



The President's Corner

Manuel AE6SG

Morongo Basin Amateur Radio Club Presidents Message

Greeting fellow members,
Hope you are all doing well and staying healthy, lots of us are getting our dose of pollen and dust from winds we have been having. I for one can't seem to get this cough under control.

We are still in need of a vice president, so if you would like the job let me know. This is not a very hard job to do and you will have help in doing it. We also need to have someone do a presentation for this month. I am sure that there must be a few of you out there with some very interesting items that you like to share with the rest of us. Remember it can be on any subject you like that would encourage us to maybe want to pursue that interest. Last week I did a brief presentation on primitive bow making. One my hobbies that has brought me lots of pleasure and self-satisfaction.

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2013 CLUB OFFICERS

- **President -** Manuel Borges AE6SG
- **Vice President -**
- **Secretary -** Marilyn Lutz AE6FH
- **Treasurer -** Glenn Miller N6GIW

The Treasurer's Report

Glenn N6GIW

Beginning balance on 4-2-13: \$1596.31
Membership renewals: + \$105.00
Repeater phone line: - \$ 24.09
Club account balance: \$1677.22

73 DE Glenn N6GIW

April Meeting Highlights

The monthly membership meeting was held on April 18th and was called to order by our President at 7:00pm.

The following items were brought before the club for consideration:

- Field Day will be held in Johnson Valley at Fire Station 43 details will be discussed at the next meeting.
- The club still needs to elect an interim vice president. We have 2 people who volunteered but because one of them was absent, we will need to continue the election next month.

After business was concluded, Manuel AE6SG gave a very interesting presentation on the art of custom bow making.

He had samples of the types of wood that he uses and several bows in different stages of completion. Not only does he craft the bows, but he makes the arrows from scratch and even winds his own twine.

Thanks for the presentation Manuel, it was great!

This month we will be discussing field day and present some of the aspects of the event. With this if you have an interesting antidote bring it up during the meeting. There are those who have never been or know about Field Day, the one event that brings the amateur radio community across the country and local communities together to test and prepare for a disaster or in support of local community events.

Those participating in Field Day may want to bring some equipment that they will be using and describe what they will be doing.

The weather is getting warmer and it's getting time to fix up that antenna that has been sitting for a while. Putting up that new antenna, or replacing some old coax. Now is also a time to get acquainted with your fellow hams and get together. How many would like to have a summer event, and just have fun?

If you have any suggestions for programs let me know, or just bring them up during the meeting. This is our club lets have some fun.

Thank you all for your support.
Manuel

*It's not important what class of license an Amateur Radio operator has.
It only matters what class of Amateur Radio operator has the license.*

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Address or phone number change???

The FCC requires you to maintain a valid current mailing address in their database at all times. This is so that they can contact you by mail if needed.

If you move or even change PO boxes, be sure to update your information using the FCC ULS online system.

If you do not maintain a current address and mail to you is returned to the FCC as undeliverable, your license can be revoked and removed from the database.

OUR NEXT MEETING

WHEN:

Thursday, May 16, 2013 7:00pm

WHERE:

St. Christopher of the Desert Catholic Church
61161 Sunburst Dr. Joshua Tree, CA

HOW TO GET THERE:

Traveling EAST *or* WEST on Hwy. 62, turn SOUTH on Sunnyhill Road in Joshua Tree.

Go ½ mile SOUTH and turn EAST (left) on Sunburst Drive. The Church is located at the end of the block.

An Opportunity for Training this Summer

I received the following email a couple of days ago. It sounds really interesting, so I'm sharing it here in case somebody didn't get a chance to read it.

-----oOo-----

Subject: NWS Weather Spotter Training

Greetings Fellow Hams

I have been asked to inquire about any amateur radio operators or community members who may be interested in taking a national weather service "Weather Spotter Training Course" in Yucca Valley in July or August. Anyone interested can send me an e-mail. I will coordinate with the High desert Skywarn coordinator on the date if we receive enough interest.

E-mail to Chris@WB6CDF.com if you are interested.

Please give this wide distribution and everyone is welcome to forward this e-mail to anyone who may be interested that may not have been included in the original e-mail.

*Thanks,
Chris Nichols
WB6CDF
Yucca Valley, California*

-----oOo-----

I really didn't know much about Skywarn, so I did some research on the internet and copied the following information from the NOAA Skywarn page at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/skywarn/>

What is Skywarn?

