

Alliance Amateur Radio Club Zero Beat

Volume XVIII, no 7

[Http://www.qsl.net/w8lky/](http://www.qsl.net/w8lky/)

July 2004

Serving the Tri-County area since 1986

AARC Field Day 2004

Field Day 2004 is now behind us, but thanks to good weather, good propagation and a lot of good food, everyone who came out had a great time.

The Club needs to thank Dawna Steele and Subway for providing over 5 dozen sandwiches, and also Sherry Whitaker for hot dogs and sausage, buns, beans, pop and coffee, and Dianna Ashburn for a large pan of rigatoni, salad and bread. There was enough food to feed an army.

We also need to thank all those who brought equipment, and gas and who helped set everything up and take it down again. Field Day takes a lot of work and planning and this year it all paid off.

Some years, in spite of all your efforts, bad weather or poor propagation can spoil the fun, but that wasn't the case this year. The sun was shining brightly in the day time and the stars lit up the night sky. Propagation



was great. We had no trouble making contacts on any of the bands we used. George, K3GP, seen above, will have the totals for us at the meeting, but we certainly beat last years score.

In the pavilion, seen below, we had one of the Club's HF rigs, which George is operating above, another HF station

(Continued on page 6)



De Olde Meeting Announcement

The next meeting of the Alliance ARC will be on Wednesday, July 7th, in the cafeteria of the Alliance Community Hospital. Our meetings begin at 7:30 PM, and are an excellent opportunity for eyeball QSO's. Directions can be found on the K8LTG Repeater (145.370)
See you there!

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Editorial

Joe Phillips, K8QOE, Ohio Section Manager sent the following item to Newsletter editors. I'm printing it here to give the other side a voice, and while I feel they have a valid point, I also think there should be something done to protect the achievements of those who worked long and hard to get their licenses. If I had only had to learn 5 word a minute code to get Extra, I'd have been an Extra class ham from the start. I passed the Advanced class test without ever reading the published study guide, but that was because I had spent years studying Mathematics and Physics. Before the question pools were published, people had to learn enough to be able to answer whatever questions were asked. Perhaps, if the ARRL spent some of the money they take in to advertise and inform the public about Amateur Radio, they wouldn't have to spend so much to defend the bands. The average citizen knows almost nothing about Ham Radio and people tend to be apathetic about things they know nothing about. Programs like the Big Project are good, but they reach so few. We need better P R and the average ham is probably ill equipped to do this job on his own. Events like Field Day could do a tremendous job if a National advertising campaign stirred up some interest before hand. But what ever course is taken, the facts that Joe puts forth here must be taken seriously.

KE8VE

Most hams understand ham radio's future at the same rate they understand Eminem's wild music.

I write this knowing full well 80 per cent of those reading the last sentence have not the foggiest idea who Eminem is.

Meetings

The Alliance Amateur Radio Club meets on the First Wednesday of every month, in the cafeteria of the Alliance Community Hospital. Talk-in is on 145.37 @. Meetings begin at 7:30 PM. Visitors are always welcome.

Nets

Thursday is our "net night," with the following nets on tap:

Ten meters

CW @ 8PM on 28.400 MHz
SSB @ 8:30PM on 28.400 MHz

2 meters

9 PM on 145.37 MHz

Internet

If you'd like to check us out on the web, our E-mail address is:

w8lky@qsl.net

Our club home page is:

[Http://www.qsl.net/w8lky](http://www.qsl.net/w8lky)

Newsletter Information

The Zero Beat is a publication of the Alliance Amateur Radio Club, P.O. Box 3344, Alliance, OH 44601

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You can submit material to the Zero Beat either electronically, to ke8ve@alliancelink.com, in person, or via snail mail. I can read most word processor formats, but prefer your files to be in straight text, or Microsoft Word format.

June Minutes

ALLIANCE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

June 2, 2004

The regular meeting of the Alliance Amateur Radio Club was held at the Alliance Community Hospital on June 2, 2004, at 7:30 P. M., with Robert Steele K8RLS, president, presiding. Secretary David Glass W8UKQ kept the minutes. There were 21 members present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given, and introductions were made.

The minutes of the regular meeting for May were published in the newsletter. The total of the treasury balance was reported for the month. The minutes were approved upon motion by Smitty KC8TIQ, seconded by Jerry K8CAT.

Mary Ann KB8IVS reported the treasury balances. The report was approved upon motion by Howard KC8YIF, seconded by Gladys KB8IVS.

