

COMMEMORATIVE REISSUE

An Amateur Wireless Magazine

THE RADIOGRAM



PCARS presents a special reprint
of the February 2006 edition of
The RADIOGRAM on the
occasion of the membership
newsletter's 10th anniversary.



This special re-print of Volume 1, Number 1 issue of the RADIOGRAM is a celebration of the Portage County Amateur Radio Service's tenth year as an Amateur Radio Club.



During the first ten years of PCARS history countless hours have been invested by the membership to perpetuate the amateur radio comradeship amongst the members of PCARS and to assist in keeping the Amateur Radio hobby alive and well in Portage County, Ohio.

PCARS has been, and is successful because of the efforts of the members.

This special re-print is dedicated to all of the PCARS members, past and present, who actively promote and participate in club activities.

As PCARS enters the second decade, let us all ensure that new members will keep this spirit and participation alive and well.





~ Officers ~

President - Tom Sly - WB8LCD
Vice President - Jim Aylward - KC8PD
Sec/Treasurer - Tom Parkinson - KB8UUZ
3 Year Trustee - Al Atkins - KB8VJL
2 Year Trustee - Joe Wehner - W8KNO
1 Year Trustee - Russ Anderson - KB8DPN

~ Meetings ~

2nd Monday of
every month. 7pm
at
Mike's Place
Routes 43 and
261 in Kent

~ Nets ~

Thursday nights
8 PM
on 146.895
PL Tones
110.9 Rootstown
114.8 Kent

PCARS

Application for
ARRL affiliation
was submitted
November 29th



WELCOME to the **PREMIER ISSUE** of The **RADIOGRAM**. The official newsletter of the Portage County Amateur Radio Service, Inc. (PCARS). Hey, this just may become a collectors edition of the newsletter, so you better hang on to it!

From the President

The Portage County Amateur Radio Service, Inc. has had the switch flipped "ON", and it's taken off like a rocket! "Thank you" to everyone who has had a part in making it happen. But this is just the beginning. There's much work that needs to be done and no-one's part is more important than *yours*!

No club or organization can succeed without the active participation of the membership. We need you - at our meetings, on the weekly net, at the various activities we will sponsor in the coming months. This club is all about having fun with your



hobby. And, by doing the activities we enjoy, being better prepared to serve the community we live in. You must show up to make it work!

Other than that, this is a "no-pressure" club. Please feel comfortable in trying new things and stretching into areas you may have felt uncomfortable in before. Never been a net control station before? Give it a try on our Thursday night net. Sure, you'll get some calls wrong, you'll be nervous at first, but after you've done it a few times, you'll be *awesome* at it! And you'll be better prepared to participate when there's a *real* emergency.

If there is a Ham Radio topic you would like more information on, let us know. If we can find a local expert, we'll have a presentation or activity to help us all learn about it. If *you* have a particular area of expertise, please let us know. We would like to have you share your knowledge with the club. I believe there is a lot of unexposed talent and knowledge in the local area, so please share it with the rest of us.

Our first club activity is planned for Saturday, February 25th at Towner's Woods in Kent. This will be the "Freeze Your Acorns Off" QRP mini-field day operating event. We'll meet at the Towner's Woods parking lot at 11:30 AM, take a short hike to

our operating position, set up however many QRP stations we can muster, operate from Noon to 2:30 pm, then regroup at Eat-N-Park in Streetsboro for debriefing at 3:00 pm.

This will be the first time *ever* that the club call, **KD8CKP**, will be on the air! There are three ways to participate:

1. Show up and operate with us!
2. Work us from your home station.
3. Show up at Eat-N-Park to help us warm up and boast about our adventure!

Either way, it'll be a fun day and I'm looking forward to your participation!

If you plan to participate and/or have equipment that could be used, please contact me via e-mail at wb8lcd@portcars.org. We'll be on 2 meters and 40 meters at a minimum, I'll let you know anticipated operating frequencies on net the week before the event.

I'm *excited* about the future of this club, and I know from talking with many of you that you are too! We can make this club a shining example of what Amateur Radio has to offer to both the individual and to the community at large. The process is simple, but it's not easy. The most important part of the process is showing up! I'll be here, come on out and join me. Best 73's.

Tom - WB8LCD

Why The Black Squirrel?

Ten rare Black Squirrels were imported from Ontario Canada in February 1961 by Larry Woodell, superintendent of the Kent State University grounds, and M. W. Staples, a retired executive of the Davey Tree Expert Company. When first accidentally (?) released at KSU, the large, black-spiked squirrels were frequently mistaken for skunks. Today they own the Kent State University campus and have since migrated throughout the county. So, we adopted the Black Squirrel as our 'mascot'. No matter where you go in the county - you'll see the Black Squirrel and think of **PCARS**!



