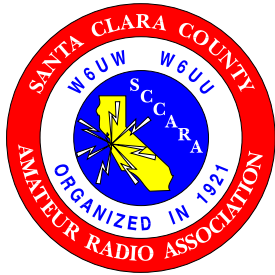


SCCARA-GRAM



Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Association

Volume 22, Number 5

May 2006



ARRL News

From *The ARRL Letter*, April 7, 2006

FCC INVITES COMMENTS ON ARRL SPREAD SPECTRUM PETITION

The FCC has invited comments on the ARRL's Petition for Rule Making, designated RM-11325, which seeks to modify a Part 97 rule governing spread spectrum (SS) operation on Amateur Radio frequencies. The League has asked the Commission to drop all but the first sentence of §97.311(d), which now requires the use of automatic power control (APC) for SS stations running more than 1 W, but retain the 100 W overall power limitation for SS. "The effect of the rule change would be to eliminate an automatic power control provision that has proven over time to be impractical" in terms of compliance, the League said in its petition, filed March 13. Comments are due Wednesday, May 3; reply comments are due Thursday, May 18. Submit or view comments filed via the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) <<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>>. Click on "Submit a Filing" or "Search for Filed Comments," and type "RM-11325" in the "Proceeding" field. Be sure to type "RM" in upper case and include the hyphen, but omit the quotation marks. A copy of the petition is on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/SS-Rulemaking-Petition.pdf>>.

ARRL ALLEGES MISREPRESENTATION BY BPL OPERATOR, INACTION BY FCC

The ARRL once again has called for the immediate shutdown of the BPL pilot project in Briarcliff Manor, New York. In a March 29 letter that takes both BPL operator Ambient Corporation and the FCC to task, the League documented continued interference on amateur frequencies at various points of the Westchester County system. The ARRL has filed five previous interference complaints about the system, the first in October 2004. The system operates under an FCC Part 5 experimental license.

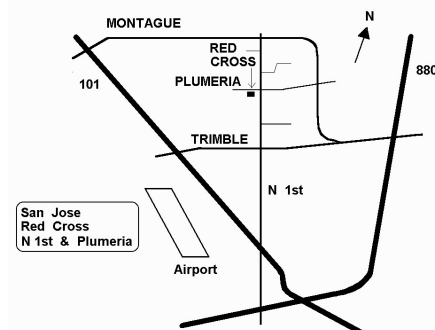
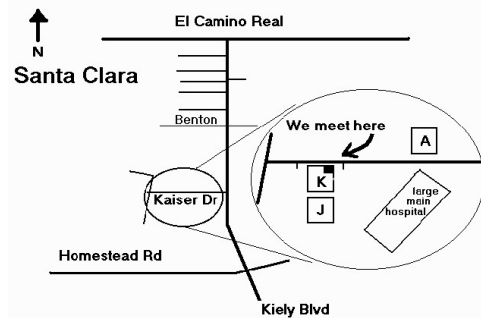
"In response to this interference, which has never been resolved or even substantively addressed by the Commission," the League wrote, "the experimental permittee, Ambient, has defiantly and consistently denied the interference, which Commission Enforcement Bureau staff personally witnessed and confirmed."

Calendar

- 5/8 **SCCARA General Meeting**
- 5/15 **SCCARA Board Meeting**--(San Jose Red Cross, 7:30p, all are welcome)
- 5/20 **Antenna trailer party** 10 AM (for Field Day)

General Meeting:

Day: Monday, May 8, 2006
Time: 7:30 PM
Place: Kaiser Santa Clara, Bld K, Rm 1
Featuring: {to be announced}



The **SCCARA-GRAM** is published monthly by the **SANTA CLARA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION**, PO Box 6, San Jose CA 95103-0006. Permission to reprint articles is hereby granted, provided the source is properly credited.

The deadline for articles is 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>.

