

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE KINGS COUNTY RADIO CLUB



June 2015

"Quid, Me Anxius Sum?"

Volume 2, Issue 6

Next Club Meeting:

Tuesday, July 14th, 2015 at 7:30PM

Next Club Activities:

Well, by the next meeting, Field Day 2015 will just be, hopefully, a pleasant memory, but there's no time like the present to start planning Field Day 2016—any thoughts?

Further details will be posted on www.KC2RC.com and www.KingsCountyRadioClub.com as they develop.

Our weekly Nets meet on Sunday at 11 AM on 28.380 (10 meters) and Tuesday on 146.730 PL 88.5 (2 Meters)

KCRC Sponsored Volunteer Exam Another Success!

The Kings County Radio Club sponsored another VE Exam Session on May 31st! Two new Technicians were inducted into the hobby and a Technician License holder was upgraded to a General License!

Let's hear it for our Volunteer Examiners responsible, Eddie WWDEV, Adam NY2K, and Roy AC2GS.

Field Day 2015!!!

Unless your Editor has been asleep at the word processor, Field Day has yet to arrive!

This year's Field Day begins 1800 UTC (2 PM EDT) Saturday, June 27th and ends 2059 UTC (4:59 PM EDT) Sunday, June 28th at Floyd Bennett Field. Set up begins Saturday 9 AM

As always, all pertinent information will be readily accessible and up-to-date on our club web site, www.KC2RC.com or www.KingsCountyRadioClub.com.

Have fun and take lots of pictures!

Vanity Call Signs Will Be Free

Leave it to the Federal Government! The arse-backwards way they have for charging for vanity call signs ended up losing money for them. They have decided, in their infinite wisdom, that it would be cheaper for them to give vanity calls away FOR FREE!

This won't go into effect for a while and no further refunds will be made, so just bide your time and get your vanity call sign for FREE!

The Kings County Radio Club is at www.KC2RC.com or www.KingsCountyRadioClub.com

KCRC is an ARRL affiliated club (see: www.ARRL.org)

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New Repeater Installed—check!

New Antenna Installed—check!

Our new Yaesu DR-1X is/(was?) live and on the air. Our new antenna is installed. But are we finished?

Hell no!

At some point down the road we will need a pre-amp, a controller and a final power amplifier. If you happen to have one of these “in the back of the truck” please share. If you know where we could get a good deal for one, let us know. If you would be interested in donating some of your dollars towards their purchase, please be generous. There is a donation page on the web site and Richard would be glad to accept checks if you are one of them thar 20th century types. Please be generous—this is YOUR repeater too!

THIS JUST IN— Our Repeater developed a little *glitch* and will needs its coax replaced, but *she'll* be back at its usual strength very soon!

Two Steps Backward, One Step Forward? Our Government in Dis-action!

Well, good news and bad news. The FCC has been talked into modifying their brilliant idea to *gut* Ham Radio enforcement by summarily firing most investigator and closing most field offices.

The bad news? Leaders of the House Energy and Commerce Committee announced ““Communities across America will continue to be served even as the commission becomes more efficient - it's a win-win,” said full committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI). Under the revised plan, 15 field offices would remain open with monthly visits to a 16th location. The plan involves two mobile “tiger teams” and a complaint escalation process to assure that disruptions to critical communications are resolved in a timely manner.

The revised plan will keep 15 of the FCC's 24 field offices open, ensure better rapid response capabilities for the west, provide a mechanism for escalating interference complaints, improve enforcement of the FCC's rules against pirate radio operators, and prevent the commission from transferring field office jobs to the FCC's Washington, D.C. headquarters. Energy and Commerce Committee leaders have pressed the FCC on the potential closure of two-thirds of the agency's field offices for several months

So, they came to a compromise where in effect, Amateurs are still getting *screwed*, but now the government promises to use lubricant!

What say we show them how much we appreciate their hard work on our behalf and send them back to private industry instead of their next term in office, eh?

Icom Announces New Flagship Radio!

Icom announced the launch of the Icom IC-7851 flagship HF/50 MHz Amateur Radio Transceiver. Looking at the specs it reads like “*state of the art stuff*” circa 1980's with an actual 21st century DSP tacked on and purty color graphics dancing across ya screen! Those guys in Japan (Icom, Kenwood, and Yaesu—the “Usual Suspects”) are about as innovative as Blackberry is these days (using one of those is like taking a time machine back to 2001). And the amazing part is this legacy machine covered with knobs and buttons only goes for \$16,999! A pittance for a REAL Ham! So if anyone out there is planning to buy one of these beauties (yeah, sure), please invite us all over to see it in action. But, until then, could ya lend me a few “*Benjamins*” until my next payday???

Minutes of the May 2015 KCRC Meeting,

May 13th, 2015

Our Treasurer reported a total of \$1,297,00 in our Club treasury.

2 Meter Net—same 6-9 check-ins.

10 Meters—DX has been problematic this month, we usually have a dozen+ check-ins each week.

Old Business—Our Yaesu DR-1X Repeater has arrived, Kenny K2MAK has promised us some hardline coax for this endeavor!

Field Day was discussed, Howard N2GOT volunteered to handle the paperwork.

Our Web site has PayPal service fully implemented and the KingsCountyRadioClub.com domain has been renewed for another year (some other kind soul renews the KC2RC.com domain with his own *scratch*). Mitch reported that our web site now fully relays the ARRL news feed.

