



The

# Propagator

The Monthly Newsletter of the South Orange Amateur Radio Association

April, 2007

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## D-Star to be Explained at April Meeting

It seems that the future of most electronic devices lies in the digital world. By no later than February 17, 2009, all U.S. television broadcasts will be exclusively digital. No one doubts that ham radio is also moving in that direction. ICOM has been promoting their D-Star system for a few years, and SOARA has acquired a total of four digital repeaters using their system.

The topic for the April meeting, Monday, April 16, is the D-Star system. SOARA's Repeater Director, Howard Brown, KG6GI, will present an overview of the system and update the members on the status of our repeaters.

D-Star is more than just encoding and decoding voice for transmission. It involves a world wide linking of D-Star repeaters with the capability to locate another ham on the system by their call sign. In order for this system to work it is necessary to have a more complex programming of the radios than we are accustomed to with analog radios.

Brian, NJ6N, will aid and abet Howard in the presentation Monday by providing demonstrations. Come to the meeting and get a deeper insight into this budding aspect of amateur radio.



## QST, QST, QST de AE6H

Once again, the summer at SOARA is stacking up to be a busy one with plenty of opportunities for all of us to be "Radio-Active".

First, we are planning a "Repeater Site Spring Clean-up Party" and you're invited! We plan to descend upon (actually, ascend to) the site in Laguna Beach, on Cinco de Mayo (May 5<sup>th</sup> for all you Gringos) to make some minor building repairs, clean up the grounds immediately around our building, lower the main tower to check the antennas, and whatever else we may think of. This is tentatively scheduled for the morning, 9:00 AM to noon, so you'll have the afternoon free for your other partying. This is a great opportunity for many of you who haven't seen the inner workings of our main repeater site to do so, and for those who have been there be-

fore, to see the recent equipment changes, especially the new D-Star installation.

Next comes Field Day! This year it is on June 23 - 24. Lou Frank, KG6FCT is coordinating our efforts with the assistance of several others. If you'd like to help with organizing, setup, operating, or in any other way, we welcome your help. Contact Lou at [kg6fct@soara.org](mailto:kg6fct@soara.org).

The OCCARO Ham Radio Booth at the Orange County Fair is in the final planning stages and promises to be an award-winning booth once again. SOARA has been assigned 2 days of the three weeklong exhibition: Thursday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> and Friday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>. Try to plan on spending a few hours in the booth. I have found it to be a lot of fun, a great opportunity to promote Ham Radio, and you get free O.C. Fair admission and parking for the day you select. You are free to enjoy

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# Upcoming Activities

## Events:

April 25  
Field Day Plan-  
ning Party  
7:00 PM

May 5  
Clean-up Day  
at the Re-  
peater site  
9:00 AM

June 23-24  
Field Day  
Gilleran Park  
In Mission  
Viejo

August 2 & 3  
O C Fair  
SOARA at the  
Ham Radio  
booth

August 5  
SOARA Picnic

September 7-9  
HamCon

## Field Day Planning

Activities abound; we can start counting down the weeks until Field Day. There is much to do and lots of fun to be had. Let us start with some real planning at the Pizza Party. Put it on your calendar for Wednesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M. It is a no host Pizza party at **Round Table Pizza** 25290 Marguerite Parkway. It is in the south east shopping center of the La Paz and Marguerite intersection. We will do some planning starting with a review of the tasks. I know some of you have been to many field days before, but I do miss some faces that have been very active in the past. This year my goal is more fun for every one and

more points; so we need to work smarter and this starts with planning. When you see me at our April meeting ask me how to get free Pizza! Till then Lou, KG6FCT

## Temple Hill Work Party

Interested in getting some sun high on the mountain? Well not so high and it might be gloomy, but you will still have a good time at the Temple Hill Work Party. Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 5, at around 9:00 A.M. This is a good opportunity to see a repeater site first hand. Ray, AE6H, will lead us in this activity. Hope to see you there!

73 Lou, KG6FCT, Activities Chair

# Raffle Report

Congratulations to the ten lucky winners in last month's one-dollar raffle! We gave away some great prizes and, you could be the next lucky winner! This month's prizes include a roll-up dual band J-Pole antenna, a SOARA t-shirt, a one-year subscription to World Radio magazine and other great prizes.

We didn't sell enough tickets in the five-dollar raffle to give away the Alinco DR-235T 222MHz mobile transceiver last month, but I anticipate being able to award it to a lucky winner at the April meeting. Thanks to all of you who participate in the raffle and make it an enjoyable event for the

club. I hope to see you at the next meeting.

