

SCCARA-GRAM



Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Association

Volume 19, Number 9

September 2003



President's Prose

At the August meeting, the scheduled speaker did not show. Fortunately, one of the visitors to the meeting was willing to be a speaker. His name is Kailash Gupta, from India. He explained the differences in Emergency Services between India and the United States. It was an interesting talk. Since then, I have found out that he is a high official for the Indian Red Cross. He is in this country for six months. He plans to do some traveling in the U. S., spend time with his new granddaughter, who was only six days old as of the meeting, and volunteer with the local Red Cross.

The other visitor Bob Anderson, KE6TFR - who, by the way, was involved in the construction of the City Eagle Rock vault, came to us from Hawaii. He is a fairly new ham. I took both gentlemen on tour of the San Jose Red Cross on Wednesday, 8/13. They got to meet Rex Painter, Director of Disaster Services, and spent time in the radio room. It was a nice day.

I called Bill Notley at NASA to find out what happened. Bill was called out of town unexpectedly. He had handed the assignment over to his assistant, Mike Allard, who was really the no-show. The situation has been resolved and Bill Notley will be the speaker at the October 13th (Columbus Day), meeting. Please mark your calendars for this speaker. He will talk on the Emergency Communications at NASA and give us the frequency to talk to the astronauts in space. You know, don't you, that you get a very special QSL card if you contact an astronaut.

We have some events coming up. The September 27th picnic, which is an addition to the regular meeting that month; nominations of officers on October, and election of officers in November. The final event of the year will be the Christmas luncheon in December. There will be more details about those events in later newsletters.

I have not heard about any Health and Welfare needs of our club members. If you know of any, please let me, or Gary know about them so they can be printed in the newsletter.

Barbara K. Britten, KD6QEI, Pres.

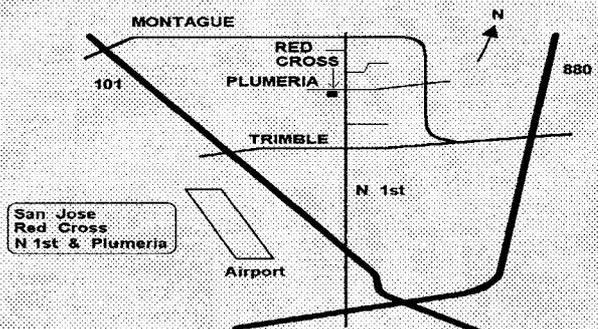
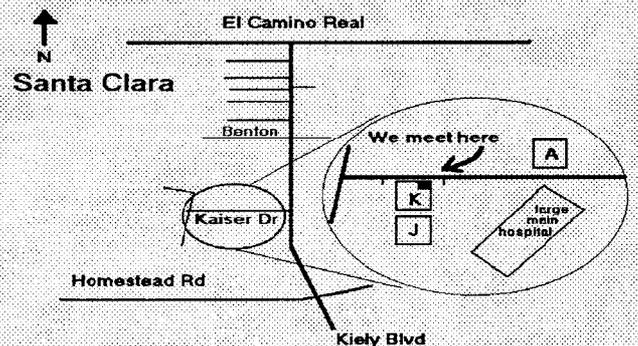


Calendar

- 9/8 SCCARA General Meeting
- 9/13 Foothill Electronic Flea Market
- 9/15 SCCARA Board Meeting--(San Jose Red Cross, 7:30p, all are welcome)
- 9/27 SCCARA Picnic, Mary Gomez Park, S.C.

General Meeting:

- Day: Monday, September 8, 2003
- Time: 7:30 PM
- Place: Kaiser Santa Clara, Bld K, Rm 1
- Featuring: Gary Siggins, N6MTO, from U.L.



Picnic

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The deadline for articles is one week before the last Monday of the month.

SCCARA was formed in 1921 and became a non-profit corporation in 1947. SCCARA is an affiliate of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). The club station is W6UW. Web page: <http://www.qsl.net/sccara>.

OFFICERS - DIRECTORS - STAFF

President	Barbara Britten, KD6QEI	293-3847
	e-mail: kd6qei@arrl.net	
Vice President	- - -	
Secretary	- - -	
Treasurer	Lloyd DeVaughns, KD6FJI	225-6769
	e-mail: ldevaughns@aol.com	
Station Trustee	Don Hayden, KO6HH	867-4643
Director	Clark Murphy, KE6KXO	262-9334
	e-mail: clarkmurph@yahoo.com	
Director	Don Apte, KK6MX	629-0725
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N0ARY BBS	Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU	265-2336
	e-mail: wb6yru@aenet.net	

SCCARA REPEATERS

SCCARA owns and operates two repeaters under the call W6UU:

2 meter: 146.385 + PL 114.8
70 cm: 442.425 + PL 107.2

Phone auto-dial and auto-patch is available. The two meter repeater is located at the Santa Teresa Hospital, south-west San Jose (near IBM). The 70 cm repeater and N0ARY BBS is located at the Regional Medical Center (formerly Alexian), east of downtown San Jose, north of 280 and 101.

SCCARA NETS

On our two meter repeater: Mondays at 7:30 PM, (not the second monday--our meeting night). Coordinator: Don K6PBQ. On ten meters, 28.385 MHz USB, Thursdays at 8:00 PM. Net control: Wally KA6YMD. Visitors welcome.

N0ARY PACKET BBS

SCCARA hosts the packet BBS N0ARY (San Jose). User ports: 144.93 (1200 baud), 433.37 (9600 baud), telephone 408 259-8497, internet (by registration only, get info by sending e-mail to: info@n0ary.org). Sysop: Gary WB6YRU

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

SCCARA contact Clark KE6KXO: 408 262-9334
ARRL/VEC Silicon Valley VE group,
Morris Jones, AD6ZHI: 408 507-4698

The SCCARA picnic this year will be Saturday, September 27 at 10 AM until 4 PM or so, at Mary Gomez Park in Santa Clara. It's located at the north-west corner of San Thomas Expressway and Forbes. Enter from the west side: go west on Forbes, north on Bucher, then turn right into the small parking lot.

