

Scope



Volume 33, Issue 2

Tower Rights Issue, February 2006

Treasurer's Report for January 2005

Assets

Cash and Bank Accounts

BoA checking	1,279.23	CD	2,759.68
CD	3,484.38	CD	2,915.28
CD	2,428.21	Post office	99.10
Savings SDCCU	50.00		
Total Assets	13,015.88		

Liabilities & Equity

Pre-Paid Dues	6,168.00	Property Ins.	0.00
Total Liabilities	6,168.00	Equity	6,847.88
Total Liabilities & Equity	13,015.88		

Excerpts from San Diego City Manager's Report on Amateur Radio Antenna Regulations – Discussion and Conclusion

The following excerpt is from an October 27, 2005 report in which the City Manager's staff recommended action to the Committee on Land Use and Housing concerning amateur radio antennas. Full report available at

http://clerkdoc.sannet.gov/RightSite/getcontent/local.pdf?DMW_OBJECTID=09001451800bbfb

–W5NYV

[There is] a 1985 FCC opinion that notes, "State and local regulations that operate to preclude amateur communications in their communities are in direct conflict with federal objectives and must be preempted." The opinion goes on further, "antenna height

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Losing Your Antenna Rights

A Letter to the Editor by Dr. Howard White KY6LA

Many of you have probably already heard about the Poway City Council Meeting in December. Hams under the leadership of Charlie NN3V tried to get Poway to comply with PRB-1. Basically the Poway City Council said, "We don't care what the law is! We do not believe that antennas are needed for Public Safety. We do not want antennas and no antenna is going to ever be approved."

It was truly one of the most amazing and eye-opening displays of public official arrogance. Elected Poway public servants literally came out and flagrantly ordered their staff to ignore Federal and State laws. They effectively challenged the ham community to sue them in court betting that amateur radio operators could not afford to sue City Hall.

So much for our Federally and State Protected Antenna Rights.

Unfortunately the practice of banning Ham Antennas is now spreading to San Diego. Uninformed City Politicians listening to well-funded NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) forces have instructed the City of San Diego to draft new restrictive anti-Ham Antenna ordinances which will effectively make it impossible to erect an antenna. (*An excerpt from the report Howard is referring to starts above left. –W5NYV*) They intend to regulate the placement of antennas so that it would practically preclude antennas from fitting on most private properties within the city limits. This will require you to go through an unreasonably expensive Site Development Permit process (*see page 4 column 2 –W5NYV*), which will include a public hearing that you will have to pay for and environmental impact studies that you will have to pay for. So, even if you can afford the antenna be prepared to spend thousand of dollars in fees to apply for the permit.

Before you get too complacent and think that just because you do not live in the City or in Poway that your antennas are protected, remember that most of the areas of San Diego County usually follow the lead of San Diego City. So when San Diego bans antennas you can almost guarantee that the County and virtually every city in San Diego will follow suit.

Yes, Ham Antennas are supposed to be protected by PRB-1 at Both

continued on page 3

restrictions directly affect the effectiveness of amateur communications.” However, the FCC concludes the opinion with “local regulations which involve placement, screening, or height of regulations based on health, safety or aesthetic considerations must be crafted to accommodate reasonably amateur communications, and to represent the minimum practicable regulation to accomplish the local authority’s legitimate purpose.”

Staff believes that this opinion precludes the City from limiting antennas in any zone or location to a fixed height with no criteria, permit, or processing option to request taller antennas. While the City’s current regulations provides no clear regulation of amateur antenna height or placement, staff does believe that the City would be allowed to add additional regulations that establish under what circumstances the City would allow an antenna to be higher than limits established by the Municipal Code. To further support this position, staff explored the regulations of several California jurisdictions that regulate amateur radio antennas (Attachment No. 3). All of these jurisdictions have height limits for antennas ranging from 25 feet (Burlingame, CA) up to 75 feet (Newport Beach, CA). Many provide location restrictions precluding their placement in front yards and in required yard setbacks. Others require placement on the site to be in the location least visible to the public and nearby residences. Most of these regulations allow antennas through a ministerial (building permit process) if they comply with the height and location restrictions. All but one allow deviations to their regulations through a discretionary permit process such as a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Staff, therefore, believes the City could also adopt regulations that follow a similar scheme.

