



# SIERA BEACON



Carson Valley, NV

February 2020

*"HAM radio is not a hobby. It's a way of life." - Carlos Beltran, XE1MW*



## **SIERA Gold**

SIERA made \$205 in donations from our post-holiday party sale in January. 'Rumor' has it that one member purchased the equipment to equal that amount. To protect his privacy, we won't divulge the name of the donor, but we hope KI7PGI will enjoy using his new linear amplifier and MFJ Pocket CW Tutor. Thank you to all who attended, brought things to sell, and all who contributed to that groaning board of a feast.

It was also AG6IF Jim Sanders' first time running the meeting. He brings new energy and direction to SIERA. It's going to be another good year. Jim is pictured here in the black tee.



**Next Meeting:** The next SIERA meeting will be February 1st at 1:30 p.m. in the United Methodist Church, 1375 Centerville Rd., Gardnerville. The Board meets at noon. Our new president, Jim Sanders AG6IF will give a presentation with demos on APRS. He also wants to pick our brains to find out what future presentations will interest us and if there are any of us willing and able to give those programs.

### **Dues! Dues! Dues!**

This is another callout to pay your dues if you still want to be a SIERA member. There are many benefits to members, such as, the monthly Beacon, interesting meeting presentations, AND, here's the big one: an awesome repeater that connects us in wide and often remote areas. Dues support the NV7CV repeater as well as the emergency trailer, which we use for Field Day and Safety Day. Club members have even borrowed this trailer to use in desert contesting. If you use the repeater, it's a cool thing to support it by paying membership dues.

<u>Individual</u>	
1 year	\$30.00
2 years	\$48.00
3 years	\$65.00

<u>Household</u>	
1 year	\$38.00
2 years	\$62.00
3 years	\$84.00

## FLDIGI Test 'n' Tune

Wednesday, January 22nd, an FLDIGI exercise was conducted to gain familiarity and capabilities using FLDIGI as a digital mode on HF radio, and as a means of communicating and passing emergency traffic. Greg Moore KG7D acted as net control. Jim Sanders AG6IF (SIERA President), Jim Marshall K6LR, and Dave Thompson AG7TX also participated in the exercise. It lasted about 45 minutes and formal messages were sent via the FLDIGI Suite of software. A picture was also transmitted to accentuate the usefulness of FLDIGI in Emcom situations.

Another "Test N Tune" exercise will be held on 40 meters at 19:30 hours Wednesday, January 29. Anyone interested in using this important mode of communications can contact Greg Moore at [KG7D@ARRL.net](mailto:KG7D@ARRL.net). (This exercise coincides with "The Watering Hole.")

## Rally Nevada

The Southwest Rally Group will hold the **2020 Rally Nevada** on the weekend of **April 4th**. This time trial event requires competitors to race the clock across tough desert roads southwest of Tonopah. We are looking for 15-18 hams to help with start and finish scoring, and to provide blockage control and competitor logging where outside roads intersect the course. The actual event will take place from about noon to 10 p.m. on Saturday. We are working with local hotels to provide discounted rates. The event will give each volunteer an t-shirt as well as lunch. There will be an awards party on Saturday night following the event. Cash prizes go to the club providing the most volunteers. Volunteer training will be either Friday night or Saturday morning. Volunteers will have the best viewing of the race! For more informations, contact Pat McMahon KG6YQZ at [rallyorg1@gmail.com](mailto:rallyorg1@gmail.com) or 562-547-1133



### Nevada Division

2020 Pony Express Re-Ride Schedule							
Section From/to	Miles	Start Time	Alocated Time	End Time	Accumulated Time	MPH in Section	Ride Captin
1 Woodfords Carson City	31.4	1:00pm 4-Jun	5:00	6:00pm 4-Jun	5 hr	6.28 mph	
2 Carson City Fort Churchill	32	6:00pm 4-Jun	4:45	10:45pm 4-Jun	9:45 hrs	7.11 mph	
3 Fort Churchill Shurz Highway	31.5	10:45pm 4-Jun	4:15	3:00am 5-Jun	14 hrs	7:41 mph	
4 Shurz Highway Sand Springs	26	3:00am 5-Jun	3:30	6:30am 5-Jun	17:30 hrs	7.42 mph	
5 Sand Springs Cold Springs	33.5	6:30am 5-Jun	5:00	11:30am 5-Jun	22:30 hr	6.7 mph	
6 Cold Springs Railroad Pass	36	11:30am 5-Jun	5:00	4:30pm 5-Jun	27:30 hr	7.2 mph	
7 Railroad Pass Grubb's Well	59	4:30pm 5-Jun	8:00	12:30am 6-Jun	35:30 hr	7.37 mph	
8 Grubb's Well Overland Pass	44	12:30am 6-Jun	6:15	6:45am 6-Jun	41:45 hr	7.04 mph	
9 Overland Pass Ibapah	144	6:45am 6-Jun	18:15	1:00am 7-Jun	60 hr	7.89 mph	



