

# RCA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

JUNE, 2006

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

INDIANAPOLIS, IN

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE RCA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB WILL BE TUESDAY,  
JUNE 6, AT 6:30 PM AT DOOKZ SPORTS GRILL,  
3800 E. 96<sup>th</sup> STREET, INDIANAPOLIS, IN

## RCA ARC NEWS

**SUMMARY OF THE MAY 2, MEETING** – At the May meeting, members present decided on a red Jerzees racing shirt for the Club. President Jim Rinehart will contact Jon Powell, KC9GUM, to get a quote. We will then start a list of those who desire to purchase shirts. The junk in the ham shack at Thomson must be out by Friday (5-May). The move is planned for Wed., May 3, weather permitting. Also, the Field Day stuff needs to be moved from Bultman's barn before mid June. Jim R. will set a weekend date.

Plans for Field Day were discussed. The Club will set up at Mike Koss' place using our own antennas and radios with battery power. Rick Ogan will be contacted about getting batteries. AF9A's Icom 756ProII will be used. N9KZJ will provide the computer with the N1MM logging program. AF9A will copy the FD bulletin on W1AW unless someone else volunteers. Food will be discussed at the June meeting.

The Club purchased a 1000' roll of Comscope 50 ohm coax with physical and loss characteristics similar to Belden 9913, but with foam dielectric. The cost was \$85.

Jim R. announced that the IMS Radio Club (W9IMS) will be operating a special event station on race weekend.

**PRESIDENT'S RAMBLINGS** –The **Dayton HamVention** weather this year turned out to be great! They said the crowds were down but I really enjoyed it. It was more like the Dayton Hamfests of the 70's, you could actually get around and see the displays in the buildings and the flea market had good ham stuff not computers.

Les and Bob's tent in the flea market was an enjoyable break with the old RCA gang.

The lunch get together and the evening dinners on Friday and Saturday were fun and a chance to see many of RCA retirees and the gang. We had a great time trading stories and finding out what everyone was doing.

**Band Conditions** -- 6 meters has been open around the US, into South America and the Caribbean and we have heard openings in Spain and Canary Island. 15 and 10 meters have shown some life also. Spring is a great time for DX on two meters and up.

Check out:

<http://www.mountainlake.k12.mn.us/ham/aprs/path.cgi?map=na>

This is a real time VHF propagation map base APRS-IS network. We found it was pretty accurate during the W9IMS operation.

**ARRL June VHF Contest** -- This is usually the best VHF contest of the year with 6 meter providing most of the contacts, but 2 meter and above will also have some of the best conditions for the year. K9RU will operate from W9VW, NE9O is expected to be out as a rover and look for N9KZJ, W9FZ and AF9A.

Date and Contest Period: Begins 1800 UTC Saturday, ends 0300 UTC Monday, June 10-12, 2006. <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2006/june-vhf.html>

**Indy Hamfest July 8<sup>th</sup>** -- The Indy Hamfest is coming up quick and we will need help moving our "junk" to the hamfest as well as manning the booth. The plan will be similar to the past,

loading and moving on Friday and manning the booth starting early Saturday morning. We will cover this in more detail at the meeting. <http://www.indyhamfest.com/>

**W9IMS Special Event Station for the Indy 500** -- W9IMS worked over 4000 QSOs on the Indy 500 weekend. They had QSO on 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, 6, and 2 meters. There were a total 30 ham operators at the station including: N9KZJ, NE9O and K9RU from the RCA ARC. This was the best effort yet. The next operation will be the F-1 race in early July. The Brickyard 400 will be the last event in August.

**TTE EMPLOYEES YOU WILL HAVE TO CHANGE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS SOON!** -- In approximately one month, your Thomson.net address will no longer work. To continue getting this newsletter, you will have to change your email to your TTECorp.net address. This can be done online.

Go to <http://lists.w9rca.org/mailman/listinfo/w9rca-news>

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Problems? Contact [W2PGS@arrl.net](mailto:W2PGS@arrl.net). Thanks!

