



# SIERA BEACON



Carson Valley, NV

June 2021

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

## **N7RCA's 17th Annual Electronics Swap Meet, June 5**

Are there just a few too many radios on your dashboard? Has your Beloved threatened to clean your ham shack with more than a dust rag? Is there that one high frequency antenna out there somewhere that would extend your DXing? Then it's time to check out Brad Hollander's Annual Electronics Swap Meet.

People from all over the region await this yearly event with great anticipation, either collecting their extra gear to sell, or hoping to find that perfect piece of equipment to complete their stations. (Are stations ever complete?) They come in their RVs and camp overnight at Brad's six-acre property at **1780 Bobcat Court**, in Minden, NV, just off East Valley Road. As soon as the sun shoots rays over the Pinenuts, buyers and sellers converge on some of the most desirable or esoteric electronics known to humankind.



And as usually happens for SIERA members, the June Board and General meetings coincide with the date. ***Now that COVID restrictions have relaxed a bit, we're back to our normal June meeting at Brad Hollander's place, 12:30 p.m. for the Board meeting and 1 p.m. for the General Meeting.*** Bring a chair and re-introduce yourself to folks you haven't seen in over a year. For more information and a map to the property, check <https://www.n7rca.com> for details.



**Our summer meeting schedules are gearing up to full pre-COVID levels as follows: June's meetings will be at Brad Hollander's (see above). July's meetings are cancelled due to the 4th of July weekend. In August, though, we'll get back to normal (we hope) at the United Methodist Church with Ed Terlau showing his generators and telling us how to power our stations and homes off-grid.**

## **May In-Person Meeting a Raucous Success**

About a couple dozen SIERA hams showed up with chairs and masks, as well as a few tape measure antennas for the May Board and General meetings at Lampe Park. Meetings were short and somewhat hampered by noisy Canada geese and exuberant children playing on that gorgeous sunny day. Apparently, that enthusiasm was as contagious as COVID when the "fox hunt" started, using the tape measure antennas to find the fox. Reports said that hams hid behind trees and jumped around, generally having more fun than they've had in nearly fifteen months. It almost makes a person want to keep meeting outside during the warm months rather than returning to our former church setting. Once inside where it's quiet, though, President Jim Sanders AG6IF would love to hold a class building these simple-to-make and cheap antennas.

## **Don't Forget These Upcoming Events**

**The Pony Express Re-Ride June 16-17:** Gerry Miller is assembling a crew of hams to support The Pony. If you're interested, contact Gerry at [KJ7GEZ@gmail.com](mailto:KJ7GEZ@gmail.com)

**Field Day June 26-27:** we'll be setting up our Field Day stations at the Minden Airport parking lot as in past years. And, as usual, Field Day coincides with our SIERA Breakfast at the Tail Dragger Café at the airport. How can life be any more convenient. So, eat a hearty breakfast, then cross the street and help set up the stations for a fun and festive post-COVID Field Day. David Granish needs to get a preliminary head-count to see if it's even worth dragging the SIERA trailer, etc., to the site, so if you want to volunteer, please contact him at: [david.granish@gmail.com](mailto:david.granish@gmail.com).

Find out more about Field Day here: <https://www.arrl.org/field-day>

**Alta Alpina Challenge - Riding the Wild Sierra June 26:** Sheila Clement KA7AJQ is looking for hams to support this ride at the 911 Dispatch Center W7SR station. Contact Sheila at [smclfc@gmail.com](mailto:smclfc@gmail.com) or Don McRoberts at [drmcroberts@outlook.com](mailto:drmcroberts@outlook.com).

**Death Ride July 17:** Contact Paul Gulbro WA6EWV at [wa6ewv@juno.com](mailto:wa6ewv@juno.com) or check out the TARA website for further information and to join his crew of support hams.

