

# SCCARA-GRAM



## Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Association

Volume 25, Number 5

May 2009



## President's Prose

There is a SCCARA 10-meter net on Thursday nights (8:00 pm, 28.385 MHz). Wally, KA6YMD is usually the net control. That frequency was deliberately chosen so that Technician Class licensees could participate, thus any and all of us can get involved. If you can get on HF, give it a try. Every class of license can operate on SSB from 28.300 to 28.500 MHz. I check in if I'm not away at a meeting, but the participation is usually pretty light. Put it on your calendar.

You may recall that we had a very informative presentation on wet-cell batteries by Tom Ryan of Bayland Battery at our February meeting. If you haven't followed up by looking at the Deka website, you're missing an opportunity to learn something. For example, see the Technical Manual on Gelled Electrolyte (gel) and Absorbed Glass Mat (AGM) Batteries at [www.eastpenn-deka.com/assets/base/0139.pdf](http://www.eastpenn-deka.com/assets/base/0139.pdf).

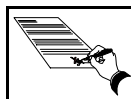
My article on the Anderson Powerpole connectors prompted some questions from readers. Here are the answers (you get to guess the questions): #1 -- The metal contact needs to be pushed into the plastic housing until you feel/hear a click and you can't pull it back out by tugging on the wire. #2 -- The red and black plastic housings will lock together if you slide them together properly and can then be secured with crazy glue or a tyrap. The steel rollpins aren't recommended since they are likely to fall out and land somewhere you'll wish they hadn't.

You are undoubtedly aware by now that the FCC has clarified what constitutes an amateur radio repeater, thanks to the efforts of our very own Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU, editor of the *SCCARA-GRAM*. Gary petitioned the FCC (do any of the rest of us know how to do that?) in December 2007 and received a response a mere 15 months later. The decision defines D-STAR and other digital repeaters as true repeaters, the same as the conventional analog repeaters such as our W6UU. That issue having been resolved, several proposals for reforming the repeater frequencies in the two-meter band are still under consideration by NARCC. I believe you will find more information on this subject elsewhere in this *SCCARA-GRAM*.

Propagation on the upper HF bands continues to be dismal as we sit in the current trough of low sunspot activity. The average daily sunspot number for the year 2008 was 4.7. Compare that with 170.3 for 2001, 176.7 for 2002 and 109.2 for 2003! Hopefully, things will begin to improve over the next year or two.

We had 57 paid-up members as of March 22, 2009. The demographics looked like this: 15 Technician Class, 13 General Class, 5 Advanced Class and 24 Extra Class.

73,  
Don - AE6PM

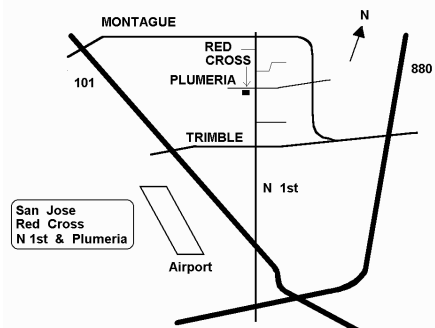
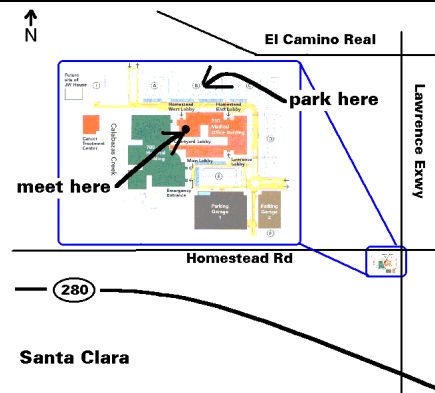


## Calendar

- 5/9 Electronic flea market (De Anza College)
- 5/11 SCCARA General Meeting
- 5/18 SCCARA Board Meeting--(San Jose Red Cross, 7:30p, all are welcome)

## General Meeting

- Day: Monday, May 11, 2009
- Time: 7:30 PM
- Place: Kaiser Santa Clara, Rm 196, 1 Craig Anderson, WiFi in Santa Clara Valley
- Featuring:



# ARRL News

From *The ARRL Letter*, April 3, 2009

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## 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

(all officers are also directors)

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Director	Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU	269-2924
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N0ARY BBS	Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU	269-2924
	e-mail: <a href="mailto:wb6yru@ix.netcom.com">wb6yru@ix.netcom.com</a>	

### 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 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 (Mt Umunhum). User ports: 144.93 (1200 baud), 433.37 (9600 baud), telnet sun.n0ary.org (login "bbs"). 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

## ARRL COMMENTS ON FCC'S PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF RURAL BROADBAND PLAN

On March 10, 2009, the FCC invited comments via a Public Notice <[http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DA-09-561A1.pdf](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-09-561A1.pdf)> concerning the establishment of a comprehensive rural broadband strategy as part of the Department of Agriculture's Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008, commonly known as the 2008 Farm Bill. Per the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act), Congress required the FCC to develop a "comprehensive national broadband plan." According to the FCC, they, Congress, and the Secretary of Agriculture "have repeatedly recognized the importance of ensuring access to advanced telecommunications and information services to all Americans, with a special focus on rural and hard-to-serve areas." The proceeding provided an opportunity for the ARRL to express its concerns about broadband over power lines (BPL) <<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/>> that the FCC has yet to satisfactorily address.

In the comments submitted by ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD <[http://www.arrl.org/news/files/09-29\\_Rural\\_Broadband\\_Comments\\_03\\_2009.pdf](http://www.arrl.org/news/files/09-29_Rural_Broadband_Comments_03_2009.pdf)>, the ARRL reaffirms its support of broadband opportunities in rural areas. "ARRL is in agreement that broadband is critical to the health of agricultural and other businesses, and to the educational interests of Americans who live in rural areas," Imlay stated. Imlay commended the FCC in looking for broadband solutions on both the short and long term, as well as identifying how Federal programs "might overcome obstacles that currently impede rural broadband development."

Imlay pointed out that while the FCC and various power utilities have touted BPL as a promising means of providing rural broadband service, the ARRL contends that there are "prohibitive limitations (notable among these being the large number, and the cost, of repeaters and couplers required on overhead, medium voltage power lines for what amounts to a limited number of subscribers' homes in rural areas)."

The ARRL maintains that before BPL could ever be considered as a long-term source of broadband in rural America, the FCC must adopt rules that provide against BPL interference to the licensed radio services. Imlay said that studies have pointed out that BPL systems cause interference to licensed radio services in "certain configurations," such as international broadcasting, aeronautical, maritime, disaster relief, military and the Amateur Radio Service. "Of particular concern in rural areas is that low-band VHF radio systems are still common among state police, volunteer fire departments and other 'First Responder' public safety agencies," Imlay told the Commission, adding, "BPL systems using this frequency range can and would, without additional rules, likely block communications between dispatch centers and emergency response vehicles."

Imlay said that Amateur Radio is a "continuous, intensive user of the high-frequency bands in residential areas," and as such, "is arguably the most pervasively affected" by deployment of BPL in rural areas. "Amateur mobile operation is a particularly notable victim of BPL interference, since medium-voltage power lines run parallel to roadways." The Commission's BPL rules "include no effective protection."

Imlay reminded the Commission that the ARRL, as well as

broadcast industry representatives, challenged the adequacy of the FCC's BPL interference rules: "On appeal to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, the Court remanded the ET Docket 04-37 proceeding to the Commission <<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2008/04/25/10064/?c=1>> with some very specific instructions, including reconsideration of assumptions relating to interference mitigation and disclosure of studies that had previously only been released in redacted form." Imlay pointed out that almost a year after the Court's decision, the Commission has done "literally nothing" to comply with the mandated instructions <<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2009/03/04/10685/>>.

