

DXER

N O R T H E R N
C A L I F O R N I A
D X C L U B



Balloons To Loft ATV

By Charles McConnell, W6DPD

Radio will reach new heights at Pacificon '93 with high-altitude balloon launches complete with ATV, VHF repeaters, beacons, and a global positioning system.

Launches are planned early Friday, October 22, and Saturday and Sunday mornings too. "After a few hours, the balloons will reach 100,000 feet," Don Smith, W6NKF, said. "Then they will destroy themselves and



parachute back to earth. They should land near Stockton, if all goes well; we will need chase teams in place. The balloons will broadcast video, which visitors can view on monitors at the show."

Bill Brown, WB8ELK, will coordinate balloon launches and give technical presentations at Pacificon. Bill has been an avid balloonist for many years.

from the Stanislaus ARA "Repeater"—Bob Pinheiro, WA6ZLO, Editor

K6KLY Makes Chron

by Dave Barton, AF6S

In its August 6 issue, the San Francisco Chronicle ran an 18-column-inch story (on page A5) on the then-upcoming Perseid meteor shower.

The author, David Perlman, the Chronicle Science Editor, quoted Russ Bentson, K6KLY, as saying this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for hams to talk to other hams as far as 2,000 miles away on the two-meter band.

The article described Bentson as an electrical engineer who has been a ham for more than 30 years, and quoted him as saying, "About 50 other Bay Area amateurs will be making the same attempt." Perlman devoted five column inches to Russ and amateur radio meteor-skip activities.

The rest of the article described the Perseid meteor shower, quoting Andrew Franknoi of the Foothill College astronomy program, who said the Perseids are debris from comet Swift-Tuttle, which has been orbiting the sun for thousands of years, approaching the sun every 130 years. A trail of debris follows its long, elliptical orbit. The Perseid meteor showers occur when Earth intersects the comet's orbit.

Hams On a Mountain

Although astronomers predicted an intense display this year, it didn't turn out that way. Garry Shapiro, NI6T; Susan Barton, KA6SEH; and yours truly watched a few fine, fiery meteors fleetingly flare the firmament, but at nothing approaching the portended one-per-minute rate.

Inside

Minutes, Roster Changes	2, 3
August Mtg. Opinion—NI6T	3
Solar Autumn—NØAX	4
Machine Madness—anon.	5
Weird Weekend—KA6SEH	6
Pet Ham Care—anon.	7
Physical Fitness—K3ORC	7
CW: Backbone—AA9CH	8
Diskette Handling—anon.	9
True Proficiency—KC4EWT	10
Q.R.O. & Q.R.P.—N6KR	11

September Meeting

The September meeting will feature *The Fires of Kuwait*, a video made by Bechtel Corporation showing the huge oil-wellhead fires set in Kuwait by Saddam Hussein's minions during the Gulf War—and how they were extinguished in far less time than anyone predicted. Dave, AF6S, and Garry, NI6T, saw this video at the San Jose Engineers' Club and Garry arranged for the club to see it. Don't miss it!

The meeting place is the Bold Knight in Sunnyvale—on Matilda just south of U.S. 101. If you plan to have dinner at the meeting, please send Craig, N6ITW, the enclosed form by Sept. 4.

Coming Events

- Livermore Swap Meet: 1st Sunday of each month at Las Positas College in Livermore, 7 till noon all year.
- Foothill College Swap Meet, 2nd Saturday each month, through Sept.
- ARRL Southwestern Div. Convention: Holiday Inn on the Beach, Ventura, Sept. 17-19.
- 11th annual Sonoma County RA flea market and auction—Sept. 18, Holy Ghost Soc. Hall, 7960 Mill Stn. Rd. Call Rick, K6ZWB, 707/542-6907.
- Pacificon '93: Hilton Hotel in Concord, October 22-24.

N O R T H E R N
C A L I F O R N I A
D X C L U B

Club Officers:

President: George Allan, WA6O
 Vice President: Garry Shapiro, NI6T
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 Director: Bob Artigo, KN6J
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Club Repeater, W6TI/R, (147.36+)
 Trustee: Bob Vallio, W6RGG
 Comm. Chairman: Ralph Hunt, AG6Q
 Club simplex: 147.54 (suggested)
 Thurs. Net QTR: 8 p.m. local time.
 Net Manager: Ralph Hunt, AG6Q
 DX News: Dave Pugatch, KI6WF
 Propagation: Al Lotze, W6RQ
 Contest News: Rich Hudgins, WX6M
 Westlink: Craig Smith, N6ITW
 Swap Shop: Ben Deovlet, W6FDU
 933 Robin Lane
 Campbell, CA, 95008
 408-374-0372

QSL Information: Mac McHenry, W6BSY

W6TI DX Bulletins:

W6TI Station Trustee Bob Vallio, W6RGG, transmits DX information at 2:00 zulu every Monday (Sunday evening local time) on both 7.016 and 14.002 MHz.

Club address: Box 608
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 94026-0608

The DXer is published Monthly by the Northern California DX Club and sent to all club members.

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Board of Directors Meeting

The July Board meeting took place on the 21st at W6VG's house. Present were President George, WA6O; Vice President Garry, NI6T; Treasurer Dewey, KG6AM; Secretary Craig, N6ITW; Director Louese, KA6ING; Director Knock, K6ITL; and club historian Ron, W6VG.

- A letter from K1ER concerning Life Membership was read, and the Secretary agreed to respond in writing.
- A "returned" notice from the Postmaster for W4AI indicated his forwarding order had expired, but our Secretary has his new address and has already written W4AI and sent his annual dues notification.
- The Board discussed the life membership application for KI6WF. KA6ING moved to accept it, KG6AM seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
- Treasurer's report: 179 checks totaling \$3609.16, as of 7/20/93.
- The Board reviewed correspondence and directed the Secretary to send WB6QMD a life membership application.
- Old business: The Board discussed supporting the NCDXF and agreed that a motion to donate \$1000 would be brought up during the September meeting.
- The issue of card counting for new members during the general meetings was discussed. The Board will review this again at its September meeting.
- K6ITL moved to open a separate "seed account" for the International DX Convention, in the amount of \$5000. Every other year, when NCDXC runs the convention, the club President would make the money available to the convention chairperson. KA6ING seconded Knock's motion and it passed unanimously.
- WA6O moved to give the DX convention chairperson and vice chairperson free convention tickets, but the vote went against this motion.
- WA6O raised the issue of a new general meeting location. N6ITW agreed to contact The Bold Knight in Sunnyvale.
- A date will be set for procedure manual changes.
- K6ITL raised the issue of an endorsement space on the new California Award certificate. No one has requested an endorsement, so the Board concurred it isn't clearly needed, and agreed instead to drop the endorsement rule.
- Someone moved to sell the stock of sans-callsign NCDXC QSL cards, for \$25 per thousand. NI6T seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

General Meeting

The meeting took place at Harry's Hof Brau in Palo Alto. George, WA6O, presided.

