

# W6VIO Calling



Jet Propulsion Laboratory Amateur Radio Club  
PO Box 842, La Canada CA 91012-0842

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Director at Large:	Jim Marr, AA6QI	626-794-9805	WR6AZN Trustee:	Bill Wood, W6FXJ	760-256-9576

## Upcoming Events:

- **Emergency Communications Net:** Every Monday at Noon, on WR6JPL 224.08/(-)/156.7 & 445.20/(-)/103.5, or WR6AZN 223.96/(-)/156.7 on Table Mountain.
- **JPLARC Regular Membership meeting:** Second working Friday every month from Noon to 1pm in 180-703C. Call-in: 818-354-4044 ID-number: **997 183 539 (NEW #!)** (without the spaces). Slides (if any) broadcast via JPL WebEx (same ID-number). **Next is May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Guest speaker: Marty Woll N6VI, Vice-Director of the ARRL Southwestern Division, will speak on the Future of Amateur Radio. From Marty's website (<http://n6vi.com>): "Demographics and technology have evolved to change the role of Amateur Radio. While the "traditional" Ham activities aren't necessarily going away, we must adapt and respond to the new environment of which we are a part. There are steps each of us can take to help create a bright future for Amateur Radio."**
- **JPLARC Board of Directors (BOD) meeting:** Normally, the first working Friday, every month, from Noon to 1pm in 180-703C. **Next is June 5<sup>th</sup>.** Call-in: 818-354-4044 ID-number: **997 183 539 (NEW #!)** (without the spaces).

## In this issue:

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## New JPLARC Call-in ID

By Steve Townes WB4ILW

A new JPLWebEx meeting ID number has been set up (due to AA6QI having set up the previous meeting and it going away because he retired). The call-in phone number remains the same at 818-354-4044 but the meeting ID-number is now **997 183 539** (without the spaces, as before). Use this same meeting ID-number when connecting through the JPLWebEx internet interface. If not an active JPL employee (or even if you are, you can still...) remember to use the "Join by

number" in the upper right part of the blue header bar at the top of the opening page. You can then listen to audio over the internet if you have a fast enough internet connection or use the dial-in number over the telephone. Remember also that JPLWebEx works from mobile devices, too.

## Regular Meeting Apr 24<sup>th</sup>

By Jim Marr AA6QI

Present were: Eric Archer<sup>†</sup> N6CV, Chuck Baker<sup>†\*</sup> WB6CWI, Vaughn Cable<sup>†</sup> K6ZTA, Bob Cesarone WA9JIB, Jim Lux W6RMK, Jim Marr<sup>†\*</sup> AA6QI, Steve Noland<sup>†</sup> WA6KLC, Len Reder<sup>†</sup> KB6DVG, Chuck Sarture<sup>†\*</sup> KG6NF, Rob Smith<sup>†\*</sup> W6GRV, Mike Tope W4EF, Steve Townes<sup>†\*</sup> WB4ILW, Umit Yildiz<sup>†</sup> KK6TJJ. On the Phone: Chris Carson<sup>†\*</sup> KE6ABQ, Walt Mushagian<sup>†</sup> K6DNS.

Note: <sup>†</sup> indicates a 2015 regular voting member (i.e., JPL/Caltech/Retired & 2015 dues paid), and <sup>\*</sup> Indicates a BOD member. For a regular meeting quorum, the JPLARC Bylaws require a majority of the BOD (four or more) and at least five other regular members. We had all six BOD members, six other regular members and three non-members, so we **did** have a quorum.

President Steve Townes opened the meeting with the usual introductions around the room. While everyone enjoyed the pizza that Mike Tope arranged to be there, Steve went through some slides with the Secretary's Report and Treasurer's Report.

**Secretary's Report:** Current membership (end of March) 38 total club members; 34 voting members; ARRL membership 76.5% (this is the percentage of licensed & voting members who are also ARRL members). For comparison, by the end of 2014, the club had 49 total members, 42 voting, with 78.6% ARRL membership. The report ended with a reminder that 2015 Dues are due to Secretary Rob Smith W6GRV and membership cards will be issued.

**Treasurer's Report:** The March beginning and ending balance in the club's Caltech Credit Union account was \$4,504.19.

**AA6QI Retiring:** Steve Townes reported that Jim Marr AA6QI is retiring May 1<sup>st</sup> so we need to transition many of his responsibilities to other members, volunteers preferred. Those willing, see Steve.

