

NOVEMBER 2012

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER of the SANTA CRUZ COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

SHORT SKIP



DXing Introduction Event at K6BJ Club Shack

Don K6GHA

What a grand day at K6BJ to be perched atop Santa Cruz overlooking Monterey Bay on Sunday November 4th! An Open House at the K6BJ Club Radio Shack from noon to five was focused on an "Introduction to DXing from K6BJ". The club's HF radios, along with other portables brought by club members were highlighted on this bright and clear fall afternoon. If you missed the event, here's a little background and what was offered, discovered, and the fun had by all.

After the SCCARC meeting presentation in October entitled "Sharpening your operating skills," which focused on the intersection of DXing, Contesting and Emergency Radio Service, a few folks approached me at the meeting and asked for a demo of how I worked with HF and DXing. They were looking at dipping their toes in the water of how to get started. In the process of answering questions, I realized that a number of these folks although new to DXing were also not aware of the resources available to club members. These discoveries lead to an impromptu decision to host the open the club shack for an afternoon of DXing, on Sunday November 4th.

I immediately tapped into the supportive community of our club and enlisted Cap (KE6AFE), Reed (N1WC), and Alan (K2ACK) to assist with the facilities and mentoring on a day of demonstration. Although I suspected, I didn't know at the time how invaluable these guys were in knowledge, mentoring, and self-starting as team. Pulling together and displaying the Emergency Comm Van (yes it has HF!), tables, tents, and sharing their collective knowledge and experience made the day, and the event. Who could ask for a better group?!

The Sunday event dawned a little later than expected. The Clocks had rolled back for the move from Daylight Savings. This may have had people moving a little early Sunday, but the club station was ready! We opened the doors with the clubs Kenwood TS-780 (100W) on the 10-15-20m beam antenna, and Alan added his Elecraft KX3 (10W) to a fan dipole covering an additional 17 and 40m. And the day was off and running.

As folks showed up, they were greeted by Cap and Reed, given a tour and an update of the changes to the site and resources, which have taken place in the past 6 months, and then handed over to the operations in the shack.

On the display tables were group of books about DXing, take home handouts articles about beginning DXing, VOCAp November Propagation Estimation Band Maps from the NCCC, and handouts for resource links for DXing software tools, web information Sources, including ARRL's Log Book of the World references.

In the shade of the Comm Van, there were many discussions around all the above topics and the cluster of folks shared experiences with those who were new to the hobby. I guess you could call this a good ol' Rag Chew.

But the event was for DXing! And I am really happy to report some amazing contacts and introductions to this part of the hobby. Alan (K2ACK) on 10M at 10W on his KX3 was demoing the features of the product to a packed shack when he stumbled upon an Island DX station off the coast of Chili! Not only did Alan make the contact, but his signal report was one of the better ones that operator had received (59+). The excitement of this contact generated a lot of talk and conversation inside and outside the Shack.

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Moving Forward

If you attended the Club meeting on Oct. 19th I know that you were as delighted as I with the show-and-tell by Don K6GHA. The presentation illustrated how Contesting, DX hunting and ARES all contribute to building our operating skills. The material was professional and the delivery flawless. Don- you raised the bar for future speakers.

Now there can be no reason to doubt that our unique training and discipline is what counts in an emergency. Our technology will always be secondary but just as our skills need to evolve so must the technology we bring to bear.

The future of wireless communications has been clear for a long time and we must make concerted efforts to move ahead to stay relevant. The following general attributes are my assertion of what our technology-base should comprise.

It will be Regional, Survivable, Reliable, Adaptable, and carry Multi-media traffic. Within a short time frame it will have transitioned to digital broadband network technologies.

If you disagree or have additional pointers, that as it should be. It's time to discuss and define our priorities, objectives and actions and I want to be part of that effort. I would like to hear from others who likewise are willing to take in planning and moving ahead.

Consider this thought; in 1916 our Club will be 100 years old. What capabilities should we have in place by then?

—Ron W6WO



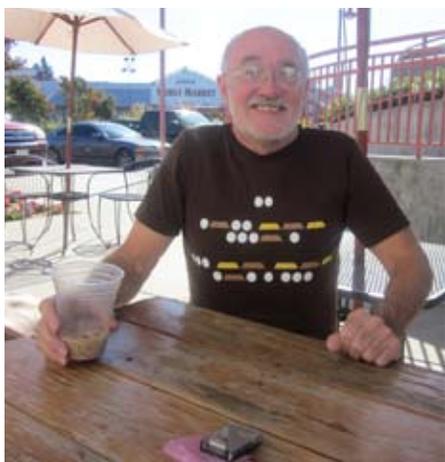
CLUB MEETING FRIDAY NOVEMBER 16, 7:30PM



Cake Crumbs

On this glorious fall morning the early-bird faithful Frank K6BDK, Reed N1WC, Kerry K6RRY, David K6RL and Ron W6WO showed up at the Abbey for our regular CAKE session. We found it was closed with major renovations under way - could they have heard we were planning to move? I received profuse apologies from a buxom barritta who said she "loved having us guys" upon which I received a big hug. Who could ask for anything more !! We posted a big red notice on the door and proceeded to Java Junction which has a nice outdoor area with a long benches, sunshades and good coffee-just perfect for this day.

