



Many hands make light work for our club

Brendan Burget / KD7IKV

President

Happy New Year!! Here we go again. This is the time to get serious about our activities for the coming 12 months.

Production of the Flea Market and *Special Events Guide* are well under way. Field Day



From the Hot Seat

will be chaired by Steve Cook KD7IQL, along with co-chairs Alan Hughes KB7SVU and myself. Alan and his wife, Tressie KC7BAL, will organize our awards banquet.

All of these activities and events require a large amount of person-power. While the members in charge of each activity are very hard workers, they *need* the help of *all* of our members. Even if you have only a small amount of time, I encourage you to get involved. With many hands, the workload becomes lighter. And quality and variety goes up.

One last note for this month. The board is moving quickly to assess and repair the damage done to the antenna trailer. **Please see the Radio Officer's column on Page 3 for more details.**

73 de KD7IKV

It's about time: Mike & Key needs your leadership

Over the next couple of months, club Chairman Steve Cook will entertain nominations for officer elections in March.

Considering the difficulty in trying to fill the empty secretary position, things do not bode well for filling the next slate. Making the situation worse is that some of our most active members have recently gone Silent Key.

This club cannot run without leadership.

When you joined, you did so because you felt there was something here of value. In my experience, I have found that value is enhanced by holding elective office and volunteering to chair committees.

Please consider throwing your hat in the ring for elected office in 2004. Don't wait for someone to cajole you into the idea or feel that it's less than honorable to nominate yourself. Volunteer!

The officer and trustee jobs typically take up one evening a month—a couple of hours. The commitment isn't great and you'll learn a lot more about how the club works, its history and its membership. Think about it.

— Michael Dinkelman / N7WA

The Inside Story

How the reality of propagation compares to software modeling.

Page 4

Whatever your interest, there's a special group to help you learn more.

Page 7

Common-sense rules about antennas worth remembering.

Page 8



The *K7LED Relay*, published monthly, is the official newsletter of the Mike & Key Amateur Radio Club. Mike & Key ARC is an ARRL-affiliated club dedicated to the growth and betterment of amateur radio.

The club meets at 10 A.M. the third Saturday of every month at Salvation Army Headquarters, 720 S. Tobin Street, in Renton (near the southeast corner of Renton Airport). Anyone interested in amateur radio is invited to participate in the Mike & Key ARC and its activities. Annual dues are \$12 for individuals and \$18 for families.



Postal Address

P.O. Box 4234
Renton, WA 98057-4234

K7LED Repeaters

146.82 output / 146.22 input (PL 103.5)
Squak Mountain

224.120 output / 222.520 input (PL 103.5)
Tiger Mountain

Web Site

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E-mail

info@mikeandkey.com

Re ector

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Webmasters	Jim Etwiler / Dave Smith	KD7BAT / KB7PSN	kd7bat@arrl.net	206-633-1512

Several club resources are available electronically:

Web: The club's site at www.mikeandkey.com includes extensive information about club events, VEC testing, membership, past editions of the *Relay* and more.

Mike & Key Online

Reflector: The public message board offers an easy and free way to converse with club members. To sign up, surf to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/mkarc>.

E-Relay: Want the newsletter in color and a day or two before the print edition arrives by regular mail? You'll also help the club save money in printing and postage costs.

To sign up, send a message to the editor: k7stq@arrl.net.



Terry Dettmann WX7S

The Issaquah water tower area after the mid-December storm. **Below:** Several of the club's beam antennas were destroyed.

Storm damages antennas, trailer

Editor's note: Our new radio officer launches a regular column this month to keep club members apprised of radio-related issues.

Terry Dettmann / WX7S

Radio Officer

Repeater Status

The 146.82 repeater has been working normally with no reported problems. Traffic has been steady, but light.

The VXR-5000 backup repeater has been taken down for testing and programming. We will be using it when spring comes for testing from some alternate sites. Once the final decision is made about where to locate the repeater, we'll install the VXR-5000 at that site and use the old ICOM repeater as a backup.

All of our repeater coordinations have been renewed for the next five years through WWARA.

Antenna Damage

The mid-December wind storm blew down a tree near the Issaquah water tower site where we store our trailers. Luckily, only one trailer was there when it happened, but it was the tower trailer with our beam antennas on top. Several of them have been destroyed.

After several visits and lots of work, we've determined that the



Radio Officer's Report

15- and 20-meter beams have been all but destroyed. We've also definitely lost two sections of tower. That much we can tell from a visual inspection of the trailer.

Bad weather forced postponement of a work party to remove all of the tower sections and beams for inspection, but we'll be going back to assess the damage more carefully when we can look at each piece.

We are concerned that other tower sections may have been damaged, but we will need to inspect them more closely. We

are also concerned that some damage may have affected the crank-up tower. We will be able to tell about the rest of the gear only when we can lay everything out and assemble it.

In addition to the towers and beams, the trailer itself was damaged. The metal rack that holds the tower sections and the beams was damaged and will need to be repaired.

