PAARA NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 73, NUMBER 3, March 2022

K6OTA K6YQT

PAARAgraphs The Official Newsletter of the



W6OTX

Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association, Inc.

Celebrating 85 years as an *active* amateur radio club—Since 1937

# Ham Radio: Serving Large Public Events Rob Orr, K9RST

W6ARA

Rob will be discussing how ham radio became part of the Chicago Marathon and roles they played. He will discuss several practical issues, like how they recruited 140 ham radio operators, how they were deployed and the roles they played in providing communications for the medical teams serving this event. Also, we'll discuss how they integrated with the many other governmental services that supported the event.

Rob Orr is the lead for the ham radio support team for the Bank of America Chicago Marathon, a volunteer position. He has been working this event for 14 years. He is on the Board of Director for the North Shore Radio Club where he served as President for 10 years. He has also volunteered for the American Red Cross as a member of their national Emergency Communication Response Vehicle (ECRV). He responded to tornado, hurricane, flood, fires and other disasters. He was the lead for the Chicago based crew of 40 who maintained and de-

(Speaker — Continued on page 2)

# This meeting will be a Zoom Meeting Only

Time: Mar 4, 2022 07:00 PM Pacific Time https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88962976505 Login ID: First name and Call Sign Meeting ID: 868 4789 6468

Upcoming Events			
Mar 4 <sup>###</sup> April 1 May 6	PAARA General Meeting, 7:00 PM In-Person and Zoom Meeting ### Zoom Meeting Only		
Mar 16 April 20 May 18	Board Meeting, 7:00 PM. Everyone welcome! Zoom Meeting, eMail President for details!		
April 9	Electronic Flea Market		
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# **President's Corner**

## March 2020

Did anything special happen to you on 2/2/22, or 2/20/22, or 2/22/22? I may or may not have had something special happen on those days but I sure did at Quartzfest! Before I tell that story, a BIG thanks go to Rob, KC6TYD, for running



the February meeting in my absence! His stepping up to run that meeting enabled me to stay in AZ so I could attend the Yuma Hamvention that was held 17 days after Quartzfest. We also need to thank Joel, KD6W, for providing the video interface between the IRL (in real life) meeting and Zoom, though I understand it wasn't needed due to the extremely low IRL turnout, and Doug, KG6LEW, for hosting the zoom part of the

# Ham Radio Outreach Rob Fenn, KC6TYD

For the past several months I've been developing an outreach program specifically designed for new hams. Stories have been told of new hams that have no clue what to do once they've obtained their Amateur Radio License. Many of us were introduced into the hobby through an Elmer making this step a lot easier. With the ease of online training, and even online testing, new hams may not be getting the whole picture, especially when it comes to taking the next step. After much research and viewing similar programs, I've finally put together a presentation outline that covers a lot of information what I believe these new hams need. Choosing the right radio, programming, radio etiquette, and exploring other modes, etc., are just a few areas I'd like to cover. This would be presented live, or on Zoom for now, as a 2 or 3-hour event. The material covered would be presented on a PowerPoint platform. But I can't make this happen without presenters. lf you're confident in your teaching skills and can conduct clear presentations, then I need you. Whether it's one topic or a few, no problem. Hoping to kick this off soon so anyone who is interested can email me at kc6tyd@gmail.com

#### (Speaker — Continued from page 1)

ployed the vehicle, one of 9 ECRV's across the country.

He is an Extra class ham radio operator and enjoys kit building, Dxing and QRP operations, However, public service has dominated his focus in the last couple of years.

In real life, he is a video producer and operates his own video production business. He has worked in more than 83 countries, although during COVID times, he has enjoyed not travelling so frequently!

Married to a very patient wife for 42 years and has two adult children and two teenage grandchildren. (President — Continued from page 1)

#### meeting.

Now back to Quartzfest. As you can see by my new picture, there is an interesting hat on my head. I'll explain what that's about down the road but first. Quartzfest. https:// quartzfest.org/, is a weeklong adventure combining camping with ham radio. Also at Quartzfest, the Northern Arizona DX Association, <u>https://www.nadxa.com/</u>, hosted a DX distance contest as well as providing the spe-I cial event station. In the contest whomever makes the longest contact on CW/SSB or FT8 or using the special event station using 100W or QRP (5W or less) wins. Thus, there were 4 categories with a grand champ and runner up in each category. You had 3 days to make and submit contacts, Monday, Tues-I day and Thursday. In order to win, you needed the longest contact of all other entries in whatever category you entered and be there on Saturday at the closing ceremony.