From the Vice President

It has been an extremely busy five months or so for the organizers of the Portage County Amateur Radio Service, Inc. Our goal from the start has been to try to provide an interesting, informative and active amateur radio club for all area hams. Collectively we decided that PCARS should be an alternative, not a competitor, to any other local clubs or groups. We still believe that and intend to follow through on that principle. It is unfortunate if some folks just cannot, or will not, see that. Well, we hoped to stimulate local amateur radio activity and at least at this point it seems that we have been successful. Enough about that stuff. Let's bring you up to date on some organizational issues and future activities.



Jim - KC8PD

As you may know, we incorporated this group as a not-for-profit Ohio corporation. We have applied for tax-exempt status through the IRS and should be receiving our ruling from them in the next three months or so. We have applied to the ARRL to be an affiliated club and, as of the writing of this column, the application is still pending due to some concerns from the Ohio Section Affiliated Club Coordinator, Joanne Solak, KJ3O. Hopefully this will be cleared up soon.

On the calendar for upcoming activities are:

- o February 13th club meeting: Jim - KC8RKY, will give us a presentation on Echolink
- o February 25th - An outdoor QRP event at Towner's Woods in Franklin Township, more information from Tom - WB8LCD who is organizing the event
- o March 13th club meeting - An introduction to the basics of Fox Hunts. Gay - WB8VNO.
- o April 10th club meeting - EmComm turn out kits; what should be in yours. Jim - KC8PD
- o April 19th or 26th - SKYWARN training at 6:30 p.m. at Maplewood (date is uncertain as of this writing). NWS
- o May 27th - "Blind Squirrel" fox hunt!
- o June 24th - 25th - Field Day

We want to make sure that we are planning far enough in advance to give you plenty of notice about future events and programs. More importantly, we want to be sure that we are providing activities and information that **you** want. If you have any ideas or suggestions please send them to me at kc8pd@portcars.org 73.



Jim - KC8PD

Two Ohio Hams among the Antarctica DXpedition to Peter One Island

There will be two Ohio amateur radio operators among the 22 members of a rare dxpedition known as Peter I - Antarctica 2006. The Ohio hams are Don DuBon, N6JRL, of Kettering; and Mel Vye, W8MV, of Akron. This rare DX location plans to be on the air for about 15 days. They plan to arrive on the



island, which is 95 per cent glacier, about February 6. The call sign is **3Y0X**. Full information about this trip is available on their web site <www.peterone.com>. It has been in the planning stages for three years. Mr. DuBon joined the team early last year to a location which it was said fewer people have landed there than have flown in space.

Chuck - K8CMP

February Contest Calendar

February, 2006	
Vermont QSO Party	0000Z, Feb 4 - 2400Z, Feb 5
10-10 Int. Winter, SSB	0001Z, Feb 4 - 2359Z, Feb 5
YLRL YL-OM Contest, CW	1400Z, Feb 4 - 0200Z, Feb 6
Minnesota QSO Party	1400Z-2400Z, Feb 4
Delaware QSO Party	1700Z, Feb 4 - 0500Z, Feb 5 & 1300Z, Feb 5 - 0100Z, Feb 6
North American Sprint, SSB	0000Z-0400Z, Feb 5
CQ WW RTTY WPX	0000Z, Feb 11 - 2400Z, Feb 12
New Hampshire QSO Party	0001Z, Feb 11 - 0001Z, Feb 13
YLRL YL-OM Contest, SSB	1400Z, Feb 11 - 0200Z, Feb 13
Louisiana QSO Party	1500Z, Feb 11 - 0300Z, Feb 12
FISTS Winter Sprint	1700Z-2100Z, Feb 11
North American Sprint, CW	0000Z-0400Z, Feb 12
ARRL School Club Roundup	1300Z, Feb 13 - 2400Z, Feb 17
ARRL Inter. DX Contest, CW	0000Z, Feb 18 - 2400Z, Feb 19
Run for the Bacon QRP	0200Z-0400Z, Feb 20
CQ 160-Meter Contest, SSB	0000Z, Feb 25 - 2359Z, Feb 26
Mississippi QSO Party	1500Z, Feb 25 - 0300Z, Feb 26
N American QSO Party, RTTY	1800Z, Feb 25 - 0600Z, Feb 26
North Carolina QSO Party	1700Z, Feb 26 - 0300Z, Feb 27

PCARS Special Event Stations

Okay - get ready to GET ON THE AIR. During the year the PCARS plans to sponsor a number of Special Event Stations. Not only are these fun, but they give us an opportunity to get together, throw up an antenna, and operate on the air. This is one good way to practice in emergency conditions and places. Now comes the part where **YOU** are involved. Look over the calendar: What events are taking place in our county during the year? We can have a Special Event tied to that event, or we can make up our own (I heard someone suggest an outdoor steak fry Special Event in January - hey, why not?). Who's call sign do we use the club call or an individual's?



We'll draw straws for it! Why? Hey - a special event is one heck of a good way to get plenty of QSL cards from around the world - and 90% of the postage is paid by the people sending in for the Special Event certificate. (Some people forget to include SASE's - but that's okay). Oh, I mentioned a certificate? Sure - we can make those with **NO PROBLEM**, so don't sweat that part. Let's have fun. Let me know what dates or events look good to you and we'll get the ball rolling. If we have 3 months advance notice, we can be sure to have it advertised in the major amateur radio magazines at no cost.

