



SPARKS



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Puget Amateur Radio Society

October 2001

Oct. program - EAS

Clay Freinwald, K7CR, will give us an inside look at the Emergency Alert System (EAS) this month. You've likely seen or heard EAS test transmissions from your TV or broadcast radio. EAS replaced the old Emergency Broadcast System (EBS). The EAS is designed to provide the President with the means to address the American people in the event of an emergency. Through the EAS, the President would have access to thousands of broadcast stations, cable systems, and satellite programmers to transmit a message to the public.

State and local officials can also send out important local emergency information targeted at a specific area. The EAS signal is in the same digital format that the National Weather Service uses on NOAA Weather Radio, allowing Weather Radio signals to be decoded by EAS equipment at the broadcast stations. Broadcasters and cable operators can retransmit weather warning messages almost immediately to their audiences. Over 70% of EAS alerts are weather-related.

PARS is fortunate to have someone with Clay's expertise available to explain the EAS to us. Clay is chairman of the National EAS Committee of the Society of Broadcast Engineers, and in this role has consulted with broadcasters across the country on the subject. He's also chairman of the Washington State Emergency Communications Committee, a co-founder and board member of the Western Washington Amateur Relay Association, and board member of the National Frequency Coordinators Committee. He's worked at Seattle-area TV and radio stations for the past 40

years, and is currently employed as a broadcast engineer for Entercom.

Given the events of the past two months, not to mention our imminent winter storms, this should be an especially timely program.

Vote on budget this month

In accordance with the By-Laws, PARS members will vote at this month's general meeting on the proposed budget distributed with last month's *Sparks*. The proposed budget is reduced slightly from last year, thanks partly to cost-savings from distributing *Sparks* electronically to many of the members. The Board also anticipates fewer equipment purchases than last year.

We continue to hold the line on dues, thanks to revenue from the Mike & Key Hamfest. We always welcome your donations of radio and other electronic equipment and other ham-related items. All donations are fully tax-deductible.

ARRL Sweepstakes - Nov. 17-18

We'll come out to play once again in the ARRL Phone Sweepstakes, to be held on the weekend of Nov. 17-18 this year. We're getting ever-closer to that elusive Clean Sweep (working all 80 ARRL and RAC sections)... last year, only Quebec eluded our grasp. While we don't expect to be able to compete with the "Big Guns" on points, a Clean Sweep is a definite possibility.

As usual, we'll start setting up antennas at the trailer at 0900 on Sat. morning. The contest runs from 1300 local on Sat. to 1900 local on Sunday, or as late as we can stand it.

Next general meeting - Thursday, October 18 at 7:00 PM at the Bellevue Senior Center, 4063 148th Ave. NE in Bellevue. Clay Freinwald, K7CR, will present a program on the Emergency Alert System (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 - Thursday, Nov. 1 at 7:00 PM at Round Table Pizza, 5111 25th Ave. NE in Seattle. All PARS members are welcome.

New VHF group forms in Northwest

About fifty weak-signal VHF enthusiasts met on Sep. 21-22 at the Best Western Tacoma Inn to hear programs on VHF, UHF, and microwave topics and to witness the birth of the Pacific Northwest VHF Society. Your PARS President and Your Sparks Editor, having survived the trip to Pend Oreille county the previous weekend, were among the attendees. Lynn Burlingame, N7CFO, and Jim Aguirre, W7DHC, who organized the event, will act as interim president and secretary-treasurer, respectively, until the fledgling organization can establish a set of by-laws and vote on a slate of officers.

Program topics included microwave equipment (presented by Rick Beaty, NU7Z, who gave a program on the same subject at the May PARS meeting and operated from the PARS Field Day site), VHF mobiling, mountain-topping (heading for the nearest high spot to increase your effective range), meteor scatter, and moonbounce. "Weak-signal" refers to long-distance VHF/UHF communications, generally via CW and SSB, as opposed to local contacts via FM and AM.

