

VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB

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January 2009

Message from the President

Mike Vieira W6MAV

Well as I brush the confetti out from what hair I have left and remove the champagne cork from my ear, I hope everyone had a great Holiday Season.

This year we are hoping to have as much fun and fellowship as we did last year. We are going to have monthly programs that will entertain and educate our membership. On that note, if anyone comes across an interesting program that you feel would be appropriate please contact yours truly at w6mav@hotmail.com and we'll try and fit him or her into the schedule.

This Wednesday we welcome as our guest speaker Battalion Chief John Jansen who will talk about VCERT and how Amateur Radio can help.

DUES!!!: Yes dues are due, please everyone send your dues in as soon as possible and remember to included your ARRL dues, as we receive a portion of the payment for our Club. (Every little bit helps.) Contact person is Bob K6HEW at hewbob@cwnet.com

EVENTS: This year we are hoping to be involved in as many events as possible to help the community and to mostly have fun. At this time, we have **no activity chairperson**. I am currently looking for a chairperson and a couple of other members to help locate and schedule events. We have participated in several past events such as Fiesta Days, March of Dimes, Bicycle Races, Merriment on Main, just to mention a few. This year we are hoping to be active all year long.

We are planning "Field Day" in June with Jerry Olive (I hope) heading this committee. Jerry and Bob K6HEW visited a few locations in past years and have some great ideas.

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We would like everyone to try and be involved in one of these committees, which will help promote our Club. I know we all have personal commitments, but maybe you can spare a little time.

MEMBERSHIP: We are hoping to bring new members into the Club this year. I asked that sometime during the year that everyone bring at least one guest to the meetings. The guest does not have to be a licensed Ham, but we would like to get them interested in Amateur Radio. We will try to have a training Class for Tech License with a test session already scheduled for Labor Day weekend session.

Anyway enough for now hope to see all at the next meeting January 14, 2009 at the Vine Street Fire House, Vacaville, CA.

I can always be contacted at w6mav@hotmail.com.
73 for now,

Mike W6MAV

Vaca Valley Radio Club Meeting Notes of Wed. 10 Dec., 2008

As his last official duty as President for 2008, Jerry Olive (KD6WKY), opened the December, 2008, general membership and Christmas dinner of the Vaca Valley Radio Club by welcoming some two dozen members and guests.

Since the evening was dedicated to a time of good friends, good food, and fun, no "official business" was conducted.

A special recognition and present for being the "youngest" ham in attendance went to Michael Llewellyn (KI6QHH) from the NBARA.

A special thanks to our good friends and sponsors who donated the many items for the evening's drawing. As a result, everyone who attended was able to make a trip to the "goodie table" to choose a present when their ticket was drawn.

Although Kim (KI6JNX) was not at the dinner, his ticket was drawn as the winner of the 2008, 50/50 Christmas drawing. Nice going Kim!

So, with the desert and coffee all gone, and everyone about talked-out, we informally closed the gathering for another year

at 1940 hr. A good time was had by all! If you missed it - mark your calendar NOW and plan on being part of the fun next year.

Respectfully submitted:

“Skip” Lawson AF6HC

Straight Key Night 2009

By Jerry Olive, KD6WKY

As I was getting ready for New Year’s Eve I dusted off one of my straight keys and worked a half a dozen stations this year. I worked one or two, then went into the kitchen and looked around to see what was in the works for the evening preparations. I think I ate half a tray of jumbo shrimp between QSO’s.

This year I have a new antenna to use. I finally got that GAP Titan DX up and running with the help of a few club members like Skip AF6HC and Tom N6AJR as well as Jerry KG6TT. I put it up in the same location as the old Cushcraft R7 vertical antenna. This antenna is much taller so I am guying it at the top and in the middle.

The new antenna gives me some room on 80m so I worked three stations on that band. I can run as much as 500w on 80m but I am finding my computer goes nuts when I run the amplifier. The compromises we make to put up antennas create problems like this. The antenna is pretty close to the house.

I was able to work a few locals as well. Tom N6AJR got on the air for one QSO with me, and Jerry KG6TT and I had a nice “slowski” conversation as well.

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB—2009 ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Mike Vieira, W6MAV
Vice President: Open and taking resumes!
Secretary: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, W6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Director: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6ZGB
Director: Glen Mitchell KI6CJZ

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Net Control Chairperson: Open
Activities Chairperson: Board of Directors
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

started to pick up around here.

