

Tara News

Affiliate of the American Radio Relay League
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What's Inside This Gift Box??

Can anyone guess just what might be inside this gift box? If not; you'll just have to wait until December 16 at the TARA Christmas Party in order to find out. That's when "one" lucky club member will be chosen to receive this very special holiday gift from TARA.

This year we're doing something a little bit special for our club members in the form of this holiday gift. But, in order to receive this gift you must attend the Christmas Party on December 16th at 7:00 PM over in Green Island. Plus, you must have your dues for 2008/2009 "PAID IN FULL." If you're not sure if your dues are paid you're still in luck. If you act right now you'll have plenty of time to check with Howie, N2HIC, at hic2@verizon.net to make sure your dues are taken care of. Also, you'll have time at the meeting but let's take care of things here and now. After all Howie wants visit with his friends/family and enjoy the party too!

So...make sure you do the following:

- 1.) MAKE SURE YOU ATTEND THE
DECEMBER 16th CHRISTMAS PARTY**
- 2.) MAKE SURE YOUR DUES ARE PAID FOR
2008/2009**
- 3.) AND IF YOU'RE CHOSEN FOR THIS GIFT
YOU MUST IMMEDIATELY GIVE IT TO
"MR.BILL" FOR SAFE -KEEPING.**

Christmas Breakfast with Santa at the Colonie Elks

Happy Holidays to All,
On Sunday, December 14, 2008 8:30 AM until
1 PM is the Annual Christmas Breakfast with
Santa at the Colonie Elks!

They will be serving their famous "All you can eat" breakfast with all the scrambled eggs, toast, sausage, bacon, ham, pancakes, french toast, sautéed onions and peppers, homemade corned beef hash, coffee, juice, milk and much more!

There will be gifts for the kiddies and pictures taken with Santa Claus!
Hope to see you there!

73,

Karen KS20



More than a Club



We're a Family



Completed Public Service Events

Pumpkin Patrol 2008



Another Great Success

Greetings to all,
I want to say a huge "Thank You" to everyone who helped with the Pumpkin Patrol this year!
We had all the over passes covered for the very first time and we had a lot of new hams and hams that have never done PP before.

With everyone pulling together, it was for me the Best Pumpkin Patrol yet!

Here is a list of everyone one who helped me...all those who have done it before and those who just got their license and those just wanting to try it and making it a great success...I thank You all for all your help!

First my net controls & back up net controls...

Tom...N2SQO	Bill....NY2U
Tony....W2BEJ	Tom....KC2FCR

To all who sat out on over passes....

John....KC2PGL	Craig....W2XAD
Beth....KC2BSC	did a media news report!
Howie....N2HIC	did a media news report!
Randy....KL7TJZ	Ken....AA2CW
Tim....WA2QAC	Russ....WB2LXC
Ridge....KB2HWL	Dave....NF2G
Ray....N2VLY	Lisa....KC2OEA
Eric....KC2TSW	Mike....N2JVE
Dave....WB2VXS	June....KB2JTG
Tad....N2TAD	Ed....KC2HNC
Mike....KC2JCJ	Bill....KC2NXC
Larry....KC2BLC	Dave....KM2O
Ray....N2ZQF	Sue....KC2IBI
Margaret....N2PEK	George....W2SFD
Ken....WA2TQK	Walt....KC2RKR
Kenny....KB2KFV	Marilyn....KB2JZI
Mac....KB2SPM	Karen....KS2O

And Thanks to all of the ACA who helped out, also.

73,

Karen-KS2O

Watervliet Holiday Sleigh Ride

Happy Holidays to All,
TARA'S Public Service Team got called out for a final event of the year to help with Sleigh rides on Saturday, December 6, 2008.

We were set up where they asked and then the people who owned the horses changed their minds and said the ride was too far for the horses to go several times during the evening. But, as usual our team worked great together and we adjusted our locations.

I want to Thank everyone who came out in the bitter cold to help with this event.

Ken...WA2TQK
Howie...N2HIC
Beth...KC2BSC
Ed...KC2HNC
Tom...KC2FCR
Margaret...N2PEK
Mac...KB2SPM

Thanks for helping me out all year!

73,

Karen-KS2O





Richard S. Carter - WA2COI, SK



Early this morning I received word that TARA lost one of our family members with the loss of Richard S. Carter, WA2COI of Wynantskill, NY. I know some of you might not recognize his call sign or recall his face but let me assure you he was a "loyal" TARA member. Dick was unable to attend many of our functions due to some physical limitations that he mostly kept private but he still kept tuned into all of our events. Even though he wasn't able to attend our meetings/functions or get on-the-air to chat like he loved to do he still kept an eye/ear on each of us. Let me tell you this; Dick knew each of you that used our repeaters by first name & call sign and he could rattle off just what trouble each of us were into!

