

Pacific Division Meeting, 12/6/2008

1. Called to order by Pacific Division Director Vallio at 0938. In attendance:

Call Sign	Name	Affiliation
KG6C	Adam Bertsch	LARK / President
KG6WIR	David Counts	LARK / Vice President
NU6T	Rich Hill	MLDXCC / President
W6VV	Art Samuelson	AD – SFHRC / Trustee
KI6FAO	Peter Chupity	SC4ARC / Radio Officer
NV6V	Andy Thomas	Calaveras ARS / Tech
KG6UAE	Jordan Hayes	NALCO / VP
KD6WZY	George Nace	NALCO / President
WA8DZP	Dewayne Hendricks	AD
N6EY	Jason Boyer	SJVARS / VP
W6TTF	Carole Whitteberry	SJVARS / President
N7JEH	Joe Giraud	SM – Nevada
AF6AQ	Jim Latham	SM – East Bay
W6DPD	Charles McConnell	SM – SJV, CCDXC Sec./Treas.
W6VZT	Al Gaetano	AD
W6RGG	Bob Vallio	Pacific Division Director
N6AJO	Andy Oppel	Pacific Division Vice Director
WB6BRU	Bobby Mooneyham	TARC
KG6UCW	Curtis McAdams	TARC
K6RAU	Fred Silveira	AD

N6QIY	Ron Raines	AD
W7POR	Gene Davis	ARACC / President
KF6ZSW	Kim Davis	ARACC / PIO
KD6W	Joel Wilhite	PAARA VP (President Elect)

2. Pave Paws: Director Vallio gave an update – there is only limited information that is available for general disclosure. Rich Hill, NU6T, asked about restrictions on base and mobile stations. As of this point in time, the Air Force is not addressing base and mobile stations, and thus there is no restriction on them.
3. ARRL is facing an income shortfall. Every attempt will be made to maintain current member service levels, but we may be forced to do things such as putting some employees on part time status. Whatever members can do in terms of donations is tax deductible. Consider the Diamond Club or one of the other funds if you can. Every bit helps. AL Gaetano, W6VZT, asked if HQ had announced anything in terms of budget adjustments. The answer is not at this time.
4. Director Vallio passed out a summary of the proposed ARRL strategic plan and solicited input. Continued in Minute 13.
5. Dewayne Hendricks, WA8DZP, described his experiences with the FCC Technical Advisory Committee, which was essentially disbanded when Chairman Martin took office. Dewayne believes amateur radio should be moved from the Wireless Bureau to the Office of Engineering and Technology. Issues with doing that include the fact that the licensing database belongs to the Wireless Bureau. But perhaps we can separate the administrative (licensing) requirements from the technology aspect of amateur radio. He described some of the history of the handling of technology within the FCC. He believes that under the new administration there will be a lot of rebuilding within the commission. We need to bring that science and technology message to the new commissioners via our HQ contacts.
6. Adam Bertsch, KG6C, noted that he's not seeing a lot of people in their teens and 20s in testing sessions. Rich Hill, N6UT noted that he is seeing about 20% in that age bracket in the testing sessions in which he participates. Carole Whiteberry, W6TTF, related her experiences with taking an HT to work with her – when the kids are exposed, they are interested. We just have to find ways to get that exposure. Al Gaetano, W6VZT, complained about the quality of the exams. Rich, NU6T, suggested that positive statements about what amateur radio could be (a happy and enjoyable experience) rather than how it's all falling apart and dying will go much further in getting people to join.

7. Joe Giraudo, N7JEH, opened the topic of Elmering. He said the difference between now and the high points in participation in amateur radio was the availability of an Elmer who knew more than the newer operator did and could help get them on the air. Adam, KG6C, addressed getting amateur radio into elective science classes, particularly in community colleges. Joe suggested online resources for Elmering. Voice chat roundtables were suggested by Andy Thomas, NV6V. Fred, K6RAU, stated that it's not the test that matters, but what you do after you take the test. Jason Boyer, N6EY, said that we are not after one audience, but perhaps several, and we have to find marketing messages that reach each one.
8. Adam, KG6C, talked to involving younger folks in amateur radio. Andy Oppel, N6AJO, described the Youth Lounge concept that was tried (very successfully) at Pacificon and other hamfests and conventions. There was more discussion about tests and whether they are easier now than they used to be. Several others pointed out that negative attitude drives people away and we have to change our message if we plan to attract and retain operators. Art Samuelson, W6VV, noted that the old timers picked on newcomers even back in the 50s. There were those who pronounced that the novice license would doom the service. Curtis McAdams, KG6UCW, said that public service can be a vehicle for making people feel good about their involvement in amateur radio.
9. Gene Davis, W7POR, encouraged people to run classes. But he noted that a lot of people get licenses and never get on the air. This underscores the need for Elmering. Peter Chupity, KI6FAO talked about CERT training where the new licensees (and the radios issued to them) would disappear and you'd never hear or see them again. Again, Elmering and a community (regular meetings) where they can meet other amateurs is essential to keeping people involved. Jim Latham, AF6AQ, spoke about getting commitment from the new amateurs as they complete training. He continued that using CERT to recruit amateurs works, but only if you involve them afterwards. Jim believes that Ham Crams and Elmering are diametrically opposed concepts – the multi-meeting class builds relationships among the students and between student and instructor, and it is those relationships that bring people back. A nationwide lesson plan for amateur classes was suggested. Peter, KI6FAO added that Field Day is a great opportunity to get new operators involved in working advanced equipment and modes.
10. DTV Conversion. The FCC has asked amateur radio, through clubs, to assist and educate the American public on the topic of DTV Conversion. In particular they are looking for programs to educate them in how to hook up converter boxes and to answer questions later on. However, we specifically do not want amateurs to make house calls – there is a significant liability issue in entering homes and handling another person's TV equipment. We have been told that the FCC is highly focused on this conversion.
11. Rich, NU6T suggested a combination of a ham cram with a "field day like" event, or with Field Day itself. He then noted that ARRL publications are often compilations from QST and QEX articles rather than a book that tells a story from the beginning to the end. He compared them

to the books from the RSGB that are more like text books that focus not just on how things work, but why.

