



NCALERA NEWS

MAY-JUNE 2001

ERA LIFE MEMBERSHIP ELECTION

by Jack Heidmiller, National Delegate

We are happy to announce the election of two new life members into the Electronics Representatives Association. At a meeting of the National Board of Directors, held during the recent Conference in Monterey, Brian Trankle and Bob Parsons were added to the rolls. Requirements for election are that individuals selected have accumulated at least twenty years of membership and service in ERA and that they no longer be active members. Both these gentlemen more than meet those demands.



Brian F. Trankle is the former owner of Brian Trankle and Associates, located in Belmont, CA. Originally joining the Northern California Chapter in 1981, Brian's Chapter offices were Vice President of the SAVES Trade Group in 1984; Treasurer in 1986, Sr. Vice President in 1987; President in 1988; National Director and Vice President Membership in 2000. He was awarded the Lebell-Logan Award in 1996.



In addition, Brian served as National Vice President and Group Chairman of the SAVES Group in 1990 and is a White Pin member.

Now retired, Brian continues to participate in volunteer activities, currently serving as Chairman of the Jack Logan Memorial Scholarship Committee.



Bob Parsons has been a member, off and on, since 1967. He has served as Chapter Vice President and has participated in many committees. He was elected an honorary member of the Chapter in 1984 when he left the business for a few years. His principal contribution has been as editor-publisher of the Chapter Newsletter for the past ten years. He now serves as Chapter Office Manager and continues the Newsletter work.

Both these men are to be congratulated.

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**ERA NEWS
NCALERA NEWS**

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Edited by R.W. (Bob) Parsons

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**MEETINGS &
SPECIAL EVENTS**

June 5 Michaels at Shoreline
Regular meeting
August 7 Michaels at Shoreline
Regular Meeting
September 24 Golf Tourney

**ERA NATIONAL
CONFERENCE REPORT**

Several of our members attended the ERA National Conference late in April. The conference was a great success, the weather cooperated reasonably, and the audience got their money's worth "in spades."

There are those who commented that Ray Hall lacked some of the fire he usually demonstrates. He was carrying the burden of knowing that he was to visit the Mayo Clinic for further surgery necessary to correct an aneurysm that has been giving him fits for some time now. He has subsequently had one of two operations scheduled. After reading his latest communiqué, we gather that he is not home free as yet. We'll keep you posted.

There was a lot to cover at the Conference. Your editor took a small ream of pictures, supplemented by a large ream taken by Pam Machado, a professional photographer sponsored by Quadrep. They posted a large number of pictures on their web site, www.quadrep.com and we have posted a very lengthy special report on the ERA Northern California Chapter web site, www.ncalera.org. Just click on Chapter Activities and you'll see the report.

It took some time to figure out how to present all those pictures in such a way that would be usable. We think we have it now but it requires time to select, edit and collate all those pictures! We'll be continuing our work on "The Gallery" as time permits. Just drop in from time to time to see where we are that day.

NEWS AND VIEWS

We have been talking with several of our rep friends, mainly to get a feel for what's happening in our world. Generally speaking, cash flow is the pits. One rep indicated that they were down 40% from last year. Nobody has enjoyed the large number of visiting principals over the past few months. But most everybody we have spoken with admits that customers have hit bottom and seem more "up." Inventories are being whittled away. Engineering activity is increasing daily. In short, if you can stand the heat for a few more months, life will be pleasant again.

Part of the challenge the year 2001 presents is the very fresh memory of what was a banner year -- Y2K was a winner for a most reps. Even though 2000 was our last year of business, we ended up having a tax problem. Here's an easy way to put things in the right perspective:

Keep a running tally of your cash flow over five years. It is a simple set up in Excel or like database. Put the total of each year in a cell, add them up and then divide by five. Tally this average as a part of an on-going flow chart. To get this right, you need to start the tally ten years ago, using year five as the first trend total. As you add years, you drop off the oldest year. When complete, you graph the entire result and you can readily see whether or not your trend line is reflecting the growth you are seeking.

If you haven't been in business for ten years, you can still plot trends. It is just obvious that the more years you can plot, the more accurate these things become. You can use similar techniques to do trends on profits, a given principal's performance, that of a salesperson, bookings, just about anything that has numbers attached to them that are changing from year-to-year.

☀ In the meantime, plan on attending our next meeting. We are going to have a very interesting speaker, Jeanne Bellew, President and CEO of Hecht and Associates, Inc. Ms Bellew comes to us upon the recommendation of Lon Hudson, CPMR, who is participating in one of their advanced programs. You



Bob Parsons, Editor

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will have received an announcement that will contain all the details of her talk.

