

QSA-5

Founded 1933

The Marin Amateur Radio Society Monthly Newsletter

November 2008

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Greetings from the desk of the Pres.

Now that our public service commitments for 2008 have been completed, I wish to thank all the volunteers for their contributions and, especially, Randy Jenkins for all his hard work organizing and directing our participation in this year's events. Randy is stepping down as the Public Service committee chairman. His shoes will admittedly be a challenge to fill, but I know he has kept exemplary records through the years, and will be sharing his valuable stockpile of information with his successor. The first public service event of 2009 will be the Relay which takes place in April.

Other committees which need a chairman for next year are: Recreation Committee, Field Day Committee, Kid's Day Committee.

Attendance at the Sunday morning breakfast at the Depot restaurant in San Rafael at 2nd and B streets could use some support. The word is that if you get there much later than 8am, you're likely to be eating alone before you finish.

Please send your RSVP for the Christmas dinner at the Deer Park Villa on Dec 7 directly to me. The editor has provided my address in the newsletter article about the dinner. Seating will begin at 5:30 with the meal service starting at 6. The restaurant needs to know how many of each entree to prepare not later than 5 days before the dinner, and NO tickets at the door will be available. No host bar will be open prior to and during dinner. If you have a donation for the raffle, please see that it gets to a board member prior to the dinner. (Here's your chance to donate some of the radio stuff you've been storing for years and never use. ed.)

I hope to see many of you at the next meeting on Nov 7, my last regular meeting as your president. Thank you for your trust and confidence the past two years.

73/88

Denice Stoops, KI6BBR
President.

Website at W6SG.NET

Phone 415.389.6630

For ARRL SF Section news, go to
www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=SF

The Christmas Party

on Dec 7th, is only a month away. I will need to have your RSVP with the number in your party and choice of Entree for each person not later than Nov 24. The Board of Directors has voted to cover the additional charge per plate to allow us to upgrade our entree choices. Please make your selection from one of the following:

Prime Rib of Beef Au Jus

Sautéed Prawns with mushrooms

Braised Cornish Game Hen with mushroom gravy.

Entrée will be served with spring mix salad, (in December?) baked potato, chocolate sundae and coffee. Tickets are \$36 per person, which includes gratuity. No Host Bar. Donated items for the raffle will be greatly appreciated and can be given to any board member prior to the dinner.

Denice Stoops, Pres.

**MAIL YOUR CHOICE OF ENTRÉE/S
AND YOUR CHECK TO**

**Denice Stoops, POBox 381
Bolinas, CA 94924-0381**

**Deadline : Must be Postmarked
No Later Than 24 November.**

Because single servings will be used at the Christmas Dinner, last minute reservations or walk-ins can't be accommodated. Your check must accompany your reservation. No dinner payments can be made at the Deer Park Villa. No check = no reservation. No whining.

Check out issue #8 of The Way-back Machine on page 3. "For some reason, Novices under this new system were given "WV" instead of "WN" as their prefix. The "V" would change to an A or B upon upgrading."

**POBox 6423
San Rafael, CA 94903**

**Marin Amateur Radio Society
Board Meeting, October 9, 2008**

Call to order: 19:36 p.m.

Agenda additions: 1) Sunday breakfast at Depot in San Rafael (third Sunday, 8:00 a. m.); 2) Will be adjourning to carry on in closed session.

Treasurer's report: Income \$2,370.00; expenses \$702.48. Water bill was unusually high for the period of 7/22-9/19. The leak through the ceiling occurred during that time. Rich will check water meter function with water turned off before resorting to calling water company.

Property tax bill—should we pay both installments now or split them. Together would be \$2,718.00. We'll pay both at once.

Committee Reports

Membership: Dave received two applications with payment, including one who paid in advance—didn't bring them. He'll e-mail the info to the board.

Recreation committee STILL needs a chairman.

Public Service now also needs a chairman, because Randy is stepping down.

Technical Committee: Doug reports that 147.330 Big Rock system was on the fritz but seems to be working now; he and John Boyd will check it out.

