
QSA-5

The Marin Amateur Radio Society Monthly Newsletter

Founded 1933

October 2016

Presidents Corner

A Christmas Gift!

With Pacificon now passed, I wonder how many of our club members had a chance to go. I went last year for the very first time and was a bit overwhelmed and fairly disappointed. I was overwhelmed because there were a lot of forum presentations I would have liked to attend and I was disappointed for two reasons. First, I missed a lot due to the fact that I was unprepared. I did not plan in advance what I would like to see and due to scheduling conflicts I had to choose between several offerings at the last minute. Second, there were several forum presentations that were so full, I literally could not get in the door, so I missed a lot. I also did not stay for the Wouff-Hong Ceremony which I had hoped to attend. This year I was better prepared, I still missed a lot, but this year I knew beforehand which presentations I was going to miss (so I was not *as* disappointed) and I planned on being early to the ones I thought might be crowded. I also attended the Royal Order of the Wouff-Hong Ceremony. Well this year was much nicer, there were still a few things I was unable to attend but all in all I had a lot of fun.

And then there were the toys. There was Elecraft, Yaesu, Kenwood, Icom, and SDR radio's galore. Software and hardware with gigits and gadgets a plenty. It's like being a kid in a candy store but not being able to afford it all. There were no less than four radios on my list of wants, two antennas, a Powerpole kit, and a whole list of other playthings.

As it is, I was a fairly good boy, I brought home only one radio, a Yaesu FT2DR, and I only drooled a little when Jerry Foster, WA6BXV, told me he had just purchase a new Elecraft KX2 (also on my list)! Of course I justify the FT2DR because we are getting the new System Fusion repeater for the club.

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From the Editor

Ed Essick, K6ELE

Mobile Operation to Change for All of Us

This September the Governor signed the updated legislation for mobile electronic device operation while driving. This means the end of our use of mobile rigs with our microphones. Here is the new law as written (emphasis added). *(f) For the purposes of this section, "electronic wireless communications device" includes, but is not limited to, a broadband personal communication device, a specialized mobile radio device, a handheld device or laptop computer with mobile data access, a pager, or a two-way messaging device.*

So our specialized mobile radio devices will have to be operated hands free or we risk being stopped by law enforcement. The fine is currently \$50, but with added court costs it can exceed \$100 per infraction. I have a Kenwood TM-V71a 2m/440m mobile, so I contacted Kenwood technical support to see if there was a hands-free solution from them. The tech had not heard of the law and told me Kenwood did not have support for hands-free operation of the rig.

One of our members, Michael Fischer installed a Hands-free headset for his rig using this unit advertised for Yaesu 8800-8900R sets. It's available on ebay for \$14.95. Michael *"reports I ordered this and just installed it; seems to work fine. The microphone mounts next to the visor and extends above the driver's door. Bends out when in use, back along the headliner when not. Frequency up-down switch and PTT are attached with velcro next to the gear-shift lever"*.



Hey, it makes perfect sense to me; I had to, it's sort of a requirement, right? At least that's my story and I'm sticking to it. And last but not least, to cap off a fun trip, I won one of the grand prizes. It is an M2 Antenna Systems, 2M-440XPSS. Now my good fortune will be someone else's good fortune. Since I have no real need for this antenna I have decided to give it to someone else in our club. So here's the deal, I would like to give it to someone who will actually make good use of it. Please see the description below for information on the antenna itself. So if there is anyone who would like this antenna for their very own, please email me your request before December 1st at tomsoskin@gmail.com. All requests will be considered and a recipient will be announce at our Christmas party. I hope to see everyone there this year, so please come and have a good time.

73

Tom Soskin, W6MTS

Antenna Description:

The 2M-440XPS is ideal for linking repeaters and remote bases utilizing both 2 meters and 440 MHz. Elements are cross polarized to avoid the severe performance compromises on 440 MHz common to other dual band antennas that have all elements in the same polarity. The XP also works well on the OSCAR frequencies and is handy wherever dual band capability and compact size are required. Recently, with PACKET users finding horizontal polarization better on 2 meters, it has become even more useful.

Construction is designed for long term mechanical and electrical integrity. Elements are 3/16" 6061-T6 aluminum rod, centered through the boom on UV stabilized insulator buttons. All hardware is stainless steel.

