

Presidents Corner

I want to open by thanking Kris Backenstose N5HIT for running another successful Technician License training class. I also want to thank the rest of his team: Jamie Taylor KK6OLF, Rich Cochran AG6QR, Rob Rowlands NZ6J, and Skip Fedanzo KJ6ARL for their efforts. Additionally I want to thank Grant Pritchard KK6JJ, and Sharon Primbsch AA6XZ who were the VEs for the group. If I left anyone out, I apologize. The class resulted in seven new hams earning their licenses and one year free memberships in our club. This was a great group effort and bringing new people into our hobby is one of the principal purposes of our club.

I would also like to give a plug to our sister club the San Francisco Radio Club, in the interests of full disclosure I am a member. They are staging their second annual SOTA activation on Saturday 18 May on Mt Tam. The event is being organized by Antonis Papatsaras AA6PP who is a member of our club too. If you like hiking and working portable this activation is for you. You can get more information on their website at <https://www.sfarc.org/>.

By the time you read this, it will probably be old news however a little explanation is probably worth the time. For the past several years we have been distributing QSA-5 using Mailman, an application that comes as part of the hosting package on our web server. This package has a few things to recommend it, it is easy to use, free, and already installed. It does have some downsides. The foremost issue is that the email originates from our own server. This is problematic because some Internet Service Providers block our emails because some other users of our hosting company send spam

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From the Editor

Ed Essick, K6ELE

ARRL Field Day

Each year amateur radio clubs have the opportunity to participate in the most popular on-the-air event held annually in the US and Canada. On the fourth weekend of June, more than 35,000 radio a ARRL Field Day is the most popular on-the-air event held annually in the US and Canada. On the fourth weekend of June, more than 35,000 radio amateurs gather with their clubs, groups or simply with friends to operate from remote locations. Amateurs gather with their clubs, groups or simply with friends to operate from remote locations.

Our club along with the Redwood Empire DX Association has participated in Field Day from the Marin Rod and Gun Club. Again this year we will be there with radios, food, and enthusiasm to represent our two clubs. Field day will be held at the Marin Rod and Gun Club this year. You can contact me if you have any questions.

The objective is to work as many stations as possible on any and all amateur bands (excluding the 60, 30, 17, and 12-meter bands) and to learn to operate in field situations in less than optimal conditions. We usually setup 2-3 portable towers and operate 2-3 stations. Operation is both SSB and CW and possibly RTTY and FT8.

A Get-On-The-Air (GOTA) Station is setup to allow newly licensed operators and non-licensed operators to participate. The GOTA station may be operated by any person licensed since the previous year's Field Day, regardless of license class. It may also be operated by a generally inactive licensee. Non-licensed persons can participate under the direct supervision of a club control operator. I will be in charge of the GOTA station this year and I would encourage you to drop by to operate the station. Also the generally inactive licensee category allows those club members without a home station who have been inactive to be part of Field Day.

Field Day is scored and we get points for visitation by elected officials and representatives of local agencies (i.e. fire, police). If you have any contacts with our elected officials or local agencies please let us know.

Field Day is always the fourth full weekend of June, beginning at 1800 UTC Saturday and running through 2059 UTC Sunday. Field Day 2019 is June 22-23. Volunteers are always needed to setup, operate radios, and take down the antennas at the end of Field Day. Setup takes place on Friday 6/21 and help is always needed. If you have participated in the past or would like to help out this year mark your calendar for these dates and come on out for Field Day.

Mailman also has very rudimentary tools for managing the list, gathering metrics on who is opening our emails and complying with rules and etiquette around bulk email. Based on conversations I have had with my geek friends we are trying out Mailchimp to send QSA-5 out to you. It resolves the issues with Mailman and is also free. From your standpoint the email you receive with QSA-5 will look different but should be just as easy for you. If you intentionally or unintentionally unsubscribe from the list getting you back on the list will require a few more steps. If that happens let Ed or me know and we will get you back on. The timing of this change is not arbitrary. Now that the past due date has occurred for membership renewal I need to clean up the mailing list and remove anyone who has not renewed so it seemed like a good time to switch over.

