

Chicago FM Club Squelch Tale - November 2003

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THE PRESIDENT COMMENTS

It's November already. This year is almost over and it seems like yesterday we where sweltering in the hot summer sun. Now it's time to bring out the long underwear.

This months' General Meeting will be held at the Edgebrook Field House and will be our Fall Mini-Auction. Now's the time to locate all those treasures you have been saving and bring them to the auction. We have 7 nominations for 5 Board positions, and the voting for this will be held at our December meeting.

The Board of Directors, Officers and Radio Expo Committee meet on the first Wednesday in November and I'm happy to report that the Club is doing well finically. Radio Expo showed a profit this year despite the problems we had. The publishing of Squelch Tale every other month and our move to the Aon building have also helped.

Radio Expo has been our main source of financing the Club for many years and is very important to us. For the past few years I have been asking for new people to come forward and relieve some of the old guard that have been the back bone of this event. I personally have been Chairman for 10 years and Jerry W9EG has been Table Chairman off and on for the same amount of time. Due to some personal changes in my life I can no longer be Chairman and Jerry has informed me that this will be his last year as Table Chairman. I have informed the Board of Directors of this and am now telling the membership. Please consider volunteering for these positions so we can keep Expo the best Hamfest in the Midwest.

I'm looking forward to seeing you all at our next General Meeting.

73 de Phil N9PA

MEETING NOTICE

The next meeting of The Chicago FM Club will be held at 7:30 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 Caldwell 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 November 19th.

CFMC will be holding their Mini - Auction this month. Don't forget that this meeting will start one half hour earlier than usual. So bring your self and your treasurers down to the auction!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION

The election of the Board of Directors of the Chicago FM Club for the 2004/2005 years will be held at the December general meeting. If you think you will not be at that meeting, you can request an absentee ballot only by mail to the Club Post Office Box or through my e-mail address. It is dick6614@aol.com. No phone calls will be honored. The nominees are:

WD9DZV Tim Garrity

KA9HHH Bob Schiff

WA9KOD Joe Genovese

N9KTW Howard Goldberg

KG9MC Ron Dubielak

KA9R Richard Roberts

W9XB Rick Duel

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

For Second Reading At The November General Meeting

K9KRO Denny Beringer (N9PA K9FFY)

New Members

The Officers and Board of Directors of CFMC would like to welcome the following new members voted in at the September and October general meetings.

W9NIX Don Nix

KB9QVS Charles Frank Burian

KC9AEW Victor Guarino

WB9JNZ Eric Lanzl

Membership Renewals

The following CFMC members renewed during September and October:

**KA9ABU KG9C WW9E N9FHD WD9FUW N9FXU KB9GUC WD9GVU W9GYC KF9HE
KA9HHH N9HKN N9HWV N9IPH WD9IRN KA9KBO N9KTW WA9LAY N9PRG KA9RHS
KB9TER KB9WPA WQ9X**

The following former members chose not to renew.

WB9CAN**ROSTER**

The latest roster of the Chicago FM Club will be included in the January issue of Squelch Tale. If there are changes required in your listing, I MUST have them by the last weekend of December. You can leave them on the Ham-Help line or my e-mail box.

NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING

The November Board meeting of the Chicago FM Club was held at the Edgebrook Library. Those in attendance were:

N9PA W9EG K0FFY N9RKU KA9HHH N9KTW KG9MC WA9KOD KA9R W9XB

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm.

Secretary **K9FFY**

The minutes of the September Board meeting as printed in Squelch Tale were accepted with no corrections or additions.

Treasurer **N9RKU**

Jim passed out copies of his report to the Board. (look elsewhere for report). **KA9HHH** made a motion to allocate \$3500.00 to purchase a replacement transmitter for the 2 Meter repeater. **N9RKU** seconded the motion and the Board voted yes.

Technical **W9XB**

KG9MC made a motion to get the 220 South repeater back on the air. **K9FFY** seconded the motion. There were 3 yes votes and 2 no votes. The motion carried. The 2 Meter Waukegan Receive site does not seem to be hearing as well as it should. It will be looked into.

