

# QSA-5

Founded 1933

The Marin Amateur Radio Society Monthly Newsletter

January 2008

## Pres' Msg.

Greetings from the desk of the president. Happy New Year to you all, it is my wish that 2008 will be a safe and prosperous year for us all. It has been my distinct pleasure to serve as your president in 2007. I can't say enough about how rewarding volunteering can be. As most of you know, I am active in a couple of radio history projects. There was a time when I didn't have time for, or more precisely, didn't "Think" I had time to volunteer. Through my involvement with the SS Jeremiah O'Brien at Pier 45 in San Francisco and the Maritime Radio Historical Society in the Pt. Reyes National Seashore, in addition to the Marin Amateur Radio Society, I have learned much more about radio, artifact preservation and myself. I have learned that I enjoy sharing what I know with others; some call that teaching. Doors of opportunity and leadership have presented themselves. I have upgraded my commercial FCC license and am in pursuit of my Merchant Mariner Document. There might be an ocean cruise in my future. I encourage each and every one of you to add volunteerism to your list of activities in 2008 if you haven't already. Best wishes for a successful 2008.

73/88

Denice Stoops

Website at **W6SG.NET**  
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For ARRL SF Section news, go to  
[www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=SF](http://www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=SF)

## December General Meeting.

Held at the **Deer Park Villa in Fairfax**, it turned out to be an enjoyable event. We can't speak for the other food choices but **the New York strip steak was perfectly medium rare**. We put no stock in the rumor that one of our members, in league with the Villa, told the waiters to give us the best piece of meat because it was going to be commented on in the club paper. This belief should be upheld by the absence of any compensation from the Villa, such as a **free bar drink or appetizer**.

Doug Short KD6SAU won the top raffle prize, a 2m HT. We didn't win anything and don't remember who won the remaining prizes. Next year we'll take notes or put this column together right after the event instead of at the end of December when much has faded from memory. Not being completely brain dead, we do remember Denice KI6BBR on our left and Elisabeth KI6IMV seated to the right.

John Iacono KF6VYH came down from Rancho Cordova to perform his legerdemain. (Last year I had to look that one up.) Unfortunately, because of safety regulations, he wasn't able to do his fire eating act. However, if he does it next year it'll have been two years since the last time and he'll be two years older and shakier and we may get to see and smell the singed moustache trick we've been waiting for for the last few years.

## New Board Members for 2008

**Randy Jenkins** (re-elected) **KA6BQF**  
**John Boyd** **KE6ORI**  
**Horst Dannecker** **KA6BHZ**  
**Elisabeth Thomas-Matej** **KI6IMV**

**There was one write-in vote for Howard Harker KG6JHW. When we have the DNA from the saliva on the envelope analyzed, we'll know who was responsible. Appropriate action will be taken.**

**POBox 6423**  
**San Rafael, 94903-0423**

**Board of Directors Meeting, Thursday,**  
**December 13, 2007**

Board members present: Rich Carbine, August Koehler, Norm Baetz, Tom Jordan, Phil Dunlap, Dave Hodgson, Doug Slusher, Randy Jenkins.

The meeting was called to order at 19:45 hours by Secretary Randy Jenkins.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as submitted by e-mail.

No printed agenda was available; the meeting was conducted in the order as listed on last month's agenda.

**Communications:** Jenkins reported on two thank-you letters / receipts for donations.

**Treasurer** Hodgson submitted three reports; the November monthly account summaries, the 2007 profit and loss statement, and the proposed 2008 budget. Income for November was \$5,250.00. Expenses for November were \$20,876.99. All CDs had been cashed in, and the net balance in the checking account was \$2965.11. All bills due to the contractors had been paid. The profit and loss statement for 2007 showed total income of \$30,818.00, and total expenses of \$65,856.10. Total construction costs were \$48,208.98. The Board of Directors discussed the 2008 proposed budget which included projected income of \$28,320, and projected expenses of \$26,760.

There was a discussion about increasing the membership dues. An increase of \$5-\$10 was discussed, to be presented at the next general membership meeting. It was moved by board member Carbine and seconded by board member Baetz to approve the 2008 budget as submitted.

Public Service Committee: we have already been contacted by the Miwok 100 and Holstein 100 with dates for 2008. Dave Hodgson is encouraging CERT members to assist us in providing communication for the Dipsea.

