



The READOUT

Year 16 Number 12 December 1994

The official newsletter of the Stanislaus Amateur Radio Association

Happy



Holidays

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All I want for Christmas

By Ernie Rader, K6UVI

Ed. note— The following is a true story which first appeared in The READOUT several years ago. Thanks to Ernie for sharing it again during this Christmas season.

During the Christmas season, it is our family tradition to write letters to Santa Claus. Santa Claus is any family member who doesn't know what another would like for Christmas, and therefore needs hints. This letter can list any number of desires, both funny and practical, but the idea here is to eliminate the need for a smile and thanks for a gift that would be totally impractical on Christmas morning. I decided my letter to Santa Claus would include a wish for something I'd long wanted to try, so I asked for a fishing pole. Yes, bright and early on Christmas morning, I had in my possession the brightest blue fishing pole and spinning reel I had ever imagined. I could hardly wait to try it out. However, since the weather in December isn't the most conducive to comfortable fishing, I had to wait awhile.

Planning for my first excursion

I used the wait to carefully plan my first fishing excursion. I knew I was to receive a sizeable income tax return within the next couple of months, so I planned to purchase a small fishing boat to accompany my new rod and reel. When the check came from Uncle Sam, I promptly purchased my craft and immediately promoted myself from deck hand to ship's captain for

only \$650.00.

However, I quickly learned that in order to tow the boat home, I needed a stout trailer hitch for my pickup. Six hundred dollars later, I had the very best Easy-Lift hitch installed, and joyously I went to pick up my "new" boat. I was oblivious to the fact that so far this free fishing pole for Christmas had now cost me \$1,250.00. I didn't care, I was now captain of my own ship, and was looking forward to many relaxing hours on the local lakes and reservoirs. However, the problems were only in their infancy.

When I arrived to pick up the boat, I'd forgotten to purchase a ball hitch. That's the little thing about the size of an apricot that the trailer hitch hooks to. As luck would have it, there was an extra laying around, so I gleefully attached it to my \$600.00 Easy-Lift. However, I didn't notice that the hole in the hitch arm was larger by a small amount than the bolt head holding the ball, and as I sped home with my new treasure, the ball hitch pulled out releasing the trailer. I hadn't had the foresight to install safety chains, so the boat and trailer dropped off my hitch and began careening down the road uncontrolled by any steering axle. I'm so lucky that it didn't hit another car coming the opposite way.

When it finally stopped, it was out in a farmer's field. However, the farmer had just flooded his field with irrigation water, and I watched as the trailer sank lower and lower in the mud. I had a minimal amount of trouble contacting the farmer, but I was delayed several days before I could take my truck out into his

See "Christmas" page 9



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Thursdays @ 8 p.m.

(Except Holidays)

2 meters 145.39 MHz WD6EJF

220 Band 224.14 MHz WD6EJF

Contributions to *The READOUT* are always welcome and may be submitted to the editor by mail or via packet at KD6JZZ on 144.97 MHz. Or you can reach the editor's PBBS, WA6ZLO-1 via packet on 144.91 MHz. If you can not reach it direct on .91, you can go through the SARA K-Node of Mt. Oso. Type C SARA then C-WA6ZLO-1. The deadline for articles is the 15th of the preceding month. Articles regarding religion or politics are not accepted.

Editor

Bob Pinheiro, WA6ZLO
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An ARRL affiliated club !

ARRL membership may be paid through SARA with the club retaining a \$2.00 commission. Please send your ARRL membership form along with your check made payable to "SARA". We will deduct the \$2.00 and send a check to the ARRL.

Ham radio dictionary

By Gary Shapiro, NI6T

Ambrose Bierce, a misanthropic 19th-century writer who disappeared in Mexico in 1913, is remembered for stories of the dark side of human experience. His *Devil's Dictionary* contained biting satiric definitions. In that vein:

—**DXers n**: A group of like-minded optimists separated from their senses and by great distances; who employ grizzled technology to exchange superficial pleasantries more efficiently accomplished by other means.

—**Flea market n**: An event for the ritualistic transfer of electronic junk between participants' garages.

—**DX net n**: An on-the-air seance in which DX stations are reputedly contacted through a conductor or medium called a "net control." Only the medium can certify the contact, since the two stations cannot hear each other.

—**PacketCluster n**: An electronic means of contacting DX stations without ever having to actually tune for them, (often using software to eliminate all need for operating skills).

—**SysOp n**.

1. Person who controls a Packet Cluster node.

2. An individual chosen by God to rule a kingdom accessed via a 2-meter frequency. A SysOp may solicit dialogue from his wretched subjects regarding PacketCluster innovations or procedures, but tends to reject and punish criticism.

—**QRM n**: All stations in a pileup other than the successful candidate; i.e., what you were in pileup before the DX station came back to you.

—**Hamvention n**: a large tribal gathering of Radio Amateurs, identifiable by such artifacts as rubber antennae attached to funny hats. Participants often communicate via small radios, even when in close proximity, while engaging in such rituals as exchanging junk. (See "Fleamarket.")

—**160 meters n**. A special region wherein gather two or more hopeful fools for the purpose of listening to static crashes.

—**6 meters n**. A spectral region wherein gather two or more hopeful fools for the purpose of listening to white noise.

From the June '94 Northern California DX Club "DXer"— Gary Shapiro, NI6T, Editor via the ARNS Bulletin.

1995 VE Exams schedule

By Chet Jensen, W6XK

The Tri-County VE Team is sponsoring an Amateur radio examination session on Saturday, December 10, 1994 at 9:00 a.m. at Prescott Senior Elementary School on Rumble Road in Modesto, California. All classes of license - Novice to Extra - will be administered. Test fee is \$5.75 (except Novice).

Bring the original and a photocopy of your ham ticket and any CSCEs in your possession. 610s provided by the team. Two test rooms to minimize waiting. All material returned to the ARRL by Air Express.

To reach the Prescott School, take Hwy 99 to Standiford. East of Standiford to Conant. South on Conant to Rumble and East of Rumble one block to the school.

