

July Meeting

Friday, July 18—7:30 pm

*Our Saviour's Lutheran Church
1035 Carol Lane
Lafayette, CA*

Meeting Program

This meeting will focus on helping newer hams with their radios. Bring your HT for help in programming. Bring your questions about operating procedure, as well as your expertise in your areas of skill.

V.E. Testing

6:00-7:00 PM, prior to each meeting at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church.

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President's QRM

by Jason Legate, W6SN



It is with a heavy heart I must bid farewell to Jeremiah Blasi, our Carrier Editor. He is packing up and has decided to "Go East, Young Man". Oh, wait, that's not how the quote goes. Either way, I wish him the best in the future, and hope he stays in touch with us via HF and/or EchoIRLP. Also, if anyone knows someone who may be able to help us put the Carrier together on a monthly basis, I encourage you to get in touch with me.

I write this, amazed at the level of response we received from Field Day, which, by all accounts must be considered a success. There will be a full report on Field Day next month, after we get all our pictures lined up and plenty of stories written down (and believe me, there are more than enough stories for the rest of the year, I think). I am very enthused about the possibility for next year, since the city has invited us back to do it all over again! Since we know so much more about the 'dangers' of operating out there (see the earlier comment about stories), we'll have plenty of experience to be able to avoid all the pitfalls that befell us this year. I'm also looking at possibly forming a small committee to deal with organizing and planning of field day next year. It turned out to be a very large task, and I feel it'd be better done if tasks are doled out a little more, as opposed to being handled by only a couple people. If you think you can help, let me know. Either come to the general meetings, or email or call me. My email is on the mdarc.org website, and my phone number is 925-348-4857.

Since field day is now behind us, I want to begin drumming up attention toward Pacificcon. I encourage everyone, ham or not, to spread the word about the convention. This hobby is such an enjoyable thing, the more people we expose it to, the better. I've realized, mostly from our experience with field day, that

people actually do have a small level of awareness of radio communications, we just need to help kindle it. If your neighbor has questions about what your antennas are for, tell them more that just "communication". You'll get much more interest, and maybe a staunch ally if there ever is a 'problem' with your tower. With that, I'll QRT till next month. May the only QRM you experience be this article!



Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club W6CX

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The Carrier is a monthly publication of the Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club (MDARC). It is the policy of the editor to publish all material submitted by the membership provided such material is in good taste, relevant to amateur radio and of interest to MDARC members, and space is available. All material must be submitted to the editor by the last day of the month prior to publication. Material is accepted on a first-in, first-out basis. Articles and other material may be submitted via Internet email to carrier@mdarc.org or delivered to the editor at the address listed in the club roster. Material will be accepted in plain ASCII or rich text format (RTF). Material may also be submitted as hardcopy.

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MDARC Meeting Minutes

June 20, 2008

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Lafayette, CA

President Jason Legate, W6SN, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. There were about 70 members and guests present.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as printed in the *Carrier*.

Jason reminded the Club of Field Day next weekend, starting with setup 11 am Friday to 11 am Sunday.

Trevor Raty, KG6MDW, reported for the Tech Committee:

- 900 mhz ATV is under test and the amplifier replacement will be accomplished
- the 1.2 gig antenna has been ordered
- Iain MacDonnell, K6IAM, will take over the voter project as soon as Trevor completes a couple of items
- PAVEPAWS has more tests; results should be available in a month or so

Jim Brunk N6BHX noted that the VEs tested a large group—23—with total results to be announced; two new Techs and one Extra were in the audience. Seven test-takers were from Canyon.

Dick Brown KT6X reminded the group that Pacifcon was coming the third weekend of October; tickets are available from him and others, by mail or on-line.

Announcements:

- Glen Rickerd NO6W noted sign-ups for a small Extra class.
- George Roush WB6OFH gave out free copies of Icom's frequency charts.
- Lauren Styles WA6CIE

advertised a Tech class for 6 weeks on Tuesday nights beginning July 15 at the Salvation Army center, 3950 Clayton Rd. The class is free except for the cost of a book.

- Chuck Graham KI6DCD offered collector QSL cards with a 1x1 call from the Rotary convention.

- Jason described the Field Day location and will check on the watering schedule.

Old Business:

- Jim Brunk discussed interference on the repeater, and advised listeners to report instances to the control ops via the website.

