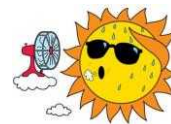


SIERA BEACON



Carson Valley, NV

August 2019

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

Field Day Results:

We had a total of **173** QSOs (80m-15, 40m-83, 20m-75 phone, 2 digital) for total points of **354**. Our bonus points were **1,050**. We have a preliminary total of: **1,404**.

Thank you to the following operators: Ben Echevarria N7BBE 67; David Granish KI6EWK 41; Jim Marshall K6LR 25; Jeff Cauhape K7BCV 24; NV7CV (whoever that was) 16; Ron K6CPR of Camarillo, CA 4; Jim AG6IF 2; and Bryce Leinen KI7NIK 1.

We didn't get a sign in/out sheet for all of our members who came out to help with the set up and break down. Next year I will ensure that we have such a list to fully ID all our folks who helped make this a great success. -- David Granish KI6EWK

Next Meeting: The August 3rd general meeting, 1 p.m. in the United Methodist Church on Centerville Rd., Gardnerville, has no presentation planned. At the July meeting, when the president asked for volunteers for presentations, all we heard were crickets. The Board elections are coming up in a few months, so we will be talking about Board positions and responsibilities and other ways to engage our members and assign jobs so that people won't be burned out ... unless they want to be, of course.

Death Ride Madness!



Paul Gulbro WA6EWV said it was the most accident-prone Death Ride he's ever experienced in the forty years he's been involved. Nearly a dozen ambulance calls, two riders air-lifted out, and a poster-signing photo op debacle at Carson Pass that held up about 100 riders from returning to Turtle Rock before dark. Madness indeed ruled the Death Ride this year.

Smack dab in the middle of it, though, sat the father-son power team of Scott and Emerson Ramirez at Half Ebbetts. Emerson did most of the talking throughout the day, reporting the chaos that was happening around him. Most of the accidents were on the Ebbetts part of the route and included two riders who sailed over the edge of the road. If you are familiar with the endless drop-offs on that road, you may wonder how

these bikers even survived. There were so many 911 calls to Markleeville's dispatch center, that the Sheriff's Office started naming them: Cliff 1, Cliff 2, Pass, Ebbetts ... well, you get the idea. Emerson kept his cool throughout the whole mishmash. Those of us listening in were quite impressed with this young HAM's professional handling of a crazy day. Even when he was pressed for details he could not provide, he kept calm and confident. Congratulations, Emerson, on your fine performance on the Death Ride.



Meanwhile, Ben Echevarria, N7BBE had his collection of nutty folks at Wolf Creek too, including the Chicken Man, who rewarded Ben with his very own rubber chicken.

Hans Bernhardt, also known as the Chicken Man, emailed the Beacon to express his sincere thanks to all the SIERA/TARA HAMs for supporting yet another great Death Ride. We realize Hans is an extremely upbeat kinda guy, but by his email, did he really know what was going on at other parts of the ride? Here's his (edited for length) missive of thanks to all of you who supported the Death Ride with an extra dose of professionalism that saved the day ... literally ... for a lot of people.

"CHICKEN MAN HERE! Thank you again for another HAM awesome Death Ride!!!"

Hey there SIERA HAMs, it's me, SIERA Rubber Chicken! Ok that was a silly joke. I think you need to make yourselves T-shirts that say "SIERA Radio Club: We make the Death Ride HAM awesome!" or something like that. THANK YOU for volunteering your time and skills to yet another stellar Death Ride! EVERY YEAR I appreciate y'all that much more!



What is funny this year, my 8th, is that many veteran volunteers are now like, "Um, I have like six or seven rubber chickens at home, so don't need another one." Which my de-oxygenated Death Ride hallucinatory mind translates as "Guess how much more weight you get to carry on your bike up the next pass. Sure do hope there are more first time volunteers up there to take all these chickens!" The carried extra chickens were evident this year as I barely made the Woodfords and Pickets cutoffs by five minutes AGAIN! I knew you knew this already because, well, HAM radio operators KNOWWWW, which I find is nice when one is out there, not just in the mountains, but in the mind...as can be the case with many if not all us cyclists. THANK YOU AGAIN for keeping the radio awareness and safety going like an umbrella over the entire course!