In the six years that the BPL rules have been on the Commission's docket, Imlay said that there has been "continuous and extensive debate about the interference potential of BPL." This, he told the FCC, has created "some uncertainty" amongst the various utilities and municipalities that have been eyeing BPL as a broadband delivery mechanism, with the Commission's inaction since the Court's decision contributing to the uncertainty and "creating a dampening effect on the marketplace's interest in BPL." Before the FCC can implement a BPL policy for rural America, Imlay said that this "regulatory uncertainty" would need to be resolved.

The cost of implementing interference resolution must be considered by any rural broadband provider, Imlay said. While there is nothing in the FCC rules concerning this, Imlay reminded the Commission that the ARRL, "some eight months ago, offered a plan to the Commission's Office of Engineering and Technology in this regard <<http://www.arrl.org/?rtid=8341>>. The revised regulation suggested by ARRL would be sufficient to reduce the potential interference from BPL to the point that it would be practical to address such instances on a case-by-case basis. Compliance is achievable with present BPL technology without significant limitation on BPL deployment, rural or otherwise. However, the absence of such rules is an obstacle to any consideration of BPL as a rural broadband mechanism and makes an evaluation of interference mitigation difficult or impossible." The deployment of a BPL system with a high potential for interference would require expensive mitigation afterwards, whereas if the potential is reduced to an acceptable level at the time of deployment, the need for mitigation -- and therefore the cost -- will be greatly reduced.

Imlay told the FCC that more than four years ago, the Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) <<http://www.usda.gov/rus/>> recognized "the need and willingness to utilize agency resources to remove interference concerns as an obstacle to rural broadband rollout (at least via BPL)." In a January 2005 letter from then-RUS Administrator Hilda Gay Legg to ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, regarding the RUS's Community Connect Grant Program <<http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/commconnect.htm>>, the RUS acknowledged that the cost of interference mitigation from BPL systems was a "significant" issue, and told the ARRL that "whenever a loan or grant application proposes broadband service delivery via BPL, the RUS will 'consider the cost of interference mitigation in [its] financial analysis.'" On March 20, current FCC Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein was nominated by President Barack Obama <<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2009/03/23/10716/?c=1>> to become the next Administrator of the RUS.

Imlay told the Commission that "[i]f the means by which a grantee would comply with the Commission requirements for interference avoidance are not clear (which as of now they are not), it is unlikely that any applicant for a grant for broadband service using BPL could address the RUS's concern about interference." Therefore, Imlay said that it is necessary for the FCC to address the BPL interference issues on remand from the Court of Appeals "in order to remove this additional obstacle to an assessment of

rural broadband opportunities via BPL."

The ARRL is "constrained" to note that the FCC has, over the past six years, "acted not as a dispassionate technical agency in the evaluation of certain broadband mechanisms, including BPL," Imlay noted, "instead acting as a self described 'cheerleader' for certain technologies, also including BPL." By these actions, Imlay said that the Commission "has ignored technical evidence that is contrary to its predisposition," and urged the FCC that "those same mistakes" not be repeated here.

Imlay reminded the Commission that President Barack Obama, on his inauguration day earlier this year, placed a series of goals on the White House Web site. "Among these," Imlay said, "was the following, obviously laudable goal: 'Restore Scientific Integrity to the White House: Restore the basic principle that government decisions should be based on the best-available, scientifically valid evidence and not on ideological predispositions.' The Commission has the opportunity to implement this goal in this Docket proceeding."

Saying that rural broadband opportunities should be "evaluated in terms of the scientific realities of the technologies on the table, and not on the basis of what the Commission wants to believe about them," the ARRL asked the FCC to fulfill "without further delay the obligations placed upon it by the United States Court of Appeals in ET Docket 04-37, and adopt such revised and additional rules for BPL so as to eliminate the extant interference potential of the technology." With the regulatory uncertainty and unresolved interference issues that continue to surround BPL, the resolution of ET Docket 04-37 is a "prerequisite for the development" of a plan for a complete evaluation of rural broadband opportunities and the development of a rural broadband plan.

