

W7TCK News

Capital City Amateur Radio Club

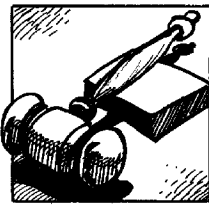
Helena, MT

John McDougall K7JM – Editor

December 2003

From The Pres...

This is my 12th article for the newsletter. For some reason I thought it would get easier to produce these monthly articles after the first couple. Obviously I was hopelessly naive in this instance.



There's been lots of learning I've done over the past year about what works and what works not so well when planning activities and working with the club on various items. A good example of this is the Club Picnic we had scheduled in August which got canceled and then I kept trying to reschedule on short notice. What I learned is a) there is no guarantee that we'll be able to do a picnic in August due to the fire situation during that time of year, b) that trying to reschedule an event like that on short notice isn't likely to happen, especially during that time of year, and c) that rescheduling for just over a month out does work. And as those of you who attended the potluck knows, we all had a pretty good turnout and everyone who (See **PRES** p.2)

DECEMBER MEETING
Monday
December 1st
Salvation Army Church
1905 Henderson
7:00 pm.



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Board of Directors

- Pres: Forrest Christian, AC7DE
- Vice Pres: John Curry, K7EBL
- Sec.: Rich Weddle, KC7VVZ
- Tres.: Dan Stinson, KC7KKH
- Newsletter Editor: John McDougall K7JM
- Training: John Geach, KS7R
- Technical: Don Heide, W7MRI
- Volunteer Exam Team Leader: John Geach, KS7R

Election Of Officers

Come to the December meeting to vote for next year's officers. Let your voice count!

(PRES cont. from p.1)
attended seemed to have a good time.

Coming up in December is our December club meeting where we elect our officers for the new year and also present the Ham of the Year award. This is an important meeting to attend.

As most of you know, the Salvation Army has graciously allowed us to use their facilities throughout the year, not only for our monthly club meetings but also for Field Day, JOTA, and also the Club Potluck. I have stated to several club members and also the the Salvation Army that it's nice to have found somewhere that feels like home.

The board has discussed ways we can thank the Salvation Army for there generosity during the year. We will be sending them a letter thanking them for their assistance throughout the year. We would also like to enclose with the letter a group of donations directly from the club members to help show how much we value the support they have given us over the last year. For this purpose, we will be soliciting donations for the Salvation Army during the December Meeting. Even a \$5 contribution will help, although larger ones will be welcomed. If your situation permits, please consider making a donation to this great cause.

And finally, I'd like to take a moment and thank everyone for the opportunity to serve as your President over the past year and hopefully into the next year.

I think that's all for now.

73's

Forrest
AC7DE



**Get On The Air
It's FUN!**

From The Editor

It's December! And with December comes the most blessed time of the year, Christmas. As we reflect upon the past year, and all that has happened in our World, Nation, and City, let us remember our friends and good times and all that God has blessed us with. If you really want to know the joy of the season, try giving to others instead of just receiving. One such idea is to let the Salvation Army know just how much we appreciate their generosity in providing the wonderful place for our club meetings and other activities. Just this last month, they provided a place for JOTA (Jamboree On The Air) and for our first annual pot luck. If you are able to give a monetary amount to the Salvation Army, it would be great. If not, a note of thanks, I'm sure, would go a long way in letting them know our appreciation.

It has been a great year for me to serve you as your Newsletter Editor. Serving you this way has been a great blessing for me, and I hope to continue with these duties in the foreseeable future. God bless you all this Christmas, and remember that Jesus is the reason for the season! Merry Christmas and 73,

John – K7JM Editor



ARES News

A CHALLENGE..

I will be writing a check during the December club meeting as a contribution to the Salvation Army. This is the time of the year that they need every bit of help they can obtain and I feel an obligation to do my part.

They have been wonderful in their support of CCARC this past year. They do not charge us for use of their facilities and have gone out of the way to help us. We have a great relationship with them and would be very much involved with them as a



"served agency" in a major disaster.

My challenge to those of you who will be at the meeting is to make a contribution, either by check or cash, to help the Salvation Army. Do it at the meeting or by mail, but please try to help them if you can.

ARES Notes:

Check out the article on pages 68 and 69 of the December, 2003 QST. Even if you have already read it, take another look at it. The article was written by David W. Thorne, K6SOJ, ARRL Sacramento Valley Section Emergency Coordinator. It discusses and promotes the development of Amateur Radio Communication Teams, or ARCT. It is a concept within the ICS system that develops response teams of radio operators and the protocols to make the concept work. An ARCT is a sub-unit in the logistics section serving under the communications unit leader. The article is the first of a series, it will be interesting to see where the idea goes. From what I see, it looks like a practical way for hams to deliver emergency communication services.

