

Feedline

The Voice of The Cary Amateur Radio Club
N4NC



www.qsl.net/n4nc/
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April 2002

CARC FEEDLINE

Editor -- Keith Zeringue,
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The deadline for submission to the Cary Amateur Radio Club FEEDLINE newsletter is the second Thursday of the month. Information should be forwarded by e-mail to the editor at w4kaz@arrl.net.

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Vice Pres. Clare Owens, N2RJB
Secretary Lee Swanson, N4AJF
Treasurer Susan Jones, WA4AKB

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Swapfest Czar: Alf Johnson, KQ4FP
Field Day Czar: Herb Lacey, W3HL
Listserv admin: Will Harper, K4IWW
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Thanks to everyone involved in putting together the Spotter update class, and to Mr. Gonski for taking the time to give the class discussion. This was the first Spotter class I had been to, and I found it very interesting. The time-lapse photography of those storm processes is fascinating. Growing up near the gulf coast I used to be able to watch thunderstorms boiling up pretty much every summer afternoon. It's not nearly as much fun to watch from below in a 14 aluminum foot flat boat with an engine that won't start, or the deck of an oil rig...been there, done that. I'd sure hate to watch one from the top of one of those thousand foot towers holding the local repeaters.

My apologies to Lee, N2AJF, for committing editorial faus pas by rudely omitting the minutes from last month's newsletter.

Some of you may have quite correctly deduced that this ← large green box has been cleverly placed on this page to reduce the amount of inane drivel you will be subjected to every month. Gold stars to all who reached this conclusion independently! It also reduces the amount of inane drivel I feel compelled to produce. Ahhhh, the ulterior motive....

Speaking of inane drivel, my comments on the "high quality" SMA adapter provoked several responses. Gary, K4GPB, suggested a viable solution. There is an entrepreneurial ham out there providing adapters with rubber tubing reinforcements. The website for these is <http://www.wa3hrl.com/smabc/>

I had decided to homebrew something very much similar, having bought several adapters in Charlotte. My own solution uses a type of plastic modeling clay that can be cured by baking. The plastic is available at local crafts stores. (I copped some from my kid's supply box.) The cheap SMA is now easily converted into a BNC, with the plastic reinforced adapter redirecting the strain on the HT's SMA connector. Unfortunately, as my architect college roommate would say, "it's functional, not esthetic".

The coupe de gras will be a decent aftermarket dual band antenna—with a BNC connector!

Whew, made it exactly to the bottom of the page again!

**Note : Due to errors by the editor, the February minutes were excluded from last months newsletter.
.....W4KAZ**

CARC Minutes - 28 Feb 2002

Lee H. Swanson, N4AJF Secretary, CARC

The February meeting of the Cary Amateur Radio Club was held on 28 February, 2002. The meeting was opened at 7:31 P.M. by the president, Ed, AB4S. Introductions by the attendees were done, there were 28 in attendance, 15 members and 13 guests. This meeting being the annual ham auction, Ed, AB4S, announced that it would be a shortened meeting, so as to get on with the auction.

The treasurer's report, given to the secretary by Susan, WA4AKB, was as follows: Checking - \$3169.62

Savings - \$1260.19

Cash - \$ 57.00

Total - \$4486.81

plus "some other cash that I forgot to count".

The secretary's report was referred to the February issue of the "Feedline" for the January minutes.

Business:

Cary Swapfest:

Alf, KQ4FP, gave out flyers to be passed out at all upcoming hamfests.

Secretary's slush fund:

Ed, AB4S, brought up a suggestion that a "slush fund" be given to the secretary, noting that many sympathy cards had been sent out this last month. It was approved.

Announcements of deaths:

Lee, N4AJF, announced the deaths in the ham community within the last month. They were:

Efrain Zambrana, WD4KCB, a life member of CARC.

Wayne Williams, K4MOB, the ex-editor of the SERA Journal.

Barbara McMurray, the wife of Bill, K4SG, who is also a CARC life member.

The mother and the father-in-law of Will, K4IWW, another CARC life member.

The wife of Roy, N4BYU, who is known by several of the local hams.

Skywarn Spotter Class:

Herb, W3HL, reminded us of the SkyWarn Spotter Update. The date will be March 28th, at McKimmon Center, at 7:00 PM. It will run about 7:30 to 9:30 PM. This will replace the regular meeting. Please email N4NC (n4nc@arll.net) to confirm your intention to attend.