Technical Committee, Doug Slusher has been in contact with Dan Healy who is willing to help us with installation of the tone boards at the remote sites for the Big Rock system. The tone boards may already be in place,

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Board meeting, from page one.

and this will be determined on their first trip which should be to the Mt. Barnabe site.

**Volunteer Examiner Liaison**, Al Weisman has been out of commission and is in a recovery hospital in the East Bay. Randy Jenkins has custody of the test materials.

**RACES Liaison**, there's a general RACES membership meeting on January 19.

**Building Managers**, Rich Carbine reported that the reconstructed rooms are ready to paint. Dave Hodgson will be recruiting volunteers in Rich's absence. We still need to get the door installed on the handicapped bathroom.

**Old Business:**

The culvert has been installed.

Ballots for the Board of Directors election have been mailed, maybe.

**Fundraising:** Elisabeth KI6IMV has several applications in progress.

**ICOM 706 Radio:** Doug has been in touch with Rem about the radio, and it should be available for Field Day.

**New Business:**

Rich Carbine will be the liaison between the Marin club and REDX for Field Day. We will use the Marin club's call sign in 2008, having used REDX's in 2007.

**Good of the Order:** Tom Jordan thanked the board for the opportunity to serve on it, explained his busy schedule for the coming year, and promised that he would keep in touch.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 20:35 hours.

Respectfully submitted, Randy Jenkins KA6BQF, Secretary.

The official copy of these minutes shall reside in the secretary's files as maintained at the corporate office.

From column three.

**stated in the radio convention which just specified a signal of three dots, three dashes, three dots, sent as one continuous group.**

**No mention was made of "SOS" at all at the Berlin Convention or in the Marconi circular letters.**

Also the mention of "can't hear because of steam" would have been in response to a signal sent by someone else. There were NO other signals at all on the recording, nor were there any atmospheric heard. The speed is too high and is contrary to what Harold Bride (2nd R/O) testified to later."

**Titanic Distress Call, Real or Faked?**

At the MARS Christmas party at the Deer Park Villa an audio CD was played purporting to be a true copy of the distress call sent by the Titanic on 14 April 1912. Some controversy has ensued among members of the Radio Officers group on this subject.

<http://groups.google.com/group/radio-officers?hl=en>

You can listen to the CQD SOS recording minus the added narrative at this address:

[http://mikea.ath.cx/www.nlea.coastalradio.org.uk/SOS\\_MGY.mp3](http://mikea.ath.cx/www.nlea.coastalradio.org.uk/SOS_MGY.mp3)

Following are some comments on the legitimacy of the recording.

"Thanks for all the wonderful answers about the SOS recording of the Titanic.

There were only a few who thought it was real. Most thought it was false, some for the keying speed, some for other reasons which we will investigate later in this email.

Regarding the keying, many thought it was a Vibroplex, however two people reported that they could and can send with a straight key at that speed and that the keying in the recording was that of a straight key. I know some whom I've heard on the air - TG9ADM comes to mind—he is a young man - less than 20 years of age - and he sends with an Ameco straight key - also known as a Japanese JJ38 key. He can send 25 to 28 wpm. I've heard him.

The other objection to the sending is the shortness of the dashes. However, Phillips was a former wire telegrapher and they used a short dash - about 2:1 ratio to speed up the transmissions. Also I've found that when sending fast on a hand key -- "something" has to go to get the speed - it's either the spacing of the length of the code elements - mostly the dash.

In support of it being a fake were mentioned the "highly unlikely" possibility of MCE having an Edison Dictaphone - even if they realized they had a "news story" and made a telegraph or telephone call - who are they going to call that has such a machine? This is Newfoundland - not New York City. However because of Newfoundland's significant geographic location with respect to Europe, it had significant telegraph coverage - if not telephone coverage. The trans-Atlantic telegraph cable was at Heart's Content, NF to Valencia

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(where present coast station EJK is located).

Some interesting reading on Newfoundland early communications is at the bottom of the news release. <http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/1997/tcr/0324N04.HTM>

Others question the non-fading of the signal. A signal from 300 miles or less - as was the distance from Titanic to Cape Race doesn't exhibit the quick fading of the HF bands, but if it does fade, it does so gradually often with the time of day - however 300 miles or less was almost always solid copy with modern equipment. But most noticed that the signal was "too loud" - I agree if the call was received with such a strong signal, it would have been received "somewhere" barely received - but heard. It wasn't. Cape Race copied it fairly faintly.

I will close by giving the email from Canadian Radio Historian, Spud Roscoe, VE1BC:

On Dec 16, 2007 1:52 PM, Spud Roscoe. Here is my 2 cents worth.

