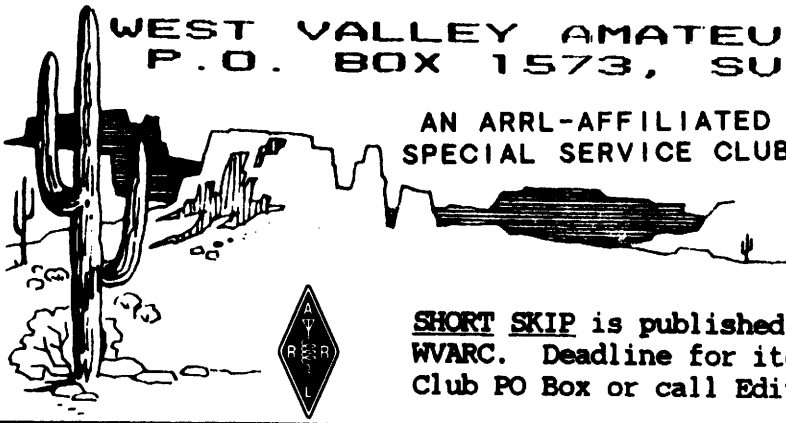


SHORT SKIP



SHORT SKIP is published monthly (every 2 months in summer) by WVARC. Deadline for items is 2 weeks before meeting. Mail to Club PO Box or call Editor Ray Summer NW7R (972-8733).

APRIL 3rd PROGRAM: VHF & UHF ANTENNAS

The West Valley Amateur Radio Club meets the first Monday of every month (usually), at St Clement Social Hall, 15800 Del Webb Blvd, Sun City. Doors open at 6:30 PM; meeting starts 7:15. The April 3rd meeting will feature a presentation on antennas (VHF, UHF, hidden, etc) by Bert Davidson W2GOB. Bert's years of experience with a variety of antennas (antennae?) make him well qualified for this assignment.

The club apologizes to those who showed up on March 6th for our last meeting. The church took over the parking lot for a men's retreat and failed to notify the club until six days before the scheduled meeting. Over 380 postcards were sent to Valley members informing them of the change to Friday March 10th, and announcements were made on the 147.30 MHz repeater on Wednesday night net and on the 9 AM daily Call-In net, but some friends of WVARC did not get the word. Fortunately Frank Smith was able to reschedule the presentation of the XF4M team's nearly ill-fated DXpedition to Socorro Island, Mexico. The meeting was well attended, but we present an abbreviated version of the talk in this newsletter for those unable to attend.

At the April meeting members will be given a ballot to express their choice for Ladies Night in October: Barbecue, regular restaurant, country club. Board members are comparing prices for this event. The club is also checking into availability of hats, T-shirts, bumper stickers, etc, with a club logo. Any interest? Club badges can be ordered from Ray NW7R for \$5; they say "EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS, (CALL), (NAME), WEST VALLEY ARC" and should be worn by members of our Public Service teams on assignments. Club "Emergency Communications" magnetic signs are \$14/pair.

EXAMS MARCH 31 SUN CITY, APRIL 1 DeVRY
Club-sponsored license exams will be held at Sun City Posse HQ on Sunland Dr in SC at 6:30 PM on FRIDAY MARCH 31st, to accommodate the NO-CODE TECH Class that has been meeting there each Friday since Feb 3. ALL TESTS (written & code) will be available to those interested. Call Ray NW7R 972-8733 to register if you are not in the NO-CODE TECH Class. Tests will be held at DeVry Institute, 2149 W Dunlap Ave, on SATURDAY APRIL 1st. Walk-in registration 8 to 10 AM.

At both sites Novice tests (Elements 1A and 2) are free; a single fee of \$5.90 is charged for all other tests. Bring original and copy of appropriate CSCE's and/or licenses.

ROSTER NOW SCHEDULED FOR APRIL MAILING

There are still a passel [def: a group or collection, esp. a fairly large one] of members who have not renewed. Please check your EXPIRATION DATE on the envelope. If it is 1/95 you need to renew if you wish to remain an active member. The club appreciates your support. New and renewed memberships will be accepted up to April 8 for the roster. Dues are only \$10; mail to club PO Box.

[NEWS EDITORS OF VALLEY CLUBS PLS COPY] C.A.R.L. SEEKS HELP FOR SUMMER STATION

The Center for Amateur Radio Learning will have a ham station and exhibit at the Arizona Museum of Science and Technology from June to mid-Sept 1995. Tony Rogozinski N7BG has a talented team at work planning HF and VHF stations. The stations will be manned each day from 10 AM to 3 PM. To volunteer, hams east of Central Ave (Phx) call Chuck KB7ICP 986-3060; those west call Ray NW7R 972-8733. Assignments will be made later to your convenience. (More info regarding CARL on page 2.)

