



Di-Dah-Dit

Official Newsletter of the Parkersburg Radio Klub
1733 Gihon Rd. Parkersburg, WV 26101

AMATEUR RADIO PRAISED AS LIFELINE IN SOUTH ASIA

As the tsunami relief and recovery effort continues in South Asia, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has joined those paying tribute to Amateur Radio's ongoing emergency communication role. Director and Executive Vice Chairman S. Suri, VU2MY, of India's National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR), noted January 5 that the PM "was all praise for hams in India and the entire world who helped us in this hour of need." Suri said the administrator of hard-hit Car Nicobar Island has asked NIAR to keep on duty Rama Mohan, VU2MYH, and five other radio amateurs who have been providing communication with the island since shortly after the December 26 disaster.

"The district administration chief of Car Nicobar Island spoke to me this morning to say even now it is only the ham communication that is aiding them for relief and rehabilitation measures," Suri said in an e-mail to Jay Wilson, W0AIR, of the Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response Association (DERA) and shared with ARRL. Mohan, who had received DERA training in the US, was part of NIAR's VU4NRO/VU4RBI DXpedition to Andaman and Nicobar Islands. When the earthquake and tsunami struck the region, DXpedition team leader Bharathi Prasad, VU2RBI, promptly shifted

the operation to handle emergency traffic and health-and-welfare inquiries between the island and the Indian mainland. More than 20 Indian radio amateurs are said to be involved in providing emergency communication support in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Ironically, until the recent NIAR DXpedition the Indian government did not allow Amateur Radio operation from the islands. It's since cleared the way for all Indian hams to operate from VU4.

In the disaster's immediate aftermath, Suri said, Mohan and other DXpedition team members risked their lives to alert the chief of administration on Andaman Island, since tsunami waves later overran the road they'd traveled. NIAR staff member Jose Jacob, VU2JOS, was providing emergency communication remote Hutbay Island.

Now back on the Indian mainland, Bharathi Prasad has reported that the VU4NRO/VU4RBI logs are safe and at NIAR headquarters, and QSLing will commence once the emergency operation concludes. DXer Charly Harpole, K4VUD/HS0ZCW, now in Bangkok, Thailand, told The Daily DX <<http://www.dailydx.com/>> that QSL cards already are showing up at NIAR.

Harpole, who was visiting the DXpedition in Port Blair on Andaman

Island when the earthquake and tsunami hit, has since been helping to handle emergency traffic from Thailand, where his wife's family lives. "I have been listening to the traffic from VU4 back to the India mainland, and by now it is smooth as silk with lots of H&W and some government messages running almost constantly," he said in an e-mail made available by QRZ DX <<http://www.dxpub.com/>> Editor Carl Smith, N4AA. Harpole advised amateurs worldwide to avoid the primary emergency traffic frequency of 14.190 MHz.

In Thailand, Harpole reports, hams have been using mostly 2 meters for their emergency traffic "and doing a huge job." He said he's heard very little from Bangladesh, and nothing from Sumatra and Burma (Myanmar). The earthquake's epicenter was some 100 miles off Sumatra, a part of Indonesia.

Just three days after the calamitous tsunami, Radio Society of Sri Lanka (RSSL) President Victor Goonetilleke, 4S7VK, declared that "uncomplicated short wave" radio had saved lives.

"Ham radio played an important part and will continue to do so," he said in an e-mail relayed to ARRL. Goonetilleke said Sri Lanka's prime minister had no contact with the outside world until Amateur Radio

operators stepped in. "Our control center was inside the prime minister's official house in his operational room," he recounted. "[This] will show how they valued our services."

Horey Majumdar, VU2HFR, in Calcutta, said improvisation was "the name of the game" in the emergency's aftermath. "Hams had to switch to good old CW and switch frequencies from 14.190 and 14.160 MHz to 7.090 MHz," he said. Majumdar noted that hams from all over "have been checking into the VU emergency nets and extending their fullest cooperation in the truest spirit of Amateur Radio."

According to the latest estimate, more than 150,000 people died as a result of the tsunami, about one-third of them children.

Although the US does not have third-party traffic agreements with any of the countries affected by the disaster, international emergency and disaster relief communications are permitted unless otherwise provided. While FCC Part 97 has not yet been updated to reflect revisions to third-party traffic rules at World Radiocommunication Conference 2003, FCC staff has told ARRL that if the government agencies responsible for the Amateur Service in affected countries do not object to their amateur stations receiving messages from US amateur stations on behalf of third parties, the US has no objection to its amateur stations transmitting international communications in support of the disaster.

