

Bulletin of the West Valley Amateur Radio Association An Affiliated Club of the American Radio Relay League

West Valley Amateur Radio Association, W6PIY— <a href="http://www.wvara.org">http://www.wvara.org</a>
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July 2009

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, 7 to 9 p.m., July 15, 2009** at the American Red Cross, 2731 North First Street at Plumeria (between Trimble and Montague Expressway) in San José. Speaker: Ian Kluft, KO6YQ — Subject: "Amateur Radio and the Stratofox Aerospace Tracking Team"

**About Our Speaker** — Ian Kluft, KO6YQ, has been an active member, officer, and board member of the West Valley Amateur Radio Association. He is a software engineer and commercial pilot/flight instructor, and the co-founder of the Stratofox Aerospace Tracking Team. He received his B.S. and M.S. degrees in Computer Science from California State University, Chico.

As a software engineer, he specializes in C and Perl development, and has worked on projects in the areas of embedded systems; software build -tools; server-side web site automation; mapmaking; and aviation navigation. He has been programming in Unix since 1984, and with Linux as both a user and developer since 1992.

He has been a private pilot since 1989, and is now a commercial pilot, flight instructor, and advanced ground instructor.



Field Day Summaries and Photos— See the next few pages!



Fig. 1 — June 13, 2009 Walk-through at the Mora Hill Field Day Site: (left to right): Phil Verinsky, W6TQG; Jon Griffiths, W6PI; Greg Olsen, K6XM; Nick Ulman, kZ2V; Gary Gordon, K6KV; and Greg DesBrisay, N6GD.



Fig. 2 — The WVARA 2009 Field Day Team Celebrates a Great Weekend.

### Field Day Results, 2009: Another All-time Record! — by Phil Verinsky, W6TQG

We worked all states except Delaware, 6 provinces (AB, BC, ON, QC,SK, MAR[NS]), and a few DX stations. All logs have been uploaded to WVARA's Logbook Of The World and eQSL accounts, and 33 states have already QSLed on LOTW. With 14,405 points, WVARA easily beat the previous all-time record for 9A-battery. The previous two all-time records were 9,190 points in 2006 by WVARA and 7930 points in 1995 by Nortown ARC.

This year our QSO count was: 889 CW, 149 Digital and 415 Phone, for a total of 1453 QSOs and 12,455 points. In addition, we had 1950 bonus points, bringing the total score to 14,405. Last year our total score was 11,650 in category 8A-battery.

The biggest improvement compared to last year was made by CW. With 3 CW stations and Gary's (K6KV) HF triplexers, we made 303 more CW contacts compared to last year! The triplexers allowed us to have more stations with fewer antennas.

Our antennas worked very well. The digital station worked Japan and eastern states. CW's 80 meter contact with W1AW has already been confirmed by LOTW. Phone did well in the east on 15 meters.

Results have been submitted to ARRL and Logbook of the World. Thank you to all participants for a great 2009 Field Day operation!

# WVARA Had an Awesome Field Day! - by Jim Peterson, K6EI

Field Day is a great opportunity to get outdoors, gain experience assembling equipment in the rough, and operate a station under challenging band conditions. There's plenty of preparation that goes into Field Day before the first radio contact ever occurs. That's part of the overall experience as well. Field Day also provides "improvisational opportunities", since Murphy invariably shows up and nothing ever goes quite as expected. And of course, being outdoors means that we get to put up wild-n-crazy antennas that our spouses and neighbor s might never allow back home. And with Field Day, you're doing this amongst a great set of old and new friends!

This year the weather was hot, but so were the bands, with plenty of contacts made by our West Valley Amateur Radio Assoc team. We operated QRP in the 9A Battery from Mora Hill overlooking Los Altos, California, from an elevation of 500 feet. Saturday's temperature approached 100 degrees, but that didn't stop us from having loads of fun — especially when 10 and 15 meters unexpectedly opened up. This year we had 3 HF CW stations, 2 HF SSB stations, an HF digital station, a GOTA station, and multiple UHF and VHF stations. Our CW operators actually worked 49 out of 50 the states. (Where was Delaware?)

By the way, if the US/Canada Field Day results for 2009 are similar to 2008, our score of 14,405 will place WVARA in the neighborhood of #11 out of all 2400 Field Day participants. Of course, the 10m and 15m openings undoubtedly benefited other clubs scores as well as ours — but even so, 14,405 is a great score! While we like collecting FD points and setting new records, we also want to have fun and share the experience with others.

We had half-a-dozen local hams (not previously associated with WVARA) and a dozen youths who dropped by our site to see the balloons and ended up becoming part of our team. In addition, our GOTA coaches, Grant and Jeanette, were skilled at snagging non-ham hikers that passed by and getting them on the air.

