

NOVEMBER 2011

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER of the SANTA CRUZ COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

# SHORT SKIP



## Carving Out Time for Ham Radio

BY Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

On a recent episode of This Week in Tech ([www.twit.tv](http://www.twit.tv)), Leo Laporte, W6TWT, mentions ham radio, and a guest asks him how much time he is spending on the air. Leo, who just recently got his Tech license says "Zero!" and laughs.

This is not uncommon. Lots of people seem to get a ham radio license and then do very little with it. I think one reason for this is that they don't take into account how much time the hobby really can eat up.

They get their ticket because it seems like a cool thing to do, but then they have to carve out some time to actually be a ham radio operator. Even if you don't make any of your own gear, setting up a station takes time, and then there is the operating time, of course. Carving time out of busy schedules—and I would guess that Laporte has a pretty busy schedule being the owner of TWiT—is a challenge.

I see things like this all the time. At one ham radio club meeting that I attended, the club vice president asked, "OK, here's the question of the month. How many of you actually got on the air in the past month." Less than half of those in attendance raised their hands. Geez, I thought to myself, why do they even bother to come to meetings if they don't get on the air?

Making time for ham radio

So, if you're a busy person, how do you make time for ham radio? Well, being the Internet geek that I am, I Googled, "making time for things you love." I got a lot of links to sites that talked about work-life balance and some new-age blogs, but none of them offered much in the way of concrete advice.

Then, I Googled "make time for hobbies"

and right off the bat, I found two good articles—7 Creative Ways to Make Time For Your Creative Hobby! (<http://www.exploringwomanhood.com/homelife/hobbies/maketime.htm>) and 5 Ways to Make Time for Your Hobby (<http://o5.com/5-ways-to-make-time-for-your-hobby/>). Both articles offered very similar advice. Here are four points that both made:

1. Schedule it. Set aside a specific time during which you're going to do ham radio. Don't let that time get pre-empted.
  2. Designate a place in your home for ham radio. Having to set up your radios or dig out your tools every time you want to operate or build something is not much fun and wastes a lot of time. Having a "shack" and a workspace designated for your projects will let you spend more time on the fun stuff.
  3. Partner up. Arranging to work with another ham will make it harder to blow off ham radio for some other activity. Besides, it's a lot of fun to do things with other hams. If you're a newly licensed ham, find an Elmer. There really are plenty around who would be willing to help you.
  4. Create a project plan. Setting up an amateur radio station is no small feat. Breaking it down into smaller chunks will make it seem more doable, and you'll get a feeling of accomplishment when you meet your in-between goals.
- There's so much to learn and do in amateur radio that it can seem quite overwhelming. I think that's one reason why so many Techs never really get into the hobby and why some experienced hams drift away. I think if you follow the advice above, though, you'll not only find the time to pursue amateur radio, but get a lot more out of it.

## Annual Election At The November Meeting

If you've always wanted to be involved in the running of an organization, now's your chance to go for it! Of the nine positions on the SCCARC Board of Directors, eight are elected (the ninth is ex officio--the immediate past President). This month we will elect a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and four Directors. Although some incumbents plan to run for office again, others are "termed out" and will need to be replaced. Watch your email for updates on the election via the K6BJ email reflector, and think about how you could contribute as an Officer or Director. If you are interested in running this year, please contact me at [ki6aie@k6bj.org](mailto:ki6aie@k6bj.org). I'd like to hear from you soon if you'd like to be included on the ballot, although we can have write-in candidates as well.

—Kathleen KI6AIE

## Call for Auction and Raffle items

At the November membership meeting we'll have our annual auction. This event usually generates a lot of excitement as well as funds for our Club. Now's the time to look around your shack and anywhere else you might find items to contribute. For the November auction, the Club gets a minimum of 20 percent of the proceeds. For the December raffle at the holiday luncheon, all proceeds go to the Club. For both the November auction and December raffle, we are not limited to radio-related items. In fact, the more unusual, the better. Remember, your discards may be someone else's treasure!

—Kathleen, KI6AIE

**CLUB MEETING FRIDAY NOVEMBER 18, 7:30PM**



By Art Lee WF6P

## CHATTER

Our monthly club meetings are a great source of interesting information, both technical and social. Getting together with fellow hams on an eyeball basis is fun. I asked Cap, KE6AFE and Kathleen, KI6AIE, if we had a date in which we began our meetings at Dominican Hospital. I believe it was circa 1985. Prior meetings were in the community room of a bank on 41st Avenue; then the old Community Hospital (now the Dominican Health and Rehabilitation Center on Frederick Street.). Our ARES meetings were often in the Red Cross building and before that, in KI6EH, Rich Hanset's business conference room adjacent to COSTCO.

