



SIERA BEACON

News for the SIERA Membership, Carson Valley, NV

October 2017

Welcome Home, Ben N7BBE

Ben Echavarria N7BBE is no stranger to emergencies. A former police officer, EMT and firefighter, Ben currently volunteers with the Red Cross, DCART, and CERT. Recently, Ben visited his wife, Kathy, in Ft. Lauderdale, where she works for the Broward Co. library system. On his way there, his plane flew over Hurricane Harvey. "There was a little turbulence, and I don't like flying anyway."

After touring Disney World and Universal Studios in Orlando, they returned to Ft. Lauderdale, where warnings for Irma were just beginning. Ben and Kathy found all store shelves were cleaned out in the panic that ensued. "Let's go to Trader Joes," Ben said. Just as they got there, a store employee rolled out a pallette stacked with cases of water. Ben snagged two and put them in his cart. When he turned to get more, the pallette was empty.

Back home, they waited out the storm, watching the 100-mile-an-hour winds whip past their windows. "It sounded like a freight train." Some here thought Ben would be safe in Ft. Lauderdale since Irma's eye was predicted to trace west of Florida. Instead, Ben said they got the full Category Five dose of Irma's wrath because they were getting the outer winds of the storm. Almost everyone lost power, but luckily their lights only flickered a couple of times.

The islands, including the barrier islands of Georgia and South Carolina, were devastated; and no one was permitted to go to the Keys. It was quite a ride for Ben and Kathy, but at least they got her set up with emergency supplies for the next go-round.

Chain-link Repeaters

At the September meeting, we had lots of discussion about linking repeaters along the Eastern Sierra Nevada, a project that BARC (Bishop Amateur Radio Club) has been working on recently. Linking these repeaters would be a boon for emergency communications as well as campers in this recreational paradise. Ed Terlau KG7ZOP does a lot of camping in this area. The day after the meeting, Ed reported that the Conway repeater, 146.970 PL131.8, and the 146.655 repeater in Antelope Valley are both active. Jeff Cauhape K7BCV emailed John Shepherd AD6NR of BARC to check the progress on this project. Here's an excerpt from John's reply:

Yes! We are working on a project to provide good two-meter repeater coverage along the US 395 corridor from Olancho to Carson Valley as well as significant additional areas in eastern CA and northwestern NV. We currently have two linked repeaters serving the Owens Valley, one on Mazourka Pea. (146.76- (103.5) and the other on Silver Peak (146.94-

(103.5). They provide good coverage from Olancho to the top of Sherwin grade with spotty coverage up to Lee Vining along US395.

Mono County RACES originally had three linked repeaters on Antelope Peak above Benton CA, Conway Summit, and Leviathan that provided excellent coverage along the US 395 corridor from south of Bishop to North of Carson City. The RACES program in Mono fell apart a number of years ago but the repeaters remained operational. About two years ago, the Antelope repeater failed and Mono County was not interested in repairing it at that time. Just recently, Paul Doste, President of BARC, convinced Mono that it should be re-activated. Mono County provided the necessary equipment and a couple of us got it wired up, programmed and working. We plan to re-install the repeater next Wednesday (ed note: Sept. 6th).

The next step is to link Silver Peak to Antelope. That will require replacing the simple control system on Silver with one capable of multiple links and installing additional link radios on Silver and Antelope. The new link radios may be the most difficult part of the project.

John said that he appreciates SIERA's support on this and that inter-club communication would be a good thing to foster. He welcomes any ideas or concerns we have, but he didn't think there was anything specific that SIERA could do at the present time. If you do have questions, ideas, or concerns, please contact Jeff at j_cauhape@yahoo.com so that he can pass them on to John.

