

Lanierland ARC



<http://www.lanierlandarc.org>

April 2009

President's Corner



Philip Loggins K4PDL



“CHANGE”

It seems we are hearing the word “*change*” more and more lately. The time just recently changed, the polarity of the new sunspots has changed, the weather is changing from Winter to Spring, and every time I look in the mirror, I SEE change.

Even though all of these are different changes, they are somewhat related when it comes to radio propagation. These changes affect amateur radio regardless of standard time, daylight time, high sunspots, low sunspots, winter, summer, spring, or fall. I didn't mention the face in the mirror in the above sentence because, though it also changes, it is a result and not a symptom. If the changes are favorable to radio operation, then the face I see has a smile, if not, the face shows frustration. I'll bet you thought the change seen in the mirror had something to do with age, didn't you?

For the last several years, I have heard a lot of comments concerning the bad conditions on the ham bands. Almost everyone wants to see a change in the sun, more sunspots. The time has changed, which compounds some of the problems brought on by band conditions. Just when the sun starts to rise earlier as the days get longer, Daylight Saving Time goes into effect. This change reverses the relative time by one hour, causing operation during conditions that had previously been slowly improving to revert back to poor. Had the time not changed, 20 meter skip would have shortened and conditions would have improved within the same hour of net operation.

We can't prevent the change, but we can endeavor to make our own changes to possibly counteract the undesirable results of the symptoms. Our biggest enemy is our *unwillingness* to make the adjustments that can cause an undesirable situation to turn around. I suppose it is human nature to want to reject change and to cling to the old familiar. The changes that we are now facing are ones that we can do nothing about. We can't paint spots on the sun, we can't revert to standard time, and we can't start the Sunday net at just any hour trying to make things better. But times will be a changing.

"And I can't do anything about the ugly mug that I see in the mirror either!

Get out and enjoy this great hobby. Be RADIO – ACTIVE!

As always, email (k4pdl@bellsouth.net) me with your thoughts, ideas, and /or criticisms.
This is YOU'RE CLUB, be an active part of it.

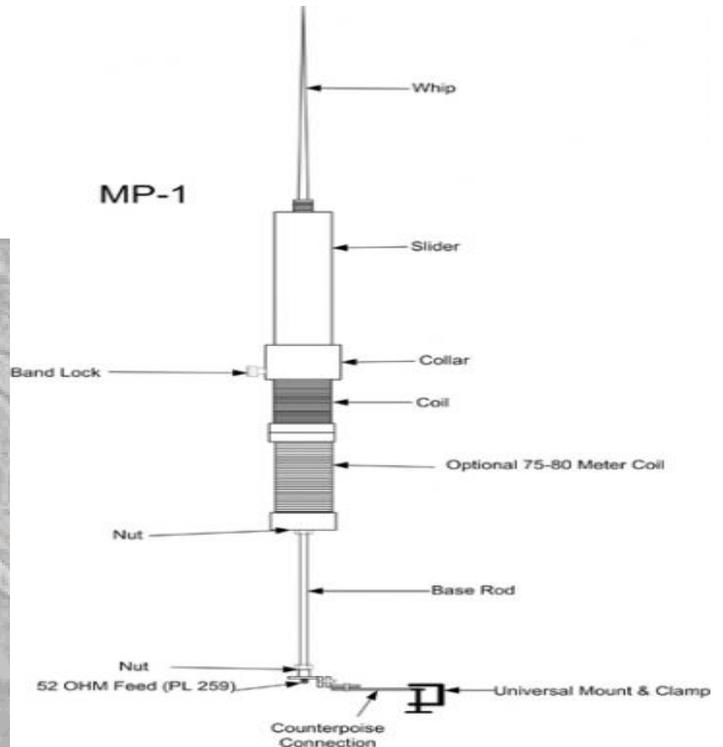
Help us preserve the good and build for tomorrow. Start today.

Until next time,



MP-1 Vertical Antenna

Ed Cravey KF4HPY



During a visit to the Dayton Hamfest, I paused at a booth featuring the MP-1 Super-antenna. The MP-1 was a manual screwdriver vertical antenna with whip. I thought the concept was very clever and later ordered one online. In the box was a very well made screwdriver antenna with a universal mount base and C-clamp. Included was a ribbon cable counterpoise. The first time I used the antenna it was not too pleasing, it was hard to tune, and the ribbon cable seemed useless. Friends and relatives who have the MP-1 voiced the same opinions, hard to tune, poor performance and a general dissatisfaction with it.

