



April 2018

QUA CVARC

A Newsletter for the Conejo Valley Amateur Radio Club

President's Message

Stu Forman-KK6VYS

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As many of you likely know, Steven Gillis-KZ6H recently started a group within CVARC specifically for Morse code enthusiasts and those who want to learn Morse code or improve their skills.

Since the group began, Steven has been sending out periodic emails with attached audio files, for group members to practice copying, as well as other helpful information and ideas. So far, the group has about 20 members. If you're interested in becoming part of this "club within the club," contact Steven at sggillis@gmail.com.

I started learning Morse code about two years ago, and I still think of myself as a beginner. I know the letters and numbers (although I don't always recognize them as fast as I'd like), and I know some basic punctuation, and some of the more popular prosigns and other shortcuts, but I'd like to improve, and this new group concept is really serving to motivate me. I can currently copy at about 10 WPM. Sure, I'm not breaking any speed records, but I can do it! But, the thing about learning Morse code is that, while a group can offer resources and support, it's something that you

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QUA [CVARC](#) Newsletter Editor
 Stu Forman—KK6VYS
sforman66@icloud.com

Club Meeting and Pre-Meeting Dinner Information

The next regular club meeting is Thursday, April 19, 2018 (always the third Thursday) at the East County Sheriff's Station Community Room on Olsen Road at 7:30 pm. Talk-in coordination is on the Bozo repeater, 147.885 (- 127.3).

Topic/Guest Speaker: Contesting: Pete Heins-N6ZE is an active contester and is considered an expert in VHF/UHF contesting. This is a great place for newer Hams and Technician class licensees to start contesting. Pete will share tips and tricks as well as discuss the technical aspects of VHF/UHF contesting along with the many possibilities for operating such as fixed station, rover or using a directional antenna.

Raffle Prizes: N3FJP Logging Software (Courtesy of N3FJP); Samlex 250W AC Inverter; Wall Wart RFI Noise Filter.

Pre-Meeting Dinner: Join fellow club members for a pre-meeting dinner, at 5 p.m., at Yolanda's, 590 E. Los Angeles Ave., Simi Valley, 805-306-9933

President's Message - Continued

really have to work at on your own. It takes time, and there is a certain level of commitment required.

However, and fortunately for us, we live in a time when we can learn just about anything online or on our phones, and often for free. With that in mind, I thought I'd share a few of the resources I used and, in some cases, continue to use, which might be helpful to you if you're interested in learning Morse code or improving your speed.

One of the first things I tried was a free app called Morse Toad. It was designed to look like an 80s-era video game, and it's a really great way to learn the letters and numbers. It utilizes the Koch method and Farnsworth timing, meaning that the student learns the characters two or three at a time, building with each lesson, and the characters are sent at full speed, say 20-25 WPM, rather than slowed down, so your brain gets accustomed to hearing the characters at the faster speed.

After I learned my letters, I started using another free app called Morse Words. It sends complete words at speeds as slow as 5 WPM, but you can adjust the settings to have the character speed at something faster, perhaps 20-25 WPM. Again the idea is to simply adjust the spacing between the characters, not the characters themselves. After you're comfortable copying words at a given speed, you can increase the WPM, which is really decreasing the spacing between the characters.

On my computer I use G4FON, which you can use to learn the letters and numbers in a similar fashion, by choosing a small number of characters and then increasing that number as you learn them, while also choosing the character speed and effective WPM. There's a lot more here to help simulate the on-air experience. You can add noise and weaken the signal strength. You can purposefully choose to have it simulate a straight key user with a bad fist. And G4FON is free too!

Finally, on my phone, I subscribe to several podcasts called QOTD, which are also available in iTunes. They are free on either platform. The podcasts are nothing more than a series of quotes sent in Morse code, and they are offered at 5, 8, 12, 15, 20, 25 and 30 WPM. It's great that, on my phone, I can rewind 15 seconds when I miss a letter or don't understand a word. I am currently going back and forth between the 8 WPM and the 12 WPM versions. Hopefully soon I'll be fully comfortable listening at 12 WPM, and ready to start trying 15 WPM.

