



# SOARC Wireless Gnus

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

SOARC, P.O. BOX 1164, GRANTS PASS, OREGON 97528  
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If you have anything to be considered for publication in the *Wireless Gnus*, please contact the editor.  
The deadline is 10 days before the next meeting.

## December meeting – Christmas party

The December meeting of SOARC will be held at 6 p.m. at the Fruitdale Grange. Rather than a regular meeting, this will be our annual Christmas party.

As in the past we ask that you bring table service and a side dish or dessert. The club will supply smoked turkey and ham along with coffee. Members are also invited to bring a guest. We moved up the time so that no one will go hungry and so that Santa Clause will have enough time to do his thing. You are also asked to bring an inexpensive gift for the gift exchange.

In the past we have all enjoyed ourselves at this event.

See you at the party at 6 p.m.

*Jim W7PUP*

## Miscellaneous information

At the November meeting we announced that our Christmas party will be held on December 18<sup>th</sup>, a Tuesday, which is the normal meeting night (3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday). Additional information is in story above.

The club received a nice thank-you letter from the CROP Walk people for the club's assistance during the recent fund-raising event.

Dennis Recla, WA5KTC showed two very cool videos at the main meeting. The first was on the DX super station K3LR in Pennsylvania. The second video was produced by the Northern California DX Foundation and covered the work that this group has done to promote ham radio and support DXpeditions .

At a recent meeting one of our members, Rose Carter, WD6GN has received word from *QRP Quarterly* magazine editors that the subject of his October club meeting talk will be published in the next, winter 2008, issue of the *Quarterly*.

*Jim W7PUP*

## Contests & events

Of all the events that are coming up over the next few weeks there are two that all of us should make an attempt to participate in. They are, News Year Eve Straight Key Night which is just great fun with a lot of rusty slow key operators and Kids Day which gives us a chance to introduce ham radio to a lot of curious kids.

- Russian 160 M CW/SSB Contest Dec.16 0000Z to 0200Z

- Croatian Contest CW Dec.15 1400Z to Dec 16 1400Z 160 to 10M

- Lighthouse Xmas Lights QSO Party CW/SSB Dec. 15 0000Z to Dec 31 2359Z 160 to 10M

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- Canadian (RAC) Winter Contest CW/SSB Dec. 29 0000Z to 2359Z 160 to 10M
  - Stew Perry 160M Distance Challenge CW Dec. 29 1500Z to Dec 30 1500Z
  - Worked All Britain Xmas Party CW/SSB Dec .26 0000Z to Jan 6 2359Z
  - ARRL Straight Key Night CW Jan. 1 0000Z to 2359Z
  - ARRL RTTY Round Up Jan. 5 1800Z to Jan 6 2400Z
  - KIDS Day SSB Jan 6 1800Z to 2400Z
  - North American QSO Party CW Jan 12 1800Z to Jan 13 0600Z 160 to 10M
  - Dutch Mid Winter Contest CW/SSB Jan 12 1400Z to 1800Z CW Jan 13 1000Z to 1400Z SSB
  - North American QSO Party SSB Jan 19 1800Z to Jan 20 0600Z
  - Hungarian DX Contest CW Jan 20 1200Z to Jan 21 1200Z 160 to 10M
  - CQ WW 160M Jan 26 0000Z to Jan 27 2359Z
  - French Contest CW Jan 26 0600Z to Jan 27 1800Z 80 to 10M
  - Belgian Contest SSB Jan 26 1300Z to Jan 27 1300Z 80 to 10M
  - Winter Field Day Jan 26 1700Z to Jan 27 1700Z 160 to 10M
  - YL QSO Party SSB Jan 26 0000Z to Jan 27 2359Z 160 to 10M
- If you haven't fired up the tube rig in awhile, this is a great excuse to blow the dust off, reform the electrolytics & give it a spin!!
- Classic Exchange CW Jan 26 1400Z to Jan 27 0800Z 160 to 2M