Cheers and Rubber Chickens to Y'all! SEE YOU in 2020!

Chicken Man
aka Hans Bernhardt

UPDATE: SIERA NV7CV Repeater

Jim Marshall, K6LR, NV7CV Repeater Trustee

It has been almost a year since we heard from the owners (CHP) of our Club repeater site on Mt Leviathan. Just got word from CHP that "at some point," a new tower will be located on Mt. Leviathan and SIERA will have to sign a lease agreement with California Highway Patrol (Sacramento) in order to remain on site. A CHP leasing contact has been assigned and I will be in contact with her in future updates.

I have no information as to the amount of the lease or when it might be enacted. In addition, installation of our antenna and Heliacx feed line must be accomplished by professional tower riggers. SIERA will be responsible for the costs associated with the feed line and antenna installation. Tower riggers are charging between \$175.00 to \$250.00 per hour and this will probably be marked up by State of Calif. I estimate that two hours of time will be needed, plus the marked up cost of the Heliacx, but that is only my estimate of time.

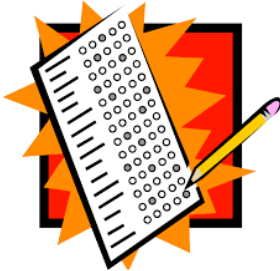
Just wanted to let the club know that the "free ride" is apparently over and we will have to pay the lease on probably a yearly basis. Depending on the dollar amount of the lease, and I would assume site maintenance costs, we as a club will have to decide to either stay on Leviathan or move elsewhere. I sincerely hope we do not elect to move, as Leviathan is a great location for all of Carson Valley, but costs to remain there may prove to be prohibitive.

I will work with Ron Sagen, Director of 911 Douglas County Dispatch, to see what we can work out when we get the dollar amount and whether we can fall under their lease. I will keep everyone updated as I hear more.

Update on the Update:

Just finished a flurry of emails with our new CHP contact. She was requesting information on SIERA and any subsequent documentation. I informed her that had been sent to CHP last November to our last known contact. She responded saying that the person named was no longer with CHP, so they (CHP) were starting over again. (Typical Government). I forwarded her all the information I had sent previously.

I asked her for a time frame and she responded that they were in preliminary phase of obtaining permission from Forest Service, doing environmental impact reports, etc., so that would indicate they are a few years away from doing anything. (Just my thought.) I will keep you informed.



ARRL Licensing Exam: SIERA offers licensing exams on the third Saturday of every odd month at 9 a.m. at Station 51 Fire Station, 777 South Stewart St., Carson City. Bring your photo ID, a copy of your license if you're upgrading, and \$15. (You'll need to pay \$15 each time you take the test, so come prepared.) Contact: Greg Moore KG7DMI at KG7DMI@frontier.com for more information.

The next Licensing exam: September 21st.

Considering there was a Tech fast class and exam session going on at NVCon, we had a good turn out. Everyone passed! Here's the breakdown:

New Techs:

Mamre Maulis - KJ7ICX (who called in on last Tuesday's VHF net.)
Tom Hardy - KN6DKH

New Generals:

Brian Kendzior - KN6DKI

Upgrades to Extra:

Diana Moore - KJ7GVY
Anthony Grandstaff - K7AMG
Cliff Dividow - WB7ATE

Brian passed his Tech and General in one sitting. We're seeing this more often. Cliff was one of those very rare upgrades from Advanced to Extra. He may be the first since I took over. Congratulations to all and hope to hear you on the air.

Here are some statistics per Hamdata.com:

The Changing Operating Classes

Over the past year the Technician class has increased at an average rate of 6/day.
The Novice class has decreased at an average rate of 3/day.
The General class has increased at an average rate of 4/day.
The Advanced class has decreased at an average rate of 8/day.
The Extra class has increased at an average rate of 5/day.
Club Stations have increased at an average rate of <1/day.

