

ORCA NewsLetter

Oakland Radio Communication Association
Oakland, California

January 6, 2006

The next meeting will be on the first Saturday, January 6, 9:00 AM at Fire Station 1 media room, 1605 Martin Luther King at 17th Street, Oakland.

Special points of interest:

- Bring your RADO Task Book to meetings
- Morse, Morse and CW

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President's Corner

I had a power outage the other day and during the course of resetting myriad dials and gadgets I came across a digital clock radio/calendar that needed adjusting. This device was "born" in 1996 and as I pressed the set button the years advanced, slowly at first and then more quickly. I zoomed through the 21st century and somehow came back to stop at the year 1900. Odd! I fancied myself as H. G. Wells at the control of his Time Machine. I pressed the button and off I went on a journey of the ages. Decades flew by in seconds and I envisioned events associated with the rapidly passing time. Marconi and the Wright Brothers. The Titanic. The Great War. Prohibition. Depression. World War II. Ike and Elvis. The Beatles and Viet



Nam. Watergate and gas lines. The fall of the Iron Curtain. Dot com boom and bust and finally Y2K. I slowed the controls and eased through the first years of the new millennium, finally coming to rest in 2006, marveling at the incredible changes and advancements that have taken place in six short years.

By the time we read this we will have had the chance

to say goodbye or good riddance to 2006, and will have welcomed in 2007 with either open arms or trepidation. Should old acquaintance be forgot, and all that entails!

2007 will be an exciting and eventful year for ORCA. There will be many new opportunities for ORCA members to flex their radio muscles. The dropping of the code requirements will open up the HF bands to many new operators. As our weekly net gains participants the chance to put on the Net Control hat will present itself. The Chabot Space and Science Center project is stirring again with exciting possibilities and potential. The Digital Modes net offers a chance to experiment with both new and

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ORCA Calendar

January 6 Meeting: *Antennas—Featuring the Buddipole, Buddstick and Homebrew Dipoles* by David **KI6AWR** and Michael **KG6DER**

January 28, April 22, July 22, and October 28: ORCA, EBARC and ARCA joint ARRL VEC Amateur Radio Test Sessions at 0900 Local, 2nd floor conference room of the Kaiser Building, 1950 Franklin, Oakland

February 3 Meeting: *Internet Radio Linking Project* by Jim Groenke **KR6WP**

President's Corner

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old technologies. Field Day will be upon us before we know it, and the many classes and workshops afforded to ORCA members abound.

Here's to a great 2007! It is not too late to make radio resolutions! No matter what your goals or aspirations may be, a fellow ORCA member certainly has "been there and done that" and will be glad to share their expertise, acumen, and knowledge.

The hobby of Ham Radio is alive and well. Partake and enjoy!!!

Happy New Year and 73, Dave **AE6PX**

Morse Code Resources

(Editor's Note: This article was written before the FCC announcement was made. Even if it is no longer to be tested on, CW is a vibrant and valuable mode.)

I found two sites that offer free Morse Code practice programs that are really neat and may be worth sharing with the club. They both use the Koch Method. They both let you set the number of characters transmitted, the duration of each drill, and a bunch of other things.

Unlike the ARRL tapes you have complete control over what and how the characters are transmitted. You can practice listening to code at any speed under any condition you want. The ultimate bonus of controlling speed and other pertinent variables is you can eventually train yourself to "hear" words and even the whole message instead of letters just like you learned to type on a typewriter or word processing program.

I also found an extensive list of URLs that offer free and commercial practice programs at <http://www.ac6v.com/morseprograms.htm>. This might be a good place to start if the individual wants to have an idea what is out there and experiment to find which method works best for him/her.

I found the following one a few days ago: <http://justlearnmorsecode.com/> It is set up so you can record the characters transmitted on your computer keyboard and display your work on a computer screen. Very nice because if you are like me, writer's cramp can develop very fast. Plus you don't have to think about forming the letter quickly and legibly. You merely press a key on your keyboard. Its other nice feature is it displays a chart that lists your accuracy for each character transmitted and your session's overall accuracy. I think you can save the results of each drill, too, so you can record progress over time, but I'm not sure of that yet.

