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# CQ BARS

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## President's Corner

The President's Corner

Happy New Year! If you are like most Americans, you have made your list of New Year's Resolutions, and if the statistics are correct, by January 31, you will have broken most of them. But, not to worry, I have collected some extra resolutions which I will share with you in the hopes that you will find one or two you had not thought of, but would like to add to your list.

- Hamfest – Resolve to take an active part in making our Hamfest a success. Pending Executive Committee approval, BARS will be host to the American Radio Relay League's 2007 Illinois State Convention on August 5, 2007. If you have not yet volunteered to be on a committee, join one. If you are already on one, volunteer to be its chairperson.
- Skywarn – Resolve to become a trained weather spotter. Classes will be forming soon, so you still have time to join the fun. Already a spotter? Well, it never hurts to review the basics and get updated on the right way to communicate with the net controllers.
- ARES – Resolve to be an asset during an emergency, not a liability. Register with the local Emergency Coordinator. Complete an Emcomm class. Take advantage of the free FEMA courses designed to update your emergency knowledge and skills. Remember, in a real emergency, Emergency Managers don't need "Radio Operators," they need "Trained Communicators."
- No Code Extra – Resolve to take advantage of the FCC's decision to remove the code requirement by upgrading your license. If you already have an Extra, consider becoming an Accredited Volunteer Examiner or a mentor. Extra's, when was the last time you took someone under your wing and helped them improve their knowledge?
- Attendance – Resolve to have perfect attendance at our meetings this year. Your club can always benefit from your knowledge, experience, and opinions. If you lack all of the above, come anyway and bring cookies. We love treats.

By the way, you are more likely to keep a resolution if it is made public. So while it is not a requirement, I will be sure to give anyone who wishes an opportunity to share their radio resolution at the meeting..



See you on the radio,

Dale, KB9LMK

## Secretary's Column

Lots to do at next month's meeting. Hamfest Committee members – have you chosen your chairperson yet? All of us on the committees made a commitment. Now it's time to fulfill that commitment.

73's for this month

Don - N9VJV

## Last Months Meeting Minutes

The meeting was opened at 19:00 hours by KB9LMK (Dale). Introductions followed. Officers present were: KC9GHB (Mike), N9VJV (Don) and KB9JHV (Jason). Also present at the meeting were:

KB9LMK	KA9ZAW	KB9JHV
N9GH	N9LJY	WD9IWC
N9BR	WA9AFR	KC9HNA
N9ZMM	KA9SFW	KA9HZH
NW9V	WA9IL	N9VJV
WB9PDD	KC9GHB	IC9IBU
KC9ERT	WB9PWQ	WX9WRN
KA9ZJJ	N9OZD	KA9CRU
KC9HFN	KC9EWY	KA9J
KB9JLB	W9KHX	

A motion to accept the minutes as published in CQ Bars was made by KA9SFW (Jim), seconded by N9ZMM (Archie) and carried

The Treasurer's report was presented by KB9JHV (Jason). A motion to accept the report as presented was made by N9LJY (Tom), seconded by WA9IL (John), and carried.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

2 meter: No Report.

220/440 WA9IL (John) reported that both machines are operating fine. Echolink is down due to computer problems.

Net Control: N9ZMM (Archie) reported good checkins.

**Hamfest:** N9LJY (Tom) reported that has received a letter of approval from Dick Isley. The ARRL board has yet to approve. The date will be Aug 5, 2007. The various committees need to begin their work. Flyers and tickets need to be out together. Let Dale know who the chairman will be in the next 2 weeks. Marti has the flyer rough copy.

**Education:** No Report

**VE:** NW9V (Phil) reported that there were 5 candidates at the last session. All passed.

**Field Day:** No Report

**Public Relations:** KA9ZJJ (Marti) has the hamfest flyer ready for approval.

**Skywarn** NW0V (Phil) reported the results from the Skywarn Appreciation Day were less than 500 contacts. Poor weather conditions were a major factor.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

The annual awards were presented:

Ham of Year – NW9V (Phil)

Achievement – N9ZMM (Archie)

Service – KB9JHV (Jason)

A motion to close old business was made by KA9HZH (Ed) (Bryan), seconded by N9LJY (Tom) and carried.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

WX9WRN (Toni) announced that she will be starting an ARES net on Tues. It will be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tues of each month at 7:30 PM on the 147.330 machine..

A motion to close new business was made by KA9ZJJ (Marti), seconded by W9AFR (Alvin), and carried

A motion to adjourn was made by NW9V (Phil), seconded by N9LJY (Tom) and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Don, N9VJV

Secretary

#### **BPL interference – Courtesy of KA9J (Frank)**

ARRL web site and listen to the interference that Broadband over Power Lines internet systems cause. They have both videos and audio recordings there, and if you just watch the first video you will understand what we'll be up against when it comes here. As you watch the video, notice the 'S' meter indication on the mobile rig.

<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/aud-vid.html#Video>

#### **The Ham Radio Toy Store has closed its doors**

Roberto' s recorded message on the store' s answering machine said the store was sold and will be demolished in January. He will be attending hamfests from time to time.

