

The Official (and only)
Newsletter Of The Steel
City Amateur Radio Club

All the (Amateur) news
that's fit to print

Inside this issue:

(Click on an article to
read it.)

DX News & Views	3
Business Meeting	
Minutes	4
ARRL WPA News	5
'08 HamFest Sched	6
VE Testing Sched	7, 8
Bum Of The Month	9
FCC/ARRL News	10
VP6DX Ducie Is.	11
Beginner's Help	
Desk	14
Monthly Website/ E-Bay Report	15
Shack-Of-The-Month	17
Propagation/Late DX News	18
Misc. News	20
Monthly Calendars	21

NEXT BUSINESS MEETING: TUESDAY,
FEBRUARY 19TH @ 8:00PM AT THE
CLUBHOUSE. **ALSO, DON'T FORGET**
ABOUT WASH-FEST 2008 ON FEB. 24.



KiloWatt Harmonics

Check us out on the web: www.w3kwh.com

February, 2008

How Did You Get Into Ham Radio?

(The following is an article written by Eric Nichols and is courtesy of the
ARRL Club News E-Letter. 73 de KQ3DX)

At a recent Arctic Amateur Radio Club board meeting, during a rare lull in the oft-heated discussions about how best to increase our membership, I threw out a simple question.

"How did you get into ham radio?"

The responses were revealing, to say the least. One by one, our board members, some young, some old, told the story of how they got into this hobby of all hobbies. One gentleman had a father who was a ham, and more or less forced him into the hobby, for which he was unspeakably grateful...years later, of course. One XYL saw a shortwave radio at a friend's house, started twiddling knobs, and got frustrated that she could only listen. For her, the rest was history. A couple of others were exposed to amateur radio in high school, one in Boy Scouts. Another credited me with getting him into ham radio, much to my gratification. One other confessed that he didn't really know; it just seemed to him that ham radio was "always around."

Interestingly enough, not one of the hams entered the hobby because of a concentrated recruitment program. Although occasional public relations "Blitzkriegs" have their place in Amateur Radio, I'm not sure they produce lasting hams. Like many other clubs, we manage to get a lot of hams licensed, but the dropout rate is appalling. The vast majority of our newly licensed hams never get on the air.

I don't think our message is flawed; I think it's our delivery. Of all the board members I mentioned above, I believe the last fellow, the one who said ham radio was "always around" had the key. We need to get back to the place where amateur radio is a continual, if quiet, presence. People who get lured into the hobby, stick with the hobby. People who get coerced and cajoled into the hobby leave as soon as we aren't looking.

The fact is, most new hams never see a working ham shack, about all they see is a handheld, which isn't all that fascinating. When a young person sees a ham shack equipped to cover everything from DC to daylight, they take notice....it doesn't matter whether they're a geek or not. (continued on next page)

The Steel City Amateur Radio Club:

- President: Michael Sapp, WA3TTS
(412) 364-2740
- VP: Madison McKee, W3MAC
(412) 279-8756
- Treasurer: Walt Adkins, KA3YNO
(412) 276-0825
- Recording Secretary: Joe Mielnicki,
WA3FWA (412) 922-6340
- Corresponding Secretary: Susan
Rakiec, KA3JKS
- License Trustee: Karl Pastorak,
WA3VXJ (412) 429-8055
- Editor(s): Greg Babin, KQ3DX
(412) 367-8845, KA3LNG, W3SVJ

How Did You Get Into Ham Radio? (continued)

I've never seen anyone who wasn't impressed by a moon bounce (Earth-Moon-Earth contact) array swinging around on its rotators...whether they had a clue what it was or not!

People don't know about ham radio because they don't see ham radio...except, perhaps at Field Day. The best place to cultivate that "always around" feeling is in the schools. We need to infiltrate the middle and high schools again. Notice, I said, again. There was a time, not too long ago, when it was difficult to find a high school without a club station. Field Day should be a three hundred and sixty five day a year event, and that is easier to achieve in the schools than anywhere else. There is no better way to teach science than with ham radio. We need to remind our public (and private) school teachers and administrators of that. We need to let our students get their hands grubby making things happen,

rather than merely watching things happen. We need to get some real hardware into the schools. We have wonderful new allocations now, and the technology to use them is cheaper and easier than ever. When I was in high school in the late 60s, it was everything one could do, and then some, to do moon bounce. It was only because we had a lunatic (no pun intended) electronics teacher, that we were able to pull off such a stunt. Now, moon bounce is practically within reach of any determined high school club station.

Wouldn't it be great if moon bounce stations proliferated at our high schools the way H.F. stations once did?

Of course, I only use moon bounce as one radical example. We have exciting things happening down at 500 kHz,

as well. What better way to learn weak signal, digital signal processing techniques than with our newly allocated MF experimental spectrum?

This all may be rocket science, but it doesn't take rocket science to get it into the schools! Our teachers want to see us excel in the sciences. Let's give them the tools to do so.

Fifty years from now, someone may be asked how they got into ham radio. It would be nice if they could answer, "I don't know...I guess it was always there."

Eric P. Nichols



KiloWatt Harmonics,
February, 2008

© 2008, The Steel City
Amateur Radio Club

'KiloWatt Harmonics' is
published monthly for
the members of the
Steel City Amateur
Radio Club.

All contributions are
welcome at:
KQ3DX@hotmail.com

Reprints/quotes permit-
ted provided credit is
given to original author
and the Steel City
Amateur Radio Club.

SCARC is a not-for-
profit organization as
defined under IRS Rules
& Regulations section
501 (C) (3)

DX News & Views

Information gleaned from various issues of the
ARRL DX Bulletin

- ♦ **MOZAMBIQUE, C9.** Rodrigo, CT1BXT is QRV as C91R until August 2008. He is active using mostly RTTY on 20 meters but expects to be active on 17, 15, 12 and 10 meters soon. QSL to home call.
- ♦ **IRAN, EP.** Pooyan, EP3PK has been QRV on 20 meters using SSB or PSK between 1130 and 1400z. QSL via IK2DUW
- ♦ **BANGLADESH, S2.** John, KX7YT will be QRV as S21YV from Dhaka from January 24 to March 11. This includes entries in the upcoming CQ WW RTTY WPX and ARRL DX SSB contests as Single Op/All Band entries. QSL to home call
- ♦ **SWEDEN, SM.** In celebration of the 350th anniversary of the Treaty of Roskilde, special event stations SB1658OZ, SC1658OZ, SH1658DK, SH1658OZ, SK1658DK and SK1658OZ are active throughout 2008. QSL via SK7JC, SK7BQ, SK6JX, SK6KY, SK7CE and SK7BQ, respectively.
- ♦ **NIUE, ZK2.** Phil, VK3APM is QRV as ZK2PM and is here for about a year. Activity is generally on the HF bands, eventually including 6 and 2 meters and 70 cm. QSL to home call
- ♦ **OPERATIONS APPROVED FOR DXCC CREDIT.** The following operations are approved for DXCC credit: **Chad, TT8PK, 2007 and current 2008 operations;** Syria, YK9SV, 2007 operation; **Revillagigedo, 6E4LM, XF4YK and XF4YW, 2007 operations;** Saint Barthelemy, FJ/OH2AM, 2007 operation; **Republic of The Congo, TN6X, 2007 operation;** and Republic of The Congo, TN9Z, 2007 operation.
- ♦ **HUNGARY, HA.** Special event callsign HG550REX is QRV until the end of 2008 to commemorate "Renaissance Year 2008" and to remember the ascension of the throne of the most popular king Matthias Corvinus that occurred 550 years ago. QSL via HA5GY.
- ♦ **BELGIUM, ON.** In celebration of the Millennium of the death of Notger Prince-Eveque, the founder of the Principality of Liege, special event callsign ON1000NOTGER is active on all HF bands using CW, SSB, RTTY and PSK until December 31. QSL direct via ON6DP.
- ♦ **SOUTH GEORGIA ISLAND, VP8.** Lars, MMODWF will be QRV as VP8DIF from the old whaling station Husvik from January 27 to February 28. Activity will be on most of the HF bands during his spare time, although 15 meters will be his main band. QSL via DJ9ZB.
- ♦ **OPERATION APPROVED FOR DXCC CREDIT.** The following operation is approved for DXCC credit: Iraq, YI9QX, current operation effective December 2007.
- ♦ **3YOE is coming to an end.** The team is scheduled to be picked up from Bouvet Island on February 12, 2008. This date may change however due to weather conditions and the speed of the ship or any other urgent matter beyond our control. Feel free to follow the movements of the ship at the following website: <http://www.sailwx.info/shiptrack/shipposition.phtml?call=ZSAF>. 3YOE is only active on 20 meters phone and normal operating frequency is 14.260 MHz with a split of 5 KHz up.
- ♦ **MOUNT ATHOS, SV/A.** Monk Apollo, SV2ASP/A has been active on 20 and 17 meters around 0910 to 1010z and then 1340 to 1400z.
- ♦ **ANTARCTICA.** Mika, OH2FFP is QRV as OJ1ABOA while on an expedition here and is on 20 meters usually around 0000z. He is here until mid-February. QSL to home call



