



MINNESOTA MARSGRAM



Information for Minnesota Navy-Marine Corps. MARS Members

January, 2005

Volume 9, Number 1

NNN0ALL Minnesota

by NNN0GAZ Tim



Greetings,

Happy New Year and Best Wishes to you and yours for 2005. The past year seems to have passed by in an instant with many memorable moments for me both with my family and with the MARS group. Thank you for your continued participation and contributions to the MARS program. Over the past few weeks I have been thinking about where we need to concentrate our efforts in the next year. Finally after many revisions I've arrived at what I want to say and strive for in the year ahead...

Conduct a minimum of one emergency communication exercise per quarter

Gentlemen, this has been a stated requirement from the Chief for many years and it is a good requirement. The mission of MARS has always been and will continue to be "...to provide emergency communications." This year, we need to improve participation in our state and area drills. Al, NNN0GAZ TWO has provided us with workable, realistic drills during his tenure, unfortunately the results have been less than rewarding. The same stations seem to participate – albeit

never more than five and always the same callsigns, the number of messages never seems to tax the switch, and while we meet the requirement the results are less than stellar. This is by no means a reflection on Al, but instead a reflection on all of us. This trend cannot continue – as has been stated here a number of times in recent months we need **participation**.

When, not if, a situation presents itself, how do we expect to respond if we haven't practiced, think about it. If you haven't participated, you've missed some interesting messages, corrections, and practice. No member need be afraid to participate, no one expects an error free implementation, EEI, or SITREP message, heck even those of us that have been participating continue to find and make errors in our ecom work. This is why we have drills, to improve, find the weak spots and make improvements. Don't like the drills we've had – make some suggestions, we're all ears. **In the next year, if you are not already participating, take the time, put in some effort and**

get on the air during an exercise.

Conduct at least one mini-lesson per quarter on an evening net – remember, training is not just the job of the training officer, each one of us can pass on our experience and expertise to our fellow members

Continue to expand our digital capabilities by utilizing modes such as PSK31, MT63, etc., with at least one net (administrative or special) per quarter and one ecom exercise during the year to utilize a digital mode, other than PACTOR;

Improve our relations with various constituencies – such as the Association of Emergency Radio Operators (AERO), Minnesota Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (MNVOAD), and possibly local Emergency Operation Centers in various counties and the Minnesota Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management – these relationships are even more important now that the FCC has autho-

GAZ cont'd page 2

The MINNESOTA MARSGRAM is published for the benefit of Amateur Radio Operators in Minnesota and other interested individuals. The contents DO NOT reflect official Navy positions.

EDITOR: Bob Reid NNN0XYA / NNN0GAZ3

Snail Mail: 13600 Princeton Circle
Savage, MN. 55378-2625

E-Mail: n0bhc@aol.com
Minnesota State Coordinator:

Tim Isom NNN0XEE / NNN0GAZ

Content Contributions Welcomed and Encouraged

MINNESOTA TRAFFIC NETS

Designator	Frequency	Local Times
5G1B	Pri. NCE Sec. NBG Ter. NAR	18:30 Daily

MINNESOTA ADMIN. NET

5G4A	Pri. NCE	19:00 2nd Sunday
------	----------	---------------------

MARS DATA SYSTEM

Frequency	NCO AFSK/USB
NN0DVD	
Intranet site	http://www.communityzero.com/mnmars

GAZ *cont'd from pg. 1*

rized the deployment of BPL, only through the cooperative efforts of all agencies will the amateur community be able to prove their worth and the necessity for interference free radio frequencies;

Recruit, train and pass to full membership a majority of those individuals expressing an interest in MARS through national web page information requests, requests received through hamfest and word-of-mouth efforts by current MARS members. This goal requires our presence at amateur radio functions – hamfests, club meetings, etc.. If you are attending a hamfest, ask GAZ for brochures to leave on a table, if fellow hams are looking for ways to be of service – suggest MARS membership, there are a multitude of ways to encourage and motivate fellow hams to join our ranks;

Hold our annual Minnesota Area Conference with as many members as possible present to review and enhance our state program.