We will have a HF radio set up again for a miniature Field Day operation.

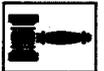
Gwen and Lou will be running our bingo game, so please bring a gift or two for prizes.

The club will provide sodas, plates, utensils, condiments, and charcoal. Please bring your own meat and a dish to share.

Don Village K6PBQ

Meeting Minutes

General Meeting, Aug. 11, 2003



Meeting began at 7:45 PM. We started late as we were waiting for the scheduled speaker to appear. President Barbara decided to start the meeting without the speaker present.

Introductions: persons attending: 14, including two visitors: Robert B. Anderson, KE6TFR, from Kawai, HI; Kailash Gupta, VU2KIZ, from India.

Speaker: Kailash Gupta, VU2KIZ. He spoke on Emergency Communications and the way disasters are handled in India. They recently had a large flood, in which he helped with communications. He is also a member of the Red Cross of India. Kailash will be in the U.S. for another six months. He will be coming to as many meetings as he can attend in that time period. He came to the U.S. a month ago so he would be here for the birth of his first grandchild, a girl, born 8/6, and tour the States.

The other visitor, Robert B. Anderson, KE6TFR, is a retired construction owner. He currently owns and operates a bed and breakfast inn in Kawai, Hawaii. He volunteers with the American Red Cross in emergency communications. He operates on 2 meters. His original home was here in San Jose. He is also a small plane pilot. He is in the beginning stages of learning emergency preparedness.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PRESIDENT: Thank you to Kailash for graciously

considering being an impromptu speaker for the meeting. Barbara said she would call the scheduled and find out what happened and see if he would be willing to be the speaker for October. She verified that we do have a speaker for September. He is from Underwriters Laboratory. His topic will be: "How they get things approved under U. L. guidelines". Barbara announced that if she were elected as President for the coming year, it would be her last year as President. She also said that when she is no longer the President, she would take the position as Secretary, as previously promised.

SECRETARY: Barbara asked if there were any correction to be made to the minutes of last month. No changes were noted.

TREASURER: Savings: \$4,923.57 / Checking: \$2,936.85

REPEATER: Wally Britten reported no new changes to the repeater status. Ben Vickers WB6FRM is still trying to figure out what changes he needs to make to the controller to get the phone patch levels to where it can be used. The 440 repeater is still chugging along. The phone patch is available on it for emergencies. No more information has come available from the HF station at Regional Medical Center. The problem still exists, this is, trying to get a conduit to pass cable through from the penthouse to the basement and into the room where the station hopes to be set up some time in the future. Trish and company have not gone up to the Eagle Rock site in Alum Rock Park to make any changes to the antennas or change the attenuator pads on the transmitter. The cable arrangements need to be changed in order to do it. Right now they are using the same antenna for transmit and receive. We cannot use the commercial antenna, even though we have paid for it, until we are sure that we are not interfering with the Sacramento repeater. We are currently on a ground plane antenna that is working. We have to wait until the City people go up to the city vault and make the necessary changes.

SCCARA-GRAM: No changes. There were some new photos of Field Day. Gary made a request. In the future, to all those who send him photos, please include a caption with information about the picture, i.e., event, names of people in the picture, what was happening at the time the picture was taken.

BBS: The Internet connection is trying to connect. The problem might be at Bob's (Arasmith) place where we get our Internet connection. Gary is talking to Owen who is trying to substitute something that behaves like an ISP port. Then we will swap things over. If it gets through there, then we will know the source of the problem is at Bob's place. If the problem is at Bob's, he will be contact. Every once in a while, Bob changes the configuration of the routing without telling Gary. The connection is being made. The computers are not cooperating.

OLD BUSINESS

STATION TRUSTEE: Don Hayden, KO6HH, has signed the station license papers with the FCC, formally making him SCCARA's Station Trustee. We now have a Station Trustee with an Extra class license.

COMING EVENTS: Picnic: Saturday, September 27, at Mary Gomez Park, on the corners of Forbes and San Tomas Expressway, from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM. SCCARA will provide the charcoal, plates, utensils, napkins, cups, sodas, and ice. Those coming to the picnic are asked to bring their own entre and a dish to share. Please also bring a white elephant gift for the bingo game, and a comfortable lawn chair, unless you really like sitting on the concrete benches of the picnic tables. There will be an HF station set up for transmitting. This is a family event. Everyone is encouraged to come out and play, eat, and have some FUN!

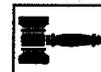
NEW BUSINESS:

FLEA MARKET: Mike Hastings reported that SCCARA members helped out at the last flea market with big **THANKS** from Lou Steirer. It had a fairly good turn out. Mike talked about his new find at Fry's, a FRS (Family Radio Service) radios. They have a range of 2 to 5 miles. They are usually priced \$39.99, but were on sale for \$25.00 with a \$25.00 mail-in rebate. Get the rebate ticket, receipt, and follow through to get your money back. They operate on 460 Mhz., with 22 channels. They can scan several channels. Mike could not attest to how well they transmitted, only that there was a plethora of them on the market. It also had a light (like a flash light). They were battery operated.

OFFICERS: Barbara asked the group t think about people to be nominated for officers for the coming year. Nominations are in October, with elections in November. The club really needs a secretary. If someone would be secretary for this next year, Barbara Britten will take the secretary position upon the end of her term as president. That would give SCCARA a whole year to find a new president. We also need a vice president.

Meeting adjourned 9:40 PM.
Barbara K. Britten, KD6QEI.

