

K6YQT

PAARA NEWSLETTER  
VOLUME 53 NUMBER 3, March 2004

W6OTX



# PAARAGraphs

Celebrating 67 years as an *active* ham radio club—Since 1937  
Newsletter for the Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association, Inc.



## CALENDAR

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| March..... 5 | <b>PAARA Meeting</b> , 7:30<br>Menlo Park Recreation Center<br>700 Alma Street, Menlo Park |
| March.....10 | <b>PAARA Board Meeting</b> , 7:30<br>Red Cross Bld., 400 Mitchell Ln., Palo Alto           |
| April.....2  | <b>PAARA Meeting</b> , 7:30  |
| April.....7  | <b>PAARA Board Meeting</b> , 7:30  |
| May.....7    | <b>PAARA Meeting</b> , 7:30  |
| May.....12   | <b>PAARA Board Meeting</b> , 7:30  |



## PROGRAM

March ....5, 2004 7:30 P.M.

### Speakers:

Mitch Cipriano AE6AI  
and  
Morris Jones AD6ZH

### How to: "Pro Tips Clinic"

Join us for pre-meeting eyeball  
at Su Hong Restaurant , 1039 El Camino Real, Menlo Park  
Food will be served at 6:00 sharp, so guests will be on time for the PAARA  
meeting. Those arriving late will be responsible for their own order and bill.

—PAARA Radio NET every Monday evening at 8:30 P.M., local time—  
on the 145.230 -600 MHz repeater, PL tone off

### March 5<sup>th</sup> PAARA speakers:

#### **Mitch Cipriano AE6AI**

"Mr. Ham Stop Nice Guy"  
*and*

#### **Morris Jones AD6ZH**

### Program:

#### **How to "Pro Tips Clinic"**

with

#### **Product Demonstrations**

#### ***Partial list of Topics:***

##### **1.DC power distribution to equipment:**

Power Poles, Rig Runners, Cables, Portable/Fixed/Mobile  
Set Ups

##### **2. Watt meter with Power Poles:**

measures Voltage, Current, and Watts

##### **3. Sound card interfaces:**

EZ PSK interfaces/ RIGblasters: How to set up, cables  
available, and what they do

##### **4. Microphones:**

Heil mikes, cables available, and how to set up and sound  
like the "Pros"

##### **5. Antennas / UHF/VHF Duplexers:**

How to get the best performance and solve your set up  
problems

This is a "must see presentation" with full screen  
pictures. Will include lots of informative and helpful  
tips to get you started using a new mode of operation or  
optimizing your current set up.

Plenty of product demonstrations and catalogs!

[www.HamStop.com](http://www.HamStop.com)

~Jim, K6AK

## Miscellaneous

### ELECTRONIC FLEA MARKET @ Foothill College

Sponsorship by A.S.V.A.R.O.

[Association of Silicon Valley Amateur Radio Organizations]  
 Second Saturday of month, March-October, 6 AM-2PM  
 Howard M. Krawetz, N6HM 650-856-9761

### PAARA Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association

meets 1st Friday 7:30 each month, Net 145.230 each Monday 8:30,  
 contact: Andreas Junge N6NU.....(650) 233 0843

### FARS Foothills Amateur Radio Society

meets 4th Friday 7:30 each month,  
 contact: <http://www.fars.k6ya.org>.

### NCDXC Northern California DX Club

meets 2nd Friday 7:30 each month.  
 repeater for member info 147.360, Thur 8:00PM,  
 contact: Mike Gavin W6WZ, (650) 851 8699.

### NorCalQRP Northern California QRP Club

meets 1st Sunday each month.  
 contact: Jim Cates 3241 Eastwood Rd., Sacramento, CA 95821.

### SPECS Southern Peninsula Emergency Communication System

meets each Monday 8:00PM on Net 145.27, 440.80 MHz, [www.specsnet.org](http://www.specsnet.org)

contact: Tom Cascone, KF6LWZ, 650-688-0441 [specs@svpal.org](mailto:specs@svpal.org)

### SCARES South County Amateur Radio Emergency Service

meets 3rd Thursday 7:30 each month, San Carlos City Hall.  
 Net is on 146.445 [PL 114.8] & 444.50 (PL-100) 7:30 Monday evenings.  
 contact:

### SCCARA Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Association

Operates W6UU & W6UU/R, repeater 146.985+  
 Nets: 2m, 7:30 Mon, 70cm, 442.425+ (pl 107.2) Thur.  
 Web site [www.qsl.net/scara](http://www.qsl.net/scara)  
 meets 2nd Mon each month @ 7:30 PM.  
 contact: Clark Murphy KE6KXO 408-262-9334  
 ARRL/VEC license testing contact 408-507-4698

### SVECS Silicon Valley Emergency Communications

Operates AA6BT repeater (146.115 MHz+)  
 contact: Lou Stierer WA6QYS 408 241 7999

### WVARA West Valley Amateur Radio Association

operates W6PIY repeater 147.394, 223.96, 441.875, 1286.2  
 WVARA now has a 6M repeater, linked to 440 and 1.2ghz  
 meets 3rd Wed every month.  
 contact: Bill Ashby N6FFC, 408-267-3118 or  
[N6FFC@Juno.com](mailto:N6FFC@Juno.com) or [N6FFC@ARRL.NET](mailto:N6FFC@ARRL.NET)

### Perham Foundation (discontinued)

### Disaster Services

#### PALO ALTO CHAPTER, American Red Cross, [www.paarc.org](http://www.paarc.org)

400 Mitchell Lane  
 Meets 3rd Wed, each month 7:30PM.  
 HF, packet, BBS, ATV, OSCAR Gateway, NASA satellite.  
 contact: Mac Millian 650-688-0423, [MACM@paarc.org](mailto:MACM@paarc.org)

#### SAN JOSE CHAPTER, American Red Cross

contact: Scott Hensley KB6UOO, (408) 967 7924, [FSHENSLEY@NOVELL.COM](mailto:FSHENSLEY@NOVELL.COM)

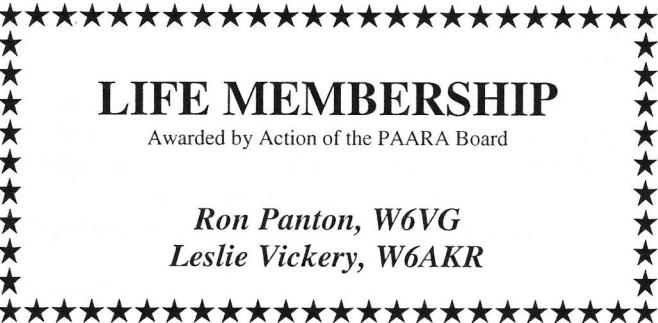
### VE Exams, 3rd Saturday each month, 10:30AM, 145.23- PL=100Hz

Redwood City Main Library, Community Conference Room  
 1044 Middlefield Road, Redwood City, CA  
 contact: Al WB6IMX@att.net

### Swap meet, LosPositas College, Livermore, 1st Sunday each month.

Contact: Cliff Kibbe (209) 835 6715 or Eliot Ross (925) 606 7710

(please send changes to PAARAGraphs editor: [k6uro@arrl.net](mailto:k6uro@arrl.net))



## LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Awarded by Action of the PAARA Board

Ron Panton, W6VG  
 Leslie Vickery, W6AKR

## Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association, Inc.

