



THE OHM TOWN NEWS

Voice of the Bridgerland Amateur Radio Club

JANUARY 1999

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CHRISTMAS PARTY A GASTRONOMICAL SUCCESS!



The annual Christmas Party, held on December 10, 1998, at the Coppermill Restaurant would have to be considered a gastronomical success. There were 60 in attendance and it appeared that all of them had a great time. The food was just tremendous.

We express thanks to all of you who attended and contributed to the success of the occasion.

Everyone needs to plan on attending next year's occasion. Who knows, YOU might be asked to be on the program.

Prizes were awarded to a great number of people and were quite evenly distributed among those who were in attendance.

The officers did their usual great job of selecting very "special" prizes to be awarded. Thanks to all of their efforts.

Now that the Christmas party is over for another year, the new 1999 Officers, under the direction of Tyler Griffiths N7UWX, will be off and running in their respective assignments within BARC. We may not be the biggest yet, but we are already working on becoming the best. We appreciate all of your help.

The President's Message

I hope every one had a Great Christmas and a Happy New Year!!! I'm glad you have enough confidence to vote me into the office of President and for that I say thank you. I hope I can make this year a fun and eventful year.

As I walked into work the other day a friend, who is not a Ham, stopped me

and asked me what our club is doing to prepare for the "Year 2000"? I thought that was pretty interesting that a non-ham would be interested in what our club was up to.

He continued on to say that he thought that our radios would be a very valuable item if the "Year 2000" problems come to reality. He was even thinking of getting his license because of this.

Just think of it, worst case scenario, your phones do not work, your pager does not work and your cell phone does not work, let alone everything else that could go wrong.

A few years ago people started saying that our club was "too into emergency communications." But over those few years I think that we have gotten too far away from emergency communications.

The only training we are getting is on the Sunday night CVER net and not enough hams are participating in that either.

If you want to hear someone who is concerned about emergency communication, listen to Nate's (AB7GO) ERRS net on Sunday evening. I think it is at 8:30 on the .80 repeater

I don't think that Emergency Communications should or will be our only direction for our club but with the reality of disasters to come, be it the Year 2000,

an earth quake, a terrible winter storm or even helping out the Red Cross or the Weather Service, our club is not prepared and as a Presidency we need to make some changes.



Other things I'm excited about for this year are :

- Bike Races
- Field Day
- Club T-shirts and hats
- Better meeting content with some outside speakers.
- Getting the club interested in other areas of Ham radio other than repeaters.
- More people involved with the Nets.
- Adding Newline back to the Tuesday night net.
- Trying to get the club involved with more public service activities. Maybe go looking for work. Send out flyers
- Get the club shack back into shape and make better use of it.
- Swap table at all club meetings
- Get involved in the 2002 Olympics.

It has been suggested that our club become an ARRL Affiliated club and I would like to hear some comments on that. The ARRL has some good programs and club aides that our club could participate in and use.

I'm sure there are tons of other things we could do also, so, if you have any ideas, please let me or any other of the members of the board know and we will try to make this an exciting year.

73 de Tyler N7UWX

The Secretary's Corner

By Beanie Lofthouse, KJ7LQ

Our BARC Christmas Party was a huge success. We had around 60 members and friends show up.



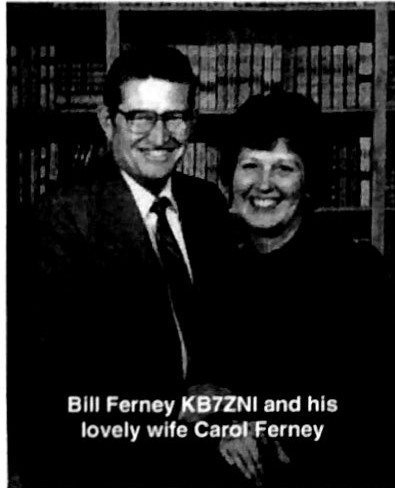
The food was great and the prizes fun. Start thinking about saving your pennies for next year's party. We really liked the Coppermill and the service. We are definitely thinking about the same place in '99.

We are going to talk about the budget at the January meeting. Hope to see a good turn-out. Just a reminder that the dues are due in January. We already have many applications. Thank you.

See you January 14, 7:30 PM, at the Hyde Park City Office Basement for the next meeting! Beanie KJ7LQ

HAM PROFILE

By Boyd Humpherys, W7MOY



Bill Ferney KB7ZNI and his lovely wife Carol Ferney

Just a year from today someone will write this column and have all sorts of interesting things to report with the event of the year 2000. Someone might even have to toss up a nickel to determine who is left to talk about.

