W6ARA

PAARA NEWSLETTER

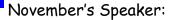
K6OTA VOLUME 65, NUMBER 10, November 2014

PAARAgraphs

The Official Newsletter of the

Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association, Inc.

Celebrating 77 years as an active amateur radio club—Since 1937



Building A Wide Coverage Repeater System

Matthew Kaufman, KA6SQG

Upcoming Events

PAARA General Meeting, 7:00 PM Nov 7

Cubberly Community Center, Room 400 Middlefield Rd, Palo Alto

Board Meeting, 7:00 PM Nov 19

Everyone welcome!

Round Table Pizza Parlor in Menlo Park

President's Corner

November 2014

October was a great month for PAARA. We had a wonderful presence at Pacificon — and don't forget Pacificon itself. Some of us spent some time working the California QSO Party. This month we have the next step in PAARA officer elections, then we have and the



PAARA Dream To Reality Raffle next month.

Over the last couple of years, PAARA's profile at Pacificon has been rising significantly. We've gone from just being participants, to a big part of what makes the convention go. I'm so proud of

how our membership and leadership have stepped forward to bring us to the forefront. The biggest part of this is our sponsorship of the special event station. This year it was the W100AW/6 ARRL Centennial station, and Pacificon was the very last of the Centennial Conventions for the ARRL. It was hard to miss the banner and station right in front of the Santa Clara Marriott. This station made over 6600 QSOs with more than 160 countries, over 50 hours of operating time. There were 64 operator certificates issued, and even more operators that did not wish to receive a certificate. This was an incredible operation that was probably the most active special event at Pacificon that has ever been seen. We really owe a debt of thanks to the special event station coordinator, PAARA VP Marty, W6NEV. Of course, the amazing station equipment is what made all those QSOs possible, and the gear and antennas were generously provided Rick, N6DQ, by and Joanna. K6YL. They set up and tore down everything on site. They did an incredible job. Please give them a special "thank you" from PAARA the next time you see them. We hope to do it all again next year, even when Pacificon moves back to San Ramon. We'll see you there.

I had a wonderful opportunity to work the California QSO Party this month. That's why I missed the last PAARA meeting. It's one of the few things that could keep me away! This year we were team N6A, operating from lovely Alpine County. We had a cabin in Bear Valley, literally right across the street from Lake Alpine. It was really in the middle of nowhere, far out on Route 4, towards Reno. As is traditional for CQP, there

(President — Continued on page 4)

K6YQT

Attenuator Use and Testing Gary Barnes

An attenuator is a passive device that reduces input signal to lower level on the output connection or terminal. The ratio between the input and output is usually expressed in decibels or dB. One Bel equals ten decibels. The unit Bel is named after Alexander Graham Bell. Therefore an attenuator with a ratio of 10:1 would have 10 dB of attenuation, and ratio of 1000:1 would have 30 dB of attenuation. A 30 dB attenuator with 100 watts of input power will have 100 milliwatts of output power, and a 40 dB attenuator would have 10 milliwatts of output power with the same 100 watts of input power or $10\log(100/0.01)$ equals 40 dB.

Most frequency counters and spectrum analyzers may be damaged with more than 10 milliwatts of input power or +10 dBm. Laboratory grade power meters will measure power levels from 1 microwatt to 100 milliwatts, although some power meter sensors will have different ranges. Power meters will display power in either watts or dBm. Zero dBm equals 1 milliwatt of power.

Other attenuator parameters include power rating, impedance, frequency range and connector type. Attenuators are available from less than 0.5 watts to millions of watts. Attenuators are available in many different impedance's such as 50, 75, 150 or 600 ohms.

Attenuator use

When testing a 100 watt amateur radio transmitter, a 40 dB, 100 watt, 50 ohm attenuator could be used. I use a 40 dB, 250-watt, 50-ohm attenuator for my testing. The lower the power attenuator's temperature, the better the attenuator's accuracy. Therefore, it is best the use an attenuator with the greater power rating then the input power to the attenuator to reduce the attenuator's heating.

