



SIERA BEACON



Carson Valley, NV

October 2021

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

For the second time this summer, firefighters saved local hams from losing their homes. Just as the Tamarack Fire south of Carson Valley was finally wrangled under containment, the Caldor Fire sprang into a monster that has charred nearly 300K acres.



While Foothill Rd. hams, like Garth Grugal KC4M once again felt the sting of evacuation warnings, our friends in Christmas Valley, Meyers, and South Lake Tahoe were forced from their homes when Caldor breached Echo Summit. Miracle of miracles, though, the high winds that blew the fire over the summit also lifted it across the valley to the opposite mountainside. Homes were spared, not only because of the wind and years of competent forestry maintenance, but the efforts of hundreds of firefighters holed up in SLT casinos. Only a few homes were lost as this wildfire churned towards Tahoe and Carson Valley.

During the DCART net on September 13, a few Tahoe ARES members checked in, letting us know they were back home and safe. Paul Gulbro, WA6EWV, trustee of the TARA 147.240MHz repeater atop the Heavenly ski lift, lives within "hot breath distance" of Caldor's flames. He expressed his relief and "heart-felt thanks" to the firefighters who saved that community and "for giving me a place to come back to."



Silent Key: Gunther Noder KU8B, Jan. 25, 1932 - Sept. 7, 2021

During the September 7th SIERA net, a moment of silence was observed for a respected member of our radio community. Gunther Noder KU8B, 89, died that morning under hospice care at the rehab where he had been living since injuring himself at his residence. Although he had mobility issues, he was active in SIERA's meetings and events, including the Moving Wall celebration at the East Valley Cemetery. The photo at the right shows him operating the radio in the SIERA communications trailer at that event.



His friend, Robert Plant KI7OXS, made sure his radios operated properly so that he could participate during the COVID lockdown. Those restrictions in particular were his bane. Every time he left The Chateau for a doctor's appointment or to visit his daughters, he was quarantined for two weeks in his apartment. Robert and Gunther's daughter, Linda, took him to Lampe Park on Field Day and set him up with a 2-meter radio. He was able to make a few contacts in the fresh air and sunshine. The photo to the left is from that Lampe Park Field Day. Thank you, Robert and Linda, for keeping Gunther in on the action.

Here are a few memories of Gunther shared by SIERA members:

Robert Plant KI7OXS: *I met Guenther while volunteering with Honor Flight Nevada. On the flight home from Washington DC, we discovered that we shared amateur radio in common. We have had many adventures together since then and most recently only a few weeks ago. (Robert and Jim Sanders AG6IF connected Gunther by ZOOM to the August SIERA General meeting.)*

Jeff Cauhape K7BCV: *I have a fond memory of working with Gunter late one night when we had Field Day at the Minden-Tahoe Airport. This is a 24-hour radio contest with the goal of contacting as many other hams as possible. The days' heat was fading and it was beginning to get tolerable in the trailer we had set up as the club radio station. Because of Gunther's visual problems, he operated the radio while I ran the contact logging software on the computer. Between the two of us I think we did pretty well.*

Jim Sanders AG6IF: *Oh, so very sad to hear this news. So glad we got to hear Gunther on our last net. He was a dedicated ham and a fighter. I also lost my dad, one year ago on 9-7. My thoughts and prayers are with Linda and his other friends and family.*

Sue Cauhape, KI7CTT: *I was privileged to drive Gunther to SIERA meetings, VE exams, and events, and got a kick out of how Cinch, our nervous Border Collie, would camp out under his chair. During our rides, he told me he was part of Hitler Youth, but explained that was what schooling was then. It replaced the regular schools at the time. He lived on the third floor of The Chateau in Gardnerville and would check in to every net and Watering Hole when his radios were working. He and Robert set up antennas on his balcony, but when The Chateau painted the building's exterior, he had to take them down. Keeping on the radio was a constant challenge for him, but he always kept at it. One time, I watched him walking down the stairs to meet me in the foyer when the elevator was stuck. I held my breath as he descended those stairs. He looked so frail, but he was able to get*

around pretty well. It took a lot to bring him down. Jeff and I miss Gunther a lot. When his voice didn't come over the radio during the nets, it made us nervous. There was a lot of heart and energy in that man that kept him going through these crazy times. He had to endure so much more than the rest of us. He was lucky to have caring family and Robert to help him stay with ham radio.



