

# SQUAKBOX

Issaquah Amateur Radio Club

Volume 34, No. 2

Issaquah, Washington

February 2012

## January 2012 VHF Contest Olympic Peninsula Rover Trip

Rod WE7X and Barry WA7KVC went roving around Olympic Peninsula coastline on January 21-22 during the ARRL January 2012 VHF Contest.

Our goal was to activate the remote lowland coastal grids in the state during the VHF contest. This is the dead of winter so other possible destinations that involved "hilltopping" or the mountainous inland grids were not considered, especially in light of our recent weather. The Seattle area was still digging out from snowfall, ice storms, downed trees, mudslides, widespread power outages and

closures. To set the stage, you should realize that Rod's home had been without power for two days before, and their neighborhood was still dark when we returned. Barry's house had power restored just before we left.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## ARRL Board of Directors Holds 2012 Annual Meeting, Okays Electronic Balloting for Division Elections

The ARRL Board of Directors held its 2012 Annual Meeting January 13-14, 2012 in Windsor, Connecticut, under the chairmanship of President Kay Craigie, N3KN. The following was among actions taken at the meeting:

After viewing a demonstration of electronic balloting, the Board adopted amendments to the ARRL Bylaws that will permit the implementation of electronic voting in the 2012 fall elections for Director and Vice Director of the Central, Hudson, New England, Northwestern and Roanoke Divisions. Plans call for paper ballots still to

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### Also . . .

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## February Program

### Four-Square Antenna

What if you had a beam antenna that could instantly turn to any desired direction? Better yet, what if it was vertically polarized with a low angle of radiation?

Paul Lemson W9PL will talk about his antenna.

Future programs are as follows:

Mar - open

Apr - open

There are openings for future programs. Contact Barry WA7KVC, 425-557-4716 to volunteer.

## Time for 2012 Dues

## At the last meeting . . .

January 4, 2012

Meeting called to order at 7:28, by President Bruce Helbert KG7OI

It was noted that the meeting started late, due to the Secretary/  
Treasurer being occupied with receiving dues from members.

After introductions, there were twelve names on the roster

Treasurer reported \$1836 in treasury, and a significant amount of cash  
on hand, to be deposited.

The minutes were accepted with one minor correction

Flash reported the Ham Radio Support Group meeting was mostly  
organizing for the upcoming meetings.

Barry announced the Sammamish Plateau ARC will be holding li-  
cense classes beginning on Monday Jan. 16, and each Monday evening  
running through March 6.

It was moved and seconded to have the Treasurer purchase a table at  
Puyallup, for the Mike and Key ARC Flea Market

A motion was made and passed, to donate \$200 to the Issaquah Sen-  
ior center.

Joe DeCuir talked about a visit to Eastside Fire and rescue, and  
found some interest in ham radio.

Bruce mentioned that Barry has agreed to chair Field Day this year.  
The date is June 23 and 24.

Bruce talked about our past field day operations.

At some point, the meeting was apparently adjourned.



## E-Mail Elmer

Got a HAM radio question and can't find an Elmer to talk to? Just  
send your question by E-Mail to our E-Mail Elmer at:

[Elmer@w7bi.com](mailto:Elmer@w7bi.com) - Ed. - S

### 2012 IARC Officers

#### President

Bruce Helbert (KG7OI) - (425) 391-6828 (Sammamish)

#### Vice President

Barry Hansen (WA7KVC) - (425) 557-4716 (Issaquah)

#### Secretary-Treasurer

Rod Johnson (WE7X) - (425) 392-8497 (Issaquah)

#### W7BI Trustee

Rod Johnson (WE7X) - (425) 392-8497 (Issaquah)

## FCC Denies ARRL Petition on Vanity, Club Call Signs

On January 11, the FCC issued a Memorandum Opinion and Order, denying an ARRL Petition for Re-consideration concerning vanity and club call signs. Filed with the Commission in January 2011, the ARRL's Petition was in response to the FCC's Report and Order (R&O) that detailed rules changes to the vanity call sign system and call signs for Amateur Radio clubs. These new rules went into effect on February 14, 2011.

The ARRL found that most changes made by the R&O were "reasonable codifications and clarifications of existing policies." But it asserted that several amended Sections of Part 97 -- including Sections 97.5 and 97.19 -- were unclear. In its Petition, the ARRL urged the FCC to reconsider and modify these portions "in order to reflect the intent of the Report and Order."

