

JANUARY 2007 CALENDAR OF EVENTS						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3 7:00 PM SCRA Meeting Luther Burbank Art & Garden Center 2050 Yulupa Ave., Santa Rosa	4	5 7:30 PM Main ARC Meeting, Alto Chubbouse, 27 Shell Road, Mill Valley	6 10:00 AM ROVARC Meeting Red Oak Victory Ship, Point Richmond Directions: www.sreodakvictory.org
7	8	9 7:30 PM Hamilton Wireless Association Building 549, Hamilton Field, Nevada	10 7:00 PM REDXA Meeting Mister McGoo's Restaurant, Petaluma 6:30 PM SCRA Board of Directors Meeting (note date change)	11	12 8:00 PM SFARC Meeting Veteran's Administration Medical Center, Auditorium of Bldg. 7, 42nd & Clement St., San Francisco	13
14	15	16	17 7:30 PM VMARC Meeting McDouggill Hall, Sonoma Dev. Center, Glen Ellen	18	19	20
21	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

The Newsletter of
Sonoma County Radio Amateurs, Inc.

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VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1

JANUARY 2007



President's Message

by
Dave Harrison, W6IBC
SCRA President

Greetings, and Happy New Year! It's a time when we announce our best intentions, fond hopes, or unrealistic expectations: aka New Year's resolutions. I have several: For sure, I'm going to be more involved with ham radio in 2007. Hope to burnish my stale CW skills and use some Morse Code on the ham airwaves this next year. Also I'll be checking into more ARES and NTS nets than before. My workbench has a number of interesting projects, and I will be keeping my soldering iron warm (but I'm just beginning to get used to using lead-free solder and surface-mount components). I'm also going to try to complete Level III, the last segment of the ARRL's Emergency Communications series. If you have some time on your hands, and you haven't tried one of these ARRL on-line courses yet, I can tell you from personal experience that they are really well thought out. For old fogies like me, on-line training and education over the internet is a new experience, and a satisfying one at that. I hope you will resolve to focus on an aspect of ham radio to increase your activity and/or hone your skills in some way that brings you enjoyment and personal satisfaction from this wonderful hobby.

With the New Year also arrives a new leadership team and Board of Directors at SCRA. In 2007 we plan to present a wide variety of interesting subjects at our monthly meetings, and conduct a number of field activities and social events, including and beyond Field Day and the second annual Fox Hunt, that we hope will engage you and reward your participation.

Our first 2007 club meeting will feature a presentation explaining "IRLP" a.k.a. Internet-Radio Linking Project. Jeff, KK6JAB, and Rich, KF6SZA, have collaborated to add IRLP capability to the KF6SZA 440 MHz repeater. This should be an exciting presentation, and we hope to

see all of you at the meeting.

Looking back, I want to thank John, KE5RI, and his board of directors, for the excellent stewardship of our club over the last two years, particularly in connection with solving the problem regarding repeater coordination. Looking forward, your continued and (hopefully) increased level of participation in SCRA is a goal I'm going to be working very hard to foster. Please share your ideas with us concerning activities you'd like SCRA to undertake in 2007. Let's have some fun together. Again, Happy New Year; please get on the air; and, we'll "see you down the logbook".

73, Dave Harrison, W6IBC
SCRA President

January Meeting Announcement: IRLP

Do you know what "IRLP" stands for? It means the "Internet-Radio Linking Project", and we're going to learn more about this exciting new technology at our January 3rd, 2007 meeting. Jeff, KK6JAB, and Rich, KF6SZA, have collaborated to install IRLP on the KF6SZA 440 MHz repeater.

The IRLP uses a Voice-Over-IP (VoIP) streaming software called Speak Freely. Speak Freely is very similar to other VoIP software packages (such as Microsoft NetMeeting and VocalTec Iphone) with one difference... It runs under Linux. If you'd like to learn more before our next meeting, check out their website at www.irlp.net.

So, mark your (new) calendars, and plan to attend. In the meanwhile happy Holidays and New Year. See you at our meeting in January.