The February Birthday Bunch

Congrats go out to those celebrating birthdays this month:

Jerry KB3BZR, 2/3
Jim KB3GXH, 2/3
Matt W3JQJ, 2/6
David WQ3T, 2/6
Bob N3LL, 2/8
Tom AA3CE, 2/12
Alan KA3MXQ, 2/14
Mike WA3TTS, 2/19
Art WA3BKD, 2/21

Happy Birthday to all!! (The January Birthday Bunch appears on the next page)

Minutes From The January 2008 Business Meeting

The President WA3TTS, Mike, called the meeting to order at 8 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by a moment of silence for our Silent Keys and 20 members and 2 guests in attendance answered a Roll Call. The Treasurer's report was given by the Treasurer KA3YNO, Walt that included a donation to the Rennerdale VFD and was accepted by the membership.

Committee Reports

Clubhouse WA3VXJ, Karl said every thing was OK and WB3HDI, Bob was working the kitchen for after meeting treats.

Technical Mike reported that the TS 2000's S meter was not functioning on 2 meters and that there was an intermittent noise on the 63/03 repeater.

Membership WA3BKD, Art gave the 2nd reading for prospective member KB3PNE, Colin.

Newsletter Editor KQ3DX, Greg thanked those who submitted their "Shack of the Month" entries for newsletter publication and he is sending 15 promotional editions to non club entities.

Ways and Means WA3FWA, Joe who will run the 50/50 raffle after the meeting, paid for the annual PO Box fee and supplied the 2007 editions of QST's in a binder for the library.

Contests The ARRL VHF and the Breeze Shooters PSK 31 contests will be held on Sat. Jan. 19. W3BC, Joe said that the PA QSO contest results were online (in no particular order) at their web site. Karl has the 50th anniversary Special Event QSL certificates which were created by AI3J, Mark.

Public Service Karl reported that we might have access to software and hardware for direct WX satellite viewing, sponsored by WB3EUR.

Old Business N3EQP, John has a library cabinet on order.

New Business Karl will investigate getting an electric range for the kitchen.

Good of the Order Art is attempting to get the ATV station up and running again. He would like to reserve the clubhouse on March 29 for a group of rail road enthusiasts whom he will entertain. Greg has some Beaver Valley club newsletters for the members to view and he displayed some hand out cards which he designed promoting the club. Walt said that he has paid for a hot plate for the kitchen last month. Anyone interested in the amateur radio station on the sub Requin should contact Art for an underwater operating adventure.

Motion to Adjourn by Art.

50/50 raffle won by WA8NLY, Rick.

Minutes submitted by recording secretary WA3FWA, Joe.

Happy (Belated) Birthday, Hams!

Through a terrible oversight, ye olde editor missed last month's Birthday Bunch. As Maxwell Smart, Secret Agent 86 of CONTROL would say, "Sorry about that, Chief."

Stu AK3J 18th

Tom AA3TK 18th

Doug W3HH 20th

Happy Birthday to all!!



THE ARRL WPA SECTION:

SECTION MANAGER:

John V. Rodgers, N3MSE
803 S Main St.
Butler, PA 16001-6326
724-287-0424
<n3mse@arrl.org>

ASSISTANT SECTION MANAGER ASM DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Anthony F Petrucci, KE3ED
473 Park St.
Rochester, PA. 15074-1859
(724) 774-4173
<ke3ed@arrl.net>

CHIEF ASSISTANT SECTION MANAGER:

Bruce E Watson, AA3LX
4347 Highland Ave.
Butler, PA. 16001-2959
(724) 482-2756, (412) 482-2756
<aa3lx@aol.com>

ASM MEDIA LIASON:

Tony Zona, WB3KGT
2485 Dorn Rd.
Waterford, PA. 16441-4013
<wb3kgt@arrl.net>

AFFILIATED CLUB COORDINATOR:

Keith "Pete" Highlands, N3RLJ
212 N 1st St.
Jeannette, PA. 15644-1827
(724) 523-6232
<n3rlj@arrl.net>

OFFICIAL OBSERVER COORDINATOR:

R Ralph Ofchinick Jr, W3ZPI
9 Brooklane Dr.
Harrison City, PA. 15636-1515
(724) 744-7180
<w3zpi@arrl.net>

SECTION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR:

Kathleen J Peca, WY3R
RR 2 Box 22
Williamsburg, PA. 16693-9618
(814) 832-2246
<ARRL.SEC.WPA@comcast.net>

SECTION TRAFFIC MANAGER

Christin J Albert, N3YTD
150 Wahl Rd.
Harmony, PA. 16037-7704
(724) 452-0583
<cja@fyi.net>

The ARRL WPA Section Page

Now that we are into the new year and the holidays are behind us our attention can focus on upcoming activities. I want to ask that all the DEC and EC's of Western Pennsylvania help us to make sure that contact information is up to date & accurate. For this reason I am asking that each of the EC's and DEC's submit a renewal application when they send their January report to the SEC. The form is found at the following URL: <<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/forms/#fsd-156>>. Please complete this and send with your January report to Kathleen Peca W. Pa. Sec. at <ARRL.SEC.WPA@comcast.net> and also a copy to me at <n3mse@arrl.org>. Monthly reports are very important and this renewal process will help us to make sure that individuals listed as EC's are still functioning in that capacity. If we do not receive this information with your report prior to the 8th of February we will assume you are no longer in the position.

Don't forget that Kathleen is still looking for individuals to fill vacancies in counties that do not have an Emergency Coordinator in place. You may also submit the above mentioned application if you are interested in filling one of these vacancies. The same holds for the DEC's on the section. You must be a league member and be willing to submit the required monthly reports. You must also be willing to work with all amateurs and clubs in your county.

I want to again clarify a mistake that was reported last month about club affiliation anniversaries. HQ had an error in a message sent out with regard to clubs in W. Pa. celebrating years of affiliation. Once again I congratulate the Beaver Valley Amateur Radio Association for their 75 years of affiliation. The Triple "A" Amateur Radio Association celebrated it's 35th year of affiliation. The Edinboro university amateur radio club is a newly affiliated club and I will be presenting their certificate at their meeting on Feb. 7th.

On January 22 I will be speaking at the Mercer county ARA at 7:30 pm. Interested parties are welcome to attend that meeting. Speaking of club functions on February 16 the Atlantic Division will be hosting a webinar for clubs and DEC's/EC's as well as members of the section staff's of the 7 sections. This will be the first of many webinars being conducted to distribute information without the cost of travel associated with getting people together in a central location. Katie Breen, W1KRB ARRL membership manager and Norm Fusaro, W3IZ, ARRL affiliated club manager will be presenting on the webinar. If you are interested in attending check out the enrollment at <<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/867561606>>. The webinar will be 10 AM to 12 noon on February 16.

One area of concern as of late is the need for operators to participate in the various traffic nets for our section. Recently we have had a growing number of messages being returned to the originators as undeliverable because we had no one in that area to handle the message. (continued on page 7)

WPA Section ARRL-Sanctioned HamFests For 2008

Here's a listing of all the ARRL-Sanctioned HamFests in the Western Pennsylvania Section for 2008:

24 Feb 2008 + WASHFest 2008

Wireless Association of South Hills, Inc.

