



The Repeater

Next Club Meeting

Thursday, November 7, 2013,
7:00 PM
Red Cross Building,
60 Hawthorne St., Medford, OR
Across from Hawthorne Park

Program: Operating above 50 MHZ
in Southern Oregon

Volume 2013, Issue 11

November 2013

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Scott Cummings	NA7OM	(541) 282-9776		Vice President
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Club Web Page:		NEW :	http://w7dta.org	

President's Letter

Autumn is a good opportunity to get some last minute antenna work done to get ready for contesting season. If any club members need help with tower or antenna work (or know any hams that do) please let me know so we can let others know of the need.

I wanted to take the opportunity this month to thank everyone who volunteers their time to help others and make our club successful. Tom McDermott, N5EG probably donates more time to our club than anyone else. Although he travels extensively for work he always produces a high quality newsletter. Our Vice President, Scott Cummings, KD7EHB

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The Repeater is the official newsletter of the Rogue Valley Amateur Radio Club, Inc. It is published 10 times a year—once per month excluding July and August.

Secretary's Report

October 3, 2013 RVARC meeting

Meeting called to order at 1900 PDT by Jeff W7KNX. Visitors:

- Jack, N7BWG former RVARC member, returning
- Dennis, WA5KTC from Grants Pass club, presenter for this evening
- Diane, XYL of WA5KTC, no call

Todd, K7TFC, briefly announced and described the club web page W7DTA.ORG

Old business: The attempt to retrieve the call N7NS is on hold and not likely. Reason: over two years have passed since Pete's death. The call will go into the vanity pool either when it expires (in 2016!) or within 30

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President's Report, Cont'd.

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worked hard to make our annual Swap Meet a success. Herb Grey, W7MMI is always there to help with just about anything and is always at the meeting early to unlock the facility, and is the last one to leave to make sure it is left as we found it. Joe Gunderson, AF7GN, has been very effective as our club PIO, making sure that our special events get as much publicity as possible, and is now coordinating classes for new hams. Todd Carney, K7TFC has done a magnificent job producing a new web page for our club. Lud Sibley, KB2EVN has served as club treasurer for some time and I would like to thank Allan Taylor, K7GT for his work as club secretary. I would also like to thank everyone who is willing to take the time to prepare and give presentations which make our club meetings so interesting.

At the November meeting election of 2014 officers will take place. Nominations from the floor will be accepted (with prior agreement of the nominee) in addition to the nominees presented by the nominating committee.

At our meeting in November, Scott Cummings, NA7OM will present the topic "Operating above 50 MHz in Southern Oregon".

I hope to see you all there.

73,

Jeff W7KNX

Secretary's Report, Cont'd

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days of a death certificate being sent to the FCC.

New business: A nominating committee was formed. It consists of Bill, W7QMU and Scott, NA7OM.

Jeff requested a storage home for the club's field day generators as Scott, NA7OM, no longer has room. Lud volunteered to store them in 'the schoolhouse'.

A PIO report was given by Curt Hadley, KF7VZV on the recent licensing classes.

- Tech class: 12 completed, all 12 passed
- General class: 4 completed, 2 passed

A combined Tech/General class is currently underway. An Extra-class class (!!) will begin in January. These classes meet at the Smullin Center near RVMC just off of Barnett Road.

Dennis, WA5KTC, gave a great presentation entitled Meteor Scatter Communication.

The SNOTEL network was described. This snow survey network of many stations uses a frequency of approximately 40 MHz with the control station in either Boise or Salt Lake City.

Amateur radio use also described. Modes practical are HSCW, SSB, and FSK441. Amateur use is almost all using WSJT software and by schedule. 6 meter band is the best performer.

Allan, K7GT, Secretary

**The Morse Telegraph Club
Vic Seeberger, W7VSE**

I worked about three and a half years at the FAA radio station, KSF, The San Francisco Overseas Station, during the Korean-war period (1950 to 1954). After the war ended, that FAA station was no longer needed, so my job was abolished, and I was transferred to FAA radio station, SLC, in Salt Lake City, Utah. I was a Watch Supervisor there for almost a year. The FAA was in the process of changing all the CW (Morse code) communications over to voice and Teletype. This hurt my feelings. I had been working and enjoying CW since 1941 and liked it so much I wanted to keep using the code. So, this encouraged me to get a book and learn enough radio theory and regulations to pass the FCC exam for my General Amateur radio license, (W7VSE), in late 1954. I bought a surplus WW2 aircraft transmitter and receiver, from another "Ham," and constructed my own antenna, quite a technical achievement for me, as I had only known how to be an operator for the previous 13 years.

