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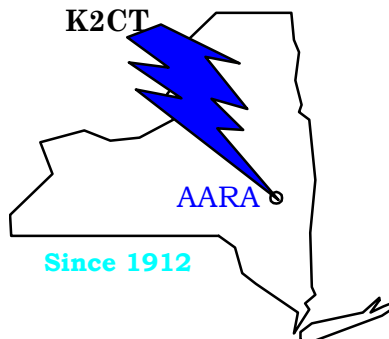
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Affiliated with the American Radio Relay League
An ARRL Special Services Club

AARA

Meets at the
Colonie Community Center
1653 Central Ave. Colonie

Friday Nov. 14

Social Hour 6:55 PM
Meeting 7:45 PM
Refreshments
soda, diet soda, coffee

NOV. Meeting

Richard Frey WA2AAU will be our speaker for November. Richard has been a member of the W2SZ Mt. Greylock UHF/VHF contest team for many years.

This month he will speak to us on RF Exposure. This is a very important topic and one that we all need to be aware of in evaluating our stations and there RF exposure potential.

K2CT Repeater

Talk-in repeater
145.19 (-) MHz
pl tone 100.0hz

or

444.30 (+) w/pl tone 100.0hz

AARA Dues

B-plus is Electronic

Dues are \$15 with B-PLUS available at the K2CT Web page in .pdf format www.qsl.net/k2ct
OR \$20 for first class mailing of the newsletter Checks should be made out to AARA and sent to: Saul Abrams, K2XA, 307 Maple Rd., Slingerlands, NY 12159

Public Service:

Volunteer CONTACT John, WE2F at 283-4304

AARA *WE Need YOU to Volunteer* **AARA**

November 2, 2003 Pumpkin Patrol

Report by Jack Donnelly WA2YBM

It happened again, on a warm and partly cloudy night. The vehicles were parked along the edge of the road. Hour after hour they sat there inhabited by sometimes lonely individuals. They had one thing in common. The radio was tuned to 145.19 Mhz listening for the bad news that never came and didn't want to hear – someone trying to drop a pumpkin or another object off a bridge that crossed the New York State Thruway.

It was Pumpkin Patrol again this year. These devoted individuals have participated many times over the years. Dedicated they are.

Over the two nights, over 40 individuals from various clubs participated.

They came from AARA, TARA, SMARA, SARA, and Central React all united with one idea in mind – to prevent accidents. They succeeded.

The Hams taking part, in no special order were:

Jack Donnelly – WA2YBM,
Mike Boggs – KC2DTL, Randy Stein – KA2TJZ, Bill Houlton – KA2OWW, Ken Clickman – AA2CW,
Mike Joyce – KB2TYC, Dave Gallently, KM2O,
John Naberezny, WE2F, Nathaniel Greenman – KB2HPW, Dave Patti – KB2HPW, Bill Neiger – KC2BBP, Mike Dundon – no call, Tom Stewart – KC2FCR, Barry Leet – WA2CW, Dick Duffy – N2TZQ, Tim Moody – WA2QAC, Frank Gagliardi – KC2HCE, Herb Orth – N2TJM, Dave Kinnerson – WA2VXS, June Kinnerson – KB2JTG, Ed Eades – KC2HNC, Margaret Warner – N2PEK, Bob Messier – N1YBT, June Wilson – KA2VEK, Dwight Ogle – N2SDL, Ken Smith – WA2TQK, Richard Wagner – W2RMW, Mike Alecksynas – N2JVE, Karen Smith – KB2UUC, Mac Smith – KB2SPM, Ken Davis – KB2KFV, Marilyn Davis – KB2JZI, Andy Lichioveri – KB2TSA, Steve Marsh – no call yet.

Also from Central React were Ray Kipp, Bob Snell, John Batchler, Tom Munhall, Dave Wilkinson, Steve Schlamowitz, and T.J. Walker.

Not to be forgotten were the rovers. Ray N2ZQF, Sue KB2IBI with the boys (smart) Alex (that's a pun) and Dave who drove to every location dispensing Hot Cider, Chocolate, donuts etc.

