



SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2004

REMARCS

www.marc-radio.org

ELECTIONS HEADLINE SEPTEMBER MARC MEETING

Annual elections for the club's board of directors will take place at the September 28 meeting. Votes will be counted and the results announced at the meeting. Although there are no contested elections, any licensed member of the club may receive write-in votes. Before undertaking a write-in campaign for someone, please get that person's permission -- and you might want to ask how come he or she didn't volunteer to be on the ballot in the first place.

A ballot is being distributed to all licensed members of the club. If you receive the newsletter electronically, you'll get a ballot in PDF format. If you receive *REMARCS* on paper, a ballot is enclosed with this issue.

If you attend the September meeting, you can bring along your ballot and cast it in person. Members who can't make it to the meeting may mail their ballots to the club PO box. The mail will be collected on the morning of September 28 and brought to the club meeting so mail-in ballots can be included in the count.

The slate of candidates is shown in the box at right.

Election Slate for 2005 MARC Board of Directors

President:	Steve Maslin N3ORH
Vice President:	Bart Feroe K4BF
Secretary:	Dennis DeMarco KA3QOT
Treasurer:	Carter Craigie N3AO
Membership Services:	Kay Craigie N3KN
Programs:	Dick Thompson K3IIN
Public Relations:	Bob Weiss KB3FSQ
Public Service:	Bob Palin N3JIZ
Technical:	Dennis Silage K3DS
Member-at-Large (to 9/30/06):	Bob Haase W3SA

*Information about the meeting programs
for the rest of 2004 appears on page 2.*

2004 HAMFEST IS GREAT SUCCESS!

MARC's 2004 hamfest had excellent weather, a good group of volunteers, and a big payoff for the club. The gross proceeds were \$4,069, including \$234 from the members' gear sales table. The perfect weather was dramatized when the following day Philly's 'burbs were walloped with 4 to 12 inches of rain that caused severe flooding in parts of the Delaware Valley.

Thanks to MARC members who volunteered to work at the Kimberton Fire Company Fair, the fire company charged us no rent for the fairgrounds for our hamfest. We usually pay \$900. Also, the main door prize -- a brand-new ICOM IC-2720H dual-band FM mobile transceiver that retails for \$369 -- was donated by a friend of the club. The combination of these two non-expenses boosted our net dramatically.

Set-up went off very well on Saturday, July 10. We had people setting up tables and chairs, others outside marking lines for the tailgate area, and others setting out signs. **Gene N3HG** and **Judy N3MBW** set up the club member gear sales table.

The member sales table has become a popular feature of our hamfest. Not only can you get rid of the stuff you don't want any more with minimal work on your part, but the club also benefits because some members choose to donate all or part of their proceeds to MARC. If this feature is going to continue, somebody else has to be ready to do it next year, because Judy and Gene may be moving away before the next hamfest. They have the system developed to a fine art -- all somebody has to do is make the commitment to pick up the ball and run.

DOOR PRIZE DONORS

American Radio Relay League (www.arrl.org)
West Mountain Radio (www.westmountainradio.com)
WorldRadio (www.wr6wr.com)
Workman Electronics (www.wep4hams.com)

LOCAL CORPORATE FRIENDS OF THE HAMFEST

ANRO Printing & Direct Mail (www.anro.com)
Radio Station WCOJ 1420 (www.wcoj.com)

Think about it, while there's ample time to consult with Gene and Judy about how it works.

MARC has many people to thank outside our club for the success of the event, starting with the fire company for making us such a generous offer about the rent. ANRO Printing and Direct Mail helped us in many ways. **WCOJ** radio station in West Chester broadcast promotional announcements about the hamfest thanks to station staffer **Gene Mitchell K3DSM**. Our principal door prize donors were **ARRL**, **West Mountain Radio**, **WorldRadio**, and **Workman Electronics** of Syracuse, NY.

Information tables were set up by Chester County ARES/RACES, Montgomery County ARES/RACES, PARA, ARRL, and Navy-Marine Corps MARS. Our commercial ham gear vendor was **Giselle Walls K3WAJ**, who used to run Amateur &
(Continued on page 4)

ABOUT MARC

wb3joe@marc-radio.org
http://www.marc-radio.org

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

4th Tuesdays, 8 PM, Tredyffrin Township
Bldg, Wayne/Berwyn. Guests welcome.
Smoke-free. Handicapped-accessible.

