

# THE COMMUNICATOR

# Newsletter of the TAMIAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Incorporated 30 November 1984 - Venice, Florida



#### -- OCTOBER 2004 --

### - PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE -

(President John Fyke-VE6AIV is still basking up at his new lakefront home, safe from the world of TV, telephones, etc. As such, we will go back in time some 90 years for the words of another ham radio luminary, Hugo Gernsback.

Lifestyles have changed significantly in the USA since Hugo wrote these words. Very few Moms are at home in the kitchen anymore when boys get home from school. Families had more disposable income from the Dad's wages, as the Income Tax as only a year old. Kids could have chemistry sets and other means to develop their interests in science, rather than being inundated by today's TV which can only dull their minds from creative thoughts. Undoubtedly, electronics and wireless are vastly more prevalent today than in 1914, however, where are the innovators?

The gist of Gernsback's editorial, however, is as true today as when he penned it. The foundation of all children is built at home. It is certain that, as they mature into adults, their ultimate outcome in life will reflect upon that foundation.)

# A SERMON TO PARENTS

"Keep Your Boy at Home"

The strongest ties in life are the home ties. It makes a lot of difference, bot to you-his parents-and to him too, when a young man grows up, whether his thoughts dwell with sweet pleasures upon his old homestead, or whether the remembrance of his home and his past home-life is painful to him.

How many well-meaning, fond American parents develop the home idea in the young boy? Are you not a bit to blame if your boy, when still in his 'teens, is seen too much in questionable company and in questionable resorts? Your boy is not naturally inclined to stay away from his home and his family. He is usually forced out, for want of something to keep his growing, inquisitive mind occupied; it's the something that he can't find at his home that forces him out. So out he goes. He drifts on, away from you,—the heart-strings loosen more and more, you—his parents—wonder and wonder and the boy becomes a stranger before you realize it.

Then It Is Usually Too Late to Mend

This is-alas-only too true a picture of the average American youth. And it is so easy to keep your boy at home. He doesn't want much, just something to dabble, to tinker, to experiment with and to keep his inborn insatiable curiosity satisfied.

You know your boy likes nothing better than this, he was born for it; are you going to club it out of him?

He has the right idea—the home idea; somewhere in him is a spark alive that needs but proper fanning to create a future Edison, a coming Marconi.

Electricity, especially Wireless, are positively the strongest home-magnets today. His workshop, his small electric laboratory of his Wireless Den are the most powerful home attractions for the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Boy.

Electricity and Wireless are the coming, undreamed of, world-moving forces. Don't kill the electric spark in your boy. It costs little to keep it going, and some fine day it will pay you and your boy handsome dividends.

Only one boy in 300 is interested in Electricity and Wireless. Your boy has the electric "bug." Thank the stars for the fact that he is so deeply interested in the greatest art the world has ever known. It's a distinction, besides:

"It Keeps Your Boy at Home."

(From http://www.earlyradiohistory.us/1924your.htm)

# - OCTOBER MEETING -

The October TARC meeting will be at 7:00 PM (NOTE the return to our former meeting time!!!) 14 October 2004 in the Community Room of The Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice, 601 South Tamiami Trail (Business US 41), across from Bon Secours Hospital. Following the business meeting, a program of interest will be offered. Try to get out to our meeting and show your support of the Tamiami Amateur Radio Club.

# - TARC, EARS VE SESSIONS COMBINE -

Effective this month, the Englewood Amateur Radio Society VE Team has disbanded. This was brought on by two factors: EARS is discontinuing membership in the Englewood-Cape Haze Chamber of Commerce, where the VE sessions were held, and requests for exams in Englewood have been minimal and erratic.

Consequently, in our immediate area, only the Tamiami Amateur Radio Club VE sessions will remain active. Those sessions are held the second Saturday of each month at 9:30 AM in the Conference Room of the Venice Public Library, 300 So. Nokomis Ave. Examiners who made up the Englewood VE Team have been invited to participate in these sessions.

