



The *KEY*

The Newsletter of the Contoocook Valley Radio Club

Volume 12, Number 4

August, 2000

Upcoming VHF/UHF events

Dale Clement, AF1T

August 19-20: ARRL Ten GHz Contest
August 25-27: Eastern VHF Conf., Enfield, CT
September 9-10: ARRL VHF QSO Party
September 16-17: ARRL 10 GHz contest (2nd weekend)

For more information on these events contact AF1T.

Programs

August 8 — Betsy Fitts is the Disaster Services Coordinator for the American Red Cross here in NH. She will be joining us so we can learn about the Red Cross, and so she can learn about us.

September 12 — Dale, AF1T, is currently working on several possible programs for the September meeting. Come to the August meeting to find out what the program will be, or look for it on the post card mailed out in September.

CVRC meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month at the Hopkinton Town Library in Contoocook, NH. Members and nonmembers alike are welcomed. Talk-in is on the K1BKE 146.895 -600 kHz (100 Hz PL) repeater.

The KEY is published every other month at the beginning of the even numbered months. The deadline for articles and submissions is the fourth Tuesday (coinciding with the usual business meeting schedule) of the preceding month.

Field Day 2000

Information provided by Dale Clement, AF1T

This year's CVRC Field Day effort was coordinated by Jason Greene, N1IIC. The club entered in the three-alpha class, which ended up being a bit ambitious. Thanks to several non-club members, however, we were able to come up with a respectable score of several thousand points. Once again, the food (Coordinated by Dave, N1KPT) was a highlight of the weekend and was enjoyed by everyone present.

The breakdown of the effort on individual bands is as follows: 80 meters, dipole, K1BX op. on phone & CW; 40 meters, 3 element wire beam and dipole at right angles, W1VE op. on phone & CW; 20 meters 3 element yagi up 40 ft., N1FOJ op. on phone & K1BX op. on CW; 15 meters, 4 element yagi up 35 ft., AF1T op. on phone; 10 meter Novice/Tech station, 3 element yagi up 50 feet, WA1VKO callsign used; 6 meters, 6 element yagi up 25 ft., N1JHJ op. on phone; digital station, N1IIC op.

In all, over 2000 contacts were made during the contest. A lot of CW contacts helped out our score, as well as being in the 150 watt class (multiplier of two for each contact). Also helping out the score is the fact that we claimed all possible bonus points (1000 total). Bonus points were awarded for media publicity, generator power, setting up a public information display, demonstrating an unusual mode of amateur communications (AF1T built & demonstrated a laser system), natural power (At least five contacts made using solar power by AF1T on 10 meters), successful satellite communications

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(Thanks to W1VE & K1CYJ), copying the ARRL Field Day Bulletin (AF1T), and sending a message to the section manager.

A special thanks goes out to several non-CVRC members who spent a lot of time operating and contributed great deal to our score. They are N1HKO, K1BX, W1VE, and N1EYF. For more information on this year's Field Day effort and the final score, be sure to come to the August club meeting!

Origin of 73

**Louise Ramsey Moreau,
W3WRE**

Submitted by Scott Clay, N1ZGO

The traditional expression "73" goes right back to the beginning of the landline telegraph days. It is found in some of the earliest editions of the numerical codes, each with a different definition, but each with the same idea in mind - it indicated that the end, or signature, was coming up. But there are no data to prove that any of these were used.

The first authentic use of 73 is in the publication *The National Telegraphic Review and Operators' Guide*, first published in April 1857. At that time, 73 meant "My love to you!" Succeeding issues of this publication continued to use this definition of the term. Curiously enough, some of the other numerals used then had the same definition as they have now, but within a short time, the use of 73 began to change.

In the National Telegraph Convention, the numeral was changed from the Valentine-type sentiment to a vague sign of fraternalism. Here, 73 was a greeting, a friendly "word" between operators and it was so used on all wires.

In 1859, the Western Union Company set up the standard "92 Code." A list of numerals from one to 92 was compiled to indicate a series of prepared phrases for use by the operators on the wires. Here, in the 92 Code, 73 changes from a fraternal sign to a very flowery "accept my compliments," which was in keeping with the florid language of that era.