- The meeting convened at 7:11 p.m. with guests introduced.
- Dave Pugatch, KI6WF, was unanimously voted in as a Life Member.
- Craig, N6ITW, announced the change of meeting location to the Bold Knight in Sunnyvale, from September at least until the first of the year.
- Gary, NI6T, introduced Tom, NW6P, who started the panel discussion on the DX Packet Spotting Network. On the panel was NW6P, KN6EL, K6LLK, and W6JZU. A detailed discussion of the network was heard by all with Q and A at the end.
- Craig, N6ITW, read new membership applications:
 First readings for George Staudacher, KI6CG; Danny Hayes, AB6LJ; and Jay Selwitz, KB6LYO.

continued on next page

General Meeting (continued)

- In the single second reading, Dick Dievendorff, AA6MC, received approval by voice vote, and was welcomed to the membership.
- The second reading for WA6HHQ was rescheduled due to the propective member being in attendance—which the club by-laws forbid.

Roster Changes

Changes and Corrections:

Klaus Heintzenberg, DJ6RX
Klaus's postal code is now D-55296

George Allen, WA6O
668 Chemeketa Dr.
San Jose, CA 95123
w: 408/226-0497

John Beck, W4AI
Box 3326
Sebring, FL 33871
h: 813/655-3682

Stephen Salmon, AA6LF
c/o Biesheuvel Sharpa & Co.
6333 Potrero Ave.
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Stephen Mainwaring, NZ6Z
Add home phone number 801/649-6669

Dave Tucker, KA6BIM
zip code should be 95337

Sandy Lynch, WA6BXH
Sandy's correct zip is 95951-5119

Donald Artu, NB6L
w: 510/484-4800

Ricardo Alfaro II, W6FWX
Delete office number 408-433-4383

Lars Berg, SMØCCM
new postal code: S-17836
h: +46858021436
w: +46856032435

Rowland Haegele, K6AFL
Correct Rowland's last name spelling.

Vincent Henley, KB6GV
Delete work number 408/463-2292.

KI6WF: Change to Life Member

K6ILM: Spelling of first name Elliott

KG6AM: Delete work number

John Knight, K6CXT is now Extra Class.

Additions:

Reg Olson, NH6T
P.O. Box 1056
Haiku, HI. 96708

Lloyd Cabral, AA6T
Box 970
Aptos, Ca. 95003
h: 408/722-4349
w: 408/425-6963

Robert Brown, N7STU
1750 Stokes #174
San Jose, Ca. 95126
h: 408/279-8480


Perseids

from page 1

But Henry Coe State Park's 3,000-foot altitude and distance from major cities provides reasonably dark skies. And with the milky way extending above our heads, we feasted on Garry's super selections from a Los Gatos deli—sourdough and "seed" baguettes, whitefish, leberwurst, provalone, barbecued chicken, and import beer.

Occasional meteors, seemingly born in an oak tree north of the parking lot, buzzed southward over our heads as Garry and I watched while reclined in Garry's folding chairs.

Susan had the best view and also escaped the chill air by rolling up in a quilt and reposing face up on a foampad.

Hey, with the bands in the doldrums and the packet screen filled with European reports, can you think of a better way to spend a summer evening? 

Allen Citragno, WA6GIN
14301 Lora Dr.
Los Gatos, Ca. 95030
h: 408/378-5221

Mark Hansen, KI7N
1291 Vicente Dr. #252
Sunnyvale, CA. 94086
h: 415/969-5462
w: 408/522-3342

Dick Dievendorff, AA6MC
2217 Cherry Ave.
San Jose, Ca. 95125
h: 408/978-9234
w: 408/927-1913

The August Meeting: One Member's Opinion

by Garry Shapiro, NI6T

Two factors influenced my asking Tom, NW6P, and Smitty, W6JZU, to hold the DXPSN presentation at the meeting:

- The proposed upgrade of the system backbone to 9600 baud needed explaining, and the U/G needs funds to finance the upgrade.
- I felt an open discussion was needed of the external-links controversy.

Unfortunately, the second part—regarding the links—did not happen.

The PSN was first connected to similar networks in five-land several months ago, through the ingenuity of Rich, KI3V. Reaction was mixed, but a majority of users favored continuing the links, and the sysops voted to continue as a limited experiment.

Subsequently Rich, on his own initiative, linked to networks in the Northwest and in Europe. User responses have been

numerous, polarized, and even rancorous, occasionally leading to exchanges of private and public insults and indignant reactions from the other connected networks.

Four factors thwarted discussion of the external links at the meeting:

- KI3V could not attend.
- The sysop leadership decided not to discuss the links at the meeting. NW6P and I had presumed Rich would brief

continued on page 5

Solar Cycle Autumn

by Ward Silver, NØAX

Why does DXing feel like the end of summer vacation right now? It's as if we are packing up our bathing suits and sunglasses, getting ready for the long drive home. You can smell it on the bands; even 15-meter European openings cause excitement; 28 MHz has an ephemeral quality about it. Tuning the higher bands is like walking into a house where all the people have left, but their belongings are strewn about—rocking chair still moving and dishes on the table.

Like all seasons, the autumn of the sunspot cycle has particular qualities to appreciate in certain ways. Twenty and forty-meters are reclaiming their thrones. The lower WARC bands, 10 and 18 MHz, are becoming a lot of fun. As we sense the coming winter, with its quiet conditions and reduced activities, we can savor the solar autumn for what it is.

The current cycle has been supremely kind to DXers; it maintaining a long, flat maximum, yet provided sufficient fireworks to keep us on our toes. Remember the great flare of March 1991? Even as late as

October 1992, the CQ World-Wide contest enjoyed first-rate conditions. Of course, better equipment and more operators were factors, but ol' Sol hung in there one more time.

I can't complain, having worked my share of goodies. I missed some, but will pursue them next time around. I still hold out hope for a QRP Zone-34 QSO from Romeo's upcoming Excellent Adventure.