Tom - KB8UZZ

Paper Chase - "Sports"

I am writing this in the middle of January when the only sport you hear about is football and the Super Bowl. But did you know that during February; Torino, Italy, will host the Winter Olympics? I did not know this fact until after working IO1FRE. In looking up the call sign, I became aware that the Associazione Radioamatori Italiani had been running special event stations for the olympics since October 10th. The stations were:

IO1ALP Alpine Skiing
IO1BIA Biathlon
IO1BOB Bobsleigh
IO1CRO Cross Country
IO1CUR Curling
IO1FRE Freestyle Skiing
IO1FSK Figure Skating
IO1HOC Hockey
IO1JUM Ski Jumping
IO1LUG Luge
IO1NOR Nordic Combined
IO1SHO Short Track Speed Skating
IO1SKE Skeleton
IO1SNO Snowboard
IO1SPE Speed Skating

All of these stations are presently active and will remain so through the 9th of February. During the Olympics, IO1ARI and II1OWG will be active. All contacts will be confirmed via the bureau. If you are lucky enough to work three of these special event stations and seven of the countries that held the last ten Winter Olympics you are entitled to a certificate costing ten dollars. The application can be downloaded from www.ari-rl.it/torino2006.

The countries that had the last ten winter games are: Austria (OE), Bosnia-Herzegovina (T9), Canada (VE), France (F), Germany (DL), Italy (I), Japan (JA), Norway (LA), Switzerland (HB9) and the United States. If you do not work all the stations, at least enjoy watching the Olympics on TV. I will be listening for you in the pile-ups!



Joe - W8KNO

Charlie the Tuner's HF HighLites

Hello from Parkman, OH. Hope you all have all recovered from the Christmas and New Year's holidays and are now focusing on working some DX in 2006. Even though propagation is reported to be at a low point, there is still several small openings that can be worked if you are patient. If I can do it with a small wire antenna, you fellas working with yagis and G5RVs can certainly do it. I hope to be able to report on a regular basis, those stations that will be on Dxpediton, Special Event DX stations, and IOTA stations as well as other interesting stations to work. Please E-mail me if

you have info on any of the above. So let's start with the first report for 2006.

9A - Special event station 9A150NT will be active on all bands and modes from Croatia from January through December 2006 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the birth of the great inventor and scientist Nikola Tesla. QSL via 9A6AA. Further information on this station, as well as on the relevant award and on Tesla, can be found at <http://www.inet.hr/9a6aa/9a150nt>

9A - The members of the Amateur Radio Club Koprivnica (9A8K) will operate as 9A650C from January 1 through December 31 2006 to celebrate the 650th anniversary of the town of Koprivnica. QSL via 9A7K. More information on the special call and Koprivnica City Award can be found at <http://www.9a7k.com>

CE - For you Hams that like to collect lighthouse contacts and IOTA contacts here's a two-fer, Carlos, CE6AMN and others will operate as CE6M from Mocha Island (SA-061) and lighthouse (ARLHS CHI-024, WLOTA LH-0684) on February 1-5. QSL via CE6AMN.

FO - Ely, HA9RE will be active from Nuku Hiva, Marquesas Islands (OC-027) from January 28 to February 18 and from Ahe (King George Islands, OC-131), French Polynesia for about ten days starting on February 20. He plans to operate on 160-10 metres CW, SSB and RTTY. QSL via HA8IB (Szabo Karoly, Aradi u. 42, H-5525 Fuzesgyarmat, Hungary).

G - Two special call signs will be aired from various locations around the UK throughout 2006 to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the International Shortwave League (<http://www.iswl.org.uk>). GB60SWL will be used one day per month during twelve public events (the first one was on January 22 from the RAF Montrose Heritage Centre, in Angus, Scotland); GB6SWL will be used during the weekends and on every UK public holiday. QSL for both calls direct to Alan Loveridge, 29 Courtiers Drive, Bishops Cleeve, Cheltenham, Glos. GL52 8NU, England, UK, or via the RSGB bureau.

TR - Franck, F4BQO will be active as TR8FC from Libreville, Gabon from January 1 until May. He plans to operate starting around 18 UTC on +/- 14190, 21020 and 24900 kHz; requests for skeds can be sent to f4bqo@orange.fr. QSL via home call.

W - Rick, K6VVA reports that the weather-permitting target dates for the IOTA operation from South East Farallon Island (NA-178) [425DXN 763] are now February 14-16. Mike, K9AJ will be joining him and the two will operate as K6VVA/6 and K9AJ/6 with one or hopefully two stations on the air around the clock. QSL via N6AWD. Bookmark <http://www.k6vva.com/iota/na178> for updates.