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	e-mail: ka6ymd@arrl.net	
Membership	Jeannie Felix, KG6YOR	293-3847
N0ARY BBS	Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU	269-2924
	e-mail: wb6yru@ix.netcom.com	

SCCARA REPEATERS

SCCARA owns and operates two repeaters under the call W6UU:

2 meter: 146.985 - 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 Eagle Rock near Alum Rock Park in the foothills of east San Jose. 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 Village, K6PBQ. On ten meters, 28.385 MHz USB, Thursdays at 8:00 PM. Net control: Wally Britten, 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.. Sysop: Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

SCCARA contact Clark KE6KXO:	408 262-9334
ARRL/VEC Silicon Valley VE group, Morris Jones, AD6ZH:	408 507-4698

Copies of the League's latest complaint went to the FCC's Office of Engineering and Technology and its Experimental Licensing Division as well as to the FCC Secretary and Ambient Corporation.

The ARRL disputed representations in a February 14 letter from Ambient counsel George Y. Wheeler to FCC Experimental Licensing Division Chief James Burtle. Wheeler's letter "simply denies that there is interference, which is patently untenable at this point," the League said. "However, the Commission's inaction has implicitly validated Ambient's inaction and repeated misrepresentations."

Interference measurements ARRL Laboratory Manager Ed Hare, WIRFI, made February 20 revealed "no substantial changes" in the system's interference profile on amateur frequencies, the League pointed out.

"The system is still operating un-notched on amateur bands at several separate locations, although notching of the amateur bands was evident at other locations in the system," the League said. Despite Ambient's claims that it had notched amateur bands, Hare found in several areas and ham bands that "none of the system appears to be notched." A 20-page supplement detailing Hare's February 20 findings accompanied the League's further complaint.

The findings show the Briarcliff Manor BPL system continues to cause harmful interference to Amateur Radio communication "and it is not compliant with applicable FCC Part 15 regulations," the League contended. It also fails to comply with the terms of its FCC Part 5 experimental authorization, nor is its operation consistent with Ambient's claims in progress reports it's filed with the FCC.

The League said it is "beyond any reasonable dispute" that the Briarcliff Manor BPL system fails to comply with Part 5 rules requiring permittees to cease transmissions "if harmful interference to an established radio service develops" and not resume transmissions until it's certain harmful interference will not recur. Part 15 rules contain similar provisions for unlicensed devices that may interfere with licensed services.

In addition, the League said, information regarding the Briarcliff Manor BPL system has yet to show up in the publicly accessible BPL database as Part 15 rules require. The ARRL took issue with Wheeler's assertions that the system's information does not have to appear in the database. "Section 15.615 of the rules makes no exception for Access BPL systems operating pursuant to an experimental authorization," the League stated.

Given its failure to comply with both Part 5 and Part 15 rules governing its operation, the Briarcliff Manor BPL system must be shut down, the ARRL demanded. "Alternatively, the Commission should rescind the experimental authorization and determine other appropriate sanctions against Ambient Corporation," the ARRL concluded.

From the *ARRL Letter*, April 14, 2006

MANASSAS BPL SYSTEM STILL INTERFERING DESPITE CLAIMS TO THE CONTRARY

Interference from the Manassas, Virginia, BPL system persists on ham radio frequencies, radio amateurs there say. Their reports fly in the face of an April 7 news release from system operator COMTek that a recent engineering survey found "no interference unique to BPL" in the amateur bands. On April 6, COMTek filed a report <<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/files/COMTek.pdf>> with the FCC in response to an earlier

interference complaint from Dwight Agnew, AI4II. COMTek said it does not believe the Manassas BPL system caused the interference Agnew and other Manassas ham radio operators have heard. Agnew told the ARRL this week that the BPL interference continues.

"Yes, it's still there," Agnew said. "Some days it will blow your ears off, other days not," he explained. "It varies. That's what's so aggravating about it."

Another Manassas amateur, George Tarnovsky, K4GVT, who's also complained to the FCC of BPL interference, echoed Agnew's report. He told the ARRL the BPL signal still can be heard along "miles of road" on 40 meters as well as 20, 17 and 15 meters. "It's everywhere," Tarnovsky said. He points out the interference level varies based on how heavily the system's approximately 900 customers are using the system.

In its April 6 filing with the FCC, COMTek—which operates the BPL system for the city—said it takes interference complaints seriously and is conducting "an ongoing investigation" to determine whether the "alleged interference" is coming from its equipment. The Manassas system uses Main.net equipment on frequencies between 4 MHz and 30 MHz, according to the BPL database.

