



# Smoke Signals

## Newsletter of Fullerton Radio Club

July 2009

### Prez Speaks

As it is July, I am writing this article from beautiful Laguna Beach, as we prepare to open the Pageant of the Masters production. It is a special event that consumes each evening July through the end of August. Bill Preston will be chairing the Board and General Meetings during this timeframe.

The May-July calendar is a very busy time each year for FRC. We had a successful Antennas in the Park in May, Field Day in June, and the radio booth at the OC Fair is coming up!

Please join me in thanking Paul Broden for his superb planning and execution of 2009 Field Day. We treat Field Day as a learning activity and there was certainly a lot of learning in setting up the antennas. While not every antenna went up as planned, we had three antennas in place. We again had the use of the Izaak Walton cabin in Hillcrest Park. Thank you Gene Thorpe for arranging for the use of the cabin! See Paul's article later in this newsletter for the additional details from Field Day.

Did you know that now all FRS radios can talk to each other? I had the opportunity to work with the staff of the Fox Fullerton two weeks ago and we had a set of interesting radio challenges. We had radios from three different manufacturers and found the not all three could talk with each other. My Yaesu FT-60 was helpful in the diagnosis; however, there was not a solution at hand. We were working with Midland, Radio Shack, and "brand-X" radios. The problems were spread amongst the radios. I look forward to looking into the radio problem in the near future.

Remember to join us for dinner, prior to the General meeting, held at Ruby's restaurant. Ruby's is located at the corner of Orangethorpe and Harbor, starting about 5:15pm. Our general meeting starts at 7pm.

Time for me to wrap up, as the show is ready to start.

73's

Robert – KI6KYW

### And From The VP

#### Greetings and Salutations

Hopefully all who participated in that madcap event called Field Day have recuperated and are already looking forward to next year's version. We started the planning process early this year by naming three of the group captains and unless I get fired before I start I have agreed to take on the role of Chief Mucky-Muck for Field Day 2010. I'll need the whole year to accomplish what Paul did in a month. Thank you, Paul, for a job well done and on very short notice. I mentioned that we have identified three of the many group captains we will need for next year. Albert Solomon (KI6WRU) has agreed to head up the team of riggers who will be responsible for the installation of our antennas. Otis has agreed to head up the overnight security squad and I suspect he will volunteer again as a rigger on Albert's team. Robby (KI6KYX) has volunteered to carry out the role of computer network captain and will no doubt be approaching Robert (KI6KYW) to request his support and guidance. We will be discussing various opportunities with all of you in the near future but if you have identified a functional area that you would like to head up please let me know. We will certainly need someone to

provide expertise in the area of radio strategy and integration. Likewise, antenna design and implementation is a key area. Here's the secret: seize the specialty you want before someone else does, thereby forcing you to accept your second or third choice.

Back to this year's Field Day for a minute. Paul really got a lot of momentum going in a very short period of time. We scored at least six times more points this year than we did last year and we weren't even trying for a high point total. Our master plan is to get our new members up to speed in a number of areas over several years. Our main goal is to have fun with our hobby. If we can get consistently better individually and as a group over the next four or five years FRC will be the club everyone wants to hang out with. The Orange Empire Barbershop Chorus has a catchy motto, "WE'RE NUMBER FUN". Works for me. They don't even have to recruit anymore because they consistently live up to their motto. Let's use this year's successful outing as a springboard to next year and measure our success by how much we learn along the way and how much fun we have doing it.

(Continued on page 2)

**REGULAR FRC MEETING, WEDNESDAY, JULY 15 at the Fullerton Senior Center  
– 7:00 PM**

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### Show –and-Tell

Bring something of interest to the meeting to show and share your story. Something old, new, or just of interest to hams.