New Business—Repeater will be installed very soon.

New 9:1 Unun (NOT unuM) was purchased by Mitch N2RGA and will be used on Field Day with an end fed random wire.

...and with that the May session of the KCRC meeting was called to a close.

(We thank Eddie, W2DEV for recording the minutes in Juan KC2QNK's absence due to health issues, get well soon, Juan!)

Minutes of the June 2015 KCRC Meeting,

June 9th, 2015

The monthly meeting was called to order by our President, Howard N2GOT. Also present at today's meeting were Vice President Mitch N2RGA, Treasurer Richard KA2KDQ, Eddie W2DEV, Roy AC2GS, Etienne, Howard K2IDJ, Eric WA2FTW, and his XYL.

Our successful VE session was discussed— we awarded two Technician's Licenses, one previously qualifying Technician Class License holder upgraded to a General License! Thanks to the efforts of our new VE Coordinator Ed W2DEV and our dedicated group of VE Examiners Roy AC2GS, and Adam NY2K.

Treasury Report—Our Treasurer reported that we presently have \$1,297.00 in our Club treasury. We have one new Club member, Joe KD2IVE, who was one of the successful new Technicians from our most recent VE session.

10 Meter Net—Howard N2GOT reported in Juan KC2QNK's absence that we regularly have more than a dozen check-ins. Most check-ins are local due to 10 Meter's poor propagation lately, but we still hear from places as far as California.

2 Meter Net—Richard KA2KDQ reported that we get anywhere from 6 to 12 check-ins each week, and that the sound on the Repeater has improved with the new Yaesu DR-1X unit.

Old Business—Our most recent VE session of May 31st was discussed. We have been advised by hospital administration that the first VE examiner should register with Methodist Hospital Security that they are there to administer a VE session, whose date was previously cleared by Hospital Administrative staff (Damian KY2P). We will try to schedule another VE session on July 25th at 1 PM in Methodist Hospital. When this date has been approved by the Hospital Administrative Staff it will be posted on our Club web site as well as the ARRL VE Session site.

Completion of the Metrocor form, in order to have our Repeater re-registered with the club's call sign, KC2RC, was taken on by Mitch N2RGA. Thanks Mitch!

Field Day was discussed. Coordination of who would be supplying transportation, as well as sundry wires, cables, radios, headsets, tents, and miscellaneous, but necessary, supplies were discussed. The need to get a firm list of who would be building the site, as well as who would be breaking down the site was discussed. Howard N2GOT made a point of telling all present that EVERYONE couldn't operate at the prime times and that some form of arrangements to *man the radios* for the whole day should be attempted. A pre-Field Day meeting was announced for June 14th at 2 PM on the planned site of our Field Day at Floyd Bennett Field (see web site for directions). The idea is to get *the lay of the land*, and to firm up all the Field Day details regarding the *who, what, and where*.

New Business—Since our club is an ARRL affiliated Club we discussed that we should try to motivate our members to join the ARRL and that it would be wise if our executive members were all ARRL members.

Our Club Roster was discussed, which at this point was only available to members of the Club's Executive Board, due to privacy issues. It was suggested, and agreed upon to release a Club Roster to the general membership that listed their call sign and name, but no other information. Mitch N2RGA will look into the best way to disperse this Roster to the general membership.

Roy AC2GS submitted a *mock up* of a proposed mass mailing effort to newly Licensed Amateur Operators in the area. Mailing was advised as the best approach rather than guessing at email addresses. A \$5 discount coupon code was suggested as part of the flyer and was agreed upon. The criteria for choosing the best candidates was discussed. Roy AC2GS was asked to research the hard numbers of new Technicians in each of the five boroughs over the range of the past year and to report back to the club at which time the club will decide what demographic factors should determine the initial mailing list.

Roy AC2GS passed around a copy of his 14+ page handout that he offers to all new Technicians from our Club sponsored VE Sessions, as well as a much shortened (one double sided page) flyer that will be distributed to an upcoming ARES sponsored VE Session (Adam NY2K was kind enough to offer to distribute these flyers at the session).

The monthly KCRC Newsletter continues to be published, albeit as the discouraging act of one single member (anybody OUT THERE!?). Any original assistance would be gratefully appreciated.

The new Repeater was discussed. There seems to be a problem with both transmission and reception that has recently developed. This might be a *computer glitch* with the Repeater itself ("sir, have you tried turning the

computer off, and on again?), or a mechanical problem with either the cable or the connectors. Howard N2GOT will wrangle up a group of people to help investigate this problem. Kenny K2MAK's kind offer of hard core coax was discussed and this acquisition will be arranged. A discussion ensued regarding the need to retune the Duplexer when new coax is attached. Howard N2GOT knows someone that could help us with this (Stu WA2JNF). Future plans were discussed—the need for a pre-amp and a final power amplifier, as well as a fuller featured separate control device and other enhancements to the Repeater system. Eric WA2FTW was thanked for his generous donation to the Club's Repeater Fund, and measures to motivate other people to donate were discussed.

