N6SJV

Lodi
CALIFORNIA

Lodi Amateur Radio Club

monthly newsletter for

AUGUST 2020

Welcome!

...to our new club newsletter. You can expect to see a new issue here around the first of each month.   Your contributions are invited—please email your comments, suggestions, articles, and especially your photos to: **LodiHams@gmail.com**

MONTHLY CLUB MEETING THURSDAY, AUGUST 6th SEE PAGE 2

In this issue:

QST, QST, QST, all radio amateurs:

Mark your calendar and join our Wednesday night nets:

- **Simplex net: 147.09 mHz   6:30 pm**
- **Club net: 147.09 repeater (PL 114.8)   7:00 pm**
- **10 mtr net: 28.400 mHz USB   8:00 PM**

See page 3 for more information on our nets.

AUGUST MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

>>> Thursday, Aug 6th, 6:30pm via Zoom <<<
See below for Zoom instructions

PROGRAM TOPIC: "FIELD DAY 2020 IN CORONAVIRUS ISOLATION" by N6TCE

Photo sources: AL7PS, WB6BET/KI6YYT, W6SF.org, N6KZW, KG7OR, ARRL, SDARC Facebook Group, LARC Facebook Group

HOW TO ZOOM: If you have previously participated in a Zoom session, you have the app already installed—just **click here** on August 6th, starting at about 6:15 pm. If you've never "zoomed" before, you'll be prompted to download and install the app, which is fast and free. (If that "click here" link doesn't work for any reason, try clicking the following URL, or copy and paste it into your browser.)

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7642652231?pwd=MkVyVjVEQm1TcjVBUFVtK3lyOWV2QT09

Additional log-in data if needed:

Meeting ID: 764 265 2231   Passcode: LODIARC   (case sensitive)
One tap mobile: +16699009128,,7642652231#,,,,,,0#,,4202205# US (San Jose).
Or dial by your location: +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose) Passcode: 4202205
Find your local number: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcRACbVnLg

See important note about operating with Zoom on next page.

Note: club members will also receive these instructions by email prior to the meeting.

Move your pointer here

👉 ***Please note:*** **Zoom is a great resource for video meetings, but it's important for everyone on the conference to avoid sending their background noise to the audio stream. Make sure your transmit audio is muted when you are not speaking—look for the red "mute" icon in the lower left corner of your thumbnail window. If it's not there, you may be generating noise on the network without knowing it. Move your pointer to the upper right corner and click the blue *Mute* button to show the red icon. Do the same and click *Unmute* when you want to talk. (Note that the mute control for phones or other devices may be different.)**

Muted audio icon

MORE ABOUT OUR NETS

(See page 1)

We operate three very different radio nets every Wednesday evening. The main Lodi A.R.C. club net starts at 7:00 pm, and is intended primarily for regular net members, defined as anyone who checks in at least three times. However, guest check-ins from anyone who can connect with the repeater are welcome—you don't have to be a Lodi A.R.C. member.

We use the WB6ASU repeater, located in the foothills due east of Lodi, a little southwest of San Andreas. It operates on 147.09 mHz, and is linked to a low power UHF repeater on 444.25 mHz, both with a PL tone of 114.8 Hz. If you're using a handheld radio, you'll do best by placing yourself at a position that affords the best clearance between you and the repeater site. If you don't get good signal reports on VHF, try the UHF repeater instead—some stations can be heard better by transmitting on the UHF side.

At 6:30 pm, prior to the club net above, we operate a special simplex net on 147.09 mHz, the output frequency of the above repeater. The net's purpose is to get experience and practice with direct (simplex) communication if the repeater should go off the air, which happens occasionally due to power outages. Check-ins from all stations at all locations are welcome and encouraged. There are specific operating procedures on this net; see page 7.

Finally, we operate a 10 meter net on 28.4 mHz USB, starting at 8:00 pm. That frequency is authorized for all license classes, so everyone is encouraged to check in and get some experience on the HF bands. In addition to your HF radio, you'll need a vertically polarized antenna, positioned as high as possible. Nighttime propagation at 28 mHz is normally local, but the net occasionally becomes very interesting when 10 meter skip opens up and we start getting DX stations checking in. You never know!