**Web site: [www.FullertonRadioClub.com](http://www.FullertonRadioClub.com)**

(Continued from page 1)

Speaking of fun, our July speaker will be our very own Tom Gaccione (WB2LRH). Tom will be taking us on a magical, mystical tour of the Atomic Power Generation industry based on his own experience at San Clemente. Tom is currently working as a radar antenna guru and manager at Raytheon, El Segundo. H'mmm, antenna guru, I wonder. Next month we will be hearing from Marty Woll, Vice Director, Southwestern District, on the Palmdale Antenna controversy. This is a must for anyone thinking about putting up an antenna. Before the year is out we will be hearing from Bill Kohlenberger, Dennis Kidder, and Tom Fiske, popular presenters all. Bill's presentation on the sunspot cycle received accolades from the Long Beach Club earlier this year and by the time he takes the stage at FRC he will have at least six additional data points for his analysis. Dennis' experiences at the Owens Valley Radio Astronomy Facility will form the backdrop for him to share various aspects of our hobby that few have experienced. You might say that he will be taking us where no man has gone before. Tom will be doing another abstract from his book and I can't wait to learn more of the secrets from the wild-west days of science and technology. Spread the word and then get there early so you can get a seat.

Bill KZ3G

### Board Meeting Minutes, July 1, 2009

The meeting was called to order by Bill Preston at 7:45pm at Marie Callenders in Placentia. Members present: Bill Preston, Alex Valdez, Gene Thorpe, Cheryl Thorpe, Bill Kohlenberger. Paul Broden

Change to June minutes: Cheryl Thorpe worked "mile 16", Gene worked "medical 16".

Treasurer's report: checking: 1513.25, savings: 1688.45. Check sent in for insurance. Insurance lower due to lower membership.

Gene T. stated that Mike Cramer (previous member) has not been heard from in awhile. Wondering if anyone had heard from him. SK?

Gene T.: Public Service-July 4 La Palma Fun Run

Bill P: Speakers: July-Tom G: Experiences as a nuclear power tech.

Aug: Marty Wohl -SW division deputy director  
Tom Fiske or Dennis Kidder in Aug. /Sep.

New business:

Field Day-2010: Bill P volunteered to be chairman. Wants to plan all year. Do things in preparation. Have captains for different portions. Make decisions earlier as to radios, antennas etc. Wants suggestions.

Paul had examples of revised QSL cards. picture of 2009 Field Day

Submitted by Cheryl Thorpe

## Field Day: A Whole Lot More Than Competition

By: Paul Broden K6MHD, field day 2009 coordinator

Well, it has come and gone – field day, that is – and its now time to reflect on the event. ARRL reminds us that FD is “officially an operating event not a contest” with purpose to “demonstrate the communications ability of the amateur radio community in simulated emergency situations.” So, why is the event so competitive, and how does this demonstrate emergency operations capability? I don’t pretend to know all the answers to either question, but here’s my read on them from our FD weekend activity.

As far as the competitiveness goes, it seems to be “in the blood” of many or most hams to see who and how many stations we can work, how far the contacts can be made, and can we get our signal through the pile-up of operators. I guess we’re no different than others that want to jump in and see how many contacts we can make. Field day simply provides a convenient and scheduled time to challenge these abilities. How well did we do with this part? Well, we’ll have more comment on that later, but for now suffice it to say that we made (preliminary unofficial count) 225 contacts with New Hampshire as the farthest distance - on 40 meters. Good or bad results? It all depends on the comparison. We won’t be in the top 10 or probably not even the top 100 for the 2A class when ARRL provides their report, but for our own comparison, we had significantly more contacts than last year’s QRP station; quite a step forward for us.

