

SCCARA-GRAM

Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Assn. (SCCARA)
Volume 7 Number 9

Organized in 1921
September 1991

THE PREZ SEZ....

Our Meeting this Month will be at the Sizzler Restaurant at 5353 Almaden Expressway (next door to Emporium) in the Almaden Fashion Plaza. It's the same place where we had our "Oldtimers, Newcomers, and Guest Nite. Our program we be more socially oriented than usual -- it's "Round Table Nite". For those who are unfamiliar with the Round Table, it's a chance to swap stories, tell tales and share some of your more memorable moments in Ham Radio. So, if you want to hear some good stories, be sure to attend this meeting and bring your spouse or significant other. The meeting room will open at 6:30 pm for dinner will begin sometime between 7:30 and 8:00 pm. Again, I encourage you to bring a guest.

By the time you read this, the official end to Summer, Labor Day will have come and gone. Monday Night Football will be in full swing and hopefully the 49ers will be 2 & 0! Please, remember that SCCARA'S Monday Night Net will also be in operation at 7:30 pm. Please, remember to check in as often as possible. It only takes a few minutes, but it's one of the best ways to keep up on what's happening in SCCARA. Hope to see you there, too.

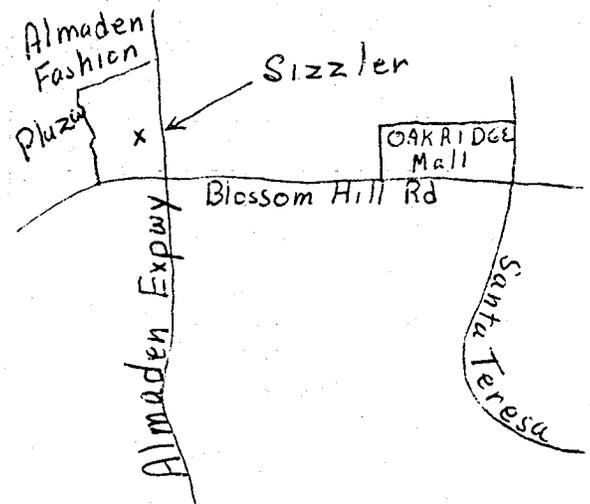
73, de George, WA60.

MINUTES OF AUGUST SCCARA MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 PM by President George Allan WA60 in the new meeting place at Storage

Next Meeting

Date: Monday 09/09/91
Time: 6:30pm till 9:30pm.
Place: The Sizzler
5353 Almaden Expressway, Sj.



Our September meeting is a "take it easy, bring your wife, tell a story, think about new SCCARA officers meeting.

Important Dates

09/09	SCCARA Meeting
09/14	HRO Grand Opening
09/14	Foothill Flea Market
09/26	SCCARA Board meeting
09/27	ARRL Computer Networking Conference.
09/28	Sonoma Hamfest

Dimensions. In attendance were 38 members and several visitors.

ARRL Vice President Rod Stafford KB6ZV gave a report on the recent ARRL Board meeting. Rod said that approximately 10,000 people have become new hams since the beginning of the No Code Tech license. He also discussed the problems concerning Packet messages and the liability of BBS operators for messages passing through their systems. Rod reported that the 220-222 MHz band is gone and that the ARRL was petitioning the FCC for 216-220 MHz to replace it.

Our program this month was presented by Bill Brothers N6ZPC. Bill gave a very interesting and enlightening discussion on magnetic and optical disk drive storage for computers. Many thanks for a great program Bill.

George WA6O reported that Brad Wyatt K6WR will be running for Vice Director and that Glenn Zumwalt KJ6EN will be running for Director of the Pacific Division. Club members are urged to consider Glenn and Brad during the upcoming election.

This month's raffle winners were: KK6ZE, K6RQ, WB6YRU, KC6WMM, K6VIP and WB6ORU.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 PM. Doug Eaton WN6U for Don Village K6PBQ.

