

January 2021 - Clay's Corner

Providing news and views from a broadcast engineers perspective since September 1986

Over the many years I've been writing this Column...I find the one I do at the end of December seems to have a similar theme. Look back at the previous year and look ahead to the next.

Like no other previous year in our lifetime, we have been dealing with a pandemic. Pandemic was a word that we'd read or heard about, but never thought we'd experience. 2020 started out with a roar, everything was running in high-gear and then....WHAM! We quickly discovered we are in for a huge change. When it all started, many wondered how long all this would last. Some figured a month or so. Accordingly, event dates were pushed back. Gradually it became clear that we were in this mess for much longer than we first thought. Despite all the warnings, the Virus continued to infect an ever-growing number of people all over the world.

On Christmas, here are the WA State COVID stats as published in the Seattle Times:

- Number of cases – 233,093
- Number of deaths – 3,184
- Number Hospitalized – 13,908
- Those testing positive – 12.2%
- Counties with no deaths – San Juan and Wahkiakum
- Ages with the most cases – 20-38 (40%)
- Ages with the most deaths – 80+ (50%)

Recently the situation in Southern California deteriorated to the point there were no hospital beds available. Meanwhile there are those that continue to call COVID a hoax, refuse to wear a mask and avoid groups while others are openly protesting restrictions. This all puts political leaders in a spot. Do they ignore those that are sick and dying or do they yield to those who want their

freedom and jobs back? Like many major events in history, some leaders rise to the occasion, while others do not. History writers will certainly have plenty to say about this event.

Early into the month, every newscast was guaranteed to contain a high percentage of stories related to COVID-19, as the impact of this terrible virus surged to its highest levels. Suddenly COVID became a leading cause of death. Those newscasts were a mix of how bad things were and news about the promise that a vaccine was on the way, with some actually receiving it by the end of the year. Did you happen to notice the video clips of those getting vaccinated usually involved their left upper arm (what's with that?). Then there is the file footage of machinery cranking out vaccines. Everyone was running the same ones. Guess they figure we can't watch someone talking about the vaccine without it?

Thankfully, there are now two vaccines that are being rolled out, with more on the way. I hate to think of the situation we'd be in as a society if this were not the case. The problem now is not everyone is willing to be vaccinated, and until sufficient number of us have been, the restrictions are going to continue....which brings us to the annual expression of 'Happy New Year'. At this point, the best we can hope for is, perhaps, a happier one. Certainly 2020 will go down in the history books as one that many of us would like to forget.

With the news that vaccinations were actually coming, and that - with luck - in six months or so we might be seeing some real signs of getting back to normal, came an increased number of stories about how the transition will work in the real world. Employers are wondering if they should or could require their employees to get vaccinated. What about those who resist? Can they, legally, fire a person for not getting vaccinated? KING 5 recently explored this issue in this report: [Employers can legally require COVID-19 vaccinations, attorneys say | king5.com](#)

Will they offer an incentive to get the shots? How is a person to know if they are mingling with people that have 'really' received their shots? There are a lot of legal issues that are going to need to be resolved for which we have no regulations or prior case law to draw from. What about those who refuse to wear a mask and/or think this is all a hoax....do you really think they are going to volunteer to be vaccinated? Would a person quit their job if their employer made being vaccinated a condition?

To be sure, there are still those who are being defiant and protesting what

they feel are the actions of an evil Governor. Interesting how these folks never blame the virus but rather blame their government for imposing restrictions they don't like. The businesses that are baulking appear to be a magnet for the news media, not sure that this attention helps or hinders. Sure to anger many is the fact that even after people start getting their shots, mask wearing is going to have to continue. It will be interesting to see what changes will take place after there is a new occupant in The White House.