.Old Business: Don K8OMO reported that the club provided communications for the mock disaster drill recently. Several sites were covered. Don will assist in the installation of an amateur station in the Emergency Room.

The Breezeshooters Hamfest is coming up. There was rain at the

Dayton Hamfest. Mile Branch Grange Fair is July 22,23,24. The Carnation Days Special event will use the same frequencies as last year. The Triathlon is August 22.

The FT1000 transceiver is being tested by John KD8MQ. It was agreed to send Mrs. Mayer a thank you letter along with a \$25 gift certificate to Bob Evan's Restaurant. It was moved by David N8NLZ, seconded by John KD8MQ to invite Mrs. Mayer to the Christmas Party. Motion approved.

Field Day: June 26-27: The 920 HF transceiver will be the check in station. Don K8OMO suggested that John KD8MQ use the FT1000 for Field Day. John has ordered the Porta-Potty.

New Business: Don K8OMO displayed an original stock certifi-

cate issued in 1909. It is signed by Alfonso Marconi.

Dave W8UKQ had a letter published in QST about clubs responding to QSLs for special events quickly.

Jerry K8CAT has a complete packet station set up for a Commodore 64 available to anyone.

Dave W8UKQ has four elements for a six meter beam available. Howard KC8YIF is interested.

Howard KC8YIF will be NCS on June 3.

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM upon motion by Jerry K8CAT, seconded by David N8NLZ.

Respectfully submitted, Dave Glass W8UKQ, Secretary



THE WAYBACK MACHINE

ISSUE #7

by **Bill Continelli, W2XOY**

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OK, as you can probably guess, with all the recent attention on the Vanity Call Sign System, not to mention the half dozen calls that I've held in the past 27 years, this edition of "The Wayback Machine" is going to focus on call signs in amateur radio history.

Prior to 1912, getting a call sign was easy, just make one up and get on the air. Legend has it that's how the word "ham" came to mean amateur radio—the letters H A-M were in fact the initials of the three operators of a powerful station in the early 'teens. With the passage of the Radio Act of 1912, the first licenses were issued. Call signs at that time for "private stations" (amateurs) consisted of a number followed by two (later three) letters, i.e., 1AW, 1TS, 8XK etc. Other countries adopted this system. This was adequate in the early, spark days of amateur radio, but as the shortwaves were developed, and CW became universal, problems appeared. Dave Sumner, Executive Vice President of the ARRL, and Trustee of NU1AW, the station of the International Amateur Radio Union, picks up the story...

"When transoceanic amateur communication started becoming commonplace in 1924, a problem immediately became apparent: call signs were all of the 'one numeral followed by two or three letters' format, with no built-in means of determining who was where. At first, an informal system of prefixes (called 'intermediates' at the time) was used by amateurs where 'a' stood for Australia, 'b' for Belgium, 'c' for Canada, 'f' for France, 'g' for Great Britain, 'j' for Japan, 'u' for United States, 'z' for New Zealand, etc. The single-letter system was fine until it became apparent that Amateur Radio was spreading to too many countries for this system to accommodate.

"In January 1927 QST, a new intermediate list was unveiled as the work of the Executive Committee of the International Amateur Radio Union. The new list took effect at 0000 GMT (UTC) February 1, 1927. It was a two-letter system with the first letter indicating the continent (E for Europe, A for Asia, N for North America, F for Africa, etc.) and the second letter indicating the country (mostly following the old system). Thus, stations in the 48 United States used the intermediate

'NU.'

"The new system was quickly overtaken by events. The regulations adopted by the Washington International Radiotelegraph Conference later the same year included the allocation of a series of 'call signals' such as K, N, and W for the United States, and mandated that stations have a call signal from the series. The Washington regulations were to become effective on January 1, 1929, but August 1928 QST noted that Canadian amateur calls had changed to VE in April and September 1928 QST announced the effective date of October 1, 1928, in the United States for the W prefix (K outside the 48 states). Thus, US amateurs sported voluntary NU prefixes for just 20 months before they became Ws.

"The founding president of the International Amateur Radio Union was, of course, Hiram Percy Maxim, 1AW, who remained in that office until his death in 1936. The call sign NU1AW commemorates HPM and the IARU's creative, if short-lived, solution to the problem of international identification of stations.

"As trustee of NU1AW it is my intention to use the call sign as a 'permanent special event station' operating in connection with World Telecommunication Day, significant IARU anniversaries, the IARU HF World Championship, and other events that will call attention to the contributions of the IARU to organized Amateur Radio."

