



Di-Dah-Dit

Official Newsletter of the Parkersburg Radio Klub
1722 20th. St. Parkersburg, WV 26101

Ham Radio Bridging the Gap in Wildfire-Stricken California

UPDATED: 2017-10-12 @ 1840 UTC] More than a dozen wildfires in Northern California have damaged or destroyed cellular telephone and Internet infrastructure in some areas, and Amateur Radio has helped to fill the communication gap. Mendocino County Sheriff Thomas Allman told news media on October 10 that damage to cell towers and fiber optic telephone phone and computer lines had left officials relying on Amateur Radio operators to communicate with area hospitals.

ARRL contacted Robin Carter, a resident of the Willits area in Mendocino County, who confirmed to ARRL that ham radio operators until midweek were stationed at all North County hospitals and large nursing homes, supplementing the county's emergency communication system. She said cell and landline telephone service was knocked out at her home, along with the fiber optic Internet connection, although the family has satellite Internet, and conventional Internet service was at least temporarily restored on Wednesday.

Her husband Mike Carter, KC6MGM, a Mendocino County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteer, had until Wednesday been staffing a station at Howard Memorial Hospital in Willits for 12 hours a day.

Radio amateurs also assisted with communication at Ukiah Valley Medical Center in Ukiah; Northbrook nursing home in Willits; the Mendocino Coast Hospital in Fort Bragg, and Red Cross shelters at Ukiah High School and Willits High School, Robin Carter said.

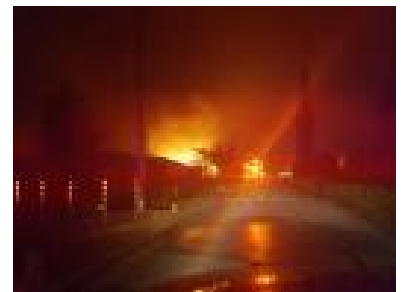
The Redwood Complex Fire, the northernmost of the fires, was responsible for the Mendocino County outages. The Atlas Fire in Solano and Napa counties is the largest and most disastrous wildfire. It covers more than 42,300 acres and was only 3% contained as of October 11.

In Sonoma County, Sonoma County Radio Amateurs (SCRA) has been conducting an ARES Fire Watch Net to relay fire and emergency information on its repeater. Auxiliary Communication Service (ACS) Radio Officer Dan Ethen, WA6CRB, said a controlled Sonoma County Fire and Emergency Services RACES/ACS net is also active.

Steve Fischer, K6ETA, told ARRL that the Sonoma County ACS has been continuously supporting shelters in Petaluma since Monday morning, and an operator is at the area Emergency Operations Center (EOC). "I have personally worked 32 hours in the EOC since Monday, and expect to continue through Friday," Fischer told ARRL. "Our ef-

forts helped coordinate the delivery of over 500 cots, breakfasts from the Redwood Empire Food Bank, and many donation and volunteer offers."

Radio amateurs are reported to be supporting shelter operations in Solano County as well.



The fast-moving, wind-driven blazes — 18 large fires in all, according to FEMA — have driven thousands from their homes, killed at least 2 dozen people, and destroyed more than 1,300 homes. FEMA said the fires cover some 150,000 acres in all. Some towns have been virtually leveled. Most of the wildfires are clustered around Santa Rosa, north of San Francisco. According to FEMA, some 106,000 residents are under mandatory evacuation orders, more than 36,500 homes are threatened, and 59 Red Cross and independent shelters are open with 5,117 evacuees.

A state of emergency exists in Napa, Sonoma, Butte, Lake, Solano,

Mendocino, Nevada, Orange, and Yuba counties. The California Emergency Operations Center is partially activated.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection mobile communications centers (MCCs) are equipped with Amateur Radio stations, but it's not known if any hams have been deployed on any MCCs in the field for the current spate of wildfires.

ARRL East Bay Section Manager John Rabold, KS6M, said their thoughts are with the victims of the wildfire disaster to the north. "Many of us Amateur Radio licensees find ourselves wanting to help," he said, advising that no one should self-deploy to the disaster area.

"Members of the public, including hams, should respond to the area only as recognized members of agencies who are active in the response or at the explicit request of those agencies," he said. "At this point, the Red Cross has not made a request for support from the [East Bay and San Francisco] sections. However, disaster response continues."

FCC Opens 630- and 2200-Meter Bands; Stations Must Notify UTC Before Operating

The FCC has announced that the Office of Management and Budget has approved, for 3 years, the information-collection requirement of the Commission's March 29 Report and Order (R&O) that spelled out Amateur Radio service rules for the two new bands -- 630 meters (472-479 kHz) and 2200 meters (135.7-137.8 kHz). Notice of the action

appeared in the September 15 edition of the Federal Register. Before using either band, stations must notify the Utilities Technology Council (UTC) that they plan to do so. If UTC does not respond within 30 days, they may commence operation.