In addition to all of this, many industries, Radio and TV stations among them, are going to be very different places to work. Some positions that existed prior to the Virus will no longer exist. Employers have already discovered they really don't need to have a large physical plant to house a staff, so look for the footprint of many stations becoming smaller. Many have discovered that their product does not require as many bodies as they thought. Already many large broadcast companies have been shedding staff and cutting expenses in order to survive. When the revenue comes back, don't look for staff sizes to return to normal. They may well never return to pre-COVID levels. If you still have a job, be thankful as many won't. Don't expect any pay raises. Many employers have exhausted all their reserves and have been forced to cut staff to previously unheard of levels.

The experts are saying we will be wearing these things for a while longer, even after getting vaccinated as we could still spread the virus to others. I understand that 70-90% of us have to be vaccinated before we can get back to something that resembles 'Normal'. In short, there is light at the end of the tunnel - but we are not there yet.

I find it interesting how sports teams, perhaps with a lot more money on the line, have approached all of this, with constant testing and putting their team and staff in a 'bubble'. Don't think many broadcast companies are ready for that. I suspect, like most, they are trying to be the best they can until we reach that point where 'Herd Immunity' becomes real.

I recently ran across a person making comments on one of the remailers frequented by people in this industry that is, obviously, not happy with the way things are going. I've X'd out the company name and cannot vouch for the validity of any of these comments, however, even if some of it is true, it's an indication of the state of our business in some locations.

- **There either will be a live morning show (big markets) or XXXXX syndicated morning show.**

- **Air talent can work remotely from home. Some will be on payroll, others will be paid \$500 per month per market that they voice track for. \$500 is the top figure, for smaller markets it is \$300.**
- **They have created for engineering, a series of "TIGER TEAMS" ...engineers around the country who will be first responders to severe engineering problems.**
- **They are downplaying local sales as it is too difficult managing sales people. Instead they have elected to concentrate on national and agency sales for national clients and PACKAGE all of their stations into a bundle. They are after SHARE of the buy, NOT PRICE. For local sales, they have developed several central sales pods. The ones that I know of are in XXXXXXXX and XXXXXX The local AE's are told to refer new clients to either "the XXXXXX computer sales web site" or to a regional sales pod where a person on headset will help you with your advertising.**

We thought the world underwent major changes due to COVID, with life becoming what we called the 'New Normal', with wearing masks, social distancing and other restrictions. During this time it also taught many how to do with less. So, looking ahead to the time when we have beaten the virus – much will never return to the 'Old Normal' but rather will become the 'New Normal – Phase 2'. Granted there will be those industries that are extremely labor intensive, like construction, maintenance and repair, foot services etc. They will likely return to the 'Old Normal'. One cannot overlook the economic impact of all of this. It will take a long time for this to sift out.

I understand that a University owned by the State is very different than a broadcast station...however, it's interesting to note that WSU has announced it plans arrival testing for all Pullman students, regardless of where they live. I get the feeling HR departments are working overtime on figuring this one out, likely in consultation with their legal departments like never before.

Immediately following a National Election, we traditionally start to wonder what changes are coming that will impact our lives, and the business we work in. Some of those changes take place in advance of the new arrival in the White House. This year is no exception with the recent announcement that Ajit Pai will be stepping down as Chairman of the FCC. During his time at the helm of the 'Commish' we have seen a lot of changes...many of them good. Now the waiting game to see who the new POTUS appoints and what he, or she, will

do that will impact the Broadcast Industry. I have one, perhaps fleeting, connection with Pai. He was on the stage at the NAB Convention shortly before I stood in the same spot to accept an award.

With all the unemployment and closed businesses how do you explain this KOMO headline? **Tacoma is now the nation's hottest housing market.**

According to real estate firm Redfin:

- Tacoma is the nation's hottest market with half of all homes having a sale pending after being on the market for only six days (it was 21 days last year at this time).
- 58% of homes in Tacoma are selling above their listing price.
- The average home price in Tacoma is 17.3% higher than last year.

Perhaps this could be explained as Seattle's 'issues' are driving people out of town? However, the Seattle market remains hot too. Homes are selling at the fastest rate in the past eight years, with prices averaging 13.1% higher over a year ago. It's not been that many years ago that Seattle was 'smugly' looking down at Pierce and Snohomish Counties!

