

# PAARAgraphs



The Official Newsletter of the

**Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association, Inc.**  
Celebrating 84 years as an *active* amateur radio club—*Since 1937*

## Spend time with Dave Minster, NA2AA

### ARRL's Chief Executive Officer

David Minster, NA2AA, of Wayne, New Jersey, is ARRL's new Chief Executive Officer. He is new post started September 28, 2020. Minster began his career as a software engineer, moving into management. From there, he spent some time as COO and CIO for a fine jewelry manufacturer and retailer. Minster got his Novice license, WB2MAE, in 1977, when he was in his teens. He progressed from Advanced to Amateur Extra and, after a stint as NW2D, he settled on the vanity call sign NA2AA in the 1990s as a way to honor a mentor, N2AA, and the contest station that he used to frequent, K2GL, in Tuxedo Park, New York. Minster earned a bachelor's degree in computer engineering from The Ohio State University and has a special interest in satellites, digital communications, remote operation, and ham radio computing and software. He has written keyer software for the commercial market, and contest logging, packet, and satellite telemetry software for personal use. In addition to being an ARRL member, Minster is a member of AMSAT, the Frankford Radio Club, the Straight Key Century Club, CWops, and the North American QRP CW Club.

### This meeting will be conducted with Zoom

Time: July 9, 2021 07:00 PM Pacific Time

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83095999160>

Login ID: First name and Call Sign

Meeting ID: 830 9599 9160

## Upcoming Events

July 9 Aug 6 Sept 3	PAARA General Meeting, 7:00 PM Zoom Meeting
July 21 Aug 18 Sept 15	Board Meeting, 7:00 PM. Everyone welcome! Zoom Meeting, eMail President for details!
July	Electronic Flea Market Cancelled

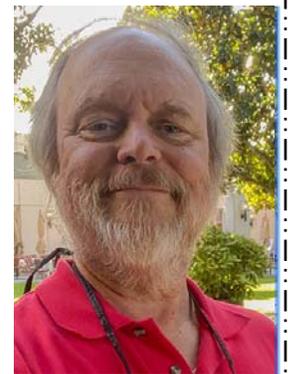


## President's Corner

July 2021

**PLEASE NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING IS JULY 9TH NOT THE 2ND!** Enjoy the 4th of July weekend!

Did you notice who our July speaker is? It's none other than David Minster, NA2AA, the CEO of the ARRL! Thanks go to Rob, KC6TYD, and Kristen, K6WX, for lining him up. This should be a presentation not to be missed, especially if you're an ARRL member. His presentation will consist largely of a Q&A session so have your questions ready. So, let's get the word out to anyone you know as this is a great opportunity to look "under the hood" of the ARRL and see what's cooking. On a side note, as he's in the eastern time zone, the meeting will start promptly at 7:00 PM (1900

*(President — Continued on page 4)*

**WHAT IT'S LIKE TO MAKE A  
 PARACHUTE MOBILE JUMP  
 Chronicle of our Sept 2009  
 operation at Byron, CA**

**by Mark Meltzer, AF6IM, "Jumper  
 1"**

~ Part 1 ~

I am excited. This crazy daydream of combining ham radio and skydiving is actually turning into reality. We've arrived at the Byron CA drop zone with a hand full of enthusiastic and disciplined ham team members determined to make it all happen. We have to tread softly at first in the hardcore skydiving world and acclimate them to this novel use of freefall airspace. So far that diplomatic mission is going fine. Michael KF6WRW is a regular jumper at Byron and confers with the owner, the pilot and other jumpers. It works. Our team is welcomed warmly.

Parachute Mobile jumps are HAHO (high altitude high opening). Most skydives are HALO (high altitude low opening). I've been skydiving for over forty years and prior to Parachute Mobile all my jumps had been HALO freefalls. HAHOs and HALOs don't mix well without careful planning. On HAHO parachute mobile jumps, we exit the aircraft, freefall for about five seconds to get stable, then deploy our canopies. Our open canopies over the drop zone (DZ) area at high altitudes present significant collision hazards for subsequent freefall jumpers, so we must arrange to be on the ground before the next load exits. We check in with the flight manifest person, check with the DZ owner or safety officer, and check with the pilot so that everyone knows what the plan is and approves it.

