

April 2007

THE GRID LEAK

The Official Newsletter of the Tulare County Amateur Radio Club

P.O. Box 723, Visalia, CA 93279
TULARE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
146.880 (-) TCARC REPEATER
Park Ridge Mountain
East of Fresno, California
36 43.29' N Latitude, 118.56.38' W Longitude
7,500' above Sea Level

I.R.L.P. Node # **8120**

Echolink Node # **152747** (WA6BAI-R)

Web Page: <http://www.tcarc.net/>

Companion site at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wa6bai/>

Club Officers

President: Dave McElroy WA6BEF

Vice President: Bill Stenger K6QOG

Secretary: Ray Quinn KF6KMY

Treasurer: Dave Millhouse N6YMM

Past President: Steve Lee-Thomas W6SLT

Repeater Liaison: Chuck Ward WA6SAA

Activities Director: Hal Clover KC5LUB



**Next Club Meeting is April 19th, 7:30 pm at the
County Board of Supervisors Building,
2800 Burrell, Visalia.
It is located West of the court house.**

Next Club meeting, April 19th: Frequency Check!

Bring your radios and Chuck WA6SAA will test the
frequency accuracy and readjust if necessary.

From the Editors: If there is anything that you would like to add to the newsletter, you may contact us by email at k6qog@ar1.net. The deadline to have articles included is the 3rd of each month; submissions after the 3rd will go in the next newsletter unless otherwise instructed. -- de Carol & Bill K6QOG

President's Message

Hello all from the desk of WA6BEF.

First, let me thank Dave, N6YMM for conducting the first ham radio training session that this county has seen in a long time. At this point, there would appear to be some interest. And we can't forget Bill K6QOG who provided our discussion on PSK31 last month.

Lately there's been some chatter on the NARCC website concerning the potential for digital modes in the 2 meter and 70 centimeter bands and above. As most of us know, ARRL has chosen not to advocate band plans based on spectrum use and will be leaving things as they are, due to popular demand. Since when have we as amateur operators been unwilling to experiment? Hasn't experimentation been the basis for our hobby in years past?

I think the time is coming for the ham radio community to take a second look at ourselves and perhaps to remember that our frequency allocations are not a right decreed by the almighty but rather a privilege. We need to understand that being a part of the process probably means some compromise on all sides. In the ham community though, we seem to have developed into two warring camps, those who

want change at any price and those who demand no change at any price.

Initially, BPL was and still is the cause of our angst, but now the potential for shifting to digital modes in some communications has many up in arms. The fact that a narrower frequency spacing is being proposed has many of us unhappy.

All of us, however, need to understand and accept the fact that much in our lives is in transition. Could Marconi have envisioned the FM handhelds that many of us now carry? Could Samuel Morse have conceived of RTTY, or ASKEE, or PSK31? Sure we need to maintain the heritage we've all worked for, but at the same time, let's not forget that part of that very heritage is experimentation and yes, innovation.

It is my sincere hope that we, as the ham radio community will be seen as part of the solution rather than the problem.

Before closing, let me remind everybody to bring your problem radios to the next meeting, 1930 hours April 19 where Chuck, WA6SAA will tell us everything we want to know about why they don't work or why they do.

It ought to be a good meeting.

Remember that's at 2800 W. Burrell, County Board of Supervisors chambers.

Till then, 73's.



Club Websites:

The mailing lists available for TCARC are:

- gridleak@tcarc.net - Grid Leak distribution in Portable Document Format (PDF)
- gridleak-text@tcarc.net - Grid Leak distribution in text format for those who prefer or require it.
- tcarc-announce@tcarc.net - One-way announcements open to all
- members@tcarc - Open to all active members
- repeater@tcarc.net - New repeater committee list (committee members only)
- officers@tcarc.net - For officers

If anyone wishes to start a new list related to amateur radio or the TCARC, you may do so by sending me an e-mail. -- 73 de Ray KF6KMY

Emergency Coordinators:

Emergency Coordinators for Tulare County:

**RACES is Jim Reeves KC6YRU -
kc6yru@tcarc.net**

**ARES is Hal Clover KC6LUB -
hal90000@sosinet.net**

TCARC Minutes from March 15th Meeting

President Dave McElroy WA6BEF called the meeting to order at 1930. It was determined that a quorum was present.

