



SPARKS



Vol. 15, No. 1

Newsletter of the Puget Amateur Radio Society

January 1999

SGC pres. to speak at Jan. meeting

With the proliferation of amateur equipment from Japan, it's gratifying to know that some American manufacturers are still holding their own in the marketplace, and even more gratifying when the company in question is in your back yard. One such firm is SGC, a 26 year old Bellevue company making HF SSB radios, automatic antenna tuners, linear amps, antennas, and accessories for the marine, aviation, commercial, military, government, and Amateur markets. PARS will be welcoming SGC president and co-founder Pierre Goral, KI7UA, as our speaker for the January program.

SGC has made quite an impression in Amateur circles with last year's introduction of its SG-2020 transceiver, a diminutive 20W SSB/CW rig that retails for around \$675. QST reviewed the SG-2020 in its October '98 issue, praising the radio's ruggedness and number of features for the price. SGC is reportedly selling every SG-2020 it can produce.

SGC is also known for its Quick Mounting (antenna) Systems, consisting of an automatic tuner and mobile whip mounted outside of a vehicle. SGC claims that this arrangement is more broad-band and efficient than a conventional mobile installation.

Naturally, Pierre will be bringing some of his radio toys for us to play with. This will be a great opportunity for you to get a hands-on demonstration without having to leave the state, as we Washingtonians usually have to do these days.
- de N7UK

The Prez Sez...

Happy New Year everyone! I hope you all had a pleasant and fulfilling Holiday season -- I know we did at our house. Being in a new house for the Holidays, we had a few logistical problems getting three extra people bedded down (we only have one spare bedroom), and we discovered that 25 people is ALL that will fit in here for dinner! And of course, in the midst of it all we had the requisite power outage for about 3-1/2 hours, so I got to test out my generator system in the bargain. All in all it was a fairly eventful Christmas Eve, but everything worked out quite well in the end.

We start out the new year with 3 new members, and we wish to warmly welcome Larry McIntyre WB6VZU, Tim Monk KD7DEY, and Dick Schwanke W9HXM. Hopefully, there will be more in the coming months.

The Christmas Pot-Luck dinner at the Hickman home on Dec. 19, was a very pleasant affair, although the sudden bad weather seems to have kept attendance down. Those of us who did get there had a good time, and boy did we have food! Unfortunately, the 1998 recipient of the Ham of the Year Award was not present, so that will be announced at the January meeting.

The January meeting will be chaired by Vice President Lorie Graff N7LCO, since I will be in San Diego that day. I really am sorry to have to miss this program and meeting, but that's the way it is. See ya in February! - 73 de Jim KC7FEH

Next general meeting - Thursday, Jan. 21 at 7:00 PM at the Bellevue Senior Center, 4063 148th Ave. NE in Bellevue. Pierre Goral, KI7UA, will present a program on the SGC Communications Co. of Bellevue (see article above). And be sure to join us at 5:30 PM for dinner at Coco's, 14804 NE 24th St. in Redmond. Visitors are always welcome at the meetings and at Coco's.

Next board meeting - At the home of Al Staples, N7VOF, 409 - 109th Ave. SE in Bellevue, Thursday, Feb. 4 at 7:00 PM. All PARS members are welcome.

Hamfest donations

With the Mike & Key hamfest only eight weeks away (Mar. 13), we hope you'll consider donating your unwanted ham-, computer-, or electronics-related items to the club. Proceeds from the hamfest help us to avoid increasing our dues, while supporting club activities and new equipment for the trailer. All donations are tax-deductible.

We'll also sell items on consignment for club members.

Call Hef, KD7E, to arrange for a donation pickup, or if you have something to consign.

WS7K repeater update

The PARS repeater on 443.2 MHz now has a proper CW ID'er, thanks to the efforts of PSE employee Jon Fortier, N7WDF. Jon and I installed a new controller on Dec. 26. Besides the ID, the controller adds a courtesy beep at the end of each transmission. At present, though, it doesn't reset the time-out timer; you still need to wait for the carrier to drop in order to avoid the "alligator".

