



Generator Basics

by
Rich Freitas KF6SZ
Sonoma County ARBS DEC

The weather will be changing soon and people will begin to plan for the recurring power outages that happen each year. Each winter season hundreds of generators are purchased and not all of those decisions are the right ones.

If you choose to buy a generator, make sure you get one that is listed with the Underwriter's laboratory (UL) or Factory Mutual (FM). Look at the labels on lighting, appliances and equipment you plan to connect to the generator to determine the amount of power that will be needed to operate them. For lighting, the wattage of the light bulb indicates the power needed; appliances and equipment usually have labels indicating power requirements. Choose a generator that produces more power than will be drawn by the combination of the equipment you plan to connect to the generator including the initial surge when it is turned on. If your generator does not produce adequate power for all you needs, plan to stagger the operating times for various pieces of equipment; this is called "shedding loads". If your equipment draws more power than the generator can produce, you may blow a fuse on the generator or damage the connected equipment.

Follow the directions supplied with the generator. Under no circumstances should portable generators be used indoors or inside a garage. Adequate ventilation is necessary and proper refueling practices, as described in the owner's manual, must be followed. It is a good idea to install one or more Carbon Monoxide (CO) alarms inside your home. If CO gas from a generator enters your home and poses a health risk, the alarm will sound to warn you. Many fires and deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning have occurred from using a generator improperly. A Northeastern ice storm in January and February of 1997 shows that as many as 100 people were killed and 5,000 people injured by misuse of a generator at home.

Be sure to let the generator cool down before refueling. Store fuel for the generator in an approved safety can. Use the type of fuel recommended in the instructions or on the label of the generator. Store fuel outdoors in a

on the label of the generator. Store fuel outdoors in a locked shed or other protected area. Do not store fuel in a garage, basement or anywhere inside a home as vapors can be released that may cause illness and are a potential fire or explosion hazard.

You should never hook up a generator directly to your home's wiring. The safest thing to do is connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator. There are several reasons why hooking up a generator to your home's electrical services is not a wise idea. Home-use (non-industrial) generators do not supply enough amperage to supply sufficient power for today's homes that require power for air conditioning, lighting, appliances and electronic equipment. Unless your home's power supply was installed with a disconnect (or transfer switch) to the main power feeding lines, power you put into your home from a generator could "backfeed" into the main grid and cause problems for the electrical utility company, your neighbors or yourself. "Backfeeding" is supplying electrical power from a power source at the residence into the incoming utility lines. This occurs when the necessary equipment used to isolate the generator from the incoming power lines is not installed. I guarantee that this will make your local power company extremely unhappy with you!

The National Electrical Code (NEC) does permit an interface between the normal power source (generally the electric utility) and an alternate power source (such as a standby or portable generator) provided that the proper transfer equipment that prevents "backfeeding" is used. Simply connecting a cord from the generator to a point on the permanent wiring system and "backfeeding" power is an unsafe method to supply a building during a utility outage. Improper connection methods not only endanger the building occupants, they pose a serious hazard to electric utility workers as well.

There are a number of products available that will provide either an automatic or manual transfer between two power sources in a manner prescribed by the NEC. When selecting a product for this function, it should be one that has been evaluated for safe performance by an organization such as Underwriter's Laboratories. The product must be installed according to the NEC and all applicable state and local codes and the manufacturer's instructions. Contact a qualified electrician if you are

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Sonoma County Radio Amateurs, Inc. Board of Directors Meeting, September 13, 2006 Minutes

Board Members Present: John Felton, KE5RI; Kevin Alt, K6BSG; Brian Torr, N6IY; Rich Freitas, KF6SZA, Fred Polkinghorn, KQ6OB. Jeff Basham, KK6JAB, was absent.

Guests Present: None.

