



Propagator

The Monthly Newsletter of the South Orange County Amateur Radio Association

In This Issue

President's
Message.....1

General Meeting
.....3

Membership ...3

International DX
Convention
Report.....4

Financial Report
.....6

Nets/Repeaters.
.....6

Soara Library. .7
Sale Mail List. .8

General Meeting

NPM Center
May 15, 2023
7:00 PM
Norman P. Murray
Center
23492 Veterans
Way, Mission Viejo,
CA 92692

President's Message

It seems that Spring is finally upon us, with some warmer weather here in Orange County. The nearly daily rains seem to be over as well, June is right around the corner.

June brings us to the ARRL Field Day (FD), which this year will be Friday afternoon, Saturday, and Sunday until mid afternoon. June 23, 24, and 25. For newer hams and any hams who have not experienced FD first hand, I strongly encourage you to take it in this year. Field Day is Amateur Radio's pre-eminent learning and operating event. Thousands of clubs and individual hams all over North America will be participating in the 24 hour FD event, with many others all over the world joining in to make North American contacts.

We'll be discussing FD briefly at this Monday's SOARA meeting and our June meeting will be largely devoted to FD Information and planning. Check out the SOARA website, under events, and Field Day FMI and some history. The information for FD 2023 will be updated soon. Also, don't hesitate to ask some others who have participated in the past about what happens at Field Day!

June also marks the beginning of many summer plans and events. To borrow a term now being used by emergency planners, and now that, in the West at least "Fire Season" is nearly year round, we're also entering the "Summer Preparedness Season". Summer Preparedness is an all risk process that we all can utilize in our daily lives, at home, work, school, vacation, or wherever.

Another term that is increasingly being used and encouraged is "Situational Awareness". Recent events show us that this too can and should be part of our daily lives and activities. Now, I'm not advocating constant vigilance to the point of paranoia, just reminding us to keep our surroundings in mind. It's all too easy to get sucked into our cellphones, other electronics, etc. Every tripped over something or nearly walking into an object while looking at the screen on your device? How about missing turns while in a mobile QSO? These

occurrences which we all have experienced from time to time are examples of not having good situational awareness. Life is full of distractions, but with a little more effort and taking a little more care to have good Situational Awareness, we can keep ourselves and those around us a little safer.

Some examples of simple situational that may come in handy should something negative occur: Whenever you enter a large gathering of people, take just a second to figure out where another route out of that area, building, courtyard, ball fields, etc., other than the entrance you used to get in there. Maybe there are several exist paths, so make a quick mental note of them. In a building, in addition to alternate exits, make a mental note if there is an AED device, and remember where you saw it. A good rule of thumb, whenever you enter a building or area you aren't very familiar with; Look Up, Look Down, Look Around. You may well prevent yourself or another from having a trip or fall injury, or from something even worse!

Finally, with warmer summer weather, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention swimming pool safety. Backyard pools are a far too frequent of danger, especially for children. Always have a responsible adult watching the water constantly. In a party or gathering, a good practice is to have a card, small board, paddle or neck lanyard; something to identify and remind that the person in possession of it has the job of always watching the pool. Remember, "Children drown without a sound".

Hope we all can enjoy a fun but safe summer 2023 and beyond!

73 and Be Safe, de Ray, AE6H

General Membership Meeting
Monday, May 15 @ 7:00 pm.
Norman P. Murray Center

Please join us at the Murray Center Monday evening at 7pm. We will have coffee and snacks.

We have several things we will go over during this meeting:

A short video presentation on a portable HF setup as a lead in to the upcoming SOARA Saturday at Gilleran Park.

We will go over how the Auction will work for buyers and sellers on June 10th. See our Live Auction page for more information.

Field Day planning to begin. Our Activities Director will be on hand to explain where the help is needed and will start taking names of volunteers.

Opportunity drawing; prizes to be announced at the meeting

Erik Wresch, VP - SOARA

Note: Ham Radio Examinations will take place prior to the General Meeting and also at the Murray Center. Testing session starts at 6pm and is \$15/session.

Pre-registration is not required and you don't need to be a SOARA member to take the test. Please contact our Education Director, Steve Kuver, if you have questions about testing at k6uvr@soara.org

SOARA Membership Report

We're currently at 207 active members.

If you need a new badge or a copy of the repeater manual, send me an email at membership@soara.org.

