

The OVH ARC Newsletter
"OLE VIRGINIA HAMS" AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.
Post Office Box 1255, Manassas, Va. 20108
Repeaters - W4OVH - 146.970- & 224.660- & 442.200+
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Port 4: 440.925Mhz 9600 Baud backbone / N3OH (SYSOP--BILL)
<http://www.w4ovh.net>

OLE VIRGINIA TIMES

MARCH 2007

Next Meeting: March 19, 2007

PRESIDENT'S LETTER:

Greetings to all. I hope this newsletter finds all of you in good health.

As your newly elected president, I would like first and foremost to extend my gratitude to the exiting officers for their years of service, duty above and beyond expectations, and exemplary dedication to the OVH organization. Truly, these folks will be a tough act to follow. You have raised the bar for the positions held. I hope we can do as well you. Thank you!!!!

To the new officers, welcome and thank you for accepting the challenge!

To the membership, thank you for electing me as your president. Even though I'm unaccustomed to the president's position, I'll do my very best, and won't let you down. The OVH organization means a great deal to me and I'm sure all of you. I have set some reasonable goals for myself and hope I can count on you for your support.

- To ensure the club's survival
- To promote active club participation
- To grow our numbers
- To protect our spectrum
- To have lots of fun

Also, remember to renew your OVH club membership for 2007 if you haven't done that already. Details for that are at the OVH club website: <http://www.w4ovh.net>

Again, thank you all! See you at the March 19, 2007 meeting at 7:30pm.

73, George, K4GVT



Ole Virginia Hams Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Post Office Box 1255
Manassas, Virginia 20108

OFFICERS

President:	George Tarnovsky	K4GVT	791-5956
Vice Pres:	Ruth Frock	KU4WH	331-1234
Secretary:	Wayne Phillips	N7QLK	393-8447
Treasurer:	Bill Ellis	WA4FIC	335-9935

DIRECTORS

Don (Butch) Blasdell	W4HJL	369-2877
Art Whittum	W1CRO	791-4330
Charlie Dale	WA4YGI	361-3091

WEEKLY NETS

Thursdays - 8:00 PM	JOHN H	257-3566
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HAMFEST 2007

TBA

FIELD DAY 2007

George T.	K4GVT	791-5956
Butch B.	W4HJL	369-2877

CLUB ROSTER

Blaine	KB4RKL	369-2877
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EDUCATION

Trish Rabe	KI4PCM	335-1096
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CLUB EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

David Meola	KI4AZX	393-6681
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ARES AREA EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

David Lane	KG4GIY	361-3042
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F.A.R. REPS.

Ruth	KU4WH	331-1234
Mary Lu	KB4EFP	369-2877

FINANCE

Mary Lu	KB4EFP	369-2877
Bill	N3OH	590-9562
Ruth	KU4WH	331-1234

GENERATORS

Steve	N4OGR	361-0008
Keith	KM4AA	909-1512
Al	KB4BHB	368-4794

HISTORIAN

Theresa	KG4TVM	257-3566
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HOME PAGE

Bill	N3OH	590-9562
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JOTA

John H.	KG4NXT	257-3566
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LEGAL

Pete	KB4RME	369-2436
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MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Joe Dobes	KI4OHR	369-2639
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NEWSLETTER

Paul	W4ZB	754-0910
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NEWSLINE

Karl	W4KRL	802-1527
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PACKET

Alan	KD4KBX	330-8844
Bill	N3OH	590-9562

PROGRAMS

TBA

PUBLICITY

Trish Rabe	KI4PCM	335-1096
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QUARTERMASTER

Steve	N4OGR	361-0008
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REPEATER CONTROLLERS

Art	W1CRO	791-4330
Butch	W4HJL	369-2877
Milt	N4SN	369-7265
Steve	N4OGR	361-0008
Alan	KD4KBX	330-8844

REPEATER TRUSTEE

Art	W1CRO	791-4330
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SCHOLARSHIP

Jim	W4JTP	392-0150
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SUNSHINE

Jan	KE4TMW	257-0897
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TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Art	W1CRO	791-4330
Alan	KD4KBX	330-8844
Bill	N3OH	590-9562
Butch	W4HJL	369-2877
George	K4GVT	791-5956
Karl	W4KRL	802-1527
Bob	K4HJF	335-1939

All telephone numbers listed above are for Area Code 703 unless otherwise noted.

