



THE MONITOR



ECARS Web Page www.qsl.net/ecars

The official publication of the East Coast Amateur Radio Service, Inc.

ECARS President's Message

by Ike Meredith K1VBD, Moultonboro, NH

Greetings to all the ECARS members from New Hampshire. It's foggy and warm as I sit here at my computer, thinking optimistically about having an early spring. However, we'll probably get six feet of snow in April, but we need to look on the bright side anyway. This nice weather makes me think about the boating and antenna work that needs to be done. But I've decided to do neither.

Speaking of spring, Richard WB3FWL, our hard working Net Manger is getting everything set up for another great get together in Ocean City, MD. The word that I just received is that we can expect to see and hear Mr. Riley

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Greeting from ECARS' Secretary Treasurer

by Charlie Stampf N2CJ, La Grangeville, NY

My Elmer told me one time that the best way to make enemies while operating Amateur Radio was to talk politics and try to separate a man from his money. While I try not to get involved in political banter, I am trying to take your money. As your newly elected Secretary-Treasurer I am charged with keeping the ECARS coffers.

My term of office was to begin on January 15, 2000. However the passing of our dear friend, Ann Hoffman, KA2ACF, forced an earlier change. Ann and I started communicating shortly after learning the results of the ECARS election. She realized that I was unfamiliar with the subtleties of the job and began the major effort of gathering all the supplies, equipment, and information that is necessary for the ECARS Secretary-Treasurer. It became obvious to me after many e-mails that most of the details were second nature to her and difficult to document.

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ECARS Y2K Reunion

With Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH
"The Enforcer"

by Richard G Murray, WB3FWL, Salisbury, MD

That's right. Mr. Hollingsworth will be the featured speaker at the ECARS reunion in Ocean City, Maryland. Once again it's time to start thinking about all the good times in "Paradise" and begin planning for a weekend of fun.

Scheduled for the weekend of April 13th - 17th, 2000, this annual event will be available as either a two or a four-day weekend. The Paradise Inn is located on Ninth Street and Boardwalk, in Ocean City, MD. This picturesque inn overlooks the beach, with a great view of the Atlantic Ocean. For those of you who have never seen a sunrise on

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Then and Now

by Cy Fellerman K3FEC, Kensington, MD

As one who has been involved with ECARS since just about its inception, it is interesting to note the changes that have taken place over the years.

It appears that the opportunity for ECARS to perform public service has diminished with the passage of time. On more than one occasion in the past, ECARS had been heavily involved during periods of natural disasters. I can recall the important role it played during and after the heavy flooding of the Susquehanna River, caused by Hurricane Agnes, back in 1972. Electrical power was completely disabled along its path, leaving amateur radio as the sole means of communication throughout the affected area. ECARS was instrumental in providing contact between local disaster agencies and the outside world, to advise of the need for food, water, and other supplies, as well as handling health and welfare messages in both directions. This is but one example of its devotion to public service. Perhaps the only service performed these days is restricted in favor of the ham community. The increase in the popularity of two meters, as well as the introduction of

Then and Now continued on page 2

President's message from page one

Hollingsworth this year. This should be an interesting program, so get your reservations in soon. March 20th is the cut off date.

On a sadder note this year we lost Ann Hoffman our long time secretary-treasurer, and even longer ECARS member. Ann had been with us since the beginning of our organization and was totally devoted to the club. Ann was working on the ECARS accounts right up to the end, making sure all was in order before her passing. She was a good friend and a great person who loved this organization. She will be greatly missed.

As we move into spring, we can look forward to good band conditions and warm weather. With many of our members traveling back north to their summer residences, the net should be a busy place in the coming months. So lets all get on the air and help out the regular net controllers.

Last but not least, I want to thank Mike NIVE, our editor (*and Peggy KIVE the proofreading-editor*) who does a great job getting the Monitor together. Help him out by sending him articles. It's your newsletter, so let's hear from ECARS members. I also want to thank Jules WIGDE, our publisher who arranges for the printing of the Monitor, and does the long and tedious job of getting it in the mail. These people work behind the scenes and do a great job. They deserve a big hand from all of us.