*See you on the air waves. For any questions contact W6IGK Elmer 73*

## Hints & Tips

A good VHF+ antenna entry-level designs are available from WA5VJB's Cheap Yagi article, <http://wa5vjb.com/yagi-pdf/cheapyagi.pdf> There is also a nice HTML table of dimensions here at

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[www.fredspinner.com/W0FMS/CheapYagi/vjbcy.html](http://www.fredspinner.com/W0FMS/CheapYagi/vjbcy.html) for the antenna builder. (Thanks, John KU4AF)

-The Extended Double Zepp is one of the most powerful wire antennas. It's a great Field Day antenna and a good one to install at a home station, too. LB Cebik has written extensively about this class of antenna at [www.cebik.com/mu/mu3a.html](http://www.cebik.com/mu/mu3a.html) (Thanks, Eric N0EW)

Two from Tom W8JI: Beware of short cuts when wiring the power connection to that new amplifier. It is illegal and a shock hazard to use the ground wire as a neutral connection. The ONLY point the neutral can be connected to the safety ground is at the main breaker box. Use the proper plug and socket wiring so that you'll be around to enjoy Cycle 24. There is an article on power wiring at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NEMA\\_connector#NEMA\\_10](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NEMA_connector#NEMA_10) that explains the proper use of power plugs. On RF relays: The key to good RF relays are short wide leads to contacts, low capacitance, and good RF path insulation.

Several years ago, Dennis N6KI wrote an article on how to rebuild Telrex traps so they don't flash over the doorknob caps. These antennas are quite sturdy, give good performance, and many are still around. The article can be read at [www.ac6v.com/telrex.htm](http://www.ac6v.com/telrex.htm) (Thanks, Dennis N6KI)

Modern solid-state rigs often have one electromechanical component left in them - the amp keying relay. If operated with current or voltages close to (or above) the relay contact ratings, erratic performance will result due to contact pitting and arcing. Eventually the relay will fail. Cleaning the contacts will often bring a marginal relay back to life until it can be replaced. No fancy equipment is required, just cut a strip of clean paper with a bit of texture - white typing paper, grocery bag, index card - and slide it between the contacts. While holding the contacts closed, gently pull the strip out. You'll probably see some oxide on the strip. Repeat until the strip comes out clean. I used to have to do this to one or two TS-930's every Friday afternoon before the big CQ WW multi-multi's at W7RM! (Thanks, QRP reflectorees)

If you're checking out a QTH and want to know maximum and average wind speed, there is a link at [www.championradio.com](http://www.championradio.com) under "Tech Notes" that gives TOA-222 wind information on a county-by-county basis. You can also call your local county building office. (Thanks, Jim K0XU and Steve K7LXC)

- LB Cebik W4RNL has made available 9 collections containing 252 Type-13 antenna modeling files for propagation prediction on the AntenneX Guest Rooms [www.antennex.com](http://www.antennex.com) . Info about the files can be found on the software download index page. (Thanks, AntenneX Online Magazine)

-Regarding broadcast towers with lights out, Fred K9VV suggests that we first contact the tower owner directly. How to find them? "It is easy to find this information at the FCC's Antenna Structure Registration page <http://tinyurl.com/zpdqh> . You can search for towers by the following search parameters:

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\* Registration Number, or Antenna Structure Registration (ASR) number (Sometimes also called a FCC tower ID number)

\* Coordinates

\* City & State

\* Zip Code

Once you find the correct tower, look under the "Owner & Contact Information" section for contact information." Fred also reports that you can check to see if a NOTAM (Notice to Air Men) has been opened on the tower in question by checking <https://pilotweb.nas.faa.gov/geo/radiusForm.html> "It's a bit tricky, but here's what you have to do: Enter the following - a 3 letter airport code and the center point coordinates for a circle search & radius in nautical miles. Then do a text search for the ASR, sometimes called the FCC tower ID. (Its a 7 digit number beginning with "1"). If you find the ASR, there is a NOTAM opened. If not, no NOTAM has been opened." (Also thanks to Mike K1MK)

