



The BPL Fight Continues

Newington, Ct, April 12th, 2005— A recent IEEE-USA white paper says that copper-wire based broadband infrastructure alternatives, including BPL, are lower in capability than optical fiber and "cannot reach fiber speeds," although they may be lower in cost.

ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, praised the perspective of the report, "Providing Ubiquitous Gigabit Networks in the United States," for focusing on the future and mentioning BPL only briefly. "Appropriately, the white paper dismisses BPL with a passing reference to its being a 'controversial and unimplemented' technology that merely illustrates that the present FCC definitions relating to broadband are 'clearly inadequate,'" he commented. "Continuing to focus on such inferior broadband access technologies as BPL will, in the words of the report, 'relegate the US telecommunications infrastructure and US innovators to positions inferior to those of competitor nations, thus undermining all aspects of the nation's current and future life that depend on it.'"

The IEEE- USA Committee on Communications and Information Policy released the document March 14.

NEWINGTON, CT, April 11th, 2005 — Responding to a recent ARRL inquiry, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) says it has not yet agreed to provide public funds to promote the Briarcliff Manor, New York, BPL project. Under the belief that NYSERDA was already providing money for the project, the League copied the Authority on its fourth and latest request to the FCC to shut down the BPL pilot operated by utility Consolidated Edison and BPL developer Ambient Corporation. Last June, Con Ed and Ambient announced a funding award, pending final contract negotiations, to enhance the BPL project. The ARRL promptly wrote NYSERDA asserting that acknowledged interference from the Briarcliff Manor installation violates the Communications Act of 1934 and questioning the propriety of a public grant. Gunnar Walmet, NYSERDA's director of industry research and buildings, said March 28 that NYSERDA has been unable to reach a contract agreement on the Briarcliff Manor BPL project and has no status in it at this point.

"On the other hand, no public money has been spent yet either," Walmet continued. "It is still our hope to reach agreement, but this length of unsuccessful negotiation is not particularly encouraging."

According to last June's announcement, NYSERDA planned to provide up to \$200,000 of the project's \$480,000 cost. Walmet said March 28 that NYSERDA's involvement, if any, would be limited to funding "aspects of the project and monitoring the results."

"Our hope continues to be that solutions can be found for technical problems with the use of PLC [BPL] and that innovative energy benefits can accrue to New York utility customers," Walmet told ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ. "The proposed project would illuminate and evaluate these potential benefits and the critically important issue of whether PLC as practiced by Con Ed in

(BPL Continued on page 8)

Presidential Words

I was a little disappointed with the turnout at our annual pizza party meeting in March. Mark N3RDV & Larry K3VX made sure there was plenty of pizza, and it turned out there was too much. Even though turnout was light, those that did attend had a good time and lots of pizza.



April is a light month for club activities with the exception of visiting the Field Day site and throwing up some lines to string antennas. But things pick up in May with the Mid Atlantic QSO party on May 14 and 15 and of course Dayton the following weekend. This will be the second year for the MAQSO party and you may remember it operates very much like the PAQSO party which means fun. How our club wants to participate this year will be a topic of discussion at our next meeting.

WASH always has a respectable group show up at Dayton with Saturday being the day that most of us show up. I will be doing the same Saturday routine of going out and back the same day. This year I am trying to arrange taking a work truck (don't worry Hank and Nelson it has a full size extended cab) out so that if Jim, WB4GCS finds a bargain on sections of Rohn 45, I can bring them back. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at Dayton.

Finally if you haven't done so yet I encourage you to pay your 2005 club dues. I would like for the club to seriously consider limiting distribution of the newsletter

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Next Meeting: : April 14th, 2005

The next monthly meeting of the **WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS, INC.** will be Thursday, March 10th, at the **Peters Township Library**, 616 East McMurray Road, McMurray, starting at 7:00 PM.

Mid Atlantic QSO Party, Dayton Hamvention, Field Day, and other plans for the remainder of the year are on the agenda.

Talk-in on the 146.955(-) N3RNX/R and 443.650(+) KB3FZU/R Repeaters (131.8 PL). All members, guests and interested parties invited!

WASH FM Net
9:00 PM ET
Sunday Nights
on the 146.955
and 443.650
Repeaters

NCS Schedule
Listed On Page 3

Want to volunteer to be
a Net Control Station?
Please contact FM Net
Manager Kevin N3HKQ
for more information.

**LOOKING
AHEAD:**

- Foothills ARC Hamfest May 7th
- Mid-Atlantic QSO Party May 14th & 15th
- Dayton Hamvention, May 20th — 22nd
- CQ WW Prefix Contest CW May 28th & 29th
- Breezeshooters Hamfest June 5
- ARRL June VHF Contest June 11th & 12th
- ARRL Field Day June 25th & 26th
- North Hills ARC Hamfest July 10
- WACOM Hamfest October 2nd
- PA QSO Party Oct. 8th & 9th