It has to be a fake because none of the old boys I interviewed 35 years ago that were there mentioned it. The DF station on Cape Race had call sign VAZ and Ray Bridger operated that in 1919. He modulated a transmitter with a gramophone and received several reports on the signal from passing passenger ships. If there had been a recording like this these old boys would have mentioned it. Unfortunately they have all been dead at least 20 years now.

Another thing I have been given is a typewritten log for this incident. Again false. The original logs burned when the MCE/VCE station burned in 1919. **I knew the log was a fake as soon as I saw it because it was not written in the radio language of the day.**

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to one and all! 73 Spud VE1BC Halifax, Nova Scotia.

So I conclude - with your help - that it is a fake.

Thanks for the answers and the help." 73 David Ring

R/O US Merchant Marine (Ret)

**The remaining text was sent as a postscript:** "I tried so hard to get all the reasons that I forgot one of the most convincing ones -- **a professional would have sent the signal of distress as it was**

Column one, lower.

**K6GWE Repeaters**  
**Big Rock Ridge 147.330 +**  
**2 meters INPUTS**  
 pl 203.5 Big Rock  
 pl 179.9 Mt. Tam west  
 pl 167.9 Mt. Barnabe  
 pl 192.8 Tiburon  
**Mt. Tamalpais 146.700 -**  
 pl 179.9 Mt. Tam input  
**San Pedro Ridge 147.330 +**  
 pl 173.8 off-line - reserve status.  
**440**  
**San Pedro Ridge**  
 443.525 + pl 82.5  
**Mt. Tamalpais**  
 443.250 + pl 179.9

**CRAB FEED**

The East Bay Amateur Radio Club will be holding a crab feed on Saturday, February 2, 2008, at the Salvation Army, 4600 Appian Way, El Sobrante.

Tickets are \$30 in advance. Doors open at 5 p.m.; dinner at 5:30. Door prize drawing. Contact Randy, KA6BQF, for tickets or information. (510) 526-4089 or KA6BQF@ARRL.net. Come on over. We'll make sure that you get crabs.

"What happens when you predict snow but don't get any! We had a female news anchor that, the day after it was supposed to have snowed and didn't, turned to the weatherman and asked: "So Bob, where's that 8 inches you promised me last night?" Not only did HE have to leave the set, but half the crew did too they were laughing so hard!"

I was all depressed last night, mostly because of the crass commercialization of Christmas. So I called 'Lifeline' this morning on my cell phone seeking help. I got a call center in Pakistan, and told them I was suicidal. They got all excited and asked if I could drive a truck.

Anonymous

**GIFT WRAPPING TIPS FOR MEN**

This is the time of year when we think back to the very first Christmas, when the Three Wise Men; Gaspar, Balthazar and Herb, went to see the baby Jesus and, according to the Book of Matthew, "presented unto Him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh".

These are simple words, but if we analyze them carefully, we discover an important, yet often overlooked, theological fact: There is no mention of wrapping paper.

If there had been wrapping paper, Matthew would have said so: "And lo, the gifts were inside 600 square cubits of paper. And the paper was festooned with pictures of Frosty the Snowman. And Joseph was going to throw it away, but Mary saideth unto him, she saideth, 'Holdeth it! That is nice paper! Saveth it for next year!' And Joseph did rolleth his eyeballs. And the baby Jesus was more interested in the paper than the frankincense.

But these words do not appear in the Bible, which means that the very first Christmas gifts were NOT wrapped. This is because the people giving those gifts had two important characteristics: 1. They were wise. 2. They were men.

Men are not big gift wrappers. Men do not understand the point of putting paper on a gift just so somebody else can tear it off. This is not just my opinion: This is a scientific fact based on a statistical survey of two guys I know.

One is Rob, who said the only time he ever wraps a gift is "if it's such a poor gift that I don't want to be there when the person opens it." The other is Gene, who told me he does wrap gifts, but as a matter of principle never takes more than 15 seconds per gift. "No one ever had to wonder which presents daddy wrapped at Christmas," Gene said. "They were the ones that looked like enormous spitballs."

I also wrap gifts, but because of some defect in my motor skills, I can never completely wrap them. I can take a gift the size of a deck of cards and put it the exact center of a piece of wrapping paper the size of a regulation volleyball court, but when I am done folding and taping, you can still see a sector of the gift peeking out. (Sometimes I camouflage this sector with a marking pen.)

