



Spark Gap

Vol. 35, Issue 2, February 2018 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities for thirty-five years*

On Our MARC:

Happy Valentine's Day!!

Hope everyone is staying healthy these days. Prayers are still needed for the families of Mike Rose and Steve Ellis. Cy Young is out of the hospital but still not 100%.

As everyone knows, the officer's had been looking for an Activity Coordinator. We are happy to have Bruce Tisdale be in charge of the events but we are still looking for someone to help with getting speakers for the club. If anyone is interested in this position, please let one of the officer's know that you are interested.

With severe weather season just around the corner, the Storm Spotter Training class will be next month. I will have more information at the meeting Saturday.

Just a reminder, it's that time of year when your dues for 2018 are due. See Marlys at the meeting. See you Saturday and the coffee will be on.

Jacki-K16QOG

President





Birthdays for the month of February:

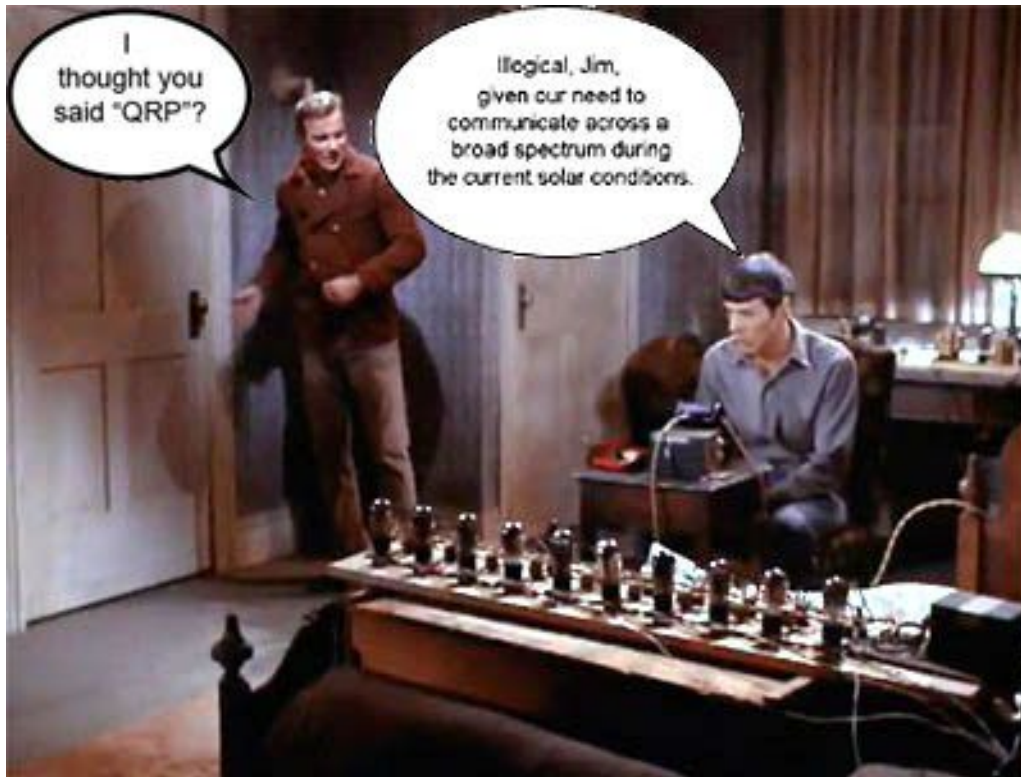
NC9ULB – Jeff Allen

ND9C – Steve Curtis

N9SIU – Bob LaGrange

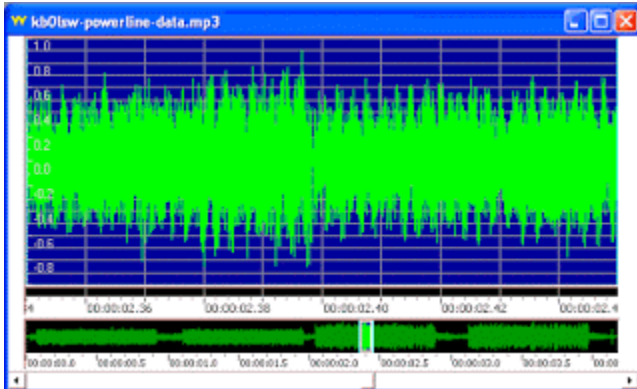
KC9ZMU – Fred Robertson

K9THR – Ron Schuetz



FCC's Noise Floor 'Study'?