Guest Speaker at November 4th meeting— Heard Is. Dxpediton

On March 10th, 2016, at 5pm (local), fourteen men left Cape Town, South Africa on the R/V Braveheart. This team traveled 2,700 miles, during their 12-day journey to Heard Island, as they navigated the perilous Southern Ocean. The team arrived on Heard Island March 22, after a rather rough and long ride on the Braveheart. The next day the team began transporting the gear to the island and setting up camp, which would be home.

Over the next three weeks the team erected the full set of antennas and worked into a routine of activities. These included working the radio pile-ups, logging around 4,000 contacts each day with up to five stations. Several team members also explored the island, documented glacier retreat, collected rock, soil, and water samples, and provided additional manpower for the myriad tasks such as filling generators, repairing equipment, and transporting our supplies from the beach (about 500 m away).

Finally, on April 11th, 2016, at 4pm (local), a month after the team left South Africa, we struck camp and beat a quick retreat as ferocious winter weather began closing in. Probably motivated by the weather, the entire campsite was dismantled and transported back to the Braveheart in less than 8 hours and team spent the next 10 days, navigating the Southern Ocean once more to Fremantle, Australia. Jim Colletto (N6TQ), a local ham based in Tiburon, had the good fortune of participating in this adventure. Hear his story at the November 4th meeting.

What's Happening in Radio

Pacific Seafarer's Net Assists in Maritime Rescue of Sailors on Sinking Sailboat

The [Pacific Seafarer's Net](#) relayed a call for help and contacted the US Coast Guard on September 28, after the SV *Rafiki* began taking on water some 230 miles south of Cold Bay, Alaska. At approximately 0300 UTC, Charles Houlihan, KD6SPJ, a net relay station, received the distress call from the sailboat's captain. Houlihan, who was also at sea in SV *Jacaranda*, contacted Randy VanLeeuwen, KH6RC, a net relay station in Hawaii. He, in turn, got in touch with Hawaii USCG District 14 to report the incident and provide *Rafiki's* location. The Hawaii USCG district then contacted the 17th USCG District in Alaska, which handled the rescue. VanLeeuwen kept in constant radio contact with the *Rafiki* until contact was lost. Fred Moore, W3ZU, in Florida, and Peter Mott, ZL1PWM, in New Zealand, also were on frequency and in contact with the vessel's captain until a US Coast Guard rescue helicopter arrived.

The Jayhawk helicopter crew was able to hoist the captain and a crew member to safety at around 1000 UTC, after dropping survival suits. Both men were reported to be uninjured, but the vessel was abandoned. The two men were taken to Kodiak, Alaska, for medical attention.

The incident occurred just before the net's daily roll-call, when a call is put out for medical, emergency, or priority traffic. The Pacific Seafarer's Net convenes daily on 14.300 MHz at 0300 UTC to monitor the progress of maritime Amateur Radio operators sailing in the Pacific.

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Heard Island Dxpediton 2016, VK0EK



ARRL NEWS

ARLB039 Rule Making Petition to FCC Calls for Vanity Call Sign Rule Changes

The FCC is inviting comments on a Petition for Rule Making

(RM-11775) from a Nevada radio amateur that seeks changes to the rules governing the Amateur Radio Vanity Call Sign Program.

Christopher LaRue, W4ADL, of North Las Vegas, is proposing that any licensee obtaining a vanity call sign be required to keep it for the full license term. LaRue contends in his petition that excessive and frequent vanity call sign filings are hampering the ability of other qualified licensees to obtain vanity call signs in one of the more desirable 1 x 2 or 2 x 1 formats. LaRue said that since the FCC dropped the fee to file for a vanity call sign, some applicants are taking advantage by regularly obtaining new call signs, thereby keeping them out of circulation.

The petition can be found on the web in PDF format at,

<https://ecfsapi.fcc.gov/file/1004220986407/Petition%20.pdf>.

"Some are changing call signs almost monthly, just to keep the newer code-free Extra class operators from obtaining a shorter call sign,"

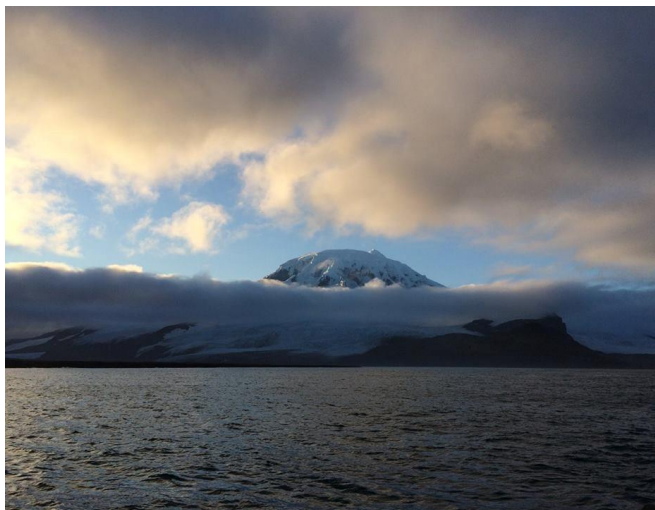
he said in his petition. "I even saw an older operator that said he does it all the time and has not even owned a radio in over 6 years.

