



# MTARA NEWS



| OCTOBER 2020 | [Mountain Top Amateur Radio Association](#) |

**President: Vic Marquez, KK6WKI**

**Secretary: Dave Esquer, K6WDE**

**Ed/Membership: Tracy Lenocker, WM6T**

The Rim of the World ARES group is an ARRL affiliated organization and part of the Mountain Top Amateur Radio Association.

**Vice President: Gary Johnson, AA6GJ**

**Treasurer: Patty Szychowski, KK6LWH**

**Past President: John Snedden, KT7P**

## President Vic's Message

**G**reetings from your President, Vic, KK6WKI.

This is our fifth issue. We have been in lockdown for just about 6 months! Remember, our Zoom virtual club "tech" sessions on Thursdays at 2:00 p.m., the schedule is published on the [MTARA website](#).

I will be operating as N6F along with a team of other firefighters for the October 4 - 10 [Fire Prevention Week Special Event](#). Check us out, we will be looking for YOU!

**We send a HUGE SHOUTOUT and THANKS for our tremendous local, state and federal firefighters and their support staff.** Fire season isn't over yet, by any means, so stay radio-active and as always, **if you see something, say something!**

73, Vic

## Monthly Club Meetings

**O**ur monthly meetings are on the first Tuesday of each month. **October 6 is our next Zoom meeting.** You will soon

receive the login credentials.

The virtual meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and last until about 8:00 p.m. Our meetings are open to everyone, licensed amateur radio or just interested parties. Our purpose is to provide educational opportunities, mentoring, radio communication training and providing radio communications for community events.

For our virtual meetings, interested parties, NOT members of the club will need to email [tracy@lenocker.com](mailto:tracy@lenocker.com) with their name and callsign. The credentials for the meeting will then be emailed to that person.

See and hear you October 6!

## Treasurer's Report - KK6LWH

**O**ur opening balance was \$9,055.52, deposits for September were \$140.00. There were no expenses for the month and the total funds on deposit in our account is now \$9,195.92.

73,

Patty

## Editor's Update, the ISS - K6WDE

**Y**es, with your simple hand held radio and a decent antenna, MTARA members can work the new International Space Station (ISS) FM repeater zooming by at 17,000 mph and 250 miles above us! Just like the local MTARA2 or MTARA5 repeaters, you too, can make a cool contact with other hams, but bouncing off the ISS!



This month, the ISS started operating a new, specially

modified Kenwood FM repeater system. It has a 2 meter uplink and a 70 centimeter downlink. This is a repeater system in cross band mode. Hams call on 2 meters and listen on the 70 cm band for a response. The 2 meter frequency is 145.990 MHz with an access PL tone of 67 Hz. The downlink on 70 cm is at 437.800 MHz.

The ISS moves so fast that you will need to compensate for Doppler shift in the downlink frequencies. Doppler shift is that phenomena

# MTARA NEWS

| OCTOBER 2020 | [Mountain Top Amateur Radio Association](#) |

that explains the sound shift (high to low) of a train whistle as it travels past you (sound waves being compressed).

So, with your Baofeng (you need 2 of these) or your Kenwood (duplex mode) or your Yaesu (if in split mode), or other HT, program the following into sequential memories:

- CH1 146.385 and 437.810 MHz
- CH2 146.385 and 437.805 MHz
- CH3 146.385 and 437.800 MHz
- CH4 146.385 and 437.795 MHz
- CH5 146.385 and 437.790 MHz

The 5 memories will let you account for the Doppler shift as the ISS flies overhead. You will start with channel 1 as the ISS pops up out of the horizon, then 2, then 3, then 4 and finally 5 as it completes the pass and disappears over the opposite side of the horizon.

What about an antenna you ask? You will hear the ISS QSOs with no problem with your rubber duck. If you can get a better antenna, then you will get better results. Do you want an even better chance of a 2-way contact with another ham? You will need a beam-type antenna. Both [Elk](#) and [Arrow](#) make excellent portable beams. Do you want a DIY tape measure yogi antenna? [Click here for the Clint Bradford, K6LCS website](#) - he is the EXPERT!

Finally, where do I find the ISS and its passes over my location? Use your smartphone, search on the iOS

or Android app stores for the "NASA" app, "gosatwatch" app or the "heavens-above" app!

*Remember*, this is YOUR newsletter, send us ideas, comments or better yet, a writeup (with photos) that you feel is worth sharing! You never know how your idea, review or comment may impact other members in the club.

73, Dave

## MTARA Radio Expo WrapUp

**T**he September 5 Radio Expo at the Masonic Lodge in Twin Peaks was a great success. Observing all COVID-19 protocols, tables with ham goodies of all sizes, shapes and price points were available for purchase. Many of us walked away with some cool stuff that we now have collecting space in our ham shacks or garages awaiting new projects.

Based on your feedback, we will be doing this Radio Expo again shortly. Your excess equipment may be just what another new or seasoned ham club member may be looking for. Organize your 'collectables' for the winter event happening within the next few months.



