



P.O. Box 6421, Auburn, CA 95604

SEPTEMBER 2026

<https://www.w6ek.org>

At The Key at SFARC:

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Mark Koehler (W2MWK)

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Greg Dolkas (KO6TH)

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Pam Bautista (KN6GTK)

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Jeff Morgan (KW6U)
Dudley McFadden (KO6DRM)

VE TESTING COORDINATOR

Brian Gohl (AI6US)

WEBMASTER

Smitty (WB1G)
Greg Dolkas (KO6TH)

STATION TRUSTEE

Clyde Campbell (AB4CC)

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Jim Zheng (W6JCZ)

GROUPS.IO ADMINISTRATOR

Aaron Bond (W1ATB)

DROPBOX ADMINISTRATOR

Smitty (WB1G)

ELMER LEAD

Greydon Hicks (KC6SLE)

ADVANCEMENT / CLASSES

Chair: Orion Endres (AI6JB)
Instructor(s): Orion Endres (AI6JB), Anders Rehnvall (NR6H), James Goldstene (AE6JG), Steven Foley (KO6EBQ)

WEEKLY CLUB NET

Thursdays @ 7:30 PM

W6EK 2m Repeater @ 145.430 MHz

Primary Net Control Operators:
Dave Jenkins (WB6RBE)
Orion Endres (AI6JB)
Chip Bautista (KM6MDF)
Smitty (WB1G)

COFFEE BREAK NET

365 Days A Year 7:30 AM – 10 AM

W6EK 2m Repeater @ 145.430 MHz

Primary Net Control Operators:
• Brian Gohl (AI6US)
• Gerry Brentnall (WA6E)
• Theta Brentnall (WA6EWF)
• Tom Newman (NN6H)
• Orion Endres (AI6JB)
• Jeff Morgan (KW6U)

Standby Net Control Operators:

- Smitty (WB1G)
- Don Hay (WB6LPJ)
- Aaron Bond (W1ATB)

CLUB MEETINGS

Second Friday of the month,
PCHHS Conference Center @ 7:30 PM
Cordova Room 500, 11434 B Ave, Auburn, CA

CLUB EVENTS

Board Meeting

September 10 @ 6 PM

[Online via Zoom](#)

General Meeting

September 11 @ 7:30 PM

PCHHS Conference Center or [Online via Zoom](#)
Cordova Room 500, 11434 B Ave, Auburn, CA

Amateur Radio License Exam Session

September 14 @ 7 PM

Confluence Church

1101 Auburn Ravine Rd, Auburn, CA

Fall Campout

September 17 – 20

Logger Campground

Stampede Reservoir, Truckee, CA

Breakfast Social & Radio Direction Finding

September 26 @ 7:30 AM

Wings Grill & Espresso Bar

13595 New Airport Rd, Auburn, CA

Visit our [website](#) for more information about RDF

REPEATERS

145.430 MHz (-0.6 MHz / CTCSS 162.2)

AllStarLink: 51018

EchoLink: 4128

Wires-X: W6EK-2M-ROOM (62545)

223.860 MHz (-1.6 MHz / CTCSS 110.9)

440.575 MHz (+5.0 MHz / CTCSS 162.2)

AMS – Fusion C4FM & Analog FM

Wires-X: NorCal Repeater GRP (43847)

YSF: US-NorCalRptGrp (06040)

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SFARC President | Mark Koehler (W2MWK)

It's hard to believe that Labor Day weekend is almost here and another summer is coming to a close. I hope everyone has had a great summer and found some time to enjoy family, friends, travel, and, of course, a little ham radio along the way.

August gave us several opportunities to get together and practice the skills that make amateur radio such an interesting hobby. Sometimes that means getting on the air, trying something new, or helping another operator. Just as important, though, are the opportunities to simply spend some time together.

I really enjoyed our breakfast gathering at the Wings Grill at the Auburn Airport. It was a great chance to sit down, have breakfast, and talk with fellow club members in a relaxed setting. No agenda, no formal program—just good conversation and the opportunity to get to know each other a little better. Those kinds of gatherings are one of the things I enjoy most about being part of SFARC.



I also enjoyed seeing and talking with so many of you at our August General Meeting. Our monthly meetings give us a chance to learn something new, catch up with friends, meet newer members, and put faces to some of those call signs we hear on the air.

BTW, if you missed Smitty's presentation on ESSB HD HF audio on SSB check out our SFARC YouTube channel.

