



The Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon's

Counterpoise



Volume XLIV

December 2003

Number 12

From the President Pat Bunsold WA6MHZ



WOW! We have just undergone the worst disaster in California History right here in East County! Over 3000 homes burnt with countless acres of forest charred under the Firestorm of 2003. Ham Radio played an important role in the affair and lived up to all it stood for. Emergency Communications! As Cell Phones flaked out, Ham Radio was there to take over. Even the new state-of-the-art fire and police systems failed, so HAMS were there and passed the traffic! Well DONE! And many valiant ARCEC members were major players in the event. Red Cross Headquarters and Shelters were staffed round the clock until the fire was out and damage was assessed.

I was personally affected by the tragedy, and nearly was a victim of the inferno! Sunday we were Evacuated from Crest and my family spent the night at the El Cajon Elks lodge watching the fire burn over the top of the hill. There was NO CHANCE our house had been spared. But midday Monday we sneaked across police lines and made our way to the burnt remains of the community. Virtually every house was toasted. But to our amazement, our house was still standing. WHY?? There was no explanation for why it had been spared. Upon closer examination, we found that FIRE had indeed been there, with our pool deck being on fire. But it had mysteriously been extinguished, with no help from man.. As I perused the scene, there was a piece of paper on the deck, burnt but still readable. It was a page from the Bible; obviously carried by the wind from a house nearby that had burnt. The page was Kings II, chapter 25 which spoke of how Nebbaczanezer came into to Judea and BURNT all the houses and the temple back in ancient times. Our Catholic Church in Crest was also burnt. This was an incredible occurrence, which ministers are in awe over. I am blown away by it too, and wonder if

this is a true Miracle! And so it seems to be as the house should have burnt to the ground like the rest of Crest. I was able to help out some by providing communications for the Shelter in Harbinson Canyon, where virtually every structure was destroyed. We will remember this Fire for decades to come, and know HAMS came through just as we were prepared for.

Though most everything that could burn did, we still must remain vigilant for any future disasters and be just as prepared for them. I built a GO kit using a big GEL CELL and a high-power mobile 2 meter radio in a suitcase. This will be ready at a moments notice for anything that occurs from now on. We can't put our trust in simple HTs to get out from remote mountain shelters. Also I have a 20 foot extendable fishing pole which bears a 2M ground plane at the top for getting a good signal out. All hams should form up something similar so when the BIG ONE strikes again someday, we are just as ready, if not more!

Well, we made it though the year and now the Gavel is ready to be handed off to a new Prez. Stogie KG6JCW is an excellent choice for your new Prez and you can be assured an even better year next year. Things went OK this year, despite the few hiccups and the disaster of a lifetime to hit us. But most club members seem amiable to this year and I hope I have not let things get too far out of hand. My objective was to make sure members had as much FUN as possible and enjoyed their time at ARCEC. Despite the loss of our fine repeater system, it's repair is well underway and everything should be better than ever shortly. Thanks to Gary N6LRV, Bob W6RHV and the rest of the guys for a monumental effort in salvaging what could be and improvising what needed to be.

Our Field Day underwent a great scandal yet ARCEC was vindicated and shown to have high integrity. The club has a spectacular new Barbecue! And this years Homebrew Contest showed members went all out to excel in the world of Electronics and Antenna ingenuity. So, as rocky as it has been, I have enjoyed the year and wish all a hearty 73. Lets do it all again NEXT YEAR!

General Membership Meeting



Wednesday, December 10, 7:00 PM

La Mesa Masonic Lodge - 4731 Date Avenue, La Mesa

2003 Officers

President	WA6MHZ	Pat Bunsold	593-1111
Vice-President	KG6JRM	Jeff Davis	698-1144
Secretary	KG6JCW	Mike Panger	263-4439
Treasurer	KF6WXA	Susan Kochel	445-6067
Past President	N6OPH	Mike Maston	296-9067

2003 Board of Directors

SANDARC	AE6AV	Larry Plummer	460-1818
Membership	KF6MPB	Joni Cranmore	443-6939
Social	WB6POW	Gordon Ripley	472-2492
Public Service	N6NKJ	Rich Beisigl	444-5465
Public Relations	N6IEF	Mike Lebo	8-278-5851
Welcoming	AE6CQ	Michael Martak	562-6477

