
B.V.A.R.A. QRM

W3SGJ

October 2001

144.710/145.310 MHZ - 100 HZ PL

447.975/442.975 MHZ - 100 HZ PL

B.V.A.R.A. OFFICERS

PRESIDENT.....N3OJN Stan Riffle
1.V.PRES.....KB3EAQ Debbie Mehutcs
2.V.PRES.....N3GZZ Joe Streit
SECRETARY...N3SVM Bob Reid
TREASURER...N3ALS Wes Morar

TRUSTEES/DIRECTORS

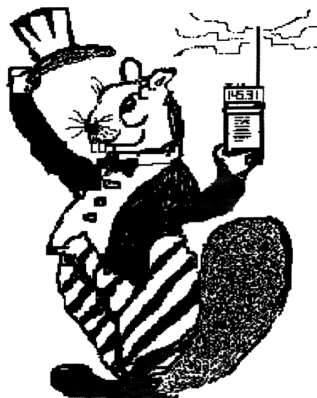
N3OJN.....Stan Riffle
KB3EAQ.....Debbie Mehutcs
N3GZZ.....Joe Streit
N3ALS.....Wes Morar
N3SVM.....Bob Reid
WA3GFM...Al Belardia
KA3SMF.....Dave Heim
KE3ED.....Tony Petruccelli/Station Trustee

Newsletter Editor

N3NBJ.....Janet Petruccelli

Newsletter Distribution

KB3EAQ.....Debbie Mehutcs



THE NET LIST

WPA CW NET.....7:00 PM DAILY.....3.585
TRADERS NET.....7:00 PM MON & FRI 3.898
HOSS TRADERS.....8:00 PM WEDNESDAY.3.910
CALLOUS BOTTOMS...11:00 PM DAILY...3.912.5
WPA PHONE & TCF.....6:00 PM DAILY...3.983
PA TRAFFIC TRAINING NET..6:30 PM...3.610
E-CARS.....8:00 AM DAILY...7.255
EAN NET.....2:30 PM DAILY..7.243
RIP VANWINKLE.....7:00 AM DAILY..145.31
B.V.A.R.A. 2 METER.....8:30 PM WED....145.31
B.V.A.R.A. 10 METER...9:30 PM WED...28.360
WPA TRAFFIC.....8:00 PM DAILY..146.88
QCWA NET.....8:30 AM SUNDAY.147.03

VISIT THE B.V.A.R.A.'s WEBSITE AT:

www.geocities.com/the_bvara

If you have a submission for the B.V.A.R.A. QRM you may submit it to Janet N3NBJ by any of the following means.. E-mail: ke3ed@arrl.net, Packet: ke3ed@k3oiw.#wpa.pa.usa.na, or typed in text format on floppy disk. Thank you.

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CLUB MEETING

The October B.V.A.R.A. meeting will take place on Thursday the 11th at 7:30 PM. Location is always at the Beaver County Emergency Operations Center, 250 East End Avenue, Beaver, PA. Please try to attend this meeting as nominations for 2002 Officers will take place.

PA QSO PARTY

Planning is well underway for the upcoming PA QSO Party scheduled for the weekend of October 13-14. Two stations are planned and our operation will again take place at Ron and Ellie Paine's (K3OIW/KA3OSC) residence high atop Paine Mountain at 3780 Ridge Road, (Independence Twp) Aliquippa, PA. A picturesque view and a weekend of ham fellowship awaits the operators who attend this contest. Lets show the other operators of Pennsylvania a well represented Beaver County presence. Hours of operation are 12:00 PM to 1:00 AM on Saturday and then 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Sunday. Goodies to eat are also welcome, HI HI! Please see Tony KE3ED or Al WA3GFM for more details.

NO HAMS NIGHT OUT THIS MONTH

Due to the PA QSO Party contest falling on the night of our usual get together we have decided to cancel "Ham's night out" this month. However we'll be back together in the month of November.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE

2001 is coming to a rapid close. WOW! Where did the year go?? It's now time again to start thinking about nominating officers for the coming year. Thanks to George Foltz WA3ONU, Chris Moratis W3OUF, and John KC3OW for taking the position of this years Nominating committee. A slate of officers will be presented at the October meeting. Should more than one party choose to run for anyone office an absentee ballot will be provided in the November QRM with instructions.

B.V.A.R.A. REPRESENTED AT WPA SECTION CLUB PRESIDENTS AND EMERGENCY COORDINATOR MEETING

On Saturday September 29th Stan N3OJN and Debbie KB3EAQ attended the ARRL Western Pa Section Club Presidents and Emergency Coordinators meeting held at the Tree of Life Wellness Center in Ellwood City, PA. The meeting was hosted by the ARRL WPA Section Manager John Rodgers N3MSE and The Ellwood City ARA. A number of section staffers were on hand for discussions of various aspects of radio and how they effect us and our clubs. A lot of good information and ideas were swapped. The first half of the day was presentation by Section Staff on how to

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better promote amateur radio. In the afternoon the group was split in to two groups, Club Presidents and the Emergency Coordinators for their respective Counties. Stan and Debbie plan on relating this information to us at our next meeting.

JOIN THE ARRL THROUGH THE B.V.A.R.A.

Those of you who have been thinking about joining the ARRL, but haven't yet, consider doing it through your club. The B.V.A.R.A. will reap a monetary gift from the ARRL for each member it achieves through club recruitment. So, if you're going to join the league anyway, do it through the club if you can.

B.V.A.R.A. SPONSORED TEST SESSION

The Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association will sponsor an ARRL VE examination on Saturday October 6th, 2001 at the Community College of Beaver County's Aviation Science building located at 125 Cessna Drive, (Chippewa Twp.) Beaver Falls, PA.

Testing will start promptly at 10:00 AM so please plan on arriving at least 15 - 30 minutes prior. Walk-ins are welcome. Talk-ins will be on the 145.310 (W3SGJ) repeater. Use minus offset and 100 hz pl tone. Also you can see our exact location via APRS on 144.39 Mhz. Look for W3SGJ.