When I finally got the amateur station ready, I found out how to load the transmitter by hooking it up to a 100-watt light bulb. With the telegraph key closed in the transmit mode, I adjusted until the light bulb got to maximum brightness. Then I stopped adjusting, connected the output to the antenna, and the transmitter was ready to be used — obviously putting out power enough to make that light bulb bright. I then connected the transmitter to the antenna and, in Morse code, called "CQ", (general call, ready to talk with anyone)

This was a special event in my life and I was secretly hoping that my first contact would be with a distant station in some faraway land. A station did immediately answer me. It was another amateur of course, but he was only across town a couple of miles in the city limits of Salt Lake City! Oh well, at least it proved my rig was working, and dur-

ing the next few months I was on the air quite a bit and made many more contacts. Most of them were in the USA, but I did get a few foreign countries. And I got to use my beloved code whenever I wanted to.

But a vacancy was advertised for Medford, Oregon, so I bid on it not thinking I would be accepted. But I was picked and soon moved to Medford to work in the FAA combined Station and Tower. This would give me a chance to break into Air Traffic Control. Also, it meant coming home for my wife and kids. We arrived in Medford around Thanksgiving in 1954, in our 1940 4-door Desoto. We had been gone for seven years. We had moved from Medford to L.A. and then to Oakland, CA, and then to San Francisco, and on to Salt Lake City and finally back to Medford. It was great to be back with the family and friends. I was tired of moving and vowed to remain in Medford the rest of my time with the FAA, if possible.

One of the other watch Supervisors at SLC was named Lloyd Byars, and he had been an amateur for a lot longer than I had. His call was W7MY. He had helped me get started. We got along, and had a lot in common. So we made an oral agreement that we would get together on the ham bands when I got set up in Medford.

In a couple of months, I put up an antenna, got in touch with him and we began a daily schedule on 40 meters, (I think). We both worked shifts so we were home in the daytime quite a bit and every day at a given time we would show up on a given frequency, or nearby if that frequency was busy. Some days there was no answer, but a majority of the time we had a daily schedule (Sked). After several months of this, we had just about learned all there was to learn about each other. I found out that he had worked a short time using the original Morse Telegraph code, just as I had when I worked

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The Morse Telegraph Club, Continued Vic Seeberger, W7VSE

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for Western Union for almost two years. I suggested that we use the Landline Morse code in our conversations to improve our proficiency in that code. He thought this might be illegal. So I said how about sending our Radio call signs, as required, in the International Morse code, to make the FCC happy, and converse in landline code. He agreed this should be OK. We did this on a regular sked, almost every day, for several years, and it was fun!

At this point, I'd like to point out that back before radio or telephone was invented, Morse telegraph was the "only kid in town," everything was handled by Morse Telegraph. It was the only means of communications available except the Stagecoach, and briefly the Pony Express. There were thousands of active Morse operators handling messages over telegraph wires that covered the whole continent. Newspaper copy, Stock Market reports, telegrams and a multitude of other information was sent by hand over those copper wires.

It was a momentous improvement in communications. Before the Morse code was invented and telegraph poles installed all over the continent, all communications had been handled by Stagecoach, and briefly by Pony Express, which was still using horses to move information around. The Morse code was probably a bigger advancement in communications than the recent invention of the computer is today. (I bet someone would want to argue that point.)

President Lincoln communicated by Morse telegraph to the generals and others in command of the armies during the Civil war (1860s era). Messages by horseback were very slow. Sometimes the battle would be over before the message arrived. Morse Telegraph possibly shortened the Civil War and saved many lives.

Those telegraph company's poles and wires, which covered the continent, would provide leased-wire space for the new-fangled telephone companies that came along after the telephone was invented. Later on the telegraph was forgotten and everyone started calling them "telephone" poles.

Another thing about the original Morse code, it was different from the International code used by our military and amateur operators. Some of the letters in Morse Telegraph ABCs have spaces within the letters. All the numbers are different except the number four. The punctuation was completely different. And it had an abundance of different letter combinations, like the dollar, cents, and British pound symbols and many more things that had to be spelled out when communicating with the International Morse code.

Some weeks or months after W7MY and I started using that landline Morse code on the air, we had hams break in on us and ask if we were using Chinese, or something. Once someone broke in on us, using the Telegraph code, and asked us what was going on. It was a ham that had earned his living at one time using the original Morse code. We welcomed him and told him we were trying to improve our skill at the telegraph code and invited him to come back on our sked. He taught us a lot, and I think he spread the word, because other ex-telegraphers started showing up. Soon it got so crowded Lloyd and I, and some others, would need to move off to different frequencies in order to talk to each other. It became a regular net and had some assigned Net Controls. The net met in the morning and again in the evening.

