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# River City ARCS

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Vol. 28 No. 05  
May 2004

River City Amateur Radio Communications Society

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## Next Meeting: May 4<sup>th</sup>

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### From the President:

Due to the resignation of our elected membership chairperson, Anne (AD6UY), I have appointed Kay (KF6IZU) to fill the remainder of the 2004 term. Thanks Kay for stepping up to the challenge!

The Board of Directors voted to shut down the 145.250 club repeater for a brief period while some maintenance tasks are performed at the main repeater site on Pine Hill. The 224.720 club repeater will be reinstalled at its mountaintop site shortly. Thanks to Chuck (W6FT) for his hard work in completing the repairs to the "box".

Field Day preparations are continuing. The extent of the setup depends greatly on your willingness to participate during the annual event. The more people who can assist in setup/takedown and operate the radios, the more antennas and radios we will have on the air. We will be setting up the equipment on Saturday morning. Takedown will be Saturday evening if we have few helpers, or Sunday morning if we have operators who want to operate the full 24 hours of Field Day operation.

Dale Hankins, AD6CT, President

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### VE SESSION RESULTS:

From Ken Hall, WO6J, our "VE Guy": "The next session will be May 15, 2004, at 8:30am at the Carmichael Elks Lodge, corner of Cypress and Hackberry in Carmichael. We have a new time schedule: 8:30am to 9:30am. Code testers must be there by 9:00am. We close at 9:30am. The fee is \$12.00. Call the Information Hotline for details: 916-492-6115.

We had three candidates at our April 17<sup>th</sup> session. Two took code and passed, both upgrading to General, and one other passed Element #3.

Ken says, "Be sure to bring your ORIGINAL CSCE form and license to the session. Copies will be made to send to the ARRL and the originals will be returned to you.

"The new General class question pool (Element #3) will be administered starting July 1, 2004. It was released for publication on December 1, 2003. Be very careful about which General Class book you purchase."

Larry Hodge will hold test sessions on the first Saturday of the month. For more information, contact Larry at <larry.r.hodge@intel.com>

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### Kathie Hoxie Was April Speaker

Kathryn Hoxie, Warning Coordination Meteorologist for the National Weather Service Office in Sacramento, was our guest speaker for the club meeting on April 6, 2004.

She will again be our speaker at a meeting in the near future. Her presentation was very interesting and informative, and she answers our questions as she goes. Great stuff!

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### You've Got Mail!

If you can receive e-mail, send a message to Dale, [ad6ct@arrl.net](mailto:ad6ct@arrl.net) and your newsletter will arrive *before* the meeting. Great news! Just write "subscription" on the subject line and send!

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### Nineteen Local Hams Volunteer

Two charity events were held this month, and nineteen local hams assisted in passing health and welfare information. The MS Walk was held on Sunday, April 18, 2004, coordinated by Don, KE6GMJ. Thanks to Bob, KD6WTY; Mary Anne, KE6EST; Ralph, W6RWL; and Dale, AD6CT, and Kay, KF6IZU, who shared net control responsibilities. Assisting in SAG team operations were the Sacramento Hilanders Search and Rescue Radio group. Thanks to Ted, KD6QJE; Hobbie, KE6UAB; Mike, KG6UDP; and Jim, K6NRA, for their assistance.

On Saturday, April 24, the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual March of Dimes Walk America began at 9:00am and we arrived about 7:30am to set up a station at the start/finish, and assign the operators. Thanks to Patrick, N6ARO; John, W3RJC; Chris, KD6TQO, and his sister, Heather; Don, KE6GMJ; Roy, KE6LLE; and Brian, WJ6H, wearing his khaki shorts, small backpack, his HT and antenna, functioned as "walker one" following the walkers and keeping net control informed about the progress of the last walkers. Dale, AD6CT, and Kay, KF6IZU, shared net control responsibilities.

Special thanks and our sincere appreciation to Chris Huber, N6ICW, for the use of the 147.195 repeater. Thanks too to the regular users of the repeater for standing by during these events.

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MEMORIAL DAY IS MAY 31<sup>ST</sup>  
DISPLAY THE FLAG!

