

From: SkyWarn Announcement List ()
To: Skywarn-list@oak.powersrvcs.net
Date: Mon, September 7, 2009 7:12:45 AM
Subject: SKYWARN Newsletter #262

Hello to all..

Newsletter Dedicated to ARRL and ARES E-Letter Articles..

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Newsletter Issued: 9/6/09.

Newsletter Dedicated to ARRL and ARES E-Letter Articles..

This newsletter is dedicated to the ARRL and ARES E-Letter articles of interest involving ARES and SKYWARN over the past 2-2.5 months. Another newsletter will follow with articles and announcements from the local and regional area in the next few days.

ARES E-Letter Article: Double-Duty on Field Day as Severe Weather/Flooding Affects Southern New England..

The following is an ARES E-Letter Article on the impact of Severe Weather and flooding on Field Day sites across portions of Southern New England. The article with pictures appears at the following link and the article appears below the link:

<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/ares-el/index.html?issue=2009-07-15#toc02>

Amateurs engaged in Field Day activities in portions of southern New England had to do double duty as severe thunderstorms and flash flooding occurred on Friday June 26th and Saturday June 27th. Operations at the NWS Taunton Amateur Radio Station, WX1BOX, were brought online to not only gather reports, but to alert Field Day sites to the threat of these storms.

Rob Macedo, KD1CY, Eastern Massachusetts SEC and SKYWARN Coordinator for NWS Taunton, Massachusetts, said "the severe weather season for our region had been relatively quiet but unfortunately became active right as Field Day weekend approached. No hams were injured but some were in the direct line of these severe thunderstorms. As we've communicated in many past years on Field Day, we asked all outdoor Field Day sites to monitor the weather via Weather Radio, Internet, media and having an Amateur Radio tuned to there local SKYWARN frequency and that definitely occurred this weekend."

On Friday June 26th, a powerful severe thunderstorm slammed portions of southern Hartford and southern Tolland counties with golf ball sized hail and significant straight-line wind damage. In addition, an EF-1 Tornado occurred in Wethersfield, Connecticut from the same parent severe thunderstorm.

Operators in Connecticut were active on the KB1AEV linked repeater system and the 146.790 MHz Vernon, Connecticut repeater run by the Pioneer Valley Radio Association. Litchfield County SKYWARN Coordinator Al Pertuni, KA1TCH and Connecticut State SKYWARN Coordinator Steve Williams, K1SJW, were active on the Connecticut Linked system for Litchfield County SKYWARN with Hartford-Tolland County SKYWARN Coordinator Roger Jeanfaivre, K1PAI, and Alternate Net Control Stan Barnes, W1GHN, active on the Vernon repeater with the Hartford-Tolland County SKYWARN Net.

"Our SKYWARN crew is always on top of things! I am very proud to have them as a critical part of Connecticut ARES," said Connecticut SEC Wayne Gronlund, N1CLV.

Operators passed in several dozen reports of large hail and wind damage to WX1BOX and reports were utilized to warn downstream counties. In some towns such as Farmington and Wethersfield, Connecticut, over 100 trees were blown down with golf ball sized hail reported in Newington, Wethersfield and Burlington, Connecticut with cars dented in some locations.

The severe thunderstorms impacted ARRL HQ on Main Street in Newington, Connecticut and the Newington ARL Field Day site. "I was in contact with Dennis Dura, K2DCD, Manager of Emergency Preparedness and Response at ARRL HQ to alert him to the storm and to gather any criteria SKYWARN reports from ARRL HQ," Macedo said.

"We have nickel sized hail, strong winds with numerous large branches and trees down and we have lost power," Dura reported. Dennis is a trained SKYWARN Spotter and former SKYWARN Coordinator from the NWS Philadelphia/Mount Holly office.

Amateur operators from the Newington ARL Field Day site took cover in their cars and gave reports of hail and large branches and trees down, some of which landed on buildings. John Hardy, KB1KIX, Connecticut ARES DEC for Area 3 provided pictures from the area.

"We owe a debt of gratitude to these amateurs at the Field Day site who reported these conditions despite being in danger. They also made the right decisions in taking cover when the severe thunderstorms approached and closely monitored their local SKYWARN frequency," Macedo said.

