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Orinda's Vice Mayor a Real Ham

By Cathy Dausman



Newly licensed Technician class amateur radio operators Sue Severson, and her husband Ralph. Photo Cathy Dausman

and calculate the limits of their amateur radio battery limits. She looks forward "to getting more involved" as a Lamorinda emergency communications volunteer in the future.

One of Orinda's newest amateur radio operators is also a familiar face at city council meetings: Vice Mayor Sue Severson. Severson recently earned her Technician class amateur radio license, and was assigned the call sign KK6CFY. Her husband Ralph and daughter-in-law Pam Severson also earned their Technician class licenses.

Severson said her "basic emergency concerns" and membership on the Orinda School Board of Trustees led over time to her participation in the Orinda City Disaster Emergency Response Team volunteer. She earned her latest certification through an intensive, short-term "ham cram" class taught through her church.

Instructor Richard Bailey said his students first visit amateur radio websites online, then meet from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Friday, and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday. They are tested at 2 p.m. Bailey said Severson's class had 24 students enrolled, 21 of whom earned licenses. Severson found the class fast-paced but not intimidating, although she admits "it didn't thrill me to see so many [basic electrical] formulas."

A knowledge of those formulas, including Ohm's Law (which deals with electrical resistance) helps even entry-level amateur radio license holders gain an appreciation for

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