
THE OMISS O'MISSILE

The OM International Sideband Society, Inc.

Vol. 21, No. 3

December, 2001

Internet Home Page: <http://www.omiss.net>

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings OMISS. It's been quite a year, and you owe yourself another pat on the back for the continued growth and success of OMISS. Our membership continues to climb at a phenomenal rate. Volunteers continue to step forward as Net Controls and other volunteer duties. Net participation is up, and so is the activity in the QSL Bureaus. Our Awards Program is also doing well, and is currently enjoying a shot in the arm resulting from the New "Esprit de Military" award. These are all signs of a healthy organization! Well done, and keep it up!

It's also been quite a year for many folks in this country and around the world. The attacks of September 11, 2001 did not go unnoticed by OMISS and our many DX members. While I am not aware of any OMISS Members directly affected by this event, I am sure we all know someone effected in some way, large or small. To a degree we were all affected, including our DX friends around the world. As Amateur Radio Operators, these events have reminded many of us to insure that our shacks are capable of operating without power in the event of further emergencies. One can just not know when YOUR station may be called to assist in a National emergency. Are you ready?

With Thanksgiving just behind us, and the Holiday Season rapidly approaching, take time to enjoy what you have. Give your kid a hug. Call a relative on the phone to let them know they are in your thoughts. Have an "informal" with a friend on OMISS. Yes, it's been a year to remember. How will you remember yours?

Happy Holidays to you and yours!

73, *Greg, AE9W*

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17M – KC7ATK, JOHN, 3920
20M – KC9NN, Fred, 324
40M – WA0VZH, Dorothy, 3649
75M – W4TOJ, Bill, 3762
160M – N7VU, Tim, 3916

BOARD MEETING

Due to band conditions items requiring board action in recent months have been handled by landline and email. Action items included: Taking no action on the 17 M net as monitoring efforts indicate that it is presently alive and well, approval of the addition of the Military award program, redesign of the OMISS Web Page to be compatible to more browsers, approval to move the 75 M late net frequency to 7.263.5, and KC0FRL, Dan, to replace Ford, N8YY, as a director.

Remember Voting for the OM of the year commences on January 1 and closed the last day of January. Candidates must have been a member of OMISS for one calendar year and all votes must be sent to the Awards Manager in written form and delivered by either email or U.S. mail. Recipients receive permanent V.I.P. status. The winner will be announced by February 10th.

TREASURERS REPORT

As of October 31, 2001, the OMISS balance is \$2,257.35, including \$31.00 in the O'MISSILE account.

Meet the OMISS QSL Bureau

**By Greg Stilwell (AE9W) and Bruce
Micales (WA2DEU)**

As all the members of OMISS know, a free QSL bureau is provided. The QSL managers (Greg, AE9W and Bruce, WA2DEU) wish to take this time to reiterate how the bureau works, its policies, and why we do some of the things that we do as volunteer managers.

Why does OMISS have a "split" QSL bureau yet the managers live very close to each other? This actually is a great benefit. The split allows greater speed in handling the increased volume of cards you are sending. Sometimes the wrong QSL cards and/or SASEs are sent to the wrong bureau (more on that in a moment). Rather than always relying on the mail, Greg and Bruce can visit each other and do the exchange in person. In addition, this allows us to discuss policies, ideas, and share time over cups of coffee. Of course, as the winter months approach, Greg and Bruce may be doing these exchanges via the U.S. mail.

How do the bureaus operate? This has been explained on the WEB site (<http://www.omiss.net>); however, going over it again might be a good method of clearing up any misunderstandings. Please note, this is a condensed version of the operation of the QSL bureaus:

1. QSL cards received at either bureau for new members shall remain in the Bureau's "Holding Tank" for 2 weeks (courtesy time) while giving the new member a chance to get some SASE's sent out.
2. An OMISS member with greater than one month of membership with no SASE's in the Bureau will be considered "Not Good in the Bureau".

3. If an OMISS member cannot provide the needed envelopes after their Last Envelope has been used, please send the QSL Manager e-mail explaining the reason. QSL cards for that station will be placed in the temporary "holding tank" and returned to the sender after the agreed upon temporary holding time. (Military deployment, moving to new QTH, etc.)

The take home message is simple: once stations have decided they wish to use the QSL bureaus, they are given at least three weeks to get SASE to the appropriate QSL bureau manger. After that time, we will assume that stations with longer than 3 weeks membership are not intending to use the Bureau, and will return any cards received in the Bureau for them back to sender. (This avoids collecting large amounts of unclaimed cards over a short period.)