On March 7, FCC Spectrum Enforcement Division Chief Joseph P. Casey requested the city and COMTek to follow up on Agnew's January 19 complaint citing harmful BPL interference along Virginia Business Route 234. The Commission told the city to test its system to be sure it complies with FCC Part 15 rules and to "resolve any continuing harmful interference."

COMTek's FCC filing included a test report by Product Safety Engineering Inc of Dade City, Florida, outlining BPL system measurements made on 40 meters at one location on Route 234. Product Safety Engineering tempered its report, however, by saying its measurements "were not intended to qualify the system or BPL equipment with respect to compliance with the FCC rules." They were intended to "assist the client in gaining an understanding of the interference potential" of the BPL equipment at "a specific location," the engineering firm said.

Conceding that the engineering firm's report was interim and "not fully compliant with the FCC's new measurement guidelines," COMTek told the FCC it would supply a complete survey by April 14.

The ARRL already has called on the FCC to shut down the Manassas system until it complies with FCC Part 15 rules. ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, says COMTek's April 6 FCC filing failed to provide what Casey had requested last month. That included making measurements at multiple locations Agnew described in his January complaint. The engineering report also gives no indication that the tests were performed during peak system usage hours, as the FCC had required.

"No explanation was provided as to why COMTek was unable to comply with the FCC requirement to resolve the interference complaint and to report within 30 days," Sumner said. "Yet on April 7, COMTek issued a news release that claimed 'rigorous FCC-mandated testing' had been completed. In fact, the testing completed as of that date failed to comply with FCC requirements, as acknowledged by COMTek itself."

Sumner said "the test results are meaningless" as a measure of the radio interference emanating from the Manassas BPL system. "Using the test equipment described in the test report to check for radio interference is like using an oven thermometer to check for

a fever."

Sumner reiterated the League's request that the FCC order the Manassas BPL system disabled "until its operation is able to comply fully with the FCC rules and instructions."

ARRL Laboratory Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI, charged COMTek with "trying to fix interference problems with press releases." ARRL's technical analysis of the testing indicates COMTek cannot show that it's able to meet FCC-required emission limits, Hare said, and doesn't even demonstrate that its system is not causing harmful interference.

Hare said BPL manufacturers and providers whose technology can operate compatibly with Amateur Radio have been working closely with the ARRL and local amateurs. "Those that cannot are taking preliminary test results and turning them into 'everything-is-wonderful now' news releases," he said. "From a technical point of view, that moves us further from solutions, not toward them."

SUPPORT STILL NEEDED FOR HOUSE RESOLUTION 230

The ongoing BPL battles in Manassas, Virginia, and Briarcliff Manor, New York, underscore the need for better FCC rules to protect radiocommunication systems from BPL interference. House Resolution 230 (H Res 230), introduced by Rep Mike Ross, WD5DVR, of Arkansas, calls on the FCC to "conduct a full and complete analysis" of radio interference from BPL, particularly with regard to public safety radio systems.

"Members of Congress need to hear constituents' concerns about BPL interference while they are in their home districts this week and next," ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, observed this week. "Rep Ross has been joined by six co-sponsors, but more support is needed to move this legislation along."

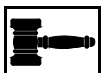
H Res 230 recently received a boost when the March issue of NPSTC Spectrum, the newsletter of the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council, carried an article, "Ham Radio and Public Safety Ask for FCC Reevaluation of Broadband over Power Lines." The article notes "significantly high levels of potential interference in the VHF low band 30 to 50 MHz range" in several test locations.

A sample letter www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/filings/hres230/HRes230-SampleLtr.doc is available for ARRL members to use as a starting point in contacting their congressional representatives. ARRL members logging onto the Members-Only portion of the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/members-only/>> will see contact information for their Member of Congress. Alternatively, visit <http://www.house.gov/>.

When writing, please send a copy of your letter to ARRL's Government Relations firm: Chwat & Company Inc, ATTN: Eric Heis, K14NFC, 625 Slaters Ln--Suite 103 Alexandria, VA 22314; Fax 703-684-7594; <eric.heis@chwatco.com>.

