



the RARA RAG

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No. 2

RaRa MEETING — OCTOBER 7th

At 8:19 a.m. on June 15, 1988, the first Ariane Launcher boosted from the pad in Kourou, French Guiana. Less than three hours later, the newest of the Oscars transmitted its first telemetry. Two in-orbit kick motor burns were successful, and OSCAR 13 was placed in a perfect orbit to provide years of space based communication services to hams worldwide.

Dave Schwitek, NW2T, will present a very interesting and informative look at the world of OSCAR Communication. As with any highly technical aspect of our hobby, use of the OSCAR satellites poses many problems, though none are insurmountable. The newest OSCAR contains modes never used from space before. During Dave's program, we will focus on several topics of interest. Among these: tracking, operating equipment, modes of operation, telemetry, orbit characteristics, etc.

This is a dynamite program. Don't miss it if you have any questions about AMSAT, OSCARS or space communications in general.

RRRA ELECTS 1988-89 OFFICERS

The following officers were elected at the May 1988 meeting.

Chairman — John March, W2SNF
Vice-Chairman — Bob O'Connell, NF2Z
Secretary — Joel Rossbach, N2EZV
Treasurer — Bill Shaw, N2EKR

SILENT KEYS

ELMER J. "BUCK" O'CONNOR
N2FI

September 3, 1988

CLYDE W. VAN DUSEN
KB2FM

September 6, 1988

IS YOUR HAM LICENSE HARD TO READ?

Here's a reminder to those who receive their Amateur Radio license in the mail, expectantly tearing open the official-looking envelope, only to find that they are unable to read the call sign!

The licenses are typed on carbon copies already in the mailer — a money-saving measure for the FCC — at times making for "difficult copy" by the amateur on the receiving end!

If you are thinking of going over the call with a pencil to darken it up, *don't!* Any alteration voids it. The "enhanced" license, if presented to a VE team for license upgrade testing, will probably be rejected.

If your license arrives in "unreadable" condition, simply request a duplicate license from the FCC, Box 1020, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 17326, explaining the circumstances.

Tnx ARRL Letter

FCC PROPOSES ADVISORY LABELS FOR SCANNERS

In the case of General Docket number 88-281, the FCC has proposed the labeling of radio scanners to advise users that it may be unlawful to intercept protected communications.

In light of the passage of the Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986 (ECPA), Regency Electronics asked the Commission to require an advisory notice for the purpose of educating the public that the use of communications scanners may be illegal under certain circumstances. The FCC said the advisory label would be the simplest and least burdensome method of alerting the public that some uses of scanning devices are prohibited. Apparently this would not affect Amateur Radio receivers, because those receivers marketed for "licensed services" are excluded from the action.

Tnx ARRL Letter

the **RaRa RAG**

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Amateur Radio News Service

RaRa OCTOBER CALENDAR

- 7 - RaRa Meeting - 8:00 p.m.
40/8 Club, 933 University Avenue
- 9 - Rochester VHF Group Meeting - 7:30 p.m.
Monroe County Social Services Building,
111 Westfall Road
- 15 - RaRa VEC Amateur Exams, 111 Westfall
Road - 8:30 a.m. Registration
Syracuse Hamfest, Syracuse, NY
- 18 - RDXA Meeting - 8:00 p.m. - 111 Westfall
- 21 - RRRR Meeting - 8:00 p.m.
(See Article Below)

RRRA SCHEDULES CLINIC OCTOBER 21st

by Bob O'Connel, NF2Z

"DR." W2TR, Gary Sienkiewicz and associates will conduct the Annual RRRR Well Radio Clinic on October 21st at the Memorial Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 650 Merchants Road, starting at 8 p.m.

The "DR." and his team will diagnose and perhaps treat or recommend a course of treatment for your rig. Poor modulation, squeaks, drifting, etc? Now is the time to bring that rig in for a free and painless check-up. This once a year free service could very well prevent a trip to a Radio ICU later.

