

Chicago FM Club Squelch Tale - June 2003

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Volume 2003

Number 6

June

2003

THE PRESIDENT COMMENTS

June 28th and 29th. Mark those dates on your calendar. The CFMC will be hosting field day at a new location. The Village of river Grove has asked us to present a demonstration of ham radio. What better why then to show them field day. The site is at their river front park, which is at Grand ave. just east of the Desplaines River. This will be the first time we will be setting up here so will need all the help we can get. If you can't show up for setup come to operate and make a good showing for ham radio.

Please let our field day chairman, Adam KU9Z that you are coming or come to the next meeting. I'm looking forward to seeing you all at field day!

73 de Phil N9PA

ARRL NEWS

ARRL'S "Logbook Of The World" Enters Open Beta-Testing Phase

The long-anticipated "Logbook of the World" (LoTW)--the ARRL's secure electronic contact-confirmation system--is being opened for beta testing. While a formal unveiling was set for the Hamvention DX Forum May 17, LoTW now is available to all who wish to participate in the beta testing program, expected to last 60 days.

At the heart of the Logbook of the World concept is a huge repository of log data provided by operators--from individual DXers and contesters to major DXpeditions--and maintained by ARRL. Logbook of the World Project Leader Wayne Mills, N7NG, says the system will benefit big and little guns alike by providing quick QSO credit for awards offered by ARRL--and, it's hoped, those offered by other organizations as well--without having to first collect and submit hard-copy QSL cards.

Visit the ARRL Logbook of the World Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/lotw>> to learn more, download the necessary software and take part in the beta testing effort. For the purposes of the beta test, validated users are asked to submit log data for contacts made on or after January 1,

1998. Once a certificate is issued, beta testers may e-mail their log data to the LoTW database lotw-test@arrrl.org.

LoTW will accept authenticated data--either in Cabrillo or ADIF format--directly from computerized logs via the Internet. Software Development Manager Jon Bloom, KE3Z, noted that because the software still is under development, any data uploaded during the beta-testing period will be erased before LoTW "goes live." Beta participants will have to obtain new certification even if they've participated in earlier LoTW testing. The beta certification will be good only for the beta-test period.

Bloom emphasized that every call sign would need a separate certificate. Bloom and Mills encouraged beta-test DXers and contesters to upload their log files--the bigger the better--to test the robustness of the software as well as to populate the database and create a more realistic environment. LoTW will find and match contacts between stations based on the log data submitted by users, and the results will appear on the Logbook of the World Web page.

"We're not replacing the whole paper QSL scheme with Logbook of the World," said Mills, who is also ARRL's Membership Services manager. "This is really a system to offer credits for awards."

Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act To Get Public Airing

The chairman of the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet has agreed to hear testimony on the House version of the Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act of 2003, HR 713, at a public hearing later this spring. Rep Fred Upton (R-MI) this week assured the bill's sponsor, Rep Michael Bilirakis (R-FL), that the hearing--which will be convened to address public safety spectrum needs--will include an opportunity for a member of the Amateur Radio community to appear before the panel. Upton also told Bilirakis that he shares his interest in protecting Amateur Radio.

"That indeed is good news!" said ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP. "A hearing is exactly what we'd like to have in order to state our case, and I think we can state a good case, too." The date of the hearing has not been set.

Upton's willingness to hear testimony on the bill is considered critical to providing it with the credibility it needs as it moves through the legislative process. It also marks a major step toward getting HR 713 through this Congress.

The agreement, during a meeting of the full House Energy and Commerce Committee, came after Bilirakis asked to speak prior to consideration of another piece of spectrum legislation, HR 1320, the Commercial Spectrum Enhancement Act, which Upton sponsored. During his comments, Bilirakis spent about five minutes discussing the importance of Amateur Radio to the committee, chaired by Rep Billy Tauzin (R-LA).

The newest cosponsors of HR 713 include representatives Jerry Moran (D-KS), John Olver (D-MA), Mike Ross, WD5DVR (D-AR), and Walter Jones, Jr (R-NC).

The Senate version of the Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act, S 537, recently got a boost when the chairman of the Senate Communications Subcommittee, Montana Republican Conrad Burns, signed on as a cosponsor. His cosponsorship indicates that the measure now has his attention and could convince others to follow suit.

