

# THE VALLEY HAM NEWS

*"The Voice of the Yuba Sutter Amateur Radio Club"*

A California Non-Profit Organization

**March 2010**

## YSARC

PO Box 1169, Yuba City, CA 95992

President: Russell Decker, KB6YAF  
Vice President: Lonnie Moore, KI6ZYY  
Secretary: Manna Whelchel, KG6PNE  
Treasurer: Clara Ansley, N6VRH  
Board Members  
Herb Puckett, W6HBU  
Barry Barnes, KE6LW  
Teeje Jamison, NE1CQ (Webmaster)  
Nancy Strong, KI6INC  
Paul Johnson, N6XVL  
Repeater Trustee, Dave Gartner, WD6AXM

## ***UPCOMING EVENTS***

March 3, 7:00 PM; Club Meeting; Yuba County Library

March 6, 9:00 AM; VE Exams at 715 King Avenue,  
Yuba City (Cornerstone Church)

March 17, 7:00 PM; board Meeting; Location TBA

March 20, 9:00 AM; Antenna Saturday at the American  
Legion Parking lot in Linda.

## **WEEKLY ACTIVITIES**

Monday nights at 7:00 PM – Weekly net with swap  
shop and help sessions on the local repeater  
(146.085 Plus-PL=127.3)

Monday nights at 8:00 PM - Butte County ARES  
net on Chico repeater (146.850 minus PL=110.0)

Tuesday nights at 7 PM – YSARC ARES net on the  
local repeater

Second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM – the  
ARRL Sacramento Valley Section Net on the local  
repeater.

## **MONTHLY ACTIVITIES**

Every First Wednesday: Club Meeting  
See the minutes for details.

Every Third Wednesday; Board of Directors' Meet-  
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Again, see the minutes for details

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## ***YUMA, ARIZONA HAMFEST***

Yuma, Arizona has a nice ham fest in the latter part of February each year. This was the fifth annual ham fest there in the Yuma County Fairgrounds, and the second time in two years I was able to attend. The climate is nice, the rain did its thing at night, and there was no dust.

As ham fests go, it is a low pressure affair. You stop and visit each tail gate position and trade stories, gear and money if you are so inclined. There is a large exhibit hall with vendors and ARRL and club tables. Refreshments are available at an outside stand.

The first thing you are aware of at this ham fest is the proximity to the Yuma Marine Corps Air Station. Harrier jump jets operate from there during most of the Friday and Saturday show...LOUDLY. If you wear hearing aids, take them out! F-5 aggressor fighters fly also, and we saw C-130 cargo planes making touch and go landings as well.

My friends, other vice-presidents of the IOOK, (International Order Of Krazies, IOOK.org) attended also, and that, of course, is my reason for driving the 700 or so miles to Yuma for this show. At least one, WA8ZWJ, drives from Ohio. The IOOK is the loose organization of hams I have been meeting long enough for one of their kids to grow up, have a 20 year plus career in the US Navy, and retire. I first attended an IOOK get together in 1980, while stationed in Omaha, NE. I had been going to the Dayton Hamvention for three years by that time.

The group of hams in Omaha got together at least twice a week, usually Friday evening for a cup of decaf and a doughnut, and again twelve hours later for breakfast. We planned our weekend activities at that time, arranging antenna parties, and swapping stories, gear, and a little money. It was like a mini ham fest. Going with this group to Dayton Hamvention was a natural branch of activ-

ities. We would form up a convoy and drive non-stop 17 ½ hours to sleep two to a bed, or on the floor, in the only accommodations we could find. These days, having raised our kids, we can afford single beds in motels.

As we spread out over the U.S., we got together twice a week on the radio, Wednesdays and Sundays on HF. But whenever a ham fest is being held within striking distance, we try to attend as a group. This year, as last at Yuma, we occupied a covered picnic area for our flea market site. Someone in the group donated a drawing prize, and I won it. So much for the \$30 or so purchased in tickets.