There is, apparently, a lot of pent-up demand for companies to show our industry what they have to sell, that we should buy. Underscoring this is the announcement that more than 500 Exhibitors from 31 countries have already committed to the 2021 NAB show. Now before you start thinking of booking that flight and hotel room in Vegas for this coming April, consider this 2021 event will be in October from the 9th to the 13th. This leads me to wonder if the 'Big show in the desert' will ever return to April or will the spring NAB show become the annual 'Fall NAB Show'?

If there is one thing we all use a lot of, it's batteries. Over the years we have seen a steady stream of improvements in that area, to the point that many devices are now possible for a couple of reasons: 1) Reduced power consumption and 2) New and improved batteries. I recall the first piece of battery equipment I used in broadcasting was a Field Strength Meter. This, very heavy, device used Vacuum Tubes and had an 'A' and 'B' battery. Thanks to solid state devices, the newer models were solid state and ran on flashlight batteries. Those too have improved significantly. Back in the days, the only batteries that could be recharged were Lead-Acid (like we still have in

our vehicles). Then along came the Nicads, and the NiMH's. The development of the Lithium battery changed as a lot of things do, quickly. Suddenly portable Radio and TV broadcast equipment were on board, as were Laptops, Cellphones and, of course Vehicles. Untold amounts of money has been spent by firms like Tesla to improve the Lithium-ion battery. Now you can purchase an alternative/ auxiliary power source from Tesla and other makers as an alternative to a fossil-fuel generator. In fact, this is exactly what a radio station in Pt. Townsend is doing right now.

Have you heard the name QuantumScape? Chances are you will, perhaps because a local guy you have heard of (Bill Gates) is involved. Their new battery has some features that are sure to get the attention of many. For instance, they claim it can be charged to 80% of capacity in 15 minutes. It's non-combustible and has nearly double the energy density of a Lithium battery. The company has been working with VW, who proposed to use the new battery in their new EV's. But, hold-on, this is getting more interesting, as Toyota is rumored to be on the cusp of announcing a new battery too.

Compared to Hydro, or fossil fuel power generation, Wind and Solar are wonderful green alternatives. However, the wind does not always blow and the sun, predictably, only can provide power for part of any day. The missing element has been energy storage. Now, thanks to the battery revolution, these energy alternatives are becoming more practical. I recently read a piece about a large wind power system in California that features large banks of batteries nearby.

The battery revolution continues, and this will make electric vehicles all the more practical, and so will these devices find their way into the electronic equipment that broadcasters use as well. Certainly exciting times.

Looking back can be fun. Here's an example:

[Northern Electric Catalogue no. 7: Electrical Supplies: Northern Electric Company Ltd: Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming: Internet Archive](#)

Here you can browse their extensive catalog(ue): Broadcast equipment starts on Page 30.

Then there is Magic Broadcasting that's been ordered to pay 125 Grand as part of a Civil Penalty and Consent Decree. So, what did they do wrong? A couple of things: 1) Conducting contests that were not fair and, 2) not keeping

watch on their tower and its lighting. As I like to say, you'd think they would have known better. Apparently, the Feds have a soft heart as they are letting the company pay off the balance in 20 installments of \$6250 each. Should they default (miss a payment), the balance is immediately due.

Last month I wrote about the FCC's decision to permit All-Digital operation within the legacy AM Band. Proving that things can get done during a Pandemic, the FCC has been doing more with Radio, this time dealing with Geo-Targeting for FM boosters. We have something similar going on in this area for over a year now with Bustos Media's KDDS on 99.3. If you drive south of downtown Seattle and pay careful attention to the RDS display on your vehicle's radio, you will be able to tell a bit about how this works. KDDS operates its main transmitter from a site called South Mountain which is west of Shelton. The big north-south ridge that runs from West Seattle – south – through Federal Way does a great job of getting in the way for listeners of the station that are east of that ridge. The solution was the installation of a series of on-frequency boosters (sometimes called a single frequency network) that are all timed so that a listener is not aware that they are actually receiving a signal from one of the boosters rather than the Main Transmitter some 50 miles to the west. The company behind this, Geo Broadcast Solutions, wants to take this a step further by allowing a station to geo-target programming (and advertising) to particular boosters. For this they use the term ZoneCasting.