Under the City’s Municipal Code, there are currently three vehicles that can be used to request deviations from height limits, a Variance, a Planned Development Permit, and a Site Development Permit. The purpose of a Variance is to provide relief for cases in which, because of special circumstances applicable to the property including size, shape, topography, location, or surroundings, the strict application of the development regulations would deprive the property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under the same land use designation and zone. Because of this, a Variance would not be the appropriate approval process to request an antenna that exceeds the height limit because the findings to support the Variance could not be made. The purpose of the Planned Development Permit (PDP) is to establish a review process for development that allows an applicant to request greater flexibility from the strict application of the regulations than would be allowed through a

Variance process. The PDP is used to encourage imaginative and innovative planning and to assure that the development achieves the purpose and intent of the applicable land use plan. The PDP was also established to create development that would be preferable to what would be achieved by strict conformance with the regulations. While this permit does specifically allow for requests to exceed height limits, the specific findings that would need to be made would not be applicable to antennas and would be difficult for decision makers to justify. The purpose of the Site Development Permit is to establish a review process for proposed development that, because of its site, location, size, or some other characteristic, may have significant impacts on resources or on the surrounding area, even if developed in conformance with all regulations. The intent of these procedures is to apply site-specific conditions as necessary to assure that the development does not adversely affect the applicable land use plan and to help ensure that all regulations are met. Site Development Permits can currently be used to grant height deviations but only for projects that provide affordable housing.

Staff believes that a similar height deviation like that allowed for affordable housing projects could be added to the Site Development Permit process. The purpose of the permit and the analysis that goes along with it are consistent with this approval process. To trigger the permit, amateur radio antennas could be added to each base zone as a limited use. This would direct applicants to development regulations in Chapter 14 of the LDC that establish antenna height requirements, placement criteria, and would identify that deviations may be requested via the Site Development Permit. This would be consistent with how other similar types of development are regulated by the LDC.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends that LU&H direct staff to prepare draft regulations that allow antennas as a limited use if they comply with specific limitations on height, placement, operation, and proximity to adjacent structures. These regulations would require a Site Development Permit (Process 3 Decision level) when an applicant requested a deviation from these regulations. Specific findings that substantiated the need to deviate for the purpose of promoting amateur radio communication would also be developed. Staff believes that this type of regulatory scheme would be consistent with the FCC opinion and would not preclude amateur radio communication in the City.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Halbert Development Services Department Director

Approved: Ellen Oppenheim Deputy City Manager

I Have My License... Now What?

If you or anyone you know is interested in Amateur Radio, this is a Golden Opportunity to learn more about the intriguing world of Amateur Radio.

~ Learn More About ~

- The Palomar Amateur Radio Club – PARC
- ARRL San Diego Section
- Amateur Radio Emergency Services- ARES
- Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service – RACES
- American Red Cross - Amateur Radio & Disaster Services
- QRP and Homebrew
- DX - Worked All States, Islands On The Air, Etc.
- Amateur Television & Satellite
- Digital Modes
- How to use a repeater
- How to use a phone patch
- How to start and join a conversation
- How to make an emergency communications
- What to do in a declared emergency

Please join us March 1st, 2006 at 7:30pm at the

**Carlsbad Safety Center
2560 Orion Way (far east end of
Faraday) Carlsbad, CA**

**Listen in on 146.730
Regardless of your level of radio
experience this is a Golden
Opportunity! ♥**

SCOPE Challenge

January Challenge: Ermanno Signorelli knows that Mary's father has five daughters, four of whom are named Nana, Nene, Nini, and Nono. What is the name of the fifth daughter?

Mary

Honorable mention to all that guessed "Nunu"! February's challenge is somewhere in the newsletter. Find it and answer it, and you will be credited in next month's SCOPE! Got a photo to submit for a Photo Challenge? Let us know! scope@palomararc.org ♥

Continued from page 1- Guest Editorial by KY6LA

the Federal and State levels. And yes the Courts have always ruled for the Hams. But these uninformed public servants are trying to find loopholes to make sure that we never put up any antennas. Remember the NIMBYs vote and have money to influence politicians.