Schedule for the Tri-County VE Team for 1995 is as follows:

Where	When	Contact	Phone
Turlock	1-14-95	W6XK ...	(209) 883-2968
Merced	2-11-95	KI6PR ...	(209) 383-2166
Modesto ...	3-11-95	W6XK ...	(209) 883-2968

If you have any questions regarding the Tri-County VE Team examination schedule, please do not hesitate to contact me @ KD6JZZ or phone (209) 883-2968.

SARA to sponsor Boy Scouts Explorer Post

SARA has joined numerous civic, business and professional organizations around the country in sponsoring an Explorer Post under the auspices of the Boy Scouts of America. Exploring, which is nothing new, was developed several years ago as a dynamic and flexible program of the Scouts to help community organizations serve youth with the aim of influencing and enriching their lives.

Explorers are young men and women, ages 12-20, who join Explorer posts organized by businesses, industries, churches, schools, government agencies, professional societies, civic clubs, labor unions, sports clubs, and other community organizations. The program of each Explorer post matches the interests of youth with the adult expertise and program resources of the sponsoring organization, in our case, Amateur Radio.

The Boy Scouts learned from extensive research which lead to the development of the Explorer Program, that eighty three percent of Explorer-age youths have specific career or hobby interests. Ninety-four percent want to work with an adult having this hobby or interest and the ma-

jority want to belong to a coed organization. They want to show what they can do on their own and be able to participate in leadership and planning, and expect the advice and support of their adult leaders.

They want hands on experiences, not lectures or movies, and of course, they want the experience to be fun, challenging, exciting, and worthwhile.

Exploring

SARA's VP Mark Lemmons, WB6BJN, has accepted the position of coordinator for our new post and will be coordinating the program with the Scouts. The program will be designed to pique the Explorers interest in the hobby of Amateur radio which will hopefully lead them to obtaining their license and exploring the many fun filled facets of our hobby.

Mark plans to make presentations on Amateur radio at area schools and invite those interested in the hobby to join our new post. Mark will need help, especially Elmer's and transportation, and has asked anyone who can donate some time to the project to contact him.

It's a rewarding program worthy of our support. It's a win-win situation.

Important changes in FCC rules

On October 25, 1994, the FCC released a 7-page order amending its Amateur rules, effective December 20, 1994, to reflect what the commission call "non-substantive procedural changes". The changes include—

1. To permit electronically filed data from VECs (paper applications also will still be accepted).

2. To authorize operation as soon as the new license data appears in the Amateur service licensee data base, rather than (as now) when the license document has been delivered. Details of how the new licensee can determine his call sign will be announced later.

3. To add a new rules section, "examinee conduct" to emphasize that an examinee must comply with the instructions given by the administering VEs.

4. To treat "Technician Plus" as a license class.

5. And to provide for a "renewal short form" which the FCC says will be mailed to licensees in advance of their expiration date beginning sometime in 1995. The FCC added that renewal applications would be accepted no more than 90 days before the expiration date. Because of the nature of these rule amendments, there is no notice or comment period required by federal law. Again, these changes do not take effect until December 20, 1994. *ARRL Packet Bulletin*

A Mag-Mount for 1290 MHz

Modified Cellular antenna from Radio Shack

By Kent Britain WA5VJB

Yes, Radio Shack really does build an antenna that can be modified to 1290 MHz. The Archer 17-332 Mag-Mount Cellular mobile antenna can be cut down for 1200 repeater use.

The center rod, which is machined from solid brass, can be cut about 1/4" above the transition point and then rounded off to fit a BNC connector.

Replace the connector that comes with it with a BNC. The SWR is low over



a 200 MHz bandwidth. Radio Shack claims 3 dB gain. This is a little optimistic for a quarter wave mag-mount, especially when the 7 feet of RG-174 has about 0.3 dS/foot or 2 dB of loss. So keep the coax as short as practical. It's not a vertical collinear, but it does work a lot better than a rubber duck in the car.

From Texas VHF-FM Society News Summer 1994 via the Arlington, TX ARC newsletter.



Incredible Universe store opens in Sacramento

By Bob Pinheiro, WA6ZLO

The new Incredible Universe store, billed as "the world's biggest electronic supermarket" opened in Sacramento in October, 1994, on a four acre site off Hwy 80 at Northgate Drive. The wife and I decided to brave the crowds, and as the Australians would say, take a "walk-about".

We were right about the crowds, but when you consider the size of this megastore, over 166,000 square feet under one roof, it was not all that bad. The Saturday we were there a line had formed outside the front door which strung out about 100 yards. It took about 20 minutes before we got to the front desk just inside the front doors where several ladies were taking names and addresses and issuing free membership cards. Another way of getting your name and address on their mailing list.

Once past the front desk you enter a short hall way that leads to the main rotunda where the awesome vastness of the store impacts your visual senses. It becomes immediately clear why the parent company, Forth Worth based Tandy/Radio Shack, named their stores "Incredible Universes." The store's concept is to provide the consumer with affordable and fun shopping in a festive, trade show/convention-style atmosphere and there is nothing like it in the country, according to Tandy. Its atmosphere is more of a carnival than a store— something that you'd expect to see on the strip in Las Vegas. All of the

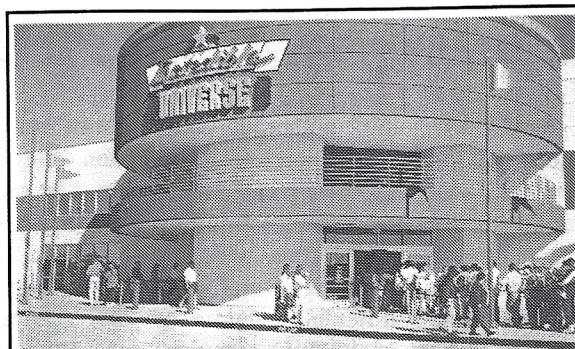
ingredients are there, less, of course, the gaming tables and the slot machines. There is even a catwalk high above the main floor to keep track of the action! Even their Incredible Universe logo signs are comparable to the signs in Vegas all of which are controlled by employees in the main rotunda area control center.

The merchandise, all \$9 million of it, is split up into approximately 20 stores (sections), each opening onto the large rotunda which is complete with a noisy sound stage and a gigantic video wall suspended from the ceiling.

