
B.V.A.R.A. QRM

W3SGJ

www.qsl.net/bvara

March 2003

144.710/145.310 MHZ - 100 HZ PL

447.975/442.975 MHZ - 100 HZ PL

B.V.A.R.A. OFFICERS

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

TRUSTEES/DIRECTORS

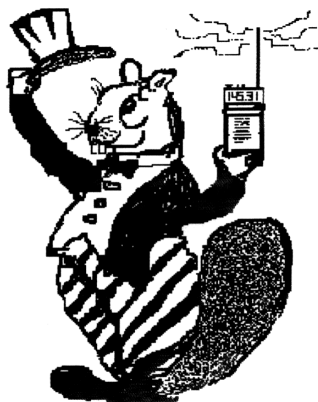
KB3EAQ.....Debbie Reid
N3GZZ.....Joe Streit
N3OJN.....Stan Riffle
N3ALS.....Wes Morar
N3SVM.....Bob Reid
WA3GFM...Al Belardia
KA3SMF.....Dave Heim
KE3ED.....Tony Petrucci/Station Trustee

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

N3NBJ.....Janet Petrucci

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

KB3EAQ....Debbie Reid



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 & TFC NET...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...9:00 PM WED...28.370
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.qsl.net/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 March monthly meeting will be held on Thursday the 13th, 7:30 PM at the Beaver County Emergency Center located at 250 East End Avenue, Beaver, PA. "Hams night out" get-togethers will be discussed as well as upcoming plans for field day. Come help us finish off the coffee and donuts, HI!

CLUB SHIRTS AND HATS

Those who have ordered Club hats and shirts are reminded to bring your money to the March Club meeting if you have not already paid. The hats and shirts will be available at that time. If you have not ordered something or if you want to order something else you may do so at the meeting. Be sure to see Phyllis N3KUG or Debbie KB3EAQ. Reminder: cost of hats are \$12.00 (\$12.50 with scrambled eggs). Shirts are \$8.00 (\$8.50 with a pocket). Also available are golf shirts at a slightly higher cost.

NET CONTROL OPERATORS NEEDED

Please Help! The B.V.A.R.A. is in need of additional Net Control Stations to conduct our Wednesday night nets. As much as our current NCS's enjoy operating the 2 and 10 meter nets they definitely need a break from time to time. The more operators we have the more enjoyable it becomes. Please contact Debbie KB3EAQ, Wes N3ALS or Tony KE3ED to get put on the schedule. Thank you.

FIELD DAY AND CORN ROAST LOCATIONS

A big thanks to Al WA3GFM for securing our Field Day and Corn Roast locations for this year. Field will be held at Brady's Run Park Shelter 6 and The Corn Roast will be held at Brady's Run Park Shelter 10.

ATTENTION 2003 MEMBERS

If you are a paid 2003 Club member and have not received the autopatch codes for the .31 repeater please see Tony KE3ED.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

The B.V.A.R.A. is in need of a special piece of equipment. If you have or find (perhaps at a flea market) a touch-tone telephone with the extra row of buttons (A,B,C,&D keys) please contact Tony KE3ED. The unit is needed for programming the .31 repeater.

ARRL Western Pennsylvania Section News
Section Manager: John V. Rodgers, N3MSE
n3mse@arrl.org

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Washfest 2003 is Sunday, February 23. This will start the hamfest season in Western Pennsylvania. I hope to see many of you at the hamfest and the other upcoming events. Either myself or one of the assistant section managers will be present at every sanctioned hamfest in our section. Information on the Washfest may be obtained at <http://www.washarc.org/> Following this event is the Foothills ARC hamfest on March 2. Additional information on this event can be found at <http://www.geocities.com/foothills007/>, Then on March 15 the Butler County ARC will hold it's second annual techfest. This event is a free event to promote interest in the many facets of amateur radio. Additional information on the techfest is available at http://www.qsl.net/w3udx/BCARA_Techfest.pdf and finally the Two Rivers ARC will sponsor it's hamfest on March 23. The Breezeshooters ARC is once again sponsoring it's popular 10 meter ground wave contest. This year's event is scheduled for February 22 for the CW contest and March 22 for the SSB portion. Information and rules for the contest is available at <http://www.breezeshooters.net/contest/contest.htm> join in the fun and I hope to work you all on 10 meters. Many individuals in the section have taken the opportunity to participate in the various emergency communications courses. A federal grant made it possible for individuals completing the level one online course to be reimbursed for the fee. Now another grant recently made available the opportunity for reimbursement of the fees associated with level two and three courses. These courses are a tremendous opportunity to learn more about the operation that may become necessary should another terrorist attack or war with Iraq come to pass. At the recent Board of Directors meeting the volunteer resources committee made a recommendation that leaders be required to complete different levels of the courses depending on the position they hold in the ARES and NTS teams. I support these recommendations and with a total reimbursement now available I encourage everyone to take advantage of the opportunity. If you need additional information on any of the courses contact myself at n3mse@arrl.org or Jeff Leach n3yea@arrl.net.

Join the WPA Phone and traffic net nightly at 6 PM on 3983 khz. 73 John Rodgers N3MSE W. Pa Section Manager n3mse@arrl.org

==>ARRL EXPRESSES MIXED FEELINGS ON SPECTRUM POLICY TASK FORCE REPORT

The ARRL has registered some mixed feelings about the FCC's Spectrum Policy Task Force Report issued late last November. In comments to the FCC this week, the League called the report "a positive first step" in developing a comprehensive national spectrum management approach. At the same time, the ARRL said, the SPTF Report "fails to address the needs and goals" of the Amateur Service and urged the FCC to not abandon longstanding allocation policies based on engineering.

