



SPARKS



Vol. 16, No. 8

Puget Amateur Radio Society

October 2000

Oct. program - ARRL forum with K9JF

ARRL Northwest Division Vice-Director Jim Fenstermaker, K9JF will be making his first visit to PARS at our October meeting, to conduct a forum on current goings-on at the ARRL and FCC. Jim will also talk about his experiences at the World Radio Team Championship (WRTC) 2000, held in Slovenia on July 8-9. He was one of 53 referees recruited from around the globe to insure that each team adhered to the rules. See this month's *QST* for details on the WRTC.

Salmon Run 2000

As I reported last month, PARS made its third foray into the Washington State Salmon Run during the weekend of Sep. 16-17. This year's effort was especially significant, since the Western Washington DX Club accorded us the honor of being the Bonus Station and allowed us to use their W7DX call.

After last year's experience operating the Run from Wahkiakum county in a rented RV, Lisa and I opted for more civilized digs this year, so we rented a 3-bedroom house near Leavenworth (Chelan county) for the weekend. We drove up Friday and managed to put up a tribander and the club's R-5 vertical before nightfall. The house was built with a steep-pitched metal roof, which proved to be a dandy ground plane for the R-5. I was able to lash it to the second-floor balcony, just clear of the rooftop. After our toils were through for the evening, we treated ourselves to some of the fine German cuisine available in downtown Leavenworth. I was grateful for having been able to take in Leavenworth's tourist activities a couple of times previously, since I

knew I wouldn't get the opportunity during the weekend.

Hef and Al arrived Saturday morning, a half-hour before the 9:00 start of the contest, and proceeded to set up their radios. I had brought along the club's IC-740, since my TS-870 was in the shop, but it proved to be unnecessary. I also brought along my shiny new laptop PC loaded with TR Log, a commercial contest-logging program. While none of us had any experience with TR Log, and it's never advisable to jump into a contest without knowing your equipment, the program proved to be fairly straightforward to use and a great boon to our efforts. With a boom-set and footswitch connected to Hef's TS-570, our hands were free to type in the contact information while the program did the dirty work of checking for duplicate contacts and tallying our points and multipliers.

Since we were operating as the Bonus Station, we knew that everyone who was operating the contest seriously would be looking for us. We would usually tune around the suggested contest frequencies on each band to see where the action was, then find a clear spot nearby and call CQ. We'd call until the contacts thinned out, then switch modes or bands. Hef worked most of the SSB, while I worked all of the CW. Al and Lisa provided moral support and helped with the antenna work. We could work each station once on each permitted band and mode; potentially, as many as 14 times, although we didn't have antennas for 160 and heard no one on 6 meters. The R-5, with its "enhanced" ground plane, proved to be our most effective antenna.

Next general meeting - Thursday, Oct. 19 at 7:00 PM at the Bellevue Senior Center, 4063 148th Ave. NE in Bellevue. Jim Fenstermaker, K9JF, will host an ARRL forum (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, Nov. 2 at 7:00 PM. All PARS members are welcome.

While Hef was busily racking up phone contacts, Al and I climbed through the underbrush and braved the yellow jackets to erect an 80-meter dipole. We also installed a 6-meter beam on the main balcony, since this year's revised Salmon Run rules allowed us to make contacts on that band. Although we did listen frequently on 50.125 MHz, the national SSB calling frequency, we never heard any activity. Lisa and I put up a 40-meter dipole as dusk approached Saturday night, in anticipation of working locals on the lower bands after dark. As we had expected from our experience with last year's Run, we made most of our in-state contacts on 40 and 80 after dinner Saturday.

One aspect of the Salmon Run that I particularly like is that there's a sleep break built in. The contest runs from 0900 to midnight local time on Saturday, then resumes at 0900 and continues to 1700 on Sunday. We ran out of stations by 2330 Saturday, called it a night, then started again on 40 meters Sunday morning, finding lots of other locals doing the same thing. Dick, W9HXM, and his XYL showed up for an all-too-brief visit. We took down the dipoles fairly early in the day, once the lower bands gave out. Then we dismantled the tribander and the 6-meter beam, and finally went QRT and brought down the R-5 about 1500.

Our QSO tally was considerably better than last year: 366 vs. 164. Because of rules changes, however, our grand total wasn't much improved: 62,336 compared to last year's 53,856. Had the old rules still been in effect, our final score would have been over 150,000. At any rate, we easily set

a new record for Chelan county ... the old record was only 2,988.

