RCA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

SEPTEMBER, 2008   MONTHLY NEWSLETTER   INDIANAPOLIS, IN

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE RCA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB WILL BE
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9th, 6:30 PM AT THE G.T. SOUTH'S,
5711 E. 71st STREET, INDIANAPOLIS, IN

MEETINGS WILL BE ON THE SECOND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH

RCA ARC NEWS

SUMMARY OF THE AUGUST MEETING – At the August meeting, we discussed the results of Field Day again. Some progress has been made in identifying the source of electrical noise at the county fairgrounds. The memorabilia donated to our Club from the VanSickle estate has been loaned to the Indy Radio Club and will be scanned for a web site presentation. The old tubes will likely go on EBay. Clarence, W2PGS, will investigate. The Indy Hamfest was very successful for our Club and we'll do it again next year. The amount of junk for next year will be less as most has now been sold. The W9RCA repeater suffered a lightning hit or near hit in July. The lightning arrestors on our Ethernet cable connection for the Internet were blown and have been replaced. There also was some damage to the Ethernet card in the Echolink computer which will be fixed by Dave Spoelstra, N9KT. Dave, N9KZJ, announced the Indy Radio Hilltopper event on Sept. 20. http://www.indyradioclub.org/irchilltop.htm Dave Brown, W9CGI, announced he will be on Grand Cayman Is. from Oct. 19 until the 30th. Details on his planned radio operations next month. The Club voted to return the Club meeting to the second Tuesday of each month. The next meeting will be Sept. 9th. –AF9A

RCA ARC NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL – In the past year or two many of our Club members have left Thomson. Some have not updated their email addresses and are still listed at Thomson.net on our email distribution. If you have contact with some of these folks or know of any others who would like to be on our email distribution, point them to the bottom of the W9RCA.org web page where you will find this link to subscribe to or change your subscription: http://lists.w9rca.org/mailman/listinfo/w9rca-news

GREENFIELD HAMFEST – Mike Mallory, NE9O, reminds us of the upcoming Green Field Hamfest on September 28.   8AM until 1PM at the Hancock County 4H Fairgrounds. Admission is $4. Indoor tables are $10 plus admission. There is a covered pavilion area which is available for flea market spaces, no tables provided. http://www.w9atg.org/

INDIANAPOLIS VE TESTING SCHEDULE -- Here is the Indianapolis Radio Club VE testing schedule for the rest of the year. Calling in advance to ensure testing availability is suggested but not mandatory.
>Sept 6th
>October 4th
>November 1st
>December 6th

SPONSOR: Indianapolis Radio Club (W9JP)
LOCATION: Indianapolis Training Center 2820 N. Meridian Street.
CONTACTS: Gale Wuollet, AA9WU (h) 317-849-8449, or Jay Wright, KK9L 317-203-3335.

HAMFESTS; EVENTS

Aug 17	TARA Hamfest, Lafayette, IN http://w9reg.org/hamfest/index.htm
Aug 23	Owen/Monroe Co. Hamfest, http://www.bloomingtonradio.org/
Aug 23	First Annal Tailgators' Hamfest, Ripley Co.ARC, http://www441775.com/
Sept 20	Indy Radio Club Hilltopper http://www.indyradioclub.org/irchilltop.htm
Sept 25	Greenfield Hamfest, 4-H Fairgrounds, Greenfield, IN http://www.W9ATG.org/
Oct 5	Hoosier Hills Ham Club, http://www.hoosierhillshamfest.org/
Oct 10	Indy Radio Club HF Mobile Antenna Shootout http://www.indyradioclub.org/ircshootout.htm
Nov 15-16	Fort Wayne Hamfest & Computer Expo. http://www.fortwaynehamfest.com/

ARRL RESPONDS TO CONCERNS RAISED BY CALIFORNIA REPEATER OWNERS AFFECTED   BY PAVE PAWS

The ARRL has responded to a series of concerns raised by repeaters owners regarding the ongoing PAVE PAWS interference mitigation project at Beale Air Force Base near Sacramento, California. In a lengthy e-mail dated August 20, ARRL Regulatory Information Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND, addressed a series of concerns raised by Tom Naso, N6MVT, of Lafayette, California; Naso is owner or trustee to several involved repeaters.

