

S.P.A.R.K.

South Peninsula Amateur Radio Klub Newsletter

Vol. MCMXCIX No III Rptr: W6APZ/R 145.230(-.600)MHz - Club Stn: WA6NKK

Friday, May 28, 1999

The June 1999 Meeting...

Where: **SPACE SYSTEMS/LORAL** Bld 3 Auditorium

When: Thursday, 3 June 1999 High Noon

Subject: FRS (Family Radio Service) -The New(?) Citizens' Band

Back in the 1950s, the FCC created "THE" Citizens' Band on the former 11 meter ham band. This enabled most people to buy inexpensive equipment to talk across the street, around town, from farm to farm-house, and when the skip was in, across the country. Even then, there was a Citizens' band up in the 400 MHz range. Back in college, we used a pair of these 400 MHz "handietalkies" (really there was nothing "handy" about those large heavy tube-type radios) to communicate from the home-coming activities back to our campus carrier-current AM radio station studio. Those 400 MHz radios were very expensive and few people seemed to use them. The 27 MHz band opened up a Pandora's box of problems and abuse with unauthorized high power amplifiers and other "legal" techniques to extend the useful range of 27 MHz The FCC eventually removed the license communications. requirements for the band and apparently gave up on enforcement. In many areas the 27 MHz band became virtually useless for the intended purpose due to the heavy QRM, especially when the skip was in.

Enter FRS. In the sense that there has been a citizens' band in the 400 MHz range for years, FRS in not a "new" CB. In the sense that the rules are new and the equipment is now very compact, FRS is the new Citizens' Band. The FCC obviously learned from their 27 MHz errors and carefully crafted the rules to minimize abuse. From reading the FCC web site information, it seems the present FRS rules coalesced from manufacturers' inputs who wanted to sell a new product, but did not want to cause problems for other equipment they manufactured in the GMRS band.

In the talk at the SPARK meeting on June 3, you will learn what can and cannot be done with FRS, which channels are available, what some of the FCC-imposed limitations on this new service are, which features various FRS radios may incorporate, and find out what they cost. You will also see a comparison of various products on the market.

The speaker, Rich Stiebel, W6APZ, has a BSEE from Illinois Institute of Technology and an MSEE from San Jose State University. He designed several 27 MHz citizens' band transceivers for Knight Electronics in the late 1950s and early 60s. He currently serves as repeater trustee for the SPARK/SARS 145.230 repeater.

For the XYL or "significant other" who refuses to get a ham license but still wants to stay in touch in the shopping mall, or while hiking on vacation, FRS may be the answer you have been looking for.



June is Field Day month...true. But contacts via repeater are not counted for field day points, so why this title? The repeater provides opportunities to increase your Field Day score. Work a station on one band, get one point. Work the same station on the same band, but a different mode and get a second point! Now what could be a better reason than that to brush up on your CW? As mentioned last month, WE6V, Jim, is providing Morse Code practice every Tuesday evening from 8 to 8:30 on the 145.230 repeater. But, did you know he is also sending code practice on Monday nights on the 146.385 (+600) repeater? Given Jim's twice/week schedule, you can still get in a lot of CW practice between now and Field Day.

I have not used CW in years, or at least so it seems. So, inspired by Field Day coming up, I got pencil and paper and started copying code last Tuesday. The first couple of words of CW started out being sent at 13 WPM instead of at slow speed as I had expected. Rattled, I missed the first couple of words. The CW then slowed down to 8 WPM and I my copy was almost solid. By the time Jim had built up his speed to 13 WPM near the end of the code practice session, I was still copying almost solid and did not even realize that his speed had increased!

Listening and copying CW on the repeater is a good way to get in shape for Field Day.

73 de Rich, W6APZ <w6apz@svpal.org



Bob Reiling, W6JHJ, had been a member of SPARK for many, many years. He served as club treasurer for several years (and as Vice President/program chair - I think - someone may know better). He was a control operator on our 145.230 repeater as well as the Black Mountain Amateur Television (ATV) Repeater. He was one of the first SPARK members to have an AM ATV station on 900 MHz and was probably the only one to build a FM ATV station among our members. He even put together a compact 10 GHz ATV station which he demonstrated at various club meetings.