Brian K6STI is widely known for his antenna modeling programs, now unfortunately off the market due to excessive piracy. Brian is still busy - take a look at <http://ham-radio.com/k6sti> - generating good stuff like antenna models, circuits, and calculator programs. (Thanks, Bob N6TV)

-How many of us look at construction-site cranes and think, "What a good tower that would make!" Here's a link [www.pd1dx.com/mast2.htm](http://www.pd1dx.com/mast2.htm) to a fellow that did more than think about it! (Thanks, Hector XE2K)

-Gary K4FWX contributes this pointer to the results of N7WS's tests [www.k6mhe.com:80/n7ws/supp-la.htm](http://www.k6mhe.com:80/n7ws/supp-la.htm) of different types of parasitic suppressors for tube amplifiers. Homebrew amplifier builders will find this very interesting!

Stub filters are common in HF stations to prevent inter-station interference. What about VHF/UHF interference to consumer FM and TV receivers? Stub filters can be put to work there just as well, as pointed out by this useful Web article <http://tinyurl.com/2d6hxx> by G4SWX. (Thanks, John W0UN)

If you're fresh out of UV-resistant cable ties, why not raid the junk box? You'll probably find a few feet of solid copper wire, such as from short pieces of house wiring cable that you, like me, are too cheap to throw away because, "They might be good for something!" Here's what they're good for - strip out the wire and use it as a twist-tie. I guarantee it will never wear out from UV.

-Building with SMT parts can be "exciting" when mixing them with a through-hole PC board or in a prototype. Adapter boards can be obtained from both Sparkfun [www.sparkfun.com/commerce/categories.php?cPath=20](http://www.sparkfun.com/commerce/categories.php?cPath=20) and Far Circuits [www.farcircuits.net/brdbd.htm](http://www.farcircuits.net/brdbd.htm) (Thanks, Bill KD5TFD and Mike AE6WA)

When waterproofing coax connections, a self-vulcanizing wrap is recommended, but where to find the tape? George N4UA recommends Scotch 130C Linerless Splicing Tape. It's

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available at electrical distributors and often at Lowe's and Home Depot.

Pat AA6EG contributes an interesting Web site [www.lbagroup.com](http://www.lbagroup.com) with lots of RF tidbits, products, and papers. Look for the "Learning Services" link.

If you're trying to decide whether a new run of low-loss coax is a good investment, here are a few "coax calculators" that compare different types of cable.

[www.timesmicrowave.com/cgi-bin/calculate.pl](http://www.timesmicrowave.com/cgi-bin/calculate.pl)

[www.rfparts.com/commcoax.html](http://www.rfparts.com/commcoax.html)

[http://harriscountyares.org/resources/training/training\\_coax\\_camp\\_chart.pdf](http://harriscountyares.org/resources/training/training_coax_camp_chart.pdf) (Thanks, Ev W2EV and Mike KA5CVH)

- Al VE1AL found an interesting op-ed column in the New York Times about one of the most-wanted DXCC entities. <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/30/opinion/30widmer.html?h&emc=th> (Thanks, Al VE1AL)

-If you notice a local broadcast tower that seems to have one or more navigation warning lights out, ask your nearest FAA office (usually at the bigger airfields) to check recent NOTAMs (Notice to Airmen bulletins about nav-aid status and the like). If the bulbs on those towers are burned out, they may not have yet been replaced. Until they are replaced the NOTAM contains a bulletin that the tower is dark, assuming the FAA has been notified as required. Notification from the public or paid tower-watchers helps avoid navigational hazards. The FAA can also be contacted toll-free at 877-487-6867 or 888-225-5322. Try to have exact geographic location, the station's call sign, or other information that will help them identify precisely which tower you are reporting. (Thanks, Bob W9GE and Don KW7R)

-Wonder how your fist rates? This utility has you connect your key or keyer to your pc and monitors your sending. It will grade you at the end. Maybe one of the on line colleges can give you a PhD in CW. Then again, there is always summer school for remedial help! [www.physics.auckland.ac.nz/staff/geb/Doktor135.zip](http://www.physics.auckland.ac.nz/staff/geb/Doktor135.zip) (Thanks, Jim N2GO)