Next the jumpers start gearing up. First I put on my jumpsuit. It isn't a wingsuit, but does have fabric extensions in different areas to give improved aerodynamic glide performance over plain coveralls. I then arm my automatic reserve chute opener (called an AAD, Automatic Activation Device) which must be done at the drop zone elevation so the device "knows" where the local ground level is and can activate

the reserve if I pass through 700 feet AGL faster than 70 MPH vertically. The AAD offers my very last chance to survive if for some reason I fail to deploy a chute in time. I have done two cutaways from malfunctioning main chutes in my four decades of skydiving. In both cases was able to manually deploy my reserve parachute. I've never had an AAD activate, but I wouldn't jump without one. It just makes the odds better, especially if you are hit hard in a freefall collision and lose consciousness. The AAD has a baro sensor, a microcontroller, and a few thousand lines of code. I just hope the designers and programmers have all the bugs worked out. At 700 feet still in freefall you are out of options. It's obviously too late to install a software patch.

I put on my parachute rig next. It houses two chutes: my main and my reserve. I take great care not to twist any straps and check repeatedly to be sure that both leg straps and the chest strap are securely fastened and properly threaded through their respective buckles and fittings. I put on my wrist-mounted altimeter and calibrate it to zero. It is surprisingly easy to lose track of altitude in freefall, especially when doing formation work. Helmet-mounted audible altimeter alarms enhance safety. I have never lost altitude awareness, but it only takes one lapse to put you at death's door, so I buy and use audible altimeters, an AAD, and just about every safety device made for skydiving.

Mounting of the radio gear depends on whether it is just stuffed into a jumpsuit pocket or carried in a strap attached pack. If a pack is used, it is put on before the parachute rig so that you don't accidentally impair or prevent access to various emergency handles for main chute cutaway or reserve activation. Rob Fenn, KC6TYD, is in charge of tactical ops and checks and double checks all radio mounting and rigging looking carefully for any loops or snag points that could interfere with a deploying parachute. Snags can be fatal. A jumper at this very dropzone died when his deploying chute snagged a shoe grommet.

Next I check my radios, make a test call to mis-

*(Mobile Jump — Continued on page 3)*

*(Mobile Jump — Continued from page 2)*

sion control, and make sure all cords and cables are properly attached and routed. I make one more gear check and then ask Michael, KF6WRW jumper 2, to check my jump gear. Jumper 2 looks at my cutaway hardware, checks the seating of opening pins for the main and reserve (each has only a single pin through a looped cord keeping them from deploying, so the pins MUST be secure) and checks to make sure my main pilot chute is properly configured and packed. I return the favor. Jumpers have fallen away from their rigs on opening because their chest strap was incorrectly routed through a buckle. Incredibly, one jumper wearing camera gear put on his jumpsuit and camera helmet but forgot to put on his parachute rig. Shockingly, nobody caught his error and he exited without a chute. His video camera recorded his last 75 seconds of life. You can never have too many gear checks.

Manifest announces “load 14, ten minute call” over the DZ loudspeaker. That means I will be climbing aboard our PAC 250 turboprop jumpship in ten minutes, so I head out to the pickup taxiway area. HAHO jumpers are usually the last to exit so we board first. It is VERY cramped aboard the jumpship. It is also very loud during climb when the engine is set at high power. You sit facing rearward, on the floor or astride a small raised longitudinal bench, packed in like sardines with your knees literally in your face. Before takeoff I fasten an aircraft safety belt though a strap on my rig. I put on my helmet and the takeoff roll starts. It is hot inside the plane with tightly packed bodies and no AC. Soon we are airborne. The plane climbs fast into cooler air. I mentally run over the jump plan, check my straps and buckles again, and start running through my emergency drills so that I will be ready to cutaway should my main chute fail to properly deploy. As we get closer to jump altitude (typically 14,000 ft AGL) jumpers give each other palm slaps, high fives, and other rituals. At many DZs, the ancient skydive chant “BLUE SKIES BLACK DEATH” is shouted out loud by all the jumpers as the plane turns onto jump run. Some say it was used by the Army Airborne troops (paratroopers) during WW 2,

but its origins remain murky. That grim chant always creeps me out. I’m glad that it is not on the prejump playlist at Byron.

