

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2009 VOLUME 9, No. 6

Mercury Amateur Radio Association - MARA - North America - North East

REPORT ON THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MERCURY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION MARA NORTHEAST

CONTENTS

- 2** REPORT ON THE 2009 ANNUAL MEETING
- 4** CRISIS IN SAMOA - PART 2
- 6** CULTURED CORNER
- 7** GRANDMA MARA'S CORNER -
- 7** TECH STUFF - ODDS 'N ENDS
- 7** QUOTE OF THE MONTH
- 8** SWAP SHOP
- 8** DI-DAH-DI-DAH-DIT

OTHER STUFF

E-mail your comments, ideas, or submissions to marane@mara.net

Material contained in this newsletter is copyrighted © by the Mercury Amateur Radio Association North East, or by the person noted. Reproduction of material appearing in this publication is encouraged, as long as the source credit is shown. Permission to reproduce articles copyrighted by the author must be obtained from that individual.

REPORT of the 2009 ANNUAL MEETING

This year's Annual Meeting of the Mercury Amateur Radio Association - North East was held on the 30th of May, 2009 at the Nazareth Ward Chapel in Nazareth PA.

At Shirrels request, Bruce gave a report on the memorial gift presentation to the Church Education Fund in memory of Richard Rostrum NG2R and Chic Naylor WA2USI. The presentation was made to the Cherry Hill Bishop on Sunday May 24th 2009 by Bruce. Steve K2KEL gave a synopsis of the history and basis of the memorial.

The Treasurer's report was given by Stan N3HS. A motion to accept was made by Bruce N3IA and seconded by Charlie WB4FLM. The motion was approved.



Photo 1 - All of the happy people present at the 2009 Annual MARA NE Meeting. Rear row - Left to right - Barry N2PCT, Jeff A17D, Michael Vuister, Sherril N3DIX, Caryl KC2QEL, and Steve K2KEL,. Middle row - left to right - Sherry KB2YXI, Dennis KB2DFW, Stan N3HS, and Frank KB3PDT. Kneeling in the front row - left to right - Mike KN4EE, Bruce N3IA, Jeff K3DEY, and Charles WB4FLM.

Shirrel N3DIX, our President welcomed attendees and recognized Charlie WB4FLM as having come the farthest for the meeting from southern Virginia. He also recognized and thanked our hosts for the meeting and luncheon, Barry N2PCT and Sherry KB2YXI.

The meeting was called to order at 11:10 AM EDT by Shirrel.

Opening prayer was given by Charles WB4FLM.

The minutes of the 2008 meeting were read by Bruce N3IA, VP. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Stan N3HS, seconded by Barry N2PCT. The motion passed.

Election of Officers

Shirrel announced he was stepping down as President.

Steve Kelly nominated Bruce N3IA to assume to remaining year of his term. Shirrel seconded the nomination and Bruce was elected by show of hands.

Nominations were opened for Vice President. Shirrel nominated Steve, seconded by Barry N2PCT. There were no other nominations, and Steve was elected by show of hands.



Photo 2 - Serious business around the table. Clockwise from the left - Michael Vuister, Stan N3HS, Frank KB3PDT, Bruce N3IA, Steve K2KEL, Caryl KC2QEL, Jeff K3DEY, Charles WB4FLM, and Dennis KB2DFW.

Shirrel nominated Dave VE1VQ to be re-elected as Secretary, seconded by Stan N3HS, and Dave was elected by show of hands.

Shirrel nominated Stan N2HS to be re-elected as Treasurer, seconded by Charlie WB4FLM, and Stan was elected by show of hands.

Board Members

Steve nominated Jeff K3DEY to serve a six year term on the board. Seconded by Bruce and elected by show of hands.

Steve nominated Shirrel to serve the remaining four years (2013) of Steve's directorship, seconded by Dennis KB3DFW and elected by show of hands.

Bruce nominated Barry to a six year term on the board. Seconded by Dennis KB3DFW and elected by show of hands.

Dennis KB3DFW nominated Jeff AI7D who declined the nomination.

It was proposed that board member Diana Taggert KE3IU by contacted to ascertain her interest in continuing on the board. Rumor has it that she and her husband have moved to Florida.

Meeting Location 2010

Mike KN4EE offered to host the meeting in Harrisburg PA next year. The date is to be determined.

