



CLUB STATION  
K6SON

# Short Skip

The Newsletter of

**Sonoma County Radio Amateurs, Inc.**

P.O. Box 116, Santa Rosa, CA 95402-0116 707-579-9608

<http://www.sonomacountyradioamateurs.com>

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REPEATER STATION  
W6SON

Volume 36, Number 9

September 2011



## September SCRA Update

by Darryl Paule, KI6MSP  
SCRA President

The month of August has been very busy for SCRA with a couple of new events that have been very successful.

The first was the Mendocino Auto Rally that took place August 6th at Cow Mountain. This was a staged rally between Ukiah and Lakeport, on a windy curvy dirt road. SCRA was the communications support along with a few radio operators from the Mendocino club, MCARCS.

This was a very large logistical undertaking. I want to thank Pat KG6JSL for managing this event. I also want to thank Jim KJ6MRV for having the vision to have an event this big logistically for all. Although there were a few glitches for this first time event. There were a few car crashes of different magnitudes, mostly into ditches. There were no injuries. The drivers have decided that they would like to do the Mendo Rally next year.

Jim is looking for assistance in making the Mendo Rally happen for next year. You can contact Jim at: [jim@mendocinorally.com](mailto:jim@mendocinorally.com)

On August 12th a few SCRA members activated grid square CM79. This was also a first time event for SCRA. This took place at the Lost Coast of the King Range National Conservation Area, in the Nadelos Camp ground. I want to thank Charlie KZ6T for doing the logistics for this event. This was a real physical

challenge for those who participated in the 2.5 mile hike. Let alone the challenge of the hills, fog in getting to CM79. I also want to thank Steve KI6TUR and Maryann for putting together some very good eats on Saturday evening and Sunday morning.

There will be a few photos from both events on the club web site.

At both of these events there is always a lot to learn and experience. One of the many aspects of amateur radio is the help and support that is available to anyone asking for help or offering support.

Also in August SCRA participated in the PCAM Air Show. We had some interest in people wanting to take the technician class. It was also a lot of fun seeing all of the different planes as well as the stunt planes.

Upcoming events:

Waves to Wine September 17th & 18th

Gran Fondo October 1st

Contact Craig K6XLT at [k6xlt@sonic.net](mailto:k6xlt@sonic.net)  
For your opportunity to participate

KRCB Wine Auction on October 14th.

This is also a new event for SCRA. SCRA will provide a phone team to take the pledges for the wine auction. This provides the club an opportunity to serve its community, as well as more public exposure for SCRA.

Continued on page 3.



## 2011 Club Officers

President	Darryl M. Paule ki6msp@arrl.net	KI6MSP 707-544-8874
Vice President	Charlie Sikes	KZ6T
Treasurer	Jack Christensen	K6ROW
Secretary	Evelyn Chavez	KI6PAY
Director	John Felton	KE5RI
	John Chavez	KG6PEP
Past President	Dave Santori	KF6CLG

## Committee Lineup/Contacts

Membership Program	Mike Von der Porten	AD6YB	
	Charlie Sikes	KZ6T	
EmComm	Rich Freitas	KF6SZA	
Field Day Activity	Brian Torr	N6IYY	707-575-5871
Public Service	Craig Gaever	K6XLT	707-545-4133
Education	John Breckenridge	WB6FRZ	707-217-1017
Repeater	John Felton	KE5RI	
Volunteer Exam Liaison	Brian Torr	N6IYY	707-575-5871
Antenna			
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Public Relations	Bill McCall	W6WDM	707 538-2844
Public Relations	Jeff Basham	KK6JAB	707-291-7355
Refreshments	Jim Draeger	KI6REK	
ARRL DXCC/WAS Manager	Chuck Ternes	N6OJ	707 763-2528
Club Raffle	John Chavez	KG6PEP	
Member Badges	Ken Rawles	N6PWW	

## Short Skip & Web Staff

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SCRA E-Mail	scra@sonomacountyradioamateurs.com
SCRA Web site	<a href="http://www.sonomacountyradioamateurs.com">http://www.sonomacountyradioamateurs.com</a>

## Tuesday Night Net

Remember to check in to the SCRA net each Tuesday evening on the 147.315+(PL 88.5) repeater at 7:00 PM. Announcements are made of upcoming SCRA and other amateur radio activities in the broadcast.