Information on our VE exam sessions is available from Jack Sproat-W4JS at 475-1929 or at <a href="wdfs.4">wdfs@juno.com</a>.

"Without bigots, eccentrics, cranks and heretics, the world would not progress." - Frank G. Burgess (1866-1951)

### TAMIAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB Minutes of the Meeting 09 September 2004

Vice President Peter Knorr-N2IZD called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led the pledge of allegiance to the US flag. There were no visitors or new members present.

MINUTES - Bob Retter-KD4SOJ moved to forego reading of the minutes of the 19 August meeting which were published in the September issue of *The Communicator*, seconded by Don Fontaine-N4ET, and passed.

CORRESPONDENCE - Secretary Jack Sproat-W4JS commented that *The Communicator* had been reformatted for e-mail distribution, however, as he had a problem with the conversion to Adobe Acrobat, conventional mail will still have to be used until expertise is available to remedy the problem.

TREASURER'S REPORT - Treasurer Bob Officer-WA6WAY reported that, due to his hurricane-related activities at the Red Cross, he had not gotten the August bank statement from the post office. Subsequent to our August meeting, he did deposit \$58.50 and paid out \$49.48 for newsletter printing and postage, and \$21.00 for three call sign badges, bringing the current account balance to \$3466.68.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

SUNSHINE -Marty Horowitz-W4MHH reported that he had just visited Bill Rockwood-KE4ZAK, who was admitted to Bon Secours Hospital with a serious breathing problem due to an enlarged thyroid blocking his windpipe.

VE TESTING - Jack-W4JS commented that a VE session is scheduled for this Saturday with a potential candidate.

REPEATER/TECHNICAL-Pete-N2IZD reported that he had disabled the EchoLink facility last weekend to avoid interference with Red Cross traffic on our repeater due to Hurricane Frances. Several members commented that the repeater was off for several days but nobody knew the cause.

NET OPERATIONS -No report.

CLUB GRANTS AND DONATIONS - Bob-WA6WAY reported that he had been promised the papers transferring the decommissioned Red Cross communications trailer to TARC, however, the potential threat from Hurricane Ivan sidetracked that action. Bob added that he has a working arrangement with a person who has proven experience in professional grant applications, and who will help us apply for grant money to refurbish and equip the communications trailer.

LIAISON TO SERC/ARES -Jim Frey -W8ISZ commented that the initial communications routine for Frances was a repeat of the volunteer efforts for Hurricane Charley. Pete-N2IZD read an e-mail from Ron Wetgen-WD4AHZ regarding the need for communicators at shelters in the Venice area. A sheet was passed around for volunteers to sign up.

LIAISON TO RED CROSS - Bob-WA6WAY stated

that he had spent five days at Red Cross headquarters during Hurricane Frances, with Blake Hudson-KE4SGK at North Port High School and Jim Prentice-WA2MZF at Pineview School. The shelter communicators advise Red Cross HQ of the number of people at the shelters; in turn, the Red Cross keeps the County advised such that additional shelters are opened when 50% capacity is reached.

LIAISON TO FGCARC - Recognizing that it's a long drive to/from Tampa for a rather short meeting, there is still no one interested in volunteering to attend the FGCARC meetings.

LIAISON TO QCWA - Jack-W4JS reported that 15 members and friends of Suncoast Chapter 53 attended the 01 September informal lunch at the Panda Pavilion in Venice. Regular luncheon meetings will start in October and any TARC members interested in the QCWA were invited to attend or join the chapter.

OLD BUSINESS - Nothing on the agenda.

**NEW BUSINESS - Nothing** 

COMMENTS - Jim-WA2MZF offered comments on the use of WinLink for emergency communications. This mode uses PACTOR on HF and conventional packet on VHF. Jim is willing to give an introductory presentation on this mode and, if there is sufficient interest, arrange for a guest speaker well versed on the subject.

Bob-WA6WAY stated that he has a SEDAN mode up and running at his home station.

ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 PM. There were 13 members present.

PROGRAM - A video of the 2000 A52A Bhutan DXpedition was shown.