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The OVH ARC meets at 7:30 p.m. local time every third Monday of the month at the NOVEC Tech Center on Wellington Road in Gainesville, Virginia. Prospective members or other interested persons are invited to attend. Local information can always be obtained, at any time, through the OVH's FM repeaters on 146.97 & 224.660 Mhz. All are welcome. Up to date information about OVH activities and meetings is also available on the OVH website at <http://www.w4ovh.net>.

Permission is hereby granted for the reprinting of articles and quotations in this letter provided full credit is given to the OVH ARC and the author or other source of the article. Contribution of printed articles by both members and non-members is encouraged. The deadline for submissions is the 5th of each month. Submissions should be forwarded to OVH TIMES Editor: W4ZB@RLAW.COM.

Letters to the Editor and Classified Ads are accepted and welcome. Approx. Circulation - 170.

Last Rev: 03/9/2007

Sunshine Corner:

Welcome to our newest member, Rosemary/KI4SND – it's great to have you!

Happy Birthday to our friends and fellow Hams: Jeff/N1SN and Russell/WB4HHN. Hope each of you has a great day!

Congratulations to Brian, WC4J, who with help from OVH ops N3OH, WA4KFZ, WA3UFY, KI4OHR, AG4ZZ, AI4II, KU4WH, WD4OJY and other OVHers won First Place – Multioperator – for the Virginia Section in the ARRL's June 2006 VHF / UHF Contest.

Finny/KØKMA has been transferred unexpectedly to a location in Ohio after just a few months on the job in Manassas and he has already relocated. We will all miss his enthusiasm and infectious good ham spirit. Finny – be sure to come back and visit with us when in the area again!

Pick your volunteer position for the upcoming Hamfest, and let the lead person know! It's your club, and your Hamfest! Also, this monthly Sunshine Corner job is open for a new volunteer!

73 de Jan/KE4TMW

Minutes of the Ole Virginia Hams Amateur Radio Club Meeting February 19, 2007:

John / KG4NXT called meeting to order at 1932 Eastern Time.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, all present stated their names and call signs. There were 22 OVH members and three guests present.

OVH Election – Butch / W4HJL – Butch noted that the following OVH members have been nominated and have agreed to serve for one year for the following OVH Officer positions: President, George Tarnovsky / K4GVT; Vice President, Ruth Frock / KU4WH; Treasurer, Bill Ellis / WA4FIC; Secretary, Wayne Phillips / N7QLK. Butch handed out ballots, and announced that other OVH members could be written in.

PROGRAM

Tom Azlin / N4ZPT of Vienna Wireless gave a presentation on the new D-Star technology, repeaters and radios. Tom told us about the experiences that they had using D-Star repeaters and radios at last year's Marine Corps Marathon and the preparations that they need to make before the event.

OVH Election Continued – Butch / W4HJL – Butch noted that the ballots had been counted and the nominated OVH members (noted above) had been elected unanimously.

George / K4GVT, the newly elected OVH President, thanked the previous OVH officers for their service to the OVH. George also stated some of his goals and objectives for the Club.

Membership – George / K4GVT – Potential new members read in were Robert Ayres / K8WTF and Chris Allen / KI4POT. Rosemary Henry / KI4SND was voted in unanimously. Welcome to the OVH, Rosemary.

Minutes – The minutes of the January 2007 OVH meeting were approved following the addition of the Membership information.

Treasurer's Report – Bill / WA4FIC – Bill read the Treasurer's Report.

