

Cathay Newsletter November 2008

www.cathayradio.org

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Treasurer: Vince Chinn, *W6EE*

Mission: The Cathay Amateur Radio Club is basically an active social club of Ham Radio Operators and their spouses

Monday Night Net Time: 9PM PST Frequency: 146.67MHz -600KHz PL85.4 and 442.70 +5MHz PL 173.8 The repeaters are linked. The Monday night net is the best way to find out the latest club news. All check-ins are welcome.

Message from the President: *Edison Fong, WB6IQN*

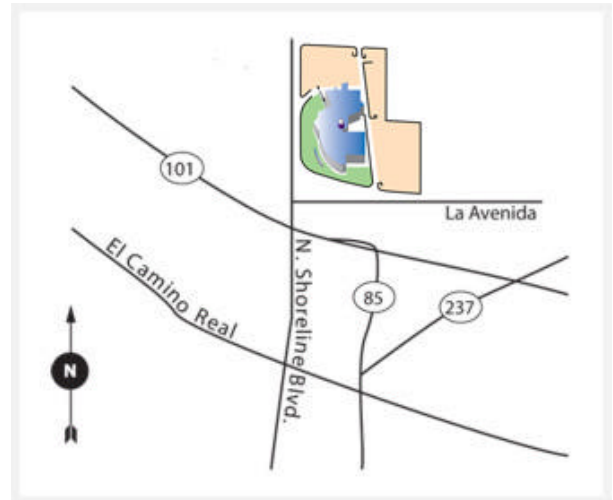
Here we are in November. October was a busy month. We had the last DeAnza College Swap Meet and then the annual Pacificon Conference in San Ramon. We have a summary complete with photos from Pacificon. Our November meeting will be a field trip to the Computer History Museum in Mountain View. See text for details. Also in November, Dave Gomberg *NE5EE* is holding a VE test session Sunday Nov. 16th in San Francisco. Bill Chin *KC6POF* is reminding us that there is no excuse not to recycle and the various locations and times are given on page 8. The end of the year is also coming up, so let's start thinking about officers for the club. With about 90 members, I am sure we all have ideas for club activities. So get your thinking caps on and email me on what secret places we could visit around the Bay Area. Mark your calendars for the last two remaining events for the year.

November 15th 1PM - Computer History Museum tour - Mountain View

December 13th 6-10PM Christmas Party in Sunnyvale

Hey, don't forget to check into the Monday night net. 9PM (2100 local). This checks out the repeater and also provides for the latest announcements. We are in the process of tuning up the repeater. It's been having some problems and we have been trying to iron them out.

Computer History Museum Field Trip - Saturday Nov 15th 1PM



Computer History Museum
1401 N Shoreline Blvd.
Mountain View, CA 94043

From San Jose via US-101 North

- **20 Minutes - 15 Miles** Take US-101 North toward San Francisco. Take Shoreline Blvd exit. Turn right onto Shoreline Blvd. Cross through intersection, Museum is on your right.

From San Francisco via US-101 South

- **40 Minutes - 35 Miles** Take US-101 South toward San Jose. Take Shoreline Blvd exit. Turn left onto Shoreline Blvd. Cross through intersection, Museum is on your right.

Our November get together will be at the **Computer History Museum** in Mountain View. There is no charge for parking or Museum fees but donations are welcome. Jim Connors, the museum curator, has promised an exciting tour. The Cathay Club will have a special tour that will last about an hour. For most of us, we will be going down memory lane seeing the sights of a Radio Shack "Trash 80", "Commodore 64", and

“Altair 8800”. But what about computers before our time like the tube type machines. How about huge mechanical calculators? These will all be there.

The first “commercial computer” and the Babbage Engine-the first true mechanical computer will be on display. A timeline of the history of semiconductors. The 1960’s and the IBM era. There is an entire exhibit on early memory technology. Remember when 64k of memory was the envy of the neighborhood? Imagine how much a gigabyte of memory cost 40 years ago. I just bought 2 Gig of DDR2 memory for my new computer and it surprised me at a cost of \$14.99. For more information on the museum, go to:

<http://www.computerhistory.org/>

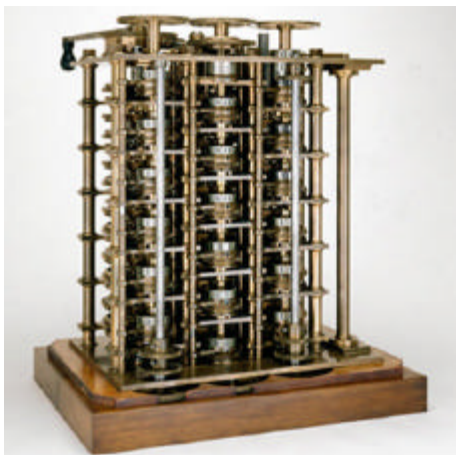
The Museum is located off of Shoreline Blvd in Mountain View and is the old Silicon Graphics site. Don’t miss it, this promises to be memorable experience.



