

# Inverted-V

Lawrence County Amateur Radio Club Newsletter

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May 2004

## BPL doesn't mean what it used to

By Dennis Schaefer

As an old-timer, I used think of the Brass Pounder's League when someone mentioned BPL. BPL was an award for handling a large quantity of traffic. Now it stands for Broadband over Power Lines, and it is not a good thing for hams. BPL would put RF energy in the 2-60 MHz range on power lines to extend broadband internet service to any home with an electrical connection. The FCC released a Notice of Inquiry last year and solicited comments. I think most of us thought the FCC were going to decide whether or not to allow BPL. Over 5100 comments were received, many from hams. Most complained that the RF would radiate from the power lines and interfere with HF radio licensed services. There were several test areas in the US and worldwide, and hams have documented severe interference to most of the HF spectrum at considerable distances from power lines. The power industry continues to insist there is no interference.

The issue has even attracted the interest of the Wall Street Journal. In an article entitled "In This Power Play, High Wire Act Riles Ham Radio Fans." Although not perfect, this article presents a fairly

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## Lawrence County A.R.C. Spring/Summer Picnic

By Carl Richardson

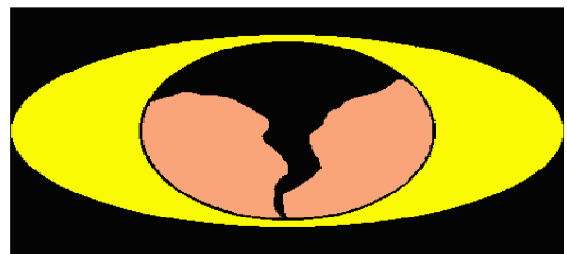
At our April Meeting we discussed and voted on the date for our Annual Spring/Summer Picnic. This years Picnic will be held on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2004 (with a rain date of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May). We will be meeting at Lake Charles State Park in the family picnic area up the hill from the beach next to the kids' playground and rest room area. Everyone should bring there food with them, but we will have a grill available for everyone to cook on. Join us for the food, fun and fellowship and I hope to see you there.

## Be at our June meeting for new officer Elections

By Carl Richardson

All members are ask to please attend our June 7<sup>th</sup> 2004 meeting to help choose and elect our new officers that will serve from July 5<sup>th</sup> 2004 till June 6<sup>th</sup> 2005. It's safer to be there, the ones that don't show up might find themselves elected into a position.

**May 3<sup>rd</sup> 6 PM Spotter Class  
Reminder**



**SKYWARN**

balanced look at the situation, and quotes several hams.

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, the ARRL put out a bulletin entitled "FCC Okays BPL Proposal". The bulletin said the FCC had "Unanimously approved a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) to deploy BPL." However, even this did not mean exactly what we thought it did. In order to clarify the situation, ARRL released on its web page ([www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org)) an advance copy of the "It Seems to Us" column from the May issue of QST. Dave Sumner, K1ZZ, ARRL CEO, explains that "The purpose of the NPRM is not to allow BPL to be deployed. BPL systems may now operate under existing Part 15 rules. If the FCC did nothing, BPL systems could continue to be installed and operated. The NPRM proposed *new requirements* for BPL systems. The intent is to make it easier to track down who is responsible for interference and to make sure that the BPL system operator can immediately take whatever steps are necessary to mitigate interference."

The NPRM would require systems to employ "Adaptive interference-mitigation techniques, including the capabilities to shut down a specific device, to reduce power levels on a dynamic or remote control basis, and to include or exclude specific operating frequencies or bands". There must be a public database to include the location of BPL devices, modulation types, and operating frequencies. Guidelines would be established for measurements of RF emissions from BPL systems.

Mr. Sumner states "The FCC's proposals go a couple of steps in a positive direction. Certainly they should offer no comfort to the BPL industry, which is on clear notice from both the FCC and from us that interference will not be tolerated. Someone who makes an investment in BPL will have no grounds for whining when they lose their shirts."

The NPRM is ET Docket No 04-037 and comments are due by May 3. You can find the NPRM and submit online comments at the FCC web site, [www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov).

Although the NPRM is better than nothing at all, improvements could be made. For example, radiation limits sufficient to protect mobiles should be established. Many hams are restricted from putting up antennas by covenants, and mobile is the only form of operation available to them. Marketers of BPL services should be required to give clear notice to consumers that licensed radio services have priority and that BPL reliability cannot be guaranteed. The best approach is to

remain positive but point out ways the NPRM could be improved.

The FCC seems to find it politically impossible to hold back any new technology, especially one that promises more broadband access. Our best approach may well be with businesses planning to implement BPL. By letting them know there is a problem, and will be active in fighting against interference, we may help them decide not to employ BPL. I have heard that Entergy currently has no interest in BPL. If you hear of anyone planning to deploy or test a BPL system, please let me know so we can monitor the situation and alert hams in the area.

73,  
Dennis Schaefer W5RZ  
ARRL Arkansas Section Manager

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### NWS SKYWARN SPOTTER CLASS

PLACE: LAWRENCE COUNTY COURTHOUSE, IN THE COURT ROOM.

TIME: MAY 3<sup>RD</sup> 6PM

Training to recognize the signs leading up to severe storms and Tornadoes.

### SPRING/SUMMER PICNIC

PLACE: LAKE CHARLES STATE PARK

TIME: MAY 15<sup>TH</sup> 2004 10:00 AM UNTIL??

Food, Fun and Fellowship (A Grill and Radio will be setup on site.

### JUNE LAWRENCE COUNTY A.R.C. MEETING

PLACE: LAWRENCE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

TIME: JUNE 7<sup>TH</sup> 7PM

Election of new officers.

### LAWRENCE COUNTY A.R.C. INFORMATION AND WEATHER NETS

PLACE: 147.045 +

TIME: 8 PM ON MAY 11<sup>TH</sup>, 25<sup>TH</sup>, JUNE 8<sup>TH</sup>, AND 22<sup>ND</sup>