When I looked him up, he has had 16 different [call signs] in 18 months."

LaRue said his proposed minor rule change would require any licensee applying for and obtaining an Amateur Radio vanity call sign "be required to keep it for the duration of the license, which is currently 10 years."

He said this would "alleviate a lot of the stress on the ULS system and manpower requirements" at the FCC. "It will also keep inactive amateurs from changing call signs regularly, thereby tying up call signs for 2 years after dismissal of said call."

Interested parties may comment using the FCC Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) at, <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/>. Comments are due within 30 days of the October 26 posting date.



Heard Island is one of the most remote places on earth, 2389 miles SW of Australia

Club Education Program

The new club education team is off to a good start under the leadership of club member Kris Backenstose, Vice President & Educational Team Leader, KK6AYC. The first Technician class started in September and this photo is from session 6 where the topic was Safety. Here Anthony, KC6KIM demonstrates tower climbing safety gear with the help of Skip and Michael.



Club Events

Annual Christmas Party Wednesday 12/8 Dinner at 6:30



General Membership Meeting

No minutes submitted

Board of Director's Meeting Minutes

Thursday October 13, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 1935 hours by President Tom Soskin.

The agenda was adopted with a motion, a second, and a vote.

The previous General Membership meeting minutes were approved.

President Tom Soskin skipped the President's Minute. Board Member Marc Bruvury however took the time and saluted President Soskin's editorial in the most recent issue of the QSA-5.

There was no Secretary's report or review of mail/email.

The Treasurer's report. The Treasurer's report began with a review by President Soskin of the HRO gift awards given to members in the past year. All have been distributed. There were five awards for \$100.00 each. A discussion ensued about President Soskin's kind gift of Baofeng HT radios for the students in the Technician class. There is discussion as to whether or not to reimburse or to write him a receipt for a tax deductible donation to MARS 501 (C)3 to President Soskin since it would make a positive club gift to the new students. President Soskin was glad to make the donation and does not request any remuneration. Board Member Marc Bruvury suggests that such a gift to students would make a great marketing pitch in future classes offered to the community. Board Member Kris Bakenstose reminds that he is already using the Baofeng radio raffle in his weekly email marketing to the current students. The idea of using the radios for future classes is tabled until the next board meeting.

Committee Reports

1. **Club Station and Facilities.** None. Board Trustee Doug Slusher is absent.
2. **Membership.** Board Members Curtis Ardourel reports there are 93 members with 2 new members.
3. **Education.** Member Kris Backenstose reviews the Technician class at the MARS Alto clubhouse. The classes are exciting with full attendance and participation. Thank you to the club members for support, mentoring, and teaching the classes. President Soskin asks about a class "post-mortem" or debriefing. Could there be a student evaluation? Discussion about helping the students to program the Baofeng radios after the last class or VE exam. Member Kris Backenstose offers to write a review for the QSA-5.
4. **Repeater and Technical reports.** None. Trustee Doug Slusher is absent.
5. **Public Service.** None. Board Members Michael Fisher and Randy Jenkins are absent.
6. **VE.** None. The next exam session is at the Alto Clubhouse on November 2, 2016 at 7 PM. That time is suited to the students who took the Technician class. Member Randy Jenkins is absent for any further report.
7. **Grant Writing.** None.
8. **Special Event.** A long discussion of the 2016 Christmas party ensues. President Soskin suggests that the event needs a chairperson. There needs to be someone who works with a caterer. Board Member John Boyd did this quite well last year. Will someone talk to John (who is absent from the meeting)? Board Member Cal Anbar volunteers to email Member John Boyd.

A Roundtable discussion raises the following questions: Can we get a prior head count of those who will attend? Will Member John Boyd be able to discover the costs for the meal and amenities (assuming that he would want to do that)? Could Member Randy Jenkins help with gifts-he has in the past? What are the mechanics of paying the caterer ahead of time? The club needs to make the caterer decisions prior to the November Board Meeting. Member Curtis Ardourel discusses the amount of money that should be spent on Christmas gifts/prizes for the party. Member Marc Bruvury suggests \$300.00 which is the amount spent for the 2015 Christmas party. Member Curtis Ardourel suggests and increase to \$400.00. A motion is made to support the \$400.00 amount.

