



April Newsletter

Volume 08, Issue 4

April 12, 2008



WOSV

*St. Cloud Amateur Radio Club
Celebrating 90 years on the airwaves*

Message from the Prez—The Prez Sez ...

I volunteer. Before you get carried away and put me to work, I mean that I volunteer to be a club member and a club officer. This has nothing to do with your yard work, sorry.

It does have to do with membership. April is the month that we ask all members to stay in good standing and pay their dues of \$20. It's voluntary. Nobody twists your arm. We won't turn you away from club meetings for not paying, or Field Day, or the hamfest (but you need to buy a ticket).

Membership is voluntary. It's been pointed out to me that no ham is required to be a member of a local club or the ARRL. Having fun with ham radio is independent of club membership.

Wait now, I'm not trying to talk anyone into leaving the club. Just the opposite. I want all of you to be members and encourage other hams to join. I enjoy getting together and talking about contacts, antennas, projects, contests, new modes, new equipment.

What you say doesn't have to be earth shattering. Maybe it's a really great contact with an old friend in Ohio, or a new friend in Texas. The new gizmo you just built, bought or borrowed. Even a problem you're having. If it inter-

ests you it's likely it will interest the rest of us.

Each year we have 60 to 80 paid members from the surrounding area. From Willmar to Little Falls, Sauk Center to Foley. Yet, there are around 200 licensed hams just in the Saint Cloud area. In this month of membership I'd like you to think of ways to draw in more hams, more members to the club.

What can we do to make being a member and attending meetings more interesting?

Our next meeting is April 17 at 7:00 PM. We'll have a PSK31 demo.

See you, and maybe a guest, there.

73
Scott - n0uv

April is the month that we ask all members to stay in good standing and pay their dues of \$20.

Dates to Remember:

April:

Board Mtg	10th
General Mtg	17th
May General Mtg w/Auction	15th
June General Mtg	19th
Field Day	28th & 29th
July Board Mtg	10th
July General Mtg	17th
August Picnic	9th
August General	21st
Sept General Mtg	18th
Oct Board Mtg	9th
Oct General Mtg	16th
Jamboree on the Air (JOTA)	19th
Nov Annual Mtg w/Auction	21st
Dec General Mtg	18th

Announcements:

- Join the Clubs' Email Reflector
See Page 2
- BPL Update
See Page 3
- Join the Clubs' E-mail Address List
See Page 4

March General Meeting Minutes

Meeting was called to order on March 20th at 7:00 p.m. Introductions were made.

The February meeting minutes were accepted as printed in the March newsletter.

The Treasurer's report was as follows:

Checking	5,214.90
Savings	1,322.69
Rest. Savings	612.43
CD	<u>1,000.00</u>
Total Balance of	\$8,150.02

Treasurer's Report was accepted.

Once again, The Hamfest went well and we hope to looking at organizing better for next year.

It was reminded that in order to erect the tower at the clubhouse, first a variance needs to be applied for and approved. A 1999 ordinance indicates that any standing structure needs to be able to fall in any direction and still remain on the property. This is not possible at the clubhouse and therefore a \$200 non-refundable fee will need to be paid along with the required

forms to receive a variance from the city.

Discussion took place in regards to a storage shed at the clubhouse, the existing shed is in rough shape. A cargo shipping container is not allowed in the city. The maximum size for a storage shed without a building permit is 10' X 12'. While discussion involved potentially building a garage, a shed would be less expensive and there would be more flexibility in moving it, etc. The topic will be reviewed at the April board meeting.

In reviewing upcoming dates, it was noted that there will be an auction at the May 15th meeting, donated items are welcome. Also June 28th/29th will be field day, held at the clubhouse this year, volunteers are being sought to help organize the event and/or take care of the food.

A club member indicated that they received word that due to a retirement, the 440 repeater at the school will need somebody to takeover responsibility of it.

