

# The PROPAGATOR

July, 2006

The Monthly Newsletter of South Orange Amateur Radio Association

## July Talk on Education

Hal Silverman, WBWXO, will be the speaker at the July meeting. Hal teaches electronics courses at Saddleback College in Mission Viejo. Although the courses are geared toward obtaining an electronics technician certificate, they are suitable for anyone wishing to gain a better understanding of electronics.

On page 2 you will find a description of his experience with the courses by SOARA member Mike Marin, WW6MM. Come to the meeting and learn more about local opportunities for educational advancement. □

## License Classes Planned

There is a new question pool for the Technician Class License exam. The club has had several inquiries about training for the Technician exam., and a new class will be organized in September. In addition to that class we will be offering General Class License instruction. This class will include, for those who are interested, Morse Code instruction.

SOARA has a number of talented and knowledgeable members to teach these classes. We do need you to do recruiting for students. Spread the word to all of your friends, work associates and anyone who might be interested. There is a great awareness of the value of radio in the event of a disaster. Now is a good time to reach potential hams.

Watch for details on the time and dates of these classes. They will be announced on the repeater and posted on the club web site. □

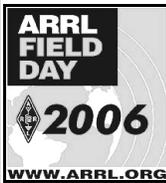
## New Members

Welcome to SOARA's newest members

Charles Reinauer Jr	KB2KBK
Spence McIntyre	(in progress)

## Field Day Was Fun

Did you get some time to spend at the SOARA Field Day site this year? I hope you were among those 54 members who took part in the weekend's activities. It started, as usual, with a get-together at the park on Friday evening. The claim is that this evening is for getting ready to put up the antennas. The usual reason (in addition to hot dogs & soft drinks) is to shoot spud guns. Well, Richard, K6RBS, did bring his latest spud gun, but he only shot it once. I think some people in Riverside are wondering where that potato came from! This year one of the attractions was to see our new storage container. (See related story.)



Saturday morning found an eager crew at the site ready to set up. Things were much the same as they have been for the past few years. The set-up went smoothly, and we were on the air on schedule. Perhaps the bands weren't as open as they have been, but we made a lot of contacts. The CW operators were the heroes for racking up points. Not only are they worth twice as much as phone contacts, but the CW contacts outnumbered the phone contacts. We really have not adopted digital modes sufficiently. We had very few PSK-31 contacts, and they are worth two points per contact just like CW. We need to generate some interest in PSK-31.

Several distinguished and interested visitors were at the site on Saturday and Sunday. Gordon West, WB6NOA, made SOARA the first stop on his tour of local club sites. Gail Reavis, Mission Viejo City Council Member and former Mayor came and spent some time. Several other people from the city came to see our operation. We enjoy considerable support and encouragement from the city.

Oh, you wanted to know how well we scored? Well, I think not too badly. We made 2165 contact points. That number gets multiplied by 2 (power multiplier) and we add 1650 bonus points to bring our score to 5980. □

## Picnic on August 6

The SOARA picnic in August (Sunday the 6th) will be in a new venue. The food and the fellowship will be the same, but the location will be at the Florence Joiner Park on Olympiad just North of Alicia Parkway.

People will start gathering about 11:00 AM, and we will eat about 1:00 PM. The club will provide the hamburgers, hot dogs, and sodas. Please bring a salad, fruit or a dessert. Plates and utensils will be provided.

We are planning for more activities this year. The T-hunt is scheduled for that day, and we will have to see what that turns out to involve. But we also have in mind some games that everyone can enjoy. If you have a GPS receiver, be sure to bring it. Also bring a compass, and — of course—an HT.

