

# The PROPAGATOR

February, 2006

The Monthly Newsletter of South Orange Amateur Radio Association

Feb. ARRL Presentation	Volunteer Opportunity	A glimpse of Katrina										
<p>Carl Gardenias, WU6D, the ARRL Section Manager for the Orange Section will officially present SOARA with the Special Services Club certificate. He will give a brief explanation of the significance and meaning of the designation. Accompanying Carl on his visit will be his Section Emergency Coordinator, Steve Grudzinski, AD6HT. Steve has some information on the amateur radio role in emergency communications and will introduce some new ideas. Come to the meeting at 7:00 PM on Monday to learn about this important area of amateur radio. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <div data-bbox="412 646 565 869" data-label="Image"> <p>Steve, AE6HT</p> </div>	<p>The communications preparation for the March 4, 2006, Vision Quest mountain bike race has been underway for several weeks now. I have the entire course checkpoints covered so far but could use some more operators at the net control station at O'Neill Park, the Finish line at Trabuco Creek and Trabuco Canyon Roads where the road meets the gravel.</p> <p>Richard, K6RBS, and Brian Dakin, KG6VCV, are covering base from 6:00 AM until 10:00 AM. Greg N6REG will then be at the net control station and he will need help until about 1:00 PM. I need two more operators to relieve them for the last shift. We need 2 operators so we can chase down the race director (Chris, KF6TKE) when we need him on the radio.</p>	<p>Last month, Tom, AE6SH, presented a verbal and photographic view of the rescue work involved in New Orleans after hurricane Katrina hit. Tom went with the Orange County Urban Search and Rescue team. It was a unique opportunity to learn about real emergency activities and communications procedures. If you missed the talk you may want to catch Tom at the club meeting. He has some very interesting stories from his adventure. <input type="checkbox"/></p>										
<p><b>Hunt Observers</b></p> <p>Four SOARA members showed up on Sunday, Feb. 12, at O'Neill Park for the on-foot hunt/orienteering meet. The plan was to observe and get some idea of how that type of hunting is done. These people are energetic and the transmitters (5) were spread out over a very long path. It is quite different from hunting in your car. Still, it is interesting and the course was varied enough to make it challenging. None of us came close to finding all of the transmitters. We averaged somewhere between 1 and zero. SOARA observers included NJ6N, K6TEK, KF6MDF, and W8RRV. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>At the finish line I have Jerrod, K6TEK, from 11:00 AM until he is relieved. I will need two more operators to cover the three shifts here.</p> <p>A special thanks to the SOARA members who have committed to this year's event so far.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kareem, KG6USK</li> <li>Patty, AD6OH</li> <li>Greg, N6REG</li> <li>Richard, K6RBS</li> <li>Matt, KE6ALM</li> <li>Tom, AE6SH</li> <li>Jerrod, K6TEK</li> <li>Heiko, AD6OI</li> </ul>	<p><b>February T-hunt</b></p> <p>SOARA's February hunt was held on Sunday, Feb. 5. Jerrod, K6TEK, did the honors of hiding the transmitter. He chose a 0.2 watt transmitter feeding a four element beam for the hidden transmitter. He didn't have to go far to find a good spot to hide it. Alicia Park in the middle of Mission Viejo was the site, but to make the hunt interesting, he aimed the beam antenna into a chain link fence just over a hill from the main park.</p> <p>Since the transmitter was quite low power, Tek (Jerrod) periodically activated a 50 watt transmitter to aid the hunters who were out of range of the weak signal. The high power transmission was short, but it enabled the hunters to get an idea of the direction to proceed until they could pick up the weak transmitter.</p>										
<p><b>New Members</b></p> <p>Welcome to SOARA's newest members</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Aaron Bentley,</td> <td>KA6MKU</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Volodymyr (Vlad) Boyko,</td> <td>KI6BLP</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Richard Hammerschlag,</td> <td>WD6X</td> </tr> <tr> <td>David Challis,</td> <td>KA6DRC</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ron Weaver,</td> <td>W6OM</td> </tr> </table>	Aaron Bentley,	KA6MKU	Volodymyr (Vlad) Boyko,	KI6BLP	Richard Hammerschlag,	WD6X	David Challis,	KA6DRC	Ron Weaver,	W6OM	<p>To summarize, I need three operators for O'Neill Park operations and two for finish line operations. We may be able to cover these jobs ourselves, but I would like to send folks home that have reported early and have put in lots of time already.</p> <p>My Day will start at 4:00 AM and will go until all riders are out of the mountains safely.</p> <p>Joe, W6BGR <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If you can help, call Joe at (714) 731-7746, or via e-mail at <a href="mailto:w6bgr@soara.org">w6bgr@soara.org</a>.</p>	<p>First to arrive at the park, and first to locate the hidden T, was Dale, W8RRV. Matt, KE6ALM, arrived and found the transmitter soon after him. Dave, KG6QCI, was the third to locate it. All of the hunters found the park in time to enjoy some refreshments and discuss the hunt. Hunters included: K6RBS, KF6MDF, KG6GI, KG6FCT, KG6USK.</p> <p>The next hunt will be held on March 5. Tom, AE6SH, will be hiding the transmitter. Come out and give it a try.</p> <p>Dale, W8RRV <input type="checkbox"/></p>
Aaron Bentley,	KA6MKU											
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## The Way I See It: Maritime Mobile (part 1) by Tony de Witte

