

SCCARA-GRAM



Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Association

Volume 51, Number 3

March 2026



March Meeting

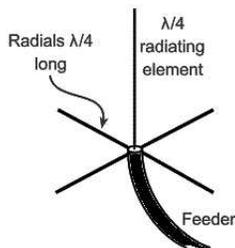
We plan to have a “project meeting” where you can make your own antenna baluns or RF chokes. First we need an idea of what people would like to make, so we’ll know what parts to get. We’ll discuss that at the March meeting.

Vertical Antennas

Vertical antennas are popular in amateur radio for their omnidirectional radiation pattern (sending signals equally in all horizontal directions) and their low take-off angle, which makes them excellent for long-distance (DX) communication. They are a preferred choice when horizontal space for a long-wire antenna is unavailable.

Common Types of Vertical Antennas

Quarter-Wave (1/4 λ) Monopole: The most common type, consisting of a vertical element roughly 1/4 the wavelength of the operating frequency. It requires a ground plane (radials) to act as the “other half” of the antenna for proper resonance.



Formulas for 1/4 Wave Vertical Antennas:

- Length in Feet: $\frac{234}{f(\text{MHz})}$
- Length in Meters: $\frac{71.5}{f(\text{MHz})}$
- Length in Inches: $\frac{2808}{f(\text{MHz})}$
- Radial Length: Typically 5% to 10% longer than the vertical radiator.

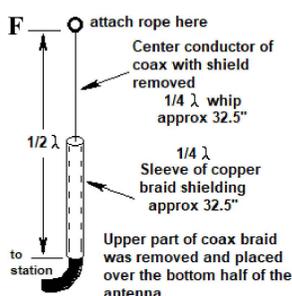
Half-Wave (1/2 λ) Vertical: Taller than a quarter-wave, this design offers more gain and, importantly, can operate without an extensive radial system. It is often used in mobile setups where a good metal ground plane is unavailable, such as on fiberglass vehicles.

Calendar

3/9 SCCARA General Meeting
3/16 SCCARA Board Meeting
3/28 Club Station open

General Meeting

Day: Monday, March 9
Time: 7:30 PM
Place: San Jose Red Cross, meeting room 3
Featuring: discussion about a project meeting



- Length in Feet: $\frac{468}{f(\text{MHz})}$
 - Length in Meters: $\frac{142.6}{f(\text{MHz})}$
- For example, a 20-meter band antenna (14.175 MHz) would be roughly
- $$\frac{468}{14.175} \approx 33 \text{ feet}$$

The **SCCARA-GRAM** is published monthly by the **SANTA CLARA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION**, PO Box 106, San Jose CA 95103-0106.

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**, located at the San Jose Red Cross.

Permission to reprint articles is hereby granted, provided the source is properly credited.

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

Web page: www.sccara.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(officers are also directors)

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Director	John Parks W6JPP	e-mail: w6jpp@arrl.net
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Webmaster	Doug Owens N6DPO	408-568-9870 e-mail: dougowens100@icloud.com

SCCARA REPEATERS

SCCARA owns and operates two repeaters under the call W6UU:
2 m: 146.985 - PL 114.8
70 cm: 442.425 + PL 107.2

Phone auto-dial and auto-patch is available. The 2 m repeater is located at Eagle Rock near Alum Rock Park in the foothills of east San Jose. The 70 cm repeater is located at the Regional Medical Center (formerly Alexian), east of downtown San Jose, north of 280 and 101.

SCCARA NETS

On our 2 m repeater: Mondays at 7:30 PM, (not the second Monday--that's our meeting night); net control: Don Village, K6PBQ. On 10 m, 28.385 MHz USB, Thursdays at 8:00 PM; net control: *to be announced*. Visitors welcome.

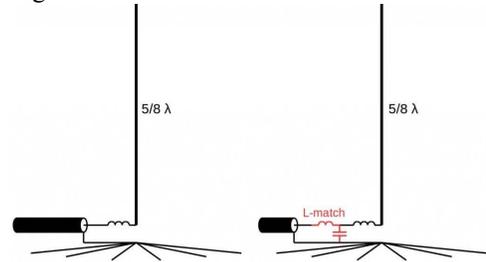
N0ARY PACKET BBS

SCCARA hosts the packet BBS N0ARY (connect to n0ary-1). User ports: 145.09 MHz at 1200 baud, 433.37 MHz at 9600 baud, and telnet sun.n0ary.org (login "bbs"). Sysop: Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU. For general packet info, see the NCPA web site ncpa.n0ary.org.

