

PRIORITY TRAFFIC

The Listening Post
Monthly Newsletter of
October, 2003



Visit the QCEN Website at <http://www.qcen.net>

Comments from the Communications Manager

Steve Lewis, N8TFD

No-code HF is coming.

Regardless of my opinion or your opinion, we have to be smart enough to be objective and observe that it's coming.

And a good time will be had by all no-code Technicians!!

Or maybe not.

Back in August, we participated in the Ohio QSO Party from W8VND. This was the 5th straight from W8VND, and our 11th "organized" contest effort from there in the last 6 years. (This is not to disparage the others, but we try hardest to activate W8VND for Field Day and the OQP, and hopefully other events will follow.)

As always, we invited all QCEN members (and anyone else, for that matter) to come to W8VND and participate...as moral support, or better yet, as radio operators. Some did. Some did not. I remember hearing a couple of club members say something like this: "I'm no-code. I'll start doing that stuff when I'm allowed to, there's no reason to bother with it now."

I didn't think much about that at the time. But I did ponder those comments later. And here's some of what I was thinking about:

- What are the 7 reliable/dependable propagation beacons?
- 75 meters is HF! Can't I talk around the world at noon on it, I mean, it's HF!
- 20 meters is open-round-the-clock, round-the-world, but not to my own state?!
- I'm at 7151.5 LSB. The band plan says 7150-7300...isn't that ok?
- I'm throwing my call sign in to the "pile-up" (do I know what that sounds like on the other end, anyway?) and I'm running more power and antenna than anyone. Why won't they acknowledge me?
- You mean there's people running voice in the digital sub-bands on 40, legally?
- Does that mean I can't talk to them?
- Why is there no one on 160 in June?

Ok. For those of you who have been around-the-block, that's probably not

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- *October 17 — QCEN Meeting; Red Cross Chapter House. Program — Shack Grounding*
- *November 13 — Executive Committee Meeting*
- *November 21 — QCEN Meeting; Red Cross Chapter House. Program — Digital, Public Safety Communications in Hamilton County*
- *December 12 — QCEN Meeting and Annual Holiday Party; Red Cross Chapter House.*
- *January 16, 2004 — QCEN Annual Meeting and Elections; Red Cross Chapter House*

QCEN is
an ARRL
Affiliated
Club



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Newsletter Editor

KC Angel,
W8ZFR

From September, 2003

**QCEN Meeting Minutes
September 19, 2003**

At 7:45 PM, **Dave KC8FKW** was forced by a motion of KC, W8ZFR and seconded by Bob, W8MRG, to become Secretary Pro-temp while **Dean KB8GFN** was away on business.

President, KC W8ZFR neglected to retrieve the appropriate name plates, and said "you could have got them". The meeting proceeded without them.

The regular monthly meeting of the Queen City Emergency Net was called to order by **President, KC Angel W8ZFR** at 8:00 PM. **KC** led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance, which was followed by a round of introductions.

KC proceeds to welcome everyone to the September meeting and thanked everyone who came out to the meeting. This greeting was followed by a list of slackers (aka People who could not attend the meeting from the executive committee). After a brief moment, **KC** admits that he had a senior moment and lost all train of thought. After reviewing notes, he proceeded with the rest of the meeting.

President, KC gave the president's report, which included a report from the Myrtle Beach crew who survived the hurricane making landfall.

Vice-President, Stu KC8HQT had nothing to report.

A motion was made by Mark, KC8SGO to accept the minutes as published in the LP. A vote was taken, and the motion passed.

Treasurer, Jim N8ZZW gave the treasurer's report and reported approximately \$4,000 in combined QCEN accounts.

Communications, Steve N8TFD was unable to attend but relayed his report to **W8ZFR** who proceeded to solicit for volunteers for the ADA Walk on October 4th. Additional Red Cross requests for volunteers for up incoming disaster drills was presented and informed that for additional info to contact **Dean, KB8GFN**.

KC, during the communications report proceeded to inform everyone that the ADA walk was actually on October 10th, until corrected by an overwhelming majority of attendees.

Activities, Dave KB0SLY that tonight's program was a tour of W8VVL presented by W8ZFR and Bob, W8MRG. Dave also informed the group that next month's program will be station grounding by **Chuck, K8CR**.

Buildings, N8PEE told the group that everything was OK.

