W5YI

National Volunteer Examiner Coordinator

REPORT

Up to the minute news from the world of amateur radio, personal computing and emerging electronics. While no guarantee is made, information is from sources we believe to be reliable. May be reproduced providing credit is given to The W5YI Report.

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★ *In This Issue* ★

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FCC MOVES TO REVOKE HAM LICENSES

Actions First Involving VE/VEC Examining Programs

The FCC has launched amateur radio license revocation proceedings against eleven amateur radio operators as a result of a continuing investigation into alleged schemes to obtain amateur radio operator licenses by illegal means in Puerto Rico. These probes involve the ARRL, W5YI and MARS-Region 12 VEC testing programs. The amateurs facing license revocation formed a group which assisted friends and family members to fraudulently obtain ham radio licenses in Puerto Rico.

"Show Cause, Suspension and Designation" orders, released by the government on May 3rd, require those accused which include both volunteer examiners and applicants to present evidence why their amateur station licenses should not be cancelled. Their amateur operator licenses were ordered suspended effective May 28 unless a hearing is requested or written statement submitted to the FCC.

The Order, released May 3rd, asserts that Commission investigation indicates *Ramon Vizcarrondo/NP4ZN* fraudulently obtained a General class amateur operator license without examination. His upgrade application was certified by VE's *Ramon R. Santos Vazquez/KP4FW, Richard Zambrana/KP4IN and Carlos M. Colon/WP4U* at a test session given August 16, 1986, in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico. On October 4, 1986, Vizcarrondo further upgraded without examination to the Advanced class. VE's *Ellie J. Rivera De Jesus/KP4KB* and *Joaquin Hernandez/NP4E* along with Santos Vasquez certified that Form 610. The Commission also said that it appears that *Nomar Vizcarrondo/NP4H* secured the false certifications for Ramon Vizcarrondo.

The FCC maintains that the General class license of *Iris C. Lopez/NP4ZM* was obtained by false certifications from Santos Vazquez, Richard Zambrana and Nomar Vizcarrondo on August 16, 1986. Those fraudulent certifications were supposedly procured by Ellie J. Rivera De Jesus. It is also charged that Rivera De Jesus arranged for VE's to upgrade *Iris Y. Rivera/WP4FOF* and *Belinda Rivera/WP4FOG* to the General class without examination on August 30, 1986. *Margie Vizcarrondo/WP4GAW* allegedly obtained a Novice license without examination.

The revocation proceeding *does not come as a surprise*. The FCC closely monitors pass rates of its amateur self-examining programs. At the Annual VEC Conference held at the FCC headquarters in Washington two years ago, the Commission notified VE Coordinators that it was very concerned about the high amateur operator examination pass rates and progress of amateur self-testing programs in Puerto Rico.

At a time when the average expansion of U.S. amateur radio operators stood at about 3½% nationwide, the census of Puerto Rican amateur operators ***spiraled by about 50%***. While four VEC programs were authorized, only three VEC

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groups actually coordinated amateur examinations in Puerto Rico - the W5YI-VEC, ARRL-VEC and the MARS-Region 12 VEC. Amid rumors of widespread irregularities, the VEC status of the MARS-Region 12 testing program was later cancelled by the FCC *"for failure to properly handle required VEC paperwork."*

Last year in an unprecedented move, the FCC *halted all VEC System testing in Puerto Rico* and required the ARRL and W5YI amateur operator examination programs to recertify its volunteer examiners. "Those VE's whose performance is suspect should be dropped from accreditation," the FCC's Personal Radio Branch ordered "...only those VE's in whose integrity you have absolute confidence" should be accredited. Additional revocation proceedings are expected involving testing irregularities in Puerto Rico.

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Get ready for international packet radio!

NEWEST OSCAR READY FOR LAUNCH

All is in readiness for the launch of ***AMSAT's Phase 3C satellite***. The most powerful OSCAR ever built is scheduled to be hurled to orbit from the European Space Agency's Kourou, French Guiana launch site during early June. Arianespace, ESA's marketing and management arm, has announced the next two Ariane launches are booked for May 17 (V-23) and June 8th (V-22). The June 8 launch will include AMSAT's hitchhiking Phase 3C satellite. To get there, however, the launch of an Intelsat communications satellite must be successful on May 17. Note that V-23 gets launched before V-22. The two June 8 launch windows for Phase 3C are from 11:12 - 12:03 UTC and 13:25 - 14:44 UTC.

The launch vehicle will be an Ariane-4 rocket, the largest ESA has ever flown. This will be its twenty-second flight. The 300 pound AMSAT spacecraft, one of three satellite payloads on Ariane, will eventually operate from a high elliptical orbit completing just over two orbits of earth per day. Also on board are the PANAMASAT and Meteosat P2 birds. About 30 days after launch and orbital insertion, Phase 3C will get its **OSCAR-13** *(**O**rbitting **S**atellite **C**arrying **A**mateur **R**adio)* designator and will be placed in general amateur operation.

