APRIL 2013

HPARC NEWSLETTER

High Point Amateur Radio Club

APRIL MEETING

At the April meeting, David Macchiarolo will have a presentation on JT65, a low-power mode used on the HF bands similar with PSK31.

Warren Gallemore presented a YouTube video of the conversion of Ham gear into military grade equipment for WWII. Very interesting.

Our attendance was good but down in number slightly this past month. This crazy cold weather could possibly be the reason. Where is global warming when you need it? Hope to see everyone at the meeting.

GOOGLE DECLARES "MORSE CODE IS PERFECT" WITH NEW GMAIL TAP MAIL PROGRAM

On April 1, Google will announce that it will unveil a new way to use its popular Gmail e-mail system. Called Gmail Tap, it uses dots and dashes to form letters, a system of communicating that should be very familiar to Radio Amateurs. "Morse Code is perfect," said Gmail Tap Engineer Mitch Fedenko. "It's just a dot and a dash. What's simpler than that?"

According to Google, Gmail Tap will let you tap without looking at your screen, replace the 26-key keyboard with two keys and double productivity by typing two e-mails at once.

"Technology is everywhere today," explained David Brook, Google Vice President for Communication Services in a video announcing Gmail Tap, "and everyone has a smart phone. Think about the size of [a smart phone]. It's only two inches, two-and-a-half inches, and we're trying to cram an entire 26-key keyboard into that space. It's time to think about 'How can we do this better?' using the technology that we have today. And that's where Gmail Tap comes in."

Gmail Tap replaces the default keyboard in the Gmail application with one that only has two buttons: One for a dot and one for a dash. Brook said that every single letter in the alphabet can be spelled out by using just these two characters.

The QWERTY keyboard – invented in 1874 – is still used today, largely unchanged. "In Morse code, every letter of the alphabet is represented by a simple pattern of dots and dashes, and once you know them, you can type without even looking at your screen," Brook said. "This makes it ideal for situations where you need to discreetly send e-mails, such as when you're on a date or in a meeting with your boss."

When Google Software Engineer Reed Morse came to Brook with the idea of bringing Morse code back, Brook said he got "really excited." Morse claims that Samuel F.B. Morse – the creator of Morse code – was his "great-grandfather's grandfather's brother." Morse is also the Lead Engineer for Gmail Tap.

Benefits of Gmail Tap include a split-screen func-

Google continued inside...

HPARC Meeting
April 1, 2013

J & S Cafe,
10210 North Main St,
Archdale, NC

Meal at 6:30 pm
Business meeting at 7:00 pm

NELSON NZ COUPLE WANT HAM'S ANTENNA TAKEN DOWN AND ALL HAM ANTENNAS BANNED DUE TO EMI EXPOSURE

A Nelson, New Zealand couple upset by the installation of a Ham Radio antenna in the middle of their expansive field of view from have taken their fight to city councilors. They also appear to want a change in local zoning law that would make all Ham Radio installations in that city subject to exceedingly strict human electromagnetic exposure limits.

Dallas Woods is the complainant who made a presentation to the council's public forum. At that hearing Woods asked councilors to change the rules so that Amateur Radio antennas are no longer a permitted activity in residential zones or the landscape overlay which covers city ridgelines. Woods said the landscape overlay was supposed to mitigate adverse effects on visual qualities and to retain views from major vantage points. Also that the council's councils current plan acknowledged that in some areas use of structures such as antenna masts should be extremely limited.

But that presentation did not stop there. According to Woods testimony, with the modern communications now available, there was no justification for large Ham Radio antennas as a right in residential zones. Woods also stated that Ham Radio was no longer needed to help with emergencies. They are also concerned about the health aspects for themselves and passers-by who could be exposed to higher what Woods terms as a than acceptable amount electromagnetic radiation from the Ham Radio antenna when it was operating at full power. Woods wants the National Radiation Laboratory of the Ministry of Health should monitor the RF output from the antenna while the Ham Radio station is operating at maximum power.

The tower and antenna in question belong to Rick Kiessig, ZL2HAM. He has acknowledged that his antenna did impinge on his neighbors view to some degree, but noted that there was a gum tree in the same area which was taller than his antenna and blocked much more of the view. He also said that he had taken a number of additional steps to mitigate the effect of the antenna on the view of his neighbors. This included his using a self-supporting tower without lots of guy wires and an antenna made of translucent fiberglass rather than one with a large number of thick aluminum elements.

Nelson's environmental inspections manager is Stephen Lawrence. He acknowledges that he has received such a request from the Woods, but he notes that a rule in the Nelson Resource Management Plan specifies that any antenna transmitting on radio frequencies had to do so within the limits of the relevant New Zealand Safety Standard. He says that Kiessig has already submitted a very detailed self assessment to council that shows his antenna system complies with that safety standard. According to Lawrence, the council in the process of seeking someone to peer review this assessment as a double check, but he adds there are currently no grounds to believe that it isn't accurate or that the antenna system is operating outside of proper safety limits.