G4FON, an Englishman, also has a very similar program at <http://www.g4fon.net/CW%20Trainer.htm> but you record the characters sent with a pencil or pen and you calculate your overall accuracy. Because of this you spend valuable time grading and filing your results on Excel or some other

similar spreadsheet instead of practicing listening to and recording code. Still this is a very good program too, and quite valuable as it gives you extensive practice quickly recording transmitted characters with a pen or pencil legibly, a far more likely situation in the field, particularly if you are working under emergency conditions where keyboards, computers and other efficient recording means may simply not be available.

73, Jim **KG6RZQ**

Holiday Dinner Report

The ORCA annual dinner was a grand affair this year, by all accounts enjoyed immensely by those who were there. In the end 33 ORCA members, family and friends made the 'trek' to the new Pier 29 at Ballena Bay, and they weren't disappointed (or at least if they were, they haven't said so). We were set up nicely in a partitioned dining area to the left of the main bar (the main dining room was to the right). We had the dockside half of the room, with views of the marina and water. The ceilings are low and the other half, apparently holiday overflow, wasn't full so there wasn't any noise issue even with the 'shared' space. A window through to the main bar gave us our own service bar, and both the bar and wait staffs were attentive and prompt in their service.

Dinner service began about 1915 Local, after socializing and once we lured the bulk of the participants in from the main bar. The tables were arrayed perpendicularly to the window, so everyone had a 'water' view, though it was quite dark and I suspect not everyone would have put money on there being water beyond the walkway. President Dave Clemes **AE6PX** gave a nice year-end recap, and teased us on the year ahead, and after a few other announcements for the good of the order, the much-anticipated raffle was underway. The Tiemstra twins once again served as the ticket-meisters, under the able tutelage of Raffle Master David **WB6NER**. Mark **W17YN** of HRO, was a generous provider of prizes, thank you very much, and attended the dinner, too. After the general raffle, the grand prize, an ICOM IC-U82 handheld with D-STAR format digital voice capability, was won by Dave McGuinness **KF6EPQ** whose karma was bolstered not only by coming to the dinner, but by paying his 2007 dues *and* buying multiple grand raffle tickets.

While no vote was taken, it seemed that the general consensus was that the experience—food, service, location, parking and being with the old Pier 29 folks—was positive enough that Pier 29 will be the location to beat for 2007's dinner...but there's plenty of time for that. Both the raffle and dinner contributed to the club treasury, important factors given our recent repeater purchases. Thank you to all who came and to those who helped organize and plan the event, especially **WB6NER** and **W17YN**, and to the Tiemstra twins for their ticket tricks.

Bob, **KE6IUE**





Oakland Radio Communication Association

Club: WW6OR, N6ORC
Repeater: WB6NDJ

New Membership and Renewal Form

New Member Renewal

Family membership—number of additional Hams: _____

Name _____

Call _____ License: E__ A__ G__ T+__ T__ N__

Address _____

City _____ State__ Zip _____

Email _____

Newsletters will be emailed only to members who specifically request them. All others will receive them by mail. Email?

Best Phone (_____) _____ Alternate Phone (_____) _____

Best is a: cell work home Alternate is a: cell work home

Are you an ARRL Member? Yes No

Family Hams name/call sign/license class:

Please remit a photocopy of your FCC license (and any Family Ham licenses) with a check payable to "ORCA" to

ORCA
P.O. Box 21305
Oakland, CA 94620-1305

All Members for 2007: \$30.00 due by February 28, 2007

2007 Dues Prorated Quarterly for New Members

Additional Family Hams: \$5 each other Family Ham (not prorated)
2008 dues will be accepted: \$30, plus \$5 each other Family Ham

Final acceptance of this application and membership in ORCA with repeater privileges is subject to review and/or approval by the ORCA Board.

I agree, for myself and for any Family members included in this application, to abide by the rules and regulations set forth in the ORCA Bylaws and the applicable repeater operating procedures.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Frequently Asked Questions About the FCC's Morse Code Changes

Reprinted from
<http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/wt05-235/>

Q. The Report and Order in WT Docket 05-235 that eliminates the Morse Code testing requirement for all license classes was adopted by the FCC on December 15, 2006. When will it become effective?

A. Typically, the effective date of a FCC order comes 30 days after its publication in the Federal Register. If that's the case, the new exam requirement and the revised 80-meter segment for automatically controlled digital stations would likely go into effect sometime in February 2007. When the rule changes adopted in the R&O are published in the Federal Register, the effective date will be included in the Federal Register summary. In any event, the new rules will not go into effect anytime before they show up in the Federal Register.