73 de wa6uds

What's Happening in Radio

7th Call Area QSO Party, 1300Z, May 4 to 0700Z, May 5

Indiana QSO Party, 1500Z, May 4 to 0300Z, May 5

Delaware QSO Party, 1700Z, May 4 to 2359Z, May 5

New England QSO Party, 2000Z, May 4 to 0500Z, May 5 and 1300Z-2400Z, May 5

VOLTA WW RTTY Contest, 1200Z, May 11 to 1200Z, May 12

Arkansas QSO Party, 1400Z, May 11 to 0200Z, May 12

CQ WW WPX Contest, CW, 0000Z, May 25 to 2359Z, May 26



ARRL News

Solar Cycle 25 Predicted to be Similar to Cycle 24

Scientists predicting the sun's activity for Solar Cycle 25 say it's likely to be much like that of current Cycle 24, which is declining and predicted to bottom out in 2019 or 2020. Solar Cycle 25 Prediction Panel experts said Solar Cycle 25 may get off to a slow start, but is anticipated to peak between 2023 and 2026 with a sunspot range of 95 to 130. This is well below the typical average of 140 to 220 sunspots per solar cycle. The panel expressed high confidence that the coming cycle should break the trend of weakening solar activity seen over the past four cycles. The Solar Cycle Prediction Panel forecasts the number of sunspots expected for solar maximum, along with the timing of the peak and minimum solar activity levels for the cycle.

Reprinted with permission ARRL Letter 4/11/19

New Members

Welcome to our new members:

William Erb, KN6BIC Larkspur

April French, KN6BID Greenbrae

Atillo Mossi, W6CQC

Justin Mazzon, KN6BIF

Faster, More Contest-Friendly FT4 Digital Protocol Beta Version to Debut on April 29

A new, speedier, more contest-friendly digital mode is just days away, initially in beta form. [WSJT-X](#) developer's say serious work on the new FT4 protocol began shortly after the FT8 Roundup held last December 1 - 2. The goal was a mode that could compete with RTTY contesting in terms of contact rates, while preserving many of the benefits of FT8.



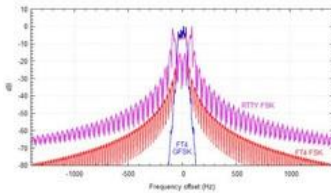
"Over the past month, a small group of volunteers have been conducting on-the-air tests of FT4," the [WSJT-X](#) development group -- Joe Taylor, K1JT; Steve Franke, K9AN; and Bill Somerville, G4WJS -- announced this week. "The early tests were very successful and helped us to make a number of important design decisions. We believe FT4 has considerable promise for its intended purpose."

The developers say FT4 soon will be ready for testing by a larger group and they're seeking interested participants who can offer their "considered feedback." They suggest reading [The FT4](#)

[Protocol for Digital Contesting](#) first. A general release of the [WSJT-X](#) suite that includes FT4 is anticipated in July.

According to the document, FT4 is an experimental digital mode designed specifically for radio contesting that -- like FT8 -- uses fixed-length transmissions, structured messages with formats optimized for minimal contacts, and strong forward-error correction. Transmit-receive sequences are 6 seconds long, making it 2.5 times faster than FT8 and about the same speed as conventional RTTY for radio contesting. FT4 can work with signals 10 dB weaker what would be required to decode RTTY while using much less bandwidth.

Transmissions last for 4.48 seconds, compared to 12.64 seconds for FT8. Modulation uses four-tone frequency-shift keying at approximately 23.4 baud, with tones separated by the baud rate. The occupied bandwidth is 90 Hz.



"We plan to post downloadable installation packages for [WSJT-X](#) version 2.1.0-rc5 on Monday, April 29," the Development Group said.

"A few parameters and operating behaviors of FT4 are still being tested and optimized," the initial FT4 guide says. "It will be very useful to hold several more mock contest practice sessions, with a larger group of active participants."

Even if these practice sessions reveal no serious bugs or inadequacies, the [WSJT-X](#) development group believes FT4 is still too new to be used in the ARRL VHF Contest (June 8 - 10) and ARRL Field Day (June 22 - 23). For that reason, release candidate [WSJT-X](#) 2.1.0-rc5 will "time out" on June 7. A general availability release is expected in mid-July.

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Public Service

Ridge to Bridge

The first public service event of the year sponsored by the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council follows the Ridge Trail from Samuel P. Taylor State Park in central Marin south to the Golden Gate Bridge.

2019 Report

In spite of the rainy weather in the morning, all went well. No injuries, and all participants were located—even the half-dozen who went walkabout without telling anyone.

We passed a LOT of traffic—way more than usual, mostly in an attempt to get the correct and final participant lists to all of the rest stop captains. Thanks for your perseverance! A special thanks to Rob Ireson, for being at the center of that drudgery at net control in the morning. It was frustrating and time-consuming. Even though we were trying to avoid unnecessary tail-gating, those rosters prevented the passing of some other traffic, a good teaching moment.

