



View from the Bridge...



Remembering Gene W7AKA, SK

By Ivy Nelson-Groves WA7IVY, President

Some sad news. Many of you have already heard that Club member Gene Underwood, W7AKA, passed away on Thursday, 8 Dec at 2:15 pm. His passing is a great loss to not only the Ham community, but to the many Public Service events he supported. Many of my colleagues at work knew Gene and have sent me messages saying how much they respected Gene, and how sad they are at his passing. I first met Gene at the Kitsap Color Classic when I was a brand new Ham.

He showed me the public service ropes and patiently answered all of my stupid questions. I've always considered him a mentor in the amateur radio world. I was overjoyed when he and Fran became members of the Mike and Key, and I looked forward to seeing both of them each month.

I last saw Gene right before I closed the Medical Net at the Seattle Marathon three days after Thanksgiving. My last memories of Gene were of him smiling and happily doing what he loved doing. I will keep that picture of him in my mind forever. Please keep Fran in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

Now on to what I was going to write before Thursday afternoon. At the December General meeting, the M&K Board will be presenting the 2012 Budget for approval by the Membership. The M&K Club 2011 books will be audited before the January 2012 meeting.

Mike N7WA and Hal N7NW will have the signup sheets for the FLEA MARKET at our monthly meeting. Remember that the Flea Market is actually a 2 day event for us (Friday and Saturday), so feel free to sign up for two or three (or more!) shifts. If you want the easiest job available, be sure to sign up for the Announcing Team! (*wink-wink!*). If you've never been to or worked the Flea Market, don't fret – the February program will be all about it!

And in March are the annual Officer/Trustee elections. All the officer positions other than Radio Officer will be up for election, along with Trustees #2 and #4. This would be a great time to consider throwing your hat in the ring if you are inclined to run. We will be taking nominations at the January, February and March meetings, right on up to the time we vote for the positions. I found the best way to find out what is going on in the Club is to serve on the Board. And at times, it can be a lot of fun!

See you on the 17th . . .

W7AKA[SK] – Memorial Service

Email from Bruce Underwood W7AKB:

As most of you know, my father, Gene Underwood, became a silent key on Thursday, December 8. We welcome all of you to come celebrate his life, the service will be held on Tuesday, December 13 at 3 PM at: First United Methodist Church , 1934 108th Avenue Northeast, Bellevue, WA, 98004. 425-454-2059.

In lieu of flowers, we request donations be made to either the **American Heart Association** or **American Diabetes Association**.

Let me thank you all for your support you have provided over the years for the events my parents have coordinated

Please keep my mom, Fran, in your prayers.

Special Peoples Holiday Cruise A Success

By Dick Radford WA7NIW

Among the many volunteers who made sure this would happen were 22 hams, including 9 current or former members of the Mike and Key ARC. Traffic handled included movements of 18 buses and approximately 550 guests, between 3 bus loading locations and 8 destinations. Thanks go out to all participants who helped make this annual event a joy to the guests.

Email forwarded by Dick Radford WA7NIW

Hello All— Thank you, once again, for donating your time and energy to the 2011 SEFAIR & 76 Special Peoples Holiday Cruise. Your enthusiasm and dedication to this event is incredible and sincerely appreciated.

I know a lot of you have been working on this event longer than I have even been alive. It was an honor and a privilege to work with and learn from you all through this event. Please make sure to pass on my thanks to everyone who helped in your world that I do not have contact information for.

You have once again given an amazing, heartfelt gift to the developmentally disabled. I know they are still talking about it and already looking forward to 2012.

I hope to see you again next year!

Happy Holidays. - Jill Farley, SEFAIR Event Coordinator

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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

Web Site:

www.mikeandkey.org

Send dues to:

Mike & Key ARC
P.O. Box 4234
Renton, WA 98057-4234

K7LED Repeaters:

146.82 output / 146.22 input
(PL 103.5)
Tiger Mountain
224.120 output / 222.520 input
(PL 103.5)
Tiger Mountain

Email:

info @ mikeandkey.org

Send newsletter submissions to:

Gary Bryan, *Relay* Editor
34033 33rd Ave SW
Federal Way, WA 98023-7724
kg7ku @ arrl.net

Reflector:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/mkarc>

Club Contacts

President	Ivy Nelson-Groves	WA7IVY	ivy @ wa7ivy.com	425-269-3259
Vice President	Kathy Martin	KB7QMO	klsmartin1 @ gmail.com	253-631-5370
Secretary	Robert Grinnell	KD7WNV	r-grinnell @ comcast.net	425-398-1466
Treasurer	Dave Smith	KB7PSN	kb7psn @ yahoo.com	425-235-5095
Activity Mgr	George Thornton	AE7G	GTLAW @ seonet.com	206-920-7072
Radio Officer	Hal Goodell	N7NW	n7nw.hal @ comcast.net	253-549-4178
Trustees --				
No. 1	Michael Dinkelman	N7WA	n7wa @ arrl.net	253-631-3756
No. 2	Kathleen Weiss	KF7MUD	kf7mud @ live.com	425-283-6545
No. 3 (CoB)	Tim Kane	K7ANE	k7ane @ arrl.net	206-251-7467
No. 4	Alan Hughes	KB7SVU	kb7svu @ junos.com	253-840-4947
No. 5	Daniel Stevens	KL7WM	KL7WM @ arrl.net	206-228-9274
Logo Committee	Dan Humphrey & Dawn Humphrey	N7QHC KC7YYB	n7qhc @ arrl.net	206-243-0163
Webmaster	Jim Etzwiler	KD7BAT	kd7bat @ arrl.net	425-788-7887
VE Testing	Scott Robinson	AG7T	ag7t @ arrl.net	425-788-0452

Mike & Key Online – The following Club resources are available:

On the Web – The Club's site at www.mikeandkey.org includes extensive information about Club activities and events, such as: VE testing, membership, past editions of the *Relay* and more.

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

E-Relay – Help the Club save on printing and postage, Email the *Relay* Editor: kg7ku @ arrl.net.

M&K December Activities

By George Thornton AE7G, Activity Manager

Camping and Radio Contest Fun December meeting features Salmon Run

September is a great time of year to go camping in the Pacific Northwest. Weather is usually excellent. Kids are back in school and the parks are uncrowded.

Our December meeting will feature presentations on how several of us had a lot of fun combining camping and radios last September at the annual Salmon Run contest. Mike Dinkelman N7WA is leading the presentation.

For the Salmon Run contest, there can be a distinct advantage in working from the field. You can move your station to a rare and highly prized location and suddenly you are your own DXpedition.

Come see how a number of us, including those with little or no contest experience, had a great time.

December is the Big Door Prize Month

At our December meeting we will be awarding both our usual and the special year end door prizes. You can see what we have for you at the end of this article.

The biggest year end prize is a new Icom dual band D Star mobile radio, the ID-880h. The ID-880h is fully operational on D Star right out of the box.

I am new to this position and still learning. I want to clarify the rules on awarding yearend prizes:

1. ***Every monthly ticket purchased between December, 2010 and November, 2011 is included in the drawing. Tickets purchased at the December, 2011 meeting will go towards next year's drawing.***
2. ***Even tickets that have won a monthly prize are included in the drawing for the yearend prize.***
3. ***An individual can win only one of the year-end prizes. Multiple prize awards can happen at the monthly drawings.***
4. ***You DO NOT need to be present to win. If you are not there you will automatically be awarded the highest value prize left. Winners who are present will be able to make their choice.***

We also have eight monthly door prizes that will be awarded. Awards for these prizes will be made from tickets purchased at the December meeting.

Last month I pointed out that every dollar spent on ticket sales goes to purchase prizes. In addition, we get discounts and donations, so we actually award MORE in prizes than our members spend on tickets.

Last month we set a record on ticket sales. I want to thank everyone for showing this program such strong support. This is good for all of us and especially for the Club!!!!!!