## **GERMAN AMSAT TEAM TRANSMITS, RECEIVES SIGNALS FROM VENUS**

On March 25, a group from AMSAT-DL bounced radio signals off the surface of Venus, marking the first time Amateur Radio operators have bounced radio signals off another planet <[http://www.amsat-dl.org/pic/gallery2/main.php?2\\_view=core.DownloadItem&g2\\_itemId=7561](http://www.amsat-dl.org/pic/gallery2/main.php?2_view=core.DownloadItem&g2_itemId=7561)>. According to AMSAT-DL President Peter Guelzow, DB2OS, the Earth-Venus-Earth (EVE) transmission is another step in preparing for a mission to Mars. According to an AMSAT-DL press release, the team's transmitter was generating about 6 kW CW on 2.4 GHz.

Guelzow said that signals were sent from a ground control station at the IUZ Sternwarte observatory in Bochum: "After traveling almost 100 million kilometers and a round trip delay of about 5 minutes, they were clearly received as echoes from the surface of Venus. This was the first German success to receive echoes of other planets. In addition, this is the farthest distance crossed by radio amateurs, over 100 times further than echoes from the moon (EME reflections)."

The EVE experiment was repeated on March 26 for several hours with "good echoes" from Venus, Guelzow said. "Morse code was used to transmit the well-known 'HI' signature known from the AMSAT OSCAR satellites."

For receiving the EVE reflections, Guelzow said that the team used a fast Fourier transform (FFT) analysis with an integration time of 5 minutes. "After integrating for 2 minutes only, the reflected signals were clearly visible in the display," he said. "Despite the bad weather, signals from Venus could be detected from 1038 UTC on until the planet reached the local horizon."

Guelzow explained that with the EVE reflections, the high power amplifier “has therefore passed this crucial test as a final key component for the planned P5-A Mars mission. By receiving generated echoes from Venus, the ground and command station for the Mars probe has been cleared for operational use and the AMSAT-DL team is now gearing up for building the P5-A space probe. AMSAT-DL wants to show that low-budget interplanetary exploration is possible with its approach.”

Development, design and construction of this first German Mars mission have been achieved by AMSAT-DL and its partner organizations, Guelzow explained. “Already a third of the total project costs were performed. More work shall follow during the mission. AMSAT-DL would like to demonstrate that their approaches to low-cost space missions are feasible.” -- Information provided by AMSAT-DL

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## NOARY BBS

### Part 3, reading messages

Last time we looked at the help functions (which is really all the motivated user needs to use the BBS) and how to list messages and bulletins. This month we'll get down to the main function of the BBS, reading and sending messages.

Reading messages is pretty straight forward. Just as you'd expect, one uses the **read** command. Message listings include the message number. One reads a message by that number, whether a bulletin or personal.

(Again, the only difference between a bulletin and a personal message is just a matter of a status bit and personal messages are sent to call signs instead of a title or category.)

To read any message, the command is: **read #** where # is the message number. You can abbreviate that as **r #**. You can read any number of messages one right after the other simply by giving the read command with several message numbers.

There are a few different versions of the read command: **read mine** (or just **rm**) – read all your unread personal messages **read header (rh)** read, but also include the full message header.

This includes the routing history, so you can see what BBS's this message went through before it got here.

**read who (rw)** – read who else has read this message

Notice that the BBS will pause after printing a page. If you are downloading messages or whatever, you can shut that off by appending the “no prompt” key word **nop**. For example:

```
r 25 27 94 nop
```

will read messages 25, 27, and 94, all at once with no pause.

Also, you can adjust the page size with the **lines** command. **Lines 0** turns the pause feature off. **Lines 10** causes the BBS to give you 10 lines at a time.

You may have noticed that you can list files too. The read command will read those files just like a message if you use the file name instead of a number.

After you've read and/or downloaded your messages, you can kill them with the **kill** command (**k**). The **mine** key word (also **km**) will kill all your personal messages. This marks the messages for deletion, but as with Windows, it doesn't happen right a way. If you kill a messages by mistake, the sysop can re-activate it. Send a message to the sysop (which is me—so you can send a message to wb6yru instead of sysop) and mention which message(s) to activate. But don't delay, killed messages only hang around for about three days.