The FCC recently voted to launch a rulemaking that could allow this system to be used by FM's nationwide.

As you may have guessed, there has been a name change at Century Link. First many of us learned about this was when we learned they were changing the name of the facility where the Seahawks play to Lumen Field. If you do a little digging, you come up with these items:

- CenturyLink has rebranded to Lumen Technologies in an effort to focus on next-generation connectivity solutions for enterprises.
- Effective with the opening of the trading day on Sept. 18, 2020, the company stock ticker will change from CTL to LUMN. The legal name of CenturyLink, Inc. is expected to be formally changed to Lumen Technologies, Inc.

- Internally, its legacy business will still be called CenturyLink, with Lumen referring to its enterprise division. Its fiber network-based consumer and small business segment will be rebranded as Quantum Fiber.

Back to the important stuff, where the Seahawks play, the name has changed over the years.

- The Hawks first played in the Kingdome (remember that?)
- Then, when the new place was constructed, we called it Seahawks Stadium.
- When 'Naming Rights' became vogue, it became Qwest Field, then with the change of the phone company name, it became Century Link Field (often called the 'Clink') and now Lumen Field. Wonder if they will start calling it 'The Lume'?

At least this name is easier to get your tongue around than the new name for Key Arena :- (

Early in December, there was a lot of activity on the KPLZ Tower on Cougar Mt. For those of you who have seen it, it's perhaps the only broadcast tower in the area painted green. I reached out to Tim Moore of Sinclair to find out what was taking place. Here is his response, and some pictures:

KPLZ's main antenna started having high reflections so we swept the system. The result showed major problems at two line connection bullet points. Inspection of the line found the issues shown in the pictures.

The sections of line were replaced which reduced the reflections, but it was not quite back to nominal values.

The decision was made to replace the entire line run with HJ8-50B Heliac. The line was replaced by P&R Tower, also known as Northstar.

The replacement line considerably reduced the high reflections to normal parameters, 50 watts total.

Inspection of the rigid line that came down showed a lot of contamination caused by the line that burnt up and indication of a

couple more bullets may have been running a little hot.

In the following picture, you are looking at what's known as the 'Center Conductor' of a piece of rigid coaxial line that connects the station's Transmitter to their Antenna. Normally the pieces would be bright and shiny. The reds and grays you see are evidence that this has been very hot. Usually, in cases like this, the heating is coming from a poor connection that could be caused by either poor design, operating with more power that it was designed for, or poor installation techniques.



Here's a comparison between the damaged item and what it should look like. The item at the bottom has also been used, as evidenced by discoloration, however it was still usable.



Upon seeing these pictures, iHeart Medias local chief, Jeff White, submitted this item:



If you are a DIRECTV customer you have been impacted with a dispute between DIRECTV and Tegna that lasted a couple of weeks. During this

period, Tegna's Channels 5 and 16 were replaced with a static message encouraging you to get their programming via their live stream. Thankfully the dispute was resolved just before Christmas.

Here is how USA Today explained it on December 2nd:

Customers across much of the U.S. have lost TV stations thanks to a dispute between AT&T and broadcaster TEGegna.

The communications company and the broadcaster failed to reach a new agreement Tuesday, resulting in more than 60 stations lost on DirecTV, AT&T U-verse and the AT&T TV streaming service.

AT&T places the blame on Tegna, which has more than 60 TV stations in 51 markets and reaches 39% of all U.S. TV households.

"In the midst of an ongoing pandemic, TEGNA is demanding the largest rate increase we have ever seen, and intentionally blacking out its most loyal viewers," the company said in a statement to USA TODAY. "We challenge TEGNA to return its local stations immediately while we finalize a new agreement and pledge to pay TEGNA retroactively whatever higher rates to which we eventually agree. We share our customers' frustration, appreciate their patience and intend to do all we can to resolve this matter soon."