I know many of you have heard me over the years talking about club members with loyalty. Well, let me tell you something, when it comes to loyalty WA2COI wrote the book! He was constantly talking with me via our many phone calls on what he could do to help the club. He truly felt part of this club and he felt that he had too do more in order to make this the very best club around. Just like each year when we started talking about Field Day, he'd say, "Okay Bill, now tell me what you guys need." But you know what,, more often he never had to ask for like I said he listened, and he listened very carefully. I can't tell you the number of times that he'd call me with a list of items we needed to get for next year's Field Day.. Or just like last year when we talked about getting those new generators. The very next day after I first mentioned the need & idea on the repeaters the phone was ringing and it was none other than "Uncle Dick" as many of us called him. He'd start chewing me out for not telling him sooner and then just like so many other times he said, "let's get this project going!" And, just like every other major project this club started he would always provide us with some needed funding to give it a good "kick start".

I still remember just how proud and elated he was to hear every- one on the repeaters talking about our new generators and most of you never knew he was involved. Dick wanted absolutely "No Credit" for his generosity and I always had to refer to him as one of our Secret Santa's. That's just the way he wanted it.

You couldn't meet a kinder nor more gentle man than Dick. As I said, he loved to talk and he simply just loved people in general. Most of all he loved his family. There wasn't a day that went by that he didn't miss his wife Kay that passed away several years ago. However, with the love from his son Edward and his daughters Barbara & Kathy he managed to keep pushing forward each day. Even though his son lived out on the West coast Dick would hear from him each day and how he looked forward to those chats! Plus, there seldom was a weekend where his girls wouldn't be right at home with him to have a meal together while catching up on all the news of their lives. As you might expect its quite hard to think I'm not going to hear from my friend again. But, I cherish the times we had together. I wish more of you had the opportunity to sit and chat or as he'd say "kick the can around." I constantly say that this is one big family we have and today that family is that much smaller.

However, too have known Dick was to know you had a friend for life. I'll always carry his memories in my heart and I know I'm a better man for having known him! Please keep him in your prayers and his family too.

"God Bless My Old Friend.."

Bill WY2U



CQ COMMUNICATIONS ACQUIRES WORLD RADIO MAGAZINE

Hicksville, NY and Sacramento, CA, November 12, 2008 -- CQ Communications, Inc. has acquired *WorldRadio* magazine, CQ Publisher Dick Ross, K2MGA and *WorldRadio* Publisher Armond Noble, N6WR, announced jointly today. CQ, based in Hicksville, New York, currently publishes *CQ Amateur Radio*, *CQ VHF* and *Popular Communications* magazines.

WorldRadio, based in Sacramento, California, has been published monthly since July, 1971, with a primary focus on the human side of ham radio.

CQ, a general-interest ham radio magazine best known for its support of DXing and contesting, has been in print since January, 1945.

Armond Noble, N6WR, Publisher of *WorldRadio*, said that at the age of 74 the time had come for him to retire. "I wanted to be sure that

WorldRadio found a good home, and that our readers would continue to be served by an independent voice in amateur radio," Noble said.

CQ Publisher Dick Ross, K2MGA, said, "*WorldRadio* has filled an important niche in our hobby for nearly four decades. We welcome *WorldRadio*'s readers to the CQ family, and we look forward to meeting their needs for many years to come."

Current plans call for *WorldRadio* to continue to be published online as part of the CQ family of magazines, with Editor Nancy Kott, WZ8C, continuing in that position. *WorldRadio* subscribers will also have their subscriptions transferred to *CQ* magazine. Readers will be notified of details as plans are finalized.

Remember !!
When You Key Your Microphone
The Entire World
May be Listening In

Reader Mailbag

Hello TARA from the UK !!!

Dear Tara,

We are pleased to announce that we have placed a brief article and link to your site.

From our site WWW.SELBYHAMRADIO.COM.

I hope you can place a link on to your excellent site. Hope to catch you on the repeater again. We at Selby fondly remember our QSQ on the repeater.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Topping

tonyopsufo@hotmail.com

Steve Watson - N2PZP wrote:

Ken,

As you have done in the past the T.A.R.A. Newsletter, was great, it had all the news that was news and it is pleasure to read.

Thank you, for sending it to me.