Special Interest Groups

Check out the special interest group discussion lists on Page 7. If you have something else you are interested in, let me know and we'll get a discussion going.

Reality vs. propagation modeling

Editor's note: Last month, Mike N7WA suggested several useful propagation programs. Scott AG7T now offers some thoughts on how software modeling compares to reality.

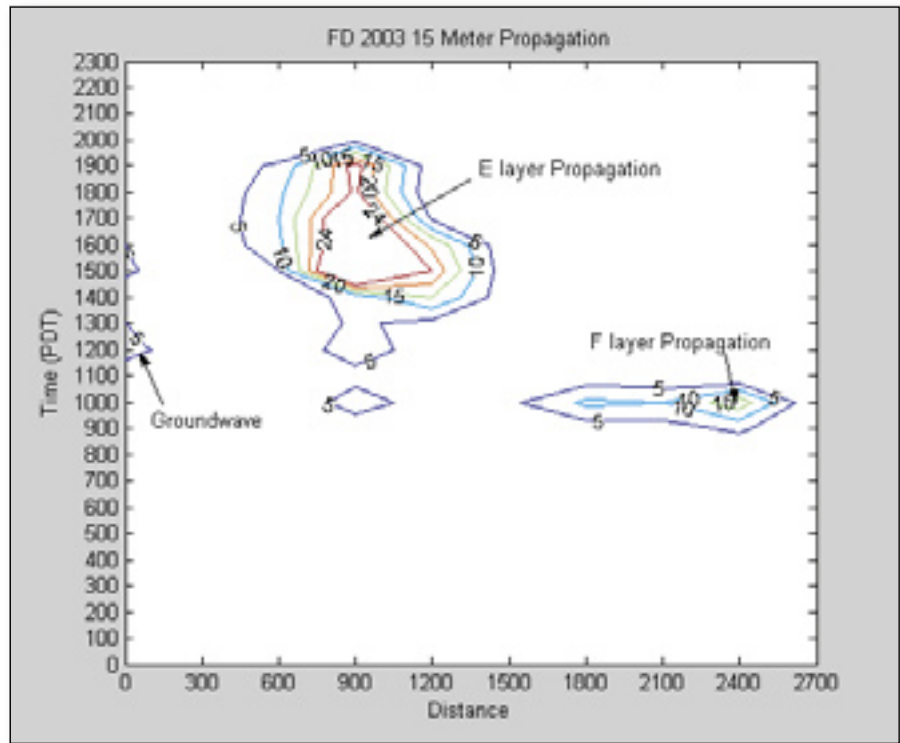
Scott Robinson / AG7T

Relay Correspondent

At the November club meeting, you heard about general radio wave propagation. I thought I would drill in on propagation as it applied to Field Day 2003 to show you the modeling tool output when compared to "real data." To keep this article short, I'm only going to look at 15 meters and will keep this high level. Low-level details will have to wait for a club meeting presentation.

The graph at right shows the 15-meter log data. I took the ARRL sections and assigned them a longitude and latitude. I then calculated their Great Circle distance from Fort Flagler. To keep the data manageable, I rounded distances to the closest 300 miles.

You'll remember the ionization layer designations: D, E, F1, F2. These are in order of lower to higher altitude. The lower the layer, the shorter the distance sky waves cover. I've annotated the graph with ground wave, E and F layer propagation.



For the F layer propagation, I took the path from Fort Flagler to Springfield, Mass., (WMA Section) and used ICEPAC as the tool. The settings I supplied were SSN=70, Yagi transmitting antenna, 100 watts, dipole receiving antenna; month 6. The SSN of 70 came from the Space Environment Center estimated smoothed sunspot number for June 28, 2003.

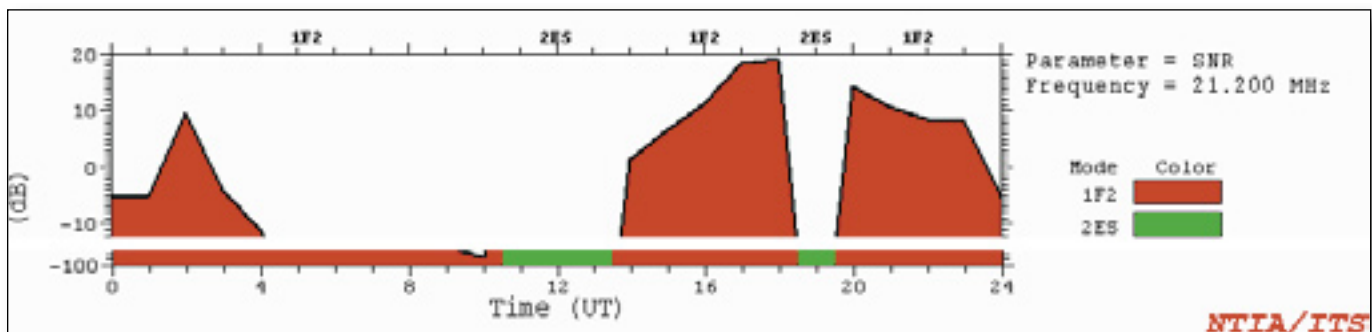
You have to be careful when picking the SSN because the modeling algorithms were de-

