



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Greetings OMISS! What a season it's been, both on the air and around the globe. Some of you have experienced some rough winters, while others enjoyed milder ones. The South had more than their share of snow and ice too! Glad everyone made it through safely, and with minimal damage to their gear.

Regarding the world situation, let me simply wish a speedy resolution. To any of you who have friends and relatives involved in the conflict, or are yourself involved – you are in many of our thoughts and prayers. Even though there is much controversy to the conflict itself, we support our troops and want them safely home as soon as possible!

This year we revived the OMISS QSO Party. Ron KX2J and Don K5DB did a fine job organizing the event, which went quite smoothly and had more participation than initially expected due to how long it's been since we last held this event. I'd personally like to thank Ron and Don once again for their efforts, and would also like to thank those who participated. Additionally, I would like to thank those who politely "stepped aside" and allowed the contest to carry on, even though they may not have appreciated the idea. OMISS is a pretty big family, so it's quite natural that we'll do things that some members like, and other members do not like. Thanks to all, which ever side of the fence you were on, for bringing back the OMISS QSO Party from the cob webs.

As members discussed the QSO Party just prior to, and for a short time afterwards, I was curious to see if we could measure any membership growth that might be attributed to the event. As such, I asked Dick KL7IHK to tally the past three year membership growth for January, February, and March. The three year avg. for January has been 26 new members. February three year avg. was 20. March three year avg.

was 15. For the year 2003, January new membership was 33; a 27% increase from the three year average. February 2003 brought 27 new members; a 35% increase over the three year avg. March 2003 brought 28 new members; an incredible 87% increase over the 3 year average. If you just lump the three months together, we averaged a 58% increase for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2003 over the three year average for that quarter. While this might not all be from the QSO Party, apparently it didn't hurt.

As we begin the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2003, I am pleased to again report that OMISS is doing well. The bands are frequently in poor shape, yet folks continue to participate and join. We continue to get volunteers for various capacities. The Awards program is very active. The QSL Bureau is very busy. All of these are good signs that things are working well. Thanks to all of you who make OMISS what it is today; a healthy, growing family of Amateur Operators. A healthy, prosperous 2003 to each of you!

73, *Greg Stilwell*  
AE9W

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## 2003-2004 EXECUTIVE BOARD, AND APPOINTMENTS

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[abc@omiss.net](mailto:abc@omiss.net)

#### **BAND COORDINATORS**

10M – KK6AW, Kelsey, 3830

15M – N7FUD, Ron, 1914

17M – KX2J, RON, 307

20M – KC9NN, Fred, 324

40M – W8XC, 1831

75M – KC8KYV, Randy, 4033

160M – N7VU, Tim, 3916

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## **OMISS QSL BUREAU**

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Just a reminder. All SASEs you send to the bureau MUST BE #10 business size envelopes and your call sign or OM number should be included in the return address. Information on QSL cards sent to the bureau should contain your call sign, your OM number and, the call sign and

OM number of the member you contacted. Envelopes containing QSL cards should be addressed to:

Dan Miller, KC0FRL

1040 Rittenhouse St

Des Moines, IA 50315

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## **TREASURERS REPORT**

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As of March 01, 2003 there is deposited in the bank the sum of \$2750.74

\$2750.74	
+\$ 1.02	interest for February
+\$ 196.00	deposits for 28 new members
+\$ 24.00	deposits for 8 rosters
+\$ 63.00	deposits for awards and endorsements
+\$ 36.00	QSO party donations * see note at bottom of statement
<hr/>	
\$3070.76	total deposits
<hr/>	
\$3070.76	
-\$ 84.00	cash transfers to petty cash
-\$ 20.00	cash withdraw for petty cash
-\$ 140.00	cash withdraw ( 3 desk plaques @ \$ 35.00 each, and accounting program \$35.00)
-\$ 75.00	cash withdraw (ink cartridges)

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\$2751.76	total monies in the bank
+\$ 24.75	petty cash
+\$ 42.17	QSL Bureau
+\$ 75.00	OMISSLE fund

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\$2893.31 Balance March 31, 2003

\*I sent out a report earlier on the QSO party cost breakdown, but unfortunately for once I did not print out a copy for my records. As it was with the \$36.00 in donations OMISS would have broken even in costs, Certificates, mailing Envelopes, Filler pages, protective cardboard, and postage, if all the entrants would have been here in the U.S., but we had 1 from Canada, and 1 from Germany. Those 2 increased the postage rates, so OMISS was a very few dollars in the hole, less than \$6.00, if my memory serves me properly. On the whole from a financial standpoint it was a BIG SUCCESS, and hopefully next year we will have more entrants and participation.