I put together my SKN QSL cards the next day and have already received confirmations from three of them via Logbook of the World and in the mail.

Merriment on Main is a great way to start the Christmas Season, SKN is the way to start the Amateur Radio New Year!

2009 New Year Resolution

By Jerry Olive KD6WKY

I will pass my Amateur Extra Class exam this year. Okay, now it is print, so it has to happen! I’m keeping the call sign though. :)

Merriment on Main 2008

We received a very nice Certificate of Appreciation from *The Reporter* for our participation in the 2008 Merriment on Main community event. I’ll bring it to the meeting.

I made a few recommendations for 2009 that Shauna asked me about. I recommended that we have a worksheet not a workbook to look up the most common questions asked by the public. This year the number one question I got was locations of the Port-a-Potties. That was not on the map or the list anywhere.

The International Year of Astronomy Special Prefix Callsigns

The International Year of Astronomy Special Prefix Callsign starts January 1st 0h UT and ends Feb 27th 23:59 UT Feb 28 2009.

All Canadian Amateurs are encouraged to use it to commemorate Galileo Galilei’s first look through an optical instrument towards the heavens. The Special Prefix are

VE changes to CG VA changes to CF
VO changes to CH VY changes to CI

The official kickoff date for IYA is January 10th and on that date many astronomy clubs across Canada and around the world will be participating in local astronomical activities. Displays at Shopping Malls, talks in Public Libraries, star parties for the public will be happening. I am also encouraging those amateur Radio operators who are affiliated with the RASC (Royal Astronomical Society of Canada) that might have local IRLP access to visit node 9005 the Vancouver Reflector on January 10th to join in the across Canada IYA Net.

To find out more about this unique ham radio Special prefix and related projects visit <http://www.hamiya2009.info>

Malcolm Scrimger, VE7DAO

DXpedition to Desecheo Gets Ready to Roll

Six members of the February 2009 [KP5 Desecheo DXpedition](#) team met in Puerto Rico the week of December 17-21. According to team co-leader Bob Allphin, K4UEE, the team visited US Fish and Wildlife Headquarters in Boqueron and met with the Chief Refuge Manager and law enforcement personnel in preparation for the DXpedition, set to start **February 12**.

Desecheo currently sits at number 7 on [DX Magazine's](#) Most Wanted list; the island is the second most-wanted DXCC entity in Asia and third most-wanted in Europe. Desecheo is a small uninhabited island in the Mona Passage, 14 miles off the western coast of Puerto Rico. It is part of the USFWS's national wildlife refuge system administered by the Caribbean National Wildlife Refuge Complex ([CNWR](#)).

"After an evening with local DXers and members of the Puerto Rico Amateur Radio League for dinner and a night of fellowship, DXpedition team members underwent UXO (unexploded ordnance) training," Allphin said. "On December 19, we accompanied US Fish and Wildlife law enforcement and UXO personnel to Desecheo Island. In the three hours we were there, the campsite and antenna fields were thoroughly swept for UXO and several areas were found suspicious. These areas were clearly marked, mapped by GPS and declared off limits for the DXpedition."

Allphin said that the USFWS will allow antennas on the ridge above the helicopter pad, providing a clear shot to Europe, North America and Japan. Other antennas will be located on the beach below the helicopter pad. While on Desecheo, the team conducted a test for the 2 meter link to Puerto Rico.

"Logistics and staging of equipment is ongoing and will be complete before the team arrives in Puerto Rico on February 7," Allphin said. "The team will transit to Desecheo on February 12 to begin the two week operation. Eight HF stations, plus 6 meters, will be operational. We have planned an incredible array of antennas. Transportation and logistics have been arranged for a fast deployment and quick appearance on the air. As soon as we land on Desecheo, two stations will be immediately activated. Stations will continue to operate until the final moments of departure on February 26."