So? Anyone else wanna join in the fun? Until next time, 73.

Stu-KK6VYS

**Halo Antenna Project Build
May 5th at 9 am.
ECSS Community Rm.**

Reminders:

- CVARC Board of Directors meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, at 7:00 pm, at the Westlake Village City Hall. All CVARC members are welcome.
- If you haven't done so already, please take some CVARC business cards to give to anyone interested in learning more about ham radio. You can get them at the club meetings from Zak-N6PK. They are especially good to have on hand when working portable.
- If you have general questions or concerns, you can always contact CVARC's Members at Large, Zak Cohen-N6PK at zakc99@aol.com, Tim Wheeler-K6POI at tim.k6poi@gmail.com or Ben Herrera-W6JWZ at w6jwz@outlook.com. Technical questions should go to Adrian Jarrett-K6KYat g4frz@hotmail.com.

March Meeting Summary

> About a dozen members met for dinner at Bandits.

Stu-KK6VYS

- > Meeting began at 7:30 with the Pledge of Allegiance.
- > About 6 first time visitors.
- > Thanks to Social Chair **Mike-KM6EII** for bringing the cookies, and **Zak-N6PK** for bringing the coffee.
- > Prizes tonight: Dual Band SWR/Power Meter, CigBuddy 12V lighter to Power Pole, and an ARRL Handbook.
- > Next mini-FD/Picnic is scheduled for Saturday, April 14th. Same location: Thousand Oaks Community Park.
- > Education: Technician classes began March 17 for 4 Saturdays; 1-5 PM; Extra class started on March, but there are 4 classes left. Both classes lead up to the April 8th Test Session. Classes and Test Session are in the Community Room of the East County Sheriff's Station.
- > Change of email address? Please let Christian know.
- > Boy Scout Camporee is April 21. **Ben-AI6YR** is requesting assistance. Contact him if you're interested.
- > **Paul-WD6EBY** has been granted permission to install an amateur digital mesh network and a UHF Repeater system on Rasnow Peak. He made a presentation to the Board requesting that CVARC fund the project, as it would service the amateur radio community in the Conejo Valley. The CVARC Board of Directors agreed to fund the project, and noted that the Club had received a donation, several years ago, that was earmarked for future digital projects.
- > The April pre-meeting dinner will be at Yolanda's in Simi Valley, and the speaker will be Pete Heins on Contesting.

Adrian-K6KY

- > Showed 2M and 6M Halo Antennas he built. Build project is scheduled for May 5.

Steven-KZ6H

- > Morse Group is forming. If you're interested in learning Morse code or improving your Morse skills, contact Steven at sggillis@gmail.com

John-NS6X

- > John Kitchens introduced himself to the Club. John is the new ARRL Section Manager.

GUEST SPEAKER: David Shoaf-KG6IRW

- > David is the International Distribution Manager for Elecraft, and he did a presentation, via Skype, on emerging remote architectures, the gatekeeper function, maintaining control and privacy, as well as implementation guidelines.

Planned CVARC Speakers and Topics

Thursday, April 19, 2018 – Contesting: Pete Heins-N6ZE is an active contester and is considered an expert in VHF/UHF contesting. This is a great place for newer Hams and Technician class licensees to start contesting. Pete will share tips and tricks as well as discuss the technical aspects of VHF/UHF contesting along with the many possibilities for operating such as fixed station, rover or using a directional antenna.

Thursday, May 17, 2018 – Field Day History

Thursday, June 21, 2018 – Emergency Preparedness: Bill Boyd, Emergency Manager with the Ventura County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services discusses emergency preparedness and communication in Ventura County.