(My thanks to K1ZZ for allowing me to reprint the above).

Thus, the call sign structure was set up for the rest of the '20's and the 1930's. Stations in the 48 States had a 1x2 or 1x3 call sign beginning with "W" and containing a numeral from 1 to 9. Stations in Alaska, Hawaii, or other US Possessions had a "K" prefix. Incidentally, note that I said 1 thru 9; this is because the numeral "0" WAS NOT available to amateurs at that time. As a result, the call sign districts had different boundaries than they do today; for example, the western sections of New York and Pennsylvania were in the 8th call district then, as opposed to the 2nd and 3rd today. Southern portions of New Jersey were part of the 3rd, rather than 2nd, call district.

When amateur radio resumed after World War II, the increased number of amateurs necessitated the addi-

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tion of the tenth call district and the numeral "0". Except for the redrawing of the boundaries, things remained the same until 1951-53.

In 1951, the FCC eliminated the old Class A, Class B, and Class C licenses, and replaced them with the Novice, Technician, Conditional, General and Extra Class licenses. (What happened to the Advanced Class? "The Wayback Machine" will tell you in a future edition!) With this change came the first "distinctive" call signs. Novices, who at that time could only get a one year, non-renewable license, had a special 2x3 call sign with the letter "N" following the "W", i.e., WN2ODC, WN6ISQ etc. When they upgraded, the "N" would be dropped.

This system barely had a chance to settle in before the next change hit in 1953. Due to the increase in the number of amateurs, the FCC was running out of "W" 1x3 call signs. So 1x3 "K" calls began to appear in the 48 states, with the US possessions receiving 2x2 and 2x3 "K" calls, such as those issued today. Novice calls in the 48 states continued to have the distinctive "N" (such as KN4LIB) which disappeared upon upgrading.

Barely 5 years later, the growth of amateur radio, particularly in the 2nd and 6th call districts, caused another problem for the FCC, they were running out of "K" and "W" calls. So, in 1958, the FCC began issuing 2x3 "WA" calls, to be followed by "WB" when necessary. For some reason, Novices under this new system were given "WV" instead of "WN" as their prefix. The "V" would change to an "A" or "B" upon upgrading. (After only a few years of this, the FCC decided that their original idea was better, and went back to the Novice "N" prefix). With the uneven amateur population in the ten call districts, it took time for the "K" calls to run out in the other areas. As late as 1964, you could still get a "K" call in the 1st, 3rd or 7th call areas, while the 2nd and 6th districts were well into the "WB"s.

The 60's had some other call sign oddities. For a period of time, you could hold BOTH a Novice and Technician Class license simultaneously; the FCC gave you 2 call signs at once (such as WA/WN2ORS) and you used the appropriate call based on the amateur band and your privileges on it. The FCC also allowed you to have two calls if you maintained two homes in separate call areas; for example, Senator Barry Goldwater, K7UGA, also held K3UIG which he used while he was in Wash-

ington. (In theory, under this system, an amateur could hold four call signs if he/she had a Novice/Technician license and two separate addresses).

Except for the Novice and the distinctive "N", there was no way under this system to tell what class of license an amateur held. As older hams became Silent Keys and the number of available 1x2 calls slowly increased, the FCC instituted a program whereby those who held an Extra Class license for more than 25 years would be eligible for a 1x2. The length of time one needed to be an Extra was gradually reduced, until July 1977, when any Extra Class could apply for a 1x2.

There was one block of call signs that were unavailable to ANY amateur, regardless of license class. These were calls in which the suffix began with "X", such as W1XW, W3XCV, WB6XXK etc.. The FCC reserved these calls for experimental stations; for example, W2XB, W2XOY, W1XMN and KE2XCC were originally call signs of early TV and FM broadcast stations. While the FCC has relaxed their position on the 1x2 and 1x3 "X" suffix calls, the 2x3 call signs (such as KA6XYZ) are still reserved for experimental use.

By the mid 70's the 2nd, 4th, 6th and 8th call areas had run out of "WB"s. For a period of time, the FCC recycled older "WA" and "WB" calls that had been vacated, but when those ran out, they went to "WD"s. ("WC"s were reserved for and being issued to RACES/ Civil Defense stations.) Before the "WD" prefix could become popular, however, an incident occurred that would change the whole call sign structure.