It's clear to all that we need to find a better way to address the situation.

Here's the back-story: in years past, it was the guides on each bus who hand-carried the final correct versions of the lists, with the adds, drops, no-shows, and "own transport." When the guides arrived at a rest stop, they would attempt to correct the signup sheets at the stop. Of course, there was a line of participants trying to sign into those sheets, so a snarl-up and delay ensued. Again and again: at each rest stop, and with the arrival of each guide. That system clearly wasn't working, hence our attempt to centralize the "correct" lists and communicate the information to all stops at the same time, and in advance of the arrival of participants.

So yesterday's system was a major improvement over what was done before. But, oh, was it tedious. And voice comms is clearly not the most efficient way to transmit lists. We will be working with the Ridge Trail Council to further streamline the system for next year. Jay, the two Robs, and Steve ETA all volunteered to help design a digital system for registration and signup. We are, of course, able to transmit spreadsheet data both over the internet and over the radio.

Other than that large issue, it was a smooth event with a lot of happy people. We wound it up just before dark at 8pm—a record. With John Kristian at Golden Gate, Brian Cooley in the Presidio, and Jim Green accompanying Mark, the Sweep of Sweeps—I picked up Jim and Mark at Golden Gate and we called it a wrap. A long day, starting just before 5am, when Rob R. pulled up with the commtruck, after arriving in town from LA after midnight.

Speaking of the comm truck, added thanks to Mitch WU1Q and Doug, who helped clean and stock it the evening before. And a special shout-out to Brian who took over net control duties after he was finished at Cardiac.

Also, thanks to all for your resilience in shifting quite quickly to the secondary frequency, when we found that the primary frequency was down. Doug and I will go up to Tam this week to fix it. Also, we will add to the roster a common frequency (most likely the Big Rock system, of course) to which all can tune to learn of last-minute problems like the one we faced with the Tam West 2-meter repeater. Thanks to MARS for maintaining that 440 box—it saved the day, and worked marvelously.

A final thanks to Tina Cuevas, the Ridge Trail Council's volunteer coordinator with whom we have worked the past two years. As with her predecessors Joel and Emily, Tina has been a delight to partner with. She is heading off to NYU and grad school in environmental education, and we wish her the very best.

With respect and warm regards,

Michael K6MLF



Michael Fischer, Ann Shores, Milt Hyams, Larry Bradley, Brad Beedle, at Tennessee Valley. Ridge to Bridge



Highway 1 Rest Stop Ridge to Bridge, Doug Slusher, Michael Fischer. Golden Gate Bridge John Kristian, Erin Michelson

Repeater Repairs, Middle Peak, Mt. Tam



Mt. Tam repeater building – Middle Peak. Doug Slusher and Mich Martin working on repeater equipment.

Club House Yard Cleanup



Thanks to Pam, Carol, Cal, Milt, Mitch, Rich, James, Stan, and Larry cleaning up the back yard

Treasurer's Report

Marin Amateur Radio Club

PROFIT AND LOSS

April 2019

	TOTAL
▼ Income	
Dues	136.00
Rent	2,450.00
Total Income	\$2,586.00
GROSS PROFIT	\$2,586.00
▼ Expenses	
Car & Truck	31.09
DSL	53.82
Education	210.85
Food	125.00
Garbage	42.73
Legal & Professional Services	75.00
Reimbursable Expenses	150.00
Telephone	312.13
Utilities	293.07
Total Expenses	\$1,293.69
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$1,292.31
NET INCOME	\$1,292.31

Accrual basis Tuesday, April 30, 2019 03:47 PM GMT-07:00

Marin Amateur Radio Club

BALANCE SHEET SUMMARY

As of April 30, 2019

	TOTAL
▼ ASSETS	
▼ Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	89,112.98
Other Current Assets	1,004.45
Total Current Assets	\$90,117.43
Fixed Assets	58,983.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$149,100.43
▼ LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
▼ Liabilities	
▼ Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	626.98
Total Current Liabilities	\$626.98
Total Liabilities	\$626.98
Equity	148,473.45
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$149,100.43

Accrual basis Tuesday, April 30, 2019 03:48 PM GMT-07:00

Donations (All amounts included in General Account)

Building Fund	\$230
Club Station Fund	\$3160
General Fund	\$636
Public Service Fund	\$2,164
Repeater Fund	\$2,380

MINUTES GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

April 5, 2019

Held at: Clubhouse, 27 Shell Ave., Mill Valley, CA

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm by Curtis Ardourel.

