

*The content which follows is a transcript of the Practical Amateur Radio Podcast hosted by Jerry Taylor, KD0BIK. This monthly version of PARP is typically released the last week of each month.*

The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast – Episode number 45.

From the ham shack of KD0BIK, located in Colorful Colorado, this is the Practical Amateur Radio Podcast.

This is show number 45, volume number 4 with a release date of August 17 , 2011.

Hello and welcome to the practical amateur radio podcast.....Creating Elmers One Podcast at a time. My name is Jerry Taylor and my amateur radio callsign is KD0BIK. Yes, this podcast is all about amateur radio or ham radio. Regardless of whether you're currently studying for your exam or have been in ham radio for years, I'm hopeful this podcast will help you. In keeping with our Creating Elmers one podcast at a time philosophy, if you learn something from this or any of my podcasts, please share that knowledge with others. Thank you.

We have another full-featured episode to get through today, so without further adieu, let's get started.

If it isn't clear by now after 45 audio episodes and a half dozen or so video episodes, my focus and certainly the focus of this podcast is to help those who are just starting out in the hobby or those who perhaps have been around a while, but may not be familiar with some of the new modes or need some encouragement to upgrade to the next license class. Of course, even yours truly needs that kick in the pants. More about this later.

Now while I just stated the podcast is geared towards those just learning about the hobby, just starting out in the hobby or those wanting to learn about new modes etc. it doesn't mean those of you who have been active for 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 or more years should click stop on the media player. Please don't click stop...please don't turn me off and please don't remove the RSS feed from your RSS catchers. I truly need you and want you all to stick around. I'm always truly tickled (that's sort of a southern thing to describe excited) to hear from those of you who have been in the hobby for several years and enjoy the podcast. So please stick around.

The topic of episode 45 simply is, So you have your technician license, now what? Well...if you just received it...and I'm talking about within the past couple of months...I suggest you pickup the general book and start studying.

I'm not the only one who suggests this. I tested for my technician license in August of 2007 and tested and passed my general in January of 2008. I regret not keeping that study momentum going and pushing on to extra. But for you, let's take it one step at a time.

Again, it is easier to keep that study mentality going when you go from one to the other. Like many, I went back to college as an older adult to take a few courses. I literally had to learn how to study all over again. You young people probably think I'm nuts...but you'll find out one of these days.

Anyway....yes, now that you are a technician....keep pushing and go for general. Of course, this also depends on what you want from the hobby. I realize I'm constantly asking the question in these episodes about "why do you want to be a ham" or "why do you want to get started in this hobby of amateur radio"? As I've always said after I ask that question, there really is no wrong answer to the question of why. Well...except if you answer "I don't know". If the answer to the question of why do you want to be a ham is "I don't know" then you need to go think about the question a little longer.

The reason why the question of why is important in today's episode is simply because if you have no further desire to work any modes or bands outside of what the technician class license allows, then you can stop right there. You are just as much a ham radio operator and just as important to the hobby of

amateur radio as anyone else...as a general or an extra class operator. Don't let anyone or anything convince you otherwise. Yes there are those that believe if you aren't an extra class ham that knows code or CW that you are not a real ham. These individuals are miss informed and they are not listening to this podcast. But I'm getting off subject.

As a technician class ham there is a lot you can do in the hobby. I know I frequently talk about the importance of joining a local club and also joining the ARRL. I'm going to just quickly touch on both and why I feel it's so important.

First...let's talk about a local club. Unless you're fortunate to have family members, friends, co-workers etc. who are hams, you might find yourself somewhat alone. Now it won't take long at all to develop friendships from on-air QSO's. These on-air QSO's may be with hams in your town, county or perhaps on the other side of the world. But just starting out I believe you need a group....a support group if you will to help you along. There is no better place than with your local club.

Find a local club that conducts face to face meetings. These might be harder to find than you think. When I first started out, I found in the greater Denver area there were more than a half dozen different amateur radio clubs and organizations. However, only one or two actually conducted face to face meetings. Most were repeater only groups which met for a weekly net. The importance of the face to face meetings is that personal human interaction that you can only get when sitting in a room with likeminded individuals. The knowledge you can pickup by just listening to casual conversation is simply priceless.

