



SIGNAL



de N1NC

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This Month's Meeting

Please note that the May and June meetings will be held at the Peppereil Library. This month is the annual Peppereil Library Book Sale uses the Community Center and next month is a dance.

This month's presentation will be on Slow Scan TV on a PC by Erik Johansson KA1EEC.

Now that we have run two exam sessions to get a group of examiners and instructors we plan to run an emergency communications course so we would be interested in what format would work best for members.

Earl WR1Y will have a laminator for people who need their license or other card-sized items protected.

Bring your outgoing QSL's to the meeting and have the club send them out. See Bob W1XP.

Bring your short Shows-and-Tell to the meetings. They are always welcome. Its always interesting to see the variety of things people are working on.

SKYWARN Training

There will be SKYWARN training in Townsend on May 30th. It has been arranged by Townsend Emergency Management and will be held at the North Middlesex Regional High School on Route 119 in Townsend. The training will take place Thursday May 30th from 7-10 PM. Although the program has always been interesting and informative they have revised it for this years sessions so it should be even better. For more information or to register contact Bill at 978-597-2348 nz1d@arrl.net.

ARRL Antenna Modeling Course EC-004

A Review By Bob Reif W1XP

The ARRL has recently started offering, through the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium four courses. Three of these courses are on Emergency Communications. EC-001, EC-002, and EC-003 are ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Communications course, Levels, I, II, and III. The fourth course is EC-004, Antenna Modeling. I recently completed this course and Stan asked if I would write something for the Signal on the course. So here goes.

The course is offered through the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium in New Britain CT. It is offered over the WEB. They award credits in the continuing education program upon successful completion. The cost of the course is \$80 for ARRL members and \$110 for non-members. The subject of the course is antenna modeling using NEC-2 computer software. NEC stands for Numerical Electromagnetics Code. This is a program to analyze the Electromagnetic fields around a structure simulated by a series of thin conductors. Antennas are only a part of the many things that can be analyzed with this core program. But these are the things that interest us. The -2 version of the program is not the latest version. It is the version that is available in the public domain. The programs are the results of a government supported program at the Lawrence-Livermore National Laboratory. This development program has been ongoing for many years. The course specifically covers two commercial packages that are currently available to amateurs. These commercial programs are user-friendly shell programs that surround the NEC-2 core program and process the input and output data to and from the NEC-2 core program. These programs are similar but do provide different features to the user. They are EZNEC, by Roy Lawallen W7EL, and NEC-Win Plus by Nittany-Scientific. More on this later. The course is a 12

week, 32 lesson course. There are 31 formal lessons and the 32nd is a final Assessment 25 question test. Successful completion requires a test score of 80% or higher.

The course material is written by L. B. Cebik, W4RNL and edited by Dean Straw, N6BV. W4RNL has written many antenna articles including the QST Nov. 2000, to Feb. 2001, *A Beginners Guide to Modeling With NEC* series of articles. These articles would be a good starting point for anyone considering taking this course. The subject material of the course is developed in 14 chapters of text. There are two to three lessons per chapter. You do not need any prior experience in antenna modeling to successfully take the course, but a reasonable knowledge of antennas and transmission lines is a good starting place. A review of the antenna and transmission line chapters in the ARRL Handbook before starting the course would be a helpful review for those that feel they are rusty on the basics. The above mentioned articles are also recommended. You can take a sample lesson on the ARRL WEB site. You will need a copy of at least one of the above mentioned programs to get the most out of the course. You need to consider this in the total cost of the course if you do not now have software. You are expected to run models and observe the results using one of the two programs. The programs are described in detail in the early part of the course so you can delay purchasing a program until you have learned a bit of the basics of the two programs. Then purchase the program via a download and catch-up on the course activities. The author/instructor switches back and forth between the two different programs through out the entire course and it can be a bit distracting from the course material. Like most normal technical course material it builds on previous lessons as the course progresses. I feel the structure and organization of the material is very good. With 32 lessons and 12 weeks to complete the course that is just under 3 lessons a week. To get the most out of the course I think you can plan on spending three evenings a week on the course. You probably can read the material and take the quiz in just over an hour, but to get more out of the course you should plan on spending time doing the suggested exercises in each lesson. Planning three hours is not unreasonable. The advantage, or disadvantage, of the course is that since it is offered on the WEB you can go at your own pace. Some students in the course were taking one lesson a day. I did this myself as I had to complete the course in less than the allotted 12 weeks. I don't recommend this but go at the pace that is comfortable for you. The student is assigned a mentor that you can ask questions via E mail if you are having difficulty. Each lesson is followed by a 10 question multiple choice quiz. You can grade the quiz as you go