1. Call to Order; Verification of Quorum – The meeting discussion was opened by President John Felton, KE5RI, at 6:48 pm. The meeting was held at John's home.
2. Approval of Minutes – It was moved by Kevin, K6BSG, that the minutes of the 08/9/2006 meeting as printed in Short Skip be approved. The motion passed.
3. Officer and Director Reports
 - a. President – John, KE5RI, - No report.
 - b. Vice President – Kevin, K6BSG, - No report.
 - c. Secretary – Rich, KF6SZA, - No report.
 - d. Treasurer – Brian, N6IY, reported checking and savings bank balances.
 - e. Directors –
 - i) Fred, KQ6OB, - No report.
 - ii) Jeff, KK6JAB, - Absent, No report.
4. Committee Reports
 - a. ARBS – Rich, KF6SZA, reported upcoming ARBS training sessions on October 9th (Natural Disasters and Disaster Recovery) and November 20th (HAZMAT and Terrorism).
 - b. Activities –
 - i) The next general meeting will include antenna construction for fox-hunting. Brian, N6IY, will coordinate the construction activity.
 - ii) The club picnic will be held on October 21st. The club will provide hamburgers. Fred, KQ6OB, will coordinate a potluck list at the next meeting.
 - c. Newsletter – No Report.
 - d. Public Service – Brian, N6IY, reported on the Waves To Wine event.
 - e. VE Liaison – Brian, N6IY, reported on the last VE session.
 - f. Repeater – No Report.
 - i) All repeaters are working.
 - ii) Net Control operators: 9/19: Craig, K6XLT; 9/26: Fred, KQ6OB; 10/3: Kevin, K6BSG; 10/10: Brian, N6IY; 10/17: Craig, K6XLT; 10/24: Fred, KQ6OB; 10/31: Kevin, K6BSG
5. Unfinished Business
 - a. Nominating Committee – Kevin, K6BSG, will establish the nominating committee at the October meeting.
 - b. The club equipment inventory still needs to be done.
 - c. Email Short Skip – Rich will bring a newsletter file disk to Fred to see if we can come up with a better method of producing an email version.
6. New Business – None.
7. Adjournment – It was motioned by Kevin, K6BSG, to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 pm. The motion passed.

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not thoroughly knowledgeable in safe electrical installation practices for this type of equipment.

The ARBS net meets on Mondays at 7:30 pm on the SCRA repeater on 147.315MHz, - offset, 88.5PL. Members and guests are invited to check in anytime.

Sonoma County Radio Amateurs, Inc. Membership Meeting, September 6, 2006 Minutes

1. Call to Order; Verification of Quorum – The meeting was called to order by Vice President Kevin Alt, K6BSG, at 7:28 pm at the Luther Burbank Arts and Garden Center.

- a. Introductions
 - i) Officers & Directors – self-introductions were made.
 - ii) Visitors – Walt, K6DZY, and Zach, KG6ABA
 - iii) Program Introduction – Fox Hunt.
 - iv) New Calls and Upgrades – None.
2. Approval of Minutes – It was moved by Dave, W6IBC, and seconded by Bob, WD6DPB, to approve the minutes of the last membership meeting as published in Short Skip. The motion passed.
3. Officer and Director Reports
 - a. President – John, KE5RI, - Absent, No Report.
 - b. Vice President – Kevin, K6BSG, - No Report.
 - c. Secretary – Rich, KF6SZA, - No Report.
 - d. Treasurer – Brian, N6IY, reported bank balances.
 - e. Directors –
 - i) Fred, KQ6OB, - Absent, No Report.
 - ii) Jeff, KK6JAB, - No Report.
4. Committee Reports
 - a. ARBS – Rich, KF6SZA, - Reported on upcoming training sessions: 10/9 – Natural Disasters Part 2; 11/20 – HAZMAT & Terrorism.
 - b. Newsletter – No Report.
 - c. Public Service – Bill, KH6GJV, solicited volunteers for Waves to Wine on 9/9-9/10 and gave an overview of the event.
 - d. VE Liaison – Brian, N6IY, reported on the last session that was held on 8/26 at BBR. The next VE session will be in approximately months.
 - e. Repeaters
 - i) Operations – All repeaters are working.
 - ii) Net Control Operators – 9/12: Dave, W6IBC; 9/19: Craig, K6XLT; 9/26: Fred, KQ6OB; 10/3: Kevin, K6BSG; 10/10: Brian, N6IY; 10/17: OPEN; 10/24: OPEN; 10/31: Kevin, K6BSG.
5. Unfinished Business
 - a. Update Club Roster – The roster was included in this month's Short Skip.
 - b. Mobile Comm Van – No report.
6. New Business
 - a. John, KG6BHI, mentioned the Marconi center at Tomales Bay and the possibility of having a club trip.
 - b. Michael, KC6UNA, requested help installing a DSP unit.
 - c. Tracy, WB6TMY, requested help with his antenna.
7. Biography – Michael, KC6UNA, relayed his interest and entry in amateur radio.
8. Show & Tell – Dave, W6IBC, showed his Yeasu 817 and talked about its capabilities.
9. Adjournment – It was moved and seconded by Michael, KC6UNA, and Jerry, K6LHC, that the meeting be adjourned at 9:05 pm. The motion passed.

