

Chicago FM Club Squelch Tale - October 2004

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THE PRESIDENT COMMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the officers, board of directors, radio expo chairpersons, and all the radio expo workers that made this year's ham fest so successful. Many hours of planning went in to this year's radio expo and it sure paid off. With the help of Mother Nature we had 2 sunny days just perfect for a ham fest. Thanks again for making Expo 2004 a success.

October's general meeting is the last time nomination will be accepted for President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. The elections will be held in December. Jim WA9EMY has volunteered to be expo chairman, and Mike WA9FTS table chairman. Both have been chairman for past expos and I'm confident they will do a great job. We are still looking for some new people to help out with expo, if your interested give Jim or myself a call.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at our next general meeting.

73 de Phil N9PA

MEETING NOTICE

The next meeting of The Chicago FM Club will be held at 8:00 PM in the Edgebrook Field House which is located at 6100 N. Central Avenue. The entrance is on the west side of the street between Cauldwell and Elston Avenues. Just so you won't get confused, the address on the entrance is 5900 N. Central. As always, CFMC's general meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month which will make this meeting date October 20th. See you at the meeting and don't forget to bring a friend!

CFMC QSL SERVICE

For those members who did not know, CFMC offers a QSL service to its membership. If you have any QSL cards that need to go to the ARRL Outgoing QSL Bureau, just sort them and send them to Tim, WD9DZV (via the Roster address) or bring them to the General Meetings and give them to Tim or Phil, N9PA! It doesn't matter if it's 1 or 100, we'll take care of them for you. There are NO FEES involved when you use this member service so it can save you a bundle of \$\$ Please remember, this service is for CFMC members ONLY!! Mailings to the ARRL QSL Bureau will be made at the end of every month, so those cards won't have to lay around while you get enough for a mailing. This service is just another one of the privileges of CFMC membership. If there are any further questions please feel free to call me, or e-mail me at: wd9dzv@arrl.net

ARRL AWARDS MANAGER

Are you trying for your Worked All States, or 5-Band Worked All States or that very difficult VHF-UHF Century

Club Award (VUCC)? If so CFMC can help.

Not actually in getting your contacts or getting your QSL's back but, once you have the necessary cards confirmed that's where our CFMC ARRL Awards Manager Tim, WD9DZV comes in. He can verify your application and your cards so that you do not have to send them off to someone in another city and chance losing them in the mail. Tim is usually at most of the CFMC general meetings or at the ARRL VE testing sessions held just before the CFMC meetings. Tim can verify your cards there, or if you wish you can even mail your cards to him.

One point to remember, if there are any corrections on the card, like a correction from SSB to CW, then the card is no good. The ARRL rules specifically state that no corrections are allowed on a card, no matter who made the correction. We did receive a card from a station in Arkansas and they had written 20 in the "MHZ" column and then wrote 14 over it. Even though it could be argued that he tried to put 20 meters and then changed it to 14 MHZ the card has been altered and not valid. We sent it back to the station and requested a corrected card.

The ARRL is now charging fees for most of the awards. Be sure that you bring a check made out to the ARRL for the correct fee amount with you. Don't forget a large enough size SASE and the required amount of postage for me to submit the award. The Awards manager now must submit the award form, not the applicant.

73's and good luck in seeking your awards. Any questions, you can reach Tim, WD9DZV via the roster, E-Mail to: wd9dzv@arrrl.net

CQ AWARDS MANAGER

If you are looking to attain any of the CQ awards, again, Tim WD9DZV is a CQ Awards Card Checker. He can help with getting that Worked All Zones Award, and CQ-DX award paperwork verified for you so you won't have to send those valuable QSL cards in the mail. For further information just contact Tim via the CFMC Roster or E-Mail him at wd9dzv@arrrl.net

ODE TO THE CODE

We' ve all heard the cry "abandon the code!,

it's useless outdated, NOT a mod-er-n mode!"

So I said to myself, "could codes' day really be over?

Best left for SKs' fer-til-iz-n' the clover?"