Steve - N2PZP

Steve Bozak – WB2IQU wrote:

Thanks Kenny for the Newsletter, great as always!

Stephen G. Bozak

MA CEP Member of IECA



"Official" TARA Baseball Hats Are Available

TARA will have its "Official" TARA Baseball Hats available at the next monthly meeting on Tuesday December 16th. These hats are adjustable, dark blue, with the colored TARA logo embroidered on them. We'll have a dozen of these hats and I'm sure they'll be going fast! If you are interested in one of these hats please let us know right away and we'll save you one. These hats sell for \$12.00 each; exactly what they cost us.

Thanks.

Mr. Bill - WY2U

Hudson Division Newsletter Award for December goes to L.I.M.A.R.C.

The November 2008 award goes to "LIMARC LOG" of the Long Island Mobile Amateur Radio Club for their December Newsletter.

Congratulations to editor Ray Taruskin, W2RFR fine job on the club newsletter. The many pictures in this month's e log really put it over the top. I think the pictures of the Awards Luncheon did the trick.

"With all the cell phone cameras and "digital dudes" snapping away at ham events there should be pictures in every newsletter. Some have none. Please note, they have not received a monthly award here."

Clubs please make sure that you continue to send a copy of your pdf file to n2ff@arrl.org. I have been missing some issues in the last few months. Not every division club is submitting each month. It's like Lotto, if you don't buy a ticket or send a PDF you can't win!

FCC called to Resume Enforcement

By CQ Magazine

From the CQ Newsroom...

Hicksville, NY November 18, 2008 -- *CQ* magazine is calling on FCC Enforcement Bureau Chief Kris Monteith to move swiftly to name a successor to Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, as Special Counsel for Amateur Radio, and to bring FCC enforcement back to the ham bands.

Writing in his "Zero Bias" editorial in the December 2008 issue, *CQ* Editor Rich Moseson, W2VU, noted that the Commission not only has failed to name a successor to Hollingsworth, but that not a single amateur enforcement action has been taken since his retirement this past July. At that time, the editorial noted, the amateur radio community was assured that the Commission's dedication to enhanced enforcement in the Amateur Service remains strong. However, the FCC's total inaction since July suggests otherwise.

"This is deeply disturbing and of grave concern," wrote Moseson, adding, "It would be a tragedy, and a travesty, if the FCC were to go back on its promise to be there for us and allowed amateur enforcement to once again drop off the radar."

The need for continuing amateur enforcement was reinforced after the issue was sent to press when *CQ* was informed of an outburst of racist diatribes on 20 meters, including the transmission of recordings of a Hitler rally and Nazi marching songs. "This type of behavior was all too common before 'Sheriff' Riley came to town a decade ago," noted Moseson, "and it quickly disappeared once it became obvious that someone in authority was paying attention. But now, only a matter of months since Riley handed in his badge, it has become obvious to these hams that they are once again free to do whatever they please without fear of any consequences."

"The FCC must get back into the amateur enforcement business, and it must do so quickly," says Moseson, "before the situation once again gets out of control. Enforcement Bureau Chief Monteith must act promptly to name a successor to Riley Hollingsworth and assure amateurs that they have not once again been abandoned by the Commission."

The full text of Moseson's editorial is online at <www.cq-amateur-radio.com>, linked from the December issue highlights.

147.00 448.225 and Echolink are Back

On the Top of Spruce Mountain

On Wednesday, November 26th 2008 the 147.00Mhz 488.225 MHz repeaters were re-installed on the top of Spruce Mountain. Both the antenna height and ground level are lower than the old site but we are still on top of the 2000' mountain.

Linking the two repeaters once again works, as does Echolink.

Frank, KA2QYE, doing some excellent driving made it up icy road Spruce Mountain Road, but two county trucks, who were headed to the top turned around. Because the mountain now has 8+ inches on top and the road is so icy, only a tracked vehicle is safe. There will be no more trips for us up Spruce until spring.

Without Frank, this project could not have been completed. Also thanks again to all who volunteered to help. I still have the list and we may still need your help as next spring, we need to move 147.24.

