



**Publication of the
Northern California
Contest Club**



Issue 501

February 2014

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Guests are always welcome at the NCCC!
Please join us.

Monday, February 10th, 2014

Time:

6:00pm Schmooz, 6:30pm Dinner, 7:00pm Program

**NCCC - LARK Joint Meeting
(Livermore Amateur Radio Klub)**

Location:

Cattlemen's, 2882 Kitty Hawk Road, Livermore, CA 94551

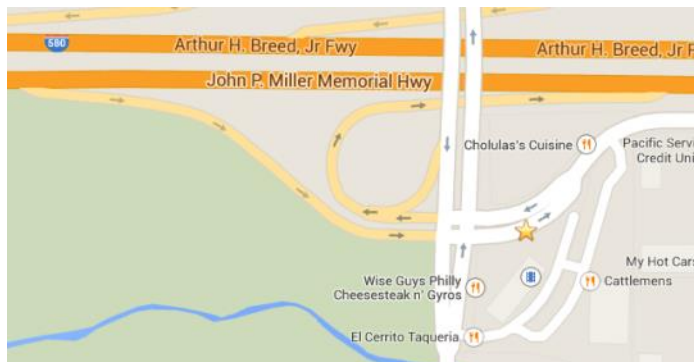
Directions: <http://goo.gl/maps/eUqgz>

Program:

"The art and science" of contesting: a panel discussion (organized by Hank W6SX)
Panelists include: Rusty W6OAT, Trey N5KO, Ken N6RO, Bob N6TV, and Jeff WK6I

To register:

Please RSVP to Tom nccc.treasurer@gmail.com



President's Report for February.

Crunch Time



It's crunch time down at the ol' NCCC. Between now and the March meeting we need to determine the club's CQP and RU awards. Plaques need to be ordered, certificates need to be printed, wine bottles need to be labeled, and what can't be distributed at our Tied House gathering needs to be mailed or brought to Visalia for distribution. We can all be thankful that a dedicated group of volunteers—K6YL, AD6E, N6IE, N6WM, N6DE, K6MM to name but a few—are working very hard to make it all happen.

The crunchiest crunch for me and for the rest of the Board of Directors is putting together a slate of officers for the 2014-15 club year. It is an inescapable fact that being an officer or being part of one of the club's volunteer committees requires a sacrifice of personal time. Most of our club's stalwarts have already been officers—some more than once—and deserve our thanks and perhaps a little free time to get on the air and to re-experience what it was that got them into ham radio in the first place.



Northern California Contest Club

Excellence In Amateur Radio Contesting

Officers:

President	Alan Eshleman	K6SRZ	doctore@well.com	Penngrove CA
Vice President /Contest Chair	Alan Maenchen	AD6E	ad6e@arrl.net	San Jose, CA
Secretary/Treasurer	Tom Epperly	NS6T	tepperly@gmail.com	Livermore CA
Past President	Dean Wood	N6DE	cqden6de@gmail.com	Sunnyvale CA
Director	Fred Jensen	K6DGW	k6dgw@foothill.net	Auburn CA
Director	Steve Dyer	W1SRD	w1srd@arrl.net	Redwood City CA
Director	Jim Brown	K9YC	k9yc@arrl.net	Santa Cruz CA

Volunteers:

New Member Mentor	Al Rendon	WT6K	wt6k@arrl.net
Charter Member	Rusty Epps	W6OAT	w6oat@sbcglobal.net
Awards Chairs	Joanna Dilley	K6YL	joanna.k6yl@gmail.com
	Rebar Rebarchik	N6DB	rebar@hamilton.com
CQP Chair	Chris Tate	N6WM	ctate@ewnetinc.com
CQP Certificates	Andy Faber	AE6Y	ae6y@arrl.net
K6ZM QSL Manager	George Daughters	K6GT	k6gt@arrl.net
K6CQP,N6CQP,W6CQP QSL Mgr	Ed Muns	W0YK	w0yk@arrl.net
NCCC Email reflector Admin	Phil Verinsky	W6PK	kb-w6tqg@verinsky.com
Webmaster	John Miller	K6MM	k6mm@arrl.net
JUG Editor	Ian Parker	W6TCP	w6tcpian@gmail.com

Thursday Night Contesting:

NCCC—Sprint	Ken Keeler	N6RO	kenkeeler@jazznut.com
NS Ladder	Bill Haddon	N6ZFO	haddon.bill@gmail.com
Slow NS (SNS)	Chris Tate	N6WM	ctate@ewnetinc.com

NCCC Net

Thursday 8 PM

Freq: 3.610 +/-

NCCC

Monthly meetings take place on the second Monday of each month !

