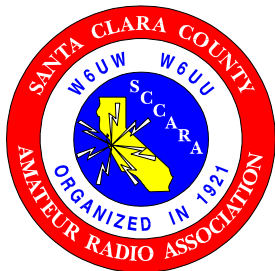


# SCCARA-GRAM



## Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Association

Volume 24, Number 3

March 2008



### *Shorty AE6Z, Silent Key*

Emmett "Shorty" Freitas AE6Z died Sunday morning, February 24, at age 89. He had been having heart trouble. Shorty was a long time active member in SCCARA until a few years ago and was very active in volunteer amateur radio testing.

There will be no services, just a burial at sea.

— Roy K6VIP

### **Picnic**

SCCARA will have a spring potluck picnic on April 10, 2008 at Agnew Park. Bring any radios you want.

Driving directions are from Santa Clara going towards Alviso on Lafayette turn left on Agnew. Make sure you cross the railroad tracks. Go 3 short blocks to stop sign, park is on the left. From ALVISO on LAFAYETTE turn right on Agnew, go 3 short blocks to the stop sign, park is on the left. There is a playground for children and a basket ball court, and nice CLEAN restrooms open until DUSK.

W6JPP, John  
Activities Chairman

### **ARRL News**

From *The ARRL Letter*, February 22, 2008

#### **ARRL HANDBOOK A "MUST-HAVE" FOR BROADCAST INDUSTRY**

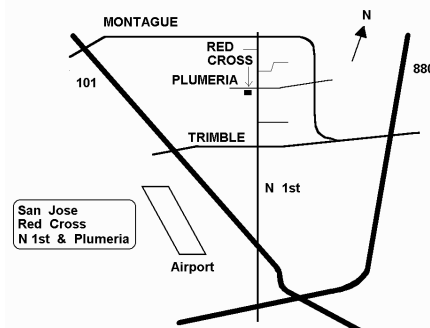
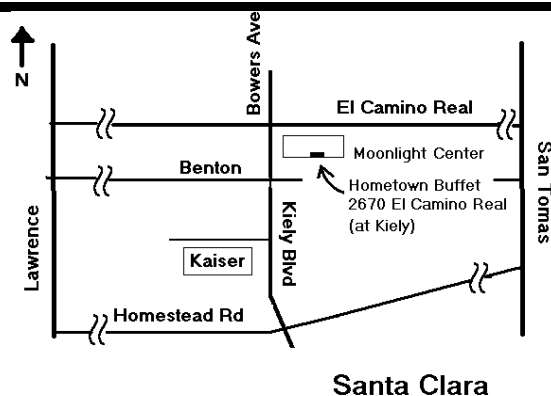
A broadcast industry trade publication has named "The ARRL Handbook for Radio Communications" as the top-rated reference book of broadcast engineers. In an article <<http://radioworld.com/pages/s.0047/t.11230.html>> in the February 13 edition of "Radio World," the various annual versions of the "Handbook" received the most mentions of necessary literature on the engineer's desk. Doug Fearn, K3KW, an independent hand crafter of audio equipment and a former chief engineer, said, "Not only did I learn electronics from that book, but the old editions are superb examples of how to explain things clearly." Andy Butler, senior director for systems engineering at

### **Calendar**

- 3/8 Electronic Flea Market at DeAnza  
3/10 SCCARA General Meeting—Dinner meeting!  
3/17 SCCARA Board Meeting--(San Jose Red Cross, 7:30p, all are welcome)  
4/14 SCCARA General Meeting

### **General Meeting**

Day: Monday, March 10, 2008  
Time: 6:00 PM  
Place: Hometown Buffet, Santa Clara  
Featuring: Dinner meeting



The **SCCARA-GRAM** is published monthly by the **SANTA CLARA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION**, PO Box 6, San Jose CA 95103-0006. Permission to reprint articles is hereby granted, provided the source is properly credited.

**The deadline for articles is the last Monday of the month.**

SCCARA was formed in 1921 and became a non-profit corporation in 1947. SCCARA is an affiliate of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). The club station is W6UW.

Web page: <http://www.qsl.net/sccara>.