How did our weekend relate to emergency communication preparedness? Those in HDSCS may see some comparison with their activities where similar issues have presented themselves at some recent drills. Can we efficiently set up remote stations, in a relatively short time, with equipment that works, and make contacts through a pile of communicators trying to reach the same station? Can we effectively receive and pass on messages during these conditions? Well ... it’s not so easy to evaluate these because there is no standard for comparison and, therefore, it becomes somewhat of a subjective determination. Yes, we did set up remotely, albeit with commercial power source thus not really challenging our preparedness for emergency operation. But that was a choice we made. Set up in a reasonably short time? Only to a limited degree. The VHF/UHF station was set up quite quickly and was on the air from starting time. But the HF stations took an inordinate amount of time for antenna installation. The first HF antenna was dismantled

when it failed to work with the available antenna tuner. Little did we know at the time that it was the tuner, not the antenna that had failed. The two other HF antennas were a bit later in setup, and by then the tuner has been repaired. Our first 40-meter contact wasn’t until 2 hours 18 minutes after start time. Equipment that works? Yes, for the most part, except for the antenna tuner. As far as contacts through the pile-up, we did a much, much better job than recent years, due in part to use of higher power, 100W versus the QRP power that was used in recently. Also, the newly acquired B&W antennas provided reception and output improvement allowing reasonable contact ability; but we have lots of room for improvement. Message handling? We didn’t even try.

Gene and Cheryl were able to install the VHF/UHF antenna easily with proven ability and practice. The HF antenna setup team, Bill KZ3G, Robby KI6KYX, Otis KD6AXR, Albert KI6WRU, Alex K9BLK and Paul K6MHD, have learned a lot about stringing wires between trees! It was interesting to watch Albert launch a rope into the trees using a water bottle and sling. Otis was a bit of a “roof rat” as he scramble over the cabin to ensure that wires didn’t snag. We finally ran one VHF/UHF and two HF stations. The J-Pole antenna did a good job on 2M & 440, and the two new B&W folded dipoles gave us significant improvement on the HF bands. An initially installed HF all-band sloper was dismantled when the tuner didn’t work.

So, how did we do this year? Here’s a preliminary summary.

Our first challenge was to clean and decontaminate the cabin porch with bleach prior to setup due to the overnight campout of a very untidy uninvited guest. This put us a bit behind in setup time.

We had a total of 13 FRC hams that signed in as operators, plus a few that I know that were there but didn’t sign in. Our thanks go out to operators (in order of sign-in) Cheryl Thorpe KE6TZU, Gene Thorpe KB6CMO, Otis McCoy KD6AXR, Norman Dickhoff NQ6L, Paul Broden K6MHD, Alex Valdez K9BLK, Tom Fiske AA6TF, Jesse Lerma KI6WQJ, Albert Solomon KI6WRU, Art Dinsmore KF6EZ, Chuck Pacier AE6YJ, David Curlee KE6IPY, and Robert Doidge KI6KYW. Bill KZ3G and Robby KI6KYX Preston were there as well, but somehow missed the

sign-in log. If I've not recognized others that were there, you have my apologies. Some of the operators came multiple times throughout the event, and we had our largest team of operators for the late-late show – yawn. Otis and Norm stayed the entire time!

A total of 30 visitors signed our visitor log including 23 hams - 2 from Red Cross, 4 from Beckman ARC, one LA County DSC, and one from ARRL.

Total Contacts 225 (all voice, no CW this year): 2M = 57; 440 = 3; 6M = 3; 10M = 3; 15M = 20; 20M = 13; 40M = 96; 80M = 30.

Bonus points are also awarded for community-related activities. Our intent was to set up a GOTA station for 100 points, but that never materialized due to antenna difficulties. No bonus points were earned for message handling, receipt of ARRL Bulletin, educational activity or visit by elected government officials. But we did score 100 bonus points for each of the following categories: Media Publicity (Jere Greene was there representing Fullerton Observer – in addition to representing ARC); set up at a Public Location; provision of a Public Information Table; visit by a Representative of an "Agency" served by ARES (two American Red Cross representatives signed in). With these four bonus categories providing 400 points our preliminary **Grand Total is 625**.

Station disassembly went much faster and easier than setup. Thanks to Robert Doidge, Otis McCoy, Jesse Lerma, Albert Solomon, Bill Preston, Gene & Cheryl Thorpe, Norman Dickhoff, Paul Broden (and maybe others I've forgotten – sorry 'bout that), the entire operation, including antennas, was totally removed in just over one hour.

Now some reflections on performance. What did we learn from the event for future improvement?

