



Simi Settlers' Amateur Radio Club

Short Circuit

May 2021

Programs

Static & Sparks

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As we go to press, no speakers are lined up for May. Heard any good stories? How about a video tour of your shack?

Thanks to past presenters:
March -

Meetings

The May general meeting is Thursday the 13th via Zoom.

The May board meeting will be on Thursday the 27 th via Zoom.

If you did not get an invite for any meeting, send an email to our president, Brian at km6min_bh@yahoo.com. We are happy to have you!

President Brian - KM6MIN

"Happy may everybody!

Almost halfway through the year and things are starting to look like change is happening soon. We received some good news about the senior center, fingers crossed that we can do in person meetings within the next couple of months.

Welcome to the new members of the club. Great to hear that even during a pandemic the Simi Settlers are still picking up new members. We do meet in person too! I promise.

As always, take care everybody, stay safe, stay healthy and stay hydrated.

Brian Hernandez

KM6MIN

General Meetings
Time: 7:00pm on the 2nd
Thursday of every month.
Held via Zoom.

May 2021

Nets of Interest

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
LSB Net 8pm 3.908 MHz SSARC 2 Meter Net* 8:30 pm SMRA-ERN Repeater 146.805 -0.6MHz PL100.0 or 445.580 -5.0MHz PL100.0 The Newbie net 7 pm, Bozo Repeater 147.885 (– 127.3)	Condor Connection 7pm (Plays Newsline) Frazier Mountain 224.720-1.6 MHz PL156.7	LSB Net 8pm 3.908 MHz ACS Area 1 Simi Valley SMRA-ERN 7:05pm Repeater 146.805 -0.6MHz PL100.0 or 445.580 -5.0MHz PL100.0 ATN-CA Net 7:30pm http://atn-tv.org/netnight.htm ACS Area 1 Simplex net, 6:45 PM on 145.510MHz	Channel Islands chapter 10-10 International 28.34 MHz at 10AM and 6PM Mesh IRC Net. 6-10 PM Mesh VOIP Net* 8pm 2.4/5.8 GHz Mesh	LSB Net 8pm 3.908 MHz		SSARC SSB HF Net 8:30am 7.240 (+ or - QRM/N) 40 meter CW-QRP 9am 7.032 MHz Quad Squad net 1PM on 21.365 MHz's

Additional information on local nets can be found on the CVARC web site at: <http://www.cvarc.org>

* For more information, see <http://www.pvarc.club/mesh/mesh-applications/>

Sunday Night Net Control Operators

Thanks to our fine Net Control Operators: Steve, KE6WEZ; Rick, W6DQE; Ray, KI6LKD; Jay, AG6JF, Brian KM6MIN and Dante, KK6JCQ.

ACS/ARES Corner

We are always looking for ACS members that would like to become Net Controllers. You will receive hands on training at the Simi Valley PD (where we normally conduct the Weekly Net). It is both fun and at times challenging. You will gain valuable experience in running a controlled Net as well as becoming more than just familiar with the equipment in the Radio Room at the PD. If you would like to volunteer for this, let me know -

ke6wez@gmail.com

If anyone is interested in how to setup your own packet station, RMS Winlink station, or a Mesh Node, let me know and we can get you started in the proper direction.

NOTE: Please be advised that we hold the Tue. countywide net at 19:30 (7:30PM) on the Sulphur Mountain WD6EBY repeater 145.200, minus 600 KHz offset, CTCSS of 127.3. Until further notice, this will be our standard frequency for countywide communications.

- Steve King KE6WEZ (ke6wez@gmail.com)



Upcoming ACS/ARES Events:

1. New Winlink PO in VC - AG6AG-10 Packet Winlink
2. Saturday, May 8th, 2021 Red Cross Drill
3. Sat. 5/30/2021 Mountain to Beach Marathon

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Events

Thursday, May 6, 2021, 6:00pm SSARC Pizza Night

Toppers Pizza, 2408 Erringer Rd, Simi Valley (even months)

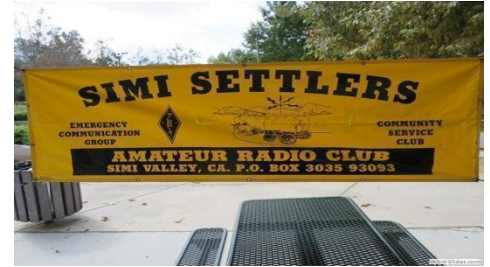
Mod Pizza, 2941 Cochran St, Unit 1A, Simi Valley (odd months)

Thursday, May 13, 2021, 7:00pm SSARC General Meeting

Via Zoom

Thursday, May 27, 2021, 7:00pm SSARC Board Meeting

Via Zoom.