or after completion of the 10 questions. The results of the quiz are only available to you. It is not available to the instructor or mentor. Each lesson uses a number of antenna models that are downloaded to the student and become part of the antenna model file in the students NEC based commercial program. In fact there are 251 of them. Many of the models are repeated or have only slight modifications to illustrate a point. These models are to be run by the student and modified to explore different aspects of the antenna model and program. This is where the real learning about antennas and modeling can take place. I did feel several times during the course that the course was as much about antennas as it was about antenna modeling. It is fair to say that if you don't know much about the various types of antennas before you take the course, you will after taking it.

I decided I wanted to take the course when I heard it was being offered. I've been modeling antennas for years, and you might ask why I would want to take the course. Well I found it a worthwhile experience. It was interesting to learn why some things I had learned the hard way are the way they are. It also covered topics that I don't normally use. In addition much of my modeling has been with Mininec. This is a different analysis program which at present does not have a commercial offering. It was also interesting to see a shift in modeling emphasis. When I first started modeling antennas there was much more emphasis on developing a model that would run quickly on the slow machines of the day. There is much more emphasis today on two decimal accuracy. I think a bit misplaced. There are other modeling programs that were not covered in the course in any detail although some were mentioned. Maybe this will be corrected in the future. I think this course will give some amateurs a better understanding what antenna modeling can and cannot do. And that is a step in the right direction.

One final note, a second class has not been announced. I can only assume that they are waiting for the first class period to finish on May 21st before announcing a second class. The first class was filled in so short a time they started the classes early. This all leads me to suspect there will be more courses of this nature offered in the future. Besides the Emergency Communications courses and this antenna modeling course, I can imagine study courses for the amateur FCC exams being offered as well as other topics in amateur radio both technical and operational. In our hectic society of today, the ability to study on your schedule is a real advantage of WEB based courses. I'm sure we will see many more.

73 Bob W1XP

Last Month's Meeting

Last month we held elections and the results are listed below. We also filled two appointed positions of PIO and Librarian. Thanks to everyone who volunteered in one way or another to help run the club.

President	Erik KA1RV
V. President	Earl WR1Y
Treasurer	Ralph KD1SM
Secretary	Ian NZ1B
Board expire 2005	Les N1SV
Board expire 2004	Bob W1XP
Board expire 2003	Den KD2S
Public Information Officer	
Librarian	Pete N1ZRB

The function of the PIO is to submit releases to the local media like newspapers and cable for possible publication.

The Librarian will maintain the club collection of books and videotapes and make them available to members. Currently there are half a dozen video tapes and six sets of ARRL Emergency Communications books. There are also several code oscillators that can be used for code practice.

Last month's speaker was Den Connors and the subject was "Mobile & Portable Communications" - making connections to a mobile world. Den discussed his arrangement of UHF/VHF and HF radios arranged in backpacks with batteries that can be used in mobile, portable, and field situations with quick changeover.

Den also displayed an array of Anderson Powerpole configurations and discussed the proper assembly of the Anderson Powerpole connectors.

If anyone needs to get some Powerpole pins crimped there are at least four members with suitable crimping tools. See Den, Stan or Ralph if you need to crimp some pins for the Powerpoles.

Adopt-A-Highway

April 21st was our first road cleanup of 2002. After the long winter layoff there was plenty to pick up. We bagged 21 bags of trash. The following members participated in the work.

Earl WR1Y, Don N1HVA, Peter N1ZRG, Bob W1XP, Jim AA1PO, John KB1HDO, Herm WW1HR, Larry KB1ESR, and Stan KD1LE.

