



P.O. Box 1005, Newcastle, CA 95658

May 2012

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At The Key of SFARC:

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Charles Baker, AE6LR
Gary Martinez, N6UWQ
Jim Griffith, K16AZH

FIELD DAY CHAIRMAN

Dave Hund, N6SHD

REPORTERS

Satellites: Greg, KO6TH
History: Gary, KQ6RT
Misc Radio: Fred, K6DGW
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

Barbara Anderson, W6EVA
916.624.1343
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WEBMASTER:

Carl A Schultz, WF6J

A "hello" from your new Editor, W6EVA

At the insistence of my husband, K6BAA, I will tell you a bit about myself. I am a Crime Scene Investigator with the California Dept of Justice. I am also a member of the DMORT Region-IX team with the Federal Government, and I deploy out to disasters where there are mass fatalities. What convinced me to get my amateur radio license was my deployment to American Samoa (tsunami disaster) in 2009. When I arrived to the island, the lines of communication were very poor and our team had a hard time getting things done. If I had my license and had brought a radio...things would have been better.

Cheers, W6EVA

Inside this issue:

- *Where there is no radio...*
- *Board of Directors Meeting Minutes*
- *General Meeting Minutes*
- *Camp Flint*

Calendar:

Friday May 11: Regular Meeting

Sunday May 20: North Hills Ham Swap

Saturday May 26: Club Breakfast

Sat/Sun June 23 & 24: Field Day

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

Where there is no radio...



Last month, Brian, KJ6SOV & I took a little road trip to northern Idaho. In preparation for the trip, I uploaded what I thought would be our route to and from the Coeur d'Alene area. Our drive there was beautiful. Up through eastern Oregon & Washington and then into Idaho, we each made several 2 meter contacts on local repeaters as well as 146.520.

We decided to change our route on the way home. We drove through central Idaho and down into the Boise area before crossing into the cold Nevada desert. Unfortunately, I had not preprogrammed that route into Brian's Icom 880H. April 5th 2012, (somewhere in the Idaho desert.)

After leaving the Lewiston area where a few locals we contacted on 146.520 gave us information on where to eat, get fuel, and see points of interest in the area, we started the long arduous journey south. There were literally hundreds of miles between spots of civilization. We monitored ".52" our entire journey. There was no cell service. We would periodically announce on .52 and we were met with dead air.

As darkness fell, we crossed into southern Oregon and onto the last leg before Winnemucca, NV. Miles and miles of nothing. I checked the repeater directory and discovered the closest 2 meter or 440 repeater was 162 miles away. I plugged it into the 880 anyway. Another few announcements on .52; "K6UDA monitoring..." More nothing. "Is anyone out there"? Still nothing. We were obviously out of cell phone range and this was, for all intensive purposes, road kill ally. I announced several more times and received one reply; "KJ6SOV" from all the way over in the driver seat.

We had no contacts all the way into Winnemucca and then on into Reno the next morning. The next contact we had was George, KG6LSB as we approached Nyack, CA. **So why do I tell this story?** Because it bothered me that during a good 400+ mile stretch of the USA, we were in a virtual radio blackout. I expected the phones to be as useful as an old iPod, but Brian and I both expected more out of the radio.

A large part of amateur radio is about EMMCOM. Now I can see the places where a ham would be in a bad radio area while traveling through this large country of ours. It's hard for me to fathom that there were no ham radio operators over the four to six hundred miles we traveled, through the countless small towns, villages, and ranches. This experience changed me. We live and work in an area where thousands of travelers pass through every day. I'm willing to bet money there are more than a few hams passing through. Many don't have the local repeaters plugged in and rely on the good ol' national simplex calling frequency in case of emergency.

Like I said before, my little trip through radio blackout land changed me. How? I now monitor 146.520 on a regular basis. I'll be that voice in the middle of the night that comes back to another ham passing through the area. I'll be the guy that helps another ham find fuel, a good hot meal, a safe place to pull over and rest, or just be a friendly voice on the other end letting them know they are not in radio blackout land. You should too. If more of us monitored 146.520 we might all be just a little safer, should bad things happen. Remember, if you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

April 13, 2012

The April Board meeting commenced at 1802 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; Director Chuck Baker-AE6LR was present; absent were Directors Gary Martinez-N6UWQ and Jim Griffith-KI6AZH. Webmaster/PIO Carl Schultz-WF6J was present as were guests Jim Carman-K6ARR and Dave Albright-NO6NO.

REPORTS and DISCUSSION

President's Report: Bob talked about attending the ARRL webinar aimed at Field Day promotion.

VP's Report: Al discussed presentations and Tech-Ten planned for the meeting, and for future meetings.

