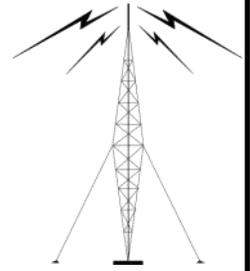




Western Public Service System Newsletter



JANUARY 2017



Letter from the President, Genie, KM6D

Hi Everyone,

Thank you all for another great year! Hope everyone had a wonderful holiday.

I want to first thank everyone that ran for an office during our elections and congratulate our new Officers. Our new Directors are Toby W6PXD, Mickie KT6U, Joe WA6FFJ and John WB6ABW. The new Alternate Directors are Bob AI6KU and Ben KI6VLC. Thank you to Scott AG6IS VP/Net Manager and Michael W7HUT Secretary. Thanks also to Jeff N6QJP, Joe N6JRZ and Bill N6FFC for running for office, your participation is greatly appreciated.

Thank you to Dave WA6KEL our Nomination Chairman and his committee for taking care of our elections.

We also have two new Life members Bob KM6GF and Roy WB6ZIH. Congratulations and thank you for everything you do for WPSS and all your years as members.

It is also getting to be time to plan our 2017 events; so far we have the Hemet Spring luncheon on March 23rd and the Annual WPSS Picnic in Casa De Fruta on June 10th. We will have more information on these as well as the Fall Luncheon in Hemet and the Northern Fall luncheon in the Sacramento area. Please check our website for updates as they become available.

There is also the Quartzfest coming up January 22 - 28, 2017 in Quartzsite, Arizona. It is all free and is a great time with all kinds of different seminars, license testing and just fun things to do.

Thank you everyone for helping make Western Public Service System such a great Net.

73
Genie Balentine-Segroves KM6D
President WPSS

From the Editor: Mike KJ6Tii

January is soon upon us and the start of a new year. There was supposed to be a November election edition but there was some miss-communication. I'll take the hit for that fumble and I will do better at getting the newsletter out every other month. I have asked for input from members, things you are doing with the hobby like buying new equipment, playing with wire antennas, making improvements to your ham shack, etc. I'm ready to accept articles from anyone that would like to participate. For now, I will discuss some aspects of ham radio that may generate some interest and discussion. Rebuttal articles are welcome.

I am not a member of the ARRL

I have been a Ham now for five years. After doing some research on the ARRL I decided it was not an organization I wanted to join. QST magazine is a shell of what it once was and for me Log book of the World, contesting and awards are not reason enough to join for. Some of you will groan and say I'm not a team player and that I do not care about the future of amateur radio...some of you will say yeah, I'm not an ARRL member either. Statistically those people within our club that are not ARRL members will number a conservative 50%. As of January 2016, the ARRL's stated membership was "over 170,000". The FCC count of licensed active Hams as of November 2016, is 741,961. That makes well over 550,000 licensed hams that are not members of the ARRL. California has 104,825 licensed Hams, of which 62,755 are Technician class (Nov. 2016). Think about that for a minute. In a country of 330 million people there are only three-quarters of a million people that are licensed Hams. And out of that three-quarters of a million licensed hams over half-a-million licensed Hams do not belong to the only organization outside of the government that represents them. Why? There are two key reasons for this in my mind. The ARRL does nothing to directly advertise and get the word out to attract people to become licensed Hams, and they have no real incentives to attract new members. The ARRL is, like many old established organizations, run by "the good old boys" that resist change and are comfortable with the way things are. The ARRL has no program in place to motivate young people to become Hams. I exclude the ARRL's work with scouting, specifically JOTA, because by their own admission "...the majority of scouts that participate in JOTA do so through stations operated by local radio clubs and individual radio amateurs". The ARRL is not alone in this. Many local and national Ham clubs also do not effectively recruit young people. Look at your local club membership next time you attend a meeting. Well over 50% of the membership and closer to 75% will be older Hams, over 60 years old. We need as a group to find ways to better promote Ham radio. The ARRL could start a pilot program and work with Junior and Senior High schools to set up VHF/UHF stations to introduce young people amateur radio. Local club members could mentor these programs. Local clubs could be more visible in their communities and attract new and younger members. As an amateur radio enthusiast, I recognize that the ARRL has done a great deal in the past to keep the bands open and available for amateur use. But they have become complacent in attracting new and young hams. They set no goals and run no annual campaigns to recruit new members. In farmer terms, the cart is stuck in a rut and it ain't going nowhere. Some of you will say to this, "stop complaining and join, become a section manager and make changes for the better". Yes, I would have to join. Then an ARRL director or section manager would have to nominate me to be able to run for a position, then I would have to win an election over long time well known/well liked Hams. Even if someone was elected that wanted to make changes his one voice would not be heard. There are numerous stories of those that have tried this within the ARRL and became frustrated. The ARRL has a lot going against it. Cell phones, computers, tweets, instant messaging, a lack of science and

