



P.O. Box 6421 Auburn, CA 95604

February 2021

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

At The Key of SFARC:

PRESIDENT

Brian Gohl, AI6US
AI6US@titaniumsattelite.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Greg Dolkas, KO6TH
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SECRETARY

Michele Bauer, WH7QC
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TREASURER

Jeff Morgan, KM6RGO
jamontrail@gmail.com

DIRECTORS

Gerry Brentnall, WA6E
Wayne Stilwell, W6DT
Chip Bautista, KM6MDF

FIELD DAY CHAIRMAN

To be filled

REPORTERS

Satellites: Greg, KO6TH
Sunshine: Roy, WH7DH

GROUPS io

Dennis Gregory, WU6X

PIO

Scott Vogelsang, WA6YNE

REPEATERS

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

CLUB NET

Thursdays, 7:30PM, W6EK/R 145.430

CLUB MEETINGS

Second Friday of the month,
Online Zoom starts @7:30pm
Meeting ID: 962 6167 5605

CLUB BREAKFAST

On hold until further notice

NET CONTROL OPS

Dave Jenkins, WB6RBE
Orion Endres, AI6JB
Chip Bautista, KM6MDF

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Barbara Anderson, W6EVA
anderson51@wavecable.com

WEBMASTER

Herb Garcia, KM6JBI

STATION TRUSTEE

Clyde Campbell, AB4CC

VOLUNTEER EXAMINER

Andrew Silvester, K6OP

Calendar of Events

**February 6th @
11am**

***RDF Project Zoom
Meeting***

**February 12th @
7:30pm**

***Zoom General
Meeting***

**February 14th
Valentine's Day**



~ ~ ~

***Join us every morning @
7:30am for the Coffee
Break Net on the W6EK
repeater 145.43, PL
162.2***



Inside this issue

- ***President's Message***
- ***Winter Field Day photographs***
- ***SFARC Shoppers & "What is it?" question***
- ***INSTALLING CHIRP IN UBUNTU 20.04***
- ***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 Brian Gohl – AI6US,
President*

Volunteer Radio Communication Events Return in 2021

Spring and summer plans have already started for community events requiring volunteer radio communications support. Please join me in welcoming Chip- KM6MDF, our new Sierra Foothills ARC Volunteer Events Radio Communications Coordinator. Chip has inherited a well-developed game plan binder for each event, which has been organized and optimized over years of successful events by the past coordinators. We look forward to supporting Chip and the club's volunteer radio communication needs during the upcoming activity filled 2021 season.

SFARC has a strong tradition of providing radio support for community events with the use of the W6EK repeaters and in organizing teams of volunteer station operators. Occasionally, you will hear the local repeaters being used for event support and non-event traffic is asked to stand-by and only use the repeater in case of an emergency.

Some of the community events last a few hours and only cover a few miles with simplex coverage on a HT, while other events last a day or more and require multiple repeaters, cross-banding, portable battery powered high power stations and creative placement of gain antennas. Traffic is often passed via Winlink and this is becoming an important method to be proficient. Each event provides a great opportunity to promote amateur radio use while increasing your skill sets. Some volunteers may be new to amateur radio and only have an HT with limited radio experience. Others will be experienced operators with complete go kit portable stations. What a great way to learn and share techniques and communication procedures, while teaming with experienced operators.

There are volunteer positions open for amateur radio operators with every level of experience. The team positions fill up fast, so check in with Chip if you are interested in participating.

Are the SFARC Books in Order?

A special thanks to the 2020 Financial Review volunteers, Don- WB6LPJ and Marv- N7MSM, who spent several hours reviewing the club accounting files to close out 2020. Don and Marv report that SFARC Treasurer, Jeff- KM6RGO has done an exceptional job with the accounting and the books are in order. Thank you!