"Overall, ARRL asks that the Commission not adopt the SPTF Report in toto, but rather use it as a basis for future planning on an ongoing basis," the League said January 27 in its comments in ET Docket 02-135. "Spectrum policy reform should be viewed as an ongoing process, not as a wholesale paradigm shift to be accomplished in half a year." The ARRL said the report's orientation toward commercial services makes it not wholly applicable to the Amateur Service. Among other factors, the League said, services such as public safety and Amateur Radio cannot pay for spectrum access.

Cautioning the FCC to not continue an apparent "rush to judgment," the ARRL said there's not been enough time to study the report's recommendations thoroughly, much less deploy them immediately. The League also warned against basing allocation policy on anticipated advances in technology.

The ARRL again called on the FCC to consider greater use of "negotiated rulemaking" to expedite allocation decisions. "Instead of acting as the judge and jury, the Commission could act as more of a facilitator among competitors for spectrum," the League said.

In terms of sharing schemes, the ARRL said it supports "to a limited extent" the concept of "interference temperature" calculations and measurements. But, it pointed to the 2400-2450 MHz band as "an example of a failing attempt at inter-service sharing" that some predictive calculations might have alleviated. The ARRL said the explosion of Part 15 devices coupled with relaxed rules on power, antenna gain and duty cycles of high-powered unlicensed devices "has rendered the band unusable in some areas."

Once again asserting that the FCC "has pushed the Part 15 concept beyond the point that it works," the ARRL took advantage of the comment opportunity to again express its view that unlicensed devices "cannot be authorized by the Commission under current statutes" without first determining that they do not pose a significant interference potential to licensed radio services.

The ARRL's comments on the FCC's Spectrum Policy Task Force Report in ET Docket 02-135 are available on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/et02-135/arrl-comments.html>>. The report itself is available from the FCC Web site <http://www.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2002/db1115/DOC-228542A1.doc>

==>FCC WARNS UNLICENSED OPS, RESCINDS REPEATER'S AUTOMATIC CONTROL AUTHORITY

The FCC has sent warning notices to 10 individuals--eight of them Amateur Radio licensees--for operating without a license in the 11-meter band. All but one of the operators live in the Greater New York City area.

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"Such operation will subject you to fine or imprisonment, as well as an in rem seizure of radio transmitting equipment, in cooperation with the United States Attorney for your jurisdiction," FCC Special Counsel Riley Hollingsworth wrote January 15. He cited "monitoring information before the Commission" indicating that the individuals were transmitting on 26.540 and/or 26.555 MHz, frequencies allocated for government use. Fines for unlicensed operation can run as high as \$10,000.

In other enforcement actions, the FCC rescinded the automatic control authority of a repeater operated by Daniel Granda, KA6VHC, of Whittier, California. The action means a control operator must be present at all times at the control point of the KA6VHC repeater. FCC Los Angeles District Director Catherine Deaton wrote Granda January 13 to say the action was being taken because Granda's repeater was under review by the Enforcement Bureau for apparent violations of the FCC's rules. Alleged violations include obscene and indecent communications, inadequate station control and deliberate interference.

Deaton told Granda that--under threat of fines and revocation proceedings--he may not operate his repeater under automatic control until the enforcement allegations are cleared up.

Last October, the FCC dismissed Granda's complaint against the KD6ZLZ and WA6NJJ repeaters on 223.82 and 223.84 MHz. The FCC told Granda that his 16-year-old coordination document "was insufficient to establish coordination" and that he bears primary responsibility for preventing interference to the two repeaters because he cannot show current coordination. Granda has told the FCC that he's been using the two frequencies "continuously for over 25 years." Hollingsworth told Granda, however, that, even if he were properly coordinated 16 years ago, "coordination is not a lifetime grant" nor a de facto frequency assignment.

The FCC said it continues to receive complaints about deliberate interference from Granda's station to the two repeaters as well as allegations of obscene and/or indecent speech. It's asked Granda to respond to the complainants. In addition, the Commission wants Granda to provide "a detailed plan" to prevent interference to the KD6ZLZ and WA6NJJ repeaters or risk enforcement action. Noting that Granda's license expires next November 9, Hollingsworth said the FCC would not act upon a renewal application until the enforcement issues were resolved.

The FCC also wrote a Florida amateur, John S. Gregory, W3ATE, letting him know that the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau had set aside his General-class upgrade on December 4. As a result, Gregory reverts to a Tech Plus licensee. The action, the FCC said, was based on complaints that Gregory--on more than one occasion in 2002--had operated his station on 20 meters while still licensed as a Technician. The FCC issued Warning Notices to Gregory last May and June but said both were returned as "unclaimed."

The FCC gave Gregory 20 days to explain the alleged operation. "Failure to respond will result in the dismissal of your application," Hollingsworth concluded.

==>FCC INVITES COMMENTS ON AMATEUR-RELATED PETITION

Comments are due February 28 on another Petition for Rulemaking filed by Dale Reich, K8AD, of Seville, Ohio.

Reich has petitioned the FCC to require sellers of two-way voice or data equipment to keep on file a buyer's name, address, telephone number and "any future information when selling a radio that required licensing under the current FCC rules." Information collected would remain private, available only to the FCC or law enforcement. Reich said in his petition that, under his proposal, any retail vendor would be able to ask local police to investigate if the retailer suspected that the radios were not going to be used in compliance with the law.

A separate petition would require "ownership and license tagging" for gear operating under Parts 5, 15, 18, 74, 80, 90, 95 and 97, including call sign, owner's name and address and any FCC file number. It would include CB, Family Radio Service, Multi-Use Radio Service and General Mobile Radio Service gear. In his petition, Reich said such tagging used to be an FCC requirement and that his proposed change was long overdue as a needed tool for local law enforcement.