Before I get further into the DX contest, there were 6 PAARA members out of ~542 who attended Quartzfest. Five of us, Joanna, K6YL, Jeanette, N6DQ, Frank, AF0XX, Karen, I KK6BGA, and myself were in one camp along with Randy (Joanna's BF), and Kathy, KE5K-IFA (my sister). Rob, KC6TYD, was in a tent not far away from our collected campers. We enjoyed many hours of chatting, game playing, storytelling, and whatever. Pink, K7ILA, even drove 2 hours from her house to spend a short time with us and say HI. You can see Rob's camp at the upper left arrow and camp IPAARA's in the lower right arrow in the arial



(Continued from page 2)

## image.

A day at Quartzfest, of which there are 7, con-I sisted of listening to the days upcoming events on the net at 7:45 AM & noon. Various seminars or events happened each day in one of several locations. Several mornings before sunrise, a Pico Balloon was launched. APRS information was provided so everyone could track it. By the end of Quartzfest, sever-I al of the balloons were over Europe. As of the board meeting, one of the balloons had traveled twice around the earth! Each day ended! with "happy hour" where information was provided on ongoing and upcoming activities. A raffle finished off the day. At sunset, a big campfire provided warmth for those wishing to exchange stories or tall tales, take your pick.

Tuesday, 39 4x4's of all sorts took part in an off road adventure lasting about 4 hours. Every vehicle had every seat filled with others who didn't have a 4x4. Every member of team PAARA and friends managed to get a ride. We took a dusty bouncy ride back to an old quartz mine where we ate lunch and ex-



plored. Though everyone ate some dirt, we all had a great time. The picture shows us gathered for lunch and exploration at our destination. The white rectangle in the background is a water collection device that feeds a large cistern for animals in the area. Though there are big horn sheep in the area, they eluded us.

On Thursday, our own Frank, AF0XX, conducted a solar walk about. Frank took interested participants around to various campers I and learned about each installation and what made it unique. Frank came back mumbling, "next year I have to plan it better so we don't crisscross the camp so many times"! Otherwise, even the veteran Frank learned a few new tricks.

Now that you've survived the diatribe, what's with the DX contest? Yours truly received an end fed wire antenna kit for Christmas. I managed to get the 49:1 impedance transformer built before leaving but did not finish the antenna. After completing the antenna at Quartzfest and stringing it up, one end on a 25' fiberglass flagpole, the other 10' up on a painter's pole, I was eager to give it a test. Camp PAARA is in the pix below with my wire off the flagpole and my Bravo 7K, made by Tom Schiller, N6BT, and setup on the right.



Wednesday night found me tuning around on 40M to see what I could hear. Even though I not a contest day, I wanted to see how the wire antenna worked before considering setting up my Bravo 7K. I heard several stations and I made contacts with a few. About 9:30 PM. on 7.145. I heard a station booming in at: S9+! After listening for a short time, I got his call sign, ZS6CCY, Bill from South Africa! He was working the grey line to the US and as you can imagine, had quite the pileup. I tried to get through but the band went dead before he could even hear me through all the east coast stations. After some thinking, I felt my wire wasn't oriented in the optimal direction, which I couldn't change due to space con-I straints, to contact him thus it was time for the Bravo 7K and the hope that he'd once again on the air on Thursday and I might be able to

(President — Continued from page 3)

contact him using that antenna.

Thursday, the last contest day, I managed a contact, off my wire, into Canada with VE7FYQ working POTA. That evening I changed to my Bravo 7K figuring that it might do a better job at getting signal toward South Africa. About 2100, there was ZS6CCY again on 7.145 booming away. He was working stations west of the Mississippi that were hitting him at S9+10 or 20! Hard to work someone with 100W on a vertical with all the high power booming his way. That didn't stop me from trying all the tricks in my bag to attempt to get through the pileup.