All candidates wishing to take a test should bring the following:

1. Two (2) forms of identification.
2. A pencil and a blue or black pen.
3. Your original AND a photocopy of your current license (if any).
4. Your original AND a photocopy of any C.S.C.E's (if any).
5. The test fee of \$10.00.

All classes of amateur radio license tests will be administered. CW tests will **NO LONGER** be multiple choice.

All Technician Plus operators licensed as such prior to March 21, 1987 should bring a copy and the original proof of this credit.

Candidates are welcome and encouraged to join us for breakfast at the Chippewa Brighton Hot Dog Shoppe at 8:00 AM. For more information contact Tony KE3ED at the following:

Packet: ke3ed @ k3oiw.#wpa.pa.usa.na
 Repeater: 145.310 (W3SGJ) minus offset & 100 hz pl tone.
 E-mail: ke3ed@bellatlantic.net
 Phone: (724) 774-4173

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PACKET IS DEAD

As the ASM of Packet I'm here to tell you something you probably already know. Packet is dead. Why? I'm sure you have as many reasons as I do but let me name a few:

Its slow – typically 1200 baud.

Internet – much faster & colorful graphics.

Who's using it? Not a lot of activity.

Right?

So for these, and perhaps other reasons, packet is dead to a great number of hams out there.

But, it seems that packet is in good company with other modes that I see as dead or dying. Among these other modes are CW, ATV, SSTV, & RTTY just to name a few. Why do I say these modes are dead too?

Lets take:

CW - testing has been reduced and in fact groups are lobbying to have the code eliminated completely from licensing exams. Oh, and don't think your CW skills will help you if your lost in a boat somewhere, the Navy and Coast Guard are no longer listening for you.

ATV – The equipment is quite expensive. Why should I spend so much money on equipment when I don't even hear of anyone else operating there?

SSTV, sure you hear guys sending pictures back and forth, but compared to the number of all the hams out there the percentage of operators is quite small.

RTTY – why that's been put out of business by PSK31, hasn't it?

Internet chat rooms and voice facilities are replacing HF voice.

And so on and so on...

Even 2-meter hand helds are not safe. Cell phones and FRS radios, both of which require no license, are very attractive alternatives to that Yaesu or Kenwood amateur HT. People just don't marvel at the ability to perform an autopatch when they have a cell phone hanging from their belt.

Actually, what I'm trying to illustrate is that a mode is only as dead as we allow it to be. If we don't want to use something we can come up with plenty of reasons not to use it. But I believe that when we do that we are limiting ourselves and not exploiting our capabilities to their fullest potential. We're shooting ourselves in the foot by poo pooing a mode only because we don't like or understand it.

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I once had someone tell me that packet wasn't usable in emergency drills because templates for the official forms, used by the emergency agencies, were not available in packet programs. My response then was, to do it! Adapt them. If they aren't available, be the first to make them up. But for the past couple of weeks I've had time to reflect that reasoning again. In light of the recent tragedies in New York and Washington DC, I seriously doubt that any emergency agencies would have rejected any emergency traffic relayed with this mode simply because the proper form was not used. Let's be serious.

Since I am the ASM for Packet my duties are to promote this mode, so I will limit my proposals to this area. First of all lets take a look at packet and what it can do for us.

As you all may or may not know packet allows us to connect a computer and radio to exchange data in an error correcting environment. However, Packet is more than just the full service bulletin boards, which forward messages all over the world that we are all pretty accustomed to.

Try to tell someone who uses a PacketCluster, for chasing DX, that packet is dead and he'll probably shrug his shoulders, say "whatever" then go back to his screen to look for that illusive dx country to appear as a spot on the network.

How about APRS? From Packet's grave comes new life in the way of the Automatic Packet Reporting System. Here is a system that not only tracks a moving station on a map but also allows directed or indiscriminate messaging to be sent and received at the same time.

Imagine watching a friend or loved ones progress on a map, perhaps giving you information such as estimated time of arrival, their speed, etc, while typing messages back and forth with them.

Not bad for a dead mode.

And don't forget the features that made Packet attractive years ago. Simple mailboxes set up on a frequency for private mail. Sure email on the net is quick and convenient but what happens when the phone lines are down? Or perhaps you just don't really want or need Internet access at \$20/month just to have mail.

The point is that we have invaluable tools available to us right now, and shame on us for not using them. I think CW is a shining example of probably our most basic form of communications, yet its utility is sometimes unparalleled. The same can be said for packets most rudimentary or basic functions.

Packet is cheap, portable, accurate and believe it or not quite private. Lets go back to that emergency situation again. The frequencies are active with all kinds of voice traffic. Anyone with a scanner can hear what you're saying. For one reason

or another you may not want that. At least with packet the audio is indistinguishable and probably can only be decoded by hams with a tnc. With Packet in its grave, who has those anymore?? HI HI! Also in this case, packet is going to get that information through faster and more accurate than voice because we won't have to repeat the message several times to clarify between 16 and 60 cases of supplies or have to spell a long list of names phonetically to get the spelling right. Not to mention that more than one qso can take place on the same frequency at the same time. Try that with voice.

So now you may be thinking, OK Tony, that's all fine and well but what good is Packet to me and my group? Well I've outlined several examples already. Want a reliable way to keep in touch with your club members or board, set up some mailboxes on an established frequency. Articles for your club newsletter could be easily and conveniently left in your editor's mailbox for later retrieval.

The list goes on... Weather nodes could be put on the air for skywarn assistance. APRS would be an invaluable tool for Skywarn. What better way for the National Weather Service or your local E.O.C to keep track of its spotters and operators in the field than to see their exact position on a map?

The point is your imagination is the only thing that limits what we use Packet for. And if Packet is dead, it's our own fault.

