



SPARKS



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Puget Amateur Radio Society

March 2001

March program - microwave demo

Rick Beatty, NU7Z, is bringing some of his microwave toys for us to ogle this month. Rick will show off his homebrew horn antennas and converters for those mysterious bands above 1 GHz, and talk about his hilltopping and moonbounce activities.

We've tried to schedule Rick for this program a couple of times previously, but he had to back out at the last minute. I had the chance to see Rick do this same program for my local ARES group, and carry on a conversation between Shoreline and Des Moines by bouncing a 2.4 GHz signal off of the Olympics. Impressive! If you've been wondering what the microwave bands are good for, here's your chance to find out.

WPX contest - Mar. 24-25

One last reminder about the CQ Worldwide WPX Contest: PARS will be participating from the trailer on the weekend of March 24-25. We'll start setting up antennas at 9:00 AM on the 24th, and operate until mid-afternoon on the 25th. We'll probably be operating with three rigs, so there'll be plenty of opportunity for everyone to get on the air and snag some DX.

All Shook Up

The Nisqually Quake of '01, as it's come to be known, has given all of us a potent reminder that we need to be prepared for The Big One. Hopefully you and yours came through it without injury or major damage. PARS had one quake casualty: Our PC monitor in the trailer took a nose dive to the floor, and failed the smoke test afterwards. Luckily it had been a thrift store

purchase, so our dollar loss was negligible.

Everyone's been anxious to share their stories about where they were and what they were doing when the shaker hit, and we'll be doing so at this month's meeting. We can all take pride in the local hams who put their emergency-response training to use to keep our police, fire, Red Cross, and other public-safety agencies in touch, even as King County's 800 MHz trunked system became almost instantly overloaded with traffic. I made my own small contribution to the relief effort, manning the ARES radios along with Stitz, W7BET, at the Shoreline EOC for about 2-1/2 hours that day. We were, fortunately, spared the kind of damage that befell Olympia and Pioneer Square. The battalion chief on duty continually bemoaned the lack of effective communications with his fire trucks, and was threatening to put a ham on each one so he could keep tabs on his guys. We earned big Brownie points with our new fire chief for our initiative and organization in establishing our emergency net, and I'm sure that ARES/RACES groups all over the area made an impression on their served agencies as well. Those of you who are involved in emergency communications, or would like to be, should take note of the upcoming Communications Academy at Sand Point, in this month's Events Calendar.

PARS Congratulates...

Doug Bell, KD7KKR, on passing the code exam on March 10 at the Mike & Key Hamfest. Doug had passed all three theory tests at an exam session six months ago, so he leapfrogged from Technician to Extra by clinching the code. Best of all for Doug, he'll no longer have to suffer through Your Sparks Editor's code classes.

Next general meeting - Thursday, Mar. 15 at 7:00 PM at the Bellevue Senior Center, 4063 148th Ave. NE in Bellevue. Rick Beatty, NU7Z, will present a program on microwaves (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, Apr. 5 at 7:00 PM. All PARS members are welcome.

Field Day redux

PARS' Field Day preparations are steadily progressing. Mark Whitaker is talking to numerous ARES and RACES teams, as well as professional public-safety groups, to sell them on the idea of exhibiting their organizations next to our humble trailer that weekend. Mark reports: "Field Day planning is swinging into full gear. We now have our reservations for the Bellevue Downtown Park confirmed, so we have the place. But what about the participants? I hope that all of you are planning on being there (we do have a written excuse from the Shoreline FD excusing Kirk for the day, but we haven't received any other written excuses, so I plan on seeing a full complement of PARS members there to show everyone how it is done.

"Now, outside of our little group I have been in contact with Barb Graff, Emergency Preparedness Manager for the City of Bellevue, and she has agreed to lend us support in this year's endeavor. Additionally, I have talked with John Schurman and Dave Condon, who are members of Kirkland ARES. John has some portable antennas that he is willing to contribute to the cause, and Dave has several students from the Lake Washington School District who are interested in participating (they have their own generator and rigs to contribute, as well!). Hopefully this will just be a start, as I have also contacted the different organizations that make up the ARES of King County and have asked them to participate in our day as well with equipment/displays on disaster preparedness. I am still working on commitments, but there has been a great deal of interest expressed in participating. I will hopefully

have more information by this month's meeting and I will have more for the next *Sparks*."