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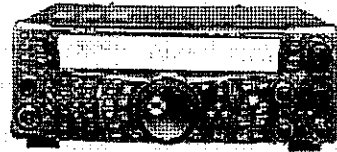
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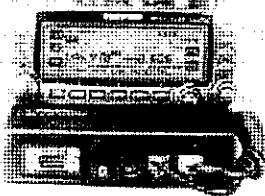
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SHORT SKIP

SONOMA COUNTY RADIO AMATEURS, INC.

OCTOBER 2006

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top-band enthusiast who was only 15 at the time we began to write. He was interested in electronics, and went on to electronics school after finishing his normal schooling.

I wrote my first letter to him in January 1970, and received a reply a few months later. As I recall, Martin's English was not as polished as he would like, so his father helped him with the composition of the letters.



WSLEW and Martin, OK1MCW meet after 35 years.

The Iron Curtain

I'll never forget one of his letters from Yugoslavia when he and his family were on vacation. Since his home country was occupied by what was then the Soviet Union, every letter coming from the West was opened and examined. But in Yugoslavia, the mail was not censored. Apparently, conditions were so bad in Czechoslovakia back in the mid '70s that Martin wrote, "If someone does not do something soon, we will all be eating grass." His letter really gripped me, almost like reading a spy novel and hearing some secret information. Some people he knew were considering immigrating to another country, but apparently Martin's father did not want to leave.

Martin later married and sent me pictures of the wedding and his new bride. Later, we swapped pictures of our children, and I remember sending him a picture of me with my prized Vega long-neck 5 string banjo. You should have seen my long sideburns!

We often talked about working each other on the air, but somehow things just never worked out. We continued our correspondence, although in the '80s and '90s it slowed down to an occasional Christmas card or postcard every few years.

Mississippi Calling!

A few years ago, I decided to send Martin a coffee mug with a Mississippi logo on the side for a Christmas gift. That resulted in Martin's looking up my old ham call on the internet, WA5YOD, and locating my e-mail address and new vanity call, WSLEW.

Imagine my surprise three years ago when I received a great e-mail from Martin. We were back in touch! And

my "international situation" had changed: my oldest daughter had married a fine young man from Germany whom she had met when she was there as an exchange student, and they were living in Germany. So now, I had a European "base of operations."

Martin and I begin to dream in our e-mails about meeting in the European Union one day. Finally, in the fall of 2005, I wrote Martin that my wife and I were traveling to Germany to check out our new granddaughter and to spend Christmas with Laurel and Burkhard, my daughter and son-in-law, and his family. I wondered if it would be possible for us to "hook up" while we were on the continent.

to be continued in the November issue

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SCRA Hotline	707 579-9608
SCRA E-Mail	scra@sonomacountyradioamateurs.com
SCRA Web Site	http://www.sonomacountyradioamateurs.com

Tuesday Night Net

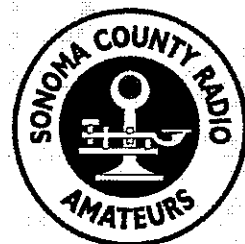
Remember to check in to the SCRA net each **Tuesday** evening on the **147.315+(PL 88.5)** repeater at **7:00 PM**. Announcements are made of upcoming SCRA and other amateur radio activities in the area and what is listed in Hank's Swap Shop. You will also hear the weekly *Amateur Radio Newsline* broadcast.

Short Skip Advertising Rates

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For more information, Contact the Editor

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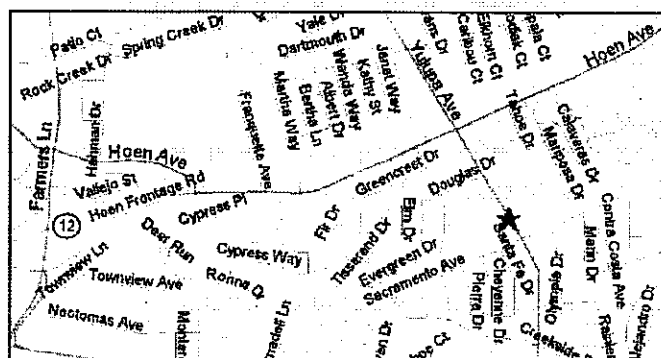


SCRA Club Meetings

The club normally meets the first Wednesday of each month. Exceptions are holidays or other big events.

Next meeting is Wednesday, October 4th at 7:00 PM at:

Luther Burbank Art & Garden Center
2050 Yulupa Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA



All are welcome!

Please join us at our next meeting. Anyone interested in Amateur Radio may be eligible for membership. A membership application is included in this newsletter.

For more information, contact any SCRA officer, director or member.

Hungry before the meeting?