When the bands aren't open, I leaf through low-band sections of antenna books or look up at my trees and ponder a possible Sterba curtain or Lazy-H. Thumbing through *QST*'s of the 1950's uncovers a treasure trove of wire antennas for forty meters and down. And armed now with antenna simulation programs, I may discover an elusive, low-angle, endfire array which fits my back forty.

Rather than just muse in lonely Vashon Island solitude, though, I look forward even more to monthly club meetings and packet cluster banter. There's always plenty to do, flux or no.

from the May '93 Western Washington DX Club, "Totem Tabloid"—Jack Fleming, WAØRJY, Editor

Clarence Zener Renowned CMU physicist dead at 87

by Ernie Hoffman

Clarence M. Zener, 87, a world-renowned physicist, recently died of heart failure at his home in Squirrel Hill, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Zener, long a professor in the physics department at Carnegie Mellon University, expanded theoretical knowledge in solid-state physics. Often he was years ahead of the technological applications of his field.

The Zener diode, a voltage regulator developed in the 1950s and used in modern electronic circuitry, resulted from a paper Professor Zener published in 1934 explaining voltage breakdown in electrical insulators.

"He was well known for his early work on the properties of solid materials, work which led to the Zener diode," John Fetkovich, associate head of the CMU physics department and assistant to the university president, said.

from the July '93 Steel City ARC "Kilo-Watt Harmonics"—Bob Rockwell, W3SYT, Editor

A QSL Bureau Suffix Manager's Lament

Bernice Peterson, N7MUC (K suffix manager, U.S. seventh call district)

QSL cards are all over my shack,
Even under the cat, to file or stack.
Your stamps I await, postal or green,
For after DXing, you should have foreseen
That cards would arrive through the
Bureau Machine.

To some I've sent notes and asked real nice;
You send no reply but I need your advice.
Your pileup of cards could paper a shack,
But psychic I'm not—I don't have the knack—
And if used for that purpose,
you won't get them back!

Amateurs foreign are wondering why:
They've sent you their card,
yet they've none in reply.

Are you laid up in bed?
Have you broken your arm?

Or maybe you've gone to the state funny farm.
Please tell me now, is there cause for alarm?

Shall I make a long list to send overseas?
"These won't QSL. Don't send any, please!"
Working new lands is a challenging game,
And contesting's fine, but I feel the shame;
When you don't QSL, you give all a bad name.

I'm thankful for those who
send postage and label,
Then patiently wait for their cards
'till I'm able

To sort and mail—whether two or ten score.
Those hams are the greatest. Of them I need more!
I'd nominate one for Ambassador.

from the April '93 Mt. Baker (Washington) ARC "The Ground Wave"—KB7TW,



Machine Madness Can Be Cured

Stolen from a Bulletin Board (not electronic) in Anderson Hall at the University of Kentucky

Sometimes the residents of Woodside, California say, "If the wind is right, you can hear the screams pierce the cool night, jangling nerves, and making the dogs howl." For nearby, nestled in the heart of Silicon Valley, lies the last hope for a growing number of desperate Americans: the Thomas Edison Clinic for the Treatment of Technoholics.

"A lot of these people don't even realize they have a problem," explains Dr. Douglas Allgood, as he shows a visitor around the 40-acre spread. "They're in denial right up to the end, trying to hide their pagers in their underwear when their families check them in."

By any account, the first five days at the Edison Clinic are the toughest. The withdrawal period can be brutal, and it's the anguished cries of these new patients that echo up and down the valley. Upon admittance, the technoholic spends each day locked in a room with only a kerosene lamp and some hardcover books—no phone calls, no television. Communication is limited to face-to-face conversations with staffers regarding nineteenth-century pastimes.

Upon completing detoxification, each new patient begins occupational therapy, relearning basic skills such as dialing a rotary phone, writing on paper with a pen, and division without a calculator. Patients spend their Recreation Hour mastering the yo-yo or shooting marbles.

In the evening, detoxified patients gather on the wide rolling lawn in front of the main

house, where they share their troubled histories and discover they are not alone.

"I guess I hit rock bottom the morning my garage-door opener broke," Ted W., a stockbroker from Los Altos, tells the assembled group. "I was stuck in the garage for three days. It wasn't 'til after I got here that I realized I could have opened the door with my hands."

Next a young tech-rep from Phoenix in her thirties rose. "My name is Ann, and I'm a technoholic."

"Hi Ann!" the crowd chants.

"I never thought I'd become an addict," she says, "like those people you see hanging around the mall, waiting for Sharper Image store to open.

"At first, I just experimented with call waiting, thinking it was okay because practically everybody had it. Then I got three-way calling, and from there things snowballed. By the time I understood what was happening to me, I had already maxed out all my credit cards on everything from portable fax machines to two-inch TVs."

The most tragic cases at Edison are the children. Many are born addicted, never knowing a life without Nintendo and Franklin electronic dictionaries. Ten-year-old Billy's alarmed grandparents admitted him after his father, a Palo Alto computer analyst, left him in their care while on a jet-skiing expedition in Maui.

"Gramps says clocks used to have hands," Billy confides, "but I don't believe it."

While technoholics as young as Billy are often the most difficult to treat, Dr. Allgood says his clinic boasts an overall success rate of 85 percent. Still, it's the few who don't complete the program that sadden the doctor. "Occasionally someone will flee the grounds. Later we'll find them in town, pumping quarters into a video game. It's heartbreaking, but we can't make those people get well if they don't want to."

Exactly what "well" means isn't clear. While the AMA refuses to categorize technoholism as a disease, Dr. Allgood and others in the field believe recognizing the problem is the first step in helping the afflicted learn again how to lead normal, healthy lives.

Toward this end, the last few weeks of the program involve reintegrating patients into the modern world—within strict guidelines. "We have a TV room," says Dr. Allgood, "but it's an old black-and-white set. Its rabbit-ears antenna only picks up a few stations, and if the patients don't like the show they're watching, they have to get up and change the channel manually."

Similarly, students in the writing and penmanship program learn to use 1960s-era electric typewriters as their future means of correspondence. "The key to recovery," Dr. Allgood says, "is acknowledging one's powerlessness in the face of technology. Only then can the healing process begin."

from the April '93 Bluegrass ARS "Qua/Ham News"—Bill De Vore, N4DIT, Editor

An August Meeting Opinion

from page 3

one of the other sysops, enabling the discussion to proceed; the sysops did not share that presumption.