These old guys were experienced and sure knew how to organize. They formed a club, elected a President and a Secretary and they named it, "The "Western Amateur

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The Morse Telegraph Club, Continued Vic Seeberger, W7VSE

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Radio Morse Code Network". The secretary, Linda, WB6ZSE, mailed a newsletter in November 1974, and listed all of us. She referred to the list as "the Pecking Order. Lloyd Byars was number 3 on the list and I was number 5. There were FORTY-FIVE active members at that time, and 6 "Silent Keys." (Deceased hams). (I have a list of members, available on request). One of the members was W6FZZ, his name was Samuel F. B. Morse III, and he was a direct descendant of the man that invented the Morse code, back in 1844. I talked with "Frank" quite often. He was a highly skilled operator in either telegraphy, or International Morse code. Once I talked to him on Radio-phone. He lived in Southern California at the time. But when I heard him speak, it was like a letter from home. He had a distinct Texas drawl, and I was born in Texas, and all my folks had that same "twang."

When I worked for Western Union in 1946-1947, I used very little Morse code. Teletype had almost replaced Morse by then. Only a few small outlying stations that had not been equipped with Teletype machines still used the code, and the messages were few and far between. I did have to work a Wire Chief (WC) in Portland, Oregon on the wire, as we took care of some leased Teletype wires for the FAA. The WC had to slow down a bit to communicate with me, but we made it.

I don't know how long that Morse Network lasted. I became more interested in using the other code, working traffic, chasing foreign countries, working all states, trying to work all 3036 U.S. counties, etc, on the Ham bands, and didn't go to the net very often. I finally quit altogether.

I retired from the FAA in 1977 after 30 years of service. My military time in the U.S. Army Air Corps counted toward my retirement from government service, so I had 35

years altogether.

I would imagine that all, or most all of those old Morse telegraph operators have gone to the "Great Telegraph Station" in the sky by now. But I know we all had fun while it lasted.

I had an Uncle and a Great Uncle, who earned their living by using the Morse telegraph code all their working lives. Both of them worked for pipeline companies in Texas. But Morse Telegraph had almost disappeared by the time I was grown. The International code had taken over. Now it is also replaced by more sophisticated means of communication.

But I am proud to say that Lloyd Byars and I were the "cause of it all!" in getting those operators together and that Morse Network on the air.

I am honored to have been a part of that group. I feel like I had a chance to peek into the past by working so many of those Grand old Morse Telegraph Operators.

Amateur Radio for Now and the Future By Joe Gunderson AF7GN, PIO

It has been a long and hot summer and yours truly has been busy. Field Day went off with out a hitch, met the mayor of Butte Falls Fred Phillips, spent some time conversing with Bonnie Altus, ARRL Oregon Section Manager were some of the highlights.

The General class was given, with the following results, Curt Hadley, Jackie Wobbe advanced. The new Tech/General class started in September.

RVARC Dues are Due

RVARC membership dues run from January 1 through December 31. Please bring cash or a check payable to RVARC to a club meeting, or mail (checks only) to:

RVARC Membership
c/o 102 McDonough Rd.
Gold Hill, OR 97525-9626

Regular Member:	\$20.00
Senior Member (62 and over):	\$15.00
Family Member:	\$20.00
Student Member:	\$10.00

Nominations / Elections

At the November meeting election of 2014 officers will take place. Nominations from the floor will be accepted (with prior agreement of the nominee) in addition to the nominees presented by the nominating committee.

Amateur Radio Examinations

In the Rogue Valley, amateur radio exams are provided by the RVARC and the SOARC. New exam participants need to provide identification, while upgrading amateurs need to **provide a copy of their current license** as well as show identification. The exam fee for 2013 remains \$15.00. All license candidates must provide a picture ID. Upgrading amateurs must also provide a photocopy of their current license to send in with their application. To search for other exam locations, see:

<http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/examsearch.phtml>

Medford—Phoenix, OR

Time: Saturdays, 8:30 AM. Exam session starts at 9:00 AM. Walk-ins welcome.

Location: Fire District 5 HQ. 5811 South Pacific Highway, Phoenix, Oregon 97535

Dates 2013: Oct 26

Contact: Don Bennett, Email: kg7bp@rfwarrior.com Phone: (541) 973-3625

Grants Pass

Time: Arrive 6:00 PM. Exam session starts at 6:30 PM. Walk-ins welcome.

Location: Fruitdale Grange. 1440 Parkdale Dr., Grants Pass OR 97527-5288

Dates 2013: Nov 15

Contact: John Stubbe, K7VSU, email: K7VSU@arrl.net, Phone: (541) 218-2244

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Thursday, November 7, 2013, 7:00 PM

Red Cross Building, 60 Hawthorne St., Medford, OR

Across from Hawthorne Park

Program: Operating above 50 MHZ in Southern Oregon