

# SEITS

SouthEast Iowa Technical Society

<http://www.seits.org>

**The Technical Journal**

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**April 1999**

## April Meeting

The next meeting is Saturday, April 10, 1999, in Iowa City. We will be meeting at Country Kitchen on Highway 6 at 12:00 noon for lunch with a 1:00 pm business meeting.

This is the beginning of Iowa's severe weather



season. This is the topic I would like all of you to think about for this month's meeting. We need to work on our local nets and using the Link System to relay our observations. Think about it, and bring your ideas to the meeting.

## HAM EXAMS

The next exam for the area will be Saturday, April 10, 1999 at St. Paul United Church of Christ, 303 West Mt. Pleasant in West Burlington, Iowa. (Corner of Mount Pleasant and Ramsey St.) Exams will start at 9:30 a.m. and end at about 11:00 a.m. Those planning on taking the exams are encouraged to arrive close to 9:30 as possible. Cost is \$6.45. FCC 610 forms will be available. Bring your current license, if you have one, a photocopy of the license, and a photo ID.

The Burlington repeater 146.79- will be monitored for those needing directions.

## Club Officers:

**President - Michael Muldoon**, KE0BX  
[muldoon@seits.org](mailto:muldoon@seits.org)

**Vice President - Dennis Hoffman**, KA0UKA  
[KA0UKA@seits.org](mailto:KA0UKA@seits.org)

**Sec/Treasurer - Mary Beth Penne**, N0IJP  
[marybeth@seits.org](mailto:marybeth@seits.org)

## 1999 Membership Dues LAST CALL

If you have not yet paid your 1999 membership dues, this is the last issue of the Journal you will be receiving. Dues are at the same level as previous years: \$20 for an individual membership, \$5 for additional members in the same household, and kids under 18 are free (but have no vote!).

You can mail your dues to:

Mary Beth Penne, N0IJP  
SEITS Sec/ Treas.  
1204 North Elm Street  
Ottumwa, Iowa 52501-2840

And of course we will accept dues at the meeting in Iowa City on Saturday, April 10.

## DAVENPORT HAMFEST

Dave Mayfield, KB9BNR, has been named the new Hamfest Chairman with the task to try to stem the tide of fading vendors and dwindling attendance at the club's annual event. Mayfield told DRAC members at a recent meeting that he is looking at a variety of solutions including changing the date to later in the Hamfest season and possibly changing the location.

He is currently looking at the Hamfest calendar for the Midwest area and checking with large commercial vendors to see what may be better dates for them.

We will try to keep up with developments as our Annual Dinner Meeting is closely linked to this Hamfest.

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# ***The NOS Box***

by Mark Atherton, N0RXD

My Nosbox runs under the Linux operating system. I've been using Linux for about 3 years now, and it has never crashed, only going down for the occasional power outage. It even ran for a couple of months after I accidentally deleted the kernel from the hard drive. It took me that long to get up the courage to see if it would reboot after installing another kernel.

## ***LINUX??***

So what is Linux? You probably have seen a headline or an article in a computer magazine that talks about it. The name comes from Linus Torvalds, a Finnish student who developed the original code. In a nutshell, Linux is:

1. A multitasking, multiuser 32-bit UNIX-clone operating system for the PC.
2. Free.

Linux runs on a 386 CPU or better. I use it mostly in its native command line mode, similar to a DOS screen. A lot of the commands are similar to DOS, but much more powerful. Linux is set up to support seven "Virtual Consoles" or separate screens that can be switched to by pressing Alt-F1 through Alt-F7. If a program hangs or starts doing something you don't want, you simply switch to another Virtual Console, find the program ID (called a process ID) and kill it. No reboot is necessary. And there is no "Blue Screen of Death".

Linux comes with a Graphical User Interface called X-Windows, which is comparable to Windows 95/98, with a task bar and start menu. Utilities are built-in, and many programs such as Netscape have versions that run under "X".

Where Linux really shines is in networking. While Windows boxes are used mostly as clients, Linux can be used for both server and client for most all network services such as email, web, ftp, printers, etc. I have yet to find something Linux can't do.

## ***WHY LINUX***

The main reason Linux has developed so far is that it is Open-Source. Nobody owns it. Microsoft can't buy it and kill it. The packages and source code are freely available from the internet, or can come on a \$20 CDROM from a Hamfest. Many developers from around the world have contributed to the effort, and when there are problems or bugs, they get fixed.

