



# SIERA BEACON



Carson Valley, NV

July 2021

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

## **June Was Busy Despite Lack of Interest**

Favorite ham events opened up after the COVID lockdown, but a lot of folks still seem to be shy about leaving the house. Brad Hollander N7RCA held his **Annual Technology Swap Meet** and welcomed SIERA hams to their second in-person meeting. He was disappointed, though, in the small turnout of buyers and sellers. Still, everyone appeared to have a great time seeing each other after so long without face-to-face, unmasked contact. About two dozen came to the SIERA meeting in Brad's "warehouse" and discussed future plans for more meetings and participation in events. Jim Marshall K6LR set up a booth with a lot of equipment donated by SIERA and TARA hams over the years and made a bit over \$300 for TARA.



Anne Martins of Stagecoach, NV carried a mochila weighing between 45-50 pounds in the 2021 Ride.

**The Pony Express Re-Ride** arrived in Woodfords, NV at 1:30 p.m., 1.5 hours behind schedule. One of the California riders was bucked off her horse and was transported for treatment. The Ride continued, though, with Ken Head KE6STM from Placerville, CA following behind the riders along Foothill Rd. Daryl Haines KE7HXD and Ed Terlau

KG7ZOP joined him and a parade of horse trailers and a sheriff's vehicle until they handed radio support to Don McRoberts W3DRM, Jim Marshall K6LR and Tom Resk KJ7TKR in Carson City.

They followed behind the riders from Curry St. and Fourth in Carson City to Ft. Churchill and then on to Top Gun Raceway in Fallon. Gerry Miller KJ7GEZ coordinated the Nevada Division of radio operators who supported the Pony this year and found that most SIERA members who have participated in past years were no longer interested in the relay and follow assignments across the state to Ibapah, UT. He did enlist George McCulley WA6TVD of Reno to post updates for the National Pony Express website. Once the Pony left Carson Valley, he passed the task on to Brian Freitag KE7JIO.

Ken Head, who has a very close relationship with the Schellbourne Riders in Ely, NV, continued onward until the Pony left Nevada three days later and four hours behind schedule. According to the NV Division of the Pony Express, they also had a hard time finding riders. So many of those who did show up for the event rode several legs and segments of the route. One rider, Sam DeMuzio, and her horse, Spirit, rode three legs of the Carson Valley segment. In the blistering heat of that day, Spirit, who is an endurance horse, "was finished" after that third leg, according to Ken Head, who followed right behind the riders.

Linking repeaters caused a few problems too. Shortly after Sue Cauhape KI7CTT linked the NV7CV and TARA repeaters, Paul Gulbro WA6EWV has to break the link because he was working with Frank Yost, KA6GWY in California to link repeaters there.

Paul knew ahead of time Frank would be tying into 33 and there can be issues if 33 and 24 were linked. As it turned out, there was an issue that appeared to be an individual using their mobile radio in cross band mode activated an RF feedback loop. That's why a link system needs to be monitored and controlled when activated, George McCulley's Reno station came on with a great signal to 24, so Paul turned the link back on. Paul monitored the links all day and linked the 147.24 to Jeff Brown's (K7BLS) 147.345 in monitor mode so listener's could keep up with the riders' progress into Lyon County.

The **Alta Alpina** toured the Sierra Nevada this year, supported by DCART hams stationed at the 911 Dispatch Center W7SR station. While Alta Alpina personnel have radio licenses and do most of the heavy lifting, they do rely on DCART to pass more urgent emergency messages to Dispatch if someone is injured badly enough to require transport to the hospital. The hams helping out were Sue and Jeff Cauhape, KI7CTT/K7BCV, Sheila and Leroy Clement, KA7AJQ/KA7UIS, Jim Marshall, K6LR, Dave O'Hara, KB7DWO, Bryce Leinan, KI7NIK. Bicycle participation was rather small this year, too, with only about 120-130 riders traversing Kingsbury, Luther, Carson, Monitor, and Ebbetts passes.

**Field Day 2021**, SIERA-style, was a complete wash this year when so few SIERA hams were willing to set up the trailer at the Minden-Tahoe Airport parking lot. In past years, we've had quite a fun party during Field Day, greeting visitors and community leaders and showing them how SIERA radio operators handle emergencies and events. This year, most people participated from their



home stations as they did last year during the COVID lockdown. It appears, at least on the ARRL Field Day Facebook page, that many other communities and individuals exercised their remote and home stations across the country. Maybe next year, we can haul out the SIERA trailer and get together again.

With this current reticence to re-emerge and participate in person, the SIERA Board decided not to hold a Board or General meeting during July because it falls on the Fourth of July weekend. We also have lots of enthusiastic campers in SIERA, including the presenter scheduled for our next meeting at the Methodist Church, if that ever happens again. So, all fingers are crossed and hopes are high that we can do that in August. Safe travels and celebrations this holiday. And PLEASE BE CAREFUL WITH ALL THINGS COMBUSTIBLE.

