

the milliwatt



The award-winning monthly publication of
The Baltimore Radio Amateur Television Society
P.O. Box 5915 Baltimore, MD 21282-5915

APRIL, 2017

USA ham radio allocations at 472 and 135.7 kHz

The FCC on March 28 adopted rules that will allow secondary Amateur Radio access to 472-479 kHz (630 meters) and to 135.7-137.8 kHz (2,200 meters), with minor conditions. The FCC Report and Order (R&O) spells out the details. It allocates 472-479 kHz to the Amateur Service on a secondary basis and amends Part 97 to provide for Amateur Service use of that band as well as of the previously allocated 135.7-137.8 kHz band. The R&O also amends Part 80 rules to authorize radio buoy operations in the 1900-2000 kHz band under a ship station license. The new rules become effective 30 days following publication in The Federal Register. (Southgate)

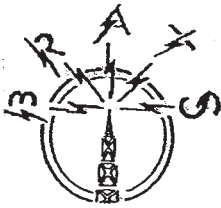
Radio Shack Files for Bankruptcy, Will Close 187 Stores

Electronics retailer RadioShack has filed for its second bankruptcy in two years and will close 187 more stores this month, about 9% of its 1,943 locations. The chain, based in Fort Worth, Texas, previously filed for bankruptcy in 2015, resulting in about 2,400 store closings. Subsequently, General Wireless, a joint venture of hedge fund Standard General and Sprint, acquired it and has run 1,518 stores.

In a Chapter 11 reorganization petition filed Wednesday in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Delaware, General Wireless stated it planned to close 187 stores this month, which the process already underway. In addition, the chain says it is closing the RadioShack portion of the 360 stores that it shares with Sprint, and evaluating whether to do the same in 971 other shared stores.

About 1,850 of RadioShack's 5,900 employees are expected to be affected by the moves. Sprint paid General Wireless a \$12 million "wind down payment," and in return was transferred the leases for 115 stores, as well as equipment and furniture in 245 more stores where Sprint is the primary tenant.

The RadioShack stores that do not close March 13 will remain open and the company will continue evaluating options on them during the bankruptcy process. Also open: RadioShack.com, which promoted a clearance sale on its home page.



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The award-winning monthly publication of The BRATS. Items herein may be reprinted with appropriate credit.

Mayer D. Zimmerman, W3GXX, Editor

Some Thoughts

Spring is here. The contest season continues. If you have never operated in a contest, try it. You probably will not win, and you won't even get a high score, but you will have FUN. Spring is here. Time to fix your antennas and Replace old coax. That is also FUN... Enjoy the warmer weather.....
73, Mayer, W3GXX

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Linked, WB3DZO
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W3GXT=5 145.05
W3GXT-10 224.52
ATV repeaters W3WCO
inputs: 426.25, 1253.25
Outputs: 439.25, 911.25

BRATS WEEKLY NETS
Monday 9 PM Traffic and Info
Tues. 11:45 Informal ATV
Wednes. 9 PM CATS ATV
Thurs 9 PM BRATS ATV
Sat. 1 PM Weekly News Bul
Sun 8 PM BRATS ATV net
AS Needed: Skywarn

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Listen to the weekly News
Bulletin on 147.03/R
Saturday at 1 PM
Join us for the weekly
Traffic and info Net on
Mondays at 9PM on 147.03/R

Baltimore Radio Amateur TV Society
MINUTES of the 20 March 2017
Monthly Meeting

KevinS, KB3PLX, chaired this month's teleconference meeting. 8 attendees.

/REPORTS

- Minutes: Secretary's Minutes from the February meeting accepted, approved. Noted correction to NW machine: changed to "linked machine".
- Treasurer: Treasurer's report accepted. 2 checks processed.
- Repeater/Equipment: 443 link machine off air (correction from last month). 900 ATV off air; need location to mount antenna. Status of roof repairs at N. Baltimore site unknown; follow up needed.
- Events: MS Walk date changed to May 6 at Padonia Park Club
Tour de Cure - May 6; volunteers needed. Contact Aero ARC.
Balloon Launch - May 13. We will hold a coordination teleconference on May 8 at 7PM. Dial-in: 804-286-6686; Conference ID: 97118690.

