



# The PROPAGATOR

July 1999

The Monthly Newsletter of South Orange Amateur Radio Association

## FIELD DAY 1999 A BIG SUCCESS

*Michael Mullard, KF6HVO*

On June 26 and 27, 1999, SOARA staged another successful Field Day operation at Gilleran Park in Mission Viejo. Participating with thousands of other Amateur Radio clubs from across the United States and Canada, the airwaves virtually crackled with the sounds of "CQ Field Day, CQ Field Day..." for twenty-four straight hours.

The night before operations formally began, SOARA hosted its traditional "Friday Night At The Park" barbecue and dipole-feed-line raising party. As always, the star of the night was WK6C, Carmine Fiorello, who hoisted the feed line for the 40 and 80 meter dipole with his wrist rocket sling shot. Somehow he escaped without much of the usual heckling. I guess his aim is improving.

Field Day set-up commenced promptly at 7:00 a.m. with a good size cadre of sleepy hams (myself among them) busily scurrying around the park. The largest group, headed by KQ6TL, Chad Edwards, were in charge of putting up all antennas including the 10, 15 and 20 meter beams, and the 40 meter dipole.

Also involved in set up were AC6XG, Jim Kelley, who graciously headed up radio placement. AD6AT, Jay Center, did a great job of installing the canopies that kept the sun and moisture away from the precious electronics. KA6BJO, Lou Parker, and KA6BJP, Muriel, Lou's better half, acted as Volunteer Examiners for those wishing to take their license examination or upgrade.

The computers arrived promptly from KD6SXQ, Sean Riegle, who was invaluable in getting them loaded with our logging program.

Sherry Kornbloom, KF6UTX, did a great job in coordinating the food preparers and the canteen set-up. She is now famous for her excellent Calico Beans and cornbread that she cooked for the Saturday night hot dinner. Also, many thanks go to Steve Morris, KF6JVT, for providing the mile long Togo's subs for lunch. On Sunday morning our good friend, Roger

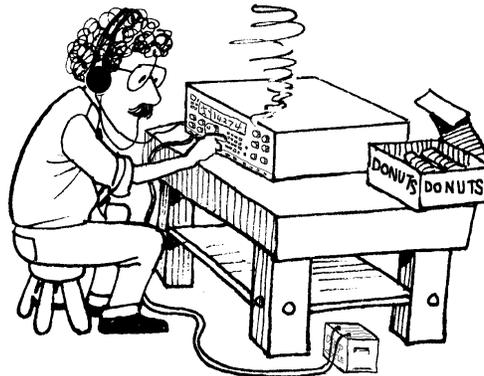
Kepner, W6SQQ, pulled out all the stops by cooking up a superb hot breakfast of pancakes, sausages, bagels and other good vitals for the bleary eyed operators. No one can accuse SOARA of not providing good food for our hungry contesters.

As always, Ray Hutchinson, AE6H, did a great job in setting up the Public Information tables and handling all of SOARA's publicity. Ray is also the proud owner of the "K6SOA Field Day Assault Vehicle" as well as his prized off-road worthy Explorer whose winch has gotten us out of some nasty antenna disasters over the last few years.

Many thanks to Ray's wife, Debbie Hutchinson, a graphic artist, who created the striking design for this year's T-Shirt.

Our microwave expert, Malcolm McDonald, KD6UIN, was gracious enough to loan us his pair of 10 GHz radios as well as record our Amateur Television contact. For me, the 10 GHz contact was one of the high points of Field Day.

As usual, Field Day operations were a smashing success. There were a total of 699 QSO's logged on the HF phone station. Many of those contacts were made around 1:00 a.m. by KE6GUQ, Phil and KF6EUO, Earl who logged over 400 QSO's in a white heat of activity. SOARA's crack team of VHF/UHF operators, Rich, KF6JHJ, Matt, KF6RTB, along with Koray, a soon to be licensed ham, scored more contacts on 220 MHz and 440 MHz FM than on any Field Day in recent memory. Fine work guys!