Additional information on Amateur Radio and the tsunami disaster is on the ARRL Web site.

BIG APPLE BROADCASTER AMPS UP ARRL RADIO SPOT FOR LIMBAUGH NETWORK FILL

ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP, says it's nice to have friends in high places. One of the friends of Amateur Radio public relations is Howard Price, KA2QPJ, of New York City's WABC-TV (Channel 7). Pitts says Price--acting president of the Broadcast Employees Amateur Radio Society (BEARS) <<http://www.w2abc.org/>>, the ham radio organization at ABC TV and Radio in New York City and an ARRL Special Service Club--heard the League's new radio public service announcement (PSA) and had an idea.

"He passed it on to Johnny Donovan, production director at WABC Radio in New York City, who dressed it up in one night and made it available as 'network fill' on The Rush Limbaugh Show," heard on hundreds of radio stations across the US. While most larger stations cover program breaks with paid advertising, many smaller stations don't, "and their listeners will hear this wonderfully enhanced PSA for ham radio," Pitts says.

Voicing the beefed-up PSA was Donovan himself, a WABC legend and also a radio amateur. "Folks all over America will recognize his voice from commercial radio," Pitts said.

ARRL has obtained permission to make the 30-second version of the radio PSA <<http://www.arrl.org/pio/HAMWORKS30.mp3>> featuring Donovan's voice

available on the League's Web site for audition and distribution to radio stations. A 60-second version of the PSA <<http://www.arrl.org/pio/60HamRadioWorks0105.mp3>>, voiced by ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP, and produced by Dave Marthouse, N2AAM, also is available.

AMSAT announces "51 on 51 Award"

AMSAT has announced its new 51 on 51 Award <<http://www.amsat.org/amsat-new/awards/#51on51>>, given to a station making contact with 51 different stations on AMSAT's Echo satellite (AO-51) during 2005. "The award is designed to promote friendship, and encourage contact with handheld and first-time satellite users," says AMSAT Contests and Awards Director Bruce Paige, KK5DO. Contacts may be in any mode (Voice/Packet/PSK31) and on any band configuration (V/U, V/S, L/S, L/U, H/U). To receive the award, submit log entries electronically or in hard copy form. Entries must indicate date and time (UTC) of the contact, call sign and grid square of the contacted station and mode used. Only QSOs made in 2005 are eligible. The deadline to submit 51 on 51 logs is April 30, 2006. QSL cards are not required. The donation for this award is \$5 for AMSAT-NA members and \$10 for nonmembers. Since production costs for this award have been underwritten by an anonymous donor to honor Robin Haighton, VE3FRH--who served as AMSAT president during the construction and launch of AO-51--all fee receipts will be applied to the AMSAT Eagle launch fund.

**PARKERSBURG AMATEUR
RADIO KLUB
November 8, 2004**

The Parkersburg Amateur Radio Klub held their monthly meeting at the Bonanza Steak House on Pike Street with President Blaine Auville (WA8IOE) presiding.

There was an introduction of 27 \ members and guests.

Lynn Palmer (N8IIM) won the 50/50 drawing of \$15.50.

The Secretary's minutes were read and approved for the October meeting.

The Treasurer's report was given by Ray Johnson (KC8RUJ) current balance of \$3866.28.

Repeater mowing party reported the date had been changed but the mowing had been completed without a picnic.

Jeff Palmer (K8BOT) reported that Bob Lyons (KB8EFB) wondered how he got on the committee for the Control Codes for our open repeater.

Jerry Wharton (KA9NJW) reported he spoke to Dave Thompson (WD8CYV) and the codes for the 147.39 are programmed into his radio but doesn't know what the codes are. Blaine Auville (WA8IOE) stated that we need to check back with Dave Thompson (WD8CYV) to see if he has the books for the repeater. Curt Fouse (K8UC) reported he has a copy of the codes Bob Lyons (KB8EFB) has.

Nothing further on a Historian for the Park Klub.

Jerry Wharton (KA8NJW) reported that if you are not receiving the newsletter to let him know.

The Christmas Party will be at the Washington Bottom Community Building on 12-11-04 at 6:00PM. The dinner will be covered dish. Chairperson for the Christmas Party Committee is Libby Auville (KA8FUA). Connie Hamilton (N8IO) will be in charge of the entertainment. The turkey, gravy, ham, butter, rolls, ice, and pop will be provided. Bring your own

place setting. Paper for the tables will need to be purchased.

Georgia Millhoan asked if anyone had heard from Jim DeSouza (W8JED). Connie Hamilton (N8IO) reported that he doesn't like to go out after night.

