
CQ BARS

Volume XXII Issue 12

December 2005

President's Corner

Well, Last month we had articles by two Presidents – Past and Present. This month – 'Nuttin!! Dale, WHERE ARE YOU!!

Secretary's Column

Well, it's PARTY TIME! Be sure to come to this month's meeting 'cause it Christmas Party Time!! Please remember to bring some goodies to munch on. The club will be furnishing the Pizza and soda as usual.

We will also be distributing the annual awards at that time.

Also, in case you didn't get the earlier group E-Mail, KB9JHV (Jason) came up with a great idea to share the bounties of the season. He suggested and the board approved the opportunity for BARS members to donate non perishable food items to a local food pantry. This is totally voluntary; so don't get the idea that you must participate. Jason will deliver all items collected at the Christmas Party to a local food bank in the name of the club.

73's for this month

Don - N9VJV

Last Months Meeting Minutes

The meeting was opened at 19:00 hours by KB9LMK (Dale). Introductions followed. Officers present were: KB9JHV (Jason), and N9VJV (Don). Also present at the meeting were:

KB9LMK	KB9JHV	KA9SFW
KC9IDF	KC9GRH	N9QOB
WA9IL	KB9JLB	KA9J
NW9V	WA9IQL	WB9PWQ
KC9ERT	N9OA	N9VJV

A motion to accept the minutes as published in CQ Bars was made by KA9SFW (Jim), seconded by N9QOB (Ron) and carried.

The Treasurer's Report was presented by KB9JHV (Jason). A motion to accept as presented was made by KC9GRH (Bryan), seconded by NW9V (Phil), and carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

2 meter: W9BBK (Bob) reported that the coordination has been received. PL (107.2) will be set on the input and the output by the end of the year. A new controller is needed and is in the works. A brand new antenna has been installed along with new coax. This antenna has unity gain to the east (to avoid interfering with the Indiana machine) and 6db gain to the west.

220/440 220 WA9IL (John) reported that Echolink is in the experimental stage on the 440 machine as K9BAR. It's not yet completely stable. IRLP is also being considered.

Net Control: No Report.

Hamfest: NW9V (Phil) reported that Tom's health problems are making it necessary for him to have a co-chair. There are some unknown issues with the Joliet Park District location. KB9LMK (Dale) will contact Tom to get details and help coordinate.

Education: KC9GRH (Bryan) reported that he has 3 people interested in classes. He needs to get a location and date.

VE: NW9V (Phil) reported that the next exam will be 12/17 at Station 5t. Cost will be \$14 W9KHX (Dale) will need some VEs to help him. Note that future VE tests will be held by appointment only.

ESG – KB9LMK (Dale) reported that there is a poll on the ESG web site to determine interest

in a Citizens Radio Watch type program that would be coordinated with the Bolingbrook Police Department. It was suggested by a village official A motion was made by NW9V (Phil), seconded by N9OA (Steve) to table any official response until the results of the poll are complete. Motion carried.

Field Day: NW9V (Phil) reported that it's progressing on schedule. The permit for 2006 is ready, but we need to get the 2007 date reserved..

Public Relations: WA9IQL (Elden) reported that the web site has been updated with everything up to date. Send any updates directly to him.

Skywarn. NW9V (Phil) reported the Special Event Station on 12/3 at the NWS. 6 PM Fri to 6 AM Sat.

Misc.: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

A motion to close old business was made by WA9IAL (Elden), seconded by N9QOB (Ron) and carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ballot for nominations for annual awards were distributed and marked. The awards will be presented at the December Christmas Party Meeting.