Chuck - K8CMP

ARRL 8th Area Incoming QSL Bureau 2005 Report

Approximately 110,905 QSL cards were received for redistribution through the central 8th area bureau in 2005. This is down almost 20% compared to 138,236 handled in 2004. We handled 154,054 cards in 2003. The monthly breakout is as follows:

Jan. -- 6,361 Feb. -- 8,083 Mar. -- 10,401 Apr. -- 8,947
 May -- 16,102 Jun. -- 5,417 Jul. -- 11,321 Aug. -- 10,891
 Sep. -- 4,676 Oct. -- 4,387 Nov. -- 18,773 Dec -- 5,546

From these numbers and trends, you can see that LBOTW and decreasing sunspots are affecting QSL volumes. (Could it also be a decreasing population of active DXers?). In 2005 we had five cycles where cards were sent from the central bureau to the individual letter managers. From that you can see that each cycle is approximately 11 weeks. In mid 2005 Dave Blake, N4DB, resigned as the 'G' letter manager after many years of dedicated service. Those folks with a 'G' after the 8 owe Dave a ton of thanks for the work he has done. Don Karvonen, another well known and active DXer, has stepped up to the plate to assume 'G' letter responsibilities. I recently replaced myself as the 'F' letter manager. Bob Boehm, K8YS, has agreed to improve on what I had been doing in that regard. The bureau is physically located at the VOA Museum in West Chester, OH. We appreciate the work of those members of the West Chester Amateur Radio Association who do the bulk sorting for us. More information on W8 Incoming Bureau operations, policies and procedures can be found at the web site: <http://home.fuse.net/jslough/w8buro.html>

Everyone is reminded that postage rates went up in January 2006. Do they have enough postage on their envelopes at the bureau to cover the new rates? Even more importantly, do they have envelopes at the bureau? As another item of note, it cost the ARRL a bit over \$1300.00 for direct expenses involving the 8th call area last year. That does not include any associated administrative costs and overhead at the league. The QSL Bureau - another benefit provided by your league and volunteers who work to serve you. 73,

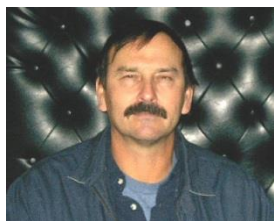
Jay Slough, K4ZLE

W8 Incoming QSL Bureau manager

Editor's Note: After reading this report, I dropped Jay an e-mail and thanked him and his volunteers for their job in keeping things 'sorted out' for those of us using the 8th QSL Bureau.

KD8CKP Club Call License Trustee Info

We have not used our new Club's call yet so there's nothing to report. I'm the club call trustee and am responsible for the proper operation of the PCARS club station. One of my duties is to designate control operators. That being said; I must know who is using our clubs call and who's in control of our station. If a club member wants to use the club call for a special event or contest, please contact me ahead of time so I can get you the information you need, and gather the data I need for my records. Remember, when you use the club call, you are the voice of PCARS when on the air and with that is an important obligation to operate in the best manner possible and within the confines of FCC Part 97. Any problem that the FCC would



Al - KB8VJL

have with our station would require me to make station records available for inspection upon request. So, we will keep operating logs when our club call is being used and I will be the custodian of the logs.

Al - KB8VJL
KD8CKP Trustee

March Contest Calendar

March, 2006	
ARRL Inter. DX, SSB	0000Z, Mar 4 - 2400Z, Mar 5
RSGB Commonwealth	1000Z, Mar 11 - 1000Z, Mar 12
Idaho QSO Party	1300Z, Mar 11 - 0100Z, Mar 12 & 1300Z, Mar 12 - 0100Z, Mar 13
Oklahoma QSO Party	1400Z, Mar 11 - 0200Z, Mar 12 & 1400Z-2000Z, Mar 12
NA Sprint, RTTY	0000Z-0400Z, Mar 12
Wisconsin QSO Party	1800Z, Mar 12 - 0100Z, Mar 13
10-10 Int. Mobile	0001Z-2359Z, Mar 18
Virginia QSO Party	1800Z, Mar 18 - 0200Z, Mar 20
Run for the Bacon QRP	0200Z-0400Z, Mar 20
CQ WW WPX, SSB	0000Z, Mar 25 - 2359Z, Mar 26

PCARS Meetings – Mike's Place

The Portage County Amateur Radio Service, Inc. (PCARS)



meets on the second Monday of every month at Mike's Place - 1700 S. Water St. – Kent. Meetings start at 7:00pm sharp and all are invited to attend. You can find out a whole lot more about Mike's Place on

the web at: www.mikesplacereastaurant.com

You can look over their entire menu and see some interesting stuff on the web site. Check it out!

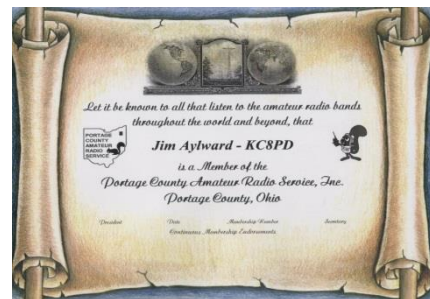
Membership Certificate

Every member of the Portage County Amateur Radio Service, Inc (PCARS) receives a beautiful membership certificate – suitable for framing! The lower part of the certificate has room for the continuous membership endorsements that will be issued at 2, 5, 10, 15, 20 (etc.) year intervals. Each member will also be issued a Membership

Number. That membership number is yours forever and will never be issued to another person.

