

THE EAST BAY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.

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THE BLOWN FUSE

CLUB STATION W6CUS

VOLUME LXII NUMBER 8

AUGUST 2009



EBARC Meeting
August 14, 2009
7:30 p.m.

To Be Announced



The East Bay Amateur Radio Club meets the second Friday of each month
at the Salvation Army, 4600 Applan Way, El Sobrante.

The Executive Board meets the Monday before each general meeting at 7:30 p.m.
at the W6CUS club station, 3200 Macdonald Ave. Richmond.

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THE EAST BAY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.
Post Office Box 1393
El Cerrito, CA 94530

The Blown Fuse is published monthly by the East Bay Amateur Radio Club, Inc. and is free to its members. *The Blown Fuse* welcomes articles of interest to its members and amateur radio in general. *The Blown Fuse* reserves the right to edit or reject any material submitted. Material submitted becomes the property of *The Blown Fuse*. Permission is hereby granted to reproduce material printed herein provided proper acknowledgment is given.
Editor: Sharon Primbsch, AA6XZ

Deadline for Sep. issue: Tuesday, Aug. 25th

[Articles may be submitted by "snail" mail, by dictation over the 'phone 510-741-8227, or by e-mail to aa6xz@earthlink.net]

QRM de KO6NO Ken Fowler, President

This month we are all hoping for the swift recovery of John Billones, WD6GGC (aka Golden Gate Charlie), who is getting better every day. We miss seeing him at our meetings and hearing him on the nets. I want to tell you about how I was recently inspired by John's homebrew talents.

This year I wanted to have a hands-free operation at my Field Day Station. Last year I had started construction of a Control-Interface box to match a computer type boom headset to my HF Transceiver, but ran out of time and interest. I dragged the project out of the junk box and figured out a way to make all the components fit in a utility box. I had used some push-button switches from an old PC front panel and mounted them on a scrap of printed circuit board. I finally got all the resistors, capacitors, and wires installed in the box and after correcting a bunch of errors, it worked. I received several good reports about the audio from the computer microphone and the Push-to-Talk button, UP button, and DOWN button all worked. I could sit back in my chair and operate the radio with one hand. But I wanted to free up the other hand so I

needed a foot-operated PTT. Fortunately, the radio has a connector on the rear panel for a PTT input.

So I thought about how I could build a foot-switch, and I remembered the way that John re-uses cast-off materials. Digging in the junk boxes, I found the guts of a failed porch light timer that I had held on to. This assembly included a small snap-action switch which could be mounted by screws. For a foot pedal, I salvaged the cover from a PC Power Supply and cut the sides to a triangular shape. In the wood scrap box, I found a piece of one-by-six pine which had previously been cut to just the right width to fit inside the metal foot pedal. I attached the pedal with a couple of wood screws from the screw collection. Now I needed something to mount the snap switch on. Again I went to the wood box where I found a wedge shaped piece of two-by-four which had just the right angle, after some shaping with a wood plane. I mounted the switch to the wedge using a couple of smooth nails saved from some project. I needed a spring to return the pedal and I found one in the drawer of miscellaneous hardware. I put all the pieces together and used an old VCR to TV cable to connect to the radio. The whole assembly was built without a trip to Radio-S*** or Ham Radio Outlet and completed in about three hours. It wasn't pretty to look at, but the foot-switch held up on Field Day while five operators worked 190 contacts on 40 Meters. It's a keeper.

Let's have an Ugly Project night at a future EBARC meeting. Bring something that you have built from Junque and have used to operate a station. See you in August. 73!

If you receive *The Blown Fuse* via snail mail and would rather get it by email, send an email message to Ye Olde Editor, aa6xz@earthlink.net

Memorial for Midge John Wood, N6JDW

EBARC members are cordially invited to celebrate the life of Dr. Marjorie (Midge) Foerster Wood, KF6OGC. The memorial will be held Saturday, August 22, 2009 at 9 a.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Road, Kensington. A reception follows 10-11:30 a.m.

2009 Field Day Report Peter Hoffman, W6DEI

Noticing that *The Blown Fuse* has been a little short on column inches for the past few months, I'll take the opportunity to be a little more verbose than usual in recapping this year's Field Day. I hope you can bear with me.

This was the lowest turnout I can remember in my 12 years of Field Days. A variety of unavoidable circumstances robbed us of some of the hardest working and most reliable participants (I'm thinking Sharon Primbsch, Don Hamma, Alan Eshleman, and Jerry Volpe in particular). Despite that and a poor ionosphere (SFI=68), this year was right up there with the best thanks to a very nice synergy among the small crew. Our spirit, energy, and even our QSO scores were outstanding.

