

SCCARA-GRAM



Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Association

Volume 26, Number 5

May 2010



President's Prose

Field Day is June 26 and 27. The Club is in need of a Field Day Chairman, someone with some organizational and leadership skills, which probably includes almost everyone in SCCARA. The Chairman does not have to do everything – just see that everything gets done. If you think you would like to give it a try, call me or email me. In addition, I'm seriously considering asking for nominations at our next general meeting. I don't know that we've done that before, but there's a first time for everything.

The Kenwood 440 repeater left Billings, Montana, on April 22. It should be on my doorstep on April 27. I'll bring it to the next meeting so you will have a chance to see what it looks like. The shipping weight is listed as 32 lbs, I can't help but wonder why. We'll see. There's quite a bit of work involved replacing the existing Motorola unit with this one, so don't expect to hear it on the air for a while.

There is a REALLY interesting article by Steve Stearns, K6OIK, in the April 2010 issue of the Foothill Amateur Radio Society newsletter, the FARS Relay. The title of the article is "SmartMeters and Electric Power Measurement." The article is eight pages long, technical, informative, and took me 35 minutes to read through it the second time. You can find the entire newsletter at <http://www.fars.k6ya.org/relay/>. In summary, our current mechanical watt-hour meters, and the two different SmartMeters that PG&E buys and installs, each compute the power consumed differently. They all agree if the load is linear-real or linear-reactive (resistors, motors, fluorescent lamps with magnetic ballasts). They don't agree when the load is nonlinear (switching power supplies, light dimmers, fluorescent lamps with electronic ballasts, CFLs, plug-in wall wart power supplies and nearly all consumer electronics). Steve explains why this is in his article. Mostly it has to do with the voltage and current waveforms being non-sinusoidal, the ability of the electronic meters to include the energy in the resulting harmonics far beyond what the mechanical meter can, and the different methods that the two electronic meters use to compute the billable power. He also points out that the electronic meters can potentially create phantom billable power if there are nonlinearities in the processing circuitry. Finally, the mechanical meters run backwards when power is being supplied to the grid – that's just the way they work. Not necessarily so for the SmartMeters. If you're a techie, you'll enjoy studying what Steve presents. If you're not, it's still interesting reading. If your CFLs cause your electric bill to go up, don't blame me!

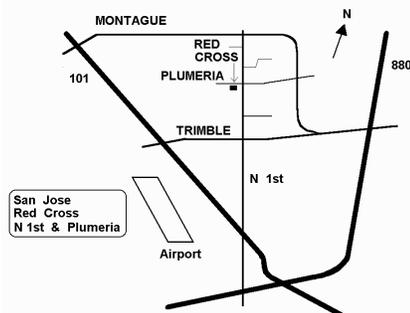
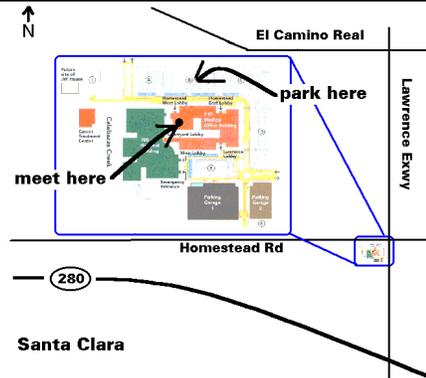
Here's a second reminder that the new Technician Class question pool will become effective on July 1, 2010. If you know someone who has been studying the 2006 pool, you might want to remind them to take the exam before the end of June. Exam sessions are held at the Saratoga fire station the first and third

Calendar

- 5/8 Electronic Flea Market (DeAnza College)
- 5/10 SCCARA General Meeting
- 5/17 SCCARA Board Meeting--(San Jose Red Cross, 7:30p, all are welcome)

General Meeting

- Day: Monday, May 10, 2010
Time: 7:30 PM
Place: Kaiser Santa Clara, Rm 196, 1
Featuring: {to be announced}



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
(all officers are also directors)

President	Don Steinbach, AE6PM	867-3912
	e-mail: ae6pm@arrl.net	
Vice President	Fred Townsend, AE6QL	263-8768
	e-mail: fred@dcotlight.net	
Past President	- - -	
Secretary	Jeannie Felix, KG6YOR	293-3847
	e-mail: jrfv7600@yahoo.com	
Treasurer	Ned Tufekcic, AC6YY	690-7250
	e-mail: ac6yy@arrl.net	
Station Trustee	Don Village, K6PBQ	263-2789
	e-mail: donvillage7@yahoo.com	
Director	John Glass	
Director	Lou Steirer, WA6QYS	241-7999
	e-mail: wa6qys@aol.com	
Director	Wally Britten, KA6YMD	293-3847
	e-mail: ka6ymd@arrl.net	
Director	John Parks, W6JPP	309-8709
	e-mail: w6jpp@arrl.net	
Director	Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU	269-2924
	e-mail: wb6yru@ix.netcom.com	

COMMITTEES

Editor	Gary Mitchell, WB6YRU	269-2924
	e-mail: wb6yru@ix.netcom.com	
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 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/nepa)

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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

Mondays of every month.

