

Central Division News & Views

Issue #16 - October, 2006

Catch-Up Time

It's been several months since I have written a newsletter and I apologize for being so late in getting one published. However, I have at least two good excuses for being so late. First, you may remember I mentioned the 2006 Central Division director election cycle in my last newsletter. I subsequently decided that I would not publish a newsletter from the start of the nominating period in July until after the ballots were counted this coming November. If there were to be a contested election, I did not want to be accused of using this newsletter to support my candidacy.

For whatever reasons (I like to think you are all happy with how I am serving as your ARRL director.), nobody chose to run against me. And this again resulted in my being declared elected for my third 3 year term starting 1 Jan, 2007. On behalf of myself and Vice Director Howard Huntington, I thank all of you for your outstanding show of support.

Winning by default eliminated my first excuse. However, my second one is real doozey. Last April, my wife and I decided to remodel both full bathrooms; one at a time. We ordered all of the items needed for both jobs in May. With arrival of the custom cabinets, tear-down of the first bathroom started on 31 July with an estimated completion date for both bathrooms of 18 August. The final contracted work was completed on 11 October! There are several reasons for this timing train wreck, but I can report both bathrooms have been remodeled *exactly* to our specifications. However, the timely resumption of this newsletter was a casualty, along with a planned late August trip, and some contracted antenna work now scheduled for 22 October.

FCC Moves On Long-Standing RMs

On Monday, 9 October, the FCC finally issued Report and Order on **WT Docket 04-140** covering a series of Amateur Radio Service rule-making petitions (RMs) going back as far as five years. Apparently, ARRL President Joel Harrison's strong letter sent to all five Commissioners the previous week resulted in this R&O. I say this because there are numerous editorial mistakes in this document; probable the resulting rush to publish the R&O. There will be lengthy erratum (error correction) report by the FCC before the R&O is published in the *Federal Register*. This FCC order will be effective 30 days after its publication in the register.

ARRL leadership is pleased the FCC is finally moving these long-standing RMs. Hopefully, we will soon see FCC action on ARRL petitions; **RM-10867** (license restructuring) and **RM-11306** (regulation by bandwidth). For those of you who believe the Amateur Radio Service is being punished by the FCC, I can assure you this is not true. Virtually all the licensed radio services have been neglected the past several years. Until 9 October, it appeared the Commission has been afraid to act on anything except for BPL and minor issues.

ARRL Files Federal Appeal Against FCC

The ARRL, after many months of consideration filed a motion in the 9th District Federal Appellate Court asking the court to hear an appeal against the FCC's R&O on **ET Docket 04-37** establishing broad band digital data transmissions over power lines (BPL). If the motion is granted, the appeal will probably be a long and expensive preparation process culminating in testimony before a panel of five federal judges. I understand the best outcome would be a court order telling the FCC to reconsider certain portions of its BPL R&O. A reconsideration (remand) order can specify exactly those portions to be reviewed and can reference the additional evidence to be taken into consideration.

To repeat what has been said many times, the ARRL is not against BPL. It is against the RF interference generated by BPL transmissions. Even if BPL should eventually fail in the marketplace, the FCC BPL R&O, will still be in effect. Unless real-world physics are used to regulate BPL, it will be an interference problem when another user, probably the power companies, use BPL for data collection (meter reading) and power distribution network control.

ARRL would be failing its primary mission - to protect and enhance Amateur Radio frequencies - if it decided to not appeal the FCC's BPL Report and Order. Upon the recommendation of our legal council, ARRL has retained Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP of Washington, DC, one of the best federal appellate law firms specializing in communications law. One of this firm's partners is widely recognized for his technical presentations before court. Therefore, this defense of our frequencies, will not be cheap and the desired outcome is not guaranteed.

You will be asked to help pay this large legal expense. Please watch for announcements in *QST*, on the ARRL web site, and in the weekly emailed *ARRL Letter*... and then donate as much as you can afford. This is an investment in your future ability to get on the air.

Hamfests & Meetings

As of the publication of this newsletter issue, here is my ARRL travel schedule for the remainder of 2006 and January 2007. It is subject to change if required ARRL meeting dates are changed or there are last minute transportation problems.

Nov 18, 2006	Fort Wayne Hamfest	Fort Wayne, IN
Jan 6, 2007	West Allis RAC Hamfest	Waukesha, WI
Jan 18-22, 2007	ARRL Board Meeting	TBA
Jan 28, 2007	WCRA (Wheaton) Hamfest	St. Charles, IL

I hope to see many of you at these hamfests. In addition to shopping for new and used equipment, they are a great way to renew and develop friendships and to meet some of the voices you have heard on your radios.

73 - George R. (Dick) Isely, W9GIG
Central Division Director