

ONE FOR OUR SIDE

A model antenna structure ordinance from the Montgomery County planners office was passed on to several townships in that county this spring. The ordinance's language did not take into account PRB-1 (limited Fed pre-emption of Amateur antennas) PR 85-87 (Federal pre-emption of satellite dishes), or the letter from the FCC to ARRL Counsel CHRIS IMLAY N3AKD stating that RFI regulation is Federally pre-empted. Thanks to prompt, level-headed response by local hams, using an info package from Newington, the ordinance was sent back to the drawing board in Upper Dublin Township. On June 2, KAY KC3LM (wearing her ARRL Eastern PA Assistant Section Manager's hat) and three Montgomery County Amateur leaders met with county planners to discuss revision of the model ordinance into something that reflects the Federal pre-emptions. We presented to them a model ordinance drafted by the aforementioned CHRIS N3AKD. Unlike some authorities elsewhere who've been distinctly unsociable on this subject, the MntCo planners have taken a very cooperative attitude. If they rewrite the ordinance as they said they would, 99% of Amateurs in a township where it's enacted won't even notice it's there -- but watch out for bad local rewrites!

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Most Board members have answering machines. The Members-At-Large are your voices on the board. When you have a question, idea, or concern, speak to one of them

STUFF & NONSENSE

Whatever the FCC decides to do by way of Novice enhancement (and you can bet your SWR that some privileges will be added -- though maybe not 220 MHz owing to its undecided future in the Amateur Service), spectrum and hardware won't do the whole job of keeping Novices in Amateur Radio. You and I still have to redouble our efforts to be friendly and helpful to newcomers, to work stations in the Novice bands (wherever those turn out to be) and show them models of good operation. It will still take us to keep the Amateur family growing.

Public Service Tip: When providing communications at an event, hams should remember that we are communicators -- period. We don't do security, first aid, traffic direction, or for that matter, windows. If we step out of our communications role, we run the risk of making an error that might harm others and expose us to legal risks.

As we learned from BILL WB3CMM's talk about tower construction at the June meeting, even with PRB-1, relations with neighbors over antennas can become an itch. That's why I have formed a company called Sneak-A-Tenna, Inc., purveying several new camouflage coatings. One makes a cubical quad look just like an ordinary innocent 1967 Buick. Another causes Rohn tower to mimic my Uncle Fred who used to stand and stare a long time at things nobody else could see. The top of the line renders a 6 element beam indistinguishable from a 30-pound Persian cat. It works like a sonofagun -- and scares the living spit out of our neighbor's beagle.

Amateur fashion tip: Don't put the new little repeater directory in your shirt pocket on a hot day or in the rain. We hear the cover's red dye will come off, if dampened. Icky! Other than this sartorial boo-boo, what do you think of the new size book?

FIELD DAY FROLIX

1986 was a boom year, with 3 transmitters signing WBSA (thanks, Bob!) and a Novice station (over 60 QSO's!) signing KA3PGJ (thanks, Andy!). Visitors were thicker than parentheses in that last sentence, with over 50 names on the list. BOB WBSA arranged the field and that humongous generator with Bell Atlantic. PETER N3DXY and BILL N3ELO organized the day very well. Did you know (and do you care?) what the AL MASLIN W3DZI Memorial Throne is? Or why JEFF W3RIZ wears stale brownies on his eyeglasses? And how did you like "Sahib" CARTER KA3IME's new headgear? And those beautiful cables done by SEAN N3EOG? And ART KA3LYM's homebrew tent? Where'd all the food come from? Thanks to everyone!

Q R Z?

But seriously (who,, me?) several articles onpacket, including one explaining how to work it, appear in the July issue of CQ. The packet BBS's in our area have now spread themselves out over the sub-band so that you don't have the annoying crowding of several months ago. Some people don't like the spread-out, but they're the same ones who used to complain of overcrowding. Does that tell you something?

ARRL LETTER (6/6/86) reports the FCC dismissed a League petition to require labeling of home electronic equipment to show its susceptibility to RFI. Uncle says we're in an age of minimum regulation and that new voluntary industry standards may prove to be enough (whenever, we might add, the engineering cycle gets them in place -- holding your breath?). So, your neighbor retains his absolute freedom to buy a piece of gobbidge you could overload with a milliwatt into a paperclip. Aren't you glad they're getting the government off our backs?

MARC VE SESSION

MARC's first VE test session on May 10 had a 100% success ratio, even though 1 candidate did not pass the test. PAUL KA3OWW (who's put in for a call sign change) passed his Tech, as did the father of TOM KA3FXX. The third candidate did not pass her Tech, but she came so much closer than she expected that the lack of success was not really a failure. She left the building feeling better about herself than when she entered. The VE's on duty were BART KC3BP, BOB WBSA, AL W3DZI, and KAY KC3LM (who?). TOM K3YPO arranged the room with the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church. If you've never signed an "instant upgrade" certificate, you can't imagine the thrill of it. So it's corny -- sue me! I guess it's having the power to help a fellow Amateur up the ladder, ham to ham, not bureaucrat to applicant. Look, getting your VE credentials isn't hard. If you're an Advanced or Extra, do it. You'll like the feeling. By press time, that third candidate was signing "temporary KI" and credited the MARC session with building up her confidence. Note our upcoming test dates in the box on page 2! And get area test skeds on the Sunday bulletins weekly.

LATE CHECK-INS

BART KC3BP has already qualified for the 10th anniversary year traffic award by originating 10 messages on the MARC nets. Several other people are working on it, as ANDY N3AZW keeps the stats. Everyone's invited to learn message handling and get a nice bit of wallpaper in return. Our traffic Net Control-Stations are CARTER KA3IME (Monday), HUGH KC3IE (Wednesday), and BART KC3BP (Friday), with backups ANDY N3AZW, SEAN N3EOG, and TOM KA3FXX on standby. If you'd like to try NCSing, contact Net Manager CARTER KA3IME.

Real testers are tough guys, but after a whole Field Day weekend with 847 cups of coffee and periodic liverwursts-on-white, the stuff on your teeth could etch PC board and your breath smells like fried EPROM. Yazzoo Electronics of Trashplant, N.J., has an 11-mode RF toothbrush/transciever. Zot the grot on your bicuspid with a kw of Colgate's and never miss a multiplier. You'll win the 'test, and avoid spaniel-mouth, too.