AMATEUR LICENSE TESTING

ARRL/VEC Silicon Valley VE group: <https://www.svve.org>
Morris Jones, AD6ZH: 408-507-4698

Five-Eighths (5/8 λ) Wave: This length provides a higher gain than either a 1/4 λ or 1/2 λ antenna by focusing more energy toward the horizon. It is frequently used for VHF/UHF mobile operations to increase range.



The formula to calculate the physical length of a five-eighths wavelength (5/8 λ) antenna depends on the units you are using and whether you include a velocity factor (typically around 0.95–0.97 for wire or tubing to account for the speed of the wave in the conductor).

1. Calculate Wavelength (λ):

Divide the speed of light by the frequency (*f*)

$$\lambda \text{ (meters)} = \frac{300}{f \text{ (MHz)}}$$

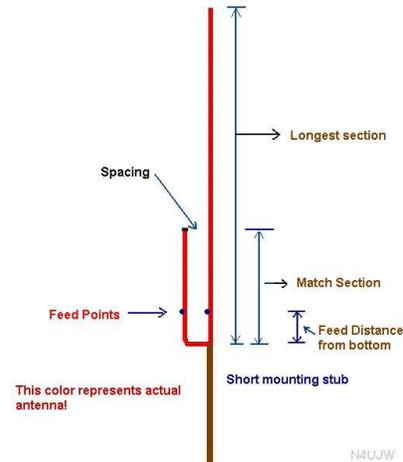
2. Apply the 5/8 Fraction:

$$L = \frac{5}{8} \times \lambda$$

3. Adjust for Velocity Factor (V):

Multiply by roughly **0.96** for real-world wire antennas

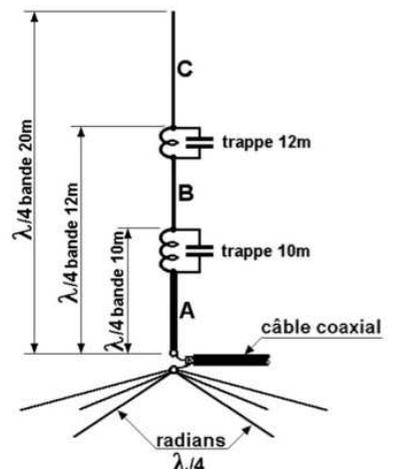
J-Pole: A 1/2 wave radiator fed by a 1/4 wave matching section.



It is popular for its simplicity and the fact that it does not require radials or a ground plane, making it ideal for portable or emergency use.

Trap Verticals:

These use parallel resonant circuits ("traps") to electrically isolate parts of the antenna, allowing it to act as a resonant 1/4 wave on multiple different bands.

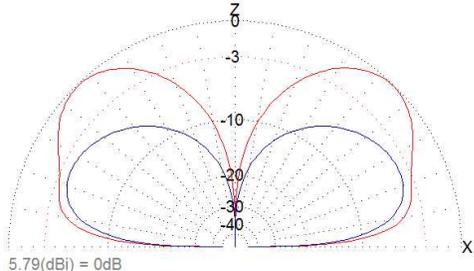


“Rubber Duck”: A very short, flexible vertical found on handheld radios. It uses an internal coil to electrically lengthen a physically short wire, though it is less efficient than full-sized alternatives.



Key Characteristics & Considerations

Feature	Explanation
Polarization	They are vertically polarized, which matches the signal of most repeaters and mobile stations.
Ground System	Most verticals (especially monopoles) require radials—wires buried or laid on the ground—to reduce signal loss and improve efficiency.
Angle of Radiation	They provide a low take-off angle (closer to the horizon), which helps signals travel further via ionospheric "hops" for DX.



1/4 Wave vs 5/8 Wave vertical

Noise Sensitivity A common disadvantage is that they tend to pick up more man-made interference (QRM) and atmospheric noise compared to horizontal antennas.



73 Ned AC6YY

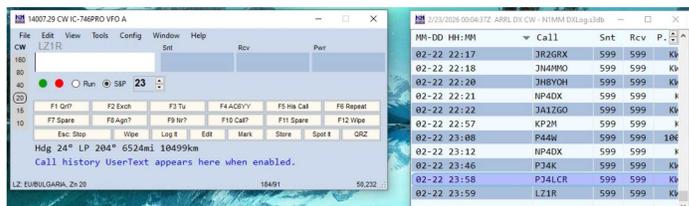
My setup:



Rig: ICOM 746PRO running 100 watts



Antennas: Hex Beam and G5RV dipole



Software: N1MM

ARRL DX Contest

I casually participated in this year’s ARRL International DX Contest CW.