#### **OFFICERS - DIRECTORS - STAFF**

|                 |                                 |          |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|----------|
| President       | Jim Tyranski, KG6UDW            | 453-0745 |
|                 | e-mail: kg6udw@arrl.net         |          |
| Vice President  | Fred Townsend, AE6QL            | 263-8768 |
|                 | e-mail: fred@dcctolight.net     |          |
| Secretary       | Mike Aronoff, WB0TOW            | 781-5704 |
|                 | e-mail: aronoff@att.net         |          |
| Treasurer       | Don Steinbach, AE6PM            | 867-3912 |
|                 | e-mail: dlsteinbach@comcast.net |          |
| Station Trustee | Don Village, K6PBQ              | 263-2789 |
|                 | e-mail: donvillage7@yahoo.com   |          |
| Director        | Don Steinbach, AE6PM            | 867-3912 |
|                 | e-mail: ae6pm@arrl.net          |          |
| Director        | Ned Tufekcic, AC6YY             | 690-7250 |
|                 | e-mail: ac6yy@arrl.net          |          |
| Director        | Don Village, K6PBQ              | 263-2789 |
|                 | e-mail: donvillage7@yahoo.com   |          |
| Director        | Lou Steirer, WA6QYS             | 241-7999 |
|                 | e-mail: wa6qys@aol.com          |          |
| Director        | Wally Britten, KA6YMD           | 293-3847 |
|                 | e-mail: ka6ymd@arrl.net         |          |
| Editor          | Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU           | 269-2924 |
|                 | e-mail: wb6yru@ix.netcom.com    |          |

#### **COMMITTEES**

|            |                              |          |
|------------|------------------------------|----------|
| Activities | John Parks, W6JPP            | 309-8709 |
|            | e-mail: w6jpp@arrl.net       |          |
| Repeater   | Wally Britten, KA6YMD        | 293-3847 |
|            | e-mail: ka6ymd@arrl.net      |          |
| N0ARY BBS  | Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU        | 269-2924 |
|            | e-mail: wb6yru@ix.netcom.com |          |

#### **SCCARA REPEATERS**

SCCARA owns and operates two repeaters under the call W6UU:

2 meter: 146.985 - PL 114.8  
70 cm: 442.425 + PL 107.2

Phone auto-dial and auto-patch is available. The two meter repeater is located at Eagle Rock near Alum Rock Park in the foothills of east San Jose. The 70 cm repeater and N0ARY BBS is located at the Regional Medical Center (formerly Alexian), east of downtown San Jose, north of 280 and 101.

#### **SCCARA NETS**

On our two meter repeater: Mondays at 7:30 PM, (not the second Monday--our meeting night). Coordinator: Don Village, K6PBQ. On ten meters, 28.385 MHz USB, Thursdays at 8:00 PM. Net control: Wally Britten, KA6YMD. Visitors welcome.

#### **N0ARY PACKET BBS**

SCCARA hosts the packet BBS N0ARY (San Jose). User ports: 144.93 (1200 baud), 433.37 (9600 baud), telephone 408 259-8497.. Sysop: Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU (packet info: [www.n0ary.org/ncpa](http://www.n0ary.org/ncpa))

#### **TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

|                                   |              |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| SCCARA contact Clark KE6KXO:      | 408 262-9334 |
| ARRL/VEC Silicon Valley VE group, |              |
| Morris Jones, AD6ZH:              | 408 507-4698 |

PBS and a former president of the Society of Broadcast Engineers (SBE), also recommended the "Handbook," calling it "The best, most comprehensive, cheapest guide to technology you will ever need."

## **Antenna on Steroids**

Most of you have heard by now that the N0ARY packet BBS has been moved to a site on Mt. Umunhum. The problem with a site like this right on the ridge is that the weather can be extreme.

The BBS has a new Comet CX-333 tri-band antenna. This antenna has a wind survival rating of 110 MPH. That's fine for us here on the valley floor. Unfortunately, the terrain up there can act a little like a wind tunnel, concentrating the wind to gusts in excess of 200 MPH right over the ridge. The folks with equipment up there tell me antennas like these have a life span of perhaps only two years, depending on exactly where and how they're mounted. Indeed, the place is littered with antenna bits and pieces—a lot of it commercial stuff.

