

HAM RAG

ROCKFORD AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, INC.

FCC CHAIRMAN MICHAEL K. POWELL ANNOUNCES HIS RESIGNATION

Newington, CT USA
January 21ST 2005

FCC Chairman Michael K. Powell announced today that he'll step down, effective "sometime in March." Powell's resignation comes just one day after President George W. Bush's inauguration for a second term in the White House. Nominated by former President Bill Clinton, Powell--whose father is Secretary of State Colin Powell--joined the FCC in 1997. He became its chairman two days after President Bush was sworn in for his first term in 2001. ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, called Powell's performance "a deep disappointment" after some initial optimism. While the League is not unhappy about Powell's departure--especially given his unabashed cheerleading on behalf of the FCC's broadband over power line (BPL) initiative--there's also concern about whom President Bush might call upon to replace him.

"It's no secret that we thought Chairman Powell was going entirely in the wrong direction on BPL and dragging the other commissioners and FCC staff along--willing or not--because he was, after all, the chairman," Sumner said. "A new chairman might be a chance for a fresh start."

Last October when the FCC adopted new Part 15 rules for BPL, Powell called it "a banner day." While conceding that BPL will affect some spectrum users, including "all those wonderful Amateur Radio operators out there," the chairman implied that the FCC must balance the benefits of BPL against the relative value of other licensed services.

Powell listed the Commission's adoption of BPL rules among the

"policy highlights" of his tenure. "Broadband to power plugs would lower prices, expand deployment," the chairman's list of accomplishments asserts.

Possibilities to replace Powell include the other Republican members of the five-member FCC--Kathleen Q. Abernathy, a staunch BPL supporter, and Kevin J. Martin. Speculation also has been raised about various candidates outside the commissioners. "We look forward to the opportunity to work with the new chairman, whoever that may be," Sumner said.

Powell, in his announcement, said it was "with a mixture of pride and regret" that he informed the president of his decision to step down.

"Having completed a bold and aggressive agenda, it is time for me to pursue other opportunities and let someone else take the reins of the agency," he said. "During my tenure, we worked to get the law right

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NEXT MEETING
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH 2005

PROGRAM
HANDY-HAMS

LOCATION
OSF ST ANTHONY MEDICAL CENTER
5666 EAST STATE STREET
ROCKFORD, IL 61107



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

From Us - Congratulations to our two "Ham of the Year" winners. Dan Hunt and Gary Hilger were picked for the honor. They have been there whenever we've needed their participation.

The Awards Banquet was attended by 32 persons. It was held at Hoffman House. It seemed that everyone enjoyed themselves.

Next meeting is Fri. Feb. 11 at OSF St. Anthony's. The 3 Alpine Park activities for the year are in the works. Tim will have more to say about them. - - - 73 Bill WB9MCZ

Tim says—The program this month is by Pierre from Woodstock. He will be talking about Handi-Hams. The summer events are in place.

June 11, 2005 breakfast at Shelter #1 Alpine Park.

June 25-26, 2005 Field Day Alpine Park areas #6 & 7

Aug. 14, 2005—"Family Picnic"—Alpine Park Shelter #2
 Details will follow next month. Still need programs for the meetings.

73 Bill & Tim

JANUARY MINUTES

Rockford Amateur Radio Association
 Monthly Membership Meeting - January 14th 2005
 Hoffman House; Rockford, IL

President Bill Peters, WB9MCZ, called the meeting to order at 7:55 PM.

Minutes: Secretary Nicholas Lager, KB9SKW, read the minutes from the December meeting; approved as read unanimously.

Treasurers' Report: President Bill Peters reported our total cash on hand is \$5765.⁰⁰.

New Business:

Gene Harlan, WB9MMM, submitted a report stating that we will again have use of the meeting room at St. Anthony's Medical Center.

Sue Peters, KA9GNR, informed the club that the annual severe weather spotting class will be held on March 19th at the Greater Rockford Airport from 9:00 AM until 12:30 PM.

Motion to adjourn by Dave Bond, W9MG, seconded by Tim Peters, KC9DNN; motion carried unanimously.

2004 AWARDS

Here are the awards given out for 2004, congratulations to everyone and thank you for your efforts.