Last year the wall heater in my ham shack went out. Couldn't get the pilot light to light. I gave it the old Jeff Liebermann, AE6KS, treatment: bang on the regulator with a big hammer, tear the regulator apart, etc. Did the banging but still no gas flow to the pilot light. Suffered through last winter by wearing my Arctic coat. This year, I decided to "fix" the heater. Attempted to disassemble the gas regulator but it was sealed very tightly. Even with the screws out, it wouldn't come apart. Resort to a hacksaw? A call to the manufacturer was no help. The old part was no longer available and that I was not to take it apart as "it would be hard to put back together." The good news was that a new part was available under a new part number – for only \$600. This necessitated a trip to Appliance Parts on Soquel. There, Chuck, the parts guy, told me that the regulator rarely failed but the small orifice on the pilot light gas feed is probably plugged. Aha! He even showed me the parts and how to take 'em apart without destroying. Keeping my fingers crossed.

The October club meeting was great. It was antenna building time. Jerry Inman, KE6I, had set up all the materials for a

rapid-moving production line for his ARES session. It was such a hit that he made it available to the club. Over the years I have heard and read where building projects were overlooked as subjects for ham club meetings. Ours was very well organized and truly a "hands on" moment. The meeting was kicked off by a short dissertation on vertical antennas by our two-term president, Bruce, AC6DN. Bruce is a delight to listen to. His use of humor and clarity of expression is a talent he has long utilized. Thanks for serving the club, Bruce. During the meeting, Becky Steinbruner, KI6TKB, was presented a very nice jacket for her work in club Field Days.

I am happy with the present sunspot activity. Who among us is not? Forty meters is booming in once again. Can copy stations in Cupertino! Don, K6GHA, set up a Monday night ten-meter net on 28.308 at 1900 PST. Happy days are here again.

Attended the Saturday CAKE meeting following Friday's club meeting. Only about six of us there, including Oliver, KJ6LDD. He is from Germany, flew corporate jets prior to taking on full-time work in the computer industry.

## Special Deal: Holiday Luncheon and Membership Renewal

Our annual Holiday Luncheon will be at the Seacliff Inn on December 17. Check-in will start at 12:30, and luncheon at 1:00. If you renew your membership by holiday luncheon, you'll get an extra five (count 'em, five) tickets for the holiday luncheon raffle! That's in addition to the one raffle ticket that is included with your \$20 for the luncheon. For most of you, that will mean \$45, preferably paid ahead of time, either at a Club meeting or by mail (SCCARC, P.O. Box 238, Santa Cruz, CA 95061-0238). Of course, you may also pay at the door, but reservations must be made by December 10 either in person or by email to [ki6aie@k6bj.org](mailto:ki6aie@k6bj.org) or by phone to (831) 476-6303.

—Kathleen, KI6AIE, SCCARC Treasurer

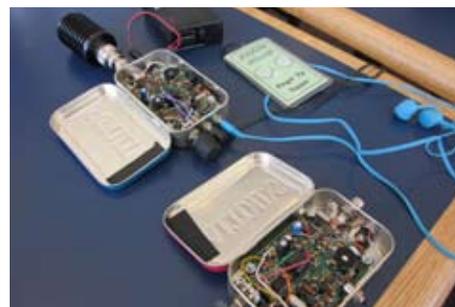


## Old Cake Crumbs

From... CAKE Crumbs Oct 9, 2010

This was a morning for the flea market in Cupertino and several of our hardy souls set off at 6:00 AM (yours truly not included). The prized items were a mint condition copy of one of Bill Orr's famous books and many copies of GE Ham News from 1949 and onwards. One book that fascinated me was "Below Ten Meters" by James Millen and Robert Kruse; a subject where hams were the pioneers.