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## AWARDS MANAGERS REPORT

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This report will cover the year 2000 up to the end of November. I will list each award, the total issued to date, total issued in the year 2002 and any endorsements for the year 2002

AWARD	TOTAL	2002	ENDORS
COUNTIES	80	4	1
5X25	18		
6X25	1		
7X25	1		
5X50	2		
GRID SQUARE	25	1	
KING & QUEEN	166	6	2
MEMBERSHIP	180	7	7
MILITARY	66	30	195*
POSTAL	2		
SPELLING BEE	53	3	1
1000 POINT	6		
TOP OP	231	11**	
TWIN COUNTIES	8	1	
VIP	257	3	
WAS	187	15	7
WAS 5 BAND	12	1	
WAS MOBILE	1		
WAS 1X3	6	2	
WAS QRP	6	4	
WPX	54	1	
Y2K	22	3	3

\*The Military award also issued Company "A" and Company "B" endorsement awards. There are a total of 18 CO "A" and 5 CO "B". Of these 13 CO "A" and 5 CO "B" were issued in the year 2002. These are included in the 195 endorsements listed under the Military Award totals.

\*\*Membership voted Award given by OMISS

This is a report for January and February of 2003. I am only reporting the awards and endorsements that have been issued for these two months and not the total number of awards that have been issued over the years. That will come in June of this year. When you get to the Military Award you will find an explanation of how that is broken down at the end of this report.

AWARD	# ISSUED	ENDORS
COUNTIES	2	1
5X25	2	
KING & QUEEN	2	3

MEMBERSHIP		1
MILITARY	10	43 *
SPELLING BEE	2	2
1000 POINT	1	
TWIN COUNTIES	1	
VIP	1	
WAS	5	5
5 BAND WAS	2	
YK2	1	

\*note on military

of the 43 endorsements issued there are :

CO "A" 3 endorsements

CO "B" 4 endorsements

BATTALION 3 endorsements

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## NET TIMES AND FREQUENCIES

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Just a reminder that all OMISS nets now operate on UTC time and net times will not change with daylight savings time as they have in the past on some nets. Remember the change in the 40 m late net frequency and the change in the starting time of the 20M net. The Approved net times and frequencies effective February, 18, 2002. 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, 1830 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

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## OM OF THE YEAR

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The Annual newsletter last August omitted the first three OMs of the Year. Fred, KC9NN provided information on these three plus the Om of the year for 2002 are listed below.

1983	N4IU	105
1984	KB5DG (now WA50)	715
1985	N8EMQ	1054
2002	KK6AW	3830

Net contacts with any OM of The Year and members of the Board of Directors may be applied toward the VIP Award. Past Presidents, holders of the Meritorious Service Award and,

Band Net Controllers are also VIPs. The quarterly Net Controller is a VIP for the three months immediately following their election and the Top OP announced for the previous month is a VIP until the 5<sup>th</sup> of the following month when the new Top OP is announced.

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## TOPS OPS

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Members receiving the monthly top op award were:

Jan 03	TIE	KF7UX
	TIE	K9DXR
Feb 03		KB9RPL

**Net Controllers:**

4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr	WA0VZH
1 <sup>ST</sup> Qtr	K9DXR

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## WIN, W8XC, 1831

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### RST

Have you ever wondered why or how we give signal reports and the relative importance of giving them? There is an excellent article on the subject of the RST system at <http://www.cebik.com/rst.html> . For those without internet capability it is also included in the ARRL logbook. Briefly I will try and elaborate on the subject.

