



The Kern River Voice

The Monthly Newsletter of the Sequoia Amateur Radio Group



Volume 16 Issue 2

February 2021

N6KRV – An ARRL Affiliated Club

PO Box 2446, Lake Isabella CA 93240



<http://www.n6krv.org>

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2021 S.A.R.G. Leadership

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(also Club Historian & The Raffle Guy)

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Board Members

Charles Caudell K16GOG (760) 223 3929

Newsletter Editor

Bill Hesse editor@n6krv.org

Past President

Bill Hesse N6TF

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ARES Net

Monday – 6:45 PM
145.450 (-) PL 156.7

Club Nets

HF Net –Tue / Thu & Sat 8 PM

3.770 MHz

VHF Net – Friday 7PM

145.450 (-) PL 156.7

Prune Juice & BS Net

Daily (exc. Sunday) 9AM

145.450 (-) PL 156.7

SARG Monthly Meetings

2nd Sat. (exc. Dec.) 9:30AM

KRV Elk's Lodge

6708 Wofford Blvd.,

Wofford Heights, CA 93285



The Prez Sez:

Hi folks,

Here we are over half way through January of 2021 and not a lot has changed.

I hope you all had a great holiday season and are now sitting by a warm fire with your favorite beverage enjoying the winter snow scene.

The fight against the covid-19 virus continues. I am seeing signs that the worst might be behind us as there are emergency room beds available locally and many of us have or are about to get our shots as they become more available. I am hopeful that in-person meetings may be allowed as soon as April or May. I hope I don't end up with egg on my face but I would like to see if we can find a potential speaker. I just have a hunch.

The N6SR repeater has been successfully moved to Rocky Point and is working well. We have a new more powerful antenna that will be erected when the weather permits. It should improve the signals from the outlying areas such as Walker Basin, Inyokern and Cane Brake. Although I enjoy getting together on Prune Juice and the Friday night net it will be great to see you all again. **Don KC6OCA.**

ARRL:

The K7RA Solar Update

01/29/2021

Tad Cook, K7RA, Seattle, reports: Solar activity increased this week. We saw no spotless days, and the average daily sunspot number rose from 14.7 to 28.1. Average daily solar flux was up from 76.1 to 77.2.

Average daily planetary A index rose from 4 to 9.4, due to a minor geomagnetic storm on Monday. On that day Alaska's High Latitude College A Index was 33.

Predicted solar flux for the next 30 days is 76, 75, 74, and 74 on January 29 – February 1; 72, 70, 70, and 72 on February 2 – 5; 76 on February 6 – 10; 77 on February 11 – 20; 76 on February 21 – 2, and 75 on February 25 – 27.

Predicted planetary A index is 5, 5, and 8 on January 29 – 31; 18, 12, and 8 on February 1 – 3; 5 on February 4 – 6; 10 on February 7 – 8; 5 on February 9 – 19; 8, 12, and 12 on February 20 – 22, and 5 on February 23 – 27.

Even after a nice stretch of days with sunspots, the 10.7-centimeter solar flux seems weak. Last week and this week we reported average daily solar flux of 73.8 and 78.6. But toward the end of 2020, the three bulletins reporting data from November 19 – December 9 had average daily solar flux at 90.1, 108.1, and 91.9.

On Thursday (1/28) [Spaceweather.com](https://www.spaceweather.com) reported a sunspot number of 26 and showed an image of two active regions on the sun, 2800 and 2797, but NOAA SESC [showed](#) a sunspot number of zero for the same day. The NOAA SESC file is the only source used for sunspot numbers reported in this report.

OUR NEXT MEETING: *Our next meeting has been canceled once again due to the current Covid-19 situation. Updates will be posted on the Club Website. (N6KRV.ORG)*

Please stay safe, well and at home.



VE Exams

The club now sponsors VE Exams on the 3rd Saturday of each month, except December. The exams will be held at the Valley Estates Community Center, 14213 Allen Ave., Weldon, CA 93283 at 11AM. Preregistration is required and the forms and directions are on the club website n6krv.org on the exam info page. This change was made on a trial basis as the Elk's Lodge was not yet available for the May testing session. It worked so well, no distractions, good social distancing for all involved and plenty of work space for everyone that it was decided to make the change of location and date permanent.

Mike KA6IYS – Lead Examiner

Some upcoming Events:
None scheduled so far.....



SICKNESS AND DISTRESS

If you hear of any of our members who aren't feeling so well, please let Christine Hesse KK6AZQ know so she can get a card out to them. Keep those prayers going.....

This month in History

February 1, 1960 - In Greensboro, North Carolina, four African American students sat down and ordered coffee at a lunch counter inside a Woolworth's store. They were refused service, but did not leave. Instead, they waited all day. The scene was repeated over the next few days, with protests spreading to other southern states, resulting in the eventual arrest of over 1,600 persons for participating in sit-ins.

February 4, 1985 - Twenty countries in the United Nations signed a [document](#) entitled "Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment."