Thoughts regarding future membership drives were again discussed. Howard N2GOT stressed the *personal touch*, even going so far as knocking on doors when you see a big antenna on the property and talking about the club. Etienne discussed social media as a means to introduce younger people to the hobby. Roy AC2GS offered his different handouts, each designed for a different group—new Technicians taking their exam at Club sponsored VE sessions, at other VE sessions and the general population of relatively new Technicians geographically close to the club. He also urged more thought regarding increasing the perceived value of a club membership. Offering *more for their buck* than our annual Field Day planning sessions. There was a bit of nostalgia for Tony WW2W's, (SK) previous *show and tells*. But we, who still remain, must pick up the slack and *carry on!* Howard K2IDJ was at the meeting to present a small talk on SWL, but due to the late time that the meeting went to, this had to be *tabled* for a later date. We have had *show and tells* since Tony's demise, but with average turnouts to our monthly meetings ranging from four to eight members, people are not greatly motivated to *whip up a talk*. It's a bit like the *chicken and the egg problem*. Different local events were discussed as venues for a small table with a member or two communicating on a battery driven radio. This will need further investigation. A presence in this fall's New York *Maker Fair* was mentioned, but most members did not seem aware of the *Maker Movement*, a generally younger demographic of electronic tinkerers that might be interested in Amateur Radio as another aspect of technology to tinker with...

Richard relayed a statement from Bob KD2BQM, regarding his ARES Sponsored VE Session for June 17th at 7 PM at 250 Baltic St, Brooklyn. All examinees **MUST** be previously registered with Adam NY2K. All pertinent information is available on the ARRL VE Session web site.

Richard also wanted to relay the information he has with regard to the Israel Amateur Radio Club's plan to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the founding of the International Amateur Radio Union, the IARU, an umbrella organization for all the national Amateur Radio Organizations. The Israel Amateur Radio Club will be transmitting with the special call sign 4Z90IARU from June 1st, 2015 to December 31st, 2015—There's a QSL with your name and call sign somewhere out there waiting for you to earn!

...and with that, at a record 10:30 PM, the June session of the KCRC meeting was called to a close (and a good thing too! The hospital cleaning staff were close to throwing our butts to the sidewalk!).

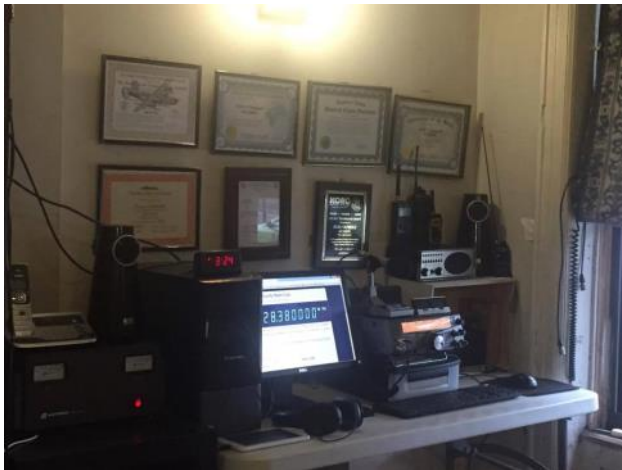
...and now A Message From Our President

...just a reminder to all the members and those interested in field day to attend on June 26th and 27th.

I would like to also stress that those who will participate with equipment to please let us know via email as to what equipment they will be bringing with them.

De Olde KCRC Photo Album

(stolen from the pages of Facebook)



Home QTH of Juan KC2QNK, home of the Sunday KC2RC 10 Meter Net



Mitch N2RGA adjusting our new Yaesu DR-1X Repeater



Who is this masked antenna installer?
Why, it's Tom KB2GTO, installing our
Repeater's new antenna!

So, Now What?

Part Zero - The Beginning...

When I arranged to have my Amateur Radio Exams I found too much self important nonsense - some guys won't push themselves away from their dinner table unless they can be assured a *good* number of examinees will be showing up for their Volunteer Exams (VE)! So, when I passed my exams, the first thing I did was apply for Volunteer Examiner Credentials and become part of the solution, rather than part of the problem. To me, helping interested souls earn their Ham tickets is an honor and a privilege - not a tedious burden.

It was at the end of one such VE session that one of the successful new Technicians turned to me and with an odd mix of a smile and a frown said...

“So, now what?”

How do you sum up all of the suggested steps for someone with a brand new Amateur Radio license, and a clean slate?

...and so, this series was born!

Let me be honest, that I doubt that this will be anything close to an exhaustive discussion of every possible *nook and cranny* of Amateur Radio that an interested person might journey through from beginning to end, when we all must join our Elmers as SK's (silent keys), but, I hope, that it will act as a starting point, from which readers will be able to branch out and make their own discoveries.

Perhaps we should start out with a preliminary short list (which might *grow* as this series progresses). This won't be a universal list that all Hams will agree about, and maybe that too will be educational for us all. Let's assume that you own no equipment of any kind, you just woke up one day with the novel idea to get your Technician's License and play with radios. Bing, bang, boom - there you are in an exam room and one hour later you are the proud owner of a Technician's Class Amateur Radio License...

What do I do now?

- 1) GET ON THE AIR! - This seems rather obvious, but you'd be surprised how many license holders never seem to get around to this step. Perhaps they just like to take tests? I dunno, but it seems

like a pointless exercise if all you've got for your trouble is a computer entry on the FCC's database (the FCC used to automatically mail you an official looking license, suitable for hanging, and another one suitable for stuffing into your wallet, but budget cuts have limited them, so that now, only if you ask, will they mail you something on recycled plain white paper, probably purchased at a nearby Staples - on sale, no doubt).