- The audience of almost 100 acquiesced: only N6ULU stood to ask about the links, but John, K6LLK, deftly deflected his question as follows: "That is Rich's area and he is not here, and it is only an experiment." No one followed up, and the presentation ended.

- Finally, the U/G mailing, including a user-preference survey card, was late, so hard input data on user preferences wasn't available by meeting time.

To me, the most troubling of those factors was the "us-versus-them" mindset of some sysops, clearly expressed in pre-meeting packet exchanges and in a post-meeting memo authored by KN6EL, which I will

share with any interested user.

Despite K6LLK's excellent technical presentation on the network and the proposed backbone upgrade, the meeting failed. NCDXC and the U/G provided an ideal opportunity and environment to discuss an important but divisive issue openly. Unfortunately, the sysops chose to stonewall.



Knowing and Using Correct Phonetics

Here is dramatic evidence of the need for all phone operators to know the ITU (International Telegraphic Union) standard phonetics.

When John, K8CQA, had to take net control of a large phone net, a high noise level made copy difficult. He could only get call letters if given in standard phonetics. As the operation proceeded, he was shocked to discover many operators did not know the phonetics even for their own call signs.

The sole purpose of phonetics is to make yourself understood under difficult conditions, and the use of more than one set of phonetics defeats that purpose. It also sounds unprofessional. So discard the former Signal Corps or Navy phonetics, or old ARRL phonetics, and learn the current ITU set. All phone operators who don't already use them, should devote a little time to the ITU list of phonetics. It doesn't take

long to learn them backwards and forwards, which is exactly what's needed.

Here are the current ITU phonetics:

- ALPHA, BRAVO
- CHARLIE, DELTA
- ECHO, FOXTROT, GOLF, HOTEL.
- INDIA, JULIET
- KILO, LIMA
- MIKE, NOVEMBER, OSCAR, PAPA.
- QUEBEC, ROMEO
- SIERRA, TANGO
- UNIFORM, VICTOR,
- WHISKEY, X-RAY.
- YANKEE, ZULU.

from the July '93 Triple States RAC "TSRAC News Bulletin"—Ralph McDonough, K8AN, Editor

(If you say them in order, in lines as listed above, the rhythm makes a jingle like the jingle that helped you learn your A-B-C's

when you were small. Say the list sing-song fashion for two minutes, and do the same again tomorrow. Then start using the ITU phonetics and no others on the air. You'll be surprised how quickly and easily they become your "natural" phonetics. Afterward you'll take pride in no longer sounding like a rube on the air—*ed.*)

Dead Skunk

A minister called the local sheriff to report a dead skunk in his driveway.

The harried sheriff said, "We're too busy to be bothered by such trivial matters. Don't you preachers look after the dead?"

"Yes," came the dignified reply. "But first we notify the next of kin."

from the June '93 Westchester Emergency Communications Assn. "Wecagram"—Paul Vydareny, WB2VUK, Editor

How About a Weird Weekend?

by Susan Barton, KA6SEH (who tracks California events as part of her new business, Perfect Weekends)

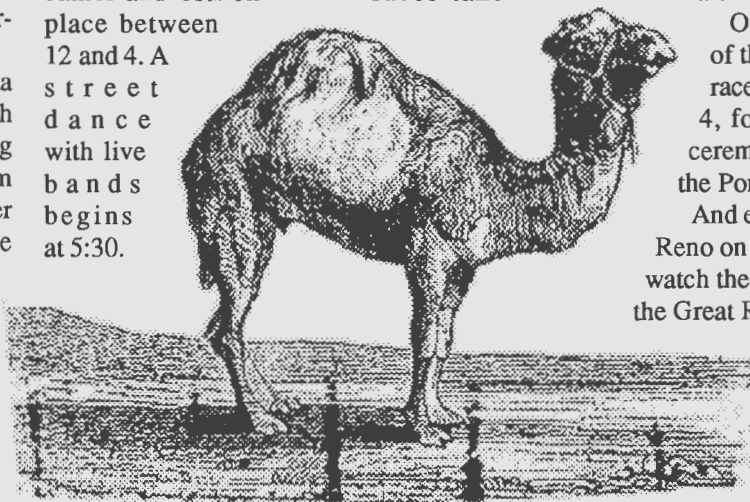
Virginia City, Nevada is the place to be September 7 to 12 for the world-famous Camel Races. There are other events too, including ostrich races, camel safaris, a Pony Express re-enactment, the Mountain Men ballet, and a Harley Davidson Motorcycle parade.

Festivities begin September 7, with Media Grudge Races at 1:00, interviews with celebrity jockeys at 3:30, official welcoming ceremonies with representatives from Australia, Saudi Arabia, and several other countries at 5:30, followed by a barbecue dinner and dancing.

September eighth activities include camel safaris, guided tours of the Comstock Lode Mine, a prize fight at 5:30, and a camel fashion show at 7. Similar activities are available on September 9, but the highlight is the Mountain Men Ballet at 8.

On Friday, September 10, the Pony Express re-enactment ride will leave the Virginia City Post Office at 8:30. Friday is also the first day of Virginia City's arts & crafts faire featuring helicopter and hot air balloon rides. The Camel Parade starts at 10. A military flyover marks the official opening of the games at 11:30, and the camel and ostrich races take place between 12 and 4. A

street dance with live bands begins at 5:30.



The street faire continues on Saturday, with the addition of mimes, magicians, and street musicians. The Harley Davidson motorcycle and exotic vehicle parade begins at 10, the camel and ostrich races take place between 12 and 4, and skydivers and biplanes entertain at 2. The day ends with the Camel Hump Ball at the Red Garter Saloon.

On Sunday, the final day of this unusual celebration, races take place from 12 to 4, followed by an awards ceremony and the return of the Pony Express riders.

And early risers can drive to Reno on Saturday or Sunday to watch the dawn patrols lift off at the Great Reno Balloon Races.

Lodging fills quickly for these popular events, so be sure to make your reservations early.

Pet Hams: Their Care and Feeding

"Pet hams" are so intelligent they often seem human, but they can be difficult to raise. Only someone with great patience should attempt it. In case you do, here is a short guide to the basics.

1. Living Area:

A pet ham needs a private "nest area"—an entire room where it will not be disturbed. Your pet ham will spend many happy hours alone there with its "treasures"—boxes, wires, bits of metal, glass, plastic, paper, etc.—that it will bring home whenever it ventures out. You'll want to encourage your pet ham to confine its activity to this room, to prevent the entire house from being subjected to noise, clutter and the boring of holes in walls.

