



*This edition of RAY~Link has been sent to all registered members who have provided an e-mail address, and by post to Group Controllers who do not have e-mail facilities. Controllers are asked to ensure that all members of their group have sight of a copy of this edition*

**Membership Fee 45p. per month.  
PAI £1.50 per year or part year  
(1st May - 30 April).**

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## RAYNET Year of Publicity Ron, GM4SRL

The March edition of RAY~Link contained information about the type of photographs which are required to refresh our aging display boards. Unfortunately, although this is a year-long project, the response so far has been poor, with only three photographs being received by the first cut off date of 1st. May. The next selections will be made on 1st. July, and hopefully, with the RAYNET season now well under way, a better return will be made by then!

Photographs should be sharp, correctly exposed, and show un-posed RAYNET activity, with our logo being included somewhere within the image area. If you are not sure if your photographs are what we are looking for, send them anyway!! They should go photos@raynet-uk.net. Happy Clicking!

## New 80m News Reader

The 80m News reading team has recently been strengthened by the addition of Peter Langtree G0KBA in the Manchester area. We hope that this will improve reception of the weekly news in the North, and reception reports would be appreciated. Peter is on the net most weeks when he is not involved in events, and reads the news script regularly. The news net can be found on 3.663MHz at 08:30 clock time every Sunday of the year.

*All correspondence and membership registrations should be sent to:-*  
"Hunters Moon", Station Road,  
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## See Hear May 2006 - Geoff Griffiths, G3STG

Why do you do it?

**T**rawling through past issues of amateur magazines, I often find myself faced with difficult questions that are not so easy to answer. QST this Spring faced me a prime example. Why get involved? is the headline which poses questions that must face all RAYNET members from time to time. The conclusion? A desire to serve.

"Why with all the high-tech state-of-the-art communications gear that exists, why would anyone rely on amateur radio?" Yet time after time, the amateurs ability to improvise, patch circuits together, and bring skills honed in our hobby to meet the needs of last resort situations saves the day.

The final report on the Katrina Hurricane seems to sum it all up for me. Three million telephone lines were put out of action, over 1000 cellphone hubs failed, and thirty-eight '911' call centres went down. More than twenty million phone calls failed, and more than 100 local radio stations off air! When help arrived, local communities found themselves unable to communicate with the relief teams either. Police and Fire officers used to being able to push a button and talk to their control rooms were now at a complete loss as to what to do.

In the aftermath, many communities are asking how they would cope in a similar situation. They are beginning to realise that "Amateur Radio is part of the Solution".

If we ever needed to renew our determination to serve, or to try to ensure that our User Services understand what we can offer, then this report should be essential reading for them (and us!) (CQ APR06 pp66-67 MAY06 pp46-51)

Yet all this will only work if we train as a team for these eventualities too. The Yanks take this seriously, with a list of more than 1500 callsigns of those who have completed all three levels of the ARRL Radio Emergency course during 2005, published in Radcom's equivalent. (QST MAR06 p42)

Perhaps we should think about whether just coming together as a team for the odd Marathon or Equestrian event is enough. When did your team

all meet together for formal training. Are you sure that all the skills of your older members are being passed on to the new members whilst there is time. Are you sure that you know what your team's resources are, and how they can be mobilised at short notice? When did you last practice a group cold call-out?

Most of us have problems when it comes to getting effective signals out on HF. And yet there is a place for the use of these frequencies for inter-county and inter-regional communications. The RAYNET HF Team have been doing sterling work in checking simple antennas in the 5MHz NOV nets, and have shown that the bands can achieve useful results. "No room for an HF antenna" I hear you say. Take a look at Loop antennas for HF in Radcom for a report of using a simple loop antenna effectively together with an efficient ATU to provide some ideas. At least one of the regular stations on the 80m RAYNET News net each Sunday morning achieves good coverage of much of the UK with an indoor antennna. Have a go! (RadcomAPR06 p26)

The Paperwork for the RSGB AGM contains the report from the Emergency and Public Service Communications team and this provides a good summary of the events over the last twelve months. Good to see the volunteers activities being reported to membership. (RadcomMAY06 p59)

And finally, something for the weekend sir? Shack projects?