So mark your calendars with that date and join us at the park for a fun time for all. See the map on page 3 for the park location. □

There is a new walk-in storage container at Gilleran Park. And it is crammed full of Amateur Radio gear. The City of Mission Viejo has provided it for the storage of what is essentially our Field Day equipment — antennas, towers, etc. Thanks to Charley Speelman, WA6RUZ, and Lou Frank, KG6FCT, and the MV RACES for their efforts in arranging for the container. □

## July 15 & 16 at the Fair

It is not too late to participate in SOARA's weekend in the Amateur Radio Booth at the Orange County Fair. Contact Lou, KG6FCT, for parking and entry passes. You should plan on working the booth for at least three hours. That will give you plenty of time to enjoy the fair also. The job is simple: just answer questions about our hobby and play with the radios! All hams like to talk about the hobby, and here is a chance to be in a situation where people will actually ask you to talk to them about your hobby. How can you resist? Call Lou now to get your passes. □



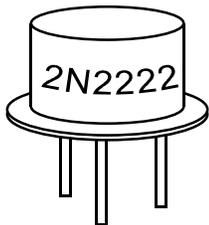
## The Way I See It: Learning Electronic

S by Mike

### Saddleback College

The electronics technology program at Saddleback is a perfect complement to our ham radio hobby. A few years ago, somehow I got a Saddleback College catalog, and I found the description of the *AC and DC fundamentals* course very attractive. Although I have a Masters in Computer Science, my lifelong hobby has been electronics. For me ham radio is an excuse to play with electronics. I enjoy building kits and playing with circuits, but never really understood how they work. This class was two nights a week, which did fit my schedule, and so, I gave it a try.

I was pleasantly surprised, because not only do they teach theory, but you also have a fully equipped bench to play with for few hours each week. Oscilloscope, function



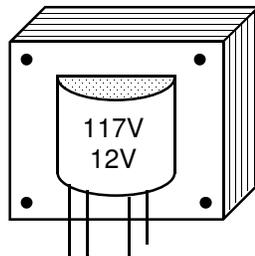
generators, power supplies, etc., are all available on each bench for the students practice. I liked that class so much that in the last few years, I have taken all the courses

they offered in the electronic technology department. For me its is hard to find a better

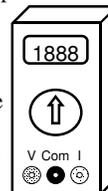
way to enjoy my electronic hobby, because you learn something new every week and have a fully equipped lab with your own bench to play for at least couple of hours per week. What else can you ask for?

At first I was a little apprehensive to go to a community College and find myself in the middle of a bunch of teenagers. Fortunately, I was wrong. The classes were small with an average of 12 students of all ages. Still, I was in the minority of students carrying reading glasses and a magnified glass to see the breadboard. However, I was not alone, and some of the classmates and teachers were also ham radio operators.

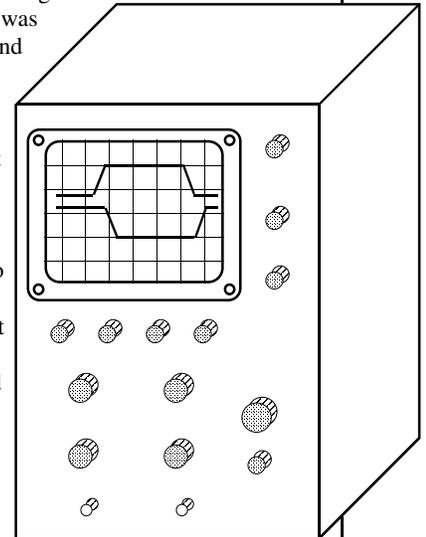
For me, some of the courses were a review. For example, during my undergraduate years (long time ago), I took classes on Boolean algebra and digital circuits. But, I still took the digital electronics course to see what has changed in more than twenty years. I'm glad that I did. I had a great time playing with the 74xx series of integrated circuits, building counters, registers, multiplexers, etc.



The computer maintenance and repair course was interesting, and although I had built several of my computers, I had a great time in this class. At the beginning of the course, the instructor offered to help students that wanted to build their own computer. A couple of students took the offer, and so, we ended up building two new computers in the lab.



During the communication course we played with fiber optics to build a transmitter and receiver. I thought that fiber optics was expensive and hard to use; but it turns out that nowadays it is not. The highlight in this course was a trip to Cox communication, where I was amazed with the amount of cable and fiber optics running throughout that facility.