As soon as the R&O is published in the Federal Register the ARRL will verify the effective date and publicize it on the ARRLWeb and in QST.

Q. I am a "no-code" Technician. What does WT Docket 05-235 mean to me?

A. Once the changes are in effect, all Technician licensees -- whether or not they have passed a Morse code examination -- will have "Tech Plus" operating privileges. This means you will have all of your current VHF/UHF and above frequencies and also will have access to the Novice/Technician Plus frequencies on HF. These include:

3525-3600 kHz CW only
 7025-7125 kHz CW only
 21,025-21,200 kHz CW only
 28,000-28,300 kHz CW, RTTY and Data
 28,300-28,500 kHz CW, SSB

The power limit is 200 W PEP output for Technician operators.

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.

Q. What about other bands and modes?

A. There are no additional new privileges available to Technician/Tech Plus licensees as a result of WT 05-235. The R&O does not change the operating privileges of Novice, General, Advanced and Amateur Extra class licensees

either.

Q. I have a Certificate for Successful Completion of Examination (CSCE) for Element 3 (General written test) and have been waiting for the FCC to drop the Morse code requirement. What will I need to do? Will I automatically receive my General license?

A. It will not happen automatically. You also will need to wait until the new rules are in effect. CSCEs remain valid for 365 days. There's been no change in that rule. If you have a non-expired CSCE for Element 3 credit, you would need to go to take the CSCE to a VE test session, pay the test session fee, if any, and have the examination team prepare and submit the paperwork for your license upgrade.

If the CSCE for Element 3 credit has expired or expires before you attend a test session to process your upgrade, you will have to retake the examination element in order to receive the credit toward your upgrade. The test session fee will apply.

Remember: A CSCE is only valid for 365 days. An expired CSCE for the General license theory will not be usable for an upgrade. If your CSCE expires before the new rules go into effect you will have to re-take the Element 3 General class theory exam in order to upgrade.

Q. I hold a Novice license. Am I grandfathered to Technician now?

A. No. There is no grandfather provision. In order to upgrade to Technician, you will need to pass the Element 2 written examination. The FCC did not change operating privileges for Novice, General, Advanced and Amateur Extra class licensees.

Q. I am a current Advanced licensee. Am I affected by this change?

A. No, this ruling does not impact your license. While no new Advanced class licenses are being issued, current Advanced class licensees will have the same privileges they already enjoy. The R&O does not change operating privileges for Novice, General, Advanced and Amateur Extra class licensees.

Q. I got my Technician license prior to March 21, 1987. What happens to my license?

A. You actually could have already taken that license and proof that you had the Technician license before that date to a volunteer examiner (VE) test session, paid the test session

Morse Code Changes FAQ Continued

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fee and already enjoying General privileges. This latest R&O doesn't change anything in this regard.

This is based on the fact that before that date, the only difference between the Technician and General class licenses was the Morse code speed; the theory exams were identical. Starting March 21, 1987, the Technician and General class license exams no longer were the same, so the "grandfather" rule doesn't apply for Technician licenses issued after March 21, 1987.

Proof that you held the license prior to March 21, 1987, could be a copy of your old Technician license or the page from the amateur Call Book showing your license class as Technician).

Q. Do I still need to pass a Morse code test in order to use CW on the air?

A. No. Any Amateur Radio licensee who wishes may use Morse code on the amateur frequencies they are authorized to use -- except the five USB-only channels at 5 MHz.

Q. The FCC issued an Order on Reconsideration involving automatically controlled digital operations previously allowed on 3620-3635 kHz. What is that Order's effect?

A. The FCC Order on Reconsideration states that when it becomes effective, the automatically controlled digital operation formerly allowed on 3620-3635 kHz will now be allowed on 3585-3600 kHz. The change affects Part 97.221 (b). While it is correcting a problem in the R&O for WT Docket 04-140, this change does not take effect immediately but on the date announced in the Federal Register when the R&O is published -- no sooner. Until that time, you may not have unattended automatically controlled digital stations on either the old or the new 80 meter subband.

Learn Morse Code!

