



The PROPAGATOR

October, 2004

The Monthly Newsletter of South Orange Amateur Radio Association

October Meeting	CQP, T-Hunt & JOTA	We Met the Candidates
<p>You Ought To Be In Pictures — and you may already be.</p> <p>SOARA Communication Director, Dave, KG6QCI, will show his new video</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“SOARA Only”.</p> <p>This video is about a SOARA field day, picnic and an auction. This particular video also has an opening tribute to one of our members who is now silent key.</p> <p>It's the only Ham radio video set to Surf Music.</p> <p>This is an excellent meeting to review what we do at SOARA.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Jim, K6LIO <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>CA QSO Party: Several SOARA members participated in that contest on the weekend of October 3. A small group spent the weekend at Dana Roode's desert QTH near Victorville. Operating as K6VO, Dana, K6NR, Brian, NJ6N, Richard, K6RBS, Jeremy, KG6JAD, and Tony, AE6QT, racked up a score of 287,332 points.</p> <p>Check SOARA's web page (soara.org) — click on the “Propagation” button — for the full story. Sounds like they had a lot of fun with some intense radio activity.</p> <p>T-Hunt: Due to the CA QSO Party, the T-hunt was postponed until the second Sunday of October. October 10 found Karl, KF6MDF, and Dale, W8RRV, ready to go on the air at 1:00 PM with the hidden transmitter. They had selected a site on Spyglass Hill. Point your browser to: <http://www.firststates.com/donnafallon/neighorhoods/neighborhoodprofile.asp?area=SPYGL&menuid=2> and click on “Visual Tours” for a look at the location and its view.</p> <p>The antenna was a high gain yagi (15 feet long) aimed at Saddleback. Richard, K6RBS, heard the signal quite well in Burbank. The intent was to send the hunters in the wrong direction. That didn't work but did make it hard to find when close. As you approached the foot of the hill, the signal dropped dramatically.</p> <p>Matt, KE6LAM, and Kareem, KG6UGK, found it after about 2½ hours. Tony, AE6QT, was next after hunting for about 4 hours. Steve Heineman, N6XFC, heard the signal at his home and joined the hunt. By 5:30 Howard, KG6GI, and Brian, NJ6N, joined the group for some well deserved food and drink.</p> <p>The scout's Jamboree On The Air (JOTA) will be held on Oct. 16 & 17. Contact Dave, kg6qci@soara.org if you can help. See the SOARA web site for details. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Our guest speakers at the September general meeting were the candidates themselves. That's right, the two candidates for President — oh, no. The candidates for the position of ARRL Southwestern Division Director visited SOARA to share their views on Amateur Radio and the important issues that the ARRL is facing.</p> <p>Art Goddard, W6XD, who has served as Division Director since 2002 has announced that he would not run for the 2005 - 2007 term. Tuck Miller, NZ6T, who currently serves as Vice Director, and Dick Norton, N6AA, are seeking the position of Director. Both candidates made impressive presentations and answered question raised by club members. Clearly either man, if elected, will represent us effectively.</p> <p>Ballots were in the mail by the first of this month and will be tallied at ARRL Headquarters on November 19. The results will be announced that day.</p>
<p>Did you pay your dues??</p> <p>Dues statements went out in the mail about four weeks ago. Did you set your statement aside? Or did you set a good example and pay them right away? Remember your timely payment of dues help support the club and actually allows the Board to plan activities for the upcoming year. Thanks to those who made their payment already.</p> <p>Dues are coming in but not as rapidly as we expected . . . so if you have not paid yours, please take the time and do it today. If you are coming to the next club meeting, you can give your dues to the Treasurer, Steve, KR6CE. Also, remember to return the data sheet so we can update the roster.</p> <p>Remember, your dues are the life blood of the club allowing us to provide many activities to support our hobby. Please send you dues today.</p> <p>Jim Riedel, K6EEE, Membership Director <input type="checkbox"/></p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Worth Mentioning (From ARRL SW div newsletter)</p> <p>ANOTHER CRACK IN THE ARMOR OF HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS - In California alone, there are 37 thousand homeowners associations covering 1/4 of the state's 12 million households. Last January, CA residents living under the iron grip of HOA's gained a bit of relief through a law that allowed them to erect flagpoles and fly flags. This coming January 1, 2005, CA Assembly Bill AB2376 becomes law. This bill requires HOA Boards to provide written reasons for denying a proposal (e.g., erecting a ham antenna). Further, the HOA Board must grant a review of a denied proposal in an open meeting of the Board. Check out SEC 3, page 4, of AB2376 at: [http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/bill/asm/ab_2351-2400/ab_2376_bill_20040830_chaptered.pdf] <input type="checkbox"/></p>



The Way I See It: Fun and QSLing

By K6EEE

I am not totally sure of the history of the QSL card, but it revolves around verifying a contact between two amateurs. It was a way in the early days to show others what your home brew equipment could do. Today such cards represent a valid contact just as in earlier times. A contact is a two way exchange of call signs, time of contact in UTC, and signal reports. The card is the verification of the contact, and in many cases, it is highly sought after to get that "new one". It's a great feeling to snag a rare DX station but to receive his/her QSL card is really a treat. QSLing however, can be a complicated process for new Hams since there are many ways to approach it. .