Modern amateur radio receivers have sensitivity of less than 1.0 microvolts, but not all RF signal generator can output signal levels below 1 microvolt. An attenuator can be placed between the signal generator's output and the radio's input. A

20-dB attenuator will reduce the output so that 1 microvolt will have a receiver input voltage of 0.1 microvolt. Two attenuators can be combined in series to increase the amount of attenuation.

Another type of attenuator is the adjustable attenuation model. The attenuation can be continuously adjustable like a volume control in a radio or it can have step adjustment using switches. These attenuators can only be used with low power, less than 1-watt. One use for an adjustable attenuator would be the check the operation of a receiver's S-Meter. A S-9 indication is when there is 50-microvolts at the receiver's input terminals, and each S-unit should be about 6 dB However, some radios use 100difference. microvolts for S-9, and most radios do not have 6 -dB change between S-units. The adjustable attenuator is placed between the RF signal generator and the receiver under test.

Attenuator Testing

One parameter of an attenuator to check is the amount of attenuation verses frequency. First a laboratory grade power meter and sensor are connected to a radio frequency signal generator. Both the signal generator and power meter must cover the frequency range of the attenuator. For an attenuator with frequency range of DC to 18 Gigahertz (GHz), the first test point would be at 1 GHz, and the test points would be every 1 GHz step up to 18 GHz. If the frequency range of the power attenuator is 250 MHz, then the test points could be 50-Mhz apart or maybe 25-MHz apart.

The signal generator is set to each test frequency, and then the power meter's indication is recorded on a data worksheet with the test frequency. Next, the attenuator under test is placed between the output of the signal generator and power meter. The signal generator is set to the same test points as before and the power meter indications are recorded for each test frequency. Then the difference between the two readings is recorded. If the power meter readings were recorded in dBm, then the results are the attenuation in dB.

To measure an attenuator's attenuation, use a

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PAARAgraphs—November 2014 Celebrating 77 years as an active ham radio club—Since 1937

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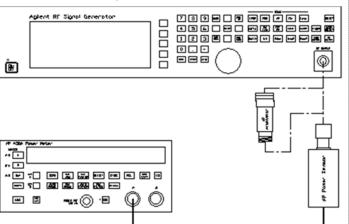
signal generator and power meter. If the first power meter reading without the attenuator is +9.0 dBm and the second power meter reading with the attenuator is -21.0 dBm, then the measured attenuation is 30.0 dB. The attenuator should be reversed and data recorded again. A good attenuator should have about the same amount of attenuation in either direction. Also the SWR or impedance should be checked at both the input and output terminals of the attenuator.

Using a power meter to measure the amount attenuation is not the best way to calibrate an attenuator. A network analyzer is a better instrument to use to measure the attenuation and standing wave ratio or SWR. A vector network analyzer will display both magnitude and phase angle of both attenuator's loss and SWR. A network analyzer can be used to measure the performance a filter as well as many types of electronic equipment.

A network analyzer will sweep over a band of frequencies selected by the operator, but limited by the network analyzer. The results will be displayed on a screen, with frequency displayed horizontally across the screen and amplitude displayed vertically. It can measure the loss or attenuation and SWR of an attenuator or filter or the gain of an amplifier.

Attenuator Testing Setup

- 1. Both the RF signal generator and power meter should be on for at least 30 minutes.
- 2. Follow the power meter's manual to zero and calibrate the power sensor.



- 3. Set the power meter to the dBm mode.
- 4. Connect the power sensor to the RF signal generator's output connector.
- 5. Record the power meter's indication and frequency for each test point.
- Remove the power sensor from the RF signal generator. Connect the device under test to the RF signal generator, and then connect power sensor to the device under test.
- 7. Record the power meter's indication for each test point.
- 8. Record the difference between the first reading and the second reading. This is the gain or loss of the device under test.

The following is the test data for a 20-dB, 25-Watt, 50-ohm power attenuator. The first column is the test frequency in Megahertz, The second column is the measured output power level of the signal generator in dBm. The attenuator under test is placed between the signal generator's output and the power meter. Column three lists those results. The last column are the final results of the test, or the amount of attenuation for each test point. This is a good attenuator.

