



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

February 2012

PO BOX 1005, NEWCASTLE, CA

At The Key of SFARC

PRESIDENT

Bob Brodovsky, KJ6MOS
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rkuepper@ymail.com

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Gary Martinez, N6UWQ
Jim Griffith, KI6AZH

FIELD DAY CHAIRMAN

Dave Hund, N6SHD

REPORTERS

Satellites: Greg, KO6TH
History: Gary, KQ6RT
Misc Radio: Fred, K6D6W
Sunshine: Richard WA6RWS
rkuepper@ymail.com

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

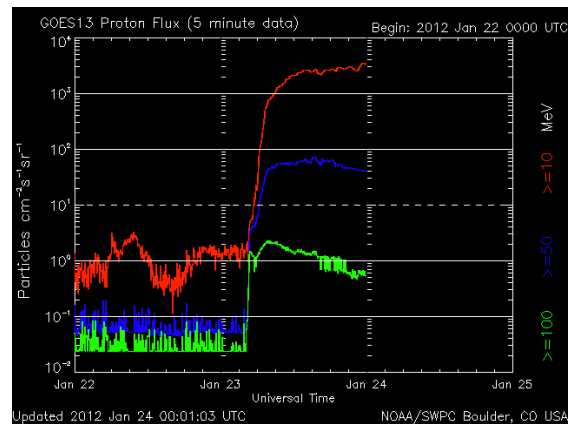
Fred Jensen, K6D6W
530.885.8251
k6dgw@foothill.net

WEBMASTER:

Carl A Schultz, WF6J

Sunspots Do Make A Difference!

Our nearest star has been getting pretty rowdy lately, generally good for HF propagation, sometimes not so much. On the 20th, we had an M9 X-Ray flare and then it belched a huge coronal mass ejection in our direction. It got to our magnetosphere early evening on the 22nd. Here's what happened in space:



High speed protons smashed into our magnetic field producing what had to have been a “Whoa!! What was that?” moment for the satellite.

Inside

President's Report

Board and General Meeting Minutes – 13 Jan

You Don't Want To Miss This

Fifty Years Ago At The SFARC

Contributions were a little thin this month.

Calendar of Events

Sat 28 Apr: Multiple Sclerosis Walk in Folsom

TBA May: CERA Enduro in Georgetown

Sat 20 Oct: Cystic Fibrosis bike ride-Newcastle vicinity

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

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Tweaks vs Changes



Summer of 2011; I was desperately trying to get out on 10 meters during the biggest solar cycle in decades without much success. I had an old scavenged G5RV and balun I had strung up on the roof, had just gotten a taste of HF, and with a few contacts in Florida. I had been stung by the DX bug. By November, I was pulling my hair out trying to get back with little to no success. With a technician ticket, I was limited to that tiny sliver of 10 meters, 28.300 to 28.500 as my entire transmitting window. I could only listen on the big boy bands.

Those two limitations caused me to make some significant changes. First, I studied hard and upgraded my license. Upon receiving my new paper, I was quick to run home and try out my new privileges on 10, 15, 20, and 40. I discovered several things, high SWR being at the top of the new list. With the help of Jim N6MED, Dennis WU6X, and a donated vertical R7 from Jim, we erected the second big change, this time in my back yard.

So last weekend, it was raining. I began contemplating why I'm just above the noise level on most of my contacts. I decided to tweak my signal by swapping out the feed line with some RG-8 I bought at the white elephant sale. Post feed line tweak, I've now got an SWR issue on 20meters. More tweaking to follow.

Like my own story, I see the club making changes and tweaks. Changes include a focus on revitalizing the membership, creating a fun, active learning environment and injecting new members to do the dirty work so you lifers can coast a bit. As for the tweaks, they are many, some small, some not so small.

