
SPARKS

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Puget Amateur Radio Society

November 2002

Girl Scouts Want to Learn About Ham Radio

From: Anne Weltner < aweltner@nwlinc.com >
To: < k7par@arrl.net >
Subject: Girl Scouts and ham radio
Date: Sat, 2 Nov 2002

Our Girl Scout troop is interested in learning about ham radios. We have 9th -11th graders (ages 13-16) and are working on a badge requirement. Is there any club that would be interested in teaching us a little about ham radios?

I got your name off of the arrl.org website. We meet in Redmond, near 148th and see that you are in this area. If we should be contacting another club, I would appreciate it if you would give me a lead.

Thanks for your help.

Anne Weltner, troop leader

Happy birthday to you!

Jan 3	Joe Langjahr	KJ7DG
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Ham Radio Training: HamTestOnline.com

From the Sep. 13 Amateur Radio Newsline at < www.arnewsline.org >: J. Cunningham and Associates has launched a new subscription website for aspiring radio amateurs and those wanting to upgrade. Called < www.hamtestonline.com >, the company says that the site is designed to help both new and experienced ham radio enthusiasts prepare for U.S. amateur radio written exams.

According to a press release, HamTestOnline operates entirely online. There is no software to download or install. One click records your answer, provides feedback, and presents the next question. The Website includes all questions from the latest Technician, General, and Amateur Extra question pools.

J. Cunningham & Assoc. is a small software development and consulting firm located on the outskirts of Boston, Massachusetts. They can be contacted by e-mail to < webmaster@hamtestonline.com >. (Hamtestonline)

A New Kind Of Battery

From the Sep. 13 ARNewsline: A new battery about to be marketed for home video enthusiasts holds a

promise in expanding ham radio emergency communications. It is called Instant Power and Amateur Radio Newsline's Henry Feinberg, K2SSQ, has more in our technology report:

One of the most frustrating experiences for a photographer or a ham radio operator is to be in an acute situation that requires equipment work properly and have the batteries powering the equipment go flat. For the photographer it usually means a lost photo opportunity. To the ham radio operator assigned to provide communications during an emergency it could be a life and death situation.

But power reliability could soon increase dramatically. Steve Crow, K4CPX, passes along word that the nations largest photographic retailer, Ritz Camera has announced plans to begin selling a new battery that can keep a camcorder or digital camera shooting away for half a day.

The new source of portable power is Electric Fuel Corp.'s Instant Power disposable batteries. Based upon Electric Fuel's zinc-air technology platform, the Instant Power camcorder battery connects to the camcorder through its DC jack and offers the user up to 10 hours of running time. Another model designed for digital still cameras offers upward of 12 hours of continuous operation time. As with the camcorder battery, the digital camera battery pack comes with a built-in belt clip and 3 foot cord. Both batteries have a five year shelf life in the original sealed aluminum pouch and come complete with a 3 foot cord and an integral belt clip.

While not directly designed for ham radio needs and not a renewable source, the new battery could augment the needs of ham radio operators in emergency communications situations. And here's where Amateur Radio ingenuity comes in. If models are available that can directly or through some home built regulator adapter be made to power a 5 watt hand-held radio, an Amateur working an emergency situation would have hours of power well beyond that of his radio's normal battery. And depending on how much he transmits, an Electric Fuel battery might run his HT for several days before requiring replacement. This also gives the possibility of extended operations for low power Field Day stations, QRP treks and similar one-time operations. Best of all it is a "date it, put it on the shelf and forget it" power source, standing by for the next five years in case it is needed.

Next general meeting - Thursday, Nov. 21 at 7:00 PM at the Bellevue Senior Center, 4063 148th Ave. NE in Bellevue. We will have John Mertel, an owner of STEEPIR, a local antenna manufacturer, who will speak on their adjustable vertical and yagi antennas. 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, Jan. 2 at 7:00 PM at the Cowboy Steakhouse, located on the east side of the Totem Lake Mall in back of the Bank of America Bldg. Take the 124th St. exit off of I-405 and go east to the first street with a left turn lane. Turn left, cross the railroad tracks, continue to the next light, turn right at the bank, go one block and take a right. All PARS members are welcome.