### PO Box 911

### Menlo Park, CA 94026

President .....	Andreas Junge N6NU.....	650-233 0843
	<a href="mailto:n6nu@arrl.net">n6nu@arrl.net</a>	
Vice President.....	Jim Rice, K6AK.....	650-851-2274
	<a href="mailto:k6ak@arrl.net">k6ak@arrl.net</a>	
Secretary .....	Terry Finn, AF6TF.....	650-366-9111
	<a href="mailto:terry@incognitoservices.com">terry@incognitoservices.com</a>	
Treasurer .....	Ron Chester, W6AZ .....	650-243 2221
	<a href="mailto:ron@taxhelp.com">ron@taxhelp.com</a>	
Membership.....	Vic Black, AB6SO.....	650-366 0636
	<a href="mailto:ab6so@smrn.com">ab6so@smrn.com</a>	
Membership.....	Lisa Rice, KG6KQS.....	650-851-2274
	<a href="mailto:lisarice@earthlink.net">lisarice@earthlink.net</a>	
W6OTX & K6YQT Station Trustee.	Gerry Tucker, N6NV..	650-326 4908
Property.....	Gerry Tucker, N6NV.....	650-326 4908
Badges.....	Dave Rogers, K5DKR .....	650-361-1555
	<a href="mailto:dkr@bigfoot.com">dkr@bigfoot.com</a>	
Sign Maker.....	Steve Brune, KG6OUB.....	650-740-4367
Raffle.....	Jim Rice, K6AK.....	650-851-2274
Ticket Master.....	Kyle Rice, KG6MSK	
Ticket Master assistant, .Ian Brune, K6IAN.		
Advertising.....	Terry Finn, AF6TF.....	650-366-9111
Field Day Coordinator.....	Gerry Tucker, N6NV.....	650-326 4908
FD Logistics Coordinator .	Steve Brune, KG6OUB.....	650-740-4367
	<a href="mailto:stevebrune@sbcglobal.net">stevebrune@sbcglobal.net</a>	
ASVARO representative Howard Takaoka, KG6GRO	650-856-9761	
	<a href="mailto:htakaoka@excite.com">htakaoka@excite.com</a>	
Webmaster .....	Peter Sheerin, K6WEB.....	
	<a href="mailto:K6WEB@arrl.net">K6WEB@arrl.net</a>	

## Board of Directors

Gerry Tucker, N6NV.....	650-326 4908 ..'05
	<a href="mailto:gerry_tucker@juno.com">gerry_tucker@juno.com</a>
Rolf Klivo, N6NFI .....	650-856-2748 ....'05
	<a href="mailto:klivo@earthlink.net">klivo@earthlink.net</a>
Adrianus Schrauwen,W6AJS..	650-494-6256 ..'04
	<a href="mailto:hagenees@att.net">hagenees@att.net</a>
Bob Korte, KD6KYT.....	650-595 1842 ..'05
	<a href="mailto:rgk4u@aol.com">rgk4u@aol.com</a>

.see "Calendar" for Board meeting times, visitors welcome-

## PAARAGraphs Staff

Editor.....	Wally Porter, K6URO.....	650-494 7038
	<a href="mailto:k6uro@arrl.net">k6uro@arrl.net</a>	
Database.....	Lisa Rice, KG6KQS.....	650-851-2274
	<a href="mailto:lisarice@earthlink.net">lisarice@earthlink.net</a>	
Columns.....	Vic Black, AB6SO.....	650-366 0636
	<a href="mailto:ab6so@smrn.com">ab6so@smrn.com</a>	
	Terry Finn, AF6TF.....	650-366-9111
	<a href="mailto:terry@incognitoservices.com">terry@incognitoservices.com</a>	
Photography, Steve Brune KG6OUB		
	additional pictures by	
Dick Kors, KM6EP, John Larribeau KR6MR, Wally Porter K6URO		

**PAARAGraphs e-mail address: [k6uro@arrl.net](mailto:k6uro@arrl.net)**

Submit material for PAARAGraphs by the 15th

Use WORD, MS Publisher, rich text, or ascii

(New Times Roman is the common font)

send pictures as attachments jpg

**PAARA Website:** [www.paara.org](http://www.paara.org)

**PAARA Forum:** <http://www.paara.org/forum/>



## **PAARA HONORS**

### **Les Vickery, W6AKR.**

by Terry Finn AF6TF

A rather deserving **LIFE MEMBER** of PAARA.

Leslie Conrad Vickery was born on October 1, 1914 (he is now 89 years young) in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. This is the farming area of the western part of the State. His mother, Anna Olson was from Norway while his father, Sivert Martin Akre was a farmer from Minnesota. The family was large and included nine children. They moved to the small saw mill town of Hermansville, on the upper peninsula of Michigan when Les was just a child. The name Akre is a Norwegian word for farm.

Sadly, the Akre family broke up in 1929 and Les was adopted by the Vickery family when he was just fifteen years old. His last name was changed by a Court order in 1929 and he continued to live in Hermansville. Les still keeps in touch with his sister who lives in Lansing, Michigan.

During high school, Les enjoyed reading various books about radio including QST which he found to be a fascinating publication. Although he worked at the local lumber company mill and occasionally fought forest fires in the area, he learned to repair radios by himself. He graduated from the local Hermansville High School in 1932 and continued with his interest in radio. He self taught himself the Morse code and traveled up to the FCC office in Marquette, Michigan in 1935 to take the amateur radio exam. He passed the test with flying colors, including the 10 wpm code exam and was issued his first license call sign of **W9LDC**.

Les had taken a fire lookout tower job during one summer and soon became a deputy State conservation officer with power of arrest authority. He was supervised by a State Game Warden who subsequently had Les transferred to the State Forest Fire Experimental Station in Roscommon, Michigan about 1939. His monthly salary was \$105.. As a result, Les was able to travel down to Port Arthur, Texas, during the winters of 1939 & 1940 to attend a commercial radio school. There, Les earned his FCC 2<sup>nd</sup> class radio telegraph license and the 1<sup>st</sup> class radio telephone license. Shortly after graduation, on the advice of a friend, Les applied at Pan Am (Pan American International Airways) in Brownsville, Texas, for a job as

a radio officer. After three months of training, Les earned the designation of flight radio officer. He had become rather familiar with radio and dead reckoning navigation from the air and was soon on his way to points South in a DC-3.

Les Vickery has a remarkable ability to remember the many places he had the opportunity of visiting and flying over in a DC-3 during the early years of Pan Am employment. In fact, during our interview, Les was able to spell correctly all of the foreign cities and countries without blinking an eye. Based in Brownsville, Texas, Les would fly off and land in such unusual places as: Tapachula, Tampico and Mexico City; then move south to Guatemala City in Guatemala; and on to San Salvador in El Salvador; Managua in Nicaragua and San Jose in Costa Rica.