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A motion to close new business was made by N9QOB (Ron), seconded by N9OA (Steve) and seconded.
A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by N9OA (Steve), seconded by WA9IL (John) and seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
Don, N9VJV
Secretary

LEAGUE SAYS BPL GROUP SHOULD EMBRACE, NOT REJECT, RECENT ARRL PROPOSALS

In a Reply to Opposition filed this week, the ARRL maintains that changes it recently proposed to the FCC's Part 15 BPL rules provide a golden opportunity for the BPL industry and the FCC. The League was responding to a November 2 United Power Line Council (UPLC) Motion opposing and seeking dismissal of the ARRL's Petition for a Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making, filed last month in the BPL proceeding, WT Docket 04-37. "As a general observation, it is difficult to understand the rationale for UPLC's kneejerk response to ARRL's Petition," the League said in its Reply to Opposition. "On its face, the Petition does no more than to state a reasonable basis for a principled accommodation for all concerned with, or about, access BPL. This would include BPL operators." The ARRL contended that the UPLC "would better serve its members by embracing the ARRL Petition, rather than rejecting it" and said its proposals represent "the last clear chance to prevent substantial interference from BPL deployments." The League's October Petition suggested that incorporating three elements into the BPL rules the Commission adopted last year would essentially resolve all issues that the ARRL and the Amateur Service have with access BPL: * Prohibiting all access BPL systems from using Amateur Radio allocations--except the five channels at 5 MHz, which the current HomePlug system architecture does not notch. * Prohibiting access BPL systems from using HF bands on medium-voltage power lines. * Measuring signal decay from access BPL systems using a more accurate 20 dB/decade extrapolation factor rather than the 40 dB/decade factor the current rules support. Calling UPLC's opposition to its proposals "short sighted," the League said the UPLC "cannot in good faith" argue that the present BPL rules are in any way sufficient to prevent or mitigate interference to Amateur Radio. "They are not sufficient, as has been demonstrated time and time again in BPL test deployments," the ARRL contended this week. To punch up that point, the League called "pure sophistry" and "absurd and false" UPLC's claim in its Motion that BPL operators using HF on medium-voltage power lines "have been very effective in mitigating rare instances of interference to Amateur Radio users." In support of that assertion, UPLC cited a July 22, 2004, letter from Bruce Franca, then Deputy Chief of the FCC's Office of Engineering and Technology, to Tom Brown, N4TAB. Franca's letter claimed that Progress Energy's BPL pilot project in the Raleigh, North Carolina, area complied with FCC rules. Responding to Franca that same day, ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, at the time noted the presence of ongoing interference and rebutted Franca's assertions. He specifically cautioned FCC to "not permit its conclusions to be erroneously represented as having given the Progress Energy trials a 'clean bill of health'--precisely what UPLC is now attempting, he said. A copy of Sumner's letter was attached to this week's League filing. UPLC failed to mention that interference from the Raleigh system to numerous Amateur Radio operators "persisted and was not resolved until the system was shut down," the League pointed out this week. ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, thinks it's ironic that UPLC chose that particular piece of FCC correspondence to buttress its case. "Mr Sumner rebutted Franca's letter in the Raleigh situation, and Franca never responded, despite repeated promises to do so," he said. "We are now a year and four months down the road." In this week's filing, the League said its Petition seeks to create additional rules

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governing BPL that, with those already on the books, would "be sufficient to allow ARRL to withdraw its pending Petition for Reconsideration" in the proceeding. In addition, the ARRL reiterated its position that certain BPL systems mentioned in the October Petition "present manageable interference potential" that "can be dealt with on a case-by-case basis." Its proposals, the League said, provide the BPL industry and the FCC with the opportunity to create an RF environment that's not substantially degraded for licensed radio services and that permits BPL to develop "without the competitive handicap of fundamental incompatibility with licensed services" and removes any remaining regulatory uncertainty. The ARRL concluded by urging the Commission to "proceed expeditiously to issue a further Notice of Proposed Rule Making, adopt the proposed rules, and remove the obstacles to a responsible rollout of access BPL that were either created, or not resolved, by the [BPL] Report and Order." A copy of the ARRL's Reply to Opposition is on the FCOWeb site <http://gullfoss2.fcc.gov/prod/ecfs/retrieve.cgi?native_or_pdf=pdf&id_document=6518181693>

AMATEUR RADIO RESPONDS AS STORMS SPAWN RASH OF TORNADOES

Just weeks after assisting in hurricane relief efforts along the Gulf Coast and in Florida, Amateur Radio volunteers responded in the wake of yet another weather emergency. Strong thunderstorms resulting from a clash of cold and warm fronts in the nation's midsection spawned tornadoes in several states. The nearly three dozen twisters reported November 15 in Kentucky, Indiana, Tennessee, Illinois and Missouri came a little more than a week after tornadoes killed more than 20 people in Indiana and days after another string hit Iowa, resulting in one death. Some 8000 customers were left without electricity in the affected states, but Kentucky appears to have been the hardest hit.