2. Expenses:

Keeping a pet ham is expensive but, unlike most pets, a pet ham can be trained to work outside the home for a few hours each day. It may even

bring in enough money to offset its expenses.

3. Feeding:

A well-behaved pet ham will eat with the family occasionally, but it usually will feel more comfortable and secure taking its meals in the nest room. You must be sure your pet ham is well supplied with food and drink during the long periods it spends alone in there, even if it doesn't beg or whine.

4. Housekeeping:

Most pet hams can be trained to use family toilet facilities but a few require a toilet or porta-pottie in the nest room.

5. Obedience Training:

A pet ham can be trained to perform simple tricks, the easiest and most common being "sit" and "speak." Don't be alarmed if it practices them for hours at a time in its nest room.

6. Health Problems:

The pet ham typically suffers lower back pain and minor throat irritations, from too much sitting and speaking, but health maintenance costs tend to be minimal.

7. Travel:

Your pet ham will gladly travel with the family by car or even by air, if allowed to bring along certain items from the nest room. Most pet hams enjoy trips to places where they can meet pet hams from other families.

8. Breeding:

If you plan to breed your pet ham, you should do so as soon as possible after you get it. As a pet ham matures, it becomes increasingly reluctant to engage in activities not associated with its nest room collection.

from the Arizona Repeater Association's March '89 'Squelch Tail,' reprinted in the Central Louisiana Amateur Radio Club's August '92 'Brass Key'—WG5W Editor

Physical Fitness for the Amateur

by Tom Dove, K3ORC

Our spouses and friends may worry that we amateurs do not get enough exercise as we sit for hours in front of our rigs. You can stay fit as you enjoy your hobby with these simple exercises that were recommended by the creative commuter gang that meets each morning on the 147.105 Mhz Anne Arundel Radio Club repeater in Davidsonville, Maryland.

Choke: Choose an inductor that fits comfortably in your hand. Squeeze and release this coil 25 times to build the muscles in the hand and forearm. Inductive reasoning experts recommend removing the coil from its circuit so it does not impede your movement.

Dipole Chin-Ups: This may require lowering your antenna or using a tall ladder. Reach or jump upward and grab the antenna on either side of the feedline. Do chin-ups until you drop. For extra fitness, climb the feedline to reach the antenna. For extra adventure, try this exercise at a friend's station while he is operating, and achieve a special glow.

HT Curls: Hold a handheld radio in your palm and lift it to your shoulder 20 times. This exercise builds strength in the biceps muscles and increases the endurance needed when operating in public service events. While new hams may use small transceivers, a greater level of fitness will result from curling radios at least ten years old.

Power Supply Press: Disconnect the power supply from your radio and hold it with both hands behind your neck. Press it vertically until both arms are straight. Repeat ten times. The age of the power supply should be inversely proportional to the age of the ham. A healthy college student may be able to press a 1955 model with tubes and an 850-Volt transformer, while a sedentary amateur may choose two D-cell batteries.

PTT Thumb Push: Set your handheld radio for a quiet simplex channel and hold it firmly in the left hand, resting the thumb on the PTT button. Press

continued on page 9

CW: Backbone of the Amateur Radio Service

by Rajiv Dewan, AA9CH

I met a ham I'll call Jim on our club's two-meter repeater. We started chatting and he told me he was interested in getting on HF using CW. Later, on the phone, we talked about how we got into ham radio. I told him of my interest in CW and asked what prompted him to go for a Technician-with-code license. This is his story.

He is a neurologist who specializes in spinal injuries. A few months ago he was at a weekend party hosted by a doctor friend, Rob, who is a ham. During the party, Rob went into the shack intending to quickly tune the bands, and came upon a weak CW signal—a plea for help from a station in the Amazon rain forest.

A person had fallen from a tree, paralyzing his arms and legs, and his companion had called for help on his radio. When Rob realized the man's spine was injured, he called for Jim, then began relaying messages in CW between Jim and the victim's companion.

Jim diagnosed the injury as a spinal dislocation. If this had occurred in the U.S., the victim would have been strapped to a board and taken to a hospital for possible surgery. But that was not feasible in the rain forest.

From the reported movements and sensations, Jim deduced which vertebra was dislocated. Something had to be done before

the spine was permanently injured, but the victim could not be moved without some initial medical attention.

Over the next hour Jim described a procedure to correct the dislocation. It involved manipulating the spine by moving the body in a precise fashion. The companion, Rob, and Jim succeeded in getting the vertebra back in position.

The spine was still injured, so with Jim's long-distance help, the companion made a splint for the victim so he could be safely transported.

Jim was so impressed with ham radio he decided to become a ham himself. He realized code would be the tough part, so he studied Morse first—pretty much by himself, using computer programs. He looked over the theory a couple of hours before taking the test. He is on the air now.

Isn't ham radio a great hobby?

from the June '93 North Shore RC (Highland Park, Illinois) "The Transmitter"—Dave Alpert, KB9CNU, Editor

Road Hazards

The two greatest hazards on the road are people over 65 going under 25, and people under 25 going over 65.

—Ann Landers

from the June '93 Sierra Intermountain Emergency RA "SIERA"—Dorothy Uebele, N7MXA, Editor

Is Commercial CW Dead?

by Wayne Thalls, KB6KN

It may not be dead, but commercial CW is disappearing. Effective August 1, 1993, U.S. Coast Guard communications stations and cutters will discontinue watch-keeping on 500 KHz, the international distress frequency. Coast Guard medium-frequency Morse Code services will also cease.

A Coast Guard bulletin states that other options for initiating or relaying distress alerts and for relaying maritime safety information now exist, so the CW services are no longer needed.

A related event was in the papers recently. World Communications station KFS finds its San Francisco Bay Area transmitting site embroiled in controversy. Located in Palo Alto, the transmitters and antennas beside the bay have provided reliable, low-cost high-frequency communications for ships at sea throughout the world for 71 years—using CW. The KFS receiving site is on a bluff overlooking the Pacific near Half Moon Bay.

KFS is under pressure to relocate so its transmitting site can be returned to a natural, tidal-wetlands state.

