



# The Repeater

## Next Club Meeting

Thursday,  
May 1, 2014, 7:00 PM

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

Program: Small, compact wide-band receiving loop antenna.

Volume 2014, Issue 5

May 2014

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 Secretary  
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## President's Letter

### Embrace the New, and But Keep the Old, Too

I've recently jumped head first into the mysterious world of vacuum tubes. When I was a child, tubes were those little jewels my father pulled out from the back of the old 1956 Zenith television—black and white, of course. I'd go with him to the dime store (remember those?) and he would test them on the cheap emission tester that was placed atop the steel cabinet that held new stock in their little elongated boxes. He'd put some back in his pocket, and some he would toss into the

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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

RVARC - Minutes for APRIL 3, 2014  
The club President Todd Carney, K7TFC, called the meeting to order at 1905PDT in the meeting room of the Red Cross building in Medford, OR.

Visitors were:

- ◆ Michael Geier, KB1UM
- ◆ Glenda Taylor, K7GRT

### Old Business

A "Easter Egg" fox hunt was announced by Todd, K7TFC, for the Saturday before Easter, with the site yet to be determined. Additionally, a workshop to build portable hand-held yagis is scheduled for Saturday, April 12 at 10 am. [NOTE: rescheduled to May 17 ]

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## President's Report, Cont'd.

*(Continued from page 1)*

waste basket that the store owner hoped would be used more often than the tester. Replacing them in the television and switching it on, there was that glow from the little curlicue on the top of some tubes, the bigger ones seemed to glow from down deep in their bowels. After a minute or so warm up, the picture emerged, this time no longer rolling from a faulty vertical-hold or whatever it was that was now fixed.

Bigger tubes, 6L6's of one subtype or another, made up the cityscape on the open-chassis monaural phono amp—a Heathkit I think—that was mounted on the wall inside the furnace closet. My grandfather had a similar setup, except his was homebrewed and it was distributed on several chassis inside a living-room cupboard. He did have a Heathkit tube preamp that I loved for its gold facade and knobs the size silver dollars, but even his speaker (singular, since stereo was still rare)—the size of a small refrigerator—he homebrewed.

The beginning of the end for electron vacuum tubes in our family came the day the preamp built into the turntable cabinet failed. I don't know the specific reason, but I distinctly recall going with my father to a local parts store where he bought a kit for a transistorized preamp. The new whiz-bang. The wave of the future. I guess it was as a kid, then, that electronics meant tubes to me, and the little TO-5 transistor can just didn't have the same allure. At least it was metal. Now plastic is the enclosure-of-choice, an army of TO-92s marching into the future. Not only were they tiny and featureless, but they didn't glow, and they didn't have the futuristic entrails that so fascinated me then (and now) with vacuum tubes.

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## Secretary's Report, Cont'd.

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Sandra Peters gave a follow-up report on the outreach to the women hams in the area, and formation of the XYL net. The 145 mailed out questionnaires resulted in 55 replies, and 23 women expressing interest. Two meetings have already been held, with Don Montgomery presenting at the first meeting.

### **New Business**

Don Bennett, KG7BP gave a brief update for the Field Day committee. Don talked about the possibility of using a triplexer during Field Day operations, which would allow three transmitters to use the same antenna. The cost of the triplexer is approximately \$195.

Joe, AF7GN, gave the PIO report. He announced that the club was offered a free booth space at the Master Gardener's Show in May. There is no fee for the booth, and electricity is \$15. Anyone interested in manning the booth, or operating a GOTA station should contact the PIO. Joe announced that effective June 1, he is resigning from the PIO position.

Allan Taylor, K7GT, spoke briefly about the planned operations on King Mountain during the upcoming 7QP event.

### **Treasurer's report**

Lud, KB2EVN, reported a balance of \$3745.13 in the club treasury.

The meeting was put on hold at 1935 PDT for "eyeball QSOs" and coffee. The meeting was called back into session at 2000 PDT Presentation

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## President's Column, Cont'd.

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Fast-forward a half century, and I'm rediscovering these little crystalline beauties, this time with some knowledge of how they work, and why. But aren't they "obsolete" has-beens? Fragile, bulky, and prone to burn out? The twenty-pound power transformers, and filter caps the size of soda cans—surely these are the dinosaurs of audio, video, and radio technology.

