SHORT SKIP

SCCARC Holiday Luncheon

The annual SCCARC Holiday Luncheon was held on December 17, 2011 in the banquet room of the Best Western Seacliff Inn in Aptos. Thanks to Craig W6WL and his friend on the staff, we secured an exceptionally good price that permitted us to lower the charge from $20 to $15. This caused extra paperwork at the door but was worth it. Many thanks also to Mike KM6IKE, our rafflemeister and restaurant liaison.

Several members took full advantage of the fact that it was a buffet which provided the ability to take second helpings.

The officers for 2012 (more in this issue of Short Skip) were installed.

The raffle was fun. Special thanks to the members who brought useful items such as a tiny (thumb-NAIL?) 4G USB

drive and a genuine Stanley utility knife with a life-time supply of spare blades, to add to the usual collection of doo-dads from Fry's. The pepper spray was a nice touch.

The grand prize, a miniature dual-band HT, was won by Roy KF6KVD. He mentioned that this is the third HT he has won as a raffle prize or a door prize. What's his secret?
Photos: Roy KF6KVD, Jeff AE6KS (panorama)

New Board for 2012

At the November general meeting of the Santa Cruz County Amateur Radio Club the following were unanimously elected: Officers: Robert Ritchey KJ6FFP (President; new to the Board), Brandon Bealer KJ6DKK (Vice President), Kathleen McQuilling KI6AIE (Secretary), David Copp WS2I (Treasurer). All of the officers except the VP are entering the first year of two-year term-limited positions; the VP is beginning his second year. Directors (no term limits): Doug Burklo KI6ZIB, Mike Doern KM6IKE, Cap Pennell KE6AFE, Jack Ragen W3IVQ (new to the Board). Bruce Hawkins AC6DN is ex officio as immediate past president.

The new Board took over at the luncheon on December 17.

CLUB MEETING FRIDAY JANUARY 20, 7:30PM

By Art Lee WF6P
CHATTER

My XYL Donna, AB6XJ, and I spent the Christmas holidays in Sacramento with our kids. My daughter's spare bedroom where I have my away-from-home ham shack, was temporarily blocked with excess furniture and storage boxes. Hence, on-the-air time for me while there was suspended, besides, Christmas shopping at Walmart and the various malls was time consuming. Christmas Day was spent with our son Randy, KB6UZI, and his family. He was having troubles with his treadmill exercise machine. As a competitive racket ball player, he uses it daily to keep in shape. A week ago it began behaving erratically. When he ran at high speed, the motor would hesitate, then resume power. After about five minutes of operating time, the fuse would blow on the circuit board panel. A new fuse restored operation for another five minutes. Thinking the motor was failing, we tore into the mechanism. A quick check showed no smoke, no smell of burning insulation, the motor was cool to the touch and the armature turned smoothly. What now? With Jeff Liebermann, AE6KS, in mind, I envisioned pulling the motor apart to check the bearings or other mechanical

failure. "Learn by destroying," is Jeff's oft-used phrase. Pulling the motor apart would not be easy as the bell housings were held in position by drive pulleys and counterweights. My wheel puller was 200 miles away at my home QTH. Now here's the AHA! of the story. We had unplugged the power while inspecting the works. When son Randy plugged the power cord back into the extension cord – nada! Some manipulation of the power plug brought the machine back to life. A badly corroded and burned and pitted connection on the underrated extension cord was causing an intermittent connection! I guess when it got hot, the resistance went up and power dropped, causing the motor's RPM to fluxuate, blowing the fuse. Replacing the extension cord with one more able to carry the load solved the problem. Gee I wish all trouble shooting was that easy. We buttoned everything back up and all is well.

On our way home to Santa Cruz, we stopped in Pinole to visit my brother Stanley, KB6SEI. While showing us some photos, he mentioned that he was having problems with his blower motor for his inflatable mattress. The ni-cad battery was dead and he couldn't get a recharge. When I picked the pump up for examination, his battery recharge cable dropped out – it had not been plugged in securely. I pushed it back in until it was snuggly in place. I'll have to check with him to see if that was the problem. If so, he should be happy (and save the cost of a new pump and battery unit).