With the help of each and every member, these goals are achievable. I look forward to a New Year of opportunities for Minnesota MARS. Together we can take advantage of the opportunities and meet the challenges. Enjoy this issue of the Minnesota MARSGRAM.

BT OVER

**Be Prepared****Handheld outplays cell phone in accident's wake**

ARRL Letter 24Dec04

When Storey County, Nevada, Emergency Coordinator Randy Davenport, KA4NMA, got into an automobile accident early on December 10, he sure was glad to have his 2-meter handheld transceiver along. "I was going down a side road and hit a sheet of ice," he reports. "I fishtailed into the other lane and nearly hit a car head on! But for some reason, my Ford Explorer turned sideways going down the road, and it did not roll over." Instead, he ended up sliding off the roadway into a creek, sustaining some injuries in the process. "I had no cell phone service, so I grabbed my HT and put out a call on 146.61," he said (the antenna for his 2-meter mobile was broken in the accident). Richard Foreman, KK7SL, in Carson City, heard his distress call and dialed 911. "The fire and sheriff department was on the scene within minutes," Davenport said. "Lesson learned: Cell phones do not work everywhere. Always carry a 2-meter radio (or other band) of some sort—handheld with charged battery or mobile—for emergency communication."

- BT OVER

BPL Not A "Commercially Viable Alternative" To Cable, DSL

Officials of Internet service provider EarthLink told the FCC that broadband over power line (BPL) cannot compete with the dominant cable or DSL technology today or in the near future. A BPL industry spokesperson subsequently criticized the ARRL apparently for reporting the company's statements. EarthLink President and CEO Garry Betty and other company officials met November 16 with FCC Chairman Michael Powell and Commission attorney Aaron Goldberger to deliver an ex parte presentation on several Wireline Competition Bureau and Common Carrier Bureau proceedings.

"EarthLink discussed that it has invested in and is in trials with several potential 'third wire' broadband transmission paths to the home, including WiFi, WiMax, MMDS and broadband over power lines," EarthLink Counsel Mark J. O'Connor informed FCC Secretary Marlene Dortch in a November 17 letter. "However, EarthLink pointed out that cable and DSL still account for virtually all consumer broadband connections and that none of these alternative technologies offer a commercially viable alternative today or in the near future."

An EarthLink analysis indicated that BPL is the most expensive of the broadband technologies it evaluated. In a chart titled "Next generation broadband," EarthLink said that wireless and BPL "are not likely to be competitive in cost and performance with cable and DSL over the last mile to the home."

EarthLink judged as "not successful" one unspecified BPL technical trial using Amperion equipment in a "wireless/BPL combo." In discussing other trials using Ambient and Current Technologies equipment—in one of which EarthLink had invested—the ISP's assessment was that the high cost per household passed—\$125 in both instances—would require a better than 15 percent market penetration to attain a competitive cost.

EarthLink said its assessment determined that ADSL2+ technology is the "best option" and can offer VoIP as well as high-speed broadband (at 6 to 10 Mbps) and video over copper wire and using on-premise consumer equipment. The company also indicated that it plans to invest in ADSL2+ technology.

ARRL's reporting of EarthLink's submission to the FCC apparently struck a nerve at Ambient, with which EarthLink has a business relationship. In a classic case of shooting the messenger, Ambient CEO John J. Joyce took the League to task on behalf of the BPL industry in a statement posted via Market Wire on the CBS MarketWatch.com Web site. Joyce

BPL *cont'd* pg. 6

Degunking Your PC

By Jeff Duntemann PC Magazine 8.17.04

Perhaps you've wondered, "Is it just me, or is my PC getting slower?" Well, your PC is getting slower, as what we affectionately call gunk collects in it. Gunk is data, files, and programs you don't need, and debris from applications you've uninstalled. It's the entropy of hard drive fragmentation, and chaos in the Windows Registry from abandoned or corrupted keys. It's spyware and adware, which beyond compromising your privacy can slow your PC and make it unstable.