Dallas K6KEB showed his K1SWL Micromite radios for 40 and 20 meters. The QRP long-wire tuner under construction showed the really great job on his first toroids. Don K6KHA is having much fun on HF and had just made his first QSO using the SPLIT mode to work some rare EU DX. Don has made good use of HRD to print out attractive maps pin-pointing his DX contacts. The world-wide system of NCDXF HF beacons are very helpful so listen on 14100 cw where you at about 10 minute intervals when you will always hear W6VX at 100,10,1,0.1 Watts Next in sequence comes KH6WO in Hawaii followed by others



Here are some crumbs of conversations. 813s at 25cents each, MOOG Synthesizers, use of 900 MHz for hair removal (no kidding its approved by the FCC). Being only one hair at a time one wag said it gave a whole new meaning to a hair cut. The adaptation of Wi-Fi for military purposes was a topic both Eric K6EP and Tom KW6S had in common. CAKE sessions are a fun place to increase one's vocabulary eg. Spectral Growth= IMD ZigBee=Mesh Networking.

When next looking at the colored bands on resistors you may recall this. Better Be Right Or Your Great Big Adventure Goes Wrong.

We invite inquiring minds so come with questions curious items.

# HF Activity

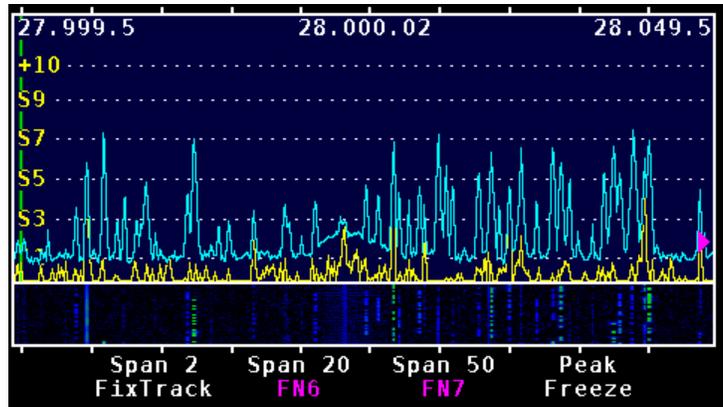
I thought you might be interested in a couple of screen shots taken this morning between 1500 and 1530 Z on 10 and 12 meters. ( I just worked a station in France on 12m as late as 1645 Z)

The 10 m scan shows the contest activity. Most of the signals in the left half of the 12 m screen are EU stations and the two vertical lines are the cursors for the A and B VFOs. Note the noise level is almost down to the MDS of the radio so I can copy a S2 signal 100 %. Here the P# is calibrated as -73 dBm for S9 and 6dB per S unit

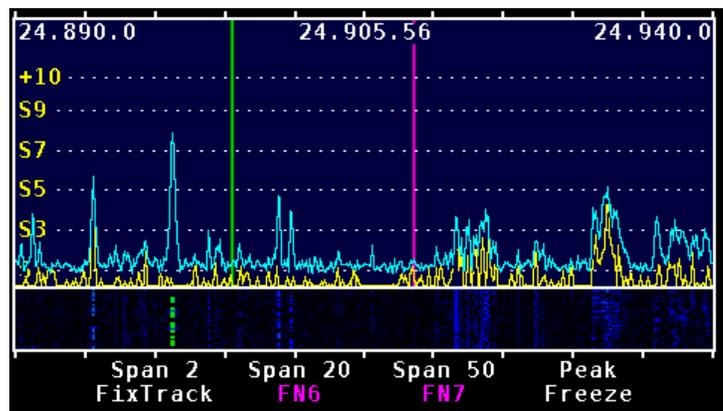
Over the past few days I have worked JT1 and XV1 on 10m and CE0 on 12m. I spend very little time on the air and do not monitor a DX spotter so I was quite lucky. I doubt that I could get thru a pile-up without the aid of the P3 using 100W and a vertical. I normally do not use the Split function as using XIT is simpler; it has its own cursor so I monitor the waterfall to find the current QSO and sit there with 50 Hz accuracy and call when the contact ends. It beats finding the current contact by ear.

Exciting times, and I hope that's true for you and lets hope it continues

—Ron W6WO



10 Meters CW at 1530Z November 5, 2011



12 Meters CW at 1530Z November 5, 2011

By MARTIN MANN

Photographs by JAMES BRAY



In his instrument-filled bedroom, Fishman shows how his homemade Geiger-Muller counter (right) registers nuclear particles. Rays from radium solution in tube show on oscilloscope at left.

## “HAM” into Scientist

Brooklyn boy shifts from radio to build electronic apparatus.

THEODORE Fishman, a New York high school student, will not be old enough to vote for four years, but his passion for science and exceptional mechanical ingenuity have enabled him to build X-ray machines, Geiger-Muller counters, and other advanced electronic apparatus in his bedroom laboratory.