If I had been an ancient Egyptian in the field of mummies, the lower half of the Pharaoh's body would be covered only by

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scotch tape. On the other hand, if you give my wife a 12-inch square of wrapping paper, she can wrap a C-130 cargo plane. My wife, like many women, actually likes wrapping things. If she gives you a gift that requires batteries, she wraps the batteries separately, which to me is very close to being a symptom of mental illness. If it were possible, my wife would wrap each individual volt.

My point is that gift-wrapping is one of those skills like having babies that come more naturally to women than to men. That is why today I am presenting:

**GIFT-WRAPPING TIPS FOR MEN:**

Whenever possible, buy gifts that are already wrapped. If, when the recipient opens the gift, neither one of you recognizes it, you can claim that it's myrrh.

The editors of Woman's Day magazine recently ran an item on how to make your own wrapping paper by printing a design on it with an apple sliced in half horizontally and dipped in a mixture of food coloring and liquid starch. They must be smoking crack.

If you're giving a hard-to-wrap gift, skip the wrapping paper! Just put it inside a bag and stick one of those little adhesive bows on it. This creates a festive visual effect that is sure to delight the lucky recipient on Christmas morning:

**YOUR WIFE:** Why is there a Hefty trash bag under the tree?

**YOU:** It's a gift! See? It has a bow!

**YOUR WIFE** (peering into the trash bag): It's a leaf blower.

**YOU:** Gas-powered! Five horsepower!

**YOUR WIFE:** I want a divorce.

**YOU:** I also got you some myrrh.

In conclusion, remember that the important thing is not what you give, or how you wrap it. The important thing, during this very special time of year, is that you save the receipt.

~Author Unknown~

But we've got a pretty good idea.

Jake is 5 and learning to read. He points at a picture in a zoo book and says, "Look Mama! It's a frickin' Elephant!" Deep breath ... "What did you call it?" "It's a frickin' Elephant, Mama! It says so on the picture!" and so it does.

"African Elephant"

## Odds & Ends

### Vanity Plates: California Goes Strange

If you live in California, have a four-or five-character call sign and apply for call sign license plates, you will be in for a surprise when they arrive. That's because the manufacturing process is designed for six digit plates, and you will likely find that the state has inserted a blank space after the third character.

According to Cliff Cheng, WW6CC, he found out the hard way when he got his new call and applied for new plates. When he received them, they read WW6 (space) CC. In the past when applying for California Ham plates, you could request that the Department of Motor Vehicles run the suffix together without the space. Now that is no longer an option. Curious as to when the option disappeared, Cliff contacted State Assemblyman Mike Feur's aide, Josh Englander. He told Cliff that this is a new policy as of last fall.

### Randy KA6BQF, on the clubhouse.

Stanton and I installed the door on the enlarged restroom. The door knob could not be installed, the backset on the knob is 2 3/4" and the door was prepped for 2 3/8". We still need to install the trim around the door.

There was a significant leak at the rear, under the deck area, but no sign of leaks in the areas that we have just completed. I will bring my carpet machine tomorrow to extract as much water from the carpet as possible. **(done)**

The canopy over the comm. truck has come loose from the building. It looks like it rose free of its supports and then came down. It is sitting on the truck. We need to remount that. **(done)**

Other than that, I talked with the neighbor to the west of us. He was vacuuming up leaves in our parking area. He said that since they come from his trees.....

My power was off all day until 6pm yesterday (Friday) and Rita didn't get power back until 5 this morning. 73 and see you tomorrow.

### Here is the MARS Calendar of Public Service Events for 2008 (so far):

Saturday, April 19 - The Relay 3PM - 5 AM 8-10 Volunteers Needed

Saturday, May 03 - Miwok 100 5 AM - 10 PM 10-12 Volunteers Needed

Saturday, May 10 - Human Race 8AM - Noon 6-8 Volunteers Needed

Sunday, June 8 - The Dipsea Race 8AM- 2 PM 12 - 14 Volunteers Needed

Saturday, June 21 - Double-Dipsea 8AM - 3 PM 8-10 Volunteers Needed

Saturday, August 02 - Marin Century / Mt. Tam Double Century 4AM - Midnight 20+ Volunteers Needed

Saturday, August 16 - Holstein Hundred 6AM-7PM 15+ Volunteers Needed

We expect a couple of additional small events, and there are opportunities in adjacent areas where volunteers are needed. Adjacent hams help us in Marin and we should return the favor, where possible.

