

W6VIO Calling



Jet Propulsion Laboratory Amateur Radio Club

PO Box 820, La Canada CA 91012-0820

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September 2002

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Secretary: Jonathan Cameron, KF6RTA 4-1189 W6JPL Trustee: Eric Archer, N6CV, 4-7350
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Meeting Notice

By Christopher Carson, KE6ABQ

The September General Meeting of the JPL Amateur Radio Club will be held on Wednesday September 11th, 2002 in 238-543 at noon. The topic will include discussion of nominations for Club Officers for the coming year.

The September Board Meeting of the JPL Amateur Radio Club will be held at noon on Wednesday September 25th, 2002 in 233-305J.

Anyone on-Lab at the time is welcome to attend either of these meetings. Bring your lunch if you like. ■

Recent Club Meetings

By Jonathan Cameron, KF6RTA

General Meeting, July 10

The July meeting of the JPLARC began at 12:05 pm on Wednesday the 10th of July. A quorum was not present. Club president NO6B opened the meeting with a discussion of the Club's status in the current reorganization of the Employee recreation clubs. HR has acknowledged that we provide critical services to the Lab and community and this needs to be taken into account in their planning. For the present, no radical changes in Club operation are anticipated.

Club VP KE6ABQ reported that he checked in with the NASA HF Net that morning. Communication with the Ames Research Center was very good. JPL appeared to have been the only station to have checked in to the net. The NASA Net has been recently reactivated and we will be participating in

Calendar of Events

September 11	General Meeting, Noon - 238-543
September 21	[CMRA Hamfest, Cal Poly, Pomona, 7 AM]
September 25	Board Meeting, Noon - 233-305J
September 28	[TRW Swap meet, Redondo Beach]
October 5	[Fontana Swap Meet, A. B. Miller HS, Fontana]
October 9r	General Meeting, Noon - 238-543
October 19	[CMRA Hamfest, Cal Poly, Pomona, 7 AM]
October 23	Board Meeting, Noon - 233-305J
October 26	[TRW Swap meet, Redondo Beach]
November 2	[Fontana Swap Meet, A. B. Miller HS, Fontana]
November 13	General Meeting, Noon - 238-543
November 16	[CMRA Hamfest, Cal Poly, Pomona, 7 AM]
November 27	Board Meeting, Noon - 233-305J
November 30	[TRW Swap meet, Redondo Beach]

the weekly check-ins. Anyone wanting more information regarding the program should contact Walt Mushagian.

N6ET reported on this years Field Day operation. Overall it was felt to have been a success. The food catering worked very well, and the Forest Service personnel who assisted in trash removal were much appreciated. Suggestions to expand the GOTA station and running QRP operations next year were discussed.

A discussion of IRLP and the current implementation on our system was followed by a discussion of DSL. The meeting adjourned at about 12:50.

Board of Directors Meeting, July 24

Bob Dengler, NO6B, opened the meeting at 12:08 pm. Those present included: Jonathan Cameron (KF6RTA), Chris Carson (KE6ABQ), Bob Dengler (NO6B), Randy Hammock (KC6HUR), Walt Mushagian (K6DNS), and Bill Wood (W6FXJ, via telephone).

Bob Dengler reported that the Samlex power supplies have been ordered. One will be used on the Cero Negro site and one will go to Bill Wood to replace the one that he used for the TMO link repeater at the City of Industry Sheriffs station.

Permission to copy is granted provided that credit is given to "W6VIO Calling."

Randy Hammock gave us an update on the IRLP. Considering the light usage by the club members, he is considering putting the codes for accessing the IRLP on our web site so that it will be publicly available. There was some discussion of this possibility but Randy decided not to do this in the near future.

There was no update on the autopatch situation at the Cero Negro site. Some controller programming needs to be done before the autopatch can be reactivated. That will be done when the site becomes more accessible.

Walt Mushagian gave a quick update on the weekly NASA HF Net. We have been trying to revive it recently and have had more centers participating in the last couple nets. Randy Hammock has been encouraging clubs at the various centers to set up IRLP nodes and is suggesting doing NASA nets with IRLP.

Special Board Of Directors Meeting, September 4

This special meeting of board of directors was started at approximately 12:10pm in 306-460 (not the normal location). The meeting was called to replace the board of directors meeting for August, to address an end of fiscal year funding issue. Those present included Jonathan Cameron (KF6RTA), Chris Carson (KE6ABQ), Bob Dengler (NO6B), Randy Hammock (KC6HUR), Walt Mushagian (K6DNS), Robert Polansky (N6ET), and Bill Wood (W6FXJ, by phone).