<http://www.n3sh.org>

Talk-In: 146.955(-) (PL 131.8)

Contact: Kevin Smith, N3HKQ

111 Watson Drive

Monongahela, PA 15063

Phone: 724-258-4153

Email: kevin.j.smith@comcast.net

Castle Shannon, PA

Castle Shannon Fire Department Memorial Hall

3600 Library Road (Route 88)

Div: Atlantic

Sect: Western Pennsylvania

9 Mar 2008 + Foothills ARC

<http://www.w3lww.org>

Talk-In: 147.180+ (PL 131.8)

Contact: Frank J. Rossi, Jr., N3FLR

707 9th Street

Irwin, PA 15642

Phone: 724-989-0462

Email: N3FLR@arrl.net

Greensburg, PA

Greensburg VFD Hose Co. #1

12 McLaughlin Drive

Div: Atlantic

Sect: Western Pennsylvania

27 Apr 2008 + Two Rivers Amateur Radio Club

<http://www.qsl.net/w3oc>

Talk-In: 146.130 / 146.730

Contact: Bill Hetrick, N3LQC

PO Box 225

Greenock, PA 15047-0225

Phone: 412-751-1937

Email: n3lqc@Comcast.net

Boston, PA

The Spectrum

6100 Smithfield Street

Div: Atlantic

Sect: Western Pennsylvania

1 Jun 2008 + Hamfest and Computer Show

Breezshooters ARC

<http://www.breezeshooters.net>

Talk-In: 147.300 (no tone)

Contact: Robert W. Benna, N3LWP

1010 Willow Drive

Pittsburgh, PA 15237-2225

Phone: 412-366-0488

Fax: 412-366-0486

Email: n3lwp@verizon.net

Butler, PA

Butler Farm Showgrounds

Route 68, (next to Roe Airport)

Div: Atlantic

Sect: Western Pennsylvania

13 Jul 2008 + 23rd Annual Hamfest

North Hills Amateur Radio Club

<http://www.nharc.org>

Talk-In: 147.09 (PL 88.5)

Contact: John Gorman, N3RQD

162 Home Drive

Pittsburgh, PA 15223

Phone: 412-487-9254

Email: n3rqd@earthlink.net

Pittsburgh, PA

Northland Public Library

300 Cumberland Road

Div: Atlantic

Sect: Western Pennsylvania

24 Aug 2008 * Western Pennsylvania Section Convention

Skyview Radio Society

<http://www.skyviewradio.net/>

Talk-In: 146.640- (PL 131.8)

Contact: Bob Boehmer, WB3FXC

1240 Hulton Road

Oakmont, PA 15139

Email: SkyviewHamfest2008@verizon.net

New Kensington, PA

Skyview Radio Society Clubhouse

2335 Turkey Ridge Road

Div: Atlantic

Sect: Western Pennsylvania

Remember, support
your local hamfest!!

Thanks/73, CUL de KQ3DX



DECEMBER NO TESTING

THANK YOU BOB BENNA N3LWP 412-366-0488

<n3lwp@verizon.net>



WPA Section News (con't)

Remember if you would like to arrange for me to speak at your club function drop me an email at [<n3mse@arrl.org>](mailto:n3mse@arrl.org) and I will try to make one of your meetings. (more WPA Section News in the next column>>>>>>>)

THE FOUNDATION FOR AMATEUR RADIO, INC., a non-profit organization with headquarters in Washington, D.C., plans to administer fifty-five (55) scholarships for the academic year 2008 - 2009 to assist licensed Radio Amateurs.
(continued on next page)

Salvation Army Radio Classes More WPA Section News (con't)



Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network (SATERN)

The Salvation Army
Emergency Disaster Services Headquarters
825 Parish St
Pittsburgh, PA 15220
7:00 PM to 9:00 PM on Wednesday Nights

Technician Class

January 16, 2008
January 23, 2008
January 30, 2008
February 6, 2008

FEBRUARY 13, 2008 VE TEST at 7:00 PM

General Class

March 12, 2008
March 19, 2008
March 26, 2008
April 2, 2008

April 9, 2008 VE TEST at 7:00 PM

Extra Class

April 16, 2008
April 23, 2008
April 30, 2008
May 7, 2008
May 14, 2008

May 21, 2008 VE TEST at 7:00 PM

For more information Contact: Joe Sculli, KA3TDQ at 412-466-4586 or ka3tdq@verizon.net

The Foundation, composed of over seventy-five local area Amateur Radio Clubs, fully funds three of these scholarships. Eleven are funded with the income from grants. The remaining forty-one (41) are administered by the Foundation without cost to the various donors. Licensed Radio Amateurs may compete for these awards if they plan to pursue a full-time course of studies beyond high school and are enrolled in or have been accepted for enrollment at an accredited university, college or technical school. The awards range from \$500 to \$3000 with preference given in some cases to residents of specified geographical areas or the pursuit of certain study programs. Amateur Radio Clubs, especially those in Delaware, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia and Wisconsin, are encouraged to announce these opportunities at their meetings, in their club newsletters, during training classes, on their nets and on their world wide web home pages.

Additional information and an application form may be requested by letter or QSL card postmarked prior to March 30, 2008. Please send name, call and address to:

FAR Scholarships
Post Office Box 831
Riverdale, MD 20738

Applications are also available for download from the Foundation's website
<<http://www.amateurradio-far.org/>>.

The Foundation for Amateur Radio, incorporated in the District of Columbia, is an exempt organization under Section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. It is devoted exclusively to promoting the interests of Amateur Radio and those scientific, literary and educational pursuits that advance the purposes of the Amateur Radio Service. The Foundation encourages all qualified amateurs to apply for these awards.



Bum Of The Month

•The BOM which takes place at Rocky's II in McKees Rocks the second Monday of each month at 11:30 AM, has been held for 313 months since it originally started back in December of 1980. That is 26 years of straight luncheons without ever missing a one. Besides that, the camaraderie that takes place at every luncheon is something that has carried over also.

•Ed W3UVG and Tony W3YDP were two of the original starters of the BOM, and there were very few, if any, luncheons that I attended that they were there. Tony became a silent key about 7 or 8 years ago, and Ed, a silent key in October of 2006. They are missed by all.

•The fun and fellowship continues as usual, and even though there have been a change of faces over the years, there are some like Kurt KA3LNG, Brian K9VKY, Roy W3TZW, Dale WB3CRC, to name a few, that are still attending regularly.

•The group is open and all are welcome, but you may want to be a ham to be able to listen and discuss radio's and frequencies.

•There are some good story tellers though, and many good jokes were recited over the years. If your job or retirement allows the time, join us the second Monday of each month down at Rocky's II. I know the group will make you welcome.

73, Dale WB3CRC



Tony, W3YDP and Ed, W3UVG at their 277th consecutive luncheon!!



Roy, W3TZW

Thanks to Dale, WB3CRC in our southern outpost of Florida for his article on the Bum Of The Month Club. 73, KQ3DX

The Steel City Swap 'n Shop

FOR SALE

Icom 735, Like New with Power Supply, Mike and Manual by W3LZA, Andy 412-279-1973
Carnegie PA asking \$ 300.00



FCC/ARRL News

Information gleaned from various issues of the
ARRL Bulletin

AIR FORCE ADDS MORE REPEATERS TO CALIFORNIA PAVE PAWS PROBLEM LIST

A second round of testing by US Air Force engineers has resulted in the identification of an additional seventy-five 70 cm repeaters in Northern California that must adjust their operations to eliminate harmful interference to the PAVE PAWS Updated Early Warning Radar (UEWR) located at Beale Air Force Base near Sacramento. As a result of these additions, new strategies for handling the situation are being put into place by the ARRL and the FCC.

"While ARRL knew that there was the possibility of additional repeaters being added in the follow-up list of those requiring mitigation, we are surprised by the large number of additions to the list," said ARRL Regulatory Information Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND. "After our discussions with FCC officials, they are becoming actively involved in ensuring that the correct repeaters have been identified and that the mitigation being required is what is actually needed to resolve the ongoing problem in each case."

Henderson continued: "From the discussions with the Air Force, it is clear that the PAVE PAWS issue is going to be a continuing process. The ARRL needs to be involved since there can be additional repeaters identified as the Department of Defense continues testing at their radar sites."

