

W7TCK News

Capital City Amateur Radio Club

Helena, MT

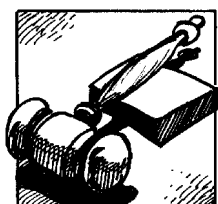
John McDougall K7JM – Editor

Happy New Year

January 2004

From The Pres...

One of the first things I do every year about this time is to get the calendar I



(usually) get for Christmas and put the important dates on them so I don't schedule over the top of them with other things.

About the first thing I put on the calendar are all my Ham Radio club meetings. These (as most of you know) go on the first Monday of each month unless there is a holiday. And no, groundhog day on 2 February doesn't count as a holiday in this case. The only meeting I seem to see which needs to be moved is our September meeting which will be on the 13th of September instead of the 6th due to labor day.

This year I've lightly penciled in our new "work meetings" which we're scheduling for the 3rd Saturday of each month. We're planning on having some activity that weekend every month. Some months it will be antenna or other project building. Other months it might be some sort of outdoor activity.

(See PRES. p.2)

January MEETING

Monday

January 5

Salvation Army Church
1905 Henderson
7:00 pm.

VE Exams
6:30 Sharp



In This Issue

From The Pres.....	1
Board of Directors.....	2
Re-Election of Officers.....	2
From The Editor.....	3
ARES News.....	4
Electricity Explained -.....	4
QRP.....	5
QRP Calling Frequencies.....	6
What is Amateur Radio?.....	6
W7CK Repeater.....	7
Dues Reminder.....	8
Newsletter available in PDF.....	8

Board of Directors

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

Re-Election of Officers

The current CCARC elected administration has been unanimously re-elected (railroaded?). All of us however are glad to serve you again in our capacities. Thank you for putting your confidence us. We enjoy doing our jobs for you.

(Cont. from PRES. p.1) I said “lightly penciled in” because I expect these to be somewhat flexible depending on what is going on. For example, in November, I would expect that instead of having the work meeting, we will again have our “pre-holiday potluck”, and it probably won't be on the third weekend since that is rather close to thanksgiving (I've initially got the potluck penciled in for November 13th).

I'll digress a minute and talk about the soldering practice kits, which were (are?) initially scheduled for our January work meeting. I have a bare handful of people who want kits for various reasons. I'm also aware that the majority, if not all, of the people who have requested them have Saturday conflicts and/or aren't interested in assembling them during the work meeting. I'd appreciate it if you are either interested in getting a kit and/or assembling it at a work meeting, please let me know via email or before the meeting on Monday night. Please contact me even if you've let me know before as I want to confirm the information I have. That way I can be 100% sure to get enough kits and also make sure that we make an informed decision about the work meeting.

In addition to the dates mentioned above, there are also two main events which you should add to your calendar. The first is Governor's Cup. This is always the first Saturday in June, which falls on June 5th this year. If for some reason this date changes, we will be letting everyone know.

The other main event you should add to your calendar (and seriously consider going to) is the Glacier Waterton Hamfest. This is always the third weekend in July (or July 16-18 for 2004). This is a great time to meet with other Hams and have some eyeball QSO's. It's also a great excuse to get away and camp out in a beautiful area near Glacier National Park. Because our July work meeting lands right in the middle of this event, the June work meeting will most likely be replaced by the Hamfest.

The final event I added to my calendar is Field Day. We'll probably do something like we did last year since that seemed to work out well. Field Day is always the fourth full weekend in June, which turns

out to be June 26th and 27th this year. This will probably be our work meeting for June. (Remember what I said about penciling in the work day).

And finally, I should mention our program for this coming regular club meeting. Our topic for this meeting is QRP, which is a mode of operation where you operate (usually on HF) using very low power. As it seems that everyone who works QRP seems to prefer a different part of QRP operation (such as building your own radio, or just seeing how far you can get on very very low power), I have asked a few club members to come prepared to talk on QRP without giving them much direction other than to tell them to stress mainly what part of the hobby they like the most. If I missed anyone who operates primarily via QRP, feel free to contribute in the meeting as well.

I think that's all for now.

73's

Forrest
AC7DE



From The Editor

Happy New Year from your Newsletter Editor. I hope and pray that 2004 will be a great year for you. 2003 certainly has been interesting.

There were many chances to get involved in this wonderful hobby in 2003. I don't make New Year's resolutions since they usually start out strong and eventually fizzle out. I do encourage you though, to get more involved in this wonderful hobby of Amateur Radio during 2004. The key word here is “INVOLVED.” Pick a small project and “go with it”. See what happens and what it will turn into. I'm sure there will be many opportunities to get involved in a new aspect of this hobby this year. Have fun!

73 and God bless you all,
John – K7JM, Editor



ARES News

Seasons Greetings and best wishes for a Happy New Year, filled with lots of DX contacts and rare grids in the log!



