

## Proposal to Create an Amateur Net for New Licensees

Creation of a ham net in the area exclusively for new licensees should be considered. The purpose of the net would be for experienced radio operators to answer questions as well as assist in protocol and conventions associated with amateur radio. Information about the net, including the time of the regularly scheduled net as well as repeater information should be provided to new licensees upon completion and at the VE testing center where they passed their exam.

Many new technician class amateur operators have trouble engaging on the repeaters for a number of reasons. Sometimes experienced operators on repeaters are impatient or come off seeming rude to new licensees. Other discouraging factors facing new ham operators may include fear of not following protocol and convention and being penalized for making mistakes while on a repeater. Asking basic questions may be intimidating for the new operator as well as an annoyance to some experienced operators regularly participating in existing nets. Having a “newbie” style discussion format not only addresses this, it is also a familiar format convention on other mediums and in other hobbies.

Selecting a repeater for the net should take into consideration an effort to avoid interference with existing repeater activity. Selection of an infrequently used repeater, which has relatively good coverage of the Omaha, Council Bluffs, and surrounding communities, would benefit those testing at exam centers in Omaha, Bellevue, and Council Bluffs.

One candidate for consideration is the WA0WTL repeater in Bellevue at 147.300 Mhz. The repeater is fully operational, has excellent coverage, and is seldom used.

When information is presented to the applicant upon successfully passing the examination it should be a “one side” of “one page” introduction to the net, what a net is, how to enter the repeater frequency and offset as a generalization relative to any standard 2m transceiver, and a warm invitation to participate. No particular club endorsement shall be presented and complete neutrality preserved in the document.

Any number of experienced hams shall be encouraged to participate in the net. At least one Amateur Extra class ham should be present to ensure the presence of an ideal wealth of knowledge. New amateur operators having held a license for less than one year shall be granted priority speaking privileges on the net, with an opportunity to speak ahead of more experienced operators when the net control moves through the list of participants. The format should be a basic Question and Answer interaction.

In conclusion, it is a fact that new amateur operators, particularly those with a technician class license, spend months prior to entry into operation on repeaters and participating in amateur radio activity. Although economic factors come into play, the most significant factor remains a basic reservation present as a result of lack of experience. Such a net could provide valuable practice and a nonjudgmental environment to the new ham operator. This serves the entire amateur radio community as expanded involvement and increased popularity of the hobby ensures frequency privileges as well as repeater funding, factors that are a benefit to everyone.

Author: Derek Winterstien  
KE0ETZ

3/15/16