On Saturday June 27th, slow moving severe thunderstorms produced large hail, wind damage and flash flooding across portions of eastern and central Massachusetts, Rhode Island, southern New Hampshire and northeast Connecticut. Some of the hardest hit areas included Foxboro, Mansfield and Townsend, Massachusetts along with Brookline, New Hampshire, the Worcester-Leominster

area and the Pomfret to Killingly to Windham, Mansfield and Willimantic, Connecticut area.

"Approximately four Field Day sites were impacted by thunderstorms with a couple of locations just missing severe thunderstorm activity. Field Day sites checked in with us for updates on the situation and provided reports much like what occurred in Newington on Friday," Macedo said.

In places like Pomfret, and Willimantic, Connecticut and Foxboro and Townsend, Massachusetts, three-quarter inch hail occurred covering the ground with pockets of trees down and flash flooding closing streets and going into buildings. Amateur Radio operators relayed many of these critical reports. "In many cases, hams performed double duty by participating both in Field Day and SKYWARN Nets as required," Macedo said.

==> ALABAMA HAMS ASSIST DURING STATEWIDE EMERGENCY DRILL

During the week of May 4-8, emergency responders and support personnel gathered in Robertsdale, Alabama for a communications interoperability training and full-scale exercise, sponsored by the Alabama Department of Homeland Security (ADHS) <<http://www.homelandsecurity.alabama.gov/>>. Gathering in a field near the Baldwin County Emergency Operations Center, responders came together to test the quality and effectiveness of communications between various State agencies and support personnel. The exercise simulated a Category 5 hurricane that entered Mobile Bay, causing damage throughout the state.

According to ARRL Alabama Section Manager Jay Isbell, KA4KUN, the Alabama DHS has come to recognize the role that Amateur Radio operators play in emergencies and natural disasters; based on this, the Alabama DHS chose to include Amateur Radio in the exercise. "During Hurricane Katrina, Amateur Radio volunteers played a key part in making sure that communications between agency personnel continued uninterrupted and the public received the help and the timely response needed in this type of catastrophic event," Isbell explained. ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) operators from SEMA Region 1 and other regions throughout Alabama were on site to support communications.

The Alabama Emergency Management Agency, the Alabama National Guard, the Alabama Department of Public Safety, Region IV of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) <<http://www.fema.org/>>, Alabama Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, Virtual Alabama, Alabama Civil Air Patrol, local sheriffs' office, as well as eight Alabama Regional Communication vehicles also participated in the exercise.

ARRL Southeastern Division Director Greg Sarratt, W4OZK, together with Alabama Region 1 District Emergency Coordinator Patti Link, KI4JEO, worked diligently with both amateur volunteers and professional partner agencies to coordinate and facilitate the role of Amateur Radio during the exercise. According to Isbell, Sarratt was the liaison at the Incident Command Point, while Link -- working in the Baldwin County EOC -- coordinated amateurs

throughout the area, dispatching them with Alabama DHS Regional Communication vehicles and to other locations in the nine-county affected area. Isbell was dispatched to a mock reception center site 60 miles north of the incident, and Section Emergency Coordinator Les Rayburn, N1LF, manned the radio at the State Emergency Operations Center.

"Since the major hurricanes of recent years, the State of Alabama and the Southeast Region of FEMA have really accepted Amateur Radio as a prime player in any major disaster," Isbell told the ARRL. "SEC Les Rayburn has grown Alabama ARES from several independent groups into a well-organized first responder team. Amateur Radio is being accepted as a critical tool during times that the daily manpower and technical resources are stretched beyond their design."

Sarratt said that the Amateur Radio participants learned a lot during the week-long exercise: "This was a good test of the ARES processes and improvements in a full-scale exercise with other agencies since Katrina. Everyone shared and learned about each other's communications capabilities. The relationships built and lessons learned here are invaluable to the Amateur Radio Service."

ARRL Letter Article: WX4NHC Announces On-The-Air Station Test Results..

