



SPARKS



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Puget Amateur Radio Society

February 2002

Feb. Program - Ham University

Michael Crick, the creator of Ham University, will be at this month's meeting to give us a show-and-tell about his product.

What the heck is it? Ham University is a Windows-based program that prepares you for both the written and Morse exam elements. Using quizzes and games, you can learn everything you'll need to know to pass your Tech, General, or Extra elements. You can download a free demo version at <http://crick.com/hamu/features.html>.

The author is one of the pioneers of the computer-game industry, developing games for Atari, Commodore, Microsoft and others. He also had a hand in developing the Windows operating system. His father, Francis, shared the Nobel Prize in medicine in 1962 for describing the structure of DNA.

WPX Contest - Mar. 30-31

PARS will yet again participate in the CQ World-Wide WPX Contest, occurring on the weekend of Mar. 30-31 this year. This is your chance to work some rarely-heard DX and try your hand (ears?) at contesting. We'll start setting up antennas at 0800 Sat. morning at the Senior Center, and go QRV as soon as we're ready.

Bob Adams, KJ7BP, has once again agreed to let us use his call during this contest. Since each unique callsign prefix (W7, K7, K6, JA1, 9U4, etc.) counts as a multiplier, we wanted to use a callsign with an uncommon prefix, and Bob's fits the bill nicely. It definitely drew some attention during last year's WPX.

Hamfest cleanup party - Feb. 23

One last reminder that the Mike and Key hamfest is just around the corner, March 9 at 0900. We'll have a work party to clean and tag our hamfest treasures on Feb. 23 at 5629 11th Ave NE in Seattle, starting at 0900. The cleanup crew gets the first opportunity to buy the goodies, and will be treated to a pizza binge courtesy of Your *Sparks* Editor. Last year's work party proved to be a fun social gathering for the club, as well.

If you plan on attending Puyallup this year, please make some time to help man our tables. It's easy duty, and a good opportunity to schmooze with the other attendees.

In sympathy

PARS extends its condolences to our president, Mark Whitaker, whose mother passed away on January 15. The club has sent a bouquet to Mark in remembrance.

Dues are past due

As I mentioned last month, all members need to pay their club dues for this year. Dues are \$15.00 for an individual, \$22.50 for a family (2 or more persons at the same address). Please fill out the survey form and send it to the PO Box along with your check.

Comm. Academy set for Mar. 23-24

One more reminder about the Communications Academy, set for the weekend of March 23-24. Advance registration is required to get into the event. You can register on-line at <http://www.academy2002.org>

Next general meeting - Thursday, February 21 at 7:00 PM at the Bellevue Senior Center, 4063 148th Ave. NE in Bellevue. Michael Crick will present a program on Ham University (see 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, Mar. 7 at 7:00 PM, location TBD. Contact Kirk if you'd like to attend. All PARS members are welcome.

Salmon Run results

The Western WA DX Club has released the results of the '01 Salmon Run. The PARS team, consisting of President Mark and Your *Sparks* Editor, operating from Pend Oreille county, took third place in the DXpedition category with a score of 56,864 points. K7UK (no relation!) and W7UB, operating from Walla Walla county, led the category with 114,448 points, followed by W7QC/QRP from Kittitas county, with 85,180 points.

Rex Maner, K7QQ, of Olalla led the pack overall with a score of 426,126 from Kitsap, operating in the single-op high-power category. Second overall was N7PP, the South Hill Contest Club in Pierce county, with 337,274 points in the club category. Third place went to William Waters, W6GKF/m, who racked up 251,850 points while operating mobile from 14 different counties!

The team of Ward Silver, NØAX, and Jack Fleming, WAØRJY, operating under the WWDXC club call of W7DX, bested this effort by operating from no less than 19 of the 39 WA counties in the course of one weekend. If the WWDXC has an inflatable seat-cushion award, it would have to go to Ward and Jack. Ward wrote an article about their Salmon Run mobiling experience, which appeared in the Feb. 13 ARRL News: "... On Friday night before the contest, we mapped a route that covered 20 counties and would not require any four-wheeling... We figured that with one driver and one operator, we could cover between 400 and 500 miles each day. We were exactly right.

"I mounted my trusty IC-735 and tuner in the

back seat so the operator could concentrate on QSOs without distracting the driver (or vice-versa)... The car, sporting a large mag-mount and Hamsticks on the roof, had the appearance of an overgrown inverted thumbtack on wheels." Ward goes on to describe their trip along the byways of Washington, frequently stopping at county lines to hand out double multipliers. You can read the complete story at <http://www.arrl.org/news/features/2002/02/13/1/?nc=1>

I happened to attend the February WWDXC meeting while they were handing out the Salmon Run prizes, and was pleasantly surprised when Run organizer Bob Preston, W7TSQ, awarded PARS a box of smoked salmon along with our contest certificate. I'm still not quite sure what we did to merit the prize, but I'm not one to complain if someone wants to hand me a hunk of smoked fish. I'll share it with everyone at this month's general meeting.

We're already planning for this year's Run, taking place on Sep. 21-22. This year we'll be activating San Juan county, the only one not activated in last year's Run, and the one consistently most wanted by county hunters. - de N7UK

Olympic special-event stations QRV

Special-event station W7U is on the air in Salt Lake City until Feb. 24. Approximate frequencies are 3.768, 14.250, 21.300, and 28.400 MHz. And WA7ITZ/W19OG (for 19th Winter Olympic Games) is QRV on 160 thru 10 meters, near the bottom of the General subbands. Operation is mostly SSB.

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, Tim Eyeman contributions, 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.

