



VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB

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February 2010

President's Message

Thanks for the great turn out at the January meeting. It's good to see so many interested radio amateurs that want to get together and check in with each other.

I'll get that PSK 31 demo going this month and see if we can have some interesting conversation about it while we're live on the air working somebody.

If you still owe your dues, please take care of that with Bob K6HEW, we want to wrap that up and put it to bed.

See you Wednesday night!

January Meeting Minutes

Not available at press time. The club secretary in his haste left the notes in his brief bag which is at his Fairfield office at the moment.

The minutes will be available to read and amend and/or approve at the meeting Wednesday night.

Sorry about that guys and gals!

Around the Shack

By Jerry Olive KD6WKY

Being an HF guy I pay attention to the sun spot activity and follow the trends I see on the bands from day to day. The number of sun spots has begun to pick up on a consistent basis now making the higher bands open more often. These

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openings lead to opportunities to work new countries and locations that have not been available for years.

I have my HF station built into my computer work station so whenever I'm working on my computer or doing something on Facebook, I usually have a DX spotting application running in the back ground. If I see something interesting I can fire up my station and go after it.

I worked a dozen interesting DX stations in January, the one new one was 5I3A Tanzania which is located on the southeast coast of Africa. I saw the spot, turned the little two element beam east and tuned in the frequency on the 17m band. Using low power 100 watts he came back to me the first time I called him. Nice.

Other DX I worked in January were TX3D Austral Island, French Polynesia, XU7XRO Cambodia, JI1FGX/DU9 The Philippines, ZD7FT St. Helena Island in the South Atlantic, E51WWA and E51WWB South Cook Islands, VP8DMN Falkland Islands, and VQ9LA Diego Garcia. I also worked EU almost every morning, usually Austria for some reason. The bands were open to EU a lot in January.

Yesterday I got up early and worked the Minnesota QSO Party for awhile. That contest was a Saturday only contest run each year on the Saturday before the Super Bowl. I worked it for about an hour before I shut down and headed out the door to do some work. Later in the day I turned on the radio and worked the contest for awhile as well.

It was interesting to be calling CQ MNQP and get stations from other states wanting to work me thinking they were helping me. I just worked them quickly and moved on; it's faster than trying to explain that I only want to talk to Minnesota stations.

I had one guy notice I was in Solano County. Gary W4IHI from Largo, FL wanted to work me. He sent me an email. We set up a schedule for Sunday at 1830 UTC on the 20m band. I worked him and sent him my QSL card. Gary is collecting counties and needed Solano. I told him to look for me in October over in Yolo County which he needs as well. I should be over there working the California QSO Party. More on that later.

With the weather getting better I have a few outdoor projects to work on dealing with antennas. I'll be inviting you to an antenna party soon. 73!

MARS Unifies Operation in Support of Haiti Relief Effort

To assist the MARS communications support effort in Haiti, the heads of the [Army](#), [Air Force](#), and [Navy-Marine Corps](#) MARS programs have agreed to divvy up responsibilities among the three Service MARS programs. According to Air Force MARS Public Information Officer David Trachtenberg, N4WWL/AFA3TR, this delegation of responsibility will facilitate more efficient utilization of MARS communications assets in the overall relief operation. On January 12, a 7.0 earthquake struck Haiti, killing thousands and wiped out the island nation's communication infrastructure.

Trachtenberg told the ARRL that Air Force MARS will have primary responsibility for coordinating and releasing public affairs information on the activities of MARS radio operators assisting with the Haiti relief operation. Navy-Marine Corps MARS will be responsible for recruiting volunteers -- who will travel to Florida at their own expense -- to serve in Haiti as part of the essential communications link. Army MARS will coordinate frequency authorizations and use of digital communications for MARS operations on the island, including the transmission of e-mail via radio links; this capability is especially useful in the absence of Internet connectivity.

"The delegation of responsibilities among the three MARS services not only makes practical sense, but is an excellent example of interoperability in action," said Air Force MARS Chief Allen Eiermann. "This represents true unity of effort," added Army MARS Chief. Navy-Marine Corps MARS Chief Bo Lindfors noted that the success of the MARS operation so far "demonstrates the value of this contingency communications capability in a real-world emergency."

According to Trachtenberg, volunteer MARS radio operators representing all three Service MARS programs have been on the ground in Haiti, working with military and medical teams to provide valuable communications support.