KFS almost played a major historic role on December 1, 1941 when a freighter in the northeastern Pacific Ocean reported a Japanese aircraft carrier task force moving eastward. But the U.S. Navy did not deem the information significant, so Navy headquarters did not order the Pacific Fleet to sortie. Five days later, on a sleepy Sunday morning, the Japanese attack came as a complete surprise at Pearl Harbor and at U.S. Army airfields on Oahu.

from the Santa Cruz ARC "Short Skip"—Wayne Thalls, KB6KN Editor

ELMER

By Rich Regent, K9GDF



from the January 1993 Copper Country RAA "The Landline"—Bryan Suits, WB8WKN, Editor

NCDXC DX-LADDER

CALL	HONOR ROLL			DX TOTALS			DX BAND TOTALS					OTHER BANDS					
	MIX	PH.	CW.	MIX	PH.	CW.	RTY	10m	15m	20m	40m	80m	160m	06m	12m	17m	30m
W6ROY						221		90	147	150							
K6AFL				213	195	18		31	16	110	36	6			2	12	
N6LTN				213													
AA6TA				208	200	20	40	93	54	97	1				3	11	
AB6EQ				205	195	93		103	54	165	35				15	10	6
KA6BIM				196	190	59		108	131	141	33	8					
AA6LF					186			93	79	149	10	1					
KC6ESL				185	185			185									
N6VAW				183	166	85		40	34	99	2						
AA6TD				178	95	125		90	55	101	39	3	1				

de Larry, (09-93)

NCDXC WAZ-LADDER

CALL	WAZ			5 BAND WAZ					OTHER ZONES				PREFIXES			
	MIX	PH.	CW.	10m	15m	20m	40m	80m	160m	12m	17m	30m	06m	MIXED	PHONE	CW.
AA6AD	40															
N3AHA	40	39	22	25	33	37	19	8								
WA6AHF	40	40														
KG6AM	40															
N6AN	40	40	40													
K6ANP			40													
W6BJH	40			40	40	40	39	32								
WA6BSS		40														
W6BSY	40	40														
W6CF	40	40												893		
W6CTL	40		40													
WB6CUA	40	40	40	40	40	40	32	24								
W6DPD	40	40														
K6DT	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	33						1416		
AD6E	40			29	35	37	33	11	2							
WD6EKR/M		40														
KN6EL	40	39	40	34	38	38	17	3	3							
W6ETR			40													
W6FAH		40	40	37	40	40	36	32								
K6FO			40													
KG6GF	40			40	40	40	40	39								
WB6GFJ	40	40												837		
N6GG	40															
W6GO	40	40		40	40	40	40	40								
K5GOE	40	40												1300	1210	
WA6HAT	40															
K6HHD	40															
K6HNZ	40															
N6HR	40			39	36	40	37	35						1488		
KG6I	40	40	40	37	39	40	34	29	14	30	38	31				
WC6I	40			38	40	40	39	31								
KA6ING	40	40		40									21			
W6ISQ	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	36						869		

CALL	WAZ			5 BAND WAZ					OTHER ZONES				PREFIXES			
	MIX	PH.	CW.	10m	15m	20m	40m	80m	160m	12m	17m	30m	06m	MIXED	PHONE	CW.
WD	40															
6WF	40	40	26	39	40	40	29	26	3	14	17	2				
B6WKM	40	40														
E6WL	40	39	40	39	40	39	35	21								
5WR	40	40														
7XA	40	40		40	40	40	39	36								
6XC	40	39	39	29	37	38	24	5	8	6	16	6				
6XM	40															
6XT	40															
D6XY	40	40	24	28	34	37	6	2								
R7Y	40	39	15	39	35	40	34	31								
V6YVK	40															659
5YY	40	40	40					40	36							
A6Z	40															
VZ6Z	40	40		39	39	40	39	33								
N6ZKM		40		39	40	40	32	34								
W6ZM	40	40														
L6ZUR			40			40										
K6ZX	40															
KA6BIM	39															
WA6BYA		39		39												28
W6ROY			39													
AF6S	39															
AB6EQ	38	38	30	33	24	36	19			9	9	6				
AG6Q	37	37	6	34	29	36	30	20								
N4QJ	36			32	30	36	26	17								
WW6D	33															
WA6TOO	20															

DXLADDER NOTES:

According to the September issue of QST, the following Club Members have attained "Top of the Honor Roll" status recently: W6BJH (Mixed), W6BSY (Mixed and Phone) and W6ZKM (Mixed and Phone).

New Honor Roll Members: KA6DXY (Mixed), W6JD (Mixed), AA6PI (Mixed and Phone), W6BJH (CW) and K6RK (CW). (The above information received on Packet, courtesy of W6RGG. Thanks Bob.)

There were 39 DX updates, and 14 Zone updates submitted for this listing of the Ladder Reports this time. Four of them were from members who have never sent their figures in previously. All members are welcome to "get listed". Don't let the high numbers shown above stop you. Everybody started out at the bottom at one time or other.

There are presently 327 countries on the Active List. This changes from time to time and should be noted and revised to keep your figures accurate. List Countries that are confirmed. You don't need to send cards or other proof of this to me. Just send the figures in a format that can be easily read into the data base.

de Larry, KD6XY (09-93)

Northern California DX Club September Meeting

Dinner Order Form
check off or write in count

Price: \$15.95 per dinner (including tax and tip)

Prime Rib w/ rice pilaf and vegetable

Salmon w/ rice pilaf and vegetable

* Dinners include salad, rolls and butter, coffee or tea.

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(Mail out no later than Sept. 4th)

Payment: Cash or check. Pay at the meeting.



NEWS RELEASE:

JIM RAFFERTY N6RJ

FROM: NORTHERN CALIFORNIA DX FOUNDATION, INC.
TO: ALL AMATEUR RADIO MEDIA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 25, 1993

As most of you are aware, the amateur radio community lost a good friend and tireless supporter with the passing of Jim Rafferty, N6RJ. One of the causes that Jim's family asked people to support was the Northern California DX Foundation.

A number of Jim's close friends have asked the foundation to put together some sort of memorial that would recognize Jim's love of amateur radio and the on-going support for the foundation and it's efforts on behalf of all DXers the world over. This has been done.

From now until December 1, 1993 the foundation will accept separate contributions in memory of Jim Rafferty. These contributions will be pooled with the rest of the foundations resources but the individuals donating will have their call signs put on a plaque. This plaque will be presented to Mrs. Rafferty and subsequently hung in the Anaheim, Ca. Ham Radio Outlet where Jim was the Vice President of the company.

