

Feedline

February, 2000

Next Meeting is February 24, 7:30 p.m.

Clear Channel Requested X Presidential Traffic to Follow X

On Jan. 06, 00, the present and past officers conducted an executive meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the status of CARC in regards to past and future. Items discussed during this meeting included the Swapfest, Field Day, and upcoming programs.

The executive committee emphasized the need of each CARC member to provide input and support for each meeting and event that the club participated in.

Also, the status of the Swapfest provided the most discussion, with past Swapfests being used as the baseline of the options. The options were narrowed and will be announced at the January meeting.

(I understand that there was some drama this year securing the Swapfest site. Come to the February meeting to hear firsthand how Will, K4IWW wrested the contract from would-be usurpers. Ed.)

The Field Day event was discussed and the emphasis was placed on having fun and bringing in more participants to the Ham hobby. Mike Doligalski, the Vice President, has been doing an excellent job of arranging programs for the coming year. The programs range from PCRN to HDTV.

73, BILL KLUTTZ, (WA4ONO) bkuttz@mindspring.com

Restructuring backlash: First request for reconsideration filed

A small group of hams who are obviously unhappy with the FCC's Report and Order to restructure the United States Amateur Radio Service have has filed a petition for partial reconsideration. The three hams behind the filing are identified as Alan J. Wormser, N5LF Frederick V. Adsit, NY2V Michael J. Dinelli, N9BOR.

Their twenty-one page petition essentially boils down to two basic complaints. First, that the FCC is dumbing down the Amateur Service by not concentrating on the technical aspect of the hobby. Second, they claim that fast code should be retained for the Extra Class license.

Regarding the dumbing down charge, the three petitioners say that the total number of questions in the testing pools is going to be reduced. As a result the proportion of questions related to technical matters will be reduced in favor of questions about rules and operating procedures.

As for the code, they press the importance of CW as an essential skill. They say that the 5 word per minute General class exam is adequate accommodation for people with disabilities. Under their proposal, there would be no Morse code waiver whatever for the Extra Class license.

The Wormser Adsit, and Dinelli petition may be found on the WWW at: <http://www.qsl.net/n5lf/>
(FL Source: Newslite, Handi-Hams Newsletter, others)

COLORADO STATE HURRICANE FORECAST TEAM CALLS FOR 'AVERAGE' 2000 SEASON; MODERATING FACTORS SHOULD LESSEN ACTIVITY OF PAST TWO YEARS

FORT COLLINS--The United States and countries in and bordering the Caribbean Basin should experience fewer storms and hurricanes in 2000 than in recent years, according to the Colorado State University hurricane forecast team's initial prediction.

William Gray, a nationally recognized hurricane expert, and his colleagues are calling for a "moderate" season in 2000 with 11 named storms, seven hurricanes and three intense hurricanes predicted.

While above the long-term average, the 2000 forecast calls for fewer storms than occurred in the years 1995, 1996, 1998 and 1999. The team is calling for an above-average probability of U.S. major hurricane landfall.

Their record for the 1999 season was one of the best in the 16 years the seasonal forecasts have been issued. In 1999, the team retained its original forecast throughout the season, predicting 14 named storms, nine hurricanes and four major, or intense, hurricanes. At the end of the June 1-Nov. 30 season, observed totals were 12 named storms, eight hurricanes and five major hurricanes.

A principal reason for the moderate storm numbers is the team's belief that the La Niña phenomenon, present for the past two years, will reduce in strength by next season. This should weaken its enhancing effect on hurricane formation in the Atlantic Basin (comprising the North Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico). Gray warned, however, that indications continue to show that intense storms (with wind speeds above 110 mph) will occur.

In terms of the probability of landfall, this year's forecast calls for the U.S. Atlantic Coast, including peninsular Florida, to have a 45 percent chance of being hit by one or more major storms with winds above 110 mph. The long-term (100-year) mean is 31 percent. The Gulf Coast faces a 37 percent probability of one or more landfalling major hurricanes, while the long-term Gulf Coast average is 30 percent. The chances of one or more intense storms coming ashore somewhere along the entire U.S. coast, from Brownsville to the Canadian border, is 66 percent (the long-term average is 52 percent).