The FCC has lumped both petitions into one, designated as RM-10641. The full text of Reich's petitions is available on the FCC Web site <http://gulfoss2.fcc.gov/prod/ecfs/retrieve.cgi?native_or_pdf=pdf&id_document=6513398853>

In an earlier petition, designated RM-10620, Reich had asked the Commission to upgrade Novice and Advanced license holders to the "next" license class if the licensee has 20 or more years of operating experience. Reich said such test-free upgrades would compensate for "the previous tougher exam that was past administered" and give credit for violation-free service records. Before the comment window for Reich's earlier petition closed January 17, it attracted more than 150 comments from the amateur community.

==>AMATEUR RADIO COMMUNITY MOURNS LOSS OF COLUMBIA ASTRONAUTS

The flags of the United States, the ARRL and the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) are flying at half staff at ARRL Headquarters as the Amateur Radio community has joined the rest of the world in mourning the loss of the seven shuttle Columbia astronauts. Through the Space Amateur Radio EXperiment (SAREX) and, more recently, the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) programs, amateurs have enjoyed a special relationship with the astronaut corps, many of whom are licensees. Three of the Columbia astronauts were Amateur

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Radio operators, and the ARISS program is a joint effort of ARRL, AMSAT and NASA.

"The ultimate in public service was just given by these astronauts," said ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP. "It's a sad thing that's occurred, and our thoughts are with the families of the astronauts who died doing what they loved. They were part of us."

Haynie, who was in Florida last weekend for the Miami Tropical Hamboree, said the news of the Columbia incident cast a pall over the festivities. "You could feel it in the crowd," he said. Haynie led those attending the ARRL forum in a moment of silence in remembrance of the lost crew members.

The STS-107 crew, headed by Commander Rick Husband, included Pilot Willie McCool, Mission Specialists Kalpana "KC" Chawla, KD5ESI; David Brown, KC5ZTC; Laurel Clark, KC5ZSU, Michael Anderson, and Payload Specialist Ilan Ramon, the first Israeli astronaut.

"The world has lost seven great heroes," said ARISS International Chairman Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, a NASA employee, in extending condolences to the families and friends of the STS-107 crew. Bauer said the Columbia catastrophe "clearly demonstrated the challenging and sometimes sobering aspects" of human spaceflight.

"Our quest for space must continue despite these tragic losses," he said.

ARRL and the ARISS Team received condolences from all over the globe. AMSAT-NA President Robin Haighton, VE3FRH--one of two Canadian ARISS representatives--expressed his great sadness at learning of the Columbia disaster. "AMSAT has always been a strong supporter of the shuttle program and of ARISS," he said "Their understanding of the risks taken on this and other missions did not prevent them from performing at the highest level and, unfortunately, paying the ultimate price," he said of the lost crew.

Ken Pulfer, VE3PU, the other Canadian delegate to the ARISS International Team, said he was overwhelmed by the tragedy, both in sympathy for his US friends and because he had met so many of the astronauts himself. It was Pulfer who convinced the Canadian government to establish an astronaut corps of its own. "My condolences go out to all Americans at this time," he said, calling February 1 "a sad, sad day indeed."

ARISS International Secretary Rosalie White, K1STO, recalled meeting "KC" Chawla at an ARISS meeting at Johnson Space Center. "Kalpana was intelligent, quiet--a professional scientist with a genuine smile," she said. She also noted that Laurel Clark had done some "terrestrial SAREX QSOs" from W5RRR at Johnson Space Center with students in Kansas and New Mexico. The "terrestrial" SAREX QSOs took place at a time when the demand from

schools for radio contacts with astronauts was high but the number of scheduled shuttle flights was very low.

Built in 1981, Columbia was the oldest shuttle in NASA's fleet and was the first to carry Amateur Radio. Retired astronaut Owen Garriott, W5LFL, became the first ham to operate from space in November 1983. Thousands heard W5LFL, and hundreds had direct QSOs with him on 2 meters. Refurbished in 1999, Columbia was on its 28th space mission. Columbia carried no Amateur Radio gear on its last mission into space, however.

==>HAMS ASSIST IN SEARCH FOR COLUMBIA DEBRIS

In Texas this week, Amateur Radio Emergency Service and SKYWARN volunteers have been assisting federal, state and local officials and relief organizations in their search for shuttle Columbia debris and remains of the crew members.

"Ham radio has proven to be the only reliable communications options during the recovery effort," said Public Information Officer Tim Lewallen, KD5ING, of the Nacogdoches Amateur Radio Club. "The communications systems used by other federal and state organizations cannot penetrate 'The Pine Curtain' as we know it in East Texas," he said. He said even local authorities were having problems with their radio gear.

Lewallen says federal authorities have requested that every survey team have at least one Amateur Radio operator along to help keep the recovery efforts coordinated and organized.

Lewallen also cited the reliability of EchoLink connections among the various groups as key to getting the operation up and running and keeping it running smoothly. He suggested that prospective volunteers visit the North Texas Section Web site <<http://www.arrrl.org/sections/?sect=NTX>> for additional information.

Alan Hayes, NE5AH, in the ARRL South Texas Section said February 6 that hams were urgently needed to assist in the search and recovery effort in the San Augustine County area east of Lufkin, site of the debris search command center at the Department of Public Safety. Hayes said a substantial amount of the debris recovery yet to be done--he estimates 50 percent--is in San Augustine County, which has few active hams. Debris from the Columbia has been recovered in more than three dozen Texas counties, and the search now has moved into parts of Arizona and California.

"We currently have the infrastructure and portable repeaters in place, thanks to all of the volunteer efforts from outside of our area," Hayes said. Volunteers have been making use of a portable repeater donated by the Garland Amateur Radio Club and set up at in San Augustine.

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"To date, Amateur Radio has proven to be the only reliable communications in this area of operations, and approximately 25 operators per day have been needed," Hayes concluded. "Thus far, alternative communications from sources other than Amateur Radio have not been successful."