Groton Road Race

The Groton Road Race went off as scheduled April 28th. At times it seemed like good practice for a hurricane emergency. While we all like a nice sunny day for our public service events they are practice to be ready for a real emergency. These seldom come on a nice sunny day. Learning how to operate and keep oneself comfortable in bad weather is a valuable skill and we all learned a lesson or two at this years race.



Photo courtesy of John KB1HDO

Thanks to the following who participated in the event.

K1LJN Mike Goldberg	K1SUB Pete Speen
K1TWF Mike Reisbeck	K1WD William Davis
KA1EEC Eric Johansson	KA1JVU Karen Reif
KA1RV Erik Piip	KB1ESR Larry Swezey
KB1GID Ron Wood	KB1HD0 John Griswold
KD1LE Stanley Pozerski	KD1SM Ralph Swick
KD2S Den Connors	N1HTS Jim Evins
N1ICB Robert Spence	N1IWW Ed Anderson
N1LLG Daniel Daigneault	N1NWE Don Cambel
N1PBL Lynda Pozerski	N1PUI Scotti Fuller
N1RXV Bob Schmeichel	N1ZRG Peter Norwood
N8VIM James Hein	NF1A Art Pizo
W1OJP Bob Belleville	W1TQ Dave Foner
W1XP Robert Reif	WA1I Jeff Moskow
WA1TAC Rod Hersh	WO1N Ken Caruso
WR1Y Earl Russell	W6ZF Jim Martin
AG1I Tom Hughes	W1OG Guss Fallgren

ARRL Emergency Communications Test

The Nashoba Valley Amateur Radio Club (NVARC) sponsored another ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course (ARECC) open examination session, on Saturday, April 27th in Pepperell. This is the second exam session given in Eastern Massa-

chusetts, with the first having been held by NVARC on March 16th.

Ten hams in the Eastern Massachusetts section of the ARRL took the exam this time, and all passed elements of the ARECC. Four hams reached level II Intermediate certification and five hams reached the level III Advanced certification.

The Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course (ARECC) is actually a series of three courses presented at different levels. The level I course consists of the basics of emergency communications, while level II focuses on intermediate level topics involving net control, working with served agencies and other topics. Level III is an advanced course, dealing with ARES organization and volunteer management, among other topics.



April 27th Nashoba Valley ARC ARECC Exam Session in Progress

The ARECC course is a part of the ARRL Certification and Continuing Education Program, and can be taken on-line as:

Introduction to Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course (EC-001), Intermediate Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course (EC-002), and Advanced Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course (EC-003).

(See the ARRL web page at www.arrl.org/cce for further details.)

The League has also suggested that active ARES groups and amateur clubs provide these courses in a

classroom environment, for groups that prefer classroom interaction and instruction. Finally, the League also offers certification exams for hams who prefer self-study, and have had considerable experience with traffic handling and public service communications.

However, the NVARC group sought to provide a mechanism for initial, early certification of amateurs in the eastern Massachusetts section and environs, as a kind of bootstrapping mechanism to get certified instructors into the section, and then to offer the ARECC in a classroom environment. A secondary goal has been to provide an avenue for experienced operators to obtain ARECC certification by the self-review and open examination process.

In the first exams held in March, eight hams in the Eastern Massachusetts section of the ARRL took the exam, and all passed elements of the ARECC. Seven hams passed the EC-001 Basic course exam, six passed the level II Intermediate course exam, and five hams passed the level III Advanced course exam. The volunteer Certification Examiners for that session were Steve Telsey, N1BDA and Darrel Malloy, K1EJ, both active hams in emergency communications in the area.

May Board of Directors Meeting

Due to scheduling difficulties no meeting was held. If there is business for the board please bring it to the monthly meeting.

Public Service List

Public Service Volunteer Opportunities in the New England Division

Date	Event	Location
Event Contact	Tel/Email	
May 19	Parker Classic Road Race	Devens MA
Stan KD1LE	978-433-5090	kd1le@amsat.org
May 19	Golden Retriever Rescue	Hudson MA
Charlie W1DOH	978-262-3743	w1doh@arrl.net
Jun 1	Apple Country Challenge	Hollis NH
Neil K1VY	603-465-2788	Neil@innermedia.com
Jun	Narragansett RI ADA	Ocean State 150
Bruce KC1US	781-275-3740	kc1us@net1plus.com
Jun 2	N Kingstown RI ADA	Ocean State 150
Bruce KC1US	781-275-3740	kc1us@net1plus.com

