

W6VIO Calling



Jet Propulsion Laboratory Amateur Radio Club

PO Box 820, La Canada CA 91012-0820

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June 2004

President:	Jim Lux, W6RMK	4-2075	Emer. Comm. Mgr:	Christopher Carson, KE6ABQ	3-3888
Vice President:	Christopher Carson, KE6ABQ	3-3888	W6VIO Trustee :	Rob Smith, W6GRV	3-7937
Secretary:	Jonathan Cameron, KF6RTA	4-1189	W6JPL Trustee:	Eric Archer, N6CV,	4-7350
Treasurer:	Chuck Sarture, KG6NF,	4-2706	WR6JPL Trustee:	Randy Hammock, KC6HUR	
Director at Large:	Jonathan Cameron, KF6RTA	4-1189	WR6AZN Trustee:	Bill Wood, W6FXJ,	760-256-9576

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Meeting Notice

By Chris Carson, KE6ABQ

The June JPLARC Board Meeting will be held June 23rd in 161-230, where the final Field Day preparations will be discussed. The next General Meeting of the JPL Amateur Radio Club will be held July 14 at noon in 238-543. Field Day results and the budget are on the agenda. Everyone on Lab at the time is welcome to attend – bring your lunch if you want. ■

President's Message

By Jim Lux, W6RMK

We had a fair interest in our table at JPL Open House. Pretty much the whole day, on both days, we had people coming by to ask what we did, to tell us about some friend or relative who had a tower or was a ham, and so forth.

Next year, I'd like to be in a more visible spot than in the "cave" under the cafeteria. The most interest from passerby was when I was shooting a line with a slingshot into the trees and hauling up wires, so maybe some sort of "antenna raising" on the grassy area might be a good activity.

There was also real interest when I hooked a straight key up so they could send their name or whatever. Parents literally had to drag their kids away. Maybe some sort of optical light beam communications with Morse or voice would be a good demo (aiming the "antenna"). Propagation was deader than a doornail, so we didn't do a lot of HF, but, that's just the way things are when you depend on the sun and ionosphere.

Calendar of Events

June 23	Board Meeting, Noon - 161-230
June 25-27	JPL ARC Field Day, Mt. Gleason
July 3	[Fontana Swap Meet, A. B. Miller HS, Fontana]
July 7	General Meeting, Noon - 238-543
July 17	[CMRA Hamfest, Cal Poly, Pomona, 7 AM]
July 28	Board Meeting, Noon - 161-230
July 31	[TRW Swap meet, Redondo Beach]
August 7	[Fontana Swap Meet, A. B. Miller HS, Fontana]
August 11	General Meeting, Noon - 238-543
August 21	[CMRA Hamfest, Cal Poly, Pomona, 7 AM]
August 25	Board Meeting, Noon - 161-230
August 28	[TRW Swap meet, Redondo Beach]
September 4	[Fontana Swap Meet, A. B. Miller HS, Fontana]
September 8	General Meeting, Noon - 238-543
September 18	[CMRA Hamfest, Cal Poly, Pomona, 7 AM]
September 22	Board Meeting, Noon - 161-230
September 25	[TRW Swap meet, Redondo Beach]

Moving away from the building might also make lower bands usable; I think the ATM or something in the cafeteria makes a fine barrage jammer for 40 and down.

We're moving into summer, and Field Day approaches. You should be receiving a stream of emails as the plans move forward for this year's operation, which will be fairly casual and relaxed.

Those of you who haven't ever been to Field Day, I encourage you to come out and help. We need to develop new talent in all those essential improvisational skills that are an inescapable part of field operations.

Come on out and learn from the pros -before they retire and move away to saltwater marshes covered hilltops with no HOA. I am certainly learning a lot about the logistics involved and the planning required. We'll be talking about Field Day at the meeting on June 9th, and we'll be having a work day to gather and check equipment on Saturday, June 19th.

One thing that comes to mind, though, is that, theoretically, we should be able to be able to put together a Field Day type operation without requiring 2 months planning and arranging.

We cannot predict that the next "event" requiring emergency communications will occur on the 4th weekend in June. In a real event, things like caterers and portable bathrooms would be "provided by others" (hopefully!) or you'd make do, but the radio part of the operation should be a "grab it and go" kind of thing. We really shouldn't need a club work day to prepare for Field Day: the equipment and procedures should just be ready; Field Day planning should be required only for permits and the added creature comforts: tents, bathrooms, food.