Hayes says that two dozen or more operators are needed each day, and he expects that need to continue for the next three weeks. Prospective volunteers may get in touch with South Texas Section Emergency Coordinator Bob Ehrhardt, W5ZX <w5zx@yahoo.com>.

Other agencies involved in the effort include the Texas Department of Public Safety, Texas Department of Transportation, the FBI, local law enforcement and fire departments and National Guard units from Texas and elsewhere. Relief organizations include the American Red Cross, The Salvation Army and the Texas Baptist Men's Kitchen. The Salvation Army also has been using Amateur Radio for its communication needs.

Hams also assisted students and staffers from the Humanities Undergraduate Environmental Sciences (HUES) Geographic Information Systems and Forestry Resources Institute labs at Stephen F. Austin State University.

Several amateurs in Texas reported hearing a reverberating, rumbling sound as the Columbia broke up above them and debris began to rain down on the landscape. "Very scary," said Ralston Gober, W5ZNN, of Corsicana, Texas. "It shook the heck out of my house and shack!"

==>SHUTTLE LOSS IMPACTING AMATEUR RADIO IN SPACE

The future of Amateur Radio in space--at least in the near term--could depend on how fast NASA pins down the cause of the February 1 shuttle Columbia disaster and fixes the problem. With the shuttle fleet grounded until it does--and further International Space Station construction on hold as a result--attention is turning to the well-being of the all-ham ISS Expedition 6 crew of Commander Ken Bowersox, KD5JBP, Don Pettit, KD5MDT, and Nikolai Budarin, RV3FB. Three of the Columbia astronauts also were Amateur Radio operators.

Under normal circumstances, a shuttle mission next month would have brought a fresh crew to the ISS and returned Bowersox and his crewmates to Earth. With a Progress 10 cargo rocket delivery February 4, the Expedition 6 team now has sufficient supplies to sustain the crew until late June or early July if necessary, NASA said this week.

What happens beyond that remains up in the air, although NASA has said it would not mothball the ISS and leave the spacecraft without a crew. The extended stay could have an unintended consequence for Amateur Radio, however, since

the temporarily stranded crew would be likely to have more spare time on its hands.

NAISS onboard the ISS represents the first permanent Amateur Radio station in space. The Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) International Team recently announced plans to expand NAISS to include, among other things, separate stations for 2 meters and 70 cm and SSTV capabilities. ARISS is an international program with participation by ARRL, AMSAT and NASA.

An ARISS contact set for February 6 with students at a high school in Germany was postponed, although the ARISS contact schedule is expected to resume later this month. "The German school QSO was postponed because of the Columbia accident and the re-planning taking place for ISS," said ARISS International Chairman Frank Bauer, KA3HDO. Bauer said the crew's having to unload a ton of equipment from the Progress rocket also was a factor. He said he's expecting further clarification from NASA regarding future ARISS school QSOs.

NASA reports that Bowersox, Budarin and Pettit paid a private tribute February 4 to Columbia's astronauts. NASA ISS flight controllers radioed the crew an audio feed from the memorial ceremony at the Johnson Space Center in Houston.

Additional information on the crew's activities aboard the ISS is available on NASA's Human Spaceflight Web site <<http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/>>.

The crippling of the US shuttle fleet has shifted formerly unanticipated demands on Russia and its meagerly funded space program, since Russian supplies the Soyuz capsules that now serve as emergency escape vehicles for the ISS crew.

"If we have the money, we can build new [Soyuz] capsules," Russian space official and former cosmonaut Valery Ryumin assured this week. But, more money or no, Soyuz vehicles cannot carry cargo or experiments. The Russians also have temporarily scrapped their "space tourist" program, which they had been promoting to raise much-needed additional funds. Businessmen Dennis Tito, KG6FZX, and Mark Shuttleworth each paid an estimated \$20 million to fill the third Soyuz seat and spend a week aboard the ISS. 'N Sync pop singer Lance Bass, KG4UYY, had been considered a possible candidate for an April Soyuz taxi flight.

Now, the Soyuz could become the principal crew transport vehicle for the ISS, although no decision has been made on whether the April taxi flight now will be used to carry out the crew change.

==>FIELD DAY GETS A NEW ENTRY CLASS FOR 2003

Field Day will gain another entry class for the 2003 running of this highly popular operating event June 28-29. "Class F"

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stations will operate at emergency operations centers--or EOCs. The change renews the emphasis of Field Day's 1933 origins as an emergency preparedness exercise as opposed to a routine contest--what former ARRL Communications Manager F. E. Handy, W1BDI, called "a test of the emergency availability of portable stations and equipment." In Handy's view, Field Day would focus attention "on the subject of 'preparedness' for communications emergencies."

ARRL Contest Branch Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND, says the League last year received a record 2110 Field Day entries from groups and individuals. That represented a total of almost 35,000 participants who joined in what Henderson called "a great tradition."

Given the increased emphasis on emergency communications since September 11, 2001, Henderson says, the ARRL Board's Membership Services Committee asked that the Contest Branch come up with a way to accommodate stations wanting to operate from the local EOC. The new Class F station, operating from an EOC, is the result.

"This is a major change," Henderson said. "Class F has been established to encourage groups to test and further their working relationships with established emergency operations centers." The updated rules and a list of frequently asked questions in the new 2003 Field Day Packet <<http://www.arrl.org/contests/forms>> spell out the details.

A Class F entry station must set up at an "established EOC" activated by a club or non-club group. An EOC is defined as a facility established by a federal, state, county, city or other civil governmental agency or administrative entity or by a chapter of a national or international served agency. The latter could include the American Red Cross or The Salvation Army, with which the Field Day group "has an established operating arrangement." Class F EOC operation must take place in cooperation with the EOC staff. Class F stations are eligible for the same bonus points as Class A stations.

