

# THE TARA NEWS

*Affiliate of the American Radio Relay League*

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**Happy  
New Year  
2004**

## HAM RADIO KID'S DAY SUNDAY - JANUARY 4

It's one of the two most important ham radio holidays of the ham radio year and its only about a week away. Of course we are talking about the first of two Kids Day operating events for 2004.

According to a recent ARRL Letter, the first Kid's Day of 2004 will occur on a Sunday. This Sunday, January the 4th. And unlike most other on-the-air events, Kid's Day is not a contest. Rather its a time when experienced hams open their hearts and their stations to invite kids in and put them on the air to experience the magic that is ham radio.

Kid's Day will run from 1800 to 2400 UTC, and there's no limit on operating time. The suggested exchange is a youngsters name, age, location and favorite color. Most operation will be found on 14.270 to 14.300, 21.380 to 21.400 and 28.350 to 28.400 MHz and local 2 meter repeaters.

Guidelines for Kids Day are available at [www.arrl.org/FandES/ead/kd-rules.htm](http://www.arrl.org/FandES/ead/kd-rules.htm). And -- oh yes: If you miss this Kids Day operating event the next one won't take place until Saturday, June 19th. (ARRL) **More on Page 4**

## Bill Pitcher - KC2IFQ - SK

**GREEN ISLAND** - William H. Pitcher Age 69, of Albany Avenue, Green Island, died Thursday, Dec. 11, 2003, at Memorial Hospital in Albany. Born in Troy, son of the late William and Eva King Pitcher, he has resided in Green Island since 1979. Bill served in the U.S. Air Force for 20 years, retiring in 1972. He then was employed by General Electric in Waterford until 1987.



He was a former Grand Master of the Troy Masonic Lodge, Apollo 13, and Iran Grotto in Troy and a member of the Blue Knights Motorcycle Club NY Chapter VIII and the Troy Amateur Radio Association. Survivors include his beloved wife, Haydee Rodriguez Pitcher; his devoted children, William Pitcher of Ambler, PA, Dennis Pitcher of Waterford, Haydee Sullivan of Green Island and James Pitcher of Schenectady; he was the brother of Patricia Killian, James Pitcher, Gail Burke and Velerie Drouillard, all of Troy, and the late Maureen DeMento, Eva Lucowitz and Beatrice Savaria; also survived by seven cherished grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at the McNulty Funeral Home, 147 Hudson Ave., Green Island, on Monday at 10 a.m. Interment in Eagle Mills Cemetery, Brunswick. The Troy Amateur Radio Association and other Amateur Radio Operators attended the wake as a group at 4:30 PM. on Sunday. Contributions in memory of Bill may be made to St. Joseph's Church, 131 George St., Green Island, NY 12183.

## Editor's Note

To the Readers: Please, accept my apologies for such a small newsletter this month. But, most of you know that I have not been feeling quite up to par this month with the surgery that I had on December 16<sup>th</sup>. Hopefully things will return to normal in February.

I could really use the assistance of the membership by submitting articles. It gets more difficult each month to bring you, an interesting newsletter with a hint of local flavor when no one except the officers (with a few exceptions) submit anything.

**PLEASE HELP !!! IT'S YOUR NEWSLETTER**



*More than a Club*



*We're a Family*



# FEMA to FCC: BPL will "Severely Impair" HF Operations

NEWINGTON, CT, Dec 8, 2003--Expressing "grave concerns" about likely interference from unlicensed Broadband over Power Line (BPL) systems, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has told the FCC that BPL could "severely impair FEMA's mission-essential HF radio operations in areas serviced by BPL technology." FEMA filed [comments](#) December 4 in response to last April's FCC BPL *Notice of Inquiry*, ET Docket 03-104. FEMA expressed primary concern over BPL's potential impact on the FEMA National Radio System (FNARS), which operates on HF and serves as the agency's primary command and control backup medium as part of the Federal Response Plan.  
<http://www2.arrl.org/news/stories/2003/12/08/1/?nc=1>



**Broadband over Power Line (BPL) systems would use low and medium-voltage power lines like these to deliver broadband Internet service to homes and businesses.**

"FEMA has concluded that introduction of unwanted interference from the implementation of BPL technology into the high frequency radio spectrum will result in significant detriment to the operation of FEMA radio systems such as FNARS," FEMA's comments assert. "FNARS radio operators normally conduct communications with signals that are barely above the ambient noise levels." FEMA further noted that FNARS HF stations typically are in residential areas of the sort that BPL--a form of power line carrier (PLC) technology--might serve.