Last fall my wife, Diane (KG6QWZ), came home from the yacht brokerage where she works and told me we had an opportunity to deliver a brand new, out of the box, 31 foot Pacific SeaCraft sailboat to Hawaii. The boat was still being built and was expected to be launched at the end of November. Give another month or so for commissioning, that is, installing the mast, rigging, sails, and owner added options such as electronics, autopilot, and the like, this would make the boat ready to go around the end of December, early January.

The owner lives in Honolulu, Oahu, and the boat was built here in Southern California. There were two options in this case to get the boat home to its owner; shipping on a freighter or delivery by a crew. Shipping was prohibitively expensive compared to the cost of delivery. So, bids for delivery were tended and we won! Somewhere early in December Diane came home and told me we got the job and that the plan was to leave before Christmas. This only left a few weeks to get ready! We managed to conscript a friend of ours, Turk, to crew with us.

What does all this have to do with Amateur Radio? Absolutely nothing, so far. I'll be getting to that. Another friend, Ron, who has the 37 ft sailboat, Pangaea, wanted to sail to Hawaii at about the same time. So we thought of "buddy boating," sailing together to Hawaii. I'm bringing him into the picture because the only means of long distance communications he had was a satellite phone. The little PSC 31 that we were taking didn't have anything besides the standard VHF marine radio. We debated whether or not to rent a Sat phone but by my way of thinking, this was too limited and I wanted some way to gather weather information. He also had a dedicated weather fax machine, and he would share the weather reports with us if we could find a way to communicate between ourselves since we would be beyond VHF range for most of the time. Our friend Ron's plans had changed and he would not be able to leave at the same time. So, we were on our own. Diane, a licensed

captain, and I do long distance deliveries on a regular basis, though, mostly coastal. Most of the boats that we've been on did not have an HF radio. I've been thinking for a long time of a portable rig that we could take along with us. As luck would have it, the PSC 31 boat manufacturer mistakenly installed an insulated backstay, which is part of the rigging. In radio parlance, this meant that the boat had a 'random wire antenna' built in. This was my chance. I told my dear wife, "No radio, no go!" We were doing this trip in the middle of winter with the threat of Pacific storms. Going without a radio was foolish and out of the question. Besides, I told her that we would have email capability. She acquiesced.

Of course, I also had an ulterior motive: Part time portable boat rig, most of the time vehicle mobile rig! So, off to HRO. Being familiar with Icom radios and short on time, I settled for the 706 Mk II, AH4 tuner, and the Pactor II modem (TNC). Bill Scholz, W1HIJ, of HRO, a sailor himself

and whose advise was instrumental in my decision, put the rig together, programmed and tested it before I took it out the door. Having two days to go before our intended departure, I installed the radio gear in a waterproof utility box, ran temporary power leads to the batteries, mounted the tuner in the cockpit locker and connected it to the insulated backstay. We took off the next day. The weather reports from the internet suggested we head south to avoid impending cold fronts and large seas lurking to the West.

The boat had not been sea-trialed nor had the radio installation been tested. We stopped in San Diego the first night and then Ensenada, Mexico, the next, making minor repairs and familiarizing ourselves with the systems. All the while I was studying the manuals of the new radio equipment. I was learning on the fly. I had to figure out how to use the radio, modem, and the weatherfax and email functions which were all new to me.

On Christmas Day, we left Ensenada for Guadeloupe Island 200 miles further south and 150 miles offshore. Ron, of Pangaea, had at least agreed to rendezvous with us there as support to replenish our stores and top off our water and fuel tanks. This would also be our last chance to get replacement parts if needed. The only problem was our ability to communicate to each other. I was learning how to use the radio and he had a Sat phone. While at anchor at the island, I had the time to figure out how to use Winlink's email program, Airmail. I sent off the first emails. This was my first contact with Richard Saunders, K6RBS.