Announcements: Public Service Ops

Lee, N4AJF, reminded the group that several Public Service opportunities had been posted on the CARC reflector this month, and that anyone who wishes to help should volunteer.

The meeting was adjourned, and went right into the auction, refreshments were available during the auction.

Hank, K4HM, was available for us to purchase pre-registration tickets to the RARS hamfest.

The program this month was the annual ham auction, being run a month earlier this year because of the SkyWarn Spotter Update being held at the date and time of our next meeting. The auctioning was done by Herb, W3HL, ably assisted by Clare, N2RJB. Much equipment found new homes, although some went home with its original owner. A good time was had by all.

Skywarn Spotter Update - 28 Mar 2002

Lee H. Swanson, N4AJF, Secretary, CARC

There was no regularly-scheduled meeting of CARC held in March, instead the scheduled night, 28 Mar 2002, was dedicated to the Skywarn Spotter Update.

The Update was sponsored by CARC, and open to all local hams and other interested people. It was held at the McKimmon Center, on the N.C.S.U. campus, with about 65 attending. It was started at 7:30 P.M., by Herb Lacey, W3HL, who introduced Tom Babb, KF4JKQ, the head of Skywarn Area 3. He, in turn, introduced Rod Gonsky, a forecaster for the National Weather Service, stationed at Centennial Campus, NCSU.

Ron gave a very interesting program, complete with video shot and/or edited by George Lemmons, who some of us remember as part of the NWS. The video was very interesting, and Ron did a great job explaining and enhancing the descriptions of the weather conditions shown.

I won't try to cover the material that Ron covered, in this report. However, I think all of us came away with a much better understanding of severe weather, Skywarn, and the part that we, as hams, play in Skywarn.

The Amateur's Code

K4MHM

Reprinted by Permission from APRIL 2000 BARC Ham Chatter
(<http://www.qsl.net/w4amc/hc/hc0004.html>)

The original Amateur's Code was written by Paul M Segal, W9EEA, in 1928. Every month one of the six items will be covered. The Code is a good guide for good Amateur Radio practice and for other aspects of our life.

The second element of the Amateur Code is **loyalty, encouragement and support**.

"The Radio Amateur ... offers loyalty, encouragement and support to other amateurs, local clubs, and the American Radio Relay League, through which Amateur Radio in the United States is represented nationally and internationally."

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines loyal as: "faithful in allegiance to one's government" and as "faithful especially to a cause or ideal." Loyalty and patriotism took a big dip during the Vietnam War and I don't think it has recovered yet. Some people supported the war while others opposed it. While loyalty does not mean giving up your right to disagree, but it does mean hanging in there for the long haul. To a degree, loyalty has become passe; we tend to give up too easily on the group when we don't get our way.

Loyalty, encouragement and support are important in any social structure. Strength and cohesion are based on mutual benefit - "I help you, you help me" - and there is a basic assumption that all of us are working for the good of the organization as a whole. All this engenders trust. While we may never be in total agreement, we do believe in the basis of the group and we won't knowingly hurt one another.

RARSFest – April 14th.....Hey, that's THIS weekend!

Catawba Valley Hamfest And Computer Fair

The Catawba Valley Hamfest will be on April 20th, at the Burke County Fairgrounds from 8:00 until 4:00. For details, see <http://www.hci.net/~ke4rcf/>

2002 Cary ARC Club Dues are Due!

Kaz, W4KAZ

Here is an excellent reason to come out to the meeting. The club would like to separate you from nine bucks worth of dues! A better bargain is seldom to be found in 21st Century America! Come by and visit with the group. Express your deepest misgivings or promote your brightest idea. Drop by for a chat. Recruit for your own pet project. Shirt and shoes optional (but don't forget the nine bucks!), so come on out.

If you are unable or unwilling to attend, don't get mad, pack up your antennae, and hide in the closet....You can send the money (\$9.00 US Dollars) by mail to:

Cary Amateur Radio Club
PO Box 53
Cary, NC 27512

(Please do not mail to the Treasurer's home QTH due to recent misdeliveries on her postal route.)

*And just so you can get something **tangible** for your money.....(Okay, so I changed Clare's title just a wee bit..... W4KAZ)*

April Meeting Program.....Jumping Joyous Joltin' J-Poles, Batman!

From Clare N2RJB

Well, I suppose we should have an April meeting. Maybe even with a program. Time sure flies when... well, it just flies.