73, NJ6N

Special thanks to:

## Hi-Tech Liquidators

2060 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 (949)646-1686  
Electronic & Industrial Surplus, Close outs, Imports & More



## D-Star Update

The new ICOM IC-2820H 2M/440 dual band, D-STAR capable mobile transceiver has arrived! This powerful new D-STAR capable radio is now available through your favorite Amateur Radio equipment dealer. To use this new transceiver with D-STAR, you'll need to install the optional UT-123 module. More information, including a PDF format brochure and other information, is now available on the ICOM web site.

The [www.soara.org/dstar](http://www.soara.org/dstar) web site has a terrific new look thanks to Richard, K6RBS. If you're interested in D-STAR, stop by the web site and you'll find a wealth of information about the SOARA D-STAR repeater system, and about D-STAR in general.

73, NJ6N

## QST, OST, QST de AE6H

*(Continued from page 1)*

the rest of the fair before or after your shift at the booth.



Finally, don't forget Hamcon 2007, the ARRL South West Division Convention, on September 7, 8, and 9 in Torrance. SOARA is a participating club, and we will be doing the Wouff Hong presentation. We still need a few cast members and support folks (ticket takers, special effects, etc.). By working on the presentation, you are automatically inducted into the Ancient and Secret Order of Wouff Hong.

We did this at the '03 convention in Long Beach, and we had a blast! We also have "Early Bird" discount registrations available. See Ray, AE6H, about either.

Balloting for the Directors for the SOARA Board is this month. Traditionally, we have included ballots with the mailed version of the "Propagator". Since we moved to the electronic distribution of the newsletter, this necessitated some changes in the way we distribute ballots. Paper Ballots will be available at the meeting this coming Monday night, April 16th. You will be able to mark and cast the ballots there or take them home and return them by mail. If you cannot make the meeting and wish to have an

## April T-Hunt



Since the scheduled T-hunt fell on April 1 this year, we couldn't resist pulling a prank on Kriss, KR6ISS. It was his first time at hiding the "T", and we

knew he would find a good spot. Rather than a competition, we hunters turned it into a cooperative hunt, with everyone sharing information. It was a different and fun way to conduct the hunt. And we did arrive pretty much as a group and in fairly short time. Oh, yes, we didn't have time to hide an APRS unit in the T-box that was loaned to Kriss. Kriss had an HF station set up in the park to pass the time as he waited for us. Now that is class!

absentee ballot mailed to you, please email me at [ae6h@soara.org](mailto:ae6h@soara.org) with your request and the address you want the ballot sent to.

The Board of directors recommended slate for the Directors is as follows:

- Education Dir: Hal Silverman, WB6WXO
- Membership Dir: Ron Weaver, W6OM
- Publications Dir: Dale Griffith, W8RRV
- Repeater Dir: Howard Brown, KG6GI
- Technical Dir: Bob Grant, W6CIC
- Communications Dir: **Position open**

Also, Phil Lonzello, WA6LDI, has agreed to accept appointment to the Secretary position to fill out the term of Greg Scott, N6REG, who needs to step down for business reasons.

As you may note, the Communications Director's position is "open". Anyone interested in this very important board position, please step forward! SOARA could use your help. The position even comes with an assistant to share the responsibilities. email Dave, <[kg6qci@soara.org](mailto:kg6qci@soara.org)> if you'd like to help.

As always, there will be space on the ballot for write in candidates.

Thanks, and best 73  
Ray Hutchinson, SOARA President



Reminder:

The May meeting is our Spring Auction meeting. It is not too early to start thinking about what items you can bring to sell. You will need the space they are taking up to put all of the good things you will buy at the auction.

The date of the May meeting is May 21.

The May T-hunt will be held on Sunday May 6. Hope to see you there. I will be waiting at the hiding place for you!

Year 2007	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
<b>General Meeting</b> 7:00 PM	22	26	19	16	21	18	16	20	17	15	19	No meeting
<b>Program</b>	KI6BLP Sat. trk ant & APRS	K6LCS Clint Bradford	W6OM Ron Operating DX	Program on D-Star	Spring Auction	F.D. Prep.					Fall Auction	—
<b>VEC Testing</b>	22	26	19	16	21	23	16	20	17	15	19	—
<b>SOARA T-Hunt</b>	7	4	4	1	6	3	1	5	2	7	4	2
<b>Board Meeting</b>	29	3/5	26	23	29	23	23	27	24	22	26	
<b>Special Events</b>			24	25	19							
<b>ARRL Field Day</b>						23/24						
<b>SOARA picnic</b>								5				
<b>SOARA Holiday Party</b>												9

☞ **SOARA** meets at the Mission Viejo Community Center, 26932 Veterans Way, Mission Viejo, the third Monday of every month at 7:00 PM. For the months of January and February the third Monday is a holiday and the meeting is held on the fourth Monday.

