



## From Over the Hill

February ramblings from the accidental President

I think "Accidental President" is a better term than "Default" as I called myself in January's Newsletter. I also consider myself an accidental DXer in that I don't pursue DX stations, but I occasionally work a few when activating SOTA or an during an SKCC event. As far as I know I will never have enough accidents to achieve DXCC but that is OK. What is great about this club is that we have such a wide variety of interests in the hobby; DX chasing , digital modes, SOTA, POTA, IOTA, USIOTA, and variations of all of those. Others collect equipment to repair, enjoy, resell, or because it is unique. To further our collecting habits many of us love going to Hamfests and sharing stories afterward about our bargain buys.

So, where am I going with this? I recently received a thought-provoking email that was triggered by my last month's screed. A few excerpts from that email.

"I read your President's message in the most recent VOMARC newsletter with some interest.

Let me start by saying the only reason I was able to see it was because I went out of my way to

find it. I definitely don't receive the newsletters via email (please don't send them here, this is a "strippable" address). Am I a member? Actually I have no idea. I don't think I've ever received a renewal notice. I don't know how to remit the dues, so there's that."

"When I passed I was informed I had "earned" a year's membership. I guess no one informed the Treasurer because I began receiving "dunning" notices for my dues. Frankly, it's so inexpensive I just paid for it."

"I came to a few meetings, but really everyone seemed to know everyone else and though I tried introducing myself no one seemed interested. I'm new to the hobby and have been learning a lot on my own, but I sure would love some guidance, I just don't know where to look."

"I found one aspect that really interested me and there is a member who appears active in that area. I asked them about it, and if I could just observe to see how it's done. It was made pretty clear they didn't want any company."

I will work on improving the processes involved in getting membership and dues updated; however, we all must work on the other issues raised. As we return to in-person meetings, look for new members or even those who haven't been seen for a while and welcome them. Find

out what aspects of ham radio they are involved in, or they would like to be. Elmering is important, share your knowledge maybe even brag a little. Then, shut up and listen. If someone asks me about SOTA, I answer their questions then invite them to go on an activation. I believe most of us long time members are friendly and welcoming but that is not the emailers perception.

The next opportunity to work on our “social” skills is coming up. Our next monthly meeting is on February 21<sup>st</sup> at the Sonoma Police Station EOC Room, 175 First Street West, Sonoma. The meeting starts at 7:30 but the door should be open by 7. There will be a Zoom option also. Dave (KD6FIL) and I (mostly Dave) checked out the AV gear and it is much improved from the old setup. Please attend in person if you can, but of course if you have any symptoms of a cold, flu, or other infectious stuff Zoom in.

Perhaps the originator of that email will be there and we can change their perception.

—Submitted by Ed W1EJ

### **NEXT MEETING**

Wed, **February 21, 2024** at 7:30 PM  
Meeting Room of the Sonoma Police  
Department, 176 First St W, Sonoma  
Topic: **Seeking the Optimum Magnetic  
Loop Antenna**  
Presenter: **Johne W6NBC**

## **Minutes of - January 17, 2023 Meeting**

**ADOPT MEETING MINUTES** as published in the newsletter?

Motion Made and Second- Approved

### **OFFICER REPORTS**

Newsletter- Eileen, KG6QNT- Absent

**ACS LEAD- MOE, KI6JNU-** KD6FIL reported-ACS nets back to Monday night after the holidays. ACS Leadership meeting on January 22.

**VE LIAISON- ELIZABETH, N6LY-** VE Test scheduled for January 28 at 10 AM at the Sonoma PD Training Room (EOC). Currently no one is signed up.

**RADIO OFFICER- MIKE, WB6TMH-** It was suggested to inventory the club radios and other assets. The Ham Club Online has a way to do this.