Introductions: Those present were:

WA6BEF Dave McElroy
WA2RQK Pam Drake
KF6KMY Ray Quinn
WA6SAA Chuck Ward
N6YMM Dave Millhouse
WA7HRG Jim Purvis
W6MTR Alan Vicenti
W6NRS Gloria Vicenti
WB6CHL Gene Simpson
WA7ZUI Jim Bartell
KG6AIR Bill Balsley
K6QOG Bill Stenger & Carol Stenger

A treasurers report was unavailable.

Alan Vicenti W6MTR motioned to accept the February minutes as published in the Gridleak, which was seconded by Pam Drake KA2RQK. The motion passed unanimously.

President Dave McElroy WA6BEF mentioned for Hal Clover KC5LUB that volunteers are STILL needed for the Baker to Vegas Challenge Cup Relay April 20-22, 2007. He also announced that volunteers are needed on May 12, 2007 for the March of Dimes Walk America.

Dave Millhouse N6YMM says the classes will be as follows:

Technician Classes
General Classes May

Both Dave's will check on available dates for the classes.

Dave Millhouse N6YMM motioned and Alan Vicenti W6MTR seconded a motion to donate an antenna to Chuck Ward WA6SAA. The motion passed unanimously.

Bill Stenger K6QOG demonstrated PSK31.

Motion to adjourn by Jim Purvis WA7HRG and seconded by Pam Drake KA2RQK. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2045

Respectfully submitted by Ray Quinn KF6KMY,



April Birthdays

N6YMM Dave Millhouse

KA6HGA Bill Shearer



SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY SECTION
Report for the month of March 2007

SM Charles McConnell, W6DPD- ASMs
K6YK and N2NS, ACC W6DPD, SEC
N6ZFN, OOC N1VM, STM K6RAU, PIC
KE6IGJ, TC W6TE.

Greetings from the ARRL San Joaquin Valley
Section.

Your club has received a petition to get the
governor to declare June 17 to 23, 2007,
Amateur Radio week in California. This is a
statewide effort. Please keep collecting
signatures and return the petitions to the address
in the email by April 25, 2007.

With the change in Part 97 of the FCC Rules
eliminating the code exam as a requirement
for upgrading, many Amateurs have upgraded
to General and Extra Class. Congratulations
to those getting upgraded licenses. Enjoy your
new privileges. Technician Class Amateurs
now enjoy limited HF privileges on 80, 40 and
15 CW and 10 meter SSB and CW. As the year
progresses, more Amateurs will upgrade to
General and Extra.

Just a reminder, the sidebands of your signal
must be within the band edges. As a rule of
thumb, on SSB you should operate no closer
that 3 KHZ to the band edge to ensure that
your sidebands remain within the band. On
CW you can get closer to the band edge as the
CW signal are not as wide as SSB signals, but
your signals must remain within the band.
Technicians may NOT operate FM on 10
meters. They may only operate SSB on 28.300
to 28.500 MHZ. FM on 10 meters can only be
used between 29.5 and 29.7 MHZ.

New General Class Amateurs should get a
frequency chart so they will know where their
bands end. You can get a new frequency chart
from the March 2007 QST or down load it
from the ARRL web page. Some new generals

are operating outside the General Class bands.
General Class Amateurs need to know where
the General Class bands end and stay within them.
You don't want to receive an OO notice or an FCC
Citation for out of band operation.

Courtesy dictates that you should listen, and then
ask if a frequency is in use before calling CQ. You
need to call CQ when soliciting a contact on HF.
Just giving your call sign on HF is not enough to
usually get a contact.

If you desire your club information and events to
be listed in Section News, please send the
information to w6dpd@arrl.org.