The thing is, they still work as well as they always did, and they have some characteristics that took a while for solid-state devices to emulate. According to electric-guitar players and hyper-sensitized audiophiles, nothing has yet replaced the "sound" of the vacuum tube, often described as "warmer" than modern transistorized and integrated audio circuits. They're still necessary for high-power amplifiers, both radio and audio. But why not at least keep a hand in the old tech? Why must new technology mean the total abandonment of the old? In some cases, of course, it doesn't. Paper, pen, or pencil have not been obsoleted by the typewriter and now by the computer. Books have not gone away, and not likely to.

Photography and now video did not mean the abandonment of oil or watercolor painting, and I predict that 3D printers are not going to obsolete sculpture, either. I think there's something healthy about maintaining (and passing on) competence in older ways. Naturally, this applies to modes of radio operation as well. Digital modes are really cool, but the simple straight key—for telegraph or radio—kept the world informed for a century and a half before it faded into a special skill some worry will eventually die. Using the hand and the trained ear to communicate in dits and dahs is pretty cool, too. If there are others of you who are hot on

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## Secretary's Report, Cont'd.

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Our guest speaker, Michael Grier, KB1UM, gave a presentation on small loop antennas. Michael discussed the theory and physical considerations of magnetic loops. Additionally, he used the loop to make a 40 meter contact, to show that these antennas actually work well.

The meeting was adjourned at 2105 PDT

Submitted by Carl VanOrden, W7BRO Secretary

## May Workshop Saturday, May 17th

RVARC's May Workshop on Saturday, 5/17, will be our antenna party for the year. We'll make 3 and 5-element yagi antennas for 2 meters that can be used with a rotatable mast or tripod-mounted for satellite use. Parts and materials have been donated, but you'll need your own coax. Consider ordering higher quality coax from HRO, DX Engineering, or your favorite online purveyor since feedline and rugged mechanical construction are both needed for 2 Meter portable antennas.

Workshop location and other details will be announced on the club's email reflector [w7dta@googlegroups.com](mailto:w7dta@googlegroups.com) (a good reason to make sure you're signed up).

## President's Column, Continued

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vacuum tubes, or CW for that matter, make yourself known on the club reflector. Share your latest exploits with us. We are fortunate in the RVARC to have a large number of members who spent the better part of their lives with the old technology. We should beg them to teach us.

This month's program will be a demonstration of a small, compact, directional wide-band receive-only antenna. It covers from WWVB (60 KHz) up to about 25 to 30 MHz.

Todd K7TFC

## The history of W7OEK, Lud Sibley

This bit of history on our club's previous callsign comes from Lud Sibley, who has a collection of old callbooks.

I looked at appearances of "W7OEK" in old Callbooks. Learned a little:

- ◆ Prewar: three-letter assignments hadn't reached that high.
- ◆ 1948-49: Callsign unassigned
- ◆ Fall '51, Winter '52, Spring '54: "RVARC, Harry H. Comstock, trustee, Jackson Co. Fairgrounds." (Seems to me that the Fairgrounds were not in today's location, and that this may have been the County-owned Camp White building that the Club once used.)
- ◆ Fall '58, Winter '59-'60: RVARC, 50 N. Hawthorne" (not necessarily today's Red Cross address at 60 Hawthorne)
- ◆ Summer '67: "RVARC, 433 Fairmount St. Medford 97501"
- ◆ '74, '77, '84, '88: "RVARC, E. Lasher, 2517 Sandy Terr., Medford 97501."
- ◆ '91: "RVARC, W. Shrader, 2042 Jasmine Ave., Medford 97501."

"Further research needed," as always.

Lud

## Your hamshack photos needed Jack Schock, WA7IHU

Dear RVARC members.

RVARC has chosen my "ham stations" Power Point slide show of for the June meeting. I need your pictures to make it interesting. I can use any ham shack, ham equipment or antenna picture. This includes my first ham shack, my present ham shack, my favorite ham shack or the best one I've seen!

Please use common formats like jpg, bmt or gif's or a photo. I probably can't open proprietary formats like Photo Shop, or Hewlett Packard types.

Bring it to a club meeting, email it or mail it. I will download it. scan it and add it to the slide show.

73, Jack, WA7IHU  
541-535-8471  
3131 Deer Trail Lane Medford, OR  
jackschock@aol.com

**Got Your Ticket Before 1984?**  
**Rita Derbas, KI6SSQ**

We have something in common. We took a test and, boy, was it exciting to hear the words, "You passed."