Training will be available early next year for an introduction to the Incident Command System. The training will be conducted at the county EOC by Bill Fleiner, who recently completed advanced training as an ICS instructor. If you are interested in this ICS training, please let me know. I will pass on further information as soon as it is available.

73.. de Bob K7HLN
ARES Coordinator

Dues

It is once again that time of year to be gently reminded about DUES. Dues are \$20 a year for membership to CCARC. You are encouraged to

get them in early. Our trusted treasurer Dan - KC7KKH would be more

than happy to accept them at the December meeting. If you can't make it to the meeting, send your dues to our P.O. Box address listed at the top of the last page of this newsletter. Be sure to include your call sign, if you have one, on your check. Dues are the main source of the monetary resource for the club, and without them, the many activities that CARC is involved in would not be possible.

\$DUES

A Return To My Roots – Part 3

This is the third part of the continuing story of my journey to repair my FIRST rig that I built as a novice back in 1973. You are invited to join me on my journey back to my roots.....

(Continued from last month)

So, now I was in search for a 10,000 ohm 10 watt resistor. After acquiring the proper resistor, I installed the new it and turned on the rig. The VR tube did not light! I examined the voltages and the newly installed had zero voltage on the VR tube side of it. The resistor was getting very hot very quickly. Upon further examination, I notice that the tube socket solder lug was bent and touching the mounting screw for the socket. I quickly shut down the power and bent the tab up off of the screw. I again turned on the rig and the VR tube glowed very nicely. I pressed the code key and again the plate current rose to about 150 ma of current but I could not locate a signal. The transmitter was not oscillating.

I re-examined the entire rig. I found one more cold solder joint and tried the rig again. And again, nothing happened. I then tried a different crystal. The rig still would not go into oscillation. The rig would not work with either crystal, mine or my Elmer's. Both were hand ground to 7.135 MHz. I started to wonder if the crystals were not working.

I usually work on Saturdays but this particular Saturday, I was off so I made a trip to Hardee's to join many other hams. If you are around on Saturday morning, try to come to Hardee's for some great "Eyeball" QSO's. Don, W7MRI was there and he asked if the 10,000 ohm resistor he gave me worked. I explained the story to him and said I thought the problem might be in the crystal. This got me thinking about it. I thought, "Since I hand ground the crystal, could it have gotten contaminated or something or do I have any other crystals lying around?"

The next day, I took apart my 7.135 MHz crystal. I closely examined the fragile element and it had what appeared as a very tiny fracture in it. That was very disappointing. I then decided to search through my junk bins for a different crystal. I was looking for anything in the 7 MHz range, and would have been satisfied to even find one from an old computer board or something. I then came across an old crystal that I had long forgotten about. I had another crystal besides the one for 7.135 that I hand ground. I found a long lost crystal for 3.735 MHz. Back in the 70's when I was a novice, the 80 meter novice band was from 3.700 to 3.750 MHz. My old homebrew novice rig was made for 80, 40, and 15 meters and I had my old 80 meter crystal. I was never successful in getting any contacts on 80 meters with the rig and have forgotten about that crystal. It would, however, tell me if the transmitter was oscillating.

At this point, I was pretty used to the idea that I would never get my old transmitter working again and I didn't really know how to end this story since I already started it before I knew the end of it. I just had to keep trying though. Could the whole problem just be the crystal? Oh, well, what did I have to lose by trying. The nervousness of trying each new step was now gone and I was used to not hearing anything on the receiver whenever I pressed the key. But, I had an other crystal and I had to try it. I plugged it into the crystal socket like I have done a dozen times before in the previous few days. I turned on the transmitter, I tuned my receiver to the 80 meter band and I pressed the key.

"BBBRRREEEEEEEEEEP"

I pressed the key again and again I heard in the receiver "BBBRRREEEEEEEEEEP BBBRRREEEEEEEEEEP BBBRRREEEEEEEEEEP." IT WORKED! I adjusted the plate and load capacitors, and the dummy load lit up nicely. Yes, the



A Beautiful Glow on my Dummy Load, and Yes the Rig is Upside down.

dummy load was a light bulb just like the old days. What else could I use for such a journey as this one back to my past. The excitement returned! I pressed the key several times and send an ID in Morse. What a marvelous sounding chirp my little rig had. I hadn't remembered that from years ago but surely it makes sense as the transmitter was a single stage marvel and as I keyed the transmitter, the oscillator would start and stop. This little rig is not like the rigs of today that have the oscillator continually running and only the amp is keyed on and off. My rig did not have any AC hum though. The sound was melodious, like the sound of a newborn crying that only the mother could appreciate.