## ARRL Licensing Exams:

VE exams are held at 9 a.m. on the third Saturday of odd months, at Fire Station 51, 777 S. Stewart Street, Carson City. Parking and entry are in the back by the fire museum. Bring your photo ID, \$15.00 cash or personal check (*we can't take cards*), and a copy of your current license if you are upgrading (*a reference copy from the FCC web site is acceptable. It doesn't have to be the Official copy*). Greg Moore KG7D also suggests you bring an extra \$15.00 if you want to take another test. Many people do this and pass with flying colors. Some people have earned Tech, General, and Extra licenses on the same day. There's also an informative Q & A session afterwards. Bring your new radios if you need help programming them.



**Contact:** Greg at [KG7D@arrl.net](mailto:KG7D@arrl.net) so we can prepare for the correct amount of candidates, or with any questions you might have. Please let Greg know you heard about the exam in the Beacon. Also, he may be able to schedule special exam sessions if the regular day doesn't work.

**The next licensing exam: March 21st.**

## New Operators Workshop

On February 8 at 9 a.m., at Fire Department Station 51, 777 Stewart Street, Carson City. David B. Thompson, AG7TX ([ag7if@arrl.net](mailto:ag7if@arrl.net)) Greg Moore, KG7D ([kg7d@arrl.net](mailto:kg7d@arrl.net)) will lead new those who have just earned their licenses in how to use a hand-held radio. This 1-1/2 hour workshop includes lots question and answer periods and hands-on practice. Bring a handheld radio or radios, user manual for the radio, pen/pencil and notebook, plenty of water, a snack, sunscreen and appropriate clothing for those sessions that are held outdoors. Email contacts are welcome.

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**These SIERA members need to renew their licenses this year. Remember, if you let your license expire, you will need to take the exam(s) all over again. You can, however, renew online by going to:** <https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/support/universal-licensing-system-uls-resources/renewing-license-universal-licensing>

N7OWV June L. Bennett Extra 05/29/2020

N7KD Ken D'Alessandro Extra 05/09/2020

KJ6HSD William Rose Tech 05/07/2020

## Ham Radio: A Hobby Still Alive and Thriving

Here's an article from the Boston University News Service about a retiree who became a Ham and now participates in emergency services to his community with a daily net. Also, it tells about Hams who worked in Puerto Rico to set up communications there. And that ain't all. There's a lot of information about modern-day amateur radio, both analog and digital modes.

[https://bunewsservice.com/ham-radio-a-hobby-still-alive-and-thriving/?fbclid=IwAR3sSQoDWVNkanFy9\\_1gWjqIDMI2o10eTLaIgROw2tk2EhviNqGjf8NaDm4](https://bunewsservice.com/ham-radio-a-hobby-still-alive-and-thriving/?fbclid=IwAR3sSQoDWVNkanFy9_1gWjqIDMI2o10eTLaIgROw2tk2EhviNqGjf8NaDm4)

If the link doesn't work, cut and paste it into your search window.

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## **BREAKFAST AND LUNCH WITH SIERA HAMS**

**8 a.m. breakfast every fourth Saturday at the Tail Dragger Café at the Minden-Tahoe Airport.**

**11:15 a.m. lunch every Wednesday at Jethro's on Kimmerling in Gardenerville.**

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## **Nets Available in Carson Valley and Beyond:**

**The SNARS Noon Net** daily on 147.150.

**Daily Carson & Eagle Valley net**, 6 p.m. on 28.435 MHz USB

**BARC Nightly Net**, 8 pm on 146.655 pl 131.8, ragchew and pre-check-in at 7:30 p.m.

**DCART Net**, Mondays at 6:30 p.m. on 147.270.

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

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

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

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

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

**SKYWARN** at 7 p.m. Wednesdays.

**NV ARES Net** Thursdays at 7 p.m. Echolink conf server NV-GATE 152566 IRLP Western Reflector Ch8:9258

**SNARS Hospital Net**, Fridays at 10:00 a.m. on 147.030 or 147.150

(SNARS Linked Repeaters: <https://snars.org>)

**RARA Rural Amateur Radio Assn.**, Fridays at 8 p.m. on 147.180 pl 123

**ARES HF Net**, Saturdays at 7 a.m. on 3965kHz (+or - QRM).

**RARA**, Rural Amateur Radio Association, Saturdays 7:30 a.m. on 3965kHz

**New Hams Net**, Sundays at 1 p.m. 146.760 pl 123

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

**Personal Repeater:** Dale Yanz KJ6IX has his own repeater that he invites everyone to use. It's located at 444.450Mhz with a plus offset and PL 107.2. His Echolink code is KJ6IX-R node: 244875.