Naso's letter can be found here
http://www.arrl.org/news/files/pavepaws_querry_2008aug20.pdf.
Henderson's reply can be found here
 http://www.arrl.org/news/files/pavepaws_response_2008aug20.pdf.

"Tom raised a series of thoughtful, valid concerns," Henderson stated. "The ARRL's response to his queries, though lengthy, attempts to address them in detail. With Tom's permission, we are releasing both his original e-mail and the ARRL's response in order to get the most accurate and full information out to repeater owners and users as possible. It also gives us the opportunity to make sure a couple of other issues relating to the PAVE PAWS situation that have arisen are brought to the public's attention."

Henderson said that the biggest challenge the ARRL -- and through them the affected repeater owners -- continues to face is "the balance between not being able to know full technical details of the interference and the testing techniques and the desire/need to know information. It's a tough challenge. And while there have been a few errors in identifying call signs (because of errors in databases being used by the Air Force), there were actual measurements made of signals identified by the Air Force testing group."

Henderson pointed out that the ARRL continues to pursue valid concerns that can be based on fact and backed up with solid data that are raised by repeater owners. "We will continue to expect the FCC to perform its responsibilities. If a permanent shut-down order comes from the FCC, we expect that the licensee is given their full rights for due process."
--ARRL Letter

FCC TO RAISE VANITY CALL SIGN FEES

On August 11, the FCC announced that the cost of an Amateur Radio vanity call sign

will increase 60 cents, from $11.70 to $12.30 http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-08-182A1.pdf. The fee will increase 30 days after notice of the increase is published in the Federal Register http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html; no date has yet been set for publication. The FCC is authorized by the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, to collect vanity call sign fees to recover the costs associated with that program. The vanity call sign regulatory fee is payable not only when applying for a new vanity call sign, but also upon renewing a vanity call sign for a new 10 year term.

The vanity call sign fee has fluctuated over the 12 years of the current program -- from a low of $11.70 to a high of $50. The FCC said it anticipates some 15,000 Amateur Radio vanity call sign "payment units" -- or applications -- during Fiscal Year 2009, collecting $184,734 in fees from the program.

The vanity call sign regulatory fee is payable not only when applying for a new vanity call sign, but also upon renewing a vanity call sign for a new term. The first vanity call sign licenses issued under the current Amateur Radio vanity call sign program that began in 1996 came up for renewal two years ago.

Those holding "personalized" call signs issued prior to 1996 are exempt from having to pay the vanity call sign regulatory fee at renewal, as Congress did not authorize the FCC to collect regulatory fees until 1993. Such "heritage" vanity call sign holders do not appear as vanity licensees in the FCC Amateur Radio database.

Amateur Radio licensees may file for renewal only within 90 days of their license expiration date. All radio amateurs must have an FCC Registration Number (FRN) before filing any application with the Commission. Applicants can obtain an FRN by going to the ULS and clicking on the "New Users Register" link http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/. You must supply your Social Security Number to obtain an FRN.

The ARRL VEC will process license renewals for vanity call sign holders for a modest fee. The service is available to ARRL members and nonmembers, although League members pay less. Routine, non-vanity renewals continue to be free for ARRL members. Trustees of club stations with vanity call signs may renew either via the ULS or through a Club Station Call Sign Administrator, such as ARRL VEC.

League members should visit the "ARRL Member Instructions for License Renewals or Changes" page http://www.arrl.org/fcc/memberlicenseinstructions.html, while the "Instructions for License Renewals or Changes" page covers general renewal procedures for nonmembers http://www.arrl.org/fcc/licenseinstructions.html. There is additional information on the "ARRL VEC's FCC License Renewals and ARRL License Expiration Notices" page <http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/renewals.html>.

