

# Sierra Signals



Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club  
Auburn, CA  
An ARRL Special Service Club

<http://www.sf-arc.org/>

JANUARY 2010

PO BOX 1005. NEWCASTLE. CA



**At the key of SFARC**

## OFFICERS

### PRESIDENT

Al Martin, NI2U  
[amartin4@wavecable.com](mailto:amartin4@wavecable.com)

### VICE PRESIDENT

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[ae6lr@yahoo.com](mailto:ae6lr@yahoo.com)

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### REPORTERS

Satellites: Greg, KO6TH

History: Gary, KQ6RT

Misc Radio: Fred, K6DGW

## RESOURCES

### REPEATERS

145.430 (-0.6 MHz/PL 162.2)

440.575 (+5.0 MHz/PL 94.8)

223.860 (-1.6 MHz/PL 100.0)

### CLUB NET

Thursdays, 7:30PM, W6EK/R

145.430

### CLUB MEETINGS

Second Friday of the month,

7:30PM at the Library, 350

Nevada St, Auburn CA

### CLUB BREAKFAST

Last Sat of the month at

Susie's Café, Cirby at Riverside,

Roseville - 8:00 AM

### NET CONTROL OPS

Dave Jenkins, WB6RBE

Gary Cunningham, KQ6RT

Norm Medland, W6AFR

Casey McPartland, W7IB

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Matthew Diridoni, KC6RUO

916-749-3032

[matteod@comcast.net](mailto:matteod@comcast.net)

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## Calendar of Events

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| January 1      | Straight Key Night   |
| January 2-3    | ARRL RTTY Round-up   |
| January 3      | Kids Day   |
| January 9      | Club Meeting   |
| January 23-25  | ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes   |
| January 30     | Club Breakfast   |
| April 30-May 2 | <b>EMCOMMWEST</b><br>Reno, Nevada<br><a href="http://www.emcommwest.org/">http://www.emcommwest.org/</a> |

**June 26 & 27 ARRL Field Days**

**For more information and rules on the ARRL activities listed above, go to:**  
<http://www.arrl.org/contests/calendar.html?year=2010>

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**SFARC CLUB MEETING JANUARY 9**  
"Tech Ten" subject to be announced  
Bring a friend  
See you there!

**We encourage members to receive Sierra Signals via email to save the Club the cost of reproduction and mailing**

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# Miscellaneous Radio

By Fred Jensen, K6DGW

## SOTA

It often amazes me what hams will come up with to provide new and interesting ways to enjoy the hobby. The Islands On The Air [IOTA] program was created by the RSGB a number of years ago and is very popular [[www.rsgbiota.org/info/index.php](http://www.rsgbiota.org/info/index.php)] The basic concept was that islands would be registered and given an IOTA number ... a two-character alphabetic designator identifying the continental area, and a three digit serial number. There are some rules as to what constitutes an "island," such as it has to be in open sea [Angel Island and Alcatraz are not IOTA islands since they're inside SF Bay, however the Farallon Islands are NA-178 since they're in the Pacific].



You obtain points in the program – that would be “programme” since it’s British – by either working islands, or putting islands on the air. Rick, K6VVA [the big guy on the right], a member of the No. Cal. Contest Club, and Mike, K9AJ, activated NA-178 several years ago. The Farallons are a wildlife refuge owned by the Federal Fish and Wildlife Service, and administered by a non-profit wildlife foundation. It took Rick a couple of years with major help from his Congressman to finally get permission to travel there and operate for 3 days, and the entire expedition was a huge undertaking.

They had to take their antennas down at night lest some endangered late night bird crash into them. At Rick’s presentation to the contest club, the most prevalent bird species in the photos was seagull which none of us knew was endangered [been to a landfill lately?], but we’ll take the Farallon Keeper’s word for it.

In the IOTA program, the Farallons were in the top ten of wanted islands worldwide, having last been activated in the early 90’s. And, it was only because once Rick decides to do something, he never gives up that they did finally

manage to get them on the air. The only access to the islands is either by sea or helicopter, and the marine access is hazardous and unsuitable for hams and their gear, so they flew. Helicopters are notoriously poor at lifting large payloads, so Rick and Mike had to balance the “What do we really need” with “What can we leave at home so this aircraft can actually take off.”

What does this have to do with SOTA? Well, as Rick found out, getting to islands can be a difficult, long, and costly task. So, again in the UK, a separate programme has been launched [Mar 2002] -- “Summits On The Air” -- and it is catching on rapidly in Europe. Summits do not generally require a boat although a helicopter might be useful for some, you are permitted to drive to the summit [although operation from a vehicle is not allowed], and the rules [[www.sota.org.uk](http://www.sota.org.uk)] make allowances for situations where operation from the exact summit point is not physically possible. In the W6 SOTA Association, that allowance is 80 vertical feet.