Tony – KE3ED

A FIRST HAND REPORT ON 9/11/01

(article provided by Carl N3OLA)

From :

"William Continelli" <nteu61vp@hotmail.com>

Hi everyone:

I was in lower Manhattan on Tuesday, 09/11/01, just 4 blocks from the WTC. Here's my impressions, from a radio point of view.

I left Albany on the 5:10 am Amtrak & arrived at Penn Station at 7:30. A \$10 cab ride brought me to 290 Broadway (the Federal Building) at 8 am. My meeting was on the 27th floor, in an inner conference room with no windows.

The meeting started at 8:30. About 8:45, we heard a muffled noise, but thought nothing of it. 5 minutes later, someone came in & said that a plane had hit one of the WTC Towers. Since we had no view, I pulled out my Sony ICF-10 AM/FM/SW pocket receiver from my "radio bag" & tuned to 1010 WINS. We listened to the report for about 5 minutes, then the manager told us we would continue with the meeting & would go to his office at our break to check out the scene. The meeting resumed, but 5 minutes later we heard a louder

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"BOOM" which shook the Federal Building. We heard screams coming from the other offices. The meeting was terminated, & we went into the hall where we saw people pouring out of offices, in shock, screaming & crying. (We later learned that they had an excellent view from their windows & saw the 2nd plane hit the 2nd tower). The elevators were full of other screaming, crying people & a "floor warden" told us to evacuate the building--by stairs. 27 flights.

When we got to the ground floor, we went outside & saw the massive clouds of black smoke. I tuned 1010 WINS in again & found out about the 2nd plane. Since there are two Federal Buildings there & Federal Agencies in the WTC, I pulled out my Yaesu-FT-50 & tuned to the GSA Police frequency of 417.200. Unfortunately, all transmissions were scrambled. There were GSA Cops everywhere, & police, fire & ambulance vehicles were racing by. We were milling about, listening to WINS & watching the smoke & fire when a GSA Cop (actually FPO) told us to evacuate the area "because it isn't over yet and the Federal Building may be next". We walked uptown to the Holiday Inn on the edge of Chinatown that some of our co-workers were staying at. Along the way, a co-worker held the Sony while I tuned around on the Yaesu. 2 meters was dead, as well as 440 & GMRS. The FRS channels were active, wit! h some transmissions actually in English. No real info there, just some frantic exchanges between people who were watching the fire.

At the Hotel, we found the cellphones, payphones & hotel phones dead. I quickly tuned the 2m & 70 cm bands again, but didn't hear anything. Unfortunately, I DID NOT KNOW the local repeater frequencies, offsets, or PL Tones, thus I may have passed by one or more active channels in my fast search.

From the radio bag I then pulled my Cobra HH-28 CB radio. I had to go outside to hear anything, but I did hear drivers on the West Side Highway (?) transmitting descriptions of what they saw. FRS was still busy, as well as the business frequencies (151.625, 154.54, .57, & .600. I quickly scanned the marine channels, & heard some weak signals from private boaters, talking about the burning Towers. (I think it was channel 69, but I'm not sure).

I went back in to coordinate with my co-workers, & that's when the Towers fell. WINS was stating that the subways, tunnels & trains weren't running, but two of us decided to get to Penn Station to try & get out. (We had heard about the Pentagon by then). For a few minutes, one guy got thru on his cellphone. A message was passed to Albany that we were all right, & I started with my co-worker on our 45 block hike. (No cabs).

On the way up 6th Avenue, we had WINS on. I tried scanning the 800 Mhz band on the Yaesu while we walked. I heard lots of transmissions, but nothing from police, fire or rescue services. Intermod was a moderate problem. I also

tried the aircraft frequencies, but after two passes from 118 to 136 Mhz (in 25 khz steps) and hearing nothing, I gave up.

On the railroad frequencies, I had better luck. Scanning from 160.215 to 161.400 Mhz in 15 khz steps, I picked out the Amtrak/CSX, & MTA hot channels. I listened to the search operations in the tunnels, as cops with bomb sniffing dogs checked things out.

Every block, we looked back & saw the massive clouds of smoke from the ruins. WINS was keeping us informed (at one point I tuned to WCBS, but for some reason I liked WINS better); all transportation/tunnels were still closed.

At Penn Station, there was a crowd of maybe 25,000 outside. The Station was closed. The Sony was on WINS, & I was tuning the Yaesu thru the 5 or 6 hot RR channels I found. It was packed shoulder to shoulder, and since we were the only ones with radios, we had people pressed up against us, leaning over us, to hear the news. The Yaesu absolutely fascinated them, as we heard the teams moving thru the Station & tunnels, checking for bombs & sabotage.

I briefly tuned to WWCR (12.16 Mhz) to see what the militia had to say. They were talking a lot but giving no real info, so we went back to WINS, which was doing a great job.

After almost 2 hours of standing on 33rd Street, the scanner gave us about a 2 minute advance notice that the Station was opening. We learned which entrance was going to be used for the Amtrak patrons, & rushed there. Once in the Station, we knew from prior travels, that Gate 6 was usually used for the northbound Amtraks. We stood near Gate 6 & watched the big board. Sure enough, the Yaesu gave us a "heads up" that Gate 6 was the Albany bound Train #281. We rushed there 30 seconds ahead of the announcement, & were one of the first people on the train.

Once aboard & moving, we were going painfully slow. It took over one hour to get from Penn Station to Yonkers. The conductor said it was because so many Metro-North trains were ahead of us. We averaged about 25 mph to Poughkeepsie, where Metro North service ends. From that point, it should have been clear sailing, but we still plodded along at 30 mph (I timed it using the mileposts). Once again, the Yaesu gave us the answer. From the snatches of conversation we heard, it became apparent that Amtrak was concerned about sabotage. I guess a train going 30 mph is safer than one going 90 mph if it derails. We also learned from the Yaesu that the TV cameras were at the Rensselaer Station, as we were the first train out of "Da City". We arrived at Rensselaer at 7:30 pm--after a 5 hour ride (2:20 is the norm).