All this is reversible, though. Once you've swept out your PC, it will be faster and more reliable. Discipline and good habits are important; with regular care, digital gunk will never get the better of you again.

Here are our top five PC degunking techniques. They're most effective when done in the order given.

Purge Your Sent Items Folder

Nearly all e-mail clients keep a copy of every sent message. Though most messages are small, in aggregate their size quickly grows. If you mail large files, you may have many megabytes of them—most of which are stored elsewhere and can be deleted—saved in the Sent Items folder.

You can quickly free up some serious space while sparing the bulk of the messages. Open your Sent Items (or Outbox) folder, and make sure you have the Size column displayed in the message index. In Outlook Express, go to View | Columns,

and click on Size. In Outlook, select View | Current View | Customize Current View, and then click on the Fields button (Figure 1). With Size displayed, click on the Size column header to sort the index by message size; then select the larger messages that you want to get rid of and delete them. Outlook 2003 contains a very useful Large Mail search folder that organizes all your mail by size, making it easy to spot really big messages.

Outlook also allows you to delete sent messages automatically after a specified period of time. Choose Tools | Options. Click on the Other tab and then select the AutoArchive button. One option lets you permanently delete items older than a specified age. For other e-mail clients, you may be able to write a filter that automatically deletes messages after a period of time, but the easiest way may be to sort your messages regularly by date, highlight messages older than 30 or 60 days, and then delete them as a batch.

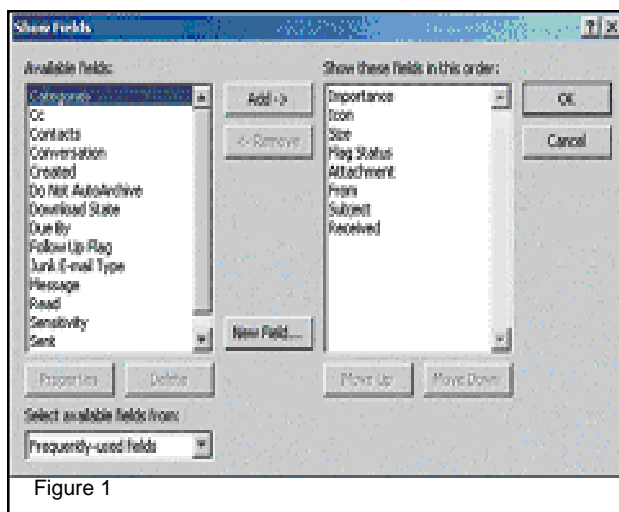


Figure 1

Consolidate Your Media Files

Nothing fills hard drives faster than digital media. Between digital photos, MP3s, rips of DVDs, and MPEG home movies, even an 80GB disk isn't so big anymore. Here are steps you can take to keep your media collection from devouring your hard drive.

Consolidate digital media under one folder. A logical place is under My Documents, where Windows already creates My Music and My Pictures subdirectories. You can make additional folders for videos, scanned images, and more. Your digital media will be easier to manage if it's all in one place. Backups will also be easier, because if you just want to protect your data, you need only back up My Documents. Should your C: drive, in which Windows places My Documents, fill up too quickly, you can move My Documents to another drive by right-clicking on My Documents, selecting Properties, and then entering a new target and clicking on Move. All the files will be sent to the new location.

Purge your digital photo archives of unneeded shots. Most of us save near-duplicate or bad shots. With higher-end cameras, they can take up

