



Smoke Signals

Newsletter of Fullerton Radio Club

June 2022

President's Column June 2022

Summer is approaching and your (club) president is on the road. This summer, I have set a goal of activating every park I camp at for the Parks on the Air (POTA) program. In the past two weeks, I have “activated” Bryce Canyon National Park, Glacier National Park, Waterton National Park (where I am writing this) and Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park.

So what is POTA and what does it mean to “activate” a park? POTA is an awards program (not a contest) that is modeled on the ARRL National Parks on the Air program that was promoted in 2016 for the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. POTA consists of hams who travel to a park, and activate the park by making 10 or more contacts via amateur radio. The hams who do this are called “activators.” Although any simplex QSO (on any band and mode) is a valid contact for purposes of the program, there are other hams who are specifically looking to make contacts with POTA activators. These hams are called “hunters” (sometimes called “chasers”). Although there are “awards” for activating parks as well as for hunting, it is mostly just good fun. For activators it is an excuse to get outside and practice operating from the field. For hunters, it's an opportunity to get on the air and talk to other hams who will be *really* grateful for your QSO.

How can I get involved? The easiest way to learn how the program works is to become a hunter. You can start hunting without registering at pota.app, but you won't be able to track your progress unless you register.

Go to the website pota.app and click the orange “SIGN UP” button. Follow the instructions to create a pota.app login. Once you have an account go to pota.app and

click the black “SIGN IN” button. You will find yourself on a page titled “Active Spots.” You will be looking at a real-time list of POTA activators who are currently calling CQ or making contacts. The most recent “spots” are at the top of the page. As you scroll down the page the spots are older. The current frequency and mode of the activators are shown in the spot. Maybe start by listening, to get the hang of the exchange. Then call one of the stations by answering their CQ. While the minimum exchange is just callsigns, operators usually exchange a quick RS(I) and maybe your state. Sometimes, the activator will have a pileup, making quick exchanges. Other times you might end up with a relaxed conversation about what equipment you are using, etc. Congratulations! You are now a POTA hunter.

What do I have to do to get “credit” for the park I just hunted? The answer is “nothing.” When the park activator sends their log to the POTA administrator, your callsign will get recorded in the POTA database. Hunters do not submit a log. The next time (after the activators log has been processed) that you log in to pota.app, you can go to “My Hunter Log” and you will see a table with all the parks you have hunted.

It would be fun if I had some FRC members “hunting” the next time I activate a park, which will be a few days from when you read this.

Next time, we can talk about what it takes to be an activator.

73,

Bob AD6QF

Fullerton Radio Club
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***July 2022 FRC BOARD
MEETING***

The next Club Board meeting will be on

July 6, 2022

***Due to the continued status of COVID-19 we
will hold the meeting by Zoom at the usual
Zoom ID and passcode.***

Meeting time: 5:30 PM

All Members are welcome

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.org

May 2022 Board Meeting Minutes

The May Board meeting was called to order on Zoom at 5:32 PM by President Bob Houghton AD6QF. Additional members present were; Vice President Robert Gimbel KG6WTQ, Secretary Paul Broden K6MHD, Treasurer Gene Thorpe KB6CMO, Board Members Larry McDavid W6FUB, and Walter Clark. Absent was Board Member Richard Belansky KG6UDD.

Minutes from the April Board Meeting were reviewed and approved.

Treasurers report: Checking \$4170.72. Savings; \$2608.96 as of the March bank statement. Deposit for member renewal \$20 is pending.

New member, Ethan Soe KN6SHV, extra class. Life member Betsy Vigus KD6FID passes away recently. See write-up elsewhere in the newsletter. There are 31 current paid members and one life member.

The club website domains have been renewed and account log-in availability has been transferred from David Curley to Bob Houghton.

State of California Statement of Information has been submitted for 2022. It will be due again in 2024.

The Club event Antennas In The Park is scheduled for May 14. Preparation assignments have been, and an invitation notice will be placed at HRO.

So far Field Day has not received sufficient support for activity planning.

Requests were made and approved for reimbursements to Bob Houghton of \$206.70 for the web domain renewal, and \$20 for the State SOI form. Request for \$300 was approved for AITP expenses.

The meeting ended at 5:53.