Soon we are on jump run, the final approach to the exit point. The door is opened and jumpers await the green light as the pilot is using GPS to spot the exit. If the jumpers are doing the spotting, one leans out the door and eyeballs the position, giving left and right hand signals to the pilot. Flaps are lowered and speed is reduced. Jump-ers start exiting. You can feel the plane buck and pitch as it rapidly sheds weight in roughly 200 pound increments. Exiting jumpers look below to assure that they have adequate separation from formation groups that have exited in “chunks” before them. I am no longer scared jumping out the door, but watching others fall like rocks as they leave the plane gives an eerie and alarming 3D look to a landscape that had previously seemed 2D and non threatening. My heart rate accelerates, but more out of excitement than fear. As a novice jumper these pre jump moments at the open door were beyond scary. They were absolutely terrifying. The exits no longer scare me, but the freefall jumps still do, at least until my chute opens. I view the change with mixed emotions: mostly relief but also a bit of longing for the old adrenaline surge, terror, and other emotional extremes that confronted me at the open door looking down from 14,000 feet.

Finally, the plane is almost empty. The HAHO Parachute Mobile jumpers have tightened their helmet straps just before jump run and now stand next to the open door. I exit carefully, rolling forward, being sure not to hop up and risk a tail strike. The view of the plane receding rapidly as I fall away from it gets my heart racing. I arch my body hard to get stable and soon, as vertical speed increases, I assume a face-to-earth stable freefall position and am ready to deploy my chute. I reach behind me (the new rigs do not have front mounted main ripcords), grope for a small ball (it is completely out of your field of view) attached to the apex of my collapsed pilot chute, pull it out from a tight spandex pocket, and toss it horizontally into the air roaring past.

*(Mobile Jump — Continued on page 4)*

(Mobile Jump — Continued from page 3)

It quickly catches air, pulls out the closing pin from its closing loop, and releases the bagged main chute, which pulls me upright as it un-folds and inflates. I have deployed prior to reaching terminal velocity so the opening is much slower than I am used to. "Come on... come onnnnn... open up..." I mutter as it slowly inflates. I see jumper 2, KF6WRW, in the distance and his chute inflates even more slowly than mine did. I wonder what Michael is muttering during his pro-longed opening.

## Parachute Mobile

### Mission Dates

Mission 39 will take place on August 21st

Mission 40 will take place on October 16th

Details will be forthcoming at:

<https://parachutemobile.wordpress.com/>

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Pacific). I anticipate his presentation to start by 7:15, so don't be late!

I'm still lacking a big story for this month's issue. Unlike last month, I'm not drafting a lengthy column. I hope someone has the time after Field Day to draft a story of their efforts or something related to our hobby. Honestly, the story doesn't even have to be about amateur radio, it can be a general interest story. So, we have something in this issue, we're reaching into the way back machine to December of 2010. I know that year isn't exactly "way back" but it's close enough. I think the story has relevance today as it did then. What some may not realize, Parachute Mobile started years back and is still going strong today. Our VP, Rob, KC6TYD, is a current member of the team and a jumper. Thanks go to Mark Meltzer, AF6IM for starting this group of enthusiasts.

The event is in person..... did you receive your invitation to register for Pacificon 2021? If not, you can go to their website [www.pacificon.org](http://www.pacificon.org) to register for the October 15~17th event. PAARA will be hosting the special event station. Mikko, AB6RF, our station captain needs all the help he can get to put the station together on Friday, man the station (especially through the night), and take it down on Sunday. Please reach out to him and offer whatever assistance you can to make this a great event!

Have you registered for the next QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo on August 14th & 17th? The last event had some wonderful speakers and topics that we don't usually have the opportunity to listen to. It should be another fun event. Go to <https://www.qsotodayhamexpo.com> after July 1st to register.

Did you make any contacts on Field Day? I hope everyone did! Please remember to indicate your club as Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association when submitting your electronic log so the club can get the points. As I'm writing this before FD, I can't speak to what happened but what I hope will happen. Seems the family decided camping was more in line with their desires than FD. So, with any luck, I'll be working FD from somewhere near Camp Far West Reservoir. I've only used my IC-7100 a couple of times as portable on HF and never for a contest so this should be interesting. I'm not sure how long I'll be on the air but keep an ear out for me on one of the bands working SSB as I'll not have digital capability.