Antennas on the Cheap

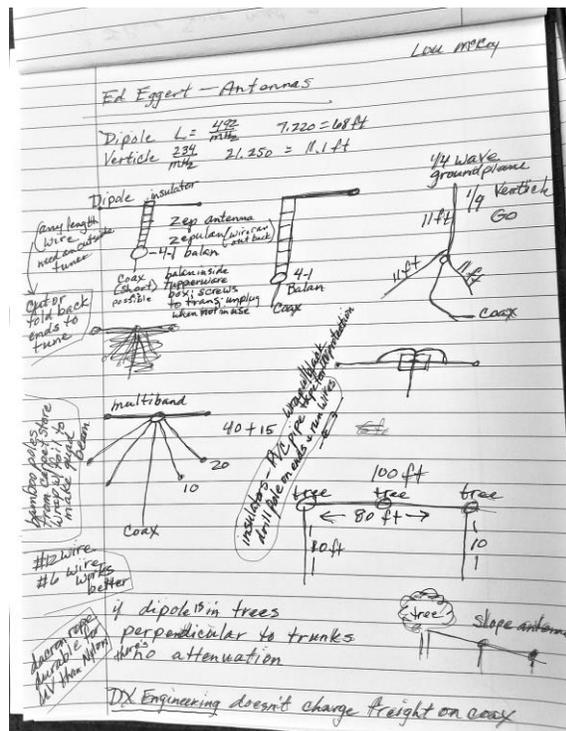
At our September meeting, Ed Eggert K3VO told us how to build antennas easily and cheaply. "Why spend hundreds of dollars online for ready-made antennas when you can buy materials at the local hardware store (ACE is his favorite) for a few bucks and have fun building your own?" Indeed! Here are a few highlights from the editor's notes:

Wire and coax are cheap and you can buy tons of it. You can pin a wire to the wall, attach the feed line to the middle of it, and use it as a two-meter antenna.

PVC pipe wrapped in black tape (for UV protection) makes good insulators. Just drill two holes in each end of a short piece of pipe and connect the wires to it.

Dacron rope is much more resistant to UV damage than nylon.

When making a dipole, use more coax than you think you'll need so you can fold it back to tune the frequency. DX Engineering doesn't charge freight on coax, so buy as much as you want.



The bamboo poles that come inside carpet rolls make very good beams after wrapping them in tin foil. Usually carpet stores have to throw these away, so recycling them for beams works well for retailers and HAMS.

Ed strung coax between three trees in his yard to make a 100-ft antenna: eighty feet vertically between the trees and ten feet draping down at each end. OR attach one end to a tree and connect the other to a 1-ft stake in the ground to make a slope antenna.

(If you can decipher the Editor's notes, you can figure out some other good ideas.)

Next Meeting: October 7, at 1 p.m. at the United Methodist Church on Centerville Road, Gardnerville, NV. We'll talk about Radiograms and relaying messages during large-scale disasters, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, etc. Of course, we'll also have plenty of time to socialize. Tom Tabacco KE7NCJ and Cathy Carney KI7NIR are providing cookies.

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Heads-ups for the November meeting: because the United Methodist Church will be using the entire building for their Christmas sale, we will be holding the November 4th meeting at the East Fork Fire Station #12, on Sunridge Drive across from Target/Home Depot on Hwy. 395.



Julie Cameron KI7QBH for passing her Technician's exam Sept. 15 with a 100% score. Way to go, Julie. You are our newest HAM. Welcome to the team!

New VEC

Greg Moore KG7DMI is our new VEC. Dale Anderson KV7S is retiring after six years of administering exams every other month for SIERA. Thank you, Dale, for helping so many new HAMS accomplish their goals. And thank you, Greg, for stepping up.



ARRL VEC Licensing Exams: SIERA offers these exams on the third Saturday every other month at 9 a.m. in the Shepherd of the Sierra Lutheran Church behind the Best Buy on Topsy Lane. Bring a photo ID, a copy of your license if you're upgrading, and \$15. **The next exam: November 18th.**



GOSSIP: A casual conversation between Board members Bob K7VOC and Debbie Williams KC6RIC and Jeff and Sue Cauhape KI7CTT revealed that SIERA has 59 members, fifteen of whom are women or 25%, and seven of those are Generals and Extras or 11%. These figures raised when Subrina Vinton officially joined SIERA. And of course Julie Cameron can now be added to the roster of women HAMs in SIERA.



Subrina is planning a **Girls QSO Party for SIERA women, October 7-8 from 5 p.m. Saturday until they get tired and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday. You can participate at any time for as long as you want. Please RSVP Subrina at vsubrina@hotmail.com for details and location. All female HAMs are invited.**

Meanwhile, Dorothy Uebele N7MXA picked up her mic the other day and talked to J.D. Fowler AD7CD for a while, asking if anyone could help her install a two-meter radio in her car. She's got the equipment; she just needs the expert hands. Little by little, she's emerging from all the chaos after George's death. She said she wants to attend the meetings and breakfasts, and report in on the nets more often. Let's hope she makes good on that promise.

So, it looks like the women are becoming a stronger force in SIERA. Of course, we have female HAMs who have assured the Editor that women have always been a strong force in SIERA!

