



# Smoke Signals

## Newsletter of Fullerton Radio Club

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### President's Column

The last month has been a busy one for the club. We have filed the mandatory non-profit tax returns, renewed our annual Zoom subscription and renewed our ARRL club insurance. Lots of paperwork for a small club!

Perhaps the more interesting way in which we have been busy, is the forming of Special Interest Groups, or SIGs. I'll talk more about our SIGs in another article.

Although I was busy with club business, I was also busy in a more fun way. In January, my wife and I spent three weeks camping, hiking, and playing radio in several desert state and national parks. We visited Death Valley National Park, Valley of Fire State Park in Nevada, Buckskin Mountain State Park, on the Arizona side of the Colorado River, near Parker. We also visited Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and Anza-Borrego State Park. I carried my Icom IC-7300 radio as well as a couple of easy to deploy antennas. At all five parks I was able to successfully activate the parks for POTA (Parks on the Air) while also making SSB contacts with several FRC members from each of the five parks.

### SIGnificant changes for FRC

You have probably been hearing me talk about SIGs a lot recently. Just in case you haven't been paying attention, a SIG, or Special Interest Group is just a group of club members who share a particular common interest, perhaps working together to achieve a goal.

In the nine or so years that I have been in the club, I have observed that many FRC members work individually on projects that interest them, and sometimes share the results at a TAG meeting or perhaps on Zoom. These are almost always individuals working solo on individual projects.

I have often left TAG meetings with some newly found excitement about a topic or perhaps an idea for something new that I wanted to learn about. I can recall a number of times where the TAG discussions continued out in the street in front of Walter's house long after the planned ending time of the meeting. I have always wanted to find a way to spread that excitement to a wider group of club members.

The purpose of organizing Special Interest Groups is to coordinate the exploration of projects involving amateur radio or other technology to include a

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## JANUARY 2024 FRC BOARD MEETING

The monthly FRC Board Meeting was called to order by President Bob Houghton AD6QF at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 7, 2024. All Board Members were present.

The January Board Meeting minutes were reviewed and approved.

Treasurers Report:

- Bank balance as of January 31, 2024: \$6503.36
- New deposits of \$45 were made on 2/2/24 for membership renewals, making the updated balance at \$6548.36 (unverified).
- There were no new members, but two showed some interest with visits on Zoom.
- Bob's records now show paid memberships at 28 plus one life member.
- New expenses included \$159 paid to Bob Houghton as reimbursement for our use of the club's Zoom account.
- ARRL Liability insurance will be due soon. The cost has been \$200 in past years, but no invoice has been received yet.

Old Business:

- Planning for SIGs has begun, and discussions will continue this evening at 7 p.m. A proposed listing of the SIGs is posted at our website [fullertonrtomradioclub.org](http://fullertonrtomradioclub.org).

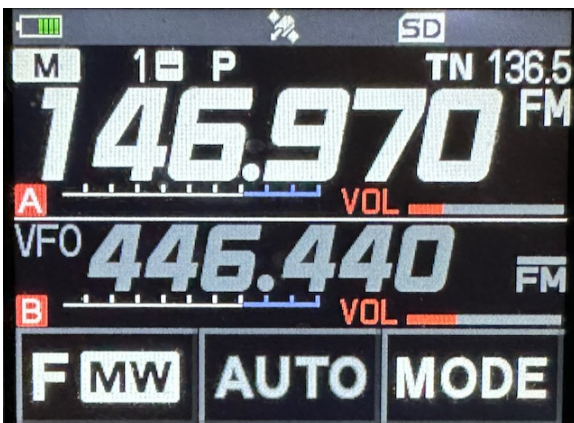
New Business:

- FRC 2023 tax forms, IRS 990N and State of California 199-N have been filed as e-postcards. Copies have been provided to all Board Members for maintenance of records.
- Several Special Interest Groups (SIGs) have been formed. Additional planning will continue. New activities may include
  - Saturday in a park with portable operation and potential mentoring of new hams
  - Visiting the Claremont swap meet followed by lunch for attendees.
  - Some sort of weekly on-the-air activity
- Record keeping, and membership listing confidentiality were discussed.
- A brief discussion was held regarding the 2023 budgeted recap, as well as questions about the potential discontinuation of the PO box or an alternate mailing option. PO box price continues to increase! The decision was made to retain use of the PO box, at least for now.
- A brief discussion also addressed the total amount in our bank account, as compared with recommendations made by the National Council of Non-Profits. No decisions were made to modify our bank account holdings.

Final discussion or announcements:

- None

There being no further discussion the meeting ended at 6:02 p.m.



K6QEH - Have you tried it lately?

larger group of members. We are still working out the format, but I think a key to the success of this idea is my hope that several people who are interested in achieving the same goal will be more successful, and have more fun, by working together. I have often heard that FRC past president Bill Kohlenberger used to ask, "Are we a technical club or are we a social club?" I think the goal of forming SIGs is to have our cake and eat it too. We can achieve technical goals while helping each other learn and enjoying the process together.

Below are some themes around which we may organize SIGs.

- Winlink and other digital modes
- Software Defined Radio
- Vintage Radio
- CW Operating
- New hams
- LoRa and wireless mesh networking
- Saturdays in the Park
- Field Trips
- Instrumentation and measurement
- Reinventing the FRC net

If any of these topics interest you or if you have a suggestion for a topic to explore, please send an email to [ad6qf@arrl.net](mailto:ad6qf@arrl.net).

## Your article could be here

There is too much white space on this page.

If you have...

Made an interesting contact recently

Tried a new mode

Read an interesting article

Taken a radio or technology-related photo

Bought a new radio, tool, or ???

Competed in a contest

Planned a change in your shack

Restored a vintage radio

Worked on an antenna design

Discovered a better way to do something

Why not share it with the club? It doesn't need to be a full article (although those are certainly welcome).

It could be...

A few sentences

A photo with a caption

A labeled sketch of something you are working on