Projects

Projects listed here are intended to peak your interest. Ask questions or submit your entry for the next newsletter.

Conejo Mountain SOTA Activation

By Ron Nelson K6RIN

Nearly every SOTA activation that I have completed has at least one highlight that makes the hobby ever more rewarding. There are always new lessons learned, and this activation was no exception.

On March 31, I set out on another SOTA (Summits on the Air) adventure climbing and activating Conejo Mountain in the western Conejo Valley. This is a fairly easy hike with a roundtrip distance of five miles and 1,151 feet of elevation gain. The peak sits at 1,814 feet above sea level. It provides commanding views of the Conejo Valley, Camarillo and the Oxnard Plains, and the Pacific Ocean along with the view of the Channel Islands off the coast.

One of the biggest challenges on this particular day were the Santa Ana winds that had come up overnight. There were wind gusts exceeding 50 mph at the top of the mountain, which made keeping my inverted V linked wire dipole antenna in the air very difficult.

Now for the Highlight...While operating on 20-meters SSB, I made contact with Denny, KN6KNE, who was aero-mobile. He was the first-officer (co-pilot) on board an American Airlines Boeing 737 commercial aircraft, flying over northern Texas in route to John Wayne airport in Orange County. We each reported a 5/9 signal both ways. During our QSO, a large wind gust blew my antenna mast down and the entire wire dipole ended up on the ground. I continued transmitting to Denny explaining my antenna dilemma and he came back to me that he could still hear me just as fine as before. I could still hear him as well. Who knew that a signal could get out with a dipole wire antenna spread out on the ground.

Denny explained that the Boeing aircraft comes equipped with a Rockwell-Collins 400 watt HF transceiver. He was intrigued with the radio equipment, but was told he could not use it without a license or active emergency situation. It was then that he got his ham radio license and he now regularly makes contacts while flying across country.

The Boeing aircraft includes an HF antenna built into the vertical tail and the leading edge of the wing. An automatic tuner allows the antenna to be used quickly on many HF bands.

Who knew that pilots can use ham radio equipment while ferrying their unsuspecting passengers across the sky? The more I learn about Ham Radio, the more I realize that there is so much more to learn about the hobby.

Here is a view from the top of Conejo Mountain:



73, Ron Nelson K6RIN

From Orv W6BI:

Local Repeater News

DARN has installed a new repeater in Ventura County. It went active on April 23, on South Mountain. It's on 447.380 with a PL of 100.0 Hz. It covers Simi Valley fairly well. If you're a member of DARN, check it out. If you're not a member of DARN, I encourage you to consider joining. The dues aren't onerous, they have very wide coverage in L.A. County and points south and east, and are improving their coverage in Ventura County. With luck, they'll have a DARN repeater on Chatsworth Peak by the end of the summer!

While the PVARC (EBY) UHF repeater on South Mountain (447.48, 156.7 Hz PL) is working well, the 2m repeater (147.060 MHz, 127.3 Hz PL) is struggling with antenna problems. They hope to repair that issue in the next few weeks.

Winlink in the County

More county stations are coming up on Winlink, the messaging system that's uniquely adapted for emergency communications. To be able to use Winlink, the bare minimum requirement is to load Winlink Express on (ideally) a Windows 10 system. With it you can send and receive Winlink email. But without a radio connection all email goes and comes via the Internet.

In order to be able to pass traffic via ham radio, you need either (or both):

- A 2 meter radio and some sort of a modem. The Signalink USB is liked for that, and the VARA FM modem is just a piece of software.
 - Signalink USB - \$150
 - VARA FM modem software - \$65 – moves data 4-5 times faster than packet radio
 - or a TNC for 1200 baud packet radio
 - 2 meter radio - \$0, or Alinco DR135 \$170 (very popular for VARA FM)

A mesh network connection, allowing you to join the ham network. That requires:

- Mikrotik hAP AC Lite - \$50
- Ubiquiti or Mikrotik outdoor wireless AP \$100-\$150
- Outdoor Ethernet cable - \$30-\$50, depending on length

This assumes you have line of sight connection to one of the county hilltop nodes. Most of Simi Valley is covered by one of the three nodes on the perimeter of the city. (There are many other network resources available once you have a link established).