Don't forget the 2-meter FM net on Monday nights, and the 10-meter SSB net (28.385 MHz USB) on Thursday nights. Anyone who has a license can participate in these nets.



73,
Don, AE6PM

SCCARA supports MS walk

I would like to thank the following SCCARA members for providing the communication for the 2010 MS walk on Sat. April 17th at the arena green park in San Jose. Thanks to Don Steinbach AE6PM for heading up net control with the help of John Parks W6JPP and Clark Murphy KE6KXO. Great job gentlemen. Mike Hastings KB6LCJ for rest stop #1. I took rest stop #2. Lloyd Devaughns KD6FJI for rest stop #3. Gregg Lane KF6FNA and Alvin Wong W6ATW for our SAG vehicles. It was a good and safe walk without any problems. Thanks again for your services of providing communications for the walk. Couldn't do it without your help.

Don Village K6PBQ



SCCARA provided communications support for the MS Walk on April 17. Seated, from left to right, Don (AE6PM), Clark (KE6KXO), Lloyd (KD6FJI). Standing, Alvin (W6ATW), John (W6JPP) and Gregg (KF6FNA). Mike (KB6LCJ), Joan (KB6LFZ) and Don (K6PBQ) were already in the field.

Caption and photo provided by Don AE6PM

NoARY BBS

The N0ARY packet BBS (which SCCARA sponsors) has been down since before the last meeting. Apparently the computer has finally given out. It has been having problems over the past year or more, but still managed to limp along... up to now.

The BBS runs on an old Sun Sparc 2 workstation under UNIX. It has been in continuous 24 hour service for some 15 years. And that machine was already well used when I got it.

Fortunately the original author and sysop of the BBS, Bob N0ARY tells me he found an old Sparc 2 in storage and is willing donate it to the cause. As soon as we can arrange a trip up to the site, the BBS should be back on line. Keep your fingers crossed.

73, Gary WB6YRU

Treasurer's Treatise

Our financial status as of April, 15 2010 is:

Account	Balances
Checking	7,500.12
Savings	3,845.45
Cash on Hand	23.95
OVERALL TOTAL	11,369.52

73, Ned AC6YY

ARRL News

From *the ARRL Letter*, April 8, 2010

CITY OF MANASSAS TO END BPL SERVICE

Once touted as "the most successful BPL deployment in the nation," the City of Manassas has decided to get out of the BPL business, once and for all. At a Special Meeting on Monday, April 5, the Manassas City Council -- acting on a recommendation from the Manassas Utilities Commission -- unanimously voted to discontinue Broadband over Powerline (BPL (www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/) Internet service as of July 1, 2010 to the approximately 520 residents and businesses who currently subscribe to the service; these customers were told that they have three months to find a new Internet service provider.

According to Manassas City Clerk Andrea Madden, there was no discussion on the resolution to discontinue service and the motion was passed "without incident."

With the motion made by Councilman Jonathan Way and seconded by Mark Wolfe, the City Council cited three reasons for discontinuing BPL service: a declining customer base, an annual income deficit of almost \$166,000 from providing Internet service, and a determination that AMI platforms don't require BPL. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advanced_Metering_Infrastructure) Way and Wolfe favored shutting down the BPL system in November 2009 (www.arrl.org/news/stories/2009/11/19/11206/?c=1), the last time this matter was brought to the Council's attention. "The City needs to get out of BPL forthwith," Way said back in 2009. "It's not a good product. The whole business is not financially sound and it never has been."

Manassas residents pay \$24.95 each month to receive Internet service via BPL. In November 2009, the Utility Commission showed the Council that little more than 500 residents and 46 businesses currently subscribed to the service, which since 2008, has been run by the City (www.arrl.org/news/stories/2008/10/16/10391/). "It's costing a little more to maintain the system than we projected in the budget," Manassas Director of Utilities Michael Moon told the Council. "The original projections

were that the customer base would be double this." In September 2008, the Manassas City Council voted to assume control of the BPL service from COMTek (www.comtekbroadband.com/), the private company that served (back then) approximately 675 residents.

In January 2009, there were 637 residential and 51 commercial BPL subscribers in Manassas. In February 2010, those numbers had shrunk to 457 residential and 50 commercial subscribers. The Utilities Commission said that the total revenue brought in by BPL for FY2010 was almost \$186,000, but the expense of keeping up the City-owned system was costing the ratepayers a little more than \$351,000, resulting in a net loss of almost \$166,000.

