

Illinois Repeater Association

Newsletter

Volume 21

March 2005

Fred Seibold W9FWS, Editor

Annual Meeting For 2005 Saturday, April 23 In Bloomington

The annual meeting of the Illinois Repeater Association will be held on Saturday, April 23, 2005 at the Best Western Eastland Suites Lodge and Conference Center, 1801 Eastland Drive, Bloomington, IL.

The Best Western is located at Eastland Drive and Prospect just off Veterans Parkway (Business 55). Exit Veterans Parkway at Route #9, which is also Empire Street. Proceed east approximately one block to Prospect then south to Eastland.

IRA Delegate check-ins and any dues payments will start at 9:00 AM, with the meeting starting at 10:00 AM sharp. When dues are paid in advance the check-in process is quicker and eliminates much of the delay. As in the past we anticipate the meeting to conclude around 1:00 to 2:00 PM.

An IRA "Membership Information" form on file listing the delegates (max of two) and signed by the president and/or trustee and showing paid up dues for 2005 are all that are needed to vote at the meeting.

Every vote is important so that your association can effectively represent you in the multi-faceted problems facing the repeater owners of the country and Illinois in particular. Therefore, if you cannot attend this meeting and have no delegate in mind, we suggest that you appoint one of the current officers or directors to be your delegate. If you later decide to attend the meeting the presence of the trustee and/or president suspends any previous delegate appointment and/or written proxy.

IRA To Choose New Leaders This Year

As was announced at the 2004 Annual Meeting, the President, Vice-President, and Secretary Treasurer will be chosen at the 2005 Annual Meeting. President Robert Hajek, W9QBH, and Secretary-Treasurer Robert Koch, KA9FCF, will not stand for re-election this year. Additionally, the Vice-President and one Director will be elected.

Your attendance at this year's annual meeting is more important than ever.

Are Your \$12 Dues Paid?? Are You An IRA Member?

If you have not paid your dues now is the time. Check your address label on this newsletter. To the right of your call sign the indicator -N means you are a coordination holder but NOT a member of IRA. If your indicator is -04 or -03 your dues are not paid and you cannot vote at the annual meeting or hold office in the Association. If the indicator is -05 your dues are current, thus you can vote and hold office. The indicator is the last two digits of the year for which your dues are paid, according to the records of your Association. If you have any questions, please contact IRA Secretary Treasurer Robert Koch, KA9FCF, at the address in this newsletter.

What Issues Face Your Association Now?

If you have questions or concerns you would like to have placed on the agenda for either the Board meeting or the Annual Meeting of the Illinois Repeater Association, please contact your President or Secretary-Treasurer at the addresses in this newsletter. The Board meeting is the evening before the Annual Meeting,

"Paper Coordinations" and "Vanity Repeaters" Are A Problem For IRA

With the ever-increasing demand for "pairs" (the two frequencies needed for a repeater to receive and transmit) the problem of "paper coordinations" and "vanity" or "garage" repeaters have become more severe. A paper coordination can be caused by several circumstances. Maybe the repeater was never built. Perhaps it is out of service pending repairs that just never get done.

Licensees seeking new coordinations and searching for pairs will discover an inactive repeater. A related problem is repeater changes of power and antenna height and coordinates that are not reported to your Association, so they are not in the database from which new coordinations are made.

When the Annual Update form is not received year after year, the question naturally arises: is this a paper coordination that should be revoked to make the pair available for a real user?

If there is data missing from your record in your Association's database, or if you fail to return your update form for two consecutive years, your coordination may be in peril.

**Our Long-time Association
Secretary-Treasurer Bob Koch,
KA9FCF, Tells You About His
Job Because He Wants You To
Take It**

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Illinois Repeater Assn. Needs New Secretary / Treasurer Right Now

By Bob Koch, KA9FCF

I have served the IRA for about eight years as the Secretary/Treasurer. It's a rewarding experience. Now it's time to pass the responsibility on to someone else. I have two reasons for this: first, I am now 74 years old and have other things that I want to do with my remaining time. Second the majority of the work associated with job comes as preparation for the annual meeting. For the past several years we have wintered, at least Feb. March and part of April, in warmer climates. We have had to cut that short in order to prepare for and attend the annual meeting. Cutting short this sojourn not something I want to do anymore.

Most of the Secretary-Treasurer's work involves record keeping. Primarily recording members and dues as well as paying any proper bills. Many of those with coordinated repeaters, for some reason, do not see fit to assist with the expense or work of maintaining the coordination process. Therefore the Secretary/Treasurer must work closely with the coordinator because our functions while related are separate and distinct. The Secretary/Treasurer does not have to be a technical expert. The coordinator, Technical Committee and Directors cover that very well.

The mailing list for all coordination holders is also maintained by the Secretary/Treasurer working closely with the coordinator and obviously with the Newsletter Editor. Recent changes in the officers and appointed positions have been, I believe, very positive. Hopefully, the changes that will take place this year will be as good for the organization. I have been told that there are several who are considering running for either the President or Secretary positions. My advice "Go for it, you will not be sorry" For more information on the positions, please go to the IRA website and look in the bylaws section.