So off went my paddle 'n keyer to a museum,

so those curious of our "past" could drop in an' see um.

I then bought a computer and a box I was told...

would update my station,using all hi-tech modes.

It then was set up,all by my own hand...

the screen it lit up et voilà Heard Is-land!

I switched to transmit to "talk with this gent"

but my screen read "sorry, can't copy 100%!"

"There's static, interference if you could hear it you'd agree...if it ain't armchair copy we machines cry c'est la vie!"

It then said "there is as YOU know a way to get through, it's called the code,and what luck for you!"

"You've learned this art,you "stuck it out"

'tis a valuable tool,there isn't a doubt."

"You' ve invested your time,and besides the code you did learn, possession of valuable skills must be... EARNED!"

So I say to you now don't get fooled when some say...

"Codes an' old dinosaur fadin' away!"

It's part of our past,present and future existence...

anti-coders prepare for "beaucoup de resistance"

FCC POISED TO ACT ON BPL REPORT AND ORDER IN MID-OCTOBER

The FCC Office of Engineering and Technology (OET) will present a draft broadband over power line (BPL) Report and Order to the full Commission when it meets October 14, the ARRL has learned. More than 6100 comments have been filed on the topic since the FCC released its initial Notice of Inquiry in the proceeding, ET Docket 03-104, in April 2003 and a subsequent Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM), ET Docket 04-37, in February of this year. The ARRL so far on this round has taken its concerns regarding Amateur Radio and BPL to three of the Commission's five members. In a meeting this week with FCC Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein, an ARRL delegation again asserted that the FCC is pushing the proceeding to a predetermined conclusion with little regard for technical issues.

Because the FCC has been unwilling to release for public review the results of its own tests and observations of BPL systems, the ARRL has no confidence that the draft Report and Order will be based on sound engineering and believes the rush to adoption is unwarranted and premature," ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, said in a follow-up letter to Adelstein. The letter reiterated the League's key points that, it said, "represent the minimum protection" that should be incorporated into the BPL Report and Order prior to Commission adoption.

"Without adequate safeguards, the deployment of BPL systems will result in the pollution and degradation of the unique natural resource of the high-frequency radio spectrum," Sumner said.

The League argued that the R&O include a reduction in the radiated emission limit. The ARRL wants the limit set 30 dB below current Part 15 requirements, which, it says, were established with narrowband point-source radiators in mind. "The record in this proceeding clearly establishes that BPL is not a point-source radiator," the ARRL's letter asserted.

The ARRL pointed out that the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has concluded that at the current Part 15 limit, interference is "likely" to receivers in land vehicles 75 meters from BPL-connected power lines and to fixed stations 460 meters from such power lines.

"Given the number of amateur stations and the fact that they almost invariably are located near power lines, the areas of potential interference at the existing Part 15 limit are clearly too large to permit case-by-case resolution of interference issues," Sumner said. "Based on experience with the very limited test deployments of BPL systems to date, notably in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Southern Wake County, North Carolina, and Cottonwood, Arizona," the ARRL told Adelstein, "widespread BPL deployment at the existing Part 15 radiated emission limit will result in an unmanageable incidence of interference."

The only way to reduce these areas of potential interference is to reduce the radiated emission limit, the ARRL maintained. Mandatory "notching" of the amateur bands by 30 dB would reduce the probability of interference to amateur stations sufficiently that the remaining interference cases might be resolved on a case-by-case basis. "However," the League added, "such notching would not solve the problem for other radio services."

The ARRL contingent, which included Sumner, ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, and ARRL Chief Technology Officer Paul Rinaldo, W4RI, decried the FCC's lack of response to issues Sumner raised two months ago regarding a North Carolina Amateur Radio interference complaint. The ARRL representatives carried copies of correspondence questioning a July OET report that essentially gave the Progress Energy Corp BPL field trial a clean bill of health despite continued interference on amateur frequencies.