Following are this month's prizes, photos provided by Jim Aigner N7MU:

M&K December Door Prizes

Here's the line-up for December door prizes:

- ***Daiwa SWR and Power Meter, 1.8 to 150 MHz, 3 ranges to 1.5 kw (used)***
- ***Heat Shrink assortment, 150+ 4" pieces in sizes from 1/16" to 3/8"***
- ***CSI2010 Digital Multimeter***
- ***19" rigid strip of cool white 12 volt DC LED lighting***
- ***6' Heavy duty ground strap (used)***
- ***(5) Silver PL-259 connectors***
- ***9-LED small flashlight***
- ***CSI Temperature controlled digital display solder station***



Year-End Door Prize #1

Wouxun's KG-UV3D-2/UHF, a Dual Band VHF/UHF handheld that gives you 5 watts on 2 meters and 4 watts on 70 cm. See the review of the earlier version of this model in November 2010 QST, page 52. The few people I know who have them, love them.



It comes with all the basic accessories needed to work your first Public Service event. Additional accessories including a programming cable and an antenna with a male SMA connector are

available at reasonable prices.

Online Reference: <http://www.powerwerx.com/wouxun-radios/kg-uv3d-dual-band.html#desc>.

Year-End Door Prize #2



Tigertronics Signalink USB – (<http://www.tigertronics.com/slusbmain.htm>).

It's a TNC for HF or VHF that puts digital modes conveniently at your fingertips. With it, you can decode/encode modes such as CW, RTTY, PSK-31, MT-63, SSTV, AMTOR, EchoLink, and run applications like Fldigi and EasyPal for your EMCOMM team.

It comes with configuration jumper wires and a generic radio cable that can be terminated with a connector that mates with your radio. It's a well-designed, well-built little unit that really simplifies adding digital modes to your radio.

Grand Year-End Door Prize

Here is the final but by no means the least of this year's yearend door prizes: the ICOM ID-880H VHF/UHF Digital Transceiver! Who of us wouldn't love to have this in our truck or on our desk? This is a very capable radio. With it's large, bright display, its 1000+ memories, its 50 watts output on both VHF and UHF, this dual band radio can operate one band at a time in the traditional FM mode or in digital voice and slow speed digital data modes. It also offers a wide receive range and 9600/1200 bps packet capability. Follow the link below to see the review in the January 2010 issue of QST.



It comes with all the basic accessories needed to work your first D-STAR contact – instruction manual, DC power and separation cables, HM-133 mic, mounting screws and mobile bracket. The CS-80/880 cloning software is available as a free download.

Review:

http://www.icomamerica.com/en/products/amateur/dstar/id880h/ID880H_QSTReview.pdf

Product Info:

<http://www.icomamerica.com/en/products/amateur/dstar/id880h/default.aspx>

M&K: Radio Officer Report

By Hal Goodell N7NW, M&K-Radio Officer

The K7LED two meter repeater is continuing to experience a problem which has been isolated to some sort of intermod mix on the hill. As some have notice we have a noise which occurs during the hang time after a station stops transmitting. The problem is intermittent, which of course makes it more difficult to trouble shoot. The noise will also cover up a very weak station and make copy difficult in that case. I have also observed the intermod at times when the 147.08 repeater is on and no one is using our repeater.

The problem has been very intermittent. I spent most of the day Saturday, Dec 3, on Tiger looking into this. However as Murphy would have it, we didn't have any intermod during the time I was on the hill. No I will not volunteer to stay up there to keep the intermod from happening. Hi.

We are continuing to look into this and hopefully will have some resolution before too long. Please refer anyone who has any questions about this problem to me at n7nw.hal@comcast.net.

The ICOM backup repeater is currently at ICOM being repaired. It had a receive problem that I was unable to fix locally. I expect to have it back in a week or so. The good thing is our Motorola is working just fine and doesn't have any known problems.

The 220 repeater continues to perform just fine, just needs more activity. - Hal Goodell, N7NW

[There is an outside camera mounted on the repeater tower on Tiger Mountain. The camera is fixed but does provide one with a view from the site looking west. To view the camera just put the following into you browser <http://www.wa7hjr.org:52101/>. You will have to enable the active X controls.]

[SK] Email: ARRL Members Only Web site...

I am saddened to announce that Gene Underwood, W7AKA, became a Silent Key yesterday [8-Dec].

Gene, an extremely active 'public service' participant, will be greatly missed. Gene's zeal for Ham Radio and Public Service has been an example and encouragement for many other Hams in Western Washington, for a very long time.

Please keep Gene's wife and family in your prayers and thoughts as they move through this loss and the difficult times ahead.

ARRL Western Washington Section – Section Manager: James D Pace, K7CEX – k7cex@arrl.org

[SK] Email: Seafair Parade Marshals...

I learned this morning [9-Dec] that Gene Underwood, W7AKA, long-time amateur radio operator and long-time public service volunteer, passed away on Thursday. Gene was a friend of Seafair and a friend of the Parade Marshals. If you are not a ham, you may not have known Gene. He and his wife Fran have committed their time and their motor home to act as Net Control for our dispersal area as well as at the command post at Westlake.

Beyond that though, Gene's tireless work in the Public Service arena of amateur radio is legendary. He was responsible for the communications network that has been used by the Seattle Marathon Association for many years. He has worked with RAMROD (Ride Around Mount Rainier in One Day) for many years as communications support. He has held posts with the ARRL (a national association of hams) for many years. He and his wife Fran were staples at hamfests, community events and even the occasional actual disaster. He will be greatly missed by those who knew him.

Allan Kush [WV7R], Chief Marshal, Seafair Parade Marshals

Celebrate December Members!

By Dave Smith KB7PSN, Treasurer

As of December 2011, these have been Mike & Key members for the number of years stated. Congratulations to all of you, and thanks for your participation and service. *Each of you makes us who we are:*

John Becker	K7PFR	39 Years
Ken Rau	K7YR	39 Years
Raleigh Elkins	WB7WNF	32 Years
Norman Ahrens	N7KWZ	24 Years
Peter Kozlowski	N7UIF	20 Years
Michael Ross	KB7YXB	18 Years
David Smith	KB7PSN	18 Years
Marilyn Olson	KB7WSH	17 Years
Alan Hughes	KB7SVU	15 Years
Ted Roubal	KC7ZEO	14 Years
Robert LeDoux	KE7JPI	4 Years
Jessie Vaughn	N/C	4 Years
Vandy Eam	N7EAM	2 Years
Allen Evenson	KF7EST	2 Years
Timothy Farnan	KC7LEM	2 Years
Jay Walton	KE7OLG	1 Year
Kenneth Whitman	N9PHW	1 Year



SILENT KEY - GENE UNDERWOOD W7AKA

By George Thornton AE7G

I first met Gene Underwood in the mid 1990's. I was a road cyclist just getting started riding many of the Northwest's most famous road rally events. I soon recognized Gene and Fran. How could I not, it seemed they were everywhere.

After a few years of riding I became involved in helping organize the RAMROD bicycle rally. I began attending monthly coordinator meetings. I saw a lot more of Gene and Fran, they were at all the meetings.

In the early 2000's I was asked to serve as RAMROD safety coordinator. I was contacted on Wednesday, the Tech exam was Saturday. I took and passed the exam. Shortly after Gene Underwood became my Elmer. We spent a lot of time together working HAM events such as RAMROD, the Seattle Marathon, RAW and many others. He pointed me in the right direction and kept me in line.

I have since learned that Gene practically invented HAM radio bicycle event support. He first became involved on behalf of the American Lung Association. He coordinated bicycle event support for several cross country Lung Association rides.

Gene was an electronics genius. In his professional career he was responsible for building and troubleshooting mission critical electronic systems in high end aircraft. Those who knew him uniformly reported he had a mind like a steel trap, things came quickly to him. When it came to electronics Gene had a magic touch.

Gene was the son of a preacher man, he had high moral standards and was loyal and devoted to his family. He and Fran met in their early 20's and they were married for 47 years. Gene revered and respected his wife. I have had many conversations with him about family. There is nothing more complimentary than the continuing love of someone who lives with you day and night year after year, decade after decade. Gene and Fran clearly won at the love game.

Above all, Gene was a consummate public servant. He was a medic and spent fifteen years as a volunteer fireman. He was an Elmer to many in the HAM community. He taught courses and organized uncountable numbers of public service events. At one point we calculated that all the events Gene supported served about a third of a million cyclists. That is not even counting hundreds of thousands of marathon runners.

