
Time Out

Publication of the ICRC, Inc.

August - 2006

This Month's Meeting

This month's meeting will be held on Friday, August 18th at 7:30 P.M. at the American Red Cross, 209 Farmington Ave. (Rte. 4), Farmington, CT. All are welcome. Bring a friend.

Last Month's Meeting

ICRC Meeting Minutes

Date:	July 21, 2006
Time Started:	7:33 PM
Time Ended:	8:15 PM

Minutes taken by: Rick Johnson, N1WGK

Attendees (Callsign):

N1WGK	K1DFS	N1JGR	K1HEJ	W1ZFG
W1LOZ	N1IKM	K1WMS	N1JWF	W1EAL
KB1JYX				

Last Month's Meeting – cont'd

Secretary report:

E-mailed report to committee for perusal.

Motion to Accept:	K1DFS
Seconded by:	W1LOZ
Abstain:	

unanimous

Treasurer Report:

No activity. Bank account balance: \$829.15

Motion to Accept:	N1WGK
Seconded by:	N1IKM
Abstain:	

unanimous

Tech. VP report...

Repeaters are all working ok. George is working on the 442.850 PL 110.9 transmit/receive and will be up soon. He has all the parts. Hopefully by the middle of August it will be ready to install.

We will be replacing the .88 preamp shortly.

Usual drivel about packet.

Motion to Accept:	N1WGK
Seconded by:	K1DFS
Abstain:	

unanimous

Old Business:

Field Day: Didn't go up to where we wanted to go because CERTAIN people were scared of lightning, but we went with plan B and went over to Al's house. Then we set up the antennas and transmitted until 4AM, We made around 100 contacts. We had 2 fully operational rigs and a good time was had by all.

New Business:

Bike race coming up on September 24th. If interested in helping, Contact Al Gerke – N1JWF or Rick – N1JGR. It's a great time.

They are still looking for people to help with the Tour of the Litchfield Hills Bike Race on Sunday, August 6th. Dave – K1DAV needs about 40 operators. (Editor's Note: The event has already taken place before this newsletter was published. Participating from the ICRC were N1IKM and W1ZFG.)

Last Month's Meeting – cont'd

K1STM w1e@allbraille.com is the e-mail contact for the Big E scheduling.

Motion to Adjourn:	N1WGK
Seconded by:	K1DFS
Abstain:	N1IKM
Unanimous	

Connecticut Yankee Digital Net

The Connecticut Yankee Digital Net has been meeting on Sunday nights at 8:30 PM on the .88 machine. for several months now. Though participation has been sparse, the few die-hards that show up each week have had an enjoyable time conversing on AMTOR FEC mode. The purpose of this net is to experiment with the latest digital modes using sound card based software. At this point, the net is more of an informal training net where people can get practice setting up and using the software and have any questions they might have answered by our "resident experts". Eventually the net will transition to more of a traditional traffic net, with the intent of practicing the passing of emergency traffic using digital modes.

If you are at all interested, come and join us! You need not have any elaborate interface equipment to participate. Simply download the software you like (readily available on the Internet), connect the audio output of your radio, HT, or scanner to the audio input of your sound card and you will be able to "read the mail". In order to transmit, you will need a sound card to radio interface. There are many simple home brew circuits available on the Internet, or commercially made units are available from Buxcomm and West Mountain Radio. Hope to "see" you next Sunday.

The CT-ARES Great VHF Hilltopping Contest of 2006

The CT-ARES Great VHF Hilltopping Contest of 2006 will take place on August 16th. (Wednesday) 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm. For the full seven-page MSWord.doc explaining the whole thing:

<http://www.StudioOne-CT.com/JobPocket/Hilltop2006.doc>

For a sample Excel (required) logsheet you can edit and use:

<http://www.StudioOne-CT.com/JobPocket/Logsheet2006.XLS>

So check out the links for all the information on the event – like simplex nite, this should surely be a fun event!

Monthly Connecticut Section News Summary

Although the weather during FD was indeed different from recent years, what I saw in visiting you was a wonderful spirit of enthusiasm and careful, creative planning. K1SFA, K1MK, DEC K1WMQ and I were among the leadership team visiting FD sites this year! It was wonderful to see members of The CT Amateur Radio League of Youth visiting FD sites as well with their advisor K1LEF. Check out the Section Page on the ARRL Web site for FD pictures and several proclamations both from the Governor's office and from State Senator Billy Ciotto and State Reps Sandy Nafis, Tim O'Brien and Anthony Guerra. Many thanks to John W1JMA and Al W1FXQ for their work in getting these written.