BPL also could render such "essential communications services" as the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES), the Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) and the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) useless, FEMA said. FEMA and ARRL last year signed a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) that focuses on how Amateur Radio personnel may coordinate with the agency to support emergency communications functions.

Calling the HF spectrum "an invaluable and irreplaceable public safety resource," FEMA said there's no current alternative to HF in terms of meeting national security and emergency preparedness requirements at the national, state and local levels. The agency recommended beefing up the FCC's Part 15 rules to ensure no increase in interference levels to existing FCC or NTIA-licensed communication systems, "because any noise increase inevitably would diminish the ability to maintain essential communications," FEMA said, and would "directly impair the safety of life and property."

The BPL interference situation is reciprocal, FEMA noted, citing "[Interference to PLC systems from Amateur Radio Operation](#)". That paper points out that Amateur Radio transmitters likely would interfere with BPL systems. BPL users likewise would experience service interruptions when its transmitters "overpower the signal levels expected by BPL modems," FEMA predicted.

FCC adoption of proposals to encourage widespread development and deployment of BPL also could result in consumer confusion regarding who would resolve interference issues and how. FEMA said it believes licensed radio services "will be perceived by consumers as responsible for the interference, since most consumers do not understand that their unlicensed Part 15 devices 'must accept any interference received, including interference that may cause undesired operation.'"

"The purported benefits of BPL in terms of expanded services in certain communications sectors do not appear to outweigh the benefit to the overall public of HF radio capability as presently used by government, broadcasting and public safety users," FEMA concluded.

FEMA Chief Information Officer Barry C. West, who filed the comments on the agency's behalf, characterized the issues it raises as being "of great importance to the national public safety." Because FEMA now is part of the Department of Homeland Security, its perspectives on BPL could carry substantial weight at the FCC, which may issue a *Notice of Proposed Rule Making* as early as February.

The ARRL announced last week that it plans to complete an independent BPL engineering study within a couple of months. The study will explore how BPL might affect HF and low-VHF amateur operation as well as how Amateur Radio operation could affect BPL systems.

Additional information about [BPL and Amateur Radio](#) is on the ARRL Web site. To support the League's efforts in this area, visit the ARRL's secure [BPL Web site](#).

**Support the  
ARRL in its  
Efforts  
against  
Interference  
from BPL  
Broadband  
Power  
Technology**



# HAM RADIO IN SPACE REACHES ANOTHER MILESTONE

Ham radio in space has reached another milestone with the successful installation and checkout of the first Amateur Radio on the Int'l Space Station (ARISS) Phase 2 equipment. The ISS now sports a new Kenwood TM-D700E dual-band transceiver in the Zvezda Service Module--the crew's living quarters. ISS Expedition 8 Commander Mike Foale, KB5UAC, set up the new transceiver at NA1SS earlier this month. Only official approval is needed to begin operations. Activation of the new gear will mean a power boost for the NA1SS downlink signal, which could prove especially helpful in school group contacts. The additional equipment--which soon will include a slow-scan television (SSTV) system--also opens up new operational possibilities.

"Clearly, we've got multi-op, multi-station capability," ARISS International Chairman Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, told ARRL. The ARISS Japan Team donated the Kenwood radio and made certain hardware and firmware modifications--including limiting its power output to a maximum of 25 W--to prepare it for flight, he said. Bauer and the ARISS US Team recently returned from Russia following successful ground testing of Phase 1 and Phase 2 equipment using a set of flight-identical ARISS antennas as well as testing of a slow-scan TV (SSTV) system.

The Phase 2 gear will use the four antennas installed on the Service Module during space walks in 2002 specifically to support Amateur Radio operations. Addition of the new antennas, which will cover from HF to microwave frequencies, opened the door to deploying the two separate ham stations aboard the orbiting outpost. Waiting in the wings is a Yaesu FT-100 HF/VHF/UHF transceiver that could go into space in January along with the new SSTV gear.

