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THE MONITOR

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Net Control Station

by Dr. Jay Gross, K3SEA

We are going to be celebrating our 35th year as the East Coast Amateur Radio Service and some of us might not know what our 'service' is or does. By reading the "Monitor" newsletter, and seeing all of the things that our members are active in, gives you some idea what ECARS is made of. It is a very diversified group of Hams that get together on 40 meters and form a group under a mutually supportive banner. We park ourselves on 7.255 kilohertz and provide an electro-atmospheric location for those who want to check-in and have the security to know that someone is always there to respond, with the benefit of possible traffic that can be passed, messages relayed, signal reports given and friendship felt.

The temporary "captains" of the Service are the Net Controls. Guys like me volunteer their time; an hour, two, or more each week, to run an orderly Net calling for check-ins and keeping informality from becoming chaos. The relaxed system works and has for a long time. Most of you know all of this, so why am I telling the story all over again? Many members that check-in can do the same volunteer work that others do and with very little training or preparation…..that's my point, and the purpose for this little story. I'm sure many of you have said to yourselves, "Hey, I could do that….and maybe even better." Then, here's my pitch.

I will have been licensed for 50 years as a 'Ham Operator' in 2008. Some of you have been in the hobby for a long time and some less. The time spent in voice or code has little to do with your ability to be an NCS. Russ, K1LRB, has crowned me with an interesting title; "Recruiting and Training Person". Now Russ is the Net Control Manager, and has the responsibility to see that the ECARS Net runs smoothly, has all the time slots filled with NCS guys, and takes the heat when something doesn't work. So he asked me to help find members who want to learn to become NCS operators or who want to get back into volunteering a little of their time for the Service.

I can hear it now, "Sure, I'm going to volunteer and Jay is going to give me the mic and tell me to run the

(Continued on page 2)

ECARS Turns 35 Years Old

by Russ Newton, K1LRB

It's been nearly three and a half decades since the East Coast Amateur Radio Service started providing public service communications in the best time-honored Amateur Radio traditions.

And to add more cheer to your upcoming Holiday Season, on December 28, ECARS will turn officially turn 35 years old.

To celebrate this milestone anniversary, a special event call sign (W1E) has been assigned for Special Commemorative Net Operations on 7 dot 255 during the weekend of December 6 and 7th.

And this is your chance to actively participate in the celebration.

While we don't normally schedule Service Control stations on weekends, on these two days of celebratory operations, a schedule of ECARS members will be assigned net control positions. Consider this an official call for volunteers to sign up for one-hour shifts to cover the 35th Anniversary Weekend.

Normal net operation will be suspended except for emergencies. We plan to start operating at 7:00 AM and will

(Continued on page 2)

In This Issue

(Net Control Station continued from page 1)

show." Nope, I wouldn't do that. That wouldn't be fair, not even to some of you who haven't been an NCS for a long time. I asked Russ if he wouldn't mind if I took an hour or two on a Saturday or Sunday morning, every now and then, when the Net is a little slow, and use the 'hour' as a training time for guys who want to give service operations a try or just want to brush up on their skills….or need to simply get the 'butterflies' out of the way. He agreed that it was a super idea, so that's what we're going to do. Starting sometime in November, after the Monitor has a chance to circulate, and things have settled down from the election, we will begin some NCS training sessions on weekends. If you'd like to do this, show up on 7.255 or send me an e-mail at K3SEA@arrl.net. Let me know what you think.

(ECARS Turns 35 Years Old, continued from page 1)

run up to 4:00 PM on each day. A specially printed certificate will be made available to those who check-in, and send a self-addressed postage paid envelope to Jerry, AA2T.

ECARS members, who participate as an NCS, will be required to send a copy of their operating log to Jerry, so that we can get the anniversary certificates to all stations who check in to the net. One legal requirement is that each NCS will have to identify with their call sign and the special events call sign – W1E once an hour.

Members who are interested in taking an hour shift are requested to let me know via e-mail, snail mail, on 7 dot 255 or call me at 1-413-498-0072. Please give me the time and day of your choice and I will do the best I can to meet your wish.

Each anniversary controller will be provided with a fact sheet of ECARS information and statistics. The special event call sign and activity will be published in QST and CQ magazine. If anyone has any suggestions for the weekend celebration, please let me know.

I anticipate a rush of volunteers vying for the special privilege of representing ECARS on the air with the W1E call sign. So please be sure to contact me as soon as possible, so you won't be disappointed.

Let's join together for an exciting and successful special event weekend. It will be a proud moment, and a well-deserved on-air tribute to the thousands of hams who've contributed to the betterment of amateur radio with ECARS!

W1E

December 6th and 7th

7:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Meet the Candidates

Candidates for ECARS Executive Committee were given an opportunity to introduce themselves to the membership to help determine who to vote for on the enclosed ballot.

John Calise, W2LKS, Toms River, NJ for President

ECARS has been my second home for the last 30 years! I wasn't with the Net from the very beginning but joined shortly after it was founded. Amateur radio was like a magnet and pulled me to the hobby as I built many rigs from scratch in the late 40's and 50's when 'cat's whiskers' and 'crystal sets' were like magic! The HX- 40's & 50's, NCX rigs, National, Hallicrafter, Heathkit, and many military experimental radios kept me up nights learning how to make transceivers out of those fragments of nuts and bolts. I lived in New York then and found ways of making radios and antennas work in high-rise apartment buildings. My years in Pennsylvania and my home in Toms River, NJ, have always shown the 'antennas' of my first love. The difficult propagation conditions today are nothing compared to the early days we struggled with. I remember the 'Radio Row' times and the outings on Canal and Houston Streets and the fascination I found there. I have brought this enthusiasm to our hobby and to Amateur radio and have felt like a kid again as I've served ECARS as Vice President, Secretary and in active membership for many years. Coming up through the ranks and serving my Country as a Marine, knowing that Ham radio plays an important part in our Country's defense, gives me pride, and I want to continue that effort as part of your leadership and as president of ECARS this coming year.

Joe Reppert, WY3T, Lenhartsville PA: for President

Hello fellow ECARS members, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I have been an ECARS area coordinator for the last two and a half years and I have worked to keep ECARS the premier service that it is with our past net manager, Al KA3UNB and our present net manager, Russ K1LRB. I have the privilege of serving as your net control station every weekday from 1:00 PM. until 2:00 PM. I want to thank all of you who have helped to make the net what it is today, by promoting the policies of ECARS and exhibiting exemplary conduct when participating in net activities, whether there is an emergency or just regular proceedings. I have been nominated for the office of president of ECARS and if elected will keep the welfare and goals of ECARS foremost in my activities. I am not a stranger to executive positions in amateur radio organizations. I served as vice president of our local club for one year and president for five consecutive years. During that time, we acquired several pieces of new equipment, doubled the funds in the treasury, rewrote the by-laws, and instituted many other positive accomplishments. I have run emer-

(Continued on page 3)

(Meet the Candidates continued from page 2)

gency stations for the American Red Cross, FEMA, and PEMA. I look forward to serving ECARS as its president. See you on 7.255.

Dave Jordan, WA1GIN, Alexandria, VA for Vice President

I passed my novice examine back in the mid sixties. Then, shortly thereafter passed the General, Advanced and lastly, the Extra Class when I turned 50 years of age. The 40-meter band is my primary band of operation.

Soon after I got my General Class ticket I began handling health and welfare traffic with the Guardian Angel Service Net. This group ran phone-patch traffic from the US Coast Guard picket ships, which at that time protected the mid-Atlantic coastline. I held two elected offices while this group was in existence, club secretary and president of the organization. This is where I met K3FEC, Cy. He was the guy who got me interested in HF mobile operations. I purchased his HW22A and used it for several years. When the Coast Guard ships were decommissioned and satellites took over coastal surveillance, the GAS net shut down operations, but many of those GAS net members helped create ECARS and were active leaders and participants in the group for decades.

During the 70s and 80s I spent most of my time with my young family and ham radio took a back seat. Now that the kids are young adults I've got more time for radio activities and enjoy freelance NCS on weekends.

I take an active interest in ECARS. I've been the webmaster/developer for several years, was director of ECARS at one time, ran the Swap and Shop during my brief two year retirement, and try to have at least one interesting article for each issue of the "*Monitor*". I enjoy operating NCS duties and finding new ways to use technology to enhance the amateur radio experience. Many of you know that I operate Virginia's first totally Internet Remote Amateur Radio Station, one of less than a dozen now operating in the USA.

