



General Contact:
VCARA
PO Box 268
Peralta, NM 87042
Website:
www.kc5our.com

Upcoming Events:

- VCARA Club Meeting
August 23, 2011
7:00PM Local Time
Calvary Chapel, 19381
NM 314 in Belen

All parties interesting
Amateur Radio are
Welcome to Attend.

- Coffee Klatch
There will be a Coffee
Klatch on the following
dates, at 2:00 PM. The
location is the Village
Inn in Los Lunas at the
corner of Main Street
and Los Lentos Road

Wed, August 24
Wed, September 7
Wed, September 21

- Wednesday Night Net
Every Wednesday at
8:00PM on the Club
Repeater

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Rocky Mountain Region Ham Convention, Taos, NM

Cliff, KE0CP, VCARA President

The Convention started Friday afternoon,
August 5 and ended at Noon on Sunday.
Sandwiched in between was a ham's nir-
vana. Lots of vendor stuff to buy, numer-
ous seminars and plenty of people to
meet and share stories with. And lots of
wild antennas on trucks and cars.

The seminars focused on several major
tracks: ARES, DX/Contesting, QRP and D-
STAR. I primarily attended the ARES and
D-STAR sessions. There was also the
portable W1AW station open to all li-
censed hams. Margette and I popped into
the trailer that housed the station at the
moment a young ham, perhaps 14 years

old, had just completed a SSB contact
with a crew member of an AirBus com-
mercial flight over Canada. His excite-
ment typified the feeling a lot of us have
experienced in this hobby and set the
tone for a great two days.

Late afternoon on Thursday, prior to the
official beginning of the Convention we
wandered into a clearing where Ollie Eis-
man, Aj10 had his 1973 Pinzgauer 4WD
Austrian military vehicle set up for satel-
lite communication. The several antennae
on the attached trailer were impressive so
I just had to stop. After bending his ear
for quite a while we decided to return
later in the weekend to try our hand at
holding a short

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Presidents Corner

Cliff, KE0CP, VCARA President

It was Sunday and it rained. One of the
first real rains we've had since my wife
and I moved to Belen late last year. Little
did I know it would change the direction
of my tenure as President of the VCARA.

Monday morning I reported for work
across the street from the building that
housed our clubhouse in downtown Belen.
About 7:45 AM I had a feeling I should go
over and check things out. As I unlocked
the rear door, I thought someone left a
radio on. Loud static came from the hall-
way. Rounding the corner I ran into a del-
uge coming from the ceiling. Water was
everywhere, ceiling, walls and floor. It
was serious.

Since that morning I've been in contact
with several people in the Belen city gov-
ernment. As of this writing no one is cer-
tain what will be done with the building.
To fix or not to fix, that is the question.
We hastily met in the adjacent fire station
for our last meeting. Our August 23rd

meeting will be at the Calvary Chapel Rio
Grande at 19381 Highway 85 (314) in the
old Wal-Mart building. Use the Club re-
peater on 146.700 if you need a call-in.
We've stored the equipment which was
not damaged. But we're homeless.

The simplest solution would be to con-
tinue meeting in churches or other public
buildings while we wait to see what hap-
pens to the old clubhouse. My guess is
that we may not know for months and it
may take months more for the City Coun-
cil to approve renovation plans, etc.
Rather than wait passively for something
to happen I've decided to try to find a
permanent replacement for our meeting
place and Club station. I'll give you an
update during our August meeting.

Margette and I attended the recent ARRL
Rocky Mountain Region Ham Convention
in Taos. We had a great time, especially
Margette who is now KF5MIQ. She passed
both her Technician and General class
exams in one sitting.

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IMPORTANT CLUB INFORMATION

Club Officers:
President: Cliff Pulis KE0CP ke0cp@frii.com
Vice President: Sean Tyler KE5LSO tylersprs@msn.com
Treasurer: Chris Gillespie W5CLG cricket87068@yahoo.com
Secretary: Leslie Wirts KE5RSG denisemarie70@msn.com
Past President: Chris Gillespie W5CSG w5csg@arrl.net

Club Repeater: 146.700 -600 100hz Tone

Club Meetings: 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00PM—Currently
the Clubhouse is closed. Stay tuned to local nets and
www.kc5our.com for info on meeting locations.