The only way we can protect our communities is by organizing such as we are doing on the San Diego Bio-terrorism and Disaster Defense Council. We must raise funds to hire lawyers and fight the well-funded NIMBY forces. Not only by informing elected officials as to how important our antennas are for public safety, but also by showing that we are a strong and well-organized force ourselves.

San Diego Bio-Terrorism and Disaster Defense Council was organized to protect our Neighbors from Bio-Terrorism and Disasters by ensuring that Emergency Preparedness is not compromised by well-meaning but uninformed individuals and groups that propose legislation counter to the operational needs of Emergency Preparedness.

The most immediate threat to our Emergency Preparedness Programs are the attempts to restrict Amateur Antennas in our communities. Our well-funded opponents rely on "Junk" science and misinformation rather than documented and substantiated facts to support their positions, which for the most part are invalid under PRB-1.

This Council is dedicated to overcoming obstacles to our providing for our community's safety by education of our elected officials and neighborhoods. You can join the efforts to protect your antennas and our communities by sending an email to:

SDDisasterDefense-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Currently this Council is attempting to become part of the SANDARC Legislative Oversight Committee under the chairmanship of Steve Early. ♥

Club Membership Report

New Members Joining PARC:

KI6BPM, KI6BLH, in addition, 2 members reinstated their membership, which had lapsed. Thanks to all!

We need new members. I notice a number of hams attended our January meeting that are not current members. We hope some of them will join. You may be interested to know that our Christmas meeting in 2004 had 58 in attendance, and last Christmas, we had 57 sign in. The January meeting of 2005, 62 signed in, in 2006, 52 were present.

Al

W6GNI

♥

President's Message for February 2006

Steve Early AD6VI

PARC President 2006

The year has had a good start. In January, we had a good presentation on Software Defined Radio, by Brian Comer, KF6C.

This month's program is the PARC Birthday Party, 70 years young and going! The presentation will be a PARC History Lesson, followed by cake and possibly ice cream.

This is an opportunity to hear the stories of how PARC became the club that it is. Bring a HAM friend and an appetite.

One enduring aspect of PARC has been service to both the Amateur Radio Community and local Communities at large. We (amateur operators) have a long and proven record of Public Service, by providing communications during both Emergencies and Public Events. One of the fundamental purposes of the Amateur Radio Service is to provide Emergency Communications (see Part 97).

In the past few month's, we (the amateur radio community) have seen a concerted effort by some of our shortsighted neighbors (and people across town, too) to end our rights to erect reasonably effective antenna systems at our homes. While there are valid arguments for and against both sides of this issue, we must work together to protect both the assets we already have and the assets that we would like to develop.

Please get involved in your community planning process and encourage your local planning departments and elected officials to help protect our ability to communicate, regardless of local conditions.

To this end, PARC will be working through the San Diego County Amateur Radio Council (SANDARC) to educate our elected officials and community planners as to our needs and wants. Please stay tuned, as this issue is likely to dominate discussions this year.

On March 1st, the presentation will be geared towards new and returning HAM's, titled: "I have my license, now what..."

This is an opportunity to call on friends that have just received their licenses, or have not been on the air in a long time. It is also an opportunity to meet HAMS that are looking for advice. The presentation will cover such things HAM etiquette, resources, GOTA, Amateur Programs and available training. Bring a new ham. Again, bring a friend to the PARC Birthday party.

See you there,
Steve Early, AD6VI

What is a Site Development Permit?

Michelle W5NYV

Site Development Permits are mentioned in the report to the city manager on Amateur Radio Antenna Regulations (*see page 1 of this issue of SCOPE for excerpts from this report. – W5NYV*). The San Diego Municipal Code explains the purpose of a Site Development Permit (SDP) in Article 6 Division 5.

<http://clerkdoc.sannet.gov/legtrain/mc/MuniCodeChapter12/Ch12Art06Division05>

According to the code (found at the address above), "The purpose of the Site Development Permit procedures is to establish a review process for proposed development that, because of its site, location, size, or some other characteristic, may have significant impacts on resources or on the surrounding area, even if developed in conformance with all regulations. The intent of these procedures is to apply site-specific conditions as necessary to assure that the development does not adversely affect the applicable land use plan and to help ensure that all regulations are met."