Please consider me for ECARS vice president.

Jerry Rogich, AA2T, Leominster, MA for Vice President

I was originally licensed as WN2MDX in Bronx, NY back in 1968. My Elmer was K2LWM, who is now a silent key. He was generous with giving (yes - giving) me a Drake R4A and a Johnson Ranger II for my novice station. Eventually I sold them and put in a few bucks for a Yaesu FT DX-560, which I still have and use. Presently I also use an Alinco DX77T, which for the money was a pretty good deal. I upgraded it with a rig blaster and W2IHY and am enjoying PSK31, SSTV and RTTY. I use an Ameritron AL572B and ATR-15 tuner for a bit more signal and have a Super Loop 40 and a 100-foot inverted vee that also covers 30, 15 and 10 meters.

My son Jerome is K1SON. I gave him a VX-5R for passing his Technician exam. He has not yet found time to upgrade.

I just pulled some old books out of storage; RCA receiving tube books, '42 handbook, old license manuals, "Radio for the Masses" etc. It is nice to look them over and remember when home brewing was more popular. In the early 70s I built homebrew rigs such as a 4 tube CW transceiver (6AQ5 – crystal transmitter) with crystal IF's, an 807 CW transmitter, as well as a 2 crystal QRP transmitter with which I've made a few contacts. I also run an EMTech 30M QRP rig when camping.

I am active with RACES/ARES for the Western Massachusetts section through the Leominster EMA, and I am the town radio officer for RACES.

This is a good hobby and we need to act and remain professionals in our QSO's and Elmering.

Dr. Jay Goss, K3SEA, Johnstown, PA for Vice President

I will celebrate 50 years as an Amateur Radio operator in 2008 after earning my first ticket in 1958, at the age of 12, after intense tutoring by my Elmer, K2GYY. My Father, K2YNE, and his enthusiasm and support, guided me into a great lifetime hobby. When I got my first call, WA2JCQ, I jumped right into the top of a solar cycle and my pulse raced as I contacted distant stations on CW and later by voice! I started out running 6 watts on a homebrew rig. Times have certainly changed! I remember starting the first 'radio club' in my junior high school and later in high school. The word that anyone could communicate any where in the country or around the world by Ham radio, was rapidly spreading. The 60's and 70's were times of change in our country, and brought an important need for emergency communications. Amateur radio was tailormade for this, and I became very active in Civil Defense with the establishment of the first RACES and portable radio emergency facilities in Central New Jersey. I was President of each group, organizer and controller of them and promoter of Amateur Radio throughout the region and State. I continued the development of Amateur Radio Stations while in College at the University of Kentucky and did reciprocal developmental work at Rutgers University and Penn State University. The inter-state coordination of disaster communications during hurricanes, floods, and National emergencies has become the by-word of our service. I have brought my enthusiasm and experience with me as I traveled and migrated from New Jersey to Pennsylvania. My terms as President of business associations, Chambers of Commerce [both domestic and international], two corporations, fiduciary board of directors, several Amateur Radio Networks, and other civic and charitable groups, and offices in those same groups, has been an invaluable experience, and allowed me to meet many enjoyable and interesting people along the way.

(Continued on page 4)

(Meet the Candidates continued from page 3)

Al Prindle, KA3UNB, Ridley Park, PA for Net Manager

Well ladies and gentleman, it is election time again, to see who will lead our group through 2004. One of the most important things that we need to do as members is to vote. As the past Net Manager (2001 and 2002), I would always remind everyone on the air, to please vote. What the hell, how hard is that to do! Well this year I am asking that you do one more thing. Know whom you are voting for. Let me repeat that; know who you are voting for.

I was first licensed in 1989 and within 6 months I upgraded to the General class license. I took a 6-year break from ham radio, and when I got back into it I found ECARS. I then upgraded to Advanced class. I ran the net off and on for a year before I was appointed Net Manager of ECARS for 2001. I held that position through 2002. I then took a year break from the group, due to other commitments and now I am back running for the office of Director.

During my tenure as Net Manager I watched our group grow from around 300 to over 700 paid members, and was instrumental in instituting may of the policies that we follow today on the net. I have also put together the last two ECARS annual meetings and get togethers. I am also the Chairperson for this year's event and will be looking at a few new locations for the next annual meeting.

Lets face it...for the most part, getting elected to the ECARS Executive Committee is really a matter of how much air time you get (a popularity contest so to speak). Most people don't know one person from the next as far as what they do for the group. That is why I am challenging you this year to make sure you know whom you are voting for. I am not going to promise that I will be there running the net everyday. That is just not going to happen, as I am self-employed and have a business to run. I will promise you one thing; I will respond to the issues as they are needed, and I will take the job seriously. With over 750 paid members in our group and over $15,000 dollars in the treasury, the membership deserves people who will protect the interests of ECARS.

I look forward to serving as ECARS Director and representing the membership as part of the Executive Committee. After all, representing the membership is what serving on the Executive Committee means.

Art Storm, K2TRK, Madison, NJ for Director

Last year I wrote most of the following when I started my first term as an ECARS director. As usual with club newsletters there was a need for articles that would be of interest to our membership. "*What and Why - ECARS & Me?*", was the original title and very little has changed since I wrote that piece except that the big reason for ECARS being my favorite HF activity - "the friends on frequency" has gotten even better throughout the ensuing year! I know more of you now than I did a year ago and I enjoy my "service control slot Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, from noon until 1:00 PM even more than before. The rest of the text that follows is somewhat modified from a year ago and some of you may find it interesting. In any case, the story of my ham radio experience from beginning thru ECARS follows.

Ham radio started for me when I joined the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) a little after I turned 16 years old. I had gotten my student pilot's license on my 16th birthday and thought that the CAP would help me get some more flying time. Because I worked at an ESSO station (remember those [pre-EXXON] days?) I was asked to repair an old 2.1 KW generator for the radio group. I found that after working afternoons and evenings as a mechanic I'd rather do something else after work. Learning about radio seemed about the next best thing to flying!

Diran, W2ZRD, the Zany Rug Dealer, was in charge of the radio crew and eventually all of us "radio" guys set up a joint CAP / AF MARS (Air Force Military Affiliate Radio System) station and parts facility in a barn converted to a two-story two-car garage that ZRD rented. We regularly checked into MARS nets on 3275 KHz and also started learning about converting old military gear for the ham bands. We made regular trips to Mitchell Air Force Base on Long Island and became fast friends with several of the guys there. They were able to get us more surplus equipment and introduced us to more of the MARS ops from Maine to Virginia. When one of the stations alerted us to some "good stuff" we'd arrange a weekend trip to collect the gear. That was great fun for young guys who could stay in the transient barracks as we were in the CAP, which is an Air Force Auxiliary.

In spring of 1956 Diran gave two of us the written and the code test for both the Novice and Technician license. On the nineteenth of June, 1956, my mom met me on the way home from high school with the letter from the FCC in hand! I was novice KN2TRK and technician K2TRK! Wow! I shortly became AAF2TRK in Air Force MARS and I could operate as a control op on 3275 KHz.

I had barely graduated from Hackensack, New Jersey High School that June but had been interviewed at Bell Labs, Murray Hill, New Jersey for a job in April. They said, by the end of the day, that if I graduated from high school to let them know and I would have a job. (There were many instances of blessing that led to that opportunity.) I started working on the ninth of July 1956 in the very lab where the first transistor was made years before in December of 1947. Being there the morning that Walter Brattain walked into the lab and said, "Hey guys, I got a phone call from Stockholm at two this morning - we won the Nobel Prize for the transistor!" was super. Brattain was still at the Labs while Shockley and Bardeen had gone on to teaching at Cal. Tech. and the University of Illinois respectively. That was very exciting stuff for an 18 year old. I was the youngest TA (Technical Aide) ever hired at that time and my TA's salary, for my age and experience, would have been $50 / week. I got an extra $2 (4%) because I had the ham ticket!

(Continued on page 5)

(Meet the Candidates continued from page 4)

A while after I started at Murray Hill I went down to the "Federated Purchaser" electronics distributor on route 22 in Springfield, New Jersey to look at some parts for the newest "Hi Fi" project. I don't recall if I got the HI FI parts but I do remember seeing and ordering a Heath Kit Sixer, or "Benton Harbor Lunch Box", 6 meter transceiver. I was driving an Austin Healey "bug eyed" Sprite at that time and it looked "different" with the Halo antenna for six meters mounted on the rear end and poised several feet above my head.