So, what I've been thinking about doing is having an antenna building night, for building 2M J-poles. I have enough pieces of old thin net RG-58 to take care of a dozen or so people's antennas. It's nice since it already has nicely attached BNC connectors. I also have a nice bag of ferrite beads to put at the base of the antenna. I can also supply the 450 ohm ladder line, the solder and I have 4 soldering guns to bring. The only thing that'd be nice to have would be some shrink tubing to go over the beads and over the cur in the one side of the ladder line.

We have promises of two MFJ 259's for the April meeting, so we'll be building the 2M flex J-pole antennas. Enough materials for a dozen to maybe 14 antennas will be supplied and based upon our usual attendance that'll probably be enough. The J-pole material I'll be bringing is the 450 ohm ladder line, so if anyone wants to use the 300 ohm line to make their antenna thinner, they can just bring a length of it. Six feet of antenna line will be enough. I just don't have any 300 ohm line in my "stock".

Windows XP Performance Tip

from Gary, K4GPB

To get a performance boost on your desktop, you can turn off the 16 "visual effects" options. They're shown in Windows XP "HELP and SUPPORT" if you do a search for "Visual Effects." The search will return a list of options. Choose "Change Windows visual effects" under "Pick A Task". You will then need to select the option "Change visual effects in SYSTEM". Following the instructions there will allow you to turn off the visual effects.

Also, turning off the HIBERNATE mode helps save some disk space as well.

Here's another source for the tip.

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/expertzone/tips/october/ruffin1.asp>

and, this one:

<http://www.windows-help.net/WindowsXP/tune-04.html>

Adventures With Wires: Tales Of HF Newbie Antennae Raising

Copyright M.R. Smith, W4CHL 2002

Well, like many an HF newbie before me I have been having some fun putting up HF antennae. This whole obsession with a better HF antenna started with my enormous frustration at good signal reports from around the world, yet the inability to get 10m signals around the county for a weekly net!

Now, so far I have been grateful for the opportunity to "test" a 200W HF rig, a Kenwood TS-520s, donated to the Phillips Amateur Radio Club. But that testing is over and the TS-520s is about to go to a new home. So, under advice of several elmers I'll be building an HF Packer amp (hfprojects.com) to go with this wonderful QRP rig that I acquired after passing the 5WPM test, a Yaesu FT-817. Parts for the HF Packer amp are due in early May, so let's get that antenna up and tested out a bit before getting some QRO out of that QRP rig! Oh did I mention that at one recent hamfest I succumbed to the siren song of a cheap HF amp? Another story, another time; that's why I'm now a paid up HF Packer amp builder with an "export" amp that's rarely used on my hands.

Now, the first HF wire antenna I put up was nothing more than a 10m, 1/2 wavelength wire dipole above the garage where I have a "shack". Not terribly effective QRP, though getting OK reports DX from as far away as Colorado and Texas. Next, given the vaguely worded constraints on antennae in the deed to our QTH, and after reading much about installing wire antennae, got myself equipped to put up a "stealthy" 40m 1/2 wavelength dipole. Needed a few things including:

- a middle of the road slingshot (\$7.95 from Wal-Mart), the lowest price one with a wrist support
- 80 feet or so of 15lb test monofilament nylon from my junk bin
- 200 feet of heavy nylon cord (about 150lb test I'd say, it barely breaks under my weight)
- an old 2oz sinker from who-knows-when I last went fishing in my youth
- wire, insulators, and a 1:1 balun used antenna acquired from the JARSfest last fall for this effort

Tested the antenna and it seemed to be OK supported above the ground a few feet with a 50 foot coiled RG-8U cable to the balun from the SWR meter. Yep, that coiled feedline will come back to haunt me, but at the time an SWR a bit under 2 in middle of 40m band seemed OK. So time to put up this inconspicuous wire antenna to better serve our neighborhood in event of emergency (That's my refrain whenever asked about why I do all this crazy stuff with radios instead of just picking up a mobile phone!)

After taking two hours to get one line up for the center support, and getting called back in to take the kids to their weekend activities before finishing, began to rethink the antenna raising process. Slingshot worked great, when the sinker was launched properly, but oh that monofilament fishing line was a pain to untangle and return to an unused speaker wire spool for the next shot!

