



Watts News



Monthly Newsletter of the
Olympia Amateur Radio Society
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From the
Oval Shack

President's Message

Happy New Year Everyone.

I hope you all had enjoyable Christmas and New Year's celebrations. I also hope everyone had a chance to enjoy the snow

we had without any building, automotive, or radio equipment damage. I did have a chance to call for help after a motor vehicle accident. I was driving some relatives to Bellingham the day after Christmas when a small pickup hit the left, then the right side guardrails. I managed to get stopped some distance ahead and called 911 on my cell phone. I realize this is not particularly a Ham Radio story, but then I did use the equipment I had available to get help.

I received word last month that membership in the Capitol Peak Repeater is down and they need members. I believe the repeater is a valuable tool in emergency communications and invite everyone to consider supporting it. I was a member several years ago but allowed my membership to lapse primarily because I am not able to hit it from my house. I live fairly close to it by the map but unfortunately the hill between myself and the repeater prevents me from hitting it. I am considering

renewing my membership for the service it provides to the community.

In the interest of emergency communication, I also encourage everyone to check out their equipment. In addition to the basic equipment, please check out your backup power supplies, and any other equipment you may have so that you will know it will perform when you need it.

One last note — I screwed up in last month's greeting. I congratulated Lee, KI7SS, concerning the class he taught in Centralia. Lee reminded me after the newsletter went out that Steve [WC7I] helped teach the class. I do apologize for neglecting to mention you Steve, so please forgive me. You may think I deliberately forgot you but I assure you it was accidental.

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I will see everyone at the January OARS meeting at the Red Cross building on the third Wednesday [January 21] at 1900.

— 73, Klaus, AC7MG

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Reminder

2009 OARS dues are now payable.

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One mode down, two to go

With the advent of the ARRL's Triple Play Award <http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2008/12/05/10490/>, on-air participation has reached a level of excitement not seen in recent years. This new, exciting award is available to all amateurs who confirm contacts with each of the 50 states using three modes for each state: CW, phone and RTTY/digital. All 150 contacts must be made on or after the January 1, 2009 and must be confirmed via Logbook of The World (LoTW) <http://www.arrl.org/lotw/>. All bands — with the exception of 60 meters — may be used in pursuit of the Triple Play Award.

The ARRL RTTY Round Up, held January 3-4, was one of the first organized events eligible for the award. "If the amount of activity in the 2009 ARRL RTTY Round Up is any indicator, the Triple Play is off to a fantastic start," said ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X. "The RTTY Roundup was the first contest to take place since the award's inception. It ended only a few days ago, and we already have received almost 1100 logs. There's been a lot of chatter on the RTTY e-mail reflectors about getting the Triple Play completed, and I personally have seen numerous stations calling 'CQ Triple Play' on PSK31 since the first of the year. People already have their 'needed list' programmed into their PSK31 macros. There is no question that the new Triple

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

Play award is causing a lot of buzz in the digital community. I'm happy that we have been able to come up with a new award that so many people are interested in right off the bat."

According to Norm Fusaro, W3IZ, Assistant Manager for the Membership and Volunteer Programs Department, hundreds of new LoTW certificates have been processed each day since the first of the year. "We are excited to see such an upswing in LoTW participation," he said. "I know what a thrill it can be to upload my logs to LoTW right after a contest and see the QSOs appear almost instantaneously. That's the magic of Logbook of The World."

Those who participated in the RTTY Round Up were ecstatic over how easy it was to use LoTW. Jose Castillo, N1BAA, of Amherst, Massachusetts, said, "Just amazing! Just under 24 hours since I uploaded my ARRL RTTY Round Up log and now I have Worked All States confirmed via LoTW [from just the RTTY Round Up]. Gotta love LoTW!" Bob Garceau, W1EQ, of Putnam, Connecticut agreed: "I'm impressed with the response to my uploaded log to LoTW. I uploaded 728 QSOs and 50 hours after the contest closed, I have 336 QSLs. That's a 46 percent response. Impressive! I think that someone will get #1 Triple Play by the end of January."

