



The Repeater

Next Club Meeting

Thursday,
January 2, 2014, 7:00 PM

Red Cross Building,
60 Hawthorne St., Medford, OR
Across from Hawthorne Park

Program: 1) Don Montgomery on
EmComm and JCARES
2) "The Next Generation
of Radio Amateurs"

Volume 2014, Issue 1

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Todd Carney	K7TFC	(541) 951-5702
Allan Taylor	K7GT	(541) 855-2054
Lud Sibley	KB2EVN	(541) 855-5207
Carl Van Orden	W7BRO	(541) 326-5871
Tom McDermott	N5EG	(541) 734-4675
Joe Gunderson	AF7GN	(541) 941-7186
Club Web Page:		

k7tfc@arri.net
k7gt@charter.net
tubelore@jeffnet.org
carl@pacificwest.com
n5eg@tapr.org
RVARC.PIO@gmail.com
<http://w7dta.org>

President & Webmaster
 Vice President
 Treasurer
 Secretary
 Newsletter & Membership
 Public Info Officer

President's Letter

On March 12, 1933, Franklin Roosevelt became the first President of the United States to address the nation by radio. That was the bottom of the Great Depression, and neither Roosevelt nor anyone else knew what to do about it. In that "Fireside Chat," he announced the guiding philosophy for the rest of his twelve years in office: "It is common sense to take an idea and try it: If it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all, try something." Imagine a president saying that today!

Over the decades of the Rogue Valley Amateur Radio Club, the membership has taken

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The Repeater is the official newsletter of the Rogue Valley Amateur Radio Club, Inc. It is published 10 times a year—once per month excluding July and August.

Secretary's Report

The December meeting was our annual Christmas party, and as such there was no business conducted. Thus, there are no minutes for December.

The party was originally planned for December 7th, but the heavy snowfall pretty much killed all travel that day, so the party was postponed to the 14th.

Freezing fog, the remaining ice, and other plans made for moderate attendance on the 14th as well, compared to the previous year.

Instead of minutes, we have some photographs of the event in this issue.

President's Report, Cont'd.

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a similar approach. Even a casual perusal of old Repeaters makes that clear. As we enter 2014—the 100th anniversary of the ARRL—there are still things to try. Some may have been attempted before, but just as “one cannot step into the same river twice” the membership of the RVARC today is not the same as yesterday's. We have many new members, some members who have not been active lately, and hundreds of licensed amateurs in our “neck of the woods.” For these reasons, let's try some things. In no particular order, here are some thoughts of my own.

- The club constitution provides for three members of the “Executive Board” from the general membership. Let's fill those slots.
- Let's form a few standing committees of at least three members each: Development, Membership, Public Information, Projects and Activities, Funding, and maybe a few more. That's at least eighteen members right there.
- Let's go back to the “3A” category for Field Day 2014, and to “4A” for 2015. Neither can be done without sufficient participation, so breaking operator hours into small sign-up pieces (as small as one hour long) rather than open-ended commitments might help. In any event, there's lots of opportunities for member involvement here, whether on a large scale or very small.
- In addition to Field Day, the Summer Ice Cream Social, and the Christmas Potluck, let's try a few other annual club-sponsored events. Examples might include a fox hunt, a camp-out QSO party, or “Ask the Elmers” sessions.
- See if some special interest groups—SIGS—within the club could be opportunities for involvement. Examples might include SIGs for QRP, homebrewing,

contesting, satellite/ISS, digital/data, SDR, and D-Star. Ham radio has so many facets. A list of possible SIGS would be lengthy.

- For our meeting programs, let's try splitting them into two half-hour presentations: one on an aspect of the “basics,” and the other on an advanced topic. We'd also alternate between technical and operating subjects. Something for everyone, you see.

That's enough for now, isn't it? I look forward to the coming year. Ham radio is fun already, but how much more fun when enjoyed with others?

Happy New Year to all!