LESSONS I LEARNED:

1) ALWAYS CARRY THE RADIOS, antennas, & spare batteries--(this was the only lesson I actually followed). I had

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the AM/FM/SW Sony, a dual band ht, & a CB. Even though I packed the 27 Mhz telescopic antenna, I don't think the CB was a practical choice. I DID NOT have a GMRS or FRS radio. With FRS units at \$20 & the size of a pack of cigarettes, there is no excuse not to have one.

2) KNOW THE FREQUENCIES OF THE AREA YOU ARE GOING TO VISIT. I wasted a lot of time in scanning entire bands because I didn't have a clue as to the local frequencies. I probably passed many active, relevant channels that were temporarily silent. I wasted more time parked on frequencies that turned out to have no real value. I could have spent 30 minutes on the Internet, downloading the necessary frequencies and programming them in. And, with most people carrying some sort of electronic organizer with them, it's easy to build up a library of frequencies for every city you visit.

3) USE RADIOS WITH GOOD SCANNING ABILITIES, AND PROGRAM IN THE FREQUENCIES, OFFSETS, & CTCSS TONES AHEAD OF TIME. My Yaesu is clogged with a hodge-podge of frequencies, in no particular order. I also have TV Audio, FM Stations & weather Channels programmed in, which stops all scanning in its tracks. In addition, many dual band ht's--although they have a lot of channels--don't have "banks" of Channels, so you have to scan all 100 or so, or lock them out, one by one. I think it is better to program in a minimal amount of channels--say 25 or so--for the area you are going to visit.

4) BRING AN EARPHONE OR HEADPHONES. Because of the noisy environment, I went through a set of batteries on both the Sony & Yaesu. (Yeah, I had plenty of batteries). In addition, while I didn't mind half of Mid-Town listening to WINS on my Sony, I didn't want them to hear the advance announcements that Amtrak was transmitting. A few people heard the Gate 6 announcement come out of my Yaesu, and immediately started heading there.

I've got to go to Buffalo next week & Seattle the week of 10/01. I hope I never go through this again, but I will be better prepared if necessary.

And....a final note....when I got home from the Rensselaer Station, my new Yaesu FT-817 was there to greet me. 20 meters from Seattle.

73,

Bill, W2XOY

==>AO-40 GIVES EARTHLINGS ANOTHER SCARE

Sighs of relief were heard around the world as the 2.4-GHz S2 beacon aboard the AO-40 satellite reappeared August 28 after an ominous absence. The beacon failed to return as scheduled on Orbit 381 after the RUDAK connections shut off.

Gunter Wertich, DF4PV, who is equipped for moonbounce work, reported hearing normal telemetry blocks very weakly, however, so ground controllers were assured that the onboard computer had not crashed. Ground controller Stacey Mills, W4SM, suspected--correctly, as it turned out--that a solid-state matrix connection had not properly latched up and that DF4PV was hearing "bleed through" of the middle beacon through the IF matrix.

When the satellite came into view at Mills' Virginia location, he manually cycled the middle beacon-to-S2 transmitter connection off and on, "and the middle beacon popped back up."

According to Mills, the beacon glitch has occurred before and may be related to critical software timing issues. "This event will be studied further, and we will watch closely for several days to see if this occurs again," he said. If it does, ground controllers will try to make changes to the spacecraft's software to prevent a recurrence.

AO-40's S1 transmitter recently failed after only a short time of operation. Attempts to restore it have failed.

The RUDAK has been turned off temporarily, but the schedule will remain in place. For now, there will be no middle beacon and no RUDAK from MA=30 to 44. AMSAT-NA says AO-40 is entering a long period during which the Earth eclipses the sun near perigee. During September, eclipses will peak at 85 minutes. In order to conserve the batteries the S2 transmitter, including the middle beacon, will be off from MA 220 to 250. The on/off times will be adjusted as the eclipse periods change. Eclipse periods will continue well into June of next year.

==>FCC WANTS EXPLANATION FOR ALLEGED INTERFERENCE DURING DECLARED EMERGENCY

The FCC apparently wants to let the amateur community know that it intends to put teeth into its infrequent emergency declarations. The Commission has written William C. Dennison, K0VCD, seeking an explanation for interference it alleges the Springfield, Missouri, amateur caused to an emergency net after the FCC declared a general communications emergency on June 10.

In a letter to Dennison on August 16, FCC Special Counsel for Amateur Radio Enforcement Riley Hollingsworth called Dennison's apparent failure to abide by the emergency declaration "a serious breach of the amateur rules."

Because of severe flooding in Texas and Louisiana, the FCC had declared 3.873 and 7.285 MHz--plus or minus 3 kHz--off limits to all but flood emergency traffic. Agents say they monitored Dennison on 75 meters later that evening, operating in the vicinity of--and causing interference to--an emergency net. At one point, the FCC said, Dennison moved onto the net's

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frequency to challenge the net control station.

FCC agents at the Commission's High Frequency Direction Finding Facility in Columbia, Maryland, were maintaining a watch on 3.873 and 7.285 MHz when Dennison was heard. After determining that Dennison's signal--on 3.875 and subsequently 3.876 MHz--was interfering with the net, an FCC agent telephoned Dennison to make sure that he was aware of the communications emergency and requesting that he change frequency.

The FCC continued to monitor Dennison's signal "splattering onto the net" on 3.873 MHz, Hollingsworth said in his letter. Dennison is said to have commented on the air regarding the telephone call from the FCC, then moved to 3.873 MHz, where he contacted the emergency net control station to challenge the net's use of HF rather than 2 meters for the emergency traffic. Hollingsworth told ARRL that Dennison subsequently either moved away from the net's frequency or went off the air, and the net experienced no further problems.

Hollingsworth requested that Dennison, a General class licensee, respond to the letter within 20 days with a detailed explanation of his operation during the periods detailed in the letter.