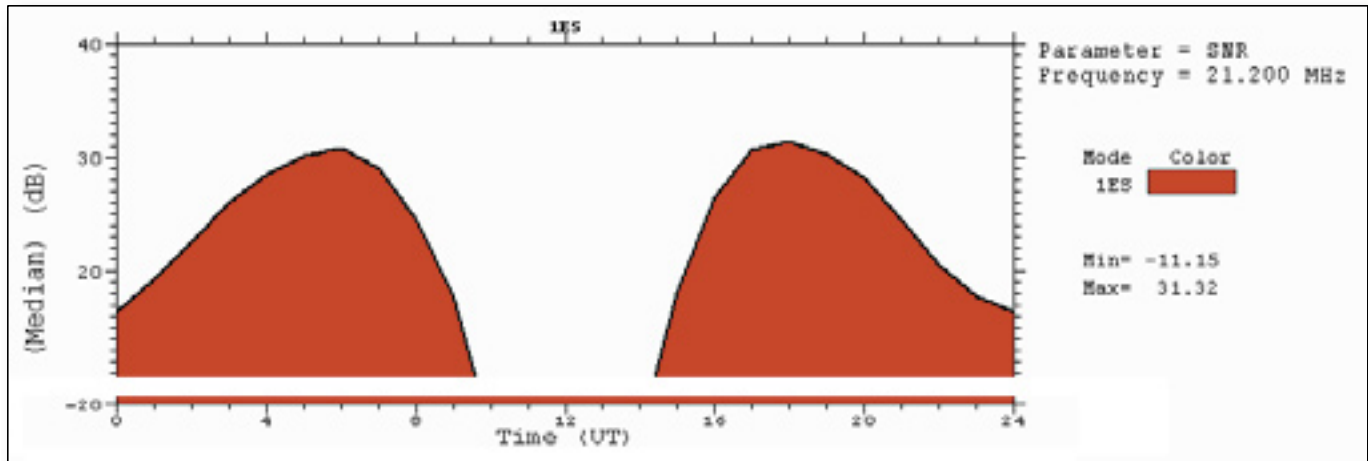
veloped using the smoothed sunspot numbers. You can't get the "official" SSN until about six months after the date. However, you can get the measured solar flux SSN equivalent on the date itself. For Field Day, this was 93.

So why not use it? Doing so produces an over-optimistic model that didn't match reality.

Below is a cut-down ICEPAC plot of signal-to-noise ratio in

Continued on Page 5





Continued from Page 4

decibels versus time. You can see that we have one bounce F2 layer and two bounce Sporadic E possibilities.

For ease of SSB communication, I want at least 15 db SNR. Anything less will be difficult to copy. The graph correlates well between the 1000 to 1100 PDT working of stations at this distance and the tool's 1700 UTC peak of almost 20 db.

I also checked the Maximum Usable Frequency. (Definition: The Maximum Usable Frequency is the frequency at which for a given month the path propagation exists 50 percent of the time.) At 1700 UT, the MUF is right at 21 MHz, so that's good.

For the E layer propagation

(shown above), I took the path from Fort Flagler to Barstow, Calif. (ORG section). The other settings remained the same.

If you evaluate the MUF on this path, it stays in the range of 10 to 16 MHz. What is making this path work for 21 MHz? It is Sporadic E entirely!

Sporadic E propagation comes in two forms at these latitudes: Blanking and Non-Blanking. Based on the log data being so consistent during 1500 to 1900 PDT, it must be Blanking. Non-Blanking might allow a path for 5 to 10 minutes at a time and corresponds to isolated clouds of ionization. The log shows continuous operation.

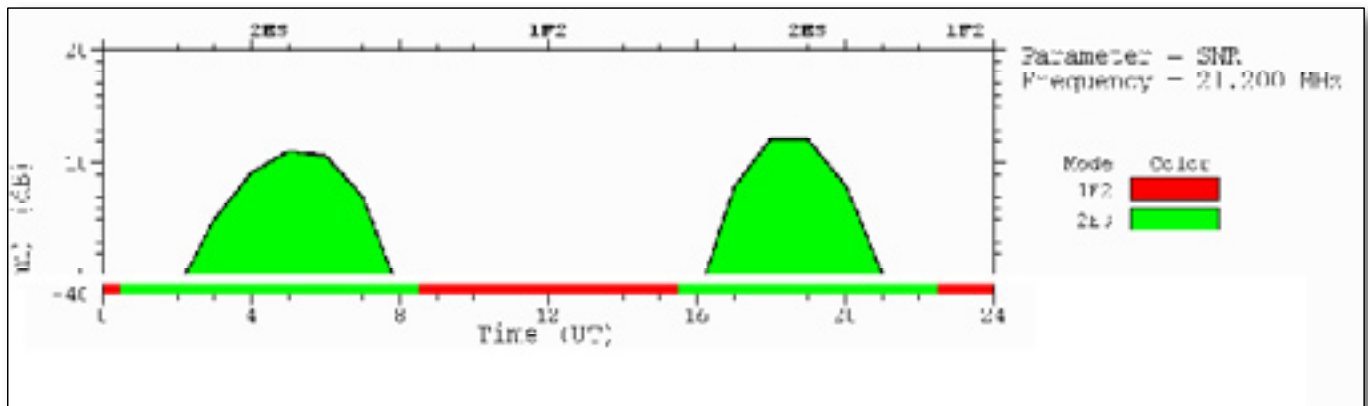
The problem with the 1ES hop is that it requires a takeoff angle of 4.5 degrees. The 15-me-