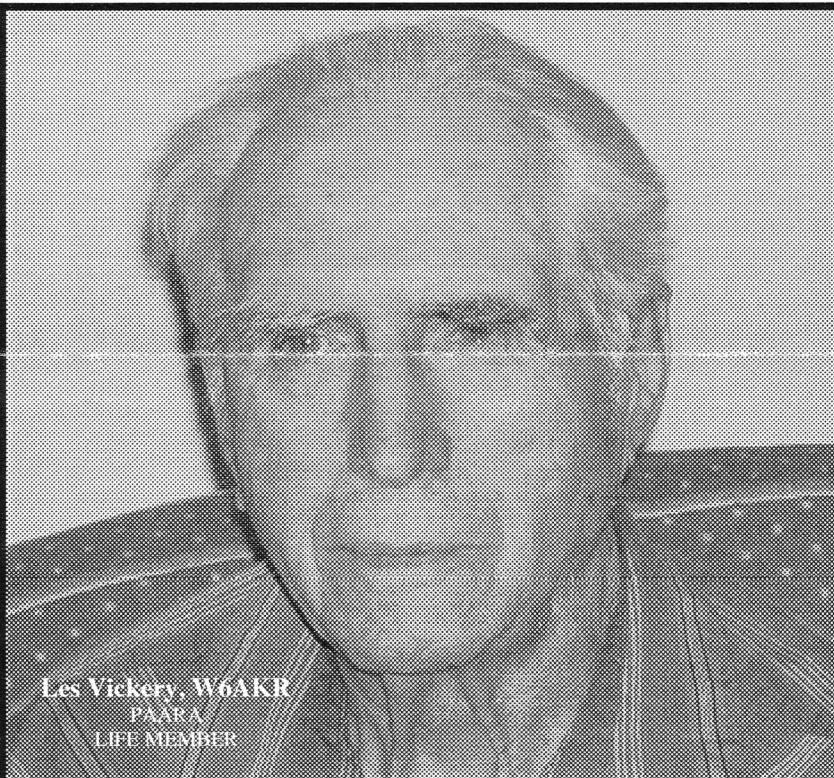
Pan Am's flight corridors continued on into central and South America to such interesting places as Balboa (on the western side of Panama), Cristobal (on the Atlantic side of Panama) and Panama City. From there, the flights would continue on to Barranquilla, Columbia; then Maracaibo, Caracas & Barcelona, Venezuela and of course returning through Port of Spain, Trinidad. These extensive flights were basically blazing the trail of the United States of America throughout South America.

It should be noted that the famous Mr. Juan Tripp, who started & operated Pan Am as a private company that employed many civilians was a personal friend of then President Roosevelt. Although it was not widely known at that time, the American President wanted to have an established American presence in these far off places because of the looming war activities in various places around the World. None of the Pan Am employees were ever

paid hazardous duty pay or even received a pension for their pre and post World War II efforts as employees. Today, as more of our history is becoming known, it is a well known and documented fact that the Pan Am flights across the Pacific and deep into South America had a dramatic effect on the United States of America and how its citizens were perceived around the World.

Les worked this South American route from 1940 to 1943. He did take a little extra time off during the spring of 1941 because he had the good fortune to meet a beautiful young woman during the Charro Days Celebration in Brownsville. Her name was Evangeline Hockenson and she had moved to Texas from her home in North Dakota. She was working as a telephone company operator, which was quite different than her earlier employment as a car hop at a beer joint. Evangeline was 21 years old when she married Les

(Continued on page 28) Les Vickery, W6AKR



**Les Vickery, W6AKR**  
PAARA  
LIFE MEMBER

**PAARAGraphs March 2004**  
**Celebrating 67 years as an active ham radio club—Since 1937**

(Continued from page 27) Les Vickery, W6AKR

Vickery, who was 27 years old. They were married in Brownsville on June 21, 1941.

One must try to visualize the work that Les was doing for Pan Am as a flight radio officer. Almost all of the communications were done via CW and much of that was done while in flight and sometimes during terrible weather. Les can remember using a bug rather than a straight key and was actually working it at about 25 wpm.

In 1943, the new Vickery family transferred to the Pan Am station in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. They lived there until 1947 when they transferred to the San Francisco station where Les flew from until 1949 when they moved back to Brazil. During their brief two year stint in northern California, the Vickery's purchased a home in Redwood City. They are living in that same home today, more than fifty years and many life experiences later.

During the San Francisco tour of duty between 1947 and 1949, Les had the opportunity to fly to many unusual south sea locations including Hawaii, Wake Island, Hong Kong, Shanghi and Tokyo, Japan. In fact, Les was a flight crew member on the inaugural flight into Tokyo from San Francisco after the war was declared over and peaceful relations were begun.

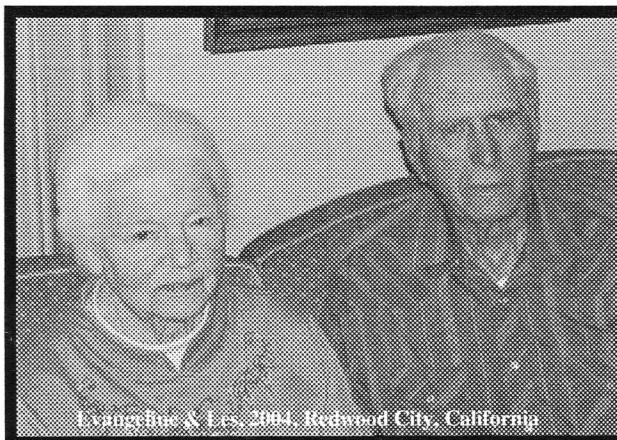
The Vickery's returned to Rio de Janeiro in 1949 and remained there until Les left Pan Am in 1954. Although Les did not want to provide details, it was clear that a number of events occurred that year that made Evangeline and Les evaluate their own lives and futures. One tragedy was the loss of good friends during an airplane crash in the jungle. Another was the fact that CW communications were slowly being phased out of service and replaced by radiotelephone equipment.

Les can recall having the opportunity to fly on all of the sophisticated aircraft of the time that were owned and operated by Pan Am. Starting with the famous DC-3, then on to the DC-4, DC-6, Super Constellation and the Boeing 377 Stratocruiser. The flying boats were not in service during the time that Les was working as they preceded the land based aircraft of the time.

In 1955 Les went to work for Ampex in Redwood City as a technician testing and experimenting with the new tape recording technology. In 1956 he took a job, again in Redwood City, with General Electric Mobile Radio as a radio repair & testing technician. One day, while delivering a piece of test equipment from the radio shop to Hewlett Packard, Les had the opportunity to view the operation at that relatively new company. He was so impressed with what he saw that he immediately applied for and received a job. Within a short period of time Les was working on the production testing of oscillators, frequency counters and bridges.



Evangeline & Les, 1942 Brownsville, Texas



Evangeline & Les, 2004, Redwood City, California

He met another former Pan Am employee by the name of Paul Hubbs (ham call unknown, SK), who enticed him into the Hewlett Packard special standards department where they would calibrate the measuring devices and equipment pursuant to the National Standards Bureau. This was to make sure that these commercial products were precisely calibrated for proper resistance, inductance and capacitance. Les was in charge of the low voltage DC and low frequency equipment in the Standards Department and retired from there in 1979 when he was 65. Since both Mr. Hewlett and Mr. Packard had retired at 65, it was an in house policy that employees had to retire at that age as well.