Bauer says the second ham station with the Kenwood transceiver is near the Service Module's dinner table and the window. "This prime location will allow the crew to more conveniently use the ISS ham radio system," he said. "They'll be able to look out the window while operating from the Service Module" Complementing the Kenwood TM-D700E will be an Ericsson 70-cm handheld.

"Our intention is to operate SSTV on 70 cm with the Ericsson equipment," Bauer said, while the crew will use the Kenwood transceiver for ARISS school group contacts as well as for casual QSOs on 2 meters. The Kenwood radio also incorporates a TNC and can support the RS0ISS packet system, not yet back in operation.

The Phase 1 "initial station" Ericsson 2-meter handheld, which has served as the only NA1SS gear for more than three years, will remain in place in the ISS Zarya Functional Cargo Block (FGB).

Details of the ARISS Phase 2 gear is available on AMSAT's ARISS Web page  
<http://www.amsat.org/amsat/ariss/Papers/Phase%20%20AGM03Final.pdf> .

# CQ FILES COMMENTS WITH FCC ON CODE TEST PETITIONS Calls for End to Code Testing Merger of Novice & Tech Licensing

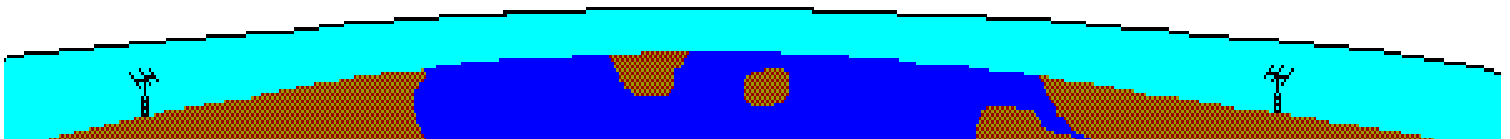
Hicksville, NY, Sept. 23, 2003-CQ Communications Inc., publishers of CQ Amateur Radio, CQ VHF and Popular Communications magazines, today filed extensive comments with the FCC on a half-dozen proposals for changes in Morse code testing and operating privileges for amateurs who have not passed code tests.

CQ's filing began with a strong statement of support for the "ongoing relevance and value" of Morse code as an operating mode, and its belief that "code will continue to be used, and to thrive," whether or not code tests are still required by the FCC. The comments continued, however, to say that "the value of Morse code as an operating mode does not necessarily equate to value as a licensing requirement" and called on the FCC to eliminate the code test requirement for both General and Extra Class amateur licenses.

The magazine publisher also proposed that the FCC merge the Novice and Technician Class licenses, giving holders of each the privileges of both, and that those privileges be expanded to include digital modes on current Novice CW segments and all modes currently permitted on the entire 10-meter band, including FM repeaters at the top end of the band. The proposal noted that nearly two-thirds of CQ magazine's readers who responded to a recent survey called for granting some HF privileges to Technicians. (The same readers were split, 50/50, on the question of changing the code test requirement.) CQ also suggested that, in the future, the FCC consider additional streamlining of the amateur licensing system to more closely resemble the two-class "CEPT" system now used in many European countries.

In addition, CQ called on the FCC to replace the current patchwork of element credit rules for upgrades with a single system of permanent exam credit for any element previously passed, including credit for elements required for licenses that have expired. It also supported a request by the FISTS CW Club to ban license candidates from retaking a failed exam element at the same test session, and agreed in theory with a FISTS proposal for the FCC to reassert some control over the structure and makeup of amateur license exams.

For more information, contact:  
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Click here for the complete text of  
CQ's comments (in PDF format).  
<http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com/92403CQCommentscodetesting.pdf>



# KID'S DAY IS SUNDAY

## JANUARY 4, 2004

For the first time, Kid's Day will occur on a Sunday. The first 2004 running of this popular operating event will be Sunday, January 4 (the second Kid's Day in 2004 will be Saturday, June 19). Intended to encourage young people--licensed or not--to enjoy Amateur Radio, Kid's Day offers a "mentoring opportunity" for experienced amateurs while giving youngsters some firsthand hamming experience and perhaps sparking a lifelong interest.