On March 27, 2017, the FCC adopted the 2012 World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-12) implementation Report and Order (ET Docket 15-99), amending its Amateur Radio rules to -- in the FCC's words -- "provide for frequency-sharing requirements" in the two bands. Section 97.313(g)(2) of the new rules requires that, prior to starting operation in either band, radio amateurs must notify UTC that they intend to operate by submitting their call signs, the intended band(s) of operation, and the coordinates of their antenna's fixed location. The new rules do not permit any mobile operation.



"Amateur stations will be permitted to commence operations after a 30-day period, unless UTC

notifies the station that its fixed location is located within 1 kilometer of Power Line Carrier (PLC) systems operating on the same or overlapping frequencies," the FCC said. PLC systems are unlicensed. "This notification process will ensure that amateur stations seeking to operate [on 630 or 2200 meters] are located beyond a minimum separation distance from PLC transmission lines, which will help ensure the compatibility and coexistence of amateur and PLC operations, and promote shared use of the bands."



ARRL 630-Meter Experiment Coordinator Fritz Raab, W1FR, advised radio amateurs who anticipate using either band to read the Federal Register posting "to understand frequencies, power limitations, and operating modes permitted." Experimental Group participant Ed Cole, KL7UW, has been operating as WD2XSH/45 with 100 W into a 43 × 122-foot base-loaded inverted L, achieving about 3 W ERP. In a message to the Topband Reflector, Eric Tichansky, NO3M, noted that during his operations as part of the ARRL Experimental Group and with his own FCC Part 5 Experimental license, he enjoyed "many cross-country QSOs at QRP power levels" using a 67-foot top-loaded vertical that shares the radial field for his 160-meter antenna. The Antennas by N6LF website offers more information.



Amateur Radio Reports: Arecibo Observatory Dish Sustained Serious Dam- age from Maria

Articles on the National Geographic and Space.com websites last week-end cited Amateur Radio reports that Puerto Rico's Arecibo Observatory came through Hurricane Maria largely intact but "with some significant damage." Universities Space Research Association (USRA), which helps to operate the Observatory, said it learned via "short wave radio contact" that staff and family members sheltering at Arecibo are safe.



The famous Arecibo Observatory dish.

"The major structures, including the 300-meter telescope, are intact, though suffered some damage when the atmospheric radar line feed broke off, and falling debris from it punctured the dish in several places," USRA reported on its website. "Also, a separate 12-meter dish used as a phase reference for Very Long Baseline Interferometry was lost."

Observatory officials are still assessing the damage, but Jim Breakall, WA3FET, of Penn State University, told ARRL that the 96-foot line feed antenna at 430 MHz is "historically the key piece to the observatory." It's also the antenna that he and others have used for Amateur Radio moon-

bounce activities from Arecibo. The Observatory is home to KP4AO. "To hear that this 10,000-pound key piece to the Observatory fell and hit the 1,000-meter dish is just a huge shock," Breakall said last Saturday. "This antenna was connected to the 2.5 million W 430-MHz radar transmitter that was a key to ionospheric experiments. It is a great loss for sure."

Angel Vazquez, WP3R, who manages radio telescope operations at the Observatory, was one of the only radio amateurs able to pass along any information; among those he contacted was Princeton University professor and Nobel Laureate Joe Taylor, K1JT. Vazquez was using a generator that, Breakall told ARRL, was not working very well. "Many others have heard about all of this and have come to help relay messages to loved ones and friends to let people know they are okay," Breakall added.



The line feed antenna can be seen pointing downward from the overhead array of equipment.

Breakall said he's less concerned to learn that his own Amateur Radio contest station, on a hill not far from the Observatory, was destroyed by Hurricane Maria. "While this is sad for me and others, my concern is with the safety and health of many friends and the people of Puerto Rico in General," he said. This is my second home, and many of the people there I treat as my brothers and sisters."

USRA reported last weekend that the access road to the Observatory was covered with debris and impassable.

Breakall told ARRL that he's worried about what might happen in the weeks and months ahead. "I just hope that desperation does not set in, and things get out of hand there," he said. "It is going to be very tough."

Update: Secure Forms on the ARRL

Website: The security of your information on the ARRL website is extremely important to the League. ARRL has taken steps to encrypt/secure all forms on the site that contain personal or account information by using Hyper Text Transfer Protocol Secure (HTTPS). This includes the Shopping Cart checkout, the ARRL Donation Form, the site Login form, the Edit your Profile form, and New User registrations. To verify that a web page is secure, look for the green closed padlock icon near the web address at the top of the browser window. The Google Chrome (v. 62) web browser will display a "Not Secure" warning when users enter text in a form on an unencrypted/insecure web page (HTTP). (Chrome already marks HTTP pages as "Not secure," if they have password or credit card fields.). The ARRL website does have numerous user-input forms on the site that are currently not encrypted. These include the site search, license class and exam searches, and several others. These forms do not contain any sensitive information and can be filled out safely, despite the updated warning from Chrome. ARRL is working toward securing all forms to provide a better visitor experience in the future. Contact the ARRL Circulation Department with any questions or concerns.

