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# Stockton-Delta Amateur Radio Club



# W6SF FLYSHEET



ARRL MEMBER

P.O. BOX 690271 STOCKTON, CA 95269-0271

August, 2013

## JULY MEETING NOTES

. On July 11, 11 members and guests sat down to socialize and review the club's status since our last meeting. With Field Day over for this year we discussed what we had accomplished. John **NZ6Q** described his efforts with a group of friends in Valley Springs. They erected a loop antenna on 50 foot push up poles that was fed with ladder line and a 4:1 balun. John said he was satisfied because the loop was quiet so they were able to hear more weak signals.

The Stockton-Delta ARC again set up in Charlie **WB6NVB**'s new vineyard on DeVries Road. The club's results this year were not of bragging quality; however, all the participants had a good time. The members present at the meeting engaged in a lengthy discussion of baluns and tuners, and how a 20 foot vertical can be made to work for Randy **K6TVT** in his restricted development.

John **NZ6Q** described the club's assistance that was provided for the San Joaquin County Bike Fest at the University of the Pacific on June 15, at which over 150 riders participated in several different rides through Stockton and the outlying areas.

## NET CONTROL OPERATORS

A list of net control operators for the next months from those that indicated an interest in doing this function is:

- August 5 Eric W6INP**
- August 12 Paul N6KZW**
- August 19 Dave N6LHL**
- August 26 John NZ6Q**
- September 2 Bob KJ6SVX**

If you have an interest in improving your traffic handling skills and moderating the Monday night net, please contact me at [n6lhl@softcom.net](mailto:n6lhl@softcom.net). The script to follow is right on the website, and all you need is a pencil and paper to write down names and calls of the members who participate. The more people who participate, the easier it is on every one.

How could I have been so mistaken as to have trusted the experts? (John F. Kennedy)

## FIELD DAY 2013

owned relatively cool with a light breeze. About 8:30am plans and at 9am started making the cow sheds suitable to grow wheat on his estate on DeVries Road, but beam antenna was moved to make room for his grapes and pushed up to 45 feet. Then the 80 meter dipole was hung at one end of the beam mast and at the other end it sloped down to a pole attached to a fence post. Fed with ladder line and run through a tuner it was ready to operate on 40 meters and 80 meters about 10am. The number of contacts members made was not up to our usual efforts. 235 contacts were made, mostly on 20 and 40 meters. We had several newer members who were not familiar with HF get their feet wet on this new (for them) band. All in all, for those who participated in this year's Field Day, a fun weekend was to be had.



Chuck **W6COB** and Randy **K6TVT** on 20 meters



Linda **KJ6YVF** and Charlie **WB6NVB**



Shirl **AA6K** and Guy **W6MSU**



Chuck **W6COB**, Guy **W6MSU** and Shirl **AA6K**



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## STOCKTON BIKE FEST

On Friday, I received an email from Tim Viall of the San Joaquin County Amateur Radio Club. He invited me to join in the fun of the San Joaquin Bike Fest 2013. The event was held on Saturday, June 15th, 2013 from 9AM until 2PM starting and ending at the Student Center at the University of the Pacific. A few quickly exchanged emails and phone calls and we had us an event!

Of course this was the same Saturday as the club's annual 'weed whacking day' at the repeater site, so staffing both events proved to be a little challenging. It seems most of our club members who enjoy volunteering for events, either also enjoy weed whacking or had other summer-time commitments. It was a welcome opportunity to reach out to our neighboring clubs for a little help. Something I hope we will do more of in the future.

The courses were set and the operators starting arriving along with about 300 riders beginning about 8AM. The Bike Fest isn't a race, it's more of a leisurely pedal along Stockton's bike trails and down through town.

Eric, **W6INP** along with new-comer Carrie, AG6UD set up net control in a shady spot near the "start/finish" line. We established the net on the club's 444.575 repeater as an exercise in testing the ability of the repeater to support low-power and handi-talkie transmissions from around town. We had also available David, N5FDL's 147.210 repeater on the Coronado Avenue tower, but never had to use it. The 444.575 repeater, with the exception of a few spots performed flawlessly across the city.