Jack Sproat-W4JS, Secretary

#### - CALL SIGN STATUS -

As of 27 September 2004, call signs issued sequentially in the Fourth District were up to:

Extra AI4HK General/Technician KI4HEB

(From N4MC's Vanity HQ Web site, <<u>www.vanity-hq.com></u>)

# -BURGHARDT'S FOUNDER, SK-

Stanley Burghardt-W0IT, founder of Burghardt Amateur Center in Watertown, South Dakota, died 22 August at age 93. Burghardt started out selling ham radio parts in 1937 and in the 1950s expanded his Watertown operation into a popular Amateur Radio equipment supplier that has been a regular *QST* advertiser for the past 50 years. Burghardt sold the business to Jim Smith-W0MJY, but remained active in the company until 2002

(From The ARRL Letter, Vol. 23, No. 36)

"A good end cannot sanctify evil means; nor must we ever do evil, that good may come of it." - William Penn (1644-1718)

# CURRENT/PENDING DX ACTIVITY AND PROPAGATION FORECASTS

|                               | CURREN             | r and/or SC. | HEDULE                                | D DX AC | TIVITY |       |                |                |             |          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|---------|--------|-------|----------------|----------------|-------------|----------|
| COUNTRY - CALL SIGN           | ACTIVITY<br>PERIOD | BEAR-<br>ING | HF BANDS and BEST OPENING TIMES (GMT) |         |        |       |                |                |             |          |
|                               |                    |              | 80                                    | 40      | 30     | 20    | 17             | 15             | 12          | 10       |
| Vanuatu - YJ0/VK4TI           | Now to 10 October  | 262          |                                       | 06-13   | 04-14  | 12-14 | 14-15          | 20-23          | 20-21       | NO       |
| Fiji - 3D2??                  | Now to 10 October  | 258          | 06-12                                 | 05-13   | 04-14  | 18-02 | 18-00          | 19-23          | 20-21       | 20-23    |
| Mayotte - FH/ZS6WPX           | Now to 13 October  | 295          | 23-03                                 | 22-04   | 21-04  | 18-21 | 18-20          | 16-19          | 18-19       | 16-18    |
| Benin - TY5M                  | Now to 21 October  | 85           | 22-06                                 | 21-07   | 20-08  | 12-00 | 13-22          | 14-20          | 16-19       | 16-19    |
| Seychelles - S79RJ & S79SO    | Now to 22 October  | 68           | 23-02                                 | 22-03   | 21-04  | 17-23 | 18-21          | 15-19          | 18-19       | 18-19    |
| Wake Is - KH9/K7ASU & AH8H    | Now to 23 October  | 297          | 06-12                                 | 04-14   | 03-15  | 19-00 | 19-00          | 20-21          | 20-21       | NO       |
| Ghana - 9G5JH                 | Now to 13 November | 87           | 22-06                                 | 21-08   | 19-02  | 13-23 | 14-21          | 15-19          | 15-19       |          |
| Cameroon - TJ3FR & TJ3SP      | 06 - 20 October    | 83           | 22-05                                 | 21-07   | 20-04  | 12-00 | 14-21          | 15-19          | 15-19       | NO       |
| Wallis Is - FW7AQR & FW7OV    | 09 - 19 October    | 260          |                                       | 04-13   | 03-14  | 23-01 | 18-23          | 19-22          | 19-21       | 17-19    |
| West Kiribati - T30KU         | 09 - 18 October    | 277          | _                                     | -       | 05-14  | 13-15 | 19-00          | 19-22          |             | 20-21    |
| Lord Howe Is - VK9L           | 09 - 23 October    | 249          | 07-12                                 | 06-13   | 06-13  | 03-13 | NO             | NO             | 20-21       | 20-21    |
| St Helena - ZD7F, ZD7J & ZD7T | 15 - ?? October    | 300          | 22-06                                 | 21-07   | 20-08  | 12-00 | 14-21          | 15-21          | NO          | NO       |
| Chesterfield Is - FK/C??      | 15 - 24 October    | 263          | 07-12                                 | 06-13   | 06-14  | 13-14 | 13-14          | 0000           | 16-20       | 16-20    |
| Cambodia - XU7ACE             | 15 Oct - 05 Nov    | 349          | 11-12                                 | 10-13   | 12-14  | 13-14 | 14-18          | 16-17          | NO          | NO       |
| Bhutan - A51WD & A51HFU       | 18-23 & 26-31 Oct  | 8            | 23-00                                 | 21-01   | 12-13  | 00-01 | 13-14          | NO NO          | 16-17       | NO       |
| Tuvalu - T20/DL2AH            | 20 - 24 October    | 267          | 05-12                                 | 04-13   | 04-15  | 18-01 | 18-23          | 19-22          | NO<br>19-21 | NO       |
| St Pierre-Miquelon - FP/VE7SV | 23 Oct - 02 Nov    | 39           | 21-12                                 | 00-24   | 12-23  | 14-20 | 16-18          | 16-18          |             | 19-21    |
| Reunion Is - TO5M             | 23 Oct - 15 Nov    | 91           | 22-02                                 | 21-03   | 20-03  | 17-23 | 17-21          | 15-19          | NO          | NO       |
| South Orkney Is - VP8SIG      | 26 - 31 October    | 163          | 00-08                                 | 23-09   | 23-04  | 19-00 | 15-20          |                | 17-18       | 17-18    |
| The Gambia - C5/ON4ACA        | 27 Oct - 10 Nov    | 88           | 22-08                                 | 20-09   | 17-01  | 13-23 |                | 22-00          | NO          | NO       |
| Mozambique - C91Z & C91Y      | 28 Oct - 01 Nov    | 101          | 22-04                                 | 21-05   | 20-05  | 17-23 | 15-19<br>17-21 | 15-20          | 16-19       | 16-19    |
| Palau - T88QQ                 | 29 Oct - 03 Nov    | 306          | 09-12                                 | 07-13   | 12-15  | 14-16 |                | 14-17          | 16-18       | 16-18    |
| South Georgia Is - VP8SGK     | 02 - 07 November   | 155          | 23-08                                 | 22-09   | 22-04  | 13-00 | 15-16<br>15-18 | 15-16<br>15-17 | NO<br>NO    | NO<br>NO |