Jun 22- MS Bike Tour Boston to Provincetown MA
John N1PYN 508-588-3250 23 to n1pyn@arrl.net

Jun 27-30 Longsjo Classic Princeton/Fitchburg, MA
Ralph KD1SM kd1sm@arrl.net

MSPCC Yankee Tour

Jul 27 Marlboro to Amherst MA

Jul 28 Amherst to N.Adams MA

Jul 29 N. Adams MA to Poultney VT

Jul 30 Poultney to Burlington VT

Jul 31 Burlington to Killington VT

Aug 1 Killington to Keene NH

Aug 2 Keene NH to Marlboro MA

Bruce KC1US 781-275-3740 kc1us@net1plus.com

This list is published periodically as demand warrants by Stan KD1LE and Ralph KD1SM. Our usual distribution is via packet to NEBBS, via Internet mail to the arrl-nediv-list and ema-arrl distribution lists, and on the World Wide Web (see URL below). If other mailing list owners wish us to distribute via their lists we will be happy to oblige. Permission is herewith granted to republish this list in its entirety provided credit is given to the authors and the URL below is included. Send comments, corrections, and updates to:

(via packet) KD1SM@K1UGM.#EMA.MA.USA,

(via Internet) KD1SM@ARRL.NET.

We make an attempt to confirm entries with the coordinator unless the information is from another published source. We very much appreciate the assistance we have been receiving from our 'scouts'; everyone is welcome to send us postings.

World Wide Web users: the most recent copy of this list is maintained as <http://purl.org/hamradio/publicservice/nediv>.

From The ARRL Letter

AMATEURS MUSTER FOR WEATHER EMERGENCIES

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) teams activated or stood by to assist as severe weather struck several states in recent days. The National Weather Service (NWS) said storms over the April 27-28 weekend left pockets of devastation from Kentucky to Maryland.

"It has been a wild 24 hours in Charles County, Maryland," said Maryland ARRL Section Manager Tom Abernethy, W3TOM. A tornado April 28 badly damaged the business district in La Plata. Among structures destroyed or damaged were the Charles County Chapter of the American Red Cross office and the building housing the Charles County Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Abernethy said Michelle Sack, N3YRZ--on the job at the LaPlata hospital at the time--broke into a SKYWARN net to report a tornado only one-half mile away to the west heading directly for her location. "She tracked and described the tornado until it struck her location and then continued to provide on-the-scene assessments," Abernethy said. Other amateurs along the storm's track also provided reports on severity and damage.

Charles County ARES Emergency Coordinator and RACES Officer Mike Tackish, KA3GRW, activated the Charles County ARES/RACES team's emergency plan. Amateurs established a UHF command/control net while VHF tactical nets supplied communications for the hospital, which was left without telephone service or internal communication.

ARES/RACES also worked with the county's Director of Emergency Services, Donald McGuire, and provided communication at Red Cross shelters. ARES/RACES teams from Prince Georges and Calvert counties supported Charles County ARES/RACES. After an activation that lasted until 2 AM the following day, amateurs returned a few hours later to enable direct communication between damage assessment teams in the field and the Charles County EOC.

Amateurs specially trained in National Weather Service severe weather investigations also assisted NWS Meteorologist Barbara Watson of the Washington/Baltimore NWS office in its follow-up investigation of the tornado, a record-breaker at F5 on the Fujita scale with winds of 261 MPH or greater.

"Amateur Radio has once again proved to be of immense value to our community in time of disaster," Abernethy said. "With large areas of the county without commercial power and cell phones not useful due to overloading, Amateur Radio provided a communications bridge in the time of need until normal services were restored."

In Kentucky, Section Emergency Coordinator Ron Dodson, KA4MAP, said the Wide Area Repeaters Net (WARN) and Meade/Breckinridge County ARES

responded April 28 to assist both the National Weather Service and Meade County Emergency Management when severe weather struck that state.