Club Picnic: Discussion was held regarding Bob's offer of his QTH for the picnic. The Board agreed this would be a good venue for this year, combined with a mini-field day, roving pot luck (different things to eat at each station) and other activities. A tentative date is now set for August 11th.

Property Officer: Richard reported on repairing the antenna analyzer. Also, the Club property available to members is to be listed on the web for sign-out and tracking.

Repeater Reports: Negative comments from some members relative to use of the repeater for a past event at the American River was discussed. The need for the audio announcement, to be available with the new repeater, was discussed as a remedy. Richard reported the Yaesu 2m repeater is not ready to install. Richard plans to extend the courtesy "beep" to one second as members are not leaving enough space between transmissions, and will also discuss repeater etiquette at tonight's meeting. No update on repeater telephone discounts.

Treasurer's Report: Richard reported a beginning balance as of March 1st was \$2,703.39. Expenses in March totaled \$92.99. Deposits included membership renewals totaling \$179.23. Net cash on hand as of March 27th is \$2,789.63. Discussion was also held regarding where monies from repeater donations should be placed; possible gas reimbursement to Enduro volunteers due to the distance and terrain.

Web/PIO Report: No new website yet; banner has been scanned, but not done ... both still in development. Business cards are done and will be handed out by Richard at the breakfast, and at tonight's meeting. Field Day press release was discussed with possible tie to "prepper" theme and other ideas to promote participation; Carl is planning a press release soon.

Other Discussions: More discussion on Field Day promotion; suggestion by Carl to invite other clubs, involving a local newspaper (interview), Boy Scouts, an Elmer net, radio testing, FRS, 4WD clubs, inactive hams, Red Cross emergency van and prepper-related subjects, and announcement that no license is required to operate, as possibilities; T-shirt contest has only 2 entries.

Meeting adjourned at 1900 hours. Submitted by *Dennis Gregory-WU6X, SFARC Club Secretary*

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

April 13, 2012



The SFARC General meeting for April 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 and Richard Kuepper-WA6RWS, Treasurer. Directors present were Chuck Baker-AE6LR; absent were Jim Griffith-KI6AZH and Gary Martinez-N6UWQ. Also present, Carl Schultz-WF6J, PIO/Webmaster. Bob-K6UDA led the Pledge of Allegiance. Officers, Directors, and approximately 28 members and guests were introduced.

REPORTS:

Past minutes – The March General meeting minutes were unanimously approved as published in the Newsletter.

VP's Report – Nothing to report.

Secretary's Report – Dennis mentioned a hand-out available for new members and guests, and asked anyone interested to check-in with him during the break.

Treasurer's Report – Richard-WA6RWS presented the Treasurer's Report; beginning balance as of March 1st was \$2,703.39. Expenses in March totaled \$92.99. Deposits included membership renewals totaling \$179.23. Net cash on hand as of March 27th is \$2,789.63.

Repeater Report – Richard-WA6RWS reported on efforts to get the new Yaesu repeater working. Then, gave a review of how the courtesy tone on the current repeater is designed to allow other users a chance to jump in between transmissions during an on-going QSO. Richard also talked about how to use the autopatch.

Satellite Report – No satellite report.

VE Report – Dave-NO6NO reported we had 8 candidates taking exams; 3 new Technician, 3 General and 1 Extra upgrades.

Sunshine Report – Richard-WA6RWS reported Jim-KI6AZH was feeling ill and that Norm-W6AFR was having cataract surgery.

Newsletter – Bruce Anderson announced that his XYL Barbara has volunteered to take on the Club Newsletter. Our sincere thanks to Fred Jensen, K6DGW for his excellent interim support to the club as Editor. And, our thanks to Barbara as well for stepping up.

Raffle and Refreshments – Gene-KG6NYH and George-KG6LSB reviewed raffle and refreshment options.

OLD BUSINESS:

T-Shirts – Two submissions were received for the Field Day T-shirt design contest. Bob-K6UDA passed the entries around the room for comment and review, while George-KG6LSB scribbled out a last minute submission. Later in the meeting, a vote was held and George-KG6LSB won the contest by a narrow margin of one vote.

Member Roster – Carl-WF6J gave instructions on how to view/download the new member roster on the Club website.

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES (continued...)

NEW BUSINESS:

Business Cards – Bob-K6UDA announced the new Club business cards now available for members to give to potential member candidates. A space on the card allows the member to enter his/her callsign, awarding the prospective member or guest a free raffle ticket at the next meeting. Richard passed cards out to interested members.