License application and renewal information and links to the required forms are available on the "ARRL Amateur Application Filing FAQ" Web page. The FCC's forms page also offers the required forms http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/application-filing-faq.html. --ARRL Letter

ARRL'S "BIG PROJECT" MAKES A BIG IMPACT ON YOUTH

Since 2001 when the Education & Technology Program -- also known as the "Big Project" -- started, ARRL has expanded the scope of its educational outreach programs by providing grants of station equipment and instructional resources for professional development to more than 300 schools (with more schools added each year)

http://www.arrl.org/FandES/tbp/. The Education & Technology Program has expanded the highly successful teacher development program in electronics, robotics and space -- the Teachers Institute on Wireless Technology <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/tbp/ti.html>.

From humble beginnings in 2003, a single gathering of 12 educators came together at ARRL Headquarters to become the Teachers Institute, with the goal to promote wireless technology literacy. Since then, the Teachers Institute has provided teachers from elementary schools to the university level with the basic tools and teaching strategies to introduce the science of radio, space technology, weather, microcontroller basics and robotics in their classrooms. In 2008, the Teachers Institute program has expanded to six four-day sessions that now include ATV and radio astronomy, more hands-on instruction of project kits -- such as a seismometer, a 24-hour clock and A BOT Instructor's Board -- to enhance the teachers' ability to instruct basic robotics, a fox-hunt activity and satellite contacts.

Each year, the League receives gratifying reports from the schools that participate in the Education & Technology Program. The schools tell us that the resources we offer are bearing fruit -- both in terms of licensing students and teachers and engaging them in wireless technology, both in the classroom and in after-school activities.

"The Education & Technology Program is truly one of ARRL's most significant projects," said ARRL Chief Development Officer Mary Hobart, K1MMH. "The contributions of ARRL members make a direct connection to teachers and their students, opening the door to Amateur Radio and other exciting areas of science." --ARRL Letter

FIFTH ANNUAL NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH COMING IN SEPTEMBER

The US Department of Homeland Security announced in July that more than 1200 national, regional, state and local businesses and organizations -- including several Amateur Radio groups -- have pledged their support and joined the 2008 National Preparedness Month Coalition <http://www.ready.gov/america/npm08/intro.html>. Sponsored by the department's "Ready" campaign, National Preparedness Month helps to raise awareness and promote action by Americans, businesses and communities on emergency preparedness.

"As we approach our fifth National Preparedness Month, I want to thank the hundreds of coalition members who are making a difference in their communities by helping raise the basic level of preparedness in our country," said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. "Individual preparedness is the cornerstone of emergency preparedness. Experience shows that if Americans take steps ahead of time, they stand a much better chance of coming through an emergency unharmed and recovering more quickly."

"The 'Ready' campaign and Citizen Corps <http://www.citizencorps.gov> are specifically encouraging individuals across the nation to take important preparedness steps," said ARRL Public Relations and Media Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP. "These steps include getting an emergency supply kit, making a family emergency plan, being informed about the different emergencies that may affect them, as well as taking the necessary steps to get trained and become engaged in community preparedness and response efforts."

National Preparedness Month Coalition members have agreed to distribute emergency preparedness information and sponsor activities across the country that will promote emergency preparedness. Membership is open to all public and private sector

organizations. Sign up your club or ARES group now! Groups and individuals can register to become members by visiting the Ready Web site http://www.ready.gov/ and clicking on the National Preparedness Month banner.
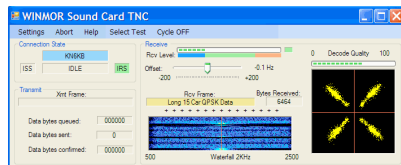
For more information on the Ready Campaign and National Preparedness Month, please visit http://www.ready.gov/ or http://www.listo.gov/ for information in Spanish. Information is also available by phone at 1-800-BE-READY or 1-888-SE-LISTO (in Spanish).