I found out Gene got his first HAM license at age 13. His biggest accomplishment in HAM radio was that he was active on HF during the Vietnam era. He was able to put together a communication with a new dad and his stateside wife. The communication was clear and lasted more than an hour.

Gene helped me figure out what radios to buy for public service, and how to set them up. He helped me successfully complete building an Elecraft K2. He taught me how to solder effectively.

He was always generous with his time. I have spent many hours at his house while we poked, prodded and tested. He was always there for me.

I tried to give back. Being old school, Gene was less skilled in computer software operation and configuration. He often called on me for computer advice. I helped him set up his iPhones and even helped him set up a new Kenwood D710 for APRS. Gene built my cables for me and fixed it when I mishandled and broke the cable.

Moreover, Gene was a real friend. He was thoughtful and considerate and complimentary. We had many hours of talking as we drove to or from events. I have been the RAMROD director for the past five years and have had to scout the RAMROD course innumerable times. Gene was there with me for most of those trips. Although in many ways we are from different worlds, spending time with him was always easy and fun. He had a good sense of humor and tolerated my many jokes. He typically would respond "Okay" to my silly stories.

I was not always there for Gene. Perhaps more than anything else he ever wanted in HAM radio, he REALLY wanted to drill antenna holes all over my new Mercedes. I was mean. He never got his wish. Today I would gladly let him drill as many holes as he wanted if it would bring him back.

Gene's particular skill was in organizing public service events. His final act came with the 2011 Seattle Marathon, which involved recruiting and organizing 115 HAMS. He did a typically Class A job. Everything ran smoothly and Gene spent all day as Net Control operator while Fran worked as sweep. This was one of the best organized events I have ever attended.

Two days later Gene went in to the hospital for cancer surgery. He seemed well on the way to recovery from the surgery when he had an unexpected turn for the worse. He passed on December 8, 2011 at 2:15 PM. His loyal and faithful wife Fran was there with him to the end.

I am going to miss my good friend. The world is going to miss a truly great and honorable man.

The Tilt Plate

By John Saunders KD7UI

You may ask what in the world, is a Tilt Plate. What does it mean in amateur radio lingo? Well that's what Al, NN4ZZ calls his idea. I found out about the "Tilt Plate" from Jim, a service rep for SteppIR antennas who lives in Atlanta, GA. I just happened to get Jim on the SteppIR service line as I had some questions on my DB-18E assemble. I mention that I had been in a car accident (hit and run) and was just getting to the antenna after having it for over a year and a half.

We got talking and I told him I was planning to have the antenna swing or tilt when I lower my 455 U.S. Tower. Because of the accident, and now being 71, my wife was insisting that I get help with this project. Well, living in the country, that's easier said than done. Getting help has to be organized and "Murphy's Law" always seems to be a factor. You are sure to need some part that you forgot about or the weather forces a postponement. Something always seems to come up that you didn't plan on. While asking for help is fine, you don't want to risk wasting club members' time. Most Hams that I know are independent and like doing pretty much everything themselves. I'm no exception.



Jim said: well there is a friend of mine that has already built what he calls a "Tilt Plate" and he has sold several. This maybe what you are looking for to use with your antenna and tower. Jim gave me Al's web address to check out his design. Well needless to say, Al did a great job. I had a similar idea, but it was obvious that Al had already done a few prototypes and the engineering and design was clean and simple, which is, good engineering!

Yes, I know that not everyone has a tower and not all towers have the ability to be lowered in such a way that a TiltPlate could be used. But, if you do have such a "tower" it is worthwhile to take a look at Al's web site; it just might be something that would work for you. You may want to consider incorporating it into your antenna system.

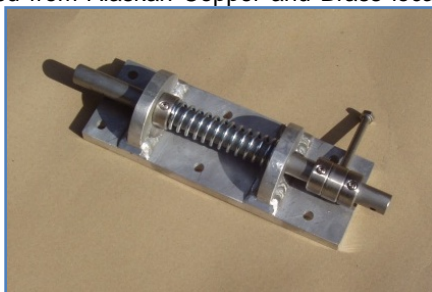
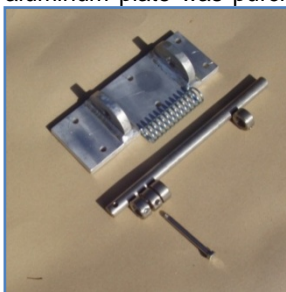
Al has a section on his web page for the do-it-yourself people and that got my

attention. Having the idea early on of building my own "tilt plate" design, it was time to see if it was something I could do. First, did I have the tools and could I get everything I needed to do the job. Well to make it short, I did build my tilt plate, but it took more time than I thought. Cutting 1/2" aluminum plate and laying out the hole patterns on the aluminum for the mast and the boom took more thought than I originally anticipated. This is normally the case with any build, even if you're using plans or other information to complete the project. We have all been there! It's always easier the second time around but this is a onetime thing. Hopefully it will and should hold up for several years.

I also designed and built a lock that holds the Tilt Plate in place after the tower has been raised. Al does have a lock but I was looking for something more positive, not allowing any movement in windy conditions. I can lock and unlock the tilt plate at the 21 foot level from the ground using a long pole. I added a loop of wire-rope to the lock if needed. The "lock" parts include a 1/2" aluminum plate with smaller plates welded in place, a 3/4" X 12" stainless shaft, four 3/4" stainless collets, a 5/16" X 4" stainless bolt and a spring. It did take some time and thought to come up with a design that was simple and functional.

Now that I have built a Tilt Plate and know the tools needed, the time and money invested in the project I would just buy Al's product. I was fortunate to have the tools to do the job and, being retired, the time. If I hadn't had the tools I would have had even more time and money in this project

I used all the parts Al shows on his web site such as bearings, U bolts and the 1"X 18" aluminum shaft. The 6061-T6 1/2" aluminum plate was purchased from Alaskan Copper and Brass located in Kent. I have about \$550.00 to \$600.00 invested, not counting my time. Don't be fooled by the simplicity of Al's design. I have many hours over several days into this project and have been frustrated at times on this build. But, I hope this add-on will make life easier for maintenance in the coming years. Of course, if the rotator goes out, I will still have to climb the tower to adjust the antenna for lowering. But the good news is it will be only at the 21 foot level with a ladder! For me, this beats removing the antenna via a J-Pole, or other means, for lowering it to the ground. SteppIR antennas are not light and the center element loop of the DB-18E runs on each



side of the mast, these facts also were considered in the decision to build and install a Tilt Plate for my antenna system.

Now that the Tilt Plate is on the tower I can get back on track finishing up the SteppIR and, weather permitting, hope to have it up in the next few weeks.

If you have a Tilt-Over-Tower and are thinking of mounting a Tilt Plate there is probably someone in the area that already has one of Al's Tilt Plates in use. You might want to check with them for firsthand information on Al's product.

You can find Al's Tilt Plate and other items on his web site: <http://www.nn4zz.com/>.



Mike & Key ARC – Elmer Contacts – By Jim Aigner N7MU

Area	Elmer Coordinator	Email	Phone	Also...
Homebrew, DX, antennas	Jeff Wandling, W7BRS	dew7brs@gmail.com	206-605-2278	New Hams, satellite work
Beams and Towers	Alan Hughes, KB7SVU	kb7svu@juno.com	253-840-4947	Beam antennas and towers, safety
Contesting	Mike Dinkelman, N7WA	mwdink@clearwire.net	253-631-3756	Contest operations
CW	Mike Dinkelman, N7WA	mwdink@clearwire.net	253-631-3756	Learn CW, operating proficiency
Digital Modes	Earl Palmer, N7EP	earl_palmer@msn.com	206-818-9246	Digital modes, software, TNC's
D-STAR	Steve Hatch, WA7DAD	stephen@hatch.net	206-851-8842	D-STAR technology and operation
Emergency Comm	Tim Kane, K7ANE	k7ane@arrl.net	206-251-7467	CERT, ARES, organizations & Eq't
HF Operation	Dale Tongue AC7NP	dale.tongue@gmail.com	425-432-4254	Eq't, Antennas, best HF operating practices
New Members	Dick Radford, WA7NIW	wa7niw@arrl.net	425-828-9791	Getting started, eq't selection and operation
QRP	Frank Qualls, AB7HA	franklin_qualls@hotmail.com	425-802-1837	Low power operation, design & construction
VHF/UHF Operation	Dave Smith, KB7PSN	kb7psn@yahoo.com	425-235-5095	6 meters and up; radios, antennas, modes

Build Something!

