

THE CIRCLE CITY COMMUNICATOR

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE CORONA NORCO AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
May 2008 – Editor & Rumor Monger: Fred Roberts, w6tkv@aceweb.com

MAY PROGRAM

This program will provide every member with a better insight into how hams in other areas prepare themselves to be ready to respond to disasters and emergencies. The evening's speaker is our own Leon Jones, N7TEB, who during our February program (*GETTING TO KNOW YOU*) advised his main interest in amateur radio was emergency communications.

Before moving to California, Leon was an active ARES member, and he will discuss how that group readied themselves for the worst. If nothing else, this program will give everyone further insight into the task we all have before us. See you on May 5th.

FIELD DAY 2008

Until a few years ago, there was no EOC class in our annual ARRL Field Day. Apparently, the ever increasing integration of ham radio into the country's EOC sites led to this change. For the most part, the nation's Field Day operations are held in parks and powered by gasoline generators or solar panels. And, this is a terrific way to spend a weekend! Saturday dinner is usually a pot luck dinner which is pretty enjoyable too! For many years, CNARC always enjoyed Field Day in a park and even found a park with shade trees.

The value of Field Day to CNARC at present is to use it as a training vehicle for all of our members. The benefits are a) becoming comfortable with our HF/VHF and our VHF radios, 2) getting used to computer logging, 3) getting used to listening to signals which are not "full quieting", 4) getting used to other stations being close in frequency, 4) getting used to operating for some length of time - particularly during very early morning and very late evening hours, 5) getting the habit of being concise.

Field Day has always been promoted as preparing for disaster communications, and it does achieve that. After several years being a part of Field Day, your Editor came to realize that if someone called and said, "There is an emergency and we have to set up a station in Indio.", (or anywhere else) - he could pack up and leave home pretty quickly with all the radios, cables, coax, masts, antennas, tables and chairs needed to set up a station - and even bring a generator (and the RV, too).

For newcomers to Field Day, the basic idea is to contact as many stations on as many bands as possible in the 24 hours between Saturday - 1800Z and Sunday - 1800Z (everyone logs in UTC and 1800Z = 11AM local). Field Day is always the fourth weekend in June. Contact exchanges are, for example, 2A ORG where 2 is the number of stations, A is the class (A means emergency power and a radio running less

than 150W) and *ORG* means the Orange section. The number of stations (i.e., 2) varies from 1 to as many as 25; the letter (A) changes to reflect, operating mobile, operating from home (commercial power), operating from home (emergency power), and now operating from an EOC.

Some clubs operate with solar power, others just run CW, and still others run QRP (less than 5W). And, if you run a VHF station, you don't count it as a station, but you get all the points. Another free station is a GOTA station (Get On The Air) for new hams and non-hams too.

One of our jobs at our May meeting is to plan our hours of operation, i.e. do we plan on keeping two stations on the air for 24 hours, or for example, will we operate Saturday from 11:00AM to Midnight and on Sunday from 7:00AM to 11:00AM. And, what kind of schedule might we set for VHF where the number of potential contacts is more limited. In a nutshell, "Do we want to hammer this, or do we want to coast?" It would be worthwhile to begin establishing a tentative operating schedule, who wants to operate and for how many hours, and so on.

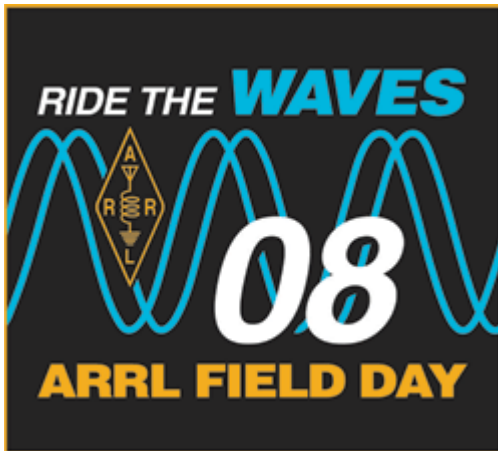
THE CNARC STORY

Our repeater – 147.060/+ MHz, PL-162.2 Hz

WebSite – <http://www.w6pwt.org>

Our next meeting will be at 7:00PM, on Monday, June 2nd.