Also with your membership certificate, you'll get a handsome membership card and a copy of our Mission Statement as well as a copy of our Constitution and By-Laws for your reference.

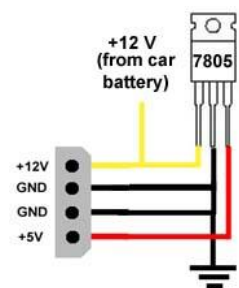
Note: Charter Membership in the Portage County Amateur Radio Service, Inc. is being held open until the March meeting. All persons signed up by then will have the honor of being known as Charter Members and will receive a Charter Member certificate at the April meeting.



Tom – KB8UZZ
Secretary

JUNKBOX CD PLAYER

If you're like me, you hardly EVER let anything out the door that might be able to be of use down the road. I have jars full of case screws and boxes full of cords and connectors cut off trashed electronic items. I usually save anything interesting. Trust me when I say that my trash collector doesn't get much when I do pitch something electronic. There is a computer Serengeti in my basement where old and slow PC's have come to die. They all know that I can't seem to let a PC go to trash. If you're like me, you upgraded to that new CD-ROM or DVD-ROM writer on your computer. Was easy enough to do, and now – you have this wonderful old 20X CD-ROM your kicking around or using for a door stop. Have I got a junk-box project for you! Did you know that you don't need a computer to use that old drive as a CD player? A simple power supply circuit made from a single voltage regulator and a heat sink, a power supply connector and a little imagination can have that CD doorstep back to life in no time! The CD-ROM drive to be use may be of any type, from the first models ("1x") until the most modern ones ("60x"). The only prerequisite is that the drive needs to have is an earphone plug and volume control. And practically all CD-ROM drives have that. I would also opt for the models that have the extra 2 buttons, one being the Play/Pause and the other being the Track Skip/Eject. This at least gives you a little extra control. To build the power supply you will need a female power plug, to be used to fit into CD-ROM drive power plug (that plug can be cut from an old power supply) and a voltage regulating integrated circuit called 7805, that may be easily found at electronic parts stores. You will also have to buy a heat sink for the 7805 (sold at the



The car battery, shack power supply, etc supplies the 12V, but the CD-ROM drive needs two voltages to work: 12 V and 5 V. The 7805 circuit is able to convert a 12 V voltage into 5 V (its pin 1 is for the input, its pin 2 is the grounding, and its pin 3 is the 5 V exit). Figure 1 shows the plan for the connection. The grounding pin should be connected to the wires of the plug grounding and the negative pole of the 12v supply. All you have to do is to make the connections shown in the above schematics (don't forget to isolate all connections with insulating tape) and you are set: you will have a CD-ROM drive working as CD player in your car or shack. In its most simplistic form, the audio output will be made using the earphone plug. To listen to a CD, you will have to use earphones. To have the sound come through the speakers of the car, you will have to buy an amplifier with RCA inputs, or use some sort of adapter that one would use to play portable audio equipment in the car, through a tape player or via your FM radio.

TAKING IT FURTHER (Testing Notes) IN THE HOME: I scarfed up a CD-ROM to Soundcard cable, took the soundcard end off and replaced it with standard RCA phono ends. This is one of the plugs in the rear of the CD that is used to supply audio to the PC soundcard. This is a line level 600ohm standard LINE level stereo output, independent and not controlled from the volume control on the front. I plugged

these in to my home stereo, and was impressed with the quality sound the drive supplied. **IN THE CAR:** Using the above setup, I was VERY impressed with the stability of the drive while going down the road. The unit was still playing despite the fact that I was shaking it back and forth and turning it upside down. **FORGIVING VOLTAGES:** In



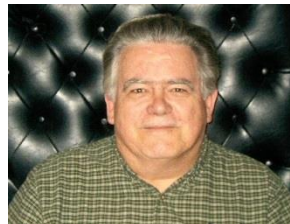
preparing a second power supply circuit – I used a junk box power converter for my 5 Volt side. The voltage markings were 3, 4.5, 6, 9 and 12 volts. I opted for the 6 volt setting, without any complications or difference. The 12V in the car is as high as 14V – so I would say the

CD-ROM circuit is quite forgiving. This has to be the least expensive CD player you could buy! Besides – Who is going to bust into your car to steal your vintage CD-ROM? Overall – I was VERY impressed the built like a tank performance of the CD unit. This was a fun junk box project. 73