- First and foremost, we need to begin FD preparation much earlier in the year. Its difficult to coordinate all personnel and equipment within a short period, therefore, plans for FD 2010 began at the Board Meeting this past Wednesday so we can get a jump on next year's activities. Details of our ideas will be provided in a later Smoke Signals.
- We need to focus on antennas! The biggest issues appear to be what HF antennas work to our expectations, and what are the best, most effective, simplest and quickest methods for installation. Although the two B&W folded dipoles used for HF activities did their job

quite well we still need to see what can be done for easier installation, better performance, and perhaps different antennas next year. Launching the wire HF antennas into the trees is quite a challenge, and a late startup of antenna installation delayed HF operations. Simply put, we need to start setup activities earlier in the day!

- All equipment needs to be tested prior to use to be sure it is operational. One HF antenna tuner – UGH, mine – failed to work until Tom Fiske AA6TF conducted a bit of field repair. It had been on the shelf and unused for quite some time and was not checked for performance prior to attempted use at field day. Somehow I expect a bit of ribbing from April WA6OPS on this lack of preparedness. The tuner worked like a champ after minor repair. Thanks Tom.
- Scheduling of operators is a big challenge. We had committed coverage for all operational times before the event, and several operators dropped by as their schedules allowed. But next year we need to improve our schedule plans to lighten the load for those who were there for long, long hours. Setup scheduling may need to be moved from 9:00AM to as early as 7:30.
- We operated from a public location, but didn't attract many park visitors with interest in what we were doing. If we intend to use this operation for public awareness to amateur radio, we need to find a better way to attract their attention.
- Operational performance – or lack thereof – identified several items that can be improved or developed into educational opportunities. We need some CW operators (we missed you Bill W6ZJE); We could do with a class on antenna making and tuning; and we could do with a bit of operational rehearsal for those who have little or no previous FD experience.

So, did we fulfill or our expectation for the day, or ARRL's statement as to what field day is supposed to be? ARRL says: "First, and foremost, Field Day should be a fun activity" It was a lot of work but I think it is fair to say we had fun in doing so ... and may have learned a thing or two while we did it.

Now, lets all be ready for FD 2010 preparations. **YOU** might even be asked to assist.

## Next on-foot foxhunt at Craig Park 7/18/09

The next on-foot direction-finding session will be Saturday, July 18, 2009 at Craig Regional Park for beginner and intermediate level transmitter hunters. All ages are welcome, so bring the family. A ham radio license and/or knowledge of radio equipment are not required. Experts will be on hand to teach you the basic techniques of on-foot direction-finding.

If you are a beginner, there will be plenty of simple two-meter fox transmitters just for you. For radio-orientees of average experience, there will be a 5-fox two-meter international-rules course of low to moderate difficulty. A transmitter on the 80-meter band will also be available to hunt. Course setter will be Joe Moell K0OV. There will be no charge for the transmitter hunts.

The main 5-fox hunt begins about 10:30 AM. Hunters may start the courses at any time until 1 PM. Courses close at 3 PM.

If you don't have the antenna/attenuator system for on-foot foxhunting on two meters with your ham radio handi-talkie or scanner, you can easily make one right before the hunts start. Beginning about 9:00 AM, Marvin Johnston KE6HTS will conduct a clinic for building his kits for measuring-tape yagis (\$15) and for 90 dB offset-type attenuators (\$18). For \$40, you can get the yagi kit and an assembled/tested attenuator in a special housing that goes inside the boom of the yagi. If you register in advance by sending e-mail to marvin@west.net, he will have the kits reserved in your name waiting for you.

It takes about an hour to put the two kits together with tools and soldering irons that will be provided. If you're not an electronic technician, don't worry because there will be plenty of experts to help you. We want you to succeed! Then with your HT and the kit-built equipment, you will be all set to hunt.