Today it's an easy process. Study a book, or flip through flash cards. Take free online exams until your confidence bursts. Drive down Highway 99 on the appropriate date. Meet Don Bennett, KG7BP our local Volunteer Examiner (VE) Coordinator. Get 26 out of 35 questions correct and voila! You've earned your Technician License.

Getting your license before 1984 took a bit more commitment. Back in the 1950's when Bill Shrader, W7QMU and Alan Taylor, K7GT got their licenses, an applicant had to go to one of the 23 FCC district offices to take the exam. If a district office was greater than 125 miles away, a General class or higher ham could proctor the exam, sometimes on his kitchen table.

First you had to pass the 13 words per minute code requirement. Code was sent for five minutes. You had to copy one consecutive minute of code without an error. Then you had to send one consecutive minute without error. If you failed the code, you were immediately shown the door. Tom McDermott, N5EG found the bus ride and test to be pretty intimidating for a teenager when he took his test in the 1960's.

After you passed code, you could take the paper exam. If you took a proctored test, it was mailed back to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to be graded. It wasn't uncommon to wait 4 to 6 weeks for the test results. Dale Trautman, N7IXS was lucky in 1964 when he took an amateur radio class in Medford at the Old Girls Country Club which offered an exam at the end of the class.

In the early 1980's government budget cut backs hit the FCC causing field office testing schedules to dwindle. Then the FCC announced that it was going to get out of the amateur radio exam business altogether.

Amateur radio was lucky to have hams in high places, in particular Senator Barry Goldwater, K7UGA (MARS call sign AFC7BC). In late 1982 President Reagan signed into law the Goldwater-Wirth bill (also known as Public Law 97-259) which amended the 1934 Communications Act, permitting the FCC to accept the voluntary and uncompensated services of licensed radio amateurs to serve in preparing and administering amateur radio license exams. It was a close call for our hobby, but the bill gave birth to the current system called the Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (VEC) program.

Next month, we'll explain the premise behind the VEC program. I'm sure you're curious about who selects the questions and who qualifies to be a volunteer examiner.

Until then, check with RVARC members like Bud Larson, W7LNG who got his license in 1947 to find out the story about his first exam. I'm sure it will be interesting.

73, Rita Derbas, KI6SSQ

### 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

### For Sale

Military antenna sections.

3-foot pieces make a 24-foot whip and a 12-foot whip.

Misc antenna masts, ropes, SOME FREE.

Lots of radio and transmitting tubes.

Bud Larson, W7LNG 541-773-5214.

### 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> or our club webpage: <http://w7dta.org>

#### **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:** Jun 21 Oct 25

**Contact:** Don Bennett, Email: [kg7bp@rfwarrior.com](mailto: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:** May 16 Aug 22 Nov 14

**Contact:** John Stubbe, K7VSU, email: [K7VSU@arrl.net](mailto: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.

### ***Next Club Meeting***

**Thursday, May 1, 2014, 7:00 PM**

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

**Program: Small, compact wideband receiving loop antenna.**

# W7DTA — May 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 • RVARC Meeting. • ARES Net.	2	3 • 7th Area QSO Party (7QP)
4	5 • Oregon Railfan Net.	6	7	8 • ARES Net.	9	10
11	12 • Oregon Railfan Net.	13	14 • RVARC Workshop. Santos Center.	15 • ARES Net. • RVARC Newsletter Input due.	16	17 • DF Antenna building party
18	19 • Oregon Railfan Net.	20	21	22 • ARES Net.	23	24
25	26 • Oregon Railfan Net.	27	28	29 • ARES Net.	30	31

## Events

- Thursday May 1st - 7:00 PM RVARC Club Meeting, Red Cross Building
- Saturday, May 3rd—7th Area QSO Party 6:00 AM to Midnight PDT. Rules at <http://7QP.org>
- Thursdays 7:30 PM - ARES Net. K7RVM repeater 147.000 (+) [ PL 123.0 ]
- Mondays at 8:00 PM. Oregon Railfan Net. K7FH King Mountain Repeater 146.940 (-) [ PL 136.5 ]. Also available on Echolink: Node #50239 or K7TVL-L
- Wednesday, May 14th. RVARC Workshop Santos Center (Columbus & Jackson) Subject TBD.
- Saturday May 17th. Direction Finding Antenna Building Party. Details TBA