2003 Standing Committee

ARRL Asst. Dir.	WA6MHZ	Pat Bunsold	593-1111
Counterpoise	NZ6T	Tuck Miller	434-4211
Education	KG6JRM	Jeff Davis	698-1144
Elmers	KD6OKR	Dan Briggs	287-0437
Estate Sales Comm.	N6JOJ	Tom Myrick	449-3547
Field Day	KG6JRM	Jeff Davis	447-6806
Finances	N6OPH	Mike Maston	296-9067
Health & Welfare			
Historian	N6WHK	Phil Pedigo	466-0590
Net Manager	N6WKB	Frito Samano	563-0514
Postmistress	N6EVE	Evelyn Miller	434-4211
Prizes	WA6PPG	Carl Ferree	265-5806
Radio Coaches	KE6BJL	Bob Spann	264-2188
SANDARC Delegate	KD6PRV	Xemi Anselmo	574-0720
Swap Meet	N6JOJ	Tom Myrick	449-3547
Technical	W6RHV	Bob Boehme	448-4728
WAMO Chairman	W6LKK	Erich Bennett	401-7332

The Counterpoise is a publication of the Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon (ARCEC). It is published once monthly and contributions are accepted from officers of the Club. We also encourage input from other Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon Members. **Opinions expressed are solely that of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon (ARCEC).** Articles may be submitted either by e-mail or mail to the editor:

Tuck Miller at:

**E-mail: nz6t@arrl.org or
3122 E. 2nd St., National City, ca**

Deadline is the **Sunday after the General Meeting.** For further information, please call (619) 434-4211

WEB SITE:

<http://www.qsl.net/wa6bgs>



Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon, Inc. General Membership Meeting Minutes. Wednesday, November 12, 2003

Call to Order: 7:03pm. by Pat Bunsold, WA6MHZ. After which he led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. After which we broke for coffee and cookies. The coffee and cookies, which were provided by Vuong Bunsold, KB6RCT and Ben, WA6BEN. provided some of the coffee and goodies. At 7:50pm hrs the business section of the meeting was commenced

President's Report: none

Secretary's Report: Stogie, KG6JCW: The General meeting Minutes were approved as corrected.

Vice President's Report: Not Present

Treasurer's Report: Susan, KF6WXA read the Treasures report into the record.

Technical Committee Report: Bob Boehme, W6RHV, the head of the Technical Committee, reported on the status of the repeater site at Crest. The roof of the radio vault on Crest caved in and burnt. This was because it was wood, the building was concrete. This blackened the top half of the rack, which housed our equipment. The 2 Meter and 440 Mhz repeaters survived. We lost the 220 Mhz radio, the controller and the control radio. Bob is looking for a Midland 509 to the transmitter boards are the same as the ones in the repeater. This is the damaged portion of the 220 repeater, if he can find one he maybe able to fix the repeater. Alex, WB6DTR is currently negotiating for a temporary site so that we can put up the 2 Meter repeater. We currently have a spare controller which is all setup and ready to go. We will also need an antenna and coax to complete the install. This will allow us to go back on the air as soon as we have the arrangements for the temporary site finalized. Bob congratulated all those who supported the Red Cross and CDF during the recent fire for a job well done. Bob also reported that our move to the First Baptist Church in Santee was progressing and the he would be presenting our request to the church council next week for final approval. Bob presented a check from SANDRA in the amount of \$500 to help with the repairs to ARCEC Crest repeater system.

Public Service: Rich N6NKJ congratulated all those how provided support for the Red Cross and CDF during the fire. Rich setup the CDF operation at Gillespie Field. Initial he had no idea how he would staff the operation. But he soon found that he had enough operators to staff the operation for the three days it ran. The operators road with the CDF Fire Information Officer and reported back to CDF Incident Command at Gillespie Field. Rich thanked everyone who assisted with the fire.