This month's column will introduce William (Bill) Ferney, KB7ZNI, who hails from our neighboring state to the North. Cache Valley imports a number of outstanding amateur enthusiasts and that's great. We'll take all we can get.

Bill was born in Parker, Idaho, which he informs me is about 10 miles north of Rexburg. I thought that strange since I was of the impression the arctic circle was on the northern outskirts. Most people from that area speak rather candidly about the winter temperatures up there. He attended high school at St. Anthony, and, incidentally, that's where he met his future spouse, Carol Romrell.

They both attended USU. Bill graduated with majors in Physics, Math, and Education. Carol attended Ricks for three years and finished at USU with a degree in Home Economics and a music minor. Upon graduation Bill accepted a position in Engineering with Thiokol in the calibrations labs. He was involved in development work on the boosters for the minuteman, space shuttle, and other larger projects. He spent some time attending schools for Thiokol at George Washington University and also project

support at Huntsville, AL. After 34 years he decided to throw in the voltmeter and launch into other things.

He had a call way back in high school, W7TEV, of the General category, then picked up again in '93 with the call of KB7ZNI and a tech plus. While attending USU he was back door neighbors with one of our old pioneers, Lonnie Pau. W7DLW, whom some of you must remember. I believe they may have shared the same antenna mast, which must have required some quiet hours on the part of one of the parties.

He speaks a little Español from a prior mission to Texas-New Mexico and now spends his time in building various sizes telescopes, no small accomplishment, wood carving, and creating some outstanding oil paintings. Of course we hear him on 2 meters occasionally with an HT, and a J-Pole or 5/8 wave vertical for mobile.

Carol and Bill met while attending high school in St. Anthony. Later they both decided to abandon the frozen northland and made their home in Cache Valley.

They are the proud parents of five daughters and one son, all are now married and living in the valley except their son Robert who is back east. Bill holds out hope for Robert falling victim to the electronics bug, but time will tell. (Bribery is the answer.) Carol has taught music, piano, and organ, and has provided a comfortable home environment for the family through the years.

When asked the ultimate question about what her feelings were when she became aware of Bill's interest in watts, antennas, and ohm's law, she indicated that he was into it when they were married but she did add a small comment that he seemed to be swallowed up in the affair.

Bill does some neat things with PCs, scanners, and the lot, along with his other interests, plus keeping peace in the family. Something we all could imitate.

We welcome Bill to our fraternity, BARC, Angies, and whatever else strikes his fancy.

SPECIAL CLUB MEETING

**PLEASE PLAN TO
ATTEND**

**THIS MEETING IS FOR ALL
BARC MEMBERS AND THEIR
GUESTS**

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 1999
FRANKLIN COUNTY EOC
PRESTON, IDAHO
9:00 AM**

Talk-in on the 146.80 repeater

The main purpose of this meeting is to help us all get to know each other better and to more fully appreciate the opportunities that exist for exciting Amateur Radio work in the southern Idaho area. Please bring all of your friends who are interested in Amateur Radio.

Antenna tuning and radio checking will be available. Bring whatever you would like to "tweek."

We look forward to seeing all of you at the meeting.

Letters to the Editor

YOUR contributions to this column are welcomed. You may contact me by the following modes:



Mail: Don Rawlinson WA7VNQ
1055 East 2000 North
North Logan UT 84341-2027
Phone: (435) 752-1269 (Home)
(435) 750-9613 (Work)
E-mail: donr@deseretonline.com or
don@campbellsci.com

Hi:

I am sure people on this reflector may already know this but I have been having a great time on 146.43 Simplex (100Hz PL) to get into the Snowbird Link with minimal power. The other day I was talking with a guy in Las Vegas while sitting in the Kmart parking lot (+5F in Logan, +65F in Las Vegas).

As I understand this link goes to a simplex repeater somewhere near Malad, Id? I don't recall the name of this system but I am sure others do.

73, Dan Anderson, KA0EOF

From Our Past President

I'm writing this with some relief, that it's my last article as President, but with some sadness, in the fact, as it comes to an end, that I have enjoyed a wonderful year as your Club President. We have had our challenges and controversies, and we have overcome them. As a Board we realized that we couldn't please everybody all the time, so we tried to please most of you as much as we could. If I have offended anyone or caused any of you to not want to be active in the club, please accept my most sincere apology. It has been completely unintentional. I have truly enjoyed serving you as your Club President this year. It has been a very rewarding experience. I couldn't have had a better board to help make all those tough decisions that had to be made this year. I want to thank them for the tremendous commitment and superior job they did on yours and my behalf. They were absolutely great!