Old Business

Jeff AI7D had a reimbursement due him from a prior year. This was approved to be applied in lieu of direct reimbursement as three years membership dues.

There was no new business.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:25

Closing prayer was offered by Mike KN4EE

Lunch was served.

Technical Show 'n Tell

A display and demonstration of portable amateur radio operations was presented by Norm N1RFK and Ron K1VSC. Thanks guys!



Photo 3 - Left to right - Charles WB4FLM, Dennis KB2DFW, Ron K1VSC, and Norm N1RFK.



Photo 4 - Incoming President N3IA on the left, and retiring President N3DIX on the right.



Photo 5 - Left to right - Michael Vuister, Barry N2PCT, and Jeff AI7D.

Those in attendance at the meeting were:

Norm Beausoleil, N1RFK
 Charles Bruington, WB4FLM
 Dennis Clark, KB3DFW
 Mike Dirlle, KN4EE
 Caryl Kelly, KC2QEL
 Steve Kelly, K2KEL
 Jeff Niceler, K3DEY
 Ron Pariseau, K1VSC
 Jeff Porter, AI7D
 Frank Rogers, KB3PDT
 Barry Smith, N2PCT
 Sherry Smith, KB2YXI
 Stan Staten, N3HS
 Michael Vuister, no call
 Bruce Wortmann, N3IA
 Shirrel Young, N3DIX



Photo 6 - Left to right - Caryl KC2QEL, Steve K2KEL, Michael, and Ron K1VSC - talking about Ron's emergency communications equipment.

CRISIS IN SAMOA

December 7 - 19, 1991
 by Reg Hardman VK4XH

This article was originally printed in the 14 April 1992 issue of Amateur Radio Action, an Australian amateur radio publication, no longer in operation. Different versions were also printed in QST (January 1993) and TCA - The Canadian Amateur (September 1992).

You may remember from the first installment of VK4XH's article about Cyclone Val in last month's newsletter that the reports coming from the operators of 5W1JL were not comforting! The power was off and they were operating on generator power, telephone communication to the outside world had failed, all aircraft flights were grounded, the wind and rain were increasing, and conditions (to say the least) were not good...

PART 2

DECEMBER 9

2000z: The MARA group meets up with 5W1JL, Ed and Utai, with good 5 and 8 signals. Conditions have now deteriorated rapidly according to Ed. This is going to be a big 'blow'.

It appears that the cyclone has now stalled, has turned back on the islands and continues to pound with heavy winds of 120-150 mph in a stationary position. There is now a great deal of flooding throughout the town, many roofs are gone, there is extensive sea-shore damage and many homes are flooded as the rain comes through at a horizontal position passing through windows and louvers.

Some people are now moving into churches to set up temporary homes as their roofs are blown away. Foliage on all the trees is stripped away. The damage is now beyond that of Cyclone Ofa of some 18 months previous and which caused great devastation to the country.

We receive word from the New Zealand armed forces, who come up on frequency and are barely audible (operating a dipole), that they have not been able to contact Samoa for some time and ask if we can get a message through to the Samoan Authorities to turn off their RACES system. It appears that this system scans a series of frequencies and locks on to the most appropriate for communication. In this case the Samoan system is refusing to lock on to a particular frequency. We relay the information on to 5W1JL as requested.



There is now a greater feeling of urgency as the destruction continues and the realization that one of the big challenges here will be the supply of aid to this remote country when the devastation ceases. Up to this point nothing has surfaced on the world's news media as to the plight of Samoa. Phone calls to the local media in Brisbane produce little interest or outright disbelief. If it doesn't come through some world service they don't seem to be interested.

Later that afternoon we resume contact with Ed and Utai with good signals both ways. The wind and rain continue at full force with damage increasing as Cyclone Val remains stationary just wearing things away. Flooding and rain damage continue with more and more homes being destroyed. It's now a simple matter of endurance. The fire station in Apia is demolished along with many other buildings on Main Street. Many high schools, primary schools and elementary schools have lost their roofs. And in some cases the rafters and joists have disappeared as well. It is hard to see a home or building which has not suffered some damage from the storm. However everyone

is staying indoors.

