



P.O. Box 6421 Auburn, CA 95604

May 2018

<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@suddenlinkmail.com

DIRECTORS

Greg Dolkas, KO6TH
Mark Graybill, W8BIT
Brian Gohl, AI6US

FIELD DAY CHAIRMAN

Gary Frerking, KC3PO

REPORTERS

Satellites: Greg, KO6TH
Sunshine: Richard, WA6RWS

GROUPS io

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
Casey McPartland, W7IB
Bob Brodovsky, K6UDA
Al Martin, NI2U

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Barbara Anderson, W6EVA
anderson51@wavecable.com

WEBMASTER:

Herb Garcia, KM6JBI

VOLUNTEER EXAMINER

Al Martin, NI2U



Calendar of Events

May 5-6th:
Enduro

May 11th:
Club Meeting

May 26th:
Club Breakfast

June 23rd & 24th:
FIELD DAY

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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

Field Day 2018

Gary, KC3PO, and a team of enthusiastic folks are deep into planning what promises to be a fun, exciting, and enriching weekend tailored to your wants and desires. A couple of surveys have been circulated and I hope you had an opportunity to share your thoughts.

Field Day is going to have something for everyone. The GOTA (Get on the Air) station is for those of you who received your license in the past year. It's a golden opportunity to work HF, even if you do not have a General ticket, under the loving and caring tutelage of one of our Elmers. I fondly remember it as my first taste of HF and have been hooked ever since.

We will have our traditional BBQ where you can catch up with all your ham friends. I even heard a rumor breakfast may be served

Field Day is Saturday and Sunday, June 23rd and 24th this year. We will be at our usual location at Nyack, only an hour away, on I-80. Perfect for a day trip. Or if you prefer, camp with us Friday and Saturday nights.

New Refreshments Chair!

Thank you to Chip, KM6MDF, for taking over the Refreshments Chair position. Chip has graciously volunteered to make sure we have beverages and goodies to eat at our general meetings. If you want to help him out by bring a little something, please feel free to do so. Just drop him a little note so he knows you are bringing something. Remember, all proceeds from the refreshments goes to our Christmas Party in December. Every little bit helps.

The Drawing is MIA!!

You may have noticed our Drawings have gone missing. There is a very good and simple explanation for that: No one has volunteered to be the Drawing Chair. It is disappointing to me with over a hundred folks in the club, we cannot get one person who is willing to run the drawing. Andrew, KC6O, has committed to buying the prizes, but is unable to reliably attend our meetings. All we need is someone to be at the meetings or arrange for someone to be at the meeting to run the raffle. If you are interested in taking on this fun role, please let me know.

Volunteerism

On April 22, Sierra Foothills ARC hams ran communications for the annual MS Walk in Folsom, CA. **Thank you to Mike, KK6GLP, for organizing the operators and working with the event staff for a very successful event.** Volunteering for community events such as this is an excellent opportunity for the

public to see ham radio in action. It is also a great opportunity for you to practice your operator skills in a “no pressure” environment. Mike has several events scheduled throughout the year like: the Georgetown Endro, Tevis Cup, and Cystic Fibrosis Bike Ride. If you are interested in helping out, no experience necessary, please let him know.

73

Orion Endres, AI6JB

President

AI6JB@arrl.net

Photos from the MS Walk - 2018



Mike, KK6GLP



**Joe, KN6FH
Greg, KO6TH**



**Les, KG6NME
Jim, WA8MPA**

Brian, AI6US



“Alexa, help me with ham radio”

Submitted by Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

KB6NU's Ham Radio Blog

I have had an Amazon Alexa (<https://www.amazon.com/Amazon-Echo-And-Alexa-Devices/b?ie=UTF8&node=9818047011>) for nearly a year now. Mostly, I just use it to listen to internet radio stations or tell me a joke, but I think it has more potential than that. For example, I've written before about how I'd like to develop an Alexa skill to control my IC-7300 (<https://www.kb6nu.com/use-alex-a-amateur-radio/>). I haven't gotten around to that yet, but, Joe, N3HEE, has just published an Alexa skill called Continuous Wave (https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B07C7HS47J/?ref=skill_dsk_skb_sr_0). It's designed to help you learn Morse Code.