The indoor vendors included HRO, Icom, Yaesu, Byonics (APRS tracking solutions), Larry's Antennas, DX Summit, and Hi Q Antennas. Most of the vendors were quite happy with the business they did. This year's show brought an estimated 600 hams, up by nearly twice that of last year. The Saturday night 'Buzzard Bar-B-Que' fed 195 in 2009, but we had 300 this year. Did I have fun? Oh, yes. Some of the best belly laughs of the year and constant kidding, visiting, and story swapping you will ever have the pleasure to enjoy.

73,  
Ron, W6KJ

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## ***THE PREZ SEZ***

Making our dollar go farther in today's economic times makes perfect sense. However, sometimes the cost of our ham radio equipment can get pricey depending on your desire for the latest 'bells & whistles'. If you are a new ham and are in the market for buying some equipment to get started, most hams start with an "HT" (handie talkie or walkie-talkie).

Now, most new HT's can be a little intimidating with respect to programming the thing. Most new

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HT's are laden with layers and layers of menus which makes programming very daunting to say the least. You might consider buying an older non-menu HT. There are some good deals on older HT's out there for those who do their homework. Older non-menu-type HT's are ones that have actual on/off knobs, a squelch knob, a VFO knob, direct frequency entry, etc. For example, I just bought a Yaesu FT-470 dual band HT on an online auction site for under \$100 with a quick charger and battery that offers a 'non-menu' operation that is basic, and quick to 'get-on-the-air'. And yes, batteries are still available for it from outfits like Batteries America for them. Other older mono-band HT's can be acquired for under \$50 with a little investigation, for example the Yaesu FT-411 or the FT-416. Other brands such as Icom and Kenwood also offer older non-menu functions. So, bottom line is if you don't want to shell out the \$125-150 for a new HT, try the auction sites, radio 'sale' nets, etc.

Inexpensive HF antennas that work great?? Try building a dipole antenna. most dipole can be built for next to nothing. Some fellow hams even will offer a hunk of wire for you plus coax. Many dipoles can be built for mere dollars that work GREAT if built and tuned for the desired band. The only difficult thing about dipoles is where and how to put it up in your yard.

For those looking for HF rigs, but can't shell out a thousand or more greenback, there are many used HF rigs to be found for a few hundred or even less. My first HF rig was a Drake TR 3 that I bought from a private party back in the late 1980's. I gave \$75 for it, and it included the power supply, and a D-104 mic!! Some of you remember seeing it in the ham radio shack videos that was shown at one of last year's club meetings.

I think being frugal with your 'dollar' is important in this economy. Good lessons can be learned by the ham radio community at large concerning making the 'dollar' go far. Many we can even pass these lessons of frugality along to Big Brother!

On a different note, some members of the YSARC participated in a fox-hunt last Saturday morning. For those of you not familiar with a "fox-hunt", it is just like playing 'hide & seek' but with radio equipment. For those of you with a computer or the internet, go to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and type in 'radio fox hunting' or transmitter hunt' in the search line and have fun watching some fun, zany, and even educational videos on fox hunting. At the YSARC, we fox-hunt on 2m-FM simplex. The equipment you would need is a 2m FM radio (maybe an HT), a directional 2m antenna, and some way to attenuate the signal as you get very close to the transmitter. Watch some of these videos and see actual radio fox-hunts. There are also many videos on how to build your own 2m directional handheld antennas. If you own an ARRL handbook, there is information in it also. ARRL also publishes some books on transmitter hunting. You can find those books at [www.arrl.net](http://www.arrl.net)

That's all for now. See you at our next meeting and don't forget to check into our web site at [www.ysarc.net](http://www.ysarc.net) or sign up to be a part of the YSARC Yahoo Group.