Meeting Minutes

General Meeting, April 10, 2006



Dinner meeting held at the hometown buffet in Santa Clara.

Sonoma Repeater: A letter has been sent to the Sonoma repeater group, telling them that we do not accept their last proposal. They have reported to us that they are going to try another frequency on a test basis.

Ham Radio Gear: An antenna and related equipment, was stolen during the Tierra Bella Bike Race on Saturday, April 15, 2006.

Field Day 2006: The Milpitas Radio Club has invited SCCARA to join them for Field Day this year at Pinewood Park. We will have our own area of Pinewood Park. We would have voice, code, and packet stations. Milpitas club would have the GOTA station. The final vote will come at the Board meeting, as to whether we go to Milpitas or Mt. Madonna.

SVECS; The next quarterly breakfast is going to be Saturday, April 22, at the VFW Hall in Santa Clara, (on Monroe, one block south of Benton. Breakfast is at 9:00 AM, program at 10:00 AM. The speaker is Chris Chamberlin. His topic is all about his work in Alabama during the disaster s of hurricane Katrina and Rita.

MS Walk: Joan Hastings, KB6LFZ, is pushing Joan Village (K6PBQ xyl) in her wheelchair, to support the MS Society on Saturday, April 22. Joan is still accepting supporters. Several SCCARA members are expected to help support the event.

The evening was great! If anyone left the restaurant hungry, it was their own fault. The event was for all of the family. There was much socializing, smiles, laughter, and enjoyment. The meeting broke up about 9:30 PM.

Board Meeting, April 17, 2006



Meeting Began: At 7:45 PM after the net.

Members present: Don Village, K6PBQ, Director and Station Trustee; Lou Stierer, WA6QYS, Director; AE6QL, Fred Townsend, Vice President; Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU, Newsletter Editor/Producer; Clark Murphy, KE6KXO, President; Barbara K. Britten, KD6QEI, Secretary; Wally Britten, KA6YMD, Director, Repeater Chairman; Jim Tyranski, KG6UDW.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Vice President: He has two possible speakers, but no confirmations as of press time.

Treasurer: Excused. No report given.

Secretary: The new members that joined as of January 2006 was compiled in a separate listing for Gary Mitchell to send a "welcome" letter along with the SCCARAGRAM. If there are errors in reporting the minutes of the meetings, please let the secretary know by phone, email, or at the meeting. If anyone is not getting the SCCARAGRAM whose dues are paid, please let me know.

Repeater Chairman: The Sonoma repeater is quiet, temporarily, while they are testing another frequency. We are hoping that NARCC will process our coordination quickly.

Vice President: Fred reports that the repeater crystals are on order. A Sun spark II computer 'shell' has been purchased for a mock-up tester. It may have a salvageable prom. There is a design issue. It involves power distribution & fusing. Fred is trying to work

something out with the help of Don Stienbach to complete the work.

BBS: It is still working, and is now forwarding traffic north and south.

Newsletter: Gary suggested a renewal letter be sent to any unrenewed people in January. January is the last SCCARAGRAM of the year. Clark made an executive decision to approve this method.

Welcome Letter: The letter has been revised but is not final yet. Don Stienbach, Fred Townsend, and Lou Steirer, to work on it. Hopefully final product will be at next month's Board meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Christmas Lunch: The Christmas luncheon will be held at the Bold Knight on Monterey Road in San Jose, on December 16, at 12 noon. The price for the meal will be \$20.00.

Collins Amplifier: We are not going to ship the Collins amplifier to its new owner. They are only available through personal pick up due to shipping liability. The amplifier and transceiver came to SCCARA from an estate bequeath. Fred Townsend will take pictures of the items to show prospective buyers what they are getting.

Field Day 2006: We are going to have Field Day at Mt. Madonna. Clark has told Bill Dale of our plans. SVECS may back us up and we hope many of its members will join us to work the various stations. The meals will be on a potluck basis. SCCARA will have charcoal for the barbeque. You are welcomed to bring your own meat and cook it on the "barby". Jim Tyranski, KG6UDW, has agreed to be Field Day Chairman.

