

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 July 27th, 7:30 pm at the
County Board of Supervisors Building,
2800 Burrell, Visalia.
It is located West of the court house.**

Happy Birthday

July Birthday:

W6NRS Gloria Vicenti

August Birthdays:

KA2RQK Pam Drake

N6EHA Marion Petty

KF6SMN Al Yarbrough

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. 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

President's Message

Words of wisdom (yah right,) follow.
<grin>

A belated happy fourth of July to all. A big thank you goes out to Hal, KC5LUB and Ray, KF6KMY for holding down the fort for the Forest Service. One of Pam's and my favorite music groups was heading off the festivities put on by the City of Visalia and we didn't know about it until the 3rd. So I'm afraid that I,(WA6 BEF), kind of bailed on Hal.

Hey, we all mess up, even club presidents. I'll do better next time.

Today I was approached by someone in the community who says he really wants to get licensed. It would seem that there's not much ham radio teaching going on. Now to be sure there are books and study materials which allow for independent study. Some of us remember the days when we had to learn CW or when we actually had to learn the concepts of electronic theory along with rules and regs. But maybe some of us have what it takes to

coach the new guys. What do you all think? Another benefit for those of us who would involve ourselves would be that we, ourselves would relearn at least some of what we've forgotten along with the new and improved modes and operational procedures.

It would be worth considering.

So for now that's all from this desk. Looking forward to seeing everybody at the next meeting, fourth Thursday, July 27, if my head calendar is correct.

73's for now.

Dave, WA6BEF



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.net - 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

No June Club Minutes because there was no meeting

From the ARRL web site.

Amateur Radio is Alive and Well in Rural America!

By Glen Sage, W4GHS

W4GHS@ARRL.NET

July 10, 2006

When tuning across the ham bands, I find it is not unusual to hear people speak about the demise of Amateur Radio. The erosion of interest is usually blamed on the Internet or the lack of interest by youth. It is easy to shake your head in agreement and think, "This is just the sign of our times."

My mind goes back to childhood and how I felt when I walked into the shacks of four of the local hams who lived within two city blocks of where I grew up in Princeton, West Virginia. I recall the feeling of excitement and wonder as they spoke to people across the country or around the world. As a small boy in the 1950s, I felt that the license privilege was beyond my grasp. I just didn't have the ability to understand the electronic theory and I would never be able to afford the cost. Aside from those obstacles, how would I ever be able to make sense of all those strange sounds of Morse code?

Getting Started

In 1976, I was living in Henry County, Virginia, and I read of a ham class that was being taught at the local community college. Quick as a wink, I enrolled and the excitement and fascination grew with each session as the strange theory began to unfold in a very logical way. After passing the Novice exam, I waited patiently for my license and call to arrive. About six weeks following the test, I was WA4WXN. I already had my station set up and was on the air that afternoon making CW contacts on 80 meters.

Just recently I was reflecting on my early experiences with Amateur Radio and I wondered if people in the 21st century don't still share some of those same feelings about Amateur Radio as that small boy back in West Virginia. On one hand, the voice was saying,

"Young people are just not interested in Amateur Radio anymore," and on the other hand was my excitement about something I love. It was then I went with my positive feelings about Amateur Radio and decided to start a license class in my local community in Carroll County, Virginia.

Passing the Torch

I enrolled as a certified instructor with the ARRL and read the advice on the League's Web site about planning and conducting a class. I began the planning in spring 2005. I knew that to have a good enrollment, I must publicize in the broadest way possible. Our recent local license exams had been attracting almost no one from our local area. To ensure growth within Amateur Radio, new hams had to be recruited and licensed from our community. I decided to place brochures at local libraries, doctors' offices, lube centers, barbershops and electronics stores. I had an article published in the paper and ran notices on the county Web site. I was hoping that six to eight people might enroll for the class. I tried to allow the brochure and articles to tell the story of how much fun Amateur Radio could be, and also pointed out its public service aspects. I explained that anyone who was having difficulty with the material would get special attention. If someone really wanted a license and was willing to work and study, our instructors would continue to work with them until they passed the Technician test.

As the cut-off date for enrollment approached, I watched the registrations grow. We soon had 10 people, then 15, 20 and at last 25 students for the class. More than half were already involved in public service such as fire, rescue, search and rescue, and E-911. This suggests that there is strong interest in Amateur Radio among public service groups in communities across America.

Following the cut-off date, others let us know they wanted to take the class when it was offered

Amateur Radio is Alive and Well in Rural America! con't

again. All of this took place in a small rural Virginia county with a population of less than 29,000.