NCCC Membership Information

If you wish to join NCCC, you must fill out an [application for membership](#), which will be read and voted upon at the next monthly meeting. ([PDF application form](#))

To join, you must reside within [club territory](#) which is defined as the maximum of:

- Northern California, anything north of the Tehachapi's up to the Oregon border, and
- A part of north-western Nevada (anything within our ARRL 175-mile radius circle centered at 10 miles North of Auburn on Highway 49).

I've contacted maybe 25 members already, asking if they'd place their names in nomination. Sadly, so far, the answer is "no". There are certainly valid excuses—health for one and travel time to our club's epicenter The Peninsula for another—but the fact remains that somebody needs to do it and this will involve a degree of personal sacrifice.

Consider what you get from your membership in the NCCC. Start with mandatory dues: there are none unless you want to be eligible for one of our award plaques. What you get is a connection with some of the world's best and most knowledgeable contesters (many of whom are also experts in their own professions) who can help with antenna parties, equipment issues, and \$#!*# computer problems.

One does not need to be a great contester or to preside over a big gun station to be an NCCC officer. In fact, no previous experience is required. All that is needed is some time to give, the ability to delegate, and a little attention to detail. The NCCC "brain trust" is always ready to help out.



George will not do it. We need you!

In other news, while it looks like the NCCC will finish second in the ARRL Sweepstakes Unlimited Club competition, we can proud that one of our own, Bob Wilson, N6TV, is the overall winner of the 2013 CW Sweepstakes.

In other contest news, the PVRC/NCCC NAQP challenge scores are very close. The RTTY Round-up results also threaten to be close, but it's too early to tell.

Finally, I mourn the passing of Bruce Butler, W6OSP, my friend, a friend to our club, and a friend to all of amateur radio.

I hope to see you all at the February meeting, which follows my 70th (!) birthday by one day. If you can't make the meeting consider logging in to the WebX feed.

73,
Alan/K6SRZ

Book Review - Thunderstruck

Thunderstruck, Eric Larson, (Three Rivers Press, 2006, 582 pp.)

Reviewed by Bill Haddon, N6ZFO, Kelseyville, CA

Eric Larson's *Thunderstruck* is a must read for the serious competitive amateur. Larson connects England's second most famous murder -- the Crippen murder -- to Marconi's then novel wireless Marconi-grams. The connection? Accused murderer Crippen and his lover, disguised as his son, fled England on a ship to Canada in July 1910. Marconi-grams between Scotland Yard detectives and the ship's captain aided in the pursuit and eventual capture of Crippen while on the ship. Indeed, the incident was the first ever in which radio played a role in apprehending a criminal. The incident occurred almost two years before the Marconi's company's more famous role in the 1912 Titanic sinking. The press rendition of Crippen's capture at sea highlighted the utility and relevance of wireless in terms that the average person could understand. Larson weaves a factual account of the murder with the evolution of wireless technology in a fascinating tale of invention and intrigue.

For most of us our impression of the development of wireless probably oversimplifies the reality of its many years of waxing and waning performance and acceptance. Many biographical descriptions of Marconi are for the period after communications from the *Carpathia* to the Marconi station at Wellfleet, Ma. in April 1912 established Marconi's reputation. The Larson account describes Marconi's early experiments, many of which achieved marginal success at best. Progress was incremental, painful and slow. Storm-damaged antennas crashed to the ground on both sides of the Atlantic, financing was always crucial and in doubt, and competition was intensive and persistent. Optimizing the antennas, something most of us still do a hundred ten years later, and modifying the coherer (detector) dominated Marconi's efforts. The author leads us through the details of Marconi's invention process, noting how his aloof personality, poor people skills, and frequently shoddy application of the scientific method interfered with progress by un-necessarily creating both skeptics and enemies.

Professor Oliver Lodge of Liverpool University was an irksome and persistent competitor of Marconi. Lodge probably equaled Marconi in troublesome quirks but surpassed him in intellect. Lodge was a disciple of Hertz, who had died in 1893. Often, his technology efforts were diverted by spiritual investigations, with a favored interest in levitation and other mystic phenomena. And physics professor John Crookes had the vision of wireless forty years before and perhaps had the talent and knowledge to be first to the prize. But Crookes possessed the same idiosyncrasy as Lodge -- a fascination with the spiritual side of science, causing his late-in-life wireless proposals to be ignored by fellow scientists.