Board Meeting, Aug. 18, 2003



Meeting began at 7:45 PM after monday night net. Members present: Barbara K. Britten, KD6QEI, Pres.; Lloyd DeVaughns, KE6FJI, Tres.; Don Village, N6PBQ, Dir.; Clark Murphy, KE6KXO, Dir.; Wally Britten, KA6YMD, Dir.; Don Apte, KK6MX, Dir.; Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU, Newsletter Editor. Kailash Gupta, VU2KIZ, visitor

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PRESIDENT: Thank you again to our visitor, Kailash Gupta, VU2KIZ, for helping us out last week, when he was our impromptu speaker for the night, because our scheduled speaker was a "no show". Barbara reported that she had talked with Bill Notley from NASA Ames Research Center, regarding the last meeting where he was supposed to be a speaker. He was called out of town unexpectedly, and had passed the assignment on to his assistant, Mike Allard, who dropped the ball. Bill has rescheduled for the October 13th (Columbus Day) meeting. Bill's topic will be the emergency communications at the research center in Mt. View. He will also have the frequency for us to talk to the astronaut hams when they are in space.

SECRETARY: There is one correction in Gary's BBS note. "There is no "40" in his report. Correction noted. Don Village motioned to accept the minutes as written. Seconded by Don Apte. Motion carried.

TREASURER: Savings: \$4,923.57; Checking: \$2,936.85

REPEATER: Wally Britten, Chairman, reported that there have been no changes to the repeater. The Sonoma repeater is heard on the input, At Red Cross, nothing heard on the output. Sonoma has turned down the power to their repeater. Trish Gibbons, WA6UBE, will talk to Ben Vickers, WB6FRM, about getting the antenna switched for receive on the Eagle Rock site. Trish now has a new employee, so she maybe able to address our problem soon.

BBS: There has been no report from Owen. The proposed test was not done to rule out Bob's place as the source of the link problem.

SCCARA-GRAM: Gary reported no new articles have been sent to him. The 2003 Field Day pictures sent to him were put in the last newsletter.

OLD BUSINESS:

Clark Murphy reported that he and Lou Steirer, WA6QYS, did the rewiring repairs at Don Hayden's home on the antenna trailer. Saw horses were made to hold the trailer tongue in a more stable position. The antenna trailer has to be covered before the rains come.

Lou Steirer, WA6QYS, has gotten hold of the president of the Collins Radio Collectors Club, and discussed the possible sale of the Collins Radio. The subject was tabled until next month when Lou is here to discuss the details he has discovered.

SCCARA has a lot of things that we should sell. In order to do this, the Board is asking any members who have SCCARA equipment, to inventory it, and bring the list to a meeting. The lists will be compiled and the items that should be kept will be stored in the locker. Those that should be sold will be put in another place and sold at flea markets, on the

Internet, or on our web site.

NEW BUSINESS:

PICNIC: Date: 9/27. See article in the meeting notes, or read Don Village's article. Don Village will set up an HF station using the Kenwood TS440, (the same one used last year), and antennas.

ELECTIONS 2004: There are two directors positions that up for re-election. Clark Murphy, KE6KXO, director, has agreed to remain in office (2 yr term). Lou Steirer, WA6QYS, director, (2yr term) has not yet been asked if he is willing to remain in office. The other offices that need to be filled are: President. Barbara has agreed to run one more year. Vice president: open. Secretary: open. Treasurer: Lloyd DeV Vaughns, has agreed to run for another year.

MEETING ADJOURNED: Motioned by Wally Britten, seconded by Clark Murphy. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Barbara KD6QEI

ARRL News

From *The ARRL Letter*, July 25, 2003

ARRL BOARD REQUESTS POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPLEMENT WRC-03 RESULTS

The ARRL Board of Directors has called on ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, and the ARRL Executive Committee to develop ARRL policy recommendations for an FCC filing to implement the results of World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 (WRC-03) in the amateur rules. ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, chaired the July 18-19 Board session in Windsor, Connecticut.

"The League, as the Amateur Radio representative in the United States, will, through its democratic process, review input from its members as to the impact and implementation of these results to the Part 97 rules," a Board resolution declared. A report on the policy recommendations is due next January. The Board expressed gratitude to the IARU and ARRL WRC-03 team for its "tireless and dedicated efforts in promoting Amateur Radio" and congratulated it for achieving the IARU's goals at the month-long international conference, which wrapped up in Geneva July 4.

Delegates to WRC-03 reached a compromise on a 200 kHz worldwide allocation--7000 to 7200 kHz--effective in 2009, with no change to the existing 300 kHz allocation in the US

or elsewhere in Region 2. The conference also eliminated the requirement that amateur applicants prove Morse code proficiency to operate below 30 MHz, leaving it up to individual administrations to retain or drop Morse as an exam element. WRC-03 decisions also resulted in changes affecting international third-party traffic, guidelines for standards of competence of amateur licensees, and recognition of the licenses of visiting amateurs.

The Board also implemented some recommendations of the wide-ranging Final Report of the Volunteer Resources Committee to the ARRL Board of Directors--an Evaluation of the ARRL's Field Organization. The committee, chaired by ARRL Midwest Division Director Wade Walstrom, W0EJ, concluded that the state of the ARRL Field Organization is "fair," but not sufficient to meet the League's obligation to provide emergency communications, especially at the national level.

In light of the report, the Board called for a comprehensive system to enhance the communications capabilities of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES). There are situations, the Board said--especially given the League's new Citizen Corps partnership with the Department of Homeland Security--when ARES "must have the capability to pass traffic across the nation quickly and accurately."

The Board also called on all Section Emergency Coordinators to develop, implement and maintain a comprehensive Section Emergency Plan by year's end. Additionally, the Board asked Sumner to formally establish leadership training courses as a part of routine Section Manager orientation.

In response to the so-called "Minute 56" report initiated at last July's meeting, the Board voted to initiate a process to revise ARRL band plans for amateur allocations between 902 MHz and 24.25 GHz. "New band plans will be developed using as a goal the full amateur deployment of each band," the Board said. The Board voted unanimously to authorize President Haynie--with assistance from Imlay and Technical Relations Manager Paul Rinaldo, W4RI, "to explore specific terms of expanded partnering plans with the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC). Such cooperation could involve greater integration of amateur operation in the bands from 902 MHz to 24.25 GHz in public safety and homeland security communications."

