THE TARA NEWS

Affiliate of the American Radio Relay League

Volume 13 Issue 6 June 2002

FIELD DAY 2002

JUNE 22 & 23

FAMILY FUN

FELLOWSHIP

AMATEUR RADIO'S OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW THE PUBLIC OUR TRUE COMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITIES

FIELD DAY PREPARATIONS IN FINAL PHASE

One of the biggest parts of getting ready for Field Day, is the preparation & inventory of equipment owned by the club. Radio equipment is being taken out of storage and being checked out and any necessary tweaking or repairs are being done to assure that everything is in top working order for the BIGGEST Amateur event of the year. If you are interested in helping with any phase, please call or e-mail Bill Eddy, Club Pres. mrbill1953@n2ty.org or FD Chairman Randy Stein ka2tjz@n2ty.org to offer your assistance.

Plans are to again use the DJ trailer to avoid damage to everyones' back. The Field Day team will meet on Friday, June 21, 2002 at noon to load the equipment and set up the shelters in accordance with ARRL Field Day rules.

Ken - KB2KFV, Editor

ANNUAL SODA DRIVE NEEDS YOUR DONATIONS

In April we started our Annual Soda Drive, as of this date we are still quite short of our goal. We are again asking everyone to please bring a couple of six packs of your favorite soda to the next monthly meeting. If you don't have time to pickup soda, just give a donation to Karen and she will pick it up for you.

The soda will be collected near the front of the meeting hall by Karen and Mac Smith. Please bring either cans or plastic.

NO GLASS BOTTLES PLEASE

You can help out with the Field Day by assisting in getting enough beverage to cover the weekend and maybe even some future meetings.

ANY SODA DONATIONS ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED

If you have any questions, please contact Karen Smith at 273-6594 or at kb2uuc@n2ty.org

PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

ROTARY RUN

On Sunday, May 19th TARA Public Service Team worked the East Greenbush Rotary Run.

The weather so far has been very good for all the Public Service Events that we have had and the same with this run, but a bit chilly.

Thanks go out to:

Steve KF2WA	Margaret N2PEK
Roy N2OWC	Frank KC2HCE
Mac KB2SPM	Karen KB2UUC

We did have two surprise volunteers show up, and very glad they did!

Russ WB2LXC Joe KC2HLC

Thanks to all for helping me out.....
Karen KB2UUC

MEMORIAL DAY PARADE WATERVLIET

On Monday, May 27th, Watervliet held it's annual Memorial Day Parade. TARA joined in and helped out to make the parade a success. We had Ray N2ZQF, and the Boy Scout vehicle in the parade representing the Boy Scouts. Thanks Ray for being in the parade for the last 3 years for me.

A special thanks to all who helped out:

Mac KB2SPM	Steve KF2WA	Gary KC2HWE
Margaret N2PEK	Roy N2OWC	Donna WA2ILD
Sue KC2IBI	Joe KC2HLC	Karen KB2UUC

This is a first time for Donna WA2ILD and Sue KC2IBI. I hope they had fun and will like to do more Public Service Events with us.

Thanks again, de Karen KB2UUC

PUBLIC SERVICE UPCOMING EVENTS

On Sunday June 16th. (Father's day) we will be volunteering to help out Beth KC2BSC with the "Run For the Arts" in Troy. This is a nice run and we are looking for volunteers to help us out.

After the "Run for the Arts" Tony WB2BEJ will be serving breakfast up at the Colonie Elks for Father's day. An all you can eat breakfast!!! We will be going up to the breakfast as soon as the run is over with.

SARATOGA TRIATHLON DATE CHANGED

There has been a date change in the Saratoga Triathlon from 6/29/02 to 9/14/02. I hope this isn't a problem for those who have already signed up to help, it will still be on a Saturday. Anyone interested in volunteer - ing for this Public Service Event or any other, you can contact me anytime by email at KB2UUC@n2ty.org or call me at home at 273-6594

Karen KB2UUC

THE FREIHOFER "RUN FOR WOMEN"

On Saturday June 1, 2002, We took on the world.....or at least it felt like it!!!

We were asked to do the Freihofer's Run For Women. We accepted, and with nice weather and lots of volunteers, we pulled it off and did a great job !!