- 2) But How Do I Get On The Air? - Well, if you have money to burn I could give you a laundry list of *toys* to buy that will make your *Shack* the envy of all of Ham-dom, but in this real world perhaps we should start more slowly and rationally. Somehow the Chinese have figured out a way to manufacture and ship decent dual band Handy-Talkies (HT) at a lower price than Japanese companies charge for little leather covers for their *much, much* more expensive HTs (\$35 sometimes with free shipping!)! Are they the same as the Japanese models? Heck, no, but they make great first HTs - they are cheap and light and if you break it, you can always just buy another one with hardly an impact on your wallet. Spring for a \$10-\$20 antenna (it almost has to be a better one than the one thrown in free with the HT), and maybe a *mag-mount* antenna (great for the car, and you can stick it on the rear of your air conditioner at home for a little bit more range than most HT mounted antennas). Google "CHIRP" for the software to program all the Repeaters you might want to listen and talk on. Don't rely on the \$4 programming cable that is usually sold by the same places that sell the HTs, it's a *crapshoot* whether they will actually work with your computer. Invest in a program cable that is in the \$10-\$20 price range - at that range the chances that it will work with your computer is near 99% (nothing is a sure thing when it comes to computers). Google "New York Repeater Directory", and you will find a LONG list of repeaters in the area. Not all are functional, and even most functional Repeaters are only active for parts of the day when their users have developed a habit of passing by for a chat. Listen for a while, get an idea of the rules of an orderly exchange of ideas and of opinions. It's not rocket science (unless, of course, you've happened upon a "Rocket Science Net"). Introduce yourself to the group and *take a seat* and talk for a spell! Start with short comments and as you get more comfortable you can have lengthier comments, but try not to stand on a soap box and offer up a speech - you're supposed to be talking *with* people, not *at* people!
- 3) But *WHO* Do I Talk To? - Gee, did anyone tell you who to pick to talk to in kindergarten? It's the same here, just listen around and find people that you would like to talk to - people like you and people unlike you, but who sound interesting! This is all supposed to be an educational and a social experience. Go have *FUN!*
- 4) But *WHO* Do I Listen To? - What a great question, glad ya asked! FM Repeaters are like Internet Forums, you have all kinds of participants - geniuses, fools, smart alecks, funny guys, hypochondriacs, depressives, Manics, quiet guys, loudmouths, the highly opinionated, and people that change their opinions more often than most people change their underwear. Let your *gut* be your guide, and remember to properly tune your *Bravo-Sierra Meter*. There are more than a few *nutty professors* that have opinions and factoids that seem to have been whispered to them by the *Amateur Radio Faerie*, bereft of any actual correct information. Unfortunately, you can't always rely on how long the old codger has been licensed - I've spoken to old timers that wouldn't know what end of a vacuum tube gets plugged in! Ultimately seniority in Ham Radio just indicates that they had the good sense not to die earlier! Don't get me wrong, there are guys on the air with a wealth of knowledge earned through a great amount of years' experience of practice and research - they are like finding a \$100 bill right in front of you on the ground. Cherish those members of the hobby, and learn from them!

- 5) So, The Only Way To Find Guys That *Know Their Stuff* Is On The Radio? - No! Look around for local and national Amateur Radio Organizations. Check out their websites, visit some local clubs at their monthly meetings - are they talking about Ham Radio, or complaining about their wives, their jobs, or their lives in general? Do they sound like they know what they are talking about? Are they interested in sharing their hard earned knowledge? Do they seem to have a personality that doesn't rub you the wrong way? Again, try to steer clear from *Nutty Professor* types! Consider joining the ARRL (www.ARRL.org) and read their monthly publication, *QST*. For that matter, consider buying a bunch of books on the subject, the more you know about this exciting new hobby the more you can learn what to do with it!
- 6) So, Am I *Done Yet*? - Far from it, you've just begun! Squeeze every knowledgeable guy for information, opinions, suggestions. It should now be time for you to think about building your own radio shack! Ask around for suggestions for a base radio and some antennas. Some people buy only radios that take advantage of the frequencies they can use and plan to *trade up* when they gain new privileges, others buy for the future as a means to self motivate themselves. It depends on your wallet, your love of haggling and your degree of optimism. If your next radio requires a separate DC power supply, don't buy the lowest amp one that you can find - you're going to be plugging things into that power supply that you don't even know that you want *yet*! Go for that 25-30 amp peak supply, better to have too much power than too little.
- 7) Antennas Gotta Be Simple, Right? - Simple, my ars*. Your antenna system will make or break your radio shack. Whether it constitutes 80% of your shack or 78.453% is a subject best left to Nutty Professors. Suffice to say, antennas are VERY important. A thorough discussion of antennas is beyond the scope of this particular series, but luckily for you, I just so happen to have a series on antenna theory on the truck! Check it out at www.AC2GS.com.
- 8) Okay, I Got It All, Right? - Do you want to be stuck with just the UHF and VHF bands, gabbing with locals or Echolink users day in and day out? Nah, get your General License and see what the beautiful World of High Frequency (HF) is like. No more marathon talks about upgrading your Radio Shack single band HT from the 90's in for one of those shiny new \$35 Baofeng HT's or at what angle should you dangle its rubber ducky, original antenna, out of your bedroom window to get the best scratchiest transmissions. No, HF is where the big boys hang out. Mind you, there are still chuckleheads and *Nutty Professors* on the HF bands, but if you tune past them you will hear guys tweaking their systems to their dreams of perfection. Will you be able to afford all their toys? Likely not, but you can still find ways to amuse yourself, and learn a heck of a lot from some of those guys!
- 9) Am I *Done Yet!!!* - Nope, you have all the bands open to you and guys that will bend your ear and educate you about every one of them. Find a few dozen things that interest you and pursue them. The point of the exercise is TO HAVE FUN!
- 10) So, now am I *DONE!!!* - Not, yet. Get that Extra license, then get your Volunteer Examiner credentials and help other new hobbyists into this great journey.
- 11) Then you can write *YOUR* list of how to get started in this hobby!

