



HANK'S SWAP SHOP

Hank Davis, W6DTV 7822 Washington Avenue
 Phone 823-7885 Sebastopol, CA 95472
 (Noncommercial ham ads are printed for free)

STARTER KIT FOR COMMODORE 64 to MFJ TNC.
 Terminal program on disk, new. \$20 or best
 offer. KC6BSI Phil 544-2572.

REGENCY 2 meter transceiver, 15 watt, xtal
 control, TT mic. \$44 or trade.

GLASSES 10 x 50 with case \$25. Hank W6DTV
 823-7885.

YOU WERE SELLING A COMMODORE RAM EXPANSION
 unit at the swapmeet. If that was you (or
 you know who it was), please call me.
 WANTED: ICOM R-71A & Commodore RAM expander.
 KENWOOD R-2000 for sale. Jay (415) 332-3742.

WANT: SX-28 receiver. Tracy WB6TMY 527-
 8124.

BOMBER BUILDER

by Allan Chapman W6ME0

A California veteran is collecting info and
 materials to create a unique display of WWII
 communications equipment: A complete, fully-
 equipped and operable radio room of a B-17G,
 to include the radios, bulkheads, flooring,
 fuselage, gun hatch and ash tray. He needs
 to hear from anyone with experience, photos,
 charts, equipment, connectors, pieces, and
 especially pertinent war stories! Contact
 Henry Engstrom, PO Box 5846, Santa Rosa, Ca,
 95405, Tel. 707/579-2070.

ARE YOU AN ARRL MEMBER?

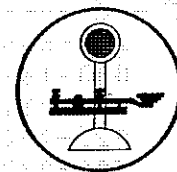


RENEW YOUR ARRL MEMBERSHIP THROUGH THE CLUB
 AND THE CLUB GETS TO KEEP \$2 (no expense to
 you). Make out your check to SCRA, and send
 it with your ARRL renewal form to SCRA, PO
 Box 116, Santa Rosa, CA 95402 or give it to
 the Treasurer.

Sonoma County Radio Amateurs, Inc.
 PO Box 116
 Santa Rosa, CA 95402

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

JOHN BRECKENRIDGE
 WB6FRZ
 574 WILD OAK DR
 WINDSOR CA 95492



SHORT SKIP



Sonoma County Radio Amateurs, Inc.

NOVEMBER 1989.