I was a bit shocked and very happy by the turnout of visitors and new members at our January meeting. Along those same lines, Doc KG6YHH made a good point to all of us about stepping out of our comfort zones and engaging newcomers at club events. As spring approaches, we'll have ample opportunity to get together at various service events, and I'd like to have a few of our own social/radio events complete with wives, kids and maybe some BBQ.

The list of up and coming tweaks is numerous and varied. Our new yahoo group is starting to really buzz. If you haven't checked it out you should. We now own the w6ek.org domain, The website is getting a complete facelift. The club is sponsoring VE exams and a new Technician prep class. On the activity front, I'm starting up a unique 2 Meter emergency preparedness net starting the first week of February. This will be much more than a check in net and some really useful information will be exchanged. If you have a few minutes, check us out Wednesday evenings 1930 PST on the W6EK repeater.

73,

Bob, K6UDA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

13 January 2012

The January Board meeting commenced at 1800 hours at Elm Avenue Round Table Pizza in Auburn.

Officers present: President Bob Brodovsky-K6UDA; Vice President Al Martin-NI2U; Secretary Dennis Gregory-WU6X; Treasurer Richard Kuepper-WA6RWS; Directors Jim Griffith-KI6AZH and Chuck Baker-AE6LR were present; Gary Martinez-N6UWQ was absent. Webmaster Carl Schultz-WF6J was present as were guests Jim Carman-K6ARR and Marty Machado-W6TOC.

Discussions were held on the following **Old Business** subjects:

Official Club Acronym: There had been some confusion as to whether the acronym for our Club was SFARC or SF-ARC. Richard reported that officially we are known as SFARC, but for Internet purposes we use SF-ARC to distinguish us from the San Francisco Amateur Radio Club organization. This may now be a moot point with the new Internet URL of "W6EK.org", which will also change our email address accordingly.

By-Laws: A few more minor typos were found in the latest version of the approved By-Laws. The Board called for the

Secretary to post a corrected version on our Yahoo! Group site for the membership to review. The President will seek approval at the next General Meeting.

Welcome Kit: A “Welcome Letter” was created by the Secretary and posted on the Yahoo! Group site, and will automatically be sent to new members joining the Yahoo! Group. Other items TBD for hand-outs to license exam candidates, etc. See Membership Recruitment under New Business.

Membership Approval: The Board discussed a By-Law requirement for the Board to “review” new member candidates. The Club may also approve new member candidates according to the By-Laws, but need not be considered in the process if the Board approves the candidate first.

Property Officer: The Treasurer is also the Property Officer according to the By-Laws. Richard, WA6RWS has accepted the position and now has possession of the new oscilloscope and the antenna analyzer. Members needing to borrow either item should contact Richard.

Treasurer’s Report: Richard and the Board reviewed details of the Treasurer’s report. In summary, beginning balance as of the end of December was \$2,293.78. Expenses in December included Newsletter printing, Christmas Party prizes, Christmas Party venue rental, PG&E for the repeater, PO Box rent, AT&T for the repeater phone connection, and reimbursement to the Webmaster for purchase of the W6EK.org URL, totaling \$501.54. Income included membership applications/renewals totaling \$405.00. Net cash on hand is \$2,197.24. Richard reported that we have more money in the checking this year than the same time last year, and only 20 members were paid as of the date of the report.

Repeater Reports: Richard reports the repeater is in good service; however, the control system may have an issue, as it held the repeater in transmit recently. Richard will investigate and report next meeting. Richard also reported that he has been working with Casey to get the repeater Trustee position transferred. The President has the authority to appoint the repeater Trustee and so appointed Richard, WA6RWS. Richard will affect a payment of \$60 to the Northern Amateur Relay Council of California (NARCC) to update our repeater registration standing, which has lapsed. The Board requested someone more local to the repeater site to be in possession of a 2nd access key to the repeater; due to the proximity of his QTH and the site, Dennis-WU6X volunteered. Richard will secure a key and send to Dennis.