**TRUSTEE- DARREL, WD6BOR-** Contacted the church to confirm the hamfest on April 29.

**SECRETARY/TREASURER- DAVE, KD6FIL-** Bank has \$3,498.70. Insurance certificate for the hamfest was sent to WD6BOR

**VICE PRESIDENT-** Vacant

**ACCIDENTAL PRESIDENT- ED, W1EJ –** Will learn as he goes and look for assistance as the club moves forward.

### **OTHER BUSINESS OLD AND NEW**

**FUTURE MEETINGS- ZOOM, IN PERSON, HYBRID?** Motion was made and seconded for change to hybrid (in person and on line) meetings. Approved unanimously. Will need to confirm that wifi is still available at the EOC and review how to set up a hybrid meeting. This will require zoom account access and might need some additional hardware.

**ZOOM ACCOUNT FOR THE CLUB?** This will need to be researched if it is possible to get a club account for a reasonable cost. Will follow up at the next meeting.

**MEETING TOPIC- WHAT TO DO ABOUT ED?- ED W1EJ –** showed a video of emergency first aid and CPR procedures.

Call 911, get AED, check on airway, breathing and start compressions.

## **NEXT MONTH'S MEETING- FEBRUARY 21, 2023**

**TOPIC- FEB 21** -Seeking the Optimum Magnetic Loop Antenna - John W6NBC

—Submitted by Dave KD6FIL

## **VE Liaison News**

—By Elizabeth N6LY

We had a successful VE Test session on January 27, with one person testing and earning his Technician License. Congratulations to Manuel, for earning his license and joining the hobby. We hope to hear you on the air.

Our next testing session will be in Conjunction with our HAM Fest on Saturday, April 27.

Come on out and get your license or upgrade and check out some good deals on Radio and antenna equipment. Don't forget to energize before the test with a pancake breakfast.

**Sponsor:** Valley of the Moon ARC

**When:** Saturday, April 27

**Time:** 10:00 AM

**Reservations required.**

**Contact:** Elizabeth Morris-Mowrey (N6LY)

**Email:** [n6ly.emm@gmail.com](mailto:n6ly.emm@gmail.com)

**Location: First Congregational Church of Sonoma**

252 West Spain Street, Sonoma CA 95476

This is a testing session only, we don't offer classes or cram sessions.

If you are testing for a new license, you will be required to pay a \$35 fee to the FCC, in addition to the fee below. Once you pass the test, the FCC will send you an email with a link to pay the fee. You will need to send in payment in order to receive your license and call sign.

This does not apply to upgrades.

## **Candidate Requirements:**

- A photo identification or (2) non-photo ID's
- FCC Registration Number
- Original and a photocopy of your current license (if licensed)
- Any original valid CSCEs and a photocopy of each
- Exam fee is \$15.00, Under 18 is \$5.00

## **Why Test With Us?**

Every candidate who takes an FCC examination with VOMARC is entitled to a free year of membership in the club, regardless of whether you pass or not! Each applicant is also provided with a welcome kit of some helpful information on how to get started on their Amateur Radio adventure.

## **Ham Jargon**

The **Farnsworth method** of sending CW is defined as sending individual CW characters at a faster speed in relation to sending inter-character and inter-word spaces. For example, characters are sent at a spacing of 13 WPM, but the characters themselves are sent at 18 WPM. In contest situations with QRM or QSB, sending callsign or exchange characters with extra spacing can improve copy ability.

—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

## **On The Air**

- Sanford (N7PIB) has worked at least 3,457 parks as part of the Parks on the Air (POTA) program.
- Carl's (N6TTV) neighbor cut down a Redwood tree that was supporting his 80M and 160M antennas. He's erected a shorter inverted L on 160M since then. He missed working the

recent TX5S DXpedition to Clipperton on 160M and 40M.

- Robert (KA5WSS) made 117 contacts in the January NA QSO Party and 133 QSOs in the CQ WPX RTTY Contest. He made a paltry 2 contacts in the January VHF Sweepstakes. He was able to contact TX5S during their Clipperton Island DXpedition on all HF bands other than 40M.

—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

## From The Archives

Former club President Jim Hill (K6UUW - SK) had a number of awards that we found at his home, including this one. He [worked all 50 States](#) using RTTY before the days of FT8 made the task easier.



