

ALL EARS

www.earsclub.org

Official Newsletter of the Escondido Amateur Radio Society - N6WB

August 2007

GENERAL MEETINGS

EARS meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month at the Salvation Army building at 1301 Las Villas Way, in Escondido. Come early and chat!

Thursday, August 9

Getting Youth Interested in Ham Radio

Carl Gardenias, who will be running for the position of ARRL Southwestern Division Director, will host a roundtable, discussing ideas he has learned to get youth interested in Amateur Radio.

ALL EARS

The official bulletin of the
Escondido Amateur Radio Society

An e-mail subscription to All Ears is FREE! You don't need to be a member. Just drop a note to:

John Musselman, N6EP, Editor
n6ep@arrl.net

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The deadline to submit material for the bulletin is by the previous month's Board meeting.

FOR SALE

by Nick, KK6TV

MFJ-1796 Vertical MultiBand antenna. It covers 2m, 6m, 10m, 15m, 20m and 40m. I am selling this for a 3rd party so cannot comment personally on its performance. It appears to basically be a multiband vertical dipole. You can view the manual at:

www.mfjenterprises.com/man/pdf/MFJ-1796.pdf

Make me a offer! Will deliver if local!

EVENT CALENDAR

Aug 9

Aug 18

Aug 25

Aug 28

EARS Monthly Meeting, 7:30 p.m.

Ears Monthly Breakfast, 8:30 a.m.

VE Testing, 9 a.m.

EARS Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

Sept 8-9

Sept 13

Sept 15

Sept 25

Sept 29

ARRL SW Division Convention

EARS Monthly Meeting, 7:30 p.m.

Ears Monthly Breakfast, 8:30 a.m.

EARS Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

VE Testing, 9 a.m.



Dirk, N6SUN, and daughter Megan help with chef duty at the a EARS annual picnic. Congratulations, Megan, on getting your ticket!

-- photo courtesy Harry, W6YOO.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Dirk, N6SUN, President

Hi All,

What a week it has been for me. After cramming for a little over two weeks, Megan took the Technician class exam at the last Escondido test session and passed. It was a proud moment for me. I remember watching her play soccer last year and she volunteered to be goalie. It was the final play off game and it came down to a score of 1 to 1. As soccer fans know, that means a decision based on penalty kicks. As the girls took turns standing in the goal, a few hit the goal bar, but Megan also blocked a couple. In the end, it was the two out of five kicks that she blocked that earned the game for her team. That was also a proud moment. And I have to say, for all the talk about dumbing down the test, it required some serious effort on my part to explain the FCC rules, frequency relationships, antennas, and essentials of electronics to an 11 year old.

Now with summer in full swing, I have been making my way to Cruisin' Grand on Friday evenings... I visit with Gary, W6BRV, and his wife, Linda. I see many people including ham friends, clients, and parents of boy and girl scouts... I usually take the VX-7R with me so that I can check into the N6LXX Six Meter amateur radio net (which is a well-run, informative net). Then, out of the blue I decided to attend the local Dalton's car show. To my surprise, at the end of the show, my car received one of the judge's picks trophies. While my car isn't perfect for sure, it is nice that it gets some recognition every now and again.

Here is a short product review for you all... While I was purchasing the study guide for Megan at HRO, I noticed that they had the new Yaesu VX-3R in stock. Well, I just couldn't resist getting one of those. It is very similar to the VX-2R with a few refinements. Most notably, you can listen to commercial AM or FM stations while ALSO monitoring your favorite amateur repeater. Let me tell you, Gary, KA6OCA, has interrupted more than a few good jazz songs... Kidding aside, this is a very handy feature. As far as downside, I've noted a couple... Mine has a charging issue where it doesn't fully charge the battery and I've noticed others have this problem as it is discussed on the VX-3R Yahoo group. It comes close, but the display says 'CHGERR' when it is done. Also, the VX-2R is actually more sensitive on the 76 through 108 Mhz band. The commercial FM part works okay, but definitely not as sensitive. AM is quite a bit more sensitive with the addition of a ferrite bar. Other than

(continued on page 3)

EARS Club Officers for 2007

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AWARDS AND QSLING, PART XXXVIII

by Harry, W6YOO

Bummer! Just as we are starting to believe that it can't get any worse, it does. What I am referring to is where we are in the sunspot cycle. For the past few months it was everyone's belief that we had hit, or would hit, rock bottom during the month of July and then slowly start the long progression upwards in Cycle 24 to where we would be able to work the world with one watt and a wet noodle as an antenna.

