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Contact Us

- Via [Facebook](#)
- Via WWW.AC6EE.ORG
- U.S. Mail:
TARA
P.O. Box 1681
Tehachapi, CA 93581

A Word

Dan Mason, AB6DM, President

Hello TARA friends,

I just realized that if our club, TARA, formed a city league softball team, we could be called the TARA Terrors!

Na...that's not our kind of contest. But this month, we have a few members taking about the kind of contests we like, ham radio contests.

Additionally, we revealed our new ham radio contest, the not yet officially named gimmick rally. It's going to be fun, and the fun starts with a build party for those who need antennas and/or variable attenuators.

Stay tuned for more on that.

73,

Dan

EDITORS' Note:

March will focus on **Off-grid Power Solutions**. *Off-grid power may be your alternate power to get through our Public Safety Power Shut-downs or your disaster preparedness efforts to assure communications are maintained or the power source you used for Parks-on-the-Air (POTA) or Summits-on-the-Air (SOTA) or ????* Whatever it may be, please share your off-grid power solutions with us, send a few paragraphs (and photos) describing your solutions.

Please email your contributions to AC6EE@arrl.net by 28 February 2022

RadioActive!

Phil Dolber, W6WBT, 1st Vice President

In December of 2021 the TARA BOD voted to form an On-the Air Game Committee. This Committee currently consists of three volunteers: myself W6WBT, Ray W6QPA and Dan AB6DM. If you would like to participate in the Committee contact one of the current volunteers. The idea of this committee is to come up with some fun on the air activities to get us RadioActive. The first game is being created as this goes to press. Below is a brief concept of the game. But first, we should talk about a build party in March for those who need a T-Hunt antenna and Attenuator you will use for this game. We will build the Tape Measure Yagi as before and I'll try to find an affordable kit for the attenuator. I will email the plans and parts list along with some sources for purchase to include the attenuator kit. I would like to see what kind of participation there we will have for the build, so we can plan for an adequate venue. Please contact me w6wbt@arrl.net and let me know if you are interested

TARA's First On-the-Air Game

The Basic Concept

The game will be a Scavenger hunt with gimmicks for navigating to Checkpoints and a T-Hunt to the finish. The gimmicks will be things like: puzzles, riddles, brainteasers...

You can earn points by making contacts with the Game Master as instructed, proper log entries, finding Scavenger Items, Checkpoints and the Finish via T-Hunt.

You can lose points for not making Call-ins when instructed, not maintaining your Log. Or, Not finding: a Scavenger Item, a Checkpoint or the Finish You can also lose points for arriving at Checkpoints and the Finish too early. **THIS IS NOT A RACE!**

Hints for the Gimmicks and T-Hunt are available for the cost of -1 point. Another cost is everyone hears the hint.

We will publish the detailed Rules of play sometime in March so everyone has a chance to get familiar with them and ask any questions to clarify the rules of play.

New to transmitter hunting? Don't be intimidated by the T-Hunt aspect of the game. It is just to point you toward the finish. You do not have to find the actual hidden "T" in this version of the game. Just find the finish. It should be fairly obvious that you have found the finish there will be a table set up there for the Game Master. We may even put out some orange cones, a flag or a club banner to make it more obvious.

The idea is first of all to have fun. Other benefits are that it will create activity on our UHF/VHF frequencies and give us a fun way to hone operating skills useful in many of our other ham radio activities. I hope you will come out and give it a try. It will be an experiment in fun and we can change anything about the game to improve it each time we play.

73 – Let's Get RadioActive!

Contests and Contesting Experiences

We asked for a description of your favorite On-the-Air Contests and your experiences with them. Here are the thoughts offered by club members.

AB6DM — Dan Mason

I'm blessed to now have been able to participate in several ham radio contests, mostly with the help of my Elmers. But my three most favorite contests are as follows: the ARRL International DX Phone Contest, the ARRL International DX Phone Contest, and the ARRL International DX Phone Contest, which happens every year in early March. Funny thing is, I wasn't necessarily looking for an international contest, but rather I was given the opportunity to make DX contacts on better than I can afford equipment, and with training by some highly skilled Elmers. My wife and I, along with other hams, were invited to join some fun radio-sport in a sort of party atmosphere. There have been other events, but those stood out the most for me. We enjoyed hours of learning, practice, and fellowship over the course of two days for each event. We both got to make many contacts with other hams all over the world. It's way more fun for us in a group setting, and we appreciate ham family for these opportunities.

W6WBT — Phil Dolber

I am not much of a contester, however I am not an opponent. Contesting, QSO parties, Field Day, POTA, SOTA and special event stations where you are trying to make as many contacts as you can in the period of time you are operating can be great fun. I highly recommend that new hams team with experienced operators for these types of operating events. It is a great chance to get over any inhibitions you have about getting on the air. Whether it is mic fright, or just plain old shyness, these activities offer a type of operation that does not require the art of conversation. The exchange is short and specific and can easily be scripted for new operators. Once you start making contacts you get into a kind of rhythm and it certainly gives the operator a feeling of purpose. Any fear, shyness or inhibitions dissolve and before you know it you are having fun.

