



Welcome to SFARC, Auburn, CA

Sierra Signals



P.O. Box 6421 Auburn, CA 95604

March 2017

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

At The Key of SFARC:

PRESIDENT

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DIRECTORS

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

FIELD DAY CHAIRMAN

Al Martin, NI2U

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

Calendar of Events

March 10th:
Club Meeting

March 17th:
St. Patrick's Day



March 18th:
Hamfest
(See page 6 for details)

March 25th:
Club Breakfast

Inside this issue:

- **President's Message**
- **Buckmaster 7-Band, Off-Center-Fed (OCF) Dipole**
- **CQ WPX RTTY contest results**
- **Upcoming event announcements**
- **Board & General Meeting Minutes**



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 Message

By Orion Endres – AI6JB, President

Greetings SFARC!

HAMFEST, HAMFEST, HAMFEST

March is upon us and so is Hamfest 2017! There is a lot of talk about our event on the local nets. It is shaping up to be an extravaganza!! Pray for good weather.

We still need your support!! We have many unfilled positions with only 18 days to go. **PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE**, email me at AI6JB@ARRL.Net with how you would like to help out. We need pop-ups, tables, and chairs as well as your smiling face on the day of.

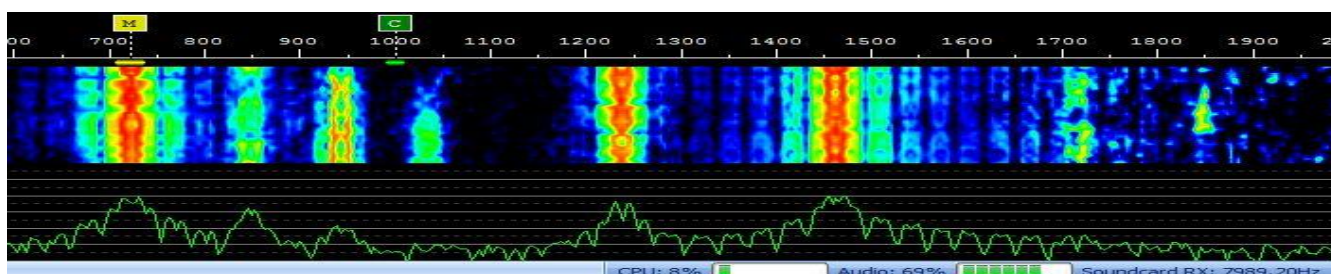
RADIOSPORT

Last year the Board thought it would be a great idea to promote radiosport in our club. Contesting is a great way to make a lot of QSOs in a very short time. Do you want to explore a new mode like RTTY? There are numerous contests throughout the year dedicated to RTTY, CW, SSB, VHF, Microwave or digital in general. I took a few hours last weekend to set up for RTTY and was quite surprised to make 6 QSOs in about 20 minutes of effort. Those QSOs included Virginia, Illinois, Alaska, Texas, and Kansas.

The beauty of contesting is you do not have to dedicate 12 or 24 hours to feel successful. Allocate the time you have available, 2, 4, 8 or more hours. I got plenty of satisfaction and had a great time learning to setup a new mode and make a few successful QSOs. I claimed my 24 points with a smile on my face!

We appointed Dennis, WU6X, to be our Contest Chair. If you have any questions about contesting or how to get setup, he is available to guide you in the right direction.

See you on the waterfall soon!



Buckmaster 7-Band, Off-Center-Fed (OCF) Dipole

Submitted by Dennis, WU6X

I had an opportunity to install and operate a 7-band **Buckmaster** OCF Dipole on the East coast a while back, while helping a life-long friend, Bob-K4JPP, get back on the air after a storm knocked his tower down. The antenna I chose for the install was the 7-band, 3KW rated model (100w and 300w versions are also available), fed with a 6:1 balun. This antenna covers 80, 40, 20, 17, 12, 10, and 6 meters, with no tuner required! The antenna-to-radio connection was made with brand new LMR-400 coax. **NOTE:** You may have noticed that 15m is not listed ... see comments down the page.