You can use the repeater to check your radio's Touch Tone pad by punching in *123*, *456*, or *789*. If the repeater decodes the tones successfully, it will respond with "OK" in code. (If these digits work, then 0 will work too). It won't check digits A, B C, and D, however.

Jon is talking with his superiors about adding phone patch capability to the repeater. This could be a tough sell, since it would require us to tap

into PSE's internal phone system. I'll let you know if we get the okay to add this feature. - *de* N7UK

K9JF is new NW Division Vice Director

From the Jan. 6 ARRL Bulletin: "James E. Fenstermaker, K9JF, of Vancouver, Washington, is the new Northwestern Division Vice Director. ARRL President Rod Stafford, W6ROD, announced the appointment January 6, following the recommendation of Northwestern Division Director Greg Milnes, W7AGQ, and certification of eligibility by the Election Committee.

"Fenstermaker, 53, fills the position left vacant when Milnes, the former vice director, succeeded Mary Lou Brown, NM7N, as director. Brown died suddenly December 3. Fenstermaker's term expires January 1, 2001.

"A ham since 1959, Fenstermaker was first licensed as KN9TZH. A DX enthusiast, he's also operated as DL5JF, OJ0SUF, and VP2V/K9JF. He's on the DXCC Honor Roll with 354 countries, 5BWAZ, 5BDXCC, and 160 Meter DXCC, as well as numerous contest honors. He's past president of the Clark County ARC and the Willamette Valley DX Club."

Birthdays!

Arthur Rolfe, N7YKI

Jan. 24

Cameron Etezadi, KFØRY

Feb. 3

PARS 1998 - 99 Club Officers:

President - Jim von Seggern, KC7FEH

360-638-1715

Secretary - Kirk Bellar, N7UK

206-542-6742

Vice President - Lorie Graff, N7LCO

425-392-5846

Treasurer - Charles Beckmeier, KC7GMF

425-822-2339

The Puget Amateur Radio Society (PARS) is an ARRL-affiliated club serving radio amateurs in the greater Seattle area. Meetings are normally held on the third Thursday of the month (except July, August, and December) at 7:00 PM at the Bellevue Senior Center, 4063 148th Ave. NE. Visitors are always welcome.

Annual dues are \$15.00 for individual membership, \$22.50 for family (2 or more). PARS will prorate the dues of new members joining after Jan. 31. Call Kirk, N7UK, for a membership application.

Join us on the PARS net every Wed. night at 7:00 PM, on the WS7K repeater, 443.2 MHz (103.5 Hz PL). The repeater is located on Rose Hill in Kirkland.

Visit our Web page at <http://www.qsl.net/k7par>. We've just started building this page, so check back often.

Send articles, comments, want ads, inane drivel, etc. for inclusion in this newsletter to Kirk Bellar, N7UK, 19353 Greenwood Ave. N, Shoreline WA 98133, fax to 425-867-2160, or e-mail to n7uk@aol.com.

"On the professional side, Fenstermaker is director of business services for the Parkrose School District in Portland, Oregon. He's a graduate of Anderson University and Indiana University and holds an accounting certificate from Portland State University.

"Fenstermaker hopes to attend his first ARRL Board meeting in Houston, Texas, January 15-16. Members may contact him via e-mail at jfenster@pacifier.com."

How 'bout a cold 807?

[Editor's note: In days past, some imbibing amateur decided that his favorite bottle of brew resembled the shape of an 807 transmitting tube, thus 'cold 807' became ham-speak for 'beer'. The term has survived the "hollow-state" era. Here's some trivia about our favorite fluid for washing down chewed rags. Thanks to Chuck and Lorie Graff.]