Once you have an RF connection, you can move traffic over RF via Winlink to one of the Winlink Post Offices.

These Ventura County ham stations are registered as Winlink stations with these communications modes (there may be others beyond this list):

Packet

AG6AG-10

W6KME-10

ARDOP HF

W6BI - 80/40/20

KE6NYT - 40

VARA HF

W6BI – 80/40/20

AG6AG - 80

VARA FM

W6RH-10

W6BI-10

Mesh Network (Winlink Post Office)

W6BI-Shack-PC

K6PVR-SVR

In case of a wide-spread Internet outage, these stations have the ability to move text traffic out of the affected area via ham radio, to a Winlink station that does offer Internet forwarding.

73

Orv W6BI

orv.beach@gmail.com

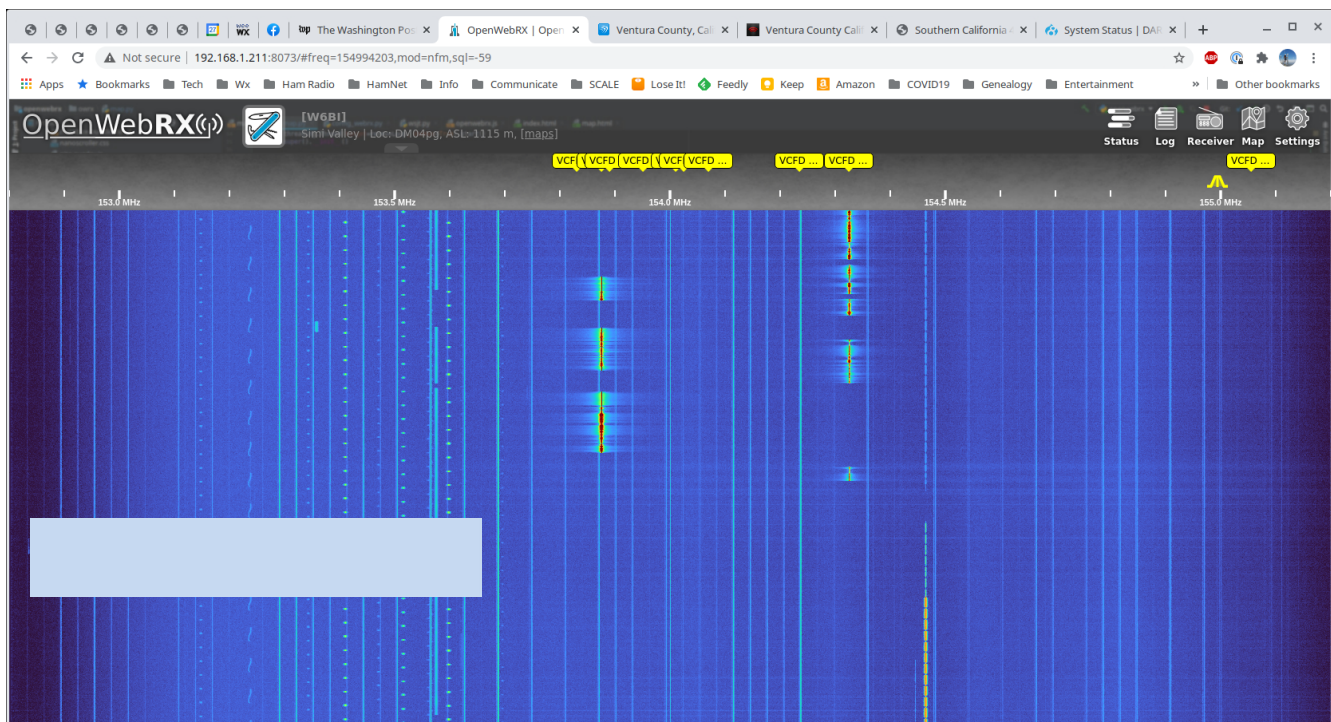
Ham Network News

SDR-based RF scanner.

I've been playing with scanner software that uses an RTL-SDR (software-defined radio) USB dongle. They look like this:



This particular one is considered higher quality than most, and as a result is a bit more expensive: \$25 :-). Most of them have a connector for an external antenna but this particular one has an SMA connector. It also has a metal enclosure, which provides better shielding than a plastic enclosure, which many of them use.