Ed hears from Savaii that a married couple from Australia has been there for a month. With the high winds the back end of their house is destroyed, and they move to the front section just in time to see their roof fly off. They then move in to the local church with the rest of the village. So many people are moving into the churches now that in some cases there is barely room enough to lie down. Someone had said that the strongest area in a building is in the toilet/bathroom areas, so in one church all the men have filed into the men's section and the women into the women's section. And there they sit, bunched together in the toilets. If the situation wasn't so serious it would be hard not to laugh.



An interesting incident occurs here with the New Zealand High Commissioner in Samoa. Not being able to communicate with Wellington, he utilizes the facilities of the club station 5W1JL to pass traffic via the MARA net to New Zealand. (The military facilities are still out). Neville Thompson, ZL1BU, tape records the High Commissioner's traffic, and plays it over the telephone line to the necessary authorities in Wellington thereby facilitating a quick and complete report.

Utai and Ed are rationing generator time as they now realize it may be a long time before power is restored. People can't move around. A report just came through that one electrical worker has been electrocuted and two others are in hospital. As usual, the information is passed directly by phone to the church in Sydney. All we can do is to wait for the next schedule at 2000z...

DECEMBER 10

2000z: Ed and Utai come through on the net at 5 by 7 to 8 as usual. I am wondering how the Tet-Emtron 3-element beam antenna can stand such a constant battering and still be intact. During the entire period it has never missed a beat with the 120-150 mph winds, yet its rating is 85 mph.

More of the same with Cyclone Val still stationary, pounding away at Samoa. This is the worst day so far. More roofs are being lost, even from the big structures like churches, halls and public buildings. There is real concern now for Savii (the big island) as communications from that island have been out for some time. No one knows what is going on, except they know that Savii got the full brunt of the storm. More and more people are moving into public buildings.

Utai and Ed are now strictly rationing the diesel fuel as their sources of supply dry up. The hospital in Apia is in desperate need of electricians as their emergency generator goes on the blink.

0500z: we again make contact with Utai and Ed but this time signals are down to 5 by 4. Ed's emergency generator is not operating – rain damage – and they are now running on batteries. The roof is starting to come off their own building and there is a great deal of water damage everywhere. They can't get downtown because of flooding ... in fact there is no communications anywhere outside of the sole amateur radio link and face-to-face.

Ed's emergency generator is not operating – rain damage – and they are now running on batteries. The roof is starting to come off their own building and there is a great deal of water damage everywhere.

Ed disconsolately remarks the other Samoan locations of Pago and Savaii may as well be 10,000 miles away as there just isn't any communication to them at all. He also reports the he has checked out the airport since our last sked, but it is obstructed by lots of debris and is now totally closed down and deserted. On the way back from the airport they find an injured girl under a roof which has blown off. They pick her up and take her to the hospital.

By this time the net begins to receive Health and Welfare messages and requests from the Australian Overseas Disaster Response Organization (AORDO)* and many individuals particularly from New Zealand, Australia and the USA. As the Australian Government is also unable to contact Western Samoa, AORDO* turns to the amateur fraternity for assistance. Due to the difficulty of so many projectiles being blown around it is difficult much of the time to get the requested information from the 5W1JL

radio room to the intended party, or to bring them to the microphone. However, most of the traffic is delivered.

*AODRO is made up of many groups including churches such as The Church of Latter-Day Saints, World Vision, the Freedom From Hunger Campaign, Community Aid Abroad, YMCA, Rotary Australia, Save the Children Fund, and many others.

Next month - Part 3 - the end is in sight...

CULTURED CORNER

by ANØNMS

WHEN TUBES WERE KING

*Oh for the days when tubes were king
And the rigs were a decent size
Knobs and things that were meant to be used
That you could still see with your eyes*

*Oh for the days when tubes were king
And the rigs at least had some weight
Now you oft have to fasten them down
Or fast off the desk they will skate*

*Oh for the days when tubes were king
And crystals were all the big thing
How we dreamed of a Heath vfo
So sad not to have enough bling*

*Oh for the days when tubes were king
And you could still take things apart
A special tool you didn't require
Now you don't know where to start*

*Oh for the days when tubes were king
And the rest of the parts were big
A soldering iron you could use
'Cause you could still work on your rig*

*Oh for the days when tubes were king
And you still had all that nice heat
You didn't need to stoke up the stove
To help us keep our warm feet*

*Oh for the days when tubes were king
And you could still get a final
Now you're lucky if you can find
One that is not made in China*

*Woe for the days when tubes were king
And we are so lucky they've been
Now with power costs way out of sight
Good that we are thinking green*

GRANDMA MARA'S CORNER

This month, by popular demand, Sherry Smith, KB2YXI, takes over the column space for her acclaimed Dijon Chicken Salad.

