
B.V.A.R.A. QRM

W3SGJ

www.qsl.net/bvara

November 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

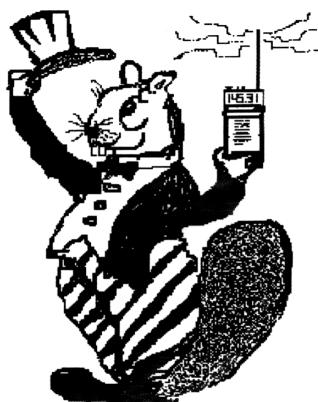
KB3EAQ.....Debbie Reid
N3GZZ.....Joe Streit
N3OJN.....Stan Riffle
N3ALS.....Wes Morar
N3SVM.....Bob Reid
WA3GFM...Al Belardia
KA3SMF.....Dave Heim
KE3ED.....Tony Petruccelli/Station Trustee

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

N3NBJ.....Janet Petruccelli

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 November Club meeting will be held on Thursday the 13th, 7:30 PM at the Beaver County Emergency Center, 250 East End Avenue, Beaver PA. Club Elections will be on the agenda. As usual the coffee will be on.

2004 DUES NOW DUE

Please note that the B.V.A.R.A. is now taking dues for 2004. You will find an application for renewal on the back of this newsletter. Please supply a completed application to our Treasurer Wes N3ALS with your dues so he may keep his records straight.

CLUB ELECTIONS

Nominations of Club Officers are now closed. At the October meeting Phyllis N3KUG withdrew her nomination for 2nd Vice-President. Therefore the slate will be as follows:

President – Debbie Reid KB3EAQ
 Vice President – Joe Streit N3GZZ
 2nd Vice President – Tom Merz N4KRA
 Treasurer – Wes Morar N3ALS
 Secretary – Bob Reid N3SVM

Since there are no opposing candidates for any offices a formal motion to accept the nominations will be made.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Final location plans for the 2003 B.V.A.R.A. Club Christmas party are at Maria's Restaurant in West Aliquippa on Saturday December 6th at 7:00 PM. We would like to let Maria's know how many of us to expect, so please advise us if you plan on attending. This will be a great help. Lots of surprises are planned. Also our "Ham of the Year" for 2003 will be announced.

QRM NEEDS NEW EDITOR

Due to time restraints the current editor of the QRM is "retiring" with the completion of the December 2003 issue. Anyone interested in taking over the QRM should contact Tony KE3ED or Debbie KB3EAQ.

BVARA PARTICIPATES IN PROVIDING COMMUNICATIONS FOR HIGH SCHOOL BAND COMPETITION

Members of the B.V.A.R.A. participated with the members of several other local radio clubs to provide communications for this years High School Band competition at the New Brighton

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High School football field. The event started at 8:00 AM and went on until 9:30 PM. The hub of the communications was the 145.31 W3SGJ/R repeater.

Debbie KB3EAQ expresses her thanks to all who participated in any way with the event and says we all look forward to operating again next year.

BVARA BAKE SALE

On Saturday October 25th the B.V.A.R.A. had a Bake Sale in front of the Merrill Lynch Building in Beaver, PA. Thanks to Debbie KB3EAQ and Phyllis N3KUG for running the sale which was a great success. Also a great thanks to Sam Spanos KB3JWU for inviting us to hold the sale in front of Merrill Lynch.

HAM OF THE YEAR BALLOTS

Please remember to send in your "Ham of the Year" ballot to Wes N3ALS. We want to know who you think was an outstanding "Ham" or Club participant. Ballots **must** reach Wes by the November Club meeting so that the plaque can be ready by the Club Christmas party.

==>ARRL REBUKES FCC COMMISSIONER'S "BROADBAND NIRVANA" REMARKS

The ARRL has strongly objected to FCC Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy's suggestion that Broadband over Power Line (BPL) technology will contribute to what she described as "broadband Nirvana." Addressing the United Powerline Council's annual conference September 22 in Arlington, Virginia, Abernathy expressed unabashed enthusiasm for BPL and recommended a combination of regulatory restraint and the elimination or substantial modification of existing rules as steps along the "path to Enlightenment," as she put it. In a terse response faxed September 25 on behalf of the League's 155,000 members, ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, asserted that Abernathy overlooked some significant issues in her Nirvana analogy.

"Nightmare is more like it," Sumner declared. "The technical showings submitted by the ARRL and others in response to the Commission's Notice of Inquiry (NOI) in ET Docket No. 03-104 clearly establish that BPL is a significant source of radio spectrum pollution. It cannot be implemented without causing harmful interference to over-the-air radio services."

Sumner told Abernathy that while BPL industry groups, such as the one she addressed this week, prefer to deny the evidence, the FCC is obliged to work to a higher standard.

In its comments in response to the FCC NOI, the League characterized BPL as "a Pandora's Box of unprecedented proportions" and said the Commission's Part 15 rules "should

be modified so as to prevent interference to users of the HF and low VHF spectrum" from the outset.

Abernathy's speech, "Reaching Broadband Nirvana," never broached the topic of BPL's potential to interfere with other radio services. Recently, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) <<http://www.ntia.doc.gov>>--which regulates spectrum allocated to federal government users--expressed "broad concerns" about interference to government users and launched an extensive modeling, analysis and measurement program for BPL. In his letter, Sumner reminded Abernathy that the radio spectrum is a precious natural resource.

"To squander that resource simply to add a redundant, unnecessary, and relatively poorly performing 'last mile' connection for consumers, is unconscionable," he said. Sumner expressed the hope that Abernathy will give the League an early opportunity to explain its BPL concerns to her in person.