With summer winding down and the kids heading back to school, perhaps September is a good time for the rest of us to get back on the radio. Try a band you haven't used in a while, check into one of the club nets, make a few contacts, or reach out to someone you haven't heard on the air recently. Amateur radio is one of those hobbies where there is almost always something new—or something old worth rediscovering.

I hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable Labor Day weekend, and I look forward to seeing you at our next club activity or hearing you on the air.

73,

Mark Koehler – W2MWK
President – SFARC

WINLINK E-MAIL OVER MERCURY

SFARC Vice Presidents | Jim Jupin (WA8MPA) and Greg Dolkas (KO6TH)



Welcome to Free/Open OFDM Modes!

Coming up at the September meeting, Craig KM6LYW will be joining us to talk about Mercury, a new way to do high-speed digital communication via radio.

The guys at Rhizomatica just made a better VARA than VARA. Unlike VARA, it's free, open-source, runs on Linux and Raspberry Pi. While not directly compatible with the proprietary VARA audio encoding, it does use the same API so existing VARA-HF clients (Pat, Winlink Express) can immediately leverage this exiting new HF radio transport!

Both VARA and MERCURY leverage "Orthogonal Frequency Division Multiplexing" which is the foundation for modern/commercial RF transports, including WIFI. That's how we get our speed and reliability. MERCURY includes "gear shifting" dynamically adapt-

ing to conditions and fading SNR.

Craig will discuss some of the interesting aspects of this new mode and hopefully send an email via Nevada using an experimental MERCURY Winlink email station (KO0000).

FOX HUNT NEWS

SFARC Elmer Lead | Greydon Hicks (KC6SLE)

Another great Fox Hunt this month. Our volunteer Fox Tender, Bret KB6LUV, created a unique and challenging Hunt with not one Fox, but two Foxes...both on the same frequency and alternating transmissions, even times transmitting at the same time. One Fox was the actual target; the other was a decoy. It made for some interesting choices for the Fox Hunters on which Fox to pursue.

Bret also created and provided each of the Fox Hunters with a series of clues in the form of limericks. I have attached a photo of Bret's clue sheet, please take the opportunity to read it. Very clever. Also included are pictures of the Fox Hunt too.

SFARC AUBURN FOX HUNT

Saturday - August 29, 2026
Fox Tender: Brett - KB6LUV

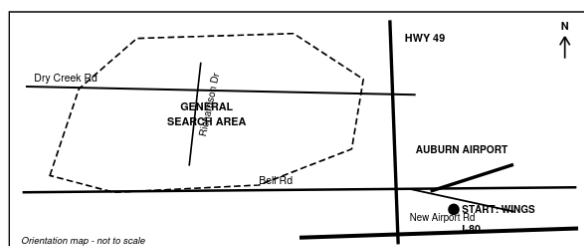
HUNT TIME

Official Hunt: 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

FOX CUTOFF: 11:15 AM

Your hunt begins with the clues on the reverse side. Read them carefully - they may tell you more than they first appear to.

GENERAL SEARCH AREA



Geographically oriented to Auburn/North Auburn; fox location is intentionally not shown.

ACCESSIBILITY / SAFETY

- Fox is in accessible areas; no dangerous climbing is required.
- Do not enter restricted/private areas. Obey traffic and parking rules.
- When signals get strong, consider whether four wheels are still your best tool.

TALK-IN / HELP

TAC 2 - 146.490 MHz simplex. Fox Tender: KB6LUV. Need an Elmer? Ask before departure and we will try to pair you with an experienced hunter.

THE AUBURN FOX

Your clues begin here. Read - listen - reread.

A fox has slipped away today,
And Auburn hides where it chose to play.
From Wings you begin - don't trust your eyes;
Let antenna and signal cut through the disguise.

One-four-six point five-three-five,
Is where you'll hear this creature alive.
It speaks for a while, then slips from the air;
Turn, take your bearing - you'll find it out there.

Listen quite closely to what you receive,
For strength and direction can both deceive.
A familiar five-note visitor may call -
But the first voice you find may not be all.

Strange encounters may lead you around,
Don't pack up your Yagi just because one's found.
Another taps out a familiar old sound;
A rhythm you've heard when good friends are around.

Look high, look low; let the landscape mislead,
For hills, trees and metal can alter your read.
When bearings grow strong, let your footsteps lead;
Where Auburn comes out for recreation, take heed.