Updated 29 September 2004, based on 29 September 2004 QRZ DX, 27 September 2004 The Weekly DX and DX Alert No. 184

Notes: ??? = Call sign not yet known, ++ = Phone Only, \*\* = CW Only, NO = No opening forecast, Time in bold = Best Band(s) for opening Long path bearings and opening times (if any) are underlined. All forecasts calculated via W6ELProp V.1.03 propagation software, <a href="http://www/qsl.net/w6elprop/">http://www/qsl.net/w6elprop/</a> by Sheldon C. Shallon-W6EL, with Solar Flux and K-index varied in accordance with NOAA 27-day forecast.

### -SOLAR ACTIVITY DURING SEPTEMBER -

During the month of September, the Solar Flux ranged from 88 up to 131, with a mean value of 103.1 (vs. 112.3 for September 2003 and 175.9 for September 2002). The Aindex was  $\leq$  10 on 19 days during that period.

#### - SEPTEMBER PROPAGATION -

During October, solar activity is predicted to be at predominately very low to low levels. The geomagnetic field is expected to range from quiet to active. From 11 to 15 October, a recurrent high speed coronal hole wind stream is expected to produce occasional active periods. The Solar Flux should range from a high of 120 on 06 October to a low of 95 by the end of the month, with a monthly average of about 103. (From NOAA Weekly Highlights and Forecasts, 28 September 2004 and NOAA 27-Day Space Weather Outlook Table, 28 September 2004)

DX propagation on 10 and 12 meters will be rather sparse (as noted in the above table), being limited to transequatorial openings. Fair to good conditions can occur on the 15-meter band, generally into the Pacific and western Africa.

