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PAARA

GRAPHS



palo alto
AMATEUR
RADIO ASSN.

MENLO PARK C.D. RADIO CLUB, K6YQT

APRIL 1978

2

VOLUME 22 NUMBER 4

PAARAGraphs is the official organ of the PALO ALTO AMATEUR RADIO
ASSOCIATION and the MENLO PARK CIVIL DEFENSE RADIO CLUB

1978 CLUB OFFICERS

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PAARA POLICIES

Membership in PAARA is a mere \$4 per calendar year, which includes a subscription to this fine periodical. PAARAGraphs alone may be had for a trifling \$1. Send cash, check, or money order to:

PAARA P. O. Box 911 Menlo Park, California 94025

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The APRIL MEETING OF PAARA will convene on Friday, April 7, 7:30 PM at the Menlo Park Recreation Center. Coffee and crumblies courtesy W6AIN. Fantastic prizes to those who can outguess the random number generator!

The evening's speaker will be Terry Easton WA30YF/6 who will talk about the "Telecommunications Revolution & State of the Art for Today & the Next 5 Years for Personal and Business Use". Mr. Easton is President of International Communications Management, Inc., S.F.

* * * * *

The BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF PAARA will meet at 7:30 PM on April 12th in the Club's trailer at SRI.

* * * * *

FUTURE meeting dates of PAARA are on the first Fridays, May 5, June 2, July 7, etc.

* * * * *

CHECK into one of PAARA's NETS: 2 meter AM 145.24 at 8:15 PM, followed by FM 147.45 at 8:30 PM, every Monday night; 15 or 20 meter net SSB is at 9 AM on alternate Saturdays at 21.393 or 14.245 (check with W6NIR for more exact dates).

* * * * *

Many thanks are due Fred Canham K6YT for the hours of back-breaking work he has done on repairing the club's motor generator. Fred is now hard at work building a trailer for it. Give him a call and a hand---there is still lots to do!

* * * * *

Ed W6AIN who has provided us with many fantastic raffles thinks "a change in the raffle handling would be kinda nice--and welcome anyhow. Different ideas, outlook, sources of supply, etc., would be good". It looks like its time to let someone else provide PAARA meetings with some excitement. If you would like to help--now is your chance--tell Bob W6BFH you'll do it!

* * * * *

Dusty K6MPN, our newest board member, has some TUBES he will swap or trade for whatever (not cash)--types are 4X-250B's and 4X-150's.

SPRING MADNESS AND THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF MARIN

One of the 1978 projects which the PAARA Board of Directors is considering is a 2 meter repeater. The only real purpose behind this is to silence the convincing voice of WA6LIJ, himself a gobbler at the public trough, whose avowed aim at PAARA meetings is to have the club treasury expended so that we are at the same zero base financing as the other three clubs to which Jerry swears allegiance.

Even LIJ, profligate spender as he is, would have quailed if he had been listening to Channel X on the evening of Feb. 21. The prestigious Mt. Pius repeater had at least 30 of its regulars holding forth (my Icom was on X by chance because the Mountain seemed an appropriate Lenten diversion).

Now Mount Pius is in Marin. Marin is sophisticated. Oakland is Oakland and Piedmont doesn't much leaven the mass; San Jose is Emeryville South. Who can hear Berryessa, and WR6ACZ does not permit crystals to be sold for its sacrosanct channel, and synthesized rig purchasers are required to sign an oath that they will not channel 96/36 until they arrive at the magic 100 countries, confirmed.

So Marin's Mount Pius is the repeater of the area, but a little too open on Feb. 21.

You see, a strange, horrendous signal had come up on 52 Sunday night. Continuous, unmodulated. Trace of a hum. All day Monday and all night it ran. No CB jammer this and no change and no modulation all day Tuesday and into Tuesday night. Slight frequency shift to 52.3.

By 8 p.m. Tuesday, the 21st, the whole ham 2 meter fraternity was aware, aroused and apprehensive. Channel X became the center of a French debate on the origin of the strange signal. Reports came in from all over--after all, Mt. Pius is the Everest of the Bay Region. Sixty over 9, San Rafael; 40 over in San Francisco; 20 over at San Jose and Oakland; S 9 in Sacramento; S 4 in Stockton, and S 3 in Eureka and Fresno. This had to be a big KW--somewhere.

The fearless net leader asked all listeners for bearings. Turn your beams and report in, he said. The 20 reports were a little confusing. A technical type asked whether the courses were magnetic or true, and Fearless said not to confuse him further: he would plot all bearings both ways. The very broad center of the resulting intersections was Mr. Pius itself, and this was of course unthinkable.

A bright, brash electronics type from Silicon Valley announced his theory at length. The divergence in bearings and the wide signal range proved that

we were listening to a stationary satellite beacon, with its frequency gone wild. A pedestrian version of the water trough. Quite convincing, too, until a spoiler asked why the satellite came in 20 db weaker at the south end of the Waldo Tunnel. "Because the satellite is positioned over the north end," said our hero, and thirty voices shouted derision. "How do you arrange for a 60 cycle hum 100 miles up," a practical type (probably a stereo repairman) queried. Some wag suggested a very long power cord and you could feel Mount Pius shudder at this irreverence.

One ex-gob, convinced that Navy incompetence was behind all life's troubles, said no one could assure him that Skaggs Island wasn't responsible, and another ex-marine with the same thought, said he had checked Skaggs that morning, but the bearing was northwest from there.

A Valley listener asked if the FCC had been on the job. "Called 'em this morning," anonymous replied. "They said their entire staff was zeroing in on an elderly lady who illegally sold her 23 channel CB set to some bad-buddy; so no time for strange signals."