ter station is not getting useful output at that angle from its Yagi antenna, so this model is unbelievable.

Changing the model for a minimum takeoff angle of 10 degrees and lowered F mode probabilities produces the graph shown below.

The 0300 to 0700 UT peak corresponds to our log data. The takeoff angle is 14 degrees for the 2ES mode, which is reasonable. The SNR is a little lower than I would like, but overall this model is usable.

My point in showing both ES models is that you have to be very careful to look at all the information provided in model output. That takeoff angle was a killer for the first model and a confirming factor for the second.



Club's largest event needs more volunteers

Michael Dinkelman / N7WA

Senior Contributing Editor

Due to rather nasty weather, there was no Flea Market Committee meeting on Jan. 6.

However, the planning and preparation goes on. In the past month, more than 12,000 flyers were labeled and readied for mailing later in January. My thanks to Earl and Jean Swiney and Fred and Dorothy Lowell for helping get these done. We couldn't have done it without you.

We have had a change in the Announcing/Public Service chairmanship. The Wolborskys have had to step down for health

Flea Market Committee

reasons. Fortunately, Mike Eakins and Pam Bryan have stepped up to take over. Barry and Kim will continue in an advising role and, hopefully, will help out by allowing us to continue using their 2-meter system.

It is important to remember that this is the last month you can sign up as a Flea Market worker *and* receive your badge at the February meeting. Of course, you can always sign up in February, but your badge must be picked up at the Flea Market itself.

Worker signup has been

pretty dismal. Fewer than 50 people have committed and a good number of them are committee chairs. Frankly, we need over 100 workers to pull this event off. When you consider we have close to 200 members, that shouldn't be a problem.

(OK, I will admit I didn't have forms available last month but the signup sheets have been available since October.) This is the big money-maker for the club. Consider putting in a few hours as part of your dues.

The next regularly scheduled Flea Market meeting—and last one before the event—will be at 7 P.M. Tuesday, Feb. 3, at the Salvation Army HQ.

Who's our next award winner? Nominate a deserving member

Carolyn Pasquier / WV7Q

Relay Correspondent

It's a new year—and time for your Pop Brown Committee to begin meeting to recognize those members who have made a special contribution to the Mike & Key ARC and Amateur Radio.

We have been actively observing our members over the last year, but we know we can't be everywhere. If you have any suggestions of members who you feel deserve special recognition, we would love to have your input.

At the Awards Banquet, held after the Flea Market, we will bestow the following awards.

Pop Brown Award: Recognizing the club member who best represented our club and Amateur Radio within the Ham community and/or to the community at large. (This award is not available to current board members.)

Ken Jackson Award: Recognizing the club member who has excelled in Ham Radio educational and Elmering activities.

Special Service Award(s): Recognizing the club member(s) who serve our organization beyond the call of duty.

Jo Hallstrom Friendship Award: Recognizing the club member who is a promoter of the friendship of our club. Essentially, this person is an ambassador of goodwill as a greeter at meetings, through on the air activities, etc.

Please speak to or e-mail any nominations you may have to one of the following individuals.

Carolyn WV7Q:

WV7Q@arrl.net

Wayne KC7ORB:

wheath4@comcast.net

Sam N7RHE:

svsullivan@comcast.net

We appreciate your thoughts.

January hearing on state antenna bill

State senators will listen to comments on SB 5200, the state's proposed antenna bill, Wednesday, Jan. 14.

The hearing will be held at 1 P.M. in Senate Hearing Room No. 3 of the Cherberg Building in Olympia.

If you are interested in testifying, contact Jim Monaghan N7HKO at (253) 845-0219.

Welcome, new member

The Mike & Key Club warmly welcomes Ed Maher NL7BP, a General from Normandy Park, who was approved at the December meeting.

A special group for every interest

Terry Dettmann / WX7S

Radio Officer

As Radio Officer, one of my duties is to encourage people to get involved. There has been considerable interest among people who would like to get involved, but most of the existing committees don't really match what they want to do.