==>FCC REGISTRATION NUMBER BECOMES MANDATORY IN DECEMBER

Get ready (again) for the FRN! Although the FCC has slipped the deadline before, the Commission said this week that, starting December 3, 2001, everyone doing business with the FCC--licensed or not--must obtain and use a 10-digit FCC Registration Number--or FRN. The FCC called the move "a first step" toward streamlining fee collection and tracking. Many amateurs registered with the Universal Licensing System (ULS) were assigned a 10-digit FRN by the Commission Registration System--or CORES--in a one-time cross-registration last year and notified by mail.

Details to implement CORES for the Amateur Service are still being worked out. Steve Linn of the FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau said just how CORES and ULS will work together remains up in the air. "CORES is not replacing the ULS database," he explained, "but there are a lot of questions as to how it is to be integrated." A final implementation with respect to Amateur Radio is "yet to be determined," he said. Under the most likely scenario, however, CORES registration will supplant ULS registration for those who do not already have an FRN.

Those without an FRN will be required to register and provide one before transacting business with the FCC, whether or not a fee is required. An individual does not have to hold an FCC license to obtain an FRN. The requirement to obtain one extends to applicants for an Amateur Radio license as well as to anyone required to pay a fee to the FCC, such as those applying for a vanity call sign. CORES registrants will

be required to supply a Taxpayer Identification Number--or TIN--typically a Social Security Number (SSN) for an individual. The FCC says CORES information is not made public.

An FRN will not be needed to file comments in rulemaking proceedings. Filings that do require an FRN but don't include one will be rejected. The FCC has not yet proposed replacing the ULS Licensee Identification Number with an FRN; many amateurs already have both, and both numbers appear in FCC licensee records. The ULS continues to be available to new registrants.

The FCC began implementing CORES last year. The agency announced the adoption of its new CORES/FRN rules on August 31 and detailed the requirements in a Report and Order.

In its Order, the FCC sounded almost apologetic for imposing yet another set of numbers on licensees and applicants. "We realize that the manner in which our electronic systems have developed has results in a multiplicity of numbers, passwords and identifiers," the FCC conceded. The FCC said that once various electronic filing systems--such as ULS--incorporate CORES and FRN into their application process, "the need to maintain registration information in multiple systems will be eliminated."

The FCC said CORES makes provision for the registration of foreign nationals unable to obtain an SSN by providing the ability to register without one. The FCC has required that club stations obtain an assigned TIN when registering in the ULS. In an apparent about-face, the FCC's CORES Order states that unincorporated radio clubs registering in CORES should use the TIN/SSN of the license trustee. The ARRL has asked the FCC to clarify.

The on-line filing system and further information on CORES is available by visiting the FCC CORES Web page, <<https://svartifoss2.fcc.gov/core/CoresHome.html>>. A copy of the FCC R&O is available on the ARRL Web site, <<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2001/09/04/3/core-ro.pdf>>.

==>ISS EXPEDITION 3 CREW CONDUCTS ITS FIRST SCHOOL CONTACT

Youngsters at Seabrook Intermediate School in Texas got their new school year off to a banner start by speaking with the International Space Station via ham radio. The September 4 contact was carried out as part of the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station program. Crew Commander Frank Culbertson, KD5OPQ, took the NA1SS microphone for the first of what's hoped will be several school contacts during his crew's four-month stay.

Ten youngsters in grades six through eight from the school's Science Magnet Program took part in the contact. Among

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other things, the students wanted to know how life aboard the ISS compared with the space shuttle.

"The space shuttle is fairly small," Culbertson said, comparing it to "a camper on the back of a pickup truck." The space station is huge in comparison. "It's like night and day between the two," he said. "For living in space, the space station is the way to go." Culbertson said he's enjoying weightlessness aboard the ISS.

One youngster wanted to know if the crew was able to shower aboard Space Station Alpha. "We don't actually take showers," Culbertson explained. "That would be pretty messy." He said the crew cleans up using a wash cloth and hot water, plus special soap and shampoo that does not need to be rinsed off but can just be wiped dry with a towel.

"It's been a real pleasure talking with you guys," Culbertson said as he signed off from NA1SS. The students reacted with loud applause.

Participating youngsters were enthusiastic about their ARISS experience. "That was just so cool talking to people over 210 nautical miles straight up," said Banks, a sixth grader. Seventh grader Adam, who hopes to become an astronaut, called it "a very eye-opening experience." Savannah, another sixth grader, said she hoped to get her ham ticket.

Coordinating the ARISS contact at the school was Bill Wood, W5OOD, with help from the Clear Lake Amateur Radio Club (K5HOU) and the Johnson Space Center Amateur Radio Club (W5RRR). Sandy Peck, the school's science coordinator, said some of her students are hoping to attend a licensing class in the spring.

The ISS crew is tentatively scheduled to speak next week with students at Altamonte Elementary School in Florida.

The ARISS program is a cooperative venture of ARRL, AMSAT and NASA. For more information, visit the ARISS Web site <<http://ariss.gsfc.nasa.gov>>.—Bruce Paige, KK5DO, provided some information for this report

==>JUDGE BANS RADIO GEAR OWNERSHIP BY FLORIDA CBER

A Florida man who's facing thousands of dollars in federal fines for unlicensed radio operation and for interfering with local hams was sentenced to probation August 30 in state court. William Flippo was found guilty of criminal mischief, a Class 1 misdemeanor, during a jury trial last spring. Palm Beach County Judge Charles Burton further ordered Flippo--a Jupiter CBER known as "Rabbit Ears"--to dispose of any radio equipment now in his possession.

The sentence resulted from a charge that Flippo rammed his vehicle into the car of a local amateur, Ed Petzolt, K1LNC, of Hobe Sound. At the time of the incident two years ago,

Petzolt was assisting an FCC agent in tracking down malicious interference attributed to Flippo.

Burton had sentenced Flippo to 120 days in jail but suspended incarceration in lieu of one year's probation with multiple conditions, including the ban on owning radio equipment. Flippo has 30 days to appeal his sentence. Burton further ordered that Flippo is to have no contact with Petzolt or with any member of Petzolt's family. He also may not own or possess any weapons, and he is required to reimburse Petzolt for lost wages. Flippo also has written a letter of apology.

