



SARA Newsletter

March 2008

Shreveport Amateur Radio Association

Meeting:

First Thursday of each month at 6:30 P.M. in the Bossier Main Library History Center

Local Amateur Information

Available at:

www.K5SAR.com

or

www.qsl.net/nwlarl/

SARA Repeaters:

145.050 - K5SAR
DX Packet Cluster

145.110 - N5FJ

146.700 - K5KDO

146.820 - K5SL

440.900 - N5FJ

SARA

PO Box 37632

Shreveport, LA

71133-7632

Club Officers

President – [Rick Westerfield, KH2DF](#)

Vice President – [Randy Fulco, K5SL](#)

Treasurer – Mike Ketchens, KE5DLM

Secretary – [Ray Bureau, AD5ZT](#)

DUCIE ISLAND ... BREAKING RECORDS

After 13 days, 7 hours and 37 minutes of continuous operation, the VP6DX Team on Ducie Island <<http://ducie2008.dl1mgb.com/index.php>> made their 168,723rd contact. Valeri Koursov, RA0ALM, of Krasnoyarsk, Russia, contacted the Ducie Island expedition on Monday, February 25, 2008 at 0437 UTC on 30 meters. According to documents maintained by Jari Jussila, OH2BU, this contact breaks the record for the largest number of contacts made by any radio expedition. The previous record was held since February 8-28, 2001 by the Five Star DX Association's DXpedition to the Comoros Island, D68C.

The Ducie Island DXpedition has broken other expedition records throughout the course of the DXpedition, including:

- The largest number of RTTY contacts, previously held by the Swains Island N8S DXpedition in April 2007.
- The largest number of SSB (voice) contacts, previously held by the Comoros Island D68C DXpedition.
- The largest number of contacts on 40 meters, previously held by the Libya 5A7A DXpedition in November 2006.
- The largest number of contacts on 30 meters, previously held by the St Brandon Island 3B7C DXpedition in September 2007.
- The largest number of contacts on 17 meters, previously held by the Swains Island N8S DXpedition.
- The largest number of contacts with North America, previously held by the Comoros Island D68C DXpedition.
- The largest number of contacts with South America, previously held by the Peter I Island 3Y0X DXpedition in February 2006.
- The largest number of contacts with Africa, previously held by the Rodrigues Island 3B9C DXpedition in March-April 2004.

The seven operating positions were divided into two sites: East (four positions) and West (three positions). The operating sites stood about 1 kilometer apart, a 15 minute walk over a coral shelf bordering the island's inner lagoon. Each site had its own WiFi network; a microwave link tied the two sites together. Sleeping tents and meals were located at the East camp.

The Ducie Island DXpedition closed down operations on Wednesday, February 27. Amateurs who had QSOs with VP6DX can check the online logs <<http://ducie2008.dl1mgb.com/onlinelog/index.php>>. -- Information provided by VP6DX Team

FCC DENIES PETITIONS TO BRING BACK MORSE CODE TESTING

In a "Memorandum Opinion and Order" (MOO) released February 28, the FCC denied two petitions calling for General or Amateur Extra license applicants to demonstrate proficiency in Morse code. In December 2006, the FCC released a "Report and Order" (R&O) in the "Morse code proceeding," WT Docket 05-235, that

eliminated Morse code testing as of February 23, 2007.

The "R&O" amended Section 97.501 to remove the telegraphy requirement. In reaching this decision, the FCC noted in the R&O that "one of the fundamental purposes underlying our Part 97 rules is to accommodate amateur radio operators' ability to contribute to the advancement of the radio art, and that the Commission had previously concluded that an individual's ability to demonstrate Morse code proficiency is not necessarily indicative of his or her ability to contribute to the advancement of the radio art." The FCC also noted that another fundamental purpose underlying Part 97 rules is "to enhance the value of the amateur service to the public, particularly with respect to emergency communications, and that the Commission had previously concluded that most emergency communication today is performed using voice, data, or video modes, because information can be exchanged much faster using modes of communication other than telegraphy."

The Commission therefore concluded that requiring an individual to demonstrate Morse code proficiency as a licensing requirement "did not further the purposes of the Part 97 rules." The Commission also found that this reasoning applied equally to the General Class and the Amateur Extra Class, so "it rejected suggestions that the Morse code requirement be eliminated for the General Class license but retained for the Amateur Extra Class license."

In the wake of the FCC's actions in WT Docket 05-235, two amateurs submitted separate petitions to the FCC, asking them to bring back the testing. Anthony R. Gordon, KG6EQM, of West Covina California, objected to the FCC eliminating the telegraphy examination element as an examination requirement for the Amateur Extra Class operator license. Russell D. Ward, W4NI, of Nashville, Tennessee, requested the FCC reconsider their decision for "strictly procedural" reasons.