Radio Direction Finder Project

Are you interested in being a contributor to develop a regional Radio Direction Finder project? We will be holding our first exploratory meeting on February 6th at 11 am via Zoom. Imagine the possibilities with several RDF units were permanently installed at local repeater sites and/or at operators QTH to provide a frequency agile VHF/UHF radio direction finder system. Maybe build as a personal device to fox hunt or overlay the repeater input transmissions on Google maps to our website or ???

Check out Groups.io thread: https://w6ek.groups.io/g/sfarc/topic/radio_direction_finding/80131696 or email Jon- KI6RT or Brian- AI6US to explore a RDF project.

Winter Field Day 2021 is a Wrap

It will be many months before we learn the official results of Winter Field Day 2021. Judging from the high number of member call signs on the logs, the talk on the repeater and the posts on groups.io, SFARC member participation in WFD was a huge success. Rule changes promoted individual activity within the Covid-19 orders and allowed each station's individual participation and score to be submitted with a club affiliation for an aggregated club score. If you haven't already submitted, remember to list "Sierra Foothills ARC" as your club.

Due to the current Covid restrictions, our station was unfortunately closed to visitors. Five intrepid souls ventured up to the Georgetown airport and were hosted by Scott- KK7AIR at the camp ground. Orion- AI6JB, Chip- KM6MDF, Trevor- KM6MDH, Devon- KM6MDG and AI6US-Brian battled through the Friday rains, put up 9 antennas then were treated to 2 days of sunshine as we operated 2 stations a total of 14 hours. Would have run more hours, but the bands closed early Saturday night and we opted to hang out by the campfire and swap stories under the stars. (See photos on page 4).

Our team tentatively logged 390 contacts with 21 multipliers on 9 bands 160m – 70cm with SSB/FM, CW and PSK31 for a claimed score of 21,972. A BIG thank you to the members who were able to assist with multipliers on the tough bands, like Josh KK6VHH who in one day built an interface for an older IC440 radio, learned and operated PSK31 and made his first ever CW contact with Orion!!! Also, Dennis- WU6X came through with some CW contacts under very rough band conditions.

For me, Field Day is much more than personal or club points. It is not a contest, but rather a benchmark. It is about being prepared to the best of my ability to meet the challenge, working with available resources and adapting when met with inevitable challenges. It is about having fun or pushing the envelope, then celebrating survival after operating for 24 hours. When the operation is over, I review the results, checklist for strengths, weaknesses then plan to come back next year to improve my personal best!

Hope to hear your WFD stories on the Coffee Break net.

Looking forward to talking with you again, a little further down the logbook!

Until then, 73

Brian Gohl – AI6US

SFARC President



ATTENTION!!! ATTENTION!!!

SFARC SHOPPERS



AISLE "W6EK"

All items are first come, first served. "As-is" (but checked out and good-to-go), US Dollars, pick-up at WA8MPA's.

All proceeds go to benefit SFARC activities (think Christmas Party).