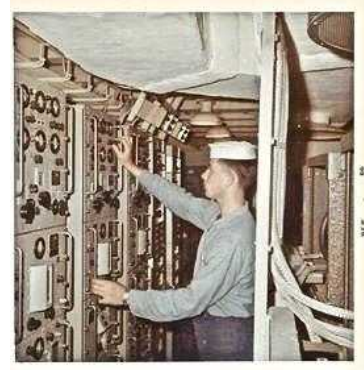
Greg Moore - KG7DMI

Jim Marshall K6LR shared this on the SIERA Facebook page:

For those of you who would like to expand your knowledge of electronics, here's a website that explains very basic components and theory to more advanced topics. It looks worthwhile to me: <http://www.learningaboutelectronics.com/>



Also, Jim found a couple of pictures of himself in the Navy aboard ship in Viet Nam, operating a radio teletype (RTTY), and tuning a 1.5 kW transmitter.



Here's a Facebook post from the Bishop Amateur Radio Club page. It's a fun nine-minute film about amateur radio in 1939:

<https://www.facebook.com/saradioclub/videos/325023814918461/>

Check us out on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/SIERA>



You don't have to join Facebook to see all the posts on our SIERA page. If you have a news item you'd like to post, send it to scauhape2002@yahoo.com. Also, tell your friends about the SIERA Facebook page. It's open to the public and our worldwide audience is growing. We are getting lots of new views from HAMs who do not receive the Beacon and who knows where they are located. SIERA is reaching the world.

And this from Mike Whitten KI7NIP:

We were discussing mobile NVIS a while back and just noticed this antenna, so here are some links about it:

Wow.....looks freaking cool to me!

<https://www.comrod.com/wp-content/uploads/HF230L-OTM.pdf>

Tactical Antennas

<https://www.comrod.com/products/tactical-antennas/>

Main site

<https://www.comrod.com/>

Mike sent this to Jeff Cauhape K7BCV who raved about this antenna, saying it is beyond NVIS in that it not only covers a 500km area as NVIS would, but also produces a ground wave. It covers a range of frequencies from 2mH to 30mH. It uses a standard NATO mount, so you can remove the current antenna on your vehicle and replace it with this one for some really awesome mobile propagation.

And a last minute announcement: David Granish KI6EWK is running for a position of the Chichester HOA Board. Perhaps he can convince them to allow antennas on homeowners' properties. Let's help him get elected and change some minds.

My Pony Express Re-Ride Experience 2019 – by Bob Yandow, K7GUU



For the first time, I volunteered to be the pony follower on Nevada Section 3 of the Pony Express Re-Ride this year. This was from West Overland Pass to Grubbs Well, which started on the top of the Diamond Mountains, heading southwest across Diamond Valley, over Garden Pass, through the Roberts Creek Mountain foothills and southwest across Kobeh Valley. The section was 48 miles long and scheduled from 11:30 pm on Monday, 17 June, to 6 am on Tuesday.

I planned for my wife and me to spend the day before the pony arrival by traveling the trail as the pony would ride it for my section 3. Our plans were foiled by an impassible road to Overland Pass and thunder storms with rain through the rest of the day. We decided we could not be close pony followers and would meet the pony at the various relay/exchange points along the route.

Monday night at 9:30 pm we arrived at the bottom of Telegraph Canyon, which is the route up to Overland Pass. Justin and “Zip” with the mail on his back while Andy is mounting.

his wife Sally were there with their horses. Justin the first rider on the section started up the canyon at 10:30 to meet the incoming pony and rider at the pass. Justin told us later he had to go part way down the other side of the pass to get the mail as the other pony was worn out by heavy going through a swamp at the bottom of the pass.