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I am not a member of the ARRL (continued from Page 2)

engineering in k-12 schools, etc. The days of building crystal sets and kit radios are gone along with companies like Heath kit that supported hams and kept the hobby alive. I have no answers as to how the ARRL can get even a portion of those 550,000 licensed Hams to join their ranks. For now, we fellow Hams have an obligation to be good ambassadors and recruiters of our hobby to younger men and women to become new Hams', to support what Hiram Percy Maxim began. If we do not, we will soon run out of people to share our hobby with through age attrition.

Mistakes I have made as a beginning Ham

When I first became a Ham, I bought whatever rigs were available at a good price. I did little research on different rigs and failed to look at reviews by other users such as you can find on eHam.net. So, my first station had Kenwood, Icom, Yaesu, and other makes. My other mistake was that I had a heavy huge desk that I used to support my rigs, about the size of an aircraft carrier. So let's look at my rig mistake. First of all this is less of a mistake than an issue of operator ease. Lots of Hams have many different makes of rigs and are happy with their set-ups. Nothing wrong with that, if it works no need to fix it. About 6 months after I got my General license I slowed down my buying spree and started doing some research into different radio manufactures. This was also about the time that my Icom 756 decided to have its display die. I did not want to lose money on selling a broken rig so I did all the research I could and learned how to fix the problem with about \$80.00 in parts and lots of sweat. After I sold the Icom 756 I began to really research different HF rigs. They are all about the same in the end and it just seems to be what make you start out with that determines what you are comfortable with...like a preference between Ford and Chevy. I also came across an article by a long-time Ham discussing how to set up a Ham Shack for new Hams. His advice was simple..." Whenever possible stay with one make or brand". The reasoning behind this is that the learning curve is shorter and menus and memories will be similar. It seemed to make sense, so I purchased a Yaesu FT-1000MP Mark-V as my main rig. I picked this rig because it has 200 watts maximum output and more filters and features than I could possibly use. The audio is sharp and the menu items are easy to use. Once I got used to operating that rig I started looking for a "back-up" rig. I chose the Yaesu FT-950. Great features much like my Mark-V and easy to program with a menu I was familiar with. My back-up to the back-up is a Yaesu FT-847 which gives me HF, 2m and 70cm. I have since bought an Icom IC-910 so that I can have 1.2ghz. For me having my main and back-up rigs being the same make has worked out fine.

As to my other mistake, at least for me, was my choice of furniture to mount my rigs on. The desk was 72 inches long by 42 inches deep and made of oak. Very heavy. Placed up against the wall getting to wiring and cables was next to impossible. As my station evolved my need to change things more often was hampered by my having to fish wires from behind the desk. So after two years of fighting this large oak anchor I went to the internet to see what other hams had done in their Ham shacks. Many Hams use what is available and cheap. After all we Hams need to spend our money on rigs, amps and antennas. After some time, I came across two Hams that had rebuilt their Shacks with a "Floating" desk to support their rigs. A floating desk is mounted to the wall of the shack into the studs and supported by angled braces below the top mounted towards the front bottom of the top. This means that there are no floor mounted leg supports to get into the way of moving a chair around. It also means that all cables and wiring can be mounted under the top to hide them and allow easy access. You can look up "floating workbench plans" on the internet for examples. My floating desk is 10 feet long and 32 inches deep. 90%