Over on CW, SOARA's heavyweight codebusters, WK6C, Carmine; W6SI, Tak; AC6XG, Jim; KO6UJ, Guy; and a new rising star, KT0F, John (who with his wife Cheryl, vacationed with us from their home in Colorado) scored over 675 QSO's! Statistics from the novice station, running the call sign, KF6TIR, held by Marty Kornbloom, and the "Fun" station are still being compiled by Dale, W8RRV, who is getting our logs ready to submit to the ARRL. Dale also provided the logging sheets and other accessories that kept the logging neat and organized.

The only minor disaster worth noting occurred when the 15 meter beam suddenly decided to fall over onto a tree right before it was to be taken down. Fortunately, no one was injured. However, the beam sustained moderate damage. Two reflector elements were severely bent on impact but may be able to be straightened out. Once again, Murphy got his hands on our antennas.

Other statistics worth noting: SOARA had over 45 members participate in Field Day operations. There were also 25 guests who signed in on the log sheets.

Many thanks to all of you who provided the equipment that is so crucial to our success. You are too numerous to name. But mostly, a giant thanks to all our members who participated and really got into the spirit of the event.

Field Day is foremost about emergency preparedness. However, it is also about leadership, teamwork, and cooperation in the face of difficult circumstances. It is always FUN. For those who participated, we'll see you next year. For those who didn't, come on out next year. You'll be glad you did.

The *Titanic* sank with another ship only 20 miles away. No one was monitoring the radio on that ship, the *California*, so they didn't know to go to the aid of the sinking ship. Congress soon passed the Radio Act of 1912.

Until recently Part 80.146 (part 80 covers Maritime Services) read in part: "During their hours of service, ship stations . . . must, remain on watch on 500 kHz . . ." Other sections spell out the details of Ship Safety Watches. Other frequencies and automatic equipment could be used.

In the series of articles by Jeff Herman, KH6O, he will tell of some of his experiences and give some feel for the part that radio, specifically CW, played in the lives of those who sail the seas — and those on shore who monitored their progress.

Satellite location and communications — all automated - have led to the removal of the CW service and of the requirement for people to monitor the airwaves — just in case.

## 500 kHz — The Passing of an Era.

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The following series is for the historical record. We are witnessing a never-to-return era of communications style and format that was so perfect that nothing will ever be its equal. I am very glad that I was able to be a part of it, if only for three years.

### 1. US Coast Guard Radio Station Honolulu (Call sign: NMO)

In July of 1977, as a 3rd Class Radioman Petty Officer for the U.S. Coast Guard, I received orders to report from Coast Guard Group Monterey, CA, to Coast Guard Radio Station Honolulu in Wahiawa, Hawaii. I had graduated from Radioman School a year earlier concluding 5 months of training in code, propagation, radio fundamentals, ITU procedures, and other such things. A minimum code speed of 22 words per minute was needed to graduate. Mine was 25.

Radio Honolulu, NMO, is situated on a huge plot of land owned by the Navy, centered in the pineapple fields of Oahu. In addition to NMO, the Navy and the Marine Corps had their Central Pacific Communications command there. By the way, NMO has the longest over water microwave link in the world: Oahu to the island of Kauai (for VHF marine band ops).

NMO was set up with the following glass-enclosed operating positions: 500 kHz CW, HF CW, HF and VHF voice, air-to-ground, RTTY, Fleet Broadcast, landline TTY, and the Chief's desk. From where the Chief RM sat he could watch all of the operators (ops) to make sure no one fell asleep. Woe to the

op who was caught sleeping on watch! The Coast Guard is the only military service that communicates directly with the public. Thus we had to know when to turn off the military radio jargon, in particular on 2182 kHz (MF international voice calling and distress freq.) and ch. 16 / 156.80 MHz (VHF international voice c & d freq.). The voice op was kept busy monitoring over a dozen voice channels: 2182 kHz, the 4, 6, 8, 12, and 16 MHz high-seas SSB ship to shore freqs, four VHF repeaters for ch. 16 (NMO had a repeater on Kauai, Oahu, Maui, and the Big Island, four repeaters for VHF ch. 23, and whatever else the Chief felt needed to be listened to. Several times each radio day the voice op had to make broadcasts (WX, Notice To Mariners, etc.) on all these frequencies. Timing was critical so the clock had to be checked frequently.