73 Russell, KB6YAF

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## ***EDITOR'S GRUMBLINGS***

Yes, today it's grumbling. Maybe it's more like screaming. If anything could go wrong in preparation of this month's Newsletter, it has happened today. Clara is having trouble getting the treasurer's report file to work as an attachment, so she typed it by hand and sent it as an E-mail instead of a file. Thanks Clara.

Manna's computer likes to go around in loops when she tries to send me the minutes. She made a special trip by and left a hard copy. No problem, I thought, I'll scan into a PDF file and Word will take care of it. NOT SO!!!! My copy of Word can save in PDF format, but it sure can't read a PDF file. So now, either I type the minutes here, or go

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out and get a copy of the darn thing on a CD.  
'Course, that's assuming Manna can burn me a disc. Don't all computers do that now??? It presently looks like whatever happens will occur late this evening whenever Manna gets home. Sooo we're another day later with the Newsletter.

Thanks to Ron for the run down on the Yuma hamfest and that elite order of fine gentlemen known as the IOOK.

I've been going through some health issues that sometimes leave me very sleepy in the middle of the day. Nothing serious yet, but my sleep time sure cuts into my Ham Radio time. I should be on 2-meter CW sometime soon and I hope to join in some of the roundtables on local CW. I'm glad to see the round tables happen. By the way, if you think CW is dead, just listen to one of the occasional CW contests on HF. The lower bands are crawling with pileups. Also, there is an occasional rare one on CW. You can find them on the lower portions of 80 and 40 meters at night and 20 meters earlier in the day. Just look for the pileups.

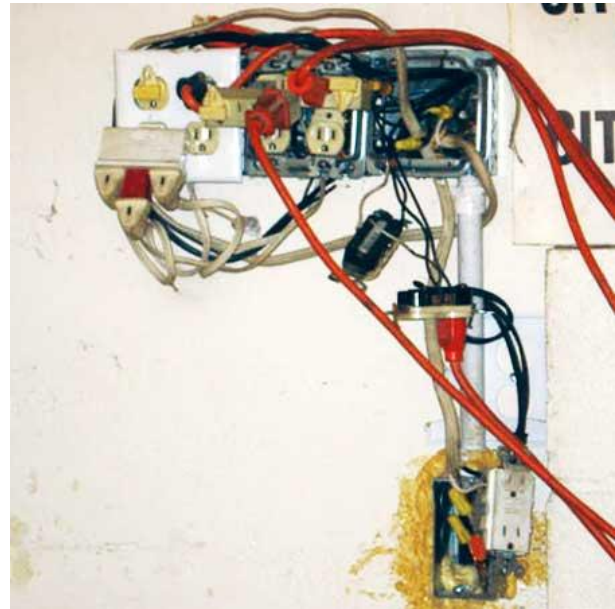
We have some pictures this month from KB6YAF that show how NOT to do your wiring. I don't know where he got them, but they look like a fire waiting to happen.

Have you noticed that the bands are beginning to open up? Asiatic Russia and Europe have been heard on 20 meters just booming in. Also, there are Japanese signals to be heard on 40 meter CW at times. Maybe there is a sunspot max coming after all.

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There are three kinds of people:

Those who make things happen,  
Those who watch things happen  
:and those who don't know what happened.