There's also been what Henderson called "some tweaking" in the rules for Field Day 2003. Among the highlights, the rules reduce from 400 to 100 the number of QSOs that the "Get On The Air" (GOTA) station needs to make to claim a 100-point bonus. "GOTA stations still may work up to a maximum of 400 QSOs to go towards the main station's score," Henderson said.

In addition, the 2003 rules enhance the bonus for having an invited official visit the Field Day site. There are now two separate bonus categories--100 points for the elected official and another 100 points for a visit by a representative of a served agency.

Henderson reminds Field Day participants that stations do not get additional bonus points for contacting stations through additional satellites. As of the 2002 event, Field Day opened

up to stations throughout the Americas, not just in the US and Canada.

Henderson encourages participants to post their Field Day experiences and photographs to the Field Day Online soapbox <<http://www.arrl.org/contests/soapbox/>>.

==>SIX-YEAR-OLD OREGON GIRL GETS GENERAL TICKET

A six-year-old girl from Roseburg, Oregon, has upgraded from Technician to General. Mattie Clauson, KD7TYN--a fourth-generation Amateur Radio operator in her family--could be the youngest General-class operator in the US. Her new ticket was granted January 13.

Mattie allowed that the Element 3 test "was pretty hard" and she had to study for a long time before passing it on her third attempt. "The Element 3 test was a lot harder than the Tech test," she said. She was ambivalent about the 5 WPM Element 1 Morse code exam, characterizing it as "not too hard, just a little, but kind of easy too."

Her parents, Tim and Charlotte Clauson, AC7SP and KD7QZB, say Mattie became interested in Amateur Radio when she was five. The Clausons discovered "a kid-friendly study book," Ride the Airwaves with Alpha and Zulu by John Abbott, K6YPB (no longer in print--Ed). The Clausons say Mattie, who already knew how to read, dove into it right away. Her mom and dad helped her to study, explained the "hard questions" and encouraged her to take practice tests at various Web sites. She obtained her Technician license last July and became KD7SDF.

The Clausons said Mattie learned Morse code using several different computer programs, and they helped her practice by tapping out letters--and later words--for her. In the end, she passed her code exam on the very first try. For the time being, Mattie says, she's sticking with phone operation but plans to give CW a try in the future. Mattie says she prefers HF over VHF "because I can talk to people in other countries."

Homeschooled with her sisters, Mattie loves to read, and that may contribute to her precocity. Among her favorites books are those by Cynthia Wall, KA7ITT, Encyclopedia Brown, and Nancy Drew. Her parents say ham radio has been a very useful tool in homeschooling--in terms of letter recognition, spelling, science, geography and other subjects.

The Clausons say Mattie doesn't consider herself "someone special" since passing her General test, and neither do they. "We do not feel that Mattie has any abilities above any other child," Charlotte Clauson said.

For her part, Mattie says she hopes that she can be an inspiration to other youngsters her age to get involved with Amateur Radio. "I think that since I got my license, whether Tech or higher, other kids can do it also," she said. Mattie's

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late great grandfather, S.A. "Sam" Sullivan, was W6WXU; his daughter, Joan Brady--Mattie's grandmother--now holds his former call sign.

"The ham community has also been very supportive, especially in the Roseburg area," said Charlotte Clauson. "Their enthusiasm has made Mattie's experience with ham radio very positive." A article on Mattie Clauson appeared February 3 in the Statesman Journal of Salem, Oregon <<http://news.statesmanjournal.com/article.cfm?i=56021>>.

Tim, Charlotte and Mattie Clauson all are ARRL members. Mattie and her mom now are working on their Amateur Extra tickets.

==>ISS CREW COMMENTS PUBLICLY ON COLUMBIA, DIGS IN FOR POSSIBLE LONG STAY

The members of the all-ham crew onboard the International Space Station said this week that while they grieve the loss of the shuttle Columbia crew, human space exploration must continue and they're ready to spend up to a year in space if necessary. The ISS crew made its first public comments since the February 1 shuttle disaster in two news conferences this week.

"My first reaction was pure shock," Expedition 6 crew commander Ken Bowersox, KD5JBP, told reporters February 11, when asked about how he felt when he heard the news that Columbia and her crew were lost. "I was numb and could not believe that it was happening." During serial briefings February 12 with CNN, ABC, CBS and NBC, Bowersox and his crew reiterated their resolve to stay the course, remaining in space for up to a year if necessary.

Bowersox said that once it became unlikely that there were any survivors from the Columbia catastrophe, "we discussed all of the different options for how it would affect us." He said he was confident that the crew would have a way to get home. "We've got a Soyuz vehicle parked right outside," he said.

Pettit--who had played chess via radio and e-mail with Columbia pilot Willie McCool during the Columbia STS-107 science mission--said he's hoped the crew somehow had made it safely to the ground. He said the magnitude of the tragedy hit him when the ISS crew realized that there were no survivors. "I'm the type that likes to grieve quietly and in private," he said February 12.

Budarin said he's comfortable with staying in orbit as long as necessary, now that NASA has indefinitely grounded the shuttle fleet. The Russian cosmonaut told a CBS reporter that he has experienced seven months in orbit before aboard Mir, and that he's hoping for a good landing back on Earth--whether via the US space shuttle or the Russian Soyuz escape vehicle that's attached to the space station.

Bowersox said the crew was happy to stay aboard the ISS. "We like it aboard space station," he said. "We're going to enjoy however many months we have to stay on orbit." Bowersox said February 12 the crew did not feel isolated and had plenty of contact with family and friends and that, while not operating at peak efficiency, the crew members would continue to move forward with the "serious tasks" ahead of them. "We'll be working through that grieving process for the rest of the time we're here, I think."

Pettit, the Expedition 6 science officer, said the crew's work schedule has suffered from the effects of the Columbia tragedy. "But now, it looks like we'll have plenty of time to finish all that we have remaining on our task list," he added.