Remember this machine? This was the Altair 8800. One of the first “home brewed” computers. It had an 8 bit CPU and as I recall could hold up to 64k of DRAM memory. I was amazed back in 1973 when I saw it run a word processing program called Wordstar. You do remember Wordstar, don’t you?



Here’s the one that started it all. The Apple I. It couldn’t really do much but it got Apple Computer its humble beginning. Most of these original machines used a black and white monitor. If you were really on a budget, one would use an old black and white TV set.



Now none of us could have used one of these. It is a turn of the century mechanical computer invented by Babbage. An exact replica of this machine in working condition is displayed at the Museum. There are not very many computers you can “see working”.



Now I do remember using one of these machines when I was in college. It is the famous PDP11. The workhorse of Digital Equipment. This machine made IBM realize it had competition. I remember when they finally got this machine to compile Fortran. That was quite an accomplishment for the time considering Fortran was only running on large mainframes like IBM 360's and IBM370's. This "minicomputer" does not even have 1/1000 the computing power of today's quad core desktop machines. Back then a terabyte was pure fantasy.

After the Museum tour, a group of us will spend the rest of the afternoon at Shoreline Park, which is at the end of Shoreline Blvd. This is just a wonderful park and worth the trip if you have not been there. At Shoreline, you will experience one of the Bay Area's most beautiful wetlands.

While at Shoreline Park, drop by the Rengstorff House. This house is a great example of Victorian Architecture. Built in 1867 by Henry Rengstorff, one of Mountain View's earliest settlers, it was restored and moved to its current location in 1991. In the same location is Shoreline Lake which is open for boat rentals. This includes windsurfing, canoeing, road boating, and paddle boating. There is a nice restaurant there by the harbor with very reasonable pricing. Boat rentals are a reasonable \$14/hr per boat. This includes all life jackets, paddles, etc. The City also offers windsurfing lessons, but that is beyond me. Kids and adults will love this place. Parking is free and it is a great place to experience the wetlands where there is spectacular wild life watching. You could bring your bicycle and experience are some of the most wonderful trails in the Bay Area. Bring your binoculars for bird watching and it will be an afternoon you will not forget.



After the computer tour enjoy visiting the Rengstroff House (above left) built in 1867 and enjoy Shoreline Lake (above right) which offers a spectacular view of the bay and offers some of the best wetland and hiking trails in the Bay Area. Once seeing this park you will agree it is one of the Bay Areas great treasures.

Pacificon - San Ramon California October 17-19 2008

Pacificon was great. The weather was just perfect. I saw a lot of friends there and Cathay radio members. We tried to get a picture together but it was hard to find everyone. I went to the Antenna Seminar Friday and it was a full house of about 250 people. Just look at the pictures below. With world class speakers on antenna such as Drs. Steve Stearns, Rudy Severns, and Dean Straw you can't beat that. Rudy Severn has been doing research on ground radials for decades and the experiments he does cannot be duplicated in your back yard. So I am glad he does them and not me. I just appreciate the results. There was the great QRP Forum Friday evening and I am just thoroughly impressed how Doug Hendricks and his group the "NorCal QRP Club" can organize themselves. They design, layout PC boards, and sell complete 20 meter SSB/CW transceivers for \$150. That's complete with a 10 watt output. The group also had a swapmeet Saturday evening that I did not get to attend but I heard it was a great success.

I think the most impressive talk I attended was with Eric Schartz WA6HHQ of Elecraft. I knew Eric in high school when he lived in Piedmont. He is the co-founder of Elecraft, the makers of the K3. Forty years ago, I use to talk to him on 2 meters Saturday evenings with Steve Nest WB6UVW and with Jack Silver W6RST. Actually I had forgotten about that until Eric reminded me about 10 years ago when I met him at Pacificon. That's another reason for why one should go to Pacificon. Just to meet up with old friends and make knew ones. He gave an excellent talk on how this transceiver was conceived and built. He gave demos of the software as well as details they went through in selecting the crystals for the roofing filters. Unlike manufacturers like Icom, Kenwood, and Yaesu,

Eric is more than happy to discuss the details of his company's designs. In the Heathkit tradition, he will reveal the entire schematic to you. What manufacturer will do that these days? For \$1399, the Elecraft K3 goes down as one of the best buys in ham radio.