Radio Expo 2004

Phil, **N9PA**, will not be Radio Expo Chairman next year and Jerry, **W9EG**, does not want to be Table chairman either. Both have worked for many years in these positions and feel it's about time someone else stepped in.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

DZV'S DITS AND BITS by Tim, WD9DZV

Ham radio news is as close as your cell phone: With many major cellular telephone calling plans largely eliminating roaming charges and offering "free nights and weekends," ARRL Audio News dial-up Amateur Radio news

service now is more available than ever. Using your cell phone, you can keep up with Amateur Radio news even if you're someplace where you don't have Internet or e-mail access. Amateur Radio news is as close as your cell phone! Have a few minutes while you're waiting for the train, bus car pool or connecting flight too? Just call 860-594-0384 to stay informed.

**ARRL Audio News remains available on the ARRL Web site
<<http://www.arrl.org/arrlletter/audio/>>.**

73 Magazine Says "73 And QRT" After completing 43 years of publication, 73 Amateur Radio Today magazine is calling it quits. Plans to publish a joint October/November issue fell through this week, and the September 2003 issue was the magazine's last. According to self-proclaimed "El Supremo and Founder" Wayne S. Green II, W2NSD, it was a simple matter of economics.

"After failing a last minute effort to collect on some larger accounts receivable we decided yesterday to throw in the towel, that the September issue will have to be the last," Green told ARRL October 9. "SK after 43 years of publishing."

The first issue of 73 was published in October 1960 from what Green, a former editor of CQ, once described as "a small, dingy apartment" in Brooklyn, New York. Since the summer of 1962, 73 has been based in Peterborough, New Hampshire, Green's home state. The magazine was a pioneer promoter of SSB, FM, solid-state, easy construction projects and the marriage of personal computing and Amateur Radio. His interest in microcomputing led Green in 1975 to found Byte, a magazine devoted to the then-nascent and largely do-it-yourself computer hobby.

At the peak of its popularity in the 1970s and 1980s, individual issues of 73 totaled more than 300 pages of ads, articles and commentary. Heading each issue was Green's inimitable "Never Say Die", some would say never-ending, editorial, in which he rarely missed an opportunity to tweak the ARRL and his magazine competitors for their perceived shortcomings.

QST Editor Steve Ford, WB8IMY, says 73 published his first article in the 1970s. "I was saddened to hear that 73 has ceased publishing," Ford said. "Wayne's excitement about the growing amateur FM repeater phenomenon at the time was infectious."

Green's 73 editorials and regular round of personal appearances originally concentrated on Amateur Radio and his ideas to improve, advance and grow it. In recent years, however, they've veered into conspiracy theories, cures for cancer, AIDS and other ailments and Green's proliferation of book titles on those topics.

CQ Publisher Dick Ross, K2MGA, said he takes no joy from the passing of 73. "The loss of any publication serving Amateur Radio leaves all of us a bit poorer," he said. "Thank you, Wayne, for 43 entertaining, informative, sometimes infuriating, and always interesting years of 73. We'll genuinely miss it."

ARRL NEWS AND VIEWS

ARRL Rebukes FCC Commissioner's "Broadband Nirvana" Remarks

The ARRL has strongly objected to FCC Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy's suggestion that Broadband over Power Line (BPL) technology will contribute

to what she described as "broadband Nirvana." Addressing the United Powerline Council's annual conference September 22 in Arlington, Virginia, Abernathy expressed unabashed enthusiasm for BPL and recommended a combination of regulatory restraint and the elimination or substantial modification of existing rules as steps along the "path to Enlightenment," as she put it. In a terse response faxed September 25 on behalf of the League's 155,000 members, ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, asserted that Abernathy

overlooked some significant issues in her Nirvana analogy.

"Nightmare is more like it," Sumner declared. "The technical showings submitted by the ARRL and others in response to the Commission's Notice of Inquiry (NOI) in ET Docket No. 03-104 clearly establish that BPL is a significant source of radio spectrum pollution. It cannot be implemented without causing harmful interference to over-the-air radio services."

Sumner told Abernathy that while BPL industry groups, such as the one she addressed this week, prefer to deny the evidence, the FCC is obliged to work to a higher standard.

In its comments in response to the FCC NOI, the League characterized BPL as "a Pandora's Box of unprecedented proportions" and said the Commission's Part 15 rules "should be modified so as to prevent interference to users of the HF and low VHF spectrum" from the outset.

Abernathy's speech, "Reaching Broadband Nirvana," never broached the topic of BPL's potential to interfere with other radio services. Recently, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) <<http://www.ntia.doc.gov>>, which regulates spectrum allocated to federal government users, expressed "broad concerns" about interference to government users and launched an extensive modeling, analysis and measurement program for BPL. In his letter, Sumner reminded Abernathy that the radio spectrum is a precious natural resource.

