SCOPE

THE PALOMAR AMATEUR RADIO CLUB NEWSLETTER

Poway Hams need our help!

Hams in Poway worked diligently this past year to get the Poway City Council to enact a Poway amateur radio ordinance that is compliant with Federal FCC regulations.

At a Poway City Council meeting held on September 3rd, the City Council directed the City planning staff to work with Poway amateurs to develop the ordinance and present it to the City Council for approval. The Poway hams are now working this matter with their counterparts in the City.

The plan now is that the Poway City development department will hold a "City Council Working Group" on Tuesday, February 18th. This will be an open City Council meeting at which the public will be invited to present their opinion about the proposed ordinance. It is likely a large public attendance will take place.

Poway hams need a large presence of San Diego County hams in Poway supporting their amateur radio cause!

Detailed time and schedule of events will be announced as soon as possible. Announcements will be carried out in newsletters (if known in a timely manner), via emails, web posts, and blogs of ham radio, on repeaters in San Diego County, etc.

Please mark your calendars to be in Poway on Tuesday February 18th. 2014 at 6:30pm to support our fellow hams.

The meeting will take place at Poway City Hall, 13325 Civic Center drive, Poway, CA.

Centennial QSO Party
A Great Way to Work All States

The ARRL Centennial QSO Party is a year-long operating event that celebrates hams making contacts. In the end you will have accumulated points, worked new stations and made new friends all over the world.

California's slot is on February 12th. Host call sign is K6NA, and is sponsored by the Southern California Contest Club.

The Centennial QSO Party is made-up of two main activities: (1) W1AW operating portable in each state and most territories; and (2) The Centennial Points Challenge which is the accumulation of points from qualifying contacts made throughout 2014. To have a score listed online in the Points Challenge competition, logs must be submitted through the Logbook of the World (LoTW)system.

W1AW will be on the air from every state and most territories, and it will be easy to work WAS working only W1AW portable operations. This is the first ARRL-sponsored operating event where every member is worth at least one point, so work as many points as you can during 2014! Earn awards based upon points, working all states or working W1AW portable in every state and territory. This is an on-the-air event like no other.

http://www.arrl.org/centennial-qso-party

Broadband Hamnet Update

PARC Members Conrad, KG6JEI, and Andre, K6AH, are part of the Broadband Hamnet (BBHN) Core Team and they have been working the past few months on porting the Linksys-based HSMM-MESH software over to the Ubiquiti AirMax line of devices. As this is being written they are set to release their version BBHN1.0.1. It will support the following devices:

· Rocket M2
· Bullet M2 HP
· AirGrid M2 HP
· NanoStation Loco M2 (NSL-M2)
· NanoStation M2 (NS-M2)

These devices will have an enormously positive impact on the utility of BBHN networks. They are environmentally rated to near-military specifications and run several times the RF power of their mesh predecessor, the Linksys WRT54-series devices.

You may recall Andre's presented to PARC last February on the subject. Look for his project, the San Diego HSMM-Mesh Working Group, to kick-off again, with this more suitable hardware, later this year.

More information can be found on the BBHN website,

http://www.broadband-hamnet.org/

Short video above NX6T contest site. This is a view from the NN6X drone. Watch for antenna rotation. Submitted by Dennis N6KI.

Checking in on the Repeater Site

Repeater site visit 28 January 2014. Weather was spectacular. No limbs down, tension on guy wires acceptable. Photos by Michelle W5NYV.

PC Tips from Dick K6KAL - Contesting!

Not all Hams contest, but if you do, here are some hints to help things go more smoothly (from the PC point of view).

1) Turn off any Anti Virus software, Anti Malware and Firewall software. These tend to slow down the system, as many Loggers use some form of database, and with each disk or network access, the Anti Virus software wants to check out things.

2) Confirm that Indexing is turned off. If left on, the Indexing software may decide to start, and use system resources and disk access to complete its task.

3) Disable the power save feature on all USB Hubs. This could cause an interruption while the system tests to see if another port or hub could be shut down. It would not touch the port you are using for the radio as it would be active, but all others would be fair game.

