

The PROPAGATOR

February, 2007

The Monthly Newsletter of South Orange Amateur Radio Association

More on Satellites

For the February meeting's presentation we are pleased to welcome Clint Bradford, K6LCS. Clint's topic will be: **Working Amateur Satellites with Your HT**. You do not need 100 watts of power and expensive rotators to work amateur satellites. You can enjoy satellite operation using rather common amateur equipment. Come and hear Clint's talk. It should be an excellent follow-up to last month's presentation by Vlad.

Clint has been a licensed amateur since 1994 and involved with public service communications. Professionally, he was sales manager for ADI/Premier/Pryme, worked for Motorola and for Ham Radio Outlet in Anaheim. Clint resides in Mira Loma with his wife, Karen, and their pets: Karen's Icelandic horse, Mjollnir, and Clint's donkey, Edward R. Burro.

Testing Note

As of Feb. 23, 2007, the code requirement is removed from the license requirements. If you are holding a valid CSCE for the general class or higher license, you do not have to pass any further tests to gain operating privileges. However, you must upgrade at a testing session and pay the testing fee. If you are in this situation, come to the test session before the general meeting and complete your paperwork. The session runs from 5:00 to 7:00 PM

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to SOARA's newest members:

Dave Ishnaek	WA6VVL
Steve Sherman	KI6FZV
Eliji Miura	KI6GMT

Changing to e-Delivery

Last month's newsletter was sent out by e-mail due to your editor being unable to get it in the mail on time. That was due to a brief but intense bout with the flu. As most of you know, SOARA is facing a sharp increase in costs due to an increase in rent on one of our repeater sites. A significant portion of the increase can be covered by eliminating the cost of printing and postage for the newsletter. A show of hands at the January meeting indicated unanimous approval of making the switch to electronic delivery.

A check of the Membership Director's records indicated that there are members who do not have e-mail service. For those people we will continue to produce and mail paper copies of the newsletter. The newsletter is sent out the week before the general meeting. The timing is intended to serve as a reminder of the meeting date.

It is important that we have correct and up-to-date e-mail addresses. Please contact Ron, W6OM, our Membership Director, with any corrections or changes to your e-mail address. If, for some reason, it is not convenient for you to receive the newsletter in electronic form, please contact Dale, W8RRV, the newsletter editor, in order to be placed on the list of those to whom the paper version will be sent.

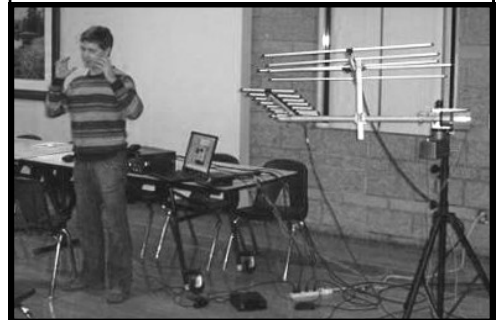
Time to Upgrade?

Have you been thinking of moving up to a General class license? You are aware that the code requirement has been completely removed, so that part will not hold you back. Time to start studying and checking on classes. Well, now is a good time to start! There may never be as good a time to advance to general.

As you may know the question pool — and perhaps the number of questions — changes every few years. Did you know that the General class question pool will change in just a few months? Yes, on July 1, 2007 there will be

Home Brew Talk in Jan.

It is always a treat and an inspiration to hear a presentation on how another ham has tackled a problem and found an elegant and inexpensive solution. Vlad, KI6BLP, demonstrated his home brew satellite tracking antenna system at the January meeting.



With this system Vlad has been able to enjoy regular contacts through the available satellites. Vlad has been a valuable resource for the club in the area of satellite communications. His expertise was of great value during last year's Field Day operation. If you are interested in trying out this mode of operation, Vlad is willing to answer questions, give advice and walk you through the initial operation. Thanks to Vlad for an informative presentation. We know he has other areas of interest and look forward to hearing from him in the future.

a new question pool for General class tests.

You could get the current study book and get busy, or you could wait for the new set of questions. What difference will it make? The consensus of opinion is that with the removal of the code requirement, the level of the questions will be raised. In other words, this is an unusually good time to upgrade. Just do it!

HRO in Anaheim carries study books. Contact Heiko, AD6OI, SOARA's Education Director for information on upcoming classes. There are plenty of Elmers in the club willing to help you learn the material. Don't put it off. See you on HF soon.



The Way I See It: What is a Newsletter ?

You probably saw the article on the first page announcing that SOARA's newsletter, *The Propagator*, will be switching to electronic delivery. The plan is to produce it as a PDF document and either include it as an attachment to an e-mail or to include in the e-mail body a link to a download page on SOARA's web site.