Events calendar

April 7, Spokane: Lilac City ARC hamfest at Spokane Community College, corner of Mission and Greene Sts. Flea market opens 9 AM, commercial exhibitors, VE exams, DXCC card checking, RV parking. Talk-in 146.38. Info: www.members.home.net/lcarc2

April 21-22, Seattle: Communications Academy 2001 on the NOAA campus, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Bldg. 9. Programs, workshops, and displays on emergency communications, 8-5 both days. Pre-registration required. Info: www.academy2001.org or phone 206-524-6567.

April 21-22, Yakima: ARRL state ham convention, 9-4 Sat, 9-1 Sun. at the Masonic Center, 510 N. Naches Ave. Flea market, programs, VE exams, commercial displays. Talk-in 146.66, PL 123.0. Info: <http://eagle.ykm.com/~w7aq/hamfest.html>

May 12, Eugene: Eugene Hamfair at the Bingomania building, 333 River Ave. Flea market 9-3. Talk-in 146.68. Info: www.angelfire.com/or/loband

May 12, Stanwood: Stanwood-Camano ARC flea market. No time or location available at press time, but usually held at Stanwood Elementary, 10227 273rd Pl NW, starting at 9 AM. Info: huppert@whidbey.net

June 1-3, Seaside: ARRL NW Division ham convention (Seapac) at the Seaside Convention Center, 12:30-5:00 Fri, 9-5 Sat, 9-12 Sun. Programs, flea market, commercial exhibits, VE exams, YLRL and QCWA luncheons, Sat. evening banquet. Talk-in 146.66. Info: www.seapac.org

June 8-10, Dryden: Wenatchee Hamfest at the Dryden Gun Club, behind BJ's Shell Station on U.S. 2 between Leavenworth and Wenatchee. Tailgate sale, potluck, RV/tent sites, VE exams Sat. Talk-in 146.68, PL 156.7. Info: ka7zna@msn.net

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, stock tips, 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.

June 8-9, Rathdrum ID: Kootenai ARS hamfest at the Lions Club, Hwy. 53. Flea market, VE exams, potluck, RV parking. Talk-in 146.38. Info: jmonroe@dm.net

July 20-22, Everett: 2001 Pacific Northwestern DX Convention at the Holiday Inn. Programs from 9-4 all three days, banquet Sat, breakfast Sun, DXCC card checking. Info: www.dxcc.org

August 4-5, Spokane: ARRL Eastern WA Section convention at University High School, 10212 E 9th Ave. Flea market 9-5 Sat, seminars, VE exams Sun, steak dinner Sat. Talk-in 147.24. Info: spokanehamfest@yahoo.com

August 11, Longview: Lower Columbia ARA ham radio, computer, & electronic swapmeet at the Cowlitz Co. Expo Center. Indoor flea market 9-1, commercial exhibitors, tailgate sales start at 6:30 AM. Talk-in 147.26. Info: www.qsl.net/nc7p/swapmeet.htm

September 8, Graham: RC of Tacoma electronics flea market at the Pierce Co. fairgrounds, 21718 Meridian Ave E. Flea market 9-3, VE exams, camping/RV parking, antique station W7OS demos. Talk-in 147.38, PL 103.5. Info: www.w7dk.org

September 30, Centralia: Chehalis Valley ARS hamfest at the Southwest WA Fairgrounds. Flea market open at 9 AM, VE exams, RV parking. Talk-in 147.06, PL 110.9. Info: www.cvars.org

Puyallup Hamfest

Your *Sparks* Editor has just returned from this year's Mike & Key Hamfest, having put in a goodly amount of his spare time over the last several weeks hauling, cleaning, pricing, hauling, loading, etc. (did he mention hauling?) the PARS' Puyallup Plunder (henceforth to be known as the P3). He's mentioning this expenditure of his time as a thinly-veiled, nay, butt-nekkid excuse for the tardiness of this month's edition. Additionally, it gives him a chance to file this report while his recollection is still fresh, and to refer to himself in the third person.

Charles Beckmeier, Doug Bell, and he, uh, I loaded the P3 into Charles' and my vehicles Friday morning for the trip south. We arrived at the fairgrounds early, queued up at the gate about an hour before the 2 PM opening, and found ourselves set upon by some of the other dealers in line, who were determined to get first crack at the P3 before we could even take it out of our cars. Our

impromptu tailgate sale netted us \$150. We were met at the loading dock by Mark Whitaker, who was (figuratively) wearing his Mike & Key hat and pulling pallets with the rest of the M & K crew. Mark, being careful to avoid any appearance of favoritism, graciously allowed two of his cohorts to deliver our pallets after we'd loaded them with the P3.