This is the sort of thing where a club (particularly one in a place like JPL, with huge infrastructure and human capital resources) can really make a contribution. Even such mundane things as laminated equipment checklists and hookup diagrams are a big help, particularly when you have willing and able helpers who aren't familiar with all the details, but can grab milk crates or rolls of coax, drive ground stakes. I know from personal experience, that it is possible to dismantle parts of my home station and get an HF station set up in a park and on the air in less than 30 minutes, but that's my own gear, where I know where everything is and which cable connects where and so forth. Our club gear may be ready, but perhaps the organizing infrastructure needs work.

And, that brings up an idea: I think that doing "mini-field days" which would last a few hours would provide a great opportunity for "ham radio outreach" both within the club and with the community at large. Imagine checking out a "Mini-Field Day-Kit" from the shack in a couple milk crates or equivalent, going to a park (or the mall on lab), and being on the air in a few minutes in connection with some other activity. This smaller, short time operation requires less of a time commitment from participants and addresses the difficulty with fitting radio in with kids' soccer games, fixing the sprinklers at home, weekend activities, and going on travel for work. Perhaps this is why you read in QST that the average reader is retired from a technical profession: greatly reduced time job and kid time pressure. We need to encourage new entrants into the activity, and demonstrations are a big part of it. I'd like to hear suggestions on these ideas, and on anything else radio related that comes to mind.

73 de W6RMK ■

Club Meetings

By Jonathan Cameron, KF6RTA

General Meeting, March 10

The secretary was unable to attend and no roll was taken and there was no quorum. Jay Holladay gave a short report on Field Day preparations. Chris Carson talked about some ideas for Open House.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, March 24

No quorum was achieved. Board members present included Jonathan Cameron (KF6RTA), Chris Carson (KE6ABQ), and Jim Lux (W6RMK).

There was some discussion of the damage to the yagi on the top of building 180 due to the extra large flag flying there. Jim Lux will follow up with club members to get this repaired.

Jonathan Cameron demonstrated the on-line voting poll that he put together based on an earlier version from Randy Hammock. Jim and Chris had a few suggestions and thought it would be a good idea to pitch to the members at our next general meeting.

GENERAL MEETING, April 14

Jim Lux opened the meeting at 12:10. Club members present were included Jonathan Cameron (KF6RTA), Chris Carson (KE6ABQ), Jay Holladay (W6EJJ), Jim Lux (W6RMK), Walt Mushagian (K6DNS), Mark Schaefer (WB6CIA), and Richard Wetzel (WA6JBZ).

Jim Lux had a few suggestions regarding club operations during JPL Open House (May 15-16, 2004). He suggested mounting an APRS tracker on one of the people mover trams to demonstrate APRS. Or setting up an HF field expedient wire-over-tree demo. He also mentioned the possibility running a special events station if there was adequate club interest and support. Chris recalled how the club station ran at last year's open house. Other ideas included recording contacts on a map to demonstrate HF communications, training kids to send their name in Morse code and providing corresponding certificates, and related ideas. Jim Lux will follow up on some of these ideas.

Jay Holladay reported on field day operations. Field Day this year starts Friday, June 25, and goes through Sunday, June 27, 2004. This year's rules seem very similar to last year's rules. Jay is proposing running "2A LAX" (including 2 HF, 1 GOTA, 1 VHF stations). Jay is appealing for help with preparations for field day. Other suggestions for field day operations included having some extra activities for club family members (hiking, astronomy, etc) during field day operations.

Chris Carson discussed the status of various club facilities. He reviewed the Yagi problem on the top of building 180. Some resolution is apparently in progress. We need to finish clearing the old club trailer so the fire department can burn for a training exercise. We will need some more work parties for dealing with all of these issues as well as equipment maintenance on the Mesa.