To expedite any new mitigation actions needed due to the enlarged list, the FCC has now taken on the lead role of making initial contact with the owners of these newly identified repeaters. "The FCC has asked the ARRL to continue its work of aiding affected repeater owners with suggested mitigation actions," Henderson stated. "However, since any mandatory enforcement action would have to come from the FCC, it makes sense for them to take the lead at this point in time."

The ARRL will continue to provide information to individual repeater owners on specific mitigation techniques as well as information to the general amateur population. "We are committed to continuing to work with the Department of Defense, FCC and the Amateur Radio community to meet the amateurs' responsibilities as secondary users. But we are not an enforcement agency. Our goal to ensure that the

impact on amateurs in the 70 cm band is the least possible, consistent with those responsibilities," Henderson said.

A teleconference was held between representatives of the DoD, FCC and ARRL on Thursday, January 17 to assess the status of the repeaters on the initial DoD list, as well as discuss the strategies for working with repeater owners on the new, second, follow-up DoD list as quickly as possible.

During this conference call, Riley Hollingsworth of the FCC confirmed he had been in contact with repeater owners from the first DoD list who had not indicated their compliance with mitigation numbers provided by the ARRL in early Fall 2007. Hollingsworth reported he has had a positive response from each owner with whom he had spoken so far. There were several who had to be contacted via regular mail (instead of e-mail or telephone) who have not yet responded.

Hollingsworth also planned to start making contact with the owners of repeaters on the second list and begin the process towards amateur compliance within a short period of time. "Once a repeater owner has been contacted, the ARRL is ready to support their efforts in meeting the mitigation requirement," said Ed Hare, W1RFI, ARRL Laboratory Manager.

ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, pointed out that any specific enforcement action or shut-down order from the FCC involving amateurs also provides for due process in those proceedings. He emphasized that even though amateurs have a secondary allocation status in the band, the DoD has the burden of proving that specific repeaters are causing harmful interference on a case-by-case basis.

CYCLE 24 OFFICIALLY STARTS: With the appearance of Sunspot 981 -- a high-latitude, reversed polarity sunspot -- on Friday, January 4, experts at NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said that Cycle 24 is now here. "This sunspot is like the first robin of spring," said solar physicist Douglas Biesecker of the Space Weather [\(continued on page 13\)](#)

VP6DX Ducie Island DXpedition Update

News #8 - 2008, January 23rd

2008 Ducie Island Expedition: VP6DX (for immediate release)

Highlights:

... WA6CDR arrives in New Zealand Braveheart departs for Mangareva Background information:

... costs and cash flow ... donors of US\$100 or more, received by Feb 5, to be honored on QSL card ...

1. Recent events:

The "planning" phase has finally ended! The expedition is underway! Last week on Sunday Eric WA6HHQ of Elecraft Radio flew from Aptos to Long Beach California in his Cessna, along with the K3 radios to be used on VP6DX.



Robin WA6CDR met Eric at Long Beach for the hand-off. A new customs carnet for the radios and a few other items was prepared and stamped by Homeland Security during the next few days. Robin flew from Los Angeles via the Cook Islands to Auckland New Zealand Thursday night with these items. Over the weekend Robin met with the crew and master of the "Braveheart" to inventory all loaded equipment and acquire locally the last items (e.g., beverage antenna supports). All the air and sea freight shipments from the USA and Germany of the last two months were delivered to the "Braveheart" on time, and the ship was ready to set sail.

Unfortunately, Mother Nature had other plans: a typhoon passing through the region. Good planning includes contingency planning. The "Braveheart" crew had built contingency time into their travel schedule to Mangareva, French Polynesia. The extra day's delay in departing New Zealand should not cause any trouble: the "Braveheart" will arrive at Mangareva around Feb 1 or 2, several days before the remainder of the operating team.

(continued on next page)

VP6DX Ducie Island (continued)

The ship is stuffed full of DXpedition equipment! Diesel fuel burned during the transit to Mangareva will be drawn off fuel bladders on the deck, freeing up some space. We will be cramped for space when the remaining 12 operators join the crew!

Photos are on the website. Check <http://ducie2008.d11mgb.com/pictures/index.php?imgdir=Preparation>

2. Costs, cash flow and donors:

The background topic for today's news release is cash. Many expeditions, including this one, ask the DX community for financial assistance. Ducie Island, a remote and uninhabited location which can only be reached by sea, certainly involves greater expenses. But how much greater?

The costs (US\$ at current exchange rates) for equipping and executing the VP6DX expedition total about \$330,000:

\$155,000 -- Sea transportation to/from Ducie Island, and costs for operating the ship while we are on the island (29 days), food, use of shelter & some generators.

\$140,000 -- hardware: radios, amplifiers, antennas, computers, spares, etc.

\$23,000 -- shipping, insurance,

\$10,000 -- gasoline, diesel, fuel containers, consumable items.

These costs do not include air transport and lodging for the operators; each operator pays his own way to/from Mangareva Atoll, French Polynesia. Almost all of the costs (\$305,000 to date) must be paid or committed before we arrive at the island. So where does the cash come from?

\$83,000 -- operator donations

\$55,000 -- loaned/donated hardware

\$30,000 -- clubs and organization donations to date

\$12,000 -- individual donations to date

\$125,000 -- debt (interest-free loans)

The last figure is the scary one! This is sunk cash, spent or obligated before the first QSO is made, which the funders expect to be returned. (About \$90k is tied up in hardware which we hope to use on future expeditions.) And we are budgeting another \$25k of expenses after departing the island for shipping, refurbishment, QSLing expenses, etc.

With this much money at risk for a major expedition, the pressure is on us to meet not only the on-the-air expectations of DXers worldwide, but also to work to raise the remaining cash. Please consider supporting the VP6DX project with a donation. If you choose to support the VP6DX project financially with a donation, we promise:

-- to do our best to deliver a first-rate, high quality expedition: to work DXers efficiently, with balance given to each region of the world, to each mode, and to each band.

-- to use your money wisely, to account for it transparently and according to professional standards, and to report back to you as to how it was used.

-- to give priority to your QSL requests and LOTW confirmations.

Because of the importance of "early cash" in reducing debt, donations of US\$100 or more received prior to Feb 5 (our departure from Mangareva Atoll to Ducie Island) will be listed on the QSL card.

Donations can be made as follows:

-- PayPal (in either US\$ or Euro) on the VP6DX website here: <http://ducie2008.d11mgb.com/howtohelp/paypal/index.php>

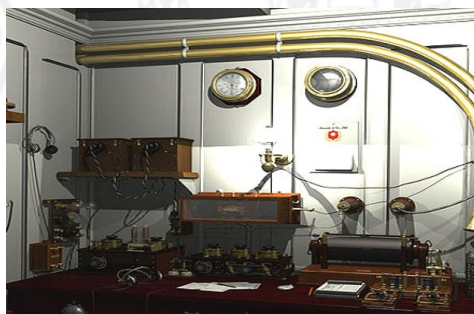
-- check (US\$) mailed to:

Eric Scace, K3NA
Radio Expeditions LLC
13 Harvard St #3
Charlestown, MA 02129, USA

-- USA donors over \$100 may make a directed gift to the Northern California DX Foundation, designated for the VP6DX project, and receive a 501(c)3 tax credit. Send these gifts to:

Bruce Butler, W6OSP
4220 Chardonnay Court
Napa, CA 94558

Thank you for your support. See you on the air real soon!



FCC/ARRL News (continued)

Prediction Center (SWPC), part of NOAA. "In this case, it's an early omen of solar storms that will gradually increase over the next few years."

Solar physicist David Hathaway of NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama concurred, saying that new solar cycles begin with a "modest knot" of magnetism, like the one that appeared on December 11 on the east limb of the Sun: "That patch of magnetism could be a sign of the next solar cycle. New solar cycles always begin with a high-latitude, reversed polarity sunspot." The region of magnetism that appeared back in December achieved high latitude (24 degrees North) and was magnetically reversed, but no supporting sunspot appeared until 25 days later.

Reversed polarity describes a sunspot with opposite magnetic polarity compared to sunspots from the previous solar cycle. High-latitude refers to the Sun's grid of latitude and longitude. Old-cycle spots congregate near the Sun's equator; new-cycle spots appear higher, around 25 or 30 degrees latitude. Sunspot 981's high-latitude location at 27 degrees North and its negative polarity leading to the right in the Northern Hemisphere are clear-cut signs of a new solar cycle, according to NOAA experts. The first active regions and sunspots of a new solar cycle can emerge at high latitudes while those from the previous cycle continue to form closer to the equator.