Once we got in, Charles and I arranged the P3 on and under our assigned tables, hoisted the PARS banner overhead, tossed a couple of tarps over the whole mess, and trotted off to annoy the other dealers as they tried to deploy their own treasures. One such dealer, understandably peeved that I would have the nerve to attempt to buy one of his cherished possessions, reacted by quoting me a price that was three times what I would have considered reasonable. So in retaliation, I bought it.

Charles, Jim Darby, John Heflin and I met for breakfast Saturday morning, then headed for the fairgrounds for the big event. We had a good location again this year, on the first floor near the main entrance, and right across from the Icom and Ham Radio Outlet booths. This proved to be a great diversion for us when sales got slow in the afternoon. There were decidedly fewer dealers than last year, as evidenced by the number of empty tables, but the morning's crowd of buyers seemed as thick as ever (in numbers, not necessarily intelligence).

Hef proved once again that he missed his true calling as a salesman, luring the rabble and hawking our P3 in best carnival-barker fashion. We managed to sell all of our oscilloscopes left over from last year, as well as most of the Motorola commercial radios donated by the Shoreline FD.

Mark and Jim, meanwhile, shelled out some of their own hard-earned for new radios at the HRO and Radio Depot booths. Doug, Charles, and Your *Sparks* Editor invested in some previously-owned goodies. I also took the opportunity to talk to the Western WA Amateur Relay Association gang about their doing a future program for us, and compared DXpedition plans for this year's Salmon Run with Jack Fleming, WAØRJY, one of the WWDXC's organizers for the Run.

The crowds thinned out a bit earlier than last year. By 1:00 it was slow going, although we had a spurt of selling activity around 2:30. We gave away some of the P3 that we didn't want to take away with us. Everyone packed it in at 3:00, loaded up their leftovers, and headed for home.

My thanks to everyone who helped out this year: Charles Beckmeier, Doug Bell, Jim Darby, Lisa Marker, Dick Schwanke, Mark Whitaker, and especially Hamfest committee chair John Heflin, all contributed to another successful hamfest for the club. - *de N7UK*

Minutes of the PARS General Meeting, 15 February 2001

The members met at the Bellevue Senior Center. Ten members attended, a quorum. President Beckmeier brought the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

Following introductions and the Pledge of Allegiance, the President proceeded to the business meeting. The members approved, without correction, the minutes of the January general meeting as published in the February issue of *Sparks*.

Treasurer's report: The Treasurer was absent.

Trailer report: The Secretary had nothing to report.

Contest report: The Secretary reminded the members about the upcoming CQ WW WPX Contest, as detailed in the February *Sparks*. He announced that the members would start setting up the antennas at 0900 on Mar. 24. Bob Adams agreed to let the club use his callsign, KJ7BP, for the contest, which was a more desirable call because of its uncommon prefix.

Field Day: Co-chair Jim Darby had applied for the permit to use Downtown Park for Field Day weekend. He expressed some concern about having vehicles parked on the grounds. Other members opined that this should not be a problem, as the club had parked vehicles there for previous Field Days. Mark Whitaker outlined his

efforts to have King County ARES, Search and Rescue, King Co. EOC, the Coast Guard, and others set up exhibits at the Field Day site.

Publicity: Chair Lisa Marker was not present. The Secretary stated that Lisa had completed the text for the new brochure, but was in need of some photos to include with the text. The Secretary hoped to have a draft brochure available for the March meeting.

The President thanked Al Staples and the Secretary for providing refreshments.

Old Business: The Secretary reiterated that he had renewed the 443.2 repeater coordination for another five years, had signed up PARS as a member of the Western WA Amateur Relay Association for a year and planned to attend as many of the WWARA general meetings as possible, and that Steve Szombathy would be our new PSE liaison to provide us with access to the repeater site. Doug Bell reported that he was compiling a list of repeater controllers and their features, in preparation for the club to decide on which controller to buy.

Hamfest: Chair John Heflin was not present. The Secretary noted that the club had a lot of hamfest donations this year, including commercial FM radios donated by the Shoreline Fire Dept. and miscellaneous items from John Sorensen, K7WNE. He announced that there would be a work party on Feb. 24 to clean up the donated items.

New Business: none

The President recessed the meeting for a 15-minute break. Following the break, Mark Whitaker showed an ham radio introductory video produced by former member Chuck Zappala in 1992, and featuring a number of present and former PARS members.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:25.

*Respectfully Submitted -
Kirk Bellar N7UK, PARS Secretary*