The new AMSAT satellite contains four separate transponders (space-based repeaters) covering frequencies in the 2-meter, 70-cm, 24-cm, 13-cm and 1.2-cm bands (145 MHz to 2.4 GHz.). A West German designed ***RUDAK*** packet radio 24-cm up/70-cm down transponder is one of the four. (Frequencies: Uplink 1269.710 MHz with two downlinks at 435.715 - 436.005 and 435.990 - 435.940 MHz.) Each transponder will be capable of carrying more than 75 simultaneous QSOs. Another transponder uses FM and could be suitable for beaming bulletins to land-based VHF repeaters. Monitoring of the spacecraft telemetry which is a major task of AMSAT Team 3 will continue until launch day.

The satellite should operate for more than 5 years. Upgraded computer memory chips are "hardened" for the severe radiation encountered in orbit. This satellite is the third in the Phase 3 series. The critical fueling operation was completed without incident during late April. There was no repeat of the Phase 3B incident when safety observers detected minute propellant gas accumulation around the spacecraft. This was determined to be slight permeation through some Teflon tubing. The new design, including a complete re-design of the valve and plumbing system, is working perfectly. Phase 3B became AMSAT **OSCAR-10** upon its successful launch in 1983.

Besides routine QSOs, Phase 3C will be used for so-called *"Techno-Sport"* activities. These on-air competitions emphasize technical skills and recognize superior ability with plaques and awards. The AMSAT *"ZRO-Test"* tests a stations' receive sensitivity by sending successively weaker signals from the satellite. The new *"Sat-Fox Test"* is a satellite version of fox-and-hound transmitter hunting. More Techno-Sports are in the planning stages.

AMSAT Phase 3C is a joint project of AMSAT North America and West Germany's AMSAT-DL with additional contributions from other AMSAT affiliated organizations. The project cost more than $400,000 US. Initial design of the Phase 3 generation of OSCARs began in the mid-seventies. AMSAT was founded in 1969.

The May 17 launch will be broadcast on SPACENET S1 (120 deg. West) on transponder 12. TVRO owners may want to tune in. Since the V-23 launch windows fit within the Tuesday evening 75 meter net operating times, AMSAT will attempt to provide live coverage of the V-23 countdown during the nets. The AMSAT 75 meter nets meet on/about 3840 kHz Tuesday evenings (Wednesday UTC). The East Coast Net begins at 2100 EDT. Mid-America

"I am a currently licensed Extra Class amateur radio operator and [illegible] operator license revoked or suspended. I do not own a significant

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER EXAMINER? [illegible] Extra Class license, the following signed statement and a SASE to:

Net begins at 21:00 CDT. The Pacific Net begins at 20:00 PDT.

Similar live coverage may be afforded the launch of Phase 3C as part of the *AMSAT Launch Information Net Service* (ALINS) whereby C-band satellite video will be available direct from Kourou. It is expected that many U.S. high frequency and repeater stations will be tied into ALINS for launch coverage. ALINS coverage will also be extended to AMSAT-UK (United Kingdom), (South Africa) SA-AMSAT (South Africa), JAMSAT (Japan) ...and others. ***(AMSAT-NA News Service contributed to this article.)***

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PETITIONS FROM HAM COMMUNITY

Concern licensing structure and privileges

The FCC has denied a number of amateur submitted petitions for rulemaking -- but did accept one for public comment.

(1.) Shannon Cisco, WB4AZT, of Suffolk, VA, requests that the operator licenses of amateurs sixty-five years of age and older who have held Technician and higher amateur licenses for twenty of more years be upgraded one class. Cisco argues that these amateurs are qualified for the upgrade by reason of their seniority and many are unable to travel to examination points because of physical disabilities. For a Technician operator to upgrade to the General Class, only the written test would have to be passed. Senior citizens holding long term General and Advanced class tickets would be advanced one grade without further examination.

In denying the Cisco petition, the FCC said that amateur operator licenses are issued only to persons who demonstrate certain operational and technical skills including proficiency in the Morse code. The Commission referred to a 1982 ruling concerning waviers of Morse code proficiency. "...if a policy of (waivers) were instituted, the Commission could find itself in the untenable position of deciding which applicants actually qualified for telegraphy exemptions and which did not. Commission personnel clearly are not trained to make such judgements. Therefore, if we decide to introduce a class of amateur radio operator license without telegraphy requirements, it will be available to any applicant, instead of limited to applicants with certain physical or learning disabilities." The FCC also said that the present examination systems can accomodate examinees with physical disbilities.