BOARD MEETINGS

4th Thursdays, 7:30 PM, Paoli Hospital.
Members may attend as observers.

SYSTEMS

145.13/R, 147.06/R, 224.42/R, 445.675/R
145.13 & 147.06 linked, CTCSS 131.8 Hz
Webmaster: Steve N3ORH (610-327-8666,
smaslin@marc-radio.org)

NETS

Club Net, Sunday, 8:30 PM
Traffic net, M/W/F, 8:30 PM
Round-Table, Thursdays, 8:30 PM
All nets on linked 145.13/R & 147.06/R
Net Manager: Carter N3AO
(610-993-9623, n3ao@arrl.net)

DUES

\$15 Full (licensed Amateurs)
\$5 Associate (unlicensed persons)
Family rate \$5 per ham after first
member pays full dues.

NEWSLETTER

REMARCS is published in the odd
months, edited by Kay N3KN
(610-993-9623, n3kn@arrl.net)

BRING A FRIEND
TO A MARC MEETING!

VOX

Welcome new members **Itamar KB3LCI**, **Steve WA2EAJ**, and **Norma KB3KRZ**, plus returning members **Peter N3DXY** (bringing his son **Daniel** as an associate member), **Steve N3LJZ**, **Leland N3LJB**, **Neil WA3RPG**, and **Lisa Cohen**. **Kay N3KN** and **Carter N3AO** enjoyed visiting Bryce Canyon, Zion National Park, and other scenic places in Utah, with a stopover in Las Vegas. MARC old-timers will remember **Jeff ex-WB3GUR**; now **W3JAM**, he stopped to say hello at the hamfest. Old-timers will also recall **Mary N3DAU** (daughter of **Gordon W3GK**) operating MARC Field Day as a little girl years ago. Sad to say, cancer has made her a Silent Key at age 34. Your editor had a nice gab with **Duke K3QWO**, who moved to Maryland a long time ago, at a hamfest down there. He sends 73 to friends up here. **Ed W3BNR** invites us to visit his homepage at <http://mysite.verizon.net/vze1zhwu/>. **Charlie W3CAU** is the former **N3NQX**. **Owen N3WO** is off to school at Phillips Exeter. **Dori W3IBH** has moved to Atglen. Her new phone number is 610-593-6279. **Carl WA3ZZU** came visiting from his present home in West Virginia to introduce his wife and 4-year-old daughter to the ocean for the first time. Did you know that **Bob WR3K** and **Dori W3IBH** are talented musicians?

PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

We have three public service communications events this fall, and we need more volunteers for all of them. Here's the list:

- Penn Wynne Library Run - Saturday, October 9, 8 AM
- American Lung Association Radnor Run - Sunday, October 31, 7 AM
- Vietnam Veterans of American 5K Run (Norristown) - November 14 (possibly November 13 - **Bob N3JIZ** is verifying facts), 8 AM

Taking part in these events is easy and interesting to do. It's also important, because public service justifies Amateur Radio's continuing access to billions of dollars' worth of spectrum. If you can give a few hours on a weekend morning to serve the community and ham radio, too, please contact **Bob N3JIZ** (610-687-4587) as soon as possible to get details and sign up.

FUTURE MARC MEETING PROGRAMS

Dick K3IIN continues to set up great programs. The ones for the remainder of 2004 are not to be missed. Here's the run-down:

September 28 - Chester County's Director of Emergency Services **Edward Atkins**, accompanied by **Amy Amer**, will tell us about the county's emergency services programs, including the 911 center. This will be a good opportunity to bring your non-ham friends and family members to a MARC meeting. Ed Atkins is a staunch supporter of Chester County ARES/RACES, and we look forward to welcoming him to a ham club meeting in Chester County.

October 26 - MARC member **Andy K3JSE** will talk about remote-controlled model aircraft. If you like radio, model-building, aircraft, or any subset of those topics, you'll enjoy Andy's presentation. Even we white-knuckle flyers will enjoy *this* trip!

November 23 - MARC's Technical Chairman and Temple University professor **Dennis K3DS** will take us to the cutting edge with a program provocatively titled "Earth Rover Digital Communications Using Amateur Radio."