An SDP is required when the development is on or adjacent to environmentally sensitive lands, when occurring with certain other types of development, or when historical resources or districts are involved. In order for the SDP to be approved, certain conditions (called findings) must be met. These include things such as complying with regulations with the Land Development Code and making sure the development isn't detrimental to public health. The majority of these findings have to do with protecting the environment and historical resources. However, an important aspect to the discussion is the following sentences from the San Diego City Manager's Report. "Site Development Permits can currently be used to grant height deviations but only for projects that provide affordable housing. Staff believes that a similar height deviation like that allowed for affordable housing projects could be added to the Site Development Permit process."

Study and input is necessary in order to ensure that language allowing reasonable antenna support structures prevails. It would seem that the goal should be that most reasonable antenna support structures be defined as to *not* trigger an SDP, due to the burden that obtaining an SDP incurs on the amateur radio operator. The SDP code, located by following the link in this article, is short enough to read in one sitting, but complicated enough to require some study. It's strongly recommended reading for anyone becoming involved in San Diego Tower Rights as it may be the vehicle of regulation.

Repeater Information

PARC Trustee: AB6QT
 52.680 W6NWX -0.5 MHz
 Autopatches: 146.730-, 147.075+, *147.130+, *447.000-
 PKT: 145.050s (PALOMAR/W6NWX-1) 146.700-
 (Duplex Pkt) PALBBS/EMG use 145.070/146.700-
 (W6NWX-3/PALBBS)
 ATV input: 915 wbfm, 2441.25 wbfm
 ATV output: 1241.25 MHz am
 Intercom: 146.415 PL 79.7 nbfm
 Affiliated: 224.380-, 224.940 KK6KD (HARS) 447.050-,
 145.260 KK6KD (HARS)
 146.175+ N6FQ (Fallbrook ARC)
 Linked to: 445.600-, 224.900- WD6HFR (Corvair/220
 ARC), 446.140- WB6FMT (123.0) Vista

†under repair * 107.2 Hz PL Tone

California's PRB-1

What does it say?

Here is the text of California's PRB-1 law, AB-1228. This law relates directly to the discussion of tower rights in California.

SECTION 1. Section 65850.3 is added to the Government Code, to read:

65850.3. Any ordinance adopted by the legislative body of a city or county that regulates amateur radio station antenna

structures shall allow those structures to be erected at heights and dimensions sufficient to accommodate amateur radio service communications, shall not preclude amateur radio service communications, shall reasonably accommodate amateur radio service communications, and shall constitute the minimum practicable regulation to accomplish the city's or county's legitimate

purpose.

It is the intent of the Legislature in adding this section to the Government Code, to codify in state law the provisions of Section 97.15 of Title 47 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which expresses the Federal Communications Commission's limited preemption of local regulations governing amateur radio station facilities. ♥

License & Class Information

Register 5-7 days in advance for the following test sessions.

- PARC Testing is in Carlsbad on the 2nd Saturday of the month at 9:30am in the Carlsbad Safety Center. Test sessions may be cancelled if nobody pre-registers. Contact Rusty Massie AA6OM at (760) 747-5872 or dunedancer@cox.net.

- EARS Testing is in Escondido on the Last Saturday of the month at 9:00 am at Fire Station #1 Escondido Fire Department. The address is 310 North Quince Street, Escondido CA 92025.

Contact Harry W6YOO (760) 743-4212 or W6YOO@amsat.org.

- "The ARRL Technician Class Course for Ham Radio Licensing" Course No. EC-010 \$99 ARRL members / \$139 non-members. Courses begin on the first and third Tuesday of each month. For more information, email cce@arrl.org or via regular mail to ARRL CCE, 225 Main Street, Newington, CT 06111. ♥

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Mysterious Interference in the San Diego AM Band

On Wednesday night, January 11, 2006, unidentified wideband interference blanketed the AM broadcast band in San Diego "with peaks all over the dial" according to one report. The interference was heard from 150 kHz to over 5 MHz and obliterated weak out-of-town AM broadcast signals. KNX was said to be 90% covered by static and noise. These observations were made along Highway 52. A second report (this from an

experienced broadcast engineer) noted RFI "from 540 kHz through 5 MHz [that] came on after 6 PM, 1/11, Wed evening. In the morning the hash was gone and [the] band was back to normal Thursday night... The RFI could NOT be nulled out and was as strong OUTSIDE as inside a house. This is using battery portables with circuit breakers on the house pulled. It was also noticed on several radios and driving in [a] car. Pretty widespread. So strong a slight hash was heard under KOGO." We could be dealing with military interference, spurs from a powerful broadcast transmitter or some peculiar kind of in- power-line device or devices. The FCC has been notified. – Bob Gonsett W6VR♥