The HF CW position required 2 ops with two racks each consisting of four Collins 651S digital readout receivers scanning the CW calling bands on 4, 6, 8, 12, 16, and 22 MHz. During daytime hours one op would take 8 and 12 - the other operator would take 16 and 22. At night one had 4 and 6 - the other would have 8 and 12. So, an operator might have 8 MHz scanning in his left ear and 12 MHz scanning in his right. The rcvrs automatically scanned a preset band of freqs, for example the 8 MHz calling band for ships calling shore stations runs from 8360.4 to 8374 kHz.

A ship calling us might have to send our call sign 20-30 times (no 3X3 format here!) while our rcvr scanned. Then the NMO op would hear our call sign being sent from the

highest to lowest to highest tones possible. He would quickly shut off the scanner, tune in the ship and turn off our CQ tape. When no traffic was being passed we'd keep the transmitters busy sending:

CQ CQ CQ DE NMO NMO NMO  
QRU QRU IMI OBS AMVER  
QSS 4 6 8 12 16 22 MHZ AR

- sort of an advertisement for traffic. On receiving a call the exchange might go some thing like this:

DE NMO  
NMO DE KNFB OBS 8360 K  
KNFB DE NMO R UP  
UP  
EE  
EE

meaning the ship has a weather observation. (Every 6 hours starting at 00Z every ship worldwide takes an OBS and passes it, at no charge, to the closest shore station.) He wants me to listen for him on 8360 kHz; he'll continue to listen to me on NMO's fixed xmtr freq. Notice the sig UP meaning "I'm shifting up to that freq". An exchange ALWAYS ends with "dit dit" — and hams thought they invented that!

The above was rare for during the obs hour not just one ship would call but dozens and dozens would be calling in both ears with the rcvrs scanning. The NMO operator would have to line them up numerically:

KNFB DE NMO UR NR 1  
R 8360 TU  
WSLH UR 2  
R 12561 TKS  
7XYM UR NR 3  
DE 7XYM 8370 R UP  
...  
JGFD UR 25  
OK UP 8375 TU

then the op would copy the WX obs from each ship one by one. After working that group of 25 ships he'd turn on the CQ tape again, and scanners and dozens more ships would pounce on him.

Since WX is time-sensitive, it was a race to 'collect' as many OBS as humanly possible. A lazy op might only get 100 during the 30-45 minute period.

End of Part 1.  
73, Jeff, KH6O

*The remaining parts will be devoted entirely to 500 kHz.*

	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
<b>Propagator Deadline</b>	2/6	3/6	4/3	5/1	6/5	7/6	7/31	9/4	10/2	10/30	
<b>General Meeting</b>	22 7:30 PM	15 7:30 PM	19 7:30 PM	17 7:00 PM	21 7:00 PM	19 7:00 PM	16 7:00 PM	20 7:00 PM	18 7:00 PM	15 7:00 PM	no meeting
<b>Board Meeting</b>	3/01	22	26	24	28	26	23	27	25	22	
<b>VEC Testing</b>		15 5:30 PM		17 5:30 PM	26	19 5:30 PM		13 5:30 PM		15 5:30 PM	
<b>Spring Auction</b>				17 7:00 PM							
<b>ARRL Field Day</b>					26 7:00 am						
<b>SOARA picnic</b>							7 9:00 am				
<b>Fall Auction</b>										15 7:00 PM	
<b>SOARA Xmas Party</b>											5 5:00 PM

On July 12, 1999, Phil Kane, K2ASP copied the following "final" transmission off the air from commercial radiotelegraph station KFS in San Francisco. This was the stations last transmission as it ceased operation and ended an era.