The following ARRL Letter Article discusses On-The-Air Station test results from their Communications Test which is done annually at the beginning of hurricane season. See article below:

==> WX4NHC ANNOUNCES ON-THE-AIR STATION TEST RESULTS

WX4NHC <<http://www.wx4nhc.org/>>, the Amateur Radio station at the National Hurricane Center <<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>>, conducted its annual On-The-Air Station Test on Saturday, May 30, 2009 <<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2009/05/15/10821/>>. According to Assistant WX4NHC Coordinator Julio Ripoll, WD4R, the station conducted the test to promote awareness of the 2009 hurricane season <<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2009/06/06/10862/?nc=1>> and to verify station equipment performance on the many frequencies and modes that are used to communicate with other stations in affected areas during hurricanes. WX4NHC has been at the NHC for 29 years.

Ripoll said that WX4NHC station was on the air for nine hours, making 154 contacts with stations in the US, the Caribbean, Central America, Canada, Australia, Europe and Africa. "Most contacts made on HF were done using phone (SSB) and on the Hurricane Watch Net <<http://www.hwn.org/>> frequency of 14.325 MHz, as well as 7.268 MHz in cooperation with the Waterway Net <<http://www.waterwayradio.net/>>," he said. "We also made contacts using HF and VHF APRS <<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/aprs/>>, and local VHF and UHF repeaters in Miami-Dade and Broward Counties."

Ripoll said that the VoIP Hurricane Net <<http://www.voipwx.net/>>

conducted a two hour simulated Hurricane Net on EchoLink (WX_TALK conference) and IRLP (node 9219) using the same methods of collecting and forwarding data to WX4NHC during hurricanes with great success: "We extend special thanks to Rob Macedo, KD1CY, and the VoIP Hurricane Net Controls for their dedication and continued support of WX4NHC."

On behalf of the WX4NHC Coordinators and operators, Ripoll thanked all the Amateur Radio operators who participated in the WX4NHC Annual Station Test: "We look forward to your continued support during the hurricane season." For a QSL card from the test, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Julio Ripoll, WD4R, 14855 SW 67 Ln, Miami, FL 33193-2027.

ARRL Letter Article: Santa Cruz Hams Provide Support in Wildfires..

==> SANTA CRUZ HAMS PROVIDE SUPPORT DURING WILDFIRES

As wildfires threaten the central California coast near Santa Cruz -- located between San Jose and Monterey -- area radio amateurs have been providing support to law enforcement and fire authorities. According to Santa Cruz County Public Information Officer Bill Conklin, AF6OH, the Santa Cruz County Emergency Operations Center requested support from ARES on Wednesday, August 12: "We activated and established an informal Net to provide fire support resources." Just two days later, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger declared a State of Emergency for Santa Cruz County.

On Thursday, three amateurs staffed the County's Emergency Operations Center for the ARES Net, beginning at 5 AM and going for 16 hours. Monterey County ARES District Emergency Coordinator Dave Burbidge, W6IIQ, also helped to provide coverage.

"Once we were activated, about 30 amateurs signed in to a Resource Net on a local repeater managed by Bob Wolbert, K6XX," Conklin said. "These hams were assigned various duties, including providing support for animal rescue operations. Some were assigned to specific locations in order to support law enforcement and fire authorities. The Santa Cruz Chapter of the American Red Cross initiated staffing and evacuation centers on Wednesday night, and we deployed the ARES Step-Van to support a shelter in Davenport, about 15 miles north of Santa Cruz on Highway 1. Due to the low volume of shelter clients, these facilities did not require further staffing by local ARES team members."

Officials declared a mandatory evacuation in the affected area on Thursday, namely for the towns of Swanton and Bonny Doon; an estimated 2500 people were evacuated from their homes. On Sunday, officials allowed residents from Bonny Doon who had been evacuated to return to their homes, but warned them to be on a state of alert and to be ready to move as needed.

Dubbed the Lockheed Fire, the blaze was 90 percent contained on Friday,

August 21. More than 7500 acres are affected by the blaze; the cause of the fire is under investigation. Approximately 2000 firefighters -- equipped with almost 300 fire engines, 14 helicopters, 30 bulldozers, six air tankers and 21 water tenders -- were trying to get the fires under last weekend. As of August 21, there are 1595 fire personnel on site with 125 engines and five helicopters. To date, no homes have been destroyed by the fire, but 13 outbuildings were burned to the ground. The damage is estimated at \$21.4 million.