Bob was involved with computers back in the days when computers were something a only few people were home-brewing; long before one could buy a computer off-the-shelf. He was an early packet radio enthusiast.

When a project at work drew to a close and Bob saw that there were high-capacity liquid nickel-cadmium cells that the repeater could use for emergency power, he was instrumental in arranging

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to have the company donate the cells to SPARK. Every year when we have reconditioned those cells, Bob has participated directly in the process by monitoring, interpreting the data, and cleaning the cells. Even this last year when he was ill, he loaned the club his cables, humongus load resistors, and fan for discharging the back-up battery pack.

The Prez Sez...

No Report

73 de Jack

A Note From the Treasurer:

Dues are due, still value priced at US\$10.00. Though I would be most happy to see you at the meetings, you may also send them in to me at:

Rolf Klibo

3825 Fabian Way, MS G-16

Palo Alto, CA 94303

Later in the newsletter you will find the Budget for 1999, and the actual costs for 1998. The latest roster is also attached. Please check your information and let me know if there should be a change made.

The following are the meeting dates for 1999:

July 1	October 7
August 5	November 4
September 2	December 2

Also, we have the opportunity to do some PR for the Klub at the annual company Health Fair. We have been offered a chance to have a table at the event, and they will plumb in power for us if we need it. This could be a great chance to expose the Klub to the employees here.

Think of the possibilities! We could have an active link to the repeater, a description of the shack, maybe get Paul, N6YNU, to bring out his ATV setup, and display our support of emergency communications for hospitals through the repeater during area emergencies. YOU probably have some good ideas, too!

Bring them to the next meeting or send them to me. And if you can volunteer for the health fair, let me know that , too.

By the way, there ARE people who are still interested in HAM Radio. Two guys in my office went out a week ago and passed their No-Code Tech tests. I hope to snag them for the Klub.

One more note. The company web folks would like to do an article on the Klub for the Internal Web Home Page. Is there someone who would volunteer to bring our Klub web site up to date? (And maintain it for a while?) I'm sure our web site will be prominent in the story.

Do you know about, or are operating on: APRS? PSK31? Let me know.

Thanks and 73 de Rolf, N6NFI

ARRL Pacific Division Update

June 1999

by Brad Wyatt, K6WR, Director, Pacific Division, ARRL 18400 Overlook Rd. #5, Los Gates CA 95030-5850 (408) 395-2501 (Phone and FAX) Packet: K6WR@N0ARY.#NOCAL.CA E-mail: K6WR@arrl.org Pacific Division Home Page: http://www.pdarrl.org/

League Urges FCC to Expedite Restructuring

The ARRL has urged the FCC to act "without delay" on Amateur Radio restructuring and has suggested that the Commission adopt the League's restructuring plan as its own in order to speed up the process. In a letter May 19 to FCC Chairman William Kennard and the five FCC Commissioners, the League says that the state of limbo created by the current FCC Amateur Radio restructuring proceeding, WT Docket 98-143, is stifling Amateur Radio's growth, as current and prospective hams await an FCC Report and Order.

"This is antithetical to the goal of the proceeding," the League said. It asked the FCC to adopt the League's plan in a Report and Order "at the earliest possible time."

The ARRL told the FCC that its comprehensive plan of four license classes and two Morse code testing tiers--5 WPM and 12 WPM--plus re-farming of the Novice/Technician Plus HF CW subbands "constitutes a reasonable middle ground proposal." The ARRL's restructuring proposal formed the core of the League's comments to the FCC on WT 98-143, which the FCC refers to as the Part 97 Biennial Review.

Both the FCC and ARRL proposals would eliminate the Novice and Tech Plus licenses. The ARRL's letter stressed that "refarming" of the Novice class subbands was "the most critical portion of the League's comprehensive plan, or, indeed, of any license restructuring plan the Commission may adopt." The League said refarming was "essential" to make room for anticipated additional licensees using SSB HF subbands. In addition, the League said, refarming "is absolutely necessary to preserve and enhance the incentive self-training program" and to ensure more efficient use of limited HF allocations. Under the League's plan, General, Advanced, and Extra class licensees would get additional HF spectrum for phone operation.

