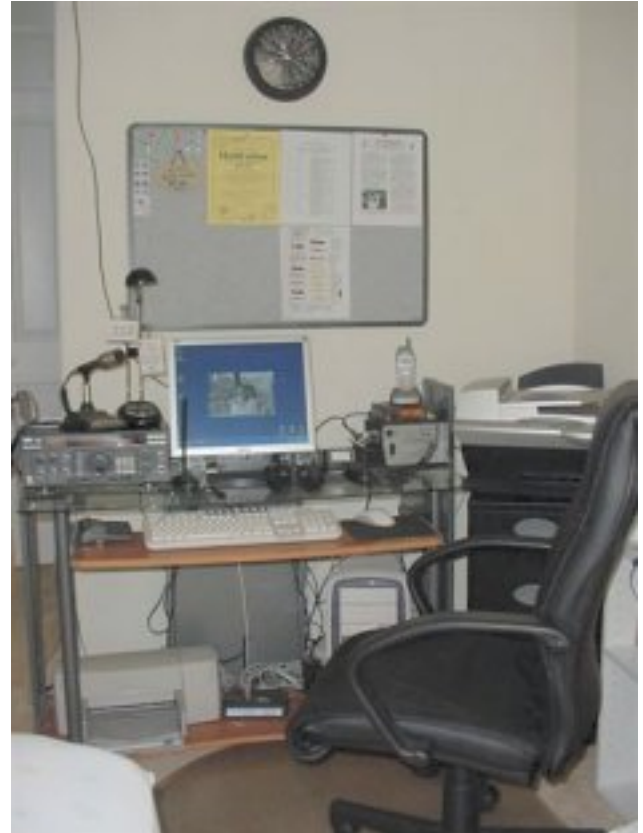
COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR – None

ADJOURNMENT – A motion to adjourn at 7:57 PM was made by Bernie Holtman-W4GO, seconded by Jim LaCourse-K4IH, and passed. There were 26 members and two visitors present.

PROGRAM – Jon Hamlet-W4ZW presented a detailed discussion of how “Digital Signal Processing” (DSP) operates, not only in DSP-equipped radios but also in several other audio devices utilizing digital processes.

Jack Sproat-W4JS
Secretary

-- K4IH SHACK COMING TOGETHER --



Jim LaCourse-K4IH (formerly AI4NQ) has started getting his shack in order at his new home. Jim has a Yaesu FT-990 with Yaesu MD-1 desk mike, a SDG Smartuner and a 20’ flagpole stealth antenna (formerly used by Bernie-W4GO) for his HF station. For UHF, Jim has an ICOM 228H feeding a Discone antenna in the attic on two meters. Good luck with the new station, Jim!

-- 2007 DUES REMINDER --

As per our Bylaws, if you have not paid your dues by 31 March 2007, you will be dropped from the membership roll. Those who received a free membership via an exam session prior to October 2006 will also be dropped if they do not become a dues paying member. Please submit an updated application form along with your payment.

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-- HOMESPUN CHARITY AT ITS BEST --

TARC Director Jon Hamlet-W4ZW now has another reason to be mighty proud of his daughter, Elizabeth (Lizzie), and son, Eric. As the 2006 Christmas shopping season was underway, Lizzie and Eric noted that many new computers were being bought as gifts. Their inquiries indicated that many people would be discarding their old computers or relegating them to a closet somewhere. The light of inspiration brightened and they came up with "Pay It Forward," a community service project to refurbish donated computers and place them with Sarasota County students currently lacking access to one at home. Such needy students only need to write a letter explaining their need, and the recipients will be chosen via these letters.

The initial donation drive was held from 10 AM to 2 PM, 29 December at the Tropical Car Wash in Palmer Ranch, where the owners, Keith and Karyn Richards, had offered the use of one wash port as the collection point.



Pine View seniors (l-r) Karrah Imeratore, Lizzie Hamlet, and Adelaide Boedecker were at the Tropical Car Wash to collect donated computers.