An enthusiastic ham radio operator in his younger days, the 17-year-old Brooklyn boy became interested in making radio crystals control frequency more precisely by exposing them to X-radiation. This led him to build an X-ray machine of secondhand parts and developed the need for a device to measure the intensity of the X-rays. Learning of a new ether-filled detector tube that would make a Geiger-Muller counter sensitive to X-rays (commonly used counters are not), he had the glass tube blown by a local instrument maker, filled it himself, and assembled the counter around it. Since then he has made two other counters, one of them on order for a Brooklyn hospital at a cost less than one-fourth the price of similar commercially built instruments.

Fishman now plans an all-purpose laboratory oscilloscope with a five-inch screen, sweep-circuit frequency range of 0.2 to 100,000 cycles, and amplification frequency range from zero to 5,000,000 cycles. He expects to build it for about \$20.

**SCCARC Board - 2011**

President	Bruce Hawkins	AC6DN	689-9923
Vice President	Brandon Bealer	KJ6DKK	
Secretary	David Copp	WS2I	708-2206
Treasurer	Kathleen McQuilling	KI6AIE	476-6303
Board	Christopher Angelos	KG6DOZ	688-3562
	Mike Doern	KM6IKE	477-1161
	Rich Olsen	W1WUH	464-7474
	Cap Pennell	KE6AFE	429-1290
	Doug Burklo	KI6ZIB	
K6BJ Trustee	Allen Fugelseth	WB6RWU	475-8846

**MONTEREY BAY REPEATER ACTIVITY**

Santa Cruz County	K6BJ 146.790- PL 94.8 Santa Cruz (linked to KI6EH) KI6EH 147.945- PL 94.8 Watsonville (linked to K6BJ) K6BJ 440.925+ PL 123.0 Santa Cruz (not linked) • SCCARC Net Monday 7:30 PM 146.79- /147.945- /147.180+ linked • SCCARC 10 Meter Net Monday 7:00 PM 28.308 MHz USB
ARES Net	SC County Wide ARES Tuesday 7:30 PM on 147.180+ PL 94.8 and 443.600+ PL 110.9 linked
San Lorenzo Valley	WR6AOK 147.120+ PL 94.8 Ben Lomond • SLV Net Thursday 7:30 PM
Loma Prieta	AB6VS 440.550+ / AE6KE 146.835- PL 94.8 (linked for net) • LP ARES / LPARC Net Tuesday 7:15 PM
Monterey	K6LY 146.97- PL 94.8 / 444.700+ PL123 (linked for net) Monterey • Monterey Co. ARES Net Wednesday 7:30 PM K6LY 146.970- (PL 94.8) • NPSARC Net Wednesday at 8 PM on K6LY/R
LPRC	WR6ABD 146.640- PL 162.2 / 442.900+ PL 162.2 (winsystem.org) • LPRC Net Tuesday 8:00 PM 146.640-(PL 162.2) • Amateur Radio Newslines broadcast Tuesday
• 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**

ARES Meeting (prior to club meeting)	Friday	Nov 18
SCCARC Meeting	Friday	Nov 18
Cake Meetings	Sat	Nov 12, 26
Board Meeting	Friday	Nov 24
Holiday Luncheon	Sat	Dec 17
Short Skip articles due	Mon	Jan 9
SCCARC Meeting	Friday	Jan 20

**MONTHLY MEETINGS.**

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

**Net Control Schedule:**

11/14	Chris KG6DOZ
11/21	Tom K6TG
11/28	Greta KI6NTL
12/5	Phil KE6UWH
12/12	Chris KG6DOZ

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

Santa Cruz County Amateur Radio Club, Inc.  
Post Office Box 238, Santa Cruz, CA 95061  
Editor: Ron Baldwin, [k6ext.santacruz@gmail.com](mailto:k6ext.santacruz@gmail.com)  
Columnist: Art Lee, WF6P  
Writer: Ron Skelton, W6WO

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

The following members joined us during September 2011:

- Spike Crutcher KJ6RVJ
- Gary Watson K6PDL

Congratulations to Carl Hensler, now AG6EO, on his Extra Class License!

**Wanted**

I need a ceramic feedthru insulator.  
The kind that looks like two cones put together, with a bolt through them.  
Allen WB6RWU  
[Allen@cruziuo.com](mailto:Allen@cruziuo.com)



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB  
P.O. BOX 238  
SANTA CRUZ, CA 95061-0238