



Watts News



Monthly Newsletter of the
Olympia Amateur Radio Society
P.O. Box 2861, Olympia, WA 98507

August 2006
email: oars@comcast.net

Edited by KB6LE (George Lanning) 360-866-2185
website: <http://olyham.org>



From the
Oval Shack

It's Saturday morning and I've just checked into the Washington State Emergency Net on 3985 KHz, where I sign in as "K17SS, SGL" — shorthand for "State Government Liaison," a job I took a number of years ago mostly be-

cause I work on the state capitol campus and thought I might be able to do our ranks some good. Occasionally, perhaps, I believe I've helped, but my work has interfered with the lobbying effort this job really calls for. Next year I'll retire and then throw a lot more energy in this direction. Meanwhile, if you'd like to help with the liaison task and have some free time and access to the capitol, please get in touch. We need to be developing a cadre of enthusiastic lobbyists, and strategizing how we press aggressively for real progress in antenna-height and restriction legislation, uniform ARES/RACES ID cards and requirements, credentials recognized state-wide, and other legislation. I note, for example, that New Mexico is spending half a million state dollars to build a network of ham radio repeaters. While I might not advocate the state's involvement in ham frequencies such owner-

ship might represent or the issues therein, the point is that other states have recognized and institutionalized our hobby as more valuable than "just a hobby" and I'd like similar recognition.

Today I'm using a new antenna, a ZEPP, which is about 100 feet of wire with some ladder line in the middle, fed by coax with an improvised balun. It's only about 25 feet up. Either conditions are great or the new antenna really works; I haven't heard such wonderful signals on the bands for a long time!

Clearly this is the time to be putting up new antennas! We've crossed the bottom trough of sunspot lows and are on our way toward, hopefully, propagation conditions like what I experienced from about 1957 through 1993. In those years a pea-shooter station with a light-bulb antenna could make contacts world-wide. I was a "rock-bound" Novice, then a "Conditional-class" licensee, and even with my 75 watt transmitter and kid-small budget I managed many, many very satisfying QSOs. You who haven't lived through a sunspot maximum don't know yet the thrill of really good band conditions! But you will! If you don't have a General license, get the book. Call me if you've got questions! Call Steve WC7I if my answers don't make sense — call SOMEONE, just do it!

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After this morning's net I made contact with Dick at special event station N7H (not a mis-type, it really is N7H), at the North-head lighthouse at the mouth of the Columbia river out on the coast. The challenge of contacting all the country's light-houses when they're activated is a great one. Give it a shot — if you get hooked, you'll be traveling to lighthouses to bring them on-the-air yourself. What a grand way to enjoy two hobbies at once — sightseeing and ham radio!

QST: Saturday August 19th, beginning at 3:30, the Olympia Amateur Radio Society will hold a potluck at Burfoot park. At the monthly OARS meeting where we planned the event, we divvied up the responsibilities for food. I ended up bringing pop. Sharon N7SSD has the list if you've forgotten what you committed yourself to bring, or missed the meeting and would like to come. Or just show up with something! Everyone, OARS member or not, is invited. We're going to put a station on-the-air for the event. We've got an antenna committee, and a rig committee, and THIS WILL BE FUN!

Speaking of stations, if you didn't make Field Day you really missed something! Steve and Dan set up a 5-ELEMENT eighty meter beam, and a 3-ELEMENT forty meter beam, and of course we had the OARS tower-trailer with the A3S 20-15-10 tri-bander on it. Conditions weren't any good on ten and fifteen, or much good on twenty, but forty and eighty were hopping, and the beams really made operating enjoyable. We had the usual pot

License Exam Sessions
 6:00 pm before each monthly OARS meeting
 Walk-ins allowed
 To apply contact Klaus Neubert 753-1493
oars-ve@comcast.net

luck at 6 p.m., and boy, was the food great! After a great event, as we were taking the systems apart, we measured the antenna gains. The eighty meter beam gave us a measured 6 db of gain, making our 100-watt station sound like 400, and the forty meter beam had over three, effectively doubling the output. Wow! That really helped!

The Lakefair Parade was guided by KA4VVA Tom, made great use of many OARS hams, and when all was said and done, we hams really rose to the occasion and produced an exceptional event! Thanks very much to all of you who helped make it happen. What a great way to highlight ham radio's power and usefulness.