New Business:

- Trevor Raty presented the Club members a bill for approval for \$602.21 for repair of the communications trailer (including two heavy-duty tires). The Board had previously approved \$600 to be approved by the membership. The Club approved the bill.

Jason adjourned the meeting at 8:05 for a break before the speaker.

The meeting resumed at 8:20 to hear a very interesting presentation by the speaker, Ed Fong WB6IQN, on the topic of "Dual band portable antennas," including making and testing. Ed has had two articles in QST on the subject, and has made about 1500 of these antennas for sale. He is an EE professor at UC Berkeley. His antennas are for sale on his website.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Dickey, N6JOX, Secretary

My First Experience With the Magic Band

by Marty Heyman, W6MDH

with Matthew G. Vurek, N4DLA

I own a Yaesu FT-817ND HF/6m/2m/432 MHz portable transceiver which is considered QRP (low power) as it has an RF output of only 5 watts. With my minimal antenna facilities, being able to work any significant “DX” seemed impossible. After owning this small transceiver for over a year, I was considering upgrading to a rig with a higher RF output.

The 2008 ARRL June VHF QSO party was held on the weekend of June 14 and 15. Fellow Orindan Matthew G. Vurek, N4DLA, was enjoying a significant band opening on 6 meter single sideband during this contest. N4DLA was able to work dozens of stations from British Columbia south to Mexico and east to Louisiana. Matthew’s 6 meter station consisted of his vintage 2002 100 watt Ranger Communications RCI-5054DX100 all mode transceiver into a 3 element yagi beam antenna perched on the roof of his paternal grandmother’s garage.

After working N4DLA on 2 meter FM simplex, Matthew suggested I try working some of the same 6 meter stations that he was working. After all, he said, 6 meters was considered “The Magic Band,” where low power and a small antenna could produce big results when conditions were right.

I placed my equipment skepticism aside as I fired up the FT-817ND and plugged it into my Diamond V2000A 6 meter/2

meter/440 MHz vertical antenna, which has a paltry 2 dB gain from 52-54 MHz—and probably less in SSB portion of 6 meters—since it was not built to work in that part of the band. However, I soon heard WA7NB furiously calling “CQ contest! CQ contest!” on 6 meter SSB. The FT-817ND’s signal strength meter showed a long streak of tall black bars on its LCD display when WA7NB transmitted. I gave him a quick call and despite my 5 watts and a vertical antenna, I received an immediate answer, “W6MDH, please copy [grid square] DM42, delta mike forty two, QSL?” I quickly replied, “QSL delta mike forty two, please copy my charlie mike eighty seven and we’re QRP!” WA7NB gave me a quick acknowledgement on our QSO and resumed calling CQ. Was this “beginner’s luck”? Such thoughts were quickly dispelled as I managed to make 8 more QSOs in California, Colorado, Mexico, Colorado and New Mexico.

I eventually racked up 7 different grid squares scattered amongst 4 states and Mexico. I only operated for a short time during last few hours of the contest and I wished I had started earlier. My goodness, I thought, N4DLA was right about 6 meters...the “Magic Band” had cast its spell on me!

For further reading:

Summer E-skip and the Magic Band by Gene Zimmerman, W3ZZ. July 2008 QST, page 55

Six Meters: A Guide to the Magic Band (revised 2003) by Ken Neubeck, WB2AMU. Published by Worldradio Books, Sacramento, California.

Public Service Events

by Pete Harris, KE6ZIW, MDARC Public Services Coordinator

The following is a list of public service events for this year. Give me a call or email to sign up (Pete Harris at 925-228-4503, pharris125@comcast.net). You can also sign up for events at our regular MDARC monthly meetings.

Alcatraz Challenge Swim

8/23/08, San Francisco Bay
Radio Coordinator: Barry Bettman

Mt Diablo Challenge

10/5/08, Mt. Diablo
Radio Coordinator: John Stuart

Mount Diablo Trail Adventure

11/2/08, Castle Rock Park
Radio Coordinator: John Stuart

Editor’s Exciter

by Jeremiah R. Blasi, K6BQ

Well, this is it. My last edition of the *Carrier*. I have truly enjoyed working with the club and this publication over the last year and a half. I hope I’ve been able to have a small part in improving the club’s image and publicity.