The store carries everything from home computers to home-theaters offering the latest in laser-disk technology. Over 300 brands television sets, 77 brands of VCR's, 60 video camcorders, 340 video games, 45,000 music CD's and video tapes, 72 models of cameras, nearly 200 different brands of refrigerators, 83 washers and dryers, over 50 computers systems and thousands of discounted computer software programs.

For the ultimate bargain basement demons, scratch 'n' dent, one-of-a-kind and discontinued special buys can be located in the "Black Hole" store; offbeat "weird stuff" is sold in the "Bazaar store". There are several small, but comfortable, demonstration rooms where satellite TV, and sound equipment is demonstrated by sales personnel. And if you get hungry or thirsty while you're shopping, there is even a McDonald's Express restaurant just off the main rotunda.

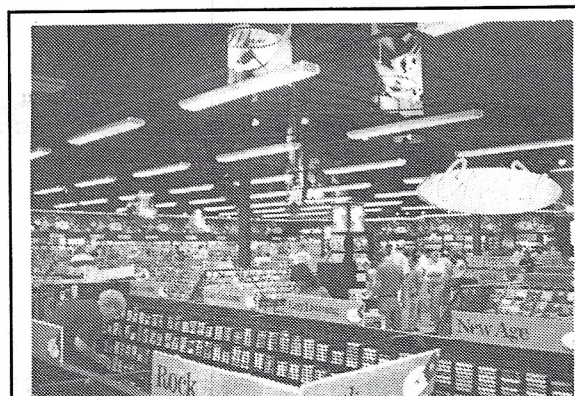
The format, the brain-child of Tandy Chairman John V. Roach, is based on the annual million-square-foot Consumer Electronics Show that highlights the industry's latest consumer electronic products and things still in development. Tandy simply took products from the nation's top 50 manufacturers, add-



Incredible Universe, Sacramento

ed customer service and the reportedly the best prices. I say reportedly, because the prices we saw, particularly in the music CD's and TV's were certainly no bargains.

With annual revenues of more than \$4.5 billion, Tandy operates some 7,400 small to medium sized consumer electronics and major appliance stores including, Radio Shack, McDuff, Video

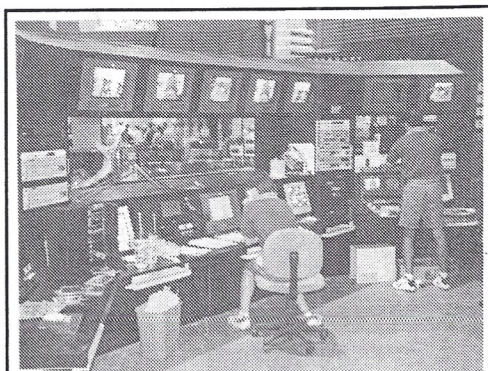


Music CD's and video tape store

Concepts, The Edge in Electronics and Computer City.

With the opening of the Sacramento store, there are now three stores in the chain. The first opened in September of 1992 in Wilsonville, Oregon, followed by their second store in Arlington, Texas, a month later.

It was fun to tour the store, but I wonder if sales will be high enough to support the overhead and pay the bills, especially the salaries of around 300 employees who work there. In any event, it's worth a look the next time your in Sacramento. From Modesto take Hwy 99



Main control center in rotunda

See "Universe" page 11

Fraudulent upgrades

Handicap certification loophole

By Dennis Schaefer, W5RZA, ARRL Volunteer Examiner

A lot of concern has been voiced lately about "no-code Extra Class" operators. Everyone must pass a 5-WPM code test to go above Technician Class, but those with a handicap can get credit for the 13 or 20-WPM elements by getting certification from a doctor. The Physician's Certificate must use a prescribed form and certify that the person has a "severe handicap" with a duration of at least 365 days, and that the handicap makes it impossible for the person to pass a code test. The ARRL Volunteer Examiner Manual further stipulates that the handicap must be of a physical nature.

Some hams are talking openly on the air about how easy it is to get a code waiver and discussing which doctors are liberal in giving certification.

As a Volunteer Examiner, I felt I should bone up on the procedure in case someone presented my team with a questionable waiver certificate. I noticed that, as part of the waiver process, the applicant signs a release allowing the doctor to provide medical information to the FCC. The original certification did not even ask the nature of the handicap. The latest release allows the FCC to seek more evidence if the certificate is questioned.

I learned that, although we cannot

refuse to accept the certificate, we can forward our observations along with the other papers, and that the ARRL assures us the FCC takes our concerns seriously.

In several instances, the FCC has set upgrades aside after FCC officers interviewed the doctors involved and determined handicaps were not sufficiently severe. A reliable source told me the FCC does a telephone interview with the doctor in each instance in which a VE team questions a certificate. I was not able to verify this with the ARRL, but they stated that the FCC does take action on reasonable VE protests.

If some applicants are abusing the system, it is our responsibility to take corrective action. If an applicant states they are too nervous to pass a code test, for instance, and that is why they got the certificate, write a letter to the FCC, stating the facts, and attach it to the certificate.

I'm not encouraging you to question all code waivers. Doing so would give the under-staffed FCC an excuse to stop scrutinizing the process. But when you encounter a questionable situation, it is your duty to make sure the FCC has the information it needs to investigate further.

From the January '94 "Magnolia Report"—Hank Downey, K5QNE, Editor. Via the ARNS Bulletin.

SARA Minutes

By Bob Pinheiro, Acting Secretary

The November 15, 1994 meeting of SARA was called to order at 730 PM by President, Liz, KD6GIW. 14 members and guest present introduced themselves. LeRoy, NV6S, gave the technical report. (See SARA Technical Report on page 6 for details).

The minutes of the October meeting were approved with the following correction which was pointed out by the Treasurer. The "difference" between our year to date income vs. expenses should have read < \$3.60 > instead of < \$311.14 >. This month's treasurers report was given by Bob, KC6TVE.

October expenses: \$946.26
October Income: \$485.75
Year to date:
Expenses \$4,322.95
Income \$3,858.84
Difference <\$464.11>
Checkbook balance \$1,582.78

TVE said the biggest expense in October was for the raffle prize. The Colt Python cost \$623.47, and the printing of the tickets was \$135.99.