Two additional REQUESTS:

1. Use **#10 business size envelopes.** Most of the QSL cards can fit into this size of envelopes.
2. **Included the OMISS # of the station that the QSL card is being sent.** The use of the OMISS # is VERY helpful to the managers in determining if this is a new station or if the sender wrote the call sign incorrectly.

How do the QSL bureaus purchase stamps, envelopes and other needed goods? Using the dues and donations provided by the members, each QSL bureau maintains a very clear record of how OMISS monies are spent. In most cases, the money is used to purchase the stamps required to pay for DX postage plus envelopes required to send out QSL cards (DX and as a courtesy).

What about increases in postal rates? OMISS will "pick this up" and supply the needed postage stamp(s). However, it is very helpful if OMISS members donate monies (\$1-\$2) or stamps for the "cause".

I have noticed mistakes made either in the number of SASEs that my station should have or receiving the wrong QSL

card – what's the deal? Please remember this is a volunteer position, Greg and Bruce make every effort to make sure mistakes are not made; however they do happen. All we can ask is that you contact the appropriate QSL manager and ask them to look into this discrepancy. In addition, the U.S. postal service may be slow in some cases. What may appear to take (or should take) only 2-3 days may actually take a week (Bruce has had this happen twice when receiving SASEs).

In closing, both Greg and Bruce enjoy serving OMISS as acting as the QSL managers. We hope that we are getting the cards to you as quickly as possible. We also hope you enjoy the ability to look up SASE counts on the web page. Again if there are any problems, please contact the appropriate QSL manager.

Thank you and 73
Greg & Bruce

AWARDS MANAGERS REPORT

Dick reports that members have been real busy working for the Military Award and he expects this to continue for some time. NOVEMBER INFORMATION (Membership certificates are not included):

AWARD	ISSUED 2001	ENDORSEMENTS	TOTAL
Counties5	5	76	
5X25	5		16
6X25	1		1
7X25	1		1
5X50	2		2
GRID SQ	0		22
1000 POINT	2		6
KING&QUEEN	6	6	160
MBRSHIP	8	5	172
POSTAL	0		2
SPELLING BEE	4	1	48
TOP OP	11		218
TWIN CO.s	2		7
VIP	6	5	254
WAS	8	5	168
WAS/MOBILE	1		1
WAS/QRP	0		2
WAS 1X3	2		4
WAS/5 BAND	2		10
WAS/6 BAND	0		1
WPX	2		53
Y2K	19	15	19

MERTORIOUS	4		11
MILITARY	22	21	22

3RD Qtr W4TOJ Bill

DOUG, N9YZS, 3533

OM OF THE YEAR

Following is a list of "OM of The Year" beginning with 1986.

1986	WL7LTB	0876	
1987	N9FPW	1939	
1988	KC9NN	0324	
1989	W0PXE	1711	
1990	N7FUD	1914	
1991	WA2QEC	1563	
1992	W0MWU	2603	
1993	KA0MGM	0675	(TIE)
1993	WA4ICK	2031	(TIE)
1994	WB2ERQ	2271	(SK)
1995	WB6QVI	2215	(TIE)
1995	WA2QOM	3013	(TIE)
1996	N/A (Insufficient votes)		
1997	WG1Q	2781	(SK)
1998	W3YJM	2904	
1999	KB8NTG	3376	
2000	KL7IHK	185	

Net contacts with any OM of The Year and members of the Board of Directors may be applied toward the VIP Award. Additionally, past presidents, holders of the Meritorious Service Award, the quarterly Net Controller and the Top OP announced for the previous month is a VIP until the 5th of the following month when the new Top OP is announced.

TOPS OPS

Members receiving the monthly top op award were:

Jan. 01	K4AQD	Bill
Feb. 01	KK6AW	Kelsey
Mar. 01	W0VD	Dan
Apr. 01	WG0Y	Dave
May 01	AE9W	Greg
Jun.01	WA2DEU	Bruce
Jul. 01	KH6IDU	EARL
Aug.01	KC2ATK	JOHN
Sep. 01	N7DLS	DAN
Oct. 01	KX2J	RON
Nov. 01	KA9GLX	4223

Net Controllers:

1 st Qtr	KC0FRL	Dan
2 nd Qtr	N7FUD	Ron

Doug is a Network Engineer working for an International firm in Downtown Chicago, IL. He's 46 and was first licensed in 1994 when he started working 2 m and 70 cm repeaters locally. Doug says this new means of communication excited him and he met many new friends. The stories they told of making contacts all over the USA and the World, excited him even more. He acquired an old Heathkit SB-303 (which was, and still is in great shape) and put up a long wire antenna to start listening on the HF bands. It wasn't long before the bug bit him and he was studying to upgrade to a Tech Plus. Learning the code wasn't so bad, even though it took him twice to pass the 5 wpm test. But, after finally passing, he began looking for a transmitter to begin his adventure into the world of HF. Another ham, AI9I, Jess, was very generous to lend him a Yaesu FT-10 to use. His first HF contact was to the state of Texas, a distance of some 1,000 miles. Doug says he bragged for days about that contact. In a very short time he made 100 or so contact and felt comfortable with CW, but that was still not enough, he wanted to expand and be able to use voice communications. Of course Jess didn't include the microphone in order to keep him from making the big mistake of working phone in the portions of the bands he wasn't licensed for. So on the top of his list of things to do was studying to upgrade. By this time his CW skills had improved and he was able to pass the 13 wpm General Class test but it took about a month of studying to upgrade to Advanced. Since then he has upgraded to Extra, which he says he thought he would never get.

As an OMISS member for over a year now, he has enjoyed the thrill of making many contacts on the Ham Bands, as well as the friendships he has established. At the beginning, he was limited to the lower bands due to insufficient antenna systems. Recently he added a Cushcraft A4 Tri-Bander with the 40 Meter Kit to a 50' tower. He says being able to get on the higher bands began his thrill with Ham radio all over again as he has met and made new friends on these bands. The newly realized ability to talk to those OM's on these bands has him feeling the way he did when he made his first Ham contact back in 1994. This new energy has spilled over to some of the local hams and non-hams he talks to on a daily

basis to the point that they are feeling a newfound energy as well. Some that were content to stay Tech's are now beginning to study for their upgrades and maybe a couple will be come new hams soon.

Doug sent along a couple of pictures, which may not get in this newsletter but will be forwarded to the web site manager for adding to the OMISS web site photo gallery.

Editors note: Isn't that what ham radio is all about -- enjoying the hobby, having fun and getting others interested in becoming 'hams'. Good job Doug!

BUCK, W3YJM, 2904

Buck now lives with his daughter, Barbara, and son-in-law in a beautiful brand new home. Buck has his own separate quarters. He doesn't have a 'rig' in the house but we are glad to hear him on the mobile when he has the opportunity to join one of the nets. For anyone who hasn't received it his new permanent mailing address is:

Charles S. Gilbert
16 Pebble Beach Dr
Harbor Twp., NJ 08234

If you can catch home at home his number is (609) 926-1496 and the e-mail is:
buckgyjm@ix.netcom.com

Buck said he has one last word for all of us, "HUG YOUR LOVED ONES EVERY DAY".

FRED, WB6QVI, 2215

Fred has been promising an article on Grid Squares for a long time. In order to keep his promise he was 'forced' to take a 10 day vacation in (of all places) Maui! Actually he and Shirley were on a 'check out' visit for next year when the entire family will return to Hawaii to celebrate the Solders 50th wedding anniversary! .Fred and Shirley met while her dad and Fred were stationed together at a small Naval Radio Station on Oahu in 1947, so the Hawaiian Islands are special to them. However, he did take time while there to send us

THE QUEST FOR GRID SQUARES

If you are the type who likes to color in little squares on a map, chasing grid squares is the thing for you! Fred says he is still not sure why they are called "grid squares" because they are actually little rectangles made up of 1 degree latitude and 2 degrees longitude. The whole world is divided into grid squares and you can get a map covering the USA from ARRL. And if you really get in to it, grid squares are further broken down by designators, but Fred says he's never gone that far.

Fred's 'quest' started when he first joined OMISS in 1987. At that time, it seemed more members were interested in the grid square award which is for working members in 200 grid squares. When he finally got his 200th grid square, he proudly submitted his application to the Awards Manager who promptly burst his bubble when he advised him that he didn't have a valid application because he had used the same member for more than one grid square, such as when they were mobile, etc. The Awards Manager interpreted the rules of the award to allow only one grid square per member! Fortunately, Fred had some extra contacts and after sorting it all out he received the award.

Fred was almost inactive in OMISS for several years, but then came back continues to be very supportive of OMISS. New grid squares come a lot slower now. When a new member joins Fred checks the grid square and highlights it on his roster if it is one he needs. His unofficial count now stands at 271! These days he works mostly 20M, so the closer stations are harder contacts for him. Fred maintains an ARRL Grid Locator map for North America and colors in each grid square once a contact is made with an OMISS member in that grid. His original 200 are colored in red and the 71 he has added since are in blue. The map is pretty solid east of the Mississippi or longitude 100W. There are still a number of active members in many of the grids he needs so it keeps him on his toes listening for them, which incidently is why he feels chasing awards keeps members involved and improves their operating skills. It just makes you try a little harder!

