

RCA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

SEPTEMBER, 2010 MONTHLY NEWSLETTER INDIANAPOLIS, IN

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE RCA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB WILL BE
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14TH, 6:30 PM AT [G.T. SOUTH'S](#),
5711 E. 71st STREET, INDIANAPOLIS, IN

RCA ARC NEWS

SUMMARY OF THE AUGUST MEETING – At the August meeting, it was announced that our Club may be in need of a new Treasurer. Barry, K3BG, has his house up for sale and will be moving. Clarence, W2PGS, will look into the cost of continuing both the W9RCA.org and .com domain names. K9RU reported on special event operations at W9IMS and the upcoming VE testing sessions. The food was good as usual!

WHAT IS THE SMART GRID? -- September 10th, 2010 (Friday evening) The Indianapolis Radio Club program is on SMART Grid. Ray Hoffman from Indianapolis Power and Light will explain all the new innovation and controls the power company is embedding in the grid and to your home. All are welcome. Come with your questions. September 10, 2010, 7:00PM EDT <http://www.indyradioclub.org>

[HTTP://INDYHAMS.ORG/](http://INDYHAMS.ORG/)-- For information on local ham radio events including hamfests, club meeting, nets, test sessions, public service opportunities, etc., see the IndyHams web site. The web site is recently “remodeled” and provides a wealth of information.

HAMFESTS, OPERATING EVENTS & TESTING

- Sept. 9** Greenfield Hamfest, <http://www.w9atg.org>
- Oct. 3** Hoosier Hills (Bedford) Hamfest <http://www.hoosierhillshamfest.org>
- Oct. 11** W9IMS license testing, Contact Jim Rinehart 317 218-7304
- Nov. 6-8** Sweepstakes, CW
- Nov. 13** Fort Wayne Hamfest & Computer Expo., <http://www.fortwaynehamfest.com>
- Nov. 20-22** Sweepstakes, Phone
- Nov. 27** Evansville Hamfest, <http://w9ear.org/hamfest.htm>
- Dec 3-5** ARRL 160 Meter Conest
- Dec 11-12** ARRL 10 Meter Contest
- Dec 19** Rookie Roundup

See the ARRL Contest Branch page, <http://www.arrl.org/contest-update-issues>, the WA7BNM Contest Calendar, <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/> and the ARRL Special Event Stations page, <http://www.arrl.org/special-event-stations> for more info.

ARRL COMMENTS ON FCC 5 MHZ PROPOSALS

On July 13, the ARRL filed its [comments](#) in response to the FCC's *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)* in [ET Docket No. 10-98](#). The *NPRM* was issued in response to an ARRL *Petition for Rule Making* -- [RM-11353](#) -- filed in October 2006. In its 2006 *Petition*,

the ARRL had sought modest improvements in operating privileges in the so-called “60 meter” band, which presently consists of five channels on which General, Advanced and Amateur Extra class licensees may use upper sideband (USB) emission and no more than 50 W effective radiated power (ERP) relative to a dipole antenna. Amateur use of these five channels is on a secondary basis and must not cause harmful interference to authorized stations in the mobile and fixed services. US amateurs were first authorized to operate on 60 meters in 2003, thanks to agreement by the Interdepartment Radio Advisory Committee ([IRAC](#)) of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration ([NTIA](#)), that with such limits, amateur use would be compatible with federal government requirements.

The ARRL’s 2006 *Petition* had requested the substitution of a different channel for one that is generally occupied and not available for amateur use, an increase in authorized ERP from 50 to 100 W, as well as authorization for amateurs to use Morse code and certain data modes in addition to USB. It also suggested that Voice-Operated Transmit (VOX) operation be required in order to ensure that a federal agency can interrupt an amateur contact quickly should the need arise. The ARRL sought and received IRAC’s endorsement of the proposed changes.

In its *NPRM*, the FCC proposed substituting 5358.5 kHz for 5368.0 kHz, as well as the requested power increase. The FCC also proposed allowing Morse telegraphy (emission designator 150HA1A), PSK31 (emission designator 60H0J2B) and PACTOR-III (emission designator 2K80J2D), but with the use of Morse and PSK31 limited to the center frequency of each channel. In its comments in response, the ARRL supported the substitute frequency and power increase; however, the ARRL requested that Morse and PSK31 be permitted within the channel limits, rather than confined to the center frequency of each channel, in order to permit multiple communications to occur simultaneously within the same channel. The ARRL also requested that the rules specify the emission designators 60H0J2B and 2K80J2D, but not the specific data modes of PSK31 and PACTOR-III, in order to provide for future flexibility.

