



Publication of the
Northern California
Contest Club



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Issue 445

NCCC Net
Thursday 8 PM
3610+/-

Program

"Station Automation and Integration"

Jack Morgan, KF6T & Ira Stoler, K2RD

Date: Monday, 15 June 2009

Time: 6pm schmooze, 6:30pm dinner, 7pm program

Location: The Carvery Harry's Hofbrau, 2491 First Street,
Livermore, CA (925) 606-1154

From South Bay, take 680 North to exit 21B. Merge onto CA-84/Vallecitos Rd toward Livermore. Turn right at Vallecitos Rd and continue on Holmes St. Slight right at First St to 2491.

Dinner: Purchase your dinner in the cafeteria line and take your tray to the meeting room in the rear.

NCCC Officers

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JUG Editor: Rob Brownstein, k6rb@baymoon.com

Inland View

By Jack Morgan, KF6T

It is time to start thinking about Field Day again! The Truckee TRASH* will again be heading back up to Martis Peak for a 2A effort. The Martis Peak lookout (8700') overlooks all of Lake Tahoe to the South and Truckee meadows to the North. Our effort is sanctioned by the CDF as a National Emergency Preparedness Drill and they welcome us to use their very nice (and warm at night) lookout tower.

*The Truckee TRASH (Truckee Radio Amateur Society Hotshots) meet weekly at Lou's Book and Bean (Truckee) 8am on Fridays. They include rascals like W6EU, K6NV, N6XI, K6EU, K6ST and many others. They are kind of like a "Chapter" of the NCCC – a good concept as our Club grows in size and territory.

A local Boy Scout Troop will be hiking up the mountain to give us a hand and to operate the GOTA station K6BSA (very appropriate call). What a great way to get started in ham radio! Other FD groups should consider inviting the Scouts – they come prepared to camp, are supervised and could even earn the Radio merit badge in the process.

Field Day is not really a contest but many club members trace their beginnings in radio or contesting to that activity. Go to the ARRL web site and find their interactive Field Day map. There are almost 1000

groups shown on the map with over 20 around the Bay Area. If you don't already have plans, find a site near you and get invited to attend – and bring a newcomer with you!

Here is a 100 bonus point FD tip for your group. Make your five “alternate power” QSOs using a VHF rig powered by a solar charged battery. VHF is an extra free station (2A and above) so you don't have to interrupt the running stations (trying to make five 20 meter QRP QSOs for example).

June Livermore Meeting

The members of LARK (Livermore Amateur Radio Klub) have been invited to join us at the Monday, June 15 meeting. This very successful club has been around since 1959. This meeting is not on the usual “second Monday” date because I am joining my fellow classmates in Connecticut for my 50th HS reunion (good grief!) the week before. I will also be visiting the ARRL HQ and W1AW and will bring back video highlights to show.

Contest station K6LRG is planning to have an open house a couple of hours prior to the Livermore NCCC meeting. It is about 15 minutes from the meeting – check out the NCCC web site for more information.

Email Reflector

New members and anyone else not subscribed the NCCC email reflector are missing out on a great service. You can post a query and get advice from our assembled experts. It is also a good way to keep in touch with current issues, arrange transportation to meetings or participate in group buys of hardware. If you need any help getting on the Email reflector, send a note to Ed, W0YK at w0yk@msn.com.

VP/CC

By: Fred Jensen, K6DGW

It was a great May meeting! I need to learn how to order at Harry's -- way too many choices, and I make them way too soon, it all looks so good! Jack's presentation on modeling antennas with EZNEC was really cool. I've heard it said that, “In theory, theory and practice are the same. In practice, they never are.”

I've actually found that EZNEC4+ does a pretty good job of giving you a good picture of how an antenna will perform, and how that will change as you adjust it. And don't miss page 32 of the June QST. Yet another antenna thing, you may recognize the author, and you can vote with ARRL as well.

You will all likely be reading this after WPX CW on Memorial Day weekend, and I hope everyone got their “CW fix” in. Bruce hasn't posted June's schedule as I write this, but our own K6MM has posted a cool little master schedule on our web site. The quicklink to it is on the opening page.

Contests for June:

Summer is the time to work on antennas and our stations, the contest schedule slows down a lot. There are some popular ones, however:

ANARTS RTTY: [13 Jun 0000Z – 14 Jun 0000Z] This will be the last running of this contest, and this one will be run out of the UK, not the VK. The VK coordinator has to give it up due to failing health and couldn't find a VK replacement.

BARTG will pick it up for this year only. Thereafter, they are going to move the BARTG RTTY to this weekend. This used to be a fairly difficult contest, not on the air, but because the logging and submittal requirement took about as much time as you spent on the air. But that changed, and there was a lot of activity last year. GW3SKA is the BARTG go-to-guy for this one and here's your chance to get some wallpaper

that won't be available ever again (sort of sounds like a Disney 'Little Mermaid' DVD commercial, no?).

ARRL June VHF: [13 Jun 1800Z – 8 Jun 0300Z] Give this a try, even if you don't have horizontal VHF antennas. Well, OK, even if you don't have 6m antennas. There will be stations on who really (as in, REALLY) want to work you.