I have a number of interest areas myself and am tied in to local Amateurs who are also interested in these areas. I think it's time for some of us to start getting together, even if it's only by e-mail, to talk about those things that we really like to do. As such, I am sponsoring several Special Interest Groups, or SIGs, focused on areas of Amateur Radio that I find particularly interesting.

So what is a SIG? They can take many forms, but the form I am using is just a bunch of people who find the area fascinating. I'm already a member of several such groups among Northwest Amateurs. They're informal and may or may not get together. Some people are part of the Mike & Key and some aren't. They're totally informal and a good place just to chat with people who are also interested in something.

These SIGs aren't clubs; there's nothing formal and no sponsorship. But the people who are in them are very interested in their particular topics. There's no better place to get in contact with people.

I've started several mailing lists at Yahoo! Groups to support these SIGs and I'd like to encourage Mike & Key members to get involved. At the end of the next meeting, I'd like to take 15 minutes to get together with anyone who wants to be part of one of the SIGs and see if we want to go further and have regular group meetings within Mike & Key.

For several of these groups, it would be interesting to get regular nets going on the 682 repeater. We have lots of time available for nets. If anyone is interested in starting up such a net, contact me and let's see about getting it going.

My ultimate goal is to make contact with as many Northwest Amateurs as possible and energize activities in those areas I enjoy doing. I'd also encourage others within the club to form SIGs around other special interests.

In some cases (public service, for example) we have a formal committee to pursue that interest and a SIG isn't really needed. There are many other interests, though, that people have (Morse Code

operation and satellite communications, to name two) that could benefit from people coming together around that interest.

The SIGs I have going are:

Repeaters

Consider this to be the Radio Officer's repeater group. While we'll talk mostly about our repeaters here, I'd like this to be more general and get people who are interested more broadly in repeaters involved. Subscribe at:

NWRptr-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Antennas (including NVIS)

Antennas of all sorts are a particular passion of mine. I write on them extensively and work with them all day every day. Subscribe at:

NWAntSIG-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Emergency Communications

Emergency communications are *very* important to me. We have a group that has attracted people from around the country. Join up and ask questions; we've got some top-notch people there to answer them. Subscribe at:

em-communicator-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

QRP

QRP and low-power operation in general (20 watts or less, usually) is another special interest of mine. Topics discussed here include operating, contesting, building, buying and nearly anything associated with low-power operation. Members range across the area from Chehalis to Blaine and beyond. Subscribe at:

pQRP-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

RDF

We've been trying to energize an RDF group here in the Puget Sound area for some time. We've got a number of interested people and we hope that, by next summer, we can start to run some simple hunts. Subscribe at:

nwrdf-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Radio Frequency Interference

Very often you don't need a full-scale effort to track down interference, just some advice from people who've dealt with it before. NWRFI is intend-

Continued on Page 11

11 common-sense rules for antennas

Everyone loves a thumb rule. We all use them, but often we don't know which ones to trust. Here is a useful collection of thumb rules which are mostly common sense:

Any antenna is better than no antenna! Take all the time you like reading, chatting or searching on the Internet. Until you actually put up an antenna, you're not on the air.

Don't agonize over the choice. Get something up quickly and try it. Particularly if you're working with wire, you can experiment until you find something that works without spending too much money. An SGC Smartuner makes it possible to try a wide variety of antennas using nothing more than wire.

Higher is better. The higher you can get your antenna, the better it will be.

Outside is better. Some of us are limited to indoor-only antennas, but anything you can do to get outside will improve your antenna's performance.

Longer is better. More wire on the antenna will generally make it a better radiator up to a point. As it starts to get over two wavelengths long, it becomes highly directional.

Most beginners will be happier with a dipole. A dipole

has excellent performance and doesn't require much installation savvy. No other antenna is as simple to erect and use.

You can't have too much RF ground. When your antenna needs an RF ground, more is definitely better. The key is RF impedance—keeping this to a minimum between the point you connect to the RF ground and the ground itself. A huge RF ground connected to the RF ground point on your Smartuner with a wire with a high impedance at your operating frequency is like having no RF ground at all.

It doesn't matter what wire you use. Within limits, whether you use thick or thin wire, insulated or bare, high-priced or low-grade copper, performance won't change much. Certainly, all of these factors have an effect, but they are small compared with just getting on the air.

If you're facing restrictions on a permanent antenna, consider a temporary one. You may get better performance from a temporary antenna you can rig when you need it than from a permanent one you have to compromise so heavily with that it barely gets a signal on the air.

Most single-band antennas can be made into a multiband antenna with the addition of a

Smartuner. An 80-meter dipole can be tuned from 160 to 6 meters by an SG-237 Smartuner with no adjustments to make. Select a frequency and transmit. This applies to loops, dipoles, long wires and so forth.

Antenna projects in magazines and books never work as advertised. Any antenna installation depends on where and how you install it. An 80-meter dipole installed 10 feet over the ground will perform differently than one that's 100 feet in the air. Experiment with any project before you make it permanent.