After several years at Bell Labs, a couple of the PhD, Members from the Technical Staff (MTS) told me that I should quit night school (Fairleigh Dickinson University) and go to a "good" school full time, days. Well I should have known better as I have never been a good student and as it turned out I did much better at night school. But, I did get a Research Assistantship with the Low Temperature Physics Department at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. The Sprite carried all my worldly possessions including the Sixer, my great Hallicrafter SX-28 "boat anchor" receiver, six meter converter, Heath 6 and 2 meter Seneca AM transmitter with a pair of 6146's in the final, all my tools in a Snap On tool box that weighed thirty eight pounds empty, a four element six meter beam and an assortment of clothes stuffed in the nooks and crannies back behind the seats. There was no outside access to the "trunk or boot" area. The passenger's seat was removed and laid in last on top of the luggage. I prayed that I wouldn't have a flat as the spare tire was at the very bottom in the rear!

Six meter AM from the mobile, in 1959, with five watts, a super-regenerative receiver and a vibrator power supply didn't make for many contacts in the Chapel Hill area - except occasionally with the guys from the UNC radio club. Washington DC and Richmond Virginia were almost the only mobile QSOs I ever got once out of the NY/NNJ area.

Early June was the time for DX on six meters with the help of the Seneca beam and thirty feet of old water pipe, discarded from the locker room at the University, which I tied to the side of the airport administration building, my home away from home. It was an old wooden house up on concrete blocks with four rooms, and some old heating pipes coming through the floor, but connected to nothing. It turned out to be the rodent underground railway. An "armstrong" rotator pointed the beam to the westerly directions when six was hot. That set-up lasted for about a year.

After spending about twenty hours finding the parts for, and building, a new vibrator supply, (the price I got for the original bought me dinner one hungry night), I could run the Sixer on the way home for Christmas. I didn't have enough money to take any of the toll roads and the interstates weren't in existence in many parts of the country yet. That made the trip a twelve or thirteen hour drive. After the supply was in the Sprite I thought I'd sleep for the afternoon and then start home. Unfortunately from about noon on folks started knocking on my door asking questions about the airport operations and I figured I wasn't going to get any sleep, so I went back into the university lab and then started for home in New Jersey. That was about an hour before I fell asleep after entering into Virginia. As my flying partner Bill says, "Ain't no sense in being stupid if you don't get a chance to show it once in while." I'll save the story of the trip to the hospital, flying back to get the car, landing in the cow pasture airport, etc. for another epistle. Just skip a few years...

After returning to New Jersey I finally got active on two meters AM and RACES. I was back at Bell Labs the last day of 1959 and eventually bought a house in Chatham. Using a borrowed SCR-522 for 2 and starting with an indoor 2-element quad got me down as far as Philadelphia, Northern Delaware, New York City, and Southern New York. If KA3UNB had been around then I could have worked him! The purchase of a Kenwood TS-430S and Butternut HF-6V got me on 10 and occasionally on 80 and 40 CW. I had gotten up to about 10 words per minute before I got the Tech. ticket but never got further. RACES kept me out of mischief and starting as a RACES radio operator, I eventually became Radio Officer and then Director or Coordinator of the Township Civil Defense organization. It was really fun to be able to meet with the Fire and Police departments and give them the word that we were only there to help them if they needed help. We were not there to take over and run the show. They had the expertise. We had some extra sources of help and support should they get beyond their normal "contiguous" aid resources. We could help with communications among several police or fire agencies that might have incompatible radio frequencies, etc. Then telling them that CD didn't know how the do their jobs, couldn't do their jobs, and we would never try to tell them how to do their jobs often brought a cheer. In New Jersey, the law says that if the mayor is not available to run the town during an emergency the CD director was next in line. Apparently a number of CD Directors let that go to their heads and tried to control everything and everyone. They were happy to hear a different story!

I had said for years that I would get the Extra if they (you know who they are) ever changed the code requirement for the higher-class licenses. Well they did and so did both my Lee - N2FGC and I. Lee and I met on NJVN the New Jersey VHF Traffic Net in June of 1985. We talked about ham gear and Star Trek after the net (now on FM) with several friends throughout the summer and early fall. The last week in September we met in person. I could never have made it to Lee's QTH without the help of a couple of friends on the 147.24 repeater giving me right and left turn directions through the city. (I know I'm supposed to say "location" but look how much longer it takes to type that!) A month later, the last week in October '85 Lee and I were married and combined our shacks.

One of the great motivations I had to upgrade was the

(Continued on page 6)

(Meet the Candidates continued from page 5)

fact that Hank, the "Lumpy Old Potato" had a weekly schedule with Vince, K2GDD. They met on ECARS Thursday mornings around 0900 local. Vince had been the Morris County OEM Radio Officer for many years and when he and Amy moved down to the Wilmington area of North Carolina, I really missed them. So it's all Vinnie's fault! At least mostly his fault.

A couple of years ago I got involved with the Morris Radio Club (MRC) here in Morris County, New Jersey and thence with their sponsorship of the Radio Shack at the Camp Allamuchy BSA Reservation in New Jersey. Several of the club members, particularly Hank, W2LOP and Bill, K2WP, collected used equipment, sold it at hamfests and then used the proceeds to buy enough equipment to provide the Scout Camp with two HF stations, IC-756 w/AL1500 Amp. and IC-746 w/ALS-600 Amp., two meter repeater, two meter packet, Tri- band beam for 10/15/20, and 40 and 80 meter dipoles. The shack is open five days a week when the campers are there and for special occasions throughout the rest of the year. It was at the camp that I first logged into ECARS and then picked up a fill-in NCS position. Now my two years as president of MRC are finished and Lee is into her second year as president. So like it or me or not - blame it on Vince!

Having been a regular ECARS NCS for a couple of years now I've had the great pleasure of participating as part of the East Coast Amateur Radio Service as NCS and now as one of the Directors for over a year. Except for the band conditions this late winter and spring, it has been a "GREAT PLEASURE". I hope to be able to continuing to serve ECARS and it is my intention to try my best.

The Preamble to the ECARS Constitution concisely enumerates the purpose of our group so I will, instead, just note for you a couple of the things that still make ECARS my favorite HF activity:

The BIG number ONE is FRIENDS. I have met so many great folks on ECARS who have allowed me to become their friend and with whom I can include in my list of friends, continually enriching my life.

SERVICE runs right along with friendship. Service, to me, is not an onerous task but rather a chance to help a friend. Have you noticed that the world is full of not just people but friends, many of whom we just haven't had the chance to meet yet? The next new check-in will probably be my next new friend! What a deal! So many folks checking in to ECARS include the "thanks for being there and running the service" comment that it's better than being paid!

I don't have more at the moment except to thank the other officers, Net Manager, K1LRB and all the members and non-members who continue to check into the service. As I often comment, "It wouldn't be any fun being NCS if no one checked in!"

Your Service Controllers

ECARS Net Manager, Russ Newton, K1LRB frequently emails a newsletter to the net controllers, updating them with information about the operation of the net and duty schedules. In addition he as been including short biographies of many of the service controllers. The biographies have been extracted from his newsletters and printed below.

Mark Litteral, W3WLW, Clinton PA

An avid SWL'er since a wee lad, Mark built his first Healthkit GR-54 (with assistance from his father). First licensed in 1983 as KA8SXD in Dayton, Ohio. Mark is a former US Marine "2512" / Communications and a graduate of OSU from the College of Engineering. He is employed as a process analyst for FedEx Express and has been married for 12 years to the world's most tolerant and beautiful woman, Christine. Mark has a 5 1/2-year-old son named Chet. Mark became active again during the Y-2K non-event and picked up the N3NOO call when he moved to Pennsylvania. He recently changed call sign to W3WLW. Mark is active in local ARES – RACES organizations and enjoys weekend early bird ECARS frequency warm up duty. Currently re runs a TS 530, FL2100B amplifier with a GAP vertical and homebrew sloper. Mark enjoys HTML programming and maintains a few web sites. He is an avid gardener and cook/ connoisseur and enjoys living in a semi remote area away from the insanity of urban life.