**Guest Speaker:** Steve Townes WB4ILW, "JPLARC Opportunities and Challenges."

Steve began with an introduction that mentioned his second year as President of the club, the foundation laid by previous club leaders, and the common bonds we share as club members: Ham Radio (our hobby), and JPL (our day jobs).

Steve then briefly reviewed key club activities, including:

- Emergency Communications – this being the major reason the institution is interested in supporting the club (JEARS; support of Great ShakeOut; and NASA Emergency HF Net).
- JPL PR – just getting on the air is good PR; special events; obtaining institutional support when needed.
- Field Day – did it last year. This year?
- Meetings – excellent presentations; time to talk to each other.

Some Opportunities:

- Camaraderie with fellow hams.
- New shack with connection to HF antennas on the Mesa (W6VIO on the air again!)
- Continuing to develop/sustain our emergency communications capabilities (EmComm net on Mondays at Noon; California Great ShakeOut each October).
- (Re)introducing new capabilities (e.g., satellite comm.; EME; digital; etc.).

Also Challenges:

- AA6QI's retirement (many functions that Jim has performed need to be transitioned to others

during the year).

- Changing relationship of clubs and the JPL institution over the years.
- Aging infrastructure (particularly IT).
- Repeater(s) location.
- Keeping/getting existing membership engaged.
- Filling leadership positions.
- Attracting new members.
- Field Day.

Steve presented a 2015 club organization chart showing:

- Board of Directors (4 elected, 2 appointed)
- Other Staff (4 appointed station Trustees)
- Standing committees (8)
- Other committees (6)

Steve then showed the approved 2015 JPLARC budget (see the February 2015 issue of W6VIO Calling at <http://jplarc.ampr.org/calling/2015/Feb2015.pdf>). He pointed out that having the funds to have a budget is good but it also highlights the things we need to do.

Next, Steve showed pictures of the new JPL Shack (building 329) and the Comm Van, both of which are going to need a bit of work to get into working condition.

He briefly discussed JEARS, which has the objective of providing trained amateur radio operators to act as primary communication conduits during small-to-major disaster situations, including acting as additional communication support when the normal means of information flow are operating. He pointed out that we haven't made much progress organizing and getting the certifications needed.

Next, Steve gave an overview of the club's IT infrastructure, followed by a listing of our currently planned guest speakers for the rest of the year.

Concluding, Steve recapped that there's lots to do that we've continued to chip away at as things can be done and we need to keep ahead of catastrophes. To do that, we need participation, both leaders and minions with a wide variety of talents (nobody is expected to be expert). As always, Steve and the other club officers want to hear feedback and suggestions. While work and life get in the way of our hobby, we all understand that and want this to continue to be fun and beneficial for the JPL ham community.

## Board Meeting May 8th

By Rob Smith W6GRV

Present were: Jorge Gonzalez† KI6BJB, Chuck Sarture†\* KG6NF, Rob Smith†\* W6GRV. On the phone or JPLWebEx: Chris Carson†\* KE6ABQ, Jim Marr†\* AA6QI, Jan Tarsala WB6VRN, Steve Townes†\* WB4ILW.

Note: † indicates a 2015 regular member (i.e., JPL/Caltech/Retired & 2015 dues paid), and \* indicates Board member. For a Board meeting quorum, the JPLARC Bylaws require a majority of the Board (four or more). We had five Board members so we **had** a quorum.

Steve (who was on travel in D.C. but projecting slides via JPLWebEx) opened the meeting at Noon.

**Secretary's Report:** Rob Smith reported that we have two more membership renewals, bringing us to 41 members of which 36 are voting members (JPL/Caltech/Retired) and 78% of the voting members are also ARRL members. For comparison, by the end of 2014, the club had 49 members of which 42 were voting, with 78.6% of voting members also being ARRL members.

**Treasurer's Report:** Chuck provided the April 2015 report as follows:

- Beginning balance: \$4,504.19

- Deposits:

Dues: \$220.00

ARRL commissions: None

Used Equipment Sales: \$60.00

Subtotal Deposits: \$280.00

- Withdrawals: None

- Ending Balance: \$4,784.19

**Guest Speakers:** Steve reported that he had contacted Marty Woll N6VI who confirmed that he will speak about the future of amateur radio at the May 22<sup>nd</sup> regular membership meeting. Steve is working on the visitor's clearance for Marty. He also reported that he is working to line up a June 19<sup>th</sup> guest speaker.