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB—2010 ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Scott Joseph, KI6YYZ
Vice President: Kim Ware, KI6JNX
Secretary: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

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Net Control Chairperson: Kim Ware, KI6JNX
Activities Chairperson: Board of Directors
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

the ground in Haiti, working with military and medical teams to provide valuable communications support.

Hamming on High

By Jack E. Roland, KE0VH
ke0vh@qsl.net

The Colorado 14er event occurs every August (It was held on August 9, 2009.) and is a great way to combine two hobbies, Amateur Radio and enjoying the great outdoors here in Colorado. This was the first one that I had participated in by hiking a fourteener (14,000 feet plus of elevation). I had contacted stations from my home and/or mobile for a few years, but had never operated from one of the 52 peaks in Colorado that were above 14,000 feet. So, early on the morning of August 10, I awoke at 3:30 to a very rude alarm, got up, got my gear and drove over to the Morrison exit to join the other day hikers in the large parking area. There I was meeting my friend Jim Langsted, KCORPS, who accompanied me up Mount Bierstadt last month.

We loaded my gear into Jim's vehicle and headed up I-70 to the Frisco exit then south into Breckenridge. You could tell even in the predawn light that the day could be a little cool and possibly raining later. We headed up Hoosier pass and then the great peaks became visible. We sighted Quandary Peak first and when we went over the pass, Mount Lincoln and Mount Cross came into view. There are some great pictures of this on the 14er Web site (www.14ers.com).

We drove into the little village of Alma on Colorado 9 and found the entrance to the forest road thru a little residential/business area then proceeding another 6 miles to the Kite Lake campground. We were thinking that we would meet up with Jeff, N0XDW, and Tom, who had camped out there the night before. Jeff and Tom were going to hike up Mount Democrat just to the west of Mount Cameron and Mount Lincoln to operate from there. Sure enough, there was Jeff's truck with a big quad antenna strapped to the top, but no sign of them yet.

The Trek Begins

It was now about 7:15 AM and Jim and I began getting ready to start the hike. It was around 42 degrees and the morning, at that time, looked fairly clear, but some clouds were already forming off the bowl top to the west. There were a lot of hikers already forming up to make the trip, including a large group of VOCs (Volunteers of Colorado) getting ready to go up the slopes to do work on the trail.

Now, technically the trails are not open at this point due to private land owners and the city of Alma still being in talks to lease the trails to the city. This is because the landowners do not want to be sued by someone who might get injured on or off the trail and because of the numerous mining shafts and holes in the area. But as long as you stay on the trail, there was no problem.

So, Jim and I started up the trail behind the large group of VOCs. We got about 1/4 mile thru the valley by Kite Lake when Jim realized he had forgotten all his paperwork, maps and log sheets back in the vehicle, so back he went and I followed slowly just enjoying the morning. Then I heard Jeff, N0XDW, give his call on 146.52 MHz simplex. He told me that his alarm had gone off almost an hour late. So, they were behind us on the trail back down the hill. The valley here with mountains on all sides except for the southern entrance was just beautiful in the early morning light.

The first part of the hike is thru the valley, but pretty much up-hill from the beginning. It traverses thru tundra and bush growth up to a level where there were ruins of a mine house and several mine shafts in the hillside. There was even an abandoned stove down the hill a ways, but the signs all said to stay on the trail, so you didn't want to go off exploring.

Soon after this we came to the rocky area of the climb and had a great view back down the trail where we could see the parking area and Kite Lake, yes, shaped like a kite with the kite's tail formed from the stream feeding down the hill. We continued up the steep trail to the saddle area between the left branch of the trail up Mount Democrat, to the right branch up Mount Cameron. The view into the valley north of the Democrat/Cameron/Lincoln complex was beautiful.

So, after a brief rest, Jim and I continued up the Mount Cameron trail to the east. We could see the VOC folks up near the summit working on the trail. The way was steeper here, but we made good time up to them. They were working on building up and making sure the trail was in good shape. I noted that they had carried up shovels, picks and other implements. Carried all that and now were working above 13,000 feet. I was impressed and Jim and I were sure to thank them for their hard work and hopefully give them a word of encouragement.

Mount Lincoln Summit

As we progressed, not only did the trail up Mount Cameron get steeper but there was a considerable drop off to the left into the valley below. If you stopped and listened, you could hear the water running in the valley. It was very relaxing to listen to. Then finally we emerged on top of Mount Cameron and had our first view of Mount Lincoln just off to the northeast. Mount Cameron has a very broad and rounded summit, with a steep slope of about 100 feet or so down to the saddle between it and another hill on the way to the Mount Lincoln summit. Within another half hour we stood together with a few others on the summit of Mount Lincoln at about 9:30 AM.