Unfortunately, I have now completed all the electronics technology courses they offer, and so, without it being my intention, I got two certificates; one on General Electronics Technology and another on Analog and Digital Circuit Electronics Technology. The only use I have for them is for decoration of my shack, so they will end hanging on a wall next to my world map and band plan.

I found Saddleback College to be a fun place to learn, and if you like to refresh your knowledge about electronics, you should consider taking advantage of our local community College. You can find more information at <http://www.saddleback.edu>.

Mike Marin, WW6MM

## A "GOOD" Balun for your Beam, Dipole or Vertical for under \$10.00



If you are as tired as I am of winding coax around old coffee cans or paying \$39.95 for a piece of PVC with a coax connector on one end for a balun to match your beam, dipole or vertical, I have good news for you. Palomar Engineers ([www.palomar-engineers.com](http://www.palomar-engineers.com)) in San Diego makes an inexpensive and very effective Toroid Balun Kit which is amazingly simple and works better than anything I have ever used.

When you order either the BA-58 kit for small RG58 coax or the BA-8 for larger RG-8 coax you will receive an envelope with five toroids and three pieces of heat shrink tubing. Simply follow the instructions: slip the toroids over the coax about 8 inches from the end which connects to the antenna, borrow your wife's hair dryer, and shrink the tubing down nice and snug. Re-install your feed line and you are ready to go once again.

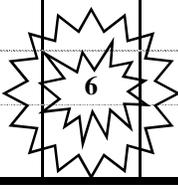
Every balun I have ever tried on any antenna always had SWR curves unique to each band and did not seem to follow any

logical pattern. Now my beams SWR is from 1.2 - 1.4 to 1 across each band on my 4 band beam, and the antenna "seems" quieter on receive, especially on 40 meters early in the morning.

I just called Palomar Engineers and ordered another Balun Kit for my 80/160 meter Inverted Vee. If you get one and need help give me a call. I will be happy to give you a hand with it. This is a simple inexpensive and effective solution, plus the people are very friendly and even say "Thank you for your order."

Ron, W6OM

Year 2006	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
General Meeting 7:00 PM	23	27	20	17	15	19	17	21	18	16	20	No meeting
Program	AE6SH	WU6D	W6RHM Spark- Gap Xmtr	K9EID Bob Heil Video	Spring Auction	F.D. Prep.	WB6WXO Hal Silverman				Fall Auction	—
VEC Testing	23	27	20	17	15	24	17	21	18	16	20	—
SOARA T-Hunt	8	5	5	2	7	4	2	6	3	8	5	3
Board Meeting	30	3/6	27	24	22	24	24	28	25	23	27	
ARRL Field Day						24/25						
SOARA picnic												
SOARA Holiday Party												3



The picnic is right around the corner!

### July T-hunt

Mission Viejo, July 2, 2006. It was a hot day. We knew it would be hot and we had prepared for it by bringing lots of ice water and soft drinks. After hiding the transmitter, we (Karl & Dale) settled down at a well shaded picnic table in a pleasant park to wait.

Lou Frank called a meeting at his house for a recap of Field Day and had invited all of the T-hunters to come over after the hunt. The meeting (pool party?) was to start about 4:00 PM, so we tried to pick a spot that was not too far away, and one that was not too hard. Well, we didn't want it to be too easy either. We settled down in Colinas Park near the intersection of Alicia Pkwy and Trabuco Rd. The transmitter was about 2000 feet north of us. We could keep an eye on it through a telescope.

