



The Short Circuit

August 2016

since 1927

Volume 89, Issue 8



There will be no regular meeting of the United Radio Amateur Club on Friday, August 19th. Instead, we are holding the annual BBQ/Picnic at the picnic area of Friendship Park, San Pedro. We have the picnic area from 9am to 5 pm and BBQing will be at noon. Be sure to notify Don, NA6Z at uracenews@yahoo.com with the number in your

party and the side dish that you will bring.



Larry, KK6TXN is organizing an antenna building project:

“Thought I’d get something together for a project for the picnic, if anyone is interested. Actually it’s 2 projects. The first one is a 2-meter tape measure beam antenna. The plans and article can be found at http://theleggios.net/wb2hol/projects/rdf/tape_bm.htm. I’m bringing all the parts and tools. We need people to measure, calculate, cut, solder, drill, etc. The second project is a 2-meter mag mount ground plane. That can be found on page 69 of the June 2016 QST magazine. I also have all the parts and tools for that. All we need is people who have fun building things, like I do.”

Friendship park has hiking trails, a children’s playground and an unbeatable view of the harbor. Bring your HT or your mobile. Talk in on 145.510 MHz.

International Lighthouse/Lightship’s Weekend: Activating Point Fermin Lighthouse



On Friday, August 19 at 5 pm local time, until Sunday, August 21, 5 pm local time, K6AA will activate the Point Fermin Lighthouse for International Lighthouse/Lightship’s Weekend. Bill Heather, KB6WKT, will be the lead on this. He is looking for operators and auxiliary helpers. Please contact him at KB6WKT@arrl.net

For both events, the weather channel app predicts sunny skies with a high temp of 79 degs F, and winds SW at 10 to 15 mph.

QST de President Doug, W6HB...

Great to see so many at the August breakfast! Lots of good stories and input.

The BOD meeting after the breakfast covered routine business and addressed concerns about the club's trailer tower. Gary, **N6HMR**, and I met with Bragg Crane and inspected the unit Wednesday, 8/10, and are happy to report that a little pro-active maintenance will allow many more years of service. I am awaiting Bragg's written report, will collate with Gary's and mine, and then release to the club.

August 20 will be our annual picnic at Friendship / Deane Dana Park. RSVP's to date show around 25 attendees. Please hurry your reservation to Don, **NA6Z**, ASAP via na6z@arrl.net. Without that we cannot insure that there will be adequate eats! Larry, **KK6TXN**, will be bringing a few homebrew projects that members can build. Let him know if you have anything to add.

URAC still needs members to volunteer to serve for 2017. Please E-mail me if you are willing to serve on a nominating committee and or self nominate for an office.

Many thanks to Gary, **N6HMR**, and Bruce, **KG7MXL**, for all their work to keep WWW.K6AA.ORG current and interesting. You may send articles and worthy links to n6hmr@k6aa.org. Insure your submissions are club and or amateur radio related.

URAC's Thursday night roundtable at 2000 local time on 145.510 simplex continues weekly with moderator John, **AG6VO**. Where were you? Come join in and share your stories, technical needs and or questions, or just rag chew.

See you at the picnic, meeting or on the air...

73 - Doug - W6HB



August First Saturday Breakfast

Wow...it's August already and here's what went down when we gathered for the Breakfast:

Nick, **N6EFI** has upgraded all his devices to Windows 10 (except one). He reports that the HF bands have been terrible lately ... and that he has been having trouble with his digital telephone.

Larry, **KK6TXN** has mounted his solar panel on the roof pointed 6 deg. South. It is now running his HF rig. He is planning a camping trip in September where he will work portable.

Bill, **KB6WKT**, a past member of URAC, just re-joined in time for Lighthouse/Lightship's Weekend, where he will be URAC's lead at Point Fermin Lighthouse. The dates overlap our picnic: Friday, August 19th at 5 pm to Sunday, August 21, at 5 pm local time. He will be setting up a home brew hex-beam antenna for his station(s). Let him know at kb6wkt@arrl.net if you are interested in joining in.

John, **AG6VO**, found and purchased an MFJ 9410 10M SSB Radio transceiver from a lady in Leisure World. Neither of them had any idea of its value, so he was able to purchase at an

extremely good price. He is currently working on the logistics of tuning his antenna long distance.