VE Session Report

December 9, 2006

SCRA sponsored a VE session on December 9 at the Blood Bank of the Redwoods. We had 7 candidates and 6 volunteer examiners. Even a brief power outage did not hamper the results. Three candidates earned their technician class licenses. Congratulations to Eddie Alexander, K16HBC, Robert Case, K16HBD, and Daniel Dyer, K16HBE. Two more, Larry Lewis, K16GWA, and Luther Winters, K16GIM, upgraded to General. One candidate, James Page, K16GON, earned element for the General class written element.

My thanks to the VEs that helped with this session: John Breckenridge, WB6FRZ, Jeff Basham, KK6JAB, Bill Hillendahl, KH6GJV, Jim Walden, W6ESJ, and Dave Harrison, W6IBC.

Sincerely, Brian Torr, N6IY, VE Liaison

2007 Club Officers

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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

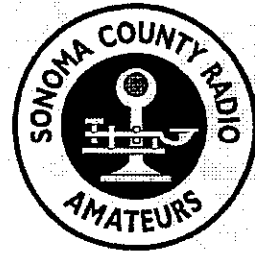
Remember to check in to the SCRA net each **Tuesday** evening on the **147.315+(PL 88.5)** repeater at **7:00 PM**. Announcements are made of upcoming SCRA and other amateur radio activities in the area and what is listed in Hank's Swap Shop. You will also hear the weekly *Amateur Radio Newsline* broadcast.

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For more information, Contact the Editor

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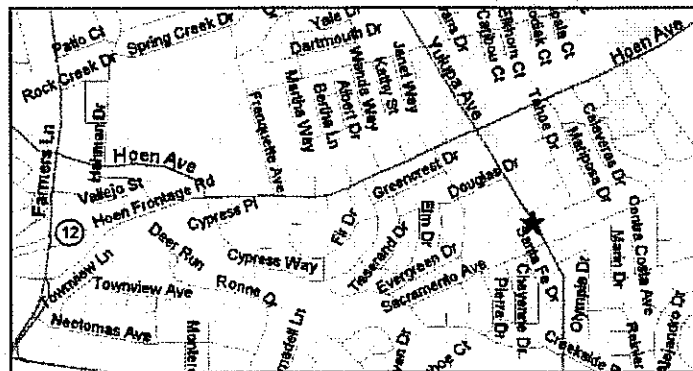


SCRA Club Meetings

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

Next meeting is Wednesday, January 3rd 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. I hope that everyone had a great holiday break. Time to get back to contesting! Big 160 meter contests and Winter Field Day this month. Anyone up for operating in the mud? Happy DX'ing!

- 31 Dec-1 Jan - ARRL Straight Key Night - CW, all bands.
See: <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2007/skn.html>.
- 1 Jan - New Years Snowball Contest - CW/SSB, 80 meters.
See: www.qsl.net/eu1eu/index_e.htm.
- 1 Jan - SARTG New Year RTTY Contest - 80-40 meters.
See: www.sartg.com/contest/nyrules.htm.
- 1 Jan - AGCW Happy New Year Contest - CW, 80-20 meters. See: www.agcw.de.
- 6-7 Jan - ARRL RTTY Roundup - 80-10 meters.
See: <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2007/rtty.html>.
- 6-7 Jan - EUCW 160 Meter Contest - CW.
See: www.uft.net/articles.php?lng=fr&pg=22.
- 7 Jan - Kid's Day - Phone, 20-2 meters.
See: <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/ead/kd-rules.html>.
- 7 Jan - DARC 10 Meter Contest - CW/SSB.
See: www.darc.de/referate/dx/fedcz.htm.
- 13 Jan - 070 PSKFest - 80-10m.
See: www.podxs.com/html/pskfest.html.
- 13-14 Jan - North American QSO Party - CW, 160-10 meters.
See: www.ncjweb.com/naqprules.php.
- 13-14 Jan - Winter Field Day - all modes, 160-10 meters.
See: www.spar-hams.org/contests/winterfd/index.php.