Experimenting on the MP-1 using an analyzer to tune up the antenna solved the tuning difficulties, as a small adjustment equaled a big change. Next the ribbon cable was set aside in favor of a single piece of insulated wire 33 feet long for the 40- meter band stretched out along the ground. Operating from Sky Valley with my Yaesu 817 with 5 Watts QRP, I was able to check into the Southbears Sunday net on 7.260 MHz with a good signal. This last summer I was able to demonstrate all I had learned to a friend in Florida using his MP-1. We added a set of military radials draped over a balcony, and did the tuning with a small analyzer in a few minutes. Soon that little antenna was radiating toward Texas and New Mexico with good reports on the performance of his 100- Watt radio.

The MP-1 is a compact antenna with a 44 inch whip, a 17 inch screwdriver section sitting atop a 12 inch mast screwed in to the 3/8-24 coax mount; forming a center loaded vertical. The C- clamp allows mounting the antenna on a picnic table, balcony rail, or other surfaces at any angle. Since none of the pieces is over 13 inches long, a small container or case is just the thing for travel; don't forget radials.

The price is \$100 and covers 40-meters to 70-cm and is rated from QRP to 150 Watts. I do have one accessory, an 80-meter coil to extend the range of the antenna down. The materials are first class, as is the workmanship. I don't use this antenna much, as I favor my hamsticks. However I keep it close by as a secondary antenna. I did use it as a 2-meter antenna during the big snow last year from Sky Valley along with the HF hamsticks.

HONORING OUR TROOPS WITH ARMAD DAY 2009

Amateur Radio News Line

Amateur Radio Military Appreciation Day or ARMAD will be held this year on May 23rd. Planners hope to encourage all radio clubs and their operators to get on the air and show thanks, support, and appreciation to our troops, military retired, and veterans. More is on-line at www.armad.net (ARMAD)

SATELLITE COLISSION POSES FUTURE ON-ORBIT PROBLEMS

More news on a story from last months issue:

Debris from a recent satellite collision between an out of control Russian military satellite a working U.S. Iridium commercial bird and could circle Earth for up to 10,000 years. This, according to Russia's Mission Control chief who admits that the debris field could threaten the safety of many other satellites in an already crowded low Earth orbit area of space.

Vladimir Solovyov is the Mission chief. He says that the smashup occurred some 800 kilometer above Earth. He notes that this is the busiest part of near-Earth space and is a very popular orbit which is used by Earth tracking and communications satellites.

Solovyov says that the clouds of debris pose a serious danger to all of them and especially those made of light weight alloys because debris fragments travel a very high speed and can damage a spacecraft.

(space.com)

Tech Class Scheduled

LARC's training team has a tech class scheduled to begin May 9.

See <http://www.lanierlandarc.org/licensing.html>

for complete details. **PLEASE HELP SPREAD THE WORD**



GEORGIA QSO PARTY 2009 APRIL 11 AND 12

Annually, the second full weekend of April

There are two operating periods:

1800Z Saturday until 0359Z Sunday

1400Z to 2359Z on Sunday

JOIN US!!

**Mobiles operate as Rovers to get ALL GA counties On the Air
WE NEED YOU**

OBJECTIVE: For amateurs outside of the state of Georgia to make contact with as many Phone and/or CW Georgia stations in as many of the 159 Georgia counties, as possible.

Georgia stations work everyone on Phone, CW, or both modes.

The GQP is on 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m, 15m, 10m, and 6m only.

Suggested operating frequencies are:

Phone: 1.865, 3.810, 7.225, 14.250, 21.300, 28.450, 50.135

CW: 1.815, 3.545, 7.045, 14.045, 21.045, 28.045, 50.095

Awards for Club competition, Out of state clubs, and Georgia clubs, are offered in each mode category along with the individual station awards.

New prizes are being prepared for 2009

GQP is becoming one of the most popular QSO party events.

QSO parties in general are now very popular. GQP has gained some status as one of the "best". Our goal is to *get all the 159 (!) GA counties on the air for the event*. So far we have not quite done it. We had 158 counties live in 2008. It can be done if the GA clubs rally to get stations on the air. Home stations can easily put in some hours on the weekend. It is the Rovers who go to the rare counties and make it fun. Get in the mobile and visit your neighboring counties on short Rover run. GA is beautiful in April.