John Auerswald - KA9SOG	2004 Awards Banquet Ham Rag Editor
Mary Auerswald - KC9AKC	2004 Awards Banquet
Larry Snyder - K0HNM	Ham of the Year Cmty. 2004 Director
Gene Harlan - WB9MMM	February Tech Class March General Class State Street Mile October Tech Class Jamboree on the Air President
Scott Allhouse - W9SBA	On The Waterfront Vice-President Meteorus Service Award
Dick Fleming - KC9BCB	2004 Field Day
Tom Shoyler - N9VJU	Breakfast in the Park
Sharri Harlan - N9SH	February Tech Class March General Class Jamboree on the Air Nominating Committee

Wendy Owano - KC9BCF	Nominating Committee Secretary
Sue Peters - KA9GNR	Rock Cut Hobo Run
Carl Cacciatore - W9TQ	October Tech Class Treasurer Jamboree on the Air
Nicholas Lager - KB9SKW	Director Jamboree on the Air
Dan Hunt - KC9ATR	Director
Gary Hilker - K9LJN	Director
Marc Broman - N9CWQ	Jamboree on the Air
Scott Knodle - WB9LHU	Elmer
Tim Peterson - KC9DNN	Jamboree on the Air
Colleen Peterson - KC9EWJ	Jamboree on the Air

Ham of the Year awards:
 Dan Hunt - KC9ATR
 Gary Hilker - K9LJN
 ARRL Award of Merit
 Wayne Hanson - KA9IMX

W5YI TESTING

Amateur radio exams for all classes are given by W5YI-VEC volunteer examiners the third Saturday of every month at OSF St Anthony Medical Center; 5666 East State Street Rockford, IL 61107 in the St. Francis Room.

The tests are given beginning at 9 A.M. with no applicants after 10:30 A.M. Fee for the session is \$14.00. Walk-ins are always welcome.

All applicants must show two forms of identification with their signature on them, one which must include a photograph such as a driver's license. All licensed amateurs and/or holders of a Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination must show the original and leave a copy.

For further information, contact Randy Scott W9HL at (815) 877-4328 or via email at w9hl@arrl.net.

[information submitted by Randy Scott W9HL]

FIREFOX GAINS AGAINST IE

*By Jim Hu CNET News.com
January 21, 2005*

The popularity of alternative Web browser FireFox continues to rise at the expense of Microsoft's Internet Explorer, according to a new study.

From the beginning of December through mid-January, 4.78 percent of Internet surfers studied by online measurement company WebSideStory used the Mozilla Foundation's FireFox browser, a gain of 0.88 percentage points. At the same time, IE usage declined 0.7 percent to 92.7 percent, the firm reported. WebSideStory said IE use has declined from 96.7 percent since June.

The study measured market share by embedding sensors on major Web sites such as those of the Walt Disney Internet Group, Best Buy, Sony and Liz Claiborne. Previous studies from WebSideStory tested all operating systems, but the company said its Windows-only numbers are more accurate because new configurations in Apple Computer's Safari browser inadvertently skewed results. WebSideStory retrieves data from 30 million Internet users a day passing through its monitored sites. The company then takes a snapshot of two days and compares the growth.

Mozilla, an open-source software foundation formed by Netscape, launched FireFox 1.0 in November, after recording more than 8 million downloads of its test version. As downloads continued to surge, measurement firms such as WebSideStory and Dutch market researcher OneStat.com began releasing data tracking FireFox gains and IE declines. In December, OneStat reported that IE's market share had

JANUARY RESULTS

No applicants for the January VEC testing.

Thank you to the VECs that attended.



slipped to 88.9 percent, a figure Microsoft disputed.

Even though Microsoft maintains the dominance it has enjoyed since defeating Netscape Communications' browser in the mid-1990s, FireFox's snowballing popularity is raising eyebrows.

Much of FireFox's success rides on it simply not being IE. FireFox fans have praised the new browser's automatic pop-up blocking and tabbed browsing features, but security has been one of the big points. Viruses and spyware are often aimed at IE because of its near-total market dominance.

However, FireFox's popularity may eventually attract the attention of malicious code writers trying to exploit security holes. The recent discovery of a potentially damaging software flaw suggested the potential for FireFox attacks.

Since beginning its measurements last summer, WebSideStory has been cautious to draw any broad conclusions about FireFox's popularity. This time around, the company said many people are not only downloading FireFox, they're sticking with it and using it.

"We are finding that in many cases there's room for two browsers on the desktop, and in other cases people are completely switched over," said Geoff Johnston, an analyst at WebSideStory.

A Microsoft spokesman did not immediately comment for this story.