Most hams use a QSL card showing their information to verify a contact. The requirements for information on the card have been developed and refined over a number of years but basically call for at least the minimum information to establish a verified contact. Other Hams have used E-QSL, an electronic system (unfortunately not recognized by the ARRL). The Log Book of the World is the ARRL's approved electronic system. The electronic systems are being used more and more by DXexpeditions and rare DX stations who find it easier to send their complete computerized log to a central point (ARRL) for verification. By the way, my experience tells me that 90% of QSLing is still done the old fashion way.....the QSL card. I hope we never lose this to the electronic system. Receiving a card in the mail is really a thrill.

There are many businesses who print cards for Hams. Just do a search and you will find several companies who will gladly take your business. Cards can be a simple two color scheme or more elaborate with pictures or other interests. It all depends on what you want in a card. Many times QSL cards have become an expression of the person on the other side. Some Hams go all out designing cards that show their station or other hobbies — a great way to express yourself.

The QSL card's main function and overriding

importance is in obtaining awards. The most sought after award is generally considered the ARRL DXCC award. This award is for contacting and receiving a card or verification in Log book of the World (to be discussed later) from 100 different countries. Think it is easy to work 100 countries and get a QSL card? It is harder than you think but a fun process. Working them is easier than the QSL process. Obtaining verification of the contact is fundamental to receiving most awards since it is the verification process to prove the contact was completed.

Most all Hams who work the low bands and those who seriously work higher frequencies for contesting have QSL cards for exchange. The simplest way to exchange a card in the US is to mail your card like a post card requesting "Pls QSL." Generally, most US hams will send you a card especially if you indicate you need their state or county for an award. It gets a little more complicated for DX chasing as explained below.

For those who decide to "chase paper" or awards, the first award many US hams obtain is WAS (Worked All States). This award tests your ability to stick to something and go for the award. Believe me, it is not that easy to work all states and be diligent to collect cards. If you really want a challenge, work all states QRP (less than 5 watts) using the CW mode.

So what are some of the basics in QSLING. Here are a few first steps

1. Your card

Cards need to be of the standard size since it may go through several bureaus (to be discussed later). There are many companies who help you design and print your cards.

2. Accurate information in your log

Call, date and time in UTC (Universal Coordinated Time), signal reports, QSL manager if any

3. Find the correct QSL route

You must find out if a DX station has a QSL manager. If so, your card needs to be sent to that manager if you expect to get a reply. If there is no QSL manager you may choose to send the card directly to the station or use the ARRL outgoing Bureau to save cost. If you choose to send the card directly, you can find the direct mailing address of the station or QSL manager from QRZ, E-Ham, or Buckmaster. The source I consistently use is "QSL Corner" at QRZ.Com. Time spent researching QSL routes is very worthwhile.

If a station has a manager and you send the

card to the station itself rather than the manager, you have virtually no chance of getting a reply. On the other hand, most managers play the game and will QSL reliably, even through the bureau. To reiterate: virtually all rare DX stations use QSL managers!

4. Use the Bureau (Via the Buro)

Your membership in ARRL allows you to use the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service to send your DX QSL cards overseas to foreign QSL Bureaus at a very low cost. See the ARRL web site for further details on the service. Postage is getting pretty expensive, so consider a cheaper way -- "QSL VIA BURO"— through the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service!

It must be said that no QSL is totally certain. Even the best operators make around 1% logging mistakes when they're very tired or under time pressure, so there is a finite risk that a solid QSO might not show up in his log. There can be few disappointments greater than having such a card returned, but it does happen.

5. Tell them why you want the card

Many will respond better if they know that the card is a new country, state or county so in the comment section of your QSL card tell them: "I need the card because . . .". Also be sure to thank operators and managers for their efforts. It does get noticed.

6. Use Direct mail when required

Many DX stations or QSL managers will not use the Buro. You have to decide how badly you want the card. Send a direct request if you need it. Be sure to include a self-addressed envelope (SAE) and sufficient return postage in the form of US dollars ("green stamps") or IRCs(International Reply Coupons-which cover postage back to the US). Most will prefer US dollars to cover postage. On a few rare ones I have included one IRC and 2 to 3 green stamps. You cannot expect the DX station to fund your QSL.

Other Thoughts on QSLing

While QSLing ethics might not directly affect one's returns, they do deserve some thought. First, there is no need to QSL if the other operator doesn't want a card. However, if the other operator sends a request, the general feeling among radio amateurs is that a reply is compulsory, regardless of whether the request was received via the bureau or directly. If a direct request includes

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Year 2004	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	
General Meeting 7:00 PM	26	23	15	19	17	21	19	16	20	18	15	No meeting	
Program	WB6NOA	W6XD	K0OV		Auction	FD prep					Auction		
VEC Testing	26	23	15	19	17	26	19	16	20	18	15	—	
SOARA T-Hunt			7	4	2	6	11	1	5	3	7	5	
Propagator Deadline	18	15	7	11	9	13	11	8	12	10	7		
Board Meeting	2/2	3/1	22	26	24	28	26	23	27	25	22		
ARRL Field Day						26/27		Auction Next Month Time to think about cleaning up the shack to make room for all the equipment you will get at the November auction!					
SOARA picnic													
SOARA Holiday Party												5	

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sufficient postage, the reply should be sent by air mail. If insufficient or no postage is included, the reply can be sent via the bureau instead.