Citing the Amateur Radio tradition of Elmering (mentoring) new and prospective amateurs, the Board okayed a resolution instructing the VRC to develop two or more viable options for an ARRL Volunteer Mentor program that would provide for "the promotion, support and growth of mentoring in Amateur Radio." The VRC is to present its options at the Board's January meeting.

Additional details are on the ARRL Web site. The minutes of the July ARRL Board of Directors meeting will be posted on the ARRL Web site.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT THE MORSE REQUIREMENT POST-WRC-03?

World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 (WRC-03) made optional the requirement to prove the ability to send and receive Morse code to operate below 30 MHz. While Morse exam elements remain on the books in the US, Canada and elsewhere, Switzerland and the United Kingdom have apparently become the first countries to delete their Morse requirements for HF operation. In the US, however, the FCC is unlikely to act on its own motion to simply make the Morse testing requirement go away.

"There isn't an exception in the Administrative Procedures Act that I am aware of that would permit the Commission to issue an administrative fiat changing the license structure or exam-requirement rules," said an FCC staffer who's closely involved with Amateur Service rules. Other countries can do this because they have different laws and procedures, the FCC staff member observed, adding that even if it could be done here, "that still leaves unanswered the fundamental question: What do you want the new rules to be?"

In its December 1999 Report and Order restructuring Amateur Radio licensing, the FCC stopped short of revising the rules to sunset the Morse requirement automatically if WRC-03 deleted Morse proficiency from the international Radio Regulations. The FCC also acknowledged "a clear dichotomy of viewpoints" on the Morse code issue within the amateur community.

The ARRL's policy for several years has been that Morse should be retained as a testing element in the US. At its July 18-19 meeting in Connecticut, however, the Board said it would solicit and review input from members on the Morse testing requirement and other possible revisions to Part 97 arising from WRC-03.

The first move on the Morse code question in the US is for someone to file a Petition for Rule Making with the FCC seeking a rule change. No Code International (NCI) <<http://www.nocode.org/>> has spearheaded the battle to eliminate the Morse requirement and would be a likely organization to file such a petition. NCI Executive Director Carl Stevenson, WK3C, said late last week that NCI was still studying the matter and had not yet made a final decision on a plan of action. An ARRL member, Stevenson says he hopes personally that the League would join NCI in actively encouraging the FCC to eliminate the Morse exam element as soon as possible.

Hopes for a quick resolution to the Morse question could be wishful thinking, however. Once a petition to drop the Morse exam element is filed, the FCC will put it on "public notice" by assigning an RM number and soliciting comments. If more than one such petition is filed, the FCC is obliged to invite comments on each. When that process is completed,

the FCC may determine that a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) is in order. The Commission at that point could incorporate all Morse-related rule making petitions into a single proceeding. The NPRM would get a docket number, and the comment process would begin anew.

Further complicating and extending the process, the FCC most likely would incorporate other pending Amateur Radio-related issues into the same NPRM. At the end of the comment and reply comment periods, the FCC would issue a Report and Order (R&O) that includes its decision on the Morse code requirement and any other issues incorporated into the proceeding. The whole process could take a couple of years, perhaps longer.

Ratification of the WRC-03 Final Acts by the US Senate does not appear to be necessary before the FCC can act or begin the rule making process. Following World Administrative Conference 1979 (WARC-79) which resulted in three new HF amateur bands, the FCC acted in 1982, prior to Senate ratification of the conference's Final Acts, not only to initiate the rule making process but to give amateurs limited access to 30 meters.

Radio Amateurs of Canada has advised hams in that country that the Morse qualification requirement remains in effect for operation below 30 MHz, "pending a review by Industry Canada of the impact of the WRC-2003 regulatory changes on the Canadian radio regulations, policies and procedures."

ARRL URGES IMPROVED RFI IMMUNITY STANDARDS FOR CONSUMER ELECTRONICS

The ARRL has told the FCC that improved interference standards for consumer electronic devices is the most pressing need as the Commission considers the interference immunity performance of receivers. The League this week filed comments in response to an FCC Notice of Inquiry (NOI), "Interference Immunity Performance Specifications for Radio Receivers" (ET-03-65), released last March to gather input on the issue. While recommending "either mandatory receiver immunity standards or at least guidelines" in most other services, the ARRL said no receiver immunity standards are necessary or practical in the "essentially experimental" Amateur Service.

"The real need for receiver immunity specifications is in the area of consumer electronics," the ARRL said. "With the current explosion of consumer electronics and unlicensed devices, the Commission must--concurrently with consideration of receiver immunity standards in licensed radio services--establish interference rejection standards for unlicensed home electronic equipment and systems as well."

At the same time, the ARRL said, development of any receiver immunity standards or guidelines "should not be used as a means of justifying the overlay of otherwise

fundamentally incompatible spectrum sharing partners."

The League said the FCC has had the authority to require improved RF interference immunity of consumer electronics and systems for many years "and has failed repeatedly to exercise it." The result has been "many thousands of instances of complaints against Amateur Radio operators and, in some cases, civil and criminal actions being filed," the League said. In its 21-page reply to the NOI, the ARRL recited the recent history of legislative and regulatory efforts to come to grips with interference from RF sources, including amateur stations, to receivers used in other services, such as TV and radio broadcasting, and to consumer electronics.

"ARRL continues to believe that receiver immunity should be on the order of 3 V/m for receivers that might be in the near field of an Amateur Radio station," the League said. At that distance, a receiver would be immune to an approximately 100 W ham radio transmission into a 0 dBd antenna 100 feet away. The League conceded, however, that such a standard would not address the interference immunity of telephones, computers, alarm systems, audio systems and other consumer electronics that "constitute the bulk of the instances of interference involving Amateur Radio operators."