Best,

Jim McKnight

K2LM

k2lm@nycap.rr.com



WA2COI - Obituary

Richard S. Carter

Richard S. Carter, 81, of Todd Drive, Wynantskill, N.Y. died Saturday, November 15, 2008 at St. Mary's Hospital after a brief illness. Born in Oneida, N.Y., he was son of the late Edward H. Carter and Esther (Sutton) Carter and beloved husband of the late Catherine (Fitzgerald) Carter. He was a 1944 graduate of Troy High School and graduated from the U.S. Naval Electronics Mate School and the National Radio Institute. He was a electronics technician for the Watervliet Arsenal from 1955-88 and after his retirement worked part time driving limousine for John Hedley and Foust Livery and delivering for Accu-Check. Mr. Carter was very active in amateur ham radio since the 1950s. He operated under the call sign of WA2COI and was a member of the Troy Amateur Radio Association and National Amateur Radio Association. He was also a member of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees, the Apollo Masonic Lodge, the Brunswick Lodge of Elks and the American Legion in Wynantskill. A World War II Navy veteran, he was stationed on the USS Gandy, a sister ship to the USS Slater and was a supporter and member of the USS Slater Destroyer Association. Survivors include a son, Edward John and Carmen Carter of Villa Park, Calif.; two daughters, Catherine A. Carter of Rensselaer and Barbara Carter De Lapp (Don) of Troy; a granddaughter, Lauryn Taylor Carter of Villa Park, Calif. and many beloved nieces and nephews. Funeral service were held on Wednesday at 10 a.m. at the Bryce Funeral Home, Inc., 276 Pawling Avenue, Troy and at 10:00 a.m. at Sacred Heart Church, Troy where a Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated. Relatives and friends called at the funeral home on Tuesday from 3-5 and 7-9 p.m. Interment was at St. Mary's Cemetery Troy. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in memory of Richard S. Carter to the Greenbush Ambulance, PO Box 99, Wynantskill, NY 12198 or the North Greenbush Police Department. For a private family guest book and service directions, visit: www.brycefh.com





On Thursday - December 11 & 18, 2008 at 9:00 PM TARA's T.N.T. Trader Net will once again be holding a very special fund drive of sorts for the Courage Center - Handiham System. The Courage Handiham System is a program service of the non-profit Courage Center, a registered 501C3 charity. Your gift will help people with disabilities enjoy the world of amateur radio.

I know things are pretty tough all around us and especially around the holidays it's hard to find any extra cash. But, we'd really appreciate hearing from those that could spare a few bucks towards this worthy cause. Let it be \$2.00 or \$20.00, it all adds up! Let's show these folks that amateurs throughout the Capital District really care about those with disabilities. We've done it in the past and I'm sure we can help again.

I will be calling the net up as usual starting at 9:00 PM and when I ask for stations to check in you can advise me then if you'd like to donate any funds. Please, keep in mind that TARA keeps none of this money. Everything is directed to the Handihams. After the net on December 18; I'll give it exactly one week then I'll take all the funds that have been sent to my home address and forwarded them to Handihams. If you wish to send me your check that's fine but make that check payable to: **"Courage Handiham System"** NOT TARA or myself!

Bill NY2U Address:

William Eddy

2404 - 22nd Street

Troy, NY 12180-1901

You can send your donations directly to Handihams by making your check payable to:

"COURAGE HANDIHAM SYSTEM"

Courage Handiham System

3915 Golden Valley Road

Golden Valley, MN 55422

Please make checks to: **"Courage Handiham System"** or call **toll-free_1-866-426-3442** to donate via credit card, or go to their website at:

<http://www.handiham.org/node/37>

TARA Bookstore has Lots of Goodies

We have the new shipment of the TARA Baseball Caps with the colored TARA logo embroidered on them for the following:

KA2HRM - \$12.00

N2MOA - \$12.00

WA2TQK - \$12.00

WA2IGM - \$12.00

N2YQW - \$12.00

N2HIC - \$12.00

If anyone else wants one of these hats you can notify us and we'll reserve one just for you.

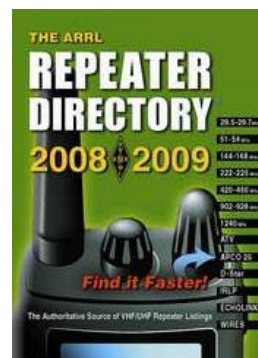
We also have a couple 2008/2009 ARRL Repeater Directories left and the

2009 ARRL RADIO CALENDARS too. These make great "Stocking Stuffers" for the Holiday's! We'll have these items at the Tuesday meeting if you're interested.