Liz, GIW, pointed out that the club elects it's officers each December and encourage any member who wanted to run for office to make their feelings know. Jim, N6UGH, agreed to run for President; Bob, TVE, for another term as Treasurer and Mark, WB6BJN, for another term as VP. Bob, ZLO, was asked about running for Secretary. He said he would consider it if no one else could be found.

A short discussion was held on possible Field Day sites for next year. Jim, N6UGH, Field Day Chairman, said he needed suggestions. Frank Rains Park in Del Puerto Canyon, and Caswell State Park were mentioned as two possibles. If you have any suggestions, please contact Jim at 892-2484.

Liz announced the club's Special Achievement Awards will be made at the December meeting. If you have someone you would like to nominate, contact Liz as soon as possible. A new member was welcome to the club, James Call, KE6HVB, of Modesto. Break for refresh-

See "Minutes" page 6

Unusual cure for electric fence interference

By John McClain, WB7CKY

I don't condone what a Phoenix ham did. But it got results, after wide-band interference had made his HF operating far less enjoyable than it should be.

When he identified the source as his neighbor's electric fence, he took the standard approach of trying to help solve the neighbor's problem. But negotiations snagged when the neighbor refused to address his problem because he believed the ham's operations were

causing the television interference he was suffering.

The Amateur installed a relay that keyed his rig whenever the receiver detected the noise from the fence. It didn't take long or the neighbor to discover that his TV problems only occurred when the electric fence was switched on. The neighbor didn't operate his fence much after that. He never did discover the true source of his TV problem either.

From the May/June ISM ARC (Boca Raton, Florida) WB40NX Neal Osborn, Editor via ARNS Bulletin



SARA Technical Report

By LeRoy Campbell, NV6S

Progress has been made on the technical front. The low-level repeater is on the air from my house at this time. Plans are being made to move it to a more permanent site and to install the Station Master antenna. Users like it very much. Remember though, it is for the use of hand-held radios and mobiles in the greater Modesto area. If this doesn't fit your description, please do not use the low level repeater as it is sure to interfere with other users on the same frequency. They are sanctioned by N.A.R.C.C. and we are not. None the less, if used for its designed purpose, it can work and relieve the 39 repeater of some of the local rag chews so that it can be free for those needing a high level repeater. The frequency is 145.430 MHz with a PL of 67 Hz. It operates in the PL mode only.

I have converted the cavities recently purchased into band pass cavities. Two of them have been installed on the 145.39 repeater coupled with a the new preamp recently purchased. At this point all reports are extremely favorable. N6UGH, Jim, accompanied me on a recent trip up Oso. Jim did the tower work while I installed the preamp and cavities. He found a corroded "N" connector near the antenna and cleaned it up. So far the repeater has been running fine.

I did a quick look for the audio level problem on the two meter repeater but found that I would have to pull the interface board completely out and risk several hours work to attempt locating the problem. Since the day was already pretty well gone, I decided to leave that problem for another trip.

The .39 repeater has spent most of its time in the PL mode because of malicious interference and caused by people of seemingly limited intelligence and obviously even more limited vocabulary. I will be looking for people in the club that have beam antennas on two meters and who are willing to help in tracking the source of interference. I already have people who are willing to do some local DF (direction finding) work but the beam headings, if done carefully with fairly

large beams, can immediately pin the signal down to about a square block. With that much to go on, the DF crew can find the source very quickly. All communications regarding such headings and DF work will be done via telephone as the suspect seems quite capable of monitoring our activities about anywhere we operate in the Amateur bands.

The 440 repeater is still functioning quite nicely, although I plan to make improvements there. The Phelps Dodge Station Master antenna is at N6UGH's house where he has fashioned a mount and taken care of some maintenance on the antenna. My thanks goes to Jim for his help on these chores. He is also working on the Station Master antenna for the low-level repeater.

The old faithful 220 MHz machine still plugs along. I am planning a tuneup on it since the sensitivity seems to have dropped off significantly in recent weeks. At this point I don't know if the loss is in the receiver or if it is coax or antenna related.

Our digital equipment is working fine. I thought the ten meter digi had died but I reset it and now it is running again. It, unfortunately, is not as frequency stable as I would like and you have to hunt from about 28.103.08 to 28.103.22 to locate it. The drift seems to take several days from one extreme to the other so it is not terribly difficult to find.

Once again I would like to thank those who have helped with the technical

chores. Several have donated time to direction finding work as well. Skip, N6ZAA, has made the trip in from Patterson several times to help do direction finding work. Several members have donated time and effort to many chores and are to be thanked. K6LPG, Alex, has been extremely valuable to us. He is a very talented professional radio technician, and I simply do not know what I would do without his help.

I will be putting a work party together in the very near future to install some guy anchors and ground rods. After that I will need a hand installing new guy wires and some additional tower sections at the repeater site. The Station Master antenna will be mounted to the tower after that.

Once again I thank the members for being patient while the work seems to be going painfully slow. 73, LeRoy

For Sale

Hygain 10-15-20 meters Super T-Bird 6 element beam with a 24 foot boom. Antenna gain is 9.5 dB and it's capable of handling a kilowatt. This beam sold new for around \$700.00 and is in the box and nearly brand new. It can be easily upgraded to include the new WARC bands. It has been donated to the club by Paul, WD6EYX. We are asking \$400.00 or best offer. Call Bob, WA6ZLO, for more information, 209-523-5880.

Wanted

If you have old computer or ham radio "stuff" that is not being used or wanted, I would like to have it. I am on disability and buying is out of the question. So, if anyone has anything they want to get rid of, let me know. Also, I have some Chevy Camaro parts that I will trade or sell for computer and ham "stuff". You can catch me on the 145.39 or 440.225 repeaters or, leave me a message on packet. I use 144.91 MHz. and the mailbox is N6YBE. Thanks. Jim, N6UGH, Patterson.

Minutes

From page 5

Break for refreshments and a video tape of the repeater equipment and facilities of the Lockheed Amateur Radio Club located near Loma Prieta east of San Jose. The tape was provided by new member Adam Harry, KE6IZU, of Tracy. The meeting was adjourned at 830 PM. Respectfully submitted by Bob, WA6ZLO, Acting Secretary.

From the desk of N6ZUC

J. T. "Tim" Low

By this time of year, our minds have all turned to the more important subjects of life. We are looking over the rapidly closing year, deciding did we do it right, did we get everything done that we wanted to accomplish this year? What remains to be done, and what will we have to carry over to next year. Did we meet our career, educational and personal goals?