While I was caught up in the frenzy of getting the boat ready, my good friend Ray Bell, KG6QWY, made an announcement on the SOARA 2 meter net of the adventure I was about to partake and that I would have an HF radio. Apparently, there was an enthusiastic response of members wanting to follow our progress. Richard volunteered to be the homebase contact and suggested that a regular radio schedule be set up.

Just before we left, Ray relayed this to me, and I told him that as soon as the radio was up and running I'd make contact. Well, this wasn't to be until our 7th day out, while at Guadeloupe Island.

In the email I told Richard that I was monitoring the Chubasco and Baja maritime nets, both on 40 meters early in the morning. The next day after I checked into the Baja net Richard jumped in and we had our first QSO. We agreed to meet thereafter on the Baja net since I listened to it regularly for weather reports. I had also sent Ron, of Pangaea, an email text message to his satellite phone stating that we were at the anchorage waiting for him. The only problem was that he could not respond, at least, directly. He was underway, but he had to call his secretary back at the office and tell her to send an email to me. Well, we never got it, but we were sure glad to see him come around the corner of the anchorage early the next morning. □

*To be continued next month*



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		Spring Auction	F.D. Prep.	WB6WXO				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								6				
SOARA Holiday Party												3

### HROC Corner

From the earliest days of the HROC association, the club was populated in large measure by T-hunters. Indeed, in the final days of the organization, the 220 MHz repeater on Sierra Peak was sold to a group of current and former HROC members and T-hunters. Hunting has long been a favorite pastime of many of the group, and I can't tell you how pleased I am that SOARA has embraced this sub-set of our hobby with such enthusiasm. T-hunting in the LA

basin has been a fixture since the early '50s, when the 2 Meter & Down Club and others scheduled regular hunts to sharpen the skills of participants. And, the hobby is just as fascinating now as it was more than 50 years ago. Anyone with a hankering to see what the game is all about is welcome to ride along on a hunt. See the T-hunting reports elsewhere in the publication for more information.

73,  
Roger, W6SQQ

### Educated "Thank You"

John Walker, AC6GK, who has served SOARA as Education Director, is leaving that position. John wrote:

*I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve SOARA on the Board as Education Director. SOARA is a big, multi-faceted group with a great energy in many aspects of radio operations and service, and I will certainly take pleasure in continuing as a member. It is just that I have had a sudden increase in church duties, requiring me to drop all my extra activities for at least a year. I know that SOARA will continue to excel with so many fine members doing so many top-notch things, so, for the moment, thanks for the great friendship and support, and 73 de AC7GK*

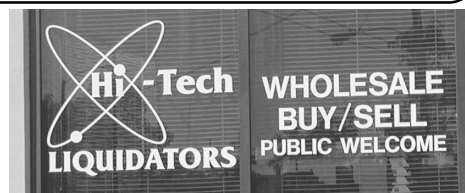
Thanks John for a job well done..

### Raffle News

Congratulations to Jim, K6EEE, for winning the \$5 raffle prize, a Yaesu FT-7800R dual band mobile rig at last month's club meeting. This month's \$5 raffle prize is a Yaesu FT-840 Compact High- Performance HF Transceiver! We'll have lots of great items for the \$1 raffle as well.

Special thanks go to Dick Hammerschlag, WD6X, from Hi-Tech Liquidators of Costa Mesa for donating several fine prizes and discount coupons to the \$1 raffle! If you won a coupon in the raffle last month, be sure to use it soon!

Best of luck to everyone and I hope to see you at the next meeting!  
73, NJ6N



### A New Source for Parts

About a week ago I had the opportunity to go to Garden Grove and visit **Hi-Tech Liquidators**. This store, at 2060 Placentia Ave. is run by (SOARA member) Dick Hammerschlag, WD6X. Fortunately I had the foresight to bring a pocket full of cash. I found a **lot** of real bargains and items that I had been looking for, even some that the major distributors don't carry. Now that was in part luck, I don't want to give the impression that Hi-Tech Liquidators is a large distributor. It is a fairly small store, but you are apt to find almost anything there, and at a very good price. There are some real prizes to be had, but you have to stop by to

check what they have as the stock keeps changing.

They have an unusually wide variety of coax connectors and adapters. SMA connectors are used on more HTs today, and most of us don't have a stock of them built up. Here is your chance to get them at a good price.

You will even find some unique pieces that you may want to buy just to take apart and examine. I couldn't resist picking up an isolator for a couple of bucks — and it had some connectors I can use. Store hours are 10 AM to 6 PM Monday through Friday.  
de Dale, W8RRV

# The PROPAGATOR

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



## Meeting: February 27, 2006 at 7:00 PM WU6D & AD6HT

☛ **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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