



QRO

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE PALOS VERDES AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

February 2011

Our Local Government Disaster Amateur Radio Groups

Learn what they've been doing recently, their plans for 2011, and how to participate

Leaders of the local government-sponsored disaster amateur radio groups serving our area will give highly-informative presentations at PVARC's February 16th general meeting, 7:30 pm, at Fred Hesse Community Park.

Presenting overviews of their respective organizations, along with their 2010 accomplishments and 2011 plans will be:

- **Los Angeles County Disaster Communication Service (DCS), Lomita District, overseen by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.**
- **Neighborhood Amateur Radio Team (NART), overseen by the Palos Verdes Estates Police Department.**
- **Peninsula Volunteer Alert Network (PVAN), overseen by the City of Rancho Palos Verdes.**
- **Torrance Amateur Radio Association (TARA), overseen by the Torrance Police Department.**

About this month's speakers:

For DCS: Diana Feinberg, AI6DF, of Rancho Palos Verdes has been District Communications Officer (T-001) for the seven-city Lomita District since August 2009 and previously served as District Operations Officer (T-003).

For NART: Bryant Winchell, W2RGG, of Palos Verdes Estates founded NART in 1998. NART is the communications arm of the developing PVE Disaster District Program.

For PVAN: Alan Soderberg, W8CU, of Rancho Palos Verdes has served as Chairman - Coordinator of PVAN since its inception in 2004.

For TARA: John Kemper, W6JN, of Torrance has served on TARA's Board of Directors for 15 years, and been a member for over 20. He was the main proponent for getting TARA operations off 2-meters and onto its own 220 MHz repeater.. ■

Dowsing For Electrical Interference Is Like Dowsing For Water

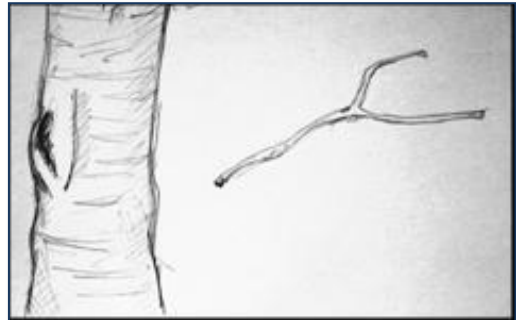
By Joe Pace, NZ6L
PVARC President

As a child growing up in a small town in central New Jersey, there was a never ending train of opportunities to observe just about everything that can and will go wrong with homes and properties as the severe weather seasons rolled by each year, leaving their mark upon sewers, plumbing, siding, roofing, and sump pumps alike. And for a kid, this offered a wealth of opportunity to watch and learn.

One spring, I believe it was in 1975, I saw our neighbor across the street walking around his front lawn with a Y shaped branch, ends held in each hand, slowly walking back and forth, and curious as this appeared, I walked over and asked Bill what he was doing.

“Dowsing my sewer line. Pipe’s busted somewhere.” Bill said tersely. I kept quiet and followed Bill around as he explained how the tip of the branch would dip when there’s water under the surface, and occasionally it did, dipping more and more sharply, until he’d honed in on the spot he was looking for. After a bit of digging and a resulting hole several feet down, there was the sewer line, and the root infested, broken section just beyond. Amazing. I had no clue that Bill was a wizard. But to Bill, the branch was no different than a wrench. It was just a tool.

Thirty years later, I was talking with a co-worker, who had been a general contractor earlier in life, about a problematic sewer line at our home, and he mentioned he’d had a similar problem, but his line unlike mine was all beneath hardscaping, so it was a bit more of a problem to get to. I asked him how he located the line, and he said, matter of factly, “Oh, I just dowsed it with a branch from my apple tree.” I was sure that Kelis and Bill must have attended Hogwarts.



It worked then.

Dowsing has to me been one of those mysterious arts of intuition and paranormal manipulation that, not unlike tuning a Heathkit linear amplifier, when done properly is a valuable tool for making contact with something illusive in an efficient and practical way.

Asking Kelis, who like Bill are both very pragmatic fellows, how this phenomenon works, he explained that dowsers are particularly sensitive to electricity, which is in some way connected to water. I’m not particularly sensitive to electrical fields, but I have something that is. An AM radio.

Now, that was something I could relate to. Dowsing for radio frequency interference sources, though substituting intuition with hearing and branches with a little battery powered AM transistor radio was something I could use as an effective tool around the house.

