



Welcome to SFARC, Auburn, CA

Sierra Signals



P.O. Box 6421 Auburn, CA 95604

January 2017

<http://w6ek.org> info@w6ek.org

At The Key of SFARC:

PRESIDENT

Orion Endres, AI6JB
ojendres@outlook.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Michael Perry, KK6GLP
mrpry2@gmail.com

SECRETARY

Bruce Anderson, K6BAA
anderson51@wavecable.com

TREASURER

Sharron Griffith, KK6RGV
sharron@usamedia.tv

DIRECTORS

Greg Dolkas, KO6TH
Bob Brodovsky, K6UDA
Andrew Silvester, KC6O

FIELD DAY CHAIRMAN

Mark Graybill, W8BIT

REPORTERS

Satellites: Greg, KO6TH
History: Gary, KQ6RT
Sunshine: Richard, WA6RWS

WEB/YAHOO! GROUP

Birton Gilbert, N6UG
Dennis Gregory, WU6X

REPEATERS

145.430 (-0.6 MHz/PL 162.2)
440.575 (+5.0 MHz/PL 162.2)
223.860 (-1.6 MHz/PL 110.9)

CLUB NET

Thursdays, 7:30PM, W6EK/R
145.430

CLUB MEETINGS

Second Friday of the month,
7:30PM at the Auburn City Hall,
1215 Lincoln Way, Auburn CA

CLUB BREAKFAST

Last Sat of the month at Mel's Diner
1730 Grass Valley Hwy, Auburn 7:30AM

NET CONTROL OPS

Dave Jenkins, WB6RBE
Norm Medland, W6AFR
Bob Brodovsky, K6UDA
Al Martin, NI2U

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Barbara Anderson, W6EVA
anderson51@wavecable.com

ARRL PIO:

Carl A Schultz, WF6J

VOLUNTEER EXAMINER

Al Martin, NI2U



2017

Calendar of Events

January 13th:
Club Meeting

January 28th:
Club Breakfast
&
Placer County
ARES Meeting

Inside this issue:

- *New Year's Eve Club Breakfast At Mel's*
- *To Contest...or Not?*
- *Club Christmas Party Highlights*
- *Noise Floor Report Does Not Inspire Confidence*

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

Sierra Signals is published monthly by the Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club for the information of its members and friends, and is distributed via E-mail and USPS mail. Opinions expressed are those of the authors. Newsletter exchanges with other clubs via E-mail are welcomed. Contact the editor to be placed on the E-mailing list. The contents of Sierra Signals are copyrighted by the Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club, and all rights are reserved. That said, we will gladly permit republications for non-profit uses of all text material. Photos require the consent of all persons pictured in them, and some of our material is copyrighted by others and published by permission. You'll need to contact them for permission.



NEW YEAR'S EVE CLUB BREAKFAST AT MEL'S

To Contest...or Not?

Submitted by Dennis, WU6X

Ham radio operators enter contests for various reasons. Just the word "contest" might scare some away ... And, of course, there are all the other sometimes negative comments relative to band use and availability of "popular" frequencies to "normal" communications. If any of these things come up for you, let me offer a few positive comments and some things to consider relative to participation and possibly a new "normal" for you.

First, I used to hate contests of any kind, ham radio or otherwise, quite possibly because I've never been very competitive in nature, other than what most males of our species are naturally provided at some age, soon after joining the herd. What participating in a radio contest typically comes down to for me is simply "sharpening the sword", or perfecting the craft, or ... pick your own analogous phrase and insert here. You see, over the past few years I've made slow but measurable changes in my station that have included contest logging software, CAT connections to radios, spectrum displays, bigger monitors, dedicated computer, etc. all of which have really enhanced the "radio experience" in some way. Since I approach contests from a "skills improvement" perspective and not a "let's get the top score" quest, each of these things have made the overall experience more fun. These changes

have also lead to improvements in various operator skill levels, especially with CW and with using ALL the capabilities of the standard filters and controls available in most radios for CW or SSB, and with old and/or new technology found in today's software defined radios (SDR).