According to Pitts, linking up with the Ready.gov people and participating in September's National Preparedness Month is "an easy win. The federal people are already doing all the hard work. All you really have to do is sign up. Most clubs and ARES groups are already doing activities which fit into their structure, so why not get credit for your actions? Of course, if you do something more with this opportunity, so much the better! But you have to sign your group in and no one can do that for you. There are hundreds of ARES groups and clubs in the country. Wouldn't it be fun to have even 70 percent of them sign up and get noticed?" --ARRL Letter

NEW HF DIGITAL PROTOCOL   TO DEBUT AT DCC

WINMOR, an HF digital protocol designed for use with the Winlink 2000 network, will be unveiled at the upcoming ARRL/TAPR Digital Communications Conference in Chicago, September 26-28.

According to developer Rick Muething, KN6KB, WINMOR will effectively eliminate the need for external PACTOR hardware. "This new protocol is implemented through a *Windows* application that uses a computer sound card for all the analog-to-digital conversion. It provides error-free ARQ transfers within 200, 500 or 2000 Hz bandwidths," Muething said.

In terms of throughput, Muething said that the 200-Hz WINMOR mode appears to equal the performance of PACTOR I. In WINMOR's 2000 Hz mode, its performance rivals PACTOR III.

"WINMOR is a work in progress," Muething said. "We won't be pulling the wraps off a finished application at the conference. We're close, though. I'd like to see on-air testing in 3 to 6 months."

Conference information and registration is available online or by telephone at 972-671-8277. Rick Muething's presentation paper, *WINMOR. . . A Sound Card ARQ Mode for Winlink HF Digital Messaging*, is included in the conference proceedings. Proceedings will also be available for sale on the ARRL Web after the conference. –ARRL

US SCHOOLS RECEIVE LIFE-SAVING   NOAA PUBLIC ALERT RADIOS

ARRL and Citizen Corps are teaming up to assist local school districts (if they need the help) to set up and register their NOAA Weather All Hazard Public Alert Radio.

An August 19 news release says: "Federal agencies have begun distributing more than 182,000 Public Alert Radios to preschools, Head Start programs, K-12 nonpublic schools and nonpublic school central offices, K-12 school district offices and post-secondary

schools. In two earlier phases, the federal government distributed radios to all 97,000 K-12 public schools across the country, bringing the program to a close this September with a life-saving radio in every school in the nation."

Two years ago, in the fall of 2006, some ARRL members, affiliated clubs and Field Organization appointees were called upon to help when this project was in its pilot phase.

"The radios are distributed by the US Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, with funding from the Department of Homeland Security and assistance from the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services," according to the news release.

The radios are designed to signal different types of alerts ranging from weather emergencies to child abductions, and from chemical accidents to acts of terrorism. The radio acts as a sentry, standing guard 24/7, to sound an alarm when danger threatens.

If you, as an individual Amateur Radio operator, as part of an Amateur Radio club or as an ARRL Field Organization appointee, would like to help Citizen Corps in this project, please contact your local Citizen Corps Council to offer assistance. Where there isn't a Council, please contact local emergency management.

Contacts should not be made directly to local schools but, instead, should be made by Citizen Corps and Emergency Management to local school district superintendents' offices to ensure a coordinated plan. Assistance to schools will be provided at the request of, and in coordination with, the school district.

For additional information on the Public Alert Radios for Schools program, see the Web site at public-alert-radio.nws.noaa.gov. The general public can learn about these radios at www.weather.gov/nwr. –ARRL

MARS TO ASSIST WITH REPUBLICAN, DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

The US Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has requested Army MARS support for the Democratic National Convention in Denver and the Republican National Convention in St Paul. "I find it hard to imagine a more challenging security operation than the upcoming Democratic and Republican National Conventions," said Army MARS Chief Stu Carter. "These climactic events, the first in Denver next week and the other a week later in Minneapolis, will gather hundreds of America's top leaders who will be exposed continuously to milling crowds of thousands. Just the thought of protecting all the converging aircraft and congested terminals is daunting enough for public safety planners."