Don't be too upset if you wanted to work one of the digital modes and didn't participate in the RTTY Round Up — other digital modes, such as PSK31 and Hellschreiber are also eligible for the digital portion of the award. The first ever 24 hour Hellschreiber sprint takes place January 17. According to the Feld Hell Club's web site, all modes of Hell on any band (with the exception of 17, 30 and 60 meters) are allowed in the sprint <http://sites.google.com/site/feldhellclub/Home/contests>. If you like operating digital modes and you missed the RTTY Round Up, why not give the Feld Hell sprint a try? According to QST Editor and digital guru Steve Ford, WB8IMY, free sound card software for Hellschreiber, such as Fldigi

OARS OFFICERS FOR 2009

President	Klaus Neubert	AC7MG	753-1493
Vice President	Ken Julian	K7VOX	951-6352
Secretary	Paul Taylor	KC7LA	866-0683
Treasurer	Ed Fitzgerald	N7WW	491-2289
Member at Large	Mark Dempsey	KE7JTU	943-0165

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 Bohon	KE7EJJ	456-6260
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	KI7SS	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

<http://www.w1hkj.com/Fldigi.html>, MultiPSK (for PCs) http://f6cte.free.fr/index_anglais.htm and cocoaModem (for Macintosh) <http://homepage.mac.com/chen/w7ay/cocoaMode> m/ can be found online.

For SSB and CW aficionados, the North American QSO Parties (NAQP) start January 10: The CW portion is 1800 UTC January 10-0600 UTC January 11, and the phone portion is 1800 UTC January 17-0600 UTC January 18 (the NAQP RTTY Contest is 1800 UTC February 28-0600 UTC March 1). Of course, you don't have to participate in a contest to chase the Triple Play Award. As long as you submit your logs to Logbook of The World, you're good! LoTW is set up to calculate your Triple Play QSOs separately from your other QSOs.

ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, warned that it can be "addictive" once you begin making your contacts for the Triple Play Award, and that "there are many possible variations on the theme. You can try to be the first (or at least the first on your block) or you can set your own pace. Think it's too easy? Limit yourself to QRP while operating your favorite mode (or all three). Maybe you prefer to be the quarry; it will quickly emerge which states are the most difficult to find, offering opportunities to earn the gratitude of your mates by activating the ones you can get to with your portable or mobile rig."

So get on the air, make contacts and submit them via Logbook of The World. Before you know it, you'll have something new to hang up on your shack wall.

— from the ARRL Letter

— ... —

Cold Cream

Little Johnny watched, fascinated, as his mother smoothed cold cream on her face. "Why do you do that, mommy?" he asked. "To make myself beautiful," said his mother, who then began removing the cream with a tissue.

"What's the matter?" asked Little Johnny. "Giving up?"

— from *ajokeaday* via Internet

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Restrictive local zoning ordinance proposed as court date in California antenna case nears

As his February 2009 court date approaches, Alec Zubarau, WB6X, of Palmdale, California, gets ready to battle his town after being ordered to dismantle his previously approved antenna system. The City of Palmdale has widened its opposition to Amateur Radio antennas by proposing an ordinance written to thwart the installation of antenna support structures throughout the city http://www.arrl.org/news/files/Palmdale_Antenna_Ordinance_DRAFT.pdf.

In 2005, Zubarau applied for a building permit to erect an antenna support structure on his property. The City approved his request, and building permit in hand, Zubarau installed a 22 foot tall crank-up tower (with an ultimate height of 55 feet), but did not place an antenna atop the structure. He also installed a 23 foot tall mast on his house, for a total mast height of 43 feet; he installed an inverted-V on the mast. In January 2007, he placed a 4 element 20 meter SteppIR antenna on the crank-up tower, and the neighbors started complaining to the City.

ARRL Southwestern Division Vice Director Marty Woll, N6VI, said that the neighbors' assertions consisted of what he called "the typical complaints: Aesthetic impact, diminution of property values and RF interference. The RFI complaints were general in nature; no direct evidence was shown of actual RFI, but the City's Planning Commission staff took the position that based on anecdotal evidence presented by the homeowners, the transmissions occurring from the antenna are causing interference with electrical equipment in the surrounding neighborhood."

Woll said that after Zubarau installed the SteppIR in 2007, the City of Palmdale, acting on a petition signed by almost 70 of Zubarau's neighbors, voted

to revoke Zubarau's original building permit after he had relied on it in putting up his tower. "In order to gain a continuance, Zubarau told the Planning Commission he would remove the SteppIR, in essence, reverting his antenna configuration back to the way to it was before he installed the antenna" said Len Shaffer, WA6QHD, Zubarau's attorney. "At the next hearing, he was ordered to remove not only the antenna, but the support structure, as well."

The City's planning staff also pointed out that Zubarau's recently erected horizontal array extends three feet into the required 10 foot sideyard setback, and that the active array exceeds thirty feet in height beyond the limit in the ordinance.