Program your radio for simplex

Programming most handheld or mobile VHF/UHF radios can be done with software and a cable, but it's usually simple enough from the keypad. It's often made simpler by the built-in repeater shift—if you select a frequency with your VFO that's designated for repeater use, you automatically get the correct transmit frequency offset, which is 600 kHz on 2 meters, up or down depending on the actual frequency.

For reference, the 2 meter frequencies in the band plan that are designated as repeater outputs are:
145.20 –145.50   146.61–146.97   147.00–147.39

> **Click here** for the full band plan, all bands

For example, dial up 147.090 on your VFO and upon transmitting you'll automatically change to 147.690 mHz in order to match the frequency of the repeater's receiver.

However, the manufacturer's cleverness in giving you automatic offsets on repeater frequencies can cause headaches if you want to work simplex on one of those frequencies, like we do on our Wednesday night simplex net on 147.09. You may find that dialing up 147.09 on your VFO forces the repeater offset that you don't want, and you need to figure out how to override it. That can be the hard part.

"F" KEY

If you've figured out how to do that on your radio, congratulations! If not, we'll try to explain it here for some of the better known models. To start, here's the secret for Yaesu's popular FT-65 handheld. To make a simplex memory on 147.09 mHz:

1. With the radio in memory mode ("m" on the left in the display), use the up-down arrows to determine the memory number you will want for the new simplex memory.

2. Press the V/M key to enter the VFO mode (the "m" disappears). You may need to tap the BAND key if you're not in the 2 meter frequency range.

3. Enter "147090" on the keypad. The display shows 147.090 with a "+" offset.

4. Press and hold the "F" key (lowest button on left side) to enter the "Set" mode.

5. Use the up-down arrows to select *Set 24: Repeater*. Tap the F key once to enter menu #24.

6. "ARS (**A**utomatic **R**epeater **S**hift): ON" will be selected (small arrow).   Tap the F key once – "ON" begins to blink. Tap one of the arrow keys to select "OFF," which is also blinking. Tap the F key once to set it—the blinking stops and ARS remains OFF.

7. Move the small arrow to "+REP," and tap the F key to change it. Use an up-down arrow to select SIMPLEX, then tap the F key.

8. Press and hold the F key to exit the repeater menu, then again to exit the menu system. The display should show 147.090 with no offset.

9. Press and hold the V/M button. A channel number will appear on the left side of the display. Use the up-down arrows to select your memory channel per step 1, then press and hold V/M.

10. The display returns to 147.090 in VFO mode. Tap V/M. Your new memory number should show 147.090 with no offset. Tap V/M again to return to VFO mode.

11. You still have ARS disabled in VFO mode per step 6. Be certain that you are in VFO mode, then select 147.090 if it's not displayed. Repeat steps 4 and 5 to reenter the repeater menu.

12. Repeat steps 6 and 7 to reset ARS to ON and MODE to "+Rep."

13. Press and hold the F key to exit the repeater menu, the again to return to the VFO display. 147.090 should now show the + offset, which is normal.

14. Tap V/M and confirm that your new simplex memory still has no offset.

Note: the foregoing is for creating a dedicated simplex memory on a normal repeater frequency. You can instead do a simpler one-time manual setting by bringing up your repeater memory for 147.09, then temporarily changing its mode to SIMPLEX per steps 4, 5, 7, and 8 above (skip step 6). When done, repeat the procedure to manually reset the mode to "+Rep." The problem with that shortcut is that you *must* remember to reset it when done, or your 147.09 repeater memory won't work. Experience has shown that going to the trouble to create a separate dedicated memory for simplex is the better choice

This has been the procedure for just one radio, and many of them require a similar process. We'll show how it's done on some of the others in future newsletters or possibly on a dedicated page elsewhere on our website. Meanwhile, tell us about any radio you have for which you need simplex programming help. Even better, if you have one that also requires trickery to turn a repeater frequency into simplex and you've figured it out yourself, please let us know so we can share it.

(Thanks to K6WEL for the loan of his FT-65 in order to prepare this article.)

New hams: come to the Tech Net, Monday at 7:00 pm

New or recently licensed hams, this is for you. Mark your calendar and check in on our *Technical Net*, each Monday evening starting at 1900 hours (7:00 pm) on the W6SF repeater, 147.165 mHz, PL 107.2 Hz.

That net's primary purpose is to give new operators like you some easy on-the-air experience, and to provide guidance in learning about ham radio technology, operations, and procedures.