Gary, N6HMR is looking for volunteers to take over Don (NA6Z's) role in the URAC e-news. (John, AG6VO is considering it.). He is also asking for feedback on proxy e-mails via k6aa.org (i.e. does yours work?).

Treva N6HMS: pass

Mary, xyl of Martin: pass

Martin, N6UB pass ... (Do I sense a trend here???)

Scotty, K6ZNL and Tom KJ6JPZ will be heading down to the horse racing at Del Mar next week. Back in time for the picnic, hopefully not broke.

John: WA6SDK: pass

Mary: xyl of Ingo: pass

Homer: K6HKT . News from the Torrance Radio Club: there is a move afoot to cut out CERT (Community Emergency Response Team). Question: are they trying to push Ham Radio out? Keep your eyes and ears open on this one ... on a lighter note, Homer remembers going to motorcycle races in Del Mar ... he and his daughter have finished moving boulders around his yard for his landscaping project. His wife is doing better.

Ingo, KK6EWB and Mary just returned from another road trip. On this one they visited West Virginia and ran into the 100 year storm, complete with major flooding. Fortunately, their Airstream encampment was on higher ground, and thus got soggy instead of flooded. They visited the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in Green Bank (see later in this issue for Ingo's report) and the National Corvette Museum in Bowling Green KY: the one with the sinkhole that ate the corvettes. The museum has a detailed display of the sinkhole and the incident and has garnered a 65% increase in visitors due to the publicity.

David, W6KL has put up solar panel(s) with Batteries.

Bill W6AJ is now our rep to the Los Angeles Area Council of Amateur Radio Clubs (LAACARC) and gave us a synopsis of what went on in the latest meeting:

- Diana Feinberg AI6DF resigned as chair since she is now the ARRL LA Section Manager. Bill Heather, KB6WKT who was vice-chair takes over as Chairman.
- There will be a new location for the Dayton Hamvention
- The LAACARC will file for 501(c)(3) status
- Next meeting will be October 4th . Gary N6HMR will be Bill's backup on the council.

The contract for Hamcon 2017 has been signed. It will be the Third weekend in September, the 15,16 and 17th, at the Torrance Marriott. There will be a new feature: an outdoor swap meet. The next meeting for the Hamcon committee is in September.

Doug W6HB will be leaving for a week in Missouri on Friday. Ana (Doug's xyl) has joined the club.

Larry, KK6TXN won the breakfast certificate

Submitted by [Scotty Butler, K6ZNL](#)

Still Temporary Scribe.

URAC's VE Corner ... Gary N6HMR

Is it time to upgrade your license?

As you may be aware, exam pools are valid for four years. Having just updated the Extra exam last month, the next update (for Technician) will not be until 2018. At present, of the URAC membership, 18% are Techs, 25% General, and 1% Advanced ... plenty of opportunity for upgrades.

Among the usual twenty showing at the *First Saturday of the Month Breakfast*, we almost always have sufficient VEs in attendance to conduct an exam session that morning. Accordingly, as you'll note on the last page of the Short Circuit, we advertise our availability for testing each month on that date. That is, however, to be considered "by appointment" to ensure we have VEs and testing material available. With two CVEs (Contact VE), it is rare that neither Bill W6AJ nor myself is available at the *Saturday Breakfast*. If you can't make the first Saturday, another option is (usually but not always) on Wednesday mornings.

While the Technician license is often associated with VHF & UHF line-of-sight and repeater HT communication, did you know you *do have* HF privileges? As you know, HF includes the frequencies from 3 to 30 MHz. Of the 9 HF Amateur bands, as a Tech you have access to 4 of them using CW. And for those not interested in CW ... one of those four, 10 meters from 28.3 to 28.5 MHz, has phone privileges.

Would you like access to a whole lot more of the Amateur Radio Spectrum? Get access to 10 bands from 10 to 160 meters by upgrading from Tech to General (admittedly, one of those is still limited to CW, but you've gotta be at least General class to work it). A General class license opens up the majority of the HF & MF spectrum, plus you can become part of the VE process helping those wishing to take their Technician exam.

While an Advanced license provides the VE option for Tech and General exams, it takes an Extra license to be a VE for all three Amateur exams. Admittedly, upgrading to Extra provides only a small increase in band spectrum access, however it makes you much more useful to your VE team if you'd care to participate in that part of the Amateur Radio hobby.