THIS MONTHS BLUE LIGHT SPECIALS

Benchner YA-1 Low Pass Filter
1.5 KW 1.8 MHz - 30 MHz

~~\$200.00~~ **TODAY ONLY \$15.00**



B&K Model 3050 Audio Generator
20 Hz - 200 KHz Sine/Square Wave

~~\$300.00~~ **TODAY ONLY \$25.00**

MFJ-4225 MV Switching Power Supply
0 - 15 Volts 20 amps

~~\$100.00~~ **TODAY ONLY \$80.00**



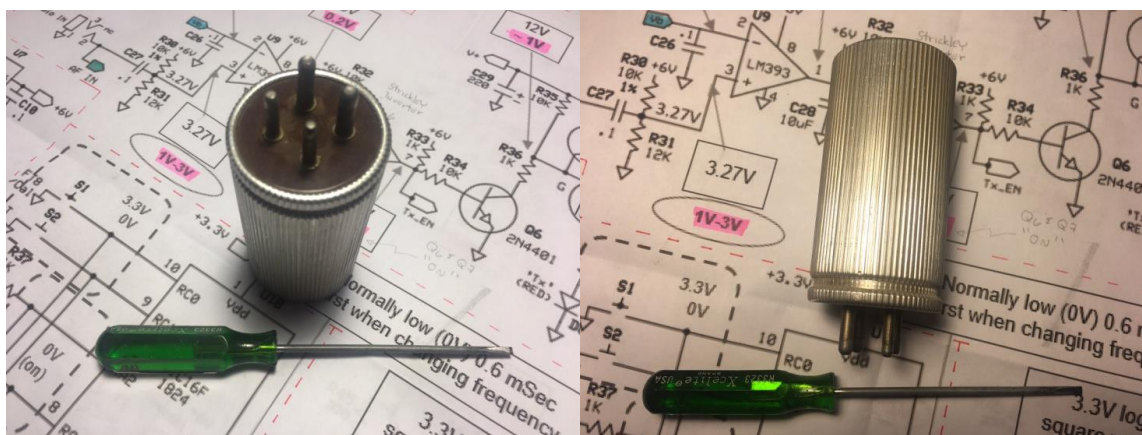
Magnum 2000 Linear Amp 10M.
10 Meter 200 watts

~~\$90.00~~ **TODAY ONLY \$75.00**

What is it?

BONUS QUESTION: What were they for and why?

(Hint: Millions were manufactured in the 1950's and Hams used them in mobile rigs)



Answer is on page 13 of this newsletter

INSTALLING CHIRP IN UBUNTU 20.04

By Joshua Besneatte - KK6VHH

If you have been using the PPA to get the Chirp dailies, you will quickly find out that this no longer works in the latest Ubuntu LTS (20.04 Focal Fossa).

This is because Python 2 is getting phased out and whatever is running the GUI for Chirp has been phased out completely. Ubuntu has removed numerous required libs from the standard repositories. This makes getting Chirp to run a little more difficult than before.

While it looks like major progress has been made with the Python 3 upgrade and Chirp is available in Ubuntu 20.10. Groovy! If you want to stick with the current LTS installing the flatpak is your solution.

A Flatpak is a self-contained package that includes all necessary libraries. Similar to a Snap, but this uses a package directly from the author. I like the flatpak option because I don't need to manually install a bunch of deprecated libs or add some PPA that wasn't even meant for Ubuntu. Let's dig in.

First thing you need to do is download the latest .flatpak file from https://trac.chirp.danplanet.com/chirp_daily/LATEST/ to your downloads folder. The rest of the work is from the terminal.

Next, open a terminal and install Flatpak using apt:

```
$ sudo apt install flatpak
```

Now we need to update flatpak so it will create the necessary paths.

```
$ flatpak update -v
```

This will give you a warning about paths, something like:

Note that the directories:

```
'/var/lib/flatpak/exports/share'
'/home/[username]/.local/share/flatpak/exports/share'
```

The above directories are not in the search path set by the XDG_DATA_DIRS environment variable, so applications installed by Flatpak may not appear on your desktop until the session is restarted.

Since we now have to log out (or reboot) anyway, now might be a good time to make sure you are in the dialout group. This is required to allow you to access your programming dongle without needing to be root.

Use the `groups` command to list your active groups. If the group “dialout” does not appear, add yourself to the group (replace [username] with your username).

```
$ sudo usermod -aG dialout [username]
```

Now restart your session (or computer) and return to the terminal.

```
$ flatpak update
Looking for updates...
Nothing to do.
```

Don't worry about installation directory warnings if you haven't installed anything yet. Those will be created later. The important thing is that we got rid of the path warning. Moving on....

Now you need to get the Freedesktop repository installed:

```
$ flatpak remote-add --if-not-exists flathub https://flathub.org/repo/flathub.flatpakrepo
```

and then install the Freedesktop Platform:

```
$ flatpak install flathub org.freedesktop.Platform//19.08
```

This might take a while it's a big (~0.5Gb) download. Grab some coffee and make some QSO's...