12. Long Range Goals for 2014: Director Vallio asked attendees to read over the 5 long range goals and comment on them. He also noted that many of these should be accomplished sooner rather than later (i.e. 2014 might be too wide a planning window for all the items).
 - a. "ARRL will be Amateur Radio's proactive advocate and representative voice in achieving key regulatory and legislative goals."
 - i. Ron Raines, N6QIY, noted that this is what he thought we did.
 - ii. Dewayne, WA8DZP, stated that there is an Obama transition team for the FCC and that he is on it. He asked what input the ARRL is making to that team. See change.gov for information about the transition team. Director Vallio said he would communicate that information to the board.
 - iii. The upcoming appointments of FCC commissioners (and a new chairperson) is the first opportunity for change.
 - iv. Several asked what the specific regulatory and legislative goals are. Vice Director Oppel stated that this was the very point – members need to tell us what those goals should be.
 - v. Joe, N7JEH, mentioned CC&Rs and that perhaps the timing is right now that the banks, realtors, and so forth have less funding to fight such initiatives.
 - b. "ARRL will be the primary source of high quality Amateur Radio educational information and resources."
 - i. Consensus was that we are meeting this goal in terms of quality. However, Director Vallio stated that we might be able to do more in getting the books into the hands of interested parties (not everyone, particularly youth, can afford to buy them).
 - ii. Several thought that renewed attempts to get books into libraries would help. Clubs can get complete sets for \$200 if they donate them to the libraries.
 - iii. Jim, AF6AQ, mentioned PR-101. We don't do enough to get our message into the media. HQ needs to provide more training in how to do that. PR-101 training works well when people get it, but it needs to be more available.
 - c. "ARRL will be the recognized and respected leader in Amateur Radio public service and emergency communications."
 - i. Art Samuelson, W6VV, asked why the ARRL wanted to be recognized in this regard. He believes that local clubs and amateur radio in general should be recognized in this way, particularly because of local differences.
 - ii. Responses from the room included the need for a consistent message and national standards and training. Relationships with agencies need to be local, but a standard template for such agreements is helpful.
 - iii. The topic of national identification credentials came up.
 - iv. The topic of background checks came up. Andy, N6AJO, described the specific issue with the Red Cross background checks (overly broad permission that you

give their selected vendor when you agree to the online form). Background checks are a reality in these times, but they should be limited to criminal background only and specific to the role the amateur would serve. Open-ended consumer credit reports have nothing to do with a communicator's suitability to serve an agency.

- v. Rich, NU6T said the ARRL needs to rethink ARES (versus RACES) if it is to continue to be relevant.
 - d. "ARRL shall attain the financial security to advance and advocate Amateur Radio."
 - i. From Adam, KG6C: Advise the board to be aware of scope creep. The ARRL cannot afford to be everything to everyone.
 - e. "ARRL will have a well-trained, team-based, member-responsive environment to advance its membership base."
 - i. Andy, N6AJ0, noted that the penetration of section/division e-mail bulletins is only about 50%. Everyone should encourage members to sign up for these e-mail bulletins.
 - ii. Some discussion of lobbying following, including a mention of the dollar limits that 501 c 3 organizations can spend on lobbying.
13. Charles McConnell, W6DPD, presented a Public Service Honor Role certificate to Fred, K6RAU for making the honor role (70 points or better) for 12 consecutive months.
14. Dewayne, WA8DZP, spoke to the need for the ARRL to have a presence on social networking sites such as FaceBook and Twitter. Why doesn't the ARRL have a Wiki or a blog? Tools of this type were instrumental in getting Obama elected. For example, anyone can provide input to the Obama transition team via change.gov. The ARRL could also have a channel on Yahoo.
15. Joel, KD6W mentioned spectrum coordination issues on 2 meters, particularly coordinated repeaters that are not on the air ("paper" repeaters) that tie up a pair but don't use it. He also wondered what could be done to get clubs that are contest or socially oriented to do more public service so they are more visible.
16. Carole, W6TTF, reported that SJVARS requires sponsors for membership, but those sponsors become your mentors. So far that system has worked well for both member retention and license upgrades.
17. Dewayne believes that the DTV conversion will be a disaster due to bad management from the FCC and the NTIA. People are not prepared for an environment where a low signal level means no picture. There is a lot of emphasis on converter boxes, but not on the antennas to go with them (which may be needed in marginal signal areas). He believes a delay is likely once the new administration gets control. He said you'll get an accurate picture of how prepared we are by simply visiting a Radio Shack and asking them about it.

18. Andy, NV6V, mentioned spectrum competition between voice, packet, and digital modes as a current issue.
19. Rich, NU6T, reported that the Mother Lode ARC is stable in terms of membership. They plan to rotate meetings around geographically.
20. Jim, AF6AQ, mentioned a scarcity of section level volunteers. He reiterated that the league has to act like a national association, rather than being negative with statements such as “we don’t have enough money to do that”.
21. Charles McConnell, W6DPD, noted that if a club sells fireworks, the company that underwrites ARRL club insurance will cancel their policy even though liability for that particular activity is specifically excluded from the coverage on the policy. He then mentioned the 100th anniversary of amateur radio in Fresno, originally called the Wireless Association of Central California (now after several name changes, the Fresno Amateur Radio Club).