Bilirakis filed HR 713 on February 12, while Idaho Sen Michael Crapo introduced S 537 on March 6. The legislation would amend the Communications Act to require the FCC to provide "equivalent replacement spectrum" to Amateur Radio and the Amateur-Satellite Service in the event of a reallocation of primary amateur allocations, any reduction in secondary amateur allocations, or "additional allocations within such bands" that would substantially reduce their utility to amateurs. Bilirakis and Crapo, both Republicans, have twice before sponsored similar legislation at the League's recommendation. The bills point out Amateur Radio's volunteer role in providing emergency communication during disasters and emergencies.

Haynie continues to encourage ARRL members to urge their senators and representatives and to cosponsor the bills. "Letters and e-mails are the key to getting legislation passed," Haynie says. A sample letter is available on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/govrelations/arspa.html>>. Those writing their lawmakers are asked to copy their correspondence to the League via e-mail <specbill03@arrl.org>. (For additional information, see "Communicating with Congress," by Derek Riker, KB3JLF, QST May 2003, p 46.)

The text of HR 713 and S 537 is available via the Thomas Web site <<http://thomas.loc.gov/>>.

ARRL Releases Updated "Logbook Of The World" Beta Software "Logbook of the World" (LoTW) beta testers for the most part have reacted positively to the latest version of ARRL's secure electronic contact-confirmation system, but some users have run into difficulties. Responding to problems encountered by some early beta testers, the League has released an updated beta version of LoTW that should resolve these issues. Beta testers are encouraged to download the new version of the software, 1.02beta, from the LoTW page <<http://www.arrl.org/lotw/>>.

"While most installations and subsequent e-mailing and uploading of log data have gone flawlessly, as expected there have been problems," said ARRL's Dave Patton, NT1N, who's been a part of the LoTW project from the start. He says the LoTW server software failed to recognize many of the new digital mode designations, such as MFSK-16 and JT6M. This caused fatal errors while digitally signing logs.

Patton says the beta update allows users to "map" any mode designation to one of the four main Amateur Data Interchange Format (ADIF) mode categories--CW, phone, image, and digital--without changing the actual log data. He said the beta upgrade also will correct other log data problems that caused fatal errors in signing a log, including allowing the signing process to complete the "good" parts of a log without crashing.

Beta testing got under way May 15. So far, the 1300 or so beta testers have uploaded upward of five million contacts to the LoTW database. Once it's ready later this year, LoTW will provide a way for amateurs worldwide to qualify for awards such as DXCC or WAS without having to first collect and submit hard-copy QSL cards.

One beta tester from Brazil lavished praised on the LoTW project. "I applaud the creators of LoTW," he wrote. "This will be, for sure, the salvation of DXing and award collecting. Please keep up this essential work!" For now, log data are limited to contacts made no more than five years ago (on or after January 1, 1998) to get a representative sampling, Patton explained.

Patton promised "many more bells and whistles" over the weeks ahead. One of those will meld LoTW with DXCC. He noted that a major DXCC software revision, now under way, will need to be completed first.

Logging software developers now can get documentation and a Windows DLL library--as well as complete source code for the TQSL software--at the SourceForge Web site <<http://sourceforge.net/projects/trustedqsl/>>.

To join the beta testing program, visit the Logbook of the World--Getting Started site <<http://www.arrl.org/lotw/getstart.html>>. The beta testing period wraps up in mid-July.

All QSO data submitted to LoTW will be deleted when the beta test period ends, and users will have to obtain new digital certificates to submit log data to LoTW once it 'goes live.' As part of the security process for the live system, passwords will be mailed to US licensees at the address that appears in the FCC database. Users should make sure the FCC has their current mailing address.

Amateurs can modify their address online or via US mail by using instructions available on the FCC Web site <<http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/amateur/licensing/changingaddress.html>>. ARRL members may submit license modifications or renewals through the ARRL VEC <<http://www.arrl.org/fcc/forms.html>>.

President Haynie To Testify For Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, will testify June 11 before the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet. Haynie will speak on behalf of the Spectrum Protection Act 2003, HR 713, at the request of the bill's sponsor, Rep Michael Bilirakis (R-FL). The measure would require the FCC to provide "equivalent replacement spectrum" to Amateur Radio in the event the Commission reallocates amateur spectrum.

"Amateur Radio has been in the forefront of technological innovation since the advent of wireless," Haynie said this week. "It's in the best interests of our nation that ham radio has spectrum to operate. At some point in time, if we continue to lose spectrum, where is the spectrum going to come from to enable continued experimentation and innovation? Or for emergency communications?"