Minutes

Aug. 14, 2017

The Parkersburg Amateur Radio Klub met at the Western Sizzlin Restaurant for the August meeting. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice-President Earl Hulce KB8HRC. Introductions were made by 25 members and guests.

The 50/50 drawing was won by Jeannia Dooley N8JMD.

The minutes were approved as read. Jane Hulce N8MOW gave the treasurer's report of \$5,799.87.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mike WD8BTI reported on the Special Event Station set for Sept. 23, 2017.

The repeaters are working fine.

Blaine WA8IOE is storing the new generators. See Blaine or Earl if you need access to one.

NEW BUSINESS

A nominating committee of Jane Hulce N8MOW and John Pitner W8IDW were appointed. Earl Hulce KB8HRG is first V-P; Dave Wright N8NWV is second V-P; and Bob Lyons KB8EFB is third V-P. Jerry Wharton KA8NJW is president.

Lynn Palmer N8IIM read a poem by Jim Palmer K8BOT, silent key. John Pitner reported that the website has 2017 Field Day information.

Kenny Harris WA8LLM reported on information for the Half Marathon on the 19th.

Bob KB8EFB moved and Harold Dooley N8KO seconded to adjourn at 7:25 p.m.

Secretary gave membership forms to Phil Richardson KE8GCL and to James Richardson KE8HLU.

Minutes recorded by Libby

KA8FUA, secretary

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September 9, 2017

The Parkersburg Amateur Radio Klub met at the Western Sizzlin Restaurant for the September meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 6:50 p.m. by President Jerry Wharton KA8NJW. Introductions were made by 23 members and guests.

No 50/50 drawing.

The minutes were approved as read.

No treasurer's report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Two new hams were voted in as members of PARK: Phil Richardson KE8GCS and Connor Richardson KE8HLU.

John Pitner W8IDW reported on the slate of officers for 2017-2018:

President: Jerry Wharton KA8NJW

1st VP: Earl Hulce KB8HRG

2nd VP: Bob Lyons KB8EFB

3rd VP: Dave Wright N8NWV

Secretary: John Pitner W8IDW

Treasurer: Jane Hulce N8MOW

Harold N8KO moved and Mike WD8BTI seconded to accept the slate of officers for 2017-2018. Motion passed.

The Special Event Station is Sept. 23, 2017 from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on 20 and 40 CW or phone.

NEW BUSINESS

Kenny Harris's Hamfest is Oct. 14.

Connie Hamilton died Sat. night. Services are Wed. Sept. 11, at Hadley Funeral Home in Marietta, OH.

There are three estates with ham equipment that the club is helping with: Jim Palmer K8BOT, Charles Dunkin, and Mark Latham.

Bob KB8EFB moved and Dave N8NWV seconded to adjourn at 7:20p.m.

Curt K8UC reported that stern-wheelers and music are at Point Park until Fri.

Minutes recorded by Libby KA8FUA, secretary

List of attendees on back

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October 9, 2017

The Parkersburg Amateur radio Klub met at the Western Sizzlin Restaurant for the October meeting.

Before the meeting two video's were shown of large contest radio stations and antenna farms.

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by President Jerry Wharton KA8NJW. Introductions were made by 26 members and guests.

The 50/50 drawing was won by Bob KB8EFB.

The minutes of the September meeting were read and approved and the treasurer's report was given by Jane N8MOW. A \$50 donation

was sent to ARRL's scholarship fund in memory of Connie Hamilton N8IO.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Jerry KA8NJW reported on the results of the Klub special event operation at Volcano Days at Mountwood Park on September 23. Kurt K8UC took photos. Jerry has processed 22 QSL requests with cards and certificates. John W8IDW has additional requests which Jerry will process. John processed a specific confirmation request on W8PAR's QRZ logbook.

A total of 192 contacts were made during the 8 hour operating period – all on 40 meter phone. Jerry has setup W8PAR on ARRL Log Book of the World (LOTW) with 29 confirmed contacts.

NEW BUSINESS:

Dave WD8CYV has purchased a radio from the estate of Mark Leatham KR5N.

Earl KB8HRG and Jerry KA8NJW have made two trips to inventory Jim Palmer's K8BOT ham equipment. A list will be made available to the Klub membership when complete and approved by Lynn N8IIM.

Some antenna work is needed by Mark Schauwecker K8IL (K4BDI). Dave WD8CYV and Jerry KA8NJW will visit and determine what needs to be done.

The Parkersburg Ham Fest (Kenny Harris WA8LLM) will be held on Saturday October 14.