While experts vary in their predictions on when the solar cycle will peak and how strong it will be, NOAA, in April 2007, in coordination with an international panel of solar experts, predicted that the next 11-year cycle of solar storms "would start in March 2008, plus or minus six months, and peak in late 2011 or mid-2012." In the cycle forecast issued in April 2007, half of the panel predicted a "moderately strong cycle of 140 sunspots, plus or minus 20, expected to peak in October 2011. The other half predicted a moderately weak cycle of 90 sunspots, plus or minus 10, peaking in August 2012. An average solar cycle ranges from 75 to 155 sunspots. The late decline of Cycle 23 has helped shift the panel away from its earlier leaning toward a strong Cycle 24. The group is evenly split between a strong and a weak cycle."

NASA's Hathaway, along with colleague Robert Wilson at a

meeting of the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco last month, said that Solar Cycle 24 "looks like it's going to be one of the most intense cycles since record-keeping began almost 400 years ago." They believe the next solar maximum should peak around 2010 with a sunspot number of 160, plus or minus 25. "This would make it one of the strongest solar cycles of the past fifty years -- which is to say, one of the strongest in recorded history." Four of the five biggest cycles on record have come in the past 50 years. "Cycle 24 should fit right into that pattern," Hathaway said.

According to Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA, "As for improvement in propagation on the higher bands, we still have a way to go before that happens, and it depends on the magnitude of Cycle 24. The Solar Cycle 24 Prediction Panel has published predictions for Cycle 24, but unfortunately the panel did not reach one consensus prediction. If the larger of the two predictions comes true, we should expect consistent F2 propagation on 10 and 12 meters to start toward the end of 2009. If the smaller prediction comes true, this will be delayed about one year."

Luetzelschwab, who writes the column "Propagation" for the National Contest Journal (NCJ), continued: "While we wait for improved high band conditions, don't forget the low bands. Around solar minimum and for the next year or so, the Earth's geomagnetic field is at its quietest. This is good for low band propagation. Thus, right now is the time to start (or add to) your 80 and 160 meter DXCC efforts."

According to NASA's Tony Phillips, many forecasters believe Solar Cycle 24 will be big and intense. "Solar cycles usually take a few years to build to a frenzy and Cycle 24 will be no exception. We still have some quiet times ahead," says Hathaway. (continued on page 18)



The Beginner's Help Desk

Just a small 'Help Desk' article this month. I know the next one was supposed to be a continuation of our digital discussions, but I figured this would some good info to run here.

CUL/73 de KQ3DX

We have 2 small articles combined this month into one column. The first one is courtesy of Mike, WA3TTS and concerns Coaxial Cable types. Thanks to WA3TTS for sending this to me. KQ3DX.

Hi Folks: I was researching RG-6U performance the other day and realized it is a very affordable alternative to other coax cable we regularly use, even though it is 75 ohm versus our typical 50 ohm cable (RG-8/213/58/8X, etc.) Even with no attempt at matching at the antenna or transmitter, the 1.5 to 1 SWR represents only 4 percent reflected power for using 75 ohm versus 50 ohm cable. The only thing that comes close on db loss per 100ft of cable is LMR400 or CNT400 grade cable. When considering RG-6/U cable is commonly used on consumer satellite TV receivers with 1500MHz intermediate frequencies, it certainly is useful on our ham bands from 1.8MHz to 1300MHz. For single band applications there are some simple ways to make matching sections to return to 50 ohms if needed. I've seen RG-6/U quad shield at Home Depot in 500ft rolls for \$63.00—that's 12.6 cents a foot! Compare that price with RG-213 or LMR-400. You can buy the \$20 F-connector crimp tool and a box of 25 F connectors and still save money compared to .90/ft copper coax. Radio Shack offers F to PL-259 adapters, which is a convenient way to get back to a compatible HF or VHF radio antenna connection. I found one reference that RG-6/U cable has a transmitter power rating of 750W at 30MHz and 2500W at 4MHz. Take a look at <http://www.vk1od.net/RG6/index.htm> and see if some RG-6 cable might solve an antenna feedline solution for some part of your radio station. 73 Mike WA3TTS

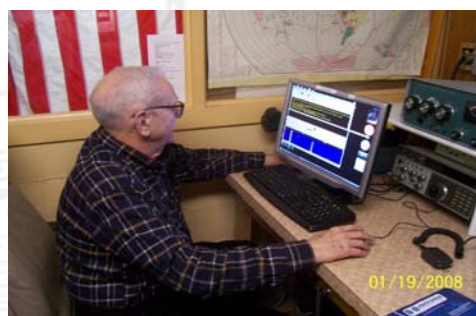
PS: Note that for a single band ground plane antenna with a 36 ohm feed point, an electrical quarter wave of 50 ohm cable will match the 36 ohm antenna to a 75 ohm feedline. Think about this if you are feeding a 2M or 440 ground plane with lossy RG-58 or even RG-213 cable. The same principle applies to the HF bands.

Our next short subject is courtesy of Billy, N3VEF and Bob, N3DOK. Thanks, guys for the submission. KQ3DX.

I came across a D-Star video. Looks like a good way of learning about D-Star. The entire DVD runs about 90 minutes. It covers what to enter into the YOURCALL, MYCALL, RPT1 and RPT2 fields, and explains why there are a variety of options. It also reviews One Touch Reply, gives tips on making your own computer interface cables, and gives some background information on the Gateway. Also covered are the DV Dongle (which lets you access D-STAR repeaters from your PC, somewhat like Echolink), OpenD-STAR.org, and more. The DVD indexed so you can easily find specific topics for review. Follow the link below and check it out:

<http://www.arvidnews.com/charlotte-dstar/index.html>

(Check out the North Hills ARC D-STAR update on page 20)



Contest season is starting to heat up. Some recent action from the clubhouse included the PSK31 Contest and the ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes. From top to bottom: Nate, W3SVJ in the HF studio working PSK31, Nate and Dave, WQ3T working the HF bands on PSK31, and our club Prez Mike, WA3TTS having fun in the VHF Contest. Thanks Chuck, N3UUZ for the photos!!

Website Of The Month

A monthly feature where I try to highlight websites that I hope you, our readers will find of interest. **Ye Olde Editor's Disclaimer:** I have no interest, either pecuniary or monetary in the websites listed herein. I'm just trying to make for interesting reading. CUL/73 de KQ3DX

This month's pick: The Ham Radio Information Page:

[<www.smeter.net>](http://www.smeter.net)

This is a pretty cool site with lots of links to lots of different information. Many links are available to take you to whatever you find interesting about Amateur Radio. Amplifier, antenna design, propagation, DX'ing, FCC, weather, there is lots of stuff to see here. Not only that but there is a link to an S-Meter site where you can see your own signal. Especially interesting is a link where you can search for ham-radio-only related sites. Lots of forums are available here too, so you can chat with others about your interests. There is also a link to NASA video content in addition to various videos about Amateur Radio. Check this one out and be sure to bookmark it. I think you'll find the ham radio website search engine especially useful. Thanks for reading!! 73 de KQ3DX



Credits/Thanks

Many thanks to those who submitted articles for this month's newsletter:

N3VEF, N3UUZ, WA3TTS, WB3CRC, W3SVJ, WA3FWA, KA3LNG, WA3BKD, WA3ZRM, N3DOK, KB3NUQ, ARRL, The VP6DX Crew.

Thanks for your efforts. They help make our newsletter a much better, informative read for all.

That's it for this month. CU next month with more news/features/minutiae. CUL/73 de KQ3DX et al.



The E-Bay Report

A monthly website where I will try to highlight some of the Amateur Radio related auctions currently on E-Bay.

Ye Olde Editor's Disclaimer: I have no interest, either pecuniary or monetary in any of the auctions described herein. Just trying, once again to make for interesting reading.