Finally we can install Chirp! (replace .flatpack filename with your downloaded version)

```
$ flatpak install Downloads/chirp-daily-20201014.flatpak
```

You're done! You can run chirp from your applications menu or from the command like this:

```
$ flatpak run com.danplanet.chirp
```

Remember, this is only a temporary solution until the Python 3 conversion of Chirp has been completely rolled out. However, in the interim if you want to easily update the flatpak, or automate it with a cron job, here is a script I wrote that works for me:

```
#!/bin/bash
```

```
## This script updates chirp flatpak to latest daily build
```

```
## Add this to root's crontab for automatic updates
```

```
## If run as standard user, you will get a popup asking for admin password
```

```
#Make download folder if doesn't exist
```

```
mkdir -p ~/Downloads/ChirpFP
```

```
#Move to Download folder
```

```
cd ~/Downloads/ChirpFP
```

```
#Remove previously downloaded flatpaks
```

```
rm *.flatpak
```

```
#Pull link from download page and download latest flatpak
```

```
wget `lynx -dump https://trac.chirp.danplanet.com/chirp_daily/LATEST/ | awk '/http/{print $2}' | grep flatpak`
```

```
#Install the file
```

```
flatpak install -y --noninteractive *.flatpak
```



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Video Conference Zoom Meeting

January 8, 2021 @ 1800

The meeting was called to order by President Brian/AI6US at 6:02 pm.

Brian gave a "welcome" to Chip/KM6MDF as our newest club director. He expressed gratitude to Nathan/N6NDC who did a great job! Nathan has moved to Texas and will be greatly missed.

All SFARC officers were present, including Gerry/WA6E who reported via his road trip to Quartzite.

President, Brian/AI6US, Vice-president, Greg/KO6TH, Secretary, Michele/WH7QC, Treasurer, Jeff/KM6RGO, Directors, Gerry/WA6E (2 years), Wayne/W6DT, and Chip/KM6MDF, and Repeater Trustee, Clyde/AB4CC.

Jeff/KM6RGO gave his 2021 budget proposals (handouts were available) and the board approved.

Michele/WH7QC had no report and the Directors had no reports.

Greeter/Sunshine, Roy/WH7DH and Assistant Jacob—Welcome!

Newsletter, Barbara/W6EVA is soliciting our articles, technology, outings, installs, shacks, Ham activities, etc. for the monthly newsletter.

Webmaster, Herb/KM6JBI reported that everything is running ok. There was a hard drive failure, but it is ok now.

Contest, Dennis/WU6X—Welcome back!! Dennis reported that tomorrow is the North America on CW. If you participate, please give your name and state.

Social Media: Many thanks to Bob/K6UDA who did a tremendous job with our social media! Bob and his wife are moving to Idaho Fall, Idaho and will be greatly missed.

Membership, Jeff/KM6RGO reported that we currently have 165 members; however, we will have about 168 by the end of the week!

We will be voting in 13 new members during our General meeting this evening.

Volunteer Events, Chip/KM6MDF has just volunteered for the position. Thank you, Chip! Chip had no report for this evening.

Public Information Officer (PIO), Scott/WA6YNE was not present.

Nomination Chair-TBD

Club Christmas Party-TBD

Field Day Chair-TBD

Picnic Chairs, Roy/WH7DH and Michele/WH7QC will plan a picnic for late summer/early autumn 2021.

Old Business

Repeater lease-We will “lay low” still as schools are still in a bit of Covid-19 turmoil.

Sister ARC proposal-Ken/K6KEC was not present.

Hamfest 2021 schedule: Orion/AI6JB mentioned that we will discuss the Hamfest during our February meeting.

New Business

220 Repeater: Clyde/AB4CC reported that our repeater is 30+ years old. He suggested doing a poll for the club’s input regarding.