Please bring along manuals. Remember this is a clinic, no basket or terminal cases PLEASE.



A PUBLIC SERVICE THANK YOU

On Saturday, September 10, 1988 a group of five RaRa members provided communications for the annual 10K Walkathon sponsored by the Rochester Puppy Raisers Program of Guiding Eyes for the Blind, Inc. The walkers and their puppies strolled along the canal path from Genesee Valley Park to a point 5 kilometers to the East and returned to the starting point. The amateurs got to meet the people involved with the program and the warm sunshine made for a very pleasant morning. The group will receive approximately \$1400 for their efforts. Club members participating were: Sue, N2HKA; Randy, KA2UTI; Jay, KB2CHZ; Chet, WB2MDO; and Dave, N2DPF. Thanks to all for your time and effort.

YASME FOUNDATION AND THE COLVINS

by Bill Welsh, W6DDB

INTRODUCTION – I have received requests from amateurs for information about the Yasme Foundation. Such requests usually come from new amateurs who have recently contacted a DX (foreign) station and has been told to “*QSL via YASME*”, which usually leaves a new amateur very confused. The information in this article was supplied by Lloyd Colvin (W6KG), with whom I chatted during a YL convention in Las Vegas. Fortunately, both of our wives were delayed more than an hour in getting out of the meeting they attended, which was to my advantage. The aid of Bob Vallio (W6RGG) has also been appreciated: Bob is Secretary of the Yasme Foundation.

History – During 1954, British subject Danny Weil built a yacht and named it “*Yasme*”, using a Japanese word that means “*good luck*”. He had never sailed a boat before and he was not an amateur radio operator, but he was determined to sail around the world. Despite the great difficulties he encountered, Danny managed to sail the *Yasme* from England to the British Virgin Islands, where he was fortunate to meet Dick Spenceley (KV4AA), one of the world’s best operators. Dick convinced Danny to become an amateur before continuing his trip around the world. Danny earned a license and was working DX (foreign stations) on code at 20 wpm one month later. He installed a rig aboard the *Yasme* and continued his trip, calling it the *Yasme DX-pedition*. The *Yasme Foundation* was formed during 1961 to help Danny meet *DX-pedition* expenses. The *Yasme Foundation* is tax free.

Danny got married in 1964 and his wife accompanied him on several trips before they settled ashore. Since 1965, the *Yasme Foundation* has sponsored *DX-peditions* of Iris (W6QL) and Lloyd (W6KG) Colvin, two of the world’s most competent operators, with the Colvins paying all of their own expenses. The *Yasme Foundation* handles *QSL* cards and *DX-pedition* publicity.

Iris and Lloyd Colvin – Lloyd (W6KG) has been licensed since 1929, and Iris (W6QL) has been licensed since 1945, which makes a combined total of 98 years. Their daughter, Joy, is also an amateur. Many amateurs feel that they have achieved a major operating milestone when they get the *DXCC* award for confirmed contacts with amateurs in at least one hundred countries. Such operators have just cause to be proud, because the *DXCC* award is not easy to earn. However, the Colvins have earned *DXCC* awards while using

about 100 different call signs all around the world. This couple holds more *DXCC* certificates than any other couple in the world. The Colvins have made over one million contacts from 166 countries and they have used 120 different call signs. They have the world’s largest alphabetically filed collection of *QSL* cards numbering about 500,000 cards.

The Colvins are Extra Class licensees. They both hold 5-band *DXCC* awards and they have been on the ARRL *DX Honor Roll* more than a decade. They were well known as top operators long before they became associated with the *Yasme Foundation*. Following the end of *WW-II*, Lloyd stayed in the United States Army Signal Corps, spending 20 years completing worldwide assignments that enabled Iris and Lloyd to operate from many countries.