They won’t help find water, but for those pesky sources of RF hash and other interference in our homes, walking around with one of these can help hone in on dimmers, transformers, and other noisy bits that can interfere with our ability to hear those weak signals from distant stations. ■



It works now.

Use It or Lose It? There's a Quiet Ham Band That Needs Some Use

By Diana Feinberg, AI6DF

The 222-225 MHz amateur band, also known as the 1.25-meter band or casually called "220 MHz", is a wonderful place for disaster amateur radio. But to ensure keeping it for amateur radio use, we also need to use it a bit more.

This ham band is important locally for connecting City EOCs and the Lomita Sheriff's station EOC, which in turn connects with the L.A. County EOC. The Palos Verdes school and library districts also rely on 1.25-meters for their amateur radio disaster communication. More recently, the 80-member Torrance Amateur Radio Association, overseen by the Torrance P.D., moved to a 1.25-meter repeater for their primary channel.

But there's some history and a future for the 1.25-meter band we need to ponder. U.S. hams lost the 220-222 MHz portion of this band in 1988 for a proposed United Parcel Service radio system that was later abandoned after various delays.

The FCC subsequently partitioned the former 220 to 222 MHz ham radio spectrum into 200 narrow-banded commercial radio channels across 94 market areas, raising over \$2 million to-date for the Federal treasury from auctions. These 200 channels just below our amateur band are now garnering considerable commercial interest and proof of economic value in adjacent spectrum. (See sidebar article on next page, "What's Happening Just Below 222 MHz?")

Why So Few Radios for 222-225 MHz?

Only These Countries* Currently Allow Their Hams to Use 1.25 meters:

- Aruba
- Bermuda
- Brazil
- Canada
- French overseas territories in ITU Region 2:
 - French Guiana
 - French islands in Caribbean & offshore Canada;
- Jamaica
- Mexico
- Trinidad and Tobago
- United States of America

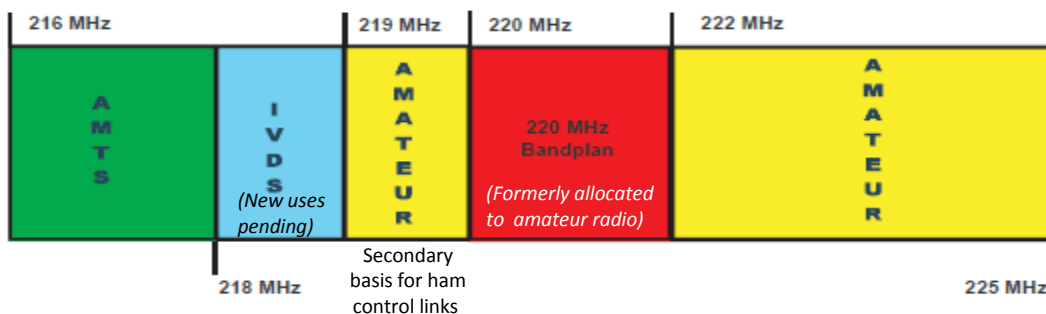
** Some of the above countries, but not the U.S., allow limited ham operation on 220-222 MHz.*

(Note: Somalia is reportedly the only entity outside the Western Hemisphere permitting amateurs to use the 1.25-meter band.)

Our 222-225 MHz ham band is great for disaster radio purposes because it affords greater "privacy" (so to speak) than either 2-meters or 70 cm. In our area it also propagates well, including ability to bounce signals off distant mountains with a gain antenna to reach certain repeaters. Only a dozen governments in the Western Hemisphere allow their amateurs to use this spectrum, leaving transceiver makers with a relatively small market opportunity for selling 1.25-meter gear.

Article continued on the next page ►

The FCC's Band Plan from 216 to 225 MHz



Until 1988, the 1.25-meter ham band in the U.S. extended from 219 through 225 MHz. The 220-222 MHz spectrum is now being coveted by some public utilities, public safety agencies, and railroads.

Use It or Lose It? There's a Quiet Ham Band That Needs Some Use

► *Continued from previous page*

Currently there are 141 coordinated 1.25-meter repeaters in Southern California, but some appear to have little if any use. The 220 MHz Spectrum Management Association of Southern California (*see below*) continually assesses the status of repeaters. Unused or abandoned repeater frequency pairs will be re-assigned after extensive efforts to contact repeater owners.

