

# 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  
Blue Ridge Mountain  
East of Visalia, California  
36 17.19' N Latitude, 118 50.23' W Longitude  
5,700' 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: Steve Lee-Thomas W6SLT

Vice President: Dave McElroy WB6BEF

Secretary: Ray Quinn KF6KMY

Treasurer: Bill Stenger K6QOG

Past President: Ray Quinn KF6KMY

Repeater Liaison: Chuck Ward WA6SAA

Activities Director: Hal Clover KC5LUB



**Next Club Meeting is July 28, 7:30 pm**  
**Red Cross Building, 505 West Main St, Visalia, CA.**

### Happy Birthdays

#### July Birthdays

KE6YJC Ted Freitas  
W6NRS Gloria Vicenti

#### August Birthdays

KA2RQK Pam Drake  
N6EHA M..A. Petty

### Happy Anniversaries

#### August Anniversaries

KJ6P Dave Gregory

**From the Editors:** If there is anything that you would like to add to the newsletter, you may contact us by email at [stengerw@sti.net](mailto:stengerw@sti.net). The deadline to have articles included is the 10th of each month; submissions after the 10th will go in the next newsletter unless otherwise instructed. -- de Carol & Bill K6QOG

**SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY SECTION**  
**Report for the month of June 2005:**

SM Charles McConnell, W6DPD- ASMs K6YK and W6FRH, ACC W6DPD, SEC N6ZFN, OOC N1VM, STM K6RAU, PIC KE6IGJ, TC W6TE.

Greetings from the ARRL San Joaquin Valley Section.

Emergency Coordinators are needed in Kings, Merced and Calaveras Counties. Contact N6ZFN (n6zfn@ares-races.net) or W6DPD (w6dpd@arrl.org) if you can help.

Field Day was successful in the SJV Section. Many groups made greater numbers of contacts than last year even though the solar conditions were not as good. Satellites and ISS provided many QSOs.

The California QSO Party is October 1-2, 2005. Try to be on the air and activate your county. Check [www.cqp.org](http://www.cqp.org) for information. This is the best of the state QSO parties.

Mark your calendars. The Fresno Hamfest is August 13, 2005. Check [www.w6to.com](http://www.w6to.com) for information. SJVARS presents the Harvest HamConVention is Sept 16-18, 2005 in Fresno. Check [www.sjvars.com](http://www.sjvars.com) for information. Pacificon 05 will be October 14-16, 2005 at the San Ramon Marriott. Check [www.pacificon.org](http://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.

Need to take an Amateur exam? Check the ARRL web page, [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org) for exam information.

The Northern California Net (NCN), the Section Traffic Net, meets nightly on 3.630 MHZ at 7 PM Pacific Time. The slow speed training session of the net meets nightly on 3.705 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.

Madera County ARC officers for 2005-2006 are pres KF6ZZXO, vp KG6KYU, sec KG6DAK, and treas KG6KYT. For information on the club go to [www.w6wgz.org](http://www.w6wgz.org).

It is my sad duty to report that AC6FD, KA6ACE, KB6QLI, N6QQV, K6GN, W6RUJ, and KE6OUG became a Silent Keys. They will be missed.

KW6N, K6XJ, KF6KDA, K6FGE, W7MH, AD6W,

have been working sporadic e skip on 6 meters.

Congratulations to W6DOM, on completing the ARECC Level 1 course and to K6LLD on completing the ARECC Level III course. There is still some grant money for fee reimbursement available but you must register for the courses very soon.

In the 2005 ARRL International DX CW Contest KA6BIM, K2VCO, and AK7G placed first, second, and third in the SJV Section.

Congratulations to W6XK on qualifying for the DXCC Honor Roll to N6SUZ on qualifying for WAS on CW, and to W7XK on qualifying for WAZ.

Traffic for June: K6RAU 15, N6SUZ 84 and W6DPD 2; Total 101. PSHR K6RAU 61, N6SUZ 100.

