

DXer



**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
DX CLUB**

BPL Looms as a Threat to Amateur Radio



ARRL "Pulling Out All Stops"

In what could be seen as the most serious threat to Amateur Radio in decades, the American Radio Relay League is actively engaged in efforts to combat the threat being posed by Broadband over Power Lines or "BPL", as it is otherwise known. Other organizations, including AMRAD, the American Radio Research and Development Corporation and NTIA, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration are also lining up in opposition to the BPL effort.

As the name implies, BPL is a technology, which superimposes broadband signals onto ordinary power lines for data communications. The data is drawn off by

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**General Meeting
Saturday, Sept 20, 2003
Annual NCDXC Picnic
Being Held This Year
at
Mitchell Park
in Palo Alto
(See Page 4 for Details)**

**Next General Meeting
Scheduled for
Thursday, October 9th
at Harry's Hof Brau
in Redwood City**

**Deadline for Input for the
October 2003 DXer is
September 24, 2003**

Club Officers:

President: Doug Westover, W6JD
 Vice Pres: Chuck Patterson, K6RK
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 Treasurer: Dewey Churchill, KG6AM
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California Award: Robert Bickel, K6FX

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Records Manager: Ron Panton, W6VG

Publications Mgr: Ron Panton, W6VG

Club Repeater, W6TI/R

Frequency/offset: 147.36 MHz, +

Trustee: Bob Vallio, W6RGG

Control Operator: Robert Smithwick, W6CS

Club simplex: 147.54 MHz (suggested)

Thurs. Net QTR: 8 pm local time.

Net Manager: Randy Wright, W6CUA

DX News: Net Control Operator

Swap Shop: Mitch Cipriano, AE6AI

QSL Information: Mac McHenry, W6BSY

W6TI DX Bulletins:

W6TI Station Trustee Bob Vallio, W6RGG, transmits DX information at 0200 UT every Monday (Sunday evening local time) on both 7.016 and 14.002 MHz.

Club address: Box 608
 Menlo Park, CA
 94026-0608

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President's Comments



What do you do to keep your interest in ham radio going? New countries? So many of us either have them all or only need one or two (I need only a 70 that counts and FR/g). Well, you can work 'em all on every band from DC to light, but that gets fairly old after a while. IOTA? Grid squares?

Contests? Work all the QRO computer operated "big guns" over and over again. I head for the WARC bands.

My interest was rejuvenated by building and QRPing. This was brought about by my introduction to the Elecraft K2. I purchased my K2 two years ago and I haven't had as much fun since the day's of Heathkit. It is now my primary radio. Oh, sure, I had to buy the 100 watt amp for it (something else to build!) but I still spend a lot of time at 10 watts or less with over 200 "entities" at those power levels.

So I guess the point of all this is; for those who still don't have them all, there is still the new country (whoops, "entity") chase. But, for those who don't need any, or many, there are still new worlds to conquer. It would also, be interesting to know what others are doing to keep their interest levels up.

Hope to see you at the picnic. Doug, W6JD

More Countries Drop HF Bands CW Requirement

More countries have announced that they no longer require a Morse code test for operation on the HF bands. In Norway, the three former license classes, with LA, LB and LC callsigns, were combined into one on the 19th of August. In the future, LA and LB callsigns will be heard on the bands, while those with LC callsigns will be allocated new LA calls.



In the Netherlands, the Dutch licensing authority announced on the 19th of August that from the 1st of September a Morse code test would no longer be necessary for operation on frequencies below 30MHz. The Dutch license classes A and C, which correspond to CEPT Classes 1 and 2 respectively, will have the same privileges, although the two license classes are to keep their separate callsign assignments for the time being. There are no changes to the Dutch Class N license, which allows operation on 2 meters and 70 centimeters only.

NCDXC Dues Information

Full and Associate Members;

Date Dues are Paid	Member	Family Rate
1 July thru 30 September	\$24.00	Plus \$15.00
1 October and after	\$24.00	Plus \$15.00

*Members who have not remitted dues by the 30 September deadline are considered dropped from the membership rolls. Those desiring to renew membership may do so anytime, but will not be included in the new issue of the NCDXC Roster.

Absentee Member Dues are \$16.00 per year.