As mentioned in months past, your club station can use more operators through the month. If you're at all interested in helping your club in this way, please let Scotty k6znl@k6aa.org know.

And speaking of your club, our President w6hb@k6aa.org can still use more help. If you can spare a little time in the month, Doug has plenty of jobs but not enough helpers.

5...4...3...2...1: Readability Reports ... **... Dan Romanchik KB6NU**

I'm big on Twitter. It connects me to a lot of interesting amateur radio operators, and I find a lot of food for thought there. Yesterday, I saw the following Tweet:

Charlie – M0PZT @M0PZT

Blog updated: [RST and Speed Matters](#)

Being a CW geek, of course I was interested. Charlie's point is that if you get a bad report, you probably should send more slowly. I certainly have no argument with that. What I do take a little

bit of an issue with is that Charlie says, "A Readability 4 report should really make it known that information needs to be brief, but repeated – Certainly no ANT/RIG/WX waffle!"

According to most sources, Readability 4 means, "Readable with practically no difficulty." When I receive an R4 report, I might slow down a little, but it doesn't mean to me that I have to cut the contact short or repeat information over and over. I replied on Twitter that if the operator at the receiving station is having so much trouble copying, then the report should probably be 319 or even 219.

Of course, RST reports are open to interpretation. With that in mind, I thought I'd explain a little more fully how I decide what Readability report to give:

R5: Perfectly readable. To me, this means that copying a signal is no work at all, and that it sounds like it's coming out of a code practice oscillator. I can put my feet up on the desk or putter around the shack while I'm ragchewing with the other operator.

R4: Readable with practically no difficulty. "Practically no difficulty" is the key phrase here. There may be some QRN or QSB on this signal, and I have to pay some attention while copying. An R4 is still solid copy, though, and ragchewing is definitely possible.

R3: Readable with considerable difficulty. A signal that rates an R3 needs my full attention. I have to work at copying the signal, and even then, might miss characters here and there. Even though I don't copy every single character, I'm able to fill in the gaps. An R3 signal might not be good enough for a ragchew, and repeating information is probably a good idea.

R2: Barely readable, occasional words distinguishable. A signal that rates an R2 is usually so weak that it's below the noise level or drops below the noise level occasionally. At this level, the contact will definitely be brief and any important information, such as the callsign needs to be repeated.

R1: Unreadable. Generally, I would never give out this report, as I would never attempt making contact if a signal was truly unreadable.

Although my explanations above reflect the fact that I'm primarily a CW operator, I think they also apply to phone or even digital contacts. For example, an R5 for a phone contact would mean that the signal sounds like it could be coming from just down the street or coming through the local repeater.

What do you think? How do you decide what Readability report to give?

=====

Dan, KB6NU, is the author of the "No Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides, and blogs about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com. You can contact him by e-mailing cwgeek@kb6nu.com. If you want an honest Readability report, look for him most evenings on 40m CW.

National Radio Quiet Zone

A Travel Log to Green Bank, West Virginia

Ingo Werk, KK6EWB - August 2016



This summer we took our Silver Bullet, also known as an Airstream travel trailer, on a road trip USA. Our two pooches always at our side, especially KK6EWB wanted to explore the NRAO National Radio Astronomy Observatory at the heart of the National Radio Quiet Zone, a 13,000 square mile region of the United States where radio signal interference is minimized. This was established in 1958 by the US Government. On arrival to the site in Green Bank, West Virginia, no cell phone service, WiFi, Bluetooth, or digital cameras.

PHOTOS: INGO WERK



Huge Range Of Science With Just One Telescope

The NRAO was founded in 1956 as the United States' first national science facility. The first radio telescope was an 85-foot kit antenna from Blaw-Knox Corporation. In the year 2000, Green Bank became home to the largest, fully steerable and most accurate single dish radio telescope in the world. A humongous parabolic dish covering 2.3 acres. At 100 meters by 110 meters, its collecting surface is larger than two football fields. The GBT Green Bank Telescope stands 485 feet tall and requires 7,652 beams to support it on top of a nearly hemispherical tilting gear. Based on solid concrete sunk 25 feet down to the Appalachian bedrock. 17 million pounds of telescope glide around in a 360-degree concrete track, to see 85% of the skies surrounding the earth over the course of a year. 60 feet above the dish, a secondary mirror aims the dish's focused radio waves into one of eight receivers hanging in a rotating turret. On the fly, a new receiver can be spun into the beam to change the frequency being recorded, giving astronomers from around the world science with just one telescope.