A SPECIAL THANKS to all who got up extra early and fought the traffic and the crowds to help me out with this event:

Steve KF2WA	Beth KC2BSC	Ramsay KC2GMW	Nick NW2D
Mac KB2SPM	Randy KA2TJZ	Kirk N2LGE	Frank KC2HCE
Ed KC2HNC	Gary KC2HWE	Steve KC2IOU	Ridge KB2HWL
Russ WB2LXC	Joe KC2HLC	Jim W2JHO	Karen KB2UUC

If you have any suggestions for next years run please let me know, as we are looking for ways to improve it. Thanks again for all your help!

73 de Karen KB2UUC

In This Issue

Ham Humor

**"The wireless telegraph is not difficult to understand.
The ordinary telegraph is like a very long cat.
You pull the tail in New York, and it meows in Los Angeles.
The wireless is the same, only without the cat."**

- Albert Einstein

Compliments of Joe - KC2HLC

Inside Your League

ARRL COURSE APPLIED TO A REAL DISASTER

ARRL Emergency Communications Course student Charlie Crizer, KF4MNE, of Alexandria, Virginia, says at least one course activity turned into reality April 28. In one activity scenario in the course, the student has been designated as chief liaison officer for a Simulated Emergency Test in which a tornado will wipe out a neighboring community. The student has to find VHF/UHF frequencies to monitor during the initial stages; a repeater for use as a calling channel; a VHF simplex frequency for local operations; and a UHF repeater for calling and coordination. Since he wasn't up to that part of the course then, Crizer says, he decided to worry about that exercise when the time came. "How wrong I was. On Sunday evening, my neighboring community [La Plata, Maryland] was wiped out by a tornado." Crizer said that evening he found himself--along with a lot of others--doing the same things out - lined in the course activity's scenario. "While anyone can buy the course books, read them and gain a better under-standing of emergency communications, actually doing the activities is the real 'meat' of this course," he said. "Do them well." To learn more, visit the ARRL Certification and Continuing Education Web page and the C-CE Links found there. For more information, contact Certification and Continuing Education Program Coordinator Dan Miller, K3UFG, cce@arrl.org .

FCC proposes two new amateur bands!

Good news for ham radio this week! FCC has proposed going along with the ARRL's request for a new domestic (US-only), secondary HF allocation at 5.25 to 5.4 MHz. The FCC also is ready to permit operation on a 136-kHz "sliver band" in the low-freq LF region. and in response to a third ARRL request, the FCC has proposed elevating Amateur Radio to primary status at 2400 to 2402 MHz. "I'm just as tickled as I can be," ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, said upon hearing the news. "This is a classic example of our ARRL at work."

The FCC voted unanimously May 2 to adopt the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in ET Docket 02-98. The Commission released a Public Notice May 9, and the NPRM is expected to be released soon. A comment deadline will be announced as soon as it's available.

The FCC said the new 5-MHz band would help amateurs "better match their choice of frequency to existing propagation conditions." The band, if approved, would be the first new amateur HF allocation since World Administrative Radio Conference 1979 gave amateurs 30, 17 and 12 meters--the so-called "WARC Bands." Assuming the 5-MHz band eventually is authorized, it could be a few years before it actually becomes available.

The League said its successful WA2XSY experiments demonstrated that amateurs can coexist with current users and that the band is very suitable for US-to-Caribbean paths. In comparisons with 80 and 40 meters, the WA2XSY operation also showed the 60-meter band to be the most reliable of the three. The ARRL also argued that a new 150-kHz allocation at 5 MHz could relieve periodic overcrowding on 80 and 40.
If allocated to amateurs on a secondary basis, hams would have to avoid interfering with--and accept interference from--current occupants of the spectrum, as they already do on 30 meters. The band 5.250 to 5.450 MHz now is allocated to Fixed and Mobile services on a co-primary basis in all three ITU regions.
The ARRL asked the FCC for two LF allocations in October 1998--135.7 to 137.8 kHz and 160 to 190 kHz. The FCC said its action on one part of that LF request proposes changes that would enhance the ability of amateur radio operators to conduct technical experiments including propagation & antenna design experiments, in the 'low frequency (LF) range of the radio spectrum.