In her remarks to the UPLC gathering, Abernathy contended that it's been regulatory restraint rather than heavy-handed regulation that has allowed nascent platforms such as direct broadcast satellite (DBS) to become competitively viable. "When the Commission completes this rulemaking," she said, "I expect that we will eliminate many existing rules and substantially modify others; the central question is the degree of regulation that will remain during the transition to a more robustly competitive market."

Individuals may e-mail Abernathy via her FCC Web site <<http://www.fcc.gov/commissioners/abernathy/mail.html>> or directly <kabernat@fcc.gov>. The text of her prepared remarks also is available on the FCC Web site <http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-239079A1.doc>.

The League's initial 120-page package of comments and technical exhibits <<http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/et03-104/>> and its reply comments <<http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/et03-104/replycomments-index.htm>> are available on the ARRL Web site. Additional information and BPL video clips are on the ARRL "Power Line Communications (PLC) and Amateur Radio" page <<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/>>.

To support the League's efforts in this area, visit the ARRL's secure BPL Web site <<https://www.arrl.org/forms/development/donations/bpl/>>.

To date, more than 4600 comments--many from the Amateur Radio community--have been filed in response to the FCC's BPL NOI. They are available for viewing via the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) <<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>>.

==>AMATEUR RADIO ENFORCEMENT "THE RILEY WAY" MARKS FIVE YEARS

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Close to 1000 Amateur Radio enforcement cases have crossed his desk since Riley Hollingsworth was tapped five years ago to resurrect the FCC's Amateur Radio enforcement efforts. That doesn't include countless ham radio "situations" he's resolved through informal counseling on the telephone or through an exchange of e-mails. At the time he took the job in the fall of 1998, Hollingsworth--whose official title is Special Counsel for Enforcement--called it "a new day for Amateur Radio" after years of amateur enforcement neglect on the Commission's part. As he sees things today, rules compliance and on-air behavior have improved since the new sheriff rode into town, but there's still lots to do.

"I'm fairly satisfied with the progress that we've made in five years," Hollingsworth said in modest acknowledgment of the milestone, "but I think we need at least five more years of this type--of this level--of enforcement, because the bands have quite a long way to go. It's no time to rest."

Five years ago, Hollingsworth began with a "top-10" list of alleged high-profile Amateur Radio offenders. By and large, he's slowly--and most would say successfully--worked his way to the point that many of today's cases appear comparatively mundane. But they get the same level of attention.

"The biggest problem we have now, I think, stems from conduct-type problems--lack of courtesy, taking serious offense and reacting to what is perceived as deliberate interference," Hollingsworth said this week. "Ninety percent of the interference that's reported to me is not deliberate." As he regards all enforcement cases, the remaining 10 percent are "serious."

"I think a lot of the 'radio rage' has subsided, but I wish that people would be a little more aware of just how valuable Amateur Radio is and how they sound on the air," said Hollingsworth. That's a message he's repeated often on the hamfest circuit.

"Maintenance mode" is a goal he'd like to see enforcement achieve. Hollingsworth explained that's when the number of enforcement cases is perceived to be in balance with the number of licensees. "I don't think we're there yet in the Amateur Service, but I think that we can get there," he said. Hollingsworth credits the amateur community's desire for strong, even stern, enforcement for his program's success.

"Probably 99 percent of the reason it's worked is everybody wants it," he said. "In this service they plead for enforcement. In every other service, they don't want to see you coming." This attitude, he believes, stems from a sincere desire by licensees to keep Amateur Radio a self-policing service. He counts keeping the support of the amateur community among his major accomplishments.

Looking out on the Amateur Radio enforcement horizon, Hollingsworth said he'll "keep pedaling" and chipping away at the enforcement workload. He'll also continue to look to the

assistance and cooperation of his fellow radio amateurs, whom he called "just good people."

Amateurs "have got to stick together and cooperate and stay away from the infighting because they've got some very serious external threats," Hollingsworth said, citing BPL as just one example. "To the extent that they're not rowing together, it makes those threats more dangerous."

In his many public appearances--including several at Hamvention--Hollingsworth has stayed "on message" over the five years of his amateur enforcement tenure. "I just want everyone to realize what they have," he said. "We have incredible frequencies, power, modes, and so forth." He said a realization of the value of Amateur Radio itself is a deterrent to potential rule breakers, but he said Amateur Radio enforcement is "permanently ensconced" at the FCC.

While he's had some very interesting assignments and enjoyed nearly every day of his tenure with the FCC, he says the past five years have been the highlight of his 30-year FCC career.

"My greatest satisfaction is thinking that I may have paid back a debt," said Hollingsworth, who's been licensed since age 13. "It's the most rewarding thing I've ever done with the Commission."

==>HAWAII SCHOOL CONTACT MARKS 115TH ARISS QSO

Students from second grade through high school at Punahou School in Honolulu, Hawaii, quizzed NASA International Space Station Science Officer Ed Lu, KC5WKJ, on September 15 about how he's faring aboard the ISS. The early morning contact between NA1SS on the ISS and WH6PN in Honolulu marked the 115th Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) school group contact. Lu told the students that living in space makes him appreciate life on Earth.

"One of the things about living in space is it makes you appreciate the things you have on the ground," Lu said, "a lot of little things that you never think about--for instance, we don't take showers up here." The other side of the coin, though is being able to see how beautiful Earth looks from space, Lu added. In response to a later question, Lu noted that living in space is not as isolating as it once was, since the crew now has access to e-mail and telephone.

