

# B-Plus

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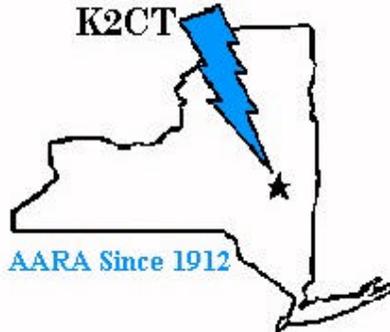
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AARA

Meets at the

Colonie Community Center

1653 Central Ave. Colonie

Friday Dec. 10

Social Hour 6:45 PM

Board Meeting 7:15 PM

Meeting 7:45 PM

refreshments

## Dec. Meeting

K2CT repeater  
Talk-in repeater 145.19 (-) MHz

Elections. Be there to choose the  
next slate of officers

Social evening including a video on  
ZL9CI Cliperton Island DX-pedition

Food and drink will be  
provided FREE

### PUBLIC SERVICE

The big public service event for the last part of October was, of course, **Pumpkin Patrol**. In Albany County we covered 13 bridges on Saturday night and 13 bridges on Sunday night, with a total of 26 hams working at least one night, and 12 working both. We also had at least two non-hams providing support and companionship, and anyone who has worked this event knows how important that is! *Page2*

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As we always hope to see, both evenings were uneventful, although Tom N2SQO and Tony W2BEJ livened things up as Net Controls. I would also like to especially thank Karen KB2UUC from TARA, who sent me extra hams from Rensselaer County to help cover Albany's many, many bridges. The remainder of the hams working in Albany were: Jim W2JHO, Craig N2UID, JR N2PEQ, Randy KA2TJZ, Ken AA2CW, Bill KC2BJC, Beverly KC2BYL, Joe KA2DDK, Nick KC2DZB, Kathy KC2FCQ, Mike WD2AJS, Marc N2XLC, Ridge KB2HWL, Russ KB2LXC, June KB2JTG, Dave WB2VXS, Ed N2API, Jack N2LEX, Laurie N2OSB, Wayne KA2MJL, Tom KC2FCR, Herb N2TJM, Jack WA2YBM, and Ray N2ZQF.

I have not yet received the certificates from the State Police, but rest assured, I will be distributing them once I have them in hand. Speaking of things I have in hand, I still have a big bag of T-shirts from the October HMRRC Schenectady to Albany marathon. I do not need more than one for myself, so please, if you worked and haven't received yours yet, let me know!

I have a dearth of upcoming events until another HMRRC marathon at the end of February, I believe on the 27th. If you want to work it, feel free to get your name in early! Laurie M. Warner, N2OSB

Public Service Coordinator  
[n2osb@arrrl.net](mailto:n2osb@arrrl.net) 872-9056

**Pay your 1999 Dues \$15/year**

Checks should be made out to AARA and sent to: Saul Abrams, K2XA, 307 Maple Rd., Slingerlands, NY 12159

**AARA Web site**

**<http://www.qsl.net/k2ct>**

**FOR SALE:** 25 kw plus diesel generator ready for sale with only 35 hours on it with manual \$5900.00 if interested contact Herm, KR6HP at 768-4611

## **FCC Denies League's Request for Stronger Federal Preemption Policy**

NEWINGTON, CT, Nov 24, 1999--The FCC has turned down a 1996 ARRL petition asking the Commission to go further in compelling state and local governments to reasonably accommodate Amateur Radio and apply the least restrictive means to regulate amateur antennas and activity. However, in denying the petition the FCC did offer some words that may be helpful to amateurs.

The requested rules changes would have expanded and clarified PRB-1, the Federal preemption of state and local regulation spelled out by the FCC in 1985 and since incorporated into the laws of several states. The thrust of the petition, according to ARRL Executive Vice President David Sumner, K1ZZ, was to get the FCC to deal with "things that frustrate the intent of PRB-1 or tend to run up the cost" for hams.