73, Greg, N6PM

SOARA Membership Director

[International DX Convention Trip Report](#)

The 74th IDXC was held in Visalia, California on April 21-23, 2023, for the first time since 2019. The conference is of interest to the leading contesters and DX hunters, but has something for everyone. There were about 400 people present for the 2 ½ day event. The convention is an ARRL sanctioned event hosted by the Northern California DX Club. Also at the convention were SOARA members Phil (WA6LDI) and Cher (K6CHR).

Of special interest to me were the various presentations starting Friday morning and continuing through Sunday. I am not a proficient contest operator and have a lot to learn about working DX and weak stations. There were several sessions that I found very useful.

Bill, K8TE gave a talk titled "How to Work the Pile-Up". He approached the topic from both the "running" station - the one calling CQ and also the "hunt and pounce" operator who is trying to work the station calling CQ. There were discussions of split operation, where you send on one frequency and receive on another, which sounds straightforward, but is actually much more complex than it seemed to me. For example, the hunter wants to try and predict where the runner will listen next, because often the runner will change his receive frequency to try and make contacts instead of just trying to hear a station among the dozens or more that may all be calling him on the same frequency. There are also issues of timing about when to call when a prior contact is completed.

Finally, the hunter needs to figure out what the propagation is like from the runner's point of view so that if the hunter is in an area where few other contacts have been made by the runner, then maybe that means that the hunter cannot be heard due to propagation. There were also discussions of how to most efficiently make a QSO in a pileup to allow others their chance. The bottom line was listen for a while before calling, be brief and professional when breaking a pile-up.

Rob, N7QT gave a very informative talk titled "Advanced FT8 Techniques" on working FT8, especially in fox-hound mode. He started by reviewing the basics of FT8 QSOs and how they should work under optimum conditions in normal mode. Next he explained the changes in fox-hound mode and how those changes allowed more QSOs/hour of operation. Among those change are: a reduction in the number of exchanges required to complete a contact and the use of interleaved communications where more than one exchange can be in progress at any one time. In fox-hound mode there are some additional restrictions that a hound must observe, namely staying at least 1000Hz off the base frequency when transmitting to the fox and not being outside the typical band pass filter used by a typical SSB receiver.

He discussed various failure modes that caused problems when trying to work a few recent DX entities. In one case, the fox was transmitting on the wrong half of the cycle which mostly prevented contacts. In another case, the fox's clock was drifting by large amounts and was out of sync with the cycle and thus contacts were prevented. Strategies were discussed about how to recognize these issues and and how hounds should respond to allow contacts to be made.

Finally, a discussion of ‘pirates’, who are people who are impersonating a rare DX station occurred. The speaker describe a way to use a validation key obtained from the DX entity website that changes frequently to verify that the fox is actually the DX entity the hound is trying to reach. There are also ways to use signal strength as a clue to avoid being fooled by pirates. The validation key and other changes around timing will be in a future WSJT-X release.

Tom, N6BT presented “Get Some and get Some More”, a talk about unconventional antenna designs and some of the measurements he has done to get insight into how models translate into real world experience. Of special interest to me was his discussion of quarter wave vertical antennas and radial fields. It turns out that ground radials serve to prevent the radiated energy from being coupled into the earth. He explained how and why elevated radial work on a completely different principal, becoming the ‘other half’ of a dipole. He showed model and then an actual vertical antenna built with a multiband radial system that was essentially wound on elevated support rods mounted perpendicular to the axis of the vertical, kind of like a hex beam. This compact radial system performed as well as a system of conventional two elevated radials per band. He showed data that this approach gained about 3-5dB over ground mounted radials and takes very little space.

Perhaps one of the most interesting presentations was the “JY0J Bouvet DXpedition” Five of the people who traveled to Bouvet Island talked about the details of their trip and some of the things that went right and a lot of what did not go as planned. The last leg by boat of the trip to Bouvet took more than two weeks, which is much longer than typical boat trip because of the remote nature of the island. The seas were incredibly rough and no one got a lot of sleep. When the actually got to the island, the first landing group were stranded overnight with only limited emergency supplies when the landing boat was washed away by the storm. Because of the extreme issues in actually landing cargo, they only were able to land 25 percent of their gear and shelter, including a very limited amount of fuel to runs the generator powering their radios. They had videos of the winds and rain that made setup and operating challenging.