SO – get yourself a grid square map. Get out your log and fill in all those you already have, and then jgo for the rest!

HAPPY GRID SQUARE HUNTING!

P.S. "I've reread the rules of the grid square award. It's not really clear to me whether you should be able to get grid square credit for more than one grid square per member or not"

WARREN, KM5EW, 3198

In October, Warren began employment as a police/fire dispatcher for the city of Georgetown, TX His working hours forced him to give up his duties in Bell County ARES, but did allow him to continue his passion for HF (including OMISS, of course), including DXing, awards, chasing, and the occasional rag chew.

He participated in the Texas QSO party during 29-30 September, and entered a log in the Single Operator Category. He hasn't heard how high he placed, but if he compares his c\score to last years' entrants, he may have placed in the top 5! Not bad for a first time entry as a single operator.

He also participated in the ARRL Sweepstakes on 17-18 November and thinks he did well in the event. He achieved the "Clean Sweep" award in 1999, and hopes to do it again this year. His entry was in the Multi-operator category, and his group hopes they finished in the top 5 in the West Gulf Division.

More than anything else, he loves to take part in the OMISS nets whenever he can. He has been a member since 1993, and has enjoyed that membership ever since first joining with absolutely no regrets! "OMISS members are the most wonderful people I have EVER met on the air, bar none".

His next adventure is his own awards program, which he is working on now, to place out there along with the other fine operating awards programs that are out there in the amateur radio world. He promises these awards will be unique, but not too difficult to achieve. Here's one example he provided: "Work all of the counties that Interstate 35 passes through, from Laredo, TX up to Duluth, MN. He says this one should be ready before too long, and several others will follow shortly. He also says that if anyone has any ideas for awards that aren't out there already, he might be interested in sponsoring it – just let him know.

Warren would like to link with OMISS members who have their own pages, and OMISS members

are certainly welcome to link with his, which deals specifically with amateur radio and weather. If anyone is interested just email him at Wirkm5ew@aol.com. His home page is: <http://www.geocities.com/km5ewwir>

KELSEY, KK6AW, 3830

Kelsey says if you have a GPS unit and are interested in having some
FUN FUN FUN
Try <http://www.geocaching.com>

Play hides and seek on a global scale, 74 countries at last count! This fun pastime allows you to get out of the house and have some fun while seeking hidden caches and hiding our own. Go to the URL above and type in your ZIP code and see a list of hidden caches in your area and beyond starting with the nearest and expanding outward several hundred miles.

It's FREE to join! Look at Kelsey's' URL <http://www.qsl.net/kk6aw>. (He says it's his first attempt at web design and he hasn't had any braining, but if you're a glutton for punishment, check it out.). Click on the geocaching logo and go to his picture page of found caches, click on the logo again and go to the Geocaching web page. Kelsey has hidden two caches called "sje/incline" and "jose basin", each has pictures of the area. Kelsey's user name is "Navtalk".

Download the info to your GPS and hit the trail. You may be surprised at where caches are hidden. This is a year round sport, from easy to difficult. Some caches can be found year round and some are summer only.

GPS units are not that expensive the Top Model Garmen etrex vista is \$284.95 with a pc cable. Models with fewer features are much less expensive. This model is over \$300.00 at most stores. If interested drop him a line for the lowest prices he has found.

Kelsey is 63 (just a kid) has a homebrew computer, P-II 450,128megs, and his ham program of logging is Logic 5 and WA4ZOP – Netcon, Digipan. .

KC2ATK, JOHN, 3920

The following is an essay John's 13-year-old Granddaughter, Erica Calhoun, wrote for school. Erica lives in Bellmawr, N.J.

"Is Freedom Really Free?"

"When I first heard the question for this essay 'Is Freedom Really Free?' I thought of course it is. After thinking about it I began to second-guess myself. If freedom really did mean free, there would be no laws or rules to follow, no crimes, and no beliefs or values to live by.

People always complain about rules and laws saying they limit our freedom. After thinking about it I believe it gives us a greater freedom. If we didn't have laws it would be all right to steal money from a store, and speed recklessly on the highway. So although laws restrict us from being "free", they give us the freedom to feel safe.

Freedom gives us the power to walk down a street without fear. Freedom gives us the right to be an individual, to have our own opinion, to speak our mind. If we didn't have freedom our life styles would be very different. Take the women of Afghanistan for example, they have no freedom. They must follow a man's orders, hide their faces, and aren't allowed to learn how to read or write. In a sense they are slaves. America made that mistake in the past but has learned and gave freedom to everyone no matter their sex, race, or religion.