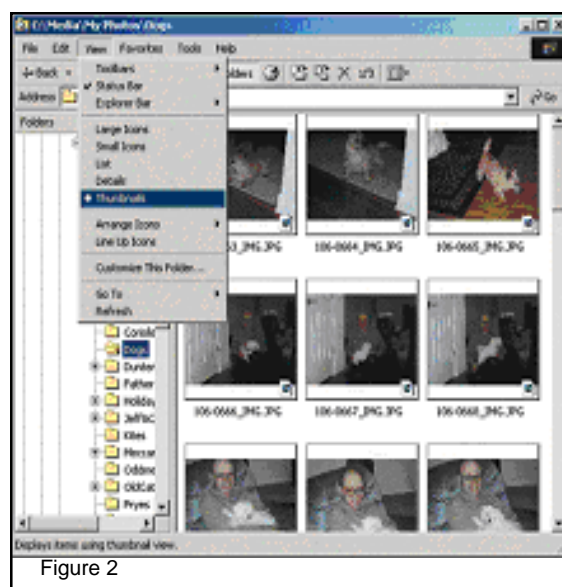


Figure 2

Degunking *cont'd from pg.3*

several megabytes each. The easiest way to purge them is with a thumbnail viewer; Windows Explorer can act as a primitive one. From your photos directory, select View | Thumbnails (Figure 2). Many scanners and digital cameras come with better viewers. ZoomBrowser, which is bundled with Canon digital cameras, and Hemera Graphics Desk, which comes with HP scanners, are both excellent. With many shots visible at once, you can quickly eliminate failed photos and choose the best of several similar shots. If you really don't want to part with them, off-load them to a recordable CD or DVD.

Purge your digital video clips of bad shots and editing culls. Digital video files are huge, and raw dumps from a DV recorder contain much useless footage. One approach is that your hard drive is for processing videos, and DVD-Rs are for storing them. Try to develop the discipline of editing your video files soon after taking them, then immediately burn them to DVD.

Purge your music collection of duplicate song files. If you get your MP3s from various sources, you no doubt have duplicate tracks, especially if you don't use a database to manage your music. The problem stems from a lack of filename conventions. MP3 filenames may begin with a track, album, or artist name. But is "Norwegian Wood" under "The Beatles" or "Beatles, The"? (Or even "The Beetles"? Early on, file traders misspelled artist names to get around blocking systems.) Consider creating a file convention, then editing the names of your music files to follow it. This will turn up all the dupes: Windows won't let you have two files in the same directory with the same name.

You could also sort music files by size. This is best for files obtained online, which have often been renamed. In Windows Explorer, sort on size; duplicate tracks—which should be the same or very similar in size—will be adjacent and easy to spot.

Purge old versions of your artwork. If you create computer drawings or animations, you may have many old versions of each on disk. Unless an earlier version has an unusual technique, it's mostly wasted space. Force yourself to let them go—or at least archive them to CD or DVD.

Get Rid of Spyware and Adware

You should eliminate spyware and adware. Many "free" utilities install a program that transmits details about your Web browsing habits to a server owned by an advertising company (if you're lucky). This process will tailor ads (often pop-ups) to your interests, but it may also bring a torrent of spam. Such programs are installed with little warning and are hard to remove. They slow your machine, clog your Registry, and may compromise your PC's network machinery. And that's just the "legitimate" spyware. Related programs (and much worse) are Trojan horses that steal passwords and open network back doors into your PC for malefactors to exploit. They can also turn your PC into a spam proxy without your knowledge.

It's best to avoid installing spyware in the first place. Before you install a "free" program, see if it comes with spyware. Read the licensing agreement carefully. Also, go to Google and type the program's name, followed by "spyware." If spyware is associated with it, you'll find Web sites carrying other users' cries of agony.

Not all spyware is installed with another application; it may come from a Web site. A pop-up may ask if you want to install something and make it appear that it's a condition of entry. Don't click on Yes. Better, use a pop-up stopper utility, or a Web browser like Mozilla Firefox (www.mozilla.org/products/firefox) with a built-in pop-up stopper. (An upgrade to Internet Explorer in the forthcoming Windows XP Service Pack 2 will also have a built-in blocker.)

If your Web browser (particularly Internet Explorer) isn't configured correctly, some Web sites can install spyware without asking permission. IE6 has two options that you must disable. (On IE5 and earlier, only the first will be present.) Bring up IE, and select Tools | Internet Options. Click on the Advanced tab; under Browsing is a list of minor topics. The two to uncheck are Enable Install on Demand (Internet Explorer), and Enable Install on Demand (Other) (Figure 3). Then click on OK.