4) Turn off windows updates. This could tie up your interconnection used for DX cluster spots, and again as with other tasks, load up the disk drive access load.

5) If your PC has a built in modem for connection to a phone line, 'disable' it. The PC system when it starts would have tried to assign com3, and this would interfere with your radio, keyer or logging software.

6) Check your systems clock. As some PC's get older, the clocks do not function as one would expect. Many PC's still use an internal battery as backup to the CMOS. If the clocks are off, it is usually an indication that your battery is going.

7) Some laptops have 'Adaptive Brightness' running which monitors ambient light and adjust the screen brightness. Turn it off.

8) The following services can be safely disabled using 'Control Panel> Administrative Tools> Services. Double Click on the service, and click the 'Stop' button. This will temporarily stop the service until the next time the computer is started. Using Windows 7, I have fewer than 50 processes running. On my XP system there are less than 30.

Below is the list of services that can be safely disabled.

```
Adobe Acrobat Updater, Bonjour
Service, Bluetooth Support
Service, Fax, Google Update
Service, Home Group Listener,
Home Group Provider, iPod
Service, Logitech Bluetooth
Service, Microsoft Antimalware
Service, Mozilla Maintenance
Service, Microsoft Software
Shadow Copy Provider, Parental
Controls, Quality Windows
Audio Video Experience, Remote
Registry, Secondary Logon,
Skype Updater, Telephony,
Volume Shadow Copy, Windows
BioMetric Service, Windows
Backup, Windows Defender,
Windows Time, Windows Search.
```

Well that is about it for the easily controllable items. Most have been the subject of earlier PC Tips. Now for some more obscure settings.

A) When using a PC with 'Real serial' ports, turn off the FIFO function. This is normally used to 'Buffer' data streams with extremely high speed devices (> 38.4). With our Ham radios, 'CAT', 'CI-V' and other protocols, the data exchanges are small, and buffering offers no advantage.

B) Turn off any background tasks. That is to say, when most new software packages are loaded, they insert a small (always running) utility to help their product start faster. A good example of software that use these starters Apple, Adobe Updater, Java (Updater), iTunes, Quicktime, Skype, most wireless printers, and many Microsoft products. (I will cover these is a future tip). Removing the startup part of their software does not change the function, it only takes a few seconds longer to start. These running processes 'Monitor' the system, waiting to 'start' their application. The fewer of them that are running, the more 'Real' memory the system has to use for your favorite Logger.

C) On older systems running XP, do a 'Disk Defrag' sometime before the contest. This will help with the overall disk access performance.

D) Windows 8 works just fine with most logging programs. One note is that if you choose to use a tool like VSPE (Virtual Serial Port Emulator), install the 32 bit version. Not all 32 bit drivers will work on the 64 bit version. This utility allows a radio to be accessed by more than one program at the same time.

E) Most contesting loggers use data files to check call signs. One site for these files is 'Super Check Partial' (http://www.supercheckpartial.com/) where you will find the most recent files. There is another file contains the 'Country'. This can be found at (http://www.country-files.com/cty/), along with installation instructions for each logger.

F) If you are part of a 'Multi' station contest, check out your network connections. Each Radio / PC will have a station number set somewhere in the software. Confirm that as a log entry is made, the other PC can see the entry. Read the logger documentation and locate the '10 Minute timer' as some contests have a band change restriction. And one last hint, 'Have Fun' and enjoy the pile-ups.

The following is a list of some of the many loggers that are in use. Find the one that works for you. Some loggers do not do contesting well, that is to say, they do not support all contests. If you are into contesting, find a good one, or run two separate applications, one for daily DX, and the other for contests.