Larry Moldauer, WA2PZI, Edison NJ

Larry was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY. His Elmer was his electricity shop teacher in junior high school, Herb, WA2DWJ. In the three years that he attended this junior high school, Herb helped him to understand general radio theory and Morse code. The electricity shop also allowed Larry to build equipment and convert military gear. Larry was first licensed as WN2PZI and then upgraded to Technician and then to the General Class license. Larry is a corporate pilot, flying from the Morristown and Teterboro airports in NJ. He loves to run vintage SSB equipment such as the Swan 700CX, Swan Cygnet, and HT-37/HQ170, just to name a few. Larry lives in Edison, NJ and has been at this location for over 20 years.

Donald (Butch) Blasdell, W4HJL, Manassas VA

Butch was first licensed in high school (1958) in Springville, NY as KN2QJE. He passed the General Exam the next year and became K2QJE. Butch was a communicator in the US Navy for two years and was discharged in 1961. He upgraded to Advanced Class in 1969 and changed the call to W4HJL. While stationed in Hawaii in 1976 passed the EXTRA class exam and obtained additional station license "KH6IPN". Returned to Virginia in 1977 and

(Continued on page 7)

(Your Service Controllers continued from page 6)

dropped the KH6 call. Butch has been married for 40 years to Mary Lu (KB4EFP - Advanced Class), and one son out of six children is licensed - Blaine KB4RKL. Butch retired from the Federal Government in 1993 and returned to work as a contractor in 1997. He retired for good last September and they have been traveling and enjoying their three grandchildren. Butch had a triple bypass operation in May and was recuperating in carardiac rehabilitation for 12 weeks, and cannot wait to be able to return to golfing, hunting and fishing, etc.

Richard Kautz, KC2HZW, Pelham, NY

Rich attended the Bronx High School of Science and obtained his Novice License in 1972 as WN2LXE. Two years ago while surfing the Net, he came across the ARRL Web site and decided to get back into the hobby. He passed the Technician exam in May of 2001 and became a Tech, plus, quickly settling into 10 meters SSB. Rich upgraded to General Class and built a 40-meter dipole. His first 40-meter contact was with Art, K2TRK on 7 dot 255. He joined ECARS in the fall of 2002 and soon became a fill-in service controller. Rich is a member of the Yonkers Amateur Radio Club, W2YRC and the Westchester Emergency Communications Association (WECA). Thursday evenings he can be found on the Yonkers repeater running the Junior Operations Net, helping new hams learn about amateur radio. Rich has been married for 19 years to his Elizabeth and has a teenage son Daniel. Dan is currently studying for his Technician's license and likes to attend foxhunts with his dad. Rich is a licensed private pilot with an instrument rating and likes to travel when he has the opportunity.

Larry Ashton Jr., N2OCW, Berkeley Springs, WV

Larry was first licensed in New Jersey and was actively involved with the Cherryville Repeater Association, W2CRA, through the tutelage of his Elmer WB2LVC, Eddie Demarest. Eddie became a silent key suddenly during the blizzard of '96. Larry still makes the yearly trek to New Jersey to participate with the Cherryville Repeater Association for Field Day, under the W2GD call sign. He can usually be found on the 3905 Century Club Nets on any of the modes they operate. Has attained nearly 50 Awards including the Masters Award #13 on April 13, 2003. Larry is also an active ECARS member and helps out as a fill in as a service controller. Presently he operates 2, 6, 220, 440, as well as 10 thru 160-meter bands with most of his HF antennas being wire. Larry is using an ICOM 736 or 751A and Heil Boom Mic. When mobile, Larry runs an ICOM 706MK2 with a High Sierra HS1500 screwdriver antenna. He has worked WAS mobile on both 40 and 75 meters as well as 40 and 75 WAS QRP 5 watts from home. Larry is part owner of a multi repeater link system along with N8YIB in Western Maryland, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Larry has the 440 repeater, N2OCW on 447.175 in Berkeley Springs, West Virginia.

Robert Reed, W4RKR, Gladstone, VA

Bob got his first license in 1976 with the call sign WD4NES. He spent a lot of time with Air Force MARS but had to put ham radio on the back burner due to work. Bob came back to the hobby in 2001 and got his present call - W4RKR. Bob worked in the construction field for 15 years and then law enforcement for 20 years, retiring in 1995. He and his wife, Joyce, have been married for 45 years. They enjoy camping, fishing and hunting.

Joe Reppert, WY3T, Lenhartsville PA

WY3T was one of the last issued Extra Class calls for 3 land. Joe was first licensed in 1989 as KA3VEL. He has done a lot of contesting and has a mixed DXCC on the wall. He was president of the Dauberville DX Association for six years and a trustee for four repeater frequencies and the club call K3TI. He has been active in emergency communications at the Red Cross and has set up and operated various portable stations to demonstrate ham radio to the public. Joe is active with a VE Group doing amateur testing, but has slowed down on all activities. He is now a net control and an area coordinator for ECARS. Joe enjoys running the Net and checking in the various stations, as well as helping anyone during a bad situation. He operates two mobile units, a TS 50S Kenwood at only 100 watts. His fixed station is a TS 950 SDX Kenwood, a Heil mic #5 cartridge, an Ameritron ATR-30 tuner, and an AL1500 amplifier. His antenna is a 102-foot Fritzel up about 40 feet. Joe's wife Joann is licensed as N3JRX and occasionally says a word or two to some of the ECARS members she has met. Also their hound Loki is a part of the group and an avid listener.

Marty Rigoulot, K1PIG, Kents Hill, ME.

Marty has been licensed since 1959 with his first call sign, K1OZW. His brother had the call sign K1PIG first and after he passed away the family felt it was fitting that Marty take the call. Marty runs an FT 840 with a Heil microphone, a homebrew Carolina Windom antenna 300 feet up the hill in the backyard. He has three repeaters in the Augusta area and one with Echolink on (449.275). Marty also operates the APRS mode and TCP/IP as the Central Maine link to the world. He moved from Connecticut in 1987 after retirement from the Wallingford Fire Department. Marty enjoys Maine politics and was recently elected as a selectmen in the town of Fayette. Besides ham radio, he collects Wallace Nutting prints, hunts, and fishes (a must in Maine). His lovely wife Lisa has been a Ham for 11 years and they enjoy Field Day together each year. Marty lives on a lake, so fishing is the real summer hobby.

Robert Benson, K2IB, Hamburg, NJ

Bob was first licensed in 1958 as WN2EJP. His first station was a couple of homemade kits, an EICO 723 Transmitter and a Filmore general coverage receiver. The next project was a Healthkit Lunchbox twoer. At that time the Novice Class operator had 2-meter voice privileges. Bob's License

(Continued on page 8)

(Your Service Controllers continued from page 7)

ran out and he did not upgrade. He finished college in 1963, and then passed the technician exam with the new call sign WA2FIB. Bob practiced Morse code and soon became a General, Advanced and then Extra Class operator and took the call sign K2IB. Bob is a retired school teacher and lives in Sussex County with his wife Christine, two Pug dogs and four Parrots. Bob's base station consists of a Tentec Jupiter, an Ameritron ALS-600 amplifier, a 40 Meter inverted vee and a Force 12 Sigma 5 Vertical for 10 thru 20 meters. His mobile setup is an ICOM 706MK11G and a baby Tarheel antenna. Bob spends most of his time on ECARS with occasional Dxing.

Wells Farr, WB3CUF, Central Station, NY

Wells was first licensed in 1976 as WN3CUF. He upgraded to General Class in 1977, Advanced in 1988 and Extra Class in 1999. Wells also holds a General Class Commercial with Radar Endorsement. Growing up in Tioga County in North Central Pennsylvania, he became a broadcast engineer with a nine-station chain around central and western Pennsylvania from 1974 to 1981. Wells then became a communications technician for the New York State Police in 1981 and moved to Central Bridge, New York. Since 1991, Wells has been self-employed as a real estate broker and consulting communications engineer. In addition, Wells is NCOIC of Operations in the 139 Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, New York Air National Guard. Active in USAF MARS as State MARS Director for New York and Region One Training Manager. Wells has been married to Elizabeth since 1984 and is still trying to get her interested in ham radio.

Jim McFadden, WA3ILW, Flinton, PA

Jim was first licensed as KN2PZR in 1954. In 1968 passed the Technician Class exam and became WA3ILW. He upgraded to General Class in 1978. While a technician, Jim was quite active in Navy/Marine Corps MARS. He handled volumes of traffic to and from Vietnam. Over the past 20 years Jin has been assigned work in many foreign countries. He installs and services automated control systems, principally in central electric generating stations. Now he is working in the Western Pennsylvania area until January 2004, when he will retire after spending 45 years with the same firm. He is an amateur airplane pilot and homebuilder, and has a plane he built in 1993. Jim is active in the Experimental Aircraft Association, Civil Air Patrol, and plays Scottish Highland Bagpipes in two pipe bands. He has been married to Judy for 44 years and has three sons and 11 grandchildren. One son, Mitchell, was recently licensed as KA3JOM. Jim and Judy enjoy camping and Judy is an avid NASCAR fan.

