
QSA-5

The Marin Amateur Radio Society Monthly Newsletter

Founded 1933

September 2015

Presidents Corner

It is dark when I get home from work. Some people I know will say that it is your own damn fault for working late and they are probably right. But just a few weeks ago it was light when I got home and I was working just as late. September 23 was the Autumnal equinox, one of two days in the year that the hours of daylight and night are equal. The Autumn part of that word also refers to the harvest time of year.

For those of you who get out at night you might also have seen the blood moon on September 27th. When the moon was at perigee and was eclipsed by the earth. Those of you who read your bible will know that the blood moon is referred 13 times in the bible and as an omen of ill to come. From its first mention in Acts to its several appearances in Revelations it is pretty frightening. If you saw it, it is also quite a sight.

The blood moon of the 27th was also a harvest moon. That is the full moon closest to the Autumnal equinox. This is also a time of year when many cultures celebrate the harvest. Of course our own American harvest festival won't be celebrated for almost another two months but the biblical Feast of the Tabernacles was on September 29th.

Any of you who actually read my little epistles each month by now have realized that I tend to be both didactic and overly concerned with the seasons. I never lived on a farm or had any job that was particularly seasonal so my fascination does not stem from anything in my history.

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From the Editor

Ed Essick, K6ELE

California QSO Party

It's that time of year again. The California QSO Party (CQP) takes place on October 3rd starting at 1600 UTC (9AM) to 2200Z (3PM) on October 4th. This is a fun contest where California stations are the "DX" and it's possible to have a pile-up trying to work your station.

This is the 50th running of the CQP that is sponsored by the Northern California Contest Club (NCCC). To help commemorate the 50th running of the California QSO Party, a special Challenge Coin will be awarded to those who work any combination of 8 Suffixes to spell the words: GOLD RUSH. For example; K6G, N6O, K6L, N6D, W6R, W6U, N6S, K6H. There are 24 California calls that can be worked to complete the phrase. See this link for all of the calls (<http://www.cqp.org/goldrush.html>).

Some of you may know that you can apply for a special three letter call for special events through W5YI. I tried to get a "GOLDRUSH" call, but was too late. So look for me as K6V for CQP. K6CTA, K6RIM, and I have registered to represent Marin in this year's contest.

The exchange for California stations is the QSO number and four digit county abbreviations, for Marin its MARN. Stations outside of California send a two letter state or Canadian abbreviation and QSO number. Give it a try next weekend.



What's Happening in Radio

On the Air

ARRL News

Pampanito Report

Member Report- APRS

Board Minutes

I would have to guess that it comes from my observation of my surroundings. That is not to say that I am a careful observer but at this point in my life I spend far too much time driving to and from work which gives me time for a lot of introspection and it is much easier to focus on the cosmic rather than on my own foibles.

Autumn is also the dimming of the light and that induces one to reflect on what has recently been. I am coming up to the end of my term as your president. I have enjoyed that role and I have enjoyed penning these little missives and I shall miss both. It is time for someone new to take the reigns.

Somehow I managed not mentioning amateur radio or club business at all here but instead you got a taste of the stuff that runs through my mind. Would I were a better writer and it might have been better organized and more poetic.

73 de WA6UDS

What's Happening in Radio

Amateur Repeaters Fall Victim to Washington Wildfire

Two Central Washington repeaters, owned and operated by the Lake Chelan Amateur Radio Club, have been destroyed by one of the wildfires raging in that state. The co-located machines, one on 2 meters and one on 6 meters, were sited on Slide Ridge near Manson, Washington, in Chelan County. On August 27, the First Creek Fire completely leveled the building housing the repeaters. Scorched antennas and support structures are still standing but are likely beyond repair. The club's Roger Odorizzi, W7CH, said the repeaters had been offline for several days.

"We knew the fire had wiped out the power going to our site, but we hoped for the best, that our mountaintop building was possibly spared," he said. "Now we have confirmation this was not the outcome." Odorizzi said the area remains closed, and the club likely will not have access to it "for a long time."