Use your favorite logger if you have one, send a Cabrillo file to gqp@iham.us
ALL forms of logs are accepted, Text files, word doc files, spreadsheets, paper logs too!
(The Mailing address for paper or?? is on the web site)

Full Rules, Prizes, Awards, current and prior results are on <http://gqp.contesting.com/>

Be sure to visit the site, and check.

Want to sponsor Prizes, Plaques, or Awards.... Contact gqp@iham.us

GQP is sponsored by South East Contest Club, and Southeastern DX Club.

Visit <http://gqp.contesting.com/> for more info

Jeff, W4DD

South East Contesting Club (SECC) VP

In The Spotlight



It seems as though Larry Tyson W4WLT has had a radio in his hands for most of his adult working life, first as a Security Officer and then in Law Enforcement with two (2) jurisdictions, but was never formally introduced to Amateur Radio until he volunteered to serve with Georgia Baptist Disaster Relief. A multitude of fine “Elmers” were his first contacts in the Amateur Radio community and helped him progress through the license classes. Larry began his Disaster Relief work in the Clean Up and Recovery ministry, but decided his calling was in Communications. First licensed as KG4IXX in August, 2000, he has managed to progress from Technician to Amateur Extra in February, 2005 (even passing the CW element before his upgrade to General). Along the way, Larry also held the vanity call K1WLT prior to his current call, W4WLT.

Larry was hired by the Northeast Georgia Chapter of the American Red Cross in May, 2006 as Emergency Services Director. Amateur Radio and the Red Cross have had a close working relationship for many years, with Amateur Radio being the preferred emergency communications system during disasters. *Larry: My being a licensed Amateur, along with my law enforcement and disaster experience probably helped in the decision to offer me the position. At least I am able to do many of the public service jobs I enjoy along with my hobby.*

Joining the Lanierland Amateur Radio Club soon after receiving his ticket, he has enjoyed learning much more about this fascinating hobby. His current interests lie in learning more about digital modes, specifically PSK31, and QRP operating. It is fascinating to him that 5 watts or less can reach such great distances. *Larry: I do look forward to Cycle 24 and the even better propagation it will bring. The Club activities and members have been a great source of information and educational experience. I look forward to many more years in this exciting hobby.*

N4HGO Gets An Article in Local Newspaper

Mike Hall N4HGO is well known as the “voice” of W4ABP. He has called our weekly Wednesday evening nets for years and most pre-recorded announcements over the our 2 meter repeater features Mike’s voice. Recently, Mike was interviewed by The Times concerning the work he does for the Georgia Forestry Commission here in Gainesville.

The story was done and published on March 17.

If you missed the article in the paper, not to worry. Visit

<http://gainesvilletimes.com/news/article/16195/>

and read all about it.

Great job Mike !!

CLUB LOGO ITEMS "SHOW YOUR TRUE CLUB COLORS"

(See John Brandon KE4PCF, supplies are limited)

Ball Caps with Embroidered Logo



\$10.00

T-Shirts (Silk Screen LOGO)



\$10.00

4 size "medium"
available

Embroidered
Patches



\$3.50

Special order golf and/or button up shirts are also available.
Club logo, name and call sign are embroidered.
See any club officer for more information.

Upcoming HAMFEST

June 6

Georgia State Convention Atlanta Radio Club (W4DOC), Marietta GA

Jim Miller Park

www.atlantahamfest.com



OSCAR STATUS

<http://www.amsat.org/amsat-new/satellites/status.php>

OSCAR FREQUENCIES :

<http://www.amsat.org/amsat-new/satellites/frequencies.php>

Satellite Prediction Software

(various platforms) <http://www.satobs.org/orbsoft.html>

AO-7 SPRINGS BACK TO LIFE

Ham Radio News Line

Still with amazing news from space, an aging ham radio satellite has sprung back to life. This with words that the Amsat Oscar 7 UHF Beacon at 435.100 MHz has been reported as becoming operational.

The satellites 70 centimeter beacon was monitored with very strong signals during February 28th passes and also since then with satellite telemetry in RTTY format is being copied. Some listeners reported that the beacon initially sounded as if it was in a two-state mode that sounded a bit like RTTY in idle. Successful RTTY decodes have since been accomplished.

AO-7 is one of the oldest ham radio birds still on-orbit. It was launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California on board a Delta 2310 rocket way back on November 15, 1974.