-Ham radio contesting made a surprise and very favorable appearance on the Sports Illustrated Web site in the form of an article on former MLB All-Star Joe Rudi NK7U [http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2007/baseball/mlb/06/25/want\\_rudi/](http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2007/baseball/mlb/06/25/want_rudi/) The story is solidly written and is great press of Amateur Radio in general. You might also want to check out the 1958 SI article "Battle of the Hams" posted at [www.hamradio-online.com/1996/jan/hams.html](http://www.hamradio-online.com/1996/jan/hams.html) (Thanks, Bob N6TV and Ralph N5RZ)

-And how many antennas do you think you could fit on this tower? [www.wired.com/culture/design/magazine/15-06/st\\_tokyotower](http://www.wired.com/culture/design/magazine/15-06/st_tokyotower) (Thanks, John K1AR)

-Operating tip. In a big pileup, pause before starting your call. With the majority of call signs being four or five characters, a

two or three-character pause leaves some of your call in the clear when everybody else's has ended. Since you are messing with the pileup rhythm, be sure to listen first. Once you've given your call, listen to see how the counter-rhythm is working - don't just keep transmitting.

-Jim K8MR posted a link <http://tinyurl.com/yugurz> to a New York Times on-line review of eight different models of noise-canceling headphones. You'll have to register on the NYT site, but it's free. The review includes the gold-standard Bose model and several other models costing as little as \$40.

-Kit builders will enjoy taking a look at the QRP offerings at <http://kitsandparts.com/rftoolkits.asp> where numerous modules are available. There is also a Google group for the kits at <http://groups.google.com/group/RF-toolkits> for user support and ideas. (Thanks, Doug N6TQS and Bob KC5WA)

*That's it for December. 73 Elmer W6IGK*

## Eddy Pollock, W6LC SK

Former W1AW Station Manager Eddy Pollock, W6LC (SK): Eddy Pollock, W6LC, W1AW station Manager from 1990-1991, passed away November 25 in Grants Pass, Oregon after a long battle with heart problems and diabetes. He was 72. Licensed since 1952, Pollock, an ARRL Life Member since 1972, came to the ARRL from California after retiring from a 30 year career of teaching electronics technology, computer science and industrial education at Cabrillo College in Aptos, California, a suburb of Santa Cruz; after leaving the League due to health concerns in 1991, Pollock and his wife Marilyn returned to Santa Cruz, eventually retiring to Oregon in 2000.

Joe Garcia, NJ1Q, current W1AW Station Manager said, "Eddy came here just after W1AW underwent its major renovation in 1989. What an honor it is to work in a place that he helped shape. Even though he was here a short time, I will

always remember the legacy Eddy left to not only W1AW, but to the ARRL." While in California, Pollock served as trustee for the Santa Cruz County Amateur Radio Club, K6BJ, and as Emergency Coordinator for Santa Cruz County. He earned DXCC and WPX Honor Roll. Pollock retired in 1974 as a Lieutenant Commander after serving 20 years in the US Naval Reserve as a communications technician.

He is survived by his wife, Marilyn, of 47 years; son, David Pollock and daughter-in-law, Cindy Wright of Grants Pass; daughter, Deanna (Dee) Evans of Clovis, California; 7 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

*From the ARRL Letter, Dec 7, 2007*

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### A ham's night before Christmas

December 24, 2004

'Twas the night before Christmas,  
And all through 2 meters,  
Not a signal was keying up  
Any repeaters.

The antennas reached up  
From the tower, quite high,  
To catch the weak signals  
That bounced from the sky.

The children, Tech-Pluses,  
Took their H-Ts to bed,  
And dreamed of the day  
They'd be Extras instead.

Mom put on her headphones,  
I plugged in the key,  
And we tuned 40 meters  
For that rare ZK3.

When the meter was pegged  
By a signal with power.  
It smoked a small diode,  
And, I swear, shook the tower.