The club's Ken Rau, K7YR, said the loss, in addition to the building, included the two repeaters, duplexers and antennas. The repeaters provided coverage in North Central Washington. Rau told ARRL that it's unlikely that the building housing the repeaters would be replaced. It once housed radio and TV broadcast translators, most no longer in use. Topography is also a factor. "This is a mountain site -- 4900 feet above mean sea level -- with power lines that were installed on a very steep slope."

Odorizzi said the club's foresight in tending the area around its 440 MHz FM repeater, located northeast of the city of Chelan, paid off. Although the fire took out power for 3 days, the 70 centimeter repeater site was saved because club members had taken care to clear brush and weeds from a wide perimeter around the building housing the machine.



On The Air

Contest Calendar

California QSO Party 1600Z, Oct 3 to 2200Z, Oct 4

Makrothen RTTY Contest 0000Z-0759Z, Oct 10 and 1600Z-2359Z, Oct 10 and 0800Z-1559Z, Oct 11

Arizona QSO Party 1600Z, Oct 10 to 0600Z, Oct 11 and 1400Z-2359Z, Oct 11

Pennsylvania QSO Part 1600Z, Oct 10 to 0500Z, Oct 11 and 1300Z-2200Z, Oct 11

CQ Worldwide DX Contest, SSB 0000Z, Oct 24 to 2400Z, Oct 25

See complete list at: <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/index.html>

ARRL News

ARRL Supports Maximum Flexibility for Amateur Use of New 2200 and 630 Meter Bands

The ARRL has told the FCC that Amateur Radio operation in the new 135.7-137.8 kHz (2200 meters) and 472-479 kHz (630 meters) bands should be as unfettered as possible from a regulatory standpoint. The League spelled out its case August 31 in detailed [comments](#) that argue in favor of flexible FCC Part 97 regulations in light of the exceptionally low interference potential to unlicensed power line carrier (PLC) systems that utilities use to manage the power grid. In its *April Report and Order, Order, and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (R&O/NPRM)* in ET Docket 15-99, the FCC had raised several questions regarding how Amateur Radio and PLC systems might coexist. The ARRL said, in its view, there is little to no evidence that Amateur Radio operation would be incompatible on the LF spectrum, where the great majority of PLC systems are deployed, and that few, if any, PLCs operate in the MF band.

"The allocation of the 2200 meter band, together with the proposal to adopt flexible rules for the use of that first LF allocation, and the proposal to allocate the 630 meter band for amateur use, when implemented, will complete at least a basic complement of Amateur Radio allocations in all portions of the radio spectrum domestically," the ARRL told the FCC.



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2 MCM Radio Practice Friends

Our next 2MCM practice is Saturday October 10th.

To help amateur radio operators prepare for the NERT drill, and to help all of us improve our radio communications skills, at our next radio practice on Saturday, October 10th, we will conduct a radio communications exercise, establishing communications posts, form teams to send and receive messages from one post to the other and provide opportunities to use our radios.

All of this will be done near and around Spreckels Lake in Golden Gate Park, starting at 1000 hrs and concluding at 1200 hrs. We will start out by the green benches at our regular 36th Ave. and Fulton St. location.

For more information & to RSVP, please contact me.

(Although not required, please RSVP so I can better plan for this practice. I may also be providing advance materials and instructions.)

Don't miss this radio practice. Both experienced radio operators and new radio operators will benefit from this radio practice. All radio operators are welcome to this practice and exercise. Invite a radio friend to join you. Tell other radio operators about this practice. Don't miss this radio opportunity.

Peter McElmury AA6SF

2MeterCriticalMass.com

Whats this?



Thanks to Bill, KF6RMK for this one.

"It is readily apparent from the record...that there can most assuredly be compatible operation by amateur stations in both the 2200 and 630 meter bands without adverse interaction with PLCs."

The League asserted that "well-established notification procedures conducted entirely in the private sector," as well as the sharing of available database information, should facilitate compatible operation. "Notification procedures will be necessary only in those predictably few instances in which geographic proximity and co-channel or overlapping channel operation occurs," the ARRL added.