17 7 February 2018 | by Steve VE7SL



It seems like the FCC's recent interest in doing an in depth study of the growing RF spectrum noise floor has taken a new twist.

The FCC's apparent lack of real action in gathering the data needed to make serious inroads into RF noise pollution has drawn the attention of the ARRL, which voiced their concerns in a recent ARRL Letter as well as in their formal response to the FCC.

In response to the FCC's Public Notice ([ET Docket No. 17-340](#)) Spectrum Management proposals.

The ARRL ***"took the opportunity to strongly urge the FCC to reinstate a 2016 TAC noise floor study, which, ARRL asserted, apparently was terminated before it even got started."*** It would seem that the proposed in-depth study never even happened and the term 'noise' has morphed into an 'interference' issue!

The FCC's paper proposed a number of guiding 'principles' in going forward with spectrum management policies, loosely based on the concept that more emphasis on eliminating 'interference' should be placed on receivers along with continued development of transmitter spectral purity and that with increased spectrum crowding, users will simply have to expect and accept certain, as yet unspecified, levels of interference!

It sounds suspiciously as if the FCC has decided that the source of any noise / interference problems have become too large to control and have passed the buck to equipment manufacturers in order to solve the growing problem for users!

“Indeed, it is difficult to imagine how the Commission can now...suggest the adoption of specific spectrum management principles, incorporating such concepts as receiver immunity, HCTs [harm claim thresholds], and interference temperature determinations without having...a firm grasp on ambient noise levels in basic RF environments and geographical areas,” the League told the FCC.

In their series of guiding principles relating to 'interference realities', the FCC has issued a number of broad, somewhat ambiguous statements, that might be interpreted in any number of odd ways ...

"Principle #1 -- Harmful interference is affected by the characteristics of both a transmitting service and a nearby receiving service in frequency, space or time;

Principle #2 – All [radio] services should plan for non-harmful interference from signals that are nearby in frequency, space or time, both now and for any changes that occur in the future;

Principle #3 – Even under ideal conditions, the electromagnetic environment is unpredictable. Operators should expect and plan for occasional service degradation or interruption. The Commission should not base its rules on exceptional events;

Principle #4 – Receivers are responsible for mitigating interference outside their assigned channels;

Principle #5 – Systems are expected to use techniques at all layers of the stack to mitigate degradation from interference;

Principle #6 – Transmitters are responsible for minimizing the amount of

their transmitted energy that appears outside their assigned frequencies and licensed areas;

Principle #7 – Services under FCC jurisdiction are expected to disclose the relevant standards, guidelines and operating characteristics of their systems to the Commission if they expect protection from harmful interference;"

The ARRL response argued that:

“Requiring better performance from receivers or RF-susceptible devices is a valid, reasonable, and long overdue requirement,” ARRL said, “but the major goal of doing so should be to prevent instances of interference ...”

Specifically they argue that amateurs are unique users and able to recognize harmful interference beyond their control and should not be subjected to the same restrictions (ie. get ready to accept new levels of yet undefined interference levels) as commercial users.

"ARRL argued, however, that the Amateur Service should not be subject to receiver immunity standards, because licensees employ a wide range of propagation, emissions, bandwidths, power levels, receivers, and antennas, making any receiver performance standards arbitrary and compromising the Service's experimental nature. They also are able to differentiate between interference from nearby spurious or out-of-band signals and that caused by receiver deficiencies. The HCT concept does not fit the Amateur Service particularly well, either, the League said; any interference hams suffer from each other is resolved cooperatively. Brute-force overload also occurs occasionally but is resolved by licensees without FCC intervention."