"To squander that resource simply to add a redundant, unnecessary, and relatively poorly performing 'last mile' connection for consumers, is unconscionable," he said. Sumner expressed the hope that Abernathy will give the League an early opportunity to explain its BPL concerns to her in person.

In her remarks to the UPLC gathering, Abernathy contended that it's been regulatory restraint rather than heavy-handed regulation that has allowed nascent platforms such as direct broadcast satellite (DBS) to become competitively viable. "When the Commission completes this rulemaking," she said, "I expect that we will eliminate many existing rules and substantially modify others; the central question is the degree of regulation that will remain during the transition to a more robustly competitive market."

Individuals may e-mail Abernathy via her FCC Web site <<http://www.fcc.gov/commissioners/abernathy/mail.html>> or directly <kabernat@fcc.gov>. The text of her prepared remarks also is available on the FCC Web site <http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-239079A1.doc>.

The League's initial 120-page package of comments and technical exhibits <<http://www.arrrl.org/announce/regulatory/et03-104/>> and its reply comments <<http://www.arrrl.org/announce/regulatory/et03-104/reply-comments-index.htm>> are available on the ARRL Web site. Additional information and BPL video clips are on the ARRL "Power Line Communications (PLC) and Amateur Radio" page <<http://www.arrrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/>>.

To support the League's efforts in this area, visit the ARRL's secure BPL Web site <<https://www.arrrl.org/forms/development/donations/bpl/>>.

To date, more than 4600 comments, many from the Amateur Radio community, have been filed in response to the FCC's BPL NOI. They are available for viewing via the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) <<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>>.

ARRL Announces Contest Rule Changes

The ARRL Contest Branch has announced rule changes governing ARRL-sponsored operating events. The changes become effective November 1, 2003.

In any contest that requires off-time, any claimed off-time period must be at least 30 minutes long. "Remember that listening time counts as operating time when calculating off-time," said ARRL Contest Branch Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND.

Second, the Northwest Territories (NWT) multiplier has been renamed "Northern Territories", abbreviated NT, for contests that use ARRL and Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC) sections as part of the exchange.

"While not an official RAC section, the VE8, VY1 and VY0 (Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut) are grouped together as a multiplier in the ARRL November Sweepstakes and the ARRL 160-Meter Contest," Henderson explained. "The new name and abbreviation will more accurately describe their makeup."

Henderson said use of the NWT abbreviation was inconsistent to designate a multiplier that also included Yukon and Nunavut. Awards for ARRL-sponsored contests will continue to be issued to the VE8, VY1 and VY0 together as the Northern Territories section.

Finally, in contests using geopolitical entities as multipliers the ARRL RTTY Roundup, the ARRL International DX Contest and the ARRL 10-Meter Contest, the official abbreviation for Northwest Territories is NWT. "This change brings the multipliers for those events into a consistent form," Henderson said. ARRL encourages contest participants to update the necessary files for their logging software. For more information, contact Henderson <n1nd@arrl.org>.

Logbook Of The World Now Works On Macintosh Computers

ARRL's Logbook of the World continues to grow and expand, and it's now operational on the Macintosh OS X operating system. Mac enthusiast Steve Palm, N9YTY, compiled a version of Trusted QSL to work with newer Macintosh computers. The program was built using MacOS version 10.2—"Jaguar"—and was tested on versions 10.2 and 10.3, the new "Panther" upgrade.

Palm, said he had a lot of fun porting the TQSL code to the Mac environment, and was satisfied that he was able to help fill a real need for Mac users. "There was a lot of discussion about this on the HamMac mailing list. It was obvious that many Mac users were looking for something," he said. Palm, the author of EchoMac, a Macintosh OS X EchoLink program, said it took about a week of concentrated effort to complete the port to the Mac platform.

"The base code developed by the TrustedQSL team at ARRL didn't really have any issues that prevented it from being ported to the Mac, so kudos go out to them for doing a good job writing portable code," Palm said. He tackled a few Windows-Mac translation issues and made the Macintosh program "more Mac-like," with configuration and help files embedded in the program so it can be installed in drag-and-drop fashion.

ARRL Web and Software Development Manager Jon Bloom, KE3Z, said he's also working on integrating Palm's MacOS changes into the official source tree so that other Mac developers will be able to easily build a library and their applications from the source code. The TQSL software also runs on the Windows platform, and Red Hat Linux versions 7.2 and 8.