Lu and Expedition 7 crew commander Yuri Malenchenko, RK3DUP, will return to Earth in October after having been aboard the ISS since April. Malenchenko and Lu became the first primary ISS crew to travel to the ISS via a Russian Soyuz TMA-2 spacecraft instead of arriving on a US space shuttle. With NASA's shuttle fleet still grounded, the crew will return on a Soyuz vehicle as well. Astronaut Mike Foale, KB5UAC,

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<<http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/Bios/htmlbios/foale.html>> and cosmonaut Alexander Kaleri, U8MIR <<http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/Bios/htmlbios/kaleri-ay.html>>--both veterans of the Russian Mir space station--have been named as the ISS Expedition 8 crew.

In responding to another question, Lu pointed out that ISS crews are quarantined for about a week before launch, in part to make sure they are not sick or coming down with something. But the quarantine period also provides some needed quiet time, "to keep you away from all of the hullabaloo that surrounds the launch," he said. "At that point you just need to study and prepare and think about your mission and get ready." Without the quarantine period, he said, "you wouldn't have any time to yourself."

"Aloha to everybody down there!" Lu said in wrapping up the contact. He said he hoped to visit Hawaii and possibly the school within the next year.

Punahou School science center co-director Gail Peiterson said the questions asked were a representative sample chosen through a student competition.

Handling Earth station duties for the contact was Nancy Rocheleau, WH6PN, who operated from the Sacred Heart Academy station. ARISS School Contact Coordinator Tim Bosma, W6ISS, moderated the contact. Two-way audio for the QSO was provided by an MCI-WorldCom teleconferencing link.

ARISS <<http://www.rac.ca/ariss/>> is an international project with support from ARRL, NASA and AMSAT.

==>DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE 2003 A HIT!

Despite Southern New England's brush with Hurricane Isabel a day earlier, more than 100 Amateur Radio digital enthusiasts showed up in Windsor, Connecticut, September 19-21 for the 2003 TAPR/ARRL Digital Communications Conference (DCC). Friday and Saturday forums covered a wide range of topics--from APRS to software-defined radio (SDR). The Sunday seminar by Matt Ettus, N2MJI, focused on SDR. This year's conference also included a number of beginner-oriented sessions on PSK31, APRS, WSJT and EchoLink.

ARRL Web and Software Development Department Manager Jon Bloom, KE3Z, came away especially impressed by the SDR developments he observed at the conference. "There's something happening here that will affect ham radio in the not-so-distant future," he said

Alex Mendelsohn, AI2Q, was the Saturday evening banquet speaker. He discussed the occasionally forgotten fact that Amateur Radio is still a source of inspiration for engineers and technicians throughout the communications industry.

Many key individuals in industry today trace their technical and engineering roots to early involvement in Amateur Radio, he pointed out.

At the banquet, ARRL New England Division Director Tom Frenaye, K1KI, presented the 2002 ARRL Technical Innovation Award to Jonathan Taylor, K1RFD, who created the popular EchoLink Amateur Radio/Voice Over Internet Protocol network.

This year's Digital Communications Conference was represented on the air by the W1AW/1 HF-digital special event station. Despite poor band conditions, the W1AW/1 operators still managed more than 100 contacts on several digital modes.

Copies of the DCC 2003 conference Proceedings remain available from the ARRL <<http://www.arrl.org/catalog/>>.

==>ROHN FILES FOR CHAPTER 11 BANKRUPTCY

Rohn Industries <<http://www.rohnnet.com/>> filed a voluntary petition for Chapter 11 bankruptcy September 16 in the US Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Indiana. The best-known manufacturer of tower and tower hardware for the Amateur Radio community, the Peoria, Illinois-based company manufactures towers, antenna support structures and "infrastructure equipment" for the telecommunications industry. In business since 1948, the firm also makes security fencing and provides design and construction services.

"Our immediate goal is to stabilize the company's financial situation and utilize the Chapter 11 process to enable the company to conduct normal business operations as the company works to complete a sale transaction," Rohn Industries President Horace Ward said in announcing the company's bankruptcy filing. Rohn says it's now in discussions with an unrelated third party regarding a proposed asset sale while it continues to conduct business as usual. Ward told ARRL there is "no truth" to a rumor circulating on some Internet newsgroups that disgruntled workers had damaged manufacturing equipment beyond repair in reprisal for consolidating fabrication facilities last January into a single plant in Frankfort, Indiana.

The impact of Rohn's troubles on the Amateur Radio community is not clear, but at least one major antenna products supplier reported earlier this summer that it was having problems getting Rohn products, although it continues to offer them. Ward told ARRL this week that Rohn intends "to execute the orders we have and to continue to take orders in the normal course of business."

In the company's statement, Ward attributed the bankruptcy filing to a severe downturn in the telecommunications industry. In July, NASDAQ delisted Rohn Industries after it was unable to meet its minimum bid price requirement. The company remains eligible for listing on the Over the Counter

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(OTC) Bulletin Board (OTC-BB: ROHN). During the past 52 weeks, the company's stock has sold for as little as a penny a share.

At the same time it filed for Chapter 11 protection, Rohn has announced it's entered into a \$9.5 million debtor-in-possession credit line with its lenders. The bankruptcy court must approve that agreement.

==>ARISS QSO WITH SCHOOL IN JAPAN IS LAST SCHEDULED FOR EXPEDITION 7 CREW

An Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) QSO September 20 with youngsters at Kagawa Junior High School in Ube City, Japan, was the last scheduled ARISS school group contact for the current crew. Now that Expedition 7 Commander Yuri Malenchenko, RK3DUP, and NASA ISS Science Officer Ed Lu, KC5WKJ, are nearing the end of their duty tour aboard the ISS, school group contacts are on hold until the next crew arrives. Lu was at the controls of NA1SS for the direct 2-meter contact with 8N4ISS in Japan. Responding to the now almost inevitable "food question," Lu told the youngsters there's a "pretty decent selection" of food onboard the ISS, but . . .