Dec Meeting Goodie Givers W6YOO

Harry, KD6RHD John, W6GNI Al,
KE6ZLY Glenn, KB6NMK Jo, W6ASP
Preston, KE9SP Jukka, WB6BFG Bill,
N6UWW Ellen, KG6WLF Amy

Jan Meeting Goodie Givers KG6RCW

Tom, KI6AOL Christy, WB6BFG Bill,
N6UWW Ellen

PARC 2006 Board

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(12.6) Wanted: A 500 to 1KW amp for disabled ham. Please phone (760-724-0049) or e mail (sstires@cox.net) for details. Thank you...WA5ACE

(10.25) Tempo S-2 (220 Mhz) Handheld with SS32 PL & DTMF built in. With Chgr. \$40.00. Galaxy Electronics Phone Patch PR-550, \$20.00. Texas Instrument TI-2000 Slim Line Laptop w/3.5 disc drive, 20 MB HD w/ac adaptor (ideal for Portable Packet). \$20.00, Epson C60 Ink Jet Printer, New/Unopened, \$40.00. Avenger 4000 Commercial Alarm System, w/8 PIR's, keypad, 2 sirens, 1 sonic, \$100.00 OBO, 13 Inch Sony Industrial Video Color monitor Model PVM-1390, \$30.00 OBO, International Audio/Video Color Processor w/ac adaptor \$30.00 OBO. 54" Oak Roll Top Desk, excellent Condx \$350.00, Sentry Fire Proof Combination Safe, \$50.00. Heath SWR Meter Model HM-102 (needs meter cover) \$10.00. IBM Clone Pentium II clone, 350 Mhz, 6 GB HD, \$50.00 OBO. 250 Laser Movies, \$7.00/ea List available, first come first served. Contact Dennis K7DCG 858-748-9046 or email K7DCG@aol.com

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Model BA-8 (for RG-8, RG-213, 9913 and similar cables up to 1/2" dia. \$15+tax+\$6 S&H/order.

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See catalog at www.Palomar-Engineers.com
Please check our complete ads in **QST**, **73**, **CQ**, and **World Radio** magazines.



FOR SALE: Hy Gain - Hy Tower 5 band (80 thru 10) vertical antenna. This is a freestanding antenna that requires a 3-foot square cement base. It has S.S. hardware. I'm asking \$300.00 and you pick up in Fallbrook. The first two sections break down into 10-foot sections and the rest is tubular. **Call Dale (W6IWO) at (760) 728-6800**

(9.1) Congratulations! You have found the February Challenge. Here it is:

In North Africa, they say a fellow can buy a fifth of champagne for just a few pennies. Ah - but here's the catch! You gotta pay for the bottle - and bottles cost plenty there.

A bottle filled with champagne costs \$1.05. But the bottle costs \$1 more than the contents.

How much does the champagne cost?

<http://www.ac6v.com/>

This wonderful ham radio website, run by Rod AC6V, is a fantastic online resource for amateur radio information. With 700 topics, 6,000 links, and 132 pages, it weighs in at the top of the scale as one of the best topical indices of ham radio webpages. The site gets well over 1,000 hits a day. Readers from 127 countries have visited www.ac6v.com. It's been in operation since 1997 and is highly praised by visitors. Unlike many sites that post reams of links, only to let them rot over time, Rod sees that the links at his site are checked monthly. This removes one of the most irritating things about resource sites - the dreaded 404 Page Not Found. Thanks to Rod, things are easier to find on the ever-growing and often chaotic Internet. Thanks Rod, for doing such a great job and providing such a wonderful service to the ham radio community!