Dave, KC6YSO who with Al Rich, WA6WYN setup and ran the Red Cross operation reported that they initially setup and manned 7 to 8 shelters. This number rapidly decreased to 2 shel-

(Continued on page 3)

ters. This was because of the speed with which phone communications could be established with these shelters. The two shelters which were manned, for an extended period, by the radio operators were in Julian/Borrego Springs, and Mountain Empire were the most remote. The Julian/Borrego Springs shelter was manned until Thursday and the Mountain Empire shelter was manned until Friday. These shelters needed a 50-watt rig and an antenna on a 15 to 20 foot mast to communicate properly with the repeater. Dave counted 84 Ham's who were involved in the fire. Of these 24 were the old timers who are always there, another 14 were KG calls (new Hams), and the rest were people who he had never seen before. The new hams included high school student among others. Dave thanked all who participated.

SANDARC Report: Mike, N6OPH Reported that they are still looking for a Convention 2006 chairman and subcommittee chairman's for the convention. They are also looking for a RFI/EMI committee chairman. The next meeting will be the last Thursday of January.

MEMBERSHIP: No report presented.

Welcoming: Tuck, NZ6T reported that there were 35 members present and that we had three visitors members present. The visitors were: Brian Kukuk KG6SMT, Bill Kukuk KG6STY Gary Smail KE6S

Old Business:

Christmas Party: Susan, KF6WXA stated that we need to know all those who are attending by December 3 so that we can tell the caterer. So far there are 38 tickets sold. You can get your ticket by mailing a self addressed stamped envelope to the club PO box.

ARCEC P.O. Box 50, El Cajon, CA 92022

Homebrew contest: The homebrew contest consisted of two categories. Below are the listed project in and the awards. The judges were Tom Caudle KC6NXZ and Carl Ferree WA6PPG

Antenna: First Place: 6 Meter antenna by Mike Lebo N6IEF

Second Place: 160-Meter Loop Antenna by Phil Pedigo, N6WHK and Karl Prinsen W1NNI

Third Place: 160-Meter Vertical by Phil Pedigo, N6WHK

Others: Lightweight portable ground plane antenna by Pat Bunsold WA6MHZ

Equipment:

First Place: Video Camera focus and zoom Control by Pat Bunsold, WA6MHZ

Second Place: Dip meter by John Roessler, K6BX

Third Place: Tube type 80 Meter with filter by David Doan, KC6YSO

Other: Surface mount crystal oscillator by Pat Bunsold, WA6MHZ

Election of New Officer: Earl, KF6WNN Chairman of the Nomination Committee reported that the following individuals were nominated for the following posts. The Nomination Committee consisted of Bill KD6QB, Evelyn N6EVE, Tom KC6NXZ, and Earl. The committee was thanked and dismissed. At 1951 Mike N6OPH moved that the nominations be closed. Tom, KC6NXZ, seconded this motion. The motion was passed

President

Tuck Miller NZ6T Declined

Pat Bunsold WA6MHZ Declined

Mike Matson N6OPH Declined

Mike Panger KG6JCW Accepted

Vice President

Tom Myrick N6JOJ Declined

Tuck Miller NZ6T Declined

Tom Caudle KC6NXZ Accepted

Secretary

Frito Samano N6WKB Not Present

Mike Matson N6OPH Accepted

Tom Caudle KC6NXZ Declined

Treasurer

Susan Kochel KF6WXA Accepted

Tuck Miller NZ6T Declined

Board Members

Ken Bourke N6NUN Not Present

Bob Boehme W6RHV Not Present

Asa Collins K6VV Not a Member

Mike Matson N6OPH Declined

John Durante KF6CSY Not Present

Larry Plummer AE6AV Accepted *

Mike Martak AE6CQ Declined *

Mike Lebo N6IEF Declined *

Gordon Ripley WB6POW Declined *

Rich Beisigl N6NKJ Accepted *

Bill Callier KD6QB Accepted *

Ed Felter AI6O Accepted *

Carl Ferree WA6PPG Accepted *

Joni Cranmore KF6MPB Accepted *

*Nominated from the floor

All nominees who were not present were assumed to have declined

A MOTION to adjourn by Tuck NZ6T

Respectfully Submitted,

Mike "Stogie" Panger, KG6JCW

Secretary, ARC of El Cajon, Inc.

DONATIONS NEEDED!!!