Bigger and Better

We soon had several volunteers from the local club who offered to assist in different ways. David Puckett, KI4AVS, and his wife Tina, KI4BMU, were there for each session to assist with handouts and other tasks. Several club members dropped by the classes to offer encouragement to the new students. James Blythe, W4RDX, taught sessions on antennas, propagation and DXing. Glen Diamond Jr, N4VL, helped by teaching the electronic theory. I filled in by teaching the remaining chapters. Each of the instructors presented their subjects in a positive way with a sense of excitement about Amateur Radio. At the end of the course, 20 students showed up for the test session, and one other took his test two weeks later. These students ranged in age from 12 to about 80. They all passed their Technician test and received their license. All the students had expressed an interest in serving in emergency communications ARES and SKYWARN. Our local ARES/RACES unit doubled in size in just one week. Some of these students have gone on to register in the ARRL Emergency Communications Course EC-001.

Near the end of the class each student was assigned a mentor from the club. These mentors assisted the new students in setting up their stations and getting on the air. In some cases, equipment was loaned to the new hams. Prior to the last class session we had an antenna building party. The students gathered at my home and joined together in building dual band 144/440 J pole antennas from copper tubing. These antennas were constructed at a cost of about \$10 each. Almost all of these new hams are now running these antennas as their primary base station antenna.

Our local club, the Briarpatch Amateur Radio Club, W4BRC, was meeting in a classroom at our local hospital. After the class, we had to move into the larger of the two classrooms, since our last meeting filled this larger room to capacity. This was partly due to the new hams, but also a number of the older hams

who had been inactive in our club caught the feeling of excitement generated by the new hams and have now started attending club meetings.

We started a "New Hams Net" on one of our local repeaters, 145.13, N4VL. This net allowed for a non-threatening environment for these new hams to make their first contacts and gain confidence in operating within a formal net. After the early jitters were abated, we have now moved on to message handling, "go kits" and other aspects of emergency communications.

"Influx of New Life"

Amateur Radio, ARES, the Briarpatch Amateur Radio Club and SKYWARN have all received a boost from this influx of new life into our ham community. No one has been a bigger winner than those of us who worked with this class and witnessed their progress each week. We have also enjoyed working them on a daily basis on the air. It is difficult to imagine the sense of satisfaction you get as an instructor when students say to you, "You have helped me to fulfill a lifelong dream in becoming a ham."

Getting new hams licensed is only the first step; that is not the time to "cut them loose" to sink or swim. Too many of our communities are loaded with licensed amateurs who are never heard on the air. Some receive their license and never make a single contact. We can all make a difference by teaching, mentoring and encouraging these new hams. This is how we will continue to retain them as an important part of our ranks.

Glen Sage, W4GHS, is currently retired. He has been a license amateur since 1976 and holds an Amateur Extra class license. Glen is active in ARES, SKYWARN and other emergency communications, as well as being an avid DXer. He also serves as a VE and a mentor in the ARRL Emergency Communications Courses. Glen lives in Hillsville, Virginia.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY SECTION

Report for the month of June 2006

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.

An Emergency Coordinator is needed in Merced County. Contact N6ZFN (n6zfn@bak.rr.com) or W6DPD (w6dpd@arrl.org) if you can help.

Mark your calendars. The 64th Fresno Hamfest will be August 5, 2006 at the Satellite Student Union on the CSUF Campus in Fresno. Check www.w6to.com for information. San Joaquin Valley ARS presents the Harvest HamConVention Sept 15-16 in Fresno. Check www.sjvars.com for information. Amateur Radio Awareness Day is Saturday, Sept. 16, 2006. The 2006 California QSO Party is October 7-8. Check www.cqp.org for information. Pacificon 06 will be October 13-15, 2006 at the San Ramon Marriott. Check www.pacificon.org for information. The International DX Convention is April 27-29, 2007 at Visalia. Check <http://www.dexconvention.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. Field Day 2007 is the fourth full weekend of June.

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

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. The California Traffic Net meets daily on 3.906 MHZ and 6:30 PM local time.

The California QSO Party, CQP, is October 7-8, 2006. This is a good opportunity to put your county on the air and be sought out by stations across the United States and around the world that are participating in the party. The Northern California Contest Club has a great award program for participating stations. Check out www.cqp.org for information.

It is my sad duty to report that W6OWT, WB6SNB, and KB6QIB are Silent Keys. They will be missed.

ARES/RACES members in Ridgecrest did a superior job during a low power outage on May 12. The served agencies were very grateful for the job the hams did in providing communications support.

Amateur operators have been providing communications support to the fire fighters attacking the grass fires in California.