Personally, since I've never had the "\$\$\$" to build a top-tier contest station, nor would I want the maintenance that comes along with one, I long-ago decided to focus on skill improvements and forget the score card. Once you make that decision, operating a contest becomes more casual and another means of talking to your friends around the country or the world and just having fun! For example, I just completed the ARRL 10m contest under some of the worse propagation conditions ever, but had a blast making the meager 166 Q's (top scores were in the 1000's) and working 22 states and 11 countries. I did this without doing anything special or planned, just stopping by the ham shack between shopping, baking cookies for the Club Christmas Dinner, un-plugging yard drains in the last down pour, and runs to the store; no pressure, just great radio fun! This is supposed to be a "hobby", remember?

Yes, I've operated the big contest station in Reno (W7RN) during W1AW/6, and a few other big-buck stations and remotes, and that was/is cool. But, nothing comes down to the fun I have just sitting here in my little shack and talking to friends using 100w and a wire antenna. This past year, I achieved a ham radio goal of mine, improving my CW skill to a point where I can pretty much converse with people going 20+ wpm. Having said this, 15 to 18wpm is still more fun ... it takes less concentration and no paper necessary. When I need to, however, I can now copy call signs at 25+ thanks to taking a CWOps class (also highly recommended) and daily practice. This increase in skill level has made contesting much more fun ... I can call CQ now (called "running") and not have the anxiety I used to have wondering how many times I would be asking for a repeat. Of course, because of band conditions during the last ARRL 10m contest, many were sending "???" to get a call correctly even at 15wpm ... and, I didn't feel embarrassed at all.

I encourage you to wade into contesting no matter how slowly you choose to do so. It WILL increase your operating skills, even if you just search-n-pounce (S&P), calling only the loudest stations you hear. Why not give contesting a try? If you hear me, I promise I'll slow down to whatever speed is comfortable for you if on CW, and I'll take the time to give you more than a 599, the usual exchange regardless of the actual signal heard. Hi! I hope to hear you on the air soon. See more of my station at:

<http://www.grz.com/db/wu6x>

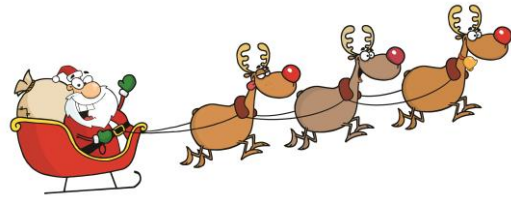


The Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club Christmas Party for December 2016 was held at the Veteran's Memorial Hall in Auburn, CA. Officers, Board members, and other SFARC staff were present, as well as newly elected officers for 2017.

President Orion, AI6JB welcomed the club members and their families. We had a special visit from Santa Claus who presented our newest member, Alexander Anderson, with an RF Brick.

Naturally there was a raffle, and the atomic clock was as popular as ever, and the evening concluded with a special award presented to Richard, WA6RWS for Lifetime Membership.







Thank you everyone for supporting our Christmas Party Food Drive! You are Awesome!!

Jim, KQ6VP, and his wife Ellen were so kind to deliver the food to the Auburn Interfaith Food Closet yesterday. Here is the feedback they got:

"Wow, what a response at the Interfaith Food closet. They could not believe how much food we delivered to them. Everyone there shared a blessing for the SFARC, and their members. They kept saying that at least there will be some thankful folks, with full stomachs. Jim KQ6VP"

Thank you all for your generosity!! Orion, AI6JB

Noise Floor Report Does Not Inspire Confidence

Submitted by Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

Last June, the FCC's Technical Advisory Committee asked licensed and unlicensed users of the electromagnetic spectrum to answer some questions about the noise they were experiencing and whether or not it was affecting their services. Specifically, they asked:

- * *Is there a noise floor problem?*
- * *Where does the problem exist? Spectrally? Spatially? Temporally?*
- * *Is there quantitative evidence of the overall increase in the total integrated noise floor across various segments of the radio frequency spectrum?*
- * *How should a noise study be performed?*