Last month's issue was sent out as a PDF, and everyone seemed to find that quite acceptable. It is an efficient and cost effective way to distribute this sort of publication. I get a fair number of similar publications via e-mail, and have not found it objectionable. However, I never gave much thought to changing *The Propagator*. It has always been a paper publication!

A local newspaper, a few days ago, contained an article in which experts explained how the NET would soon bring about the end of books. I am old enough to remember the

predictions, when television was new, that movies would soon disappear from the scene. Well, they have lived long past that 50 year old obituary. And I think books will survive the net.

Books will last, in part, because you can curl up in a cozy spot with a good book. You can't do that with your computer. But newsletters are different. A newsletter should be a quick read, just right for reading from the glowing screen. We have become accustomed to spending time working (or playing) on the computer for long stretches.

The general look and format of this newsletter I inherited from the previous editor. Over the years I have made some minor changes, and have been fairly happy with the result. However, for the past few months I have had the nagging feeling that the format should change. I don't know what should change: it just seems to have gotten a bit stale.

If it is a bit stuffy as a printed newsletter, I am afraid it will seem very stuffy as a PDF. The new medium requires a new look and a slicker style. I am not sure what constraints will be important. Will recipients want to print out the entire newsletter? Will they want a format from which they can print out only special items such as the calendar? Perhaps it should be produced in HTML where it would be easier to collect just the items you want to print or save.

There are a few things I don't anticipate changing. A newsletter should be short. Not overloaded with stories and the stories brief and to the point. The material is to be primarily about the club or club members. Original articles of general interest by a club member is fair game, but I don't see the club newsletter as a place for repeating articles that are readily available elsewhere. In the case of material available on the web, it is quite easy to direct anyone interested to it by just giving the URL.

Right now I couldn't give you a very clear idea of what next month's *Propagator* will look like. It will be delivered electronically and it will look different. I am very anxious to hear suggestions from you. Some of you have been involved in electronic publishing for years. Send me your ideas, hints, examples, and anything you think will help. Together we will come up with a new look for the newsletter.

Any comments, ideas, etc. may be sent to <w8rrv@soara.org>, or see me at a club meeting. Thanks in advance for your contributions.

73 de Dale, W8RRV

D-Star Update

While your principle D-STAR system implementors, Howard and Brian, have been a little under the weather as of late, progress is still being made on our D-STAR system. As noted previously, SOARA has D-STAR digital voice + low-speed digital data repeaters up and running on 2 meters, 70 cm, and 1.2 GHz and an additional high-speed (128Kbps) digital data repeater on 1.2 GHz.

D-STAR GATEWAY NETWORK

We are now connected to the international network of D-STAR repeater systems! Howard and I are currently working on the necessary documentation for how to use the D-STAR system, including gateway to other D-STAR systems.

I have also been busy developing software that will enable automatic administration of the distributed gateway system, something that is a bit of a problem right now. Bad data

has been periodically introduced into the gateway system that causes delays or problems for us. Currently, the only way to clear out bad data is to have every gateway administrator shut down their gateway, clear out the erroneous data, and restart after the master server database is cleaned up and restarted. If any single gateway administrator doesn't follow through and clean up their gateway, they re-introduce the bad data into the system. Coordinating this manually has failed several times now so an automatic system is needed.

I've been told that a new gateway is being added to the network almost every week so the system will be growing quite large!

D-STAR systems are currently located in Hawaii, Canada, Australia, and in many areas of the US! See <http://www.jfindu.net/DSTARRepeaters.aspx> for a map of available gateways. Check out <http://dstarusers.org/dstar.php> for a list of active users of all of the D-STAR systems. The SOARA D-STAR web site is: <http://soara.org/dstar>

NEW ICOM TRANSCEIVER

ICOM has announced a new D-STAR capable mobile transceiver that will have dual-band (at the same time!) capability, optional D-STAR digital voice and low-speed data, 522 memories, diversity receive (compares the receiving signal strength from two different antennas), and some really impressive GPS features. Look for the link to more information about this exciting new transceiver on the SOARA D-STAR web page.

We will be opening up the gateway for general SOARA membership use soon. I hope to hear you on one of our D-STAR repeaters!