Club Station
 W6LFJ

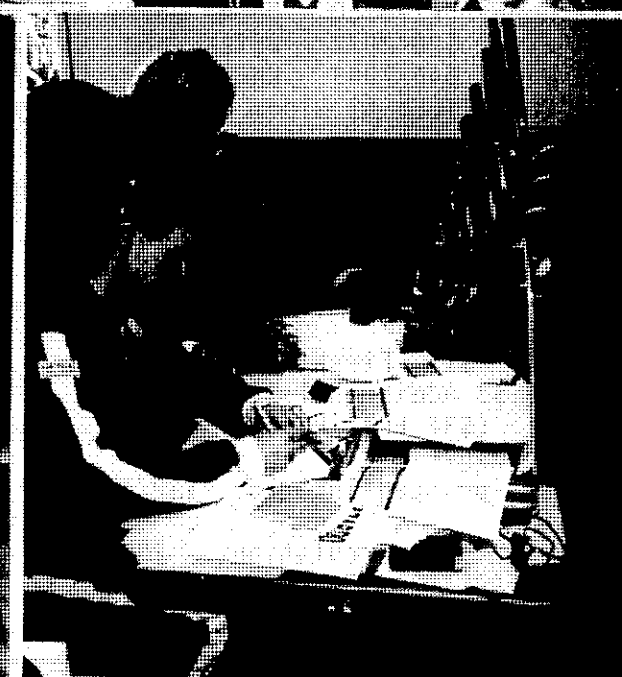
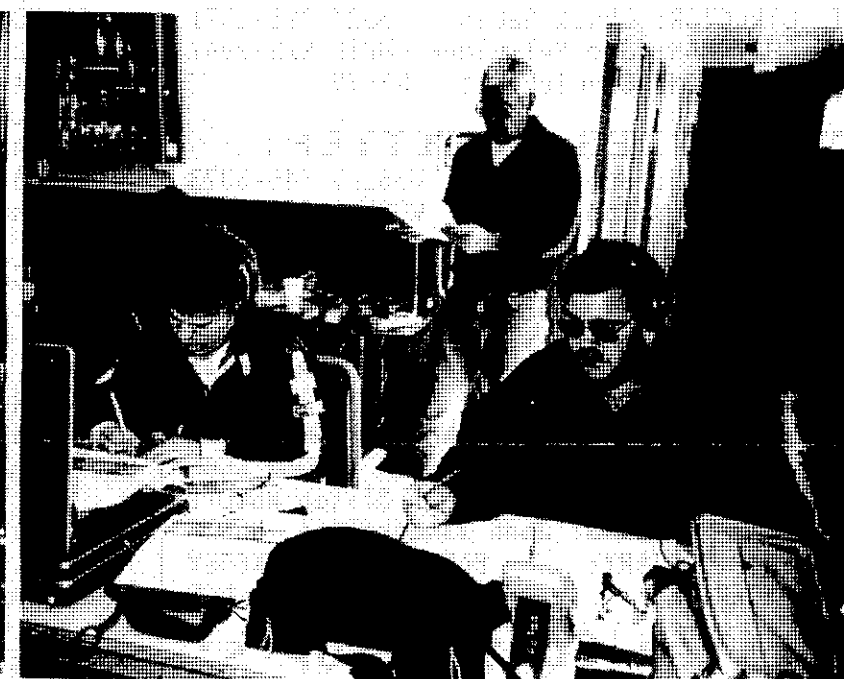
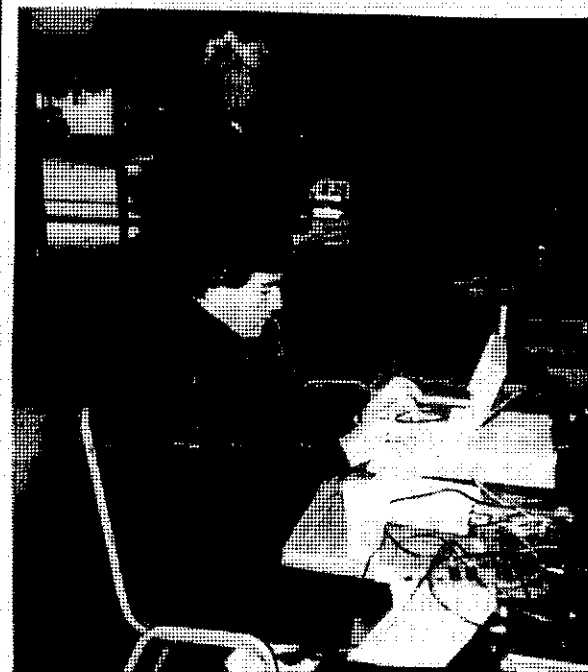
P.O. Box 116
 Santa Rosa, CA 95402

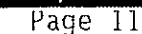
Repeater Station
 WB6PVS

VOL 14 # 11

SIMULATED EMERGENCY TEST OCT 15, 1989

Two days before the "real thing", the ARRL SET was manned by (top left) Jim WB6PER,
 Glen N6DNB, (top right) WB6PER, Mike N1DJE, and Dave N6RIF. Photos Tnx John W6TLK.





GARBLEDYGOOK

Traffic handlers! We are not doing a good enough job with message accuracy. Too, too many radiograms come through with obvious and not-so-obvious errors. The not-so-obvious errors often show up when delivery is attempted.

Traffic handlers! First and foremost is ACCURACY! If we can't deliver a message because of a garbled address, the public relations benefit is nil. If we deliver a message with a garbled text, the public relations benefit is less than nil -- it's negative. Garbled messages make ham radio look stupid and childish.

I have a very uncomfortable, sick feeling whenever I run across a garbled radiogram. And, I get mad because garbled messages don't have to be. Well, at least 99.99% of garbles don't have to be. We will never have 100% accuracy, but we can come close.

How? Most important is the care factor of each traffic handler. Each of us has to commit to 100% accuracy. Don't slack off and say, "Close enough, and, anyway, I don't have to deliver it." Close enough should not be a part of your traffic vocabulary, not even in your deepest subconscious.

Always send traffic in standard format. Every deviation increases the chances of garble, particularly in the address. Don't neglect AA between lines. Correct sending errors. Repeat unusual names and words.

When receiving traffic, take as long as needed to get it right. It is much more important to get it right than to get it fast. Don't guess. Ask for repeats or confirmations. It doesn't matter if it is your fault, or the sending station's fault.

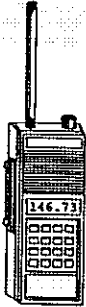
[Ed note: Contrary to common belief, it IS possible to have errors on packet messages. If it's not typed in correctly, it won't come out right on the other end!]

Tnx RN6 Net Bulletin via KB6GOZ BBS.

THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE
RADIOGRAM
VIA AMATEUR RADIO

RACES NEWS

ICS RACES RESPONDERS CHECKLIST
Stan Harter KH6GBX, CA RACES Coord.