Feedline Source: W3HL via <http://www.aoml.noaa.gov> (Severely edited version of technical report.)

Restructuring: Don't complain to Riley

If you have questions, comments or complaints about the restructuring of Amateur Radio, please do not address them to FCC Special Counsel for Amateur Radio, Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH. He can't help you because his department had nothing to do with writing the document and is not in a position to comment on it:

Hollingsworth: "I've been getting a lot of questions about restructuring. I want to emphasize that issue is a Wireless Telecommunications Bureau matter. You recall that they handle policy and rule-making regarding the Amateur Service as well as licensing. By agreement, we in the Enforcement Bureau just handle the enforcement aspect, so as much as I might like to it isn't appropriate for me to answer questions or comment on the restructuring."

And what will restructuring mean for his department? Hollingsworth says that it will not greatly impact on enforcing the rules:

Hollingsworth: "Enforcement will continue unabated. There is nothing in the restructuring item that causes me any concern at all from an enforcement standpoint. Basically, for any program to work it has to have two things. One is a basic set of good rules and two, the willingness and resources to enforce them. We have both of those for this Amateur Radio program, so I am not worried about that at all."

Hollingsworth indicates that as far as enforcing the rules, nothing will change.

Feedline Source: Newline via RAIN.

Enforcement: Clemson, SC exam sessions investigated

The FCC has upped the stakes in its investigation of an Amateur Radio exam session held in Clemson, South Carolina on July 14th 1999. This as several people say that they were not at the session and have no idea how their signatures got on a manifest of candidates whom the VE's claim had successfully passed their Amateur Radio exams.

The latest revelations come in January 13th letters from FCC Special Counsel for Amateur Radio Riley Hollingsworth to two William J. Browning of Pendleton and Eugene D. Watring of Iva, South Carolina. According to Hollingsworth, both served as Volunteer Examiners and managers for various exam elements claimed to have been administered for the July 14th 1999 session. Now, both are now being asked to explain how signatures purported to be from several people who were not at the session got on the manifest document.

Specifically, in relation to Watring, the FCC says that it has confirmation from a Mr. Grady P. Robinson that states that he was not present at the session. Also, that he did not sign any documents relating to it.

In relation to Browning, the FCC says that both Mr. Eugene D. Matring and Mauriece D. Martin have filed statements with the Commission certifying that they were not present at the session and did not sign the manifest.

Hollingsworth has mailed both VE's copies of the manifest and Form 610's from the session. He has given them twenty days to explain in detail the apparent discrepancies. Hollingsworth adds that Title 18, Section 1001 of the United States Code provides for criminal penalties.

But that's not all. Hollingsworth's letter to Browning says that the agency has received allegations that Browning has, and we quote "physically threatened one or more of the Volunteer Examiners whom your documents indicate participated in the July 14, 1999 session at Clemson." end quote.

Hollingsworth cautions Browning that if such allegations are true, this information will be turned over to law enforcement authorities, including the United States Attorney, in Browning's jurisdiction.

The audit and investigation of this session is expected to continue for some time.
Feedline Source: Newsline via FCC

Space: MIR may have ham radio again

If cosmonauts do return to the MIR space station in March, hams wonder if they will put the ham radio station back on the air. While nobody really knows for certain, at least one Internet based rumor seems fairly certain that ham radio will play a part in the mission.

The report says that right now all of the Amateur Radio experiments are currently disconnected but there is a tentative plan to have any new crew reactivate the Packet and SSTV station. If they ever do come back on the air, any activity will be limited to FM Simplex on 145.985 MHz.

We must note that at air time there is no independent confirmation of this report from any Russian government source. Also, putting the station back in service will require permission from the Russian Space Agency and licensing of the crew by this nations department of Poste and Telecommunications.
Feedline Source: AMSAT

(The Russian government had said it would only pay for Mir through August, and then scrap the station unless private investors come up with funds. Russian space officials announced Tuesday (2/15/00) hat British millionaire Peter Llewelyn has agreed to pay \$100 million for a week-long ride on Mir -- covering about half of the space station's annual maintenance costs. If the deal works, it will be a big relief for Russian space officials and cosmonauts eager to keep Mir in orbit. - AP via DiscoveryOnline. Ed.)