The ARRL suggested the FCC mandate a standard for all consumer electronics or adopt a labeling or grading system that allows consumers to make their own choices about the importance of interference immunity and its value in terms of increased product cost. The League also said software-defined radio (SDR) technology offered the best opportunity to deal with receiver immunity.

The ARRL advised the FCC against relying exclusively on manufacturers to agree on how to deal with interference immunity.

The ARRL also urged the FCC not to make interference susceptibility of unlicensed devices a determining factor in whether a licensed radio service should be given an allocation in bands in where unlicensed--and unprotected--devices are deployed. As an example, the League cited the FCC's recent refusal to allocate a sliver band in the vicinity of 136 kHz "because of the ill-conceived prior deployment of unlicensed power line carrier [PLC] systems."

The FCC, in effect, "refused to make an allocation based on interference susceptibility of unlicensed and unprotected RF devices and systems," the League said. "This is improper spectrum management and the policy should be revisited."

The ARRL's comments on the NOI are available on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/et03-65/ARRL-ET-03-65-cmts.pdf>>.

From *The ARRL Letter*, August 1, 2003

AMATEUR COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO POTENTIAL BPL THREAT

Members of the Amateur Radio community have responded to the potential threat posed by Broadband over Power Line (BPL) by opening their wallets in a most generous fashion. ARRL Chief Development Officer Mary Hobart, K1MMH, says BPL has hit a major hot button with amateurs, but more help is needed.

"We're now up to nearly \$193,000 from more than 3690 donors," Hobart said as July drew to a close. The goal for the special Spectrum Defense campaign is \$300,000 by August 31.

Possibly equally significant is the fact that the number of donors to the BPL campaign substantially exceeds the number of individuals and organizations--approximately 1900--who filed initial comments in response to the FCC's Notice of Inquiry (NOI) on BPL earlier this year. While the deadline for initial comments has passed, the FCC this week extended the reply comment deadline to August 20 <http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-03-2590A1.doc>.

The League filed a 120-page package of comments and technical exhibits <<http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/et03-104/>> on July 7, and it plans to file reply comments.

A form of power line carrier (PLC) technology, BPL would use existing electrical power lines to deliver high-speed (ie, broadband) Internet services to homes and businesses. Because it would use frequencies between 2 and 80 MHz, HF and low-VHF amateur allocations could be affected if such systems are deployed. Proponents--primarily electric power utilities--already are testing BPL systems in several markets. Although FCC rules already allow BPL, industry proponents want the FCC to relax radiation limit, which could further increase the interference potential to Amateur Radio operations.

ARRL Lab Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI, is continuing his efforts to assess and quantify the effects of BPL on HF amateur allocations. Just back from a more than 1300 mile trip to evaluate the effects of BPL systems now in the testing stages, Hare described the interference he monitored on the HF bands as "devastating." Meanwhile, ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, and members of the ARRL Technical Relations Office staff have been working to build the Amateur Radio case against BPL in Washington.

In a recent solicitation focusing on the BPL issue, ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, said no prior threat has posed a challenge more serious. "The threat is as close as the power lines right in your neighborhood," Sumner said in issuing a call to action to all amateurs. "Only by joining forces financially will we be able to educate government officials quickly and effectively on the impact of this new

threat to Amateur Radio spectrum."

BPL technology already has been deployed in some European countries, and amateurs there have experienced interference from the systems. Responding in part to concerns expressed by its amateur community, Japan last year decided not to adopt the technology because of its interference potential.

For additional information on BPL, visit the ARRL "Power Line Communications (PLC) and Amateur Radio" page <<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/>>. Hobart invites donors to visit the ARRL Spectrum Defense campaign page <<https://www.arrl.org/forms/development/donations/bpl/>>.

From *The ARRL Letter*, August 8, 2003

BPL IS "SPECTRUM POLLUTION," ARRL PRESIDENT SAYS

ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, says Broadband over Power Line (BPL)--if widely deployed--would represent "spectrum pollution" on a level that is "difficult to imagine." Haynie reacted after seeing videotape and early data from recent ARRL field studies in four states where BPL is undergoing testing.

"BPL is the most crucial issue facing Amateur Radio and the one that has the most devastating potential," Haynie said. In terms of interference potential on HF and low-VHF frequencies, "nothing is on the same scale as BPL."

A form of power line carrier (PLC) technology, BPL would use existing low and medium-voltage power lines to deliver broadband services to homes and businesses. Because it uses frequencies between 2 and 80 MHz, BPL could affect HF and low-VHF amateur allocations wherever it's deployed. BPL proponents--primarily electric power utilities--already are testing BPL systems in several markets, and one reportedly is already offering the service. FCC rules already allow BPL, although industry proponents want the FCC to relax radiation limits. It's feared such a change could exacerbate BPL's interference potential.

During the ARRL forum at the West Gulf Division Convention (Austin Summerfest 2003) August 1-2 in Austin, Texas, Haynie previewed a short video highlighting a recent tour of BPL field trial sites by ARRL Lab Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI. In late July, Hare traveled to BPL trial communities in Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York to take measurements over significant parts of the HF spectrum and initial readings at low-VHF. Driving a specially equipped vehicle loaded with radio gear and measurement devices, Hare said he didn't need to look long to find BPL interference. "The signals were all over," he said. "The interference found ranged from moderate to extremely strong."

The video shows the S meter of an HF transceiver holding steady in excess of S9 as the speaker emits a crackling din, which one observer described as sounding like a Geiger counter. Only the very strongest amateur signals broke through on 20 and 15 meters. Hare noted, however, that the field strengths of the various systems all were within FCC Part 15 limits for power line carrier (PLC) devices.

Each BPL system exhibited a unique sound depending upon the modulation scheme it used. While in most cases it sounded like static or pulse noise, in one city warbling "birdies" blanketed the bands at closely spaced intervals.

The ARRL already has filed a 120-page package of text and technical exhibits in response to the FCC's Notice of Inquiry in late May. The League plans to file reply comments--responses to comments already filed--by the recently extended August 20 FCC deadline.