Lodi Club member Barry, KI6ZZD provided communications from the west Rest Stop at Buckley Cove Park by the Buckley Cove Marina. Once we helped him get his FT60 HT programmed with the right PL he was able to provide solid reports the entire morning. Ron, N6GKJ, also a Lodi-ARC member covered the east Rest Stop where the Stockton Diverting Canal meets Cherokee Rd. These stops were turn-around points for riders who were basically enjoying the bike trail from west to east across the city and back.

David, N5FDL provide coverage for the downtown route, stopping to assist at the Rest Stop at Banner Island ball park when a situation arose with the placement of the water to be offered to riders on this trek. This southern route continued actually past the ballpark and around the Waterfront taking a route around McCloud Lake and Morelli Park before heading back up to UOP.

Ed, **N6XMA** took on navigator duties while riding shotgun in John, **NZ6Q**'s truck. They were pressed into last-minute SAG Wagon duty when the SAG wagon volunteer cancelled at the last minute.

Overall, this event was a low-impact work-out. A great exercise for some of our newer equipment and a chance to "play radio" with some of our neighbors that we don't see often enough. A special thank you to Ron, N6GKJ who delayed a trip to Southern California to help out for a few hours.

Also Carrie, AG6UD turned out to be a natural "net-control operator". Her radio presence was clear, concise and made everyone in the field feel like she was in control of the event. I would love to see her work NCS duty at a little more intense event and hopefully she will volunteer for the Run for Hunger, Ride for the Blind and the Delta Century next year.

ate unless there is a report on food and thank you gifts. I was disappointed in a shortfall of t-shirts in sizes that most of us need but the food I believe more than made up for it! Bar-B-Que was excellent and made for a nice 'wrap' of the event. This should be an event we want to have on the calendar for next year to support.

de John **NZ6Q**



Ron N6GKJ and Ed **N6XMA**



Dave **N5FDL**

## We get to help again at “Return to Kingdon”

Kingdon Airport was built in the early forties by the United States military and was used as a training facility for military pilots. In the mid fifties a Stockton Police Officer converted its use into what was then known as the “Kingdon Drag Strip”. The philosophy was to get kids who were engaging in illegal street racing off the streets and provide them with a safer and legal alternative. For the next two decades the drag strip became very well known throughout the racing community and hosted many big name competitors from all over the state. In the mid seventies, Kingdon was converted back into an operational airport and is currently used for general aviation and flight training. In honor of the many racers and all the exciting memories of the Kingdon Drag Strip Kingdon Airport has once again opened its doors for an annual reunion of drag racing for all to enjoy.

So, not far from Charlie’s wheat field is the Kingdon Air Strip. This is a once a year **charity event**. Quite a few hams came out to volunteer with security last year and we have been asked to help out again. We will be watching the race and looking for those with too much to drink. I am happy to say everything went wonderful last year. The spectators and participants were very well behaved. The shifts are expected to be 4 hours long. But many of us have enjoyed the entire weekend. The exhilaration of seeing and hearing those incredible cars is a wonderful experience. We will use both business band radios and the W6SF repeater. Free

are Sept 6 , 7 & 8 . Friday is a short day with  
7pm . Sat is all day event (6:45am - 7pm) along

LET ME KNOW ASAP if you would like to help... When can you come? And what is your shirt size? I still enjoy my shirt from last year.

Contact me at [n6kzw@sbcglobal.net](mailto:n6kzw@sbcglobal.net) Please let me know, shirts are being ordered soon....

õ ..de Paul **N6KZW**



## DOES ANTENNA POLARITY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

By John KD6FVA

They say practical experience is the best teacher and most recently I had an opportunity to observe just how much antenna polarity can affect your communication.