2. Introductions:

There were a total of 24 members and guests present. Board members and officers present: Curtis Ardourel WA6UDS, President, Mitch Martin WU1Q, Vice President, Milt Hyams KM6ASI, Secretary, Tom Soskin W6MTS and K6GWE Trustee Doug Slusher KF6AKU.

There were no new members present to introduce.

3. Adopt Agenda:

The agenda was adopted as presented.

4. Approve Minutes:

It was M/S/A that the minutes from the February 1, 2019 and March 1, 2019 General Membership Meetings be approved.

5. Board Actions:

Curtis stated there was nothing major to report. The minutes from the last (March 14th) Board meeting are included in the latest QSA-5 for review.

6. Fun with Ham Radio:

Larry Bradley (KK6QPE) reported on MDARC's participation in the Contra Costa Science Fair as judges. They presented an award for the most radio oriented project to a solar panel study on the affects of fire and smoke from fire storms on solar panel energy generation. This led to a discussion on methods to bring youngsters into amateur radio. A suggestion by Grant Prichard (KK6JJ) for the club to offer a scholarship for youngsters that are licensed amateurs developed traction and will be looked into by the Board.

7. Secretary's Report—External Communications:

The FCC has renewed the club's K6GWE radio license for another 10 years.

8. Treasurer's Report:

Ed reported that the latest Treasurer's Report is in the latest QSA-5.

9. Committee and other Reports:

Membership : As of the close of business of April 4th, 106 members are current for 2019, 83% of 2018 membership. Past due notices were sent to those members on the club roster from last year that have not paid.

Public Service:

Larry Bradley, Public Services Co-chair reported that the first public service activity for 2019 will be tomorrow, April 5th, with the Ridge to Bridge event for the Marin Trail Council.

Facilities:

Doug reported that there has been no progress on getting more bids from contractors for the roof due to the weather.

Education:

The License Exam will be administered on April 11th in the Clubhouse, so the Board meeting will be held in the Radio Room again.

10. Old business:

None.

11. New business:

None.

12. Good of the order:

Nothing.

13. Adjournment:

It was moved, seconded and approved that the meeting be adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Presentation:

A presentation was made by members Steve Smith and Jan Leja on the club's new kit project: An RF Detection Meter.

Respectfully submitted by

Milton Hyams, , Secretary, on April 8, 2019.

MINUTES BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

April 11, 2019

Held at: Clubhouse (Radio Room), 27 Shell Ave., Mill Valley, CA

Board members present: Curtis Ardourel WA6UDS, President; Mitch Martin WU1Q, Vice President; Ed Essick K6ELE, Treasurer; Milt Hyams KM6ASI, Secretary; Tom Soskin W6MTS; Kris Backenstose N5HIT, was present, but was conducting Technical Class license training during the meeting and did not participate in any votes .

Absent: Marc Bruvry KF6VNT

Other attendees: K6GWE Trustee Doug Slusher KF6AKU; member Kaled Anber, N6TIA.

14. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:39 pm by Curtis Ardourel.

15. Adopt Agenda:

Without objection, the agenda was adopted.

16. Approve minutes:

Minutes of the March 14, 2019 board meeting were approved without objection.

17. Secretary's Report (External Communications):

Nothing to report.

18. Treasurer's Report:

Ed Essick presented the Balance Sheet Detail for FY 2019 to date and the Profit and Loss Statement, year to date. The latter will be published in the next QSA-5. There were no questions concerning the reports.

Ed also reported that he has continued to look for appropriate investments for cash balance in the bank, and most recently Schwab advised him that they won't entertain opening a bond account with an opening balance of less than \$250,000, which is far more than we have to deposit.

19. Membership Chair Report:

Curtis reported that 110 members are current for 2019, 92% of 2018 membership. Past due notices have been sent to those members on our roster from last year that have not paid and the QSA-5 mailing list is going to be changed accordingly.

20. Education Chair:

Kris Backenstose reported that 9 students from the last technician license class took the license exam this evening and all passed. Curtis pointed out that those passing the exam are eligible for membership automatically and will be added to the roster for this year.

Concerns were raised about the shortage of qualified instructors for the license class this past cycle. A concerted effort was promised to publicize the need and outreach to support recruitment of instructors for the next cycle.

21. Facilities Chair:

Doug Slusher reported that the registration and license sticker has been received from DMV for the Comm Truck.

Another contractor is going to inspect the building for an estimate on roof repairs.