**Field Day (FD):** The Pasadena Radio Club (PRC) now has a Field Day lead (Tom Mikkelson WA0POD) and are interested in teaming up with the JPLARC & CITARC as we did last year. The next two PRC Board of Directors meetings (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month; 7:15pm at the Kaiser facility at 393 E. Walnut - NW corner of Walnut and Los Robles) will be reserved for FD planning. Jim Marr will represent the JPLARC at these planning meetings. The JPLARC still needs an active employee lead. Mike Tope W4EF is considering volunteering for the JPLARC lead. Jorge Gonzalez KI6BJB offered to help with FD and Jim suggested that he talk with Mike Tope. Jim can help the on-lab FD team with the list items that will be needed and where they are all located (all are ready to go). There will be a work party to put new aircraft cables on the CITARC crank up tower (we noticed at last year's FD that these cables were getting long in the tooth).

**Network:** KC6UZN sent an email to Chris Carson about a potential security issue with our web/email/echo-link computer. Steve asked who was keeping our mail system up to date. Jim reported that Randy Hammock

KC6HUR was keeping our computer security up to date but he has been away from JPL for over a decade now and it's been a while since he's done any of that, so we need someone to take this over. Bob Dengler NO6B has the admin passwords and Bill Wood W6FXJ has been maintaining our [jplarc.ampr.org](http://jplarc.ampr.org) website. Randy Hammock, Rob Smith and Jim Marr have administrator passwords for the JPLARC email reflector. Jorge Gonzalez said that he is familiar with IT security and offered to help. Steve said that Walt Ciszczon KK6DUL also offered to help with our IT efforts. Jim reminded that Bob Dengler is interested in porting our web server, email reflector, and IRLP/Echolink node to a Raspberry PI, which would be a fun project for a small group.

**Newsletter:** Steve said that we need to start working on a transition of the newsletter to another editor, now that Jim is retired. Jim said that he is willing to continue editing the newsletter, at least for a while, until a new editor is found. He is also willing to assist in training the new editor.

**Shack:** Chris Carson reported that a safety walkthrough schedule for Monday May 4<sup>th</sup> was canceled due to a badge issue that prevented Safety from getting access. It will be rescheduled. JPL Safety is using a third party outfit that they have worked with before. Chris also reported that the hardline order has a leadtime of 6 to 8 weeks after the order is placed, so it may be here by July/Aug. Holes have been punched in the shack bulkhead for cables and a plywood backer board will be added. Chris is looking for where we could put a 15 to 20 ft tower. Jim reported that there are sections of a tower up on the Mesa near the Rohn tower that has the TH-6 tribander and 2-element 40m beam but he doesn't know whether it is a complete tower. Someone with Mesa access should check it out.

The meeting was adjourned at about 12:30 pm so Steve could head for the airport to catch his flight home.

## Past Time to Renew for 2015

By Jim Marr AA6QI

The JPLARC Bylaws (<http://jplarc.ampr.org/Bylaws-2014.pdf>) specifies annual membership renewals are due **by the end of January** each year.

Membership renewal consists of filling in the membership application form (<http://jplarc.ampr.org/applic.pdf>) and submitting the form along with your annual dues to our Club Secretary, Rob Smith W6GRV.

Note that the Board voted to increase the annual dues to \$20 for members but left family members at \$5 as before. This is the first dues increase since January 1991.

Recall that the liability waiver on the back of the membership application form does NOT need to be signed by active JPL or JPL Contractor employees. All others need to sign the waiver.

Also recall that newly licensed members do not pay dues for the first year of club membership (but do need to submit the membership application).

## 2015 Committees?

By Jim Marr AA6QI

Operation of the Club depends upon the active workings of a number of committees. Committee chairs are appointed by the President. Club members interested in those committees volunteer to participate (just let any Board member or any member of that committee know that you'd like to participate).

Please consider volunteering to support one or more committees that are of interest to you. The Club needs your help!

### Committees include:

**Repeater Committee.** Operates, maintains and improves the club's many VHF/UHF repeaters, with some exciting developments coming in 2015.

**EmComm/JEARS Committee.** Works with JPL emergency operations to provide support to JPL during emergencies. Includes organizing participation in the annual Great ShakeOut exercise in October.