The Center for Amateur Radio Learning Project is an effort by the ham radio clubs of Arizona, especially those in the greater Phoenix area, to provide the community with a state-of-the-art Amateur Radio station and exhibit in the new Arizona Science Center under construction on Washington St between 5th and 7th Sts. Ham exhibits are on display in Science centers and Museums across the US, some with active stations. With the support of members of some 25 clubs in the Valley and others in the state, along with unaffiliated hams, CARL should be a showcase for everything that makes this hobby fascinating.

CARL has a charter and commitment of support from the Arizona Science Center and a nucleus of well-qualified hams at work on the project. It is hoped that all clubs will have a CARL committee, with members serving on cluster teams of the project. Dee Hester N6BQR has been showing models of the Science Center and VuGraphs of the project at various club meetings and collecting volunteers.

The budget for construction of the project itself is \$50,000 and the Finance Committee soon will be soliciting commercial sources for the bulk of this amount (which will include equipment). We understand that ARCA has already contributed \$500 and a WVARC member another \$100 toward this goal. Such contributions should be made to Arizona Science Center (a non-profit charitable organization) and earmarked for the CARL project. The project also needs seed money for its operations. WVARC members voted \$200 for this operation; three other clubs to date have also given generously.

Mostly CARL will need dedicated hams to volunteer their time, when the new station and exhibit are on line. The temporary station that will be operating this summer at the Museum of Science and Technology will indicate how willing the ham community is to meet the challenge.

To keep informed of the progress, listen to 147.28 MHz on Wednesdays at 6:30 PM. To help on one of the clusters (Management, Technical, Finance, Communications), call project secretary Al Lee 933-1942.

ARRL SW DIV CONVENTION UPDATE

Retired talk-radio personality Ray Briem N6FFT will be MC at the Convention Banquet aboard the Queen Mary in Long Beach on SATURDAY SEPT 2nd. Speaker will be Dr George Fishbeck, well-known TV personality. Banquet is \$25/each. Saturday luncheon: \$15. Sunday Breakfast: \$12. Early Registration for Convention (by May 20): \$10. [Short Skip Editor has registration forms.]

Congratulations to OPDX's 1994 DXer of the Year Rudi Klos DK7PE/AHOG. In the OPDX reader survey many readers complimented Rudi's CW skills and how he has supplied many with several new ones, most notably the Congo as TNOCW last year. The survey also honored the 3YOPI team as the 1994 DXpedition of the Year by a group, and Rudi for the 1994 DXpedition by an individual. He is reportedly in Pakistan at present, seeking operating permission. The survey named the TOP 20 most wanted DXCC countries, top 10 being Libya 5A; Andaman VU4; Heard Is. VK0/H; Bhutan A5; Kermadec ZL8; Yemen 70; Macquarie Is. VK0/M; Tunisia 3V; Amsterdam/St Paul FT8Z; Mount Athos SV/A. News has leaked out that a large group is planning to activate Heard and Macquarie in January 1997. Many of the 3YOPI team are involved.

As you read this the Conway Reef DXpedition is probably QRV. Led by Pekka OH1RY, the group includes Mats SM7PKK, Nils SM6CAS and Jun JH4RHF. Listen for 3D2CU for CW and RTTY and 3D2CT for SSB. The team will operate 3 stations 24 hours a day. Don't miss this much needed contact. Another very important location, Europa, is said to be active until the end of April on RTTY, SSTV, SSB & CW, 40 through 10 meters as FR5HG.

Geni ZALB, who was our guest in Phoenix 2 years ago, is activating Sazan Island as ZA0B from time to time. This is the first-ever IOTA operation from an Albanian Island. Listen also for Mafia Island 5H3CK (counts as Tanzania) by Franco I4LCK who will also activate Boydu and Nyuni Islands, both new islands for IOTA.

UA9OBA has announced plans to travel to Bouvet Island 3Y beginning in June. Apparently this will be part of an extensive journey that will also include some rare IOTA locations such as Nanskian and Scott Islands.

Look for Birgit DL7VTZ and Holger DL7VTM (who recently activated Congo) from Malta 9H on Gozo Island signing 9H1TZ and 9H1TY. There are also reports that Scotty KODQ is active from Bahrain as A92Q, especially on 40m CW. Also listen for Afghanistan YA by PA3BTQ, Algeria 7X5JF, Ascension Island ZD8Z, Comoros D68 by ON4QM, Rwanda 9X5EE, Spratly Islands 9MOA and DUOK both, and Zaire 9Q by ON6TT. You might even hear an odd signal from Northern Marianas/Saipan de yours truly as AHOW.

