

Socorro Amateur Radio Association

"All the news that fits, we print"

SARA News

www.socorroara.org

September 2010

MEETINGS

Minutes of the August Meeting

See <http://www.socorroara.org/sara/minutes/1008minutes.html>.

The September Meeting

Wednesday, September 8, 2010 at 7:30 pm local, in the Socorro County EOC, 198 Neel Ave. See agenda at <http://www.socorroara.org/sara/agenda/100908.pdf>

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

This past month has been real hard on Margaret and myself. For the past 6 weekends we have been driving to Los Alamos and working to get her house ready to sell. Talk about a full range of work, painting, plumbing, electrical, carpentry and lots and lots of yard work. All this to worry about and trying to find a job also, my plate has been full to say the least. I apologize that I have not been able to spend much time on club business. I don't think I have run my HF station more than 1 or 2 hours this year.

The weather is getting cooler and it is fun to be outside. The Fall season brings a chance to do antenna work, so you will be ready for the Winter operating ahead. With this cooler Fall weather, portable operation outside is a real pleasure. It does not matter if you ride a bicycle or motorcycle, operate mobile or use a picnic table. All amateurs

Officers

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Vice President: Eric Albrecht - W5VZB
Secretary: Doug May - KF5AVG
Treasurer: Jim Lommen - KC7QY
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SARA News Editor: David Johnson - KB5YIW

need to practice portable operation.

You can use a HT, VHF mobile, or a HF rig, grab a battery and antenna, then have fun. This is not a contest. Just for the fun of it, I want to know is how you operate. What equipment or accessories do you use. What failures have you endured, and what are your successes.



This September meeting I want to see your portable stations. Please bring your portable or mobile station to the meeting and be able to host a brief discussion about your station. What antenna do you

use, how do you carry or protect the radio, what is your power source.

This is a chance for everyone to learn something new. Again, this is not a contest, just a basic show and tell. I have never been to a club meeting where nobody brought a radio, until I joined this club. How can we introduce people to amateur radio, if we don't bring the technology to the people.

I will bring my portable station to the meeting and I look forward to learning what others are doing.

Thanks, 73'S KA5SIW

EVENTS

- Alamogordo Hamfest: September 4, 2010, 7am to 2pm; Otero County Fairgrounds; free admission
- NWR Special Event Station N5B: October

- See You At The Meeting -

- Have you used the SARA repeater today? -

15-16, 2010 during daylight hours at Bosque del Apache NWR (see article on p. 2 of this newsletter).

- 2010 SARA/TARA Hamfest: Saturday, October 30, 2010. Visit www.socorroara.org for more information.

Nets —

- Weekly ARES net at 20:00 hours local on Wednesdays on the SARA Repeater [146.68(-) w/ 100 Hz tone].
- NM Section ARES & RACES HF net — First and third Sundays of each month. The net provides a forum to discuss Amateur Radio support of all types of emergency communications including MARS, SAR, CAP, public service events. Meet at the Socorro County EOC at 19:30 hours MDT.

Gatherings, gatherings —

- SARA monthly meeting - SARA meetings are held, beginning at 19:30 hours on the second Wednesday of each month (except December) in the Socorro County Emergency Operations Center, 198 Neel Ave.
- Everyone is invited to coffee every Saturday ~8:00 to 9:30 hrs at McDonalds.

SARA NEWS

SARA hams provide radio communications at Socorro Chili Harvest Triathlon - Seven SARA hams provided radio communications around the bicycle and run courses of the Socorro Chili Harvest Triathlon August 6 and 7. On Friday evening, Doug May KF5AVG and Prescott Grey W1PCG manned the youth bike turns at Leroy/Bullock and Leroy/Campus intersections, with Bill Brundage NM5WB

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at the NMT pool transitions area. About 37 boys and girls in 4 age groups swam 50 to 200 meters (NMT pool), bike 2 to 8 kilometers and run 1 to 2 kilometers, depending on age group. No mishaps! On Saturday at 7 am the big triathlon started with a 400 meter swim (city pool), then bike 20 K followed by run 5 K. Dave Finley N1IRZ, Prescott Grey W1PCG, Doug May KF5AVG, Bear Albrect W5VZB and Dave Jonson KB5YIW manned critical turns on the bike course. Again no mishaps! Vern Leavett KD5UHB monitored an intersection on the run course. Again no mishaps, such as heat exhaustion, just a long morning until the last runner (/walker) went by. Bill Brundage manned the net and the transition area. Socorro Striders and Riders extend a BIG THANK YOU to these SARA hams!

National Wildlife Refuge Week 2010 - 2010 National Wildlife Refuge Week is set for October 10-16, and Amateur Radio will again be helping to mark this event, Oct. 9-17. The goal is to combine our communication skills with our enjoyment of the outdoors to help others learn about the National Wildlife Refuge System.

SARA will activate a special event station Friday and Saturday, October 15th & 16th at Bosque del Apache NWR during daylight hours (approximately 8am to 5pm). Saturday is the day the refuge has selected to hold its open house and should bring several visitors to the refuge. We will operate HF from the ARES trailer with at least one ham available to greet visitors and discuss amateur radio in addition to the operator. We will operate with a special event 1X1 call sign; N5B. On the air we will attempt to contact as many stations as possible and describe the function of the refuge and its mission to provide wintering grounds for migratory waterfowl.