We're also coming into the Es season so there is a good chance we may see some great openings on 6m. Not long after I assembled my K3 last summer, I thought I should see if it actually worked on 6. I discovered the ATU would match my tribander just fine (haven't worked that out in EZNEC yet), tuned around, and found KH6FI calling CQ. I got him on the second call, 57 both ways. This was the first time, in 54 years as a ham, that my call was heard (legally at least) on 6m. You'll be surprised what you can load up on 6 and work people with.

All Asian CW: [20 Jun 0000Z – 21 Jun 2400Z] For our new members who may also be somewhat new to ham radio, this is a great place to find Pacific rim countries, Eastern Russians, Chinese, and SE Asians. For this one, we are the "West Coast Wall" for our right-coast comrades and you can easily beat out their KW's with 100W. Be prepared for a lot of JA's, I work them all, and then get ready for the QSL's in about a year or two. Every one is a Q and every Q counts!

ARRL Field Day: [27 Jun 1800Z – 28 Jun 2100Z] What's to say about Field Day? Short of SS (I think), it may be one of the longest running events in the US. I say "Event" because ARRL tells us it is not a "contest." Let's see ... there are entry classes, there is an exchange, there is a time schedule, there are rules www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2009/fd.html they publish results, and it appears under "Operating Activities.Contests" on the web page. The whole thing sounds sort of contestish to me. Can't go out to the field? Get on as a 1D (home station, commercial

power) and hand out Q's to those who are in the field. Other 1D's don't count for you (might be best not to call CQ as a 1D), but everyone else does put points in your log, and you put points in all the logs for the guys in the field.

NAQP: The North American RTTY QSO Party comes up in July, followed by the CW and SSB in Aug. NCCC always fields a number of 5-station teams (8 or 9 is my recollection of our high points), and I need some volunteers to flog these contests. No experience required and training – such as it might be needed – is readily available. I'm really looking for a couple or three new members to do this. It's a great way to learn who your contesting comrades are.

The lower bands are getting noisy as they always do in the summer, but 40 is coming into its prime, and 20 has been staying open until 2300 or so PDT. Don't write off 15, it does open, just nobody there. As of when I write this, SFI=72 and SSN=14. Not great, but better than it has been for over a year. Some predictions say Cycle 24 will equal Cycle 19. I was a teen on the radio during 19, and I'd be very happy if 24 does that. But, I'll also be very happy if 24 does half of 19.

73,

Fred K6DGW
VP/CC

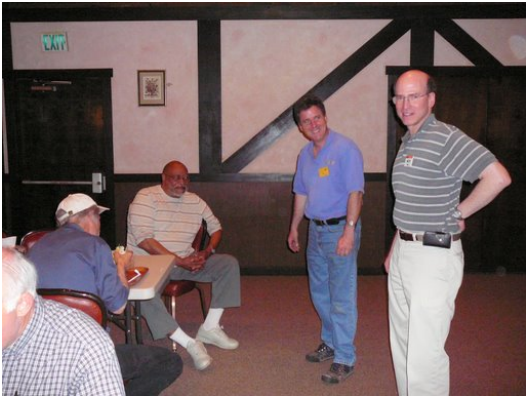
Dues

Have you paid your dues for the year? It's still just \$24 (cheap), with students just \$12 (even cheaper) and family members \$12 (what a deal).

Contact [Jack Brindle, W6FB](#)

We can get your dues via PayPal or snail mail or via cash at the next meeting.

Photos from May's Meeting (photos K6RB)



Last Paper JUG Issue

This issue – Number 445 – will be the final printed issue of the NCCC JUG. Like so many other print media, the costs for continuing to print and mail each issue have risen to the point where a member's entire annual dues will not cover the cost of a year's printing and delivery. Therefore, the current board of directors has voted to discontinue the so-called "paper JUG."

Any member who will have extreme difficulty downloading and reading the JUG online should contact Jack Brindle so we can make arrangements to suit your needs.

One of the benefits of an online JUG is no practical size constraint. The printed JUG was constrained to eight pages (four pages double-sided) in order to keep the postage down to a single first-class stamp. The online JUG beginning with the July issue will no longer be limited to eight pages.

In addition, photos can be larger and easier to see. And, type-size can be increased to make the JUG easier to read. We will be able to use color-coding for graphs and tables, too, because we will no longer have to worry about the limitations of monochrome printing.

As important, the club will save \$1,200 per year in production costs which can be used to fund things like WebEx training sessions and club outreach programs.

Your NCCC Board of Directors

Your New Online JUG

Rob Brownstein, K6RB

Starting with issue number 446, NCCC will be turning a new page. That will be the debut issue of our new online JUG. Those of us who have been reading the online version for several years, now, know first-hand that the photos look better and diagrams are easier to read.

Now that we are no longer limited in page number and size, the new JUG can have richer content. For example, instead of still graphics, we could have some video snippets where the motion images add information value. We could even have sound files.

I'd like to solicit comments from NCCCers about ideas for making the new online JUG a standout ham-club newsletter. You may want to do some Web surfing to see, for example, what PVRC does with its newsletter. They have many sections covering a broad swath of topics.

I will let the new online JUG evolve as I receive and share with you some of the suggestions I receive. Some ideas, in addition to our current meetings info, president's message, and VP/CC column might be:

- member-written product reviews
- primers on contest-related topics
- clever solutions to vexing problems
- publishing the NS ladder, with monthly updates.

I'm excited about the prospects. Please send your ideas to k6rb@baymoon.com and use the header "JUG ideas."