Landmark Bill could provide amateurs relief from restrictive covenants

A bill introduced in Congress May 14 could provide relief to amateurs prevented by private deed covenants, conditions and restrictions--CC&Rs--from installing outdoor antennas. Rep Steve Israel (D-NY) has introduced the "Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Consistency Act." The measure is aimed at preventing private land-use rules from "unreasonably interfering with" the installation and use of "appropriate antenna structures" for amateurs. Rep Greg Walden, WB7OCE (R-OR)--the only Amateur Radio operator in Congress--and Rep Pete Sessions (R-TX) have signed on as original co-sponsors.

The measure contains but one sentence: "For purposes of the Federal Communications Commission's regulation relating to station antenna structures in the Amateur Radio Service (47 CFR 97.15), any private land use rules applicable to such structures shall be treated as a state or local regulation and shall be subject to the same requirements and limitations as a state or local regulation." The bill, which does not yet have a number, is expected to be assigned to the Telecommunications and Internet Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

After the ARRL ran into a brick wall trying to convince the FCC to include CC&Rs under the limited federal preemption known as PRB-1, the League's Board of Directors agreed to pursue a congressional remedy. ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, and other League officials met with Israel, Walden, Sessions and others on Capitol Hill earlier this year to discuss the prospect of such a bill and how it should be worded. With the proposal now in the legislative hopper, Haynie says the "really hard work" is up to the amateur community, League members or not.

"It becomes important for all of us to write your congress-man, call your congressman and voice your support," Haynie said. "This will have to be a grassroots effort, and we're going to pull out all the stops."

Israel, whose father, Howard, is K2JCC, said in a statement read into the Congressional Record that his bill seeks to ensure a continued viability of a volunteer public service resource. "My bill would provide Amateur Radio licensees with the ability to negotiate reasonable accommodation provisions with homeowners associations" Israel said, "just as they do now with governmental land-use regulators, to ensure that our nation is not left with areas devoid of the public safety services amateurs can provide."

Visit the US House of Representatives "Write Your Representative Service" Web page http://www.house.gov/writerep for information on how to contact your representative.

ARRL requests those contacting members of Congress to copy ARRL on their correspondence--via e-mail to ccr-bill@arrl.org or via US Mail to CC&R Bill, ARRL, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111. Please include your name & address on all correspondence.

TOP TEN REASONS TO GO TO TARA FIELD DAY 2002

10. YOU WILL GET YOUR PICTURE POSTED ON THE WEB!

9. YOU GET TO HOB-NOB WITH THE EX-ENRON CORPORATE EXECUTIVES HIDING FROM THE PRESS, IN THE WOODS AT FREAR PARK!

8. CRAIG – N2UID IS COOKING & GIVING FREE PIGGYBACK RIDES!

7. KEN – KB2KFV WILL BE BRINGING HIS BARRY MANILOW MUSIC COLLECTION

6. WATCH MAC – KB2SPM TRYING TO FLY HIS PLANES FROM HIS BOAT IN THE FREAR PARK POND, WHILE MARGARET – N2PEK USES MAC'S PLANES FOR SKEET TARGET PRACTICE

5. MR BILL – NY2U WILL BE MANNING A FREE KISSING BOOTH!

4. RANDY - KA2TJZ WILL ATTEMPT BUNGEE JUMPING FROM THE TOP OF THE TARA ANTENNA TOWERS

3. KAREN – KB2UUC WILL BE SIGNING COPIES OF HER NEW BOOK, "THE JOY OF TARA"!

2. IF YOU ARE AT "FIELD DAY" YOU WILL HAVE AN EXCUSE NOT TO FIX THE LEAKY FAUCET YOUR SIGNIFICANT OTHER HAS BEEN PESTERING YOU ABOUT ALL WEEK.

1. MEMBERS WHO DON'T SHOW UP WILL BE APPOINTED AS COMMITTEE CHAIR PERSONS OR BOARD MEMBERS!

SO, BE THERE OR END UP BEING A NEWLY ELECTED OFFICER OR CHAIR PERSON AT THE JULY TARA MEETING !!!!

TARA TECH TOY RAFFLE

Don't Forget to purchase your tickets for this great raffle to be drawn at our annual Field Day Dinner on June 22, 2002. Contact Mr. Bill, Karen & Hollins if you need any tickets.