Bell Atlantic in talks to put cell phones in new GM vehicles

General Motors is in talks with Bell Atlantic to put cell phones in millions of new cars and trucks, part of the automaker's strategy to link drivers to the Internet and generate revenue after a sale, people familiar with the plan said.

General Motors said today it will install as many as 1 million phones in vehicles this year but wouldn't say which telecommunications company it was talking to. An agreement with the No. 2 U.S. local phone company may come as early as next week, the people said. The companies declined to comment.

An alliance would advance GM's effort to offer online entertainment and personal services to motorists via its OnStar system, which uses satellites to track cars and cell technology for communication. The system gives GM a way to keep making money after a car leaves a dealer lot. America Online, the biggest online service, this week agreed to help provide content.

The plan "would effectively double the number of mobile Internet phones that are out there today," said Mark Lowenstein, senior vice president at Boston-based market researcher Yankee Group. "That's an awfully ambitious number, but on the other hand, they sell a lot of cars."

The selection of Bell Atlantic would be a vote of confidence in the New York company, which unlike rivals AT&T and Sprint's PCS Group is only now assembling its own national wireless network.

"A lot of this is a bet on the future," Lowenstein said. GM and its eventual partner would split a monthly fee for the service, said Mark Hogan, head of GM's Internet unit. OnStar could generate \$40 a month in revenue per vehicle, and GM eventually plans to install the hardware for the service on almost all of the 9 million vehicles it makes annually, he said.

"You can imagine, if we develop a subscription fee for every car we make, what an opportunity it would be for us to increase the value of GM," chairman Jack Smith said in an interview.

The wider base will give GM clout to drive down prices for cellular services and content. "It can certainly be big if they do a good job on the service side and the pricing," said Lehman Brothers Holdings analyst Nicholas Lobaccaro.

To succeed, GM's services will have to displace the cell phones that millions of Americans already carry in glove compartments. That will be hard, but not impossible as safety concerns over handheld cell phones grow, Lobaccaro said. U.S. highway safety regulators concluded in a 1998 report that the use of cellular phones probably increases the risk of automobile crashes.

GM started offering OnStar in late 1998 on all Cadillac Escalade sport utility vehicles as a dealer-installed option. GM expects to install OnStar in 3 million vehicles in the next few years, up from 100,000 now.

OnStar lets drivers contact a 24-hour service center for directions or help in an emergency. Cadillac started offering an option this month in which the OnStar service center will place a cellular call to any phone designated by the driver with the touch of a single button, Cadillac spokesman Chris Preuss said.

Eventually, GM will link this service to a handheld unit that drivers can carry with them when they leave the vehicle. "Like any other option, it will eventually trickle down to the entire lineup," Smith said.

All major automakers are scrambling to make sure drivers are as connected to global communications grids in their cars as they are in their homes and offices, Smith said. Ford Motor, the world's second-largest automaker, plans to make Internet access standard on some Lincoln cars starting on 2001 models.

"We want to make sure we have a chance to be the first mover," Smith said. Some of the hardware for the new services might come from Delphi Automotive Systems or Motorola, Smith said. The alliance with GM would come as Bell Atlantic is preparing to link its Northeast wireless properties with those of GTE in the Midwest and Vodafone AirTouch's AirTouch Cellular unit in the West.

Bell Atlantic Mobile customers can place and receive calls outside the company's own service area, on other carriers' networks, but doing so costs them and the company more.

Feedline Source: **Bloomberg News Special to CNET News**

Solar Activity to Peak this Year

The current solar cycle, Cycle 23, is predicted by an international panel of solar experts to hit maximum in the second half of this year. They expect a greater-than-average number - more than 140 - of "geomagnetically disturbed days" during this period. The recent trend in solar activity has been toward larger-amplitude sunspot cycles and plasma flares.

"We haven't reached the maximum for this cycle yet, but we're definitely at the 11th hour. Whatever big that is going to happen will happen this calendar year." Joe Kunches - NOAA Forecaster.
Feedline Source: NOAA.ORG

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Feedline is a member-supported publication of the Cary Amateur Radio Club and is published monthly. Deadline for submissions is the second Thursday of the month. Editor: Tom Klimala, KM4LB, send snail mail to 1545 Seabrook Avenue Cary, North Carolina 27511 klimala@mindspring.com