

W6VIO Calling



Jet Propulsion Laboratory Amateur Radio Club

PO Box 820, La Canada CA 91012-0820

Volume 31, Issue 5



May 2002

President:	Bob Dengler, NO6B	4-9620	Emer. Comm. Mgr: Walt Mushagian, K6DNS,	4-3036
Vice President:	Christopher Carson KE6ABQ	3-3888	W6VIO Trustee : Bob Polansky, N6ET,	4-4940
Secretary:	Jonathan Cameron, KF6RTA	4-1189	W6JPL Trustee: Eric Archer, N6CV,	4-7350
Treasurer:	Chuck Sarture, KG6NF,	4-2706	W6VIO Calling Editor; WR6AZN Trustee: Bill Wood,	
Director at Large; WR6JPL Trustee: Randy Hammock, KC6HUR	4-0628		W6FXJ, 760-256-5529	

Contents

Meeting Notice	1
Calendar of Events	1
April Club Meetings	1
W6VIO and DX News	2
Traveling with Ham Radio	2
Field Day 2002	3
Treasurer's Report	4
25 Years Ago in W6VIO Calling	4
Classified Ads	4
Field Day Sign Up Form	5

Meeting Notice

By Christopher Carson, KE6ABQ

The May General Meeting of the JPL Amateur Radio Club will be held on Wednesday May 8th, 2002 in 238-543 at noon. The topic will include Field Day. Bring your lunch if you like.

The May Board Meeting of the JPL Amateur Radio Club will be held at noon on Wednesday May 22nd, 2002 in 233-305J. Bring your lunch if you like. Everyone is welcome to attend either of these meetings.

April Club Meetings

By Jonathan Cameron, KF6RTA

General Meeting, April 10

No notes or attendance information are available for this meeting due to the absence of the club secretary. According to some people who were present, no significant actions were taken by the club at this meeting.

Board of Directors Meeting, April 24

Bob Polansky, N6ET, opened the meeting at 12:13pm. Those present included: Eric Archer (N6CV via phone), Jonathan Cameron (KF6RTA), Chris Carson (KE6ABQ), Bob Dengler (NO6B), Walt Mushagian (K6DNS), Bob Polansky (N6ET), and Chuck Sarture (KG6NF).

Bob Polansky discussed the food arrangements for field day. No one volunteered to coordinate the food, so he is in the process of arranging catering. A potential caterer has been

Calendar of Events

May 8	General Meeting, Noon - 238-543
May 18	[CMRA Hamfest, Cal Poly, Pomona, 7 AM]
May 22	Board Meeting, Noon - 233-305J
May 25	[TRW Swap meet, Redondo Beach]
June 1	[Fontana Swap Meet, A. B. Miller HS, Fontana]
June 12	General Meeting, Noon - 238-543
June 15	[CMRA Hamfest, Cal Poly, Pomona, 7 AM]
June 26	Board Meeting, Noon - 233-305J
June 21-23	ARRL Field Day, Mount Gleason
June 29	[TRW Swap meet, Redondo Beach]
July 6	[Fontana Swap Meet, A. B. Miller HS, Fontana]
July 10	General Meeting, Noon - 238-543
July 20	[CMRA Hamfest, Cal Poly, Pomona, 7 AM]
July 24	Board Meeting, Noon - 233-305J
July 27	[TRW Swap meet, Redondo Beach]

contacted. The total cost is approximately \$1200-\$1400, translating to approximately \$5 per person per meal. This will require getting food funds beforehand and making a club commitment for this amount.

Due to uncertain attendance, the club will face some risk and Bob Polansky wanted the club to be aware of this risk. A motion was introduced to allow Bob Polansky or his designee (Carl De Silveira) to make arrangements for the JPL Radio Club with the caterer to provide food and related services for field day up to \$1400 from club funds.

The plan is to have most of this covered by funds collected from attendees before the event. The club will absorb any over-spending necessary. The motion was seconded. After some discussion, the vote was taken and the motion was passed unanimously. Other potential sources of funds to help in this include the recent club equipment auction and contributions from the Caltech club.

After discussing the options, we agreed that meal tickets will be sold beforehand for \$5 a person per meal. A few extra meals will be available for purchase on site at a cost \$6 on a first-come, first-served basis.