Russ - KB8DPN

From the Editor

Welcome to the new Portage County Amateur Radio Service, Inc. (PCARS) – at your service here in Portage County, Ohio. Why a new amateur radio club? Because we want to DO things, we want to be INVOLVED with the community, and we want to HAVE FUN with Amateur Radio. If you're a ham – you already know how valuable our hobby is, not only to us, but to the community at large. We can, and do, offer emergency communications in support of Federal, State, and Local authorities during times of emergency. The saying "When All Else Fails – Amateur Radio Works" is very true and we can provide that important link when needed. 2006 is here, a new year is always an opportunity to accomplish good and better things. It's a time when we make resolutions to get something important done and make commitments for the new year. This is your opportunity to join us in our endeavor to make amateur radio an important part of Portage County. This is a NEW club – not a re-make of any other older club. We have aggressive plans and goals that we think will be



embraced by many of our fellow Portage County Amateur Radio Operators. During these first few months, our club will be growing and expanding and we hope you'll become part of that with us. In our monthly newsletter, you'll have articles from not only

ALL the officers, but with your help, many of the members as well. This newsletter will help to promote our club and amateur radio in the community. Many plans have been made, goals have been set, and the challenge is there – just waiting for you to join in and not only learn a few things, have some fun, and to help others as well. Have a safe & happy New Year. Take care & 73.

Tom - KB8UUZ
Newsletter Editor

EmComm

The Portage County Amateur Radio Service wants to be as active as possible in providing information and training activities for area hams who are interested in emergency communications. Every PCARS newsletter will have this column and we welcome your questions and suggestions for issues to discuss. I can tell you from personal experience how critical I believe it is that all hams at least familiarize themselves with emcomm basics and, more importantly, how vital it is for those hams who want to assist in the event of an emergency train and prepare as though it may happen tomorrow. Last September, I had the privilege of participating in the Hurricane Katrina ARRL/Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES®) emcomm efforts in Ocean Springs, Mississippi. This was truly an extraordinary event that drew heavily on relief efforts by a wide variety of agencies and organizations and that saw local public and private telecommunications disrupted over a broad area. There was an exceptional response by hams from around the country. One trait was shared by most of them: they had completed at



least Level I of the Amateur Radio Emergency Communication courses provided by the ARRL. Many had also moved on to the Level II and III programs. All three are available online from the ARRL at a modest cost of about forty dollars per course.

You are given a reasonable amount of time to complete the course work. All of your assignments are submitted to a mentor who will review your work and give you feedback on your progress. Those courses are a great starting point for any ham who really wants to upgrade his or her skills and knowledge about emcomm services. I wholeheartedly encourage all of our members to enroll in at least the Level I course. PCARS plans to provide emcomm training opportunities throughout the year. We will always work to do this in coordination with other area amateur radio organizations as well as public and private served agencies. The Hurricane Katrina effort has prompted a serious examination of how amateur radio can and should respond to local or regional disasters and emergencies. Advances in other telecommunication systems, particularly cell phones and the internet, have provided alternatives to traditional voice and data communication services. However, both of these services are also uniquely vulnerable, most particularly at the local level, when a disaster strikes. Amateur radio must rise to meet the challenge to both identify what contemporary emcomm needs will be as well as how to meet those needs. Whether as the "last-mile" of an internet link via Winlink 2000 on HF or VHF, or as the provider of wireless digital communications via HSMN such as 802.11, or phone communications employing VOIP applications such as Echolink, or providing VHF or UHF services when local communication services have failed, hams need to continually adopt new technologies and combine them with existing and future radio gear if they are to have a role in twenty-first century emcomm services. Let's all work together to be there "...when all else fails."

Jim - KC8PD

As Telecom Reels From Storm Damage, Ham Radios Hum..

MONROE, La. -- In a shelter here, 300 miles north of New Orleans, Theo McDaniel took his plight to a young man fiddling with a clunky, outdated-looking radio. Mr. McDaniel, a 25-year-old barber, had evacuated New Orleans with his wife and two small children more than a week ago and since then had had no contact with his brother or his aunt. The last he heard, his 42-year-old aunt was clinging to her roof. "We've got to get a message down there to help them," he said. The man at the radio sent the information to the emergency-operations center across town, which relayed it to rescue units in New Orleans. Later in the weekend, Mr. McDaniel learned that food and water were on the way to his trapped brother and his brother's young family. He had heard nothing about his aunt. With Hurricane Katrina having knocked out nearly all the high-end emergency communications gear, 911 centers, cellphone towers and normal fixed phone lines in its path, ham-radio operators have begun to fill the information vacuum. "Right now, 99.9% of normal communications in the affected region is nonexistent," says David Gore, the man operating the ham radio in the Monroe shelter. "That's where we come in." In an age of high-tech, real-time gadgetry, it's the decidedly unsexy ham radio -- whose technology has changed little since World War II -- that is in high demand in ravaged New Orleans and environs. The Red Cross issued a request for about 500 amateur radio operators -- known as "hams" -- for the 260 shelters it is erecting in the area. The American Radio Relay League, a national association of ham-radio operators, has been deluged with requests to find people in the region. The U.S. Coast Guard is looking for hams to help with its relief efforts. Ham radios, battery operated, work well when others don't in part because they are simple. Each operator acts as his own base station, requiring only his radio and about 50 feet of fence wire to transmit messages thousands of miles. Ham radios can send messages on multiple channels and in myriad ways, including Morse code, microwave frequencies and even email. Then there are the ham-radio operators themselves, a band of radio enthusiasts who spend hours jabbering with each other even during normal times. They are often the first to get messages in and out of disaster areas, in part because they are everywhere. (The ARRL estimates there are 250,000 licensed hams in the U.S.) Sometimes they are the only source of information in the first hours following a disaster. "No matter how good the homeland-security system is, it will be overwhelmed," says Thomas Leggett, a retired mill worker manning a ham radio in the operations center here. "You don't hear about us, but we are there." Slidell, a town 30 miles northeast of New Orleans, was directly hit by the hurricane and remains virtually cut off from the outside world. One of the few, if not the only, communications links is Michael King, a retired Navy captain, operating a ham radio out of a Slidell hospital. "How are you holding up, Mike?" asked Sharon Riviere into a ham-radio microphone at Monroe's operations center. She and her husband, Ron, who is the president of the Slidell ham-radio club, had evacuated before the storm to the home of some fellow ham-radio enthusiasts in Monroe. She said Mr. King had been working 20-hour days since the storm hit.