**There's arcing? I wonder why.**



**Breakers keep tripping, so let's just take 'em out**

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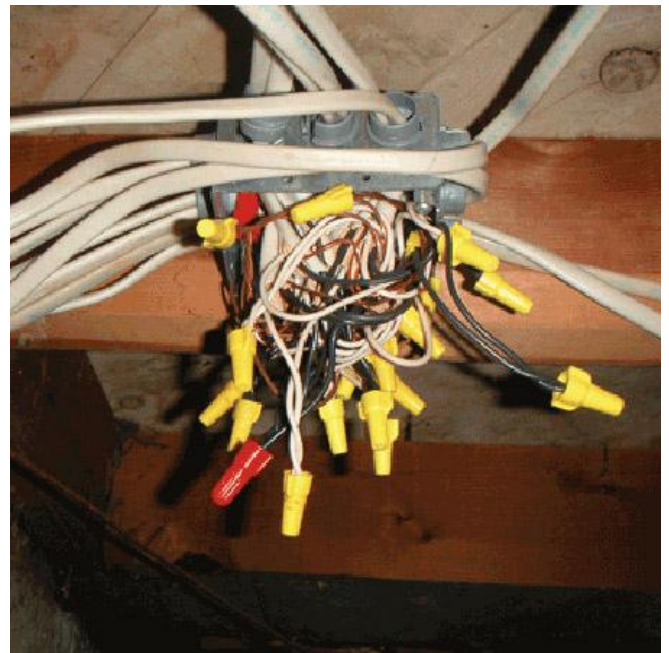
Who's going to work on this if there is an electrical or plumbing problem?



Notice the plug wiring



Missed it by a foot. Why not use a bunch of electrical box extensions?



Who needs an electrical outlet box?

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## MANNA'S MINUTES

**YSARC BOARD MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY February 17, 2010**  
**KB6YAF Residence, Yuba City, CA**

The meeting was called to order at approximately 1912 hours by President Russ Decker. The Club started the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:** President Russell Decker KB6YAF; Vice President Lonnie Moore KI6ZYY; Secretary Manna Whelchel, KG6PNE.

**OFFICERS UNABLE TO ATTEND:** Treasurer Clara Ansley N6VRH

**BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Barry Barnes KE6LW; Paul Johnson N6XVL; Herb Puckett W6HBU.

**BOARD MEMBERS UNABLE TO ATTEND:** Teeje Jamison NE1CQ; Nancy Strong KI6INC.

**Recognition of Guests:** Bob McClard N6BOB; Lee Sheffield KC6MCI; and Debbie Decker KI6ROW

Refreshments were Russ' Snickerdoodles.....

**Secretary's Report:** Manna read minutes of meeting of Wednesday, January 20, 2010.

Amendments and corrections as follows:

- 1) Under New Business: As there was not a quorum, and in the event a vote was needed to be taken, Ron spoke with Nancy and received her authorization; Lonnie spoke with Herb and received his authorization (AMENDMENT STARTS AS FOLLOWS:) for Bob to act as proxy for Herb.
- 2) Lonnie submitted that our club have a Valentines' Day dinner/meeting for our Wednesday, February 3 club meeting. He suggested that we bring our spouses and (amendment starts as follows:) **slash OR**, significant others. This event will be held at Perko's at 7PM.

**Treasurer's Report:** As Clara was unable to attend this meeting, the Treasurer's Report information will follow at a later date.

**Old Business:** Russ spoke with Lt. Colonel Keppler who was going to get back to Russ on Wednesday, February 17. No word yet. We are waiting to see if this program will be in March or April.

Re our May 15, pre-Field Day test site: It was voted to be at Franklin School. Manna will need a copy of the Club's Insurance to give to Franklin School, and then that date can be firmed up if the school does not have a prior function. There was discussion about facilities being available.

Paul stated that our March 20 Antenna Saturday location has been confirmed. It will be held at the American Legion Linda Post 807, 5477 Feather River Boulevard, in the Linda area. It is a BYO stuff Party: so hamburgers and hot dogs will be perfect along with your favorite soda or tea. There will be a BBQ available. This function will be from 9am until Noon.

Lonnie suggested that we have just one type of antenna project for any given antenna Saturday.

**New Business:** Russ stated that the Club should have a resolve statement which reads as follows: **"The Yuba Sutter Amateur Radio Club promotes and expects respectful, courteous, and civil treatment by its membership, to all. Any behavior contrary to the above will result in appropriate action by the Yuba Sutter Amateur Radio Club Board."**

Lonnie made the motion to accept the aforementioned Resolve. Herb seconded said motion. M/S/P.

Barry made a motion to accept Lee as a member for the remainder of 2010, with his dues fully paid due to his lost time in 2008. Herb seconded the motion. M/S/P.