The July program given by Greater Philadelphia Search & Rescue stirred up a lot of interest among the hams. One of the guest speakers described the overall program -- those people really train hard! -- and some recent search missions. Another speaker told us how they train the tracker dogs used to locate missing people. These dogs are selected from breeds that have the best-developed knack for following scents. But off-duty, they're people's pet pooches and play with the kids at home.

FIELD DAY ENTRY SUBMITTED

MARC's Field Day entry was submitted to the ARRL, claiming 3,508 points for QSO's and another 780 points for bonus activities.

We did 198 CW QSO's, 24 digital QSO's, and 1,310 phone QSO's. Gosh, your editor can remember when MARC didn't do 1,000 Q's on all modes put together! Nice going, folks.

Field Day was fun because a lot of people pitched in. Nobody was left holding the bag with too much work and too few helpers. That's the way it s'posed to be, and as a result everybody is eagerly awaiting MARC Field Day 2005.

Would you like to try being the moderator of the Thursday night round-table rag chew net? This fun gathering was originated by Bob W3LIA and Dori W3IBH. They are eager to welcome more volunteers as net moderators. Dick K3IIN and Dennis KA3QOT have already done it. Ask Bob or Dori, and they'll get you set up to run the net some evening.

FROM THE EDITOR'S JUNK BOX

Some people say hams are not the brightest lights on Broadway, but that's not true. Some hams have astounding mental abilities that go beyond intelligence to downright psychic powers. You don't think so? Read on.

While waiting for the Aves Island DXpedition to come up on 14.195 MHz, I heard a lot of illegal antics: whistling tunes, "haaaaaallo," all sorts of silly noises. No callsigns, just noises and nonsense.

After a bit, a gravelly male voice came on the frequency and said, "This is what happens when they take away the Morse code test." Another man's voice replied, "That's right. Devalue the license and you get this."

I stand in awe of their genius. Not only can these men discern from some idiot's unidentified SSB transmission that said idiot did not pass a Morse code test, they can also make properly-identified transmissions of their own but render it impossible for mere mortals like me to *hear* those station ID's! This must be true because such models of rectitude would never make illegal unidentified transmissions like the morons they were criticizing.

I have 3 college degrees and passed 20 wpm code, but I can't do what these men can. They must have to write their IQ's in scientific notation!

I am certain these Einsteins of the ham bands have a logical explanation for why I *think* I remember perfectly appalling operating (such as "The Dog" and the Bouvet DXpedition debacle and repeaters in California where the only users who weren't toilet-mouths were jammers), back in the days when every ham had to pass a Morse code test and DXpeditions used frequencies restricted to the 20 wpm crowd. There's no way such disgraceful behavior could have actually happened back in that era, so why do I recall it so vividly? How does my memory play these tricks on me?

I'm certain the super-brains who were waiting with me to call Aves Island have the answers.

How foolish of me not to have asked them when I had the chance.

-- 73, Kay N3KN

MARC WEB SITE NOW HAS MESSAGE FORUMS , PHOTO GALLERY

Recent upgrades to the MARC Web site make it possible for photos of club events to be displayed and for discussion forums to be set up.

On the opening page, click on "Utilities" and then select "Photo Gallery." Currently on display are some great photos from the MARC hamfest taken by **Bob W3LIA**. If you would like to submit photos of club events for the site, please contact webmaster **Steve N3ORH** (smaslin@marc-radio.org) to find out the particulars.

On the opening page, click on "Utilities" and then select "Message Forums." People who want to participate in the forums must register before they can log in. Registration is easy and fast. First, click "Register." You will create a user name (it could be your callsign) and password and enter your e-mail address. There's a lot of other optional information that you can enter or omit, as you prefer. The system will send you an e-mail with a URL you must click on in order to finish the registration process. Then you can log in and enjoy the forums.

Several forums are already set up, as you will see when you visit this part of the site. If you would like to have a special-interest message forum having to do with some aspect of ham radio, or if you have any questions about the message forum area of the MARC Web site, please contact webmaster **Steve N3ORH** (smaslin@marc-radio.org).