I'll report on how it goes. Speaking of reporting on FD, wouldn't it be nice if we had a large number of short blurbs from anyone who worked any mode or band to put in the next issue of PAARAgaphs? We can easily dedicate the whole issue to everyone's respective efforts on FD if you could send me something. So, please send me a paragraph or two on what you did and how it went and we'll get it into the July issue.

73, Jim K6SV

Get on the air to keep the airwaves alive!

## QRP Six Pack Mystery

I found a small sealed envelope marked “QRP Six Pack”. It contains many small, through-the-hole circuit boards. I remember buying this many years ago, but I have no recollection of what these boards are.

Does anyone on this email have any idea what these are?

Thanks

Rich Stiebel  
W6APZ@comcast.net

## PAARA board meeting minutes, 6/15/21

The June board meeting was held via videoconference. Present were: President Jim Thielemann, K6SV; Vice President Rob Fenn, KC6TYD; Secretary Ric Hulett, N6AJS; Treasurer Bob Korte KD6KYT; Directors Doug Teter KG6LWE, Darryl Presley KI6LDM, and Joel Wilhite, KD6W. A quorum was present. The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m.

### President’s Report

Thanks to Rob Fenn for covering for Jim at the last PAARA meeting. Much appreciated.

First in-person meeting of PAARA will likely be in August. We heard from Cubberley that a room will be available, but we need to follow their guidelines. We don’t know yet whether we will be in the same room. We also need to validate the Wi-Fi connection for streaming meetings from Cubberley. Rob will run a test from the site. Alternatively, we can create a hotspot on a 4G phone.

### Secretary’s Report

Welcome to Jore Janke, KN6PEV, our newest PAARA member. With 2 regular and 4 family renewals, we have bounced back to 162 club members.

One member has switched from paper PAARAgaphs to the electronic version.

Thanks to Christopher AI6KG for handling the PAARAgaphs mailing for June.

### Treasurer’s Report

Minimal fiscal activity this month. Bob has celebrated his 53rd wedding anniversary!

### VP / Program Chair Report

Our speaker for the July meeting will be David Minster, NA2AA. David is the ARRL CEO. We don’t have a title at this time. Because David is on the East coast, 3 hours ahead, we will start the July meeting promptly at 7:00.

### Old Business

The June guest speaker, WGOAT, was very well received.

Once again, there are zero PAARA articles for next month. This month’s PAARAgaphs may be thin.

PAARA members, please help the club here, with an article for the newsletter.

Darryl will pen an article on AC power line noise suppression for a future issue. Rob can put an article or flyer for the parachute mobile. We discussed printing a Pacifcon banner notice for the July PAARAgaphs.

**Field day:** Please remember to show:

“Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association”

as your club when submitting your entry.

### Education Committee, Rob

No progress this month.

PAARA will again operate the W1AW/6 Pacifcon special event station this year. Mikko Sannala, AB6RF is the coordinator.

**900 MHz Repeater Status (Joel, KD6W):** People are reporting frustration with outdoor antenna setup, et cetera. We may compose a column for the newsletter on how to set up a basic 900 MHz antenna.

**PAARA-owned radio sales:** Marty, W6NEV has been handling this effort. He wishes to hand this off to another club member. Anyone

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*(Minutes — Continued from page 5)*

interested should contact Marty at:

mcwayne2@comcast.net

for details.

**Shack Show:** We have not had volunteers for a 'shack visit' at the PAARA meeting. Jim will ask one more time for a volunteer.

We will be videoconferencing the next club meeting on July 9. PAARAgaphs will be out a week ahead, owing to the July 4 holiday.