A useful review of soldering tips for survival and success including information on Solders and Flux appeared in QST in March 2006 (p51), and non-lead solders are becoming harder to ignore. In the same issue, the first of two part series on constructing a charger for rechargeable batteries (MAR p52,53 APR p68,69) and some cautionary tales about "mis-communications" leading to fatal mistakes in message handling. (CQ Mar06 p60,61) Back to training again?

As always if you have difficulty accessing any of these references let me know and I will see what I can do to assist.

## Zone 10 Report May 2006. - David Hicks, G6IFA

**A** Zone/North West RAYNET Association meeting was held on March 5th. at Westliegh, Preston. The Guest Speaker was Cathy Clark G1GQJ Chairman of the Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network, talking about RAYNET Today and answering questions from the floor.

The NWRA AGM also took place at the meeting with David Hicks G6IFA being re-elected as Chairman & Paul Gaskell G4MWO re-elected as Secretary. The AGM was followed by the Zone meeting where County Reports and general business was discussed.

Cumbria RAYNET are progressing well, and the newly formed West Cumbria has successfully carried out its first event. Training continues and close cooperation with the EPU in Carlisle.

Isle of Man RAYNET are now in their main season of Motor Rallies on the Island, they are therefore busy, and training of new members continues.

Lancashire RAYNET continue to be busy and have had several call-outs by the EPU for evacuation incidents in the County this year.

Greater Manchester RAYNET are working with the local Fire and Rescue, and Rail Authorities on Tunnel Communications. They are also busy with the normal programme of events and training.

Merseyside RAYNET are also busy with events and exercises, and are recovering from further changes in the EPU staffing.

Cheshire RAYNET are busy in general. Contact with the EPU's is excellent and they continue to use RAYNET in the many excercises programmed.

At Zone level contact continues with the Regional Resilience Forum of Government Office North West. RAYNET is now involved in all demonstrations of capability run by GONW, and are present at all excercises involving Volunteers. Excercises at present are mainly involved with the potential Avian Flu Pandemic, which are also now being held at local level. This involves many more RAYNET members in training and understanding of the potential problems and the need for proper communication at all levels.

## Emergency Comms Column - Geoff Griffiths, G3STG

**I** was very pleased to be given the opportunity to edit the new RAYNET column (even if by another name) which we hope will be appeartiong regulary in RADCOM, initially every four months. Its continuation will depend very much on what you want to see reproted there, and upon your contributions and ideas.

Please let me have you ideas, comments and input. I need pictures, reports,ideas and "bees in bonnets" from you all in order to put over the RAYNET Message to a wider amateur audience. Your contributions don't have to be "polished" submissions, and anything we can use will be welcomed with open arms. Please write, email or call me with your offerings.

Lead times are quite long, so I'm afraid that anything you submit will probably take three months or so to appear. The August columnn is probably written by the time you read this plea!

Geoff G3STG QTHR 01664 480733 g3stg@raynet-uk.net

## FIFE RAYNET CALL OUT Jim Burke, GM4TNP

**H**eavy snow falls overnight on the weekend of 11th to 12th March resulted in 6" to 8" of snow over much of the Fife area. Up to 16" of snow was reported in some of the higher villages. This snow disrupted much of the transport network in the County. The Fife Council Emergency Support Centre (CESC) was inundated with telephone calls requesting assistance. Of particular concern were those vulnerable persons in the community who required home care provided by Social Works. Because of the snow, normal methods of transportation for the home care workers proved impossible. The Emergency Support Centre contacted the Council Emergency Planning Officer requesting assistance in sourcing 4 x 4 wheel drive vehicles to transport the home carers to those most in need of assistance.

Fife Council Senior Emergency Planning Officer Frank Wallace contacted Fife Group Controller Jim Burke at 1155 hours on the Sunday. As it happened, Jim's Brother, David Burke, GM6SZJ, and other members of the Scottish Off Road Club were making the best of the snow and having an enjoyable 4 x 4 day out near the city of Perth. Many of the vehicles at the event were well suited to coping with the conditions both in the way of off road tyres and the necessary safety equipment. Most of the drivers having lots of experience in difficult conditions and rough terrain. The question of insurance was raised and a suitable arrangement was agreed with senior council officials.