A major rule for summit qualification is what they call “prominence.” Roughly speaking, this is the distance the summit sticks up above surrounding terrain, although the precise definition is much more complex. Years ago, I heard this property of a mountain called “tallness,” but prominence seems to be the accepted term now. A summit must have a prominence of 500 ft to qualify in the W6 SOTA Association.

California has been divided into several groups and a number of summits identified already. You will recognize many, they’re the ones along the Pacific Crest Trail, and were chosen from an atlas [[www.peaklist.org/CAMtnatlas/CAMtnatlas.htm](http://www.peaklist.org/CAMtnatlas/CAMtnatlas.htm)]. We are in the Whitney Group, Pyramid Cell in the atlas. It turns out that prominence is a major player in orometry, the study and classification of terrain features which is closely related to topology, the mathematics of surfaces. It also turns out that



ometry is a much more complex subject than I ever thought it would be. There’s a section on Orometric Theory on the peaklist site if you’re interested.



I've been to the summit of Mt. Whitney as a teenager [no radio, they were fairly big and heavy then] and there is no doubt left that I won't be returning. However, there are a number of accessible summits around us here in the Sierra. The first one I checked was Bald Mtn east of Georgetown which is the home of two of the VHF and UHF repeaters used on the WSER and Tevis each year. There is a dirt road to the top, and the atlas lists its prominence at 512 ft, just over the SOTA minimum. If I can get the W6 Association manager to add Bald to the W6 SOTA list and give it a designator, I might do the Flight of the Bumblebees contest from there next July with my K2 and Buddipole. I have been doing them from Overlook Park in Auburn, but I'm getting a little tired of the same place each year.

So, if you are already at the top of the DXCC Honor Roll and have your walls covered with winning certificates, SOTA might just be the ticket for you. Many summits around us can be accessed for the cost of gasoline to get there, and radios and batteries are small and light enough now to make backpacking possible. There is a SOTAalert section on the UK website where you can post your summit activation plans and read about others.

And, here's a quick puzzle: Anyone who has driven up I-5, come around the corner and seen Mt. Shasta just sticking up from the valley floor has an appreciation for the concept of "tallness" or prominence. Mt. Whitney is the highest point in the lower 48, however it is surrounded by many peaks almost as high, and looking at the crest of the Sierra, it is hard to actually pick it out. This is also true of Mt. Everest, but not a problem with Shasta! So, if "tallness" means the "vertical distance from the peak to the lowest surrounding parts of the earth's surface," what is the tallest mountain on the planet? Answer next month.

I hope everyone had a good holiday season,

73, Fred K6DGW

## Meeting Minutes

December 11, 2009

December is the traditional Christmas Dinner for the radio club. Instead of being called to order, those attending were called to dinner at 6:30 PM by Vice President Al Martin, N12U.

Members and guests were treated to a sumptuous feast prepared by Head Chef Debbie Cunningham, KF6LXN, and her staff of volunteers. Debbie has undertaken this task for the last several years and seems to surpass her accomplishments each year. Members brought there specialty side dishes and deserts.

As the meal was being finished, Santa dropped by, and dropped is the operative road. One would have thought he was lost except that he brought well deserved gifts for a select few of the members.

After Santa was lucky enough to find his way out, his vision might have been a little impaired, Al, N12U, presented certificates to several members for service to the club this year. In addition, two plaques were awarded for long time services to the club. The first was to Bob Boeckman, WA6ULL, who was present to receive his award. The second was to Matt Diridoni, KC6RUO, who unfortunately was unable to attend and will receive his award at a later time. The gathering concluded at about 8:50 as people started to head home, except for the clean up crew.

Respectfully submitted, Wayne Stilwell, W6DT  
Secretary

### SFARC PAST PRESIDENTS AND LIFE MEMBER SAY HELLO!

Hello from the North East corner of this great country, Greg Huttula, KC6LOE, Jan Huttula, KC6LIX and Geri Metke, K6GKR (Silent Key W6SUP's XYL.)

Since moving to New Hampshire ten years ago we shamefully have not done much with our radio heritage. First, it was due to move and then due to the loss of Greg KC6LOE's dream job and living 8 hours away from our NH home. More employment uncertainties followed along with new job woes. When things leveled out, we had house repairs and renovations. Then Bob W6SUP's illness and passing which was followed by Geri, K6GKR's health issues, and moving to New Hampshire, and much more.



We have finally begun to settle into our New Hampshire home, yet knowing retirement for Greg KC6LOE is lurking. Will it bring us back to Roseville, CA or another QT? Will we be able to get back on the air? We will let you know when we know. We wish you all a prosperous 2010! Come for a visit, you are always welcome.