Education: Dave reports some requests for classes, need at least 5 students to schedule.

VE Coordinator: 11/15/08 is still the date for the next exam.

RACES/ACS exercise is coming up October 23, Silver Sentinel.

Field day: Needs a chairman for next year.

Old Business

Prescriptive easement—Doug needs the property owners' names to write the letter. The permission form needs to describe the triangular area clearly—Dave suggests looking it up on the county GIS mapping system.

K6GWE Repeaters**Big Rock Ridge 147.330 +****2 meters****INPUTS**

pl 203.5

Big Rock

pl 179.9

Mt. Tam west

pl 167.9

Mt. Barnabe

pl 192.8

Tiburon

Mt. Tamalpais 146.700 -

pl 179.9

Mt. Tam input

San Pedro Ridge 147.330 +

pl 173.8 off-line - reserve status.

440**San Pedro Ridge**

443.525 +

pl 82.5

Mt. Tamalpais

443.250 +

pl 179.9

Here's how this stock market stuff works:

'Once upon a time, in a village, a man appeared and announced to the villagers that he would buy monkeys for \$10 each. The villagers, seeing that there were many monkeys around, went out to the forest and started catching them. The man bought thousands at \$10 and, as supply started to diminish, the villagers stopped their effort. He further announced that he would now pay \$20 for a monkey.

This renewed the efforts of the villagers and they started catching monkeys again. Soon the supply diminished even further and people started going back to their farms. The offer increased to \$25 each, and the supply of monkeys became so small that it was an effort to even find a single monkey, let alone catch it! The man now announced that he would buy monkeys at \$50!

However, since he had to go to the city on some business, his assistant would now buy on his behalf. In the absence of the man, the assistant told the villagers. 'Look at all these monkeys in the big cage that the man has collected. I will sell them to you at \$35, and when the man returns from the city, you can sell them to him for \$50 each.' The villagers rounded up all their savings and bought all the monkeys. They never saw the man nor his assistant again, only monkeys everywhere!

Now you have a better understanding of how the stock market works.

Author unknown.

Back in 1990, the Government seized the Mustang Ranch brothel in Nevada for tax evasion and, as required by law, tried to run it. They failed and it closed. Now we are trusting the economy of our country to a pack of nit-wits who couldn't make money running a whore house and selling booze.

Recreation Committee, Field Day, and Public Service need chairpersons, as noted above. Does anyone want to do Kids' Day? **Board of Directors election process:** Doug has spoken to Eric and turned over the spreadsheet of members who are terming out.

Replacement door for tenant's entrance—Denice will measure it again. (Measure twice, cut once. This also covers those times when the first figures have been forgotten. ed.)

Christmas party menu: prime rib, sautéed prawns, or Cornish game hen. Denice needs everyone's menu selections and number in party by November 30. Tickets are \$36.00, because the MARS treasury is forking over the extra \$2.00 per head/mouth for the \$38.00 menu. Prizes: \$300 allocation approved, passed w/o objection. [We also welcome gag gifts or useful items.](#) We'll probably start at 5:30 p.m., dinner served at 6:00, no-host bar available.

Breakfast at the Depot Café on B street in San Rafael occurs on the third Sunday of the month—Doug says be there at 8:00 a.m. or don't bother, because the group consists of early risers.

Adjourned: 8:20 p.m. for closed-session discussion.

Attendance: Rich Carbine, Dave Hodgson, Denice Stoops, Doug Slusher, Augie Koehler, Elisabeth Thomas-Matej, Madeline Matej, John Boyd, Norm Baetz, Phil Dunlap.

[The following speaker has been scheduled for the November MARS general membership meeting:](#)

Friday, November 7: Andy Oppel N6AJO ARRL Pacific Division Vice-director. Andy was our speaker in February 2004. Pacific Division Director Bob Vallio W6RGG attended at that time, also.