A 5 WPM Morse Code class will be given at the West County Adult School in Richmond, CA. It is sponsored by three local ham radio clubs; EBARC, ORCA and ARCA. It will start on January 24, 2007 and run for 12 weeks. Classes are 2 hours long and begin promptly at 7 p.m. The course is free, but registration is required. If the FCC still requires the 5 WPM Morse Code for General and Extra class hams, the code exam will be given by ARRL Volunteer Examiners during the final class meeting (test is \$14). For more information: call John Wood, 510-741-7050, evenings.

February 3rd Speaker

Jim Groenke **KR6WP** from Redwood City has accepted our invitation to speak at our February 3rd meeting on the Internet Radio Linking Project (IRLP). Jim is one of the pioneers who helped to bring this technology to several cities in the greater San Mateo County area, and is now responsible for several IRLP nodes that he either owns or manages. Jim is a professional radio engineer who provides radio installations and support for police and fire agencies throughout the Bay Area.

This new and exciting development in amateur radio makes it possible for hams around the world to select a repeater of their choice to create a link. So at the bottom of the solar cycle, a ham here in Oakland can talk and have his/her voice transmitted with FM quality on a repeater in Australia, New Zealand, London, in virtually every state in the US, all throughout Europe... or some 2,000 places... all you need is an HT with a DTMF pad and that's it! In an emergency, it should prove to be an important alternate channel for traffic to such places as Sacramento or even Washington, DC.

For more information about IRLP please click onto:

<http://www.irlp.net/>

Regards, Paul **KA6GEM**

*Reminder for those who were present for the
RADO Training:*

Bring your RADO Task Books to meetings. There will occasionally be opportunities to be signed off on tasks at meetings.

Oakland RACES Basic Frequencies

Primary Resource/Travel	146.880 - PL 77
Secondary Resource/Travel	146.880 simplex
Primary Tactical	147.585 simplex
Secondary Tactical	146.565 simplex
Primary Command	442.400 + PL 77
Secondary Command	442.400 simplex

No PL tone on any frequency except repeaters. Never announce frequencies over the air, use function name for ID.

Program your radios early and often.

Monitoring Frequencies

WHITE 3 State Mutual Aid	154.295
WHITE 2 State Mutual Aid	154.265
WHITE 1 State Mutual Aid	154.280



Antennas by David KI6AWR and Michael KG6DER

Monthly events

1st Saturday ORCA Monthly Meeting - Oakland OES 9:00
2nd Friday East Bay Amateur Radio Club
2nd Saturday Electronics Flea Market in Sunnyvale
3rd Friday Hayward Radio Club
3rd Friday Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club
4th Friday Amateur Radio Club of Alameda

Amateur Radio Club of Alameda meets 7:00 PM at Building 522
West Midway on Alameda Point.

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

Hayward Radio Club meets at 7:30 PM 1401 West Winton Ave.
in Hayward behind Hayward Fire Station 6, next to the
Hayward Air National Guard Base.

Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club meets at 7:30 PM
at Our Savior Lutheran Church,
1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette.

Weekly Nets

Thursdays Oakland ARES/RACES Net
7:30 PM 146.88 MHz minus PL 77
Wenesdays Digital Modes Net
7:30 PM 442.4 MHz Plus PL 77
Thursdays Alameda Emergency Preparedness
7:00 PM 146.88 MHz minus PL 77
Thursdays NALCO ARES/RACES
7:15 PM 440.9 MHz plus PL 131.8
Mondays Hayward RACES
7:30 PM 145.130 MHz minus PL 127.3

ORCA Officers and Board

President:	Dave Clemes	AE6PX
Vice Pres.:	Michael Hole	KG6DER
Treasurer:	Robert Firehock	KE6IUE
Secretary:	Tom Tazelaar	KG6MAC

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Director:	Karen Harris	KG6ADB
Director:	Art McLaughlin	W6THD
Director:	David Otey	WB6NER

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WW6OR trustee:	Jim Tiemstra	K6JAT
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ORCA on the web:
ww6or.com

The ORCA NewsLetter is published monthly. Any articles can be used with attribution. Articles, news and photos submitted make for a more interesting newsletter; thank you!

Please submit materials for the next issue by January 27 to Michael **KG6DER** kg6der@arrl.net or fax to 707 215-6124. Thanks again!