Several leadership changes have occurred this month: Al W1FXQ moved from PIC to ASM; K1SFA is our new PIC; N1FNE is now ASM and ASEC; K1BRF moved from ASM to SEC.

Many thanks to Al, W1FXQ for his very fine work on my cabinet for many years; he has been wonderfully supportive and full of good ideas. I'm so pleased he can stay on as an ASM--great--keep coming to the meetings Al and help us all out; you always know how to get us out of our dilemmas!

A warm welcome to one of our newest ham ops Khrystyne Keane, K1SFA who is very enthused about becoming our PIC. She has studied journalism and is currently on staff at Hq as an Assistant Editor for QST. I know you'll all give Khrystyne a hand learning who's who around the Section. Email: k1sfa@arrl.net I will be giving her my club email list so she can soon contact clubs and hopefully find additional PIOs. I had the pleasure of awarding certificates to both Khrystyne and Al at the NARL FD between the drops of rain!

I want to publicly thank Rod Lane, N1FNE for serving as our SEC for the last year. He explained to Brian and me that he had figured on doing the SEC job for a year and wanted to return to his role as assistant. We have had a lot of fun together working through the usual organizational details so I am very happy that he is staying on the leadership team as ASEC with an ARRL appointment of Assistant Section Manager. We will all benefit from his creative ideas! Rod, thank you for your time, energy and enthusiasm for ARES and for always being there to lend a helping hand. And thanks for continuing on the cabinet! Be sure to read his letter to the Section at <http://www.ctares.org> or on the Section Page ARRL site.

Brian Fernandez, K1BRF, has accepted the appointment of SEC effective July 1. I have worked with Brian for many years in his role as Assistant Section Manager and I very much appreciate the unique perspective he brings to the cabinet. Thank you Brian for taking this important position within the Section. It is a privilege to have both K1BRF and N1FNE on my leadership team. Please give them your full support.--
K1EIC SM

And now, here is our new SEC's letter of introduction. Introductions in a new position are sometimes difficult, especially when following talented and capable people (and personal friends) like Rod Lane, Chuck Rexroad and Allen Pitts. So while I am enthusiastic about ARES and its future and look forward to working with all of you, I know these particular SEC shoes are hard to fill. It is fortunate for all of us Rod and Chuck will remain in key roles and will be working with us.

ARES makes serious and valuable contributions to the public good. But while performing its role it is important that we have some fun while contributing our time. The most important asset of ARES is you and the time you have devoted toward making it such a great organization. Thank you sincerely for your past support and efforts. I hope that working together we can create the enthusiasm and enlarge our talent pool so ARES can move to an even higher level of operating excellence.

Monthly Connecticut Section News Summary – cont'd

To change gears a bit, let me give you some of my background as an initial introduction to those I haven't yet met. I've been active in emergency communications for about 15+ years. In California, where I went through basic NERT (Neighborhood Emergency Response Training) with the San Francisco Fire Department, I supported OES emergency communications in a variety of positions from ERD Post Support at a Fire House to Acting Director of Auxiliary Communications and even wrote the flip-open communications response manual. Net control is deadly serious in the land of earthquakes and it served as an excellent introduction to a highly focused, well-supported, rigorously trained and very strong emergency response culture. ARES and Red Cross activity became my primary focus when I returned to the East Coast where I have been involved as DEC and ASM in a number of responses including a 30+ day stint acting as field operator, net control, and night shift (5PM to 8AM) communications coordinator for the World Trade Center communications response. Within the Red Cross framework, I have worked as Reaction Technology Team coordinator (radio and sat communications, telephones, wireless communications networks, etc.), TOPOFF3 communications Officer, and so forth. All this is just to let you know that the ARRL training (and as one of the contributors to their emergency training courses), and FEMA, DHS, Red Cross, etc. courses, have been paired with some reasonable real-world field experience working directly with valuable served agencies under difficult conditions for extended periods of time. You haven't lived until the situation is chaotic, everything appears totally confused and no equipment or systems work as they are supposed to. In emergencies, you don't always rise to the occasion, but you definitely fall to the level of your training so training is something I support: not as a rigid and enforced arbitrary requirement but as a learning experience and a way to build knowledge and confidence. The more you know, the better off ARES and you will be when things go terribly wrong because, as Katrina vividly demonstrated, things do and can go wrong. I'm obviously a strong supporter of ARRL.