In summary, the FCC said neither petition asserted "any grounds for reconsidering" the decision in the Report and Order. "We believe that the actions taken therein will allow amateur service licensees to better fulfill the purpose of the amateur service, and will enhance the usefulness of the amateur service to the public and licensees."

Gearing Up for Dayton Hamvention

ARRL EXPO returns to Dayton Hamvention, to be held May 16-18, 2008 at the Hara Arena in Dayton, Ohio. The huge ARRL exhibit area is a showcase of displays, activities and program representatives to enhance your ham radio experience. The ARRL EXPO is open to all Hamvention attendees. Meet ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, other ARRL officials, volunteers and staff knowledgeable on a wide variety of topics. Among the highlights of the exhibit space will be a card checking area for operating awards, activities for young hams, the ARRL bookstore and more. ARRL Membership Manager Katie Breen, W1KRB, is the ARRL EXPO coordinator. "We are looking at some new and exciting venues within EXPO, but I'm not ready to spill the beans quite yet! We are focusing our attention this year on the theme of technology and on Hamvention's theme celebrating ham radio fellowship -- stay tuned for more news. We sincerely thank the 2008 Dayton Hamvention Committee and their volunteers for all they do to make this a signature convention; we are so pleased to participate." Keep an eye on the ARRL EXPO Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/expo>> for updates.

"Swiss Army Knife" for PIOs

The 2008 edition of the "Swiss Army Knife for PIOs" CD is now available. This "toolkit-on-a-disk" is designed to be a handy reference for Amateur Radio public relations officials. Topics on the disk include how to write press releases, give interviews and talk to groups; how to deal with legislative issues affecting Amateur Radio; audio, video and picture files; how to write articles for ARRL publications such as QST; how to connect with youth; information on ARRL public relations awards; how to promote Field Day in your community; FEMA course information, and more. To receive a copy, send a self-addressed stamped envelope (please make sure the envelope is large enough for a CD disk) with at least two units of postage and a note to Public Relations, ARRL, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111. This disk is available to anyone with an interest in spreading the word about Amateur Radio.

K5MC: Candidate for Delta Division Director

I believe the ARRL needs new leadership if we truly want it to be the "National Association of Amateur Radio" in the future. In recent years the ARRL Board of Directors has shown poor judgment in a number of ways. Perhaps the most obvious example is the "regulation by bandwidth" proposal (RM-11306) submitted by the League to the FCC. A large majority of the comments submitted by hams to the FCC on RM-11306 were

negative; the League then tried to salvage part of RM-11306 by submitting an ex-parte revision which included an "erratum" that supposedly conveyed the ARRL's true desires. Finally, in the face of massive opposition, the ARRL asked the FCC to withdraw RM-11306 from further consideration.

I have decided to run for Delta Division Director this year. Fred AA7BQ has given me permission to post my campaign platform on QRZ.COM. Although the election ballots will not be mailed to the ARRL members in the Delta Division (Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee) until late September, I would like to hear now from both Delta Division members and any other amateur radio operators who have constructive ideas on how we can improve the ARRL. Depending upon the suggestions I receive here and by other means (emails, discussions at hamfests, etc.), I will "fine tune" my platform in the coming months.

Among the changes I plan to pursue if I'm elected the new Delta Division Director are the following:

1. *ARRL members should have the choice of receiving QST, QEX, or NCJ.* A number of League members have complained in recent years about the lack of technical content, contest reporting, etc., in QST. If the content in QST cannot be improved, then the members should have the choice of receiving QST, QEX, or NCJ. Other organizations (e.g., the National Rifle Association) offer similar options to their members and the ARRL should do likewise.
2. *The ARRL Board meetings should be open to a limited number of members, including those who write for non-League publications such as CQ Magazine and WorldRadio, as long as personnel issues are not under discussion.* The ARRL Board needs to be more "open" in making League policy; one way to do that is to permit a limited number of League members to attend Board meetings (at their own expense) unless personnel matters are under discussion. These "guests" would be observers only. It is particularly important that members who write news articles for non-ARRL publications (e.g., CQ Magazine, WorldRadio) be permitted to attend Board meetings.
3. *An independent committee of technically qualified hams should carefully determine the advantages and disadvantages of "regulation by bandwidth" through spectrum efficiency studies, etc., to determine if a new proposal should be submitted to the FCC.* The recent ARRL petition included essentially no documentation (engineering studies, band plans, or other data) that justified changing from the current scheme of regulation by mode to regulation by bandwidth. Before we ask the FCC to make such a dramatic change in the Part 97 rules, the ham community needs to be reasonably sure that such a change is warranted and that the Amateur Radio Service will be improved.
4. *The ARRL Board should achieve a reasonable degree of consensus within the ham community before submitting any future proposals to the FCC.* The ARRL Board should post drafts of its proposals on the ARRL Web site for comments by hams, both members and non-members. All of the posted comments should be available for everyone to review. Some proposals may have to be revised several times over many months before a consensus is achieved. If a reasonable consensus cannot be achieved, then that proposal should not be submitted to the FCC. This policy will prevent future fiascoes similar to RM-11306.
5. *All petitions released by the FCC for comment that concern the Amateur Radio Service should be made known to the ham community in a timely manner by the ARRL.* In late 2007 the FCC invited comments on RM-11392, a proposal asking the FCC to limit the maximum bandwidth of data transmissions to 1.5 kHz on all HF bands except 10 meters. In addition to not filing any comments itself, the ARRL apparently never even mentioned the existence of this particular petition on the ARRL Web site. There is no excuse for the ARRL not to inform the ham community of the existence of such petitions. In addition, if the ARRL chooses not to comment officially to the FCC, the League should at least discuss within the ham community the various advantages and disadvantages of any submitted petitions. The ARRL once again showed a serious lack of leadership in its failure to do anything regarding RM-11392.
6. *The ARRL should increase its support of the National Traffic System and should quickly move on the recommendations of the National Emergency Response Planning Committee.*
The current national leadership undervalues the training opportunities in emergency communications offered by the League's own National Traffic System (including NTSD, the digital "arm" of NTS) in such fundamental skills as formal message handling and operating in directed nets. The ARRL Board should support the use of all appropriate modes and networks in providing backup communications to the public during emergencies. In addition, since Hurricane Katrina there has been little apparent progress by the ARRL regarding the recommendations of its own National Emergency Response Planning Committee (NERPC). For example, little or no action appears to have been taken by the ARRL Board so far on such issues as credentialing, establishing a national emcomm database of responders, or identifying Major Disaster Emergency Coordinators (MDECs).

I want the ARRL to once again be a membership organization that we all can be proud of, newcomers and

old timers alike. If elected, I will work diligently to have the Board adopt the changes described above. Thank you for your support.

73,

Mickey Cox K5MC

Mickey Cox will be our guest speaker for the March 6th, 2008 membership meeting, 6:30 PM at the Bossier City Library History Center.

Ducie Island Gear

The Ducie Island crew received inquiries about the equipment and antennas used on Ducie Island. They reported that each operating position used:

- Elecraft K3 radio. They said "The outstanding receiver and transmitter characteristics allowed us to run two positions simultaneously on any band -- even the very narrow 30 meter band -- with absolutely no interference. Good design makes the complex appear simple: the ins and outs of this sophisticated radio were quickly mastered by the operator team, none of whom had seen a K3 before the expedition."
- Microham microKeyer II computer interfaces: plug in, turn on, call CQ and get to work.
- Acom 2000, 1000 or 1010 amplifiers: quietly getting the job done without trouble. The position used on 160 meters includes an OM 2500 HF amplifier.
- 200 W W3NQN bandpass filters from Array Solutions and 2 kW bandpass filters from 4O3A.
- WinTest logging software running on Durabook ruggedized laptops.
- Honda EM65is and EM30is inverter supply, gasoline generators. The operators report that the generators offer "100 percent reliability to date. The inverter system has been very tolerant of the widely varying loads presented to the generators as multiple operating positions switch between transmit (high power consumption) and receive (low power consumption), a vast improvement over previous gasoline generator designs."

Great Web Site

<http://www.ocarc.ca/coax.htm>

This is a great site to calculate loss of line/ft/SWR (s if you prefer). It can also calculate loss of the line with a high SWR. Play with some RG 58 at 30 MHz with a 3 to 1, and then do the same with some open wire from the wire man...Almost always under 1 db for the open wire....Randy K5SL

ARRL Section Manager Election Results

Louisiana will also be getting a new Section Manager on April 1. **Gary Stratton, K5GLS**, of Shreveport, the Louisiana Section Emergency Coordinator for the last three years, will be taking the reins from Mickey Cox, K5MC. Cox, who has served as Section Manager for the past eight years, decided not to run for another term of office.

Stalking DX

SOLOMON ISLANDS, H4. Bernhard, DL2GAC will be QRV as H44MS from Honiara, IOTA OC-047, from March 5 to April 27. He will also be active from Lighthouse WLOTA LH-0086. QSL to home call.

SAN ANDRES AND PROVIDENCIA, HK0. Operators WF5W, W5PF, NM5G, K5WAF, W5PR and N4AL will be QRV as 5J0E from San Andres Island, IOTA NA-033, in the ARRL SSB DX contest. Before and after the contest, look for them to be active as HK0/homecalls using CW, SSB and various digital modes. QSL all calls for this operation via W5PF.

ST. VINCENT, J8. Dave, G3TBK will be QRV as J88DR for one week. This includes an entry in the ARRL SSB DX contest. Afterwards, he will be active on all bands using CW, SSB, RTTY and possibly SSTV. QSL to home call.