The Yaesu backup 2m repeater requires re-programming before it can go back up on the hill, now planned for February. The plans are to “channelize” the Yaesu repeater channels to 16 specific service functions; Richard to connect with Dave Fortenberry, NA6DF for assistance. The Yaesu repeater will become the primary repeater and the current Master2 will be moved to Jim-KI6AZH’s QTH as the backup. Also, Richard plans to change the current DC connections from screw connections to quick-release “Powerpole” type for safety. The 440 repeater needs a little work before it can go back up on the hill, as connectors were cut from cables when it was removed due to Pave Paws radar use of the 70cm band by Beale AFB and mandates by the Department of Defense (DOD).

Elmer Help: Carl reported there have been no new requests for assistance.

PIO Report: No report

Discussions were held on the following **New Business** subjects:

PayPal Membership Renewals: The Board discussed adding the convenience of PayPal membership renewal capability (with \$1 fee to offset PayPal handling charges). The Board voted approval and directed the Webmaster to implement the capability with planned updates to the website.

Club Logo: Examples were presented by the Webmaster for review by the Board. The Board discussed variations and the need to keep the original or change it. Versions should contain the old “patch” logo (currently missing from the header and stationary) and the ARRL Service Club logo. The Board approved keeping the original design, but adding the W6EK callsign (Carl to develop a sample). Discussion was also held about where patches could be made for distribution to the membership, and on creating a new, updated design that could be used on name tags.

Membership Recruitment: Bob led a discussion of how we might attract new members. One suggestion is to hand-out a questionnaire to license test candidates to determine their interests. This would enable the Club to focus services towards new member candidates, and encourage them to come to a meeting to find out more about the club. Richard suggested gathering this information would allow us to send candidates a current Newsletter, as well. AI-NI2U suggested we invite the VE to the next Board meeting to discuss recruitment ideas. Jim-KI6AZH and Richard suggested going to schools and getting teachers involved as a way to promote interest in ham radio in their students.

2m “Prepper” Net: Bob discussed his proposal to create a new interactive “net” on the Club repeater that would address “personal and family preparedness” in various areas (proposal submitted to Board for review). The Board reviewed the proposal submitted and had no objections to Bob proceeding with the creation of the new net. The net will not be affiliated with W6EK, but be “hosted” on the Club repeater. Bob will announce the new net at the General Meeting.

Website Updates: Carl reviewed the following changes to the Club website: change URL to W6EK.org and forward old URL new URL; links to Newsletters; removal of guest book due to non-use; club logo modifications to add call sign, wider format by moving “links” across the top, under the header; adding officers pictures; and promoting the Yahoo! Group site as a means of disseminating new information to members, the ability for polling, Club files, pictures, etc.

QRZ.com Updates: Dennis-WU6X will seek access to the QRZ.com website for W6EK and update the site with current information and references to our website, meetings, nets, etc.

Password Lists: Carl suggested we create and maintain a single list of passwords, account numbers, and other important Club information.

ARRL Updates: Al directed Richard to try and sign into the ARRL site to update Club Officer and trustee information. Currently, the address points to Newcastle due to our mailbox being associated with that address. The Board agreed to see if we can fix the ARRL registration to point to Auburn, so when people search for an amateur radio club in Auburn, ARRL (and Google) will point to Auburn instead of Newcastle. Changing the PO Box to an Auburn address was also discussed but, unfortunately, we just paid for another 2 years in Newcastle. Richard will try to update the ARRL reference.

Sacramento Valley Noon Net: Marty-W6TOC discussed his past involvement in representing the Club, but due to changes in priorities, was not able to keep providing this daily service. He suggested the Club ask for volunteers at the General Meeting to determine if a few people might rotate to participate in the net and report on behalf of SFARC.

Meeting adjourned at 1912 hours.

