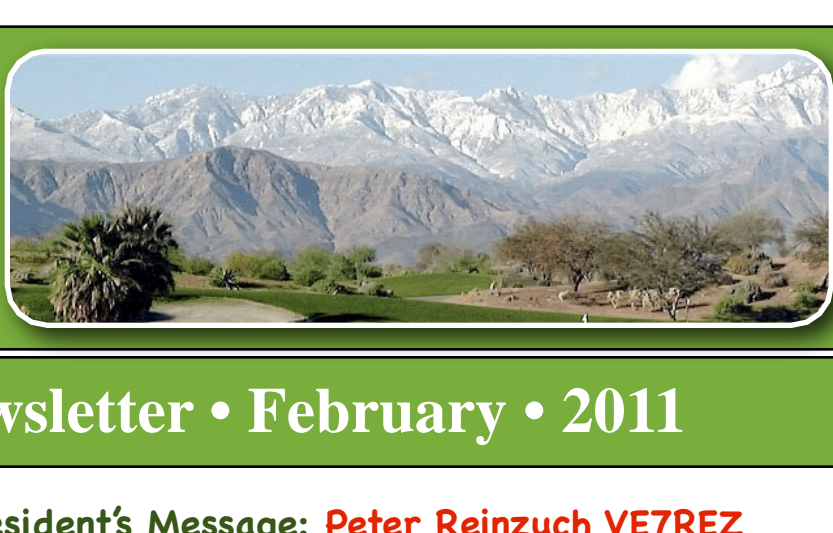
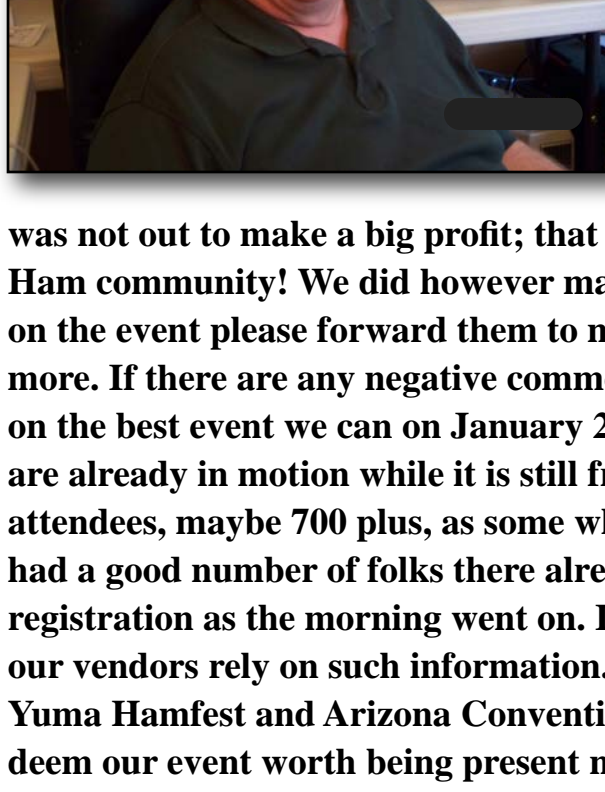




Repeater:
146.940 PL 107.2
Monday Evening Net
Newline • 6:30 pm
Regular • 7:00 pm
ARES Digital • 7:30 pm