Gunther's daughter, Linda: *I will be keeping Dad's Handheld close and every now and then, if it's ok, I may just listen in to the net check in and the Watering Hole for Dad. I often listened with him. He loved just being connected and if I can do that once in a while, for my Daddy, I think he might like that. Just keeping a little of Dad's favorite hobby in our hearts for a little while.*

Thank you to the club for all you have done for Dad in the past. I listened in (to the Tuesday net) and it was so nice and moving. It was a very nice tribute and honor to him on the net tonight. Thank you. I felt close to him just holding the handheld and listening. Glad it cooperated as that thing can be finicky, but sure Dad was holding it with me listening in as well.

Korean War and Korean Defense
Service Veterans, Lake Co., FL
Chapter 169.

An Obituary: Guenther Noder-- 1/25/1932 – 9/7/2021

Guenther was born in Germany and lived much of his childhood and pre-teen years during WW II. He immigrated to the US in 1951 and lived with his aunt and uncle in Detroit, Michigan, who acted as his sponsors for entering the US.

In Michigan he enlisted in the Army and did his training at Ft. Knox, KY. He was stationed, much to his surprise and disappointment, back in Germany to help with interpreting, after WW II ended, with US troops still onsite in Germany. He really wanted to be stationed elsewhere, but with him being fluent in the German language, he helped US troops with their post WW II presence. In addition, he almost reached Korea to fight in the Korean War, but the plane carrying him and other soldiers to Korea, turned around while in flight, as the war had just ended as they were in route. After his military service, he returned to Michigan and worked at his uncle's machine/tool shop and attended night school to gain his engineering degree.

He married a wonderful German gal, Inge, in 1958, who also immigrated to the US, and had two daughters, Dorothy and Linda, in 1959 and 1963, respectively. Guenther worked as an engineer at The General Motors Tech Center, about 12 miles north of the Motor City, Detroit, where he worked for 30 years.

After retirement, he and Inge moved to Florida and they lived there for almost 15 years, then moved out to Las Vegas NV, to be closer to family, and eventually, after his wife passed in 2017, he moved to Gardnerville where he would spend his remaining years.

During Guenther's life, he was very active in the Civil Air Patrol and the Coast Guard Auxiliary. He participated in many functions with the CAP and flew search and rescue missions with the CG off the coast of Florida.

He became an Amateur Radio Operator "Ham" in the late 50s/early 60s and carried on with this hobby up to almost his passing. He assisted in manning the hurricane/evacuation shelters in Florida using his ham radio communication skills. He loved this hobby so much; I remember times we would literally have to pull him away from his ham station to come eat meals with us. Especially if a contest was going on. While packing up his possessions, we found many QSL cards

from contacts he had made all over the world. We will have fun looking these over. In all his organizations and radio clubs, he made many good friends and acquaintances. This is also true when he went on Honor Flight Nevada in 2018.

Guenther/Dad, was a great husband, father, hard worker, veteran and a true patriot who loved this country. We are very proud of all his accomplishments and services he provided to this country and his communities. We, who remain, will keep his passions and memories alive but he is already very missed.

If anyone is interested, a donation in memory of Guenther can be made to:
Honor Flight Nevada, PO Box 21123, Reno, NV 89515 honorflightnv.org.

Our October 2nd Board and General meetings will held at the United Methodist Church in Gardnerville (1375 Centerville Rd.) Board meeting at noon, General at 1 p.m. Bring a mask.

Nevada Day Parade

Tom Tabacco KE7NCJ needs two more volunteers for the Nevada Day Parade Oct 30. One position calls for someone to be net control. The other will be stationed at an announcer's stand. Participants meet at Red's BBQ Restaurant on Carson Street for breakfast before 6 a.m. because the parade route will be closed then. If you are interested, please contact Tom at smokey5880@gmail.com.



