

# SIERA BEACON

News for the SIERA Membership, Carson Valley, NV

August 2016

## Weather Forecasting



### Skywarn Storm Spotters Wanted

DCART members heard all about the Skywarn weather watch system at the last meeting. Ben Echavarria (N7BBE) took the basic course, finding an informative PDF file online at: <http://skywarn.org/wp-content/uploads/basicspot.pdf> that tells you how to identify various weather conditions and what they mean. He's always liked looking at clouds, but now, he told us, he looks at them a totally different way because of this course.

Storm Spotters are actually "storm chasers," checking the National Weather Service and augmenting the radar system with immediate local information. The radar sweeps a huge regional area, but as we've all seen, Carson Valley has lots of microclimates.

One example of this was a few years ago when Sue (KI7CTT) and Valerie Cauhape were watching the smoke from a wildfire billow up around their house. Val got a cell phone alert that the fire was seven miles to the south. Within minutes, another alert warned of a flash flood in the Johnson Lane wash a block to the north. Sunlight still filtered through the smoke. It was an interesting day.

Skywarn Storm Spotters can report such eccentric conditions either by calling Skywarn directly or going on their Facebook page with photos or videos of all the very local action. There is an 800 number since the problem with reporting on repeaters is that your storm event report may be obsolete by the time they hear it on the repeater.

The best way to alert the weather service to severe events in your area is to become a formal Spotter. According to Wendell Hohmann (KD7ZOU), NWS Skywarn in Reno, there are spotter training sessions which Wendell can coordinate for groups. You can take courses online: *Skywarn Spotter Training*, *Role of the Skywarn Spotter* and *Skywarn Spotter Convective Basics* offered through COMET. These courses require signing up for an account with COMET, but it is a free service.

If you want to be a spotter, go to NWS Reno Skywarn Spotter Program, <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/rev/spotter/spotter.php>. There may be a delay in response as they are working through their limited summer staffing. Also, check out, <http://skywarn.org/>, for more details.

**August Meeting: Saturday, August 6th, at 1 p.m., at the United Methodist Church, 1375 Centerville Lane, Gardnerville. We'll be talking about High-Speed Multimedia.**

**July Meeting:** We had a productive and quite civil post-mortem session talking about all that went right and wrong with the Pony Express Re-Ride coverage and Field Day results.

HAMs following the Pony often found it difficult to tell base stations where exactly they were. For instance, Ben Echavarria (N7BBE) discovered two "red barns" on his route from the California border along Foothill Road. The President asked all those who followed the Pony to email him ([j\\_cauhape@yahoo.com](mailto:j_cauhape@yahoo.com)) a revised list of clearer landmarks that we can use in the future.

Field Day participants discovered there were far too many people trying to communicate with each other while raising the main antenna mast. That wasn't the reason the mast folded and fell, but we decided that from now on, those who assembled the mast would be the ones to raise it because it worked well between them when they tested this process. Field Day organizers want to thank all those who came by and wanted to help. To better facilitate this in coming years, we decided to use a sign-up sheet for operator slots. We had a madding crowd helping to set up and a shortage of operators. This leaves only a handful of hardy souls spending long hours on the radios. While our points almost doubled this year, we can do a lot better if we have more operators covering throughout the 24-hour event and nobody gets burned out.

### **SOTAWATCH.ORG**

A visitor to Brad (WT6B) Smith's *Watering Hole* last Wednesday told us about a fun outdoor activity that merged back country travel, either by vehicle or foot, and amateur radio. SOTAWATCH.ORG (Summit On The Air) challenges HAMs around the world to make four contacts from atop an approved mountain peak for points. HAMs can either participate from Base Stations or in the field, eventually earning the title of Mountain Goats. This is usually done on the Simplex frequency 145.52MHz. <http://sotawatch.org/> offers further information and lists of peaks in our area. Check it out.

**Brad's *Watering Hole* is every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. on 147.33, discussing questions and issues pertaining to amateur radio.**



**Happy Birthday  
Bob Williams  
Karen Haines**

## **FROM THE EMAIL FILES:**

FYI DARA Dayton HamVention moving!

The Dayton Amateur Radio Association (DARA) regrets to inform our many vendors, visitors and stakeholders that, unfortunately, HARA has announced the closing of their facility. We have begun execution of our contingency plan to move Hamvention® 2017 to a new home.

DARA and Hamvention® have enjoyed many successful years working together with HARA Arena and we wish the Wampler family the best.