Neighbors (a lady who lives on the southeast side of the property and Bruce who lives on the west side of the property) complained to Kal about the condition of the building, most notably painting. He invited them to attend this Board meeting, but no representative of the neighborhood was present. This inspired an animated debate about the best way to deal with the appearance of the property. It was pointed out that if two neighbors have complained, in all likelihood a number more are upset with how it looks. Kris thought that at least some of the building should be painted, but others believe that it is a waste of money if the building is painted before the roof repairs are done. A consensus developed that at least the front doors could be painted and paint would be purchased for that purpose and the fence should be fixed. Ed has a handyman that could do the work.

It was M/S/A to approve \$1500 to hire the handyman to repair the fence and gate and to do touch up painting around the building. Ed will coordinate putting his handyman in touch with Doug.

Doug reported that the problems experienced with the Tam West Repeater that caused it to be unavailable during the Ridge to Bridge event on April 6th have been resolved. Also the PL for Tam West has been officially changed to 192.8 and the old PL of 179.9 has been turned off. An output tone PL of 82.5 has been set to minimize interference with the San Pedro Ridge Repeater and others on 147.33.

The front door lock is going to be changed to a proximity card key and documentation has been requested to determine what needs to be done to the door to facilitate the change-over.

22. Old business:

a. Curtis announced that the signup and Pay Pal payment forms for the RF Detector Building Project are going to be loaded onto the website and signups will be limited to the number of kits ordered (10). If more people are interested, they can wait to sign up for the next project cycle.

b. Curtis circulated mock-ups of new club ID cards for discussion. This card will also serve as a receipt for any equipment borrowed from the Club's new lending library of equipment. Some suggestions for changes were made and Curtis will make the appropriate changes. After printing the new cards they will be mailed to all members with a form seeking updates on contact information (a number of e-mail addresses for members have come back as invalid) and seeking volunteers for presenters for licensing classes and other projects including maintenance on the building.

23. New business:

a. Curtis circulated sample paper bills that will be mailed to all members for payment of dues next year. These bills will also include a list of opportunities for members to volunteer for activities in support of the club to include license instructors.

b. As a follow-up to a report that Larry Bradley made at the General Meeting about MDARC judging and presenting an award at the Contra Costa Youth Science Fair, Curtis wants to follow up on the suggestion that was made that MARS create a scholarship for a youngster or youngsters that are licensed amateurs. It was agreed that a donation fund for scholarships will be created for that purpose and solicitations will be made at membership renewal time. Tom made the first donation to the fund. Board members were instructed to research existing scholarship funds and be prepared to make recommendations on details for implementing a MARS scholarship program at the next Board meeting.

24. Good of the order:

Milt will do the HF Net on this coming Sunday if Marc is not available.

25. Executive Session:

None.

26. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 9:44 pm

Respectfully submitted by
Milton Hyams

Secretary,
April 12, 2019

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 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</p> <p>Vice President Mitch Martin, WU1Q</p> <p>Secretary Milt Hyams, KM6ASI</p> <p>Treasurer: Ed Essick, K6ELE</p> <p>Board Members Curtis Ardourel, WA6UDS, 510-290-6069 Milt Hyams, KM6ASI, 415453-3867 Kris Backenstose, KK6AYC Marc Bruvry, KF6VNT 492-9292 Ed Essick, K6ELE, 415-456-1715 Mitch Martin, WU1Q Tom Soskin, W6MTS, 415-342-2372</p> <p>Other Positions:</p> <p>Education Chair Randy Jenkins Kris Backenstose Instruction Team Leader.</p> <p>VE Liaison Grant Pritchard</p> <p>Building Manager Doug Slusher</p> <p>Trustee for W6SG Mitch Martin, WU1Q</p> <p>Trustee for K6GWE Doug Slusher KF6AKU</p> <p>Sunday Emergency Nets Mark Bruvry</p> <p>DX Representative of ARRL Jerry Foster WA6BXV 892-3829</p>	<p>Public Service Event Coordinators Michael Fischer, K6MKLF Randy Jenkins KA6BQF Rob Rowlands, NZ6J</p> <p>Membership Curtis Ardourel, WA6UDS</p> <p>Editor of QSA5 Ed Essick, K6ELE e.essick@comcast.net</p> <p>ARRL San Francisco Section Manager Bill Hillendahl KH6GJV@ARRL.ORG</p> <p>WEBMASTER Curtis Ardourel, WA6UDS</p> <p>HF Sunday Net Control Mark Bruvry, KF6VNT</p> <p>VHF Sunday Net Control Steve Toquinto, KB6HOH</p>
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