Repeaters – Butch / W4HJL – They're fine!!

Education – Patricia / KI4PCM – Patricia will be very busy for the next few months, and we need someone to help teach a new Technician class. Brian / WC4J noted that several people have also expressed interest in a General class.

Hamfest – George / K4GVT – George noted that we still need someone to step up and be the Hamfest Chairman. Butch / W4HJL noted that despite the lack of a Chairman, everything is moving forward and is on track for the upcoming Hamfest. Memphis Amateur Electronics will be a major commercial vendor this year. It was also noted that the Vienna Wireless Hamfest (Annadale Winterfest) is this coming weekend.

Field Day – George / K4GVT – Butch / W4HJL and George / K4GVT will co-chair the OVH Field Day event.

50/50 – Charlie / WA4YGI won the 50/50 raffle. \$28 was collected, and Charlie donated his winning share back to the Club. Thank you Charlie.

The meeting adjourned at 2058 Eastern time.

Reminders about some upcoming events / calendar dates:

HAMFESTS

March 31th – April 1st. Greater Baltimore Hamboree and Computerfest, Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium, Maryland. Anyone going to this should contact Mary Lu about distributing flyers for the June OVH Hamfest. Details: <http://www.gbhc.org>

OPERATING CONTESTS

March 17th – 18th. Virginia QSO Party - Phone/CW/Digital, OVH had a speaker about this last year. Join in again this year. Details: http://www.qsl.net/sterling/VA_QSO_Party/QSOParty.htm. Brian, WC4J, is planning to operate around the clock and is looking for operators. In past years the participation of digital mode (RTTY, PSK31, etc.) operators has been limited and the contest has separate categories for digital mode operation.

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY ARES/RACES

March 17th. Bi-Monthly Training (Vertex/Dulles Drill). Details at pwcares.org or from KG4GIY.

FAR SCHOLARSHIPS FOR POST-HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

April 30th – absolute deadline for applications. Licensed Radio Amateurs are eligible to apply for a number of scholarships administered by The Foundation For Amateur Radio, Inc. if they plan to pursue a full-time course of studies beyond high school and are enrolled in or have been accepted for enrollment at an accredited university, college or technical school. The awards range from \$500 to \$3000 with preference given in some cases to residents of specified geographical areas or the pursuit of certain study programs. Request an application (and additional information) by letter before April 30, 2007 to: FAR Scholarships, Box 831, Riverdale, MD 20738 or by email to AA3OF@arrl.net. More details at: <http://farweb.org>.

OVH MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2007

Please be sure to renew your annual OVH membership for 2007 if you haven't done that already. Do it now or at the meeting on March 19, 2007. The renewal form is available on the Club website.

Selected Amateur Radio News from the ARRL March 10, 2007 RSS Feed

Former ISS Crew Members on Hand for Ham Radio Contact with ISS from Centreville, Virginia School

Technical problems failed to dampen the enthusiasm of youngsters at Virginia Run Elementary School in Centreville, Virginia, who spoke March 2nd via ham radio with International Space Station flight engineer Suni Williams, KD5PLB. The Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) program arranged the direct VHF contact. For reasons still being looked into, the space station's NA1SS and Earth station K4HTA failed to establish solid communication until more than three minutes into the approximately ten-minute pass. Nonetheless, not only did Williams answer all the students' questions but had time to let the youngsters know how much she enjoyed the opportunity.

ARRL President Emeritus Jim Haynie, W5JBP, is "Amateur of the Year"

Dayton Hamvention® has named ARRL President Emeritus Jim Haynie, W5JBP, as its 2007 Amateur of the Year. Hamvention says Haynie's League leadership "helped define Amateur Radio's role in emergency communication." ARRL Laboratory Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI, will receive Hamvention's

Special Achievement Award to recognize his technical expertise in documenting the threat of interference from broadband over power line (BPL) systems. David Cameron, VE7LTD, was named the recipient of the Technical Excellence Award for his work developing the Internet Radio Linking Project (IRLP). Hamvention announced its award winners today.