April 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				Tri-State Spring Radio Fest Antique Radio Flea Market & Auction		1 Poisson d'Avril Contest Elco ARS Meeting
						2 RA Erie VE Test Beaver Valley ARA VE Test Somerset Co ARC Breakfast North Hills ARC Elmer Net
3 Ellwood City ARA Meeting OCWA Pittsburgh Net North Hills ARC Teen Net Somerset Co ARC Net WASH FM Net	4 Breezeshooters Net Triple 'A' ARC Net Beaver Co Public Service Net	5 Butler Co ARA Meeting Skyview RS Meeting WACOM Net North Hills ARC Net SATERN Net GPVHFS Swap 'n' Shop Net	6 WACOM Meeting Uniontown ARC Meeting Steel City ARC Social Night Allegheny Co SKYWarn Net Allegheny Co ARES Net	7 RA Erie Meeting Uniontown ARC Net	8	9 Skyview RS VE Test Foothills ARC Breakfast 2 Rivers ARC Breakfast North Hills ARC Breakfast Foothills ARC Breakfast Quad Co ARC Breakfast Nittany ARC Coffee Call North Hills ARC Elmer Net
10 WACOM VE Test Session OCWA Pittsburgh Net North Hills ARC Teen Net Somerset Co ARC Net WASH FM Net	11 <i>Bum of the Month Lunch</i> ARL Lawrence Co Meeting Breezeshooters Net 2 Rivers ARC Net Triple 'A' ARC Net Beaver Co Public Service Net	12 Foothills ARC Meeting Coke Center ARC Meeting FLVengo M&K Meeting Nittany ARC Meeting Punxsatawney Area ARC Mtng North Hills ARC Net WACOM Net SATERN Net	13 North Hills ARC Meeting Butler Co PSG Meeting Laurel Highlands VHF Mtng Steel City ARC Social Night Allegheny Co ARES Net Westmoreland Co ARES Net	WASH Meeting	14 Horseshoe ARC Meeting Beaver Valley ARA Meeting Uniontown ARC Net	15 Quad Co ARC Meeting
17 Elk Co ARC Meeting WPA Repeater Council Meeting, Clarion PA OCWA Pittsburgh Net North Hills ARC Teen Net Somerset Co ARC Net WASH FM Net	18 Monessen ARC Meeting Breezeshooters Net Steel City ARC VE Test 2 Rivers ARC Net Triple 'A' ARC Net Beaver Co Public Service Net	19 Steel City ARC Meeting 2 Rivers ARC Meeting S H B P & M Meeting Tri-County CW ARC Meeting Juniata Valley ARC Meeting Chestnut Ridge ARC Meeting Pymatuning ARC Meeting North Hills ARC Net	20 Huntington Co ARC Meeting Allegheny Co SKYWarn Net Allegheny Co ARES Net	21 Triple "A" ARA Meeting Somerset Co ARC Meeting Greene Co ARC Meeting Uniontown ARC Net	22	23 Indiana Co ARA VE Test North Hills ARC Elmer Net
24 OCWA Pittsburgh Net North Hills ARC Teen Net Somerset Co ARC Net WASH FM Net	25 Breezeshooters Net 2 Rivers ARC Net Triple 'A' ARC Net Beaver Co Public Service Net	26 Mercer Co ARA Meeting WACOM Net North Hills ARC Net SATERN Net GPVHFS Swap 'n' Shop Net	27 NHARC Activity Night Ft. Armstrong WA Meeting Steel City ARC Social Night Allegheny Co ARES Net Westmoreland Co ARES Net	28 WACOM Board of Directors Meeting Uniontown ARC Net	29	WASH Breakfast Nittany ARC Coffee Call North Hills ARC Elmer Net

WASH 2005 OFFICERS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

President Kevin Smith N3HKQ
VP / Secretary Steve Lane W3SRL
VP / Treasurer Mark Stabryla N3RDV

AND WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT:

N3SH / WA3SH Trustee Steve Lane W3SRL
NP2SH Trustee Paul Jordan NP2JF
N3SH / WA3SH QSL Manager Paul Lusardi NØVLR
NP2SH QSL Manager Ed Oelschlager N3ZNI
VE Team Liaison Jacqué Gosselin N3ZEL
Webmaster Bob Sanford AA3FI
Quartermaster Harold Rosenberger KB3CPI
WASH FM Net Manager Kevin Smith N3HKQ
WASHFest 2005 Committee Steve Lane W3SRL, Chairman
Carol Danko KB3GMN
Bill Hill W3WH
Activities & Operating Events Kevin Smith N3HKQ
Larry Comden K3VX
Ted Huf W4ZE
Ways & Means Carol Danko KB3GMN
Media Communications Kevin DeRose N3KFD
Allegheny Co ARES Representative Ben Williams KB3ERQ

CLUB-AFFILIATED REPEATERS & BEACONS:

Mt. Lebanon	N3RNX/R	146.955 MHz (-)	PL 131.8
Mt. Lebanon	W3SRL/R	442.550 MHz (+)	PL 131.8
		Echo Link #26861 (courtesy W3SRL)	
Canonsburg	KB3FZU/R	443.650 MHz (+)	PL 131.8
St. Johns, VI	NP2SH/B	28.276 MHz	

N3SH/WA3SH WASHNet, the weekly on-air net of WASH, meets every Sunday Night, 9:00 PM ET, on the 146.955 & 443.650 repeaters. All radio amateurs, WASH members or not, are welcome to join in!

THE LEGAL STUFF

"The WASHRag™" (formerly "The Mariner™") is the Official Newsletter of the WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS, INC. (WASH)

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The WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS, INC. was founded on August 23rd, 1993, as the original SOUTH HILLS AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, and operated under that name through 1998. WASH was also known briefly in late 1998 as the N3SH AMATEUR RADIO CLUB. It is not in any way affiliated with the "South Hills Amateur Radio Club, Inc." and is not responsible for that group, it's members, or it's actions in any way, shape, or form.

As always, special thanks to the owners of both the N3RNX/R Repeater System and the KB3FZU/R Repeater System for permitting the WIRELESS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HILLS, INC. and it's members to use their repeaters for club purposes. Special thanks also to our webmaster, Bob Sanford AA3FI, and to Shawn Djernes NØPEU for providing space on-line for back issues of "The WASHRag™" which can be found at www.washarc.org or www.djernes.org/washrag

WASH Amateur Radio Club News Briefs

Next WASH VE Test April 21st

The Next WASH VE exam sessions will be **Thursday, April 21st, 2005, 6:30 PM**, at the **Peters Township Library**, 616 East McMurray Road, McMurray, PA. Talk-in on the 146.955 MHz and 443.650 MHz repeaters. All examiners are ARRL VEC affiliated.