Jerry Wharton (KA9NJW) volunteered to help Mrs. Scott with preparing for her license test.

A get well card will be sent to Gene West.

Motion to adjourn was made by Jeff Palmer (K8BOT).

Mike & Pam Davis Secretaries

**PARKERSBURG AMATEUR
RADIO KLUB
January 10, 2005**

The Parkersburg Amateur Radio Klub held their monthly meeting at the Bonanza Steak House on Pike Street with President Blaine Auville (WA8IOE) presiding.

There was an introduction of 33 members and guests.

Dan Betts (N8OG) won the 50/50 drawing of \$27.00.

The Secretary's minutes were read and approved for the November meeting.

The Treasurer's report was given by Ray Johnson (KC8RUJ) current balance of \$3793.27.

It was reported by Blaine Auville (WA8IOE) that the Christmas Party was well attended & the food was good with some left over.

Connie Hamilton (N8IO) suggested that we change the Christmas Party from the 2nd Saturday to the 3rd Saturday in December. Georgia Milhoan made a motion to have the Christmas Party December 17th, 2005 at the Washington Bottom Community Building at 6:00p.m. Motion was 2nd by Jim Palmer (K8BOT). Motion passed.

Application for James Adams (KC8WKT) was read Blaine Auville (WA8IOE). Ray Johnson (KC8RUJ) moved to accept the application, 2nd by Connie Hamilton (N8IO). Application accepted.

South Eastern Repeater Association (SERA) dues are past due & contact names need to be changed.

Blaine Auville (WA8IOE) suggested Curt Fouse (K8UC) & Jim Palmer (K8BOT) for the repeater coordination. Jane McGuffy (N8MOW) made a motion to name Curt Fouse (K8UC) & Jim Palmer (K8BOT) as the contact coordinators for SERA. Motion was 2nd by Connie Hamilton (N8IO). Motion passed.

Field Day, Blaine Auville (WA8IOE) asked Lloyd Boston (AB8KS) if he had any thoughts. Lloyd Boston (AB8KS) advised that he has prior obligations for that date & may not attend. Will follow-up in the February meeting.

Blaine Auville (WA8IOE) reminded everyone that the dues are due January 1, \$16 for single & \$24 for family.

Upcoming Ham Fests were reported by Connie Hamilton (N8IO).

January 16, 2005 – Nelsonville

January 23, 2005 – Tusco Amateur Radio Club, talk-in frequency 146.73, located in Strasburg.

February 13, 2005 – Mansfield

W5YI testing will be at the 911 Center, Core Rd. 2nd Saturday in February & 2nd Saturday in April. Registration at 6:00 p.m., testing at 6:30 p.m.

Curt Fouse (K8UC) suggested insurance for the Klub's equipment. Lloyd Boston (AB8KS) suggested that we should check into the cost for insurance.

The Marietta Club meeting will be January 11, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.

Ray Bodie (N8TWV) provided information on jackets.

There was a short discussion on purchasing a copier/scanner/printer. Lloyd Boston (AB8KS) may be able to acquire one at a reasonable price. To be followed up on.

Motion to adjourn was made by Jim Palmer (K8BOT), 2nd by Georgia Milhoan.

Mike & Pam Davis Secretaries

ARES/RACES AID IN CALIFORNIA FLOOD RESPONSE

Flooding and a devastating mudslide in Southern California kept Ventura County ARES/RACES members on the move this week. Among other activities, ARES/RACES has supported communication at shelters housing La Conchita residents displaced by a massive and deadly mudslide January 10 that killed at least 10 people. A town of some 250 inhabitants, La Conchita is approximately 65 miles north of Los Angeles.

"Several communities were cut off from access to the outside world during the flooding, including the Ojai area and the cities of Santa Paula, Fillmore, and Piru," reports David Gilmore, AA6VH, ARES District Emergency Coordinator and Ventura County RACES Radio Officer. He said five shelters were opened during the course of the flooding, providing refuge to more than 700 evacuees. Gilmore said the hospital in Ojai also experienced flooding, but the community's flood-initiated isolation would have made it extremely difficult to transfer patients to other facilities.

"An ARES/RACES member stood by at the radio communications room at the hospital during this crisis, while the flooding was dealt with," he said. "Fortunately, the effects of the flooding were able to be contained, and the hospital was able to continue operating."

In the midst of dealing with the La Conchita mudslide and the subsequent rescue/recovery effort, Ventura County also faced a forecast of additional heavy rainfall plus a prediction that the Santa Felicia dam at Lake Piru might overflow January 11.

