

# November 2017 Newsletter

## Big Island Amateur Radio Club



*Up front, at the October meeting: President Gary Schwiter, at left, and program co-Chair Les Hittner, whose presentation focused on "Why Digital?"*

**Photos by  
Linda  
Quarberg,  
WH6LQ**

## Slate of officers nominated for 2018

At the October BIARC meeting, members unanimously approved nominating committee Chair Bob Schneider's proposed slate of officers for next year.

In a motion offered by Doug Wilson and seconded by Bob, the following members were recommended for election at the November meeting:  
President Pascal Nelson, [ac7n@arrl.net](mailto:ac7n@arrl.net);

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*Les Hittner demonstrates Fusion performance while talking on his handytalky.*



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Vice President: Peggy Gentle, radiopeg@gmail.com; Secretary: open for nomination; Treasurer: Paul Ducasse, ducasse@hawaii.rr.com; Directors: Gary Schwiter, wh6eps@gmx.com (past president); Cory Allen, KN6ZU@yahoo.com; Barbara Darling, nh7fy@yahoo.com; Kim Fendt, wh6kim@gmail.com; Bill Hanson, whanson@co.hawaii.hi.us; and Bob Schneider, ah6j@arrl.org.

Program co-Chairs John Bush, amsjbush@gmail.com, and Les Hittner, lhittner@hbc.com, will maintain their current posts.

President Gary Schwiter convened the monthly meeting shortly after 2 p.m. at the Keau Community Center, with about 25 members present. A round of self-introductions followed, as

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hams offered updates on what they've been doing of late.

Schneider and John Buck offered info on the annual Hamfest set for the Waimea Community Center on Nov. 4. There is a chance that the date might be changed due to the Hawaii County islandwide conference that weekend in Hilo for the Community Emergency Response Team program. Of the 200-plus CERTs registered for the Nov. 3-4 event, about 40 are amateur radio operators from across the Big Island. **(See adjacent story for latest info on the Waimea Hamfest.)**

Doug announced that there will be VE testing at our 2 p.m. November 11 meeting and at 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 21, at the end of his new Technician class. Both testing sessions will be at the Keaau Community Center. If you or anyone you know wants to get licensed or upgrade, spread the word. As always, the FCC test costs \$15. Please bring exact cash amount.

Treasurer Paul Ducasse reported that the club has a balance of \$2,082.26, with all of the T-shirt orders paid for.

Gary said the T-shirts will be available "definitely by the next meeting," following a few setbacks at the printing company due to a far from homogenous order featuring various sizes, colors, formatting and call signs. "It's been a challenge, with the diversity of every shirt," he explained.

He also offered an update on the Ka'u repeater, which a SWAT team of club volunteers relocated to a farm not far from the Punalu'u Bakery after police decided after a couple of decades that they no longer wanted it on the grounds behind the station. Brainstorming continues on a new permanent home for the repeater, which must be located in a direct line with the Kulani repeater in order to link up with hams on the southern end of the island.

Gary said a DR2X, with networking card, is on order for the Kulani repeater, to be paired probably with an S-Com controller.

Following a break for refreshments, Les Hittner offered the monthly educational program. "Why digital?" was the title. And the answer: because it's "simple and powerful."

Les focused on C4FM and various digital technologies. He showed his WiresX setup which he runs 24 hours a day at his home. He favors the Yaesu system for its consistency and almost flawless performance.

The Fusion Future is bright, he says: "The future of digital is not that it's digital, it's because it's compelling. It will be simple and powerful, allowing users to easily access a connected amateur radio world."

"All you ever wanted to know about Fusion and WiresX" is available at hamoperator.com. K9EQ runs this WiresX Bible.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Leigh Critchlow, for Angelina Schwiter, BIARC secretary**



**Newest BIARC recruit:  
Peter Heffron, WH6FKU.**

### **Waimea hamfest moved to next year, and other last-minute updates:**

For the BIARC November meeting, program topics will include elections, planning for the Christmas party and meeting and some discussion of the club bylaws. And Robert Oliver will give an update on the emergency communications setup at Hilo Hospital.

Bob Schneider reports that the Waimea swap meet will NOT be on November 4. The members of KHRC decided to move it to next year. The tentative date is now Saturday, January 13. "This is not absolute, but will be confirmed later," said Bob.

See you at the BIARC meeting: 2 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 11, at Keaau Community Center. Remember: There will be VE testing for all levels of FCC licensing, during the meeting in an adjacent room.





## ARRL Simulated Emergency Test (SET)

BIARC members Doug Wilson (KH7DQ), Linda Quarberg (WH6LQ) and Jim Tatar (WH6EMN) participated in the annual ARRL Simulated Emergency Test (SET) on Oct. 21. They established and maintained a simulated ACS Net to receive emergency traffic from various stations around Hawaii Island for Civil Defense's EOC during the 5-hour exercise. They received and processed 14 Situation Reports, 11 Requests For Assistance (RFAs) and 2 Requests For Information (RFIs). In addition, 2 Emergency Alert Messages (EAMs) were broadcast during the exercise.