"Nets for SKYWARN were activated all across the affected areas," Kentucky Section Emergency Coordinator Ron Dodson, KA4MAP, reported November 16. "We also had the state EOC [emergency operations center] on the air on 3.993 MHz last night as we were trying to get emergency information into and out of the affected areas." Dodson told ARRL Headquarters that WX4NWS at the Louisville National Weather Service (NWS) office was active during the afternoon and evening of November 15 as forecasters tried to keep up with the rapidly developing weather. One person died in the Marshall County town of Benton, where a tornado severely damaged a mobile home park. Upward of two dozen other people were hurt, Dodson added. Kentucky Area 2 District Emergency Coordinator Nick Bailey, KG4URI, said a tornado ripped through the southern end of Madisonville. He estimated that up to 30 ARES and RACES volunteers deployed throughout Hopkins County. Baily reported "a lot of damage" but no deaths.

On November 16, three ARES teams equipped with APRS and GPS accompanied search-and-rescue (SAR) teams going door-to-door. "Amateur radio provided mostly SAR communications as the police repeaters were still up," Bailey added. According to Bailey, preliminary estimates had 35 to 40 homes severely damaged or destroyed in the Madisonville area and possibly 10 in Earlington. At least two dozen people were reported injured in Hopkins County, and the count was expected to rise. A confirmed touchdown also occurred in Sharps. Steve Morgan, W4NHO, an ARRL Great Lakes Division assistant director, reported a tornado was tracked from Dawson Spring through Owensboro and into southeastern Indiana. "I spoke with the deputy EMA director in Hopkins County, Frank Wright, KA4IGR," he said at mid-week. "Amateur Radio is the only reliable communications they have at the moment due to power outages." Telephone service also was reported out in parts of Kentucky. Indiana's latest encounter with tornadoes was not nearly as severe as that of November 6. In the November 15 outbreak, one person was reported killed in Hancock County when a car went out of control after running into

water on the pavement. Indiana SEC Dave Pifer, N9YNF, said property damage this time was largely "hit and miss" across the state. "I know the SKYWARN programs were hopping yesterday as we tracked the storms through the area," he said. "At one point they would only take tornado/funnel reports and significant damage reports because there was so much going on."

Illinois SM Shari Harlan, N9SH, says her section seems to have largely escaped the tornado outbreak. "It appears that while some straight line winds toppled some structures in the Wabash, Edwards and Lawrence county area, they escaped the afternoon round of storms," she said. She did note one report of definite rotational echoes, however. Iowa SEC Jim Snapp, NA0R, said Amateur Radio volunteers responded after a series of eight tornadoes within a few hours hit central Iowa November 12. The twisters hit parts of eight counties, he said, and one person was killed.

"Homes, business and farmsteads were damaged or destroyed as the tornadoes rampaged through the Iowa countryside and in some small communities," he said. According to Snapp, K0DMX at the NWS Des Moines office started getting reports of hail and tornado activity around 3:45 PM CDT. "Amateur reports as well as other sources of storm information enabled the NWS staff to send out updates to the storms activity and its path to the public," he said, adding that a dozen hams contributed reports to the SKYWARN net.

When Hospital Communications Fail

The famous Orange County (California) Hospital Disaster Support Communications System (HDSCS) was nominated for the ARRL International Humanitarian Award in 2001 and subsequently won a National Certificate of Merit from the ARRL Board of Directors for its work in providing back-up communications to a vast number of hospitals in the area. - ed.] HDSCS communicators were requested by St. Jude Medical Center on the night of July 27 for an "emergency standby" while phone technicians tried to troubleshoot problems with the new phone system. The timing was not good with many HDSCS communicators set to participate early the next morning in a terrorism drill in Anaheim. But true to our mission, we supported the request.