—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

## Misc

There are currently about 30 members whose memberships officially expired on December 31st. Our HamClubOnline account is set up to keep expired members on the roster for 60 days after expiration. If you have not yet paid your dues for the current year, now would be the time to do it!

—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

# A WALK IN THE WOODS

Sometimes you need to just drop everything and get away, for an hour, a day, or more. On a recent stressful day, I felt that way; and even though it was a chilly, gray, drizzly January day, I just had to get away. My walks usually include some radio activity (not radioactivity), and since it is a new year, any nearby SOTA summit would count for points. One of my favorites is Mount Wittenberg in the Point Reyes National Seashore.

Wittenberg has an elevation of 1407 feet and there are two routes for the hike. The easy one is from Sky Trailhead, off Limantour Road, with an elevation gain of 750 feet; or, Bear Valley Trailhead, near the visitor center, requiring a 1300-foot climb. I felt the need for a workout, so I chose the harder route. Along the way I stopped to smell the trees because the flowers are not awake this early, although I did see some California Fuchsia that will be pretty when summer comes. I met a few people on the trail, a couple from Canada and some locals, heard some birds but saw only a few, and no wildlife except for Banana Slugs, lots of them.

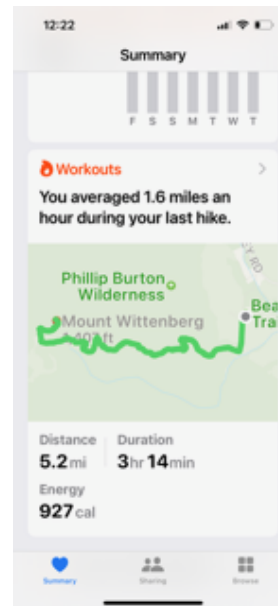


At the saddle on top of the ridge is the Z-Ranch sign; from there it is only about a quarter mile to the summit, and another 200 feet of elevation. There is no view at the top, only a clearing in the trees (great antenna supports), but it is very peaceful. I bunged my antenna to a pole across the clearing and set up my gear almost on top of the USGS marker.

Since my KH1 had not come back from Watsonville, I used my trusty KX2 and leg



mounted paddles. I had posted an alert on the SOTA site, so it took only one CQ call to get the Chasers started. No DX, accidental or intentional, but a nice variety of locations around the country. Most contacts were on 20 Meters and a few on 17, 15, 12 and 10 Meters. I cut it short after twenty contacts so I could make it home by the promised time. Back in the parking lot I noticed the Ham License plate of W6STR (Michael) who has chased me on several summits, but he was nowhere around.



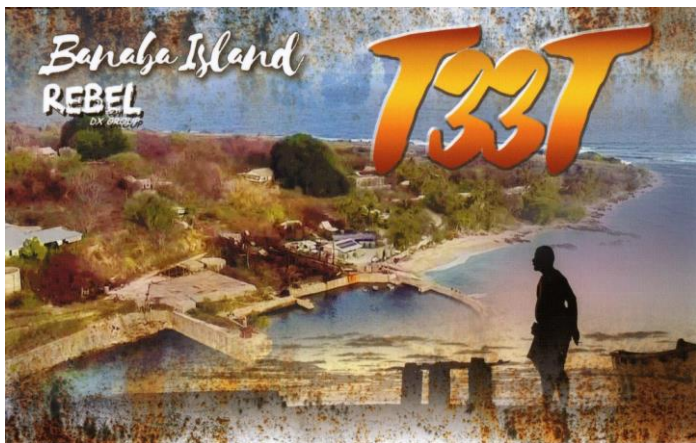
An Apple Watch and an iPhone are great accessories on a SOTA activation. The Watch keeps track of your progress and heart rate, then you can review it later on the phone Activity App. You can also answer calls without digging out the phone, heck it even shows the time. The SOTA Goat App on the phone allows you to spot yourself or to see if you have been

spotted automatically. If there are other activators spotted you can try to work them summit to summit.

