

March 6, 2004



NewsLetter

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The March meeting will be the first Saturday, March 6, 9:00 AM at Fire Station 1 media room, 1605 Martin Luther King at 17th Street, Oakland. The following meeting is April 3.

Special points of interest:

- two omni-directional antennas installed
- Trophy for net control
- Dues deadline March 31
- ARRL course ARECC recommended
- Join ORCA Yahoo Group!

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President's Corner

This past weekend I had the pleasure of visiting the snow and seeing an old, retired friend, **K6KAP**. One of the remarkable things about ham radio is that no matter where you travel, you always have friends. In fact, I met several more hams in Mariposa during the short weekend both on and off the air, people I instantly have something in common with. Of course, the technical side of ham radio is also both useful and fun on any trip. I was able to contact Mach while still two hours away through a high level VHF repeater which made both direction finding and hooking up much easier. Moreover, operating HF from the car in the high country was a blast as



well as watching Mach work stations in the ARRL International DX Contest (CW) at blistering Morse speeds.

Speaking of contests, **WW6OR** will be activated from the EOC following ORCA's March meeting for the SSB weekend of the ARRL International DX Contest. Come join the fun! Learn contesting tricks and techniques while working stations around the world. Those members who played during last fall's CQ World Wide Contest will tell you they had a blast. We'll be keeping an eye

out for ORCA's call sign in the published standings. The fun thing about the ARRL contest is that all DX stations get extra points for working North America so U.S. stations are in big demand.

On another subject, the Chabot project seems to be getting off the ground. We are getting some excellent technical assistance from Emily, **W0EEC**, who has lots of contacts with AM-SAT, et al. She also knows an individual who was instrumental in creating a Canadian exhibit/museum station. This station has contacted the ISS and is regularly heard on the "birds". We are in the process of scheduling a meeting with Chabot to create a MOU to launch the project. There will be more to come on this exciting endeavor.

Hoping u are all meeting new people and making new friends on the ham bands, de **K6JAT**, 73, Jim

March 6 Program

WW6OR will be activated from the EOC following ORCA's March meeting for the SSB weekend of the ARRL International DX Contest. Come join the fun! Learn contesting tricks and techniques while working stations around the world. Field Day planning is on the meeting agenda. Free raffle will be held.

.NOTES FROM ORCA MEETING SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2004

At the beginning of the meeting, Dave **WB6NER** asked for a volunteer to take notes so that the information on what happened at the meeting could be given to the Newsletter editor for the next issue. It is hoped to have a recorder for each meeting in the future. Vail **KE6WPJ** volunteered for this one.

Jim **K6JAT** announced the ARRL International DX Contest that is coming up the first weekend in March, and proposed that this be the activity for the March 6 ORCA meeting. It will follow the March 6 business meeting and go from 10:00 to noon.

He said that progress is being made on setting up stations at the Chabot Space and Science Center and Skyline High School. Brian **W6LL** and Adele **KE6HKY** are working with the Chabot Space Center. Regarding the Skyline High station, it is hoped that ARRL will pick up some of its costs.

Colleen gave a report on a Homeland Security drill to be held in August dealing with transportation security. Four airports in the area will be involved. There will be planning meetings and a tabletop exercise. Oakland is receiving \$7.8 million from the Department of Homeland Security.

Bob **KE6IUE** gave the treasurer's report. The goal is to get a total of 65 members, and we have 42 so far.

Art **W6THD** reported on work done so far on the repeater. There are 3 items he wants to bring to the attention of ORCA members. 1) The 2-meter ID-er covers up voice transmission when it comes on approximately every 9-1/2 minutes. Don't try to talk over it, but wait until it has finished. 2) The time-out timer is set for 3 minutes. At 2-1/2 minutes it makes a sound like a phone ringing. If you hear that, don't key up until the repeater has dropped off the air. (In fact, it's always a good idea to let the repeater drop off the air between transmissions so that other stations can break in.) This protects the repeater in the event that a carrier is locked up on the input frequency. 3) The courtesy tone is at the end, instead of the beginning, of the hang time.

[Update from the Feb. 8 workday: Art (W6THD) writes, "We had quite a successful day with the new antenna installation (with special thanks to our pole-climber **KA6NZB**. We now have two omnidirectional antennas (one for transmit and one for receive) about 40 feet above the ground. First indications are that they have improved our coverage, but we'll get a better idea of how they're working after using them for a week or two."]

Frank **K6UE** is retiring as trustee of the repeater after many years of service. Dave **WB6NER** will take over as trustee.

Dave **WB6NER** distributed a master ORCA calendar for the year with the date of each meeting and events that are planned. Regarding the weekly Thursday nets, it is planned to start more record keeping which will track how many times people have checked in and how often people do Net Control (a trophy is planned for Net Control operators). We will try to get Net Control done from fire stations.