We now have 2 used 2KW field generators (from Cheli). They look like they are operational, but their exact condition is not clear. Some testing will be necessary.

Bob Polansky reported that arrangements have been made to get the new 6KW generator situated on the concrete slab in the next week or two. Bob expressed concern regarding the noisy air-conditioner in the new shack. Several solutions were discussed, but nothing was resolved. One potential solution is to take the smaller air-conditioning unit from the trailer and use it to replace the large, noisy unit. ■

W6VIO and DX News

By Bob Polansky, N6ET

Not too much in the way of W6VIO facility news this month with the following being the exceptions: The Facilities Division has relocated our new 6 kW generator onto the cement pad next to B173. It is standing on two 4"X4" hardwood blocks to permit its fluids to be drained. A transfer switch permitting B173 to be operated from the generator in the event of an Edison failure is planned.

The ant population around the shack appears to be growing as Spring temperatures increase. A bit of ant repellent will be applied tomorrow morning after I go hunting for a KH1 QSO on 160 meters.

Once the hard-line pressurization equipment and the 12 Volt distribution lines are in place (through the antenna access port to the shack) we intend to inject foam into the access port to provide a barrier for ants invading our shack from that source.

A third new AL-82 linear amplifier has been ordered and its delivery is expected within a week or two. That will provide all three HF stations with full legal limit power output capabilities.

QSL cards from many of the QSO's made during the last few contests are coming in at about 10 per week. Lots of new band-entities as well as new ones on both phone and CW are being added to the W6VIO totals.

I've had several requests, all of them honored, for people wishing to be checked out on the stations so they can get keys to B173 and operate. I stand ready to quickly handle all such requests. The facility is for the use of all of our Club members and it's a shame to see the stations sitting idle when someone could be having lots of fun there. Call me at X44940 and set up an appointment!

Much of my time this month has been spent getting ready for Field Day. The major difference this year is that the food preparation will be handled for the first time by a caterer. The cost will be a bit higher as a result, but the caterer has extensive experience feeding groups both indoors and outdoors and she comes highly recommended. More on this shortly as we get more information from the caterer on exactly how this will all play out.

Now for the DX news:

BAKER ISLAND - K1B (KH1) opened several days back now. They will be giving out QSO's through 9 May. K1B is active on 160M through 6M, all modes. Beam about 240 degrees from here, or use a short piece of wire!

CONGO – An operation using the calls TN3B and TN3W will take place from 16 May through 27 May from this most rare African entity. W6VIO needs this one for an all-time new one. It's also one of five I still need for my CW DXCC. LIGHT THE AFTERBURNERS!!

CYPRUS - 5B4/AI5P will be the call used during this 4 through 14 May operation from Cyprus. Don't have information on modes or band activities planned.

MACQUARIE - Look for VK9MQI operating both phone and CW on 160M through 6 M through March of '03. He reportedly operates on 21210, 21295, and 28630 from 0430 to 0600Z. These times may be a bit late for propagation to the West Coast.

TROMELIN – FR5ZU/T will be creating pile-ups from 5 June for a month. W6VIO worked the last operation from there, but has never been able to get QSL's. Help us get this one.

That is all for now. Don't miss the CQ WW WPX Contest, which runs from 25 through 26 May, starting at 0000Z. Lots of strange prefixes usually surface and even a few new band-entities are possible for the careful listener. Enjoy the bands while the sunspots are plentiful. ■

Traveling with Ham Radio Bermuda, May 22-28!

By Merv MacMedan, N6NO

The last article I wrote for this newsletter about the fun I had operating from W1AW while traveling in Connecticut whetted my own appetite for more easy ways to enjoy ham radio while traveling.

A few months ago I was reading the classified ads in QST and came across one from an entrepreneurial Bermuda ham who offered a well-equipped apartment for rent. "Well-equipped" for me means "with antenna" so I e-mailed him to inquire what he had to offer.

Turns out the apartment has an installed Cushcraft R-6000 vertical antenna that covers 6 bands: 6, 10, 12, 15, 17, and 20 meters, plus a G5RV antenna that I think my antenna tuner will tune for 30 and 40 meters. All I have to do is bring my rig and plug it in. Bermuda even uses US power standards (115 volts, 60 Hz and US-style plugs)!