Jim Stitzinger WA3CEX had a session on Collins Radios and he even drove up his famous Collins Van that he has totally restored. This was the same van that Collins drove around the Country in the 60's to display their latest and greatest. The Collins Ford Van was outfitted with a complete S/Line in the 1960's and traveled to hamfests and ARRL conventions promoting the S/Line. Jim found the van many years later and completely restored it. Jim gave a fantastic talk on Collins radio on Sunday.



The Antenna Forum with over 250 attendees was all sold out. As always, it included world renown speakers.



A replica of a para radio used by Allied Forces during WWII was at the QRP forum Friday evening.



Here are Wayne Wong and Lee of LED Wholesalers. They have the best flashlights in town.



Here is Eric Schartz WA6HHQ of Elecraft. They offer the famous K3 Transceiver.



The Cathay Members that we managed to catch up with to take a photo. Left photo (top row), *Ed Fong WB6IQN, Ron Quan KI6AZB, Dave Chan, WZ6X, George Chong W6BUR* Left photo – bottom row - *Tony KR6EG and Connie KF6WEA Halog, George Froberg NR6I, Paul Kitagaki W6NDA.*

Right photo – *Nelson Doon – AD6XZ Dave Chan W6ZX, Ron Quan KI6AZB, George Chong – W6BUR, Bob Lai KN6QP* - Missing are *Dave Gomberg NE5EE and Bart Lee KV6LEE* that I saw running around.

EARN YOUR RADIO LICENSE IN ONE DAY!

Sunday, November 16, 2008

8:45AM SHARP! - 3:00PM

San Francisco County Fair Building Hall of Flowers – Rec Room

9th Avenue and Lincoln Way

There will be a General cram for Techs same place & time.

Ample free parking. Great lunch restaurants nearby.

Bring 2 IDs (one with picture), a couple of pens and

\$20 cash for Technician study materials, tips, and test **OR**

\$40 cash for General study materials, lecture, and test **OR**

\$14 cash for testing only (general, extra, Morse tests available too)

8:45AM Checkin for study. Don't be early or late. **Dropins OK.**

If you want test only (no preparation onsite) come at 1:30PM.

8:50 Beginners' tips, donuts

9:00 Self-study starts, coffee

1:30 Exams begin

No advance preparation needed for beginners, we do it all in 6 hours. General exam class begins 9:05AM (if you are already licensed or have already mastered the Technician exam material).

Questions? **hamcrams.com**

Next test date: January?, 2009

Recycling Your Old Electronic Wastes (E-Waste) - *Bill Chin KC6POF*

Wondering what to do with your old computers, monitors, telephones, TVs, VCRs, printers, etc? Here are some upcoming one-time and recurring local and free e-waste recycling events below. Be sure to check the listed websites for specific address, drop off times, any restrictions, and updates. Save these websites for future events in other areas.

Source: http://www.alliedwastedalycity.com/allied_news.cfm

Dec 13-14, Daly City, Daly City Hall parking lot

Source: <http://www.unwaste.com/event-calendar.php>

Oct 25-26, Palo Alto High School

Nov 1-2, Pinole Senior Center

Nov 8-9, Oakland, E. C. Reemes Academy

6 days a week (Mon-Sat), Oakland - Universal Waste Management Warehouse

Source: <http://www.noewaste.com/events.htm>

Oct 25, San Ramon, Toyota-San Francisco Parts Distribution Center

Oct 26, Pinole, Collins Elementary School

Nov 1, Pleasant Hill, Diablo Valley College

Nov 1, San Ramon, Diablo Valley College

5 days a week (Tues-Sat), San Leandro - Electronic Waste Management

Source: <http://www.aslrecycling.com>

Oct 25, San Jose, Union Middle School

Oct 25, Los Gatos, Sereno Group

Oct 25, Los Altos, Coldwell Banker

Source: <http://www.recycleforbreastcancer.org/dropoffanytime.htm>

7 days a week, San Ramon

Source: <http://www.rapidrecycle.net>

6 days a week (Mon-Sat), Pacheco

Source: <http://www.accrc.org>

6 days a week (Mon-Sat), Berkeley

Source: <http://www.acrrecycling.com>

5 days a week (Mon-Fri), Santa Clara

Source: <http://www.sfgoodwill.org/ElecRecycle2.aspx>

Many Goodwill Stores and Donation Centers offer recycling of working and non-working electronics.