Mark your calendars The International DX
Convention is April 27-29, 2007 at Visalia. Check
<http://www.dxconvention.org/> for information.
EMCOMM West is May 4-6, 2007 at the Atlantis
Resort and Casino in Reno NV. Check
www.emcommwest.org for information. Los Banos
ARC special event station is May 12. Tuolumne
Swap Meet June 2, 2007, 8 AM to 3 PM at the
Sonora East Shopping Center in Sonora. Contact
Jerry WA6AVR, jerrytanhhauser@us.army.mil for
information. Field Day 2007 is the fourth full
weekend of June. The 65th Fresno Hamfest is
August 4, 2007 at the Holiday Inn at the Airport
in Fresno. Check www.w6to.com for information.
The California QSO Party is
October 6-7, 2007. Check www.cqp.org for
information. Pacificon 2007 is October 19-21,
2007 at the Marriott Hotel in San Ramon CA.
Check www.pacificon.org for information.

When your affiliated club elects officers for the
next year, be sure to update your club's information
on the affiliated club area of the ARRL web page.
If you fail to update your clubs information for 2
years, your club will be placed in the inactive file.

Need to take an Amateur exam? Check the ARRL
web page, www.arrl.org for exam information.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY SECTION
Report for the month of March 2007 Continued

You can also search for Amateur Radio Classes in your area.

The Northern California Net (NCN), the Section Traffic Net, meets nightly on 3.533 MHZ at 7 PM Pacific Time. The slow speed training session of the net meets nightly on 3.533 MHZ at 9 PM Pacific Time. Handling traffic on CW is a good way to improve your CW skills. The Daytime Region 6 Traffic Net meets daily at 3:30 pacific time on or near 7.275 MHZ. The California Traffic Net meets daily on 3.906 MHZ and 6:30 PM local time. The noon time net meets on 7.268.5 MHZ. This net handles a lot of messages.

It is my sad duty to report that KA6RCP Ernie and AD6RP Jack are Silent Keys. They will be missed.

Stanislaus County ARES was activated to help search for a missing person. An ARES member found the missing person who was in fine health.

Manteca ARC and San Joaquin County ARES will hold a one-day "Ham Cram" Study session, followed by FCC testing, on Saturday, April 14, 2007 from 8:30am until 5 pm in Manteca. Fee for the training session is \$16 plus \$14 for testing (\$30 total). All license classes offered. No walk-ins. Limited retesting available. Location: TBA, Manteca, CA (95336) Space limited, pre-registration required. Contact: David Coursey, Emergency Coordinator, SJ ARES, (209) 835-6893, N5FDL@ARRL.NET W5YI-VEC

Congrats to NG6NG and W6NBK on completing the ARECC Level One course.

W6MSU, Guy, participated in the 2006 ARRL Frequency Measuring Test with an entry of 1 HZ or less. Congrats Guy.

TCARES provided communications support for the Jamestown Run.

Stanislaus ARA 2007 officers are pres W6UHF, vp KF6NPG, sec KD6YWO, and treas KC6TVE. Check www.saraclub.net for information.

Calaveras ARS 2007 officers are pres AE6LA, vp KO6HV, sec WB6QVU and treas AC6CY. Check www.calaverasars.org for information.

SJV Scores in the 2006 CW Sweepstakes were: High Power WC6H first, and W6SX second; Low Power K2VCO first, K6CSL second, and WA6IQZ; Unlimited N6EE first, N6NZ second and WK6I third. Congratulations!!

W6WTG earned DXCC.

N2NS earned DXCC on 80m and 5BDXCC.

W6XK qualified for WAZ on RTTY.

AB6CF qualified for WAS on 10 M.

Traffic for March: K6RAU 14, Total 14. PSHR: K6RAU 44.



Op Ed: EmComm — What's It All About?

Dewayne Siddon, KE4IDH

ARRL Assistant Emergency Coordinator, Hamilton County, Tennessee

ke4idh@arrl.net

April 5, 2007

- EmCom Training -

What Is It and Why Should I Take It?

EmComm, Emergency Communications, training consists of a series of courses designed for amateur communicators. After successful completion of these courses, the participant can be credentialed in Amateur Radio emergency communications. Credentialing is a process used to demonstrate education, basic knowledge, understanding and skill in a subject area.