In other news ... Jeff Cauhape earned a whopping \$8 for SIERA at his Swap Meet a few weeks ago. A friendly crowd visited and a couple actually bought stuff. Because of that disappointing turnout, Jeff is considering piling all but the most generically useful leftovers, such as cables and coax, in the trailer and hauling it to the recyclers or the dump. He also plans to be as brutal with his own collection.

Jim Marshall K6LR, Mel Hogan WA6EYD, and Dale Anderson KV7S have also been heavily involved at sorting through the estates of our recently departed friends and are storing much of it at their homes. While SIERA can offer a valuable service to the family of Silent Keys, storing it for years creates a similar dilemma for others. If anyone has even the slightest interest in any of this equipment, talk to Jeff at the meeting. At this point, it's FREE to a good home.



Also, **Joe Turek's** AB7TJ equipment is also for sale. Jim Marshall has made an extensive list of these items which is posted to the SIERA Facebook page, the cvhams.com, and will be available at the next meeting. Thank you, Jim, Mel, and Dale, for your hard work in helping the families settle these estates. It is another way SIERA can serve our communities.





Breakfast and Lunch Gatherings

11:15 a.m., every Wednesday at Jethro's on Kimmerling in the Ranchos.

8 a.m., every fourth Saturday at the Taildragger Café at the Minden-Tahoe Airport.

Nets Available in Carson Valley and Beyond:

DCART Net, Mondays at 6:30 p.m. on 146.655 pl 131.8

TARA Net, Mondays at 7:30 p.m. on 147.240.

Plumas County Net, Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m., on 145.470.

SIERA VHF Net, Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. on 147.330.

SIERA HF Net, Tuesdays at 8 p.m. on 3982KHz.

Brad Smith's (WT6B) Watering Hole, Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. on NV7CV 147.330, "*discussing questions and issues pertaining to amateur radio.*"

SKYWARN at 7 p.m. Wednesdays and the **NV ARES** is 7 p.m.

Thursdays. Both operate on the EchoLink conference server NV-GATE:

152566 EchoLink and can go onto your smart phones, tablets and computers.

"When all else fails: Amateur Radio," Fridays at 10 a.m. on 147.150.

Hospital Net, Fridays at 10:30 a.m. on 147.150.

National Traffic Service Net, Sundays at 6:15 p.m. on 3945KHz.

The SNARS Noon Net daily 147.15.



Arlan Duwayne Robinson KA7ZAU has invited everyone to report in on the **Hospital Net**, Fridays at 10:30 a.m. on the SNARS linked repeaters. You don't have to be a hospital or a radio room to check in as a visitor. Here's the list of the repeaters:

Freq.	Offset	PL Tone	City
147.150	+	123.0	Lake Tahoe, Truckee, Carson, Fallon
147.210	+	100.0	Reno, Sparks
444.125	+	123.0	Reno, Sparks (coming soon)
147.030	+	123.0	Sparks, Spanish Springs, Fernley
146.925	-	123.0	Lovelock, Fallon
146.670	-	123.0	Winnemucca (NNARS Supported)
444.875	+	100.0	Yerington, Smith Valley

Few Crickets Heard! If the Tuesday VHF Net is any indication, SIERA is growing not only in numbers but also in vitality. Lots of new people checking in as well as those friends we haven't heard from in a while. 73s to everyone and welcome to the VHF Net.

Caryl Anderson K6BQV
Steven Rawson KD7JRI



We apologize to Jamie Dahl N6JFD for announcing that he was going to do a digital modes presentation at the September meeting. He knew somebody was going to, but it wasn't him. Now the Beacon editor is wondering who we thought was going to do this. If it was YOU, please let us know.

What could possibly go wrong?



Send your news and photos to the Beacon:
scauhape2002@yahoo.com

SIERA Board Meeting, September 2, 2017

Called to order: 12:20 p.m.

Present: Ed Eggert, Sue Cauhape, Jeff Cauhape, Tom Tabacco, Daryl Haines.

Absent: Ben Echavarria, Debbie Williams, Bob Williams, J.D. Fowler.

Guest: Sheila Clement

Minutes: July Minutes read and approved. Tom Tabacco moved to approve and Ed Eggert seconded.

Treasurer: No August report because of estate sale at general meeting. SIERA is changing accounts from Bank of America to United Federal Credit Union.

B of A is now closed and all funds have been transferred to UFCU.