It is common in carriage disputes such as these, neither side is releasing the specific points of contention.

"The companies have not specified why the two sides are quarreling, but money is the usual reason behind a channel blackout," says Phil Swann, a journalist who operates The TV Answer Man website. "Tegna station subscribers are already voicing their anger on social media sites."

If you are annoyed by all of this, there is a work around using technology that's been around long before Satellite TV. Put up an antenna! Classic legacy technology comes to the rescue with even better news. You will, going forward, be able to watch KING and KONG for free!

On the topic of local TV, 'Hats Off' to KOMO for their production of a 90 minute documentary that explores the effects of the drug culture on the Emerald City. With fingers crossed, this will promote a conversation that will

yield positive results. My first job in Seattle was back in the mid-60's working for KTW. I returned with the building of the new studios for KBSG in the mid 80's and worked downtown until about 11 years ago. What we have today is something very troublesome. Hopefully Seattle can get it turned around. You can watch the documentary here:

['Fight for the Soul of Seattle': Program looks at effects of city's permissive posture | KOMO \(komonews.com\)](#)

During December it was announced that the end of Radio Disney is now planned for Q1 2021...and some layoffs. A few years ago, Radio Disney operated at 1250 AM in Seattle (The old KTW).

As you all know, AM radio is suffering, for a multitude of reasons with many stations going dark. Meanwhile, iHeartMedia discovered a business opportunity with it's Black Information Network, BIN, which it launched in June of 2020.



iHM quickly changed the format of their Tacoma 850, KHHO to the new format (long time known as KTAC). Apparently, the idea has caught on with the company snapping up AM stations across the country. Kudos to iHeart for beathing new life into AM Radio.

Here's a publication that you may not have heard of:



In a recent issue they have an article titled:

AM Radio Transmitter Sites Now Valuable Real Estate for Logistics

Industry

Here is what they had to say:

The familiar real estate adage “location, location, location” rings true these days for huge tracts on the outskirts of major cities — sites that for decades housed AM radio towers but that today command top dollar as e-commerce fuels rising demand for new warehouses and logistics centers.

Look no further than the \$51 million sale of a five-acre parcel in Queens, N.Y., where an AM radio station will eventually abandon its existing tower and transmitter site, and move it.

New York radio station WFME’s owner, Nashville, Tenn.-based Family Radio, sold its AM transmitter site to Prologis, a San Francisco developer that specializes in building warehouses for companies looking to expand final-mile capability.

This property is situated near the Long Island Expressway, the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, the Queens-Midtown Tunnel, and La Guardia and JFK airports. The spot’s current value as a logistics hub far outstrips its importance to a broadcast outlet that didn’t register in New York’s most recent radio ratings book.

The rising value of these locations is being driven by changing consumer habits and rapid technological evolution. Sites on the edge of town that in radio’s heyday were cheap and plentiful can now house vital links in a supply chain propelled by technology that was hard to imagine back in AM’s early days.

Elon University journalism professor Richard Landesberg told Transport Topics most AM station owners know their transmitter sites are worth more than the licenses for their stations — licenses that, as a practical matter, are issued by the Federal Communications Commission and are not technically owned by licensees.

“It used to be if you were in your car, you listened to AM radio because that’s all there was,” said Landesberg, a former network radio bureau chief in Los Angeles and London with Mutual/NBC Radio. “A lot of AM broadcasters are giving up their licenses. It’s because the licenses

aren't worth much, but the land is valuable. If you're a small, 5,000-watt station that served a community, those days are gone."

Landesberg noted that value is harmed by AM radio's audio quality, which is far weaker than that of FM stations and digital services such as streaming audio, satellite radio and internet stations.

FCC data shows that since 2000 nearly 400 AM stations have ceased operations. The trend has accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic — nearly 80 stations have gone silent this year.

Arizona State University logistics professor Dale Rogers told TT he expects the demand for warehouse space to accelerate as e-commerce becomes more critical to consumers.