CUL/73 de KQ3DX

Our topic this month: Amp and Tuners

This first one is for a Nye Viking MB-V-A HF tuner. I've wanted one of these for many years. It is considered by many (including me) to be the finest tuner ever manufactured. This baby'll handle 3KW of juice. These are no longer manufactured. I believe they stopped making these in the last year or so. They were selling for around \$900.00 new. I found this one on E-Bay just in the last week or so. Extremely clean and lightly used, from what I saw there were no scratches or dents on it. I thought about bidding on it, but didn't. Turns out if I had, I would've been the winner. This clean unit went no bids received. It had a starting price of \$600.00 and a buy-it-now price of \$650.00. Most people who are fortunate enough to own one usually keep it for life.



The Nye-Viking MB-V-A HF tuner as auctioned on E-Bay. This monster would be the last tuner you'd ever have to buy. No bids received; hopefully it'll be up again real soon.

Up next is an old Heathkit SB-200 Amp. These are still extremely popular even today, 40 years after they were manufactured. You'll still hear lots of guys (and gals) using these today. This one also appeared to be very clean and well cared for. No scratches or dents or anything. The ad described it as the tubes lighting up but no more. Even if that is all it did, (continued on next page)

The E-Bay Report (continued)

it would be a snap to fix, especially since the manuals are still available. Don't know if the manual was included with this one though. However, you can still get the book from many different sources, whether on CD or a reproduction copy. Final price: \$361.75. All in all, a good solid performing amp for a miserly sum.



The Heath SB-200 as seen on E-Bay. As you can see, this particular amp was clean inside and out. To top it off, the price was right, too.

Our next pick for this month is a newer vintage Amertron AL-80B amp. Described as 'gently used by a ham with 50+ years of experience with amps, the pictures seemed to back him up. Another clean amp; again you'll hear many of these on the air today. This amp has a single 3-500Z tube and will deliver a KW with 85-100 watts drive.

This one comes with the original packaging and manual. This one had a buy-it-now price of \$875.00, but someone was able to get it for \$850.00. Another quality amp at a decent price.



The Amertron AL-80B amp as seen on E-Bay. Another good one to think of if you're in the market for a high-power HF amp.

Here's an old tuner that I think you old-timers will appreciate. This is an old Johnson Viking Matchbox that I found. It appeared to be very well cared for. This one tunes just the original Amateur bands of 10, 15, 20, 40 and 80M, and will handle 275 watts. Not one to buy if you're running legal-limit power. However, as with all Johnson Viking stuff, it is still very collectable. Perfect if you are just running a few hundred watts of power. Final price: A measly \$114.50. A collectable piece at a great price.



The Johnson Matchbox Antenna Tuner as seen on E-Bay. A good little tuner at a very reasonable price.

That's all for this month. Thanks for reading!!
CUL/73 de KQ3DX



Shack Of The Month

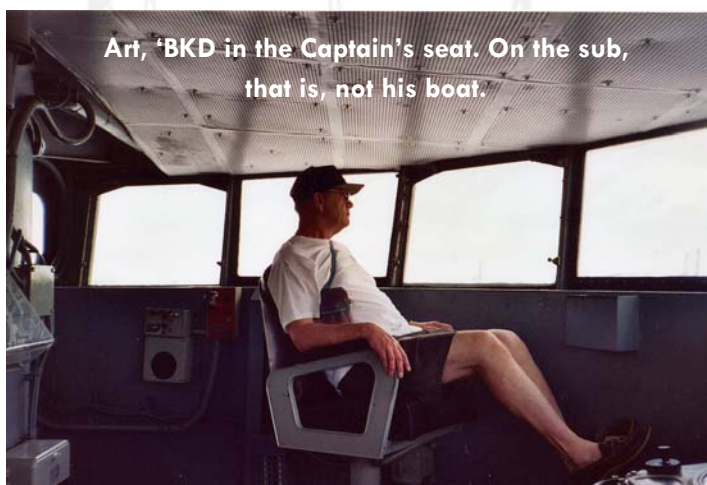
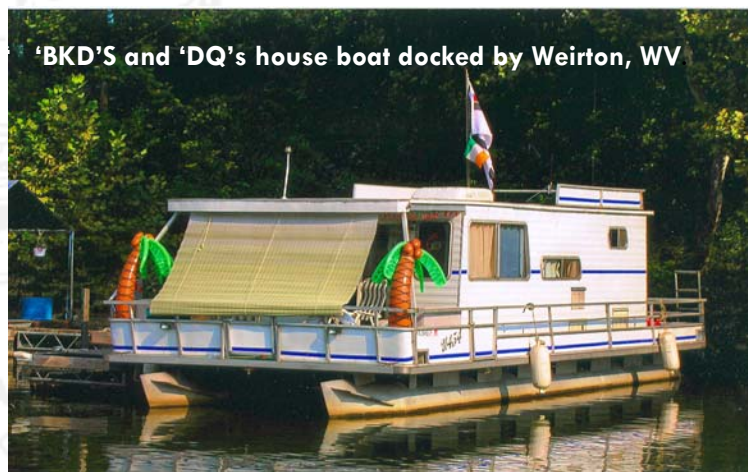
Our February Shack-Of-The-Month selection comes from Art, WA3BKD.

During the summer, 'DQ' and I spend as much time on our boat (the U434) as we can. Like all good hams, any excuse or new place to play radio will be explored. The '434' is an all metal house boat we dock near Weirton, WV. The boat floats on 2 31" diameter X 35' long pontoons. Around the roof of the cabin is an aluminum rail. All metal surfaces are bonded to the pontoons for a good ground system. The rigs used include a Ten-Tec Scout @ 50 watts and a Yaesu FT-817 for QRP'n. Antennas include HamStick whips for 40 and 20M. A 2 meter ground plane works for both 2M and Marine VHF radios.

As you can see from the pics, the boat is docked against a hillside with a lot of trees hanging over it. This would seem like a poor QTH for radio, but on the air, results prove otherwise. The antennas are mounted on the roof rail at the back of the boat under these trees. Daytime 40M results are what you'd expect from a modest home setup. Nighttime 40 CW will get us into Europe and South America a lot. 20M day and night will work Eastern Europe and Africa. Some nice DX QSL cards are in our collection for our efforts. 2M keeps us in touch with the locals for late nite summertime QSO's.

It should be noted most of the hamming takes place dockside. The boat's 110VAC system and a 13.6VDC power supply is used to run the radios. Under way, the old Johnson V4 makes a lot of QRM, and besides, running the 434 takes a lot of paying attention. We are always ready with a cold one and warm radios for guests. Next summer, drop by for some /MM fun.

73, Art, 'BKD.



Propagation Report

Sunspots have returned. After nearly three weeks with nothing visible (January 9-28), Sunspot Group 982 emerged on January 29. The very quiet geomagnetic conditions of the past week may be ending with some moderate to unsettled activity. The US Air Force predicts planetary A index for February 1-6 at 12, 10, 15, 10, 8 and 5. The next active period could be around February 9-10, with planetary A index of 15. The period of February 16-26 is likely to see no spots; we may see sunspots reappear February 27-March 1. Sunspot numbers for January 24 through 30 were 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 13 and 14 with a mean of 3.9. The 10.7 cm flux was 71.3, 71, 72.5, 72, 71.3, 71.6 and 72.7 with a mean of 71.8.

Estimated planetary A indices were 5, 11, 5, 2, 2, 4 and 2 with a mean of 4.4. Estimated mid-latitude A indices were 3, 8, 6, 2, 2, 3 and 1 with a mean of 3.6. Geophysical Institute Prague predicts unsettled to active conditions for February 1-2, unsettled February 3-4, quiet to unsettled February 5 and quiet on February 6-7. For more information concerning radio propagation, visit the ARRL Technical Information Service Propagation page <http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/propagation.html>. To read this week's Solar Report in its entirety, check out the W1AW Propagation Bulletin page <http://www.arrl.org/w1aw/prop/>.