The power meter is a Hewlett Packard 438A, and he power sensor is a Hewlett Packard 8482A.

| Attenuator Check: | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| | Generator | Attenuator | |
| Frequency | Level | Output | Attenuation |
| (MHz) | (dBm) | (dBm) | (dB) |
| | | | |
| 25 | 5.01 | -14.81 | 19.82 |
| 50 | 5.01 | -14.81 | 19.82 |
| 75 | 5.00 | -14.82 | 19.82 |
| 100 | 5.00 | -14.82 | 19.82 |
| 125 | 4.99 | -14.83 | 19.82 |
| 150 | 4.99 | -14.83 | 19.82 |
| 175 | 4.98 | -14.84 | 19.82 |
| 200 | 4.99 | -14.82 | 19.81 |
| 225 | 4.98 | -14.83 | 19.81 |
| 250 | 5.00 | -14.82 | 19.82 |
| | | | |

(President — Continued from page 1)



was no cell service, and the weather was just beautiful. The team was Rick, N6DQ, Joanna, K6YL, Daniel, KJ6SEE, and myself. We arrived on Thursday night, with me coming up separately, and the others in an RV that was towing the

tower trailer. On Friday we set up the hex beam on the tower and then **Daniel** made some perfect shots with the tennis ball launcher to get our 40m and 80m dipoles up into



the trees at about 90 ft and 70 ft respectively. With that the stations were about ready. The radios were assembled, and then we had our traditional pre-contest dinner. After dinner we got on the radio and I had the most amazing QSO I've ever had to South Africa. I spoke to a gentleman in Pretoria for about 40 minutes on 15m, and it was just like talking on the telephone. Just unreal! Next morning, an early breakfast, and off we went for 30 hours of fun and adventure. There were lots of great QSOs and pileups. I had runs and pileups with EU going on 15m. 10m was hot, hot, hot. It was wonderful. I exchanged CQP numbers in exchange for ten-ten numbers to get some points. What

fun! We were less serious; actually getting some sleep, and we scored really well. We might even have set a new record. Check out our picture on cqp.org.

The November meeting is the last meeting for officer nominations. If you wish to nominate someone, please contact someone on the leadership team as soon as possible. Nominations close at the end of the November meeting. Start thinking about that new K3 you might win at the December Dream To Reality Raffle. It's coming up soon. The December meeting is on the 5th of December, so put it on your calendar now. You don't want to miss it.

Kristen (K6WX)

October 15 2014 Board Meeting Minutes

The October Board Meeting was held at the Menlo Park 'Round Table Pizza Parlor', commencing at 7:40 on October 15th, 2014. In attendance were Kristen McIntyre, K6WX (President), Marty Wayne, W6NEV (V.P.), Jim Thielemann K6SV (Sec, Membership), Rob Riley Kl6INR (Dir), and non-Board Members, Rick Melrose, K6RDM (Chaplain), Doug Teter, KG6LWE (Field Day Coordinator), and Walter McVeigh KK6GTU. A quorum was not present.

President's Report: Kristen, K6WX, commented on how much fun CQP operations were. A few pictures of their operations can be found on http://cqp.org/. CQP conflicted with the October meeting but she did receive positive comments regarding Michael Fox, N6MEF, presentation entitled "Internet outages: not just for disasters". Though the turnout for the meeting was smaller than normal, those in attendance came away with a different perspective on the use of Ham Radio. She also thanked Marty for running the meeting in her stead.

Though we have another great meeting coming up in November, it's not too early to start talking about the December Dream to Reality raffle. Once again PAARA will be raffling off a K3. According to Elecraft, "PAARA has given away more K3's

(Minutes — Continued on page 5)

(Minutes — Continued from page 4)

than any other club". It's not too late to start saving your pennies so you can better your odds at the December 5th meeting.

She also mentioned that election nominations will close at the end of the November meeting. Up for election are the 4 officers and 2 of the directors. Contact Daniel Rahamin, KJ6SEE, if you are interested in running or wish to nominate someone. His email address is KJ6SEE@gmail.com. Remember you must be a member of PAARA for 2014 in order to vote.