So let me start my THANK YOUs. Stanton always does the work of 10 men, so between the two of us we had a virtual crew of 11 to haul all the equipment from the club station! And since it really was just the two of us, we took a lot less junk this year. When Stanton's on the job you know it'll get done on time and superbly. As usual, he handled all our electrical power needs and once again it ran as smooth as silk. Varon Smith, WS6V, stepped up to fill the huge void left by Sharon's absence. He took charge of the GOTA station in a solo effort and did a marvelous PR job. I can't thank him enough for standing guard over our equipment by himself Friday night. It was a

lonely sight that greeted me at 7 o'clock Saturday morning; just Varon and his dog, Lizzie, getting ready for their morning walk with not another soul around.

At the risk of sounding like a gushing celebrity name dropper, I think we can take a lot of pride in the fact that Dean Straw, N6BV, chose to spend his Field Day with us again this year. I only hope Dean enjoyed himself as much as we enjoyed having his company, antenna expertise, contesting skills, and seemingly endless energy. After many hours helping us set up the site on Friday, Dean still managed to spend nearly 24 hours at the CW key. And, last but not least, he brought Nathan and Alan with him (more on the dynamic duo later).

Jack has added immeasurably to my enjoyment of Field Day since joining EBARC a few years ago. When the going gets tough we always start talking about doing the next Field Day on a beach in Kauai with a Mai Tai in one hand and a mic in the other. Just that thought is enough to keep us going a while longer. With a little help from Nathan and Alan (more on the dynamic duo later), Jack pretty much kept the SSB station going by himself the entire time. Honestly, I don't know how you contesters do it.

Marc Gorelnik and I always have a blast co-hosting the PSK station. It's the lazy-man's contesting mode and we'd humbly admit that the two of us together couldn't match the stamina of either Dean or Jack, except that neither of us is particularly humble! Were still looking for a third partner who likes to stay up all night and run those guys on 40 and 80 meters while we go home and curl up in our own comfy beds. We appreciated all the folks who just showed up for a social visit (Bob Uhrhammer, Joe Lee, Vern, Robbie, Ron Smith, Don, et. al.). It was great to have you, and we know you've all paid your Field Day dues 1000 times over in Field Days Past.

Thanks to Rita and Randy for a great dinner on Friday night; lots of help from Randy, Craig and Maria in breaking things down on Sunday; and Gary Elliott for help in the set up. Thanks to Texx for the generous donation of crank-up towers that made things soooooo much easier for us.

Oh yeah, getting back to the dynamic duo, as promised. We all know our hobby sorely needs an infusion of youthful enthusiasm and Nathan and Alan are just the ticket. It took only a few hours of expert elmering from Varon for Alan to go from his first HF QSO to a firm grasp of contesting. So after his stint on the GOTA station, he and Nathan took the helm of the SSB station for a serious dose of ham radio, giving Jack a much needed respite for an hour or so. If they are any indication, the future of the hobby is lookin' good. Thanks to both you kids for all your help this weekend. You are welcome anytime at an EBARC Field Day, and please bring more friends with you!

Here are our preliminary point totals: CW QSOs, 816, points, 3264; SSB QSOs, 461, points 922; PSK QSOs, 180, points: 720. Bonus points included 20 GOTA QSOs, 20 GOTA QSOs by one operator, GOTA coach, public location, information table, alternative power source, educational activity, visit by a local police officer, online results submission, NTS message to ARRL section manager, and 7 NTS messages passed for a bonus of 720 points, which gives us a total of about 5,688.

Thanks again to all who participated!

General Meeting Minutes July 10, 2009

Sharon Primbsch, AA6XZ, Acting Secty.

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m. by President Ken Fowler, KO6NO

Field Day Chair Peter Hoffman, W6DEI, said that the turnout was very low. He will have a

report in the August Blown Fuse. He doesn't want to be Field Day Chair next year.

Program Chair "Texx" Woodworth, KG6ATH, says that a possibility for the August program is the South Bay Wireless Experimenter Group.

Hospitality Chair Bob Bowling, K6ZLG, thanked Rita Brenden for homebaked goodies.

Membership Chair Sharon Primbsch, AA6XZ, has no membership or *Blown Fuse* report. She announced the July 26th VE session.

Treasurer Gordy Parsons, NU6W, reports that HRO paid us \$180 for advertising.

Club Station Manager Stanton Gleason, KD6SWU, reports that the crank-up tower is done. Its rotor cable was attacked by squirrels and a few things are off the air. There is no new information on our club station building's status from the City of Richmond. Therefore, we may have a work party soon to redo the plastic on to roof.

Education Chair Randy Jenkins, KA6BQF, reminds us about the Technician class starting next week in Alameda.

President Ken Fowler, KO6NO, reports that KRE is having an open house soon, possibly July 18th. KPH, the Marin Historical Radio Society is holding its "Night of Nights" soon, possibly July 13th. The USS Hornet is having a celebration for the 40th anniversary of the Apollo Splashdown, 3 days over the weekend of July 25th. The Hornet's ham station will be on the air during some of that time, and hams are invited to operate. The 4Cs/EBARC picnic will be held Sunday, August 16th.