It was the accepted practice in Babylonia 4,000 years ago that for a month after the wedding, the bride's father would supply his son-in-law with all the mead he could drink. Mead is a honey beer, and because their calendar was lunar based, this period was called the "honey month" or what we know today as the "honeymoon".

Before thermometers were invented, brewers would dip a thumb or finger into the mix to find the right temperature for adding yeast. Too cold, and the yeast wouldn't grow. Too hot, and the yeast would die. This thumb in the beer is where we get the phrase "rule of thumb".

In English pubs, ale is ordered by pints and quarts. So in old England, when customers got unruly, the bartender would yell at them to mind their own pints and quarts and settle down. It's where we get the phrase "Mind your P's and Q's".

Beer was the reason the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock. It's clear from the Mayflower's log that the crew didn't want to waste beer looking for a better site. The log goes on to state that the passengers "were hasted ashore and made to drink water that the seamen might have the more beer"!

After consuming a bucket or two of vibrant brew they called aul, or ale, the Vikings would head fearlessly into battle, often without armor

or even shirts. In fact, the term "berserk" means "bare shirt" in Norse, and eventually took on the meaning of their wild battles.

In 1740 Admiral Vernon of the British fleet decided to water down the navy's rum. Needless to say, the sailors weren't too pleased and called Admiral Vernon "Old Grog", after the stiff wool grogan coats he wore. The term "grog" soon began to mean the watered-down drink itself. When you were drunk on this grog, you were "groggy".

*Phil Gildersleeve, W1CJD
From QST, Dec. 1964*

Many years ago in England, pub frequenters had a whistle baked into the rim or handle of their ceramic cups. When they needed a refill, they used the whistle to get some service. "Wet your whistle" is the phrase inspired by this practice.

Now you can appreciate the importance of beer throughout history.

Jan. Board minutes available

Minutes of the January Board meeting are available from the Secretary. There was no general meeting in December, therefore no meeting minutes appear in *Sparks* this month.

Trailer Committee disbanding

By meeting time this month, the permanent trailer committee is expected to be disbanded. Many of us weren't aware that we even had such a committee, so a little history is in order: In 1991, the members decided that the club's purposes would be better served by having a trailer from which to operate and support club activities. In May of that year, PARS members John Black, Chuck and Lorie Graff, Jerry Sampont, and Herschel Whiting jointly purchased the 1971 Coleman Corsair 23-foot travel trailer, fixed it up (with a great deal of help from Jim Von Seggern, who repaired damage from dry rot), added the operating benches and power distribution, and donated it to the club on August 6, 1992. The donors wrote an agreement stipulating how the trailer was to be used, and that PARS would appoint them as a permanent committee to ensure that the rules would be adhered to.

Since then, Jerry and Herschel have moved to the Olympic peninsula, the Graffs intend to follow suit within a couple of years, and John Black has become an inactive member. Therefore, the committee members have tendered their resignations and have delegated oversight of the trailer to the PARS Board of Directors, with the proviso that the Board respect the original agreement governing the allowable uses of the trailer.

The agreement limits use of the trailer to amateur radio and PARS club activities, including:

- ★Demonstrating amateur radio to schools, youth organizations, and the general public
- ★Club-sponsored activities such as Field Day, contests, and fox hunts
- ★Support for emergency and public-service communications
- ★Provision of a training facility for new/upgrading hams.

The intent of this agreement was to ensure that no one would use the for non-Amateur purposes. Other provisions of the agreement cover maintenance, insurance, licensing, disposal, etc. The

Board expects this change to have minimal impact on the operation of the club. Any PARS member wishing to use the trailer should contact one of the Board members.

The permanent trailer committee is not to be confused with the trailer maintenance committee, which currently consists of Your *Sparks* Editor. PARS will, of course, have an ongoing need for people to maintain and upgrade the trailer and its contents for as long as we own it. - *de N7UK*

EARS hoping you'll call

Eastside Amateur Radio Service - interested parties contact John, W7HIL, at 425-391-8026 or Chuck, WA7EBH, at 425-392-5303. Always room for more help in this community activity.