KA2HRM - (1) ARRL REPEATER DIRECTORY - \$10.95

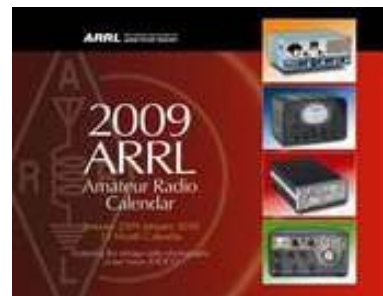
WA2TQK - (1) ARRL REPEATER DIRECTORY - \$10.95

KI2L - (1) ARRL REPEATER DIRECTORY - \$10.95



KA2HRM - (1) ARRL RADIO CALENDAR - \$12.95

WA2TQK - (1) ARRL RADIO CALENDAR - \$12.95



73 de NY2U "Mr.Bill"

November's Guest Speaker Dick Frey, WA2AAU W2SZ/1 MGEF

Richard L. Frey (WA2AAU, ex-WB2BXP) has been the spark plug who has led the Mt. Greylock Expeditionary Force (MGEF) to be one of the longest running and most successful radio contest groups around. In the spring of 1969, he and a brave group of hams mounted a contest effort in the Catskills. Later that year, in September, they operated their first contest from Greylock. In June of 1976, the group started using the call letters W2SZ/1.



Dick has mentored numerous hams in the art of VHF and microwave techniques, some of whom have built their work careers around this foundation. An RPI alumni, Dick would frequent the W2SZ radio club meetings, and always welcome new members and invite them to experience VHF radio construction and contesting.

Often seen at local hamfests with test equipment and offers to help "tune up" that fussy microwave circuit or rig, he has set an example for amateur radio public service. In 1980, before cell phones, he organized communications via amateur radio for the Olympic Torch procession to Lake Placid, NY. In January 1983, he was featured on the cover of QST Magazine. In 1998, he was inducted into the CQ Contest Hall of Fame (#32) as an amateur "who not only excels in personal performance in Amateur Radio competition, but who also 'gives back' to Amateur Radio in outstanding ways." Dick has also helped design, debug, and maintain many amateur repeater systems around New England, and has been active with the Northern Berkshire Amateur Radio Club (NoBARC).

Now, as a retired engineer from GE CR&D, Dick enjoys more spare time designing and building microwave amateur radio gear, skiing, scouting out new rover sites in distant grid squares, and climbing towers in his wing-tip dress shoes.

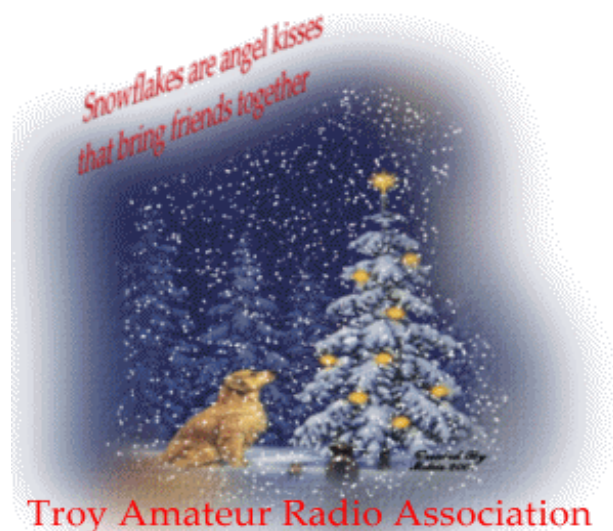
CHU Canada to QSY on January 1

Canadian Time/Frequency Standard Station CHU -a fixture for decades on 7335 kHz will change frequency to 7850 kHz at 0000 UTC on January 1, 2009. The move comes as a result of the International Telecommunication Union's decision in 2007 to expand the 40-meter ham band in Europe and Africa (Region I) to 7000-7200 kHz. It was previously 7000-7100 kHz, with as every 40-meter DXer knows International broadcasting allocated from 7100-7300 kHz.

As part of the 40-meter expansion, the international broadcast band was shifted to 7200-7350 kHz. As broadcasters began relocating, CHU on 7335 began experiencing significant interference. Thus, officials at Canada's National Research Council, which operates CHU, decided to move the time /frequency standard station's transmissions to 7850 kHz as of the beginning of 2009.

The complete NRC announcement (English version) is online at:

http://inms-ienm.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/common_files/stories/chu/commonique_e.pdf



Rensselaer County ARES/RACES

Next Meeting - Elections

January 15th, 2009



We would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that our Next meeting will be held on January 15, 2009. The location will be posted on the RC RACES Yahoo Group. Most likely it will be at the North Greenbush Town Offices but, it has to be confirmed first.

The next meeting will be our Annual election of Officers. Nominations were made this past month, but that does not preclude nominations from being made from the floor on the night of the meeting. This is an important meeting so please attend it and get involved. Also, if you are a member of the club or choose to join, annual dues are due at this time. Dues are \$ 10.00 per person or \$ 15.00 / Family.

