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Sky Valley ham operators chat all over the world

By Bruce Greeley

Some Sky Valley residents really know how to ham it up — ham radio, that is.

Member Dave Axe who started the Index branch that grew into the Sky Valley Amateur Radio Club, said one main goal is "to interest young people in amateur radio."

"I'm interested in any project that involves kids and technology," said the school board member.

The present club grew out of this Index branch and one following a parallel path in Sultan.

Axe has been enthusiastically pursuing his hobby for 37 years — since he was a Seattle teenager.

"Involvement with ham radio has proved to be beneficial," noted Axe. "It's opened up job opportunities."

"It gives more of an outlook on the world," he added.



(Dan Bethel photo)

Russ Sumpter tries picking up a familiar voice on his trusty ham radio at home in east Monroe.

noting Index elementary school students are excited now to be playing a game of chess against an Australian

teacher via this communication network.

But Axe, who maintains (Continued on page 2)

Egg-citing events set for Easter

By Bruce Greeley

Monroe looks to be hopping come this Easter weekend with special events planned in a number of locations.

East County Senior Center

The East County Senior Center will host an Easter luncheon beginning at 11 a.m. at the center at 14961 Chain Lake Road.

The festivities open to all for a small suggested donation will feature a full-course lunch, refreshments and dessert served by Monroe High School students as well as entertainment by Rod Quano singing songs from the 1940s.

The affair will also be combined with a birthday party for anyone who was born in the month of April, said East County Senior Center Program Director Sammie Proud.

Reservations should be made ahead of time with receptionist Betty Orwick at 794-6359.

Monroe Plaza

When the fire engine roars into Monroe Plaza this Saturday at 8:30 a.m., don't look for the fire

Instead, the truck will be rushing to bring the Easter Bunny to the Pay 'N Save for its pre-opening in-store Easter egg hunt.

Another Easter egg hunt will take place at 10 a.m. in a couple bales of hay outdoors near the northeast corner of Albertson's. Kid's Country in the same mall will then hold its own indoor hunt at 11 a.m.

For this "Easter at Monroe Plaza," the Easter Bunny will be available for free polaroid pictures courtesy of the Monroe Plaza Merchants Association until 11 a.m.

Monroe Eagles

On Easter Sunday, at 1 p.m. the Monroe Eagles will sponsor an Easter egg hunt at the Frank Wagner Elementary School playground. Children up to age 12 will divide into four age groups and will have the opportunity to search for 150 dozen pairs.

All children are welcome. There will be ice cream for everyone.

usually affecting TB. Symptoms, said Mockler, a persistent cough, weight loss and night sweats.

Some TB skin tests residents have come positive, said Mockler, who they are probably carrying germ although he adds doesn't mean they will actually contract the illness. person has no symptoms, germ is likely inactive and immune systems can effectively combat it.

Mockler stressed the TB discovered in Index is a drug-resistant strain discussed in national news casts.

The one known infectious disease also worked in Seattle, said it is unknown what picked up the disease, he pointed out since the illness is contagious "it is around."

Health department officials said once identified, TB is easily treated and cured with two-week medical prescriptions.

Overeaters Anonymous

Overeaters Anonymous meets Thursday nights at 7 p.m. at Sky Valley Medical Center, 17707 162nd St. S.E., Snohomish. For more information call 794-0354.

activities were essential to the final selections.

Historical society hosts potluck dinner, meeting

The April meeting of the Monroe Historical Society will be a potluck dinner at the Tualco Grange, April 21 at 6:30 p.m. Officers for the coming year will be installed. Burlington Northern historian Allen Miller will be a guest speaker, sharing his knowledge of the history of railroading between Seattle and Skykomish. More entertainment will be provided by the Country and Western Musicians Association. The community is invited to attend.

Hospital hosts final free health forum Monday

Valley General Hospital is presenting the free "Spring into Health" class, "Memory Loss — Is it Aging or Alzheimer's?" on Monday at 7 p.m. in the Godard Room featuring guest speaker Beverly Ricker of the National Alzheimer's Association. For further information, call Marlene Dankers at 794-1411 or



(Dan Bethel photo)

Skater Walter Wolover gets an assist from his Labrador, Shadow, across Monroe's McDougall Street Thursday.

Radio hams inspire related careers

(Continued from page 1)

regular communications with other hams in Winnipeg, Canada and Pitcairn Island in the South Pacific, pointed out it's not all fun and games.

"One of the primary aims is to provide communication in times of emergency," he said, noting the common flooding in Sky Valley makes this purpose especially relevant.

Communication with hams overseas is not as tough as it may seem. "Fortunately for us, the international language of communication is English," said Axe.

Club treasurer Ernie Allsop said he even made contact with the space shuttle from his

car the other week.

Every summer, the Sky Valley Hams participate in a field day, an international contest for each club to try to contact as many other hams as possible in 24 hours.

"Last year, we contacted all but four state and provinces," said Allsop.

Sultan resident and club vice president Mike Lee is planning on starting a ham class at Monroe Christian School.

"(They'll) build a little shortwave radio," he said, noting one of the students — his daughter — is already studying for her novice ham license.

Monroe's Jill and Russ

Sumpter are both members of the club — Russ has been involved since he got a shortwave radio as a youngster in Nebraska.

"It's not as archaic as a lot of people have in mind," he said, noting the radios can now be hooked up to computers and use satellites to broadcast signals.

Russ has talked to about 130 countries and keeps in regular touch with operators living near his hometown in Nebraska.

Though the hams are somewhat at the mercy of the ionosphere for their reception, Sumpter noted one advantage ham radio has over the telephone: it's free!