The League requested that the FCC finalize service rules for 2200 meters that the ARRL outlined, and that it create the proposed 630 meter allocation. Operation on 2200 meters would be limited to 1 W EIRP, and operation on 630 meters held to 5 W EIRP, in both cases with an absolute EIRP transmitter output limit of 1500 W PEP and a 200 foot maximum antenna height. Assuming continued PLC compliance with Part 15 rules, the ARRL argued, "there is no significant interference potential to PLC systems, operated on an unlicensed basis, in that very small segment of the 9-490 kHz band that is available for PLC operation, even at separation distances of less than 1 kilometer from the transmission line. At distances of 1 kilometer or more, there is no chance of interference to a PLC line whatsoever, and no restrictions on Amateur operation outside of that distance need be imposed."

The ARRL said PLCs that might be operating in the two bands should be frequency agile enough to relocate to frequencies falling outside the proposed allocations, making additional regulations unnecessary. The League has conducted a lengthy and ongoing [experimental operation](#) (WD2XSH) on 630 meters. It pointed out that it was "unaware of any reports of interference to PLC systems arising from that operation, conducted pursuant to numerous Part 5 experimental licenses...in the large band utilized by PLCs."

The League agreed with the FCC's proposal to make both 2200 and 630 meters available to Amateur Extra, Advanced, and General licensees. The ARRL also said the FCC should provide "maximum flexibility with emission types" throughout 630 and 2200 meters, including CW, RTTY, data, and even phone and image, the last "especially at 630 meters."

Reprinted with permission of ARRL Newsletter, 9/3/15

August Whats this?



No one tried to answer this one. It's a Marconi Direction Finder.

Spaghetti Antenna

Bill Rathbun decided that he needed a marine antenna for his ham station on his 38 ft. sailboat. Not wanting to mount a ground plate on his boat hull, he came up with a different idea. So using the KISS principle he decided to make up a bunch of wires, each cut to a specific quarter wave ham frequency to use as his antenna. He folded them back and forth to fit below deck on the sailboat and then tie wrapped them together. From his slip in Berkeley he tested it and made contacts in New Mexico and Tokyo running 150 watts.

Thanks to Mark Shafer, KE6FGL for this one.



APRS in the North Bay

By Steve Fischer K6ETA and Rob Rowlands NZ6J

APRS (Automatic Packet Reporting System) is a valuable tool for amateur radio and the emergency services clients we serve. It's been around for 21 years and is still growing steadily. It works to extend the range of our position reporting tools far beyond the cell phone network—as well as aiding to bridge areas with and without internet access. Additionally APRS has unique messaging capabilities than can bridge our client organizations SMS text and email reach.

Because of these virtues, APRS is well-suited for public service events and emcomm efforts around the North Bay. The region's terrain and spotty cell phone coverage make APRS useful in routine and emcomm operations – and that's why we're using it more and more. In an all-out disaster APRS may be compromised by loss of infrastructure, however its inherent peer-to-peer capabilities can still prove useful.

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The Marin Amateur Radio Society supports a wide variety of public service events each year. Many of them involve both radio-enabled volunteers and non-radio personnel alike. Due to these dynamic situations, knowing where non-radio support vehicles are can make decisions at Net Control more effective.

In the last year or so, Rob NZ6J has identified the need to improve our APRS capabilities. Enlisting the help of several other MARS participants such as Michael, K6MLF and Rich AG6QR, he has led the efforts to develop and test the APRS infrastructure around the county. So naturally I've joined in!