There are all sorts of software packages for both Windows and Linux supporting these SDRs. The one I chose is called “openwebrx”. It’s one of the few that’s web based and the only one that supports multiple users.

It’s currently running on a Raspberry Pi 4 (small computer) in my shack, hooked to a mag mount antenna on an outside air conditioner. With that setup, it hears pretty well.

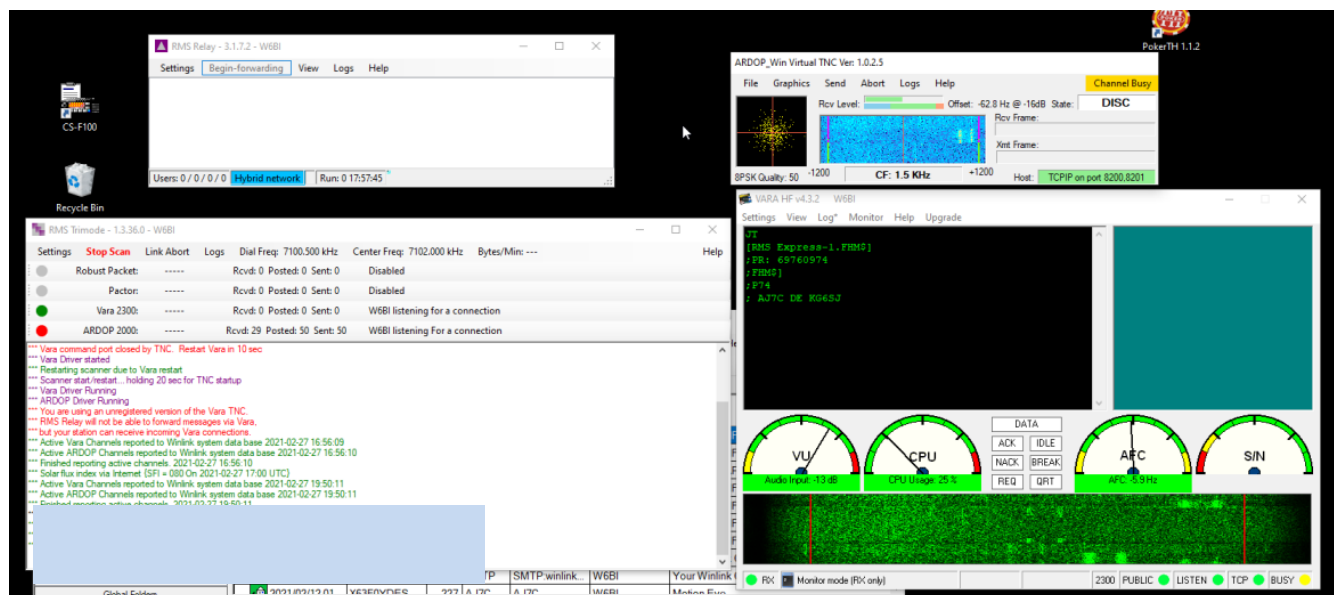
I plan to move it to the Simi North radio site soon (north of the north end of Sycamore Road). There it will be sitting on the ham radio mesh network and available to all users on the network (not just in Simi Valley).

The radio cabinet at Simi North was put up there in 1988 for the Simi Valley 2 meter and 220 repeaters. The repeaters are long gone, but fortuitously there’s an NMO mount and whip on the top of the enclosure. It was connected to a 220 MHz receiver for “out of band” repeater management (a legal requirement back then). It’ll be an excellent antenna for the scanner. And because the Simi North site is elevated a few hundred feet above the surrounding terrain it will hear radio signals very well.

PVARC (the Pleasant Valley ARC) has a similar setup at the Reeves Road site, but it’s an older RTL-SDR and its Raspberry Pi is a Model 3, which is a bit underpowered for the SDR software. So both will be getting upgrades. That particular site’s SDR monitor is available over the Internet, if you know the secret URL :-). (It will be made less secret after it’s fully functional!)

Other news

I’ve added an HF Gateway to my Winlink setup in my shack. It’s scanning 40 and 20 meters waiting for connections, using both ARDOP (“Amateur Radio Digital Open Protocol”) and “VARA HF”. VARA HF is a newer protocol for transmitting data. While not nearly as fast as the mesh network, it’s considerably faster than the old 300 baud HF packet radio. I’ll be adding VARA FM soon on 2 meters. A number of hams in Ventura County have adopted it for use with Winlink.