THANKS GANG FOR THE TREATS. Oohhh! they were Sooooo good!

On the other side of the river, Karen and Mac were the rovers on Thursday night with Ken and Marilyn taking over on Friday night.

All told, there were 45 individuals helping out over both nights. What a HUGH group of Public Service people in a relatively small geographic area.

AARA *WE Need YOU to Volunteer* **AARA**

DITTER II--THE RETURN OF THE DITTER

The ARRL Letter Vol. 22, No. 43 Oct 31, 2003

Some solid teamwork between the FCC and the ARRL and accurate direction-finding led some Amateur Radio volunteers to the source of an unidentified and continuous string of dits being transmitted without identification on 14.024.8 MHz. The situation last week was eerily similar to one more than three years ago, when another volunteer eventually tracked down another "ditter"

<<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2000/07/28/2/>> on the West Coast that had plagued 20 meters. After receiving reports of the more recent signal, ARRL Field and Regulatory Correspondent Chuck Skolaut, K0BOG, found he was able to copy it from ARRL Headquarters. The ARRL called upon the FCC's HF Direction Finding (HFDF) facility in Maryland to get a bearing on the signal.

"Really aggravating," is how the HFDF facility's Betty Mallay, KL7AP, described it. "Of course, it doesn't help when others try to 'dit-dit-dit' along with it," she added wryly.

The HFDF facility was able to localize the signal's source to vicinity of Houston, Texas. Skolaut then called on ARRL South Texas Official Observer Coordinator Carl Griffin, KA5KQZ, to see if any of his volunteers had direction-finding equipment that could pin it down.

Two of them--who prefer to remain anonymous--took on the challenge. Their DFing led to a location in a Houston suburb that was within three miles of where the FCC's HFDF facility said it would be.

As in the earlier case, "Ditter II" apparently had no idea his station was transmitting. "I called him on the phone, and he went and checked the station and it had something up against the keyer," one of the volunteers said in his report to Griffin. "He was embarrassed." Left unanswered was why the unidentified amateur's transmitter was powered up and ready to transmit in the first place.

Complimenting the OOs on their quick work, South Texas Section Manager Ray Taylor, N5NAV, took a philosophical view. "I monitored it several times with about S7 signal," he said. "We all make mistakes at times."

Radio controlled ECHOLINK node is up and running. It's on 147.550 simplex using the standard DTMF control codes for ECHOLINK. The coverage area is approximately a 10 mile radius centered on Delmar. For further info contact John, K2QY at jgalt54@aol.com

TEXAS ANTENNA CASE SHOWS PRB-1 IS NO PAPER TIGER

The ARRL Letter Vol. 22, No. 42 Oct 24, 2003

A Texas amateur antenna case has affirmed again that the limited federal preemption known as PRB-1

<<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/local/prb-1.html>> has teeth when it comes to compelling municipalities to reasonably accommodate Amateur Radio communication. It took some time, persistence and considerable aggravation, but in the end the US District Court for the Southern District of Texas--Houston Division ruled in favor of Orin Snook, KB5F, of Missouri City. The court determined in late August that Snook could keep his 114-foot antenna structure.

In a 63-page Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law <<http://users3.ev1.net/~osnook/34.pdf>> that Snook has posted on his Web site, US District Judge David Hittner said the city "failed to meet the FCC's requirement of reasonably accommodating Snook's amateur communication needs in accordance with PRB-1." Missouri City had attempted to limit Snook's tower to 65 feet, limit the size of his antenna array and required removal of the 100-foot structure for which it already had granted him a building permit. Snook, who is ARRL Fort Bend County Emergency Coordinator and an

Official Emergency Station, argued that he needed the higher structure to permit him to operate VHF and UHF effectively in an emergency.

The court declared the city's height restrictions, antenna array restrictions and structure removal requirement "preempted, void and unenforceable." Hittner ordered the city to grant Snook a specific use permit allowing his tower and antennas to remain, although Snook must maintain an existing screening of mature trees surrounding the tower.

Although Texas adopted a PRB-1 statute in 1999, it was Snook who made the city council aware of PRB-1. Even so, the city rejected the recommendation of its planner and building inspector to issue Snook whatever permit was necessary under the relevant federal law.