When David requested volunteers to assist he was faced with some difficult decisions due to the number of people who came forward. We had agreed on four vehicles. Two teams each with two vehicles. This arrangement should ensure if one vehicle became stuck the other vehicle could provide assistance to free the stuck vehicle or allow the team to retreat to safety. Four members were eventually chosen. David GM6SZJ, Dave MM3LTO, Renny MM3KOZ and Steve 2M0TBY.

One team was asked to rendezvous at Fife House for 1400 hours which was the time the Home Carers had a change of shift. This allowed ample time for the 4 x 4 teams to make their way safely to their rendezvous points. The other team met up in the West of Fife area. The Home Carers work in pairs to attend their clients which meant two carers with each team. After radio checks and briefing the teams set off with the carers to set about the task of assisting those in need. The master plan laid out by the CESC had some interruptions due to needy clients activating their Emergency Community Alarms. These are small units worn by those who may, for instance, fall and are unable to get up themselves or need other assistance that does not warrant a 999 call. Once activated, the unit dials the CESC via the user's home telephone. There is a speakerphone mode that allows the CESC operator to speak with the caller and determine the urgency of the call. These urgent requirements were relayed to the 4 x 4 teams using 144.625 MHz. There are RAYNET aerials permanently fixed on the Council Offices in Glenrothes that provide radio coverage over much of Fife. One area that has a difficult path from Fife House is Valleyfield. To overcome the difficulty of contacting the teams when they were in this area, Gerry GM0IXO, provided a message relay from his home station in Townhill which has good coverage of this area.

The set up worked well and the teams seemed to enjoy the challenge. The carer ladies were often overheard giggling in the background during radio exchanges. About 30 to 40 clients were identified as high risk and needing personal care. Normally there are about 3000 Fifers who require assistance over a weekend.

## FIFE RAYNET CALL OUT (contd)

As the day wore on, other 4x4 drivers on their return from the Perth event offered their services. The CESC had also sourced some Council vehicles and drivers but as the RAYNET teams were well into the routine and evening was approaching it was decided that the teams should be back at Fife House by 2000 hours. This cut off time was decided upon to lessen the chance of any incidents occurring due to darkness and also the freezing conditions.

The EPO was kept well updated with progress throughout the day and he in turn kept the Police and other agencies informed of our activities.

The last RAYNET member arrived home at 2200 hours and called on the radio to announce his safe arrival.

The whole incident went well and great attention was paid to working safely. At the end of the day the assistance was most appreciated by those who needed help the most.

The local paper 'Dunfermline Press' ran an article about the RAYNET exploits. Praise indeed!

The real heroes are the Home Carers who care day in and day out for the less fortunate amongst us. If you enjoy good health, be thankful. You cannot buy it.



## **International Role for Yorkshire Team Brian Dooks, G0RHI**

**R**AYNET operators providing safety cover on the Yorkshire Three Peaks Fell Race - one of the toughest in the UK - will be working on an international event in 2008.

Organisers of the Three Peaks, which takes in the summits of Penyghent, 2,277ft, Whernside, 2,475ft, and Ingleborough, 2,346ft, on a 22-mile course in the Yorkshire Dales, announced its inclusion in the World Long Distance Mountain Running Challenge at the prize presentation after the race on April 30.

The Three Peaks Race, being run for the 52nd time this year with nearly 500 entries, has a record time of 2hrs 46mins 3secs established in 1996. It becomes the fifth event to host the Long Distance Mountain Running Challenge after being accepted by the World Mountain Running Association.

The Mountain Running Challenge is designed to attract the world's best runners to one venue which will rotate between Europe, the Americas, Oceania, Africa and Asia. This year it will be held at the Pikes Peak Marathon in Colorado and in 2007 on the Jungfrau in Switzerland - coming to the Yorkshire Dales in 2008.

This year Leeds RAYNET Controller, Graham Belt, G0SCV, was supported by 26 operators from Leeds, Keighley, Richmond, Rossendale, Cheshire and Devon groups. RAYNET operates from each of the summits as well providing stations at the valley bottom checkpoints and in race control at Horton-in-Ribblesdale, near Settle.

## **RAYNET Supplies**

The current order form is included with this RAY~Link



# RAYNET Supplies

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Orders will be dispatched as soon as possible, but please allow 21 days for delivery.

RAYNET Supplies reserves the right to alter specifications and / or prices without prior notification.

**All orders deducting 10% will be checked against the national registrations database.**