We wasted no time setting up gear to get on the air. Jim assembled his 2 meter tape measure beam and I found some loose

stones right next to the summit marker. I inserted my combination antenna mast/walking stick (actually a collapsible painter's pole) and put up the 6 meter inverted V. I then took out the MFJ -9406 transceiver and UPS battery I had lugged up the mountain and put it on 6 meters. While doing this I made a contact or two using the VX-6 on 2 meters, including Jeff, N0XDW, back on Mount Democrat off to the west. I continued to set up the 6 meter station and soon was tuning the MFJ and hearing signals on 6.

I was really hopeful we would have a band opening as the weather conditions were about the same as the day before when I had heard stations back east from my QTH. So sure enough, I heard a station sign from Chattanooga, Tennessee. So I started calling CQ from the top of Mount Lincoln at 14,286 feet. Then, after tuning around, I worked stations in eastern Tennessee (W2OO), Jackson, Mississippi (W4UDH) and AB4EJ, 50 miles southeast of Birmingham, Alabama. I also worked Dennis, N0SP, who was on Mount Thorodin close to Denver. He and I had talked the day before on 6 meters and he told me that he would look for us on Mount Lincoln. All this time, Jim was working a bunch of stations on 2 meters; a lot of the other peaks were on the air.

We could see Quandary Peak off to the north but hadn't heard anyone yet. We continued to work more stations on both 2 and 6 meters, although during a break in the action on 6 meters I made one contact on 223.5 MHz using the VX-6 with KQ6EE on Pikes Peak. This guy comes in just about every year from California and operates, so I was really glad to be able to make a 220 contact with him.

Rare Square and Cold Air

I didn't know at the time but we were operating from grid square DM69wi, which is a much rarer square than most. This made the guys who were looking for grid squares very happy.

More hikers were coming up to the summit during the whole 2 hours we were operating. We asked one to take our picture for our QSL. We will be sending this out to our contacts. Then, the weather started deteriorating, getting colder and rain clouds definitely were moving in. So, we started wrapping up, but then heard a guy bring Quandary Peak on the air on 2 meters, so we were glad to work him. His partner evidently hadn't been able to make it to the summit and had turned back, but he came on up.

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

The W6VVR net call is Tuesday evenings at 7pm on the club repeater. All are invited to participate in this weekly meeting on the air. 73!

Additional local repeaters

WV6F 224.200(-) WV6F 440.025(+) PL 127.3
 W6OMF Repeater 224.540 MHz, PL 118.8 Hz

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988 General Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM 420 Vine Street Fire Station.

Wheelchair accessible

Quandary at this point was not visible, neither was Democrat off to the south. We could still see the guy on Mount Bross just to our south, he had a vehicle on top. There is a forest road that leads all the way to the top of Bross and I had to laugh thinking that he was warm and dry and a lightweight. (Just joking here.) During the time up on the summit we also had the opportunity to show Amateur Radio to an interested few that wanted to know what we were doing.

A Curious Thing

On our way down from Mount Lincoln, we looked off over to the west and saw that someone had tried to drive their little Toyota up to Mount Bross and the car was literally hanging at a precarious angle over the edge of the "road." More a two rut four wheel drive track than anything. What can you say about that except you sure hope they can get it down all right.

We went back over Mount Cameron and the wind was picking up and we got a rain drop or two. Now, the slope that we so easily traveled going down to the saddle between Cameron and Lincoln had to be traveled back up. Pretty steep loose soil and rock here, but we made it back up to head down the west side of Cameron to the saddle between it and Democrat.

During the descent to the saddle Jim was talking to a young operator on Pikes Peak who was up with his dad and you could tell he was having a great time. Then I heard him actually call for me, which was surprising. When I answered him he relayed a message from Rich, W9BNO, who had hoped to work Jim and I but couldn't find us. We sent a 73 back his way via the station on Pikes Peak, so I guess we also activated Mount Cameron for a bit as well.

During this time, we could see the summit of Mount Democrat and we could see Jeff, N0XDW, and his partner packing up and heading down. As we descended towards the saddle we watched the two small dark figures heading down to meet us on the saddle. About that time it began to rain so I had to put on a poncho to keep dry. About an hour later we were at the parking lot, ready to go home. I highly recommend a trip up a 14er and be sure to take your radio with you.