About 40 minutes later, he finally respond to a station in Arizona, is there hope? I decided to add the tag "Quartzfest" to my call in the hope he might hear it and wonder what it was. A few minutes later, he responded to a station in Monterey who told him about Quartzfest and suggested he give us a listen, which he gracious did. I'm guessing that had I not added Quartzfest to the tail of my call, none of us would have gotten him in our log.

The first station he responded to his call was one of the organizers of the DX event who was exempt from competing but he told Bill about Quartzfest. I'm getting impatient as I knew from the night before that the band wouldn't stay open much longer. FINALLY, they signed off and I pounced! Wonderfully, he came back to me with a 58 signal report. II sent 59+, he asked my name and boom, we were in each other's log! This makes only my second contact from Africa! It's also the longest contact by far using my IC7100 and the Bravo! The calculated distance was 10,099.6 miles! Whaoo for the grey line and good band conditions and for a little help from the Monte-I rey station!

I popped out of my motorhome and announced that I made contact with him, needless to say, everyone in "camp PAARA" were elated. BTW, I was correct, not 10 minutes after my contact, the band went dead! Interestingly enough, Randy was the most excited and wanted to know everything. Though stud-I ying for the Technician test, he had no idea you could talk with someone so far away. It's one thing to read about making far away contacts, it's another to witness it!

The next morning I went over to the special event station to get my submission slip and make sure they received it before noon, which was the cutoff time. Of course, they already knew someone made a rather long distance contact and were hoping they'd submit it. I met the DX ham who made the 1st contact with Bill and had a fun conversation about the previous evening.

As they say, the rest is history. As you can see, that contact won me the SSB distance challenge. As it turns out, the second place ham also made contact with Bill but 3 minutes after I did! He was happy telling others, "I'm ok with the outcome; after all, he did all the heavy lifting". I got the hat and some other prizes as my reward for the longest SSB con-



tact from Quartzfest. Interestingly, it's the first award for anything I've received in ham radio. Awards are not the kind of thing I seem to be chasing. Nevertheless, I LOVE a wonderful DX contact! Though frustrating at times, it's more rewarding when you have to work for it.

(President — Continued from page 4)

In case you were wondering, I was advised the antenna on top of my hat is specially tuned for 40M! Maybe I'll not need the Bravo 7K (seen over my left shoulder) next year, hi hi. Yes, I did proudly wear my PAARA Field Day shirt during the award ceremony.

What a wonderful thing to happen during this trip!! I had no intension of making such a contact before I went to Quartzfest. I only hoped to make a few fun contacts along the way. One thing is for sure, if you don't turn your radio on, you'll never make that unforeseen contact!

Of note, Rob, KC6TYD, also competed in the challenge in the QRP category. See his story elsewhere in this issue.



Above are the PAARA members and friends. Left-right, Jim, (K6SV) Kathy (KE5KFA), Randy (& King his dog), Rob (KC6TYD), Joanna (N6YL), Jeanette (N6DQ), Karen (KK6BGA), and Frank (AF0XX).

Mark your calendar for next year's event and join the fun at camp PAARA. Next year Quartzfest will be held on January 22nd through the 29th. A camper isn't required as Rob, along with others, use a tent to enjoy the experience.

As I stated at the start of this column, thanks to Rob, I decided to stick around in the area to attend the Yuma Hamvention. I found a wonderful site just inside of CA just north of Parker, AZ. In fact, I can easily see Parker from I my camp site. I'm still in the desert on BLM land. I've enjoyed many an interesting hike through the volcanic fields and up a couple of what I think are cinder cones. The thing that hasn't been fun is the wind that decides to pay you a visit on a regular basis. When not blowing, it's been wonderful. It also allowed me to setup my radio again and see what was on the bands.

Being during the day, I configured my antenna for 20M. There was lots of activity in the higher part of the band with LOTS of POTA (Parks on the Air) stations activating various parks. They seem to be on the air in large numbers (37 on one day) and just looking for contacts. After making contact with several, II happened upon someone just transmitting responses. I knew from experience that it must have been a station-working split (transmitting on one frequency and listening on another). I finally got his call sign and that he was working up 5 (listening up 5MHz from where he was transmitting).