Anyone who desires to donate to this memorial should send their contribution C/O. The Northern Ca. DX Foundation P.O. Box 2368 Stanford Ca. 94305 or to Bruce Butler W6OSP Treasurer 4220 Chardonnay Ct. Napa, Ca. 94558.

Dear Elmer

by "Elmer Quirk"
(ex W7VJT, WB6ZHH) (S9JAVWOU)

Dear Elmer,

I worked a guy the other day who said his antenna is a beam. When I told him mine is a quad, he said he had considered a quad, but heard beams are better. So he put up a 3-element triband yagi beam. Isn't my quad a beam too?

—Quad from Quincy

Dear Bamboo-zled (Fiberglassed?):

Beam schmeam, it's enough to make you scream. Any antenna more directive than a dipole is a beam—as in *flashlight* beam.

The boob you worked apparently subscribes to the perversion that the words beam and yagi are synonyms. They are not; a yagi is a fine beam, but it's just one type among a wide variety of beams.

When a ham says his antenna is a beam, it's a safe bet he's missing some dits. So at it short. Tell him it's time for your tower-climbing exercises. Then pull the big switch and go help wash the dishes.

Some people of the beam persuasion think the word refers to the *structure* of a yagi antenna—an idea that smells suspiciously of 27 MHz origins.

If you and he cross wavelengths again, tell him about your secure receiving antenna—the phase-locked loop. If he buys that, don't bother trying to explain that your two-element quad is a beam.

from the January '93 Amateur Radio News Service "ARNS Bulletin"—AF6S Editor

VOA Acquires K5UR

The Voice of America has acquired super station K5UR, according to a VOA announcement aired in April.

In an interview, VOA director Upduh Powers said, "The new Little Rock facility will give us a strong signal into almost every corner of the globe, and at the agreed-upon price—in the seven figures range—it is an economical alternative to building a new tation under government contract."

from "The Clod Harris DX Bulletin," an anonymously produced flyer that was passed out at the '92 Dayton Hamvention.

A Diskette Handling Guide

Here are some tips for handling computer diskettes. You might even consider this the BIBLE of diskette care.

1. Never leave diskettes in the drive; data can leak out of a disk and corrode the mechanics of the drive. Diskettes should be rolled up and stored in pencil holders.
2. Diskettes should be cleaned and waxed about once a week. You can remove microscopic metal particles by waving a magnet over the disk surface. Scour with steel wool to remove stubborn metal shavings. When washing a diskette, make sure its surface is even, so it can spin fast for better access time.
3. You can fold "big" diskettes to use them in "little" drives.
4. Never insert a diskette into the drive upside down. The data can fall off the surface and jam the mechanism.
5. Diskettes cannot be backed up by running them through a photocopy machine. To back up your data, just insert two diskettes into your drive. That way, when you update a

document, the data will go on both disks. For more legible copies, sprinkle iron filings between the diskettes.

6. Diskettes should not be removed from or inserted into a drive while the red light is on. Doing so can smear the data, making it unreadable. The red light sometimes flashes to indicate what is known as "hung" or "hooked" state. If your system is hung, you will probably need to insert a few coins. Or maybe you should give your drive two minutes in the penalty box.
7. If your diskette is full and you need more storage space, remove it and shake vigorously. This will pack the data (data compression) to allow for more storage. Be sure to cover all openings with scotch tape to prevent loss of data.
8. You can improve access time by cutting more holes in the jacket. This provides simultaneous access to more points on the disk.
9. Spray diskettes with insecticide, from time to time, to prevent bugs and viruses from spreading.

from QUA/Ham News, Bluegrass ARS, Lexington KY

Physical Fitness

continued from page 7

and release the button repeatedly, being sure to identify. After 25 pushes, change hands (which requires inverting or rotating the radio) and repeat. Keep it up and it'll be "good-bye flabby thumbs"!

Tower Exercises: Climb your antenna tower until your knuckles turn white. As you become more proficient, your altitude will increase. Extra points are awarded for leaping from the tower to the ground instead of simply climbing down. Proper execution of this feet-first "Herman Drop" is

especially beneficial to tall people who wish to become shorter.

Yagi Yoga: After exercising, meditation benefits both body and mind. Sit atop a yagi antenna in a cross-legged position while your assistant rotates it, beginning at north and going clockwise. Close your eyes and repeat the mantra "Ohm" 52 times.

from the June '93 Anne Arundel RC "The Ham Arundel News"—Holly Bevans, N3BMB, Editor

True Proficiency

by R. Daniel "Dan" Johnson, KC4EWT

CW is the best-kept secret in ham radio. Long before I became a ham, I was fortunate to have a friend—Rich, KB4N—who loved CW. He loved it so much he didn't even own a microphone. I can still recall the image of Rich during a casual QSO at 35 WPM. He had the facial expression of a concert pianist as he immersed himself in his own world. Rich's enthusiasm soon infected me; I wanted the exhilaration he so obviously felt.

Rich taught me there's more to CW than learning the code. Maybe the ARRL materials' dreary emphasis on passing tests is why so many hams miss the point and deny themselves CW's unique joys.

A throwback to a time when the only other choice was AM, CW's technology is outmoded, right? Well sure, if you take it only as far as the license FCC requires.

Ham publications deal with the beginning levels, but seldom mention the easy, conversational head-copy of real CW operators. Yet that's where the enjoyment lies—where CW shines.



"Can't stand large nets myself ..."

from the Mobile Amateur Radio Awards Club "County Line Road Runner"—R. Dyson, KØAYO, Editor.

The formula QSO solves the same problem people have when they meet someone new in person for the first time; it's a point of departure. However, to start a meaningful conversation with a stranger, you have to ask questions. But beware; you may strike a gusher.

During a recent QSO, KB7JMO said he was in Gillette, Wyoming. When I said I had heard it called a beautiful area, he told me the setting of the movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, Devil's Tower National Monument, was visible out his window. He sent me a nice postcard too.

In another QSO, W8MVN said he was QRP. When I asked whether his rig was a homebrew, he answered, "It sure is. I built the whole thing from scratch, and it's solar powered." He sent me a picture showing his station mounted on a presentation case. He sent block diagrams, a drawing of his antenna, specs for his solar power system, and literature about solar cells and batteries.

I enjoy working Novices, especially if I'm one of their first contacts. They go through the formula QSO and then quickly say 73—if you don't do something unusual. They don't know what to do next. It seems silly, but a quick question like, "IS UR VERT ON GND OR UP IN AIR" will break them loose and start them talking.