For the Amateur Radio Newslite, I'm Henry Feinberg, K2SSQ.

Electric Fuel also manufactures a smaller version of this battery technology for cellular phones and PDA's. You can find out more about this new power source and the technology behind it is on the web at < www.electric-fuel.com >. (K4CPX)

Emergency Comms: New Database Being Created

From the Sep. 20 ARNewslite: A new ham radio volunteer database is about to become a reality. Amateur Radio Newslite's Henry Feinberg, K2SSQ, has the story of how an act of terror led to its creation:

A year ago, when al-Qaida terrorists hit in New York City, Pennsylvania and Washington DC, it was Joe Tomasone, AB2M, who put together an Internet based volunteer registration system. This strategy permitted ham radio volunteers to be quickly credentialed and dispatched to the various disaster sites where they were needed. Last May at the Amateur Radio Newslite sponsored Ham Radio Town Meeting in Dayton Joe explained that the database came about because he wanted to do something to help in the wake of the attacks:

Tomasone: "Not knowing what else to do I sent an e-mail to Tom Caruba, KA2D, who is the Section Emergency Coordinator for the New York City and Long Island. I said that I know there is nothing that is nothing I can do to help, but let me know if there is something I can do to help.

And I expected that maybe he would request for me to make some phone calls or do some health and welfare traffic outside the area because the phones were in sketchy status in the New York City areas. A short time later a request came back that I wasn't sure how to answer. They asked: '...can you make a database that will track the hundreds of requests we are getting [from hams] to come down and volunteer and can we put that up on the Internet so that it can be accessed.'

I thought about it for a few minutes and I said yes, I think we can do that."

Joe Tomasone did do it. The result was a steady flow of volunteers being dispatched when and where they were needed.

Tomasone: "On the registration page as many of you were able to see, it asked for basic information such as your name, your call sign, your address, contact information, what ARRL Section you were from and what your availability was. Now once that was put into the database, it was able to be queried by a number of people who were given access to that portion of the suite. That enabled them to do searches based on a number of criteria."

During his Dayton presentation, Joe mentioned his desire to grow what became known as the World Trade Center Volunteer Database into a general event

activation management program for ARES, RACES and SKYWARN activities. Now Joe is about to get that project off the ground. But to do it he needs your help.

Joe tells Amateur Radio Newslite that making it happen will take people and new ideas. To that end, he has created an e-mail mailing list to solicit concepts and volunteers for this project. Anyone who is interested can either sign up directly by sending an e-mail to < volreg-request@1... > [sic.] or by visiting < wtc.ab2m.net > on the World Wide Web. Please note that there is no www in that URL. It's simply < wtc.ab2m.net >.

For the Amateur Radio Newslite, I'm Henry Feinberg, K2SSQ, in New York.

Radio Law: CC&R Bill HR 4720 Attracts Additional Cosponsors

From the Sep. 20 ARNewslite: Good news on the legislative front. Five more cosponsors now have signed aboard HR 4720. This is a bill in Congress aimed at providing relief to amateurs faced with private deed covenants, conditions and restrictions when they want to put up antennas.

According to a story in the ARRL Letter, the list of cosponsors is now up to 23 members of the US House of Representatives who have agreed to sign on to the measure. This includes two radio amateurs: They are Oregon Republican Greg Walden, WB7OCE and Arkansas Democrat Mike Ross, WD5DVR. Walden was one of the two original cosponsors of HR 4720 with Texas Republican Pete Sessions. Walden and Ross are believed to be the only Amateur Radio licensees in the US House of Representatives.

It was New York Democrat Steve Israel introduced HR 4720 back on May 14th. The measure would require private land use regulators such as homeowners' associations to "reasonably accommodate" Amateur Radio communication consistent with the PRB-1 limited federal preemption. PRB-1 now applies only to states and municipalities. (ARRL)

Consciousness Based on Wireless?