Kristen indicated her reserve of stories is ok but new stories are always needed. The board wishes to encourage the general membership to submit articles to be published in upcoming issues of PAARAgraphs. Do you have any projects, like those for home brew night in January, technical articles, hints n kinks, DX, on the air experiences that might be of interest? We can even help you write them up, "even if it's only 4 sentences", says Kristen.

Vice President's Report: Marty, W6NEV, reported that the speaker for the November meeting is Matthew Kaufman, KA6SQG whose talk is entitled "Building a Wide Coverage Repeater System". Marty also reported that he has a full roster of interesting speakers lined for the rest of the year and 2 months into next year. Marty is still working on the next field trip. His idea from last month isn't going to pan out but he has come up with another one. Stay tuned.....

Secretary's report: Jim, K6SV, reported that the membership stands at 149 for 2014, with twelve members paid through 2015, for a total of 161 members. So far there have been 44 renewals via PayPal through the Club website. He also reported there was one new member in October. Now is the time to jump on the website and renew for 2015 via PayPal.

Treasurer's Report: Ron, W6AZ, was not able to be at the meeting due to other commitments. He reported via email that though the Raffle sales as well as sources of income were down for October, the club finances are in fine order.

Under Old Business, Marty reported that the W100AW/6 station PAARA provided, mostly setup by Marty, W6NEV, Rick, N6DQ, and Joanna,

K6YL, for the PACIFICON convention was VERY successful. Read his report elsewhere in this issue. The board wishes to congratulate them for such a successful event and for all of the time they spent planning, setting up, operating and packing it all back up. Additionally, the board wishes to extend Rick and Joanna additional gratitude for providing ALL the radio equipment to make the event happen.

Jim, K6SV, reported that he hopes to update the web site roster before the November meeting as the number of roster changes has slowed to a crawl.

Under New Business, Kristen, K6WX, indicated she'd received an inquiry from Sergey, NS6W, regarding a club station. The board discussed the merits of having a station and possible locations. The board agrees that such a station will need someone to "champion" the cause. Should Sergey agree, the board agrees to consider, at a later date, any backing that may be necessary.

Joel, KD6W, suggested the board consider selling the DStar repeater and purchasing a DMR repeater. Though a quorum wasn't present to vote, those in attendance did agree that owing to the DStar repeater having been donated to the club, the board doesn't see how we could sell it without potential ramifications.

Owing to the success of the PACIFICON station, there was some conversation regarding the club sponsoring a special event station at some time of the year when it wouldn't conflict with all the other events, possibly the 1st quarter of the year. This idea will require further exploration.

Doug, KG6LWE, reported that the tower trailer was taken to the brake shop for repair. The repairs needed were a bit more than anticipated as all the bearings were falling apart. The trailer is now ready for longer "missions".

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00.

Jim Thielemann Secretary/membership K6SV

New Member

Rod Broyles, KF6EDJ

Pacificon Special Events Station Report

It has been about month since the Special Events Radio Station, W100AW/6, ended its operation at noon, Sunday, October 12 at PACIFICON. I am still recovering from the hours of set up, operating, and tear down at the station that was part of the ARRL Pacific Division Convention.

The special events station operated for 50 continuous hours plus set up and tear down time. There were 6,630 contacts made with other operators in 160 different countries including the USA. About 90 different operators worked the station, 63 of whom elected to accepted a certificate verifying they operated the W100AW/6 station. This was the last station to use this special call. An email from Dave Patton, NN1N from the ARRL expressed his amazement at our effort and success.

"Wow-- those really are terrific #s Marty!...No other regional convention has come even close! :-). 73, Dave."

What fun it was.

Rick Huisman, N6DQ and Joanna Dilley, K6YL deserve a special thanks for providing all the station operating equipment. What a setup we had with 4 HF stations and a VHF station, a K4KIO 6 band Hex Beam along with 40 and 80 Meter double bazooka antennas also thanks to Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club for allowing PAARA to participate in Pacificon 2014.