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2004

PRESIDENT

Steve Maslin N3ORH 610-327-8666
smaslin@marc-radio.org

VICE PRESIDENT

Bart Feroe K4BF 610-367-4288
k4bf@arri.net

SECRETARY

Bob Haase W3SA 610-293-1919
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TREASURER

Carter Craigie N3AO 610-993-9623
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Kay Craigie N3KN 610-993-9623
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PROGRAMS

Dick Thompson K3IIN 610-688-0874
k3iin@arri.net

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Bob Weiss KB3FSQ 215-477-6475
kb3fsq@netcarrier.com

PUBLIC SERVICE

Bob Palin N3JIZ 610-687-4587
rjpelectric@worldlynx.net

TECHNICAL

Dennis Silage K3DS 610-353-4829
silage@temple.edu

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

To 9/30/2004: Al Maslin N3EA
610-446-4936, amaslin@earthlink.net

To 9/30/2005: Gene Hoenig N3HG
610-353-3281, n3hg@arri.net

CALLSIGN TRUSTEES

WB3JOE: Carter Craigie N3AO
610-993-9623, n3ao@arri.net

W3NWA: Kay Craigie N3KN
610-993-9623, n3kn@arri.net

MARC HAMFEST SUNDAY, JULY 10 2005

AUGUST TEST SESSION RESULTS

All four candidates served at the August test session went home happy, because all the test elements that were attempted were passed. One new Technician license was earned, in addition to one new General and one new Extra. The fourth candidate passed a test element which didn't produce an upgrade. One MARC member took advantage of the free test session available to club members.

The examiners were **Bob W3ZQN**, **Bob KA3NIQ**, **Bob W3SA**, **Paul NX3Q**, **Ned WQ3Z**, **Steve KD0VA**, and **Susan K3SUE**. The next MARC test session will be November 6. Contact **Bob W3ZQN** (rjlees@aol.com, 610-265-6032) for details.

HAMFEST SUCCESS STORY

Continued from Page 1

Advanced Communications in Delaware. Our badge engravers were **Larry Stamm WB3EVL** and **Joanne Stamm KC3WY** (www.qth.com/dustcovers/).

HAMFEST REVENUE

Income	\$4,069.00
Expenses	52.65
Net	\$4,016.35

It is difficult to have a financially-successful hamfest these days. Rising costs and dwindling attendance by buyers and vendors have caused a number of once-thriving big hamfests to shrink towards unprofitability. Ten years ago, many hams used to gripe that there were too many computer vendors at the big hamfests. Well, most of the computer vendors don't come any more, and most of the non-ham computer shoppers don't come any more, either. With those buyers' and sellers' dollars no longer flowing in, hamfest revenues are down and the sponsoring clubs are hurting. I hope the anti-computer-stuff hams are happy now!

Add to the absence of the computer buyers/sellers the easy availability of used ham gear on the Web -- plus decreased interest in going to hamfests to socialize, and you've got a climate that is hard to do business in.

To be honest, MARC's gate is not growing. However, our costs are as low as we can cut them, thanks to faithful volunteers and generous friends. That's why we actually put more dollars in the bank every year than some of the larger hamfests whose costs of doing business are much greater.

Clubs whose hamfests are dying are scrambling to find alternative means of financing themselves. Like MARC, they know you can't charge enough dues to fund a major club's activities.

There are several club hamfests in the fall in the Philadelphia area. MARC encourages you to attend our neighbor clubs' hamfests. When all the local clubs are financially healthy, it benefits the whole ham radio community in the long run.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BOARD MEETINGS

At the July 22 meeting, the board received reports on Field Day, future programs, membership, and the hamfest. The board voted to substitute the MICOR 440 MHz repeater for the ICOM 440 MHz repeater now in use, because the MICOR is more powerful and more sensitive. If the change is satisfactory, the ICOM repeater will be sold. The treasury balance was \$11,854.73.

At the August 26 meeting, the board received updates on future programs, fall season public service events, and nominations for the 2004-2005 board of directors. The treasury balance was \$11,659.47.

LICENSE COURSE AT ADULT NIGHT SCHOOL

Adult Night School for Chester County will feature a Tech course taught by **George Vargo W3XE** at Stetson Middle School, September 22 - November 10, 6 - 9 PM. For more information, go to www.adulthighschool.org/courses/personal.htm. The school is on US 202, between West Chester and PA 926.