Like a local ham radio club, it is my opinion you should also join the ARRL. The ARRL is the American Radio Relay League and think of it as the national organization of all hams in the US. Your participation in the ARRL not only benefits you, but it benefits fellow hams all across the US and around the world. The ARRL is our only mouthpiece into Washington and they fight each and every day to protect your rights to do what you do in the hobby of amateur radio. It's a great organization and I invite you to visit [ARRL.org](http://ARRL.org) to learn more.

In addition to a local club and the ARRL, if you are a college student, alumni, faculty and/or staff, please check out college ARC .com

<http://www.collegearc.com/>

Now just a few seconds ago I mentioned the knowledge you can pickup by just listening to casual conversation at your local club meetings. Something that may not be obvious to you...or perhaps it is. But a ham radio license is more than a ticket to talk on the radio...it's also a ticket to listen and to learn. I just celebrated my 4th year as a licensed ham and my uncle will celebrate his 52nd or 53rd. I know he'll say this as well....you will do a lot more listening than you will talking with your ham radio license. Let me rephrase that to also say, you **should** do a lot more listening than you do talking.

The knowledge you've gained just from studying for and passing the technician class exam gives you powerful knowledge of what amateur radio is all about. You may have owned a shortwave radio for years and tuned around and listened to hams ragchew. But with the knowledge you've gained with your technician license...you know a lot more and I encourage you to listen to the HF bands if you have the means. If you don't have a shortwave receiver or haven't purchased an HF rig yet, there are some websites which allow you to stream from dedicated receivers. One of the best sites to find such receivers is [WebSDR.org](http://WebSDR.org). Again that is [WebSDR.org](http://WebSDR.org). I would like to thank Philip, KC2TPY for helping me remember that website URL. I'll list a few others in the show notes. Just visit [www.myamateurradio.com](http://www.myamateurradio.com) and look for the show notes for this episode, episode 45.

<http://www.websdr.org/>

<http://www.smeter.net/>

I would be remiss if I failed to make the following statement. If you are new to amateur radio and especially new to the HF bands, not everything you'll hear on the HF bands and even on some local VHF/UHF repeaters is good amateur practice. Please use your better judgment and if you think a QSO you are listening to probably shouldn't be taking place or is something you would rather not be listening to, then just spin the dial and move up or down the band.

This would also be a good time to once again mention the Radio Amateurs Code. I've referred to the radio amateur's code many times on various podcast episodes. The Radio Amateur's Code was written way back in 1928 and every element of this code still applies today. The elements of the Radio Amateur's code are Considerate, Loyal, Progressive, Friendly, Balanced and Patriotic. If you apply these six elements and their meaning to your operating...you won't go wrong. Please visit [myamateurradio.com](http://myamateurradio.com) and look on the left side in the top menu for the link to the Radio Amateur's Code. Make this code a part of your day to day ham shack operations.

Before I get back on track, I want to say one more thing about the radio amateur's code. I personally feel so strongly about these very basic principles which make up the code, I printed the code off on some brown parchment paper, framed it and it hangs just beside my ARRL Life Member plaque. Both sit right behind my Yaesu FT-950 and are in clear line of sight when I'm sitting down at my ham station.

Again, regardless of the mechanism of an HF radio, a shortwave radio or a streaming feed from the internet...do spend some time listening. Listening is an excellent way to learn more about this hobby.

Now a few minutes ago I started off by saying, So you have your technician license, now what? Well there are so many things that you even as just a technician class license holder can do. Here's just a real quick rundown of just a few of the many things you can do with a technician class license:

Volunteer - ARES, RACES, SATERN and even your local amateur radio club could use your help with various communication tasks.

Satellites and International Space Station - Check out [AMSAT.org](http://AMSAT.org), again that is AMSAT (Alpha, Mike, Sierra, Alpha, Tango) . ORG. Also check out the great videos Randy Hall, K7AGE put together on Youtube. Just go to Youtube and search for K7AGE.

VHF/UHF, Repeaters, IRLP, Echolink,

D-STAR Yes, digital D-STAR is certainly a mode new hams can operate. I recently purchased the DVAP or DV Access Point Dongle. While similar to the DV Dongle, the DVAP does require you to use one of the D-STAR transceivers. Stay tuned for D-STAR to be a topic of discussion on a future edition of the practical amateur radio podcast.