## Short Skip Advertising Rates

Business Cards	\$12 per month
1st Quarter Column	\$13 per month
Each Additional Quarter Column	\$4 per month
Full page (one side)	\$35 per month
Pre-printed inserts (each)	\$35 per month

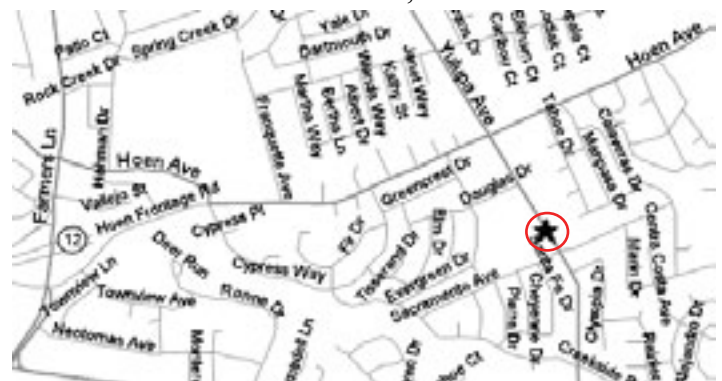
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## SCRA Club Meetings

The club normally meets the first Wednesday of each month. Exceptions are holidays or other big events.

Meeting location:  
Luther Burbank Art & Garden Center  
2050 Yulupa Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA



**All are welcome!**

Please join us at our next meeting. Anyone interested in Amateur Radio may be eligible for membership. A membership application is included in this newsletter. For more information, contact any SCRA officer, director or member.

**Hungry before the meeting?**

**Join us for dinner! We meet at Star Restaurant,  
1350 Farmers Lane, Santa Rosa.  
People start showing up at 5:30 PM.  
No RSVP is required.**

**See you there every month except December.**

If you are not getting the ARRL San Francisco Section news by e-mail and you are an ARRL member, be sure to subscribe under your Members Only information or go to this Web site:

<http://www.arrl.org/Groups/view/san-francisco>

President's message, continued.

One of the primary aspects of amateur radio is serving our community during disaster events. Another part of serving our community is to support the Redwood Empire Food Bank. There are many in our communities that are without food. Please bring your donations to the club meetings

At the September 7th club meeting there will be another first for SCRA. The presentation will be on operating satellites. This will be via SKYPE with Clint K6LCS AMSAT area coordinator.

73

Darryl KI6MSP

## National Radio Astronomy Observatory

Looking for a good place for radio amateurs?

Mike (AD6YB) and Elaine (KI6TIJ) recently visited Randolph County, West Virginia. This is NOT the place for radio amateurs. It is the home of the National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO). They seek radio silence or as close to it as they can get.

There are only 8,500 residents in the county (a declining number). There is no cell service, so pay phones actually get used!

The NRAO has a team which monitors for radio noise and a van that seeks it out. If you have a bad electrical connection or microwave in the area, the NRAO will fix it for free!

The NRAO has a series of antennas. The largest has an area of 2-1/2 acres! It can be pointed in any direction.

Not a great spot for hams to operate, but a really interesting place to visit!

Mike, AD6YB



## September Meeting Program Change

"How to Work the Amateur FM Satellites With Your HT," Clint Bradford, K6LCS - presenter

AMSAT area coordinator Clint Bradford, K6LCS, will be presenting his "Working Amateur Satellites With Your HT" session at the September 7, 2011 meeting of the Sonoma County Radio Amateurs. ALL are welcome to attend.

"The Sonoma County club has been serving their region for more than SEVENTY years," writes Clint. "I am really looking forward to meeting the group!"



Clint's in Southern California - but has prepared a custom slideshow for the Sonoma County club, which will be displayed - as Skype handles the session's audio. "I'd much rather be there in person - but this arrangement has worked quite successfully in the past. We'll have a great time!"

Attendees should visit Clint's Web site ahead of time at <http://www.work-sat.com> and download the four-page PDF tutorial. And he welcomes pre-presentation questions - call him at 909-241-7666 (cell) or send email to [clint@clintbradford.com](mailto:clint@clintbradford.com).

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## Ham Nation Studio Inaugurated

By Dave Harrison W6IBC

On Saturday, August 20th and Sunday August 21st, TWIT.TV celebrated the grand opening of its new studios in Petaluma. Ham radio played a key part. TWIT.TV, the brainchild of Leo Laporte W6TWT (a recognized computer technology commentator, program host and author), is the cyberspace home of the weekly Ham Nation webcast ([www.twit.tv/hn](http://www.twit.tv/hn)) on Tuesday evenings beginning at 6PM PDT. This webcast program, is led by Leo Laporte and includes Bob Heil K9EID, Gordon West WB6NOA and other notable hams, and features a variety of topics of interest to radio amateurs. The webcast lasts about an hour or so.

The TWIT.TV studio open house prominently featured amateur radio and includes a ham station having the latest Icom equipment including an IC-7800 HF and 6 meters, an IC-9100 HF-1.2GHz radio and an Icom 2 meter-440 MHz FM radio equipped with DSTAR which saw considerable use by visiting hams during the open house. In addition, a fully restored Collins

20V commercial AM broadcast transmitter and an AM broadcast studio control console are also featured as part of the ham radio corner of the studios. Members of the Redwood Empire DX Association club in Petaluma were instrumental in installing and removing a temporary beam antenna on the roof of the new studios to facilitate HF amateur radio communications. A permanent antenna facility is planned for installation in the near future. The addition of Leo Laporte W6TWT as an enthusiastic member of the ham radio community marks a very positive development for the ham radio community, both locally and nationally. Here is a link to a virtual tour conducted by Leo Laporte of the new TWIT.TV studios in downtown Petaluma:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BLMB0JqOAgY&feature=related>

In case you didn't know, "TWIT" stands for "This Week in Technology", a flagship program covering computer and related technology broadcast each week on many radio stations around the country and world.