Back to researching alternatives before the next antenna launch action. After a reference from a fellow regional QRPer, found an article from the Adventure Radio Society (www.natworld.com/ars) and immediately ordered one of the \$10 bowfish spools and \$3 for 90 feet of slippery 100 lb test Dacron cord from the archery supply house cited. In true ham spirit I couldn't pass up the free shipping deal for any order over \$20. So now I have two bowfish reels and two 90 foot coils of Dacron cord for \$26 with no S/H charge. Anyone want to take the other reel and Dacron cord off my hands for \$13 ? I'll have it at the RARSfest just in case !

Now, when the next opportunity arose, resumed firing lines into the trees. WOW what a difference! Within 30 min, I was hauling the antenna into its current resting position oriented N/S about 35 feet off the ground, clear of the house, and nearly invisible among the Loblolly pines. Got great reports (57, 58) on 40m on the soon-to-be-relocated TS-520s from Argentina and the UK, and one OK report on the FT-817 (5W) on PSK31 from Utah on 20m. Nobody replied when attempting to check-in to a couple of nets on 40m QRP from the FT-817, though.

So - with a bit of perseverance, my QTH sports an invisible 40m dipole antenna, except now the SWR is reported at about 3 even with the minimum run of RG-8/U, that 50 feet of feedline is now uncoiled. Arghh, so before I take the ends of the 40m wire and 1:1 balun down to put up a 4:1 balun and re-trim it, I'll get that QRP wire antenna up oriented E/W so I won't be without an HF antenna at the QTH.

The more I researched, the more I lean toward a ladder line 40m wire antenna for portable QRP work and oriented E/W when up at the QTH to complement the 40m wire w/ balun. While looking to order ladder line stumbled upon w7fg.com "true ladder line" and a special at the time of a 10-40m "true ladder line" doublet trimmed and ready to go for \$30. Perhaps I'll add an 80m extension at a later date, but once the ladder line is up will take the wire w/balun down and trim/tune it, extend it, perhaps adding trap, later replacing with a 4:1 balun. Shooting for Memorial Day to get up on 80m, but may back off to Labor Day given other goings on around the QTH.

Part of the reason for writing this is that I really appreciate feedback and commentary on the ramblings of this HF newbie. (correspondence to W4CHL@arrl.net)

73 de Mark W4CHL

M.R. Smith, W4CHL, somehow earned that extra class ticket in 2001, now he's gonna show that book learnin' translates to something worthwhile outside of using VHF/UHF repeaters ! Given his call sign, its probably not a surprise to learn that he lives in Chapel Hill.

Playing Catch

Kaz, W4KAZ

It is automatic for people who have practiced enough. Your hand twists, you tense the muscles, your timing is exact, all while the speed of the ball is constantly changing due to the force of gravity here on Earth. So how does your brain do it? (note: for some of us, it doesn't!!!) What happens to one's ability to catch when deprived of the effects of gravity?

Does that sound like a great experiment for NASA? Well, they must have thought so too. It turns out that the brain is anticipating the effects of the gravity field, even when it's not there. The experiment also found that after about two weeks of practice, the brain began to adapt to the new environment. Check it out at:

http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2002/18mar_playingcatch.htm and
<http://neurolab.jsc.nasa.gov/sensbert.htm>

Marshall Tests Tethers.....now, say that three times really fast...

Kaz, W4KAZ, from NASA/Marshall Space Flight Center News release NASA scientists in Huntsville, Alabama have successfully tested a propellant free propulsion technology. The Propulsive Small Expendable Deployer system - called ProSEDS - is a tether-based propulsion experiment that draws power from the space environment around Earth, allowing the transfer of energy from the Earth to the spacecraft.

The ProSEDS is a 3.1-mile-long (5 kilometers), ultra-thin bare-wire tether connected with a 6.2-mile-long (10 kilometers) non-conducting tether. The interaction of the bare-wire tether with the Earth's ionosphere will produce thrust, thus lowering the altitude of the stage.

The process of collecting energy will begin when the electromagnetic portion of the tether collects electrical current along the tether's length as it moves through the Earth's magnetic field. To keep the current flowing, the plasma contactor reconnects the electrons with the invisible, electrically charged plasma that surrounds the Earth, emitting the electrons back into space so it can complete its circuit.