Ownership of 1.25-meter ham gear in the U.S. is now said to be at its highest level ever and many users of this band still do value its relative quietness. But many 1.25-meter repeaters need some activity to demonstrate this spectrum is worthy for continued amateur use. We now know there's a value for commercial uses just below our ham band.

Give a 1.25-meter open repeater a try sometime. ■

The 220 MHz Spectrum Management Association of Southern California

Coordinating the frequency pairs used by all 1.25-meter amateur repeaters throughout Southern California is the authorized job of the 220 MHz Spectrum Management Association. This group also maintains the 1.25-meter band plan for Southern California.

While other ham band coordination groups extend membership only to repeater owners, the 220 SMA organization is open to any amateur who uses the 1.25-meter band. (*Full disclosure: The author of the accompanying article is a member of the 220 SMA due to her interest in this band.*)

Membership in 220 SMA is \$15 annually and the organization holds quarterly general meetings open to all members. The group's coordination board meets separately during the year and reports any developments at the general meetings.

If you are interested in supporting the 1.25-meter ham band or finding a list of open repeaters, the 220 SMA's website is at:

<http://www.220sma.org> ■

What's Happening Just Below 222 MHz?

There's some action at last by commercial radio users in the former 220-222 MHz ham radio spectrum.

The 200 frequencies (100 pairs) there are now being assigned or considered for land-mobile voice and data use by public utility firms (mostly in less-populated areas, i.e., eastern Kentucky or the like) and other users. There are ten frequency pairs for public safety use.

Base stations are assigned frequencies in the 220-221 MHz range and paired with mobile frequencies exactly 1 MHz higher in 221-222 MHz.

The Big Four railroads have acquired some spectrum rights in this area as well. They've been testing and using their frequencies for what's called "Positive Train Control". PTC systems convey information about track conditions, switches, signals, speeds, etc., to and from locomotives, with the ability to override manual train operation if the engineer becomes inattentive.

A bit further down the spectrum, 216-218 MHz is used for inland maritime communication on U.S. waterways, but not more than 12 miles off coastlines. AMTS stands for Advanced Maritime Telecommunications Systems. It is also a primary user on 219-220 MHz, in which amateur radio has a secondary allocation for control frequencies only.

An FCC auction enabling new uses of the 218-219 MHz spectrum was postponed last August to provide more time for bidder preparation. The new 218-219 MHz service is intended to provide fixed or mobile communications (voice and/or data) to subscribers within a specified service area. These may be on a common carrier or single user basis.

As one might expect, frequencies in the 216-225 MHz range do not have sufficient baud rates to support many types of video or data-intensive applications.

But there is some good news for hams. These spectrum uses are spawning more 220 MHz commercial-quality radios and repeaters which amateurs will eventually program for 1.25-meter ham use. ■

Last Call: The ship to Catalina is about to sail

Our 2011 "Islands on the Air" DXpedition to Santa Catalina Island is QRV Feb. 23-27 (Wednesday through Sunday)



Santa Catalina Island is designated as IOTA NA-066.

Only 32.6% of all IOTA participants worldwide have claimed credit for working NA-066, according to IOTA's website.

PVARC members interested in going on the DXpedition who haven't already reserved a spot will need to act **quickly**. Please contact our DXpedition leader, **Ray Day, N6HE** at 310-541-7557 or rayday@cox.net

Technician Class license holders are welcome to participate and operate on HF bands during the DXpedition under the supervision of a higher class licensee.

Palos Verdes Peninsula

Catalina Express leaves from Long Beach

The IOTA DXpedition will operate from Two Harbors.

We'll be there at:

- SSB : 3.755, 7.260, 14.260, 21.260 MHz
- CW: 3.530, 7.055, 14.040, 21.040 MHz
- RTTY: 3.600, 7.080 (and down), 14.080, and 21.080 MHz
- PSK31: 7.070, 14.070, 21.070 MHz

Two Harbors

Santa Catalina Island

Avalon

Map Image: ©2010 Google – Imagery ©2010 TerraMetrics

Please reserve your boat transportation on Catalina Express from Long Beach if you plan to participate. There is only one ship daily to Two Harbors via Avalon during the "off-season" (no service on Thursdays). Round trip fare is \$66, or \$60 for those over 55. Visit Catalina Express at: www.catalinaexpress.com/scheduleFaresTwoHarbors.php#tlb ■

January 2011						
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October 2011						
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November 2011						
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December 2011						
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PALOS VERDES AMATEUR RADIO CLUB 2011 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



Weekly Club Nets:

All members and guests are invited to check-in to our Club net every Tuesday at 7:30 pm on the K6PV repeater, 447.120 MHz (-), PL 100.0.