### Sonoma County Radio Amateurs, Inc. Membership Application

Please Print Clearly

New [ ] Renewal [ ]

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Call Sign \_\_\_\_\_ License Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ H Phone \_\_\_\_\_ W Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

ARRL Member? Yes [ ] No [ ] Receive Short Skip newsletter via email? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

#### Dues & Fees: March 1 to February 28

Individual / Associate Member	\$24 (\$6.00/qtr)
Family Membership	\$36 (\$9.00/qtr)
Under 18 Membership	\$18 (\$3.00/qtr)
Badge	\$10

#### Badge Information

Call Sign \_\_\_\_\_  
First Name \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_

#### Payment Calculations: Make checks payable to SCRA

Dues - Full Year	\$ _____
Dues -	
Prorated _____ Qtrs. x \$ _____/qtr	\$ _____
Badge	\$ _____
Other - _____	\$ _____
Donation	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Mail to: SCRA, P.O. Box 116, Santa Rosa, CA 95402

## MENDOCINO RED TAIL RALLY

Pat Coyle, KG6JSL

A new event for SCRA and Northern California hams was the Mendocino Red Tail Rally held August 6, 2011, at the South Cow Mountain Off Highway Vehicle Area in the hills east of Ukiah. SCRA officially supported this event with hams from the Mendocino County Amateur Radio Club and as far away as Southern California joining in the fun.

This was a performance rally in 7 separate stages, with vehicles competing for best time exceeding 60mph over a twisting and dusty dirt road normally traversed at about 15-20 mph. 14 vehicles started the event and 10 survived to complete the last stage.

Safety was critical with operators manning 22 checkpoints including Start and Finish to track the competitors and guard against vehicle and live intruders onto the course. Although one competitor rounded a curve upside down and leaking gas, John Chavez, KG6PEP, helped winch another back onto the road with his trusty jeep, and a group of unauthorized spectators was safely ushered off the course, there were no serious injuries and missing vehicles were quickly accounted for.

Although most of us had not worked a performance rally before, reviews of our efforts from experienced rally workers were entirely positive. We look forward to doing this again next year.

Check out more photos and videos on the Rally website at <http://mendocinorally.com/>

Many thanks to the following participants:  
 Allen Spivik, WA6JFK; Andrew Raike, KE6HID;  
 Brian Torr, N6IY; Darryl Paule, KI6MSP; Dave Harrison, W6IBC; Dave Jordan, KI6ISO; Douglas Payne, KF6LMB; Ed Jacobson, W1EJ; Edward Adams, KJ6DOU; Ästrid Thienes, KJ6JTP; Henry Thienes, KI6VKL; Jack Christensen, K6ROW; Jim Cline, W6JRC; Jim Draeger, KI6REK; Jim Kerschner, K6HKY; Jim Robison, KJ6MRV; Joe Fortuna, KJ6DDL; John Breckinridge, WB6FRZ; John Chavez, KG6PEP; Julie Fraedrich, KD8AYJ; Keith Horton, KI6HLD; Kris Ridste, KJ6OFO; Lee Sorenson,

N6STI; Marcella Chandler, KI6MJC; Mike Monzon, KI6THV; Nick Wharff, KI6RIT; Pat Coyle, KG6JSL; Steve Morse, KI6HGH; Tom Turner, KI6CCW; William Brink, KV6G.



## California QSO Party (CQP)

### CQP & improving your operating skills

From an operating point of view, what do Public Service, chasing DX or working contests have in common?

They all require accurate copy of information under stress – whether the stress of the moment, the adrenaline rush of rare DX or contest pile up, you have to accurately copy and relay information.

Entering a contest either casually to give some points or as a serious effort, Contesting provides a great learning experience for information copy “under fire”.

The first weekend of October (October 1st & 2nd this year) sees the annual running of the California QSO Party – a great opportunity for stations in California because everyone else HAS TO WORK US!

We are the DX!

Whether you are a “big gun” with stacked yagis and 1500 watts, or a “little pistol” with 100 watts to a vertical or a wire antenna, everyone else in the world wants to work YOU to pick up one of the 58 counties in our state.

It’s a lot of fun being on the receiving end of a pile up or searching & pouncing for other states and countries.

For California stations the object of the contest is to work as many stations as possible on SSB and CW. You can work the same station on each band and each mode for score credit. Every US state and Canadian province you work counts as a multiplier – 58 total for us just like the number of counties in California.