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**Tuesday Ten Net
Net Control Schedule**

10/14/03 - WD8JAW
10/21/03 - Available
10/28/03 - Available
11/04/03 - Available
11/11/03 - Available

- Have you ever been net control? When was the last time? Don't you think it makes sense to know how or practice? Will you be ready when you are needed?
- The Tuesday 10 Net is a great place to get your feet wet. Run the net, submit a check-in list and you could win a \$25 gift certificate.
- Contact N8TFD to run one!

On The Lighter Side...

INITIAL TESTS OF BROADBAND OVER POWER LINES SHOW MAJOR FLAW - True Cause of Major Northeast Blackout Revealed.

NEW YORK (AP) - Broadband over Power Line proponents met with a major setback as their pilot testing of BPL was identified as the prime cause of the major power blackout that occurred in most of the Northeast and Canada that left over 50 million in the dark.

BPL Consortium spokesperson I.C. Cash indicated that BPL tests were progressing well with the initial all '1's test that started on Monday. "We were very pleased with our success at BPL's ability to send the all '1's pattern. But when we introduced the all '0's test on Thursday afternoon, we encountered a major flaw in our design." This flaw was responsible for the blackout that affected the region.

He went on to say, "This is new technology, you know, and the BPL Consortium Technical team still has a few kinks to be worked out."

Specifically, Mr. Cash went on to say that broadband modulation of the power grid might turn out to be more of a technical challenge than previously thought. "We didn't realize that our modulation technique could wreak such havoc on the power grid. Use of direct modulation of power plants themselves for BPL transmission didn't work as well as planned. We are meeting this week to reevaluate our design."

Calls to FCC Chairman Powell for comments on this issue were not returned.

from-eHam.com

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much of a mental exercise. But to the no-codes or other operators who aren't familiar with HF, what do you think about those? Based on the comments I've heard on VHF and UHF repeaters, there's a lot of confusion out there.

Here's a secret. The HF bands aren't a democracy, and when it comes to chasing rare DX, they can be downright unfriendly (which admittedly, is unfortunate. See any column titled "It's Just a Hobby.")

You are not going to have any fun on the HF bands if you don't appear to know what you're doing. The guy at the other end of the pile-up, if he doesn't like something about your operating practices, isn't likely to talk to you. Sure it's unfair, might even be rude, but that's how it is.

If you try to "work all Ohio counties" on 20 meters for the Ohio QSO Party, you're going to fail miserably and waste your day. If you put up a 160 meter sloper especially for those lazy summer days, you're going to be sweaty and disappointed.

I'm not trying to chase anyone away from HF. Just the opposite is true--I'm trying to encourage you to gain some operating experience any way you can, so

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Member News

Bruce Goldstein, KC8IYS, became a silent key on September 26, 2003. Bruce was a very active Red Cross volunteer serving following many disasters. QCEN extends condolences to Bruce's friends and family.

QCEN member **Debbie Kaegi (XYL of Bob, KB8TPC)** recently lost her father. QCEN extends condolences to Debbie, Bob and their family.

Chuck DeSantis, K8CR, recently celebrated a birthday. Happy Birthday, Chuck.

John Dine, WA8DFD, continues his recovery and will be celebrating a birthday this month. Happy Birthday, John, and keep up the good work.

If you have an item for Member News, email w8zfr@qcen.net.

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*Amateur Radio Affiliate of the American Red Cross,
Cincinnati Area Chapter*

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Charts and Maps, KC8FKW had nothing to report.

Education, **Mark WM8R** was unable to attend but sent a confused report verbally to W8ZFR who relayed that to the group.

Hank, **N8XX** gives an update concerning **John Dine WA8DFD** informing the group that he is doing well overall.

Membership, Bob W8MRG gives the membership report and adds that cell phone numbers are being added to the membership lists and if you would like your number to be included to inform him.

Publications, KC W8ZFR reports that the newsletter got sent out last week.

There was no reoccurring old business, or new business for the group.

Hank, N8XX made a motion to adjourn at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
David Zitt, KC8FKW
Acting Secretary

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that when the bands are handed to you, you'll be able to make something of the opportunity.

I'm making at least one more HF-equipped road trip this year. I'll be driving through 3-land (PA), 2-land (NY/NJ), and 1-land (CT). Anyone want to give it a shot? I'm no prude, I will be trying Echolink or IRLP too. Never discount any one part of the hobby "just because".

And if you're interested in my opinion on no-code HF, then contact me with an open mind and your "feelings" aside!

-73-

If you aren't familiar with BPL — Broadband over Power Line (also known as PLT — Power Line Telecommunication) and the threat it poses to HF communications, check out the ARRL website at www.arrl.org.