Conklin said that the Santa Cruz County Equine Rescue Team was activated in response to the fire, providing large animal rescue support. "In the past year, many members of the team received their Amateur Radio license," he explained. "They were instrumental in organizing and rescuing horses, llamas, alpacas, goats, sheep, chickens and ducks, as well as arranging transport for 100 head of cattle. Working in conjunction with County of Santa Cruz County Animal Services, they were able to transport and relocate the animals to safety at two sites within the county."

Volunteers staged an equine and large animal rescue at the cement plant in Davenport. A shelter for smaller animals was established at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds in Watsonville, about 15 miles south of the City of Santa Cruz.

The weather continues to be a major concern, as do the steep terrain and limited access to the fire's perimeter, Conklin said: "Conditions continue to be very fluid and may change quickly based on weather factors. Firefighters will continue to construct fire line around the perimeter of the fire." Governor Schwarzenegger visited the Fire Operations Center in Watsonville and thanked all of the firefighters for their assistance.

"Once again, Amateur Radio and ARES proved to be an essential resource in times of emergency," Conklin said. "The citizens of Santa Cruz County are fortunate to have this trained, technical resource available to provide these essential communications resources."

ARRL Letter Article: Amateur Radio Station WX4NHC Featured in National Commercial..

The following ARRL Letter article is on how the Amateur Radio Station at the National Hurricane Center, WX4NHC, was featured in a recent national commercial by Duracell. See article below:

==> AMATEUR RADIO STATION WX4NHC FEATURED IN NATIONAL COMMERCIAL

WX4NHC, the Amateur Radio Station at the National Hurricane Center (NHC) <<http://www.wx4nhc.org/>>, is featured in a 60 second radio spot for Duracell batteries. The commercial, which begins airing this month, highlights the efforts of an all-volunteer army of ham radio operators for WX4NHC. Narrated by actor Jeff Bridges, it describes the important role that radio amateurs play during severe weather conditions --

enabling communications with emergency medical teams, police and fire departments -- when the power goes out. The narration underscores the importance of a reliable battery to power the portable ham radios, which are crucial to WX4NHC's work. Listen to the spot here:

<http://www.arrl.org/news/files/HURRICANE_60_PREPAREDNESS_MIX.MP3>.

"This commercial is being played nationally during hurricane season and will help promote awareness of Amateur Radio and the public service we do to provide emergency communications, especially during and after hurricanes, when we have experienced complete electrical and conventional communications blackouts for periods of days and weeks," WX4NHC Assistant Coordinator Julio Ripoll, WD4R, told the ARRL.

Ripoll said that he and WX4NHC Amateur Radio Coordinator John McHugh, K4AG, worked with the ACME Marketing Firm and Duracell for several weeks to help produce the radio commercial. "It captures the essence of Amateur Radio volunteer public service and the important role of Amateur Radio performs during emergency communications in 30 seconds," Ripoll said. "The President and Creative Director of ACME and the Duracell national representative also flew down to Miami and received a tour of NHC and of the WX4NHC station where they learned about our many modes of communications, including our portable VHF/UHF radios and other portable battery operated equipment."

"With this new spot, we are helping to showcase the important contributions made by the Miami ham radio operators," said Duracell's Bob Jacobs. "These heroic teams are working to save the lives of others. When storms strike, the radio operators are donating their time to make sure communications stay intact, facing intense pressures and dangerous conditions to those in need. We're proud that our batteries can help power these life-saving efforts."

ARRL Letter Article: Hurricane Bill Downgraded to Category 2; Amateur Radio Hurricane Nets Ready..

The following ARRL Letter article discusses Hurricane Bill as it was downgraded to a Category 2 Hurricane and how Amateur Radio Hurricane Nets are ready. Please see article below:

==> HURRICANE BILL DOWNGRADED TO CATEGORY 2; AMATEUR RADIO HURRICANE NETS READY

Now that Tropical Storms Ana and Claudette have dissipated, Hurricane Bill -- downgraded from a Category 4 storm to a Category 2 storm -- is churning its way across the Atlantic with sustained winds near 110 miles per hour. Even though the storm's projected path does not make landfall in the US, hams affiliated with the Hurricane Watch Net (HWN) and the VoIP Hurricane Net (VoIPWX) are ready to provide communications support.