Diamond Terrace Invites Members to Engrave Call Signs in Stone for new ARRL HQ entrance terrace

The ARRL Diamond Club now is offering the opportunity to make your call sign a permanent part of ARRL Headquarters by contributing an engraved brick to The Diamond Terrace at ARRL. A project of the ARRL Diamond Club, The Diamond Terrace will be constructed of personalized, 4x8-inch laser-engraved bricks for the new entrance terrace at the ARRL Headquarters in Newington, Connecticut.

The current ARRL Audio News: Mar 9, 2007 is available at <http://www.arrl.org/arrlletter/audio/> If you want more, the Amateur Radio Newsline audio feed is also available at <http://www.arnewsline.org>.

Follow up notes re the D-STAR talk at the February 2007 OVH meeting

1. A wiki which contains a comprehensive collection of D-STAR related experience and information in Northern Virginia is being maintained by Ben, KF4KJQ, on the M.I.T. web server at <http://d-star.mit.edu/>.
2. The ARRL website includes a downloadable document which purports to set out the D-Star technical specification at <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/techchar/D-STAR.pdf>.

What's your Computer doing, "Fix" for the DST change, etc.

The following three freeware programs each provide information, insights and reports which can save hours of time in maintenance of computers running Windows XP (and other operating systems too):

1. WinAudit 2.17 available at <http://www.pxserver.com>.
2. PC Wizard 2007 available at <http://www.cpuid.org>.
3. What's Running 2.2 available at <http://www.whatsrunning.net>.

Search for KB931836 and download the executable/info at microsoft.com for the Windows XP "fix" for the recent Daylight Savings Time change which will remain in effect for at least several more years.

If you want or need to find out almost everything about the local network and/or the Internet connections being made or attempted to/from programs running on your computer(s), then check out NSauditor at <http://www.nsauditor.com>. This is low cost with a free demo. Find out what's going on!

From the ARRL's website:

ARRL Seeks Comments on New HF Digital Protocol

NEWINGTON, CT, Feb 22, 2007 -- The ARRL is seeking comments from amateurs concerning development of an open-source (non-proprietary) data communications protocol suitable for use by radio amateurs over high-frequency (HF) fading paths. This is not a Request for Proposals (RFP). An RFP may or not be forthcoming depending on evaluation of the information received.

Specifically, the League is asking for comments and information on the following issues:

- **Access Method:** Is Orthogonal Frequency-Division Multiplexing (OFDM) the best candidate technology, or should other competitive technologies be considered?
- **Data Rate and Bandwidth:** What data rates/throughputs are achievable at various bandwidths up to 3 kHz bandwidth?
- **Adaptivity:** What adaptive features should be considered, such as automatic adjustment of transmitter power, modulation waveform and coding, in order to maximize throughput and efficiency in two-way contacts?
- **Robustness:** What is achievable for reliable operation at power levels typical in the Amateur Radio Service and low signal/noise and interference ratios?
- **Error control:** What are the appropriate applications of error control suitable for HF

channels? For example, how should Repeat reQuest (ARQ) and Forward Error Control (FEC) be applied to two-way contacts and one-to-many (roundtable and bulletin) transmissions?

- **Activity Detection:** What is an effective method of determining whether a frequency is busy prior to transmission?
- **Operating System:** What operating systems (such as Windows or Linux) are appropriate for Amateur Radio use with this protocol?
- **Hardware:** What practical and affordable hardware platforms are suitable for amateur stations? Consider the use of personal computers with or without sound cards. Provide any information about the need for an additional "box" if needed.

Please provide the following with your response: (1) name of respondent, (2) respondent's contact information, (3) related experience, and (4) type of respondent: (individual, partnership, corporation or group). Do not include proprietary information as part of your response.

