



# SIGMA



February 1999 Volume 8 Number 2

## This Months Meeting

This month's speaker is Roger Perkins W1OJ who will speak on "Repeaters in New England"

## Last Month's Meeting

VP Den, KD2S, opened the meeting at 7.40PM with 12 members present. Treasurer Ralph advised that the current balance was \$412 less \$20 for the renewal of the local PO Box.

### Announcements:

Stan, KD1LE, advised that the next VE session will be held in Nashua the upcoming weekend and Ralph, KD1SM told members of the Marlboro Flea Market on February 13 and the upcoming ARES, RACES, SKYWARN training session Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> in Marlboro MA.

### Guest Speaker:

The speaker for the evening was George Caswell W1ME the New England AMSAT Coordinator. George began by noting that operating via satellites is easy, giving examples of the RS satellites which any ham with simple HF equipment could use. He also showed the range of satellites available to hams from Phase 3, Oscar 10 through Oscar 27, effectively an FM repeater in space.

George urged the club to set up the club repeater to transmit satellites and NASA audio to allow members and listeners to become familiar with the modes and gain experience via the repeater. His presentation covered AMSAT and the Internet, the MIR project plus the many ways to get into satellites without spending a fortune. One of his examples was the use of an ancient "C"; band TV dish to receive audio and video from NASA.

A theme that ran through Georges "RS" presentation was an urging to get the youth of the commu-

nity involved via youth projects. Further information on this is available by e-mailing George at [w1me@amsat.org](mailto:w1me@amsat.org). George handed out several disks containing useful satellite programs and information to get members started in the mode. After a series of questions from members, George handed over the floor to Keith Baker KB1SF, President of AMSAT, who spoke more on the national and international level concerning the past, present and future activities of AMSAT.

We were fortunate in having George and Keith to present to the meeting and the extended session was testimony to their interesting content and presentation. Ian NZ1B

## Groton Road Race Needs You



The Groton Road Race continues to grow in popularity and size. Erik KA1RV will be looking for lots of help again this year. If you've had a good time and want

to help again or want to see what you've been missing why not give him a call rather than make him do all the calling?

Erik KA1RV 978-448-5536

## Equipment for Sale

The Community Church of Pepperell has received a gift of several pieces of amateur radio equipment. They have offered the NVARC a generous percentage of the value of the equipment in exchange for selling the equipment.

The equipment will be sold in a silent auction during February and early March, with bids closing on the March 17th mail. Last minute bids can be made at the March NVARC meeting.

If you are interested in bidding for any piece of gear, send your bid, on a 3x5 inch card, to Erik Piip KA1RV, 791 Townsend Rd, Groton, MA 01450. (One bid per card please.) If you have any questions, please call me on (978)-448-5536.

The equipment is functional, unless otherwise noted. If it is found to be faulty, a refund will be offered. Cosmetic condition varies. Most of the equipment has been conspicuously marked with the previous owner's name and SS number.

(The list of equipment is on the last page.—ed)

Regards, Erik

## QRZ Club Purchase

Several members have expressed interest in another Club purchase of the QRZ! CD-ROM. QRZ! Volume 12, the winter 1998/1999 issue contains a complete FCC callsign database (as of October, 1998), over 130,000 e-mail addresses, over 3750 QSL card images, and hundreds of megabytes of ham radio shareware. Volume 12 also contains listings for amateurs in Argentina, Austria, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Egypt, Estonia, Israel, India, Italy, Korea, Namibia, New Zealand, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Pakistan, Portugal, Taiwan, Turkey, the U.K., Uruguay, and Venezuela.

Search software is provided for Windows 95, Windows 3.1, Windows NT, MS-DOS, OS/2, SunOS, AIX HP-UX, IRIX, FreeBSD, NeXT, and Linux.

The list price of this CD is \$19.95. The typical hamfest price is \$14.95. However, the vendor from whom we previously made the club purchase will again make QRZ! available to NVARC members at the price of \$11.00 in quantities greater than 10. If you wish to purchase QRZ! at this spe-

cial NVARC price, talk with Ralph KD1SM; he will be collecting the money and placing the order soon after the February meeting.

## NVARC Board Meeting Notes 2/11/99

Russ W1RY, asked what was happening re Club PR. Jonathon Kinney, N1JGA had offered to take on that role, so Ian agreed to call him and invite him to the next board meeting to give an update.