The ARRL International DX Contest is a major amateur radio event where operators in the US and Canada (W/VE) attempt to contact as many DX stations as possible *outside* the US and Canada. The objective is to encourage hams to improve their operating skills and knowledge of DX propagation.

It is divided into two separate weekends by mode:

CW (Morse Code): Third full weekend in February. For 2026, this is February 21–22.

Phone (SSB): First full weekend in March. For 2026, this is March 7–8.



WIN keyer

I mostly used the **S&P** (Search and Pounce) technique. In ham radio it’s a contesting technique where an operator tunes across the bands, listens for stations calling CQ, and immediately

replies to (or “pounces on”) them to make a quick contact. It is the primary method for smaller stations to build a high score, often paired with *running* (holding a frequency).

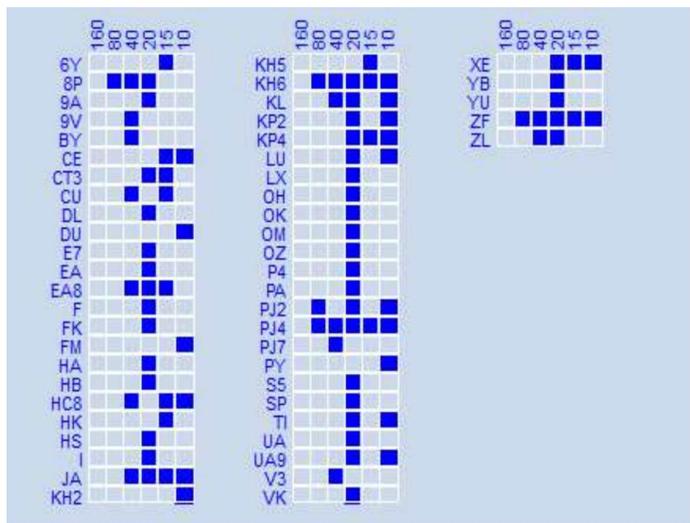
S&P is ideal for beginners, it is generally easier than running and is recommended for stations with limited equipment, as it does not require a “big signal” to be heard. And more efficiently allows for finding new multipliers quickly rather than waiting for them to call you.

Contest: ARRLDXCW				
Band	QSOs	Pts	Cty	Pt/Q
3.5	6	18	5	3.0
7	33	99	14	3.0
14	69	207	40	3.0
21	26	78	14	3.0
28	50	150	18	3.0
Total	184	552	91	3.0
Score: 50,232				
1 Mult = 2.0 Q's				

My Results

Statistics		Graph		
Mode	Band		Tot	Accum
CW	3.5	6	6	6
CW	7	33	33	39
CW	14	67	67	106
CW	21	26	26	132
CW	28	50	50	182
Total		182	182	182

QSOs by band



Countries worked



73
Ned AC6YY

ARRL News

Feb. 20, 2026

FCC Requires that FRN Contact Information Be Updated Within Ten Days of a Change

ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio® reports that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted changes to its rules to require that every holder of an FCC Registration Number (FRN) update their contact information in the [CORES](#) system (email and postal addresses) within ten business days of a change.

<https://apps.fcc.gov/cores/userLogin.do>

Because every FCC licensee—including amateur radio operators—must have an FRN to file applications, this requirement applies to all licensed amateurs. FRN contact information is handled separately and apart from contact information related to a license in the [License Manager System](#). Both records must be kept up-to-date, and each requires a separate update.

<https://wireless2.fcc.gov/UlsEntry/licManager/login.jsp>

Until now, no specific deadline existed for updating FRN or license contact information. Instead, the amateur rules at sections 97.21 and 97.23 provide that a license may be suspended or revoked “if FCC correspondence is returned as undeliverable because of an incorrect address/email.” These provisions remain in effect as well as the 10-day deadline applicable to FRN information.

If your FRN information is current and has not changed, no immediate action is required, but you must adhere to the 10-day rule for future changes. It is recommended to periodically check both the CORES and License Manager Systems to ensure contact information is accurate, even if no changes have occurred.