I gotta wonder how many of these guys were hams, sure sounds like an antennae-raising. W4KAZ. See: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2002/02/020205080246.htm>

Tabletop Nuclear Fusion →As Close As I'll Get To An "April's Fool" Story

Kaz, W4KAZ

Hmmm, I'll bring my half-gallon can of solvent out for Field Day, you bring the fusion reactor? This should have accompanied the stories on FreeCharge and Fuel Cells in the March issue, but hey, you folks are gonna get what you pay for.....W4KAZ.

Two Oak Ridge Labs scientists published a paper in the March issue of the journal "Science" on their experiment in desktop fusion. By bombarding a beaker of acetone with ultrasound, they were able to create tiny bubbles within the liquid, which collapse in a flash of light. Their supporting calculations suggest that temperatures within the bubbles could approach 10 million Kelvin, which is hot enough for fusion to occur. Two other Oak Ridge scientists were unable to reproduce measurements of tritium and neutron emissions for verification. Neither experiment has yet been peer reviewed, nor are the results endorsed by the journal "Science".

Maybe they are just boiling acetone... But wouldn't it be fun to make the Middle East irrelevant?.. Get the full story at: <http://www.sciam.com/news/030602/1.html>

Tree Rings And Icebergs

Kaz, W4KAZ

A study of ancient tree rings from 14 sites on three different continents show that temperatures from 800 to 1000 years ago closely match our planet's warming trend of contemporary times. The study, published March 22nd in the journal "*Science*", shows that there are natural processes within the Earth's climate capable of producing large climate changes over long periods of time.

Also, recent media reports have concentrated much attention on the erosion of the floating Antarctic ice sheet known as "Larsen B", while almost no reports have been made on the contradictory evidence presented by the growth of the Antarctic glacier known as "stream C". So which is it, global warming or the return of the glaciers?

All of which show yet again just how little the "greenhouse effect" crowd really know about the function of the Earth's climate versus what they know about data manipulation and biased agit-prop.

Call your Congressman and Senators to lobby for "sunspot control" before it's too late! Hmmm, now, do we want to turn those sunspots "on" or "off" ??????...You 6 meter DX guys pipe down!

See:

http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/ap/20020321/ap_on_sc/tree_rings_1&cid=624

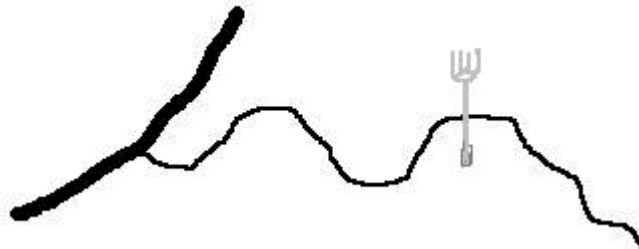
and

<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/scitech/DailyNews/ice020117.html>

Directions, Circa 1970

From "Slippo, the Wonder Eel"

From the Ventura Freeway, take the Slauchson's Cutoff until you get to..... the fork in the road! See map below, for those who never saw a "tea time movie".



2002 Dayton Hamvention, May 17-19th

Kaz, W4KAZ

Well, I have been only once, and it was a great outing, in good company. For those that have the opportunity, the wherewithal, and the time, I would heartily recommend the trip to Dayton. This year's advance ticket ordering deadline is May 1st, and the Hamvention is Friday May 17th through Sunday May 19th. You can get ticket ordering info at: <http://www.hamvention.org/tickets.html>
Information on the Hamvention forums is available at <http://www.hamvention.org/forums.html>

FCC opens proceeding to mitigate orbital debris

IN BRIEF: The ARRL Letter, Vol. 21, No. 12, March 22, 2002

In an action that could have implications for Amateur Radio satellites, the FCC has opened a proceeding regarding orbital debris. "Minimization of orbital debris will help maximize the usefulness of space for satellite communications and other services," the Commission said in a statement. AMSAT-NA has indicated it plans to file comments. The March 14 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking proposes to adopt a requirement that all FCC-licensed satellite systems submit information concerning plans to mitigate orbital debris. According to the FCC, orbital debris "consists of artificial objects orbiting the Earth that are not functional spacecraft." The FCC said studies show that a continued increase in orbital debris "may raise concerns regarding the reliability and cost of space activities, including satellite communications." For more information, see the news release on the FCC Web site <http://www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/International/News_Releases/2002/nrin0204.html>. --FCC