On a personal and professional level, following the pursuit of mathematics and physics (and some other things) at Princeton, etc., I've spent most of my time in the global financial and management world, initially as a technology research analyst, technology investment banker and finally as a manager of venture capital, private equity funds and investment banking firms, largely operating in the technology and alternative energy arenas. I've also served as a consultant to a number of government agencies on global technology, organization, and financial policy/operational issues. My wife of 30+ years is a lecturer in medieval art, a classical goldsmith; we have 4 children. The door to my virtual office is open pretty much 24/7 via e-mail (phone if you prefer) and I'd like to invite you to let me know if you have suggestions for improvement, ideas we should explore, etc. I'd like to hear your input. If you have a complaint, that's fine, too but it would be really helpful if you also attached your suggested solution to the problem or issue to speed resolution. I look forward to meeting you and working with you. – Brian Fernandez, K1BRF, SEC CT Section; k1brf@arrl.net. Brian immediately appointed Chuck Rexroad, AB1CR as DEC and Digital Communications Coordinator. for the Connecticut Section. "It's important we have dedicated focus on our existing valuable packet network so it will be there when we need it. In addition, Chuck will be the focus for examining new ways of communicating. To implement this tasking, Chuck will chair a fast-moving and compact Steering Committee which will explore various options, make recommendations to the leadership team, and actually build pilot implementations."--K1BRF. A warm welcome back to the leadership team Chuck.--K1EIC

From the ARRL Newsletter

CONGRESSMAN, ARRL APPEAL TO FCC TO ACCOMMODATE BPL INTERFERENCE CONCERNS

US Rep Mike Ross, WD5DVR (D-AR), and the ARRL have appealed to the FCC to accommodate the Broadband Over Power Line interference concerns of Amateur Radio operators. Ross's letter to FCC Chairman Kevin J. Martin and the League's plea to individual commissioners and a face-to-face meeting with one FCC member come in advance of the Commission's consideration of two significant BPL-related actions. "As you reconsider the BPL rules, please accommodate the very reasonable interests of Amateur Radio operators in avoiding interference in residential and mobile deployment," Ross asked Martin. "It is in the best interest of our emergency preparedness efforts to do so." The FCC will meet in open session Thursday, August 3, to consider the United Power Line Council's Petition for Declaratory Ruling (WC Docket 06-10) regarding the classification of BPL Internet access service as an "information service." The FCC also will consider a Memorandum Opinion and Order in response to petitions for reconsideration -- 17 in all, one from the ARRL -- of the rules that apply to BPL systems (ET 04-37).

In letters to each FCC member on the League's behalf July 26, ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, spelled out what he called "a win-win solution" to the BPL interference issue. "Fortunately, as the result of extensive field studies and measurements conducted by ARRL, the Commission has an opportunity now to fix the rules before BPL deployment becomes widespread," Imlay said, "and before interference becomes an impossible enforcement burden and a substantial threat to the public service, emergency and disaster relief communications provided by the Amateur Service." Imlay asserted the FCC does not have to choose between permitting BPL and protecting licensed radio services. The FCC only needs to do two things: Require that BPL providers only utilize frequencies above 30 MHz on overhead medium-voltage power lines, and make no use of Amateur Radio spectrum on underground lines and lines to customer premises. If the Commission does, Imlay said, any remaining interference issues "become manageable on a case-by-case basis." Imlay explained that BPL systems using DS2 chipsets or Main.net architecture have caused untenable instances of harmful interference to Amateur Radio operators. "Unfortunately, the Commission's Enforcement Bureau has been unresponsive in addressing a substantial number of BPL interference cases," he said. "By notable contrast," Imlay continued, BPL systems that don't make use of HF spectrum on overhead lines avoid interference problems. He pointed out that the Current Technologies BPL system, which uses spectrum above 30 MHz, "has proven relatively benign toward Amateur Radio." The Motorola BPL system makes no use of HF at all on medium voltage lines "and is completely benign toward Amateur Radio," Imlay said. In his letter, Ross noted that Amateur Radio was "instrumental in providing interoperability communications in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma last year." Infrastructure-free long-distance communication is provided "on a volunteer basis and cannot be duplicated," the congressman told the FCC chairman. In their respective communications, Ross and Imlay emphasized that Amateur Radio operators are not opposed to BPL per se. They are opposed to interference and to the rules the FCC adopted in 2004 that "did not do anything to prevent inevitable, harmful interference from BPL systems" that employ HF spectrum on unshielded, overhead medium-voltage lines, Imlay said. "This is the crux of the problem, and it is a very substantial one," Imlay maintained. Earlier this week, Imlay was able to meet with FCC commissioner Robert McDowell and members of his staff to express Amateur Radio's concerns about interference problems the current Part 15 rules governing BPL fail to adequately address. "The Amateur Radio Service and ARRL -- the National Association for Amateur Radio needs your support in arriving at a solution that meets the needs of all interested parties," Imlay concluded.