(2.) Larry Ballentine, N5BZB, Bryant, Arkansas, petitioned the government to reduce the number of amateur operator classes from five to four by merging the Technician Class with the General operator license. He also asks that the Morse code requirements for these four classes be reduced to 5 words-per-minute and contain only letters and numbers. As an alternative, the petitioner suggests a written "code recognition" test be administered where only a knowledge of the sequence of dots and dashes that make up the alphabet letters and numbers 0-9 be required.

Ballentine also proposed that amateur licensees be given access to the incentive telegraphy band segments on the basis of (1) endorsements for passing the 13 and 20 words-per-minute words per minute examinations or (2) code speed certificates for those speeds issued by VECs. Ballentine states that operator license privileges should be based on technical ability and knowledge of the rules - not on telegraphy proficiency. He further argues that the amateur service must be modernized and deregulated so that its ranks will continue to grow.

The FCC denied and dismissed the petition. "We believe that operator privileges should continue to be based on telegraphy skills as well as on expertise in technical, operational and regulatory matters. The petition ignores the important role that telegraphy continues to play in the amateur service, particularly in emergency communications during natural disasters when communications may be affected by weather, poor propagation and interference."

(3.) Angelo J. Polvere, KA9CSO, of Inverness, Illinois, petitioned the government to provide for immediate operating privileges for examinees who had successfully passed the Novice Class operator license. Proposed was a sponsor holding a General Class or higher operator license who would issue a temporary call sign to the successful Novice examinee consisting of the sponsor's call sign and a unique designator. Polvere argued that enthusiasm wanes and skills are dulled during the waiting period for Novice licenses to arrive. The petitioner believes that his proposal is simple, easy to administer and capable of being put into effect very quickly.

The FCC said the instant licensing proposal would be contrary to international (ITU) regulations

which provide that each country shall verify the operational and technical qualifications of any person who wishes to operate an amateur station. In addition, the application processing time is relatively short and the benefits of "instant Novice licensing" marginal when compared to the disadvantages that could occur.

(4.) **<u>Dr. Howard E. McKeathian, N6ELL</u>, of San Bernardino, CA**, filed a petition last November seeking to expand HF privileges available to the Technician Class. He argues this would allow Techs to participate more fully in emergency communications such as marine disasters and forest fires.

The FCC again denied the petition stating that amateur license structure, requirements and privileges had been considered previously in five major rulemakings. "The operator license classes and associated privileges were developed to provide motivation for amateur operators to advance their skills in both the communications and technical phases of the radio art," the FCC said.

(5.) **<u>Marvin T. Fricklas, W2FGD</u>, of Freeport, New York,** wants long term Advanced Class operators to be upgraded without examination if they have (1) twenty-five years of continuous amateur activity, (2) submit evidence of rendering continuous public assistance in the amateur service and (3) are honorably discharged from the Armed Forces.

The FCC denied the petition stating that while armed forces and public service activites as an amateur radio operator are commendable, "Such services are not sufficent reason to revise the Commission's policy of not granting preferential treatment to any group or individual. Amateur operator licenses are issued only to persons who demonstrate certain operational and technical skills."

(6.) **<u>Anthony J. Sivo, W2FJ</u>, of Plainsboro, New Jersey,** filed a petition for rulemaking seeking to allow voice privileges in the 30 meter amateur band. He requests amendment to Part 97.61(a) of the Amateur Radio Service rules to permit the use of Single Sideband Suppressed Carrier (J3E) emissions in the 10.10 - 10.15 MHz frequency ham band. Silvo argues that amateurs are not using the 30 meter band to its fullest extent. "The popularity of this band is dampened somewhat by regulations that permit only radio telegraphy (A1A, F1B) emissions." He says there is very little Amateur Radio activity above the lower 10 kHz portion of the band and "...teletype usage is practically non-existent."

He adds, "My survey indicates that there are not enough radiotelegraph or radioteletype enthusiasts to justify excluding all other modes of emissions on the 10.1 MHz band of frequencies. Those who lobbied for this situation -- limited modes of emissions -- have had their opportunity. They have not occupied this band to the full extent possible. Why should a handful of operators be permitted to deny the use of other types of emissions?" he asks in his April 19th very well done and documented petition.

He further requests "...in order to achieve full utilization of the 10.1 MHz band, that no sub-allocation of the various modes be made. Precedence in this matter has been set in the late 1950's when the 1.8 - 2.0 MHz [160 meter] band was divided into 25 KHz segments. Within this narrow band segment, half the bandwidth of the 10.1 MHz band, the various modes got along very well -- so well that the 1.8 MHz band earned an enviable title by being referred to as 'The Gentlemen's Band' No other band, even with mode separation mandated by the FCC, could make that claim. It should be noted that, as of this date, there are no FCC sub-allocations in the 1.8 MHz band."