When you get right down to it, in this holiday season, none of that stuff matters. There is plenty of time for that after New Years. Right now I'm more concerned about the really important subject of deciding what I want for Christmas. In the spirit of the season, I've put together my list.

Merely triband beam.
Extra class privileges for everyone.
RF Concepts 2 mtr/70 cm amplifier.
Rohn tower.
Yaesu FT1000D hf xcvr.

Cushcraft R7 vertical.
Henry 2k Classic.
RCI 2970 10mtr xcvr.
Icom IC-970A.
SGC SG-230 autotuner.
Ten Tec Scout.
MFJ-249 SWR Analyzer.
AEA SWR-21 Antenna Analyst.
Startek ATH-50 frequency counter.

I hope you too have gathered together your Christmas wish list, and I hope you get whatever you desire. It's been a good year, and I'm looking for a

great New Year in 95. It's also time to thank all those club members who continue to donate their time and energy, making your club work. For without them, there would be no club. Paying your dues is important, but keep in mind that the club also only works when each of us participates. Make sure you thank those Officers and members who work hard for you, and plan to give some of your valuable time to the club in the year to come.

If you have any suggestions on topics to explore in the new year, jot down those ideas and send them along to me. I'm always looking for good ideas. You can reach me in care of **The READOUT**, or via fax at 619-735-9125, or on packet: N6ZUC @ KJ6VC. #SOC.CA.USA.NOAM.

73, and I hope your list spells out a very, Merry Christmas. Tim

Printed Circuit Board Design

J.T. (Tim) Low, N6ZUC

Phone or FAX

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2936 Amanecer Place

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Learning English the hard way

An African tribal chief flew to the United States to visit the President. When he arrived at the airport, a host of newsmen and television cameramen met him.

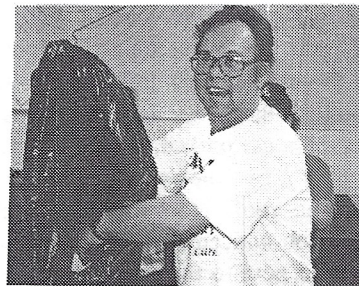
One of the reporters asked the chief if he had a comfortable flight. The chief made a series of weird noises which sounded like screeches, scratching, honks, buzzing, whistles and hissing" ...and then added in perfect English, "Yes, I had a very nice flight."

Another reporter asked, "Chief, do you plan to visit the Washington Monument while you're in the area?" The chief made the same noises concluding his response in perfect english by saying, "Yes, and I also plan to visit the White House and the Capitol Building."

"Where did you learn to speak such flawless English?" asked the next reporter. The chief replied with the same noises breaking out into perfect english saying...."from the shortwave radio."

Author unknown. From W3OK Corral, newsletter of the Delaware-Lehigh ARC in Easton, Pennsylvania.

Thank You for Your Support!



Jim, a visitor at the October **SARA** meeting, draws the winning ticket in the fund raising raffle.

A hamloaf recipe

Ingredients: One Amateur Radio operator. Two trees and a hammock. Mix well, cover and allow to remain undisturbed for several hours. Garnish with one handi-talkie and a rubber ducky.





Editor's Notes

By Bob Pinheiro, WA6ZLO

Our membership continues to grow, primarily as a result of no-code technician class licensees coming on board. As of December 1, 1994, our membership stood at 186 and climbing. I would like to welcome two new members—Gerry Brite, of Delhi as an Associate member and Adam Harry, KE6IZV, a new member from Tracy. Adam is a Technician and works in the Bay Area. One thing the club has never be able to do is reach the 200 members mark. This is the first year in a long time that we have a chance of achieving this milestone before the year is out.

Surely you know someone who is not a member that you could recruit. All we need at this time is 14 to make 200. I suggest as a reward, the member that recruits number 200 have his 1995 dues paid by the club. Let's see if we can make the goal.

—Congratulations to Larry Owens, KE6HDT, who upgraded to Tech-Plus November 12.

—VP Mark, WB6BJN, is commended for heading up the new *SARA* Explorer scout program. He desperately needs help! He will be making presentations on ham radio to our local schools and needs help not only in the presentations, but in transportation. This is a very worthwhile endeavor which begs for your support. If you can donate even a limited amount of your time, do it! Remember these young men and women are our future.

—Bob Liddy, K8BL, saw something at the Dayton Hamvention that just blew his mind. "It even tops the time I saw a CB vertical mounted on a tower with a rotator," said Bob. In this instance, Bob observed a car parked in the flea-market area with a two-meter mag mount antenna on the roof. No problem, right? Well, then Bob noticed that the owner had drilled a hole next to the mount and used it for his coax line.

—I have received several phone calls lately from members with older

equipment not equipped with a sub-audible tone encoder. All wanted to know why they could not bring up the two meter repeater. The reason is that we have been forced to put the PL (136.5 Hz) on the repeater in an effort to cut down on transmissions from a couple of individuals who have been using foul language and bringing up the autopatch and letting it hang. We are not sure, but we believe that one, and possibly the other subject, are in possession of stolen radios recently taken in this area. We have been able to keep one of the offenders off with the PL. Not so lucky on the other. So, until such time as we can get rid of these individuals, we are stuck on PL.

PL encoders can be easily added to most modern day FM equipment. I purchased a Communications Specialists tuneable encoder several years ago for my Yaesu 227R Memorizer. It was easy to install and very reasonable. Communications Specialists, Inc. 426 West Taft Ave. Orange, CA 92665-4296 800/854-0547. I don't remember the price of the chip, but it was very reasonable. It won't be long before everything is going to be PLED so you better consider adding the PL encoder (chip) to your older equipment or buy a new radio with it built in.

—From the "I didn't know that!" file comes these little morsels. All service stations built along major highways in California after January 1, 1990, are required to have restrooms for their patrons. Those stations built before that date and not on major highways are exempt. I'm wondering when they will have drive through restrooms.

—During the last few months of the year the club's membership increases to the point that we don't have enough newsletters to send to each member of a the same household. In an effort to keep costs down, we will send only one copy to a household with more than one member. We hope you understand and will share the issue with each member. Thank you for your understanding.