It was a pleasure to be associated with this fantastic group of ham operators that helped assemble and take down the station along with the guest operators. What a great group.

Come on 2015 Pacificon!

73.

Marty, W6NEV

PAARA 10/3/14 Raffle Prize Winners

1st Prize Andy Korsak / KR6DD / Wouxon

Dual Band HT

2nd Prize Rod Broyles / KF6EDJ / Daiwa Co-

ax Switcher

3rd Prize Dale O'Harra / NX6S / Battery Ten-

der Junior

4th Prize Howard Califf / W6HOC / World

Atlas

5th Prize Doug Teter / KG6LWE / ARRL Re-

peater Directory

6th Prize Vic Black / AB6SO / Rescue Tape

7th Prize Bill Parsons / AF6AE / Minilog

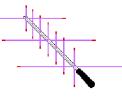
8th Prize Rob/ KI6INR / Bongo Ties

Raffle Prizes

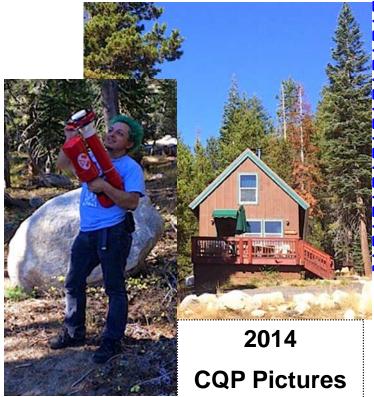
1st Wouxon KGUV3D-2-UHF HT Transceiver 2M/440 DUAL BAND HT, 128 Memories, 1700mAh LI-ON BAT-TERY



2nd Arrow Yagi / 3 Element VHF / 7 Element UHF / Max



(Raffle Prizes — Continued on page 7)







(Raffle Prizes — Continued from page 6)

3rd MFJ Magnet Antenna Mount

4th Ham Radio Book

5th ARRL ID Badge Lanyard

6th Rescue Tape

7th Bongo Ties







Celebrating 77 years as an active ham radio club—Since 1937

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| Director ('14) | .Rob Riley, KI6INR | 650 799-1607 | | |
| Director ('14) | (cell) | 650 465-8210 | | |
| Director ('14) | n6db@arrl.net .Darryl Presley, кı6ьрм ki6ldm@arrl.net | 650 255-2454 | | |
| Anno | inted Positions | | | |
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| Database | .Jim Thielemann, K6SV | 408-839-6815 | | |
| Chaplain | Rick Melrose K6RDM | 408-341-9070 | | |
| Public Affairs | . Position Vacant | | | |
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| Station Trustee K60TA Property Manager | | | | |
| Fund Raising Coordinator | | 408 396 4745 | | |
| Badge Coordinator | | 650-367-6200 | | |
| Historian Position | | | | |
| Raffle Coordinator | .Jim Rice, ĸ6aĸ | 650-851-2274 | | |
| Ticket Master | | 408-246-7531 | | |
| Field Day Coordinator | | 650-367-6200 | | |
| ASVARO Rep | n6nfi@arrl.net | 650-856-2748 | | |
| Webmaster | .John Miller к6мм webaron@gmail.com | | | |
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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: http://amateur-radio.org or AI, WB6IMX@att.net

Electronics Flea Market

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

Second Saturday of month, March-October, 6am-2pm Howard M. Krawetz, N6HM 650-856-9761

Contact: http://www.electronic

PAARA — Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association

Meets 1st 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, KD6W@ARRL.NET, 650-325-8239

FARS — Foothills Amateur Radio Society

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

NCDXC — Northern California DX Club

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

QCWA Chapter 11

Northern California Quarter Century Wireless Association

Meets third Wednesday monthly at Harry's Hofbrau in Redwood City @ 11:30 AM. Guests are welcome. Saturday morning net on 146.850 MHz, PL 114.8

50 MHz & Up Group

Meets 1st Thursday each month at 7pm in the Texas Instruments Building E conference room in Santa Clara.