In the R&O, the FCC pointed out that it had "amended and clarified its rules with respect to vanity call signs and club station licenses to promote processes that are more to limit club stations to holding only one vanity call sign and to limit an individual to being the trustee for only one club station license." It said that the purpose of the rules change was "to prevent club stations from obtaining an unfair share of desirable call signs, given that individuals are limited

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Rover Trip Cont.

Our plan to target the “warmer” ocean coast turned out to be mostly successful – at least it didn’t rain all the time during our trip. Sometimes it snowed for awhile instead.

During the 650-mile drive, our constant companions were rain, cold, wind, squalls, snow and fog. But it was fabulously scenic. Thankfully the 4Runner’s broad liftgate provided shelter from the worst elements when we stopped and put up the 2-meter beam at the back of the truck. All we had to do is remember to park pointing into the wind.

We drove clockwise around the Olympic Peninsula, thinking that we should activate the single most difficult grid square (CN78 at Sekiu) on Sunday morning during the VHF weak-signal net. This turned out to be a Good Idea because it loaned us the most capable VHF operators. It was difficult to make any contacts but we achieved a few by bouncing a signal from Mt Baker.

tent that its forest path was unfindable.

Instead of North Point, we went to a spot near the Sekiu airport, a distant second choice in altitude and desirability, but it’s the best we could do in an area simply chock full of poor choices.



I love the banter you can use when calling from CN78: “CQ CQ, CQ from Sekiu, CQ to Sekiu, and CQ everywhere else”. All active hams should have a chance to visit a place that can help spread so much mind-boggling confusion.



enjoyed a real pile-up. Rod made 15 contacts in 10 minutes.

A blizzard at night driving from Forks to Port Angeles caused almost white-out conditions. Indeed, there was snow alongside the road on the entire route and snowplows were few and far between.

It was a new experience to send CW in conditions so cold that it required two-finger gloves.

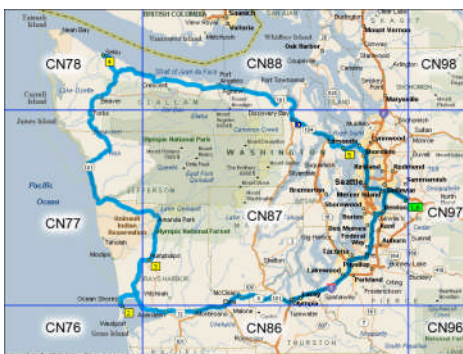


January is so far off the tourist season in Port Angeles that one of their best Fish-n-Chips restaurants closed early: 7pm Saturday!

A golden sun spurting crepuscular rays across the heavens while it sets behind a cloud bank over the crashing surf is always a huge inspirational thrill, even in near-freezing temperatures.

We pulled into a Super-8 hotel in Port Angeles, and their entry overhang looked quite high. Imag-

*(Continued on page 5)*



### Rover Highlights

We scouted the route to North Point (Kloshe Nanitch Lookout), a nice high 3,000’ ridge in the closer part of CN78. The road was totally blocked by recent snow to the ex-

Crossing gridlines is always exciting. Just when you think the bands died or the antenna fell off, you cross a gridline and suddenly become extremely popular again. All gridline crossings were like this, but when we entered CN97 above Issaquah Highlands on the plateau at 1,001-foot elevation, we

## ARRL Petition Cont.

to holding one operator/primary station license (and, therefore, one call sign), while there was no limit on the number of licenses a club could hold.”

The FCC said that it had heard from radio amateurs who urged the FCC to limit the number of club stations for which an individual could serve as trustee, “pointing out that limiting the number of vanity call signs that a club can obtain would accomplish nothing if an individual could bypass the rule by creating multiple clubs.”

The FCC noted that the ARRL supports its efforts to prevent club stations from obtaining an unfair share of desirable call signs, but expresses concern that the specific rule language adopted by the Commission “does not preclude the abuses that the Report and Order intended to preclude.” In its Petition, the ARRL stated that if a club has multiple station trustees, each of these trustees could obtain a vanity call sign for the club, thereby allowing the club to obtain multiple vanity call signs. The ARRL also argued that a club could “gam[e] the club station vanity call sign system” by obtaining multiple FCC Registration Numbers (FRNs) and applying for a vanity call sign under each FRN. “We do not believe that the vanity call sign system is subject to the abuses identified by the ARRL,” the FCC said, “or that its suggested rule changes are necessary.”