The court found the city "failed to attempt to negotiate a satisfactory compromise with Snook" and rejected consideration of any height extending above the trees. Snook secured the services of professional engineer Kent Marshall, W5TXV, who testified to Snook's need for a 100-foot structure instead of the compromise 65 footer.

For Snook, Hittner's decision is half a loaf because he failed to prevail on several other non-PRB-1 issues, including purported malicious prosecution and his convictions on 21 counts of violating city statutes in the course of the years-long row. Snook alleges that his wife also lost her job with the city as a result of the dispute. The battle, he estimates, also has left him some \$35,000 poorer. "It's a tough victory that's extremely hollow right now," Snook told ARRL. "The 21 criminal convictions of ordinances written after the antenna went up were largely ignored." Hittner determined that the city had, indeed, changed its ordinance, then required Snook to comply with it, even though it already had issued him a building permit in 1999.

Snook also points out that while the court ordered the city to pay his costs, that does not include his attorneys fees or a damage award. In addition, the city gets to keep its ordinance--which he'd tried to get thrown out. "The judge ruled strongly in our favor but protected the city as best he could too," he said.

Hittner's decision was based on case law that's well known in amateur antenna legal circles. Among decisions cited was *Pentel v City of Mendota*, argued successfully by attorney and ARRL Dakota Division Director Jay Bellows, K0QB. Also cited was *Marchand v Town of Hudson*. In that case, ARRL New England Division Vice Director and Volunteer Counsel Mike Raisbeck, K1TWF, represented the amateur involved in written and oral arguments before the New Hampshire Supreme Court, while ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, filed an amicus brief. Imlay and Bellows both discussed Snook's case with him by telephone.

Snook seeks contributions to his KB5F Legal Defense Fund via his Web site <<http://users3.ev1.net/~osnook/>>.

DX-Cluster can be accessed on web at
<telnet://na2na.net>

ATVET 2003

ATVET CONTACT: Nels Williams
wb2sbo@aol.com or 518-439-7357
ATVET LIAISON: Gerald Murray,
atvet@n2ty.org or 518-482-8700

New Dates coming soon

CQWW REMINDER

Anyone who hasn't yet sent their CQWW Phone score to us is urged to do so!

We plan to have a listing of scores in next month's B-Plus. So don't be left out! Also, remember to get on the air for the CW weekend on November 29-30. Send both sets of scores (a copy of your Summary sheet, plain text (only) to:

sue.walt@verizon.net

See you in the pileups!

**73,
Walt, WA1KKM and Sue, N2LBR**

AARA Homepage
www.qls.net/k2ct

Upcoming Events

November, 2003

ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, SSB 2100Z, Nov 15 - 0300Z, Nov 17

North American Collegiate ARC Championship, SSB 2100Z, Nov 15 - 0300Z, Nov 17

RSGB 1.8 MHz Contest, CW 2100Z, Nov 15 - 0100Z, Nov 16

LZ DX Contest 1200Z, Nov 22 - 1200Z, Nov 23

CQ Worldwide DX Contest, CW 0000Z, Nov 29 - 2400Z, Nov 30

December, 2003

ARRL 160-Meter Contest 2200Z, Dec 5 - 1600Z, Dec 7

PSK31 Death Match 0000Z, Dec 6 - 2400Z, Dec 7

TARA RTTY Sprint 1800Z, Dec 6 - 0200Z, Dec 7

TOPS Activity 80m Contest 1800Z, Dec 6 - 1800Z, Dec 7

SWAP SHOP

Send items to B-Plus editor, Mike, WD2AJS at wd2ajs@arrl.net or call 489-3110

SK Charles Kenna, KA2SKG died on Thursday, Oct. 23, at age 76. He was a member of AARA for more than 15 years. WE will miss him.

B-PLUS OCT. deadline is Sat. Nov.1st.

Are You Changing Your Address: Please contact Bill, K2BX with your address corrections: Bill Nettleton, K2BX 7 Frederick Pl., Troy, NY 12180 or e-mail at k2bx@arrl.net

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