**Editors Note:** Janet Huttula, KC6LIX served SFARC as President in 1993, Greg Huttula, KC6LOE served as President in 1997. Janet's Mother is SFARC Life Member Geri Metke, K6GKR. They keep in touch with SFARC and receive a monthly copy of Sierra Signals by e-mail.

DON'T FORGET TO CHECK OUT OUR WEB PAGE

<http://www.sf-arc.org/>



HOME Meetings Breakfast Repeaters Nets Officers Newsletters Member Application

Welcome to the Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club's Website

Please use the navigation buttons above to view our site.



### Local ARRL Exam Sessions

Courtesy of the ARRL

02-Jan-2010

**Sponsor:** UNSPONSORED

**Time:** 8:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)

**Contact:** LARRY R HODGE

(916)361-2476

**Email:** [LARRYHODGE2000@COMCAST.NET](mailto:LARRYHODGE2000@COMCAST.NET)

**VEC:** ARRL/VEC

**Location:** RALEY'S COMMUNITY EVENT CENTER

6845 DOUGLAS BLVD

GRANITE BAY, CA 95746

06-Feb-2010

**Sponsor:** UNSPONSORED

**Time:** 8:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)

**Contact:** LARRY R HODGE

(916)361-2476

**Email:** [LARRYHODGE2000@COMCAST.NET](mailto:LARRYHODGE2000@COMCAST.NET)

**VEC:** ARRL/VEC

**Location:** RALEY'S COMMUNITY EVENT CENTER

6845 DOUGLAS BLVD

GRANITE BAY, CA 95746

03-Apr-2010

**Sponsor:** UNSPONSORED

**Time:** 8:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)

**Contact:** LARRY R HODGE

(916)361-2476

**Email:** [LARRYHODGE2000@COMCAST.NET](mailto:LARRYHODGE2000@COMCAST.NET)

**VEC:** ARRL/VEC

**Location:** RALEY'S COMMUNITY EVENT CENTER

6845 DOUGLAS BLVD

GRANITE BAY, CA 95746

### VICE PRESIDENT NEEDS YOUR ASSISTANCE

This is a plea from your new Vice President. As a member I have always enjoyed the "Ten Tech" talks and the "Programs". As the new VP I discovered it is my job to coordinate all of this. Your help is requested. Any suggestions or requests about the content would be great, as would any volunteers to present these to the club. What are you interested in? Let me know.

Chuck Baker [ae6lr@yahoo.com](mailto:ae6lr@yahoo.com)



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Auburn, CA 95603  
(right next door to Midas)  
530.888.8483  
[dave@radiosupplyco.com](mailto:dave@radiosupplyco.com)



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Fri: 8:00-8:00  
Sat: 8:00-6:00  
Sun: 10:00-5:00  
Phone Number: 916.722.3300

### Larry Sutter is named the new Section Emergency Coordinator

Effective immediately, our new Section Emergency Coordinator is Larry Sutter, WD6FXR. Larry has big shoes to fill, following the several years of excellent service by Richard Cloyd, W06P, who asked to step down in January, 2010. Please give Larry your support and look to him for the leadership I know he can provide for Emergency Communications Coordination in our Section.

Section Manager: Ronald D. Murdock, W6KJ  
[w6kj@arrrl.org](mailto:w6kj@arrrl.org)





**2009 SFARCC CHRISTMAS PARTY**

More Photos are available thanks to George Simmons, KG6LSB.  
Go to the web address below.

<http://picasaweb.google.com/grsim1938/SFARCCChristmas2009?feat=email#>

SIERRA FOOTHILLS AMATEUR  
 RADIO CLUB  
 P.O. Box 1005  
 Newcastle, CA 95658

PLACE  
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 HERE

SIERRA FOOTHILLS AMATEUR RADIO CLUB  
 2010 Membership Application

**Please Print**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Call: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Associate Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Call: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Application: (Circle One)    New            Renewal

Member Dues: Circle Amounts That Apply.            Applications (for new members only) received in the middle of the year will be pro rated. Contact the President or Treasurer for exact rate.

Membership: (P)	\$22.00	Name Badge: (R)	\$7.00
Associate: (Q)	\$ 7.00	Repeater Donation: (S)	\$ _____
Auto Patch Donation: (T)	\$ _____	Newsletter Booster: (V)	\$ _____
Misc. Donation: (X)	\$ _____	Christmas Donation: (W)	\$ _____
<b>TOTAL: (Y)</b>		<b>\$ _____</b>	

OFFICE USE ONLY:		DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE	
Date: _____	Treasurer: _____	Secretary: _____	Roster: _____
Payment: _____	Check Number: _____	Cash: _____	