Several companies offer Linux distribution packages, including Slackware, RedHat, Caldera, SuSE, and Debian. RedHat seems to be the most popular. Although downloading from the internet is possible, it can take a very long time unless you have a fast (ethernet) connection. The best way is to get the CDROM.

## ***INSTALLATION***

Installation is a bit more complicated than clicking on "install". Linux can coexist on a Windows PC, but it must be installed in its own partition or on a separate hard drive. If your drive is already partitioned, there is a dos utility called Fips that can repartition your HD without losing data, as long as there is enough free space. A floppy disk is made to boot from, and an install program formats the partition and handles the rest of the process. Linux has its own boot manager, called 'lilo', which can be set up to let you choose between Linux, and Windows, Dos, or any other OS you may have.

Help and support is plentiful. From within Linux, manual pages can be easily called up with "man <command>". The Linux Documentation Project, or LDP, has many "HOWTO" files that explain in detail how to install and set up various services. There is even a "HAM-HOWTO". Check out <http://metalab.unc.edu/mdw/linux.html>.

My next anticipated project is to connect my radios to Linux using a sound card instead of a tnc. The tools are all there, I just need to put them together.

73 de N0RXD  
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## **FCC Says Reciprocal Permits Now "Paperless"**

The FCC is advising applicants for reciprocal operating permits that an application is no longer required.

Under new ULS rules that took effect February 12, the FCC Form 610A has passed into history. The new rules also will pave the way for US hams to more easily operate in most of Europe. The FCC is expected to issue a Public Notice in the near future that will spell out the details.

### **FOREIGN VISITORS**

Alien visitors to the US holding an amateur license issued by their home country may operate in the US without submitting any FCC paperwork—provided that a reciprocal operating agreement is in effect between the two countries. The only documentation required is proof of citizenship and an Amateur Radio license issued by the country of citizenship. These arrangements are similar to longstanding arrangements between the US and Canada.

The new rules move the U.S. a step closer to participation in the licensing arrangements of CEPT, the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations. The U.S. State Department applied for U.S. participation in 1997, and the request was approved in early 1998. Completion of the final steps to make this a reality is understood to be imminent. These include formal US notification to the European Radiocommunications Office that it is prepared to carry out its responsibilities under CEPT Recommendation T/R 61-01, and the issuance of a Public Notice in English, French and German.

### **PRIVILEGES ABROAD**

Under the CEPT arrangements, a US Technician licensee will be recognized as holding the equivalent of a CEPT Class 2 (VHF-only) license. Holders of Tech Plus through Extra tickets will have the full HF and VHF privileges of a CEPT Class 1 license. Novice licensees will not be eligible.

Additionally, the ARRL has informed the U.S. State Department that it plans to go forward in April with arrangements to issue International Amateur Radio Permits to U.S. hams in accordance with the CITEL Amateur Convention, signed by several countries in the Americas. The League has offered its services to issue IARPs to US hams. An IARP is not a license, but it certifies the existence of a license.

### **NOT VALID EVERYWHERE**

The new rules will not change the procedures for US hams wishing to operate overseas in countries that are not CEPT members or CITEL Amateur Convention signatories.

*from ARRL Bulletin #23*

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### **SPACE NEWS**

The expedition commander of the first International Space Station crew, U.S. astronaut William G. "Shep" Shepherd, has passed his Technician test. He's now KD5GSL. Shepherd will join Russian cosmonauts Yuri Gidzenko and Sergei Krikalev, U5MIR.

MIREX President Dave Larsen, N6CO, reports that recent problems with the TNC aboard Mir have been repaired with the help of Scott Avery, WA6LIE. He asks Mir packet users to refrain from attempting to access the PMS if it's in use by another ground station and to not digipeat through the TNC when a ground station is connected.

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## **JOURNAL NOTES**

The deadline for the May issue is Monday, April 26. We will begin assembling and printing on Tuesday, April 27 with a target mailing date of Friday, April 30.

The May meeting is Sunday, May 9 in Fairfield, Iowa. I hope to have arrangements made with Dwight Harris, K0TE, and have a Repeater Help session for the 147.120 machine after a very short business meeting.

As always, for the most up-to-date SEITS information, check into our website at [www.seits.org](http://www.seits.org). We are always adding new stuff, so if you haven't been there lately, you may be missing something!

Til next time. KE0BX