The current RST reporting system was developed circa 1936. It was developed as a means of reporting to other operators the strength, readability and tone of their signal. Let's face it, back during those days most ham equipment was homebrew therefore parts used for construction were not state of the art as they are today. This left, in some cases the builder with marginal designs resulting in less than desirable signals. So how best could the budding ham determine his signal strength and quality? Enter the current method of reporting. It establishes a common theme that is used by all amateurs when making contact with other stations. During each QSO, usually at the beginning, signal reports are given and for standardization the RST system is used. During the early days and even in some logbooks today the RST system is included for easy lookup. Is the system of value? I think so. I remember one particular QSO during my novice days in which I received a report that caused

some concern. Quickly I looked it up and lo and behold the other operator's report 556 caused me to do some investigating. I learned that I had "chirp on my signal as evidenced by the later notice that I received from an OO (Official Observer)

I think you can begin to see the value of the reporting system and why it is used but why is it used on nets and QSL cards? The answer is because some organizations require certain things be included on an exchange in order that it becomes a valid contact for awards purposes. If for example you have completed your Worked All States (WAS) and have submitted your cards to the ARRL for certification one of the items they check is the signal report. So what is a valid report? Some accept 2X2 while others might accept 2X1 as valid reports. Check with the offering authority for their official minimum report. I hope this offers some insight into the RST system and hopefully you will do a little more investigating for history of the RST system.

QSL. What is it and is it necessary? After completing a QSO (contact) as a means of courtesy a QSL card is sent to the other operator. QSLing is also done to provide proof of having a valid contact with another station. So what does this mean to you? You've just received your coveted license and after a few contacts you have decided to go for WAS (Worked All States). Initially you send out a few cards to some of the stations with whom you had contact and you notice that you are not getting a very good return on your cards. Well did you include an SASE (Self Addressed Stamped Envelope)? Why, you ask must you do that? Let's look at an example. My first license was issued when I was in the military stationed in Maine. Now Maine is sparsely populated and has even fewer hams therefore contacting a ham from Maine was difficult especially during the 1970's therefore I received more than my fair share of requests for a QSL card. I was as eager to contact other stations as they were to contact me because I also wanted to have the coveted WAS certificate in my shack. After sending out a few cards it became apparent that this could be expensive. Sending out an SASE to all 50 states plus answering those cards that didn't bother sending an SASE didn't have much appeal so I started investigating alternate methods of reducing my costs of QSLing. Fortunately I had a very good mentor who introduced me to the QSL "bureau". I was elated to learn that in some cases going the bureau route reduced my costs to about half that of sending out cards singularly. This was

especially beneficial after I upgraded and started working DX. Sending an SASE for first class mail is cheap compared to other countries. If you don't believe me check your local post office and ask the price of an International Reply Coupon (IRC) at last check they were going for around \$1.85. So you can see that if each contact that a DX station makes he or she sends direct the postage would be prohibitive.

So the moral of the story here is simply this. If you initiate contact with another station it is incumbent upon you for the initial QSL either direct or through the bureau or through a manager. If through the bureau no SASE is required other than the ones that you have deposited at the bureau for that purpose. If sending direct it is customary to include a SASE. These articles are not all inclusive nor are they intended to be. Hopefully they will offer some insight and spur your thoughts for further investigation. Enjoy the hobby!

(Win operates a FT757GX and has a dipole antenna..)

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### **BUCK, W3YJM, 2904**

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Ron, N7FUD, recently sent Buck a personal 'Friendly Certificate' and received an email response from him. A portion of the response follows:

I want to thank you for the friendly certificate that you mailed to me. That means a lot to me. You were my first contact with OMISS and from there I joined and had many years of wonderful contacts. I was very active until my dear wife of 56 years passed away. I was devastated and overwhelmed with grief. I loved her so very much and miss her terribly. I now live with my oldest daughter and son-in-law in a beautiful home with an apartment of my own. I am so fortunate to have such a wonderful daughter. However, there are no antennas or amateur radio allowed where we live, plus my daughter doesn't want any outdoor antennas or any holes for leads into the house, even if I was willing to cheat with a flagpole antenna or some other hidden one. So I try to operate from the back of my van, but it hasn't worked out very well. So my days of amateur radio are limited and at 81 I guess my days of anything won't be very long.

I want to thank you again for the certificate of friendship. It means a lot to me. Buck

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Editors note: Hey, Buck, I've heard that mobile and the signal isn't all that bad so hang in there. A lot of members enjoy contacting you.