SJV stations active in the ARRL International CW DX Contest placed as follows. First was W6FRH, N6HK was second and KI6VC was third. W6FRH placed eighth in the Pacific Division.

Congrats to W6RFL on making the DXCC Honor Roll.

Madera ARC officers for 2006-2007 are pres KF6ZXO, vp KG6SUN, sec KG6DAK and treas KG6KYT. Check www.w6wgz.org for information.

Don't forget to submit Field Day contact lists and supporting bonus information to ARRL by July 25.

Traffic for June: W6DPD 3, K6RAU 24, and N6SUZ 205; Total 232 PSHR K6RAU 65 N6SUZ 100.

From the ARRL web site.

"Night of Nights VII" to Commemorate Last Commercial Morse Message in US

July 10, 2006

Several commercial coast stations will be back on the air Thursday, July 13 (UTC), to mark the "Nights of Nights VII." The annual event commemorates the last commercial Morse message sent in the US. Many commercial radio operators also were Amateur Radio operators. Historic KPH -- which has been maintained in operational order and hosts Amateur Radio station K6KPH -- will celebrate its 101st anniversary this year. Other stations to be on the air include KSM -- celebrating its first anniversary -- , KLB and NMC. Coast station NOJ in Alaska was also to be on the roster but was unable to participate this year. Radio amateurs and shortwave listeners (SWLs) are invited to tune in and send reports.

"These on-the-air events are intended to honor the men and women who followed the radiotelegraph trade on ships and at coast stations around the world and made it one of honor and skill," says Richard "RD" Dillman, W6AWO, of the Marine Radio Historical Society (MRHS). The Society maintains KPH in cooperation with the Point Reyes National Seashore, part of the National Park Service. Transmissions are expected to continue until at least midnight PDT (0700 UTC).

KPH, the former RCA coast station located north of San Francisco, will begin its commemorative transmission at 0001 UTC on July 13 (1701 PDT), which is seven years and one minute after the last commercial Morse transmission in the US.

Dillman has issued a special request for those monitoring KPH on 12,808.5 kHz on the Night of Nights. "The Transmitter Department plans to alternate transmitters and, more important, antennas on this frequency at the top of each hour during this year's Night of Nights," he said. "Both antennas will be directional H over 2 types but one will be oriented north/south, the other east/west."

Dillman says the Transmitter Department will carefully log which antenna is in use at what time and compare this information against

incoming reports. "So for all reception reports, but especially those for 12808.5, please include the time you heard the signal and a detailed signal report," he said.

The two KPH transmitters on 12808.5 kHz will be an early 1990s-vintage Henry and a 1950s-vintage RCA "L" set. Dillman says listeners may detect some slight difference in keying between the two transmitters.

Returning from the Dead

ARRL member Brian Smith, W9IND, in Indiana, says the maritime Morse transmissions were a great source of code practice when he was a prospective radio amateur in his teens. "I learned how to send and receive Morse code by listening to the automatic CW loops of these very stations -- WLO, KPH, WCC, NSS and so forth," Smith said. "The rhythms of the characters stuck in my head, which helped me pass my Novice test at the age of 15; I was soon licensed as WN9ICB."

Smith notes that while the coast stations won't be working amateur stations, they'll be offering QSL cards for reception reports. He called the event "a rare opportunity to snare a collectible QSL from CW stations that are essentially returning from the dead."

Veteran Operators and Transmitters

Veteran Morse operators, including former KPH staff members, will be on duty at the KPH receiving station at Point Reyes, California, "listening for calls from ships and sending messages just as they did for so many years before Morse operations were shut down," Dillman says. The transmitting station, some 18 miles south of Point Reyes in Bolinas, was established in 1913 by the American Marconi Co. "The original KPH transmitters, receivers and antennas will be used to activate frequencies in all the commercial maritime HF bands and on MF as well."

Many of the KPH transmitters will be 1950s-era RCA sets. KSM will use a 1940s-vintage Press Wireless PW-15 transmitter on its 12

"Night of Nights VII" to Commemorate Last Commercial Morse Message in US con't

MHz frequency, and output power will be in the 4 to 5 kW range. Transmitting antennas include a Marconi T for MF, double extended Zepps for 4, 6 and 8 MHz and H over 2s for 12, 16 and 22 MHz.

Dillman says KPH will send traffic lists, weather and press broadcasts as well as special commemorative messages, some of which will be sent by hand. At other times the KPH and KSM "wheel" will be sent to mark the transmitting frequencies.

Streaming Audio Available

A streaming audio feed will be available for Night of Nights VII. "Audio will be from a remote receiver probably tuned to the KPH 4 Mc channel," Dillman said. He notes, however, that picking up the Internet audio feed does not qualify for a QSL card.