- 13-14 Jan - Midwinter Contest - CW/SSB, 80-10-meters.
See: www.qsl.net/pi4ylc/Engels/midwinter%20contest.htm.
- 13-14 Jan - Hunting Lions in the Air - CW/SSB, 80-10 meters.
See: www.sarl.org.za/public/contests/contestrules.asp.
- 18 Jan - NAQCC Monthly Straight Key Sprint - CW, 80-20 meters.
See: www.arm-tek.net/~yoel.
- 20 Jan - LZ Open Championship - CW, 80-40 meters.
See: www.linkove.com/lz-open-contest/rules/rules.htm.
- 20 Jan - International United Teenager Contest - CW/SSB, 80-10 meters.
See: www.sk3bg.se/contest/utcont.htm.
- 20-21 Jan - North American QSO Party - SSB, 160-10 meters.
See: www.ncjweb.com/naqprules.php.
- 20-21 Jan - HA DX Contest - CW/SSB, 160-10 meters. See: www.mrasz.hu.
- 20-21 Jan - UK DX RTTY Contest - 80-10 meters. See: www.ukdx.scotnam.net.
- 20-21 Jan - ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes - all modes, 6 meters and up.
See: <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2007/jan-vhf-ss.html>.
- 25 Jan - NAQCC Special 160 Meters Straight Key Sprint - CW, 160 meters.
See: www.arm-tek.net/~yoel.
- 27-28 Jan - CQ WW 160 Meter Contest - CW.
See: www.cq-amateur-radio.com/index.html.
- 27-28 Jan - BARTG RTTY Sprint - 80-10-meters. See: www.bartg.demon.co.uk.
- 27-28 Jan - REF French Contest - CW, 80-10 meters. See: www.ref-union.org/concours.
- 27-28 Jan - UBA Contest - SSB, 80-10 meters. See: www.uba.be.
- 28-29 Jan - Classic Exchange - AM/SSB, 160-2 meters.
See: <http://qsl.asti.com/CX>.

Sonoma County Radio Amateurs, Inc. Membership Application

Please Print Clearly New [] Renewal []

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Address _____ H Phone _____ W Phone _____

City/State _____ Zip _____ E-Mail _____

ARRL Member? Yes [] No []

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 Volney Davis, at Officers Vets
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 eric@hamradio.com

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 mark@hamradio.com

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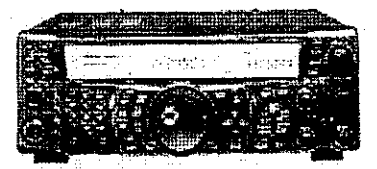
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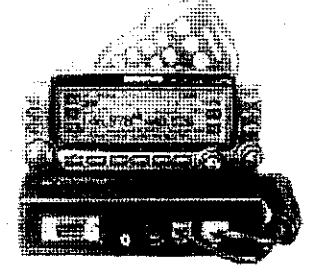
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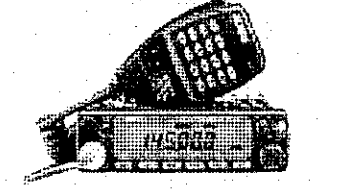
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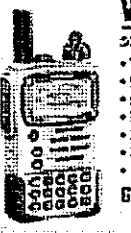


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Morse Code Decision
 Sung to the tune of "Mr. Ed"

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 And no one can talk with Morse of course,
 That is, of course, unless the course is taught
 by A-R-R-L.

Go right to the source and ask about Morse,
 We'll give you a program that you'll endorse,
 You'll always stay on a steady course,
 Contact A-R-R-L.

Phone ops yakkity yak a streak and waste
 your time of day,
 But Morse operators will never "speak" unless
 they have something to say

A ham is a ham, of course, of course,
 And some will talk 'til their "voice" is hoarse;
 Would you rather sound like a horse's a--?
 Well why not learn this: "dot-dit-dit-dit-dash"

A gem from Joe Shea,
 of the HQ's Production staff
 via Rich Freitas KF6SZA

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Untrained Third Party Traffic

by Rich Freitas KF6SZA
Sonoma County ARES
District Emergency Coordinator

The following is an excerpt from an article by Dave Thorne, K6SOJ, editor of EmComm Monthly.