I want to thank all you club members

for your support, commitment and effort you all have given the club this year in making our club successful. Without your help and your willingness to accept assignments and the plea from Russ Tarbet KJ7UP to help at all the activities we had, and there are many, and some were new, the club would not be as fun and active as it is. I've said it before and I'll say it again, **WE HAVE THE BEST CLUB IN ALL OF NORTHERN UTAH.**

Thank you for supporting the Tuesday night nets, Club meetings, activities and Elmering one another as we enjoy this world of Amateur (HAM) radio.

As I close out this Presidency and turn it over to Tyler N7UWX, next year's President, we will have another great year under Tyler's leadership. I hope he enjoys being President and writing the newsletter articles as much as I have.

So until we meet again, and we will meet again, **"REACH FOR THE STARS, BUT KEEP YOUR FEET ON THE GROUND."**

Mahalo and 73's
Farrell Garr, KC7CWX

Holiday greetings, I have a non repeater AM radio question. Can anyone give me a tip.

I have a friend who spends 3 to 4 months a year in Alaska (life is rough) leading rich people on hunting trips. He likes to take an AM radio with him just to have something to listen to at night. It is a pocket portable radio. He can pick up a few am stations including some Russian ones. The stations are weak including the Alaska ones. He would like to know of a way to extend his reception.

He did take some copper wire and connect onto the antenna a string in some trees with no luck. He asked me what to do.

I have been told before that it has to do with capacitance. And you can sometimes work it by putting a capacitor inline with the new antenna.

Have any of you done this? How do you do it?

He is also willing to buy a new radio if necessary. I think I have seen radios that had pull out wire antennas or a place to connect a wire antenna.

Any help is appreciated.

Thanks
Kevin N7RXE

Test Session Report

A successful test session was held on Saturday, December 12th. 20 candidates took exams and of these, 11 received the Technician Class and 3 moved up to Technician Plus.

Appreciation is expressed to the following Volunteer Examiners for their efforts at this session.

Paul Hansen, WO7N, Coordinator
Mark Hebert, AA1HR
Beanie Lofthouse, KJ7LQ
Nate Ricks, AB7GO
Harl Goodsell, W7LTH
Keith Taggart, AB7GP
Bob Wood, WA7MXZ
Dave Auger, WB7CFT
Travis Roberts, AB7ZK
Don Rawlinson WA7VNQ

(The above are not listed in any special order, especially not in order of their efforts, as appreciation is expressed equally to all !)

Special appreciation to Brian Ulrich, N7QAR, for his efforts, along with Travis, in preparing the facility for testing at Campbell Scientific.

I don't have word on test sessions at other locations, however our next test session for BARC is to be held on Saturday, March 13, 8:00 AM at Campbell Scientific, Inc. Please be a few minutes early.

Members, please keep anyone interested informed of this date.

PLAN NOW

BARC TEST SESSION

Saturday, March 13, 1999
Campbell Scientific Inc.
815 West 1800 North
Logan 8:00 AM

For advance reservations, call Paul WO7N, our VE coordinator, at 753-4843. He always likes to know a little ahead of time about how many are planning to come.

If you are not yet an Extra class license holder...**SEE YOU**

BARC Repeater System News



146.720, 449.625, 146.800, 145.310,
147.260, 146.640

If you have any comments or question for the Repeater Committee, please send an email message to

BARC-Repeater@gis.usu.edu

or contact one of the committee:

Bill Neville (WA7KMF) (Chairman)

752-4352 billn@sisna.com

Bob Wood (WA7MXZ), Wally Gibbons

(WB7ASQ), Brent Yates (KA7FAP),

Andrew Rakowski (KC7OZS), Tyler

Griffiths (N7UWX), Mark Hebert

(AA1HR), Jeff Tingey (KF7ZX), Dean

Stevens (N7WDY), Kevin Reeve

(N7RXE), Dave Auger (WB7CFT),

Travis Roberts (AB7ZK), Farrell Garr

(KC7CWX), Warren Wilde (N7JYU), or

Ted McArthur (KB7PAB)

73, Tyler N7UWX

REPEATER COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT

A repeater committee meeting was held on Saturday, 19th and the following items were reported to the OTN by Travis Roberts, AB7ZK

1. There are some changes coming on the .80 repeater, including an Auto-patch.

2. Red Spur Repeater, 147.31 is to be fixed as soon as feasible.

3. Autopatch codes will be simplified on the 146.64 repeater, requiring only a * to bring it up and # to take it down. This will probably be in affect before the newsletter goes out.