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There will be a Transmitter hunt on Saturday, February 20, with the starting point being at Sam Brannan Park.

Remember, the next Club meeting will be at 1900 on Wednesday, March 3, 2010, at the Marysville Library.

The next Board Meeting will be on Wednesday, March 17, at 1900. Location TBA.

Remember, it is MEMBERSHIP DUES time. Have you paid your dues yet?????

As there was no further business the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2106. Herb moved that the meeting be closed. Lonnie seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,  
Manna Whelchel, Secretary, KG6PNE

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## ***MORE EDITOR'S GRUMBLINGS***

A day has now passed, and there has been some progress on the Newsletter. The computer is still on my black list, but at least it hasn't crashed within the last few days.

I haven't even turned on a radio since yesterday morning. I wonder if I missed anything? Maybe an opening to a real rare one??? Maybe someone called me and got no answer. I'd say use the landline, but my darn phone has a habit of slipping off the cradle here in the shack, so even that would not have worked. In fact, it caused my daughter to call my cell phone last night to raise me.

My younger daughter (KC6HEL) had called Earlier and asked if I wanted to take her out to dinner. After much thought (about 2 seconds) I agreed that would be a capital idea. The computer was closed down, and things were readied for a night on the town.

I don't often get to enjoy an evening with Lori, as she lives in Gridley, and works full time. This cuts into here social life, so such an offer is not to be turned down.

We enjoyed dinner at the Colusa Casino buffet,, where I ate too much (There goes the diet!), but it was worth it.

Somewhere in the late day yesterday, Manna returned my plea for help with the minutes file, and I managed to get it into the Newsletter. Thanks, Manna, you saved my worthless hide.

For all who give the Editor a bad time for sleeping in, I'll have you know that I was out of bed showered, dressed and on the road this morning at 4:30 AM!!! The other daughter and her husband are now in Disneyland in Anaheim enjoying a well-deserved vacation. It was my task to take them to the airport for an early flight. So you see, it can be done. 'Course, I took a short nap in the big chair this morning after returning. Now it's lunch time and the Newsletter still is not done. First things first – I'll break for lunch and then back at the keyboard while the sun shines and it's a wonderful day outside.

Speaking of outside, here is where I would rather be than in front of the computer. Of course, the picture was taken in the Summer, and I'm sure snow covers the ground now. However, I can dream. This would make a fine Field Day site, but it's about 100 miles from Yuba City.



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## TREASURER'S REPORT: FEBRUARY, 2010

Checking Balance: January, 2010 \$3,022.35

### Receipts Deposited:

2/1 Dues: AD6VU; WD6BFR/KA6FUP; KG6PUU (2012);  
N6DXN (\$18): Total Dues: \$103. Repeater donations: KC6MCI  
\$20; K6SCM \$25: Total donations: \$45 \$ 148.00

2/15 Dues: KI6INC; KJ6DKM: Total dues: \$40; KI6INC return of  
remainder of Xmas dinner allowance: \$23.54 63.54

2/16 Dues: Ginger Gerard/David McConathy \$25; KI6CSO - ARRL  
Dues \$39 64.00

2/26 Dues: KI6IGV; N6VRH; KE6JJZ: Total dues: \$60; N6VRH ARRL  
Dues \$39. 99.00

TOTAL: \$3,396.89

### BILLS:

1224 Postmaster Y.C. box rent 1 year \$ 70.00  
1225 ARRL DUES: KI6CSO and N6VRH 61.00

TOTAL BILLS: \$ 131.00

CHECKING BALANCE: \$3,365.89

### LESS SPECIAL ACCOUNTS:

Repeater: \$1,003.80  
Christmas Drawing 95.40  
Memorial: 65.00  
VE 75.50

TOTAL: \$1,239.70 \$1,239.70

CLUB BALANCE: \$2,126.19

Submitted By: Clara M. Ansley Treasurer