Dodson said a weather-spotting net activated after a severe thunderstorm warning was issued for the two counties. A few minutes later, a tornado was spotted in Breckinridge County. A second report of a possible tornado west of Irvington was followed by damage reports east of the town. As a result of amateur reports, the NWS issued a tornado warning. Several homes in the Irvington area were damaged or destroyed, Dodson said, and one person died. No major damage was reported in Meade County, although the area experienced power outages, high winds and heavy rainfall. Dodson said 11 amateurs participated in the response.

Floyd Sense, K8AC, notes that a tornado that swept through the Jackson Township, Ohio, area April 28 severely damaged the home of Jerry LaRocca, KF8EB, in Massillon. "Jerry and his wife, while in the house when the tornado struck, were uninjured," Sense said. "The home next door, about 50 feet away, was completely leveled."

In Erie, Pennsylvania, Lee Williams, N3APP, reported that a line of severe thunderstorms that plowed through his area April 28 left a trail of destruction. The Radio Association of Erie was providing communications for a March of Dimes nine-mile walk, which was called off after the severe weather hit. "SKYWARN was activated, and the event's net control was advised that a tornado warning had been issued," Williams said.

High winds damaged buildings at the Erie International Airport, which also suffered a power outage. Trees and power lines also were downed, but no injuries were reported.

In Missouri on April 24, tornadoes struck southeastern Missouri. Hardest hit were Butler, Carter and Madison counties. More than 100 homes were damaged or destroyed. ARRL Missouri Section Emergency Coordinator Patrick Boyle, K0JPB, said ARES teams and individual amateurs remained on standby to assist if needed during the recovery period.

ARES TEAMS ACTIVATE FOLLOWING FATAL TRAIN WRECKS

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) teams in California and Northern Florida activated recently to assist in the wake of separate train wrecks.

In Florida more than half the cars of an Amtrak "Auto Train" carrying 418 passengers and 34 crew members derailed April 18 near Crescent City. Putnam County ARES established emergency communication from the site—on the Putnam/Volusia county line—shortly after the wreck and also staffed a shelter and two hospitals. Four people died as a result of the mishap and more than 100 others were injured.

Billy Williams, N4UF, of Florida Crown District ARES, said the American Red Cross responded in the accident's immediate aftermath. Red Cross communications were set up on a VHF repeater with help from Duval County amateurs. Other amateurs pitched in to staff a Red Cross shelter and the Putnam County emergency operations center. ARES members also were deployed at a local hospital as well as at hospitals in Jacksonville that were put on alert to receive patients.

Within 15 minutes of the wreck, the Florida Crown Emergency Net activated on a linked repeater system. A third repeater served as a base of operation for Putnam County ARES, under the direction of Putnam County Emergency Coordinator Mark Bradford, WF3F. That repeater was linked to a Jacksonville repeater (W4IJJ) to handle Red Cross requests between the Jacksonville Red Cross Headquarters and the scene of the wreck some 60 miles away, Williams said.

The shelter and triage center at Crescent City High School reported a peak population of more than 300 via Amateur Radio—most believed to be passengers who were able to walk away from the scene. Amtrak later bussed remaining passengers from the shelter to hotels for the night, and the amateur operation was able to shut down.

More than a dozen hams assisted in the ARES response. Additional details are on the North Florida Amateur Radio Society Balanced Modulator Web site <http://home.earthlink.net/~bfwillia/_wsn/page4.html>

In California, a freight train collided head-on April 23 with a Metrolink double-decker commuter train. Ironically, the mishap occurred just as hospitals and emergency responders in Orange County were about to hold a large-scale drill to test patient triage and transportation procedures for mass casualty incidents.

Two dozen members of the Hospital Disaster Support Communication System (HDSCS)—a special ARES group that always participates in the drill—were awaiting assignments when word came in of the train collision. Two passengers were killed and more

than 200 were injured--many seriously. Orange County ARES Emergency Coordinator and HDSCS Net Control April Moell, WA6OPS, immediately assigned the drill-ready hams to the 14 hospitals expected to receive crash victims. For the next 4-1/2 hours, 28 HDSCS members provided vital links among the hospitals, the county's ambulance dispatch center and the county's emergency medical service agency.

Net traffic included verifying victim dispatch and patient counts, providing hospitals with information for inquiring family members, and liaison with hams supporting the Red Cross. Within some hospitals, hams provided direct communication among triage areas, emergency departments, and command posts.