Haynie this week received his formal invitation to appear before the subcommittee. He'll get about 10 minutes to address the lawmakers. The 11 AM hearing at which Haynie will testify--"The Spectrum Needs of Our Nation's First Responders"--will convene to address public safety spectrum needs. Subcommittee Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI) agreed earlier this year with a request from Bilirakis to include an opportunity for a member of the Amateur Radio community to testify. Upton also told Bilirakis that he shares his interest in protecting Amateur Radio. The panel is a subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee chaired by Rep Billy Tauzin (R-LA).

Haynie says he's looking forward to the opportunity to state the League's case. Upton's willingness to hear testimony on the bill is considered critical to enhancing the measure's credibility, and it marks a major step toward getting HR 713 through Congress this year.

The Senate version of the Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act, S 537--introduced by Michael Crapo (R-ID)--got a boost earlier this year when Senate Communications Subcommittee Chairman Conrad Burns (R-MT)--the expected architect of the Senate's spectrum management legislation--signed on as a cosponsor. Burns' support suggests that the measure now has his attention and could convince others to follow suit, although that hasn't happened yet.

The Spectrum Protection Act would amend the Communications Act to require the FCC to

provide "equivalent replacement spectrum" to Amateur Radio and the Amateur-Satellite Service in the event of a reallocation of primary amateur allocations, any reduction in secondary amateur allocations, or "additional allocations within such bands" that would substantially reduce their utility to amateurs. The bills point out Amateur Radio's volunteer role in providing emergency communication during disasters and emergencies.

HR 713 has attracted 31 cosponsors while S 537 has three so far. Haynie continues to encourage ARRL members to urge their senators and representatives and to sign on as cosponsors. Cosponsorship lends support to legislation while it's in committee. "Letters and e-mails are the key to getting legislation passed," Haynie says. A sample letter is available on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/govrelations/arspa.html>>. Those writing their lawmakers are asked to copy their correspondence to the League via e-mail <specbill03@arrl.org>.

The text of HR 713 and S 537 is available via the Thomas Web site<<http://thomas.loc.gov/>>.

40-Meter "Realignment" Tops WRC-2003 Amateur Radio Issues When delegates gather June 9 in Geneva, Switzerland, for World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 (WRC-03), Amateur Radio will enjoy robust representation. The International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) is looking to WRC-03 to resolve the longstanding issue of a harmonized worldwide 40-meter amateur allocation. In addition, the IARU has taken positions on several other issues of importance to hams.

"Forty meters is the biggie," says ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, who will attend the month-long international assembly in the role of administrative officer of the IARU observer delegation headed by President Larry Price, W4RA. "It's complicated, controversial and involves multiple radio services, and there's simply no way of predicting what the outcome will be."

Citing its desire to "meet the needs of communications for humanitarian assistance," the IARU has expressed strong support for a realignment of the band to make available to hams globally 300 kHz of spectrum in the vicinity of 7 MHz.

While Region 2 amateurs--including US hams--now enjoy 7.000 to 7.300 MHz, hams in most of the rest of the world--Regions 1 and 3--may use only 7.000 to 7.100 MHz. Methods to get the issue off the dime must address the incompatibility arising from how, where and on what timetable the broadcasters in Regions 1 and 3 should be shifted to higher frequencies while continuing to meet the needs of fixed and mobile services in the band.

Other Amateur Radio-related agenda items include proposed revisions to Article 25 of the Radio Regulations. Article 25 details the requirements for Amateur Radio and includes the obligation to demonstrate Morse code proficiency to operate below 30 MHz. Sumner said he expects the WRC-03 delegates to delete the international requirement, although administrations could continue to require Morse proficiency if they wished to do so.

The IARU favors a revision to Paragraph 25.6 to incorporate an ITU Recommendation (ITU-R M.1544) by reference to establish a minimum international standard for Amateur Radio licensing. The IARU also supports adding new provisions urging administrations to take steps to allow amateur stations to prepare for and meet communication needs to support disaster relief and to permit individuals licensed in another country to operate temporarily while in their territory. The IARU also supports giving greater flexibility to administrations in the formation of Amateur Radio call signs.

Expressing concern over interference potential, the IARU opposes allocating any spectrum to the

Earth Exploration Satellite Service (Active) to deploy spaceborne synthetic aperture radars (SARs) in the 430 to 440 MHz band. Amateur Radio is co-primary at 430 to 440 MHz in Region 1 and in several countries in Region 2.