## 2004 RCARCS Officers/Board

President Dale Hankins (AD6CT) (916) 925-1062  
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Vice President Chuck Freas (W6FT) . . . . . (916) 332-0927  
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Ruff Gunn (K6DME) . . . . . (707) 678-5192

### Committees:

Sound Guy: Paul Grose, KG6KPV  
Newsletter Editor: Kay Hankins, KF6IZU  
VE Liaison: Ken Hall, WO6J  
Education Coordinator: Bob Balthrope, KD6WTY  
Holiday Dinner: Kay Hankins, KF6IZU  
Repeater Trustee: Dane Westvik, KO6YD  
Bylaws: Kay Hankins, KF6IZU, Chuck Freas, W6FT  
Field Day General Chairman: Roy Rudebaugh, KD6LLE  
Pot Luck Lunch Chairman: Kay Hankins, KF6IZU  
Set Up/Take Down Chairman:  
Publicity Chairman:

Jackets, T-shirts & hats: Mary Anne Balthrope, KE6EST

\*Leave message

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### CLUB INFORMATION:

**DUES:** \$20.00 Annually beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>

**CLASSES:** Contact Bob Balthrope, KD6WTY, for information and scheduling.

**MEETINGS:** Club meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month, 7:30 pm, at the Sacramento County Corporation Yard, (formerly SMUD), corner of Don Julio and Elkhorn Blvds.

**Board of Directors meetings** are held the fourth Tuesday at 7:00 pm.

**CLUB PHONE:** (916) 492-6115

### MAILING ADDRESS:

PO Box 215073, Sacramento, CA 95821

**WEB SITE:** [www.n6na.org](http://www.n6na.org)

**E-MAIL:** [n6na@arrl.net](mailto:n6na@arrl.net)

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## 2004 RCARCS Calendar

May 4<sup>th</sup> Club Meeting, 7:30pm  
May 16<sup>th</sup> Northhills Swap Meet  
Bella Vista High School

May 25<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, 7:00pm  
June 1<sup>st</sup> Club Meeting, 7:30pm  
June 22<sup>nd</sup> Board Meeting, 7:00pm  
June 26-27 Field Day 2004  
July 6<sup>th</sup> Club Meeting, 7:30pm  
July 27<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, 7:00pm  
August 3<sup>rd</sup> Club Meeting, 7:30pm  
August 24<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, 7:00pm  
September 7<sup>th</sup> Club Meeting, 7:30pm  
September 25<sup>th</sup> RCARCS Swap Meet (TBA)  
September 28<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, 7:00pm  
October 5<sup>th</sup> Club Meeting, 7:30pm  
October 26<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, 7:00pm  
November 1<sup>st</sup> CLUB MEETING, MONDAY, 7:30pm  
November 2<sup>nd</sup> NO MEETING Election Day  
November 23<sup>rd</sup> Board Meeting, 7:00pm  
December 7<sup>th</sup> Club Meeting, 7:30pm  
December 12 Club Holiday Party (TBA)  
December 28<sup>th</sup> No Board Meeting

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## Editorial

*(From Kay, KF6IZU/AG)*

After three and one-half months, almost 24/7, I finally passed the 5 wpm Morse Code test and now hold a General class license! My sincerest appreciation to Dale, AD6CT, for his love and support and mentoring to help me reach my goal. Starting early each morning, several sessions during the day, and a final session before I went to sleep, I studied The Code!

This all started in early 2003 when Dale announced he was going to teach a General class (including code) in our home. Now, being a gracious hostess, I couldn't come up with a justifiable reason not to participate in the class. With my living room filled with dedicated and determined hams seeking to upgrade their licenses, it didn't seem appropriate to abandon them and hide out upstairs! So, I joined the class. The technical portion was going well for me, but after about four weeks I was getting nowhere with the code. I passed the written element in April 2003 which gave me a 365 day period to learn code.

After the Holidays and retirement, I began to study in earnest. Using the ARRL CDs, I sat at the end of my dining room table and listened diligently to the instructor and copied letters, numbers, punctuation and pro-signs. Dale set up his iambic paddles on the breakfast table, and a keyboard code generator on the wet bar. Even with this, I couldn't copy up to speed (5 wpm) and it might as well have been 60 wpm! He loaded the Morse Academy program on our old 286 computer in his radio room, and I began using that too.

In March, not feeling totally comfortable, I went to the VE session and took a code test. I failed. Now I was really up against the deadline! 30 days left. If I failed the April session, I would have to take the written element again. So I really dug in. I ate, drank, and slept dits and dahs. I read road signs, car license plates, bumper stickers, and magazine covers in code. Dits and dahs were everywhere!

On test day, I woke up at 4:00am, way before o'dark thirty, and sat down at the computer. The first two tests maxed at 10 consecutive characters! I was devastated! It

wasn't just brain fade, I felt brain dead! The deadline was just hours away! I ran another test. Not bad, 29 and 37 consecutive characters. The fourth practice run was 65 characters.

The drive to the test site was very quiet. I was worried. I had studied so long and hard, with so many of my friends encouraging me, and I didn't want to disappoint Dale because he had been so supportive and patient.