Thursday, July 19, 2018 – Logging Software

Thursday, August 16, 2018 – Mobile Operation

Thursday, September 20, 2018 – DMR

Thursday, October 18, 2018 – Repeater Systems

Thursday, November 15, 2018 – Antennas

Thursday, December 13, 2018 – CVARC Holiday Party

The Speakers Committee (Mark Horner-KK6IKX Brad Ormsby-W6VO, David Arata-KA9WMI and Andy Ludlum-K6AGL) is always interested in your program ideas. If you have thoughts on who might be a good speaker for a club meeting, please let any of us know.

Note: This is the latest schedule of planned Speakers and Topics. It is always a work-in-progress, and sometimes it becomes necessary to reschedule a speaker to another date. We apologize for any confusion.

Logging, HF Contesting and Proposed HF Privileges for Technicians

By Stuart Sheldon-AG6AG

Is contesting really important to the hobby?

That question comes up a lot when talking to new hams. Although discussed in some detail in the ARRL Technician's Handbook, the actual Technician test (at the time of this writing) has very few questions that mention contesting. Many General and Extra class operators don't seem to get *'the whole contest thing'* as well.

So why are contests important? Why should we care about radio sport at all? And what does this have to do with the new proposal put forward by ARRL to the FCC to grant additional HF privileges to Technicians?

New Privileges for Technicians.

Full disclosure... I am for the new privileges. I believe that new hams need to be able to *'taste'* HF Phone and HF Data to encourage them to upgrade to General. I think it's time we realize that limiting Technicians to just CW on 15m, 40m and 80m is too restrictive.

Don't get me wrong, CW is a valid and important part of our hobby. There are many operators out there working to learn CW simply because they want to. But why are we requiring a Technician to learn CW just to get on HF? The FCC no longer requires it for any class of license.

Giving a Technician the ability to work limited phone and data on HF will hopefully inspire them to invest the time and money required to put together an HF rig and antenna system.

Most arguments I've heard have seemed to center on having untrained and inexperienced operators on the bands. My answer to this is that you are absolutely right! Boy you should have heard me the first time I keyed up on 40m. I was tongue twisted and used every 'Q' code except the one I should have been using. Boy did I make a mess of things those first 10 or so QSOs. Oh, and by the way, I was a General at the time... Did I get yelled at? No! I got laughed at a couple times... But everyone seemed to realize I was totally new at this, and like most good hams, they helped me work through it.

Why is Radio Sport important and good for the Hobby?

Because, it gets Amateurs on the Air! I can not tell you how many times I've turned the rig on and checked out the activity on the bands, only to find nothing happening. Sure, I call CQ a few times (more like several times over and over), but a lot of times, no reply... I'm told that it's band conditions and the solar cycle, and that the witch doctors in the south pacific are cursing us... Wait, strike that last one. But for whatever reason, there is just no activity to speak of.

Now, turn the radio on during a contest, and WOW! There are people to connect with. What a difference. Admittedly there is not a lot of rag chewing going on, and the QSOs are pretty much a limited exchange, but there are quite a few pay offs for new hams.

- Gaining confidence
- Learning to use the radio and all the filters
- Learning to listen and copy weak signals
- Better understanding of propagation and conditions

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Logging, HF Contesting and Proposed HF Privileges for Technicians - Continued

All and all, these attributes make us all better operators.

Rule Changes Regarding Logging.

It used to be that every contact, regardless of band, needed to be logged and kept for review in case the FCC wanted more information regarding your activity on the air. On June 9th, 1983 the requirements for logging were virtually eliminated. Although there was much speculation, the consensus was that Amateur Operator logs would not provide useful information to the FCC, and that the requirement was an unnecessary burden on Amateurs.

For me, it's hard to imagine having to log every contact I made on a VHF or UHF repeater, let alone do it while driving. But before the change in 1983, that was the rule.

As a matter of fact, you don't even have to log contest contacts if you don't want to... Although that can be considered poor radio sport, it isn't required.