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HAMS AT RISK

London, UK
January 12TH 2005

Plans to send Internet broadband signals down mains electricity cables rather than telephone lines could hit the radio hams whose transmissions were so vital in the aftermath of the Asian tsunami, New Scientist magazine reported on Wednesday. The technology is being pushed by power companies keen to compete with traditional broadband suppliers and get a slice of the profits from the demand for fast Internet connection.

"The downside is that packets of Internet data pulsing down unshielded mains cables makes the cables behave like aerials that send short-wave interference beaming out over a wide area," the magazine reports.

Amateur radio operators believe this could threaten reliable communications on short-wave frequencies, which are invaluable to global broadcasting and emergency communications when all other options fail.

"A few extra decibels of interference from future networks and I would not have been able to hear the news from amateurs in Sri Lanka, India and the Andaman Islands," Hilary Clayton-Smith of the International Amateur Radio Union's UK branch told the magazine.

The U.S. government approved the power line technology in October, while the European Commission is set to approve its version soon.

The U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has ruled service providers must use filters on their household equipment, to avoid the problem. The EC is trying to set similar rules.

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ANNOUNCED DX

March 4 - March 22. DXCC Entity: Guadeloupe, Call Sign FG, QSL via F9IE. By F6KOP and others - 40-10m; CW SSB Digital.

March 14 - March 24. DXCC Entity: Netherlands Antilles, Call Sign PJ4, QSL via Home Call. By DF7ZS as PJ4/DF7ZS - 40 20 SSB RRTY.

March 18 - March 20. DXCC Entity: Guam, Call Sign NH2, QSL via JH0MG. By JH0MHJ as AL5A/NH2.

March 18 - March 23. DXCC Entity: Taiwan, Call Sign bw2, QSL via Home Call. By JA9BV, JA3DYU as BW2/JA3DYU - 80 40, 20, 15; CW SSB.

NG3K Amateur Radio Contest/DX webpage - www.ng3k.com

ARRL LETTER

Ham-astronaut Accepts WAC Certificate: January 14TH 2005, During his International Space Station Expedition 9 duty tour, astronaut Mike Fincke, KE5AIT, became the first ISS crew member to contact all seven of the world's continents via Amateur Radio. Now he has the International Amateur Radio Union's Worked All Continents certificate for his wall. Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) Ham Radio Technical Coordinator Kenneth Ransom, N5VHO, presented the award to Fincke recently at Johnson Space Center. Operating NA1SS Fincke worked KC4AAC at Antarctica's Palmer Research Station for his last contact--actually a "bonus continent" not required to earn WAC. During that QSO, Fincke and ARRL Life Member Chuck Kimball, N0NHJ, compared and contrasted life in their respective outposts. After returning to Earth in October, Fincke said he's not sure everyone in the NASA community understands and appreciates what Amateur Radio means for the rest of the world. "It promotes the space program very well," he said. "It is in NASA's interest to continue Amateur Radio operations onboard ISS." Fincke said he'd also like to do make the first Amateur Radio contact from the moon. His WAC is not the first such award from a ham station in space. In 1992, shuttle astronauts David Leestma, N5WQC, and Kathryn Sullivan also worked Palmer Station to complete their WAC list.

Echo satellite reopens for normal FM repeater: January 21ST 2005, The Echo (AO-51) command team says that because no tsunami relief-related emergency message traffic has been seen on the AO-51 Paksat Broadcast Protocol BBS (PBBS), it's configured the satellite to permit normal FM repeater and 9k6 digital operation. "The plan is to run in this mode until the end of January, unless word is received from the disaster area that a different setup would be useful," said the AO-51 command team's Mike Kingery, KE4AZN. Because the switch to solely digital store-and-forward operation preempted the satellite's use in FM repeater mode for Kid's Day January 2, AMSAT now plans to reschedule its Kid's Day activity on the satellite for an as-yet-unannounced Saturday in February. The AO-51 FM voice uplink is 145.920 MHz (with 67 Hz CTCSS tone required); downlink is 435.300 MHz. The 9k6 digital PBBS uplink is 145.860 MHz FM; downlink is 435.150 MHz FM. - AMSAT News Service.

Amateur Radio volunteer among train wreck victims: January 28TH 2005, Amateur Radio volunteer Scott McKeown, KE6EMI, of Moorpark, California, was among the 11 people who died after two Los Angeles Metrolink commuter trains collided January 26 in Glendale. More than 200 people were injured in the mishap, which occurred after one of the trains derailed after striking a motor vehicle left on the tracks. McKeown, 42, served as Ventura County ARES/RACES Area 8 Moorpark Assistant Emergency Coordinator. He also regularly volunteered to support communications for the An-

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POWELL RESIGNES

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in order to stimulate innovative technology that puts more power in the hands of the American people, giving them greater choices that enrich their lives."