Another club member asked about potential interference on 80 meters locally. It was questioned if gas meter readers were causing it, either by the frequency they operate or by switch mode power supply noise. City water meters were also questioned. Other possible interferences experienced by other members are bad insulators on power poles which can be resolved by working with the power company and also street lamps which have bad starters, causing flickering.

It would be nice to have more demonstrations at meetings. In April we will have a PSK demonstration and perhaps packet or slowscan tv sometime in the future.

Dave, WOHE won the World Radio Subscription and the \$5 prize would have gone to Jon Asplund, NOJSA if he had been present.

It was reminded that the copper-tone side-by-side frig at the clubhouse is for sale for almost nothing.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:50.

Respectfully submitted by Mike Parker, KCOUEA.

Interference locally on 80 meters?

Field Day held at the Clubhouse June 28th & 29th!

Stay in touch! Join the club's e-mail Reflector:

1. From your email account that you would like to send and receive Radio club emails at, send an email to: scarcmn-subscribe@yahoogroups.com In the body of the email include your name and ham call sign.
2. Then check your email for a new email, almost immediately there will be an email which will tell you to reply to that email to confirm your request to join, reply to the email. This will alert Brad and Mike of your request to join.
3. Once Brad or Mike checks their email next they will see your request to join and will submit their approval for you to join.
4. You will receive a confirmation email indicating that you were approved and that you have joined the Yahoo Group/ the Clubs' E-mail Reflector. You will then receive messages sent to the email reflector by other members. To send a message to all members on the email reflector send your message in an email to: scarcmn@yahoogroups.com

It Seems to Us — Imaginary Numbers

By David Sumner, K1ZZ—April 1, 2008

Just as generations of bankers have known that it's a bad idea to lend money to people who can't pay it back, generations of electrical engineers have known that -- unless you want it to radiate -- it's a bad idea to put radio frequency energy on an unshielded, unbalanced conductor. Financial experts will be arguing for years about whether the federal government inadvertently contributed to the subprime mortgage crisis and whether it should have acted earlier to head off a credit meltdown, but at least the government wasn't blatantly cheerleading on behalf of unsound lending practices.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said with respect to BPL. On the basis of wagonloads of wishful thinking and precious little else, the current Administration -- through the Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and even the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission -- has devoted considerable effort to touting BPL as the "third wire" that would bring affordable broadband into American homes. Despite the rhetoric, it hasn't happened. According to the latest FCC figures -- which come from reports that service providers are *required* to file -- fewer than 5,000 broadband customers received service via BPL as of December 31, 2006.

Everyone makes mistakes. If today the Administration simply admitted that BPL has not lived up to its expectations and announced a shift in focus to other, more promising broadband technologies, we would be the first to applaud. An opportunity to do so came on January 31 with the release of the NTIA report *Networked Nation: Broadband in America 2007*. This report sets out to demonstrate that Administration policy has contributed to substantial achievement of the vision of universal, affordable access to broadband.

The report's Executive Summary notes that according to FCC data, the total number of fiber and power line connections grew by 789 percent over a three-year period but then states, "Fiber optic lines, however, appear to be almost entirely responsible for this expansion." So much for BPL, one might think. However, the term "BPL" is mentioned *45 times* in the 60-page report. While the report acknowledges that "BPL has yet to make significant inroads in the broadband marketplace," it goes on to claim that "it holds promise for the future." A couple of sentences later, a description of the Manassas, Virginia BPL system is given -- but you have to read the endnotes to learn that the May 2006 article from which the description is taken was entitled "Powerline Promises Broken on Broadband." The NTIA report chose not to dwell on the fact that the article painted a dismal picture of BPL's future. (Speaking of Manassas, the BPL provider there recently announced that it has cut its office hours to just two hours per day.)

The inspiration for this month's title, "Imaginary Numbers," is the following quotation from the NTIA's report:

"Reliable BPL subscribership figures are difficult to find. The FCC's most recent data identify fewer than 5,000 BPL customers as of yearend 2006. That figure appears low, however. TIA [The Telecommunications Industry Association] estimates 200,000 current BPL subscribers..."