The new deadline (section 1.8002(b)(2) of the Commission’s Rules) became effective on February 5 as part of a proceeding that was limited to further constraining robocalls. Although the proceeding focused on robocall issues, the 10-day update requirement applies broadly to all FRN holders. On February 6 the FCC confirmed in a Public Notice that the new deadline applies to all FRN holders. The amendment replaces language adopted in 2001 that required FRN holders to keep their contact information up-to-date but had not imposed a deadline for doing so.

Numerous requests for clarification from non-robocaller interests led the FCC to issue a [Public Notice on February 6](#) (see also [PDF](#)) clarifying that fines imposed on those subject to the robocall rules for not keeping contact information up-to-date do NOT apply to licensees such as radio amateurs, but that the 10-day deadline does apply to all FRN holders.

<https://www.fcc.gov/document/wcb-reminds-rmd-filers-new-base-forfeitures>
<https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-26-133A1.pdf>

See the following resources for updating FRN and license information.

FCC Tutorial on updating FRN information:
https://apps.fcc.gov/cores/html/Update_FRN_Information.htm

ARRL information on how to update license information:
<https://www.arrl.org/call-sign-renewals-or-changes>

For assistance, call the FCC FRN Help Desk: (877) 480-3201 (available 8 AM to 6 PM ET).

Meeting Minutes

General Meeting, Feb. 9, 2026



Meeting room 3, San Jose Red Cross, N. 1st St and Plumeria

Meeting called to order by President Gregg Lane KF6FNA at 7:37 pm

Customary self introductions.
WB6YRU, Gary
KE6FNA, Gregg
N6NKT, George Williams
WA6QYS, Lou Steirer
KO6MHH, Sunshine Pooley (visitor)
KG6GO, Donald wile
AC6YY, Ned
KN6BEZ, Ogman Kabranov
KO6FCL, Pablo Gianni
W6JPP, John Parks

Announcements

President Gregg KF6FNA:
Board meeting will be next Monday. The Radio Room will be open Saturday, Feb.28. The weekly nets are on Mondays, 7:30 pm, and Thursdays on 10 m.

Our guest speaker is Ned AC6YY who gave an interesting presentation on baluns. QRZ.com does personal logging, coordinates with others, call search, etc. very popular. Toroid mix 31 works well for RF suppression, those are chokes. A choke can be used to stop RF from coming down the outside of a coax, instead of using a balun. Mix 43 is good for baluns, 1.25 to 300 MHz. The larger the toroid the more power it can handle, can stack them to get the same benefit. A balun is BALanced to UNbalanced such as transforming a dipole antenna to coax. Impedance can be transformed at the same time with various winding ratios..

Meeting adjourned at 9:01 pm

Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU, Recording for the Secretary

Board Meeting, Feb. 16, 2026



Held verbally on our 2 m repeater W6UU/R

Meeting called to order by President Gregg Lane KF6FNA at 7:42 PM

Attendance:

Officers: President Gregg Lane KF6FNA, Treasurer Ned Tufekcic AC6YY, Station Trustee Don Village K6PBQ.
Directors: Lou Steirer WA6QYS, Wally Britten KA6YMD, John Parks W6JPP, Janet Motha KF6PUQ.
Visitors: Gary WB6YRU

President's Report, Gregg KF6FNA:

Our turn to host the flea market will be July 11, 6 am to noon. More info to follow later.

We have a briefcase. Not sure whether it was something we lost.

It's being investigated.

Secretary's Report, (vacant):

Gregg KF6FNA: The minutes were in the SCCARA-GRAM, any changes?

(nothing heard)

John W6JPP: I move to accept the minutes as published.

Don K6PBQ: Second

Gregg KF6FNA: Any opposed? (nothing heard)

Motion passes.

Treasurer's Report, Ned AC6YY:

\$12635 checking \$110 petty cash

Insurance payment for \$300 is pending.

John W6JPP: Move to accept the treasurer's report

Don K6PBQ: Second

Gregg KF6FNA: Any objections? (none heard)

Motion passes.

Station Trustee's Report, Don K6PBQ: Nothing new to report, no additions or corrections.

Standing Committees

Editor's report: Gary WB6YRU: We've had a couple articles lately (thanks Ned). I hope everyone sees the improvement that makes and will be motivated to send in more articles.

BBS Sysop's report: Gary WB6YRU: Nothing new to report

Repeater Chairman's report, Goetz K6GKB:

Gregg KF6FNA: I contacted him, nothing new to report, it's chugging along fine.