The more practical voice of a telephone company type came on. "We have all heard lectures from the Happy Warriors at our clubs," he said. "They self-admittedly can catch any jammer in 30 seconds with their fantastic VHF direction finders, and by actual demonstration have confounded the FAA with discovery of vagrant ELT emissions in 2 minutes 22 seconds. Why can't Captain Courageous of that group fly out in his highwing tin goose and discover this signal?" (It was at the recent PAARA lecture by the Captain himself that suspicious Fred--our K6YT, that is--unimpressed by the ray guns and disenchanted by many a d.f. problem on pre-war Midway with an easier low frequency spectrum, dared wonder aloud if the Happy Warriors were quite as good as they claimed).

In the gap that followed, an earnest and grizzled voice came on: he was a Happy Warrior, he said, and wanted to explain their findings. While silent Channel X waited with bated breath, the Happy Warriors' saga unfolded. The night before, armed with their secret weapons, they had ventured north on Marin's 101 in a mundane earthbound Pontiac (probably an ex-police vehicle) tracking down the mystery voice, and pinpointed it (very loosely speaking) as west of 101 "somewhere between Santa Rosa and Novato." This was admittedly not up to the Happy Warrior's usual 90 second performance with an accuracy of 17 to 19 feet. "Why didn't you fly it?" a raucous breaker demanded. No one would pay \$50 toward gasoline for Captain Courageous' plane, was the reply, and on top of that misfortune, when about to pinpoint the rogue signal, the

Pontiac blew its alternator, forcing our heros to retreat. Which proves you just cain't trust them Indians.

At this point a visitor broke in--not one of Mt. Pius' regulars, obviously. Barely readable, audio breaking up. A real breaker. The net leader courteously told him so. Our friend sputtered he had just worked 20 repeaters with top reports, and the trouble was with the crummy repeater, not his rig. Thirty voices came on verifying he was breaking up from Mendocino to Monterey to Sacramento to Napa. "Stinking repeater," he signed off, and the calm voice of the control operator saying "this machine does have a very limited audio pass band" did not restore order, but moved the conversation back to the unknown signal.

Our Happy Warrier narrator came on to finish his story. He had come back that morning and solved the mystery, to a degree, by at least finding the signal. With one of their secret weapons, he had pinpointed the rogue emissions to Hamilton Field. Drove alongside the south runway. Sixty over nine. The needle in his magic box pointed to the approach over the marsh. A skeptical air force maintenance officer accompanied our hero to the restricted area. The direction finder unerringly pointed to just one of the disconnected approach lights, #18 to be exact--not 17 and not 19. There was no question about it. This was the signal origin. But the mystery remained. No visible connection to any R.F. source. No emitter. No transmitter. Nothing but an old approach light with a muddy Fresnal lens. Putting out that colossal rogue signal--from nowhere!

An excited convert to this theory said that SLAC, buried and shielded as its accelerator is, puts out a horrendous 49 mhz signal too, with no radiators apparent. If Jerry (Brown, that is; sorry LIJ) can now be playing with satellites, why can't he have buried an accelerator at the start of the Hamilton runway?

This speculation came to a jarring halt when the flat voice of a 1 by 2 regular terminated the debate. "Your mystery signal just signed off," he announced, "with apologies from W6XYZ, whose KW remote base on Rocky Ridge has had a shorted control cable for 40 hours."

The Saga was over. Mt. Pius repeater returned to its usual routine. Twenty listening novices decided to return to Charlie Brown, where even Channel 18 was less raucous. PAARA was given its lesson: heed Starkey, if we must, by spending our till in monthly round-trip tickets for 2 to Waikiki for our raffle prizes, but no VHF direction finder, and never a PAARA repeater. It might be heard in Marin.

anonymous

NOVICE, DX, and OTHER NOTES

A unique Novice net

Bill Baicum, WA6YWS, is the net manager of a very interesting Novice net in California. The net, which meets at 3730 kHz at 9:30 a.m. local time Saturdays, provides net training for all new amateurs.

Each station that checks in must bring a "drill message," which is a piece of traffic which can be sent to any member of the net. The net control station (NCS) pairs off

the checkins and sends them off frequency to exchange messages. Thus every time you check in, you get to send and receive at least one message! Of course, regular messages take priority over the drills, but you can't beat this procedure for getting lots of traffic practice in a hurry!

Interested in starting a similar net in your area? Contact WA6YWS for more information on his net, and write ARRL for general information on traffic handling and net procedures.

— *New Ham News* **Worldradio**

New beacon stations

A new beacon station, A9XC, on 28.245 MHz, located at Bahrein, operates between 2100 and 1300 GMT daily and should provide a valuable guide to 28 MHz conditions during the increasing sunspot activity of the next few years.

ZS5VHF at Alverstone, near Durban, is the first of a series of South African VHF beacon stations; it opened recently on 144.925 MHz.

A beacon at Mbabane, Swaziland, 3D6AX, is operating from a site 4500 feet above sea level on 144.735 MHz.

— *The Canadian Amateur* □

Worldradio, March 1978

DX tip for Novices

Kevin Elliott, WBØUHG, of Allerton, Iowa wrote to say that Novices should look for DX on 15 meters on Sunday mornings about 21.185-198 from 1330Z to 1600 Z.

An example of the stations on the frequency include 4U1ITU, PAØEF and G3JGJ.

Worldradio, February

Interesting BC Band Stations

Radio Balese(ex British Honduras), 834 kc. Radio Tarawa, Gilbert Islands, 10 kW, 844 kc.

Tnx to W6TYP

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