With the exception of those amateurs registered with RACES organizations or served agencies such as the Red Cross, amateur emergency communicators have not been expected to have formal training (Red Cross communications training usually dealt with the use of their message forms). Many amateurs thought that the basic skills they learned through everyday communications, contesting and public service events included everything they needed to be an effective emergency communicator. This may have been the case in the past, but it left a very poor image of Amateur Radio with our served agencies.

Amateur Does Not Mean “Not an Expert”

The world expects those who present themselves as an expert or capable of doing a certain job task to be competent in that task. For instance, if a volunteer fireman comes to your aid, you would expect that person to be knowledgeable in fire fighting and rescue skills and able to safely use his equipment.

The firefighter must participate in training and practice to be able to do the job and be able to show proof of that training. We hold our volunteer firefighters to a high standard. Why should we not also expect our volunteer emergency communicators to meet designated standards?

Agencies that use the services of our volunteer communicators expect them to meet certain standards and be able to show proof of training. By using credentialed volunteers, the served agency has more confidence in, and higher expectations of, the service being provided. In this day and time, it is just no longer acceptable to do otherwise.

We All Benefit from Training

What are the benefits to all this effort? The benefits to the individual amateur may not seem to be very significant, especially given all the work and effort (not to mention testing jitters and expense). There are many community benefits. First, your community will have trained and credentialed volunteer emergency communicators. During a disaster, communications blackout or public service event, these are the people your community can count on for help. Our Federal, state and local governments also benefit by having access to a pool of trained, credentialed and ready volunteers to provide communications in case of disasters like hurricane Katrina.

“But wait,” you say. “The government has RACES that fills this role.” It is true that RACES fills the local government's emergency communications needs in many local areas. This has worked very well in the past, and can continue to do so in the future. Amateurs registered with a RACES sponsoring organization usually get training specified by their RACES sponsor. One drawback, however, is that RACES groups are limited to their sponsoring organization's geographic area and responsibility, usually that

EmComm — What's It All About? Cont.

of a local government's emergency management agency. By making emergency communications training available to any interested amateur operator, the pool of available emergency responders becomes much larger.

In addition, a nationwide organization such as ARES is not restricted to a local area. These volunteers have the freedom to go wherever needed, while maintaining their organized structure. By having a set of nationally standardized basic training requirements, served agencies, as well as local, state and federal authorities can be assured of having access to qualified amateur operators during an emergency. These are operators who have demonstrated that they have met certain basic qualifications and can fit into emergency operations wherever needed.

The individual amateur operator benefits by gaining additional knowledge and training from the courses taken and the additional experience gained. There is the added benefit of self-satisfaction of having completed the training and obtaining the certification certificates. Additional opportunities open up for these amateur operators through assisting other hams with training and testing exams.

What Training is Available?

How do you go about getting this training? There are several ways to obtain the certification for the three levels of the ARRL Emergency Communications Courses. First, and often the most criticized for various reasons, is the online course. This method, while usually thought of as the most expensive way to complete the training, ensures an excellent educational experience. One alternative is traditional classroom training with a "traditional" test. Another is a hybrid course that is composed of classroom training and online testing. The

least expensive might be self-study and then taking the certification exam at a traditional testing session.

Online courses and testing are a bit expensive for the average volunteer. The Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium offers these online courses and testing. The CDLC uses volunteer instructors (mentors) to keep the costs as low as possible, but still there are expenses that have to be covered. If you are a person who can complete a self-study course on your own, then do so, but for those who need interaction with other students, an instructor or mentor, then one of the other training methods might be more appropriate.

Other required courses can include FEMA training. The Federal government frequently imposes various requirements upon the State governments. By doing so, they receive federal funds. In order to promote standardized training of emergency responders, including amateur operators, the Federal government imposed a training requirement upon the States; this must be included in their emergency management plans. This requirement calls for all emergency responders to be familiar with the basic concepts of the Federal disaster response plan, as well as training in other areas that the responder would be responsible for.

This is where the FEMA IS-100, IS-700 and IS-800 courses, as well as the EmComm courses come into play. Various courses are required, depending on the level of participation in the disaster management program. For instance, basic responders may only be expected to complete the IS-700 course and Level 1 of the communications course. The county Emergency Coordinator and higher officials might be required to take all three levels of the emergency communications courses and additional FEMA courses.