While on a recent camping trip in the high Sierra (7000 feet) I observed that I could not make any of the usual Sierra Foothill repeaters including our W6SF. On this trip I wanted to try simplex back to the valley floor on simplex 2 meters so Mike K6BR and I set up a schedule on 147.510. Mike has a 80 foot tower with a HORIZONTAL 2 meter beam at the top. I brought with me two antenna's, an old Cushcraft Ringo Ranger (a 2 meter vertical with only modest gain characteristics) and a 3 element 2 meter beam. I erected a makeshift antenna mast at 15 feet and mounted the Ringo Ranger and began to make calls to K6BR but could not copy anything, nor did it seem he was hearing to me.



I then mounted the 3 element beam to a mast about 6 feet high and began to hear a faint simplex signal from Tracy, I moved the antenna left and right and found the maximum incoming signal strength. On a very curious move I accidentally oriented the beam to roughly 10 to 15 degree downtilt towards the ground and the signal improved a bit. I was perplexed at first why tilting the antenna toward the ground would improve our communication. I began to wonder if the signal effectively bouncing off ground was altering the pattern of my signal as it left my camp area and creating something other than a nice vertical signal.



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antenna's in opposite polarity K6BR suggested I rotate  
enna on his tower in Tracy. I rotated the beam to  
ition I had before but I did not aim it with any downtilt  
every call thereafter was a full scale simplex signal  
s of power to make the earlier attempts when I was

Vertically polarized. Now with both receive and transmit antennas in the same Horizontal  
polarity I was able to reduce my transmit power to only 5 watts, ten times less power than was  
required before. According to K6SCA (Steve) there is a 20 db difference when the polarity is  
180 degree out of phase.

Does the polarity make a big difference on the HF bands? Not nearly so much, when the signal  
bounces off the atmosphere the polarity shifts and does not come down in the same polarity is  
arrived. For this reason you can use either Vertical or Horizontally polarized antennas on HF.

## TAKING A DOSE OF MY OWN MEDICINE

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

Last week, I wrote a blog post on preventive maintenance for one of my writing clients.

Afterwards, I decided to take a dose of my own medicine and do a little preventive maintenance  
around the shack. I started with the Astron RS-35M, which provides the DC power that runs HF  
transceiver and my VHF/UHF transceiver in my shack. I had started noticing a few little things,  
such as the voltage adjustment being a little fussy, that I wanted to correct before the supply  
failed on me.

After removing the cover, I vacuumed all the dust out of the supply. The RS-35M wasn't very  
dirty, but even so, getting the dirt out of a piece of equipment is probably the first thing you'll  
want to do when performing preventive maintenance. Dirt impedes air flow. That can lead to  
higher operating temperatures, and as the lab manager that I interviewed for my blog post said,  
"Heat kills." Not only should you vacuum any dust out of a cabinet, you should also clean the  
fan filters, if your gear has them. Dusty filters prevent air from flowing smoothly through  
equipment, and that means the fans don't cool as well as they should.

Once that was done, I did a visual inspection. One thing that you want to look for are  
components that look like they're getting too hot. Another thing to look for is evidence of arcing.  
Whatever is causing the overheating or arcing will eventually cause a unit to fail. Fortunately, I  
found neither. Next, I checked to see that the components mounted to the enclosure were  
securely screwed down. In the RS-35M, the transformer, the bridge rectifier, and an electrolytic  
are mounted to the enclosure. Oddly enough, the bridge rectifier was quite loose, so I tightened  
it down. Also loose were the output terminals. I tightened these down as well.

Finally, I squirted a little cleaner and lube into the voltage adjustment pot and worked it back and  
forth. That seemed to do the job. That pot now works smoothly and cleanly.

I put the cover back on, reconnected the power cable, and got back to making QSOs. It should  
be good for another couple of years.