Homemade antennas are better than commercial ones. Often, that's because you can make your antenna into exactly what it needs to be. At the very least, before buying a commercial antenna, you should test your antenna configuration with wire to be sure it will perform the way it is supposed to.

Antennas don't change much. Even old antenna books have a lot going for them. Find a used bookstore and see if you can locate an old *ARRL Antenna Handbook*. If you can't afford a new one, the old one will still have more things than you can try in a lifetime.

— Reprinted from *SGCWorld*

The club's newest trustee is a Field Day aficionado

Editor's note: In November, club members voted to approve Scott Robinson to take over as Trustee No. 1. Now we learn the real truth about him.

Scott passed his Technician license in 1990 (N1HPL) and his Amateur Extra license (WT1T) in 1991. He's been active in operating large (21A) and small (1A) Field Day efforts and has been an ARRL-accredited VE since 1991.

Scott joined the Mike & Key Club after he moved

from Boston and changed his call to AG7T. (You can thank Carolyn WV7Q for letting him run four or five hours of QSOs on 15 meters during the 1998 Field Day to clinch joining the club ;-)

He is interested in most technical aspects of Ham Radio with special interests in antenna modeling and how to do well in Field Day while having fun. Scott also participates in most CW contests (SS, ARRL DX, CQWW, WPX, WAE) during the year while using 100 watts or less.

Take time today to plan for tomorrow

Dawn Humphrey / KC7YYB

Relay Correspondent

This article is about changes. As many of you may know, Dan N7QHC is now retirement age (65) and, as you may have heard, is in the best job he's ever had both in wage and pleasant-though-challenging working conditions.

He's not as eager to retire as he was just 12 months ago when the job he'd had for six years became a real drag. As many of you know, if you aren't happy in your job, no amount of money is going to make you feel any happier getting up each morning and heading toward something you grow to dread more each day.

There are a great number of members in the club who have already experienced both the retirement thing and the attitude-toward-the-job thing. However, this article is for those of you still looking toward their day of retirement.

Planning what you will be doing with your time is something very important to discuss with your spouse or significant other (providing you have one) because, if you are both going to be happy and not drive each other nuts, you have to have a plan.

For Dan and I, our plan is to "go on the road." For us, it means doing volunteer labor with

his skills as a cabinetmaker/woodworker. For this, we needed to have an RV of some kind that would fit the bill.

This came about through Dan's sister, who called up one day and said a friend of theirs had just gotten a new truck and a trailer and wanted to sell their motor home. We went over to see it and took along a knowledgeable friend, who agreed that it was a good deal for the price. The morning of the Fourth of July, we headed over to Poulsbo and paid for it, went back on Sunday and brought it home.

Sights & Sounds by Sunrise

It isn't new. It's a "77 Ford chassis 23" Midas with roof air, and what was most important to me: a "sitdown" tub, rather than just the usual shower or shower/toilet combo. The price was within our budget and we've taken it to the Coos County ARC flea market in Bandon, Ore., to the North Kitsap ARC swap meet in Silverdale and finished off with the Mount Baker ARC flea market in Lynden. It isn't the best on gas, but it's home for us when on the road.

So, that is an example of changes in our lives.

Now, maybe that will prompt you to start thinking about the

inevitable changes in your lives. Children leaving home. Grandchildren perhaps gracing your now-empty rooms with their visits. Loss of job. Loss of loved one.

That one I can speak to since I lost my father the day after Christmas '02. At 85, it seemed too short of a time for me. I wasn't prepared to face only having my mother left. Now, I will have to plan for that inevitable day, which will affect me far more due to our closeness.

As a club, we've experienced the recent loss of key members who leave an empty space in our hearts and minds as we tend to feel that their leaving us was much to soon. We may think to ourselves "they weren't that old" but, for whatever reason, they're gone and life goes on.

Hopefully, this new year will not see more losses, but as night follows day, these things are facts of life.

What was the purpose of this article, you might be asking as you finally get this far? It is a reminder to appreciate each day as it comes, but don't forget to *plan for the future!* 73

Welcome to 2004, little one. We will be watching your progress and growth throughout the coming months until the cycle is complete and another year ends, as 2003 just has.

'CC&R' antenna bill needs your support

Twenty-nine cosponsors are backing the federal Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Consistency Act of 2003, also known as the CC&R bill.

Sponsored by Rep. Steve Israel (D-NY), HR 1478 would require

private land-use regulators such as homeowners' associations to "reasonably accommodate" Amateur Radio antennas consistent with the PRB-1 limited federal pre-emption.

The ARRL is seeking a spon-

sor for a companion bill in the U.S. Senate.

The ARRL urges Hams to write their congressmen to support the bill and to copy their correspondence to ccr-bill@arrl.org.

— *The ARRL Letter*

Officers present:

President – Brendan Burget (KD7IKV)
 Vice President – Sam Sullivan (N7RHE)
 Secretary – Paul McElroy (K7STQ)
 Treasurer – Jack Grimmatt (N7IHS)
 Activity Manager – John Long (KW7A)
 Radio Officer – Terry Dettmann (WX7S)

Trustees present:

No. 1 – Scott Robinson (AG7T)
 No. 2 – Terry Dettmann (WX7S)
 No. 3 – Steve Cook / CoB (KD7IQL)
 No. 4 – Dick Radford (WA7NIW)

Visitors: Ron Baker; Vera Doss.