When Les had transferred to San Francisco in 1947, he changed his amateur radio call sign from W9LDC to W6AKR and when they moved back to Redwood City in 1955, Les became an active ham and member of PAARA. He was using a Heathkit transmitter that he had assembled, a Hammarlund receiver and a half wave dipole. He has always preferred CW and could carry on a lengthy QSO at 25 to 30 wpm. In recent years, Les has lost his sight almost completely and can no longer see the front panel of the radios that he has owned. As a result, he has given away most of his equipment to PAARA members.

Les spends a lot of his time now listening to audio tapes and commercial

radio. He enjoys people reading things for him, so Evangeline has her hands full taking care of some of those projects. Les and Evangeline used to travel extensively around the US, Canada and Mexico via their RV. The last big road trip was in 1986, just before his sight started to deteriorate, when they traveled to Nova

Scotia and back. However, neither of them will ever forget the round the world trip they took together in 1953 on Pan Am. They used up six weeks of vacation time to literally tour the world by flying to practically every airport used by Pan Am throughout the whole airline network. What a tremendous and exciting experience.

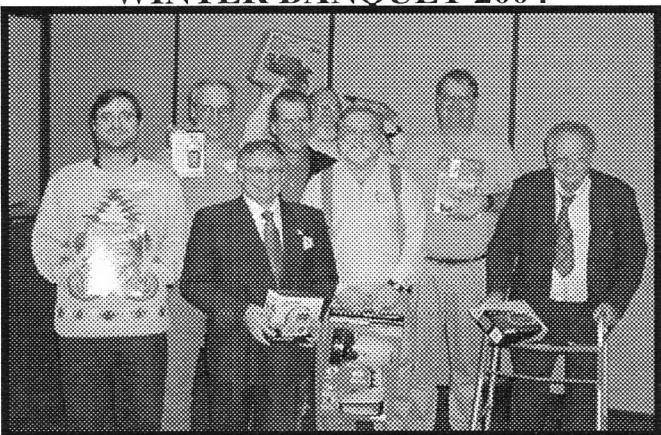
Les and Evangeline are the proud parents of three. Their son, Leslie Vickery, Jr., was born in 1950 in Rio de Janeiro. He worked as a machinist near Seattle making parts for Boeing aircraft before retiring. He now is a craftsman of

violins. A daughter, Leeann, also born in Rio de Janeiro, is a lab technician in San Jose. Another daughter, Sandra, lives in Daly City and works for the U.S. Postal Service.

We, the members of PAARA, are honored to know Les & Evangeline Vickery. We wish them well in their retirement and thank them for their service to PAARA and the USA.

~Terry Finn. A6TF.

## WINTER BANQUET 2004



### Here's the list of winners:

Herb Davidson, KF6BKL, Yaesu FT-817  
Dave Platt, AE6EO, Garmin eTrex GPS Receiver  
Stan Kuhl, K6MA, MAHA Charger  
Dr. Seppo Sisatto, OH1VR, Grundig FR-200 Emergency Radio  
Howard Califf, KE6PWH, Coleman Powermate Spotlight  
Peter Sheerin, K6WEB, The ARRL 2004 Handbook  
Kit Blanke, WA6PWW, The ARRL Antenna Book

### PAARA HAS A NEW TOWER TRAILER !!

Through the efforts of PAARA member **Bob Korte, KD6KYT**, PAARA is the recipient of a large, dual axel utility trailer that is almost perfect to be made into a tower trailer. Bob came across the information through his confidential sources and immediately acted on the tip that AMD (Advanced Micro Devices) was planning on selling off some of their surplus equipment.

He met with Lance Taylor, the Manager of the Reclaim Department of Advanced Micro Devices, Inc., and convinced him that PAARA could really use that equipment for our field day and emergency communications activities. Bob contacted the PAARA Secretary, **Terry Finn, AF6TF**, and the PAARA Treasurer, **Ron Chester, W6AZ**, who both immediately contacted Lance Taylor by e-mail. They provided the requisite information for AMD and within days we became the new owners of a 1984 custom built utility trailer.

This particular trailer had been used by AMD to carry a large water tank to their various facilities for specific assignments. Since AMD no longer required it, they were simply going to dispose of it through a used vehicle auction. Bob was instrumental in obtaining this new piece of equipment for PAARA and we commend him for his actions.

Unfortunately, AMD could not find the DMV certificate of ownership (pink slip) for this trailer, although they had the annual license plate registrations & insurance cards going back for years. Not to worry though, as your extremely talented PAARA Board of Directors has ways of cutting through the red tape and getting things done. By the time this trailer is ready for Field Day, we should have the proper DMV paperwork completed so that PAARA can claim legal ownership of yet another piece of handy equipment.

Now, we just require a few talented PAARA members to design and build the adjustable antenna tower that needs to be installed on the trailer. So, the handy persons among us may now come forth and volunteer for yet another exciting PAARA project.

*~Terry Finn, AF6TF.*



## Technical Tip

### Working DX

by Vic Black AB6SO

At first working DX may seem pretty difficult, but it becomes easier with experience. In order of importance, the following items need to be considered:

- 1) Propagation
- 2) Your Location
- 3) Your skill
- 4) Your Antennas
- 5) Your Receiver Quality, and
- 6) when all else fails, an Amplifier.

Oh, yes, there's one other thing: being on the air when the DX is on.

Some operators try to invert the order of these requirements. Their first priorities are to get the best available transmitter and amp along with a big antenna system. That costs a lot of money, which is fine if you can afford it for your hobby. However, it doesn't make up for a lack of propagation and skill. For most of us, the location is at home and we can't change that easily. We can travel to better locations, though, to operate mobile or portable when conditions warrant the minor effort involved. Besides, it's fun to operate from interesting or exotic locations. Propagation conditions are much more consistent near the tropics. HF is very difficult from the extreme north and extreme south near the earth's magnetic poles. You needn't venture far from home, though. Pack some small, light weight equipment and walk or ride a bicycle to the nearest park for a pleasant afternoon of outdoor fun.

I consider propagation most important because when the sunspot cycle is at its peak and background noise low it becomes very simple to work DX with minimum power, skill and equipment. When conditions are less than perfect, it's important to pick the best times to be on the air for success. No amount of power and expensive antennas can overcome HF blackouts or extremely high background noise levels. You must match the season and time of day to the band and DX you want to work.

Some operators are blessed with excellent locations. Some that come to mind are beach front locations near salt water, on hilltops with drop offs in desirable directions or maybe isolated locations, such as the high desert with very low physical and electrical noise levels. Working weak signals is much more difficult when you can barely hear them above the noise even though signal levels would otherwise be adequate. Beach locations are especially amenable to use of vertical antennas because of the excellent salt water ground. Dipoles and yagis work best when they are at least one quarter wave above surrounding ground in order to keep ground losses low. That's easier to accomplish when the ground slopes away from your antenna.