Thanks to Russ for putting these biographies together. If you would like to have your biography (and photo) published in the "Monitor", please send them to Mike Stone, 32 Carriage Rd., Gilford, NH or e-mail to n1ve@amsat.org. ***Editor***

The Early Years of ECARS

by Russ Newton K1LRB
ECARS Net Manager

Modern-era amateur radio history is ripe with public service events. A benchmark tradition of sound amateur practice is based on the fact that ham operators contribute to the general welfare of their communities and the nation.

Few would dispute the notion that one of amateur radio's strongest pillars in defending our operating privileges against spectrum encroachment by and interference from commercial interests in the 'digital age' is, quite simply, the service's proven willingness to stand up a be counted when a crisis triggers the need for supplemental communications services to protect life and property.

We as ECARS members can take pride that our organization is widely recognized throughout the ham radio community -- and well beyond -- as one of the nation's longest-running and most dependable community service organizations. Decades before the introduction of cellular telephones, ECARS was a vital communications link to motorists on the highways and byways of the Eastern United States.

So with the generous assistance of Jim Olsen, W3KMN, who provided significant historical data on ECARS' early days ... and Sy, K3FEC (SK), who wrote these facts about ECARS in the December 1988 issue of The Monitor, let's take a look back at the early history of our organization.

- December 28, 1968: First day of operation. Earliest known check-ins: K1TLO, WA1KRN, WA3GAL, W3RAZ, and W3RSC (later W4MLF).
- February 1969: First issue of the ECARS Monitor, listed Bernie Howe, K1TLO as Net Manager; Jim Lightfoot, WA1KRN as Secretary and Editor, and Dave Flynn, W2CFP in charge of Public Relations.
- November 1969: K1TLO - SK.
- September 1970: ECARS meeting in Boston during the ARRL Convention. A committee including W1TWG (Chair), WA1IEB, K1HHN, WA2GQW, W2MSS, K3FEC, K4BX and W3JAW was appointed to consider incorporation and other matters.
- October 1971: At the Gaithersburg, MD Hamfest, the ECARS Constitution and By-Laws were unanimously adopted.
- August-through-December 1971: On-the-air meetings under the sponsorship of K3FEC and K3UIY were held, to reorganize. An election was conducted on-the-air, and K3FEC was chosen as Interim President; WA1KRN interim Vice-President. They were to hold office until an election, as directed by the constitution, was held.
- January 1971: The first officers elected under the provisions of the new constitution were: president, K3FEC; vice-president, W1TWG; secretary-treasurer, W2CFP; directors, K1HHN and K3UIY. The net manager was WA1IEB.

(Continued on page 9)

(The Early Years of ECARS continued from page 8)

- January 1974: The present system of membership numbering was inaugurated.
- July 27, 1974: ECARS is incorporated under the laws of the State of Delaware. (Co-incidentally, many U.S. national and multi-national corporations even today also incorporate in Delaware, due to the soundness and 'friendliness' of its body of corporate law.) The incorporator was Richard M. Cornell, WA3KKL (later K3KL).

So that's a look at the beginnings of ECARS. It would be an interesting project if others would forward to me their recollections of organization history and highlights from the mid-1970s to the present day, for inclusion in future articles.

There is much to take pride in...and to remember -- and memorialize -- as ECARS marches forward into our new century.

Roy Moyer, K3RRK, SK

It is with great regret that we must announce the passing of Roy Moyer, K3RRK. Roy was a pioneer in the television industry and became an engineer for television station WPTZ-TV, now KYW, in Philadelphia. His son Dan said that, although his father had studied electrical engineering at Drexel Institute of Technology (later Drexel University), "the [TV] technology was so new, he learned on the job."

At the time, WPTZ (Channel 3) was an NBC affiliate run by Philco Broadcasting Co. as an experimental station serving the 500 area residents who owned television sets.

Roy was the engineer in the Philadelphia studio for local programs including The Ernie Kovacs Show and Television Kitchen, a half-hour cooking show hosted by Florence Hanford. He was later engineer for the nightly news anchored by Vince Leonard.

Away from the studio, Roy worked on location as remote technical supervisor for Philadelphia Warriors basketball games, Phillies and Philadelphia Athletics baseball games, and the annual Army-Navy football game. He worked at the 1960 National Football League championship game in which the Eagles beat the Green Bay Packers.

Roy also was remote technical supervisor for NBC national broadcasts, among them the first televised coverage of the New Hampshire presidential primary in 1956, early NASA space launchings, and the funeral of President John F. Kennedy in 1963. Roy retired in 1983.

Roy was born in Pittsburgh and his family later moved to Philadelphia, and he was a graduate of Germantown High School.

During World War II, Roy was a Navy pilot and flight instructor in the states.

After he retired, he kept up his interest in electronic communications as a ham-radio operator and was a member of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Broadcast Pioneers of America.

In addition to his son, Roy is survived by his wife of 59 years, Dolores Spears Moyer; another son, David; a daughter, Diane Zenner; a sister; and seven grandchildren.

Roy will be greatly missed by all of us.

The Slingshot-Tandem

by Dr. Jay Gross, K3SEA

March, 2003 saw a deteriorating propagation on 40 meters…..the band began to shut down. A combination of the 'Solar Cycle', Solar flares, magnetic space storms, atmospheric interference, aurora, and any other problem that could combine to cause very unusual reception and transmission had become the rule. We've been stuck in it and it's been very hard pulling out.

Adjusting and coping is ECARS way of handling problems as they arise. If nothing else, Ham Operators are flexible and inventive. At the top of the 'inventive' list are the NCS operators of the East Coast Amateur Radio Service. Knowing that the conditions were worsening with each daily operation of the service, the Net was going to have to adopt some unique and innovative procedures……we did!

Marty, K1PIG from the great state of Maine and myself, K3SEA, from Western Pennsylvania, developed the concept of "sharing" the Net Control operation of ECARS during the early morning hours between 0800 and 0900, when it was particularly hard to send or receive signals on the 40 meter band from fixed or mobile stations. We did it this way: I would open the hour by asking if there were any stations that had schedules to keep, then mobile stations and then fixed stations. I logged any responses. When there was a lull I would transfer control to Marty and he would work as co-Net Control. We would do this back-and-forth during the hour.

This 'Slingshot – Tandem' cooperation worked well most of the time, but there were operational problems that made the Net almost impossible. On those days we had to do something even more inventive and an idea that couldn't have been done only a few years ago took shape – the use of 'real-time computer dialog communications', called "Instant Messaging". There were times we couldn't hear each other on 7255 kilohertz and had to resort to computer communications in this way, to be able to bridge the gap in distance and line-of-sight propagation and continue Net operations. This was the 'slingshot' part of the 'Tandem'. This joint Net Control could not have worked without this 21st century technology.

Two other Net Control Stations began to use this type of 'Slingshot-Tandem' Net operation shortly afterwards, K1PIG and K3SEA started using the system. Luke, KA3SE and Alex, K3ICX have successfully run the Net during the consecutive hour 0900 to 1000 with this technique.

The discovery and innovation of something new and necessary has kept ECARS alive and well and the Premiere Net on the 40 Meter Band. We have survived terrible conditions, helped many in rough situations, and will continue to get through and operate while many Nets just quit. The teamwork and patience of all of our members and supporters have made the NCS volunteers jobs easier and continue to make the East Coast Amateur Radio Service a valuable part of the Amateur Radio Spectrum.

Internet Audio and Other Comments

by Dave Jordan, WA3GIN

Net Meeting (NM) Set-up

I believe some of the NM bandwidth consumption is determined by the voice codec selected. You can choose which codec, in the NM advanced options feature. Actually, there are a few NM bandwidth-effecting selections that are important to optimize Internet enabled amateur radio stations. These selections may have significant Internet bandwidth implications for the IRAR host-server connection, particularly if the Internet connection is dial-up, i.e. limited in bandwidth (56 kbps or less). There is no broad band Internet data service available where the WA3GIN IRAR station is located and the typical bandwidth speed is 24 kbps.