Scientists And Radio Waves: GPS Was Born Here


Especially for me as an amateur radio operator the use of radio telescopes is of the utmost fascination because of the never-ending study of naturally-occurring radio light from stars, galaxies, and other astronomical objects. In between Karl Jansky's discovery of cosmic radio waves and the end of WWII, a man called Grote Reber advanced the new science of Radio Astronomy. For a sense of history, the right-hand picture above shows the first successful receiver center frequency of 160 MHz from approx. 1942. My visit to the GBT was very educational and I recommend it highly to anybody being radio-active. Tucked away in a beautiful summer-green county or parish with a population of only 8,000 country folks, they receive 40,000 visitors per year. Compare this with 18 million annually for Disneyland California alone. For more GBT information, visit www.nrao.edu or call 304-456-2150.

PHOTOS: INGO WERK

~ August 2016 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 URAC 2M simplex roundtable: 145.510MHz, 8 pm	5	6 URAC First Saturday Breakfast, 8 am; BOD meeting 9:30; Think Café, San Pedro
7 International Friendship Day	8	9	10	11 URAC 2M simplex roundtable: 145.510MHz, 8 pm	12	13
14	15	16	17	18 URAC 2M simplex roundtable: 145.510MHz, 8 pm	19 NO URAC MEETING: PICNIC TOMORROW Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend: K6AA to activate Point Fermin Lighthouse. 5 pm Friday to 5 pm Sunday	20 URAC Picnic 9-5 (BBQ at noon), Friendship Park, San Pedro  Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend: K6AA to activate Point Fermin Lighthouse. 5 pm Friday to 5 pm Sunday
21 Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend: K6AA to activate Point Fermin Lighthouse. 5 pm Friday to 5 pm Sunday	22	23	24	25 URAC 2M simplex roundtable: 145.510MHz, 8 pm	26	27
28	29	30	31			

~ September 2016 ~

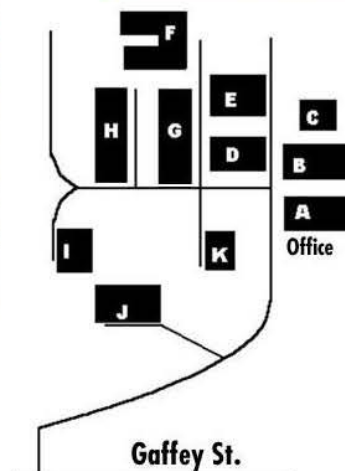
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 URAC 2M simplex roundtable: 145.510MHz, 8 pm	2	3 URAC First Saturday Breakfast, 8 am & BOD meeting 9:30; Think Café, San Pedro
4		6	7	8 URAC 2M simplex roundtable: 145.510MHz, 8 pm	9	10
11 Patriot Day	12	13	14	15 URAC 2M simplex roundtable: 145.510MHz, 8 pm	16 URAC membership meeting, 7 pm Los Angeles Maritime Museum, San Pedro	17
18	19	20	21	22 Fall begins (Northern H.) URAC 2M simplex roundtable: 145.510MHz, 8 pm	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 URAC 2M simplex roundtable: 145.510MHz, 8 pm	30	



CW station set up



Information Table



Martin: 6M and 2M/440

Larry: Solar Station



Get on the Air
Station GOTA
Scotty and Tom



Ivan, David and Steve

Sam: 40M
Station
with Doug



Ivan:
10/15/20
M Station



John operating

Sign at entrance



Field Day

K6AA 2016

DX OPERATIONS FOE AUGUST 2016**Per NG3K**

Tuvalu, T2COW: Is now operating thru 8/18/2016. QSL via KCOW.

Belize, V31TA: Is now operating thru 8/12/2016. QSL via W2JHP.

Crete, SW9AA: Is now operating thru 8/11/2016. QSL via LZ1PM.

Morocco, CN2RN: Is now operating thru 8/14/2016. QSL via F8FGU.

Vanuatu, YJ8RN: Is now operating thru 8/20/2016. QSL via NZ4DX.

Azores, CT8: Is now operating thru 8/19/2016. QSL via F5IRO.

Hawaii, KH6: Is now operating thru 8/26/2016. QSL via F4GHS.