(From "Teens begin drive to obtain computers for the needy," Connie Pfahlert, *Herald Tribune*, 29 December 2006)



Jon-W4ZW sorting through the donated computers.

Well, that initial drive really exceeded all expectations! More than 50 computers were dropped off in the first two hours. By 2 PM, over 100 computers, printers and monitors had been donated.

To find suitable storage space for this much equipment, Lizzie's mother, Ashley, went to the USA Stor-A-Way to rent a storage unit. When the manager, Juli Luke, learned what was happening, she volunteered a truck and a storage unit for the project.

(From "Computer drive 'pays it forward'," Kazuaki Nagata, *Herald Tribune*, 10 January 2007)

-- A TRADITION COMING TO AN END --

With publication of the FCC's R&O, WT Docket 05-235 in the *Federal Register* on 24 January, the deletion of Element 1-Morse Code from the exam requirements for access to the Amateur Radio HF bands will go into effect 23 February 2007.

On that date, all Technician licensees will have HF privileges identical to those of current Novice and Tech+ licensees. They need take no further action to enjoy those privileges. A Technician holding a valid CSCE for Element 3 can go to a VE Session, pay the \$14 application fee, and receive an instant upgrade.

As the tape player was being put away at the end of our 13 January VE Session, the remark was made that "That's the last we will be using this." Ron Hogarth-K4AUX had the distinction of being the last person to be given an Element 1 Morse code exam by our VE Team. (Ron passed with flying colors, and is now a General class licensee.) As there will not be a VE Session in February, due to conflict with the Orlando HamCation, our 10 March session will be *post facto*, as Morse testing will be gone.

Use of Morse by hams is not dead, however, in the future it is likely that most of it will be computer generated and copied—the current state of the art for a communication mode that began in 1844.

-- NEED A TARC MEMBER BADGE? --

For one reason or another, it's been quite awhile since we purchased badges for our members. A tentative list has been made of 23 members who have never received a badge. If you will be an active member during 2007, but have never received a badge, please confirm this with either Treasurer Don Gray-WD7A via resqzj8u@verizon.net or Secretary Jack Sproat via w4js@juno.com. The TARC roster will be finalized after the 31 March deadline for payment of 2007 dues and all missing badges will then be ordered.

"It must never be forgotten...that the liberties of the people are no so safe under the gracious manner of government as by the limitation of power." - Richard Henry Lee (1732-1794)

-- A VISTA OVERVIEW --

The Windows VISTA operating system will become available to consumers 30 January 2007. This new OS took more than five years of development to replace Windows XP. In one reviewer's opinion, it is "worthy, but largely unexciting."

Overall, it works pretty much the same way as Windows XP, and nearly all the major, visible new features of Vista are already available in Apple's operating system, called Mac OS X, which came out in 2001 and was last upgraded in 2005.

To get the full benefits of Vista, you will need a hefty new computer, or a hefty one recently purchased. The vast majority of existing Windows PCs won't be able to use all of Vista's features without major hardware upgrades. They will be able to run only a stripped-down version and, even then, at very slow speeds.

Vista comes in six versions, two of which are primarily aimed at consumers. One, called Home Premium, is the version most consumers will want. Home Premium costs \$239, or \$159 if you are upgrading from an earlier version of Windows. This version contains the full Aero interface, Windows Media Center and Windows Tablet. Home Premium will be preloaded on most midrange and some high-end consumer PCs.

Vista Ultimate expands Home Premium with some additional features from the business versions of Vista. This is for power users, and it's likely to be preloaded on high-end PCs. Ultimate will cost \$399, or \$259 as an upgrade.

For most users who want Vista, purchase of a new computer is recommended. Don't even consider trying to upgrade a computer older than 18 months, and even some of them may be unsuitable. Microsoft offers a free, downloadable "Upgrade Advisor" program to determine if your XP machine is suitable for upgrading. Go to microsoft.com/windowsvista/get-ready/upgradeadvisor5.