Join us for dinner! We meet at Coco's restaurant, 1501 Farmers Lane (corner of Farmers & Hwy 12), Santa Rosa. People start showing up at 5:30 PM.

No RSVP is required.

See you there every month except December.

If you are not getting the ARRL San Francisco Section news by e-mail and you are an ARRL member, be sure to subscribe under your Members Only information or go to these websites:

<http://www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=SF>
<http://www.pdarrrl.org/sfsec/>

Contest Corner

by Kevin Alt K6BSG

Hello contesters. Anyone up for a "DX-pedition" to a remote CA county for the CA QSO party next weekend? Don't miss the major CQ WW Phone contest last weekend of the month. Happy DX'ing!

- 30 Sep, 1 Oct - TOEC WW Grid Contest - CW, 160-10 meters. See: www.sk3bj.se/contest/toecwwgc.htm.
- 30 Sep, 1 Oct - Coast to Coast Contest - CW, 80-10 meters. See: www.tomochka.com/k7ff/fmw_c2c06.html.
- 30 Sep, 2 Oct - Arkansas QSO Party - CW/SSB/PSK31, 80-2 meters. See: www.arkan.us.
- 1 Oct - RSGB 21/28 MHz Contest - SSB/CW, 15 and 10 meters. See: www.rsgbhfcc.org.
- 1-2 Oct - Classic Exchange - CW, 160-2 meters. See: <http://qsl.asst.com/CX>.
- 3-5 Oct - YLRL Anniversary Party - CW, 160-10 meters. See: www.ylrl.org.
- 7 Oct - EU Autumn Sprint - SSB, 80-20 meters. See: www.eusprint.com.
- 7 Oct - PSK Rumble (The Fall Classic) - 160-6 meters. See: www.n2ty.org/seasons/tara_rumble_rules.html.
- 7-8 Oct - California QSO Party - CW/SSB, 160-2 meters. See: www.cqp.org.
- 7-8 Oct - Oceania DX Contest - SSB, 160-10 meters. See: www.oceaniadxcontest.com.
- 10 Oct - 10-10 Day Sprint - Phone/CW/Digital, 10 meters. See: www.ten-ten.org.
- 10-12 Oct - YLRL Anniversary Party - SSB, 160-10 meters. See: www.ylrl.org.
- 13-23 Oct - ALE (Automatic Link Establishment) On The Air Week - 160-2 meters. See: <http://hflink.com>.
- 14 Oct - EU Autumn Sprint - CW, 80-20 meters. See: www.eusprint.com.
- 14 Oct - Bill Windle QSO Party - CW, 160-2 meters. See: www.firstclasscw.org.uk.
- 14 Oct - FISTS Fall Sprint - CW, 80-10 meters. See: www.fists.org.
- 14-15 Oct - ARRL International EME Contest - 50-1296 MHz. See: <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2006/eme.html>.
- 14-15 Oct - Pennsylvania QSO Party - CW, Phone, PSK31, RTTY, 160-10 meters. See: www.pennsylvania-qso.net/paqso.html.
- 14-15 Oct - Oceania DX Contest - CW, 160-10 meters. See: www.oceaniadxcontest.com.
- 15 Oct - North American RTTY Sprint - 80-20 meters. See: www.ncjweb.com.
- 15 Oct - Asia-Pacific Sprint - CW, 20-15 meters. See: <http://jsfc.org/apsprint>.
- 16 Oct - RSGB 21/28 MHz Contest - CW, 15 and 10 meters. See: www.rsgbhfcc.org.
- 21 Oct - Delaware Valley VHF FM Simplex Contest - 144, 220, 440 simplex frequencies. See: <http://harenet.org>.
- 21-22 Oct - USI W/VE Islands QSO Party - CW/Digital/SSB, 160-6 meters. See: http://members.cox.net/usi1/contest_rules.html.
- 21-22 Oct - QRP ARCI Fall QSO Party - CW, 160-10 meters. See: www.qrparci.org.
- 21-22 Oct - Worked All Germany - CW/SSB, 80-10 meters. See: www.darc.de/referate/dx/tedeg.htm.
- 21-22 Oct - JARTS WW RTTY Contest - 80-10 meters. See: www.edsoftz.com/JARTS.
- 22-23 Oct - Illinois QSO Party - CW/Phone, 160-2 meters. See: www.w9awe.org/ILQP2006.html.
- 28-29 Oct - CQ World Wide DX Contest - SSB, 160-10 meters. See: www.cqww.com.
- 28-29 Oct - 10-10 International CW/Digital Contest - 10 meters. See: www.ten-ten.org.