"It's pretty clear urban land is going to be more valuable, especially in particular areas," Rogers said. "It's places where there are a lot of exciting things going on; we'll see a lot more of this."

Broadcast groups such as iHeartRadio have sold or leased hundreds of transmitter and tower sites to privately owned tower management companies, including Boca Raton, Fla.-based Vertical Bridge. These companies are either developing the real estate or, in some cases, building lucrative cellular antennas.

But it's not just low-rated or struggling station groups cashing in.

The owners of WBBM 780 AM/105.9 FM — the top-rated station in Chicago — in 2018 sold the station's 42-acre transmitter site near O'Hare International Airport to Bridge Development Partners for \$46 million. The 695-foot antenna and a smaller backup unit had been in use since 1942, but now a 750,000-square-foot logistics and warehouse complex is being developed on the site.

"This site had unparalleled highway access," he said. "That's about as close as you can get to O'Hare, and for us this was proximity to the other freight forwarders."

Technology also is making it easier to relocate AM transmitters. While stations previously needed their own transmitter sites, engineering improvements now permit more than one station on a single antenna.

WBBM now shares an antenna with another station in its ownership group, and WFME likely will do the same thing.

“AM radio is not making the money it used to,” Elon Landesberg told TT, “It used to be if you owned an AM radio station it was a license to print money. Now, it’s valuable real estate, and they’re not making more of that. Whatever land use brings in the most money, then the antenna is coming down.”

Here in our area we have also seen a number of relocations of AM’s, most of which occurred several years back.

KOL/ 1300 was for many years using a huge, self-supporting tower in the Port of Seattle. They moved to Tacoma and later to Bainbridge Island.

KBLE/1050 was also located in the Port of Seattle. They now are operating from Pigeon Point in West Seattle.

KJR/950 was located on the West Waterway. They have made several moves, first up the Duwamish, then to the 850 site in Tacoma and finally ended up duplexing the 820/KGNW array on Vashon Island.

KKMO was located in Fife for many years. They moved, first, to Indian Hill and then to Browns Point. Their old location is now industrial.

KKNW was located in the SoDo area of Seattle for years. They are now in the swamp near I-405 & I-90.

The major AM’s in our area are either located in the ‘Swamp’ that’s the home to 880,1150 & 1540 or are on Vashon Island.

The bottom line – The article is correct in many respects, it’s just that the AM’s in this area moved out of these industrial areas long ago.

From the Profound Department –

If you only have two ducks, they will always all be in a row.

The December, 12+, Radio Ratings are out for Seattle-Tacoma.

Here are some observations:

- KIRO-FM is back at #1 followed by KUOW @ #2
- All news KOMO Radio is #4. Pretty impressive for any AM Station!
- Can't help but notice that of the top 15 stations, only one of them is owned by Entercom (KISW).
- Perhaps as a result of the recent elections or the lack of sports games, conservative talk, AM, KTTH is marginally ahead of KIRO-AM.
- In the battle for the Country listener, The Bull is having it's way with the Wolf.
- KFNQ continues to struggle with the other Sports/Talkers. Their numbers are a third of Seattle Schools KNHC and a fraction of KEXP.

I was recently working on Vashon Island with the local crew from Bonneville (Steven Allen & Paul Carvalho). On one day we were joined by Bonneville's regional engineer, Jason Ornellas.



To my surprise I recently learned that Jason is the recipient of the Radio World Excellence in Engineering Award. You can read about the Award and Jason here:

<https://www.radioworld.com/columns-and-views/from-the-editor/jason-ornellas-makes-his-mark>

Speaking as an 'Old Duffer', I am more than pleased to see a fellow who is less than 1/3 of my age be recognized for his accomplishments.

Congratulations Jason!!

