Editor’s Notes
Lots of good stuff in this issue!

In addition to reporting about Field Day, we have an article from our Vice-President, Ramon Duenas, KJ6QQK, about the Chula Vista CERT call-out during the May wildfires, a report on some recent FCC changes regarding licensing, and Joe Bennett, W6VMX, tells how he came to build his “Cart.”

Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, contributes another column, this time about new hams. Considering that our numbers are climbing, this is good information for all of us.

Lastly, legislation has been introduced in the House of Representatives that could ultimately effect those of us that live in communities governed by CC&Rs and regulated by HOAs. More inside...✓

New Members
We would like to welcome the following new members to SOBARS:

Neill Campbell, KK6JDH
Bobby Erdmann, KK6KDB
Barbie Flinn, WA6URS
Ed Flinn, WA6YVX
Eric Bennett, KK6NRU

From the President’s Shack
By John Wright, K6CPO

Well, Field Day is over and, at the time of this writing, we’re wrapping up the 4th of July weekend. Summer is upon us!

There’s lots that has happened in the time between our last issue of Spurious Emissions and this one.

There was a major wildfire incident in the North County in May and a number of homes were lost. Amateur radio responded to the emergency in a number of ways. Hams manned communications stations at a number of evacuation shelters and the Chula Vista CERT Team was called out for the first time ever. They were tasked with providing overwatch on canyons on the east side of the city. CVFD was shorthanded due to having provided resources to the fire fighting effort in the North County.

From all accounts, Field Day was an unqualified success. We were a 10A this year and we did some things we haven’t done in the past. Nestor

Nestor Punales, K6JTT, uses his Elk antenna to work some amateur radio satellites at the SOBARS Field Day, June 28, 2014.

Pete Villaver, N3PV
Punales, K6JTT and Bill Torre, AG6WB, while banging out contacts on the phone bands, also made several contacts via satellite.

Some SOBARS members who didn’t operate at the site assisted in other ways. Thanks go out to Alain Gillot, K6BSB, for providing a multi-band vertical antenna to the effort.

Mark Wallace, KJ6NMJ, is to be congratulated for doing a superb job in his first year as Field Day Chairman. Thank you, Mark!

On June 9, 2014, the FCC released a Report & Order that makes changes to the Amateur Service Part 97 rules. The most significant part of the R&O grants credit for written examination elements 3 (General) and 4 (Amateur Extra) to holders of “expired licenses that required passage of those elements.” The FCC will require former licensees — those falling outside the 2-year grace period — to pass Element 2 (Technician) in order to be re-licensed, however. The Commission declined to give examination credit to the holder of an expired Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination (CSCE) or to extend its validity to the holder’s lifetime. Their rational for this was that a CSCE doesn’t guarantee that a license was issued, just that the individual passed the examination.


—Original Message—
From: Hugo Bermudez
Sent: Wed 5/14/2014 3:25 PM
To: Hugo Bermudez
Subject: CERT ACTIVATION STAND-BY - THIS IS NOT A DRILL

Due to the fires, the Chula Vista Volunteers/CERT Team will be activated today. Please reply to this note with your name and contact number (preferable cell) if you are available.

Standby for further instructions.

Hugo Bermudez

Of course when this came out, I responded to it immediately. Sending my cell phone information as requested. As I left work from downtown San Diego riding the trolley to the Palomar station I got on the phone with my wife letting her know what was going on. Of course SOBARS had a meeting that day. I got home and started packing my van. Knowing that my family was taken care of and we are prepared for emergencies. Also having every item I needed neatly packed and stored in my wall locker. I just needed to grab it and go. I headed out for the SOBARS meeting with all my gear in tow. Like a good Vice-President I stopped and
picked up donuts and drinks for the meeting. At 6:31 PM I received a phone call from one of our CERT members asking if I was ready to volunteer and respond to activation. I responded “Yes, I am packed and ready to go. Just say when.” Then he stated that he was getting a head count and that we would find out by 8:00 PM if we were to be activated.