ARRL T-SHIRTS AND PINS



Each year, the ARRL offers a new T-Shirt, but this is the first year for a design on a black shirt. These are available in a full range of sizes (Small, Medium, Large, XL, 2XL, 3XL, 4XL), and the cost is \$12.00. If we order T-Shirts, we should order them in one batch to reduce shipping cost. Pins are \$2.00.

JOIN THE ARRL

As an ARRL Affiliated Club, we must have at least 51% of our members as ARRL Members. The ARRL is our "national radio club" and definitely of value to every one of us.

Aside from the obvious routine benefits (Field Day, contests, QST Magazine, several different news bulletins, DX QSL Bureau - in & out, use of W1AW/6 as a special event station at our local ARRL conventions, etc.), the biggest benefit is the ARRL's continued and diligent efforts in protecting our many HF and VHF frequencies.

The most recent success is covered in the attached ARRL Bulletin, ARLB008 (page 3 and 4). It covers the FCC's efforts to approve Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) which would have RF on every power line and creating large amounts of QRM for most every ham in the greater Los Angeles area! The only hams who would escape this QRM would be those fortunate enough to have underground power lines - you know, the kind most of us in Riverside county area don't have.

After reading the bulletin, I wondered how much the ARRL has spent in opposing protecting the U.S, hams from the appearance of BPL on our power lines. And so, I sent Dave Sumner, ARRL Chief Executive Officer, an e-mail, and he responded very quickly.

(continued on next column)

Hi Fred,

We have been battling BPL at the FCC for five years -- yesterday was the 5th anniversary of the release of the FCC's Notice of Inquiry in ET Docket No. 03-104 -- but the opening salvo in our battle was actually the October 2002 QST editorial, "Radio Smog."

It would be difficult to put a price tag on the effort. We could figure it out for WilmerHale and for Chris, who we compensate on the basis of billable hours (*attorneys*), but for many of us -- including but by no means limited to Ed Hare, Paul Rinaldo, and me -- it has represented an opportunity cost; the ARRL would have paid our salaries anyway but we would have spent our time productively in other areas. The same is true of the time of many volunteers who have been working on the issue.

Even leaving opportunity cost out of the equation, you can say without fear of factual contradiction that the ARRL has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on the BPL effort. Our only objective has been the protection of Amateur Radio. The support of more than 147,000 ARRL members is what makes everything the ARRL does possible, but to mount an effective spectrum defense takes even more. The BPL effort was made possible by the voluntary contributions of thousands of members who understand the need to go beyond basic membership dues in their support.

By the way, our BPL effort has not been limited to the FCC and the courts. As a licensed service we're entitled to better protection than the FCC was willing to give us, but we did not put all our eggs in that basket. We have been working the issue on Capitol Hill as well as, perhaps most importantly, with the BPL industry. Ed Hare has made great strides in getting across to the technical staffs of BPL companies that they had to take interference to Amateur Radio seriously, and with a few minor exceptions they have done so. The way second-generation BPL is being deployed goes beyond what the FCC rules require in avoiding interference in the ham bands.

I hope this is helpful, Fred. Thanks for your strong support.

73, Dave Sumner, K1ZZ

(More CNARC articles at end of page 4)

QST de W1AW
ARRL Bulletin 8 - ARLB008
From ARRL Headquarters
Newington CT April 25, 2008
To all radio amateurs

SB QST ARL ARLB008

**ARLB008 - Court Finds FCC Violated Administrative Procedure Act
in BPL
Decision**

The US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit today released its decision on the ARRL's Petition for Review of the FCC's

Orders adopting rules governing broadband over power line (BPL) systems. The Court agreed with the ARRL on two major points and remanded the rules to the Commission. Writing for the three-judge panel of Circuit Judges Rogers, Tatel and Kavanaugh, Judge Rogers summarized: "The Commission failed to satisfy the notice and comment requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) by redacting studies on which it relied in promulgating the rule and failed to provide a reasoned explanation for its choice of the extrapolation factor for measuring Access BPL emissions."

The Court agreed with the ARRL that the FCC had failed to comply with the APA by not fully disclosing for public comment the staff studies on which it relied. The Court also agreed with the ARRL that the Commission erred in not providing a reasoned justification for its choice of an extrapolation factor of 40 dB per decade for Access BPL systems and in offering "no reasoned explanation for its dismissal of empirical data that was submitted at its invitation." The Court was not persuaded by the ARRL's arguments on two other points, on which it found that the Commission had acted within its discretion.