Sally had driven a couple of miles down the road to the next exchange point as she was the second rider. Justin came out of the canyon and got to the exchange point with Sally 1 hour and 15 minutes late. We moved on to the second exchange point where we met Andy, the third rider, and Randy the fourth rider. We spent a pleasant 45 minutes talking to Andy and Randy while waiting for Sally.

After the mail exchange, we proceeded four miles to where the mail passed from Andy to Randy. The next exchange was on highway 278 at the Pony Express monument kiosk. When we arrived, the next rider was warming up his horse. We were very tired and decided to nap while waiting for Randy to arrive, which he did in about 30 minutes. We would meet this outgoing rider a few hours later.

The previous day we had found a spot on the road which was flooded near the next exchange point. We decided to skip that road and head to a spot where the Pony Express Trail crosses 3- Bars road two miles northeast of Grubbs Well.

We arrived at the crossing point with light in the east and at what we estimated was about one hour before the pony and rider came through. Both my wife and I set alarms and slept for about 45 minutes. Of course, we had the mobile radio on and which was very quiet during the night. At about 5:45 am we saw some dust up the trail that appeared to be something moving towards us. In about 10 minutes two pickups with horse trailers arrived and stopped at the crossing. We then met several people of the Circle J ranch clan from Spring Creek, including the rider who rode from the highway 278 kiosk.

They were there for the mail exchanger between two family members. We were confused as we understood the next and last exchange in our section was at Grubbs Well. We learned an exception was being made so that 25-year-old Christy was incoming to pass the mail to her dad for his last carrying of the mail after several decades of doing so. At about 6:05 am she came riding in hot, in a cloud of dust, passed the mail to her dad who started for Grubbs Well at a good pace. I reported the progress to N7CLB as the mail being 15 minutes behind schedule; this was after six riders made up one hour over five hours. That ended our 2019 Re-Ride support experiences.



The Circle J Ride Captain preparing for his final ride.

Significant or interesting points –

The mochila (riders always referred to it as the mail) was quite heavy and it was much easier and faster for two riders to move the four, interconnected mail bags from horse to horse.

The night riders had forward pointing lights on their hats.

Riders did not want anyone following them. Especially not within a mile or so. The noise could/would bother them.

Preceding the pony to the next exchange allowed us to meet the next rider and learn more about their Re-Ride experiences. Twice new riders were waiting in the night by themselves when we arrived.

The riders and their support people asked us if they were on schedule several times.

We and the riders used the Pony Express Re-Ride Spot Messenger website via cell phone to get the progress of the incoming rider. Sometimes the website was 30 minutes to server hours late with the status.

Our section had limited radio contacts because the Eureka 2m repeater could not be hit by me. Sometimes I could not hit the Roberts Creek Ranch relay station manned by Doug Lundgren, N7CBL. He was never able to connect to the Eureka repeater.

At one point I phoned the current base station in Carson City to report progress because I could not contact N7CBL.

Verizon cell coverage was 2 to 3 bars and in many places non-existent throughout section 3.

SIERA Re-Ride support should continue in areas of limited cell coverage for communication and safety reasons, especially in areas a distance from highway 50 where emergency response times might be lengthy.

All seven riders on section 3 were from Spring Creek, a small town south of Elko.

It was exciting to see a light in the distance as the incoming riders slowly appeared in the night and then to see the outgoing rider quickly disappear down the trail.

We had fun, a lot of this due to it being night, so I volunteered to be the Pony follower for section 3 in 2020.

My wife adds that it was just beautiful. We had a full moon. Heard lots of cows and coyotes and birds in the AM. It was a special night of history and solitude for us. The time went very quickly as well.

DCART News:

2019 July Alpine/Douglas ARES Comment:

The big event this month was the "Death Ride" also known as "Tour of the California Alps" (bicyclists) in Alpine County July 13th. Several DCART members assisted Tahoe Amateur Radio Association (TARA) with communications planning and staging at rest sites. Two members, Bob Williams K7VOC, and Debbie Williams N7XYL, staffed the Alpine County Sheriff's Office ham radio alongside the Dispatcher Chris for about fourteen hours. Always a great opportunity to coordinate with Sheriff Rick Stephens and staff.

