

FRED LAUN, K3ZO, RETIRES FROM *REGION II NEWS*

by Thomas Atkins, VE3CDM

It is with regret that we announce that Fred Laun, K3ZO, has advised us of his retirement as Managing Editor of *Region II News* at the end of this year.

The publication of the original *Region II News* was suspended in 1983 primarily due to lack of support from Member societies, coupled with the increasing cost of production and distribution. In July 1990 after an absence of more than six years, the publication of a new *Region II News* resumed under Managing Editor Fred Laun, K3ZO of Temple Hills, MD, U. S. A.

Fred is an active and internationally known and respected U.S. Radio Amateur, who has also lived and worked in Central and South America and South East Asia. Perhaps best known for his international contest activity, having won many major awards, Fred brought to the new *Region II News* his experience as a professional journalist, coupled with his knowledge of both the official working languages of Region II.

The past eight years with Fred as Editor have seen a continual improvement in the content and overall appearance of our regional magazine, beginning with a move to the larger physical size of the journal, which improved its overall readability, coupled with a newly designed color cover, giving a more attractive appearance. Also we have been encouraged by the increased level of contributions from our Member Societies.

Apart from the editorial responsibilities and printing, the most time-consuming and labour intensive task, is the individual packaging and mailing copies to our Member Societies, to the IARU IS, Regions I and III, ITU, CITEL and some administrations.

Last year, it was decided on Fred's recommendation to begin electronic distribution of *Region II News*, in addition to the hard copy. This has received favourable acclaim, and hopefully this will result in further subscribers in future.

With Fred's departure, it is time for us to review the future plans and prospects for *Region II News* for the three years beginning in 1999. A separate communication to all Region II Member Societies seeking your comments and guidance has already been distributed. We look forward to hearing from you, and based on the responses received, this will form the basis of a recommendation from the Region II Executive Committee at the XIII General Assembly in Isla Margarita in September.

Region II News since Fred became Editor, has been truly a Laun family project, with the continuing involvement of his charming and very supportive wife Somporn, also a volunteer, who has helped with all the tasks that are involved in producing *Region II News* in both official languages, printing, and then distribution. It has also been my pleasure and a true learning experience, to work with Fred on *Region II News* throughout the past eight years.

Those of us who are aware of the dedication and enthusiasm that characterized K3ZO's involvement feel a particular sense of loss at his departure, but fully realize that the time comes for us all to move on. It will be a most difficult task to replace our friend Fred, and Somporn too. We are grateful to them both for spending the last few years working on behalf of Region II and Amateur Radio.

On behalf of us all, our sincere thanks and appreciation. With best wishes from all your readers.

PERU SIGNS RECIPROCAL OPERATING AGREEMENT WITH JAPAN

On June 1, 1998, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs exchanged diplomatic notes with the Embassy of Peru in Tokyo ratifying an Amateur Radio Reciprocal Operating Agreement between the two countries. The agreement took effect on August 1,

1998, and will permit Peruvian Radio Amateurs to operate in Japan while Japanese Radio Amateurs will also be able to operate in Peru.

(Tks OA4PQ)