This meeting could be invaluable since the main thrust of her presentation will be to follow new ideas and to rid yourself of old thinking. We liked her comment about old axioms being obsolete. She says:

- *Hard Work* does not pay off, except with fatigue.
- *A positive attitude* does not mean customers (internal or external) will be satisfied.
- *Copying or mimicking* others or learning from experts only ensures that we will be “behind the curve” in our performance and operate at high cost to our companies and ourselves.
- *Experience* requires too much time to build and quickly becomes obsolete.

Virtually all our communications are now via the internet.

Be there. You will be glad you came.

☀ By the time you read this, your editor will have completed a full year in his new role of Chapter Office Manager. It has been a rather bumpy ride, to say the least. Our hats are off to Marie Lape, who has on numerous occasions come to our rescue when trying to find things. The time between calls has become more lengthy, but then one might expect that.

Some of the things we have accomplished can certainly stand review. We welcome any input from the readership as to ways that the job can be made more efficient. Some moves, for instance:

Virtually all our communications are now via the internet.

- This newsletter is published in .pdf format, allowing us to attach it to an e-mail. Most find this an improvement, but some still have difficulty.
- All announcements are made via e-mail.
- Practically all documents associated with the daily operation of the Chapter are stored on the computer.

We regularly print a Black & White Edition for mailing

to our retired members and those few who manage to exist without the Internet.

Actually, we encourage readers to view the color edition, since the pictures turn out so much better. Black and white is better than nothing, but color is better.

HERE IS AN INTERESTING MEMO FROM STEVE ROSS, OUR DIRECTORY CHAIRMAN:

Approximately 2000 directories were printed and distributed to members, distributors and ERA manufacturer members. The balance will be mailed to manufacturers and customers who ask. As the quantity of the directories printed declines, so too, has our chapter subsidy. It is possible that the directory will be self sustaining in 2002! Data for next year's directory will be solicited in September. As a final note, I would greatly appreciate another member stepping forward to assist me so that at an appropriate time, I can fade away with grace! Although the pay is poor, the task is enjoyable and the hours are flexible. If you may be interested, please call me at (408) 988-8111. Thanks.

Steve Ross, Directory Chair

[WESCON Celebrates 50th Anniversary!](#)

50 Years! In today's technology driven society where product life cycles of 2-3 years are a lifetime, Wescon is set to celebrate 50 years of service to the electronics community *Wescon/2001*. will take place *October 16-18 at the San Jose Convention Center*. Wescon/2001 will feature over 1,000 exhibits and an IEEE sponsored conference. In addition to Wescon's traditional focus on component technology, special focus areas include test & measurement, power components and cutting edge, electronic products from today's hottest entrepreneurial firms. Mark your calendar and make plans to attend this year's event. FREE exhibit floor registration is available at www.wescon.com or call 800-877-2668.



Steve Ross



THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Okay, so nobody can hide these days. I know that the economy is down, but I look on the bright side. This downturn has brought me closer to my principals. Never before can I remember having the time to fill out all those monthly call reports. Some of my principals figure, "Since it is sooooo slow..."

Suddenly, all of our days are filled with territory visits from people we have never seen. We never realized how popular we were with sales managers that we had never met. Oh, and the sales promotions we have been reading have been very enticing. Indeed, these are exiting times.

But just how excited can a Rep get while working two to three times as hard for orders that are just not coming. It gets increasingly frustrating when you are doing everything you can possibly do not to sink with the economy, but you have no control. Not that we ever had control in the first place. But at least our hard work in the past paid off in a manner where we thought we had some control. At least enough control to forecast growth for our companies and be within ten to twenty percent of target. We could plan our next vacation without worrying that we might lose a line while we are gone.

When it is slow, everything becomes visible. Suddenly, contracts are looked over more closely, time spent in the field is questioned more frequently, account base knowledge is tested, and revenue is spread more thinly. What can we do to ensure that we are employing every strategical method of protecting our businesses from this glaring visibility? What was once transparent is now in the forefront. Are we doing everything right? No. Is there more that we should know? Yes!

The "more" of what we should know is residing in the minds of the greatest pool of strategic knowledge in Northern California. Simply stated, it is our own Chapter members. Where else could any rep go to get the best understanding, counseling, and workable knowledge than from our own members? It behooves



us all to gather, share, guide, and learn to better strengthen our own businesses. From small Rep firms to large, we can all learn from each other. Whether it is regarding employee compensation, hiring and firing, databases, dealing with an (your word here) principal, or just networking with others to see how NOT alone we are out there. We can gain valuable knowledge from one another.

With this in mind, the Northern California Chapter of the Electronic Representative's Association has created the REP OWNER'S COUNCIL. It will be a volunteer council that will meet bi-monthly at a disclosed location during lunchtime, to discuss, in a round table forum, the various topics that make a Rep firm successful. The attendees by nature will be their own council. Lunch will be provided and education will be served. The number attending will be limited only by the facility selected and then it will be first come – first served.

