President’s Notes August 2021

Greetings Fellow Members,

As we approach the mid-point of Summer 2021, here are three goals that I wish to accomplish before the end of 2021. Having goals as a ham radio operator enables one to grow and develop in the hobby. There is no one specified ham career path, per se, just the pace you want to set and the things you want to do with your ham experience. Everyone’s “ham radio career path” is very different. There is no right and wrong path for hams. The only requirement is to have fun on the bands, meet people, and make contacts, no matter what the mode or format.

First, I am going to study for and pass my Extra Class Exam later this year. I just need to put in some quality study hours and I feel reasonably confident that I can pass the test. Getting my Extra Class license seemed so distant at the first B.A.R.S. breakfast that I attended in December 2019. I had always thought that being a ham radio operator was well beyond my skill set. Little did I know that 10 year olds have taken and passed the Extra Class Exam, and little did I know that a year and a half later, I would be a budding General Class Licensee!

Second, I want to learn CW by the end of 2021. The more I read about and learn about CW, the more I want to learn it. My Grandfather was a radio operator on one of the New York Boats in the 1920’s and he could send and receive CW at 50-60 WPM, which I find remarkable! I am sad that I never really got to know him (he passed away in 1966 when I was 5 years old) and he would have been very proud of my ham radio journey thus far. I can feel a real connection to him as I get further involved in this great hobby. I am very much looking forward to taking the CW course that Henry Christle WA1VAB. Henry is offering the course for all levels of CW operator, from the beginner (like myself) to the expert level. The thought of making contacts on CW with low power around the world really appeals to me! I hope it appeals to a lot of my fellow members as well, as CW makes a comeback in our Club this Fall in a big way with these Zoom courses that Henry is teaching.

Thirdly, I want to get my WAS (Worked All States) award, my WAC (Worked All Continents) Award, along with my DXCC Award from the ARRL. These awards are attainable for all hams, regardless of what you have for equipment and antennas. Obviously the better the antenna and the better the rig, the better chance you have to get these awards in a relatively short space of time (or whatever time frame suits your fancy!). These awards fit nicely into a set of goals for the ham radio operator. I recently qualified for my WAC Award by working a station near Sydney, Australia, 10,068 miles away from my modest shack here in Reading, MA! I have 47 states confirmed towards my WAS, and I have 49 confirmed countries (mostly FT8 contacts) as I work to my DXCC Award.

In closing, the most important goal of our hobby I sto have fun and make friends and contacts all over the world! The sky is the limit and setting some goals can make the hobby a lot more enjoyable!

Until next month,

73,

Doug

N1WRN