Discussion continued on getting our meetings listed in the local newspapers and also the possibility of getting listed on local community TV.

Stan advised that a Pepperell Parks and Recreation mailing had gone out to all Pepperell residents for Winter/Spring activities and we had missed it. He said that he would see if the club could get information on a License Class in next one which would be for Spring/Summer. There were questions as to whether a similar newsletter existed for Townsend and Groton.

Ian advised that the Public Service report to the ARRL was due and it was agreed that this be sent off using last years data plus the Field Day information from this year.

It was agreed that meeting minutes would be e-mailed to Stan for inclusion in the Newsletter (if appropriate).

Considerable discussion ensued re the disposal of the second-hand Ham Equipment that the Club is tasked with selling for profit, based on a FMV list compiled by Erik. It was agreed that we would handle it as an auction starting with the equipment information in this months Newsletter and ending at the March NVARC meeting. Final bids will be taken at the March Meeting. Also suggested/agreed was the provision of 3x5 cards for meeting attendees to enter last minute bids.

Ian Norrish NVARC Secretary

## You Thought Y2K Was a New Problem?

>From the SMH's column 8: (?-ed.)

An atmosphere close to panic prevails today throughout Europe as the millennial year 1000 approaches, bringing with it the so-called "Y1K Bug". The entire fabric of Western Civilisation, based as it now is upon monastic computations, could collapse, and there is simply not enough time left to fix the problem. Just how did this disaster-in-the-making ever arise? Why did no-one

anticipate that a change from a three-digit to a four-digit year would throw into total disarray all liturgical chants and all metrical verse in which any date is mentioned? Every formulaic hymn, prayer, ceremony and incantation dealing with dated events will have to be rewritten to accommodate three extra syllables. All tabular chronologies with three-space year columns, maintained for generations by scribes using carefully hand-ruled lines on vellum sheets, will now have to be converted to four-space columns, at enormous cost.

Stonemasons are already reported threatening to demand a proportional pay increase for having to carve an extra numeral in all dates on tombstones, cornerstones and monuments. Monks are also confused about how to reset or upgrade their sundials to allow for the date change. Many families, in expectation of the worst, are stocking up on holy water and indulgences.

### Public Service

The Boston Marathon coming up April 19<sup>th</sup>. The BAA has requested 180 hams for the 1999 Marathon. The contacts for the Marathon are listed below.

Hopkinton-Start Steve K1ST 508-435-5178  
stolf@ma.ultranet.com  
Course Bob WA1IDA 508-650-9440  
wa1ida@mediaone.net  
Finish Line Paul W1SEX  
ptopolski@net1plus.com

The Groton Road Race on April 25<sup>th</sup> needs 35 hams. For more information contact Erik Piip KA1RV at 978-448-5536.

[piip@merl.com](mailto:piip@merl.com)

You should also check the Public Service List which is available on packet, and from the following web sites.

From <http://www.arrl.org>:  
Info & Services->  
ARRL Field Activities/ARRL Field Organization->  
ARRL Section Managers->  
New England Division-  
Public Service Opportunities

Or From  
<http://www.qsl.net/ema-arrl/> (The EMA Site):  
Resources ->  
Public Service and Emergency Communications/Public Service List

### NVARC Fox Hunters Report

All the current activity has been hunting the MMRA Fox Box. Since it is located further south there is generally less of a snow problem. The fox has been located in Harvard, Berlin, Clinton, Sterling, Stow, Hudson, and Maynard lately. It transmits on 145.63 with a PL of 146.2 which is the same as ours. This Fall for the benefit of the hunters we changed to a two and one half minute off time. The MMRA folks must have liked the idea since when they had their box in for some repairs this Winter they changed over to the same timing.

### SKYWARN / NWS

There was a lot of activity on the SKYWARN front last year and this year looks to be the same. There are already several training sessions scheduled for 1999. They have improved the APRS setup and are working to get HF running at NWS Taunton. They are also planning to run a state-wide combined RACES/SKYWARN SET scenario if they can get a plan together. Rob Macedo KD1CY has been moving these issues forward.

From the National Weather Service...summary of the 1998 Atlantic hurricane season.