"The League offers its comprehensive plan in toto, as the best means of accomplishing increased growth in the Amateur Service and the continuation of the value of the Service as a foundation cornerstone of telecommunications development," the League's letter said.

Judging from comments made at the Dayton Hamvention FCC forum by William Cross, W3TN, of the FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, no substantive progress has been made toward formulating Amateur Service rules changes beyond reading, analyzing, and tabulating comments. Cross said no decisions had been made on WT Docket 98-143 as of May 13. The FCC received 2250 comments from the amateur community in the proceeding.

In its letter, the League took the opportunity to express appreciation for the support for the Amateur Service by both Kennard and WTB Chief Thomas Sugrue and to thank the FCC for the renewed enforcement efforts of Compliance and Information Bureau Chief Richard Lee and CIB Legal Advisor Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH.

"Their innovation and dedication to purpose, together with your timely reemphasis on regulatory compliance, has reinvigorated the Amateur Service and represents the finest tradition of government service to the public," the letter concluded. Thanks ARRL Members Only web site.

Update on the

Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act

It's round two in Congress for the Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act. At the request of the ARRL, Rep Michael Bilirakis introduced the 1999 version of the proposed legislation, HR 783, on February 23. As of May 18, the bill had received 56 co-sponsors Site may also obtain their League addresses, but the procedure is including Pacific Division Congresswoman Mink (HI 2) and Congressmen Farr (CA 17) and Miller (CA 7). Great work in so short a time!

The bill is aimed at ensuring the availability of spectrum to Amateur Radio operators. It would protect existing Amateur Radio spectrum against reallocations to or sharing with other services unless the FCC provides "equivalent replacement spectrum" elsewhere. Bilirakis, a Florida Republican, also sponsored last year's measure, which attracted upwards of 83 cosponsors on both sides of the aisle. Rep Frank Pallone Jr., a New Jersey Democrat, is the initial cosponsor of the 1999 bill.

ARRL Legislative and Public Affairs Manager Steve Mansfield, N1MZA, says the 1999 bill "is largely the same as last of the Charles N. Fisher Memorial Scholarship Award. He is year's HR 3572." The major difference is that the 1999 version adds "Amateur Satellite Service" frequencies to "Amateur Radio Service" in detailing the frequencies that would be afforded protection under the act.

Specifically, HR 783 would amend the Communications Act to require the FCC to provide "equivalent replacement spectrum" to Amateur Radio and the Amateur Satellite Service in the event of a reallocation of primary amateur allocations, any reduction in secondary amateur allocations, or "additional allocations within such bands that would substantially reduce the utility thereof" to amateurs.

Mansfield said it's too soon to predict how HR 783 will fare in the new Congress, but said the fact that it has been introduced so early in the session "bodes well for our prospects." He said that a number of the cosponsors from last year already have indicated an interest in signing on again, "so I think we'll have a lot of support."

A copy of the measure is available via the Thomas Web site,. http://thomas.loc.gov/

Thanks, ARRL Bulletin.

1999 Young Ham of the Year Nominations Open

Nominations are due May 30, 1999, for the Amateur Radio Newsline 1999 Young Ham of the Year (YHOTY). Now in its second decade, the YHOTY award goes each year to a US amateur 18 or younger who has used Amateur Radio to significantly contribute to the benefit of the hobby, to the state of the communications art, to the community or to the nation.

To obtain an official application, send an SASE to 1999 Young Ham of the Year Award, Newsline, 28197 Robin Ave, Santa Clarita, CA 91350. Nomination applications also are available at http://www.arNewsline.org.

The award presentation is scheduled take place at the 1999 Huntsville Hamfest in August. The 1999 Young Ham of the Year also will spend a week at Space camp in Huntsville.

Thanks, Newsline.

ARRL E-mail Addresses Are Available to Members

ARRL members can now announce their ARRL membership through their e-mail addresses! Starting February 1, 1999, a new membership service was available for those wishing to have an ARRL e-mail address, and you won't have to switch e- mail services to do it. Not only that, but it will be free- of-charge to League members!

The new, personalized League e-mail addresses will consist site at http://www.arrl.org/contests/. of the member's call sign @arrl.net. Electronic mail sent to the address automatically will be forwarded to any e-mail account you choose.

As long as you remain an ARRL member, you'll never have to notify people of an address change - even if you change Internet Service Providers.