In early 1977, an FCC employee was indicted for taking bribes offered by amateurs wanting special call signs. He was convicted and sent to jail. Partly as a result of this scandal, the FCC on February 23, 1978, adopted the call sign structure we have in place today. For 18 years, until the opening of the Vanity System, it had been impossible to request a specific individual or club call. Given the passionate love affair that some of us have with our calls, the FCC stands to make millions.

So, as you contemplate the call of your dreams, Form 610V in hand, take a moment to tune in NU1AW and work a piece of history. Meanwhile, "The Wayback Machine" is preparing for it's next journey to another moment in amateur radio history. I hope you're on board.

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and the check-in station. There was another HF station in Don's van, which Jack, W8WEN is seen operating in the picture on page 3. The Club's other HF rig was set up in KD8MQ's screen tent. Both of the Club's radios performed very well .

The pictures were provided by K8OMO and K8RLS. A few more will be printed in future editions of the Zero Beat, and all the pictures may be posted on the Club website.

The sign-in sheet had 24 names on it Saturday and 9 on Sunday, but there were a few more that didn't sign in both days, and a few that didn't sign at all. Thanks to all who attended.

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But then we have been paying attention to ham radio licensing statistics as often as we attend his rock concerts.

Current FCC proposals to change ham radio licensing (and recent suggestions from the ARRL) have raised eyebrows about - how many license classes should there be - - what CW requirements are needed - should we really have novices on most HF bands ?? - and the like.

Time to stop grumbling and look at reality. The ARRL has been doing that as well as the FCC. Time for the rest of us to join them. And the biggest reality is the average age of hams - 54 years old. That's the exact middle range of Federally licensed radio operators.

Just a frightening number all by itself. Was 45 years of age in 1979. But the real horror story is not that today's number (25 years later in 2004) is 54 but in how fast it is climbing to age 60 and above.

In the past 25 years, it climbed ONLY nine years from 45 to 54. BUT FIGURES FOR THE LAST TEN YEARS show current the growing rate is accelerating at a mind numbing rate, Yes, current figures show the average age

climbing almost one year EACH YEAR. If true we will go up nine years or from 54 to 63 average age by 2014 - or in ten years not 25. Yes, I know that attendance at hamfests and club meetings clearly demonstrates how old we are but those naked numbers should make us skip a heartbeat or two.

Getting younger licensed hams is not some desired goal - it is simple survival of the hobby.

And while we are passing around numbers, like Eminem passes out cultural insults, how about the fact that in 1998 the hobby experienced negative growth (more SKs than new licenses). Thanks to 1999 restructuring stats we have not repeated that but continue to stay close - one maybe two per cent growth annually. Nothing there to break out the champagne over.

Want more numbers? How about looking at license class numbers comparing, say 1997 to today. Without comment.

Seven years ago: May, 1997

Extra 73,737
Advanced 107,024
General 116,629
Tech/ No code Tech 314,532
Novices 66,551

TOTALS 678,473

Right now May 2004

Extra 105,361
Advanced 80,012
General 140,053
Tech/Tech + 333,732
Novice 31,545

TOTALS 690,703

Yes, I know reading the above and comparing license class numbers, will trigger comments about dumbing down license requirements, loss of CW skills, and the like. However true, these concerns are as angry and as useful as an Eminem song refrain.

His lyrics don't deal with reality either.

From the Ohio Section Journal, Ron Griffin, N8AEH, Findlay, Editor

HISTORIC MORSE CODE RADIO STATION WILL RETURN TO THE AIR

Former RCA Station KPH To Be
Heard Once Again

In the fifth annual event that has become known as the "Night of Nights", historic Morse code radio station KPH will return to the air in commemoration of the last commercial Morse message sent in the United States.

KPH, the ex-RCA coast station located north of San Francisco, will return to the air for commemorative broadcasts on 12 July at 1101 PDT (13 July at 0001 GMT), 5 years and one minute after the last commercial Morse transmission in the U.S. These on-the-air events are intended to honor the men and women who followed the radiotelegraph trade on ships and at coast stations around the world and made it one of honor and skill. Transmissions are expected to continue until at least midnight PDT(O700GMT).

For this fifth annual Night of Nights one frequency for the equally historic coast station KFS may possibly be activated. We are working now to repair the antenna needed for the KFS transmission.