W6QPA — Ray Gretlein

I had always been intimidated by the thought of "CONTESTING," it was a high pressure, score-driven activity reserved for the hams with big antenna farms and bigger amplifiers! I didn't have the temperament, real estate or budget for such endeavors. Then there's this "exchange" thing which also was intimidating. I'd listen on air and catch these short bursts of "Ray CA" or "55N CA Ray 5W" that didn't seem to be directed at any particular station ... it was all confusing. And

so it was for the first 49 years of my licensed activity. Then an acquaintance introduced me to the QRP Fox Hunts (<https://www.qrpfoxhunt.org>). This contest restricts all participants to 5 watts or less of power. The ‘game’ is to find the FOX and make a contact. The organizers established a 20KHz range where the FOX can “Hide”; in the case of our Winter Fox Hunt that is 40 meters — somewhere between 7.030 and 7.050 MHz. My friend took the time to explain the “exchange” (internet searches make finding the exchange for a given contest MUCH easier) and the sequence of a contest QSO. Using the QRP Fox Hunt as an example the QSO looks like this (we’ll use W1AW as the Fox and my Call W6QPA as the hound):

Fox: CQ FOX W1AW UP

— This is a CW contest so abbreviations are rampant — It is almost a “normal” CQ except we are letting listeners know that we are looking for folks participating in the QRP Fox Hunt by sending FOX as part of the CQ ... we’re not looking for a regular QSO. UP means the FOX is working a split operation where they are listening for callers above the frequency they are transmitting on. By convention UP, for this contest, means 1 to 1-1/2 KHz above their transmit frequency.

Hound replies: W6QPA

— Sent once or maybe twice on a frequency above where I found the hound ... hopefully one he is listening on. I often have to listen to this area and find the spot where other hounds are calling (think of a pack of hound dogs baying as they run after the fox). There are usually a number of hounds all trying to get the fox’s attention. I want to separate myself from them just a bit so I stand out and may be heard. If the fox hears me he will respond as follows ...

Fox: W6QPA CT Hiram 5W <AR>

— The Fox heard me, acknowledges that by sending my call and the “exchange”. For the Fox hunt the exchange is the State (CT for W1AW), operators first name (Hiram), and the transmitter power (5W)

Hound replies: CA Ray 5W

Fox: TU W1AW UP

— Fox says thanks (TU) and begins the cycle waiting for the next hound to call. If they don’t have an almost immediate call from a hound they’ll repeat the CQ FOX call again.

There, that wasn’t too bad. I made my first fox hunt QSO!

There are a host of other contests, each with their own “exchange” requirements, but the overall format is similar. I’ve found that even my imperfect CW skills are adequate for most CW contests, mostly because the whole QSO is rather structured, you know what your listening for which makes it easier to copy. I’ve also accepted that I’m not going to be competitive in these contests, which takes away a lot of the “Test” anxiety. I use them purely as a way of finding someone to work and practice with.

Other contests I have been enjoying and using to improve my CW skills are:

K1USN Slow Speed Contest — <http://www.k1usn.com/sst.html>

Winter Field Day — <https://www.winterfieldday.com>

CWOPS Mini Contest — <https://cwops.org/cwops-tests/>

ARRL RTTY Roundup — Not CW but fun — <http://www.arrl.org/rtty-roundup>

KK6WLQ — Valerie Mason

My DX experience was last March when we participated in International DX Contesting (I believe it's called). I'm still not use to getting stations zoned in on the radio, so have lots of help, lol, but enjoy being able to talk to people in different cities and countries. I reached at least 5 people and as many as 8. Don't have the list anymore, but it was fun to accomplish actually talking to people in other areas.

Humor

Courtesy of Laura Sherrod, KI6EOG

♦ How do we know that the ocean is friendly?

It waves. :)

♦ What is a computers favorite snack?

Computer chips. :)

ARRL Contest Calendar

This page provides a summary of events sponsored by the ARRL, the national association for amateur radio. The most current information is on the website at:

<http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar>

February 2022

- 14-18 School Club Roundup
- 19-22 International DX – CW

March 2022

- 5-6 International DX– Phone

April 2022

- 10 Rookie Roundup – Phone

TARA Calendar

This page is a summary of events sponsored by or involving our club.

All dates are subject to change. Please check the club Facebook and website for updates.

