

APRIL 2021

HPARC NEWSLETTER

High Point
Amateur Radio
Club



APRIL MEETING

At the April meeting, David Macchiarolo plans to talk about Field Day.

David gave a program on lightning for the March meeting. David's presentation led into questions beyond what he intended for the meeting. Maybe he will expand in a future program.

David Macchiarolo is in charge of sending out Zoom email invitations to the club meeting. If you are planning to attend the meeting via Zoom

and have not gotten an invitation, please contact David and let him know (email under Officers in this newsletter.

HPARC Meeting

6:00 p.m.

Meal: 5:00 p.m.

April 5, 2021

J&S Cafeteria

5835 Samet Drive, HP
& on the Zoom app

My monthly plug for J&S Cafeteria: J&S has recently

expanded its operating hours by staying open to 7:30 pm. I encourage our members to frequent J&S between meetings. This has been a good place for the HPARC to meet, and we need to help them by giving them our business.

I have missing many of our club members. I understand your reasons. We are meeting via Zoom along with the regular meeting. I hope everyone is safe and healthy. Hope to see you all very soon.

FCC NOT YET COLLECTING \$35 APPLICATION FEE

The majority of the FCC's revised Part 97 rules (adopted in December 2020) establishing new application fees become effective on April 19, but the new Amateur Radio application fees will not become effective on April 19. The FCC announced on March 19 that the Amateur Radio application fees, including those associated with Form 605 filings, would not become effective until the "requisite notice has been provided to Congress, the FCC's information technology systems and internal procedures have been updated, and the Commission publishes notice(s) in the Federal Register announcing the effective date of

such rules."

The \$35 fee, when it becomes effective, would apply to new, modification (upgrade and sequential call sign change), renewal, and vanity call sign applications, as well as applications for a special temporary authority (STA) or a rule waiver. All fees will be per application. Administrative updates, such as a change of mailing, email address, or name, are exempt.

It is expected that such fees will not become effective before summer 2021. The FCC has stated that Amateurs will have advance warning of the actual effective date, because it will publish such date in the Federal

Register.

ARRL Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (VEC) Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM, said VECs and Volunteer Examiner (VE) teams will not have to collect the \$35 fee at exam sessions. Once the FCC application fee takes effect, new and upgrade applicants will pay

Fee continued inside...

HPARC/Zoom Meeting April 5, 2021

J&S Cafeteria,
5835 Samet Drive, HP
& on Zoom

Meal at 5:30 p.m.
Business meeting at 6:00 p.m.

FCC TO REINSTATE MORSE CODE TEST

APRIL 1, 2021

Washington, D.C. – April 1, 2021 – Today, the Federal Communications Commission (Commission or FCC) approved Report and Order 14-987af which reinstates the Morse Code test for General Class and Amateur Extra Class licensees. “It was a big mistake eliminating the Morse Code test,” admits Dotty Dasher, the FCC’s director of examinations. “We now realize that being able to send and receive Morse Code is an essential skill for radio Amateurs. As they say, it really does get through when other modes can’t.”

Not only will new applicants have to take the test, but General Class licensees who have never passed a code test will have one year to pass a 5-wpm code test. Similarly, Amateur Extra class licensees

that never passed a code test will have one year to pass a 13-wpm test. Those Amateurs that fail to pass the test will face revocation of their operating privileges. Materials for administering the examinations will be distributed to Volunteer Examiner Coordinators by the end of April, so that they can begin the testing on May 1, 2021.

“This isn’t going to be one of those silly multiple-choice type tests,” noted Dasher. “We’re going to be sending five-character random code groups, just like we did in the old days. And, applicants will have to prove that they can send, too, using a poorly adjusted straight key.”

Technician Class licensees will not be required to take a Morse Code test, nor will a test be required for new applicants.

“We discussed it,” said Dasher, “but decided that since most Techs can’t even figure out how to program their HTs, requiring them to learn Morse Code seemed like cruel and unusual punishment.”

When asked what other actions we might see from the FCC, Dasher hinted that in the future applicants taking the written exam may be required to draw circuit diagrams, such as Colpitts oscillators and diode ring mixers, once again. “We’re beginning to think that if an applicant passes an Amateur Radio license exam it should mean that he or she actually knows something,” she said.

For further information, contact James X. Shorts, Assistant Liaison to the Deputy Chief of Public Relations for the FCC at (202) 555-1212.

MONSTER DIPOLE CAN DELIVER MONSTER SIGNAL

A video shows how Gary Watson, ZL3SV, in Nelson, New Zealand, installed an enormous all-band dipole with each leg extending 320 meters (about 1,050 feet). The antenna is multiple wavelengths on HF, and on 20 meters it has a gain of more than 16 dB, Watson says. It hears quite well, too.

A huge 12:1 balun resembling a utility pole power step-down transformer converts the impedance from 50 W unbalanced to 600 W balanced. The

wire he uses for each leg is aluminum-wrapped, power-line cable (10-millimeter cable with wrap), and he uses power-line fittings, because they’re designed to handle the wire. The line has a 60-ton breaking strength.

Watson said he made the 600 W ladder line himself and he uses the antenna on all bands, typically running only 200 W. The coaxial feed line goes to his house down a slope from the antenna via a conduit.

His home is entirely off the grid, powered by solar power. The noise level is very low at his location, with power lines some distance away, although his solar power system’s inverter is nearby.

Watson says he can copy stations with the “monster” antenna that remain undetectable with a half-wave dipole.