4. The following have accepted trustee assignments on our repeater system.

146.72 - Bob Wood, WA7MXZ

146.64 - Terry Zollinger, N7PEG

146.80 - Warren Wilde N7JYU

145.31 - Bill Neville, WA7KMF

147.26 - Bill Neville, WA7KMF

5. A special club meeting will be held on January 30, 1999, (Saturday) at the Franklin County EOC in Preston.

Please...everyone is invited. See announcement elsewhere in this newsletter for details. (Filed by Travis AB7ZK)

PL Tones

The What, When, How, and Why

by G. Travis Roberts

AB7ZK

With the advent of new technology and our knowledge of things doubling every few years, amateur radio equipment has continued to change and mold with the times. These changes have allowed us to do many extraordinary things. For example, we can now span the world with just a few watts of RF energy. We can provide reliable communications when conventional methods have failed. The list can go on and on. With this expansion of knowledge, we (radio amateurs) have benefited greatly and have enhanced our enjoyment of the hobby.

One of the new technologies that has been adopted by radio amateurs is CTCSS or PL tones. CTCSS or Continuous Tone Coded Squelch System is a subaudible tone that is superimposed by a transmitter on a transmitted signal to control a receiver's squelch. When used in combination with the noise squelch, CTCSS provides a simple method to selectively choose which stations will be heard.

Most modern radios can encode a CTCSS signal on the carrier right out of the box. Most, though, cannot decode CTCSS. For a small price (HA!), this feature can be added to your radio.

There are many practical uses for CTCSS. For example, a husband and wife like to monitor and use a popular FM simplex frequency. The husband enjoys listening to all the traffic on the simplex channel. The wife does not. One simple way to solve this problem is to install CTCSS encoders and decoders on both radios. Both the husband and the wife set a PL tone of 123.0 on each of the radios (both radios encode the carrier). The wife then sets up her radio so that it decodes 123.0. Her radio will now only open up the squelch when her husband transmits. Since he has not set up his radio to decode CTCSS, his radio will open the squelch every time there is a carrier on the frequency. Later, if he wishes, he can also set up his radio so that the squelch will only open when his wife transmits.

Another example, two repeaters with the same frequency both cover the same stretch of an interstate highway. The repeater trustee has set up their repeaters with different CTCSS tones. As a car travels through this stretch of highway, the radio amateur transmits on the frequency with one of the repeater's PL tone superimposed on his signal. The repeater that detects the correct CTCSS encoded on the carrier will then retransmit the signal. The other repeater will not retransmit because of the lack of a correct PL tone.

PL tones on repeaters are also used as a way of reducing interference. Many repeater sites around the United States are used for more than just amateur radio. With a lot of RF in the air and Murphy's Law, CTCSS provides repeater trustee a simple way to reject unwanted signals. This is one reason why two of the BARC's repeaters use PL tones (Redspur 145.31 and Promintory 147.26).

With the use of PL tones come some problems. One, not all repeater's tones are published. Two, if they are published, chances are they are not correct. These problems can cause a lot of grief and frustration for radio amateurs.

Fortunately, there are some simple methods that you can use to overcome these problems. It is assumed that you are already familiar with how to program your radio and also how to change tones. The first thing that you want to do is listen. Sometimes during a conversation or net, the CTCSS tone for the repeater will be shared. If you do not want to wait, try these next methods.

Check to see if there is already a conversation going over the repeater. If there is, switch your radio over to the input frequency of the repeater (using the reverse function on your radio). If you can hear one or both of the conversationalists on the input, change your radio back to normal repeater operation mode. Then remove the offset from the frequency of the repeater on your radio. This will allow you to transmit simplex on the repeater output. Ask one of the operators (when it is appropriate to break in, or when the conversation is finished) what the PL tone for this repeater is. Problem solved.

A HAM'S NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Another way is to try each tone and transmit until you hear the repeater's tail squelch or courtesy tone. Make sure that you state your call sign each time you press the PTT button so that you are in compliance with the FCC Rules.