We discussed the lack of funds in the EOC account. Apparently, the shortfall was due to a missed allocation on the part of the EOC. Bob Polansky has worked on this problem and presented a letter he sent to Joseph Charles regarding the issue. Even if this problem gets fixed, some adjustments will probably be necessary to the club budget.

Bob Dengler led an overview of the current budget. Bill Wood had requested a new repeater controller at the JPL Table Mountain Facility to improve the reliability of the Goldstone link. The total for the controller is approximately \$1805. If the requested funding was restored in the EOC account the controller the controller can be purchased.

After some discussion, we agreed to see if EOC wants to add the remainder of the requested funding for this year to the normal FY2003 EOC allotment in October of this year. If so, that would be acceptable. If we get the funds restored in FY2002 we will spend it on the Table mountain repeater upgrade. *Secretary's note: Since the meeting, Bob Polansky has informed us that Joe Charles has agreed to provide the replacement funds for us in the next FY.* ■

W6VIO and DX News

By Bob Polansky, N6ET

First, the shack news: The 7 kilowatt generator has been firmly affixed to its concrete support outside of the W6VIO shack. An enclosure has been built around it to protect it from the elements. Unlocked doors are yet to be installed. The generator has been wired to a new transfer switch located in the W6VIO operating room. Either Edison or generator feeds can be selected to power all the 117 volt equipment (including the lights) in the shack. The diesel generator runs fine; although, it has not yet physically operated the hardware in the shack.

We end up looking much more like a real emergency communications center once that takes place. In addition, they have agreed to address the over-temperature environment which exists in the entry room to our facility. Not sure exactly when the changes will take place, but at least they will take place.

The JPL Motor Pool has agreed to feed the generator diesel fuel for the time being. Once the new Facility Division support contract is in place, our generator will be added to the list of generators maintained by the successful bidder.

The DX packet computer has a laser printer attached to it that generates error messages instead of printing. Perhaps one of our Club members could see if they can correct this new anomaly.

Now for the DX News: We are in the midst of what are known in the business as "the summer doldrums". Very few exciting DX activities take place during this period. Fear not, all is not lost. According to the 59(9) Report and the LI DX Bulletins, there's hope to catch a few of those elusive DX operations during the next month. While I have no specifics, VQ9J, ZD9IR, 9L1BTB, VK0MQI, S9SS, and S9YL will all be active through at least the entire month. In addition, the following operations will cause pileups in the HF bands as indicated next.

MONGOLIA - For a Mongolian QSO and a quick QSL, look for K4ZW to be operating from the JT1CO QTH for several weeks during September. He came across with rapid QSL's after his trip last year. He may also be able to get QSL's for QSO's you may have had with JT-land in the past. He can be contacted by Email.

MARKET REEF - OJ0LA planned to be active from 31 August through 7 September. Frequencies, bands, and modes are unknown to me.

MONGOLIA (in the rare CQ Zone 23) - K4ZW and another W4-land amateur will be improving the low-band antenna systems at JT1CO's shack from 9 through 15 September. They plan on doing some operating over the same period. Last time there, they operated as K4ZW/JT1. Good for a quick QSL upon return to the USA.

SAO THOME - S9SS and S9YL have been reported on 17 meter SSB. No specifics to help here, but past operation from these two hams has resulted in rapid QSL responses.

That is all for now. Enjoy the HF bands while the sunspots are plentiful. They won't stay that way for long. ■



JPL Retiree and Former Club President, Stan Brokl, N7YQ, at FD



Field Day 2002 Wrap-up

By Jay Holladay, W6EJJ

Highlights of the JPL ARC/Caltech ARC Field Day operation for 2002 were reported in last month's issue, and there is not too much to add to that report. The final results have been tabulated, and our entry consisting of dupe sheets and other paperwork has been received and acknowledged by ARRL Headquarters. Now we wait for the complete results for FD 2002 to be published in December QST.