### Men and women on a mission from the heart

In the brief course of a few weeks, amateur radio has been called on for communications support in **Texas, Louisiana, Florida, Mexico, Puerto Rico** and elsewhere in **the Caribbean, and California**, among other areas.

The 22 "**Force of 50**" radio amateurs who deployed to Puerto Rico earlier this month as American Red Cross volunteers have ended their mission and will be back on the US mainland by



month's end. They had been in Puerto Rico for about 3 weeks.

"The Force of 50 volunteers demonstrated an extraordinary range of skills possessed by this accomplished team," said ARRL CEO Tom Gallagher, NY2RF. "There was no task that they wouldn't tackle. It also demonstrated the generosity of these volunteers,

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who not only performed their roles as communicators, but also engaged the population with their many acts of personal kindness."

Val Hotzfeld, NV9L, who filed situation reports documenting the team's activities, said the volunteers accomplished everything they went to Puerto Rico to do, "and then some." She said that the Red Cross felt they had exceeded all expectations.

"We opened a lot of people's eyes when we started going to the ESF-2 communications task force meetings. They had no idea of our capabilities," Hotzfeld told ARRL. "When they heard what we'd accomplished, we were swarmed; everybody was wanting us."

Hotzfeld said the volunteers' initial mission was to provide a way to gather outbound health and welfare messages and put them into the **Red Cross's Safe and Well System** using Winlink. However, the mission changed once they were on the ground, when they discovered the needs were much greater.

"No one had any communications, so the mission morphed to communications," she said. "But, we did both." She said the Red Cross recognized the value of ensuring communication for hospitals, and other volunteers handled Safe and Well messages.

She said the **volunteers possessed a wide range of talents, from medical to mechanical, not just communications**. For example, Andy Anderson, KE0AYJ, set up the helicopter landing pad at Guajataca Dam, Hotzfeld said, and provided communication where there was none.

**Ten SHARES (Shared Resources) HF Radio Program** operators will replace the Amateur Radio volunteers who had worked on behalf of the Red Cross. These SHARES operators are federal employees who happen to be radio amateurs and volunteered for the duty in Puerto Rico. Hotzfeld said they will be stationed in four different zones, with two operators at headquarters in the San Juan Convention Center. "The hospitals did not want us to leave," Hotzfeld said. "They were begging



***Amateur Radio volunteer Val Hotzfeld, NV9L. She is now back home.***

us to stay." She noted, though, that the hospitals also have access to satellite telephones.

"I was so proud of our guys," Hotzfeld said in summary. "They were rock stars."

### **Puerto Rico volunteer aids burn victim, contacts family via radio**

"We had a stressful night on the island!" That's how Puerto Rico volunteer Jeremy Dougherty, NS0S, described an October 12 medical emergency on the **island of Culebra**, in which Amateur Radio played a major role. Dougherty, a Force of 50 American Red Cross volunteer who was supporting communication at Culebra Hospital, said fumes from a gasoline fuel container ignited, seriously injuring a woman. Dougherty was unable to raise any of the other volunteers in San Juan -- likely because of the late hour -- but the only doctor at the hospital at the time called Centro de Medico on a satellite phone to coordinate transportation for the patient. The only other after-hours staff was a nurse.

"This patient was far from being within our scope to treat at this facility," Dougherty said. "The patient had burns to at least 30% of her body. I had to do a lot of medical work here." While the nurse, who knew the patient, left to get belongings from the burn victim's house,

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Dougherty, a medic who works for the Kansas City (Missouri) Fire Department, administered first aid, under the doctor's direction, to stabilize the woman.

After helicopter transport to San Juan was arranged, Dougherty set about contacting the patient's family. He got on 40 meters, interrupting a pileup of stations trying to work National Fire Prevention Week special event station N4F, being run by Kevin Young, KC7FPF, in Bronson, Florida. Dougherty explained the situation and asked Young to contact the woman's family in Connecticut.

"We had complete radio silence while we were passing traffic," Dougherty said. "We were literally passing traffic as the helicopter flew overhead." Copy was poor with an increasing noise level, Young told ARRL, but he was able to pull out NS0S, get the message, and pass it to the family.