Dennis-WU6X
SFARC Club Secretary

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

13 January 2012

The SFARC General meeting for January commenced at 1930 hours at the Placer County Library in Auburn. Present were officers Bob Brodovsky-K6UDA, President; Al Martin-NI2U, VP; Dennis Gregory-WU6X, Secretary; Richard Kuepper-WA6RWS, Treasurer and Directors Chuck Baker-AE6LR and Jim Griffith-KI6AZH. Absent were Director Gary Martinez-N6UWQ and interim Newsletter editor Fred Jensen. Also present, Carl Schultz-WF6J, PIO/Webmaster.

Bob led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Officers, Directors, and approximately 40 members and guests were introduced.

REPORTS:

Past minutes: – The December meeting minutes were approved as published in the Newsletter.

Treasurer’s report: – Richard presented the Treasurer’s Report. Balance as of the end of December was \$2,293.78. Expenses in December totaled \$501.54. Income totaled \$405.00, leaving net cash on hand of \$2,197.24.

VE report: – Dave-NO6NO reported that we had 2 candidates taking exams; both passed as Technicians. Dave also reported he is two sessions into teaching a Tech class at Granite Bay Raley’s with a few more sessions scheduled on Saturday’s at 11am. There is no charge for the class and anyone is welcome.

Satellite report: – Greg-KO6TH reported on the PSAT APRS satellite developed by Bob Bruninga-WB4APR at the US Naval Academy Satellite Lab, and the issues with the solar cell battery charging system. The satellite was unfortunately turned off and everyone is waiting for the next chance to activate it. More information at: <http://www.aprs.org/psat.html>

Sunshine Report: – Richard reported George and Gene were doing great after heart-related issues. Casey is on the mend after shoulder repair, and NormW6AFR is also on the mend after back surgery.

Newsletter: –Richard checked with members on how they were receiving it. Larger versions do not work well for download with dial-up connection. Richard is looking at making the electronic version smaller. (Secretary’s note: the Newsletter can also be viewed “online” from our website.) The Club is still looking for a volunteer to pick up Newsletter development each month. A big “thank you” to Fred for his interim support.

Repeater: – Richard reported on an issue with the repeater locking up after Thursday’s Net, and thanked Al and Bob for going to the site to reset it manually. The Yaesu repeater is scheduled to start testing at the site sometime in February. The UHF machine is also scheduled to go back up soon. Email Richard if you would like to volunteer to assist. Richard was

appointed as the Trustee for the repeater and will be responsible for updating our status with the Northern Amateur Relay Council of California (NARCC).

OLD BUSINESS:

Christmas Party: – Bob and the club acknowledged and thanked those involved with putting the Party together. Their efforts and hard work made the Party a great success. Pictures are posted on the Club’s website.

New Member Approval: – Bob reported on the Board’s decision to review and approve new members to speed up the approval process. Previously, new member candidates had to wait until a General Meeting to be “voted” in. Our By-Laws support Board review and approval of new membership applications.

NEW BUSINESS:

Club Logo Updates: – Bob reported on Board discussion regarding the club logo. Plans are to use the current logo but add our Club callsign. Also, Carl and Bob have been working on an updated logo to use on name tags. More to come on this subject, as well as the cost for making nametags with a unique logo.

Membership Recruitment: – Bob reported on the Board’s discussion of marketing the Club to new licensees, especially to VE participants. Bob encouraged all members to approach new members and guests at meetings and breakfast events; introduce yourself, and make them feel welcome.

Preparedness Net: – Bob reported on his proposal to create a new interactive “net” to address “personal and family preparedness” in numerous areas. The Board reviewed the proposal and had no objections to Bob hosting the net on the Club repeater, possibly on Wednesday evenings. Look for announcements on W6EK Yahoo! Groups.

Website Updates: Carl-WF6J gave a quick report on changes planned for the Club website including a wider format by shifting menus from the left side to across the top to allow more page display area. Also, we now have “W6EK.org” as the Club website URL. The old URL, “SF-ARC.org” now forwards to the new site.