Well, the results are in, and Radio World recently published a summary of the responses that the FCC received (<http://www.radioworld.com/business-and-law/0009/noise-floor-where-do-we-go-from-here/338242>). The FCC received 93 replies from 73 (great number, eh?) different people or organizations, including:

- * *23 companies/industry organizations*
- * *39 RF professionals (broadcast and wireless)*
- * *31 licensed radio amateurs*
- * *9 responders did not reply to the questions asked*

Respondents included the ARRL, the Society of Broadcast Engineers, the National Association of Broadcasters, the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council, ATT, and the National Electrical Manufacturers Association. I found especially interesting comments from the Society of Broadcast Engineers. They include:

- * *Increased cooperation is needed between manufacturers of Part 15 devices and users of radio spectrum to identify noise sources and take appropriate remedial action.*
- * *Radiated emission limits below 30 MHz in the FCC Part 15 rules for unintentional emitters should be enacted. There are presently no radiated emission limits below 30 MHz for most unintentional emitters.*
- * *Reduced Part 15 limits for LED lights should be enacted to be harmonized with the Part 18 lower limits for fluorescent bulbs.*
- * *Better labeling on packaging for Part 18 fluorescent bulbs and ballasts to better inform consumers of potential interference to radio, TV and cellphone reception in the residential environment.*
- * *Specific radiated and/or conducted emission limits for incidental emitters, such as motors or power lines, should be enacted.*
- * *Conducted emission limits on pulse-width motor controllers used in appliances should be enacted.*
- * *Substantially increase the visibility of enforcement in power line interference cases.*

Other organizations made similar comments.

While the report is encouraging, it won't mean a thing if no action is taken on these issues. Given that the FCC is cutting back on its field offices, and our president-elect has said that he plans to reduce the number of governmental regulations, I'm not optimistic that we'll see the noise situation get better before it gets worse. What do you all think?

When he's not battling the noise floor at his QTH, Dan blogs about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com, writes the "No Nonsense" amateur radio study guides and teaches ham classes. You can contact him by e-mailing cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

**An optimist stays up until midnight
to see the new year in.
A pessimist stays up
to make sure the old year leaves.**

Bill Vaughan

DENNIS H. GREGORY
Instructor/Technician

Computer Repairs and Support
Reasonable rates, free consultation
Placer County Business License #92311

Phone: 530-305-0180
Auburn, CA

Email: WU6X@hotmail.com
www.yourmissioncontrol.com

Batteries + Bulbs®

Ryan Tollefson
District Manager

8025 Greenback Lane • Citrus Heights, CA 95610
P 916 -722- 8800 • C 916-775- 3030 • F 916-722- 2489
rtollefson@batteriesplus.net • www.BatteriesPlus.com

Independently owned and operated Franchise.

SIERRA FOOTHILLS AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

P.O. Box 6421, Auburn, CA 95604

SIERRA FOOTHILLS AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

P.O. Box 6421, Auburn, CA 95604

2016 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____ Call: _____ Class: _____ e-mail: _____

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

Associate Name: _____ Call: _____ Class: _____ email: _____

Phone: _____ Cellphone: _____ Application is: (New / Renewal)

Dues / Donations:

Membership: yearly*	\$22.00	or 20x	Name Badge:	\$ 10.00/15.00	Yes (special name)	_____
Associate: yearly*	\$	7.00	Repeater Donation:	\$	_____	
Auto Patch Donation:	\$	_____	Newsletter Booster:	\$	_____	
Misc. Donation:	\$	_____	Christmas Donation:	\$	_____	ARRL member? (Yes/No/Life) _____

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

*Prorated dues for NEW Members/Associates Only

July	\$ 20/6	October	\$ 14/3 + following year
August	\$ 18/5	November	\$ 12/2 + following year
September	\$ 16/4	December	\$ 10/1 + following year

New---New---New---
Multi-year DISCOUNT Membership
****\$20 per year for 2 or more years (new or renewal)**

OFFICE USE ONLY:**DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE**

Date: _____ Treasurer: _____ Secretary: _____ Roster: _____

Payment: _____ Check Number: _____ Cash: _____ PayPal: _____