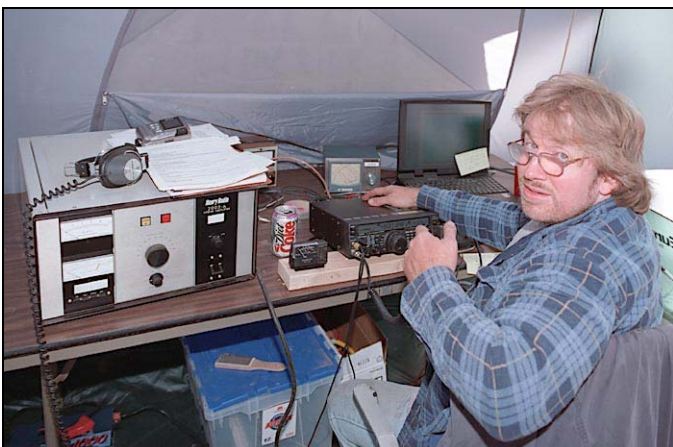
The table below shows a band by band breakdown of the final results:

Band	CW	Digital	Phone	Total
80	97		158	255
40	290		121	411
20	522		624	1146
15	340		352	692
10	32		79	111
6	4		59	63
2			80	80
222			15	15
440			14	14
GOTA			206	206
Total	1285		1708	2993

1285 CW QSO's X 4 pts = 5140

1708 Phone QSO's X 2 pts = 3416
8556

+Bonus Points 800
Total points 9356



Mike Tope, W4EF, at the Satellite/Moon bounce Station

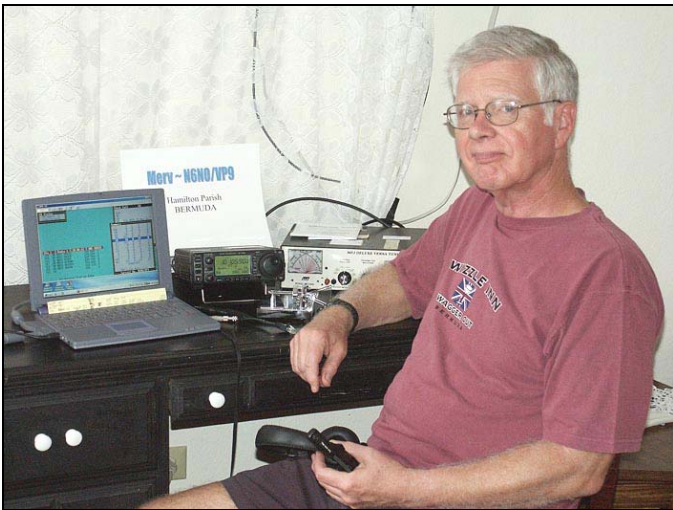


W6EJJ Cleaning Up After Field Day 2002!

Immediately after the contest, we compiled a "lessons learned" list which will be the basis for our planning for next year. Among the items are having a specific person responsible for checkout and packing each station, a simpler and more easily set up satellite station, and making sure that key people and equipment are on-site earlier. It was great to have plenty of help on Friday, but lack of some key items put us considerably behind schedule. Hopefully, CW keying and network issues will be resolved before we arrive on-site next year, but Murphy always seems to have some surprises for us. Each year we add some great new capabilities and improve the way we do things. With a little more help in the early preparation stage, we should be able to mount a great effort next year. We hope you will join us for FD 2003.

It is difficult to compare these results directly with those from last year, when we were a Class 6A entry. Comparing this year's 4A entry with last year's 4A results, we would have placed 11th nationally in total score (6th in terms of total QSO's). It is worth noting that we were way above (>1100 QSO's) the highest placing West Coast station in Class 4A last year. They placed 27th nationally, but this was probably a fluke, since West Coast entries placed very high in other classes. Our own W6VIO entry was third nationally in 6A last year. ■





Traveling With Ham Radio: Bermuda, Part 2

By Merv MacMedan, N6NO

In May I gave you the "before" plans for my one-week vacation and DXpedition to Bermuda ... now here's the "after" story:

I packed my roll-on with my trusty travellin' IC706 HF rig, antenna tuner, paddle and the laptop computer that I had recently bought for logging, along with the ever-essential toilet kit and medications. There was even a little room left over for an emergency change of clothes, in case my main suitcase got lost. Not having to worry about lugging antennas, fittings, tools (and security-alerting solder gun) was the best part about this trip.