**July's Board and General meetings are cancelled due to falling on the 4th of July weekend. In August, though, we'll get back to normal (we hope) at the United Methodist Church with Ed Terlau presenting "Generators and Inverters, OH MY!" You might recall that Ed shared much of this information in the Beacon before COVID cancelled his that meeting. He's rearin' to go this year on August 7th.**

**Death Ride July 17:** Paul Gulbro WA6EWV has a full roster of hams scheduled to fill the support locations for this big bicycle event that normally requires riders to climb five summits. This year, Carson Pass won't be included. Instead, riders will be cycling clear down to Alpine Lake on Hwy 4 over Ebbetts Pass. That's grueling enough, but there's still Monitor Pass just for them to warm up on. If this heat continues, it's going to be a busy time for hams and other support crew. And the extended route will need added repeater assistance from Frank Yost. We'll let Paul Gulbro explain the details:

### **ACSO and EDSO SAR Amateur Radio repeater!**

EDSO SAR makes extensive and very successful use of amateur radio in their SAR operations. Consequently, Alpine County Under Sheriff Mender contacted Frank Yost, KA6GWY, the EDSO communication manager, to facilitate a similar system for Alpine County SAR along with the ability to link the systems for mutual aid.

Under-Sheriff Mender was aware of TARA's involvement in the Death Ride these past years and was also interested in providing additional radio support with a repeater that would back up the 147.33 system.

The short story is I, Under-Sheriff Mender, and Frank will look at the installation of an amateur radio repeater at Hawkins's peak. Indeed, I'm attempting to accelerate the process so there will at least be a system in place to test during the Death Ride.

With the "NEW" Death Ride course extending to Lake Alpine on Hwy 4, it may well be a better repeater location for this area as 147.33 (and 146.655) are not accessible.

### **Carson Valley Weather**

Don McRoberts W3DRM is not only our web master for [www.cvhams.com](http://www.cvhams.com), he also maintains a great website called Carson Valley Weather. Click here and explore all that Don has gathered for us: <https://www.carsonvalleyweather.com/wxindex.php>

## **Joe Walsh WB6ACU**

While the Beacon editor was lurking and listening to Jim AG6IF and Ed K3VO rag-chewing on NV7CV, they mentioned that Joe Walsh of Eagles fame is a longtime ham radio operator. While many famous people enjoy this hobby, Joe offers his name and fame to boost the popularity of amateur radio. Here are a few articles online about his efforts:



Article of Joe's first visit to the ARRL Headquarters and how he got involved in ham radio: <https://www.cham.net/article/7913>

An article in ARRL about Joe doing PSA's promoting amateur radio: <https://www.arrl.org/news/eagles-guitarist-joe-walsh-wb6acu-promotes-amateur-radio-in-media-announcements>

## **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 at the cafe, but we were able to drag tables together for our group. Join SIERA for the Fourth Saturday Breakfast at 8 a.m. any month of the year. Let's rebuild the raucous group that used to descend upon the Tail Dragger in pre-COVID days.

## **DCART News**

Welcome DCART Emergency Coordinator, Dave O'Hara, KB7DWO, effective July 1st. Sheila Clement, KA7AJQ, will remain in DCART at the Assistant Emergency Coordinator.

The Pony Express Re-Ride through Nevada was supported by SIERA ham communications. Several DCART members are SIERA members also. Many other area hams supported the Ride as well - especially by coordinating key repeaters.

DCART members supported the Alta Alpina Wild SIERA bicycle event on July 26th. This event took place in Douglas County, NV and Alpine County, CA. DCART members staffed our Douglas County 911 Emergency Services ham station to make sure any emergency traffic made it into the 911 system. We staffed our ham station from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Our monthly meeting was held on Zoom. We all introduced ourselves to Dave, telling him about our skills and participation in DCART for emergency service. He discussed his desires to set up more trainings and events to get people more engaged and back to more normal enthusiasm for DCART and what it can do for the community.

Dave is checking out other venues, including the Community Center in Gardnerville because of its centralized location. We hope to find a permanent place to meet in-person soon.

Also, he wants to recruit more active members. If you're interested in doing more formalized emergency radio support, contact him at [dwohara@gmail.com](mailto:dwohara@gmail.com).

Sheila Clement, KA7AJQ,  
Emergency Coordinator  
Douglas and Alpine Counties

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

### **Watering Hole Discussion: Winlink**

This radio email tool is well-loved by government emergency people and is the "must have" for DCART and other grassroots emcomm agencies. During an emergency, when cell towers and Internet service may be compromised, Winlink Express can be used to connect between state and federal resources because it claims it can be used with or without the Internet. It's basically a Windows product, so those who have Linux platforms need a work-around to use it on their computers.