## Route 66 Special Event Update

**W**ell, the Citrus Belt Amateur Radio Club's (CBARC) 2020 September 11-20 Route 66 Special Event is in the history books. As of this writing, and with the support of MTARA operators, the W6C San Bernardino station managed 2,144 QSOs over the 10 day event.



Additionally, MTARA members were chasing all 21 stations from Santa Monica (W6A) to Wilmington, IL (W6U)

with great success on digital (FT8 and FT4), Morse code (CW) and phone (SSB) modes on bands from 80 to 10 meters from sunrise to sunset!

MTARA members AA6GJ (Gary), WB6LVC (Debbie), KK6WKI (Vic), K6WDE (Dave), KM6UWI (Ed), AJ6FN (Greg), WM6T (Tracy), K6DDZ (Dede) and K6KTH (Tom) acted as W6C at various times and modes through the event.

Preliminary numbers for MTARA QSOs are 1,420, a great and respectable effort for our mountain and valley members.

Congrats to the CBARC for another fantastic event and for the MTARA members for their support. Hear you on September 11, 2021!

# MTARA NEWS

| OCTOBER 2020 | [Mountain Top Amateur Radio Association](#) |

## September WWFF-KFF and POTA Activation

**A**nother success for MTARA! On September 3, below Heaps Peak, on a south side highway 18 turnout, operators **AJ6FN** (Greg), **K6WDE** (Dave), **KG4SXQ** (Alvie), **KM6UWI** (Ed), **KJ6LMP** (Gene) and **KK6WKI** (Vic) setup under 2 canopies, flying the



MTARA banner.

The goal was to activate the San Bernardino National Forest (SBNF) under the World-Wide Flora and Fauna program as KFF-4490 and under the U.S. Parks On

the Air as K-4463. Our club callsign, WA6MTN was used for the activation.



Three stations were in use from 10:00 a.m. to about 2:30 p.m. We had a 40 meter (CW/SSB) station, a 20 meter SSB station and a 2 meter VHF simplex station in use. Bruce, KJ6IJM

stopped by and was able to assist us in dialing in the HF antennas from on-site and from his home in Green Valley Lake. The 20 meter station utilized a 17 foot 1/4 wave vertical antenna with counterpoises distributed on the ground. The 40 meter station utilized an end-fed 1/2 wave vertical sloper antenna with an elevation about 30 feet.

Alvie led the way and after his 20 meter shift, took control of the 2 meter station calling CQ on simplex frequencies utilizing the beam antenna that Vic brought to the show. Greg, Gene and Ed owned the 20 meter



station while Vic, Dave and Alvie took over on the 40 meter station. With proper filtering, we were successful in running both the 20 and 40 meter stations without interference.

We made 64 contacts, well over the 10 required for POTA and 44 required for KFF. It was great fun and logs were submitted and approved by both programs.



Check out our club progress on the [WWFF-KFF](#) and [POTA](#) websites, search for WA6MTN.

Stay tuned for our next activation. While the time and location are uncertain due to the SBNF forest closure, we will have Jo (N6NTJ), John (WA6PJ), Maria (KM6DTQ) and Assunta (KJ6FQP) on deck soon!

# MTARA NEWS

| OCTOBER 2020 | [Mountain Top Amateur Radio Association](#) |

## Local Weekly Nets

	Repeater	Time	Activity	Purpose
Monday	MTARA-2	7:00 p.m.	Weekly Check-in	MTARA news
Monday	144.330 Mhz	8:00 p.m.	'Gordo' net	Simplex readiness
Tuesday	MTARA-5	7:00 p.m.	Weekly Check-in	Tech discussions
Wednesday	HF	7:30 p.m.	7.223 Mhz	Band(s) status
Friday	MTARA-5	5:00 p.m.	XYL Happy Hour!	It's Friday!
Daily	<a href="#">CBARC</a>	7:00 a.m.	Technet	Elmer sessions

## Membership Info

**M**embership in the Mountain Top Amateur Radio Association© is open to any person interested in learning more about Amateur Radio. Members do not have to be a licensed Amateur Radio Operator to be a member but licensure is recommended. Members must be active in club activities which includes trainings, events, club meetings and Field Day. Membership is on an annual basis and is from January 1 to December 31 of each year. There are no prorated memberships. The annual membership is \$20 for a single member or \$30 for an entire family. The membership form can be downloaded by [clicking here](#).

## Echolink Update

**F**or those who are away from their radios during our MTARA nets you can always check in using Echolink from your computer, smart phone or tablet. Setup is easy and fast but you must wait for confirmation of your call sign before you are enabled.

This verification makes sure only license amateur radio operators are using the system.

Echolink is always up on MTARA2 except for maintenance once a week for about 10 minutes. We can switch the MTARA Echolink to any 2-meter frequency if necessary in an emergency. The node is WM6T-L.