In denying the ARRL’s Petition for Reconsideration, the FCC

maintained that a club may have only one license trustee at a time: “Section 97.5(b)(2) of our Rules states, in part, ‘A club station license grant may be held only by the person who is the license trustee designated by an officer of the club.’ Consequently, we believe that Section 97.19(a), which provides that ‘the person named in a club station license grant that shows on the license a call sign that was selected by a trustee is not eligible for an additional vanity call sign,’ effectively implements the Commission’s decision to limit club stations to holding only one vanity call sign. Any application from a club for an additional vanity call sign when the club already is assigned a vanity call sign will be dismissed because the trustee is not eligible for an additional vanity call sign. Accordingly, we decline to revise Section 97.19(a) as ARRL requests.”

With regard to the ARRL’s concern that a club could obtain multiple FRNs and thereby obtain multiple vanity call signs, the FCC asserted that vanity call sign applications from club stations are checked not only with respect to whether the FRN on the application matches the FRN on the grant of a vanity call sign to any club station, but also with respect to whether the club name on the application matches the club name on the grant of a vanity call sign to any club station: “Therefore, even if a club obtains or holds multiple FRNs, if an application is received from a club and the database

## ARRL Launches New DIY Campaign

The ARRL Public Relations Department has released the Do-It-Yourself (DIY) suite of interrelated promotional materials aimed at exposing the growing Do It Yourself/Maker community to Amateur Radio opportunities. The DIY movement is nothing new to Amateur Radio. For more than a century, hams have been working in basements and attics, taking things apart and putting them back together in new ways, just for the fun of it. Meanwhile, there has been a growing population of DIY hobbyists who do not know about the opportunities of Amateur Radio.



To reach this growing group, the ARRL Public Relations Department has created an entirely new set of campaign materials for ARRL Public Information Officers, groups and individual hams to use in reaching out to the DIY/Maker community. Bill Pasternak,

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Rover Trip Cont.

ine our surprise when we step out to discover the loops had just cleared it by an inch. If we'd parked a little to the left then it would've had a nasty dispute with a light fixture.



### Testing New Gear

A large part of this trip's purpose was to try out a wide variety of new equipment:

1. New Toyota 4Runner – a very capable truck that makes some unthinkable spots possible and some difficult conditions become easy. It has lots of storage room and good road manners at all speeds in all conditions.

Biggest problem: while operating at the back end, the rainwater pools in the liftgate and later, when you pull down the hatch, makes itself known. The icy water takes a diabolically unavoidable path down your arm and into your neck and armpit.

Second biggest problem: In spite of its advanced hill-climbing features, a new 4Runner still won't let you climb a forest trail up to a 3,000' ridge on a road that is so buried under snow that it's unfindable.

2. New trailer hitch T-adapter – this allows two versatile side mounting positions, where we

could have two masts while not blocking the rear hatch access.

Biggest problem: Rod is keeping it for himself. So, just because he provided the entire idea, design, parts, labor, construction, painting, installation and testing, why does he think he can keep it?

3. New TM-D710 dual band mobile radio – integrates with Avmap G5 and supports APRS and displays your six-digit grid square with a handy continuous dashboard display.

Biggest problem: no APRS receiving stations around most of the Olympic Peninsula to bridge our position to the Internet.

4. M2 seven-element 2-meter beam on a 15' mast – terrific gain, f/b ratio, low SWR, portability and light weight. This let us bounce a signal from CN78 (Sekiu) off of Mt Baker and work a few stations in Seattle.

Biggest problem: you just don't need these features for the other 90% of the contacts around the greater Seattle area.



5. New deep-cycle storage battery – its huge 134 amp-hour capacity could probably have powered both VHF radios for the entire weekend.

Biggest problem: the battery went untested and unused since it I forgot to connect it.

### Results

The overall contest activity was pretty light. The recent ice and snow storms probably reduced the participation from everyone across the Pacific NW. We had no good 6-meter or 2-meter openings during the trip and we only made three Canadian contacts.

This was my first two-person rover contest operation. It was highly enjoyable and a rather successful trip, activating six grids resulting in 103 contacts for an estimated score of 2,398 points. - Barry WA7KVC - S

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## ARRL Cont.

be mailed to those members who have not shared their e-mail addresses with the ARRL, or who simply prefer to cast their votes by mail. Supervision of the balloting is the responsibility of the Ethics and Elections Committee.

- The ARRL Letter, 1/19/2012 - S

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## DIY Cont.