One option is located by going to the general options tab "Bandwidth Settings", on Net Mtg. Go to "Tools" tab, then "Options" (General Tab)...Bandwidth Settings...to set the speed of the Internet link speed, which Net Mtg. will utilize.

The second option is the "Advanced Compression Settings" option. Go to "Tools" tab, "Options" (Audio Tab)... Advanced. Select manually configure compression settings. At this location if you check "Select Manually Configure Compression Settings" you can select the type of codec you prefer to us for audio compression. You will notice that MS uses their proprietary standard as the default, but offers others options.

I have experimented with all of them. However, when using SSB mode, I doubt most operators will actually hear a difference. The codec code provides significantly more audio bandwidth than will pass through the SSB filters of the average HF radio transceiver. I use the "MS G.723.1.8kHz Mono, 6400 bps".

Other features such as "Full Duplex, Auto Gain Control (speaker output), Auto Adjust Microphone Gain, Direct Sound", etc. improve audio performance. "Direct Sound" is only provided with certain sound cards. This feature provides an on/off fixed algorithm equalizer feature

I highly recommend utilizing the NM tuning wizard on both the remote and remote host side of the connection. The wizard will adjust the AGC for transmitter audio microphone input from the remote PC sound card as well as the radio speaker output to the remote host PC sound card microphone input. Using the wizard will be help ensure you achieve good quality transmit/receive audio.

Net Meeting and Firewalls

PCs utilizing networks, LANs, routers, Firewalls, etc. should know that Net Mtg. requires TCP/UDP ports 5198 - 5201 to be opened.

More Audio Isn't Better

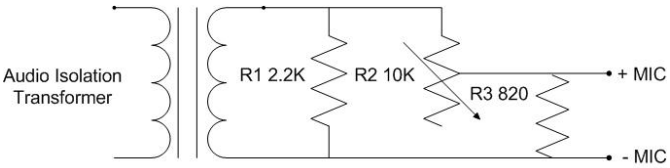
Too much audio gain will only produce excessive distortion, hum, and background noise. Typically, PC sound card output voltages will be greater than can be accommodated by the radio transceiver's microphone input circuits. Be aware that some newer PC sound cards provide audio line output voltages that are higher than the old standard for sound cards (3.3 volts rather than 1.0 volts).

Crisp Clean Transmit Audio

When transmitting with your microphone, note the ALC meter reading. Typically, the meter reading will indicate on the low side of the meter range (best practice) for voice peaks. However, with the PC soundboard feeding the HF radio MIC input, the ALC meter may read higher or even be off the scale. It's important to appreciate that there are several important audio adjustments now in play.

1. Net Mtg. volume adjustment
2. Sound Board to Radio attenuation/isolator adjustment
3. HF radio microphone gain adjustment

Adjusting the audio for your remote station will be made easier with the assistance of another ham radio operator. You will want to have a second operator access your IRAR station so that you can perform the fine tuning audio adjustments of the three in-line audio elements that deliver your remote audio to the HF transceiver microphone input. This can be accomplished without causing undue RF interference by terminating the radio output into a 50-ohm dummy load. Using the dummy load will allow you to test/monitor the transmit audio quality without having RF present. In addition to monitoring the ALC readings one can activate the audio monitor mode and use headphones to listen to the audio. Once you are satisfied with the quality of the audio you can connect your antenna and go live. This test is also important as you will want to ensure that you do not have RFI on your transmit audio. It's a good idea to install ferrite clam-shells on all of the audio, control, and power leads connecting the remote host server to the HF radio. In addition all standard grounding practices for the IRAR station equipment should be followed. You need to make RFI tests on all bands you intend to use. Good audio on 40m doesn't ensure good audio on 10m. Take the time and make the test. If you are using a beam on the higher bands rotate the beam while you are testing. Often times RFI may only occur when the beam is pointed in a specific direction.



IRAR Server Sound Board to Radio Interface

Net Meeting CODEC

The Net Meeting voice codec removes much of the background noise it detects. Because you will typically be operating from a quiet location, you most likely will not have to deal with background noise. With Net Meeting via the Internet you could receive reports that your transmit audio sounds distorted, etc. These reports my not be due to audio overdrive. The audio distortion could become an elusive problem to resolve.

(Continued on page 11)

(Internet Audio continued from page 10)

Testing the Transmit Audio

IRAR operators shouldn't presume that good receive audio means the transmitter audio will also be good quality. If you receive reports of poor transmit audio quality the problem can often be traced back to three causes:

RF getting into the phone line which is connected to the PC is migrating to the sound card inputs, etc.

Audio from the PC sound card line/speaker outputs are overdriving the radio's microphone input.

Impedance mismatch between the sound card output and radio microphone input.

Interfacing the Soundcard to the Radio

Even though the Kenwood TS-B2000 has a microphone input impedance of 600 ohms and the IRAR server sound card has a 600-ohm line output, they are not compatible for a direct connection. The radio microphone input was "NOT" designed to accept line level input voltages. You must introduce a padding circuit that will do several things:

1. Match the impedance between the inputs and outputs of the equipment
2. Adjust the levels from the output of the sound card to the radio MIC input
3. Isolate the inputs/outputs of the soundcard from the radio
4. Adjust the levels from the radio speaker output to the sound card's MIC input

W2IHY (Julius@W2IHY.com) provides a parts kit for those that want to build this simple circuit which will help ensure excellent audio matching and level adjustments between the radio and server soundcard.

Back to Bandwidth Concerns

One can expect to successfully operate an IRAR station with a dial-up speed of 24 kbps. At modem speeds of 28 kbps or greater one can easily operate the IRAR station and expect to easily participate in rag chew sessions, round tables, or phone nets. Contesting requires broadband connection speeds.

If you have taken time and have been meticulous in your installation, you can expect that most stations you contact will have no idea that they are talking to an Internet remote station. In fact many contacts ask about the station equipment because the audio sounds good. The only thing that gives the station away is the infrequent Packet- Delay-Chop (PDC) or occasional dropped packet. If one is going to use DSL or Cable modem these type problems become much less of a concern.

Thoughts for Today

Lastly, please seriously consider all the statements below, before you attempt to use the transceiver's speech processor!

Your IRAR station's transmit audio has been adequately processed (Net Mtg./two sound boards, etc.) long before that audio signal arrived at the HF radio's microphone input. If you engage the radio's speech compressor the following will occur:

1. The compressor/processor will narrow the audio bandwidth
2. The audio signal will become less intelligible due to increased distortion
3. Typically induced noise products will consume 20-30% of the RF power/output
4. Reduced linear final amplifier life, etc.

The basic speech compressor designs in today's ham radio transceivers do nothing for the audio that hasn't already been addressed by the complex codecs used in Net Mtg. and the PC sound cards.

The magic is in the Internet and Net Meeting, not the radio's speech processor/compressor.

Noticeable improvements, in audio quality, can be made by utilizing devices such as the W2IHY 8 band EQ/ noise gate (www.W2IHY.com) at one or both ends of the system.

From the Author

I hope this article offers the reader ideas, which are new and useful. I believe IRAR will, one day, play an important role in Amateur Radio. Providing flexibility and station location alternatives to amateur radio operators.

Today IRAR is a viable method in which to transport both transmit and receive audio, in full duplex, with excellent signal to noise, and with consistently reproducible Hi-Quality. I imagine that one day IRAR stations will be used by radio clubs, hams living in assisted living scenarios and others who live in neighborhoods where HF antennas are restricted, etc.

Special thanks to W7KW and W4MQ for assisting me in the development and testing of the WA3GIN Internet Remote Amateur Radio Station.

If anyone would like a demonstration of the IRAR station you can tune into the Night Hawks Mobile net on 7.255 MHz, evenings (www.thenighthawks.net).

HAVE FUN and remember a great thing has little room for improvement.

Identity Theft Growing Cause for Concern

by Dave Jordan, WA3GIN

Internet users better check their back pockets. Con artists these days can pick pockets from a few feet away or across the globe. These bandits aren't satisfied with stealing just a little cash. They're stealing entire identities.

Identity theft is the stealing of personal identifying information such as social security numbers, bank account numbers, names and addresses, and using that information for criminal activities.

After stealing personal information, criminals are opening bank accounts and subsequently writing bad checks, obtaining loans, making credit cards, opening lines of credit, obtaining fake driver's licenses, signing phone or wireless phone contracts, and filing for bankruptcy. Identity theft boils down to shopping sprees for criminals, and years of headaches, frustration and bad credit for the victims.