The meeting adjourned about 8:15 p.m. for refreshments and a presentation on antenna analyzers by David Haycock, KI6AWR.

Marin Public Service

The Marin Amateur Radio Society (MARS) is looking for ham volunteers for the Marin Century / Mt. Tam Double Century bike ride on Saturday, August 1. Hams are needed to man fixed locations and to ride as communicators in SAG vehicles. We also have positions available for the Holstein 100 bike ride on Saturday, August 15. Contact Randy Jenkins, KA6BQF, at ka6bqf@arrl.net or 510-526-4089

The Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club will be holding a 6 week Technician course. Classes begin on Wednesday September 2nd at 7-9 pm. at the Salvation Army, 3950 Clayton Road, (at West St.), Concord 94520. Registration is recommended. The class is FREE and Textbook, if needed, is about \$23. To join, contact: John Primus, primus@astound.net 925-825-7670 or Chuck Graham, KI6DCD@gmail.com

Future Bay Area Events

- Livermore Swap Meet, 1st Sunday of each month at Robertson Park, 7 a.m. to noon, all year. Talk-in 147.045 MHz. Info: www.livermoreark.org/swap/swap.html
 - South Bay Electronics Flea Market, 2nd Saturday of each month, March through October, De Anza College, Cupertino. Details at www.asvaro.org. Talk-in on 145.27 MHz (-, 100 Hz PL).
 - EBARC, ORCA, and ARCA sponsor joint ARRL VEC Amateur Radio Test Sessions quarterly at 9 a.m. in the Media Room, 1605 Martin Luther King Jr. Way (at 16th St.), Oakland. The remaining date for 2009 is Oct. 25th, and the fee is \$15. Info at 510-846-1587 or 510-741-8227.
 - CoCoCo RACES Training: Details at www.cc-races.org or via RACES net, 6:45 p.m., Thursdays on 145.11 MHz.
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The East Bay Amateur Radio Club, founded in 1947, is a California non-profit organization of amateur radio operators in Contra Costa and Alameda counties. The club is open to anyone interested in amateur radio. Annual dues are \$25 for individual membership, \$30 for a family membership, and \$10 for students K-12. For information, contact any EBARC officer, see Web page www.eastbayarc.org, or write EBARC, P.O. Box 1393, El Cerrito, CA 94530. The East Bay Amateur Radio Club maintains a club station, W6CUS, at 3200 Macdonald Ave., Richmond.

2009 EAST BAY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB EXECUTIVE BOARD

- Ken Fowler, KO6NO, President: 222-0830
- "Texx" Woodworth, KG6ATH, 1st VP - Program Chair: 524-7452
- Bob Bowling, K6ZLG, 2nd VP - Hospitality Chair: 233-5749
- Sharon Primbsch, AA6XZ, 3rd VP - Membership / *Blown Fuse* Editor: 741-8227
- Gordon Parsons, NU6W, Treasurer / Finance Committee Chair: 785-4290
- Charles Hayes, AF6AB, Secretary: 932-4819
- Stanton Gleason, KD6SWU, Club Station Manager: 385-4044
- Jack Burris, K6JEB, W6CUS Trustee & Member-at-Large: 415-305-2547
- Peter Hoffman, W6DEI, Field Day Chair, Webmaster, Publicity Chair: 525-0694
- Randy Jenkins, KA6BQF, Education Chair: 526-4089
- Joe Lee, W6DOB, Silent Key Chair: 724-0533
- Mark O'Brien, AF6FR, af6fr@yahoo.com, Ride Coordinator: 650-776-1817

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Member-at-Large	
Awards Chair.....	
Social & Digital Committees Chair.....	
Legislative Affairs	
RFI Committee Chair.....	
Historian	

AMATEUR RADIO NETS

NET	DAYS	LOCAL TIME	FREQ, MHZ
West Contra Costa County ARES/RACES Net	Thurs	1845 (PL 82.5-)	145.110
EBARC "Explore Net" (HF)	Mon	1930 (USB)	28.425
KARO/ECHO ARES/RACES Net	Thurs	~1900 simplex	146.415
NALCO RACES/ARES Net	Thurs	1915 (PL 131.8+)	440.900
Oakland ARES Emergency Communications Net	Thurs	1930 (PL 77-)	146.880
Contra Costa Communications Club Net	Thurs	1930 (PL 82.5-)	145.110
Tech Net	Thurs	2000 (PL 82.5-)	145.110
"Over the Hill Gang" Breakfast/Commute Net	Mo-Fr	0710 (PL 82.5-)	145.110
Northern Calif. Net VHF Session	Daily	1930 (PL 107.2-)	145.410
"Going Home Group"	Mo-Fr	1600 (PL 82.5-)	145.110

Asst. EC West CoCoCo: Mike McMillan, K6MCM, mcmillan50y@yahoo.com, phone 510 223-3052.
 Frequencies: #1=145.110-, #2=147.570s, www.cc-races.org.