I made my way to the SOBARS meeting and enjoyed the presentation, while in the back of my mind I was waiting to hear from CERT. 8:00 PM comes around and sure enough that same CERT member calls and states, “We are standing down tonight, but we are being activated for tomorrow starting at 7:00 AM. We have 2 shifts, one from 7 AM to 1 PM and 1 PM to 7 PM. Which one should he put you in? ” I said let’s try the later one. Here is the email that was sent out that night.

—Original Message—
From: Hugo Bermudez
Sent: Wed 5/14/2014 7:10 PM
To: Hugo Bermudez

Subject: RE: CERT ACTIVATION STANDBY - THIS IS NOT A DRILL

CVCERT:

Thank you for your prompt replies and willingness to support the Chula Vista Fire Department. The operational period has been canceled for tonight but will continue tomorrow.

The Chula Vista Police Department will be acting IC for tomorrow’s operational period and have requested Chula Vista to support both Fire and Police department.

There will be two operational periods as described below: 0700 (7:00 AM) – 1500 (3:00 PM) – 1st Shift (need to show up at 7:00 AM)1300 (1:00 PM) – 2000 (8:00 PM) – 2nd Shift (need to show up at 1:00 PM)

The Incident Command / Meeting will be at Fire Station 4, 850 Paseo Ranchero. We’ll meet Lt. Vern who will provide us with the assignments and locations.

Please let me know if you can attend either of the operational periods listed above (1st or 2nd shift). You do not need to attend both but we need solid confirmations.

You will also be contacted by phone tonight in case you don’t get this email.

Thanks and hope to see you tomorrow at Station 4.

Hugo Bermudez
Program Manager, Chula Vista CERT

The next day, May 15th, I went to work downtown and let my supervisor know I was taking off early. I called Hugo that morning around 8 AM to see how things were. He said it was kind of a light showing. I asked him if they had a communications plan ready. He said that they were going to use cell phones. I asked if they were any hams that showed up. He said yes. I told Hugo that the SOBARS repeater was there for communications and he said thanks. I then called SOBARS President John Wright, K6CPO, to let him know that Chula Vista CERT was activated and that some members will be using the repeater. I then called Secretary-Treasurer Fred Curtis, K16GRO, to let him know. Fred also suggested e-mailing the SOBARS members to let them know that CERT would be using the repeater. I thought that was a great idea. While this was going on I started closing out my duties at work, then headed down to Chula Vista.

I made it home and transferred all my gear from the van to my car. I kissed the wife and kids and headed to Fire Station #4. I arrived around 12:30 pm and met a couple of members parking their vehicles at the station. At the Command Post we were greeted by Hugo who was waiting for the other shift to return. On the wall were giant maps of our area of operation. CERT members mustered in and we began to get information about what we were being tasked to do. At 1 PM Fire Marshal and Assistant Chief Justin Gibson welcomed us and stated that Fire Chief Dave Hanneman had activated Chula Vista CERT and that we were going to work with and support both Chula Vista Police and Fire Department on “Operation Firewatch”. Then he introduced the Incident Commander for the 2nd Shift as Lieutenant Salle with Lieutenant Collum from the Chula Vista
Police Department acting as the Operations Chief for that operational period. The brief was simple. Chula Vista Senior Volunteer Patrol and Chula Vista CERT were going to work in tandem. The Fire Department had identified certain areas of high risk within the city of Chula Vista and they wanted extra people out there to spot any smoke within those areas to give the Fire Department a head start on any fires because all aerial support was located in the North County. We were also to interact with the public and make them aware of the fire danger on that day and to report anything to 911. The temperature on that day reached 103 degrees and was very sunny. So our job was to patrol the nearby canyons and keep a watchful eye on them.

During the brief, a question of communications came up. Cell phones were the primary way to communicate with the Command Post. Then one of the hams asked, “What about us?” I reported that the SOBARS repeater had been made available to Chula Vista CERT during this operational period and it was frequency 146.085 MHz, positive offset, with a PL tone of 100. The first shift was already using the SOBARS repeater. The command post did not have an acceptable communications set up. I set up my mobile radio and antenna at the command post. The antenna was outside on a painter’s pole. That gave the command post adequate communications with an exterior antenna and a mobile as a base station able to reach the CERT ams in the field.