WA6ITF, and Dave Bell, W6AQ, were recruited to create the new video. Recruiting volunteers throughout 2011, the duo shot more than 65 hours of high-definition video, and then edited it down to a mere 8 minutes. Titled The DIY Magic of Amateur Radio, it shows ham-makers projects from around the country. - ARRL Letter, 1/5/2012 - S

## ARRL Petition Cont.

shows that a club with the same name already has a vanity call sign, the application will not be granted, absent further review. We accordingly conclude that the change that ARRL requests to Section 97.5(b)(2) is not necessary.”

The FCC maintained that the ARRL’s Petition for Reconsideration “does not provide any grounds for reconsidering the Commission’s decision in the Report and Order. The concerns expressed by the ARRL about licensees attempting to evade the rules adopted in the Report and Order are already addressed by our licensing rules and processes. We therefore deny the Petition for Reconsideration.” The FCC also noted that while ARRL suggests that it take the matter up again in a future proceeding, “we have no plans to revisit the issue at this time.”

Commenting on the Memorandum Opinion and Order, ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, observed: “We believe the FCC has been too hasty in denying the ARRL’s Petition for Reconsideration. In footnote 6, the FCC assures amateurs that ‘Club stations may continue to obtain multiple sequential call signs.’ However, this is inconsistent with the Commission’s interpretation of 97.5(b)(2), as preventing a club from having more than one trustee, because 97.5(b)(2) applies to all club station licenses and not simply to those with van-

*(Continued on page 8)*

## Yaesu's Amateur Radio Division Breaks with Motorola, Changes Name to Yaesu Musen

After four years under the Motorola umbrella, Yaesu has split from that company. According to Vertex Standard President and Chief Executive Officer Jun Hasegawa, effective January 1, 2012, Motorola will keep the Vertex Standard Land-Mobile Division, while the amateur, marine and air-band will be under the Yaesu Musen banner. The new company will be known as Yaesu USA here in the US.

“This reorganization will allow us to concentrate in amateur, marine and air-band business, which will better leverage and align the strengths of our entire business operation,” Hasegawa said in a press release dated December 27. “We believe that there is an exciting opportunity to evolve our organization to meet the needs of the Amateur Radio, Marine equipment

and air band telecommunication industries by continuing to provide specialized services and the highest quality products.”

Hasegawa explained that the new company’s name will be Yaesu Musen, “a name our business partners have been familiar with for over 50 years. We are delighted to bring you the legacy of trust, quality and solid customer service that has always been associated with the Yaesu Musen company name.”

While Yaesu Musen will have a new Japanese address, the address and phone numbers -- as well as the US operations and sales organization -- for Yaesu USA will not change. Dennis Motschenbacher, K7BV, will remain in charge of Yaesu USA’s sales division. – ARRL Letter, 1/5/2012 - S

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## Radio Amateurs Not Affected by Narrowbanding Requirements

The FCC released a Public Notice on January 6, reminding land mobile licensees, frequency coordinators and equipment manufacturers that they have less than one year to transition to narrowband operations in the 150-174 and 421-512 MHz bands. While the latter frequency range includes amateur service allocations, radio amateurs are not affected by the narrow-

banding requirement. Land mobile operation is permitted in parts of the 421-430 MHz band in the areas around Detroit, Cleveland and Buffalo, and land mobile licensees in these areas are among those who will have to migrate to narrowband (12.5 kHz or narrower) technology by January 1, 2013. Amateur operation is not permit-

*(Continued on page 8)*

## BPL Provider IBEC Announces Shutdown

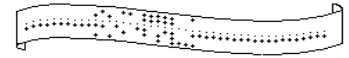
IBEC -- one of the very few remaining operators of Access BPL systems -- has announced that it is closing down. In an undated announcement that appeared on the IBEC website, the company announced that it has "no other option than to close our doors and cease operations." IBEC claims that it cannot recover financially from the April 2011 tornadoes in Alabama that "ravished [sic] some of our major service areas." IBEC provided Internet service via broadband over power lines (BPL) to rural communities. In this letter dated December 23, 2011, IBEC notified their customers that it would be discontinuing service. - ARRL Letter, 1/5/2012 - S



## Reminder: Postage Rates Are Up

Beginning Sunday, January 22, it cost more to mail first class letters, postcards and packages within the US. The cost to mail a first class letter is 45 cents, an increase of 1 cent. According to the USPS, this is the first increase since May 2009. The cost of mailing a postcard will be 32 cents, an increase of 3 cents. This is the sec-