—*The ARRL Letter*,

March 11, 2021

Rick Lindquist, WW1ME,
Editor

The HPARC Newsletter is published monthly by the High Point Amateur Radio Club (HPARC) for its members. The HPARC Newsletter serves as a source of information about Club activities, and general news items of interest to Amateur Radio. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the HPARC or its officers. Material in this newsletter may be reproduced provided the HPARC is properly credited.

Complimentary issues of the HPARC Newsletter are available by writing to the HPARC Newsletter at PO Box 4941, High Point, NC 27263 or emailing your request to w4ua@arrl.net. Subscriptions are available to non-members for \$12.00 a year. Contributions and letters/emails to the editor are welcome.

Membership is open in the HPARC to all licensed Amateur Radio operators. Membership is \$24.00 a year. Associate membership is also available to those who are interested in Amateur Radio but who do not currently hold a license. Associate membership is \$12.00 a year. Student membership is also available for \$12.00 a year.

The High Point Amateur Radio Club meets the first Monday of each month (except for holidays) at 5:00 p.m. at a local restaurant announced in the newsletter. The business meeting starts at 6:00 p.m. followed by a short program of interest. Family and visitors are welcome to attend. For more information, please call or email one of the HPARC officers listed in this newsletter.

...*Fee continued from cover*

the \$15 exam session fee to the VE team as usual, and pay the \$35 application fee directly to the FCC via the Fee Filer

System or License Manager System. Somma said this information was provided in a VE Newsletter distributed this past week. "Further news and

instructions will follow when we have them," she said.

—*The ARRL Letter*,

March 25, 2021

Rick Lindquist, WW1ME, Ed.

ARISS HAM STATION IN COLUMBUS MODULE IS ONCE AGAIN OPERATIONAL

Some 6 weeks after going silent following a spacewalk that installed new antenna cabling, the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) Ham station in the Columbus module is once again operational. The Columbus station, which typically uses the call sign NA1SS, is the primary ARISS Amateur Radio station used for school contacts and other activities. The problem arose after a January 27 spacewalk replaced a coax feed line installed 11 years ago with another built by the European Space Agency (ESA) and Airbus.

While the specific cause of the problem has not yet been determined, a March 13 spacewalk that restored the antenna cabling to its original configuration provided the cure. The plan to return the ARISS cabling to its original configuration had been a "contingency task" for a March 5 spacewalk, but the astronauts ran out of time. The ARISS work was appended to the to-do list for astronauts Mike Hopkins, KF5LJG, and Victor Glover, KI5BKC, to complete a week later.

During the weekend spacewalk, Hopkins swapped out a cable for the Bartolomeo com-

mmercial payload-handling platform that had been installed in series with the ARISS VHF-UHF antenna feed line, returning the ARISS system to its pre-January 27 configuration. Hopkins raised a question concerning a sharp bend in the cable near a connector, but no further adjustments were possible.

Work during the March 13 spacewalk also made Bartolomeo operational. "Yesterday was a great day for all!" Bauer said. "Ad astra!"

—*The ARRL Letter*,

March 18, 2021

Rick Lindquist, WW1ME, Ed.

NCVEC QUESTION POOL COMMITTEE SEEKS INPUT FOR UPDATED TECHNICIAN QUESTION POOL

The National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (NCVEC) Question Pool Committee (QPC) is requesting input from the Amateur Radio community on new or modified questions for the 2022 – 2026 FCC Element 2 (Technician pool), which goes into effect on July 1, 2022. This may include suggestions for new questions, changes to current examination topic areas, or changes to existing questions in the current Technician question pool.

The QPC said it's seeking input that focuses on:

- Topics and subjects that enhance public interest and understanding and use of Amateur Radio, or focus on STEM

hands-on learning and education.

- Questions on new technology, digital modes, station setup and operation, antennas, and emergency and non-emergency operation.

To submit suggested questions for QPC review, the committee asks that questions have no more than two 70-character lines, including spaces. Distractors should be no more than two 70-character lines long, and shorter if possible. Each multiple choice question must be accompanied by four possible distractors and only one correct answer. The answer choices may be in any order, but the correct answer must be indicated by the letters A, B, C, or D at the

beginning of the question. Those submitting suggestions should provide the resource information that supports the correct answer or the FCC Part 97 rule.

The QPC will accept question comments, revisions, and submissions from the Amateur Radio community via email through June 30, 2021. This email address is a bulk forwarding mailbox, so no acknowledgment will be sent by return email. The NCVEC QPC will take all comments into consideration as it updates the Technician question pool for 2022 – 2026.

—*The ARRL Letter*,

March 25, 2021

Rick Lindquist, WW1ME, Ed.



High Point Amateur Radio Club
PO Box 4941
High Point, NC 27263

HPARC APRIL CALENDAR

- 1 — **April Fool's Day**
- 4 — **EASTER**
- 5 — **HPARC Club Meeting**
- 10 — Greensboro VE Session, Hinshaw
United Methodist Church
- 18 — ARRL Rookie Roundup – Phone
- 21 — Administrative Professionals' Day
- 24 — W4VEC High Point session (Hickory
Chapel Wesleyan Church, Fellowship Bldg)
- 26 — HPARC Newsletter Deadline
- 30 — National Arbor Day

BIRTHDAYS

- Keith Thomas — April 11
- David Macchiarolo — April 25
- Dan Bly — April 27

For W4VEC Test information, call or email David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF, (336) 420-9424, aj4tf@arrl.net

2021 HPARC OFFICERS

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**Saturday
 Breakfast**
 —
8:00 a.m.
 —
**Mrs Winners,
 2713 S. Main St.**