Local Kuwaitis now have callsigns formerly assigned to foreigners in Kuwaiti, who must now sign 9K2/homecall. Bob 9K2ZZ is now 9K2/N6BFM.

Upcoming: WPX contests, the Poland DX Contest Apr 1-2 and Israeli Contest Apr 8-9. Gd Luck.

[Editor's note: Here are the highlights from Frank Smith's talk at the WVARC March Meeting. A more extensive treatment is in the April issue of Worldradio Magazine.]

THE 1994 DX-PEDITION TO SOCORRO ISLAND BY THE XF4M TEAM

Isla Socorro is a member of the Revillagigedos group of islands about 300 miles south of the tip of Baja California. It is occupied mostly by Mexican Navy personnel and civilian support workers. Non-Mexican hams are not permitted to operate there or on other Mexican islands, but Victor Keller XELVIC managed to secure permits and documents for a team of Mexicans (and non-Mexicans!) to go there. It took two years of dreaming and planning the logistics and financing of the operation. In addition to XELVIC, the team that met in La Paz, Baja California, consisted of Ricardo Villa XELIIR, Alfonso Belmar XELJLH, Andy Chesnokov UA3AB, Harry Booklan RA3AUU, Ed Kritsky NT2X and Frank Smith AHOW.

The La Paz ham radio community gave them a joyous send-off as they boarded the Felipe Angeles for a 50 hour trip. Initially the captain headed for the wrong island but managed to find Socorro Island by late afternoon. (No one is permitted to land after sundown.) Navy people were on hand with amphibious military vehicles -- surplus US Army gear from the Vietnam War -- and the team was taken up the island's volcanic mountain to a plateau about 1500 feet in altitude.

Within an hour they were engaged in QSO's worldwide, mostly on 80m. By the end of the second day, three complete HF stations were in operation, with logging computers, beams, dipoles, two 5KW generators and other gear. The team stayed on the air day and night for nearly a week, including a multi-single DXpedition entry in the CQWW/SSB Contest, logging a total QSO count of more than 15,000. The operation ended at 6 PM (local) on Sunday and the team disassembled all equipment, repacked it and boarded trucks in less than an hour and a half. They were soon on board the Felipe Angeles, anchored a few hundred feet beyond the harbor, and were ready for a night of well-deserved sleep. Instead, what followed was a night described by Frank Smith as "sheer hell for all".

The captain was apparently unaware that the ship had an electrical winch to raise the anchor. He repeatedly strained the ship's engines trying to free the anchor so that it could be raised by hand. When the winch was finally used, the anchor was brought up, twisted beyond recognition. Several hours after the ship was underway, the DXers were awakened by the sound of flares being fired into the night sky. They were told that the engines had burned up and were not repairable. The boat was drifting aimlessly, being driven by the currents of a very black ocean in a very black night. Hammerhead sharks that thrive in those waters south of the Sea of Cortez were of some concern to the DXers. The crew's response to the crisis was to go to sleep.

Ed "the Red" Kritsky got on the 75m band and came across a rag-chew in progress between hams in Texas and California. He repeated "maritime distress" several times, trying to get their attention. One of them said that he heard "maritime distress" but when he couldn't hear the signal a second time he continued the ragchew. Fortunately, on another frequency Ed got a response from Gary Unger K8RIQ in Mesa AZ. Gary had come home from his swing-shift job as police dispatcher for the Mesa PD and had just turned on his HF rig when he heard the cry for help.

Gary had taken specialized emergency communications training with a group of other Phoenix-area hams. This "Mesa Emergency Group" (MEG) has about 60 active ham operators who conduct emergency drills as well as formal training sessions. Each member has a pre-determined area of responsibility within the city of Mesa during city-wide emergencies, communications breakdowns, etc. They are coordinated with the 911 system in the area. Thus Gary was uniquely suited to respond to the DXers' dilemma. He alerted the US Coast Guard in San Diego to the problem and coordinated communications between the boat and the USCG, which was able to determine the exact location of the boat and contact the Mexican Navy regarding the situation. Since the USCG could not contact the boat on 75m subsequent conversations with the Coast Guard took place on 5 and 8 MHz frequencies. When Gary was satisfied that the matter was under control he withdrew and relaxed.

Late the following day welcome news came to the group via UHF. Naval authorities of Socorro established radio contact with the ship and said that a rescue boat was on its way. Late that night the totally exhausted team was returned to Socorro and housed in the dormitories there. Frank found some humor in the situation, remarking to the naval commander that the Russian and American team members now had the distinction of being the only foreign hams ever to visit Socorro twice!