Pettit said that cutting the crew size would hurt scientific research because the crew would spend a lot more of its time just maintaining the ISS. But, he pointed out, research into how humans cope physiologically in space would continue and would make the risk of human spaceflight worthwhile. "This is a matter where you can decide as a society can decide to lead the way, step aside or follow," Pettit told NBC News anchorman Tom Brokaw. Space exploration is "an investment in your future, and, as such, you can't let a setback stop your exploration activities."

The Expedition 6 crew has been aboard the ISS since November and was scheduled to return to Earth aboard the shuttle Atlantis in March. Unmanned Progress cargo rockets, including one that docked February 4, are providing fuel and supplies. On February 11, the crew used the Progress to boost the stations' orbit by about six miles (the ISS is approximately 250 miles above Earth). The crew reportedly has sufficient provisions to last at least until June. A Soyuz taxi crew is scheduled to visit the ISS in April to drop off a new Soyuz capsule and return the one now attached to the ISS.

The crew has not used the NA1SS onboard ham station since the last Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) school contact in January. The next scheduled ARISS contact is set for February 21, with students at Oregon State University.

==>TEXAS AMATEURS STAND DOWN IN COLUMBIA DEBRIS SEARCH

Ham radio support for the shuttle Columbia debris search and recovery effort in Nacogdoches and San Augustine counties in Texas wrapped up February 12. US Forest Service personnel were scheduled to assume the support role hams had filled in East Texas for nearly two weeks.

"I must say the amateurs were very professional and very dedicated to assist in any manner," said South Texas Section Emergency Coordinator Bob Ehrhardt, W5ZX. "Even after a day in the bush, they would come back in to the ops center and say they were ready for another day."

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Ehrhardt said the weather often was rainy and cold with some sleet. "The brambles and briars in the forest did not help," he added. "The agencies that they worked with were very surprised and pleased with Amateur Radio. I know that we changed several minds that we could get the job done."

Jim Lawyer, AA5QX, a Dallas-area amateur who'd helped to organize Amateur Radio search-and-recovery support in Nacogdoches County also expressed his appreciation. "To all who offered to assist and for those who were able to serve, thank you for being part of the solution!" he said. In addition to communication support, hams used GPS and computer mapping software to pin down and report the locations of debris items as they were sighted.

Nacogdoches County ARES Emergency Coordinator Kenneth Hughes, KK5BE, said he was "very proud" of the local ARES members who responded to the call for volunteers. "Twelve days of operation is hard to keep all things going well," he said.

Kevin Anderson, KD5CCH, of Nacogdoches he was proud of the support East Texas amateurs were able to provide. "This has been a rather large team effort," he said. "Under the extremely complicated and sensitive circumstances in which we have operated, we came together and pulled off a rather huge task based on the scope of the operations in which we were called upon to participate and the type of services we were asked to provide."

Lawyer says that preliminary numbers reported February 13 during a debriefing net in Nacogdoches indicated that 198 amateurs logged in at one time or another in Nacogdoches County and 148 in San Augustine County. Lawyer says an estimated 80 percent of the participating amateurs were from outside the two counties. "It took all of us to make it happen, and without all of us, it wouldn't have been the success that it was," Lawyer said. "You have reason to be proud that you are 'amateurs'--those who do it for the love of it."

==>HARMONIZED 7 MHz ALLOCATION GAINS SUPPORT IN THE AMERICAS

A dozen countries in the Americas have agreed to support a proposal for a "harmonized" 300-kHz amateur band in the vicinity of 7 MHz. The issue of a uniform worldwide 40-meter allocation is on the agenda of the World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 (WRC-03), set to be held in Geneva this June and July. The US has so far taken no position on the issue.

"It is possible that other countries will sign on when this proposal is circulated among all 34 member-states of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL)," said ARRL Technical Relations Specialist Jon Siverling, WB3ERA. "It takes at least six countries of the Organization of American States to make an Inter-American Proposal

(IAP). If more countries sign on, the IAP will have greater weight at WRC-03."

Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela agreed to the Canadian-sponsored IAP for a 300-kHz amateur band--from 7 to 7.3 MHz—in all three ITU radio regions. That position is in line with what the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) has been calling for.

The support came during a meeting of CITEL's Permanent Consultative Committee for Radiocommunications (PCC.II-RADIO) Working Group, which is preparing Inter-American Proposals for WRC-03. PCC.II-Radio met February 3-7 in Orlando, Florida. Fourteen CITEL member states attended the Orlando session.

Siverling has been chair of so-called Chapter 5 issues for CITEL, leading up to WRC-03, which he will also attend. Chapter 5 issues include the Maritime Mobile, Amateur and Amateur-Satellite and Broadcasting services in the MF and HF bands.

Another matter on the WRC-03 agenda is possible changes to Articles 25, 19 and 1 to the international Radio Regulations. Fifteen countries--Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, the US, Uruguay and Venezuela--signed an IAP favorable to the Amateur Service. The US signed the IAP but withheld support on two of the 18 specific provisions.

Siverling explained that the IAP approved at Orlando conforms with IARU positions on the three articles. Article 25 covers technical requirements and operator qualifications, including Morse code proficiency--which could be left up to individual administrations to require following WRC-03; Article 19 covers call sign configurations, and Article 1 deals with issues consequent to any changes to Article 25.

Twelve CITEL countries agreed in Orlando on an IAP to propose a "footnote allocation" of 135.7-137.8 kHz to amateurs in Region 2. This band is already available to amateurs in some CEPT countries.

The 136-kHz issue came up as a Canadian proposal to create a secondary allocation, but the issue is not on the WRC-03 agenda. According to Siverling, International Telecommunication Union (ITU) member-states want to eliminate or minimize footnotes in the Radio Regulations. The IAP for a "footnote allocation" at 136 kHz, however, was seen as a way to get the issue on the WRC-03 agenda "on an exception basis," he said.