The 1998 season will be remembered as being one of the deadliest in history...and for having the strongest October hurricane on record. It was a very active season with 14 named tropical storms of which 10 became hurricanes. Three of these were major hurricanes of categories three, four, and five on the Saffir/Simpson hurricane scale. The four-year period of 1995-1998 had a total of 33 hurricanes an all-time record. Tropical cyclones claimed an estimated 11,629 lives in 1998 11,000 due to hurricane Mitch in Central America. Not since 1780 has an Atlantic hurricane caused so many deaths. Seven of the tropical storms and hurricanes hit the United States which is more than twice the average. Total damages in the United States stand at \$6.5 billion dollars. The season started a little late but more than made up for lost time. There were no tropical cyclones in June and the first storm of the season, tropical storm Alex, developed on July 27. Then in a hyper-active 35-day span from August 19 to September 23 ten named tropical cyclones formed. Two tropical cyclones formed in October Lisa and powerful hurricane Mitch. The season concluded

with hurricane Nicole in late November. On September 25 there were four Atlantic hurricanes in progress at once. This is the first time such an event was observed since 1893.

### Which Planet is Furthest From the Sun?

If you said Pluto, you wouldn't have been correct until last Thursday, February 11<sup>th</sup> (and you haven't been right for the last twenty years).

Because of Pluto's eccentric orbit, it spends a small fraction of its time inside the orbit of Neptune. Pluto is on its way back out now and on Thursday February 11, 1999 at about 10:00 UTC, Pluto will again be farther away than Neptune.

For more detailed info, see the JPL's fact sheet at: [http://ssd.jpl.nasa.gov/pluto\\_neptune.html](http://ssd.jpl.nasa.gov/pluto_neptune.html)

### From the ARRL Newsletter

#### HAMS RESPOND AS KILLER TORNADOES RAKE SOUTH

Hams in Tennessee and Arkansas responded as unusual tornadoes threatened, then struck, this week. The death toll from the freak storms stood at 16 as of January 22, and losses were expected to top \$1 billion. A call went out January 22 for additional ham radio volunteers to assist emergency operations in Tennessee in the storms' wake.

Tornadoes in the Jackson, Tennessee, area January 17 killed eight people. Another eight died when tornadoes struck in the vicinity of Little Rock and White County, Arkansas, January 21. The National Weather Service called it "an unprecedented outbreak of tornadoes for January."

Arkansas Section Manager Roger Gray, N5QS, in Searcy, reports he was up all night and observed four or five funnel clouds, but he estimated that at least 30 tornadoes swept through the area. Gray has been actively managing the ARES operation. "We have had an incredible response from the amateur community," he said. He estimated that up to 60 hams were active on VHF and HF nets. "We have been running nets almost continuously since 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon and no end in sight," he added. One problem, he said, was that access to the badly damaged town of Beebe was extremely restricted "and contacting people in that

area is extremely difficult right now." In addition to health-and-welfare and damage assessment traffic, he said Amateur Radio was filling the gap as long-distance telephone circuits have become overloaded. "That's why we're handling as much traffic as we are." Damage was primarily confined to four areas, and he expected ham radio involvement to conclude within 24 hours.

Gray said five weather-spotting net control stations were active. The EC in charge, James Wiles, KK5WM, in Beebe, suffered damage to his house and had to move operations to a Red Cross shelter, Gray reported. Hams are expected to become involved in damage assessment.

The National Weather Service confirmed that "between two and three dozen" tornadoes damaged or destroyed homes and businesses in Little Rock, Beebe, Searcy, and in other locations to the north and east. Large hail also was reported, including "baseball to grapefruit size hail near Hot Springs and around the Little Rock and Conway areas," the NWS said.

"Another wild night in Arkansas," said ARRL Vice President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, in Judsonia, who reported "lots of damage" in his area. "I have to tell you, in my 41 years of living here, I have never seen storms like we had last night," he said. Harrison said the first line came through around 5 PM, "then another, and another, and another for what seemed like every half hour till about 10:30 PM."

"The damage in a 10 mile radius around my home is horrible!" Harrison said. Arkansas State University in Beebe--where his son, Mark, attends school--had extensive damage. "There is considerable damage in Little Rock, even to the Governor's Mansion," he added.

Mark Harrison, KC5YNE, said most of the town of Beebe was damaged or destroyed, and eight tornadoes hit White County alone. He reports the family spent an anxious night. "It was a relief when the storms finally quit, and everything was fine here," he said.