Here's a summary of some of this year's more noteworthy Field Day moments:

- <u>The Coolest Technology</u>: **Gary (K6KV)** brought two homebrew HF triplexers that allowed us to simultaneously share each HF tribander between three stations running on 10 15- and 20 meters.
- The High Point of the Weekend: **Svend (KF6EMB)** deployed a pair of helium balloon-supported full-wavelength loop antennas on 40 and 80 meters. These antennas are based on WUØI's award-winning QST article from July 2007, and give new meaning to that old 5<sup>th</sup> Dimension song from the 1960s: "Up, Up and Away with my Beautiful Balloon."
- The Biggest Grin: Gary (K6KV) got a charge from working W1AW on 80 meters with the balloon loop and 5 watts.
- The Most Exciting Moment Jack (W6FB) got a real thrill -- jumping what seemed like 5 feet straight up -- after literally stepping on a large snake in the grass. Both Jack and the snake appeared to be equally surprised by the experience and rapidly departed the scene in opposite directions.



Fig. 3 — WVARA's 2009 Field Day Was a Team Effort.



Fig. 4 — Keith (KI6BDR) making some late night contacts.



Fig. 5 — Chuck (AD6CL) and first harmonic Michael making SSB contacts.



Fig. 6 — Jeff (KG6SGX) and Kenneth (W6KWF) at midnight after nine hours of heavy SSB operating.



Fig. 7 — Svend (KF6EMB) deployed a pair of helium balloon supported full-wavelength loop antennas on 40 and 80 meters.

### From the Back Porch — by Loren Singh, AD6YU

My "shack" is located in the service porch at the back of the house where the laundry washer and dryer are located. As someone who is not hard -core contester, nevertheless I still like to make a small number of contest contacts on 20M CW, because contest time presents opportunities for a QRP station like mine (2 watts) to have QSOs with "big gun" stations that ordinarily would not work a weak signal QRP station like mine.

During Field Day, Sunday morning is the best time for me to make a few QSOs. I arose at 0530 PDT, but 20M CW was quiet. By 0615, the band started to come alive. The strongest local station heard was that of the Saratoga Amateur Radio Association (SARA) Field Day site, K6SA. The group coordinated its site tear-down effort on K6SA/R, 146.655 (-) MHz FM with Fabrizio, KG6UOH monitoring the repeater. Other stations I worked included K7AW, K7UM, W7R, and VE7SUN. Does anyone know to whom the special events call sign, W7R, was assigned for Field Day 2009?

WVARA's W6ZZZ and Stanford University's W6YX (the club of my undergraduate days in an earlier lifetime) operated from locations with directional antennas that made their ground waves skip over my QTH. I heard both stations at about RST 559, but could not work either of them.

Field Day and other contests provide opportunities for me to have a few CW QSOs and to exchange QSL cards. For a CW ragchewer like me, 20M CW is often devoid of activity and is only full of QRN and white noise. After more than 50 years as a ham, I still find CW to be the most enjoyable mode of ham radio operating.

## SVECS Quarterly Breakfast and Meeting, July 25, 2009, 0900-1200 PDT —

Santa Clara Senior Center 1303 Fremont St. (corner of Monroe and Fremont) Santa Clara, CA

Door prize: HT radio

Breakfast (\$5 per person) at 9 a.m., program at 10 a.m.

Please RSVP on the SVECS net, AA6BT repeater, 146.115 (+) MHz, 100 PL, Tuesdays 2000 hours, or Lou WA6QYS at 408-241-7999.

Chris Morgan of Calfire will discuss the Copernicus Peak Fire Lookout station near Lick Observatory on Mt. Hamilton.

The fire lookout was closed for 17 years reo pened in 2007. A 2-and-a-half-year-old volunteer project resurrected the lookout, which will not only preserve one of the Santa Clara Unit's historical places, but will recognize Cal Fire's 100-plus years of service. Volunteers will staff the lookout on an as-need basis during red flags, high winds, after lightning storms and on high-fire danger days. The lookout was constructed in 1938 and served as one of several fire lookouts within the Santa Clara Unit, a 1.4 million-acre stretch.

Club Net: Tuesday, 8:30 p.m. on our club repeaters:

WVARA Repeaters (W6PIY)				
Band	MHz	PL	Status	
6 Meters	52.580-	151.4 Hz	Operating	
2 Meters	147.39+	151.4 Hz	Operating	
1.25 Meters	223.96-	156.7 Hz	Operating	
0.70 Meter	441.35+	88.5 Hz	Operating	
0.23 Meter	1286.2-	100 Hz	Operating	

# West Valley Amateur Radio Association

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