Walk-ins are always welcome, but if you plan on attending the test session, please contact VE Team Liason Jacqué Gosselin N3ZEL:

Telephone (724) 746-9235 or E-Mail: n3zel@fyi.net

Please bring the following to your test session:

- Picture ID or other suitable identification (2 forms of ID required)
- Pen / Pencil / Calculator
- Original FCC license plus a copy of license (if upgrading)
- Original CSCE plus a copy of CSCE (if upgrading)
- Check or Cash in the amount of **\$14.00** (payable to: ARRL VEC)

Future test dates: Thursday, July 21st, 2005
 (tentative) Thursday, October 20th, 2005
 Thursday, January 19th, 2006
 Thursday, April 20th, 2006

The last Saturday in March, the day before Easter Sunday, brought together the **WASH Breakfast Gang** together again at the **The Starting Line Café** on Route 19 near Race Track Road north of Washington... but not for long, as breakfast turned almost into a fox hunt! Seems the owner (with the keys!) didn't turn up on time and the place wasn't open yet. So, abandoning the poor bus boy to his fate, and leaving Jacqué & Ed behind for a few minutes to catch any stragglers who weren't monitoring the repeaters, the Gang relocated to the back room of **The Country Fixin's** on Route 980 in Cecil, just on the other side of Canonsburg.

And it was a full house squeezed into the backroom this time (along with some Easter Baskets under construction... so THAT'S where that bunny hangs his hat!). In attendance where NØVLR, W3WH, a "spectacularly well" W9UK, N3IDH, KB3CPI, WB4GCS, K3VX, N3XFE & Noreen, N3HKQ & Peg, KB3FNM & Mary Lou, WN3VAW & Jessie, N3ZNI, N3ZEL, and N3KLR. Among the many topics of the morning were an upcoming VP2M trip, computer parts, Excel for Windows 3.11 on floppy disks, pink bunny rabbits, new jobs, gerbils, Breezeshooters Groundwave contest, Easter vacations and egg hunts, Borland C++, charging batteries, poison ivy as a border, Girl Scout cookies, KPC 3+ TNC's, wire antennas, chocolate chip pancakes, 802.11b & 802.11g, logging for lumber, raspberries, blackberries, elderberries, identity theft, ventless furnaces & CO, making pencils, and a whole bunch more that just flew around the tables.

So why don't you join us at the next Club Breakfast, to be held at the **Your Way Café** in the Caste Village Shops, Grove & Baptist Roads, Whitehall, April 30th. We hope to return to **The Starting Line Café** on Route 19 near Race Track Road, north of Washington, on May 28th (if they've found the keys by then!). See you there!

We're late, we're late ... Every attempt is made to get the newsletter in everyone's hands (OK, electronic mailbox) sometime between the first of the month and the weekend before the meeting. This just wasn't one of those months, between extra work assignments and the usual things that just can gang up on you sometimes. Ye Editor wishes to apologize to everyone for this one being so late, and promises that he's going to try real hard not to let it happen again (of course it will, but he's going to try very hard regardless!)

The Club Picnic at the Breezeshooter's Hamfest, as far as we know, is still on schedule for this year. Lack of room squeezed the usual announcement out this month (along with the usual DX information), but it should be in next month. Details will be discussed at the next two club meetings and the club breakfasts in between!

Proud Sibling: Paul NØVLR is very proud of his sister Diane KB1KRJ who recently upgraded to General — congratulations! (What, no Zero call?).

News? Yes, club news is lacking more than a little. Please bear in mind that right now, Ye Editor is usually working odd shifts and doesn't get to listen in on many drive time (or other) repeater conversations. So take pity and if you have some club news, let him know... or he'll make good on that threat to start printing pictures of his dog and his kids!

Interested in a "one-day" trip to the 2005 Dayton Hamvention with Larry K3VX?

The plan will be to leave sometime Friday evening, stay overnight a short distance away, spend Saturday at the HARA arena, and then return home Saturday evening (after joining the whole **WASH** gang for dinner, right Larry?)

If interested, please contact Larry at the meeting or on the club reflector to work out the details.

Have you ever wanted to lookup a call sign on QRZ.com without going to QRZ.com first? Well, if you are using Mozilla, Firefox, or a recent version of Netscape, now you can! (Sorry, Bill Gates; you have to keep up with the technology.)

1. Go to my site, AE7Q - Amateur Radio Database Query Tools, and in the right-hand column, click on the QRZ.com install link.
2. In your Mozilla browser's search engine window, click on the tiny down-arrow (diamond).
3. Select QRZ.com. Note that the logo may not show up until you restart your browser.

— Dean Gibson AE7Q
<http://amateur.mailpen.net>

WASH Apparel Updates!

Dan KB3HVN & OGS Distributing are continuing to work on the upcoming web page link to permit WASH club members to order shirts, jackets, hats, and whatever direct from the club web page.