In response to the FCC’s observation that stipulating VOX operation might actually increase the potential for interference in a high noise environment such as an emergency operations center, the ARRL concurred. With regard to the FCC’s proposal that “Amateur operators using data emissions must exercise care to limit the length of transmissions so as to avoid causing harmful interference to Federal stations,” the ARRL observed that “The Commission has reached the proper balance of regulatory flexibility and channel preclusion avoidance.” Finally, other than to say that it should not be a requirement, the ARRL took no position in response to the FCC’s solicitation -- on behalf of the NTIA -- of comments as to whether amateurs should be encouraged to add a sound card generated Automatic Link Establishment ([ALE](#)) capability to their stations.

“Amateurs have proven, through interference-free operation on these channels, that compatible sharing of the channels is possible,” the ARRL noted in its comments. “The proposed minor changes retain sufficient safeguards to protect the primary and important Federal Government operations that make use of these channels from time to time. ARRL firmly commits to the preparation and widespread dissemination of a ‘best practice’ document for amateur use of these channels going forward with the replacement channel, modified power limit and more flexible emission types permitted.”

The ARRL also pledged to develop a workable band plan for occupancy of these channels “to ensure against usurpation by any one emission type and to continue the excellent track record of interference avoidance to Federal operations.”

Saying that it hopes that consideration can be given to a domestic secondary allocation of a contiguous band of at least 50 kHz in the vicinity of the existing channels, the ARRL pointed out that a “continuous band rather than discrete channels is more normal for the Amateur

Service, as it affords the opportunity for dynamic frequency selection according to band occupancy.” But in the meantime, the ARRL said that increased flexibility in the use of the five channels allocated to the Amateur Service on a secondary basis “will greatly facilitate emergency communications preparedness and will permit a substantial degree of additional flexibility in the use of the channels without any increase in interference potential.” –ARRL Letter

NEW D-STAR REPEATER NOW IN PLACE IN ARRL LABORATORY

The ARRL Lab has installed a D-STAR (Digital Smart Technologies for Amateur Radio) repeater in the Lab at the ARRL Headquarters building. Operating with an output of 147.390 MHz, positive offset, the W1HQ D-STAR repeater is a local repeater with a modest footprint covering the Hartford-New Britain, Connecticut area. The antenna is on the roof of the Headquarters building with the repeater located in the Lab. With its gateway, the repeater is accessible to any D-STAR user on the planet. The Lab’s call sign is W1INF.

“The purpose of the repeater is to better educate the Lab staff on D-STAR technology,” explained ARRL Test Engineer Bob Allison, WB1GCM. “In turn, we will have the ability to handle some of our members' questions on the matter. We also intend to use this new technology when emergencies occur where D-STAR technology is deployed.”

In the near future, the W1HQ D-STAR system will also include 70 and 23 cm repeaters, as well as a 23 cm high speed data link, once initial frequency coordination is granted. “We’re especially interested in the high speed data link,” Allison said. “Though it will have a limited range, we can begin experimenting with its potential and use it as a training tool for Lab staff.”

Allison thanked Bill Unghire, N1CNV, for his contributions as the major motivator for the ARRL HQ D-STAR project. “Bill, an ARRL Life Member, also provided valuable IT support with setting up the gateway,” he said. Building Manager Greg Kwasowski, W1GJK, handled the installation of all of the hardware, and Allison and W1AW Station Manager Joe Carcia, NJ1Q, handled the testing and coordination efforts. “Try giving the Lab a call -- during our noon lunch break, of course,” Allison invited. –ARRL Letter

FCC DENIES *PETITIONS* ON CALL SIGN USAGE, EXPANDED PRIVILEGES

On August 9, the FCC denied two *Petitions for Rule Making*: one to prohibit what the petitioner called “the false or unauthorized use of an Amateur Radio call sign,” and one to wishing to expand privileges on the 15 meter phone band for General and Amateur Extra class licensees.

Eric R. Hilding, K6VVA

Eric R. Hilding, K6VVA, of Morgan Hill, California, filed a [Petition for Rule Making](#) in November 2009, asking the FCC that Part 97 of the Commission’s Rules “be amended to prohibit the false or unauthorized use of an amateur radio call sign.” Hilding, in his *Petition*, made the argument that “the grant of an Amateur Radio operator/primary station license and

call sign is actually a federal fingerprint and federal identity that is unique to one, and only one, individual person or club entity, using the same principle as assignment of unique federal Social Security numbers. Any unauthorized use or identity theft of a person's Social Security number is rightfully a federal crime."

Hilding cited several instances where a "psychotic individual" allegedly used valid call signs of well-known amateurs and DXpeditions to post on "multiple international anonymous Internet proxy servers to post *non*-international goodwill content foul trash. Clearly, many of these ongoing posts are a form of electronic 'harassment' and 'stalking.' Some of the postings constitute a form of 'electronic hate crime'...very disturbing is that the perpetrator of these electronic crimes is most likely an FCC Amateur Radio licensee."