A big "THANKS" to everyone who responded to the fund raising challenge for the Salvation Army at the December club meeting. Our Prez informs me that we raised in excess of \$300 in cash and checks. That was a great way to let the Salvation Army know that we appreciate being able to use their facilities for our meetings and other activities.

The recent media articles about the cost of last summer's wildfires have not mentioned the hours and days of volunteer time or an approximation of its dollar value to the over-all efforts. I am not only thinking in terms of ham radio, but other volunteers such as Red Cross, Salvation Army, church and civic groups and others who gave time and effort without financial reimbursement. If you have wondered what a volunteer's time is worth in dollars and cents, then here is something to think about. ARRL figures our time is worth \$10.00 an hour as a contributed effort. Red Cross computes their over-all volunteer hours at \$15.05 an hour. Do some quick calculations of the hours involved, then add the value of personal and club equipment such as radios, repeaters, power supplies, generators, antennas, trailers, etc., etc. Then add to that the value of vehicles and the cost of fuel used to get back and forth from our assignments. Scary, isn't it?

As I am writing this article, the whole country has gone to "Orange" (High) alert status for possible terrorist attacks and the city of Paso Robles, California, is recovering from a 6.5 earthquake and its aftershocks. This should serve as a reminder to continue to be prepared for natural or man made disasters. We are reluctant to think about being affected ourselves, but we all know it can happen. This might be a good time to recheck radios and power supplies and to get go-bags and 48 hour bags prepared, if we have not already done so.

73.. Bob K7HLN, ARES Coordinator

Electricity Explained -

Here is a simple experiment that will teach you an important electrical lesson: on a cool, dry day, scuff your feet along a carpet, then reach your hand into a friend's, mouth and touch one of his dental fillings. Did you notice how your friend twitched violently and cried out in pain? This teaches us that electricity can be a Very powerful force, but we must never use it to hurt others unless we need to learn an important electrical lesson.

It also teaches us how an electrical circuit works. When. you scuffed your feet, you picked up batches of "electrons", which are very small objects that carpet manufacturers weave into carpet so that they will attract dirt. The electrons travel through your bloodstream and collect in your finger, where they form a spark that leaps to your friends filling, then travel down to his feet and back into the carpet, thus completing the circuit.

AMAZING ELECTRONIC FACT: If you scuffed your feet long enough without touching anything, you would build up so many electrons that your finger would explode! But this is nothing to worry about unless you have carpeting.

Although we modern persons tend to take our electric lights, radios, etc. for granted, hundreds of years ago people did not have any of these things, which is just as well because there was no place to plug them in.

Then along came the first Electrical Pioneer, Benjamin Franklin, who flew a kite in a lightning storm and received a serious electrical shock. This proved that lightning was powered by the same force as carpets, but it also damaged Franklin's brain so severely that he started speaking only in incomprehensible maxims, such as, "A penny saved is a penny earned." Eventually he had to be given a job running the Post Office.

After Franklin, came a herd of Electrical Pioneers whose names have become part of our electrical terminology: Myron Volt, Mary Louise Amp, James Watt, Bob Transformer, etc.. These pioneers



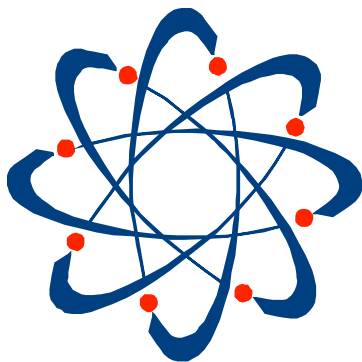
conducted many important electrical experiments -
- Among them, Galvani discovered (this is the truth) that when he attached two different kinds of metal to the leg of a frog, an electrical current developed and the frog's leg kicked, even though it was no longer attached to the frog, which was dead anyway.

Galvani's discovery led to enormous advances in the field of amphibian medicine. Today, skilled veterinary surgeons can take a frog that has been seriously injured or killed, implant pieces of metal in its muscles, and watch it hop back into the pond just like a normal frog, except for the fact that it sinks like a stone.

But the greatest Electrical Pioneer of them all was Thomas Edison, who was a brilliant inventor despite the fact that he had little formal education and lived in New Jersey. Edison's first major invention in 1877 was the phonograph, which could soon be found in

thousands of American homes where it basically sat until 1923, when the record was invented.

But Edison's greatest achievement came in 1879 when he invented the electric company. Edison's design was a brilliant adaptation of the simple electrical circuit: the electric company sends electricity through a wire to a customer, then immediately gets the electricity back through another wire, then (this is the brilliant part) sends it right back to the customer again. This means that an electric company can sell a customer the same batch of electricity thousands of times a day and never get caught, since very few customers take the time to examine their electricity closely. In fact, the last year any new electricity was generated was 1937; the electric companies have been merely re-selling it ever since, which is why they have so much time to apply for rate increases.