Popular Loggers: (some designed for heavy duty contesting *)
For the PC: WriteLog*, N1MM*, WinTest* (Like the old DOS CT on steroids), Ham Radio Delux (freeware version), Logger32, NA by K8CC (DOS), TR4W, XMLog, DX4WIN, SwissLog, TR4W,

And for Apple: iLog, MacLoggerDX, Aether Log Book, Rumped Log Ver.3*

And yes Linux: CQRLOG, CLLOG, DBLog, and a bunch more at : (http://radio.linux.org.au/?sectpat=logging)

Other utilities that may be useful:
Audacity, an audio editing application to helps create wav files (http://audacity.sourceforge.net/), VE7CC-1 Web Cluster software (http://www.ve7cc.net/), WinTelNetX another DX cluster application, to name a few.
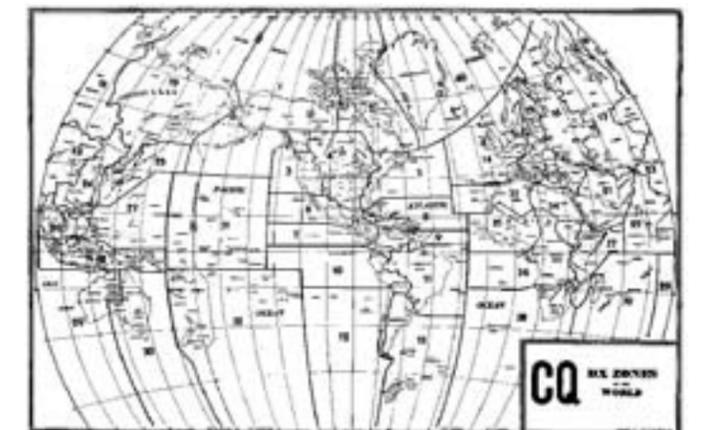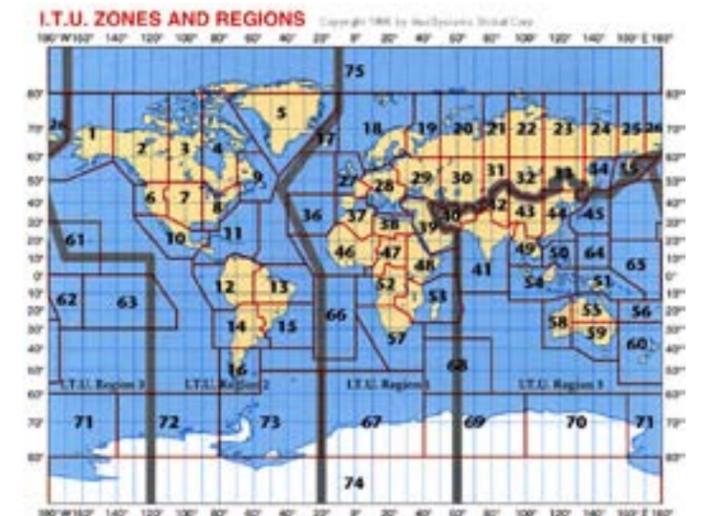
Here are a number of useful web sites:
QRZ, DXScape, dxwatch, DXMaps, DXforMe, LOTW, ClubLog, eQsl, and do not forget to add a link to your favorite logger.

What ever your flavor is for the Radio Sport, have fun with it. Although you may not be a DXCC hunter or Worked all states enthusiast, PC or Apple based logging tools can make things easier.

I would suggest that all Hams use LOTW (Log Book of the World) to record your contacts. While you may not be trying for any awards, the other operator may. There is also eQSL, and Club Log, which are easy to use and becoming more popular.

One last note: Keep a pencil and paper handy, as computers some time have a mind of their own, and like to test one of the Murphy's Law with you at the worst possible time. Continue to log contacts by hand until the PC operation can be restored.

Featured Program:

At 7:30pm on 5 February 2014, Palomar Amateur Radio Club will present a program. Joe, K6JPE will do

a presentation on APRS. Come at 7:00pm to socialize before the program.

We look forward to seeing you at the Carlsbad Safety Center, 2560 Orion Way, Carlsbad, CA.

Sign up for the PARC Email Lists:

http://www.palomararc.org/mailman/listinfo