Financial Review: Don/WB6LPJ and Marv/N7MSM will work with Treasurer, Jeff/KM6RGO and the financial books.

Lifetime Membership for past presidents was proposed by Matt/KC6RUO. Some of the board members felt that doing this would set a precedent. We feel it should be a “lifetime award” as it would make the award more special, and not possibly an incentive for someone to run for president, or that type of thing. We do not need a motion.

SFARC round, bumper-type stickers: Should we mail to members with a club packet? Should we authorize postage for 165 members? It was decided that Jeff/KM6RGO will post the stickers to new members.

Field Day 2021: We should preplan and have one chairperson and then they can incorporate some help as needed.

The SFARC Board meeting was adjourned at 18:52. Submitted by Michele J. Bauer/WH7QC.



GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Video Conference Zoom Meeting

January 8, 2021 @ 1930

Welcome and greetings to all attendees by Brian/AI6US and then meeting called to order at 20:10.

Brian/AI6US just announced that Carl/N6CKV just became an ARRL Lifetime member! Congratulations Carl!

Introduction of board members: President, Brian/AI6US, Vice-president, Greg/KO6TH, Secretary, Michele/WH7QC, Treasurer, Jeff/KM6RGO, Repeater Trustee, Clyde/AB4CC, Directors, Gerry/WA6E, Wayne/W6DT, and Chip/KM6MDF. Chip is our newest member of the board of directors. Welcome Chip! Gerry/WA6E is in attendance en route to Quartzite.

Jeff/KM6RGO has the budget proposal for the 2021 year which he will go over later on.

The club wishes to thank Nathan/N6NDC (who recently moved to Texas) for his great service to the SFARC club. Thank you, Nathan! You will be missed!

We have some recent new members who are here attending their first SFARC meeting: Charles/KN6LDK, Bryan/KN6LDG, and Mike/K6YMM. Welcome all to the club!

Sad news: We have two recent "silent keys". There was a "moment of silence" for: Jim Griffith/KI6AZH, our "the voice on the hill" as described by Carl/N6CKV.

Dave Fortenberry/K6VHP, who would send messages to Brian/AI6US during our beloved "Coffee Break Net". Both hams were a friend to club members for many, many years and will be greatly missed.

The November 2020 minutes were approved per the corrections made by Michele/WH7QC. It was motioned and seconded and all approved.

SFARC stickers are available and were donated by Herb/KM6JBI. Thank you, Herb! There is one available for each member.

Many thanks go out to Jim Jupin/WA8MPA for organizing our 2020 Christmas Party which was a huge success—via Zoom! Great job Jim and all those who helped out! The prize wheel was handled by Joe/K6SAT, who last-minute took over for Dennis/WU6X who was recovering from illness. Gerry/WA6E put on a fun trivia game, some of which really took some thinking. Great job guys!

The Daniel Fogard/W6PRL Student Awards (Scholarships) were awarded by Orion/AI6JB to: Bryan Catacata/KN6LDG for his Technician license and Charles Giasson/KN6LDK for his Technician and General licenses. Great job young men!

Joe/K6SAT announced the upcoming Western States and TEVIS Cup competitions coming up for this year. These are a big deal up in our “neck of the woods”. He called for Radio volunteers for the events which are planned for June 26-27. The Western States 100 Mile Endurance Run is the world’s oldest 100-mile trail race (est. 1974). It starts in Olympic Valley and finishes in Auburn. There is over 18,000 feet of climbing/23,000 feet of descent. There are usually 369 runners, 1500 volunteers, 23 checkpoints, + Net control. There are approximately 100 radio volunteers! To sign up, or for more information one may connect on: radio@wser.org. Thank you, Joe for the great service you always give!

We have 13 new members: Art, Christian, Greg, Tyler, Bill, Jojo, Charlie, Leslie, Trevor, Devon, Pam, Theta, and Michelle. Gary/KB7QWC motioned and Roy/WH7DH seconded that the club receive these new members. The voting was unanimous. Welcome new Ham friends!