For more information, contact Dan & OGS Distributing at 412-655-8787

WASHNet

2005 NCS Schedule

04/03 — Paul NØVLR	05/22 — Bell Family
04/10 — Carol KB3GMN or Rich N3SBF	05/29 — Michael KB3HFP
04/17 — Steve W3SRL	06/05 — Frank KB3FZU
04/24 — Hank KB3FNM	06/12 — Paul NØVLR
05/01 — Kevin N3HKQ	06/19 — Hank KB3FNM
05/08 — Harold KB3CPI	06/26 — Carol KB3GMN or Rich N3SBF
05/15 — Bill W3WH	Alternate — Ron WN3VAW

Minutes, March 10th Meeting

Steve Lane W3SRL, VP/ Secretary, **WASH**

The meeting was called to order by President Kevin Smith at 19:00 hours, local time.

There was a moment of silence observed for SK.

Introductions were made all around, as is our custom.

W3RJM motioned to waive the reading of the February's meeting minutes, seconded by KB3GMN and carried.

Committee Reports:

Treasurer: No report.

Secretary: W3SRL gave the hamfest report.

VE: N3ZEL reported that there will be a VE session in April.

Repeaters: W3SRL reported the sale of the Motorola equipment donated by N8DPW for a total of \$800 for the slush fund. WB4GCS reported that KB3FZU is looking for a new remote receiver site somewhere to the east for his system.

FM Net: Schedule set, no additional news.

Contests: WN3VAW reported that the CQWW WPX Phone contest is 26-27 March.

Public service: No report.

Activities: K3VX No report.

Newsletter: WN3VAW - Post-hamfest edition is due out soon, as is the April issue.

Ways & Means: KB3GMN: 50/50. "Give Me the Money"

President: No report.

Hamfest: W3SRL gave the wrap-up report, and reported a modest profit. N3ZNI reported 38 new names added to the mailing list.

Old Business: WN3VAW reported that N3UE has a packet node that he owns, minus the Kantronics controller that he would like to offer to the club, before he tries to sell it off. It is located at the KBFZU repeater site. NØVLR will look into what is actually needed to get it back on the air.

New Business: N3HKQ stated his intention to form a committee to look into the club's equipment needs. KB3KOT volunteered to assist K3VX with such a committee, as did WN3VAW.

Good of the Order: N3HKQ has a GAP Challenger HF antenna with "issues". Free to a good home.

The meeting was adjourned at 20:15 hours on a motion by KB3GMN and seconded by WN3VAW. Motion carried.

(Presidential Words Continued from page 1)

and access to the reflector to dues paying members only.

Of course that is a matter for the club to decide but if you consider yourself a member of the Wireless Association of the South Hills, why wouldn't you pay your dues?

— 73, Kevin Smith N3HKQ, President,
Wireless Association of South Hills, Inc.
N3SH / WA3SH / NP2SH/b

Back Issues of the **WASHRag** can be found on the web at:
www.djernes.org/washrag
Thanks Again to Shawn NØPEU for providing the site!

WASH Spotlight



Most of the March Breakfast Gang.

Photo courtesy of and ©Copyright 2005 Kevin Smith N3HKQ

Every month we're going to feature a **WASH** club member, something about them, something they're involved in or a club-related activity that we're involved in, in the **WASH Spotlight**. Submissions for the Spotlight should be sent to Ron WN3VAW at wn3vaw@njdx.org

Monthly WASH Breakfast

Please join us for the next **WASH** Breakfast! We usually get together on the LAST Saturday of every month for a chance to informally sit down, shoot the breeze, compare notes, drink lots of coffee, and just have a good time!



We alternate our breakfast locations every month to make it easier for club members to get to at least one of them:

Join us in April at the **Your Way Café**, Caste Village Shops, Baptist & Grove Roads, Whitehall, and in May at **The Starting Line Café** on Route 19 near Race Track Road, north of Washington. Start time is about 8 AM until ????. Monitor 146.955 & 443.650 for talk-in or any last minute changes.

All are welcome, **WASH** members or not, amateurs or not!

Wireless Association of South Hills Membership

AA3FI	KB3GUZ	NØVLR	N3VEH	W3VFA	Silent Keys
AA3JS	KB3HFP	NØWPV	N3XFE	W3WH	
AB3AB	KB3HVN	N2QIV	N3XI	W4ZE	K3EED
K3BZW	KB3IAC	N3AWF	N3YPB	W8LEV	KB3ENX
K3JDS	KB3ICC	N3BSQ	N3YQY	WA3JPP	KB3FQT
K3LGM	KB3IJX	N3CZZ	N3ZCG	WA3RVD	N3KEH
K3OL	KB3IRQ	N3DFK	N3ZEG	WB3BPH	N3OBD
K3PCF	KB3IVW	N3FZ	N3ZEH	WB4GCS	N3SKR
K3VX	KB3IVX	N3HKQ	N3ZEL	WB3GTL	N3SRC
K9LZ	KB3KGP	N3IDH	N3ZNI	WN3BOJ	W3ZLK
KA3PPH	KB3KOT	N3INT	N4MIS	WN3VAW	Color Codes: 2005 Member 2004 Member 2003 Member 2002 Member (2001 and earlier members no longer displayed)
KA3TWI	KB3LIX	N3KFD	NP2JF	WO3Z	
KA3UPY	KB3QX	N3PN	N8DPW	Barbara Misic	
KA3WZO	KC2JJB	N3QMV	N3WEL	David	
KA3YTS	KC4WTT	N3RDV	W3HND	Delmonico	
KB3CPI	KC6VLV	N3RHT	W3JAF		
KB3DCO	KE3XB	N3RNX	W3RJM		
KB3ERQ	KE7FD	N3SBF	W3RWS		
KB3FNM	KE8RN	N3TBK	W3SRL		
KB3FZU	NØPEU	N3UE	W3VE		
KB3GMN					
KB3GMO					
KB3GMP					
KB3GMU					

Through April 13th, 2005
List compiled by
Mark Stabryla N3RDV, Vice President/Treasurer

Why It Matters

Steve Katz WB2WIK/6 courtesy of www.qrz.com

There have been many discussions about CC&Rs on-line, and I've participated in some of them. I've been a vocal advocate of protesting restrictive covenants by not buying any, and have been trying to convince others to follow this path. Sometimes, I wonder why I bother!