And remember to *Have Fun!*

- The Editor- (The Editor can be reached at TheEditor@KC2RC.com)

The Hitchhiker's Guide to New York Repeaters

(So, Now What? - Part 1)

The local "Repeater Ecosystem" is a dynamic, ever changing living thing. Repeaters can, and do, abruptly break and fall silent, only to be repaired and rise again, sometimes in days, sometimes in years. Users of Repeaters pop up from nowhere. Sometimes they fade away into silence in days, others stick around for years. Some Repeater users establish the Repeater's personality, while other users "go along for the ride".

This is an article designed to describe some of the more interesting Repeaters available in the Metropolitan area. It is far from exhaustive, but is meant as a highlight of what's available. Hopefully others will add their favorite Repeaters to this list.

If you are looking for a simple table of Repeaters registered in the Metropolitan area, I would suggest you take a look at <http://www.nyrepeaters.com/nyc2m.htm> for 2 meters, <http://www.nyrepeaters.com/nyc222.htm> for 220 MHz, and <http://www.nyrepeaters.com/nyc440.htm> for 70 cm. Some Repeaters on the list are totally silent and not operational, many others are very rarely in use by anyone. The list that follows below should be a much more lively selection.

It is my hope that this will be of value to both new members of the Ham world as well as Hams that haven't visited the VHF/UHF bands for years. It's time to rediscover the local Repeater scene, maybe even re-establish a new active Repeater site!

The information will include the Repeater's Call Sign, followed by its output frequency. Listen for a while, get accustomed to the personalities of the Repeater users and the type of language and content as a guide on how to fit into the culture that already exists. With the input frequency and the PL sub audible tone you'll be able to communicate with others on a given Repeater. Your transceiver's manual has complete instructions on how to set all this up.

KB2NQT/KC2RC

The output frequency is 146.730 MHz, its input frequency is 146.130, its PL is 88.5 Hz. This open Repeater was privately owned, but its owner has moved on to "The Promised Land" (Florida), and it has been donated to The Kings County Radio Club. At the time of this entry big plans are *afoot* for this Repeater. We just installed new Yaesu DR-1X Digital/Analog Repeater and have a new antenna installed. Initially, it will be set in a *mixed* mode function so that all signals both analog and digital (Yaesu's C4M - Fusion) will be able to be received and its output will be completely analog. Kings County Radio Club holds their weekly net meeting here, on Tuesday at 9PM (other than the second Tuesday of the month, when we have "eyeball QSOs" at our in-person monthly meeting). Everyone is welcome (to the net meeting AND our monthly meeting)!

KC2RA

The output frequency is 146.430, its input frequency is 147.430, its PL is 136.5 Hz. This is the open Repeater of the Kings County Repeater Association. They are listed as having their club net meeting every Monday at 9:00 PM, but I have never heard them there. Indeed, for a Club based Repeater Association, I've never heard any Club based activities going on there. They host the Big Apple Traffic Net every Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday at 8:00 PM. The Repeater was off the air for a time a few years ago, but lately it has become a more active Repeater in the NYC area. There are presently four or five regular users, who pass thru at night, and may start up a pleasant QSO if they find another kindred soul.

W2VL

The output frequency is 146.850, its input frequency is 146.250, its PL 136.5 is Hz. This is one of the most active Repeaters in the Metropolitan area. It hosts an extremely informative TechNet on Sunday from 8:00 PM to midnight where all topics from Antenna Theory, to Space Technology to Theoretical Physics are entertained by some very smart fellow Hams (I've been known to pass by and offer some comments, myself). The Repeater also hosts their club net meeting every Monday at 8:30 PM, a Computer Net on the 3rd and 4th Wednesday of the month at 8:30 PM, and an Astronomy Net on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays at 8:30 PM. The rest of the time it can be quite active with informal conversations. Sometimes it is Hams running errands in their car, interested in some lively conversation to vanquish the boredom, other times it is Hams asking for transmission checks, discussing their Ham set ups and asking advice from others. Some late nights there are impromptu discussions of Radar Technology, Space Science, and esoteric aspects of Physics. Although it has been listed as a closed Repeater for club members, members of the club are very friendly and welcoming to nonmembers. Occasional QSO's by nonmembers are fine, but if you decide to camp out on the site for the long haul the club's Executive Board urges people to invest in a club membership. This is one of my personal favorites. It has remained the most consistent Repeater with regard to remaining operational and the users not sinking to near the level of the anonymous jammers that frequent any popular site.

