



# NCALERA NEWS

**JANUARY-FEBRUARY**

**2003**

**WELCOME TO 2003!**

**Presidents Column**  
By Bill Hedgpeth

We believe the slate of officers this year can bring some excitement into ERA. Our objectives for 2003 are to have excellent meetings, beginning with the Brian Shirley presentation on February 27. We want these presentations to be beneficial to the entire chapter and possible new prospects for our chapter.



We will make the officer's meetings go smoothly and efficiently by holding some of them using teleconferencing. Since this is a volunteer organization, such meetings should not be a time drain nor create a handicap to committing time to get involved with ERA. Meetings will be run efficiently, with an objective and outline for every meeting so they are viewed as profitable time investments, well spent.

We feel we have generated a budget that is a working tool for the membership and it can be tracked for the first time. We have the officer slate that will allow us to increase membership. We offer potential members programs and networking abilities that are not available any where else in the Bay Area.

I look forward to the challenges of 2003 and welcome any input from our members.

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***EDITOR'S NOTE: Our first meeting of 2003 has been delayed due to a very special presentation. See the announcement on the next page.***

**NCALERA NEWS**

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R.W. (Bob) Parsons, editor

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We are privileged to have Brian Shirley as our speaker at the next meeting. This is held on a special date due to conflicts in scheduling. We tried to get him earlier but Southern California beat us to the punch. His subject is:

**BUYING . . .  
 SELLING . . .  
 MERGING . . .**

First presented at the annual ERA National Conference in Tampa last year, Brian has been busy traveling around the country giving this talk over and over.

If you have ever thought about this subject, have just finished a deal, or have been approached by another rep (or maybe even a principal) this is the meeting for you.

In his presentation, Brian covers a lot of territory, too much, obviously, for this announcement.

For the curious, look for answers to questions like those listed below:

- How do I find the opportunity?
- How do I determine the valuation of this deal?
- How do I structure the deal?
- What are the key ingredients for success?
- How do I make it stick?

You might even be asking yourself – WHY? This and lots more on February 27<sup>th</sup> at Michaels at Shoreline. Watch for the announcement!

## NEWS & VIEWS

By Bob Parsons

Last year, we started our very first column (Jan-Feb) with:

“Welcome to the New Year – 2002! We hope that it is a happy one for you all. It won’t have to strain much to far exceed 2001, that’s for sure. First business tanked and then -- 9-11!” It did turn out to be a better year and we wish you the best for 2003!



In this issue we begin by doing a recap of last year’s key News & Views points. We saw some dramatic changes and it isn’t going to stop, in our opinion. Reps took positive actions. They merged, moved into smaller quarters and spread their people around the territory by encouraging them to re-locate into their homes. But mostly, reps are working and selling harder!

Did you take time to review the ERA White Paper, “Split Influence Recommendations for the Electronics Industry?” This writer was and still is impressed. The creators of this paper certainly did their homework. We liked the last page where they discuss attitudes. They do not call it that, but one doesn’t have to read far to sense the piercing sincerity of the message.

Sometimes it is almost impossible to track sales, particularly items of a commodity nature. Yet often the same design-in selling job is required as it is for the more “engineered” products. We continue to hear suggestions, some unprintable, but one continues to pop up, “Fee for Service!”

Reps have been subjected to unfair practices for a long time, too long to accept the façade of fair play when in fact there is rarely any change in the principal’s attitude. In fact, once in place, a policy of fee-for-service could open the door to new kinds of “extra” service demands.

We kicked this around during the year, even seriously considered holding an owner’s forum on the subject. It was resolved that the subject is part of a problem that is so broad and complex that looking at this small part of it would be less than productive.

Review the March-April edition and you'll read about one of the more unpleasant aspects of our business, computer help-desks. After a few biting comments about service in general (Bad!) we laid high praise on Intuit (Quicken; Quick Books, etc.) and their "Premier Service." As it turns out the service has been changed to become less comprehensive and – oh, yes – the price was raised -- considerably.

Now, you might ask yourself, how far can this go? We have arrived at the conclusion that, even if they wanted to, they really can't afford to do any better.

Technicians demand training, must be articulate at fielding questions, and require a certain amount of tenacity. And, technicians cost money.

Later in the year we observed: The difficulty of getting good service for your computer/network systems is compounding. Do not be surprised if you call a hardware/software vendor for telephone support and end up in a foreign country. Large ISP's such as Earthlink have support offices all over the country, so that has not been a surprise. One never knows from where a Pacific Bell (SBC) service response is coming. Now, however, we note that Dell is sending all their support requests to India and Linksys is using a group in the Philippines! We haven't heard anyone say that it works all that well, as one might imagine. (Time wounds all heals?)

One answer to the service challenge might be for every rep to have at least one expert on staff with good knowledge of the "system" installed. Outside services are usually expensive as all get out and it is sometimes not clear at all as to their value. We can almost visualize the day when a prospective inside person's qualifications will start with an interview discussion on the applicant's computer/network knowledge. It is also reasonable to expect that these individuals will cost the rep more (or less, depending upon your perspective).

It is either that or work one's way through the trial-and-error process until a suitable marriage is made between a rep's system's maintenance needs and a local outside service person/company. And, if you are smugly content with your current condition, just remember how many marriages end up in divorce – or worse.

*One answer to the service challenge might be for every rep to have at least one expert on staff with good knowledge of the "system" installed.*

We finished the first quarter with comment about our chapter's Educational Trust where the monies received from the sale of WESCON are deposited.