While doing some, long overdue, purging of old stuff, out of a file folder fell a picture that took me back to my days at KNBQ in Tacoma. This picture was taken in the Engineering Shop at the, then, Tacoma-based station and a much younger Nick Winter. My guess is this was taken in the early 80's. We were preparing to move the station's studios to Seattle. In the process, we were building items that would be used there. The rack that Nick has his hands on would end up in the Telephone Equipment room and would house House-Monitor Amplifiers, etc. Some other things in this shot: The workbench behind Nick is still being used at my shop in Auburn. That Red Toolbox is still serving us well. It was moved to the Seattle Studio Shop. Later, when 97.3 moved to the KIRO building at 1820 Eastlake, when Entercom purchased the station, it was moved to West Tiger where it remains today, and is used by the five stations that used to be part of Entercom, still adorned with KNBQ Stickers. Oh yes, Nick is now retired and living in Tacoma. For those of you who have not followed the progression, Viacom renamed KNBQ KBSG. Bonneville renamed it KIRO-FM.



The following shows the collection of stickers on this trusty toolbox. That KNBQ Bumper Sticker was there when the above picture was taken. The Station's call letters were changed to KBSG when Viacom purchased it. Note the little Viacom Inventory label.



I recently heard a rumor that Dave Ratener had landed a new gig, so I dropped him a note to gain more info, here is his response:

Hi Clay, Yes I am now the new chief engineer for Salem media here in Seattle. Monte Passmore, the current chief, is retiring after 22 years. The stations are KGNW, KLFE, and KNTS. All 3 are AM's. KGNW is on Vashon, and the other two are diplexed on Bainbridge Island. I have started the job and actually getting trained and introduced to all of the equipment in use now at Salem. Nice to be working again.

On the morning of the 12th at about 10:15 a.m., something went buzzap-pop at West Tiger. That something turned out to be a high voltage disconnect owned by American Tower that forced generators at three of the sites on the mountain to spring into action. All the damage was confined to the Gray Gizmo on the right. Thankfully it can be repaired. Until then, power to a couple of the non-broadcast sites is being supplied from the Broadcast building at the site.



Thanks to all the Web Cameras up there, now we were able to watch the coming and going of various parties as the day wore on. In this picture, you can see the headlights of a couple of PSE service vehicles as they head down the hill after locating the problem.