Hurricane Watch Net

As Bill approached, HWN Manager Dave Lefavour, W7GOX, told the ARRL that Net members are "limbering up their microphones and checking their antennas. We're all very carefully watching the storm. We could activate sometime during the next few days, based on the forecast tracks and intensity. We always ask all of our Amateur Radio friends and any new stations that might have data for us in the Atlantic, Caribbean, the Gulf of Mexico and the Gulf coastal areas to dust off their weather instruments. We'll probably need to establish communications with them very soon."

The HWN -- operating on 14.325 MHz -- relays real-time weather observations to WX4NHC <<http://www.wx4nhc.org/>> at the National Hurricane Center (NHC) <<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>>. "We want all of our reporting stations, especially those closer to the US, to keep in mind that we're also prepared to operate the HWN on 7.168 MHz or 3.668 MHz," Lefavour explained. "If propagation is such that we cannot maintain contact with reporting stations on 14.325 MHz, we'll open a Net on one or the other of those frequencies. Plans are to try 40 meters first, with 80 meters as our last choice of bands."

Lefavour encouraged hams to monitor the HWN Web site <<http://www.hwn.org/>> for Net activation plans: "We have placed data products from the NHC on the HWN Web site, including maps and charts of tropical storm activity."

VoIP Hurricane Net

The VoIP Hurricane Net -- which meets weekly during the hurricane season months of June-November and monthly from December-May -- has also been monitored Tropical Storms Ana and Claudette last week and is closely monitoring the progress of Hurricane Bill this week <<http://www.voipwx.net/>>.

"We are continuing to closely monitor the storm's progress," said VoIP Hurricane Net Director of Operations Rob Macedo, KD1CY. "Since 2002, we have been gathering surface reports to help WX4NHC save lives," he said. "The Net activates whenever there is a landfalling hurricane and will review any and all sources to gather surface data for WX4NHC as required."

The weekly VoIPWX Net had a surge in activity last week as Tropical Storms Ana, Bill and Claudette formed almost right on top of each other. Macedo told the ARRL that hams, many of whom are in hurricane-prone areas, were informed of the advisories for each tropical system. "The Net also informally activated as Claudette made landfall as a tropical storm in the Florida Panhandle," he explained. "The VoIP Hurricane Net Activation Policy <<http://www.voipwx.net/node/235>> is to activate during hurricanes, but will sometimes activate in the event of strong tropical storms that are near hurricane strength."

The VoIP Hurricane Net meets every Saturday evening at 8 PM EDT (0000

UTC Sunday) on the *WX-TALK* EchoLink Conference Node: 7203/IRLP Reflector 9219 system. When hurricanes threaten land, the Net meets and stays active as long as required on the system with listen-only EchoLink conferences and IRLP systems and streaming audio systems available.

From the National Hurricane Center

At 1800 UTC on Friday, August 21, the center of Hurricane Bill was located about 290 miles (465 km) south-southwest of Bermuda and about 695 miles southeast of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. Bill is moving toward the northwest at a speed near 18 MPH (30 km/hr). This track is expected to continue through Saturday. The core of Hurricane Bill is expected to pass over open waters between Bermuda and the East Coast of the United States early Saturday. Large swells generated by this hurricane are affecting Puerto Rico, Hispaniola, the Bahamas and Bermuda, moving to East Coast of the US and the Atlantic Maritimes of Canada during the next day or two. These swells will likely cause extremely dangerous surf and life-threatening rip currents.

The Bermuda Weather Service has issued a hurricane watch and a tropical storm warning for Bermuda. A hurricane watch means that hurricane conditions are possible within the watch area, generally within 36 hours.

ARRL Letter Article: Hurricane Bill Passes New England, Finds Newfoundland..