That's it from New Hampshire for this quarter. All of you have fun and be happy and I'll see you on 7.255

73 Ike 

Then and Now from page one


cellular phones, can be held responsible for this shift of activity.

Back in "those good old days", it was not uncommon for mobile stations to report accidents and other unusual occurrences during their travels. One of the many incidents I can recall occurred when someone stole an automobile and drove away, completely unaware that he was being followed by a mobile ECARS member who had witnessed the event. The operator then contacted a local fixed station and had him report the incident to the local police. With the information that had been passed along, the authorities were able to catch up with the hijacked car, and make the arrest.

Then there's the case of intentional QRM. Old timers will probably remember W4HJ, who seemed to get his kicks by setting his kilowatt rig about a half KC above or below ECARS, and then proceed to call CQ for long periods of time. All attempts to reason with him were absolutely futile, and it was just about impossible to work through his strong signal. While there are instances of intentional interference more recently, they don't compare with the frequency and intensity of former days.

Scheduled one-hour tours for Control Stations are a recent innovation. In the past, operators had been relieving each other on a hit and miss basis, although, surprisingly, it was only infrequently that the Service had to be shut down. However, I believe this new arrangement is a great improvement, and those operators who have signed up for these one-hour shifts deserve the greatest appreciation from the entire membership.

Finally, I would like to mention that the earliest issues of The Monitor were run off on a mimeograph machine, consisting of some three or four pages. This is a far cry from the current publication which, as I'm sure everyone will agree, is in a class by itself. Kudos to Mike Stone, NIVE, and his efficient staff.

And in conclusion, while it cannot be said that ECARS cannot stand improvement, it is my belief that it has "come a long way, baby". 

From Your Editor

By Mike Stone N1VE, Gilford, NH

The Monitor via Email

As mentioned in Charlie Stampf's article in this issue, ECARS can save considerable expense by emailing the Monitor to members who are willing and able to open a PDF file. Club members receiving the Monitor as an email attachment will receive it within minutes after the master copy has been printed. Therefore you will have it two weeks or more earlier than by snail mail. You can print from a PDF file if you want to keep a hard copy of the Monitor. It will look exactly like the printed issues that you have been receiving in the mail. However until we have perfected the conversion process between the desktop publishing software and the PDF software, you may see slight coarseness in the type on a printed page. However, you can view the Monitor, page by page on your computer monitor and archive the PDF file on your hard drive, zip drive, floppy, or writable CD for future reference.

To receive the Monitor by email, you must have Adobe Acrobat reader installed on your computer. You can

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Roll Call

Don't forget to tune to 7.255 MHz at 11:00 AM on the second Saturday of the month for ECARS roll call. All members are encouraged to check in and show your support for ECARS.

Where Were You When the Ball Dropped?

Art W1EQK, ECARS #1439 was taping WWV on 10 MHz. At the moment when WWV said, "At the tone it will be five hours Universal Time"; Art called on 3.834 MHz CQ, CQ, CQ W1EQK. Art's TS 440S nearly made his boom box jump off the bench as he taped these transmissions.

Was Art the first in 2000?

Editor from page 2

download this program free of charge from the web. Also, your email address / ISP account must be able to allow you to receive attachments. The standard Juno.com will not. The files are relatively large. An eight-page issue is about 1.2 megabytes, so it will take some time for you to download. However, we can send you a zipped version as an exe (executable) file that will take less than 400 kilobytes for eight pages.


For those of you who don't have the Adobe Acrobat Reader for reading PDF files, it can be downloaded free-of-charge at

<<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html>>. To download a free program to unzip compressed files, connect to <www.winzip.com>.

Please contact Charlie Stampf N2CJ at n2cj@arrl.net if you would like to receive the Monitor by email.

