

# Spark Gap

Volume 24, Issue 4, April 2007



## FCC Poised to Cut Vanity Call Sign Fee by More Than 40%

**ARRL  
NEWINGTON,  
CT, Apr 19, 2007**

— The FCC has proposed reducing the regulatory fee to obtain or retain an Amateur Radio vanity call sign by more than 40

percent starting later this year. *In a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM)* released April 18, “Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year 2007,” in MD Docket 07-81, the Commission is proposing to cut the fee from its current \$20.80 to \$11.70. If ultimately adopted, that would mark the lowest fee in the history of the current vanity call sign program.

“In this *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, we propose to collect \$290,295,160 in regulatory fees for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007, pursuant to Section 9 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended,” the FCC said. “These fees are mandated by Congress and are collected to recover the regulatory costs associated with the Commission’s enforcement, policy and rulemaking, user information, and international activities.”

Regulatory fees are collected in advance to cover the term of the license and are submitted at the time of application, the FCC points out. Comments on the proposals outlined in MD Docket 07-81 are due May 3. Reply comments are due May 11.

The Commission is obligated to collect nearly \$290.3 million in regulatory fees during FY

2007 to fund its operations. “Consistent with our established practice, we intend to collect these regulatory fees in the August-September 2007 time frame in order to collect the required amount by the end of the fiscal year,” the FCC said.

### **Regulatory Fee Roller Coaster**

The vanity call sign fee has fluctuated over the years, but even the current fee is far lower than the \$70 the FCC first announced in its 1994 *Report and Order*. The fee subsequently was reduced to \$30 for the initial rounds of vanity call sign filers in 1996. Over the 11 years of the program, the fee has varied from a low of \$12 to a high of \$50. The FCC indicates in the *NPRM* that it anticipates some 14,700 Amateur Radio vanity call sign “payment units” or applications during the next fiscal year.

### **Vanity Fee Due for New, Renewal Applications**

The vanity call sign regulatory fee is payable not only when applying for a new vanity call sign but upon renewing a vanity call sign for a new term. The first vanity call sign licenses issued under the current Amateur Radio vanity call sign program that began in 1996 came up for renewal last year.

Those holding vanity call signs issued prior to 1996 are exempt from having to pay the vanity call sign regulatory fee at renewal. That’s because Congress did not authorize the FCC to collect regulatory fees until 1993. Such “heritage” vanity call sign holders do not appear as vanity licensees in the ULS Amateur Radio database. ■

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## *Vanity Call Sign Changes*

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*The Official  
Newsletter of the  
Mid-State Amateur  
Radio Club*



Mid-State Amateur  
Radio Club  
P. O. Box 836  
Franklin, IN 46131  
www.midstatehams.org

# ARRL URGES SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

ARRL NEWINGTON, CT, Apr 4, 2007

— The ARRL is encouraging members to invest in Amateur Radio's future generation by supporting the Education and Technology Program (ETP). Begun simply as "The Big Project" under the inspiration of then-President (now President Emeritus) Jim Haynie, W5JBP, the ETP has

expanded to some 250 participating schools across the US and sponsors free Teachers Institutes each summer for educators. The program is funded solely through contributions. ARRL Chief Development Officer Mary Hobart, K1MMH, describes the ETP as the cornerstone of the League's efforts to introduce a new generation to ham radio.

"ARRL is doing lots of great things in education for Amateur Radio, but the ETP is the foundation of our future," Hobart says. "I wish every ARRL member could sit in a classroom as students discover the magic of wireless technology, or sit in on one day of the Teachers Institute as teachers unravel the mysteries of weather, space, robotics and ham radio — and how they are interwoven — to open up a whole new world for kids. It's magical and inspiring!"

Mark Spencer, WA8SME, coordinates the ETP. The program provides participating schools with a turnkey Amateur Radio station and a complete wireless technology curriculum at no cost. Many youngsters at ETP grant schools have obtained Amateur Radio licenses, although that's not a primary program goal. Hobart says hundreds of students and their teachers have become radio amateurs, forming school clubs and getting on the air for such events as the annual School Club Round-Up.

Hobart predicts, recent changes in the

requirements to obtain an Amateur Radio license will spark even more interest. "We are poised to add thousands of new hams to our service — many of them young people who are just discovering the magic of wireless communication," she said. Hobart notes the recent appointment of Debra Johnson, K1DMJ, as the League's new Education Services Manager as further evidence of ARRL's commitment to inspiring and educating the generations of radio amateurs yet to come. The ETP will sponsor four Teachers Institutes this year, and contributions help keep this free educational service alive.

"Youngsters who benefit from the generosity of your donations may follow in the footsteps of hams who found a future in electronics, communications, computers and the sciences," she says. "Without the contributions of ARRL members, the Education and Technology Program would not be a reality." "Contributions by June 30 will place Amateur Radio in more schools and train more teachers in 2007," Hobart says. Visit the secure [ARRL Development Office Web site](#) to donate. For more information, contact Hobart via e-mail or call 860-594-0397. ■

## Reminder...

If you haven't already done so, please remember to get your dues paid to Brenda Haler, KC9EBL. Also if you will let Linda Harshbarger, KC9GCH, know if you are a member of ARRL that would be greatly appreciated. We recently updated our information with the ARRL and wish to keep our records up-to-date. ■



## Officers

**President:**  
Meredith 'JR'  
Osborne, KB9HSE

**Vice President:**  
Dave Daily,  
KB9LOT

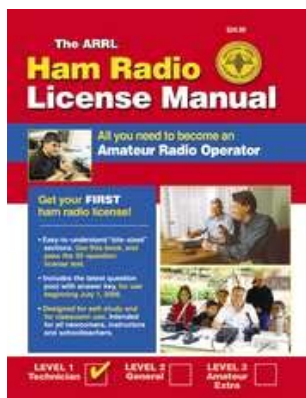
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KC9EBL

**Repeater Trustee:**  
Jay Chrisman,  
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**Spark Gap Editor:**  
Bob LaGrange,  
N9SIU

# Technician Class Update



The Technician class has completed four sessions so far with a class of four students. One student has already tested and received his ticket.. Still left are classes on the following Wednesdays; April 25, May 2 and May 9.