### **New Business**

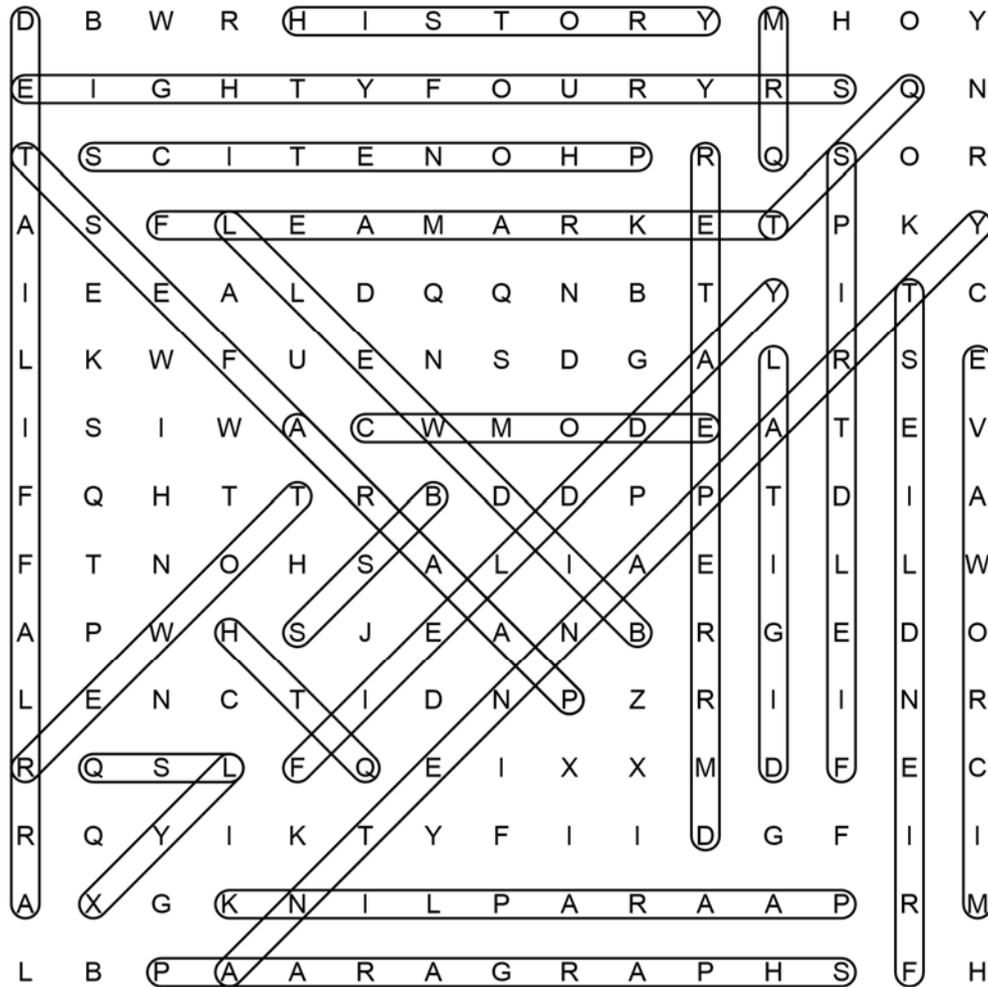
Joel has a receipt for antennas (2m and 70cm) purchased from HRO. 2008. Plus 900MHz repeater, plus other misc. expenses. The board voted to reimburse Joel for these expenses relating to repeaters and antennas.

Steve Lippman AD6AB has acquired an old transceiver from the mid-80s, A TS-520. He would like to have it checked and repaired for donation to a suitable organization or young ham. Joel agreed to check it out.

By 2022, all of us hams must do a station evaluation for RF Exposure. Jim will find a software application for running the evaluation.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ric Hulett N6AJS



**Last Months Puzzle Solution**

## Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association, Inc.

PO Box 911 Menlo Park, CA 94026

### Officers

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Vice President .....	Rob Fenn, kc6tyd	650-888-9060
	kc6tyd@gmail.com	
Secretary .....	Ric Hulett, N6AJS	408-332-4593
	energyconserved@sbcglobal.net	
Treasurer .....	Bob Korte, KD6KYT	408 396 4745
	bob@rgktechsales.com	

### Directors

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	kd6w@arrl.net	
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	walt@tradewindsaviation.com	
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	dteter@wawi.com	
Director ('21) .....	Darryl Presley, K16LDM	650 255-2454
	ki6ldm@arrl.net	