Programs, get your programs ...

We're still looking for programs for the April, May, and June meetings. Call Lorie if you'd like to be a speaker, or if you have a program idea.

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ **PARS BAZAAR** ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

Buy, sell, or trade your ham-, electronic-, or computer-related treasures here. Ads are gratis for PARS members. Call or e-mail Kirk, N7UK, to place your ad. The Editor reserves the right to capriciously refuse any ads he deems unsuitable, e.g. black-velvet paintings.

WANTED TO BUY Ham radio and test equipment that glows in the dark (anything with tubes). I enjoy restoring and most of all operating these beauties from a BYGONE ERA. They will get a loving home. Also will buy any tubes, parts, extra manuals, pre-1970 CQ-73-ARRL handbooks, or anything else relating to ham radio of that era. These items are of great value as a resource when restoring equipment. Jerry, WA7BUY, 360-457-6671 or **kit-susa@olypen.com**.

KEYS WANTED - Collector wants to buy straight keys, bugs, keyers, other telegraph-related instruments, books, and ephemera. Kirk, N7UK, 206-542-6742 or **n7uk@aol.com**.

Mary Lou Brown memorial service

It was my sad duty to attend the memorial service for Mary Lou Brown NM7N, our late Northwest Regional Director, on Thursday Dec. 17, 1998, on Guemes Island near Anacortes. Mary Lou, as you probably all know, died suddenly at Los Angeles International Airport en route home from a DXpedition "down under".

More than an occasion to mourn her passing, however, the service was a time for friends and family to celebrate a remarkable life in which we were privileged to participate in one degree or another. Mary Lou was not only an avid ham, but an accomplished bird-watcher, and a real force in the Anacortes-Whatcom County Red Cross and Emergency services. And all of this while she had a full career in education, built her home on Guemes Island (mostly by herself by hand), and gathered friends from all over the country (and probably the world as well). She was known as a tireless worker for the cause of amateur radio at very high levels.

She was also very warmly regarded by her neighbors in Anacortes and Guemes Island. There were signs up all over about the memorial service, and the ferry to Guemes was free for those attending the service with or without cars.

There was a large group of islanders who attended the service, many of whom were hams. In addition, the attendees included Dave Sumner K1ZZ, ARRL Executive Vice-President; Greg Milnes W7AGQ, her successor as regional Director; and several past and present local officials from Anacortes and Whatcom County, as well as a large group of hams from Western Washington and Oregon.

We shall miss you, Mary Lou, and those of us left to pick up your burdens have a big job to fill your shoes. 73 ••• —•—
- de KC7FEH

Salem Hamfair in Feb.

The Northwest's first hamfest of the year will take place Saturday, Feb. 20 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Polk County Fairgrounds in Rickreal, Oregon, 10 mi. west of Salem on state hwy. 22.

The fest will include a flea market, commercial exhibitors, and seminars. Talk-in is 146.86 (-). Admission is \$6.00 in advance, \$7.00 at the door. Call Evan Burroughs, N7IFJ, at 503-585-5924 or e-mail to n7ifj@teleport.com for info, or check their website: <http://sra.goldcom.com>

Dues are due!

It's that time of year again: all PARS members must pay their dues by the end of the month to remain in good standing. Dues are still \$15.00 for individuals, \$22.50 for families (two or more members sharing the same mailing address). Bring your check or cash to the January meeting, or mail your check to:

Charles Beckmeier, KC7GMF
636 12th Ave
Kirkland WA 98033

Contact Charles if you have any questions about your dues status.