While the race to be first in transcontinental communication was one aspect of early century experimentation with wireless, the competition for integrity and consistency of message handling was another matter altogether. Germany's Telefunken co-existed with Marconi Wireless in the years prior to the Great War, as did a number of English companies, many of which were detractors rather than serious competitors. Marconi's early alliance with the British Post Office had consequences -- information leaked to Kaiser Wilhelm before the Great War aided Telefunken, a serious competitor for shipboard wireless transmission. Furthermore, the British Post Office attempted to hijack legal au-

thority over Marconi's patents, claiming government exclusivity for message delivery by whatever means.

As in amateur radio today, bandwidth and QRM were important considerations. Would Marconi's powerful transcontinental wireless spark transmitters obliterate messages being sent at the same time from lower-powered wireless stations in England and on the continent? In one crucial demonstration from England detractors jammed Marconi signals in an attempt to create more controversy and doubt about the Marconi enterprise.

Marconi received the Physics Nobel in 1908. The achievement stirred resentment in the physics community as Marconi was an experimentalist with only minimal understanding of Maxwell's equations and limited appreciation for the work of Hertz. Perhaps that was an unfair charge because previous awards were for experimental work -- Pierre and Marie Curie and Prof. Becquerel for radiation (1903), J. J. Thomson (1906) for cathode ray experiments and Lord Rayleigh for studies of gasses and the discovery of Argon (1904). But unlike Marconi these Nobelists had academic connections and less thirst for profit. And Marconi had made a few enemies in his chaotic dash to the prize. But through all these distractions he persevered and retained focus -- never diverting his vision from the dream of wireless communication. Marconi combined technical brilliance with business acuity. In the end his devotion to experimentation, perhaps helped a bit by his mother's family connection to the Jameson whiskey fortune, triumphed.

Extended footnotes accompany the text. They comprise an intriguing back-page story —the book is factual and carefully documented. I found this account in the notes to be particularly interesting evidence of the humorously sad state of technology and science in the mid 1800's: "The year 1850 also witnessed one of the strangest attempts at wireless communication. A Frenchman allowed two snails to get to know one another then shipped one snail off to New York . . . to test the widely held belief that physical contact between them set up an invisible connection that allowed them to communicate with each other regardless of distance. They placed the snails in metal bowls marked with letters of the alphabet and claimed that when one snail touched a letter the other snail, on the opposite side of the Atlantic, likewise touched that letter. Concluding that somehow signals had been transmitted, the researchers proposed the existence of an ether-like realm that they called 'escargotic fluid'." [Collins, A. Frederick, *Wireless Telegraphy: History, Theory and Practice*, McGraw 1905 p. 37]

Perhaps the expert multitasking contest enthusiasts can breeze through Thunderstruck while conducting RTTY Q's on at least two radios. CW operators should maybe wait for the summer radio doldrums and relax with an 807 or two while reading this fascinating account of late 19th and early 20th century radio and crime. For SSB enthusiasts, if you can read, talk and log at the same time, congratulations.

NCCC/REDXA Joint Meeting –1



NCCC/REDXA Joint Meeting –2



We Need You !

We are forming an nominating committee charged with preparing a slate of officers to be presented at our April meeting. I am chairing the committee.

I hope that some of you will be willing to serve on the committee, and I very much appreciate getting your suggestions for who would be good candidates for club officers.

The positions to be filled are:

President
Vice President/Contest Chair
Secretary-Treasurer

Directors (3)

The directors are usually nominated by president-to-be.

Please communicate directly to me by email or telephone and not (for now) on the general reflector.

Thank you for your kind attention.

73,

Alan/K6SRZ





Contest Calendar—February page 1

Vermont QSO Party	0000Z, Feb 1 to 2400Z, Feb 2
Triathlon DX Contest	0000Z-0759Z, Feb 1 (CW) and 0800Z-1559Z, Feb 1 (SSB) and 1600Z-2359Z, Feb 1 (RTTY)
10-10 Int. Winter Contest, SSB	0001Z, Feb 1 to 2359Z, Feb 2
F9AA Cup, CW	1200Z, Feb 1 to 1200Z, Feb 2
EPC WW DX Contest	1200Z, Feb 1 to 1200Z, Feb 2
Black Sea Cup International	1200Z, Feb 1 to 1159Z, Feb 2
FYBO Winter QRP Sprint	1400Z-2400Z, Feb 1
Minnesota QSO Party	1400Z-2400Z, Feb 1
AGCW Straight Key Party	1600Z-1900Z, Feb 1
British Columbia QSO Party	1600Z, Feb 1 to 0400Z, Feb 2
Delaware QSO Party	1700Z, Feb 1 to 2359Z, Feb 2
Mexico RTTY International Contest	1800Z, Feb 1 to 1759Z, Feb 2
North American Sprint, CW	0000Z-0400Z, Feb 2
RSGB 80m Club Championship, SSB	2000Z-2130Z, Feb 3
ARS Spartan Sprint	0200Z-0400Z, Feb 4
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Feb 7
CQ WW RTTY WPX Contest	0000Z, Feb 8 to 2359Z, Feb 9
YL-ISSB QSO Party, CW	0000Z, Feb 8 to 2359Z, Feb 9
SARL Field Day Contest	1000Z, Feb 8 to 1000Z, Feb 9
Asia-Pacific Spring Sprint, CW	1100Z-1300Z, Feb 8
SKCC Weekend Sprintathon	1200Z, Feb 8 to 2400Z, Feb 9
Dutch PACC Contest	1200Z, Feb 8 to 1200Z, Feb 9
KCJ Topband Contest	1200Z, Feb 8 to 1200Z, Feb 9