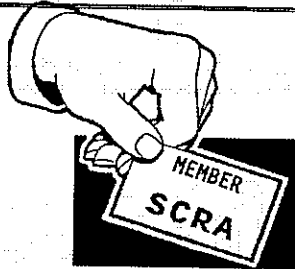


This checklist applies to State RACES personnel and is recommended to the RACES in other jurisdictions and organizations using the Incident Command System.

1. Receive your assignment and mission or order number.
2. Check in at the incident base or where directed above.
3. Obtain briefing from supervisor. This should include sleeping, feeding, and other details.
4. Acquire work materials if required.
5. Organize and brief subordinates. Everybody has a supervisor.
6. Observe communications procedures and discipline.
7. Brief your relief as you would want to be briefed.
8. Complete necessary forms and record keeping.

THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF WORKING WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE ICS ORGANIZATION IS MAINTAINING A GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP BY KEEPING THE COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS OPEN.

NEW AND RENEWED MEMBERS



Doug Lash KC6GJF
1738 Kerry Lane
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
573-1738

We now have
183 members.

Radio Shack

STORE NO. 3855

ZANE BATES

MANAGER

510 FARMERS LANE
SANTA ROSA, CA. 95405

TELEPHONE
546-8423

10 YEARS AGO

IN SHORT SKIP



The Oct 1979 transmitter hunt was something of a disappointment due to low turnout, but to those who participated, it was a real challenge. Seems the "bunny" hid in a Sheriff's patrol car -- at the County Jail, at that. WD6CKP wiped out his quad and several members nearly got arrested for peering into cars and prowling around the county complex.

Jim W6CYM and Allen KA6GDB set up Amateur Radio displays at the Sonoma County Library and Rohnert Park Library, respectively.

The RTTY gang was growing -- newest member: Don KB6LO. Others included W6JCX, K6CNJ, WB6VSD, K6QXB, W6JFN, WA6FGG, WA6WYZ and WB6KMI. [For you newcomers, RTTY is like packet, only slower.]

QST CONGRATULATES...

the Sonoma County Radio Amateurs, Inc., whose first exhibit at the county fair provided fair-goers with a half-size model of OSCAR 8, an OSCAR demonstration, RTTY demonstration, keyboard CW with readout, hands-on CW, receiver for public use, operating radio stations, a message center and public relations desk. Nearly 150 people signed up for September classes.

from QST, November 1979.

ELECTIONS:

The following have been nominated for next year's officers, to be elected at the November meeting. Nominations will also be solicited from the floor.

PRESIDENT:	John Wallack	W6TLK
VICE PRESIDENT:	Jim Pelmulder	N6PTM
SECRETARY:	Al Bloom	N1AL
TREASURER:	(OPEN)	
MEMBER AT LARGE:	Chuck Sabin	N6DDK
	Rick Sealock	N6RXA



WAVES TO WINE

by BOB SONES WB6EKV

In the picture, the woman on the right is Devon Cutty, Director of the Waves to Wine bike race. The other person for sure is not a woman -- Rick worked the net on Sunday.

Devon was very cooperative and worked closely with our net controls. Most of them were pleased with this arrangement, especially the males.

EVENT STATISTICS: 2-day event, Sat/Sun Oct 7/8. 1600 bikers, 400 volunteers, 22 hams.

The event produced \$425,000 for the Multiple Sclerosis Soc. It was quite an experience. The radio people did a great job and were very much appreciated by the MS staff. We'll be happy to do it again next year.

Hams who helped: Ruth WA6AQA, Philip KC6BSI, Hoppy WD6CKP, Bob WD6DPE, Jay KB6ENY, Connie N6FYV, Bill N6GHG, Ken N6GXI, Georgia N6GZU, Brian N6IIY, Rudy N6KLU, Russ N6KMJ, Harvey K6KZ, Ren KI6LS, Ken N6MHG, Wilber N6MGY, Phil N600A, Hans KI6PD, Jim N6PTM, Marie KI6QY, Rick N6RXA, Steve N6RXY, John W6TLK

SCRA MEMBER OF THE YEAR

It's that time of the year again -- hand in your "Member of the Year" award nomination at the November meeting, or send it to N6FAX at 7822 Washington Ave, Sebastopol CA 95472. The award is issued at the Christmas party in December, and time is needed to select the winner and have a plaque made.

\$5000 PER RIDER...

by HANK DAVIS W6DTV

In Sonoma County, over the years, there have been many bicycle races and rides. The first annual Pacific Coast Trek is a little different. An outgrowth of the Trek Across America, it starts in Seattle, WA and ends in San Diego, CA.