Another new change is going to be our NETS. We have decided that since the nets amount to nothing more than a check-in net that we would be better off reducing the number of the nets and making them more purposeful.

Our "ON THE AIR NET" will be On the "FIRST THURSDAY of the MONTH at 7:30 PM. At this time we will discuss future training nets.

Dave Trembley, WA2IGM has picked up the hat of Simplex Training Officer and will tell you when The Simplex Net for the month will be at the Net on the First Thursday of the Month.

ARISS to Celebrate 25 Years of Amateur Radio in Space

Twenty-five years ago this week, Owen Garriott, W5LFL, made history by being the first Amateur Radio operator to talk to hams from space. His historic flight on STS-9 on board the Space Shuttle Columbia was launched on November 28 and landed on December 8, 1983. Garriott's ham radio adventure on that mission ushered in a host of what Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) Chairman Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, called "outstanding outreach activities that continue today with the ARISS program."

Bauer said that many hams still remember that first set of contacts and downlinks with Garriott: "Those first contacts allowed each of us to share the excitement of space exploration through Owen's first-hand eyewitness accounts. Owen's ham radio legacy enabled space travelers that have flown on the space shuttle, the space station Mir and now the International Space Station (ISS) to share their journey of exploration."

Just last month, Garriott's son Richard, W5KWQ, became the first second generation Amateur Radio operator to travel in space and speak with hams. "What other hobby, except Amateur Radio," Bauer wondered, "could or would open the communications lines of space travelers beyond that of the space agencies or international heads of state?"

To celebrate 25 years of Amateur Radio operations from space, ARISS has planned a set of special event opportunities for December and part of January. According to Bauer, a special certificate will be available for those who communicate with the ISS, either two-way direct (with the ISS crew, the digipeater or cross-band repeater) or one-way reception of SSTV or voice downlink. "Several 'surprises' are planned over the month-long celebration," he said, and will be announced soon.

Bauer said that in addition to school contacts and APRS digi-operations, ARISS will configure the radio system for cross-band repeater operations to utilize the standard ultra-violet operations in low power mode during the first week of December.

Starting December 7, ARISS will then run a test of 9600 baud packet operations on 145.825 MHz. "Given that PCSat should be in full Sun starting December 9," Bauer explained, "we will switch to 1200 baud packet on 145.825 on December 14-19 to support double hop opportunities. At times, especially during the weekends, you might see some SSTV operations if the crew is available." Bauer reminded hams that due to ISS flight requirements related to spacewalks and vehicle activity, the radio onboard the ISS may be off for some portion of this schedule. School contacts and general QSO opportunities by the crew will also preempt this schedule for short periods of time. "But remember that if you hear these," Bauer said, "you still qualify for a commemorative certificate!"

IBM bringing broadband over power line to rural America

Just When We Thought It Was Over !!

Posted by [Marguerite Reardon](#) CNET

November 12, 2008 7:34 AM PST

IBM has been hired to help rural Americans get broadband access using power lines.

On Wednesday, Big Blue announced it has signed a \$9.6 million contract with International Broadband Electric Communications to bring the technology to rural America where it hopes to deliver high-speed broadband connectivity to millions of people who otherwise wouldn't be able to get it. IBM and IBEC, which will build and manage the networks, are working with over a dozen electricity cooperatives in seven states, [The Wall Street Journal](#) reported.

For years, people have hoped broadband-over-power line technology, or BPL, would allow power companies to become the [third alternative in the broadband market](#), competing against cable operators and telephone companies. But [technical limitations and interference issues](#) with local emergency radios and short-wave ham radios have stood in the way of mass adoption.

In recent years, new modulation techniques supported by other technological advances have helped BPL evolve. Most services today are capable of delivering between 512Kbps and 3Mbps of throughput, which is comparable to most DSL offerings.

In rural areas in particular, BPL technology could finally bring high-speed Internet access to people who otherwise couldn't get it. Traditional phone and cable companies often find it too expensive to deploy new infrastructure to provide service to the far reaches of rural America. BPL could provide an affordable technology for reaching this population because the infrastructure is already built. More than 900 electricity cooperatives in the U.S. cover 75 percent of the land mass in the U.S. The technology and its promise of leveraging existing infrastructure has caught the attention of other major players, such as [Google](#) and [EarthLink](#). But so far, BPL deployments have been slow to take off. According to the United Power Line Council, there were approximately 35 BPL deployments around the United States as of last year. As of the middle of last year, there were about 5,000 BPL subscribers in the U.S., according to the Federal Communications Commission. But, the big problem for BPL is that fact that there are still complaints of interference with amateur radio operators. Several companies once hot on the technology have now scaled back their hopes and are using the BPL networks to offer [smart-grid monitoring](#). Last May, DirecTV and Current Communications sold a flagship BPL deployment in Dallas to the local utility, which plans to use the network for smart-grid monitoring.