Randy Jenkins, KA6BQF
ka6bqf@arrl.net

Vice President, VE Liaison & Public Service Coordinator
Marin Amateur Radio Society
510.526.4089

Once upon a time in San Francisco there was a bank called Crocker that had a promotion that worked like nothing ever had before. It was centered around a little stuffed dog called the Crocker Spaniel -- if you opened a new account, you got one -- and the response was overwhelming.

GENERAL MEETING, Oct. 3 2008

President Denice Stoops called the meeting to order at 19:35. The agenda was passed w/o objection. Guests were introduced. The minutes of the Sept 5th meeting were approved. There was a discussion about the upcoming elections. Doug Slusher is putting a slate of nominees together.

There was a thank you for the club's participation in the Zero Breast Cancer event.

A report on the Sept. 11th Board meeting discussed the up-coming Christmas party menu. Price will be \$36.00/head.

We need a recreation chairman. Any volunteers?

The Treasurer's report was given and showed a sizable surplus for the past month.

Randy Jenkins said there was one public service event left this year and thanked all for their participation.

Rich Carbine said nothing new to report about building improvements but hoped for things to improve in the future.

Good news: membership donations equaled an anonymous \$1K donation which gave the club \$2,000 for the building fund.

Denice again asked for more member participation in club activities. Field Day and Recreation chairmen are very much needed for next year. Next month's speaker will talk about the ARRL.

The regular meeting was adjourned at 1955 hours. Rich and Marilyn gave a very interesting slide show and narration of Field Day showing some of the hams participating with emphasis on antenna and tower erection and the visit by the REACH helicopter.

Submitted by acting secretary Norm Baetz WA6CLK

A woman visited a plastic surgeon who told her about a new procedure called 'The Knob,' where a small knob is placed at the back of the woman's head and could be turned to tighten up her skin and produce the effect of a brand new face-lift. Of course, the woman wanted 'The Knob.' Over the course of the years, the woman tightened the knob, and the effects were wonderful. She remained young looking and vibrant.

After fifteen years, the woman returned to the surgeon with two problems. 'All these years, everything has been working just fine. I've had to turn the knob many times and I've always loved the results. But now I've developed two annoying problems:

First, I have these terrible bags under my eyes and the knob won't get rid of them.'

The doctor looked at her closely and said, 'Those aren't bags, those are your breasts.'

She said, 'Well, I guess there's no point in asking about the goatee.'

THE WAYBACK MACHINE -- ISSUE #8
 by Bill Continelli, W2XOY
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OK, as you can probably guess, with all the recent attention on the Vanity Call Sign System, not to mention the half dozen calls that I've held in the past 27 years, this edition of "The Wayback Machine" is going to focus on call signs in amateur radio history.

Prior to 1912, getting a call sign was easy, just make one up and get on the air. Legend has it that's how the word "ham" came to mean amateur radio-the letters H-A-M were in fact the initials of the three operators of a powerful station in the early 'teens. With the passage of the Radio Act of 1912, the first licenses were issued. Call signs at that time for "private stations" (amateurs) consisted of a number followed by two (later three) letters, i.e., 1AW, 1TS, 8XK etc. Other countries adopted this system. This was adequate in the early, spark days of amateur radio, but as the shortwaves were developed, and CW became universal, problems appeared. Dave Sumner, Executive Vice President of the ARRL, and Trustee of NU1AW, the station of the International Amateur Radio Union, picks up the story...

"When transoceanic amateur communication started becoming commonplace in 1924, a problem immediately became apparent: call signs were all of the 'one numeral followed by two or three letters' format, with no built-in means of determining who was where. At first, an informal system of prefixes (called 'intermediates' at the time) was used by amateurs where 'a' stood for Australia, 'b' for Belgium, 'c' for Canada, 'f' for France, 'g' for Great Britain, 'j' for Japan, 'u' for United States, 'z' for New Zealand, etc. The single-letter system was fine until it became apparent that Amateur Radio was spreading to too many countries for this system to accommodate.

In January 1927 QST, a new intermediate list was unveiled as the work of the Executive Committee of the International Amateur Radio Union. The new list took effect at 0000 GMT (UTC) February 1, 1927. It was a two-letter system with the first letter indicating the continent (E for Europe, A for Asia, N for North America, F for Africa, etc.) and the second letter indicating the country (mostly following the old system). Thus, stations in the 48 United States used the intermediate 'NU.'