"We realize that this way of copying KPH may not be completely in line with the traditions of maritime communications," he said, "but we thought we'd provide it as an option for those who are unable to copy the proceedings any other way."

More Information

Members of the public are invited to visit the KPH receiving station for this week's event. It will open to visitors at 1500 PDT. The station is located at 17400 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, on the route to the Point Reyes lighthouse.

There's more information about the Night of Nights VII event on the Maritime Radio Historical Society Web site or by contacting Dillman (415) 990-7090, or Tom Horsfall, WA6OPE (510) 237-9535.

Frequencies and QSL Info

·**KPH** will transmit on 4247.0, 6477.5, 8642.0, 12808.5, 17016.8 and 22477.5 kHz on HF and 500 and 426 kHz on MF. These frequencies have been made available through the generous cooperation of Globe Wireless, the current owner of the KPH and KFS licenses. Operators will listen for calls from ships on ITU Channel 3 in all bands. The Channel 3 frequencies are

4184.0, 6276.0, 8368.0, 12552.0, 16736.0 and 22280.5 kHz on HF and 500 kHz on MF. Send reception reports to D.A. Stoops, PO Box 381, Bolinas, CA 94924-0381 USA. (Denice Stoops was the first female telegrapher hired at KPH.)

·**KSM** will transmit on 426, 500, 6474, 12993 and 16914 kHz. Operators will listen for calls from ships on 500 kHz and HF Channel 3 (see KPH listing for frequencies). Send reception to D.A. Stoops, PO Box 381, Bolinas, CA 94924-0381 USA.

·**WLO** will transmit on 438, 500, 8514.0 and 12660.0 kHz, and operators will listen for calls from ships on 500 kHz and on HF Channel 3 (see KPH listing for frequencies). Send reception reports to WLO/KLB, 700 Rinla Ave, Mobile, AL 36619 USA, or via e-mail.

·**KLB** will transmit on 488, 500, 2063.0, 6411.0 and 12917.0 kHz, and operators will listen for calls from ships on 500 kHz and on HF Channel 3 (see KPH listing for frequencies). Send reception reports to WLO/KLB, 700 Rinla Ave, Mobile, AL 36619 USA, or via e-mail.

·**NMC** will transmit on 448, 472, 500, 6383.0, 8574.0 and 17220.5 kHz, and operators will listen for calls from ships on 500 kHz and on HF Channel 3 (see KPH listing for frequencies). Send reception reports to Commanding Officer, ATTN: ITC Eric Simmons, Communications Area Master Station Pacific, 1700 Sir Francis Drake Blvd, Pt Reyes Station, CA 94956-0560 USA.

64th Fresno Hamfest August 5, 2006

You are cordially invited to attend the 64th Fresno Hamfest on August 5, 2006 from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The Hamfest will be held at the Satellite Student Union on the CSUF Campus. The Satellite Union is located on Maple Ave. You enter the campus on Barstow Ave from either Cedar Ave or Chestnut Ave. Turn South on Maple Ave, and you will see the Satellite Union. There is ample parking available.

The Fresno Hamfest began in 1936 and has been held each year since, except for the War years. This year's event will include swap tables, commercial exhibits, tech talks, lunch with a keynote speaker, talk-in station with a radio raffle on 146.34/94 W6TO repeater, club and other ham radio organization displays, and prizes.

The main prize for this year's Hamfest is "Build Your Own Radio", a \$1,000 gift certificate from Amateur Electronic Supply. Tickets are \$10 each with only 300 tickets to be sold.

Tickets will be sold for other prizes. On your way to the Hamfest, be sure to check in on the W6TO repeater, 146.34/94 to get your ticket for the radio raffle.

The keynote speaker will be David Rosenthal, N6TST, of Ridgecrest CA. He is an award winning QST author. He has received 2 cover plaque awards for his articles in QST. His latest article, "Polar Bear Portable" appeared in the Feb. 2006 QST.

The Technical program will have Grady Williams, K6IXA, discussing controlling remote stations; Jeff (Shorty) Stouffer, K6JSI, on the Western Intertie Network (WIN System); Dave Smith, W6TE, the SJV Section Technical Coordinator and AMSAT Coordinator, will talk on the latest developments in Amateur Satellites; and Bob Vallio, W6RGG, ARRL Pacific Division Director, will conduct the ARRL Forum.

Some clubs and organizations with displays will be ARRL, QCWA, ARES, OES, and Search and Rescue,

Please use the enclosed flier to register for the 64th Fresno Hamfest. See you there.

Thanks and 73,

Tom Jarvis, KG6KYU
Chairperson

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED PDF FLIER

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