DX openings should be possible on 20 meters both day and night. Conditions should peak from about an hour or two after sunrise and again during the late afternoon and early evening-including long path propagation. When conditions are Above Normal, expect 20 meters to remain open for worldwide DX during most of the night. Openings on 17 meters will generally be similar to those on 20, however, of

shorter duration and with less probability and signal strength.

The hottest DX band will be 40 meters, good for DX openings to many areas of the world during the hours of darkness as the static levels decline. The 30-meter band will have similar characteristics, but will generally open earlier and close later.

The 80-meter band should be a good DX band to most areas of the world during the hours of darkness and into the sunrise period.

Conditions should be *Above Normal* 2, 9, 20, 24-27 and 29 October; and *High Normal* 3-8, 10-12, 18-19, 21-23 and 30-31 October. (From "Propagation", Tomas Hood-NW7US, October 2004 *CQ*)

# - CHESTERFIELD IS. DXPEDITION -

This DXpedition by a German team is undoubtedly welcome, however, the forecast propagation is not heartening. Following is their proposed band plan:

CW - 3504, 7004, 10102, 14029, 18080, 21029, 24900, and 28029

**SSB** - 3799, 7055, 14195, 14225, 18120, 21295, 24940, and 28445.

They will never listen on their transmit frequency, but will always listen up.

There are two QSL managers; SSB via DL5NAM, and CW via DL4XS. For direct QSLs, only NEW style IRCs or US\$2 are acceptable.

# **CONTESTS & ACTIVITIES**

| Contest/Special Event  | Times/Dates                        | Bands/Modes                   | QSO With  | Exchange                     |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Oceania DX Contest   | 0800 GMT 09 Oct<br>0800 GMT 10 Oct | 160 - 10 Meters<br>CW Only    | Only Stations in Oceania                          | R/S/T+Serial<br>Number       |
| Worked All Germany Contest                                   | 1500 GMT 16 Oct<br>1459 GMT 17 Oct | 80 - 10 Meters<br>Phone & CW  | German Stations Only                              | R/S/(T) + Serial<br>Number   |
| RSGB 21/28 MHz Contest                                       | 0700 GMT 16 Oct<br>1900 GMT 16 Oct | 15 - 10 Meters<br>CW Only     | United Kingdom Stations Only                      | R/S/T + Serial<br>Number     |
| CQ World Wide DX Contest  m October 2004 Worldradia and Octo | 0000 GMT 30 Oct<br>2400 GMT 31 Oct | 160 - 10 Meters<br>Phone Only | DXCC Entities (QSO with USA for zone credit only) | R/S + CQ Zone (F) is Zone 5) |

From October 2004 Worldradio and October 2004 QST.

# - CQ WORLDWIDE DX CONTEST -

The CQ WW DX Contests are undoubtedly the most popular HF contests on the air. As such, they present excellent opportunities for any station to get on the air and practice their abilities. The "Big Gun" contest stations are looking for as many QSOs as possible, and they will listen intently—especially the second day of the contest—for any potential QSO that can help their score.

It's really simple to get involved. Just get on the DX station's frequency and give your call sign when he stands by. There's no need to give the call of the DX station—he knows who he is, and it just takes up extra time. When the DX replies with your call sign, he will say "5/9" and give his CQ Zone. You then just respond, "QSL, you're 5/9/05. Good Luck" He then knows you are in Zone 5, here in sunny Florida. What could be any simpler?

Just because you get into the contest (or any other contest) doesn't mean you have to submit a contest log to CQ magazine. You're really just practicing, seeing how you station is getting out, and-perhaps-competing against yourself. After all, if you don't utilize your station when it's just for fun, what would you do if there was some true necessity to get your station on the air? How will you know if your antenna(s) really radiate, or are just oversized dummy loads?

# - "BIG STICK" NOW NI4CE -

Effective 29 August 2004 the Big Stick Repeater System began using its new call sign, NI4CE. The new call sign is the first part of the effort by the West Central Florida Group, Inc.—the sponsor of the system—to establish its own identity, independent of the ARRL West Central Florida Section. The repeater system will continue to support Section Nets and communications efforts.