After reading a message, you can reply with the **reply** command. It automatically sets the address and puts you in the message editor.

Next time, about sending messages.

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## Repeater channel spacing in the 2 M band

### NARCC is looking at proposals on reducing the channel spacing of repeater segments in the 2 M band

An Open Letter to SCCARA Membership

by Fred Townsend – AE6QL

This is a highly technical subject which I'm sure, for some, will become a highly emotional subject as well. I will try and address the issue from the basis of 1) SCCARA's 2 M Repeater, 2) The SCCARA Membership, and finally 3) The Bay Area Repeater Community. Hopefully I can do this in a way most people can understand.

Have you ever wondered why there is no TV channel 3, 6, 8, 10, or 12 in the Bay Area, or LA, or NYC for that matter? When the FCC laid out the original TV band plan they knew there would be adjacent channel interference if these channels were collocated with the other channels. Simply, the TV receivers lacked the selectivity to separate two nearby signals. That's because the receiver front end, the mixer, the part that initially detects and tunes the signal, was wide open. It tuned the whole band at once; the part of the receiver that actually separates adjacent signals, is downstream of the mixer.

Guess what! The hams borrowed those same TV tubes and circuits when they started building VHF receivers. We don't use tubes anymore some but the same types of problems are still hanging around. Technology has made marvelous progress but new technology is costly and it doesn't always find its way to the amateur world right away. Sometimes we have to wait for the movie to come out on the DVD so to speak.

We are now asked to make an evolutionary step. That sounds great unless you are still using tubes. Taking the next step often means generating the next generation of boat anchors. There is the possibly that some hams will get left behind if they can't afford new technology... the new boat anchors in search of a boat.

Presently the 2 M band is split at 145 MHz between 20 KHz and 15 KHz channels. Why two channel spacings? Well it seemed like a good compromise at the time but now it seems really dumb. If 15 KHz works just fine then 20 KHz is a waste of spectrum. Now we are talking of narrowing all the channels to: A) 12.5 KHz or B) 15 KHz and 12.5 KHz (i.e. keep the old 15 KHz channels and change the 20 KHz to 12.5 KHz) or C) 15 KHz, 15 KHz and 12.5 KHz (i.e. keep the old 15 KHz channels and change the 20 KHz to both 15 KHz and 12.5 KHz).

Why change at all, you ask? To get more channels. The 2 M band has been full, to the max, for some time. The D-Star folks say they can use the spectrum more efficiently than the old analog FM repeaters. They want all channels converted to 12.5 KHz. If we did that we would pick up an additional 21 repeater channels. They say it's easy for the old analog FM repeaters to convert over too. Let's look at what it will take to move the SCCARA repeater.

1. To comply with Proposal A we need to Move both transmit and receive frequencies up 2.5 KHz: This is probably within the normal adjustment range of the crystals but not a certainty. Of course all cavities must be re-tuned as well. This is not necessarily and insignificant task.

2. Back the transmitter deviation off to 2.5 to 3 KHz: Again this is easy to do but here comes the first rub.

Because of closer spacing, the close-in transmitter sidebands must be cleaner or it may cause adjacent channel interference. This means better low pass filtering of the transmit audio. Some types of noisier modulators may need more filtering. Those transmitters which use circulator type duplexers instead of cavities may be dirty enough to cause problems to adjacent channels. Problems of this kind are often mitigated with geographic isolation. However proponents of option 'A' seem to think geographic isolation will no longer be needed. I think SCCARA uses cavities but the requirement must be fully assessed.

3. Modify the receiver IF bandpass: According to proponents of option A, 'some older models are incapable of narrow banding'. Then they reverse themselves and say, 'For older repeaters, receiver IF bandwidth [is] simple to modify (standard kits available)'.

Here is a major rub. The ability to reduce a receiver bandwidth is highly dependent on the receiver architecture. Indeed changing many of the older receivers involves changing the whole IF strip. After changing, the receiver must be completely realigned. Changing some of the new models may be a bit easier since it involves swapping of a crystal or SAW filter. Minor alignment would still be needed.