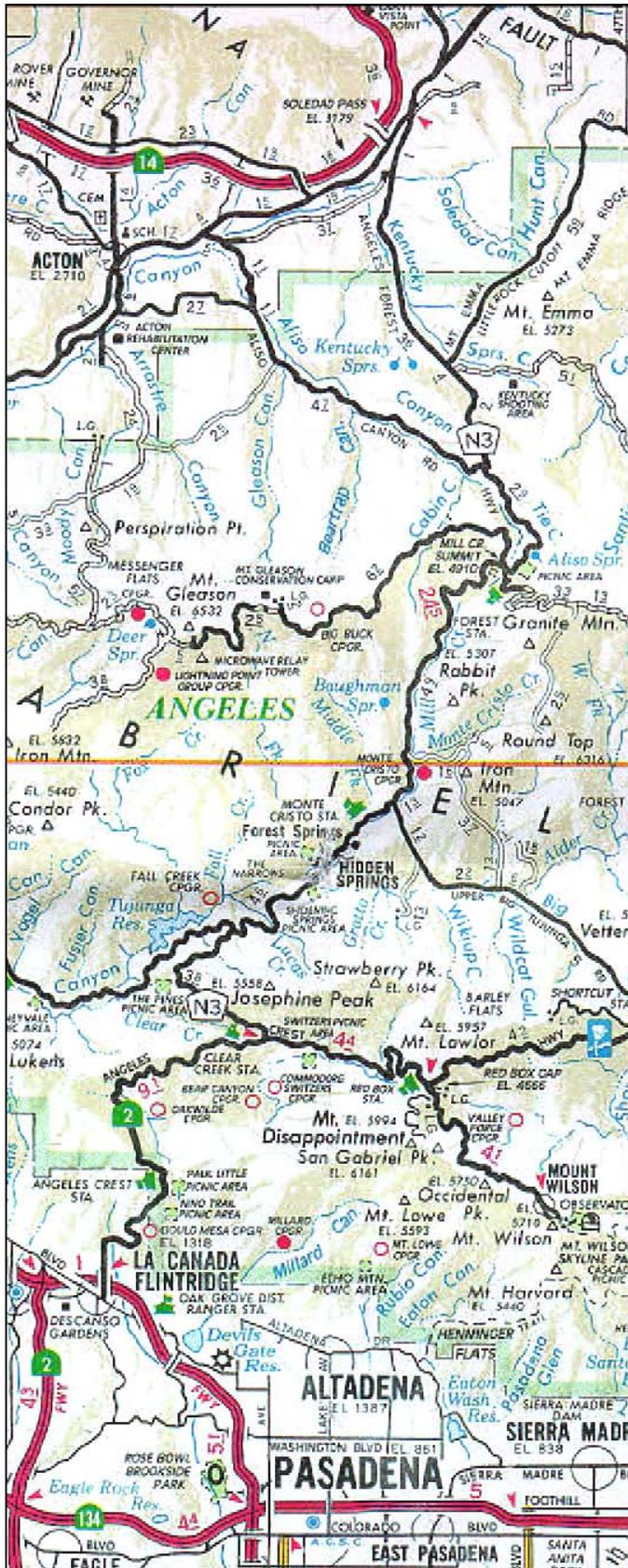
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, April 28

The meeting opened at 12:15. Board members present included Jonathan Cameron (KF6RTA), Chris Carson (KE6ABQ), Jay Holladay (W6EJJ), Jim Lux (W6RMK), and Walt Mushagian (K6DNS).

We discussed the JPL ARC booth the JPL Open House. Jim Lux said that we will get the same location under building 167 as we had last year. Jay Holladay has a display of 40 nice QSL cards from all over the world that he will provide for display at field day.

There was some discussion of projects that need to be done on our various facilities such as the club shack (Building 173).

Jay Holladay reported on preparations for field day, June 25-27. He has done some detailed planning with Merv MacMedan and has recruited a core team of several key individuals to help get everything organized including Mike Tope, Merv MacMedan, and Marty Woll. We plan to operate in a similar setup for last year, including 2 HF stations, a GOTA station, VHF stations, and more. ■



Route to the 2004 Field Day Site at Mt. Gleason

Field Day 2004

By Jay Holladay, W6EJJ

Here is the information on how you can take part in this year's Field Day: Even if you aren't sure you want to operate a station, we need your help with setup, computer logging, and other chores. All hams at JPL and Caltech and their families and friends are invited to visit us at the Field Day site. And, please bring one of your own QSL cards for our display board.

How You Can Take Part:

Please fill out the sign-up sheet on the last page of this issue and return it to Jay Holladay. Print out this article and bring it with you to Field Day. Even if you do not return the sign-up sheet, please feel free to visit us at Mt. Gleason.

The latest Field Day planning information will also be disseminated via the Club's email list and via the Monday net on the W6JPL repeater.

As usual, we will use computers and the program CT to log our Field Day QSO's. CT practice sessions will be held during June. Call Jay Holladay at 354-7758 for more information, or watch for an announcement on the JPL mailing list.