This about sums it up. I hope it helped to defuse some misunderstandings and confusion that exists. If you have any questions about what has been discussed here, feel free to contact myself or anyone on the repeater committee. They are ready and willing to answer your questions or help you in any way. Good Luck and Happy New Year!

GRAB AND GO!

Someone on the Sunday night net asked the question, "What should one pack for a radio grab and go kit?" Here are a few thoughts I have on that subject.

First ask the question, "Will I be setting up a 2 mtr station, an HF station, or both." obviously your needs will be more extensive if the operation is to include HF.

In any case your primary concern should be to keep the operator alive and well. I certainly recommend taking along food, water, warm clothes, (yes, even if it is summer), any medications you may be taking, and perhaps a sleeping bag. For sure we can't help anyone if we don't take care of ourselves.

If operations will be from your vehicle and you already have your radio installed, about all that will be needed is a tank full of gas, and the above mentioned articles, plus paper, pencils and any OP AIDS you feel you may need; message forms, frequency lists etc. Your station is already built and ready to go.

If operations will be set up in a shelter, you will need a radio, good antenna, coaxial cable, connectors, and a source of power. Emphasis on the antenna. We can have no guarantee that the repeater will be available and communications could be mainly or solely on simplex. A rubber duck is simply not a very good antenna and you will be sadly disappointed if that is all you have available. It is highly recommended that all operators do extensive experimentation with simplex operations and different antennas before hand, so that we can have a feel for the capabilities of our system.

'Twas the night before Christmas,
And all through two-meters,
Not a signal was keying up
Any repeaters.

The antennas reached up
From the tower, quite high,
To catch the weak signals
That bounced from the sky.

The children, Tech-Pluses,
Took their HT's to bed,
And dreamed of the day
They'd be Extras, instead.

Mom put on her headphones,
I plugged in the key,
And we tuned 40 meters
For that rare ZK3.

When the meter was pegged
by a signal with power.
It smoked a small diode,
and, I swear, shook the tower.

Mom yanked off her phones,
And with all she could muster
Logged a spot of the signal
On the DX PacketCluster.

While I ran to the window
And peered up at the sky,
To see what could generate
RF that high.

It was way in the distance,
But the moon made it gleam -
A flying sleigh, with an
Eight element beam,

And a little old driver
who looked slightly mean.
So I thought for a moment,
That it might be Wayne Green.

But no, it was Santa,
The Santa of Hams,
On a mission, this Christmas,
To clean up the bands.

He circled the tower,
Then stopped in his track,
And he slid down the coax
Right into the shack.

While Mom and I hid
Behind stacks of CQ,
This Santa of hamming
Knew just what to do.

He cleared off the shack desk
Of paper and parts,
And filled out all my late QSLs
For a start.

He ran copper braid,
Took a steel rod and pounded
It into the earth, till
The station was grounded.

He tightened loose fittings,
Resoldered connections,
Cranked down modulation,
Installed lightning protection.

He neutralized tubes
In my linear amp...
(Never worked right before-
Now it works like a champ).

A new, low-pass filter
Cleaned up the TV.
He corrected the settings
In my TNC.

He repaired the computer
That would not compute,
And he backed up the hard drive
And got it to boot.

Then, he reached really deep
In the bag that he brought,
And he pulled out a big box.
A new rig? I thought!

A new Kenwood? An Icom?
A Yaesu, for me?!
(If he thought I'd been bad
it might be QRP!)

Yes! The Ultimate Station!
How could I deserve this?
Could it be all those hours
that I worked Public Service?

He hooked it all up
And in record time, quickly
Worked 100 countries,
All down on 160.

I should have been happy,
It was my call he sent.
But the cards and the postage
Will cost two month's rent!

He made final adjustments,
And left a card by the key:
"To Gary, from Santa Claus.
Seventy-Three."

Then he grabbed his HT,
Looked me straight in the eye,
Punched a code on the pad,
And was gone - no good-bye.

I ran back to the station,
And the pile-up was big,
But a card from St. Nick
Would be worth my new rig.

Oh, too late, for his final
came over the air.
It was copied all over.
It was heard everywhere.

The Ham's Santa exclaimed
What a ham might expect,
"Merry Christmas to all,
And to all, good DX."

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Before we let it go for 1998, I Just couldn't resist this one last blast of Christmas that I received from Tyler N7UWX! (Hope the small type didn't destroy your eyesight!) - Editor