So, if we don't have to log at all, why is it that most Amateurs still do?

Why we still log our contacts.

The FCC no longer requires us to log our contacts. Why is the common belief that we should all still log our QSOs (at least our HR QSOs)?

Well, I'm sure some of you reading have your own opinions on this, but here is my short list:

- Seeing if you talked to someone before
- It's neat to look at your history when in a QSO with someone and see that you spoke with them before.
- Referencing a previous contact during the contact also makes the person on the other side feel good that you remembered them.
- Documenting a contact with what many experienced ham's call a 'Rare DX Station'
- Have you ever talked to Brazil? How about Russia or Australia? I have, and I can tell you when, on what frequency and to who because I have a Log.
- Qualifying for wall paper (Awards)
- By uploading your logs to services like Logbook of The World or QRZ.com you can qualify for Awards like 'Worked all States' or 'DX Century Club'.
- Justifying to the FCC that we amateurs actually use all the bands and frequencies we are licensed to use...
- WAIT... WHAT?

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Logging, HF Contesting and Proposed HF Privileges for Technicians - Continued

Spectrum Equals Revenue to the Feds.

Anybody catch what the FCC spectrum auction brought in? How about over 19 Billion Dollars! What was once considered useless bands, now brings huge revenue to the US government.

With all the gadgets and other things that are eating up current spectrum allocations, it is no surprise that many commercial companies are questioning the need for Amateur Radio to have access to such a broad range of bands.

This is why Spectrum Protection is such an important thing for us. Whatever you may think about the current politics of ARRL, you still must concede that they are still Amateur Radio's lobbying organization, and are still working to protect our bands.

But if we can't prove that we are using the bands, we will face huge obstacles in keeping and expanding our spectrum in the future.

If there was only a way to show some sort of report on band usage across the country and the world... Some way to demonstrate that Amateur Radio Operators actually used these bands...

I think you can see where I'm going here...

OK, let me try to pull this all together.

So... I'm sure you all got the logic here, but if not, let me summarize.

- The proposed changes to the Technician License allocations should result in more HF operators in the future.
- Spectrum has monetary value and we must help protect ours.
- Logging is important, and uploading those logs helps us prove that we use the spectrum.
- Contesting vastly increases the number of operators at a given time, and allows for real world practice and skill development on all the bands.
- If you compete in a contest, you most likely will upload a log. This again adds to our 'body of proof' that we are using the bands we have allocated to us.

Closing Thoughts...

I know I over simplified a lot of the subject matter. But I believe, for the most part, my points are accurate. And, I also realize that many of the points easily stand on their own without associating the others. Radio Sport is a great part of our hobby. It's not for everyone, but it can be an excellent training tool for new hams. Oh, and did I mention it's FUN!!! Most VHF / UHF contacts never see a log. Heck, most of them are on a repeater. Very few new Technician level hams experiment with simplex. VHF / UHF contests are all about simplex, and should be part of the new ham's induction into the hobby. Will the FCC add the new privileges to the Technician License? I don't know, but if it does get to a Request for Comment state, I'll go on record as supporting it as proposed by the ARRL. I think it's good for the hobby. I believe we need to insure that HF has lots of new operators. I also believe it will increase the number of upgrades to General and beyond.

— Stu (AG6AG)