$2.00 each or 3 for $ 5.00

First Prize: PALM Personal Digital Assistant Model VII x
Internet Ready With PALM Portable Keyboard
Second Prize: $ 40.00 CASH
Third Prize: $ 20.00 Gift Certificate Dining for two
Frank's Diner, 25 Lower Hudson Avenue
Green Island, N.Y.

PLEASE SELL TICKETS

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Several countries in Europe and elsewhere already have 136-kHz amateur allocations. The first amateur transatlantic contact on the band was recorded in February 2001. Hams would be secondary to the Fixed and Maritime Mobile services in the 136-kHz allocation. The League said its engineering surveys suggest that hams could operate without causing problems to power line carrier (PLC) systems already active in that vicinity or to government assignments. Unallocated Part 15 PLC systems are used by electric utilities to send control signals, data and voice. The FCC said its proposal to upgrade the Amateur Service allocationat 2400 to 2402 MHz to primary "seeks to protect current amateur use of this band." Hams have shared their other 2.4 GHz spectrum on a secondary basis with government users. Amateurs already are primary at 2390 to 2400 and from 2402 to 2417 MHz. The ARRL has said primary status in the intervening spectrum slice was needed "to provide some assurances of future occupancy of the band segments for the next generation of amateur satellites."The ARRL has expressed its belief that hams can continue to accommodate Part 15 and Part 18 devices at 2.4 GHz.

A WIN IN KINDERHOOK
ARRL & PRB-1 CREDITED IN ANTENNA BATTLE

A New York amateur is crediting the limited federal preemption PRB-1 and ARRL with helping him win approval for an antenna support structure on his property. Fred Fitte, WA2MMX, spent the better part of a year trying to gain the necessary approvals from the Town of Kinderhook. He finally got a building permit earlier this month.

"It's been a really ugly battle for about eight months," Fitte said. "I can't say enough good things about the League." The Town of Kinderhook would not allow a ham radio antenna support structure in excess of 35 feet without a variance. "PRB-1 is what saved my bacon," said Fitte, who finally won approval of his request to erect a 50-foot tower on a 3-1 vote of the town's zoning board of appeals. PRB-1, which is spelled out in the FCC Amateur Service rules under §97.15(b), requires municipalities to "reasonably accommodate" amateur communication. Fitte said that by the time he had presented his case, "it was real clear that the zoning board of appeals knew what they had to do."

Fitte singled out ARRL Hudson Division Director Frank Fallon, N2FF—who attended every hearing--and ARRL Lab Supervisor Ed Hare, W1RFI—who attended several--for special mention. A required trip to the town's planning board for a "site review" was routine and uneventful, he said. Fitte called Fallon "a crusader in the effort to keep ham radio active and moving forward," and said he became an ARRL Life Member because of his efforts. He also credited his legal counsel, Al Millus, WB2EQR, and Dr George Wilner, K2ONP, head of the Hematology Department at Albany Medical Center, whose expert testimony addressed concerns about possible RF exposure.

Fitte said the zoning board "acknowledged that PRB-1 was a major factor in the decision" and that if his application had been considered based solely on a request for a variance, it would not have been granted. Despite its earlier opposition, Fitte said, the ZBA eventually came to conclude that his application did not significantly alter the character of the neighborhood, did not affect property values and did not have a negative environmental impact. In addition, he said, the board agreed that no negative health impact based on RF exposure was proven. More pertinent, however, was a conclusion that a 35-foot structure would not be conducive to effective communications and that 50 feet--his request--was the bare minimum. Fitte said the ZBA also accepted Hare's assertions before the board that 75 feet was the accepted height for optimum communications. The zoning board's approval did not come without some restrictions, however. Fitte's tower was approved for the left side of the house. Fitte had hoped to erect it on the right side of the structure, nearest to his ham shack. The ZBA okayed a total height of 75 feet--50 feet of tower and 25 feet of antenna, an outcome he called "a pleasant surprise." He also agreed to install an anti-climbing device and to remove the structure when he moved. He also must provide proof of license renewal every 10 years. With a building permit now in hand, Fitte says he intends to get his town's zoning code changed to provide an exemption for Amateur Radio antenna support structures. But that will have to wait for a tower-raising party, he said.