To use this skill, you have to first enable it. Once enabled, say, “Alexa, open Continuous Wave.” This opens the skill at the main menu. You can then say any of the following at any voice prompt...

- Learn
- Practice
- Alphabet
- Common words
- Random words
- Words
- Sentences
- Call signs
- Contest
- Quick Brown Fox
- QSO
- Help
- Stop – To end your session.

I've just played around with this app for a short time, but I've found it to be quite entertaining. It does, however, have one big drawback. You can't set the speed. It's currently limited to sending at 20 words per minute only.

Also, the learn function could use a little refining. When you give the command “learn,” it asks you for a character, sends that character three times, and then asks you for another. If you could set the speed at which the skill sends characters, it could teach a character like the K7QO Code Course, first sending the character slowly, then ramping up the speed.

Overall, though, I think this is a great first shot at a usable Alexa skill for teaching Morse Code. I hope this is the first of many versions of this skill.

While I was poking around on Amazon, I decided to see what other amateur radio skills might be available. Here are a few that I found:

- Ham Exam

(https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B01N7NQ3JE/?ref=skill_dsk_skb_sr_6&qid=1524602919). Ask Alexa to ask you questions from the Technician Class question pool.

- Ham Lookup

(https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B073YL88SL/?ref=skill_dsk_pnps_dp_1). Allows you to look up amateurs by call sign. Information is provided from the callbook.info database.

- Ham Radio Propagation Forecast

(https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B073THV6ZP/?ref=skill_dsk_pnps_dp_0). Reports the latest forecasts directly from HamQSL (run by NONBH).

- ARRL Audio News

(https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B078Y7NGYT/?ref=skill_dsk_skb_sr_1&qid=1524750783). Adds ARRL Audio News to your Alexa flash briefing.

Building your own voice app:

The Continuous Wave Alexa skill was developed using tools found at VoiceApps.Com. Two other websites, Pullstring (<https://pullstring.com>) and StoryLine (<https://getstoryline.com>), also have tools to help you build voice apps.

And, Amazon has an online tutorial that will teach you how to build an Alexa app. I'm just getting started with these tools, so I can't recommend one over the others, but they do look like they'll make developing voice apps easier.

Since I'm currently in the process of updating my No Nonsense Technician Class License Study Guide, it occurs to me that I should also develop an Alexa skill for drilling students on test questions. I guess you could call them audio flashcards. Stay tuned for that.

When he's not trying to figure out how to build voice apps, Dan blogs about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com, teaches ham radio classes, and operates CW on the HF bands. Look for him on 30m, 40m, and 80m. You can email him about the voice apps that you like at cwgeek@kb6nu.com.



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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

April 13, 2018

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

Roll Call: All officers and Directors were present. Guests included Richard-WA6RWS, Dennis-WU6X, Al-NI2U, Herb-KM6JBI and Toni-KK6JPJ.

REPORTS and DISCUSSIONS

President's Report: Orion-AI6JB submitted the agenda and asked for officer, board and committee chair reports. Orion asked each of the board members to submit their duties in a report.

VP Report: Mike-KK6GLP reviewed this evening's presentation.

Secretary's Report: Bruce-K6BAA advised the club repeater site lease extension is ready to be submitted to the Auburn Union School District.

Treasurer's Report: Sharron-KK6RGV updated the board on the budget and dues received from renewals.

Sunshine: Richard-WA6RWS advised George-KG6LSB, has completed his medical treatment and is recovering at home.

Directors:

Brian-AI6US advised he likes the response to the Elmer program which assigns a club member to new members to act as an Elmer.

Greg-KO6TH would like to remind all those participating in nets to end their final transmissions with their call sign as required by the FCC regulations.

OTHER DISCUSSIONS

Membership: Richard-WA6RWS advised club currently at 98 members. Herb-KM6JBI suggested getting more new members to participate in the Elmer Net. Greg suggested giving each Elmer Net a main topic for the discussion.

VE: Al-NI2U advised because of his recent surgery, Andrew-KC6O is handling VEC lead duties.

Events: Mike-KK6GLP advised the MS Walk is scheduled in Folsom April 15, the Enduro will be combined May 5-6 and the Tour de Cure has been cancelled this year. The Tevis Cup is on the club calendar.