Articles Needed

You may have noticed that this issue of the Monitor is much smaller than in the past. The reason is because we did not receive many articles since the last issue of the Monitor. Again, we ask ECARS members to please help us to produce an interesting and informative newsletter by contributing articles. Let's hear about new equipment that you've added to your shack, interesting DX or local radio contacts, hints that we can use when setting up operating stations at home or in vehicles, your thoughts on the recent changes in the amateur radio licensing, and how much you enjoyed the ECARS Y2K Reunion. I'm sure that many of you have much that you can add to the content of the next Monitor. Take a few minutes and write an article or just jot down some thoughts and send them to Mike Stone N1VE at 32 Carriage Rd., Gilford NH 03246 or email to n1ve@amsat.org. ECARS members will really appreciate your efforts and you will see your writing in print.

Our thanks to those of you who helped out with this issue. 

Reunion from page one

the ocean, you don't know what you have missed.

Riley Hollingsworth will be our guest speaker after the banquet on Saturday night. We all know what a fine job that Riley has been doing for amateur radio, and now you'll have an opportunity to meet him.

Reservations


Individuals are responsible for making reservations with the Paradise Inn. The toll-free number is 1-888-678-4111. Reservations must be confirmed by no later than March 20, 2000. Be sure to identify yourself as a member of the East Coast Amateur Radio Service, to receive the negotiated rate of \$72.00 (plus tax) per night for double occupancy. We have a block of rooms assigned for us, but after the 20th of March the Paradise Inn will release any remaining rooms to the general public.

The Buffet

Everyone who attended the buffet last year will attest to the great food and the great time. The all-you-can-eat buffet will be held on Saturday evening at 6:00. The cost for the buffet is \$20.00 including tax and gratuity, the same as last year. Please note that because the restaurant is not under the same management as the Paradise Inn; do not send your payment for the Paradise Inn. Send your check to Richard G. Murray, 1811 Mt. Hermon, Rd., and Salisbury, MD 21804-9400

More Information

I can assure you that you will be treated to a weekend of fun, as you were last year. So let's get started with plans for the even now. To learn more about the ECARS Y2K Reunion, contact me (WB3FWL) on ECARS Net (7.255 MHz), or by email at rgmurray@ezy.net.

73. I'll be looking forward to seeing you in "Paradise" at the ECARS Y2K Reunion. 

Correction

The article entitled "Radio Storyteller Dies" in the January issue of the Monitor was sent to us by Mark Grossman K2CON, from Jamaica, NY.

Missing Monitors

If any ECARS members do not get the Monitor, please contact ECARS Secretary Charlie Stampf N2CJ for a copy. Also, new ECARS members must obtain their copies from the Charlie.

Tribute to Ann Hoffman

by Cy Fellerman, K3FEC, Kensington, MD

As the predecessor to Ann Hoffman (KA2ACF) as Secretary / Treasurer of ECARS, I feel that it is incumbent upon me to express my feelings upon learning of her death. The transfer of funds, records, and memorabilia occurred back in 1979, and this activity formed the initial basis for an increasing respect for Ann's ability and devotion to ECARS. For eleven consecutive years she handled the secretarial and monetary affairs, in a completely professional manner and then topped it off with another stint of four additional years, starting in 1996. Her ability to keep the financial books in good standing, and, at the same time attend to the business of assuring prompt response to new

Tribute to Ann Hoffman continued on page 4

Greetings from page one

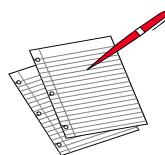
Unfortunately we never got a chance to fully review all of them. However, it is absolutely clear that Ann performed in an exemplarity manor. She kept the group's records, finances, and historical information accurately and up-to-date. No one will ever know how many times she ran to the bank and post office with ECARS' business. I have in my possession countless letters and memos from members recognizing her accuracy and speedy service. Her "act" will be difficult to follow. Although I only knew Ann for a short time, I will miss her. She gave me the encouragement and support to take on the job as ECARS Secretary-Treasurer and I'm proud to say I knew her. THANK YOU ANN!