MARC MEMBERS WORK AT KIMBERTON FIRE COMPANY FAIR

Thanks to a group of MARC members who were willing to donate their time to work at the Kimberton Fire Company Fair on July 29, 30, and 31, the fire company did not charge us any rent for using the fairgrounds for our hamfest. That's \$900 straight to the bottom line of our own event!

Club members sold ride tickets and collected parking donations. The hams on parking duty sometimes used 2m simplex to coordinate their efforts, which must have been especially helpful after dark.

Frankly, it took more last-minute scrambling than it should have in order to get enough volunteers to fulfill our deal with the fire company. If we have the chance to do this again next year, we're going to have to sign up more people to be sure we have enough people. We understand that stuff happens -- people get sick, the boss changes the work schedule, etc. -- and so we'll make sure next time we are better prepared for those unforeseen and uncontrollable circumstances.

In case you're wondering, the volunteers said they had a good time. **Gene N3HG**, who sold ride tickets, said, "**Judy N3MBW** and I had a great time at the Kimberton fair. Amazing! We would do it again without question, given the chance. It was absolutely a gas."

After working 3 shifts selling ride tickets, I am pleasantly surprised to tell you that only one customer was obnoxious. That's astonishing. Best moment for me: One of my ticket customers is a server at my favorite diner. It was fun to turn the tables and wait on her for a change.

Owen N3WO observed that helping the fire company is a kind of public service -- just not the sort we usually do. He said it felt good to do this work. **Ned WQ3Z** said on a MARC Sunday net, "I had a great time." **Bart K4BF** added, "It was fun."

Owen's mother **Vivian Comer** and his younger brother **Ellis** worked selling ride tickets while Owen was with the parking donation crew. Another non-ham who worked was **Delores Higgins**, wife of **Charlie W3CAU**. She took parking donations. We particularly appreciate these non-hams who came out to support MARC and their family members. Here's the list of fair volunteers:

Dieter K3DK
Dick K3IIN
Bob KB3FSQ
Charlie W3CAU
Delores Higgins
Bob N3JIZ
Floyd KA3OXA
Steve N3LJZ
Ned WQ3Z
Kay N3KN

Carter N3AO
Gene N3HG
Judy N3MBW
Owen N3WO
Vivian Comer
Ellis Mays
Steve WA2EAJ
Bart K4BF
Bill KN3EUF
Mike KF3CD

The enthusiastic comments by this year's volunteers should encourage you to sign up and work next year. You can help two worthy organizations at once: MARC and the Kimberton Fire Company.

BEWARE OF BOGUS E-MAILS

They're Not Really from ARRL.net

Another round of e-mail messages purporting to be from "noreply @arrl.net," the "ARRL.net Support Team" or some similar variation went through the Internet this summer. These messages are not from the ARRL. They are the result of a virus that creates bogus e-mails carrying virus-infected attachments.

ARRL has heard from members who have received e-mails alleging that their ARRL E-Mail Forwarding Service (@arrl.net) address has been used to send spam and urging them to open an attachment to help resolve the situation.

Opening the attachment will infect the recipient's computer. When your anti-virus software flags such messages as suspicious, believe it, and follow your software's instructions for deleting the message.

Outside of routine correspondence, the ARRL only sends e-mail to members who request mailings, such as W1AW bulletins and The ARRL Letter, and none of these are sent via the ARRL E-Mail Forwarding Service.

Viruses can make it look as though an e-mail was sent by somebody it did not really come from. This is called "spoofing." It can fool you into making a costly mistake -- put a virus on your computer, reveal your personal data to a thief, and so on.

We should all use anti-virus software and update it often. Mine is updated daily, and I use several additional layers of hardware and software protection against viruses and hackers, because I receive and must read many e-mails from people I don't know, owing to my work with the League.

Local computer shop proprietor **Gene K3DSM** says he spends a huge amount of his time these days cleaning up infected computers. Sometimes more than once for the same customer! Some people, he says, just don't get it about protecting their systems from viruses spread through the Internet. If you go to Gene's shop, make it for some other reason than to have your computer disinfected.

**NEWS ABOUT AMATEUR RADIO
FROM THE ARRL
UPDATED DAILY
www.arrl.org**

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OPEN HOUSE

On Saturday, September 25, there will be an open house at the National Weather Service Forecasting Office in Mount Holly, New Jersey.