It's recommended that you have on gigabyte of memory to run Home Basic and two gigs for Premium or Ultimate. The latter two will also need a powerful, modern graphics system to run well.

The reviewer tried Vista on three computers. On a new, top-of-the-line HP laptop with Vista preinstalled it worked smoothly and quickly. On a 3-year-old HP desktop, a Vista upgrade installed OK, however, even with one gig of memory and what was once a high-end graphics card, Ultimate reverted to Basic. It was so poor that this PC was useless. The third machine was a new Dell XPS M1210 laptop. In general Vista ran OK but some operations were very slow.

(From "Vista not exciting, but it's the best Windows yet," Walter Mossberg, *Herald-Tribune Business Weekly*, 22 January 2007)

-- VANITY APPLICATIONS ON HOLD --

The FCC suspended processing of vanity call sign applications on 18 December 2006, and there is yet on word on when this processing will resume. This suspension, which does not affect renewals of vanity call signs, resulted from the new rule which went into effect 15 December 2006 to discourage the filing of multiple applications by one individual for the same call sign.

While the FCC continues to accept vanity call sign applications, those applications will not be processed until software changes have been fully implemented to comply with the new regulation.

The last vanity call signs were issued 04 January for applications received on 15 December. Once processing of new vanity applications resumes, the FCC will process all applications in the order in which they were received. Typically, it takes 18 days from when an application is received until the call sign is issued, or the application is denied.

Of interest, one person submitted 30 applications for the same call sign three days after the new rule became effective on 15 December.

The current vanity call sign fee, for both new applications and renewals is \$20.80 for the 10-year term of the license.

(From ARRL Web site, 24 January 2007)

-- THE "KILLER WATT" --

(QRP is considered to be 5 watts, or less, output power and many believe "Life's too short for QRP." Not so for Port Charlotte's Dennis Lazar-W4DNN.)

While serving with the Coast Guard as an electronics technician at an Alaskan LORAN station, Dennis-W4DNN got interested in QRP and built a one-tube transmitter using a 6J6 tube. He operated the rig while on break times during his nighttime shift. Working US and Asian stations were easy with his "Killer Watt" transmitter.

Dennis upgraded to Heathkit HW-8 in the mid-70s, and now runs two watts output to a GAP Titan vertical, ground-mounted about 200 feet from a salt water canal at his QTH in Port Charlotte.

The QRP Radio Club International, <http://www.qrprci.org/>, offers a 1000 Mile Per Watt Award, and Dennis was determined to earn that award. Last April he heard V73NS calling CQ on 15-meter CW, with a S-1 signal. Dennis replied to the CQ, and was amazed when V73NS came back to him. Checking with <http://www.indo.com/distance/>, he found that Kwajalein was 7322 miles from him—a 3661 miles per watt QSO.

So, DX is there to be worked—if you want to try.

(From "The 'Killer Watt' Bags QRP's Ultimate Certificate, or 'Real CW Ops Wear Headphones'" Dennis Lazar-W4DNN, February 2007 CQ)

**TAMIAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Name _____ Call Sign _____ Class ____ ARRL (Y/N) ____

Local Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Summer Address _____ City/State _____ Zip _____

Tel. No. _____ E-Mail _____

Please check activity interests: Ass't Net Control __, RFI/TVI __, VE Testing __, Training __, Packet __, RTTY __, Computers __, DXing __, Contests __, Field Day __, Publicity __, Emergency Communications __, Special Events __, VHF/UHF __, SSTV __, ATV __, Repeater __, EchoLink __, Other (specify) _____

Single Member @ \$15.00/year __, Family Membership @ \$18.50/year __ (\$8.00 after 30 June for remainder of calendar year. \$15.00 after 31 October grants membership through remainder of year and all of the following year.)

MAIL TO: TARC, 1419 E. MANASOTA BEACH RD, ENGLEWOOD, FL 34223-6341

**TAMIAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.
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ENGLEWOOD, FL 34223-6341**

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