## HAMFESTS; EVENTS

May 5	RCA ARC June meeting
June 24-25	ARRL Field Day
July 8	Indy Hamfest, Camp Sertoma

## RILEY HOLLINGSWORTH TO AMATEUR RADIO COMMUNITY: "LIGHTEN UP!"

FCC Special Counsel for Enforcement Riley Hollingsworth advised those attending the FCC forum at Dayton Hamvention 2006 to try kindness instead of confrontation when problems arise on the bands. Hollingsworth spoke May 20 to a nearly full house at Hara Arena, and for the most part he praised the behavior of the majority of Amateur Radio operators, especially those who volunteered in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina last year. But, he noted, radio amateurs still could be more courteous and less inclined to fly off the handle at some perceived on-the-air offense.

"You need to lighten up and not embarrass the Amateur Radio Service," Hollingsworth advised. "All of us make mistakes, especially with the new features you have on radios today. It's very easy to make a mistake, to be on the wrong frequency or be operating split and not know it--there's a hundred ways to make mistakes." Hollingsworth said experience has shown him that at least 75 percent of the interference complained about is absolutely unintentional.

In Hollingsworth's view, radio amateurs all too often are hypersensitive and rude. "We have a radar going to detect offenses at all times, we assume the worst in people, we rarely give people the benefit of the doubt," he said. He joked that if there were three amateurs in a town, there would be two Amateur Radio clubs.

"And there'll be two hamfests with 20 people each, because they wouldn't dare

consolidate them," he added.

Hollingsworth acknowledged that "certain problem operators" remain, but the real troublemakers are rarely the newcomers to Amateur Radio. "If there's a downfall in Amateur Radio, it won't be caused by no-code Technicians or codeless anything else," he said. "It'll be caused by the microphone--no doubt in my mind." He advised his audience to ignore the troublesome operators and not give them the attention they crave by engaging them on the air.

"Now, think about it: If what you're hearing annoys you, or angers you or is stupid, use the 'stupid filter,' which is that big knob--that VFO that will take you somewhere else," he quipped. "It's the largest knob on the radio." He recommended moving to another frequency or even another band altogether.

Hollingsworth praised the Volunteer Examiner program as "outstanding" and noted there had not been a single complaint in the past year stemming from an examination session. He also said the Amateur Radio community should have a greater appreciation for what the ARRL is doing on its behalf.

"Most of you have no idea how much work is done in Newington for you and the Amateur Radio Service generally," he said. "I see it every day, but I think you have no idea of the hard work and dedication that comes out of that office up there, and I don't think we would be there if it weren't for [the League]."

"This country's communications infrastructure needs Amateur Radio," Hollingsworth emphasized, praising Amateur Radio's overall performance following Hurricane Katrina. "You have a tremendous amount to be proud of."

He also suggested that radio amateurs have an obligation to stay informed about what's going on in Amateur Radio that might affect their activities. "You have to not only keep up, you have to lead the way, because it's in your charter," he said, pointing to §97.1 of the Amateur Service rules.

Hollingsworth noted at the start of his talk that he could not address any questions dealing with the FCC's long-awaited decision on the Morse code requirement (Element 1), because he works in the Commission's Enforcement Bureau. "We don't meddle in rule making," he explained, but added that he didn't expect CW to decline if the FCC does drop the 5 WPM Morse requirement for all Amateur Radio license classes as it's proposed to do.

The FCC Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB) handles Amateur Radio rule makings, Hollingsworth noted, including the "Morse code" proceeding, WT Docket 05-235, and the so-called "omnibus" proceeding, WT Docket 04-140. The WTB has said it will rule first on the omnibus proceeding, then tackle the Morse code proceeding, but it has not indicated when to expect either Report and Order.