Repeater: Richard-WA6RWS advised the system is working well.

Drawing/Refreshments: Volunteers needed for both, contact Orion.

WEB: Herb-KM6JBI advised he is updating the web site and is adding field day information. Brian added he would like to see club activities updates and update photo albums to the most recent activities. Greg added the web site should be more of an advertisement for the club.

Groups io: Dennis-WU6X advised the new group is working well with 105 members.

Social Media: Mark-W8BIT updated the board on Facebook.

Field Day: Brian-AI6US suggested the club purchase a large tent for field day and other club events.

Old Business

Orion advised club officer duties list is still needed from each officer. Richard-WA6RWS will receive the lists. Orion also announced a change of venue for future board of directors meetings to Mel's Dinner on Hwy 49 in Auburn. This will take effect at the May meeting.

Financial Audit: Richard-WA6RWS presented the board with the results of his 2017 financial review/audit. Orion tabled further discussion of the review to a later date.

Meeting adjourned at 1850. Submitted by *Bruce Anderson, SFARC Secretary*

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

April 13, 2018



The SFARC General meeting for April commenced at 1930 hours at the Auburn City Hall Rose Room, President Orion-AI6JB presiding. All Officers and Directors were present. Orion led approximately 44 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. At this point in the evenings activities, Greg-KO6TH using a cross polarized handheld beam antenna and hand held transceiver, began a live demonstration of the International Space Station Cosmonaut SSTV transmission. Greg had the live downlink projected to a screen for club members to view. This was an exciting presentation that was well received by members.

Vice President's Report: Mike-KK6GLP reviewed upcoming presentations and events.

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.

Special Presentation: Sonja Conklin, Membership Manager of AirMedCare, gave a presentation on AirMedCare and the membership discount provided to Club members (and their household members).

Repeater Report: Richard-WA6RWS reviewed the repeaters status.

Sunshine: Richard advised George-KG6LSB has completed medical treatment and is recovering at home.

VE's Report: Al-NI2U advised the FCC application for license now asks for felony conviction status.

Activities: Mike-KK6GLP advised the MS Walk is scheduled in Folsom April 15, the Enduro will be combined May 5-6 and the Tour de Cure has been cancelled this year.

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

Refreshments/Drawing A new drawing and refreshment chair is needed. Contact Orion.

WEB: Herb-KM6JBI advised he is updating and asked members to send photos of club activities.

Social Media: Mark-W8BIT updated the membership on Facebook/Twitter.

Groups io: Dennis-WU6X advised the new group is working well with 105 members.

Contests: "Rookie Round Up" to take place in April.

Membership: Richard-WA6RWS advised club currently at 98 members and encouraged members who haven't renewed to do so.


ARES: Carl-N6CKV advised the next ARES meeting to take place April 28th.

Tech-Ten /Field Day: Gary-KC3PO chair, updated members on field day preparations. The next planning meetings will be at Denny's Newcastle, 5/14/18 and 6/11/18. All members are invited to attend.

Presentation: Ralph-W6RWL, Joe-K6SAT and Randy-KD6MWJ, ham radio coordinators, gave a presentation on the upcoming Western States (6/23/18) and TEVAS (7/28/18) events.

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 **Mel's Dinner** Hwy 49, 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 2145. Submitted by Bruce-K6BAA, Club Secretary



Batteries + Bulbs.

Ryan Tollefson
District Manager

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SIERRA FOOTHILLS AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

P.O. Box 6421, Auburn, CA 95604

2018 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

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

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

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

ARRL member? Yes / No (circle one)

DUES / DONATIONS:

Membership: yearly * \$22.00 or 20.00 X how many years _____ = \$ _____ *** see below Multi-year Discount

Associate: yearly \$7.00

Repeater Donation: \$ _____

Auto Patch Donation: \$ _____

Newsletter Booster: \$ _____

Misc. Donation: \$ _____

Christmas Donation: \$ _____

Name Badge \$10 or \$15 (circle one) ** see below for type of badge requested Name on Badge _____

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

** Clip Badge = \$10; Magnetic Badge = \$15

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

OFFICE USE ONLY:

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

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