Post, fax or e-mail your response by 1900 UTC, May 15, 2007, to ARRL Chief Technology Officer Paul Rinaldo, W4RI, 3545 Chain Bridge Rd -- Suite 209, Fairfax, VA 22030; Fax: 703-934-2079.

From the ARRL's website:

ARRL Seeks to Force FCC to Produce Documents on BPL Complaint Dismissals

NEWINGTON, CT, Feb 27, 2007 -- The ARRL has filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request seeking to compel the FCC to provide several documents related to its dismissal of several broadband over power line (BPL) interference complaints from radio amateurs in Manassas, Virginia. The FCC on December 14 told five Manassas radio amateurs that it was throwing out their complaints, asserting that its measurements last October 25 and 26 showed the Manassas BPL system to be in compliance. The ARRL has disputed the FCC's findings and, on December 21, sought clarification in a letter to several FCC officials,

including Enforcement Bureau Chief Kris Monteith and Spectrum Enforcement Division Chief Kathryn S. Berthot, who authored the dismissal letter. The FCC's silence to date prompted the FOIA request. ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, says that while Manassas-area amateurs indicate new BPL equipment has somewhat reduced interference, some severe interference exists, and the situation remains far from acceptable.

"The reasons for the Commission's dismissal, after months of delay, of five of the six Manassas complaints are inadequately documented, and

no action appears ever to have been taken on a sixth complaint,” Sumner commented. “The FOIA request was submitted only after the FCC failed, after more than two months, to respond to a letter from the ARRL pointing out apparent deficiencies in the Commission’s investigation and requesting additional information to supplement Kathryn Berthot’s terse and uninformative letter of December 14 dismissing the five complaints.”

ARRL Chief Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, filed the FOIA request February 23, seeking essentially the same information and documentation it had asked the Commission last December to provide voluntarily. The League is looking for any documents that:

- indicate whether or not the hams who filed interference complaints were notified in advance of the FCC inspection and testing in late October, and, if so, who;
- indicate if anyone other than FCC staff observed the Manassas BPL system tests;
- indicate which FCC staffers were involved in the testing and if any were from the Office of Engineering and Technology (OET);
- indicate which FCC staff members determined the test procedures used during the October inspection;
- indicate whether or not representatives of BPL system operator COMTek and equipment supplier Main.net had been notified in advance of the October inspection and testing;
- identify the six areas of the BPL system where the FCC reported it conducted tests, how it determined those areas, why two test sites were segregated from the six identified earlier, whether test results on October 26 differed from those of the previous day and whether there were changes in the BPL system prior to the October 26 testing, and that
- indicate specific test methodologies and equipment the FCC used during its testing, specific frequencies checked, radiated emission levels recorded, the distance from power lines and their height above ground, if any underground lines were tested and if they were notched on any bands.

The League also wants copies of all correspondence regarding the October 25-26 tests “between or among” OET, the Enforcement Bureau, Main.net, COMTek and/or the City of Manassas, including letters and e-mails.

BPL proponent the United Power Line Council hailed Berthot’s December 14 dismissal as a “complete and total vindication” of the Manassas BPL system, but Imlay maintained in his December 21 response to the FCC that Berthot’s letter raised more questions than it answered. For starters, he said, there’s no independent means to evaluate the conclusions Berthot described.

One complainant, George Tarnovsky, K4GVT, said neither he nor the other five complainants was alerted to the planned FCC testing. The others are Donald “Butch” Blasdel, W4HJL; William South, N3OH; Arthur Whittum, W1CRO; Jack Cochran, WC4J, and Dwight Agnew, AI4II. Berthot’s December 14 letter altogether overlooked Whittum’s May 2006 complaint that BPL interference precluded communication with the EastCARS and MidCARS nets on 40 meters. As recently as February 26, Whittum reported experiencing harmful interference on 40 meters from emissions that appeared to be well in excess of FCC limits.