"He definitely stepped up to the challenge of the unexpected emergency and handled it quite well," Dougherty said. **"Someone needs to pin a medal on his chest."**



**Sacramento Valley Section  
Emergency Coordinator  
Greg Kruckewitt, KG6SJT,  
relays shelter status  
reports via Winlink.**

## **California: Transformers and propane tanks going off like a war zone**

San Francisco Section District Emergency Coordinator (and former Section Manager) Len Gwinn, WA6KLLK, in the Redwood Valley told ARRL last week that Amateur Radio volunteers in Mendocino and Lake counties have stood down, and things are "kind of back to normal, in that no emergency stations are being operated." Gwinn, who spent more than 3 decades as a Cal Fire employee and a few more years as a volunteer, said the sound of wildfire in the Redwood Valley was remarkable.

"Never, ever had I heard a fire like this," he told ARRL. "[T]he roar of the fire was something else from 2 miles away the first night," he recounted. **"Transformers and propane tanks**

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***The Cal Fire map for October 18, 2017.***





**California wildfires: Telecoms infrastructure damage.**

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**going off like a war zone. Some shook my house!"**

"Skies are still smoky, but getting much better," Gwinn said.

Gail Harris, KM6CEK, became an accidental volunteer after she was stuck in Ukiah by road closings. Armed with US Forest Service and incident radio experience, Harris ended up working in the emergency operations center at the Mendocino county Sheriff's Office until October 12. **"It was awesome," she said. "It was the reason I got involved with ham radio."**

Mary Jane Cummings, WA3VUI, of Covelo, took a night shift at Howard memorial Hospital in Willits, monitoring the radio and handling messages for the hospital and the shelter at the local high school.

Gwinn thanked Greg Glavich, WA6RQX, in Ukiah, who manages a five-linked repeater complex for wide-area communication, and George Burton, K7WWA, in Willits, for his central repeater that also carried traffic.

Telecommunications facilities in the fire zone

suffered damage that will take some time to repair.

The North Bay Amateur Radio Association's (NBARA) Gary Gross, KE6QR, recruited Amateur Radio volunteers on October 13 to support shelters housing those evacuating because of the Napa Valley Fires. Gross said the specific need was for backup communication between the Crossroads Shelter in Napa, the Napa Community College Shelter, and the American Canyon High School over the weekend, 9 AM until 6 PM each day.

"As soon as I finished copying the request for help, volunteers immediately started calling me, offering their services over the repeater," Gross said in an update. "Now that's what I call real volunteerism; all positions were filled over the repeater via RF."

According to Sacramento Valley Section Emergency Coordinator Greg Kruckewitt, KG6SJT, Butte County Emergency Coordinator Dale Anderson, KK6EVX, reported that radio amateurs deployed on October 9 to a Red Cross shelter in Oroville, set up for VHF to

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monitor public service frequencies and for Winlink. Shelter status reports were being sent to the California Office of Emergency Services (CAL OES), via Winlink.

In Nevada County, radio amateurs deployed to a shelter for evacuees. Nevada County Emergency Coordinator Richard Vizcarra, K6TM, said earlier last week that the need was winding down, but the Red Cross invited those Amateur Radio volunteers to support its efforts. **"The Red Cross was very impressed with the communication abilities we demonstrated,** and immediately had several ideas of how it could be used to eliminate unnecessary legwork for communication in emergency situations," Vizcarra said. The shelter team was able to send and receive messages via Winlink on VHF and handled health-and-welfare and other message requests.

Amador County Emergency Coordinator Daniel Edwards, KJ6WYW, reported that the Red Cross requested ARES support at a shelter in Pioneer for Calaveras County residents. Edwards set up a **temporary net control station using a 2-meter mobile radio,** working through the K6ARC repeater. Contact was made with the Calaveras County CERT Team, and the Red Cross opened a shelter in West Point. Several volunteers stepped up to staff the station until the need for the shelter ended.

Shelter status reports were relayed by voice to Kruckewitt, who sent them on via Winlink to Cal OES.

"Nearly 10,000 firefighters continue making progress on 13 large wildfires burning in the state that, combined, have burned over 210,000 acres," Cal Fire reported in late October. "While many evacuation orders have been lifted in northern California, over 22,000 people remain out of their homes." The death toll then stood at 42.



## **Global effort under way to restore Dominica's amateur radio capabilities**

The Yasme Foundation, Yaesu USA, the Foundation for Amateur International Radio Service (FAIRS), and individual GoFundMe donors have joined forces to restore **country-wide Amateur Radio communication on Dominica** in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. Private pilots Brian Machesney, K1LI, and Dave Bridgham, N1AHF, arrived in Dominica from Vermont with a planeload of Amateur Radio gear, relief equipment, and supplies to better prepare the small Caribbean island nation for future disasters. Bridgham is a volunteer for the Dominica "Angels to Eden" airlift spearheaded by round-the-world pilot Brian Lloyd, WB6RQN.