Want to be really on the end of a pile up? Plan a “CA-expedition” to one of the rarer counties in California and the rest of the world will beat a path to your front end!

Low Power, High Power? CW or SSB? CQP is a fun contest for all.

CQP is sponsored by the Northern California Contest Club led by the NCCC “Green” team chaired by Rick “The Rhino” N6RNO as CQP Contest Chairman. A group of NCCC volunteers help with PR, planning

county expeditions and processing all the logs to score the contest.

The last 10 years has seen a great increase in the number of logs submitted from the US, the DX world and (of course!) from California.

Last year we received just over 900 logs and with 2011 being the 45th Anniversary of CQP, we are making a big drive to get well over 1000 logs submitted.

Every station that submits a log is eligible for an achievement certificate and there are several operating categories where the leader receives a wooden CQP plaque for proud display on the shack wall.

Three categories are designed to encourage operation in contests:

- YL award
- Youth (< 18) award

and starting this year, a New California Contester’s Award. This category is open to any operator that submits a log with at least 100 QSOs, made using either TriBander, Wire or Vertical antennas AND who have never submitted a log in any contest with more than 100 QSOs.

So if you’ve never entered a contest or have only dabbled in the past, this award category is for you!

If you work all 58 counties, you qualify for the “Worked All California Counties Award” sponsored by NCCC.

You can find the full rules and award details on the CQP web site at <http://www.cqp.org>.

Part time or full, home operator or an expedition to a new county, CQP is a blast!

We hope you will join us this year and have a lot of Fun!

Stu Phillips – K6TU



## Mendo Rally Comm Test

Jim Draeger, KI6REK

Here is a photo of the people that showed up for the Mendo Rally live comm test at the Youth Park. I think we did this two weeks before the Rally. Good thing we did the test, we found weak spots, and solved problems at the park. Better there than on Rally day.



## PCAM Air Show

by Pat Coyle

SCRA once again had a display at the Pacific Coast Air Museum Air Show. The show was as spectacular as always and we introduced people to ham radio and obtained sign-ups for John Breckenridge's license class. We had a 2meter radio, as well as a High Frequency radio and members participated on a contest. Thanks to Darryl, KI6MSP, Astrid, KJ6JTP, Henry, KI6VKL; Jeff, KI6PBF; Brian, K6IYY; Pat, KG6JSL; John, KG6BHI; Saraj, KU6F; Frank, NQ6E

Photo by John Shappell, KM6XO



Cut out for your VIP Discount Card

## 2011 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Date	Program	Presenter
Sep 7, 2011	Working Satellites	K6LCS
Oct 5, 2011	Test Equipment	N6IYY / WB6FRZ
Nov 2, 2011	Elections / Game Night	
Dec 7, 2011	Holiday Party, No Program	



## More Mendo Rally Photos

From Jim Draeger, KI6REK

All pics are from my position at block 20, Start finish at east end of course. The timing team was Julie, Art, and Dan. Dan is also a Rally car driver that was not racing that day.



## CONTEST CORNER by Kevin Alt, K6BSG

Hello testers. Lots of contest activity in September including several digital contests and state QSO parties. How about trying the ARRL VHF DX contest from a remote California grid square? Happy DX'ing!

2 Sept – **SNS and NS Weekly Sprints** – CW, 160-20 meters. See: [www.ncccsprint.com/rules.html](http://www.ncccsprint.com/rules.html).

3 Sept - **Russian RTTY WW, RTTY**, 80-10 meters. See: [www.radio.ru/cq/contest/rule-results/index2.shtml](http://www.radio.ru/cq/contest/rule-results/index2.shtml).

3 Sept - **DARC 10-Meter Digital Contest “Corona”** – Digital, 10 meters. See: [www.darc.de/referate/ukw-funksport](http://www.darc.de/referate/ukw-funksport).

3 Sept – **AGCW Straight Key Party** – CW, 40 meters. See: [www.agcw.org](http://www.agcw.org).

3-4 Sept - **All-Asian DX Contest** - Phone, 80-10 meters. See: [www.jarl.or.jp/English](http://www.jarl.or.jp/English).

3-4 Sept – **Colorado QSO Party** – All modes, 160-6 meters. See: [www.ppraa.org/coqp](http://www.ppraa.org/coqp).

3-4 Sept - **IARU Region 1 Field Day** - SSB, 160-10 meters.

3-4 Sept - **QCWA Fall QSO Party** – All modes, 160-6 meters. See: [www.qcwa.org/qso-party.htm](http://www.qcwa.org/qso-party.htm).

4-5 Sept - **Tennessee QSO Party** – All modes, 160-6 meters. See: [www.tnqp.org](http://www.tnqp.org).

5-6 Sept - **Labor Day Sprint** - CW, 160-6 meters. See: [miqrp.org](http://miqrp.org).