Meanwhile, Delta Division Vice Director Henry Leggette, WD4Q, in Memphis, Tennessee, reports considerable ham radio activity in the Jackson area, where tornadoes hit last weekend, as well as in Clarksville, where twisters struck early on the morning of January 21. "The VoINet has played an important part here," he said. The VoINet is a 2-meter net interfaced via a 440-MHz link and pro-

viding coverage from Oxford, Mississippi, to the Memphis area and beyond. Leggette said he planned to visit the Jackson area over the weekend to assist.

Tennessee SEC Jim Jarvis, WD4JJ, in Bristol, relayed a request for amateurs with mobile units to assist at the Clarksville/Montgomery County Emergency Operations Center. Hams willing to volunteer may contact the EOC directly on the 147.39 MHz repeater, he said. "The police department and city hall have been completely demolished, and the downtown area is a complete wreck." Jarvis also reports damage in Humphreys County, as well as in McEwen, Waverly, and Camden counties. He estimated that up to three dozen hams active in providing emergency communication in the Clarksville/Montgomery County area.

Hams also were reported active at Ft Campbell, Kentucky, with Albert Furlow, KA1FFO, in Clarksville said to be at the helm.

In the aftermath of the earlier storms, Jarvis reports that EC Kenny Johns, AB4EG, in Jackson was rounding up volunteers to assist the Red Cross with damage assessment in the seven counties hit last weekend. Among those reported to be active were members of John's club, the West Tennessee Amateur Radio Society. Johns said a SKYWARN net was activated last Sunday afternoon, but the tornadoes were unexpected. Two ham weather spotters saw the twisters--illuminated by the lightning--and took shelter. After the storms struck, more than two dozen ARES members handled health-and-welfare traffic at the EOC for 22 hours. During that time, the EOC repeater was knocked off the air, but amateur repeaters, including one at the EOC, remained up, making Amateur Radio the primary backup for the EOC.

Hams were on alert for additional severe weather prior to the January 21 storms that struck Tennessee and Arkansas. Jarvis says SKYWARN nets remain on the alert for additional severe weather this weekend in the Tennessee-Arkansas-Louisiana region.

#### BOARD EMBRACES NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR AMATEUR RADIO'S FUTURE

The ARRL Board of Directors has adopted an initiative proposed by President Rod Stafford, W6ROD, to promote new technology in Amateur Radio. Meeting in Houston, Texas, January 15

and 16, the Board adopted Stafford's proposal to establish an Amateur Radio Technology Task Force to develop a strategy and plan for exploring new technologies and assessing their applicability and possible incorporation into Amateur Radio.

In his meeting report, Stafford expressed his concerns about dwindling amateur activity in general and a decline in ARRL membership in particular. "In my humble opinion, it seems that the average ham radio operator is not very excited about anything in Amateur Radio these days," he said. The Board went along with Stafford's suggestion that an infusion of newer technologies into the hobby might renew enthusiasm.

Stafford will appoint members to the Technology Task Force who have been actively involved in experimenting with or developing new technology. An initial report is due next January. In a collateral move, the Board reconstituted the Future Systems Committee as the Amateur Radio Technology Working Group to serve as a resource for the Technology Task Force. As an adjunct to the Technology Task Force, the Technology Working Group will conduct experiments, research and development involving newer technologies.

In other action, the Board declined--at least for now--to join the National Frequency Coordinators' Council in petitioning the FCC seeking rules requiring frequency coordination for fixed repeaters and auxiliary stations. A majority of the Board said there was no compelling evidence warranting a move beyond the existing rules. But the Board did invite the NFCC to revisit the issue at a later date.

"Coordinated repeaters already have a degree of priority," said ARRL Executive Vice President David Sumner, K1ZZ, in explaining the Board's decision. Board members are keeping an open mind, but by and large, they are not yet persuaded of the necessity to go beyond that."

In a letter to Stafford following the meeting, NFCC President George Isely, W9GIG, expressed disappointment. "I think it's fair to say this is not a dead issue for the NFCC," he said. NFCC members had approved the filing of the petition by a wide margin.

In his report to the Board, Vice President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, praised an apparent return to enforcement by the FCC. Harrison said the League has been pushing for better enforcement for some time, and that FCC action against willful violators has been a historical and primary concern of the

amateur community. Harrison summarized recent FCC actions as the Board applauded.

Following a study of the Y2K computer issue by its Volunteer Resources Committee, recommended that section managers, section emergency coordinators, and ARES groups enter into memoranda of understanding and conduct drills, with public utilities and public safety agencies for emergency communications necessitated by possible Y2K problems.