"In October 2003, the Manassas City Council was told that it could expect as much as \$4.5 million in revenue from awarding a 10 year BPL franchise," said ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ. "Instead, six months later, BPL had turned into a money pit for the City of Manassas. Anyone thinking of investing in BPL would do well to learn from the Manassas experience."

In November 2009, Manassas' Assistant Utilities Director (Electric) Gregg Paulson told the ARRL that they had "every intention of putting BPL Internet service in the budget and the Council can decide its fate as they work through the budget process." Paulson also said that while Internet service to consumers would "probably" be the only thing that would be cut if the Council decided to forego BPL, he left the door open as to using the BPL infrastructure for other purposes: "We still own the BPL network, but we may or may not use this network for utility monitoring or other AMI purposes."

But according to the resolution passed by the Council, the Manassas Utilities Department will not be using BPL for AMI, but instead will use "a combination of fiber and wireless technology exclusive of the BPL." According to the Agenda Statement for the Special Meeting, the BPL equipment will be removed from the system and "inquiries will be made regarding the salvage value."

Sumner said that the ARRL's concern was not with the business plan -- that he termed "obviously flawed" -- but with "the interference to licensed radio services -- and in particular the Amateur Radio Service -- inevitably caused by putting radio frequency energy on unshielded, unbalanced conductors. Manassas was touted as 'the most successful BPL deployment in the nation' when FCC Chairman Michael Powell visited the site with much fanfare -- and, the ARRL maintains, in violation of the FCC's own rules -- on the eve of the FCC's vote to adopt inadequate protection for licensed radio services against interference from BPL systems. The taxpayers and ratepayers of Manassas are not the only ones who benefit from the end of this ill-considered foray into BPL. Radio amateurs in the Manassas area have good reason to celebrate, for they have spent countless hours documenting the widespread interference caused by the system."

BPL technology uses the electricity grid in a city and the wiring in individual homes to provide direct "plug in" broadband access through electricity sockets, rather than over phone or cable TV lines. Because BPL wiring is physically large, is often overhead and extends across entire communities, these systems pose a significant interference potential to over-the-air radio services, including Amateur Radio.

From *the ARRL Letter*, April 29, 2010

FCC SEEKS COMMENTS ON NEWLY PROPOSED RULES FOR AMATEUR RADIO OPERATORS AND

EMERGENCY DRILLS

In March, the FCC released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) that proposed to amend the Part 97 rules -- specifically 97.113(a)(3)-- governing the Amateur Radio Service, Docket #10-72. (www.arrl.org/news/fcc-issues-notice-of-proposed-rule-making-on-government-disaster-drills-and-amateur-radio.)

The new rules would provide that, under certain limited conditions, Amateur Radio operators may transmit messages during emergency and disaster preparedness drills, regardless of whether the operators are employees of entities participating in the drill. On April 22, a summary of the NPRM was published in the Federal Register (edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-9092.pdf) and the FCC is seeking comments on it. Comments must be filed on or before May 24, 2010 (30 days after publication in the Federal Register); reply comments must be filed on or before June 7, 2010 (45 days after publication in the Federal Register). Instructions on how to file comments are listed beginning on page 5 of the NPRM (hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-10-45A1.pdf).

Meeting Minutes

General Meeting, April 12, 2010



Don Steinbach, AE6PM called the meeting to order @ 19:36

Introductions & Announcements:

Don Steinbach, AE6PM announced FARS is offering a class in Mt. View on April 15 to upgrade your Ham License to General.

Lou Steirer, WA6QYS announced the SVECS Breakfast is on April 24 & the presentation is the CISCO NERV (Network Emergency Response Vehicle).

Don Village, K6PBQ announced the club station at Red Cross is open on April 24 after the SVECS Breakfast also the Annual M.S. Walk is on April 17.

Fred Townsend, AE6QL announced several things which I was not able to get - Sorry for any inconvenience.

Guest Speaker - Tom Schiller, N6BT. Tom announced a interesting website for DXing : www.swpc.noaa.gov/pmap/index.html. The presentation was about antennas and antenna design. Most of Tom's lessons learned were empirical, mainly from operating abroad in contests. One lesson was that performance of a vertical is significantly improved next to salt water--so put your vertical on the beach if you can. Tom also mentioned that small magnetic antenna (Gary Mitchell thinks it was ZR or something like that) performed astonishingly well, even in doors. Since it's magnetic, it isn't effected too much by what's near it. Tom also talked about proper placement and configuration of ground radials. etc.