6 Sept – **ARS Spartan Sprint** – CW, 80-10 meters. See: [www.arsqrp.blogspot.com](http://www.arsqrp.blogspot.com).

9-10 Sept – **070 Club KA3X Memorial Sprint** – Digital, 80 meters. See: [www.podxs070.com](http://www.podxs070.com).

10 Sept – **Ohio State Parks On the Air** – All modes, 80-2 meters. See: [parks.portcars.org](http://parks.portcars.org).

10-11 Sept – **Worked All Europe DX Contest** - SSB, 80-10 meters. See: [waedc.de](http://waedc.de).

10-11 Sept - **Arkansas QSO Party** – All modes, 80-2 meters. See: [www.arkanhams.org](http://www.arkanhams.org).

10-12 Sept - **ARRL September VHF QSO Party**, All modes, 6 meters and up. See: <http://www.arrl.org/contests>.

10-12 Sept – **QRP ARCI VHF Contest** – All modes, 6 meters and up. See: [www.qrparci.org](http://www.qrparci.org).

11 Sept - **North American Sprint** - CW, 80-20 meters. See: [www.ncjweb.com](http://www.ncjweb.com).

11 Sept – **SKCC Straight Key Weekend Sprint** – CW, 80-6 meters. See: [www.skccgroup.com/sprint/wes](http://www.skccgroup.com/sprint/wes).

11-12 Sept - **Classic Exchange** - CW, 160-2 meters. See: [www.classicexchange.org](http://www.classicexchange.org).

14 Sept – **CWops Monthly Mini-CWT Test** – CW, 80-20 meters. See: [www.cwops.org/onair.html](http://www.cwops.org/onair.html).

17 Sept – **Connecticut QSO Party** – All modes, 80-10 meters. See: [www.ctqp.org/2011.html](http://www.ctqp.org/2011.html).

17 Sept - **Feld-Hell on Wheels Sprint** – Digital, 160-10 meters. See: [www.feldhellclub.org](http://www.feldhellclub.org).

17-18 Sept - **ARRL 10 GHz Cumulative Contest**, All modes, 10 GHz and up. See: [www.arrl.org/contests](http://www.arrl.org/contests).

17-18 Sept – **CIS DX PSK Contest** – Digital, 160-10 meters. See: [www.eupsk.com](http://www.eupsk.com).

17-18 Sept - **Scandinavian Activity Contest** - CW, 80-10 meters. See: [www.sactest.net](http://www.sactest.net).

17-18 Sept - **South Carolina QSO Party** – All modes, 160-6 meters. See: [w4cae.org/scqp/scqsoweb.html](http://w4cae.org/scqp/scqsoweb.html).

17-18 Sept - **Washington State Salmon Run** – All modes, 160- 6 meters. See: [www.wwdxc.org](http://www.wwdxc.org).

18 Sept - **North American Sprint** - SSB, 80-20 meters. See: [www.ncjweb.com](http://www.ncjweb.com).

18 Sept – **BARTG Sprint 75** – Digital, 80-10 meters. See: [www.bartg.org.uk](http://www.bartg.org.uk).

Continued on next page.



Contest Corner, continued.

18-19 Sep - **Classic Exchange** - SSB, 160-2 meters.  
See: [www.classicexchange.org](http://www.classicexchange.org).

19 Sep - **Fall VHF Sprint** – All modes, 2 meters. See:  
[www.svhfs.org](http://www.svhfs.org).

19 Sep – **Run For the Bacon** – CW, 160-10 meters.  
See: [www.fpqr.org](http://www.fpqr.org).

22 Sep – **NAQCC Monthly QRP Sprint** – CW, 80-20 meters. See: [naqcc.info](http://naqcc.info).

24 Sep - **Texas QSO Party** – All modes, 160-2 meters.  
See: [www.txqp.org](http://www.txqp.org).

24-25 Sep - **ARRL EME Competition**, All modes, 2304 MHz and up. See: [www.arrl.org/contests](http://www.arrl.org/contests).

24-25 Sep - **CQ Worldwide RTTY Contest** - 80-10 meters. See: [www.cqwwrtty.com](http://www.cqwwrtty.com).

27 Sep - **Fall VHF Sprint** – All modes, 222 MHz. See:  
[www.svhfs.org](http://www.svhfs.org).

27 Sep - **Fall QRP Homebrewer Sprint** - CW, 80-10 meters. See: [www.njqrp.org](http://www.njqrp.org).

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### **A Note from the SCRA President:**

There has been a lot of discussion over the past few years about having a club directory. I understand that there will be a few who don't want their information made public. However, when you get your license you are in the FCC database. This directory will be in booklet form.

You do have the opportunity to opt out. However being able to contact you for working events or other club activities will be greatly diminished!

## **Public Service Roundup**

August was pretty quiet except for the Mendo Rally. I've heard good things about the event and expect the KG6JSL has a report elsewhere in this news letter.