All in all, it was a successful call out. No one was injured and we proved to be of use to the City. After my shift concluded, operations were ceased for the evening, to begin again at 0700 the next day. After the morning shift into the second shift of May 16th the operational period was cancelled. We were anticipating another shift but the next e-mail came out and that was that.

***OPERATIONAL PERIOD CANCELED***

The fire watch operational period is canceled; please do not report to Fire Station 4.

I wanted to take this time to thank the Chula Vista CERT and Senior Volunteer Patrol and the professionalism of your response to support our community during this operational period. CERT and SVP provided invaluable assistance to the Chula Vista Fire and the Chula Vista Police agencies by successfully providing early warning reconnaissance of high-risk areas for wildfire prevention. Many of you worked the long hours, kudos to you and thank you all for being safe! A special thanks to Chief Gipson, Marissa Balmer, Lt. Salle, Lt. Collum, Sgt. Autolino and Sgt. Reber for their leadership.

Regards,
Hugo Bermudez
Program Manager, Chula Vista CERT

---

**Legislation Introduced to Apply PRB-1 to Private Property**

By John Wright, K6CPO

On June 25, 2015 Represetative Adam Kinzinger, (R-IL) introduced HR 4969, *The Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2014*, in the US House of Representatives. If enacted, this bill would “direct the Federal Communications Commission to extend to private land use restrictions its rule relating to reasonable accommodation of amateur service communications.”

If enacted, this bill will provide amateur radio operators living in CC&R communities the relief they have...
long sought. When the original PRB-1 rule was made in 1985, the FCC chose not to apply it to private land use restrictions without further guidance from Congress.

Whether this bill will pass is in doubt, especially in an election year. It is recommended that all licensed radio amateurs write letters or e-mails to their elected representatives in both the House of Representatives and the Senate urging passage of this bill.

The ARRL is promoting a grassroots campaign to promote co-sponsorship among other members of congress. They offer a number of suggestions that will help get this essential legislation through the congress. More information can be found at: http://www.arrl.org/news/grassroots-campaign-underway-to-promote-co-sponsorship-of-amateur-radio-parity-act

The full text of the bill is below:

[Congressional Bills 113th Congress] [From the U.S. Government Printing Office] [H.R. 4969 Introduced in House (IH)]

113th CONGRESS 2d Session

H. R. 4969

To direct the Federal Communications Commission to extend to private land use restrictions its rule relating to reasonable accommodation of amateur service communications.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

June 25, 2014

Mr. Kinzinger of Illinois (for himself and Mr. Courtney) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To direct the Federal Communications Commission to extend to private land use restrictions its rule relating to reasonable accommodation of amateur service communications.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE. This Act may be cited as the “Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2014”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) More than 700,000 radio amateurs in the United States are licensed by the Federal Communications Commission in the amateur radio service.

(2) Amateur radio, at no cost to taxpayers, provides a fertile ground for technical self-training in modern telecommunications, electronics technology, and emergency communications techniques and protocols.

(3) There is a strong Federal interest in the effective performance of amateur radio stations established at the residences of licensees. Such stations have been shown to be frequently and increasingly precluded by unreasonable private land use restrictions, including restrictive covenants.

(4) Federal Communications Commission regulations have for 28 years prohibited the application to amateur radio stations of State and local regulations that preclude or fail to reasonably accommodate amateur service communications, or that do not constitute the minimum practicable regulation to accomplish a legitimate State or local purpose. Commission policy has been and is to permit erection of a station antenna structure at heights and dimensions sufficient to accommodate amateur service communications.

(5) The Federal Communications Commission has sought guidance and direction from Congress with respect to the application of the Commission’s limited preemption policy regarding amateur radio communications to private land use restrictions, including restrictive covenants.

SEC. 3. ACCOMMODATION OF AMATEUR SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS.

Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Communications Commission shall amend section 97.15(b) of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, so that such section prohibits application to amateur service communications of any private land use restriction, including a restrictive covenant, that--

(1) precludes such communications;

(2) fails to reasonably accommodate such communications; or

(3) does not constitute the minimum practicable restriction on such communications to accomplish the legitimate purpose of the private entity seeking to enforce such restriction.
“The Cart”  
by Joe Bennett, W6VMX

"The Cart" was originally built as a Pole Mounted Camera support cart. I used it quite a bit to take photos of people’s houses, golf courses, horse racing tracks, and many other subjects.

Lots of work went into designing and building the cart to do the job it was intended to do, and it did it well. It is able to supply 12VDC power to operate various support components, as well as 120VAC through a 750 watt inverter for other requirements while in the field.

DC is stored in a 106AH Deep Discharge Marine battery that weighs in at about 63 lbs. It can be field charged by hooking up a solar panel array through the built in solar controller, or via a small AC float charger while in the shop. There are switched outlets to provide the 110VAC as well as various DC connections too.

After I became a ham, I thought about how I might be able to use the cart to operate a portable radio in the field. The pole would allow me to place a nice antenna about 40 feet into the air, and the power from the cart would provide quite a bit of on the air time if used properly. So I began the process of modifying it all to become “The Cart”.

I wasn’t so much trying to create a perfect platform as much as to repurpose an existing piece of equipment to fit a new use. I think it has worked out pretty well so far. I am currently using a Diamond x50a dual band antenna on 2 meters and 70 centimeters for local operations. From Imperial Beach, I can hit virtually all San Diego repeaters with full quieting and great modulation from my Wouxun HT. I have a 50’ length of coax attached to the antenna which allows me to get away from the cart and under my pop-up cover where I typically set up a folding table and several chairs.

Power from the cart provides lighting for night operations from two LED lighting modules as well as power for my laptop and a couple of monitors & a small fan too. I am looking for approximately 24 to 48 hours of operation without a charge on the battery, which from experience gathered at the last SOBARS Field Day 2013, seems highly achievable for Field Day 2014. I will set up my Icom IC-7000 for use with the cart, and will be working 20 meter phone with a ½ wave dipole set up as an inverted vee. At any rate, keep your ears tuned for me and hope to hear you out there soon.

Operating portable with a Wouxun HT from the driveway.  
Joe Bennett, W6VMX

Operating with “The Cart” at the SOBARS 2014 Field Day.  
Nestor Punales, K6JTT
New Hams Are Different
By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

This is going to be a bit of a ramble, but I need to get some thoughts down about new hams, and maybe get some feedback on these ideas from both new hams and guys that have been around for a while.

Recently, I visited the All Hands Active (AHA) maker-space here in Ann Arbor. Several of the “makers” that use this space have recently gotten their ham licenses—most of them in one of my one-day Tech classes. I was down there trying to get them interested in attending Field Day, and in particular, in operating the GOTA station.

There were four of us sitting around, talking about amateur radio, the projects they were working on, Field Day, and other stuff. In the past, they had also expressed an interest in doing something with WA2HOM, our station at the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum. While it was a great discussion, it was apparent to me that it was going to be difficult to get them out for Field.

It dawned on me that these new radio amateurs were just not interested in the “old” amateur radio. Sitting in front of shortwave radios and exchanging fake signal reports with other guys sitting in front of shortwave radios is just not their idea of a good time. I think that if you take a step back and try to look at it through their eyes, you’ll see where they’re coming from.

What are they interested in? Well, one guy is having a blast playing around with RTL SDR dongles. He’s also trying to figure out a way to rig up wireless link to light a light at bus stops around his house when a bus is approaching. Another is working on a Hinternet-type project. I helped him out a little bit last summer setting up a wireless node at his house.

This is perhaps one reason why there are so many more licensed radio amateurs these days, but yet there seems to be less activity on the HF bands these days. HF is just not where it’s at for these new guys.

One consequence of this is that the old amateur radio clubs don’t have much to offer the new guys. In fact, one of them told me that the one time that he attended the local club meeting, he got such a hostile response that he decided not to return.

I’m finding this all quite interesting. I do intend to pursue some kind of joint activities between the All Hands Active maker group and WA2HOM and see where that goes. They may not be interested in working DX on 20m, but they do seem to be interested in the IRLP node that we’re in the process of installing there.