V CQ DE KPH KPH KPH WE  
NOW CLOSE THE  
RADIOTELEGRAPH OPERATION OF  
STATION KPH. SINCE 1924,  
STATION KPH HAS  
DISTINGUISHED ITSELF AS ONE  
OF THE MOST WELL KNOWN AND  
RESPECTED CALL SIGNS IN THE  
W II THE WORLD, AND WILL  
CONTINUE TO DO SO AS PART  
OF THE GLOBAL RADIO NETWORK  
OF HF STATIONS = NW CL  
DE KPH

DE KFS = THIS IS THE FINAL  
CW TRANSMISSION FROM  
STATION KFS - THE LAST  
COMMERCIAL RADIOTELEGRAPH  
STATION IN NORTH AMERICA.  
APPROPRIATELY, WE CLOSE CW  
AND EMBARK ON A NEW ERA OF  
COMMUNICATION WITH SAMUEL  
F.B. MORSE'S WORDS OF 155  
YER ? YEARS AGO = NW CL 73  
= WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT =  
DE KFS



**Maybe a 1 kW HT wasn't  
the great idea Joe thought  
it would be**

Before you criticize someone,  
walk a mile in his shoes. —  
That way, when you do criticize  
him, you will be one mile away  
and have his shoes.

## July Speaker to Give Insight into Historic Station

In the last issue under the headline "Happy Birthday FCC" we noted that KDKA of Pittsburgh, PA was the first broadcast station. And indeed it is the oldest broadcast station on the air today. (There are some who claim that Union College in Schenectady started broadcasting before KDKA.)

WBZ (Boston) is reported to have been the first broadcast station licensed (in 1921).. This would mean that KDKA, although an earlier station, was not *licensed* before WBZ.

Another of the early broadcast stations was started in a garage in Southern California. The year was 1922, two years after KDKA started and one year after WBZ. Earle C. Anthony using a homemade 50-watt radio transmitter started broadcasting at 640 AM. Station KFI made its humble start. Come to the July meeting to hear Norman Pilawski, WT7Y give a presentation on KFI.

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South Orange Amateur Radio Association  
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## **Meeting: Monday 7/19/99 at 7:00 PM** Norman Pilawski (WT7Y) on "KFI"

☛ **SOARA** meets at the Mission Viejo Community Center, 26932 Veterans Way, Mission Viejo, the third Monday of every month at 7:00 PM. Changes to the meeting time or place are announced in this newsletter and on the two-meter repeater.

☛ **License Exams:** Amateur License Exams are given prior to most SOARA meetings. Exams are from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. You must make an appointment at least a week in advance. Call Lou Parker, KA6BJO, at 951-0336. (No calls after 9:00 PM please.)

☛ **Contacting SOARA:** Questions about SOARA? Send e-mail to: [info@soara.org](mailto:info@soara.org), or leave a message at 949-249-1373: a SOARA board member will respond as soon as possible.

☛ **Repeaters:** The SOARA 2-meter repeater is open to all licensed hams. The SOARA 440 repeater is for club members only and is currently operated on a "coordination pending" basis.

**SOARA 2m** — 147.645 - (110.9)

**SOARA 440** — 447.050 - (110.9)

The SOARA 220 and HROC 440 repeaters are shared by members of both clubs. Each machine is subject to the operating rules of its respective club. Call AC6XG for details.

**SOARA 220** — 224.640 - (123.0)

**HROC 440** — 447.175 - (131.8)

☛ **Nets:** SOARA 2 m repeater,

Tuesdays: 7:00 PM Laguna RACES

7:30 PM Mission Viejo RACES

8:00 PM SOARA open net

40 meter HF net (7.235 MHz +/- for QRM), Sunday 7:30 AM

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