"The effects of severe weather are felt every year by many Americans. To obtain critical weather information, NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS), part of the U.S. Department of Commerce, established SKYWARN® with partner organizations. SKYWARN® is a volunteer program with nearly 290,000 trained severe weather spotters. These volunteers help keep their local communities safe by providing timely and accurate reports of severe weather to the National Weather Service.

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"Skywarn® and the Skywarn® logo are registered trademarks of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, used with permission."

Although SKYWARN® spotters provide essential information for all types of weather hazards, the main responsibility of a SKYWARN® spotter is to identify and describe severe local storms. In the average year, 10,000 severe thunderstorms, 5,000 floods and more than 1,000 tornadoes occur across the United States. These events threatened lives and property.

Since the program started in the 1970s, the information provided by SKYWARN® spotters, coupled with Doppler radar technology, improved satellite and other data, has enabled NWS to issue more timely and accurate warnings for tornadoes, severe thunderstorms and flash floods.

SKYWARN® storm spotters are part of the ranks of citizens who form the Nation's first line of defense against severe weather. There can be no finer reward than to know that their efforts have given communities the precious gift of time--seconds and minutes that can help save lives.

Who is Eligible?

NWS encourages anyone with an interest in public service and access to communication, such as HAM radio, to join the SKYWARN® program. Volunteers include police and fire personnel, dispatchers, EMS workers, public utility workers and other concerned private citizens. Individuals affiliated with hospitals, schools, churches, nursing homes or who have a responsibility for protecting others are also encouraged to become a spotter.

How Can I Get Involved?

NWS has 122 local Weather Forecast Offices, each with a Warning Coordination Meteorologist, who is responsible for administering the SKYWARN® program in their local area. Training is conducted at these local offices and covers:

- Basics of thunderstorm development
- Fundamentals of storm structure
- Identifying potential severe weather features
- Information to report
- How to report information
- Basic severe weather safety

Classes are free and typically are about two hours long."

If this sounds interesting to you too, please don't hesitate to let Chris know so that they can organize a session for this summer.

Basic Grounding Notes from this “Dummy”

Tom McLean KJ6DZT – Part Dos, Deux, Two.



In the last article, I was installing 3-10 foot 1/2” copper pipes for ground rods. I finally got three 10 foot copper pipes in a triangular configuration, well sort of, but Oh Well! Blame the rocks/boulders. The pipes were connected with #6 (AWG) solid copper wire that was found at my local hardware store with 1955 pricing on it. Huge savings. \$\$ They didn’t have any skewers on it and it wasn’t in the inventory to charge me the current price and it had oxidized, a little dented and out-of shape, so they let me have it at \$.11 per foot just to get rid of it – so I bought the entire 50 foot roll.

I again used Joe Carr’s Radio Tech-Notes on “What is a good Ground?” <http://www.dxing.com/tnotes/tnote02.pdf> as my guidelines and ... installed 3 ground rods arranged in a triangle like the Greek letter delta (Δ) when viewed from above”. See the photo above. A bit overkill perhaps, but I only wanted to do this one (1) time and I only had room for 3 ground rods. Besides if the triangle didn’t work, I could disconnect them as needed. No need to now.

I also thought it wouldn’t hurt to lay down an additional ground plane before I covered everything up. Will 1/4” galvanized wire like this is enough? We shall see!



I only had 7 feet between the house and the property line wall to put the wire mesh, using gutter spikes and some old metal plumbers tape to secure the mesh to the ground. I soldered the pieces of wire mesh where they overlapped. I don’t recommend doing this in the wind and I finally resorted to a torch. A #6 copper wire was threaded through the mesh and again clamped and soldered it to the mesh and connected it to the first ground rod. Before covering up the trenches, a quarter inch flex drip irrigation hose was installed to each of the ground rods. The intent is to attach the hose to my drip irrigation system and air condition condensation drain and keep the soil moist around each of the ground rods if needed.



Just outside my ham shack and radios is an electrical box (Grounding Panel), 4 feet from the radios. Two Lightning Surge Protectors were installed inline with the two incoming antenna cables, and then connected directly to the first outside ground rod one and a half feet (1.5') away.

Notice all my coax is run through 1" and 3" conduit buried for easy access, inspection and replacement if needed and out-of-sight from the HAO antenna wardens.

The primary rule for protecting ham radio equipment against lightning damage is connection of **ALL** elements to a **SINGLE**, low impedance grounding point within or near the ham shack.