Our club is helping put a 6-meter repeater on Capitol Peak! Most of the gear is already in hand; the club voted at the last meeting to help purchase the remaining items needed to make the system operable and "legal." Stay tuned.

Sometimes, I must confess, I just don't get it together. Seems like my work responsibilities leave me too worn to do what's needed to lead this club properly — like, write this report in a timely manner, or help orchestrate an effective program for our monthly meetings. To help fix that I just acquired a new laptop, a tool I've wanted for a long time. Now I'll be able to write these missives more effectively. I was using an old Linux machine and the screen wasn't too good, so I kind of dreaded the task. I do need help, however. Let me know what you can do, especially in making club meetings into really exciting endeavors. I think effective meetings make or break an organization — let's make ours really shine! What do you want to see or hear about at club meetings?

All the best for now! --73! — Lee, K17SS



OARS OFFICERS FOR 2006

President	Lee Chambers	K17SS	866-0236
Vice President	Sharon Kinder	N7SSD	943-6187
Secretary	Tom Bohon	KE7EJJ	786-4211
Treasurer	Ed Fitzgerald	N7WW	491-2289
Member at Large	Larry Watkinson	KC7CKO	943-4352

KEY CONTACTS

RFI Committee	Ghery Pettit	N6TPT	412-1340
Repeater Committee	Larry Watkinson	KC7CKO	943-4352
Club License Trustee	Duane Braford	WB7ROZ	412-1902
Information Net	Duane Braford	WB7ROZ	412-1902
ARES Net	Tom Dennis	KA4VVA	786-5500
OLY Packet Node	Larry Ikenberry	K7APT	943-7208
	Rick Taylor	K7CAH	943-6793
Packet BBS	George Lanning	KB6LE	866-2185
Newsletter	George Lanning	KB6LE	866-2185
OARS Website	George Lanning	KB6LE	866-2185
Classes	Lee Chambers	K17SS	866-0236
License Exams	Klaus Neubert	AC7MG	753-1493
Equip. Custodian	Larry Watkinson	KC7CKO	943-4352

REPEATERS: 147.36 MHz 224.46 MHz 441.40 MHz

PACKET: 145.07 MHz OLY Node 40 BBS

Membership is open to all interested radio amateurs.
 Yearly dues are: \$20 for individual, \$25 for family.

Free Ham Gear

FREE used coax etc. Two 37' Belden coils of best RG-8U plus a number of other items. Just the thing for new or old hams needing to stock up. Please take entire package.

Jack Barber W1PRT, Tel. 438-5921.

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Care Package Received

Dan,

The packages have arrived!!! THANK-YOU! The guys over here are very appreciative of everything. I had plenty of help opening the boxes! :-)

The female articles did present a problem at first. We don't have any females in our work center/base. I had to run an errand to Camp Victory today so I took the female items with me. I ran into a Navy buddy while at Al Faw Palace (HQ building) and offered him a ladies care kit in jest. We laughed and then he said "wait a minute!" He had just been on a trip to Mosul with an Air Force officer and said they were just "dumped" by their Army driver and left to fend for themselves. A really kind National Guard Sergeant — female type — helped them get a place to stay and assisted them with their stay. This gal was complaining about the conditions up there right now in Mosul — they couldn't even buy basic stuff like soap. On top of this they just got extended for another 4 months in country so their morale was kind of low.

My buddy and his Air Force friend will be shipping the boxes up to this Sergeant for distribution to the ladies in Mosul. You can be assured that they'll be saying that their prayers have been answered when those boxes arrive!

You folks are awesome! Thanks for all your support.

73, Ed K6EKB

— Dan Crane, KB7DFL

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Hams, Monitoring Enthusiasts Invited to Aid Wildlife Researchers

Wildlife researchers are asking radio amateurs and VHF monitoring enthusiasts to help listen for radio tag signals from migrating birds. A non-profit organization in New Mexico wants to find the wintering grounds of the burrowing owl, which summers in the grasslands of Kirtland Air Force Base.

"Twenty-eight of the birds have been fitted with pulsing radio-tags near 172 MHz, and attempts will be made to track them by aircraft to see if they go east toward Texas, west to California, or south to Mexico," says ARRL Amateur Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) Coordinator Joe Moell, K0OV. "It's likely that aircraft will lose contact with most of the owls, so volunteers throughout southwestern states and northern Mexico are being asked to listen for them."

