

# Squelch Tails

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 3

Field Day Review Issue

JULY, 1998

## KC4RIB/sk

On July 17th, ham radio and the North Fulton Amateur Radio League lost a great man. Al Fischer, KC4RIB, passed away that Friday. He had been a member of NFARL for as long as I had been in ham radio and was one of the best things about our club. The callbook shows that Al got the call KC4RIB on September 17th, 1991. Before that, he held the novice call KB8ITA. The records don't show when he first got that call, but I know Al had been in ham radio for many years. In the last two days I've learned about the many things that Al did, and he was a busy man. Between church, working at SciTrek, volunteering at the Georgia Radio Reading Service and doing things for NFARL. I'm not sure when he slept. He cared for ham radio and especially for the people in it. In the past three years, when I asked Al to do something, I never heard him say "I'm too busy" but instead heard "Will this be soon enough" and "What else can I do?" Al got the word to newspapers about our Field Day plans, he got the Amateur of the Year plaque made in time for the December party and even helped us when we didn't have a program for meetings. This year, Al got Field Day weekend proclaimed Amateur Radio Weekend by the Georgia General Assembly. Above all of this, he was a good friend to everyone in the club and especially to me. It still hurts to think that I won't see Al and Betty at meetings or that he won't be calling to tell me something to help me do club business. He was the secretary and then vice-president while I was president and he made my job much easier. I'm going to miss Al but I'll never forget him. I ask that you say a prayer for him and then remember all of the good things about him—a man with a smile and a kind word for everyone.

Steve Mays KS4KJ

## President's Platform



Well, it's July. Field Day has come and gone. We had a lower turnout this year, but the participation by those who did attend was very good. We had transmitters going pretty much the entire time allowed. I haven't heard the final score yet and even though it will probably be lower than last year, I think it will be good for the turnout we had. I'd like to thank Pat Patterson who took the job of Coordinator and gave us a good Field Day. I'm sure we will hear more from Pat about what transpired this year.

The board will be meeting soon to plan the details of the annual NFARL Auction. It was moved from

its usual May date to try to keep from conflicting with Dayton and other events around that time. We are going to try to do it on a weekend to make it easier for everyone to attend. Anybody wishing to make their suggestions can email me at [steve-mays@compuserve.com](mailto:steve-mays@compuserve.com) and let me know them. Another idea for a club event made to me at the last meeting was to try to have a tailgate-type of event in a field or large parking lot. The lack of good tailgating space at the last Atlanta hamfest was felt by many and this is an idea that we will look at. Once again, let me know if any of you have any thoughts on this.

Don't forget we are meeting at Ryan's on Alpharetta Highway just south of the North Fulton Hospital. In August, we will have Milton Lord, N4DA, doing a program on radio maintenance, so make plans to attend now. Milton runs a ham radio repair business and has many years of experience with all types of ham gear. This is the chance to ask repair questions that you've always wondered about. See you at 6:00pm on Wednesday August 12th.

Steve Mays KS4KJ

FIELD DAY 98 has come and gone. Turnout was a bit lower than expected and definitely lower than hoped, but those of us that sweated through the weekend enjoyed the challenge and rewards. The logistics of getting all the equipment from various storage spots was a challenge all by itself. Being there for table and chair delivery and pick-up was another. It took many ham-hours to put the station On-the-Air and many more to shut it down.

Once again, Antenna Mike came through to get the wire sorted out and in the air. He climbed 7 of the 8 poles so we could get the HF stations running. (You might hear a strange rumor about who made it 85' up the other pole!) It all paid off for Mike as he finally, after 2 years of running Field day, was able to pass it to Pat and operate!

If you have never experienced it, you are really missing ham radio at its peak. Swatting mosquitoes while calling CQ to the smell and drone of generators, wiping spilled coffee from log sheets and swapping lies about the T14 you just worked are memories that make any

ham smile. One thing that really stands out for me though, is working a station where the Op is someone who showed up just to see what the fascinating hobby of ours is all about. Listening to the unusual rhythm of a voice that is being coached and imagining the smile on some young face when they realize that they are talking to someone a thousand or more miles away makes all the sweat, skeeter bites and lack of sleep worth while.

