

MAY 2006

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER of the SANTA CRUZ COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

SHORT SKIP



Panorama of a Club Meeting...



“QSL LIMBO”

George Hitz, W1DA, of Sudbury, Massachusetts, can finally account for one of his QSL cards--one he sent in 1956. While a newly licensed teenager living in DeLand, Florida, Hitz, then KN4DPI, fired up his Johnson Viking Adventurer transmitter and made contact with Dave, KN6MSI, on 40 meters. Like a good operator, Hitz sent off a QSL card, addressed only to “Amateur Radio--KN6NMI, Chief Op Dave, Address Unknown, Riverdale, Calif.” This turned out to be David Leaven, later WI6J, who became a Silent Key in 2003.

“I was 14, and like me, Dave was a new ham, and he wasn’t in the call book,” Hitz told ARRL. “I hoped there would be someone at the Riverdale post office that would know who Dave was, and it would get to him.” But Hitz made one mistake: he addressed the card to Riverdale instead of to Dave’s actual QTH, Riverside. That simple error left the card sitting in QSL limbo from 1956 until now.

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Watsonville Air Show

It is about that time of year again and the 2006 Watsonville Fly-in & Air Show is almost here. I am now taking applications from Ham Radio operators to work this year’s event as Public Safety Communications members. You will find the web page at <http://k6rmw.net> and clicking on the show link, or by going direct to <http://k6rmw.net/airshow/>.

If you have worked the event before or are new to Ham Radio but are interested, please send me an email response to this message and let me know. I will go over the operations with you and discuss how we can fit you in.

The schedule of events is posted on the web page and as you will see, there is a new event for this year. There will be a Saturday evening Fire Works show after dark.

Thanks again for another year serving the public safety. It should be another year of

excellent field training for ARES/ACS operations.

73... Bob Wisner, K6RMW Coordinator, Safety Communications Unit Watsonville Fly-in & Air Show 2006

Field Day Are you ready?

It’s time to think about participating this year (Friday through Sunday, June 23-25). Come to the next Club meeting on Friday, May 19, ready to sign up. As in previous years, our Club and the San Lorenzo Valley club are joining forces for Field Day this year. This year’s SCCARC Field Day Coordinator is Dave Stoddart, W8FLL, and the SLV Club’s Coordinator is J V Rudnick, K6HJU.

CLUB MEETING FRIDAY May 19, 7:30 P.M.



CAKE Crumbs 4/8/06

A small but lively crowd held forth at this session, including Dave W8FLL, Mike N6IL, Bob K6XX and his daughter Sarah ("K1D"), Peter AB6WM (just back from Turkey), Art WF6P, Eric K6EP, and Kathleen KI6AIE.

W8FLL mentioned that he'd come into possession of a Collins 75A-1 and was in the process of checking it out. Dave's mystery item drew some interesting guesses, including "mine detector"; other comments included "submersible to 20 feet." At first glance, WF6P recognized it was from a tank, and indeed, it turned out to be an automatic antenna tuner for 50-60 MHz from an Israeli tank, made in the mid-'70s. One part, cylindrical with holes all around, seemed to K6XX to be a desiccant.



This antenna tuner inspired several of those present to share their antenna tuner stories, including one startling incident when an airplane on autopilot turned right when a passenger's antenna tuner was activated. Eek!

N6IL brought a crystal set built by his father around 1980, along with another mystery item which was a repeater deflector, and some of his "light" reading which included a 1937 article, "Ground Systems as a factor in Antenna Efficiency," a 1937 text, "Electromagnetics," and two versions of "Antennas" (1950 and 1988) by Kraus W8JK.

KI6AIE presented a challenge to the assemblage involving her portable power pack and what to do about the inverter and power supply used to charge it in her car--the power switch needs to be reset manually each time the car is turned on. After some discussion, K6XX produced a pageful of circuit diagrams, one featuring a Shottky

diode. Thanks, Bob!