President Burget called the meeting to order at 10:02 A.M. at the Salvation Army Building in Renton, Wash. All members and guests repeated the Pledge of Allegiance. The president made several announcements: The Mike & Key ARC is affiliated with the ARRL, which members are encouraged to join; everyone, including visitors, should sign the rosters; visitors are reminded not to vote on membership matters; smoking is allowed in the parking lot but not in front of the chapel. Members and guests introduced themselves.

Quorum present.

Minutes: Jim Monaghan N7HKO moved and Carolyn Pasquier WV7Q seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as printed in the *K7LED Relay*. Motion passed.

Officer Reports

President – Brendan KD7IKV: Congratulates Mike K7JML and Ronnie KC7UFS LaFerla, Calvin Doss KC7IYP and everyone else who helped create an excellent Christmas party.

Vice President – Sam N7RHE: The hourglass timer bestowed to Nils Hallstrom W7RUJ is back in the club's possession and will be used for long-winded speakers, including but not limited to Jim N7HKO. New membership applications: Ed Maher NL7BP, a General. Approved.

Secretary – No report.

Treasurer – Jack N7IHS: Issued P&L statement.

Radio Officer – Terry WX7S: 682 repeater has less interference because he took down the backup repeater. It is not well documented, but he wants to go over it and get it back in shape as a suitable backup. The new VXR repeater is 25

General Meeting Minutes Dec. 20, 2003

watts — half the wattage of the current one — and needs an amplifier. An order for one earlier this year was canceled. He'll bring the new repeater to a meeting before putting it up. There are conflicting opinions on whether the Rattlesnake Ridge site has good coverage, so plans to use it are on hold. The club is still evaluating. Moving to that location would require coordination of frequencies.

He sent a note to the Reflector about special interest groups in the area. He would like to get other people involved in QRP and other activities. Call Terry if you have questions.

Activity Manager – John KW7A: Happy holidays to all. Today's raffle includes 23 items. Tickets are two-for-one because they count for the day's raffle, plus the end-of-year giveaway.

Chairman of the Board – Steve KD7IQL: The December board meeting will be held at 7:15 p.m. Jan. 7. The January meeting will be held as usual on the last Wednesday of the month.

Standing Committee Reports

Those committees not reporting in the Relay are asked to report before the general membership.

Facilities – Steve KD7IQL: The November wind storm caused a tree to fall on the trailer at the water tower in Issaquah. The club has more than likely lost numerous beam antennas used for Field Day. Looks like the trailer was undamaged, but he won't know for sure until the tree is removed. A site visit will be conducted.

The club bought a case for its LCD projector.

Public Service – Brendan KD7IKV: No meeting today. The committee is still hard at work on the Special Events & Information Guide. AES bought a full-page ad, the second year in a row it has done so. The book will be released at the Flea Market, as always.

Strategic Planning – Carolyn Pasquier WV7Q: They have been meeting since summer and are focusing on members who do not stay in the club. A respectable number of new members have joined, but there has been lots of attrition for members after five years or so. They

are working on a phone survey.

Flea Market – Mike Dinkelman N7WA: The next meeting will be at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 6 at the Salvation Army Building. Sign-up sheets will be available at January general meeting. The swap meet will be held Saturday, March 6.

Alligator Award: Dean Holtan N7NKO hands it back to Calvin KC7IYP, keeping this prestigious statue "in the family."

Old Business

Public Service survey: Dick WA7NIW has received two completed surveys, but wants the other 197. They can be e-mailed to him (wa7niw@arrl.net) or turned in at a general meeting.

New Business

2004 budget – Jack N7IHS: The club's bylaws stipulate that the new budget should be approved in December. He proposes approving the budget, then re-evaluating certain expenses when the antenna damage is assessed and going back to the board for further review. After discussing the budget, Brendan KD7IKV moved and Tressie Hughes KC7BAL seconded approving it. Motion passed.

Audit: The Audit Committee will meet after the January general meeting to conduct the audit.

Antennas: Jim N7HKO suggests looking into an ARRL antenna insurance policy. Alan Hughes KB7SVU has extra antennas he's willing to donate to the club if someone will help him put them together.

Good of the Order

Seattle Marathon: Jim N7HKO worked the event, which included 8,000 runners. There were a few minor incidents, but the event ran very smoothly.

Senate Bill 5200 – Jim N7HKO: Some cities plan to oppose the bill. Hams must fight to get it passed. He will find out what day the bill will be debated and alert members. It's critical to pass this bill given the prospect of natural disasters here. RCT and BEARS are helping.