My challenge now was to try to remember how to work split with my IC7100. It's not something that I do all the time on this radio nor have I at any time in the recent past. I finally figured it out and tossed my call out. To my shock, he came back to me on the 1st try! I bagged TU5PCT (~7,000 mi away from where I was) with a big smile on my face. Then did a QRZ lookup to find it was a DXpedition and he was on the Ivory Coast of Africa! OMG, 2 Africa contacts on the same trip working portable! Never in my wildest dreams did I foresee this as a possibility on this trip, or any other for that matter.

Next month I'll talk about my Yuma experi-

PLEASE Note: in light of the extremely light turn out at the last club meeting, the board agreed to not have a meeting in person next month but only have a meeting using Zoom. Moving forward, we'll reassess every month the validity of having an in person meeting.

73, Jim K6SV

Get on the air to keep the airwaves alive!

# My QRP Woes -Rob Fenn, KC6TYD

While attending Quartzfest 2022, I participated in the Long Distance Challenge. There were three days designated for this event. You weren't required to work all three days. You simply listed four of your furthest contacts for each day you worked the event. With my new KX3, I opted to enter the QRP category. Well, this didn't go as easy as I thought it would. My campsite was situated about 30 feet from the Special Event Station W7Q. I quickly learned that as long as someone was operating at W7Q I had no chance. Regardless of which



band I was using, the W7Q bleed over was too much to contend with.

On the last day, as a last ditch effort, I decided to pack up the radio and antenna and head west. This was easy to do as there are miles of open BLM land available. I found a spot approximately a half a mile from my campsite. Using a brand new tilt-over hitch mount for the antenna mast, I was back up and running in less than an hour. Awwww, much better. Using an End Fed Half Wave antenna attached to a 9:1 UNUN, I was hearing stations from Brazil, New York, and Florida all calling CQ. Unfortunately, I was only running 5 watts and was lost in the pile ups. I kept trying. Eventually I made a contact with a POTA, (Parks on the Air), station in Oregon using a slinky antenna. I also made contact to Summerville. Tx. Ventura, OR, and a 40 meter QSO with a mobile station at Point Mugu in Malibu, CA. I learned that late in the afternoon when all the big guns move to the lower bands I was able to pick up some of the left overs still hanging around on 20 meters.

Nope, I didn't win in my category but it was fun

using the December Dream To Reality KX3, I won, and getting used to all the functions and features it has to offer. I have added the optional protective side rails and a cover. I've also ordered the inter-



nal battery charger and real-time clock module. I also wanted to get a carrying case and after some research, I purchased the Lowepro Nova AW II camera bag. It's larger then what I've seen most KX3 owners use, but I wanted room for mic, battery, antenna/UNUN, and other misc parts.

Next attempt: Rigging up the KX3 for Parachute Mobile.

# Recent ASVARO Meeting Report Clark Martin, KK6ISP

Flea markets (FMs) will start again April 9, (2022) and currently it is planned to run till October. The location is in Sunnyvale, we will announce the exact site when the last details are nailed down. Stall prices are dependent on the precise contract made with the site owner. It is anticipated that the stall price will be in the neighborhood of \$30 and discounts will be available for multiple adjacent stalls.

PAARA is the host for May 14th. October is not assigned at this time.

Since we are the second club to host the Flea Market a delegation will be sent in April to view and plan for our hosting of the FM.

For more information see

www.electronicsfleamarket.com

# Feb PAARA Board Meeting Minutes

Present were President Jim Thielemann K6SV, Vice President Rob Fenn KC6TYD, Secretary Ric Hulett N6AJS, Treasurer Bob Korte KD6TYD, Directors Doug Teter KG6L-WE, and Walt Gyger K6WGY. Clark Martin KK6ISP also checked in briefly. The meeting was called to order at 8:17 p.m. A quorum was present.

**President's Report:** At Quartzfest, we lost a fellow ham, who became a silent key, while attending his eleventh Quartzfest. Life is short. Let's not waste any of our minutes on this planet.

On a lighter note, you never know who you can contact, unless you turn your radio on. While travelling, and using my IC-7100 and Bravo-7K antenna, I worked one African and two POTA (Parks on the Air) stations. There were 37 POTA stations on the air on Tuesday afternoon. You just have to turn your radio on, and make the contacts. It's fun to figure out where the POTA stations are located.

**Secretary's Report:** We are holding steady at 175 PAARA members. We still have quite a few who have yet to renew for 2022.