(OVER)

But the problem of getting back home to families and jobs remained. Nellie XE1CI in Mexico City was an angel who made countless phone calls to families in New York, Mexico City and Phoenix, assuring them that everything would be OK. There was an airstrip on the island, but efforts to find pilots willing to fly there were fruitless. Finally, the Mexican Defense Ministry ordered a C-130 military transport plane to get the XF4M team off the island. After a two-hour flight to La Paz, the visibly shaken team disembarked to be greeted by the cheers of the La Paz Radio Club and their families on the tarmac. The team will never forget the reception and seeing four-year old "Irma" wearing a Mexican national costume crowned with a tiara in her hair, who came to welcome the group back to safety.

Frank said, "There were two things that saved us. One was Gary Unger and the skill and experience that came from his amateur emergency training and police background. The other was an act of God: the seas around Socorro Island normally have 20+ foot waves. That day they were unusually smooth. Except for that fact, we might not have made it, even with Gary's help."

VANITY CALLS

The FCC has announced that the long-awaited for Form 610-V won't be available until after May 1st, 1995. This is the form that will enable you to apply for an Amateur Radio vanity call sign. DO NOT REQUEST THE FORM PRIOR TO THAT DATE. Anyone doing so will not have his name recorded and it will be necessary for him to request the form again, according to a recent WLAW bulletin.

The FCC is expected to make a public announcement of the date for the opening of the "first gate" for these calls. Beginning May 1, FCC Form 610-V may be requested by calling the FCC Forms Distribution Center at 1-800-418-3676. This is the correct number; previous bulletins had it wrong. Or send an SASE to ARRL-VEC anytime; write "Form 610-V Request" on outer envelope.

The vanity call is expected to cost \$70 for a 10-year license. Instructions for wiring funds will be announced.

FOR SALE

KENWOOD TM-2550A MOBILE 2m XCVR (5w/45w) with mounting brackets and half & full-wave antennas and magnetic antenna holder.

L.D. N7ILU 972-8757

DENTRON CLIPPERTON L linear, 1 KW; \$350.

ICOM IC-P2AT, 2 meters, like new; \$250.

Wally AE7Y 933-7011

AM/VHF PORTABLE RCVR (540-1600 kHz/108-135 MHz) \$10 obo (will UPS free of charge).

George N7SCC 995-2005

CLUB NOTES: In our last SHORT SKIP we told how you could use ARRL's Technical Information Service and Automated Information Server via internet. Rich Piggott WB2LKU has sent us info on accessing internet thru AzTec (a free ASU service). We couldn't find space in this issue but will have copies on hand at April meeting.

SILENT KEYS

LeMARR LUNDSTROM K7OGA died in Sun City in December, according to a neighbor George Scott N7WHY. LeMarr would have been 84 on Jan 1. He was a member of the club for the past 30 years! Our condolences to his wife Helen and family.

JIM CAPEK KB7GTV passed away at Boswell Memorial Hospital in March. Jim joined the club and its NOVICE radio class in 1988 and quickly became a ham and active member of the club. He was a sound engineer for the Sun City Rec Centers. We extend our sympathy to his wife Rose.

The club also lost a number of old friends and former club members recently. Old-timers will remember Jim Geer W7GHW, Harry Thompson W7JCX, Bill Balch W7LCE and Nathaniel Colby WA6MDL.

ARIZONA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB HAMFEST, APRIL 29th

AARC will hold its third annual Hamfest on April 29th at Park Central Mall. Park Central is located on Central Avenue and Earll Drive.

USCG AT VIRGINIA BEACH WILL DROP CW SOON

The US Coast Guard's Virginia Beach master Atlantic station CAMSLANT has announced plans to cease all Morse Code operations on April 1st. Their final CW transmission will take place on that date at 0001 UTC on 5.870, 8.471, 12.7185 and 16.976 MHz. A special certificate will be issued to those who accurately copy their final message. If you copy it, submit your copy to USCG CAMSLANT, c/o NSGA Northwest, Chesapeake, VA 23322, Attn: TC3 S.Morales (KP4FFW).

MORE CLUB NOTES: Remember our luncheons every THURSDAY 11 AM and breakfast SECOND SATURDAY of month 8 AM, at Denny's on Bell Rd in Surprise. All hams and spouses welcome....As of April 1, ARRL dues (regular) are \$31, (senior) \$25, for 1 year. WVARC gets \$2 per renewal, \$5 per new member. Call Jack Dow KE7ZQ (584-5284) for details....Bruce Stuart KB7ZFF of Peoria is our new director, taking over for Bill Pauley.