Birthday February 4 - [Thaddeus Kosciusko](#) (1746-1817) was born in Poland. He served in the American Revolution, building the first fortifications at West Point. He then returned to Poland and fought against a Russian invasion.

February 10, 1967 - The 25th [Amendment](#) to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, clarifying the procedures for presidential succession in the event of the disability of a sitting president.

February 14, 1849 - Photographer [Mathew Brady](#) took the first photograph of a U.S. President in office, [James Polk](#).

Birthday February 19, - Astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) was born in Torun, Poland. Considered the founder of modern astronomy, he theorized that the sun, not the earth, was the center of the solar system.

Birthday February 22, - [George Washington](#) (1732-1799) was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia. He served as commander of the Continental Army during the [American Revolution](#) and became the first U.S. President.

February 28, 1844 - During a demonstration of naval fire power, one of the guns aboard the USS Princeton exploded, killing several top U.S. government officials on the steamer ship, and narrowly missed killing President [John Tyler](#).

February 28, 1986 - Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme (1927-1986) was assassinated in Stockholm while exiting a movie theater with his wife.

February 28, 1994 - NATO conducted its first combat action in its 45 year history as four Bosnian Serb jets were shot down by American fighters in a no-fly zone.

How about a little humor:

A Pastor was seated next to a cowboy on a flight to Texas.

After the plane took off, the cowboy asked for a whiskey and soda, which was brought and placed before him.

The flight attendant then asked the Pastor if he would like a drink.

Appalled, the Pastor replied, "I'd rather be tied up and taken advantage of by women of ill-repute, than allow a drop of liquor touch my lips."

The cowboy then handed his drink back to the attendant and said,

"Me too, I didn't know we had a choice."

Digital Radio

Submitted by Pete Higginbotham W6SV

The purpose of this article is to acquaint you with the digital modes that are popping up all over the Ham radio bands. Right up front, I am not an expert and many of the terms I use are used to help me understand things and, hopefully to help me explain them to you.

Okay, what is digital anyway? Well for our purposes it is simply changing a signal, a voice, into ones and zeros so it can be processed by a computer AND sending that information where we want it, THEN changing those ones and zeros back into a voice at the place we want to hear them. We kind of do the same thing with our regular radio. We talk into the microphone and the radio magically changes our voice into modulated energy waves, shoots them off into space until they get to a location where they are picked up by another radio that interprets the signal and sends out a voice through the speaker. We are not hearing the same voice. We are hearing an interpretation of the waves sent and received. An interpretation made in that little box we talk to. You still talk to a radio, most of the time, with digital. The radio translates the signal into ones and zeros where they are picked by a repeater or another radio then they are sent across the internet to any location in the world with internet access and a radio that understands and can translate our ones and zeros back into a voice. The media we send through is different in part, internet vs. stratosphere, but you can see the similarities.

Okay so Ya got digi? We are using 1s and 0s to send our voice from one place to another instead of using modulated energy waves. We are using the internet as our medium to direct our signal to a specific place rather than sending it into the atmosphere for delivery. There are a lot of ways to translate our voice into a signal a computer can understand so there are a lot of different digital modes or types. There is Echo Link, P-25, Fusion, All star, D-Star and variations of these plus many, many more. Some, like Echo link do not require a radio, your computer microphone and speaker act as the user interface and the translator is built into the software. Your cell phone? Yep, internet access

and a speaker and microphone. You are in business with the right software. EchoLink will work right off of your cell phone.

Digital radio is not new. I used a mixed form of digital radio in the later 1970s with the Sheriffs Department in Santa Clara Co.. It has been used extensively in the commercial radio world for decades and like many types of HAM radio it became popular in HAM applications as commercial users adapted commercial equipment to HAM operations. Numerous radios are now available from China and the big Japanese companies are all jumping on board and most of them have at least one type of digital. Some support several types. Kenwood supports both D-Star and DMR as an example.

If you are in the market for a new mobile radio or handheld, one with digital capabilities may be the radio to look at. Having a digitally capable radio does not detract from the radio at all. Digital is an add on with most of the popular Japanese radios. Kenwood and Icom support D-Star. Yaesu supports Fusion (Wires and WiresX are Fusion driven). Despite industry claims one is no better than the other. There are translation differences but they all use Voice Over Internet Protocol for signal transfer. These radios work on analog or digital and some even recognize the signal and automatically switch to the proper mode. Pick your radio based on your own brand preferences and the digital mode that comes with it will work just fine. I like Yaesu radios, so my first digital radio is a Yaesu FTM-400XD. I did not buy it for its WiresX capabilities. In fact I thought I would never use Wires. The radio has a very nice, very large detachable display. I bought it for that display. I had it well over a year before I even looked at the digital manual!

WiresX is the mobile and handheld name given the Yaesu flavor of digital and it like others mentioned above is all built-in and pre-programmed into some models of this brands radio. I am familiar with Wires and that is what I will reference but please, this not an endorsement. The others work very much the same, just different names. Read your manual carefully. Follow directions carefully. The radios with built in digital modes are pretty straightforward but

“Digital Radio” continued...

remember they are computer driven and are not tolerant of exploratory surgery. Get it working first, then explore. This is much less frustrating!