The following ARRL Letter article discusses Hurricane Bill passing New England and finding Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. See article below:

==> HURRICANE BILL PASSES NEW ENGLAND, FINDS NEWFOUNDLAND

Along Coastal New England and the Canadian Maritimes, residents boarded up windows in preparation for Hurricane Bill. Even though the storm -- eventually downgraded from Category 4 to Category 1 -- was considerably weaker than it had been when it was in the Caribbean earlier last week, those who live and work in the region were not taking any chances. To assist the National Hurricane Center (NHC) <<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>> in tracking the storm, hams with the Hurricane Watch Net and the VoIP Hurricane Net relayed traffic and spotting reports to WX4NHC, the Amateur Radio Station at the NHC <<http://www.wx4nhc.org/>>.

"For the second year in a row -- last year with Hurricane Kyle, and now Hurricane Bill -- the Amateur Radio operators in the Canadian Maritimes proved their skills at supporting the needs of the hurricane centers and in passing information vital to the public's safety," said ARRL Emergency Preparedness and Response Manager Dennis Dura, K2DCD. "We know that should even more severe tropical events impact that area, the hams will be ready with this increasing experience of late, and we will be ready to support them."

Bill's top-sustained winds fell from 105 MPH on Friday night to just 85

MPH by Sunday morning. But as the storm's wind speed dissipated, its size didn't: The diameter of tropical storm-force winds stretched 550 miles, the distance from Atlanta to Washington, DC. During the early hours of Sunday morning, Bill's center of circulation passed about 160 miles to the east-southeast of Nantucket, Massachusetts, its closest approach to the United States. There were wind gusts ranging from 25-35 MPH along the eastern coast of Massachusetts and a few bands of rain swept northward across Cape Cod, but not enough to cause any flooding.

The VoIP Hurricane Net (VoIP Net) <<http://www.voipwx.net/>> activated at 4 AM EDT on Sunday, August 23, wrapping up at 6 PM that evening. "Nova Scotia amateurs relayed a significant number of reports to WX4NHC via the Net," said Director of Operations for the VoIP Hurricane Net Rob Macedo, KD1CY. "They described tropical storm force conditions and pockets of wind damage, including a few coastal road washouts from storm surge but the region was spared hurricane force winds. This is likely because of Bill's track parallel to the coast, just south of the province. The highest wind gusts were in the 45-55 MPH range over land."

Macedo said that during the weekly VoIP Net on Saturday evening, Net Control conducted a special roll call, lining up Canadian stations from the affected area: "Martin Thomas, VE1AUZ, was the key liaison station monitoring the local VHF/UHF repeaters, feeding the information to the VoIP Hurricane Net. Several other Canadian stations also relayed reports, including Geoff Wilson, VE1GW, and Frank Leslie, VE1FWL. VE1EMX, an official station for the Municipality of the County of Cumberland's Emergency Measures Organization, was also on the air. More than a dozen Canadian stations were connected into the VoIP Hurricane Net during the height of Bill's impact on the Maritimes. This is our second time in two years working with Canadian amateurs and amateurs affiliated with Radio Amateurs Canada and they did a terrific job once again."

RAC Vice President of Field Services Doug Mercer, VO1DTM, told the ARRL that he, Newfoundland Section Emergency Coordinator Rendyl Godwin, VO1RYL, and four District Emergency Coordinators were "actively passing traffic hourly to the Hurricane Watch Net since 1200 UTC [Sunday]."

Hurricane Watch Net (HWN) <<http://www.hwn.org/>> Manager Dave Lefavour, W7GOX, told the ARRL that they received an activation request from WX4NHC, their first activation of the 2009 hurricane season: "We opened the Net at 8 AM EDT on Sunday, August 23 on 14.325 MHz, and operated continuously until 7 PM. We had a successful spring recruiting campaign that brought several new members to the Net, and Hurricane Bill allowed us to introduce them to our Net protocols. It's one thing to read about how we do things, but there is no substitute for experience. Conditions on 20 meters were difficult, but with the additional members added to our roster, we were able to maintain communications with our Canadian reporting stations. Kudos to three hams -- Derek King, VE1AWT, David Myrick, VO1VCE, and Fredrick Snow, VO1FJS -- are in order, as they were stalwarts during this HWN session, providing timely information that we

relayed to the National Hurricane Center in Miami. By the end of the day, 22 HWN members had participated in the Net."

Lefavour thanked all amateurs who kept the 20 meter frequency clear so they could support WX4NHC. "With the unpredictable shifts in propagation on the 20 meter band, and considering the conditions under which these folks are operating, the signals of our reporting stations are often weak," he said. "This was certainly the case for Sunday's Net session."