Last Minute DX News

- ♦ **TURKEY, TA.** Special event station TC800NH is QRV until February 15 in commemoration of the 800th anniversary of famous Turkish folk hero Nasreddin Hoca. Activity is mostly on 40, 20 and 17 meters using CW and SSB. QSL via TA1HZ.
- ♦ **BANGLADESH, S2.** Toby, SM4XDJ is QRV as S21XJ from Dhaka for a few weeks. Activity is on the HF bands using SSB and various digital modes during his evening hours and weekends. QSL via SM4XIH.
- ♦ **WEST KIRIBATI, T30.** Udo, C21HC is QRV as T30HC. He has been active on 20 meters CW around 0600z. QSL via DL9HCU.
- ♦ **MINAMI TORISHIMA, JD1.** Masa, JA6G XK is QRV as JD1BMM until February 19. Activity is limited to his spare time. QSL to home call



More FCC/ARRL News (con't)

On January 31, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) released its report "Networked Nation: Broadband in America 2007" <http://www.ntia.doc.gov/reports/2008/NetworkedNationBroadbandinAmerica2007.pdf>. The NTIA is part of the Department of Commerce, so it is not unexpected that the report attempts to show that the Administration has largely succeeded in meeting President Bush's goal of "universal, affordable access" to broadband technology by 2007.

Those more expert than I on the general subject of broadband deployment will offer their own critiques of the NTIA report. My own expertise is with regard to broadband over power lines (BPL) and was reluctantly acquired over a five-year period in the course of addressing the serious problem of interference from BPL systems to the radio frequencies that are used by licensed Amateur Radio operators. BPL technology uses power lines to distribute broadband signals.

Unfortunately it has a propensity for polluting the radio spectrum, since broadband signals operate at radio frequencies and the power lines are not shielded to prevent them from escaping. Despite this inherent flaw the Administration, through the NTIA, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and even the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), has devoted considerable energy to promoting BPL. Yet, the FCC's own data show that BPL has failed to catch on. My particular interest in reading the NTIA report was to see the extent to which BPL would be credited with having contributed toward meeting the Administration's goal, thus justifying its promotional investment.

By the way, BPL manufacturers have made considerable progress in engineering their devices to avoid the radio frequencies that cause the most interference. The FCC deserves no credit for this, since the Commission has shown little interest in enforcing even the inadequate rules against radio interference that it hurriedly adopted in 2004 to promote BPL deployment.

At one time the FCC's semi-annual reports, "High-Speed
(continued on next page)

FCC/ARRL News (continued)

Services for Internet Access," lumped BPL in with fiber optic lines. The FCC eventually recognized that this was inappropriate, since the two technologies have absolutely nothing in common, and stopped doing so after 2004. For some reason, the NTIA's report continues to treat the two together. Even so, reading the executive summary offered a glimmer of hope that the report would be realistic with regard to BPL; it notes that while "the total number of high speed lines delivered over fiber and power line connections grew 789 percent from December 2003 to December 2006...[f]iber optic lines...appear to be almost entirely responsible for this expansion." (The latest FCC report that is available is for December 31, 2006; it was released in October 2007.) Less encouraging was the fact that the term "BPL" occurs no fewer than 45 times in the 60-page report, an emphasis that is hardly justified by BPL's miniscule market share.

Turning to the body of the report, on page 5 "removing barriers to innovative new applications such as...BPL" is mentioned as one of "...a number of targeted pro-growth telecommunications policies that have also contributed to robust technological development in the broadband sector." So, exactly how much "robust technological development" has occurred as a result of this policy of "removing barriers" to BPL that is described more fully on page 8 as a cooperative effort between the FCC and NTIA? One has to wait until page 26 to find the NTIA's answer -- and modest as it is, it is still startlingly at variance with reality.

Here the report admits that "BPL has yet to make significant inroads in the broadband marketplace." Then comes the following incredible paragraph:

"Reliable BPL subscribership figures are difficult to find. The FCC's most recent data identify fewer than 5,000 BPL customers as of year end 2006. That figure appears low, however. TIA [Telecommunications Industry Association] estimates 200,000 current BPL subscribers, increasing to 700,000 by 2010. Another source forecast about 400,000 customers by the end of 2007, growing to 2.5 million by year end 2011. "

WHAT IS GOING ON HERE? The FCC's data showing fewer than 5000 BPL customers -- a number that dropped in the six

month period covered by the report -- are taken from forms that service providers are required to submit. Why does the NTIA not regard this figure as reliable? The only way that it "appears low" is by comparison with the excessive industry and government hype.

Further distorting the picture, at the bottom of page 26 is an out-of-date map taken directly from the United Power Line Council (UPLC), an industry source with a vested interest in BPL. It purports to show BPL deployments "updated as of July 10, 2007." However, a number of those shown had already been decommissioned by that date and others have been taken out of service since then.

I have followed the ups and downs of the BPL industry very closely for more than five years. There are very few commercial deployments of BPL, and examination of the FCC data state by state shows all of the significant ones are included. The idea that there could be another 195,000 customers out there, happily connected to the Internet by BPL -- yet unreported by their service providers -- is utterly ludicrous.

Even more absurd is the NTIA's citation of the "forecast" of about 400,000 customers by the end of 2007, drawn from a year-old Web promotion for a \$3000 "industry report." It is indefensible that the NTIA chose to include in its report unsubstantiated industry estimates and forecasts that inflate the FCC-documented figure for BPL subscribership by 3900 percent to 7900 percent. If the agency wishes to retain a shred of credibility, it will issue a corrected report with the UPLC map, the TIA estimate and the unsupported forecasts deleted.



Miscellaneous News

◆ NORTH HILLS ARC D-STAR UPDATE

The other day while ye olde editor was on his way to work, he got a special surprise. I put out a 'KQ3DX listening' call on the 444.350 North Hills ARC D-STAR repeater, and one of the local club members (N3CVL) responded. We had a nice chat and he went on to say that the gateway was now up and running. The gateway is the internet interface that connects the repeater to other repeater systems all over the country. So now it is possible to connect thru the local NHARC W3EXW D-STAR repeater and chat with hams all over the country. So, if you are in the market for a new 2M/440 rig, consider getting one with the D-STAR capability. It is starting to catch on and is growing in all parts of the country. Local activity is also starting to gain momentum too. I'll have more details on this in upcoming issues of the newsletter, so stay tuned.

◆ MOTOROLA COMPLETES TENDER OFFER FOR YAESU

On Wednesday, January 16, Motorola, Inc. announced that its subsidiary, MI, Inc. has successfully completed its tender offer to acquire a controlling interest in Vertex Standard, parent company of Yaesu. The tender offer period expired on January 15 with approximately 5.4 million shares tendered and accepted. On November 5, 2007, Motorola launched the tender offer, in cooperation with Tokogiken (a privately held Japanese company controlled by Vertex Standard's president and CEO Jun Hasegawa) with the intention of forming a joint venture to develop and sell Vertex Standard products and develop select Motorola products. All regulatory clearances required for the completion of the transaction have been obtained.

Starting on January 22, Motorola will have a total ownership stake of approximately 78 percent of Vertex Standard on a fully diluted basis (excluding certain stock acquisition rights that are scheduled to be cancelled), following the settlement of the tender offer for approximately 12 billion Yen (almost \$112 million US dollars) in cash. Through a subsequent restructuring process, Motorola will own 80 percent of Vertex Standard, while Tokogiken will retain a 20 percent stake.

"We are extremely pleased to team with Motorola, a global technology leader that has been a leading provider and pioneer in 2-way radio communication solutions," Hasegawa said. "With Motorola, Vertex Standard will be stronger and better positioned to deliver new and innovative 2-way radio solutions for professionals and consumers."

Dennis Motschenbacher, K7BV, Yaesu's Executive Vice President for Amateur Radio Sales in North America, told the ARRL that he sees the joint venture of Vertex Standard and Motorola as "a very good thing for Amateur Radio in general and Yaesu customers in particular. I hope our loyal customers will readily see this business venture for what it is, an oppor-

tunity to make a solid 50-plus year old Yaesu company even stronger and more formidable than is already the case. There is absolutely no reason to have the slightest concern about equipment warranties and the continuation of support for our products. I am really excited to see what the joint engineering capabilities of these two huge communications companies will bring in the way of new technology advancement for the Amateur Radio Service."

Motschenbacher continued: "There is a unique aspect of business that comes with Amateur Radio. It's not just about a radio. It's the relationship between the ham, the radio itself and the company that makes that radio. This relationship in Amateur Radio is far different than it is, say, between a buyer of a HDTV, the TV and the TV manufacturer. The relationship in Amateur Radio is far more personal and 'bonding,' per se. I am certain that we will do our utmost to ensure that Motorola understands this delicate bond. Since Motorola is leaving the day-to-day management of Yaesu in the hands of my boss, Jun Hasegawa, President of Vertex Standard, we can expect our longtime relationship with hams to remain intact."