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### **DENNIS, VE7IPU, 3715**

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When not on our nets, some members do other neat things on the ham bands. Darryl, KD5CQT, 3677, was part of a team that put Cat Island, MS. IOTA NA 082 on the air on August 22 2002. The call sign was K5C and from two small tents with a small tripod and beam on a barren Island in the Gulf of Mexico, they worked 1530 QSO's for 15 Hours. They had 79 DXCC contacts. A pretty good feat. As an avid IOTA hunter you can imagine my surprise when I heard a familiar voice ask me how I was, its Darryl. Its This kind of thing that makes Ham radio so exciting, and it is really great to run into OMISS members almost anywhere on the bands, Like W6VFA, WEB, 4298, on 6 meters, for a new grid square on 6.

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### **FRED, WB6QVI, 2215**

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For the last few months, when I realized I was getting close, I've had a personal goal of bringing my total of OMISS members worked up to 1000! I keep a paper log, but I'm careful about trying to keep it accurately so I believe I reached that goal on 28 Jan 03 @0212 UTC when I worked Neil, KA8MMI, OM 4538, on 7.262.5 Mhz. My total is now up to 1008, so I have a little pad to cover any errors. I have really enjoyed OMISS and, other than a few years when I was suffering from the DX bug, have been reasonably active since I made my first OMISS contact with ed-NT9V, OM 1939, on 1 Dec 1986. I spend most of my OMISS time on 20m. The daily 40m net comes during our dinner time out here, so can't check in too often. At times I can copy the 75m net, but the folks on 3.940 usually take care of that. I love the weekend nets, but can't get on those as often as I would like.

In spite of my limitations on some bands, I have been working on 5 band members and now have over 25, but haven't sent in for the award yet. I even have a few 6 band members, as a result of a

couple of lucky nights on 75m. With the number of contacts per member varying all the way from 1 to 6, I really have no idea of my total number of OMISS contacts, but would guess it must be up around 3000 with probably an equal number of 'informals'. Now I keep a detailed listing by band, but previously didn't do that. Some rainy day I'll start going back through my logs and bring the whole thing up to date. My other interest, that doesn't seem to be too popular lately, is grid squares. At one time there was more interest in the 200 grid square award. I received the award in 1996 and have continued to work at it. I'm up to around 295. I'm very happy to see OMISS alive and getting stronger after all these years, and my thanks to all those who have made and are making it happen!

Hope to meet you on the nets.

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## JOHN, N2STX, 4622

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### THE NUMBER ONE OFFENSE IN AMATEUR RADIO...

If you were asked what is the most frequent offense in amateur radio I'm sure you would have to think a while. Could it be "Excessive transmitting power"? or "Not ID'ing every ten minutes"? or maybe "Transmitting out of band"?

You could rack your brains for hours with some poor operating procedures, but the number one amateur radio violation is "TUNING UP ON FREQUENCY."

This problem is more than just a nuisance, it is a violation of FCC rules and regulations, and violators can be charged with "HARMFUL INTERFERENCE." Many amateurs don't want to spring for a dummy-load and many more are just lazy. There are many alternatives to tuning up on frequency, some as simple as going up or down a couple of KC's to an OPEN frequency and tuning up with MINIMAL power!

If your radio is equipped with AM you should be able to tune up WITHOUT the tone! It's one thing to deal with "Jammers" and pathetic individuals who WANT to cause interference, but to loose a contact because someone was too lazy to "tune-up" the correct way is disheartening so remember good tune up etiquette the next time you tune up.

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## CHARLIE, WOMWU, 2603

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In order to determine his final rank, Charlie had to dig down in his memory boxes to come up with several discharge forms to find he was a Technical Sergeant at that time. He says he had a bad habit of getting busted at pretty regular intervals, then laying back and not doing anything until he was promoted again. Those old records stirred the memories.

He was an intermediate speed radio operator, awarded three bronze stars for campaigns in the Western Pacific, Luzon and New Guinea. He also installed, repaired and operated tactical field radios and instructed personnel in the operation of radio equipment. He spent three years on various Hawaiian Islands and would go back at the drop of a hat (and has been back several times to visit)

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## JOHN, KC2ATK,

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In 1915 his father, an immigrant to Alaska from the Tyrol, was issued papers by a circuit-riding federal judge. So long as he was able, he never failed to vote in an election. John came across those papers recently. Attached to the papers was a yellowed card containing the following words:

"Every right bestowed upon by your country begets a corresponding duty. We are promised the pursuit of Happiness. We are not promised happiness. We are promised equality of opportunity. We are not promised riches. We are promised Freedom to speak and to write. We are not promised wisdom. We are promised liberty we are not promised peace."