Webmaster's report, Ned AC6YY:

Gregg KF6FNA: The access info has not been received by Ned. I contacted Doug and he will send that over.

Ned AC6YY: Doug thought he sent it, but he hasn't. He said he will get to that.

Old Business

Gregg KF6FNA: We need a clear spot in the weather then we will schedule a time to do some antenna work at the Red Cross.

We voted to get a new tuner for the club station. Ned ordered it. Ned AC6YY: It has arrived. There's no serial number, just the model number. It needs 12 VDC, I need to attach a power-poll connector for that.

John W6JPP: I may have a power supply for the antenna tuner.

Ned AC6YY: We don't need it, we just need a connector to plug into the existing supply

New Business

Gregg KF6FNA: There's been some talk about getting toroids for a transformer building session.

Gary WB6YRU: Ned gave a talk about baluns and chokes at the last general meeting. I suggest we have a follow-up meeting where the attendees can make antenna transformers themselves. The club can supply the toroids and wire, guidance and information. I can print up information hand-outs. This means buying a selection of toroids and wire. The board might want members to pay their way, but we have been lacking a reason to attend meetings recently and supplying those parts for free would certainly help. A selection of toroids and wire wouldn't be that expensive.

Ned AC6YY: We need to decide which supplies to buy. Do we want connectors and boxes too or just the toroids and wire? And which toroids, how many. There are balun kits, those might be better.

Gregg KF6FNA: If we want to do that for the next meeting, work on it quickly and we can have an emergency board meeting to approve spending the money.

Gregg KF6FNA: Doug N6DPO extended our liability insurance and paid it himself, \$300.

John W6JPP: I move that we reimburse Doug for that payment.

Ned AC6YY: Second.

Gregg KF6FNA: Any objections? (nothing heard)

Motion passes.

John W6JPP: If anyone tries to get a hold of me, I haven't been near a cell phone or land line very often lately. I was in an accident and have been traveling back and forth to the doctor. Leave me a text message.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM

Gary Mitchell WB6YRU, recording for the Secretary

Packet Pieces

Downloaded from the BBS packet network:

=====
Date: 29 Apr 2020 23:23
From: GM3YEW@GB7YEW
To: HUMOUR@WW
Subject: jokes 30/4

My wife was complaining that I spend too much time on the computer, and not enough time with her. I decided to fix that by having a "movie night" with her.

We watched Hackers, The Net, Anti-Trust, You've Got Mail, and The Matrix.

She's still mad at me. What did I do?

A mechanic was removing a cylinder head from the motor of a Harley motorcycle when he spotted a well-known heart surgeon in his shop.

The surgeon was there waiting for the service manager to come take a look at his bike when the mechanic shouted across the garage, "Hey, Doc, can I ask you a question!?"

The surgeon, a bit surprised, walked over to where the mechanic was working on the motorcycle. The mechanic straightened up, wiped his hands on a rag and asked, "So, Doc, look at this engine. I open it up, take the valves out, repair any damage, and then put them back in, and when I finish, it works just like new. So how come I get such a small salary and you get the really big bucks, when you and I are doing basically the same work?"

The surgeon paused, smiled and leaned over, and whispered to the Mechanic... "Try doing it with the engine running"

These actually appeared in church bulletins or were announced in church services:

Bertha Belch, a missionary from Africa, will be speaking tonight at Calvary Methodist. Come hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa.

The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.

The sermon this morning: "Jesus Walks on the Water." The sermon tonight: "Searching for Jesus."

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget your husbands.

The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been canceled due to a conflict.

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say "Hell" to someone who doesn't care much about you.

Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.

Miss Charlene Mason sang "I will not pass this way again," giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.

Barbara remains in the hospital and needs blood donors for more transfusions. She is also having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of Pastor Jack's sermons.

The Rector will preach his farewell message after which the choir will sing: "Break Forth Into Joy."

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What Is Hell?" Come early and listen to our choir practice.

Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.

Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.

The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment, and gracious hostility.

Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM - prayer and medication to follow.

The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

This evening at 7 PM there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come

prepared to sin.

Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10 AM. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B. S. is done.

The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.

Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door.