PACKET, APRS, Amateur Radio Television and Radio Direction Finding also known as fox hunting - I run a VHF packet station here in my shack and also have APRS beacon send out weather conditions at my QTH as well as run APRS when mobile. Check out the videos I made on the subject of APRS on [MyAmateurRadio.com](http://MyAmateurRadio.com). Amateur Radio Television isn't very popular here in the Denver area, but I know

in other parts of the country it is. Check out episode 12 of Ham Nation. Ham Nation is the new video podcast by Bob Heil, Gordon West and Leo LaPorte. Episode 12 is all about amateur radio television. Just go to <http://www.twit.tv/hn> You'll also find this link listed on MyAmateurRadio.com.

By the way, if you watched only a few episodes of Ham Nation in the beginning, please do go check out the Ham Nation netcast and watch/listen to episode 12. A few changes were made to resolve the video lag issues with Gordon West's connection and I really enjoyed the episode and look forward to future episodes of this show.

Finally, 10 meters and the magic band also known as 6 meters are available to you. I have heard of some nice 6 meter openings. Remember summer time is the time for Sporadic E. Again, I refer you to Randy Hall, K7AGE and his Youtube channel. Randy has a couple of videos on the subject of 6 meters. Please go check them out.

Well...there you have it. A short list of things you can do as a tech class license holder. But before I close out this segment and move to the next. I want to once again encourage you new tech license holders to continue the study process. You'll notice as you move from Tech to General and to Extra that much of the material is sort of building on top of the other. If you desire to go all the way and make extra...then I encourage you to keep the learning process going.

This doesn't mean you should test and pass all three levels at the same time. I'm a strong advocate of going one step at a time and experience each step. Just keep the study material nearby and keep those brain cells active with amateur radio content.

### **Featured Website Segment**

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### **Featured Gadget Segment**

Amateur Radio is all about gadgets. Some gadgets may directly relate to amateur radio and some may not. However, in most cases the featured gadget will at the very least be something that may help you in some capacity around the shack.

None

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### **Ham Adventures Segment**

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- Back in July and on the same weekend I published episode 44, I spent some time on the air. I had wanted to work N4S (November 4 Sierra) which was a operating special event station commemorating the final NASA Space Shuttle flight, STS135 of Space Shuttle Atlantis.

I truly enjoy working special event stations and besides all the usual reasons why amateur radio is so much fun, working special event stations probably ranks high in my top 10 list of most favorite things to do in the hobby. I tend to seek out special event stations which either mean something to me because of a common interest or some other historical meaning. As an example, I've always been fascinated with all things Titanic. I worked a couple of Titanic special event stations year before last. These stations were on the air to honor the 98th anniversary of the sinking. Next April will be the 100th anniversary of that tragic event. You'll be certain to hear me in the pileup trying to make that contact.

As you can imagine, the hobby of amateur radio does have many, many ties into the space program. Many hams became fascinated with both the space program and with amateur radio when Sputnik was launched back in the early 60's. Of course, many of you very much enjoy working the various amateur satellites rotating the earth and consider working an astronaut aboard the international space station or space shuttle to be the greatest personal achievement a ham can do.

So naturally a special event station commemorating the end of such an important era in the history of manned space flight would certainly attract plenty of hams. N4S had been on the air and operating from 5 minutes after lift-off and planned to operate until Atlantis returned home.

As I shared with you during the episodes which I talked about contesting and provided some tips on busting pileups etc. It does take equal parts patience, skill and sometimes luck when competing with stations running much, much more power into much, much larger and taller antennas.

This particular event reminded me of a Dxpedition operating from a rare and almost never heard from location, but of course much closer to home. I began listening for N4S on Friday afternoon. I heard their strong signal on 20m around 14.280. I replied a few times but didn't have any luck breaking through. I tried again for a few hours on Saturday with about the same success. While time was slipping away, I didn't panic and I didn't give up.

20 meters had been strong all day on Sunday. N4S was certainly running more than 100 watts and was booming into Colorado at 5, 9 and up to even 20 over 9 most of the time. The operator running the station most of Sunday was incredibly awesome, even admitting he wasn't a contester and much rather preferred rag chewing on QRP. He didn't operate in the typical call sign, signal report exchange format of most special event or contest stations.