The "Tech Net" is your perfect opportunity to become familiar with amateur radio basics and to overcome any reluctance you might have to push that transmit switch on your radio for the first time. When the net control station invites check-ins from new hams, just press your push-to-talk button and state your call sign, your name, and your city or other location.

We hope to hear you next Monday on the Tech Net.

> The W6SF repeater is at Fiddletown, about 35 miles northeast of Lodi.

Improvements to our website: https://lodiarc.org
(Click the link)

Besides this newsletter, you will find several enhancements on our website, including:

- A membership roster link via the "Member Pages" tab. (Find yourself on the page.)
- Links to our club Constitution and Bylaws via the "Member Pages" tab.
- An improved new member application form via the "Join" tab at the top.
- A home page link for upcoming license testing opportunities.
- Several obsolete links removed and/or replaced on various tabs.
- A revised "Contact" page, with messages directed to specific club officers. A copy of any message goes to the secretary in order to ensure nothing gets missed.

In addition, N6GKJ and KG7OR are working more or less continuously on further additions and improvements, which will be announced on our nets and in future newsletters. Stay tuned!

From the club president

I am a relative newcomer to amateur radio—got my Tech license in 2009. I remember my first Field Day with the Lodi ARC. A handful of members met in the parking lot of Hutchins Street Square. I had no idea what was going on and no one seemed willing to clue me in. My impressions may have been wrong, but the end result was the same—I didn't feel like I was part of the activity. Everyone, veterans and new members alike, should know, that this club has been revitalized in the last ten years. With the help of all of you, we have developed a community that supports local hams and welcomes new members. *Thank you* to those who have contributed your time and energy to the club, and to those who will step up in the future.

Of course, the current Covid-19 situation puts a strain on our club; there's a lot we can't do until things improve. Still, we can make it work with the situation that we have; that's what hams *do.* Examples:

- Use your radio. Check into the our nets. I am especially proud of the success of the simplex net.
- The repeater is often very quiet. *Use it*.
- Get involved. Your time and ideas are unique and valuable to the club.
- Stay informed.   Our secretary provides excellent email updates, and the newsletter we've just rolled out should become a monthly habit for you.
- Attend the Zoom meetings. It's not the same as a face to face meeting, but we make it work.
- Help a new ham (or an old one!). We can all learn from each other. Each of us has one or more particular radio talents that can benefit others. Share the wealth.

I hope all of you stay well and I look forward to seeing you at the Zoom meeting on August 6th. As my childhood hero used to say, "Happy Trails to you until we meet again."

—73, Barry, K6ZZD

Operating on the simplex net

Our Wednesday night simplex net at 6:30 pm is a type of emergency operations net. The FCC defines ham radio as a "service," and we need to be able to demonstrate that we can provide it under various conditions. One of those is the failure of the repeater we most often use, whether we're doing so for emergency assistance, casual QSOs, or anything else.

That's why we go to the trouble to configure our radios to work on the repeater's output frequency, which can be a challenge in some cases. If the repeater can't help us talk, then we need to use what we have get it done, and that means basic radio—the simplex mode.

Here are some pointers for good operating procedures on the net. Following these hints will help ensure that the net runs as smoothly as possible during an emergency, whether real or for practice.

1. Prior to the start of the net, make sure your radio is configured for simplex on 147.09 mHz. Programming a dedicated simplex memory in advance is preferable to simply canceling the offset on your normal memory channel for the repeater.

2. Operate your radio at maximum transmitter power, even if you're receiving strong signals from others. You can't predict how everyone out there is hearing you; there may be someone who can't read you on low power—give them every watt you can muster because it may make a difference.

3. It's a directed net, so don't transmit unless called or authorized by the net control station (NCS). If you don't hear your call sign during the check-in process, wait for "*missed or late check-ins,*" then make your call.

4. When checking in, give the NCS a signal report on his transmission and report the signal of other stations if requested. There may be one or more stations that some operators can't hear well, so it's useful for the NCS to know who can and cannot copy a particular station in order to arrange relays.

5. The NCS calls a station and you hear that operator check in, but the NCS does not—he will then call for a relay. If you heard the other station well enough to understand him, key your mic. and say "Relay," followed by your call sign and your signal report on the other station. You may then be asked to serve as the relay station between the NCS and the other operator.