Craig Regional Park is between the cities of Fullerton and Brea. It is bounded on the west by State College Boulevard, on the north by Imperial Highway, on the east by the 57 freeway and on the south by Bastanchury Road. See the maps at homingin.com for navigation to the park and to the start point. From the 57 freeway, take the Imperial Highway exit, go west to State College (first light), turn left (south) and look for the park on your left (east). This is the only vehicular entrance.

Vehicular entrance and parking within Craig Park costs \$5, although you can park just outside along the street for free. Hunt starting point will be at the north end of the park, just south of the walkway. If you're driving in, turn left into the first parking lot after the entry gate. If you park outside and walk in, turn to the left and take the sidewalk to the north end. Look for the orange and white orienteering flag.

Two meter talk-in is on K6QEH/R, 146.97(-) PL 136.5.

73,  
Joe Moell K0OV  
www.homingin.com

## FRC T-Hunts for May and June

Dave Balgie N7MJN was hider for the May 16 FRC transmitter hunt. He found a good location along Skyline Drive in Hacienda Heights and transmitted 5 watts into a 5/8 wavelength ground plane antenna. Skyline Drive hunts are always challenging because of the many nearby hills and canyons to cause reflections, but all of the teams did very well this time.

<u>Team</u> <u>Calls</u>	<u>Odo</u> <u>Mileage</u>
KF6GQ/KA6TAS	16.6
N6AIN/WA6PYE	17.8
N6ZHZ/KG6LSE	18.6
N6UZS	20.7

Don Lewis and his wife, who won that hunt, got the duty of hiding for the hunt on June 20. They were at the dead end of Garvey Avenue in West Covina, only a few yards south of the 10 freeway boundary for this hunt, just west of Kellogg Hill. Even with 1.2 watts and the quad antenna pointed toward Mount Wilson, they had super-strong signal on the winding Lorencita Drive just to the south, fooling many hunters into thinking they were there. The results

below have been adjusted for odometer calibration.

<u>Team</u> <u>Calls</u>	<u>Odo</u> <u>Mileage</u>
N6UZS	20.87
N6AIN/WA6PYE/KG6LSE	21.87
K0OV/WB2LRH	23.05
N6MJN	24.44
N6ZHZ	29.6
WB6JPI	47.0

Newcomers are always welcome on FRC transmitter hunts. Our next one will be Saturday evening, July 18, starting at Skyline and Acacia in Fullerton. The transmitter goes on the air at 8 PM. For more information on beginner mobile T-hunts in the southern California area, go to:

<http://www.homingin.com/beginr.html>

73,  
Joe Moell K0OV

### FRC Regular Club Meeting

Third Wednesday of each month  
Fullerton Senior Center  
340 W. Commonwealth Ave.  
Fullerton, CA

Next Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, July 15, 2009

Dinner before the meeting: 5:15 PM at  
Ruby's Diner, Harbor Blvd. at Orangethorpe

**MEETING 7:00 PM**

### FRC Monthly Board Meeting

Open to all members  
Marie Callender's Restaurant  
126 Yorba Linda Blvd., Placentia

First Wednesday of each month

Next Board Meeting

Wednesday, August 5, 2009

QSO and dinner 7:00 PM  
Meeting: 7:30 PM

### Orange County Council of Amateur Radio Organizations (OCCARO)

www.occaro.org

### FRC Tuesday Net

8:00 PM – 147.975 (-) PL 114.8

### Hidden Transmitter Hunt

FRC operates a 2-meter mobile T-Hunt every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday, courtesy of Joe Moell K0OV. We meet at the corner of Acacia Avenue and Skyline Drive in Fullerton at 8:00 PM sharp for deployment and the hunt. No need to be a licensed ham to

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### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL / APPLICATION

Fullerton Radio Club

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(Please Print)

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Name #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Call: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Name #3: \_\_\_\_\_ Call: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Email #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Email #2: \_\_\_\_\_

ARRL Member?  Yes  No

Special Amateur Radio Interests or Activities: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues are \$20 per member, or \$25 per family. Students (full time) \$10.

**Bring your dues payment to the next meeting or mail to the address above.**