Monthly No-Host Dinners:

Prior to each month's General Meeting, join club members (and often our speaker) at 5:30 pm for a No-Host dinner at the Red Onion Restaurant, 736 Silver Spur Road, Rolling Hills Estates.

- February 16th – General Meeting
- February 23rd-27th – Catalina IOTA Trip
- February 27th & March 5th – Tech Class
- March 12th – FCC Exam at Hesse Park
- March 16th – General Meeting
- March 27st – Ridgcrest 5K
- April 20st – General Meeting
- May 14th – Palos Verdes Marathon
- May 18th – General Meeting
- June 15th – General Meeting
- June 25th-26th – ARRL Field Day!
- July 20st – General Meeting
- August 13th – RHE 5K/10K Run/5K Walk
- August 19st-21nd – Lighthouse Weekend
- August 21nd – Summer Picnic at Pt. Vicente
- September 5th – Conquer the Bridge Run
- September 9th-11th – HAMCON 2011
- September 18th – Concours d'Elegance
- September 21th – General Meeting
- September 24th – RAT Beach Bike Tour
- October 19th – General Meeting
- November 16th – General Meeting
- December 14nd – Holiday Dinner TBD

It's Time for 2011 Membership Renewals

If you have already submitted your renewal dues for 2011, we thank you. If not, please complete our membership form and return it with your payment to our Post Office Box or to our next general meeting at Hesse Park.

It's Also Time for PVARC Elections

As mentioned at last month's general meeting, our club will be electing new officers at the February 16th meeting. The members who have offered to serve for the next year are:

President: Jeff Wolf, K6JW
 Vice President: Bob Sylvest, AB6SY
 Secretary: Chuck McCown, K6CTM
 Treasurer: Diana Feinberg, AI6DF

As in prior years, the President and Vice President candidates have prepared statements about their backgrounds. Their statements appear on the next page.

How About Yourself As Net Control of a PVARC Weekly Net?

Denzel Dyer, KG6QWJ, will soon be retiring as Net Control for PVARC's first Tuesday of the month club nets. How about yourself to succeed Denzel on this night each month? Please notify Joe Pace, NZ6L, if you are interested. ■

PVARC Treasurer's Report, 02-02-2011

PVARC General Fund	\$2,535.87
John Alexander Fund	\$991.00
Repeater Fund	\$1,207.86
Total Bank Balance	\$4,734.73
2010 Membership	136
2009 Membership	129

Palos Verdes Amateur Radio Club

Board of Directors:

President Joe Pace, NZ6L
 Vice President Hal Lazar, KI6SPB
 Treasurer Diana Feinberg, AI6DF
 Secretary Chuck McCown, K6CTM
 Past President Ginger Clark, KG6TAU
 Directors: Mel Hughes, K6SY
 Jeff Wolf, K6JW

Appointed Offices:

Interim QRO Editor Diana Feinberg, AI6DF
 Asst. to Editor Paige Omoto, KI6MAH
 Webmaster John Freeman, WW6WW
 Club Librarian Bryant Winchell, W2RGG
 VE Coordinator Dave Scholler, KG6BPH
 VE Liaison Diana Feinberg, AI6DF
 LAACARC Rep Joe Locascio, K5KT
 Yahoo PVARC Group Moderator Daniel Yang, K6DPY

Contacts:

Interim QRO Editor: 310-544-2917, ai6df@arrl.net
 Webmaster: 310-541-6971, jfree@cox.net

Email us: k6pv@arrl.net

Website: www.palosverdes.com/pvarc

Mailing Address:

Palos Verdes Amateur Radio Club
 PO Box 2316
 Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274-8316

Monthly Meetings:

Third Wednesday (except August and December) at 7:30 pm at Fred Hesse Park, 29301 Hawthorne Blvd., Rancho Palos Verdes, CA. Visitors always welcome.