We wound up the second quarter in typical summer doldrums. The big news was the up-grading of our web site. *What was then an announcement is now a reality.*

*Why not take advantage of every opportunity that is available to make your investment pay?*

Most members have been good about getting their information posted. We have received compliments from principals who are calling for assistance in finding reps. Members who have not signed on are reminded that this is a service that you pay for with your annual dues. Why

not take advantage of every opportunity that is available to make your investment pay? Sign on today!

The **product/company/rep cross-reference** that proved to be an insurmountable task in the printed directory is now a reality on the new web site. Not only are such pages present, the program structure is such that when you make a change, the cross-reference data changes automatically.

Not a part of News & Views, but a feature in the September-October edition was the Palm Pilot Workshop, organized and set up by Michael Onken (right, above), our educational chairman. We'll have more of these meetings, we are certain.



The third quarter gave us the first **OWNER'S FORUM** of 2002, a success. Mark Conley, our National Director, (right, below) did a repeat of his presentation at the National conference in Tampa last April. The subject was originally listed as NBO (New Business Opportunities) reporting. Mark incorporated additional data he picked up from fellow conference speakers that enhanced this presentation immensely.



We received very positive input while attending the second presentation of Chip Doyle, given September 17. Chip, Director of the local Sandler Sales Institute operation, targeted the sales person, inside and out. He asked, "How do we use our time more effectively?" We can't begin to review the article (August September) but we do recall the comments of one of the senior reps present, one with many years of experience in the field, commented that he liked the presentation because much

of it was a review of things he had learned (*the hard way, we suspect*) over the years.

The last quarter was not very eventful unless you overlook the big event of the year, a personal visit by our National Executive VP, Ray Hall (right). His visit occupied a special issue covering the meeting of November. The write up is posted on our web site, as are all the issues of the past year. Feel free to re-visit them at your leisure.



Finally, we were saddened by the departure of our former President, Brian Everhart (right, below). Brian decided to devote more time to his business and family, choosing to cut back on extra activities. We note that he was active during his time as president. During his tenure, his administration managed to:

- Re-write and update the Chapter by-laws
- Move and upgrade the ERA Office
- Discontinue the ERA hard copy membership directory and move it onto the website
- Discontinue Services Inc.
- Visit the ERA LA Chapter and benchmark some of their progressive ideas
- Produce a handbook for incoming Chapter Officers



His parting words are, “It was with extreme pride that I was able to serve the ERA as president in 2002. It goes without saying that the job was made much easier because of the capable staff I served with.”

Thanks, Brian, from all. God Speed.

Finally, we don’t like everything we see and hear about “how things are” in 2003. We worry about the war on terrorism and are thankful that we are not doing a lot of traveling these days. But we have faith that the country’s leaders will get us through this as well as the threats of war with Iraq and North Korea.

We are pleased that the stock market is acting in a more normal manner. Among other things, the current administration is making noises indicating that they are aware of the need for a solid economy.

**We really do hope that 2003 is a banner year for you all.**

The Northern California Chapter of ERA is one of the more active chapters within the National Association. We have received numerous national awards to prove it. Our success is a direct result of the interest and effort put forth by its members and the officers listed below, all volunteers.

**CHAPTER OFFICERS, CHAIRPERSONS & DIRECTORS**

<b>OFFICERS</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>COMPANY</b>	<b>A/C</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>FAX</b>
Chairman of Board	Chris Jumper	<b>JEM Electronics</b>	925	417-1033	417-1458
President	Bill Hedgpeth	Z-Tech Sales	408	257-5371	257-5651
Vice President	John Latimer	Luscombe Eng.	408	955-9515	955-9581
Treasurer	Eric Robinson	ES-West	408	565-9050	565-9055
Secretary	Phil Kipness	Pacific Coast Ventures.com	408	988-1444	988-1707
Membership VP	Michael Onken	Bridge Mktg.	650	827-3600	827-3609
Special Interest Groups VP	Chris Straube	Straube Assoc. Inc.	650	969-6060	964-6526
Past President	Bill Walsh	Westech Assoc.	650	961-1422	968-9898
Past President	Lon Hudson	Ross Marketing	408	988-8111	492-0197
National Director	Mark Conley	O'Donnell Assoc.No.	408	456-2950	943-8243
Alt.National Dir.	Lon Hudson	Ross Marketing	408	988-8111	492-0197

**DIVISION VICE PRESIDENTS**

Communications	Hugh Shyba	Shur Sales	408	399-7487	399-4767
Components/Materials	Alan Kuczer	Prism Technical Sales	408	248-0700	248-2797
Computer Products	David Barrios	Dali Technical Sales	650	359-3982	359-3996
Instrumentation	Brian Levien	Sentech Measurements	530	792-0175	792-0515
RF/Microwave	Charlie Dickinson	C/G/ Associates	510	790-1193	790-1383
SAVE	Phil Kipness	Pacific Coast Visions.com	408	988-1444	988-1707

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Ambassador	Hugo Shane	Executive Director	408	243-3372	246-4413
Ambassador	Tom Mollard	Llife Member	650	968-1581	
Education	Michael Onken	Bridge Marketing	650	827-3600	827-3609
Golf Tourney	Ron Jenkins	Westech Associates	650	961-1422	968-9898
Internet	Edward Blake	Edward Blake Assoc. Inc.	408	934-3955	956-9732
Scholarship	Brian Trankle	Jack Logan Memorial Fund	650	343-2416	
Distributor Coord.	Shirley Burres	Recht Associates	650	964-6321	964-8165
Nominating	Chris Jumper	JEM Electronics	925	417-1033	417-1458
Newsletter	Bob Parsons	Chapter Office Manager	408	243-3372	246-4413

**CHAPTER STAFF**

Executive Director	Hugo Shane	408	243-3372	246-4413
Chapter Office Manager	Bob Parsons	408	243-3372	246-4413