The most notorious spyware sources are file-sharing utilities, spam-promoted Web sites, and sites offering sleazeware such as porn, warez (pirated software), and cracks (tools to defeat software serial-number registration.) Stay away from these and your defenses won't be tested as often.

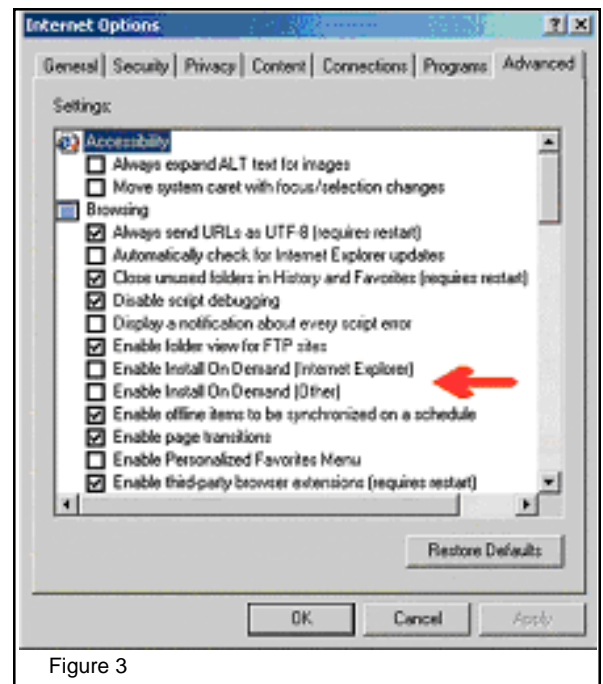


Figure 3

Degunking *cont'd from pg. 4*

Some spyware goes to great lengths to avoid removal. Some nastier items modify the Registry and install small boot-time service routines: If removed, they will reinstall themselves from a hidden file!

The best way to get rid of spyware and adware is to use a utility that's specifically designed for this. Our current favorite is Webroot's Spy Sweeper (\$30 direct), followed closely by the free Spybot Search & Destroy (www.safer-networking.org; donations are encouraged). In addition to spyware, these programs remove cookies from known spyware and adware companies. Both programs are very easy to use; run them regularly to be sure that nothing sneaks past you.

Use Windows Disk Cleanup and Then Defrag Your Hard Drive

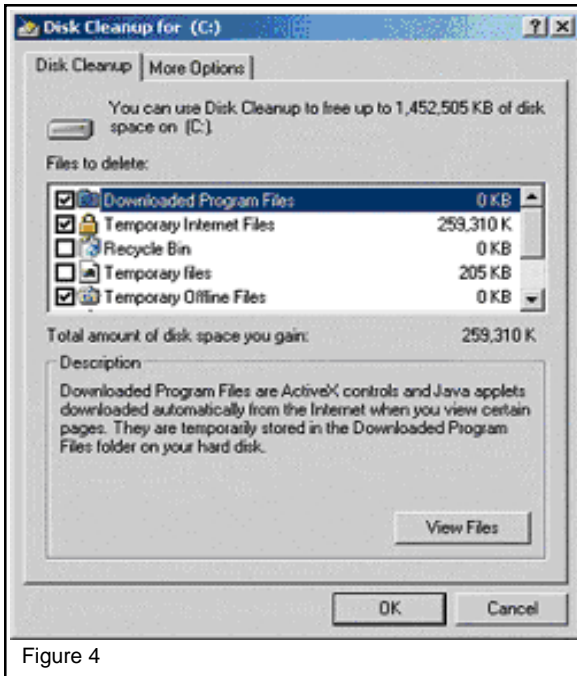


Figure 4

Windows Disk Cleanup removes cached and temporary files from your PC. To run it, select Start | Programs | Accessories | System Tools | Disk Cleanup. Or you can start it from a button on the main Properties display for any nonremovable hard drive.

Once you select a drive to clean, Cleanup will determine what it can remove—this may take a while—and then supply a list of file categories (Figure 4). Check the ones that you want to clear, and click on OK. If you're unsure about the files in a given category, you can click on the Files button to review them, but you're unlikely to find any tagged files worth keeping.