It is a challenge every year just to see if we, as a club, still have it in us to put a station on the air. Somehow we always amaze ourselves when the

time rolls around and we jump into the pile-ups at 1800z. Sometimes, it's because we just barely got the last coax repaired and sometimes it's because the SWR is running 3.5:1. Both are cause for excitement! If you missed it, shame on you. We wish you were there to see it. Next year?

It is also a personal challenge. Can I do better than last year? Can I still copy more than 8 wpm? Will I remember the power cord to the rig? Will I remember the Field Day callsign? This year, an untested piece of feed line caused me to lose a bit more hair. Last year it was a pre-amp. What is it going to be next year? We'll just have to wait and find out.

KF4DZV



## Squelch Tales

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### NFARL Repeaters

145.470 MHz -0.6MHz  
147.060 MHz +0.6MHz  
444.475 MHz +5.0MHz

## Incentive Licensing

I got my HRO catalog the other day and ICOM has a real incentive for upgrading. On the back of the HRO catalog is ICOM's "Upgrade 98" offer. For those of you that haven't seen it yet, let me fill you in on the juicy details.

"Every ham who upgrades to General Class or higher between 4/1/98 and 3/31/99, and mails in a copy of their new license to ICOM America, will be entered into a monthly drawing to win a new IC-706MKII."

If the chance at a brand new, in the box, FREE, IC-706 doesn't get you excited, I'm not sure about some hamming, but I am sure that some of the folks currently holding an Extra Class license are wishing for the FCC to create another class so they could have a chance at this rig. ICOM is giving away one of these each month during the next twelve months. That stacks the odds a bit better. Pat might even have to start VE sessions at the monthly meetings! Somehow though I think he would actually enjoy that extra bit of work. I don't have all the details or fine print, but you can call or write HRO to get them.

I'll see you in one of those monthly drawings. Now, just where did I put those code tapes?

## Where Are We?



Who are we? Where are we? What do we do? These are questions that need to be asked - and answered - to give us direction on where we are going as a club. Dropping the address list into a mapping program shows us where we are. The little "houses" show geographically where we concentrate and how far we are spread. Most of us are in North Fulton, Cobb and Cherokee counties, but we are spread from Jonesboro to Cumming, west Paulding to Winder, Covington to Cartersville. That's a big area, but in that amount of area, there's bound to be a few more hams who would like to join NFARL.

Why don't they join? Why did you join? After I got my ticket and finally got a 2m rig, I started listening to various repeaters around. The rig was an HTX-202, so I didn't have much range. I listened to the 145.47 N4CLA/r for about a week when I finally keyed up and called for N4CLA since it was his call sign on the

machine. I asked what type of group it was. Fred swears he doesn't remember it, but his answer was "just a bunch of farmers." I figured I'd fit in! Actually though, I liked the mix of conversation: DX to traffic, antennas to computers. It was a nice cross section of many subjects and the machine worked well.

That was then, that was only one person and that person was a neophyte on the air. What about now? Among our membership we have a large pool of talent. We have engineers, managers, surveyors, painters, nurses, students, sales, mechanics, secretaries, PhD's and even flunkies like me.

So what does that have to do with anything? Bruce Warrington, N9EHA, President of the Schaumburg Amateur Radio Club (IL), suggests that if members try putting some effort into SARC, they'll see it

returned by it being a club others want to join and help out with. Bruce further states that sometimes you have to put in some real work, even at your hobbies, if you want them to be truly interesting. (He did note that the top four attended functions involved free food!)

So, what was the last thing you did to improve your club? The \$30/year is just for the upkeep and hardware of the machines. (Fred notes that it takes about 24 full members just to pay the phone bill.) All of the muscle and brain power are donated. Both money and time are necessary to keep the repeaters and the club running. Are you supporting all aspects of NFARL? "Someone else" isn't always going to be there to fix, instruct, guide, build, operate, climb, etc. It will be up to you. Will you be there? We're counting on us.