REPEATER COMMITTEE REPORT

8/31/91 de WA6VJY

The current goal of the committee is to identify and purchase items to upgrade our 440 repeater to all commercial-grade equipment. Our flea market efforts are specifically to finance this upgrading of club equipment.

The August Flea Market was pretty successful. We had over \$350 in sales. Once again, I was amazed at what people will pay us money for! There really IS money in junk! I have to admit that I

thought we wouldn't sell half of what we had, but we did!

The Flea Market effort was aided by: Jim WE6V and his grandson Peter KF7QK, "ace salesman" Gary WB6YRU, Don K6PBQ, Mike KB6LCJ, J.D. K6YKG and his son, and myself. If I missed anyone, I'll try to mention you next month. For all those who helped, thank you. It was good to see everyone who stopped by to socialize. That is a big part of the Flea Market scene for all those who participate.

Bob N6WHO stopped by the sales booth to ask a few questions regarding SCCARA and our repeater. In the discussion that followed, he had some suggestions that will help improve the functioning of our repeater during power outages. I plan to implement one in particular to prevent the controller from being reset every time the repeater switches power supplies (either to or from battery power). Thanks for the idea, Bob.

The S-meter circuit for the 2meter repeater will be installed and working soon. The way to test your signal strength into the repeater will be discussed in my column next month. This S-meter function is important in that it will tell you if you have a strong-enough signal to make a phone patch. It can also give you relative signal strength readings between two antennas as a comparison of the gain between them.

As with ALL functions you wish to use on the repeater, IDENTIFY YOURSELF prior to making use of those functions. Unidentified "button-pushing" will (if taken to extreme) force us to disable one or more functions we take for granted. (If you aren't proud of your callsign, why stay in the hobby? If you are proud of your callsign, USE IT!)

This coming Flea Market will be the last one for this year. It will be on September 14. Plan on being at the SCCARA storage locker on Friday the 13th at about 4:30pm if you can help with transportation of our "gems". Again, for all of you who have helped with sales in past months, thank you.

73 and CUL,
Stan WA6VJY

NOMINATIONS de Herb K6ABG

The nominating committee is seeking two or three people to assist me in locating members to run for club office, specifically: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary; also two Director seats.

This task will require some telephoning and perhaps a little arm twisting. Nominations should be presented at the October meeting. Elections are set for the November meeting.

Please call Herb at 226-2919 to volunteer for the nominating committee. Become a POWER BROKER.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP IN SCCARA

By Doc Gmelin, W6ZRJ

The other day one of the local hams was talking about life memberships in SCCARA and he was surprised when I told him that in a way I'm a life member of SCCARA. In fact a lot of us oldtimers are "life members".

An explanation is certainly deserving for many of the members of SCCARA who joined the club after it was voted to return to a club dues structure sometime in the mid 1960s. To the best of my recollection, here is the story.

When I joined SCCARA in August 1946 I recall that the dues were 25 cents per month, which worked out to be \$3.00 per year. This dues structure remained in effect until sometime in 1948. The club had experienced a decline of interested members by that time. In fact I remember one meeting where only seven members came to the meeting. Something had to be done to revive interest.

Some of us put our heads together and thanks to a generous offer by Frank Quement to donate items to be used as drawing prizes, it was decided to suspend dues and make everyone a life member after a \$2.00 initiation fee. We would raise our main funds via the prize drawings at the monthly meeting. And by golly it worked.

So a lot of us are Life Members of SCCARA because we paid our \$2.00 fee and should be members for life. But while the club did raise enough money for a number of years, eventually the prize donations stopped. There were a number of reasons why this happened. Certainly we can't blame Frank. He made the donations through his business and when this generosity became impossible, we certainly understood why the donations stopped.

When the club voted to rescind the "life membership" many of us pointed out that perhaps this was breaking a contract, and I still think that this is the case. But we all went along, at least most "life members" did. A few actually quit the club.

There is a second category of life membership that has been used by SCCARA over the years,

and that is "Honorary Life Member". I believe that only two have been given, one to Paul Tibbs, W6WGO who was President for four terms, and one to Ralph Heintz, W6RH, who was an early radio pioneer in tube design and production. Ralph was given the honor as a result of a talk he gave on the early days of radio in this area. He was never active with the club in later years, although I think he may have been an early member.