Haynie has been doing a bit of traveling of his own, including more than two weeks in Washington so far this year dealing with the FCC and with members of Congress on BPL and other Amateur Radio-related issues.

Countering critics who suggest that the League is only using BPL as a fund-raising ploy, Haynie said the League would not be putting as much effort into attempting to quantify the BPL threat and to put a face on it if it weren't real.

"The BPL industry and their associations have told the FCC and the world that there is no interference potential from BPL systems," Haynie said. "Anyone seeing these BPL signals for megahertz after megahertz for miles along a power line should be convinced that BPL--even operating at the present FCC limits--poses a serious threat to all HF and low-VHF communications."

More information is available on the ARRL Web site <<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/>>.

NEW HF RFID TAG LIMITS SHOULD NOT AFFECT AMATEURS

Little or no impact to the Amateur Service is expected at the low end of 20 meters in the wake of an FCC decision to raise the power limit for radio frequency identification (RFID) tags that operate in the vicinity of 13.5 MHz. The FCC agreed in a Second Report and Order (SR&O) and Memorandum Opinion and Order (MO&O) in ET Docket 95-19 released July 17 to allow 3.5 times the previous harmonic field strength in the range of 13.710 to 14.010 MHz.

The joint SR&O and MO&O were in response to a Petition

for Declaratory Ruling filed by M/A-COM Private Radio Systems Inc in 2001 and a Petition for Reconsideration filed by the Information Technology Industry Council in 1997. The FCC authorized an increase in the maximum allowed field strength of unlicensed Part 15 devices that transmit data--specifically RFID tags--in the 13.553 to 13.567 MHz band from 10,000 to 15,848 uV/m at 30 meters.

Additionally, the FCC permitted an increase in the maximum field strength of harmonics from the devices in the range of 13.110 to 13.410 MHz and 13.710 to 14.010 MHz from the current 30 uV/m to 106 uV/m at 30 meters. All other harmonics of the devices must remain below 30 uV/m at 30 meters.

While the increased strength in lower sideband harmonics of the RFID devices creeps into the lowest 10 kHz of the 20 meter CW band, ARRL Lab Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI says there is little, if any, cause for hams to worry about increased noise.

"The potential impact on amateurs from this rule change is minimal," he said. "To meet the field strength requirements at and above 14.010 MHz, these systems, in practice, would typically exhibit less than 1 dB over current FCC limits."

The FCC said the changes would allow for improved operation and spur development of the RFID tag technology, as well as bring the standards in line with those in Europe and Australia.

LEAGUE DOCUMENTS DIGITAL MODES

With a new Web page on digital mode specifications, ARRL hopes to make answering the question "Is that mode legal?" a lot easier.

Until 1995, the only permissible digital modes under Part 97 rules were RTTY and modes that used ASCII codes. On November 1 of that year, the FCC--acting on an ARRL petition--agreed to allow the use of any digital mode, providing its technical characteristics were "publicly documented"--97.309(a)(4)--and the HF digital mode explosion began in earnest.

To make finding technical specifications for existing and emerging digital modes more convenient, ARRL now provides technical documentation for many modes now in use on its "97.309(a)(4) Technical Descriptions" page <<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/techchar/>>.

"We needed a better place to find whether a technique has been published," said ARRL Technical Relations Manager Paul Rinaldo, W4RI, in explaining the move to make the information more readily available. "A place on the Web seemed to be the best way of letting the amateur community know that a technique is published as well as providing an

accurate technical description of what it is."

The documentation is adequate to recognize the technique or protocol when observed on the air, to determine the call signs of stations in communication and to read the content of their transmissions. The page currently contains technical descriptions of CLOVER, CLOVER-2000, G-TOR, PACTOR, PACTOR-II and PSK31. Volunteers are developing documentation for MT63, PACTOR-III, MFSK-16 and Q15X25 for later addition.

The ARRL invites help from designers, manufacturers, users and user groups to fill in the gaps for additional modes. Send information or inquiries to ARRL Technical Relations Manager Paul Rinaldo, W4RI <w4ri@arrl.org>.

From *The ARRL Letter*, August 15, 2003

HAMS A BRIGHT SPOT DURING POWER BLACKOUT

When a power blackout struck at least a half dozen eastern states August 14, many Amateur Radio operators were ready and able to provide whatever assistance they could. Hardest hit were metropolitan areas like New York City, Detroit and Cleveland. In New York, residents and commuters found themselves stranded in electricity-dependent elevators and subway or rail cars while visitors ended up stuck at airports, which were forced to shut down. With the cellular systems overloaded or out altogether, the incident turned into a test of Amateur Radio's capabilities to operate without commercial power.

"It was a good drill," said New York City-Long Island Section Emergency Coordinator Tom Carrubba, KA2D. But, he adds, it was a cautionary tale too. "The lesson is that everybody gets a little complacent," he said. "Have emergency power backup and make sure it's working!"

By and large, Carrubba said, ARES members did what they were trained to do. "It's going to show the worth of Amateur Radio," he said of the blackout response. "There were people on the air immediately."

Diane Ortiz, K2DO, the Public Information Coordinator for NYC-Long Island was one of them. When power went down in her Suffolk County community, she started up an informal VHF net. Over the next 20 hours or so, it passed some 500 pieces of what Ortiz described as largely "health and welfare traffic."

"People are getting on and helping," she said. In addition to handling messages for people stranded in the city, amateurs also relayed useful information, such as which stores or filling stations were open and operating. With many radio and TV stations dark, and hams were able to help fill the information void, Ortiz said.

In the Big Apple itself, ARES teams provided communication support for Red Cross Emergency Response Vehicles (ERVs) set up at main transportation centers in Manhattan. ARES members also accompanied ERVs on fire calls.