A second is heard, and the board vote is to spend \$400.00. There is more discussion even though

this order of business is technically under the scheduled New Business of the meeting. Member Cal Anbar will contact Member Randy Jenkins and Board Member Rita Brenden about decorations since they have worked with those in the past.

Old Business None

New Business

1. **Dues for 2017.** This discussion is tabled until the next MARS board meeting. There are just too many members who are absent. There is a vigorous discussion however about the dues. Member Curtis Ardourel summarizes that dues cover QSA-5, repeater, and food costs. Member Kris Backenstose would like a list of the expenses in order to formulate email and QSA-5 advertising to let club members and prospective members know just what they are getting for their money. A calculation and breakdown would lend to the explanation to a raise in dues, perhaps up to \$30 a year, which is like other area clubs. Member Cal Anbar would like to see a designated donation system. Again, the full discussion is tabled until the November 2016 Board Meeting.
2. **Changes to the Club By-Laws.** This discussion is tabled until the November 2016 Board meeting.
3. **Ham of the Year nominations.** There are awards for ham achievements and efforts such as the Hy Roberts and John Butler awards. There is also the Board President's Award. Previous recipients are mentioned. Possible suggestions for recipients occurs. Final recommendations from the Board and the President are tabled until the November 2016 Board Meeting.
4. **Award Nominations.** This is a continuation of the 3rd order of New Business above. Final award grants will be decided at the November 2016 Board Meeting.
5. **Board of Directors nominations.** There is a discussion of the revolving system of Board Members' terms. Trustee Doug Slusher has emailed President Tom Soskin and is creating a nominating committee, requiring two assistants. Board Member David Chaney and Member Kris Backenstose volunteer as assistants.
6. **Christmas Party Chair.** This discussion occurred in Committee Reports. Member Cal Anbar will contact Member John Boyd to ask him to be the chair.
7. **DSL and Router internet problems at the Alto MARS clubhouse.** There is a roundtable discussion about the problems of slow internet speed at the clubhouse. Breaks or corrosion in the outside lines to the clubhouse or internal wiring problems may be the culprit. The line speed is half of what is being purchased. President Tom Soskin has submitted a service ticket for repair analysis. He may help on the work himself, being employed by the internet provider.
8. **Reduced phone bills.** Member Kris Backenstose proposes applying for the California Telecommunications reduced rate which is a 50% reduction. The MARS club meets the definition of a community-based institution offering instruction, access, and training in technologies because the club offers the Technician class and the Radio Repair Service. Member Backenstose will fill out the form and submit it to the State of California for approval. There is a motion, a second, and the vote is to support the application.
9. **Phone patch.** Member Kris Backenstose wants the MARS club to re-activate the phone patch in the radio repeater system. He will come up with a proposal and re-introduce the plan as new business in a future Board Meeting.

President Tom Soskin adjourns the meeting at **2130 hours** after a motion and a second for the Good of the Order. Recorded by Member David Chaney AA6AE. *Original signed.*

Marin Amateur Radio Society Officers and Board Members:

President

Tom Soskin, W6MTS
tomsoskin@gmail.com

Vice President

Kris Bakenstose, KK6AYC

Secretary

Randy Jenkins KA6BQF 510-526-4089

Treasurer:

Dave Hodgson KG6TCJ 707 978-2560

Board Members

Cal Anber N6TIA 209-275-5252
Rita Brenden KG6WPN 707-557-5521
Marc Bruvry KF6VNT 492-9292
Howard Leistner, W2BBF
Ed Essick K6ELE 456-1715

Other Positions:

Education Chair

Randy Jenkins
Kris Backenstose Instruction Team Leader.

VE Liaison

Randy Jenkins

Building Co-Managers

Doug Slusher
Dave Hodgson

Trustee for W6SG

Augie Koehler K0CQL

Trustee for K6GWE

Doug Slusher KF6AKU

Sunday Emergency Nets

Mark Bruvry and other volunteers

DX Representative of ARRL

Jerry Foster WA6BXV 892-3829

Public Service Event Coordinators

Randy Jenkins KA6BQF 510-526-4089
Rob Rowlands, NZ6J, Michael Fischer, K6MLF

Membership

Curtis Ardourel, WA6UDS

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