

PK TERM Offered Free to Schools

Timewave Technology and Creative Services Software say any school with a club callsign is eligible to receive a free copy of PK TERM '99 packet software, according to Timewave Sales Manager John Douglas, NØISL, who says there are no strings attached. "Just e-mail us with your school call and a mailing address and we will do all the rest," he says.

PK TERM '99 software runs on Timewave and AEA TNCs and requires Windows 95/98. Douglas says Timewave will help find the proper software — also for free — for schools that have TNCs that won't run PK TERM. In addition, Douglas is looking for donations of old, non-working, PK-232 TNCs. "If it can be repaired," he says, "we will donate it in your name to a school that does not have packet/HF digital equipment, either a school of your choice or any one that has applied for equipment." For details, contact Douglas via e-mail at <jdouglas@timewave.com>.

Restructuring on FCC's "Front Burner"

By the time you read this, the FCC may already have handed down its long-awaited decision on amateur license restructuring. The ARRL reported in mid-November—just before this issue went to press—that knowledgeable sources in Washington said the restructuring issue had "moved to the front burner at the FCC" and that "a Report and Order could be released before the end of 1999."

More than 2,000 comments were received on the Commission's 1998 proposal to reduce the number of license classes from six to four, and to possibly reduce the code speed requirements for HF access. Watch CQ's website <<http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com>> for updates. We will post the FCC's decision as soon as it is announced.

FCC: Partial Callsigns Illegal

Identifying on the air with only part of your callsign, a common practice among some DXers and net participants, is a violation of FCC rules, according to Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, the Commission's Special Counsel for Amateur Radio. The statement comes in a letter to Alan Strauss, WA4JTK, of Carol City, Florida. The main point of the letter was to clarify the fact that all amateur frequencies are shared and that no one ham or group of hams has any greater right to a given frequency than any other. "A net 'taking over' a frequency from existing legitimate communications, or deliberately operating dis-

ruptively close to existing legitimate communications, will be considered to be engaging in deliberate interference," Hollingsworth wrote.

But the letter added, "We also take this opportunity to point out that the practice of identifying only by the last two letters of an Amateur call sign is a violation of Part 97 of the Commission's rules. A station identifying by only part of its assigned call sign is *not complying* with the clearly written rules regarding station identification..."

In other recent enforcement actions, the FCC ordered several hams to be retested at Commission offices, revoked the licenses of several other hams who did not appear for ordered retests, and issued several warning notices regarding deliberate interference and unlicensed operation. In addition, the FCC continued its ongoing inquiry into multiple club callsign holders, and affirmed its decision to suspend for six months the HF operating privileges of a North Carolina ham who it determined was causing interference on 80 meters.

Repeater Coordinators Must Consider Needs of All Hams

Repeater coordinators, beware. If you ignore the needs of repeater users and other hams sharing VHF and UHF bands, you are not doing your job properly and could be replaced. This warning comes in a letter from the FCC's D'Wana Terry, Chief of the Public Safety and Private Wireless Division of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, to California Congressman David Dreier, who had contacted the Commission on behalf of two constituents who objected to recent decisions of the Southern California Repeater and Remote Base Association (SCRRBA). The Public Safety and Private Wireless Division regulates amateur radio, along with other services.

In her letter to Dreier, Terry said the FCC's amateur rules make coordinators responsible to *all* hams who are authorized to be licensees of repeater or auxiliary stations, and wrote that "(a)n entity that considers the concerns only of repeater owners ... would not be considering the concerns of other users of spectrum affected by repeater operation and, therefore, would appear at odds with the definition of a frequency coordinator in the amateur service." Terry continued, "We envision that an entity not considering the concerns of other users of spectrum affected by repeater operation can be replaced by a broad base of local amateurs choosing another frequency coordination entity..."

The letter, based on a 1986 Commission ruling, did not suggest how such a

choice might be made, but noted that multiple coordinators are permitted, although they must cooperate with each other "so that station licensees may make the most effective use of amateur service frequencies..." It is too early to tell what fallout, if any, will result from this letter, which seems to encourage hams to replace frequency coordinators whom they feel are unresponsive to their needs. The two hams whose Congressman contacted the FCC have already announced the formation of a competing 70 cm coordination group in southern California.

Jean Shepherd, K2ORS, SK

Radio legend Jean Shepherd, K2ORS, died on October 16 at age 78. Shepherd entertained millions of listeners during more than 20 years at WOR radio in New York City with his stories and the characters he created to inhabit them. The stories occasionally made reference to ham radio, and Shepherd was active on the air for many years. In addition to his radio program, Shepherd produced several television specials and wrote several books, including *In God We Trust, All Others Pay Cash* and *The Ferrari in the Bedroom*.

License Exam Fee Set at \$6.65

The FCC has set the maximum fee for amateur license exams in 2000 at \$6.66. The ARRL VEC and other volunteer examiner coordinators promptly set their fees at \$6.65. The FCC sets a fee each October for the following year, based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index, or CPI, from September to September. The increase from 1998 to 1999 was 2.6%.

Vanity Call Website

Finally, the *ARRL Letter* reports that Michael Carroll, AA4BP, has set up a website devoted to vanity callsigns. Among other things, says the *Letter*, users may access a list of soon-to-be-available callsigns and may find out if someone has already applied for a particular call. The site may be accessed at <<http://www.carroll-usa.com/vanity/>>.

"Ham Radio News" will be a regular feature in CQ each month. Please send us your news items and "hot tips." You can reach our news desk directly via e-mail to <news@cq-amateur-radio.com>, or by postal mail to CQ Amateur Radio News, 25 Newbridge Rd., Hicksville, NY 11801. Always include contact information in case we need to ask you for more information.