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Mistakes I have made as a beginning Ham (continued from Page 2)

of my wiring runs under the top along with a multi-plug and MJF AC RFI filter. Everybody in Ham radio is different and what works best for you is what's important. Next time you "update" your Ham shack look and see what other Hams have done to their shacks...and have some fun.

Rig News

BTECH (sold by Baofeng Tech) just came out with a new tri-Band base / mobile radio with 220mhz. The rig covers 136-174mhz, 210-230mhz and 400-520mhz. High/low power settings, CTCSS, and DCS calling modes. The rig will also receive only 65-108mhz. You can buy it on several sites, Amazon currently has it for \$128.86. TYT and Jetstream also sell single band 220mhz rigs for under \$200.00. 220mhz is a nice band to "get away from it all". It's quiet. The band is allocated to amateur radio in the United States and Canada. Outside of ITU region 2 the only country listed having allocation is Somalia. 220mhz is not harmonically related to the band pair two meters and 70cm so in the past adding 220mhz to a dual band VHF/UHF rig would have required manufactures to outlay significant costs in new electronics, filters, etc. This along with few countries using 220mhz for amateur radio use is a main reason we do not see many 220mhz radios. That's changing a little with advances in microelectronics making a tri-band radio with 220mhz simple and inexpensive to produce. The 220mhz band has been at times allocated and reallocated, divided, and placed on secondary use for some portions over the past few decades. For now we have 220mhz available for amateur use and it can be worked fairly inexpensively. Try a 220mhz radio and have some fun while keeping the band active. You may find many of your two meter friends using 220mhz to escape the traffic!

Upcoming Events 2017

One of the biggest Ham Radio events happening in our area is QuartzFest 2017. QuartzFest is a week-long event held in Quartzite Arizona January 22-28, 2017. QuartzFest is a one of a kind Ham radio event. There are educational classes and seminars for Hams at all levels of experience. You can see the latest technology, study advanced radio theory, attend educational classes, see demos of mobile antenna systems, mobile Ham shacks, off grid living and much more. QuartzFest is well worth the trip.

◇ QuartzFest 2017	Quartzite Arizona	January 22-28
◇ Yuma Hamfest	Yuma, Arizona	February 17-18
◇ WPSS Spring Luncheon	Hemet, Ca.	March 23
◇ WPSS Picnic	Casa De Fruta	June 10
◇ AARL Field Day	Everywhere	June 24-25
◇ WPSS Fall Luncheon	Hemet, Ca.	TBA
◇ WPSS Northern Luncheon	Sacramento, Ca.	TBA

Facebook

There have been a few questions this past year by members about starting a Facebook WPSS page. Facebook is used by many people worldwide and many amateur radio clubs have a page. Most Facebook pages for clubs start out well and soon fade away. However, since a few members have brought the subject up I believe the question should be asked.

Do enough WPSS members want a Facebook page to make it worthwhile?

This is just an unofficial pole to see if there is any interest. Send your Yes, No, and comments to me, your friendly editor. oldwesthand@hotmail.com. We will print the results in the March edition of the WPSS Newsletter.

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Steve Bynum Ralph Matthews Bob McNeil Mike LeFevre <u>Directors Through 2018</u>	W6NFL NA6D KA6ZVR WB6AQH	Bob Roehm Jack Green Michael Dobrzensky Mike Siegel Toby Mort Fred Silveira Speed Gonsalves Kevin White Jack Richetti Earle Anten Roy Peak <u>Newsletter Editor</u> Mike Martinez <u>WPSS Prize Chairman</u>	W6PXD KT6U WA6FFJ WB6ABW N3ETA AG6IS WB6NVT		
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