Hilding proposed changes to Part 97 to reflect his belief that using someone else's call sign is a form of identity theft. He called on the FCC to add language to Part 97 stating that "[a]ny misrepresentation or unauthorized use of a Federal Communications Commission licensee's unique call sign identity, whether made over the public airwaves, Internet packet cluster system postings, cellular or non-cellular telephone connections, electronic based communications or print media formats of any other nature, shall be considered a form of federal identity theft and a federal crime," and wanted those who violated this provision to face consequences of jail time up to five years and/or fines up to \$50,000. Hilding wanted his proposed amendments to be effective retroactively as of January 1, 2007.

In its [denial of Hilding's Petition](#), the FCC said that Part 97 of the Commission's Rules regulates only the Amateur Radio Service: "Regulations regarding other forms of communications would be beyond the scope of Part 97. Given that Part 97 already prohibits amateur stations from transmitting false identification, we conclude that the rules already address the misuse of amateur call signs to the appropriate extent, and that your *Petition* presents no grounds for amending Part 97."

Richard Ebeling, K2UTC

Richard Ebeling, K2UTC, of White Plains, New York, filed a *Petition for Rule Making* in December 2009, requesting that the FCC amend Part 97 to authorize more spectrum for voice communications, specifically, to increase the segment in the 15 meter band authorized to General and Amateur Extra class licensees for phone emissions by 75 and 50 kilohertz, respectively.

In his *Petition*, Ebeling argued that the frequency segment available for phone emissions allotted to General class licensees in the 15 meter band should be returned to what it was prior to the Commission's *Incentive Licensing* decision in 1967. The FCC noted in its [denial letter](#) that Ebeling believed that taking away these privileges "unfairly disadvantaged General class licensees."

The FCC pointed out that it recently increased the spectrum amateur stations could use for voice communications in various amateur bands, specifically, that the spectrum that General class licensees may use for phone emissions in the 15 meter band was increased by 25 kilohertz. "The *Petition* does not address this action, or otherwise present evidence that the current amount of spectrum in the 15 meter band available for voice communications is inadequate," the FCC said. "Consequently, we conclude that the rule change you request is not necessary." –ARRL Letter

FLORIDA REPEATER COUNCIL RELEASES VHF AND UHF NARROW BANDING PROPOSAL

The Florida Repeater Council has officially posted its proposed narrow-banding recommendation for 2 meters and 70 centimeters on its website. The concept adopted by the Florida Repeater Council leadership basically follows the narrow-banding in the Part 90 VHF and UHF commercial services. Its also based on the knowledge that most if not all of the newer amateur radio FM equipment available on the market today in the 144 to 148 MHz and 430 to 450 MHz range is capable of using 6.25 KHz channels if deviation is set at 2.5 KHz deviation.

Since the use of these new technology systems usually requires the purchase of new radios which are compatible with the new technology systems, by allocating narrow band channels for only newer technology systems there should be a minimal impact on existing wide band repeaters and their users. While 12.5 and 6.25 KHz channel spacing has been used on the UHF commercial and amateur bands for some time, the VHF bands have used 15 KHz spacing for decades. Since the legacy spacing of VHF commercial and the 146 to 148 MHz amateur service bands do not permit the use of 12.5 or 6.25 KHz spacing without a complete and disruptive re-farming of the entire band, the Florida Repeater Council is proposing to follow the FCC's VHF plan for Part 90. This will allow use of 7.5 KHz spacing between the legacy 15 KHz channels in the 146 to 148 MHz subband 2 meter and 10 kHz spacing between the existing 144.5 to 145.5 MHz channels in the lower subband.

The Florida repeater council says that most newer amateur radio equipment evaluated can program to the 7.5 or 10 KHz spacing without difficulty. However in some case the scanning or stepping functions of some radios may require software or firmware updates to properly scan these new channels in a given radios VFO mode.

The proposed changes will create 71 new frequency pairs for narrow band repeaters on 2 meters. It would also significantly expand the number of UHF narrow band channel pairs available as well. This says the council should provide the needed spectrum for experimentation and development of the newer technology systems that utilize narrow band emission such as D-Star and P-25 digital audio relay services.

The Florida Repeater Council will be looking for public comment on its proposal by e-mail to narrowbandcomments (at) florida-repeaters (dot) org or at the Melborne Hamfest this coming October. More on this proposed band change is on-line at www.florida-repeaters.org. (KS4VT, FRC)

AMATEUR RADIO OPERATORS PROVIDE VITAL COMMUNICATIONS LINKS BETWEEN RED CROSS SHELTERS DURING HURRICANE EARL

Friday, September 3, 2010 - HYANNIS, MA - "K1PBO, this is W2BTA with the shelter status report from the Nantucket shelter."