73
Orv
W6BI

From Brian KM6MIN,

On March 28 a handful of members from the club came together to help Rick W6DQE put up a 3 element beam antenna.

Myself, Brian KM6MIN alongside Bill AB6BW, Jay AG6JF, Ray KI6LKD and Ron K6RIN came together on bright sunny Sunday afternoon to help Rick put up an antenna that he had set up, but just needed the extra manpower to pull it up to be mounted.

With everybody's help, we lifted up the antenna, moved it to position without hitting the fence or house (its that big) and set it down again. Some planning minutes later and we decided its light enough to hoist overhead. With a rope tied to its middle, held by Jay, we lifted it high enough for Rick to grab and work with while on the roof.?

Then came the important step: turn the meat. What meat? Oh, the tri-tip Rick offered for a job well done. With some supervision from Ray (because sometimes I drop things) I turned the meat. By this time most of us on the floor we're just observing while the antenna was being mounted to the mast.

Some testing later and everything works like its supposed to!

And the tri-tip was delicious!

Thanks Rick!

Here are some photos from the day:

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Letter From The Editor

Please submit articles, pictures, etc. on things of interest to our SSARC community for publication to me at ericoberg1@gmail.com. Such items may discuss your recent antenna project, shack modifications, new operating modes, anecdotes from portable field operations, and so forth. A picture with a caption works. A few sentences strung together works. A few paragraphs, a few pages with detailed illustrations.... It's all good.

73, Eric KE6MLF

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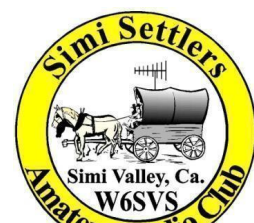
Simi Settlers Amateur Radio Club General Membership Meeting, April 8, 2021

- Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by President, Brian Hernandez, KM6MIN. Brian welcomed everyone to the meeting, held over the internet using Zoom. 7 Officers and Board Members/Advisors were present. The total attendance was approx. 19.
- Secretary:** Minutes from the March General Meeting have been published in the April newsletter.
- Treasurer:** Treasurer Glenn Daly, WA6GNB, reported the account balance as (not recorded). He welcomed new members Barry and Carolyn Isseks who recently joined the Club. Glenn also said he expects to receive the annual billing for the Club's insurance policy. It was MSP to approve the Treasurer's Report.
- Membership:** Membership chairman Jim Parker, KJ6LXJ, said he has added Barry Isseks, K6ZA, and Carolyn Isseks, WA2DXH, to the Membership Roster. In addition, the April Club newsletter will be posted on the website.
- Publicity:** PIO, Linda Parker, said she has made calls to the Simi Valley Senior Center to ask when the Center might re-open for our Club meetings. So far, she has not received any response.
- Newsletter:** Editor Eric Oberg, KE6MLF, said the April newsletter has been posted on the new 'groups.io' page that Orv Beach set up for the Club. The name of the page is: SimiSettlers@groups.io. Eric also mentioned that he has a new job working in Camarillo.
- Program:** President Brian said we have no guest speaker for this meeting, so he invited members in the zoom meeting to tell us about any recent projects or activities they have been doing.
- Orv Beach said that he and his son along with Bill Woods and Eric Oberg will have an antenna party at his home on Saturday. (April 10, 2021)
 - Barry Isseks, W6ZA introduced himself and said he has moved here from Walnut Creek in the S.F. East Bay area.
 - Bill Woods, AB6BW, talked about helping Jim Hutchinson, KI6MZ, with problems Jim has been having getting into Zoom Meetings. Bill also said he participated in the ACS O.R.T. last week at Simi Valley Hospital and was unable to access the MESH node.
 - Eric talked about his new Raspberry Pi 4. He has set it up with an SDR dongle that down-converts radio signals through a USB interface. Software then displays signals in a waterfall where they can be selected. Later in the meeting Eric shared his screen to demo the SDR waterfall display and the decoding of signals.
 - Ron Nelson, K6RIN, reminded us that May 15 will be National Peace Officers Memorial Day and he plans to operate a Special Event station at the Simi Valley P.D. Ron invited members to join him in this activity.
- Field Day:** Stu Sheldon, AG6AG, mentioned that Field Day this year will be Saturday and Sunday, June 26-27. He asked Vern Potter, W6NCT, Field Day chairman for VCARS, to give a report on planning for this year. Vern said that the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library is within weeks of re-opening at 25% capacity and with new protocols. Vern is waiting for a response from the Library about a possible group activity like Field Day. If it can be done, operators will need to be vaccinated. He is looking for alternate sites and has poll questions on a VCARS groups.io page for Field Day. Vern will post info from the Reagan Library when he gets it.
- Member Drawing:** Brian made the drawing for the progressive Membership drawing and reported the winning name was Patrick O'Bryan, WB6USZ. Patrick was logged into this Zoom meeting, so he won the \$40 prize. The prize amount will now reset to \$10 for our May meeting. While the Club continues to hold meetings on Zoom, members must be logged into the meeting to win. The prize amount grows by \$10 each month it is unclaimed.
- Adjournment:** The Zoom meeting was adjourned at 7:58 pm. Submitted by: Secretary, John Percival, WI6O