Each treker must have \$5000 of sponsorship money pledged before he or she can sign up for the Pacific Coast Trek. The money goes to the American Lung Association.

These treks are highly-organized well in advance of the starting date. For starters, there are three or four 13-passenger vans that follow the riders and act as sag wagons or emergency units (paramedics are along). A mechanics' van with spare parts is available to service the bicycles.

Another truck and trailer haul the tents, sleeping bags, etc. They take care of the needs of the trekers, including showers, washing, shaving, laundry & a hand-operated spin dryer that you have to see to believe.

The office and communications van includes two radios and a packet unit plus desks, files and other necessities. A two meter and 220 MHz radio are interfaced to work as repeaters by throwing a switch. This is very useful in terrain not covered by local repeaters.

Amateur Radio is a very important part of these extended treks. 13 Amateurs are with the everyday running of the 1500-mile-long activity. Backing up this group are about 41 local Amateurs located along the route who act as base support stations. They help when needed for police, ambulance, lost trekers, phone calls from folks at home, or relay of messages.

In Sonoma County, the two local base support stations were Ed Warner WB6UDR of Cloverdale and Hank Davis W6DTV of Sebastopol.

All in all a very interesting activity for a person interested in bicycle travel or Amateur Radio.

PK-232 USERS' GROUP

by Allan Chapman W6MEO

The PK-232 TNC, popular but not inexpensive, is about to get a boost from its users. Emulating long-established commercial bootstrapping, some hams who use (and may not even own) the unit are forming a users' group to share expertise and build clout.

Objectives: (1) Identify expectations for the PK-232, some of which may not be presently met or even understood by AEA; (2) Serve as a collective voice for the users, in a cooperative "partnership" with factory staff; (3) Solicit and disseminate for group evaluation the needs and views of all members. A vote-tallying process by mail will be used at first because of the large volume of requests.

Limited to non-commercial operators of the equipment, whether owned or not -- any user can participate. Commercial users are not included, but even non-hams are, IF they use the PK-232 in a service not related to a business. E.g. public safety comm operators are OK; also, each of the several users of a club station which may have one PK-232 are encouraged.

MEMBERSHIP: This group is just now in formation, has zero funds and accepts no subsidy. That means IF, repeat IF, you send a large #10 S.A.S.E. with adequate postage (USA 25-cents) you will receive info. Address: W6MEO 5602 Raters Drive, Santa Rosa, CA 95409. Tel 707/538-4935. W6MEO @ WD6CMU.NOCAL.CA.USA.NA.

HSC Halted
specialties co.

Electronics • Prototyping Supplies • Computers • Lasers

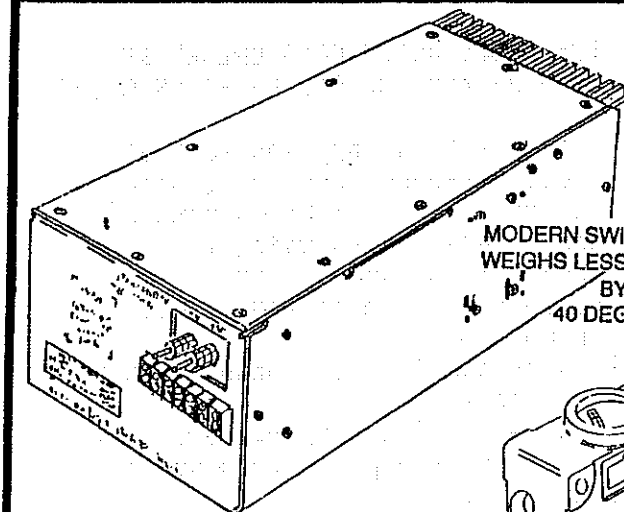
George Shedore
Manager
KS6W

6819 REDWOOD DRIVE
COTATI, CA 94931

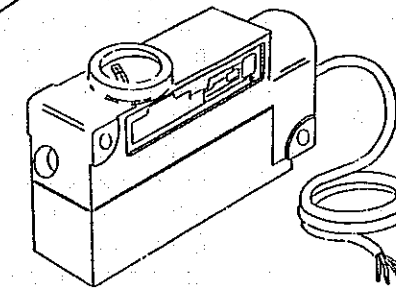
PHONE: (707) 792-2277
FAX: (707) 792-0146

HSC**Halted**
specialties co.**SINCE 1963!**Electronic Components & Test Equip.
Prototyping & Hobby Supplies