**Treasurer's Report:** The club finances have been pretty quiet. We issued a check to PIP for production of the newsletter.

**VP/Program Chair Report:** Rob Orr K9RST will be giving the presentation in March. He is a communications planner for the Chicago Marathon. They recruit 140 hams, interacting with emergency services. We will have a ham pico- balloon launcher for the April meeting.

No raffle was held in February, as the inperson meeting attendance was quite low.

# Old Business

**PAARA Members:** We need more content for our unique PAARAgraphs newsletter! Please write up you interesting ham-related experiences and activities, even if brief. We have a shortage of material 'in the hopper'.

**Education Committee:** Rob KC6TYD. We have an upcoming article for PAARAgraphs,

and we are looking to create a speakers committee of knowledgeable volunteers.

**EFM:** Clark KK6ISP is communicating with ASVARO about restarting the flea market. Pending resolution of some details, there will be an Electronic Flea Market beginning April 9. PAARA will host on May 14.

**Club-owned equipment:** We have created a listing of club-owned equipment. Rob KC6TYD, Doug KG6LWE, and Ric N6AJS will meet online to decide which equipment to keep, and which to offer for sale to members and others. We will announce the plan at the March PAARA meeting.

**KN6DH antenna removal:** DONE! Thanks to all who helped & Doug for gathering the troops.

The board voted to offer the hex-beam antenna to a club member.

**PAARA 85th year event:** Ric N6AJS has created a draft survey to gauge member interest in a special operating event. Will publish the link at the March club meeting.

# **New Business**

**Online/In-person meetings:** There were only 7 attendees in person at the February club meeting. The board voted to hold the March meeting online only. We will decide on further in-person meetings on a month-to-month basis, based on COVID and member interest.

**PAARAgraphs ad invoices:** Walt K6WGY will invoice our advertisers this month.

**ARRL Field Day:** Doug will check with the city of Menlo Park to determine whether Bedwell Bayfront park will be available. New Field Day rules have been made permanent: The low-power limit is 100 watts; home stations can contact other home stations for credit, and the bonus points for media exposure require accomplishment rather than effort.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm

Respectfully Submitted Ric Hulett N6AJS PAARA Secretary

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#### VE Exams

Redwood City Main Library, Community Conference Room, 4th Saturday 10:30 am each month and De Anza Park, Sunnyvale, 2nd Saturday 10:30 am each month except November and December. See website for details and exceptions: <u>http:// amateur-radio.org</u> or Contact AI, <u>WB6IMX@att.net</u>

#### Electronics Flea Market

Sponsorship by A.S.V.A.R.O. — Association of Silicon Valley Amateur Radio Organizations

Second Saturday of month, March-September, 6am–12 noon Contact: <u>http://www.electronicsfleamarket.com/</u>

#### **PAARA** — Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association

Meets 1<sup>st</sup> Friday 7:00pm each month at Room H-6, Cubberley Community Center; Net 145.230 - PL 100Hz Mondays at 8:30. See our website at http://www.paara.org for more information or contact: Joel Wilhite KD6W, <u>kD6W@ARRL.NET</u>, 650-325-8239

#### FARS — Foothills Amateur Radio Society

Meets 4<sup>th</sup> Friday each month at 7:30pm Contact: <u>http://www.fars.k6ya.org</u>

### NCDXC — Northern California DX Club

Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday 7:30pm each month, Repeater for member info 147.360, Thursday 8:00PM Contact: <u>http://ncdxc.org</u> or Mike Gavin W6WZ, (650) 851 8699

#### 50 MHz & Up Group

Meets 1st Thursday each month at 7pm in the Summit Room at the Sunnyvale Sports Basement, 1177 Kern Ave, Sunnyvale Contact: http://50MhzandUp.org

#### San Mateo Radio Club W6UQ.ORG

Meets, 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday, January through November Tuesdays, [Directed] Net, 7pm, N6ZX 145.370Hz -600KHz PL107.2Hz Contact: <u>http://W6UQ.org/calendar</u>

#### SPECS

Southern Peninsula Emergency Communication System

Meets each Monday 8:00pm on Net 145.27, 440.80 MHz Contact: <u>http://specsnet.org</u> or Tom Cascone, KF6LWZ, 650-688-0441