SIERA Board Elections

It's that time again. Gee, this year just flew by, didn't it? (cough) Start thinking about who you want to have on the 2022 SIERA Board or whether you'd like to be on the Board. We've had a great Board serving SIERA for several years, but some of those folks want to retire. Some already have and left gaping holes in our leadership. Even if we all agree to keep the present Board by affirmation, we still need a Secretary, Treasurer, and other positions. There are also lots of important jobs to fill that don't necessarily involve being on the Board. We can discuss all of these at the next meeting. The Election will be held in December, but a committee will be formed in November to recruit candidates. So, now's the time to speak up if you want to serve SIERA and keep this club a vital resource for hams in western Nevada.

For Sale: An Entire Radio Station

Because he's relocating to Oregon, Curt Lueck KG7TVC has donated his complete HF station to SIERA. He wants all the equipment to go to someone who is new to Ham Radio, and is looking for a HF Transceiver. However, this donation is a complete station including transceiver, power supply, antenna tuner, microphone, external speaker, two antennas, and complete documentation.

The station consists of:

1. ICOM-718 transceiver w/DSP module
2. Astron RM-35 power supply
3. LDG automatic antenna tuner
4. ICOM microphone
5. External Speaker
6. MFJ 40/20M dipole antenna
7. Lasco dipole antenna
8. MFJ Headphones
9. SWR meter
10. Complete documentation
11. Misc. antenna parts



After picking up the station, Jim Marshall K6LR discovered the Astron Power supply had a bad power switch. He ordered a new switch, installed it, and it works fine. The transceiver works perfectly. Jim tested it on all bands and it has great sensitivity and makes full 100 watts RF output. EHAM gives this transceiver 4.6 out of 5 stars. It is still in production, and lists for \$750.00. The Astron RM-35 lists for \$435.00. The LDG-100 auto antenna tuner sells for \$150.00. He would suggest that the station should sell for \$750 - \$800, but is waiting for the Board to decide on the price. Contact Jim K6LR at: jmarshalt1945@yahoo.com or learn more about it at the October 2nd meeting.



DCART News:

Douglas County Amateur Radio Team (DCART) members responded to our Director of Douglas County 911 Emergency Services, Ron Sagen, for his callout to the Team for active standby status for the Caldor Fire earlier this month. The Caldor Fire threatened many agencies' communications infrastructure. Fortunately, communications were secure.

Did you feel the urge to help somehow? In today's world Amateur Radio Operators must be affiliated with a government agency - in our case, Douglas County 911 Emergency Services. Our DCART team is seeking volunteers who are interested in using their ham radio skills to serve their community by providing vital communications services during times of emergency and disaster. Typical assignments include working in the DCART communications center located within the Douglas County 911 center, the Douglas County mobile communications command post and field assignments, participating in weekly DCART communications networks, training classes and exercises. Ready to apply? Contact Dave OHara, KB7DWO, at dwohara@gmail.com

September has been designated as Emergency Preparedness Month. We certainly were tested. SIERA also has been active with nets and meetings emphasizing what you need for evacuation to go bags. It is difficult to decide at the last minute what you should take.

DCART members met in person for the first time in a long time. Good to see and personally check up on each other. Dave, KB7DWO, along with other ARES leadership, has called our yearly SET for October 16th. More information to follow.

73,
Dave OHara, KB7DWO
ARES Emergency Coordinator
Douglas and Alpine Counties

Sheila Clement, KA7AJQ
ARES AEC
Douglas and Alpine Counties



Shared on the SIERA Facebook page this month:

Keeping It Alive: A Morse Code Documentary:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1taa-quTHJI>

Article about a study of the affects of a CME on the electrical grid.
<https://www.livescience.com/solar-storm-internet-apocalypse>

"In Case of Fire, Break Glass:" <https://fireaviation.com/2021/09/24/in-case-of-fire-break-glass/>

By the way, 116 people follow the SIERA page. SIERA has 76 members. We reach a lot of hams from all over the world with our SIERA presence on Facebook.