Moell said July 25 that the birds "will start moving any day now." Meanwhile, researchers at two Toronto universities are radiotagging 20 young purple martins at a breeding colony in Edinboro, Pennsylvania.

"These beautiful birds are expected to start flying south in mid-August, probably to winter grounds in South America," Moell says. "Hams in southern states from Texas through Florida are asked to be listening and possibly detect the flyovers."

He says those living in the migration zones and can receive 172 MHz signals can help. "If you have radio-direction finding equipment for VHF, so much the better," he adds.

Moell's "Homing In web site <http://www.homingin.com> has much more information on these projects. The site includes frequencies and equipment suggestions as well as a descriptions of the unique characteristics of wildlife tags to help listeners distinguish them from other signals they may encounter at 172 MHz. The site also tells how to join the BIOTRACKERS mailing list for the latest updates and discussions of wildlife-tracking topics.

— from the ARRL Letter

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Treasurer's Report

As of 7/31/06

GENERAL FUND (checking account)

Previous balance	\$ 2,878.18
Income	60.60
Expenses	396.49
Ending balance	2,542.29

REPEATER / PACKET FUND (savings account)

Previous balance	\$ 995.60
Income	0.00
Expenses	0.00
Ending balance	995.60

— Ed Fitzgerald, N7WW, Treasurer

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Eye Contact

The woman taking my order at a fast food restaurant was about 25. She was attractive and had a bubbly personality and a warm smile. Even though I'm 45, I felt there was chemistry between us. Before I walked away from the counter to sit down, we made eye contact and again exchanged smiles.

Eating my burger, I glanced at my receipt. It turned out she had given me the senior citizen discount.

— from David, ZL3AI, via packet

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Radio

The wireless music box has no imaginable commercial value. Who would pay for a message sent to nobody in particular?

— David Sarnoff's associates in the 1920s

Message to OARS

The following was received via email to the OARS web site:

Hello,

My name is Julie and I live Olympia. I'm interested in becoming a ham operator and need help in determining if the reasons are sound. I travel to southern Florida on a regular basis to visit a family member who lives alone. She has a disability.

I have promised her that should a hurricane come her direction I would travel down there to ride it out with her in an appropriate facility. I have done this twice before over the last 3 years. Typically we lose power and phone. Typically the cell phone circuits if working are jammed. I would like to have a ham license so that I may keep in touch with family members here in Olympia as well as elsewhere in the states. I know that phone patches are possible. But I would also be in a position to offer emergency radio service to people at the location I would be at.

Most of the people at the location will be age 65 and older. I'm pretty mechanically adept and learn quickly.

What do I need to do to achieve this? I know I'll have to earn a ham license and I'll have to purchase a radio. I want the radio to be as compact as possible but still have the power to reach out during and after a major storm. Is there a radio like this?

Also how long to earn a license?

Your advise and help are greatly appreciated.

Julie Bennett

jbennett@mcleodusa.net

Steve Ward, WC7I, has responded to Julie's email at some length. If anyone else would care to offer her advice or encouragement, I'm sure it would be appreciated also.

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Pacific Northwest VHF+ Conference

VHF and above activity encompasses more than FM repeaters and handhelds. Find out how much more at the Pacific Northwest VHF+ Conference to be held in Bellingham, Washington, on the weekend of September 29-October 1. Learn about long-haul six-meter and two-meter propagation, contesting, microwave activity and a whole bunch more.

The conference is sponsored by the Pacific Northwest VHF Society and will be held at the Hampton Inn. You do not have to be a member of the society to attend the conference; all are welcome. The Hampton Inn is also offering special room rates for conference attendees.

Meet some of the Pacific Northwest's top VHF+ operators and learn more about this fascinating aspect of amateur radio. Find out more about both the conference and the sponsoring organization at www.pnwhfs.org.

While the formal conference presentations are scheduled for Saturday, September 30, there are several fun activities scheduled on Friday afternoon and evening, and on Saturday evening. From 4:00 to 5:30 pm on Friday, registered conference participants can take a free guided tour of the world-class Museum of Radio and Electricity in Bellingham. You won't believe your eyes! On Friday evening, there will be a no-host "Pizza Bash" at Izzy's Pizza Bar & Classic Buffet Restaurant beginning at 6:00 pm. There will be plenty of opportunity to "talk shop," swap stories and make new friends. Bring the family too.