Palm, a ham since 1994 and a programmer since the early 1980s, said that with the new program development tools Apple has recently released, he believes that more Macintosh Amateur Radio software authors will now get involved with porting existing ham programs and creating new ones.

In the six weeks the system has been open to the public, Logbook of the World has accepted logs from 4,000 users from 158 DXCC entities. These users, all with secure digital certificates, have uploaded nearly 21 million QSO records into the system, as of November 3. All of those contacts have so far resulted in more than 350,000 records being generated, Bloom said.

ARRL Assistant to the CEO David Patton, NN1N, said Logbook continues to evolve, with the ability to claim confirmed contacts for ARRL awards credit being just around the corner. He said the cost per credit would be between 15 and 25 cents, making each credit far cheaper than the cost of mailing a paper QSL card with a self-addressed, stamped envelope and possibly an international reply coupon, as well.

For a complete overview on Logbook of the World, just head on over to the LoTW Web page at www.arrl.org/lotw.

ROHN FILES FOR CHAPTER 11 BANKRUPTCY

Rohn Industries <<http://www.rohnnet.com/>> filed a voluntary petition for Chapter 11 bankruptcy September 16 in the US Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Indiana. The best-known manufacturer of tower and tower hardware for the Amateur Radio community, the Peoria, Illinois-based company manufactures towers, antenna support structures and "infrastructure equipment" for the telecommunications industry. In business since 1948, the firm also makes security fencing and provides design and construction services.

"Our immediate goal is to stabilize the company's financial situation and utilize the Chapter 11 process to enable the company to conduct normal business operations as the company works to complete a sale transaction," Rohn Industries President Horace Ward said in announcing the company's bankruptcy filing. Rohn says it's now in discussions with an unrelated third party regarding a proposed asset sale while it continues to conduct business as usual. Ward told ARRL there is "no truth" to a rumor circulating on some Internet newsgroups that disgruntled workers had damaged manufacturing equipment beyond repair in reprisal for consolidating fabrication facilities last January into a single plant in Frankfort, Indiana. The impact of Rohn's troubles on the Amateur Radio community is not clear, but at least one major antenna products supplier reported earlier this summer that it was having problems getting Rohn products, although it continues to offer them. Ward told ARRL this week that Rohn intends "to execute the orders we have and to continue to take orders in the normal course of business."

In the company's statement, Ward attributed the bankruptcy filing to a severe downturn in the telecommunications industry. In July, NASDAQ delisted Rohn Industries after it was unable to meet its minimum bid price requirement. The company remains eligible for listing on the Over the Counter (OTC) Bulletin Board (OTC-BB: ROHN). During the past 52 weeks, the company's stock has sold for as little as a penny a share.

At the same time it filed for Chapter 11 protection, Rohn has announced it's entered into a \$9.5 million debtor-in-possession credit line with its lenders. The bankruptcy court must approve that agreement.

FCC NEWS

FCC Asks Power Company To Try Harder To Resolve Noise Complaints

The FCC has asked American Electric Power Company of Columbus, Ohio, to take a closer look at several power line noise complaints and try harder to resolve them. The cases involve complaints from four Amateur Radio operators in Ohio, Indiana and Oklahoma.

"While we certainly appreciate the considerable effort that AEP afforded this matter, we are puzzled by the lack of results," FCC Special Counsel Riley Hollingsworth wrote August 26 in a letter to AEP Senior Vice President Marsha P. Ryan. "In most cases, a noise source can be located easily by trained personnel using the proper equipment."

AEP responded February 10 to the FCC's initial correspondence regarding the four cases. Hollingsworth says, however, that follow-up reports from the complainants suggest discrepancies exist between what AEP told the FCC and what the complainants report. Hollingsworth said evidence to date indicates that none of the cases has been satisfactorily resolved.

In one case, AEP erroneously identified the amateur's own antenna as the source of the noise.

Jerry Daugherty, W9FS, of Indiana told the FCC that he's heard nothing from AEP and was not even aware that the utility was considering his case closed. "As of June 20, 2003, the noise was present at VHF and coming from several different locations," Hollingsworth said, citing information from Daugherty.

James Kiskis, W8PA, of Ohio reported to the Commission that, although interference identified as coming from two utility poles was fixed, it has since returned from one of them. Kiskis told Hollingsworth that an AEP interference investigator showed up at his residence June 23 and, using a spectrum analyzer hooked up to Kiskis' antenna, found strong noise on 20 and 10 meters. The investigator reportedly told Kiskis that he was turning his findings over to a line crew to have the problems repaired.