Over the years from 1859 to 1900, the many manuals of telegraphy show variations of this meaning. Dodge's *The Telegraph Instructor* shows it merely as "compliments." The *Twentieth Century Manual of Railways and Commercial Telegraphy* defines it two ways, one listing as "my compliments to you"; but in the glossary of abbreviations it is merely "compliments." Theodore A. Edison's *Telegraphy Self-Taught* shows a return of "accept my compliments." By 1908, however, a later edition of the *Dodge Manual* gives us today's definition of "best regards" with a backward look at the older meaning in another part of the work where it also lists it as "compliments."

"Best regards" has remained ever since as the "put-it-down-in-black-and-white" meaning of 73 but it has acquired overtones of much warmer meaning. Today, amateurs use it more in the manner that James Reid had intended that it be used - a "friendly word between operators."

Revised Morse Testing Standards

ARRL Bulletin 34 ARLB034

The National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators has voted to set up revised standards for the administration of Morse code examinations in the US.

Under the revised standards, examinees would have to show 25 character-count solid copy on test sheets or successfully answer seven out of ten questions of a fill-in-the-blank quiz on the sent text. The plan would bar multiple choice tests for Morse code testing.

Morse examinations would specify use of a Farnsworth "character speed" in the range of 13 to 15 WPM. Morse code audio pitch would have to be between 700 and 1000 Hz. Standard 5 WPM tests with 5 WPM character speed could be administered only as a special accommodation.

The new Morse testing standards are to be in effect by next July 1, but VECs may implement them sooner.

The NCVEC vote came July 21 during a meeting of VECs in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

Merrimack County

ARES Corner

Tom, N1SKZ, Emergency Coordinator

Net: 20:00 Local Time, Mondays
Frequency: 146.895 - (CVRC Repeater)
Alternate: 147.570 Simplex

E-mail: N1SKZ@ARRL.NET
Phone: 464-4095 (evenings)
www.qsl.net/merrimack-ares

Hello again and I hope that everyone is having a safe and happy summer. So far this year it has been quiet on the ARES front. There have been some rumblings from the agencies I keep in contact with about joint exercises, but nothing firm as of yet. The Red Cross has started building up a workstation for the KB1FDX station. Once that project has been completed, work will begin on mounting the antenna and assembling the station. After the station is on the air, arrangements will be made to include the station in the weekly net and other ARES events.

For those of you who having been keeping track of the ARES web site, you already know the wealth of information that can be found on the site and through the links. The latest project with the site is to find and add links to other ARES sites around the US. So far links to the Mid-Atlantic Section are being created with others soon to follow.

Participation in the net continues to grow with new participants joining the ranks of the long-standing members. As net participation grows, the number of members vying for Net Participation awards also grows. As of July 24th two stations, K1CKL and W1XV, are more than halfway to receiving this award. Participation in the Net Control Station Award has been lighter. The leading contender for this award is N1ZIH. Coming up in the next few months on the net will be tests with dual HF and VHF nets and a NTS refresher. Please feel free to join the net and take part in the training, camaraderie and the awards.

With the onset of the thunderstorm season, it

is important to keep some facts in mind when these storms roll through the area. First, here are some facts regarding lightning taken from the NOAA, FEMA, Red Cross preparedness guide Thunderstorms and Lightning, the underrated killers.

* Lightning often strikes outside of heavy rain and may occur as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall.

* What is referred to as "heat lightning" is actually lightning from a thunderstorm too far away for thunder to be heard. However, the storm may be moving in your direction!

* Rubber-soled shoes and rubber tires provide no protection from lightning. However, the steel frame of a hard-topped vehicle provides increased protection if you are not touching metal. Although you may be injured if lightning strikes your car, you are much safer inside a vehicle than outside.

It is also important to know the difference between a severe thunderstorm watch and warning. A watch tells you when and where severe thunderstorms are more likely to occur. A warning is issued when severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. When you hear either of the two issued by the National Weather Service, be prepared to take part in your local Skywarn net. Nets in the area are held on the 146.895 and 147.225 machines. If no net is being held on either of these machines, a wide area net is held on the 443.35 machine. Please use the two VHF nets if they are in session since they will liaison to the UHF net in an effort to reduce congestion. The following conditions should be reported to your local net:

- * Tornadoes or funnel clouds.
- * Wall clouds, especially if they are rotating.
- * Hail, be specific with regards to size. Do not report marble size, since marble come in varying sizes.
- * Winds which down branches or cause damage.
- * Rainfall of 1 inch or greater an hour, or greater than 2 inches for the storm.
- * Flooding

73 and see you on the net.

Tom, N1SKZ