Field Day activities will kick off on Friday morning, June 25. The hard-core FD types will take vacation that Friday to assist with the logistics and transportation chores. We will meet at 8:00 AM at the JPL ham shack by the JPL East Gate to load all of the gear for the trip up the mountain. Once everything is loaded we will caravan to Mt. Gleason and begin setting up. Lunch and dinner will be served on Friday while we erect tents and antennas, then set up and test all of the rigs.

The Field Day contest starts at 11 AM local (1800 UTC) Saturday and ends at the same time on Sunday. As has been described elsewhere, this year we will have the luxury of catered meals, and at a reasonable price. The Saturday evening dinner is always a special event. After the contest is over we will have lunch and disassemble everything, leaving Mt. Gleason as we found it. Then it's back to JPL to return the Club equipment and home for a well-deserved shower and nap.

What to Bring to Field Day:

Even if you only plan to visit for the afternoon, it is wise to be prepared for anything. You may enjoy Field Day so much you will want to spend the night. To get to Mt. Gleason, see the directions on the next page. The road is paved all the way except for the short bypass around the correctional facility and any car can make it to the top.

Although meals will be provided, you are responsible for your own place to sleep and enough warm clothing to stay comfortable during the cold nights (Mt. Gleason is at 6532 ft). Be prepared for weather like the Sahara Desert during the day and the Arctic at night, along with gale force winds, and you should be OK. Seriously, light thermal underwear and light gloves are often needed if you are operating in the wee hours of Sunday morning.

The following is a suggested checklist for your personal FD preparations:

Wide-brimmed hat	Long-sleeved shirt
Mosquito repellent	Toothbrush & paste
2 gallons of water per person	Favorite snack food
Sleeping bag	First-aid Kit
Heavy jacket	Undershirt
Thermal underwear	Jeans
Several pairs of socks	Towel
Washcloth	Boots
Money	Tent
220 MHz Handy-talkie	Sunglasses
Sunscreen	Soap
Lip balm	Maps
Flashlight	Chair

AM/FM Radio (for earthquake report, etc.)

Bring a copy of your QSL card to post on the PR display

Don't forget any needed medications or aspirin and vitamins. If you do spend the night, it is highly recommended that you bring a tent or camper. The view is well worth bringing camera and binoculars. We will also have telescopes available for the non-amateurs to do some star gazing.

As far as Amateur Radio gear is concerned, the Clubs will furnish rigs (with some additional loans from the members). We can always use a spare HF or VHF rig as backup, so bring one along if it's convenient. Don't forget the rig compatible power supply and cables. Bring whatever specialty operating items you wish. If you have a favorite keyer, headset, or boom mike, please bring it along.

All the HF rigs will use 8-pin mike connector wired for Kenwood. (We could really use a digital voice "keyer" if anyone has one!) Also a small tool kit, extra table, antenna wire, battery-operated clock, spare batteries of all types, etc., always seem to come in handy.

In short, anything you might need to be self-sufficient and stay operational under emergency conditions will probably be useful at Field Day. In fact, that's what the exercise is supposed to be all about. CU at FD!

Directions to Mount Gleason Field Day Site:

Take the Foothill Freeway (210) to La Canada. Exit at Angeles Crest Highway/Route 2. Go north 9.1 miles on Route 2 up into the San Gabriel Mts. Turn left at the junction with Angeles Forest Highway (N3). Continue 3.8 miles on Angeles Forest Highway past Big Tujunga Junction. Go another 5.9 miles through the tunnel, past Hidden Springs to the Monte Cristo Campground. Continue another 4.9 miles on Angeles Forest Highway to the Mill Creek Campground at the Mill Creek Summit.

Turn left on Mt. Gleason Road. (The Mill Creek Campground will be on the right.) Continue 6.2 miles on Mt. Gleason Road until you reach the Mount Gleason Conservation Camp. Take dirt road bypass left of the Correction Facility; continue 2.5 miles. Keep to the right at Y-junction just after Microwave Station. When you reach the locked gate, call on Simplex for admission. The road will end at the Summit and our FD site.