Latest YASME DX-pedition – The Colvins are now on another *DX-pedition* that is expected to last into 1987. They hope to operate from a number of Indian Ocean countries, working equal amounts of code and voice contacts. As usual, amateurs will be listening for them and working them from as many countries as possible.

YASME QSL – If you are told to “*QSL via Yasme*”, send your card to the *Yasme Foundation*, P. O. Box 2025, Castro Valley, California 94546. Be sure to include your self-addressed, stamped envelope (S.A.S.E.) to assure the quickest reply to your *QSL* request. All *Yasme* contacts are *QSL’d* soon after they are verified in the logs. I can personally vouch for the accuracy of the preceding statement, I have received many *Yasme DX-pedition* cards.

Tnx LERC Club Bulletin

ERROR IN CALLBOOK

The Radio Amateur Callbook, Inc., reports that because of a computer programming error in the 1988 *Callbook* supplement, all *Novice* licenses are incorrectly shown as *Advanced*. This means that the supplement (Volume 66, No. 2) cannot be used to determine license class of these licenses.

Radio Amateur Callbook, Inc., also announced the 1988 *International Callbook* has been sold out, and a new printing is impossible. There is also only a limited supply of the 1988 *North American Callbooks* available.

Tnx ARRL Letter

ADVERTISING REMINDER

Could it be that a "boat anchor" in your closet could be someone's "sunken treasure"? Any current member of RaRa can advertise any extra equipment in the RAG free of charge. Just drop a list of those things gathering dust to either co-editor (their addresses are on Page 2) or pin them down at any RaRa meeting.

Any RaRa member who owns or operates his/her own business or service is encouraged to advertise in the RAG. The RAG reaches over 900 members a month. The first issue of the RAG, which is mailed to all amateur radio operators in the 144 - 145 - 146 ZIP Codes, is sent to almost 4000 hams in all. Rates are quite reasonable, so just contact Dick Goslee, K2VCZ.

THE RaRa RAG 20 YEARS AGO — OCTOBER 1968

by Ed Gable, K2MP

Two local Hams were mentioned in this issue as the presenters of the October meeting. Two Bob's: Bob Nezelek, W2CNS, and Bob Jeffers, W2ALL, will demonstrate a timely topic of how to tune and load a Single Sideband transmitter. The Antique Wireless Association announced their annual Historical Radio Conference to be held at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC. Membership Chairman Ed Gable, W2MPM, told of 30 new members including such notables as: Ed Kessler, K3UZO; Bob Phelps, WB2DPT; Sherwood Snyder, W2KFU; Fred Cupp, W2DUC; Jim Tiefenthal, K8DVL; and Dick Fish, W2OWF. Dave Hassett, K2SQI, announced new Code and Theory classes starting with newly graduated assistants to help out. Included were Ed Holdsworth, WN2EKR; Don Hassett, WB2QVD; Bill Gaines, WB2QVB; and Bob Pavlock, WB2ECD.

Rag Editor, Harold Smith, WA2KND, wrote a lengthy horror story concerning the almost undelivered September Rags. After delivering all 1,000 copies to the Post Office Harold was called and told the Rags could not be delivered because of two "illegal" words in a particular article. This was Wednesday prior to the meeting. The P.O. said these words were not allowed in second class postage and had to be removed. The offensive copies were picked up at the main P.O. at 7 p.m. Wednesday evening. A heroic crew consisting of Bill and Florence Kirkbright, WA2HWC/WA2QXB; Bud Young, WA2UGE; Bob Gross, WB2RVV; Chuck Oneske, K2YCO; John and Jeanne Wenrich, WB2FJU/WB2MFV; and Harold and Helen Smith, WA2KND/WA2YRH, were enlisted for the job. They opened all 1,000 copies, blacked out the offensive words, resealed, bundled and recounted - all in record time for on time delivery. What were these words? Well they were &%\$! ¢&&! * ... Oh no, we're not gonna do that again!!