BPL Looms as Threat (Continued)

From Page 1

the use of filters, modems and other devices, which connect to PC's and other computers. The problem with all of this is, the technology creates excessively high noise levels in the HF radio spectrum, typically from 1.5 to 80 MHz. Not since the days of the "Russian Woodpecker" has such noise been experienced on the ham bands. It's not there yet, except in areas where the trials are being run, but it will be, if we allow it to go into general use. And, unlike the "Woodpecker", it would be all over the bands.

I would encourage anyone, who is interested in the nature of such interference, to go into the following websites and listen to the sound clips of the actual interference caused by BPL. The first is; www.qsl.net/RSGB_emc/PLTREP.pdf. This site offers a reproduction of the actual signal interfering with what appears to be amateur radio communications. Another site at www.qsl.net/RSGB_emc/pltsounds.html presents sound clips of the interfering signals alone. The point here is: this is the kind of interference we're gonna be facing, unless something is done now to avert the threat.

So what can we do about it? Well the first thing that can be done is to become educated in what the threat is and the way it will affect the HF service. That can be done by accessing the info available at the ARRL website at www.ARRL.org/tis/info/HTML/pic, reading the information there and following the links to other sites with additional information. Secondly, share this information and your concern with others who haven't bothered to look into the matter. And finally, support the ARRL in its efforts to combat the threat.

I'm totally impressed by the effort the ARRL is putting into this. I'm also confident that, if we ALL support their effort, then we will stave off this threat to our hobby.

ARRL Seeks Clubs' Support in BPL Campaign

(Aug 27, 2003) — ARRL has asked some 2100 ARRL-affiliated clubs to consider donating to the Broadband over Power Line (BPL) Special Spectrum Defense Campaign. "Your ARRL is at the forefront of the campaign to defeat BPL and will continue to work tirelessly to protect your Amateur Radio bands," says ARRL Chief Development Officer Mary Hobart, K1MMH. Hobart notes that individuals and clubs have responded generously to fund ARRL's efforts to fight BPL and many also have filed comments in response to the FCC's *Notice of Inquiry* in ET Docket 03-104. "But we still need to raise an additional \$55,000 to fund the field measurements and document filings necessary to defeat this threat," Hobart pointed out in urging clubs to give serious thought to helping out. ARRL has received club contributions ranging from \$50 to \$2000. She promised to post a list of contributing clubs on the ARRL Web site this fall "as our way of saying thank you." More information on BPL is available on the ARRL Web site, including a video—available for downloading and showing at club meetings—that graphically demonstrates the interference radio amateurs would experience from BPL. There's a *PowerPoint* presentation too. To help, visit ARRL's secure BPL campaign donation site or mail your contribution to BPL Special Spectrum Defense Campaign, ARRL, 225 Main St, Newington CT 06111

W6BUY Silent Key

It is with great sorrow that we report the passing of Jack Holmes, W6BUY. Jack became a silent key in the early morning hours of August 15. Jack was a Charter Member of NCDXC and had been residing in Reno, Nevada. He was 96.

K6DUE, Silent Key

Roy Neal, K6DUE, of AMSAT has become a Silent Key. He was recovering after heart surgery but died from complications on the 15th of August. Roy Neal was for many years the NBC-news Science Correspondent, covering the American space missions for US television audiences. Through his extensive contacts at NASA, he was instrumental in convincing NASA management to fly amateur radio on-board the Space Shuttle. Later, he worked on the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station - or 'ARISS' - program and provided much support to AMSAT and the ARRL on amateur radio space matters.

Logging Help

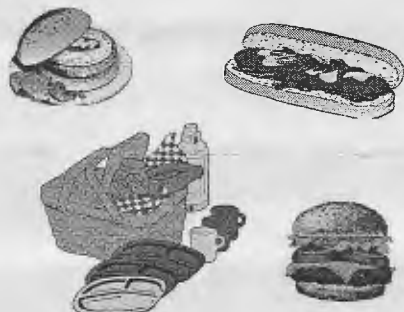
The following was "gleaned" from the SDDXC Reflector. I've not tried teither program, but intend to do so soon. I'll let you know what I think about them in a future issue. -Ed.