The thieves operate on a simple rule: people have a lot

(Continued on page 12)

(Identity Theft continued from page 11)

of personal information that can be easily obtained. Common transactions such as opening bank and credit card accounts, requesting balances and using automatic teller machines require the transmission of personal information.

While completely eradicating identity theft is impossible — some victims don't know that they're personal information has been stolen until months or years later — WA3GIN (Dave), Arlington's Chief Information Security Officer says vigilance can greatly reduce the chances of becoming a victim, and has several avoidance tips for those of us that use our PCs on the Internet.

Credit Reports

Once a year, folks should order copies of their credit reports to make sure that everything listed is legitimate. Credit reports show credit standing, credit accounts that are open, loans, payment schedules and other people and organizations that have requested to view the reports.

If you are a victim of identity theft, you should expect to see unfamiliar accounts or loans listed on the report.

There are three credit bureaus — Equifax, Experian and TransUnion — and legally, they can charge a maximum of $9 for each credit report requested.

Passwords

Place passwords on credit, bank and phone accounts. Passwords should not be easy-to-figure-out information such as birth dates, telephone numbers and the last four digits of social security numbers. Create passwords containing a combination of both letters and numbers.

When opening new accounts that require a "mother's maiden name," instead, ask if passwords can be used.

Spam

Do not reply to Spam e-mails or click on links contained in them. Often, Spam e-mails are used to collect personal information such as credit card numbers, names and addresses.

Dave warns us of a particular scam where Spam e-mails advertise products at incredibly low prices. When victims link to the web sites, they may even look like sites of popular companies. The deceit, however, is that the sites are fake, and they request personal information to ship products that the victims never get. Instead, the sites are used for mining data to be used to perpetrate identity theft. Symantec's Norton Anti-virus product is the most often used product advertisement for such scams. Symantec does not send unsolicited email advertisements. If you receive an email from someone claiming to be a Symantec sales rep, etc., it's a scam. Go to the official Symantec web page to place your orders.

Divulging Personal Information

Never give out personal information through e-mail, faxes, over the web, in person or over the phone, unless the recipient is 100 percent trusted. Identity thieves may pose as representatives of banks, Internet service providers and even government agencies looking to steal personal identifying information. Before sharing any personal information, confirm that the requestor is legitimate. Ask for a company name, street address, Web site and/or phone number. Dave says "even be suspicious if you receive an email requesting you to call a number to confirm personal information, particularly if the forth digit of the last four numbers of the phone number begins with a "9"." Many, if not most payphones are assigned with the forth digit as a "9". For example 703-228-9000. Scammers will actually work as in teams at the payphone. You make the call, a woman answers the phone. You give them the name of the person listed on the email. She places you on what sounds like "HOLD", then hands the phone set over to her accomplice who then attempts to social engineer from you the information necessary to steal your identity.

Protecting Computer Information

Some of you may want to consider investing in file encryption software to protect the integrity of information stored on their personal computers. A Goggle search contains numerous file encryption programs, some free and some that require payments.

Anyone planning to buy a new computer should transfer all of their needed data from their old hard drive, then make sure that the old drive is removed and destroyed. Dave also recommends that folks consider maintaining the old computer offline simply to maintain a secure "confidential information" off-line storage/backup option.

Public Computers

Dave cautions that when public computers are used, such as those in libraries or "cybercafes," folks should pay very close attention.

The potential exists with public computers that personal information could be collected. A recent case involved a criminal who installed software on 14 Kinko's public-access computers that collected usernames and passwords for various Web sites that were visited. The criminal was able to access and even open bank accounts online in the victims' names.

Personal Papers at Home

Personal information at home should be kept in a secure place not in plain site. Social security cards should not be carried, but also be kept safe.

Paper Shredders

Far from being paranoid, folks should guard personal information that will go into the trash. A paper shredder can ensure that documents do not fall into the wrong hands. It's very easy for a criminal to search through rubbish until he or she finds personal information such as copies of credit applications, old credit card statements, insurance forms, physician statements, checks and bank statements.

More Information

For more information, log onto the FTC's identity theft web site. Past Intranet articles may also provide helpful information.

Those of you who have been victims should call the FTC's identity theft hotline at (877) 438-4338.

Secretary / Treasurer's Report


Charlie Stampf, N2CJ

Secretary's Report – October 2003

As of mid-September, ECARS paid membership has increased to 804. That's a sizeable change from this time last year. Welcome to all new members.

We had unusually high expenses this year. We purchased a laptop computer to maintain ECARS master database and financial records. In addition we had to replenish our supply of lapel pins. Fortunately we located a manufacturer that provided us with a great price and a quantity discount. I'm sure you all will agree that these pins are of outstanding quality.

Email distribution of the "*Monitor*" went fairly well with a few exceptions. Many were 'bounced' or returned because of incorrect addresses. Quite a few returns were attributed to the recipient's ISP not allowing attachments of the "*Monitor*" size. If you didn't receive the previous issue via email, please check your data on our web site and advise us of any updates or corrections.

We began using the services of PAYPAL on our web site to enroll new members and to accept renewal applications. As of the 31st of August, 35 members took advantage of that service. This has proven to be an efficient and secure method for our members to submit their dues payments. We will be looking at the possibility of allowing 2 and 3 year options.

As we approach the end of the year, I would like to remind all members that the expiration of your current membership falls on the 31st of December. Please consider renewing early so that you will be certain to receive next year's first issue of the "*Monitor*", as it is distributed only to paid members.

I am writing this report from my home in Hudson, Florida. I'm not able to monitor the NET and as a result I miss a lot of the current topics and discussions. Many have sent me comments, suggestions, and criticisms via email and I thank you for your thoughts. Please continue, as I really enjoy your input. Hopefully when I return to New York, band conditions will return to 40 meters and I'll do some net control and chat with my friends on ECARS, the BEST net on the amateur bands today.

73

Charlie, N2CJ

Income/Expense
1/1/2003 Through 8/31/2003

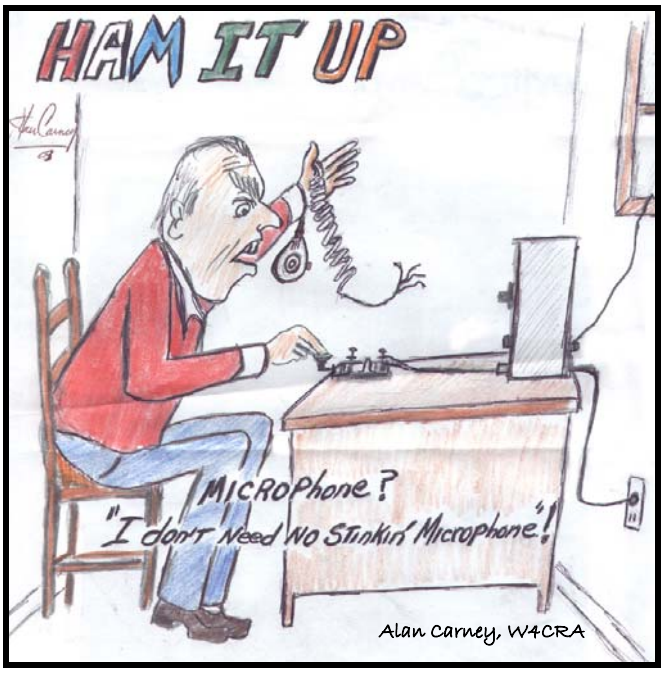
INCOME		
Uncategorized	62.10	62.10
DECAL	6.00	6.00
DINNER - ANNUAL MEETING	1,760.00	1,760.00
Dues - New	1,692.50	1,692.50
Dues - Renewal	1,311.42	1,311.42
Dues PayPal	166.90	166.90
ECARS Pin	68.50	68.50
Misc. Income	9.42	9.42
Monitor Refund	338.36	338.36
TOTAL INCOME	5,415.20	5,415.20
EXPENSES		
Annual Meeting	1,685.38	1,685.38
Corporation Fees	195.00	195.00
Misc. Expense	222.66	222.66
Office	194.90	194.90
Office Equip.	1,762.10	1,762.10
Office Supplies	206.37	206.37
Postage	199.00	199.00
Postage and Delivery	43.85	43.85
Printing	800.00	800.00
Reimbursement - Misc.	21.00	21.00
Supplies, Bus	745.00	745.00
Web Page	100.00	100.00

Net Worth Report
As of 10/1/2003

ASSETS	
Cash and Bank Accounts	
Checking	6,700.27
TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts	6,700.27
Investments	
CD	5,565.98
TOTAL Investments	5,565.98
TOTAL ASSETS	12,266.25
OVERALL TOTAL	12,266.25

ECARS Pins

ECARS pins are available from club secretary/ treasurer Charlie Stampf, N2CJ. These are beautiful one-inch diameter gold pins with the red, white, and blue ECARS insignia in a very durable glossy finish. The price for one pin is $3.50 plus $.60 postage. To order a pin, send your check made out to ECARS for $4.10 per pin to ECARS, PO Box 49, Verbank, NY 12585.