-KA9FCF

Tone Squelch Needed To Keep Coordinations

Continuous Tone Coded Squelch System (CTCSS) tones or digital squelch coding, that is. Facing the increased congestion and resultant scarcity of frequency pairs, the I R A added this condition to repeater coordination requirements in Illinois at its 2003 Annual Meeting: **"All future (after May 1, 2003) repeater coordinations shall include coded squelch (encode/decode) and existing coordinations shall meet the same operating requirements by December 31, 2005."** Existing repeaters not using tones may keep operating but will not receive coordination protection from toned repeaters after December 31, 2005. Small tone cards for retrofitting have been described in ham magazine projects; manufactured versions are available from most ham distributors; one such unit measuring 0.6" x 1.08" x 0.21" (about the size of a crystal) is priced at \$28.99 in a recent catalog, permitting toning older rigs at nominal cost. Board member Tim Childers KB9FBI pointed out in a recent discussion of the issue, that **drawing a 120-mile radius around Chicago and St. Louis doesn't leave much of Illinois remaining for locating unconditional coordinations.** An additional benefit of CTCSS will be increased reliability of the repeater due to protection from ducted or scattered interference from emissions lacking the proper (for that repeater) CTCSS tone. Board members are working toward developing tone coordination by regions of the state so a common tone can be used in a given area, simplifying repeater use by transient hams. Many newer H/Ts and mobiles can identify repeater encode tone; a directory is not needed to find the code in use. -W9FWS

Attend IRA Annual Meeting Saturday, April 23, 2005 Take Part In Choosing Our New Leadership Team. It's Your Association, After All.

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BPL Reconsideration Petitions Filed At FCC, ARRL Says Court Appeal Probable

More than a dozen petitions for reconsideration have been filed in the wake of the FCC's October 14, 2004, Report and Order (R&O) adopting new Part 15 rules governing broadband over power line (BPL) deployment. They include the ARRL's Petition for Reconsideration, filed February 7, 2005. The FCC said this week that interested parties may file opposition comments ("oppositions") to the petitions within 15 days of the date of public notice of the petitions in the Federal Register, which has not yet occurred. Replies to oppositions must be filed within 10 days after the time for filing oppositions has expired. ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, has expressed little confidence that the FCC will make any substantive rule changes in response to any arguments put forth in the petitions for reconsideration. In a March 1 interview with Marc Strassman of Broadband over Power Line World (BPLW), **Sumner predicted that the BPL proceeding ultimately will wind up in court.**

"Realistically, do we expect dramatic changes in the Commission's rules as a result of the reconsideration petitions?" Sumner asked in concluding the interview. "Probably not. So we're probably looking to the Court of Appeals before all the dust settles."

In the interview with Strassman, Sumner discussed the League's Petition for Reconsideration, which calls on the FCC to "reconsider, rescind and restudy" its unanimous adoption of the new Part 15 BPL rules last October. Strassman also interviewed Associate Counsel Brett Kilbourne of the United Power Line Council (UPLC), an organization promoting BPL development that also filed a reconsideration petition. Among other things, Kilbourne conceded to BPLW that Amateur Radio complaints

and concerns raised about RFI from BPL could hinder BPL rollouts. **"Yeah, my concern is that you're going to have--whenever there's a deployment--people complaining automatically,"** Kilbourne said. "To the extent that does happen, that's going to discourage folks from getting into this space, I think." In its reconsideration petition, the UPLC calls on the FCC to not require 30-day advance notice of BPL operations. It also wants the FCC to extend the 18-month transition period that applies to marketing or installation of equipment.

The various petitions for reconsideration came from BPL industry groups and proponents as well as from the ARRL and other organizations and individuals concerned about BPL's interference potential. All petitions for reconsideration filed in the two BPL-related proceedings--ET Docket 03-104 and ET Docket 04-37--are available for viewing via the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS). Once the filing window opens, those wishing to file oppositions to specific petitions may use the ECFS to do so, but comments supporting one petition or another are not welcome, ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, points out. "Individual radio amateurs are welcome to file oppositions on any petition with which they have specific issues," he said, adding that commenters should support their points with facts and statements. **"All statements should be specific to one or more arguments in a reconsideration petition with which the person filing an opposition disagrees," Imlay explained. "They should not simply say, 'I oppose this petition.'"**

Imlay says the ARRL is reviewing all petitions for reconsideration filed in the BPL proceedings to see if any oppositions from the League will be required.

What is Broadband over Power Line?

BPL is the delivery of broadband Internet signals using electrical wiring

to conduct high-speed digital signals to homes and businesses. BPL systems are designed to deliver Internet services using medium voltage power lines as the distribution medium and generally use the frequency range between 1.7 and 80 megahertz (MHz).

The Concern: Broadband + Power Lines = Broadband Interference

Because power lines are not designed to prevent radiation of RF energy, BPL represents a significant potential interference source for all radio services using this frequency range, including the Amateur Radio Service. Overhead electrical power lines and residential wiring act as antennas that unintentionally radiate the broadband signals as radio signals throughout entire neighborhoods and along roadsides. **Interference has been observed nearly one mile from the nearest BPL source.**

What is the status of BPL?

From a regulatory standpoint, BPL is an unlicensed, unintentional emitter of RF energy and is subject to FCC Part 15 rules. FCC rules require that BPL systems may only operate subject to the express condition that harmful interference is not caused to licensed radio services. BPL is not entitled to protection from interference. So far, BPL has been deployed in numerous temporary test sites but in few commercial installations. Despite the very limited deployment, considerable interference has been documented. In October 2004 the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted new rules for BPL systems.

-ARRL

The ARRL Petition For Reconsideration Attacks the FCC's Unseemly Rush To Embrace BPL. Read It At:

http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/et04-37/recon_petition/

...and then write your Senators and Congressman.

-W9FWS

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Are Your Dues Paid? Check The Mailing Label For -05

**Illinois Repeater Association
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**Annual Meeting Notice
April 23, 2005**

**New President and
Secretary-Treasurer
To Be Elected, Details Inside**

First Class Mail



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