Randy Jenkins, KA6BQF, ka6bqf@arrl.net

Secretary & Public Service Coordinator

510 526.4089

### Amateur Radio Operators Gain New LF Band

At the now concluded World Radiocommunications Conference in Geneva, Switzerland; a worldwide secondary allocation of 135.7-137.8 kHz was approved. This marks the first time since allocations to radio services began that the amateur service has had an allocation below the medium-wave broadcasting band. The effective date is not yet set, and, in any case, Amateur Radio operators must wait until their own administrations authorize the new allocation before they can use it.

At the time of writing, hopes of an allocation near 5 MHz had faded.

Future World Radiocommunications Conferences are tentatively scheduled for 2011 and 2015. One tentative agenda item for 2011 is a secondary allocation of about 15 kHz around 500 kHz. Not on the schedule is any more talk about a new 5 MHz Amateur Radio band.

— ARNewsline

A six year old goes to the hospital with his grandma to visit his grandpa.

When they get to the hospital, he runs ahead of his grandma and bursts into his grandpa's room.

"Grandpa, Grandpa," he says excitedly, "as soon as Grandma comes into the room, make a noise like a frog!"

"What?" said his grandpa.

"Make a noise like a frog because grandma said that as soon as you croak, we're going to Disneyland

**General Membership Meeting** is held on the first Friday of each month at Alto District Clubhouse on Shell Road in Mill Valley, starting at 7:30 PM. Turn right at the first stop light west off hwy 101 at the Mill Valley/Tiburon exit. Angle right at next stop sign, then turn left at next street, Shell Road. We are in the two story building on the left directly under the power lines.

**Business/Board Meeting** meets at the Alto District Clubhouse in Mill Valley on the second Thursday at 7:30 PM. Members are encouraged to attend to try to keep the clowns honest.

**Sunday morning informal meeting**, grinningly called the bible/babble class, meets every Sunday morning at the Alto District Clubhouse in Mill Valley starting at roughly 0800 hours and runs to around 1100 hours. Sometimes we even talk about radio. This weekly event is hosted by **Ben Sawtelle N6PJZ**, our Ham of The Year in 1996, whose absence would be the result of serious disease or dismemberment, only. So far, he hasn't forgotten how to get there.

**Dues structure is: \$25. per year. \$30. for family memberships.** No dues are charged for Life or Honorary members.

<p><b>Marin Amateur Radio Society</b>  <b>President:</b>                  Denice Stoops KI6BBR 672-0303  <b>Vice President:</b>                  Eric Rosenquist KG6WOU 257-8841  <b>Secretary:</b>                  Randy Jenkins KA6BQF                  510-526-4089  <b>Treasurer:</b>                  Dave Hodgson KG6TCJ 332-1864  <b>Additional Board Members:</b>                  Norm Baetz WA6CLK 898-4887                  Rich Carbine W6UDS 479-3136                  Phil Dunlap K6PHD 491-0318                  John Boyd KE6ORI                  Horst Dannecker KA6BHZ                  Elisabeth Thomas-Matej KG6IMV</p>	<p><b>Education Chair:</b>                  Ben Sawtelle N6PJZ 382-1170                  kermode7@hotmail.com  <b>Membership:</b> Dave and Phil  <b>VE Liaison:</b>                  Al Weisman W5ALW 510-237-1978  <b>Bldg. Manager</b>                  Rich Carbine W6UDS 479-3136  <b>Trustee for W6SG:</b>                  Augie Koehler KØCQL  <b>Trustee for K6GWE:</b>                  Doug Slusher KF6AKU  <b>Sunday Emergency Nets:</b>  <b>HF</b> Ben's been doing both.  <b>VHF</b>                  Corrections to K6PHD@ARRL.NET</p>	<p><b>DX Representative of ARRL:</b>                  Jerry Foster WA6BXV 892-3829  <b>WEBMASTER</b>                  Glenn Meader N1ZKW 987-3948                  N1ZKW@ARRL.NET  <b>Public Service Event Coordinators</b>                  Randy Jenkins KA6BQF                  510-526-4089                  Asst. Tom Jordan KG6TCM                  497-4406  <b>ARRL San Francisco Section Mgr.</b>                  Bill Hillendahl KH6GJV@ARRL.ORG  <b>Editor of QSA-5:</b>                  Phil Dunlap K6PHD 491-0318                  K6PHD@ARRL.NET</p>
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The Mailing  
 Address  
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