Yahoo! Group – Carl-WF6J reminded those in attendance of the W6EK Yahoo! Group, its uses, and explained how to sign up for email notifications and announcements.

Club Events – George-KG6LSB reported on the upcoming MS Walk (Saturday, April 28th) and invited new members or anyone interested to see him at the break for more information. Bob-K6UDA discussed an increased interest in the “prepper net” and reported on Board discussions of conducting “live demonstrations” on items of interest too difficult to understand over the radio.

Announcements – Club net on Thursday’s at 7:30; Board meeting at 6pm on general meeting nights at Round Table Pizza; the General meeting schedule; Club breakfasts (last Saturday at Susie’s Café); the “Prepper Net” every other Wednesday on the 2m repeater at 7:30pm; see the Club website (W6EK.org) for more information or changing dates. Bob-K6UDA announced the August 11th tentative date for the Club Picnic, and discussed the idea of a mini-field day and roving picnic. Bob offered his QTH for this year’s venue. Richard discussed equipment available to the membership for borrowing (antenna analyzer and 100mhz scope).

Tech-Ten – Al-NI2U gave a short presentation on notch filters and how a few small changes in components can cause dramatic changes in performance.

Presentation – Chuck-AE6LR gave part 2 of a 2-part series on solar weather and propagation (see Yahoo! Groups “Files” section for a copy of the presentation).

The meeting adjourned at 2048 hours. Submitted by, Dennis – WU6X, Secretary

Sunshine report

It is with great sadness to report that Bill Costa, WV6J’s grandson was killed in Afghanistan. Please keep Bill and his family in your prayers.

Richard WA6RWS

MISCELLANEOUS RADIO

Camp Flint

“**W**hat” I hear you say? “What does 'Camp Flint' have to do with radio, miscellaneous or otherwise?” OK, everyone who knows what and where Camp Flint is, raise your hand. Thus encouraged, and I promise this will connect with ham radio -- it did so on 29 Apr 2012, and that wasn't the first connection and we'll get to the radio part, but first the “What is it?” and “Where is it?” part.



This photo will probably answer the “Where is it” question for many of you. What's left of Camp Flint is that hill on the right as you enter the parking lot at Overlook Park off Pleasant/Pacific Streets. It's directly across the lot from the modular we use for Event Control for the WSER and Tevis, and the Auburn Skate Park. There is a Reclamation road down to the dam site off of Pacific St just west of the parking lot. It is gated and locked and the sign on the gate tells you it's the “Camp Flint Gate.” You can climb to the top on the hill in front of my truck, or you can walk around the gate, down the road about 100 meters, and up a very old road.

You can also continue down the road to the river and site of the abandoned Auburn Dam. Just beware; it is quite a distance ... farther coming back up than going down ... and moderately steep. I've made the trip once, when I was much younger, and it's really scenic [except for the scars left by the

dam construction].

There isn't much up on top. The Auburn Police have one of their repeater/communications sites there, and there is an old wood building next to it with a porch running around it. Both are enclosed with a chain link fence. Other than those, some very large oak trees, and some stone and concrete remnants behind them (all covered by the obligatory graffiti), it's pretty much empty.

A little research, and I emphasize “little,” these days it only takes a few seconds to find anything that is findable, yielded this information, from the California State Military Museum:

“Named for the adjacent Southern Pacific Railroad Company Station (Flint Station), Camp Flint was initially established in 1938 on the southeastern portion of 20th District Agricultural Association Fairgrounds as a joint State/Federal relief camp under the State Relief Agency (SRA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) during the Great Depression. It should be noted that despite the name, the 20th District Agricultural Association is a State agency under the California Department of Agriculture (after 1972, California Department of Food and Agriculture). Camp Flint served as a labor camp for unemployed men seeking work on Federal and State funded public works projects in the Auburn area. Laborers lived in a camp that consisted of wood and canvas hutments. The area northwest of the Southern Pacific Railroad was the fairgrounds of the 20th District Agricultural Association.”

“In November 1940, the 20th District Agricultural Association quitclaimed the southeastern portion of the fairgrounds, which was then occupied (by the) WPA/SRA labor camp, to the City of Auburn. This area is best described as that portion of the fairgrounds southeast of the then Southern Pacific Railroad right of way. The City continued to allow the WPA/SRA to operate the camp after the transfer of the property. However, on 5 July 1941, due to a lack of funding, the camp was closed and its operations were moved to Camp Placer near the town of Applegate, California. There is no information currently available concerning the termination of a permit or lease between the WPA and/or the SRA and the City of Auburn.”