I think the question; "Is Freedom Really Free?" is a trick question. Freedom allows us to be free, but only to a point. It does not allow us to be absolutely free, because that could be dangerous to ourselves. Total freedom would cause chaos. The restricted freedom we have is limited for our safety. The amount of freedom we have compared to the rest of the world makes our rules and laws seem simple. I would rather live a life with laws such as 'your are not allowed to do drugs' than a world that would punish your for showing your face.

In the end when being asked "Is Freedom Really Free?" I would have to go with my original answer and say 'yes'. In my opinion, in our country freedom really does mean free. "

DON, N0CQI, 2808

Don send a short note with a little support for the **O'MISSILE** and says he joined OMISS about 1986, but didn't do much with it for some time. However, he says he is really enjoying the nets now but just never seems to get on the air as much as he would like.

PHIL, WA5YLM, 3189

Phil and Rick, KK5BR, build about 90% of their own equipment. He sent a photocopy of a roller inductor but we were unable to reproduce it for the newsletter. He says the original roller inductors are very hard to find and they use them in some antenna tuners and amplifiers. Otherwise they use plug in coils, which they build also and he says either one is very reliable. One potential disadvantage of their rigs is they are very heavy and take up a lot of room Phil has 2 spare amplifiers with 811A tubes but his big amp and power supply uses 3-500 tubes and the combination weighs about 400 pounds! That's why he mounted it on a mobile skate-board to make it easy to move. Phil reports that he has almost zero trouble with the homemade amplifiers and power supplies and he has enough parts in stock to build several more.

Know his equipment was large and heavy, when Phil designed his new 'shack' several years ago he worked with the contractor to make sure everything would fit in its' place. He even had the contractor run a separate electrical service to the shack, which is heated and air conditioned, as the big power supplies run on 220V. You can see Phil's shack by visiting page 8 of the OMISS web site photo gallery

The actual building of the equipment takes place in his double garage where he has a lathe, drill press and a lot of other ship equipment plus the hardware, etc., which enable them to complete their projects. Phil doesn't sell any of the equipment they build due to the liability aspect, but he is always glad to send prints out to other hams interested in building their own equipment. If you build or decide to build Phil offers one word of caution – There is **very high voltage** involved so all it takes is one mistake!

Phil added a P.S. "Hey that new military award is working very well, I will keep working on that, I am almost done with the second bank of 12 members."

EDITORIAL, N5VTP, 2869

Each year we are saddened to learn of members who have become Silent Keys during the year. Every loss is special, but this year we lost Ford, N8YY, OM 3543, who was active in a number of areas and was very instrumental in keeping 75M alive when everyone was ready to give it up. Upon learning of his passing several members contributed to a memorial which was sent to his widow. We recently received a note from Jane thanking OMISS for the contribution which was given to the Cancer Society for research in the field of prostate cancer.

A great big **THANK YOU** to all of the members who contributed material in this issue of the **O'MISSILE!**

Not only did I enjoy 'editing' it but I also enjoyed reading the articles and getting caught up on nets times and frequencies which changed October 28.

Thanks again to all who have contributed financially to this publication; however, contributions continue in the deficit mode and member support must increase or the O'MISSILE will be available only on the web site and as an 'ANNUAL NEWSLETTER' mailed only to those who have made a monetary contribution unless other action is taken by the Board of Directors.

*THE O'MISSILE, WHAT'S IT WORTH?
THE DECISION IS YOURS!*

Harry

NET TIMES AND FREQUENCIES

Just a reminder that all OMISS nets now operate on UTC time and net times will not change with daylight savings time as it has in the past on some nets. Also note the change in the 40 m late net frequency. The Approved net times and frequencies effective October, 2001. All times are UTC.

160 meters, 1.880, Fri & Sat 0400

75 meters 3.940.5, 0200 daily

40 meters, 7.263.5, 0100 daily

40 meters late net, 7.263.5 0300 Fri & Sat

20 meters, 14.29, 1800 Mon through Sat

17 meters, 18.165, 1900 Sat and Sun

15 Meters, 21.360, 1700 Sat & Sun, and Holiday Mondays.

10 Meters, 28.665, 1800 Sat and Sun

STATEMENTS TO PONDER

By George Carlin

1. One tequila, two tequila, three tequila, floor.
 2. How is it possible to have a civil war?
 3. Can vegetarians eat animal crackers?
 4. How do they get the deer to cross at that yellow sign?
 5. Would a fly without wings be called a walk?
 6. Isn't it a bit unnerving that doctors call what they do "practice"?
 7. If man evolved from monkeys and apes...why do we still have monkeys and apes?
-