Someone could check the minutes for the story of both regular and honorary life members, but at least everyone has read about and can know the "rest of the story."

"QSA-5 R-9"

By Doc Gmelin, W6ZRJ

When I first started operating 10 meter phone in 1947, the most common signal report given was something like this:

"Thanks for the call, old man. Your signal is QSA-5, R-9 here is San Jose."

Now even in that dim distant past on AM, the preferred ARRL signal report for phone was R (1 to 5) for readability and S (1 to 9) for signal strength. How the heck did QSA and R come into the picture?

Well first you have to understand the fact that a majority of amateurs used homebrew equipment in those days, both for receiving and transmitting. Most home brew receivers and even a many of the commercial receivers in the 1920s and 30s, did not have any signal strength meter.

And those that did had "R" meters instead of "S" meters. Why was it called an "R" meter? I've been told that this meant "readability meter" and the meter was calibrated 1 to 9, with 9

being the top of the meter.

Well then why the QSA-5?

QSA is the standard Q signal for signal strength with 5 being "extremely strong signals", and 1 being "barely readable signals." This is just a relative comparison on the part of the operator, while the reading on the R meter meant at least a measurable strength.

So the standard QSA-5 R-9 signal report meant:

"I think your signal is extremely strong and the reading on my R-meter is a "9". That's about the best signal report you could get.

Later on S meters were added to most commercial receivers and the calibration was in S units that related to a certain number of microvolts developed across the antenna terminals of the receiver. And even later it was found that signals could develop even higher voltages than the standard S-9 and the higher signals were calibrated in decibels, which are a relationship useful in either voltage or voltage comparisons.

It is difficult to establish an absolute system for measuring signal strength, and for most work amateurs are interested in comparing signals anyway.

For a vast number of radio amateurs who work only of VHF and UHF repeaters, signal strength reports are of little significance. Today one hear's "you are full quieting" as the signal report on repeaters.

Perhaps the readings of signal strength are not important since today so many amateurs really use amateur radio as a personal communications service rather than for radio experiments. So we probably won't hear "your signals are 5/9 plus 20 db on and certainly we no longer hear QSA-5 R- 9.

But if you hear any

old-timers like W6ZRJ or W6VZT use QSA-5, R-9, you will know what they mean. After all, amateur radio has a language of its own. More later on this subject.

The Queen Mary by Don Village K6PBQ

Joan and I spent our vacation in Long Beach and San Diego. That's why I missed the August meeting. While in Long Beach I operated



Don KA6PBQ operating the station on the Queen Mary

W6RO in the Queen Marys Wireless Room. They have a great station and setup there. They can operate on 20 thru 80 meters on HF plus have 2 meter and packet. If anyone is going down to Long Beach and would like to operate in the Wireless Room on the Queen Mary, please let me know as I have the info on making arrangements.

SCCARA SCUTTLEBUTT

Many thanks to Frank Glass K6RQ for working on the Swan 500 which was donated to the club. The club sold at the last flea market for \$225 and the buyer got himself a solid rig.

On a less happy note, JD K6YKG said that two people who are in his code class have purchased rigs at the flea market which were defective. Please keep in mind that all purchases at the flea market are **BUYER BEWARE!!**

Roland KA6UMA reports that he has his new packet system on the air. When not physically in use, it will act as a digipeater on 145.050.

The N6IIU-1 BBS has been having problems. If you have trouble getting thru., you may want to digipeat thru N6IIU, SJ-7 or W6IAQ-1. You might even try Rolands as previously mentioned.

The listening post is a newsletter for the B.A.S.E. (Bay Area Scanner Enthusiasts

club). It's well done and is packed with data. They have a booth at the Foothill Flea Market. Many members are also Hams.

Don't miss the grand opening of our "local" HRO. The date is 09/14/91.

The last flea market of the season for SCCARA is coming up. Come on out and help.