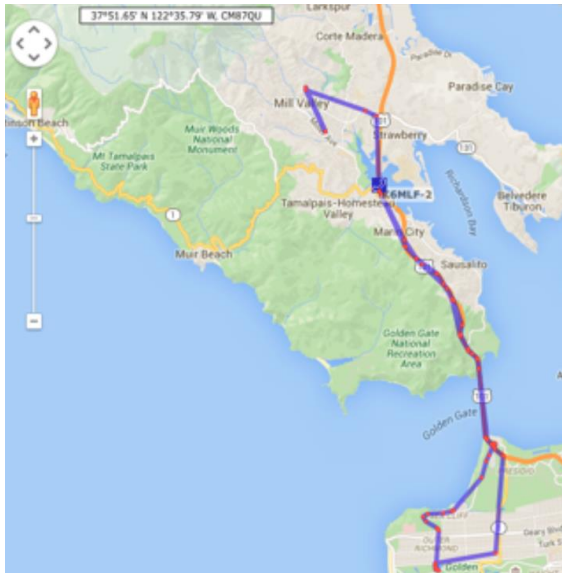
Our testing and two public service events (the Marin Century and the Dirt Fondo) have given us enough data points to conclude that improvements in both the trackers deployed in the field and digipeaters around the counties are needed. As things stand, we have enough infrastructure and experience to make APRS quite useful – but there are still many gaps in coverage that could easily be filled with the addition on some inexpensive equipment in 2-3 locations such as the Throckmorton Ridge Fire Station.

At Net Control we've found that APRS trackers on non-radio SAGs (support vehicles) provide an enhanced situational awareness and help to spread the assets more effectively along event routes. We've also found that these capabilities require an experienced operator and some form of internet access at Net Control to be the most effective. APRS can certainly function by RF only, with no internet, but is a bit more limited in its usefulness in such a scenario. As radio hams we tend to not want to use cellular internet, even though APRS programs support it. Our clients don't care. Still, using RF only, it can and does function.

Looking forward, there are two main efforts Rob and company will be pushing. The first is training. Without knowledgeable operators and well-tested equipment, APRS is not much of a help. The second is expansion of infrastructure to fill in the coverage gaps. This will enhance the detail and accuracy of our position reporting.

The bar to entry is pretty low if you already have an Android phone, or any tablet with or without cellular service. If you don't, most electronics and drug stores have \$20 deals on phones that aren't capable of 4G cellular service. Programs such as APRSdroid only require audio coupling to an HT, or use WiFi/cellular internet to connect to the global APRS-IS structure. Web sites such as sprs.fi can be used to stalk your operator of choice.

So more volunteers and packet enthusiasts are needed! If you want to get involved, talk to Rob NZ6J, Michael K6MLF or Steve K6ETA!



APRS position reports that make it, via an I-gate, to a server called APRS-IS can be queried based on call sign, or a specific location. This screen shot shows position reports from Michael K6MLF as he travels south from Mill Valley. There are several websites that allow this, in this example its www.aprs.fi".

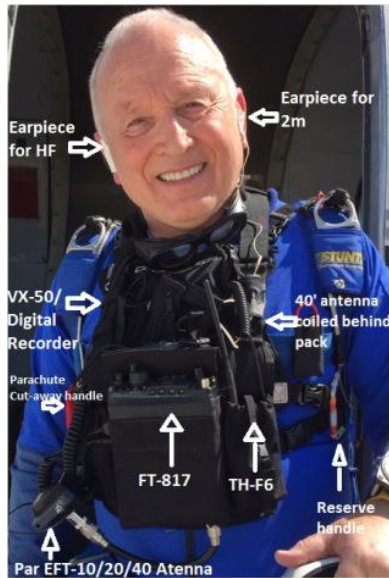
If you would like to know more about APRS here is a reference.

<http://k9dci.home.comcast.net/~k9dci/APRS%20Beginner%20Guide%20-%20K9DCI%20Ver%205-1.pdf>

Parachute Mobile

On Sunday Sept 20, 2015 Mark Meltzer AF6IM, Jumper 1, exited a King Air 90 jumpship 13,500 feet above the Bay Area Skydiving drop zone at Byron CA. Mark savored a few seconds of free fall, then deployed his canopy. After kicking out some suspension line twists and finishing canopy safety checks, he unstowed a PAR 10-20-40 trailing wire end fed dipole antenna, turned on his chest mounted Yaesu FT-817 transceiver and began calling on 28.425 USB. Twelve contacts were made while descending. Best DX was N6SN who was mobile at Big Sur CA, over 100 miles away. With no further 10M stations to work Mark switched to 2M FM and worked a few more QSOs before stowing his radio gear at 4000 feet to begin navigating back to the dropzone for landing.