Due to the recent Crest fires, much of the Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon's repeater equipment was either damaged or completely destroyed. The club needs your help!! The San Diego Repeater Association (SANDRA) has already donated \$500 towards the restoration, and we continue to need more donations to bring the system back up to par. This is YOUR club, and we need your help now. Please mail your checks to:

Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon

PO Box 50

El Cajon, Ca 92022

THANKS!!!

Ham of the Year!!

Evelyn Miller
N6EVE



Evelyn Miller N6EVE has been active behind the scenes for many years. Most of you know she was the refreshment lady for many years, making all that great coffee, and providing some excellent cookies for your enjoyment. Now, each month, she folds, staples, and labels every Counterpoise that is sent out in the mail. I would encourage you to vote for Evelyn for this years Ham of the Year.

Michael Martak
AE6CQ



Michael has gone out of his way to help out at club events including field day, the picnic, Del Mar fair and others for several years now. He is a VEC and assists in testing new hams. He works mainly "behind the scenes" assisting in any way he can. He has been welcoming members and guests to the club meetings for two years. He is always ready to assist a ham (or non-ham) in any way he can. He can be relied on as a nice friendly first impression to anyone showing an interest in ham radio.

2004 Slate of Officers

The following persons have been nominated for office for the year 2004:

President: Mike Panger KG6JCW

Vice President: Tom Caudle KC6NXZ

Secretary: Mike Matson N6OPH

Treasurer: Susan Kochel KF6WXA

Board Members

Larry Plummer AE6AV

Rich Beisigl N6NKJ

Bill Callier KD6QB

Ed Felter AI6O

Carl Ferree WA6PPG

Joni Cranmore KF6MPB

December Birthdays



Happy Birthday!

991	KD6INP	Frank	Sanchez Jr.	December 4
1122	KD6WFT	Lee	Darter	December 4
949	KC6QLS	Paul	Rios	December 6
1584	KF6NHM	Richard	Sink	December 6
1393	KF6LCZ	Lee	Smith	December 7
1034	KD6JXR	Tom	Walker	December 8
1585	KG6GZF	Brian	Gess	December 8
1077	KB7NG	Bob	Bostick	December 16
1518	KF6YVK	Mary	Durante-Le Leu	December 19
1602	WM6B	Glenn	Gerbrand	December 19
		Ruth	Rogers	December 20
948	KC6TBG	Ann	Rios	December 21
787	KN6HP	Lee	Sheeler	December 22
1018	AD6LM	Nick	Chamberlain	December 23
1056	KC6MWQ	Art	Strege	December 23
1155	KD6CYS	Claude	Gunnensen	December 23
		Carrie	Brummund (L)	December 23
836	KF6XB	Russ	Davison Jr	December 25
738	K7BAV	Jim	Gould	December 29
1127	KD6YAT	Jim	Logan	December 30
1615	N6IEF	Mike	Lebo	December 31

Calendar of Events!!

December 2: Board Meeting

December 6: Swap Meet, Santee Drive in, 6:30 am

December 6: T-Hunt 6pm, Grossmont College parking lot

December 10: General Meeting (Election of Officers, HOTY)

December 12: Christmas Party

December 20: Swap Meet, Santee Drive in, 6:30 am

December 20: T-Hunt 6pm, Grossmont College parking lot

December 20: Chanukah

December 25: Christmas Day

December 31: New Years Eve

New Member

The Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon welcomes **Walter Buck KG6SDK**

Merry
Christmas
To All



Excerpted from QST Magazine "Hints N Kinks".