We are heading out on Thursday, July 10, for our new home in Wagoner, OK. Stay in contact through email at k6bq@arrl.net. I’d love to set up an HF sked once I get settled!

Also, Jason, W6SN is looking for a volunteer to help with the *Carrier*. Until then, he’ll have to work on it; but it’s a big job, so somebody please volunteer and help the club!

MDARC Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

June 2, 2008

Fuddruckers, 1940 N. Main St., Walnut Creek

President Jason Legate W6SN, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Other Board Members present: Vice-President Dave Mulkearns, K6OH; Secretary Paul Dickey, N6JOX; EC Bob Green, K6GD; Directors Herbert Cole, KI6ATB; Dave Gordon, N6SWE; and Trevor Raty, KG6MDW. Also present were Iain MacDonnell, K6IAM; John Ronan, K3ZJJ; and John Schuler, KG6CZX.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved as published.

Treasurer Don Anthony was unavailable, recovering from surgery.

Jason announced that Carrier Editor Jeremiah Blasi, K6BQ, would be moving, so has resigned. Jason asked for volunteers and nominations for the position.

Bob noted that the County was making organizational changes affecting the RACES/ARES relationships. Because of vocational time concerns, he advised the Board that he would need to resign immediately.

Field Day site will be at Heather Farms in Walnut Creek. Jason presented copies of a press release for the event. The Salvation Army canteen will be available if not called for a fire or other emergency.

SK notice: Len Pringle, KH8A, (who had donated equipment for the last auction).

New Business:

- Trevor reported on the condition of the Club's trailer. He had found it hemmed in behind other trailers and with damage inside, as well as with

previous temporary arrangements that needed permanent replacement. He repaired power connections, leaks, etc. for a materials cost of \$402.21. Also, he noted that the tires were cracked and in poor condition. New tires were estimated at \$160. The Board approved expenses of \$600 total, and will present that to the membership for approval. Trevor will pursue coordination with Martinez PD regarding storage and accessibility of the trailer.

- John Ronan presented an ATV proposal to the Board, to allow continued installation of 900mhz equipment on the hill. The Board noted that the 1.2ghz antenna had been purchased and as soon as received would be installed by a tower climber, while the issue of coordination is pursued. In the meantime, the Board specifically authorized the installation of an ATV 900mhz amplifier replacement. The Board noted further that its advice to the Tech Committee to place the voter project in first priority did not preclude other authorized parties from working on ATV.

- Trevor reported that the voter project was progressing, but that the Vaca site was now unavailable. The planned installation on the East Bay hills is waiting for equipment. Because of increased demands on his time, Trevor will hand-off the voter project completion to Iain.

- In order to clarify needs and establish responsibility, the Board established a new policy for coordination. Henceforth, any authorized party making a trip to the hill should notify the Tech Committee 48hrs. in advance, so that needs, items to check, etc. can be arranged for one trip. In the event of emergency, post-notification is to be done as soon as possible.

- Jason appointed Herbert to the Tech Committee for the purpose of using his vocational skills in project management.

Jason adjourned the meeting at 9:23 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Paul Dickey, N6JOX, Secretary*

NEW DUAL BAND 2M/440

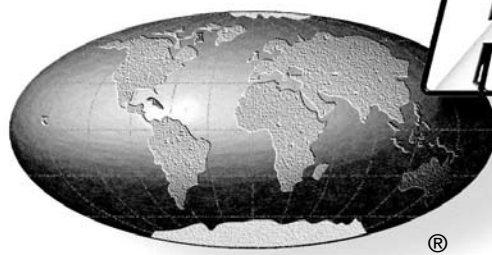
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Ed Ritchie, K6SFD

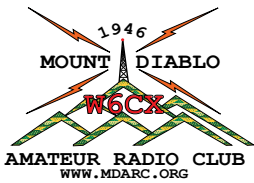
West County 145.110/-
Steve Adams, KF6WNNH

June Events

July 18 7:30 pm **MDARC Monthly Meeting**
Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Lafayette

July 30 **August Carrier Deadline**

August 4 7:00 pm **MDARC Board Meeting**
Fuddrucker's, 1940 N. Main St., Walnut Creek



The Carrier

Newsletter of the Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club

P.O. Box 23222

Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

www.mdarc.org



Next Meeting—July 18