Since Dale, our repeater system trustee, moved away, several repeater business and maintenance issues have surfaced. CARS (Churchill Amateur Radio Society) absorbed us into their organization. By doing this, Jeff Brown K5BLS, CARS President, is able to take care of repeater sites maintenance and cost. A new antenna is ready to be installed on the 147.270 pending good weather and climbing technician availability.

Station licenses are being formally processed. Information is coming from the CARS newsletters. The W7SR license has been updated and is now held by Curt Anderson N7AER, trustee. The W7DEM club license is in process at the FCC and should be changed over soon with David Law N7TNX, retaining the designated trustee position.

Our DCART ham station at 911 has new antennas, new feed line, new grounding, new radios (including HF), new 50A 12v power source, a new large capacity battery backup supply for the AC transition to the 911 generator, and a new WiresX computer and a new logo. The radios are Fusion capable. See NVCARS.org for our new DCART station photo. So much thanks to Ron Sagen, Director, Douglas County 911



Emergency Services, and Douglas County Communications Tech, Jeff Brown, K5BLS, for our state of the art station. Jeff has conferred with Dick Flanagan, originator of our original repeater system and the Carson Valley Radio Club. CVRC and CARS have merged. CVRC is the social side and CARS is the business and assets side. CARS members are also CVRC members

The NVCon Conference was a good one and good information came out of the classes and networking with other Nevada, California and New Mexico hams. DCART and Lyon

County member John Abrott, KD7NHC, is our Nevada SEC (Section Emergency Coordinator) as Glen, KB7REO, stepped down to handle some family and business matters. Other presentations about the California Camp Fire gave great insight on communications failures, heroic actions and Insight to working with Red Cross support and operations. -- ARES Emergency Coordinator for Douglas and Alpine Counties
Sheila Clement, KA7AJQ



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.



Want to go Digital? Stephen Goble KW4TA, who recently moved to Minden, wants to make digital contacts. Anybody interested?

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.



SIERA Board Meeting Minutes, July 6, 2019

Call to order

12:10 p.m.

Present

Jeff Cauhape K7BCV, Ben Echavarria N7BBE, David Granish KI6EWK
Greg Moore KG7DMI, Jim Marshall K6LR, Bob Williams K7VOC,
Debbie Williams N7XYL

Absent

Cathy Carney KI7NIR, Subrina Vinton KI7OAL

Minutes

June minutes were read and approved.

Treasurer's Report for July 2019

Checking Account	
<u>Starting Balance</u>	2282.73
Deposits Membership	82.50
Withdrawals: Greg Moore, KG7DMI, two laptop computers	<440.00>
<u>Ending Balance</u>	1925.23
Savings Account	
<u>Starting Balance</u>	4071.19
Dividends	.17
<u>Ending Balance</u>	4071.53
Grand Total	5996.76

New Hams Workshop:

The New Hams Workshop was held at Wilson Commons Park. Twelve new HAMS showed up and learned how to tune and use their handhelds. David Thompson, AG7TX, put it on with the assistance of Greg Moore, KG7DMI.

Old Business

Replacement of trailer computers

Greg Moore, KG7DMI, spent \$440 on two laptops from Computer Corps to replace the ones in the trailer. One has a I-3 core, one has a I-5 core, both have 200-300 GB-hard drives, and they were bought with Windows 10 pre-installed. Greg installed N1MM Logger, Fldigi Suite (includes Fldigi, FlAMP, and Flmsg), and WSJT-X ver 2.1. Not only can Fldigi and WSJT-X be used as solo applications: both can and are, configured to be used in conjunction with N1MM Logger for Field Day, QSO Parties, and contests. Also installed but not yet configured, is MMSSTV for slow scan TV. Greg drew a map of where

everything is connected to the COMM ports, and made a list of procedural instructions on how to boot each computer so that there will be no problems with this in future events. These instructions are inserted in a plastic cover and should be kept inside the laptops at the end of use.