Of course, my attachment, Claire, was interested in the more practical amenities of the apartment such as what kind of beds, kitchen, bus transportation, air conditioning and TV it has. Fortunately, it has all of the above plus a nice lawn area (with furniture), perfect for her relaxing and reading and just a stone's throw from the ocean. Claire and I thereupon decided Bermuda would be our next destination and I booked the apartment right away.

So this is to warn you guys that if all goes well, I should be on the air during the period May 22-28 as N6NO/VP9. Mark your calendars! I already have the license, (which, I must mention, was the easiest foreign license I have ever gotten. Bermuda sure knows how to please visitors!)

But after I booked the apartment I was pleasantly surprised to discover that the CQ CW WPX Contest will take place the weekend of May 25-26, right in the middle of my vacation

there. This contest enables many hams to work new prefixes, and since VP9 is a prefix not abundantly heard on CW, this operation should be popular.

So, my plans will be to operate as much as I can (when I'm not eating, sleeping or sightseeing) favoring the WARC bands (12, 17, 30 meters) outside of the contest and using the traditional bands (10, 15, 20, 40 meters) in the contest (WARC bands are not allowed in the WPX contest.) Since both the antenna and my rig cover 6 meters, I may even make my first 6-meter QSO if any openings occur, since I understand 6 meters has had some hot openings at times this past year.

Since I enjoy CW operation best I will concentrate on that mode, although I recently got my Heil Boom headset retrofitted with a new ICOM-specific Electret microphone element to improve the audio from my little IC-706 and will pack it for those occasional SSB requests.

If you need Bermuda for a new country, or VP9 as a new prefix, maybe I'll be able to help during this vacation. I'll be listening for our club members' calls in the pileup. ■

Field Day 2002

By Merv MacMedan, N6NO

Each year the JPL Amateur Radio Club (W6VIO) combines forces with members of the Caltech Amateur Radio Club (W6UE) to participate in the annual nationwide ARRL Field Day event. Every year we reserve the site atop Mount Gleason in the Angeles National Forest (easy to drive to, off Angeles Forest Highway); this year Field Day is the weekend of June 22-23. Field Day has two objectives:

First:

To allow hams across the country to exercise our emergency preparedness, in both equipment readiness, and the resourcefulness of our members to put a station on the air under adverse conditions. (Murphy is ever present at an emergency, real or simulated!)

Second:

To increase operator skills under adverse conditions simulating a field emergency situation.

We demonstrate our ability to get on the air by erecting antennas, setting up tents and operating positions and bringing our own power sources along. We exercise our operator skills by participating in a sort of contest, where each station tries to contact as many other stations as they can. The competition is fun and we can evaluate how well we did when they print the national scores in QST.

This year we will have a "GOTA" (Get on the Air) station replacing our traditional "Novice" station. This station is no longer just for Novices or Technicians. It will be dedicated to anyone who would like to brush up on their operating skills.

That includes new hams, prospective hams without a license, or just rusty old-timers. One of our experienced mentors and control operators will provide guidance for the contest exchanges. Everyone is welcome here - you won't pull down our contact rate if you're not experienced - and the points we get are all gravy to help our score.

There are lots of things for the non-hams to do: set up tents and tables, open restricted gates, help with cleanup of the site, lend a hand with a guy rope to erect an antenna or mast or go fly a kite. It's also an interesting hiking and biking destination.

Current plans call for competing in the four-station category. In addition to the usual CW, SSB and VHF/UHF FM operations, other more exotic modes will be used since we get bonuses for these. We plan to demonstrate Satellite, PSK31 digital, Packet Radio, Solar Powered and perhaps other non-traditional methods of communicating.

Three meals a day plus snacks and drinks will be available, but must be ordered ahead (more on this later). You can come up for a few hours or the whole weekend, but if you plan on sleeping, bring your own camping equipment (e.g., sleeping bag, tent, trailer, camper or motor home).