The tune, not just strength, has a story to tell -

**FIND WHAT IS HIDDEN...
AND LISTEN WELL.**

Official hunt: 9:00-11:00 AM | Fox cutoff: 11:15 AM
Fox Tender: Brett - KB6LUV | Talk-in: TAC 2, 146.490 MHz simplex

Congratulations to Bob N6EMS and Frank KG9M for being the first to find the "correct" Fox!

This month's Fox Hunt participants:

Patrick AK6JP
Evan AJ6OR
Dudley KO6DRM
Bob N6EMS
Frank KG9M
Greydon KC6SLE
Brian AI6US
Bret KB6LUV



Our next two Fox Hunts will be during the SFARC Campout at Stampede, one on Friday morning September 18 and the other on Saturday morning September 19. See you all at the lake.

Greydon KC6SLE

WHAT HAPPENED TO HOT RF NIGHTS 2026?

SFARC Elmer Lead | Greydon Hicks (KC6SLE)

SFARC decided this year to take a hard look at future Hot RF Nights (HRFN) events. Based on feedback from both the organizers and participants last year it was decided that the event had strayed far from its original objective, was not serving the emergency services groups who attended well, and had become frankly very volunteer intensive and costly to plan and implement.

I took on the task of creating a new vision for Hot RF Nights and presented the same to the SFARC Board earlier this month. I am pleased to announce that the Board accepted and embraced the new vision for HRFN. The Board also discussed whether there was time, under this new vision, to squeeze in a HRFN 2026 within the very busy remaining SFARC 2026 Calendar of Events. It was decided there was not a viable opportunity to schedule, plan and host HRFN 2026. Therefore, we are taking a break from HRFN this year, but it will be back in 2027.

So, what does this new vision for HRFN include:

- Get back to the roots (original purpose) of HRFN
- Keep HRFN simple and solely focused on Amateur Radio
- The main participant focus for HRFN will be SFARC membership, but we will invite and welcome our neighboring amateur radio clubs
- HRFN is a celebration of HAM mobile and field-based equipment creativity, design and implementation
- HRFN will be scheduled in conjunction with a regularly scheduled SFARC second Friday of the month General Membership meeting at the regular General Membership meeting location
- HRFN should be simple to plan and implement at a minimal cost, and exciting and fun to attend and participate in
- HRFN should be a no cost event for participants to attend and participate in

Next step is to get Hot RF Nights 2027 on the SFARC calendar for 2027. I am looking forward to it, and I have agreed to head up this event for the Club next year. There will not be a large need for volunteers, as in the past, but there will be a need for a few. If you are interested in joining the HRFN 2027 Team, please drop me a note. Your service will be most valued and appreciated.

73's

Greydon KC6SLE

VE REPORT

SFARC VE Coordinator | Brian Gohl (AI6US)

The August 3rd, 2026 amateur radio exam evening began with a great social dinner with the VEs, Elmers and guests at Old Town Pizza in Auburn, then met at the Confluence Church campus to hold the exam session at 7 pm. Welcome to new technician, 16 y/o, James Nelson – KO6ORT and awarded the W5YI youth / student scholarship, which provides a free exam and his FCC license fee payment! Congrats to Greg Hughes – AK6VM (formerly KI6NLD) for his Extra class upgrade. We thanked Greg for his military service and awarded him with the 50% discount on the exam.

Exam Team

VEC: Brian – AI6US

VE Lead: Anders – NR6H

Signing VEs: Bob – WB6MUZ, Steven - KO6EBQ and Dave – WB6RBE (Rejoining the SFARC VE Team after a 22 year hiatus)!

Elmer Team

Elmer Lead: Steven – KO6EBQ

Elmer Team: Don – WB6LPJ, Jim – WA8MPA, Greg – KO6TH, Mark – W2MWK, Bob – N6EMS, Kerry – KI6PAL

The next exam session will be 7pm on September 14 at the Confluence Church campus. Pre-register at www.hamstudy.org/sessions/sfarc. All SFARC members are invited to join us for the VE / Elmer dinner at 5pm for the best BBQ West of the Sierra Mountains and great conversations. [Smokey Pit BBQ, 160 Harrison Ave, Auburn, CA, United States, 95603](#).