Column two.

"The new system was quickly overtaken by events. The regulations adopted by the Washington International Radiotelegraph Conference later the same year included the allocation of a series of 'call signals' such as K, N, and W for the United States, and mandated that stations have a call signal from the series. The Washington regulations were to become effective on January 1, 1929, but August 1928 QST noted that Canadian amateur calls had changed to VE in April and September 1928 QST announced the effective date of October 1, 1928, in the United States for the W prefix (K outside the 48 states). Thus, US amateurs sported voluntary NU prefixes for just 20 months before they became Ws.

"The founding president of the International Amateur Radio Union was, of course, Hiram Percy Maxim, 1AW, who remained in that office until his death in 1936. The call sign NU1AW commemorates HPM and the IARU's creative, if short-lived, solution to the problem of international identification of stations.

"As trustee of NU1AW it is my intention to use the call sign as a 'permanent special event station' operating in connection with World Telecommunication Day, significant IARU anniversaries, the IARU HF World Championship, and other events that will call attention to the contributions of the IARU to organized Amateur Radio." (My thanks to K1ZZ for allowing me to reprint the above).

Thus, the call sign structure was set up for the rest of the '20's and the 1930's. Stations in the 48 States had a 1x2 or 1x3 call sign beginning with "W" and containing a numeral from 1 to 9. Stations in Alaska, Hawaii, or other US Possessions had a "K" prefix. Incidentally, note that I said 1 thru 9; this is because the numeral "0" WAS NOT available to amateurs at that time. As a result, the call sign districts had different boundaries than they do today; for example, the western sections of New York and Pennsylvania were in the 8th call district then, as opposed to the 2nd and 3rd today. Southern portions of New Jersey were part of the 3rd, rather than 2nd, call district.

When amateur radio resumed after World War II, the increased number of amateurs necessitated the addition of the tenth call district and the numeral "0". Except for the drawing of the boundaries, things remained the same until 1951-53.

In 1951, the FCC eliminated the old Class A, Class B, and

Column three.

Class C licenses, and replaced them with the Novice, Technician, Conditional, General and Extra Class licenses. (What happened to the Advanced Class? "The Wayback Machine" will tell you in a future edition!) With this change came the first "distinctive" call signs. Novices, who at that time could only get a one year, non-renewable license, had a special 2x3 call sign with the letter "N" following the "W", i.e., WN2ODC, WN6ISQ etc. When they upgraded, the "N" would be dropped.

This system barely had a chance to settle in before the next change hit in 1953. Due to the increase in the number of amateurs, the FCC was running out of "W" 1x3 call signs. So 1x3 "K" calls began to appear in the 48 states, with the US possessions receiving 2x2 and 2x3 "K" calls, such as those issued today. Novice calls in the 48 states continued to have the distinctive "N" (such as KN4LIB) which disappeared upon upgrading.

Barely 5 years later, the growth of amateur radio, particularly in the 2nd and 6th call districts, caused another problem for the FCC. They were running out of "K" and "W" calls. So, in 1958, the FCC began issuing 2x3 "WA" calls, to be followed by "WB" when necessary. For some reason, Novices under this new system were given "WV" instead of "WN" as their prefix. The "V" would change to an "A" or "B" upon upgrading. (After only a few years of this, the FCC decided that their original idea was better, and went back to the Novice "N" prefix). With the uneven amateur population in the ten call districts, it took time for the "K" calls to run out in the other areas. As late as 1964, you could still get a "K" call in the 1st, 3rd or 7th call areas, while the 2nd and 6th districts were well into the WBs.

The 60s had some other call sign oddities. For a period of time, you could hold BOTH a Novice and Technician Class license simultaneously; the FCC gave you 2 call signs at once (such as WA/WN2ORS) and you used the appropriate call based on the amateur band and your privileges on it. The FCC also allowed you to have two calls if you maintained two homes in separate call areas; for example, Senator Barry Goldwater, K7UGA, also held K3UIG which he used while he was in Washington. (In theory, under this system, an amateur could hold four call signs if he/she had a Novice/Technician license and two separate addresses). Next page, column one.