Contest Calendar—February page 2

OMISS QSO Party	1500Z, Feb 8 to 1500Z, Feb 9
New Hampshire QSO Party	1600Z, Feb 8 to 0400Z, Feb 9 and 1200Z-2200Z, Feb 9
FISTS Winter Sprint	1700Z-2100Z, Feb 8
RSGB 1st 1.8 MHz Contest	2100Z, Feb 8 to 0100Z, Feb 9
AWA Amplitude Modulation QSO Party	2300Z, Feb 8 to 2300Z, Feb 9
Classic Exchange, Phone	1400Z, Feb 9 to 0800Z, Feb 10
NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint	0130Z-0330Z, Feb 12
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z, Feb 12 and 1900Z-2000Z, Feb 12 and 0300Z-0400Z, Feb 13
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Feb 14
ARRL Inter. DX Contest, CW	0000Z, Feb 15 to 2400Z, Feb 16
AGCW Semi-Automatic Key Evening	1900Z-2030Z, Feb 19
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Feb 21
CQ 160-Meter Contest, SSB	2200Z, Feb 21 to 2200Z, Feb 23
REF Contest, SSB	0600Z, Feb 22 to 1800Z, Feb 23
UBA DX Contest, CW	1300Z, Feb 22 to 1300Z, Feb 23
North American QSO Party, RTTY	1800Z, Feb 22 to 0559Z, Feb 23
High Speed Club CW Contest	0900Z-1700Z, Feb 23
North Carolina QSO Party	1500Z, Feb 23 to 0059Z, Feb 24
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z, Feb 26 and 1900Z-2000Z, Feb 26 and 0300Z-0400Z, Feb 27

12 STORE BUYING POWER

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(Near Disneyland)
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anaheim@hamradio.com

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1525 W. Magnolia Bl., 91506
(818) 842-1786
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Eric, K6EJC, Mgr.
Magnolia between
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2210 Livingston St., 94606
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Gary, N7GJ, Mgr.
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Steve, W4SHS, Mgr.
Exit 161, I-95, So. to US 1
virginia@hamradio.com

SALEM, NH
(Near Boston)
224 N. Broadway, 03079
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Dave, N1EDU, Mgr.
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TM-V71A 2M/440 Dual Band

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- 5/2.5/1.0/0.5/0.1W Output • RX: 0.52-1.71, 88-174, 380-479 MHz** • AMV FM/FM-N/WFM/DV • 1304 Alphanumeric Memory Chis • Integrated GPS • D-STAR Repeater Directory • IPX7 Submersible



IC-7600 All Mode Transceiver

- 100W HF/6M Transceiver, gen cov. receiver • Dual DSP 32 bit • Three roofing filters - 3, 6, 15kHz • 5.8 In WQVGA TFT display • Hi-res real time spectrum scope



IC-V8000 2M Mobile Transceiver

- 75 watts • Dynamic Memory Scan (DMS)
- CTCSS/DCS encode/decode w/tone scan • Weather alert • Weather channel scan • 200 alphanumeric memories

ID-880H Analog + Digital Dual Bander D-STAR

- D-STAR DV mode operation • DR (D-STAR repeater) mode • Free software download • GPS A mode for easy D-PRS operation • One touch reply button (DV mode) • Wideband receiver



YAESU
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- 50W 2M, 45W on 440MHz • Weather Alert • 1000+ Memories • WIRES capability • Wideband receiver (cell blocked)

FT-60R 2M/440 5W HT

- Wide receiver coverage • AM air band receive • 1000 memory channels w/al-pha labels • Huge LCD display • Rugged die-cast, water resistant case • NOAA severe weather alert with alert scan



FT-450D 100W HF + 6M Transceiver

- 100W HF/6M • Auto tuner built-in • DSP built-in
- 500 memories • DNR, IF Notch, IF Shift



FT-857D Ultra Compact HF/VHF/UHF

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