145.33 briefly QRT over dispute

The Boeing Employees ARS repeater on 145.33 MHz was shut down from Dec. 21-26 due to interference complaints from the owners of the 145.31 and 145.35 machines. The interference came to the attention of the Western WA Amateur Relay Association, our local repeater-coordinating organization, in early December. (PARS is a member of WWARA) The QRM had been occurring intermittently for a year.

The WWARA technical committee confirmed that the interference was coming from the BEARS transmitter, and chairman John Schurman, AA7UJ, advised the Boeing group of the situation and asked them to take the repeater off the air. In an item in this month's WWARA newsletter, AA7UJ writes: "The BEARS trustees initially refused to cease operations in favor of trying to minimize the use of the repeater by cancelling their scheduled net operations and limiting use to emergency traffic. They expressed concern that if the repeater were disabled via the remote telephone control and an emergency came along that knocked out the telephone, they would not be able to restart the machine. They also indicated they could not get to the site due to weather conditions and did not have a spare P.A. should that be necessary. Pete, K7PP, offered to loan them a P.A. and we were receiving daily reports from other repeater owners who were able to access the Tiger Mountain site. Their attempts to limit user traffic only resulted in more traffic and interference by control operators to spread the word.

"The WWARA notified the BEARS that this remedy was unacceptable and that their continued operations were in direct violation of FCC Rules. The WWARA Coordination Policies, which all repeater trustees jointly developed and agreed to follow, required us to start the process to revoke the Certificate of Coordination for the 145.33 repeater. At this point, the interfered-with repeater owners were also requesting the WWARA to make formal complaint with the FCC and provide our data showing that the 145.33 [repeater] was causing the interference.

"I was very concerned that by forwarding a complaint to the FCC, the WWARA was engaging in an enforcement action which is not our province or desire. In order to resolve this quickly, I called Riley Hollingsworth, FCC Special Council for Amateur [Radio] Enforcement, to pose the question of whether the WWARA, as a coordinating body, should report the interference to the FCC. His reply was that the FCC would receive and investigate reports of interference from any source, in any form, anytime and that the WWARA could without fear of stepping over the enforcement line, report the interference. Notification is not enforcement. He does believe that the most appropriate entity to report interference to the FCC is the affected station but that should not prevent us from helping, when requested.

"... I personally believe that any other repeater owner, when notified they were causing interference, would immediately 'pull the plug.' The fact that this trustee refused to comply shows a disregard for both the FCC rules and the courtesy and rights of the other repeater owners and users whose systems were made unusable by the interference. This is a hobby. If the repeater operation is so critical that it must always be available, I suggest what others have done. Install a backup repeater either at the same site or coordinate another repeater at a backup site with the WWARA to continue operation during an equipment failure or emergency.

"Fortunately, the 145.33 [repeater] finally ceased operations [on Dec. 21], after receiving the written notice of revocation and were only off the air a few days until they could get to the site and make repairs. Once they came into compliance with Part 97 Rules and eliminated the interference, the process to revoke their coordination was terminated and all parties are now satisfied ..."

Repeater Update

Our PSE liaison, Steve Szombathy, W7UDI, has collected our new repeater controller and plans to install it "as time permits." As of this writing, the 443.2 machine is still running with the old controller.

Minutes of the PARS general meeting, 17 Jan. 2001

The members met at the Bellevue Senior Center. 10 members were present, a quorum. The President brought the meeting to order at 7:17 PM.

As there was no program available, the President brought the business meeting to order. The members approved the minutes of the November meeting as published in the January issue of *Sparks*.

Treasurer's report: The Treasurer reported a positive balance as of Jan. 17, and reported income and expenses since the November meeting. He announced that PARS had sold a set of 2-meter cavities to the Federal Way ARC in early December, which would cover a large portion of the anticipated operating expenses for the year.
[Financial statements are available from the Treasurer - Ed.]

Trailer committee: The President remarked that he had cleaned out the trailer in advance of the ARRL Sweepstakes, and discovered that the smoke detector wasn't working. The members discussed whether to buy a new smoke detector, as well as a carbon monoxide detector. The members voted to approve an expenditure of up to \$50 for both detectors. Charles Beckmeier agreed to make the purchase.

Contest: The Secretary discussed the results of the ARRL Sweepstakes contest in November, and stated that he had turned the results to the ARRL. PARS will participate in the CQ World-wide WPX contest at the end of March. Bob Adams agreed to again let the club use his call, KJ7BP, during the contest. The Secretary announced that he would be participating in the ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes from Westport during the weekend of Jan. 19-20.

Hamfest: Chairman Doug Bell agreed to fill in the application form and send it in. The Secretary wrote a check to cover the expense.

Field Day: The members discussed whether to hold Field Day at the Senior Center or elsewhere. The members voted to remain at the Center this year.

Refreshments: The President thanked the Vice-President for bringing refreshments.

Old Business: The Secretary reported that he'd still had no response from Puget Sound Energy regarding installation of the new repeater controller. The President said that there was no progress in getting the city of Bellevue to install an 80-meter dipole on the Senior Center or water tank.

New Business: The Secretary noted that the club's radio signals had been interfering with the Senior Center PA system. The club has had previous problems with this during contests. While the staff agreed to turning off the PA amplifiers temporarily, a permanent fix is desirable. The members discussed ways of alleviating the problem.

The Secretary announced that dues were due for all members. He also asked that members fill out and return their survey forms.

With no further business, the President adjourned for a break at 8:20. Following the break, the members watched a video of the VKØIR DXpedition to Heard Island.

- Respectfully Submitted,
Kirk Bellar N7UK
PARS Secretary-Treasurer

RAC Nat'l Convention in BC this July
Radio Amateurs of Canada will hold its national convention in Vernon BC this July 26-28. The convention will include a flea market, commercial exhibitors, social activities, and seminars. See <http://www.rac2002.org> for details and registration.