Submitted by Secretary Paul Broden

June 2022 Board Meeting Minutes

The June Board meeting was called to order on Zoom at 5:32 PM by President Bob Houghton AD6QF. Additional members present were; Vice President Robert Gimbel KG6WTQ, Secretary Paul Broden K6MHD, Treasurer Gene Thorpe KB6CMO, Board Members Larry McDavid W6FUB, and Walter Clark. Absent was Board Member Richard Belansky KG6UDD.

There were no minutes written presented from the May Board Meeting due to hospitalization of the club secretary. May Board minutes will be presented in the June issue of Smoke Signals and reviewed at the July Board Meeting.

Treasurers report: Checking; \$4170.72. Savings; \$2608.96 (March bank statement). There is an \$86 pending deposit from membership renewals and AITP donation. New member; Roger Kohlenberger W6ZJE. Roger has received his dad's (Bill) call sign! Membership is now at 32 paid and one life member.

Bob Houghton received the requested web domain and SOI reimbursements described in the May Board Meeting minutes. Reimbursements were made to Larry McDavid in the amount of \$226.70 and to Walter Clark \$52.77 for expenses related to food and supplies for the AITP event.

There was no old business.

New business:

- On June 7 Gene Thorpe will meet with BofA representatives to empty the safe deposit box as the box will require re-keying.
- AITP debrief: there were 43 sign-ins.
- There will be no FRC activity on Field Day. Some members have made arrangements to participate separately.
- It was suggested that additional advertisement should be considered for AITP next year, perhaps even on social media.

The meeting ended at 5:49.

Submitted by Secretary Paul Broden

POTA Contact with Bob, AD6QF/VE6, at Waterton Lakes National Park

This afternoon, June 8, 2022, I contacted Bob Houghton on 14.235 MHz during his POTA (**P**arks **O**n **T**he **A**ir) activation from Waterton National Park in Alberta, Canada. The park is located in the southwest corner of Alberta near the border with Montana on a true bearing of 9-degrees from Fullerton or Buena Park where I am located.

Bob told me via email prior to our contact that a contact might be questionable because of his antenna's low angle of radiation and high mountains near his location and directly in the path between the park and Southern California. This proved to be an unnecessary concern.

The contact was challenging. At the time of Bob's "activation" (POTA terminology) the band conditions were very poor with the solar flux at 101 and the A and K indexes at 5 and 2 respectively. Basically, the QRN level was between S7 and S9 and almost no signals were visible on 20-meters for most of the operating time and none were strong.

Bob said he came on the air a few minutes before the scheduled start time of 1:00 P.M. PDT, but I was unable to detect any signal on his frequency of 14.235 MHz until about 1:20 PM when I started to see faint indications of a signal on my Flex 6400 waterfall display. All I saw on the pan-adaptor was the noise floor. During the operating period I alternately monitored and made calls on both my Flex 6400 (100 Watts) and Drake TR7 (140 Watts) that were switched between my 4-element KT34A antenna at 45-feet pointed at a predetermined heading of 9-degrees true. Bob used his IC-7300 (50-100 Watts) and a ground mounted vertical antenna.

After about forty minutes the band improved and we made a contact at S9 on both ends for a around two minutes before the band rapidly closed. For the next fifteen minutes the band opened briefly and closed again more than once. The openings ranged from S3 to S5, but were very short. Bob then switched to 21.250 MHz, but the band was completely dead.

Bob emailed me that POTA requires ten contacts for an activation to count. He said he made 17 contacts, although he usually tries for 12. So it turned out to be fun for both of us.

Bob will be doing the same thing next week from Banff National Park.

Bart, WB6WUW

The following is response from Bob.

Hi Bart,

If you log in to pota.app and look at your hunter log ("My Hunter Log") you might be surprised to see you got credit for two parks yesterday. It turns out that I am in Waterton Lakes National Park (which we knew) but I am also within the larger Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park. When one park is contained within another, the activator can submit the same log for each park (changing only the park identifier) and get credit for both. POTA calls this a "two-fer".

My case was unusual because there are only a few UNESCO International Peace Parks, but in the US there are lots of parks that are contained within a national forest.