## **Fourth Saturday Breakfasts are Back**

May's fourth Saturday officially re-opened our monthly breakfasts at the Tail Dragger Café at the Minden Airport with an earnest group about a dozen diners. It was good to SEE people again, in-person and maskless. There's still some social distancing, but we were able to drag tables together for our group. The Tail Dragger has faltered a bit under the weight of COVID restrictions. They're desperately trying to find a full-time cook, for example. But the café has managed to hang in there and deserves our patronage. Anytime you want a hearty meal in a friendly place, try the Tail Dragger. And by all means, join SIERA for the June Fourth Saturday Breakfast at 8 a.m.

## **The SIERA Board Is Burning Out**

At the Lampe Park Board meeting, Jim Sanders asked Ben if he would be available by telephone to participate in Board meetings. Ben replied he would be able to do that from his new home in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Don't you love technology when it helps us participate despite long distances? So that's one Board member who may not be lost to us; however, other Board members are retiring ... or trying to anyway. Bob and Debbie Williams, K7VOC and N7XYL will be retiring at the end of the year. And David DeAngelis is desperately trying to pass his secretarial duties to someone else so he can retire. We have lots of talented people in SIERA and some enthusiastic new members, too. Is there anyone out there who would like to spend some time serving SIERA and keeping this club vibrant and functioning at the high levels that have been established by some great leadership?



## **Jim Marshall is Having Antenna Troubles**



When Jim Marshall K6LR got home from Eagle Lake, he noticed his log periodic antenna was pointing west. The rotator controller said it was pointing east. He also found that turning the rotator did not move the antenna. He determined the rotator coupler had given up after four years. (*Ed Note: With the winds we have around here, it's amazing the antenna stood up this long.*)

The only solution was to climb that 60-foot tower and fix the darned thing. At 76, Jim was not too enthusiastic, especially since his strength flagged on him while connecting the antenna at installation. When the temps rose and the winds calmed, Jim was able to climb up and fix his free-wheeling antenna. He found that a 5/16 inch grade 8 bolt he used for a shear pin had backed out from the threads. He removed the bolt, rotated the mast with a 14 in. pipe wrench to line up the hole in the mast, tightened everything back up, checked connections and guy clamps, and called it a day. Total time on tower was about 45 minutes. That ought to keep everything in place for another four years, especially if he also used Lok-Tite.



### **Jonathan Charles Videos:**

While we're on the subject of log periodic antennas, do you ever wish you could hoist one of those on your car for portable DXing? Here are two videos from a ham who worked it all out.

Making telescoping mast for spider beam antenna (10:55 minutes):

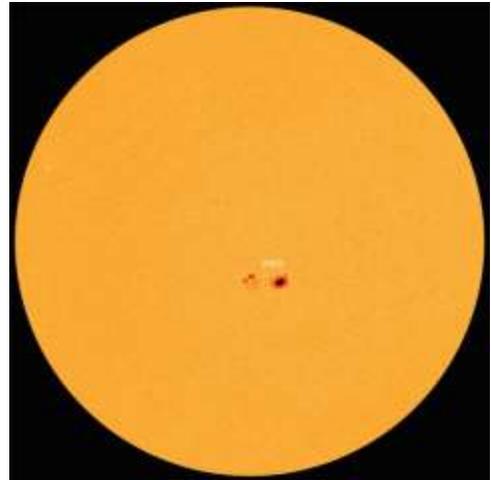
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ks3EhFdArU>

Portable telescoping mast (19:51 minutes):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88easdWM-TE&t=429s>

### **Solar Cycle 25 Expected to Be Stronger**

In this five-month-old article from Forbes, scientists predict this current solar cycle will be much stronger than they thought. Also, it explains how they determine how strong or weak a solar cycle will be. (Just cut and paste the link into your search window.)