Club Repeater (Open):

K6PV, 447.120 MHz (-), PL 100.0, CTCSS

To order a Club badge:

Karen Freeman, KG6BNN, 310-541-6971

To order a Club jacket or patch:

Dave Scholler, KG6BPH, 310-373-8166

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Front page photo of Pt. Vicente Lighthouse by: Matt Orlich, WA6AJC

Candidate for PVARC President:

Jeff Wolf, K6JW

I was first licensed in 1958 and have been continuously licensed ever since. Last September marked my 52nd year as a ham. I've been active in amateur radio for all but about six of those 52 years: my last two years of college and four years of medical school.

I'm active on CW, SSB, FM, and digital modes, my preferred mode being CW. I've been a member of the PVARC since 1987 and was its President in 1992. Since then I've served on the Board as Vice President and Director at Large, each for several terms. I am a long-time member of the Southern California DX Club, and have served as its Vice President and President. I've belonged to the ARRL since I was first licensed and am an ARRL-certified VE. I'm a member of the Quarter Century Wireless Association and I'm on the board of directors of the Medical Amateur Radio Council.

I was one of the founders of the PVARC's Field Day event at the high school and have served as its chairperson for about 17 of its 21 years. I only missed participating in Field Day once, back in 1992, and that was when I was recovering from back surgery. Most of you have read (or at least seen) my many articles in QRO over the years, and have seen me as an active participant in many Club and public service activities. Some of you have also seen the various programs I've done for the Club, including my most recent presentation at the 2010 holiday dinner.

The PVARC is our amateur radio voice on the Peninsula. I believe we must be both active and visible, representing the best of amateur radio to our community. Amateur radio provides a critical line of communication in emergencies and times of local, national, and international upheaval. One only needs to look at the role of amateur radio in getting information out of Egypt over the past few weeks to understand how vital a resource amateur radio is. Unfortunately, the public often forgets what we both *can* and actually *do* deliver when the chips are down. If I'm elected President of the PVARC in 2011, I'll do my best along with the Board to keep amateur radio a prominent and vital force for the better in our community. ■

Candidate for PVARC Vice-President:

Bob Sylvest, AB6SY

At the tender age of seven, after winning a radio kit for selling 20 boxes of imprinted Christmas cards to my unsuspecting neighbors, my long and interrupted interest in radio began. This radio had one transistor and a crystal, and it picked up one overbearing local AM station, but it was radio.

Fast forward through high school and university, where I earned undergrad degrees in chemistry and math/computer science, and I landed a job in research with Dow Chemical. Dare I say it, CB radio was all the rage then, and I became an aficionado, also taking radio repair courses by correspondence. I built small projects like variable power supplies, speech compressors, and other trinkets, but while working on code for my ham ticket, I started traveling extensively for work, moved to Michigan, then to Switzerland for 14 years, and unfortunately all but forgot about radio. I finished my MBA at City University in Zurich and almost abandoned the technical side of my career as well.

As global Commercial Development director and later as head of mergers and acquisitions for a JV between DuPont and Dow Chemical, radio was relegated to a back seat. I finished my career as a six sigma black belt and "retired" to open a small business in Torrance, giving my wife a chance also to return to her South Bay roots. It was she who became involved with CERT and mentioned after completing her training that PVE was seeking licensed ham radio operators for emergency communications.

This need resonated with those latent interests, so I enrolled in Walt, K1DFO's classes, and managed to go through all the gates to get to Extra Class in a couple months. After selling down and winding up the "retirement" business, I've now "really retired" and am happily working with PVE's NART emergency communications team. Slowly but surely moving up the curve, I've added HF, slow code, and some digital mode capability. I've also been able to make some good friends in this hobby and have developed a healthy appreciation for the wealth of knowledge of some members of PVARC who've been hams since about the time I sold those Christmas cards. ■



Palos Verdes Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 2316
Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274
www.palosverdes.com/pvarc

**NEW MEMBER &
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM**

NEW: _____ or RENEWAL: _____ MEMBERSHIP DATE: _____

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: Home _____ Work _____ Cell _____

Email address: _____

(Unless otherwise noted emails will be sent to the applying member only)

License Call: _____ License Class: _____ ARRL Member _____ Birth Mo./Day: _____

Member of: (DCS, ARES, PVAN, NART) _____ District _____ Unit ID # _____

Additional Household and/or Family Members (if Applicable):

Name _____ Call _____ Class _____ ARRL _____ Birth Mo./Day: _____

Name _____ Call _____ Class _____ ARRL _____ Birth Mo./Day: _____

Name _____ Call _____ Class _____ ARRL _____ Birth Mo./Day: _____

Individual membership (\$15.00) \$ _____

Household and/or Family membership (\$17.00) \$ _____

Donation to the John Alexander Fund \$ _____

Donation to the Repeater Fund \$ _____

Other Donation to PVARC \$ _____

Cash: _____ or Check #: _____ Date _____ TOTAL \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: Palos Verdes Amateur Radio Club; Dues based on January 1st to December 31st year.
All New and Renewal Member applications must be signed below.