At \$180 for a CX-333, I wasn't satisfied. If you look around carefully up there, you'll see I'm not the only one. There are antennas like this mounted lower down on their masts with bracing of some sort. Mechanically, this is good, but the metal of the mast will interfere with the antenna radiation pattern.

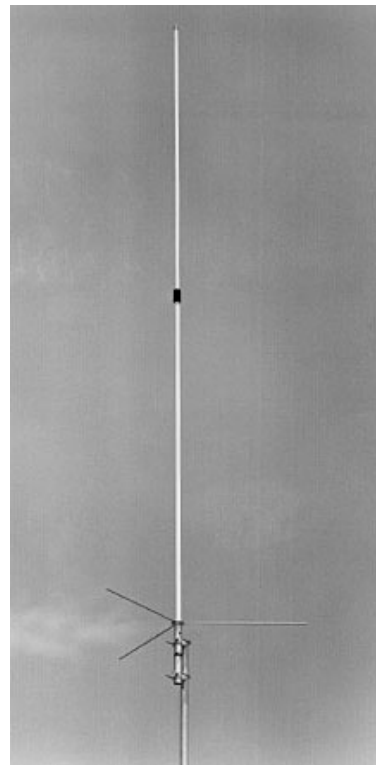
I wanted both mechanical strength and a good radiation pattern. After some thought and \$30 worth of PVC plumbing and cord, I think I have it... At least it's good enough as an experiment.

Antennas like the CX-333 are vertical whips with counter poise elements at the base. The active elements are enclosed in a weather-proof fiberglass radome attached at the base. The base fastens to a mount that attaches it to a mast or pipe.

This configuration puts most of the stress at the point where the radome attaches to the base as the wind puts horizontal pressure on the antenna.

My solution is to enclose the antenna in PVC pipe with the weight of the pipe sitting on the mount. Then to take up the horizontal stress, there are non-conducting guy wires attached at the mid-point. The cord used is a mix of nylon and polyester, supposedly best able to handle the weather... we'll see about that.

The antenna comes in two parts with a coupler in the middle. This required a larger section of PVC pipe in the middle



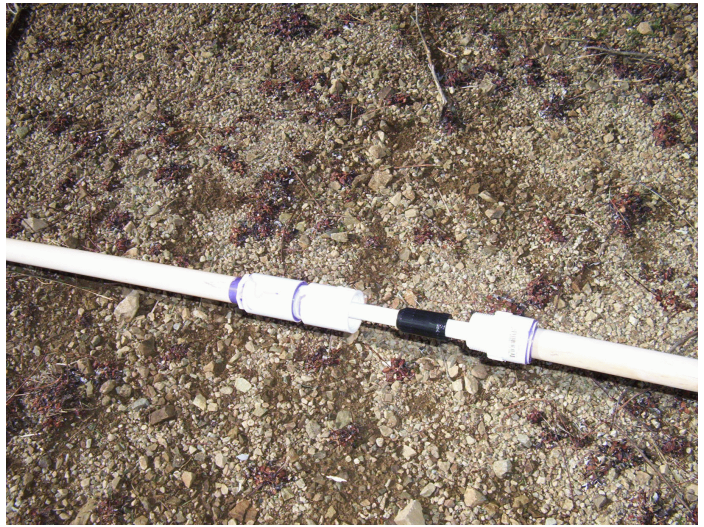


to accommodate the antenna's coupler.