"We want the Commission to say flat out that localities must find the least restrictive means" to deal with ham radio, Sumner said when the petition, designated RM-8763, was filed in February 1996.

Specifically, the League called on the FCC to amend Section 97.15(e) of its rules to say that any state or local antenna restrictions limiting ham radio antennas to heights below 70 feet would be "presumed unreasonable" unless the state or local authority could show its restrictions were necessary for health, safety or aesthetic reasons.

Further, the ARRL asked the FCC to clarify that local government's role in applying PRB-1 was to accommodate ham antennas rather than to balance local interests against Federal interests in "effective public service amateur communications." The League also wanted the FCC to acknowledge that it "has no less

interest in the effective performance of an Amateur Radio Station" in an area regulated by deed restrictions, covenants, or condominium regulations than by zoning ordinances. It also wanted the FCC to preempt overly burdensome conditions and excessive costs that might be required by localities in connection with amateurs antenna installations.

In its denial, in an Order released November 19, the FCC said it would not be "prudent" or "appropriate" to set a height standard for

amateur antennas and supporting structures "because of varying circumstances that may occur" for differing antenna configurations. "We believe that the policy enunciated in PRB-1 is sound," the FCC said, noting that PRB-1 does not specify a height limit. The Commission also said it did not want to mandate specific provisions that localities must include in zoning ordinances.

"We continue to believe that the standards the Commission set, that is 'reasonable accommodation' and 'minimum practicable regulation', have worked relatively well," the FCC said. The Commission applied that same philosophy to the imposition of fees, zoning laws and other conditions that localities might impose on amateur antenna installations.

The FCC also said its policy with respect to restrictive covenants already is clearly stated in PRB-1, which excludes restrictive covenants in private contracts as "outside the reach of our limited preemption." The FCC did say that it "strongly encourages associations of homeowners and private contracting parties to follow the principle of reasonable accommodation" with respect to Amateur Radio. But it drew the line at proposing specific rule changes to bring private restrictive covenants under the umbrella of PRB-1.

The part of the FCC's Order that may prove most helpful is the assertion that PRB-1 precisely stated the principle of "reasonable accommodation." Some courts have held that a local authority can merely balance its own interests against those of the amateur. PRB-1 states that local regulations involving placement, screening, or height of antennas based on health, safety, or aesthetic considerations "must be crafted to accommodate reasonably amateur communications, and to represent the minimum practicable regulation to accomplish the local authority's legitimate

purpose." In its Order, the FCC said that given PRB-1's explicit language, "it is clear that a 'balancing of interests' approach is not appropriate in this context."

The ARRL Executive Committee will be reviewing the Order at its next meeting on December 4 to determine what further action is appropriate.

### Upcoming Events

Dec	11-12	ARRL 10-meter contest
	18-19	RAC Winter contest
	31	ARRL straight key night
Jan	23	HRU 2000 Babylon, NY

### From "The ARRL Letter" November 19:

Even though registration has been available for approximately two years now, most Amateur Radio licensees have yet to register with the FCC's Universal Licensing System. The ULS Task Force reports that, as of mid-November, 682,212 amateurs still have not registered. This figure includes individuals whose licenses have lapsed but remain in the two-year grace period. The FCC recently said approximately 3% of US licensees had registered with the ULS.

The FCC deployed the ULS for the Amateur Service on August 16, 1999. Amateurs must be registered in the ULS in order to file applications with the FCC -- including renewals, modifications, and vanity call sign requests.

Meanwhile, the latest "good news/bad news" scenario from the ULS could go something like this: "Dear Amateur: The good news is that we have granted your requested Group C vanity call sign which you sought 10 weeks ago when you were a General class licensee. The bad news is that when we granted your long-awaited vanity call, we also undid the Advanced and Extra class upgrades you accomplished while your vanity was

pending. So, congratulations! You're a General once again."

The ULS Task Force says it recently discovered that the bug occurs when several applications are pending (eg, a vanity application and an upgrade application). The FCC is attempting to straighten out the unintended downgrades and says it will have the operator class of affected licensees corrected within a week.