Our Social Media Officer, Bob/K6UDA is moving to Idaho Falls and will be greatly missed! Thank you, Bob for all your tremendous service on behalf of the SFARC club! Besides Social Media, Bob has served as club president, on Digital repeater, for Field Day and club inclusiveness. The YouTubers channel will stay on our fusion repeater. The club wishes you and Karen well in your next chapter. Should the club vote to share Bob with the Magic Valley Club? 😊

Wheel of Prizes, Dennis/WU6X. Rich/AA6RS won the Dutch Bro. \$20 gift coupon—Yay Rich!! Later in the evening were other winners:

Michael/KK6RXY won the Wireless Mouse—Yay Michael!

Steve/K7VUE won the Microsoft Wireless Keyboard—Yay Steve!

Auction items of the month, Jim/WA8MPA. To bid, “chat” with your price for the Kenwood radio, TS-570d. This is in beautiful condition and sells for about \$500.

Later in the evening, the winning bidder was announced—tada! Wayne/W6DT for \$250 for the Kenwood radio—Yay Wayne!!

TECH TEN-1

The 2021 Winter Field Day is a club event. Orion/AI6JB gave us a “How to Participate” for the event. This year’s event is scheduled for Saturday & Sunday, January 30-31. It lasts for 24 hours and starts at 1900 UTC (1100 PST). Set up starts at 1900 UTC on Friday, January 29.

What is new for 2021? No In-person gathering, but—you can operate from home! individual scores will be aggregated. Submit your log with “Sierra Foothills ARC” as the club name. Get on the air and work as many bands and modes as you can. Have fun!

Orion also announced scores for the 2020 Summer Field Day event—26 logs were submitted. Our club received 8th in the nation--a 6-way tie! Rules for the Winter Field Day can be found on: <https://www.winterfieldday.com/> Thank you, Orion, as always!

TECH TEN-2

For the “Show Us Your Shack” mystery shack feature, Alan/W6WN showed us his beautiful little attic steampunk nook. It was a “shack” to be admired for sure! The furnishings were antique steampunk, of which the natural wood and metal added an attractive touch to the small, yet adequate room/shack. Thank you, Alan for sharing!

PROGRAM

Clyde/AB4CC

Our club Repeater Trustee, Clyde/AB4CC gave us an overview of “Repeater Systems”. Japan actually started WIRES-X. His goal is to get everyone comfortable using all the repeaters available from the club. Our W6EK Repeater is many and varied, from YAESU to WACOM to Telewave, to ARCOM to Motorola to Allstarlink, Echolink, Raspberry PI 3 and so forth. Thank you, Clyde for your great presentation AND for always making sure the Club Repeaters are up and running and in good order!

Chair Reports

Repeater Trustee, Clyd/AB4CC reported that the club is upgrading our system this Monday (January 11)—a new modem and software and upgrade.

Sunshine/Greeters, Roy/WH7DH and Jacob/Sidekick are our new Sunshine Boys

VE Exam, Andrew/K6OP VEC or Carl/N6CKV. Online training is completed and 7 are now providing Online Exams.

Volunteer Events, Chip/KM6MDF Welcome! Chip has just volunteered to do the job—thank you, Chip!

Amateur Exam Classes, Orion/AI6JB-Orion will be offering the Extra Class course beginning on Tuesday evenings from 7-9 pm, beginning on February 2nd. Thank you so much Orion!

Newsletter, Barbara/W6EVA has asked for the club’s contributions to the monthly newsletter of articles, photos, technology, outings, installs, etc. Barbara does an outstanding job with our club newsletters. Thank you, Barbara!

Satellite, Greg/KO6TH says to look to 2021 to be a big year, particularly for MARS!

Website, Herb/KM6JBI also asks for photos etc. for the club website.

Groups io/Contests, Dennis/WU6X reported that 180 people participating. The site has lots of information. As to the contest, there is the upcoming North America CW. We are SO glad to have you back with us Dennis!!