Generally, wire antennas are a great choice for HF and typically are less conspicuous, less hassle to put up (no radials) and capture less noise than a vertical antenna. The 7-band **Buckmaster** OCF has a 45 foot leg on one side of the 6:1 feed point balun, and a 90 foot leg on the other, totaling 135 feet. With the middle at 35 feet (recommended) and the ends at 10 feet, the 7-Band antenna requires about 120 feet of ground space, unless you “dog-leg” the long end(s).

I put the center of the antenna in a tree at 35 feet at the apex (according to the instructions) and sent the long leg off to the north, and the short leg 120 degrees from center towards the west in an inverted-V configuration. I was hoping to give K4JPP a 360 degree pattern of sorts, and still favor Europe with the longest leg.

In this configuration, antenna performance was way better than I expected ... I worked 60+ stations (mostly SSB) over a couple days when band condx were good, the farthest being **Australia** on 17m SSB, and **Hawaii** on 17m SSB as well! Remember, this was from Virginia Beach, VA folks. Of course, Spain, France and other EU's were soooo loud, similar to us talking to Hawaii from the West coast. Most people thought I was using a beam of some kind. Reports were mostly S9 or better with 800w going into the antenna from the Yaesu FT-2000 and Quadra amp combination. CW operation was excellent. On SSB, I connected with Bob-K6UDA and a couple other guys who hang out on 7.155 every morning. And, made a lot of new friends on the East coast.

15m: One issue is the antenna is not made for 15m, so you will have to do something else on that band. I have a feeling it may work anyway, but a 4.5:1 SWR would keep you from running any power ... it should take 100w. One thing I wanted to try was cutting a 15m dipole and tie each leg to the center insulator and feed, but the antenna and wire is so well insulated I would have had to remove insulation, and didn't want to risk voiding the warranty. In any case, anything more than 100w might smoke the 6:1 balun even with the beefy toroidal inductor it contains.



Summary

I have to say, I am very impressed with the construction and overall performance of the Buckmaster OCF antenna. Sweeping the antenna with my Autek antenna analyzer showed less than 2:1 SWR on all 7 bands, including 6m. As it turned out, I needed the antenna on a Saturday, so called and then drove

up to Mineral, VA to meet with Jack Speer of Buckmaster Antennas in person. Jack was a super guy and I visited with him at his shop for a 1/2 hour or so, then back in the rental car for the 2 and 1/2 hour drive back to Virginia Beach. Jack says he has been at Dayton for 30+ years now! The product support is excellent ... I mean, how many other manufacturers would invite you to their home on a weekend?

Virginia is a beautiful place to visit towards the end of the year. I was a couple weeks early for Fall, but still "green" is the color of choice, and the favorite pastime for residents appears to be ... mowing grass. If you have a chance to visit, do so ... maybe drop by Jack's place and pick up a Buckmaster OCF dipole while you are at it?

Reference: <http://hamcall.net/7bandocf.html#7band> \$330 (a 100w and 300w version available for \$187 and \$230, respectively, direct from Jack)



This year's CQ WPX RTTY contest was a lot of fun regardless of what some folks are saying about band conditions. Many stations made 500 to over a 1000 contacts. I ran low-power (<100w), not to have to use my tube amp, and had a blast.

Software: I use MixW2 software on the digital modes which allows me to simply setup MACROs so I can click a call on the decode screen, then push a button ... the response is sent automatically, including an incrementing serial number. I'm pretty sure Fldigi will do the same thing, but I've been using MixW2 for so long I just keep going back to it.

Results: With a collective time of 16 hours operation, I racked up and easy 250 contacts as follows:

Total Contacts by Band and Mode:

Band	Q's
80	6
40	78
20	162
15	4

Total Contacts = 250

Total Points = 62,850

Dennis - WU6X

American Legion Amateur Radio Club Special Event Station

The American Legion Amateur Radio Club will operate a special event station to commemorate the Legion's upcoming birthday. Working from the radio room at National Headquarters in Indianapolis, ham radio operators at club station K9TAL will celebrate the Legion's 98 years of service to America's veterans with both members and non-member amateur radio operators around the world on Saturday, March 11.