**Station Facility Committee.** Maintains and improves the club's four operating stations and antennas. The big news in 2015 will be the move of the main shack (building 173) to its new location next to building 86 (just east of and on the other side of the road from The Mars Yard) and restoration of feed lines to our antenna farm on the JPL Mesa.

**Field Day Committee.** It is already past time to begin planning our 2015 ARRL June Field Day participation. This committee will lead those activities. Last year's field day committee chairman won't be able to serve as chair this year due to his retirement, so this is your chance to make field day what you would like it to be.

**Publicity/Membership Committee:** Maintains membership records, advertises activities and special events, and coordinates with other area amateur radio clubs.

**Internet Services Committee:** Operates, maintains and improves the JPLARC internet-based services, including our web site, email exploder, and ARRL affiliated club web presence.

**Club Bulletin:** Prepares and publishes the monthly JPLARC club bulletin: W6VIO Calling.

**Meeting Program Committee:** Arranges for interesting guest speakers at the monthly regular membership meetings.

**Nominating Committee:** Recruits the slate of officers for

the next calendar year (starts activities in October).

**Education Committee:** Provides training for the use of club facilities and license upgrades. Volunteer Examiner credentials are a plus for membership in this committee.

**Public/Special Events Committee:** Arranges for special operating events (e.g., commemorative operating events like landings, launches, flybys, etc.). We could begin doing these anytime from our home stations using the W6VIO call (if authorized by the W6VIO trustee).

**Refreshments Committee:** While we list this committee, it did not operate in 2013 or 2014 and may or may not operate in 2015 unless someone is interested in doing it.

**Holiday Banquet Committee:** We haven't had a December holiday banquet for the past couple of years. These used to be held at a local restaurant and were a lot of fun. It would be good to get these going again.

**Historian:** Bill Wood W6FXJ (retired member) has been implicitly serving as the club historian but has indicated a desire to pass this on to someone new.

## ARRL Membership:

By Jim Marr AA6QI

As an ARRL affiliated club, at least 51% of our membership must be ARRL members.

As of May 8, 2015, of our 41 CY2015 members, 31 (76%) are either Life (7) or Regular (24) ARRL members. Note that 78% of our 36 voting-eligible members (i.e., JPLARC Regular members) are also ARRL members.

While there are no requirements to maintain ARRL membership, there are some clear advantages to having ARRL membership. Some of these are:

- Receiving the monthly QST magazine and having access to all back issues electronically.
- Being able to subscribe to weekly ARRL news, propagation forecasts, and satellite ephemeris notifications.
- Being able to subscribe to the electronic monthly Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) newsletter that may be of interest to members who wish to stay current on emergency communications.
- Member discounts on materials and training. For example, the ARRL Introduction to Emergency Communication Course is \$85 for non-members but only \$50 for members.
- You support ARRL, the only significant amateur radio advocacy organization in the U.S. that is fighting to protect our access to the airwaves.

Should those of you who are not already members and may wish to join, please do so through the Club rather than joining directly through ARRL. Why? If you join through the Club (new members), the Club retains \$15 of your membership fee to support Club activities. From your point of view, the amount you pay is the same

either way. Even if you are a member who is just renewing, doing so through the Club nets the Club \$2, again without changing your costs at all.

To renew through the Club, see Secretary Rob Smith who will help you with the paperwork (don't worry, it's really simple!).

Thanks in advance for considering joining ARRL or for maintaining your membership.

## JPLARC 2015 Members

By Jim Marr AA6QI & Rob Smith W6GRV

JPLARC 2015 paid membership as of May 8<sup>th</sup> follows:

Call	First	Last	MbrCat	Vote?	Lclass	ARRL?
KK6RAW	Ridwan	Angkasa	FAM	N	T	Y
N6CV	Eric	Archer	JPL	Y	E	Y
WB6CWI	Chuck	Baker	JPL	Y	T	Y
WA6DZS	Philip	Barnes-Roberts	RET	Y	E	Y
KE6PNC	Donna	Barnes-Roberts	FAM	N	G	Y
KJ6IZX	Gary	Block	JPL	Y	E	Y
KJ6IZX	Gary	Block	JPL	Y	E	Y
K6ZTA	Vaughn	Cable	JPL	Y	E	L
KE6ABQ	Chris	Carson	JPL	Y	E	N
KK6DUL	Walt	Ciszczon	JPL	Y	T	Y
AG6YR	Steve	Collins	JPL	Y	E	N
NO6B	Robert	Dengler	JPL	Y	E	N
N5BF	Courtney	Duncan	JPL	Y	E	L
WD5EHM	Viann	Duncan	FAM	N	T	N
N6PGC	Jim	Erickson	JPL	Y	T	Y
KK6QJG	James	Gerhard	JPL	Y	T	Y
KI6BJB	Jorge	Gonzalez	JPL	Y	T	Y
AE6S	Robert	Gosline	RET	Y	E	L
N6UNI	James	Jenkins	JPL	Y	E	Y
AG6MN	Jeffrey	LaGrange	CTR	Y	E	Y
KK6QJH	Francisco	Loaiza	JPL	Y	T	Y
WA6KPW	Jim	Longthorne	OTH	N	G	Y
AG6TD	Mark	Lysek	JPL	Y	E	N
AA6QI	Jim	Marr	RET	Y	E	L
KC6FSP	Michele	Marr	FAM	N	T	N
K6DNS	Walter	Mushagian	RET	Y	E	Y
WA6KLC	Steve	Noland	JPL	Y	A	Y
K6SN	Scott	Nolte	JPL	Y	E	L
KB6DVG	Leonard	Reder	JPL	Y	G	N
WB6KZE	Charles	Rhoades	JPL	Y	A	N
N6MP	Stan	Sander	JPL	Y	E	Y
KG6NF	Chuck	Sarture	JPL	Y	A	Y
KC6NRL	David	Seidel	JPL	Y	T	N
W6GRV	Rob	Smith	JPL	Y	E	L
KK6QJE	Lew	Soloway	JPL	Y	T	Y
WB4ILW	Stephen	Townes	JPL	Y	A	Y
N6FV	Fred	Vescelus	RET	Y	E	Y
N6CI	William	Weber	RET	Y	E	Y
W6FXJ	Bill	Wood	RET	Y	A	L
KK6TJJ	Umut	Yildiz	JPL	Y	T	N
KI6BWO	Simeon	Young	JPL	Y	E	Y

## Equipment For Sale

By Jim Marr AA6QI

The sale of the following items of surplus JPLARC equipment was approved by the quorum present at the October 24 2014 regular membership meeting. Please make your best offer to Club Treasurer Chuck Sarture at JPL. All equipment is sold as-is with a receipt from the JPLARC.

- ICOM IC-27H 25W 2m FM transceiver, asking \$50.

- Kenwood TR-9130 all-mode 25W 2m transceiver, asking \$80.

- ICOM IC-471A 1W to 25W 70cm all-mode transceiver with external PS-30 power supply, asking \$150.

- ICOM IC-471H 10W to 75W 70cm all-mode transceiver with internal power supply, asking \$200.

- ICOM AG-35 70cm mast mounted preamp, asking \$15.

- Packet Station consisting of an MFJ-8621A 2m Data Radio with crystals for 145.01 MHz & 145.09 MHz, and an AEA PK-232 MBX TNC, asking \$20 for the pair.

- RS232 to RS422 level converter, EASY model IC456A-R2, asking \$3.

## Future Meetings

By Jim Marr AA6QI

All JPLARC meetings are being held on non-RDO Friday's from Noon to 1 PM in 180-703C. Upcoming talks (subject to change, as always):

Potential topics for the rest of the year include (although not all speakers are confirmed yet and always subject to change):

June 19<sup>th</sup>: Contest software, rig connectivity, computer logging/ADIF/LoTW/eQSL (options & how), speaker TBD.

July 17<sup>th</sup>: DX for the Beginner, Vaughn Cable K6ZTA

August 28<sup>th</sup>: Digital communications (RTTY, PSK31, JT-9, JT-65, & others), speaker TBD.

September 25<sup>th</sup>: JEARS progress update, Will Michael KC6LOK.

October 23<sup>rd</sup>: Amateur Satellite Communications for the beginner (focus on how to get started), speaker TBD.

November 20<sup>th</sup>: HRO Burbank - gear demo, HRO's Eric Christensen K6EJC.

## Advertisements:



<http://www.hamradio.com>

The Burbank HRO store may offer up to a 5% discount on some ham radio "accessories" to JPLARC members, upon presentation of a valid JPLARC membership card.