"That being said, it has been five months up here and I am looking forward to some different kinds of food when I get back down to the ground," he conceded. Lu expressed mixed feelings about his life in space as compared with life on Earth. He told the students that while he missed his friends and family on Earth, "up here it's a very special place."

One student wanted to know if the astronauts could use fire in space.

"Well, it's not something we typically use up here," Lu responded, but he went on to say that the ISS is equipped with solid-fuel oxygen generators that are burned to produce oxygen.

"That is an emergency means of producing oxygen if our normal oxygen-generating systems all fail--as a last resort," he said. Lu said the devices also are used on submarines, but they are not normally used aboard the ISS.

Thirteen students at the Japanese school got in more than a dozen questions during the pass, which ran just under ten minutes before the ISS went out of range. Handling Earth-station duties at 8N4ISS was Hisao Emoto, JG4OHX. An audience of approximately 150 and several news media representatives were on hand for the occasion.

ARISS <<http://www.rac.ca/ariss/>> is an international project with support from ARRL, NASA and AMSAT.--Some information provided by Satoshi Yasuda. 7M3TJZ/AD6GZ

==>WORLD'S BROADCASTERS JOIN ANTI-BPL CHORUS

A subcommittee of an International Telecommunication Union (ITU) <<http://www.itu.org/>> panel of technical experts responsible for terrestrial broadcasting issues has joined a growing chorus of concern about the interference potential of power line telecommunication (PLT)--better known in the US as Broadband over Power Line (BPL). ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) Sub Working Group (SWG) 6E1 expressed the view that interference produced by systems employing PLT as well as by Industrial, Scientific and Medical (ISM) equipment and short-range devices, would compromise broadcast reception.

"SWG 6E1 is of the opinion that any increase in the amount of noise due to these systems is unacceptable," said a statement from the group's chairman to the chairman of Working Party 6E (WP 6E). "In particular, broadcast services should be protected from unwanted emissions from PLT systems," the panel asserted, "as these emissions are a byproduct of a system that is not itself a user of the radio spectrum." The panel recommended the formation of a group representing all users of the radio spectrum "to coordinate development of limits to be imposed on the radiation from these systems."

WP6E says it will continue to study the effects of PLT/BPL, ISM equipment and short-range devices on terrestrial broadcasting and send the results to ITU-R Working Party 1A, which is responsible for spectrum engineering techniques. WP 1A is scheduled to meet in Geneva October 30 to November 5.

ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, expressed strong support and appreciation for the SWG's conclusions and the ongoing efforts of parent Working Party 6E to study the issue. "If BPL is a problem for broadcasters," Sumner said, "it's easy to see that it would be a disaster for us."

Broadcasters themselves also have exhibited increased concern about the potential of PLT/BPL to prevent their signals from reaching listeners. The Research and Development branch of the highly regarded British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) has released a White Paper <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/rd/pubs/whp/whp067.html>> reporting on a brief trial in Scotland. The two competing PLT/BPL systems in operation in the town of Crieff both interfered with HF reception. Tests were conducted at four locations.

"The forms of access PLT that were tested in Crieff were found to have demonstrable potential to cause interference to indoor reception of broadcasting in relevant bands," the White Paper concluded. Significant interference even occurred in one residential area with an underground power distribution cable. BBC engineers described the interference as varying between "annoying" and "a level sufficient to make the broadcast completely unintelligible." Before commercially licensing PLT, the report advised, regulators need to undertake further study of other PLT systems and, among

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other issues, look into possible ways to make the PLT systems compatible with radio reception.

A report prepared by the Australian Communications Authority (ACA), Broadband Powerline Communications Systems--A Background Brief <http://www.aca.gov.au/radcomm/frequency_planning/spps/0311spp.pdf>, concluded that "a potential risk to HF radiocommunications services from the widespread use of broadband powerline communications systems" appeared to exist. Citing BPL trials in the US, Europe and Asia, the ACA brief said, "The results of these trials have not alleviated concerns over the potential interference risk to radiocommunications."

ARRL's comments <<http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/et03-104/>>, reply comments <<http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/et03-104/reply-comments-index.html>> and technical exhibits filed with the FCC in response to the Commission's Notice of Inquiry (ET Docket ET 03-104) are available on the ARRL Web site. See also the article "BPL is a Pandora's Box of Unprecedented Proportions, ARRL Tells FCC" <<http://www.arrl.org/news/features/2003/07/08/1/>>. Additional information and video clips are on the ARRL "Power Line Communications (PLC) and Amateur Radio" page <<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/>>.

To support the League's efforts in the BPL fight, visit the ARRL's secure BPL Web site <<https://www.arrl.org/forms/development/donations/bpl/>>.

==>FCC INVITES COMMENTS ON ADDITIONAL MORSE CODE-RELATED PETITIONS

The FCC has sounded the bell to begin Round 2 of the Morse code debate by inviting public comment on another group of seven Morse-related petitions for rulemaking. The FCC put the petitions on public notice October 8, and comments are due by November 7. Members of the amateur community may make their opinions known on any or all of these filings using the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) <<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>>. The petitions are RM-10805 through RM-10811. To summarize:

* Charles L. Young Jr, AG4YO, asks the FCC to delete the 5 WPM Morse code test (Element 1) for Technician-plus-Element 1 privileges (formerly "Tech Plus"). Designated RM-10805, his petition would retain Element 1 as an examination requirement for General and Amateur Extra applicants and give Technicians limited HF SSB privileges.