Ham radio operators wishing to contact Special Event Station K9TAL should tune to 40 meters: 7.225 MHz (+/- 5 KHz) LSB; or to 2 meters: K9DC 147.315 Repeater at Indianapolis; or IRLP Node 9735; or, to EchoLink *CROSSRDS* Conference node. All operations will be conducted on Saturday, March 11, 2017, between 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. Eastern time. All amateur radio operators are invited to check in. American Legion posts with TALARC stations are encouraged to check in from around the country.

For More information, go to:

<https://www.legion.org/hamradio/231254/legion-birthday-ham-radio-event-march-11>



International DX Convention

This year's IDXC 2017 will be the 68th annual International DX Convention. (Sponsored by the Northern California DX Club and held at the beautiful Visalia Conference Center). DXers from around the world will gather once again to meet their fellow DXers, attend interesting and informative programs, see the latest in new products from the top vendors – and have a chance to win some great raffle prizes! Friday April 21 will be a full day of training, presentations and vendor exhibits this year.

Full details of IDXC 2017 are at the website: [International DX Convention](#)



Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club presents:

Hamfest 2017

Saturday, March 18, 2017

Historic Loomis Train Depot

First swap of the Year!



Drawings, Free Parking, Great Seller Spots, Food & Drink available. Last 2 years were fantastic, 2017 should be even better!

Come on out and have some fun, talk with buddies and enjoy the swap more Info at: w6ek.org



California (Loomis) — Mar 18 D F H R T V
7:30 – 11 AM. *Spr:* Sierra Foothills ARC. Historic Loomis Train Depot Plaza, 3640 Taylor Rd. *Tl:* 145.43, 223.86 (both 162.2 Hz). *Adm:* Free. www.w6ek.org.



Directions:

Located Northeast of Sacramento or Southeast of Auburn, off Interstate 80.

Loomis Exit off I80 - Horseshoe Bar Road
Go NNW to the Taylor Road stoplight.

Follow Signs to Buyer's parking.

Seller's go straight at the stoplight, then turn into the Seller's parking area.

Talk in on W6EK/r 145.430 pl 162.2Hz

CQ Hamfest - CQ Hamfest - CQ Hamfest - CQ Hamfest - CQ Hamfest - CQ Hamfest

From the Field Day Chairman. Al, NI2U

Most members of the SFARC know me. So I volunteered for Field Day Chairman as it is what I consider the best operating contest in Amateur Radio. My first exposure was in 1962 or so in a field north of Rome, New York. The Rome Radio Club operation allowed for setting up antennas, setting up operating positions, starting and using noisy surplus generators and a steak and egg breakfast on Sunday. Man that was living. We had plenty of 6 meters, 2 meters (there were no repeaters) 80 through 10 CW with mechanical keys (not my cup of tea) and, of course, voice. Most of the receivers available were the best WWII surplus. Once and a while, a Collins rig would show up.

Fast forward to today, now there are automatic keyers, automatic voice machines, water fall displays, receivers with noise limited performance and digital signal processing.

OK, so what does SFARC want to do.? Last year, we ran QRP and reached a terrific score. Field Day has to be what the SFARC wants. But, you have to let me know your desires. QRP required a lot more patience than operating with 100 watts or so. Tell me what it takes to get you to OPERATE during Field Day. I need your input.

Operating and having fun is my thrust for this year. The radio positions (3, 4 or 5) need to be kept on the air for 24 hours, we came closer last year.





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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

February 10, 2017

The SFARC Board meeting for February commenced at 1800 hours at the Sizzler restaurant in Auburn.

Roll Call: All officers and Directors were present. Guests included Al-NI2U, Dennis-WU6X and George-KG6LSB.

REPORTS and DISCUSSIONS

President's Report: Orion-AI6JB submitted the agenda and asked for officer, board and committee chair reports.

VP Report: Mike-KK6GLP thanked everyone who volunteered to speak and give presentations at the club general meetings. Mike led a discussion regarding club branding to include patches, t-shirts, hats and possibly a vinyl logo sticker. It was agreed to bring this discussion to the general meeting for member comment.

Secretary's Report: Bruce-K6BAA had nothing to report.

Treasurer's Report: Sharron-KK6RGV presented the budget to board members and advised she is attempting to get the new rates for Cal Star.

Directors:

Bob-K6UDA advised he is working on a Skype presentation by Bob Heil for an upcoming club meeting.