Other Chapters across the country have similar programs and they have proven to be fabulously successful. I know that our Chapter will take this forum to its highest level. This will become a member benefit that has no limits, because we will take from it only what we give.

DONATE A PHONE

By Tom Birks

Luana Crotteau of CG Associates suggested that we put the word out to fellow Reps that a tax-saving program is available to accept donations of your old cellular phones. You set the value and the donation is tax-deductible. It is for a good cause, as you will see. I investigated the program and have ordered a kit that contains all of the necessary information to collect the phones donated by our members. I will be setting up a display at one of our future meetings, which will contain the appropriate forms to recognize donation of the phones. It will also describe how to send the phones to me for collection.



About the Program

The Donate a Phone campaign is designed to collect wireless phones that are no longer used by consumers.

This includes old bag phones, PCS phones, or any other cellular phones. The program is an expansion of the Call to Protect program, a national educator and philanthropic initiative aimed at combating domestic violence. Donate a Phone was founded by the Wireless Foundation, Motorola, and the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence in 1999. Victims of domestic violence receive donated wireless phones and matching airtime. Call to Protect wireless phones are pre-programmed to dial 9-1-1 and one non-emergency number to enable a victim to summon help with the push of a button and assist in the transition from a life of fear to a feeling of protection 24 hours a day. The

Wireless Foundation is a qualified 501© (3) charitable organization, therefore, your used wireless phone(s) and any peripherals are tax deductible.

The Northern California Chapter of ERA is one of the most active chapters within the national association and it has won numerous awards for its service to the electronics industry. The chapter's success is a direct result of the interest and the effort put forth by its members and the volunteers and officers listed below.

2001 - Chapter Officers, Chairpersons & Directors

Executive Committee

Officers			Area	Telephone	Fax
President	Chris Jumper	JEM Electronics	(925)	417-1033	417-1458
Senior Vice President	Brian Everhart	EVERHART, Inc.	(408)	865-0344	865-0343
Treasurer	Bill Hegepeth	Z-Tech Sales.	(408)	257-5371	257-5651
Secretary	Chris Straub	Straub Associates.	(650)	969-6060	964-6526
Membership VP	Tom Birks	Left Coast Ventures.	(408)	378-5620	378-8347

Division Vice Presidents:

Components/Materials; Assembly; Production	Doug Evans	Paxcell Group, Inc.	(925) (702)	963-1008	831-1367
Communications/ Computer Products	Eric Robinson	E. S. West	(408)	565-9050	565-9055
Instrumentation	Brian Levien	Sentech Measurements	(530)	792- 0175	792-0515
RF/Microwave	Tom Birks	Left Coast Ventures, Inc.	(408)	378-5620	378-8347
Sound, A/V, Security	Phil Kipnis	Pacific Coast Visions.com	(408)	988-1444	988-1707

Executive Committee (The following plus officers noted above)

Board of Directors:

Chairman of the Board	Bill Walsh	Westech Associates	(650)	961-1422	968-9898
Past President	Lon Hudson	Ross Marketing Assocs	(408)	988-8111	492-0197
Past President	Kevin Frost	Ross Marketing Assocs.	(408)	988-8111	492-0197
National Director	Jack Heidmiller	The Heidmiller Group	(650)	960-3933	390-0650
Alternate Director	Craig Smith	Prism Technical Sales	(408)	248-0700	248-2797
Director: ECI	Dick Foley	Ewing-Foley, Inc.	(408)	342-1200	342-1201
Secretary: ECI	Hugh Shyba	Shur Sales	(408)	399-7487	399-4767

Committee Chairpersons

Ambassador					
Ambassador	Tom Mollard	Life Member	(650)	968-1581	
Archivist	Jean Lape	J.E. Lape Company	(650)	345-3021	345-3952
Directory	Steve Ross	Ross Marketing Ass.	(408)	988-8111	492-0197
Education	Michael Onken	Bridge Marketing	(650)	827-3600	827-3609
Golf Tournament	Ron Jenkins	Westech Sales	(650)	961-1422	968-9898
Internet	Edward Blake	Edward Blake Assoc. Inc.	(408)	934-3955	956-9732
Newsletter	Bob Parsons	Chapter Office Manager	(408)	243-3372	246-4413

National officers

Chairman of the Board	Clark Moulthrop	Moulthrop Sales, Inc.	(510)	461-7100	461-7120
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Chapter Subsidiary

Pres., Services, Inc.	Bill Walsh	Westech Associates	(650)	961-1422	968-9898
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Chapter staff

Executive Director	Hugo Shane		(408)	243-3372	246-4413
Bus. Office Mgr.	Bob Parsons		(408)	243-3372	246-4413