Countries"; that is, the number of DX entities confirmed on each band, 10 meters through 160 meters, either by QSL card or Logbook of the World. I have posted the top four places here. The maximum possible score, given that there are 337 current DXCC entities is 3033!

What amazed me are the scores for 10 and 160 meters. I am an avid 10 meter enthusiast and my total on that band is only 285 and on 160 meters is a mere 29. Don't these folks have another life? Surely they must spend every waking hour on the

TOPBANDS 01/08/2007

NR	CALL	10	12	15	17	20	30	40	80	160	Total
1	W4DR	334	328	336	334	336	333	335	334	308	2978
2	K2TQC	334	334	337	336	337	333	336	334	295	2976
3	N4WW	333	326	335	333	337	330	335	331	300	2960
4	OK1RD	330	325	337	333	337	332	334	329	302	2959

Now comes a new prognostication that we really won't hit bottom until early in 2008. Of course they really won't know until six months after the event occurs. So was it this past July, or will it be next year? Only time will tell.

In the meantime, the "Top Band" award announcement has been made and the results are phenomenal! This listing appears in the 425 DX Bulletin and gives the top performers in DXing in total "Band

radio! What might be interesting is to see how old these folks are and how many years they have been chasing DX?

Those of you that have heard my presentation entitled DXing 101 may remember my admonition that if one is to pursue DXing that keeping a divorce attorney on retainer might be a good thing to consider.

Oh by the way, I just received my annual update back from the ARRL and my Band Country total is now 2025 so I am over 950 away from the leaders. Come on sunspots! For more, see www.425dxn.org.

Remember, in whatever race you are in, do your best to get to the finish line. There's an old saw that says: "Nobody remembers who finishes second." Well, guess what? Not many of you will even remember who finished first? Just finish!

See you in the pileups! 73, Harry, W6YOO

PRESIDENT'S CORNER (cont'd)

those few items, it is another great release from Yaesu. The Yaesu retails at \$189. If you have a new radio and would like to submit a brief review, forward it to the newsletter editor. This provides first hand experiences to other club members about the new equipment that is available in our hobby.

We have a special guest coming to the meeting as our program this week. Carl Gardenias from Orange County will host a roundtable discussing ideas he has learned to get youth interested in amateur radio. Carl is very passionate about Amateur Radio and will be running for the position of ARRL Southwestern Division Director. I saw him speak at the ARRL convention last year. And the new ham Megan said she would be there with me... Come early and visit with the other club members.

73, Dirk

HAM RADIO OUTLET

Open 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Monday through Saturday

5375 Kearny Villa Road, San Diego
560-4900 or Toll Free 1-800-854-6046

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DXPEDITION CA STYLE

by Nick, KK6TV

In anticipation of this year's CQ World Wide Worked all Prefixes contest, I decided to try something different. Why not mix mountain biking and ham radio? Why not take it a step further and do a little QRP (QRP is low power, usually 5 watts or less)?

Matt, KI6HEB, and I try to get out about once a week or more to try out some of the local trails. One which we frequent is a trail off the western edge of Daley Ranch near Dixon Lake. There is a nice group of large rocks appropriately named Boulder Loop with an excellent view of the ocean on a clear day. So we figured, why not grab my ICOM IC-703, a 12V gel cell battery pack, about 30 feet of RG-58, and a dipole, stuff it in a backpack and hit the trail.

I had a 10 meter dipole stashed away in a drawer. After dusting it off, I carefully cut some 15 meter and 20 meter extensions with alligator clips and had a simple portable Tri Bander. I didn't think the backpack was going to be too heavy, but after I added a few tools, a jacket and a couple of bottles of water it weighed in at over 20 pounds and I quickly felt the extra weight on the trip up. My bike also felt the extra weight as Matt pointed out to me my tires looked as though they needed air. But you can't spend time putting air in your tires when you've got DX to work.

About half way up the hill I decided to share some of the weight so I handed Matt the battery pack to carry. He had offered to take it earlier, but you can't be taking time to adjust the weight when you've got DX to work! As I was digging through the backpack to hand off the battery, a woman who was walking two huge dogs passed by. She noticed the battery and electronics equipment and, from the look on her face, I would guess she suspected we were up to no good. Her dogs were not willing to stop barking or growling at us long enough to explain to her what we were doing so we quickly moved on. If there was a SWAT team waiting for us when we got back, I guess I would have understood.