John though our members might be interested to know this.

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## RUSS, K9DXR, 4366

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Following is a letter that Russ received from one of our newer member, Jim, KB9MAS, OM 4640.

“This is Jim, KB9MAS, thank you and all of the others on the net for not laughing when I was on the net. I’m new at all of this even though I have had my license for 5 years. When I upgraded to General in 2000, I got an HF rig but all I did was listen. Too nervous to get on and embarrass myself talking with Old Timers. Like the other night giving Signal Strength reports of 5/5 and then asking for call signs three or four times. Hope to get better at this with more practice. So far I have filled in one page of my logbook for two years contacts. Had a great time getting on the OMISS net and had more contacts in one night than in the previous year.

To end this rambling will just say that I want to thank you for the fine job you did on the net and I will be back. Thanks again to everyone.”

Editors note: The attitude and approach, even the tone of voice of our Net Control Stations and members participating in the nets are what make men like Jim want to be a part of OMISS. This is what amateur radio is or should be all about! Thanks to Russ for passing this along.

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### **RON, N7FUD, 1914**

Ron says 15 is getting spotty. Sometimes it opens up after our net times. 10 is almost totally closed to the states.

He recently received 2 awards from WA; 1st place DX in the OMISS-QSO-Party and 1st place Germany in the WA Salomon Run 2002, (from min 6, have to relay place 6's award..)

Shortly after he sent his message, some people from his club made a trip to visit a medium waves broadcast station.

He says changing to daylight savings time will effect his propagation but hopes to hear everyone.

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### **LEON, WA0LAB, 3101**

Leon provided the following information on the Baghdad ham club station which was dismantled prior to bombing: The Daily DX <<http://www.dailydx.com>> relays information from Diya Sayah, Y11DZ--one of the primary operators at the Baghdad Radio Club Y11BGD station in Baghdad. Sayah reported

just prior to the outbreak of hostilities in Iraq that he had dismantled the Y11BGD station equipment and stored it in a safe place--if there can be such a location in the besieged capital city at this point. The Daily DX Editor Bernie McClenny, W3UR, says he doubts there will be any activity in the near future from Y11BGD "much less any other YI stations." The Y11BGD club station went on the air in the 1970s. The Iraqi Association for Radio Amateurs (IARA) remains an international Amateur Radio Union (IARU) member-society. Its president is Adnan M. Aswad, Y11DX.

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### **PAGE, WA3EOP, 3031**

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Just a quick thank you to all who found me in the Pocket rocket Mobile during the OMISS QSO Party.

In the six hours I was mobile before the cold started to get the better of me I did go through 4 states and totaled 62 contacts in 26 states and 2 DX countries. From my prospective I found:

10 meters not useful. No one in the states heard me. The band was open to Europe as before the contest down in the 28.4-28.5 range. I heard several P14 stations and worked 2 of them to proved the mobile was working ok.

15 meters – my best band and I could work about everyone I could hear with a few exceptions.

There wasn't much activity from the West Coast and where were the California members?

20 meters – but from a mobile a tough band to work. All the activity was around the net frequency and never heard more than 2 frequencies in use for OMISS, could hear KG4OTS and tried him off and on from several states but no go. Still managed about ¼ of my contacts on this band.

40 meters – didn't get here till later in the afternoon. This was a good band until the attack of the broadcasters.

75 meters- The cold got me and I never came up on this band during the party.

It was good to actually have time to qso and not just “you are 57 have a good day” with a few stations. Had longer qsos with WA0LAB, AG4PP, and W5IOK.

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Also thought a few stations were very courteous to this little mobile and his 50 watts to an Outbacker Antenna (WA4ZOP for example.”

All in all I drove about 150 miles and used about a ½ tank of gas.

Thanks for the memories.

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## **EDITORIAL, N5VTP, 2869**

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Last year the OMISS Board voted to finance two issues of the newsletter each year. This eliminates the necessity of members monetary contributions but the necessity for you to continue contributing articles remains. The next issue is scheduled for August. You can make it successful by contributing an article.

How about it?

*Harry*