Calling it "an awesome opportunity for MARS," Carter said that Mike Barrett, K3MMB/AAA9TS, is the Army MARS liaison at TSA headquarters. "He's a career IT specialist, the last 28 years in federal service and a TSA staffer from that agency's beginning. He joined Army MARS in 2004. When [Hurricane] Katrina struck a year later, it was Mike Barrett who initiated the first TSA-MARS emergency contact, with Texas Army MARS. This week, he has been coordinating support requirements directly with Region 8 for the Democratic Party Convention beginning Monday in Denver, and Region 5 for the Republican Convention on September 1 in Minneapolis."

According to Carter, the TSA's own MARS/*Winlink* teams are deploying from Tucson and Dallas to operate AAN8DNC with local staffers in Denver; Pensacola and

Washington, DC teams will deploy to Minneapolis as AAN5RNC. Carter said that Barrett asked that Army MARS Regions 8 and 5 make resources available to the two convention operations as needed.

Barrett said that he feels "these events will provide valuable lessons learned and excellent training opportunities for the entire tri-MARS force. We therefore request that all other regions stand by for possible support. DHS/TSA will activate all MARS stations within its network in support and for training. Our resources will have direct contact with Department of Justice (DoJ) and FEMA resources, giving the MARS program an opportunity to further enhance the interoperability capabilities of all agencies." –ARRL

SHORTS

SDR ARTICLE IN ELECTRONIC DESIGN – There is an interesting article in Electronic Design about Software Defined Radios and Amateur Radio:
http://electronicdesign.com/Articles/ArticleID/19439/19439.html

QRP DXCC ACHIEVED IN SUNSPOT MINIMUM YEAR -- Aki JQ2UOZ has been awarded the QRP DXCC by the ARRL for working 100 DXCC entities using just 500 milliwatts and a dipole antenna on the bands above 18 MHz in sunspot minimum year.

It shows what can be achieved using QRP on the higher HF bands regardless of the state of the sunspot cycle. His website giving details of the achievement can be seen at http://www.k4.dion.ne.jp/~jq2uoz/

JQ2UOZ QRP DXCC Award http://www.k4.dion.ne.jp/~jq2uoz/qrpdxcc.html

--Southgate ARC

ARRL LAB MANAGER TO SERVE AS TECHNICAL SESSION CHAIR AT IEEE EMC CONFERENCE: ARRL Lab Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI, will chair a Technical Session at this year's Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) International Symposium on Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) http://www.emc2008.org/. It will be held at the Cobo Center in Detroit, Michigan, August 18-22. Mark Steffka, WW8MS, a member of the ARRL EMC Committee http://www.arrl.org/announce/reports-2008/july/, invited Hare to chair the session due to Hare's involvement with a number of international committees on EMC standards. The session, covering the topic of EMC emissions and immunity, will take place on Thursday afternoon, August 21. Hare said he was pleased to receive the invitation: "ARRL has been an active and regular participant in a number of industry EMC committees, ensuring that Amateur Radio is represented and has a seat at the table. I've helped at most of the Symposium events held over the past few years, peer reviewing submitted papers and providing support to the ham radio luncheon that is held there every year." The IEEE EMC Society's Standards Development Committee (SDCom) is also meeting at the event on Monday and Wednesday mornings. Hare serves as the elected Secretary of SDCom. Hare said the event is not just meetings -- "There is a fun part of the event, too. The Motor City Radio Club http://www.w8mrm.org/ will activate W8MRM August 19-21, giving Amateur Radio a special presence at this industry event. Look for them starting at 1500 UTC on 7.040, 7.240, 14.040 and 14.240 MHz." --ARRL Letter