Silvo further supports his 'no subbands' plea with a December 14, 1981, determination by James C. McKinney, then Private Radio Bureau Chief "...effective utilization of the [160 meter] band might be reduced since a Commission imposed subband partition would be inflexible toward temporary changes in the balance between the number of telegraphy operations and the number of telephony operations taking place at any given time. Second, such a designation would place a new and unwarranted burden on the Commission from the enforcement standpoint. With lessening resources to devote to the Commission's enforcement program, it would be undesirable to undertake a new enforcement responsibility with no assurance of benefiting the amateur community."

The FCC has accepted the petition as having merit and is requesting public comment on the proposal. Refer to rulemaking file number: RM-6363.

(7.) **<u>Karl Victor Pagel, N6BVU</u>, of Orange California**, submitted a petition for rulemaking on April 19th, but the FCC has not yet decided on how

it will be handled. Pagel, who is embroiled in a Southern California repeater coordination dispute, requests an "Amendment of the Amateur Radio Service Rules to change the definition of Frequency Coordinator as defined in §Part 97.3(AA)."

The current definition of frequency coordinator is "an individual or organization recognized in a local or regional area *by amateur operators whose stations are eligible to engage in* repeater or auxiliary operation which recommends frequencies and, where necessary, associated operating and technical parameters for amateur reapeater and auxiliary operation in order to avoid or minimize potential interference."

Pagel feels that recognition as a frequency coordinator should come solely from repeater/remote/auxiliary owners or trustees and not users. "...users don't care about the coordination process," he argues. "[repeater users] ...are just like the average citizen who turns on his personal AM/FM radio. All he/she cares about is that there is a 'station' there to listen to, or in the case of an amateur, one to talk to."

He wants the FCC definition of a frequency coordinator changed to read, "An individual or organization selected in a regional area *by owners or trustees* of amateur repeaters, remote bases, and auxiliary links, which recommends frequencies and, where necessary, associated operating and technical parameters..."

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British government assists amateur community...

PACKET LINK TO UK FORMED

Long distance digital message forwarding has been hampered by international regulations which effect the flow of packet radio messages. Strict third-party traffic regulations in the USA made it impossible to forward messages to or from the United Kingdom through the USA packet network.

Amateur satellite, UoSAT OSCAR 11's onboard *Digital Communications Experiment* (DCE) had been rendered practically useless until the British government recently came to its rescue. UoSAT team members **Jeff Ward (G0/K8KA)** and **Martin Sweeting (G3YJO)** at the University of Surrey (England) contacted the UK *Department of Trade and Industry* (DTI) and asked their assistance. The DTI is the government agency regulating amateur radio in the U.K. They recognized the UoSAT-2 DCE as an important communications experiment and granted the UoSAT DCE groundstation the special callsign ***GB2UP.***

The call sign change allows United States AMSAT packeteers to take advantage of the limited third party agreement in effect between the USA and the United Kingdom. The treaty agreement allows third party traffic to be passed to or from UK stations using callsign prefix "GB" except those with "GB3" Since the University of Surrey had the call sign GB3UP, its satellite routed packet messages could not be transmitted to or from the United States until the call sign change. More than one megabyte of messages have now been passed to Great Britain from the USA packet network thanks to UK gateway station GB2UP and the British government.

The two amateur satellites capable of international packet message forwarding, UoSAT-OSCAR 11 and (Japanese) JAMSAT Fuji-OSCAR 12, are soon to be joined by Phase 3C OSCAR-13 in June. The day of worldwide international packet message forwarding is here! We must be very careful to distinguish between acceptable international traffic from that which should be suppressed.

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Another interesting GB2 story...

SCOTCHING WHISKEY'S DECLINE

Apparently Scotch whiskey isn't selling as well as it used to. Dewar's and Cutty Sark will be offering consumers membership in a club similar to the airline industry's frequent flyer program. Dewar's *"Highlander Clan"* and Cutty's *"Connoisseur Club"* will offer discounts on merchandise and trips to Scotland. You have to save liquor labels and cap liners. The clubs are designed to boost consumption and build brand sales in the declining 15 million-case Scotch category.

Now comes word that even ham radio operators are even being enlisted to help! Special Event Station **GB2DWR (GB2DeWaRs?)** will be operating from four different scotch whiskey distilleries on: **May 15-16** *(Cardhu Distillery at Granton on Spay);* **May 17-18** *(Cragganmoor Distillery at Granton on Spay);* **May 19-20** *(Royal Loch Nagar Distillery at Crathie near Balmoral Castle)* and **May 21-22** at *Blair Atholl Distillery at Pitlochry.)* Operation: 1000Z to 1500Z the following day.

AMATEUR RADIO CALL SIGNS

...issued as of the first of May 1988.