Five years of experience in dealing with BPL systems as a radio interference source has given the ARRL considerable insight into the BPL industry. Based on that experience the FCC's figure of fewer than 5,000 BPL customers is entirely credible, so we were curious where the "estimate" of 200,000 current BPL subscribers came from.

(Continued on next page)

Current Board Members

President

Scott Hall - NOUV

Vice President

Art Carlson - WAONJR - Elected

Treasurer

Jerome Dahlager - KCOWCF - Elected

Secretary

David Nick - KD7III - Elected

Mike Parker - KCOUEA - Acting Secretary

Trustees

Leonard Hopkins - KCONZF (2008 - 10)

Harold Hoffman KCOFAX (2007 - 09)

Larry Snodgrass - KCOSMM (2006 - 08)

Past President

Jack Maus - WOMBD

Webmaster

Phil Jorgensen - NIARM



Pictured from left to right:
Art Carlson - WAONJR (Vice President),
Scott Hall - NOUV (President)
Jerome Dahlager - KCOWCF (Treasurer)

It Seems to Us — Imaginary Numbers Continued

We contacted TIA and learned that the figure came from a market study prepared by a telecommunications research consultant, based on research conducted by a second firm. We contacted the second firm and asked how the figure was derived. They responded: "The 200,000 number for BPL subs did not come from [us]. In our US broadband forecast, we estimate about 231,000 broadband subscribers in the 'other' category besides DSL, cable, satellite. Other includes BPL, but is not solely BPL."

We then contacted the consultant. They responded, "Our source for the BPL figures was [the second firm]." When that firm's denial was shared with them they responded, "It was our understanding that BPL was the principal component as it was the first item listed."

In other words, **the figure of 200,000** -- a figure cited by NTIA because they regarded the FCC figure as too low -- **came out of thin air**. We immediately called this to the attention of the Acting Administrator of the NTIA and requested a correction. Two weeks later there has been no response.

Our quarrel is not with TIA, which was invited to comment but declined to do so. Their telecommunications market study was comprehensive and mentioned BPL only in passing; surely they neither intended nor expected that it would be cited as an authoritative source of BPL data. The fault we find is with the NTIA, for giving credibility to this fictitious figure. The NTIA compounded its error by citing yet another "forecast" of 400,000 BPL customers by the end of 2007 -- a figure that is drawn from a year-old Web promotion for a \$3,000 "industry report."

We would really like to know why the NTIA chose to dig around for sources of inflated BPL figures rather than to acknowledge the simple truth that the marketplace has opted for better solutions than BPL. What interest remains in BPL is largely in utility applications, not in consumer broadband service.

To be fair to the surviving BPL manufacturers, in closing we must note that they now generally acknowledge the potential severity of our interference problem and have made considerable progress in engineering their devices to avoid the amateur bands. We just wish that the Administration was as interested in addressing the interference problem as it is in cheerleading for a technology after the fans have left the stadium.

Article from ARRL website: <http://www.arrl.org/news/features/2008/04/01/1/?nc=1>

Field Day Station Locator Up and Running

<http://www.arrl.org/contests/announcements/fd/locator.php>



(Apr 5, 2008) -- This year, for the first time, the ARRL has put together a Station Locator to help amateurs or those interested in Amateur Radio find a Field Day site near them. According to ARRL Field Day Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND, many amateurs have been asking for something like this for many years: "So far, 287 groups in 45 states and 3 Canadian provinces had registered their Field Day site with the Station Locator." If your group would like to be a part of the Station Locator Service, it's easy to get started. Just go to the Field Day Station Locator Web site and follow the instructions.