Meeting Adjourned @ 21:20
Jeannie Felix, KG6YOR - Secretary

Board Meeting, April 19, 2010



The SCCARA Board Meeting was called to order @ 19:46 by

AE6PM, Don Steinbach

Attendance: AE6PM, Don Steinbach (President); AE6QL, Fred Townsend (V. President); KG6YOR, Jeannie Felix (Secretary); AC6YY, Ned Tufekcic (Treasurer); K6PBQ, Don Village (Trustee); WA6QYS, Lou Steirer (Director); KA6YMD, Wally Britten (Director); WB6YRU, Gary Mitchell (Director); W6JPP, John Parks (Director)

Excused Absence: NU6P, John Glass (Director)

Visitors: KF6OTD, Gwen Steirer

Announcements: Don Steinbach, AE6PM asked the board to review the agenda. A few additions to new business. Don announced the deadline for the sccara-gram is 04/26/2010.

Treasurer's Report: Expense report for 2008,2009 supplied to the board reporting ending balances.

Gary Mitchell is still working on the bylaws.

Don Steinbach reported the new 440 repeater should be arriving soon.

Fred is still searching for a video projector for SCCARA

John Parks, W6JPP made a motion to allocate approximately \$200 for new bulb for fred's personal projector. Don Village seconded the motion. Motion Carried

Treasurer to reimburse Jim Tyranski Jr. for \$60.00 for domain name registration.

Fred will reissue the email about the domain name registration & ned to follow up w/ J. tyranski to transfer the account to SCCARA. This issue to readdressed next month.

John Parks, W6JPP made a motion to accept the march 15 board meeting minutes as is. Lou Steirer seconded the motion. Motion Carried

Wally Britten, KA6YMD takes ownership on the red cross antenna work.

Fred has future recognition of guest speakers - a certificate & 1 year membership was suggested.

Don Village to purchase cable for kenwood.

Meeting Adjourned @ 21:20
Jeannie Felix, KG6YOR - Secretary

Packet Pieces

Downloaded from the BBS packet network:

Date: 20 Jan 2007 21:21
From: ZL3AI@ZL2BAU
To: HUMOUR@WW
Subject: Guilt/Helmsman/Bureaucracy

Guilt

Farmer Josh killed a pig and hung it up for the night, intending to butcher it in the morning, but the next day it was gone. He didn't tell a soul about it, and nothing happened for more than two months.

Then another farmer, who lived down the road, came by and said, "By the way Josh, did you ever find out who stole your pig?"

"Nope," said Josh. "Not until just now."

Helmsman

A young man who wants to see the world signs on to a tramp steamer to be trained as a helmsman. He masters the classroom instruction, then starts his practical training on the wheel of the vessel. In his first lesson, the mate gives him a heading, and the young fellow holds to it.

Then the mate orders, "Come starboard."

Pleased at knowing immediately which way starboard is, the young man leaves the helm and walks over to his instructor.

The mate has an incredulous look on his face as the helm swings freely. Then, rather gently considering the circumstance, he asks politely, "Could you bring the ship with you?"

Rules Of Bureaucracy

1. Preserve thyself.
2. It is easier to fix the blame than to fix the problem.
3. A penny saved is an oversight.
4. Information deteriorates upward.
5. The first 90% of the task takes 90% of the time; the last 10% takes the other 90%.
6. Experience is what you get just after you need it.
7. For any given large, complex, hard-to-understand, expensive problem, there exists at least one short, simple, easy, cheap wrong answer.
8. Anything that can be changed will be, until time runs out.
9. To err is human; to shrug is civil service.
10. There's never enough time to do it right, but there's always enough time to do it over.

73, David ZL3AI.

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, W6JPP
TVI/RFI: WB6YRU
Homebrew projects, construction: KD6FJI, WB6YRU
Computers: older IBM PC: WB6YRU
Packet Network (BBS, forwarding): WB6YRU
Code operating and installations: WB6EMR, K6PBQ
DX (long distance/propagation): WB6EMR
Emergency operating/preparedness: WA6QYS
HF operating techniques (SSB, CW): WB6EMR, K6PBQ
Legal/FCC rules: WB6YRU
SCCARA (club inner workings): K6PBQ, WB6YRU, WA6QYS
EchoLink: KK6MX

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

W6JPP, John Parks, (408) 309-8709
e-mail: w6jpp@arrl.net

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

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

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

Newsletter Notes

WHOOOPS!

The previous issue of the *SCCARA-GRAM* was in fact the April issue, despite the word "January" at the top.

There are two ways to tell the difference: The April issue has "**Volume 26, Number 4**" at the top. If it were the January issue, that would have been number 1, not 4. Also, in the April issue the first article is about Trish WA6UBE SK. The actual January issue has the usual President's Prose as the first article.

It was suggested this might have been an April Fools joke, but nope, no such luck. An actual April Fools joke would have been much better than that.

Sorry for any confusion.

73, Gary WB6YRU, editor



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 2010

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

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.