February 2022

- 2, 9, 16, 23 – 19:00 PST “Just Because” Net (W6SLZ VHF rpt, 146.70 - / 123.0)
- 3 – 19:00 PST, TARA Board Meeting, Via Zoom (invite via email)
- 5 — 08:30 PST, TARA Club Breakfast at Gracian Grill
- 10 – 19:00 PST, TARA Club Meeting, Tehachapi Police Department Conference Room, 220 W C St, Tehachapi.
- 26 — 08:00 PST, TARA Club Breakfast at BVS Mulligan Room. Reserve a spot with Valerie Mason by February 14th

March 2022

- 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 – 19:00 PST (PDT 16, 23, 30) “Just Because” Net (W6SLZ VHF rpt, 146.70 - / 123.0)
- 3 – 19:00 PST, TARA Board Meeting, Via Zoom (invite via email)
- 10 – 19:00 PST, Club Meeting, Tehachapi Police Department Conference Room, 220 W C St, Tehachapi.
- 12 — 08:30 PST, TARA Club Breakfast at Gracian Grill
- 26 — 08:00 PDT, TARA Club Breakfast at BVS Mulligan Room. Reserve a spot with Valerie Mason by 14 March 2022.

April 2022

- 6, 13, 20, 27 – 19:00 PDT “Just Because” Net (W6SLZ VHF rpt, 146.70 - / 123.0)
- 7 – 19:00 PDT, TARA Board Meeting, Via Zoom (invite via email)
- 9 — 08:30 PDT, TARA Club Breakfast at Gracian Grill
- 14 – 19:00 PDT, TARA Club Meeting, Tehachapi Police Department Conference Room, 220 W C St, Tehachapi.
- 30 — 08:00 PDT, TARA Club Breakfast at BVS Mulligan Room. Reserve a spot with Valerie Mason by 14 April 2022.

Reference Information

Local Repeater Information				
TARA APRS Digipeater	144.390	No tone	AC6EE-3	APRS
BVS APRS Digipeater	144.390	No tone	WA6LDQ-3	APRS
BVS Repeater Backup Freq.	146.700 145.580	123.0 Hz Tone Simplex	W6SLZ	Open Machine
BVS Repeater	440.625	100.0 Hz Tone	W6SLZ	Open Machine
Tehachapi Repeater	444.225	100.0 Hz TONE	KG6KKV	Overlooks Bakersfield
DMR Digital	442.675	Offset: +5.000 ColorCode: 1	K7RET	Brandmeister, Bakersfield, CA The location is in the Tehachapi Mountains near Cummings Mountain

Local Repeater Information				
DMR Repeater	447.120	Offset: -5.00 ColorCode: 1	KR6DK	Brandmeister, McKittrick, CA The location is in the Tehachapi Mountains near Double Mountain This repeater is permanently linked to the KR6DK analog repeater system.
Tehachapi Simplex	145.58	No Tone		Local Simplex
Tehachapi Simplex	146.54	No Tone		Local Simplex

In addition to the repeaters listed above the following repeaters, part of the Kern System, can be reached from locations throughout the Tehachapi area. They are linked together and more information may be found at <http://www.KernSystem.org>

KERN System Linked Repeater				
Frazier Mountain (8,000')	447.860	141.3 Hz Tone	KK6AC	Jerry Garis
Cummings Mountain (7,800')	442.95	141.3 Hz Tone	KI6HHU	Lee Bouchard
Double Mountain (8,000')	446.320	151.4 Hz Tone	KI6HHU	Lee Bouchard

ATTENTION:

For those interested in monitoring dispatch for the Bear Valley Springs Police Department

- KCSO Eastern Dispatch — 460.225
- KCSO East TAC — 460.125

All dispatch for BVSPD will be handled by the Kern County Sheriff's Department

Club & Other Websites	
TARA website	http://www.ac6ee.org
TARA Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/TARAtehachapiamateurradio/

Club & Other Websites	
Antelope Valley Amateur Radio Club (AVARC)	http://www.k6ox.club/index.html
Kern County-Central Valley Amateur Radio Club (KCCVARC)	http://www.w6lie.org
ARRL	http://www.arrl.org
West Kern County Amateur Radio Emergency Services (WKCARES)	http://westernkerncountyares.org/index.html

Officers & Committee Chairs			
Office/Committee	Name	Call	Email
President	Dan Mason	AB6DM	ab6dm@arrl.net
1st Vice President	Phil Dolber	W6WBT	w6wbt@arrl.net
2nd Vice President	Ray Gretlein	W6QPA	w6qpa@arrl.net
Secretary	Valerie Mason	KK6WLQ	val3mason@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Dick Brown	W6SLZ	db24130@sbcglobal.net
Web Page & FaceBook maintenance	John Dyer	KM6DXY	km6dxy@gmail.com

Meeting and Club Membership Information

The Tehachapi Amateur Radio Association meets every second Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM (except for July - no meeting). Our meetings are on Zoom and in-person meeting site is now Tehachapi Police Department Conference Room, 220 W C St, Tehachapi.

Member Annual Dues: \$25.00/year

Additional Family Member: \$12.50/per person

Membership Application

Download a copy of our Membership Application [here](#). Please share this with any friends, family or neighbors that are either Hams or may be interested in Amateur Radio. Applications are

accepted at all club meetings if we are meeting in-person. Or you may mail your application along with the applicable dues to the club Post Office Box:

Tehachapi Amateur Radio Association (TARA)

P.O. Box 1681

Tehachapi, CA 93581-1681