Club Net: Every Wednesday at 8:00PM on the club Repeater



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### Presidents Message Cont.

We also attended several seminars, gawked at the various vendor exhibits and with Chris's, W5CLG, help purchased four radios which will be raffled off at the Christmas event. I took some notes and pictures and would like to give a report on the Convention at a future meeting.

About the Christmas raffle. Please note that as in the past you must purchase raffle tickets at the club meetings prior to the Christmas event. Raffle ticket sales will cease at the end of our November meeting. You cannot purchase raffle tickets at the door the evening of the event.

One final note, I want to thank James, KC7YWB, for the excellent job he has done on the new Club website. If you have not seen it please go to [www.kc5our.com](http://www.kc5our.com). ■

### WANTED: NM Ham Radio Plates

Bill, K5ZI

WANTED: New Mexico Amateur Radio License Plates, all years. Especially need 1959—1964, inclusive, plus 1976, 1977, 1983, 1984, 1986, 1987, 1989, and 2000. Will buy or trade. Bill Johnston, K5ZI, P.O. Box 640, Organ, NM 88052-0640. Tel. 575-382-7804. e-mail: [K5ZI@arrl.net](mailto:K5ZI@arrl.net). ■

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### FOR SALE: 2011 Field Day Pin

Paul, NM5RC, VCARA Member

Found another 2011 Field Day pin. If you did not order a Field Day pin this year, here's another opportunity to get one. Call or see Paul, N5PR. ■

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### Ham Convention.

2m/70cm antenna and an HT to listen in on satellite QSOs. We did and found it both challenging and rewarding.

The D-STAR presentations were among the most interesting to me. It is a form of digital voice and data communication requiring special equipment available from ICOM and Motorola (they call it Moto TRBO). The Motorola system is compatible with D-STAR but includes text messaging which ICOM does not support. It offers voice and data communications with stations anywhere in the world when connected to the internet via a repeater. If the repeater is down it still offers powerful local area communication capabilities. D-STAR uses a 4800 bps format: 2400 for voice, 1200 for forward error correction on voice and 1200 for data. Operating on 2m and 70cm the voice and data signal occupies about 6.25 KHz bandwidth. At 1.2 GHz, the third frequency associated with D-STAR, the voice/data rate is 128 Kbps and bandwidth about 150 KHz. So you have a protocol that can send both voice and data on each transmission. The modulation scheme is GMSK (Gaussian Medium Shift Keying) but don't ask me what that is because I really don't know, nor did the folks giving the presentation. You may have heard that the D-STAR scheme is proprietary but it is not. In fact, it is an open standard. Only the D/A – A/D converter module is proprietary. It's an AMBE-VOCODER chip from DVS1 and is currently the only device available for analog/digital conversion used in D-STAR.

If all this sounds a bit technical it is, but the important thing to realize is that D-STAR's voice quality is improved significantly over narrow FM used on your everyday 2m/70cm HT. There is simply no static until the voice completely drops out at the fringe of reception. In addition,

D-STAR offers transmission of digitized voice content which at the present time cannot be listened to by a scanner, as none currently exist that will decode the bit stream. That's one of several reasons first responders in Colorado have enthusiastically embraced D-STAR. The narrow bandwidth is also a plus, since along the Front Range of eastern Colorado the VHF spectrum space for repeaters is essentially used up. There is a D-STAR repeater on Capila peak and one somewhere else in the Albuquerque area. I suspect that it will take a while for D-STAR to be widely adopted as we do not suffer yet from limited spectrum space in New Mexico. There's a lot more to D-STAR but that level of detail is best left to a future Club meeting presentation.