Contributed by Dave Mitchell WA7DTM

December 2, 2011

This blog post was contributed by Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, amateur radio operator for 40 years & experienced EE.

A couple of years ago, a group of local hams were talking on the club repeater, and the talk got around to building stuff. One of the guys said, "You can't really build anything anymore." I almost fell out of my chair. That's simply not true. There are still many companies out there selling kits that are not only fun to build, but are useful additions to the ham shack. There are even reports that Heathkit plans to start selling kits again.

Here are a couple of sources:

- Elecraft (www.elecraft.com). In my mind, Elecraft has become the premiere ham radio kit company, if not the premiere ham radio company, period. The new K3, for example, outperforms just about anything on the market by many accounts. Personally, I have built the KX-1, which is a real blast to operate from a park bench or to take on vacation. I also have and use the W1 wattmeter.
- TenTec (www.tentec.com/categories/Kits). While perhaps known more for their ready-made rigs, they also sell a line of single-band transceivers and receiver kits.
- QRP Kits (www.qrpkits.com). QRPKits.com sells kits that cater to the QRP crowd, that is hams who like to operate low power. They offer many different radios and accessories.

Below are some other companies whose kits have good reputations, but with which I have no personal experience:

- Small Wonder Labs (www.smallwonderlabs.com)
- Wilderness Radio (www.fix.net/~jparker/wild.html)
- Milestone Technologies (www.mtechnologies.com)
- Ham Gadgets (www.hamgadgets.com)
- Almost All Digital Electronics (www.aade.com/index.html)
- FAR Circuits (www.farcircuits.net)
- Jackson Harbor (www.wb9kzy.com/ham.htm)
- QRPme (www.qrpme.com)

QRP clubs are also a good source of cool kits. QRP operators are natural builders and tinkerers, and many of their designs are quite unique. They also like sharing what they've done with other hams. Check out the offering of the American QRP Club (www.amqrp.org), the Four State QRP Club (www.wa0itp.com/4sqrpkitindex.html), and the Arizona SQRPIons (<http://www.azsqrpiions.com>).

Ready to rock and roll? Here are a couple Web sites that you might want to check out before you dive in:

- Electronic Construction from A to Z (www.mtechnologies.com/building/atoz.htm). This site includes a page that lists all the tools you'll need to become a successful kit builder.
- Crystal Sets to Sideband: A Guide to Building an Amateur Radio Station (www.qsl.net/k3pd/book.html). This site not only discusses kit building, but also radio theory.
- The Joy of Kit Building by N6HI (<http://members.cox.net/jrehak/wm-2kit.htm>).

I hope that I've whetted your appetite for building a kit or two. They're a lot of fun to build, and you really do get a rush from operating a radio or using a piece of test equipment that you built yourself.

If you know of other kit sources, or if you've built a kit lately, I'd like to hear about it. Leave a comment below or e-mail me at cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

For more on ham radio, see: [Ham radio in the 21st century](#).

Posted by [Suzanne Deffree](#) on December 2, 2011 EDN Magazine

December 2011

K7LED Relay

M&K General Meeting Minutes

By Robert Grinnell KD7WNV, Secretary

Meeting held November 19, 2011

Meeting was called to order at 1004 hours by the President, Ivy WA7IVY.

Pledge of Allegiance.

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.

Introductions

Officer Reports:

President – Ivy WA7IVY: Report was in the *Relay*.

Secretary – Robert KD7WNV: Will not be present at the December General Membership meeting. Dick WA7NIW or Liz N7ZXH will substitute taking minutes.

Treasurer – Dave KB7PSN: The Board began work on the 2012 Budget at its November meeting. The budget will be presented for approval at the December General Membership meeting. Also, we will be auditing the books in January. Please send in all expenses and dues.

Activities Manager – George AE7G: We were concerned about the weather, but escaped without snow, and our speaker, Lyle Johnson KK7P from Elecraft, is here today. Mike N7WA is organizing a presentation on the Salmon Run for the December program. Encouraged members to buy door prize tickets – we get about double value for each dollar spent, due to deals, and there are great year-end prizes.

Chairman of the Board – Tim K7ANE: Nothing to report.

Radio Officer – Hal N7NW: There is a new courtesy tone on the repeater. Thought we had a repeater problem. Some had commented that the repeater comes on by itself, which it should not be able to do. Found out that 147.08 was on the air when that happens. Concluded that there was some kind of mix going on between the two, having the same tone. Still some investigating and work to do.

Quorum present.

Sam N7RHE made a motion to approve the minutes; seconded Michelle WA7PVE. Motion passed.

Vice President – Kathy KB7QMO: Membership applications: Charles Graff, K7CHV; Leslie Johnson, N2YNK and Denise Johnson, KF7RSK (family membership). All approved by the membership.

Relay Editor – Gary KG7KU: Expressed appreciation for all those who continue to contribute to the *Relay*. Keep in mind that the *Relay* gets quite a circulation—there are a lot of people outside the Club who read it.

Webmaster – Jim KD7BAT: The website is mostly up to date. Notify Jim if you find something that isn't. Reminded members that there is a Swap page available for items you want to sell.

Standing Committee Reports:

Strategic Planning – Mike N7WA: Nothing to report.

Facilities – Daniel KL7WM: We are just completing a rental agreement with the Salvation Army. We thank them for the use of the facility. We have also arranged some insurance coverage that they requested that we have. Encouraged members to take the *Relay* by electronic delivery instead of postal—it saves the Club quite a bit of money.

Education – Tim K7ANE: Not aware of any more classes before January, but Daniel KL7WM indicated that the Federal Way ARC will conduct a Technician class on the first weekend of December. Check the FWARC website for details. Tim announced that NOAA will conduct three

sessions of SKYWARN weather spotter training: This Monday night (November 21) in Kent; the following Monday night (November 28) in Poulsbo; and December 12 in Tacoma. Addresses and contact in *Relay*.

Public Service – Robert KD7WNV: The committee met after the October General meeting, to begin work on the 2012 booklet, and we have already designated most of the content update and advertising solicitation responsibilities. Anyone wishing to help is welcome, and many of us are handling multiple assignments, so would be glad to spread them around to more people. There are a couple of major public service events coming up. Gene W7AKA and Fran N7FWZ are coordinating support for the Seattle Marathon, and are holding prep sessions at their home this weekend. The Special People's Cruise is the first Sunday in December. Dick WA7NIW indicated there are still some openings; see him if interested.

Technical – Alan KB7SVU: Alan not present.

Other Committees (as appropriate)

VE Exams – Scott AG7T: We had 9 people take exams last month. Awarded 6 Technician, 2 General, and 1 Extra.

Flea Market – Mike N7WA: The signup book is here today; please sign up for what you can do. Thanks for helping with folding and labeling the flyers today.

By Laws Review – Dave KB7PSN: Nothing to report.

Field Day – Ivy WA7IVY: The 2011 Field Day results were published in *QST*. We did well this year: 1st place in Washington state, in the 7th call area, and in Class 6A nationwide; and 19th overall. Introduced Andy KE7ZGR, Bonus Points chair. Michelle WA7PVE volunteered to be VHF/UHF Chair for 2012. Both the Wagon Wheel and the Barracks have been reserved for 2012.

In-House Contest – Mike N7WA: The contest is finished. Have received one log so far; please turn yours in by December 10th.

Holiday Party: We do not have a chair yet. We need someone to volunteer today or we will not have the party.

Audit – Sam N7RHE: The Audit committee will convene before the January meeting to audit the books.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Bell Ringing – Jim KD7BAT: Our annual day of bell ringing for the Salvation Army will be Saturday, December 10. Sign-up sheets are going around. Jim will send out lists to those signed up after the meeting. Locations will be Fry's and WalMart in Renton. This is actually part of our agreement with the Salvation Army, and reduces our rent.

