

# SQUAKBOX

Issaquah Amateur Radio Club

Volume 34, No. 4

Issaquah, Washington

April 2012

## Special Event Stations Planned for London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

Some special event call signs will be activated to celebrate the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games: 2012L from London, England and 2012W from Barry, Wales. The London 2012 Inspire program has granted the Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB) -- Great Britain's IARU Member-Society -- use of the "Inspire mark" for these stations. Both stations will be on-the-air for the duration of the Games, July 27 -August 12. Organizers hope to make at least 80,000 contacts dur-

ing the seven weeks that 2012L and 2012W are on the air.

The London station -- 2012L -- will be active on 160-2 meters on all



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## April Program

### April Fun

It's that time again., Well, almost. Time to bring something related to Radio that is Odd or Unusual to Show and Tell. There will also be a Geography Quiz. All Good Hams should know their Geography. There will be Prizes !

Future programs are as follows:  
May - open  
June-- Field Day Prep

There are openings for future programs. Contact Barry K7BWH, 425-557-4716 to volunteer.

## ARRL Announces New DXCC Fee Structure

The DX Century Club (DXCC) is the premier Amateur Radio operating award. Available to hams around the world, tens of thousands of awards have been issued since 1945 under the modern award program. In 2012, the DXCC program is not only still thriving, but it is growing, both in participation and in numbers of award options. The addition of Logbook of the World (LoTW) and soon, the addition of an Online DXCC Application utility, will continue to help the program grow. Effective Monday, April 2, the way DXCC fees are assessed will change. These changes will include both rate increases and rate decreases.

The ARRL continues to add new and exciting twists to the DXCC platform, including a special 75th anniversary Diamond DXCC Challenge award for 2012. The DXCC Challenge -- which counts total entities confirmed on 160-6 meters -- has proven to be extremely popular as a competitive

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## At the last meeting . . .

March 7, 2012

\*The meeting was called to order by President Bruce Helbert KG7OI at approximately 7:25 pm.

\*After introductions, there were 17 members and guests present.

Guest Randy Diddel K5RHD recently moved from New Mexico.

Jim Fenstermaker K9JF (ARRL Northwest Division Director) and able assistant Shirley Fenstermaker W7SAF were also here as guests.

\* There were no minutes to approve, because there were none published from the previous meeting.

\* Treasurer reported a balance of \$2104.70 in the Chase checking account, with the Issaquah Senior Center donation check being the only significant check still outstanding.

Bruce suggested getting a BECU account. They have offered to let us have an account that will not incur monthly expenses, even with a low monthly balance. ( Update: Currently we are not in that low balance situation, but Chase did revise their fee structure and I have been told we will not be charged the fees as mentioned in the recent notice, even if we do go below their arbitrary minimum)

\*Rod also mentioned he had discovered the Club license (W7BI) had

expired at the beginning of the previous month. He will get the license renewed.

\* Issaquah Ham Radio Support Group-Flash N7TCW said the March Fifth Saturday drill has been rescheduled to a date in April.

\* Field Day-Barry (now K7BWH) will be the 2012 Field Day Chairman. Rod announced that he will not be in the country for Field Day this year, but that any equipment normally used for the IARC Field Day will be made available for pickup before Rod leaves. We have the Sunny Hills Elementary School site for the event.

\*Peter AS7SB opened the discussion about the new W7BI web site and how it might be meeting previously discussed expectations. Here was some discussion and then the matter was tabled, until the next meeting, hoping for more input from members.

\* Puyallup Swap Meet-Rod reported that the tables were purchased and that Bruce and Barry had offered to help man the tables. John Black had some equipment that was going to be taken and sold if possible. Bruce has been cataloging and testing equipment prior to the sale. (Treasurer's note \$178.00 was deposited from the

*(Continued on page 3)*

## DXCC Cont.

supplement for everyone, complementing the lifetime achievement of the DXCC Honor Roll. The ARRL website continues to add to the fun with many pages of award statistics and information, including DXCC standings for each award that are updated daily. Inside Logbook of The World, each user can see which records are stored in the DXCC system for all of his or her entities on each band and mode. In 2011, the DXCC Desk processed more than 11,450 DXCC applications and endorsements.

As a direct result of the terrific popularity of the DXCC program, our customer service has lagged a bit. DXCC participants know that when the end-of-year deadline is reached, the load on the staff is quite heavy and the turnaround time increases to more than 10 weeks. Our staff want to provide better service and will continue to try to do so. The old fee structure is one of the culprits that increased the workload. Most participants submitted one or two applications each year, with each of those applications loaded with at least 120 QSOs and included a Logbook application component, as well.

