



# SIERA BEACON



Carson Valley, NV

September 2019

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

## It Ain't Over til It's Over



As this busy summer's HAM-related events wind down, September offers a warm and restful interlude with long days for camping and exploring local wild lands with our radios. There was quite a discussion about this on a recent *Watering Hole* when Stephen Goble KW4TA asked if there were parks or other places where he could erect a temporary HF antenna.

David Thompson AG7TX suggested going into the Pine Nuts where there are plenty of hilltops for using HF antennas. Jamie Dahl N6JFD, an enthusiastic SOTA ham, told Stephen that the sand hill north of the Johnson Lane area is a Summits on the Air peak. Depending on one's vehicle (and a limited slip differential is necessary for climbing that hill), a ham can get on top and contact all kinds of people. Ed Terlau KG7ZOP is a camper who loves to link in to the system BARC put together along the Hwy. 395 corridor, which by the way is now fully linked between Lone Pine and Carson Valley. These repeaters allow Ed to camp either east in the deserts or west in the Sierra Nevada without sacrificing communications capability.

By the way, Stephen WK4TA also wants to make some digital contacts. Anyone interested?

### **There's Even More's Coming:**

Coming right up on **September 15 is the Edible Pedal Bike Ride**, a bicycle touring event which features mountain passes and gourmet food at each rest stop. It starts and ends at Bowers Mansion. They need Ride-Alongs in the "Sherpa" wagons and also someone to help install a portable APRS digi at the Minden-Tahoe Airport. If you're interested in helping out, Bob Miller WA6MTY, 775-843-5952, [wa6mty@gbis.com](mailto:wa6mty@gbis.com), is anxious to hear from you. Call him TODAY!

For those interested in QSO Parties, SNARS is sponsoring the first of what they hope will be an annual **QSO party**. This inaugural event will be held **Oct. 11-13** and will encourage participants to contact as many hams in Nevada's seventeen counties as possible. For further information, here's the link:  
[http://nvqso.com/?utm\\_source=snars&utm\\_medium=banner&utm\\_campaign=nvqso2019](http://nvqso.com/?utm_source=snars&utm_medium=banner&utm_campaign=nvqso2019)

SIERA is attracting more young people to the club and connecting with youth groups has tweaked a few interested members in the past. **Jamboree-on-the-Air (JOTA)** happens every year, the third full weekend in October, (**Oct 18-19**) and brings scouts and hams together around the world. If you are a scout leader or know a scout troop that would like to participate in this event, check out the website, [www.scouting.org/jota/](http://www.scouting.org/jota/) and set up a ham station to introduce boys and girls to amateur radio in a fun and easy way.

SIERA's major autumn event, **The Nevada Day Parade**, is still two months away, but Tom Tabacco KE7NCJ is encouraging us to **keep the last Saturday in October** open. This is always fun to do (unless you hate getting up at OMG-it's-dark-thirty). It's usually over by early afternoon, provides you with a steady stream of Nevada's fascinating cultures, and rewards you with a sumptuous breakfast at Red's Old 395 Grill. Contact Tom at [smokey@pyramid.net](mailto:smokey@pyramid.net).

Even further into the future is the SIERA **Board Election**. Some members have been on the Board for years and would like very much to pass the bounty of leadership on to others. SIERA has acquired several new members, all of whom have already demonstrated well-honed skills they can offer our club. And there are many old-timers who have been shy about showing off their abilities. This is not the time for humility, folks! There are several jobs that can enhance our club experiences that are small in scope but huge in impact. Please tell the Board if you would like to be on the roster of candidates for December's election or if there's a particular job you'd like to do outside the Board.

**Next Meeting: The September 7th General Meeting, 1 p.m. in the United Methodist Church on Centerville Rd., Gardnerville**

### **Digital Presentation at August Meeting:**

Jim Marshall gave an impromptu presentation on the benefits of using digital communication modes when propagation (or lack thereof) is hindering HF contacts. Since we're currently at the bottom of the 11-year sun, conditions are generally not beneficial to communicating using the High Frequency Ham bands.

Jim explained that digital signals can convey intelligible communications using low power (100 watts or lower) when propagation conditions are marginal. The reason digital works is that the computer can detect patterns, and can make sense of variations in signals that are not detectable with the human ear.

Digital modes are not new to Ham Radio. RTTY (Radio Teletype) has been around for sixty years. He stated that CW (Continuous Wave) Morse code is essentially a digital mode, as it is either on or off. (Binary).

Jim backed his support for digital by recounting recent contacts he has made with FT8, FT4 and PSK-31, using a computer and an external sound card connected to his transceiver. Using these modes, he was able reach hams in Argentina, Alaska, Puerto Rico, Bolivia, Canada and France, using 100 watts or less.

Jim also pointed out that many times, a ham may turn on his or her radio, tune up and down the bands, and hear no one calling CQ. Imagine 2500 hams doing the same thing and, not hearing anyone, deciding that the "Bands are dead." It is like a bunch of fishermen on a lake and, seeing no fish jumping, determine that the fishing is lousy. You don't know if the fish are biting until you cast in your line. Same with Ham Radio. You don't know if the bands are dead until you transmit "CQ" a few times. Some of those 2500 hams will hear you and may call you back. The band may be open somewhere in the world. You don't know until you try.