If you're looking for a spreadsheet to help compile all your countries worked, QSL's received, all bands, all modes, etc., here are a couple of logging programs that could meet your needs:

XMLOG is free off of the internet. Contributions are always appreciated but not mandatory. Go to www.xmlog.com/.

This one looks like it will take care of all your needs for WAS, DXCC, etc.: It's at <http://www.n0oks.com/> and is designed with the "paper chaser" in mind. It's "shareware and they require a \$35 contribution to get the full blown version.

NCDXC Picnic September 20 (11:30 AM til ??)



Mitchell Park, Palo Alto -- Located at intersection of Middlefield Road and Meadow Drive behind Palo Alto Fire Station #4. Club provides burgers / hot dogs / soft drinks and all the fixings.

Our permit is very clear

NO ALCOHOL

From Highway 101 take San Antonio Rd exit, West to Middlefield Road. Turn right onto Middlefield and follow it to Meadow Drive.

Left onto Meadow about 1/2 block to Mitchell Park entrance.

You want to park as far back in the parking lot as you can.

(see map of the park on next page).

From El Camino Real turn onto Charleston (East) and follow it to Middlefield.

Turn left onto Middlefield and follow to Meadow as above.

Just a little more about the picnic:

Car pooling might be a good idea as the park is fairly heavily used and parking can be a problem.

You should try to park as close to the library lot and tennis courts as possible. Unfortunately the map of the park that Palo Alto supplied is pretty poor quality and did not scan/reproduce very well.* But, if you look carefully, you will see an area that is circled...this is the Pine Grove Area and the location of our picnic.

Doug, W6JD

* We did manage to download a better image of the park from Palo Alto's website (see the image at the right), but it's still somewhat lacking in clarity. In particular, it has been prepared from a perspective that's 180 degrees opposite to conventional mapping. Therefore, all the printing appears upside down when properly viewed. Other than that, it's fairly clear and shows our picnic site. -Ed.

NCDXF Re-elects Officers & Board

At its Board of Directors meeting on August 26, 2003 in Berkeley, CA, the Northern California DX Foundation re-elected the following officers and directors:

President	Len Gerald	K6ANP
Vice President	Al Burnham	K6RIM
Secretary	Tom McShane	NW6P
Treasurer	Bruce Butler	W6OSP
Director	Rusty Epps	W6OAT
Director	Dave Pugatch	KI6WF
Director	Chuck Ternes	N6OJ
Director	Glenn Vinson	W6OTC
Director	Steve Merchant	K6AW
Director	Ken Anderson	K6TA
Director	Tim Totten	N4GN



Information pertaining to the Northern California DX Foundation is available at <http://www.ncdxf.org>

Northern California DX Foundation
by: Al Burnham, K6RIM, VP

More NCDXC Picnic Information

Editor's Choice

My how time flies! Here it is September already and the summer is nearly gone. So are the sunspots!

Both Monaco (3A) and the Maldives (8Q), which I need, were supposed to have been on the air in August, but I didn't hear even a peep from them. The bands have been fairly decent in the past few weeks and we could hear a few faint signals from garden variety DX.

In our lead article, this month, we talked about the seriousness of the BPL threat to Amateur Radio and HF communications. It goes without saying that it is an even bigger threat to DXing, since DXers tend to scour the bands listening for weak signals. So, we should make an even stronger effort to combat the threat.

I, for one, think the NCDXC should consider making a contribution to the ARRL BPL Defense fund. If only 110 of the 2100 affiliated clubs were to donate \$500, the ARRL would have the \$55,000 they need to conduct their field studies. It's something we should consider.

Hope to see you at the Picnic on the 20th. de George, W6YD.