Claire and I arrived at Bermuda around 10:30pm on May 21. We breezed through customs and our host (Ed, VP9GE) was right there to pick us up in his mini-van. We installed ourselves in the spacious apartment. It was very complete, with two large closets, full bedroom and bath, dining room and large kitchen with TV, phone, microwave, stove, electric oven, fridge, etc. It met Claire's standards for civilized comfort. The next morning Ed took Claire and I went shopping for some supplies (food and bus passes). Then I went about connecting up the gear and setting up the operating table. Everything went smoothly, in part because the power was US-standard 110 volts with US-standard plugs.

Ed's antenna assortment included a Cushcraft R-6000 vertical, which covers 6-20 meters including the WARC bands. The SWR match was very good and I never had to use the tuner with it. For the lower bands, he had the popular "all-band" G5RV, which is a flat top wire, fed off-center with ladder line for a certain distance and then coax for the rest. With the tuner it worked extremely well on 30 meters, fair on 40 meters but I never had much luck on 80 with it. I got one query for 160 meter operation but didn't even try it. I had promised to listen on 6 meters in case there was an opening, but even though I checked it from time to time, I never heard any activity there. Of course I'm not too knowledgeable about beacon frequencies on 6 meters, but I did ascertain that Bermuda has no 6-meter beacon, so the only way to discover an opening is

to do diligent listening. As I was leaving for home, Ed told me the other VP9's had reported there had been a couple of 6-meter openings during my stay, but I guess I just missed them.

The objective of this operation was to provide a VP9 CW presence on the newer (WARC) bands before and after the weekend WPX CW contest, and work the traditional bands during the contest. This is essentially what I did, between May 22 and May 28. But 10 meters only opened one day, and propagation on 12 meters was only fair on one or two days so most of the contacts were on 15, 17, 20 and 30 meters.

Although I had used CT at JPL ARC Field Days for several years, it had been configured for me by the experts. Now I had to do it all by myself. Computer interfacing, logging and operating in DX-pedition mode was a real learning experience for me. I found that the software I used (CT) automatically gives everybody a "599" report. I never did find out if it is possible to tailor the report to the QSO, so even the weakest QRP guys that were barely readable happily got "599" reports from me. That probably explains why reports you hear in contests can't be trusted for signal comparison purposes since many reports are stuck at "599". Switching from pre-canned contest mode to keyboard dialog mode to add a few personal remarks took some learning. Computer assisted operating and logging has its upside (convenience, less tiring) and downside (new tricks to learn, limited dialog capability, and more gear to drag along.) I had about 1500 QSO's altogether - about 1000 QSO's during the weekend contest and about 500 QSO's before and after it. In retrospect, the computer allowed me to work more hours without tiring as much and saved a lot of logging work for so many QSO's. I feel it was well worth buying, installing, and learning how to use a laptop as an assistant logger and rig keyer, and I thank members W6EJJ and WB6VRN for their suggestions and help in getting this set up.

I was disappointed that I didn't manage to QSO more JPL ARC club members. The lucky ones I recall were W6EJJ, N6ET, W6GRV, W6VIO and former JPL ARC member W6UM. If I worked you and didn't recognize the call, please let me know. Jay Holladay tracked all the "N6NO/VP9 spots" that appeared on the "DX Summit" web site, and found that during my week's operation I was spotted 48 times! According to my computer log, I worked over 150 countries not counting the contest, but getting the cards to prove it for DXCC will be another story! Of course, from Bermuda's strategic location, Europe (with its many countries) is easy to work.

I was surprised to find that during my entire week-long stay I never once heard a VP9 on CW. The Bermuda ham population of about 100 must all be on VHF or SSB (or more likely at the beach!) Perhaps that's why I was so popular on CW. In case someone asked for a phone contact I had a microphone ready, but there was no demand.

Claire enjoys reading, so she accommodated me quite nicely. As I hunched over my hot keyboard, she made herself comfortable on the sunny porch and took advantage of the opportunity to catch up on her mystery books. I believe in having a life, too, so we did manage to squeeze in a reasonable amount of Bermuda sightseeing, pub-sampling and shopping together. A photo I took of one of the beaches we visited was so pretty it became the front of my N6NO/VP9 QSL card. I inquired about

visiting the Air Force/NASA tracking station in Bermuda, but was sadly informed that it is now closed, and its prime real estate is being returned to Bermuda for development as a resort.