On a more somber and challenging note one of the Conference speakers, Rick Roderick, K5UR, cited the dwindling number of young licensed hams in the US. He showed a graph of licensed hams by age. It looked like a bell curve, peaking somewhere around age 62. His concern is that if this trend continues we will have a very small number of hams within a few decades. How will we then hold on to the spectrum space we now enjoy? His challenge to all hams is to think of ways to preserve our hobby for the next 1,000 years! That is a huge challenge. The only way is to get more young people interested and licensed. What about you? Can you bring just one person into our hobby this year? And what about our Club? Surely we can Elmer some of the local youth groups and encourage an interest in ham radio.

I would encourage anyone interested in the expanding technology and areas of interest in our hobby to consider attending at least one Ham Convention in the future. Next year's gathering will be at Ruby's Inn at Bryce Canyon, UT. ■



Free Study Guides

Ralph, NM5RC, VCARA Member

Free study guides for the Technician and General exams can be found at: <http://kb6nu.com/tech-manual/>

Rather than the exam pool questions with answers approach used in most study manuals, these use short paragraphs with key words and information in bold. Supplementing the manuals with a few drawings to illustrate the concepts would be helpful (i.e., Ohm's Law circle, repeater on mountain top, etc.). Each manual is about 50 pages.

You Never Know...

Paul, N5PR, VCARA Member

So.... how are you doing with the project of leaving your old ham radio magazines in waiting rooms of doctor's offices, car dealerships, oil changing places, etc.?

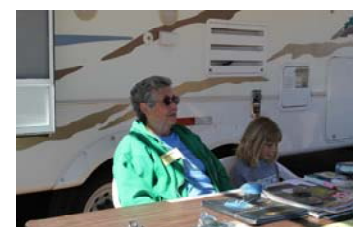
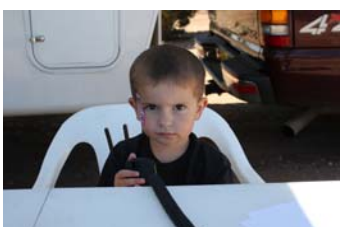
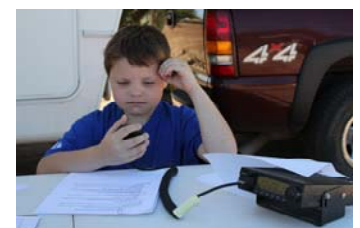
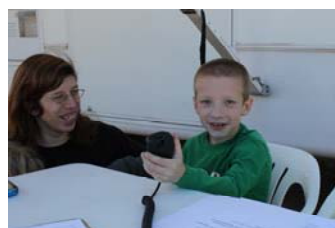
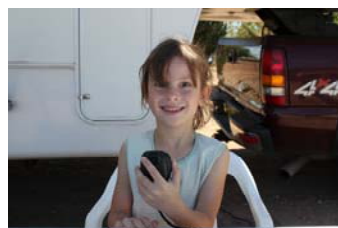
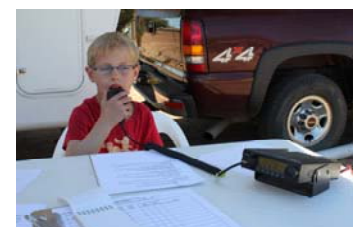
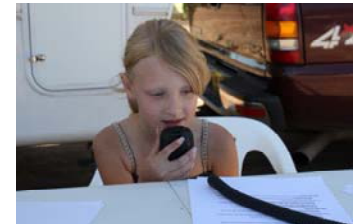
The other day I had to have a blood test before going to my doctor. I had deliberately taken one of my old ham magazines to leave in this office. Then, the next week my wife had to go get a blood test. There were several people ahead of us and as I sat there waiting, I thought about the magazine I had left the previous week. I looked through the small stack of magazines on the table next to my chair and didn't find it. Just as I looked up, I saw a familiar magazine title held up in front of a lady all the way across the room from us. There was the very CQ magazine I had left the week before, being thumbed through by an elderly lady of about 80 years old! I kept watching her out of the corner of my eye and she spent about 10 minutes reading and turning pages, finally laying it down just before they called our turn to give blood. I couldn't help but wonder if she had any idea of what she was reading. Maybe in her past she knew someone who was a ham. This incident gave me encouragement to make sure I take more magazines wherever I have to sit in a waiting room. You never know.....