Committee Chairpersons

ARES Info	Tony	KC6YSP
ARES Net	Dennis S.	K7DCC@amsat.org
Attendance	Al	W6GNI@amsat.org
ATV	Art	KC6UQH@amsat.org
Auction	Tom M.	KG6RCW@amsat.org
Badges New	Al	W6GNI@amsat.org
Batteries	David	
	BK6EBYDAT@Gerry.Palomar.caltech.edu	
BBS Monitor	Bill B.	N6FMK@amsat.org
Billing Ads/etc		KB6NMK@amsat.org
Contest Info	Dennis V.	N6KI@amsat.org
Control Ops	Filled	W6NWG@amsat.org
Del Mar Fair	needed!	
EmComm	Harry	W6YOO@amsat.org
	Dennis V.	N6KI@amsat.org
Field Day	needed!	
Field Day Tech	John K.	WB6IQS@amsat.org
Inventory	Dennis B.	KG6TUJ@amsat.org
New Member	Christy M.	KI6AOL
Nets	PARC	Board@palomararc.org
Newsletter	needed!	W5NYV@amsat.org
Patch Info	Stan	W9FQN@amsat.org
Patch Electronics	Jerry H.	WB6FMT@amsat.org
Picnic	Mark R.	KF6WTN@amsat.org
Power AC/DC	Mike P.	K6MRP@amsat.org
Programs	Dennis B.	KG6TUJ@amsat.org
Publicity	needed!	
QSL Cards	Harry H.	W6YOO@cox.net
RACES Info	Jo A.	KB6NMK@amsat.org
RED Flag	Steve	AD6VI@amsat.org
Repeater Site	Mike P.	K6MRP@amsat.org
Repeater Tech	Mike D.	AB6QT@amsat.org
SANDARC	Jin/Steve	NE6O/AD6VI
Seller Table	John K.	WB6IQS@amsat.org
Asst. SWD Dir	needed!	
Testing VE	Rusty	dunedancer@cox.net
Trustee	Mike D.	AB6QT@amsat.org
Web	Paul W.	www.palomararc.org



Solar Cycles part 2

Michelle W5NYV

You'll recall from the December 2005 SCOPE that we talked about Smoothed Sunspot Numbers (SSN). High SSNs are better for high frequencies, and low SSNs are better for low frequencies. We're currently near the bottom of solar cycle 23. It all sounds so simple. Nice pretty graph, reasonably predictable behavior, let's get on the air! However, SSNs are only the beginning of the ways the sun affects propagation. Let's look at another big influence on the radio environment. Solar flares!

Solar flares burst out from the sun because of the collapse of magnetic gradients. This is analogous to the creation of violent storms here on earth that are due to the collapse of pressure gradients. A cold front crashes into a warm front, pressure builds up, air rushes through, a supercell forms, and SKYWARN activates their warning system. On the sun, magnetic fields form around developing sunspots. When there is a collapse, tremendous amounts of energy are released, and NOAA (National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration) activates their warning system. Want to know something that solar flares do to the sun that terrestrial storms do not do to the earth? They can cause sunquakes, the sun equivalent to our earthquakes.

Solar flares are like Hollywood Explosions. They're enormous, dramatic, and make great photographic stills. They are also Big Trouble for HF communications. Earth-facing solar flares that produce large numbers of protons can induce unexpected high currents in earthbound pipelines, cables, and transmission lines. They have knocked out communications, affected satellites, and made compass needles act whacky.

It only takes eight minutes for the cloud of Pure Proton Power to reach the earth from the sun, so being able to measure and predict damaging solar flares will only become more important with our increasing reliance on communications. The solar flare of March 6, 1989 was the largest ever recorded. It lasted for 10 hours, which is a very long time compared to the more typical 15 to 30 minutes that most flares last. The history of solar flare measurement indicates that that flare will hardly be the last one we experience.

When researching solar flares, look for representations of the intensity given by letters. The letter A stands for the lowest intensity flare. Going up in intensity, flares are rated as follows: B, C, M, and X. ♥

Public Relations & PARC

Michelle W5NYV

As long as I have been a member of the Palomar Amateur Radio Club, the position of Public Relations or Publicity Chair has remained unfilled. This is one position among many that the club has had some trouble keeping staffed. This isn't an uncommon problem in groups such as ours. Volunteers are a commodity in short supply, and it is easier to fill some positions than others. Whole books (e.g. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* by Robert D. Putnam, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000) have been written about how we as a society are becoming more isolated from each other, with membership in almost all types of groups and organizations declining.