Here's why:

Ham radio, a great hobby comprised mostly of people who like to communicate with each other via radio, is already in trouble. I'm not a doomsayer who thinks the hobby will bite the bullet in the next ten years; I doubt that will happen. But it will, eventually, become a sad and lonely place unless hams can continue doing what they've done since the spark days of a century ago: That is, install useful antennas to keep ourselves in contact with each other.

"Everything works," as N6BT once wrote in an article of that title a few years ago in QST magazine, and Tom went on to discuss making radio contacts using a light bulb for an antenna. I've made contacts with a light bulb antenna also, and fun as that may be, it's a bit too much of a challenge for daily activity. I'd change hobbies if that were my only recourse for an antenna.

The truth is, everything doesn't work, and aspiring hams, new hams and even some very long-time hams who have never experienced what a really good antenna system can do for them don't know what a pleasure it is to spend operating time actually making solid contacts anywhere band conditions allow rather than listening, tuning, calling unanswered CQs and making unanswered calls. Or making contacts that are cut short by, "Sorry, the band's going out on us!"

Experimenting is Good

For sure it is, as is QRPP work, minimalist station work, and jumping from an airplane without a parachute if you're really into thrills. But to develop the skills to be a great amateur wireless experimenter, it helps a lot to make a few thousand contacts and become a good operator. If you make one contact a day for a year, you're not there yet – trust me.

So, I endorse experimenting, and do a lot of it, myself. I love to see what I can work with the FT-817 and a wire tossed over a tree limb at a beachfront campground. It's very cool. But if that were "ham radio" to me, I'd rank it right down there with the other hobbies I tried and gave up from boredom, like stamp collecting.

Great Operators Are Bred by Experience

And making thousands, and thousands, and thousands of contacts. As most hams who've tried contesting at least once from a big-gun multioperator HF/DX station will agree, sitting and "running" 120 contacts per hour for about 10 or 12 hours, yielding 1200-1440 QSOs in a single sitting, is, um, stimulating. And the same ones will tell you that after doing this the first time, they all acknowledge they have a lot to learn about operating and developing the skill set to actually win a contest.

You Can Do It Anywhere

You can become a great operator working somebody else's station, for certain. But many of us, maybe most of us, would like to have a home station where we can do almost the same thing. That's where CC&Rs come in: They usually won't let you.

Some aren't interested in becoming great operators, and just want to have fun chit-chatting ("rag chewing") with other hams. That's great, too, and a huge part of this hobby and its attraction. Just remember, unless you only want to rag chew with the strongest stations on the band, the stations with good "ears" who will hear you even if you generate a miniscule signal, you're really limiting yourself if you can't install effective antennas for the bands you want to use. That's where CC&R's come in: They usually won't let you.

Some are into the Public Service aspects of the hobby, and that's also great and part of the reason for the Amateur Radio Service. While it might be possible to help in an emergency with a "shack on your belt" (hand held VHF-UHF rig), I'd rather help the Tsunami victims by passing emergency traffic on 20 meters, exchanging info with stations in the Indian Ocean region. That's where CC&Rs come in: They usually won't let you do that, either.

The Solution

If hams keep buying homes with restrictive covenants that prohibit the installation of effective outdoor antenna systems, one day the bands will sound very quiet, as nobody will be generating any signals strong enough for the others to hear. Perhaps this is the ultimate irony, and the way the hobby should come to a close after more than a century of wireless experimentation.

But I'd like to think the hobby will survive me by another century. The only way that's likely to happen is if hams can continue getting on the air and communicating with each other directly, without aid from non-amateur hardware, eg., telephones, internet, satellites.

Would you like to help? You can. We can all contribute to the ultimate decline and

downfall of restrictive covenants, one by one, by simply not buying properties having any. Since my family and I value Quality of Life over other factors, and we've experienced living behind security gates twice (never again!), and clearly understand the difference between an unrestricted lifestyle and a highly restricted one created by covenants we did not write, those in my family all know we'll never invest a penny in a covenant-restricted property, anywhere, ever. I've further convinced several friends, coworkers and more distant relatives to follow suit, and they're on the bandwagon.

I'd say at this point, I have twenty people in my camp on this matter. If there are 500,000 hams in the U.S. (the gross figure is higher), and each of us represents twenty people who will never buy a CC&R home, now we've controlled ten million home buyers.

Be Vocal

I'm very vocal. My XYL and I go out of our way to look at new home construction sites having Open Houses, and tell the brokers why we can't consider buying anything from them: "Sorry, if it weren't for the covenants, we'd buy right now." Maybe if they hear this a few million times, it will make a difference. (Note: We do own homes already, that are covenant-free; but we're always looking – it keeps life interesting, and we've moved enough times that we are now really good at it.)

We Can All Tell

I operate the HF bands quite a bit, and can always tell when somebody's using compromised antennas. They're weaker, and more difficult to copy, that's how. Every time I hear a nice, strong signal, I ask not, "What are you running there?" but rather, "What kind of antenna are you using?" The strong signals come from the stations with good antennas, and the weak ones come from the stations with, um, less good antennas – every time. Band conditions change, but at any given point in time, I can usually tell the difference.