MY EXPERIENCE AT THE CALIFORNIA STATE FAIR

OPERATING AS SPECIAL STATION K6C

SFARC Member | John Moorhead (KE6JEM)

I'm what I refer to as a "new-old ham", having been licensed originally in 1968 for a few years, but then I had to give it up due to intense college studies and later work commitments. I set a bucket list item last year in my retirement and re-gained my license on Christmas Day and received my vanity call a few weeks later. I was a member of the Silverado Amateur Radio Society in Napa back in the day, and attended my first SFARC meeting in February of this year. Many thanks to Brian (AI6US) for sending me a nice QSL card for the first QSO with my new callsign! I have never attended or participated in Field Day and wanted to very much this year for my first time, but I had to be at my ranch in Napa County on Field Day this year to monitor several infrastructure projects. I did get some listening time in though, and heard several CQ sessions taking place in the Bay Area and learned about the special call sequence which is used on Field Day to convey the transmitter count, type of station, and the ARRL sectional region. As I have slowly gotten over "mic fright" (I was a strictly CW operator back in the late 60's) I have gotten a bit bolder and have chatted in the morning Coffee Chat Net several times, and wanted to participate in some type of contest or event. But I have a lot of hobbies and manage the family ranch property so it is hard for me to devote a lot of time to ham radio although I am making the effort.

When the opportunity to operate and greet the public at the California State Fair came up as special station K6C, I jumped on it. Admittedly another incentive was that I would get a free pass to the Fair as a participant – I had not been to the Fair in several years and wanted to check it out. Due to other time commitments, I could only participate for 1 4-hour shift of one day of the Fair – the first two hours as an operator, and the second two as a booth greeter. I signed up for Wednesday July 22nd. This year the Fair opened up for the public at 4:00pm during weekdays, and there was a question about whether I would be allowed on the grounds before then. Getting the proper parking stub and Fair pass was a bit of a challenge – I ended up driving to ARRL Sacramento Valley Section Manager Jay Ballinger's (N6SAC) house and picking them up a couple days before. I had almost bailed out of the whole event due to concerns about parking (I have a disabled sticker) and the timing relative to Fair gate access, but Jay encouraged me to give it a try, and I'm very glad he convinced me to participate! I also submitted the required information to the State to be validated against the Megan's Law list as part of the standard public safety procedure.

Jay had been concerned that I might not be able to access the grounds until about a half hour before it opened to the public at 4:00pm, but I decided to try at 1:30PM and had no problems. The special parking area for participants was located just below the levy adjacent to the animal barn, with Building C being just next to that – not too far for me to walk with my cane. Another concern was whether they would allow a backpack with electronics taken inside, but there was no check. My parking stub and Fair participant ticket were sufficient to be let in without any questions. I was able to pack my Kenwood HT, spare battery, coax adapters and some miscellaneous items including a bunch of SFARC stickers and a patch in my backpack and walked right into Building C. Nobody was in the booth and the building was very quiet, so I just set up, connected the HT to the external antenna and started calling CQ using the special call station ID K6C. I started out on the standard POTA frequency, but after a couple contacts there with no follow-up I decided to just hop around the repeaters I have programmed into the rig. I made contacts all over the area on 2 meters including Fair Oaks, Carmichael, Citrus Heights, Roseville, Elk Grove, West Sacramento, EL Dorado Hills, and Folsom. At one point I made contact with NZ6Q, John Litz, who is the ARRL Pacific Division Director. It turned out he was driving up to the event and was between Stockton and Lodi. I had 5-9 signals on all contacts, and all contacts reported my signal as being very strong. I was using the 2-watt setting on the rig – not even using full power. Congratulations go to the team led by Jay earlier in the previous week who had set up the rooftop antenna as it had excellent coverage. At about 3:30, Dr. Carol Millazo (KP4MD) (our ARRL Pacific Division Vice Director) arrived, and John Litz arrived shortly after. Another ham who I didn't get

the name of also was present that day in the booth; he was an area ARES volunteer. As my operating time ended at 4:00, I switched to greeting the public. It took a while for the public at large to start filtering into the building, but we eventually did have several families with young children who stopped by and asked a lot of questions. John was especially helpful at engaging them in conversation. We had several fact sheets they could take home, among them a list of the local clubs in the area that I had printed up. One fun activity was a Morse code key and oscillator set up with a sheet that showed the code for each letter; the kids were encouraged to write out their first names in code and then use the key to send it. This proved quite a popular activity and got them engaged. It was an honor to work the booth with two of the ARRL representatives for our area.