Story submitted by,
Craig Wood – N2UID

Rensselaer County R.A.C.E.S. Activation - Grafton Search

Rensselaer County Races was activated Tuesday May 21st at about 3:00PM for the search for a missing teenager. The Races repeater in Grafton NY (147.180) was used. On Thursday the body of the teenager was found. Our condolencences go out to the boy's family. We had 12 people on Wednesday May 22 and 14 people on Thursday May 23, 2002. On Thursday the Races repeater was used for prime communications for both DEC and Rensselaer County .

The following people were involved and I wish to give a special thank you to them all for their time and effort.

Frank Gagliardi KC2HCE	Ed Eades III KC2HNC	Dave Kinerson WB2VXS
June Kinerson KB2JTG	Donald Bell WA2YQY	George Nagle AB2G Franklin County NY
Neil Anderson N2LOD	Garry Brooks KC2HCF	Russ Greenman WB2LXC
Dave Patti KB2HPW	MacDonald Smith KB2SPM	Jim Noble K2ZP

The cooperation between all the organizations was terrific. Over the past 6 days there were over 600 people involved. There was a tremendous response from people donating food to the people in the field and RCRACES was proud to be part of it.

In addition, Rensselaer County RACES members, Ken Davis – KB2KFV and Jim Pendilino – KC2HRO participated in the search on Sunday, May 19, 2002 with the Rensselaer County Search and Rescue Team. (Editors' Note)

Submitted by,
Jim Noble - K2ZP, EC/RO Rens Co. R.A.C.E.S.
k2zp@arrl.net

The RST Standard of Reporting

By L. B. Cebik, W4RNL

The RST (Readability-Strength-Tone) system of reporting with which we are all familiar (or are we?) goes back to 1934. The S-meter name was derived from the S in RST. Before (and for some time after) that, receiver meters were sometimes called R-meters (and sometimes just "signal" meters) and terminated at either 5 or 9. The difference in the 2 scales results directly from the change brought about in the standard RST report system between 1934 and 1936. These vacuum-tube voltmeters were used as much to align the receiver as to determine the strength of incoming signals.

Most S-meters were and are still a derivative function of AGC (called AVC by many in those days) and thus cannot exactly parallel the RST system. Few S-meter circuits are able to meet the proposed standard of S9=50 microvolts, with each S-unit equaling a 6 dB reduction from that level. The more signal processing we insert before the detection of a voltage roughly corresponding to signal strength, the more troubles we encounter with the accuracy of the system. Moreover, receiver gain distribution tends to vary from band to band (which is why *QST* product reviews rate sensitivity on various bands). Hence, the standard proposed in the early 1940s was never adopted by manufacturer's, even though S-meters are given printed scales as if the system were universal.

Between S1 and S9, a well-calibrated meter can provide a reasonable indication of signal strength that parallels the original RST system. In contrast, S9+40 is a sort of meaningless extra in conversation relative to the system. It is extraneous precision for the term "extremely strong signals" on an electronic system (the receiver) that has been shown time and time again to be quite imprecise. Hence, S9+40 is almost the SSB equivalent of Dave's World talk--and of a world where the thing rules the operator rather than the operator ruling the thing (the meter).

Unfortunately, few if any transceivers have well-calibrated S-meters. For a review of the performance of some recent transceivers, see the website of Greg Ordy, W8WWV (http://www.seed-solutions.com/gregordy) and look at two special items: "S Meter Blues" and "S Meter Lite." The latter is an attempt to overcome transceiver S-meter limitations with better-calibrated software.

The only way for the meter to be precisely in tune with the RST reporting system at the low end is to have S1 as the left needle rest marking. Then, you give S1 if you can hear the non-needle mover and give nothing if you cannot hear him. If S1=a certain number of microvolts of signal strength, the needle does not move until there is that number +1 (or +.001, etc.). Everything else that is lower is still S1. Or it is silence, since a person cannot give a report to a station he does not hear (nets and contests not included). This means of meter calibration would make the meter again partially track the RST standard.