From Wired News < www.wired.com/news/technology/0,1282,52674,00.html >

02:00 AM May. 21, 2002 PT Human consciousness is actually wireless communication between the cells of your brain, according to a professor of molecular genetics at the University of Surrey in Great Britain.

Pulling together research from neuroscience, psychology, physics and biology, Johnjoe McFadden has proposed a radical answer to questions that have vexed philosophers and scientists since Plato's time and, more recently, those on a quest for artificial intelligence: What is consciousness? How does the brain create intelligent thoughts? Do we have free will?

If proven correct, McFadden's theory could turn philosophy on its head, revolutionize neuroscience, and bring us a step closer to creating lifelike artificial intelligence. "It gives a physical theory of consciousness that can be tested," he said. "If we can understand it, we can improve it, change it, and even create artificial consciousness."

McFadden, author of *Quantum Evolution*, argues that human consciousness is actually the brain's electromagnetic field interacting with its circuitry.

Nerve cells firing simultaneously create powerful waves in the field, which in turn cause other neurons to spark. In this way, the electromagnetic field works as a sort of wireless processor, combining the most important information from the hard wiring of the brain into a wireless signal, which is then transmitted back to the brain as conscious thought.

This "field effect," he said, is the piece of the puzzle artificial intelligence experts have missed. "Some have been saying that if computers are powerful enough, they'll become conscious, but it hasn't happened," McFadden said. "It's time they realize there's something missing. You have to design an artificial brain using field effects."

"It strikes me as very intriguing," MacLennan said. "He's gathered a lot of good evidence and support. His approach brings a new perspective to my work. It suggests we may be looking in the wrong place."

Published in the most recent issue of *The Journal of Consciousness Studies*, the theory < www.surrey.ac.uk/qe/PDFs/cemi_theory_paper.pdf > faces an uphill battle for acceptance among cognitive scientists. Scientific study of consciousness has only recently begun to gain acceptance as a legitimate scientific discipline, and some think field theories like McFadden's are pseudo-science that threaten their hard-won legitimacy.

"No serious researcher I know believes in an electromagnetic theory of consciousness," Bernard Baars wrote in an e-mail. Baars is a neurobiologist and co-editor of *Consciousness & Cognition*, another scientific journal in the field. "It's not really worth talking about scientifically."

McFadden acknowledges that his theory — which he calls the "cemi field theory" — is far from proven but he argues that it is certainly a legitimate line of scientific inquiry. His article underwent peer review before publication. In fact, Baars is on the editorial board of the journal that published it.

"The cemi field theory is not idle speculation," McFadden said. "It is one of the few theories of consciousness that actually provides predictions that are scientifically testable."

McFadden's cemi field theory makes several predictions, some of which can be tested fairly easily. His assertion that the brain's electromagnetic field plays an active role in thinking means that outside

electromagnetic fields should have an effect on our behavior.

Among the first criticisms of cemi field theory has been from those who say, if correct, it would mean radiation from cell phones and power lines messes with our minds. Aside from the fact that most people don't seem to trip out while talking on a cell phone, numerous studies launched to investigate the problem have failed to show electromagnetic fields have any effect on us at all.

But McFadden argues that these studies have also found that the reason cell phones don't affect us is that our skull and protective membranes effectively block the radiation. According to his calculations, the fields from these outside sources are far weaker than the brain's own natural electromagnetism.

Although controversial, some testing of the effect of strong magnetic fields on the brain has already been done by psychiatrists seeking to treat depression. The tests show that the fields can affect behavior.

Aside from artificial intelligence, if correct, the theory would revolutionize philosophy as well. Those who argue that the mind is of a different substance than the physical body — we have a soul — have been on the run in modern times, but McFadden's theory could bring this kind of dualism back into fashion.

Except in his version, our spirit is not the breath of God, but a wireless signal our brain sends to itself. "It restores dualism, but in a completely different way than Descartes envisioned it," McFadden said. Descartes, the father of modern philosophy, argued that the soul accessed the body through the pineal gland.