RACES activated in most Greater New York City area counties after a state of emergency was declared. Some ARES teams--including a few across the Hudson River in New Jersey--activated or remained on standby to help if called upon. In New Jersey, a net linked the Red Cross lead chapter's N2ARC in Princeton with other New Jersey ARC chapters.

Michigan Section Manager Dale Williams, WA8EFK, reports scattered ARES activations. Williams, who lives in Dundee south of Detroit, was without power August 15 and relying on his emergency generator. Some Michigan ARES teams assisted emergency operations centers and the Red Cross.

In Ohio, Section Emergency Coordinator Larry Rain, WD8IHP, reports that all ARES organizations in northern Ohio were activated after the power grid went down. Still going strong at week's end were ARES teams in Cleveland and Akron. "ARES is handling communication support for Ohio Emergency Management in the affected cities and communities," Rain said. Ohio VHF and UHF nets and the Ohio SSB net on HF have been handling blackout-related traffic.

Nancy Hall, KC4IYD--who lives 20 miles west of Cleveland--said she's glad she'd taken the ARRL Emergency Communications Level I class. "I have to say that being a ham and knowing about emergency preparedness did make life easier for me and my family," said Hall, who's now signed up for the Level II class.

New England states were far less affected by the blackout. ARES/RACES operators in the region were on standby after the blackout. Only Connecticut and sections of Western Massachusetts reported significant outages, and ARES nets activated in both states.

Bill Sexton, N1IN/AAR1FP, an Army MARS member, said his emergency power capability permitted him to check into the Northeast SHARES (National Communications System HF Shared Resources Program) net and maintain e-mail contact after Berkshire County lost power.

"The experience proved once gain the great strength of ham radio in an emergency," Sexton said. "It is self-starting, and it is everywhere."

HAYNIE URGES MORE LETTERS TO POTENTIAL SPECTRUM BILL COSPONSORS

ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, wants to see more

letters urging members of Congress to sign on as cosponsors of the Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act bills in the US House and Senate. The identical measures, an ARRL initiative, are on their third try in Congress. Noting that cosponsor counts have changed little over the past month and that some lawmakers he's contacted had not yet heard from constituents, Haynie encouraged more League members to take the effort to write, call or e-mail their representatives and senators to explain the bills' importance.

"Those letters are everything to a congressperson or a senator," Haynie said. "Without letters from constituents, we're just spinning our wheels." Conceding that Broadband over Power Line (BPL) has been taking the limelight in recent days, Haynie said passage of the Spectrum Protection Act remains important to the overall future of Amateur Radio.

The Spectrum Protection Act would require the FCC to provide "equivalent replacement spectrum" to Amateur Radio if the FCC reallocates primary amateur frequencies, reduces any secondary amateur allocations, or makes additional allocations within such bands that would substantially reduce their utility to amateurs.

A sample letter on ARRL's The Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act of 2003 Web page <<http://www.arrl.org/govrelations/arspa.html>> cites Amateur Radio's role in public service activities. The page also contains information on how to identify and contact members of Congress and links to the Thomas Web site <<http://thomas.loc.gov/>>, where the bills' text and a list of cosponsors are available.

"Just bringing the Spectrum Protection Act to the attention of your senator or representative is a major help in this effort," Haynie said. "This is not one of those cases where we're looking for donations. This is something that you--as a member--can do on behalf of Amateur Radio, and the most it will cost you is some stationery and a 37 cent stamp."

Those writing their lawmakers on behalf of the Spectrum Protection Act are asked to copy their correspondence to the League via e-mail <specbill03@arrl.org>.

HR 713 now has 44 cosponsors, while the identical S 537 has six. Cosponsorship lends support to legislation while it's in committee, and Haynie says letters and e-mails from members to their lawmakers remains the key to getting the legislation passed.

BELGIUM, GERMANY DROP MORSE REQUIREMENT

Belgium and Germany are the latest countries to drop the requirement to pass a Morse code examination to obtain HF operating privileges. Their action followed the decision of World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 to delete the treaty requirement calling on applicants to prove Morse

proficiency to have HF access.

Belgians holding ON1-prefix Class B tickets can get new Class A HF licenses and ON4, 5, 6 or 7 prefixes by applying to Belgium's telecommunications authority and paying a 5 Euro fee. As of August 8, some 200 Belgian Class B licensees had taken advantage of the plan.

Starting August 15, an estimated 33,000 German Class 2 VHF/UHF-only licensees will be permitted access to the HF bands on an equal footing with current Class 1 licensees. "Morse telegraph knowledge as a prerequisite to use the high-frequency bands is no longer required," said a statement from the German Federal Ministry of Economy and Labor (BMWA). "These rules apply for foreign Amateur Radio licensees with comparable privileges operating during visits in Germany." At least for now, the upgraded Class 2 licensees will use their current call signs (prefixes include DB, DC, DD and DG).

Switzerland was the first country to drop the Morse requirement, albeit on a provisional basis while it makes the rule change permanent. The UK soon followed.

Radio Amateurs of Canada is conducting a national on-line Morse survey <<http://www.rac.ca/news/msurvey.htm>> to record Canadian amateurs' preferences on the current 5 WPM Morse requirement for HF access. The RAC Board of Directors will consider the results of the survey in arriving at a recommendation for Industry Canada, which will decide the matter in Canada.

ALASKA AMATEUR DEBUTS EXPERIMENTAL 136 kHz BEACON

An Alaska amateur has launched a beacon on 136 kHz under a FCC Part 5 experimental license, and he's already confirmed a reception report from British Columbia and received an unconfirmed report--or "trace"--from the UK. Laurence Howell, KL1X (ex-GM4DMA), reports his WD2XDW CW beacon from Anchorage (BP41xd) is now on the air 24/7 at 137.77350 kHz--a slight change from his initial frequency to avoid LORAN C spurs.

"A lot of experimenters are still reeling after the recent refusal by the FCC to allow a 136 kHz allocation to the Amateur Service," Howell told ARRL. "This Part 5 license approval is most welcomed by the experimental community."