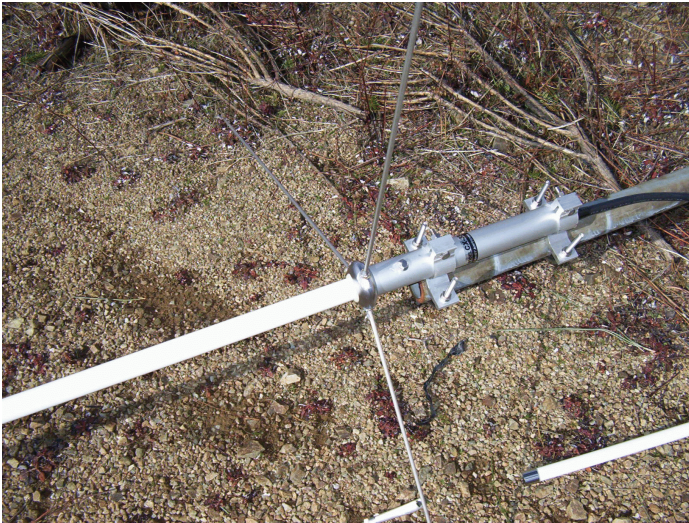
Ideally, the base of the PVC structure should be mechanically attached at the base, so that the guy wires wouldn't be needed, but I couldn't see an easy way to do that. This will have to wait for revision 2. Until then, it will be interesting to see how this works out.

As I write this, we've already had gusts of up to 100 MPH and it still looks like it was just put up an hour ago. So far, so good.

73, Gary WB6YRU



The larger PVC sections accommodate the coupler.



Standard mounting of the CX-333 before the PVC armor covering is slipped into place. The PVC base has slots cut in it to accommodate the counterpoise radials and sits on the mount.



The PVC pipes fastened together over the antenna coupler, with cord guys attached.



The CX-333 antenna with the bottom PVC section in place, the top section is in the foreground. The white and blue stuff is the coiled up guy cord.

Note the broken antenna in the background, this is a common sight up there. That's their old 220 repeater antenna.



The finished product. We'll see how long this lasts.



# Meeting Minutes

## General Meeting, Feb. 11, 2008



The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM with introductions. The meeting room was near capacity with 33 members and 11 guests!

### Announcements:

- Bill Dale, N2RHV reminded everyone of the upcoming Monterey Radiofest '08 on 2/23-2/24. Also, the new cell phone law does not apply to PPT radios (amateur or commercial).
- John W6JPP talked briefly about the Emcomm conference at Reno on May 2-4 at Circus Circus. He also noted the Northern California DX Association convention April 26-28 at Visalia. He also congratulated James K6WRJ on making the last contact for his WAS.
- Fred AE6QL informed the group that the new rules for Field Day have been posted on-line, and that this year new licensees (the last 12 months) will earn extra points for operating the GOTA station.
- The March meeting is the dinner meeting at Hometown Buffet (see announcement in this issue of the SCCARA-gram). Dinner will start after 6:00 PM, with the abbreviated meeting starting at 6:30 PM. Eating dinner will not be required for entrance to the meeting.

### Evening Program:

The much-awaited speaker for the evening was Eric Swartz, WA6HHQ, from Elecraft, talking about and showing the K3 transceiver kits. To date, Elecraft has produced over 10,000 radios, including 7,000 of the K2's. Eric talked about the latest testing done in the ARRL lab as well as their own and other independent results, and compared them to the other competition-grade radios on the market. He then went through the design in detail, explaining how the design evolved and the remarkable performance was achieved. He stressed in particular the role intermodulation distortion and strong-signal blocking or compression plays in limiting performance, and how the K3 design and component selection reduces the effects. He also discussed some of the unique features and the option structure. At the end there were two examples of the radio for everyone to examine. The good news is how affordable the K3 can be. The bad news is the four-month backlog of orders! The Elecraft presentation is becoming one of the club's most anticipated annual programs!

### Closing Remarks and Announcements:

- Jim Tyranski asked for volunteers for Field Day activities, and asked anyone interested to contact any of the officers. Also the BBS has been moved to its new location.
- Fred reported that the club by-laws are in revision, and that the results will be posted in PDF format on the web site when reviewed by the board.

The meeting was adjourned formally at 9:30 PM.

Minutes submitted by Mike Aronoff

## Board Meeting, Feb. 18, 2008



The meeting was called to order at 1945 hours.

The following members were in attendance:

Fred Townsend, AE6QL, Vice President  
Don Steinbach, AE6PM, Director & Treasurer

Lou Steirer, WA6QYS, Director  
Ned Tufekcic, AC6YY, Director  
Don Village, Director & Trustee  
Mike Aronoff, WB0TOW, Secretary  
Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU, Editor  
John Parks, W6JPP, Activities Chairman  
Gwen Steirer, KF6OTD, guest and social conscience  
Clark Murphy, KE6KXO, venerable presence

The President presided.