E-mail Dave at W0DZW@charter.net with your Call sign, First name and E-mail address to be added to the compiled list of club members e-mail addresses. These will be shared with club members only.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Annandale Triathlon

Information Coming soon
Contact person will be Lee, WBOTRA

Tour of Saints

July 13th
Bike ride event (not a race) - Volunteers to provide radio communication for bike repairs, injuries and to support operations of the event.
Contact person is: Scott, NOUV — n0uv@arrl.net

St. Cloud Amateur Radio Club

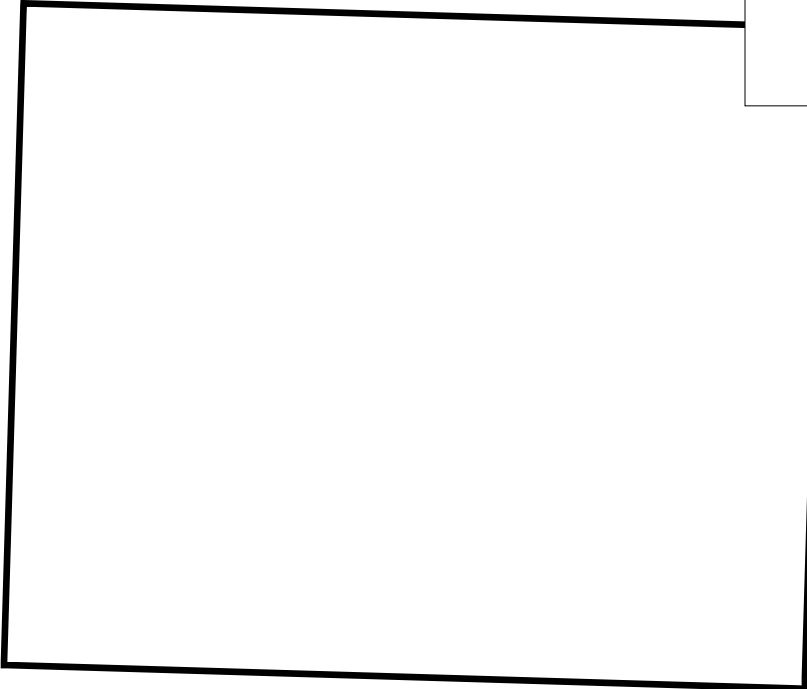
401 4th Street North
Waite Park, MN 56387



Phone: 320-255-1410

E-mail: webinfo@w0sv.org

E-mail Reflector:
[http://groups.yahoo.com/
group/scarcmn/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/scarcmn/)



Information About the St. Cloud Amateur Radio Club & Area Repeaters

The St. Cloud Amateur Radio Club is 85 years strong!

It all started back in 1921 with Robert "Bob" Witchen, WØSV, licensed as 9SV.

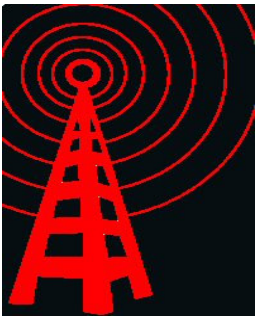
The St. Cloud Radio Club call is registered as WØSV in honor of Bob Witchen, first licensed ham in the area.

Since then, the club has grown by leaps and bounds serving in many useful ways among the surrounding tri-county area.

For a more detailed history visit our website at: www.w0sv.org

73

<u>Repeater</u>	<u>Offset</u>	<u>Tone</u>	<u>Location</u>
147.015	+	PL 100.0	Collegetown, MN
146.940	-	Autopatch	St. Cloud, MN
146.835	-	PL 85.4	St. Cloud, MN
147.105	+	PL 85.4	Avon, MN
224.800	-	No Tone	St. Joseph, MN
444.350	+	No Tone	St. Cloud, MN
443.650	+	PL 85.4	Avon, MN
145.270	-	No Tone	Paynesville, MN
146.520		Simplex	Nationwide Simplex
146.640		Simplex	Nationwide Simplex
442.225	+	No Tone	St. Cloud, MN
147.225	+	No Tone	Sauk Centre, MN



Please email the editor, Mike, KCOUEA at KCOUEA@yahoo.com with any corrections or additions to the newsletter.