K2MAK

The output frequency is 448.275 MHz, its input frequency is 443.275, its PL is 88.5 Hz. This is a privately owned open Repeater that is very active. After a particularly incessant assault by local malicious jammers Ken, K2MAK decided that extreme nuisances call for extreme solutions and switched to Motorola based Mototrbo Digital Voice. In short, this means only Hams who possess some Hytek, Motorola, TYT, Connect Systems, or Vertex UHF gear will now be able to use this Repeater. Many of K2MAK's regular users have risen to the challenge and purchased compatible radios, but for the rest of us who used to listen occasionally they are all hidden behind their *digital* wall. Some previous users are hoping that Ken, K2MAK changes his mind and switches back to analog transmissions, but according to his Facebook entries he was seriously considering switching his one remaining analog station, KC2BVP to Mototrbo also! The owner/operator Ken, K2MAK would like people to know that it's located on the Empire State Building with great coverage throughout NYC.

KC2BVP

The output frequency is 449.775 MHz, its input frequency is 444.775, its PL is 189.9 Hz. This might be considered K2MAK's Repeater's baby brother. It is often linked with K2MAK's Repeater when you Google this Repeater. Many of the users frequenting this Repeater can usually be heard on K2MAK's other Repeater, but since K2MAK has gone Mototrbo Digital Voice, many now seem to have made a home here. Most of the users seem to know each other well and are given to playful jibes directed at each other at times. Radios, cars, motorcycles, boats, sports and wrestling are the subjects that tend to be discussed. The convivial conversation is reminiscent of present day 75 meter rag chewing groups or CB in the 70-80's without the 10 codes and trucker slang. It's a recreational area. One caution though, the language is not always G rated (or even PG or R for that matter), so if you will be listening with small children who haven't already learned all the "dirty words" available in the English language, you might want to steer clear. It has been suggested that this Repeater might also be switched to Motorola's proprietary Digital Voice mode. It provides good coverage in Manhattan and great coverage in Brooklyn and Queens.

WA2JNF/W2CMA

The output frequency is 145.230 MHz, its input frequency is 144.630, its PL is 114.8 Hz. In some repeater lists the call sign given is WA2JNF (its owner's), in others it's listed as W2CMA. It does not seem to have an ID signal, so I'm unsure which the most accurate call sign is. This is the site of the New York City Transit Authority Amateur Radio Club Net on each Thursday at 8:00 PM. You don't need to be affiliated with the NYC Transit Authority, everyone is welcomed.

WA2JNF/W2CMA

The output frequency is 446.675 MHz, its input frequency is 441.675, its PL is 114.8 Hz. In some repeater lists the call sign given is WA2JNF (its owner's), in others it's listed as W2CMA. Its Morse Code identifier is WA2JNF/R. It hosts the Brooklyn Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) Net Sundays at 8:00 PM.

KB2NGU

The output frequency is 147.300 MHz, its input frequency is 147.900, its PL is 146.2 Hz. This can be the most active party line in radio. When it's working, it is linked via IRLP and Echolink to Repeaters all over the world. It is not unusual to talk with a Ham from a Repeater based in England. Unfortunately, these links are subject to completely breaking down, reducing this Repeater to prolonged episodes of silence that can last for months until the connections are finally re-established. It's a crapshoot - it may be frantically active or it might be... dead.

NY4Z

The output frequency is 440.600 MHz, its input frequency is 445.600, its PL is 141.3 Hz. It hosts the Bronx

Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) Net Sundays at 7:00 PM.

K2CJP

The output frequency is 145.410 MHz, its input frequency is 144.810, its PL is 114.8 Hz. It hosts the Queens Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) Net Thursdays at 8:00 PM.

KC2CIG

The output frequency is 447.375 MHz, its input frequency is 442.375, its PL is 141.3 Hz. It hosts the Staten Island Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) Net Wednesdays at 8:30 PM.

WA2ZLB

The output frequency is 147.360 MHz, its input frequency is 147.960, its PL is 107.2 Hz. It hosts the New York City Amateur Radio Emergency Corp (AREC) Net Mondays at 8:30 PM.

WA2ZLB

The output frequency is 447.825 MHz, its input frequency is 442.825, its PL is 107.2 Hz. It is the 70cm Repeater owned by the same Ham that operates the 2 meter WAZLB. It is located above Rockefeller Center, with good coverage, but limited activity.

WB2ZTH

The output frequency is 447.175 MHz, its input frequency is 442.175, its PL is 141.3 Hz. It is an open Repeater, located in Midtown and has great coverage favoring the northern part of the City. It's not very active when I listen, but it is fully operational . Maybe it is can be fertile ground for a new community?

N2ROW

The output frequency is 449.825 MHz, its input frequency is 444.825, its PL is 179.9 Hz. It is an open Repeater located in the Times Square area of NYC, so it should provide great coverage in Midtown. It is also linked to N2ROW 441.100 PL 136.5. Its activity is intermittent, most of the time I've listened, it has been silent.

WB2SEB

The output frequency is 449.625 MHz, its input frequency is 444.625, its PL is 107.2 Hz. It is located near Times Square and I'm told it has great coverage. Not much activity when I listen.