Moell is founder and Emergency Coordinator of the ARES group. More information is available on the HDSCS Web site <<http://www.hdscs.org>>.--thanks to Billy Williams, N4UF and Joe Moell, K0OV

IMAX FILM SPACE STATION CALLED "BREATH TAKING"

ARISS International Chairman Frank Bauer, A3HDO, used the words "fantastic" and "breath-taking" to describe the world premiere of the IMAX film Space Station on April 16 and 17. The film, now showing (or scheduled to show) in selected theaters nationwide, includes a segment on the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station program. ARISS set up a display booth at the movie's opening at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, DC.

"It was pretty awesome to see Bill Shepherd [KD5GSL] talk to the Texas students with our ARISS equipment in 3D," Bauer said afterward. "This is a must-see movie." Space Station is the first 3D IMAX space movie. Made possible by NASA, the film is presented by Lockheed Martin and narrated by Academy Award nominee Tom Cruise.

Seabrook Intermediate School in Texas provided the earthbound setting for ARISS' role in the IMAX production. Footage with Shepherd answering a question during a school contact was shot in January 2001 during Shepherd's tour of duty as Expedition 1 commander. The question segment and the answer segment then were matched up during editing for the final production.

Bauer said that seeing Space Station is the closest one can get to experiencing space without actually

going there. "It was spectacular from the perspective that you really felt like you were there," he said.

The ARISS display at the National Air and Space Museum premiere attracted visits from member of Congress, Bauer said, as well as officials from NASA, IMAX and Lockheed Martin.

Among the special guests were Shepherd, the ISS Expedition 1 crew commander; Yuri Usachev, the Expedition 2 commander, Brian Duffy, N5WQW, an ardent SAREX/ARISS supporter on several shuttle flights; Toni Meyers, the IMAX film producer; and Jack Dailey, the museum's curator.

"We now have a permanent legacy in film," Bauer said. For more information, visit the IMAX Web site <<http://www.imax.com/spacestation/>>.--AMSAT News Service provided some information for this report

PRAISE FOR AMATEUR RADIO AIRS DURING NATIONAL HURRICANE CONFERENCE

At the National Hurricane Conference <http://www.hurricanemeeting.com> April 1-5 in Orlando, Florida, representatives of Florida-based served agencies praised the role of Amateur Radio in hurricane-related communication emergencies. Meteorologists, emergency management professionals and disaster-relief organizations from hurricane-prone states use the annual conference to exchange ideas and learn about new developments and issues involving emergency preparedness.

"Amateur Radio really shines during callouts," said John Fleming, the communications officer of the Florida Division of Emergency Management during an April 2 Amateur Radio training session organized by Mike Carter, N3PDK. Carter chairs the Amateur Radio Topic Committee for the conference.

Fleming said his agency "just wants effective communication" during emergencies, and he described how Amateur Radio fits into Florida's emergency plans. Since the state capital of Tallahassee is in the ARRL Northern Florida Section, Fleming explained, his office follows the Northern Florida ARES plan to take advantage of Amateur Radio resources.

Santa Rosa County, Florida, Director of Emergency Management Dave Ling echoed Fleming's sentiments to the Amateur Radio operators in attendance. "We really appreciate your efforts, and I got a whole lot out of this conference," he said.

During the hurricane season, which starts June 1 and runs through November, the National Hurricane Center in Miami benefits from the support of a corps of Amateur Radio volunteers who staff the center's W4EHW <<http://www.fiu.edu/org/w4ehw>> amateur station. W4EHW Amateur Radio Coordinator John McHugh, KU4GY, and Assistant Coordinator Julio Ripoll, WD4JR, talked about their ongoing work and provided an update on the Caribbean Amateur Radio Meteorological Emergency Network, or CARMEN (See "Public Service," Jan 2002 QST, p 85). W4EHW gathers real-time storm data from members of the Hurricane Watch Net on 20 meters as well as from other sources, including the Internet.

ARRL is among the many sponsors of the annual National Hurricane Conference. ARRL Field Organization/Public Service Team Leader Steve Ewald, WV1X, represented ARRL Headquarters during the event.