From a member's advertisement you could buy a complete 6 meter 20 watt transmitter from Cappy Capualdy for a mere twenty bucks - the macaroni was free. (That's a 20 year old inside joke - Ed)

FOR SALE: C64 Computer, 1541 Disk Drive, and much hardware and software. Have gone AMIGA! First \$200.00. Chuck Oneske, K2YCO - 266-6370 after 6 p.m.

RECIPROCAL CALL ID UPDATE

As previously reported (ARRL Letter No. 10, May 23, 1988) there is going to be a change in the identification procedures for alien licensees operating under reciprocal agreement with the US. We now have received the official FCC Order, and its effective date is July 18, 1988.

For those of you keeping track, the FCC rule change effected is 97.313, revised as follows:

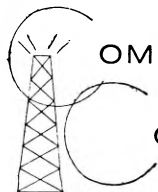
"When the station is operating under a reciprocal permit, the call sign transmitted in the identification procedure must be that issued to the station by the licensing country, preceded by the appropriate letter-numeral designating the station location, separated by the slant mark "/" or by the word "stroke" or "slash" during radio-telephone operations. At least once during each intercommunication, the identification announcement must include the geographic location as nearly as possible by city and state, commonwealth or possession, stated in the English language."

Tnx ARRL Letter



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FCC DENIES PETITION

The FCC has denied a petition submitted by Carroll L. Norton, NA4I, which sought to authorize the use of amateur stations for communications between family members, limited to families where at least one person holds an Amateur Extra Class license.

The petition sought to permit the licensee's immediate (non-licensed) family members to act as station control operators, but only for communications with the Extra Class operator. Norton stated in support of his petition that the proposed rule change would enhance Amateur Extra Class privileges and encourage family participation in Amateur Radio.

In denying the petition, the FCC said the Amateur Service should not be used as an "alternative" to other radio services, and secondly, the FCC does not exempt any amateur station control operator from the licensing requirement. Only a qualified person can hold an amateur operator license, as required in the International Radio Regulations of the ITU, and the Communications Act of 1934.

"The petitioner, in effect, seeks to use the amateur service for a purpose not intended (i.e. as a personal radio service) and a primary purpose of the amateur service is to improve and expand our country's reserve of radio operators who contribute to the advancement of communications technology. Only amateur radio operators who possess technical knowledge and operating skills are capable of meeting these objectives. Thus the purpose of the amateur service is best served by the application to all users of a licensing requirement based on demonstrated abilities."

Tnx ARRL Letter

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CAUSE OF 20 METER BAND FIRE STILL A MYSTERY AFTER EIGHT YEARS

This week marks the eighth anniversary of the freak fire that destroyed over 50 kilohertz of the 20 meter band, and forced the FCC to shut down most HF ham bands for over 24 hours. Apparently the fire originated on about 14.280 megahertz following an unusually long series of QSOs by an undetermined number of California stations running very high power and extreme modulation compression. At the time, Marvin Larpsnogg, an FCC Special Frequency Engineer, told reporters, "We had a hell of a time putting the fire out. Shutting down the propagation generators did no good at all. The fire just spread up and down the band, so we had to turn off all the HF ham bands from 40 through 10 meters to smother the flames". Finally, after three hours the FCC had the fire under control. Most HF bands were back in operation by the next day; however, 20 meters was closed for more than eight weeks while the charred frequencies were being refurbished. Since that time, many studies have been made of the fire and its possible causes. One such study, made by Dr. Eugene Peritonitis, Chairman of the Consultative Committee on Frequency Damage, indicated that the cause might have been due to thermofrequency heating (TFH). However, the study's results were inconclusive. Other studies have achieved similarly inconclusive results. Some weeks after the fire the FCC promised to install a sprinkler system on the band to prevent another disaster. With the advent of deregulation, however, the sprinkler system was never installed and 20 meters still has no protection. The League of Radio Relaying Americans (LRRRA) has expressed concern about this neglect of 20 meters and calls attention to the fact that the 5 meter band was completely wiped out for all time by the holocaust of the late 1930s. Unfortunately, the FCC no longer has the funds to make good on its promise to protect 20 meters. For that reason, all hams should use extreme care when using 20 meters and all other bands. They are a perishable resource. Don't use high power on ANY ham band or use any mode that might ignite a frequency, particularly during openings when the frequencies are especially dry. Remember, only YOU can prevent BAND fires.