Desert RATS Newsletter • February • 2011



President's Message: Peter Reinzuch VE7REZ
Well, I hope you are rested up now that Palm Springs Hamfest is behind us! It took a lot of folks to make this event happen. We had 37 volunteers carry this off in a most professional way and every members' efforts is very much appreciated in making this event a grand success! Everyone made the Desert RATS Club look good and each member who participated deserves all the credit for the accolades we are again receiving for our 2nd year of this ARRL sanctioned Event. The Club was not out to make a big profit; that was not the idea. It was the Desert RATS Club gift to the Ham community! We did however make a nice profit of over \$3500. If you have any comments on the event please forward them to me so we can improve or streamline how we do things even more. If there are any negative comments I want to hear them too! I want to make sure we put on the best event we can on January 28, 2012! Yes, we are planning the next event and things are already in motion while it is still fresh in our memory. By the way, we had over 650 attendees, maybe 700 plus, as some who got there before 7:00AM may not have registered (we had a good number of folks there already at that time) and there were some who slipped by registration as the morning went on. I know we have to regulate registration better next time as our vendors rely on such information. Unfortunately ICOM withdrew (here as well as from Yuma Hamfest and Arizona Convention Upcoming). With this year's success we hope they deem our event worth being present next year. However, Yaesu, HRO, DX Store, RF Stuff, Byonics, Impulse Electronics and all the rest had a grand display of products. All vendors I spoke to did good numbers of sales. I hear from Gary they all want to come back but for I who had not tallied up their sales yet. Numbers mean quite a bit in these tough times. The support of Hams Like Gordon West, Bill Prats, Carl Gardenias, Bart Susmann, Steve Smart, Corky the Cop, Steve Weed, Richard Palasynski, Bill Pastornac, Clint Bradford and others from outside of the Valley also helped make this the third largest ARRL Event in California. The DEMOS proved interesting and we will be doing more, I think, next year.

Yuma Hamfest is coming up on the 17-19th of February and I'll be going as Ambassador to promote next year. If anyone else plans on coming, let me know maybe we can have a RATS Camp! <http://www.yumahamfest.org/> In case you forgot, here again is a list of our Club's volunteers (** indicates committee leaders):

Parking...
**Orin Gilbertson - WW6O, Steve Melroy - KJ6WNV, Earl Haltman - KJ6DQR, Bruce Aubert - KJ6GLA, Carl Evert - N2VQP (although Carl was stuck in New York because of snow and could not fly out.... he tried, so he deserves mention), Robert Le Cesne - KJ6WNO, Nathan Haltman - AG6AV (he had that cool looking 1930's gem in the volunteer parking area which he and Earl built), Zachary Aubert - N6ZAK you all did an outstanding job of placing those cars and some RV's led by Gordon West on Friday who joined our Convoy from Quartzsite- Quartzfest.

Food Service and Cooking:
**Tom McLean - KJ6DZT, **Julie Haltman - KJ6FYY (as leaders, these two made it all look easy), Christi DeRouen - KJ6LWJ (she and VP Glenn also contributed that nice home made chili ...she was also flipping those burgers to perfection), Harriett Silverman - provided a lot of good humour, Paul Short - KJ6DZQ, (surrounded by ladies he kept smiling everytime I saw him), Sharon Snow, KJ6WNY (who made the cookies, yum), Clare Gilbertson, N6ODO- (field did double duty elsewhere as well), Pat El Shari - KJ6OTE (seasoned veteran of June's World Day crew), Laura Brennan - KA6VKF (also helped Micheal with the Military Radio display by the green tent), Lisa Kordich - KJ6DZU (knows how to flip them burgers too).

Registration:
**Pat Case - KG6NXC **Darline Case - KG6NXB (also ran the Bank and tallied the till), Gene Balentine Segroves - KM6D, Lloyd Segroves - W6LGS (both worked wherever they were needed), Glenda Stults - student

Special Event Station:
**Glenn Morrison - WB6RLC (Station set up, Talk-in and a Silent Keys' widow -- Helper-- ...he brought in a nice tally to add to our coffers by liquidating almost a truck load of stuff), **Tom Averett - AE6WL (helped before the event and during--promoting, coordinating, overseeing and participating by keeping things going under poor band conditions, Lisa Kordich - KJ6DZU (a trooper in the midst of some frustrating conditions), Shari Pate - KJ6HTC, Earl Haltman KJ6DQR (Earl helped where he was needed ---all round Handl Man Award goes to Earl; did you see the nice job he did preparing the parking lot...electrical, parking, yep he was everywhere).