Amateur Radio Technician Wini Lord Meservey was on duty at the communications room crowded with radios and computers in the basement of the American Red Cross Cape Cod Chapter in Hyannis, MA. She returned the radio call from the amateur radio operator located at the Red Cross shelters on Nantucket Island, one of many regional shelters opened in

response to Hurricane Earl.

"W2BTA, this is K1PBO. I copy you," Meservey replied. "Go ahead with your shelter report."

One by one, each of the stations at the Red Cross shelters checked in with the count of residents and tourists who had sought shelter from Hurricane Earl. This information, along with current weather and reports of flooding, was gathered and then passed along to the Red Cross as well as the Emergency Operations Center and the nearby military base.

"Amateur radio provides communications to support the disaster relief efforts of the American Red Cross," said Frank O'Laughlin (WQ1O). "When all other forms of communications go out, we are still on the air to keep vital emergency links open. This is particularly important here at the Cape. We are vulnerable here on our peninsula and on Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard to storms and power outages." O'Laughlin is the Director of the local Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES - pronounced A-Rees) and is a veteran ham radio operator and trained Red Cross volunteer with twenty years' experience. ARES is a program of the Amateur Radio Relay League (ARRL) that provides point to point communications between shelters, assists in recovery efforts, provides weather reports in weather disasters and sends messages where normal communications have failed or are overloaded.

"The ARRL operates under a Memorandum of Understanding with the American Red Cross," said Keith Robertory, Manager for Disaster Technology at the American Red Cross. "The hams are all volunteers and many of them are also trained Red Cross volunteers. They are our 'force on the ground' that respond when there is a disaster anywhere in the country."

ARES has been supporting Red Cross disaster relief operations for a very long time and will celebrate its 75th anniversary this month. "We have been working with the Red Cross long before there were cell phones," said Alan Pitts of the ARRL. "When the Internet, the cell phones and the electricity go out, they call on us, the hams, to get the job done."

Effective disaster relief operations rely on a number of different skills and trained volunteers, and the dedicated ham radio operators of ARES play an invaluable key role in Red Cross emergency service delivery around the country, wherever disasters occur. Frank O'Laughlin and his crew of 35 committed amateur radio operators on Cape Cod expertly filled that role during Hurricane Earl, and when the next disaster strikes they are trained and ready to respond whenever called upon.

<http://newsroom.redcross.org/2010/09/07/story-amateur-radio-operators-provide-vital-communications-links-between-red-cross-shelters-during-hurricane-earl/#more-4063> This post is written by American Red Cross disaster volunteer Allen Crabtree --InHam, N9NWO

SHORTS

NEW RULES FOR EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN DRILLS BEGAN SEPTEMBER 3 -- Beginning September 3, the new, revised wording of Section 97.113 went into effect. As of this date, the FCC will permit government entities that sponsor disaster and emergency drills to hold these drills without applying for a waiver. Additionally, employees who wish to participate in non-government-sponsored drills and exercises may do so under certain conditions. Part 97 is the portion of the Commission's rules that govern the Amateur Radio Service. Read more here.

VANITY CALL SIGN FEES TO DECREASE AUGUST 17 -- On July 19, the FCC announced via the Federal Register that the cost of a 10 year Amateur Radio vanity call sign

will decrease 10 cents, from \$13.40 to \$13.30. The new fees take effect 30 days after publication, making August 17, 2010, the first day the new fee is in effect. In FY2010, the FCC anticipates granting 14,800 vanity call signs, bringing in \$196,840 from the vanity call sign program. Earlier this year, the FCC released a Notice of Proposed Rule Making and Order (NPRM), seeking to lower the fee for Amateur Radio vanity call signs. The notice in the July 19, 2010 edition of the Federal Register -- entitled "Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year 2010; Final Rule" -- includes all FCC regulatory fees; these fees are expected to recover a total of \$336,712,213 during FY2010, encompassing all the Services the FCC regulates. 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. --ARRL Letter

VE COUNT NOW WORKING ON VE SITE -- If you're an ARRL Volunteer Examiner ([VE](#)) who is interested in seeing how many ARRL exam sessions you've taken part in, you can find the answer on the [VE Session counts](#) Web page. On this page, you'll be able to access a list that shows the total number of exam sessions that each ARRL VE has conducted. The listings are listed first by state and then in alpha-numeric call sign order (call area number, then suffix letters). The state where an individual VE record is located is based on the VE's official address on file with the ARRL Volunteer Examiner Coordinator. Only currently accredited ARRL VEs will be displayed on the Web page. ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM, said she is "thrilled" that the enhanced page now includes the VEs name, as well as the call sign and session participation total: "Incorporating the name field in the lists added a higher level of authentication when determining a VE's accreditation status and participation. We applaud the volunteers whose dedication and service make the VE program successful. Your hard work and contribution of countless hours of your time helps ensure the future of Amateur Radio. Your efforts matter and we thank you. Our VEs should be very proud of their accomplishments." -- ARRL Letter

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