73, Bob

Hillcrest Park ARDF on 5/14/2022

Photos below and report by Joe Moell KØOV

It was probably the biggest turnout ever for the annual Fullerton Radio Club's "Antennas In The Park" get-together. Several HF band stations went together on the hillside with wire antennas in the trees to take advantage of the improved band conditions as the new solar cycle gets under way.

Culinary expert Al Solomon AG6OF filled the grill with hamburgers, chicken and brats. For dessert, there was the traditional Worldwide Foxhunting Weekend cake, furnished by April Moell WA6OPS.

TWO-METER COURSE RESULTS -- 5 FOXES		
Name and call	Time	Foxes
Bill Wright WB6CMD	0:46:00	5
Scot Barth KA6UDZ	0:51:00	5
Michael Hart KC6MEH	2:02:40	5

Michael Hart KC6MEH usually does much better at ARDF, but he had equipment problems this time. He writes, "I wasted an hour before I realized my batteries were low. When I figured this out, I went to my car to get another antenna that I know I put fresh batteries in. After a year of not using my equipment it is good to always check the batteries!"

Everyone was kept so busy on two meters that only Bill Wright WB6CMD found time to find my 80-meter transmitter, which he did in an amazing five minutes.

Thanks to all of the helpers mentioned above and also thanks to FRC President Bob Houghton AD6QF and Larry McDavid W6FUB for arranging for the luncheon provisions. A tip of the hat to Gene and Cheryl Thorpe, KB6CMO and KE6TZU of the Izaak Walton League for hosting at the cabin. Despite temperatures in the 90's, it was a great day for all.

Joe Moell KØOV

Marvin Johnston KE6HTS arrived from Santa Barbara with a box full of two-meter RDF antenna and attenuator kits for the usual kitbuilding workshop. Among those participating were high-school students from Sota Academy of Math and Science in Long Beach and their mentor, Devon Day KF6KEE. Then there were my practice transmitters to find near the Izaak Walton cabin. Helping beginners learn the technique were experienced radio-orientees Jay Thompson W6JAY and Tom Smith KB6A.

Only three people went on my international-rules ARDF short course, with five transmitters out in the hills of the park. Here are the results:

**Next Event: To be announced.
For e-mail notification of these
events, join the southern
California ARDF mailing list. Go
to:**

<http://www.homingin.com/joemoell/ardfinla.html>

Photos below from FRC Antennas In The Park, May 14, 2002



Another FRC member: Silent Key

Long time Fullerton Radio Club member Elizabeth (Betsy) Vigus KD6FID (SK) passed away on February 8. The announcement of her passing was made in the Mid-April issue of Fullerton Observer. Betsy and her husband Vince W6ZKZ (SK) were editors and publishers of Smoke Signals for many years until Vince's death in 2001. A "celebration of life" was held for Betsy at the Fullerton Arboretum on April 22.

Classified ad

ICOM IC-208H; VHF/UHF Transceiver. **\$100.00**

MH133 microphone

With operator's manual

Used very seldom. Like new

Power Werx SS-30DV switching power supply
\$35.00

Turn the mobile IC-208H to a base station

MFJ-115 24-Hour Quartz World Clock **\$20.00**

Contact Paul K6MHD: pbroden53@gmail.com

June Club Meeting

We'll continue to meet by Zoom until the Board is completely comfortable with the potential exposure status to COVID-19, AND an appropriate location is found for return to fact-to-face meetings. That is unless we identify that Zoom brings out a better attendance, presentations and presenters (if any) are acceptable with this format, and members also accept the Zoom process. Decisions yet to be made.

*Meeting Date: Wednesday, June 15, 2022. Time: **7 PM PDT** Please be prepared to discuss, and perhaps even make a presentation on what you've been doing with Ham Radio. Bands are opening. What contacts have you made?*

We'll be at the same Zoom ID and password as usual. If you don't know the Zoom address please contact a Board member and we'll provide. We don't publish the Zoom ID/password to avoid unwanted interruptions.

NO TAG MEETING OR REPORT FOR JUNE!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL / APPLICATION

Fullerton Radio Club
PO Box 545, Fullerton, CA 92836

(Please Print)

Name #1 _____ Call: _____ Class: _____

Name #2 _____ Call: _____ Class: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State/Zip: _____

Phone #1: _____ Email #1: _____

ARRL Member ☐ Yes ☐ No

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

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