After using Disk Cleanup, defragment your hard drive. Windows 2000 and XP have a built-in defragging utility, which is in the same System Tools menu as Disk Cleanup. But you can have better, more reliable defragging with Executive Software's Diskeeper 8.0 Professional Edition or Raxco's PerfectDisk 6.0. Both received Editors' Choice in our recent Utility Guide.

Disk defragmentation will reverse a sort of entropy that gradually breaks down the files stored on your hard drive into small, scattered chunks. When you erase a file, Windows reuses that space. Deleting files opens up free space holes on your drive, which Windows fills as new files, are created. Windows knows exactly where each piece of a fragmented file

resides, but it has to do a lot more chasing in order to access the scattered fragments. Defragmentation reorganizes your hard drive so that its files are stored as single sequential blocks and thus reading these files can be done as quickly as is physically possible.

Clean Your Registry

Abandoned, incorrect, and corrupted entries in the Windows Registry top our list of gunk. Often people are terrified of trying to clean the Registry, having been told that doing so is about as safe as defusing a nuclear weapon.

There is some truth in this. The Registry is Windows' most vulnerable subsystem, in that relatively small changes done incorrectly can render the system unbootable. The Registry is crucial because it is the central database where Windows "remembers" how its thousands of pieces are configured and work together—everything from what color your title bars are to how Windows boots the system and what files it uses when it does.

As you install and uninstall applications, keys are abandoned or invalidated. Many applications store their lists of recently accessed files in the Registry, and as you move files around or swap removable media, keys representing these lists are invalidated and must be built again—adding still more keys to the Registry and slowing your system down. (Windows needs time to determine that a given Registry key is invalid, then it must search the Registry again for a valid instance of the same item.)

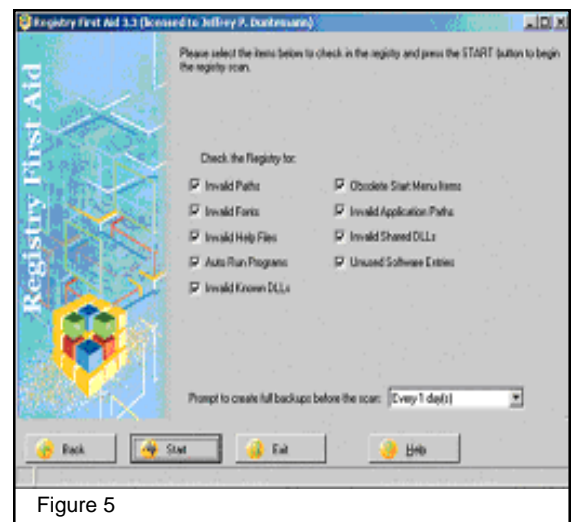


Figure 5

Degunking *cont'd from pg. 5*

The safest way to deal with Registry gunk is with one of several excellent third-party Registry cleaners. V Communications' RegistryFixer, part of the company's Fix-It Utilities 5, is our current Editors' Choice in this category, as described in our Utility Guide.

Another decent product in the category is Rose City Software's Registry First Aid (www.rosecitysoftware.com). It's inexpensive (\$21 direct) and extremely careful with your system. It backs up the Registry before each cleaning run and prompts you to back up your system through Windows Backup if you choose. It deletes only keys it knows it can remove without harming Windows; fortunately, these are the most common ones and the ones most to blame for system slow-downs.

Registry First Aid lets you select what sorts of Registry problems to scan for (Figure 5). As the program scans, it