I want to thank those of you who have been checking into the net; it's been a success so far. As N6TCE mentions in his article below, we'd love to have other volunteers for net control. Please let Bob know if your station is well equipped and you're willing to give it a try.   —73, Ron, N6GKJ

An offer you can't refuse....

Remember that <u>new</u> members joining the club during any month have their dues paid up though the end of the <u>following</u> year—a great deal! If you or anyone you know is a candidate for membership, now's the time. See our new member form: **click here**.

From your net manager

"CQ DE N6TCE"

The job of the club's net manager is to make sure our nets operate as scheduled and to assign the net control station (NCS) for each session. Our nets serve as mini-club meetings, and they showcase the fabric of the club, serving as a way for outsiders to notice and evaluate us. If they observe an active an effective net, it typifies a club that might be attractive to new hams.

The Wednesday night simplex net is an example of a special purpose net. Others include nets established to aid in public events, such as parades and rural bike rides. Those and our regular weekly nets need capable NCS operators. Our club net on Wednesday night at 7:00 has four volunteers who rotate the duty, and we'd like to have more. The same is true on the 6:30 simplex net, where N6GKJ has had all of the NCS duty since inception.

The NCS job isn't at all difficult; you work from a prepared script that anyone can follow. There are some simple procedures to maintain control of the net, as you've observed as a net participant or simply by listening. If you're willing to at least consider helping us out as an NCS, please contact me to talk it over. Catch me on the net or **send an email**.   —73, Bob, N6TCE

VE exams in Stockton Saturday, August 8th

at the Stockton Sailing Club, 4980 Buckley Cove Way
(west end of March Lane)

The Stockton-Delta club's VE team will conduct free amateur radio license exams on Saturday morning, August 8th. Separate one-hour test sessions will commence at 9:00, 10:00, 11:00 and 12:00, and advance registration is required. Due to limited seating, you may be assigned to any of the four sessions. Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes in advance. To register or get more information, **click here**.

Covid-19 prevention procedures will be in force – bring and wear your mask.

The previously scheduled HamCram and VE tests at the Stockton Fire Department station #2 on this date have been canceled.

Late news: just before this newsletter was ready to post, N6TCE advised that he has obtained a former call sign of Shirl Rose, AA6K (SK), who had been a very popular and active member of the Stockton-Delta club. The memorial station is **AD6KU,** and you can check it out now on **QRZ.com**.

ABOUT THE LODI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Web: **https://lodiarc.org**
Email: **LodiHams@gmail.com**

The Lodi A.R.C. is an association of licensed amateur radio operators and others interested in amateur radio. We are formed in order to provide volunteer radio communication services during emergency situations and public activities, to render assistance by radio to visitors and travelers, and to aid our members in the practice of amateur radio, including public service, education, technical advancement, and recreation. Club meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month commencing at 6:30 pm. Meetings are currently conducted online via Zoom until such time as in-person meetings can resume.

To read or download our constitution and bylaws, click the links: **Constitution   Bylaws**
They can also be accessed from our home page: click the *Member Pages* tab, then the desired link.

Our 2020 Board of Directors:

President: **Barry Marson, K6ZZD**   Immediate Past President: **Emilia Seiferling, KI6YYT**
Vice President: **Mike Dugger, K6AAN**   Technical Committee Manager: **Mark Cloud, W6SXA**
Secretary: **Jim Seiferling, WB6BET**   Net Operations Committee Manager: **Bob Officer, N6TCE**
Treasurer: **Ron Russell, KG7OR**   Media Committee Manager: **Ron Simpson, N6GKJ**

To contact any board member, send an email message to LodiHams@gmail.com or click the *Contact* tab on our home page.

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The goals of this newsletter are (1) to fully inform the members about our activities, (2) to support the club's principles stated above, and (3) to provide a useful resource for all hams in the surrounding area. Submissions of any kind are desired and welcome; use the email ID above. We'll appreciate mention in other club newsletters or on websites and will reciprocate. Here are a few to start:

Stockton-Delta A.R.C. "Flysheet"   **Stanislaus A.R.A "Readout"**   **Calaveras A.R.S. website**

Mother Load DX/Contest Club "Nugget"   **Northern Calif. Contest Club "Jug"**

For us, just link our home page (above) where the *Newsletter* tab will be found.

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