Alligator Award – Mike W7XTZ still holds the award.

Good of the Order:

⇒LW Abel K7LWA is looking for an Elmer to help with a couple of homebrew projects.

⇒The next organizing meeting for the Flea Market is the second Tuesday, December 13.

⇒The next Mike & Key Board meeting will be on the first Tuesday of the month, December 6 at 7:00 pm, at the Salvation Army in Renton.

⇒The next Mike & Key General Membership meeting is the third Saturday, December 17, 2011.

⇒John WA7HQG made a motion to close the meeting, seconded by Gil W7GIL. The motion was passed. Meeting adjourned at 1052 hours.

⇒8 guests; 64 members, 60 ARRL members

Attested: Robert Grinnell KD7WNV, Secretary

December 2011

K7LED Relay

M&K Board Meeting Minutes

By Ivy Nelson-Groves WA7IVY, Acting Secretary
Meeting held 6-December 2011

Officers present

- President – Ivy Nelson-Groves (WA7IVY)
- Vice President – Kathy Martin (KB7QMO)
- Secretary – Robert Grinnell (KD7WNV)
- Treasurer – Dave Smith (KB7PSN)
- Activities Manager – George Thornton (AE7G)
- Radio Officer – Hal Goodell (N7NW)

Trustees present

- No. 1 – Mike Dinkelman (N7WA)
- No. 2 – Kathleen Weiss (KF7MUD)
- No. 3 – Tim Kane (K7ANE) (CoB)
- No. 4 – Alan Hughes (KB7SVU)
- No. 5 – Daniel Stevens (KL7WM)

Other officers (non-voting)

- Relay Editor – Gary Bryan (KG7KU)
- Webmaster – Jim Etwiler (KD7BAT)

Visitors

Michael KG7MX

Chairman of the Board Tim K7ANE called the meeting to order at 1901 hours.

Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes of the previous board meeting was made by Ivy WA7IVY, seconded by Alan KB7SVU. Motion passed.

Officer Reports

- Chairman of the Board** – Tim K7ANE: nothing to report
- President** – Ivy WA7IVY: nothing to report
- Vice President** – Kathy KB7QMO: New member applicants: Kathryn Shuman KF7RSX and Douglas S Clowers KF7REF. All recommended for approval.
- Secretary** – Robert KD7WNV: not present, email was read by Ivy.
- Treasurer** – Dave KB7PSN: Our books are in order.
- Activities Manager** – George AE7G: Set a record on door prize ticket sales last month. Mike N7WA will be presenting about Salmon Run in December. George discussed potential programs for January. February program will be about the Flea Market; March will be annual elections.
- Radio Officer** – Hal N7NW: Hal went up to the repeater on Saturday (Dec 3rd). Looks like there is no problem with the Motorola repeater, but there is still an intermod problem on Tiger Mountain. Hal is still working on finding out what is going on. Our back up repeater is currently in the shop at ICOM being repaired (the receiver was not locking up on frequency). Hal will be renewing our annual report to the Washington Secretary of State.
- Relay Editor** – Gary KG7KU: not present
- Webmaster** – Jim KD7BAT: not present

Standing Committee Reports

- Strategic Planning** – Mike N7WA: no report
- Facilities** – Daniel KL7WM: no report
- Education** – Tim K7ANE: no report
- Public Service** – Kathleen KF7MUD: not present
- Technical** – Alan KB7SVU: no report

Other Committee Reports

- By-Laws** – Dave KB7PSN: no report
- Logo** – Jim N7MU: no report
- Field Day** – Ivy WA7IVY: we have secured the barracks and wagon wheel for 2012. Ivy will clarify if the Discovery pass will be required for those using the wagon wheel and the barracks.
- Picnic** – Hal N7NW: can't reserve until the beginning of January. Insurance is not required so long as we don't have inflatable devices. Dave KB7PSN will make the reservations for us.
- Flea Market** – Mike N7WA / Hal N7NW: meeting will be next Tuesday. We still need a ticket chair.

Old Business

Bell ringing is this Saturday at Frys and Walmart. Jim Etwiler will send out an email to those that signed up with the schedule

New Business

- ⇒ Dave KB7PSN has volunteered to do the Awards Banquet and has found a venue in the Renton Highlands for the event.
- ⇒ Budget: The board discussed items to be included in the 2012 budget. George AE7G moved to approve the budget and submit it to the general membership, Daniel KL7WM seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- ⇒ Discussion about the Salvation Army and our board meeting arrangements. Daniel will work with Jim to clarify these issues and the construction timeline with the Salvation Army leadership.
- Good of the Order**
- ⇒ George AE7G would like feedback about the door prizes.
- ⇒ Need an additional work party to put the power trailer items back. Sunday afternoon, Dec 11th at 2pm; only need about four people about ½ hour to finish this. Ivy WA7IVY will send this out on the reflector.
- ⇒ March is our annual elections, so we need to get nominations.
- ⇒ January will be our annual audit.
- ⇒ There being no further business, Tim K7ANE adjourned the meeting at 2016 hours.

Attested: Ivy Nelson-Groves, President (Acting Secretary for Dec 2011).

Wear the Mike & Key Club Logo

By Jim Aigner N7MU

Over the last few months you may have noticed the Mike and Key logo prominently displayed on fleece jackets and an assortment of shirts. Our logo was digitized in two sizes, a small version for the chest suitable for embroidery on the front of shirts, vests, and jackets and a large version for use on the back of sweatshirts, vests, and jackets.

You can buy new clothing with the club logo or have your own items embroidered by a vendor or do it yourself. There are a few vendors who have our logo and can do the work for you. You can find just about everything - shirts, vests, sweatshirts, and jackets in the online catalog: <http://www.sanmar.com>. Prices with the logo are about 10% less than catalog list prices.

If you have questions, see a Logo Committee member: Jim Aigner N7MU, Dawn Humphrey KC7YYB, or Dan Humphrey N7QHC. Let's continue to wear the Mike and Key logo proudly at club meetings, the summer picnic, and Field Day.

Pacific Northwest Hamfairs & Events

Source: PNW Hamfair webpage at <http://www.n7cfo.com/amradio/hf/hf.htm>. (Used with Permission)

February 18, 2012. Salem Hamfair & Computer/Electronics Swapmeet. Rickreall, Oregon at the Polk County Fairgrounds. <http://www.w7sra.com>.

March 10, 2012. Mike & Key Swap Meet. Puyallup fairgrounds exhibition hall, Puyallup, WA. For information, contact dmdink@yahoo.com or n7wa@arrl.net. <http://www.mikeandkey.org/flea.htm>, [Flyer in PDF](#). (298K)

March 31, 2012. MicroHAMS Digital Conference. Redmond, WA.
<http://www.microhams.com/softcontent.aspx?scld=58>

[Statements as posted on the Website:] Please email any comments, corrections, questions, etc. to [n7cfo \[at\] n7cfo.com](mailto:n7cfo@n7cfo.com).

N7CFO-Disclaimer: I do my best to keep up with scheduling changes on these events, but there is always the chance that one will be canceled or re-scheduled and I will not find out about it. Please verify all dates and locations with the sponsor.

Auburn, WA – Ham Related Classes: December 2011 thru January 2012

Contributed by Bill Balzarini KL7BB

These Workshops-Classes open to All Washington FCC Licensed Hams and CERT Members and is conducted at no charge to attend. Also see: <http://HamShare.com>. Location: Auburn Annex Building 98002.

Dec 17, 2011 9:00AM to Noon Saturday Doors Open 8:45AM to 9AM (lunch 11:30 to 12:45)

High Performance Repeater Systems, (Class #500) 9:00AM to Noon – How to build **High Performance High Power** Ham Radio Repeater Systems for max coverage and range for users with low power Hand-Held walkie-n-talkie Transceivers. How to **Solar power** your Repeater system for EOC use. To Register Send: Your Name, Call Sign, Phone#, Email address and the words **Class # 500RPT** to: [Email.HamShare\(at\)Yahoo.com](mailto:Email.HamShare(at)Yahoo.com). Also see: <http://HamShare.com>.