The contest started at 0000 Zulu (1700 local). We had expected to start at that time, but actually arrived there around 0020. As I was climbing off the bike, I noticed a rattlesnake on the ground which Mutt luckily (and unknowingly) stepped over. The snake was devouring. I suspect that was his first meal of the year as I guess he just came out of hibernation. We set up about 10 feet from him and he was gone when we left. You can't worry about rattlesnakes when you've got DX to work!

We quickly set up the 703 on top of an 8 foot rock,

rolled up the coax and laid out the dipole on the adjacent brush. Somewhere I had lost half of the 15 and 20 meter extensions, so I stuck the 15m extension on one end and the 20 on the other. The autotuner in the 703 handled it just fine.

A quick scan of 10 meters revealed a few active stations, but, after dropping down to 15 and hearing lots of activity, we knew this was where we wanted to stay! The first several attempts yielded no response, then suddenly KV4T answered our call. KK6TV ur 59 041! Awesome. It seemed that we had to struggle a bit for that first QSO so I decided to go into the menu and verify the power. For that first QSO we were running 1 Watt into a dipole about 8 feet (plus or minus brush) in the air. So I decided to push things and crank the power up to 5 watts. Over the next 2 hours we managed to work WN6K in Vista, a few JAs, ZM2M from New Zealand, NH7O from Hawaii and a few other stateside calls.

KE6PY from Escondido also attempted to contact us. He claims we were S2 but we never heard him. After a few hours it was dark, wind was coming up and it was getting a bit cool. We were very happy with the contacts we made, packed things up and headed down the hill. Not bad for the bottom of the sunspot cycle. Now, we just have to see what we can do for that next contest!

VK FOUNDATION LICENSE

by Lionel, VK3NM

A new class of license been introduced by the ACMA for Australia to boost the number of Hams which has been decreasing over the years with average age increasing.

This Foundation class, with a lower level of theory/regs plus a simple practical test, is proving popular with young children, XYLs etc. Our numbers of Hams are increasing with some upgrading to a higher level, i.e. Standard or Advance.

Call sign allocation are of four letters VK*FAAA to FZZZ eg VK3FJYL with exemptions that could form certain 4 letter offensive F words.

Foundation Licensees can use 3.5 to 3.7, 7.0 to 7.3, 21.0 to 21.45, 28.0 to 29.7 with 10 watts output SSB, AM or CW and 10 watts FM on 2 and 70cm. So have a look for these Guys - there are plenty of them looking for DX.

JULY BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

information provided by Sam, N6SD

1. Steve, W6TAN, reported he has obtained an Excel program for the database but hasn't received a copy of the club roster yet.

2. Marvin, WB6PKK, reported there has been no progress on the 8 bay dipole but the new 3 port controller has arrived and he is learning how to program it.

3. Harry, W6YOO, reported that the next ARES breakfast will include training for the EM test August 18th. The ARRL Convention will be September 8th and 9th at the Torrance Marriott. Miramar will hold a mass casualty drill the third week of September in preparation for the Air Show on October 12, 13, 14. The raffle drawing will be December the 8th. For more information go to www.sdgares.org.

4. Jeff, AE6GM, reported he just received the latest list of about 15 new hams from Harry, W6YOO.

5. John, N6EP, reported for Field Day we did well on

bonus points but poor on contacts. There were 1290 bonus points, 700 CW contacts and 570 Phone contacts and the food was good.

6. The turnout for the picnic was smaller this year but everyone had a good time and the food was good.

7. Steve, W6TAN, will order an updated copy of WriteLog for the Club under the Club's call sign.

8. All the receipts from purchases for the Club need to be turned in to Konrad for reimbursement.

9. A preliminary review of who will be staying on the Board next year indicates there will be openings for vice president and secretary.

10. Sam, N6SD, will make measurements in the radio room in preparation to building cabinetry for the SATERN station.

Escondido Amateur Radio Society Membership Application and Renewal Form

Name _____

Call _____ Class _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone No _____ Date of Birth _____

E-mail Address _____

Date Licensed _____ Expires _____

Member of the following organizations?

ARES _____ ARRL _____

EVAC _____ MARS _____

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Other _____

Membership Rates

One year \$13.00

Family membership \$3.00

Lifetime membership \$130.00

Lifetime membership (family) \$20.00

Mail this form with payment to EARS, PO Box 3243, Escondido, CA 92033, or give it to the treasurer or any other club officer at a regular club meeting.