The event will be held from 12.00 noon to 5.00 pm, with tours every half hour (12.00, 12.30, 1.00, 1.30, 2.00, 2.30, 3.00, 3.30, 4.00 and 4.30).

Free parking is available on site. For directions, please see the website at www.nws.noaa.gov/er/phi.

FOUNDATION FOR AMATEUR RADIO SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS IN OUR AREA

The Foundation for Amateur Radio (FAR), a consortium of ham radio clubs in the Baltimore-Washington area, administers more than 50 scholarships for post-secondary study. Only licensed Amateurs may compete for the awards, which are donated by private individuals or radio organizations, or funded by the annual FAR hamfest (which is moving back to Gaithersburg, this year, by the way).

Winners for the 2004-05 academic year from our area are Benjamin Jack N3VYA (Huntingdon Valley) and Thomas Reber KB3FCH (Coatesville).

The scholarships range in value from \$500 to \$2,000. That's not a lot of money, but every dollar counts when you are financing higher education. You do not have to be a traditional-age student to apply for FAR scholarships, by the way. Adult hams who are returning to the classroom to finish a degree or earn a new one may also compete. Information about the next FAR scholarship competition will appear in *REMARCS* early next year.

USING YOUR NEW CALLSIGN

You've applied for a vanity callsign or a new sequential callsign, and you see on the FCC's ULS Web page or one of the on-line callbooks that the application has been granted. Are you supposed to wait until your new paper license document comes in the mail before using the new callsign?

No. Just as brand-new licensees may begin to operate as soon as they know that their license has been granted (usually by seeing it on the FCC Web page or an on-line callbook), existing licensees should begin to use a new callsign as soon as they know it has been granted.

Today's FCC thinks in terms of license *grants*. The grant is the authority to operate, not the piece of paper. The document is just a paper notice of the grant. This is different from the old days, when the license document was the key thing.

AUGUST HOMEBREWERS GROUP MEETING

Jack KB3GDC hosted the group, which consisted of **Owen N3WO**, **Gene N3HG**, **Josy WQ3E**, **Bob W3LIA**, **Bob KB3FSQ**, and **Itamar KB3LCI**. Itamar was welcomed as a newcomer to the group and congratulated on passing his General test.

Gene N3HG brought in another of his homebrewed keyers, which was admired by everyone. The group talked about their future, since several of the regulars are moving away, going away to school, or occupied with other responsibilities and seldom able to attend in-person meetings.

The group hopes to bring in some projects to display before regular club meetings to whet others' interests. They are also making good use of the homebrewers message forum on the MARC web site.

Several group members are experienced builders and will be happy to help beginner builders get started and solve problems. The group is for everyone who is interested in building electronic equipment, regardless of experience or skill level.

SEVERAL POWER COMPANIES BACK AWAY FROM BPL

More Trouble Than It's Worth?

Several electric power companies are ending their tests of Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) and deciding not to proceed further. Supposedly a cash cow for the utilities, BPL has significant interference potential for area radio communications including Amateur Radio, and it may be that power companies and municipalities are deciding the technology isn't the pure-and-simple license to print money that they were led to believe. Stories from the ARRL's Web site give the details.

Raleigh, NC

In early August, Progress Energy Corporation (PEC) said it completed Phase II of its BPL field trial in the Raleigh, North Carolina, area. In an August 4 PEC internal memorandum made available to ARRL, the company said its program to "test the viability of providing broadband service to communities it serves" would wrap up by the end of August, although PEC still plans to explore "several key strategic issues" regarding BPL through the end of this year. The company reportedly will shut down the system once it's able to move its BPL customers to other broadband providers.

"Currently, the company does not have plans for a large-scale commercial rollout of BPL in the company's service territories," the memorandum states. Progress Energy's decision came on the heels of announced shutdowns of BPL field trials in Penn Yan, New York, and Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Penn Yan, NY

The broadband provider that was testing BPL in the Village of Penn Yan, New York, reportedly plans to "move away" from that technology. The Western New York community of some 5000 residents has been considering various proposals with Data Ventures (DVI) to offer broadband service, with the village reportedly getting 10 percent of any generated revenue. According to an article in the July 28 edition of the *Finger Lakes Times Online*, DVI now is proposing to employ wireless mesh WiFi technology instead of BPL. ARRL CEO **David Sumner K1ZZ** congratulated Penn Yan Mayor **Douglas G. Marchionda Jr** and DVI for going with wireless broadband instead of BPL.