Contact: http://50MhzandUp.org

SPECS

Southern Peninsula Emergency Communication System

Meets each Monday 8:00pm on Net 145.27, 440.80 MHz

Contact: http://specsnet.org or Tom Cascone, KF6LWZ, 650-688-0441

SCARES

South County Amateur Radio Emergency Service

Meets 3rd 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) E-mail: pres@k6mpn.org Web: http://k6mpn.org

SCCARA

Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Association

Operates W6UU & W6UU/R, repeater 146.985-pl Nets: 2m, 7:30pm Mon; 70cm, 442.425+ (pl 107.2) Thur. Meets 2nd Mon each month @ 7:30 PM.

Contact: http://www.gsl.net/sccara or 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: http://www.svecs.net 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.

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. UHF:

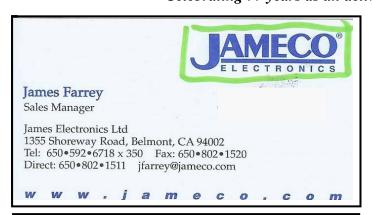
VHF: 52.58 (-500) 151.4 ctcss 147.39 (+600) 151.4 ctcss 441.35 (+5.0) 88.5 ctcss 1286.20 (-12m) 100.0 ctcss

223.96 (+1.6) 156.7 ctcss Meetings are 3rd Wednesday of every month.

Contact: http://wwara.org, Bill Ashby N6FFC, 408-267-3118, N6FFC@Juno.com, or N6FFC@ARRL.NET

American Red Cross, Santa Clara Valley Chapter

Contact: http://santaclaravalley.redcross.org or Scott Hensley KB6UOO, (408) 967 7924





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Badges are ready for pickup.

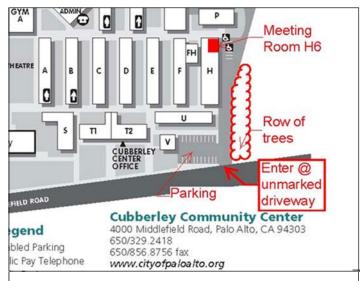
If you would like to order a badge, see **Doug Teter, KG6LWE**.

PAARA Weekly Radio Net

Info and Swap Session every Monday evening at 8:30pm on the N6NFI 145.230 MHz repeater

| <u>Week</u> | Control Operator |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1 st | Joel KD6W |
| 2 nd | Doug - KG6LWE |
| 3 rd | Jack - N1VSL |
| 4 th | Marty - W6NEV |
| 5 th | Rob KC6TYD |

If you're interested in trying out at Net Control, Contact Doug, KG6LWE. It's good practice, and lots o' fun! Give it a try.



Meeting Location — Middlefield Road between San Antonio and Charleston in Palo Alto. 4000 Middlefield Road

http://www.foto.mail.ru/list/shkurkin

Vladimir Vladimirovich

SHKURKIN

Editing and Translation Services English-Russian-English

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

Club meetings are on the first Friday of each month, 7:00pm at the Room H-6, Cubberley Community Center.

Radio NET & Swap Session every Monday evening, at 8:30pm, on the 145.230 –600 MHz repeater, PL 100Hz.

Membership in PAARA is \$20.00 per calendar year, which includes one subscription to PAARAgraphs \$6 for each additional family member (no newsletter).

Make payment to the

Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association, P.O. Box 911, Menlo Park, CA 94026-0911

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RADIO IN THE PARK

9:30am - 12:30pm Check Back In the Spring

QTH:

Agnews Historic Park 4030 Lafayette St. Santa Clara, CA 95050

N 37° 23.549 W 121° 57.297 llse Beck, E. A., KI6IBM



441 N. Central Avenue, #9 Campbell, CA 95008

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Submit items to **PAARA***graphs* by the 3rd Wed to: rrvt@swde.com
Text: .doc, .rtf, or .txt



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Manager: Jim Thielemann, K6SV,
408-839-6815, thielem@pacbell.net

PAARAgraphs Ad Rates

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PAARA graphs 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, \$25-half page, \$50 full page or back cover per issue.

 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
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