The chairman said the seeds of the Commission's policies under his leadership "are taking firm root in the marketplace and are starting to blossom." He cited the increased use of cell phones, digital TV and other digital technology "increasingly connected anytime, anywhere by a wide variety of broadband networks."

"Our children will inherit this exciting future," Powell proclaimed, adding that he looks forward to spending some time with his wife and two sons "before taking up my next challenge."

As FCC chairman, Powell also has been in the forefront of enforcing the Commission's rules on indecency, largely through imposing huge fines on violators. He also supported changes in media ownership rules that permitted even greater concentration in the ownership of broadcasting outlets.

Powell's formal resignation announcement followed widespread reports in the media that he would be leaving. Communications Daily said the chairman's last day would be March 10.

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ARRL LETTER

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geles Crest 100-Mile Endurance Run and had assisted during past runnings of the Baker to Vegas Relay Annual Challenge Run. A former City of Glendale employee, McKeown - a married father of two - was acting telecommunications manager for the City of Pasadena.

Special event station to commemorate Yalta Conference: January 28th 2005, Special event station EM60J will be on the air February 4-11 from Ukraine to mark the 60th anniversary of the Yalta Conference. The historic 1945 talks brought together the "Big Three" Allied leaders - Great Britain's Prime Minister Winston Churchill, US President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Russia's Joseph Stalin - to discuss post-World War II reorganization of Europe. The conference's primary purpose was to re-establish the nations that had been conquered by Nazi Germany, and one result was the partitioning of Germany into US, Russian, British and French zones. QSL via UU5JYA or direct to PO Box 378, Yalta 98600, Ukraine. - The Daily DX www.dailydx.com

MARCH CONTESTS

AGCW YL-CW Party

1900Z-2100Z, March 1

ARRL Inter. DX Contest, SSB

0000Z, March 5 to 2400Z, March 6

Wake-Up! QRP Sprint

0400Z-0600Z, March 5

DARC 10-Meter Digital Contest

1100Z-1700Z, March 6

ARS Spartan Sprint

0200Z-0400Z, March 8

Pesky Texan Armadillo Chase

0200Z-0400Z, March 10

RSGB Commonwealth Contest

1000Z, March 12 to 1000Z, March 13

AGCW QRP Contest

1400Z-2000Z, March 12

Oklahoma QSO Party

1400Z, March 12 to 0200Z, March 13 and 1400Z-2000Z, March 13

North American Sprint, RTTY

0000Z-0400Z, March 13

UBA Spring Contest, CW

0700Z-1100Z, March 13

NSARA Contest

1200Z-1600Z, March 13 and 1800Z-2200Z, March 13

Wisconsin QSO Party

1800Z, March 13 to 0100Z, March 14

RSGB 80m Club Championship, CW

2000Z-2130Z, March 16

10-10 Int. Mobile Contest

0001Z-2359Z, March 19

BARTG HF RTTY Contest

0200Z, March 19 to 0200Z, March 21

Russian DX Contest

1200Z, March 19 to 1200Z, March 20

CLARA and Family HF Contest

1700Z, March 19 to 1700Z, March 20

Virginia QSO Party

1800Z, March 19 to 0200Z, March 21

UBA Spring Contest, 6m

0700Z-1100Z, March 20

RSGB 80m Club Championship, SSB

2000Z-2130Z, March 24

CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB

0000Z, March 26 to 2359Z, March 27

Spring QRP Homebrewer Sprint

0000Z-0400Z, March 28

Low Power Spring Sprint

1400Z-2000Z, March 28

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**ROCKFORD AMATEUR RADIO
ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

SINGLE ADULT: \$25⁰⁰ ADULT W/ FAMILY: \$30⁰⁰
SINGLE SENIOR: \$15⁰⁰ SENIROW W/ FAMILY: \$20⁰⁰
STUDENT: \$15⁰⁰

Above rate includes the RARA monthly newsletter, Ham Rag, via e-mail.

HAM RAG VIA U.S. POSTAL SERVICE: \$12⁰⁰

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P.O. BOX 8465
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS 61126

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Inc.**

P. O. Box 8465, Rockford, IL 61126

Phone: (815) 398-2683

E-mail: hamrag@w9axd.com

Web: www.w9axd.com

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MEMBERSHIP**