Keifer Bly KJ7LYB offered a way for Mac users to use the Windows-based Winlink on their computers.

"With VirtualBox, you can run all of the HF radio programs for Windows in a virtual machine.

First, download VirtualBox from here: <https://www.virtualbox.org/wiki/Downloads>.

Instructions: open virtual box, select new virtual machine and follow the set up wizard instructions. You'll have to select the Windows ISO to use during install."

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**Jim Marshall Equipment Sale:** [jmarshall1945@yahoo.com](mailto:jmarshall1945@yahoo.com)



Someone at the swap meet donated a Samlex power supply was donated to SIERA. This power supply is offered with the ICOM radio for \$35.00. Proceeds from the power supply will go to the club. I am asking \$375 for the Yaesu with the power supply shown, and \$350 for the ICOM, plus the \$35.00 for the Samlex power supply.



### Yaesu FT 747GX

- Compact 100 watt HF Transceiver, with matching power supply and speaker.
- 1.6 M thru 10 M. with gen coverage receiver. Variable power output control, Clarifier, Noise blanker, Attenuator, CAT (Computer Aided Tuning), 20 Memory channels, Split mode operation, dual VFO's, AM, USB, LSB, FM (opt) modes of operation.
- Includes Microphone, Power Supply, External speaker.
- Makes full power, 50 microvolts = S9 receiver meter reading, receives down to less than 1 microvolt.
- Forced air cooling of PA.

### ICOM IC 735

Compact HF Transceiver, 100 watts, 160 thru 10 M.  
Requires 12 VDC at 10 amps.

Noise Blanker, Notch filter, Attenuator, RF gain, VOX, Variable power control, IF passband tuning, Split mode, 12 memories, Compression, Rcv. preamp, ALC adjust, Scan, Phone Jack.

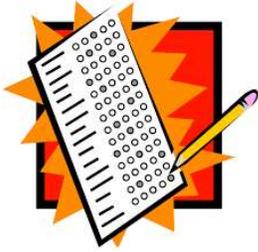


Keyer input. Incl Microphone.

Makes 110 watts of power, 50 microvolts = S9 meter reading, receives at less than 1 microvolt Sensitivity.

Passive power supply available.

## 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>

## 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 147.270mh 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



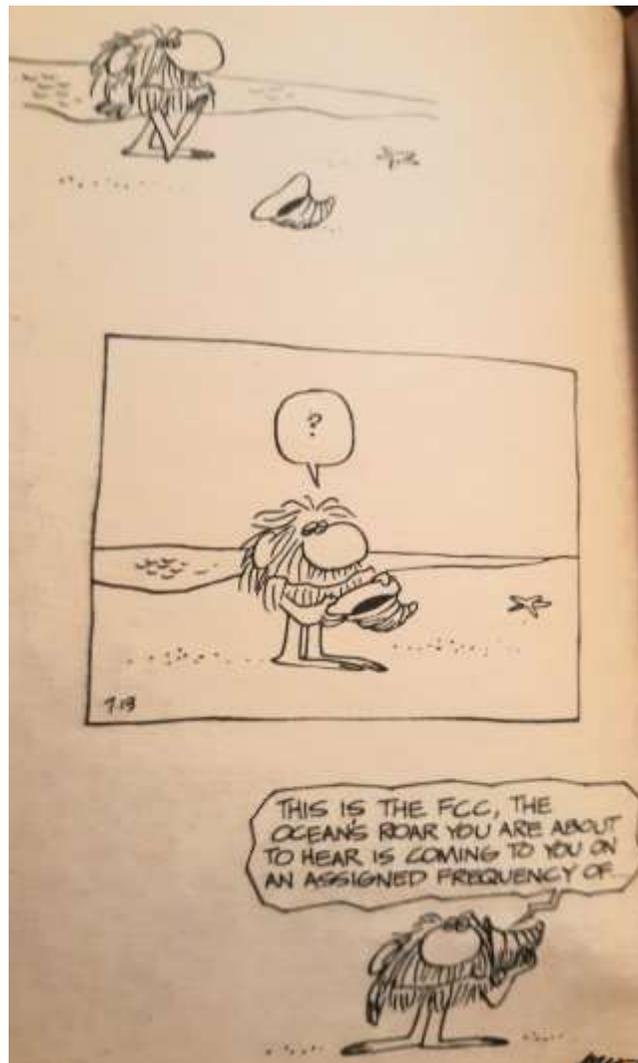
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Don't forget to check out the SIERA website on <https://www.cvhams.com/> for lots of information and reference material. This includes a comprehensive list of nets throughout the area.



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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.



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