* Describing CW as "the purest, most accurate, efficient, reliable and economical form of radio communications ever devised," Frank Napurano, K2OKA, requests that the FCC retain the 5 WPM Morse requirement "in the interest of public safety, the preservation of a radio art and as a tribute of support for a prized and respected avocation." The FCC designated his filing as RM-10806.

* A petition by Robert G. Rightsell, AE4FA and Harry A.M. Kholer, N0PU, designated RM-10807, would continue Morse testing but give applicants up to 24 points of exam credit according to their success on Element 1. The final exam score would be the sum of earned Element 1 points and the written test score for a possible total of 100 points. Their petition also calls on the FCC to consolidate the Novice and Technician and the Advanced and Amateur Extra licenses, boost the number and range of written test questions and give new Technicians CW and data privileges.

* Joseph Speroni, AH0A, seeks to have the FCC delete Element 1 for applicants who want to operate phone on HF but retain Element 1 at 5 WPM for applicants who want to operate CW. Designated RM-10808, his petition would restructure the Amateur Radio testing regime to require specific knowledge of "RTTY, data, image, spread spectrum, pulse/test, RACES/ARES and space communications only for those wishing to operate these modes." Under Speroni's plan, applicants would be under no obligation to pass mode-specific examination elements for mode privileges they don't wish to operate.

* The Puerto Rico Amateur Radio League (PRARL) asks the FCC to delete Element 1 for Technician and General classes but to increase the rigor of the written elements for those two license classes. The PRARL would keep the 5 WPM Morse exam for Extra applicants. The PRARL also would eliminate same-session retesting and require 30 days between retakes. The petition is designated RM-10809.

* James Roux, W4YA, proposes in his petition, designated RM-10810, that the FCC cut the number of license classes to two--General and Amateur Extra--and the number of written examination elements to one--at the General level. Roux's petition would eliminate the 5 WPM Morse code exam for General but require Extra applicants to pass a 15 WPM test. Roux also would give Generals all currently available amateur privileges except the Extra-class CW subbands.

* A petition filed on behalf of FISTS CW Club <<http://www.fists.org>> would delete the requirement to pass Element 1 to obtain Technician plus Element 1 (ie, "Tech Plus") HF privileges. Designated RM-10811, it would merge Tech and Tech Plus into a single class, emphasize technical content, including digital modes, on written examinations and extend digital mode privileges within Novice/Tech Plus subbands. It would not provide additional HF phone privileges for Technicians, however. The FISTS petition would retain a 5 WPM Morse exam for General applicants and raise the Morse exam to 12 WPM for Amateur Extra applicants while increasing the technical level on written examinations for both classes.

The FISTS CW Club petition had attracted more than 230 comments by week's end. In all, the FCC had recorded a total of approximately 500 comments on the seven petitions as of October 10.

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Interested parties may file comments on any or all of these petitions using the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) <<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>>, which also permits users to view all comments on file.

To file a comment, click on "Submit a Filing" under "ECFS Main Links." In the "Proceeding" field, type the full RM number and complete the required fields. "RM" must be in capital letters, and you must include the hyphen between "RM" and the five-digit number. You may type your remarks into a form or attach a file. ECFS also accepts comments in active proceedings via e-mail, per instructions on the ECFS page.

To view filed comments, click on "Search for Filed Comments" under "ECFS Main Links" and type in the complete RM number, including the hyphen, in the "Proceeding" field. "RM" must be in capital letters.

==>PUSH TO IDENTIFY UNLICENSED 10-METER OPERATORS CONTINUES

A concerted effort begun last spring to monitor for and possibly identify unlicensed operators on 10 meters will continue through October. The FCC already has asked the ARRL Amateur Auxiliary/Official Observers <<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/org/oo.html>> for assistance. Now, FCC Special Counsel Riley Hollingsworth is inviting hard information on suspected interlopers from all amateurs.

"If I don't receive reports, we'll have to conclude that unlicensed operation on 10 meters no longer is a problem," Hollingsworth said this week. Hollingsworth's initial request to beef up monitoring came in the wake of complaints from the amateur community that rose to the level of a major enforcement headache. He's expressed some disappointment, however, that the number of solid reports received so far has been few, although he's aware that a problem exists.

Hollingsworth asks amateurs to be specific in what they report. "Everybody should police their own neighborhood," he suggested. "Turn on the radio, and take a listen on the band. If you hear a loud signal that's obviously an unlicensed interloper, see if you can track it down."

Hollingsworth said that in the case of a suspected unlicensed trucker on the highway, amateurs should try to get the license plate number of the tractor--not the trailer--or at least the company name and, if possible, the DOT number.

The FCC does not require direction-finding data but would appreciate, where possible, names and addresses of alleged or suspected operators. Audio recordings of apparently illegal transmissions also can prove helpful.

Individual amateurs with solid information on alleged unlicensed operation on 10 or even 12 meters should report it

to the FCC via e-mail <fccham@fcc.gov>. Official Observers should file their reports through normal ARRL channels.

ARRL Field and Regulatory Correspondent Chuck Skolaut, K0BOG, says the FCC wants to pin down specific areas where unlicensed operation is prevalent in the US. He and Hollingsworth concede, however, that not all illegal 10-meter operation is of domestic origin.

The FCC's initial request last May request was made in accordance with the Communications Act and a longstanding agreement between ARRL and the FCC regarding the use of Amateur Radio volunteers to assist in enforcement.

==>73 MAGAZINE SAYS "73 AND QRT"

After completing 43 years of publication, 73 Amateur Radio Today magazine is calling it quits. Plans to publish a joint October/November issue fell through this week, and the September 2003 issue was the magazine's last. According to self-proclaimed "El Supremo and Founder" Wayne S. Green II, W2NSD, it was a simple matter of economics.