73,
NJ6N

Year 2007	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
General Meeting 7:00 PM	22	26	19	16	21	18	16	20	17	15	19	No meeting
Program	KI6BLP Sat. trk ant & APRS	K6LCS Clint Bradford	N6PEQ Dan Daskert	Program on D-Star	Spring Auction	F.D. Prep.					Fall Auction	—
VEC Testing	22	26	19	16	21	23	16	20	17	15	19	—
SOARA T-Hunt	7	4	4	1	6	3	1	5	2	7	4	2
Board Meeting	29	3/5	26	23	29	23	23	27	24	22	26	
Special Events			24	25	19							
ARRL Field Day						23/24						
SOARA picnic								5				
SOARA Holiday Party												9

~~Saturday~~ Sunday T-Hunt

Stalling off the hunt so we could all enjoy Super Bowl Sunday was a good idea. Putting the hunt on a Saturday, perhaps not such a good idea. We did get some first time hunters and it did last nice and long.

The start of the hunt was delayed by about a half hour while I had a discussed with a CHP officer about a missing year sticker for the car's license plate

As soon as I got the "T" perking I had three guys looking for it. Not a single hot-dog in the group so we are going to get a new, first time winner. A couple of hours into the hunt I gave a key location. Now it was easy to get to, right off the I-5 freeway and the "T" was nice and loud. BUT, not all of the roads connect, especially where I was sitting.

So, if you found me, you didn't find the transmitter. It was on the other side of the railroad. The road on the other side of the railroad did not connect to my road. So, it was back on the freeway to the next exit and double back on the road that crossed the railroad.

Kriss, KR6ISS, was the first on the scene. I gave him some short instructions and he collared the "T" at 3:30 PM. A first find for him and the first finder of the day.

Kriss had no attenuator, he used the proven King Richard technique of taking the antenna off the radio and also using the third harmonic.

Next came Tec, K6TEK, who bagged the "T" at 4:15 PM. He gave a motor home on my side of the tracks a good going over, but no luck. It was on the other side of the tracks.

Tom, AE6SH, tossed in the towel around 3:30 PM because he had commitments he had to get to. But he admitted that it was a tricky one before he left.

73, Dave, KG6QCI



Hi-Tech LIQUIDATORS

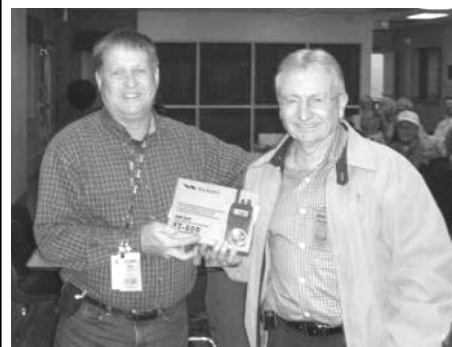
2060 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627

A very special thanks to Hi-Tech Liquidators for their monthly donations to the club raffle.

Located at 2060 Placentia Ave, in
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

Phone: (949) 646-1686

Raffle News



Congratulations to Howard, K6BYU, who was the lucky winner of last month's \$5 raffle prize! Howard took home a brand new Yaesu FT-60R 2m/440 hand-held transceiver! Congratulations to all of the \$1 raffle prize winners as well. SOARA would like to thank Hi-Tech liquidators (<http://www.a-aengineering.com/HiTech.htm>) for their generous support of the \$1 raffle.

This month's \$5 raffle prize is a Yaesu FT-1802M 2M FM mobile transceiver. This transceiver features 50 watts of output power, extended receiver coverage, 221 memory channels, dedicated 10-channel NOAA weather receive, and a host of other nice features!

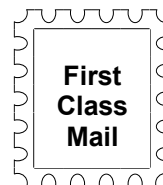
Best of luck in the raffles and I hope to see you at the meeting,
73, NJ6N

The PROPAGATOR

South Orange Amateur Radio Association

P.O. Box 2545

Mission Viejo, CA 92690



Meeting: February 26, 2007, at 7:00 PM

Clint, K6LCS: Satellites on an HT

☛ **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 147.645MHz & 447.180MHz repeaters.

☛ **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 Laguna Beach, San Clemente, and Trabuco repeaters are open. The Santiago Peak repeaters are closed. For details or questions on the repeaters contact the Repeater director, KG6GI.

2m	—	147.645	—	(110.9)	Laguna Beach
2m	—	146.025	+	(110.9)	San Clemente
2m	—	145.240	—	(110.9)	Trabuco

D-STAR	2m	—	146.115	+	(K6SOA_C)	Laguna Beach
	220	—	224.100	—	(110.9)	Laguna Beach
	220	—	224.640	—	(123.0)	Santiago Pk. (C)

D-STAR	440	—	445.660	—	(K6SOA_B)	Laguna Beach
	440	—	447.180	—	(131.8)	Santiago Pk. (C)

D-STAR	1.2G	—	1282.600	—	(K6SOA_A)	Laguna Beach
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☛ **Nets:** SOARA 2 m repeater open net is held Tuesday 8:00 PM
40 meter HF net (7.250 MHz +/- for QRM), Sunday 8:00 AM.

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