Several people showed what they had in their Go-Bags; some had mostly survival-type items and some mostly radio-type items. 73, Vail **KE6WPJ**

Money and Members

Thanks to all who have renewed already for 2004, and thanks in advance to the rest of you who will do so this month. Before the Treasurer took his winter break in sunnier climes, we had 46 2004 members enrolled, almost 2/3's of our annual goal. Several new policies are being implemented on a trial basis this year.

The revised family membership policy will allow additional household and family HAMS of a full dues paying member to become full members for \$5 for each additional HAM. For another new approach, you can lock in the \$30 dues level for 2005, and save some paper as well, by paying both your 2004 and 2005 dues now.

Finally, to help with our budget and fiscal stewardship, we are asking everyone to **renew by March 31, 2004**. This will allow us to make any necessary budget adjustments early in the year. We'll do outreach before we let your membership lapse, but after the 31st, delinquent members will lose any special privileges and their newsletter subscription. Of course, all will be restored promptly when your dues are paid. Send checks to:
ORCA-KE6IUE, P.O. Box 21305, Oakland, CA 94620

73, Bob **KE6IUE**

ORCA on the web:

www.qsl.net/orca

EmCommWest 2004

EmCommWest 2004 is an ARRL Pacific Division Operating Specialty Convention focusing on Emergency Communications. It is being held on Saturday & Sunday, May 22nd & 23rd in Reno, NV at the Fred W. Traner Middle School. ARRL EmComm & ARECC Courses are offered, as well as a number of speakers including Dan Miller, **K3UFG**, the ARRL ARECC

Course Manager. This year's event is combined with the Reno Spring Ham Swap Meet being held at the same location.

More details can be found on the convention website at <http://www.emcommwest.org/>

The ORCA NewsLetter is published monthly. Any articles can be used with attribution. Articles, news and photos submitted make for a more interesting newsletter. Please submit materials for the April issue by March 13 to Dave KF6EPQ dpm24@cornell.edu or fax to 540-7045. Thank you!

**ORCA on the web:
ORCA Yahoo Group**

http://groups.yahoo.com/orca_races

Sign up!

ORCA Yahoo Group

Would you like to receive email reminders of club events? Be informed of things of interest to the club by email? Or the ability to send email to other members of the club to discuss ORCA just by sending an email to a single address? Then you should take advantage of the ORCA Yahoo mailing list! To join, all you need to do is send an email to KG6DER@arrl.net and ask to be added to the list. The subjects of all emails sent from and through the mailing list are preceded by "[ORCA]" so you know it is from the ORCA list.

By joining the e-mail list, you have free access to a calendar of upcoming ORCA and other Ham events. Also a photo gallery that includes Field Day 2003. Also, handy reference materials (including the Alameda ARES-RACES Instant Trainer in PDF format), an archive of ORCA Newsletters (starting with the August 2003 edition), and a list of interesting Ham websites. You should take full advantage of the ORCA Yahoo Group. Just go to http://groups.yahoo.com/orca_races and request to join.

Now to address some of your possible concerns. All attachments are prevented from going through the list. This will prevent any viruses from accidentally being passed through the list, as well as ensure your mailbox will not be unintentionally over filled by some well meaning person. Membership to the list is restricted, so we won't have random people signing up to the list and sending Spam. Anyone sending Spam through the list will be promptly remove. If you change your mind and want to get off the list, that is very easy as well. If you get need help or get stuck, you can always email KG6DER@arrl.net and ask for help.

Michael E. Hole KG6DER@arrl.net

Attendance February 7

Adele Bertaud	KE6HKY
Mike Cassidy	W6UAB
Francis Clasby	K6UE
Dave Clemes	KG6GTR
Doug Faunt, Jr.	N6TQS
Robert A Firehock	KE6IUE
Dan Grassetti	KD6TWW
Karen Harris	KG6ADB
Read Heath	KF6VBQ
Michael Hole	KG6DER
Marvin J Kay	K6GHE
Joe Kohler	KL7IDY
Sandy Lavine	K06JF
John J Mayerhofer	WB6BYA
Bob Mayes	KE6DVT
Art McLaughlin	W6THD
Norman Morse	WB4RNW
David F Otey	WB6NER
L Vail Palomino	KE6WPJ
Chris Peeples	KE6MQW
Selma Rockett	KG6SXJ
Allen A Sweet	KG6HM
Tom Tazelaar	KG6MAC
James A Tiemstra	K6JAT
Brian Treusch	W6LL
Mark H Violet	N6RCG

*In addition to news and viewing, if you have any events, files, web links, photos or news you would like to share with the other members of the group, you can! It is all included with free membership in the **ORCA Yahoo group.***

>> KG6DER Michael

ARRL's ARECC course

The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) offers the online emergency communications course ARECC in a three tiered level. I recently completed the 8 week Level I class and found it to be a very educational endeavor.