Sooner or later, every emcomm operator will find themselves in a position where they need to handle a piece of third-party traffic from an operator that is unfamiliar with the proper procedures. It may be on voice or CW, or you may be monitoring a calling or watch frequency, or just tuning across the band and hear a station asking for anyone to respond and accept a message. The calling station may be foreign or within your own country and language differences and/or accents may make communication difficult. If you respond and make contact, here are a few tips that may be of value:

1. If this happens during a net, it is better if the NCS asks for an operator (that can hear the calling station) to volunteer to move to another frequency and handle the traffic. REMEMBER: The station that is to RECEIVE the traffic is the one who picks the exact frequency and calls the station that has the traffic to send.
2. You will need plenty of patience. An untrained operator may not use ITU phonetics and prowords (if on voice), or standard Q signals and prosigns (if on CW).
3. If you decide to accept the traffic, avoid making any on-the-air criticism of their lack of knowledge and preparedness.
4. Consider it to be a learning experience for them and a teaching experience for yourself.

After you have established contact and both stations have identified and given their location, make sure that the other station's country is on the approved list for third party traffic. If it is an EMERGENCY message ... do not waste time with this! Ask the calling operator the name, the complete address, and the telephone number (if available) of the addressee; be sure you get it correct. Have the sending operator say what the message is; you may have to help to compose or format it. This is no different from what a counter person does, except you are doing it over the air. Then, verbally obtain the signature and, if a reply is requested, you must obtain the signer's address or other means of contact.

Of utmost importance is the correct establishment of the PREAMBLE.

1. In these situations YOU then become the originating station since you are the first station to format and transmit the message as a RADIOGRAM.
2. Assign the message a number per your normal procedure.
3. Assign the message a precedence (Routine, Welfare, Priority, or EMERGENCY).
4. Assign handling instructions (HX) if appropriate.
5. Your call sign (or the station where you are operating) is the station or origin.
6. Complete the "word" count and fill in the check.
7. Fill in time if appropriate. UTC (ZULU) is recommended. This is tricky because the time of origin (when you accepted the message) may be somewhat later than the time the message was actually originated. If the message has some time specific requirement, consider stating that clearly in the text.

8. Fill in the date. Again, UTC (ZULU) is recommended; it must match the time.

Make sure that the message correctly states what is to be said. Read (or send) it all back if necessary. Again ... you have assumed the role of a counter person. Finally, ask the other operator if there is anything else you can do to help and reassure them that you will forward the message. Consider making a schedule in a day or two in case a service message is needed.

On phone you will hear all sorts of "phonetics". Some may be easy to understand ... others may be confusing. Some "bogus phonetics" may be nearly standard (ITU) phonetics (e.g. - "FOX" is commonly used in place of FOXTROT, but FOX is a "soft" sound that could easily be mistaken another word). Another common example is that KILOWATT is often used improperly for the proper KILO. I once heard a ham say, "I don't have time to learn all these new phonetics!" Excuse me...the current ITU RADIOTELEPHONE PHONETICS were adopted as the INTERNATIONAL STANDARD in 1956! That's 50 years ago! How long should it take to learn twenty-six words?

The ARES 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. Board of Directors Meeting, December 13, 2006 Minutes

Board Members Present: John Felton, KE5RI; Kevin, K6BSG; Rich Freitas, KF6SZA; Fred, KQ6OB; and Brian, N6IYY. Jeff, KK6JAB, was absent. Also present: President-Elect, Dave, W6IBC, and Directors-Elect, Bob, KG6ZDN, and Pat, KG6JSL.