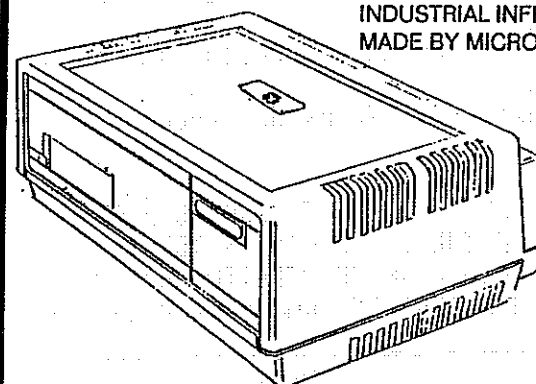
Computers, Lasers & Optics

HAM RADIO SPECIAL!**65 AMPERE 13.8 VOLT POWER SUPPLY**

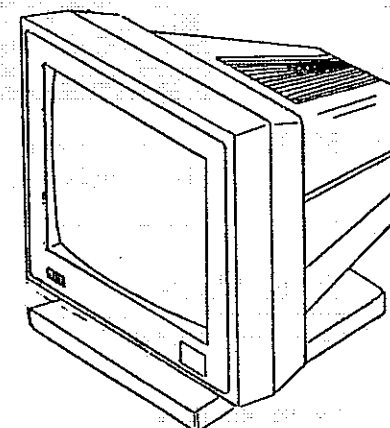
MODERN SWITCHING DESIGN, VENTILATED, FULLY ENCLOSED CABINET! NO NOISY FANS, WEIGHS LESS THAN 25#, OPERATES FROM 120V AC. REMOVED FROM EQUIPMENT, MADE BY LAMBDA. MODEL LGSEEA-15-OV-R. THIS UNIT IS RATED AT 65 AMPERES AT 40 DEGREES C. IMPORTED 20 AMP SUPPLIES COST MORE THAN OUR ASKING PRICE

STOCK # 10797 **ONLY \$179.00**

INDUSTRIAL INFRARED SCANNER/DETECTOR MODULE
MADE BY MICROSWITCH, HSC #9822 \$9.95



DISK DRIVE CABINET WITH POWER SUPPLY
TELEVIDEO MODEL TS-806 HSC #9295 \$39.00



12" COMPOSITE VIDEO MONITOR WITH SWIVEL STAND
RS-170 INTERFACE, GREEN SCREEN STOCK # 10766

NOW ONLY \$49.00

3 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS:

HSC of Santa Clara
3500 Ryder Street
Santa Clara, CA

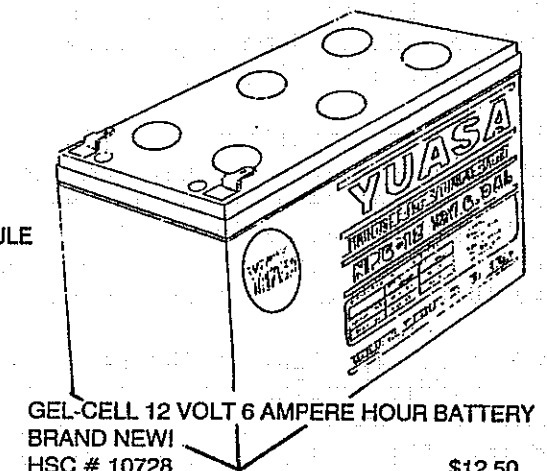
(408) 732-1573

HSC of Sacramento
5549 Hemlock Street
Sacramento, CA

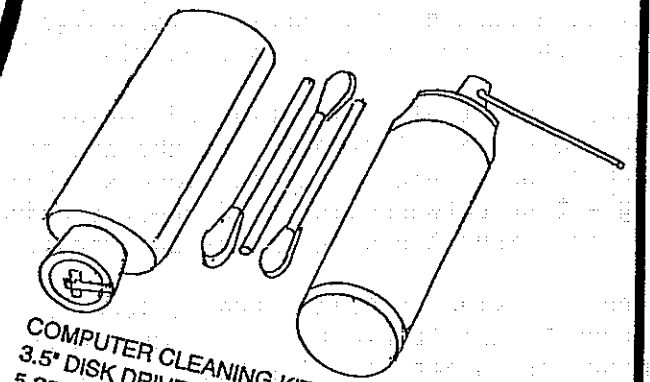
(916) 338-2545

HSC of Santa Rosa
6819 Redwood Drive
Cotati, CA

(707) 792-2277



GEL-CELL 12 VOLT 6 AMPERE HOUR BATTERY
BRAND NEW!
HSC # 10728 \$12.50



COMPUTER CLEANING KITS! YOUR CHOICE \$2.79
3.5" DISK DRIVE CLEANING KIT HSC #9967
5.25" DISK DRIVE CLEANING KIT HSC #9968
KEYBOARD/PRINTER CLEANING KIT HSC #9969

We Buy Excess Inventories and Surplus!**PHONE ORDERS PLEASE CALL:**

CA Residents & Info Toll Free Order Line
408-732-1573 800-4-HALTED

SCRA MINUTES

October 4, 1989



The meeting was called to order by President Glenn Crownover N6DNB at 7:31 PM. Other officers present were Vice President John Wallack W6TLK, Secretary Al Bloom N1AL, Treasurer Jim Pelmulder N6PTM, and Member-at-Large Bob Olsten WD6DPE.