If we turn the question around and require that the reporting system parallel the action of meters, then we need a new standard by which to report. The RST system of reporting is a standard and was developed to be a standard. It is not and was never intended to be a large collection of individual interpretations and inventions. Rather, it is a standard agreed upon and promulgated to everyone for standard use, in essence, an ITU standard paralleling all those used in physics and electronics that have been agreed upon by recognized bodies representative of all users. Until a new standard exists, the current standard places the RST system ahead of meter readings and "S" runs from 1 to 9. Those who insist upon putting their own revisions into practice--however widespread--only create confusion--like inventing a new set of meanings for voltage, current, and resistance such that E=2IR: quite possible, but confusing to casual readers. The following notes may form some historical background to my comments concerning RST as a standard.

In the 1930 *ARRL Handbook*, there is no mention of RST. Rather, the standard log page shows reference to QSA (Strength of signals on a scale of 1 to 5) and tone, given as a set of remarks (pp. 195-96). An alternative to the word "tone" was QRI? ("Is my tone bad?" as if the expected reply would be "yes.") Q-signals were the universal means of conveying complex questions and information quickly in early radio, augmented by the Phillips code, Navy signals, and a few other sources.

The 1936 *ARRL Handbook* (the next in my collection) reports (p. 323) that the basic version of the modern (?) RST system was proposed in 1934 by W2BSR. The original system used a 559 scale to preserve the QSA range. "T" was very detailed, since the achievement of a "Purest d.c.

note" was a function of many factors, including poor or nonexistent power supply filtration and what was then known as musical modulation and whistle.

"Some time later," W2BSR made a second proposal to expand the strength scale to 1 to 9 to accommodate finer gradations of perceived signal strength. (This step must have occurred either late in 1934 or early in 1935, since the copyright date of the '36 *Handbook* is October, 1935.) In 1936, an RST followed by "X" for the appearance of crystal control (for frequency stability) already existed, but there is no mention of "K" for key clicks is given. The 1947 *Handbook* adds "C" for chirp (p. 466), while retaining the 1936 meaning for the T-numbers. By 1952 the "K" appears, but the RST system has become such a standard part of amateur operations, that the editors moved the chart to the "Miscellaneous Data" chapter without any accompanying textual comment (p. 547). To receive a report in 1936, one sent "RST?" or "QRK?" ("Are you receiving me well?") RST was an evolving standard, and reports were not yet sent by everyone as part of the first exchange. The '36 *Handbook* refers to the RST system as "the present standard recommended for your use" (p. 323).

Between 1936 and 1995, the meanings of the 5 R-numbers and the 9 S-numbers did not change. Sometime between 1970 and 1978 (the space between *Handbooks* in my collection), the T-numbers took on their current meanings. The T-scale was altered in wording to reflect changing problems in achieving pure CW. In the 30s, T represented what the ham constructor had achieved. In modern times, it largely indicates a malfunction of some stage in a transmitter. T-6 now means "Filtered tone, definite trace of ripple modulation." Between 1934 and the early 70s, it was interpreted as "Modulated note, slight trace of whistle." See the accompanying table for further details on "T" and a reminder of the meanings of the rest of the numbers.

Table. 1. The RST system in 1936 and in 1995.

R: Same in '36 and '95	S: Same in '36 and '95
1 Unreadable	1 Faint signals, barely perceptible
2 Barely readable, occasional words distinguishable	2 Very weak signals
3 Readable with considerably difficulty	3 Weak signals
4 Readable with practically no difficulty	4 Fair signals
5 Perfectly readable	5 Fairly good signals
	6 Good signals
	7 Moderately strong signals
	8 Strong signals
	9 Extremely strong signals

T: 1936	T: 1995
1 Extremely rough hissing note	1 Sixty-cycle ac or less, very rough and broad
2 Very rough a.c. note, no trace of musicality; broad	2 Very rough ac, very harsh
3 Rough, low-pitched a.c. note, slightly musical	3 Rough ac tone, rectified but not filtered
4 Rather rough a.c. note; moderately musical	4 Rough note, some trace of filtering
5 Musically modulated note	5 Filtered rectified ac, but strongly ripple-modulated
6 Modulated note, slight trace of whistle	6 Filtered tone, definite trace of ripple modulation
7 Near d.c. note, smooth ripple	7 Near pure tone, trace of ripple modulation
8 Good d.c. note, just a trace of ripple	8 Near perfect tone, slight trace of modulation
9 Purest d.c. note	9 Perfect tone, no trace of ripple or modulation of any kind

Does the RST standard system of reporting need change? Perhaps "R" is not to be changed, since it represents a measure of readability to the receiving operator. Is "S" a strict measure (a standardized meter reading), a relative measure (based on how signals sound compared to each other on a given occasion with given band conditions), or a subjective measure (of how the receiving operator feels about the incoming signal)? What can "S" be as a standard for the next century? Does "T" need revision, omission, or mention only when the note is other than purest d.c.? Perhaps QRP operators are in the best position to contribute to a revised standard applicable to them or to everyone since they work at power levels where the report is most meaningful.