Security/Rovers:
**Gary Boskovich - KD6QLT, **Susie Boskovich -KD6TVO (the HOSTS that did the MOST!), Cameron Robbins - KJ6LWH, Art Snow- N6RKS, John McKee- WB6VKS (yep, John too did double duty as our Special Edition Newsletter Editor with a very short publishing time; thanks for meeting my deadlines!) and also Jake, the black lab co-hosting the event.

Club consignment table:
**Bill Prats - K6ACJ (he comes all the way from Huntington Beach to help out and endlessly promoted our event as ARRL Clubs Rep), **Chris Vance, K6YNN (mister know it all...in a good way (Chris knows his stuff when it comes to helping folks buy the good deals from the Club table). These two guys brought in an outstanding dollar figure in revenue for the Club.

MC and Raffle:
Larry Miller-KJ6LWM (Larry is such a natural doing the MC job with his lovely wife Susie handling Raffle Sales at the announcers area; I think we'll hire him again next year!). Larry bought his first Ham Radio at Hamfest and I think got a pretty good buy! Me, I was Larry's assistant as he ran the show handing out raffle prizes every 15 minutes then in the afternoon every 10 minutes. And we still had some left over. We will be giving them out at the next few Club meetings as our vendors were very generous donating to our event. All the vendors gave something and many gave more than one item. Thanks goes to that long list.

Website:
Evan DeRouen-KJ6WNF (did you know we were broadcasting the entire event on " U-Stream live Internet TV" on our own channel... yes "heyricki" (our channel) was seen in Cyberspace for 2 days and Twittered to hundreds...we had over 5000 hits on our website in the weeks before Hamfest.

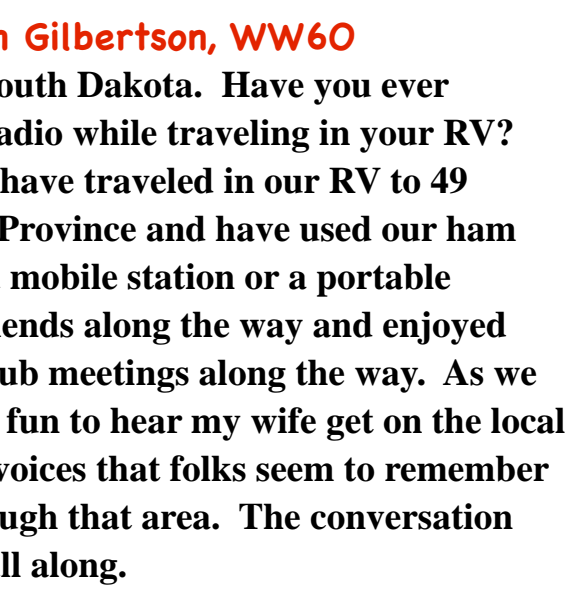
Medic:
Regina Epp, RN (Regina was there at the ready but fortunately no incident required her help...seen at the cleanup--folding table cloths and cleaning up some chairs).

Yes, it takes all kinds of skilled Volunteers putting on an Event like Palm Springs Hamfest but now we are all seasoned Pros and made a pretty good Team! Hope to see all of you again January 28, 2012 for our Third ARRL sanctioned Event!

Hope to see you at the next meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 15. Orin Gilbertson - WW6O will be giving a presentation on Computers and Ham Radio. Learn how he uses logging programs and what is out there in the way of logging software.

We will be giving away more of the prizes donated by our vendors. In fact I can say that we have something for everyone that shows up! Come be a winner!

The Day the Crowd Came: Susie Boskovich KD6TVO
Like a typical Palm Springs morning, we woke up to a beautiful clear day. Unlike a typical day, cars started rolling in about 6:00 AM. We already had about 30 RV's come in the day before for dry camping. Most of the vendors set up on Friday afternoon and evening. The remainder came early Saturday morning along with the swap meet/tailgaters. Palm Springs Ham Fest was underway.