Coffee Klatch:  
Village Inn, Los Lunas at  
2:00PM, Main Street and  
Los Lentos Road

- ednesday, August 24th
- Wednesday, Sept. 7th
- Wednesday, Sept. 21st
- Wednesday, October 5th
- Wednesday, October 19th
- Wednesday, November 2nd
- Wednesday, November 16th

Wednesday Night Net  
Schedule:

- August 17 - Ralph NM5RC
- August 24 - Joyce KD5IAI
- August 31 - Goose K5EMH
- Sept. 7—Mark K5WM
- Sept. 14—Elvira KD5UJQ
- Sept. 21—Paul N5PR
- Sept. 28—Joyce KD5IAI
- October 5—Russus KD6UJR
- October 12—Charlie NM5CL





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## Dots 'n Dashes

KC5OUR

August 2011

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To report any errors, omissions or general letters to the editor, please contact:

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The views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Valencia County Amateur Radio Association. The association accepts no liability for misprints or inaccurate information.■

### Don't Miss the Coffee Klatch:

The next Coffee Klatch will be Wednesday, August 10th at 2:00PM. Join us at the Village Inn in Los Lunas at the corner of Main Street and Los Lentos Road.



PO Box 268  
Peralta, NM 87042

## **VALENCIA COUNTY HAMS NEEDED TO PROVIDE COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE TOUR OF THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY BICYCLE TOUR**

### **Tour of the Rio Grande Valley - September 18, 2011**

This popular bicycle tour ran for more than 20 years during the 1970s-1990s with over a thousand riders is being revived. It includes rides of 25, 50, 65, and 100 miles originating in Los Ranchos de Albuquerque. The route goes through Isleta, Los Lunas and Belen then loops south to the NM 346 bridge and back to Belen before returning to Los Ranchos de Albuquerque. By July over 400 riders had signed up for the event. Ham Radio Operators at rest stops, with event officials, mobile along segments of the course, and in support vehicles will provide communications for the event.

The event web site is at <http://www.bikenm.org/action/tour-of-the-rio-grande-valley-09182011> (but the easy way is to Google “Tour of the Rio Grande Valley”) has route maps.

### **Valencia County Hams**

Responsible for communications for the route and rest stops south of Isleta Pueblo.

Exception - Some sag wagons and other mobile event staff will have Hams with them which we will not need to provide.

Need eight Valencia County Hams and could use more to:

Provide communications at the Los Lunas and Belen rest stops.

Operate mobile along the route to provide communications as required.

### **What equipment do I need?**

- For rest stops, a hand held 2-meter rig (plus extra battery) with an antenna better than the HT's original rubber duck would be sufficient. Although not necessary, if someone wanted to be fancy and cross band repeat from HT to mobile rig then to the repeater it might be fun.
- For mobile rigs patrolling the route, a mobile rig with an exterior antenna is desired. A HT with a mag mount antenna would probably be sufficient south of Los Lunas .
- We will probably be using the URFMS 2-meter Capilla Peak 146.96 – 100 repeater.

### **I'd like to help, but I've never done something like this before and/or do not have the necessary equipment. Is there still a role for me?**

Absolutely! You can be paired with someone who has the radio and/or experience. Having two folks at the rest stops and two in the mobile rigs is always desired.

### **I'm ready, how do I sign up?**

Send email indicating you will help and any assignment requests to all of the following:

Ed N5LI	assembling the list of Ham volunteers	<a href="mailto:n5li@arrl.net">n5li@arrl.net</a>
Dick AD5CS	coordinating this event's Ham volunteers	<a href="mailto:dpowellabq@comcast.net">dpowellabq@comcast.net</a>
Earl K1ERL	coordinating the Valencia County Hams	<a href="mailto:shepard.earl@gmail.com">shepard.earl@gmail.com</a>
Ralph NM5RC	recruiting Valencia Hams for the event	<a href="mailto:nm5rc@msn.com">nm5rc@msn.com</a>