### Appointed Positions

Membership .....	Vic Black, AB6SO	650-366 0636
	ab6so@smrn.com	
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	energyconserved@sbcglobal.net	
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	K6RDM@yahoo.com	
Public Affairs .....	<i>Position Vacant</i>	
Station Trustee W6OTX, W6ARA....	Gerry Tucker, N6NV	
Station Trustee K6YQT...	Doug Teter, KG6LWE	650-367-6200
Station Trustee K6OTA...	Ron Chester, W6AZ	
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	dteter@wawi.com	
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Field Day Coordinator ...	Doug Teter, KG6LWE	650-367-6200
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Technical Coordinator ...	Joel Wilhite, KD6W	408-839-5948
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QSL Manager .....	Marty Wayne, W6NEV	408-234-8023
Speaker Coordinator .....	Rob Fenn, kc6tyd	650-888-9060

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Technical Tips .....	Vic Black, AB6SO	650-366 0636
	ab6so@smrn.com	
Photographer .....	<i>Position Vacant</i>	

## 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: <http://amateur-radio.org> or Contact Al, [WB6IMX@att.net](mailto:WB6IMX@att.net)

## 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: <http://www.electronicfleamarket.com/>

## 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, [KD6W@ARRL.NET](mailto:KD6W@ARRL.NET), 650-325-8239

## FARS — Foothills Amateur Radio Society

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

## 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: <http://nodxc.org> 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>

## 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 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](mailto:pres@k6mpn.org)

## SCCARRA

### 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: <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.

Contact: [AA6T@ARRL.NET](mailto:AA6T@ARRL.NET)

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: 441.35 (+5.0) 88.5 ctcss  
 147.39 (+600) 151.4 ctcss 1286.20 (-12m) 100.0 ctcss  
 223.96 (+1.6) 156.7 ctcss

Meetings are 2nd Wednesday of every month except July, August and December.  
 Contact: <http://wvara.org>, Bill Ashby N6FFC, 408-267-3118, [president@wvara.org](mailto:president@wvara.org)

## American Red Cross, Santa Clara Valley Chapter

Contact: <http://santaclaravalley.redcross.org> or Scott Hensley KB6UOO, (408) 967 7924 [shensley@Novell.com](mailto:shensley@Novell.com)

(Please send changes to [PAARAgaphs editor](mailto:PAARAgaphs editor))

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE  
THE NEXT CHAPTER FOR US:

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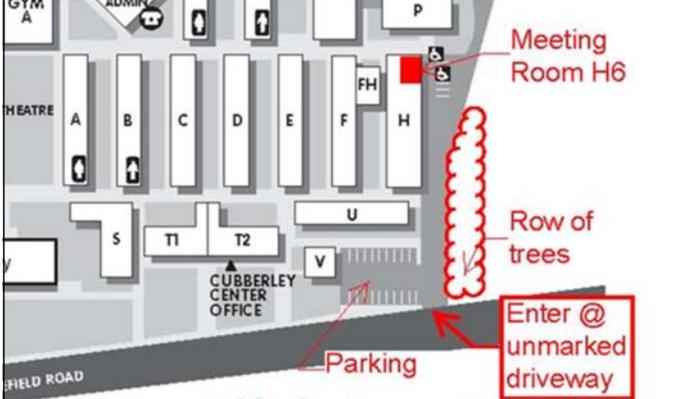
www.jameco.com

### PAARA Weekly Radio Net

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

Week	Control Operator
1 <sup>st</sup>	Joel - KD6W
2 <sup>nd</sup>	John - W6JMK
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Ric - N6AJS
4 <sup>th</sup>	Rob - KC6TYD
5 <sup>th</sup>	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.



**Cubberley Community Center**  
 4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303  
 650/329.2418  
 650/856.8756 fax  
 www.cityofpaloalto.org

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

### Tribulations about moving?

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**KARL DRESDEN**, R.E.# DRE 00525686  
 KJ6GUK General License, PAARA member  
 777 Woodside Rd., Suite B, Redwood City, CA 94061  
 Email: KARLDRESDEN@juno.com

### 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 \$25.00 per calendar year, which includes one subscription to PAARAgaphs \$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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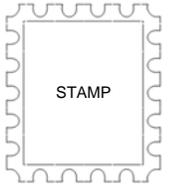
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# PAARAgaphs — July 2021

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