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## **DCART meeting notes**

At the January 22nd meeting, Sheila Clement, KA7AJQ, talked about sharing nets between the South Lake Tahoe group, headed now by Mike Cullen, KM6UWG, Tahoe ARES EC, TARA ECC), on the 147.33 repeater. Not only does the NV7CV repeater put out a stronger signal than the 147.27 and can reach Topaz, it can also be linked to the TARA 147.24 repeater. Paul Gulbro WA6EWV usually links these repeaters for the SIERA nets and the Watering Hole. Sheila will ask him to add Monday to his links to accommodate the DCART net and possibly the Tahoe Net.

Our ham station at the Douglas County 911 Emergency Services is up and running well. Sue Cauhape KI7CTT does her DCART nets from that station with great success. During the meeting, Sheila gave us our "emergency" assignments. Depending upon who arrives first, Sue could be net control on the VHF radio, Mel Hogan WA6EYD could be the backup/scribe and on the other UHF radio, Jim Marshall



K6LR could be on the HF/packet station, and Ben Echevarria N7BBE could oversee the operation and relay messages to dispatch. All other DCART members would take positions in the field, at home, or in the CM11 mobile Dispatch Unit possibly even if it is deployed to the field.

Use of the SIERA trailer was not discussed, but SIERA has made it clear that their trailer is available to deploy for 911 assistance if needed.

Other discussions centered around DCART's communications with outside governmental agencies. Sheila told the group that DCART is considered a RACES entity and is required to comply with RACES directives. FEMA requires counties to use only FEMA forms/documents or forfeit federal disaster funding to their counties. FEMA also doesn't recognize Radiogram forms. Radiograms are used especially for messages through the ARES/ARRL NTS (National Traffic System), and we will continue to train on radiogram traffic.

Ben Echevarria informed us that Douglas County CERT members have been trained to set up shelters. Basically, according to Ben, we are on our own. We should prepare to be totally self-sufficient in large-scale emergency events as Red Cross resources may be quite a distance away and take time to arrive. There will be a Quad County Red Cross shelter exercise March 18th so we will have more information later as to how we could participate.

DCART is also connected to the Sacramento ARES organization because we share resources with Alpine County, CA. Because there is quite a geographical separation with Sacramento, Red Cross requests for Alpine County shelters would need to be carefully worked out and possibly with CERT.

Luckily, Douglas County has an abundance of emergency resources, including our fine firefighting and law enforcement agencies, CERT, and DCART. There are also churches, civic groups, and commercial entities that have demonstrated their ability to provide services to support disaster relief of many different kinds.

Leroy Clement KA7UIS is working with Dave Law N7TNX and Keith Bartleson KJ6JJN on the "Carson Tahoe Emergency Communications" volunteer group. There are VHF/UHF stations at CTRMC (Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center) and CTSMC (Carson Tahoe Medical Specialty Center, the old hospital). CTRMC also has Winlink. Leroy and crew are in the planning and fundraising stages to add an HF station to CTRMC. After completing CTRMC updates, they plan to work on getting CTMMC (Carson Tahoe Minden Medical Center at Ironwood) established with a station and volunteers. Of course, this depends on how successful the fundraising is.

David Granish KI6EWK has been working to develop a ham station at Carson Valley Medical Center. Leroy said that citizens band radio has been added to ham radios and makes it easier to get hospital personnel to commit to working the station. There are licensed hams at CVMC, but they are primarily ER doctors and nurses and will be overwhelmed during emergencies.