The September 20th jump was preparation for Parachute Mobile Mission 22 that will take place on Oct 17th 2015 in conjunction with the ARRL Pacifcon event in San Ramon CA.



Pacifcon 2015

October 16-18th San Ramon Marriott (<http://www.pacifcon.org/>)



Pampanito Report

9/12/15

Operators:

Jerry foster, wa6bxv bill Stewart, kf6rmk

NJ6VT was activated at 10:45 on 20 meters. 40 meters was not very active in the CW portion of the band. 20 meters was quite active with signals and several contests were in progress as usual. 4 or 5 CW contacts were made at this time.

Six (6) Historical Radio Exercise Radiogram messages were delivered by hand to the boat at 11:00 commemorating the rescue of 73 POWs 71 years ago. QSL to the traffic net and thanks for the good words.

There was a steady, large crowd visiting the boat in the afternoon. People from Germany, The Netherlands, Scotland, UK, Argentina, and Norway along with a verbose X-Marine from New Jersey.

The perfect and cool weather attracted a good crowd to the wharf on Saturday.

We closed NJ6VT at 16:00

Public Service Signups Still Needed

The following MARS events still need volunteers. Please consider signing up to help out with these.

Dolphin Club Escape from Alcatraz Triathlon- Saturday 10/17

General Membership Meeting

Friday, September 04, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 19:33 hrs by President Curtis Ardourel.

A round of introductions was the first order of business. Twenty-one members or guests were present.

The agenda was adopted as presented.

The minutes of the August 07 General Membership Meeting were approved as published.

President Ardourel reported on the actions at the August 13 Board of Director's Meeting. A Nominating Committee for the club election was appointed. Members were encouraged to run for the Board. We also received a donation of radios from John Butler's estate.

Fun with Ham Radio – There were four reports.

There were no new members to report.

Secretary Jenkins reported on correspondence. There was nothing to report on.

Treasurer Dave Hodgson was not present.

Membership: 86 for 2015.

Public Service – The next event is on September 26. There are three more events scheduled.

The Technical Committee: Doug reported that he will propose a satellite receiver for the simulcast system at the 402 site. He is still looking for notch filters.

Education: There is interest in teaching a class

VE: We had a successful exam session on Saturday, 8/29.

The Picnic is scheduled for September 19, Piper Park at 11:00.

Old business: None.

New Business: None.

There will be a presentation in October.

There being no further business, the business meeting was adjourned at 20:30 hrs.

Respectfully submitted, Randy Jenkins, KA6BQF, Secretary.

Board of Director's Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 10, 2015

Board Members present: Curtis Ardourel, Ed Essick, August Koehler, Doug Slusher, John Boyd, Dave Hodgson, Cal Anber, and Phil Dunlap. Members present: Tom Soskin. Rita Brenden and Randy Jenkins arrived after the meeting was called to order.

The meeting was called to order by Curtis Ardourel at 19:30 hours. Dave began taking minutes.

The agenda was approved as amended.

The minutes of the August 13, 2015 meeting were approved as amended.

Dave reported on a letter from the Marin Public Works and on a Dipsea brochure under Correspondence.

Randy began taking minutes.

Treasurer: Dave submitted reports for August. The report showed \$5,497.45 income and \$455.64 expenses; and total cash assets of \$64,826.30. There was a discussion about allocating money to sub-accounts.

Committee reports:

Membership- We have 86 paid members.

Public Service – The next MCBC Dirt Fondo on August 30 went well. The next event is the ZBC Dipsea Lite Hike on 9/26. There are three events scheduled for this year. There was a discussion about the Escape from Alcatraz on 10/17.

Technical- Doug is putting together a proposal about linking site 402 to the Simululcast System.