Summary Advice on Direct DX QSLing

1. Check to ensure that the time (in UTC)/date/Call on your card is correct.
2. Enclose a self addressed envelope with your address in full, including your country,
3. Enclose IRC's/\$\$ (SASE for domestic) to cover return postage costs.
4. Use only the route given by the operator. If the operator tells you to QSL direct only or via his manager, do just that. There is no point in flooding the QSL Bureau with cards if he is not a member,
5. Don't write the date backward: 02-11-98 is 2 November 1998. Many DX stations are not on computer and you will get a "not in log" reply.
6. Is your county on your card? Many recipients of your card are county hunters. How about grid squares and IOTA?
7. Enclose an extra \$ or IRC with your card. There is no profit in QSLing for the DX station or manager. They are providing you with a service, and they probably don't need another "W" or "K" card for their collection.

InComing Cards from DX Bureaus

Most countries have "outgoing" QSL bureaus that operate in much the same manner as the ARRL Outgoing Service. The member sends his cards to his outgoing bureau where they are packaged and shipped to the appropriate countries.

A majority of the DX QSLs are shipped directly to the individual incoming bureaus where volunteers sort the incoming QSLs by the first letter of the call sign-suffix. One individual may be assigned the task of handling one or more letters of the alphabet. All incoming QSL Bureaus have an e-mail address Here is our bureau:

ARRL Sixth (6th) District DX QSL Bureau
P.O. Box 530
Weed, CA., 96094-0530

Comments or questions on this bureau's operation may be directed to kobis@cot.net
See the W6 Bureau home page
[<http://www.kqlz.com/qslbureau6/>]

Please consult the ARRL Incoming Service for additional information and the above 6th District for procedures to receive DX cards. I believe our 6th District prefers to receive money, and they will purchase envelopes and stamps to send your DX cards to you. This way the can have consistency in size and format.

Logbook of the World

[<https://www.assl.org/lotw/default/>]
ARRL's *Logbook of the World* (LoTW) system is a repository of log records submitted by users from around the world. When both participants in a QSO submit matching QSO records to LoTW, the result is a QSL that can be used for ARRL award credit.

To minimize the chance of fraudulent

submissions to LoTW, all QSO records must be digitally signed using a digital certificate obtained from ARRL. Obtaining such a certificate requires verification of the licensee's identity either through mail verification (US) or inspection by ARRL of required documentation (non-US).

Software developed by ARRL can be used to convert a log file (in ADIF or Cabrillo file format) into a file of digitally signed QSO data ready for submission to LoTW. LoTW began operation on September 15, 2003. Please see the ARRL Web site for additional information on how to register and how to upload contacts.

Well, there is still a lot to tell about QSLing, but it will be easier for you to use your computer to get more information. There are many sources including DX Clubs and other techniques for getting those rare contacts verified. This hobby has many aspects to it and chasing awards can be fun and rewarding. There are so many awards that it would take pages to list them. Check out the ARRL list and "Ham awards.com" for a listing of several.

If you don't have a QSL card, get a few hundred and start exchanging with those rare stations. Remember, be ready for the improvement in propagation we are told will be here soon. Believe it or not, Nevada and South Dakota can be rare these days. As always have fun

73 es gud dx K6EEE

The PROPAGATOR

South Orange Amateur Radio Association
P.O. Box 2545
Mission Viejo, CA 92690



Meeting: October 18, 2004 at 7:00 PM
Dave Seroski, KG6QCI

☛ **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 147.645 two-meter repeater.

☛ **License Exams:** Amateur License Exams are given prior to SOARA meetings. Exams are from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. Walk-in applicants are welcome. For information call Paul Levey, NZ1M, at 949-481-5454.

☛ **Contacting SOARA:** Questions about SOARA? Send e-mail to: info@soara.org, or leave a message at 949-249-1373.

☛ **Web Site:** SOARA maintains a web site with current club information. The URL is: <http://www.soara.org>.

☛ **Repeaters:** The SOARA 2-meter, 70 cm and 224.100 MHz repeaters are open to all licensed hams.

SOARA 2m — 147.645 - (110.9) Laguna Beach

SOARA 2m — 146.025 + (110.9) San Clemente

SOARA 2m — 145.240 - (110.9) Trabuco

SOARA 220 — 224.100 - (110.9) Laguna Beach

SOARA 440 — 445.660 - (110.9) Laguna Beach

EchoLink

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 KG6GI for details.

SOARA 220 — 224.640 - (123.0) Santiago Pk. (C)

HROC 440 — 447.180 - (131.8) Santiago Pk. (C)

☛ **Nets:** SOARA 2 m repeater open net is held Tuesday 8:00 PM
40 meter HF net (7.248 MHz +/- for QRM), Sunday 7:30 AM.

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