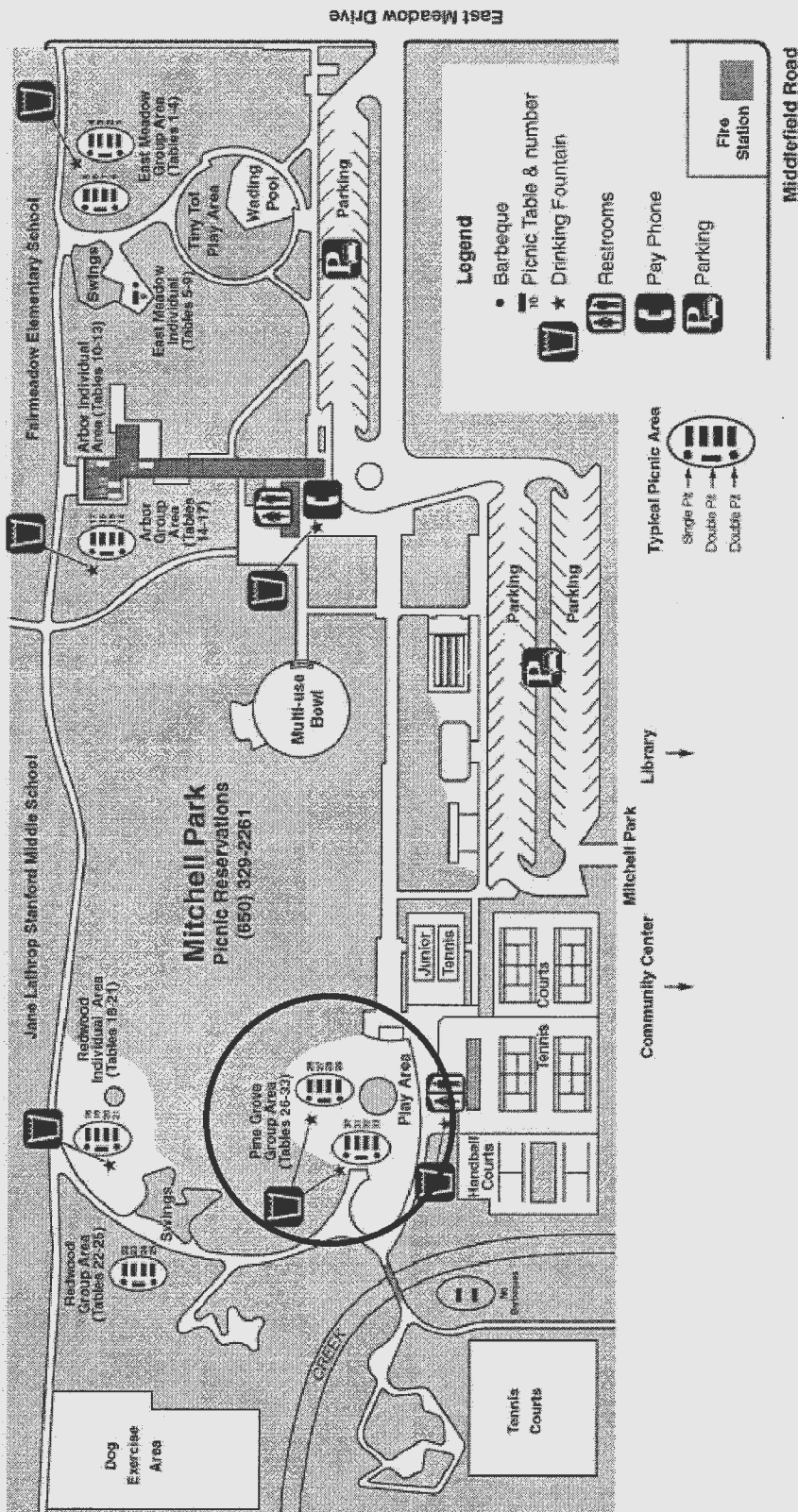
Kudos 'n Kredits

This month's issue of *The DXer* was made possible by articles and input from the following sources:

- W6JD, Doug Westover**
- W6KM, Dick Letrich**
- ARRL Website**
- City of Palo Alto Website**
- RSGB Website**
- SDDXC Reflector**

Thank you, one and all!

George, W6YD



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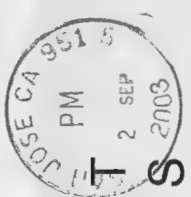
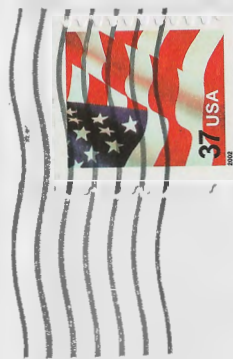
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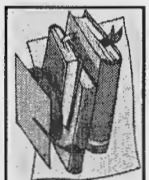
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September 2003

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