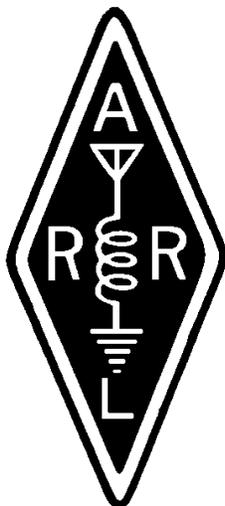
#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO PONDER LEAGUE NAME CHANGE

Could the American Radio Relay League enter the new millennium with a new name? The ARRL Board of Directors has asked the League's Executive Committee to develop a proposal to change the League's name to one that more clearly reflects the focus and purpose of the organization to hams and nonhams alike. The Board charged the Executive Committee to develop a name change proposal for consideration by the Board at its July meeting.

The name-change idea is not a new one. A previous proposal was considered by the Board several years ago, but it was set aside.

The now-obscure "Relay" part of the League's name often is the most troublesome to explain nowadays. It refers to the earlier practice, fostered by the League, of relaying long-distance message traffic from station to station in a time when direct contact was not always feasible. The Board's resolution said the League's current name no longer adequately reflects "the breadth of amateur radio" and that the ARRL needs a name that would "clearly reflect our focus and purpose--Amateur Radio--to those both inside and outside our organization."

The Board said the year 2000 would be "a natural point for change." Members who learned of the resolution this week discussed the issue on various Internet reflectors.



Earlier this decade, the ARRL Board declined a suggestion from the Long Range Planning Committee to change the League's name to the American Amateur

Radio League--ironically the same name first suggested by ARRL founder Hiram Percy Maxim in 1914. The November 1992 issue of QST broached the subject to the League's members and encouraged them to express their opinions. Directors overwhelmingly--but not unanimously--abandoned the name-change campaign at the Board's January 1993 meeting.

#### FCC ISSUES 5-MHZ EXPERIMENTAL LICENSE TO ARRL

The FCC has issued an Experimental Radio Service license to the ARRL to permit two-way tests in the vicinity of 5 MHz, the most likely site of the next amateur HF band. The license, bearing the call sign WA2XSY, was issued January 8. A group of 15 current amateurs in various parts of the US and the Caribbean will conduct experimental, two-way RTTY and SSB transmissions within the band 5.100 to 5.450 MHz. To avoid interfering with existing services, the participants will confine their operations to the least-populated 50-kHz segment.

"The idea is to show that an amateur allocation there will improve our emergency communication capabilities by filling the gap between the 3.5 and 7.0 MHz bands," said ARRL Executive Vice President David Sumner, K1ZZ. Sumner pointed out that several of the participants are phone net members in the Caribbean and Gulf area who frequently handle hurricane-related traffic and now must alternate between 75 meters and 40 meters. Other participants are members of a nationwide digital data-forwarding network.

The Experimental license is good for two years. Two studies by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) include an allocation at 5 MHz among the future spectrum needs for the Amateur Service. The subject is not likely to show up on the agenda of a World Radio-communication Conference for several years, however.

Participants in the WA2XSY experiment may run up to 200 W effective radiated power. Similar multiband trap dipoles capable of operation on 80 and 40 meters as well as at 5 MHz will be employed at each station location. Operation by participants will consist of short transmissions to determine propagation characteristics.

Participating stations are located in New Hampshire, Tennessee, Ohio, Florida, Mississippi, Wisconsin, Indiana, California, Utah, New York, Texas, the US Virgin Islands, and Maryland.

New Canadian prefix: The territory of Nunavut comes into existence April 1, 1999, and with it, a new Amateur Radio prefix. Radio Amateurs of Canada has announced that Nunavut will get the prefix VY0 "to ensure a unique identification for the new territory." However, there are no plans to add the new territory to the list of ARRL November Sweepstakes multipliers. Nunavut, which means "our land" in the Inuktitut language will be comprised of the eastern portion of the present Northwest Territories. The new territory will be about five times the size of Alberta but has a population of just 24,000, some 85% of whom are Inuit. The VE8 prefix will remain in use for the western Northwest Territories, which may get a new name as a result of the partitioning. For more information on Nunavut, see <http://www.ccu-cuc.ca/en/library/nunavut.html>.