Event Calendar

- April 14 Mini-Field Day & Picnic
Thousand Oaks Community Park - 2525 N. Moorpark Rd
- April 14 – 15 HF QSO Party's: New Mexico, North Dakota, Georgia
<http://www.newmexicoqsoparty.org/wp/>
<http://www.kg0yl.net/QSO.html>
<http://www.georgiaqsoparty.org/>
- April 15 Rookie Roundup - Phone
<http://www.arrl.org/rookie-roundup>
- April 15 International Vintage Contest HF 1200z – 1800z
<http://contestvintage.beepworld.it/rules-2012.htm>
- April 17 222 Mhz Spring Sprint 7 – 11pm
<https://sites.google.com/site/springvhfupsprints/home/2018-information>
- April 19 CVARC General Meeting 7:30 pm ECSS
Topic: Contesting
Pre-meeting Dinner is at Yolanda's, Simi Valley, 5 pm
- April 20 – 22 International DX Convention - Visalia
<http://www.dxconvention.org>
- April 22 Goodkin 1-Day Ham Radio Class 9 – 4pm
<http://hamclass.goodkin.net/>
- April 21 BSA Camporee 7 – 3:30pm
Tierra Rejada Rd., Moorpark
Ben-AI6YR KK6FUT@gmail.com
- April 25 432 Mhz Spring Sprint 7 – 11pm
- April 29 Aut2Run - CSUCI
- May 4 – 5 Military Radio Collector's Group Annual Mtg/Swap
Estrella Warbird Museum, Paso Robles
<http://www.mrcgwest.org/>
- May 5 Halo Antenna Project Build with Adrian-K6KY
ECSS Community Room, 9 am g4frz@hotmail.com
- May 5 Microwave Spring Sprint 8:00 am – 2:00 pm (local time)
<https://sites.google.com/site/springvhfupsprints/home/2018-information>
- May 5 – 6 7th Call Area/Indiana, Delaware, New England QSO Parties
<http://ws7n.net/7QP/new/Page.asp?content=rules>
- May 10 CVARC Board Mtg 7:00 pm Westlake City Hall



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Calendar—Continued

May 12	Simi Expo - Simi Valley Town Center Steve ke6wez@gmail.com
May 12 – 13	50 Mhz(6 Meters) Spring Sprint https://sites.google.com/site/springvhfupsprints/home/2018-information
May 17	CVARC General Mtg 7:30 pm ECSS Topic: Field Day History Pre-meeting Dinner is at Dugout Sports Grill, Moorpark, 5 pm
May 19	Red Cross Ride for the Red Bike Ride Stewart Stone KG6BOV@arrl.net
May 27	Mountain to the Beach Marathon - http://www.mountains2beachmarathon.com/
June 2 – 3	10-10 Int. Open Season PSK Contest https://www.ten-ten.org/index.php/activity/2013-07-22-20-26-48/qso-party-schedule/2-uncategorised/51-open-season-rules
June 2 – 3	Special Event Station: USS Midway Museum Ship (museum ships weekend) N16IW San Diego 1600z – 2300z 14.320, 7.250, 14.070
June 9 – 11	June VHF Contest http://www.arrl.org/june-vhf
June 10	CVARC VE Exam ECSS Community Rm 8:30 am
June 14	CVARC Board Mtg 7:00 pm Westlake City Hall
June 16	ARRL Kids Day http://www.arrl.org/kids-day
June 21	CVARC General Mtg 7:30 pm ECSS Topic: Emergency Preparedness Pre-meeting Dinner is at Brent's Deli, Westlake Village, 5 pm
June 22 – 25	FD 2018 Commemorating the Lives of President Ronald & Nancy Reagan 21.320 14.255 7.260 3.810
June 23 – 24	Field Day http://www.arrl.org/field-day
July 14 – 15	IARU HF World Championship http://www.arrl.org/iaru-hf-championship
July 19	CVARC General Mtg 7:30 pm ECSS Topic: Logging Software Pre-meeting Dinner is at Junkyard Café, Simi Valley, 5 pm
August 4 – 5	222 Mhz and Up Distance Contest
August 12	CVARC VE Exam ECSS Community Rm 8:30 am

CVARC would like to thank N3FJP for donating a copy of their Amateur Contact Log (Logging Software) for this month's Raffle Grand Prize. Learn more at www.n3fjp.com.