-- N8JR et al via GEARVAKf

FOR SALE: Cushcraft A4 Beam: 4 bands, 10-40 meters, taken off tower, in good condition. \$125.00. Chick, WA2IJH, 227-2542.

RDXA OCTOBER 1988 DXING AND CONTESTING

Chasing DX is the primary interest of a great many hams. Even those who claim that they are not DXers will proudly tell listeners that they worked a "new one" or that they talked to six or seven different countries last weekend. One of the most magical parts of Amateur Radio is working a station halfway around the world from your location. So, if you enjoy working DX seriously or just want to add a few countries to your list, consider this.

Fall is the beginning of the contest season and brings forth the cry from all good net participants and those who sked the same station every day; NOT ANOTHER CONTEST!!! Actually there are only two contests that disrupt the bands to any great degree: CQ World Wide DX and ARRL Sweepstakes. Sweepstakes is a domestic contest and is felt to be one of the true tests of the die hard tester. For most casual testers the most fun is derived from DX contest, and CQWW is the biggest and best. The phone portion is at the end of October and CW at the end of November. So what does this have to do with DX?

Looking at the results of CQWW 1987 I see 2nd call district, 10 meters, 73 different countries worked by a single operator. In October of '87 10 meters was not "hot" like it is now. Sure, this op is a "contester" but look at the casual entries on 10 - 68 QSO's and 25 countries; 26 QSO's and 19 countries. I don't know exactly how many different are on that one weekend, but the results show three stations contacted 141 countries just on 20 meters and the best score for just 10 meters was 92 countries. Last October I put my new antenna on my tower on Sunday of CQWW and at 2000Z connected temporary coax and made 92 contacts barefoot; worked 50 band/countires; worked two new countries and seven new band countries. Thats why DXers work and enter contests; you get the biggest concentration of countries in the shortest time and with the best operators getting you through fast. An added bonus is that they tend to be excellent QSLers.

The RDXA meeting will be held October 18, at 8:00 p.m. at the Monroe County Social Service Building on Westfall Road. There will be a tape or slide DX show and a discussion of the upcoming contests.

-- KB2SE

IMPROVED ADHESION OF ON-GLASS ANTENNAS

by N3WS via NARC Radio Newsletter

I just finished reading an interesting article in Antenna News published by Larsen Antennas and I thought I would share it with you. For some time Larsen has been recommending thorough cleaning of auto windows before installing on-glass antennas. The modern auto glass is getting better all the time and now the cleaning becomes even more critical.

The new glass is getting smoother, with fewer pores in the surface. That means you can clean it easier, but it also makes it harder for the adhesives to do their job. "*The lack of pores in the glass offers very little surface for the adhesive to grip. So new glass is more difficult than old glass that has small pits due to time and weathering*".

In addition, modern car washes add oil-based waxes to every car to allow the car to be air-dried without water spotting. This makes the water ball up and run off. Unfortunately this wax also fills up the pores needed for adhesion.

To complicate things, new products, such as RAIN-X, are designed to fill up those pores, allowing the rain to literally fall off the glass.

Larsen recommends that the window glass be cleaned three times where the antenna is to be mounted. First, clean with a glass cleaner (like Windex) to remove loose particles. Then thoroughly scrub with a cleaner (Bon-Ami is one which they recommend to avoid scratching!). This is to remove the chemically bonded waxes from the pores of the glass. Then, clean the area with the alcohol wipes supplied with the antenna.