## SCARES

#### South County Amateur Radio Emergency Service

Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday 7:30pm each month, Belmont EOC, Belmont City Hall, One Twin Pines Lane, Belmont CA 94002. Net is on 146.445 [PL 114.8] & 444.50 (PL-100) 7:30 Monday evenings. Contact: President Gary D. Aden, K6GDA 650-743-1265 (D), 650- 595-5590 (N)

Web: http://k6mpn.org E-mail: pres@k6mpn.org

### SCCARA Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Association

Operates W6UU & W6UU/R, repeater 146.985-pl Nets: 2m, 7:30pm Mon; 70cm, 10M (28.385) 8PM Thur. Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Mon each month @ 7:30 PM. ARRL/VEC license testing contact 408-507-4698

#### SVECS — Silicon Valley Emergency Communications

Operates AA6BT repeater (146.115 MHz+) contact: <u>http://www.svecs.net</u> or Lou Stierer WA6QYS 408 241 7999

#### TEARS — The Elmer Amateur Radio Society Dedicated to operational training, knowledge building & FCC exam testing. KV6R repeater under construction. Contact: AA6T@ARRLNET

Most members are Extra Class or VE's. See QRZ dot com/kv6r for class info

#### WVARA — West Valley Amateur Radio Association

W6PIY six-meter repeater on 52.58mHz. Normally, six-meters is linked with 147 and 223, while 441 and 1286 repeaters are linked. VHF: 52.58 (-500) 151.4 ctcss UHF:

 VHF:
 52.58
 (-500) 151.4 ctcss
 UHF:

 147.39
 (+600) 151.4 ctcss
 UHF:

 223.96
 (+1.6) 156.7 ctcss
 1286.20
 (-12m) 100.0 ctcss

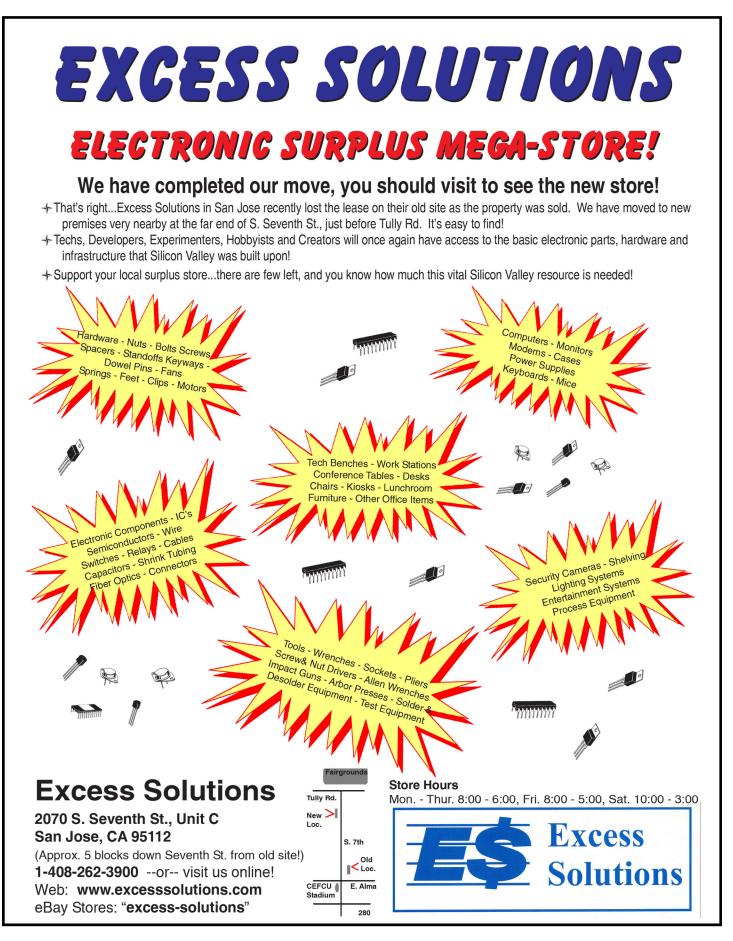
 Meetings are 2nd Wednesday of every month except July, August and December.
 Contact:
 http://wvara.org