/OLD BUSINESS

- Event Forms: Kevin and Oryx will complete today. [DONE]
- Meeting Venue: Russ to check Owings Mills availability for Apr. 17, May 15, and Jun. 19. As alternate for April 17, we will use Greene Turtle.

Ted, WA3AER
Secretary

ARRL Reiterates Its Case for New Band at 5 MHz:

In comments filed on March 20 with the FCC on its own January Petition for Rule Making (RM-11785 https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/search/filings?q=rm-11785&sort=date_disseminated_DESC), ARRL reiterated its case for a contiguous secondary 15-kHz wide, 60-meter band of 5,351.5 to 5,366.5 kHz in addition to the four existing discrete 60-meter channels that fall outside the requested band, with a permitted power level of 100 W EIRP and retention of current operating rules. More than 5 dozen comments, all supporting the proposed allocation, were filed on the League's petition. While some suggested more spectrum or higher power, or a combination, ARRL said in its comments that it does not at this time favor any changes in its initial request for a new band. The League proposal would implement a portion of the Final Acts of World Radiocommunication Conference 2015 (WRC-15) that provided for a secondary international amateur allocation of 5,351.5 to 5,366.5 kHz at a maximum of 15 W EIRP.

"Each component of this proposal is intended to maximize spectral efficiency by permitting amateurs to operate throughout a band as conditions and availability warrant; to give primary service operations certainty as to where radio amateurs will be located within the broader fixed and mobile service band between 5.250-5.450 MHz; and it protects those primary users with the same successful interference avoidance techniques and protocols that have been used for the past 15 years domestically, with which radio amateurs have the technical training and experience to comply," ARRL asserted in its comments.

Puerto Rico Section, American Red Cross PR Chapter; Ink Memorandum of Understanding:

The ARRL Puerto Rico Section and the American Red Cross Puerto Rico Chapter have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to offer assistance and emergency communication support, should Red Cross communication systems fail or are disrupted. The MoU signing took place on March 3 at the Red Cross offices in San Juan. Red Cross Regional Executive Lee Vanessa Feliciano and Puerto Rico Section Manager Oscar Resto, KP4RF, signed for their respective organizations.

"This MoU is based on the one ARRL has at the national level, and it was adapted to our local needs," Resto said. "We are also in communication with various emergency radio clubs to be part of this accord and eventually to build ARES on the island." Resto explained to Feliciano how the section emergency structure works and how communication is provided.

Among other provisions, the MoU calls for both organizations to collaborate in training and educational opportunities, as well as pre-disaster planning. The Red Cross in Puerto Rico will also take part in Field Day and the Simulated Emergency Test (SET), as well as other emergency preparedness exercises.

103-YEAR-OLD HAM IN RUSSIA, A SILENT KEY

JIM/ANCHOR: In his lifetime, Victor Sokkolov U5FS of Izmail, Russia, had seen World War I, the Russian Revolution and World War II, in which he served in the military. Victor, who became a Silent Key on March 25 at the age of 103, was believed to be among the oldest amateurs in Russia, if not the world.

A less active ham in his later years, Victor was proud of his military service and would often tell of the action he was involved in, including the Russian landing on the Kerch Strait which aimed to recapture Crimea from Germany. His death was reported in the Daily DX. (SOUTHGATE, DAILY DX via eham.net)