"The integrity of the dam itself was never in doubt," Gilmore explained. "However the amount of water flowing into the reservoir was of sufficient volume that if an overflow occurred, the community of Piru--located at the very eastern part of Ventura County and below the dam--was expected to experience considerable damage."

In light of the threat, authorities ordered residents to evacuate to higher ground, and requested Ventura County ARES/RACES to set up radio communications inside the community. Access to Piru was already difficult, Gilmore explained, and once flooding commenced the town was expected to become completely inaccessible.

"We realized that any personnel who went to Piru could become stranded for several days, along with the Piru residents," he said. Nonetheless, Ventura County ARES/RACES members did not hesitate to volunteer for the assignment.

"Steve King, KE6WEZ, immediately packed his vehicle with supplies and extra radio equipment, and headed out," Gilmore said. Although his trip was hampered by closed or flood-damaged roadways, the California Highway Patrol immediately let King through. "He drove the perilous journey along Highway 126 to Piru, navigating through flowing water and mudslides that already littered the road," Gilmore said.

Although two more operators--Dan Halpert, WA6JQB, and Karl Baird, KG6KRN, had also prepared to go, King's vehicle was the last allowed

in before nightfall, when the highway became too dangerous to travel.

Once there King spent a busy--and uncomfortable--night supporting communication for the more than 500 flood refugees, who had little in the way of supplies. King was able to help coordinate the delivery of needed provisions. At one point, he also handled traffic for the emergency evacuation of a Piru resident who required medical treatment. The area lost electrical power around 3 AM, and Gilmore says King was instrumental in locating a small generator and getting it on line as dawn approached.

Fortunately, the anticipated heavy rain did not materialize, and the release of water over the dam was held back enough to avoid affecting residential housing. Piru residents were allowed to return home the next morning, and King was able to get back home for a well-deserved rest, Gilmore said.

As the severe weather wound down, so did the Ventura County ARES/RACES activation. Gilmore said the team remains on standby if additional communication problems arise.

Heavy rainfall in California in recent days has resulted in mudslides that left at least two dozen people dead. California Gov Arnold Schwarzenegger, who toured La Conchita January 12, has declared a state of emergency in Ventura County. The Salvation Army and the American Red Cross are cooperating in meeting the needs of those displaced by the flooding and mudslides.

SCAMP ON-AIR TESTING COMMENCES

The Sound Card Amateur Message Protocol--or SCAMP--is not just a conference paper topic anymore. On-the-air testing of the digital communication protocol began in late November, and the first transcontinental communication using SCAMP occurred on December 4. SCAMP is designed to eliminate the need for pricey external hardware for passing e-mail traffic on relatively narrow-bandwidth channels. Rick Muething, KN6KB, prepared a presentation on SCAMP for the ARRL-TAPR Digital Communications Conference in September.

"SCAMP is an example of what is now possible with sound card, computer and software technology using cooperative amateur efforts," he says. "SCAMP and similar programs like DIGTRX for image transmission offer low-cost alternatives to dedicated or proprietary hardware."

As Muething explains, SCAMP is intended for transmitting messages--text with binary attachments--via 2-kHz bandwidth HF and VHF voice channels. The program is compatible with Winlink2000. SCAMP uses the Redundant Digital File Transfer (RDFT) transport layer, developed by Barry Sanderson, KB9VAK, with the addition of Automatic Repeat Request (ARQ)--the technique all "linked" modes use to ensure error-free transmission--and message layer protocols that Muething developed. He says SCAMP offers a moderate-throughput, error-free protocol that works using conventional sound cards and modestly powered computers.

The RDFT utilities and documentation for the Windows and Linux

operating systems have been released under the GNU General Public License (GPL).

Muething says a dozen dedicated testers began initial on-air testing on HF and VHF November 27 using the alpha version of a Windows-based SCAMP client called Paclink SCD that he and Vic Poor, W5SMM, developed.

In addition to Muething and Poor, alpha testers included Scott Thile, K4SET; Bud Thompson, N0IA; Bill Hickey, AB7AA; Howard White, VE3GFW; Dave Wagner, WA2DXQ; Lor Kutchins, W3QA; Larry Trullinger, KB0EMB; Mike Burton, N6KZB; Bill Kearns, WB6JAR, and Steve Waterman, K4CJX. Primary testing was done on 40, 30 and 20 meters, and VHF testing was carried out on 2-meters using both FM and SSB. Alpha testing will continue over the next several weeks, and beta testing is set to crank up in February, Muething says.