PCsat Reported In Trouble

IN BRIEF: The ARRL Letter, Vol. 21, No. 12, March 22, 2002

Bob Bruninga, WB4APR, reports that PCsat could be lost if ground controllers are not able to get the spacecraft into a positive power budget. He has asked all users to not digipeat via PCsat until further notice. Bruninga said PCsat is resetting--and running the batteries dead--on every eclipse. "This is killing it, unless we are successful soon," he said. Command stations in the Southern Hemisphere--where PCsat currently just encounters the sun and the only place where a "low power" command would have any chance of recovering the spacecraft--are working to resolve the problem. "There is nothing we in the Northern Hemisphere can do other than turn our transmitters off, so as not to add to the power load," he said. Built by midshipmen from the US Naval Academy under Bruninga's guidance and launched last September, PCsat is a 1200-baud APRS digipeater designed for use by hand-held transceivers or mobiles. Bruninga said command stations are on top of the situation, and he discouraged outside reports.

FCC Notification Leads To Shutdown Of Uncoordinated Repeater

The ARRL Letter, Vol. 21, No. 12, March 22, 2002

An uncoordinated North Carolina repeater has been taken off the air as a result of a letter from the FCC to the repeater's owner. The FCC this month followed up on complaints registered last fall that an uncoordinated repeater on 147.030 MHz was interfering with a coordinated repeater, KU4OL, on the same frequency pair.

The FCC ordered the NY4X repeater shut down until the owner either obtains coordination or submits "a detailed, specific plan" to the FCC to prevent interference to KU4OL. FCC Special Counsel for Enforcement Riley Hollingsworth on March 1 warned that failure to shut down the NY4X repeater could result in enforcement action, up to and including a fine and license revocation proceedings.

John A. Parker Jr, AG4AZ, owns and operates the repeater which, with permission, had identified using the call sign of Richard E. Howell, NY4X. In letters to both, Hollingsworth recounted allegations that the NY4X repeater "often keys up even if there are no legitimate communications on it" and that some users "deliberately interfere with the KU4OL repeater."

In a letter last November, Hollingsworth reminded Parker that §97.205 of the FCC's Amateur Service rules require that, in cases where an uncoordinated repeater is interfering with a coordinated machine, "the licensee of the uncoordinated repeater has primary responsibility to resolve the interference."

Parker conceded in responses to the FCC that the NY4X repeater was not coordinated but that he was attempting to obtain coordination from the SouthEastern Repeater Association (SERA) on 145.23 MHz.

When the repeater still was not coordinated in February, the FCC gave Parker until the end of the month to remedy the situation or face FCC sanctions. Hollingsworth told ARRL that Parker opted to shut down the machine.

Acting in another recent repeater conflict case, Hollingsworth told a group operating an uncoordinated repeater--KF8HL in Mingo County, West Virginia--that it bore primary responsibility under §97.205 to avoid interference to the KC8FKP repeater, operated by the Portsmouth (Ohio) Radio Club on the same frequency, 145.390 MHz.

The FCC declined to intervene in a third repeater situation involving a complaint last December from an amateur in Midway, Tennessee. Jeffrey Bible, K4MFD, had complained of interference from the nearby W4WC repeater, operated by the Andrew Johnson Amateur Radio Club. The two machines are on different channels but are sited on adjacent towers. Both repeaters are coordinated, according to SERA.

"There is no reason whatsoever why these two systems cannot coexist," Hollingsworth wrote in a February 21 letter, adding that the two systems share responsibility for preventing harmful interference.

Hams Help Transport Injured Passenger From Sailboat

IN BRIEF: The ARRL Letter, Vol. 21, No. 13, Mar 29, 2002

Marc Weinberg, K9PET, says amateurs on the Manana Net on 14.340 MHz recently were confronted with a medical emergency. On March 13, it was reported that a man suffered a back injury aboard a sailboat off the Pacific side of Baja near Rosario, Mexico. Amateurs alerted appropriate authorities. By the next day, however, seas were too high--more than 20 feet--and there was no nearby sheltered harbor. The Mexican Navy was standing by to assist, and an ambulance was available on the shore, but weather conditions prevented airlifting the injured man from the vessel. Weinberg says the March 15 Net session brought the happier news that the man had been taken off the boat by a US Coast Guard helicopter and was in a San Diego hospital. It turned out that the man had aggravated a previous injury to his spine while aboard the boat. The man was able to travel to San Francisco for surgery.