Today, thanks to men like Edison and Franklin, and

frogs like Galvani's, we receive almost unlimited benefits from electricity. For example, in the past decade scientists have developed the laser, an electronic appliance so powerful that it can vaporize a bulldozer 2000 yards away, yet so precise that doctors can use it to perform delicate operations to the human eyeball, provided they remember to change the power setting from "Vaporize Bulldozer" to "Delicate."



QRP

THE QRPers Quiet Radio Power From Steve, NU7T

*Did you know a good QRP radio is actually a tape recorder? This enables the operator to hold a QSO.



*Have you ever watched a QRP operator in action? After each transmission he looks around the room to see if anyone heard him.

*QRP clubs are gaining in popularity. Hams realize simultaneous transmission results in an audible signal.

*Why do QRP operators, with an RST of 219, insist on telling you the details of their recent 2 month vacation?

*Did you notice QRP ops shout during an eyeball QSO?

*Old DX ops never die. They go QRP.

*I listened to a QRP net last night and didn't hear a thing.

*A QRO op gets by with a light bulb on a fence post. A QRP op needs stacked arrays.

*How can you tell if a mobile station is QRP? The cw is accompanied by hand signals.

*Why does a QRP op leave his amp on? To keep the coffee warm.

Several Hams are going to tell of their QRP operating activities this month at the CCARC club meeting. Come and investigate this aspect of our wonderful hobby. QRP refers to low power

operating. 5 watts or less on CW (code) and 10 watts or less on SSB (phone).

QRP Calling Frequencies

BAND CW	SSB
160M CW—1.810	SSB -- 1.910
80M CW-- 3.560	SSB --3.985
80M CW-- 3.579 (Colorburst Crystal Frequency) --	
80M CW--3.710 (Novice) --	
40M CW--7.040	SSB --7.285
40M CW--7.035 (QRP-L) --	
40M CW--7.110 (Novice) --	
40M CW--7.112 (NorCal crystals) --	
30M CW--10.106 --	
30M CW-- 10.116 (QRP-L) --	
20M CW-- 14.060	SSB --14.285
17M CW--18.096	SSB --18.130
15M CW--21.060	SSB --21.385
15M CW-- 21.110 (Novice) --	
12M CW--24.906	SSB --24.950
10M CW--28.060	SSB -- 28.885
10M CW--28.110 (Novice) SSB --28.385 (Novice)	
6M CW-- 50.060	SSB --50.885
2M CW--144.060	SSB --144.285
2M --	FM--144.585

What is Amateur Radio?

Have you ever been asked “What is ham radio?” but didn't quite know how to answer them? Are you a new reader to this newsletter and have questions of what ham radio is? Here is a VERY short definition.

People who pursue the hobby of using a personal radio station to communicate, purely for non-commercial purposes, with other radio hobbyists call it ham radio or Amateur Radio. They call themselves Amateur Radio operators, ham radio operators or just plain “hams.”

Hams communicate with other hams, around the

block, on a distant continent – or from an orbiting space station! Some talk via computers, others prefer to use regular voice communications and still others enjoy using one of the oldest forms of radio communication – Morse code. Some hams help save people's lives by handling emergency communications following a natural disaster or other emergency. Some become close friends with the people they talk to on the other side of the globe – then make it a point to meet one or more of them in person. Some can take a bag full of electrical parts and turn it into a station accessory that improves their station's reception of distant radio signals.

By definition, Amateur Radio is a radio communication service for the purpose of self-training, intercommunication and technical investigations carried out by amateurs, that is, duly authorized persons interested in radio technique solely with a person aim and without pecuniary interest. (Pecuniary means payment of any type, whether money or other goods.) Also called ham radio.



W7CK Repeater

W7CK reminds us that the .85 repeater is open and available for use for all hams. The repeater also has an autopatch for phone connection when necessary. Remember, that your conversations are always public and all FCC rules must be in effect while using the autopatch. Jim monitors this repeater from home so be sure to keep quiet hours after 10:00 pm unless it is an emergency.

The Helena Hogback repeater is a privately owned repeater, with the receiver in the basement of the Rogers Mountain Look out (DNRC), with the transmitter in the basement of Hogback Mountain Lookout (USFS), with the linking repeater located at W7TCK's residence in East Helena.



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.

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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!

Dues Reminder

It is a new year and dues are due. Dan KC7KKH will be happy to take them from you. \$20 a year is a great price to pay for all the benefits of membership which includes this news letter and a fine repeater system. If you use the repeater, you should be a member. Join or renew today!

Newsletter available in PDF

The W7TCK News is now available in PDF format. This will NOT be replacing the mailed version, but if you are a member or a guest, and would like a copy of a newsletter that you might be missing, as of Dec. 2003, I can now export to PDF and I can e-mail you one. I do not plan on doing this on an automated basis. I will send one out at a time as requested. John K7JM ed.

First Class Mail