[https://www.forbes.com/sites/jamiecartereurope/2020/12/08/our-sun-could-be-on-the-verge-of-its-strongest-cycle-since-records-began-say-scientists/?sh=697b450553ac&fbclid=IwAR1wi03zk2qKSYQB2z-qA1ZB0mwm0JXonjJHFJ3zUITW2Kwzgb\\_7DhPy9M](https://www.forbes.com/sites/jamiecartereurope/2020/12/08/our-sun-could-be-on-the-verge-of-its-strongest-cycle-since-records-began-say-scientists/?sh=697b450553ac&fbclid=IwAR1wi03zk2qKSYQB2z-qA1ZB0mwm0JXonjJHFJ3zUITW2Kwzgb_7DhPy9M)

### **DCART News**

Sheila Clement is retiring as Douglas and Alpine Counties ARES Coordinator and is passing her duties to Dave O'Hara KB7DWO. They have been meeting with Douglas County Dispatch Center supervisor Ron Sagen to discuss re-opening access to the W7SR

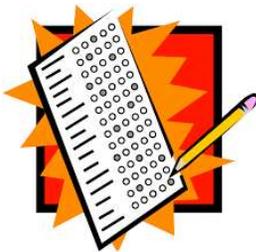
station. It's been a long time since DCART members have been able to go there to work DCART nets and support events, such as the Alta Alpina Bike Tour.

That is changing. DCART members can use their access cards at the Dispatch Center entrance, either by passing it by the electronic lock or using the phone there to call Dispatch 775-782-5726. The dispatcher will unlock the door then.

Dave reported during a recent Net that they are trying to find a meeting place to resume DCART in-person meetings. The former meeting place, Fire Station 12, remains closed to the public. Ron has offered the Community Center in Gardnerville. If all members of DCART have the capacity, Dave is hoping to hold a ZOOM meeting in June if a physical site cannot be arranged, to discuss future plans and information about trainings. After a year and a half, DCART needs to be revitalized for its role in supporting emergencies in Douglas and Alpine Counties. Fire and flood season is upon us.

**The Watering Hole, Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. on 147.330/240mh. Questions and Answers pertaining to Amateur Radio.**

### **Resources for Taking the Licensing Exams During the COVID Era**



Despite the COVID lockdown on in-person meetings and testing opportunities, SNARS in Reno has a schedule of exam sessions at the REOC. Just click on this link for more information and registration: <https://snars.org/exams/>

#### **Good online resources for learning amateur radio:**

**eHam.com** has study questions and quizzes

**hamstudy.org** is highly recommended by SIERA members because it helps you understand the whys and wherefores of amateur radio instead of encouraging you to just memorize answers.

There is also a wide selection of licensing books on Amazon. One of the more expensive as well as the best resource is the *ARRL General License Manual*.

**Ham Test Online** <https://www.hamradiolicenseexam.com/study.jsp>

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**Don't forget to check out the SIERA website on <https://www.cvhams.com> for lots of information and reference material. This includes a comprehensive list of nets throughout the area.**



## **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 the following schedule: The first two Mondays on 147.330 linked with 147.240. The third Monday is Tahoe Basin ARES on 147.240 to be linked with 147.330. The fourth (and fifth) Monday(s) on 147.270 to be linked with 147.240

**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.

**W7DEM Net**, Wednesdays at 9 a.m., various frequencies: Eagle Ridge 442.225 T156.7, Carson DEM 442.900 T156.7, Lake Tahoe 442.300 T156.7, and Smith Valley 440.050 T 94.8. (Refer to Nov. 2020 Beacon for details.)

**Carson ARES Net**: 9-10 a.m., check in anytime in that hour on 147.270MHz PL156.7. Includes VHF

**CARS Fusion Net**, Wednesdays at 7 p.m. The local FUSION repeater is at 442.300.

**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

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**If you want a copy of the Treasurer's Report, email Debbie Williams N7XYL at [n7xyl@arrl.net](mailto:n7xyl@arrl.net) or any of the Board members.**

While working out of town, Samuel Morse received a letter that his wife had fallen ill.

Packing for home the next day, he received another that she had already died.

When he got home he had missed the funeral.

These events inspired him to create a quicker way to communicate:  
**Morse Code.**



WEIRD HISTORY

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Weird History  
May 2 at 11:45 PM · 🌐

12 Facts About Historical Figures We Just Learned This Week That Made Us Say 'Really?'  
[mkr.co/historical-figure-facts-weekly](http://mkr.co/historical-figure-facts-weekly)

**Remember to send your photos and news for the Beacon and the SIERA Facebook page to [scauhape2020@protonmail.com](mailto:scauhape2020@protonmail.com)**