☞ **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](mailto: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          |
| <b>D-Star</b> | 2m   | — | 146.115  | + | (K6SOA C) | Laguna Beach     |
|               | 220  | — | 224.100  | — | (110.9)   | Laguna Beach     |
|               | 220  | — | 224.640  | — | (123.0)   | Santiago Pk. (C) |
| <b>D-Star</b> | 440  | — | 445.660  | — | (K6SOA B) | Laguna Beach     |
|               | 440  | — | 447.180  | — | (131.8)   | Santiago Pk. (C) |
| <b>D-Star</b> | 1.2G | — | 1282.600 | — | (K6SOA A) | Laguna Beach     |

☞ **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.

### SOARA OFFICERS

- President:** Ray Hutchinson, AE6H . . . . . 949-496-8020  
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## IRLP and Me

By Hal Silverman, WB6WXO



Thanks to Hal, WB6WXO for this "How To" article on IRLP. If you have questions do not hesitate to contact Hal, either in person, on the radio or via e-mail. He will be glad to discuss his experiences with you.

I announced at the March meeting that I had just completed an IRLP node. I was asked to check the frequency against the TASMA band plan. That resulted in moving the frequency to 145.770 with a PL 103.5. Why IRLP when SOARA has a Echolink and D-Star repeaters either in operation. My interest in IRLP started several years ago when I met what has now become a good friend. George Merchant (formerly VE7CHU) VE7QH, was introduced to me after my close friend Brian Lagden (VE7QH) became a silent key. **George's QTH did not lend itself to a good RF location, and so he became interested in IRLP and passed along the interest to me.**

If you like to tinker with radio and computers as I do, this is not a bad way to go. This could be an introduction to DX but not the same as Ron Weaver presented. It is a good way to meet hams from all over the world, and it presents a different slice of Ham radio. For those of you just starting out in Ham radio, this might be an interesting project. The requirements are minimal, and you do not need a large antenna farm to get the system to work. The IRLP design links ham radio through a computer and then through the internet. The computer requirements are as follows:

Early Pentium 4 with about 130Mb of EDO memory. A little more is better but not necessary.

**A sound card. It doesn't have to be state of the art. It does need a "line in" and a "line out" feature.**

A serial port on the mother board

A parallel port on the computer

A network card

A floppy drive

A hard drive with about 10Gb capacity. This could also be less

The computer should be dedicated to the node.

For the radio, I used an Alinco 135. This is compatible with IRLP software and has a dedicated serial port. To access the node you can use a small hand held radio that has a DTMF key pad. If this begins to wet your whistle, check the web site <http://www.irlp.net>. There are several linking web pages to the main site. You can order the interface board from the designer Dave Cameron, VE7LTD. There is also a Yahoo users group to answer any question that you care to post. The cost of the interface board is \$130 USD and can be paid through PayPal. You can also order the serial cable for the connection from the serial port on the computer to the Alinco radio. The cable also has two flying leads to connect to the sound card. The cable cost is about \$40.00USD and can also be purchased through the web site and paid for through PayPal

The interface board comes with a Linux operating system and the software to install the program. You will need to have a Windows boot disk if you are going to use a Windows based computer. The boot disk is used to reformat the hard drive. You have to do this before installing the Linux software. There is a 12 or 13 step self check imbedded in the software that checks your installation. There is also a check to see if your DTMF tones are getting through the interface board, and a self check to see if your PTT is also getting through the interface board.

The software will assign you a node number when it is installed. My number is 3522. I found that the hams that use IRLP and are in the users group have been very helpful. You will have to use a separate Windows based computer with a recorder feature that will allow you to record a greeting. As an example, if you have access to an IRLP station, dial node 1010 with your DTMF key pad, and you get a great recorded greeting from the University of British Columbia.

There is a net that meets every day that has check-ins from across Canada. There is also one that has check-ins fro Australia. There is a WIN system that allows multi check ins through a special node called a reflector. While this is an overview of a part of ham radio, it is just a slightly different way to enjoy the hobby. As for myself, the only thing I want to do is to put a 2m on top of my tower. The tower is up about 45 to 50 feet and the mast extends just above the 2m and 440MHz beams. This will give me access to IRLP while in the car. When I get the antenna installed, I will publish that in the Propagator or make announcement during one of the nets. If any one has any questions, please contact me at the meeting or through [wb6wxo@soara.org](mailto:wb6wxo@soara.org).