If good QRP practice does require a new standard for RST, then let there be a deliberative body representative of all the QRP organizations, and let this body study the problem, receive input from all interested operators, consider all the aspects of the problem, and develop a new standard. Further, let all QRP organizations making studies, issuing awards, and publishing operating accomplishments formally adopt the new standard and insist that all data input to them be in accord with the new standard. At that time, deviant input must be rejected or revised to meet the new standard.

Until then, the *de facto* standard is that which appears in handbooks and which takes precedence over meters. Until we go through the process of creating a better standard, we can either report in accord with the standard to the best of our operating skill or we can be deviant (or "cool"). If the latter, we owe it to other QRP operators to let them know which we are doing so that operator may discount our report. If the former, then we are committed to applying our best efforts and skills to master the art of reporting uniformly with others who are also committed to the standard. The uniformity cannot be perfect, but it can be reliable.

"R" reports may improve as we better master the art of copying CW (or SSB). Recognizing CW signal faults may require much practice in this day and age when almost all rigs produce clean CW. Strength reporting may be the most controversial part of the process. If the RST system is the standard, then the use of meters is an aid to reporting signal strength, but it is not as the standard itself. Should anyone report my signal as S0, I shall stop transmitting, since that is--by the standard--evidence of non-contact, and except for CQ and QST (no, not the magazines), non-contact transmissions except for brief tests and known beacons are not regulatorily approved. If someone gives me an S9+anything, then that is only a cue to reduce power. Only the S9 goes in the logbook/disk.

Of course, virtually all BIG contest reports and dx pile-up reports are meaningless. But that fact does not say that QRP operators must adopt the meaningless. They can still adhere to the operative standard for maximum information transferral until such time as a better standard is adopted--if there is one.

Anyone care to lead the effort to form an international body to study the question and develop a new standard for the 21st century?

Whatever may transpire, I recommend that we always keep the other operator in mind as we use the present RST system for the transferal of the most precise information permitted by the standard. We can always add notes in our own logs for impressions of the band conditions, etc. But as the 1936 *Handbook* notes, the RST system is a complete and efficient report in its own right to the other operator.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Kentucky Chili

This one is a slow cooker because you want as much time as possible for the onions and spices to seep into the sauce. Enjoy!

Ingredients:

2 cans chili hot beans	1 can of baked beans	2 lbs ground chuck	1 can tomato sauce
1 or 2 cups of tomato juice	2 heaping tsp. of chili powder	1/2 of large onion	1 tsp. salt
1 heaping tsp. Sugar	1/2 to 1 whole tsp. of red pepper		

Preparation: Brown meat with diced onion, salt. In large pot mix the beans, tomato sauce, tomato juice. Add sugar, pepper, and chili powder. Mix meat and beans together. Let it simmer awhile (the longer the better), and add more or less pepper to taste. For thickness add more or less juice to taste. Also use a little milk to thicken if you like.

New Mexico amateurs support fire response – May 1, 2002

Amateur Radio Emergency Service/Radio Amateur Civil EmergencyService members this week assisted the American Red Cross in New Mexico following evacuations prompted by yet another wildfire. The latest fire emergency came about as tinder-dry conditions continue to keep New Mexico ARES RACES members busy.

A dozen or so air tankers were ordered to battle the most recent fire near Pecos--the so-called Dalton Fire in the Santa Fe National Forest. More than 100 residents were evacuated in the Dalton Canyon and Pecos Canyon areas.

"The fire hazard remains high throughout virtually all of New Mexico so there is no doubt that ARES RACES teams will be called out again--the only question is, when?" said New Mexico Section Emergency Coordinator Bill Kauffman, W5YEJ Kauffman said the US Forest Service now estimates the so-called Dalton Fire is 70 percent contained. "This fire, which is believed to have been intentionally started, was hit hard with slurry bombers and hot shot ground teams," Kauffman said.