While they were on the island the wildlife mostly left them alone, with some being quite curious and fun to watch. However, as they prepared to leave a large, very aggressive sea lion prevented them from landing the Zodiac that was to take them back to the large boat. There were some very funny stories about what they had to do to actually leave the island, although they probably were not so entertaining at the time.

Even with all of the challenges, the expedition operators and boat crew prevailed and they made a pretty fair number of contacts. Because they prioritized safety, no one was injured, which likely would have ended the expedition early. Congratulations to all who worked so hard to activate Bouvet.

Dale Tyler

W6EDT

SOARA - Statement of Cash Income & Expenses October 1, 2022 Through April 30, 2023

Seven Months Ended:	April 30 <u>2023</u>	April 30 <u>2022</u>	Increase <u>(Decrease)</u>
Cash Income:			
Memberships	9,834	7,548	2,286
Other	<u>5,283</u>	<u>1,849</u>	<u>3,434</u>
Total Cash Income	<u>15,117</u>	<u>9,397</u>	<u>5,720</u>
Cash Expenses:			
Repeaters including site rental, utilities & insurance	11,166	4,828	6,338
Member Activities	3,099	2,174	925
Other expenses	<u>867</u>	<u>1,102</u>	<u>(235)</u>
Total Cash Expenses	<u>15,132</u>	<u>8,104</u>	<u>7,028</u>
Cash Net Income	(15)	1,293	(1,308)
Beginning Cash-October 1	<u>25,860</u>	<u>27,741</u>	<u>(1,881)</u>
Ending Cash - April 30	25,845	29,034	(3,189)

Note: If any member has questions about the financials, please contact the Treasurer or any Board member.

Ron Mosher - K0PGE
SOARA Treasurer

SOARA Nets and Repeaters

As many of you already know, SOARA has nets two nights a week and both Saturday and Sunday. There are also many other nets on our repeaters as well.

We have about seven or eight different net controls for over two dozen available positions every month, depending on whether the month has four or five turns available.

We are always looking for more Net Control operators so please apply if you want to join our select group.

In general our nets are friendly and easy going but there are some rules that we should follow, not many thank goodness.

- The FCC requires you to identify with you call sign within ten minutes of getting on the air and every ten minutes thereafter including when you finish the conversation.
- We (SOARA) as well as almost all organizations with repeaters ask you to identify yourself with your FCC issued I.D. when you first get on the air and then follow the FCC guidelines, including when signing off.
- Other than that we try to avoid controversial subjects that might displease or anger others.

Now to the fun part.

- First of all, all SOARA nets are directed nets and the Net Control is in charge.
- In a conversation with a friend recently we came up with some thoughts and ideas on how to run an amateur radio net and also how to respond to it.
- As Net Control you should try to let your guests do the talking. Guests please feel free to express yourselves.
- Prime them with a good general topic that they can expound on. Guests, if you have topical suggestions for the Net please address the Net Control operator with your thoughts.
- Net Controls, prepare yourself with some good leading questions ahead of time to ask when you need to get a response.
- If it is a small group let them do a round robin, being sure to remind them who is before and who follows. This will make it easier for you.
- Round robin is from Net Control to the first operator A, then to operator B, then to operator C, and so on until everyone has had a chance to express themselves.
- If one operator has a question for another operator, let the operators go directly one to another as necessary, this will save you time and effort.
- In general make sure that they are enjoying themselves.
- Never put anyone in a position where they might feel uncomfortable.
- As a special note for my Emergency Communications friends, this is for our casual SOARA nets, Emcom lives by a different set of rules.

Nota bene: been there and done that.

Heiko AD6OI

[SOARA Library](#)

As some of you have already heard the AD6OI/SOARA Library is now up and running at our house. (Please see attached picture for details). This library contains ARRL Handbooks, Repeater location guides, Tech modification books, radio and electrical books and a wealth of radio related information. For now the library will be open from 1pm to 4pm on Saturdays, and other times by appointment, if you call first, either by radio or telephone. E-mail will also work but allow at least 24 hours for a reply.

Thank you
Heiko AD6OI

[SOARA Equipment For Sale Online Site](#)

Based on numerous requests from SOARA members for a place to post Ham Radio related items for sale to other club members, we have set up an opt-in based Mailman mailing list on our server. Interested SOARA members are invited to join the mailing list. The SOARA organization and Board of Directors do not provide any warranty or guarantee for the items being advertised, buyer beware!