On January 1, 2000 there were 417 active members of ECARS. The term ACTIVE in my database terminology means currently paid-up members. I began using Microsoft Access as a database manager and imported all member information from the former software. The older database tools are DOS based and it seemed to make sense to me to use current state-of-the-art software. As a result, several changes were made to the structure of the database. The most prominent is the way in which member numbers are stored. After discussing this with the Executive Committee, the following change affecting only a few members should be noted: All Canadian member numbers will no longer contain the letters "VE". Numbers will be assigned the same as all others in the ten US call area zones. Canadian stations in the VE3 call area will be assigned a number from the 3000 series; VE2 will be assigned from the 2000 series, etc. This change will allow more powerful manipulation of the database.

In addition to the new database features, I have begun maintaining ECARS finances in Quicken 2000 software. I recreated the entire year of 1999 from the checkbook. A summary of that year's activity and balance sheet is below. We will be able track new and renewal memberships on a monthly basis. We will be able to show where our expenses are, and where we might possibly save some money. I will be able to report to you on a routine basis and will do so in each issue of the Monitor.

One possible way for us to keep costs down and avoid a dues increase is to take advantage of modern technology. I propose to provide each member the option of receiving the Monitor via email. Based on a member count of 400, the Monitor cost us about \$4.21 per member per year. That leaves \$.79 of each members dues for other expenses of the organization. Postage to mail the membership card takes another \$.31. Not much is left for other things. Email delivery of the Monitor will save us dollars for other uses. If you would like to participate in this effort, please send your acknowledgement to me via email to: n2cj@arrl.net. If there is enough interest, we will begin in the near future.

I wish to thank you for your support and encouragement as I embark upon the job as your Secretary-Treasurer. I thoroughly enjoy talking with you as a Net Control Station and look forward to many more rewarding experiences with the East Coast Amateur Radio Service.

**Secretary-Treasurer's Report**by **Charlie Stampf N2CJ****ECARS Cash Flow Report**
1/1/99 Through 12/31/99**INFLOWS**

Uncategorized Inflows 2,917.40

TOTAL INFLOWS 2,917.40**OUTFLOWS**

Bank Fees 14.00

Corporation Fees 20.00

Dues Refund 18.45

Office Supplies 206.48

Post Office Box Rental 14.00

Stamps, Mailing 288.40

Monitor 1,687.03

Web Page 25.00

TOTAL OUTFLOWS 2,273.36**OVERALL TOTAL 644.04****Tribute to Ann Hoffman from page 3**

membership applications, which, in turn, leads to the need for good record-keeping, mark her as perfectly suited for the position she held for so long.

I had the pleasure of personally meeting with Ann on a few occasions, and I retain fond memories of her friendliness and capability. Unfortunately, the nature of the position she held does not afford proper recognition for the tremendous amount of work involved, but as one who has been "through the mill", I can assure anyone who might have any doubts that her tenure, in the office she held for so long, contributed greatly to the success that ECARS has enjoyed over the years.

I feel a strong sense of pride to have known Ann, and it is with a high degree of certainty that she will be missed as a strong ECARS supporter.



Portawattz

by Mike Stone N1VE, Gilford, NH

Just as its name implies, this luggable 12-volt storage system will keep you radio-active when out of reach of commercial power. At 18 pounds, it's something that might be a bit heavy to pack into the woods, but under the right circumstances this battery-powered system can be just what you need.

I spotted the Portawattz in BJs wholesale warehouse and tried to read the manual for information that I thought might be interesting for an article in the Communicator. The entire manual was written in French, so the following information is what I could extract from the outside of the bilingual box.

The Portawattz is a rechargeable AC/DC power source. Its power is derived from an 18 ampere hour non-spillable lead-acid battery. What makes this power pack different than the others is that it includes a 300-watt inverter, which claims to produce 120 volts AC with a modified sine wave. The inverter has a power switch and two 15 ampere 120 outlets. In addition, the Portawattz has a 12-ampere rated 12-volt cigarette type outlet. Eight gauge copper jumper cables and fairly heavy-duty clamps are also provided for jump starting vehicles. I have my doubts about the ability of a relatively small 18-ampere hour battery to start a cold, large displacement automobile engine with a dead battery.