—Now for a story of trouble in the control room.

*—The other day while in my shack,
I called CQ, but no one came
back.*

*—I looked around, the switch was
on, I did not know what could be
the matter.*

*—I switched the rig to another band,
but, no one seemed to be at hand.*

*—And then I checked into a net, but,
no responses could I get.*

*—I tried the code, but, it was the
pits, there were no dahs, there
were not dits.*

*—And to my shame and my chagrin,
the AC plug was not plugged in.*

(Author unknown)

—We have already received a few membership renewals for 1995 and we thank you. For the rest of us, please remember that unless you have already paid for 1995, club dues are due and payable on January 1, 1995. Thanks to the fund raising raffle, we are able to pay our bills and hold the line of membership dues. Use the handy renewal form on page 11 and send in your dues today.

—The Dallas, Texas, FCC field office sent an inspector to Denison, TX, to inspect an AM-FM broadcast station. Upon arrival the inspector was astonished to find the station running completely unattended. The station was running on pre-recorded tapes including all the music and commercials. The FCC inspector finally tracked down the station manager who said that times were tough and he had to lay off all of his employees.

The inspector shut the station down and issued a Notice of Apparent Liability to the owner. As bad as things are, the station will probably not be able to pay the fine and will go off the air for good.

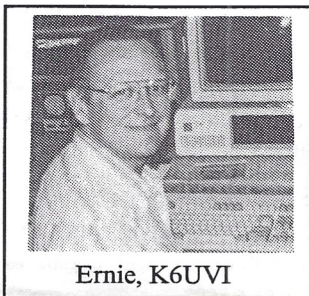
—I hope all you have a happy and joyous holiday season. 73, Bob.

"Christmas"

from front page

field to retrieve the boat. "Farmer Jones" merely looked on with disgust as I "fished" my boat out of the now dry muck and towed it home.

As I said at the beginning of this piece, I did my best to bring every plan possible to fruition in preparation for the enjoyment I felt sure I would experience. As part of this planning procedure, I'd gone to the local sporting goods store and purchased a tackle box, and every kind of lure displayed. I didn't know what I was buying, but the store manager was more than happy to describe them all and my absolute need for their purchase. \$200.00



Ernie, K6UVI

later, and the purchase of a fishing license, I was ever closer to the pursuit of my latest past time.

Finally, launch day

Finally the day came to launch my boat on its maiden voyage. With the pride only a boat owner knows, I drove up to the boat launch, backed down the ramp, tied a rope between the bow and the dock, and backed the boat out into the water. Several bystanders began yelling at me immediately. It seems that I had forgotten to put the drain plug in, and water was flowing inside. I jumped out of my truck, ran back to my pride and joy, tried to get inside quickly, and immediately slipped and fell in the water. Soaked to the skin, I climbed in as bystanders laughed profusely, and hurriedly put the plug in the boat. Luckily it didn't sink to the bottom.

After laboriously putting the boat back on the trailer (remember, it had lots of water in it now), I again pulled the plug and began draining the water from its bilge. That was my first attempt at boating, and since the bystanders were still there, I decided not to con-

tinue my efforts then, but instead went home to try another day when my mistakes hopefully weren't going to be viewed by the general public.

Things can only get better- right?

Armed with the knowledge gained by past mistakes, I knew things could only get better. I also knew when one is bucked off a horse it's best to climb right back on again. My boat wasn't going to discourage me that easily, so next day I tried again at another boat launch, one that was deserted. This time I launched her like a real pro. There she sat in all her majesty tied to the dock just waiting to take me to ports of call I only had dreamed of. The engine roared to life and soon I was proudly skimming the top of the water as life's troubles vanished from the face of the earth.

Murphy strikes again

However, Mr. Murphy was close at hand. Several of us from time to time have made his acquaintance—and I'm no exception. It was like someone had turned off the ignition switch. There was dead silence. Many times I tried to restart my engine, but it wouldn't so much as "putt." It wasn't long before the battery was relatively dead, and I brought out the oars. Now this is a fiberglass "ski" boat, so there are no oar locks, but in desperation I knew I had to do something or the current would wash me out to sea.

Yes, the current in the Delta was taking me toward Pittsburg and no one was around to tow me back in. Frantically, I rowed against the current and was even making headway, but I was tiring quickly. Several times I rowed to the shore and tied the boat so I could rest, and by late afternoon, I could see the dock where I launched. My glee was somewhat dulled by the pain in my arms and shoulders, but at least I could make out my destination. So could another boat who finally showed up and towed me the last one hundred yards or so. Needless-to-say, I didn't have very many kind words to say about my situation at that point.

The next day

Next day found me with the charger on the battery and the cover off of the engine. A single attempt at starting that blasted motor produced the deep and pow-

erful sound engines make when they run perfectly. You cannot possibly know how much I longed to hear that sound the day before. After a half a day of trouble shooting what an experienced mechanic could have accomplished in five minutes, I determined that the coil was heating up and then malfunctioning. Yes, I was right. Evinrude was more than happy to sell me another one for \$75.00. Please keep in mind that this free fishing pole for Christmas was getting more and more expensive.

I made the repairs to the motor myself and was ready to tackle the problem of having so much fun all over again.

We're off again

With a cooler full of the sudsy stuff and a bit of fried chicken to go along with it, I headed out again. Launching the boat was a snap—I was really getting good at this now. My new blue fishing pole was placed perfectly, my cooler of beer was packed away nicely, both gas tanks were full, the sun was shining, I had my two meter rig with me—nothing could go wrong. The afternoon sun and fresh breeze along with the cold beer and chicken combined in their "magic" ways, and as the afternoon turned to evening, I found my gasoline supply was dwindling. Soon it was getting dark.

Another predicament

For those of you who have seen a map of the Delta, you know that unless one is familiar with the myriad of passageways, or has a map with the markers listed, it's quite easy to find oneself in the same predicament as I was now in—LOST. Frantically I searched for some sign of familiarity. Naturally, when you don't want them around, there are boats and skiers everywhere. When you do, they are strangely absent. This was the situation I found myself in, and soon my boat motor was silent. No gas stations or AM/PM mini-markets out here. All was not lost! I had a two meter handie talkie with me, and in spite of my embarrassment I was able to raise one of the locals.