“Immediately after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, the U.S. Army's Western Defense Command



and Fourth Army sought to secure the strategically important railroad through the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Elements of the 32nd Infantry Division (a Wisconsin National Guard unit called into Federal service in 1940) were rushed from Camp Livingston, Louisiana to guard tunnels and bridges against potential saboteurs along the Southern Pacific Railroad's right of way. On 9 December 1941, soldiers of the 32nd Infantry Division arrived in Auburn and occupied the former WPA/SRA labor camp and used it as a base of operations for providing static defense of the railroad's vulnerable infrastructure. No documentation was found that a formal lease or permit was ever executed at this time."

"In February 1942, the 754th Military Police Battalion (Zone of the Interior) arrived at Camp Flint and assumed the railroad security duties from the 32nd Infantry Division who departed in March of 1942. The 754th Military Police Battalion's four companies (A through D) rotated between Camp Kohler, Camp Flint, Camp Placer, the Soda Springs Hotel, and Sparks, Nevada. A fifth company, Headquarters Company, remained at Camp Flint throughout the battalion's tenure at Camp Flint."

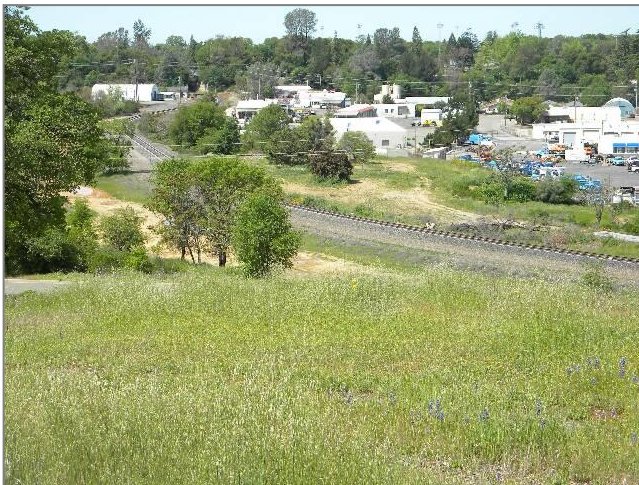
"On 10 April 1942, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers leased the former WPA/SRA camp area from the City of Auburn (lease W868-ENG-4313) and the fairgrounds from the 20th District Agricultural Association (lease W868-ENG-4729). This was followed up with an agreement dated 21 September 1942 between the War Department and the Southern Pacific Company for the construction, maintenance and use of a railroad crossing between the two portions of the post."

"On 29 November 1943, a fire swept through and destroyed the camp's mess hall and forced the unit there to utilize a field kitchen until a new mess hall was built. Photographic documentation at the Placer County Archives supports the fact that the U.S. Army replaced many of the WPA/SRA buildings with standard U.S. Army temporary structures"

"As World War II progressed, the need for a static defense of the railroad lessened and as a result, the 754th Military Police Battalion was transferred to Camp Beale (now Beale Air Force Base) on 18 December 1943. With the battalion's departure, the U.S. Army placed into an inactive status. It appears that the installation was placed under the control of the U.S. Army's DeWitt General Hospital soon after being placed in an inactive status and established as a Reconditioning (i.e., physical therapy) Center in August 1944. Documentation was not found detailing the extent in which Camp Flint was used for this purpose."

"In June of 1945, 200 German Prisoners of War were transferred to Camp Flint from Florence, Arizona to provide support at DeWitt General Hospital. Additional security fencing and guard towers were added to the site to secure the prisoner of war camp. Although the hospital was closed in December of 1945, records at the Placer County Archives indicate that German prisoners were still at Camp Flint in February of 1946."

"While an exact day of the Site's closing could not be determined, it is known that the leases with the 20th District Agricultural Association (lease W868-ENG-4729) and the City of Auburn (lease W868-ENG-4313) were terminated on 10 May 1946 and 15 May 1946, respectively. This was followed by the termination of the Memorandum of Agreement (W868-ENG-4999) with the Southern Pacific Company on 3 June 1946."



Everyone knows where Beale AFB is, Camp Placer maybe not so much, and we all probably know where the hotel at Soda Springs is. Now, everyone who knows where Camp Kohler is [it's still there] please raise your hand... Answer at the end.

These are the tracks as they are today. That's the PG&E yard that's at the far end of the big Fairgrounds parking lot on Sacramento Street. The Fairgrounds are out of the photo to the right. The railroad's original alignment in this part of Auburn wasn't far off of where it is today, the differences being mainly where bridges, tunnels, and grade crossings have been constructed.

There is a story, maybe a legend, "urban" or otherwise, that the wooden building in the photo above was a lookout for Japanese aircraft. There are several old telephone lines on top of 1940's style termination blocks; I'd expect such a lookout to have several phone lines ... who knows?