Radio District	Gp."A" Extra	Gp."B" Advan.	Gp."C" Tech/Gen.	Gp."D" Novice
0	WG0Z	KE0UT	N0JEU	KB0CMY
1	NR1C	KC1JH	N1FRJ	KA1RXU
2	WF2V	KE2GL	N2IDN	KB2FPT
3	NO3L	KD3HT	N3GEG	KA3TAW
4 (*)	AB4HW	KM4AZ	N4SRY	KC4EZD
5 (*)	AA4FO	KG5JR	N5MNB	KB5GCC
6 (*)	AA6IG	KJ6GH	N6SAL	KB6YAQ
7	WN7I	KF7JK	N7KXS	KB7EVP
8	WF8A	KE8RH	N8JLV	KB8EQB
9	NY9R	KE9KJ	N9HKW	KB9ASO
N. Mariana Is.	AH0E	AH0AD	KH0AJ	WH0AAH
Guam	KH2I	AH2BY	KH2DG	WH2ALL
Johnston Is.	AH3A	AH3AC	KH3AB	WH3AAC
Midway Island		AH4AA	KH4AD	WH4AAF
Palmyra/Jarvis	AH5A			
Hawaii	(**)	AH6IY	NH6PB	WH6BXX
Kure Island			KH7AA	
Amer. Samoa	AH8C	AH8AD	KH8AF	WH8AAX
Wake Wilkes Peale		AH9AD	KH9AD	WH9AAH
Alaska	(**)	AL7JV	NL7NH	WL7BRF
Virgin Islands	KP2Y	KP2BN	NP2CN	WP2AFZ
Puerto Rico	(**)	KP4OY	WP4OB	WP4HYQ

NOTE: * = All 2-by-1 format call signs have been assigned in the 4th, 5th and 6th radio districts. 2-by-2 format call signs from the AA-AL prefix block now being assigned to Extra Class amateurs. ** = All Group "A" (2-by-1) format call signs have been assigned in Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico. Only one Group "A" call sign left in the Virgin Islands! Group "B" (2-by-2) format call

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Amateurs Flock to Dayton, Ohio!
HAMVENTION -'88 IS BEST EVER!

Nearly 35,000 happy hams jammed Dayton's Hara Arena the last weekend in April for the *37th Annual HamVention.* It is by far the best attended of the ham conventions. Amateurs come from all over to attend its many forums, visit the huge fleamarket and drool over the new offerings from the commercial exhibitors. HamVention began in 1961 in a Dayton hotel and is now the largest amateur event in the world.

The *Dayton Amateur Radio Association* has a committee for everything. They think of everything ...little things, like a fully equipped test bench in a DARA van for you to check out your equipment purchases ...and a Delta Airlines air cargo truck parked nearby to whisk them away at a 30% air freight saving. Delta employees even had a supply of packaging material and helped with the packing process. The people at DARA sure know now to throw a hamfest. Each year they award thousands of dollars in scholarships.

The Amateur Industry held a meeting the evening before HamVention got underway. It was hosted by Yaesu's **Chip Margelli. Wayne Green/W2NSD** suggested a closer tie with the FCC through reactivation of an amateur industry advisory committee. **Joe Shroeder/W9JUV** made a plea for defense funds for Westlink Radio and **Bill Pasternak/WA6ITF** who is being sued by a splinter frequency coordinator.

Glenn Baxter/K1MAN and **Hap Holly/KC9RP** requested financial support for RAIN, the Radio Amateur Information Network. Bill Pasternak suggested a Hams Against Drugs (HAD) awareness campaign. **Bob Wallar/WB6QNR**, a fifth grade teacher from Lakewood, California, discussed how amateur radio can be used in the classroom to revitalize analytical skills.

Dave Sumner/K1ZZ, ARRL Executive VP, painted a glowing picture of amateur radio growth which was somewhat misleading we thought. He compared licensing and upgrading statistics over the past six months rather than over a longer period of time. He said new amateur licenses were up 12% from October 1987 to March 1988 with upgrading increasing more than 50% which is true.

While the current trend is *most encouraging*, when the same six months statistics are compared with those of two years ago, however, the growth in new licensees and upgrades is somewhat less. The upgrades can be traced almost totally to the split of the Element 3 written examination into 3A and 3B.

To say that "amateur radio growth is impressive" is similar to saying that the stock market growth is also. While it is true that the Dow averages are substantially up over October 1987, the market remains in less than good shape.