April Club Meeting

April 28

Holiday Inn / Lanier Center

400 EE Butler Parkway Gainesville, Georgia-----Dinner @18:00 with meeting following @
19:00

Lunch Bunch Every Friday at 11:30 there is a lunch get-together at a local restaurant. The location is announced on the Wednesday night net, our web site under the activities tab and under the calendar icon as well as announced on the 146.67 repeater. ALL are welcome

Hall County Nets W4ABP repeater 146.67 (-) 131.8 Hz PL

Hall County ARES Net, Wednesday @ 20:00 & LARC Net, Wednesday @ 20:30
"Everyone is welcome to check in"

ON THE HAM BANDS

Waking the Dead, Unruding the Rude

T.J. "Skip" Arey, N2EI

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF AMATEUR RADIO

Originally published in "Monitoring Times" May 2005

Printed Here With Permission

Recently I had the opportunity to drive through a region of the country I have not had reason to visit for about ten years or so. In looking over my logs I recalled the area to have quite a few fine and very active repeater systems. Consulting the current edition of the ARRL *Repeater Directory* revealed almost a dozen machines that should have made my stay in this area alot of fun for amateur radio. In preparation for the trip I programmed all the aforementioned systems into the memories of my handheld and looked forward to many hours of relaxing rag chewing.

What I discovered, however, did not speak well of the state of VHF/UHF repeater activity, at least in that particular part of the country. I shall keep the region nameless, because I know the situation to be similar in more than a few locations around the country.

As I drove through the area and set up shop in a number of bed & breakfasts and motels during my travels, I found incredibly little repeater activity. On many of the machines my calls went unanswered, even during peak *drive time* hours. (This does not bode well for travelers in need of aid in an unfamiliar part of the land.) Those machines where my call was answered almost always resulted in curt responses, sometimes with an overt indication that outsiders were not all that welcome. Roundtables consisted of a handful of friends talking only to one another and not opening up matters to general discussion.

I recall passing through this area in the past and being invited *twice* on two different repeaters to meet some local hams for coffee at local eateries. Now I find only dead air or the cold shoulder.

Something is not healthy in ham radio land. While most areas are not in as dire straits as the part of the world I was visiting, I think we can all think of one or two machines near our QTHs that are either unfriendly or have been so inactive that dust comes out of the speaker when you key them up.

What Happened?

I guess we could begin the analysis by looking at how the area might have started down the road to radio hobby entropy. The most common excuse I hear folks give is, "The Internet is to blame!"

Contrary to popular belief, the wave of interest in personal computing did not kill off repeater use.

I suppose by some stretch of the imagination an argument could be made that some folks have stopped playing radio in favor of playing with computers. My experience, and that of most of my friends, does not reflect that scenario. I cannot think of any ham who has become inactive due to the addition of a computer in the shack. Every radio person I know – or otherwise – has seen the computer as a tool to enhance their hobby fun. While computer technology is a convenient target, I just don't see anything that really supports this notion. Have you ever seen an ad in the ham radio press stating "Must sell my ham gear to buy a PC?" Nope, me either.

A more reasonable argument might be made for the growth of the cellular phone industry cutting into ham repeater activity. Many repeaters sprang up around the use of, and access to, a viable area telephone patch system. I know more than a few folks (whose ham activity is mainly in the HF bands), who bought a 2 meter rig and supported a local repeater just for the security of being able to make an emergency call from the road. Today, for most folks, cell phones do the job instead. So, the lack of need for phone-patch based systems and their group support brings us to where the problem probably really comes home to roost.

I think we have nobody but ourselves to blame for the lack of repeater activity. Most metropolitan areas (with the reduction in phone patch use) probably have more repeater systems than they reasonably require. In the late seventies and early eighties, everyone who could get a channel off of their regional frequency coordinator (and even some who didn't) put a repeater system on the air. So, instead of a large number of folks sharing the fun in a few good places, smaller and smaller groups broke out onto the different machines and, over time, there just wasn't enough activity to keep folks interested. And, with fewer folks depending on phone patching to let their significant other know when they would be home for dinner, a lot of machines have gotten awfully quiet. Quantity is seldom quality.

No Ham is an Island

So, we have addressed the dead systems: What about those unfriendly ones? That might be a tougher nut to crack, but it's something we need to look at, because, along with a drop in repeater system use, has come a drop in the interest in emergency service activity. In spite of efforts to tighten up emergency response for increased homeland security, many local groups still find it hard to get folks out for ARES/RACES nets and field activities. Sadly, even some of those groups that are active can tend to be rather insular. While they may pay lip service to the desire for new participants, their actions and attitudes treat newcomers like ham outsiders.