Siverling explained that the CITEL IAP leading to a possible allocation in Region 2 of the 136-kHz band at WRC-03 has been handled separately from the pending US amateur LF

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allocation. Acting on an ARRL request, the FCC has proposed a domestic (US-only) allocation at 136 kHz on a non-interference basis. "At some point, the twain will meet," Siverling said.

==>HOLLINGSWORTH PREACHES COURTESY, COMMON SENSE

FCC Special Counsel Riley Hollingsworth told those attending his forum at the Richmond, Virginia, Frostfest February 9 that Amateur Radio enforcement still has a long way to go, but that amateurs can do a lot through peer pressure to head off problems before they become enforcement issues.

"Enforcement is no substitute for courtesy and common sense," Hollingsworth declared. "More courtesy would go a long way. Hollingsworth again suggested that amateurs "operate so that listeners will be impressed with Amateur Radio," not offended or turned off by it. He said awareness of Amateur Radio is on the rise in the wake of media attention since September 11, 2001, and, more recently, with ham radio assistance in the search for debris from the shuttle Columbia. He pointed to 20 and 75 meters as the current enforcement hot spots as well as the bands where the least courteous operating practices are found--some of which he described as "a disgrace" to the Amateur Service.

Off-the-air peer pressure, he said, is an effective tool to provide guidance to amateurs who may be unaware of how they sound to others on the air. The reactions of some hams when they confront interference—or perceived interference--can be worse than the original interference--whether or not it's deliberate. "Don't overreact," Hollingsworth advised. "The best reaction is no reaction whatsoever."

"You have to always be aware of your image and be willing to protect it," he told those gathered in the packed forum. "You can't shoot yourself in the foot." More than 1000 attended the Richmond Frostfest, sponsored by the Richmond Amateur Telecommunications Society <<http://www.rats.net/>>.

The use of new technology and on-the-air experimentation also sometimes brings controversy to the amateur bands, Hollingsworth said, and may prompt an occasion for the FCC to revisit its current Part 97 Amateur Service rules. Hollingsworth pointed to the use of so-called "enhanced SSB," where experimenters have been attempting to achieve full-carrier AM-like high-fidelity audio in that mode. Hollingsworth said the presence of the enhanced SSB experimenters has led to complaints to the FCC—as many as 20 per week--that these signals are taking up excessive bandwidth.

Hollingsworth told his Richmond audience that deliberately operating a wideband mode in a crowded spectrum is "shortsighted and rude," may be ignoring the "minimum bandwidth necessary" rule. If its use isn't accompanied by

courtesy and common sense, he said, it will lead to pressure on the FCC to revise the Amateur Service rules.

The "Emission Standards" section of Part 97--specifically §97.307(a) and (b)--requires amateur transmissions to not occupy "more bandwidth than necessary for the information rate and emission type being transmitted, in accordance with good amateur practice" and to "not cause splatter" on adjacent frequencies.

Hollingsworth said the bandwidth of a given signal is not easily determined by the average amateur transceiver--even one equipped with a band scope of some sort. He pointed out that the problems with apparent splatter can be aggravated by the use of a noise blanker on the receiving end. "Just because it sounds wide doesn't mean I is wide," he said, adding that he'd prefer the amateur community come up a way to accommodate such experimentation, because "a government solution will be worse than the problem."

==>ARISS CONTACT WITH JAPANESE SCHOOL FIRST SINCE COLUMBIA TRAGEDY

Pupils at an elementary school in Japan have been the first youngsters to speak to the astronauts aboard the International Space Station since the shuttle Columbia tragedy. The contact took place February 18 between 8N3HES at the Hirano Elementary School and astronaut Don Pettit, KD5MDT, at the controls of NA1SS. The direct 2-meter contact was arranged by the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) program, which has been on hold since the shuttle catastrophe.

No one asked any questions about the Columbia tragedy during the approximately 10-minute contact that was marred by some communication difficulty. An audience of approximately 180 people--essentially the entire school plus several reporters--was on hand for the ARISS contact. Pettit managed to answer eight of the nine questions put to him by the fifth and sixth graders

One student wanted to know what Pettit would bring with him if he had to live in space for the rest of his life. "I would hope to bring my whole family," Pettit responded. "I would bring my wife and my children and we would live in space together."

Because of the Columbia disaster, the mission of the Expedition 6 crew members already has been extended until at least June. It had been scheduled to end next month.

Other students asked questions relating to everyday life aboard the space station, including how the crew gets rid of its trash. Pettit explained that after putting the trash into airtight bags, it's loaded on an empty Progress cargo supply rocket and sent back into Earth's atmosphere. "It's the ultimate means of recycling your garbage," he said.

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Pettit told the youngsters that it's "nice and warm" aboard the space station--about 22 degrees Centigrade--but that the crew could set the temperature to whatever they desired.

One student asked what the crew would do if someone became ill. "Fortunately no one has become sick on our mission, so we haven't had to worry about that," Pettit replied. He said that in the case of sickness among the crew, the crew would contact flight surgeons on Earth to get advice. He also explained that the crew has a medical kit on board for those kinds of situation.

ARISS is an international project with participation by ARRL, AMSAT and NASA.

==>IN BRIEF:

*** Hams provide assistance following plane crash:** After two small planes collided and crashed January 24 over Denver's West Highland neighborhood, Amateur Radio operators were among those on hand to assist. Five persons onboard the two aircraft were killed, and seven on the ground were treated for minor injuries. One plane came down near an apartment complex occupied mostly by retired older adults. The other landed in a backyard. The Salvation Army's Emergency Disaster Services (EDS) Metro Denver team was called in to provide canteen services. Metro Denver EDS Supervisor Mike Gelski, KB0PVD, contacted team volunteers to prepare two canteens. Gelski reports that during the response, nine members of the Denver Radio Club provided Amateur Radio communication between two feeding stations as well as with the Denver command post and the Salvation Army command post. Canteen services were concluded the following evening after aircraft debris was removed from both crash locations.