The amateur licensing statistics as reported by the FCC/Washington, DC, are as follows:

AMATEUR LICENSES ISSUED - 10/87 - 3/88

1987	New LICENSES			Upgraded		
4th Qtr.	1986	1987	1988	1986	1987	1988
October	1356	874	882	1709	1060	2024
November	910	1404	1131	1148	1450	1236
December	2385	1826	2582	1899	771	2294
TOTAL:	**4651**	**4104**	**4595**	**4756**	**3281**	**5554**
Increase:		-12%	+12%		-31%	+69%
1988						
1st Qtr.	1986	1987	1988	1986	1987	1988
January	1500	2299	1189	1097	1388	1590
February	1889	1889	1624	2082	2047	1716
March	1606	795	2733	1755	717	3138
TOTAL:	**4995**	**4983**	**5546**	**4934**	**4152**	**6444**
Increase:		-.2%	+11%		-16%	+55%
Six Months						
TOTAL:	**9646**	**9087**	**10141**	**9690**	**7433**	**11998**
Increase:		-6%	+12%		-23%	+61%
1988 versus 1986:			+5.1%			+23.8%
Annual Increase:			**+2.6%**			**+11.9%**

Sumner also reported on the effect that increasing sunspot numbers will have on industry sales and progress on the Docket 87-14 (220-MHz) proceeding. He said that ARRL membership of US-licensed hams is higher than at any time in its history, including the CB-boom years when dues were $9.

The HamVention Banquet was well attended, with **Gordon West/WB6NOA** being the keynote speaker. He presented a demonstration of different types of radio emissions aided by high intensity laser beams. The Amateur of the Year award went to the late **Bill Bennett/W7PHO**, Special Achievement Award to **Fred Hammond/VE3HC** and **Lew McCoy/W1ICP** captured the award for Technical Excellence.

Other Dayton HamVention Notes....

- New ICOM-781 HF transceiver with its multi-function CRT display and dual receiving capability appeared to be a big hit! You can work one DX station and line up another simultaneously! ICOM also debuted (1.) a new IC-32AT dual-band (2-meter and 70-cm) hand-held (2.) new IC-228 2-meter top-of-the-line mobiles and (3.) a new IC-1500A HF automatic linear amplifier.

- **Joe Phillips/K8QOE** who writes a ham radio newspaper column every two weeks for the ***Cincinnati Enquirer*** stopped by our booth. The "Ham Call" column has been in existence for 22 years. Phillips (2800 Jupiter Dr., Fairfield, OH 45014) would like to hear from other ham radio columnists.

- **Uniden Corporation** had a HamVention commercial booth and introduced their new (and first) amateur radio product, the HR-2510 ***"President"*** 10-meter AM/FM/SSB/CW Mobile (25 watt PEP) Transceiver.

- **Chod Harris/VP2ML** of ***The DX Bulletin*** was distributing an April Fools Day edition. (P.O. Box 50, Fulton, CA 95439.) As always, **Joe Ventolo/K8DMZ** was passing out his ***GEARVAKf Bulletin*** which spoofs ham radio. (Copy: $1.00 from 356 Coronado Tr., Enon, OH 45323.)

- We participated in a VEC Forum - as did **Jim Clary/WB9IHH** ARRL-VEC, **Jim Georgias/W9JUG** DeVry-VEC and **Ray Adams/N4BAQ** WCARS-VEC. 73 Magazine presented us and **Gordon West/WB6NOA** with their 1988 Education Achievement Award for our work on the ***Novice Training Package*** carried in all Radio Shack stores.

- The ***Frequency Coordinator's Forum*** was very controversial! **Ray Kowalski**, previously with the FCC/Washington, was a speaker and criticized the FCC for their positon on frequency coordination of amateur repeaters. ***CVRA-Southeastern Repeater Association, Inc.*** (SERA) took steps to preclude their repeater coordinations being published by other repeater directories under other than their guidelines. SERA claims the ARRL's *National Repeater Directory* recognizes all who profess coordinator's status thus inviting acceptance of self-appointed coordinators by the FCC who view the ARRL directory as the official amateur radio repeater frequency coordination list. SERA said they would release the copyright to publishers *who recognize only one coordinator for a given geographic area and spectrum segment.*

- **Harry MacLean/VE3GRO** (Canadian Radio Relay League VP) showed us a new **QST/CANADA** supplement that will be included with all (ARRL) QST magazines going to Canadian subscribers. His one page Canadian NewsFronts column has been discontinued from the U.S. edition of QST. The supplement will accept advertising.

- **Herb Nelson/W9IGL**, publisher of the ***Radio Amateur Callbook*** told us he is completely sold out of the *1988 International Callbooks* and

very few of the *1988 North American edition* remain in inventory. He said it appears the new novice privileges and the unusually rapid increase in the number of sunspots are largely responsible. A new printing the 1988 Callbooks is not economically feasible since the setup charges for a short run are prohibitive.

Johnny Johnston, W3BE, Chief of the FCC's Washington DC *Personal Radio Branch* discussed the following topics at the FCC Forum:

(1.) The new ***proposed §Part 97*** with its increased freedom for amateurs to maneuver. It contains fewer hard and fast rules.