Joe Walsh, rock star/Collins collector: A West Virginia ham recently cut a deal to sell his refurbished vintage Collins KWS-1 transmitter and 75A4 receiver to singer-songwriter Joe Walsh, WB6ACU. Mark Danehart, W8MSD, of Mt Olivet, West Virginia, decided to sell the pair recently, and he was surprised when Walsh was the lone caller responding to his ad. Danehart made arrangements to ship the heavy metal units to Walsh, who was wrapping up a concert tour. An ARRL Life Member, Walsh, 51, has enjoyed a career with the Eagles and as a solo artist. He's belonged to the League for 27 years now. In addition to a check for the Collins gear, he sent Danehart an autographed picture as well as two autographed CDs. Walsh's road manager also promised Danehart front row seats to Walsh's next concert in the Ohio Valley. Danehart's story of the Collins sale appeared December 9, 1998 in The Wheeling Intelligencer.

ARRL Educational Services Manager Rosalie White, WA1STO, a member of the Space Amateur Radio EXperiment (SAREX) Working Group, said she was pleased that NASA was taking no chances during the qualification testing of the ham gear. "I think it's great that they're taking the time to do a detailed examination," she said.

Getting Amateur Radio a permanent berth in space aboard the ISS has involved efforts in several countries. The primary players include the US, Russia, the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, and Japan. "The ARISS team is truly an international, democratic, organization and is cooperating to provide human spaceflight Amateur Radio op-

erations to the entire ham community well into the next decade," said Marchant.

#### COLOMBIAN QUAKE SPRINGS HAMS TO ACTION

Amateur Radio nets activated in short order on 20 and 40 meters following an earthquake January 25 in West Central Colombia. The quake, measuring 6 on the Richter scale, killed more than 1000 people, injured thousands of others, and caused major structural damage. The Salvation Army reports more than 150,000 people missing in Colombia's mountainous coffee-growing region. The initial tremor and some aftershocks were felt in the capital city of Bogota. News media in Colombia were reporting "chaos" in the city of Armenia, where some residents stormed and looted stores and supermarkets when relief supplies failed to materialize. Martial law was declared there.

"In most cases, the problem is in the distribution," said Dallas Carter, W3PP, in Laurel, Delaware. Carter monitored some of the first reports of the quake via Amateur Radio on a 20-meter relief net run by HK3SA and HK3RQA and has been assisting as a US net control--sometimes for as long as 12 hours a day. Amateur activities were taking place on 14.347 MHz and locally on 7.085 and 7.090 MHz.

Ham radio was a major source of information out of the affected area in the hours immediately following the disaster. "They are requesting blood, water, medical assistance, rescue equipment," Carter said this week. He said HK3SA was flown into the city of Armenia and has set up an HF operation to maintain contact via 40 and 20 meters to directly handle international health-and-welfare requests as well as keep in touch with the capital. He said 2-meter repeaters were being used for local emergency coordination.

The Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network (SATERN) has established contact with hams in Colombia and a net on 14.265 MHz and was helping with inquiries about victims. At this point, most of the health-and-welfare traffic was coming into the US from the stricken regions, while not much was going into the area. The Salvation Army's Michael Koenemund, KB1CKF, reported that the Salvation Army had dispatched a 10-member assessment and first response team from Bogota to the affected cities of Pereira and Ibaque. "The team will render primary services, including food, water and shelter," he said.

The International Red Cross in Colombia has dispatched a team of 80, plus relief equipment and supplies "There's an extreme shortage of doctors," Carter said. "They're still digging people out."

The ARRL has offered its assistance to the Liga Colombiana de Radioaficionados (LCRA), the League's IARU sister society in Colombia.

Media in Bogota have set up Web sites with information from the affected areas including lists of individual names and status. See <http://www.rcntv.com.co> or <http://www.eureka.com.co/terremoto/> (Spanish) or <http://www.eureka.com.co/terremoto/indexEn.html> (English).

#### TORNADOES, CLEANUP KEEP DIXIE HAMS BUSY

Additional severe weather hit parts of the South January 22, less than a day after tornadoes killed eight people in Arkansas and injured many others in Arkansas and Tennessee. Amateur Radio operators volunteered as needed in the wake of the January 21 tornadoes as well as the storms the following day reported in Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, and Alabama. Few additional injuries and no deaths were reported, and damage for the most part was minimal.

Arkansas Section Manager Roger Gray, N5QS, reported several amateurs working with cleanup crews, disaster assessment teams, or Red Cross mobile feeding stations after the January 21 tornadoes that swept the Little Rock area and badly damaged the town of Beebe.