Acquired skill and experience are things money can't buy. It's important to learn how to "zero beat" so you'll be on just the right frequency. It won't work to be outside the filter pass band of the station you are calling. Experiment with your receiver's attenuator. When there's a lot of interference, you can often turn the attenuator on to drop most signals down below the noise level. So long as the station you are listening to is above the noise level, you can then turn up the volume control and the interference will be gone. Know how to operate your equipment to its fullest potential, know when to

*(Continued on page 30) Working DX*

**PAARGraphs March 2004**  
**Celebrating 67 years as an active ham radio club—Since 1937**

(Continued from page 29) Working DX

call and when to listen, how to operate "split", and when to wait for another day. This can be as simple as waiting for the last few days of an expedition or the last few hours of a contest when all the "big guns" have already worked the rare ones. Your chances for a clear shot are much better then. Contesters work high power "first tier" stations first and try to get all the multiplier stations up front. Then they go for second and third tier stations that count only for QSO credit, but are not needed for scoring multipliers. If you aren't a rare multiplier, your chances are improved later in the contest. During VHF/UHF contests the "big guns" operate SSB and CW at the start of the contest and then go to FM to pick up QSO points later in the contest.

During contests, choose an entry category that maximizes your chances for success. Pick a mode, frequency band or location without too much competition in order to have a better chance of success to bolster your self esteem for later, more ambitious efforts. You'll be competing with big stations for contacts, but within your own category for awards.

Some examples might include a mini-DXpedition to one of the nearby, but rare, counties during the California QSO Party. You can literally walk across the Sacramento River Bridge from downtown Sacramento and be in Yolo County, which is rare and sought after by County Hunters all over the world. San Francisco County is also a rare county. Another example would be to work the 222 MHz band during a VHF contest or work a DXpedition on RTTY rather than SSB since statistics for DXpeditions show that only about 2,000 stations worldwide are truly active on radio teletype, thereby limiting competition.

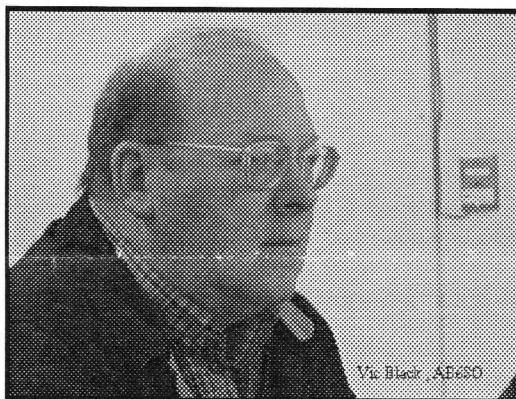
Don't get "chatty" when working a DX pileup or a contest. Competitive operators strive for a high "QSO rate", or hourly contact rate. If they miss something, they will ask for a repeat. Repeat only what is called for. Sometimes you have a good signal at the other end, but there is a lot of interference and something will be missed. The operator wants you to repeat only the missed part 2 or 3 times in order to get it through between bouts of interference. For instance, if you are asked for "Your Suffix", the operator wants you to repeat only the letters following the number in your call sign. Don't repeat your entire call, his signal report, your location or your name. If you do, one of two things might happen. He may give up on you and call another station or a very high power station with a rude operator may just walk all over you and call, thereby ending your chances of getting into the rare station's log book.

There's an old adage that 90% of your station budget should go to building antennas. The reason for this is that efficient antennas can make up for less power. Even a well made, simple dipole can work wonders. Don't let the lack of a tower and beam keep you from operating. Any antenna is better than no antenna. Wire antennas work well, stand up well under adverse weather conditions and require very little maintenance. And remember, wire is cheap; amplifiers are expensive.

The quality of your receiver is very important. If it isn't sensitive enough to hear weak stations or selective enough to separate stations from each other you'll never be able to hear the DX stations. This doesn't mean you need to spend a lot of money on equipment,

though. Some kit radios have receivers that match the best commercial equipment available. They just don't have all of the computerized accessories and "bells and whistles" of their commercial cousins. Transmitter power output isn't nearly as important as being able to hear the weak ones. If you can hear and work the weak stations before others have heard them, you'll be ahead of the game. On the other hand, if you run low power, you may want to call very loud stations. There's usually less interference on a frequency that is dominated by one really loud station. If a loud station doesn't hear you, it may be because he has a louder noise background than you do.

When all else fails, crank up the power and use an amplifier. But keep in mind that even an amp won't help during the occasional HF blackout. When the sun throws a lot of particles at us, those particles disturb the magnetosphere surrounding the earth and we suffer a geomagnetic storm. During those storms, I often can't hear WWV in Fort Collins, CO even though they are running 10,000 watts. It wouldn't be very productive to try finishing up your Worked All States award by calling "CQ Colorado" on one of those days.



Vic Black AB6SO

Earlier I mentioned one other thing and that's being on the air when the DX is on. There is usually more activity on weekends than during the work week even though a lot of operators are retired. Don't go on the air calling CQ Europe, for instance, when it's 3 a.m. in Europe. Most people there will be asleep and there will be a lot of interference from megawatt shortwave broadcast stations in Europe on the lower HF bands at that time. Also remember the International Date Line. It might be Sunday afternoon on the US west coast, but 9 a.m. Monday in Japan and the folks there are already heading to work. Your signal gets a boost from gray line propagation at your sunset and sunrise. Some parts of the year, though, there may not be anything but water along the gray line. Chances of contacts may change dramatically in a month or two as the seasons change.

Another excellent time to work DX is a few days before a major international contest. The major competitors will be testing their stations at that time to ensure everything is in working order for the upcoming contest. They're also planting their call signs in the minds of other contesters so that contacts can be made quicker during the contest. Some operators will travel to exotic locations for the contests and will need to set up antennas, power supplies, amplifiers and computers and check radios that have been in storage, sometimes in rather harsh environments. You do them a favor by working them at that time without the pressure of a contest.

Watching DX spotting networks on packet or the Internet will let you know when the DX is on, but chances are that all of the "big guns" have already spotted the station by then and so the competition will be heavier. A good use for spotting networks, though, is finding out what parts of the world and what frequency bands are supporting propagation at any given time. Search and pounce can often let you be the first one to find the rare ones; that's to your advantage. Above all else, don't get discouraged. Gold prospectors have an old adage: "Gold is wherever you find it". So it is with DX.

~Vic Black AB6SO

## Field Day, June 25-27, 2004

~by Jack Daane, KR6CD

Field day is an emergency communication exercise. Each year, during the fourth weekend in June, amateur radio operators presume there has been a major disruption to electric power and commercial communication systems. The power is off, there is no local phone service, no long distance, no cell phone, no internet service, even some of the government radio systems have been knocked out. In response, amateurs assemble two-way radio stations operating on emergency power to transmit messages over the amateur bands.

In a real emergency, radio amateurs would send messages, telegram style, for public officials over these stations. For example, the mayor would write a message to send to the governor, hand it to the radio amateurs who would then relay the message, station by station, to the state capital and deliver it. Similarly, the reply from the governor would be relayed back to the mayor.

That's the idea behind field day, practice setting up a radio station on short notice and operate it on emergency power. Many amateur clubs like PAARA take part.

Interested in participating? Well, there are three major activities to work on: assembly Friday afternoon, operating Saturday and Sunday, and then disassembly on Sunday. Everybody is welcome to join in.

First comes assembling the PAARA station on Friday afternoon. The electric generators, radios, towers, antennas, and shelters must be brought to the field day site and put together into working radio stations. This gives you a great hands-on opportunity to work with a variety of equipment. You'll be piecing towers together, mounting antennas and rotators on them, threading transmission lines on them, and then hoisting them skyward. Down on the ground, there are power supplies and two-way radios to hook up. The generator has to be cabled to the radio equipment. You'll see equipment you'll never find in a radio store, and you actually get to use it, not just look at it.