Hams have a lot in common, so it's easy to break the ice; try a question next time you work a beginner. It will probably precipitate a real QSO.

CW is a great equalizer. You receive only what the other person sends. You don't see skin color or hear an accent. You can't tell age or even gender if the person you work chooses not to make those things clear.

It's refreshing to listen to a person's fist, instead of his or her vocal inflections. CW has similarities to that obsolete form of communication, letter writing. But its immediacy gives CW a special quality different than any other form of human communication.

from the September '92 Old Virginia Hams ARC 'Ole Virginia Times"—N4QPB Editor

Two-Handed Code

by Donald K. deNeuf, WA1SPM (SK)

In his book *My SF Story of the Waterfront and the Wireless*, Dick Johnstone relates how he and a buddy were determined to become operators at the old KPH Marconi station shortly after WW1. KPH operators were required to use a landline telegraph circuit as well as the wireless facilities.

Johnstone and his friend were already proficient in the International Code used on wireless, so they began to teach each other the American Morse Code used on landlines. In six months they mastered the additional code at fast operating speeds and also learned to copy on a mill (typewriter) and to write with a pencil with either hand. They landed the KPH jobs.

Johnstone does not seem to have recorded it but I've been told that eventually he was able to send equally well with either hand. In fact, he developed his ambidexterity to the point he could send a message in American Morse with one hand while sending in International Morse with the other. This would seem incredible if it were not for the various stage demonstrations we've seen where, for example, an entertainer writes poetry on a blackboard with one hand while recording and adding a long column of figures dictated by someone at random in the audience.

Of course, all Morse telegraphers developed some of this kind of skill—sending with one hand while writing (number, time sent, etc.) on the message blank with the other hand—no doubt after much diligent practice.

from the June 1993 *Morsum Magnificat* (Americans interested in Morse Code history, equipment, and practice can subscribe to MM by sending 21.50 to Wise Owl Worldwide Publications, 4314 West 238th St., Torrance, CA 90505-4509.

Q. R. Oscar & Q. R. Pete

by Wayne A. Burdick, N6KR

It happened in September, on a cold and stormy day;
The mother of all contests would soon be under way.
Before that day would end, ears from Bonn to Surinam
Would hear a battle rage between two breeds of ham.

Oscar— distinguished, of wisdom and of Wattage—
Surveyed amid pipesmoke his substantial short-wave cottage.
“Let the games begin,” he cried, aglow with pride and power,
And with a grin he swung his tall rotating tower.

Not far away a man named Pete crouched inside a tent,
His sleeping bag was soggy and his penlight made him squint.
Yet as he worked he smiled—twisting wires, tweaking pots—
And soon his rig produced 200 milli-Watts.

Just after zero, zero, zero UTC,
Both men were on twenty, listening carefully,
But neither could believe his ears, then both shouted “hooray!”
On fourteen-oh-twenty, was Zed-A-One-A!

Oscar moved up five, with dignity and class;
He gripped his paddle deftly, ready to pound brass.
Though heterodynes screeched, like birds caged in a zoo,
He knew he’d break the pileup in just a call or two.

stening to the bedlam with a frown upon his face,
Pete took quite a different tack; he scanned for open space,
He tugged his random wire to improve its ERP,
And found a spot at last, to sign “slash QRP.”

Well, Oscar’s monster, fire-breathin’ signal was the best,
And Zed-A-One-A heard him, but felt sorry for the rest.
With that in mind, he listened for the meager and the brave,
And ignored the QRO boys (who began to rant and rave).

Soon the Zed-A found a wimpy QRP,
And fired off a 599, then waited patiently,
But Pete was eating trail mix—his mood had been dejected;
Being called by rare DX was not what he expected.

Oscar found Pete’s frequency and moved in for the kill,
Yet when he thought his turn would come, the QSO lingered still.
“So how much are you running?” ... “A quarter Watt or less.”
“A homebrew rig?” ... “My own design—or mostly, I confess.”
“Well I’m a QRP fan too—good attitude to foster.”
The Zed-A then sent “73,” and next, “It’s your turn Oscar.”

On Sunday, Pete packed up his gear, his low-Watt mission done.
(Birds that perched upon *his* wire would live to tell their young.)
Pete surveyed the hills and fields, a wondrous sight to feast on,
Then he stuffed himself into his trusty, rusty Nissan.

Oscar? He had ruled the night with clear, demonic vision,
Slicing QRM with unleashed nuclear fission.

At near the stroke of twelve, he cut down two dB,
When worked a rare DX and said, “Not bad for QRP!”

from the April '93 “QRP Quarterly,”—Jim Griffin, W9NJP, Editor. (Box 776, Alpine, Texas 79831. Jim credits “72”, the newsletter of the New England QRP Club.)

Welfare Traffic?

anonymous

Dear Son,

I am writin this slow, cause I know you cant read fast. We dont live where we did when you left. I read in the paper where most accidents happen near home, so we moved. I wont be able to send you the address neither, cause the last family that live here took the numbers with them to their new house so they dont have to change their address.

This place has a washing machine. Pa put four shirts in yesterday and pulled the chain, and I havent seen em since.

It rained twice this week—three days the first time and four days the second. Know the coat you wanted me to send? Aunt Sue said it was too heavy for the mail, so she cut off all them heavy buttons and put em in the pockets.

We got a bill from the funeral parlor. Said if we dint make the last payment on Grandma, up she comes.

Pa got a great new job—500 men under him. Hes cutting grass at the cemetary.

And your sister had a baby this morning, but I havent found out if its a boy or girl.

Uncle John fell in a whiskey vat. The men tried to pull him out, but he fought them off playfully and drowned. We had trouble cremating him too. He burned for three days.

Three of your friends—Joe, Harry, and Moe—went off the bridge and into the crick in Joe’s pickup. Joe got out okay. He rolled the window down and swam away. But Harry and Moe drowned. They couldnt get the tail-gate down.

Not much news to report, son. Nothin ever happens around here. But you write more often, hear?

Love, Mom

(on the envelope) P.S. Woulda sent you some money, but the envelope was already sealed.

from the February '93 Olympia (Washington) ARS 'Watts News'—George Lanning, KB6LE Editor



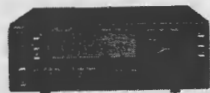
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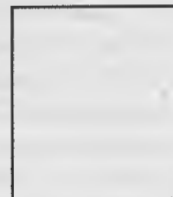
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