After the formal conference activities conclude on Saturday afternoon, there will be a door prize drawing ("grand prize" is a brand new Icom IC-910H multimode VHF/UHF transceiver) and an informal "tailgate swap meet." Wrapping up the Saturday activity will be a no-host dinner at Mykonos Greek Restaurant across the street from the Hampton Inn. Those who stay over until Sunday morning can meet in the hotel lobby for a "Farewell Breakfast." See you in Bellingham!

— Lynn, N7CFO

OARS Net check-ins

The following stations checked in on the OARS General Information Net one or more times on the dates of July 11 or 18:

AA7YD	AB7PS	AC7PT	K7GUH
K7MBB	K7TAG	K7VRE	KB7DFL
KB7UEN	KC7FEE	KC7LA	KD7AVI
KD7TQW	KE7CG	KE7EJ	KI4JFZ
KI4JXZ	KI7SS	N5MUR	N7IVM
N7WK	NX6W	W3OZ	W7HRY
WB7ROZ	WC7I		

Net control stations reporting for the month were KB7DFL and WC7I. Thank you for your support!!

The net meets at 7:30 every Tuesday evening on the 3 linked OARS repeaters: 147.36, 224.46, and 441.40 MHz. All Hams are invited to check in.

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Salmon Run

Please join us in one of the premier QSO parties of the year. The Western Washington DX Club is proud to once again sponsor this long-standing tradition of the **Salmon Run**.

The **Salmon Run QP** is fun and a challenge to big guns, little pistols and the new hams to get in and make some qso's. **DX, all States and Provinces** are encouraged to participate.

There are nice prizes, plaques and certificates. DX, County Expeditions, Out of State, In State, Rovers and Club competitions are highly regarded. Many rare Washington counties are put on the map during this exciting weekend.

See the rules at **WWDXC**
<http://www.wwdxc.org/salmonrun/>

"I can taste that smoked Salmon already!"

See you for some fun contesting or just a few q's.
Sept 16-17 2006.

Harry, K7LAZ, Member WWDXC Salmon Run
Committee

— ... —

First ARRL Online Auction Planned for October

The ARRL may be giving eBay and the other auction sites a little competition in the Amateur Radio arena this fall when the first ARRL Online Auction gets under way. Auction proceeds will help to support the League's educational services and programs. The event now is in the planning stages, says ARRL Business Services Manager Deb Jahnke, K1DAJ.

"We will soon embark on an exciting new venture," Jahnke said in providing the broad strokes of the online auction to ARRL Headquarters staff members. Jahnke and her Business Services team will organize and manage the event, which is planned for late October — the exact dates haven't been set yet — and she promises it will be lots of fun. "This will not be just another boring auction, because we plan to include many unique and special items related to Amateur Radio," she said. "We are hoping to offer items that will interest our audience, ranging from DXpedition vacation rentals to restored Collins 75A4s." Jahnke says this inaugural online auction will be limited to 100 items.

The auction will be open to all — ARRL members and otherwise. Bidders just need online access to take part. "With an online auction, we can reach potential bidders across the nation and around the world," Jahnke pointed out.

Jahnke says she anticipates that the online auction will be open for about two weeks, and participants will need to register in advance. At this stage, she says, the auction planners are seeking additional ideas but no auction booty as yet. Contact Jahnke via e-mail djahnke@arrl.org.

— from the ARRL Letter

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Good Question

On the first day of school, the kindergarten teacher said, "If anyone has to go to the bathroom, hold up two fingers." A little voice from the back of the room asked, "How will that help?"

— ... —

Massive CubeSat launch fails

An attempt to launch 15 CubeSats from 11 universities and one private company failed July 26. Fourteen of the CubeSats, now lost, carried Amateur Radio transmit-only payloads.

The Dnepr-1LV rocket lifted off from Russia's Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan at 1943 UTC on July 26. Space Launch Report cites payload users as reporting that the mission went awry sometime after first-stage separation. An Interfax report said an emergency shutdown of the rocket's main engine initiated 86 seconds after launch, shortly before the first stage would have completed its burn. Gazeta.kz reported the vehicle fell to Earth almost 190 km from the launch site.