#### **FCC ELIMINATES MORSE CODE AS EXAM REQUIREMENT!**

Early next year, the US will join the growing list of countries that no longer require Amateur Radio applicants to pass a Morse code test as the entry ticket to HF. Announcement of the pending historic rule change arrived with no fanfare December 15 in an FCC public notice. A full-blown Report and Order (R&O) in the proceeding, WT Docket 05-235, followed December 19. The best estimate of when the Morse code requirement will go away officially is sometime in February -- 30 days after the R&O appears in the Federal Register.

"We . . . believe that the public interest is not served by requiring facility in Morse code when the trend in amateur communications is to use voice and digital technologies for exchanging messages," the FCC said in its R&O. "Rather, we believe that because the international requirement for telegraphy proficiency has been eliminated, we should treat Morse code telegraphy no differently from other Amateur Service communications techniques."

The FCC says it deems the current regime of written examinations "sufficient to determine whether a person is

qualified to be issued an Amateur Radio operator license."

The FCC cast aside arguments that Morse ability is advantageous in emergencies, concluding that most emergency communication is handled using voice, data, or video techniques. The Commission also turned away assertions that retaining a Morse requirement would help keep out the bad apples.

"The record is devoid of a demonstrated nexus between Morse code proficiency and on-the-air conduct," the FCC observed. It concurred with one commenter' s observation that "maintaining the code requirement does not purge Amateur Radio of bad operators. Education and self-policing does."

The FCC also ordered that all Technician licensees present and future -- whether or not they' ve passed a Morse code test, will get privileges on 80, 40, 15 and 10 meters identical to those of Novice licensees. "In eliminating this disparity between Technician and Technician Plus licenses, we are simplifying the Amateur Service licensing structure and promoting regulatory parity," the FCC said.

The FCC took advantage of the occasion to act on the League' s Petition for Partial Reconsideration in the "omnibus" proceeding, WT Docket 04-140, calling on the Commission to retain 3620 to 3635 kHz for automatically controlled digital stations by moving the Extra class phone band edge to 3635 kHz. The FCC decided instead to authorize 3585 to 3600 kHz for such operations, and leave the newly expanded phone band intact.

The Commission further amended Part 97 "to authorize Amateur Extra class privileges to all individuals who have been issued a CEPT radio-amateur license by their country of citizenship, and who satisfy other requirements in the Commission' s rules."

Although the FCC' s Morse code decision came as no surprise, it nonetheless revived debate on the issue. The FCC had proposed more than a year ago to drop the Morse code requirement for all license classes. The record in the proceeding, the FCC said, "reflects a division of views in the Amateur Radio community." After reviewing the more than 3500 comments and counter-proposals radio amateurs had filed, the Commission stuck with its initial proposal.

ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, had this reaction: "While the Commission' s decision to delete the Morse code requirement for an Amateur Extra Class license departs from the ARRL' s recommendation, it is helpful to have the matter resolved so we can move forward."

ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, expressed a similar viewpoint.

"Now that the debate is over, we can focus on learning Morse code simply for its own sake," he said. Sumner pledged that the League would maintain its

traditional support of Morse code as an operating mode and would continue to offer Morse training materials as well as such incentives as bonus credit for CW contacts in ARRL-sponsored operating events. ARRL' s Hiram Percy Maxim Memorial Station W1AW will keep its schedule of Morse code practice and bulletin transmissions.

Since World Radiocommunication Conference 2003, the UK, Canada, Germany and other countries have dropped their Morse requirements. Sumner said other countries have successfully made the transition to a codeless testing regime, and he doesn' t anticipate problems in the US.

The pending disappearance of the Morse code requirement seems to have rejuvenated the urge to upgrade. ARRL Sales and Marketing Manager Bob Inderbitzen, NQ1R, says distribution of General Class license training materials have skyrocketed in the week after the FCC announcement.

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The ARRL has posted information relevant to the FCC action in WT Docket

05-235, including an FAQ, on its Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/fcc/morse/>>.

Web site remains: <<http://www.amateur-radio-toy-store.com>>

#### **QST de KA9QPN:**

I'd like to divert a bit from normal organizational issues and comment on the recent FCC R&O removing the need to test for Morse code proficiency. Quite frankly, I've heard some really appalling comments from some quarters about the future of the Service. More disturbing is the resurgence of the awful prejudices against no-code licensees in general, prejudices which have no place in our Fraternity. There have been loud and dire predictions of the Service becoming 'another Citizens' Band', obviously coming from people who don't listen to certain sections of the HF spectrum. There have been broadside blasts against the 'dumbing down' of the Service in particular and society in general. And there has been a lot of ill will generated for no real good reason. Let's look at this with a clear eye:

First, the ITU left it up to member nations to decide the need for a code test. The Union itself removed the Morse test requirement as a international requirement. Reasons for this being that there is no general commercial or military use of Morse code. Consequently, there is no perceived need to generally require testing for the proficiency of Morse. After this decision, it was only a matter of time before the requirement fell on a nation by nation basis. The list of nations that now require a code test is very short. The Commission's action was inevitable. Why the fireworks now?