I sat down at the table with the VEs and we began. I missed the first call sign, then the second. Oh dear, the hour of truth! Then I copied the location, city and state, and I knew I was on a roll! When the code stopped and I looked at my test page, I could read English – lot's of it! I passed. I knew it. And sure enough, when Ken Hall, WO6J, our VE Liaison, announced that I had passed and was now a "full General" class operator, I was elated. I did it! Now, the next step is gaining that Extra Class license!

So, in closing, if you're learning The Code, the best advice I can give is what others gave me: Keep practicing! We each have a price to pay, and I don't know what yours is. In the words of Sir Winston Churchill, "Never give up!"

My sincere thanks to my friends for your encouragement and support, and to Dale, who believed I could do it. --- KF6IZU/AG

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#### Mike's 2-Way Radio Shop

9580 Arcada Court  
Elk Grove, CA 95624  
(916) 806-8550  
[www.mikes2way.com](http://www.mikes2way.com)

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#### North Hills Radio Club Swap Meet

North Hills Radio Club Annual Swap Meet is scheduled Sunday, May 16, 2004, at Bella Vista High School on Madison Avenue in Orangevale.

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#### Area VEC Test Locations

##### **River City ARCS** (Walk-ins okay)

Contact Ken Hall at 916-492-6115 (club hotline)

##### **Folsom** (Walk-ins okay)

Contact Larry Hodge at 916-361-2476 or  
[larry.r.hodge@intel.com](mailto:larry.r.hodge@intel.com)

##### **Sacramento ARC** (Pre-registration required)

Contact Bill Allshouse, KQ6AW, at 916-464-4115

##### **Yuba Sutter ARC** (Walk-ins okay)

Contact Eddie O. Ansely at 530-742-2674 or  
[www.users.cwnet.com/ysarc/](http://www.users.cwnet.com/ysarc/)

##### **Stockton** (Walk-ins okay)

Contact Mark at 209-465-7496

##### **Santa Rosa** (Walk-ins okay)

Hot Line 707-579-9608

##### **Nevada County ARC** (Walk-ins okay)

Contact Louis Pelletier at 530-477-2295 or  
[kq6sq@ncws.com](mailto:kq6sq@ncws.com)

##### **El Dorado Sheriff & Search & Rescue** (Walk-ins okay)

contact James Swanson at 530-544-2351

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### ITU Recommended Phonetics

A	Alfa	( <b>AL</b> FAH)
B	Bravo	( <b>BR</b> AH VOH)
C	Charlie	( <b>CHAR</b> LEE or <b>SHAR</b> LEE)
D	Delta	( <b>DELL</b> TAH)
E	Echo	( <b>ECH</b> OH)
F	Foxtrot	( <b>FOKS</b> TROT)
G	Golf	( <b>GOLF</b> )
H	Hotel	( <b>HOH</b> TELL)
I	India	( <b>IN</b> DEE AH)
J	Juliet	( <b>JEW</b> LEE ETT)
K	Kilo	( <b>KEY</b> LOH)
L	Lima	( <b>LEE</b> MAH)
M	Mike	( <b>MIKE</b> )
N	November	( <b>NO VEM</b> BER)
O	Oscar	( <b>OSS</b> CAH)
P	Papa	( <b>PAH PAH</b> )
Q	Quebec	( <b>KEH BECK</b> )
R	Romeo	( <b>ROW</b> ME OH)
S	Sierra	( <b>SEE AIR</b> RAH)
T	Tango	( <b>TANG</b> GO)
U	Uniform	( <b>YOU</b> NEE FORM or <b>OO</b> NEE FORM)
V	Victor	( <b>VIC</b> TAH)
W	Whiskey	( <b>WISS</b> KEY)
X	X-Ray	( <b>ECKS</b> RAY)
Y	Yankee	( <b>YANG</b> KEY)
Z	Zulu	( <b>ZOO</b> LOO)

*Note:* The **Boldfaced** syllables are emphasized. The pronunciations shown in the table were designed for speakers from all international languages. The pronunciations given for "Oscar" and "Victor" may seem awkward to English-speaking people in the US.

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### Survey Results

(Reported by Bob Vallio, W6RGG, ARRL Pacific Division Director)

In a nut shell: 52.7% agreed that a Morse code testing requirement should be retained for the General Class license; 71.9% agreed that the Morse code testing requirement should be retained for the Extra Class license; and 44.9% of those surveys returned said no effort should be put into time and funding eliminating the Morse code license testing requirements.