My thanks to Hef and Al for bringing their radios and expertise, and to Lisa for tolerating these little weekend getaways (she spent most of her time shopping in Leavenworth, so it wasn't too much of a hardship). I'm already thinking about packing up the aluminum and heading for an obscure WA county next September. - *de N7UK*

Vote on budget this month

In accordance with our By-Laws, the club will vote on this year's proposed budget at the October general meeting. Members receiving Sparks by mail will find a copy of the proposed budget with this newsletter; copies will also be available at the meeting. Members who attended the September meeting have already had the opportunity to see and discuss the budget, as noted in the Minutes.

Sweepstakes contest Nov. 18-19

PARS will yet again be participating in the ARRL Phone Sweepstakes, occurring on the weekend of Nov. 18-19. The object, as always, will be to work as many stations in as many of the 80 ARRL and RAC sections as we can. We'll be making another concerted effort at a Clean Sweep (all 80 sections worked)... we thought we had 'em all last year, but the League disqualified a couple of our contacts because of logging errors. Those of you who are CW-phobic will be happy to know that this is a SSB-only event. We'll start setting up antennas at the trailer at 0900 on the 18th, go QRV at 1300, and operate until 1900 Sunday if we can stand it. Hope to see you there!

PARS 2000 - 01 Club Officers:

President - Charles Beckmeier, KC7GMF 425-392-5846
Vice Pres. - Al Staples, N7VOF 425-454-2882

Secretary - Kirk Bellar, N7UK 206-542-6742
Treasurer - John Heflin, KD7E 425-828-3034

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 persons at the same address). PARS will prorate the dues of new members joining after Jan. 31. Call Kirk, N7UK, for a membership application.

Visit our Web page at <http://www.qsl.net/k7par>. This is always a work in progress, so check back often.

Send articles, comments, want ads, idle gossip, 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.

Send all other club-related correspondence to PARS, PO Box 32, Kirkland WA 98083-0032.

**MINUTES of the GENERAL MEETING
of the
PUGET AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY
June 15, 2000**

The meeting was called to order by Pres. Kirk Bellar N7UK with the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 11 members present (a quorum) and 2 guests. The program was given by Dick Schwanke W9HXM on the subject of learning code and increasing speed of comprehension. A few additional comments were made by Kirk regarding sending code with the various types of keys.

Following a break for refreshments, the business meeting was convened. The minutes of the May meeting, as published in SPARKS, were approved. The Treasurer reported that the club is solvent. A complete report is available on request.

Committee reports: The trailer is ready for Field Day. Ham Fest donations are still needed. Chairman John Heflin KD7E reports that his garage is not nearly full enough. Chuck Mauro, a former member, donated some computer gear and some will perhaps be used in the trailer.

Contests: The 99 Sweepstakes yielded a Clean Sweep, but ARRL disallowed two sections because of logging errors, so we really didn't get the award (they did allow the ops to buy the mugs however!). IOTA is coming up the last weekend in July, possibly Camano or Whidbey. The Salmon Run is Sept. 16-17, we'll possibly go to Chelan County. Field day is next weekend. Pres.-elect Chuck Beckmeier KC7GMF suggested that the club buy a batch of Field Day 2000 commemorative pins, and interested members can purchase them for approximately \$5. A motion was made and seconded, and passed, to purchase a minimum order or approximately 18-24 pins.

There was no further old business. No new business was introduced. The meeting was adjourned. - *Respectfully submitted,*
Jim Von Seggern KC7FEH Secretary pro tem

Holiday party - Dec. 2

John Heflin has graciously offered to host this year's PARS holiday party, to be held on Dec. 2. As usual, this will be a potluck affair, so RSVP Hef by phone or e-mail and let him know whether you want to bring an entree, side dish, or dessert. The club will provide utensils, pop, and coffee, and the host has promised to have some cold 807s (that's "beer" in hamspeak) on hand; otherwise, you're welcome to BYOB. The party will begin at 1800, dress is casual.

PARS holds this party every year in lieu of a December general meeting. The only "business" to be conducted will be the presentation of the Ham of the Year Award, if the recipient is in attendance. Otherwise, the award will be presented at the first opportune general meeting.

PARS Congratulates ...