Parking the hundreds of cars and the RV's really took some skill. Thank goodness for the golf cart to bring people up the hill that had difficulty walking. They seemed to be a sea of cars everywhere we looked. Sorting out the handicapped, tailgaters, RV's and regular cars took some ingenuity. Also, helping take visitors back down with their purchases. Some were quite heavy or large. What an elegant service of transportation provided to anyone that needed it.

At this point, Tom's McMuffin's were cooking on the griddle. They really hit the spot. The food group really stepped up early and cooked out a great lunch. Then went right on to start on Hamburgers at 10:30 AM. They put out about 250 lunches. They did it in such a professional manner and beat out any hamburger place in the Desert.

ARRL was well represented with Dick Norton, Director of Southwestern Division and Carl and Cathy Gardenias, Orange Section Manager. They were here to support this ARRL sanctioned event. ARES, Desert Cities, was represented and gave out some beneficial information. HAMCOM 2011, the ARRL Southwestern Convention representatives were here to inform everyone about the up and coming convention in Los Angeles.

Registration kept up a steady stream. When looking down the driveway, we could see lots and lots of cars and lines at the registration booth. No body got much of a break from that as it didn't stop until mid afternoon.

The club consignment table was overflowing with merchandise. Not much was left at the end of the day. That group was pretty exhausted.

Lots of raffle tickets were sold. The great prizes donated by the vendors were varied and in abundance. Everyone wanted to be sure to win something. While the raffle prizes were flowing, the announcer was gabbing away and never sat down. Especially telling everyone where the bathrooms were and when food was served.

The special event station was busy all day long. Jumping from radio to radio, making contacts and giving directions on the call in station. Everyone seemed to find them and it wasn't as quiet as we thought it might be.

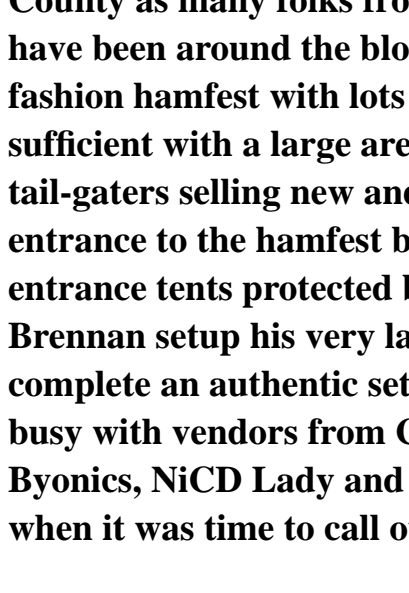
Security had no problems. Everyone behaved themselves. All was quiet on the western front. And the First Aid station was luckily not needed.

We sure want to thank all the volunteers that helped make this Ham Fest a real success. We could not have even put on an event this size without everyone's help. Their spirit and diligence was never ending. Everyone was willing to give their effort and time. Many of the volunteers were here on Friday and came again on Saturday. From slicing and dicing up the ropes and barricades to try to funnel in the visitors, and helping the vendors set up booths and big Military tents. Some were already tired but gave all their effort for the betterment of the event. God Bless all of you.

The vendors seemed to have a great time. All of their booths were busy and a couple have already expressed a desire to return next year. Even Earl's electric came in on a SOS call to a set up a 220 line for a vendor that needed it. That was above and beyond the call of duty. The Vendor promised to come back next year with a bigger and better display. This is what we try to do for all the vendors to make them want to come back and make a better Ham Fest for the community at large. Those that stayed in RV's were a real pleasure. We had more of a chance to visit with them on Sunday before most of them left. A couple even stayed until Tuesday morning. Those RV's in the lower section, all expressed pleasure to be able to stay Friday and Saturday nights.