Next comes operating the stations, starting on Saturday. There probably won't be an actual disruption to commercial communication systems during field day, so instead of re-laying telegrams for public officials, amateurs contact one another to determine the range of each station.

Operators generally work in pairs at each radio. One person operates, the other logs contacts. The operator calls "CQ field day, CQ field day", and gives the station's call sign, K6YQT. When a distant operator responds to the call, the logger records the call sign and location of the far station. It is very similar to contesting and clubs compete to see who gets the most points by contacting the most stations. This goes on for 24 hours straight, but obviously operators work in shifts of a few hours at a time.

During field day there are stations in the US, Canada, and many other countries participating on most of the amateur bands, including HF, VHF, UHF, and satellite. Most of the

operating modes are used as well, such as CW, voice, packet, even FAX and TV. Field day is a great opportunity to try a mode that you might not have at your own station.

PAARA typically has a CW and a SSB station on HF plus a station on VHF. Other bands and modes might also be used depending upon what the club members choose to do during field day.

Since a logger can serve as the control operator, you can be the radio operator and use modes that your own license class does not permit. For example, during field day, Technician class licensees can use voice or CW on the HF bands.

After the official field day operating period ends on Sunday, all that equipment has to come back down and go into storage for the next field day, or maybe a true communication emergency.

There is still work to do after field day weekend has past. The contact lists must be submitted to the ARRL for compilation. In addition, the field day planners get together to analyze the contact data to see where each station could reach, where it didn't reach, and to revise the plan for the next field day in order to maximize the radio coverage area.

Field day is a lot of fun, a great way to work with a team of amateur radio operators, and try out the biggest variety of equipment you'll probably ever see in one location. For more information about PAARA's field day exercise, contact any of the members listed below.

**Gerry Tucker, N6NV**, overall field day coordinator, tower and antenna transportation and construction, and phone captain.

**Steve Brune, KG6OUB**, logistics.

**Andreas Junge, N6NU**, CW captain.

**Doug Teter, KG6LWE**, electrical power (generator).

## George Berry, KC6ULT, SK

George Berry, KC6ULT, a great colleague of the San Mateo County Sheriff's Area OES passed away January 21, 2004 after several months of courageously battling cancer. He was an incredible caring person and a superb emergency planner. He touched our lives, sharing his humor and skills generously with all of us. George had a great interest in supporting public schools and education.

Bill O'Callahan, San Mateo County Sheriff's Area OES 650-599-1294.

George was a featured speaker at PAARA when he presented a program about the Menlo Park Urban Search and Rescue Team's participation in the search for victims in the April 19, 1995 Alfred P. Murrah Federal Office Building bombing in Oklahoma City.

Vic Black AB6SO

**PAARAGraphs March 2004**  
**Celebrating 67 years as an active ham radio club—Since 1937**



**Mitch Cipriano AE6AI** has donated a power distribution box for the raffle. It is a new Saratoga Products box about the size of the MFJ code reader and has one Andersen Power Pole input and three outputs, plus a 25 amp fuse. They sell for \$20 at Livermore (higher on the web). I have it. He has also stated that he would like to demonstrate some of his products at a PAARA meeting.

Bonnie Crystal would like to present her very interesting proposal for realigning the ham bands based on bandwidth rather than mode. On any particular band, the entire band could be used for the narrowest modes and then sub bands for each of two other wider bandwidths, regardless of mode or type of modulation. This would make the bands easier to use and would expand the usable portions of the bands. The proposal is located at <http://www.qsl.net/kq6xa/freqplan>

She is promoting it to the ARRL and FCC. It is based on three classes of licenses: Novice, General and Extra Class and takes into account the new proposal to allow Novice access to HF bands without CW testing. It's very well thought out and interesting. She's putting together a Power Point presentation.

~Vic, AB6SO

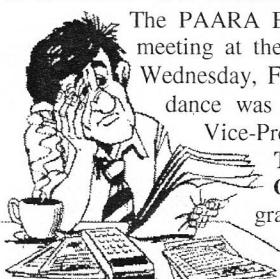
## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING.

The PAARA Board of Directors had their regular meeting at the Red Cross offices in Palo Alto on Wednesday, February 11/04 at 1930 hrs. In attendance was President **Andreas Junge, N6NU**; Vice-President **Jim Rice, K6AK**; Secretary **Terry Finn, AF6TF**; Board member **Gerry Tucker, N6NV**; PARAGraphs editor **Wally Porter, K6URO**; Board member **Vic Black, AB6SO**; Board member **Rolfe Klubo, N6NFI**; members **Steve Brune, KG6OUB**; **Dave Rogers, K5DKR**; **Howard Takaoka, KG6GRO**; and **Dick Kors, KM6EP**.

**Howard Takaoka, KG6GRO** presented the Board with all of the facts regarding the joint FARS/PAARA winter banquet held in January. It was clearly a success with 107 participants and many happy winners of prizes. Both clubs were able to realize a small profit after all of the expenses. We were especially fortunate to have a large number of awarded prizes donated by Ham Radio Outlet.

Howard also advised that the electronic flea markets that have been held at the southern parking lot of Foothills College would no longer be able to be held at that location for a number of reasons. The administration group is currently seeking a new location & that info will be provided in this publication when the details have been worked out. It should be noted that PAARA will sponsor the flea market in April, so volunteers will be required for that event.

**Dick Kors, KM6EP**, will be coordinating with a local video club to do a video production of the PAARA activities during Field Day in June. This completed video will be available as a



training and public relations aid for PAARA.

The PAARA repeater committee is still functioning well and continues to seek an available frequency pair (preferably UHF) to install and operate a club machine. **Dave Rogers, K5DKR** is investigating the possibility of using an existing commercial repeater site that he has access to through his employment. PAARA members are asked to keep their ears open for information on any existing repeater owner who may wish to relinquish their repeater to PAARA.

The President has appointed **Peter Sheerin, K6WEB** to the position of webmaster. Peter will be experimenting with several new ideas under the direction of the web site committee and will reveal the new PAARA web site when it is completed and all the bugs have been worked out. Members are requested to check out the web site at: [www.paara.org](http://www.paara.org) and submit their ideas or thoughts to the President.

The membership committee co-chairs, **Lisa Rice, KG6KQS** and **Vic Black, AB6SO**, have been doing a sterling job of recruiting new members with the assistance of the Secretary, **Terry Finn, AF6TF**, who has been signing them up at monthly meetings. **Dave Rogers, K5DKR** has been able to gain control of the PAARA name badge problem and now has the badges made & in his possession within a week of them being ordered. He has been mailing out the name badges so members can have them before they attend the next meeting.

The Secretary, **Terry Finn, AF6TF**, has asked the membership committee to provide a list of PAARA members for forwarding to ARRL so we can re-establish PAARA as an approved ARRL radio club. This list must include the information on whether the member is also an ARRL member. Apparently PAARA was dropped from the approved radio club rolls of ARRL several years ago due to an oversight on our part.