# RYRYRYRY...



DE KA7TTY

Wow. What a January. How long were you without electrical power? We were out for 34 hours. Had power for 2 hours, then off for another 4 hours. What a sucker play that was. You just about think it is going to be good again, and poof. You are back in the dark. Thank goodness we have a propane stove for esthetics. It work like a champ and kept us toasty in the family room. How did your antennas do. Mine are still up, thank goodness. Lost some trees, but no buildings damaged. 73 and see you at the meeting, John KA7TTY

## FCC Grants Special Temporary Authority for Amateur Spread Spectrum Experiments

Phil Williams, KA1GMN, has been granted a Special Temporary Authority (STA) by the Federal Communications Commission to conduct Spread Spectrum experiments within 2.5 kHz signal bandwidths on 160 through 2 meters at a maximum of 100 W effective radiated power. The 6-month authorization takes effect February 1 and expires on July 31. The FCC has assigned Williams the call WF9XJD for use during his ex-

periments.

"The overall objective is to evaluate the compatibility of operating spread spectrum on HF and VHF," Williams stated. "I think it will established Amateur Radio best operating practices. Part of this experiment will be to determine the minimum ERP required to maintain reliable communications. I think this is extremely important with the crowded bands we all have to operate in today."

Spread-Spectrum has been available for decades and it is often used as a means to limit power flux density in transmitted signals while providing substantial immunity at the receiving end to natural and man-made interference. Under normal operation (not an STA) amateurs in the US are only permitted to use Spread Spectrum above 222 MHz. The STA breaks new ground by allowing Spread Spectrum experimentation on the HF and lower VHF bands. - ARRL Letter, 1/12/2012 - S

ond increase for postcard postage in less than a year; in April 2011, the USPS boosted the postcard stamp price from 28 cents to 29 cents. You will also pay more to send letters to Canada, Mexico and other international destinations. Click here for more information on all the postal increases. - ARRL Letter, 1/19/2012 - S

## SQUAKBOX

This newsletter is published monthly for the members of the Issaquah ARC W7BI. Items for publication must be received by the 15th day of the month preceding publication. Send items to:

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 Issaquah, WA 98027-3909

Material may also be sent via E-Mail at editor@w7bi.com.

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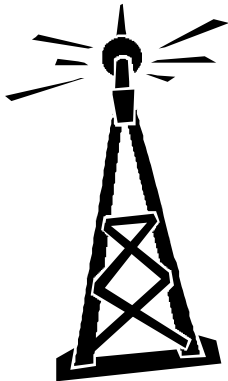
Membership is open to anyone regardless of age, sex, race, national origin, religion, or amateur radio license status. Dues are \$20 per year for a family membership, free for those under 19 years of age.

A two-month courtesy mailing of this newsletter will be made to meeting visitors and others upon request.

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## - Coming Events -

- **February 1, 2012** - Monthly Issaquah ARC meeting at the Issaquah Valley Senior Citizens Center, 75 NE Creek Way, Issaquah. Doors open at 7:00 PM, the meeting begins promptly at 7:30 PM and the program begins at 8:00 PM. Refreshments are provided.
- **February 18, 2012** - Salem Hamfair & Computer/Electronics Swapmeet. Rickreall, Oregon at the Polk County Fairgrounds. <http://www.w7sra.com>
- **February 25, 2012** - Ham Days, Grays Harbor ARC. Elma, WA. [www.gharc.org](http://www.gharc.org). Contact: Les, N7GH [N7GH@arrl.net](mailto:N7GH@arrl.net). 360-532-0157.
- **February 26, 2012** - Burnaby Amateur Radio Club swap meet. Surrey, BC. [http://rac.eton.ca/events/detail.php?event\\_ID=1536](http://rac.eton.ca/events/detail.php?event_ID=1536)
- **February 27, 2012** - Issaquah Communications Support Team meeting, Police Station, Issaquah, talk-in 146.56 MHz at 6:45 PM, Meeting at 7:00 PM.
- **March 7, 2012** - Monthly Issaquah ARC meeting. See Feb. 1st for time and location.
- **March 10, 2012** - Mike & Key Swap Meet. Puyallup fairgrounds



## ARRL Petition Narrowbanding

Cont.

ity call signs. Coupled with 97.17 (d), this appears to make it impossible for clubs to obtain more than one sequential call sign, contrary to the Commission's intent as stated in footnote 6." ARRL Letter, 1/12/2012 - S

Cont.

ted along the Canadian border (north of Line A as defined in the FCC Rules) in the band 420-430 MHz. - ARRL Letter, 1/12/2012 - S

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2012 - 7:30 PM

Talk-in frequency: 146.56 MHz

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE  
 --- TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

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