Second, let's stop fooling ourselves. Morse code proficiency alone was never an adequate barrier to bad operators. The Service was founded (and further steps were taken with the establishment of the Amateur Auxiliary) to make US responsible for keeping our peers headed in the same general direction while behaving within the rules and the accepted norms of our group. If it's gotten screwed up, it was ours to keep from being so. How? We are the recruiters and the mentors of those who follow. If we end up with CB redux after this, it's my opinion that we didn't go out and find the 'right' folks to bring into the Service. It will be because we didn't Elmer them properly; or worse, didn't Elmer them at all. A garden takes work in plant selection, cultivation, and care. If you let your garden get overrun with weeds, it's because you didn't put the time and effort in on your plants. Sure, there will be incorrigibles and renegades. For those few that just won't listen, we have the FCC and the Federal courts. Only a damn fool wants to go to prison or pay big fines for playing radio.

Third, it's time to stop all of this "my license is better than yours" nonsense before it starts. I'll not join the debate on the general deterioration of our societal standards here. Suffice to say that it is my own belief that you choose and set your own personal standards, then live to meet or exceed them. I'll say again that there is no general commercial or military use of Morse code. It is a pleasant pastime for those inclined. A lot of us learned our 5WPM and promptly forgot it after passing the exam. The jury will be out for long time on the wisdom of that forgetfulness. Times change and requirements change. Ultimately, Morse code's use and preservation should be encouraged. That said, I note that 55 years ago, my parents had to learn Latin and calculus to graduate high school. 33 years ago, I needed to have passed geometry and French. 11 years ago, my son didn't need a foreign language and barely saw algebra. Do we all have valid high school diplomas? Answer: Yes, as the valid requirements for the certification were met at the time. These new licenses will be as valid as any earned prior, and these new folks will become part of the backbone of the Service, just as their predecessors did. Our Service and our Section thrive because of the help of the enthusiastic newcomers that have come into the Service since the no code license and because of their Old Timer mentors. I am personally excited about the possibilities that will be brought about by the general public's perceived lowering of barriers to entering our Fraternity. The pool of folks who may become

interested in our Service will most certainly grow. We need to get out there and find those interested and bring them in. We need to mentor them, get them tested, bring them into our clubs, school them in the ways of A-1 Operating, get them on track to augment our EmComm groups and other community service activities. We need to introduce them to traffic handling, contesting, and the gentle pastime of chewing the rag. We need to show the newcomers how hams still advance the radio art by showcasing new technologies. Only by taking this opportunity can we make giant strides in becoming the premier Citizen Public Servants and preserving Amateur Radio for our grandchildren and their children. The new people are coming, and they are coming without a code test to operate throughout our allocations. It's the law of the land that allows them to do so. It's up to us as to how we spend or waste this golden opportunity for a ham radio renaissance. Oh, and we will survive, despite the doomsayers. We came back after the First World War, even though the deck was stacked against resumption of Amateur operations. We survived the license class reshuffles of 1951, 1953 and again in 1968, when many wrote ham radio's obituary. We survived the influx of the 'Bash Techs' in 1982 (I was one of those). We had CBers get ham licenses in the early and mid 80's (I'm one of those, too) and we were supposed to be overrun by lids then, too. We are still here after the No-Code Tech ticket was created. Even that 'sacrilege' didn't ruin Amateur Radio, except in some arguably closed minds. If we 'lose' the Amateur Radio Service after this R&O takes effect, it will be by our own hand through our inactivity, our self fragmentation, our lack of imagination, and our inability/unwillingness to perceive and seize the future.

#### **Storm spotter classes starting in February! Courtesy of WX9WRN (Toni)**

If you are interested in becoming a trained Skywarn severe storm spotter, free classes will be held throughout northern Illinois and northwest Indiana from approximately February through mid April. A complete schedule will be posted by January 20. For more information on the Skywarn program, please read our Spotter FAQ (<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/lot/?n=spotterfaq>).

#### **World Scout Movement announces centenary of scouting ham radio award:**

The World Scout Bureau is sponsoring the "Scouting 100 Radio Award" for contacting Scout stations via Amateur Radio during 2007 -- the centenary of Scouting. This international award is also available to short-wave listeners (SWLs). Stations may be worked/logged on all bands and modes including EchoLink and IRLP, and endorsements are available for special modes or bands, such as "All Satellite Contacts" or "All QRP Contacts." Award activity will focus around the international Scout frequencies

<<http://www.home.zonnet.nl/worldscout/Jota/frequencies.htm>> (in the Americas, use 7270 kHz as the 40-meter SSB frequency; on 80 meters, avoid RTTY/digital DX on 3590 kHz). Complete details are on the Scouting 100 Radio Award Web site <<http://www.scouting100award.org/>>. Meanwhile, special event station VI3JAM <<http://www.vi3jam.com/>> will be on the air until January 13 from the 21st Scouts Australia Jamboree, and the Scout Radio and Electronics Service Unit will activate special event VI3SAA throughout 2007. Both events are part of the World Scouting centenary activities, and commemorative QSL cards will be available.

Some articles courtesy of the ARRL.