



RACES – Mountain District – Mile High Radio Club

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www.milehighradioclub.org

Repeater Station WA6SSS 146.895 (-) pl 118.8

A non-profit 501 c 3 status organization



President's Message

What a month this has been, the Mile High Radio Club (MHRC) has been busy. Between the Idyllwild Cycling – Spring Challenge mountain bike race course communications, testing new frequencies for the portable repeater builds to hosting a ham radio class.

Early in the year, several people from our mountain community came to Bill Baker KN6JV Riverside County RACES – Mountain District – Emergency Coordinator and asked if he would conduct another introductory ham radio class. I think the recent rash of earthquakes and the increased interest in emergency preparedness had something to do with their asking. In spite of the naysayers who said nobody would come, eventually we had a total of 28 people sign up for the class for the month of May.

Also, Reba Coulter with the Idyllwild Rotary Club has a grant for assisting with Fire Abatement for the local camps, which includes money for education and promotion of safety. She determined that communication during disasters was a very important part in keeping camp residents safe and added her request for a radio class. Of the 28 enlisted for the class, 10 of them were individuals from the local camps sponsored by this grant. The grant provided for their books, license exam fees and will buy amateur radios for the camps to be used by these individuals.

Bill Baker had an introductory meeting in late April to explain to people what would be taught in the class, but stressed their success depended on continued studying and taking practice tests through out the three weeks. He provided course books, which they purchased and study aids in the form of DVDs, which he created. He held 3 classes at the Idyllwild Fire Department training room on three consecutive Saturdays during the month of May.

On the third Saturday, half of the students took the test for a Technician Class license approved by the FCC. On Sunday, the rest of the students took the test and all students on both days passed!!! Two of the 28 students were unable to take the test because of illness or job obligations, but we now have 26 new ham radio operators throughout the mountain communities. Eight of them are from the local camps.

The tests were administered by Volunteer Examiners (VE's) accredited by the FCC. This team of examiners was headed up by Al Toering N6TEZ. His team consisted of VE's; Bill Baker KN6JV, Vi Hallacy K6VBH, Don and Kathy Hamilton (AD6NP & KA6MOM) and Chris Johnson KI6LOD. Each of the tests must be reviewed for score by a minimum of three VE's before the results are official.

The VE's also administered tests for advanced license levels (General and Extra) to five walk-ins who already had their Technician or General license. These people studied on their own to advance their knowledge of radio technology. Passing a more advanced test, thus achieving General or an Extra license status enables them legally to use a broader range of frequency bands that cover distances clear across the country and in some cases, other countries. The value of this increased capability to communicate



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great distances has been demonstrated over and over again in disasters around the world. We commend these people for their diligence in learning more about radio communications and advancing their skills.

Carl Gardenias WU6D ARRL Section Orange Manager sent his congratulations to Bill for his 80th birthday and 26 new amateur Technicians. “It is not everyday that someone as devoted as Bill can accomplish so much. On top of that the Rotary club giving so generously to the hams.”

Incredible success goes out to Bill Baker from Bill Pratts K6ACJ ARRL Affiliated Club Coordinator; “26 out of 26 is a record that’s hard to beat. I’m really encouraged to see the community help this group through sponsorship and material support, these are actions that are new to me.”

Don and Kathy Hamilton, of Anza and Idyllwild commented; “Due to the excellent teacher, Bill Baker one hundred percent of the people who took the class and test passed! That is some record. Congratulations to all of the new Hams and to the teacher. Looking forward to hearing all of the new Hams over the air, especially on the Anza and Idyllwild repeaters.” The VE’s also commented; “that never in all the years they have been testing, have they had all the students pass.”

Harold Witten RACES Deputy Chief – Eastern District had this to say; “Actually it does not surprise me about Bill Baker’s success with the class. While a true Amateur Radio operator, he is also a true professional. I have always admired his leadership skills. The Mountain District is lucky to have Mr. Baker KN6JV among them.”

What a triumph for Bill Baker, the students for passing their tests and all who supported this effort.

Vi Hallacy K6VBH
MHRC President
RACES – Mountain District – AEC