FROM DUBLIN TO NEPAL AND BACK AGAIN

Call it a success! The Irish DXpeditioners who went to Nepal are back home, returning with more than 30,000 QSOs completed, The Irish DXpedition 9N7NEI reports that it has completed its goal of more than 30,000 QSOs during 10 days of operation before going QRT on March 19. The team's shutdown came just in time - it was right before a major power outage, the team reports on its website. In fact, much of the DXpedition was plagued on and off by power outages, electrical storms and noise issues. There were bright spots however, that had nothing to do with a sky illuminated by lightning: Operators got to celebrate St. Patrick's Day at the team's QTH at the Sojourn Himalaya Resort in Nepal. They also played host to a number of guests including three students and their teachers from the Sweden's Sando Rescue College, who had come to learn the logistics of setup and operations, especially with a dozen operators on the air. The team is grateful of course for exceeding its QSO goal and counts itself lucky even as it counts those 30,366 contacts. All that remained was the 22-hour trip back to Dublin.

WA7BNM Contest Calendar

April 14-15 Holyland DX Contest
YU DX Contest
Michigan QSO Party

April 15-16 North Dakota QSO Party
Ontario QSO Party

April 22-23 UK/EI DX Contest, CW
SP DX Contest, RTTY
Nebraska QSO Party

April 29-30 10-10 Intl Spring Contest,,
Digital
Helvetia Contest
Florida QSO Party

May 6- 10-10 Spring Contest, CW
Indiana QSO Party

HAMFESTS

Saturday, April 22, Georgetown, DE
Summit ARA Hamfesst a the Cheer
Center, 20520 San Hill Rd. (near Rte 9)
Georgetown, DE, 147.09 (PL 156.7)
Herb, KF3BT 302-629-4949
herb@hamiltongraphics.com

Sunday, May 28, W. Friendship, MD
MDFM Memorial Weekend Hamfest
Howard County Fairgrounds, Rte 144
West Friendship, MD (156.76)
John, W3MNN, 301-641-5313
marylandfm@verizon.net

ARRL DX NEWS

TUVALU, T2. Tim, NL8F is QRV as T2TT until April 13. Activity is on the various HF bands using SSB and digital modes. This includes being an entry in the CQ World Wide WPX SSB contest. QSL via N7RO.

MALI, TZ. Laurent, F5IXR is QRV as TZ5XR until 2019. Activity is on 40, 20, 17, 12 and 10 meters using mostly CW. QSL direct to home call.

CANADA, VE. Members of the Canam Contest Club are QRV as XO1X from Whitehorse, Yukon during all of 2017 in celebration of Canada's 150th anniversary.. QSL via KC1CWF.

OPERATION APPROVED FOR DXCC CREDIT. The following operation has been approved for DXCC credit: Palestine, E44CM, November 2016 operation.

THE WORLD OF DX

In the world of DX, Jean-Marc, F5SGI, will be active between April 9th and 15th as EA6/F5SGI from Minorque Island. He will be operating on the HF bands, CW only. Send QSL cards to his home callsign, direct or by the Bureau.

Listen for Marc, ON5SM, in the Philippines where he is operating from April 4th through May 24th as DU9/ON5SM. He will be active on 80 meters through 6 meters using SSB and the Digital modes. Send QSL cards via his home callsign, direct or by the Bureau.

Between April 18th and 27th, listen for Stephen/WF2S and Ralph/K1ZZI, operating from St. Lucia. You can hear them on various HF bands, most likely on SSB, RTTY, PSK and JT65. They will also operate some CW. Send QSL cards to their home callsigns, direct or LoTW, which is preferred. (ARNewsline via eham.net)

BARC VE EXAMS
Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church
905 Frederic Rd. Catonsville, MD

Registration starts at 2 PM

Exams at 2:30 PM

**NO ONE ADMITTED AFTER
EXAMS BEGIN**

Pre-register by email:
info@veteam.org

NEXT EXAMS
Saturday, May 6th
2:30 PM
and first Saturday
of each month

BARC Meetings
First Wednesday, 7 PM
All meetings at Wegmans
Hunt Valley, in the upstairs
dining room.....