VHF's the same way, really, but the stations are closer. In the January VHF Sweepstakes, a great opportunity to work a bunch of new stuff on the VHF bands, I usually get on and make contacts. Some signals are incredibly poor, even though they're pretty local. "Which way's your beam pointed?" I usually ask, and then of course find out, "No beam, I'm using a XYZ antenna in the attic." Which is why they're not only weak to me, but nobody else even hears them calling. Antennas matter.

And the problem is, CC&Rs impact our ability to install ones that work. Well, it's really worse than that: CC&Rs might also impact our ability to even transmit a signal, since they often include statements regarding the use of transmitters -- or disturbing the peace, which can be a pretty wide-ranging impact statement.

Spare Us the Advantages

I've heard from some folks, including hams, that CC&Rs are actually beneficial in some ways. When queried about the details, though, these arguments fall short of making any sense.

"They help preserve property values!" Hogwas h. Prove it. You won't be able to, because there isn't a shred of evidence this is true; in reality, it's the other way around: Covenant-free properties are appreciating faster and higher than covenant-restricted properties – everywhere, in all 50 States.

"They protect us from having neighbors with old washing machines and rotting automobiles on their lawns!" Well, if this is the case, I feel sorry for you. Really sorry. Why did you pick a neighborhood where people are doing that? I've never lived anyplace like that, and surely wouldn't. But everywhere I have lived already had ordinances or zoning laws prohibiting exactly these activities, and violators would receive a lot more than a slap on the wrist from a Homeowners Association: They'd receive a summons to answer the charges regarding their violations; a no-show results in a Contempt Order, followed by a bench warrant, possible arrest and a jail sentence.

"The covenants and the HOA keep our place neat, tidy and well cared for." Well, this may be true; but I don't need covenants or an Association to keep my place looking neat and well cared for: I do that, anyway. So can anybody. Here where I live (Los Angeles), we have a municipal ordinance requiring everyone to keep their lawns and yards cut to a maximum (grass/weed/brush) height of four inches. Violators are fined, quickly – without exception. Then, the Fire Department comes in and cuts your lawn and yard for you! (Isn't that nice of them?)

(Why It Matters Continued from page 5)

And they send you a bill, for a minimum of \$300, for this service rendered. They'll do so every couple of weeks, if need be. And the fines keep piling up. Unpaid fines result in court action, and then property seizure so your property can be auctioned off to pay arrears. More effective than an HOA, and you don't have to pay any dues!

"I'm a lazy SOB who can't take care of my property, and need somebody else to do everything for me." Bingo! Pretty good justification, I can't argue with this one.

Reasons to Avoid CC&Rs, Even if You're Not a Ham

- Property value appreciation: Verifiably more, faster, without covenants: Guaranteed.
- Freedom of expression, with regard to house design, roofing design, mailbox design, garage door style, plantings (bushes/trees), etc.
- Ability to have visitors who can actually park in your driveway, or on the street in front of your house.
- Ability to have visitors who might actually feel welcome enough to drop by.
- Freedom to park your own vehicle(s) in your own driveway – even at night!
- You can have your own private swimming pool, spa or whatever you like for backyard recreation and exercise without sharing resources with neighbors.
- No HOA fees to pay – which usually start out low and then escalate over time.
- You can hire your own gardener, pool guy and other service people you choose; or you can choose to save money, get some exercise, and do all this stuff yourself.
- You have the option to close yourself off from your neighbors with a fence or a wall, if you wish – or not, if you don't wish.
- You can install a basketball goal, hockey goal or other sporting equipment that makes good, healthy exercise for the kids.
- You can make architectural changes if you want to – like adding a fireplace, re-paving your driveway with a new design or materials...all sorts of interesting things that CC&Rs usually prohibit entirely.

Can't Find Any New Homes Without Restrictions?

Ah, a common problem, and a great reason to not buy a newly built home. But have you really, really looked? Let me give you an example of somebody who I think didn't look, much:

A ham I don't really know (we've corresponded, and that's all) bought a very nice home with CC&Rs in New Jersey, a place I know really well since I grew up and owned several homes there. In fact, by coincidence, he bought a home only a couple of miles from where I used to live and also owned a home.

Difference is, my home, which was new when I bought it and is still pretty new, didn't have any CC&Rs. I questioned this fellow about why he bought where he did, and every single reason given would have been more than covered if he had simply purchased my last home there. Same neighborhood, same school system, same commute, same proximity to shopping and services, better view out the window, larger home, larger lot – and no restrictions.

Of course, I can't guarantee my old house there was actually for sale. But it was one of a few hundred homes on that same hill, and I'll bet one of them was. The difference is, this fellow, who was relocating from another area, likely didn't know my old neighborhood existed – because if you use a Realtor in your search, they don't know everything about anyplace. They know what they have for sale, and that's about it.

Only a real local will know everything about the area. Preferably, a "ham" local, who's lived there a long time and seen everything go up around him,

and knows what neighborhoods have restrictions and which ones don't.

The Realtor will show "new" houses because they're easy to sell, and in fact he may be representing the builder and selling only those homes.

If this fellow had only asked, "Well, are there other homes in the area with a nice hilltop location, but with a larger yard and no covenants?" I'm not sure what answer he might have received, but maybe he would have heard the truth, which would have been, "Yes, of course there are. Want to see some?"

Here's another story, a personal experience of this past Fall:

I ran into a ham on the air who was moving to southwest Missouri, in the Ozarks area, and was bemoaning that all homes in the whole area have antenna restrictions. That didn't seem possible to me, especially since I work stations in the Ozarks of MO who I know have big beams on big towers and have the resulting great signals. So, I made a few calls.