UFCU Checking Account:

Starting balance:	\$ 237.00
B of A money	1000.00
Membership	101.00
Exams	70.00
Estate Sale proceeds	561.00
Total	\$1969.00

No withdrawals

Ending Balance \$1969.00

Savings Account (Fund from B of A) \$4567.37

Grand total of both accounts: \$6536.37

The savings account is earning a dividend rate of 0.05%. We have not earned any dividend at this time.

Membership: no report

Business:

EBay Sales: Ed Eggert warned us to reconsider selling equipment on EBay as there are bidders in foreign countries who will buy but never send the money, thus cheating the sellers. He's had really good luck selling equipment on QTH. They're honest and he's gotten good results.

Business Cards: Sue Cauhape passed around a page of business card designs for the Board to choose. Or she said she could look on the 365 pages on Vista Print. Members suggested local outlets: Cheap QSL.com, Canon Supply and a mail service place on Fairview and Roop in Carson City. The only design preferred by those who spoke up was the first one. Sue bring finished cards to the October meetings.

Linking Hwy 395 Repeaters: A recent conversation on the 147.330 repeater told of the Bishop Amateur Radio Club's (BARC) efforts to link repeaters between Olancho and Carson Valley. The Board discussed this, along with information various people had about the project, so that SIERA could offer support. People also mentioned CARLA, which connects repeaters throughout California and parts of Oregon. It has two PL tones: one for local transmissions and one for a wider contact area for specific transmissions in emergencies. Several contacts were suggested, but Sheila Clement said there's a Sunday morning Net from Bishop at 8 a.m. on 3950 that could probably provide more direct information about who's in charge and what the progress is. She named Keith W6KRF (the Net Control operator) as a good contact. Jeff Cauhape will check in to that Net and learn more about this project and report in the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned: Jeff Cauhape moved to adjourn and Sheila Clement seconded. The meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

General Meeting, September 2, 2017:

Called to order: 1:00 p.m.

Introductions: Nancy KE7OER and Robert Plant, State EmComm Commissioner

Minutes: Because the General Meeting Minutes are published in the Beacon and posted to cvhams.com, Sue Cauhape asked the membership if they would prefer that the Minutes not be read during the meeting, allowing more time for business, presentations, and socializing. David Granish moved that the Minutes not be read and David DeAngelis seconded.

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Announcements:

Jeff Cauhape announced that SIERA hats (\$15) and patches (\$5) are still available.

There will be a Swap Meet at the Cauhape house, 2554 Nye Drive, Saturday September 9 starting at 8 a.m. Vendors can start setting up at 7 a.m.

The annual Reno Swap Meet will be at Cabela's in Verdi, NV on September 23.

Business:

Connecting Repeaters: The discussion about connecting repeaters was shared with the membership. Ed Terlau said he camps a lot along the Eastern Sierra Nevada corridor and would like very much for the repeaters to be connected. Cell phone coverage is really spotty throughout much of rural Nevada and linking repeaters through the entire state would be a good idea. He did discover during one trip that the

146.655 and the Conway Summit repeaters have been re-activated. Jeff will listen to the Sunday morning NET to talk to Keith W6KRF. Then SIERA will go from there.

Joe Turek's equipment: Dale Anderson and Jim Marshall have inventoried Joe's equipment. Dale shared a list of the equipment with members and said that all of that and other heavier items will be available after he and Jim talk to Joe's son, Shawn. He will determine the final disposition of it all.

Business Cards: Sue Cauhape passed around sheets with business card designs and told about the suggested shops in the area. A few people echoed preference for the first design on the sheet. Sue will follow through and have cards ready for members at the next meeting.

Emergency Practice: Ed Eggert reminded us, because of Hurricane Harvey, etc., that it's important to keep checking our stations' equipment for use during emergencies. Sheila Clement also mentioned an upcoming SET on September 30 in which DCART will be participating. While our repeater is fairly secure and on backup power, we still need to be able to reach people through Simplex. (Note: 147.33 works well on Simplex.)

CW Class: Jeff Cauhape asked if anyone is interested in a CW class to be offered after the first of the year. About six people responded. Various members reminded us that CW is one of the best modes to use during emergencies. When everything else is down, CW can still get through.

BREAK

Ed Eggert presented a very good lecture on building our own antennas using really cheap materials. He told the members that he hated to see people spend \$100 on a dipole from an online store when they could build one for about \$5-10 worth of materials they could find at the local hardware store.

Meeting Adjourned: 2:30 p.m.