There was a brief discussion of operating systems, featuring Windows 98, XP, and Linux, with no clear winner, as usual. Also discussed were grounding systems, including one involving sheet copper all the way across the back of the bench. Sounds efficient as well as attractive!

"Hey, Bob, what time is it? What do you mean, where?" K6XX passed around his Citizen Ecodrives Skyhawk wristwatch featuring full-time UTC display as well as local and Japanese time, a solar panel and charge indicator, and a slide rule for aviation navigation.

Several of those present shared some of their personal ham history, including one who passed all exam elements (did I hear right? with perfect scores?) on the same day, and another who finally got on the air 34-1/2 years after first being licensed!

As the session wound down, Art was off to his piano lesson (after 25 years of lessons, don't you think it's time to move on from scales to, say, Chopsticks?).

CAKE April 22, 2006

What this CAKE session might have lacked in numbers it made up for with variety of topics covered and enthusiasm of the group. Those present were Mikey N6IL, Reed KG6RQH, Larry WB6MVK, Art WF6P, and Kathleen KI6AIE. Dave W8FLL was conspicuous by his absence.

Larry brought some information (courtesy of Wayne KB6KN) about an Epson printer class action suit involving cartridges; complete information is at www.epsonsettlement.com.

Mikey brought a small device that sends out position report via APRS signal: the TinyTrak from Byonics. There was one adjustment still needing to be made, and a quick wireless Internet search produced the needed information.

Larry mentioned that Eddy Pollock, W6LC, had recently suffered a stroke (Eddy is an SCCARC Life Member). Eddy, who has been living in Oregon for the last six years, was Art's Extra class VE.

There was some discussion of the correct way to pronounce "kilometer" which sent at least one attendee to her on-line dictionary with inconclusive results.

The conversation turned to slide rules, prompting the revelation that the square root of 3 is George Washington's birth year (ignoring the decimal point). This sent at least one attendee to the Internet, where

she located the following website: <http://www.math.com/students/calculators/source/square-root.htm> (and confirmed that it was true, at least if the result is truncated).

There followed a lively discussion covering laptops, trackpads, trackballs, ThinkPads, TechTool, Intel in Macs, Linux, Skype, and the web site <http://www.time.gov/>, which provides an animated clock with "official" U.S. time.

Mikey displayed on his laptop the group photo taken at the April Club meeting using a tripod and delay to include himself in the photo.

We also enjoyed a demonstration of the latest Leatherman tool as well as two different versions of Swiss Army knives.

Kathleen passed around some information on a Japanese Morse code watch and showed off what she had built in an "tiny" Altoids tin--not exactly radio equipment, but it does have an LED.

Speaking of code, some of the ol' timers reminisced about Dan Anderson, AA6GD (SK) and someone mentioned a steam-driven code machine! There was some discussion about the best way to work on improving code speed, particularly with numbers.

Then the conversation turned back to timekeeping, school clocks, a Stonehenge pocket watch, and then veered off to pianos, whereupon we were treated to some rare bits of trivia (or maybe signifi-): 1) the grand piano is not distinguished by the shape of its case but rather by the way it is strung, and 2) The Steinway company, known for having developed the metal harp frame for pianos in order to strengthen them for use with metal strings, during WWII produced laminated wooden wing spars for a twin-engine Cessna known as the Bobcat.

The last written notes regarded someone who purchased half of a Cessna C-120 and put it in his yard. At this point the aviators in the group (who constituted a majority of those present) began to relate tales of exploits and near-catastrophes in the air, including one instance when a broken throttle wire and an engine stuck wide open required the pilot to circle the airfield until his fuel was exhausted, observed by a growing crowd of media people and other curious folks.

Does this make you want to show up at the next CAKE? Mark your calendar--it's Saturday, May 13, 10 AM, at Gigi's on River Street.