Aland Is, OH0: Is now operating thru 8/11/2016. QSL via OH2IS.

Jamaica, 6Y6n: Is now operating thru 8/20/2016. QSL via DK9PY.

Cambodia, XU7: Is now operating thru 8/18/2016. QSL via HB9FXL.

Market Reef, OJ0DX: Will be operating from 8/11 thru 8/16/2016. QSL via DL2JRM.

Tanzania, 5H1XX: Will be operating from 8/13 thru 8/22/2016. QSL via M0URX.

French Polynesia, TX2AH: Will be operating from 8/17 thru 8/28/2016. QSL via DL2AH.

Belize, V31VP: Will be operating from 8/19 thru 8/23/2016. QSL via WB0TEV.

St Paul, CY9C: Will be operating from 8/19 thru 8/28/2016. QSL via WA4DAN.

Vanuatu, YJ: Will be operating from 8/20 thru 9/21/2016. QSL via KCOW.

Corsica, TK: Will be operating from 9/21 thru 9/4/2016. QSL via MW1LCR.

Ogasawara, JD1YBV: Will be operating from 8/23 thru 8/28/2016. QSL via JA1HQG.

Macao, XX9TYT: Will be operating from 9/29 thru 9/5/2016. QSL via IW7EGQ.

Mongolia, JT: Will be operating from 8/30 thru 9/24/2016. QSL via OK1DBS.

Two Free Amateur Radio Courses

FCC **“Technician”** course (entry level)

FCC **“General”** course (2nd level)

Each course is 2 sessions

The sessions will be on 27 August and 10 September 2016

Technician 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM both Saturdays (bring your lunch)

General 1:30 PM to 5:00 PM both Saturdays

The FCC tests will be 10:00 AM to noon on 17 September 2016

At the start of the 27 August Technician course, the Palos Verdes Amateur Radio Club will give a 30 minute presentation on how to get further involved with amateur radio.

The class location is at Fred Hesse Community Park,
29301 Hawthorne Blvd., Rancho Palos Verdes.

Confirm your attendance to Walt, K1DFO at waltordway@juno.com

There is **no fee** for either course.

Taking the FCC test is \$15.

Optional Material (sold at cost)

Gordon West books with all the FCC test questions,










\$22 for the Technician and \$26 for the General

Paper copy of Walt's Power Point charts,

\$22 for the Technician and \$22 for the General -

For courses sponsored by the Palos Verdes Amateur Radio Club, students thru grade 12 who pass their examination at a PVARC VE test session will, upon application to the Club, be eligible for reimbursement up to a maximum of \$50 to cover the cost of materials and the examination fee.

Everyone who obtains their first ham radio license through a PVARC VE test session, regardless of age, will receive a free membership in the Palos Verdes Amateur Radio Club for the remainder of the current calendar year.

<i>2016 U.R.A.C. Executive Board</i>			
PRESIDENT Doug Dowds W6HB		VICE-PRESIDENT Bill Carter W6AJ	
SECRETARY John Rockwood WA6SDK		TREASURER Scotty Butler K6ZNL	
DIRECTOR Gary Forister N6HMR		DIRECTOR Homer Meek K6HKT	
DIRECTOR Steve Mandich K6NT		DIRECTOR Don Putnick NA6Z	
		Past President Bill Carter W6AJ	

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*** IMPORTANT NOTES ***

K6AA Station We can still use more operators for our K6AA station. See Doug, W6HB, and or Scotty, K6ZNL, for training and checkout.

Check out the special events page on k6aa.org for the latest from arrl and e-ham net.

Additional Calendar Notes

Club Roundtable

Held weekly on
Thursdays at 8pm
145.510 Simplex

Club Meeting

Held monthly on 3rd Friday of the month (except August and December)

No Host Breakfast

Held monthly on the 1st Saturday of the month at 8:00am. Location:
Think Café on 5th Street in San Pedro

“VE/CE Session for Amateur and Commercial Licenses

Monthly on 1st Saturday **by appointment**. Go to k6aa.org/licensing-exams/

Also available most Wednesdays, again ... **by appointment**.

If no one schedules an exam, there won't necessarily be an exam team or exam material available.



The Museum is at the Foot of 6th Street. To get to the Break Room, walk past the main entrance around to the north end (nearest the Iowa) until you see the gate. There will be a greeter at the gate. Gate to the Break Room.