Another company called Comtek deployed a BPL network in Manassas, Va. But after persistent complaints from radio operators, it has decided to also focus efforts on providing smart-grid monitoring. The BPL movement was also dealt a blow earlier this year when a federal appeals court [sided in part with amateur radio operators who challenged FCC rules](#) designed to speed the nascent Internet service's rollout. The judges in the case sent the rules back to the FCC with instructions to clarify its reasoning for its rules and to publicize its studies more fully.

While IBM and IBEC have the right idea when it comes to focusing on rural and underserved markets, it seems like they still have an uphill battle in overcoming interference issues. There is no doubt that it is important to get broadband access to rural America. On the campaign trail, President-elect Barack Obama even mentioned the need for ubiquitous broadband. But there are other technologies, such as WiMax and other 4G wireless, that may offer faster speeds with fewer technical issues. Recently opened "white space" spectrum could help fill this need in rural areas. The problem is that deploying any new infrastructure whether it's wired or wireless won't be cheap. And it could take years before rural Americans ever get high-speed Internet.

W

Here's a quick and easy method of getting your tower off the launching "pad" and heading in the right direction.

AN IMPROVED METHOD OF TOWER LEVELING

BY TERRANCE P. JONES*, KA6IYE

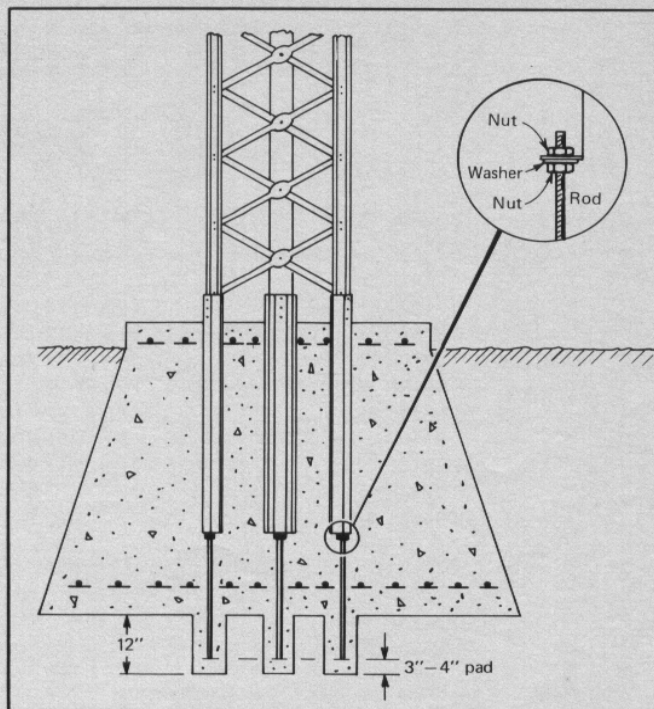


Fig. 1—By digging three additional holes in the larger base hole, you can ensure a positive and accurate method of leveling your tower.

Putting up a tower entails a bit more than one might at first imagine. Besides the tower, there's the rotor, top bearing, assorted cables and fasteners, and of course the antenna. There is also the foundation, which in my case was painfully dug by hand, and the 18,000 pounds of concrete to fill same. The point is, a lot of time and money are expended on a tower and antenna installation. What I propose is that one invest an extra two hours in time and about \$15.00 to ensure a really top-notch installation and guarantee that your tower remains true when that 18,000 pounds of concrete comes crashing down into your foundation.