This is the very same salad that I served at the May Annual Meeting. Several of you who were present asked for a copy of the recipe, so here it is...

Dijon Chicken Salad

4 c. cubed cooked chicken
1 c. sliced celery
1 c. seedless green and red grapes, halved
1/4 c. sliced green onions
1/2 c. mayo
2 T. honey
1 T. Dijon mustard
Salt & Pepper to taste
Lettuce leaves
Toasted almond slices

In a bowl combine chicken, celery, grapes and green onions. In a small bowl combine mayo, honey, mustard, salt and pepper; and mix well. Stir into chicken mixture. Cover and refrigerate. Serve on lettuce-lined plates. Sprinkle with almonds. Makes 6 servings.

It's best to add dressing just before serving.
Hope you like it!

Sherry (Chief Cook & Bottle Washer at the Smith Residence), KB2YXI

TECH STUFF

by VE1VQ

ODDS 'N ENDS

I was mousing around the internet the other day, as I am known to indulge in when I don't feel like working. Since I'm self employed, no one is going to complain!

I happened across the Mercury Northwest's (formerly the MARA Northwest) website at <http://www.mercurynorthwest.org> and spent some time browsing through the pages. You might want to take a look at their newsletters and other information on the site just to see how our twin on the other side of the continent is doing.

Another site is LDS HAMS (catchy name!) at <http://www.ldshams.com> You'll have to follow the simple registration process to access the site. Make sure you have 'cookies' enabled for this site or you will keep getting the dreaded "503 Error - The server is temporarily unable to service your request due to maintenance downtime or capacity problems. Please try again later." They seem to be going through a 'who are we and what are we here for' phase right now. Still, its a good place to make contact with other LDS hams.

And for those techies out there (we know who we are!), there is LDS TECH at <http://tech.lds.org> You will have to register but the process is painless and you have access within minutes. It contains, among other things, forums with a lot of information regarding technical issues of the Church. There are several about ham radio. Do a search on 'EM COMMS' to find them.

One last one is ERC INFO at <http://ercinfo.webs.com> for people who want to know more information about LDS ERC. Ask questions, get answers!

Saw this on a wall sign in an episode of the television series 'NCIS' - *"There are 10 types of people. Those who understand binary and those that don't."*

If you're **not** one of those types of people, you can find the explanation in July's newsletter.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"What a great favor God does to those He places in the company of good people!"

St. Theresa of Avila

SWAP SHOP

List for free any items you wish to buy, sell, trade, or give away.

DI-DAH-DI-DAH-DIT

ARE WE LIKE THE MONKEYS?

Reading VK4XH's article about conditions that existed on Samoa during Cyclone Val in 1991, I can't imagine what it must have been like for the operators, Utai and Ed.

I tend to grumble at the power company when the wind blows, it rains for a few days, and the power flickers off and on now and then. I've never had to worry about the roof blowing off and the water coming in. I've never had to worry for more than a few hours about where the next hot meal was coming from, or whether or not I had water and my toilet was going to work.

When nothing much happens, in the way of emergencies in our lives, we become complacent and get into the mind-set of, "it'll never happen here!" A few years back, a friend bought a generator after a storm and its associated power outage. Has never taken it out of the box. When our leaders remind us to have some food storage laid in, we feel a little twinge of guilt, and that will probably be forgotten by the next day.

I remember a story in one of my elementary grade readers about a group of monkeys who, when it rained and they got soaking wet and miserable, thought about building a roof to keep themselves comfortable; how they planned and schemed to do it. Then when the rainy season was over, the sun came out, and they were once again warm and dry, they forgot all about their plans.

Are we like those monkeys; once the storm has passed, do we fail to remember the need for planning and preparation. Will we be the ones who weep and wail when the rain pours in, or will we be the ones who are prepared and dry?

Until next month,
VE1VQ

IN THE JULY NEWSLETTER...

----CRISIS IN SAMOA - PART 3