However, this year we are forced to make a *major change*. We have learned that our traditional volunteer cooks and food service providers will not be able to buy, prepare and dish out the excellent chow we have become accustomed to at Field Day. Therefore the club has decided to hire a professional caterer who will provide three meals a day for the group and who will stay on site at the Mt Gleason camp with us for the full field day period. This arrangement will be mapping new territory for both our club and the caterer.

Unfortunately it is difficult to contract with a caterer to do this without a fairly precise and guaranteed headcount. Caterers doing a remote site are not in a position to absorb risk if we have too few or too many attendees showing up, and neither is your club.

I originally started telephoning members informally, simply to find out whether they planned to attend, and if so, what meals the club should plan to provide. With this new situation (a contracted caterer) we will have to have a precise headcount early on, and require *advance* payment. Therefore I will need to have your definite schedule and money ahead of time.

We will issue meal tickets at a cost of \$5 apiece for the meals you specify you want. The food quality will be comparable to what you get at JPL retirement parties. The caterer will provide meals on the following schedule:

Friday	June 21	Lunch and Dinner
Saturday	June 22	Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner
Sunday	June 23	Breakfast and Lunch

Please fill in the Field Day 2002 form on page 5 and send it to me with your check, payable to "JPLARC". I *must* have your check in my postbox by Friday, June 7, so we can finalize our contract with the caterer. Your meal tickets will be waiting for you when you arrive at the field day site on Mount Gleason. 73

Merv MacMedan, N6NO
P.O. Box 1109
Arcadia, CA 91077 ■

Newsletter Deadline:

Friday, May 31 for the June issue of W6VIO Calling. Your articles, ads, photos, diagrams, letters to the editor, or technical material should be submitted to the editor via email (w6fxj@earthlink.net) or regular mail to: Bill Wood, 31094 Hemlock Ave, Barstow, CA 92311.

Treasurer's Reports

By Charles Sarture, KG6NF

April, 2002

General Club Account	
Beginning of Month Balance:	\$2,184.56
Income:	
Membership Dues	\$229.00
Used Equipment Auction	\$910.00
Total Income:	\$1,139.00
Expenses:	
No Expenses This Month	
Total Expenses:	\$0.00
End of Month Balance:	\$3,323.56
 Emergency Communications Account	
Beginning of Month Balance:	\$2,051.05
Income:	
No Income This Month	\$0.00
Total Income:	\$0.00
Expenses:	
No Expenses This Month	\$0.00
Total Expenses:	\$0.00
End of Month Balance:	\$2,051.05

Chuck Sarture, KG6NF
2002 Treasurer

25 Years Ago in: W6VIO Calling

By Bill Wood, W6FXJ

Editor Merv MacMedan, W6IUUV, packed the May 1977 issue with news about club activities. In April of 1977, the JPL ARC hosted more than 100 visitors from other area radio clubs on a tour of JPL facilities dealing with Space Communications. Director at Large Stan Brokl's (K6YYQ) candidacy for Los Angeles SCM. ARRL Vice Director Jay Holliday's (W6EJJ) report of FCC Dockets dealing with major proposed changes to FCC Rules. That eight club members were going to the Kennedy Space Center to support scheduled Voyager launches.

Club Board of Directors Meeting highlights included: Discussions regarding Voyager commemorative activities. Stan Brokl's report that Field Day interest was high! Jay Holladay presented a Certificate of Merit to Jim Lumsden, WA6MYJ) for his leading of the club N6V activities. Walt Diem, WA6PEA, reported on the club's WR6APQ 220 repeater. (Walt also provided this information in the form of an article complete with photographs). Ron Ploszaj, WA6TPW, reported that paid-up club membership for 1977 had reached 97.

Paul Lecoq, K6KNA, contributed a puzzler about series circuits. Check this to see if you know the correct answer!