Flippo, 58, already owes the US government \$20,000 in fines for unlicensed operation, willful and malicious interference to Amateur Radio communications, and failure to let the FCC inspect his radio equipment. He's now scheduled to appear in federal court November 5 after his arrest last summer on additional charges. Flippo faces four counts of operating without a license and four counts of deliberate and malicious interference to a licensed service--Amateur Radio.

Flippo was taken into custody in July 2000 and has been free on \$100,000 bond. As a condition of his release, US Magistrate Judge Ann E. Vitunac restricted Flippo's travel and prohibited him from making any radio transmissions.

The criminal charges going to trial in November cover alleged violations between June 1999 and April of last year. Each count carries a maximum penalty of one year in prison and a \$10,000 fine. In January 2000, the FCC gave Flippo 30 days to pay the \$20,000 already levied. The case was referred to the US Attorney after he failed to do so, and the interference complaints continued.

==>LOWER AMATEUR RADIO VANITY FEE IS EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 10

The FCC says the fee for a new or renewed Amateur Radio vanity call sign will drop to \$12 on September 10. Applications received on or after that date will be subject to the new fee. The current vanity call sign fee is \$14.

The FCC proposed the lower fee last March in a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for the Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for FY 2001 (MD Docket No. 01-76). The FCC has estimated that 8000 applicants will apply for vanity call signs in the current fiscal year.

Earlier this year, the FCC also put paper and electronic vanity call sign applications on an equal footing in terms of processing priority. The FCC used to give priority to electronic applications for vanity call signs.

FCC rules stipulate refunds for applicants who inadvertently overpay a regulatory fee. Applicants who determine that they overpaid a vanity fee may request a refund in writing. Requests seeking a "Vanity Fee Overpayment Refund" go to FCC, 1270 Fairfield Rd, Gettysburg PA 17325-7245. Refund

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requests should indicate the date of application, the total fee paid, and the total refund owed.

The FCC has posted its FY2001 fee schedule on the Web <<http://www.fcc.gov/fees/2001wtbguide.txt>>. For more information on applying for a vanity call sign, visit the FCC Amateur Radio Web page, <<http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/amateur/VanityCS.html>>.

==>AMATEUR RADIO RESPONDS IN FORCE IN WAKE OF TERRORIST ATTACKS

Some already are calling it "Amateur Radio's Finest Hour," as volunteers answer the call to assist in ongoing relief and recovery operations in New York City, Washington, DC, and western Pennsylvania in the wake of terrorist attacks on the US September 11. The need continues for operators to assist over the long haul, however. Current estimates suggest hams may be needed for a month or longer in the New York City area, and for at least the next two weeks in Washington, DC.

Along with most other federal agencies, the FCC closed its offices and sent its employees home following the attacks. The FCC issued no emergency declarations nor other special instructions to the Amateur Radio community. The ARRL advised amateurs to stay alert to instructions from local authorities.

New York City-Long Island Section Emergency Coordinator Tom Carrubba, KA2D, reports that hams have been supporting emergency officials and the American Red Cross relief and recovery effort. Amateurs have been staffing several

Red Cross shelters in addition to a staging/National Disaster Medical System center, various Red Cross units, and the Greater New York City American Red Cross Headquarters as well as the New York City Office of Emergency Management.

Carrubba says the telephone system in lower Manhattan continues to be problematic because of the high call volume. "American Red Cross communications are overloaded, and traffic from the shelters is coming into the New York City net at a rapid pace," he said. "The Amateur Radio ops are doing a great job under very difficult and strange conditions, but this is what they have trained for; they are getting it done well."

Red Cross Communications Officer Jay Ferron, N4GAA, agreed. "The Amateur Radio community has come out very big and very strong," he said, adding that local clubs and repeater groups have volunteered gear, frequencies and operators.

New York City District Emergency Coordinator Charles Hargrove, N2NOV, has expressed his appreciation to the amateur community. "Thank you for all the support and well wishes," he said. "This is a difficult time for all of us. We appreciate all the amateurs who have volunteered their time and equipment."

Carrubba also cited the ongoing efforts of Guy Richman, KC2AYG, who has been coordinating net controls for the ARES nets, and Manhattan ARRL EC John Kiernan, KE2UN.

Carrubba is seeking additional volunteers from the Greater New York City region. He has asked out-of-state volunteers to "stand by until we can provide for your safety and comfort." Volunteers need a VHF (2-meter) or, preferably, a VHF/UHF (2-meter/70-cm) mobile radio, power supply and cables, and mobile/portable mag-mounted gain antenna. Carrubba says hand-helds are not sufficient to deal with the difficult operating conditions.

"Operators are still needed," he said, but stressed, "This is a difficult assignment."

Amateurs are working two 12-hour shifts per day, 8 AM to 8 PM and 8 PM to 8 AM, "plus or minus three or four hours, mostly plus," Carrubba said. Additional information is available on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org>>.

At the scene of the Pentagon attack near Washington, DC, Virginia Section Emergency Coordinator Tom Gregory, N4NW, reports an "upbeat" crew of about two dozen amateurs is staffing six Amateur Radio stations in the immediate vicinity of the Pentagon. "What shocked me the most was the devastation you can see right there, 100 feet from the building," Gregory said. "The destruction is total."

The ARES operation is providing logistical support between the Salvation Army's relief and recovery effort on site and the agency's Arlington headquarters. The Salvation Army has deployed several mobile canteens and a feeding unit to serve military and civilian emergency personnel assigned to the recovery operation.

"What we're finding is that communication is very difficult because of the tremendous amount of noise from the construction-type equipment and the generators providing power for the lights and support staff," Gregory said. Because of the noise level, operators are being rotated frequently in and out of the immediate vicinity of the attack. "There's the emotion of it, and there's the tremendous amount of noise, and it's very grating on you because you can hardly hear the radio to communicate," Gregory explained.