From the ARRL Newsletter – cont'd

==>NEW EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS BILL INCLUDES ROLE FOR HAMS

A bill to enhance emergency communication at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) includes Amateur Radio operators as part of an overall effort to provide interoperability among responders. The 21st Century Emergency Communications Act of 2006 (HR 5852), an amendment to the Homeland Security Act of 2002, passed the US House this week on a 414-2 vote and has gone to the Senate. Its sponsor, Rep David G. Reichert (R-WA) -- who chairs the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Science and Technology -- says his legislation is designed "to improve the ability of emergency responders to communicate with each other" -- interoperability. "Until the events of September 11, 2001, many people in this nation believed and assumed that first responders from different disciplines and jurisdictions could actually talk to each other," Reichert -- a former police officer -- told the House in support of his bill. "It wasn't happening. It is still not happening today. Unfortunately, that was not the case then, and, as demonstrated by the inadequate responses to Hurricane Katrina, that is not the case today." Reichert told his colleagues that the inability of first responders to communicate with each another effectively led to the loss of many lives along the US Gulf Coast last year. "This is simply unacceptable," he said. His measure also would require the DHS to strengthen its efforts to improve emergency communications. HR 5852 calls for Amateur Radio operators to be part of a "Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group" (RECC Working Group) that would be attached to each regional Department of Homeland Security office. The RECC Working Groups would advise federal and state homeland security officials. In addition to radio amateurs, membership in the RECC Working Groups would include state and local officials; law enforcement, first responders such as fire departments; 911 centers; hospitals; ambulance services; communications equipment vendors, telephone, wireless satellite, broadband and cable service providers; public utilities; broadcasters; emergency evacuation transit services; state emergency managers, homeland security directors or representatives of state administrative agencies; local emergency managers or homeland security directors, and "other emergency response providers or emergency support providers as deemed appropriate." Federal government representatives to the RECC Working Groups would include representatives from the DHS "and other federal departments and agencies with responsibility for coordinating interoperable emergency communications" with state, local, and tribal governments. According to the bill, the RECC Working Groups would function to assess the survivability, sustainability, and interoperability of local emergency communications systems to meet the goals of the National Emergency Communications Report. That report would recommend how the US could "accelerate the deployment of interoperable emergency communications nationwide." The RECC Working Groups also would be tasked with ensuring a process to coordinate the establishment of "effective multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency emergency communications networks" that could be brought into play following acts of terrorism, natural disasters and other emergencies.

HR 5852 has been referred to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

A Different Twist on BPL

This is a new twist on the BPL Subject from a regular contributor to TIPSnet VK2FA - Grahame from Newcastle Australia in response to a program presented on BPL by Allen Pitts W1AGP a couple of weeks ago. Thought it would be of interest to all. Great to see how the rest of the world regards this problem.

----- Original Message -----

Date: Sun, 30 Jul 2006 21:56:49 +1000

From: Grahame O'Brien <vk2fa@arrl.net>

To: <tipsnet@allbraille.com>

John, just thought this would have been of interest to tips.

Cheers Grahame VK2FA

<http://www.wia.org.au/news/2006/20060728-05.php>

The WIA Presents at the IIR conference - BPL in Australia

WIA Director Phil Wait (VK2DKN) delivered a presentation entitled "BPL and Amateur Radio" to the IIR conference "BPL in Australia" held in Sydney on 26 and 27 July. The WIA was invited to present their concerns about the interference potential of BPL to HF radio communications.

The conference was attended by management level decision makers from the power and utility industries, the Department of Defence, the regulator - ACMA, ISPs, and others interested in providing access and in-house BPL services, automatic meter reading (AMR), and demand side power management such as dynamic electricity pricing and load shedding. The WIA presentation was very well received and has increased the awareness of amateur radio and the importance of avoiding interference to radio communications services, including amateur radio.

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation

<http://www.wia.org.au/BPL/BPL_IIR_PowerPoint_Presentation.ppt> can be downloaded from the WIA's BPL page. This is a **/large/** file (almost 10Mb) and will require a broadband connection and a copy of Microsoft PowerPoint. Clubs and others are welcome to use this presentation **/without/** modification.

http://www.wia.org.au/BPL/BPL_IIR_PowerPoint_Presentation.ppt

Download Presentation - Note : Size is 10 Megs

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