One of the reasons these applications have been so large is that for many years, DXCC charged extra fees for second and subsequent applications each year. Additionally, application fees were waived for LoTW applications if they were tied to a paper application, adding a large amount of work for

*(Continued on page 4)*

## 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 (K7BWH) - (425) 557-4716 (Sammamish)

#### Secretary-Treasurer

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

#### W7BI Trustee

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

## Olympics Cont.

modes. The station is located at the historic Eltham Palace in Southeast London, in the London borough of Greenwich, one of the six "host boroughs" for the Games.

The Welsh station -- 2O12W -- will be active on 160 meters-23 cm on all modes, including SSTV and satellite, will be based on the seafront esplanade at Whitmore Beach, Barry Island, Vale of Glamorgan. The site is located just a few miles south west of Cardiff and the Millennium Stadium, home to the first football match that will open the Games in Wales.

"Amateur Radio operators everywhere will be able to share in the Olympic experience by making contact with the station and exchanging greetings messages with visitors and Games participants

## Minutes Cont.

proceeds of IARC equipment and parts sold)

\* After a brief social break, Jim Fenstermaker K9JF gave an overview of his duties and responsibilities, along with some history of the ARRL, and related personal experiences.

By IARC Secretary/Treasurer Rod Johnson

who visit the station," said Project Echo Publicity Officer John Warburton, G4IRN. "The team aims to make contact with as many of the Games participating countries as possible. Special QSL cards will be available to stations contacted. The project aims to leave a lasting legacy by encouraging visitors to learn more about radio communications and the social, career and recreational benefits that it brings. Of course, visiting hams will be made very welcome at the stations." - ARRL Letter, 03/21/2012 - S

## Understanding the New 60 Meter Privileges

On March 5 amateurs were granted new privileges on the 60 meter band. The effective radiated power level was increased from 50 to 100 W, along with the ability to use CW and the digital modes PACTOR III and PSK31.

The response thus far has been enthusiastic with all five 60 meter channels buzzing with activity. Sideband operators in particular have welcomed the 3 dB power boost. Many have reported substantially improved range, especially in noisy conditions. Sideband DX activity on 5403.5 (Channel 5) has increased significantly.

CW and PSK31 operators are making good use of the new privileges as well, but are reminded that their transmissions must take place on the channel center frequencies as specified by the FCC:

Channel 1: 5332.0 kHz

Channel 2: 5348.0 kHz

Channel 3: 5358.5 kHz

Channel 4: 5373.0 kHz

Channel 5: 5405.0 kHz

"CW operators seem to have little problem figuring how where they need to transmit, but some PSK31 operators are reading the text of the FCC Report and Order and coming away a bit confused," said Dan Henderson, N1ND, ARRL Regulatory Information Manager. "The R&O states, 'We adopt a modified instruction for PSK31 channel use to correct an error introduced in the NPRM. To

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## TAPR Opens "Interest List" for Hermes SDR

Tucson Amateur Packet Radio (TAPR) announces the opening of the "interest list" for the openHPSDR Hermes single-board Software Defined Radio. The Hermes interest list is used by TAPR to determine the number of Hermes boards to manufacture in the pending initial production run this spring.

Hermes is a long-awaited addition to the openHPSDR project lineup, advancing through four prototypes while evolving from a USB-based to an Ethernet-based

transceiver in about two years. Hermes is a Direct-Down Conversion receiver, a Direct-Up-Conversion 500 mW transmitter and a gigabit Ethernet interface all on one board. Also on board is an RF-quiet switch-mode power supply, which allows Hermes to run from a single 13.8 Vdc source.

More information can be found on the Hermes Wiki. Amateurs can add their names to the interest list here (look under the Projects – TAPR-HPSDR tab after logging in). – ARRL Letter, 03/19/2012 – S

## DXCC Cont.

the staff as they matched applications. Frequently, there were hundreds of applications on both the paper application side and on the LoTW side, waiting for their “hybrid match” to arrive, delaying processing and setting the whole operation back.