Veteran Morse operators, including former KPH staff members, will be on duty at the receiving station at Point Reyes, CA listening for calls from ships and sending messages

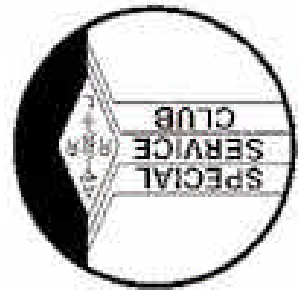
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July 2004

Happy Birthday to: K8CMI and K8CAT

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<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">ARCI Summer Homebrew Sprint</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; color: green;">CUYAHOGA ARS VE, INDEPENDENCE, OH</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; color: blue;">Wood County ARC Hamfest, Bowling Green, OH</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">COLUM. COUNTY TRAINING NET 8:00PM</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">STARK COUNTY ARES NET 7PM 147.120</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">NORTHERN COLUMBIANA ARES NET 9PM 147.255</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">CARROLL COUNTY NET 8:00PM 147.075</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">RSGB 80m Club Champi- onship, SSB</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">AARC NETS 8:00, 8:30, 9:00</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; color: red;">K8CMI</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; color: green;">MAHONING VALLEY ARA VE, YOUNGST- OWN, OH</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">QCWA Net 7:30</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">MASSILLON NET 8:00PM 147.18</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Mid-Summer Six Club Contest</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">CQ Worldwide VHF Contest</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">North American QSO Party, RTTY</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; color: blue;">Northern Ohio ARS Hamfest. Wellington, OH</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">VK/Trans-Tasman 160m Contest</div>																																																																																				
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<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">RSGB Low Power Field Day</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; color: blue;">Van Wert ARC Hamfes- t, Van Wert, OH</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">COLUM. COUNTY TRAINING NET 8:00PM</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">STARK COUNTY ARES NET 7PM 147.120</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">NORTHERN COLUMBIANA ARES NET 9PM 147.255</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">CARROLL COUNTY NET 8:00PM 147.075</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">RSGB 80m Club Championship, Data</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; color: green;">TWENTY OVER NINE ARC VE, YOUNGSTOWN, OH</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">AARC NETS 8:00, 8:30, 9:00</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">QCWA Net 7:30</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">MASSILLON NET 8:00PM 147.18</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; color: red; text-align: center;">K8CAT</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; color: blue;">OH-KY-IN ARS Hamfes- t, Cincinnati, OH</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">RSGB IOTA Contest</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Russian RTTY WW Contest</div>																																																																																				
25	26	27	28	29	30	31																																																																																				
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; color: blue;">Portage ARC Hamfest, Randolph, OH</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; color: green;">WARREN ARA VE, NEWTON FALLS, OH</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">COLUM. COUNTY TRAINING NET 8:00PM</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">STARK COUNTY ARES NET 7PM 147.120</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">NORTHERN COLUMBIANA ARES NET 9PM 147.255</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">CARROLL COUNTY NET 8:00PM 147.075</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">AARC NETS 8:00, 8:30, 9:00</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">QCWA Net 7:30</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">MASSILLON NET 8:00PM 147.18</div>																																																																																					

Nostalgia isn't what it used to be.



Alliance Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 3344
Alliance, OH 44601

(Continued from page 6)

just as they did for so many years before Morse operations were shut down.

The transmitters are located 18 miles south of Point Reyes in Bolinas, CA at the transmitting station established in 1913 by the American Marconi Co. The original KPH transmitters, receivers and antennas will be used to activate frequencies in all the commercial maritime HF bands and on MF as well.

KPH will transmit on 4247.0, 6477.5, 8642.0, 12808.5, 17016.8 and 22477.5kc on HF and 500 and 426kc on MF. If KFS is activated, transmissions will be on 12695.5kc.

These frequencies have been made available through the generous cooperation of Globe Wireless, the current owner of the KPH and KFS licenses.

Many of the transmitters will be 50's vintage RCA sets. Power output will be 4 to 5kw. The transmitting antennas include a Marconi T for MF, double extended Zepps for 4, 6 and 8Mc and H over 2s for 12, 16 and 22Mc.

Operators will listen for calls from ships on 4184.0, 6276.0, 8368.0, 12552.0, 16736.0 and 22280.5kc on HF and 500kc on MF. KPH, and KFS if activated, will send traffic lists, weather and press broadcasts as well as special commemorative messages, many of which will be sent by hand. At other times the

KPH and KFS "wheel" will be sent to mark the transmitting frequencies.

Reception reports may be sent to:
Denice Stoops, P.O. Box 381,
Bolinas CA 94924-0381