Amateur Radio and EmComm - Looking Ahead

The future of Amateur Radio response in disaster

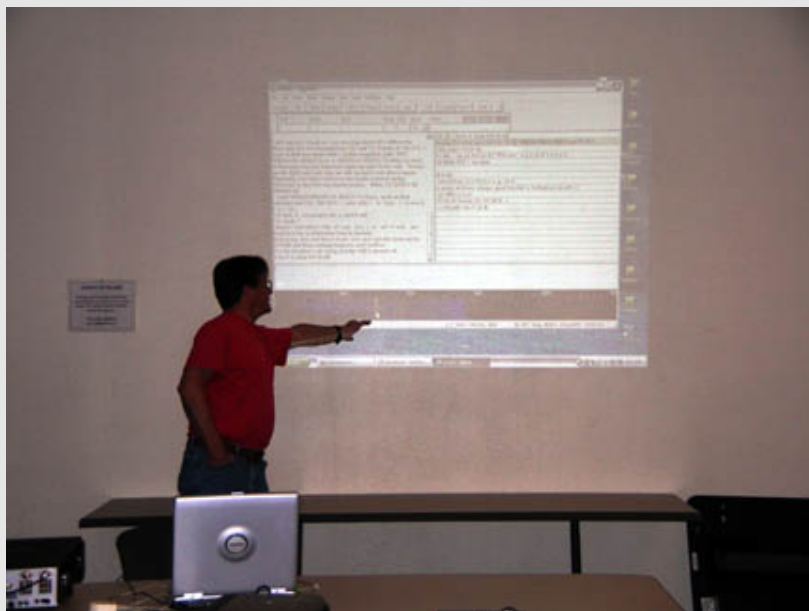
EmComm — What's It All About? Cont.

situations is as bright as it ever has been and there may be even more opportunity in the future. A recent Federal appropriations bill included Amateur Radio operators in the classification of “first responders,” along with fire fighters, police officers, emergency medical services and others.

In order to fulfill our full potential, we as Amateur Radio operators must get prepared, stay prepared and project a trustworthy image to the public, government agencies and the various served agencies. Being “officially” trained and credentialed is a significant part of these preparations. It is also important to register your credentials with your local emergency communications group so that the information will be readily available for an immediate response. You should participate to whatever extent you can in your local emergency communications group, applying the concepts learned in the various courses.

It is not expected that those without credentials would be excluded from the disaster response, but it is almost a certainty that without credentials you will not get the best assignments.

First licensed in 1993, Dewayne Siddon, KE4IDH, serves Hamilton County, Tennessee as an ARES Assistant Emergency Coordinator where he oversees training. He was recently appointed as ARES Tennessee District 7 Assistant District EC, with responsibilities for wide area nets and emergency communications course testing. He is also an ARRL Certified Examiner and Certified Instructor for the ARRL online emergency communications courses. Dewayne is a Registered Nurse, working as an emergency services information system coordinator; he is responsible for an electronic medical record system serving three emergency departments. Married to Jackie, KE4SWH, he lives in Cleveland Tennessee.



At the last meeting

Thanks to Dave N6YMM for helping put up an 80m antenna and providing a projector, Bill, K6QOG was able to demo PSK31. Bill has a printed qso and is pointing out some of the properties of the software called Digipan.

TULARE COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC. MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME (Self) _____ NAME (Family Member) _____

CALLSIGN (Self) _____ CALLSIGN (Family Member) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL _____

LICENSE CLASS (Self) _____ LICENSE CLASS (Family Member) _____

RES PHONE _____ BUS PHONE _____

EQUIPMENT _____

BANDS _____

INTERESTS (Please Check)

EMERGENCY SERVICE

RAG CHEWING

BUILDING

TRAFFIC HANDLING

Dxing

ANTENNAS

CINTESTS

QRP

OTHER

DESCRIBE _____

SIGNATURE _____

Membership Dues: (\$20.00 - Individual - \$25.00 - Family)

Mail To:
Tulare County Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 723
Visalia, CA 93279