The official meeting was adjourned at 2110 hours and many of the Board members traveled to McDonalds in Menlo Park for the after Board discussion group.

~~Secretary: Terry Finn. AF6TF

## ARE YOU AN ARRL MEMBER?

The ARRL rules require an approved radio club to have at least fifty one per cent of their membership and fifty one per cent of their Board of Directors as members of ARRL.

PAARA was an approved ARRL radio club for many years, however in recent years we have somehow allowed that designation to lapse. We are now taking the necessary steps to be reassigned that rather prestigious distinction. So, your mission is to immediately contact the membership co-chair person, **Lisa Rice, KG6KQS**, and advise her of your ARRL membership status. The best bet is to just send her an e-mail at: [lisarice@earthlink.net](mailto:lisarice@earthlink.net) with the information.

If you have already made a notation on the form that was passed around at the last meeting on Feb 6/04, or if you advised **Terry Finn, AF6TF**, at the check in table of your ARRL membership status, then you do not need to do it again.

We will keep you informed of how our application is going with the ARRL and when we will again be an approved radio club. Thank you.

~Terry Finn. AF6TF.

*PAARA membership is \$12 per year and \$6 for each additional family member.*

# 2004 Field Day Assignments

<b>Function:</b>	<b>Assigned To:</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
<i>Overall Field Day Supervisor</i>	N6NV	Obtain site permissions, Cert. Of insurance, Coordinate bands, resolve disputes, etc
<i>Phone Captain</i>	N6NV	provide and monitor phone station equipment and operation
<i>CW Captains</i>	N6NU/W6KNS	provide and monitor CW station equipment and operation
<i>VHF Captain</i>	KR6MR	provide and monitor VHF station equipment and operation
<i>GOTA Captains</i>	N6NFI/K6AK	provide and monitor GOTA station equipment and operation
<i>Satellite Captains</i>	N6NU/AA6PA/WA6DNR	provide and monitor satellite station equipment and operation
<i>Publicity Responsibility</i>	K6EURO	Provide pre FD publicity for <b>Bonus points</b> and coordinate activity photos for QST & newspapers
<i>Participation Recorder</i>	K6GEM	Obtain participant logs for <b>Bonus points</b> Radiogram and score submittal
<i>RF Equipment setup</i>	N6NV	Coordinate and ensure setup up of all necessary antennas, coax, etc.
<i>Power Equipment setup</i>	KG6LWE	Coordinate and ensure setup up of all necessary Generators, power distribution, etc.
<i>Site Traffic Control</i>	KD6KYT/AF6TF	Determine site traffic control and parking requirements & prepare and install necessary signs
<i>Field Day Documentary</i>	KM6EP	TBD
<i>FD Rules &amp; Score Submittal</i>	W6AZ	Ensure FD rules are understood, as necessary, by all participants, coordinate logging and submit final score
<i>Computer Logging Setup</i>	N6NU	Provide computers, logging software, and necessary training
<i>Site Photos &amp; WEB support</i>	KG6OUB	Provide photos of interest and provide as necessary for publicity, PAARA web site, etc
<i>First Aid support</i>	W6FEL	Provide minimal first aid equipment availability for FD duration
<i>Saturday Dinner</i>	WYFEL	Purchase and provide support for Saturday dinner
<i>Cook</i>	K6DPW	Self explanatory
<i>Bonus Points Manager</i>	TBD	List all bonus point activities and ensure no possible points go unclaimed
<i>Digital &amp; Special Modes</i>	WA6SBO/KG6JDE	Provide all RF bonus points are planned and executed

The above list is an initial effort at identifying the basic responsibilities for carrying out a successful Field Day effort for 25-27 June 2004. I have generally assigned the function to the person who did it last year, but let me know if there is any problem with this.

*If you can commit to helping on Field Day and have a particular area of support in mind, offer your services to the coordinator listed above.*

The PAARA field day site has not been determined yet, but I am hoping for the same one as last year.

It is not going to be easy to beat last year's terrific score, but it is a contest and I'm determined we should try!

Gerry Tucker, de N6NV



Dick Jones K4MHN

**PAARAGraphs March 2004**  
**Celebrating 67 years as an active ham radio club—Since 1937**



**Attention Members and Visitors:**

**Raffle Prizes**

for the March 5<sup>th</sup> PAARA Meeting:

IC-2100H 55W Mobile rig + Garmin eTrex GPS receiver + EZ-PSK Hardware Interface OR TWO, Motorola Talkabout FRS Radios + Two FOURTH place PRIZES + BONUS PRIZE  
 Come try your hand at winning the

**FIRST PRIZE:** Icom IC-2100H, 55W, 2m, Mobile rig, with remote keypad (green or amber display)

**SECOND PRIZE:** Garmin eTrex, 12 Channel, GPS receiver; **THIRD PRIZE:** EZ-PSK Hardware Interface **or** TWO, Motorola Talkabout FRS Radios

**Sharp Wizard Organizer.**

Don't forget about the TWO

**FOURTH place raffle prizes**

plus a

Bonus Prize of a 1 year subscription to WORLD RADI

Enjoy our fabulous speakers, free refreshments, chatting with your friends, and the chance to take home an unbelievable prize.

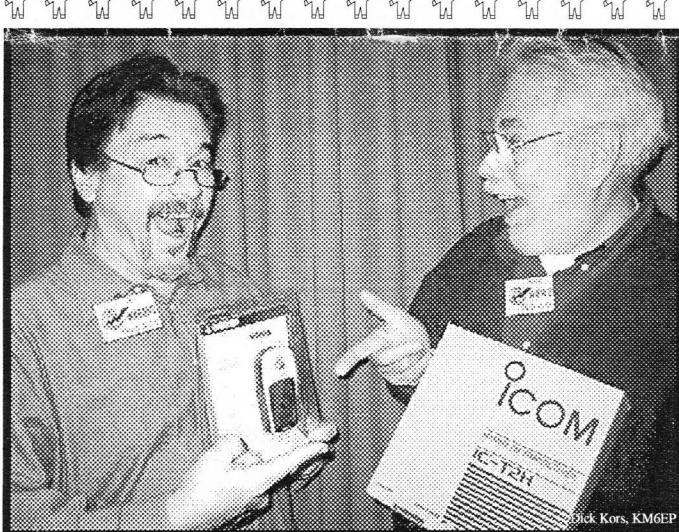
See you at Round Table after the meeting!

Kyle, Ian and I are having a lot of fun. **THANKS AGAIN FOR MAKING THE MEETINGS VERY EXCITING!**

The PAARA Raffle is FULL of SURPRISES and YOUR LUCKY DAY may be March 5<sup>th</sup>.

Contact Kyle, KG6MSK and Ian, K6IAN for tickets at the meeting.