The League delegation suggested to Adelstein that the OET has swept the North Carolina BPL interference case under the rug and has attempted to discount interference issues in general while overstating the FCC's ability to address them.

Other points the ARRL has stressed in its meetings with Commission members include:

- * consider including the NTIA's recommendations to standardize measurement procedures and to require that Access BPL systems be certificated, not merely verified.

- * requiring independent confirmation of rules compliance before a BPL system is placed in operation.

- * the need for advance public notification of BPL system locations and characteristics, something not included in the NPRM

- * performance standards for interference mitigation that would require that interference be terminated immediately upon notification to the operator; and meaningful penalties for non-compliance, including fines.

- * require BPL marketers to "give clear notice to potential customers that licensed radio services have priority and that the delivery of broadband service via BPL cannot be guaranteed."

In addition to Adelstein, ARRL representatives have met so far with Commissioners Kevin J. Martin, and Michael J. Copps. The League hopes to meet with the principal advisors to Chairman Michael K. Powell and Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy before the October 7 cutoff for ex parte communications in the proceeding.

IS YOUR STATION SAFE FROM LIGHTNING?

So, you bought a new rig and it's sitting on a wooden table, still in the box. What are the chances of it being destroyed? "None," you say, huh? Well, by gosh you're right. So now you remove it from the box and admire it sitting on the table. Still no chance of it becoming part of the path, right? Absolutely! Next, after checking the

manual, you hook up an antenna, and plug it into the AC, or a power supply that is plugged in. Now your nice new rig is part of a possible path. Whether the path be "cloud to antenna, to feed line, to radio to AC ground" (or the reverse). Anyway, leave it that way, and you are inviting trouble.

For peace of mind you can pull the plug from the AC. If you are in the basement you can drop the cord/plug onto the cement floor. So now you have reduced the potential path by having a half inch gap between the plug prong and the grounded (?) cement floor. Will it jump that half inch? Did it jump between your antenna and the cloud?

Okay, so you put the cord up on the table, but in the meantime you had put the rotator control box on the wooden table, and plugged it in. How much distance between that control box and the rig? Not nearly as far as it is between the cloud and your antenna, right? Is there a light, or clock near the rig that is still plugged in?

But wait, why not just remove the antenna from the rig? Very good thinking, but that plug still better be pulled, and no ground left attached either! Why? Please study these possible paths.

Cloud to antenna, to rotator, to wire, to control box, to 6 inch gap, to rig, to ground; or; Cloud to AC mains, to house wiring, to clock, to 6 inch gap, to rig, to ground. If you are using a metal desk instead of a wooden table, then those 6 inch gaps become much less, depending on whether there are rubber feet on the various items mentioned. Of course, if you are not

in the basement then you can pull all the plugs and just drop 'em on the floor.

That ground that you insist an having attached to your rig, etc., is (1) to keep you from getting electrocuted should there be problem with a breakdown between the AC mains and any part of your operating hardware that you might touch, and (2) to improve the transfer of RF from the rig to the ether. If you want to leave it on there to enhance that path that I have been talking about, then you're on your own.

If you take a direct hit from that terrible lightning, then there isn't much to worry about. You will probably lose the TV, microwave, stereo, telephones, refrigerators, and maybe the whole house. Remember, the direct hit may be several blocks away, but, it's those fingers (like tentacles) from the main bolt that we are to be concerned with. There may be hundreds of them so our chances of getting hit with one of those is hundreds to one of taking the direct hit. The only ground in my shack is tied to a panel with SO-239 coax connectors on it. When I pull the power, I transfer the coax cables from the coax switch to that panel. There is also an AC receptacle on that panel, with all pins grounded. It isn't for power, it's for the rotator control box cord to plug into.

Remember, the important concern is the path, and keeping you and your equipment out of it. (txs to State Of The ARTS for this article)

JAMBOREE ON THE AIR (JOTA) 2004 IS OCTOBER 16-17

The 47th Jamboree On The Air (JOTA) takes place October 16-17. Details on JOTA also appear in September QST, page 104. JOTA is an annual event in which Boy and Girl Scouts and Guides from all over the world speak to each other via Amateur Radio to share experiences and ideas. Since 1958, when the first Jamboree On The Air was held, millions of Scouts have become acquainted through this event.