Crackling static and odd, garbled sounds followed her question to Mr. King. Then he replied: "It's total devastation here. I've got 18 feet of water at my house. Johnny's Café down there has water up to its roof." Ms. Riviere asked about her own home, which is not far from Mr. King's. "It's full of mud," Mr. King replied. "Looks like someone's been slugging it out in there." Ham radios are often most effective as one link in a chain of communication devices. Early last week,



someone trapped with 15 people on a roof of a New Orleans home tried unsuccessfully to get through to a 911 center on his cell phone. He was able to call a relative in Baton Rouge, who in turn called another relative, Sybil Hayes, in Broken Arrow, Okla. Ms. Hayes, whose 81-year-old aunt was among those stranded on the New

Orleans roof, then called the Red Cross in Broken Arrow, which handed the message to its affiliated ham-radio operator, Ben Joplin. Via stations in Oregon, Idaho and Louisiana, Mr. Joplin got the message to rescue workers who were able to save the 15 people on the roof, according to the ARRL, based in Newington, Conn. "We are like the Pony Express," says the 26-year-old Mr. Gore, wearing black cowboy boots. "One way or the other, even by hand, we will get you the message." Mr. Gore, who is in charge of the northeastern district of Louisiana for the Amateur Radio Emergency Service, has spent a lot of time the past week at the Monroe shelter, helping evacuees try to track missing friends and relatives. Last Monday, Danita Alexander of Violet, La., came to a ham operator in the Monroe shelter asking about her 96-year-old grandfather, Willie Bright, who had been in a nursing home in New Orleans. The next day, she got word back from a ham operator that he had been safely transferred to a shelter near New Orleans. "We can't do enough of these," says Mark Ketchell, who runs the ARES branch in Monroe. Nevertheless, the ham-radio community feels under threat. Telecom companies want to deliver broadband Internet connections over power lines, which ham-radio operators say distorts communications in the surrounding area. Since hams are "amateurs," there is little lobbying money to fight such changes, they add. The hams also get little respect from telecommunications-equipment companies, such as Motorola Inc. "Something is better than nothing, that's right," says Jim Screeden, who runs all of Motorola's repair teams in the field for its emergency-response business. "But ham radios are pretty close to nothing." Mr.



rely on ham radios can take a long time to relay messages and work essentially as "party lines," with multiple parties talking at once. Says Mr. Leggett at the Monroe operations center: "We are the unwanted stepchild. But when the s- hits the fan, who are you going to call?"

CHRISTOPHER RHOADS

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

September 6, 2005; Page A19

Write to Christopher Rhoads at christopher.rhoads@wsj.com

Thanks

On behalf of the members of the Portage County Amateur Radio Service, Inc. (PCARS) – I'd like to send out a big "Thanks" to the organizations and newspapers that published information about our club being formed and encouraging people to visit our meetings. So – Thanks goes to the Geauga Amateur Radio Association newsletter, the 20/9 newsletter, the Tri-County Traffic Net people, the Cleveland Plain Dealer and the Ravenna Record Courier - - **Thanks.**



HAMFEST CALENDAR

5 Feb 2006 - WinterHamFest - Northern Ohio Amateur Radio Society - www.NOARS.net - Talk-In: 146.70 (PL 110.9) - Contact: Tom Porter, W8KYZ - 161 Herrmann Dr. - Avon Lake, OH 44012 - Phone: 440-930-9115 - Email: tporter161@comcast.net - Lorain, OH - Gargus Hall - 1965 North Ridge Rd.

12 Feb 2006 - Mansfield Mid*Winter Hamfest and Computer Show - InterCity Amateur Radio Club - www.iarc.ws - Talk-In: 146.94 - (PL 71.9) - Contact: Dean Wrasse, KB8MG - 1094 Beal Rd. - Mansfield, OH 44905 - Phone: 419-589-2415 (after 10:30 AM) - Email: deanwrasse@yahoo.com - Mansfield, OH - Richland County Fairgrounds - 750 North Home Rd.