For most of Sunday afternoon he was calling stations by numbers. In other words, working stations in the numerical order of their call sign. 1 stations, 2 stations, 3 stations etc. Me living in Zero land, I would wait patiently until he finished the 9's and then he would call for zeros.

Now this is really where the equal parts listening and patience come in. I heard many stations call outside of their turn. He would work them...but would generally make a comment about he was really only working fives or sevens. Working contests, dxpeditions or special event stations, you really need to listen to what the operator is calling for. If the station is located in the US and he is calling for only DX and you live in California...then put your microphone down and wait. He or she will resume calling for North American stations in due time.

Anyway, the afternoon was turning into early evening and he was working his way back up the numbers again. He commented a few times that he was tired and would need to leave soon and wasn't sure if anyone would relieve him. I continued to remain patient as I knew I still had several days over the next week to work N4S.

Around 6 PM local time, 20m was sounding just about as tired as that poor operator was. He finally made it back up to the Zero's and I began saying my call sign. He worked about a half dozen stations and made mention he would take just a few more. He called November four sierra QRZ and I said Kilo Delta Zero Bravo India Kilo. He came back with KD0 Question Mark and this is where the skill comes in as I was certainly other KD0 stations were trying to work him as well. I came back with Kilo Delta Zero Bravo

India Kilo, Bravo India Kilo, Bravo India Kilo. He then answered back with Kilo Delta Zero Bravo India Kilo. I had made it. Fingers cross the band would hold together for another 60 seconds or so for me to give him my name and state. I had to repeat Charlie Oscar a few times and he finally came back with Colorado. I was in the log. Success.

Those equal parts of patience, skill and mostly luck proved to be successful that Sunday afternoon. I took the time to fill out my QSL card and included a SASE in an 8.5 x 11 envelope for my cool certificate.

Now earlier that afternoon, I did work November 5 Sierra (N5S) which was another special event station....a sister station to N4S operating from Las Cruces, NM. I also prepared my QSL card and mailed both on Monday morning.

While both special event stations were cool to operate and I do eagerly await the QSL certificates, I must admit there was a lot of personal joy and satisfaction of finally having success of breaking through the pileup and getting N4S in my logbook.

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Now in addition to working N4S and N5S, I've also been active with JT65-HF. I will probably talk more about JT65 on the next episode, so stay tuned for that. But I started working JT65-HF about 6 months ago. As you all know I wasn't very active the first part of the year so I installed the software and had a few QSO's and that was about it. Well in recent weeks, the HF conditions on 20m have been amazing and running JT65-HF with around 25-30 watts of power, I've worked stations in Moscow, the Ukraine and made my furthest QSO contact all the way down under to Australia.

Finally, I've started blogging about amateur radio again. Please visit [www.kd0bik.com/blog](http://www.kd0bik.com/blog) to subscribe to and read some of my latest blog posts. Recently I've blogged about my 4th anniversary in the hobby, I blogged about my JT65-HF QSO to Australia and also blogged about receiving transmissions from the newly launched ARISS-1 Satellite and also my renewed focus on my own study plans to earn my extra ticket.

Yes, I'm once again serious about this. By keeping the podcast to just once a month, I'm finding I have a little more time for other things like the blog and actually getting on the air. I'm also actively reading and studying the material. I discovered a class held on Echolink and hosted by the South Coast Amateur Radio Society (SouthCARS). We meet twice a week and in addition to self-paced study, they have several extra class elmers which volunteer their time to these classes to answer questions and go over the question pool. I'm into the second week and it's scheduled to go through the middle of September. I'm getting a lot from the class and feeling more confident about what I know and looking forward to learning and understanding what I don't.

The blog is sort of my personal extension of the hobby. But I from time to time throw in educational content. So you might just learn something from it as well. Again, please visit [www.kd0bik.com/blog](http://www.kd0bik.com/blog)

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### **Mailbag**

I haven't read a lot of email on the podcast lately. With my on-again and off-again schedule, the emails haven't always been timely. I did receive an email a few weeks ago that I want to share with you. Regretfully the news isn't good....