Gregory described the entire area as "very crowded with people" inside and outside the Pentagon. "People and equipment cleaning up, finding bodies, finding plane parts, firefighters still checking for hot spots, hoses, equipment," he said. "The damage to the building looks worse when you are right next to it than it does on TV."

"I found that it took me a few minutes to realize the gravity of what was going on and the importance of what we hams are doing in our own small way to help out," Gregory said. "The devastation of that building is awesome, and it puts things in

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perspective and it certainly made me proud to be an Amateur Radio operator and serve the people of the United States by offering the support we could."

The Pentagon ARES operation continues to seek volunteers. "Because of the immensity of the thing, we're trying to have six amateurs on duty at all times," he said. "We need 20 volunteers every day for at least two weeks." Volunteers should e-mail Tom Gregory, N4NW, at n4nw@arrl.net.

Gregory emphasized that Pentagon site security is extremely tight. All ham volunteers must have a photo ID issued by a government entity to the secured area. "The FBI is handling issuance of IDs for access to the secured area and is doing a complete NCIC check before a photo ID is issued," Gregory said.

At the so-called "fourth" plane crash site in rural Somerset County western Pennsylvania, Kevin Custer, W3KKC, reports a busy scene as the investigation continues. Custer arranged preliminary repeater communication into and out of the crash site on Tuesday to help the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Pennsylvania State Police, the FBI and other state and federal agencies on the scene.

Custer said the investigation could continue for several weeks. "At this time we are preparing for the possibility of family members coming to the crash site--or close by," he said.

Montgomery County, Maryland, Deputy RACES Officer John Creel, WB3GXW, observed that while the enormity of the attacks is bound to touch the amateur community directly or indirectly, he has seen nothing but professionalism among the responding operators in his area. Creel advised amateurs to "just be prepared," and he echoed the sentiment of many that the events of September 11 "will be with us for the rest of our lives."

More detailed and updated information on Amateur Radio's involvement in the disaster relief and recovery efforts is available on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org>>.

==>AMATEURS AMONG THE MISSING IN WORLD TRADE CENTER ATTACK

At least four Amateur Radio operators are among the many still missing in the aftermath of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center in New York City. The attack also destroyed the major TV and radio transmitting site atop one of the twin towers.

The hams reported missing so far include:

- * Steven A. "Steve" Jacobson, N2SJ, 53, of New York City, a transmitter engineer for WPIX TV, and an ARRL member.

- * William V. "Bill" Steckman, WA2ACW, of W Hempstead, New York, a transmitter engineer for WNBC TV. He was

well know in the NYC area and ran a number of repeaters from the World Trade Center, most notably the 434 MHz ATV repeater.

* Robert D. "Bob" Cirri Sr, KA2OTD, 39, an ARRL member from Nutley, New Jersey and the ARRL District Emergency Coordinator for Hudson County. A Port Authority police officer, Cirri was on the job helping to evacuate workers from the building when it collapsed.

* Michael G. Jacobs, AA1GO, 54, an ARRL member from Danbury, Connecticut. Jacobs worked at Fiduciary Trust Company International, which had offices in the World Trade Center.

The collapse of the World Trade Center brought down the master TV transmitting antenna that served all but one television station in New York City, as well as several radio stations and amateur repeaters. "The broadcast community is in absolute shock," said Hudson Division Vice Director Steve Mendelsohn, W2ML, who works for ABC News. "We all knew transmitter engineers, we all knew people who worked up in those towers near those big television transmitters, and they're gone."

Mendelsohn said many viewers in the Greater New York City Area who are not on cable can only see WCBS, channel 2, which maintains its transmitter site on the Empire State Building. WCBS has offered assistance and space to help the other stations get back on the air from its site, he said.

"None of the other transmitters exist anymore. They're in the rubble along with the master antenna system, hundreds and hundreds of two-way radio system antennas, and boxes and, of course, untold thousands of people who perished."

There was cause for rejoicing in the case of another amateur who worked in the World Trade Center. Rob Nall, WV0S, reports that his friend, Herman Belderok, Jr, KB0EEB, managed to get out of the building just minutes before the structure collapsed.

==>ARRISS ANTENNAS MOVE CLOSER TO LAUNCH

New Amateur Radio on the International Space Station antennas could be in place by early 2002. In addition, plans now call for splitting the current initial ARISS equipment into separate ham stations aboard the ISS—initially 2 meters in one location and 70 cm in the second.

ARRISS Chairman Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, said the new flight antenna systems were shipped earlier this month to Johnson Space Center for a bench review. "We will be having our final safety review with NASA on September 18," he said. He said prototype units already have been tested to see if they withstand the temperature extremes and "thermal shock" of space. Technical testing for SWR and pattern also has been completed.

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The new antennas--designed to cover HF, VHF, UHF, and the 1.2 and 2.4 GHz bands--are expected to be transported to the ISS in late November aboard the shuttle Endeavour on the STS-108 mission. The new antennas could be installed during a space walk early next year after the Expedition 4 crew is aboard. Bauer said training to install the new antennas is under way.

Once the appropriate gear is in place, ARISS operation could extend from HF through 2.4 GHz. The HF antenna is a 2.5-meter long flexible tape. Bauer thinks it will definitely work on 10 meters and speculated that it might work on 15 or 20 too. The new antennas will be arrayed around the perimeter of the ISS Russian Service Module--or Zvezda.

Bauer says a 2-meter station will remain in the Russian "Functional Cargo Block"--also called the FGB or Zarya--and will use the existing Russian antennas now used for ARISS. Once the new antennas have been deployed, a second station will be set up in the Service Module. In the short term, that will be a 70-cm station, but in the long term, the Service Module station will support expanded capabilities.

The new antenna systems were developed by the US, Italian and Russian ARISS partners. Bauer concedes the hardest part of the process has been getting the new antennas space-ready. "I want to thank all the individuals from around the world who have enabled the ARISS team to get this far," he said. "It has been a challenging effort. Your persistence and can-do spirit enabled the antenna systems to go from just a dream to reality."