Still coming up in September (17-18) we have Waves to Wine. I've got a few slots left to fill on Saturday, notably the afternoon Net Control shifts and a few rest stops. For Sunday quite a few rest stops are still available as well as the afternoon NC. If SAGging is your thing, we can always use a few mobile units. Of larger concern, I'm going to be out of town that weekend. I'm still looking for someone who can oversee the event while I'm away. It would be a good introduction into managing a public service event. Duties involve coordinating with Waves to Wine staff and our troupe. It does involve working both days unless two of you want to split the duty. If you're at all interested please let me know soon so I can keep you posted on the event as it develops. I'll take care of the minutiae of getting folks organized and will make it as easy as possible for someone to step in. This is pretty urgent so please help the wrangler out otherwise everyone will be on their own.

Oct 1 is once again Levi's Gran Fondo and we'll have the usual rest stops, NC and sag slots available. I'll be here to manage this one, so let me know if you have an interest. I've been asked about using APRS on the event and hope that we might be able to make a real show of how APRS works in an event. Give it some thought, there's an opportunity here.

Remember too that the club benefits greatly from these events as contributions from these groups help fund our purchase of club equipment and pay the various bills. It's a wonderful thing. If you're new to public service feel free to come out and join the fun. We've got a spot for you.

Craig  
K6XLT  
Public Service Wrangler



## Last U-2 over flight of the USSR

Attached is an eyewitness account of some of the events of the U-2 over flight of the USSR on 1 May 1960 which was piloted by Francis "Frank" Gary Powers. It was done by the late Dick Pero who was a CIA Office of Communications employee. He was detailed to the IDEALIST Project (CIA U-2 over flights of the USSR) and this mission. Dick did it many years ago for a history of the O.C. This was never published as it was shot down by the Publication Review Board of the CIA. A few years ago I received a copy of this article that was in a 2004 retiree newsletter from the administrator of the O.C. retiree association in VA. I noticed that the PRB had originally removed names and locations from the article. I recently researched the matter and found out that any one with an interest in this incident can go to a library and get the full account of the story and all its locations now. I will not insert the other O.C. names involved in this account as it is not necessary nor of any interest to the reader.

A good account of the whole story was written by "Frank" Powers in 1970 called "Operation Overflight" and republished with an epilogue in 2004 by his son Francis "Gary" Powers, Jr. and his widow "Sue" Powers. Sue, a former CIA employee, and I were acquainted overseas in the early 1960's. She also brought martinis to my wife when she had a baby in the local hospital. We had a visit with her at the Blackbirds Reunion in Sparks, NV in 1993. We had not seen her since we were together more than 30 years before. Sue died a few years ago in Las Vegas.

I established an ongoing relationship with Gary Powers, Jr. and he has been most helpful in my research in the U-2 history and in other matters. Gary is the founder/director of the soon to be built Cold War Museum at Lorton, VA.

I did down line O.C. support for the last two over flights of the USSR in 1960 and then two years, 1963-65, in S. Calif in support of all three spies-in-the-skies projects, specifically Idealist (U-2), Oxcart (A/12ISR-71), and Corona (spy satellite).

Charles L. Christian O.C., CIA, 1955-67.  
Retired O.C. Foreign Service U.S. State Dept. 1986  
Member: DragonladyAssoc. Blackbird Assoc.  
RoadRunners Internationale

Message Received Unfortunately

By the late Dick Pero, Office of Communications,  
CIA

Courtesy Charles Christian W6CLC

Countless times Commo has received and delivered a message under adverse circumstances; many times this has been instrumental in the success of an operation. This is one instance where perhaps it might have been best if Commo had failed to receive the message. I was a young communicator on my first tour at the cover support-base at (Frankfurt, according to his widow) in 1960. Some of my colleagues were on a TDY "Flying Squad". Every few months they would go off to some unknown destination for several weeks to return tight-lipped about where they had been, but with a smug grin indicating they had done something special. I was eager to get in on this action. I wanted to do something spooky. After all, I thought, this was what it was all about.

When one of the "Flying squad" communicators rotated to another job, I was selected to fill the vacancy. I still did not know what I would be doing or where I would go, but I was ready. Finally I received the initial alert- "You're on standby!, be prepared to leave on a moment's notice." A week or so later at about 10 PM; I received a telephone call at my residence in Frankfurt. It was couched in guarded terms something to the effect: "you're on a standby TDY list. How soon can you be ready to leave? An hour or two?" I did not know the caller, but said I was prepared to leave. What, I asked, were my instructions? First we had to find my traveling partner on the team, a bachelor. He did not answer the phone at home. Did I know here he might be? Recollecting this query, I have to laugh. A bachelor in Frankfurt at 10 P.M. could be at any of a hundred or so places offering various forms of enjoyment. I gave my caller some leads and he said he would get back to me. In the wee hours of the morning, with me still wide awake in anticipation, the phone rang once again. "Get to Rhein Main and check in at the desk so-and-so at the operations center ASAP." Off I went, leaving the wife and children, to begin my unknown adventure. I joined my bleary-eyed colleague,??? and we were put on a USAF airplane with a grumbling crew who had been waiting for us all night. It was now circa 6 A.M. Climbing aboard, we found we were the only passengers in an aircraft the size of a bowling center. ?? an old hand on the team, stated this looked like a fast-moving



exercise and there would not be time for a formal briefing for me before we deployed to the advance base. He therefore decided to brief me. We were going out in support of a black over flight of the USSR by a super spy plane called the U-2. Gangbusters! I had finally arrived! This was spooky.