Mom yanked off her phones,  
And with all she could muster  
Logged a spot of the signal  
On the DX *PacketCluster*,

While I ran to the window  
And peered up at the sky,  
To see what could generate  
RF that high.



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It was way in the distance,  
But the moon made it gleam.  
A flying sleigh, with an  
Eight-element beam,

And a little old driver  
Who looked slightly mean.  
So I thought for a moment,  
That it might be Wayne Green.

But no, it was Santa,  
The Santa of Hams.  
On a mission, this Christmas,  
To clean up the bands.

He circled the tower,  
Then stopped in his track,  
And he slid down the coax  
Right into the shack.

While Mom and I hid  
Behind stacks of *CQ*,  
This Santa of hamming  
Knew just what to do.

He cleared off the shack desk  
Of paper and parts,  
And filled out all my late QSLs  
For a start.

He ran copper braid,  
Took a steel rod and pounded  
It into the earth, till  
The station was grounded.  
He tightened loose fittings,  
Resoldered connections,  
Cranked down modulation,  
Installed lightning protection. He neutralized tubes  
In my linear amp.  
(Never worked right before;  
Now it works like a champ).

A new, lowpass filter  
Cleaned up the TV.  
He corrected the settings  
In my TNC.

He repaired the computer  
That would not compute,  
And he backed up the hard drive  
And got it to boot.

Then, he reached really deep  
In the bag that he brought,  
And he pulled out a big box.  
A new rig? I thought!

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A new Kenwood? An Icom?  
A Yaesu, for me?!  
(If he thought I'd been bad,  
it might be QRP!)

Yes! The Ultimate Station!  
How could I deserve this?  
Could it be all those hours  
that I worked Public Service?

He hooked it all up  
And in record time, quickly  
Worked 100 countries,  
All down on 160.

I should have been happy,  
It was my call he sent.  
But the cards and the postage  
Will cost two month's rent!

He made final adjustments,  
And left a card by the key:  
"To Gary, from Santa Claus.  
73."

Then he grabbed his H-T,  
Looked me straight in the eye,  
Punched a code on the pad,  
And was gone with no good-bye.

I ran back to the station,  
And the pileup was big,  
But a card from St. Nick  
Would be worth my new rig.

Oh, too late, for his final  
came over the air.  
It was copied all over.  
It was heard everywhere.

The Ham's Santa exclaimed  
What a ham might expect,  
"Merry Christmas to all,  
And to all, good DX!"

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### Items for sale

If you have something for sale please send description to Jim  
W7PUP via [W7PUP@arrl.net](mailto:W7PUP@arrl.net) .



In 2008, exams will be given on Friday evenings from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Fruitdale Grange (VEC people come at 6 p.m.). The dates remaining for 2007 are as follows:

Feb 22  
May 23  
Aug 22  
Nov 21

Currently the fee for exams is \$14.00.

Remember to visit the [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org) website to get the latest information about testing, requirements. Some new changes that are coming down the pike. The website for Grants Pass exam schedules is

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

If you will notice the right hand side contains lots of hyperlinks covering most of the questions about exam sessions. A copy of this completed schedule has been sent to the VEC and should appear at this site very soon.

73, Bill (WX7U), VE and Liaison.

## SOARC nets & repeaters

SOARC Repeater, K7LIX, 146.640(-) and on 147.300(+).  
(The 64 machine may be down for maintenance).

SOARC ARES/NTS Net: Monday evenings at 7:30 p.m. on 147.300(+) repeater.

ORCA Swapnet - Wednesday evenings at 8 p.m. on the ORCA system.

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The Southern Oregon Amateur Radio Club is a general-purpose ham radio club and is affiliated with the American Radio Relay League. Anyone interested in amateur radio is welcome to attend our meetings. We operate the ARRL-sponsored field day each June and support emergency communications. We also promote volunteer exams for those interested in becoming licensed by the FCC. For more information contact one of the board members listed below.

SOARC, PO Box 1164, Grants Pass, OR 97528

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### 2006 SOARC officers and board members

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