"After failing a last minute effort to collect on some larger accounts receivable we decided yesterday to throw in the towel--that the September issue will have to be the last," Green told ARRL October 9. "SK after 43 years of publishing."

The first issue of 73 was published in October 1960 from what Green—a former editor of CQ--once described as "a small, dingy apartment" in Brooklyn, New York. Since the summer of 1962, 73 has been based in Peterborough, New Hampshire--Green's home state. The magazine was a pioneer promoter of SSB, FM, solid-state, easy construction projects and the marriage of personal computing and Amateur Radio. His interest in microcomputing led Green in 1975 to found Byte, a magazine devoted to the then-nascent and largely do-it-yourself computer hobby.

At the peak of its popularity in the 1970s and 1980s, individual issues of 73 totaled more than 300 pages of ads, articles and commentary. Heading each issue was Green's inimitable "Never Say Die"--some would say never-ending--editorial, in which he rarely missed an opportunity to tweak the ARRL and his magazine competitors for their perceived shortcomings.

QST Editor Steve Ford, WB8IMY, says 73 published his first article in the 1970s. "I was saddened to hear that 73 has ceased publishing," Ford said. "Wayne's excitement about the growing amateur FM repeater phenomenon at the time was infectious."

Green's 73 editorials and regular round of personal appearances originally concentrated on Amateur Radio and his ideas to improve, advance and grow it. In recent years, however, they've veered into conspiracy theories, cures for

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cancer, AIDS and other ailments and Green's proliferation of book titles on those topics.

Green says he'll continue his essays on his Web site <<http://www.waynegreen.com>> "for those subscribers who mainly bought the magazine for them." He told ARRL that no definite arrangements have been made yet about how to handle outstanding 73 subscriptions.

CQ Publisher Dick Ross, K2MGA, said he takes no joy from the passing of 73. "The loss of any publication serving Amateur Radio leaves all of us a bit poorer," he said. "Thank you, Wayne, for 43 entertaining, informative, sometimes infuriating, and always interesting years of 73. We'll genuinely miss it."

==>VIRGINIA BPL STARTUP SPARKS ARRL RESPONSE

The ARRL this week put officials in Manassas, Virginia, on notice that the League will act on behalf of its members to ensure full compliance with FCC regulations when the city's Broadband over Power Line (BPL) system starts up in a few months. The League was responding to media reports that Manassas--a Washington, DC, suburb--has approved plans for a citywide BPL rollout. Manassas City Council reportedly voted unanimously October 16 to grant a 10-year franchise to Prospect Street Broadband to expand a BPL field trial and offer high-speed Internet service to the entire community over municipal power lines. ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, on October 22 faxed Manassas Mayor Marvin L. Gillum to point out BPL's dark side--the potential for RF interference from and to any BPL system.

"Your advisors no doubt have made the Council fully aware of the great potential for radio interference from such a system," Sumner said. "In particular, you are no doubt well aware that Title 47 CFR §15.5 requires that no harmful interference is caused to any radiocommunication service, and that the operator shall be required to cease operation upon notification by a Federal Communications Commission representative that the device is causing harmful interference." Sumner noted that the same FCC Part 15 rule also provides no protection against interference from the operation of an authorized radio station.

"Tests conducted by ARRL technical personnel have shown that the system planned to be deployed in Manassas causes harmful interference to the Amateur Radio service," Sumner said. "We also have reason to believe that the system will be susceptible to interference from normal amateur station operations."

An article in Potomac News.com touted the impending Manassas BPL rollout as the first of its type in the US. Sumner said he was writing to alert the City of Manassas "on behalf of its members who live in and use the public thoroughfares of Manassas" that the ARRL "will ensure that

there is full compliance with the FCC regulations" once the city's BPL system is in operation.

Prospect Street Broadband reportedly will offer the BPL service for \$29.95 a month. One estimate predicts the city stands to gain up to \$4.5 million over the 10-year life of the contract, due to be signed this week.

The Manassas BPL field trial is one of the smallest now under way and involves fewer than a dozen homes and businesses. It was installed in an area that has underground utility wiring and no Amateur Radio licensees nearby.

BPL articles in major media have proliferated in recent weeks, many of them painting the service in rosy hues and neglecting to point out the potential for radio interference to and from BPL by other HF spectrum occupants. An October 13 article in The Wall Street Journal, "A New Outlet," by Walin Wong, quotes one trial user who calls the service "fantastic." But Wong also notes that one "Achilles' heel" of BPL is that serving rural areas would require installing costly repeaters every mile or so along the power line. The article also deals with the reluctance on the part of some electric utilities to embrace the technology.

Sumner also reacted to the WSJ article. In a letter to the editor not yet published, he pointed out that BPL "amounts to sending a wideband radio signal over unshielded wires that were not designed for the purpose" and that do not work well for the 2 to 80 MHz signals common in BPL systems. Instead, "they function as antennas," he said, and that can lead to interference to radio services, including some involved with public safety.

Sumner said potential broadband technology and delivery investors would be far better off considering fiber in densely populated areas and adaptations of wireless LAN technology in rural areas.

Additional information on BPL and video clips from field trial sites are on the ARRL "Power Line Communications (PLC) and Amateur Radio" page <<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/>>. To support the League's efforts in the BPL fight, visit the ARRL's secure BPL Web site <<https://www.arrl.org/forms/development/donations/bpl/>>.