"Kid's Day is an opportunity to introduce your own youngsters, neighborhood kids and nieces and nephews to participate in the magic of ham radio," suggests Jean Wolfgang, WB3IOS, of ARRL Field and Educational Services. Originated by the Boring Amateur Radio Club <<http://jzap.com/k7rat/>>, Kid's Day now is sponsored and administered by the ARRL with BARC's cooperation and assistance. Now entering its tenth year, each running of Kid's Day typically attracts more than 1000 participants.

Kid's Day is not a contest, and patience is the byword on both sides of each contact. The role of the licensee and control operator is to help youngsters with the basics, keep an eye on the technical aspects of the operation, observe third-party traffic restrictions <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/io/3rdparty.html> when making DX QSOs and ensure station identification at proper intervals. In this event, it's quality of the contacts that counts, not quantity.

Kid's Day will run from 1800 to 2400 UTC, and there's no limit on operating time. The suggested exchange is name, age, location and favorite color. Stations may work the same station again if an operator has changed. Call "CQ Kid's Day."

Suggested frequencies are 14.270-14.300, 21.380-21.400 and 28.350-28.400 MHz plus 2 meter repeater frequencies, with permission from the repeater's sponsor). Guidelines for this event are available on the ARRL Web site <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/ead/kd-rules.html>.

All participants are eligible to receive a colorful certificate. Visit the ARRL Kid's Day Survey page <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/ead/kids-day-survey.html> to complete a short survey and post your comments. You will then have access to download the certificate page. Or you can send a 9x12 SASE to Boring Amateur Radio Club, PO Box 1357, Boring, OR 97009.

Kid's Day participants are invited to post logs and comments on the Internet <http://lists.contesting.com/pipermail/kids>



# RESCUE RADIO

## THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA QUAKE

**Amateur Radio Newline, I'm Burt Hicks, WB6MQV, reporting:** Meantime, about 90 miles North of Lompoc an earthquake measuring 6 point 5 on the Richter scale struck at 11:15 a.m. on Monday December 22nd. Centered not far from the famed Hearst Castle tourist attraction at San Simeon. Ham radio was quick to respond as we hear in this report:

K6YR: "Various parts of the living room looked like the U.S. Army had gone through a Fedee'y'n safe house. Just glass and food stuffs all over the place. It was pretty scary."

That's Rob Griffin, K6YR, the Section Manager for the area where the quake hit. He was describing what his own home looked like after the magnitude 6.5 temblor hit. But Griffin would have to put off clean-up chores because there was other work that needed to be done:

K6YR: By noon the San Luis Obispo Emergency Operations Center had called out the ARES and RACES operators, primarily supporting the Red Cross in opening shelters in Paso Robles and Oceana. Morrow Bay also had Red Cross shelters and we provided communications for the Red Cross because their cell phones just weren't functioning for the first 12 hours after the earthquake.

According to Griffin with cell phones down, another way to communicate was needed by emergency workers. Enter ham radio volunteers.

K6YR: "We had some come from as far as South county which includes Oceana, Nipomo, maybe even some from Santa Maria to help support the North county Paso Robles ARES area."

The city of Paso Robles was hardest hit. Part of the historic downtown area was destroyed and two people were killed. Griffin says that hams were on scene providing communications for about 24 hours. When we spoke to K6YR some were still there:

K6YR: " There are some Amateur operators still manning the county Emergency Operations Center. but my understanding is that the communications and support up at the Paso Robles Police Department has closed down for the timer being and it appears that the Red Cross has its communications which relies on cell phones back in operation."

The bottom line. It took the cellular providers about 12 hours to get service back to most of the stricken area. Meantime ham radio operators were there, doing what they do best.

According to Cal Tech, Monday's temblor was the state's first deadly earthquake since the magnitude 6.7 shaker that hit Northridge California in 1994. (ARNewline(tm))



## ***FCC Mulls Privacy Issues on Enforcement Actions***

The FCC is trying to work out a policy to make sure its notices of enforcement actions comply with provisions of the Privacy Act, which is responsible for all those privacy notifications you've gotten from your bank, doctor and local supermarket. Until a policy is set, says the Commission's Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, his office will no longer identify individual amateurs who are the subjects of enforcement actions, releasing only city, state, class of license and action taken.