Most of the towers which I have witnessed being put up have relied upon a plumb-bob of some type, or a level, and then "wiggled and jiggled" to the point of being perpendicular. If the truth be known, all these towers appear perpendicular when complete. The method described offers a great deal more precision than any I have seen used previously. Although I used this method for my Rohn BX series tower, it can easily be adapted to other tower types as well. The additional materials required are minimal:

- 1 bag of ready mix concrete
- 3 threaded rods, $\frac{1}{8}$ ", two feet long
- 6 nuts for above
- 3 fender washers to slip on rods

Upon digging the foundation to the required dimensions (*i.e., too big!*), three additional holes will be required about twelve inches deep. These should be dug inside the existing foundation hole so they will be directly underneath the legs of the tower. A small pad of ready mix is then poured in each of the small holes to a depth of about four inches. This concrete is allowed to set. While the concrete is setting prepare the base stubs and first tower section. At this time attach the threaded rods, nuts, and washers as illustrated. After the concrete pads have set place the assembled base section and threaded rods in the foundation, placing the rods on the concrete pads. Fill the holes with ready mix and read the latest DX poop sheet while the concrete sets. The small pads not only serve as support for the rods, but also prevent metal-earth contact and the resulting electrolysis. By loosening the top nuts, one can now jack each leg up or down by applying torque to the lower nut and achieve a truly perpendicular base. Once the base section is aligned the top nuts can be tightened to literally "lock in" the settings. As a bonus, the rods can

be used for anchor points for the rebar expansion control, again avoiding earth-metal contact.

This method was used to set my HDBX 48-foot tower, and I am unable to determine any deviation from true perpendicular in any direction, using either a plumb or a 4-foot contractors level.

I realize there are those who will scoff at the time and effort expended, especially on something that will not be seen after the tower is complete. Besides, what's $\frac{1}{32}$ " more or less you might ask. This is true. However there is nothing like a job well done in the best manner you can achieve, and the satisfaction of knowing that it's "right."

Footnote

The entire tower, and all cables as well as rotor alignment, was done horizontally (the rotor was aligned with a dial indicator with the top section vertical). The tower was then hoisted by a 76-foot reach aerial basket, and the tower bolted to the base. The author then rode up in the basket with the four element yagi and attached it to the mast. The entire tower erection can be completed in one hour by one man and the crane operator. At this QTH the rental on the aerial basket is \$45.00/hour including the operator.

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FCC wants Amateur Service to Educate Public about DTV

Earlier this week, the ARRL received a request from the FCC asking that ARRL members to provide technical educational assistance to their communities concerning the FCC-mandated digital television ([DTV](#)) conversion scheduled for February 17, 2009.

According to ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP, Amateur Radio clubs across the country are being asked to develop and implement plans to provide information throughout January and February about the DTV conversion in their areas. The FCC is leaving it up to the clubs to decide how to do this, as local groups understand the communities in ways that the FCC does not. Each community is a little different, Pitts said, so plans carried out by the clubs will vary from community to community. Interested groups should contact their ARRL Section Manager.

Pitts stressed that hams should *not* make "house calls," sell any equipment or do actual installations; the request is only to distribute technical information and FCC materials. He commented: "As we all know, some folks just never get the message until too late. Materials for presentations, education and many other activities are available [online](#). Beginning early January, FCC staff will contact Section Managers and leaders of interested clubs and, where possible, arrange to meet to share even more information, audio, visual and printed materials, as well as and training aids, with the clubs involved this effort. We know the time is short, but your aid in this now will be appreciated."

In early January, Pitts said that the FCC will ask Section Managers for the names and contact information of the volunteering groups. The FCC staff will then make contact with the groups, learn their plans and provide them with the media, brochures or other materials groups may need in this effort. Materials also can be downloaded from the [DTV Conversion Web site](#). FCC regional staff members may even come and visit with larger groups to aid in implementation of the group's plans.

"I really appreciate the willingness of the ARRL to actively participate in helping Americans with the transition to DTV and your helpful suggestions," said George Dillon, FCC Deputy Bureau Chief for Field Operations. "The DTV transition will be an historic moment in the evolution of TV. Broadcast television stations can offer viewers improved picture and sound quality and new programming choices. All-digital broadcasting also will allow us to significantly improve public safety communications and will usher in a new era of advanced wireless services such as the widespread deployment of wireless broadband. Our goal is to engage the amateur community on a cooperative basis to help with the DTV outreach and to educate consumers."

Dillon continued that local Amateur Radio clubs might consider offering technical advice to consumers via telephone to those consumers who may encounter difficulty with the installation and setting up of their converter box. "Any assistance...will greatly help in the efforts of the FCC to ensure a smooth transition to DTV on February 17, 2009."

Pitts advises interested groups to keep in mind that they are to provide technical educational help only: "At no time should the hams enter someone else's home or install equipment. They should not broker or sell conversion boxes in any way. Clubs can provide such things as a call-in telephone number for technical help, make presentations at meetings, do demonstrations at malls or give talks to other groups -- whatever works in their community."

<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2008/12/10/10499/?nc=1>

W



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THE TARA NEWS

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