Amateur Radio clubs and individual licensees make it possible for Scouts to get on the air, and your club is invited to be a part of JOTA 2004. If your club is planning a JOTA activity, register it on the ARRL Youth Skeds Database page <<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/ead/youthskeds/>>. There, youngsters and parents can search for scheduled on-the-air activities in which to participate. You also can contact your local Boy Scouts of America Council <<http://www.scouting.org/nav/enter.jsp?s=xx&c=lc>> and let it know that you're planning a JOTA activity.

With assistance from ARRL HQ staff members, Education and Technology Program Coordinator Mark Spencer, WA8SME, will operate Maxim Memorial Station W1AW on Saturday, October 16, for JOTA. "This year the focus will be on achieving the radio merit badge," he noted. Spencer has set up a program that should allow Scouts participating at W1AW to walk away from the JOTA experience with the merit badge, "with some preparation and a little homework on the Scout's part," he added.

ARRL staffer Larry Wolfgang, WR1B--a veteran Scout leader--will be setting up a station at the Mohegan District Fall Camporee at Waterford Beach in Connecticut. "We will be operating WA1BSA," Wolfgang said, adding that he's expecting some 400 to 500 Scouts to turn out for the campout.

The ARRL New Hampshire Section, the New Hampshire Amateur Radio Service Club (WB1BSA) and the Lawrence L. Lee Scouting Museum <<http://www.scoutingmuseum.org/>> have announced that the Max I. Silber Memorial Station will be on the air during JOTA 2004 using special event call sign N1S--primarily using SSB and SSTV on 20 and 40 meters.

Scouts and scouters worldwide also can participate in JOTA via Internet Radio Linking Project (IRLP) Reflector 9205. There's more information on the IRLP Web site <<http://www.irlp.net/>>.

If you hear any participating JOTA stations on the air, be sure to make a contact--and don't forget to QSL. There's more information about JOTA on the Web <<http://www.scouting.org/international/jota.html>> and <<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/ead/jota.html>>.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES CAN DONATE TO ARRL THROUGH COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN

Employees of the US government can designate their Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) pledges to the ARRL. (The League is CFC No 9872.) Federal employees who participate in the CFC can donate all or part of their CFC contribution to the League to support ARRL's efforts on behalf of Amateur Radio. Some private-sector employers also match donations their employees make to ARRL, while others will donate to the League if you volunteer your time--as an Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) volunteer, for example.

"ExxonMobil gives ARRL a donation of \$500 for every 25 hours that I volunteer for ARES activities, including training, exercises and preparation--with a max of \$2000 per year," says ARRL member Alan Isaachsen, KB2WF. ARRL is a qualifying §501(c)(3) organization, and contributions may be tax deductible for both employer and employee.

To learn how to donate to various ARRL funds, visit the Support Amateur Radio and ARRL Web page <<http://www.arrl.org/development/#top>>. For additional information, contact ARRL Chief Development Officer Mary Hobart, K1MMH, mhobart@arrl.org; 860-594-0397; fax 860-594-0259.—thanks to Alan Isaachsen, KB2WF, and Walt Dubose, K5YFW

RaNdOm AcCeSs HuMoR

"More hay, Trigger?" "No thanks, Roy, I'm stuffed!"

A flashlight is a case for holding dead batteries.

Lottery: a tax on people who are bad at math.

Error, no keyboard - press F1 to continue.

I have a grip on reality, just not this particular one.

There's too much blood in my caffeine system.

Artificial intelligence usually beats real stupidity.

Cream rises to the top...so do dead fish.

Ask me about my vow of silence!

A bachelor never makes the same mistake once.

If you can read this, my cloaking device is on the fritz.

What's all this about hell fire and dalmations?

I'm not a complete idiot - several parts are missing.