The ARRL seems somewhat forgetful when it comes to several long-standing complaints of inappropriate amateur-generated interference and bad behaviours which have been ignored for far too long ... problems well beyond 'cooperative resolution' by affected amateurs.

Although the ARRL does agree with many of the FCC's proposals, they doggedly insist that the FCC's apparent quashing of their original noise data investigations is critical to going forward:

“That, in ARRL’s view, is a big mistake,” the League contended. “No system of spectrum management incorporating [harm claim thresholds] and receiver immunity levels can be accurately implemented” without the noise study data.

“That study is more important now than ever before,” ARRL concluded, “and it is increasingly urgent as a prerequisite for any new spectrum management policies.”

With Washington's drastic cutbacks in FCC field-office investigators and overall budget trimming, it seems that the FCC is still relentlessly driven to eradicate all forms of illegal (pirate) broadcasting. It's a pity that they don't display the same zeal for dealing with the illegal imports and distribution of the offshore equipment that is quickly killing our ability to hear anything on the ham bands ... without selling-off and moving to several acres in the country.

[Steve McDonald, VE7SL](#), is a regular contributor to [AmateurRadio.com](#) and writes from British Columbia, Canada. Contact him at ve7sl@shaw.ca.

CLUB DUES FOR 2018

It is that time of year to pay your dues for the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club.

The dues are still \$18.00 and they have remained that amount for many years. This also a good time to update any of your information for club records such as licence upgrade, change of address or call sign.

This is also a good opportunity for new amateurs to join our club and be part of our club activities.

**Please see Marlys Barr, KC9BHM
M.A.R.C. Treasurer**

Sisterhood of Amateur Radio Supports Girl Scouts in Obtaining Radio Wireless Patch

The Sisterhood of Amateur Radio (SOAR), in conjunction with the Girl Scout Council of Southern Nevada, hosted a Radio and Wireless Tech Field Day on February 3 in Las Vegas, for more than 60 girls and their adult chaperones. ARRL began offering its program for Girl Scouts in 2016. The program defines the requirements for Girl Scouts to earn the patch at the Brownie, Junior, Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador levels and provides a platform for participants to learn about wireless technology, including Amateur Radio, and to inspire girls to learn the fundamentals of radio communication and wireless technology. It also prompts participants to take action in their communities to apply their newfound knowledge to connect people, provide safety, and to kindle an interest in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects and careers.

In addition to hands-on activities, the Girl Scouts in Las Vegas also learned about emergency and public service communications, and explored ways wireless technology is used in everyday life and in the workplace. The SOAR participants enthusiastically shared what it means to be an Amateur Radio operator and demonstrated how they can communicate around the world via Amateur Radio.

“As a girl-led and girl-focused organization, Girl Scouts of Southern Nevada understands the importance of providing science and engineering educational programming to girls of all ages,” said Linda Bridges, Chief of Communications for Girl Scouts of Southern Nevada. “By partnering with SOAR, we look forward to inspiring all Girl Scouts to pursue a lifelong love of communication and global goodwill.”

Highlights of the event were spelling out their name in Morse code and hearing it via a code practice oscillator, learning about antenna directivity and participating in a fox hunt, and actually talking on the radio as well as using Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) modes.

Todd Wilson, WH6DWF, coordinated the *ISLANDS* Conference Server, IRLP 9256, the StarLink System Hub 357087, and DODROPIN 355800, and AllStar, illustrating how Amateur Radio can be used on a tablet or a smart phone, in addition to traditional radio equipment.

ARRL Nevada Section Manager John Bigley, N7UR, expressed appreciation for “the contribution of all the participants who took time out of their day to speak to the girls to demonstrate these young girls what Amateur Radio can do to connect people around the world.” -- Thanks to John Bigley, N7UR, and Nevada Section PIO Cathy Etheredge, N7HVN

..... *ARRL News February 2018*

Storm Spotters brave elements to get a first look at severe weather

Ham radio group aids emergency management efforts in Jasper County, Iowa

Tornado sirens might send most Iowans scrambling for their basements, but they send Chuck Wagoner out to his pickup truck.