### Secretary's Report -

The minutes were as published in the last SCCARA-GRAM. There were no corrections requested. There have been 65 membership renewals to date (27 not yet renewed).

### Treasurer's Report -

Current account balances were \$2124.29 in checking, \$6,289.32 in savings, and \$333.75 cash-on-hand for a total of \$8747.36. Pending expenses are field day reservations (\$438), flea market (\$1550), repeater (\$1500), insurance (\$320), NARC (\$20), and BBS move (\$350). Don Village moved to accept the report, seconded by Lou. Passed without objection.

### BBS Report -

To complete the move with all equipment in good condition, a new antenna, TNC, and backup battery had to be purchased. The antenna hardware was upgraded (including PVC "armor"), as were digital cables, noise filters, a higher-efficiency switching power supply, and a gel cell battery. The total one-time cost was \$727.97. The electricity bill with the new supply will drop to \$5.75 per month. Eliminating the two phone lines at the old location will save about \$400 per year. Ned moved and Don Steinbach seconded that the two lines be canceled immediately (passed without objection). Don Steinbach then moved and Don Village seconded that Gary be reimbursed \$727.97 for the cost of the move (previous allocation was \$350). Passed without objection. Don Village then moved and Lou seconded that SCCARA allocate up to \$10 per month to pay for BBS electricity costs (passed without objection).

### Repeater Report -

In the absence of any commitment from Kenwood to deliver a 440 repeater, efforts are now focused on the Motorola repeater that Jim purchased. Although no longer supported by the factory, manuals and channel elements are readily available on the internet and from repair shops, and crystals from the manufacturer. Fred and Jim are running these down and will report to the board.

### By-Laws Committee Report -

Fred presented a draft revision to the board for review. Changes include:

- Adding the immediate past president to the board for a one-year, non-renewing term
- Changing the station trustee to an indefinite appointed position
- Adding all elected officers as voting members of the board
- Allowing virtual (on-air or on-line) board meetings or attendance
- Removing present restrictions on bank to use
- Add a clause for "implied resignation" of board members
- Adding a pro-rated dues formula for new members

Comments and corrections from the board and officers were due to the committee by 2/22/08. The draft is to be published in March, with a vote of the membership scheduled for the April meeting. Proxies will be available upon (timely) request to the Secretary.

### Club Station Trustee's Report -

- The instruction set for the club station operation was completed, is posted at the operating position, and has been distributed.

#### Newsletter Editor's Report -

Photos for publication are welcomed if they are supplied with captions or an accompanying article, please. In discussing on-line publication of the newsletter, Jim attempted to explain that we need a web host with a greater capacity and wider range of service. Fred accepted the task of investigating possibilities.

#### Activities Chairman's Report -

- The Spring picnic was discussed. John Parks is to prepare an article with the details for the March SCCARA-Gram.

#### Old Business-

- Clark is going to look at holding the next holiday lunch at the Santa Clara Elks Lodge, to address the space and time limitations experienced at the last venue. (To be coordinated with Don Village.)

- The Stanford ARC is awaiting confirmation that the club will participate in the Powow on May 10th about 10 AM. Lou is to respond.

#### New Business -

- Jim needs to renew the current club web domain names in March.  
- It was moved by Don Village and seconded by Ned that Gwen should get a door prize for XYL's attending the March dinner meeting for \$15.00 (plant suggested by Gwen). Passed without objection

The meeting was adjourned at more usual time of 2120 hours.

Minutes submitted by Mike Aronoff, Secretary

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## Packet Pieces

### Downloaded from the BBS packet network:

=====

Date: 27 Nov 2005 13:20

From: ZL3AI@ZL2BAU

To: HUMOUR@WW

Subject: Colonists

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#### Colonists

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The colonists said: "We discovered new lands and territories."