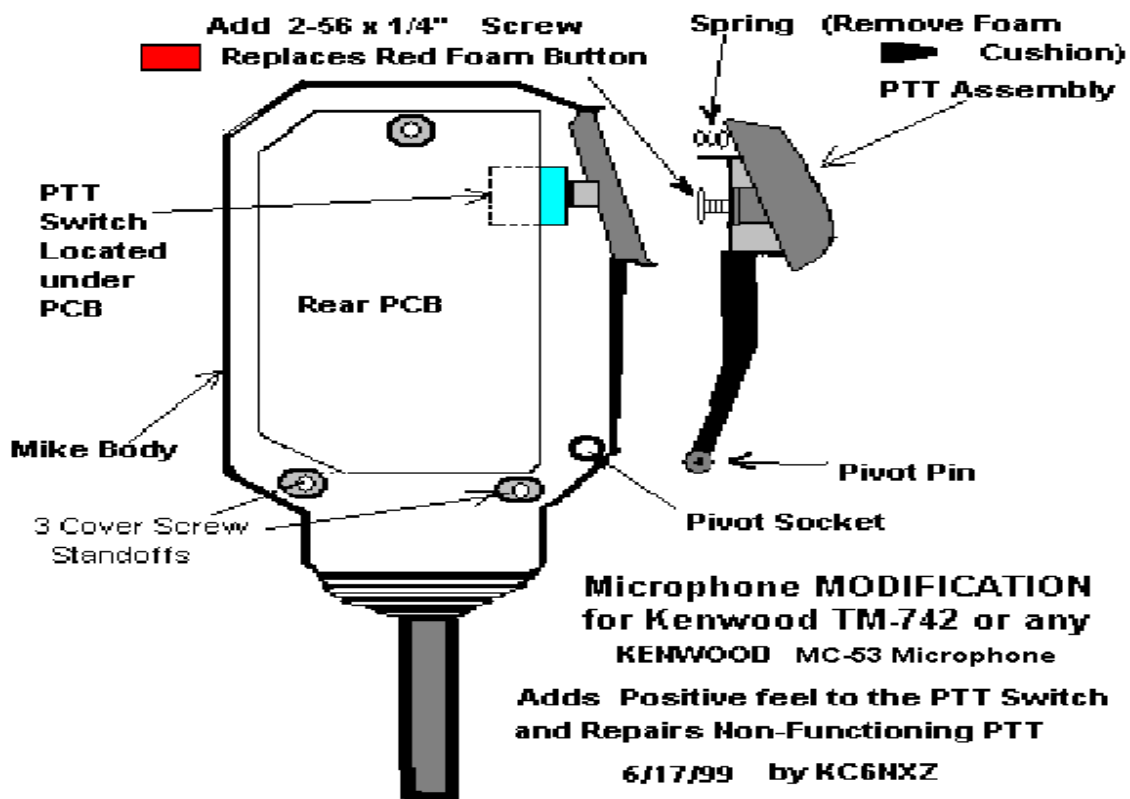
Attached is a drawing I made in order to explain a Mod needed to most of the Kenwood MC-53 Microphones (possibly others commonly used on the Kenwood Transceivers models TM-742, TM-741, and others as well.

TEXT of MODIFICATION:

"If any of you proud TM-742 owners have found your Back lit microphone PTT going away or becoming Intermittent, the solution is at hand! Simply remove three screws holding the back cover then remove the PTT Lever. Remove the Foam Rubber Cylinder from the lever and discard. Now remove the little foam piece within the return spring. Next, install a 2-56 by 1/4 " screw where the first foam rubber was glued into the hole provided there in the plastic of the lever. NOTE: I have many of the 2-56 screws if you need them. Just drop me an SASE at my address on QRZ.com, KC6NXZ

Adjust for proper action upon the PTT switch or to your liking. Finally, close up the microphone and perform a final check attached to the transceiver. This Mod should give you a positive feel when the PTT switch transfers. I am told it did wonders for Carl, KE6JQL who had lost some of his finger strength due to a stroke.

©1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003 by Tom Caudle, KC6NXZ "



Mark your Calendars....



Friday December 12, 2003

6 pm

El Cajon Elks Club

1400 Washington

El Cajon, Ca

Contact Susan KF6WXA

**Before Dec 3rd for tickets, or send
check with sase to club PO Box.**

The Counterpoise is also online in **FULL
COLOR!!** Check out the newsletter and the
rest of our club web site at:

www.qsl.net/wa6bgs

For any suggestions to the web site, contact the
webmaster at kc6nxz@arrl.net

Technician Class to Start

13 January 2004 7PM

El Cajon Fire Dept.

Magnolia @ Lexington

Text: Now You're Talking!

**Instructor: Mike Maston 296-
9067**

Tuesday nites for 5 to 6 weeks

The Following letter was published in the *San Diego Union-Tribune*:

Dear Sir:

I read with interest your recent story concerning the many radio problems encountered by the firefighters and support staff during the Firestorm. This is an old story. The same type of story was written soon after the Pines fire of last year. After throwing all of that money into a new and improved 800mhz radio system, the same communications problems still seem to occur.