KC2GOW

The output frequency is 147.315 MHz, its input frequency is 147.915, its PL is 118.8 Hz. It is located in Staten Island and has been used more by Staten Island based Hams, than Hams from the rest of the area, but it is an open Repeater and everyone is invited to use it.

W2NJR

The output frequency is 147.285 MHz, its input frequency is 147.825, its PL is 141.3 Hz. This seems to be a New Jersey based Repeater that attracts Echolink users from New Jersey as well as many other states.

K2FJ

The output frequency is 146.955 MHz, its input frequency is 146.355, its PL is 141.3 Hz. This is another New Jersey based Repeater with a significant number of Echolink users.

WB2ZSE

The output frequency is 147.000 MHz, its input frequency is 146.400, its PL is 136.5 Hz. This is a great Repeater with good coverage and a fine signal, but very few people seem to be using it these days. People sometimes use it when LIMARC's Repeater shuts down for maintenance, but otherwise it seems mostly silent.

WB2HWW

The output frequency is 440.700 MHz, its input frequency is 445.700, its PL is 114.8 Hz. It seems like Howard, WB2HWW is always there chatting with his regular Repeater users. Lots of entry -intermediate level technical conversations to be found there!

W2YRC

The output frequency is 146.865 MHz, its input frequency is 146.225, its PL is 110.9 Hz. This can be a lively Repeater at times. It doesn't have a particular *personality* that I can perceive.

WB2ZII

The output frequency is 147.060 MHz, its input frequency is 147.660, its PL is 114.8 Hz. This is based in Valhalla, NY (Westchester). It is owned and operated by The Westchester Emergency Communications Association. There is a relatively new Ham that seemed ever present on this Repeater. He has worked hard to learn a lot about this hobby in his short time and could be a font of information for newbies. Common sense info, simply explained. "Your FCC license entitles you to talk on the radio, not just listen" seemed to be his mantra. He hasn't been active for a while there... That's the nature of Repeater culture.

KB2RNI

The output frequency is 441.150 MHz, its input frequency is 446.150, its PL is 162.2 Hz. This is a Brooklyn based Repeater, that our club member Juan KC2QNK serves as a control operator on.

WA2SQQ

The output frequency is 442.000 MHz, its input frequency is 447.000, its PL is 156.7 Hz. This is a New Jersey Repeater, based in Wayne, NJ.

WA2WSK

The output frequency is 443.400 MHz, its input frequency is 448.300, its PL is 141.3 Hz. This is a New Jersey Repeater, based in South Brunswick, NJ. It is operated by the South Brunswick Radio Group.

K2GE

The output frequency is 443.200 MHz, its input frequency is 448.200, its PL is 141.3 Hz. This is a New Jersey Repeater, based in Sayreville, NJ. It is sponsored by the Raritan Bay Radio Amateurs. They operate the Central Jersey Traffic Net nightly at 20:00. They have Echolink access.

N2ION

The output frequency is 443.600 MHz, its input frequency is 448.600, its PL is 110.9 Hz. This is based in Jamaica, NY. It is linked to 443.600 (N2ION) at Hastings on Hudson, NY, and 447.925 (N2ION) at Oceanside, NY.

KQ2H

The output frequency is 445.900 MHz, its input frequency is 445.090, its PL is 82.5 Hz. This is based in Washingtonville, NY. This is just one Repeater of a massive group of linked Repeaters going from 10 Meters (29.620 MHz) to 6 Meters (53.730 MHz), to 2 Meters (146.460 MHz and 147.460MHz), to 70 cm (447.525 MHz, 449.175 MHz, 449.225 MHz) up to 33 cm at 927.9375!

...and now a short discourse/thoughts on Digital Voice Modes:

I am a self-admitted technophile. If something contains a bit of new technology I would like to try it. I hope that I never become averse to new technology, as some of my more curmudgeonly Ham friends have grown ("damn transistor rigs, where's my tube rig", "software defined WHAT, where are the damn knobs and buttons!"). Some Digital modes have been developed as fully open standards (PSK, MSK, JT65, etc.) and they have extended the reach of many low power, compromise antenna wielding Hams. Digital Voice Mode appears different in this regard. They are not fully open standards, Motorola/Vertex gives you Mototrbo, Icom gives you D-Star, Yaesu gives you their new mode, Fusion - each of these modes are incompatible with the others.

They promote themselves as "*open standards*", and perhaps their methods for transmitting and receiving binary streams might be (although they are all incompatible with each other). The problem is that an uncompressed digital audio stream would be too wide a signal to be tolerated. It needs to be shrunk - compressed just like the MP3 algorithm does for music. The Digital Voice Encoder-Decoder (Vocoder) selected invariably is a patented method going by some variation of the acronym AMBE. This algorithm is not fully documented and is only licensed with the purchase of the licensing company's Digital Signal Processor chips, which work as a copyright protecting dongle. No chip = no digital voice, so where otherwise a simple firmware update would give everyone universal digital voice capability, we are now stuck with requiring a complete hardware redesign to have any access! These "*open source modes*" effectively lock out the overwhelming majority of Hams until they pay up for the latest greatest mobile radios, or HTs. What are the benefits of these modes other than Internet linking, which can also be done with analog signals? Transmission distance is not appreciably improved (there is some disagreement on this), some say clarity and intelligibility is improved, but I find that at times the voice codecs used with these modes alter voices in subtle ways and occasionally produce a weird robot like voice in the transmission. Less bandwidth is required, but anyone scanning the bands has noticed that the number of working Repeaters is growing smaller and smaller with huge gaps of frequencies unused, but are still tied up by people that once managed an active Repeater site. I think Digital Voice's chief benefit, in this era of jammers, with way too much free time, is the ability to ID the transmission and lock out users, as well as the unfortunate limitation for all users, that they might have to buy another rig from a certain company to have access to that proprietary mode. Is this "*throwing the baby out with the bath water*"? Only time will tell. One of the great things about Ham Radio, in my humble opinion, is its inclusiveness - y'all welcome! I see this generation of Digital Voice as more exclusionary in its implementation. I believe that the digital Voice implementation that will be a *game changer* has not yet arrived, and when it does, it will be like the days when Single Side Band (SSB) was a new idea!