According to Motorola, "[t]he joint venture is expected to expand and develop a comprehensive suite of products to address the rapidly growing demand for 2-way radio solutions. Vertex Standard's strength in the amateur, marine and airband (avionics) segments provides Motorola with access to new business opportunities. In addition, Vertex Standard's solutions are highly complementary with Motorola's products and add greater depth and breadth to Motorola's Government and Public Safety business. The venture also provides additional engineering talent for Motorola."

Following the restructuring, which will be implemented after the settlement of the tender offer, Vertex Standard will be de-listed from the NASDAQ. The joint venture company will continue to be called "Vertex Standard Co, Ltd" and will become a subsidiary of Motorola, with headquarters in Tokyo.

(Information courtesy of the ARRL Bulletin.)



January 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

February 2008

March 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 <i>Groundhog Day</i> Vermont QSO Party 10-10 Int'l SSB Contest MN QSO Party Delaware QSO Party
3 WASH Sun. Eve Net Vermont QSO Party 10-10 Int'l SSB Contest Delaware QSO Party	4 Breezeshooters Net Delaware QSO Party	5 WACOM 10M Net WACOM 2M Net	6 <i>SCARC Social Nite</i> <i>Ash Wednesday</i> Alleg. Co. ARES Net	7 SkyView 2M Net	8	9 <i>CQ WPX RTTY Contest</i> FISTS Winter CW Sprint SARL Field Day Contest LA QSO Party Asia-Pacific Spring CW Sprint
10 WASH Sun. Eve Net <i>CQ WPX RTTY Contest</i> NA SSB Sprint SARL Field Day Contest LA QSO Party	11 Breezeshooters Net	12 WACOM 10M Net WACOM 2M Net	13 <i>SCARC Social Nite</i> Alleg. Co. ARES Net NHARC Business Meeting	14 <i>Valentine's Day</i> SkyView 2M Net WASH Business Meeting	15	16 ARRL International DX CW Contest Feld-Hell Sprint
ARRL School Club Roundup						
17 WASH Sun. Eve Net ARRL International DX CW Contest	18 <i>President's Day</i> Breezeshooters Net	19 <i>SCARC Business Meeting</i> WACOM 10M Net WACOM 2M Net	20 Alleg. Co. ARES Net	21 SkyView 2M Net	22	23 NA QSO Party RTTY CQ WW 160M SSB Contest REF SSB Contest WASH Breakfast Miss. QSO Party
24 <i>WASHFest 2008</i> NA QSO Party RTTY CQ WW 160M SSB Contest REF SSB Contest WASH Sun. Eve Net Miss. QSO Party	25 Breezeshooters Net NC QSO Party (also on 2/24)	26 WACOM 10M Net WACOM 2M Net	27 <i>SCARC Social Nite</i> Alleg Co. ARES Net	28 SkyView 2M Net	29	

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 ARRL Int'l DX SSB Contest
2 WASH Sun. Eve. Net ARRL Int'l DX SSB Contest DARC 10M Digital Contest	3 Breezeshooters Net RSGB 80M Club Test Data	4 WACOM 10M Net WACOM 2M Net SkView Business Meeting	5 SCARC Social Nite Alleg Co. ARES Net	6 SkyView 2M Net SkyView 2M Net WACOM Meeting	7 NCCC Sprint	8 RSGB Commwealth Contest Oklahoma QSO Party EA PSK31 Contest Idaho QSO Party
9 RSGB Contest Oklahoma Q Party EA PSK31 Contest Idaho QSO Party UBA Spring Contest CW WASH Net	10 Breezeshooters Net Wisconsin QSO Party (also on 3/09)	11 WACOM 2M Net WACOM 10M Net	12 SCARC Social Nite Alleg Co. ARES Net NHARC Business Meeting	13 SkyView 2M Net WASH Business Meeting	14	15 10-10 Int'l Mobile Contest Russian DX Contest VA QSO Party Feld-Hell Sprint
16 Palm Sunday Russian DX Contest UBA Spring Contest 6M VA QSO Party WASH Net	17 St. Patrick's Day Breezeshooters Net	18 WACOM 2M Net WACOM 10M Net SCARC Business Meeting SkyView Social Nite 2 Rivers ARC Business Meeting	19 Alleg Co. ARES Net	20 Spring Begins SkyView 2M Net RSGB 80M Club Championship SSB NCCC Straight Key/ Bug Sprint	21 Good Friday NCCC Sprint	22 BARTG Spring RTTY Contest
23 Easter Sunday BARTG Spring RTTY Contest UBA Spring Contest 2M WASH Net	24 Breezeshooters Net	25 WACOM 2M Net WACOM 10M Net	26 SCARC Social Nite Alleg Co. ARES Net	27 SkyView 2M Net	28	29 WASH Club Breakfast CQ WPX DX SSB Contest
30 CQ WPX DX SSB Contest WASH Net	31 Breezeshooters Net					

Now in our *THIRTEENTH* big year!



WASHfest 2008

The South Hills Hamfest

Sponsored by the Wireless Association of South Hills Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Sunday, February 24th, 2008

8:00 AM until 3:00 PM Rain or Shine (or Snow!)

Castle Shannon VFD Memorial Hall

3600 Library Road (State Route 88), Castle Shannon, PA

Talk-In on 146.955(-) and 443.650(+) 131.8 PL



(800) 545-8881

Breakfast & Lunch provided
by **JACK'S CATERING**
of Peters Township

FREE Coffee for the entire Hamfest
courtesy of HAM RADIO INSURANCE ASSOCIATES
of Canonsburg, PA

MAIN PRIZES — *You've Got to play to WIN!*



1st Prize: Kenwood TS-480SAT
2nd Prize: Kenwood TH-D7A
3rd Prize: SGC SG-239 HF Smarttuner

Additional Hourly Door Prizes!

Main Prize tickets are \$2.00 each, or 3 for \$5.00

All Prizes Subject to last-minute changes

For reservations, or information, Contact:

Kevin Smith N3HKQ at (724) 228-4153 or Bill Hill W3WH at (724) 746-1776

E-mail us directly at washarc@yahoo.com Check out our website too! www.n3sh.org

Hamfest Table Reservation Form—Please PRINT LEGIBLY ALL INFORMATION

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Phone: () _____ - _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Call Sign: _____

Tables WITH Electricity: _____ X \$15.00 = _____

Tables WITHOUT Electricity: _____ X \$10.00 = _____

Please make all checks payable to:
WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS
111 Watson Drive
Monongahela, PA 15063-1045

We reserve the right to resell any tables not occupied by 8 AM, unless prior arrangements have been made!

The Steel City Amateur Radio Club
(412) 787-0777

2M Repeater:
147.030/147.630MHz (PL 123.0)

70cm Repeater:
444.450/449.450MHz (PL 103.5)

WA3TTS Beacon: 144.300MHz
(CW)

ATV Repeater: 426.250MHz
(Currently off-line. Contact AA3EE
for more info.)

1296MHz Beacon: 1296.269MHz
(CW) 1W

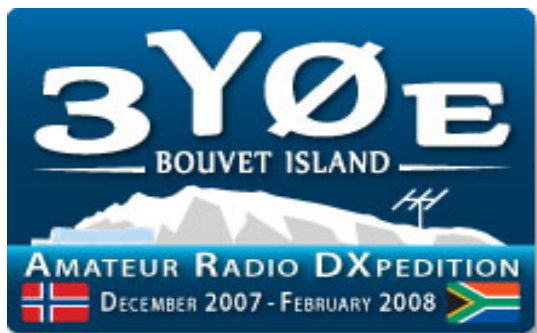
We're on the web!

www.w3kwh.com

The Steel City Amateur Radio
Club is an ARRL-Affiliated
organization



Steel City Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 281
Carnegie, Pennsylvania 15106
Phone 412-787-0777
Editor: Greg Babin, KQ3DX
KQ3DX@hotmail.com
www.w3kwh.com



**Time's running out!! Work'em while you still
can!! [See page 3 for details.](#)**