For applications received on April 2, 2012 and after, we are changing the fee structure for several reasons:

Promoting more frequent applications

Removing the “hybrid application” problem

Simplifying the price structure for DXCC

Raising the rates slightly to help offset ARRL’s increased costs

Improving customer service

The rates for DXCC have not changed since 2003. While the rates are going up for some single applications, for those who continue to submit multiple applications each year, the costs will be less. Accompanying the end of the “hybrid application” is a lower per-QSO fee for using credits in LoTW and the addition of a small application fee. “We want participants to use LoTW as often as they can and like” explained Membership and Volunteer Programs Department Manager Dave Patton, NN1N. “LoTW applications are easier for everyone to process and remain the ‘way of the future’ to participate in awards programs. The costs of using LoTW are far less than traditional QSLing, when one considers the

costs of obtaining QSLs which then need to be stored, recorded and carried to a card checker or sent to HQ.” As in the past, US participants must be ARRL members to receive a DXCC award. See the link below for an explanation of the new fees.

As indicated earlier, ARRL HQ will very soon launch an Online DXCC Application. This new tool will allow the client to supply the data from traditional paper QSLs in a digital form, so that DXCC staff will not have to perform the data entry.

The way the Online Application works is that the participant can select the cards that he or she would like to have checked by a card checker and, at his or her convenience, type that data into a form (which can be saved and retrieved at any time until submitted) and make an application for DXCC. When the application is finished, the participant will be able to print the list of cards and take the list and the cards (in the same order that they are entered into the form) to a card checker who will check the cards, note any changes and send the form to ARRL HQ. The card checker’s job is exactly the same as before, except he or she does not need to collect a payment (unless the participant has worked that out with the card checker), as the client can pay online. At ARRL HQ, DXCC staff will be able to access the file submitted by the client, quickly make any changes noted by the card checker and process the ap-

plication. The Online DXCC Application will have rates that are half those of a traditional paper QSL application that is sent to ARRL HQ.

On and after April 2, 2012, here is how the DXCC fee system will change:

\* No more hybrid applications.

Each DXCC application -- be it paper QSLs, LoTW or Online DXCC -- will be considered separate applications with separate application fees.

\* There are no limits on the number of applications that can be submitted. There will be no more surcharges added to the second or subsequent applications.

\* A traditional, paper QSL application will have an application fee of \$15 for ARRL members, and \$25 for non-members. These applications will be allowed to include up to 101 QSOs. Additional QSOs in this sort of application will continue to cost 15 cents each.

\* A DXCC application submitted using LoTW will have an application fee of \$5 for ARRL members and \$10 for non-members. There are no limits on the number of QSOs that can be included as part of a LoTW application. Each QSO used in LoTW for an award will cost 12 cents, down from a minimum of 15 cents in 2011. We will no longer sell LoTW “credits” in bulk. If you have credits stored, you will still be able to use them.

\* DXCC staff will not mail any paperwork for LoTW applications

*(Continued on page 5)*

**DXCC** Cont.

(credit matrix or application summary), as all application information will be available online in the LoTW User account.

\* An Online DXCC Application will have an application fee of \$7.50 for ARRL members and \$12.50 for non-members and will be allowed to include up to 101 QSOs. Additional QSOs will cost 8 cents. This application is primarily intended to be used in conjunction with field checkers, but can be used by applicants who do not have access to a card checker and

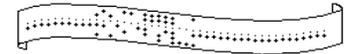
*(Continued on page 6)*

**60 M** Cont.

have a PSK31 signal transmitted on the center frequency, the control operator should not set the carrier frequency to the center frequency but should instead set the carrier frequency 1.5 kHz below the center frequency (i.e., the same as for phone and data emissions).'

"The word 'carrier' in this context means the suppressed carrier frequency of a transceiver when operated in the USB mode, but some have taken it to mean the PSK31 signal itself. They read this text and come to the conclusion that the PSK31 signal should be 1.5 kHz below the channel center. They are mistaken. The PSK31 signal must be in the center of the channel."

Hams are advised to carefully check not only their PSK31 software, but also their transceivers to make sure the radios are not shift-

**RYRYRYRY...**

DE KA7TTY

I'm giving up my space this month for a full newsletter.

ing PSK31 signal frequencies during digital operation. The same is true for CW operators who may be using transceivers that have an automatic CW offset when operating in that mode.

Henderson notes that a few PSK31 operators appear to have missed the injunction to transmit only one signal per channel. "We've seen some guys deliberately starting conversations above or below the center frequency when the center frequency is already occupied with another PSK31 QSO or a CW transmission," Henderson said. "Not only is this in violation of the requirement to be at the channel center frequency, it also violates the restriction that mandates only one signal per channel. If you want to operate but you hear someone already using the channel, you have to try a different channel or check back later. Remember, we have only one operating frequency on each channel. This is not a situation where you can squeeze multiple signals within the channel based on the belief that it is okay because a PSK signal is so narrow."