## Online Zoom tech meetings

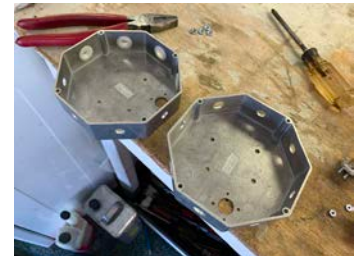
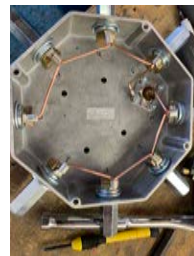
**O**ur Zoom meetings are on THURSDAYS at 2:00 p.m. Check out the MTARA Website home page for a listing of what each of the presentations will be about. If you need help setting up Zoom on your laptop or smart phone please contact Tracy, WM6T, who will help you get set up and running.

## Next Month's Newsletter . . .



**A**re you interested in building a home-brew version of that popular **MFJ Octopus portable antenna** with those ham sticks you picked up at this month's Radio Expo?

Stay tuned, a parts lists and full instructions by AJ6FN, Greg, will appear in the November newsletter! Quick photos tease of the ongoing build and test ...



# MTARA NEWS

| OCTOBER 2020 | [Mountain Top Amateur Radio Association](#) |

## *Upcoming Calendar of Events*

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Activities that MTARA will be participating in or supporting during the upcoming months:

- ▶ October monthly meeting via Zoom - October 6 at 7:00 p.m. Zoom invite to follow.
- ▶ November monthly meeting via Zoom - November 3 at 7:00 p.m.
- ▶ December monthly meeting - December 1 at 7:00 p.m.

## *Upcoming VHF/UHF and HF Ham Radio calendar of events*

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A few fun events that club members can participate in and/or sharpen their communication skills with!

- ▶ [Slow Speed Con\(Test\)](#) for CW operators, 00:00-01:00 UTC **EVERY Monday** (5:00 - 6:00 p.m., US PDT Sundays), a great learning tool for us new operators!
- ▶ [California QSO Party](#), October 3-4
- ▶ [Fire Prevention Week](#), October 4-10, listen for Vic, KK6WKI during the week
- ▶ [Pacificon](#), October 16-18, cancelled
- ▶ 4th anniversary! [100 Watts and a Wire - Fall Out](#), October 9-11, great way to make some fun and casual contacts, cool prizes if you can make > 25 QSOs
- ▶ [Nevada QSO Party](#), October 9-11
- ▶ [Arizona QSO Party](#), October 10-11
- ▶ [3rd Annual Get Your Park ON!](#), October 10-18. In celebration of Earth Science Week, WWFF-KFF stations will be active from KFF parks throughout the week operating with 1x1 callsigns, e.g., N5G. Hunters are encouraged to work as many of these Special Event Stations as possible, with special recognition given to those working ten or more.
- ▶ [Pennsylvania QSO Party](#), October 10-11
- ▶ [South Dakota QSO Party](#), October 10-11
- ▶ [New York QSO Party](#), October 17
- ▶ [Illinois QSO Party](#), October 18-19
- ▶ [CQ Worldwide DX Contest, SSB](#), October 24-25
- ▶ [ARRL November Sweepstakes](#), CW - November 7-9
- ▶ [ARRL November Sweepstakes](#), SSB - November 21-23

# MTARA NEWS

| OCTOBER 2020 | [Mountain Top Amateur Radio Association](#) |

## *A Magic Moment! - WB6LVC*



Ham radio is a hobby that attracts people from all walks of life and of all ages. Imagine our excitement when our grandson, Andrew, expressed an interest in actually learning about the elements involved to take the Technician test and become a licensed Ham. His interest began at the early age of 3! No, I am not kidding you. He started out learning about circuits with “Pops” (aka, Gary, AA6GJ) when Gary started using Snap Circuits with him. Later, Andrew liked to sit and watch us in our shacks as we operated our radios. He would wear headphones, turn dials, and use the PTT buttons to pretend he was on the air. It was great fun for all of us.

This past summer, after Gary and I had watched an episode of Ham Nation, I told Andrew he could sign up for an on-line code class offered through the [Long Island CW club](#). This was exciting to him especially since Pops bought him a practice key. Our daughter signed him up and they started taking the class. Rob, the instructor, was just great with the kids. He even had them practice sending code to each other using a made-up call sign. Andrew would walk around the house, sending code with his voice. His sister, Sarah, picked it up, too. Needless to say, it got a bit noisy at their house.

Since Gary was teaching a Technician Class Course via Zoom, it was the perfect opportunity for Andrew and his dad, Jason, to learn the concepts of Ham Radio. On September 16th, Andrew took his Technician exam and

passed! (BTW, Jason took all three exams. He is now an Amateur Extra. WOW!)

I decided to ask Andrew why this had all become so important to him. He told me that he thought it would be fun. “I like Science and Math. I like working with the Snap Circuits. And Dad and I did practice tests and studied together. That was a lot of fun.”, he said. Then I asked him what he will do with this new skill. “I am going to talk to people anywhere they live. I have already shared about it with my friends; one friend was shocked at the number of questions I had to study. He thought what I was doing was cool.” So, what is the next step? “I am starting to study for my General,” Andrew informed me.

Another Magic Moment to look forward to!

Debbie Johnson

*P.S. Jason’s callsign is AJ6QH and Andrew is now KN6LBK, we welcome them both to ham radio! Well done Johnson family!*