Sonoma County Radio Amateurs, Inc. Membership Application

Please Print Clearly New [] Renewal []

Name _____ Call Sign _____ License Class _____ Date _____

Address _____ H Phone _____ W Phone _____

City/State _____ Zip _____ E-Mail _____

ARRL Member? Yes [] No []

Dues & Fees: (SCRA dues year is 3/1/05 to 2/28/06)

Individual / Associate Member	\$24 (\$6.00/qtr)
Family Membership	\$36 (\$9.00/qtr)
Under 18 Membership	\$18 (\$3.00/qtr)
Badge	\$10

Payment Calculations: Make checks payable to SCRA

Dues - Full Year	\$ _____
Dues - Prorated _____ Qtrs. x \$ _____ /qtr	\$ _____
Badge	\$ _____
Other - _____	\$ _____
Donation	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Badge Information

Call Sign _____
First Name _____
City _____

Mail to: SCRA, P.O. Box 116, Santa Rosa, CA 95402

OCTOBER 2006 CALENDAR OF EVENTS						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4 7:00 PM SCRA Meeting Luther Burbank Art & Garden Center 2050 Yukon Ave., Santa Rosa	5	6 7:30 PM Alvin ARC Meeting, Alto Clubhouse, 27 Shell Road, Mill Valley	7 10:00 AM ROYARC Meeting Rad Oak Victory Ship, Point Richmond Directions: www.sredockvictory.org
8	9	10 7:30 PM Hamden Wireless Association Building 549, Hamilton Field, Nevada	11 7:00 PM REDXA Meeting Mister McGee's Restaurant, Petaluma 6:30 PM SCRA Board of Directors Meeting (note date change)	12	13 PACIFIC CON	14 PACSON
15 PAC CON	16	17	18 7:30 PM VMARC Meeting McDougal Hall, Sonoma Dist. Center, Glen Ellen	19	20 8:00 PM SFARC Meeting Veteran's Administration Medical Center, Auditorium of Bldg. 7, 42nd & Clement St., San Francisco	21 FOX HUNT PICNIC HOWARTH 2006
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Sonoma County Radio Amateurs, Inc.
P.O. Box 116
Santa Rosa, California
95402-0116

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Short Skip

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President's Message

by
John Felton KE5RI
SCRA President

When I was a kid my uncle Sandy used to play a five string guitar. One of his favorite songs was "THE FOX", originally sung by Peter, Paul and Mary. I have taken some liberty in modifying the lyrics to fit our upcoming event.

*The ham drove out to chilly place,
he hurried along to keep up the pace,
for he'd many a mile to go that day,
before he hid the Fox, Oh,
the Fox, Oh, the Fox, Oh,
yes, he'd many a mile to go that day
before for he hid the Fox.*

The Ham: Name and Call is highly classified. (No, even if leaked, it won't be published by the New York Times)

The Fox: Hidden transmitter (2 meters)

When: Saturday, October 14th at Howarth Park

Time: Fox Hunt begins at 10AM - Family fun and Picnic Lunch to follow.

Food: BBQ Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Fox Burgers, potluck (sign-ups at the next meeting).

In preparation for this event, we will be building "cheap" DF yagi antennas at the October membership meeting. Please refer to Brian Torr's recent e-mail regarding construction details. Also

at the October meeting we will kick off the campaign for election of officers for the Year 2007. The election itself is conducted at the November Membership meeting. As your President two years running, I will only be serving on the Boards as Past President. Please be thinking of who you would like to serve the Club during the coming year.

John, KE5RI

October Meeting Program

Fox Hunt Antenna Construction Party October 4, 2006

In preparation for the Foxhunt at the club picnic, the program for our meeting on October 4, will be building fox hunt antennas. The antennas are made from PVC pipe and steel measuring tape. For a preview of the design, visit the following website:

http://home.att.net/~jleggio/projects/rdf/tape_bm.htm

SCRA will provide materials for several antennas. If you would like to bring some of the materials, that would be great, too.

Hope to see you all there!

73, Brian Torr, N6IIV

Hams Meet After 35 Years

by Lew King, W5LEW w5lew@arrl.net
August 30, 2006 Courtesy, ARRL Website

It's always fun to put a face to the voice and the call sign. But what if that "voice" lives several thousand miles away?

It all started in 1970. A lady in my church had a nephew in Czechoslovakia looking for someone to write to in the United States; he was also a ham radio operator. I was a new ham myself, after being a shortwave listener (SWL) for many years. I had a pen-pal in the Netherlands when I was a young child, so I jumped at the opportunity to have a new pen-pal who was also a ham.

Her nephew's name was Martin Kumpost, OK1MCW, a
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