The team of Lou, KG6FCT, Howard, KG6GI, and Brian, NJ6N, were the first to arrive at the transmitter location. Hot and tired they insisted that we bring them cold drinks and ferry them over to the park. The hunt had been in progress for over two hours. Now it is only fair that I clarify the situation. Yes, we were in the heart of Mission Viejo, and most of the area is ordinary looking neighborhoods. But the terrain is very high there and in

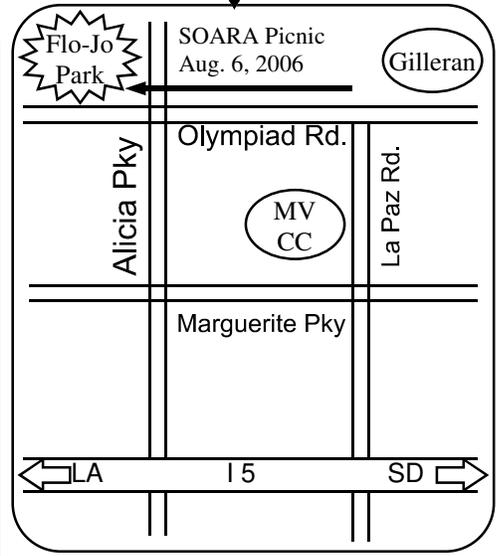
some spots very rugged. You could get fairly close to the transmitter and not be able to get to it without taking a long circuitous route. Also, there are a lot of foot paths through the area, and although the transmitter was not far from a street, it might not be the street you were on!

Our winning trio had parked their vehicle and set out on foot. It was a long walk — but they got there first. (And they didn't want to walk back to their car.)

Matt, KF6ALM, and Kareem, KG6USK, made it to the park and had some cold drinks before we decided to collect the transmitter and head over to Lou's party. As we arrived at the transmitter location we caught sight of Horst, KD7JHR, tracking it down. He had heard the chatter on the repeater and decided to give it an "informal" try. Well, I'd say he did pretty good. Every one agreed it was a good hunt, and Howard was able to show that his newest hunting equipment was a good investment.

The team of Howard, Lou, and Brian will do the honors of hiding it next month. That coincides with the SOARA picnic, so we will see what they come up with.

73, Dale, W8RRV



### Raffle News

Congratulations to the lucky winners of the \$1 raffle at the June meeting. Thanks to your generous participation on the \$1 raffle, we were able to raise \$25 for the Orange county Fair Ham Radio booth.

We did not sell enough tickets to raffle off the \$5 raffle prize, a Yaesu FT-1802M VHF FM mobile transceiver AND a Yaesu VX-170 VHF FM handie talkie. We should award that prize to a lucky ticket holder at Monday's meeting.

I hope to see you all at the meeting.  
73, NJ6N

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South Orange Amateur Radio Association  
P.O. Box 2545  
Mission Viejo, CA 92690

## PICNIC ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 6

A very special thanks to Hi-Tech Liquidators for their monthly donations to the club raffle.



### Meeting: July 17, 2006 at 7:00 PM Hal Silverman, WB6WXO

☛ **SOARA** meets at the Mission Viejo Community Center, 26932 Veterans Way, Mission Viejo, the third Monday of every month at 7:00 PM. Changes to the meeting time or place are announced in this newsletter and on the 147.645 two-meter repeater.

☛ **License Exams:** Amateur License Exams are given prior to SOARA meetings. Exams are from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. Walk-in applicants are welcome. For information call Paul Levey, NZ1M, at 949-481-5454.

☛ **Contacting SOARA:** Questions about SOARA? Send e-mail to: [info@soara.org](mailto:info@soara.org), or leave a message at 949-249-1373.

☛ **Web Site:** SOARA maintains a web site with current club information. The URL is: <http://www.soara.org>.

☛ **Repeaters:** The Laguna Beach, San Clemente, and Trabuco repeaters are open. The Santiago Peak repeaters are closed. For details or questions on the repeaters contact the Repeater director, KG6GI.

2m — 147.645 - (110.9) Laguna Beach  
2m — 146.025 + (110.9) San Clemente  
2m — 145.240 - (110.9) Trabuco  
220 — 224.100 - (110.9) Laguna Beach  
220 — 224.640 - (123.0) Santiago Pk. (C) 440 —  
445.660 - (110.9) Laguna Beach  
440 — 447.180 - (131.8) Santiago Pk. (C)

☛ **Nets:** SOARA 2 m repeater open net is held Tuesday 8:00 PM 40 meter HF net (7.250 MHz +/- for QRM), Sunday 8:00 AM.

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