Carolyn WV7Q suggests contacting the city of Renton because Hams stepped in to help during the last disaster when their communications didn't work so

Continued on Page 11



Extensive interference ends BPL test

The Austrian Amateur Transmitter Federation reports that a Broadband over Power Line field test in the city of Linz has been cut short as a result of excessive radio interference.

ÖVSV, Austria's International Amateur Radio Union member society, said in December that the Government Ministry for Commerce, Innovation and Technology closed down Linz Power Co.'s BPL pilot project because it was generating interference on the HF bands.

Shortwave broadcaster Radio Austria's futureZone service says the case that brought the issue to a head was a Red Cross report that emergency services radio traffic during a disaster response

drill last May was the victim of massive BPL interference.

"The Commerce Ministry order not only means the end of the Linz BPL pilot project," the Radio Austria report said, "but the end of the deployment of this technology in Austria, especially given the interference to radio communication in places of business."

According to the broadcaster, measurements were said to have indicated that radiation from the BPL system exceeded permissible field-strength levels by a factor of 10,000.

Among other problems with BPL, ÖVSV has cited its potential to disrupt emergency communications and safety-of-life services

as well as military operations on HF and navigation and aeronautical communication.

Last fall, ÖVSV representatives and Linz Amateurs met with power company representatives to resolve BPL's incompatibility with HF radio operation. The meetings followed news reports of interference to emergency service communications and QRM complaints from several area Hams.

The utility agreed to look into a 100-meter protective zone around each Amateur's location, notch filters for Amateur frequencies, network system filters and the use of 5 GHz wireless local area networks.

— *The ARRL Letter*

Whatever your interest in radio, there's a SIG for you

Continued from Page 7

ed as a resource where you can ask advice about your interference problem. Really serious RFI problems, particularly those involving neighbors and such, should involve the ARRL Technical Coordinator or the Radio Officer. But if you just want to chat about interference problems without calling out a four-alarm fire brigade, then stop by and chat. Any of you who consider yourselves experts are invited to join to help those who need help. Subscribe at:

nwrfi-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Digital Communications

There is a big need for people to get on and talk about digital communications (packet, HF digital, etc.). It's one of the most popular ways to communicate these days, but many people don't really understand it. Here is a place to chat about what

you'd like to know. Subscribe at:

NWDigital-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

These groups allow only members to post, but they are public groups. I've also restricted access to the member lists so no one, not even a member, can access the membership list and add you to a spam list. Yahoo! Groups messages do include advertising, but that's what makes them free.

There is no lack of experts available in our area. If you're interested in something, there are others who will probably be interested, as well. The topics I've listed are my special interests and I'll sponsor SIGs around them.

I'll be happy to help if someone wants to start some other groups to focus on other interests or if you just want to ask questions or need help in getting signed up with one of the existing online groups. Drop me a line at wx7s@cfsystems.org and let me know how I can help.

Continued from Page 10

well.

Sam N7RHE: ARRL Section Manager Ed Bruett testified in Olympia on the BPL aspect of the bill in mid-December.

General Meeting Minutes Dec. 20, 2003

There being no further business,

Mike K7JML moved and Richard Pasquier N7MER seconded a motion to adjourn. Approved and President Burget closed the meeting at 10:26 a.m.

Attested: Paul McElroy – Secretary,
K7STQ





Ham Nets & Events for January / February 2004

All nets are on 146.82
unless indicated otherwise
Send calendar items to the Relay editor:
k7stq@arri.net

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
11 2000 — King Co. ARES (weekly) 2000 — Amateur TV net: 147.08 (weekly)	12 0545 — Weather net: 145.33 (M – F) 1645 — Weather net (M – F)	13 2000 — Snoho. Co. RACES: 146.92 (weekly)	14 2000 — General Info & Tech net: 145.33 (weekly)	15 1900 — Pub. Service net (weekly) 1930 — Shoreline ARES: 440.3 (wkl.)	16 2000 — Youth net: 145.33 (weekly)	17 0900 — Club net 1000 — Club mtg. 1300 — Ham exams North American QSO Party SSB
18 2030 — Snoho. Co. ARES: 146.92 (weekly)	19 1730 — Puget Sound Traffic Sys. (daily) 1730 — Wash. ARES HF: 3.985 (weekly)	20	21 2030 — WARFA swapnet: 3.908 (weekly)	22	23	24 CQ 160-meter CW contest ARRL January VHF sweepstakes
25 2200 — Northwest Astronomy net: 145.33 (weekly)	26 1900 — Elmer's net: 145.33 (weekly)	27	28 1915 — Board mtg.	29	30	31
1	2 2000 — YL net: 145.33 (weekly)	3 1900 — Flea Market Committee mtg. 2000 — Maple Valley ARC/ARES: 146.54 (weekly)	4 2100 — NWSOAR net (weekly)	5 2000 — Computer & Packet net: 145.33 (weekly) 2000 — Amateur TV net: 147.08 (weekly)	6	7 0900 — Wash. ARES HF: 7.245 (weekly) 10-10 International Winter SSB contest
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
						Relay deadline