"Not only will your citizens receive better service, but a serious radio spectrum pollution problem has been averted as well," Sumner said in a fax to Marchionda and to DVI CEO **Marc Burling**. "We hope that other communities will be able to profit from your experience." Sumner raised the issue of interference complaints from the Penn Yan BPL trial with Marchionda last April.

The *Finger Lakes Times* report quotes Burling as saying that his company didn't feel BPL was "commercially deployable." He also cited issues with the BPL trial including security concerns and interference -- which will not be an issue with the wireless system.

Burling told ARRL that the Penn Yan BPL system remains on line but would be shut down once DVI starts deploying its wireless system. As for BPL, "We are going to sit back and wait for an official ruling from the FCC and go from there," he added.

Penn Yan already has rejected two DVI proposals to bring

high-speed Internet service to the community, the newspaper said. Village officials reportedly met again with DVI representatives this week. DVI is partnering with Nortel to offer the wireless service.

The *Finger Lakes Times* article quotes Marchionda as saying that the village didn't want to be involved with handling complaints or operating the broadband system. It just wants to rent space on village-owned utility poles and benefit from any revenue the system generates.

Cedar Rapids, IA

Alliant Energy called an early end to its BPL pilot project in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The "evaluation system" went live March 30, and plans were for it to remain active until August or September. Alliant shut it down June 25. Ongoing, unresolved HF interference from the system to retired engineer **Jim Spencer W0SR** and other amateurs prompted the ARRL to file a complaint to the FCC on Spencer's behalf demanding it be shut down. Spencer said he was happy with Alliant's decision, and was gracious in expressing appreciation to the utility for working with him on the interference issues. "And thanks also to the ARRL and the Cedar Rapids BPL Steering Committee for their knowledge and efforts in making a truly professional evaluation," he added.

Alliant Energy's BPL Project Leader **Dan Hinz** says the ARRL complaint "certainly was a factor" in the utility's decision to pull the plug prematurely but "not the overriding factor." More to the point, he said, was that Alliant also was able to "accomplish the majority of its objectives" ahead of schedule. The primary purpose of the Cedar Rapids evaluation was to gain an understanding of BPL technology and what issues might be involved in a real-world deployment, Hinz explained, adding that regulatory uncertainty and other unspecified technical issues also factored into the choice to end the pilot early.

What's ahead?

To paraphrase **Mark Twain**, reports of BPL's death would be premature. It's encouraging that several companies have decided against BPL. Not only does that eliminate the problem for hams in those local areas, but it also helps Amateurs in other test areas argue that the technology has been tried and found wanting. On the other hand, the FCC has taken a disturbing stance about documented interference from BPL to Amateur communications. They admit it interferes but deny that the interference is "harmful," although scientific facts say otherwise.

The industry made sneering, dismissive comments about Amateur Radio in their reply comments in the FCC's Notice of Inquiry (NOI) proceeding about BPL. Hams in the know take this as a good sign -- you don't bother to attack an opponent who's really as irrelevant as they're saying we are. When you have no factual legs to stand on, you call the other guy a name.

So we have gotten under their skin and made them scratch at the itch. The marketplace may go the other way on BPL and drag the politicians and policy wonks with them, eventually. However, we have only won a few rounds in this fight. There are many more rounds left to go.

WRITING TO OFFICIAL WASHINGTON

Getting Your Message Through

Whether your Congressman and Senators send you good replies, dumb replies, or no replies at all when you write about ham radio, keep on writing. Their offices keep track of how many constituents write about each subject.

ARRL's Washington jaw-boners get the cold shoulder when they visit offices on the Hill which have not received constituent mail on ham radio issues. Only we, the voters, can keep those Capitol Hill doors open.

The ARRL's Washington office recommends communicating with Congressmen, Senators, and other Washington big-wigs via e-mail now instead of paper mail, if timeliness matters at all. Because of the still-unsolved anthrax incidents of 2001, paper mail for Washington honchos is put through so much time-consuming bio-hazard screening that your pet issue may be a dead issue by the time your letter reaches the office of Congressman Whozits or Senator Blabb.