19 Mar 2006 - TMRA Hamfest and Computer Show - Toledo Mobile Radio Association - www.tmrhamradio.org - Talk-In: 147.27 + (no PL - rpt in net mode) - Contact: Brian J. Harrington, WD8MXR - 4463 Holly Hill Dr. - Toledo, OH 43614 - Phone: 419-535-6594 - Email: bharrington@meduohio.edu - Maumee (Toledo), OH - Lucas County Recreation Center - 2901 Key St.

26 Mar 2006 - Lake County Amateur Radio Association - www.lcara.org - Talk-In: 147.21 (PL 110.9) - Contact: Rocky, KB8WFD - 7480 Fern Dr. - Mentor-on-the-Lake, OH 44060-3233 - Phone: 440-209-8953 - Email: rocky@lcara.org - Madison, OH - Madison High School - 3100 Burns Rd.

2 Apr 2006 - 52nd Annual Hamfest/Electronics & Computer Show - Cuyahoga Falls ARC - www.cfarc.org - Talk-In: 147.27 - Contact: Ted Sarah, W8TTS - 239 Belmont Ave. - Munroe Falls, OH 44262 - Phone: 330-688-2013 - Email: w8tts@w8tts.com - Cuyahoga Falls, OH - Emidio & Sons Party Center - 48 East Bath Rd.

Real Heroes Award

From the American Red Cross of Portage County
January 13, 2006

The American Red Cross of Portage County is pleased to inform **James Aylward – KC8PD** has been selected as a recipient of the **Real Heroes Award**. The Red Cross will be honoring Jim – KC8PD and others from our community who have demonstrated the values of courage, compassion, character, humanity, personal initiative and responsibility, at the 7th Annual Real Heroes Breakfast. The event will take place on Saturday, March 4, 2006 at the Northeast Ohio University College of Medicine, Conference Center in Rootstown, OH starting at 10:00 am. To give an idea of the atmosphere of the ceremony, dress is business attire and last year there were over 300 in attendance. Tickets for this event are \$20.00 and can be purchased at the Red Cross office in Ravenna through February 24th. Proceeds from the Real Heroes Breakfast will be used to support Red Cross programs and services in Portage County.



Jim – KC8PD, Vice President of PCARS was a volunteer during the Hurricane Katrina aftermath and served in the Ocean Springs, MS area. We're all proud of Jim's volunteer service and his commitment to make ham radio an important part in emergency communications. Jim was also on the cover of the November 2005 "QST" magazine.

PCARS WEB SITE

The PCARS Web Site is up and running and can be located at www.portcars.org. The Web Master is **Russ – KB8DPN** and he jumped right in and has made the web site pretty nifty looking! He said he'll be keeping the



information up to date and welcomes any inputs. Stop by the web site and check it out, you'll be very impressed by all the hard work that Russ has devoted to it. Thanks Russ!!



Mark Your Calendars

- Feb. 13 – PCARS Meeting - 7pm - Program will be on Echo-Link
- Feb. 25 – PCARS "Freeze Your Acorns Off" QRP mini-field day operating event. We'll meet at the Towner's Woods parking lot at 11:30 AM, take a short hike to our operating position, set up however many QRP stations we can muster, operate from Noon to 2:30 pm, then regroup at Eat-N-Park in Streetsboro for debriefing at 3 pm.
- March 4 - Red Cross 7th Annual Real Heroes Breakfast honoring Jim - KC8PD – 10am at the NE Ohio Univ College of Medicine – Rootstown – Tickets at the Red Cross - \$20.00 – Business attire.
- March 13 - PCARS Meeting - 7pm - An introduction to the basics of hidden transmitter hunting.
- April 10 - PCARS Meeting – EmComm turn out kits; what should be in yours.



PCARS Shirts and More

The Portage County Amateur Radio Service logo can be embroidered on a shirt, t-shirt, hat, sweatshirt, etc. along with your name and call sign. The club does not make any money on this, but we want to pass on the information for those of you wanting to show off the PCARS logo! Contact : CallsignWear.com - Matt Sikorski - S&S Computer Imaging, Inc. - email: info@callsignwear.com - Phone: 413-536-0117 - Fax: 413-538-7130.



Happy Birthday PCARS Members

Russ – KB8DPN and Carl – N4TIE both have birthdays in February

Thanks

Well, that's the 1st issue of the PCARS newsletter. Whew, over 12 hours of work putting it all together. I hope you enjoy it and I look forward to you sending in those articles to share with our members. Thanks goes out to this months contributors: WB8LCD, KC8PD, KB8VJL, W8KNO, KB8DPN, K8CMP, KB8UZZ, Christopher Rhoads - Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, Jay Slough, K4ZLE - W8 Incoming QSL Bureau Mgr. With your help – we can make this a great newsletter.

Tom – KB8UZZ
Newsletter Editor