Members are able to sign up quickly and easily through the ARRL Members Only Web Site. If you are not already registered for Members Only Web Site, you can do the SO at http://www.arrl.org/members/.

Members who are not registered for the Members Only Web a bit more time consuming. For instructions, send a blank message to subscribe@arrl.net.

Thanks, ARRL Letter.

Pacific Division Winners of **ARRL Scholarships Announced**

DeLynn Bettencourt, KF6FWU, of Crows Landing, CA, is the winner of a General Scholarship Fund Award. She will graduate from Turlock High School this month and plans to attend California State University in Fresno to take Electrical Engineering. She is also the winner of the Smittcamp Family Honors College Award.

Derrill Dabkoski, AC6UY, of San Francisco, CA, is the winner currently attending City College of San Francisco and is transferring to the University of California Berkeley this fall as a junior. He will be studying in the EE and Computer Science Department.

Congratulations to both DeLynn and Derrill! Thanks, ARRL Foundation.

Pacific Division Section Managers Re-elected

Bob Davis, K7IY, the incumbent Nevada Section Manager, and Don Costello, W7WN, the incumbent San Joaquin Valley Section Manager, both were unopposed for reelection so were named to new two year terms.

Congratulations Bob and Don and thanks for all your work during the last two years!

Dayton Amateur Radio Association Scholarships

The Dayton Amateur Radio Association is accepting applications for its annual scholarship awards. The DARA Scholarship Program is open initially to any Amateur Radio operator graduating from high school in 1999. There are no restrictions on course of study, nor does the student need to be pursuing a four-year baccalaureate degree, but schools selected must be accredited. Awards are made on a nondiscriminatory basis. Selection criteria include financial need, scholastic achievement, contributions to Amateur Radio, and community involvement. Decisions of the DARA Scholarship Committee are final. Maximum individual awards are \$2000. For an application and full details, send an SASE to DARA Scholarships, 45 Cinnamon Ct., Springboro, OH 45066. Application deadline is June 15, 1999. Thanks, Stan Kuck, NY8F.

Coming Events

- Livermore Swap Meet - 1st Sunday of each month at Las Positas College in Livermore, 7:00 AM to noon, all year. Talk in 147.045 from the west, 145.35 from the east. Contact Cliff Kibbe, KF6EII, (209) 835-6715, e- mail: larkswap@ hotmail.com.

- Foothill Flea Market - 2nd Saturday of each month from March to October at Foothill College, Los Altos Hills, CA.

- Western States Weak Signal Society (WSWSS) will have their summer meeting on June 5, 10:00AM, at Baker's Square Restaurant, Harbor Blvd. and Hwy. 50 in West Sacramento CA.

- ARRL Field Day, June 26^27. For complete details see May QST pages 95 and 96. General contest rules are on the ARRL web

Hoo's Hoo...

Officers:

President:	Jack Nawrocki
Vice Pres:	Bill Jiminez
Treasurer:	Rolf Klibo
Secretary:	Open

SS/L_Shack_Trustee: Dick LeMassena, W6KH

<u>Newsletter Editor:</u> Gary Hendra, W6NOE -- SS/L 3825 Fabian Way, MS-G36, Palo Alto 94303

E-mail to 'hendra.gary@.ssd.loral.com'

Repeater Trustee/Control Operators(Primary):

Repeater Trustee: Rich Stiebel, W6APZ Control Operators: John Buonocore, KD6ZL, Dan Connell, W6ASD, Rolf Klibo, N6NFI, Tom Holden, KN6KL; Gregg Schlaman, WA6ECQ

Repeater Technical Committee:

Committee Chairman: Rich Stiebel, W6APZ N6NFI - Rolf Klibo and KN6KL - Tom Holden

Other appointed positions

Club historian:	To be announced.
Retiree Representative:	John Gibson, N6OM
Club emergency comm coordinator:	Randy Bassett, N6RUR
Club ARRL Coordinator:	To be announced
Club swap meet coordinator:	To be announced.
Club Project coordinators:	To be announced

For Address Changes, or If Undeliverable, Return to: Gary Hendra MS-G36 SPACE SYSTEMS/LORAL 3825 Fabian Way Palo Alto, CA 94303-4604