The attendees had the opportunity to join the Society as charter members, and 32 did so, including Mark and me. Membership numbers were chosen by random drawing after the event, in spite of "financial incentives" offered to Lynn and Jim by some of those present to improve their odds of getting a low number. Lynn and Jim are members 001 and 002 respectively. Your Sparks Editor was amazed to discover that he had received the coveted member number 003. Your PARS President didn't fare badly either, receiving member number 007. Expect to see him sporting

a tux and driving an Aston-Martin to club meetings from now on.

Charter memberships will be available until the end of this month. See <http://pw1.netcom.com/~n7cfo/pnwsociety/pnwsoc.htm> for details. - de N7UK

ARRL members tapped for CC&R effort

From the ARRL Letter: "Have you ever been denied the ability to put up an antenna, or to operate a radio transmitter, or had any other restriction on your Amateur Radio activities because you live in a housing development or condominium complex governed by private land use regulations? (These are often referred to by lawyers and real estate professionals as CC&Rs.) ... As a result of request from members, the ARRL Board ... adopted a goal of trying for legislative action that helps overcome the unreasonable restrictions of CC&Rs that prohibit or restrict Amateur Radio antennas.

"... letters from ARRL members to their representatives have become increasingly important... If you are affected by a CC&R, or know someone in your Congressional district who is, and you want to help out, please adapt our sample letter to your own situation and consider sending it to your member of Congress... it would help ARRL's Office of Legislative Affairs to receive a copy of the letter you send."

The sample letter is available at <http://www.arrl.org/govrelations/CCR-Sample-Letter.html>

PARS 2000 - 01 Club Officers:

President - Mark Whitaker, KD7KUN

Vice Pres. - Lisa Marker, K7LAM

206-542-6742

Secretary-Treasurer - Kirk Bellar, N7UK

206-542-6742

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 North 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, Bin Laden sightings, 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.

PARS runs with the salmon again

Two club members put K7PAR on the air again this year for the Washington Salmon Run, sponsored by the Western Washington DX Club. The Run took place on Sept. 15-16. President Mark and Your *Sparks* Editor made the six-hour jaunt to the northeast corner of the state to activate Pend Oreille county, which had never before been activated during the ten-year history of the Salmon Run (there may have been some contacts, but no one had ever submitted a log from Pend Oreille before). As it turned out, Dick K7BTW also planned to operate mobile from Pend Oreille, so we wouldn't have the county entirely to ourselves, but that didn't deter us from going.

I had reserved lodging sight-unseen at Marshall Lake Resort, about five miles northwest of Newport (the county seat). The owners were very accommodating when I described what we were planning to do, and said that we'd have a choice of lodgings when we arrived. The resort turned out to be a ramshackle collection of old trailers, RV spaces, and a few cabins. The lake itself is about a half-mile across and mostly undeveloped. The owners assured us that the cutthroat trout fishing was excellent there, not that we availed ourselves of the opportunity. I ended up renting a two-bedroom cabin that was surrounded by 60- to 75-foot pines. These proved to be excellent dipole supports.

Mark and I drove separately to the resort on the Friday before the contest. We set up my TH3-Jr tribander on a telescoping mast, lashed the club's R-5 vertical to a fence, and hoisted the 80m dipole from a couple of convenient pines. Afterwards we headed for the local pizza joint, then came back to the resort and marveled at the unsullied view of the night sky.

The contest began at 0900 local on Saturday. We rose early enough to set up my TS-870 and IC-706 transceivers and to put up my six-meter beam on the telescoping mast before the start of the contest. Mark had also brought his FT-817 backpacker vertical to play with. The contest rules allowed for only one transmitted signal at a time, so one of us would operate the TS-870 while the other would occasionally listen around on the IC-

706 or FT-817. I put up the club's 40m dipole that afternoon, in anticipation of making in-state contacts after dark. We spent our daylight hours talking to the rest of the country on 20 and 15 meters, then switched to 40 around 1700 and started working our fellow Washingtonians in earnest. We were pleasantly surprised to get a call from our own Mr. Heflin about 2330, who was operating from home in Kirkland. We shut down at midnight, in accordance with the rules, then started again at 0900 Sunday and operated until 1330. We could have worked until 1700, but sanity dictated that we tear down in time to get home at a reasonable hour. Mark and I enjoyed a protracted car-to-car rag-chew on 2 meters as we convoyed back across the state.