In general, we as Californians belong to fewer organizations that regularly meet, know fewer of our neighbors, go out with friends less frequently, and even socialize with our families less often than even a few short years ago. A very interesting statistic from the book referenced above is that "Americans are bowling more than ever before, but they are not bowling in leagues." In other words, it's not just a catchy title. People really are bowling alone.

The reasons for these changes in our community and civic life are several. Demographic and technological changes have exerted tremendous pressure on the way we spend time together as well as the way we spend time separately. The rise of the internet, widespread availability of computer games, explosion of television channels, changes in family structure, evolving social roles, increases in the average number of hours worked per week, and a shift in where people tend to live are only the beginning of the influences that shape our social pursuits. Much like bowling, amateur radio is an individual pursuit that is traditional done in a social setting. However, our clubs and organizations are at risk for some of the very same reasons that bowling leagues are. Palomar Amateur Radio Club is approximately half the size that it was at its high-water mark. There is no one explanation for the decline in membership over the years. Perhaps the needs of amateur radio operators have changed in San Diego County. Although we like to think we've kept up with the changes, maybe we haven't done all we can to be the best organization we can be. Perhaps our current size is even ideal!

However, one of the many downsides to declining membership and lack of organization is the unfortunate effect it has on our rights to pursue our hobby. Although regulations exist protecting our right to have a reasonable type of antenna

support structure (*see page 5*), without an organized and public presence, these rights lack a powerful advocacy that cannot be adequately recreated by individuals acting alone.

Successful Public Relations has a powerful membership creation effect. Membership doesn't increase in an organization simply by repeating, "gosh we need more members" amongst ourselves. People are attracted to groups and organizations for many different reasons (primarily fun reasons). People find out about groups through personal contact with members, by initiating a search for a group based on individual interest, and often through noticing publicity generated by the group's activities.

We can rely on the vast majority of our members to be on the lookout for anyone that expresses an interest in joining. I've noticed that's pretty much a given in PARC. We have a very nicely done website that shows up in internet searches, and we have fliers that are periodically placed around town at locations that amateur radio operators might frequent. It's the last category – active and organized publicity – that we seem to be falling a bit short on these days. Let's fix that!

Public Relations, in addition to indirectly protecting the hobby by increasing the number of organized people that practice it, can also directly contribute to the promotion of the hobby by developing regular contact with elected and appointed public officials. This aspect is vital during times like the one we're facing now. Namely, when a government begins to examine issues such as tower ordinances that may or may not excessively restrict our ability to have an antenna of any reasonable type. You can read about Dr. Howard White's efforts to organize a special-interest group to educate and effect change as the process begins here in San Diego starting on the first page of this newsletter. Based on the efforts being made towards influencing what will be a very important phase of antenna regulation debate, I would suggest that it is time for Palomar Amateur Radio Club to renew our commitment to the Public half of the term "Public Service", and update our goals for publicity for and advocacy of our hobby at the local level. **This necessarily includes Public Relations leadership.** Please consider volunteering. Better yet, volunteer someone else that you know would do a good job! ☺

Good government, like charity, begins at home. Regardless of the amount of time or money you possess, every one of us is capable of doing two very important things. First, by educating ourselves on the basics of the issues at hand. Second, by contacting our elected officials to politely and competently express ourselves concerning issues such as antenna ordinances. ♥

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About our Organization

The Palomar Amateur Radio Club serves the Amateur Radio community of San Diego County California with repeaters located on Palomar Mountain. The club has monthly meetings, Field Day festivities, an annual auction, and many other fun and interesting functions. All are welcome at our club meetings and on-the-air interactive radio nets which now feature discussion groups on hiking, sailing, microwave, off-roading, as well as traditional message traffic and emergency communications nets (RACES - ARES - MARA).

73 and hope to CU you on the air! -NN3V

Meeting Location and Time

This month's General Meeting will be held on February 1st, 2006 (the first Wednesday of each month) at the Carlsbad Safety Center. The meeting will be the celebration of the 70th anniversary of PARC! Talk-in on 146.730 MHz repeater. Meeting starts at 19:30. Ridesharing and coordinating for dinner beforehand often occurs on the repeater on Wednesday afternoons. Everyone is welcome!