Dec 26Th 2011 10:AM to 3:00PM **Monday** Doors open 9:30AM to 10:00AM (lunch 11:30 to 12:45)

NVIS Antenna Workshop (for HF Bands) (Class #098R)

10:00AM to 10:45AM NVIS Antenna Presentation

11:00AM to 11:30AM This classroom demo is hands-on learning about the NVIS Antenna and have a chance to build one.

12:45PM to ~3PM Additional Antenna Presentations (4 Square etc.)

To Register Send: Your Name, Call Sign, Phone#, Email address and the words **Class# 098R NVIS**

to: [Email.HamShare \(at\) Yahoo.com](mailto:Email.HamShare(at)Yahoo.com)

Also see: <http://HamShare.com>

Jan 07, 2012 9AM to 5 PM Saturday Doors open at 8:45 to 9:00AM (lunch 11:30 to 12:45)

Basic Electronics Workshop-Class (Class #100)

DC (Direct Current), Digital Voltmeter "Volts-Amps-Ohms", Resistor Color Code and other Value Systems.

Mobile power sources. 120VAC to 12DC-Power supplies.

Steering Diodes Forward Amps & PIV. Switching Power Supplies, Noise Considerations.

Batteries, Wet Cell Technology. CTEK-7002 Battery Reconditioning. Solar Power Energy for your Ham Radio Station.

To Register Send: Your Name, Call Sign, Phone#, Email address and the words **Class# 100 DC**

to: [Email.HamShare \(at\) Yahoo.com](mailto:Email.HamShare(at)Yahoo.com)

Also see: <http://HamShare.com>

Jan 14, 2012 9AM to 5 PM Saturday Doors open at 8:45 to 9:00AM (lunch 11:30 to 12:45) **Basic Electronics Workshop-Class** (Class #101)

AC (Alternating Current).

Capacitors. Inductors. Transformers.

Audio Amplifiers, Solid State, IC Integrated Circuits.

Modems. Audio Power Amplifiers. Filters.

Turning AC power into +12Volts DC.

To Register Send: Your Name, Call Sign, Phone#, Email address and the words **Class# 101**

to: [Email.HamShare \(at\) Yahoo.com](mailto:Email.HamShare(at)Yahoo.com)

Also see: <http://HamShare.com>

Jan 21, 2012 9AM to 5 PM Saturday Doors open at 8:45 to 9:00AM (lunch 11:30 to 12:45)

Digital Messaging Tools, Workshop-Class (Class #501 FLX)

FLdigi, RMS-Express.

Guest Presenter Curt Black WR5J. Puget Sound Digital Hams and President of the West Seattle Amateur Radio Club

This hands on Workshop-Class will make the Digital World of Ham Radio Fun, come alive with

your Software Programs & Lap-top computer. Using: FLDIGI, FLMSG, CheckSR, RMSEXPRESS, and EASYPAL.

Please bring any laptop you may have - and a VHF/UHF handheld - if you don't have these no problem - the demos are just a bit more fun if you actively decode along with the program.

We will start with FLDIGI a piece of software that runs on Windows, AppleOS and Linux. We'll explore some of what it offers us for use in our daily radio operations and how it can really shine in emergency communications applications.

We will next explore EASYPAL - a Windows digital application primarily used for image transmission, but actually very capable of transmitting error free any file on your computer.

Then I hope we can play a bit with RMSEXPRESS - a way to send messages on VHF or HF into the WinLink2000 system using the Winmor protocol on HF or packet radio infrastructure on VHF. Don't have a Packet TNC? I think by the time of this workshop, we will have the ability to use some software called Sound Modem to replace the hardware - we will see. Traditionally, hardware for packet is the reliable way to go - maybe that is changing.

To Register Send: Your Name, Call Sign, Phone#, Email address and the words **Class #501 FLX**

to: [Email.HamShare \(at\) Yahoo.com](mailto:Email.HamShare(at)Yahoo.com)

Also see: <http://HamShare.com>

73 de Bill KL7BB 206-400-1723 KL7BB@Yahoo.com

Special Event for Special People

By Tim Kane, K7ANE



Steamer "Virginia V" awaits her "Special People" guests at the Naval Reserve dock.

Their eyes were sparkling; their voices were excited, as they arrived at the Naval Reserve dock and yacht clubs and marinas around Lake Union and Lake Washington. Hundreds of developmentally disabled guests and their helpers, family and friends excitedly awaited the Captains' hails to come aboard the awaiting boats for the annual Special People's Holiday Cruise.

The weather gods were most kind again this year on Sunday afternoon, 4-December, providing a magnificent winter day – clear, dry and cool -- make that, cold.

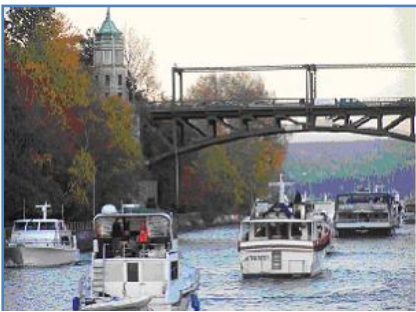
Boats including "Virginia V," "Goodtime II," "Spirit of '76," and "Match Maker" were moored dockside, awaiting their passengers. The guests arrived by private cars, vans and school buses from around the region. Individual boaters and marine charter operators volunteered their vessels and crews for this annual event. Each boat was decorated with Christmas lights and garlands, large inflatable Santas and Snowmen and other holiday decorations; many crews included costumed Santa's elves and helpers.

The boats took their guests on a two-hour sunset cruise around Lake Union, through the Montlake cut and along Lake Washington's 520 floating bridge, then back in a parade of scores of decorated boats. The guests also enjoyed the many holiday-decorated and lighted homes along the shoreline. Near the eastern shore the boats rounded a lovely old two-masted wooden sailboat, where Santa greeted each vessel and guest, while Christmas carols drifted on the chilly air.



Guests board the M/V "Goodtime II."

Sponsored by SEAFAIR and 'Union-76' gas stations and others, this unique outdoor adventure is arranged each year in cooperation with organizations and programs for the disabled around the region. Caterers and food companies donated delicious holiday platters for on-board refreshment, Christmas carolers serenaded at dockside; members of the SEAFAIR family – Boat Club, Commodores, Pirates, Parade Marshals, and others, provided support and service personnel. Similar cruises are held simultaneously in Bremerton, Tacoma, and Olympia.



Cruise boats passing under the Montlake Bridge.

Communication support was provided, as every year, by amateur radio operators, coordinated by Mike & Key's own Dick Radford, WA7NIW. Using 2-meter simplex and repeater channels, hams worked at each dock, shadowing and providing the SEAFAIR dock coordinators with information from the event managers. One

ham was also assigned to one or more of the boats from each starting dock, to let Dick at Net Control know periodically the boat's current position on the lakes.

Previously Net Control was situated on the second floor of the Naval Reserve building, overlooking south Lake Union. This year, however, Dick set up on a boat nearby. Somebody suggested it was docked beside *Hooters*, but that's surely just a rumor. This relocation was caused by the extensive construction in progress at the Naval Reserve armory, turning it into the new home for *MOHAI*, the *Museum of History and Industry*, which will open next year.



Sternwheeler "Christine W" makes the turn for home around Santa's ketch.



Santa waves to special guests from the "Virginia V."

When each boat returned to its dock the hams took on their most critical role, and ensured that the same number of passengers who arrived return to each bus, no stowaways still on the boats, no guests overboard. Net Control confirms the numbers are right. This year at least 24 hams helped out on the Cruise, several from Mike & Key.

In addition to Dick WA7NIW, who was ably assisted in Net Control by Colleen N7LEX, there were Gary KG7KU, David KC7FSR, Jim KD7BAT, Liz N7ZXH, Brendan KD7IKV, and yours truly, Tim K7ANE, all from Mike & Key, plus other hams, Charles W7CEB, Bob KC8TYE, Victor KD7OWX, Anna KE7OIQ, David KE7PBA, Jeff W7IUS, Ralph N7KGA, Bill N6NBN, Jon WE7IRD, Ted NØYC, Jon KC7EWE, Pat W7GTO, Hal N3YX, and Anthony KE7HQY. Michelle, WB7AYU, also volunteered and captained her boat in the parade. Other hams crewed on various vessels. Thank you all!!