Hey, if you believe that, I can go to court and say: "Your honor, I was exploring some fire escapes and discovered this apartment. I planted my flag in the living room and now all that stuff is mine!"

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## Need Help?

Amateurs have a long history of helping each other. An experienced amateur who helps another is traditionally called an "Elmer." If you have a question or problem, you are encouraged to ask one of SCCARA's Elmers. Below is a list of topics including who to contact for each.

If you consider yourself to be reasonably competent in at least one area of amateur radio and would be willing help others, please fill out an Elmer form from the club secretary.

Antennas, feed-lines, tuners: WB6EMR, K6PBQ, WB6YRU  
Lightning protection, grounding: WB6YRU  
Station set-up, equipment: K6PBQ  
TVI/RFI: WB6YRU  
Homebrew projects, construction: KD6FJI, WB6YRU  
Computers: KB6NP; IBM PC: WB6YRU  
Packet Network (BBS, forwarding): WB6YRU  
Code operating and installations: WB6EMR, K6PBQ  
DX (long distance/propagation): WB6EMR  
Emergency operating/preparedness: WA6QYS  
FM (VHF/UHF, repeaters):  
HF operating techniques (SSB, CW): WB6EMR, K6PBQ  
Classes/license upgrading: W6ACW  
Legal/FCC rules: WB6YRU  
SCCARA (club inner workings): K6PBQ, WB6YRU, WA6QYS  
Children's Discovery Museum, volunteer operator: K6PBQ  
EchoLink: KK6MX

W6ACW, Ed Hajny, (408) 739-6105

WB6EMR, James D. Armstrong, Jr.,  
evening & msg: (408) 945-1202

KD6FJI, Lloyd DeVaughns,  
(408) 225-6769 e-mail: kd6fji@arrl.net

KK6MX, Don Apte, (408) 629-0725  
e-mail: kk6mx@aol.com

KB6NP, Jon Dutra, day & msg (408) 428-2058  
evening (408) 867-8654  
packet: home BBS NOARY  
e-mail: jad@aol.com

K6PBQ, Don Village, (408) 263-2789

WA6QYS, Lou Steirer, (408) 241-7999  
packet: home BBS NOARY

WB6YRU, Gary Mitchell, msg (408) 265-2336  
also (408) 269-2924  
packet: home BBS NOARY  
e-mail: wb6yru@ix.netcom.com

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## Newsletter Notes

New bylaws have been drawn up. The membership will be asked to vote on it soon.

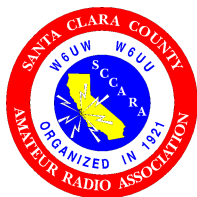
There was supposed to be a copy here in this issue for membership review, but for some reason it wasn't submitted. Hopefully it will be in the next issue, keep an eye out for it. A copy is said to be on the club web site, but as I write this, it's not there (yet).

I'm told there will be no comment period. The membership's only comment will be to vote the whole thing up or down. So, if there's just one small part that you don't like, your only choice will be to vote the whole package down.

If it doesn't pass, the bylaw committee will work on it some more. Perhaps there will be a membership comment period then. If it does pass, that will become our new bylaws.

73, Gary WB6YRU, editor

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## SCC-A-R-A

Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Association  
PO Box 6  
SAN JOSE CA 95103-0006

Affiliate of the ARRL,  
American Radio Relay League



**FIRST CLASS**

### ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## SCC-A-R-A Membership Form for 2008

(Fill in name and call only if renewing and no info has changed)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Call: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: E A G T+ T N

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Licensed since (yr): \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Licence Expiration  
Date (mo/yr): \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ New Member ☐ Renewal  
☐ I'm also a member of the ARRL

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual membership dues are payable at the first of the year and expire the following December 31.  
New members joining on or after July 1, pay half the membership dues.

**Annual Membership dues:** ☐ \$20 Individual ☐ \$25 Family ☐ \$10 Student (under 18)  
For family memberships (at the same address), please include a separate form for each family member.

**I want the newsletter by:** ☐ U.S. Mail ☐ internet (make sure your e-mail address is legible and correct)

Give this completed form (or copy) with payment to the Secretary or Treasurer at any meeting or mail to the club address.