To say standard kits (for non standard operation) are available begs the question as how do you know they are available?

An even bigger question arises. Shifting the frequencies around allows more repeaters to be added. Instead of the next channel being 15 KHz or 20 KHz away, the next channel may now be only 12.5 KHz away. That's 20% closer. That means the receiver filter skirts need to be 20% steeper too. Likely that means adding two poles to the filter so a replacement filter must be a better quality, more expensive, filter. The chances of a reverse split causing problems are considerably greater. At a minimum the added channels must be very carefully geographically coordinated. In short the idea of simply narrow banding a receiver is a myth. It must be done with careful engineering and that could cost \$200 or more for new filters alone. It may be cheaper and easier just to buy a new receiver rather than re-engineering the old one.

Also receiver mods are not the type operation that can be performed on a mountain top. The repeater would likely need to be removed from the mountain top, modified, returned to the mountain, and then returned to the cavities. This would not be a simple or cheap operation.

It is said that if you are a hammer everything else looks like a nail. The D-Star folks say we need to make more channels and those channels should be populated with spectrum efficient radios, meaning digital radios, meaning D-Star. Undoubtedly some of the old analog repeaters when faced with upgrading old radios will opt for new radios and those could very likely be digital radios. To D-Star everything should be digital.

Missing from the NARCC discussions seems to be consideration of the repeater users' radios. At a minimum they will need to crank up their audio gain when receiving new narrow band FM. They will need to reduce their deviation as well but they may not have the selectivity to reject adjacent channel interference in which case they will need to buy new radios... D-Star radios. The price difference between analog and digital radios is considerable.

What is best for SCCARA and its membership? Only option A requires any change of the SCCARA Repeater. Options B & C

might require changes or replacement of the member radios but only when operating below 146 MHz. Members could still use their radios above 146 MHz without changes.

Your officers and directors represent you, the members of SCCARA. Tell them what you think. They want to hear from you.

Fred Townsend

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## Meeting Minutes

### General Meeting, April 13, 2009



*{No minutes were received by the deadline. – Ed}*

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### Board Meeting, April 20, 2009



Unapproved Minutes

Red Cross, 2731 North 1st Street, San Jose, CA

The meeting was called to order at 7:42 pm. by Don Steinbach.

Attendance

Board Members

Don Steinbach, AE6PM, President  
Fred Townsend, AE6QL, Vice President  
David Dippon, AE6YE, Secretary  
Ned Tufekcic, AC6YY, Treasurer  
Don Village, K6PBQ, Trustee  
Lou Steirer, WA6QYS, Director  
Wally Britten, KA6YMD, Director  
Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU, Director  
John Parks, W6JPP, Director

Guests

Clark Murphy, KE6KXO  
Gwen Steirer, KG6OTD

Excused Absences:

John Glass, NU6P, Director

Don Steinbach asked the Board members to review the agenda. Clark Murphy asked that a discussion about moving the repeater cabinet in his yard be added. Wally Britten asked that a discussion about the recent NARCC meeting. John Parks asked that a discussion about the repeater cavities at his residence.

Don Steinbach announced the upcoming SVECS breakfast and a Technician license class on May 16 in Saratoga.

Vice President's Report

Fred Townsend announced that Craig Anderson will present a talk on Wifi in Silicon Valley at the May membership meeting. He also mentioned that the Field Day rules regarding the GOTA (Get on the Air) station. The upcoming rules tend back toward the original rules regarding operators eligible to score points for GOTA stations.

Secretary's Report

Minutes from March board meeting were reviewed. Don Village offered a motion that the March minutes be approved with minor conditions. Lou Steirer seconded the motion. The motion passed

unanimously.

#### Treasurer's Report

Ned Tufekcic reported that there were no changes from treasurer's report published in the most recent SCCARA-GRAM. The club did receive an addition \$20.00 from a new membership. Ned did ask about a bill from New Hampshire Insurance Company for club liability insurance.