Call the Coast Guard

Since I was completely lost, it was suggested that someone call the Coast Guard for advice. I can only imagine the look of disgust when that call was received and the caller was told that they

See "Christmas" page 10

"Christmas"

from page 9

would do nothing until morning when the sun was up. It was suggested that I spend the night on the boat, and someone could come and get me in the morning. The problem here is that I had not dressed warmly. In fact, I was wearing a pair of shorts and had only a T-shirt to cover the rest of me. Soon, a heavy mist began to cover everything, and since many spring evenings bring cold temperatures, a thick coating of ice began to form on the bow of my boat. It was really getting cold! I was also getting worried and felt more than a little stupid. I climbed up to the top of the bank and noticed a dull glow in the sky. I figured that must be the town of Tracy, and since I was cold and needed the physical exercise to warm up, I decided to start walking toward that "glow." With two meter handie talkie in hand, the trek began.

Help arrives

About an hour later I heard: "Ernie.....ERNIE!!!!!" I couldn't believe my good fortune! The son of the man I'd talked to on my radio had miraculously found me, and had a can of gasoline. Now to find the boat again. Soon, with gas can contents transferred to gas tank, the boat motor roared to life again, and I was given directions to the dock. I was lucky in that I was only about two miles from my destination and even I could find my way back. As a result, my "savior" left to go back to his warm bed while I was left to my own resources. Needless-to-say, I sheepishly thanked him profusely and said I'd contact him in the morning.

Stranded again

Backing away from the bank introduced me to another problem boaters encounter from time to time. The Delta banks are reinforced with large rocks to ensure they aren't eroded by the currents and wave actions of boaters. During my backing procedure my propeller hit one of those rocks, and I broke a shear pin. Aside from taking a large chunk out of my propeller, and the aggravation of seeing my friend's vehicle dust billow in the distance, I was again stranded. You see, this shear pin is a protection to the motor in that should the propeller snag a rock, it

will break rather than the transmission within.

Back to the oars, and a short trip back to shore where I again tied up. This time I was prepared. I had a spare pin and knew how to replace it. However, doing so in the dark when it was a cold as it was, further drained what stamina I had left, but about an hour later, I was ready to try getting home again. Slowly, slowly, SLOWLY I backed out into the water. Slowly I put the transmission in gear and SLOWLY began my journey back to the dock and safety there on. Thirty minutes later I could see a dim light in the distance and knew I was close to home and the anticipation of a hot shower and dry sheets warmed the very soul of this new boat captain.

Going the wrong way

There it was! The dock was at hand! In spite of the fact that no one was watching, after all it was dark, I wanted to make my entrance in a professional manner. However, my approach was a bit swift, so in an effort to slow myself down, I put the motor in reverse. It worked perfectly though I left it in reverse a bit too long as I found myself ever so slowly going backwards, back in the direction I came from, and in the same direction as the gentle current. As I attempted to shift back to the forward gear again, the shifting linkage broke and I was unable to travel the last few feet to the dock. In fact, I was floating back to sea again. You guessed it, out came the oars again.

After tying up on shore, a mere 20 or so feet from the dock, I was ready to drive home, leave the boat there and maybe, just MAYBE, come back and get it in the morning. However, my "savior", mentioned before, just happened to drive up and between the two of us we were able to bring the boat back to the dock where I was able to get it back on its trailer.

The final analysis

I got home at two o'clock in the morning. Now a lesser man would have had the foresight and intelligence to know that something was wrong. Why should I subject myself to such anger and frustration when the intent in the beginning was to merely get a fishing pole for Christmas and go fishing once in awhile. Not me!

Out to the Delta again

That next afternoon, after making the necessary repairs, I was out on the Delta again. However, this time, after launching the boat, I drove about a hundred yards from the dock and anchored. I knew under these conditions I could swim home if needed and had visions of planting dynamite in the boat's hull if I had to. Believe it or not, I caught a fish! It was a channel cat and weighed about four ounces. About the same number of bites as I recall when I got it home, cleaned and ate my first catch.

The final figures

With my hunger pangs unsatisfied I took out a calculator and began to add things up. Let's see:

Fishing pole	FREE!
Boat, motor, and trailer	\$650.00
Hitch for truck	\$600.00
Engine coil	\$75.00
Fishing tackle	\$200.00
Additional repairs and gas	\$100.00
Total	\$1,625.00

That cat fish weighed four ounces, or at this point cost me about \$6,500.00 a pound! I haven't had too many offers accepted to go fishing with me since my first successful fishing trip—if you can call it that! Any chance you'd like to go with me? Happy Holidays, Ernie.



**May every happiness be yours
at this Holiday Season
and throughout the New Year.**

ARRL Pacific Division Update

By Brad Wyatt, K6WR

Congressional Legislative Report

The BIG NEWS is that President Clinton signed Public Law 103-408 (Senate Joint Resolution 90) into law on Oct. 22, 1994.

The language of the new law asks all government entities to support, as national policy, "reasonable accommodation" in the operation of Amateur Radio stations in homes, automobiles and public places. In my opinion, with the signing of this bill we have accomplished the goal we started out to attain in 1993 of having Congress pass and the President sign a bill which said Amateur Radio is a great service and should be supported by all governmental entities.

The House bill, HR 4522, contains various technical provisions desired by the FCC and other provisions desired by ARRL (but less the Joint Resolution language). Among the provisions is one related to "vanity calls." Congress had previously authorized a \$7 per year fee for "vanity calls," but in HR 4522 it is changed to a ONE TIME application fee of \$150. It was the judgment of Congress that this change was "revenue neutral" and would ease the burden of billing and collection on the FCC. (It also helps to stay away from a potential annual license

fees for ALL Amateur Radio licenses).

If the reconvened Senate passes and the President signs the House passed FCC Authorization Act as it now stands, we will have added even more strength to the Amateur Radio Service cause, and we will have helped the FCC obtain changes it wants—ultimately to our benefit.

If both these items become law, 1994 will go down in history as a banner year for Amateur Radio in terms of long term national support for our service!