The full May 1977 issue can be accessed at the following Internet address: <http://jplarc.ampr.org/calling/1977/may/may77.html> ■

Classified Section

Wanted:

Looking for an Alinco DJ-G5T dual-band HT. Contact Bob NO6B at no6b@rprrlist.w6jpl.ampr.org or 818-354-9620

Donations requested: Do you have an old 2 meter handheld that you don't use anymore because it doesn't have pl tones? How about donating it to a non-profit conservation group and receive a donation receipt for full market value. The Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep is prototyping a system to transmit weather and water level data from remote water catchments (Big Game Guzzlers) in the desert. Looking for TNCs also. Contact John Carnakis, KE6DKY, for more information: phone, 661 821-2067 or email, john.bobbi@thegrid.net

Your want-ad or article for inclusion in a future issue of W6VIO Calling. Submit to Bill Wood, W6FXJ, 31094 Hemlock Ave, Barstow, CA 92311; or email w6fxj@earthlink.net

For Sale:

Gillette Gen-Pro 12.5 Kw Diesel Generator, 21Hp DUETZ GRUGGERINI air cooled diesel, Electric start, 8 gal fuel tank, Low hrs. Can be viewed at <http://home.att.net/~n7hd/Gen.jpg>. Cost \$7800, sell for \$3100. Contact Buddy, 626-584-4645 days, 661-944-3864 eves,

QST 1990-1994 CD-ROM set, new. \$25 (ARRL price \$39.95) Skip, W7NWY, 818-354-9674

Icom UT-40 Tone Squelch Option Board (CTCSS) for HT models 2GAT, 4GAT, 12GAT, 32AT or for mobiles 228, 448, 901, 1201, 2400 and 2500. Cost: \$80 (AES Catalog) Sale for \$40. Contact, scott.nolte@jpl.nasa.gov or 818-354-9724

Cushcraft R8 multi-band vertical antenna covering 6, 10, 12, 15, 17, 20, 30, and 40 Meters for sale. Check the Cushcraft web site, www.cushcraft.com, for full details.

The antenna has been in use for slightly over 1 year and is in good condition. It has been a good performer for me. I no longer need this antenna, as I have replaced it with a multi-band beam. The antenna is partially assembled and I can deliver within the LA area. I will fully disassemble the antenna for shipment by UPS if desired.

The complete manual is included in the sale. Recent eBay auctions have priced this antenna at over \$250, HRO new \$450. I will consider any reasonable offer. I also have an Alpha Delta mounting system for this antenna that allows easy raising and lowering of the antenna. Larry Pyle AD6ST, 805 526-9556. ■

Editor's Note: The JPL ARC Web Page is back up and operating at: <http://jplarc.ampr.org> Check it out!

**JPL Amateur Radio Club
Caltech Amateur Radio Club
Field Day, 2002**

Name: _____ Call, if any: _____ License Class: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

YES, I'd like to join the fun on: (you may add arrival/departure times if possible)

- Friday, June 21 (set-up)
- Saturday, June 22
- Sunday, June 23

Besides myself, I will bring _____ guests/kids.

I would like to help with:

- Load/Unload at JPL/Caltech Station Setup Antenna Setup
- Power/Lights/Computer network Tent setup Generators
- Operating:
 - CW SSB VHF/UHF Packet/Digital/Satellite
- The new "Get On The Air" Station for beginners and rusty old-timers
- Other _____
- Encouraging others by eating, sleeping and staying out of their way

Now for the really important stuff:

I'd like the following quantities of meal tickets at \$5 per meal per person:

FRIDAY LUNCH _____ FRIDAY DINNER _____
 SATURDAY BREAKFAST _____ SATURDAY LUNCH _____
 SATURDAY DINNER _____
 SUNDAY BREAKFAST _____ SUNDAY LUNCH _____

Add it up right, and mail this form with your check payable to "JPLARC" TO ARRIVE
 IN MY POSTBOX BY FRIDAY JUNE 7 AT THE LATEST, to:

Merv MacMedan, N6NO
 P.O. Box 1109
 Arcadia, CA 91077

Meal tickets will be waiting for you at the "Will Call" table when you arrive at the field day site. Enjoy!



Jet Propulsion Laboratory Amateur Radio Club
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La Canada, CA 91012-0820

First Class Mail

What's Inside the May 2002

W6VIO Calling

Meeting Notice	1
Calendar of Events	1
April Club Meetings	1
W6VIO and DX News	2
Traveling with Ham Radio	2
Field Day 2002	3
Treasurer's Report	4
25 Years Ago in W6VIO Calling	4
Classified Ads	4
Field Day Sign Up Form	5