Ham Station at Red Cross: The station will be open April 29, from 10:00 AM until 3 or 4:00 PM. All are welcomed to come and transmit in voice or code.

Antenna Party: There will be an antenna trailer painting of the trailer deck party, and make repairs, and change and grease the wheels day on May 20, at 10:00 AM. Bring your own lunch and something to drink. There will be a BBQ available, says Clark.

Jeannie is to send a SCCARA QSL card to Preston, KI6DHL, in Boulder Creek. He is stationed at Moffitt Field. He is a newly licensed ham.

Deep cycle Batteries: The three deep cycle batteries that we have are going bad. Fred suggested that we buy one new battery, a Group 27, on trade in. Then trade one in next year, and trickle charge the third one. Fred agreed to pick up the batteries from Lloyd DeVaughns and check them out.

40 meter Dipole: The 40 meter dipole at Red Cross is okay. The 80 meter trap dipole needs to be checked. It may be necessary to change the 80 meter dipole to a fanned dipole. Wally Britten to set up time with Scott Hensley, to go on the roof to do this. Then Wally will call some people to go with him up to the roof. Scott has preapproved Wally to do this work. Scott will not have to be present during this process.

NEW BUSINESS:

Field Day Staff: Jim Tyranski, KG6UDW, has agreed to be Field Day Chairman. The other station heads needed are: CW; phone; GOTA. Gary Mitchell reported that there is no need for a packet station this year.

Fred Townsend moved that the meeting adjourn, seconded by Wally Britten. Meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Submitted by: Barbara K. Britten, KD6QEI, Secretary.

DX (long distance/propagation): WB6EMR
Emergency operating/preparedness: WA6QYS
FM (VHF/UHF, repeaters):
HF operating techniques (SSB, CW): WB6EMR, K6PBQ
Classes/license upgrading: W6ACW
Legal/FCC rules: WB6YRU
SCCARA (club inner workings): K6PBQ, WB6YRU, WA6QYS
Children's Discovery Museum, volunteer operator:
K6PBQ
EchoLink: KK6MX

W6ACW, Ed Hajny, (408) 739-6105

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

KD6FJI, Lloyd DeVaughns,
day: (408) 918-4635, evening: (408) 225-6769
e-mail: kd6fji@arrl.net

KK6MX, Don Apte, (408) 629-0725
e-mail: kk6mx@aol.com

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

K6PBQ, Don Village, (408) 263-2789

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

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

Packet Pieces

Downloaded from the packet network:

=====
Date: 18 Feb 2004 09:06
From: W1GMF@W1GMF
To: HUMOR@USA
Subject: HUMOR FOR TODAY 0206

Daily Thoughts

I have good news and bad news. The good news is that the car's air bag works...

"He who laughs last is generally the last to get the joke."
Terry Cohen

Last Laugh

A young executive was leaving the office at 6 p.m. when he found the CEO standing in front of a shredder with a piece of paper in his hand.

"Listen," said the CEO, "this is a very sensitive and important document, and my secretary has left. Can you make this thing work?"
"Certainly," said the young executive.

He turned the machine on, inserted the paper, and pressed the start button.

"Excellent, excellent!" said the CEO as his paper disappeared inside the machine, "I just need one copy."

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 fill out an Elmer form from the club secretary.

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

Newsletter Notes

I tend to include a lot of articles from the ARRL on the topic of BPL. There are precious few comments ever made about the newsletter or its contents, but I have heard one or two comments recently about being interested in this topic.

Most of that material comes from the ARRL Letter. They have other things from contesting to amateurs on the space station. I just need to know what topics people want to see here and I'll put those in. So, if you think the BPL coverage in the *SCCARA-GRAM* is too extensive (or not enough), please don't be bashful, let me know.

And don't forget, I'm always interested in getting material--especially locally generated. (If you have something that's copyrighted, please get written permission first.)

73, Gary WB6YRU, editor

SCCARA Membership Form for 2006

(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" here 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: \$20 Individual \$25 Family \$10 Student (under 18)

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

Rev. 5/17/2005

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



SCCARA
Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Assn.
PO Box 6
SAN JOSE CA 95103-0006

Affiliate of the ARRL,
American Radio Relay League



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST CLASS