Originally set for June 28, the launch had been postponed until July 26. The CubeSat project was a collaboration between California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo and Stanford University's Space Systems Development Laboratory. All of the CubeSats were designed and built by students at various universities in the US and elsewhere in the world.

Thirteen of the satellites were to have downlinks in the Amateur Radio satellite allocation between 435 and 438 MHz, and one was to operate on 145.980 MHz. None of the spacecraft carried a transponder. Transmitter power outputs ranged from 10 mW to 2 W.

According to Satellite Launch Report, the original Dnepr launcher was replaced by a different one in June after a problem was detected in the original vehicle's digital flight control system. The Dnepr vehicle is a repurposed SS-18 "Satan" three-stage intercontinental ballistic missile.

— ARRL Bulletin ARLS005

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No Regular OARS Meeting in August

Remember, the picnic at Burfoot Park on August 19th replaces the regular OARS meeting for the month.

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September 2006

OARS Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
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3 All-Asian DX Contest Phone IARU Region 1 Field Day SSB	4	5 7:00 PM ARES Net 7:30 PM OARS Net Slow-Speed CW Net 3.68 MHz	6	7	8 <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px; color: red;"> Deadline for Watts News Inputs </div> G3ZQS Memorial Straight Key Contest	9 ARRL VHF QSO Party G3ZQS Memorial Straight Key Contest																																																																																				
10 ARRL VHF QSO Party G3ZQS Memorial Straight Key Contest N American Sprint CW	11 ARRL VHF QSO Party	12 7:00 PM ARES Net 7:30 PM OARS Net Slow-Speed CW Net 3.68 MHz <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px; text-align: center;"> YLRL Howdy Days CW/SSB </div>	13 9:00 PM K6YR West Coast Qualifying Run	14	15 Get Your Feet Wet Weekend CW	16 <small>ARRL 10 GHz and Up Contest ARRL EME Contest Get Your Feet Wet Weekend CW QCWA Fall QSO Party Phone/CW/ Digital Scandinavian Activity Contest CW</small> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px;"> WA State Saamon Run </div>																																																																																				
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24 Classic Exchange SSB CQ WW RTTY DX Contest Scandinavian Activity Contest SSB	25 Classic Exchange SSB Fall QRP Homebrewer Sprint CW/PSK31	26 7:00 PM ARES Net 7:30 PM OARS Net Slow-Speed CW Net 3.68 MHz	27 <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px; color: green;"> 7:00 PM OARS Meeting at South Bay Fire Station </div>	28	29 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px;"> PNW VHF+ Confer- ence in Bellingham </div>	30 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px;"> PNW VHF+ Conferen- ce in Bellingham </div> TOEC WW Grid Contes- t CW																																																																																				

OARS Membership Application

" New Date _____
" Renewal ARRL member ? _____
Call Sign _____ License class _____
Name _____
Address _____
City, St. _____ ZIP _____
Home phone _____
Day phone _____
Email _____

Annual Dues: \$20 (\$25 family) — first year prorated by number of months.

If family membership, please attach above information for each family member.

Send to: OARS
PO Box 2861
Olympia, WA 98507

OARS Potluck Picnic at Burfoot Park

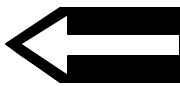
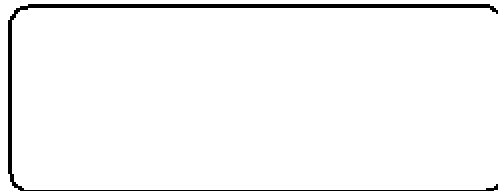
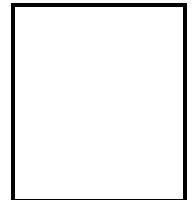
Saturday, August 19th, 3:30 p.m.

(No regular meeting in August)

An Invitation

If you are a Ham who has received this newsletter, but are not yet a member of OARS, you are cordially invited to join us. Submit the membership application at the left to OARS at PO Box 2861, Olympia WA 98507, or bring it to an OARS meeting and see Treasurer Ed Fitzgerald.

OARS
PO BOX 2861
OLYMPIA WA 98507



If the date on your address label is marked in red, it is time to renew!