Doug Bell for passing the Technician exam. His call, issued just in time for the September general meeting, is KD7KKR. Doug also passed the General and Extra written exams at the same test session, so only the code exam stands between him and an Extra-class ticket.

You've got QSLs!

... Well, you might, anyway, if you go to the www.eQSL.cc web page and become a registered user. The eQSL page allows you to fill in, send and receive electronic QSL cards, eliminating the hassle and expense of printing and mailing paper cards. You can even send them your log files and QSL en masse without breaking a sweat. While the ARRL and some other awards sponsors don't accept e-QSLs for operating awards (yet), it's a mighty convenient way to confirm your last rag-chew. The site's owners claim that e-QSLs are more secure than the printed kind.

If you're active on the bands, you may find that there are e-QSLs already waiting for you, as I did when I registered K7PAR recently. I have no doubt that almost every ham will QSL this way in the future. - *de N7UK*

Minutes of the PARS general meeting, 21 Sep. 2000

PARS members convened at the Bellevue Senior Center. 12 members and 1 visitor were present. President Beckmeier called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM. Following the Pledge of Allegiance and introductions, the President commenced with the business meeting.

Meeting minutes: The Secretary did not include the June meeting minutes in September's issue of Sparks, therefore the members tabled approval of the minutes. The Secretary promised to include the June minutes in October's issue.

Treasurer's report: The Treasurer reported a positive balance as of Sep. 21 [*financial reports are available to members from the Treasurer - Ed.*]

Trailer Committee: The Secretary noted that the trailer was presently full of donated parts and equipment to be sold at the Mike and Key hamfest in March. The Treasurer plans to move the donated items to his garage. Bob Adams mentioned that he had washed the exterior of the trailer, in response to complaints from Senior Center staff.

Contest Committee: The Secretary summarized the club's efforts in the Washington State Salmon Run during the weekend of Sep. 16-17. PARS operated from Chelan county as the Bonus Station during the contest, and used the W7DX callsign by permission from the Western Washington DX Club [*See the full report elsewhere in this issue - Ed.*]. The Secretary also announced that PARS would again compete in the ARRL Phone Sweepstakes contest, to be held the weekend before Thanksgiving.

Hamfest Committee: The Treasurer solicited donations of parts or equipment for the hamfest. The Secretary reiterated that the trailer presently holds a large cache of items donated by a Shoreline ARES member. The Treasurer has been corresponding with someone in England wanting to buy two of the Tektronix oscilloscopes donated last year.

Field Day Committee: The President solicited volunteers for this committee, and the Secretary detailed the job requirements. Jim Darby and Doug Bell agreed to act as co-chairs.

Publicity Committee: The President solicited a volunteer to chair this committee. Lisa Marker assented, although she advised the members that she wouldn't be able to attend any more general meetings for the rest of the club year because of school. The Secretary will act as intermediary between the Publicity chair and the club. The Secretary mentioned that publicity duties would include writing an information pamphlet to be distributed at retailers Radio Depot and ABC Communications, and submitting press releases to local newspapers in advance of Field Day and other club events. The Treasurer had already delivered copies of Sparks to Radio Depot for free distribution. Jim Darby reminded the Secretary that the Eastside Journal had offered the club a free web page; the Treasurer advised that it might be useful to have another web page in the event that the club runs out of space on the www.qth.net site.

Old business: none

New business: The members discussed the current status of the WS7K repeater. The Secretary expressed a desire to replace the existing Morse repeater controller with one that can identify by voice, and discussed the history of the repeater. The President tabled further discussion, pending research of available controllers.

The Treasurer distributed copies of the proposed budget for the 00-01 club year. The Secretary reminded the members that the club would vote on the budget at the October general meeting, in conformance with the By-Laws. The Treasurer pointed out that the major expenses are for liability insurance and distributing Sparks. He expected the actual cost for Sparks to be less than budgeted, since almost half of the members have agreed to get their copies on-line. The Secretary said that the only foreseeable equipment purchase would be a new repeater controller. The members discussed the remaining line items on the proposed budget.

With no further business, the President recessed the meeting at 8:15 PM. Following a 15-minute break, Treasurer Heflin demonstrated the PSK31 digital HF mode to the members, and explained the operation and advantages of this new mode.

- Respectfully Submitted Kirk Bellar, N7UK, Secretary