==>HAMVENTION SIGNS CONTRACT FOR 2004 SHOW AT HARA ARENA

Hamvention <<http://www.hamvention.org>> will be at Hara Arena near Dayton, Ohio, at least for another year. General Chairman Gary Des Combes, N8EMO, announced the one-show contract this week. The last Hamvention contract with Hara Arena was for five years. Des Combes also expressed confidence that behind-the-scenes management changes he's instituted since taking over July 1 will translate into success for "the world's largest Amateur Radio gathering and trade show."

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"Overall, I think things are going very well," Des Combes said of progress toward pulling together Hamvention's 53rd show, which will take place May 14-16. "I'm confident we're going to be successful." The always popular annual gathering attracted slightly more than 22,100 visitors in 2003. That figure was down by more than 10 percent from the 2002 crowd, and it marked the third year in a row of declining Hamvention attendance.

Des Combes is banking that the management team and "best business practices" approach he's put into place for next spring's show will turn things around. One significant change is a shift away from jobbing out Hamvention's production to paid professionals and returning to the strong reliance on volunteers that was a hallmark of past Hamventions.

"Some of the volunteers, quite frankly, felt they were not welcome," said Des Combes, who believes that moving away from an all-volunteer Hamvention was a mistake and created some unease within the organization. Under his regime, some volunteer staffers from the past now have returned to the fold, Des Combes said. Most of the volunteers for the 2004 show are from the sponsoring Dayton Amateur Radio Association (DARA) <<http://www.ceitron.com/dara/>>.

The new order at Hamvention means that Garry Matthews, KB8GOL, is out as the show's paid production manager (See "How Hamvention Happens" <<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2003/03/06/4/0004053.pdf>>, by Rick Lindquist, N1RL, QST, Apr 2000). Matthews had served as the backstage impresario for more than three decades of Hamventions. Des Combes said he intends to spread out Matthews' former duties among several volunteers, saving money in the process. He's also establishing--and in some cases re-establishing--a set of committees responsible for various aspects of Hamvention. The Hamvention assistant chairman is Jim Nies, WX8F.

"We have to just work smarter and tougher," he said, adding that the management change will be invisible to those attending. "I don't think John Q. Ham will see anything much different."

While the show is still in the planning stages, Des Combes said one possible change would be to have the award winners' recognition ceremony during Hamvention itself. The recognition event has replaced the traditional Saturday evening banquet, done away with this year because of slack attendance.

A project management professional, Des Combes says he anticipates the all-volunteer approach will make it possible for Hamvention to more economically mount a show that's of the same quality or better than those of past years.

"I can tell you I am leading sweeping changes in how we operate Hamvention," he said. All of them, he says, will

better serve the vendors, DARA and the amateurs who attend Hamvention. "I think it's going to be good for everybody."

Ticket prices for the 2004 Hamvention will remain at the prices established prior to Des Combes' taking over the reins. Advance tickets for all three days are \$20 (\$23 park-n-ride bus transportation). Tickets at the gate will cost \$25. All under 12 years of age are admitted free. Des Combes says arrangements are under way to enable on-line ticket purchases.

There's more information on the Hamvention Web site <<http://www.hamvention.org>>.

==>NEW TWO-HAM CREW TAKES OVER ISS REINS

The new two-ham crew of Expedition 8 Commander and NASA ISS Science Officer Mike Foale, KB5UAC, and Russian Cosmonaut and ISS Flight Engineer Alexander "Sasha" Kaleri, U8MIR, officially took over the reins of the International Space Station this week. A formal change-of-command ceremony took place Friday, October 24.

The contingent of space travelers aboard the ISS expanded to five this week with the arrival of the Expedition 8 crew and European Space Agency (ESA) astronaut Pedro Duque, KC5RGG, who accompanied them into space. Duque, who spent the week aboard the ISS, conducted two Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) <<http://www.rac.ca/ariss/>> contacts with school groups in his native Spain using the special call sign ED4ISS. He'll return to Earth October 27 with Expedition 7 Commander Yuri Malenchenko, RK3DUP, and NASA ISS Science Officer Ed Lu, KC5WKJ, aboard the Soyuz transporter that's been docked with the ISS. Malenchenko and Lu have been aboard the ISS since April.

The Expedition 8 crew, which left Earth from Russia October 18, will spend the next six months on the ISS. The two teams have been conducting crew hand-over activities during their eight days of joint operations. Duque, who flew under a commercial agreement between the Russian space agency Rosaviakosmos and the ESA, also conducted a series of scientific studies during his ISS stay. This mission mark Duque's second space flight.

The Expedition 7 crew chalked up several human spaceflight milestones. During its tour, the crew marked the 1000th day of ISS habitation on July 29, Lu's 40th birthday on July 1, and Malenchenko's marriage by proxy on August 10 to Ekaterina Dmitriev, a native of Ukraine who now lives in Texas. Upon his return, the couple reportedly plans a church wedding in Russia.

Expedition 8 Commander Foale, 46, is a veteran of five space flights and has spent a total of nearly 180 days in space--including more than four months on the Russian Mir space station in 1997. During his Mir stay, Foale found ham radio a

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valuable supplement to conventional Russian and NASA communication systems after the station was damaged in a collision with an unmanned Progress cargo rocket. Kaleri, 47, flew on three Mir missions and has logged 416 days in space.--information provided by NASA was used in this report

==>AMSAT OSCAR ECHO TO LAUNCH IN MARCH

AMSAT-North America <<http://www.amsat.org/>> has announced that launch of the AMSAT OSCAR-E Amateur Radio microsat--the "Echo Project"--has been moved up to March 31, 2004. Earlier plans had called for a May 2004 launch. Echo Project Team member Richard Hambly, W2GPS, reported at AMSAT-NA's Annual Meeting and Space Symposium October 18-19 in Toronto, Canada, that the Echo project has made significant progress in recent months.