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Minutes of the PARS General Meeting, 17 October 2002

The members met at the Bellevue Senior Center. Our secretary arrived late. The scheduled speaker did not appear, so our president had commenced with the business meeting. At 7:16, the 10 attendees were introducing themselves and talking about their recent ham activities.

- There was a discussion about ad-hoc ham antennas for ARES service on fire trucks.
- Dick Schwanke asked how many would be interested in supplying communications for the Seattle Marathon. One member said he volunteers for this duty every year.
- Al Staples talked about how he and his brother Wilbur Staples were able to contact an HF net using mobile equipment each day on their recent road trip to Santa Fe. The net operates weekdays on 20 m, at 14.305 MHz at 11 AM PT, with contacts from Alaska to San Diego.

- Van Kichline had his busiest month with ham radio, working the Salmon Run with Kirk Bellar, participating in the Kirkland ARES Simulation, and working the new PARS repeater with an HT.
- Charles Beckmeier also participated in the Kirkland ARES Simulation. He asked if anyone would like to help him inventory the club assets. He hadn't had a chance to start yet.
- Our Sparks editor described his current interim solution for producing the newsletter. He asked whether members had gotten their hard-copy newsletters on time this month. There was general assent. He asked how previous issues came out to a full 4 pages. Kirk Bellar explained that quite a long time ago the club had decided to use envelopes, and he had some left.
- Kirk Bellar talked about operating the recent Salmon Run with Van Kichline and his family at a resort on Orcas Island. He is considering not continuing to activate a different county each year since such a good time was had by all on Orcas. He also talked about finding a new home with appropriate property for an antenna farm and preparing to move.

Trailer report: Our president had received an e-mail message from Chuck Graff, a former member of PARS, who has offered to help move the trailer closer to the building, which has been requested by the Senior Center. There was discussion of possibly adding some kind of door, perhaps with chicken wire, between the trailer and the wall.

Hamfest report: Our president called for a volunteer for hamfest chairman. Doug Bell was encouraged to volunteer. There was discussion about the need for

storage space. Our president will try to contact a friend about the use of his garage.

Field Day report: Kirk Bellar declined to be chairman. There was discussion of joining with the Microhams, the Microsoft employee ham club for the upcoming Field Day, since they had invited us last year after we had decided to join with the Shoreline ARES group. Van will try to attend a Microhams meeting and ask them about this.

Treasurer's report: Our treasurer reported that there are plenty of funds available to purchase Adobe Acrobat if our Sparks editor needs it. Our Sparks editor talked about the package he intends to try instead of Adobe Acrobat, which he considers too expensive for something that will be used only once a month.

Christmas Party: Van Kichline offered to host the Christmas party this year. Our president would like to encourage better attendance this year — he hopes for 100%. It was tentatively decided to have the party on the first Saturday, the 7th of December. If this is bad for you, please let us know.

Our president announced that the night's speaker would be scheduled for next month. In place of a speaker, Kirk had videotapes on amateur radio history: a tour of ARRL headquarters, circa 1985, the transatlantic tests in the 1920's, and one on Major Armstrong, inventor of the Superheterodyne, and FM.

It was decided to adjourn the meeting, have a 10 minute recess, and those who wish could stay to watch the videotapes.

Respectfully Submitted –
Doug Bell KD7KKR
PARS Secretary

PARS 2002 - 03 Club Officers:			
President	Don Hickman	KC7MDA	425-821-7025
Vice-President	Charles Beckmeier	KC7GMF	425-822-2339
Secretary	Doug Bell	KD7KKR	206-362-2421
Treasurer	Van Kichline	KD7QIT	425-820-7278

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, large unmarked bills, etc. for inclusion in this newsletter to Doug Bell, KD7KKR, 12755 27th Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98125-4311, or e-mail to warrenhb@msn.com .	
Send all other club-related correspondence to PARS, PO Box 32, Kirkland, WA 98083-0032.	