#### Trustee's Report

Don Village announced that the club station at the Red Cross was open on March 28. The station will be open this coming Saturday after the SVECS breakfast.

#### Activities

John Park received a request from the Coast Guard for a count of the number of attendees. So far only, there are only five confirmed attendees. The Coast Guard needs minimum of 15 to 20 for the tour of the Coast Guard cutter to happen. There is a danger that the Coast Guard will cancel the cutter tour prior to the previously announced July 14th cut-off published the SCCARA-GRAM. Ned Tufekcic suggested sending the email to the membership. An announcement will be made at the next general meeting.

The proposed activity aboard the USS Hornet activity is on hold until fall.

#### Newsletter

There were no new changes about the newsletter reported. Wally Britten reported that a number of members have received multiple emails.

#### BBS

Gary Mitchell reported that the BBS is running well with no significant changes.

#### Repeater

Wally Britten mentioned that the repeaters are running fine. He did mention some crackling during the recent, past windy weather. John Parks also mentioned that some inter-mod on the 440 repeater is still present.

Web Master: Nothing new

#### Old Business

#### Repeater Cabinet

Clark Murphy reported that the repeater cabinet needs to be moved from his yard to the storage cabinets. Lou Steirer mentioned that it requires at least three people to move the cabinet. It was decided a group of consisting of David Dippon, Lou Steirer, Gwen Steirer, and Fred Townsend will meet at Clark's residence on 23 April at 7 pm to move the cabinet.

#### NARCC

At least three proposals to reallocate the 2 meter band were presented at recent NARCC meeting. They are available on NARCC website. NARCC has decided not to reallocate the entire band.

#### Old 2 Meter Duplexers

John Parks announced that the duplexers need to be moved from his residence. He would like the move to be completed as soon as possible. The goal is to accomplish this by the end of May.

#### Membership Roster

The Board members reported receiving the membership roster from David Dippon.

#### New Business

#### Stanford PowWow

The Stanford PowWow will be held on May 8, 9, and 10. Lou Steirer has been told by the organizers that ham radio will be included. The organizers are also considering putting the station in a more visible location, so more hams are needed to man the station--particularly on Saturday. Camping is allowed. The word needs to get out since there will not being another SCCARA meeting before the PowWow.

#### Field Day Pre-Planning

Don Steinbach asked for Field Day planning items. He mentioned that he had written a procedure for raising the towers. Gary Mitchell has also written a procedure.

John Parks mentioned that Fred Townsend will be in charge of computers. There was discussion about a need to replace batteries. Fred Townsend suggested the batteries be checked on Thursday when the repeater cabinet gets moved. John Parks feels we should have four batteries. A number of the Board members mentioned they could provide their own batteries. Lou Steirer mentioned that batteries for use at Field Day should be loaned by members for Field Day use.

Fred Townsend is working on logging software. He asked if the CW station operators want to use their own computer. He doesn't believe that any of the club computers have speakers.

Don Steinbach asked about the number of club computers. Fred Townsend reported that three of the club laptops are in good shape. Wally Britten offered to load his old Think Pad for Field Day use. Ned Tufekcic mentioned he has access to a small PC that could be used with a UPS.

Don Steinbach asked about the antenna trailer hitch weight. Ned Tufekcic asked who is going to pull the antenna trailer. John Parks is looking for someone to pull the trailer.

Gwen Steirer asked about canopies. John Parks mention that the club owns two, and will loan an additional one.

Don Village mentioned that the club radios will be checked during the normally scheduled club station openings.

John Parks mentioned that antennas trailer maintenance should be not a large effort this year, due to work performed in previous years.

Don Village asked about antenna assignments for the Field Day stations.

#### Old 2 Meter Repeater

Gary Mitchell mentioned he found a filter from the old 2 meter repeater that the club may want to retain.