Using amateur radio equipment improperly or ignoring safety practices can lead to injury or other harm. Don't try to perform amateur radio operations you might learn through PVARC or elsewhere unless you are certain they are safe for you. If something doesn't feel right, either: 1) do not do it; 2) look for another approach; or 3) ask for assistance from someone who is more experienced. PVARC wants you and your family to be safe and enjoy amateur radio to its fullest. Your signature below acknowledges that you will take responsibility for keeping safety foremost when working with amateur radio equipment or at events.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Family Member Signature: _____ Date: _____

PVARC's next ham radio license courses taught by Walt Ordway, K1DFO, start on February 26. Please tell your friends, neighbors, and family members.

Two Amateur Radio Courses

FCC "Technician" course (entry level)

FCC "General" course (2nd level)

Each course is 2 sessions

The 2 sessions are on February 26 & March 5

Technician 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM both Saturdays

General 2:15 PM to 5:00 PM both Saturdays

FCC tests will be 10 AM to noon on March 12

The location is Hesse Park

29301 Hawthorne Blvd.

Rancho Palos Verdes

- No pre-registration required -
- No fee for either course -
- Taking the FCC Test is \$15 -

Optional Material

- Gordon West book with FCC test questions,
\$22 for Technician and \$23 for General -
- Copy of my Power Point charts,
\$18 for Technician and \$15 for General -

Students (thru grade 12) who take this course and get their license will be reimbursed up to \$50 by the Palos Verdes Amateur Radio Club

For more information contact
Walt, K1DFO, at walt.ordway@yahoo.com

And lastly, two announcements about interesting amateur radio venues.

(The fine print: The following events are not sponsored by the PVARC. These events are shown solely for the convenience of our members and do not imply any endorsement or assumption of liability by the PVARC.)

1. The International DX Convention is in Visalia, CA, during mid-April

DXers! Contesters! Don't miss our 62nd annual International DX Convention April 15-16-17, 2011 in Visalia, California. Enjoy DXpedition presentations - Technical sessions - Vendor exhibits - Contest Academy - Ladies Tour - Golf Tournament - Saturday Banquet - Over \$25,000 in raffle prizes - and meet DXers who travel from around the world to this premier DX event. Early registration closes on March 19th, so register today at <http://www.dxconvention.org/>

2.

*My Pin Money Travel, LLC Announces
It's First Amateur Radio Cruise*

HAM RADIO CRUISE 2011

On the Carnival Conquest October 30, 2011 for 7 Days

**The perfect gift for the "hard to buy for" person.
Great vacation with family and friends**

Planned activities onboard include DX and Technical seminars conducted during days at sea, working Maritime Mobile on two ship installed HF stations with DX for all licensed amateurs and all the fun of a Carnival Cruise! Special arrangements have been made with Carnival Cruise Lines for two HF operating stations and antennas.

Cruise from Galveston, Tx. To Montego Bay, Jamaica, Grand Cayman,
Cayman Islands, Cozumel, Mexico returning to Galveston.



Only 50 cabins reserved. Book quickly - don't miss the great prices & extras!*

All prices are double occupancy and include government taxes and fees as follows:**

Inside Cabin (Cat 4B) -- \$556.43 per person
Ocean view Cabin (6B) -- \$676.43 per person
Balcony Cabin (8B) -- \$846.43 per person

Deposit of \$250 due at booking in order to assign your stateroom.
Full payment due by June 1, 2011.

TRAVEL INSURANCE IS OPTIONAL, BUT HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.
It can be purchased when you book your stateroom and is generally \$100 or less per person.

Cruise through Debbie Rumfield, N5DSR with My Pin Money Travel, LLC who can be reached at mypinmoneytravel@yahoo.com or by telephone at 832-656-0731.