Announcements: – Bob provided schedules for the Club net on Thursday’s at 7:30; Board meeting time of 6pm on general meeting nights at Round Table Pizza; the General meeting schedule, Club breakfasts (last Saturday at Susie’s Café), and referred to the Club website for more information. Marty-W6TOC reported on the Sacramento Valley Noon Net and our participation, now looking for volunteers to assist.

Tech-Ten: – Carl-WF6J gave a presentation on the Club’s new Yahoo! Groups site, showing functions and capabilities. He covered how to request access, edit membership functions, post messages, the Activities Calendar, and access to files and pictures. Members can sign-up to be emailed on every posting, or get a “daily digest” summary, once per day. Interested members should go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/W6EK/>, or from the link on the Club website.

Presentation: – Dennis-WU6X gave a presentation on control of an HF base station using an iPhone. The presentation included a review of features and functions, a block diagram of the necessary components and connections, and cost. A “live demo” was conducted with the assistance of KG6LSB’s portable HF station receiving communications from Dennis’ home station via the 10m band. Howard Nurse-W6HN, the creator of the software that runs on the iPhone and home computer, has graciously discounted the \$50 fee for the desktop software to \$25, and will donate that \$25 to the club; he is not asking for any money. The iPhone app is free. Interested hams should contact Dennis for more information or go to W6HN on QRZ.com for links to more information. A copy of the presentation can be found at the W6EK Yahoo! Groups site.

The meeting adjourned at 2130 hours.

*Dennis
WU6X, Secretary*

SUNSHINE REPORT
Richard, WA6RWS

Gene, KG6NYH is out of the hospital after additional surgery. Just a two day stay.

Casey, W7IB says he is doing much better after shoulder surgery.

Norm, W6AFR says he is doing great after back surgery and says he will be at the next breakfast.

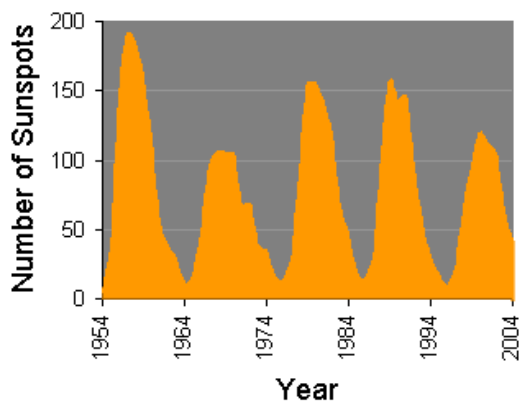
If anyone else needs some sunshine let me know please.

YOU REALLY DON'T WANT TO MISS THIS! *If You Do, It Will Be Another Eleven Years*

More things than I can count have changed in ham radio over the years. In the 50's when I started, the examinations included drawing circuits, answering questions by actually writing words, and Morse code. We were required to log every time we transmitted, even if our CQ yielded no answer, which was common. If I was going to be operating temporarily from another state, I was required to notify the nearest FCC Field Engineering office of the locations and dates, and I had to sign my call with the call area I was in.¹ At that time, you could buy receivers... transmitters -- not so much ... so those were home brewed. Morse code was the mainstay of record radio communications, radiograms from ships at sea was big business, the military relied on hams who knew the code, and NTS was thriving. Radio club newsletters were at most a page, from a mimeograph that was created on a typewriter. It was a lot different, although if you think, "Those were the days," is starting the next paragraph, you're in for a big disappointment.

All those rules and examination requirements made sense ... well most of them, ... but not so much today. I have two VHF/UHF handhelds, neither of which I can remember to keep charged, and I wouldn't even think of taking them apart. My ICOM VHF/UHF mobile sports a screen I can plug my smart phone into and use it as a TV monitor, if I knew how. My K3 does 3/4 of the business of radio in software, and the KPA500 amplifier just sits there and makes RF ... no tuning, no high voltage, no plate or grid current meters. I'm not taking any of this stuff apart. And, I'm putting this issue of Sierra Signals together using a computer on my desk. In the 50's, the president of IBM announced there was a worldwide market for at most, "six or seven computers." "Appliance operator" used to be a pejorative term, now it's how it is. The only things home brewed in my shack are a handful of interface cables/connectors between my appliances.