Todd, K7TFC

RVARC Christmas Party 2014



Amateur Radio for Now and the Future

Joe Gunderson AF7GN, PIO

I hope all of you received all the new toys you wanted from Santa and are getting time to play with them. I got my share of new toys and I am sure I will enjoy them throughout the new year.

I will start off the column with what is happening on the new classes for the this coming year. All events will be held at:

- **Smullin Center of Rogue Regional Medical Center, 2825 E. Barnett Rd., Medford, OR 97504 Sundays at 3:00 PM, unless otherwise specified.**

January 5th - Meet and Greet for future students to explain what the course offers and the costs and answer any questions that the future student may have as well as order their text books for class.

January 12th - We will be offering a Soldering class with former NASA certified solder-

ing experts. This is open to all, reservations are a must as class size is limited. The cost will be less than \$10 for materials used in class. A note concerning the soldering class, safety glasses will be required or you will not do any actual soldering.

January 19th - Technician / General classes start.

The Extra classes are still in flux - I am waiting for the Smullin Center to give a larger allotment of time to hold this class. I have several great Instructors but I could sure use more. If you might be interested let me know.

I am in the process of updating and verifying the VIP list for Field Day. I am also working on a presentation of Amateur Radio to run in the PIO Booth. Any suggestions or help are welcome.



VC60B+ Digital Resistance Tester (Megger)
Review from the Toy Bin - by Joe Gunderson AF7GN

If you are like me, you wish to save a buck when you can, and who among us can resist free or dirt cheap coax when the opportunity arises. You have a good radio, and correctly assembled your antenna which took forever to assemble, because if it is home brewed you invariably up one of the measurements. If it's new, the directions are in a strange language that take you hours to decipher or look for help on line to finish the project. A fellow ham whose better half has given the ultimatum that something has to go from his ham shack treasures, has given you a 100 feet of beautiful 30 year old coax with the connectors already on it. You are assured that it is in great working operation. How great is that? You attach the coax to the antenna, erect the antenna. Now you connect the antenna to your radio. Now is the time of truth! You turn on the radio with great anticipation, then reality sets in. The results are a weak receive, lots of noise. Hmm! You put your handy antenna analyzer on it, looks good enough, less than 1.5 to 1.0 SWR. Did my radio decide it was going start dying a horrible death. The madness begins. After untold hours of trouble shooting, frustration, it is discovered the coax is breaking down, after I replaced it with a new coax and connectors. That can't be! It checks good with the analyzer, I was assured it was good by my buddy who gave it to me. I now know why he was smirking when he gave me the coax.

Solution: I thought back to my Navy days and remembered why we had Meggers (Ed note: shorthand for Megohm meter). After time in the elements, the insulation starts slowly breaking down, not enough for the analyzer to pick up, or even a good VOM.

Some of you can remember the black box made of Bakelite, meter, couple of leads

built in and a crank called a Megger, built by the Megger Corporation that was used to check for breakdown of insulation. It applied a high voltage provided by cranking and checked for breakdown of the insulation up to 10 Meg Ohms, versus 1 Meg Ohm for VOM. These are hard to find, and expensive, so fast forward to the digital age and Vici produces the VC-60+ "Megger, which can test up to 2000 Meg Ohms, at a 1000V, from 9vdc. Basically a ohmmeter on steroids. Caution should be used as you can definitely get a nice zap from it (experience has shown! DUHH!).



Cost is \$55.25 with free shipping thrown in from EBay. It is compact, rugged and fairly lightweight. It comes with leads, alligator clips for attachment to the leads, batteries, carrying strap and instructions. You can go to the website and download the complete instructions in pdf format if you need or wish more information, but it is very easy to use and works well. A very nice piece of test equipment to augment your ham shack and inexpensive enough that it doesn't have to be used frequently to justify owning! If I had

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VC60B+ Digital Resistance Tester (Megger)
Review from the Toy Bin - by Joe Gunderson AF7GN

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this at the onset I would of saved time and my sanity. Now there is time to help my buddy out with a freebee!