This is actually a fairly complicated subject that goes well beyond the ham radio world. An excellent book that looks at the problem and some of the solutions is called *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* by Robert D. Putnam (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000). I commend it to you for further study.

Some systems that were once open, with gregarious memberships who encouraged new activity, have turned in on themselves, feeling little or no connection with hams outside of the local group. I once drove through an area and made a call on a system listed in the *ARRL Repeater Directory* as "open." Before the squelch tail dropped, someone (who, by the way, neglected to give his callsign), felt the need to inform me in no uncertain terms that people who did not pay dues on the system were not allowed to talk on it. Even if this was a case where the system had gone "closed" for some reason (it hadn't), I am sure you can think of quite a few ways that interaction could have been handled with better amateur radio spirit and camaraderie!

So how do we get these inactive and insular repeater systems to wake up and operate in the best traditions of the amateur radio fraternity? In checking out matters with some of my local repeater groups and talking with folks in other parts of the country, I think there are lots of ways to turn dead and unfriendly systems around. Let me outline a few that might be useful should you run into similar situations in your area.

Join Your Local Repeater Group

Regardless whether a system is considered open or closed, the people who pay the bills always have the most say in how a system is run. Contributing membership in your local system(s) allows you to have input into matters, or at least have direct access to those who set policy.

Remember that system I spoke of where I was told to get off the air because I wasn't a paying member?

I made a point of finding out who the system trustee was and getting in contact with him. That gentleman assured me that this unknown individual was not speaking for the repeater group, that the system was open and use by travelers was encouraged. He assured me that the matter would be discussed at the next quarterly repeater group meeting and that he would advise regular users to keep an ear out for anyone making such inappropriate statements on behalf of the group. I wasn't a member of that group and my concerns were still well heard. Think of how much more clout a ham's position would have if he was a card carrying member!

Go to Group Meetings

This is sort of a chicken and egg situation. I know of some repeater groups that, as they have become more inactive, have held less frequent meetings. This is 180 degrees out of phase. You need to hold *more frequent* meetings to discuss how to improve system participation, to meet around. and welcome new hams to the group, and to find out about any emerging matters that could have a negative effect on the system. More meetings will produce more activity. A more active repeater will have more members, who will come to more meetings....GET THE PICTURE?

And while you're at those meetings be a voice for the kind of repeater group you would want to me a member of. Remind folks of the public service aspects of the hobby as well as the brotherhood and sisterhood all hams should show for each other .

Lead by Example

As a bona fide member of your local system, make a point of getting on the air frequently and taking the time to greet and reach out to newcomers and travelers you hear on the system. Often, these folks will be amateurs just starting out in their ham radio experience. Not only can you help them to feel welcome, you can help them learn the correct practice and procedures and make them a better ham in doing so,

Since the general demise of the "Novice Bands", newcomers have no safe place to cut their amateur radio teeth. New folks need support and encouragement. A little effort on your part will go a long way and probably even bring in new members to your local group. You may even make a friend for life.

On Air Activities

It's easy to encourage repeater system use through organized activities. How about a weekly swap net? Code practice? Technical discussion? Rag chews? **Encourage taking turns moderating the activities to get more people involved.**

Here's a great activity that allows for participation by retirees and shut ins: Set up a schedule for repeater monitoring so that as many hours as possible of the day or night are covered by someone from the group. It's easy enough to do: just get folks to sign up for an hour or two where they promise to keep their rig on and answer any call that comes in. Even if you can't get 24/7 coverage, try to see that your machine is covered during peak hours and on weekends. What a great service to travelers and newcomers!

No repeater has to fall into disuse or, worse yet, rudeness. With a little effort and some reflection on what makes the amateur radio hobby great, any repeater can become a popular place that performs good service and is fun to hang around. I'll see you on the bottom end of 40 meters – that is, unless you answer my call on your local machine!

Quote of the Month

I love to go to Washington - if only to be near my money.
Bob Hope

Proverb of the Month

Necessity never made a good bargain.

'Amateur Radio Service'

The National Weather Service this time of year gets really active, as we all know. The call comes out of potentially severe weather being on the horizon. They ask for the help of the Amateur Radio community.

They comply, and it's like they have come out of the woodwork, manning their radio stations and ready for the call to do whatever they can to help their community. What motivated the hams to be there in the first place? I believe it is quite obvious, it's their desire to serve.

We all like to chit-chat to people near and far. But service is where hams really shine, whether participating in a weather emergency net, the Bicycle Tour of Georgia, the Peachtree Road Race, or just maintaining situational awareness by monitoring a radio band..... we do it, and don't ask a penny in return. To those hams, amateur radio is way more than a hobby.