Although I did not see him on the day I was there, a friend of mine, Bill Shocknesse (N6NA), was apparently there at the beginning of the Fair and was communicating with the satellite. Our own club's recently joined young member Maxim had been there on the first weekend and apparently made several contacts on 40 meters.

I had a good time operating and greeting the public, and will try to participate again next year. I encourage more of our club members to come out and participate as well.

IS BROADCAST RADIO DEAD?

SFARC Public Information Officer | Smitty (WB1G)

It's complicated, and it starts with relevance.

Having spent 15 years working in radio, in front of and behind the microphone, I am passionate about this topic. So the best place to start is whether radio is still relevant. The simple answer is yes, but limited to a demographic that is aging out. The primary radio advertising "buying demo" is adults 25–54. As Gen Xers get older and head into retirement, spending becomes more calculated. Broadcast radio remains dominant in vehicles, with AM/FM representing over 70% of ad-supported in-car listening among the upper end of the demographic. Radio remains a strong reach medium, but it is no longer the center of people's audio lives. The key is "upper end of the demographic".

What's In A Name?

Ask your kids or grandkids what their favorite radio station is and who their favorite DJ is. Among ages 13–24, over-the-air radio accounts for roughly 16% of total audio time. Only 10% of ages 13–17 and 5% of ages 18–24 identify AM/FM as their primary source for discovering music (from Radio World and Radio Ink).



Plenty of under-25s "hear radio", often in a parent's car, workplace, or shared setting, but that doesn't mean they intentionally selected the station, know its call letters or frequency, or could name it when asked. In advertisers' eyes, that is not good.

What about AM radio?



According to Edison Research, AM radio is in a substantially weaker position with people under 25 than FM radio. Current national studies generally combine AM and FM, so there is no credible published percentage showing how many under-25s can name an AM station. AM isn't dead as a distribution system, but among younger listeners it has a serious brand awareness and intentional-use problem that makes ad monetization challenging beyond radio's broader challenge. Large antenna systems and towers require substantial land, ground radials, and specialized maintenance, which makes AM cost prohibitive in many markets. A National Alliance of State Broadcasters Associations survey of more than 1,000 AM stations found that over 70% of AM radio stations on the air today have an FM simulcast.

Looking into the crystal ball, how much time do we have left? In the United States, FM radio likely has at least another 20 years as a meaningful broadcast service; however, that doesn't indicate profitability. Among existing radio fans surveyed by Jacobs Media, broadcast delivery fell from 85% of station listening in 2013 to 54% in 2026. Digital delivery rose from 14% to 44%; among Gen Z, digital has already slightly passed broadcast. The greater near-term risk isn't that the FM band is switched off. It's that individual stations become economically unsustainable, further consolidate, reduce local programming or operate mainly as automated extensions of digital brands. To be frank, this has already been happening for the last 20 years.

So where does that leave us?

I'm sorry to say, when Gen Xers and early Millennials age out, broadcast radio will become more niche and background noise.

CALLING ALL HAMS, HAM SPOUSES, HAM KIDS, AND HAM GRANDKIDS!

The SFARC Fall Campout is fast approaching, and you don't want to miss one of the best events of the year.

DATE: September 17th – 20th, 2026

WHERE: Stampede Reservoir, Logger Campground
(Double Bit Loop)

The weekend includes fox hunts, movie nights, great food, games, and if you look hard enough, you'll likely find someone with a radio doing POTA activities. This is a family-friendly event for all ages, so bring your family, kids, and/or grandkids.



SOME COMMON QUESTIONS FROM CAMPERS:

How do meals work?

Breakfast and dinner are usually shared. Once you RSVP, information will be shared with you regarding meal plans. For lunch, you're on your own. Like any SFARC, we'll have a fully stocked snack table.

Do I need to book a campsite in the same loop as the club?