VISITORS were introduced by Jane N6NTB: Tony Virgilio, Bill Kaiser N6OLD, and Don Montgomery K6LTS.

UPGRADES since last month include KJ6UY/AE.

The MINUTES of last month had an error: substitute VP W6TLK for President N6DNB as presiding officer. The minutes as printed in *Short Skip* were then approved as amended. m/s N1AL/KD6GC

The TREASURER'S REPORT shows \$1413.40 in the General Fund and \$1785.07 in the Repeater Fund. Approved. m/s N1AL/N6PTM

A VOLUNTEER is needed to spell Tracy WB6TMY in folding/stapling/mailling *Short Skip*.

The Secretary read a note from John WB6FRZ updating us on the 13 wpm CODE CLASS. There have been 7 classes so far with 12 students.

145.19 REPEATER: The CDF repeater is now up on Mt Jackson on 145.19 MHz. It uses the equipment from Warren WB6RHP's old machine. Jim Nessen KD6LC has ordered a replacement part which should bring receiver sensitivity up to snuff. The NARC sanction has been applied for.

CLUB HISTORY: Al N1AL passed around some old photos of the club in days gone by. Hank W6DTV gave a short talk on the history of the club. The present-day club was revived after World War II in the shack of Floyd Barnes W6ADM in 1949.

PROGRAM: Glenn Elmore N6GN gave us a "dry run" of a talk he is giving at the Pacific Division Convention in San Jose called

"Networking, Microwaves, and the Future of Amateur Radio." Glenn's thesis is that if we are not ready to relegate Amateur Radio to the dustbin of history, we are going to have to develop networks capable of handling large amounts of information, and microwaves are the place to do it.

AMATEUR OF THE YEAR submissions are due to Sarah N6FAX by the next club meeting.

The MEMBER LOTTERY went uncollected again this month. There is now \$32 in the kitty.

N6PTM has many BADGES that need to be picked up by new members. There is 1 magnetic Emergency Communications sign left for \$8. The SET (ARRL Simulated Emergency Test) will be held Sunday Oct 15 from 10 AM to noon and will simulate a military aircraft breaking up and spilling hazardous materials over Sonoma County.

The meeting adjourned 9:29 PM. m/s K6GEV/N6PTM

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Al Bloom N1AL.

TREASURER'S REPORT

FOR MONTH ENDING August 31, 1989



ACCOUNT	REVENUE	EXPENSE
Refreshments at meetings ..	6.21	5.97
Raffle at meetings	32.00	
Dues and Initiations	32.00	
Fund-Raisers (Flea Market) ..	60.00	200.00
Badges	4.00	7.42
Misc(Donation)....	1.50	
Westlink Report		6.48
Membership Supplies.....	49.75	
	-----	-----
	185.46	219.87
ASSETS:		
General Fund Account	1224.73	
Cash/checks on hand	188.67	
Total General Fund	1413.40	
Total Repeater Fund	1785.07	

- de N6PTM

CDF - VIP NEWS

SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL
by RUDY MAPPUS N6KLU



At 5:04 PM, Tuesday October 17, 1989, we all felt what we thought was the "big one". We later learned from he experts that the "big one" is still to come. Numerous aftershocks continued through the end of the week, and more were expected. That was the bad news. The good news was that Sonoma County came through without any appreciable damage.

At 8:15 PM, the VIP's received a call from the Sonoma CDF Ranger Unit requesting assistance at CDF Region I HQ (RO I). This site was also the Office of Emergency Services (OES) Region II dispatch center.

Our response was immediate. Garry N6ONZ, Jim N6PTM and Phil N600A began setting up shop within 30 minutes using 440 MHz and 2 meters. Shortly thereafter, contact was made with Morgan Hill, and information on property damage, loss of life, injuries, road conditions, etc. began to flow to CDF RO I. To improve signal quality, Garry, in the dark of night, climbed onto the roof of the RO and set up 440 and 2 meter antennas.

Unable to contact Hollister and Santa Cruz, Garry, Jim and Phil decided to attempt to reach these areas on 80 meters. Al N1AL brought in an HF radio and 80M antenna early Wednesday morning. Problems developed, and several other radios & antennas were tried. [Ed note: it turned out to be propagation. John W6TLK later brought in a 40M dipole and a more-portable radio.] Al, John and Garry each took turns climbing CDF's 100-foot tower. I understand they all lost a little weight as a result of the experience. Later, both the 40 and 80 meter bands opened up.