1. Call to Order; Verification of Quorum - The meeting was called to order by President John Felton, KE5RI, at 7:20 pm. The meeting was held at President-Elect Dave Harrison's home. A quorum was present in that five voting board members were present.
2. Approval of Minutes - It was moved by Kevin, K6BSG, that the minutes of the previous Board 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, N6IYY, reported bank balances. It was motioned by Brian, N6IYY, that we pay current bills; the motion passed.
 - e. Directors -
 - i) Fred, KQ6OB, - No report.
 - ii) Jeff, KK6JAB, - Absent, no report.
4. Committee Reports
 - a. Activities - No report.
 - b. ARES - Rich, KF6SZA, reported on the status of the antenna pole at Red Cross. Rich, KF6SZA, agreed to continue as the BoD ARES Committee chairman.
 - c. Newsletter - No report. There was continued discussion regarding the challenge of producing a quality email version of the newsletter.
 - d. Public Service - There was discussion regarding the participation in the memorial bike ride for Kathy Hiebel.
 - e. VE Session - No report.
 - f. Repeater - Net Control Operators - 1/02: Fred, KQ6OB; 1/09: Brian, N6IYY; 1/16: John, KE5RI; 1/23: Dave, W6IBC; 1/30: Kevin, K6BSG. John, KE5RI mentioned that there appear to be some receiver problems on 2M at English Hill. John, KE5RI, agreed to continue as Repeater Chairman.
5. Unfinished Business -
 - a. The inventory is still not completed. Fred, KQ6OB, volunteered to help.
 - b. Comm Van - There was discussion regarding what to do with the vehicle compared to our needs, uses, etc., and the fact that emcomm needs have changed. The BoD will estimate the costs to complete and maintain the vehicle before any decisions are made.
6. New Business -
 - a. Audit - There has not been a formal financial audit in a few years; Brian, N6IYY, and Pat, KG6JSL, will prepare an audit.
 - b. Website - Jeff, KK6JAB, who has been the webmaster for the past years, will be working out of the area. Bob, KG6ZDN, volunteered to be the new webmaster.
 - c. There was general discussion regarding the logistics of holding the membership meetings and topics for the upcoming BoD planning retreat.
7. Adjournment - It was moved by pat, KG6JSL, to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 pm. The motion passed.

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

Annual SCRA Christmas Party
Happy Holidays

Recent FCC Amateur Radio Rules Changes

from ARRL sources
via Dave Harrison, W6IBC

The FCC has announced it will modify the Amateur Radio Service rules, eliminating Morse code exam requirements. This change is said to bring the United States into conformance with a worldwide policy to eliminate Morse Code proficiency as a condition of amateur radio operation on the high frequency bands. This policy was adopted by the World Radio Conference at its 2003 meeting.

Upon implementation presently expected sometime in January or February, 2007, the rule changes will grant limited HF operating privileges to Technician licensees on 80, 40, 15, and 10 meters.

The ARRL believes eliminating the Morse Code examination element is "a great opportunity to encourage Technician licensees to upgrade." Once the new rules take effect, Technicians can upgrade to General by passing the Element 3 written exam and to Amateur Extra by also passing the Element 4 written exam. No Morse code test will be required.

In the meanwhile on December 15, 2006, FCC rules changing high frequency mode allocations took effect. The Amateur Radio phone band changes affect only the 80/75, 40 and 15-meter bands.

On 75 meters, Generals may operate on phone from 3800 to 4000 kHz -- an increase of 50 kHz, Advanced class licensees from 3700 to 4000 kHz -- an increase of 75 kHz, and Amateur Extras from 3600 to 4000 kHz -- a substantial increase of 150 kHz.

On 40 meters, the Advanced and Extra class phone band spans 7125 to 7300 kHz -- an increase of 25 kHz, while Generals now may operate phone from 7175 to 7300 kHz -- an increase of 50 kHz.

On 15 meters, Generals now have phone privileges from 21,275 to 21,450 kHz -- an increase of 25 kHz.

In addition, Novice and Tech Plus (Technician with Element 1 credit) licensees now may operate in the former General class CW allocations on 80, 40 and 15 meters. Novice/Tech Plus licensees still may run no more than 200 W PEP on those HF CW segments, but the FCC did away with similar power limitations on HF segments for higher-class licensees, with the exception of the 200 W PEP power limitation already in place on 30 meters and the 50 W ERP restriction on 60 meters.