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## Emergency Coordinators:

Emergency Coordinators for Tulare County:

RACES is Jim Reeves KC6YRU - [kc6yru@tcarc.net](mailto:kc6yru@tcarc.net)  
ARES is Hal Clover KC6LUB - [hal90000@sosinet.net](mailto:hal90000@sosinet.net)

## Club Websites:

The mailing lists available for TCARC are:

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

**BROKEN ANTENNA (ALMOST)  
RUINS FIELD DAY 2005  
(by KG6AIR)**

The last time I touched my Yaesu FT-890AT was Field Day 2004, when I was the club's GOTA (Get On The Air) station, as a no-code technician. I used a fishing combo to hoist a home-brew antenna into the pine trees near Big Meadow in Sequoia National Forest. The 20-meter double-bazooka design was fabricated from cheapo RG-58 and insulated #12 stranded wire, with an SO-238 jack in the middle. Thought of as a monoband antenna, I was astonished when 10-meters opened up, and the log started to fill.

Fast forward to June 2005: my tent and sleeping bag were airing out in the backyard, while the rig and antenna were still under a layer of dust. Field Day takes a lot of preparation and coordination, but it wasn't meant to be. After repacking my camping gear, I stared up into the backyard tree and remembered tossing that 12-lb test into the pines. In Visalia, on the valley floor, maybe I'd hear some contest action and feel that wonderful sensation of bumping into a distant 599 pileup.

I went for my fishing pole and my home-made monobander. My first cast toward the 60-ft treetop was on the money, and I pulled up a length of twine, followed by one end of the antenna. For some reason, I thought that 50-ft of 9913-coax was a good feedline, not thinking of its weight. My intent was to stretch the second end into another tree, but Murphy paid me a visit, or so it seemed.

The antenna popped like a pine log in the campfire. I was just giving it a little tug, and one of the coax-to-stranded joints blew out on me. I muttered something that would make a sailor blush. It was nearly 4pm on Saturday, getting hotter in the valley, and I felt defeated. Cripe, I just wanted to listen, and I didn't feel at all like soldering. Three fourths of an antenna lay in a mess on the lawn, connected to the big fat coax.

I had poured concrete earlier that day, and considered a nap. First, maybe I'll hook up this

mess, still on the lawn, and give a listen. I straightened out the loops in the wires, connected the dusty HF rig to the partial antenna and power supply, stared at the microphone in its cardboard box, and flipped the switch.

Hearing alpha-alpha-zero-alpha right away caused me to quickly print some make-believe log sheets. I'm not great with that phonetic alphabet, and hearing stuff like zulu-whiskey-tango conjures up a mental image of people dancing in an African bar. But I soon settled down and enjoyed being an SWL (short wave listener).

AA0A was one-alpha Missouri, and my pitiful wire is lazin' in the grass. What is going on? They would have to bounce over the Western Divide, and need a 7 or 8 degree takeoff angle to clear the sierras. Minutes later, I was hooked once again, as I listened to both the serious-contesters and the point-givers on 20-meters and later on 40-meters. Forget that nap.

I spent about 6 hours logging less than 100 stations, listening, and wondering about the broken antenna I had disdained so terribly. What kind of reception could this train-wreck on the lawn possibly bring in? Here a just a few of the points I didn't get this Field Day 2005, with callsign, location, and distance (in miles).

- W1NVT Vermont 2,469
- K8BB Michigan 1,959
- WY5I Florida 2,383
- NP2I Virgin Islands 3,550
- N5TT Texas 1,306
- ZL1BMW Auckland NZ 6,573
- VK2APG New South Wales AUS 7,563
- KH6J Hawaii 2,527
- KL7Y Alaska 2,172
- VE4ARM Manitoba 1,346

In summary, I had a fantastic Field Day without making a single QSO. Three days later, I re-soldered the antenna and packed it away, to wait for another Field Day. Oh yeah, and I started studying code again.

73 de KG6AIR - Bill

## Tulare County Amateur Radio Club



### Late but not forgotten!

**WalkAmerica** April 30, 2005, beginning and ending at College of the Sequoias, 5K walk followed by a luncheon along with entertainment. Communications provided by TCARC.

**Big decision:** Getting connected wasn't as easy as first thought. A last resort was to hang the mag-mount by a rope from a tree limb, but still had difficulty clearing the building for a clean shot to the repeater. But who will climb the tree? (Group to the right)



**Mike at the con** (control). With a camera in the van, patrolling the route, Mike had a view of the participants.

**Is it working?** Do we have a picture? Mike wants to know as he pulls on the rope to adjust the height of the antenna.



# TULARE COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC. MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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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