

NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The burden imposed on Jan, N6DDO, in the monthly production of this newsletter was one not appreciated by very many of us. We all owe her a BIG THANK YOU for the job she did. In any event, until a new newsletter editor is found, articles should be submitted to Larry, WA6ISR, as soon as possible for inclusion in next month's newsletter (no later than Dec. 5, please).

We have a Christmas Party scheduled on the night of the regular December meeting. It will be held at Lee's Canton Restaurant, same format as last year. We need a list of those attending as soon as possible! It would be nice to break last year's attendance record - about 50. Also, if we can agree on it at the next meeting, there will be optional gifts. The idea works this way: If you want to receive a gift, just bring one for a ham. If your non-ham spouse would like to get in on the fun, have them bring a small gift suitable for another non-ham spouse. If we use our imagination and keep the cost of the gift down to about \$4, it should be fun and not impose a hardship on anyone. This will be a one-gift for one-gift swap and purely optional. More at the next meeting.

So remember!

Dec. 11, 7 p.m.

LEE'S CANTON RESTAURANT

Turkey and All the trimmings

Price not yet determined - but not much worse than last year. SEE YA THERE! (and let WB5FIX, KA6UBI, or WA6ISR know if you will attend)
 Location, WB5FIX

DISASTER DRILL AHEAD

The water's risin' and the earth's shakin'. Yep, it's a disaster and we've been put on the spot to help sort it all out.

Sutter County Emergency Services Officer Cynthia Allen has called a disaster drill for the morning of Nov. 29. The drill, a "tabletop" drill, will be staged at the Sutter County Agricultural Commissioner's Office on Garden Highway, just in front of the Red Cross Building.

Barry, KE6LW, is coordinating our response and is looking for volunteers to man the radios during the three-hour event. Under the plan for the event, a team of emergency workers in one conference room at the Ag Building will determine exactly what has happened out "in the field" and relay it back to the Emergency Operations Center in the next conference room for decisions and response. The relay will be provided by, you guessed it, members of the Yuba-Sutter Amateur Radio Club.

More on this at Tuesday's meeting and on a special net planned by Barry for Nov. 27.

SPECIAL EVENTS

As the holiday season nears and family commitments grow, I realize it is harder to break free for special communications events. As of this writing, we have nothing scheduled through Christmas.

MEETING NIGHT

The November membership meeting of the YSARC is scheduled at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 13. The location will be the GRAY AVENUE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL, 808 Gray Ave., Yuba City. We will be discussing the cleanout of various facilities where we have "junk" equipment stored, the upcoming emergency drill, appointment of a two-meter net coordinator, gift exchange at the Christmas Party and trying to get a head count for that event. Come and join the fun and fellowship.

NEW MEMBERS

Please add the following names to your club roster:

Earl Hickman, KD6TZ
 12689 Lone Tree Way
 Marysville
 Phone: 741-2004

Bill Herring, KG6GB
 P.O. Box 428
 Marysville
 Phone: 743-6196

RED CROSS CHANGES

The Red Cross is getting squeezed for space and, as a result, our radio room at the Red Cross Building will be moving — but only to the other end of the building. We will share the

Events

For those of you who have been active in such activities in the last two months, my heartfelt thanks. The YSARC has run three athletic events since the first of September. We have received praise for our professionalism and clear communications from organizers of all three events. 'I don't know how we did it without you last year!', one event official said afterward.

Those who have kept up on the trials and tribulations of the club repeater know the events have not been done under ideal conditions. Desensitization and intermod on top of the Buttes, worries about interference from outside the area, interfacing our operations with those of police and fire agencies and changes and lack of organization on the part of some of the event sponsors and the necessity just two weeks ago to work an event on simplex because of problems 'on the hill' have brought out the best in those operators who found time to give of their time for the club and the community. Not to be left out is our technical crew headed by, Dave, WD6AXM, who have made uncounted trips to the repeater to solve immediate problems so the communications events can proceed.

Now, I would like everyone to go back and read that last paragraph. Substitute the term 'disaster' for athletic event and you may get what I am driving at.

Working emergency communications is like driving a car. It takes special skills and basic knowledge of how the machinery (steering wheel, accelerator, brakes) of a car works before you can be a safe, successful driver. You don't simply go out and buy a car, get into it and drive away.

Likewise, you don't simply get your ham radio license, pickup a radio and provide EFFECTIVE emergency communications. It takes practice at passing traffic under less than ideal conditions, knowledge of what is important and how to successfully get the message to its intended receiver in an understandable, useable form in the shortest amount of "air" time possible.

In short, it takes practice at communicating to learn how to handle emergency traffic under emergency conditions. That is one of the primary purposes behind the YSARC's participation in community events. Not only does it provide us with a valuable public relations tool, it gives us practice in adapting our 'tools' to the task and circumstances at hand. No better example can be given than the recent Heart and Sole Classic Run in Riverfront Park when problems on the hill forced us to move off the repeater and use simplex 15 minutes before the event began.

I don't want to belabor the point but suffice to say, it does little good to do something unless you know what your doing. Again, thanks to the club (and non-club) members who have participated in the recent events. Your training is well on its way. It's a team effort!

Changes

facility with the Red Cross' own inter-office radio equipment. As a result, much of the "excess" material we have accumulated over the years must go since room will be available only for "operational" equipment. Among the rare "finds" are an empty 6-foot rack, a Hammerlund receiver, at least 2½ model 19 teletypes and some fine "boat anchors". The equipment will be available for club members, the board of directors has decided. For more on this, attend Tuesday's meeting.