## Computer Haiku

(Reprinted from the *El Dorado County Amateur Radio Club Newsletter*, April 2004. Submitted by Dick Wilson, K6LRN)

In Japan, they have replaced the impersonal and unhelpful Microsoft error messages with Haiku poetry messages. They're used to communicate a timeless message, often achieving a wistful yearning and powerful insight through extreme brevity.

Here are 16 actual error messages from Japan:

The Web site you seek cannot be located, but countless more exist.

Chaos reigns within. Reflect, repent, and reboot. Order shall return.

Program aborting: Close all that you have worked on. You ask far too much.

Windows NT crashed. I am the Blue Screen of Death. No one hears your screams.

Yesterday it worked. Today it is not working. Windows is like that.

Your file was so big. It might be very useful. But now it is gone.

Stay the patient course. Of little worth is your ire. The network is down.

A crash reduces your expensive computer to a simple stone.

Three things are certain: Death, taxes and lost data. Guess which has occurred.

You step in the stream, but the water has moved on. This page is not here.

Out of memory. We wish to hold the whole sky, but we never will.

Having been erased, the document you're seeking must now be retyped.

Serious error. All shortcuts have disappeared. Screen. Mind. Both are blank.

Now . . . Isn't that better than "Your computer has performed an illegal operation"?

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## T-mail; PX-mail; E-mail

On May 24, 1844, Samuel Finley Breese Morse transmitted the first message across his electric telegraph line: "What hath God wrought?". Over the next ten years more than 23,000 miles of wire connected cities in the United States, and became the fastest mode of communication known to mankind.

Samuel F. B. Morse maintained a steady interest in invention, and in 1832 he became interested in telegraphy. On a return trip to the United States from Europe, he overheard a conversation about electromagnetism and that inspired his idea for an electric telegraph. With little training in electricity, he realized that pulses of electrical current could convey information over wires, one for each letter of the alphabet. About that time two German engineers had invented a five-wire model. Morse wanted to reduce the number of wires to one.

In 1838, Morse created a dot and dash code to represent the letters of the English alphabet and ten digits, although his assistant, Alfred Vail, was credited by Franklin Pope in *"The Century: Illustrated Monthly Magazine"*, April 1888 issue. The code system could be sent over one wire and "sound read" by operators. At an

exhibition of his telegraph in New York, Morse transmitted ten words per minute using the Morse code that would become standard throughout the world.

Some years later, on April 3, 1860, the Pony Express began its historic mail delivery between St. Joseph, Missouri, and Sacramento, California. During its operation, 183 riders relayed mail on horseback, day and night, summer and winter. A fresh horse was provided every 10 to 15 miles over the nearly 2,000 miles of the trail through Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, Nevada, and California, at an average speed of 10 miles per hour. Riders were paid \$100 per month

Then, in 1876, Scotsman Alexander Graham Bell invented his "electrical speech machine" which is now referred to as a telephone, paving the way for the Information Superhighway. Fiber optics have improved the quality and speed of data transmission, and signals are bounced off satellites in space.

Today, most of us carry a wireless cellular telephone a little bigger than a bank card. We send and receive our correspondence and pay our bills via e-mail. We shop via the internet.

Maybe amateur radio operators are a die hard lot, but in our observations of modern communication, when a disaster strikes, be it man-made or natural, ham radio comes to the rescue for passing information and providing health and welfare communication. And Morse Code just might be a necessary skill to get that message to the proper authority. Is the code outdated and useless? I don't think so!

So, if you're thinking of learning code, there are lots of tools to help you. I checked E-bay and found nearly one hundred code related items, from instruction tapes and CDs to new and antique code keyers. Check it out!

Kay, KF6IZU, Editor

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## Field Day 2004

Field Day 2004 will be held the weekend of June 26 and 27, 2004, at Madera Park in Citrus Heights. RCARCS will set up antennas and stations and communicate with other hams around the world, some voice, and some Morse code.

A potluck dinner will be served at 5:00 pm and you are invited to bring your favorite dishes to share. In order to avoid 50 pounds of potato salad, the following formula will be used: A – F, dips, chips, veggie platters, etc.; G – P, salads, bean dishes, etc.; Q– Z, dessert. If you have a special dish and you don't fall into that category, please contact Kay, KF6IZU, so we can keep a balance. Atkins-friendly is okay! The club will provide fried chicken, water, sodas, and coffee. Additionally, plates and knives and forks will be provided, but if you wish to bring your own, please do!

We need operators and volunteers to set up on Saturday morning, and take down. Please contact Dale, AD6CT, if you can make yourself available.

And don't forget your sunscreen and insect repellent. I always have a first aid kit with me and will replenish my supply of band-aids and ointments. See you there!

Kay, KF6IZU, Editor