"Because Zubarau's permit referred to the support structure as 'an antenna with cage (the base)' and the Planning Commission called it a tower antenna, everyone assumed it was indeed an antenna," Shaffer recalled. "When I pointed out to the Planning Commission that it was nothing more than a support structure and did not radiate, they were surprised. They asked if the support structure functioned as an antenna without the horizontal element. I told them it did not. Judy Skousen, Palmdale's Assistant City Attorney, told the Commission it did not matter — the permit and application was for a tower antenna and that is what it was. It did not matter if the nomenclature was added by city employees rather than Zubarau."

"After exhausting his administrative remedies, Zubarau challenged the action in the courts, aided by Shaffer," Woll said "The court date has been set for early February 2009." Woll continued, saying that the planning staff is placing the burden on Zubarau, saying that he has not submitted a site-specific engineering study showing that the operation or transmission from his house is not interfering with residential uses. The staff also notes that the FCC has failed to resolve RFI complaints in this matter, inferring that the City must act to solve them.

Palmdale Proposes Rewrite of Amateur Radio Antenna Ordinance

Shortly after issuing the permit revocation order, ARRL Southwestern Director Dick Norton, N6AA, said that the City of Palmdale began drafting an amended antenna ordinance that placed severe restrictions on all Amateur Radio antennas. "The draft was released just before Thanksgiving, and a

hearing was scheduled for December 4," Norton said. "Prior to that hearing and at the request of Vice Director Marty Woll, N6VI — who attended the Palmdale Planning Commission meeting along with about a dozen local hams and supporters — ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, wrote a lengthy letter to the City Attorney pointing out numerous flaws in the proposed ordinance and explaining why many of its provisions are void or unenforceable, being pre-empted by federal or state law."

In his letter, Imlay explained to the City that it is without authority to resolve RFI complaints; the jurisdiction is solely that of the FCC, as stated in the Communications Act of 1934, as amended. "The Federal Communications Commission has exclusive jurisdiction over radio frequency interference (RFI) matters, and technical matters specifically," he said.

Imlay pointed out that the "first specific concern in the draft ordinance is the statement that 'an Amateur Radio antenna, the operation of which causes unreasonable interference with electrical equipment in the surrounding neighborhood, is not compatible with that neighborhood.'"

This is "patently false," Imlay said, stating "there is no correlation between the presence of an outdoor Amateur Radio antenna, its height, configuration or placement and radio frequency interference (RFI) to home electronic equipment. As a matter of technical fact, the higher an antenna, the lower the electrical field in the horizontal plane of the home electronic equipment, and the less the likelihood of RFI in that equipment. Furthermore, the 'cause' of RFI is not the power of an Amateur Radio station, or the presence of an antenna, but rather the inability of home electronic equipment to reject unwanted signals. FCC regulations clearly obligate most home electronic equipment to accept any interference from licensed radio services as a condition of the permitted marketing and operation of that equipment."

Furthermore, in a Conference Report from the 97th Congress in 1982, Imlay explained that Congressional report "...is further intended to clarify the reservation of exclusive jurisdiction to the Federal Communications Commission over matters involving RFI. Such matters shall not be regulated by local or state law, nor shall radio transmitting apparatus be subject to local or state regulation as part of any effort to resolve an RFI complaint. The Conferees

believe that radio transmitter operators should not be subject to fines, forfeitures or other liability imposed by any local or state authority as a result of interference appearing in home electronic equipment or systems. Rather, the Conferees intend that regulation of RFI phenomena shall be imposed only by the Commission.”

Saying that the Conference Report went on to clarify “that the exclusive jurisdiction over RFI incidents (including preemption of state and local regulation of such phenomena) lies with the FCC,” Imlay told the City of Palmdale that “Obviously, state or local regulations based on interference from one radio service to another would directly frustrate the intention and goals of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.”

Imlay said that in 1985, the FCC said that the “federal power in the area of radio frequency interference is exclusive; to the extent that any state or local government attempts to regulate in this area, [its] regulations are preempted.” Imlay explained that the FCC concluded that the Federal regulatory scheme is so pervasive that it is reasonable to assume that Congress did not intend to permit states to supplement it.

According to Shaffer, the City of Palmdale does not think antenna support structures are “compatible” with the town’s image: “The Mayor told the Council that while, if a house was built that was not compatible with the neighborhood, they would not bulldoze it to the ground, this is ‘just an antenna,’ and they can get rid of it if they want to,” Shaffer said.

Going to Court

Norton said that the ARRL’s Amateur Radio Legal Defense and Assistance Committee has voted to contribute \$5000 toward the cost of Zubarau’s lawsuit against the City of Palmdale. “More than \$1500 has already been contributed by clubs and their members from throughout the Southwestern Division, and this contribution from the League-managed Antenna Defense Fund will further help defray the expenses of preparing for the February 2009 court date,” Norton said. “Len Shaffer is performing the legal work pro bono, but even just compiling the record to present in court can be costly.”