XYL VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are being sought by the Red Cross to assist in time of emergencies with mass feeding, shelter management, family assistance and damage assistance. It's an excellent chance for your non-ham spouse, who might be feeling left out or abandoned, to join in providing community service. For more information, contact Barry, KE6LW.

EXAM SCHEDULE

Here is a schedule of volunteer examinations slated over the next several months easily reached by amateur radio operators in Northern California:

Exam date: Dec. 11, 1984

Application deadline: Nov. 12.

Contact: Kings ARC, Marg Duyst, N6DTZ, 14413 Everett, Hanford, Ca. 93230

Exam date: April 17, 1985

Application deadline: March 16, 1985

Contact: Sierra Nevada ARC, Gary Grant, K7VY, 11040 Broken Hill Rd., Reno, Nev. 89511

PRODUCT REVIEW

AEA CP-1 Computer Interface

There is a certain danger in this article. At least one other member of the club has already reported on this product, though not in print, and his opinion is respected, and mine may be at odds with his. But what the heck! We'll let the chips fall where they may.

My experience with RTTY—CW demodulators is limited, but only by my exposure. The best one I ever watched in action was a Dovetron, owned by an agency of the Federal government. It would copy reasonable print when I could no longer be sure that the signal was present - monitored on a speaker at reasonable volume. It's cost was nearly \$1,000.

My bank account sent me in a more moderate direction - that is as close to zero as I could rationalize. First we tried 'surplus' demodulators, ex-Army or Navy types of doubtful history. 'Working when we took it out of service' was a familiar refrain. No luck - though

Review

Maybe my patience was thin.

Then along came my first Commodore computer and the Macrotronics M-65 system. This was a PLL demodulator, without much in the way of a keying circuit to generate the tones required for AFSK—RTTY. It worked - after a fashion - on strong signals in the absence of QRM.

After much soul-searching and listening to good sounding signals on the air, we acquired a HAL ST-5000. It is a superb demodulator - reliable, sensitive and moderately priced. With a few modifications, it has served for over five years without failure.

But it was designed to be used with 170 volts, 60 ma loop supplies. As an afterthought, an RS-232 circuit paralleled the loop circuit. No TTL output needed by my computer. It did not copy CW. It was for 179 hz transmit only.

In trying to come up with a better system, I have tried the Kantronics Interface. It does a very reasonable job but is better on CW than on RTTY. The MFJ 1224 also was tried and I frankly am amazed that anybody uses this piece of junk. It just doesn't measure up - at least not when compared to the above equipment.

Enter the AEA CP-1. This is a gem. It does a very good job on all shifts of RTTY I have encountered. It does the best job on CW I have seen, though signals just above the noise level that are readable by ear will not be detected by the CP-1.

AEA has done a great job on this TU. It is compatible with lots of existing software. The tuning indicator on the front panel is complimented by a set of scope outputs on the back panel - highly recommended for quick tuning. The computer connection plug is exactly the same pin setup as the Kantronics (this has become standard). There is a push button on the front panel for manual PTT keying if you require that.

The only drawback is that the threshold or squelch control located on the left rear of the panel should be moved to the front panel, and then not played with in most cases. In short, this is a good piece of equipment for the beginner or old timer who needs a decent computer RTTY—CW interface. I am sure that if you get to compare TU's as I have, you will agree.

Ron, WB5FIX

CLUB STATION NEWS

On Oct. 13, a work party consisting partly of KE6LW, N6CCS and WB5FIX erected a Mor-Gain 40 & 75-meter short dipole on top of the Red Cross Building. The club TS-520 was used to test the antenna and everything worked fine. In the near future, we will have an 80-meter sloper for the RTTY—CW portion of that band installed on the tower. Do we hear any volunteers?

INPUTS NEEDED TO KEEP THE NEWSLETTER ALIVE!

So that we can have a newsletter that you want to read and maybe even refer back to on occasion, we need your cooperation. We need funny, informative or serious or newsy articles from YOU. They may fit one or more of the categories listed but they should be from you. You are interesting people doing interesting things and this should be reflected in the newsletter.

Have you contacted a rare DX station and had a good rag chew? Let us know about it. How about that favorite RFI story? Most of us have one. Why not share it? Or really open up and describe the trauma of your first novice CW contact. I'm sure most of us can remember that far back. In any event, your contributions will make this newsletter something everyone looks forward to receiving and reading each month.

Ron, WB5FIX

OUT AND ABOUT

Congratulations to Lloyd, WA6AGD, who sneaked away to San Francisco Nov. 5 and passed his Extra class examine... Emery, NG6L, has been checking in recently on 40-meters from South Utah or somewhere back East. The occasion is a black powder hunting trip? Did ya get anything, Emery?... Jan, N6DDO, and Tammy, N6JYT, abandoned homey Live Oak on Monday, Nov. 5, to join 30,000 people gathered on the steps of the State Capitol in Sacramento to see and hear President Ronald Reagan on the final day of campaigning before last Tuesday's election... Bill, N6FAB, and June, N6JEY, recently returned from a vacation trip to the New Orleans area... Clyde, N6IFY, what was that purple politician joke you told on the net the other night?... Anyone interested in a special events station (when it warms up) at the Donner Lake overlook on old Highway 40? More later... WB5FIX was to be playing chauffeur this weekend (Nov. 10-11) in Ashland, Ore... Barry, KE6LW, says he's so accustomed to getting up on Tuesday mornings to make special runs to the top of the Sutter Buttes for repeater problems he was up last Tuesday before realizing the repeater was back on the ground in YC. Habit?

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