So how'd we do? We finished with 319 QSOs, 27 of the 39 Washington counties, 45 states, two Canadian provinces, and three DX countries (Mexico, Japan, and Hungary), for a grand total of 56,864 points. This was down from last year's total of 366 QSOs and 62,336 total points, when we operated the W7DX bonus station from Chelan county. One difference this year was the lack of the Tennessee QSO Party on Sunday; we usually practice a bit of "quid pro quo" and exchange reports with the TN contestants, but the sponsors decided to postpone the TN Party until December in the wake of the events of Sep. 11. I suspect that other would-be participants were transfixed in front of their TVs that weekend, rather than getting on the air. At any rate, I enjoyed myself as always, Mark had another taste of Field Day-style operating (but without the generator, thankfully), and we got to put a "new" county in the books and see a part of the state we might never have visited otherwise.

And yes, we're already making plans for next year's Run. We expect to head for San Juan county next time, which is not only seldom-heard during the contest, but is also the most-wanted WA county for the legions of county-hunters around the globe.

Those of you who attended the Sep. meeting got the chance to see some photos from our little adventure. We'll be posting them to the web shortly. - *de N7UK*

Minutes of the PARS General Meeting, 20 Sept. 2001

The members met at the Bellevue Senior Center. 12 members attended, a quorum. The President brought the meeting to order at 7:26 PM.

The members recited the Pledge of Allegiance, then observed a moment of silence for those who lost their lives in the Sep. 11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, including amateurs N2SJ, WA2ACW, KA2OTD, and AA1GO.

The members approved, without additions or corrections, the June meeting minutes as published in the September issue of *Sparks*.

Treasurer's report: The Treasurer reported a positive balance in the club account. [*figures are available from the Secretary-Treasurer - Ed.*] The previous Treasurer hadn't yet provided the latest bank statement to the Treasurer.

Trailer report: The Secretary announced that the President would be taking over as trailer committee chair. The two discussed responsibilities of the trailer committee.

Publicity: The Secretary noted that chair Lisa Marker had provided brochures for June's Field Day effort. He asked John Heflin to place some brochures at Radio Depot.

Old Business: The Secretary reported that PSE still hadn't arranged access to the repeater site for the purpose of installing the new controller for the club's 443.2 machine. The Secretary would advise the membership once access is granted.

New Business: The members discussed the proposed budget, which was essentially unchanged from the previous year's budget. There were some slight reductions in proposed expenditures for equipment, refreshments, and the newsletter. The members will vote on the proposed budget at the October general meeting, in accordance with the By-Laws. The club will once again be dependent on hamfest revenue for the bulk of its income. The Secretary didn't anticipate spending as much on equipment as last

year, although he thought that the club might need to replace its keyer.

Al Staples asked about the refreshment committee. The Vice President said that she had agreed to take on the job.

The Secretary noted that John Heflin would continue to maintain the club's web site, not the President as noted in the September *Sparks*. The Secretary also noted that the hamfest and Field Day chairs were still open, and he expected to be storing the hamfest donations at his house.

The President expressed his appreciation to everyone who participated in Field Day.

Following a break, John Heflin presented a program on multi-frequency-shift keying (MFSK) and slow-scan television (SSTV), implemented with a PC, sound card, and free software.

With no further business, the President adjourned the meeting at 9:12 PM.

*Respectfully Submitted -
Kirk Bellar N7UK, PARS Secretary-Treasurer*