Finally, you must evaporate moisture which has condensed into the microscopic pores of the glass. It is suggested to use a hair dryer on the window immediately prior to installation, and install the antenna onto the glass in a minute or less or the moisture will recondense. Watch out and do not get the glass too hot! If you can't touch the glass without discomfort, you are getting it too hot and may be risking damage to the window glass. Larsen recommends 70 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

ANTENNA TIP

Are you having trouble with a Larsen 2-meter 1/2 wave glass mounted antenna for your car? If you seem to be getting a very high SWR, Larsen says there is a possibility that the auto glass has a high lead content affecting the antenna performance. This could vary from different car makers.

Tnx Gary, N2IFI via METROPLEX

WHICH RIG TO BUY?

This is a question asked often by both new Hams and old timers. Let's look at both situations and try to shed some light. Remember, though, the ultimate decision must be your own.

The newcomer to Ham Radio may balk at having to pay close to a thousand dollars (or more!) for the latest high-tech creation. After all, this is supposed to be a hobby. What he really needs is a simply, reliable rig to get his feet wet. Eventually, if his perceived needs (and bank balance) justify it, he may choose something more elaborate. His best bet may be to purchase an older pre-owned (to borrow a phrase from the up-market used car dealers) piece of equipment. Rather than getting a separate receiver and transmitter, it is more desirable to go the transceiver route.

The modern CW/SSB transceiver dates from the early 1970's when many American manufacturers were in their heyday. Names to look for are Heath, Drake, Hallicrafters, Swan and National. Almost invariably they were vacuum tube rigs. These tubes are now getting somewhat expensive, although availability isn't much of a problem and quite often a spare set of tubes is thrown in with the deal. Most of this equipment is very easy to service and usually came with service manuals.

When checking out such a rig, try to solicit the advice of a Ham familiar with gear of this era and insist upon a demonstration. The deal should include all power supplies, cables, and filters normally supplied by the manufacturer. A crystal CW (narrow band) filter is highly desirable. Prices should be between \$300 and \$500 (subject to the usual horse trading). During the last half of the 1970's Japanese transistorized equipment grabbed most of the market. For the most part, this gear has turned out to be reliable although servicing was hampered by a lack of service manuals, the need for special extender circuit boards, and the use of non-standard transistors and final amplifier tubes. Generally, if it's working OK when you buy it, it should give long faithful service. The best examples to look for are YAESU FT101E, Kenwood TS-520, or TS-820.

From 1980 to the present, the Japanese manufacturers have gone "Hi-Tech" with a vengeance. Modern rigs have features and capabilities undreamt of a decade ago. Whether you need or want all of these features, you have to pay for them anyway. And as for self-servicing, forget it! The schematic of one of these machines makes a bowl of spaghetti look orderly! This is where the old timer, who is attempting to modernize his station, starts having problems trying to decide what is the best buy for him.

One prominent manufacturer (the big "T") even sells a rig (microprocessor controlled) whose functions are stored in volatile memory, held live by a lithium battery. When that battery dies, as it will, the rig dies too. A good practice to follow would be to pull out past issues of QST and read the product reviews. These are usually very enlightening and pull no punches. If you don't understand something ask somebody who does. It would be, in the opinion of this writer, nice to see a rig produced which incorporates the following features:

- a. Minimal "bells and whistles"
- b. Modern, completely solid state design
- c. Easy serviceability
- d. Controls scaled to human dimensions
- e. Good reliability
- f. Priced below \$1000 Canadian.

If such a rig exists, please write and tell the author about it.

*R. F. Burns
Scarborough A.R.C. Inc.
P.O. Box 174, Station D
Scarborough, Ontario M1R 5B5*

US POSTAGE INCREASE AFFECTS MAIL TO CANADA

Everyone is aware that the US increased its postage rates from 22 cents to 25 cents for First Class mail on April 3. However, what you may *not* be aware of is that the rates for letters to Canada are *no longer* the same postage as domestic mail. It now costs 30 cents to send a First-Class letter to Canada from the US, and if you are sending a QSL card, it will now cost you 21 cents if it's bound for North of the border.