The Wayback Machine, from page three.

Except for the Novice and the distinctive "N", there was no way under this system to tell what class of license an amateur held. As older hams became Silent Keys and the number of available 1x2 calls slowly increased, the FCC instituted a program whereby those who held an Extra Class license for more than 25 years would be eligible for a 1x2. The length of time one needed to be an Extra was gradually reduced, until July 1977, when any Extra Class could apply for a 1x2.

There was one block of call signs that were unavailable to ANY amateur, regardless of license class. These were calls in which the suffix began with "X", such as W1XW, W3XCV, WB6XXK etc.. The FCC reserved these calls for experimental stations; for example, W2XB, W2XOY, W1XMN and KE2XCC were originally call signs of early TV and FM broadcast stations. While the FCC has relaxed their position on the 1x2 and 1x3 "X" suffix calls, the 2x3 call signs (such as KA6XYZ) are still reserved for experimental use.

By the mid 70s the 2nd, 4th, 6th and 8th call areas had run out of WBs. For a period of time, the FCC recycled older WA and WB calls that had been vacated, but when those ran out, they went to WDs. (WCs were reserved for and being issued to RACES/Civil Defense stations.) Before the WD prefix could become popular, however, an incident occurred that would change the whole call sign structure.

In early 1977, an FCC employee was indicted for taking bribes offered by amateurs wanting special call signs. He was convicted and sent to jail. Partly as a result of this scandal, the FCC on February 23, 1978, adopted the call sign structure we have in place today. For 18 years, until the opening of the Vanity System, it had been impossible to request a specific individual or club call. Given the passionate love affair that some of us have with our calls, the FCC stands to make millions.

So, as you contemplate the call of your dreams, Form 610V in hand, take a moment to tune in NU1AW and work a piece of history. Meanwhile, "The Wayback Machine" is preparing for it's next journey to another moment in amateur radio history. I hope you're on board.

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More on the Xmas Dinner

In addition to club-supplied raffle prizes at the dinner, if you have some excess equipment, etc., in good operating condition and easy to carry that's just taking up space in your shack, you could donate it to the raffle. (please no war surplus BC-610s, etc., from the early half of the 20th century) Smaller "boat anchors" OK if you can carry them in. Johnson Desk Kilowatt? Prolly not.

Those who haven't seen a Johnson Desk Kilowatt can look one over at the Western Historic Radio museum in Virginia City. Run by a husband/wife team W7HTR and KK7EI. Find it at

www.radioblvd.com

The site also has pics of ham gear dating to the spark days of 1910.

The Marconi Conference Center

in Marshall will host RADIO DAYS, a two day event celebrating Marconi's contributions to global communications. The exhibit will be open to students from 0930 to 1400 November 21 and to the public from 1000 to 1500 November 22. Info: call 663-8151 or go to www.marconiconference.com From the Marin IJ



The year was 1996, the centennial of the Mt. Tam & Muir Woods Railroad. The event: a scheduled early hike up the old RR grade from downtown Mill Valley to the site shown in the picture, just below the East Peak. Stops along the way supplied food and drink, otherwise the clown shown, suffering from shin splints at the finish, would not have made it. Lucky Bill Provines W6JBZ and Ted Wurm got to ride up on a flatbed truck.

Lower an egg into a glass of water.

If the egg lies at the bottom on its side, it's fresh. If the egg sinks, but with one end up, it's getting old but is still edible. If the egg floats at all, you should buy some fresh ones.

But if you're a kid chucking eggs at cars, it doesn't matter much.

The kids filed back into class Monday morning. They were very excited. Their weekend assignment was to sell something, then give a talk on productive salesmanship. Little Sally led off: "I sold Girl Scout cookies and I made \$30," she said proudly, "My sales approach was to appeal to the customer's civil spirit and I credit that approach for my obvious success." "Very good," said the teacher. Little Jenny was next: "I sold magazines," she said, "I made \$45 and I explained to everyone that magazines would keep them up on current events."