Visit the ARISS Web site, <http://ariss.gsfc.nasa.gov>

==>THREE SCHOOLS ENJOY ISS INTERVIEWS

Students at schools in Florida and Virginia got to talk with International Space Station Expedition 3 Crew Commander Frank Culbertson, KD5OPQ, this month. The contacts were arranged as part of the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station program.

On September 14, 15 youngsters and their teacher at Altamonte Elementary School in Altamonte Springs, Florida, questioned Culbertson about life in space and how he and his crew are coping. Given that the contact was just a few days after the World Trade Center and Pentagon terrorist attacks, Culbertson told pupils that, for a change, he and the crew wished they had TV aboard.

"This is the only week that I have been up here that I wish I could have watched TV, because of all the things that are happening down there which obviously touch all of us very deeply," he said.

Culbertson also referred to attacks during a September 19 ARISS QSO with students at Western Albemarle High School in Crozet, Virginia. Culbertson said the crew members heard

about the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks from a doctor on Earth while they were involved in a medical conference. "Obviously it was quite a shock, and it took a while to get me the details," he said. "Of course, it was hard to believe, at first."

On the lighter side, when asked by another high schooler about how the ISS smells, Culbertson replied, "We think it smells pretty good, but I bet you'll have to ask the next crew what they think when they get here."

Early on the morning of September 25, Culbertson was quizzed by 13 first and second graders at Ladysmith Primary School in Ruther Glenn, Virginia. Among other things, the pupils there wanted to know what crew members did with their dirty clothes, how they got rid of garbage (both are burned up in Progress rockets sent zooming into Earth's atmosphere) and how they washed dishes (they don't use dishes).

"It was a tremendously positive experience," said Jim Whitaker, KQ4RH, who helped organize the Ladysmith contact and whose wife, Carolyn, KF4RXJ, is a kindergarten teacher at the school. "Frank Culbertson was wonderful! You can tell he understands children and wanted to make this special for the kids."

Altamonte teacher Cricket Scheer, KG4EGW, called her school's QSO "an experience of a lifetime, and a happy, positive one during a very frightening time."

For more information on the ARISS program, visit the ARISS Web site <<http://ariss.gsfc.nasa.gov>>

==>IN BRIEF:

*** ISS crew to resume ARISS school contacts after Labor Day:** The International Space Station's Expedition 3 crew is scheduled to resume Amateur Radio school contacts after Labor Day. The first ARISS crew contacts had been penciled in for late August, but members of the crew, headed by Frank Culbertson, KD5OPQ, requested that ham radio activities be rescheduled while they got acclimated to their new home. The first scheduled contact is set for Tuesday, September 4, with Science Magnet Program students at Seabrook Intermediate School in Texas. A contact with Altamonte Elementary School in Florida has been tentatively set for the following week. The ARISS packet station reportedly is on the air, but still using the old TNC that does not reflect a call sign. A new packet TNC, correctly programmed with RS0ISS, now is aboard the ISS and scheduled to be installed by the Expedition 3 crew

*** ARRL E-Mail Forwarding Service address changes with call sign:** ARRL Information Systems Manager Don Durand reminds ARRL members who are planning to obtain new calls sign that their ARRL E-Mail Forwarding Service address will follow suit. So, plan ahead. The @arrl.net system

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is designed to provide only one e-mail forwarding address per member, based on your current call sign. Durand says the system will automatically update your ARRL E-Mail Forwarding System address to reflect your new call sign. ARRL membership records also are automatically updated using data provided by the FCC Amateur Service database. Visit the ARRL E-Mail Forwarding Service page <<http://www.arrl.org/members-only/emailfwd.html>> for more information.

*** High-altitude balloon flight carried ham radio payload:** Edge of Space Sciences is declaring its latest balloon launch a success. The Denver, Colorado-based non-profit organization promotes science and education by exploring frontiers in Amateur Radio and high-altitude balloons. EOSS reports that its Flight 51 was launched and recovered successfully on August 25. Seven payloads were on board. "ATV from the balloon was spectacular," said Jack Roland, KE0VH. "It showed the balloon going through a snowstorm as it ascended through 25,000 feet, on its way to its maximum altitude of slightly more than 90,000 feet." Roland said the EOSS team had clear pictures throughout the entire flight. Future flights will incorporate a crossband repeater. For more information, visit the EOSS Web site <<http://www.eoss.org/index.html>>.

*** Special event station K5MFJ to commemorate MFJ's 30th anniversary:** MFJ Enterprises in Starkville, Mississippi, will sponsor a Mississippi ARRL day in the park, Saturday, September 29. Special event station K5MFJ will be on the air to commemorate the company's 30th anniversary. Events include tailgating and factory tours of MFJ, Ameritron, Hy-Gain, and the MFJ metalshop and engineering building. ARRL and MFJ have provided door prizes. Lunch is on the house. Work K5MFJ on 10, 15, 20 or 40 meters and receive a commemorative certificate. QSL to MFJ Amateur Radio Club, PO Box 494, Mississippi State, MS 39762. For more information, visit the MFJ Web site <<http://www.mfjenterprises.com>>.

*** Ten-Tec opens retail store, full-line dealership:** Ten-Tec has opened an Amateur Radio retail store and full-line equipment dealership. The 1000-square-foot retail store and ham shack are in the lobby of the Ten-Tec manufacturing facility in Sevierville, Tennessee. "We have a large, loyal customer base that we'll be able to supply with accessories that complement our own manufactured equipment," says Ten-Tec Amateur Radio Product Manager Scott Robbins, W4PA. "Equipment from more than 20 manufacturers is already in stock and available direct from Ten-Tec." Ten-Tec is planning a grand opening celebration for its new retail outlet during the annual Ten-Tec Hamfest, Friday and Saturday, September 28-29. Visit the Ten-Tec Web site <<http://www.tentec.com>>.

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