SPECIFICATIONS

Basic Function	VC60B+		
Measuring Voltage	250V±10%	500V±10%	1000V±10%
Range	0.1MΩ~20 MΩ	0.1MΩ~50 MΩ	0.1MΩ~100 MΩ
	20MΩ~500 MΩ	50MΩ~1000 MΩ	100MΩ~2000 MΩ
Accuracy	±(4% of reading +2d)		
Current of Short Circuit	1.7mA	1.7mA	1.4mA
Median Resistance	2MΩ	2MΩ	5MΩ
Low Battery Indication	Yes		
Alarm Function	Red indicator light is illuminated		
Over Load Indication	Yes		
Unit Symbol Display	Yes		
Auto Power Off	Yes		
Max. Display	1999		
Using Temperature	0°C ~ 40°C		
Relative Humidity	30%RH ~ 85%RH		
Over Range Display	“1”		
Dimension	80mm(W)×185mm(L)×45mm(Thickness) = 3.15"x7.25"x1.75"		
Weight	360g (including battery)		
Power	9V (6x1.5V 5# battery)		

Note: Median resistance ensures that two terminal voltages is not less than 90% of test voltage of low terminal limit value of measure resistance.

[Editor's note: another way to measure the loss of a piece of coaxial cable is to short the far end of the cable. Then transmit into the coax and measure the SWR. Lower SWR = worse.

Shorted SWR	Appx Cable loss
3:1	3 dB
1.5:1	7 dB
1.2:1	10.4 dB

Shorted SWR	Appx Cable loss
20:1	0.43 dB
10:1	0.87 dB
6:1	1.46 dB

RVARC Dues 2014

RVARC membership dues run from January 1 through December 31. Please bring cash or a check payable to RVARC to a club meeting, or mail (checks only) to:

RVARC Membership
c/o 102 McDonough Rd.
Gold Hill, OR 97525-9626

Regular Member:	\$20.00
Senior Member (62 and over):	\$15.00
Family Member:	\$20.00
Student Member:	\$10.00

2014 Amateur Radio Courses

Joe Gunderson, AF7GN

January 5th 3:00 PM, a meet and greet will be held at the Smullin Center for anyone interested in taking classes in 2014. We will give an introduction to the hobby and the costs to take the course and time necessary to devote to it. We will also happily answer any questions. The Technician course will start on the 19th of January.

The Smullin center is located at 2825 E Barnett Rd, Medford, OR 97504

2014 Amateur Radio Examinations

In the Rogue Valley, amateur radio exams are provided by the RVARC and the SOARC. New exam participants need to provide identification, while upgrading amateurs need to **provide a copy of their current license** as well as show identification. The exam fee for 2014 remains \$15.00. All license candidates must provide a picture ID. Upgrading amateurs must also provide a photocopy of their current license to send in with their application. To search for other exam locations, see:

<http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/examsearch.phtml>

Medford—Phoenix, OR

Time: Saturdays, 8:30 AM. Exam session starts at 9:00 AM. Walk-ins welcome.

Location: Fire District 5 HQ. 5811 South Pacific Highway, Phoenix, Oregon 97535

Dates 2014: Feb 22 Jun 21 Oct 25

Contact: Don Bennett, Email: kg7bp@rfwarrior.com Phone: (541) 973-3625

Grants Pass

Time: Fridays 6:00 PM. Exam session starts at 6:30 PM. Walk-ins welcome.

Location: Fruitdale Grange. 1440 Parkdale Dr., Grants Pass OR 97527-5288

Dates 2014: Feb 21 May 16 Aug 22 Nov 14

Contact: John Stubbe, K7VSU, email: K7VSU@arrl.net, Phone: (541) 218-2244

Roseburg, Bend, Redding, Brookings, Crescent City— no information received. Please see our club webpage, <http://w7dta.org> for updates as we receive schedules for these cities.

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