First we need to find a WiresX capable repeater. Ted, N6SMU, has a repeater on Fraiser. 447.040, – offset with a CTCSS (Continuous Tone Controlled Squelch System) encode tone of 136.5. This is an automatic switching repeater so you can use it from any brand of radio. If it reads an in-coming WiresX transmission it automatically switches to digital mode and if it hears an incoming analog signal it switches to analog mode and acts like a normal repeater. To talk to the N6SMU repeater digitally I set my Yaesu radio on Ted’s frequency. Press a button on the face of the radio until a red bar appears on the display. This red bar tells me my radio is in automatic switch mode. I tap my push to talk button to lock in digital mode. My display shows a digital indicator. I can now talk to the repeater digitally. I press and hold a button on the display to bring up the chat rooms list. Remember in digital we are not sending our signal randomly into the air we are directing it via the internet to a specific location. These locations are meet up spots. Every brand has a different name for these meeting places, Wires uses “Rooms”. It doesn’t matter. There are about 1,500 available at anytime. If I want to talk to Ireland I look for an Irish named spot like, CQ Ireland or just “Ireland”, whatever. Once I find the room I want to join I select it and quickly press my push to talk button. The “key-in” or quick key is frowned on in regular analog radio but in the digital world is a proper and required procedure. The key-in registers you in a room. Then throw out your call sign out and start your QSO. For most rooms your key-in is good for 15 Minutes. If you key up and just start talking, no one will hear you. You have to quick key (less than ½ second) to register first. If you listen and don’t key up again you will be dropped from the room in 15 minutes. Key-in again for another 15, or talk! That is what it is all about. Remember that other brands will be somewhat different. Different names, you may have to use menus instead of display buttons but the general procedure will be similar. Read your manual for the

specifics. To find a repeater compatible with your brand go to www.repeaterbook.com.

I have a WiresX node. This means I can connect to a chat room without a repeater by connecting my laptop to my Yaesu radio. My laptop acts as a repeater and I manipulate my radio in the same manner. I use my radio microphone, I receive the voice back over my radio speaker. To get to a chat room or meeting spot I push the same buttons. The rooms show up on my computer display instead of the radio display but everything else is the same. Being a node gives flexibility. You do not have to depend on someone else’s repeater being available. It also requires that you register with Yaesu and get a number which is connected to your HAM call sign. The registration process is simple, go to your products web site and follow directions. You do not HAVE to register. You only register if you want to be a node. Ted’s repeater is a registered node for Yaesu.

.....End of part one..Part two next month.....

Why couldn't the bicycle stand up?.....



It was two tired.....

Let me hear from you if you like or don't like what you've seen in this issue of *your* "Kern River Voice". EDITOR@N6KRV.ORG



Jon Armstrong, K6QXG, became a silent key on January 10, 2021 at the age of 80. He held an Amateur Extra Class license and had been licensed since he was a youth.

Jon was a retired Sgt. with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. After retiring he continued working in a variety of jobs including driving a fuel tanker delivering to gas stations in and around Bakersfield. He used his law enforcement background and volunteered with the Bakersfield

Police department in their communications division.

Jon was a long-time member and officer in the Kern County Central Valley Amateur Radio Club. When we formed our local club here in the Kern River Valley Jon was one of the guys from Bakersfield who regularly commuted up the canyon to attend our meetings and he eventually became an Associate Member of our club.

Jon became an Extra Class Volunteer Examiner with the Greater Los Angeles Amateur Radio Group and was a part of our local team and assisted at many of our local VE Sessions.

His passing will leave a hole in our club that will be hard to fill.

Submitted by Mike Higgins KA6IYS



Valentine's Day Genie

Brother Xing

I'm driving with this guy, and he runs right through a Stop sign. So I say, "Hey, that was a Stop sign." And he says, "I drive like my brother!"

A few blocks later, he plows right through a red light. I say, "You just ran a red light." And he says, "I drive like my brother!"

So now we're coming up on a green light, and he slows down. I'm confused, so I say, "It's green; why are you slowing down?" He says, "My brother might be coming."

Cute Angles

If you were a triangle you'd be acute one.

Caught the Love Bug

Did you hear about the bed bugs who fell in love? They're getting married in the spring!

What's the difference between a \$20 steak and a \$55 steak?

February 14th.

AN OLDER WOMAN runs into her friend at the mall. "You're not going to believe this," she said. "I found an old lamp the other day. I rubbed it and a genie popped out. He explained that genies don't give three wishes anymore, but he did offer me a choice between one of two wishes. He could give me a better memory or turn my husband into the greatest lover ever." "Tough choice," said her friend. "Which one did you choose?" "That's the thing. I can't remember."

Learn to Whistle

Thinking no one could hear me as I loaded a UPS tractor trailer, I began to whistle. I was really getting into it when a coworker in the next trailer poked his head in. "You know, I always used to wish I could whistle," he said. "Now I just wish you could." —Megs Brunner





FEBRUARY 2021

Serving the Kern River Valley and Walker Basin



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