FCC personnel are currently testing the processing for club, military recreation, and

RACES applications and hopes to act on pending applications before the end of the month. Up until now, those applications have been filed on paper and still must be manually keystroked into the ULS prior to processing.

The ULS Task Force also wants amateur applicants to know that if they apply too early for license renewal, their applications will be dismissed. A license renewal must be filed no sooner than within 90 days of expiration, even if coupled with a license modification. This is only an issue for those filing paper applications; the electronic filing system will not let applicants file prematurely. To register for the ULS, visit <http://www/fcc.gov/wtb/uls> and click on "TIN/Call Sign Registration". Paper registration also is possible. For more information, call toll-free 888-CALL FCC (225-5322).

## AARA ELECTIONS

AARA

nominating committee Will Liporace, NA2NA, Barry Gross, N1EU, and Ed Gosch W2CUH has designated for elections of new officers the following slate:

Ernie Popp K2EP president  
Jerry Murray, WA2IWW vice-president  
Bill Nettleton, K2BX secretary  
Saul Abrams, K2XA treasurer  
Sue Rothchild, N2LBR 3-yr director

If you have an interest to be an officer or director nominations will be accepted from the floor. You must be present to vote! December 10, 1999 at the Colonie Community Center.

Summarized from: "The ARRL Letter" November 19: FCC Special Counsel for Amateur Radio Enforcement Riley Hollingsworth stated that the practice of "identifying only by the last two letters of an Amateur call sign is a violation of Part 97" of the FCC rules and that such practice "must not be condoned by nets." Some amateurs had construed the statement -- widely reported elsewhere -- as a tightening of FCC station identification enforcement policy. Hollingsworth says that's not the case.

"All we said was that if only the last two letters are given, it doesn't meet Part 97," he said. He pointed out that if a calling station using an abbreviated ID is never acknowledged and given a chance to give a complete call sign, a legal ID would be lacking for that communication. To be strictly legal, stations using a suffix-letter ID always must identify within the first 10 minutes of the communication (and each 10 minutes thereafter) with a complete call sign

Hollingsworth this week also reminded net control stations not to encourage rule violations by requiring check-ins to use two-letter IDs without allowing a legal ID at some point within the time limits of the rules.

## **New Beacon Activated in AMRAD Low-Frequency Experiment**

NEWINGTON, CT, Nov 22, 1999--A second experimental low-frequency beacon is on the air from Northern Virginia. The WA2XTF/12 beacon on 136.745 kHz is a part of the Amateur Radio Research and Development Corporation's experiments to gain LF experience in anticipation that the FCC may allocate an amateur band at 136 kHz. AMRAD obtained its Part 5 experimental license for the project earlier this year.

The new beacon at the QTH of Ted Seely, AA4GM, near Front Royal, Virginia--one of 12 WA2XTF sites--features a 175 W transmitter feeding a 1600-foot horizontal antenna. It transmits a continuous CW message at 5 WPM. As of this writing, the AMRAD project's first beacon WA2XTF/6, on 136.75 kHz, has been shut down temporarily to eliminate the potential for interference.

Several countries throughout the world already enjoy LF allocations around 136 kHz. These include New Zealand, Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland, Belgium, Holland, Sweden, Finland, Czechoslovakia, Germany and several other European nations.

While the list of stations participating in the WA2XTF experiment is closed and new transmitting stations cannot be added presently, others are invited to join the project by listening and reporting results. Reception reports may be sent via e-mail to André Kesteloot, N4ICK, [n4ick@amrad.org](mailto:n4ick@amrad.org) <<mailto:n4ick@amrad.org>>.

Further information concerning the LF experiments is available at <http://www.amrad.org>.

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B-PLUS Jan. article deadline is Sun., Jan. 2., 2PM

**Are You Changing Your Address:** Please contact Bill with your address corrections write to Bill Nettleton, K2BX 7 Frederick Pl., Troy, NY 12180 or e-mail at [k2bx@msn.com](mailto:k2bx@msn.com)

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