*** Prompt action by Amateur Radio operators helps save lives:** As ARRL member Joe Giraudo, N7JEH, was on his long, daily commute to his office at a mining corporation outside Elko, Nevada, he came upon a car that had skidded on "black ice" and rolled over a number of times in isolated valley north of Carlin. A bus carrying emergency medical technicians to the mine had already arrived, and the EMTs were mobilizing to treat the three accident victims. Giraudo immediately called up the autopatch on the W7LKO 146.85 repeater to notify the Nevada Highway Patrol and the Carlin police and fire departments. He again used the autopatch so EMTs could relay situation reports to the responding emergency units. When the emergency units started arriving, they found they were unable to communicate using their own radios because of the local terrain. Again, the autopatch under Giraudo's control allowed them to communicate with their central dispatcher to coordinate other responding units, warn them of the black ice and request helicopter support. At one point the W7LKO autopatch went down, but Gene D'Asto, WA7BWF, immediately came up on the repeater and began relaying information via landline. After a 30 minute extraction effort, all three victims were taken by ambulance to

the Elko Regional Medical Center.--Dick Flanagan
W6OLD/Carson Valley Radio Club Carson Currents.

*** Viewing and commenting on petitions the FCC puts on public notice:** Members of the amateur community (and the general public) may comment via the Web or e-mail on any Petition for Rulemaking that the FCC has put on public notice and assigned a rulemaking (RM) number. Visit the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) page <<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>>, which includes detailed instructions. To view a petition and/or any comments filed, click on "Search for Filed Comments" on the right-hand side of the page and enter the RM number in the "Proceeding" field. You must enter "RM" in upper-case letters and include the hyphen followed by the appropriate five digits. To file comments, click on "Submit a Filing" on the right-hand side of the ECFS page or see the instructions on how to file comments via e-mail. A typical comment period runs 30 days from the date the FCC puts a petition on public notice.

*** Yugoslavia becomes Serbia-Montenegro:** Yugoslavia's parliament has voted to formally abolish that nation and replace it with a new country called Serbia-Montenegro, which were the two remaining Yugoslav republics. In accordance with a deal arranged by the European Union and aimed at keeping the two republics together, Serbia and Montenegro will continue to share a capital--Belgrade--and a joint administration for defense and foreign affairs. The new arrangement will have little immediate impact on Amateur Radio. For DXCC purposes, Serbia and Montenegro will be considered a single entity--at least for the time being--and amateurs there are expected to continue using YU/YT prefixes. The situation could change in three years when residents of the two republics would be allowed to vote to stick together or go their separate ways. Yugoslavia was established in 1918 as the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. DXCC criteria are available on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/awards/dxcc/rules.html#sii>>.

*** Atlantic Division seeks nominees for annual awards:** The ARRL Atlantic Division is seeking nominees for its 2003 awards for Amateur of the Year and Technical Achievement. The Amateur of the Year Award recognizes a ham in the division whose record merits recognition for outstanding contributions to the Amateur Radio Service. The Technical Achievement Award honors amateurs who contribute to the advancement of the radio art and whose attitude exemplifies the highest dedication to service to others and to science, rather than self. Groups of two or more Amateurs may be nominated for a joint award in this category. All nominations must be received by March 15, 2003. Visit the Atlantic Division Web site <<http://www.bfdin.net/atldiv/AtlAwards.htm>> to obtain an award nomination form and additional details. For more information, contact Atlantic Division Vice Director Bill Edgar, N3LLR, n3llr@arrl.org, or write him at 22 Jackson Ave, Bradford, PA 16701.

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*** ARISS chair begs patience regarding RS0ISS packet system:** The chairman of the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station international team, Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, is asking hams to be patient regarding resumption of the ISS packet operation. "Over the past few weeks the ARISS team has received numerous queries as to when the packet system will be turned back on," Bauer said. "We want to thank you all for your concern in getting this important capability up and running again." Bauer said ARISS has been working with NASA and Russian space officials to get the system operational again, but that the ISS crew has other priorities—especially in the wake of the Columbia tragedy. Bauer said that given the busy crew schedule, amateurs should not be surprised if the RS0ISS packet system is off the air for a bit longer. Once it's operational, he advised amateurs not to post messages to the crew since the crew has not had the opportunity to read the mail.

*** ARRL Certification and Continuing Education course registration:** Thanks to a new grant from ARRL's corporate partner, United Technologies Corporation, students successfully completing Level II and Level III on-line Amateur Radio Emergency Communications classes now are eligible for reimbursement of their \$45 registration fee. Registration for the grant-sponsored ARRL Level III Amateur Radio Emergency Communications (EC-003) and for the unsponsored HF Digital Communications (EC-005) courses opens Monday, February 17, 12:01 AM Eastern Standard Time (0501 UTC). Senior amateurs are especially encouraged to take advantage of the Amateur Radio Emergency Communications classes. Registration will remain open through Sunday, February 23 or until all seats have been filled. Classes begin Monday, February 24. No seats remain in the February registration period for the ARRL Level II Amateur Radio Emergency Communications (EC-002). Registration for the Antenna Modeling (EC-004) course remains open through Sunday, February 16. A new service now allows those interested in taking an ARRL Certification and Continuing Education (C-CE) course in the future to receive advance word of registration opportunities via e-mail. To take advantage, send an e-mail to prereg@arrl.org. On the subject line, include the course name or number (eg, EC-00#). In the message body, include your name, call sign, e-mail address, and the month you want to start the course. To learn more, visit the ARRL Certification and Continuing Education Web page <<http://www.arrl.org/cce>> and the C-CE Links found there. For more information, contact Certification and Continuing Education Program Coordinator Howard Robins, WIHSR, hrobins@arrl.org.

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