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When he's not keeping the gear in his shack in tip-top shape, Dan, KB6NU enjoys working CW  
on the HF bands and teaching ham radio classes. For more information about his operating  
activities and his "No-Nonsense" series of amateur radio license study guides, go to  
[KB6NU.Com](http://KB6NU.Com) or e-mail [cwgeek@kb6nu.com](mailto:cwgeek@kb6nu.com).



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# MEMBER CALENDAR

QSO Party [www.ten-ten.org](http://www.ten-ten.org)

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August 3 & 4 - ARRL August UHF Contest [www.arrl.org/contests](http://www.arrl.org/contests)

August 3 & 4 - North American QSO Party, CW [www.ncjweb.com](http://www.ncjweb.com)

August 8 . Monthly **membership meeting** of the Stockton Delta ARC at Bear Creek Community Church, 11171 Lower Sacramento Road, just north of Eight Mile Road.

August 17 - **VE Testing** at Fire Station #14 on McNabb Street off Thornton Road at 10am. Contact Mike Zane at [N6ZW @ Comcast.net](mailto:N6ZW@Comcast.net) at least 3 days prior to test day. No walk ins!

August 17 & 18 - North American QSO Party, Phone [www.njcweb.com](http://www.njcweb.com)

August 24 -26 . Hawaii QSO Party [www.hawaiiqsoparty.org](http://www.hawaiiqsoparty.org)

August 24 & 25 . Kansas QSO Party [www.ksqsoparty.org](http://www.ksqsoparty.org).

August 24 & 25 . Ohio QSO Party. [www.ohqp.org](http://www.ohqp.org)

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**Do you have any suggestions, comments or concerns? We want to hear from you. Do you have an idea that we, as a club can all benefit from? Let us hear about it. Do you have any topic for discussion that YOU could and would contribute to the club? We want to hear from YOU! To submit articles for the monthly newsletter, email the editor at [n6lhl@softcom.net](mailto:n6lhl@softcom.net)**

"Half this game is ninety percent mental."  
--Philadelphia Phillies manager, Danny Ozark

## W6SF CLUB INFORMATION

**MEETINGS:** Regular meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at **7:30pm, at the Bear Creek Community Church, 11171 Lower Sacramento Road, just north of Eight Mile Road.** Members, guests, and people having an interest in Amateur Radio are invited to attend. The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, August 8, 2013**

**WEEKLY NET:** Held each Monday evening at 8pm on **147.165+ PL 107.2 Hz** Members and visitors are invited to check in. There is also an unofficial get together on Thursday evenings (except meeting nights) at 7:30pm on **28.457**. Amateurs with the proper license are encouraged to participate.



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500 feet, the club repeater covers the southern Sacramento and  
**W6SF**, and can be heard on **147.165**+Mhz with a PL tone of 107.2  
MHz repeater at **442.250 +** with a PL of 107.2 Hz. Locally, the  
PL of 107.2 from East Main Street.

**CLUB WEBSITE:** <http://www.w6sf.org>

**2013 CLUB OFFICERS:**

President:	<b>WB6NVB</b> , Charlie Johnson	wb6nvb@arrl.net
Vice President:	<b>N6KZW</b> , Paul Engelman	n6kzw@sbcglobal.net
Treasurer:	<b>KD6CPA</b> , Peter Hine	selkied@earthlink.net
Secretary:	<b>W6INP</b> , Eric Chapa	perrla1@aol.com
Call Sign Trustee	<b>AA6K</b> , Shirl Rose	rosesl@prodigy.net
Repeater Trustee:	<b>KD6FVA</b> , John Kester	jbkester@att.net
Member At Large:	<b>K6KJQ</b> , Glen Pitts	kjq45@att.net
Membership Chairman	<b>KJ6RGE</b> , Bryan Moulton	b.moulton@sbcglobal.net
Newsletter Editor	<b>N6LHL</b> , Dave Hardwick	n6lhl@softcom.net

**CLUB DUES:** Individual dues are \$20, family dues are \$30, payable to Stockton-Delta Amateur Radio Club at the address on the masthead. We thank you for your continued support!