On the way home I stopped at Marin French Cheese to get some goodies to share with my wife, while I uploaded my log and drank a beer. Tired and relaxed I realized that a good walk in the woods is great therapy, cheaper than a counselor with no co-pays.

Ed W1EJ

# QSL Card Inbox



Banaba Island is part of Kiribati in the Pacific Ocean. But it counts as a separate DXCC entity. I worked T33T using FT8 on the 30M, 15M and 12M bands. This was an All Time New One (ATNO) for me.



I worked YJØTT on Vanuatu on 20M using FT8 and both 15M and 10M using SSB. I received this card and a card from YJØCA on the same day.

—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

## THE VOMARC WIRELESS

### VOLUME 28 EDITION 1

A PUBLICATION OF VOMARC, THE VALLEY OF THE MOON AMATEUR RADIO CLUB – W6AJF

Frank C. Jones – W6AJF

Honorary President in Perpetuity

#### CAST OF CHARACTERS

Ed Jacobson, W1EJ – President

– Vice President

Dave Dammuller, KD6FIL – Secretary/Treasurer

Mike Miller, WB6TMH – Radio Officer

Moe Llanes, KI6JNU – ACS Unit Leader

Elizabeth Morris-Mowrey, N6LY – VE Liaison

Darrel Jones, WD6BOR – Station Trustee for W6AJF

Eileen Adams, KG6QNT – Editor

Robert Barron, KA5WSS – Webmeister

*“Receipt of the Wireless is one of the most sought after benefits of membership in VOMARC.”—S. Marler*

WEB PAGE: <http://www.vomarc.org/>

**Nets** are held every Wednesday night at 19:30 (7:30 P.M.) local, except meeting nights on the 145.350 repeater, -600 kHz, PL 88.5 Hz.

**Breakfast Nets** are held every Tuesday and Saturday morning at 7:30 AM on the 146.205, +600, PL 88.5 Hz repeater.

Comments and submissions of material may be sent to:

[Eileen@vom.com](mailto:Eileen@vom.com)

—Or—

**Valley of the Moon ARC, Inc.**

C/O Sonoma Police Department

175 First Street West

Sonoma, CA 95476

## ACS

### NET CONTROL ASSIGNMENTS

	Name	Call
JANUARY	MOE	KI6JNU
FEBRUARY	SCOTT	KJ6QIQ
MARCH	SCOTT	KJ6QIQ
APRIL	JIM	K6UUW
MAY	DICK	KF6FZM
JUNE	MOE	KI6JNU
JULY		
AUGUST	BILL	KJ6EIG
SEPTEMBER	SAM	W5LTP
OCTOBER	DICK	KF6FZM
NOVEMBER	MIKE	WB6TMH
DECEMBER	DARREL	WD6BOR

## VOMARC

### NET CONTROL ASSIGNMENTS

	Name	Call
JANUARY	ROBERT	KA5WSS
FEBRUARY	DARREL	WD6BOR
MARCH	MOE	KI6JNU
APRIL	DAVE	KD6FIL
MAY	ED	W1EJ
JUNE	FRANK	KG6N
JULY	ED	W1EJ
AUGUST	CARL	N6TTV
SEPTEMBER	ED	W1EJ
OCTOBER	JOHN	W8EWL
NOVEMBER	MIKE	WB6TMH
DECEMBER	DARREL	WD6BOR

## VOMARC MEMBERSHIP 2024

Membership Dues: \$15/year individual; \$5/year family member at same address.

VOMARC encourages its members to join the ARRL. More information is available at [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org).

QST is available to blind and physically handicapped individuals on audio cassette from the Library of Congress, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Call 1-800-424-8567.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ CALL: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ APT: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ CALL: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ CALL: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

VOMARC Membership: Complimentary with Class—Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Moment, From the Database Queen:

Dues may be mailed to VOMARC in care of the Sonoma Police Department, 175 1<sup>st</sup> St West, CA 95476, or brought to the next meeting. Your check should be made payable to: **VOMARC**.