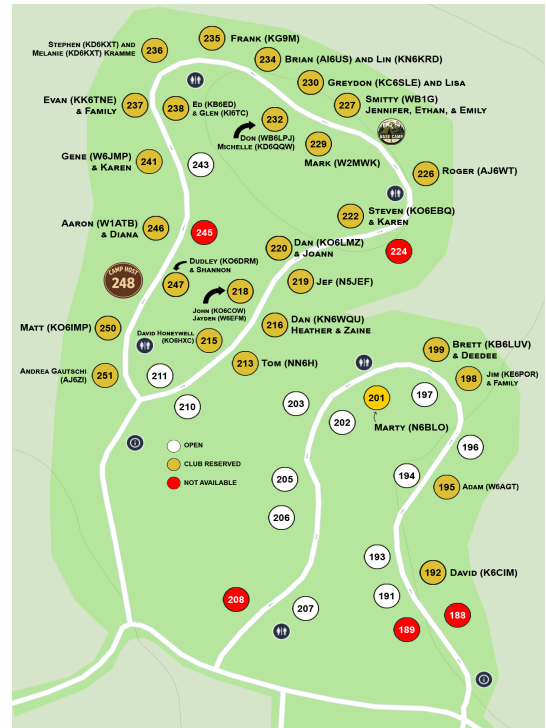
NO. The club Base-camp will be at site 227 in the Double Bit loop (210-252). Meals and other activities will be announced on a simplex frequency so spread out if you wish.

A list of Frequently Asked Questions can be found on our website @ <https://www.w6ek.org/activities/campout/faq>

It's easy:

- The RSVP deadline is coming soon on September 10th so don't delay!**

**73,
Smitty (WB1G)
Public Information Officer and Campout Chair**



POTLUCK PICNIC IN THE PARK

October 10th, 2026 at 4PM

Auburn Recreation Park,
123 Recreation Dr, Auburn, CA 95603



CLICK HERE TO TELL US
WHAT DISH YOU'RE BRINGING!

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

SFARC Membership Coordinator | Dudley McFadden (K06DRM)

Congratulations to the newest members of SFARC who were voted in at August's general club meeting!



Mark Gallagher	K060N0
Rebecca "Rebe" Jewell	K060LH
Thomas "TJ" Lacoste	K060HH
Stelian Viceanu	AE60R

We have 5 new members to vote on at the next club meeting on September 11.

Richard Colston	K06NNW
Donald Roberts	W6PMY
Andrea Nowak	K06NMP
Misagh Janami	K06LNX
Richard McCready	K06OY0



SFARC ON SOCIAL MEDIA

X / TWITTER <https://x.w6ek.org>
FACEBOOK <https://facebook.w6ek.org>
INSTAGRAM <https://instagram.w6ek.org>
YOUTUBE <https://youtube.w6ek.org>
LINKEDIN <https://linkedin.w6ek.org>
GROUPS.IO <https://w6ek.groups.io>



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

SFARC Secretary | Bob Patton (N6EMS)

August 13, 2026 at 1800 Hrs.
SFARC Club Zoom Room

1. Board Approved Up to \$1,000 for Smitty's Recognition with Open Options

The board unanimously approved a motion to allocate up to \$1,000 to recognize Smitty WB1G for his contributions (in maintaining the website), with flexibility for Smitty to choose how to use the funds—either for travel to Huntsville to accept an award or for a personal weekend with his wife. The motion was made by Greydon KC6SLE and seconded by Clyde AB4CC.

2. Decision Postponed on White Elephant Sale and Hot RF Nights Until 2027

After discussing calendar conflicts and concerns about attendance and volunteer availability, the board decided to postpone both the White Elephant Sale and Hot RF Nights events. They agreed that these should be pushed to 2027, with May identified as a possible time to avoid conflicts with other club events.

3. Preference for a Refined, Smaller-Scale Model for Hot RF Nights in the Future

The board expressed agreement with Greydon's proposed model for future Hot RF Nights: keep the event simple, club-focused, low-cost, and with limited involvement replace other clubs, emphasizing creativity and community among core members.

4. Picnic Remains of Interest; Board to Finalize a Date

There is continued interest among board members and their families for a club picnic. The board will coordinate via email to select between two possible dates (September 26 or October 10) and will need collaborative effort to plan and execute the event.

5. March 20th Tentatively Proposed for Next Ham Fest; Weather and Logistics to Be Reviewed

The board tentatively proposed March 20th for the upcoming Ham Fest, recognizing potential issues with weather, time changes, and other logistics. Further review will be conducted to confirm the suitability of this date and to compare with other possible dates in April.

6. Money Minder Financial System Update Delayed

Laurie provided a brief update stating that no significant progress had been made on Money Minder integration due to scheduling, but a Zoom is planned for the following day to move the process forward.

7. Square Payment System Operations May Switch to Daily Transfers

A discussion arose regarding the Square payment processing system, suggesting a switch to replace the current monthly manual transfer to daily automatic transfers to improve financial operations for the club.