"The Project Team met with our contractor, SpaceQuest <<http://www.spacequest.com/>>, and at this meeting we decided that spacecraft integration would take place this December and scheduled the launch for March," Hambly told the gathering. Integration will take place at the AMSAT Integration Lab at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland.

A Russian Dnepr LV rocket--a converted SS-18 intercontinental ballistic missile--will carry the approximately 10-inch-square satellite into a low-Earth orbit from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

Hambly reported that the project team powered up the Echo flight hardware in late summer in a "flat-sat" configuration at SpaceQuest. Data communications, command and control, and attitude control subsystems were tested, in addition to the radio equipment, power systems and cabling.

The satellite will incorporate two UHF transmitters, each running from 1 to 8 W and capable of simultaneous operation, four VHF receivers and a multiband, multimode receiver capable of operation on the 10 meter, 2 meter, 70 cm and 23 cm bands. Echo will feature V/U, L/S and HF/U operational configurations, with V/S, L/U and HF/S also possible. FM voice and various digital modes--including PSK31 on a 10-meter SSB uplink--also will be available.

During the Symposium, Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) Chairman Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, outlined the delivery of the so-called Phase 2 ham equipment to the ISS. A Progress rocket already has delivered a Kenwood TM-D700E VHF/UHF transceiver to the ISS. The unit will mean a significant boost to the power output of the ARISS initial station gear--from 5 W to 25 W.

Bauer said a Yaesu FT-100D and SSTV equipment, along with some new headsets, tentatively are set for transport to the ISS in January on another Progress flight. Additional

ARISS gear will not go up until the space shuttle returns to flight in September 2004, however. Bauer said the equipment still on the ground will be tested in November in Moscow to validate that the Phase 1 and 2 systems are compatible. RF testing will also be conducted.

According to Bauer, plans call for the Expedition 8 crew of Mike Foale, KB5UAC, and Alex Kaleri, U8MIR, to install the Phase 1 and 2 70-cm hardware after ground tests are complete. Previous crews already installed four Amateur Radio antennas to cover HF, 2 meters, 70 cm and microwave frequencies.

In addressing the general membership meeting, AMSAT-NA President Robin Highton, VE3FRH, asked the Board of Directors to continue its support of ARISS and that it go ahead with the OSCAR-Eagle project.

==>TEXAS ANTENNA CASE SHOWS PRB-1 IS NO PAPER TIGER

A Texas amateur antenna case has affirmed again that the limited federal preemption known as PRB-1 <<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/local/prb1.htm>> has teeth when it comes to compelling municipalities to reasonably accommodate Amateur Radio communication. It took some time, persistence and considerable aggravation, but in the end the US District Court for the Southern District of Texas--Houston Division ruled in favor of Orin Snook, KB5F, of Missouri City. The court determined in late August that Snook could keep his 114-foot antenna structure.

In a 63-page Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law <<http://users3.ev1.net/~osnook/34.pdf>> that Snook has posted on his Web site, US District Judge David Hittner said the city "failed to meet the FCC's requirement of reasonably accommodating Snook's amateur communication needs in accordance with PRB-1." Missouri City had attempted to limit Snook's tower to 65 feet, limit the size of his antenna array and

required removal of the 100-foot structure for which it already had granted him a building permit. Snook, who is ARRL Fort Bend County Emergency Coordinator and an Official Emergency Station, argued that he needed the higher structure to permit him to operate VHF and UHF effectively in an emergency.

The court declared the city's height restrictions, antenna array restrictions and structure removal requirement "preempted, void and unenforceable." Hittner ordered the city to grant Snook a specific use permit allowing his tower and antennas to remain, although Snook must maintain an existing screening of mature trees surrounding the tower.

Although Texas adopted a PRB-1 statute in 1999, it was Snook who made the city council aware of PRB-1. Even so, the city rejected the recommendation of its planner and

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building inspector to issue Snook whatever permit was necessary under the relevant federal law.

The court found the city "failed to attempt to negotiate a satisfactory compromise with Snook" and rejected consideration of any height extending above the trees. Snook secured the services of professional engineer Kent Marshall, W5TXV, who testified to Snook's need for a 100-foot structure instead of the compromise 65 footer.

For Snook, Hittner's decision is half a loaf because he failed to prevail on several other non-PRB-1 issues, including purported malicious prosecution and his convictions on 21 counts of violating city statutes in the course of the years-long row. Snook alleges that his wife also lost her job with the city as a result of the dispute. The battle, he estimates, also has left him some \$35,000 poorer. "It's a tough victory that's extremely hollow right now," Snook told ARRL. "The 21 criminal convictions of ordinances written after the antenna went up were largely ignored." Hittner determined that the city had, indeed, changed its ordinance, then required Snook to comply with it, even though it already had issued him a building permit in 1999.

Snook also points out that while the court ordered the city to pay his costs, that does not include his attorneys fees or a damage award. In addition, the city gets to keep its ordinance--which he'd tried to get thrown out. "The judge ruled strongly in our favor but protected the city as best he could too," he said.

Hittner's decision was based on case law that's well known in amateur antenna legal circles. Among decisions cited was *Pentel v City of Mendota*, argued successfully by attorney and ARRL Dakota Division Director Jay Bellows, K0QB. Also cited was *Marchand v Town of Hudson*. In that case, ARRL New England Division Vice Director and Volunteer Counsel Mike Raisbeck, K1TWF, represented the amateur involved in written and oral arguments before the New Hampshire Supreme Court, while ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, filed an amicus brief. Imlay and Bellows both discussed Snook's case with him by telephone.

Snook seeks contributions to his KB5F Legal Defense Fund via his Web site <<http://users3.ev1.net/~osnook/>>.

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