Boyhood acquaintance.

In the evening we landed at Incirlik where we were hustled through some kind of passport/immigration control and shuttled off to a house trailer occupied by a commo tech. There we feasted on a can of Dinty Moore's beef stew, which was described to me as probably being the best meal I would have in a week or so. The gilt was coming off the lily already. Shortly thereafter, we boarded a C-130 loaded with two vans and various and sundry other boxes. I had already been strongly reminded that this was a super-secret operation and to keep my mouth shut and ask no questions. Much to my chagrin, my jump seat co-passenger dressed in Air Force fatigues with sergeant chevrons, started yelling at me above the roar of the takeoff that he thought he knew me. I indicated that we would talk later as we leveled off and removed our earplugs. After the noise abated to a dull roar, we re-established an old acquaintance. Sergeant Jim Fahey had preceded me by a year or two in high school and we had played CYO basketball against one another.

He invited me to visit in his van after we landed and get set up. It seemed like days later we landed at the staging site, an USAF base in Incirlik, Turkey. We began unloading and setting up the commo van. Our team consisted of leader ?? and myself. Before we left we were told that two communicators from ?? and ?? would be arriving in Incirlik to man that end of the circuit. The commo project chief, ??? who was on "permanent TDY" in Incirlik, said that in the event the operators were delayed, please keep the code speed down as he hadn't operated in a long while and he would be the only game in town. We set up our van, one that had been put together by a previous team, which housed two HF receivers and an HT-4 HF transmitter (fondly called the "widow maker" because of the danger involved when making frequency changes). We then began a watch schedule of eight hours on, eight off, two men to shift, with periodic checks with the base in Incirlik in CW (Morse code). When not on duty we hot-bunked it on two army cots alongside the

van a few hundred yards from the runway. The remainder of the close support team, about ? of all kinds and some tech reps, were housed in the hangar area, but for us it was open air living, no shelter of any kind. Luckily it didn't rain. The exciting part of each day was when we opened up a box of IF-9's (in-flight rations) to see what culinary delight we had in store for us. The spaghetti, tuna, and marinated (pickled) beef were big hits. Low on the totem pole were five to eight year old dinner rolls. I decided to visit ? one day and ended up in the "driver's" van. (The pilots of the U-2 were called drivers.) It was air-conditioned – what a luxury in the 90 degree plus heat of Incirlik. ? showed me a space suit especially designed for our pilots and when I spotted a pistol I was told each driver carried a personal weapon. The driver selected for this mission was Francis Gary Powers and he carried a Colt Woodsman 22. I'm somewhat of a gun nut and ended up examining this particular pistol.

"HBJGO" Puzzle

Indications were that D-Day was arriving. The "go" message would come from President Eisenhower, and he was playing this mission very close because of the upcoming summit with Khrushchev. A decision was not expected until the eleventh hour. The message was to be relayed from CIA Hqs? to the Project Comcenter in Wash DC, thence to Incirlik, which would pass it to us via CW. Sometime during the night before the mission was scheduled, the "bird" was to be pulled from the hangar and positioned at the end of the runway. As dawn broke I received my first glimpse of the U-2, long drooping wings, a bullet-like fuselage and all black with no markings – definitely meeting my expectations of what a spy plane should look like. The takeoff was scheduled for 6 A.M. It was light long before then and we were in what is known in commo jargon as the transition period. The ionosphere would not support reliable communications between the two sites; the night frequencies were falling and the day frequencies were not yet stabilized. ? and ? were on duty but all four of us plus the project chief were in the van. It was crowded, hot, and tense. Outside all the close support team members were standing around in anticipation of a takeoff with all eyes focused on our little van. The U-2 sat on the runway midst the increasing heat waves. I am sure Gary Powers was tensing up as well. Somewhere around 6 A.M. We heard some CW on one of the guard frequencies we were frantically searching.



While it sounded like Incirlik's signal and our operator's fist, the characters being sent made no sense and we continued our search and call procedure. Like a magnet, that familiar signal sending repetitive characters kept drawing our attention. We passed the 6 A.M. takeoff time and by now ? in the first states of a nervous breakdown with the rest of us not far behind. We were by now convinced that the signal was coming from our base. We focused on the characters being sent, although they made no sense. "JGOHB". But wait – there was a slight discernible break after three and then two characters. It became 'HBJ-GO-HBJ-GO, etc. The operator kept sending in the blind. We stared at these repeating five characters as if they comprised a puzzle.