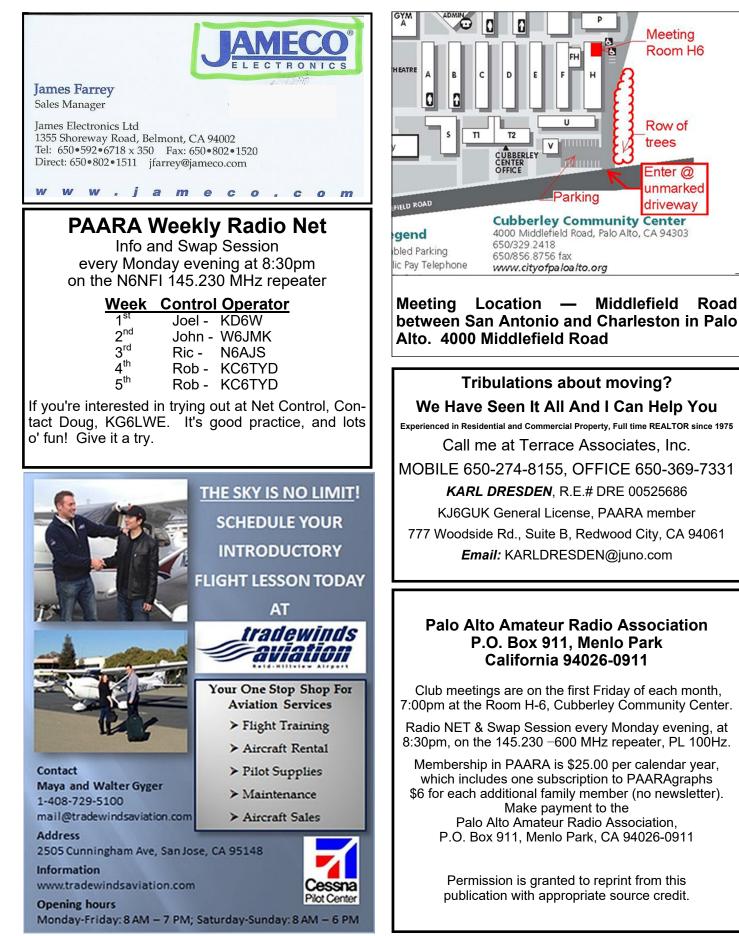
 Contact:
 http://wvara.org
 Bill Ashby N6FFC, 408-267-3118, president@wvara.org

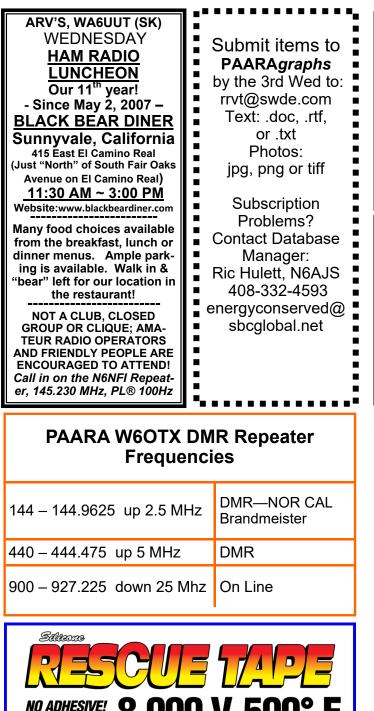
#### American Red Cross, Santa Clara Valley Chapter

Contact: <u>http://santaclaravalley.redcross.org</u> or Scott Hensley KB6UOO, (408) 967 7924 <u>fshensley@Novell.com</u>

(Please send changes to <u>PAARAgraphs editor</u>)







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# **PAARA Badges**

In the absence of in person meetings, you can still order a badge from the Club's website. PAARA.org. Go to the bottom of the membership page to order. Badges will be mailed to purchasers, at an additional cost of \$4.95 until we can meet face to face again.

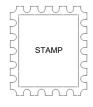
# PAARAgraphs Ad Rates

PAARAgraphs accepts paid advertisements from non-members. (short personal ads remain free for members in good standing). All ad rates listed are per issue. 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 per issue).
 2. For Profit organizations and/or individuals: \$5-business card size, \$14.00-quarter page, \$25-half page, \$50 full page or back cover per issue.
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HEAT RESISTANCE

# PAARAgraphs — March 2022

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