No representative from the WTB was at Dayton Hamvention this year. --ARRL Letter

## **PUBLIC BPL DATABASE ACCESS RESTRICTIONS REMOVED**

United Telecom Council (UTC) has removed all restrictions on access to the BPL Interference Resolution Web site. In cooperation with the United Power Line Council (UPLC), UTC administers the database, which FCC Part 15 rules mandate be "publicly available." Ever since the database debuted last October, the ARRL has taken strong exception to access constraints UTC had imposed. These included limiting searches solely on the basis of ZIP code and rationing the number of allowable searches. In

February, the League filed a formal complaint with the FCC, demanding the Commission order UTC to "cease its arbitrary limits" on access to the database. ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, said the League was happy to hear that UTC now has eliminated search limits and posted all BPL system information.

"We are pleased that UTC finally has seen the merit of our arguments in favor of making the database truly accessible," Sumner commented. "This can't possibly hurt, and can only help everyone focus on the real issue: the avoidance and prompt correction of harmful interference to radiocommunications from BPL."

The UTC BPL database still offers the ability to search by ZIP code. Somewhat less prominent is a link to the entire database in ZIP-code order.

The League also has complained to the FCC that the BPL Interference Resolution Web Site database contains inaccuracies and is incomplete, although UTC has made some improvements since the ARRL raised the issues. That complaint is still pending.

The UTC's decision to modify its BPL database came two days after its representatives and a representative from Duke Power met May 17 with FCC Office of Engineering and Technology (OET) staff to address "changes to the database concerning the search limits." ARRL representatives recently further discussed the League's perspective on the same subject with OET staff.

UTC Director of Regulatory Services/Associate Counsel Brett Kilbourne on May 19 informed Acting OET Chief Julius Knapp that it was revising the BPL database "in the interests of resolving the complaint without further dispute." UTC asked the FCC to dismiss the League's complaint "without further action." –ARRL Letter

## **ARRL SHIFTS CONGRESSIONAL BPL FOCUS TO US SENATE**

With an amendment requiring the FCC to study BPL interference now included in Section 502 of the House telecom bill, HR 5252, the ARRL is shifting its focus to the Senate. The Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee will conduct hearings on its own version of telecom legislation, S 2686, later this month and will begin consideration of the bill in early June. Between now and then, the ARRL is urging members in the 22 states with Senators on the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee to write seeking support to include similar BPL study language in the Senate bill.

"If we can protect Section 502 when the bill comes to the House floor for consideration, and if we can get similar language introduced on the Senate side, we'll be in a good position when and if the two bills go to a Conference Committee," observes ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ.

Proposed by Rep Mike Ross, WD5DVR (D-AR), the amendment to the House bill, the Communications Opportunity, Promotion and Enhancement (COPE) Act of 2006, gained the support of Committee Chairman Joe Barton (R-TX), and House Energy and Commerce Committee voted 42-12 to send the COPE Act, amendment intact, to the full House for its consideration.

The Ross amendment has received significant opposition from electric utilities. The United Telecom Council (UTC), a bulwark of BPL support and administrator of the Interference Resolution Web site, has referred to the amendment as a threat and is urging its members to contact their members of Congress regarding its inclusion.

This week the League began getting out the word via e-mail to members in states with

Senators on Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee. The letter to members in targeted states asks League members to urge their Senators on the committee to support language addressing the BPL interference issue when the Senate bill is marked up in committee on June 8.

The language the League wants to see in the Senate amendment to the telecom bill would call on the FCC to "conduct, and submit to the House Energy and Commerce and the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, a study of the interference potential of broadband over power line systems leading to improved rules to prevent the deployment of systems having a potential to cause destructive interference to radio communication systems."

The ARRL plea includes a sample letter <http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/files/BPL-Amendment-SenateSampleLetter0506-Rev2.doc>, which members are encouraged to personalize as much as indicated in the e-mail to members plus a copy to ARRL's government relations firm Chwat & Company, ATTN: Eric Heis, KI4NFC, 625 Slaters Ln -- Suite 103, Alexandria, VA 22314. Fax 703-684-7594.

The sample letter points out the value of Amateur Radio's role in recent disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina. "The reason we need your help is that the FCC continues to resist growing evidence that its rules are inadequate to protect radiocommunication systems, including those relied upon by First Responders, from radio spectrum pollution caused by BPL systems," it says. "The FCC needs to objectively and carefully review this evidence and adopt rules that will keep interference from BPL within reasonable bounds."