This unit comes with a 500 ma AC charger which can be plugged in indefinitely to keep it powered up and ready to go. A status panel with four LEDs indicates the state of charge and a single LED indicates the recharging status.

This relatively compact (6" x 9.4" x 12.5") power pack comes with a sturdy built-in handle and is available for \$99.

Their web address, <http://www.store4power.com/core.asp> will provide you with a complete list of appliances and devices that are claimed to operate on the Portawattz, including a 27-inch television. Interestingly the price for the Portawattz from their web site is \$149.00.

For oramation write to:

Statpower
7725 Lougheed Highway
Burnaby, BC
Canada V5A4V8
Phone: 604-420-1585
Fax: 604-420-1591

Murphy's Computer Law

- 1 As soon as you delete a worthless file, you'll need it.
- 2 Installing a new program will always mess up at least one old one.
- 3 The computer will work perfectly at the repair shop.
- 4 The first place to look for a lost file is the last place you would expect to find it.
- 5 Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.
- 6 Important letters that contain no errors will develop errors on the way to the printer.
- 7 Regardless of the program, you won't have enough hard

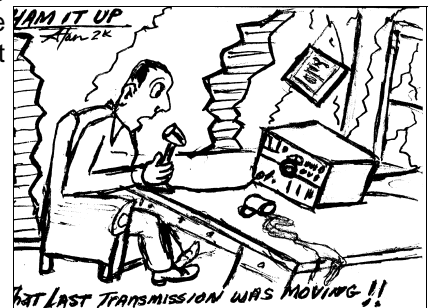
disk space to install it.

- 8 The easier it is to get into a program, the harder it will be to get out.
- 9 Every machine will eventually fall apart.
- 10 In a computer manual, any simple idea will be worded in the most complicated way.
- 11 If you hit two keys on the keyboard simultaneously, the one that you don't want will appear on the screen.
- 12 The probability of anything going wrong is in inverse proportion to its desirability.
- 13 No matter how long you shop for an item, after you've bought it, it will be on sale cheaper the next day.
- 14 The computer only crashes when printing a document you haven't saved.
- 15 If you make a copy of your system configuration nine out of ten times, the tenth time is the only time you'll need it.
- 16 The more pounds the package weighs, the harder it will be to find the installation instructions.
- 17 The need for space on a disk will always exceed the available space by ten percent.
- 18 The likelihood of a hard disk crash is in direct proportion to the value of the material that hasn't been backed up.
- 19 There are only two kinds of computer users: Those whose hard disks have crashed, and those whose hard disks haven't crashed - yet.
- 20 Before you do something, you have to do something else first.
- 21 Anything can be made to work if you fiddle with it. If you fiddle with something long enough, you'll break it.
- 22 If at first you don't succeed, try again. Then quit. No use being a fool about it.
- 23 You can't win them all, but you sure can lose them all.
- 24 Don't let any mechanical device know that you're in a hurry.
- 25 If it's worth doing, it's worth hiring someone who knows how to do it.
- 26 The one piece of data you're absolutely sure is correct, isn't.
- 27 Never put off till tomorrow what you can avoid altogether.

Wanted

Original VFO and crystals for the **Allied Knight F-60 transmitter**. Contact Alan Carney W4CRA at 7127 Washington Pike, Corryton, TN 37721

Alan can be found on the 7.240 net at 10:00 AM.



Alan Carney W4CRA

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Items for the Monitor should be typed, if possible. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month preceding 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 \$5.00 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 2/\$1.00, and pins for \$2.00 each plus \$.60 postage, from the secretary, at ECARS PO Box 49, Verbank, NY 12585.

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The ECARS Monitor

First Class Mail