German Vote Favors Retention Of Morse Requirement

IN BRIEF: The ARRL Letter, Vol. 21, No. 13, Mar 29, 2002

The results of a mail-in vote of Deutscher Amateur Radio Club (DARC) members on whether to retain a Morse code requirement as an examination criterion for HF access indicates DARC members almost split on the issue. Of the 17,455 votes cast, 8530 (48.8%) favored retaining the existing 5 WPM requirement in Germany while 7781 (44.6%) favored abolishing the requirement. DARC said 1133 ballots were nullified (for a variety of reasons that included ballots from nonmembers and duplicate ballots), and 11 took no position.--Hans Berg, DJ6TJ/DARC

Tired of your Emu's and Llama's? - Go Into Wouff Hong Farming!

Kaz, W4KAZ, from April 1st 2002, ARRL Amateur Radio News

So, that's where they come from! Perhaps Wouff Hong seedlings or cuttings will soon allow an explosion of Wouff Hong truck farms. See:

<http://www.remote.arrl.org/news/features/2002/04/01/1/?nc=1>



And for background on the Wouff Hong, see
<http://www.remote.arrl.org/tis/info/history.html#hong>

B&W co-founder John F. "Jack" Williamson, W3GC, SK

IN BRIEF: The ARRL Letter, Vol. 21, No. 13, Mar 29, 2002

Jack Williamson, W3GC, of Newtown Square, Pennsylvania, died March 19. He was 95. Williamson was the co-founder of Barker & Williamson--B&W--once a well-known US manufacturer of Amateur Radio equipment. First licensed in 1921, Williamson in his youth earned a widespread reputation for his radio knowledge, and even radio manufacturer Atwater Kent and his engineers sought Williamson out for his technical advice. After leaving his electrical engineering studies at Drexel Institute when the Depression hit, he and long-time friend Barrie Barker, W3DGP, then out of work, launched a new business to manufacture RF coils for amateurs. B&W did so well in the pre-World War II years that Hallicrafters engineers, frustrated in their attempts to design an antenna tuner for the BC-610 that could match short antennas to Signal Corps specifications, approached the fledgling company. B&W's prototype was accepted, and a production contract was awarded for the tuner, known as BC-939. That led to additional contracts. After WWII, the company was successful in both the military and ham radio sectors. Most notable in the B&W amateur line were their coils and transmitter variable capacitor products and the model 5100 all-band transmitter. While Barker retired, Williamson continued operating B&W until its sale in 1964. He had been an ARRL member for 22 years and had continued as an active amateur until recently.--Bob Thomas, W3NE

Meteor scatter rally announced

The ARRL Letter, Vol. 21, No. 14, April 5, 2002

Meteor scatter enthusiasts now have an operating event to call their own. The 2002 North American Meteor Scatter Rally, sponsored by WA5UFH, KM5ES, and K1JT, is aimed at promoting the use of VHF/UHF meteor-scatter communication techniques. The event is set for April 27 through May 5--to take advantage of the Eta Aquarids meteor shower. The idea is to work as many stations as possible in as many grid squares as possible via meteor scatter on the bands above 50 MHz. Rally rules and entry forms are posted on the WA5UFH Meteor Scatter Web site <<http://www.qsl.net/wa5ufh/>> as well as on the WSJT Meteor Scatter/Weak Signal Group site <<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wsjtgroup/?yguid=6309253>>.--Randy Tipton, WA5UFH

Wisconsin Governor Signs Amateur Antenna Bill

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Wisconsin Gov Scott McCallum this week signed AB368, the Amateur Radio FCC PRB-1 Amateur Radio Antenna Protection Act into law in that state. The governor's stroke of the pen April 2 makes the Badger State the 16th to incorporate the language of the limited federal preemption known as PRB-1 into its statutes. The new law becomes effective immediately.

"After summarizing the contents of the law, Gov McCallum made a special point of noting the important role that Wisconsin hams play in providing emergency and public communication support throughout the state," said ARRL Wisconsin Section Government Liaison Jim Lackore, AD9X, who was present at the signing.

AB 368 mirrors the language of the limited federal preemption. It would require that ordinances or resolutions affecting the placement, screening or height of Amateur Radio antennas or support structures have a "reasonable and clearly defined aesthetic, public health or safety objective." Such an ordinance or resolution also must represent "the minimum practical regulation" necessary to accomplish the locality's objectives and must reasonably accommodate Amateur Radio communication. More information on antenna regulation is available on the ARRL Antenna Restrictions Web page <<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/antenna-restrictions.html>>.