So, I'm not sure if this story is over yet, but I am satisfied where it went. I would love to actually make a contact with the old rig. I noticed that the plate capacitor arced somewhat when I was tuning the transmitter. This is the same capacitor that I described in part one of this story that I had to

repair. I would like to get a new capacitor. Also, I notice that the load capacitor was all the way meshed when tuning on 80 meters. This gave me an idea as to why I have never been able to make a contact on 80 meters with this rig. I would like to try adding more capacitance to the loading capacitor to see if I can increase the transmitter output. Also, I am searching for a 40 meter crystal, maybe on the QRP frequency of 7.040 MHz. A chirpy transmitter is more likely to be tolerated on that frequency.



The Crystal That "Did It"

With all that said, stay tuned to W7TCK News to see if there is a part four of this series. And maybe someday, when you are tuning around the lower end of the 40 meter band, if you hear a chirpy little signal, answer the call. You might be hearing my old single tube 6DQ6 crystal controlled transmitter from yesteryear. I will again be a 14 year old, warming up the shack with my vacuum tubes while pounding the midnight brass. John K7JM

SKYWARN Recognition Day

The fifth annual SKYWARN Recognition Day (SRD) will take place this year on Saturday, December 6, 2003. This is the day that Amateur Radio operators visit National Weather Service (NWS) offices and contact other operators around the world. The purpose of the event is to recognize Amateur Radio operators for the vital public

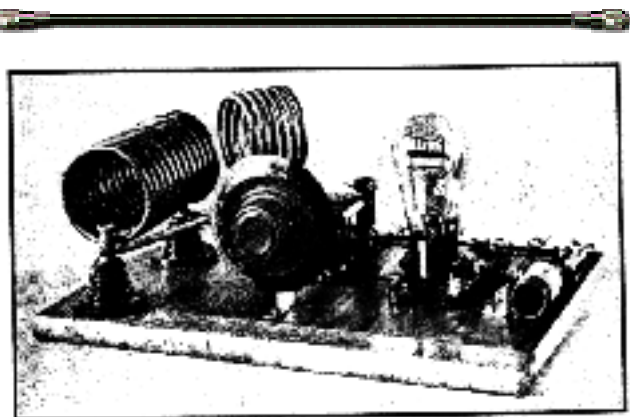
service they perform during times of severe weather, and to strengthen the bond between radio amateurs and their local National Weather Service office. The event is co-sponsored by the American Radio Relay League and the National Weather Service.

Traditionally, hams have assisted the National Weather Service during times of severe weather by providing real-time reports of severe events and storm evolution. "You simply can't put a price tag on it", says Scott Mentzer (N0QE), organizer of the event and Meteorologist-In-Charge at the NWS office in Goodland, Kansas. "The assistance that radio amateurs provide to the NWS throughout the year is invaluable".

SKYWARN Recognition Day this year will be held from 0000 UTC to 2400 UTC on December 6, 2003. Scott Mentzer, the creator and promoter of the event, strives to involve more NWS offices and Amateur Radio operators each year. In 2002, participants logged nearly 23,000 QSOs during the 24-hour event. Last year nearly 70 countries were contacted. To learn more about this year's event, check out the NOAA Web site:

<http://hamradio.noaa.gov/>. This site includes a link to a list of participating National Weather Service offices and their call signs.

Questions concerning this event can be directed to Larry Boyd, K0ILB, at larry.boyd@noaa.gov.



Dick-N7RB relates that his FIRST rig looked a lot like this single type 10 tube rig.

The W7TCK Newsletter is published by the Capital City Amateur Radio Club.
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CCARC Regular meetings are at 7:00 pm on the first non-holiday Monday of each month at the Salvation Army Church 1905 Henderson.

The CCARC Volunteer Exam Team conducts sessions at 6:30 pm in Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sep, Nov, and at special times as announced.

W7MRI Repeater: 147.82 (-offset)

Net every Tuesday at 7:30 pm local time on the 147.82 (-offset) repeater.

Salvation Army Donation

We Love You!



We will be accepting donations for the Salvation Army during the December Meeting. Please think about what amount (if any) you can contribute to the Salvation Army to help show your support for their organization and to thank them for their willingness to provide a home for our monthly meetings and other activities.

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All expressions of opinions and all statements of supposed facts are published on the authority of the author and are not to be regarded as expressing the view of CCARC.

Biscuits and Gravy

Come to Hardee's on Saturday. Every Saturday morning between 9:30 and 11:00, as many as twenty hams show up for "EYEBALL" QSOs.

COME JOIN THE FUN!

First Class Mail