The conclusion that the FCC violated the APA hinges on case law. "It would appear to be a fairly obvious proposition that studies upon which an agency relies in promulgating a rule must be made available during the rulemaking in order to afford interested persons meaningful notice and an opportunity for comment," the Court said, adding that "there is no APA precedent allowing an agency to cherry-pick a study on which it has chosen to rely in part."

The Court continued, "The League has met its burden to demonstrate prejudice by showing that it 'has something useful to say' regarding the unredacted studies citation omitted that may allow it to 'mount a credible challenge' if given the opportunity to comment." Information withheld by the Commission included material under the headings "New Information Arguing for Caution on HF BPL" and "BPL Spectrum Tradeoffs." The Court concluded that "no precedent sanctions such a 'hide and seek' application of the APA's notice and comment requirements."

With regard to the extrapolation factor, the Court ordered: "On remand, the Commission shall either provide a reasoned justification for retaining an extrapolation factor of 40 dB per decade for Access BPL systems sufficient to indicate that it has grappled with the 2005 studies, or adopt another factor and

provide a reasoned explanation for it." The studies in question were conducted by the Office of Communications, the FCC's counterpart in the United Kingdom, and were submitted by the ARRL, along with the League's own analysis showing that an extrapolation factor closer to 20 dB per decade was more appropriate, as part of the record in its petition for reconsideration of the FCC's BPL Order. The Court said that the FCC "summarily dismissed" this data in a manner that "cannot substitute for a reasoned explanation." The Court also noted that the record in the FCC proceeding included a study by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration that "itself casts doubt on the Commission's decision."

The briefs for the ARRL were prepared by a team of attorneys at WilmerHale, a firm with extensive appellate experience, with assistance from ARRL General Counsel Christopher D. Imlay, W3KD. Oral argument for the ARRL was conducted by Jonathan J. Frankel of WilmerHale. Oral argument was heard on October 23, 2007; the Court's decision was released more than six months later.

After reading the decision, General Counsel Imlay observed, "The decision of the Court of Appeals, though long in coming, was well worth the wait. It is obvious that the FCC was overzealous in its advocacy of BPL, and that resulted in a rather blatant cover-up of the technical facts surrounding its interference potential. Both BPL and Amateur Radio would be better off had the FCC dealt with the interference potential in an honest and forthright manner at the outset. Now there is an opportunity to finally establish some rules that will allow BPL to proceed, if it can in configurations that don't expose licensed radio services to preclusive interference in the HF bands."

ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, added: "We are gratified that the Court decided to hold the FCC's feet to the fire on such a technical issue as the 40 dB per decade extrapolation factor. It is also gratifying to read the Court's strong support for the principles underlying the Administrative Procedure Act. Now that the Commission has been ordered to do what it should have done in the first place, we look forward to participating in the proceedings on remand, and to helping to craft rules that will provide licensed radio services with the interference protection they are entitled to under law."

ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, concluded: "I am very pleased that the Court saw through the FCC's smoke screen and its withholding of valid engineering data that may contradict their position that the interference potential of BPL to Amateur Radio and public safety communications is minimal. The remand back to the FCC regarding their use of an inappropriate extrapolation factor validates the technical competence of Amateur Radio operators and especially of the ARRL Lab under the direction of Ed Hare, W1RFI. We are grateful for the work of our legal team

and especially for the unflagging support of the ARRL membership as we fought the odds in pursuing this appeal."

NEED A TOWER TRAILER?

If you need to rent a tower trailer, you might call Sunbelt Rentals In Anaheim - their number is 714-638-8730. Most tower sections are 20ft long, so an 8ft trailer just doesn't cut it.

OUR NEXT T-HUNT

Our next T-Hunt will take place on Saturday, June 7th at 10:00AM at St. John's Church. Mr. Fox will be our May winner (*the May hunt is 2 days prior to our May meeting*).

We have 4 regulars - KN6CV, AE6GQ, W6TKV and KO6XB. Lunch always follows the hunt at Norco's Best on Hamner Avenue (~ 4th to 5th Streets) in Norco.

All club members who ride along are really treated well. And, guess what? They even get a free ride back to their own cars about 1:00PM. No one who takes up our offer of a first hand look at T-Hunting has to walk 6 miles back to the starting point! We are all just plain good old boys - that seems correct, we are "good", we are "old" and we are "boys".

MY APOLOGIES, BUT . . .

Sorry about the long issue, but hope you join the ARRL if not a member. de W6TKV