Membership, Jeff/KM6RGO reported we are now 166 members strong now! Membership dues can now be paid via lots of ways, including PayPal. As of January 2020, we had 103 members, but since Covid and our now famous, “Coffee Break Net”, as of the end of December 2020, we bumped up to the 166.

ARES, Carl/N6CKV had no report, but there is ARES net every Sunday evening at 7:30 pm.

Library/Equipment Donations, Jim/WA8MPA reported that there are some back issues of QST available on CD's that were donated by Marv/N7MSM. Thank you, Marv!!

Calendar

Winter Field Day, January 30-31, 2021

Announcements

Club Nets every Thursday @ 7:30 pm (145.430, PL=162.2).

Elmer Net every 1st and 3rd Wednesdays @ 7:30 pm (145.430, PL=162.2).

Coffee Break Net every morning @ 7:30 am (145.430, PL=162.2).

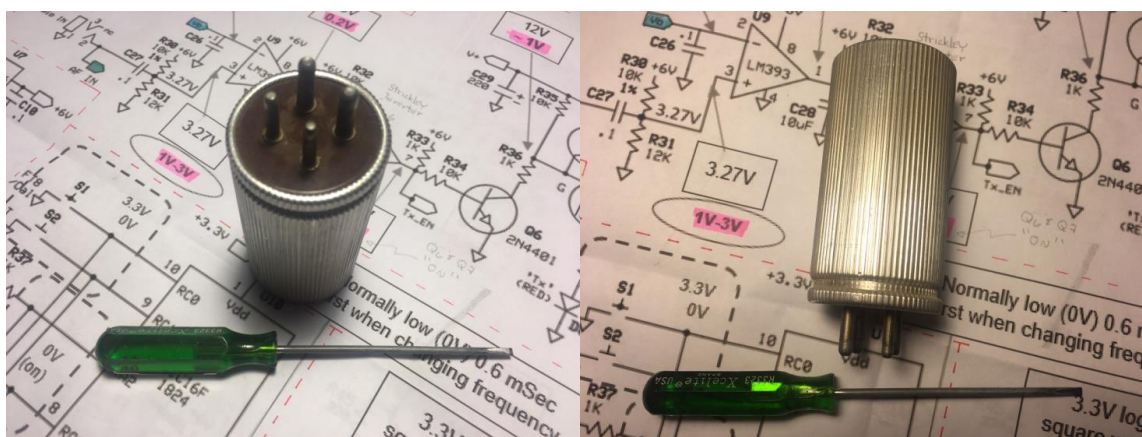
Club Breakfast, normally the last Saturday @ Mel's in Auburn is cancelled until further notice.

Club Board Meeting is every 2nd Friday of the month. Next meeting will be February 12 @ 6 pm via Zoom.

Club General Meeting is every 2nd Friday of the month. Next meeting will be February 12 @ 7:30 pm via Zoom.

Any QST's from the Members? The meeting was adjourned at 22:05. Several took advantage of the opportunity to socialize after the meeting on the W6EK Repeater or stay on Zoom.

Submitted by Michele J. Bauer/WH7QC



“WHAT IS IT?”

Answer: “Vibrator” - used in 1950's automobile radios, both 6 volt and later 12 volt systems.

Bonus Question Answer: The “Vibrator” was a mechanical device composed of a coil, vibrating reed, and contacts whose output was applied to the primary of a step-up transformer to provide the high voltage (later rectified) for the vacuum tube plate circuits.

SIERRA FOOTHILLS AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
P.O. Box 6421, Auburn, CA 95604

2020 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	New- -- New -- New -- Multi-year DISCOUNT Membership *\$20 per year for 2 or more years (new or renewal)
August	\$ 18/5	November	\$ 12/2+ following year	
September	\$ 16/4	December	\$ 10/1 + following year	

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Rev. 5-11-2018



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