—Kathleen KI6AIE



By Art Lee WF6P

CHATTER

Leon, AA6ZG, Wayne, KB6KN, and I meet often at lunch to discuss our writing projects. We have been joined at times by Suellene, KG6MBT; Kathleen, KI6AIE; and JV, K6HJU, who is working on a book. At one recent luncheon meeting, Leon gave me the Spencer Duckworth book "Destroyers On The Rocks: Seven Ships Lost."

Our family legend states that my grandfather was a crewman who distinguished himself when these ships ran aground at Point Arguello in 1923. Twenty three men lost their lives. Most were engine room personnel. But over 500 men survived. Despite constant radio bearings from Navy radioman ashore, the flotilla commander ignored the information and took a wrong turn onto the shore. My grandfather was a Machinist Mate First class who secured his ship's engines as he stood on the rocks puncturing the hull of his sinking ship. My father considered my grandfather a hero, yet I could not find his name mentioned in any crew roster. As is often the case, not every important player in a disaster is recognized.

Duckworth's book prompted me to renew my quest to confirm that my grandfather really was aboard one of those ships. It would be nice to have a family hero. I found the web site for the Point Honda Memorial and contacted June Golowski. She worked with a team of researchers and came back with a great surprise. Indeed, my grandfather was listed as a crewman aboard one of the lost ships, the USS Nicholas (DD 311). June is forwarding a letter stating that the engineers on duty remained at their posts and continued their duties until the department was secured. The letter is one "Commending Conduct of certain Officers and enlisted Personnel of the USS Nicholas." My grandfather's name was listed.

Somewhat ironically, the former naviga-

N6IL—Member Profile



In November 2005 we welcomed new member Michael Furman, N6IL, a UC Santa Cruz student majoring in computer science. A third-generation ham licensed since 1992, Mikey has also spent seven years working in network and software engineering, system administration, and webpage development. He appreciates both cutting-edge technology and "heritage" equipment, and his ham radio interests

include HF mobiling, repeaters, QRP, portable operating, and DX. Mikey is a regular and active participant in CAKE sessions and is working on the K6BJ station wireless internet project. His other interests include music, audio/hi-fi, and photography. You can see Mikey's gallery and much more at his web site (www.ocs.net) and his bio on QRZ.com (<http://www.qrz.com/callsign/n6il>).

-Kathleen KI6AIE

QSL continued

"In 1956, I was just a Novice operator with a primitive station and even more primitive operating skills," Hitz explained. "Back then, with my radio built from a kit and my BC-348 World War II Army Air Corps surplus receiver and a 60-foot long wire antenna that was 15 feet high, California, was like a whole other country. And I needed that California QSL!"

Hitz had put a return address on his card, but for reasons perhaps best known to the US Postal Service, it finally was returned to his former Florida address in early April. It turned up in the mailbox of Mack McCormick, a nonham now living in Hitz's childhood home.

tor of the lead destroyer, USS Delphi, LT (jg) Lawrence Blodgett, as a Lieutenant Commander, was the commanding officer of the Naval Ammunition Depot where we lived during the December 7th, 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

Another book on this disaster, "Tragedy at Honda" by Vice Admiral Lockwood and USAF Col. Hans Christian Adamson is available through the Santa Cruz library.

"The card apparently has been in the 'Twilight Zone' for 50 years," McCormick said. "It's not wrinkled or anything."

McCormick offered to return the card to Hitz, but Hitz declined. "What would I do with it?" he said. "I understand the guy who found it is going to frame it and place it on his coffee table!"

The story of the long-lost QSL card received worldwide attention. "The press has run wild with this," Hitz said. "I heard this story has been in newspapers in India, Iceland, Ireland--all over the world, over 100 countries! It's almost like I could have DXCC from all the countries that have reported it."

—From ARRL Newsletter

Membership News

The 2006 membership renewal cycle has been completed, and rosters and membership cards have been mailed out to all current members. We have a total of 107 members this year, the same number as last year. Although several members did not renew, the same number of new/returning members brought the total back up.