10 years ago, maybe a little more, we used Camp Flint for the control site for the WSER and Tevis. The paths to Bald Mt and portable repeaters on the trail, and VHF simplex to both the High School and the Fairgrounds were very good. At that

time, the modular had not been constructed. The site was not without its problems though. Mosquitoes at sunrise and sunset, motorcycle races at the Fairgrounds [Fast Fridays], noisy trains, numerous, and well timed, and prior to the WSER final finish on one Sunday, a hive of bees living in the big oak tree next to our canopy decided to split up and formed a swarm directly over us. But, it was the first introduction of ham radio to Camp Flint.

What about April 29, 2012? Each year, Paul (NA5N), sponsors a little event called "QRP To The Field." He comes up with a new "theme" each year ... one year was "QRP On The Border," where you were encouraged to operate on an international border (we really only have two) or a state line.

This year he joined with the Summits On The Air crowd for "Get High on QRP." Since it's a one-man contest, Paul gets to make the rules. This year, in addition to the normal states/provinces/countries for multipliers, he added registered SOTA summits. And to make it interesting for everyone, after multiplying your QSO points by the number of SPC's plus SOTA summits, you then multiply it by the "TTF Multiplier:"

- x1: At home**
- x2: On a hill** [we all know what they look like]
- x3: On a mountain more than 500 ft above surrounding terrain**
- x4: On a registered SOTA summit**

The nearest registered SOTA summit is Banner Mt, W6/SN-0048; I've activated it once. It is populated all the way to the top, has nothing scenic, and I decided I didn't want to drive that far out Idaho-Maryland Rd. The roads to Bald, Slate, and of course Little Bald are still snowed in. So I gave up on a x4 TTF multiplier. Plan B didn't work out too well, finding a mountain >500 ft above the surrounding terrain that I could get to proved pretty difficult, so I opted for Camp Flint. I briefly considered Channel Hill (I can see it from home and it had "hill" in the name in case my entry was contested ☺) but a quick recon on Fri ruled it out; the comm site has expanded some and there's really no room at the top.

I used my Elecraft K2, powered by the 4-cell 4 Ah 12 V LiFePO4 battery on the top. I used lightweight headphones, and the tiny American Morse Equipment paddle was fastened to the clipboard. It all fit into my pack, and despite my orthopedic issues, I managed a 2 or 3 mile hike with it.



Normally, I use a Buddipole antenna in the field but it was way too heavy for that much of a hike, so this time I used a 20m inverted vee that also fit in my pack. I was able to get it out in the open, and up very quickly by tossing the rope over the ancient telephone lines.

QRPTTF is an "Eight to Eight" affair. We loaded my truck with plants for the Auburn Garden Club annual plant sale and my gear, and after dropping the plants off at the sale early Saturday, I picked up a Sausage Egg McMuffin, refilled my coffee mug, and hit Camp Flint. I got on the air about 0845 local, ended up making 21 QSO's, 2 of them on SOTA summits, and packed it in around noon. It was supposed to be in the 70's Saturday, however there was a stiff breeze coming up the canyon and even in the sun with a sweatshirt on, I started to get cold.

If you've never tried QRP [<5W], you might give it a try from home. With the rising Cycle 24, it really only takes a few watts. One of my QSO's in QRPTTF was JI3WDO. And, taking radio to the field is a lot of fun. You get exercise, you make a lot of vitamin D in the sun, and you can be in really beautiful spots. I positioned my back to the chain link fence, couldn't see the old building or the Auburn PD vault, and it really was very nice.

Many thanks to Barbara for picking up the editorship of Sierra Signals.

73,

Fred K6DGW

Camp Kohler is on Roseville Road on the left as you get into North Highlands. It's pretty hard to miss ... there's a large FAA radar on it. It used to be part of McClellan AFB and housed the Base Laundry and several classified operations at various times.



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Dues / Donations:

Membership: yearly*	\$22.00	Name Badge:	\$7.00	Yes (special name)	_____
Associate: yearly*	\$ 7.00	Repeater Donation:	\$ _____		
Auto Patch Donation:	\$ _____	Newsletter Booster:	\$ _____		
Misc. Donation:	\$ _____	Christmas Donation:	\$ _____	ARRL member? (circle)	Yes No

TOTAL: \$ _____ **Please add \$1 if paying via PayPal**

*Prorated dues for NEW Members/Associates Only

July	\$ 20 /7	October	\$ 14/4 + following year
August	\$ 18/6	November	\$ 12/3 + following year
September	\$ 16/5	December	\$ 10/2 + following year

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