Greg-KO6TH-will continue to post videos of club presentations.

Andrew-KC6O is waiting for bi-law corrections.

OTHER DISCUSSIONS

Yahoo: currently over 100 members. Remember you must be a current (paid up) member to post.

Membership: 107

VE: Al-NI2U reported there were 11 examiners for two candidates resulting in two new technicians.

Dennis-WU6X advised the board he was in contact with Jim Weir of Sierra College regarding licensing opportunities for students. Weir wanted a lower licensing examination fee for students due to their limited finances. Bob-K6UDA proposed if they had a student body card, the club could contribute \$ 10 towards the exam fee as a goodwill gesture to promote ham radio to youth. Bob made a motion, Andrew KC6O seconded and it passed unanimously with an amendment to make the proposal for one year.

Dennis also advised the new donated club projector is too heavy/cumbersome and recommended purchasing a replacement as was approved previously by the board.

Refreshments: Sharron-KK6RGV advised contributions for refreshments has fallen off and reminded everyone needs to contribute.

Nominations: Andrew-KC6O volunteered to chair the position.

Field Day: Al-NI2U volunteered to be the Field Day Chairman.

Vacant Committees: Orion-AI6JB advised volunteers are needed for the club picnic and Christmas party.

Meeting adjourned at 1901. Submitted by *Bruce Anderson, SFARC Secretary*

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

February 10, 2017



The SFARC General meeting for February commenced at 1930 hours at the Auburn City Hall Rose Room, President Orion-AI6JB presiding. All Officers and Directors were present. Orion led approximately 34 members and guests in a Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. An introduction of Officers, members and guests followed.

REPORTS:

President's Report: Orion briefly discussed the agenda and reviewed this evening's board meeting.

Vice President's Report: Mike-KK6GLP had nothing to report.

Secretary's Report: Bruce-K6BAA requested input for the club newsletter; advised a welcome letter was available for new members and guests, and a reminder to the membership to sign the attendance sheet.

Treasurer's Report: Sharron-KK6RGV reported on the club's finances.

Repeater Report: Birton-N6UG reviewed the repeaters status.

Sunshine Report: Richard-WA6RWS is recuperating at home after a short hospital stay. A card will be sent.

VE's Report: Al-NI2U advised there were 11 examiners and two candidates resulting in two new technicians. Al discussed the proposal to assist college students (see board minutes for details).

Activities: George-KG6LSB reviewed upcoming events.

Satellite Report: Greg-KO6TH briefed members on current satellite activity.

Refreshments/Drawing Aaron-KG6TVT reviewed items planned for the drawing. Sharron-KK6RGV reported on refreshments for the break and asked for contributions.

Club Picnic: Chair needed. Event will be held again at Applegate Park in August. Date TBD.

Christmas Party: Chair needed to volunteer.

Hamfest: Orion-AI6JB advised the membership of the preparations for the rain or shine March 18th event and invited members to attend the next planning meeting.

Field Day: Al-NI2U volunteered to be the field day chair.

Nominations: Andrew-KC6O volunteered.

Yahoo: Dennis-WU6X advised the membership on the Yahoo group status which is at over 100 subscribers.

Club Contest: Orion led a discussion on contests and discussed club branding. He polled members for interest. Birton-N6UG also suggested giving news outlets a story about the club/ham radio.

Tech-Ten: Al-NI2U gave an informative presentation on elevation and azimuth patterns using EZNEC.

Presentation: Carl-N6CKV gave a presentation on ARES.

General Announcements: The Club Net meets every Thursday at 7:30pm; Board and General Meetings occur on the 2nd Friday, Board meeting is held at **Sizzler Restaurant** in Auburn, and General meetings at 7:30pm at **Auburn City Hall**. The Club breakfast is held on the last Saturday at **Mel's Diner** in Auburn; an Elmer Net is held the first and third Wednesday night at 7:30pm on the 2m repeater. See **www.w6ek.org** for more information.

The meeting adjourned at 2130. Submitted by Bruce-K6BAA, Club Secretary

SIERRA FOOTHILLS AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

P.O. Box 6421, Auburn, CA 95604

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2017 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)**

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