I will be posting pictures for the entire trip on my Web site, www.qsl.net/ke0vh/techham.html, so take a look when you can.

All photos by Jack E. Roland, KE0VH.

Jack E. Roland, KE0VH, has been licensed since 1977. He is the Chief Engineer for Salem Communications, Colorado Springs and is net control for the Society of Broadcast engineers IRLP net. He has been married for 25 years and has eight children, two of whom have licenses and one is on the way. Jack can be reached at 4320 Hoyt Court, Wheat Ridge, CO 80033.



Ham Helps Out in Riverside County

Desert Rescue

On the afternoon of Saturday, January 16, Christopher Walsh, KJ6BBS, of Irvine, California, was listening to radio traffic on 446.760 MHz, a channel used by the Los Angeles area-based Pocket Auto-Patch Association ([PAPA](#)) system -- an Amateur Radio network of 22 interlinked analog and digital D-STAR repeaters that provides extensive coverage of the Southern California region and beyond -- when he heard an emergency radio call break from Jose Hernandez, KI6PCK, of Thousand Oaks, California, reporting an injured male who had broken some ribs from an ATV-type accident.

According to Walsh, John Stevens, KI6FKP, of Topanga Canyon attempted to take the emergency call during the break, but he did not have the ability to access a phone to contact emergency services. "After hearing the emergency call and the nature of the emergency," Walsh said, "I decided that time was of the essence and so I broke in to radio traffic, asking Hernandez what assistance I could offer. I asked him what the nature of the emergency was and to provide me with as specific description as possible of his geographical location. He responded with a description -- on the [Bradshaw Trail](#) about 15 miles northeast of [Niland, California](#) -- as well as the GPS coordinates of the injured party."

Walsh immediately contacted 911, "but since I live in Irvine, I was initially directed to the Orange County dispatcher," he explained. "The emergency call's origin was based in Riverside County, just over the border of Imperial County. I then got a hold of the Riverside office of the California Highway Patrol and gave them the description of injured party's location and GPS coordinates."

A few minutes later, Walsh received a call from Riverside County Sheriff's office, asking for the location information; during that call, he also received a call from Riverside County Fire Department. "Riverside County Fire had asked more direct question about the injured party, such as how old he was,

whether or not there were any visible injuries and what the general description of the landscape was of the injured party's location," Walsh said. "These and many more questions from the various rescue agencies were then immediately relayed to Jose who provided detailed answers."

Over the course of a half an hour, Walsh relayed questions from both Hernandez to the rescuing agencies -- Riverside County Fire, Riverside County Sheriff, CHP and Imperial County Sheriff -- and vice versa. "During that time, Riverside Fire coordinated with me, gathering navigational information on how Jose and the injured party had entered Bradshaw Trail into the desert, so as to report to the land-based rescue units how to arrive to the scene. At this point I received a direct telephone call from a Riverside County firefighter. I passed him information from Jose about the physical description of their entrance to the trail - 8 miles north of a campground near Niland, off of Hot Mineral Springs Road."

During this entire process, Walsh advised Hernandez not to move from his location, to stand by for more information regarding the rescue and to relay any updates they had. "Jose wanted to know when the rescuers would arrive, so I asked the first agency to call me back, which was Riverside Fire. They reported that CHP had a spotter plane about two minutes out from their location and that a rescue helicopter was about 20 minutes inbound. Jose then told me that the injured party was experiencing very difficult breathing and that it was worsening. Imperial County Sheriff also reported that they had an inbound

Jose then told me that the injured party was experiencing very difficult breathing and that it was worsening. Imperial County Sheriff also reported that they had an inbound rescue helicopter with an ETA of 19 minutes."

Less than a half-hour later, Hernandez told Walsh that a red helicopter was directly approaching them and that the injured party was showing signs of relief. "There was a long pause between this and the closing communication when he reported that the injured party was airlifted to a nearby hospital and that the rescue effort was a success," Walsh said. "Thanks to the PAPA system, Jose Hernandez, KI6PCK, and all of the rescue agencies involved, a man was successfully rescued. Without ham radio and the PAPA system infrastructure, who knows what kind of suffering this individual would have to have experienced before he could arrive to the nearest hospital. I am so glad I was able to contribute to this effort, and would never hesitate to help another person or people in need of rescue. Amateur Radio saved the day!"



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 -----\$20.00 _____
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-----\$37.00 _____
Name: _____ Call Sign _____	ARRL dues (Senior) -----\$34.00 _____
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