Incidentally, do you know how many times the word "hobby" appears in Part 97? Zero! The FCC calls our little fraternity the Amateur Radio Service. It's a pretty good reflection of what we're capable of doing. Be proud of being an Amateur Radio Operator.

Fast Forward Field Day June 27 and 28



Plans are in the works for this years "Field Day"
Make your plans now to attend and share the fun !!!!!!!
Recently, we have been authorized to use "Special Event" call **W4E**
for Field Day.
More information on Field Day plans coming soon.....

SB QST @ ARL \$ARLB014
ARLB014 Julius Genachowski Nominated as Next FCC Chairman

ZCZC AG14
QST de W1AW
ARRL Bulletin 14 ARLB014
From ARRL Headquarters
Newington CT March 5, 2009

To all radio amateurs

SB QST ARL ARLB014
ARLB014 Julius Genachowski Nominated as Next FCC Chairman

On Tuesday, March 3, President Barack Obama nominated Julius Genachowski as FCC Chairman. Genachowski, 46, is a technology executive and a former classmate of Obama's from Harvard Law School.

Upon Senate confirmation, Genachowski will replace Acting FCC Chairman Michael Copps; Copps took over the Commission on January 22, 2009, two days after then-Chairman Kevin Martin resigned.

Genachowski has been widely praised by industry executives and consumer-activist groups -- two groups often at odds -- for his wide-ranging experience and intimate knowledge of technology issues.

"I can think of no one better than Julius Genachowski to serve as chairman of the Federal Communications Commission," said President Obama. "He will bring to the job diverse and unparalleled experience in communications and technology, with two decades of accomplishment in the private sector and public service. I know him as the son of immigrants who carries a deep appreciation for this country and the American dream; and as the proud father of three children working with his wife Rachel to be responsible parents in this digital age."

According to the Wall Street Journal, speculation has been rife as to why President Obama had not put forth Genachowski's name before now, saying that "his nomination has centered on the administration's efforts to find at least one more nominee -- more likely two -- to fill other open spots on the FCC's five-person board. Agency nominations tend to move through the Senate more quickly if a Democratic nominee is paired with a Republican nominee."

The Wall Street Journal said that a number of Republicans -- including FCC Deputy General Counsel Ajit Pai -- have been mentioned as a possible replacement for the seat left vacant by Republican Deborah Taylor Tate when she left the Commission in January. "On the Democratic side, speculation is growing that FCC Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein may not be renominated for the seat he currently holds. South Carolina public utilities commission official Mignon Clyburn (daughter of [Democrat Representative] Jim Clyburn) has been most often mentioned by people close to the Obama team as a

candidate for that seat," the Journal reported. "Adelstein could be up for a job elsewhere in the Obama administration, insiders say, possibly at the Agriculture Department."

Acting Chairman Copps said President Obama "made an excellent choice in announcing his intent to nominate Julius Genachowski to be the next Chairman of the FCC. Julius has the knowledge, experience and dedication to lead this Agency forward as we tackle the many challenges confronting the country -- and the Commission. I look forward to the prospect of working with him on a communications agenda focused on serving consumers and the public interest. He will find here a talented and energized team of public servants committed to precisely this goal. I wish him a successful Senate confirmation."

Commissioner Adelstein also added his congratulations: "I warmly congratulate my friend Julius Genachowski on his nomination by President Barack Obama to be Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. He is the right person at the right time for the job. His leadership, experience and intelligence will serve him and the American people well as he takes the helm of the FCC during this pivotal time for our country and the agency. By designating a Chairman with such a strong strategic vision, striking talents, wealth of experience inside and outside the Commission, and practical understanding of technology, President Obama once again demonstrates his commitment to the transformational power of communications technology and innovation."

Commissioner Robert McDowell congratulated Genachowski on his nomination, saying he "will bring a valuable perspective to the Commission with his experience not only in government, but in the private sector. I look forward to working closely with Mr Genachowski on the many important communications challenges that lie ahead for the American people."

Additional information -- including Genachowski's background -- can be found on the web at,

<http://www.arrrl.org/news/stories/2009/03/03/10684/?nc=1>

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Many thanks go to those who submitted news, information and articles for this edition. Send you newsletter contributions to W4DJG@bellsouth.net

As a reminder, our newsletters are archived within our web-site.
Each issue is listed with the most recent edition first.

<http://www.lanierlandarc.org/newsletters.html>



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