## Top signs that you may need an elmer..

By Jeffrey S. King, N1DJS, [jeff.king@ecbix.com](mailto:jeff.king@ecbix.com)

An elmer is the guy you go to, to ask questions about topics in Ham Radio that you don't understand. In that vein, **you know it's time for you to find an Elmer if...**

- Your friend tells you he has a new two meter radio and you figure one of the meters must be for swr and the other for power out.
- You hear a conversation on the low bands about CW and you think they're referring to the cold war.
- You hear someone sign "this is N8XXX mobile 4" and you think it's because he has three other radios.
- You hear that someone won a 40 meter radio at a hamfest and you wonder how they're going to get something that large in their house.
- You build a morse code key out of plexiglass and can't figure out why it won't key your radio.
- You think the difference between short wave and long wave is the speed at which you move your wrist back and forth.
- You're thinking about joining your other ham friends in the local ATV group because you own a four wheel drive vehicle that will go just about anywhere.
- You won't use a repeater because you've heard that using a repeater could be dangerous. You've heard an alligator could get you.
- You think a colinear antenna can only be used with two amplifiers.
- You think fm is the modulation type that came after em, dm, cm, bm and am.
- You wouldn't mind getting into packet radio but no matter how much you practice you can't get the hang of sending those beeps and braps with your keyer.
- You wonder what sound a short wave makes and why anyone would want to listen to one.
- You think the repeater owner would be a lot happier if instead of talking about his cavities he just went to the dentist and got them filled.
- You think a CW ID is the number the army gave you on your dog tags during the cold war.

I followed a vehicle with mag mounts, but no antennas. This was not a very happy sight. The operator will never be heard on our repeater again. Al Fisher, KC4RIB, is now a silent key.

A tireless individual, Al was always available for NFARL. This year, Al single-handedly got Field Day week-end named Amateur radio week-end in honor of all of Georgia's amateur radio operators. Every Thursday morning was a guaranteed contact with Al as he went to SciTrek to help promote Amateur radio to anyone that would listen.

During Field day, Al was there operating at four o'clock Sunday morning because he knew that would be the difficult time to get operators awake enough to recognize our own call sign. He also had several other projects to do during the day. Al was also very involved with the Georgia Radio Reading Services for the Blind.

I am certain Al did many more things that few of us knew about. He never did anything for just himself - but was always doing something for all of us. The loss of Al is going to leave a big hole in the Atlanta ham community and especially NFARL. I know Al is counting on us to continue with the numerous things he was always doing and even more. Let's not disappoint him.

73s Al, We will really miss you.

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Mr. Alphonse Fischer, KC4RIB, age 76, of Marietta, died July 17, 1998. Mr. Fischer was a WWII Navy veteran, a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, Amvets, VFW, Cobb County Republicans and the Georgia Ham Radio Club. He also read for the Georgia Radio Reading Services for the Blind. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Kelley Fischer; Daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth Gergely, Cumming and Mrs. Suzanne Canale, Montclair, NJ. Sons, Mr. John A. Fischer, Pittsburgh, PA, Mr. Charles D. Fischer and Mr. Philip J. Fischer both of Atlanta. 13 grandchildren, 3 great grandchildren, several nieces and nephews. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Monday, July 20, 1998 at 1:30 PM at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church. Father Albert Jowdy, Father John Anderson and Rev. Mr. Don Nadeau, celebrants. Entombment is at Georgia Memorial Park.

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Several of our members have asked what NFARL is going to do. There is something "in the works" that I hope will be a fitting tribute to Al and all that he did for us. This project will be discussed at the next board meeting and then presented to the membership at the next regular meeting. I would like to add something though. Al did almost everything on his own, usually without asking. If possible, Al tried to do something with kids. At SciTrek, his ability to talk with the numerous school kids on tour was nothing short of legendary. The most fitting tribute that any of us can do for Al is to carry on his work. Try to think about some of what Al accomplished and then take that on for your own project. Believe me, it is going to take all of us doing all those little things to fill the void left by this giant of a man.

## ARRL Proposes Simplified Amateur License Structure

The ARRL Board has agreed to propose a simplified Amateur Radio licensing structure with four classes. Lengthy discussion and debate during the Board's meeting July 16-18 led to majority support for a plan for four written examination elements to establish amateurs' operational and technical qualifications instead of the present five, and two Morse code examination elements instead of the present three.