In summary, I found Bermuda a delightful, friendly vacation spot and combining it with a ham radio expedition worked very well. I was pleased to be able to give quite a few "First VP9" QSO's (mostly on the WARC bands or to Ropers running 5 watts), and to give a VP9 prefix multiplier to nearly everyone in the WPX (Prefix) Contest. The reciprocal license was easy to get (there's no charge for 3 months' validity), VP9GE's apartments (and antennas) were great, and the buses that go everywhere on the island stopped every 10 minutes right at our driveway. (No rental cars are available for visitors to Bermuda, because of limited road and parking capacity.)

As a final thought, my QSL printer only takes orders in lots of 1000, so I had to order more than I will use (2000 for 1500 contacts.) Having a modicum of Scotch blood in me, I can't see wasting 500 cards, so I think Claire and I will have to do this Bermuda ham vacation again in a year or two ... just to make use of the leftover QSL cards, of course.

Ed. Note: If you'd like more information on planning such a vacation for yourself, Merv will be happy to give you details. You can contact him at [n6no at arrl.net](mailto:n6no@arrl.net) ■

Classified Section

Wanted:

Looking for an Alinco DJ-G5T dual-band HT. Contact Bob LNO6B at [n6ob at rprlist.w6jpl.ampr.org](mailto:n6ob@rprlist.w6jpl.ampr.org) or 818-354-9620

Donations requested: Old 2 meter handhelds and TNC's. Needed by the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep to transmit weather and water level data from remote water catchments. Contact John Carnakis, KE6DKY: Phone, 661 821-2067 or email, john.bobbi at thegrid.net

For Sale:

Kenwood TR - 7850, 2-mtr mobile, \$75. ICOM IC-3AT, 220 Handheld, \$75. ICOM IC-2AT, 2-mtr handheld, \$25. ICOM BC 30, drop-in charger for IC-3AT and IC-2AT, \$10. ICOM IC-27A, 2-mtr mobile, \$100. Or \$200 for everything! Contact Jim Sutton, ND6X, [cdrsutton at attbi.com](mailto:cdrsutton@attbi.com) 818-352-3588.

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 at jpl.nasa.gov](mailto: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. The antenna is partially assembled. 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 winning bid: \$250. New: \$450. I will consider any reasonable offer. Larry Pyle AD6ST, 805 526-9556. ■

Treasurer's Reports

By Chuck Sarture, KG6NF

July, 2002

General Club Account	
Beginning of Month Balance:	\$3,924.10
Income:	
No Income This Month	\$0.00
	Total Income: \$0.00
Expenses:	
Field Day Food - Balance to Caterer	\$701.00
	Total Expenses: \$701.00
	End of Month Balance: \$3,223.10

Emergency Communications Account	
Beginning of Month Balance:	\$2,051.05
Income:	
No Income This Month	\$0.00
	Total Income: \$0.00
Expenses:	
Samlex SEC1223 12V repeater power supplies, quantity 2	\$208.00
	Total Expenses: \$208.00
	End of Month Balance: \$1,843.05

August, 2002

General Club Account	
Beginning of Month Balance:	\$3,223.10
Income:	
Memberships	\$57.00
	Total Income: \$57.00
Expenses:	
PO Box rental - annual renewal	\$38.00
	Total Expenses: \$38.00
	End of Month Balance: \$3,242.10

Emergency Communications Account	
Beginning of Month Balance:	\$1,843.05
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: \$1,843.05

Chuck Sarture, KG6NF
2002 Treasurer ■

Newsletter Deadline:

Friday, September 27 for the October issue of W6VIO Calling. Your articles, ads, photos, diagrams, letters to the editor, or technical material should be submitted to the editor via email ([Hbill.wood at mind-spring.com](mailto:Hbill.wood@mind-spring.com)) or regular mail to: Bill Wood, 31094 Hemlock Ave, Bar...



Jet Propulsion Laboratory Amateur Radio Club
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First Class Mail

JPL ARC Repeaters			
Pasadena:			
WR6JPL	147.15 MHz	(+)	PL 131.8 Open
WR6JPL	224.08 MHz	(-)	PL 156.7 Open
WR6JPL	224.70 MHz	(-)	Closed Autopatch
WR6JPL	445.20 MHz	(-)	PL 103.5 Open
W6JPL-1	145.09 MHz		Packet Node/BBS
W6JPL-1	223.54 MHz		Packet Node/BBS
Table Mountain:			
WR6AZN	145.28 MHz	(-)	PL 131.8 Open
WR6AZN	223.96 MHz	(-)	PL 156.7 Open
WR6AZN	447.20 MHz	(-)	PL 94.8 Open