It was such fun for us also. We saw friends from all over that we hadn't seen in quite some time. Gary says he saw someone that he had not seen in 10 years and thought had died and gone to heaven. What a pleasant surprise. Even though the planning of the Ham Fest took a great deal of time and effort by all, it was a joy having it hosted here and we enjoyed preparing for the event. Knowing we had such a terrific back up team (the volunteers) to help us made it all possible.

As long as we are able, and the club agrees to help, we will be happy to continue hosting this event here. The main idea of having this Ham Fest, is to bring hams together in the spirit of Ham Radio. We think that we were successful in meeting that goal. Everyone had a great time, lots of good feed back, and lots were looking forward to next year and telling more of their friends.



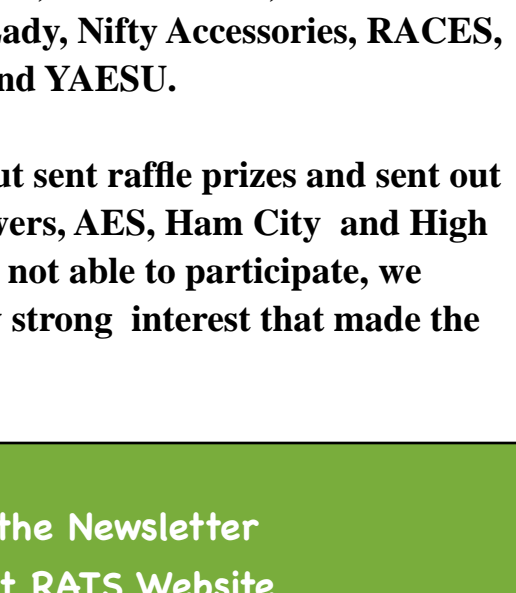
Hamming With Your RV: Orin Gilbertson, WW6O
WW6O/VE8. N6ODO mobile South Dakota. Have you ever thought about using your ham radio while traveling in your RV? My wife, Clare (N6ODO), and I have traveled in our RV to 49 states and all but one Canadian Province and have used our ham radio in most of them either as a mobile station or a portable station. We've met many new friends along the way and enjoyed stopping by for Field Day and club meetings along the way. As we travel back through an area it is fun to hear my wife get on the local repeaters. She has one of those voices that folks seem to remember from the last time we drove through that area. The conversation takes off as if we've been there all along.

Using your ham radio while RVing can be a rewarding experience. With your RV you are probably traveling somewhere in the Northern Hemisphere (Canada, USA or Mexico) to see the many interesting and beautiful sites as well as seeing family and friends along the way. Breaking out your VHF/UHF radio along the way can expand your knowledge of the local area particularly if you operate on the local repeaters. There's almost always someone on a repeater to give you directions, a recipe or provide information on the local area. After you get your RV set up in camp, it's also fun to set up your HF rig and talk with friends back home, meet some new ham friends and tell them about your trip or contact someone in a DX location. Sometimes you may even become the object of a pile-up! There are a lot of folks out there (stateside and DX) looking for contacts in specific counties or states so you might be able to help them out with the contact for whatever award they're chasing. I enjoy contesting so find it interesting to operate from somewhere away from my home station during a contest with lower power and an antenna other than my beam. You'll find that propagation can be quite different on the East coast than on the West coast. And you can break through the East coast signal curtain into Europe and Africa so much easier!

You don't have to have a fancy ham radio to really enjoy hamming while out in your RV. Your handi-talkie will generally do just fine on the local repeaters. A mobile radio with an externally mounted antenna will give you more power output and a better range but is not necessary in most cases. If you venture into the HF bands you'll find one of the small, multi-band HF radios will work fine. Some type of external antenna is a must - a vertical mounted on the RV or nearby, a dipole hung from a nearby tree or, for those who have room to carry one, a multi-element rotary dipole or mini-beam.

Whatever rig you have and where ever you travel you can find enjoyment operating on the ham bands. See you there!