Newbie Net Schedule

Sunday nights, 7 pm, Bozo Repeater 147.885 (-127.3), all are welcome, especially newer hams. Want to be net control? The procedure will be provided. Contact Todd-KD6RCM, kd6rcm@arrl.net. Check the CVARC website and discussion group for additions and corrections to net control operators.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Net Control Operator</u>
April 15	Todd-KD6RCM
April 22	Bob-W6CJX
April 29	OPEN
May 6	OPEN

Net Control Operators, please send me your logs of check-ins after the net.

Todd-KD6RCM

Recurring Nets

Sundays: Newbie Net, 7 pm, Bozo Repeater 147.885 (-127.3), all are welcome especially newer hams. Want to be net control? The procedure will be provided. Contact Todd-KD6RCM, kd6rcm@arrl.net. Following the Newbie Net, look for the VHF Simplex Rag Chew, 146.550 MHz, open for all.

Tuesdays: ACS/ARES/RACES Net, 7 pm, Bozo Repeater and 7:10 Amgen Repeater.

Wednesdays: HF Roundtable, 7 pm, 21.333 ± MHz, USB, all are welcome.



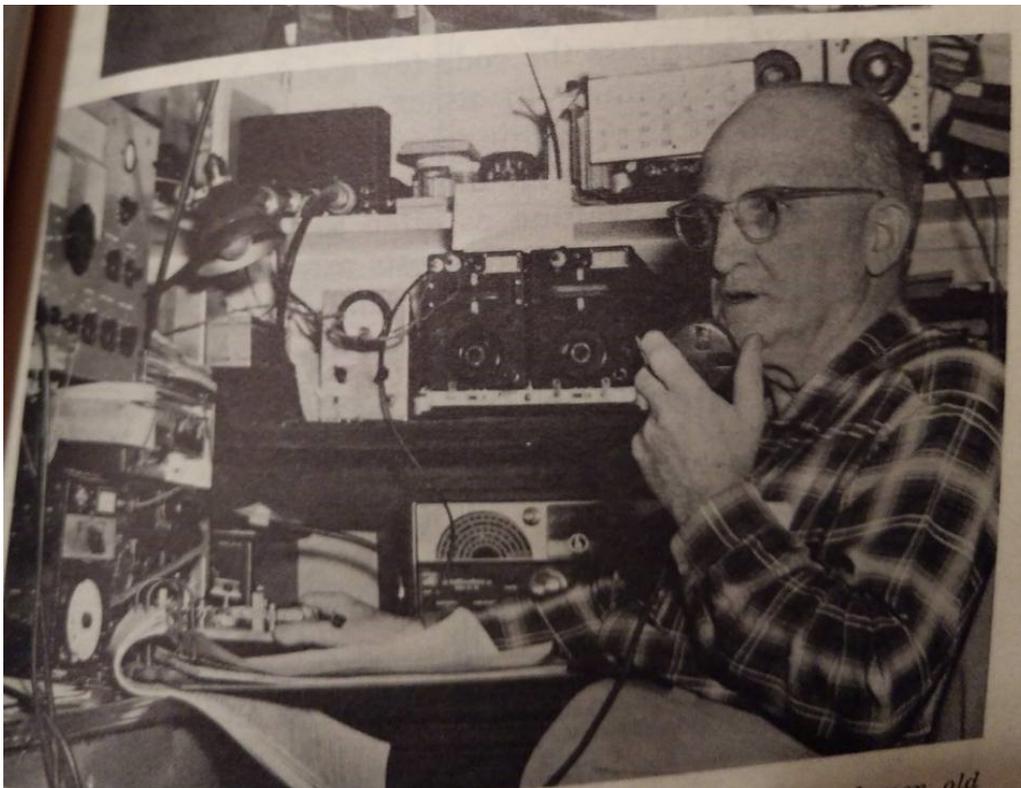
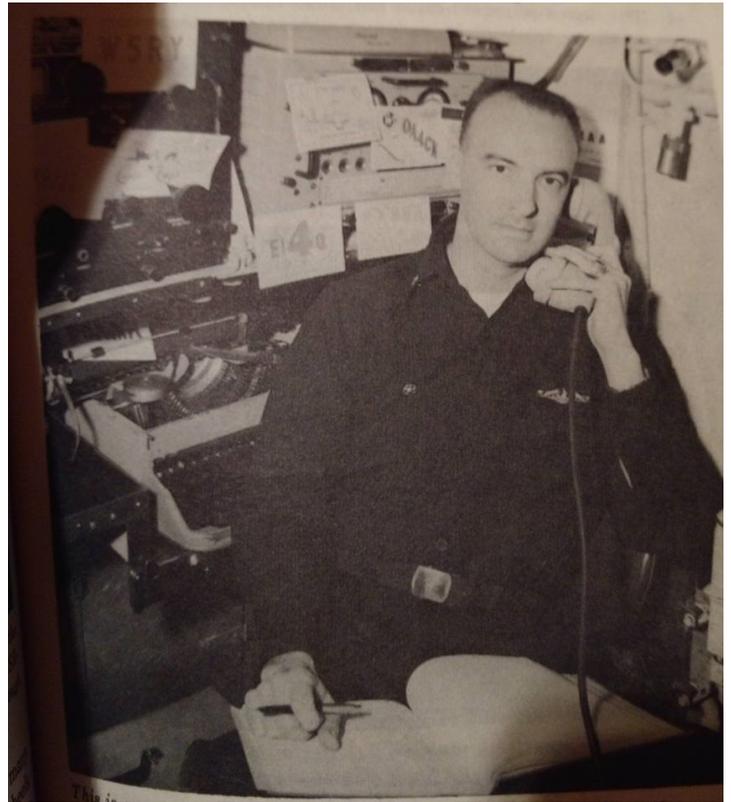
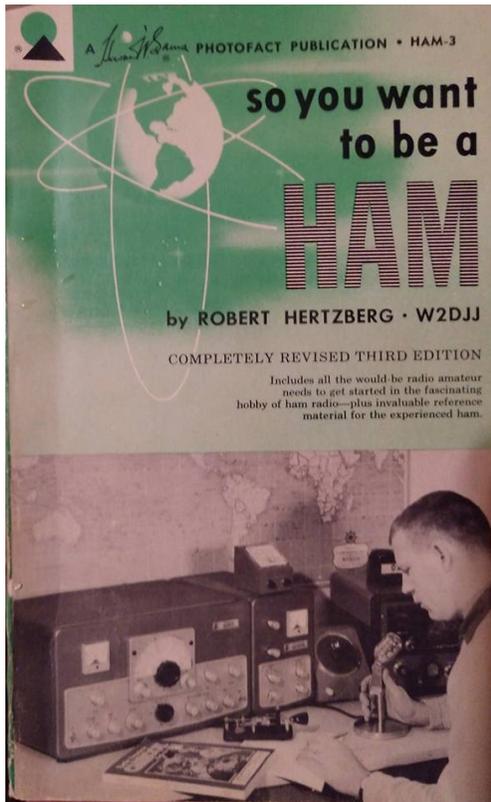
CVARC Yahoo Discussion Group

Are you interested in seeing current information or posting timely information yourself? Visit and join the CVARC Yahoo Discussion Group.

This is a closed Yahoo group so you have to go to the club website, select the “About Us” tab, and follow the “Discussion Groups” link to join. <http://www.cvarc.org/page2/page3/>

After being approved, you can read past and recent posts or comment and post information yourself. Take a look. Lots of timely information being passed back and forth.

The Ham Cam



A book from 1964.

Do you have any interesting gear? A vintage radio? An old or unique Morse code key? A special QSL card? Tell us about it! Send photos and a brief description to sforman66@icloud.com.



Receiver: BC-348, \$100.