As an observer at the conference, the IARU can only request that ITU member-states take its views into consideration when deciding on WRC-03 agenda items. ARRL has launched a special WRC-03 campaign <<http://www.arrl.org/defense>> to help generate the funds needed to continue the defense of Amateur Radio spectrum. Sumner said "unquantifiable thousands of hours by volunteers and staff members" have gone into WRC-03 preparations.

ARRL Technical Relations Manager Paul Rinaldo, W4RI, and ARRL Technical Relations Specialist Jon Siverling, WB3ERA, will serve on the US delegation. More than a dozen other Amateur Radio licensees are expected to be in Geneva to help represent Amateur Radio. WRC-03 concludes July 4. More information on WRC-03 is available on the ITU WRC-03 Web page <<http://www.itu.int/ITU-R/conferences/wrc/wrc-03/index.asp>> and on the FCC Web site <<http://www.fcc.gov/ib/wrc-03/>>.

FCC UPDATES

New 60-Meter Band To Become Available July 3! The new five-channel 60-meter amateur allocation becomes available to US Amateur Radio operators at midnight (12:00 AM) local time on July 3. The local time designation means that amateurs in the US territory of Guam likely will be the first to get a crack at the new band.

The new band will be a secondary allocation--federal government users are primary--and the first on which the only permitted mode will be upper-sideband (USB) phone (emission type 2K8J3E). The FCC last month announced it would grant hams access to five discrete 2.8-kHz-wide channels instead of the 150 kHz-wide band ARRL had requested and the FCC initially proposed. The League remains optimistic, however, that Amateur Radio eventually may be able to enjoy a band segment with multiple mode privileges at 60 meters. ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, has said that in the meantime hams will have to be on their best behavior when taking advantage of the limited channelized allocation, open to General and higher class licensees.

The FCC has granted amateurs center-channel frequencies of 5332, 5348, 5368, 5373 and 5405 kHz--the last channel common to the amateur experimental operation under way in the United Kingdom <<http://www.rsgb-hfc.org.uk/5mhz.htm>>. To be "on channel," users of 60 meters should set their transmitted carrier frequency 1.5 kHz lower than the channel-center frequency. In terms of day-to-day operation, the new band is expected to resemble the sort of channel sharing typical on local repeaters.

ARRL Laboratory Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI, says hams need to be very careful if they're considering modifying their current transceiver or transmitter for 5 MHz. The ARRL advises that members check with the appropriate equipment manufacturers regarding specific modification information. Some modifications not only may void the warranty but could affect or alter a transmitter's operation in unpredictable ways.

"Hams need to be sure that any modifications put them right on the desired channel," Hare said. "Most hams are used to just having to think about band edges, so on other bands, if a mod were a bit 'off,' all operators would need to ensure is that they are not transmitting outside the band."

Hare recommended that on 5 MHz amateurs remain within "a few tens of Hertz" of suppressed-carrier accuracy. He also pointed out that hams have a mandate not to have any of their signal

occupy spectrum outside the assigned 2.8 kHz channels.

Noting that high-frequency audio response can vary considerably from radio to radio, Hare has suggested restricting occupied channel audio bandwidth to 2600 Hz, rolling off below 200 Hz on the low end and above 2800 Hz on the high end.

Last-minute opposition to the granting of a band segment at 5 MHz came last year from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), which cited the ongoing spectrum requirements of federal government licensees having homeland security responsibilities. The NTIA administers spectrum allocated to the federal government. A compromise between the FCC and the NTIA resulted in the limited, channelized allocation.

The NTIA selected the channels the FCC authorized to minimize the possibility of interference to federal government users, and it dictated the use of USB so that federal government users--who also use only USB--could readily identify amateur stations if necessary.

The FCC has set maximum power at 50 W ERP and said it would consider a typical half-wave dipole to exhibit no gain.

LOOKING FOR MY KENWOOD!!

Hi, Would appreciate it if you would please pass the word among your club members and on your nets -- My Kenwood TR-7950 two meter FM rig, used as a talkin station at the hamfest yesterday at DuPage County Fairgrounds, was mistakenly auctioned off by the Antique Radio Club of Illinois who mistakenly thought it was part of the donation auction. It has the optional Kenwood CTCSS built in, and the power cord was cut short and has spade lugs on the ends. Our K9ONA 146.97 freq was in memory. I believe the serial number is 3060144 but am not sure. I'm offering a \$50 reward for its return. I can be reached at WA9FIH@aol.com or via our club's InfoLine recorder, 708-442-4961. Thanks & 73, Jim, WA9FIH

Created on June 11, 2003