The standby was set for 9 PM to midnight but as many of these events go, midnight came and went. Our coverage continued in hospital key areas and the shadowing of the administrative nurse. At 8:30AM and during the next five hours HDSCS communicators were activated to the participating hospitals, including St. Jude, to provide backup communications related to the scenario of a sarin gas terrorist attack at the Anaheim Convention Center. In the midafternoon, after all 21 communicators had secured and were recharging batteries, the disaster/safety coordinator from St. Jude once again contacted HDSCS to request standby communications for that night. The work was scheduled for 9 PM to midnight.

Another three-hour event not only went past midnight, but during the phone work a major alarm failure occurred. Not only were phones down but the hospital's various backup systems failed also. Good thing we were there BEFORE ALL ELSE FAILED. Critical tactical communications were handled between the emergency department and other units during that time. By 6AM on Friday, July 29, HDSCS communicators could finally secure.

I share this event to point out the value and importance of the following: being integrated into hospital disaster plans, and having activation plans so hospitals can contact Amateur Radio teams directly. Have portability and flexibility; we used no installed equipment. And have depth in your group: We were stretched throughout the event and we have a pretty big group from which we can draw. -- April Moell, WA6OPS, Emergency Coordinator, Hospital Disaster Support Communications System, Orange County, California emcom4hosp@aol.com and <http://www.hdscs.org>.

"Ham Aid" funds available to help replace storm-damaged emcomm systems:

Thanks to a Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) grant extension, limited ARRL Ham Aid funds are available to help cover the cost of replacing hurricane-damaged Amateur Radio emergency communication systems. This assistance applies to ARES group or club-owned open-access repeaters, critical Amateur Radio infrastructure or other essential communication backbone equipment damaged by hurricanes Katrina, Rita or Wilma. The goal is to restore critical Amateur Radio emergency communication systems in hurricane-prone areas, and especially in cases where equipment damage has compromised Amateur Radio's disaster response capability. Funds will be dispersed on a first-come, first-served basis, and interested groups or organizations should be prepared to document the loss and provide a replacement budget. Contact ARRL Chief Development Officer Mary Hobart, K1MMH <mhobart@arll.org>; 860-594-0397 for complete application details and requirements. Hobart says Ham Aid funds also remain available to cover limited out-of-pocket expenses for Amateur Radio volunteers who deployed to the field during hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma. Application guidelines are on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arll.org/FandES/field/forms/cnscs/>>. Time is of the essence! The grant extension expires December 31, 2005!

ARES on the ARRL Web Site

The ARRL staff is studying how they can better support ARES via the ARRL Web site. As ARES and emergency communication are pillars of the ARRL strategic vision, the ARRL needs to do a much better job of promoting and supporting these activities. Please send in your ideas. The ideas considered so far fall into two basic categories: information resources, and interactive applications.

Goals for information resources: include more information on digital ARES networks such as WinLink; provide links to information on FEMA training; publish explanations of SKYWARN, NVOAD, RACES and other non-ARRL programs; archive the Web news stories about, for example, ARES, SATERN, SKYWARN, and other programs into one area; and list ARES pages set up by ARRL sections.

Goals for Interactive Applications: enhance and integrate Electronic Public Service Activity Reports, such as the Volunteer Reporting and Public Service Stories databases that have recently been added; and include a database searchable by authorized users. The ARRL could host an ARES forum on-line community where ARES participants could share information. This may include forums restricted to ARES officials as well as ones open to all ARES members. An ARES locator could be established as a place where ARES and government officials could find contact information for local ARES officers.

Whatever ideas are eventually implemented, ARES information on the Web site needs to be integrated into a cohesive, high-profile whole that can be easily found, accessed and promoted. Ideas? Send them to the editor for compilation, publication and forwarding to HQ staff for consideration.

Some articles courtesy of the ARRL.