The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement Friday at 7 PM. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new tithing campaign slogan last Sunday: "I Upped My Pledge - Up Yours"

=====
Date: 29 Apr 2020 02:03
From: GM3YEW@GB7YEW
To: HUMOUR@WW
Subject: jokes 29/4

IRISH HUMOR

Six retired Irishmen were playing poker in O'Leary's apartment when Paddy Murphy loses \$500 on a single hand, clutches his chest, and drops dead at the table.

Michael O'Conner looks around and asks, 'Oh, me boys, someone got's to tell Paddy's wife. Who will it be?'

They draw straws. Paul Gallagher picks the short one. They tell him to be discreet, be gentle, don't make a bad situation any worse.

'Discreet? I'm the most discreet Irishmen you'll ever meet. Discretion is me middle name. Leave it to me.'

Gallagher goes over to Murphy's house and knocks on the door. Mrs. Murphy answers and asks what he wants. He declares, "Your husband just lost \$500 gambling and is afraid to come home."

"Tell him to drop dead!" says Murphy's wife.
"Yes ma'am, I'll go tell him." says Gallagher.

A drunk staggers into a Catholic Church, enters a confessional booth, sits down, but says nothing.

The Priest coughs a few times to get his attention, but the drunk continues to sit there quietly. Then the Priest pounds three times on the wall.

The drunk mumbles, "No use a knockin, there ain't no paper on this side neither."

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 and who to contact for each. If your topic isn't listed, ask one of the Elmers under the topic that comes closest and we'll ask around.

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 (available from the club secretary or on our web site).

Topics:

- Antennas, feed-lines, tuners: **NV6W, W6JPP, K6PBQ**
- CW (Morse code): **NV6W, K6PBQ**
- DX (long distance, propagation): **NV6W**
- EchoLink: **K6GKB**
- Emergency operating, preparedness: **WA6QYS**
- HF operating techniques: **NV6W, K6PBQ**
- Homebrew projects, construction: **WB6YRU**
- Legal, FCC rules: **WB6YRU**
- License testing, new amateurs: **W6JPP**
- Lightning protection, grounding: **WB6YRU**
- Packet Network (BBS, forwarding): **WB6YRU**
- SCCARA (club inner workings): **K6PBQ, WB6YRU, WA6QYS**
- Station set-up, equipment: **K6PBQ, W6JPP**
- TVI, RFI: **WB6YRU**

Contacts for the above topics:

K6GKB, Goetz Brandt, 408-259-7287
e-mail: goetz@ix.netcom.com

NV6W, James D. Armstrong, Jr.,
evening & msg: 408-670-1680

W6JPP, John Parks
e-mail: w6jpp@arrl.net

K6PBQ, Don Village, 408-263-2789

WA6QYS, Lou Steirer, 408-241-7999
e-mail: wa6qys@arrl.net

WB6YRU, Gary Mitchell, 408-269-2924
packet: home BBS N0ARY
e-mail: wb6yru@ix.netcom.com

Newsletter Notes

Isn't great having some interesting and informative articles for a change? Thank You Ned!

The topic of the next general meeting hasn't been officially announced, but the intention is to find out what parts we need to buy for a project meeting where attendees can make a balun or choke. That means we need to find out from YOU what you need in the way of matching your antennas. Do you need to connect coax to a dipole or have the ole RF-in-the-shack problem? Come to the March meeting, let's talk!



73, Gary WB6YRU, editor



SCCARA
 Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Association
 PO Box 106
 SAN JOSE CA 95103-0106



FIRST CLASS

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

SCCARA Membership for 2026

If renewing and none of your info has changed, please only fill in your name and call

Name: _____ Call: _____ Class: _____

Address: _____ Licensed since (year): _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip+4: _____

Telephone: _____ New Member Renewal I'm also an ARRL member

E-mail: _____

For delivery of the SCCARA-GRAM (pdf) and club announcements

Membership type and dues: Individual, \$20 Family, \$25 Student, \$10 (under 18)

All memberships start January 1 and expire December 31.

Family memberships (more than one member per household): please include the above info for each member, use separate forms.

New members:

Dues are prorated: dues x (11 - month) x 10% For example: July would be \$20 x (11-7) x 0.1 = \$8
 If joining in November or December: normal dues for next year, the rest of this year is included free.

I want the paper newsletter delivered by U.S. Mail for an additional \$15 per year

Prorated, \$1.25 per month. That's \$13.75 if starting in February, \$12.50 if starting in March, etc.)

\$ _____ **Total** enclosed

Give this completed form and payment to the Secretary or Treasurer at any meeting or mail to the club address.