ARES nets were activated on both local VHF repeaters and on 75 meters after more than 30 tornadoes touched down in White County. "I personally saw one pass within one mile of my house and within a half mile of [ARRL Vice President Joel Harrison] W5ZN's house. Gray says White County ARES closed down January 26 after nearly a week's operation. Gray reports that on several occasions as the storms developed, various net control stations were forced to take cover and hand over NCS duties to another station. White County EC James Wiles, KK5WM, in Beebe, was forced to seek shelter after his home suffered tornado damage. "He was later able to return to salvage his radio equipment and set up a station at a shelter and man it single-handed through the night," Gray said.

A health-and-welfare and disaster recovery net evolved from the storm-spotting net after the storms had passed through, and net control moved to Red Cross headquarters. Gray said more than 70 hams assisted with traffic for the Red Cross and Salvation Army as well as health-and-welfare inquiries, emergency, and general disaster recovery. "Three crossband repeaters were in operation to allow low-power stations to access distant repeaters," he said. Hams also made temporary repairs to the local ambulance service base station antenna.

In Tennessee, Madison County EC Kenny Johns, AB4EG, worked with volunteers from several areas to assist the Red Cross with damage assessment in 19 affected counties. Johns said in Jackson and in Madison County, more than 300 homes, apartments and mobile homes were completely destroyed. Another 357 received extreme damage. ARRL Delta Division Vice Director Henry Leggette, WD4Q, visited the Jackson area January 28 and met with members of John's club, the West Tennessee Amateur Radio Society, who were coordinating activities on VHF and UHF. He reported that more than 200 hams helped out in some way after the storms. "This made me very proud to be an Amateur Radio operator," Leggette said.

The town of Clarksville, Tennessee, also received significant damage from the January 22 storms. Under the direction of Albert Furlow, KA1FFO, members of the Clarksville Amateur Radio Transmitting Society's (CATS) disaster team activated a SKYWARN net. After the storm, CAT members worked with the Red Cross and emergency officials, passing spot information and later assisting with damage assessment. Furlow reports hams also will help with the cleanup effort this weekend.

Also on January 22, National Red Cross Headquarters requested Virginia ARES to follow up after a reported F4 tornado struck the northeastern Mississippi town of Corinth, cutting off contact with the community of approximately 14,000. The Red Cross contacted Virginia ARES to attempt to get information on possible damage and injuries. Volunteers were able to get information via the Mississippi Emergency Net indicating trees and power lines down and some property damage, but no deaths and only one injury. Virginia ARES relayed all information to the Red Cross, which indicated that it was the first news they had received from the affected area.

## FCC COMES A CALLIN' IN THE CAROLINAS

FCC engineering and legal staff conducted unannounced Amateur Radio station inspections January 21 and 22 in North and South Carolina, reports FCC amateur enforcement honcho Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH.

"Commission personnel inspected the stations of John A. Abernethy, K4OKA, an Extra Class licensee in Hickory, North Carolina, and Richard Whiten, WB2OTK, a General Class licensee in Easley, South Carolina," Hollingsworth said.

In both visits, FCC officials were accompanied by local law enforcement personnel. Hollingsworth said both amateurs cooperated with the inspections, which lasted approximately two hours apiece. FCC officials said that both operators "were the subjects of many complaints about their operations on the 75 and 20 meter Amateur bands." The officials said the results of the inspections were "under review," and declined further comment.

Earlier this month, the FCC issued a stern warning to an Indian River County, Florida ham who, the FCC said, had been using the amateur airwaves to transmit information on, among other things, the credit reports, criminal records, and mortgage foreclosures of other hams and their families. "You have apparently made these disclosures and broadcasts for the purpose of deliberately and maliciously interfering with licensed Amateurs operating on those bands, and for harassment or perceived retaliation," said the letter, signed by Hollingsworth.

"We view this matter as extremely serious," he told the ARRL. Hollingsworth called the alleged operation "contrary to the purpose of Amateur Radio" and said that it "endangers the entire Amateur Radio frequency allocation internationally."

**5 MHz experiment**--no additional help needed: In response to inquiries about the ARRL's recently granted WA2XSX Experimental Radio Service license for investigations on 5 MHz, the League has been requested by FCC staff to advise that no additional participants are being sought at this time. Additionally, operating schedules have not been established but will be announced if monitoring reports are solicited as part of the experiment.