You Be the Judge

by Alan Carney, W4CRA, Knoxville, TN

Imagine a real serious emergency, and the only real way to make contact is by using CW. The phone lines are down and audio modulated signals are not being received. Your trusty key or bug goes into action and the communication is made.

Should we lose sight of a much needed and vital part of Amateur Radio?

I've heard it voiced several times on two-meters, "I hear they're gonna do away with the code entirely." "Roger that." "Ah, we don't need it, what good is it for, all those dits and dahs?"

It is sad to hear such nonsense. CW is a part of the amateur radio heritage. Let's not lose sight of continuous wave. There are a lot of us who don't use it, but what if we lose it.

ECARS Swap and Shop Net

Don't forget to tune to 7.255 MHz on Wednesday mornings from 9:00-11:00 for the ECARS Swap and Shop Net.

New ECARS URL

ECARS has a new URL. To access the ECARS web page, connect to:

www.ecars7255.com

Praise for ECARS and Our Net Controllers

Russ,
Let me take this time to thank you and all the controllers who were on the air while my wife and I were on our trip to Tennessee and back. It sure made the time go by a lot easier knowing we had great communications. We also have to thank the Propagation Gods for their help. It is a true commitment that was made by all, especially the tandem controllers. What a team, K1PIG and K3SEA, Marty and Jay were wonderful. Thanks again. As I get nearer to retirement in a few years, I am hoping that I can be of service as some of the guys are now. Their professionalism in handling the airwaves in a controlled net was beyond anyone's expectations. I don't think anyone missed a beat. You could pass this on to the all the controllers if you would like.
Thanks again,
73 from Catasauqua, Pa.
de K3MP Mark

The Top Ten States

As of May 2003, ECARS membership broken down by percentage for the top ten states were as follows: PA – 22%, NY – 21%, NJ-10%, MA-8%, VA-8%, MD-6%, CT-6% NH-5%, ME-4%, NC-2%. Thanks to Jim, W3KMN for putting these statistics together.

The Phonetic Alphabet

A	Alfa		N	November
B	Bravo		O	Oscar
C	Charlie		P	Papa
D	Delta		Q	Quebec
E	Echo		R	Romeo
F	Foxtrot		S	Sierra
G	Golf		T	Tango
H	Hotel		U	Uniform
I	India		V	Victor
J	Juliet		W	Whiskey
K	Kilo		X	X-ray
L	Lima		Y	Yankee
M	Mike		Z	Zulu

Don't Forget to Vote

Proposition for Electronic Voting

Currently, changes to the ECARS Constitution or By-Laws, require a paper vote which can "only" occur once a year in the last issue of the ECARS "Monitor". This process requires mailing the ballot, which is becoming increasingly expensive. In addition, each year ballots are lost in the mail, members whose mailing addresses have changed, as well as the "Monitor" being misplaced by members. There is a time limit for this voting process.

Today, more than half of the ECARS members receive their ECARS "Monitor" via the Internet and this method is "FREE", efficient, and the delivery can be easily verified. It enables every member to participate in the voting process and to take advantage of this available technology. Electronic voting will significantly reduce ECARS operating costs, and reduces the work load of those involved with the hands-on paper voting. Language in both Article IV, section G and Article V reflects the use of electronic voting as an option, but does not exclude paper ballots.

Cast your vote below to either accept or reject electronic voting.

The slate of officers below was submitted by the ECARS Nomination Committee.

Mark Litteral, W3WLW (chair)
Bill Jobes, W3WJ
Mary Rigoulot, K1PIG

Official ECARS Ballot
2004

Voting Instructions: (1) Mark your ballot, (2) Put the ballot in the envelope marked "Ballot" and seal it. (3) Put the ballot envelope into the return envelop and mail it. Don't forget to put your name and return address on the return envelope only. This process will insure anonymity and that only ECARS members vote.

President (one year term)
- ☐ W2LKS, John Calise
- ☐ WY3T, Joe Reppert

Vice President (one year term)
- ☐ AA2T, Jerry Rogich
- ☐ K3SEA, Jay Gross
- ☐ WA3GIN, Dave Jordan

Secretary/Treasurer (one year term)
- ☐ N2CJ, Charles Stampf

Director, (two year term)
Vote for **one**
- ☐ K2TRK, Art Storm
- ☐ KA3UMB, Al Prindle

___ **YES**, amend Article IV, section G and Article V to authorize Internet enabled voting for ECARS members who choose to vote electronically

___ **NO**, do not amend Article IV, section G and Article V.

Ham Radio Steps In When Technology Fails

National Association for Amateur Radio

HARTFORD, Conn., 1:51 p.m. EDT August 19, 2003

When technology failed on a massive scale last week, some old-fashioned broadcasting stepped into the breach as ham radio operators took to the airwaves to reach emergency workers.

For millions of people in the Northeast and Midwest, the Aug. 14 outage took access to e-mail and the Internet with it. Landline and cellular telephones were jammed by a crush of calls.

But the ham radio, which developed during the World War I era, connected firefighters and police departments, Red Cross workers and other emergency personnel during the most extensive blackout in the Northeast since 1977.

Ham operators are not dependent on a server or cell tower. They can operate with battery backups.

"When everything else fails, the ham radio is still there," said Allen Pitts, a ham operator in New Britain. "You can't knock out that system."

The radios are operated by a network of volunteers organized by the Newington-based American Radio Relay League.

Ham radio's importance won renewed recognition after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. ARRL won a federal Homeland Security grant of nearly $182,000 to train amateur radio operators in emergency operations to help during terrorist attacks.

"It's incredible the differences you're seeing, the large cadre of people who know what they're doing," Pitts said. "It's making a major difference."

Tom Carrubba, a coordinator for ARRL in New York City's five boroughs and two counties on Long Island, said volunteers went to work immediately after power went down Thursday afternoon.

"In five minutes, guys were on the air with the Red Cross and Office of Emergency Management," he said.

During other disasters, such as severe weather, ARRL volunteers and coordinators activate telephone trees, Carrubba said. On Thursday, they instead hit their assigned frequency or staffed an emergency operations center.

In the New York-Long Island region, with a population of nearly 10 million, about 100 ham radio operators handled the situation, Carrubba said. Some volunteers headed to a Red Cross headquarters or shelter, fire department, or hospital, he said. One hospital was temporarily powerless, and ARRL volunteers provided communications to ambulances until electricity was restored.

Carrubba estimated that operators handled 800 to 1,000 communications from Thursday afternoon until early Friday.

The ECARS Monitor is published by the East Coast Amateur Radio Service Inc., for the benefit of its members. Full permission to quote from the Monitor is granted, provided a credit line is used. Members' for sale advertisements are run free of charge. Credit card size commercial ads are accepted at a cost of $15.00 per issue or $45.00 per year. Send advertisement information to the editor. The Monitor and ECARS do not assume any responsibility for items offered for sale. Your Monitor mailing label will show your ECARS number and the year of membership expiration.

Items for the Monitor should be sent to the editor in Microsoft Word or text format, if possible. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month preceding the month of publication, subject to change by the Editor. Publication is in Feb., June, Oct., and Dec. The Editor reserves the right to reject, edit, or modify submitted material as necessary.

Membership renewals, address changes, call sign changes, and new applications should be sent to: **ECARS, PO Box 49, Verbank, NY 12585.** Membership dues are $7.50 per year. Make checks payable to ECARS, and put your call sign and member number on the check memo. Multi-year renewals are appreciated. Renewals of three years or more will receive a laminated card at no charge. All membership subscriptions begin upon receipt of dues and terminate on December 31st.

ECARS decals are available for $1.50 each, and pins for $3.50 each plus $.60 postage. Sent your payment to: ECARS, PO Box 49, Verbank, NY 12585.