So, what are you doing next year? Pencil the Cruise in on your calendar, and let Dick know you're interested in helping. This is a great special event, providing some fun and wonder to many very special people.

M&K-K7LED Club Library

By Tim Kane – K7ANE



If you drop by the club library at Toku's (AD7JA) TV repair shop in Skyway in the coming weeks or stop by the library table at the next Club General membership meeting you'll find five new books. The books were selected based on the preference survey we held at the general meeting a couple months back, plus input from the board and others.

The nice weather and the impulse to get outdoors seems to have influenced the results. Antennas are clearly the number one interest of club members at present, as reflected in the fact that three of the five new acquisitions relate to this key outdoor element of our stations. The other two publications focus on mobile amateur operations, by car, boat, and even airplane.

Based on what you told us the new books include:

- *Stealth Antennas, 1st Edition, 2010*
- *Amateur Radio on the Move, 1st Edition, 2005*
- *GPS and Amateur Radio, 2007*
- *ARRL Guide to Antenna Tuners, 1st Edition, 2010*
- *Small Antennas for Small Spaces, 1st Edition, 2011*

If you don't see a book on your primary interest, don't worry. We'll put in another order or two later in the year, working from the survey, and member input. Let me know if there's something you'd like to see the club acquire, that's not already on the list.

In the meantime, take a look at the new books at the library at Skyway TV & Radio Service, 11818 Renton Avenue South, Seattle. Enjoy some of the benefits of your membership, expand your knowledge, or just have a nice summertime read.



HamRadioBooks'dot'Com

By Andrew Baze AB8L



You're reading the serialized version of *The Road Home*, which is available in full form in your **Mike & Key library** (as well as **HRO, Universal Radio, and Amazon.com**). You can experience "the rest of the story", which includes the adventures of a few more characters, and additional radio and emergency preparedness details (non-fiction), by getting your own, full copy of the book or Kindle e-book.

Whether you're only reading the shortened serial or the full book, I hope you love the story!

Good news: **The Kindle e-book is on sale for a short time for only \$0.99!** If you've been waiting for a good time to get your own copy, now is the perfect time – the pricing is temporary and will never be lower! ☺

And for more preparedness tips, including the class-by-class review of my recent CERT course in Redmond, you can go to www.PreparedBlog.com.

73, Andrew Baze AB8L

Navigating the Wreckage

Robbie pulled to the shoulder and stopped. He and Jeff stared ahead in fascinated horror.

When the earthquake struck, most of the damage was centered in the Seattle area. Since Seattle was unfortunately built directly on a fault line, much of the destruction was catastrophic. But even 30 miles away in North Bend, due to the size and ferocity of the quake, the damaging effects were severe. The combination of the incredible shaking, even at this distance from the epicenter, and the construction practices at the time when the natural gas lines were installed in North Bend, led to several critical failures. On the northeast side of town, one intersection of two major gas lines was completely severed as pipes were simply pulled apart. In two other places, as the pipeline bisected the town from east to west, the line cracked enough to quickly release all of the pressurized natural gas in the lines.

Maybe because of pilot lights in water heaters and gas stoves, electrical wires short-circuiting, or maybe even because of a burning cigarette falling out of the mouth of someone standing slack-jawed, watching buildings collapse, two large fires had started. Initially fueled by natural gas, and later fueled further by wood buildings it consumed as it grew, the fire roared through the already-devastated southern part of town.

From their vantage point, Robbie and Jeff could see three North Bend fire engines parked in one area, with nearby firefighters directing water onto two buildings not yet completely engulfed in flames.

As they watched, one of the hoses stopped spraying water. One of the engines had probably exhausted the onboard water tank. Jeff wondered how long the other two would last.

"Larry, I can see that much of the town is on fire. And the part that's not on fire appears to be severely damaged from the quake. Where are you? Are you OK?"

Jeff didn't really think they'd have any time or ability to help Larry even if he wasn't OK, but fell back on his polite habits and had to ask. He was hoping that Larry could continue to operate his radio and help keep locals informed and relay emergency messages.

"I'm OK. I'm up on the hill to the south, on the other side of the highway. I can see into town, but my house is OK. I had it earthquake-proofed a few years ago. In fact, the guy..."

Jeff knew that Larry was shaken up and wanted to talk. But they had no time. He set the handset in his lap as he turned to Robbie.

"We have to get through here soon, before the fire spreads or something else happens. Drive up to the intersection and take a left. Go slowly. The last thing we need now is a wreck. Our goal is to get to the other side of town, where we'll find the next off-ramp, so we can get back on I-90."

"Got it, Dad," Robbie replied with confidence.

Larry stopped talking for a moment. Jeff took the opportunity to speak before Larry started up again.

"Larry, listen, this is important. You may be the only guy in the area who can warn people. You should probably keep transmitting on this frequency. If anyone is scanning repeater frequencies, they'll hear you sooner or later. Everyone who's heading westbound needs to know that the road is blocked."

Jeff thought for a moment. Before Larry could answer, he spoke again. "Do you have an ARES or RACES group in North Bend, as far as you know?"

Larry had started to come out of his shock, and was ready to get down to business. "I have a flyer around here somewhere. I think they have a weekly radio net. I remember writing down that frequency somewhere."

"Get on that frequency too, and let them know. Hopefully many of them have backup power and working radios. They should be prepared for a power outage, and will know who to sync up with. Let them know about the blocked road too, so they can relay that information."

"Larry," Jeff said slowly and seriously, "it's up to you now to get the word out. Do you have enough power to keep transmitting for a while?"

[Continued on Page 14]

HamRadioBooks'dot'Com *[Continued from Page 13]*

"Yeah," Larry replied, sounding serious now too. "My power is still on. One of my neighbors said that a block over, the power is out, but at least on my block we still have power. And if it goes out, I have a generator and some backup batteries to run my radio. I'm topping off the charge on them right now, just in case."

"Sounds like a good idea. Use the power while you have it. Now I have to go. We have to get back to Bellevue. It's all up to you now. Make sure people in the area know what's going on. Good luck."

"Thanks Jeff. Good luck to you."

"NM8J clear and monitoring."

"KD9PW clear and monitoring." Larry was already sounding in control of the situation.

Robbie drove slowly down a main road, headed west, carefully weaving around occasional pieces of debris in the roadway. He stayed clear of the few other, slowly-moving cars on the road. Now the road curved to the north, toward the fire. He pulled over to the shoulder and stopped again.

"What now, Dad? The road looks like it's taking us toward the fire."

"Up there — see the left turn we can take?" Jeff pointed to a side road about twenty yards ahead. "Let's turn there."

Robbie pulled out onto the road again. They heard the screech of brakes and a blaring horn as a car swerved around them, also heading north.

"Dang it!" Robbie said, shaking his head. They couldn't afford any stupid mistakes, and he'd just made one.

"Yeah, you probably should have looked before pulling onto the roadway. And I should have looked too. That was my fault. Sorry, Robbie. Lesson learned. You're doing great though. Just keep going."

Jeff felt bad about not having time to be thorough in Robbie's driver training. It was obviously a ridiculous environment for a driver's education course, but he was doing his best, and they didn't really have a choice.

Robbie carefully took the left-hand turn into a neighborhood, hoping it had an exit to the main road that led to the next I-90 onramp.

"Hold on!" Jeff said excitedly.

Robbie slowed down even further, unsure of what Jeff was asking.

"No, sorry, keep going. I just remembered. Even though the phones don't work, the GPS still does!" Jeff had become accustomed to using the GPS functionality in his cell phone. When the phones stopped working, he had been too distracted to think about switching to another device. And since they had known exactly where they were going until just recently, they hadn't needed to think about any alternative.

Jeff pulled a GPS unit from the glove compartment. He plugged the charger into the 12-volt outlet in the dashboard and turned it on.

"Give it a minute to lock onto some satellites, and we'll be in business," Jeff said. "In fact, you might as well pull over for a minute while we figure it out, in case we're going the wrong way right now."