Comm Truck- Discussion of the comm truck was tabled.

Education – Nothing has been scheduled. There are four people at the who were interested in teaching.

VE Liaison – Randy reported that we had a successful VE Session on Saturday August 29. The next session is scheduled for November 21.

Speakers – Doug announced that we have a speaker for the October meeting, Rob Rowlands, NZ6J, who will talking about APRS.

Picnic – The date is set for Saturday, September 19. There some discussion about planning.

Building Committee – Doug has re-contacted the roofing contractor for an estimate. There was a discussion about ongoing clubhouse cleaning. Doug will have an initial cleaning done.

Old Business:

Parking Signs – Here. Cal has the materials to make stands.

Digital Repeater - Curtis will create a survey. John reported on new information. We will plan to have a discussion at the November membership meeting.

New Business:

There was a discussion about how to allocate funds generated by the auction. This subject was tabled until the October Board meeting.

There was a discussion about holding transmitter hunts. The idea was met with general approval. We are waiting on more information.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 20:52 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Jenkins, KA6BQF

Secretary, Marin Amateur Radio Society

The official copy of these minutes shall reside in the Secretary's files as maintained at the Corporate Office.

Randy Jenkins, KA6BQF

ka6bqf@arrl.net

510 526.4089 or 707 557.5521

Marin Amateur Radio Society W6SG.NET, membership@w6sg.net General Membership Meeting is held on the first Friday of each month at Alto District Clubhouse at 27 Shell Road in Mill Valley, starting at 7:30 PM. Come a little early for pizza or whatever. From highway 101, head west toward Mill Valley on E. Blithedale. Turn right at the first stop light. Stay right at next stop sign, then turn left at next corner, Shell Road. We are in a two story building, second from the corner 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.

Sunday morning informal meeting (aka bible class) meets every Sunday morning at the Alto District Clubhouse in Mill Valley starting around 8am and runs to about 11am. Sometimes we even talk about radio.

The Sunday Emergency nets. The K6GWE emergency VHF net check-in is at 10:15 am on 147.700 (-pl 203.5). This is a directed net and the net control station may operate at the club house or at a member location. Members on the net check-in list that do not check in for three consecutive weeks are removed from the list until they reestablish check-in. Any member can sign up to act as the net control station. See the club website for signup instructions. The W6SG emergency HF net check-in is at 9 am on 3.915 Mh.

<p>Marin Amateur Radio Society Officers and Board Members:</p> <p>President Curtis Ardourel WA6UDS 510-595-3494</p> <p>Vice President John Boyd KE6ORI 924-04419</p> <p>Secretary Randy Jenkins KA6BQF 510-526-4089</p> <p>Treasure: Dave Hodgson KG6TCJ 707 978-2560</p> <p>Board Members Cal Anber N6TIA 209-275-5252 Rita Brenden KG6WPN 707-557-5521 Marc Bruvry KF6VNT 492-9292 Phil Dunlap K6PHD 491-0318 Ed Essick K6ELE 456-1715</p> <p>Other Positions:</p> <p>Education Chair Randy Jenkins</p> <p>VE Liaison Randy Jenkins</p> <p>Building Co-Managers Doug Slusher Dave Hodgson</p> <p>Trustee for W6SG Augie Koehler K0CQL</p> <p>Trustee for K6GWE Doug Slusher KF6AKU</p> <p>Sunday Emergency Nets Mark Bruvry and other volunteers</p> <p>DX Representative of ARRL Jerry Foster WA6BXV 892-3829</p>	<p>Public Service Event Coordinator Randy Jenkins KA6BQF 510-526-4089</p> <p>Membership</p> <p>Editor of QSA-5 Ed Essick K6ELE 456-1715 e.essick@comcast.net</p> <p>ARRL San Francisco Section Manager Bill Hillendahl KH6GJV@ARRL.ORG</p> <p>WEBMASTER Glenn Meader N1ZKW 987-3948 N1ZKW@ARRL.NET</p>
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