As the fire emergency escalated earlier this week, Kauffman said hams quickly set up at a Red Cross shelter and other facilities near Pecos. The New Mexico State Emergency Operations Center in Santa Fe was not activated, but EOC personnel had asked ARES/RACES to beready if needed.

On May 2, ARES/RACES activated an HF net at the request of the state EOC to provide possible communication support with Otero County EOC in response to the so-called Penasco Fire. That blaze near Mayhill was expected to be 100 percent contained by mid-week after burning more than 15,000 acres. Most residents of the James Canyon have been allowed to return to their homes after being evacuated earlier last week. The Penasco Fire destroyed more than a dozen homes and more than two dozen other structures. About 15 families were reported in Red Cross shelters as of the end of last week. More than 1500 firefighters have been involved in fighting the Penasco fire.

Kauffman said Forest Service supervisors have been discussing closing all or parts of the Cibola and Santa Fe National Forests and the City of Albuquerque is considering closing the area along both sides of the Rio Grande as it runs through the city, known as the Bosque. The New Mexico statewide emergency frequencies are 7233 kHz days and 3939 kHz nights (plus or minus adjacent QRM).

ARRL New Mexico Section Manager Joe Knight says the situation "could change at any time." Little or no rain has fallen in New Mexico in recent weeks, he said, noting that Albuquerque got just 0.04 inches of rain in April. The lack of rainfall, combined with extremely low humidity, led to the critical fire situation in New Mexico, which is now at Level III. Knight said hams in New Mexico remained on alert to render possible aid to neighboring Arizona, where another 12,000 acre fire was raging.

West Virginia Amateurs help state deal with flooding

Amateurs in West Virginia continue to assist in the wake of recent flooding. The state has recorded nine deaths since severe thunderstorms May 2 dumped more than five inches of rain over the southern West Virginia coalfields within a few hours.

ARRL West Virginia Section Emergency Coordinator Mac McMillian, W8XF, says several roads in the hardest-hit region in and around Welch and Webster counties remain closed due to flood damage, and "uncounted" families have been forced from their homes. Schools in McDowell County remain closed. Gov Bob Wise has declared a state of emergency in several counties.

"Amateur Radio involvement has been done locally on battery-powered repeaters in the affected areas." McMillian said this week. Amateurs from the Charleston area volunteered to assist in Welch County.
McMillian said amateurs were able to handle a request from the state Emergency Operations Center to provide back-up communication from Welch to the state EOC in Charleston when a coal mine impound dam threatened to burst. The impound was pumped down to safe levels before that could happen, however.

Raleigh County Emergency Coordinator Tim Zutaut, KC8PMI, said this week that Raleigh County ARES-RACES was monitoring the Welch 145.45 MHz repeater. A McDowell County ARES group has been using the repeater to assist with communications into and out of the county, he said. "Our group is set up at the Red Cross to assist them with any traffic and needs they may have," he told McMillian." From the reports I have received, the damage there [McDowell County] is very extensive."

McMillian said the McDowell County 911 center was flooded, and more than two-thirds of the telephones in the affected area were not functional in the immediate aftermath of the flooding. Some cellular telephone sites have remained operational, however.
In Virginia, flooding in Buchanan County affected more than 2500 residents and caused damage estimated at $30 million. Two people drowned in the community of Hurley. Flooding also affected Pike County, Kentucky, and one person drowned in that state.

Thank You Note from Ron Cluster KB7VIR

Thanks for the copy of the newsletter Ken. The article came out looking great. Nice job laying it out and working in the photos. Kind of a thrill to see it in "print"!! I never considered myself much of a writer, but this is sort of fun! I have the "photos of the console" on my list of things for this weekend so I'll be getting started on that pretty soon. I really wish I would have taken some photos during the construction phase but it's too late to do anything about that now. I should be able to get the idea across, I think !!!

Thanks again,

73 Ron - KB7VIR (-9 when mobile)

W

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THE TARA NEWS

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Next Meeting

Tuesday, June 18, 2002 7:30 p.m.
Green Island Municipal Center
at the intersection of
George St. & Hudson Ave.
HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE

Troy's Full Service Repeaters
145.170/R 444.225/R