Some ARRL Official Observers have reported the use of Minimum-Shift Keying RTTY, Contestia and other digital modes on 60 meters. "By a strict reading of the R&O some of these transmissions may not be in technical violation of FCC rules, but they not in line

with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) request," Henderson said. "The NTIA administers these frequencies, not the FCC, so their request that digital enthusiasts restrict themselves to PSK31 and PACTOR III is a prevailing guideline."

"The confusion arises because many amateurs mistakenly believe that the FCC controls all of the radio spectrum in the US. That is incorrect. The NTIA controls frequencies that are allocated to governmental users, including FEMA, DHS, and the military. The five channels on the 60-meter band are under the direction of the NTIA. The FCC has worked with the NTIA to, in essence, 'negotiate' a secondary allocation for amateurs on that band. Amateurs need to keep in mind that the NTIA is the body that will either support the expansion of our privileges at some future date, or request that the FCC pull the plug on 60 meter Amateur Radio activity entirely. The NTIA is most definitely listening and non-compliant behavior puts our use of the band in jeopardy. Fortunately, instances of non-compliance appear to be isolated."

To date there have been no reports of PACTOR III activity on 60 meters. PACTOR III is restricted to live keyboard-to-keyboard use only. - ARRL Letter, 03/12/2012 - 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:

**SQUAKBOX Editor**  
**John MacDuff, KA7TTY**  
 620 S.E. Bush St.  
 Issaquah, WA 98027-3909

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

The IARC is a nonprofit organization registered in the State of Washington and is affiliated with the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). Visit our WEB page at: <http://www.w7bi.com>

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.

Original material may be quoted without prior permission provided ISSAQUAH ARC SQUAKBOX is credited.

## - Coming Events -

- **April 4, 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.
- **April 14, 2012** - Yakima Hamfest. Yakima, Washington. Selah Civic Center, 216 South 1st Street, Selah, WA. For information, contact Lindsay Kooser (509)965-6612 [n7rhw@arrl.net](mailto:n7rhw@arrl.net) . <http://w7aq.org/>
- **April 14, 2012** - Communications Academy. Seattle, WA. <http://www.commacademy.org>
- **April 20-22, 2012** - Idaho State Convention. Boise, ID, Voice of Idaho ARC. Info, Lynn Rasmussen , W7RAZ, (208) 550-7710, [w7raz24@gmail.com](mailto:w7raz24@gmail.com) . <http://www.idahostateconvention.com/>
- **April 23, 2012** - Issaquah Communications Support Team meeting, Police Station, Issaquah, talk-in 146.56 MHz at 6:45 PM, Meeting at 7:00 PM.

## DXCC Cont.

are willing to ship cards to ARRL HQ.

\* Certificates will still cost \$14 delivered in the USA, and \$16.50 delivered outside the USA. Pins will continue to cost \$7 delivered anywhere.

\* The fee for an initial DXCC award will now be the same as for any DXCC application.

\* The free DXCC Yearbook that was sent to ARRL members will now be made available electronically, and it will appear in an edi-

tion of Digital QST. For those who want a League-printed Yearbook, it will still be available at a modest cost. - ARRL Letter, 03/15/2012 - S

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NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, Apr. 4, 2012 - 7:30 PM

Talk-in frequency: 146.56 MHz

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FIRST CLASS POSTAGE ---  
 TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

Issaquah Amateur Radio Club  
 P. O. Box 2171  
 Issaquah, WA 98027-0097

## Issaquah Amateur Radio Club Minutes of the February 1, 2012 meeting

\*The meeting was called to order by Vice-President Barry Hansen K7BWH in the absence of our President.

\* After introductions, there were sixteen members and guests present

\* The minutes of the previous meeting were approved

\* Treasurer reported \$2104.70 in the checking account, with the check to the senior center still outstanding. Money from dues collected will be deposited this month.

\*Treasurer reported a note with the bank statement indicated Chase Bank will start charging a monthly fee for checking accounts whose balances drop below newly stated minimums. We might fall into that category later in the year. Rod will check with the bank for clarification as to our account status.

\* There was some discussion about the upcoming mike and key Swap Meet in Puyallup on March 10. (Note: IARC has two tables paid for)

\*Barry (now K7BWH) has agreed to be Chairman of the IARC Field Day this year. ( Rod will submit the application for the use of the Sunny Hills Elementary School location)

\*Barry brought donuts for his birthday meeting.

Meeting was adjourned prior, for a short social time.

Paul Lemson W9PL presented a well documented program on his experience with Four-Square antennas.

Submitted by IARC Sec/Treasurer Rod Johnson