(2.) Discussion on ***status of 220-MHz band***. The Personal Radio Branch is "standing by" in the event the bottom two-megahertz is reallocated by the Commission to business radio interests. The matter is being handled by the FCC's *Office of Engineering and Technology,* but the Personal Radio Branch will have to rewrite the rules and advise amateurs of any operational phase out procedure from 220-222 MHz.

(3.) A **§Part 15 *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*** (Docket 87-389) seeks to authorize low power intentional and unintentional radiating devices throughout the radio spectrum - including the ham bands. Reply comments extended to June 8.

(4.) ***PRB-3*** - the proceeding that looks toward developing a private sector administered program to allocate secondary amateur radio call signs of choice. Nothing has been decided on this issue yet. A decision is at least a couple of months away.

(5.) The ***VE/VEC System*** administered 81,042 test elements to 49,728 persons at 4,378 sessions during 1987. (60.58% upgraded) No pass/fail records are kept on the Novice testing program but it is believed that about the same number participated in that program.

(6.) The ***Fourth Annual VEC Conference*** will be convened in Dallas on June 3rd. It is at these conferences that the VEC's collectively determine the path that amateur examining will take.

(6.) The subject of **amateur frequency and repeater coordination** came up. The FCC will *not* handle frequency coordination nor will they select or approve coordinators.

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Aliens Operating Under Reciprocal Permits
AMATEUR STATION ID RULES CHANGED

On May 9th, at the request of the ARRL, the FCC has changed the ID rules by which aliens identify their amateur station when operating under a reciprocal permit. Effective early next month, foreign amateurs will identify their station with the appropriate U.S. ITU country prefix and radio district numeral designating the station location first - then their foreign call sign. For example: A reciprocally licensed West German amateur with the call **DL2ABC** will become **W2/DL2ABC** when operating in the U.S. second call district. The slant bar would become the word "stroke" or "slash" when operation is in the voice mode.

ARRL stated that its request is based on an *International Amateur Radio Union (IARU)* resolution to standardize call sign identification for stations operating under reciprocal agreements. Additionally, ARRL noted that the United Kingdom, France, the Federal Republic of Germany and Switzerland have already implemented the IARU standard.

The new reciprocal ID rules will apply to all countries *except Canada*. A completely different and very specific reciprocal operating treaty arrangement exists with Canada. That agreement specifies that the country designator and radio district must come *after* the alien's primary call sign. It is also our understanding that the U.S./Canada agreement is in the process of being renegotiated for other reasons.

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U.S. Military says it still needs 220 MHz...
PENTAGON OPPOSES FCC DOCKET 87-14

"The *Department of Defense* has emerged as a prime critic of the FCC's plan to restructure the 220-MHz band to accommodate narrowband land mobile users." So says **Benn Kobb, KC5CW**, in the preview issue of ***Federal Communications TechNews (FCTN).*** "In formal comments, DoD said its research into 'ground based detection and tracking of targets with small radar cross-sections' shows an *'imperative' need for continued primary access to 215-225 MHz."* The DoD comments were in reply to a United Parcel Service filing that seeks to to encourage the Commission to rearrange the 220-225 MHz spectrum, currently allocated to co-primary amateur, fixed and mobile services.

Kobb who holds as Masters in Telecommunications from the University of Colorado is former editor of *Personal Communications Technology* magazine and *Cellular Radio News*. FCTN is not an ham publication, but will contain amateur news when it affects other areas of telecommunications.

It is intended for engineers and technical managers at organizations that have a stake in FCC decisions ...especially rulings regarding the radio spectrum. *[For information write: Box 435, Falls Church, VA 22046.]*

The FCC previously denied a *Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)* request from a William Rondini seeking access to all files pertaining to amateur radio station, **WA4D, Michael Whatley** (Alexandria, Virginia.) The investigation of Whately is now complete and the PRB has agreed to release the files except for portions that could be used to discover the identity of the complainants. Handwritten complaints are being withheld in their entirety.

The FCC has affirmed the imposition of a $1,450 fine against **David G. Ackley/W4UWH** (St. Thomas, USVI) for transmitting on a frequency not authorized to Technician Class operators, failure to properly identify his amateur station and causing deliberate interference to other radio communications. He has been ordered to pay the fine by June 5th.

We understand that a new **BY4RSA Chinese Amateur Radio Station** will be in operation by the end of October 1988 from Nanjing. It will be operated under the guidance of **Chen Fang**, secretary general of the Jiang Su Province Radio Sport Association, hence the suffix.

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Partying at the Pole...