One large realty agency is owned by a licensed broker who is well known in that area. We exchanged a few e-mails and telephone calls, and he sent me all the MLS listings in a couple of zip codes I asked about. The standard building lot back there is 3 acres (!), and indeed, most of the tract homes (yes, there are tract homes on 3 acre lots) do indeed have restrictions. So, I focused on the non-tract homes. Not a single one had any restrictions at all – none, nada, zip. And they looked beautiful in the pictures, and priced about the same as the new tract homes.

So, the XYL and I made a little trip: To the Ozarks. To Ozark County, specifically. I had to see what's going on there. We met with the well known and respected realtor, and in fact he bought us dinner. We spent one full day looking at the tract homes on 3 acre lots, and also at five or six non-tract homes, also on 3-acre parcels – the ones having no CC&Rs. The non-tract homes were nicer, more feature-filled, and had more interesting stuff for sale with them: Like in-ground pools and tennis courts, which the tract homes didn't have, and couldn't have, because the CC&Rs restricted them.

I finally asked the broker, "Why in the world does anybody buy these tract homes, when the other houses and lots are nicer for the same price?" The answer: "We show the tract homes more, partly because we are the exclusive agent for the developer and we must sell these homes. Also, we can show more of them in less time, because there might be ten on one street."

Great.

The fact is, most prospective home buyers aren't very good at it.

In Summary

Even if you don't care about all the other stuff, the preservation of our hobby as we know it is dependant upon our ability to get on the air and talk to each other. It's the reason most of us got licensed in the first place.

Every time one of "us" buys a home having restrictive covenants, we're cutting short the overall life of this wonderful hobby.

Of course, then, there's always needlework.

QSL Routes

3D2FI via GØUIH — W3AWU
 3D2JX via JN1HOW — K5AQ
 3DAØWPX via ZS6WPX — WØMM
 3V8SQ via DL2OBF — JF1LZQ
 3XY1L via UY5XG — KA2BZS
 4N2Z via YU7KW — VE3EXY
 5H9AW via ZS6WPX — WØMM
 5NØHVC via OK1DXE — KA2BZS
 5Z4DZ via PC1A — WØMM
 6OØCW via I2YSB — W2IRT
 6OØX via DJ6SI — W9IXX
 9H3IC via M5AAV — M5AAV
 9QØAR via SM5BFJ — W2IRT
 9U6PM via HB9TDM — DE1DXX
 9Y4/N3BNA via KA2AEV — KA2AEV
 C91Z via ZS6WPX — WØMM
 ER3R via ER3DX — JF1LZQ
 ES5MC via W3HMK — W2IRT
 EX9A via DF8WS — W5ADF
 FP5BZ via F5TJP — 9K3HN
 GD6IA via GD3UMW — W9OL
 G11W via G1ØNWG — KT4U
 J45DX via HA4DX — W2IRT
 JY8MZ via S51GL — KA2BZS
 M2Z, MJ2Z, MU2Z, MW2Z via
 M5AAV — M5AAV
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 Y19MC via N2OO — UA6JD
 YK1BA via N5FF — KA2BZS
 ZD7ZA via G3ZAY — DE1DXX
 ZK3DX via EB2AYV — W2AY
 ZS1EL via K4YL — W2IRT
 ZS8MI via ZS6WLC — NJ9K

Total number of USA Licensed Amateurs by Class

As of May 14 th , 2000:		As of April 3 rd , 2005	
Novice	49,329	Novice	28,869
Tech/Tech+	334,254	Tech/Tech+	318,221
General	112,677	General	137,093
Advanced	99,782	Advanced	76,706
Extra	78,750	Extra	106,238
Total all classes	674,792	Total all classes	667,318

Thanks to the NJDXA DX News & DX Chat Reflectors, the DX-QSL Reflector, 425 DX News, OPDX News, Diamond DX Club News, ICPO Bulletin, & ARRL DX Bulletin for our DX News information. Thanks also to Bill Moore NC1L / ARRL DXCC Desk, & Bernie McClelleny W3UR / The Daily DX for confirmations & additional information.



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FCC News

ARRL Web Extra & ARRL Letter, courtesy American Radio Relay League

NEWINGTON, CT, April 5th, 2005 — In filings before the FCC, the ARRL has again challenged some basic assumptions made by BPL proponents and included in the FCC's *Report and Order (R&O)* adopting new rules governing the deployment of broadband over power line (BPL) systems. The League took particular issue with any notion that a balancing test exists between BPL's purported public benefits and its potential to interfere with licensed services.



"There is no balancing to be done in the case of compatibility between unlicensed devices and licensed radio services," the ARRL asserted April 1 in its *Reply to Oppositions* from Ambient Corporation and the United Power Line Council (UPLC). "Unlicensed devices are not entitled to operate if they cause harmful interference to licensed radio services, and they cannot be authorized at all . . . if they have, as does BPL, a significant interference potential to licensed services." The League's remarks reiterate a point it's made in other FCC proceedings that have pitted unlicensed Part 15 devices against licensed services.

The *Reply to Oppositions* comments mark the last opportunity for BPL stakeholders to comment in the FCC rule making proceeding that led to last October's *R&O*. In separate replies, the ARRL zeroed in on oppositions to petitions for reconsideration filed by Ambient, the UPLC, Current Technologies, three utilities—Ameren Energy Communications, Virginia Electric Power and Tucson Electric Power—Homeplug Power Line Alliance and Intellon.

The ARRL also targeted Ambient's stated assumption that the FCC's goal in the proceeding should be to "ensure that its interference protection rules and policies do not inadvertently hinder development and deployment" of BPL. The League cited its own experiences with Ambient to make its point.