Under the plan adopted by the Board, the entry level to Amateur Radio would be known as Class D and would convey the privileges of the present Technician license. The written examination would be at the same level of difficulty as that of the present Technician examination, but consistent with the privileges of the license. All amateurs now licensed as Technicians would become Class D.

The next step would be known as Class C and would convey the privileges of the present General license, but with phone subbands expanded by 50 kHz on 75 and 15 meters and by 25 kHz on 40 meters. Class C would be the entry level to high frequency (HF) operating privileges. To upgrade from Class D to Class C, an amateur would pass a written examination on the operational and technical qualifications required for HF operation and a 5 word per minute Morse code examination. All amateurs now licensed as General, Technician Plus, and Novice would become Class C. The expansion of the telephony sub-bands would result from "refarming" of the Novice CW bands that are no longer required for their original purpose.

The third step would be known as Class B and would convey the privileges of the present Advanced license, but with phone subbands expanded by 50 kHz on 75 and 15 meters and by 25 kHz on 40 meters. To upgrade from Class C to Class B, an amateur would pass a more advanced written examination similar in difficulty to the present Element 4A and a 12 word per minute Morse code examination. All amateurs now licensed as Advanced would become Class B.

The final step would be known as Class A and would convey the full privileges of the present Amateur Extra Class, with telephony sub-bands expanded by 50 kHz on 75 and 15 meters and by 25 kHz on 40 meters. To upgrade from Class B to Class A, an amateur would be required to pass the most difficult written examination

in the sequence. Consistent with the practice in many other countries, no additional Morse code examination would be required beyond 12 words per minute. All amateurs presently licensed as Amateur Extra Class would become Class A.

In their discussions, Board members emphasized that the objective is to rationalize and simplify the amateur licensing structure without reducing the requirements for any class of license. Where reductions in Morse code requirements are proposed, there would be a corresponding increase in written examination standards. On the other hand, Board members were adamant that simplifying the structure should not come at the expense of privileges already earned by amateurs. Therefore, present Novice and Technician Plus licensees, having earned entry-level HF operating privileges, would be granted the new entry-level HF license.

Adoption of the simplification plan marks the culmination of 30 months of work by the Board, during which time the input of literally thousands of ARRL members and other amateurs and prospective amateurs was considered. The Board debated a wide variety of options including both smaller and larger numbers of license classes, higher and lower qualification levels, and different privileges. Nine of the 15 Directors voted in favor of the plan, with six opposed. Following the meeting ARRL President Rod Stafford, W6ROD, observed, "The debate was at times contentious and the result was not unanimous. Some Board members preferred greater simplification; others were uncomfortable with some of the changes being proposed. However, every Board member, without exception, left the meeting knowing that each of his or her colleagues did what they believe is best for the future of Amateur Radio."

Members are urged to contact their ARRL directors to comment on this proposal. E-mail addresses are on page 10 of any issue of QST. Members also may comment on the proposal via the ARRL Web site, <http://www.arrl.org> or via e-mail at [restrux@arrl.org](mailto:restrux@arrl.org).

## Simulated Emergency Test (SET)

The ARRL Simulated Emergency Test is a nationwide exercise in emergency communications, administered by ARRL Emergency Coordinators and Net Managers. Both ARES and the National Traffic System (NTS) are involved. The SET weekend gives communicators the opportunity to focus on the emergency communications capability within their community while interacting with NTS nets. SET weekend is held in October, and is announced in QST.

### Purpose of SET

1. To find out the strengths and weaknesses of ARES and NTS, the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) and other groups in providing emergency communications.
2. To provide a public demonstration to served agencies such as Red Cross, Civil Preparedness, and through the news media—of the value to the public that Amateur Radio provides, particularly in time of need.
3. To help radio amateurs gain experience in communications using standard procedures and a variety of modes under simulated emergency conditions.