Do not block the road at the far end of the Mt. Gleason operating site by parking on it. Watch out for kids, antenna wires, and loose hams

Alternate Route:

210 Freeway to Interstate 5; North to 14 Freeway; Exit at Angeles Forest Highway take Angeles Forest (N3) South, turn right on Mt. Gleason Road. ■

Treasurer's Reports

By Chuck Sarture, KG6NF

April, 2004

General Club Account

	Beginning of Month Balance:	\$3,623.27
Income:		
	Memberships	\$76.00
	Total Income:	\$76.00
Expenses:		
	No Expenses This Month	\$0.00
	Total Expenses:	\$0.00
	End of Month Balance:	\$3,699.27

May, 2004

General Club Account

	Beginning of Month Balance:	\$3,699.27
Income:		
	No Income This Month	\$0.00
	Total Income:	\$0.00
Expenses:		
	No Expenses This Month	\$0.00
	Total Expenses:	\$0.00
	End of Month Balance:	\$3,699.27

Chuck Sarture, KG6NF
2004 Treasurer

Newsletter Deadline:

Friday, July 30 for the August issue of W6VIO Calling. Your articles, ads, photos, diagrams, letters to the editor, or technical material should be submitted to the editor via email (bill.wood@direcway.com) or regular mail to: Bill Wood, 31094 Hemlock Ave, Barstow, CA 92311.

JPL / CITARC 2004 Field Day Participant Input Form

Please return to: jay.a.holladay@jpl.nasa.gov or Jay Holladay, MS 303-404

Name _____ If licensed: Call _____ License Class _____

Yes, I can join the crew on: ___ Fri. 6/25 (set-up) ___ Sat. 6/26 ___ Sun. 6/27

I (and guests) would like the following quantities of meals (\$5.00 contribution per meal will be collected):

___ Fri. lunch ___ Fri. dinner ___ Sat. bkfst ___ Sat. lunch ___ Sat. dinner ___ Sun. bkfst ___ Sun. lunch

___ Sorry, I'm unable to attend (but I can provide gear or help prepare as indicated below)

My operating preferences are: ___ HF high-rate SSB ___ HF casual SSB ___ PSK-31/RTTY

___ HF high-rate CW ___ HF casual CW ___ VHF high-rate Voice ___ VHF casual

___ VHF weak-signal SSB / CW ___ VHF packet ___ Satellite ___ Other _____

___ Operate GOTA station (I'm novice, tech, inactive or unlicensed) ___ Mentoring GOTA station

I can make the following available if needed:

HF rig _____ Power supply _____ Laptop _____

VHF / UHF FM rig(s) (specify bands) _____

VHF / UHF SSB/CW rigs _____ Microwave gear _____

Accessories (preamps, amps, meters, lights, ac strips, etc.) _____

Specialty-mode (PSK31, APRS, packet node, APRS, ATV, SSTV, etc.) _____

Tower sections, masts _____

HF antennas _____ HF tuner _____

VHF / UHF / microwave antennas _____

Rotors (for VHF, Satellite), hardline coax _____

Vehicle-based op. position _____ Tow vehicle (2") _____

Filters / cavities _____ Solar panels _____ Other _____

I can help before Field Day to: ___ build / test filters, cables, other hardware ___ repair gear

___ machine or weld parts ___ arrange publicity ___ install software / prepare laptops

___ pre-assemble & mark antennas ___ load vehicles ___ Other _____

I can help during Field Day to: ___ assemble antennas on the ground ___ climb

___ pitch tents ___ raise towers & masts ___ set up stations ___ set up network

___ prepare or serve food ___ maintain generator ___ escort visitors / give "tours"

___ break down and pack up ___ unload vehicles at JPL or Caltech ___ bring VIP visitor(s)

___ Mentor the GOTA station ___ Other _____



Jet Propulsion Laboratory Amateur Radio Club
PO Box 820
La Canada, CA 91012-0820

First Class Mail

JPL ARC Repeaters			
Pasadena:			
WR6JPL	147.15 MHz	(+)	PL 131.8 Open
WR6JPL	224.08 MHz	(-)	PL 156.7 Open
WR6JPL	224.70 MHz	(-)	Closed Autopatch
WR6JPL	445.20 MHz	(-)	PL 103.5 Open
W6JPL-1	145.09 MHz		Packet Node/BBS
W6JPL-1	223.54 MHz		Packet Node/BBS
Table Mountain:			
WR6AZN	145.28 MHz	(-)	PL 131.8 Open
WR6AZN	223.96 MHz	(-)	PL 156.7 Open
WR6AZN	447.20 MHz	(-)	PL 94.8 Open

