

Chapter News

TRAVIS WILLIAMS, MEMBER, CPRA • PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRYAN HAWKINS, 1999 CPRA CHAPTER PRESIDENT

APCO Bulletin

CPRA Celebrates 65 Years

With many decked out in period attire reminiscent of the mid-1930s, members of the California Public-Safety Radio Association (CPRA), their spouses and special guests enjoyed an evening of history and merriment Dec. 10, 1999. That night, APCO International's 13th chapter paid tribute to its past, as part of the annual officer installation banquet.

A decorated and spacious banquet facility at The Grand at Willow Street in Long Beach (Calif.) was the elaborate setting for virtually non-stop entertainment and activities. Professional table magician Carl Wilson displayed bewildering sleight-of-hand tricks, and Fran Newman accompanied dinner with exquisite piano stylings. Comic ventriloquist Joe Gandleman performed, and "Trilogy" gave a powerful musical presentation, recreating the fast-paced tempos and harmonies of the 1930s and '40s.

Arriving guests first toured the CPRA "Mini-Museum," which included displays of legacy wireless communications equipment, as well as a collection of reproductions, narratives and photographs detailing the history of the chapter and APCO.

Attendees also received complimentary reproductions of the April 1945 BULLETIN, which heralded CPRA's unanimous decision to affiliate with the fast-growing national organization, and the pocket-sized 1947 edition of the CPRA's "Official Code Book."

Among those on hand to congratulate CPRA on the occasion of its 65th anniversary was APCO International President Joe Hanna.

"The CPRA has long been a leader among chapters," Hanna said. "The chapter has been blessed with great leadership. Without question, any strengths I may have as president were learned from CPRA's 'native son,' Jack Keating. Clearly, the contributions of

Gary Gray, Henry Richter, Dave Buchanan and others have had considerable impact on APCO's filings before the FCC.

"I firmly believe the chapter is the cornerstone of APCO," Hanna continued. "President-elect Lyle Gallagher has been assigned the task of working with chapters to enhance the future of APCO. The CPRA chapter provides President-elect Gallagher with a prime example of how a chapter should be managed."

1999 Chapter President Bryan Hawkins took inspiration from the early activities of APCO and CPRA, as well as the similarities between "then" and "now."

"As you read through the minutes of APCO's first conference in 1935, or the first APCO BULLETIN published that same year, you notice many similarities to our present activities and undertakings," Hawkins said. "It's no coincidence both APCO and CPRA trace their roots to 1935. That was a benchmark year in the evolution of two-way radio systems connecting police and fire stations with units in the field."

Also present to commemorate the event were Barbara Lawrence, corporate advertising/production manager, representing the APCO International staff, and APCO International Second Vice President Glen Nash, who holds membership both in CPRA and the Northern California APCO chapter. Past APCO presidents Gary David Gray and Jack Keating also attended.

In summing up the success of the banquet, Hawkins said he believes adding a touch of history to such an event heightens member interest. He recommended the same approach to other chapters. "Our business is public safety communications," Hawkins said. "It only makes sense we should remember and recognize the people, events and technologies that evolved over the past 65 years as we enter a new century with new challenges." ■



Guests arriving at CPRA's 65th anniversary celebration were treated to a "mini museum" exhibit which featured communications equipment, old photos and other artifacts dating back to the late 1930s.

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Dave Buchanan, Larry Schwartz and Gary Gray in the exhibit.

New Officers Installed for 2000

CPRA's leadership for the year 2000, led by incoming Chapter President Annette Allen, had the honor and distinction of having the oath of office administered by President Hanna. Joining Allen on the Executive Committee are President-elect Ernest Gallo, City of Torrance; Vice President David Buchanan, San Bernardino County; Treasurer Joe Parrino, City of Montebello; Secretary Gina Purvis, California Highway Patrol; Executive Council Delegate Garrett Mayer, Los Angeles County; and Sergeant-at-Arms John Sarkissian, Riverside County. Past Chapter presidents Bryan Hawkins, City of Long Beach, Jim Acosta, City of Downey and Ralph Blount, City of Torrance, will serve as directors for 2000.

Chapter President Allen said she looks forward to the chapter's continued growth during her term of office. "I hope we can continue the course that has been set in previous years by both recognizing and providing training for dispatchers," Allen said. "It is my intent to encourage expanded functions with our other segments in mind, such as technical and management."

CPRA Joined APCO in 1945

On March 30, 1945, less than six weeks before V-E Day, more than 30 representatives of Southern California law enforcement agencies gathered to vote on a recommendation that the California Police Radio Association (CPRA) become affiliated with the national Associated Police Communications Officers (APCO).

Chapter Secretary H.B. "Hersh" Calvert of the Pasadena Police Department reported on CPRA's participation in the APCO conference held in Toledo, Ohio. Calvert praised APCO's accomplishments and the long spirit of cooperation between CPRA and APCO, two factors which figured prominently in a recommendation that the best interests of CPRA would be best served by becoming an APCO chapter.

On the subsequent motion of Robert H. Fox, Bakersfield Police Department, seconded by Glenn Lewis, San Diego Police Department, CPRA's membership voted unanimously in favor of affiliation. On April 7, 1945, the California Police Radio Association became APCO's 13th chapter, extending the growing national organization's reach from "border to border, coast to coast." APCO Secretary Ero Erickson, Chicago Police Department, under the authority of Association

President Frank W. Walker, East Lansing (Mich.) Police Department, signed the national charter.

At the time the charter was granted, CPRA's leadership consisted of President Walter E. "Bud" Whiteman, Orange County Sheriff's Office, Secretary H.B. "Hersh" Calvert of Pasadena, and Lt. Robert L. Amsbury, Whittier Police Department, who headed up the committee that studied APCO affiliation.

President Whiteman was an amateur radio operator. His call sign (W6VT), originally issued in 1928, now resides with the Orange County Employees' Amateur Radio Club.

Although CPRA's decision to become an APCO chapter was a major milestone in the chapter's evolution, the history of CPRA dates back a decade earlier. The year of birth of both APCO and CPRA was 1935.

The Northern California chapter of APCO – now known as NAPCO – was one of the original chapters of APCO. In 1935 it was known as the Northern California Police Communications Officers Association (NCPCOA). As far back as the 1930s, CPRA and NCPCOA held regular "North-South" gatherings where the separate organizations would congregate at Fresno, the mid-point of the state, to discuss mutual problems. That tradition remains very much alive today. ■

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