# Secretary's Report

by Cynthia KF4GFG

So once again I must compile all my notes into something that you can read. You do not realize what a job that is. I was not here for the April meeting and I have not been able to get the notes from them so you will have to do with what I have got. How many of you read this part anyway? The May meeting started at 7:38 p.m. and we had 24 members and visitors. We discussed that Land Mobile Communications Council wants 420-430 MHz and 440-450 MHz. You had until June 1, 1998 to reply with your comments. There is a bill in congress to protect and reallocate replacement spectrum if the government gives or auctions any of our amateur frequencies (current write up in August QST. Check it out.). You probably already heard about the Icom upgrade contest. We discussed that we should all upgrade and give the radio to Cynthia KF4GFG if we win. You should come to the meetings and see what really goes on. Fred, W2HIK talked for Pat, W1CQ about field day. We needed a power coordinator, logistic coordinator, picnic coordinator and dis-

cussed who would run what band. I picked Savage Garden. We talked about the fact that 14 people came last year that did nothing but eat. We voted on no picnic this year but people who did come and operate were fed. I also volunteered for logistics coordinator. Not like I don't have enough to fill my time. Roswell Recreation Center needs to be confirmed and Al, KC4RIB is taking care of public relations. We need one more generator. Steve KS4KJ volunteered one. Someone will contact Joe Lamboli about working with children and amateur radio.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20. Keith KE4TEG did a program on power regulations and rules.

### June Meeting

Meeting began after 7:30. There were quite a few people in attendance. We discussed remaining loose ends before field day and who still needs to take care of what. Trust me, there was a lot of little tidbits that I could not write them all down and I was not included in all the discussions. There was no program after the meeting. It ended about 9:00. (OK, I lost the notes for this meeting).

### July Meeting

I do have the notes for this meeting. The meeting began at 7:49 and there were 20 people in attendance. Milton Lord is doing the August program. We discussed field day and how tired we were. We managed to pull it off and got a respectable number of contacts. We hope to get the pictures back in time to put them in this newsletter. Coffin needs a home. Nancy may take it (Steve, I put that in print just for you.) Talked about having a hamfest. Opinions are tossed out about it. School, church, mall parking lots are options for holding it. Weekend date in cooler weather were unanimously voted upon. Tech America parking lot is a hopeful thought. W4QO is looking for volunteers for a walk this Saturday. Meeting was adjourned at 8:10. Al, KC4RIB did trivia for us. Thank you Al.

All right, that is all of the notes I have. Please remember that I am not a real secretary and I don't get paid for this. Have some compassion.

88's Cynthia KF4GFG  
a.k.a. Gonzo



## NFARL BALANCE SHEET AS OF JUNE 30, 1998

## ASSETS

## Current Assets

## Checking/Savings

NFARL Checking 622.84

Petty Cash 155.35

Total Checking/Savings 778.19

## Accounts Receivable

Receivables 1747.50

Total Accounts Receivable 1747.50

## Other Current Assets

Savings Acct 4878.69

Total Other Current Assets 4878.69

Total Current Assets 7404.38

TOTAL ASSETS 7404.38

## LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY

## Liabilities

## Current Liabilities

## Accounts Payable

Payables 203.48

Total Accounts Payable 203.48

## Other Current Liabilities

Sales Tax -0.75

Total Other Current Liabilities -0.75

Total Current Liabilities 202.73

Total Liabilities 202.73

## Equity

Open Bal Equity 3239.50

Retained Earnings 2319.15

Net Income 1643.00

Total Equity 7201.65

TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY 7404.38

(Field Day expenses were not entered before I ran this report. 73, Fred)

## Views of Field Day



KF4DVM trying to stay awake at Field Day after working BRAG for the rest of the weekend. Dedication like this is what got John the 'Amateur of the Year' award last year. It is never a dull life trying to work all the events that are available with ham radio.



The 6 meter station with the 6M7JHV that barely arrived in time. I was getting very nervous about it but UPS delivered it on Friday before Field Day. This year, 6 meters managed 160+ contacts - including T14JHQ.

[illegible]

Jim Stafford

U.S. West-Kont

Reinhold, G. 1992.



weather provided rain. The tarp in the foreground is a side for the awning to cut the afternoon sun. That's Bill Cook on the right working CW while basking in the breeze of the fan. As usual, Mother nature provided all the warmth we needed - and extra!

## SQUELCH TAILS