Registration is ongoing on a monthly basis and can be made easy by signing up for notification of registration through the ARRL website www.arrl.org/cce/. The approximate 60 spaces fill up very quickly. I recommend that your registration be completed by 9pm on the Sunday of the registration cycle (12:01 am EST) to avoid being closed out.

The objective of ARECC Level I is to provide a base level of knowledge and skills in emergency Amateur Radio Communications. The class uses a book that is online or can be purchased. The course is broken down into 19 learning units with topics ranging from organizational systems to message handling and net control, to equipment choices and usage. At the end of each unit are 4 to 5 multiple choice questions and 2 to 3 student activities. The activities are essay type questions and the answers are emailed to your assigned mentor. My mentor, Dennis, **K6DF**, responded promptly to each activity answer and we maintained a continuing dialog as the course progressed. I attempted to complete a unit every 2-3 days to avoid a "pileup" at the end of the 8 weeks. At the end of course a student must pass a 25 multiple choice exam in order to graduate. Dennis, **K6DF**, confirmed my passing score and sent the results to ARRL and within 10 days I received a ARRL EMCOMM patch, a certificate of completion suitable for framing and, as an ARRL member, a \$45.00 registration refund check!

As members of ORCA we are fortunate to be able to practice our communication skills through our weekly nets, July 4th fire patrol, SETs, and Field Day activities. The emergency communication courses offered by ARRL can complement the knowledge we gain during each exercise and confirm our goals and commitments. I recommend these courses to all ORCA members. I plan on taking Level II in the near future.

Dave KG6GTR 73

*"The great thing about the class was that all the activities and exercises we do at ORCA were outlined in the book! We are very fortunate to have members such as **WB6NER K6JAT W6THD** to teach us the proper way to do emergency communications." Dave KG6GTR*

The email address to pre-register for an ARRL class is PREREG@ARRL.ORG. You indicate the course you are interested in, your name and call sign and email address.



March 6 program: SSB use in EOC Radio Room

Monthly events

1st Sundays	Livermore Swap meet Las Positas CC
1st Saturdays	ORCA ARES - Oakland OES 9:00
2nd Saturdays	Electronics Flea Market: Sunnyvale
2nd Fridays	East Bay Amateur Radio Club
3rd Fridays	Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club
3rd Fridays	Hayward Radio Club
3rd Wednesdays	Rocky Ridge Repeater Group
4 th Fridays	Alameda Radio Club Assn. (ARCA)

East Bay Amateur Radio Club meets 7:30PM at the
Salvation Army, 4600 Appian Way, El Sobrante.

Hayward Radio Club meets at 1401 West Winton Ave in
Hayward behind Hayward Fire Station 6, next to the
Hayward Air National Guard Base.

Alameda Radio Club Assn. meets 7pm at Building 522
West Midway on Alameda Point.

Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club and the Rocky Ridge
Repeater Group meet at Our Savior Lutheran Church,
1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette.

*Thanks to the many authors of articles in
this month's ORCA NewsLetter!*

ORCA Officers and Board

President:	Jim Tiemstra	K6JAT
Vice Pres.:	Alan Whitman	KQ6TW
Treasurer:	Bob Firehock	KE6IUE
Secretary:	Art McLaughlin	W6THD

Director:	Adele Bertaud	KE6HKY
Director:	Dave Clemes	KG6GTR
Director:	Bill Hardy	KF6VOG
Director:	David Otey	WB6NER
Director:	Brian Treusch	W6LL

Ex-Officio Directors:

ARES Liaison	Mark Violet	N6RCG
Repeater Trustee	Frank Clasby	K6UE

NOTE: The Foothill Flea Market has been re-located to the Lockheed Martin parking lot west of the Satellite Test Center (Blue Cube) for this year starting on March 13th.

Go to <http://www.asvaro.org> for maps, dates and general info. Hope to see you there. Bob
WA6OIW

2004 ORCA Membership Renewal Update

ORCA is making good progress toward full 2004 renewal of 2003 members. That said, there are still 28 members who haven't renewed as of this writing but they have received friendly reminder emails or phone calls. Per the Board's recent vote, members will not be "delinquent" until March 31. As ORCA is undergoing a 100% replacement of repeater equipment, your annual membership revenue is crucial to uninterrupted operations! The best option, of course, is to come to a meeting, re-up, and be eligible for the **meeting's raffle drawing**.

We want to see everyone! 73, **WB6NER**