

Next Club Meeting

The next scheduled club meeting will be on Thursday, December 13th, @ 6:00PM at the Alfys Pizza in Silver Lake. This will be our final club meeting for 2007 so please be sure and attend. If anyone is interested in purchasing a Power Pole PP4 power panel, Annie Wright, AA7AG, will have a number of them available at the meeting – they are \$25/each.

Upcoming Operating Activities

The two big events in the month of December are the ARRL 160 meter and 10 meter contests. Both are good ways to work on that 5 band Worked All States Award! New Year's Eve is Straight Key Night – this traditional activity has been a mainstay of amateur radio for many years. You'll hear lots of CW being sent by straight keys – that's the point of the event. This activity is all about ragchewing and getting back to the roots of CW.

Antenna Projects - Update

Last month we featured an article about an upcoming antenna project that Mark McLaughlin, KN7T, was planning for his backyard. That antenna was successfully installed and it was used during the recent CQ WW DX and ARRL 160 Meter contests. The construction and installation of the super linear loaded inverted vee went pretty much as described in last month's newsletter. The T-Mastco extra heavy duty 22 foot fiberglass push up poles are working very well as end supports and tensioning devices for the antenna. The poles are attached to existing 4X4 fence posts by a pair of 2.5" conduit clamps and lathe screws. The clamps provide a snug fit but not too tight as to crush the fiberglass pole base section. A threaded eyebolt was installed at the top of each pole and another attach point was provided approximately 10" below the tip. As each section of the poles were extended into place, the joints were wrapped with Scotch 33 electrical tape so as to provide a weatherproof seal and keep moisture out as much as possible. The base section rubber cap had a

number of very small holes drilled in it to provide a drain path for any moisture that does work its way into the pole. Once each leg of the antenna was threaded through the top of the poles, it was routed back towards the center support and then folds back towards the poles again. An end insulator is then tied to a small diameter rope and the rope is pulled taught through the second attach point at the top of each pole. The ropes were tightened just enough to get the antenna into its rough shape. A guy line was also attached to the second attach point and it was then used to pull the fiberglass pole back in the opposite direction to provide the final tension for each antenna leg. As the poles tension, they will tend to bend in the direction of the tension being provided. Once the legs are tensioned sufficiently, the guy ropes are tied off.

The antenna loads up very well on 160, 80, and 40 meters with just a few limitations. The 2:1 SWR bandwidth is not very wide on any of those bands but the auto tuner in the shack kept the SWR in check as desired. Since the antenna is not very high up in the air, the RF takeoff angle is not very low, which will limit the effective communication distance. Even so, the antenna performed reasonably well and a number of long distance contacts were possible when using a 500 watt amplifier with the rig in the shack. Using just the normal 100 watts output, the antenna will provide reliable communications within the confines of the greater Pacific Northwest, California, and Western Canada.

Communications Academy 2008

The Tenth Annual Communications Academy will be held April 5th-6th, 2008 at South Seattle Community College. The theme for this year's conference is: "The Next Disaster is Ready for You -- Are You Ready for it?" There will be a keynote speaker on both Saturday and Sunday, followed by five concurrent breakout sessions throughout each day. The new facility provides us with better conference and class room space, and a better location for vehicle displays.

This year, lunches will be incorporated into the registration price for the first time. (There are no readily available fast-food or casual dining restaurants in the immediate area.)

For more information, visit the Communications Academy website at:

<http://www.CommAcademy.org>

ARRL Newsletters and Publications

Are you subscribed to any of the newsletters that the ARRL publishes? If not, here's a list of what's currently available:

The ARRL Letter – published weekly, contains a news summary of all things amateur radio related.

The Contester's Rate Sheet – edited by local ham Ward Silver, NØAX. Published every two weeks, it contains a comprehensive contest calendar with articles and technical content.

The ARES E-Letter – a monthly publication – it is a source of news of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service.

The VE E-Express Newsletter – published 4 to 6 times per year, this document keeps Volunteer Examiners up to date on the ARRL VEC program and other items of interest to VEs.

BEARONS VE Testing

There are no more VE test sessions scheduled for 2007. Keep watching the BEARONS website for the 2008 VE testing schedule. It will likely become available in January 2008.

Classifieds

For Sale: Timewave DSP-599zx digital signal processor. Excellent condition, includes power cable and manual. \$250. Mark McLauchlin, KN7T, EvernhamMS91@verizon.net

For Sale: MFJ-962D Versa Tuner III (roller inductor), w/manual. Good condition. \$135. Mark McLauchlin, KN7T, EvernhamMS91@verizon.net

For Sale: Icom IC-756 PRO II HF Transceiver. 160 through 6 Meters, all modes – 100 watts. Color display, IF-DSP filtering, bandscope, INRAD roofing filter modification installed. Includes hand mic, power cable, and manual. Excellent Condition. \$1600. Mark McLauchlin, KN7T, EvernhamMS91@verizon.net