While the story goes into great detail at times regarding the radio problems, you neglected to note the help given to the firefighters and support staff by amateur radio operators in San Diego County. I saw not one sentence regarding the volunteer help rendered by amateur radio operators. These men and women took time from their schedules to volunteer when and where needed at their own expense and using their own equipment. I know this because I was one of those volunteers. We were able to communicate where CDF and other agencies were not.

In my instance myself and Gene Swiech, WB9COY were sent to Julian on 29 October along with Es Berliner of CDF to facilitate communications with CDF in the field and their base camp at Gillespe Field. We were on duty for at least 13 hours. During that time we were able to facilitate communications where there was a virtual communications blackout in the Julian area. In Julian there was a plethora of press in the area and the CDF PIO (Public Information Officers) Ms. Berliner was able to brief the press and maintain communications with CDF base camp. None of knew each other or have ever worked with each other before. But we came together and did the job we were asked to do.

Amateur radio operators spent countless hours manning the Red Cross shelters throughout the county. Also amateurs were involved in animal rescue and other support help throughout the entire fire incident. None of which was mentioned in the media, print or television. This too is an old story.

There are about 9000 hams (amateur radio operators) in the San Diego County region. They form radio clubs and those clubs have formed a council. This council, known as SANDARC (San Diego County Amateur Radio Council, Inc.) formed in 1958 helps coordinate activities and needs of the amateur radio community. Many members of each of the radio clubs participated as well as organizations within the amateur radio community such as ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service), RACES (Radio Amateur County Emergency Service), RAVES (Radio Amateur Volunteer Emergency Service) and ARRL (Amateur Radio Relay League). We drill just for such an emergency every month or so and have a national exercise in June called "field day." When fire or disaster occur, we are ready to help the community. I would hope that in the future that the San Diego Union and other San Diego press would at least acknowledge our contribution.

Michael P. Maston, N6OPH
Chairman
SANDARC, Inc.

**Many items were taken out of this edition to allow
more editorial content to appear. Some of the items
will return next month.**

FIRESTORMS HIT WA6BGS

By Gary Richardson N6LRV

The Cedar fire approached Crest from several fronts late that Sunday. The mass amounts of dried grasses throughout the County fueled the fires and accelerated it's growth. While fighting the fires with my water dept. coworkers I watched while it moved very quickly, more than 100 yds. in 1 minute's time!

The familiar old Crest water tanks belonging to Padre Dam Water District housed our club's VHF and UHF repeaters at no cost to the club, in the pump house between the two tanks. The fires in and around Crest moved very quickly creating swirling, unpredictable winds in the process. Fiery embers brought destruction to many homes and other structures including the wooden roofed Crest water tanks and their pump house. The roofs burned through and eventually collapsed exposing all inside to enormous heat. Fortunately, our repeaters were housed in a sturdy, fully enclosed cabinet that kept some of our equipment safe however, the heat was intense enough near the top of the room to destroy all repeater components near the top of the cabinet. As soon as possible I retrieved the entire cabinet and began assessing the damage with our Technical Committee. So far we have managed to recover the commercial 2 meter repeater transceiver, the commercial 70cm (440Mhz) repeater transceiver, and the 2 meter filter cavities. The 440Mhz filters system, central power supply, and maybe the main controller may be salvageable however, the entire 1.25 meter (220Mhz) repeater system and our antenna system suffered severe heat damage and are unusable at this time. Currently, the Technical Committee is working to reassemble the 2 meter repeater system and get it back on the air on another nearby hilltop as soon as possible. I'd like to encourage all to please make monetary donations to the club's repeater fund to help rebuild them. Anyone with questions is welcome to contact me by phone or email at [<n6lrv@arrl.net>](mailto:n6lrv@arrl.net) or (619) 442-7590.



Aerial pics of the Crest water tanks belonging to Padre Dam Water District. The El Cajon Amateur Radio Club was operating VHF and UHF repeaters from this site in the small block building between the tanks however, that roof was wood too so it burned along with much of the equipment inside.

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
El Cajon, CA 92020
Permit No. 182

Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon
P. O. Box 50
El Cajon, California 92022