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**Shark Open Spot 2:** Jim Marshall K6LR demonstrated his newest gadget that enables him to connect his handheld radio to his cell phone through digital "Hotspot." The Shark Open Spot communicates with a handheld radio with a low power UHF simplex bi-directional signal. The Open Spot 2 is about half the size of a deck of cards, and is powered by an external battery, via USB cable (Same as charging a cell phone.) An app on the cell phone connects to a pre-selected "Node" anywhere in the world via Internet. The Open Spot is compatible with DMR, Fusion and DSTAR. Jim has communicated with the UK, Alaska and Iowa with just his handheld Yaesu radio and the Open Spot. This is an efficient method to communicate anywhere without a lot of heavy equipment and antennas. It doesn't even require an extended antenna. The rubber duck on the radio will be sufficient because it's a UHF digital connection with the Open Spot interface. <https://www.sharkrf.com/products/openspot2/>



## Text to 911 Now In Service

Douglas County Emergency Services now has Text to 911 nationwide. *“Call if you can – Text if you can’t”* is the new method of contacting Emergency Services. *Text to 911* allows a person to send a text message (SMS) from a mobile device to 911 instead of placing a phone call. Here's how it works:

To text to 911, simply enter the numbers “911” in the “To” or “Recipient” field, type a brief but detailed message that includes location and type of the emergency, and press “Send.” (Be sure to type only the numbers “911” in the “To” field; do not include any punctuation.) An example of a text may be:

### ***Car crash w/injuries, 395 and Mica***

Know When to Text to 911:

1. If you are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability.
2. If you cannot speak due to an injury or medical condition.
3. If you are in a threatening situation and a voice call could increase the threat.
4. If you cannot make a call because your mobile phone reception is poor.

Individuals with questions regarding their carrier’s text to 911 capabilities should contact their service providers directly for information. A text or data plan is required to place a text to 911.

Contact 911 only in a fire, medical or police emergency. **Public safety officials encourage you to think of text to 911 as a last resort**, not the normal process for contacting 911. Calls to 911 are preferred because they are typically more efficient during an emergency.

Do Not Text and Drive. If you need to text 911 while in a vehicle, be sure you have securely parked your vehicle off the roadway. Text to 911 is not available if you are in a “roaming” situation.

Text to 911 in Languages Other Than English Translation services are not available at this time; therefore, any text to 911 call placed in Douglas County should be in English.

As with all text messages, 911 text messages can take longer to receive, may be delivered out of order, or may not be received at all.

Photos and videos cannot be sent to 911 at this time. Text to 911 cannot include more than one person. Do not copy anyone on your emergency text to 911. Wait until you are safe to notify others of your situation. Once received, a person who sends a text to 911 will receive a response from the 911 call center.

Only text 911 in a fire, medical or police emergency. People who send prank texts can be identified and possibly prosecuted.

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**Wanted: more hams to do SIERA VHF/HF net control on Tuesday evenings. Contact Sheila Clement at [smclfc@gmail.com](mailto:smclfc@gmail.com) to join the crew.**



## **Videos from Greg Kruckewitt, KG6SJT**

### **A High and Awful Price: Lessons Learned From the Camp Fire**

<https://youtu.be/bo0yBOCvuwU> (Ed. Note: this video is about a half hour long but is well worth your time. If the links don't work from the Beacon, cut and paste it into your Search window.)

"A High and Awful Price: Lessons Learned from the Camp Fire" is a mini-documentary taken from our interviews with first responders, disaster response officials and the survivors of the Camp Fire, passing on our hard won knowledge to those who may someday face their own disaster.

This was made in connection with Butte County and is meant as a clear, simple explanation of the causes, effects and responses to a disaster as complex, overwhelming and devastating as the Camp Fire—while also communicating the most important lesson: You are not helpless and there is something you can do in the face of danger.

### **First Responder Access and Functional Needs Training Series**

<https://www.readysandiego.org/content/oesready/en-us/training/first-responder-access-functional-needs-training-series.html>

The County of San Diego Office of Emergency Services produced a series of training videos aimed at providing first responders with helpful information to consider when evacuating individuals with physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities. In total, eight videos that are each 8-10 minutes in length are available. A supplemental handout highlighting important talking points from each video is also available.

#### **Training Series:**

- Alzheimer's Disease & Memory Loss
- Autism
- Blind & Low Vision
- Chronic Illness
- Cognitive Disabilities
- Deaf & Hard of Hearing
- Mental Illness
- Physical Disabilities

**Excellent information for everyone in an emergency even if you are not a first responder.**

Greg Kruckewitt, KG6SJT  
ARRL Sacramento Valley Section  
Section Emergency Coordinator  
[www.sacvalleyares.org](http://www.sacvalleyares.org)

*If these website links don't work when you click them from the Beacon, please cut and paste into your web search window.*

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**Because of our post-holiday party, we do not have meeting minutes for this Beacon.**

**Remember, send your photos and news for the Beacon to:**  
[scauhape2002@yahoo.com](mailto:scauhape2002@yahoo.com)