ARRL Defense Committee Chair Jay Bellows, K0QB, said that although the case has not yet reached the appellate level, “The egregious nature

of Palmdale’s actions — including ordering removal of a previously approved antenna tower — the potential impact on a large number of amateurs and the existence of substantial local financial support from the ham community were significant factors in the Committee’s decision to provide support for this case.”

Bellows said he has participated in nearly 100 tower and antenna matters, from working with local hams and municipalities on tower ordinances to individual tower issues including litigation at the local and appellate level over the past 20 years. “If I’ve learned anything,” he said, “I learned that a simple, clear explanation of who we are, what we do and why the antenna is needed are essential. Even if those steps are perfectly executed, the local authority (in this case, the City of Palmdale) has to be convinced that: 1. Federal law trumps the local zoning interests either generally or in the particular case; 2. The amateur is going to be politely persistent despite opposition from the locality; 3. The cost to the locality in time and treasure will exceed any political benefit in ‘protecting its citizens from the scourge and despoliation of ugly Amateur Radio antennas.’ Still, the single most important factor is that the amateur should always be the guy in the ‘white hat,’ no matter how reprehensible or offensive the actions of the locality or the opposing neighbors.”

Norton went on to say that Woll has met with Palmdale hams and the management of the Palmdale Public Safety Department, who he described as “supportive of hams.” Woll and Keith Hoyt, K6GXO, will meet with Palmdale’s Planning Department and Assistant City Attorney in early January. “The proposed ordinance has been the subject of considerable discussion in Amateur Radio circles,” Norton said. “Local hams, [as well as] Division and National League representatives are devoting considerable time and effort toward resolving the issue.”

— from the ARRL Letter



OARS Net check-ins

No check-in reports were received for December nets.

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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Treasurer's Report

As of 12/31/08

GENERAL FUND (checking account)

Previous balance	\$ 1,493.19
Income	0.33
Expenses	83.91
Ending balance	1,409.61

REPEATER / PACKET FUND (savings account)

Previous balance	\$ 1,018.57
Income	2.60
Expenses	0.00
Ending balance	1,021.17

— Ed Fitzgerald, N7WW, Treasurer

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Disorder in the court

Said to be from actual court transcripts:

What is your date of birth?
July fifteenth.
What year?
Every year.

What gear were you in at the moment of the accident?
Gucci sweatshirt and Reeboks.

So the date of conception (of the baby) was August 8th?

Yes.

And what were you doing at that time?

She had three children, right?

Yes.

How many were boys?

None.

Were there any girls?

How was your first marriage terminated?

By death.

By whose death was it terminated?

Can you describe the individual?

He was about medium height and had a beard.

Was this a male, or a female?

Doctor, how many autopsies have you performed on dead people?

All my autopsies are performed on dead people.

All your responses must be oral, OK? What school did you go to?

Oral.

What was the first thing your husband said to you when he woke up that morning?

He said, "Where am I Cathy?"

And why did that upset you?

My name is Susan.

— from *ajokeaday* via Internet

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The Obituary

A man died and his wife phoned the newspaper to place an obituary. She called the obituary department and said "This is what I want to print: Bernie is dead."

The man at the newspaper said "But for \$25 you are allowed to print six words." The woman answered. "OK. Then print: Bernie is dead. Toyota for sale."

— from *ajokeaday* via Internet

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February 2009

OARS Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 QRP Winter Fireside SSB Sprint	2	3 7:00 PM ARES Net 7:30 PM OARS Net Spartan Sprint CW	4	5	6 Deadline for Watts News Inputs	7 7:15 AM Breakfast at Nickelby's 600 Trosper Rd Ten-Ten Winter Phone QSO Pty
8 50-440 FM Simplex Contest N Amer Sprint CW Ten-Ten Winter Phone QSO Pty	9	10 7:00 PM ARES Net 7:30 PM OARS Net	11	12	13 Valentine's Day Sprint Digital YL-OM Contest Phn	14 CQ WW RTTY WPX Valentine's Day Sprint Digital YL-OM Contest Phn
15 CQ WW RTTY WPX N Amer Sprint Phn YL-OM Contest Phn	16	17 7:00 PM ARES Net 7:30 PM OARS Net	18 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM OARS Gen- eral Meeting at Red Cross	19	20	21 ARRL DX Contest
22 ARRL DX Contest	23	24 7:00 PM ARES Net 7:30 PM OARS Net	25	26	27 Russian WW PSK Contest	28 CQ WW 160 Meter SSB N Amer QSO Party Digital Russian WW PSK Contest

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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