Someone started saying them - "HBJ-GO-HBJ-GO." I cannot recall which of us in the van finally broke the code but someone shouted: "HBJAYWALK GO!" That was it! (HBJAYWALK was the project cryptonym.) ? almost broke a leg exiting the van and went racing across the field toward the bird. He waved for takeoff. By now it was about 6:15 A.M. Then out of the eerie early morning stillness came the roar of the engine. Gary Powers was on his way. As the U-2 contrail faded in the sky we felt drained but elated: Commo had done its job one more time. Incirlik's operator had known that with the circuit out he could not send the formal enciphered message, so he sent all he dared to send in the clear and in the blind in the hope we would hear the signal and figure out what it meant. We had.

### Feasting and Fingerprints

We were directed to stay in place until we were assured that the aircraft had passed the point of no return in the flight plan. By this time we were just about out of IF-9's and were rummaging around in the discarded cans of food that had not previously appealed to our palates. In true fashion we were not forgotten. Another U-2 landed at Peshawar with cameras and recorders removed and their cavities filled with frozen T-bones and several bags of charcoal. We feasted, rested, packed up, and started back. Our C-130 landed at RAF Habbiniyah, Iraq (a logical guess on my part) for a rest stop about 1.00 A.M. After a fine breakfast at the British Officer's Club and the passing around of some liquid fortification by the two standby drivers who had been pre- positioned there, it was off to bed in the BOQ. At around 5 A.M. we were rudely awakened by

a loud knocking on our doors. "Get up, get dressed, and be ready to move out." Something was wrong and the rumors began fly – we had to go back, the bird was down, the bird was lost. We sat around until mid-afternoon not knowing what was happening. ?? was closeted and all we could do was speculate. Everyone was grim faced and not enthused by the prospect of returning to Peshawar. There was universal concern for the driver and the success of the mission. Finally, in mid-afternoon, we boarded the C-130, took off, lost an engine, landed, reloaded the vans and equipment on a standby C-130, and headed back to Peshawar. Still no word on what had happened. The next morning we were debriefed and given the cover story on the loss of the plane, lost on a weather mission along the border and presumed to have inadvertently strayed over the border. Everyone was sworn to absolute secrecy. We received our per diem (about \$15 since quarters and rations were provided) and packed off back to Frankfurt.

Several days after my return I was reading the Stars and Stripes at breakfast and there it was - Khrushchev had blown the lid off. To top it off, there was a picture of the "agent's weapon" a Colt Woodsman 22 with my fingerprints on it. My wife took one look at me and asked no questions -she knew where I had been for the last two weeks. The lid was also off back at work and our colleagues finally figured out where the "flying squad" had been flying to all along. Did fate play one of its tricks on us this time? Who knows? Whatever the end result, commo did it's job. But maybe this would have been one time when we should have failed.

End.

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## From the past...

The August 1981 Short Skip (30 years ago) has articles about a sister club in Germany and follow up on Field Day: "Terry changed from bow and arrow and used a hammer on the end of a rope (to put up an antenna) – he got the Sheriff, old Dave WD6AJR, three stitches." Field Day was held at Ragle Ranch Park that year.

A Silverado, Napa County Fire consumed 23,000 acres and 55 to 65 homes. A group of Napa and Sonoma County hams helped out.

Next month's program (September 1981) was to be Al Bloom N1AL talking about the German sister club!

To see this old Short Ship and others, see [www.winepi.com/SCRA.htm](http://www.winepi.com/SCRA.htm).

--Mike Von der Porten, AD6YB

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Santa Rosa, California  
95402-0116

Return Service Requested

## Heathkit Returns

A notice on the Heathkit website announces that the venerable kit manufacturer, well-known to all Amateur Radio operators of a certain age, will be reentering the kit business in late August. The notice states, in part: "Heathkit will debut their new line of Do-it-Yourself kits for common around-the-house items. The first kit will be a Garage Parking Assistant (GPA). The Garage Parking Assistant kit lets you build your own system that uses ultrasonic sound waves to locate your car as it enters the garage. The system signals to the driver using LED lights mounted on the wall when the car is detected and in the perfect spot for parking.

"The GPA-100 kit consists of two primary assemblies -- the LED Display in kit form and the pre-assembled ultrasonic range module. The kit will include everything you need to complete the project except a soldering iron and hand tools.

Heathkit is interested in learning what types of products kit builders would like to build. Kit builders can submit their suggestions through this website ([www.heathkit.com](http://www.heathkit.com)) using the Contact Us email."

Although there's no indication that Heathkit Educational Systems is planning to reenter the Amateur Radio market, the St Joseph, Michigan-based company is actively looking for kit suggestions.