The sample letter notes that not only has the FCC shown no inclination to do that, it's so far failed "to enforce its existing rules in specific, well documented instances of harmful interference."

"Remember that it is not BPL that we oppose, but BPL interference," Sumner emphasized this week. "Some BPL systems are designed not to cause widespread interference, but many are not. The problem is that the FCC rules don't distinguish between the two. This is unfair to licensed radio services that must deal with the consequences of spectrum pollution." –ARRL Letter

## **FCC, PILOT TRAVEL CENTERS CONSENT DECREE ENDS TRANSCEIVER MARKETING CASE**

A consent decree has finally ended an enforcement action against Pilot Travel Centers LLC that could have cost the company \$125,000 in fines. In November 2004 the FCC issued a Notice of Apparent Liability (NAL) asserting that Pilot, despite multiple citations and warnings, continued to market CB transceivers labeled as Amateur Radio gear but intended for use on both Citizens Band and amateur frequencies. An FCC Order released May 11 adopts the attached consent decree between the agency and Pilot and terminates the forfeiture action. While Pilot agrees to make "a voluntary contribution" of \$90,000 to the US Treasury "without further protest or recourse," the company does not admit any wrongdoing.

"The parties further agree that this consent decree is for settlement purposes only and that by agreeing to the consent decree, Pilot does not admit or deny any liability for violating the [Communications] Act or the rules in connection with the matters that are the subject of this consent decree," the agreement stipulates.

Under the terms of the consent decree, Pilot must refrain in the future from marketing as "Amateur Radio" gear any transmitting devices with built-in features to facilitate CB

operation. The company also must determine in advance that any CB transmitting gear it offers for sale is FCC certificated. CB transmitters must receive FCC certification--formerly called "type acceptance." Amateur Radio transmitting equipment does not require FCC certification.

Should Pilot plan to sell legitimate Amateur Radio transceivers, it must ensure before marketing or selling them that the ARRL Lab has reviewed the equipment in question and determined that it transmits only in the Amateur Radio bands. The ARRL Lab tests equipment both for QST "Product Review" articles as well as for compliance with QST advertising policy, which requires that items offered for sale meet FCC rules.

Further, the consent decree requires Pilot to remove from sale certain Galaxy brand transceivers (models DX33HML, DX66V and DX99V) and any other "Amateur Radio" transceivers that have not passed ARRL Lab muster in the course of product review or advertising compliance testing. Pilot also will have to ensure that any CB transceivers on sale by entities leasing space on its premises are FCC certificated.

The consent decree brings to a close an enforcement action dating back more than six years. In its 2004 NAL, the FCC cited 47 separate instances between 2002 and 2004 when Pilot allegedly had offered for sale various models of non-certificated Galaxy CB transceivers labeled as "amateur radios" that easily could be modified for CB operation.

The Order and the consent decree are on the FCC Web site [http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/FCC-06-53A1.pdf](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-06-53A1.pdf). --ARRL Letter

## FCC WRC-03 AMATEUR RULE CHANGES NOW IN EFFECT

Several FCC Part 97 Amateur Radio rule revisions to implement changes agreed to at the international level during World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 (WRC-03) went into effect May 3 upon their publication in The Federal Register. The FCC Order [http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DA-06-79A1.pdf](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-06-79A1.pdf), released in January, affects §97.111, Authorized transmissions; §97.113, Prohibited transmissions; §97.115, Third party communications, and §97.117, International communications. The FCC has yet to deal with the so-called "Morse code proceeding," WT Docket 05-235, which also stemmed from decisions made at WRC-03. The Commission has proposed deleting the Element 1 5 WPM code test as a requirement to obtain any Amateur Radio license.

"These amendments will ensure that the Commission's Amateur Radio Service rules conform to Article 25 of the international Radio Regulations adopted at the 2003 World Radiocommunication Conference, and will further the Commission's ongoing efforts to streamline its Amateur Service Rules," the FCC Order said.