One letter that was released went to 16 hang-gliding associations, citing increasing complaints about hang-gliding enthusiasts using amateur radio handhelds without licenses. Hollingsworth says the United States Hang Gliding Association has promised to work with the Commission to resolve the problem.

## ***Frank's Funnies*** ***By: Francis X. Ryan - KC2JRE***

It is the year 2003 and Noah lives in the United States...

The Lord speaks to Noah and says: "In one year I am going to make it rain and cover the whole earth with water until all is destroyed. But I want you to save the righteous people and two of every kind of living thing on the earth. Therefore, I am commanding you to build an Ark."

In a flash of lightning, God delivered the specifications for an Ark. Fearful and trembling, Noah took the plans and agreed to build the Ark. "Remember," said the Lord, "You must complete the Ark and bring everything aboard in one year."

Exactly one year later, a fierce storm cloud covered the earth and all the seas of the earth went into a tumult. The Lord saw Noah sitting in his front yard weeping. "Noah." He shouted, "Where is the Ark?" "Lord please forgive me!" cried Noah. "I did my best but there were big problems. First, I had to get a permit for construction and your plans did not comply with the codes. I had to hire an engineering firm and redraw the plans. "Then I got into a fight with OSHA over whether or not the Ark needed a fire sprinkler system and floatation devices.

"Then my neighbor objected, claiming I was violating zoning ordinances by building the Ark in my front yard, so I had to get a variance from the city planning commission. "I had problems getting enough wood for the Ark, because there was a ban on cutting trees to protect the Spotted Owl. I finally convinced the U.S. Forest Service that I needed the wood to save the owls. "However, the Fish and Wildlife Service won't let me catch any owls. So, no owls." "The carpenters formed a union and went out on strike. "I had to negotiate a settlement with the National Labor Union. Now I have 16 carpenters on the Ark. but still no owls.

## ***FCC Upgrades ULS Website Now Easier to Navigate***

Have you ever tried to negotiate the FCC's Universal Licensing System web site and thrown up your hands in frustration, we've got good news. The Commission has completely revamped the web site and made it much easier to view records and fill out forms online.

According to the ARRL, anyone using the system to file forms must log on using their FCC Registration Number (FRN) and Commission Registration System (CORES) password. Social Security numbers will no longer be accepted for signing in. If you have trouble using the new site, tech support is available online at <http://esupport.fcc.gov> or by phone at (877) 480-3201. You may also use the main FCC help line at (888) CALL FCC (225-5322) and select option 2.

## ***IF NOAH WAS STILL ALIVE***

"When I started rounding up the other animals, I got sued by an animal rights group. They objected to me only taking two of each kind aboard. "Just when I got the suit dismissed, the EPA notified me that I could not complete the Ark without filing an environmental impact statement on your proposed flood. They didn't take very kindly to the idea that they had no jurisdiction over the conduct of the Creator of the universe.

"Then the Army Corps of Engineer demanded a map of the proposed new flood plain. I sent them a globe.

"Right now, I am trying to resolve a complaint filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that I am practicing discrimination by not taking godless, unbelieving people aboard!

"The IRS has seized all my assets, claiming that I'm building the Ark in preparation to flee the country to avoid paying taxes.

"I just got a notice from the State that I owe some kind of user tax and failed to register the Ark as a recreational water craft." "Finally the ACLU got the courts to issue an injunction against further construction of the Ark, saying that since God is flooding the earth, it is a religious event and therefore unconstitutional.

"I really don't think I can finish the Ark for another 5 or 6 years!" Noah wailed.

The sky began to clear, the sun began to shine and the seas began to calm. A rainbow arched across the sky.

Noah looked up hopefully. "You mean you are not going to destroy the earth, Lord?"

"No," said the Lord sadly. "The government already has." AMEN

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# ***THE TARA NEWS***

Troy Amateur Radio Association, Inc.

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Visit us on the Internet

At <http://www.n2ty.org/>

**Next Meeting**

**Tuesday, January 20, 2004**

**7:30 p.m.**

**Green Island Municipal Center**

**Intersection of**

**George St. & Hudson Ave.**

**Green Island, New York**

**Ample Parking**

**Parking Lot on Hudson Ave.**

# **Troy's Full Service Repeaters**

**145.170/R**

**444.225/R**