DARA and Hamvention® have been working on a contingency plan in the event HARA would become unavailable. We have spent many hours over the last few years evaluating possible locations and have found one in the area we believe will be a great new home! Due to logistics and timing issues, we will make a formal announcement introducing our new partner. This information will be coming soon. We all believe this new venue will be a spectacular place to hold our beloved event. Please rest assured we will have the event on the same weekend and, since it will be in the region, the current accommodations and outside events already planned for Hamvention® 2017 should not be affected.

We look forward to your continued support as we move to a new future with The Dayton Hamvention®.

Ron Cramer, General Chairman, Dayton Hamvention® 2017



### **ARRL Bulletin 27 ARLB027**

From ARRL Headquarters  
Newington CT July 29, 2016  
To all radio amateurs

SB QST ARL ARLB027

ARLB027 FCC Proposes Rule Changes in Response to ARRL's  
"Symbol Rate" Petition, Seeks Comment

The FCC has proposed to revise the Amateur Service Part 97 rules in response to the ARRL's so-called "Symbol Rate" Petition for Rule Making (RM-11708), filed in late 2013, and it has invited comments on its recommended changes. The Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) in WT Docket 16-239, released on July 28, had been making the rounds at the FCC since May. ARRL had asked the FCC to change the Part 97 rules to delete the symbol rate limits in Part 97.307(f) and replace it with a maximum bandwidth for data emissions of 2.8 kHz on amateur frequencies below 29.7 MHz.

The NPRM can be found on the web in PDF format at:

[http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily\\_Releases/Daily\\_Business/2016/db0728/FCC-16-96A1.pdf](http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2016/db0728/FCC-16-96A1.pdf)

"[W]e believe that the public interest may be served by revising the Amateur Service rules to eliminate the current baud rate limitations for data emissions, consistent with ARRL's Petition, to allow Amateur Service licensees to use modern digital emissions, thereby furthering the purposes of the Amateur Service and enhancing the usefulness of the service," the FCC said in its NPRM.

"We do not, however, propose a bandwidth limitation for data emissions in the MF and HF bands to replace the baud rate limitations," the NPRM concluded, "because the rules' current approach for limiting bandwidth use by amateur stations using one of

the specified digital codes to encode the signal being transmitted appears sufficient to ensure that general access to the band by licensees in the Amateur Service does not become unduly impaired."

Under the current rules, "specified digital codes" in Part 97 may be used with a symbol rate that does not exceed 300 baud for frequencies below 28 MHz, with the exception of 60 meters, and 1200baud in the 10 meter band. The baud rate limits were adopted in 1980, when the FCC amended Part 97 to specify ASCII as a permissible digital code.

Comments in the proceeding will be due 60 days after the date that the NPRM appears in the Federal Register.

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: **HAM Breakfast and Lunch:** The Tail Dragger at the Minden-Tahoe Airport always :  
: serves up the best breakfast and friendliest hospitality in Carson Valley. Come join us :  
: every fourth Saturday 8 a.m. It's another chance to meet some HAMs. :  
: .....

: And if once a month isn't enough for you, come to Jethro's on Kimmerling every :  
: Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. Again, friendly waitresses and HAMs, and awe-inspiring BBQ. :  
: .....

### **FREE TO A GOOD HOME**

Mike Pryzbylo, an inactive HAM who attended that last HAM breakfast, donated a 35-foot, three-section telescoping mast that shortens to 12 feet for easy mobility. Anyone who wants to use this can call Jeff Cauhape at 775-224-6836 or email him, [j\\_cauhape@yahoo.com](mailto:j_cauhape@yahoo.com).

**Next HAM exam:** The next local HAM licensing exam, **9 a.m., Saturday, September 17th**, at the Shepherd of the Sierras Church, behind Best Buy on Topsy Lane. If you can't make this date, aim for November 19th.



**Here's a complete index of all ARRL Newsletters:**

<http://www.arrl.org/ares-el?issue>

**and a link to ARRL contest updates:**

<http://www.arrl.org/contests/update/?issue=2016-06-15>

**The ARRL Letter for July 7, 2016:**

[http://www.arrl.org/arrlletter/?issue=2016-07-07\[arrl.org\]](http://www.arrl.org/arrlletter/?issue=2016-07-07[arrl.org])

## **A Little Tidbit from the Local News Media:**



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"Wednesday (July 14) was a mess, starting around 9:30 a.m. when a fire in the 911 Communications room knocked out a power supply. Most of the emergency traffic on Wednesday, and there was a lot, was *handled through alternative means.*" **Record-Courier.**

Hmmmm... what did they mean by "alternative means?"

**Got a news item, a question, a suggestion, pictures and information about a HAM event: Please send it to *The Beacon* to:**

**[scauhape2002@yahoo.com](mailto:scauhape2002@yahoo.com)**.

**73s everybody!**