The WCFG considers the new call sign emblematic of the of the service the facility can provide, i.e., "Necessary Infrastructure 4 Communications Emergencies." As the latest policy change of the FCC, terminating its Declarations of Communications Emergencies on the 40- and 75-meter bands, the presence of the NI4CE Repeater System as a regional communications resource will be even more important in the future. Further information is available at http://www.ni4ce.org. (From 06 September e-mail from Paul Toth-NA4AR, WCFG President)

# - N1RA SETS SAIL ONCE AGAIN -

Marie and Bob Avrutik-N1RA are again hitting the high seas the end of OCtober, and Bob will again be operating maritime mobile from their Crystal Cruise Line ship. Their itinerary will take them into the western Mediterranean and along the northern coast of Africa, as per:

| •      | The state of the s | phus.       |
|--------|--|-------------|
| Date   | Activity/Location  | Call Sign   |
| 30 Oct | Cruising in Atlantic   | C6ARA/MM    |
| 31 Oct | Malaga, Spain  | EA7/NIRA    |
| 01 Nov | Cadiz, Spain   | EA7/N1RA    |
| 02 Nov | Casablanca, Morocco  | CN/NIRA     |
| 03 Nov | Agadir, Morocco  | CN/NIRA     |
| 04 Nov | Cruising in Atlantic   | C6ARA/MM    |
| 05 Nov | Las Palmas, Canary Is.   | EA8/N1RA    |
| 06 Nov | Tenerife, Canary Is.   | EA8/NIRA    |
| 07 Nov | Funchal, Madeira Is.   | CT3/NIRA    |
| 08 Nov | Cruising in Atlantic   | C6ARA/MM    |
| 09 Nov | Arrive in Portugal   | No Activity |
| 74     |  |             |

Propagation to all these locations is quite similar. Based on a Solar Flux of 100, the best times for openings are as follow:

| Band | GMT         |
|------|-------------|
| 40   | 2000 - 0800 |
| 30   | 1200 - 2330 |
| 20   | 1300 - 1930 |
| 17   | 1500 - 1830 |
| 15   | 1600 - 1800 |
| 12   | No Opening  |
| 10   | No Omening  |

Bob prefers to be about 25 - 30 kc up from the low edge of the CW bands, and will try to work Phone up in the General portion of the phone bands. Propagation should be much better than when Bob cruised the British Isles during the summer of 2003, so listen and give Bob a shout if you hear him on the air.

# -CANADIAN MORSE UPDATE -

Industry Canada is soliciting comments from Canadian hams regarding deletion of Morse code as a qualification for HF operation. Radio Amateurs of Canada (Canada's IARU organization) recommends that Canadian hams support the deletion, leaving it as a voluntary qualification since some countries may require Morse credit for reciprocal operation.

(From The ARRL Letter, Vol. 23, No. 36)

# - WIFI VIS-A-VIS BPL -

(The following is taken from two newspaper articles: "Whole cities as Internet hot spots?--WiFI revolution spreads" by Neal Pierce in the 12 September 2004 Englewood Herald Tribune, and "Taking home comforts along—Truckers cross over to Wi-Fi Internet connections" by Doug Bell of the Dallas Morning News, in the 03 October 2004 Englewood Sun. WiFi certainly looks like a more viable and less costly broadband provider than does BPL, which is abhorred by Ham Radio operators)

From Corpus Christi, Texas to the Silicon Valley, at least 50 cities are actively exploring their own versions of remarkably inexpensive community-wide transmitter nets, mounted every few hundred feet on utility poles or light posts. The new technology, called WiFi (shorthand for wireless fidelity) is increasingly popular as manufacturers build receiver chips into laptops and handheld computers. The system permits a suitably equipped computer to connect to the Internet, without any wiring, while within the range of these wireless nets.

Philadelphia is debating making all 134 sq. miles of the city the world's largest wireless hot spot. Boston, Atlanta, New York, Los Angeles and other cities are considering parallel moves. In Europe, Amsterdam is set to go citywide with WiFi.