Wagoner, along with his colleagues in Newton's ham radio club, the Amateur Radio Association of Newton have been assisting emergency management personnel in Jasper County for years, heading out to track and monitor deadly storms. In April, the association will sponsor a free class designed to teach residents more about storm spotting, and how to recognize dangerous weather events.

"It just gives you a good idea of what to look for in a storm and not be terrified, because it may not be as bad as it seems," Wagoner said.

During the class, participants will learn how to spot funnel clouds, the best way to contact emergency officials and how to accurately measure wind speed.

For almost 40 years, the ham radio club has been working hand in hand with officials in Jasper County to help monitor dangerous storms. Members of the club communicate via ham radio, a form of amateur radio that has more two million active users around the globe. While Wagoner acknowledged ham radio is primarily a hobby, he said it also functions as an important emergency messaging service. When severe weather threatens Jasper County members of the club head to observe the storm, acting as the "eyes and ears" of the National Weather Service.

"It's a hobby, but it's also nationally recognized as an emergency service," Wagoner said. "When there's some kind of a disaster we're ready to set up at a moment's notice."

..... Southgate Amateur Radio News, February 2018



One of those famous Iowa twisters

UP – COMING ACTIVITIES AND HAMFESTS

02/17/2018 – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

03/17/2018 – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

04/21/2018 – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

05/19/2018 – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.



RFinder WW Repeater Directory

<http://subscribe.rfinder.net>

An Update from Hamvention Leadership

Despite all of the best efforts and intentions by Greene County, the Greene County Agricultural Society and Hamvention, we have learned the anticipated new building will not be constructed in time for Hamvention 2018. The prefab sections bid on and architecturally required are currently backlogged. We expect construction to be delayed until after our show and the Greene County Fair. We expect completion of construction yet this year and ready for our use in 2019. We regret this; however it is well out of our control.

On the positive side:

We will have increased Inside Exhibits space with the addition of the vacated Furniture Building.

The Flea Market will not be losing any space and actually may be gaining new space.

After consultation with professionals, we are in the process of solving the mud issue in the Flea Market area. We anticipate work to start as soon as weather allows.

We are rearranging the soccer field parking to eliminate use of the low areas where we had problems last year. We will also have a revised exit plan.

Additional offsite parking will be available, along with easily used maps to help you navigate. Transportation from parking areas to the show will still be at no cost.

Traffic issues were solved by mid-morning on Friday last year and we do not anticipate new issues this year.

Talk-In has all new equipment and will be using a taller tower this year allowing us to reach out farther to help you navigate to the show. Be sure to use this service. Do not forget the bulletin frequencies for more help.

There are many new ideas we are working on to make your stay with us more enjoyable. Keep watching our website "hamvention.org" for updates.

Ron Cramer, KD8ENJ, Hamvention General Chair

Jack Gerbs, WB8SCT, Hamvention Assistant General Chair

Michael Kalter, W8CI, Hamvention CFO, Spokesperson

MID-SATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the **THIRD SATURDAY** of each month at the Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

See our website, www.midstatehams.org, for maps on how to get to our meeting.

Everyone is welcome; you do not have to be a *HAM* to attend our meetings or a member of the club.

WA9RDF Repeater:

146.835/
146.235 MHz
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

Club Officers:

President: Jacki Frederick – KI6QOG
Vice President: Ron Schuetz -K9THR
Secretary: Rhonda Curtis – WS9H
Treasurer: Marlys Barr – KD9BHM
Repeater Trustee - Chris Frederick – KQ9Y

WA9RDF Repeater:

443.525/
448.525 MHz
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

Weekly Net: Sunday evening 7:00 PM ARES/RACES members and ALL RADIO AMATEURS
146.835/146.235 MHz (151.4 Hz PL Tone)

The Official Newsletter of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

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Franklin, Indiana
46131

Spark Gap Editor: Robert LaGrange N9SIU

Please send your articles to my email: n9siu@yahoo.com no later than the 3rd of the month



Special thanks to Johnson County REMC for the use of their community room for meetings and testing.