To subscribe, navigate to:

<https://soara.org/mailman/listinfo/forsale>

Enter your "real" email address, not your at "soara dot org" alias. You must be able to send and receive email from the address you provide.

Once subscribed, you will receive email when other members post items for sale. When posting to the list, you should provide an accurate description of the item for sale, its condition, and asking price. Replies to postings should be sent to the poster of the item, and not the list.

The archives of postings are publicly available on the web here:

<https://soara.org/pipermail/forsale/>

This mailing list may be suspended or discontinued at the discretion of the SOARA Board of Directors should that become necessary.

Brian, NJ6N

2023 SOARA Calendar

Month	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
General Meeting 7:00 PM	30 Online	27	20	17	15	19	17	21	18	16	20	-
Program		-	-	-		Field Day Prep	-	-	-	-		-
FCC Ham Exam 6:00 PM		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education Classes 8:00 AM			-	-	-	-						-
SOARA Elmer Saturday 9:00 AM	28 WFD Gillieran	Mar 4 Murray Center	18 Murray Center	22 Murray Center	20 Gillieran Park	24 FD Gillieran	22 Gillieran Park	26 Gillieran Park	23 Murray Center	21 Murray Center	25 Murray Center	16 Murray Center
SOARA T-Hunt 1:00 pm	updates	updates	Updates	Updates	Updates	Updates	Updates	Updates	Updates	Updates	Updates	updates
Board Meeting	Feb 6	Mar 6	27	24	22	FD	24	28	25	23	27	-
Special Events	Quartz- fest 17-23	Palm Springs		Visalia DX	Dayton Ham- vention	SOARA Auction 10			SOARA Picnic TBD	JOTA 16-18	SOARA Auction TBD	SOARA Holiday Party TBD
Major HF Contests		ARRL DX-CW 20-21	ARRL DX-SSB 6-7 CQWPX SSB 27-28		CQWPX CW 29-30	ARRL Field Day 23-25			CQWW RTTY	CQWW SSB	CQWW SSB	
Volunteer Events	OC Chili Run	Paws Fur Pink OC Chili Run	OC Chili Run Baker to Vegas	Dessert Storm Rally Ride for Rwanda	HD Trails LH Mara- thon	ARRL Field Day 23-25	MV Fire- works 4				Vision Quest OC Mara- thon	

Dates subject to Change - Check the SOARA Web Site (<http://www.soara.org>) to verify locations and times or click on the live links in the table

SOARA Information

SOARA meets at the Norman P. Murray Center, 24932 Veterans Way, Mission Viejo, CA on 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, except June. Exams are at 6pm. Prior registration is not required and walk-in applicants are welcome. For June, exams are held at Field Day. For further information, email Sean Reigle, AJ6B, at aj6b@soara.org.

SOARA Library: SOARA has many amateur radio related books such as hand books, books about electrical theory, etc. available to lend out to club members. Contact Heiko Peschel ad6oi@soara.org for more info.

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, or repeater@soara.org.

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	- (pvt)	Santiago Peak. (C)
440	— 445.660	- (110.9)	Laguna Beach
D-STAR 440	— 445.705	- (K6SOA B)	Laguna Beach
440	— 447.180	- (pvt)	Santiago Peak. (C)
D-STAR 1.2G	1282.600	- (K6SOA A)	Laguna Beach

Nets:

- 40 meter HF (7.200 MHz +/- , Sundays @ 8 AM
- 10 meter HF (Technicians Welcome) (28.415 +/-) Sundays @ 9 AM
- General Membership Net - UHF/VHF (447.180, 147.645 & 224.640): Tuesdays @ 8 PM
- Astronomy - VHF 147.645: Wednesdays @ 7 PM
- D-STAR (146.115 C module): Wednesdays @ 8 PM
- Dinner Net - 147.645, 224.640, 447.180: Fridays at 7 PM
- Tech Net - 147.645, 224.640, 447.180: Saturdays @ 9 AM

- California Rescue Communications (Gordo Net) HF (7.250 MHz +/- for QRM): Weekdays @ 8:30AM
- MVRACES - 447.180: Tuesdays @ 7PM
- Tri-Cities RACES - 146.025: Wednesdays @ 8 PM
- LNACS - 147.645: Thursdays @ 7 PM
- OC Parks Fire Watch - 447.180: Thursdays @ 8 PM

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