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Simi Settlers' Amateur Radio Club Web Page: <http://www.simisetters.org/index.htm>
 Simi Settlers' ARC Yahoo Group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SimiSettlersARC>
 Mail: P.O. Box 2125 Simi Valley, CA 93062-2125

Simi Settlers' Leadership				
President	Brian Hernandez	KM6MIN	(805) 813-7595	km6min_bh@yahoo.com
Vice President	VACANT			
Secretary	John Percival	WI6O		johnspercival1@gmail.com
Treasurer	Glenn Daly	WA6GNB		gnb.2112@yahoo.com
Committee Chairpersons				
Webmaster	Jim Parker	KJ6LXJ	(805) 368-6745 cell	kj6lxj@gmail.com
Newsletter	Eric Oberg	KE6MLF	(805) 791-0745 cell	ericoberg1@gmail.com
Membership	Jim Parker	KJ6LXJ	(805) 368-6745 cell	kj6lxj@gmail.com
PIO	Linda Parker		(805) 558-1731 cell	kj6lxj@gmail.com
Raffle Prizes	Rick Galbraith	W6DQE	(805) 433-4513 cell	rick@keymaterial.com
Youth Coordinator	VACANT			
Historian	Mike Tweedy	KV6I		mtweedy@roadrunner.com
Net Coordinator	Brian Hernandez	KM6MIN	(805) 813-7595	
Net Coordinator	Steve King	KE6WEZ		ke6wez@gmail.com
Food Services	Bill Everett	KI6KSV		ki6ksv@gmail.com
Room Coordinator	Linda Parker		(805) 558-1731 cell	kj6lxj@gmail.com
Elmers and Members at Large				
Past-President	Bill Woods	AB6BW	(818) 694-9019cell	AB6BW1@gmail.com
Elmer	VACANT			
Advisor	Bill Everett	KI6KSV		wildpoky45@earthlink.net
Advisor	Jim Hutchinson	KI6MZ		jhutch17@adelphia.net
Advisor	Brad Rife	KI6KSY		speedy@earthlink.net



Simi Settlers Amateur Radio Club

P.O. Box 2125 Simi Valley, Ca 93062-2125 --- (www.simisettlers.org)

Membership Application

Type of Application:

New Member ☐
Renewal ☐

Type of Membership:

Individual (\$18/yr) ☐
Family (\$20/yr) ☐

Name: _____ Day & Month of Birth: _____
(Omit year)

Call: _____ Class: _____ ARRL: Yes ☐ No ☐

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Alt. Phone: (____) _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Additional Family Members:

Name: _____ Day & Month of Birth: _____
(Omit year)

Call: _____ Class: _____ ARRL: Yes ☐ No ☐

Name: _____ Day & Month of Birth: _____
(Omit year)

Call: _____ Class: _____ ARRL: Yes ☐ No ☐

Name: _____ Day & Month of Birth: _____
(Omit year)

Call: _____ Class: _____ ARRL: Yes ☐ No ☐

Badges requested: Yes ☐ No ☐ How many? _____ X \$18.00 = \$ _____

Name (s) Call(s): _____

Shirts requested: Yes ☐ No ☐ How many? _____ X \$35.00 = \$ _____

Name (s) Call(s) Size(s) (Sm, Med, L, XL, etc): _____

Jackets Requested: Yes ☐ No ☐ How many? _____ X \$88.00 = \$ _____

Name (s) Call(s) Size(s) (Sm, Med, L, XL, etc): _____

OFFICE USE ONLY

Application type: New ☐ Renewal ☐ Membership type: Individual ☐ Family ☐

Date Received: _____ Amount Received: _____ Database completed: _____

Badges and Shirts ordered: _____

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