

THE CIRCLE CITY COMMUNICATOR

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE CORONA NORCO AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

September 2008 – Editor: Fred Roberts, w6tkv@aceweb.com – ARRL Affiliated Club #2108

SEPTEMBER 1st PROGRAM

With the club's acquisition of a brand new computer projector, Norm-KN6CV suggested a brief training session for our members so we are all better informed on this new piece of equipment. Why not bring some of your ham pictures to show our members.

T-HUNT NEXT SATURDAY

This month, the first Saturday falls in the same week as our club meeting.

The upcoming T-hunt will be on Saturday, September 6th, 10:00AM at St. Johns Church at the corner of Magnolia and Ontario in Corona. Although the hunt starts at 10 AM, everyone arrives early enough to get set up prior to the starting time.

The hunt area is defined by the triangle formed by the 91, 60 and 71 freeways plus the entire city of Corona.

Our last T-Hunt was won by Fred-W6TKV with Carlos-KD6CZT riding along on his first T-Hunt. We hope he joins us this time when he can ride with Perry-AE6GQ, Norm-KN6CV, Joe-KO6XB. Maybe Dave-KI6LYZ will join us for a ride along.

P.S. The hiding place is a toss-up between the top on Mt. Baldy and far side of Big Bear - both clearly within the hunt area.

THE CNARC STORY

Our repeater – 147.060/+ MHz, PL-162.2 Hz

WebSite – www.w6pwt.org

Articles to your Editor at w6tkv@arrl.net

Our next meeting will be at 7:00PM, on Monday, October 6th

OCTOBER PICNIC

A Picnic is being planned for October 4th at the Norco Warfare Assessment Division. Because of their Security, we will need to have an accurate sign-in list for you, your YL or XYL and your children. This will be reviewed at our meeting on Monday

VE TESTING AT CNARC

VE Team Members are Dick-AF6F, Perry-AE6GQ, and Fred-W6TKV - all ARRL Accredited VE Examiners.

The team is currently trying to set day and time when testing works for everyone, but mainly for Perry, our only working VE. We have several members who wish to upgrade, so there is an incentive to resolve the schedule.

THE SOLAR CYCLE

Being at the bottom of the Solar Cycle which now seems like forever, our newer hams appear to have accepted the idea that HF either works not at all, or it only works at odd times and just occasionally.

Certainly, in recent months, newer hams rarely hear anyone talk too much about HF, or talk to someone who has just worked one or more DX stations (other countries). This lack of input probably strengthens the idea "HF is dead", and of course the unfortunate result is a newer ham doesn't have an interest in getting an HF rig, doesn't put up any HF antennas, and turns off his "interest engine". To be sure, there are some very notable exceptions in our club to this broad generalization.

All club members, General and above, can use the equipment in the EOC Ham Station, and those who are Technicians can also do so as long as a General or Extra is present as control operator. Technicians should use W6PWT, the higher grades may either use W6PWT or their own call. This, my friends, is call a "Golden Opportunity" to try out HF without spending a dime for equipment and without the need to read a 100-page manual before putting a rig on the air. In a word, this is a champagne and a free lunch.

So now let's take a look at reality. Doesn't it strike you as strange that during a contest, there is a lot of band activity? Could it possibly be that right now hundreds of hams all around the U.S. are tuning across 10M all at the same time to see if the band is open or not? Could it possibly be that no one has thought to

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Stories from W6TKV (continued)

call CQ? Recently, W6TKV tuned across 10M - sure enough it was a dead band, not a signal anywhere. He thought about what might be a good frequency given the phone band runs from 28.300 - 29.700MHz with the major activity being 28.300 - 28.500MHz. He settled on the middle of the busier section of the band - 28,400KHz. He called CQ for a minute, listened for a couple seconds but no calls. The CQ/listen cycle was repeated a half dozen or more times, and came an answer to the call.

When experienced hams hear a station, particularly a DX station, they seem to consider his local time and what might be going on at that station - and that thought process is done almost intuitively in just seconds. To illustrate this, here other related stories from W6TKV.

"One evening, higher in the Solar Cycle, there was a station on 20M located in Jordan (JY), and he was making a lot of contacts. Of course there were many, many U.S. stations calling every time he said, "QRZ" (One of the Q-codes, QRZ means 'who is calling'). This went on for 10-15 minutes, when he said, 'I am shutting down now. I am sorry I couldn't work everyone, but I should be here tomorrow.'

"When the JA shut down, I pictured he might still be sitting in front of a still active radio, while he cleaned up his log before shutting down. So, I keyed the transmit switch and gave my call just once phonetically. Silence. In about 10-15 seconds, I did it again. Silence. In another 10-15 seconds, I did it again, and received a short lecture from one of the wiser, more experienced operators in the middle of our country, "He just shut down, dummy." So, in a few seconds more, I gave my call again. Silence.

"But the very next time I gave my call, that JA responded and so I logged another JA. My feeling was he had finished whatever he was doing, and had heard the entire sequence so decided to make one more QSO before shutting down and going QRT (off the air)."

"A few months ago, a bunch of hams went on a DXpedition to Clipperton Island which is a small, remote spot in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. To put this in context, when a team does this they solicit monies from the Northern California DX Foundation and similar like organizations whose members contribute money annually - there is no fixed amount and

donations range from tens of dollars to thousands of dollars. In addition, each member usually has to pay ~\$5K. DXpeditions are not cheap running \$200K to \$400K each.

"When this team arrived at Clipperton, they download their radios, antennas, tents, generators, fuel, food, clothes with a many trips in a small motor boat, and then they set up tents and erected all of the antennas. Keep in mind, the antennas are all mono-banders, and they need one for each band they plan on using - frequently 160M, 80M, 40M, 30M, 20M, 15M, 10M and 6M. Getting these up is a lot of work.

"To function better, stations usually operate using split frequencies meaning a 20M station may transmit on 14.195MHz but be listening on 14.200 to 14.210MHz. When operating split, the DX station will usually say, "listening 200 to 210" once in a while.

"Now to the story. The 20M operator was busy working U.S. stations, and the trick is to figure out where he is listening - the solution is to listen to whom he calls and quickly find that station - now you can call where the DX is listening. After 30-40 minutes, the Clipperton operator said, 'Well, my shift is up. There will be a new operator in soon.' - then silence. After waiting for 20 minutes, a voice said, 'Well, I'll be with you all in a minute.' After a second, I moved my transmitter to his frequency, and said 'W6TKV'. Guess what, he returned my call with a signal report, and so Clipperton went into my log once again. He worked one other station before waking up and saying, 'Hold on. I will be listening on 14,230 to 240.'

"Why no one else called him first is a mystery to me."

Hopefully, this article may serve to trigger more new hams to upgrade past the Technician class. And, remember Dick-AF6F and Fred-W6TKV have made the offer to help you get started on HF using the EOC Ham Station - the deal is either 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM or 10:30 AM to Noon. You get an hour and a half of HF guidance per session - all because we like to help other CNARC members.

You might as well get started now, because when the Solar Cycle rises and the bands move from okay, to pretty good, to good, to great, everyone is going to be on the air a lot of the time.

And, you thought this article was all about the Solar Cycle.