"Very good, Jenny," said the teacher. Eventually, it was Little Johnny's turn. The teacher held her breath. Little Johnny walked to the front of the classroom and dumped a box full of cash on the teacher's desk. "\$2,467," he said. "\$2,467!" cried the teacher, "What in the world were you selling?" "Toothbrushes," said Little Johnny. "Toothbrushes," echoed the teacher, "How could you possibly sell enough tooth brushes to make that much money?" "I found the busiest corner in town," said Little Johnny, "I set up a cookie stand. I gave everybody who walked by a free sample. They all said the same thing, "Jeeze, this tastes like dog s__t!" Then I would say, "It is! Wanta buy a toothbrush?"

My girlfriend called me as she was driving to an appointment. She arrived, and I could tell from her voice that she was getting frustrated. Finally she said, "I know I had my cell phone with me. And now I can't find it!"

I replied, "Aren't you talking on it?"

There was a solid period of stunned silence as the reality of the situation sank in, followed by, "You are NOT going to tell anybody about this!"

QSA 5 November 2008

General Membership Meeting is held on the first Friday of each month at Alto District Clubhouse on Shell Road in Mill Valley, starting at 7:30 PM. Turn right at the first stop light west off hwy 101 at the Mill Valley/Tiburon exit. Angle right at next stop sign, then turn left at next street, Shell Road. We are in the two story building on the left directly under the power lines.

Business/Board Meeting meets at the Alto District Clubhouse in Mill Valley on the second Thursday at 7:30 PM. Members are encouraged to attend to try to keep the clowns honest.

Sunday morning informal meeting, grinningly called the bible/babble class, meets every Sunday morning at the Alto District Clubhouse in Mill Valley starting at roughly 0800 hours and runs to around 1100 hours +or-. Sometimes we even talk about radio. This weekly event is hosted by **Ben Sawtelle N6PJZ**, our Ham of The Year in 1996, whose absence would be the result of serious disease or dismemberment, only. So far, he hasn't forgotten how to get to the clubhouse.

Dues structure is: \$25. per year. \$30. for family memberships. No dues are charged for Life or Honorary members.

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| <p>Marin Amateur Radio Society</p> <p>President: Denice Stoops KI6BBR 672-0303</p> <p>Vice President: Randy Jenkins KA6BQF 510-526-4089</p> <p>Secretary: Elisabeth Thomas-Matej KG6IMV 381-0585</p> <p>Treasurer: Dave Hodgson KG6TCJ 332-1864</p> <p>Additional Board Members: Norm Baetz WA6CLK 898-4887 John Boyd KE6ORI Rich Carbine W6UDS 479-3136 Horst Dannecker KA6BHZ Phil Dunlap K6PHD 491-0318</p> | <p>Education Chair: Ben Sawtelle N6PJZ 382-1170 kermode7@hotmail.com</p> <p>Membership: Dave and Phil</p> <p>VE Liaison: Randy Jenkins KA6BQF 510-526-4089</p> <p>Bldg. Manager Rich Carbine W6UDS 479-3136</p> <p>Trustee for W6SG: Augie Koehler KØCQL</p> <p>Trustee for K6GWE: Doug Slusher KF6AKU</p> <p>Sunday Emergency Nets: HF Ben's been doing both. VHF</p> | <p>DX Representative of ARRL: Jerry Foster WA6BXV 892-3829</p> <p>WEBMASTER Glenn Meader N1ZKW 987-3948 N1ZKW@ARRL.NET</p> <p>Public Service Event Coordinator Randy Jenkins KA6BQF 510-526-4089</p> <p>ARRL San Francisco Section Mgr. Bill Hillendahl KH6GJV@ARRL.ORG</p> <p>Editor of QSA-5: Phil Dunlap K6PHD 491-0318 K6PHD@ARRL.NET</p> |
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The Mailing
Address
Goes Here