**ARRL E-Mail Forwarding Service:** Starting February 1, ARRL members will be able to sign up via the Members Only Web Site (<http://www.arrl.org/members-only/>) for the League's new E-Mail Forwarding Service. The forwarding--or alias--service is available at no additional charge for ARRL members. It will provide members with a uniform "callsign@arrl.net" e-mail address that remains the same even if the user changes e-mail service providers. Details are available on the Members Only Web Site at <http://www.arrl.org/members-only/emailfwd.html>. The service does not affect usability of your original e-mail address, which will continue to be the one reflected in outgoing messages.

**SUNSAT launch delayed:** At first frustrated by numerous weather-related delays, the Boeing team that's attempting to launch a Delta II rocket carrying the SUNSAT amateur satellite and other payloads aloft ran into a technical snag during the January 28 launch attempt. Eric Lemmon, WB6FLY, reports: "At 1044 UTC on Thursday, January 28th, the Delta-II rocket experienced an engine cutoff immediately after the engine start command was issued. The shutoff is sent automatically when an anomaly in the engine sequence is detected. The cause is currently under investigation. No damage occurred to the rocket or to the three satellites that comprise its payload. The delay will probably be a few days, and no further information is available at this time."--WB6FLY

**K6STI goes out of software business:** Ham radio software developer Brian Beezley, K6STI, has gone out of business. Beezley says he's dropping distribution and further software development as a result of the piracy of his RITTY radioteletype program. He says an overseas ham broke the copy protection on a demo version of his program and posted the pirated version on the Internet. That prompted him to discontinue selling software altogether, he said. "I've just had enough of it. I'm really quite disgusted and bitter," Beezley remarked. "I hate being stolen from." He said his software business was his main source of income, and he's not sure what he'll do next. Dick Stevens, N1RCT, who runs the "All Things RTTY" Web site (<http://www.megalink.net/~n1rct/>) called it "a sad day." He has pulled all versions of RITTY from his site. Beezley said he'll sell RITTY "if somebody wants it" but he has no plans to offer support or further program enhancements. He also had developed five antenna programs, including the Yagi-optimizing program YO. Beezley re-

mains available only via the USPS at 3532 Linda Vista Dr, San Marcos, CA 92069. He no longer has e-mail service.

Dayton

14-16

**\$The February Treasurer's Report \$**

In January we received \$15.00 in dues and disbursed \$32.40 for newsletter copying and postage. The current General Fund balance is \$394.96. Nothing was disbursed from the Community Fund, leaving a current balance of \$440.92.

Remember, if your ARRL membership is coming up for renewal soon you can save the cost of a stamp and add a little to the Club treasury by letting me send in your membership renewal. As a Special Service Club, the League rebates a portion of your ARRL dues to us when you allow us to forward your payment.



Note to all Members:

We have been doing some Y2K testing on the databases used in the NVARC member roster. Our testing has revealed the fortunate data that in 10 months our treasury problem will be resolved as each of your membership bills for prior years becomes due. We suggest that to avoid having to pay the full amount of \$1380 in a single installment on 1-Jan-1900, you may wish to spread it in equal payments of \$138/month during 1999. Send your payments to the Club postal address: PO Box 900, Pepperell MA 01463.

**Calendar of Events**

February		
ARRL Intl DX Contest CW		20-21
Vermont State Convention		27
March		
ARRL Intl DX Contest Ph		6-7
Mt. Tom Hamfest		7
Gardner Mohawk Auction		13
Maine State Convention	19-20	
April		
MIT starts again	18	
May		
Hosstraders, Rochester, NH		7-8



**Nashoba Valley  
Amateur Radio Club**

PO Box # 900  
Pepperell Mass 01463-0900

Pres.: Erik Piip KA1RV  
V Pres.: Den Connors KD2S  
Secretary: Ian Norrish NZ1B  
Treasurer: Ralph Swick KD1SM  
Editor: Stan Pozerski KD1LE  
PIO: Jon Kinney N1JGA

Meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of the month - 7:30 p.m. - Pepperell Community Ctr.  
Talk-in 146.490 simplex  
442.90 + 100Hz Repeater

This newsletter is published monthly. Submissions, corrections and inquiries should be directed to the newsletter editor. Articles and graphics in most IBM-PC formats are OK. You can leave items on PEPMBX, at Packet address:  
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