"Almost a month after Hurricane Maria, there are still families waiting to hear whether their loved ones are alive or dead or in serious need of medical attention," said Michelle Guenard, Machesney's spouse and spokesperson for the joint effort. Guenard pointed out that in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, which devastated Dominica and its telecommunications infrastructure, "the only news of their families and friends was gleaned through the transmissions of local [Amateur Radio] operators." She noted that many were able to listen to live streams of ham radio traffic

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via Facebook and YouTube live feeds.

Guenard explained that **many Dominica expatriates now want to equip their home villages with ham radio stations**, and she started a GoFundMe campaign for that purpose. "Once this equipment arrives and is installed throughout the island, we will have achieved our goal, 'to provide every human being on the island of Dominica with the ability to call for help.'"

Working with a network of contacts developed over decades of visits to Dominica, Machesney and Guenard established a partnership that has pulled together more than \$30,000 worth of radio equipment and solar-powered battery-charging stations. "When fully deployed, Dominica will be part of a robust local, regional, and worldwide network of Amateur Radio stations," Machesney said.

**"Many of our members lost everything in the hurricane,"** said Joseph Raymond, J73RJ, President of the Dominica Amateur Radio Club Inc. (DARCI). "The donated equipment will dramatically improve our near-term ability to connect towns and villages all over Dominica, and to stay connected well into the future."

Yasme President Ward Silver, N0AX, said his organization began working with the Dominica Amateur Radio Club and Dominica's National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC) last year to recruit and equip new ham radio operators for just such an emergency.

## Caribbean Telecommunications Union head calls for "New Generation" of hams

In remarks made on International Disaster Reduction Day, Friday, October 13, Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) Secretary-General Bernadette Lewis described Amateur Radio as a **"bedrock of sustained communications"** during emergencies, and strongly suggested cultivating a new and younger generation of radio amateurs to carry this role forward. She spoke as part of a panel on emergency telecommunications during the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) World Telecommunication Development



**CTU  
(Caribbean  
Telecommunications  
Union)  
Secretary-  
General  
Bernadette  
Lewis.**

Conference 2017 (WTDC-17) in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The CTU, she said, has been considering the role of Amateur Radio in light of this "very, very, violent hurricane season."

**"Amateur Radio has been a staple**, and it is because of...the Amateur Radio operators in the region that we get a lot of the information that we need," she told her audience. Her presentation defined Amateur Radio as one component in the coordination of preparedness, response, and recovery efforts on the part of national emergency management agencies.

Moderator Vanessa Gray later asked Lewis what "one concrete step" could be taken to make better use of information and communication technologies (ICT) for disaster management.

"We really have to cultivate a new generation of Amateur Radio operators," Lewis replied without hesitation, but added, "We found that they are all on the northern side of 50."

**"Amateur Radio has been the bedrock of sustained communications during such emergencies,"** she continued, "and one of the things we're looking at is actually facilitating this process of having a network of disaster-resistant centers that, in times when you don't have a disaster, could be used for training new operators and generating that interest across the region."

Lewis, of Trinidad and Tobago, reiterated her remarks in condensed form during a subsequent interview, in which she called hurricanes "a fact of life" for Caribbean countries, and suggested that hurricane-devastated countries need to think carefully about how to rebuild their infrastructure to make it less prone to storm damage.



***Irene Kubica, NH7PE, is an avid participant in 10-meter activity and encourages hams at all levels to join in the fun.***

## Upcoming events

Sat Nov 11, 2017 00:00 -	
Sun Nov 12, 2017 23:59	
<b>FALL QSO</b>	
Mon Jan 01, 2018 00:00	
<b>10-10 Anniversary</b>	
Mon Jan 01, 2018 00:00	
<b>10-10 Meet the Volunteers</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## The 10-10 Connection

with NH7PE,

**10-10 Aloha Chapter**



### ***Have a hankering for rag-chewing?***

Check into the daily (except Sunday) SSB nets at 8 a.m. HST on 28.380 and 28.800MHz. They are called from Illinois, California, Arizona, Florida, North Carolina and Michigan. Try them out.

Remember: You have to make contacts to get results!

***Be sure to check  
www.ten-ten.org for  
details***

### **Ten-Ten International QSO Parties**

For those who join in the Ten-Ten QSO Parties, remember: You can assign your score to the Aloha Chapter. Logs must be postmarked no later than 15 days after the respective QSO Party.

To see what's open on 10 meters, listen to the beacons from 28.175-28.300 so you will know where DX is coming from.

The Ten-Ten International News has reprinted several antenna articles by L.B. Cebik (SK), W4RNL #41159.

Ten-Ten International pins are available for purchase at \$2 each. See [www.ten-ten.org](http://www.ten-ten.org) for details.

CW news: FISTS Get Your Feet Wet Activity Day! Every third Sunday from 0001 to 2400 UTC on 80 and 40 meters (3.558-7.110 MHz); exchange name, QTH, FIST #, RST.