Amateurs representing Florida's three ARRL sections were on hand for the conference. Attending from the Northern Florida Section were Section Manager Rudy Hubbard, WA4PUP, and Assistant SM Steve Richbourg, KO4TT. From West Central Florida were Section Manager Dave Armbrust, AE4MR, Section Emergency Coordinator/Assistant SM Paul Toth, NA4AR, and Public Information Coordinator Jack Doyle, WX1JAD. In attendance from Southern Florida was SEC and Assistant SM Jim Goldsberry, KD4GR.

During the gathering, Jerry Herman, N3BDW, formally announced his retirement as manager of the Hurricane Watch Net <<http://www.hwn.org>>. Mike Pilgrim, K5MP, of Boca Raton, Florida, was introduced as the new net manager.

Colorado State University hurricane expert Dr. Bill Gray announced his latest predictions for the upcoming season on April 5 at the Orlando conference. Gray predicted 12 "named" storms and 7 hurricanes--three of them major.

NEW MEXICO ARES/RACES TEAMS SUPPORT FIRE RESPONSE

Amateurs in New Mexico supported the activities of responding agencies in late March when four wildfires broke out at approximately the same time within a few miles of each other. One of the fires destroyed more than two dozen houses.

Working as a combined Lincoln County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) team, amateurs

provided local communication support as well as an HF link between the fire incident command post and the state emergency operations center in the capital city of Santa Fe.

"This was the first time the team members wore both hats during an actual event," said Lincoln County Emergency Coordinator and RACES Officer Rick Sohl, K5RIC.

Amateurs also helped the Rio Hondo Chapter of the American Red Cross, which provided staff, equipment and food to feed fire-suppression teams as well as those staffing the incident command headquarters, other support staffers and those forced to take refuge in Red Cross shelters or seek first aid. More than 1000 people had to be evacuated.

Sohl said the so-called Alto Fire got its start March 23 in Lincoln County and destroyed 29 homes and a barn. "Someone putting fireplace ashes outside without making sure the ashes were out caused this fire," he said. The blaze burned nearly 1000 acres. A second fire started in Otero County on the Mescalero Apache Reservation. Called the Hondo Fire, it subsequently crossed into Lincoln County and burned some 17,000 acres.

Sohl said local repeater nets coordinated support personal, equipment disbursement and food distribution. In addition to the HF link with the state EOC, the ARES/RACES team networked the Red Cross shelter, first aid station, fire command post, three county-wide gateway net control stations and five mobile radio units via Amateur Radio. "The two fires required the Red Cross to set up two shelters and first aid stations to deal with two areas," Sohl said. "Two smaller fires were being suppressed at the same time."

The ARES/RACES team was able to integrate smoothly into the Red Cross response activities, Sohl observed. "Feeding this many people can be a logistical problem," he said. "This chapter has provided such support each year during fire season, so they know how to do the job correctly and have found that a radio network can improve efficiency at a time when it can make a major difference."

Sohl said this week that while the Alto and Hondo fires now are out, high winds plus a warmer-than-normal winter and a lack of snowfall have combined to create an extremely high fire danger situation.

In all, more than three dozen amateurs--including ARRL New Mexico Section Manager Joe Knight, W5PDY--were involved in providing communication

support during the fire emergency. More information is available on the Lincoln County ARES/RACES Web site <<http://www.zianet.com/sohl>>.

April Treasurer Report\$

April income was \$20 in membership dues, \$25.95 net from the FoxFinder project, \$15.22 in bank interest, \$43 from the book raffle, \$65 from Powerpole connector sales, net \$0.32 from the ARECC Exam session.

Expenses were \$144.05 for Powerpole connectors and \$3.45 for spray paint for the safety vests, leaving a net income for the month of \$21.99.



Current balances:
General fund: \$4821.26
Community fund: \$1717.55
73, -Ralph KD1SM



Nashoba Valley Amateur Radio Club

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<http://purl.org/hamradio/club/nvarc/>

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V Pres.: Earl Russell WR1Y
Secretary: Ian Norrish NZ1B
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Les Peters 2002-2005
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Photographer: Ralph Swick KD1SM
PIO: open
Peter Nordberg Librarian
N1NC Trustee: Bruce Blain K1BG

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
53.890 - 100Hz Repeater

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