The email is from Resonant Frequency: The Amateur Radio Podcast and the subject line reads Ends Production

Greetings to the Amateur Radio community and all my faithful listeners. It is with great sadness that we announce that Resonant Frequency: The Amateur Radio Podcast will officially end production as of August 9 2011. Due to personal reasons, monetary reasons and time constraints it is no longer possible for me to continue the show. This is as much of a disappointment to me as I am sure it will be to all of our listeners.

Since we started the show in 2007 we have met some really great people Ham and Podcaster alike. I am very pleased that the show was able to inspire a few really good radio operators to start their own podcast and add to the pool of audio information available to the amateur radio community. Because our number one goal has always been to pass on the knowledge or Elmer ALL our fellow Ham's. I feel confident that the Elmering will continue with great shows out there like The Practical Amateur Radio podcast, ICQpodcast, and many others.

I would like to thank all the listeners without whose input, feedback, and questions this show wouldn't have been around this long. I would also like to thank those listeners that have contributed audio and articles to the podcast and website. We will be uploading all audio to the Internet Archive and will be looking for a place that will post any articles that we have. Lastly I would like to thank the listeners that have contributed to helping pay our hosting fees and helped us upgrade our equipment so we were able to do a show we could be proud of. Never forget that the listeners have always been the most important part of Resonant Frequency: The Amateur Radio Podcast.

Lastly, but certainly not least I would really like to thank Russ K5TUX who has helped me immeasurably in improving the sound of Resonant Frequency and has been invaluable in helping me make this show something I could be proud of. Bill KA9WKA The keeper of show notes who has helped me in more ways than I have room to list. Jerry KD0BIK who as a new ham inspired me and as a Podcaster has earned a huge amount of respect from me and has always offered encouragement when I really needed it. Most of all I would like to thank our most faithful fan Tim KI6BGE. Tim has been with us since very early on he has brought up show ideas, sent in audio, and if nothing else has been our biggest supporter. Thanks Tim.

Resonant frequency has existed in some form since 1992 and will continue in some form in the future but until then all the episodes have been uploaded to the Internet Archive and you can find them at <http://www.archive.org/details/ResonantFrequencyTheAmateurRadioPodcast>

I will be looking for a place to post articles. The videos will remain on YouTube.

Thank you my friends. It's been a great ride. Remember to spread the good news of Amateur Radio. You are an Elmer if you have a license. See it, Do it, Teach it.

Who knows we may be back.

73

Richard KB5JBV

Host of Resonant Frequency: The Amateur Radio Podcast

Richard's podcast was one of the first podcasts on the subject of amateur radio I discovered after earning my ticket in 2007. It was Richard who inspired me to create the Practical Amateur Radio Podcast and to keep it going into my 4th season. Richard coached me and made me a better podcaster. I was nervous as heck on my first half-dozen episodes. True...no one saw me and no one heard my screams of frustration when I would get my tongue all tied up. But Richard coached me and gave me a level of confidence which allowed me to keep going.

Richard also taught me that our podcasts, that all amateur radio podcasts were truly partners....not competitors....but partners in helping to not only promote our hobby....but also help educate anyone willing to listen.

While Richard will still be a part of the Linux in the ham shack podcast, Resonate Frequency: the amateur radio podcast will be missed, it will be missed by not only myself but many in the hobby.

Well this wraps another episode of The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast. We will return again with episode 46 sometime in September. Before I go, I would like to give a shout-out to my fellow hamtwits and the hamtwit echolink net which takes place on Wednesday evenings (8 PM EST). I've never done much with Echolink since the days of my tech license, but I checked into the hamtwit net last week for the first time and plan to do so again.

I'll share more about the hamtwit net in a future episode, but for now just visit their website located at [www . Hamtwit . Net](http://www.Hamtwit.Net). From their website you can learn how to find the correct Echolink Node and other information. I hope you'll check it out and checkin to the Hamtwit net. I'll speak to you there.

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Until next time, 73 to all from KD0BIK.

This has been The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast. The Practical Amateur Radio Podcast is written and produced by Jerry Taylor. You may contact Jerry by email at [kd0bik@arrl.net](mailto:kd0bik@arrl.net) or by visiting his website at [www.myamateurradio.com](http://www.myamateurradio.com). The practical amateur radio podcast and myamateurradio.com are protected under the Creative Commons license. Please see myamateurradio.com for details.