You can find the e-mail address for your Congressman at www.house.gov and your Senators' e-mail addresses at www.senate.gov.

Messages to government officials about ham radio issues should be brief, clear, spell-checked (please!), jargon-free, and courteous. Lengthy, convoluted, illiterate, rude messages laced with arcane ham-speak do make an impression. The wrong one!

PENNSYLVANIA QSO PARTY

OCTOBER 9 - 10, 2004

www.nittany-arc.net/paqso.html

Are you curious about contesting but hesitant to try the world-wide ones that can be intimidating to the newcomer? Then the Pennsylvania QSO Party is for you. It's a great way to sample competitive operating in a friendly, low-stress atmosphere.

The contest is divided into two time periods. 1600 UTC on October 9 to 0500 UTC on October 10, and 1300 UTC to 2200 UTC on October 10.

The exchange (what you say to the other stations and what they say to you) is a serial number plus your county in Pennsylvania or your ARRL Section if you live outside Pennsylvania. For example, your editor would send "001 CHE." The next QSO, I'd send "002 CHE," and so forth. There are official 3-letter abbreviations for the counties that you should become familiar with, especially if you plan to operate any CW or use a logging program. The abbreviations are on the Web site (but Pike is PIK, not PI). On CW, you may hear people calling "CQ PAQP."

MARC participates in the club competition. Operators who are club members submit their scores not only for themselves for the various individual awards but also for MARC. Because there is more than one "MARC" in Pennsylvania, be sure to write out "Mid-Atlantic ARC" on your entry form! And be sure to send in your entry, even if you make only a handful of contacts.

For more information and a copy of the official entry form, contact **Kay N3KN** (610-993-9623, n3kn@arll.net). See you at the QSO party!

WELDON SKEPTICAL ABOUT BPL

By Kay Craigie N3KN

Our radio club does not endorse political candidates or engage in any kind of partisan political activity. However, since many MARC members live in the Congressional district represented by **Curt Weldon**, it is a legitimate news story that Rep. Weldon has commented substantively on broadband over power lines (BPL), an issue that's very important to us hams.

Following **President Bush's** speech last spring endorsing BPL, I wrote e-mails to the President, to Senators **Specter** and **Santorum**, and to Congressman **Weldon**. Except for Rep. Weldon, all the replies I received were generic "thank you for your input" messages that don't mean anything in my opinion.

Rep. Weldon's reply was responsive. He said, "I am very concerned with the dangers this may present to our public safety communications and I am giving this matter my close attention." He went on to say, "While I applaud the President for making access to broadband a priority and for requesting the use of technical standards for its deployment, I am well aware of the dangers this idea represents."

If you live in Rep. Weldon's district and would like to see the whole letter, I will be happy to send you a photocopy. Better yet, e-mail the Congressman yourself, and see what he writes back to you. Generally speaking, Rep. Weldon has been sympathetic to Amateur Radio issues.

All members of the House of Representatives are up for reelection this year. We have every right and reason to ask incumbent Representatives and their opponents what they think about issues related to Amateur Radio.

WB3JOE TRUSTEE, NET MANAGER CHANGES

AI N3EA has passed the trusteeship of MARC's **WB3JOE** call-sign to **Carter N3AO**, with the approval of the board. Although moving to Florida doesn't make it illegal for AI to continue as trustee of a Pennsylvania club's callsign, AI thought it would be better to have a local trustee. The **WB3JOE** repeaters will continue to operate as they did under AI's guidance -- following the FCC's rules, yet friendly and open to all responsible users. We owe AI tremendous gratitude for his many years as an officer and board member of MARC -- including several terms as president -- and for his service as **WB3JOE** trustee. He did get married on Field Day weekend, which we will never allow him to live down, but other than that AI has been devoted to the club since MARC was formed in 1976. Enjoy retirement in Florida, AI, and send us an orange sometime. He and wife **Nina** plan to be up here a lot to visit family and enjoy their house at the Jersey shore, so we haven't seen and heard the last of **N3EA** -- and that's good news.

Dick K3IIN takes over as Net Manager of the MARC nets effective September 1. **Carter N3AO** has turned over the responsibility to Dick after quite a few years at the helm of MARC's net program. The traffic net certificate program will continue through the end of 2004 despite the change of Net Manager.