We were soon joined by Cap KE6AFE and Peter AB6WM..Peter provided exciting news about his company Cam-Do-Com and showed us an innovative product for time-lapse photography. Peter is a prime example of a very modern entrepreneur with an idea and the technical and organizational skills to bring it to market. This little product uses a Go-Pro controller and has many applications. For example a significant order was placed for use in monitoring the sea-bed.



Peter AB6WM at a CAKE meeting with his "soon-to-be world-famous time lapse camera"

Alan K2ACK came with a TDS 3052 digital oscilloscope and gave us a short presentation of its features. I was struck by the clean and simple front panel made possible by combining on-screen choices with a few front panel buttons. Far less clutter than my trusty Tek 475A. Digressing a little, recently I was tidying up my shack and found a box full of

knobs of many kind. It made me wonder if my grandson will ever use such things as they must seem so antiquated to him.

Kerry illustrated his tower and antenna ideas and naturally we are all keen to attend a party to get them installed. Alan is musing over a possible beam antenna for his current abode near the harbour. I suggested that he consider just a vertical which given his location would work as well or better than a lowly beam and with less reaction from his landlord. My tendency would be towards a simple vertical, an automatic base coupler like an SGC 230 for multi-band operation plus some wire mesh on his flat roof.

Ron wanted some advice on a temperature sensor for fan control in a power amp and this showed a distinct difference in how we approach problems these days. My solution is a thermistor with a few discrete components. The alternative starts with a question "Don't you have a microprocessor in your amp at all? Answer - well no and I don't need temp control with 12 bit resolution in 0.75 seconds and all that implies. Alan and Peter tend towards reducing problems to software while Ron and others prefer simple hardware. We could agree that using the best fit from of both worlds makes sense.

Ron provided a mystery item that was easily guessed to be a current shunt. however nobody came close to guessing its current carrying capacity was 200A. Here was their bonus question. Given this shunt is rated at 200A and produces a 75mV signal to the meter; what is the resistance of the shunt element? Try it as you may be surprised at the answer.



A 375 micro-Ohm 200 Amp current shunt

David is looking for a moderately priced HF rig, can anyone help him ?

Many minds are at work about finding a new home for future CAKE sessions and I hope we can settle on this shortly.

Brit Humour I am addicted to drinking brake fluid but it's OK I can stop any time.

—73 Ron W6WO

DX continued

By-the-way, 10M is open!

Thomas Sarlandie (KK6AHT), a new ham (and soon to be member of the SCCARC) working towards his Extra Class license in the current classes at UCSC, had never worked HF before. Not only did he bring his new Elecraft KX3 too, but he was our big DX winner for the day with over 5 contacts, around the globe from Brazil to Georgia (USA). Congratulations on your first HF Contacts and performing so well under the gun of DXing for the first time. You are a natural! Your smile indicated you will be really enjoying this hobby. ;-)

The interaction and discussions between new and experienced Amateurs was great to see take place. The mentoring, knowledge sharing, and informal proceedings added to a super day of DXing, Club Shack discovery, and an overall great time for everyone in attendance. Thanks to those additional folks who showed up and gave of their time and knowledge; Chris (KG6DOZ) and John (KI6EAB). And a big THANK YOU to the almost dozen and a half folks who also took the time to make their way up to K6BJ Club Shack for the event. We hope you all took away new found knowledge of the Club, AOs Shack offerings, the sense of excitement about DXing, and the knowledge and support the SCCARC members can provide in this part the hobby.

As the sun set over the Monterey Bay on a perfect fall afternoon, a few more folks were thinking about DXing, K6BJ shack resources, antennas, propagation, and the coming great conditions as we move into winter. I hope you are doing that now as well. Good DX and 73.

Saturday Project

Many thanks to those who worked so diligently at the Club Station Saturday, Oct. 20. Thanks to: Cap (KE6AFE), Duane (KC7AEM), Chris (KG6DOZ), Gary (K6PDL), and Dave (K6RL), the K6BJ repeater batteries (think HUGE and HEAVY) have been cleaned of terminal corrosion and the ethernet cable responsible for Club packet and DSTAR operations is buried in conduit, safe from the elements and vandalism. These folks worked hard and non-stop until nearly 4pm with only goo-goo bars as sustenance.

A special thanks goes to Duane (KC7AEM) who secured all supplies for the ethernet cable project! Oliver (KJ6LDD) assisted.

We discussed ideas about how best to install the 50' tower for the K6BJ antenna.....stay tuned for the next work day, Saturday, November 17! This one could involve a BBQ.....