CARA
4th Tuesday at 7:30 PM
Columbia Gateway Center
Room 401; Columbia, MD

LARC VE EXAMS
364 Main St Laurel,
3rd Sat at 9 AM;
John, WB3GXW,
301-572-5124

**MD Mobileers VE Exams at
National Electronics Museum,
Linthicum**
4th Tuesday at 6 PM
Mike, KA2JAI, 443-310-4902
KA2JAI@arrl.net

SPEAKING UP (LOUDLY) ABOUT RISING NOISE FLOOR:

We begin this week's newscast with this report on noise. The noise floor is rising on the bands and so are the efforts at mitigation. In South Africa, a detailed study is about to get under way and the South African Radio League is in search of input and expertise to assist, as we hear from Amateur Radio Newsline's Jim Meachen ZL2BHF.

In South Africa, it's time to start making some noise - some complaining noise - to help make the bands more hospitable for amateur radio. The South African Radio League is forming a study group to monitor the rising RF noise floor on the bands and to identify ways to mitigate noise from manmade sources that impacts the radio frequencies.

The radio league is collecting information from radio amateurs who may have expertise or interest in providing input to the study in preparation for a workshop being held on the 22nd of April. The open meeting will take place at the National Amateur Radio Centre in Cape Town. For more details about the workshop on the rising noise floor, or to express interest in being a part of the noise study, send an email to sarlregwg-at-sarl-dot-org-dot-za (sarlregwg@sarl.org.za)

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HRO price \$199. N3BHE.
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wa3tad@comcast.net

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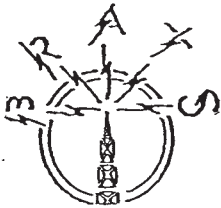
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KICKER: TRANSMITTING, IN A NUTSHELL

We end this week's newscast with the story of a very miniature homebrew transmitter that was a tough nut to crack. Well....maybe not. The transmitter is actually a very simple device for sending CW. It operates QRP, drawing its power from a 9-volt battery. Of course, it's so tiny that the battery actually has to be outside the device: the transmitter is housed inside a walnut shell! Its creator, Jarno (YARN-O) de Haan PA3DMI in Amsterdam, just happens to really like walnuts -- and the ones he was eating from his neighbor's tree inspired him to follow a design he had seen for a tiny CW transmitter. As he told Amateur Radio Newsline in a recent email: QUOTE "looking at the design and eating walnuts got me thinking what if....." ENDQUOTE

What if, indeed. He found four very tiny crystals on the Internet for \$10, added a few other super-small components, then added the most miniature hinges he could find that would allow the nut to open and close. When he hooked it up to a dummyload, out came 50 to 60 milliwatts!

After he posted a video of it on YouTube, the website Hackaday.com took it viral. The rest is Internet and ham radio history. Followers have gone, well.....nuts over it. As for Jarno (YARN-O), he's inspired now to do more. He wrote Newsline to say: QUOTE: "I still have about a half kilo of walnuts so I could make a receiver, an antenna tuner, a new walnut CW-key - the possibilities are endless." ENDQUOTE

Amateur Radio Newsline congratulates Jarno (YARN-O) on revolutionizing the wireless world of walnuts and asks that he please write us again when he's had his first successful QSO with a squirrel. (AR Newsline)

Ham Radio Outlet Closes Silicon Valley Store:

On March 22, Ham Radio Outlet (HRO <http://www.hamradio.com/>) closed its Sunnyvale, California, store -- one of its first -- which served the Amateur Radio community in the heart of Silicon Valley for more than a quarter of a century. One of five California HRO stores, the Sunnyvale store has been consolidated as a cost-saving measure with HRO's Oakland operation. "We needed to make some changes in our Northern California locations," HRO National Sales Manager Steve Gilmore, W4SHG, said in a statement. "Some of the costs associated with operating in the Sunnyvale location have absolutely skyrocketed, and the traffic and parking availability in our current Sunnyvale location has become seriously problematic." Employees in the Sunnyvale store were offered positions in the Oakland shop, about 1 hour away to the north along San Francisco Bay.