I’m not sure where this is all headed, but what I do know is that these folks have a lot of energy and creativity. If we can couple that with our knowledge and experience, then I think that we’ll be a good fit for one another. It’s going to take open minds all around, though.

I’m really interested in hearing from all of you about this. Have your clubs made contact with the “makers” in your area? Do any of them have ham radio licenses? Are there any interesting ham radio/maker projects going on in your area?

When he’s not thinking about the future of amateur radio, Dan, KB6NU enjoys working CW on the HF bands, teaching amateur radio classes, and building kits. For more information about his operating activities and his “No-Nonsense” series of amateur radio license study guides, go to KB6NU.com or e-mail cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

Field Day 2014
By The Participants

Editor’s Note: Last year I received the suggestion that instead of having one single individual write a story about Field Day I should have each participant write a short paragraph about their experience. It worked so well that I’m doing it again this year.

John Markham, KD6VKW

I try to take a new antenna to Field Day every year. This year I decided on the Moxon, AKA the Moxon Rectangle. I signed up for 10m Phone, figuring I could build that antenna and it would be small enough to be transportable. I began reading about the Moxon design a few years ago but this was my first time to construct one. I used a freeware program called “MoxGen” to get the dimensions. The formulas are available for the do-it-yourself crowd but MoxGen was instantaneous and the results can be sent to a printer. See for yourself at MoxGen.

The Moxon is supposed to offer a few dB gain over a dipole. Its selling point is a high front-to-back ratio, exceeding 15 dB. I can aim to Hawaii, for example and most of North America should get two S-units quieter. Whether 10m would be open for Field Day remained a question.

Ultimately, the Moxon antenna showed itself to be
working as advertised but band conditions were so bizarre, I initially wondered about it. At first, I worked a half-dozen nearby stations on direct wave. Next, I heard KH6RS from Hawaii about 5-5 off the back of the antenna and worked him easily. He was present on the band virtually all the time. I could sometimes hear the North American stations he was working but just barely. I logged a few other Hawaii stations, but not much else. What’s happening to North America???

Late that evening, I went home to sleep and came back Sunday morning. I began to operate again around 8:30 AM local time to much the same nonsense. The band changed shortly after 9:00 AM. I started hearing the Pacific Northwest coming in. I easily worked about a dozen stations in Washington and Oregon. One of them was even 5-over, off the side. For the next hour, FD was like bowling -- I just kept knocking them over! I would have kept working but people were visiting like a parade, all wanting to talk, so I hung up the mike shortly after 10:00. That late surge of activity was the only thing that kept my Field Day from being a near-total bust!

We logged over a mesh network with N3FJP’s Field Day 4.2. The only hitch was the program’s demand for the registration number on two of the client computers. Our FD chairman had to make a forty-minute round trip home to get the number. During multiple dry runs at his house, the problem never appeared once, so it was a complete surprise. I’m pretty sure our chairman is going to ask N3FJP about it.

Joe Bennett, W6VMX

I arrived about 3PM on Friday, the 27th of June and checked in with John, K6CPO and awaited arrival of my support crew, my son Eric and grandson Chris. Upon their arrival we began unloading our station from my Explorer and Eric’s Subaru wagon.

We had the complete station set up and working in an hour and a half. The station electrical load was fed from my Cart totally (battery/solar), and for this year, was over twice the electrical load it was last year. I had my trusty Icom IC-7000, with an LDG IT-100 tuner as my base system. I would be working 20 meter phone again, and I was looking forward to it too. I also had a spanking new MFJ battery booster and remote display unit. This was able to keep my radio supplied with 13.8 VDC throughout operating time with no problem. My Cart also supplied 120 VAC via an inverter to power three LCD monitors—a 7 inch and a 15 inch to display the radio screen, and a 23" for the desktop computer. The CPU and mesh network modem topped off the items being fed. A few small loads such as a 12 VDC feed for my meter lighting, and an LED area light pretty much completed it all.