In May, the FCC unexpectedly turned down ARRL's petition to grant 135.7 to 137.8 kHz to amateurs. In its denial, the FCC cited arguments put forth by power companies that amateur operation in the vicinity of 136 kHz might interfere with power line carrier (PLC) systems used to control the power grid.

Howell says Steve McDonald, VE7SL--some 2100 km away

in British Columbia--was able to copy a part of the WD2XDW call sign about 45 minutes before dawn on August 15. The "capture" matched up with the beacon's transmission.

"Given the time of year and solar/geomagnetic conditions, this is a very good sign," he said.

The WD2XDW beacon is being used for propagation experimentation within the US and to check transpolar propagation to Europe on paths over the high Arctic. It's transmitting very slow-speed CW--so-called "QRSS" transmissions of one dit every six seconds--at up to 2 W ERP.

The beacon's antenna is a 32 meter (105 feet) wire vertical with a capacity top hat, about 1 mH of base-loading inductance and a killer ground system that covers several acres. Despite the extensive ground system, Howell says, the antenna system remains pretty lossy at LF.

Howell notes that Alaska is in a period of essentially 24 hour daylight, but he expects things to heat up on LF in late September or early October. Experimenters use software such as Argo <<http://www.weaksignals.com/>> to "copy" the weak-signal LF transmissions.

Howell said he hopes his beacon will promote a better understanding of complex propagation modes associated with what he termed "this fascinating part of the spectrum."

Need Help?

Amateurs have a long history of helping each other. An experienced amateur who helps another is traditionally called an "Elmer." If you have a question or problem, you are encouraged to ask one of SCCARA's Elmers. Below is a list of topics including who to contact for each.

If you consider yourself to be reasonably competent in at least one area of amateur radio and would be willing help others, please ask the club secretary for an Elmer survey form and fill it out.

Antennas, feed-lines, tuners: WB6EMR, K6PBQ, WB6YRU
Lightning protection, grounding: WB6YRU
Station set-up, equipment: K6PBQ
TVI/RFI: WB6YRU
Homebrew projects, construction: KD6FJI, WB6YRU
Computers: KB6NP; IBM PC: WB6YRU
Packet Network (BBS, forwarding): WB6YRU
Code operating and installations: WB6EMR, K6PBQ
DX (long distance/propagation): WB6EMR
Emergency operating/preparedness: WA6QYS
FM (VHF/UHF, repeaters): WA6VJY
HF operating techniques (SSB, CW): WB6EMR, K6PBQ
Classes/license upgrading: W6ACW
Legal/FCC rules: WB6YRU

SCCARA (club inner workings):
K06HH, K6PBQ, WA6VJY, WB6YRU, WA6QYS
Children's Discovery Museum, volunteer operator:
K6PBQ

W6ACW, Ed Hajny, (408) 739-6105

WB6EMR, James D. Armstrong, Jr.,
evening & msg: (408) 945-1202

KD6FJI, Lloyd DeVaughns,
day: (408) 299-8933, evening: (408) 225-6769
packet: home BBS KB6MER

K06HH, Don Hayden, (408) 867-4643
packet: home BBS NOARY

KB6NP, Jon Dutra, day & msg (408) 428-2058
evening (408) 867-8654
packet: home BBS NOARY
internet: jad@aol.com

K6PBQ, Don Village, (408) 263-2789

WA6QYS, Lou Steirer, (408) 241-7999
packet: home BBS NOARY

WA6VJY, Stan Getsla, day: (408) 738-2888 x5929, evening &
msg: (408) 275-0735

WB6YRU, Gary Mitchell, msg (408) 265-2336
also (408) 269-2924
packet: home BBS NOARY
internet: wb6yru@aenat.net

Newsletter Notes

This issue of the *SCCARA-GRAM* is rather heavy on items from the ARRL Newsletter. The main reason is simply that there just happens to be more available this month that I thought some of you might be interested in... It's "a busy news day" as they say. However, there's another reason. I'd like to know whether you guys want more of this sort of thing or not. And if so, do you want there to be emphasis (or de-emphasis) on any particular topics?

I've always said that there should be more of a local flavor to a club newsletter, articles from the membership. But aside from the President's Prose and the occasional activity notice, so little material is submitted, I have to wonder if I'm the only one that feels that way.

It's OK with me if everyone is happier with more material from outside sources like the ARRL Letter, but I'd much rather not guess--you need to tell me. So, please don't be bashful about saying what you'd like to see (or not see) in the *SCCARA-GRAM*. It's *your* newsletter.

73, Gary WB6YRU, Editor

S.C.C.A.R.A. Membership Form for 2003

(Fill in name and address if there is no mailing label below; make corrections if the label is incorrect)

Name: _____ Call: _____ Class: E A G T+ T N

Address: _____ Licensed since (yr): _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ - _____ Licence Expiration Date (mo/yr): _____

Telephone: () _____ New Member I'm also an
 Renewal ARRL member _____

E-mail: _____ Packet: _____

For family memberships (at the same address), please fill out a separate form for each. Indicate the "primary member" for mailing purposes: _____

Annual membership dues are payable at the first of the year and expire the following December 31. New members joining on or after July 1, pay half the membership dues.

Annual Membership dues: \$15 Individual \$20 Family \$5 Student (under 18)

Please send the repeater Auto-Dial/Auto-Patch codes (no charge, circle): Yes
WE MUST BE ABLE TO VERIFY YOUR AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE
BEFORE ANY REPEATER CODES WILL BE SENT

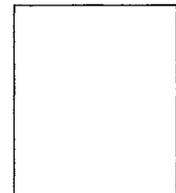
Give this completed form (or copy) with payment to the Secretary or Treasurer at any meeting or mail to the return address below.

====> PLEASE DO NOT TEAR OR CUT FORM <====

**SANTA CLARA COUNTY
AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION**

PO BOX 6
San Jose CA 95103-0006

Affiliate of the American Radio Relay League



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