8. Need to Verify Presence of First Place Winner before Smitty Attends Award Event

The board tasked Smitty with confirming whether the first-place winner is attending the Huntsville event, as sending a representative only to pick up a second-place award without the first-place awardee present was seen as less meaningful.

9. Club Recognition Strategies: Membership Exposure vs. Individual Reward

Board members debated between using Smitty's recognition as an opportunity for club exposure at the event or focusing on a more personal reward for Smitty and his wife, considering both public relations and individual appreciation.

10. Potential Inclusion of September 11th Commemoration in Future Events

A suggestion was raised to integrate recognition of September 11th into future events scheduled on that date, possibly through a color guard or other acknowledgment, to respect the day's significance if club events coincide.

11. Repeater Site Equipment and Emergency Contingencies for Aging Infrastructure

There was discussion about contingencies for certain infrastructure failure at the repeater site. No decision was made, but the repeater committee will take up the discussion and report back to the board.

12. Budget Planning Discussion

Discussions were held about the upcoming budget, and a suggestion was made that the budget be structured with a 10% variance included. This would allow events to move forward if they faced increased costs without going back to the general membership for costs within that 10% margin.

The meeting was adjourned at 1930 Hrs.

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

SFARC Secretary | Bob Patton (N6EMS)

August 14, 2026 at 1900 Hrs.
Placer County HHS Conference Center

1. Mark W2MWK opened the meeting with safety information and the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Recognition of First-Time Attendees and Zoom Participants

New members and first-time Zoom participants were welcomed, showing effort to include and acknowledge all participants regardless of their physical or virtual presence.

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes from last month were reviewed, with no additions or corrections, allowing them to be officially accepted and recorded.

4. Board Updates and VE Session Results

There were no significant board updates. A VE session was noted, with a 16-year-old named James Nelson successfully taking advantage of the testing service, and Greg upgraded his license before expiration.

5. New Members and Voting Process

New members approved last month were highlighted, with four more pending. A vote for the new members will be online this weekend. The voting process is swift and proactive online, and members are encouraged to participate.

6. Financial Management Transition to Money Minder

Progress being made in transitioning financial management to Money Minder. The specialist reviewed the preliminary 2027 budget, and finalization is planned for the September 9th board meeting, possibly with a special Tuesday session. The high-level budget will be presented in October. We will take 14 days for review followed by a seven-day online voting period.

7. Nomination Slate for Club Officers and Directors

A full slate of nominees for key positions (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Directors) was presented for upcoming elections in November, with the new board to be announced at the party in December. Members are encouraged to volunteer if interested.

8. Recognition for Best Club Website (Second Place)

The club was honored to receive second place for best club website by the ARRL, out of at least 80 evaluated (and possibly 2100 possible clubs). The site's success was credited to Smitty's work, dynamic club activity and content contributions, with plans to incorporate feedback for further improvement.

9. Presentation from Western States Endurance Run Team

Greg Larkin, the new radio team lead for the Western States Endurance Run, acknowledged the critical support from the club, especially the use of the W6EK repeater, and donated \$1,000 for its maintenance. He discussed improvements in event communications using Starlink and portable VHF simplex all-star nodes.

10. Field Day Debrief and Feedback

Field Day feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with a well-organized infrastructure and a welcoming atmosphere. Key strengths to preserve include the venue, station design, and the welcome tent. Areas for improvement include more organization of operators at stations, earlier outreach to youth groups, improved evening operations, and empowerment of station owners.

11. Field Day Participation and Results

Over 1,600 QSOs were logged, with significant contributions from CW operators and a high visitor turnout (over 120 known visitors). Maxim and his family were recognized for exceptional performance at the GOTA station, with Maxim making the most contacts and displaying impressive operating skills. (Maxim KO6NEZ, and Dad Jeremy KO6KUL)

12. Plans for Next Year and Closing Thoughts

The meeting concluded with intentions to implement improvements based on feedback, continue using successful formats, and encourage continued participation and engagement for future events.

13. The presentation was made by Smitty WB1G on Extended Single Sideband (eSSB). The presentation will be available on the YouTube page.

14. We had our drawing for prizes and Gary got a reel for wire antennas, Greg Larkin got a HRO gift card, Greg Dolkas got a club logo stuff bag, John got a HRO gift card and Tom got a club logo stuff bag.

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