Wednesday afternoon, the VIP's contacted Hollister. Thursday, contact was made with Santa Cruz, the hardest-hit area with the least resources.

Aside from the initial propagation and antenna problems, everything went smoothly until Hollister shifted frequencies without

telling anyone. After an hour of searching the bands, Hollister and Santa Rosa were once again communicating with each other. Shortly thereafter, the flow of information began to slow down. Our duty period ended on Friday October 20, 1989 at 12:45 PM.

Alltogether the VIP's gave more than 130 hours of their time to this activity.

Many, many thanks to Garry N6ONZ, Jim N6PTM, Phil N600A, Al N1AL, Hank W6DTV, Sarah N6FAX, John W6TLK, Rick N6RXA, Hoppy WD6CKP, Harvey K6KZ, Marie KI6QY, and Jud N6QAV for a job well done. A special thanks to Mike N6DZU and Joel N6AMG for the use of their repeaters and for their invaluable assistance in setting up the system that was used so effectively in this exercise.

WE'RE LOOKING FOR MORE HAMS AND NON-HAMS TO JOIN THE VOLUNTEERS IN PREVENTION PROGRAM. IF YOU OR ANYONE YOU KNOW IS INTERESTED, PLEASE CONTACT MARIE KI6QY, 707-664-1978. ■

EARTHQUAKE INFO NEEDED

As *Short Skip* goes to press, earthquake communications continue. Send your stories to me. (And Photos, if you got 'em!) - N1AL

SLINGING ANTENNAS

Another method I have used that works well is the use of a slingshot and "Jetline". Jetline is used by utility companies and others for putting up power lines and such. It lends itself to antenna work very nicely. It comes in a plastic tube.

I hold the tube in the same hand that I hold the slingshot, with the open end of the tube in the direction the fishing sinker is to be propelled. Slingshots are great for pulling the Jetline from the tube and carry the weight up and over whatever you want to use as your aerial support. A 2-1/2 or 3 ounce weight is used to provide enough weight to get your Jetline over a rough branch surface and back down to where you can reach it.

I haven't figured out a way to get the Jetline back into the tube. There is enough in one tube to put up several antennas -- depending upon the height, of course. Tnx Calif. OES RACES Bulletin & KB6GOZ BBS ■

SONOMA COUNTY RADIO AMATEURS, INC. THE BEGINNING

by Hank Davis W6DTV

SCRA started sometime in the 1930's -- the affiliation certificate is dated 1939. The original club had connections to broadcasting in Santa Rosa. Some of the early BC station owners were members of SCRA. Amateur Radio was closed down during the war, and the club was inactive.

In 1949, a group composed of Floyd Barnes W6ADM, Don Christensen W6DZM, Hank Davis W6DTV and Wallie Wallace (non-licensed) met at Floyd's shack and created the foundation for the present SCRA.

The club has used many places around Santa Rosa for meetings: The old Naval Air Station southwest of Santa Rosa (1949), Grace Bros. Brewery tap room (1950), Fairgrounds chicken building, SR Fire Station (1954), Boy Scouts King St. clubhouse (1955), Franklin Park clubhouse (1958), Red Cross building on Yulupa (1970), Community Hospital Child Care Center (1981), Public Health Bldg. (Feb-Aug 1987), and the present meeting place, County OES Emergency Operations Center (May 1981).

The club had many public service events in the early days, floods being the main ones. Members worked in the name of Civil Defense, as RACES was not yet available. The first CD/Amateur Headquarters building was called the Veterans' Village on Clement St. Later locations were the County Corp. Yard out at the airport, and the Agriculture Building in the County complex.

This was a fine setup as each operator had his own position with a door to exclude noise and other distractions. There were 6 of these units: one had the 1750 kc inter-region station; two had crystal-controlled receivers and a pair of 4-125A's running 250 watts of AM mounted on a deck overhead. This room was located about 50 feet to the right of the present county service shop.

RACES started about this time, as did the club station W6LFJ. Hank Davis was trustee for the first 15 years. Bob Maple K6CZ was

second in line, and Steve Schaffer KD6GC is the present trustee.

Many social events were held in the early days like pot lucks and picnics via mobile caravans. 10 meters was the main mobile band at that time. Rigs were generally either military or Sheriff's dept. surplus.

The first repeater located on Sonoma Mt. was set up by the 6 meter club, later affiliated with SCRA. A 2 meter unit was added. This fell out, and a few years later, the present series of two meter repeaters was started. I still have one of the controllers used on the six meter repeater.