The rate for letters and cards sent to Mexico remains the same: 25 cents for letters and 15 cents for postcards.

Tnx ARRL Letter

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 220-MHz AMATEUR RADIO ALLOCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

December 1, 1938 – In accordance with the 1937 Inter-American Radio Conference, the band 224-230 MHz is allocated to amateur and experimental stations.

May 25 1945 – In Docket No. 6651, FCC allocates 220-225 MHz for postwar amateur use, on an exclusive basis; no operation yet permitted.

April 1, 1946 – FCC authorizes amateur operation on 235-240 MHz instead, on an interim basis, to protect British-made distance-measuring equipment still using 220-231 MHz.

October 2, 1947 – International Radio Regulation signed at Atlantic City establish exclusive allocation to the Amateur Service at 220-225 MHz in Region 2, with distance-measuring equipment to cease operating by January 1, 1952.

April 28, 1948 – FCC shifts amateur band from 235-240 to 220-225 MHz.

April 1958 – Responding to a request from the Office of Defense Mobilization, FCC incorporates Government Radiopositioning as primary service in the 220-225 MHz band, with the Amateur Service secondary; international allocation remains unchanged as Amateur primary.

December 21, 1951 – International Radio Regulations signed in Geneva establish Amateur and Radiolocation as co-primary in Region 2, Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

December 1979 – International Radio Regulations signed in Geneva reduce status of Radiolocation to secondary, effective January 1, 1990, and introduce the Fixed and Mobile Services as primary in addition to the Amateur Service, effective January 1, 1982.

June 1981 – FCC begins to implement the 1979 Conference results between 28 and 1215 Mhz (Second Notice of Inquiry, Docket 80-739).

January 1983 – FCC releases NPRM in Docket 80-739, states: "The current and future spectrum requirements for 220-225 MHz are undefined at the present time".

December 1983 – FCC adopts Second Report and Order in Docket 80-739, says "there is an FCC/NTIA working group developing an allocation plan for this band" and "no assignments will be made to the fixed and mobile ser-

vices until the allocation and service rules are finalized".

February 1987 – In General Docket 87-14, FCC proposed to eliminate the amateur allocation at 220-222 MHz and to allocate 222-225 MHz to the Amateur Service on an exclusive basis.

August 1988 – Three Commissioners of FCC voted unanimously to reallocate 220-222 MHz band to land mobile use.

Tnx ARRL Letter

SOLAR CYCLE PEAK MAY BE EARLY

The peak of the next solar cycle may occur as early as late 1988, and may possibly be the most intense cycle ever measured. According to Dr. Patrick McIntosh, Director of Solar Physics Research at NOAA's Space Environment Laboratory in Boulder, Colorado, the solar activity level could reach normal maximum by summer if current trends continue. Earlier predictions based on traditional methods suggested that 1992 be the maximum.

Predicting solar activity is risky, and Dr. McIntosh cautions that the rapidly increasing levels could flatten out. However, NASA is apparently taking some precautionary action with its low earth orbiting satellites, protecting them from the "drag" that increases during the periods of high solar activity.

Tnx ARRL Letter

THINK BEFORE YOU BUY "USED" GEAR

There are potential problems involved in the buying and selling of used radio equipment that hams should remain aware of.

There is a reported case of a ham being arrested for possession of "stolen" equipment after having innocently purchased a piece of "surplus" commercial radio equipment for conversion and use on the amateur bands. Beware of future implications when dealing for that piece of "surplus" equipment – you may face felony charges for possession of stolen property, not to mention the loss of the equipment without any reimbursement to you!

Purchasing your surplus equipment from someone you know, or better yet, from a reputable dealer, is the best way to protect yourself from obtaining equipment of "questionable origin".

Tnx ARRL Letter