Qusi-random Reading

My favorite magazine when very young was called "Wireless World" which I devoured cover to cover each month.
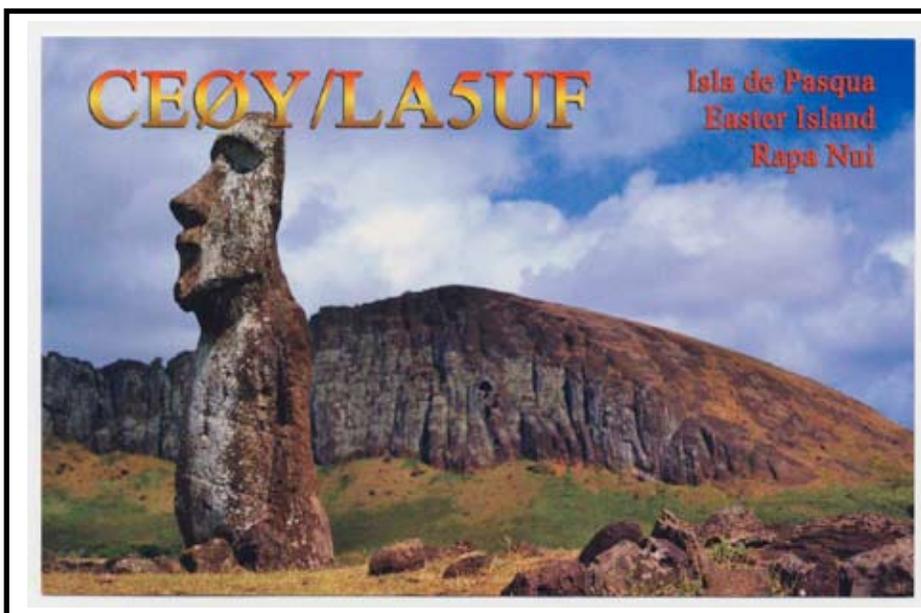
I don't recall ever signing up to receive many of the numerous magazines that come in the door today . At best I just scan the articles and adverts but almost always find something of interest. Take the Dec issue of Microwaves and RF for example. These products caught my attention.

Freescale Semiconductor Model MRFE6VP-61K25HR6 is a transistor rated at 1250 watts CW at frequencies up to 600MHz with the capability of operating with load mismatches to a VSWR of 65:1 Is that rugged enough for us !

Mini-Circuits keeps coming up with great new products such as their smart USB-based RF power meter used with a variety of software packages. There is a cool spectrum analyzer/power meter for use with an i-Phone put out by Saelig Co Inc. At the device level I could see some amateur applications for the digitally tuneable capacitors from Peregrine Semiconductor. One of the articles in this issue from a Chinese University deserves more than usual attention. It describes using some simple passive components to reduce non-linear distortion in nominally linear power amplifiers.

Must run I need to read the 150 page user manual for my Icom 2820H radio.

—Ron W6WO

CE0Y/LA5UF

Isla de Pasqua
Easter Island
Rapa Nui

Exceptional HF Conditions

Last November we experienced a burst of HF propagation that we haven't seen in many a year. It was exciting and destined not to last long but that's part of the game isn't it. Another part is collecting QSL cards and I must admit that getting a rare one remains a thrill. Working Easter Island on 12 meters with a simple vertical and 100 W was made even more memorable by receiving their QSL card in the mail today. I am hoping for one from Mongolia next..

—W6WO

QSL... Remembering the Penny Postcard

By Don Taylor K6GHA

I haven't seen to many penny postcards, in fact the only inexpensive one I remember seeing was one for 3 cents at an antique shop! Today that makes the post card at 29 cents seem pretty expensive. For those who DX and QSL contacts, when you add the cost of getting your QSL card printed, it can drive that cost way above 75 cents per card to send. So, how can you cut down on the cost of QSL cards, and still have the fun of sending something to others that may become a treasured contact (and still pay the mortgage)? Let me share a bit of fun you can have with your PC, some editing software, and your local (or on-line) photo store.