Veni, vidi, velcro: I came, I saw, I stuck around.

Every time my ship comes in there's a dock strike.

Efficiency is a highly developed form of laziness.

Why'd they bury Mozart? Because he was decomposing.

Excuse me, Chief, my shoe is ringing.

Got a Pentium4 for my wife - good trade.

If everything seems to go right, check your zipper.

The four food groups: Fast, Frozen, Instant and Chocolate.

What this country needs is a good 5-cent quarter.

Ensign Walnut approaches Dr. Crusher with caution.

Ted Kennedy's Bumper Sticker: My other car is underwater.

C'mon, where's your sense of adventure?

I'm not round. I'm an oblate spheroid.

Neutrinos have mass? I didn't even know they're Catholic!

Don't be so open minded that your brain falls out.

I know it all, I just can't remember most of it.

What goes around usually gets dizzy and falls over.

If reality wants to get in touch, it knows where I am.

Learn from your parents' mistakes - use birth control!

Hard work has a future payoff. Laziness pays off now.

Give the gift of high velocity lead.

System error - press F13 to continue.

Friends help you move. Real friends help you move bodies.

No, I'm not an elitist. Why do you ask, peasant?

Did you expect mere proof to sway my opinion?

Smokey the Bear says, "Strip mining prevents forest fires."

Just sliding down the razor blade of life.

And you thought space was warped.

Government: not the solution, but the problem.

The most affectionate creature is the wet dog.

The secret of the universe is @*&^^^ NO CARRIER

My IRS check just bounced.

I can't think of anything that remotely fits the subject.

I was born alive. Isn't that punishment enough?

One if by LAN, two if by C.

I pray to St. Francis of ANSI C.

Computing is a terminal condition.

My superiority complex is better than yours!

Double your drive space - delete Windows!

Everybody stand back, he's got a MAGNET!

Everything's falling into place - on top of me.

I won't rise to the occasion, but I'll slide over to it.

Boldly going forward because we can't find reverse.

Karaoke is the Japanese word for "tone deaf."

Sinead O'Connor: a chia pet before adding water.

The is abuse. Arguments are down the hall.

What is a "free gift?" Aren't all gifts free?

DZV'S DITS AND BITS by Tim, WD9DZV

MARS members asked to assist in hurricane health-and-welfare traffic: Army MARS Eastern Area Coordinator Robert Hollister, AAA9E/N7INK, has asked Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) stations and nets to assist in handling health-and-welfare traffic related to the recent hurricanes. "MARS stations in Florida and other affected areas should coordinate with ARES/RACES and local ham radio operators and see if MARS can help handle some of this workload for them," Hollister said in a message to MARS members in the Eastern US. "This is another opportunity for MARS to demonstrate our capabilities and provide a service to the people stricken by these storms." Hollister said that Army MARS stations not supporting the disaster response in the stricken areas should continue to monitor regional net frequencies and remain available to assist as needed in handling traffic. He also encouraged Army MARS members to work with their Air Force and Navy counterparts "to get the traffic out of the affected area."

Amateur microsat model on display at Smithsonian: AMSAT's Perry Klein, W3PK, reports that the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington, DC, has put the microsat mechanical test model on display, just in time for AMSAT's 35th anniversary celebration and its Symposium and Annual Meeting October 8-13. "They suspended it from the ceiling outside the NN3SI Smithsonian Amateur Radio Club station, located at 'The Information Age' exhibit on the first floor, west end of the American History Museum," Klein said. "It's been a number of years since an OSCAR satellite has been on continuous display at the Smithsonian." An OSCAR 1 model was in the Hall of Satellites at the National Air and Space Museum for several years, Klein notes, although it's now in storage. But, OSCAR 1 and PCSat models currently are being readied for display at the Air and Space Museum's Udvar-Hazy Center near Dulles Airport. The center's space exhibit hangar is expected to open soon.

THE INTERNET: US FALLING BEHIND IN BROADBAND ROLLOUT

The FCC insists that the United States is making progress in rolling out high-speed Internet service. This, despite facts showing that the nation is falling further behind other countries.