William Hannon, N8PW, of Ohio confirmed to the FCC that AEP had repaired several suspect utility poles, "including one very significant noise source," Hollingsworth said. But, he added in his letter to Ryan, Hannon "continues to experience strong noise in dry weather conditions when his antenna is pointed east."

Howard McCloud, KC5RGC, of Oklahoma reported power line noise last April and identified its source for AEP as utility lines about a mile from his station. McCloud was not aware that AEP had attempted to correct it, Hollingsworth wrote. "AEP now apparently maintains that the source of the

noise is McCloud's antenna, even when it is disconnected and on the ground," a conclusion Hollingsworth labeled "patently defective." McCloud reports relatively strong noise on HF that continues 24/7.

Hollingsworth asked AEP to "revisit each of these cases" and to update the FCC within 45 days of any progress in each case. He also referred the power company to ARRL RFI Specialist Mike Gruber, W1MG, for technical assistance in resolving the cases.

Push To Identify Unlicensed 10-Meter Operators Continues

A concerted effort begun last spring to monitor for and possibly identify unlicensed operators on 10 meters will continue through October. The FCC already has asked the ARRL Amateur Auxiliary/Official Observers <<http://www.arrl.org/FieldES/field/org/oo.html>> for assistance. Now, FCC Special Counsel Riley Hollingsworth is inviting hard information on suspected interlopers from all amateurs.

"If I don't receive reports, we'll have to conclude that unlicensed operation on 10 meters no longer is a problem," Hollingsworth said this week. Hollingsworth's initial request to beef up monitoring came in the wake of complaints from the amateur community that rose to the level of a major enforcement headache. He's expressed some disappointment, however, that the number of solid reports received so far has been few, although he's aware that a problem exists.

Hollingsworth asks amateurs to be specific in what they report. "Everybody should police their own neighborhood," he suggested. "Turn on the radio, and take a listen on the band. If you hear a loud signal that's obviously an unlicensed interloper, see if you can track it down."

Hollingsworth said that in the case of a suspected unlicensed trucker on the highway, amateurs should try to get the license plate number of the tractor—not the trailer—or at least the company name and, if possible, the DOT number.

The FCC does not require direction-finding data but would appreciate, where possible, names and addresses of alleged or suspected operators. Audio recordings of apparently illegal transmissions also can prove helpful.

Individual amateurs with solid information on alleged unlicensed operation on 10 or even 12 meters should report it to the FCC via e-mail <fccham@fcc.gov>. Official Observers should file their reports through normal ARRL channels.

ARRL Field and Regulatory Correspondent Chuck Skolaut, K0BOG, says the FCC wants to pin down specific areas where unlicensed operation is prevalent in the US. He and Hollingsworth concede, however, that not all illegal 10-meter operation is of domestic origin.

The FCC's initial request last May request was made in accordance with the Communications Act and a longstanding agreement between ARRL and the FCC regarding the use of Amateur Radio volunteers to assist in enforcement.

WHAT TO DO WITH THOSE PESKY EXPENDED NICADS

Since we recently had our cell phone battery go bloeey and now one of my ham radio batteries looks like it's gone, I have wondered what to do with the no-good nickel-cadmium batteries. I know that they are recyclable, but I didn't know how or where. I wasn't about to throw them in the can.

The good news is that just about everyone has a drop-off place close by. Radio Shack, WalMart and Circuit City are national participants in the "Charge Up For Recycling!" program. If you want to know who else participates, or more info on the program, check out www.rbrc.com for more details. This is the website for the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation, a non-profit organization formed by the rechargeable power industry.

This means just about all rechargeable batteries can be turned in when they no longer take a charge—cordless and cell phones, camcorder, laptop, portable radios, rechargeable AA, C, D, 9v,

etc. I think they may accept more than just NiCad batteries, but those are by far the most common type.

DX CODE OF ETHICS

DXers:

- 1. I will not transmit on a DX calling frequency.**
- 2. When calling a DX station is in a pileup, I will call one time and listen.**
- 3. I will listen to the DX station, if I can't hear him well enough then I will not call.**
- 4. I will listen to the DX station for his Call Sign, location, QSL info, and where he is listening.**
- 5. I will not call out of turn.**

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