Special Event Station: Glenn Morrison, WB6RLC
By now you have read all about the wonderful success of the Hamfest. I am talking with Dennis W6DQ with the Microwave group about doing a talk for our club. Here, in part, this was his response; "Thanks for the note. It was really great to meet you and other members of your club. What a wonderful event!! Kudos to you all. We need more events like yours to keep ham radio going strong!"



Now on to the special event station at Hamfest. We had 2 radios set up at the side yard of The Barn. We used a beam on 40 Meters and a vertical antenna for 20 Meters. We were a little short of operators for some periods of the day and band conditions were not that great either. But all in all, those that did participate had a good time. We pretty much covered the width and length of the US and some of Canada. Not bad. Some new hams stopped by to give it a try on HF and some wannab hams came by to get their feet wet and give a listen.

Our talk-in station was kept busy as well. Not everyone is as familiar with the valley as we are. I confused some when I told them to cross Hwy 111. Well, at Gene Autry it's not 111, is it? Oops. One poor guy checked in with "I am on Indian Canyon, where is Gene Autry"? We got him turned around and he actually stopped by the station to thank us for the talk-in.

Another big hit at the station was the test station. There were 2 watt meters, a DC power supply and dummy loads to 2KW available for use. Quite a few buyers brought over a piece of gear to test it to see if it worked as promised.

Thanks to Lisa KJ6DZU, Shari AF6YM, Earl KJ6DQR, cont' Op Tom AE6WL and everyone else that stopped by.

Report from the ARRL Affiliated Club Coordinator Orange Section: Bill Prats, K6ACT
The new ARRL web site is slowly evolving towards a finished product and one of the features that was slow to return was access to the ARRL club data base. It became tedious to go through each individual club record to track information when the Big List was once available for bulk download. After many emails to League headquarters it appears the data base has been restored as it was prior to December 2009 and more recently the link has been added to the ARRL web site but its not clear how the 'repair' was advertised to all ARRL volunteers and officials. Big List features now include Adobe PDF output for those who prefer the format. I have an issue with the equipment reviews, data capable radios should include data related tests giving information about the reliability for data transfers, specifically packet data. For example, frequency stability, internal noise, modulation techniques and quality affect performance. It is not easy to extract test information of this type but let's see what the future brings to us.

Winter Events:
There were at least four notable club events this winter designed to draw club members into the fold. What is it that makes hooking up a battery powered rig to a make-shift antenna out in the desert or city park that is so attractive? It's hard to answer that question but here is an easy observation, club members are drawn to these events to play radio and visit.

Orange County Amateur Radio Club 'Portable in the Park' event held at the Orange County Amateur Radio Club 'Portable in the Park' event held at the Jeffrey Preserve in Irvine last November. The point was to have a day in the park where guests could operate HF Stations from solar power and batteries. Some of us brought our own portable HF rigs and after putting up a number of antennas all of us were quickly making CW and SSB contacts. Luckily conditions on 20 meters were good for QRP and low power and one DX contact into Europe was completed. Another event is scheduled for this February. See www.w6ze.org for more information.

Palm Springs Desert RATS, 'RATS in the Desert Adventure' where RATS members packed up RVs and headed out to the desert near the Salton Sea for a long weekend to play radio. After locating a suitable spot in the barren desert a group of club members setup a full wave 40 meter loop antenna supported by those popular military masts and operated QRP and 100 watts till late in each star lit evening. This large antenna was an excellent club project as there are many facets to assembling home made components and erecting the masts. Another highlight was a 20 pound deep fried turkey for dinner cooked by club president Peter VE7REZ/W6. Needless to say everyone enjoyed the radio station, the tasty fried turkey and tamales.

Quartzfest 2011 is a very unique ham radio event spanning seven days in the desert south of Quartzsite Arizona. The event is organized by the Escapes RV Club, new camp hosts Steve and Linda packed the week with many events and presentations, the event list is very large and well advertised, see www.quartzfest.org. The weather was perfect, blue daytime skies and clear star filled evenings. Temperatures ranged from the mid 40s to 70s, nearly perfect. A couple of highlights include the annual antenna shootout and antenna walkabout. If anyone is short on antenna ideas, a visit to Quartzfest will fill a large notebook with details for all types of static and mechanized mobile and fixed antennas. As a member of the Desert RATS, our 40 meter loop antenna performed very well while managing the antenna shootout and exchanging signal information with shootout monitor stations located across California, Nevada and Washington.