A new Federal Communications Commission report found that U.S. high-speed Internet lines had tripled to 28.2 million by the end of 2003 from June 2001, but the country at best was 10th place in international rankings down from fourth, lagging nations like Canada and South Korea.

FCC Commissioner Michael Copps criticized his own agency over the disappointing news. He says that the agency had failed to establish a coherent policy for broadband, sacrificing the nation's rank. Copps also noted that service was as cheap as \$10 a month in Japan for 8 megabits a second versus \$30-\$50 for 1-3 megabits in the United States.

HAM RADIO ON THE INTERNET: BIG DATABASE UPGRADE AT QRZ.COM

The QRZ.com website call sign system is running a lot faster these. This as the result of a major an upgrade to a new and more powerful server.

The new database engine is a Sun E280R. This is a 64-bit industrial strength machine with dual 900 MHz processors, 4 GB of RAM, and a pair of 36 gigabyte 10,000 R-P-M Fibre channel disk drives.

Fred Lloyd who runs QRZ.com says that these new disks are really impressive. Fred says that he has clocked them at speeds of up to 64 megabytes per second. That equates to an entire C D ROM's worth of data being moved internally in only 10 seconds.

Lloyd adds that this new server only handles the call sign database. The main QRZ.com web server remains a 450 MHz Sun E420R with 2 gigabytes of RAM.

AN OPEN LETTER TO A HAM

You, sir, are demanded to either confirm or deny certain long standing allegations surrounding your activities in an area removed from normal life in which you have devoted not inconsiderable time.

Are you an Amateur Radio Operator who, at given times, eschews drinking, eating and daily bathing in favor of playing with radios?

Is it not true that you present yourself with a label which you refer to as a call sign, under a license granted by the Federal government?

Is it also not true that you pronounce the letter Zee as Zed in order to promulgate the arcane aspects of being such a radio operator?

Did you not obtain that license by demonstrating superior knowledge in electronics, regulations, practices including Ohm's Law, Kirchoff's Laws and Cole's Law..and have you not demonstrated the latter by shredding cabbage and adding dressing thereto?

Do you have regular discourse over the public air-waves on frequencies held exclusively for your ilk, with a cabal sometimes referred to as HAMS?

Have you been known to participate in verbal exchanges with those of similar bent located in relatively unknown sections of the planet like Brunei, Market Reef, The Aland Islands and East Podunk?

Will you admit to actually devoting countless hours in the questionable practice of exchanging meaningless and trivial data which you affectionately call Rag Chewing?

And do you not actually possess a certificate issued by the American Radio Relay League attesting to your proficiency in that practice that you have framed and hanging in a prominent place in your house?

Have you not announced to others publicly and openly that you spend considerable time in a secluded section of your domicile practicing this so-called hobby and do you not refer to that section of your house as the SHACK?

Do you utilize outdoors structures like towers and antennas to further your hobby and do you proclaim of these, the MORE THE BETTER?

Do you agree with your cohorts about antennas, that if it doesn't break, IT AIN'T BIG ENOUGH and if it doesn't fall down, IT AIN'T HIGH ENOUGH?

Do you have an arcane method of communicating with your fellow HAMS using only electronic pulses that emerge as DITS and DAHS....DI - DI - DA - DAH - DI DIT?

Have you been known to camp overnight on some remote hill or dale annually in June in an event called Field Day where you try to contact as many other HAMS as you possibly can using as little power as you possibly can? And is it true that you once reduced your power to absolute zero and still contacted a dx station although it may simply have been a casual passerby?

Do you regard a fellow Ham with whom you have spoken just once a CONTACT? Do you regard your fellow HAMS, with whom you have spoken at least twice but whom you have never met in person, as FRIENDS?

If your answers to the above queries are a resounding "Roger, roger", then you have truly crossed the threshold into the Valhalla of the Wouff Hong.

73

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Inverness, IL

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