Profile: Larry McIntyre

This month we're profiling new member Larry McIntyre, WB6VZU. I'll let Larry describe his hamming experiences in his own words:

I was introduced to ham radio by a radio-electronics instructor when I was about 14. The bug raised an itch that wouldn't quit. After numerous occasions where I had the code speed up and there was no convenient place to sit for the exam, or vice versa, the mess the media made of 11-meter communications drove me to finally get my ticket in '76. I was driving truck at the time and we had a gentlemen's world on the airwaves until the "smokey hunters" with their squelch cranked tight and no courtesy kept interrupting every conversation we were having. With the option to move into "quiet" channels or gain the ham spectrum legitimately, the choice was obvious.

I think I was a Novice for less than 2 months, using a Yaesu FT101E that was salvaged from misuse on 11 meters, when the lure of 2 meters convinced me to go for Tech. We had a very active RACES group in Los Angeles County and many of my lodge brothers were also active. I

think I lasted as a Tech through one Field Day and then had to get the HF privileges. I'd copy W1AW re-broadcasts on a 2 meter repeater in the San Francisco Bay area whenever the job took me there and was as active as I could be with the traffic net. It was enough to let me get my code speed up to the edge and, thanks to picking up on a conversation with a lady trying to convince her brother to make his first CQ the night before I sat for my test, I was able to make and hold General for about a half an hour. As long as I was in the FCC office, why not sit for Advanced at the same time?

That opened up a world of directed hamming while on the road. While there were a number of other drivers out there who were also looking for conversation to pass the miles and there were also a number of repeaters that encouraged our conversations and highway and weather updates, 2 meters just wasn't enough. With the FT101E along side me and broad-banded ticket in my pocket, the truck became my primary station. It eventually grew to 7 bands available at any time (160 was just too hard to try to get a reasonable match for transmission) with 10m and 2m being my favorites. What was always a high spot, at the time, was allowing one of my 11-meter friends to see me use an obviously barefooted CB rig and carry on clear, clean, and lengthy conversations with the world well beyond the immediate horizon. I was using the same SBE Sidebender II (now re-crystalled for 10m) they had been accustomed to seeing me use in the previous life without the noise, rudeness, and trash they were listening to all the time. There was a lot of interest, although I never verified any actual converts.

The home station at the time was the FT101E into a 4 band rotator control cable dipole for most HF, with a trimmed "Starduster" vertical for omni-directional 10m work. 2m was with an Icom 211D into a pair of 11-element beams on an Armstrong rotator (each beam was tuned to half the band). A major criteria was that all the equipment be mobile, as my station was always with me in the truck.

Besides the activity with RACES, I was associated with a couple of other service-oriented clubs that allowed me to participate in communications for the Rose Parade and several others for a few years.

A change in domestic status at about the same time the driving career was winding down brought a corresponding reduction in operating status. A 2m antenna had to be bootlegged onto the dwelling and HF was out of the question, except for Field Days. Still, I was able to remain active in a different local club (even serving a term as president) and worked communication for the Rim of the World Off-Road Race a couple of years. One highlight of this was setting up the 2m beam for quick mounting in the back of my pickup truck to improve signal strength in the mountains. Unfortunately, I had to do a quick move to a different stage of the race and didn't have time to dismount the antenna, and ended up making a 10- or 15-mile dash on moderately-travelled roads. No problems other than maybe some whiplash to other drivers as I went by.

Now, operation is limited to occasionally working 2m from within the apartment or mobile and listening to 70cm on a cheapy scanner. All the original equipment is still available and will one day be put back in operation. I guess that's one way to plan to retire and engage in the hobby on the cheap.

Larry, a southern California native, studied electronics in high school and the Navy, and took a job in the electronics industry before turning to trucking to support his family. When his employer went out of business, he went to work as an electronics technician for Spacelabs Medical in Chatsworth CA, designing and building test fixtures. Larry and Donna, his XYL of ten years, were living in Northridge in 1993, at the epicenter of the great California earthquake of that year; their house sustained moderate damage, but they were uninjured. He transferred to the Seattle area in 1994, when his company moved their manufacturing operation to Redmond.

Larry has a son and daughter from his previous marriage, and four grandkids.