The FCC Order revises:

\* §97.111(a)(1) to permit "transmissions necessary to exchange messages with other stations in the Amateur Service, except those in any country whose administration has notified the ITU that it objects to such communications. The FCC will issue public notices of current arrangements for international communications." The old language permitted communication among amateur stations in different countries "except those in any country whose administration has given notice that it objects to such communications."

The FCC said the change does not prejudice its consideration of comments to rule changes it's proposed to §97.111(a)(2) in WT Docket 04-140--the so-called "Omnibus" proceeding that covers a wide range of rule changes and proposals. The Commission wants to amend that rule section to clarify that amateur stations may at all times and on all authorized channels transmit communications necessary to meet essential needs and to

facilitate relief actions.

\* §97.115(a)(2) to facilitate the transmission of international communications on behalf of third parties in emergency or disaster-relief situations, whether or not a third-party agreement is in place between the US and the countries involved. The revision now permits communication with any non-US station "when transmitting emergency or disaster relief communications" as well as with any non-US station "whose administration has made arrangements with the United States to allow amateur stations to be used for transmitting international communications on behalf of third parties."

The revised rule further provides that no station may transmit third-party traffic other than emergency or disaster relief communications to a station whose government has not made a third-party arrangement. Still excepted from the prohibition is any third party eligible to be the control operator of an amateur station.

\* §97.113(a)(4) to prohibit amateur stations exchanging messages with amateur stations in other countries from making transmissions that are encoded for the purpose of obscuring their meaning, except for control signals exchanged between Earth command stations and space stations in the Amateur-Satellite service, something Part 97 already provides for. The old rule referred to the use of "codes and ciphers."

The same rule also already prohibits transmitting music, communications intended to facilitate a criminal act, obscene or indecent words or language and false or deceptive messages, signals or identification.

\* §97.117 to state that amateur stations may transmit communications incidental to the purposes of the Amateur Service and to remarks of a personal character.

The FCC also revised §97.3 and 97.309 to update the definition of International Morse code and of various digital codes in the amateur rules to reflect changes in the Radio Regulations.

The WRC-03 Final Acts revising the international regulations that apply to the Amateur and the Amateur Satellite services became effective July 5, 2003. These latest Part 97 revisions now bring the FCC's Amateur Service rules into conformance with the international Radio Regulations. –ARRL Letter

## WX4NHC HURRICANE SEASON 2006 STATION TEST SET

The National Hurricane Center's WX4NHC <http://www.wx4nhc.org/> will conduct its "Hurricane Season 2006 On-the-Air Station Test" Saturday, June 3, from 1300 until 2200 UTC.

The annual station test provides an opportunity for WX4NHC to check out all of its radio equipment, computers and antennas using as many modes and frequencies as possible. It's also a chance for RFI monitoring of NHC equipment and to conduct some operator training. It is not a contest or simulated hurricane exercise.

WX4NHC will operate on HF, VHF and UHF. Phone frequencies will be 7.268, 14.325, 21.325 and 28.525 MHz. CW frequencies will be 14.035, 21.035 and 28.035 MHz. PSK31 will be on 14.070 MHz. Look for WX4NHC on the DX spotting networks as well. WX4NHC also will be on the VoIP Hurricane Net <http://www.voipwx.net/> (IRLP node 9219; EchoLink WX-TALK Conference) from 1700 until 1900UTC. WX4NHC also will operate on South Florida area VHF and UHF repeaters and on FM simplex.

When working WX4NHC, report your call sign, signal report, location, name and a brief description of current weather conditions (eg, "sunny," "rainy," "windy"). Nonhams may participate by submitting their actual weather conditions using the On-Line Hurricane

Report Form <http://www.wx4nhc.org/WX-form1.html>.

QSL cards are available for an SASE to WX4NHC Assistant Amateur Radio Volunteer Coordinator Julio Ripoll, WD4R, 14855 SW 67 Ln, Miami, FL 33193-2027. Do not QSL directly to the National Hurricane Center. Due to security measures, no visitors will be allowed at NHC during this test. –ARRL Letter

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