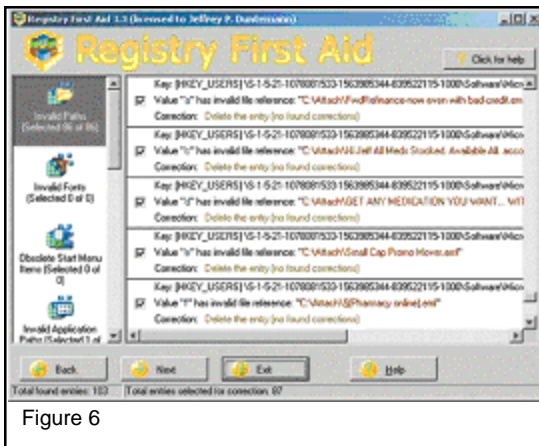


Figure 6

builds a list of problem keys (Figure 6). Though the scan can take time, removing the bad keys takes just seconds. The program lets you schedule Registry cleanings regularly. You may well have performed some of these steps before, but more important than any one technique is cleaning your PC regularly so that it lasts longer and runs better. The problem is neither you nor the PC: It's the gunk. Clean it out and become a degunking believer.

BT OVER



Interesting Sights

NASA's Visible Earth
<http://visibleearth.nasa.gov/>

Mt. St. Helens volcano camera
<http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/volcanocams/msh/>

ready.gov print media campaign
http://www.americaprepared.org/media_print.html



Argonauts' Osprey



Atlantic Ocean (Dec. 8, 2004) - A MV-22 Osprey assigned to the "Argonauts" of Marine Air Test and Evaluation Squadron Two Two (VMX-22), lifts off from the flight deck aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Kearsarge (LHD-3). Kearsarge is conducting landing, launch and recovery training and evaluation with the Ospreys for the aircrew assigned to VMX-22. U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate Airman Dexter Roberts

BPL *cont'd from pg. 2*

seemed to suggest that the League itself had provided the EarthLink information and was spinning the company's remarks to advantage.

"The release by the ARRL clearly takes the statements of EarthLink's attorney out of context and conveniently ignores many developments in the industry that contradict ARRL's conclusions," Joyce said, adding that 2005 promises to be "the year of BPL."

Among other things, Joyce said that "the ARRL perception of BPL's economics fails to consider that consumer broadband is only one application for a BPL-enabled utility system." he said there are other industrial applications that may augur in BPL's economic favor. He also emphasized that the projects with which his company and EarthLink have collaborated were demonstrations "never intended to be competitive installations" and are "in no way representative of BPL economics."

ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, said the League stands by its account, which Joyce characterized as a "claim" on the ARRL's part. "ARRL's report on the document was accurate in every way, and we stand by our report," he said. "The conclusions given are not ours, but EarthLink's. Anyone who wishes to do so can read the submission for themselves."

BT OVER

5G1B Net Schedule

6:30PM 4007 kHz USB

Day	NECOS	Tfc Rep
Sun.	XYA	XEE
Mon.	KZC	KZC
Tue.	XEE	XEE
Wed.	BQH	BQH
Thu.	SXU	SXU
Fri.	ACY	OCF

Sat. Rotating Duty (see right)

Don't be bashful, if the net has not been called by the net control station within 2 minutes, jump in and start things rolling.

Saturday NECOS / TREP Schedules

	NECOS	TREP
Jan 8	Open	Open
Jan 15	XYA	XEE
Jan 22	KZC	KZC
Jan 29	XEE	XEE
Feb 5	BQH	BQH

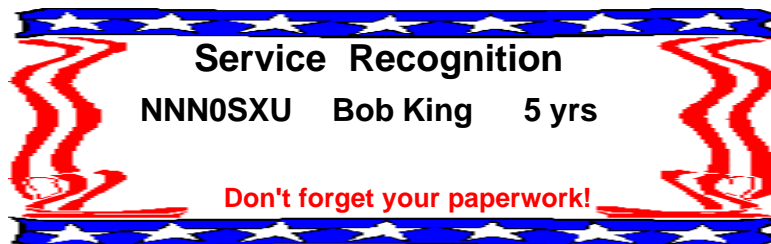


EAST WEST SHRINE GAME
80th Annual East West Shrine Game
Saturday - January 15, 2005 11AM PST
PacBell Park, San Francisco - ESPN