—73, Becky (KI6TKB)



By Art Lee WF6P

CHATTER

Last week I made the vexing but necessary trip to the DMV to renew my driver's license. The Capitola DMV is very well organized and I was processed through without waiting, despite having no appointment. I paged through the information material for my Operator's and Motorcycle licenses. The examiner gave me a "Happy Face" for my error-free driver's exam. I failed my motorcycle exam. I had two more chances to pass the test. I failed the second test. On the third try, I passed. No happy face, but I did pass. "Most of the experienced riders fail the test," said the examiner. I was experienced, but still needed to pass the written test. Sweating, I sat down and STUDIED the riders' manual. As I worked on the exam in the small partitioned area, the thought came to me that in 1980, I was taking my Novice code test within a few feet of where I was now. In those days, our club president, Mike Ritz, taught Novice classes in the training room of the Capitola DMV. It was a weekly session lasting about six weeks. All dozen of us passed. The novice test had only 20 questions, plus the 5 wpm code test.

Yesterday, a YL checked in on the Pacific MM Net. She was single-handing her sailboat from Washington to Mexico. She was a few miles off Carmel. Net control asked if she was

going to put in to Santa Cruz. She declined and would continue to San Diego. I offered to buy her a cup of coffee if she decided to need an end-tie. Single-handing is tough on the human body. How do you sleep? Getting run down by a super tanker cannot be that much fun. A few years ago, Skip Allen, N6NEN, abandoned his 32 foot sloop in mid-ocean because of exhaustion and heavy storm conditions. He was picked up by the Coast Guard. Skip and I used to work CW when he cruised Alaskan waters. When sending, he'd lie on his bunk and send using his straight key mounted on the cabin's overhead. Currently, a dear friend and his XYL are taking the Coast Guard offshore cruising class. They hope to buy a sailboat and do some cruising. I'm encouraging them to get a ham ticket. Computers and the Internet are valuable communicating devices, but ham radio is different and a nice backup communications system.

I have not attended any of the recent Cake Crumbs meetings. These are highly technical and very interesting. Ron, W6WO, does an excellent job of keeping the meetings on track (not always easy!). Some of the "Guess What This Is?" items are intriguing.

I belong to The True Tales Writer's group. We have ten members of experienced writers and meet monthly in the Scotts Valley library. Under the leadership of Nancy Hofmann, members present a ten-minute reading of their material. Not a drop-in group, it has functioned for about three years. This is a fun but committed group and all attend the sessions regularly. If you are interested in sharpening your writing skills, this is an excellent opportunity. Members offer friendly, helpful comments on writing if desired. For information, call me at 426-5279, or Nancy at 831-335-9394

Mapping Tool

Here is an asset you may want to incorporate into your disaster preparedness response kits.

First Responders will be the first assets on-scene following the impact of Hurricane Sandy along the east coast. Due to potential street flooding and street sign damage, use of a mapping program may be helpful. The following tool may be helpful and can be obtained at no cost:

EPA/NOAA's MARPLOT program is a stand-alone mapping program which can serve as a fantastic tool to determine coordinate locations of incidents without the need for the Internet. It can be installed in your onboard mobile data terminals (MDT), and/or on your laptop computer.

a. You can download the tool at: <http://www.epa.gov/osweroe1/content/cameo/marplot.htm>

b. Use the zoom-in tools to go to your location. The "gold bar" at the top of the screen will allow you to download and permanently install maps for your region and anywhere else in the 56 US States and Territories.

c. Coordinate features appear on the bottom left-side of the Main view screen. They represent the click point or flashing target on your screen. Just point-and-click with the pointer tool.

NOTE: If your jurisdiction is not already using this program for Planning and Response, the only features that will appear following the download are your streets.

— 73 William Conklin, AF6OH SCCARC-PIO

KJ6BNO at Pacificon



ARRL publicity shot including local ham Cece Kerns (KJ6BNO) with NASA Astronaut Lee Morin KF5DDB and NASA ISS Ham Radio Project Engineer Kenneth Ransom NSVHO.

IRC's... Going Going Gone

If the US Postal Service (USPS) gets its way, it will no longer sell International Reply Coupons (IRCs) after January 27, 2013. There is not sufficient demand for the USPS to continue offering IRCs to customers; however, per the Universal Postal Union (UPU) regulations, the USPS must continue to exchange and redeem IRCs that have been purchased in foreign countries and presented at USPS facilities. IRCs provide foreign addressees with a prepaid means of responding to inquiries, solicitations or other types of communications -- such as QSL cards -- that are initiated by US senders. IRCs are exchangeable for postage stamps by postal administrations in member countries of the UPU. Each IRC is equivalent in value to the destination country's minimum postage price for an unregistered airmail letter. The purchase price in the US is currently \$2.20 per IRC.

—Amateur Radio Newsline

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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) K6BJ D-Star 441.675 +5MHz (D Star link: tinyurl.com/dstar-sc) • 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	Nov 16
SCCARC Meeting	Friday	Nov 16
Cake Meetings	Sat	Nov 10, 24
Board Meeting		TBA
Short Skip articles due	Mon	Dec 17
Holiday Luncheon		TBA

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:

11/12	Becky KI6TKB
11/19	om K6TG
11/26	Phil KE6UWH
12/3	Keith W6WKK
12/10	Becky KI6TKB
12/17	Tom K6TG

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Free to members.

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