So, what's the point? Well, the licensing changes slowly kept pace with technology [good], and many people have entered the hobby, found VHF/UHF and repeaters [all of 2m in the 50's was either CW or AM]. They form a big world, are a mainstay for emergency communications, and every one are as welcome as any of us.



Thanks to windows2universe.com [something not even imagined in the 50's], we have the diagram on the left, sunspots since 1953. Note: There's a pattern, and the 13-yr old was starting out on that steep upswing just as he was actually learning how to use his equipment. Note also: There have been 5 peaks since he was 13 and we're headed for another. And believe me, he thought, "This is how it will be forever!"

Magical things happen on the radio when the sun is active. And, that's the point I want to make. Many of the hurdles to higher class licenses are gone. Morse is no longer useful to the military or companies, drawing circuit diagrams of Colpitts oscillators and knowledge of motor-generator sets no longer matters, and thankfully, they're no longer on the examinations. Things are happening right now on the HF bands [it's called Cycle 24], it only happens every 11 years, and you don't want to miss it.

By happenstance, our President wrote on this very subject this month. It wasn't planned. If you've never experienced a QSO on a frequency below 2 meters and would like to try, call or email me and we'll set up a time for you to come over. I'll be the "control operator" but you'll make the contacts. Believe me, you can't do any damage to folks outside the ham bands, you can't hurt my radio no matter what you do, and the worst that can happen is you'll talk over another ham's QSO ... like that has never happened before. ☺

As Bob says, upgrading is pretty easy these days, it should be, and it's worth the effort. My phone number is in the roster and you all know how to reach me on email [see front page].

73,

Fred K6DGW
Interim Editor Dude

¹ They actually meant something then

Fifty Years Ago at SFARC *Gary, KQ6RT*

Home of C. Goodpastor
Auburn, Calif.
Feb. 14, 1962

The meeting was called to order by Pres. Dick Lund, at 8:00 pm.

Mr. Dean Pratt of CD² dept. was our guest speaker. He spoke with emphasis on the dangers of fall out, and how to handle the situation. We were told that 60 to 1000 Rimkins (?) was fatal and that two days later it would be down to 100, which is not critical. It is a matter of first staying alive, and then take measures to get back on your feet.

There were uncertainties regarding the part amateurs can play in the RACES and CD program. Dean Pratt will find out and report to us later.

Question was proposed by Clayton on possibility of our club to maintain and set up the CD radio equipment and also be able to use them. This plan was received quite favorably.

CD now has use of the front room of the old Naval Reserve building, and the second room is jointly available for our clubs use, and we have been promised the keys as soon as everything is settled. At this time Mr. Pratt left because of his other duties.

Minutes of the previous meeting was read and approved and Jim Carman made the treasurer's report. Everyone was asked to pay their dues to end of year.

Linn Hunter and Otto Rudd have found a place at Mt. Hallow or Wolf Mt., For Field Day about the last week in June.

Act. Chrmn. Bob Richier brought in some high frequency equipment for demonstration, and Sage passed out Viking Amateur Cat. 961 to those who so desired.

Meeting was closed at 9:45 pm and refreshments prepared and served by our host.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sage Otow



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² "CD" referred to "Civil Defense," a major ham program in the 50's/60's.

Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club
P. O. Box 1005
Newcastle, CA 95658



**Sierra Foothills Amateur radio Club
2012 Membership Application**

Please Print

Name: _____ Callsign: _____ Class: _____ email: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Associate Name: _____ Callsign: _____ 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)	\$ _____
		TOTAL: (Y)	\$ _____

ARRL member? (please circle) Yes No

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