Future Presentations

Jeff asked for people to sign up for future presentations. The response was silence.

New Business

Thanks to Lander County

Robert Nelson, WA3PAD, whose group provided relay support of the Pony Express at the Austin airport, wants to thank the Lander Co. airport commissioners for allowing them to camp at the airport and use their facilities. Robert said he would write a letter of a personal nature to them himself and requested SIERA to also follow-up with a thank you letter and certificate of appreciation. The Board agreed to do both these things upon receipt of a copy of Robert's letter containing the details of their stay.

Communications between Meetings

It was proposed that Sue Cauhape, KI7CTT, public information officer, send e-mail blasts for information that can't wait for the Beacon to spread to the whole membership. Sue agreed to do this as well as post the information to the SIERA Facebook page for the extended community.

DCART Call List:

It was proposed and approved by acclamation to request Don McRoberts, W3DRM, to include the DCART Call List with the VHF and HF lists on the ***cvhams.com*** website.

Club Insurance

Bob Williams, K7VOC, reported that ARRL offers \$5K worth of insurance for \$70/year to cover the NV7CV repeater against fire, theft, and replacements costs. There's a \$50 deductible per claim. The Board agreed to go with this. Bob will also investigate the costs of covering the club trailer. The Board members estimated that \$3k would be enough to cover the computers, coax, and other equipment, but not the trailer itself.

Post-Holiday Party

Because the post-holiday potluck was such a success last year, the Board will bring up to the membership whether or not to hold another one or to appoint someone to organize a party at a catered venue as has been done in past years.

Nominating Committee

Bob Williams, K7VOC, reminded the Board that the president, before October 1st, needs to name three people to be a nominating committee to develop a roster of Board candidates for 2020. This roster will be presented to the membership at the November general meeting.

Coffee Mugs:

A box of SIERA coffee mugs were found stored in the trailer. It was decided to sell them to members, with the money given to the repeater fund.

Classes:

Jeff Cauhape, K7BCV, told the Board that he is taking a year off from teaching classes, but if anyone is interested in picking up the piton, he encourages them to talk to Western Nevada College. WNC offers an excellent classroom venue, audio/visual equipment, advanced advertising, pricing, and a small percentage of enrollment as a stipend to teachers in the Community Education department. Jim Marshall, K6LR, volunteered to

teach classes and Greg Moore, KG7DMI, said that Jim Sanders was interested in teaching classes.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:00.

General Meeting Minutes for July 6, 2019

Called to order: 1:10 p.m.

Introductions: Shirley Yandow who gave the presentation.

Treasurer's Report June 2019 (see Board Meeting)

Business:

Club Insurance: Bob Williams reported the information given to the Board concerning ARRL insurance for the repeater. He will also inventory the equipment in the trailer and submit that report in August.

Classes: Jeff Cauhape repeated his encouragement for anyone interested in teaching classes to contact the WNC Comm. Ed. **Jim Marshall and Jim Sanders volunteered to teach classes.**

Nominating Committee: Bob Williams reminded the membership to start thinking of naming three people to be on a nominating committee to choose candidates for the 2020 Board. The committee meets in November and the membership votes in December.

Potluck or Banquet: It was an overwhelming vote among the members in favor of holding another potluck for the January 2020 meeting.

Pony Express: Following a presentation given by Shirley Yandow of her and husband Bob's, experiences following the Pony between Overland Pass West and Grubbs Wells, Tom Tabacco led the discussion about where SIERA needs to provide coverage and where we should stay out of the way. Many followers found that they were part of a parade of vehicles following the riders and felt like they were not really needed. Many of the teams have cell phone coverage along much of the route, while other areas are so remote, that hams are necessary and helpful. Tom and Jeff will attend the next meeting of the Nevada Pony Express and with president Art Johnson to figure out what exactly the Pony people need and what SIERA can provide.

Meeting adjourned: 2:30 p.m.

Remember, send your photos and news for the Beacon to:
scauhape2002@yahoo.com.