COMING EVENTS:

SCARS NET: 146.73 MHz
Tuesdays at 7 PM.

VE EXAMS HOTLINE NR:
408-984-8353

NOVEMBER:

- 1 - SCRA meeting 7/7:30 PM
- 5 - Windsor Whale Run
- 4-6 - ARRL Sweepstakes, CW
- 6 - RACES etc. Net, 7:30 PM
- 16 - CDF/VIP Meeting 7:30 PM
- 18-20 - ARRL Sweepstakes, Phone
- 20 - RACES etc. Net, 7:30 PM
- 25-26 - CQ Worldwide CW DX Contest

DECEMBER:

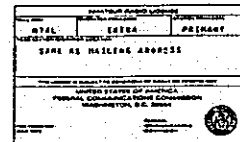
- 1-3 - ARRL 160 Meter Contest
- 4 - RACES etc. Net, 7:30 PM
- 9-10 - ARRL 10 Meter Contest
- 21 - CDF/VIP Meeting 7:30 PM
- 18 - RACES etc. Net, 7:30 PM

From Gaye Lebaron's Aug 23 column in the PD:

■ Sarah Davis of Sebastopol says the 1969 shaker here pulled their house, which she described as "an elderly frame house" away from the chimney, which was a more recent addition. There has been an inch-and-a-half space between the two for 20 years. Last week's earthquake "popped it right back flush with the house," says Sarah.

AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE EXAMS

by STEVE LUND WA8LLY



EXAM RESULTS

27 souls braved more than the FCC Elements the day of the SCRA Flea Market to attend the largest VEC exam session given locally. Four hours later, 18 of them had earned new licenses or upgrades. Five examinees had no license before the session: Lewis Newton earned the Advanced license and Craig Van Horn the Extra. It total, 4 hams upgraded to Extra -- just in time to use those sunspots. I was also happy to have Mike KB6GWC earn his General license. A special thanks to the patience of the examinees who were left in the dark by power failures on several occasions. Fortunately the emergency generator at the EOC worked flawlessly.

I'd especially like to thank the VE's: John WB6FRZ, Ken K6UX0, Al N1AL, and Jim WN6D for making the session a success. The local VE team receives little recognition for the time and monay spent providing Sonoma County hams with examination opportunities.

NEW CODE TESTS

Anyone planning to take a code test should be aware of some recent changes. The local VE team generally uses the tapes supplied by the ARRL VEC. ARRL recently switched back to a code test consisting of a typical ham QSO. The length is approximately 6 minutes. The most noticeable difference is that the character speed is 18 wpm for the 5 and 13 wpm tests. Additional spacing between letters brings the overall speed to the correct 5 or 13 wpm.

None of the commercial code practice tapes use this combination -- the Gordon West tapes use a character speed of 15 wpm, while the W5YI exams are at 13 wpm charcter speed. This change is most noticeable at 5 wpm which seems very fast. Everyone who took the 5 wpm code test at the last exam session passed easily. If you learned the code at a true 5 wpm, you might be surprised.

ARRL's new code practice tapes should be available in a few months. If you are practicing from a computer program, change the character speed to 18 wpm. This will force you to learn the sound of each character. This makes it easier to build up your speed, as you never get into the bad habit of counting dots and dashes.

NEXT EXAM SESSION

A special VEC exam session will be held 7 PM Wed. Nov 8 at the EOC. While this is mainly for people in John WB6FRZ's code class, others are welcome to attend -- Please let Steve WA8LLY know you are coming: 823-4544.

This session is for Technician exams or higher -- no Novice-only exams given. Bring your ORIGINAL license (if any), photo ID (Calif drivers' license), a check for \$4.75 made out to "ARRL-VEC", and a completed 610 form. You will also need 2 soft-lead pencils, a pen and a calculator.

NOTE: The new Technician exam questions go into effect Nov 1. These questions are still based on the old regulations, however.

Next exam session will probably be in Feb. ■



The FORUM

DISASTER RELIEF COMM.

by ALLAN CHAPMAN W6MEO

W6MEO refiled from/to USAF MARS (Military Affiliate Radio System), NCV (No. Calif VHF Net) and several packet BBS's in expediting earthquake relief traffic, mostly H & W (health & welfare) type. I feel that, although cooperation between the several Amateur and allied networks was good, improvement is needed in certain areas.

RACES, ARES, MARS, ARC (Am. Red Cross), and informal local nets can be more effective if they are able to plan jointly how best to cross-communicate under extreme conditions. One of the hardest things was finding out who was up on what frtequency, where, and for what type traffic.