HF Comms at Sea



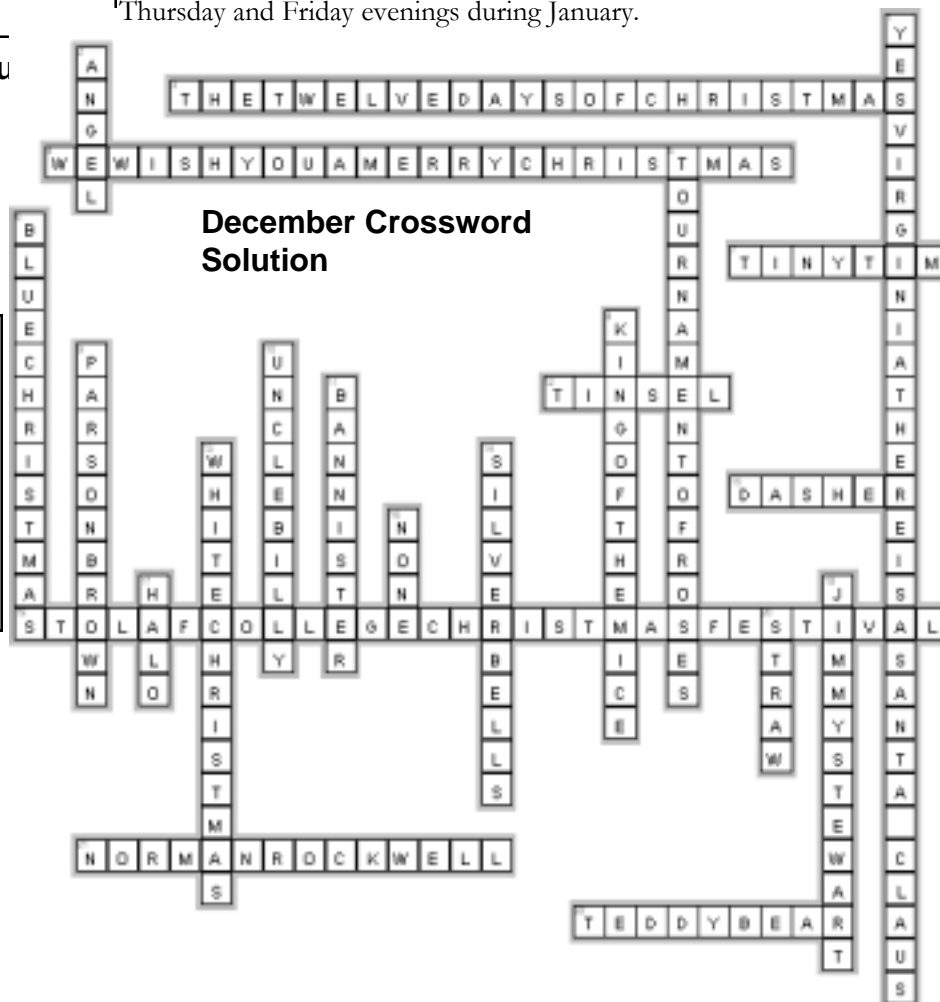
Pacific Ocean (Dec. 7, 2004) - From foreground, Information Systems Technician Seaman Ivan Monserrat, Electronics Technician 3rd Class Paul Burnett and Electronics Technician 3rd Class Robert Cantero, uses high frequency radios and couplers aboard USS Shiloh (CG 67) to talk with other ships in the USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) Carrier Strike Group (CSG). Shiloh is part of the Lincoln CSG currently deployed to the Western Pacific Ocean. U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 3rd Class Bernardo Fuller



Net Control Openings

There will be a opening for NECOS duty over the next couple months as some of our members head to snow-less areas of the country during the up coming cooler season here in Minnesota. Let NNN0XYA know which dates you can fill in as NECOS.

Thursday and Friday evenings during January.



Test Your Analytical Skills

Value of Each Resistor

We have 4 series connected resistors. R2 is twice as large as R1, R3 is 1.5 ohms greater than R2, and R4 is 0.5 ohms greater than R2, and the total resistance is 11 ohms. Find the value of each resistor.

Answer in the next issue of the Minnesota MARSGRAM

December Test - Holiday Shopping Answer: \$120.