Robbie pulled over and looked at the GPS with Jeff, watching an hourglass symbol spin around slowly as the GPS receiver locked on to several satellites and triangulated the truck's position. About a minute later, a map appeared. Jeff zoomed in, so that they could get a better view of the city and this neighborhood.

"Look," Jeff said. "We can follow this road to the main road, and get back on the highway here." He pointed to the road that ran north-south, almost parallel to Interstate-90. They would be able to get onto that road as soon as they got out of this neighborhood. Luckily, they had been going the right direction.

"OK, I'll keep going the same way," Robbie said, as he pulled back onto the road and drove north, into the heart of the neighborhood.

Whether because of building code standards, earthquake retrofitting, or just because of dumb luck, some houses were standing and appeared to be untouched by the quake, while others had fully or partially collapsed. Robbie remembered a video about tornados they'd watched once in his Earth Science class at school. They had seen where a tornado had come through and totally destroyed some houses, while leaving some others undamaged only a few dozen yards away. The path of devastation in this neighborhood wasn't as clear as the path of destruction the tornado left behind, but there were still clusters of houses standing near areas where many houses had collapsed.

As they slowly passed one collapsed house, they saw several people standing outside, shouting at the house. Apparently someone was trapped inside. A woman sat outside on the sidewalk, her hands on her face, crying uncontrollably, with another man sitting next to her, his face showing his own pain as he tried to comfort her. Two other men were wedging a board under part of a partially collapsed wall, to keep it from collapsing further, and several other people stood and watched with helpless expressions on their faces.

"Dad, can we help them?"

Jeff was quiet. Robbie slowed down even more.

A few people outside the house looked their way, but did nothing.

Jeff said "Keep going. They have it under control, and we have to get back to our house."

Jeff didn't need to say that their house could also have collapsed.

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"See the green vest that guy is wearing?" He pointed to one of the men trying to wedge the board under a leaning wall. "That's a CERT vest. He must have taken the CERT training, which means he has at least very basic training about what to do. That's probably as good as they're going to get for a while."

Robbie felt his eyes fill with tears as he continued driving. He imagined a similar scene at his home, and thought about how it would be if his mom and Lisa were trapped inside.

The people outside the house turned back to their work as Robbie accelerated and drove away.

Robbie and Jeff saw similar scenes several more times, people in clusters outside fallen houses, some trying to get inside, some just watching. Robbie and Jeff would occasionally wave somberly as they passed, but most of the time, as soon as people noticed that they weren't firefighters or police officers, they turned their attention back to their destroyed homes or trapped neighbors.

Robbie and Jeff continued to drive slowly through the neighborhood, occasionally driving around debris that had spilled into the roadway. They eventually neared the edge of the neighborhood. They saw the highway only a hundred yards away, through the gap between two lightly-damaged houses.

"Look Dad — we're close!" Robbie said excitedly.

"Almost there!" Jeff said.

Robbie slammed on the brakes again.

This time he was faster than his father. Jeff had been thinking about the highway and trying to figure out what road led to the highway on-ramp. Robbie had been looking forward for about a second before Jeff had turned his attention back to the road. During that second Robbie couldn't help but notice the spray of sparks that shot out from a long, black snake lying in the roadway. A snapped power line was lying across the road, waiting for them, directly in their path. If the sparks hadn't alerted him, Robbie may not have seen it.

"You're turning into a good driver," Jeff said. "You're doing a great job paying attention to the road."

Robbie beamed.

It was true. Robbie's driving skills had improved since earlier in the afternoon. Of course, anyone could reasonably argue that they could only improve when starting with no skills at all, aside from those learned playing video games. However, Robbie had a knack for problem-solving. Much of the challenge of driving, whether it's getting along with the other vehicles on the road, timing turns appropriately, or navigating both unexpected obstacles, is related to problem-solving abilities. So even though Robbie hadn't spent any time on the road driving a real car or truck, this ability started to reveal itself in new ways. In this case, with the sparks alerting him to take action, braking was almost instinctual, one of the easiest problems to solve so far today: see sparks, stop the truck.

For a few seconds after the truck screeched to a halt, Robbie and Jeff sat and stared at the scene in front of them. They could see that the fallen power line draped across a parked car and then crossed the road. There was no way to drive down the road without touching the line. Even though power appeared to be out in many areas, it appeared to be on here, which meant that this wire could kill them both in an instant.

Robbie looked left, looked right, and spoke. "I don't want to touch that wire, and I don't want to go back. Maybe we can go around it. That yard on the right looks like a safe way to go."

"You're right. We can't drive over that power line," Jeff replied. "Even though we're insulated from the ground because of our tires, it's a bad idea." He looked around a little bit more. Robbie had assessed the situation correctly. "You're right. That yard on the right looks clear, and we'll be able to keep at least two wheels on the sidewalk, so we should have no problem. Put it into four-wheel drive and go slowly."

Robbie pressed a button on the dashboard, and the truck shifted into four-wheel-drive, then turned the steering wheel sharply to the right and gently pressed down on the accelerator. The truck crawled over the curb, onto the sidewalk. Robbie steered toward the lawn, intending to use the sidewalk and part of the lawn as their new path. As they neared the far edge of the lawn, the front door of the nearby house door popped open and a man jumped out, wearing a dingy, white bathrobe. He was fat, and the robe barely fit around his midsection. But despite his size, he moved quickly, and he appeared to be angry.

"What the heck are you doing? Get off of my lawn! I'm calling the cops!"

Startled, but not slowing down, Robbie continued to drive carefully.

"Sorry — we need to get to the highway," Jeff called back, through the partially-opened passenger side window.

A second later, Robbie turned the wheel sharply to the left, dropped down off of the sidewalk, and they were back on the road. They could hear the man shouting curses at them, enraged at the shallow track their passenger side tires had left in his lawn.

As they continued down the road, Robbie glanced in the rearview mirror. The man was still in the yard, yelling at them.

"Wow," Robbie said. "It's like he didn't even realize there was an earthquake. He's worried about his lawn!"

"I bet we'll see more unusual behavior before the day is over," Jeff replied.

Ham Nets & Events - DECEMBER 2011 / JANUARY 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
11 1700 – NWWA-LDS Net 147.34 (Weekly) 2000 – King Co. ARES Net 147.08 (Weekly) 2015 – Kids Net 145.49 (Weekly)	12 0545 & 1645 – Weather Net 145.33 (M-F) 1700 – Evergreen State Traffic System Net 145.19 (Daily) 1830 – WA Emerg. HF Net-ARES 3.985 (Weekly)	13 2000 – Seattle Red Cross Comm Team Net 147.080 (Weekly) 2000 – Snohomish Co. ACS/RACES Net 146.92 (Weekly)	14 2000 – Evergreen Interie Gen/Tech Info Net – 145.33 (Weekly) 2000 – Educational Radio Net – PSRG 146.96 (Weekly)	15 1900 – M&K Public Service Net 146.82 (Weekly) 2000 – Computer & Packet Net 145.33 (Weekly)	16	17 1000–M&K Club Meeting, Renton 1230– M&K Ham Radio Exams, Renton. Scott- ag7t@arrl.net
18 2200 – NW Astronomy Net 145.33 (Weekly)	19 1900 – Seattle ACS Net 146.90 (Weekly) 1930 – PSRG Net 146.96 (Weekly) 2000 – VL Net 145.33 (WKly)	20	21 2100 – NWSOAR Net 146.82 (Weekly)	22	23	24 0900 – WA State Emerg. Net (WSEN) ARES HF Net 3.985 (Weekly)
25 –Christmas– Happy Holidays	26	27	28	29	30	31 –December– 2011 New Years' Eve
01 –January– 2012 Have a Safe & Happy New Year!	02	03 M&K Board Mtg Salvation Army Bldg Renton, 7pm	04	05	06	07
08	09	10 M&K Flea market Committee Mtg Mike Dinkelman's N7WA residence, 7pm	11	12	13 Relay Articles Due – 23:59:59	14
15	16	17	18	19	20 Relay Articles Due – 23:59:59	21 1000–M&K Club Meeting, Renton 1230– M&K Ham Radio Exams, Renton. Scott- ag7t@arrl.net