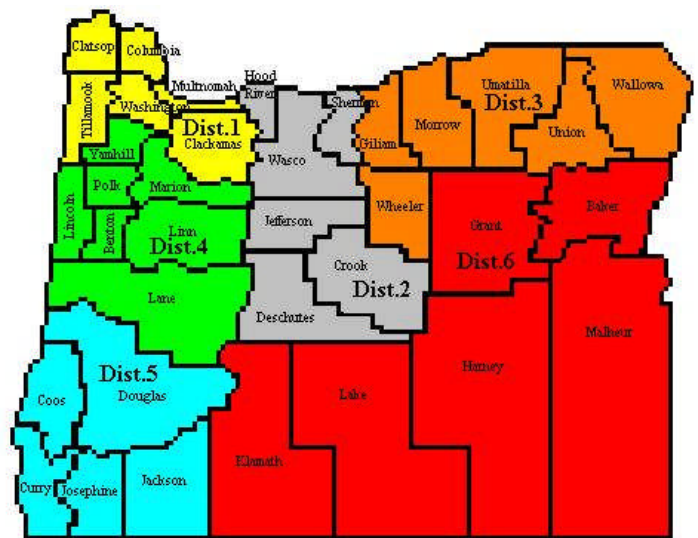
Allphin told the ARRL that stepping onto Desecheo for the first time "was a dream come true. After working on this project for so many years -- to actually be there and with the blessing of the USFWS -- was truly emotional for me. The recon trip to the island was absolutely invaluable: We were able to see exactly what terrain issues we were faced with and be able to design the antenna types and locations to maximize our signals into the target areas. The amateurs in Europe and Asia will be pleased

with our signals. The cooperation of the USFWS has been extremely cooperative and helpful."

Per USFWS rules, only 15 operators will be allowed on the island at one time. "We have arranged with USFWS to allow a shift change about half way through the DXpedition," Allphin told the ARRL. "This has allowed a number of hams on our waiting list an opportunity to participate in this DXpedition."

DXpedition co-leader Glenn Johnson, W0GJ, said the team will be running CW, SSB and RTTY on 160-6 meters. "We've had tremendous support from DX organizations all over the world and from numerous equipment and antenna manufacturers," he told the ARRL. "We are diligently working on the propagation studies to reach our hard-to-work areas of Asia and Europe. This plus our planned antennas, we should knock Desecheo off of the Most Wanted List for a long time to come."

Hams Provide Communications as 911 Service Goes Offline in Oregon



With snow and ice impacting all parts of the Pacific Northwest, local ARES® groups are on the job assisting served agencies, including local Emergency Operations Centers. According to District Emergency Coordinator for Oregon's District One David Kidd, KA7OZO, amateurs in Clatsop County, Oregon providing direct emergency communications support for the 911 system.

"The Clatsop County ARES Unit received a call from the County Emergency Manager on Monday afternoon to help out with 911 service," Kidd said. "The unit is helping out with this, providing 911 services for four villages and hamlets in the

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

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Wheelchair accessible

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at:

<http://users.cwnet.com/hewbob/vvrc>

Club repeater in Vacaville: W6VVR 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3

Additional local repeaters

WV6F 224.200(-) WV6F 440.025(+) WV6F 1291.900(-)

southern part of the county. Residents in the area have been told to go to the hams and have them relay their needed service requests to the county EOC." Hams are at fire stations or sheriff's sub-stations in the affected area.

Two ARES personnel, along with the resident deputy, are manning the sheriff's sub-station in Jewell. "They are providing 24 hour radio communication services to the county EOC with regular Net check-ins," Kidd said. "The first two hams on duty were relieved by two other hams early Tuesday morning. This will continue on a daily basis as needed, until the services are restored." On late Tuesday afternoon, Kidd told the ARRL that amateurs had been asked to stand down, as 911 service had been restored.

Kidd said that the American Red Cross is setting up shelters and warming stations in the area: "They have 70 heater meals and blankets for people that need them if they shelter there or need a hot meal. ARC personnel will be operating shelters and warming stations as long as necessary. The area is expected to be without power until after Christmas"

Kidd stressed that the other five counties that comprise Oregon's District One -- Columbia, Tillamook, Washington, Clackamas and Multnomah -- are prepared to support operations in Clatsop County if needed.

Other counties in the District, Kidd said, have been "severely impacted by snow and ice":