Bob KB8EFB made a motion to adjourn at 7:21 pm.

Minutes recorded by John W8IDW, secretary

List of attendees on the reverse.

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Volcano Days Special Event Station was fun for all!

The Volcano Day's Special-Event Station that was on the air on Saturday September 23rd Was a success and the first Special Event Station that the Klub has had in a few years.

We were on the air from 10 A.M. till 6 P.M. We stuck to 40 meters and made 194 contacts. In 32 states and two providence's in Canada.

Qsl cards and/or certificates have been mailed to 24 people.

Thanks to all who helped make this a success. Here are a few pictures, thanks Curt KA8NJW Jerry



Volcano Days 2017 Special Event Station **W8PAR**

Call Number: 412-367-5610

Date: September 23, 2017

Time: 10:00 - 18:00 UTC

Host: Jerry KA8NJW
no QRZ update

Mode: Phone

Call Sign: W84KFO

Non-Profit

Sponsored by: Parkersburg Ham Fest & Klub
PO Box 36
Parkersburg, WV 26101

Honoring the days when oil was a booming industry in Volcano, WV, before a destructive fire destroyed the town in 1879.

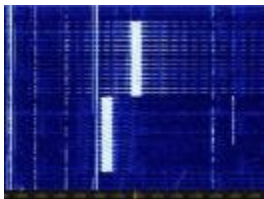
First oil field in the US to employ the "rodent cable pumping system"

First regular gauge railroad built in the state of WV.

First pipeline to be built in WV.

Not All “Intruders” on Ham Bands are Illegal — But a Lot of Them Are

The monthly newsletter of the International Amateur Radio Union Region 1 Monitoring Service (IARUMS) typically makes for some interesting reading. While the reports that come from more than two dozen contributors in Europe and Africa can be a bit visually dense, the content conveys the impression that there are myriad intruders on the Amateur Radio bands. However, not all of them are illegal, as IARUMS points out, but a lot of the signals heard are not supposed to be where they were monitored. The individual reports can be a bit humorous too.



“Get the grub, and I’ll talk to you later this evening,” was a snippet of a conversation

between two fishermen — identified as Mick and Jack — that an Irish Radio Transmitters Society (IRTS) monitor overheard on 3.570 MHz and reported to the IARUMS. The IRTS said the chatter was accompanied on both sides by “loud motor noise,” and, if that were not sufficient detail, it pointed out that both men had Galway accents. Intruding signals from fishing crews throughout IARU Region 1 are commonplace.

More blatant are the repeat offenders, such as the “Chinese foghorn” heard by over-the-horizon (OTH) radars on several frequencies in the exclusive Amateur Radio 20-meter allocation, as well as on 15 and 40 meters. IARUMS Region 1 Coordinator Wolf Hadel, DK2OM, said

the signals, 10 kHz wide and with 50 and 66.66 sweeps per second, transmit in burst mode and often jump frequencies.

Some signals from military stations on non-exclusive Amateur Radio allocations are legal. For example, the latest IARUMS newsletter cites the Stanag-4285 military signal that showed up for a few days in August on 5,361.8 kHz. The Stanag-4285 transmissions, coming from a Navy facility in Aarhus, quit on August 28. “Many thanks to the Danish Navy for leaving this frequency!” Hadel added, noting that the Danish Navy is a primary user. “We have to respect primary users!” he said.



An Australian OTH radar “Jorn” showed up on 5,357 kHz. IARUMS noted that this is a primary user of that band.

Adding a little mystery and intrigue to the compilation was a report from a radio amateur in the UK cit-

ing a “female voice with encrypted messages” on 14.212 MHz, believed to originate with the Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine in Rivne.

In the “miscellaneous or bad news” category were some repeat offenders, such as Radio Hargaysa in Somalia on 7,120.0 kHz; Radio Eritrea and white noise interference from Radio Ethiopia persisting on 7,140.0 kHz and 7,180 kHz; a third harmonic of Radio Tajik on 4,765 kHz, showing up on 14,295.0 kHz; the Sound of Hope from Taiwan, transmitting on 18,080 kHz; the Russian Navy sending CW on 21,438.0 kHz, and Radio Iran “in burst mode” on 28,960.0 kHz, daily.

True intruders are those appearing on exclusive Amateur Radio frequency allocations. Some domestic Amateur Radio HF allocations outside Region 2 (the Americas), such as 7.200 to 7.300 MHz, are either shared with other services or not available to radio amateurs. Only the 7.000 to 7.200 MHz segment of 40 meters is currently allocated exclusively to the Amateur Radio Service worldwide. On other ham radio HF allocations, such as the 30-meter band, Amateur Radio is secondary to other users. However, the 20, 17, 15, 12, and 10-meter bands are exclusively available to the Amateur Radio Service worldwide.