SKITREK AT TOP OF THE WORLD

Amateur Radio Provides Communication

Nearly two months after leaving Cape Arctic on USSR's Severnaya Zemlyla, four Canadian and nine Russian skiers have reached the North Pole. The Russian skiers were already ham operators but the Canadian expeditioners had to be specially licensed by their government so that they could communicate on amateur spectrum.

They skied over 600 miles to reach the pole, their first major objective on their journey to Canada's Cape Columbia on Ellesmere Island - another 500 miles away. The Skitrek, as it is being called, is a joint Soviet/Canadian *"Glasnost"* test of human endurance aided by high technology. *Glasnost* is the new Soviet government position of openness and international cooperation. The ski junket over the pole from the USSR to Canada has never been accomplished before.

Throughout this long and hazardous journey, the skiers have been constantly in touch by amateur radio which provides their safety and logistical lifeline with the outside world. Position reports are spoken to the skiers from the orbitting amateur satellite ***UoSAT OSCAR-11's Digitalker*** on 2-meters

(145.825 MHz) as it passes overhead. The position telemetry is provided to OSCAR-11 by orbitting search and rescue satellites.

Several Canadian and Soviet dignitaries from Ottawa and Moscow flew to the North Pole to participate in a joint celebration and press conference marking the expedition's arrival at the pole. One of those was UO-11's Digitalker programmer, **Michael Meerman, G0/PA3BHF** ...a guest of the Soviets. He is a member of the University of Surrey's UoSAT *Spacecraft Engineering Research Unit.*

Meerman arrived in Moscow on April 24th after a four hour flight from England. The following morning he flew to Siberia's Sredney Island in the Soviet Arctic - another 6½ hours away. The plane was crammed with about 30 passengers and their equipment. The next day they set off in the same airplane to the floating Soviet ice island, North Pole 28. The final leg - about 15 miles to the North Pole itself - was by helicopter.

The official ceremony, lasting only about an hour, consisted of about 150 people, probably the largest gathering ever held at the Pole. No one knows for sure what time or day it took place since time and dates are determined by meridians which converge at the poles. The party organizers had laid a small ring on the ground around a makeshift ice pillar - the pole itself - with a flame on top and some meridian lines sratched out in the direction of the South Pole. A sign said, *"Welcome to the North Pole."* There were flags, balloons, ...a miniature McDonalds restaurant, a post office and a radio shack. McDonalds is one of the Canadian sponsors of the trek. The Russians put up a few tents with heaters! The temperature was about 30 degrees below zero.

Media coverage increased as Russian TV, CNN (the Cable News Network) and the CBC-TV (Canadian Broadcasting Company) covered festivities live from the North Pole. The joint Soviet/Canadian polar expedition is very big news in the USSR. Nearly every news broadcast carries a progress report.

Michael Meerman made about 50 ham radio QSO's using an ICOM-761 rig borrowed from the nearby Soviet floating scientific ice station and a skitrek radio control base. The pile up was enormous! Except for unexpected polar bear tracks, there are no signs of life at the North Pole. The trekkers carry a rifle for protection.

The control station for the first part of the journey was located on Sredney Island where it was jointly manned by **Leonid Labutin, UA3CR** and **Rick Burke, VO1SA/UA0**. Control has now been passed to North Pole 28. Canadian **Barry Garratt/ VE3CDX**, using his USSR call sign 4K0DX is working together with his USSR counterpart, 4K0DOC at NP-28. Garratt had a close call when a large crack developed in the ice between his ICOM ham radio and its 40/80 meter antennas. He had to cut the coax as his rig and antenna floated in different two directions. It was a close call but he was able to salvage the radio equipment.

Control of the expedition will next be passed to Canada's Cape Columbia, where amateur station CI8C at Resolute Bay will assume the prime communications responsibility for the remainder of the trip. **Tom Atkins, VE3CDM**, Canadian communications coordinator, reports that all expedition communications are working extremely well.

The skiers using Soviet EX0VE and Canadian CI8UA amateur call signs are using a crystal controlled Soviet built 10-watt sideband transceiver on two frequencies in the 20, 40 and 80 meter ham band powered by a 50 amp lithium battery pack. The battery is changed out during periodic supply air drops.

The *"Party at the Pole"* was over ...the participants departed. The skiers were alone once again. "The moving group" using the Soviet call sign of EX0VE and CI8UA resumed their trek towards Canada nearly two months away. The skiers are carrying small rubber boats with them in the event they encounter open water. Thus far they have been able to go around open water - or wait for a freeze.

Amateurs and school children around the world have been tracking the skiers by listening to the UoSAT-2 Digitalker and learning about polar exploration through the weekly AMSAT Ski-Trek updates. Michael Meerman carried a list of their questions with him to the pole to get answers directly from the skiers themselves.

*(**Rich Ensign, N8IWJ, Vern Riportella, WA2LQQ,** and **Al d'Eon, VE3AND,** assisted in preparing this report.)*