Again, this is a work in progress. I hope that readers will offer their favorite Repeater sites and observations to extend this list. You can find my email address on QRZ.

73,
Roy, AC2GS

Hubris - Our Most Popular Hobby?

Anyone remember the line “pride goeth before a fall”?

We find ourselves in a strange new world. Parents from those intriguingly labeled generations, the *X Gen*, or the *Y Gen* or even those extra *new-age-y Millennials* are getting together with a properly sized audience to applaud the fact that their little spawn has been able to produce a bowel movement. Hopefully when their little gift from the Universe grows a little older and is entered into some noncompetitive competitive junior sport, he will receive a richly decorated trophy not for winning anything or attaining anything particularly special, but just for being able to continue breathing by the end of any particular game.

Aren't we all special? Naaaaaaawwwwww.

Our ancestors had to deal with more pressing questions, like “are we going to make it out of here alive by the end of the day”. They had neither the time nor the inclination to pump an already swollen ego with their own “special-ness”. Perhaps they had an innate understanding that they weren't special, and that it was alright if they weren't!

You hear this self important nonsense all the time on the ham bands. I understand pride in your equipment - you worked hard to afford it, or traded wisely to acquire it, or maybe even built the darn thing yourself. You thought deep and long what it should be made up of, so I understand the sense of pride. What I don't quite understand are the fine old gentlemen that repeatedly crow that they have been in this hobby for over 80 years (I am of course exaggerating, but only a bit - the magic number is usually in the 50-60's). This is not necessarily some arduously hard earned achievement - Amateur Radio license renewals do not require any demonstration that you have progressed in the hobby, or even that you have maintained your level of understanding, that you showed, to obtain your license in the first place. Longevity in this hobby could be as simple as regularly mailing in your renewal paperwork! In the final analysis, it often means that you have had the good sense not to die at an early age! Regrettably, as any health provider can tell you, longevity is all too often the consequence of picking the right parents, dumb luck, and not taking up the habit of crossing busy intersections blindfolded. Do people give honors for winning a random lottery? These days, probably!

I have spoken with brilliant Hams with a half century of hard earned expertise, but I have also spoken with 50+ year old ticket holders who are as radio-dumb as a bag of rocks. In this hobby, as most aspects of life, you get what you put into any endeavor - if you have been a vacant-minded Ham for 50+ years, you learned pretty much nothing in all those years. I was proud to be *baptized* by one of those clueless Hams with little more than their seniority as an indication of their self worth as “Real” Hams, when I was labeled as yet another “one of those *new guys*, that's what's wrong with this hobby”. Trust me

great-grandpa, Amateur exams were even harder before you decided to join the club. You don't really deserve a bronze plaque for the personal achievement, your reward is/was getting to use your transmitter. Trust me, the Spartan's right of passage was a lot more arduous than copying 13 WPM of morse code. Hell, my Bar Mitzvah was harder, and most 13 year old boys, who are given the task, seem to be able to accomplish it!

Just as an illustration of how important each of us are... There are approximately 7,125,000,000 people alive today. Some people suggest that the total number of homo sapiens sapiens, modern men, that have ever lived, amounts to something like 50 to 100 billion individuals! This lovely planet is only one within a Galaxy that has approximately 200,000,000,000 stars, and our lovely little Milky Way Galaxy is but one of approximately 100,000,000,000 Galaxies that make up this particular Universe (who knows if there are parallel Universes "out there"?). In the great scheme of things, we are ALL as ultimately more inconsequential than a single grain of sand In the middle of the Sahara Desert, is to all the works of mankind.

We just ain't that special... and it's okay!

So, enjoy the hell out of your hobby and the rest of your life. It's a one-way trip with a common destination. Enjoy the path you chose, to take to get there, and try to make it a long and an enjoyable trip!

73,

The [Cranky] Editor

Closing statements (from the Editor):

Well, another month, another cacophony of silence from our readership (in case there are any?).

IS THERE ANYBODY OUT THERE??

If this keeps up I may have to poke somebody with a pointy stick, just to see if they are still alive.

But seriously, I hope everyone enjoys Field Day. I have some ideas for Field Day 2027...

For your ideas, your thoughts, your dreams, your kind words or even your epithets, I can be contacted at TheEditor@KC2RC.com .

- The Editor -

The opinions expressed here are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the positions of The Executive Board of The Kings County Radio Club.

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