Monsoon rains in herein DHS bring severe lightning strikes and at an elevation of 1329 feet, most of the time we are at cloud level when the monsoons move in.



This is a picture taken three years ago during a severe "summer monsoonal lightning storm" by my neighbor Jay Calderon, Photo Editor for The Desert Sun. Jay was doing his ***"Ben Franklin"*** impression with his camera in hand during the lightning storm and rain. Minutes later, my other neighbor had a direct lightning hit to his palm tree which caused an explosion and the tree caught on fire. Despite the intense rain the Fire Department was called.

OK! Lesson learned! This prompted/forced me to install the Ground Panel/Electrical Box shown above. Better be safe late than never!

OK! Time for the results! We're up and running, checking my new grounding system and radio performance. Here are some of my findings:

(1) I observed not only an increase in the receiver's sensitivity, but also the transmitting propagation considering that I am only using 100 watts max many times less. I chose to "go barefoot" to see what/if I could get the maximum performance from my equipment before I jump into the amplifier ***"Fray"***. Another article and a longer story.



(2) A noticeable decrease in surrounding ambient noise from S-9 to S-5 on 40 meters and similar or better decreases on the remaining 6 meters thru 80 meters depending on which portion of the band I was on. I am able to **ferret** and **filter** out contacts that were previously buried in the ambient noise levels. My regular ham contacts have noticed and reported a vast improvement to my signal and transmission. As you probably know, HF antennas work best when they work against a good counterpoise ground reference.

Most readings were taken mid band. I can successfully report tuning to 40 meters at a SWR of 1.1: 1 (See the photo). Upper right hand corner shows the ambient noise level of S-5 – down from S-9. The spikes on the graph show active band activity.

Are we done yet? Probably NOT! Like all Hams, we are always looking for the “magic genie” or “silver bullet” to make all our equipment improve and work better. At least for now, I am pleased with my much improved ground system.

You've heard this before! ***"Your mileage may vary."*** I'll add, don't just believe what anyone tells you. Consider their advice but do your own research to find out if you agree. There is nothing wrong with asking for directions, but do a little fact-checking before jumping off that bridge! ***And take your time!*** In the long run it will save you money. ***Don't forget to "KICK" the tires.***

I'd certainly recommend at least reading:

<http://www.solacity.com/Docs/Polyphaser/Where%20the%20lightning%20energy%20goes%20and%20what%20can%20happen.pdf>

<http://www.qsl.net/w9aml/Lightning%20Protection%20-%20HAM.pdf>

<http://www.dxing.com/tnotes/tnote02.pdf>

This article or recommendations are by no means the first or last word in Lightning or grounding characteristics, but it can help you understand the concepts. There are numerous other published articles on soil doping, lightning surge suppressors, wire sizes, soil resistivity, ground saturation, “Ufer” grounds, ground rod depth, grounding theories, ... and that list of articles goes on and on and on - ***ad nauseam.***

Again do your own homework and good luck!

73

Tom Mc Lean

KJ6DZT

CLUB REPEATERS

The Morongo Basin Amateur Radio Club has 2 vhf repeaters:

- **Yucca Valley ***
W6BA 146.790 MHz
(- shift, 136.5 PL)
- **Twentynine Palms ***
W6IF 147.060 MHz
(+ shift, 136.5 PL)

* Linked Repeaters

These are open repeaters. You do not have to be a club member to use them.

A club net is held each Tuesday at 7PM on the W6BA repeater.

You do not have to be a club member to be a net member.

The local EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE (ECS) group conducts a net at **6:45 p.m.**, each **Monday** on the W6BA repeater.

The local ARES group also conducts their weekly net each **Monday at 7:15 pm** on the W6BA repeater

MARC Membership Application

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1/10/2010

May 2013

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2 ARES Meeting 7:00 pm Good Shepherd Lutheran Ch. Y.V.	3	4
5	6 ECS Net 6:45pm ARES Net 7:15pm	7 Club Net 7:00 pm	8	9	10	11
12	13 ECS Net 6:45pm ARES Net 7:15pm	14 Club Net 7:00 pm	15	16 <u>Club Meeting</u> <u>7:00 pm</u> St. Christopher's Catholic Church Joshua Tree	17	18
19	20 ECS Net 6:45pm ARES Net 7:15pm	21 Club Net 7:00 pm	22	23	24	25 Grubstake Days Parade
26	27 ECS Net 6:45pm ARES Net 7:15pm	28 Club Net 7:00 pm	29	30	31	