Lou Steirer showed the Board members the poster for the Stanford PowWow.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 pm

Respectfully Submitted, David Dippon, Secretary

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## April Pres. Prose

*{This should have appeared in the April issue. . - Editor}*

The FCC has clarified what constitutes an amateur radio repeater, thanks to the efforts of our very own Gary Mitchell,

WB6YRU, editor of the SCCARA-GRAM. Gary petitioned the FCC (do any of the rest of us know how to do that?) in December 2007 and received a response a mere 15 months later. The decision defines D-STAR and other digital repeaters as true repeaters, the same as the conventional analog repeaters such as our W6UU. See the details elsewhere in this issue. I'm predicting that protracted debate will ensue.

My article on the Anderson Powerpole connectors prompted some questions from readers. Here are the answers (you get to guess the questions): #1 -- The metal contact needs to be pushed into the plastic housing until you feel/hear a click and you can't pull it back out by tugging on the wire. #2 -- The red and black plastic housings will lock together if you slide them together properly and can then be secured with crazy glue or a tyrap. The steel rollpins aren't recommended since they are likely to fall out and land somewhere you'll wish they hadn't.

You may recall that we had a very informative presentation on wet-cell batteries by Tom Ryan of Bayland Battery at our February meeting. If you haven't followed up by looking at the Deka website, you're missing an opportunity to learn something. For example, see the Technical Manual on Gelled Electrolyte (gel) and Absorbed Glass Mat (AGM) Batteries at <http://www.eastpenn-deka.com/assets/base/0139.pdf>.

We have 57 paid-up members as of March 22, 2009. The demographics look like this: 15 Technician Class, 13 General Class, 5 Advanced Class and 24 Extra Class.

There is a SCCARA 10-meter net on Thursday nights (8:00 pm, 28.385 MHz). Wally, KA6YMD is usually the net control. That frequency was deliberately chosen so that Technician Class licensees could participate, thus any and all of us can get involved. If you can get on HF, give it a try. Every class of license can operate on SSB from 28.300 to 28.500 MHz. I check in if I'm not away at a meeting, but the participation is usually pretty light. Put it on your calendar.

Our next meeting will be at the Hometown Buffet in the shopping center at El Camino Real and Keiley. Last time I looked it cost around \$10 - \$12. The price includes anything you can find to eat or drink. If you're conscientious about what you eat, go to <http://www.hometownbuffet.com/nutritioncontent.htm> and take a look at the menu items and their nutritional analysis.

73, Don - AE6PM

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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, W6JPP, 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  
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](mailto:kd6fji@arrl.net)

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

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

K6PBQ, Don Village, (408) 263-2789  
e-mail: [donvillage7@yahoo.com](mailto:donvillage7@yahoo.com)

WA6QYS, Lou Steirer, (408) 241-7999

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

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## Newsletter Notes

Apologies to Don AE6PM and the rest of the club for missing his President's Prose article last month. He sent it in, but I mistakenly put it in the wrong folder. So, when the time came to assemble the newsletter, it wasn't with the rest of the files for that month.

Don was good enough to adjust his column this month to include part of the previous article. Even so, in an attempt to make up for the goof, I've included both in this issue. Again, sorry about that.

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### On a personal note...

If you're not up for non-club related sad news, stop here.

Some of you remember that years ago I brought my mother to a few club dinner meetings, and have asked how she's doing. She died Saturday, May 2, 2009, after a long decline from vascular dementia. At least it was expected.

This being the weekend for publishing the *SCCARA-GRAM*, I didn't think I'd get this issue out on time, but doing so turned out to be very therapeutic. Indeed, keeping occupied with other things really helps. So, if it's all the same, at Monday's meeting I'd like to concentrate on the meeting.

73, Gary WB6YRU, editor

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**SCCARA**

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**

**SCCARA Membership Form for 2009**

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: \_\_\_\_\_

Memberships begin January 1 and expire December 31.

**If renewing:** annual membership dues (base rate) are: \$20 Individual, \$25 Family, \$10 Student (under 18)

**For new members:**

If joining in January: base rate

If joining in February through October: base rate x (11 - month) x 10% (e.g. for June, that would be: base rate x 50%)

If joining in November or December: free for November and December if paying the base rate for the following year

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Dues payment for:**  individual  family  student

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.