The Cart again supported the 40 foot WonderPole which this year held my 20 meter ½ wave dipole in an inverted V configuration at about 35 feet and of course a Diamond X50A dual band for 2 meters and 70 cm at the very top.
Another lesson I learned from staying over on Friday night, next year I will be pitching a tent and sleeping on a cot instead of the front seat of my Explorer. You would have expected me to have learned that lesson from last year. Well, it is now deeply reinforced from this years experience. That night took a lot out of me, and lead to my decision to pack up late Saturday afternoon after only about 6 hours of operation during Field Day. I understand others had some problems, mostly related to password and serial number, but we had worked this all out prior to Field Day and had no problems ourselves.

Overall I had a great time, talked to some fantastic people, had some GREAT food, and my son Eric became a new ham—KK6NRU— at the VEC testing booth. See you all there next year!!!!

Sarah Honaker, KK6DKP

Field Day 2014 was a fun day to get on the air and work the bands. I worked the 6 meter band with my father, N9LZ, and together we made ten contacts despite the bands being noisy with static. I had a good time with the other members of our club and just being outside. I look forward to next year’s Field Day.

Fred Curtis, K6GRO

Field Day 2014 started off with VE testing under a couple of canopies and plenty of VE’s. I had the privilege of grading tests along with John Wright, K6CPO and Dave Kaltenborn, N8KBC. Following testing, I set up my 40M phone station but lacked an antenna. Thankfully, Terry Hohm, AG6WG came to the rescue with a 40M dipole. I set up an inverted-V antenna but the SWR was high and John Markham, KD6VKW helped me set up the antenna with addition of some poles and duct tape. I had a lot of noise from the generator but there was nothing I could do about that.

My next hurdle was the logging software and the mesh node. I was gone backpacking when the other members set up their nodes so I was starting from scratch. Mark Wallace, KJ6NMJ gave me a configured node and I was able to copy the correct settings from his node.
and I set up my node up. Needless to say, I did not get on the air at the official start of Field Day! I started making contacts only to find out that when I entered the contact in the logging software, the program would shut down!!! Mark looked at the program and said I needed the password for the program. Unfortunately, the password was not at the FD site. I made a few more contacts, but restarting the logging program ate up valuable time. Mark was a trooper and went home and retrieved the password. I made a few more contacts, but the heavy static from my generator was getting annoying. Fortunately, other club members worked 40M phone and were able to make many contacts. I was not prepared as I should have been and learned my lesson. Better luck next year!

**Nestor Punales, K6JTT**

My personal opinion is that there were no low points!

I had a great time with a great group of people. I joined the club very recently and I was eager to see how Field Day was going to be with the members of SOBARS. It definitely was well worth it to be part of Field Day with you guys.

Kudos to everyone that in one way or another was part of, or contributed to, in some way, to make the 2014 Field Day happen!!

I’m looking forward to Field Day 2015.

**Editor:** See the front page for a picture of Nestor working an amateur radio satellite.

---

**Frank Spurgeon, Jr, W6FSJ**

Better food!

I think overall the event was perfect and we make it better every year. My band died pretty early putting me out of commission. I loaned my laptop to Ramon and he was a work horse till about 4AM on 20M phone. We couldn’t have asked for better weather.

When he wasn’t cooking the wonderful food we had this year, Frank Spurgeon, Jr, W6FSJ was working 15 meter phone.

**Mark Wallace, KJ6NMJ**

It was my honor and privilege to serve this year as Field Day Chair. I could not have picked a better group of men and women to represent our club and its Field Day spirit. All who participated in even the simplest of ways have my gratitude and favor.

My 4 goals this year were clear, participation, a little more participation, filled in with more of your participation. The distant 4th goal was the resolution of nagging network issues. South Bay Amateur Radio Society delivered a 10A. There were many examples of dedication, teamwork and ingenuity throughout the day and night. I can also testify to fun, I heard several laughs as the wind picked up my canopy and took it and Terry’s antenna for a ride. This lead to half a dozen people coming to my rescue, thanks again. If you missed it, good. As for the network issue, Fred had pondered aloud more than a year ago “wonder if mesh would work?” Enough said. Hats off Broadband-Hamnet.