The quartzfest.org web site contains many photos of the activities and antennas. This is my 5th year at Quartzfest and in my opinion I would estimate this event had about 50% greater attendance than 2010.

Palm Springs Desert RATS and Palm Springs DX Club hamfest located at the Boskovich Estate just off Highway 111 and Gene Autry Drive. The location is an easy drive from Orange County as many folks from Huntington Beach and Santa Ana were there. For those of us who have been around the block a few times, this hamfest has much of the charm of an old time fashion hamfest with lots of gear, raffle tickets and of course ... food. The parking was sufficient with a large area designated for visitor's cars, RV's and vendor parking. Numerous tail-gaters selling new and vintage gear filled the remaining open spaces in and around the entrance to the hamfest building which is actually an extremely large garage. Near the entrance tents protected both vendors and various radio and EmmComm displays. Michael Brennan setup his very large military radio & antenna display alongside an old WWII tent to complete an authentic setting, it proved to be a popular display. Inside, the garage was very busy with vendors from CQ Magazine, HRO, Yaesu, Impulse Electronics, RF Parts, ARRL, Byonics, NiCD Lady and the Club Consignment table to name a few. Things got even busier when it was time to call out the winning raffle numbers to the crowd.

This was the club's 2nd annual hamfest and more are planned for the future. Attendance was perhaps 50% greater then last year and the potential to grow and fulfill the need for more ham radio events in the south land is excellent. See you there next year.

Club Projects:
What are you doing for club projects? QRP, Antennas, APRS, Power Supplies, How to (?), I'd like to hear from you.

Event Calendar:
OCARC is hosting another Radio in the Park event, see www.w6ze.org for details.

Yuma Hamfest February 17. www.yumahamfest.org

Links:
ARRL Club Big List <http://www.arrl.org/big-club-list>
ARRL Club Update Link <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/club/forms/fsd2/>
Orange Section Web Site <http://www.orange-arrl.org/web/>
SW Division Convention and Hamfest: <http://www.orange-arrl.org/web/>

Additional Thank You's:
Susie & Gary Boskovich KD6TVO/KD6QLT
There are many others that deserve a THANK YOU for making Palm Springs Ham Fest 2011 such a success. The local merchants that help with discounted food and beverages really came through for us. Smart and Final, Vons in Palm Springs, Palm Desert, Ralphs on Sunrise in Palm Springs, Ralphs at Smoke Tree in Palm Springs, Ralphs in La Quinta. These merchants help the community by providing gift cards or discounted prices on the merchandise which in turn lowers our cost to put on the event. We cannot thank them enough for all their help.

We also want to THANK all the vendors that participated in our event. If we did not have vendors and those putting on demonstrations, we would not have an event to do. They are: The ARRL, ARES, Alpine Antenna Co., AMSAT, Old Military Radios, Bud's Engraving, Byonics, CQ Magazine, D-star, DX Store, EDS Emergency Pack, Elecraft, Fiberglass Poles, HAMCON 2011, Ham Radio Outlet, Impulse Electronics, MARS, M2 Antennas, Microwave Society of San Bernardino, Next Generation Antennas, NiCD Lady, Yaesu Accessories, RACES, RF Stuff, Skip Bernacko, tower installer, W5YI/Gordon West, and YAESU.

There were also several vendors that were not able to attend but sent raffle prizes and sent out information to their customers about the Ham Fest. Texas Towers, AES, Ham City and High Sierra all helped make this a success. Even though ICOM was not able to participate, we appreciated their support. It is this kind of support and a very strong interest that made the Ham Fest what it is today and even better next year.

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