Last August, the ARRL had recommended that the FCC Enforcement Bureau and the OET to take independent measurements in Manassas, rather than relying on COMTek to provide the information. It further urged the Commission to contact all complainants ahead of time to provide “an opportunity for all concerned to witness the testing and to be assured that valid test methodologies were used,” Imlay said. “Had that been done,” Imlay wrote December 21, “and had the measurements been fairly and objectively made, and if the results were as the Commission stated in its December 14 letter, this matter would have been resolved. As it is, nothing is now resolved.”

In requesting a fee waiver with its FOIA request, the ARRL noted that the FCC “has not previously disclosed its methodologies for investigating claims of interference to licensed radio services” from BPL. As a result, disclosure of the requested information would “lead to a significantly better understanding of the operations or activities of the government.”

Online Resources For BPL

1. The ARRL website at <http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/> continues to provide excellent links to numerous BPL / PLC resources.
2. The ARRL's website has recently referred to several BPL developments in Australia. The source information from the Wireless Institute of Australia ["WIA"], the ARRL's counterpart in Australia, is readily available online at <http://wia.org.au> and <http://www.wia.org.au/BPL/>. The latter site includes a suggested form to be used for making written BPL interference complaints to Australia's FCC counterpart.
3. The website of the RSGB at <http://www.rsgb.org/emc/plc.php> provides good links for information about BPL / PLC developments in the United Kingdom.
4. The <http://www.powerline-plc.info/> website which is sponsored by the OEVSU, the ARRL's counterpart in Austria, has good links [in English and German] to BPL / PLC developments and resources in Europe.
5. The website of the DARC, ARRL's counterpart in Germany, at <http://www.darc.de/aktuell/plc/> has good links [mostly in German, some English] to BPL/PLC information developments in Germany and Europe.

A Few More Observations

The ARRL's recent Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the FCC (referred to in the ARRL article above) may eventually produce some information to explain the FCC's apparent whitewash last Fall of the BPL interference complaints from Manassas, but no one should hold his/her breath waiting. Why? FOIA gives Federal agencies 30 days to respond to administrative FOIA requests, but agencies routinely ask requestors to extend the time for response beyond that 30 day limit. If the agency does not plan to provide all responsive FOIA documents with reasonable expedition as may well be the case here, any voluntary extension by the requestor simply enables the agency to tread water until the extended time is up and then request another extension which a naive requestor may grant again. A request for waiver of a [small] fee in such circumstances provides an additional excuse for delay by enabling the agency to claim it needs more time to consider that separate request. A naive requestor will learn the hard way - if this scenario is playing out - that the administrative stage delays can go on and on for many times the supposed 30 day limit - with the agency still producing nothing of substance. Only after the administrative response period times out may the requestor file a FOIA Complaint in a U.S. District Court to compel production, but that necessary step rarely produces quick compliance either. The good news: the Courts do ultimately enforce FOIA for a persistent requestor. Agencies have 60 days to respond to a FOIA Complaint, but U.S. District Courts routinely allow additional time for initial agency responses. A reluctant agency quickly learns that it can fail to provide proper FOIA responses until a FOIA Complaint has been filed against it, and even then only if it is pressured by the Justice Department or ordered by the Court to do so. Regrettably, recalcitrant agencies are able to cause delays and run up requestors' costs using these approaches with no downsides at all in most instances. Unfortunately, this is what a legitimate FOIA requestor must go through when an agency plays cover-up hardball.

Still Another Morse Code Resource

Anyone who wants to learn Morse Code ("CW") or improve his/her proficiency should consider the following freeware program: "Just Learn Morse Code" available at <http://justlearnmorsecode.com/>. This is a very up to date and professionally written program for computers running Windows XP from LB3KB in Norway. Absolute beginners with Morse Code will probably need some guidance about how to best get started using this program as an aid for self-learning, but those who know even a little Morse Code will almost immediately recognize how to use this program for practice to increase copying speed and proficiency. Check it out. Beginners should not hesitate to ask OVH club members willing to help / mentor about learning CW for assistance.