I have been storing photos out on one of the photo services (in my case SnapFish) for a number of years and ignoring all the ads to get 'deep discounts' on printing services from them. One day the light bulb went on and I thought about combining photos with QSL cards. I have seen a few cool ones in the last year, and didn't just want to send something that looked like stick art acknowledging a DX contact, and I knew that custom cards can run up to 75 cents to a dollar each to have printed.

QSL cards contain a lot of information on them and, in most cases, can be automated to print mailing labels from your PC logging software. There are tons of examples out on the web and I'll leave it to you to determine what the best method is for you. You can even create a card on line (see link below)!

I used my PC and it was actually pretty simple:

1) I used my digital camera to snap a few photos of my station and local scenery to add as the back drop. 2) I used MS Power-Point (or other screen editor) to create the QSL look and feel and add photos

3) I created a .JPEG file that could be uploaded, as a photo, to the photo service

Once on the photo service server, I waited for one of those great deals. In my case it was 300 pictures for a penny each (plus shipping and handling). For a total price of $15 for 300 4x6 postcard photos it averages out to about 5 cents a card!

Pros = Fun, creative, flexible and cheap

Cons = Expensive if you don't get it right, cards are a bit flimsy, may require some practice

Lessons learned include printing (on your printer) to make sure you see what you think you will get, using glossy photos and not matt, and using a good fine point Sharpie to write that QSO information.

Hope you have fun trying this out. Here's my example and some resources.

What is a QSL Card?

http://www.eham.net/newham/qslcards

QSL Card Maker
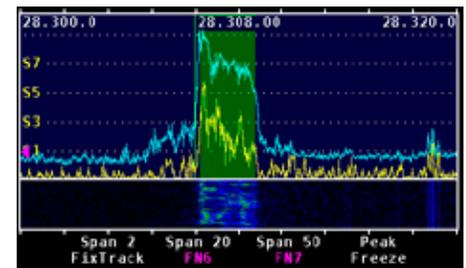
http://www.radioqth.net/qsl.aspx

Transmit Audio Spectrum Capture

The Monday 7:00PM 10 meter net on 28.308 is going strong and as several of us have Elecraft Panadapters it is easy for someone to capture a scan of the individual transmissions of those on the net. Here for example is what Tom KW6S looked like, note the concentration of power at the low audio frequencies which is one factor making Tom's audio sound rich and powerful. There might be a case for some higher emphasis under common noisy HF conditions

If you would like to see what you sound like make mention of it during the net

—Ron W6WO

SCCARC Membership Renewals

If you have already renewed your membership for 2012, thank you! If you haven't, please do it now. Annual dues are $25 for full members, $6 each for each additional member at the same mailing address, and $10 for full-time students age 18 or under. Dues may be paid in cash or check (payable to SCCARC) in person, at regular Club meetings, or checks may be mailed to SCCARC, P.O. Box 238, Santa Cruz, CA 95061-0238.

Changes?

If any of your contact information has changed, please notify SCCARC Secretary Kathleen McQuilling, KI6AIE, in person at the Club meeting or by email to ki6aie@k6bj.org by January 31 in order to have your current information printed in the new directory.

--Kathleen KI6AIE, Secretary, SCCARC

SCCARC Board - 2011

President	Robert Ritchey	KJ6FFP	
Vice President	Brandon Bealer	KJ6DKK	
Secretary	Kathleen McQuilling	KI6AIE	476-6303
Treasurer	David Copp	WS2I	708-2206
Board	Doug Burklo	KI6ZIB	
	Mike Doern	KM6IKE	477-1161
	Bruce Hawkins	AC6DN	689-9923
	Cap Pennell	KE6AFE	429-1290
	Jack Ragen	W3IVQ	
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 Newsline 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	Jan 20
SCCARC Meeting	Friday	Jan 20
Cake Meetings	Sat	Jan 14, 28
Board Meeting	Friday	Jan 26
Short Skip articles due	Mon	Feb 6
SCCARC Meeting	Friday	Feb 17

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:

1/16	Tom K6TG
1/23	Greta KI6NTL
1/30	Phil KE6UWH
2/6	Chris KG6DOZ
2/13	Tom K6TG

SHORT SKIP

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