"Ambient's priorities and spectrum manners are evident not only in [its] statement, but as well in its atrocious record of harmful interference and unresponsiveness to verified interference complaints in its BPL test operations," the ARRL said. It attached a copy of its latest interference complaint involving Ambient's Briarcliff Manor, New York, BPL pilot project. "The interference to Amateur Radio communications at that site has been unresolved for a period of an **entire year**," the League emphasized.

Ambient's *Opposition* filing, the League said, suggests the company "believes that the potential future benefit of BPL justifies whatever harmful byproduct there is in terms of interference to licensed radio services." But the Ambient pilot project, the ARRL continued, "form an obvious, empirical rebuttal" to the FCC's assertion in the *R&O* that BPL has a low interference potential, and that BPL providers have some incentive to remedy BPL interference. "Both of these fundamental premises have proven false," the ARRL said.

The ARRL also took issue with the UPLC's suggestion in its *Opposition* that the FCC's *R&O* "struck the right balance between protecting against potential interference and promoting the public interest in BPL deployment." The League said previously stated FCC policy that radiated emission levels sufficiently low to prevent interference to licensed services rather than mitigating it after the fact has provided the basis for authorizing unlicensed RF devices such as BPL.

Any "balancing test" with respect to BPL is improper, the ARRL concluded, adding that any future public benefits of unlicensed BPL systems "are irrelevant" under the Communications Act.

Beyond that, BPL operators have a greater incentive to deny the existence of any interference, harmful or otherwise, the ARRL said. "and so far, the Commission has given every indication that it will indulge them."

Current Technologies' statement in its *Opposition* that the FCC's *R&O* establishes "even-handed rules" for BPL also drew fire from the League, which said the nation's amateur licensees have been left wondering how the new rules will do anything to preclude interference. "In ARRL's view, the *Report and Order* denies the interference potential and does virtually nothing either to prevent interference in advance or to remedy it after the fact," the League said.

"BPL providers are the beneficiaries of the *Report and Order*." Amateur licensees on the other hand, the ARRL said, "must bear the burden" the *R&O* creates, despite the fact that Amateur Radio is a licensed service.

Responding to oppositions from the utilities, Homeplug and Intellon, the League reiterated its argument that the FCC's measurement extrapolation factor of 40 dB per decade (ie, a factor of 10 in terms of measurement distance) below 30 MHz--but 20 dB per decade above 30 MHz--for BPL systems is "excessively liberal."

The ARRL said the burden of justifying the 40 dB/decade HF extrapolation

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(BPL Continued from page 1)

Briarcliff can be made fully FCC compliant."

In a reply April 1, Sumner reiterated that the reason for his original letter last June was "to raise the question of whether a project that was in willful violation of the Communications Act was deserving of public funding." Sumner told Walmet that not only does the original question remain, it's now joined by another: "whether corporations that make such misrepresentations are qualified to receive public funding."

In mid-March, the ARRL charged Ambient and the FCC with being unwilling or unable to effectively deal with harmful interference stemming from the Briarcliff Manor BPL pilot project. The League asked the Commission pull the plug on the system until Ambient addresses interference complaints.

Sumner assured Walmet that the ARRL will continue to call ongoing violations in Briarcliff Manor to the FCC's attention until the agency takes corrective action. "In the meantime, as long as no NYSERDA funds are devoted to supporting PLC operations, there will be no need for me to trouble you again," he concluded.

Under the funding agreement announced last year, Con Edison would have to "continually monitor possible radio interference" from the BPL demonstration, investigate ways to mitigate interference and "assess potential barriers to full-scale deployment including regulatory issues."

Walmet had earlier expressed confidence that the Briarcliff Manor BPL trial would operate within the terms of its FCC license. Ambient has a "nationwide" FCC Part 5 Experimental license, WD2XEQ, to test BPL on HF.

— Courtesy of the American Radio Relay League

(FCC Continued from page 7)

factor "should have been placed on the proponents of the unlicensed, spectrum-polluting technology." BPL proponents want the FCC to retain the standard. The League maintains there's no technical justification for the 40 dB/decade extrapolation factor and, given the height of typical amateur antennas with respect to overhead power lines, "will not protect against interference."

The ARRL says analyses by the National Telecommunications and Information Agency (NTIA) and others have shown that if a large number of BPL emitters is deployed, "they will raise the ambient levels of man-made noise worldwide." Further complicating measurements is that maximum radiation angle from overhead BPL lines will be upward from the line, not downward, according to NTIA's analysis. The League also countered the assertions that BPL is a point-source radiator for measurement purposes rather than a line-source radiator.

The League says applying the 40 dB/decade extrapolation factor to measurements made at ground level do not equate to actual field strengths taken at a distance of 30 meters and underestimates maximum field strength by as much as 11.5 dB. It requested a 20 dB/decade extrapolation factor for line emitters such as BPL on overhead lines.

The ARRL also urged BPL providers to seriously rethink the idea of using BPL to carry emergency communications and provide utility company management of the power grid. "BPL is entitled to no protection from interference at all, and it can neither expect nor claim any such protection," the ARRL said, pointing to tests demonstrating that even low levels of RF can disrupt BPL transmissions.



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Inside This Issue:

- News on the BPL Front!
- Things to think about when dealing with the CC&R Issue!
- So, did you find our breakfast gathering last month

All this & more... waiting for your right inside these pages!!



Family Portrait

Paul NØVLR & Annette NØWPV Lusardi and their family.

For those who didn't hear, Paul has been working extra hard the last few months to surprise Annette with a second honeymoon trip to the Dominican Republic sometime this month... sorry, they're not going to be going long enough to take a radio along and work anybody this time around!

Photo courtesy of and ©Copyright 2004 Paul Lusardi NØVLR

The *WASH*Rag

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