Membership is from January 1 to December 31. After July 1, membership to the end of the year is ½ the annual fee. Special rates apply for family membership for each additional licensed amateur radio operator in your immediate family and for lifetime membership.

For membership confirmation, include a self-addressed stamped envelope with this form.

GENERAL INFORMATION

CLUB REPEATERS - EARS operates two repeaters in Escondido. The two meter EARS repeater is on 146.88 MHz with a PL of 107.2. The 440 EARS repeater is on 449.240 MHz with a PL of 127.3. Both repeaters are local in nature and primarily serve the immediate Escondido area.

ECHO-LINK - The two meter repeater is tied to the Echo-Link system as node 2846. See the Club website, www.earsclub.org, for information on Echo-Link. There is also a listing of local Echo-Link codes in the members section of the website.

EARS WEB PAGE - EARS is on the Internet. You can read about upcoming activities, get links to other ham radio sites, read back issues of All Ears, or update your call or address. The site is updated regularly. Check it out at www.earsclub.org.

EARS REFLECTOR – is a free service that keeps members up-to-date via e-mail. To get on the reflector, go to the EARS website and click on Yahoo Groups in the site map. If you have any questions, suggestions or comments, e-mail any club officer.

CLUB BADGES - Let everyone know that you are a member of EARS and avoid having them guess what your name is. See Harry, W6YOO, to obtain a badge. The price is \$8.00

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR CALLSIGN - Please let us know if you change your address, callsign, telephone, license class, e-mail, etc. We want to keep our records up to date. Contact any club officer.

ARRL LETTER - The ARRL Letter, a weekly e-mailing of Amateur Radio related news, is available to ARRL members free of charge directly from ARRL HQ. To subscribe for e-mail delivery, ARRL members first must register on the Members Only Website, www.arrl.org/members. The ARRL Letter is also available to all, free of charge, at www.arrl.org/arrlletter, where it is posted each Friday after it is distributed via e-mail.

SANDARC - EARS is a member of the San Diego Amateur Radio Council, an association of San Diego area Amateur Radio clubs. Among other things, SANDARC runs the local Volunteer Examiner program (SANDARC-VEC), and manages the ARRL Southwestern Division Convention when held in San Diego every fourth year. See www.sandarc.org.

MONTHLY BREAKFAST - EARS members meet socially the third Saturday of each month at the Westside Cafe, on West Ninth Ave. at the corner of Redwood St. at 8:30 a.m.

SUNDAY EVENING NET is every Sunday at 8 p.m. local time. You can get the latest information on club activities there. Tune in to the club repeater at 146.88 MHz, negative offset and PL of 107.2, check in and say hi.

MONTHLY ARES MEETING – The San Diego Section ARES meets on the second Saturday of each month at 8:00 a.m. at Scripps Green Hospital, 10666 North Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla. An all you can eat breakfast buffet is served for \$8.00. The monthly ARES training session follows the breakfast meeting at 10:00 a.m. in the hospital's auditorium and normally lasts approximately one hour. Join ARES by visiting www.sdgares.org. There are no dues. San Diego ARES is an IRS 501(c)3 organization and all donations are tax deductible. Volunteer responders are always needed.

SECTION NEWS – The latest happenings around San Diego are available at www.arrl.org/sections/SDG.html, the official website of the ARRL San Diego Section.

AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE RENEWALS AND CHANGE OF ADDRESS - To renew your license or supply the FCC with a change of address, use NCVEC Form 605 (obtainable from Harry, W6YOO). Attach a photocopy of your license and mail to SANDARC VEC, 5511 Maryland Drive, La Mesa, CA 91942-1519. You must include your FRN Number. There is no charge for this service.

HAM RADIO LICENSE PLATES - All California hams may receive their call sign on their license plate. Use DMV Form REG17A. The cost is \$21.00 and is a one-time fee.

VE TESTING - A SANDARC Volunteer Examiner team administers license examinations on the last Saturday of each month at 9:00 a.m. at the LDS Church, 1917 East Washington Avenue, Escondido, 92025. Contact Harry, W6YOO, at (760) 743-4212 or w6yoo@amsat.org to schedule an appointment.

MILITARY AFFILIATE RADIO SYSTEM - The US Army, the US Air Force, and the US Navy/Marine Corps Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) are looking for a few good men/women. See Harry, W6YOO/AAR9LX for details.