- In Clackamas County, more than 16,000 customers are without power. "We have severe road conditions with packed ice and snow," Kidd relayed. "There are numerous wide-covering power outages all over the county that Portland General Electric (PGE) is working on as fast as they can. I have 10 inches of snow, with an inch and a half of ice on top of it, at my home right now." In Columbia County, there are reports of "major road issues with ice," but no major power issues at this time.
- Chains are required in all of Washington County. There are minor power outages in the county, and the County EOC is in contact with EOCs in Vernonia and Tillamook Counties. "The Washington County Emergency Coordinator told me that on Monday afternoon, it started to snow again at his location, and an additional 2-6 inches that evening was being forecast," Kidd said.
- The Tillamook County Emergency Coordinator reported that there were "phone issues" in a switching station in Sheridan. The telephone company sent people in to fix it, Kidd said, but "there was so much smoke, the repair personnel had to back out on their hands and knees. They had localized 911 capability, so emergency telephone calls are not affected, so the situation isn't as bad as it was."
- Multnomah County -- home of Portland, Oregon's most populous city -- reported severe road conditions with packed ice and snow. "PGE is working on the numerous large power outages all over the county. Chains are re-

quired in the Portland area. The eastern part of the county remains under blizzard warnings, with high winds, blowing snow and terrible road conditions," Kidd said.

- ARRL Oregon Section Manager Bonnie Altus, AB7ZQ, lives in Sheridan, a town in Yamhill County, just south of District One. She told the ARRL she has been without power since Sunday afternoon and does not know when power will be restored: "I fire up the generator a couple times a day so I can get online and get caught up on the news. Getting into town requires 4WD. We had our second generator hooked up to pump water from the well, but then one of our neighbors asked if we had a spare generator because their livestock water was frozen and they needed to pump water to the barn, so we put some water in the tub and filled three 15 gallon containers with water and hauled that generator down for them to use. We have a 500 gallon tank out with the well, so we can carry water in if necessary. We also have a wood stove so I have coffee and heated up soup for lunch."

According to the National Weather Service (NWS), a winter storm warning for heavy snow and freezing rain is in effect through Thursday afternoon for the North and Central Oregon coast, the Willapa Hills and the central Oregon Cascades and foothills. Additional accumulations of 1 to 2 feet are possible, with the heaviest amounts expected in the Cascades. The NWS advises that if you must travel, keep a flashlight and water in your car for emergencies.

In Nevada, Hams Are NWS's Eyes

With winter upon us, and inclement weather coming almost daily in one form or another, the wind and its treatment of mountaintop equipment is a major concern. According to ARRL Nevada Section Emergency Coordinator Don Carlson, KQ6FM, the mountains of Northern Nevada take their share of beatings, but he said that in this case, "winter has certainly come in like a lion. On December 19, a major winter storm hit the area, bringing with it hurricane-force winds to high elevations." Gusts of more than 140 miles per hour battered the mountain, [damaging sensitive electronic weather gear](#), including the [NEXRAD radar system](#) used by the National Weather Service office in Reno.

"Fortunately, Northwest Nevada has a very active team of amateurs who are members of the National Weather Service's SKY-WARN weather spotter program," Carlson said. "Since the demise of the radar system, NWS Reno has asked spotters to assist by providing real-time weather information via Amateur Radio."

Carlson said that Dee Arnold, KA7LOZ, manned WX7RNO, the amateur station at the NWS Reno office to take reports that came in from a very large area of the region. At times when no one is available to actually be on site, weather service personnel turn the 2 meter radio on and monitor reports that can be delivered at any time of the day or night. "We will have to be their eyes for the time being until the radar site can be accessed and

repaired, which may not be for some time and could be several weeks," Arnold said.

Spotters file reports on the Wide Area Data Club's high-level linked system that covers a good portion of both Northern Nevada and North Central California. "The Amateur Radio SKY-WARN weather spotters will remain on duty giving reports until further notice, as another storm approaches the area over Christmas," Carlson recounted. "Amateurs have also been providing highway information over mountain passes during the recent flurry of early winter storms."



PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely

Dues are delinquent January 1st

Name: _____ Call Sign _____	MEMBER Dues -----\$15.00 _____
Street: _____	Each Family Member ---\$ 2.00 _____
City: _____ Zip: _____	Student -----\$ 5.00 _____
Phone: (_____) _____ - _____ OK to Publish?(_____) _____	Repeater/Autopatch donation--- _____
License Class: _____ ARRL Member?(_____) _____	Call/Name badge -----\$10.00 _____
E-Mail Address _____	Optional ARRL membership
FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)	ARRL dues-----\$39.00 _____
Name: _____ Call Sign _____	ARRL dues (Senior) -----\$36.00 _____
License Class: _____ ARRL Member?(_____) _____	Senior is 65 yr or older with one time proof on age.
Name: _____ Call Sign _____	Total----- _____
License Class: _____ ARRL Member?(_____) _____	Paid by CASH: _____ Check # _____

Mail to : Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143