—Kathleen KI6AIE, Treasurer, SCCARC

SCCARC Board - 2006

President	Christopher Angelos	KG6DOZ	688-3562
Vice President	Pat Barthelow	AA6EG	
Secretary			
Treasurer	Kathleen McQuilling	KI6AIE	476-6303
Board	Mike Doern	KM6IKE	477-1161
	Allen Fugelseth	WB6RWU	475-8846
	Rich Hanset	KI6EH	438-0615
	Bruce Hawkins	AC6DN	
	Vic Linderholm	AE6ID	476-5567
K6BJ Trustee	Royce Krilanovich	AC6Z	475-4798

MONTEREY BAY REPEATER ACTIVITY

Santa Cruz County ARC	K6BJ 146.790- PL 94.8 Santa Cruz KI6EH 147.945- PL 94.8 Watsonville K6BJ 440.925+ PL 123.0 Santa Cruz • SCCARC Net Monday 7:30 PM 146.79- /147.180+ /440.925+ linked • SCCARC 10 Meter Net 28.308 MHz USB Monday 7:00 PM
San Lorenzo Valley ARC	WR6AOK 147.120+ PL 94.8 Ben Lomond • SLVARC Net Thursday 7:30 PM
Loma Prieta RC	WR6ABD 146.640-(PL 162.2) • LPRC Net Tuesday 8:00 PM
Naval Postgraduate School ARC	K6LY 146.97- PL 94.8 / 444.700+ PL 123 (Linked) Monterey • NPSARC Net Wednesday at 8 PM on K6LY/R • Monterey ARES Net Wednesday 7:30 PM K6LY 146.970- (PL 94.9)
ARES Nets	SC County Wide ARES Tuesday 7:15 PM on AB6VS 440.550- W6WLS 147.180+ AE6KE 146.835-(Linked repeaters / PL 94.8)
Followed directly by	• SLV ARES W6JVS 146.745-(PL 94.8) & WR6AOK 147.120+(PL 94.8) on alternate Tuesdays • South County ARES K6RMW 147.00+ (PL 94.8) • LPrieta ARES AE6KE 146.835- / AB6VS 440.550+ (Linked /PL 94.8) • Santa Cruz ARES K6BJ 146.79- / (PL 94.8)
	• Newslite (Ham News) Broadcast Wednesday at end of NPSARC Net • Santa Clara Valley Section Traffic NET Tuesday 9:00PM 146.640- (PL 162.2)

FOR MORE INFO SEE: <http://www.k6bj.org/freq.html>

SCCARC Calendar of Events

SCCARC Meeting	Friday	May 19
SCCARC Board Meeting	Wednesday	May 24
7:30pm Conf. Rm. E, Dominican Ed. Center		
Short Skip Deadline	Monday	June 5
SCCARC Meeting	Friday	June 16
SCCARC Board Meeting	Wednesday	June 28

MONTHLY MEETINGS.

The SCCARC Meets at 7:30 PM, on the THIRD FRIDAY of the each month (except December). Meetings are at Dominican Hospital, 1555 Soquel Drive, Santa Cruz.

NET CONTROL SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)

5/8	Phil KE6UWH
5/15	Allen WB6RWU
5/22	Tom K6TG
5/29	Cody KG6YPK
6/5	Phil KE6UWH
6/12	Allen WB6RWU

Short Skip is published 12 times per year. Free to members.

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Treasurer's Report

At the Board of Directors meeting on April 26, 2006, SCCARC Treasurer Kathleen McQuilling, KI6AIE, reported that the SCCARC treasury had \$6,690.61 in cash and bank accounts. At that time all financial obligations had been met.

Board Meeting

The next Board Meeting will be Wednesday May 24, at 7:30 pm in Conference Room E, Dominican Education Building. Meetings will be held on the fourth Wednesday of each month.