We have permission to set up and operate the trailer in the Headquarters area near the picnic shelter and to use the shelter as a greeting area for visitors. What is needed are volunteers to staff the operation both as operators and as greeters. For this event we need to have people scheduled into time slots to be sure of continuous coverage so please contact me if you are available and wish to participate. Let me know your availability and preference for Friday or Saturday; morning or afternoon. We will also need extra hands for set-

- Encourage a friend to join SARA -

up Friday morning and tear-down Saturday afternoon.

Some history; the NWR week event started in 2005 with an operation by John Forslen, KC8ULE from Seney NWR in upper Michigan which as operated every year since. Fifteen stations participated last year. Interestingly, when I approached Tom Melanson about having an operation this year he noted that none of the refuges activated last year were in the West and that it would be a great idea to get the Bosque activated. Last year the KP1-5 Project stepped up to take over coordination of the event. You may remember this group as the one that activated Desecheo Island NWR, a DXCC entity, in 2009 for the first time in 15 years. Among other things, KP1-5 established a committee which developed rules for NWR Week-Amateur Radio that were vetted through U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The sponsors award a certificate to amateurs working five different refuges which should add some interest for other stations working us during the event as we will be one of just nine refuges activated this year. The NWR – Radio website link has been posted to the SARA website for more information on other planned activities and additional background.

TARA REPORT

School is back in session, so our club station will soon be on the air making contacts again. Over the summer, Dr. Kalman Oravec has logged quite a few contacts from the Hungarian net.

Last Monday, the club set up a portable station in front of Fidel to try to raise awareness of our club and the amateur radio class. While we only had a few folks stop by, we did learn a few things to do differently for next year, and got some experience setting up a station in a hurry.

We spent the first hour and a half trying to get the dipole hung in the tree. I was using a socket as a counterweight and it was not heavy enough. It was, however, big enough to get wedged in between branches on the tree, making recovery difficult. I'd also like to use this space to thank Facilities Management at NMT, for helping us recover the socket, and then helping us hang the antenna!

Once on the air, we learned what a deaf 20 meter dipole antenna sounds like, netting only one contact. We did hear a really strong station in Finland, but were unable to work him. By really strong- we heard him about 4x4 or so- and he was dumping a kilowatt into a stacked array of five 3-element beams.

I'd like to thank Brad Smith (KD5JNI), David Hunter (KF5AVI), Bill Brundage (NM5WB), Kalman Oravec (AJ5B), Kasimir Gabert (KF5DTW), and James Boswell (KA5SIW) for their efforts in putting this station on the air.

Schedule

9/3/10, 10:00am - Club Fair in Fidel Center

9/19/10, 6:00pm - North American Sprint (SSB) in President's Hall Basement

9/27/10, 9:00pm - TARA Club Meeting in President's Hall Basement

Seth Price N3MRA

ARES/EOC NEWS

The Socorro County Annex Building now has a three-phase 120/208 volt backup generator. It is rated at 75 KW, well over the normal consumption for the whole building. On a full fuel tank it can run for 96 hours at 100 percent load.

If regular co-op power is lost, the generator starts within a few seconds and then takes the load, until the transfer switch senses that the co-op power has been on and stable for 30 minutes, at which time it will transfer back.

None of this eliminates the need for surge suppressors, nor for UPS backup for critical equipment. When we did the final test our web server died at some point in the switchover; obviously the power strip that it was plugged into did not have any surge-suppression abilities.

We will be setting up a schedule for regular testing of the generator, and ARES members might wish to be involved in this. Contact me: ebear@co.socorro.nm.us

Bear Albrecht W5VZB

Join/Renew Your SARA Membership

Are you a member? When does your membership expire? If you are reading this from a newsletter sent to you via U.S. Mail, take a look at the mailing label. Your membership expiration date is listed on the bottom line of the label. Newsletters will continue to be sent for a month or so after expiration just in case you haven't had a chance to check your expiration date. If you do not receive your newsletter by mail you might check the membership list on the SARA web page. The address is <http://socorroara.org/members.html>.

If you are a member seeking to renew or a ham new to the Socorro area, joining SARA is easy and inexpensive. Download a membership application (from www.socorroara.org/SARAform.html) and send it with a check for \$15 (\$20 for family memberships) to: Socorro Amateur Radio Association, 722 N. California St., Socorro, NM 87801 or drop by the Socorro Radio Shack and say that you would like to join.

Submissions to SARA News

Contributions and photographs related to SARA and amateur radio will be considered for inclusion in *SARA News*. Text should be of general interest to readers, and on the order of 200 to 300 words. Each month ads to buy, sell or trade may be included. The usual caveat applies, items must be ham related. Material will be included on a space available, first come, first served basis; and pretty much at the discretion of the editor. To be assured of consideration for the next newsletter, material must be received by the 25th day of the month. I would prefer to have submissions in digital form with text in the form of an ascii file or as text in an email message. Send email to kb5yiw@arrl.net or snail mail to SARA News, 1307 Lopezville Rd., Socorro, NM 87801. (D. Johnson -ed.)