Effort to Save the 13 cm. Band

As you will recall, the FCC issued a Notice of Inquiry in May of this year including proposed reallocation of portions of our 13 cm band. After extensive comment by interested parties, including the ARRL and many other amateur groups and individuals, the FCC has now issued a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) on the matter. The NPRM, involving the sale of licenses in the 2390 - 2400 and 2402-2417 MHz bands, was finally made available on Nov. 8. The comment deadline is Dec. 19, 1994. We will need all the resources of the Pacific Division to supply support data to the ARRL General Counsel to develop the ARRL comments. Other groups may want to comment also.

Pacificon'94

Pacificon'94 is now history. It was a great success by all measures. Many thanks to all who attended and had a great time and especially to the Mount Diablo ARC who did all the hard work to get ready for the convention and then put it on. Great job!

Electronic filing of 610s

The first data interchange tests between selected VECs and FCC dealing with electronic filing of 610s has started. So far, the test results seem favorable. If all goes well, the FCC could be fully on-line with the new 610 process by end of 1994.

Scholarships and Awards

There are many scholarships and awards covering a wide range of situations available to licensed Amateurs. The ARRL Foundation, The Dayton Amateur Radio Association, The Foundation for Amateur Radio, to name only a few, will be announcing their dates for applications for their 1995 scholarships. Watch QST and other Amateur radio publications for details. Nominations for 1995 awards can be submitted starting now.

Happy Holidays

Vice Director Jim Maxwell, W6CF, and I wish you all a very happy holiday season! Brad, K6WR.

"Universe"

From page 4

or I-5 to Sacramento and follow the signs to Redding. After crossing over the American River it about 3-4 miles to the point where I-5/Hwy 99 intersect with Hwy 80. At this point follow the signs to Reno via Hwy 80. You would take the off ramp to your right and start eastbound on Hwy 80. The first off ramp you come to on Hwy 80 (about 4 miles) is Northgate Blvd. At the top of the off ramp turn back to your left and go back over the freeway. The store is on your right at the base of the overpass.

1995 SARA Membership Renewal Application

Call	Date	
Name		
Address	Phone	
City	State	ZIP Code
Class of License	Year first licensed	
Occupation	Member of ARRL?	

Dues: Renewal (full membership)= \$23.00. Student (up to Sophomore in college and Associate (unlicensed applicant) \$12.00. Family rate: \$23.00 head of household and \$12.00 for the next two members living in the same home. The fourth or more family members in the same home are FREE. Out of Area rate (more than 150 miles from Modesto) is \$11.00. Make your checks or money orders payable to SARA. Thank You!



Calendar

- Dec. 4, 1994 Livermore Swap Meet 7 AM-Noon
Los Positas College. Talkin 145.35 MHz.
- Dec. 10, 1994 VE Testing In Modesto 9AM
Contact Chet, W6XK, 883-2968
- Dec. 20, 1994 **SARA** Monthly Meeting 730 PM
Special Achievement Awards presented
and the election of 1995 officers
- Jan. 1, 1995 SARA Dues for 1995 are due
- Jan. 14, 1995 VE Testing In Turlock 9 AM
Contact Chet, W6XK, 883-2968
- Jan. 17, 1995 **SARA** Monthly Meeting 730 PM
- Jan. 21 Winterfest Hamfest 8 AM- 2PM
Talkin 146.97 (-) PL 94.8 Hz.

SARA meets the third Tuesday of each month (except holidays) at the Stanislaus County Administration Building 11th and H Streets in downtown Modesto. The meetings are held in the lower-level conference room at 730 pm. Visitors and interested persons are most welcome to attend. **SARA** is an ARRL affiliated club and is also affiliated with the Stanislaus County and City of Modesto RACES/VARES programs.

The **READOUT** is mailed with a bulk mailing permit. Please notify us if you move as the Post Office will not forward bulk mail regardless if you left a forwarding address.

SARA low level machine on the air — 145.43 MHz PL 67 Hz

The **SARA** low level machine is finally on the air from it's temporary home at the home of LeRoy, NV6S in East Modesto. According LeRoy, **SARA's** chief engineer, the machine has been working very well and it is hoped it will take some of the local area load off the main .39 repeater on Mt. Oso.

"The machine is primarily for talkies and mobiles in the Modesto area and trying to work the machine from areas outside the greater Modesto area is discouraged" said LeRoy. The primary reason for this is the fact that the machine is on a frequency already in use by other sanctioned systems and our machine is not

sanctioned on this frequency, 145.43 MHz. We therefore we must be careful not to interfere with the sanctioned systems (one in the Bay Area and one in Placer County).

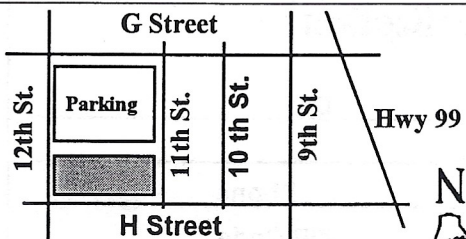
The repeater itself is one of our spare Spectrum repeaters recently taken out of service on Mt. Oso and requires a 67 Hz PL at all times to access it. Future plans are to move it to a permanent low level site as soon as permission. The site we are working on is an old telephone company site at 7th and Morgan in the Ceres area. If we get the site, we will mount a Station Master antenna on the pole already there which will put it up about 60 feet. More on this next month.

SARA repeaters on Mt. Oso at 3,300 feet- 145.39(-) MHz PL 136.5 Hz. 224.14 (-) MHz. 440.225 (+) MHz PL 136.5 Hz . Modesto Low Level machine 145.43 MHz (-) PL 67 Hz. KA-Node Digipeater (**SARA**) 144.91 MHz. 10 meter digipeater 28.103 kHz.

Stanislaus Amateur Radio Association, Inc.
P. O. Box 4601
Modesto, CA. 95352

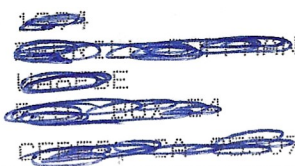
Address Correction Requested

Bulk Rate
U. S. Postage
Paid
Permit 5
Modesto, CA.



SARA Meeting Location
Stanislaus County Administration Bldg
1100 H Street, Modesto, CA
Lower Level Conference Room.
730 pm third Tuesday of each month.

To:



Next SARA Meeting is Dec 20, 1994 at 730PM & You're Invited!