I’ve been asking myself what do the previous year’s efforts mean to the future of SOBARS field Days.. The years I now know show incredible work ethic, w6rgs turns in 500 point efforts. This year’s super stars talked to space stations, satellites and on 160 meters. Other
super stars held guy wires for the guys. Field Day has 2 faces, by definition it is a contest, and this contest is an event. Events need people, South Bay Amateur Radio Society has great people, and this year we saw new and old shine.

If you’ll bring me back next year I promise to put a chicken in every pot and pick up the points I left behind. I know it’s too early to start stumping for the job but I see us coming in pairs next year. Tough pairs built on friendships and for support. 73’s

My responsibility, as in past years, was to staff the public information table. Foot traffic past the Field Day site was even less than last year and those that did come through didn’t stop.

We had visits from the usual ARRL officials, including Dick Norton, N6AA, the Southwestern Division Director and Steve Early, AD6VI, the San Diego Section Manager.

Again this year, the South Bay VE Team held license testing at our Field Day site. There were five candidates who took and passed the Technician examination, including our own Eric Bennett, who now sports KK6NRU as his call sign. Congratulations Eric!

Field Day was a unqualified success and we should thank Mark Wallace, KJ6NMJ for the outstanding job he did as Chairman. We had the largest turnout of members I’ve seen in my three years with SOBARS and I don’t know of anyone who didn’t have fun. I’m sure everyone is looking forward to next year. I know I am.
Help for New Hams
By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

In a box of stuff recently donated to WA2HOM, our amateur radio station at the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum, there was a book W1FB’s Help for New Hams by Doug DeMaw, W1FB. This book hits on just about all the topics that a new ham in the late 1980s would want to know about, and W1FB does a great job of walking the new ham through these topics.

Of course, being 25 years old, some of it is out-of-date, and it doesn’t cover some questions that a new ham today would ask. For example, there’s nothing in this book about digital modes or using a computer in the shack.

So, I’m thinking of writing my own Help for New Hams. Mine would probably be a little less HF-centric and include advice on joining clubs and how to use a computer in the shack. I am also thinking that maybe I should write two separate versions: an HF version and a VHF version.

At any rate, I’ve listed the chapters of the W1FB version below. If you have any comments about what I should include in my version, I’d love to hear from you.

*The Newly Licensed Amateur. This chapter talks mainly about how to choose equipment, but also covers some of the modes that amateur radio operators can use.

*Your New Equipment—Getting Acquainted. This chapter discusses how to use the features of modern transceivers, amplifiers, and antenna tuners. It also talks a little bit about antennas and SWR.

*Constructing and Using Antennas. This chapter goes into greater depth on antennas. It discusses the different types of antennas, how to feed them, and how to bring feedlines into the shack.

*Station Layout and Safety. This chapter covers the practical aspects of setting up an amateur radio station, including desk and chair selection and station wiring.

*TVI and RFI—Strange Bedfellows. TVI and RFI are less of a problem these days than back in the 80s, but it’s still something new hams need to know about.

*Operating Problems and Fears. This chapter discusses some of the operating problems new hams face, including honesty in signal reporting, how to operate split and how to work DX.

*On-the-Air Conduct and Procedures. This chapter discusses more operating procedures, including calling CQ, how to operate via a repeater, and how to ID.

*Station Accessories—What to Buy? This chapter discusses a variety of station accessories including keys and keyers, microphones, antenna tuners, phone patch- es (!), and antenna switches.

*dx and Contest Operating. This chapter not only discusses operating procedures, but how certain equipment features will help the new ham work more DX and score better in contests.

*Logging, QSL Cards, and Record Keeping. This chapter discusses why it is important to keep logs and how to QSL.

*Obtaining Accurate Information. This chapter is basically an ad for the ARRL, counseling the new ham to join the ARRL and buy ARRL books.

I am especially interested in hearing from new hams about these topics. What about amateur radio confused you at first? What information would have helped you have more fun with amateur radio? What do you know now that you wish you had known when you got started?cwgeek@kb6nu.com

QRM...

Editor: Thanks to artist Jeff Bacon for his gracious permission to reprint this cartoon.