Receiver: Kenwood R-1000, \$225.

Keyer: KE Electronics, \$20.

DMR HT: Connect Systems CS-700, \$100.

Norm-AB6ET

radioab6et@verizon.net

(805) 990-4972

* * *

As some of you may know, a few of us have been working with the family of the late **Terry Graves (K7FE/sk)** to find new homes for many of his Amateur Radio and engineering **Treasurers**, while at the same time trying to recover some much-needed revenue for the family. To that end, in May, 2017, we published the first list (i.e., Rev. 1.0) of “**For Sale**” items for your review and consideration. We will try to keep the list as *current* and *accurate* as possible, dropping items that are either PENDING SALE or SOLD, refining item information as appropriate, and adding items as they become available. Items currently available for purchase are listed at <http://terrygraves.org>

* * *

Wanted - Morse code key bug wedge. Not looking for a collector's mint version, but something to use.



Norm-AB6ET

radioab6et@verizon.net

(805) 990-4972

If you have gear for sale, and you'd like to have it included in upcoming CVARC Newsletters, please send a brief description of each item, the price, your name and contact info and, if necessary, a photo to Stu-KK6VYS at sforman66@icloud.com.

General Information about the Conejo Valley Amateur Radio Club, CVARC

CVARC is a Special Service Club (SSC)

The Conejo Valley Amateur Radio Club is an ARRL affiliated Special Service Club. To be recognized by the ARRL as a Special Service Club, the club must regularly show that it is actively involved in certain areas, including: New Ham Development and Training, Public Relations, Emergency Communications, Technical Advancement, and Operating Activities.

Meetings and Location

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month, except December. The meeting location is the Community Room at the East County Sheriff Station, 2101 E. Olsen Road, Thousand Oaks. Meetings start at 7:30 p.m. with a pre-meeting social and technical assistance session beforehand or as announced. Meetings are open to the public, and members are encouraged to bring friends.

Visitors are always welcome at our monthly meetings, and we do not pressure newcomers to join. If, however, you would like to support the club and its activities by becoming a member then we will be pleased to have you join.

CVARC Membership Rates

The simplest way to join (or to renew) is to give a check bearing your name and address to the Treasurer in person or by mail. Make the check payable to "CVARC" and please put your call sign and email address on the memo line.

CVARC single membership is \$20 per year. For a multi-year single membership, the special rate is \$16 per year. Family membership is \$25 per year. A special \$10 first year membership rate is offered to new hams licensed in the last 12 months and full-time students. CVARC membership dues are payable in May. If you are joining the club during any other month of the year, please contact info@cvarc.org or the club treasurer Christian Ylagan at a club meeting for the proper, prorated dues amount to get you on a May renewal schedule. An application to join is found on the club website.

Name, call sign, or address changes may be e-mailed to the Treasurer.

QUA CVARC

"QUA CVARC" is the club newsletter published monthly, not later than the Monday preceding the CVARC club meeting, by the Conejo Valley Amateur Radio Club, AA6CV, PO Box 2093, Thousand Oaks, CA 91358-2093.

Opinions expressed in articles in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the club, its board, or its members.

Tax Deductible Donations to CVARC

CVARC is an IRS-certified 501(c)3 charitable organization and donations are deductible pursuant to IRS rules. If you have working radio equipment or ancillary equipment that you can and wish to donate to the club, please contact one of the board members and we will be happy to talk to you about the process to help fund and grow CVARC.

We cannot accept certain donations, and have to place some restrictions on them such as, no hazardous materials, nothing we could not sell, etc. If you are interested in donating, contact any board member at a meeting or via email.

Many companies will either grant or match employee's gifts to non-profit organizations like CVARC. Please determine if your company is among these and contact a board member for more details.

CVARC Officers

For the current list of CVARC officers together with their contact information, please visit the club's website at <http://www.cvarc.org>. You may view past newsletters on the website.