According to ZL2HAM, Amateur Radio stations such as his that operate in the high frequency spectrum makes them safer at a given power density than cellphones or wireless internet. He notes that a Ham Radio station in the high frequency range would need to transmit about 12,000 watts of effective radiated power to have the same power density as a cellphone in normal use.

—Amateur Radio Newsline,
Report 1858, March 22, 2013

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 at 6:30 pm at a local restaurant announced in the newsletter. The business meeting starts around 7:00 pm 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.

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tion, enabling you to send two messages at once, to two completely different recipients. "Gmail Tap multitasking, it's an improvement over speech," Brook said. "You can say two things with your fingers that your mouth can only say one of. People are going to be twice as productive, and people are going to be able to write e-mails anytime they want." A planned "ship-to-shore mode" will "activate your phone's flash to communicate with other power users across an ocean (of people)." Also planned for the future is the Double-Black Diamond mode that will "add a third, fourth and more keyboards for writing up to eight messages at once."

Gmail Tap Product Lead Todd Smith said that "you can tap it in the morning, you can tap it at night, you can tap it in the bathroom. It [takes] a dot and a dash to have a conversation with the entire world. It's great!"

You can get more information on the internet at https://mail.google.com/mail/help/promos/tap/index.html

ARRL Editor's note: The ARRL reminds everyone to keep in mind the date of Gmail Tap's release.

—from the ARRL,
via the Internet

GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOL TO TALK TO ASTRONAUTS ABOARD INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION

Ronald E. McNair Elementary School in Browns Summit, just northeast of Greensboro, has been selected by ARISS (Amateur Radio on the International Space Station) to have a QSO with the astronauts aboard the International Space Station (ISS).

The approximate 10-15 minute QSO, which will take place during one of the ISS's passes over the area, is scheduled to take place the week of April 29th-May 4th. The exact date and time will be determined in late April. This is the third ARISS contact in North Carolina schools in recent years.

Schools apply with the ARISS organization to arrange QSOs with the ISS. Part of the criteria for selecting a school is based on how it integrates into its curriculum STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Math – and how Amateur Radio supports STEM studies on an ongoing basis.

The school is named for astronaut and physicist Dr. Ronald E. McNair, who received his bachelor's degree from North Carolina A&T State University. He was one of seven crew members killed on the Space Shuttle Challenger in 1986. You can learn more about ARISS at http://www.arrl.org/amateur-radio-on-the-international-space-station

—North Carolina Section News – March 2013, Bill Morine, N2COP, ARRL NC Section Manager

GPS JAMMERS GROWING PROBLEM ON UK ROADS

Jamming of the Global Positioning System by drivers on United Kingdom is becoming a growing threat to public safety. The United Kingdom's Guardian newspaper reports that thousands of people in that nation may be using GPS jamming devices on UK roads. This to be invisible to any form of surveillance while driving.

According to the article there are a lot of concerns that use of these devices could lead to dangers to public safety. This includes overtired bus drivers or others staying on the roads despite the presence of monitoring equipment. More importantly they could also pose major a threat if vehicles equipped with the jammers were to go on in airport areas near aircraft which rely on the global positioning system for navigation.

The Guardian article also notes that the growing use of these devices could torpedo any plans to introduce pay as you drive insurance or road toll systems. This is because a vehicle owner would be able to block communications with monitoring systems.

GPS jammers, which can have a range of several hundred meters, can be bought in the United Kingdom for about £30 or about $45 in US currency. While not illegal to purchase and own in the UK it is against the law to use them.

—Amateur Radio Newsline, Report 1858, March 22, 2013

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

HPARC APRIL CALENDAR

1 — April Fool's Day
1 — HPARC Club Meeting
20-25 — HP Furniture Market
22 — EARTH DAY
24 — Administrative Professionals' Day
26 — National Arbor Day
26 — HPARC Newsletter Deadline
27 — Catawba Valley Hamfest,
Morganton, NC

BIRTHDAYS
Sam Hall — April 21
David Macchiarolo — April 25
Dan Bly — April 27

2013 HPARC OFFICERS

Warren Gallemore, KA4LOQ — President — 883-4944 — warreng960@aol.com
Bob Erdin, N4ADQ — Vice-President — 889-8692 — rerdin@northstate.net
Mark McMahan, KB4MFP — Secretary/Treasurer — 887-3039 — kb4mfp@arrl.net
Newsletter Editor — Mark McMahan — 887-3039 — kb4mfp@arrl.net
HPARC Web page: http://w4ua.net • w4ua@arrl.net

Breakfast every Saturday
—
8:00 am
—
Mrs. Winner's, South Main St.