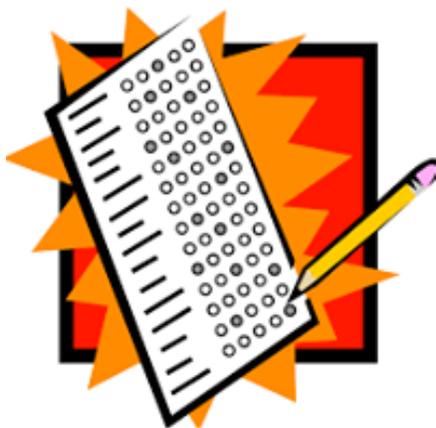
There's an App for That

Here's an app shared by Keifer Bly KJ7LYB which allows you to check HF and VHF propagation conditions at the click of a button. It shows sunspot number (the estimation) as well as the current bad conditions, too.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D0u0gLnFFO0>

Unfortunately, there is only an Android version, but it's nice as you can just click to view the conditions, takes less time than looking them up.

**Join Jeff K7BCV for The Watering Hole, every
Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. on 147.330/240mh.
Questions and Answers about Amateur Radio.**



Taking Licensing Exams During the COVID Era

SNARS schedules exam sessions at the REOC in Reno. 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>

Fourth Saturday Breakfasts are Back



Join SIERA hams for breakfast at the Taildragger Café at the Minden-Tahoe Airport every fourth Saturday of the month at 8 a.m.



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

State of NV DEM (W7DEM) Wednesday Morning Nets

If you want to test your equipment for emergency communications work with DEM, check out their website, <https://www.carsoncityares.org/WedNets.html> for details on how you can check in on a wide variety of frequencies and modes, including VHF, HF, DMR, CW, WinLink, and Fusion. This is an opportunity to exercise your capabilities to assist during disasters and emergencies. There is no complex protocol involved with these nets. Just tune in to the designated frequency and mode at the scheduled time frame then give Net Control your name, call sign, and location. CW simply requires your call sign.



Nets Available in Carson Valley and Beyond:

The SNARS Noon Net daily on 147.150.

Daily Carson & Eagle Valley net, Mon-Sat, 6 p.m. on 28.435 MHz USB

BARC Nightly Net, 8 pm on 146.655MHz 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 147.330/147.240MHz. The fourth (and fifth) Mondays on 147.270/147.240MHz.

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

SIERA VHF/HF Nets, Tuesdays: 7:30 p.m. on 147.330/240MHz; 8 p.m. on 3982KHz.

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

W7DEM Net, Wednesday mornings on various frequencies. Check this website for details:

<https://www.carsoncityares.org/WedNets.html>.

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

The Watering Hole, Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. on 147.330.240MHz,

"questions and answers pertaining to amateur radio."

SKYWARN at 7 p.m. Wednesdays 441.650MHz.

NV ARES Net Thursdays at 7 p.m. Echolink conf server NV-GATE 152566 IRLP Western Reflector Ch 8: 9258

SNARS Hospital Net, Fridays at 10:00 a.m. on 147.030/147.150MHz

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

Lyon/Churchill Area Emergency Radio Communications Net, Fridays at 6 p.m. on 147.345MHz.

RARA Rural Amateur Radio Assn., Fridays at 8 p.m. on 147.180MHz 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. 146.760MHz pl 123

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

Lyon County Amateur Radio Emergency Service Net, Sundays at 7 p.m. on 147.345MHz.

A Note from the Beacon Editor:

We've sensed a bit of discontent with the lack of technical information in the Beacon. In past years, members have submitted articles to enrich announcements and news. David DeAngelis wrote many such articles. Jim Marshall K6LR shared stories about his restoration projects. Keifer Bly KJ7LYB has posted links to his online videos. Everyone in SIERA can show and tell what's going on; such as, projects about station-building, experiences using ham radio when traveling, restoring old equipment, or how you bring others into the hobby. So, don't be shy. The Beacon is yours to make SIERA a vital organization for new and old hams alike.

Remember to send your photos and news for the Beacon and the SIERA Facebook page to scauhape2020@protonmail.com