MARC Members are encouraged to attend at least one class session to offer support for both instructors and students.

Still needed is an instructor for the last class on May 9th who is willing to teach Electrical & RF Safety. Contact Linda if you wish to volunteer.

## Can You Google?

Linda is looking for someone who can work with Google Maps and has the time to assist with a SKYWARN project she is working on for the club. If you can Google and like to work with mapping, please let her know. We are wanting to put together a series of Johnson County maps that show both the locations of our club members and potential sites for those who can go mobile during SKYWARN activations. The idea came from a recent ARRL article.

# Evansville Plans New 160 Meter Repeater

**SPARKS April 2007** - This information comes to us via the Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society, Evansville, IN. "A new experimental repeater will soon be going on line in the Evansville area. The new repeater will operate in the 160 meter band using converted commercial broadcast equipment. The input frequency will be 1.850 MHz with an output of 1.950 MHz. Since FM is not legal on that band this new repeater will actually operate in the AM mode. Power output will be approximately 1000 watts. The antenna system will consist of an eight-bay vertical phased array. This new repeater will provide the basis for a new communications system utilizing the recently announced FT-160R 160-meter HT from Yaesu.

The final location of the repeater has yet to be determined. Bosse Field and Reitz Bowl are currently under consideration as possible sites as their fields would be of sufficient size to contain the duplexer needed for this system. The duplexer itself will be homebrewed and will consist of six converted grain silos.

An application for a new club call for this repeater has been submitted. The new call will be WC9AFD. More information is expected in their next newsletter.

## Wanted

Photos of your shacks. Linda is looking for digital photos of your at-home shacks. Take a photo and send it to her at [PIO@midstatehams.org](mailto:PIO@midstatehams.org).

**WA9RDF**  
*Repeater*  
**146.835/  
146.235 MHz**  
**151.4 Hz PL**  
*Tone*

*Weekly Net*  
*Every Sunday*  
*at 7PM EST*

*Tune in to hear*  
*the ARRL*  
*Newsline!*

*The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club sponsors a weekly traffic and social net on our repeater. The net begins at 7:00 p.m. local time, and features local news, announcements, and NTS traffic, as well as rebroadcasts of Amateur Radio Newsline.*

## Weekly Net

Make sure to check out our weekly net, held every Sunday at 1900 (7 PM) local time.

This is a great chance to meet other local amateur radio operators and test your operating skills.

Newsline is often played, allowing net participants to get the latest news about the amateur radio hobby. For those without the license or means to check in over the air, we offer an email check-in. Just send an email with your name and contact information to

[netcontrol@midstatehams.org](mailto:netcontrol@midstatehams.org), and we will record your check-in!



Mid-State Amateur  
Radio Club  
P. O. Box 836  
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*Spark Gap*

# 2007 Schedule of Events

## Public Service Events and/or Educational/Testing Opportunities

### APRIL 2007

- 4 Technician Class - 3rd class - Bob LaGrange, N9SIU, Instructor**  
White River Township Library Community Room, SR 135 and Smith Valley Road.  
Check our website for directions to the Library and for a full schedule of classes.
- 11 Technician Class - 4th class - Matt Payne, KB9UJE, Instructor**  
White River Township Library Community Room, SR 135 and Smith Valley Road.  
Check our website for directions to the Library and for a full schedule of classes.
- 14 15K Mini Marathon Pre-Race, Indianapolis**  
To volunteer or for more information contact Mike Palmer N9FEB at [www.indyhams.com](http://www.indyhams.com)
- 15 North Central Indiana Hamfest, Miami County 4-H Fairgrounds**  
Sponsored by Grant, Miami, Blackford & Kokomo ARCs  
Talk in 147.345
- 21 MARC Meeting - 8 AM**  
VEC Testing immediately following the meeting (approx. 9:30 am)  
Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN
- 25 Technician Class - 5th class - Dave Wendt, KA9OOH, Instructor**  
White River Township Library Community Room, SR 135 and Smith Valley Road.  
Check our website for directions to the Library and for a full schedule of classes.

### MAY 2007

- 2 Technician Class - 6th class - Jack Parker W8ISH, Instructor**  
White River Township Library Community Room, SR 135 and Smith Valley Road.  
Check our website for directions to the Library and for a full schedule of classes.
- 5 Mini-Marathon, Indianapolis**  
To volunteer or for more information contact Mike Palmer N9FEB at [www.indyhams.com](http://www.indyhams.com)
- 9 Technician Class - 7th class - Instructor TBA**  
White River Township Library Community Room, SR 135 and Smith Valley Road.  
Check our website for directions to the Library and for a full schedule of classes.
- 18-20 Dayton Hamvention, Dayton, OH**
- 19 MARC Meeting - 8 AM**  
VEC Testing immediately following the meeting (approx. 9:30 am)  
Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN
- 26 500 Festival Parade, Indianapolis**  
To volunteer or for more information contact Mike Palmer N9FEB at

### Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the THIRD SATURDAY of each month in the basement of the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, Indiana 46131.

**See our website, [www.midstatehams.org](http://www.midstatehams.org), for maps on how to get to our meeting.**