~Jim, K6AK



**PAARA BADGES**

*to order one, pay membership coordinator*

**Lisa Rice KG6KQS**

[lizarice@earthlink.net](mailto:lizarice@earthlink.net)

*next meeting pick up from*

**Dave Rogers, K5DKR**

[dkr@bigfoot.com](mailto:dkr@bigfoot.com)

*or contact at next PAARA meeting*



# Congratulations

## PAARA Raffle Prize Winners:

February 6<sup>th</sup> 2004

**1<sup>st</sup> Prize:** Jay Melvin WA6SBO  
 Garmin eTrex GPS Receiver

**2<sup>nd</sup> Prize:** Mike Gavin W6WZ  
 Icom IC-T2H 5W HT

**3<sup>rd</sup> Prize:** Leigh Klotz WA5ZNU  
 2 Motorola FRS radios

**4<sup>th</sup> Prize:** Fish K6FSH / Ground cable

**4<sup>th</sup> Prize:** Bill Ashby N6FFC / Multimeter  
**Bonus Prize:** Vic Black AB6SO

Declined prize / 1 year subscription to WORLD RADI  
 "Thanks Vic, for the kind gesture."

**Bonus Prize:** Eric Vinande KG6NFJ  
 1 year subscription to WORLD RADI

## PAARA Members and Visitors

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

of the upcoming

**PAARA 2004 Dream to Reality Raffle II**

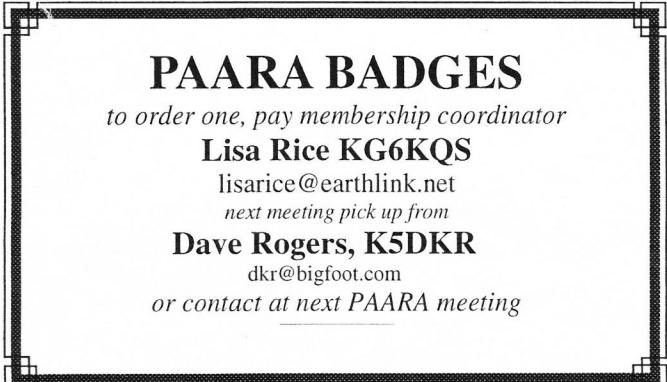
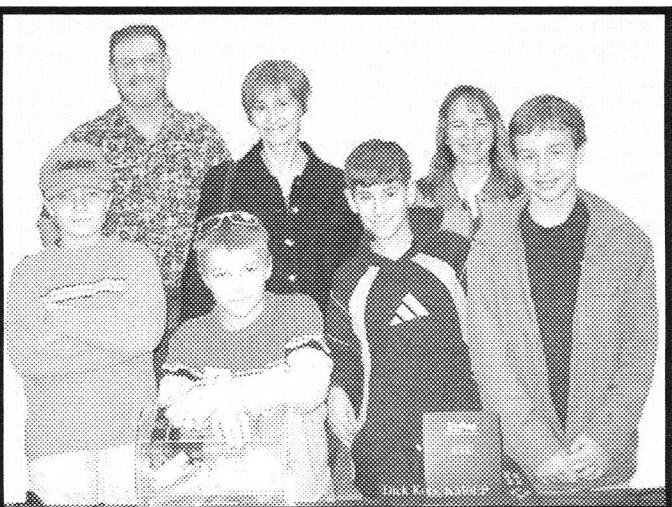
as well as

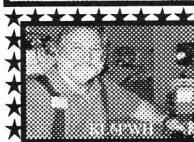
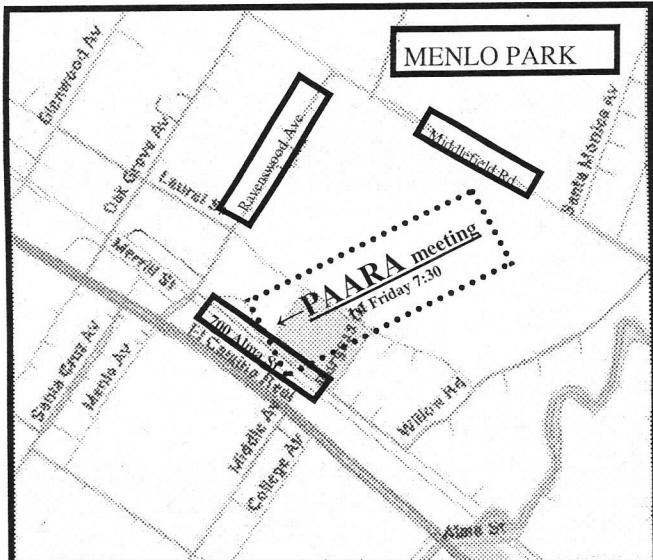
the exciting monthly raffles!

PAARA is having a remarkable year in 2004,  
 and  
 YOU are responsible!

If you aren't a member, please join PAARA  
 and  
 experience fun events with the  
 friendliest club around.

~Jim, K6AK





Howard at HRO says: "HAM accessories and gift certificates are available at HRO"

★ "Congratulations PAARA on a successful year." ★

## MADONNA'S BAIL BONDS



Ayudamos a la Comunidad Hispana



REDWOOD CITY ————— **650-366-9111**  
SAN FRANCISCO ————— **415-495-2245**  
SAN JOSE ————— **408-266-2245**

TERRY FINN AF6TF, CA License #1A38965

234 Marshall Street, UPSTAIRS #3 Redwood City, CA 94063-1550

**HSC**

**Halted**  
**specialties co.**

Electronics • Prototyping Supplies • Computers • Lasers

**Debra Blanke**

Sales

KG6UI

3500 RYDER STREET  
SANTA CLARA, CA 95051  
[www.halted.com](http://www.halted.com)

PHONES: (408) 732-1573  
(650) 969-1448  
FAX: (408) 732-6428

**W6AZ**

Ron Chester  
Santa Clara  
(408) 243-2221  
[Ron@taxhelp.com](mailto:Ron@taxhelp.com)

Tax Preparation & QuickBooks Consulting • Ham discount

## PAARA Radio NET

every Monday evening

8:30 P.M., local time

on the

**145.230 -600 MHz repeater**

PL tone off

control operators

1st Mon KG6ILA, Pinkney Foster  
2nd Mon N6NU, Andreas Junge  
3rd Mon AD6FX, Jon Zweig  
4th Mon AA6PA, Bill Rausch  
5th Mon tba

## PAARAGraphs Ad Rates

PAARAGraphs accepts paid advertisements from non-members.  
(short personal ads remain free for members in good standing).

All ad rates listed are per issue only.

1. Not for profit ads by association members for ham-related items and wants. No cost for business card size ads (additional space at \$2.50 per business card size).

2. For Profit organizations and/or individuals: \$5-business card size, \$25-half page, \$50 full page or back cover.

These fees may be reduced or waived in exchange for a valuable consideration that is given to the Association or its general membership. Such consideration must be in addition to any existing arrangements with the association.

The PAARAGraphs editors reserve the right to reject any ad deemed to be not in the best interest of the Association. All fees payable in advance by the year with "scanner-ready" copy or text-only ads. Give payment and copy to Bob Korte

**PAARA • Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association • P.O. Box 911, Menlo Park, California 94026-0911**

- Club meetings are on the first Friday of each month, 7:30pm at the Menlo Park Recreation Center, 700 Alma Street, Menlo Park, CA. •
- Radio NET every Monday evening, at 8:30pm, on the 145.230-600 MHz repeater, PL tone off. •

Membership in PAARA is \$12.00 per calendar year which includes a subscription to PAARAGraphs, \$6 for additional family members (no newsletter).  
Make payment to the Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association, P.O. Box 911, Menlo Park, CA 94026-0911

Permission is granted to reprint from this publication with appropriate source credit.