The first successful transcontinental exchange of Amateur Radio e-mail messages using SCAMP took place December 4 on 20 meters between N6KZB in Temecula, California, and W3QA in West Chester, Pennsylvania. Each station ran 70 W.

"Several other two-way exchanges were also made over the weekend as operational and protocol bugs were fixed in the alpha software," Muething reports. "The throughput of SCAMP adjusts to the channel quality, reaching a current net maximum of about 4800 bytes per minute before compression gains."

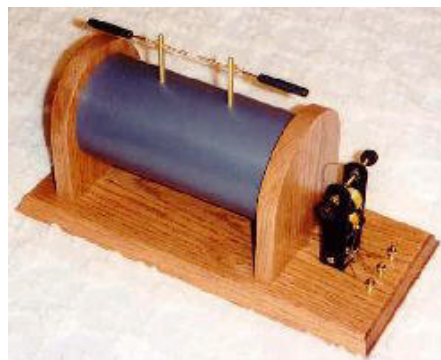
Muething says SCAMP doesn't require anything more than a 1-GHz

class Pentium or Celeron processor with a minimum of 128 MB of memory to reach full throughput. Lesser systems may be used at reduced throughput.

The complete SCAMP specification is available and will be released under the GPL as a blueprint for client developers to insure compatibility across different implementations. Muething says further protocol optimization continues to up system throughput and improve its robustness in poor HF multipath channels.

He'd also like to see some band plan restructuring to "open up spectrum for digital modes and encourage new experimentation and development like SCAMP." The ARRL has sought comment from the amateur community on draft proposals <<http://www.arrl.org/announce/bandwidth.html>> seeking to regulate subbands by emission bandwidth rather than by mode. At this point, the proposals remain a work in progress, and the ARRL has not petitioned the FCC for any changes.

Muething has more information on SCAMP. Contact him via e-mail <kn6kb@arrl.net>;. Information on RDFT is available on the Web <<http://www.svs.net/wyman/examples/hdsstv/index.html>>.



C W World Record

Guinness World Records recognizes high-speed telegraphy achievement: Guinness World Records Ltd has recognized the high-speed telegraphy achievement of Andrei Bindasov, EU7KI. "On 6 May 2003 Andrei Bindasov (Belarus) transmitted 216 marks of mixed text per minute during the 5th International Amateur Radio Union World Championship in High Speed Telegraphy in Belarus," the Guinness database listing states. Witnessing the accomplishment in Minsk were HST International Referee Oscar Verbanck, ON5ME, Region 1 Executive Committee member Panayot Danev, LZ1US, and IARU Region 1 HST Coordinator Oliver Tabakovski, Z32TO. Bindasov says he received the official certificate from Guinness November 24. Bindasov also sent 271 letters per minute and 230 figures per minute during those phases of the 2003 HST competition <<http://www.qsl.net/yo4kca/hstrules.htm>>.

FCC ACTS ON LONG-RANGE CORDLESS TELEPHONE COMPLAINT

The FCC in November responded to a complaint from the Holmesburg (Pennsylvania) Amateur Radio Club about interference on 2 meters from a high-powered so-called long-range cordless telephone. FCC Special Counsel Riley Hollingsworth forwarded information from the club to the FCC Philadelphia District Office on November 22.

The club claimed that the cordless telephone system was causing interference on its repeater's 146.080 MHz input frequency. On November 27, an agent from the Philadelphia District Office investigated the complaint and determined that a resident of Glassboro, New Jersey, was operating a "Senao High Quality Cordless Telephone," model SN-358. The base unit appeared to operate on 146.080 MHz, while the handset appeared to operate on 228.960 MHz (specifications listed on Senao's Web site indicate the model SN-358 handset operates on 268 MHz and the base on

394 MHz).

During an on-site inspection, the telephone's owner voluntarily surrendered the unit to the FCC agent. The telephone owner asserted that he'd purchased the system, which reportedly did not display an FCC certification notice, from an eBay advertiser.

The FCC's Philadelphia District Office is continuing to investigate.

FEES UP

ARRL VEC exam session application fee to change: Starting January 1, the fee charged all applicants at ARRL VEC-coordinated Amateur Radio examination sessions will rise from \$12 to \$14. ARRL Volunteer Examiner (VE) teams may retain up to \$6 of this fee to reimburse the VE team's out-of-pocket test session-related expenses. The fee is charged to anyone applying for a new amateur license or an upgrade. It also applies to ARRL VEC-session applicants retesting on the same element after being unsuccessful (where examiners permit), or applicants seeking grandfather-credit upgrades and not taking an exam.

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