The "OneCleveland" campaign, led by Case Western Reserve University, boasts of the thousands of users already logged cost-free onto rapid broadband Internet service through the 4,000 wireless transmitters recently installed in the University Circle and Midtown districts and along the lakefront. Every coffee shop, museum space and park is now wireless enabled. IBM and Cisco are significant players in the OneCleveland initiative.

Broadband costs are amazingly low. The estimate for mounting a network serving all of Philadelphia is less than \$7 per person. City governments are logical WiFi network initiators, creating instant low-cost communications systems for every function from police reporting to meter reading. Once a city network is built, the same equipment can easily provide Internet service. Chaska, Minnesota is offering all its 7,000 homeowners city-run WiFI for \$16 monthly, versus typical commercial hardline broadband service costs of \$35 to \$65 per month.

Governments may be an initiator, however, it's not good at the challenges of deployment, marketing and maintenance required. There will be a period of experimentation with multiple partners-private providers, utilities, chambers of commerce, neighboring communities, schools and universities all playing roles.

WiFi operates on unlicensed frequency spectrum. (Therefore, none of these signals are within any Amateur Radio frequency.) This allows for fast experimentation, but also potentially jammed or overlapping signals if one city selects one vendor and its neighbor another.

Thousands of cross-country truckers are increasingly dropping the CB 10-4s for the 802.11's-wireless WiFi Internet connections right to their truck cabs. And major

truck stops have found that WiFi is becoming as vital to their clientele as diesel fuel and hot showers.

Many long-haul truckers have outfitted their rigs with an array of new electronic gadgetry. For instance, 49-year-old trucker Tom Wiles carries a Toshiba laptop equipped with a WiFi card and subscriptions for access points at Flying J truck stops across the country. There are 180 Flying J stops with WiFi signals. Hooking up costs \$1.95/hour or \$200 for a year's subscription. Truckstop.net has WiFi installed at more than 400 independent truck stops and has targeted about 3,000 for its \$250 annual service.

While on the road, away from the truck stops, Wiles uses Sprint PCS Vision cellular network. For \$80/month, he gets unlimited access to a data network available just about anywhere in the USA. He slips a Sprint Merlin PC card into the Toshiba and hooks right into the Internet.

(To this observer, WiFi certainly looks like the Internet access means that today's on-the-go consumers would prefer hands down over any potential BPL system. As always, in the private sector, price and convenience will be the deciding factor.)

#### - ARRL ON-LINE SURVEY -

On 13 August the survey asked, "How many pieces of test equipment do you own (volt meters, signal generators, etc.)." Of the 2486 respondents, only 90 had no test equipment while 596 claimed owning 10 or more pieces. The largest percentage, 1096 respondents, own from 2-5 pieces.

The 27 August query asked, "When was the last time you built your own transceiver, transmitter or receiver, either from scratch or from a kit?" The (c. 1991) demise of Heathkit seems apparent, as it's been more than five years since 1272 (43.6%) of the 2920 respondents have done such construction and that 818 (28.0%) never built such equipment. However, 294 claimed such construction this year, and 197 claimed to have built such rigs last year.

When asked on 03 September, "What prevents you from spending more time on the air?", 1249 of the 2879 respondents have either lost interest, have family obligations, or have other activities taking up their time. Only 185 claimed lack of equipment, and 221 blance their inactivity on poor band conditions. However, 1195 claimed more than one of the aforementioned reasons.

For the week ending 24 September, the poll asked, "Do you know the resistor color code?" Of the 3196 respondents, 2025 claimed they knew it. Perhaps the 902 who replied they once knew it but have forgotten it were more realistic. And, 244 admitted they never knew it, while 25 respondents had never heard of the resistor color code. (Most of those little buggers are so small anymore, who can even see the colors?)

"I think if they were holding an election right now, Chama, you would have a tough time getting a vote." - Joe Kidd (Clint Eastwood) to Luis Chama (John Saxon) in "Joe Kidd"

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# TAMIAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC. P. O. BOX 273 NOKOMIS, FL 34274-0273

The Communicator is a monthly publication of the Tamiami Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

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