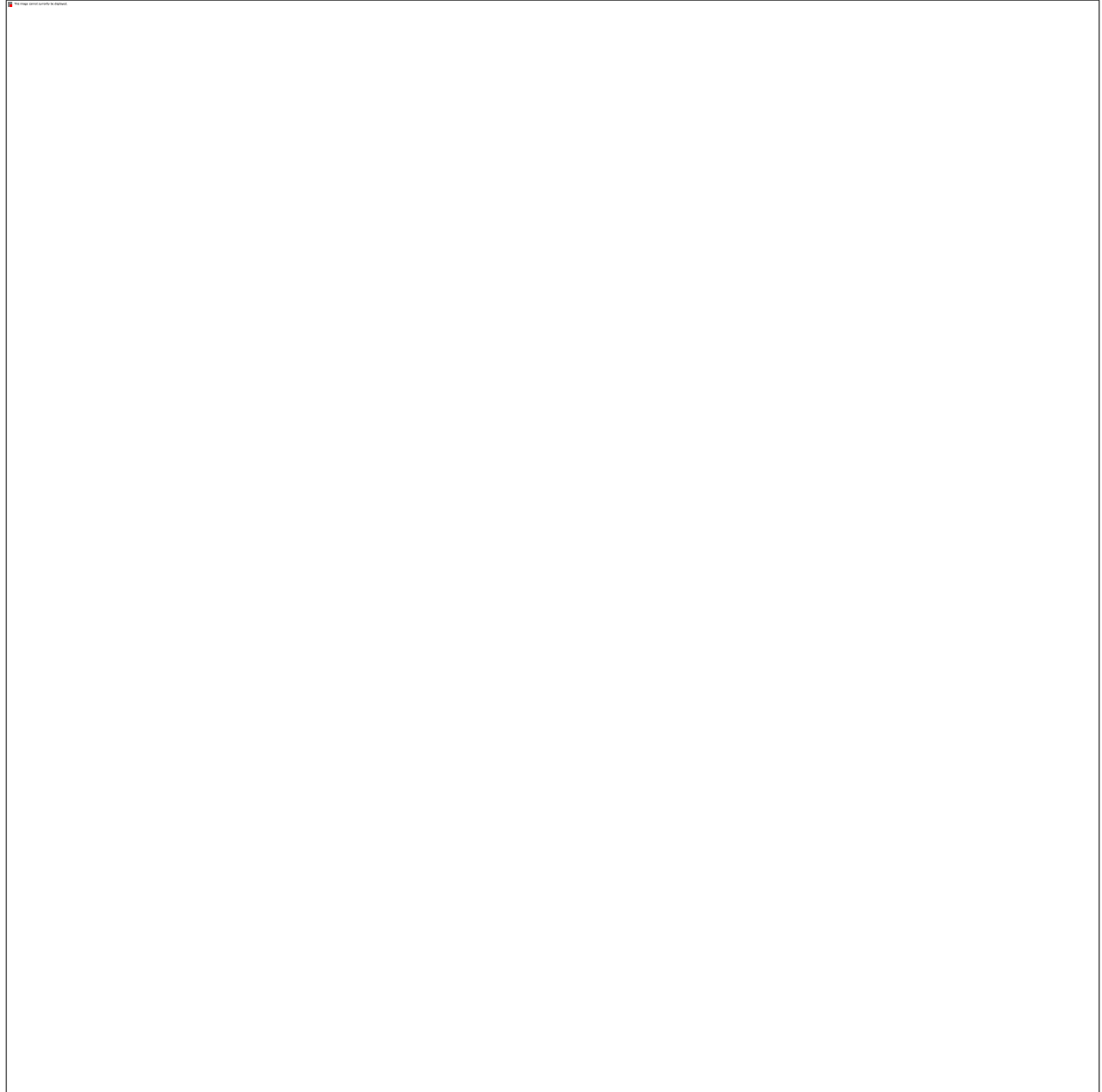


Then on the 22nd, a major power problem struck Cougar Mountain. There were a number of PSE vehicles on site and multiple generators running when I left the site that day. I suspected it had something to do with the heavy wet snow we had overnight that brought down a lot of limbs.

Speaking of which, on the 21st, the first day of Winter, we set a record high at Sea-Tac Airport of 59 Degrees. Remarkably, in a few hours it would be snowing.

In the FCC's Releases on December 15th, I see KZIZ has filed to modify their Construction Permit from the former KMIA Night Site to the existing KMIA (Day/Night) transmitter site, where they propose to diplex the existing two KMIA towers. They would be operating 3.2 kw Non-Directional Day and 200 Watts Directional at Night with nulls to the Southeast.

This contribution comes from Bob Trimble of RF Specialties fame. I'm sure that you have all read about this metal monolith that was discovered In Utah. Didn't take long for someone to exploit the term. 😏



Yes, thankfully, there is a category for COVID Humor. Let me leave you with some that will hopefully leave you with a smile.

- One day, you'll be able to tell your grandkids ..."I survived the Great Toilet Paper Shortage of 2020".
- The world has turned upside down. Old folks are sneaking out of the house & their kids are yelling at them to stay indoors!

- Every few days try your jeans on just to make sure they fit. Pajamas will have you believe all is well in the kingdom.
- Does anyone know if we can take showers yet or should we just keep washing our hands?
- I never thought the comment, “I wouldn’t touch him/her with a 6-foot pole” would become a national policy, but here we are!
- I need to practice social distancing from the refrigerator.
- I hope the weather is good tomorrow for my trip to the Backyard. I’m getting tired of the Living Room.
- Never in a million years could I have imagined I would go up to a bank teller with a mask on and ask for money.

That’s about it for this month, my friends. Lord willing, I will be back next month at most of the usual locations.

Until then, stay safe as you carefully venture out with your facial coverings and freshly washed hands, keeping your distance from others. The ‘All-Clear’ is still a long way off.

Clay, K7CR, CPBE