WX4NHC Assistant Coordinator Julio Ripoll, WD4R, thanked the hams who supported the operation: "I would like to echo my thanks to everyone for making the effort to support our friends in Canada during Hurricane Bill. It was truly an international effort with Net Controls from many parts of the US and as far away as Germany. The highest wind reports that I saw come in came from Sable Island with a population of five people and 300 wild horses."

Ripoll singled out five Canadian hams "who truly deserve special mention for their extra efforts and long hours relaying reports: Martin Thomas, VE1AUZ; Joseph Wilson, VE1GW; Frank Leslie, VE1FWL; James Hannon, VE1EMX, and Fredrick Snow, VO1FJS."

"Bill opened the 2009 hurricane season for us," HWN's Lefavour said. "We hope that we are not needed for the rest of the year, but the peak of the hurricane season is yet to come. We're ready."

ARRL Letter Article: ARES Awaits Activation for Wildfire, Tropical Storms..

The following ARRL Letter Article discusses ARES being on guard for the Station fire in Los Angeles, Hurricane Jimena affecting Baja California and Tropical Storm Erika impacting the Caribbean islands before degenerating to a remnant system. See article below:

==> ARES AWAITS ACTIVATION FOR WILDFIRES, TROPICAL STORMS

Even as the Station fire threatens Los Angeles' communications infrastructure atop Mt Wilson and Tropical Storm Erika and Hurricane Jimena die down in the tropics, amateurs -- including ARES groups -- await being called to help.

Mt Wilson houses many antennas for television and FM radio stations in the Los Angeles area, as well as antennas for pagers, cell phones and even Amateur Radio repeater systems. But even as the fire encroaches on these vital communications links, the infrastructure is still in place and working.

"We have established coordination with Dennis Smith, KA6GSE, the Section Emergency Coordinator for the Los Angeles Section," said ARRL Emergency Preparedness and Response Manager Dennis Dura, K2DCD. "As of the afternoon of Thursday, September 3, no ARES missions have been established. Of course, if the communications infrastructure at Mt

Wilson is compromised in any way, area ARES groups will be ready to do whatever is needed to provide communications support."

As of Friday afternoon, what was once Tropical Storm Erika has weakened and is now classified as a remnant over the northeastern Caribbean.

Angel Santana-Diaz, WP3GW, an ARRL Public Information Officer in Puerto Rico, told the League that "at 8:10 AM [on Thursday, September 3], I made contact with Lionel Ellis, J69KZ, on St Lucia on 7.169 MHz, where he does a regular net. I asked him how were they doing, and he told me that there are thunderstorms and copious rain, but nothing serious at the moment. I am monitoring the band if something comes up. Over here in Puerto Rico, the government is finishing the preparations to be ready when Erika passes by, which is expected to be tomorrow, possibly as a tropical depression." The NWS said that unsettled weather will spread across the US and British Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico later Thursday, continuing through Friday. It would then spread across Dominican Republic and Haiti this weekend and possibly into the Bahamas early next week.

Pacific Hurricane Jimena -- a Category 1 storm -- made landfall near the southern Baja near San Buenaventura, Mexico on Wednesday, September 2. According to the NWS, there have been reports of damage to poorly constructed buildings, major beach erosion over the southern Baja and flash flooding; resorts along the southern tip of Baja California did not experience any major damage. Jimena has now weakened over land and has been downgraded to a tropical storm over the central Baja, with maximum sustained winds decreasing to 45 miles.

The NWS said that Jimena will likely become a depression late Thursday and then drift slowly west and southwest as a remnant low on Friday. Heavy rains and flooding will be the primary impacts over the central Baja and adjacent portions of the western coast of Mexico. Some gusts to tropical storm strength are still possible.

Dura said that WX4NHC, the Amateur Radio station at the National Hurricane Center <<http://www.wx4nhc.org/>>, has also been monitoring Erika and Jimena, but did not activate for the storms. "There really aren't that many amateurs in the affected areas, which makes reporting conditions quite difficult," he said. "We here at ARRL HQ are keeping a close eye on everything."

Respectfully Submitted,

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