Jim highlighted a recent QSO on 20 meters using SSB with a 96-year-old ham in an assisted-living home in British Columbia. He was first licensed in 1938, which Jim stated was six years before he was born! Jim talked with him for about twenty minutes, and said that he realized that one of the attractions of being a ham is that it opens the door to meeting some amazing people.

Jim encouraged interested hams to look at free software such as FLdigi and WSJT-X for the digital modes. They are not hard to set up. His final point was that one only needs a HF transceiver, an external sound card, and a computer.

**Also at the August meeting** was the appearance of one of our favorite hams, Subrina Vinton KI7OAL, who has been battling cancer for the past year. When she entered the room, everyone greeted her with lots of hugs and were so glad to see her looking so healthy. And, she could talk! Apparently, she also had tumors on her vocal cords. She was able to continue working at the DMV in a capacity where she didn't need to speak. At the meeting, however, she was in full voice, smiling and beautiful. **Welcome back, Subrina!**



### **After the Exam — Now What?**

David B. Thompson, AG7TX [ag7tx@arrl.org](mailto:ag7tx@arrl.org)

Greg Moore, KG7DMI [kg7dmi@frontier.com](mailto:kg7dmi@frontier.com)

### **I Passed the Exam and Have a License. Now What?**

A great deal of effort goes into preparing for, taking, and passing the Amateur Operator's License exams. Once that hurdle is crossed, then the next step is to obtain a radio (or radios) and begin operating. However, the new grantee is not prepared for this

element of the service during preparation for the examinations. Therefore, the objective of a new workshop David Thomson and Greg Moore are giving is to provide a fun and practical group activity aimed at those first operations.

**Where and When:**

**We are scheduled for 0900h local time on 05 October 2019 at Wilson Commons Park** (GPS: N39.2665°, W119.8358°). One or more of us will be monitoring the SNARS repeater network if you need help finding us.

**Topics to be Covered:**

This is not a “class;” it is a workshop. There will be some talking by the instructors, as much question and answer time as attendees want, some practical exercises, and time for small group/one-on-one discussions. Duration of the workshop is intended to be about 1-1/2 hours.

**The basic syllabus is:**

- VHF/UHF radios,
- Handheld, mobile/portable and base station radios — differences and applications,
- Programming the radio, basics and direction to manuals/online resources,
- Running the radio
- ∞ Practical: Operation protocol — how to call another station and how to answer a call (without the radio),
- ∞ Simplex ops,
- ∞ Practical: Running the radio,
- ∞ Practical: Make and answer a simplex call,
- ∞ Using a repeater,
- ∞ Repeater etiquette,
- ∞ Use in emergencies (think SNARS noontime net discussion),
- ∞ Practical: Make a contact through the SNARS repeaters,
- ∞ VHF “Nets”,
- ∞ There is more than FM – other modes on the VHF/UHF bands,
- ∞ Practical: Make a simplex call using VHF SSB (if enough radios are available), and
- ∞ Beyond VHF/UHF, what is the deal with the HF bands and why you want a General (or Amateur Extra) Class license?

**What to Bring:**

Bring a HT (handheld radio or radios), user manual for the radio, pen/pencil and notebook, plenty of water, a snack, sunscreen, questions to be asked/answered, and a good attitude. Be prepared to operate radios in the field. Email contacts are welcome.



**Biker Develops New Emergency Medical Procedure for Pain Relief**

*A couple years back, Hans Berkhart, aka The Chicken Man, was the "Death Ride Lantern Rubber Chicken Rouge" - The "Dead Last Finisher." After helping a woman who wrecked coming back down Ebbetts by the lake, he effectively gave up his ride, but then push it hard to make the Picketts Cutoff by 1 minute. Here's an excerpt from his story of what happened that day:*

"She crashed HARD on the way down Ebbetts Pass after the second climb. I was second on scene. The first on scene had also crashed, but he was OK. We went to her.

She lay there on her side, conscious, but unable to get up. One arm under her laid outward, the rest of her in a kind of fetal position. She tried moving, but to great pain. I asked her some key questions to gauge her coherence. She seemed mentally OK. "PHEW!" I thought. My community disaster recovery training taught me so much, but to be in the middle of the mountains with who knows where the course rescue squad was, had she been incoherent, or worse, unconscious, well, that would not have been good.

She rolled, adrenaline obviously making her stubborn. She wanted to get up, but could not. My guess eventually was broken hip and/or shoulder. I said to her, "You must stay still. You could have injuries to your neck or spine. I know it hurts to lay there, but you must stay still." I instructed the other cyclist to hold her head steady. She still tried to roll. SHE WAS NOT HAPPY. Struggling. Had to get up. Adrenaline and stubborn walk together hand-in-hand when one is hurt.

So I did the next thing I could think of. I PULLED OUT MY RUBBER CHICKEN. And I placed it across her outreached arm lying on the ground. "FOCUS ON THE CHICKEN," I implored.

There was an awkward pause as she focused in on what I had just put in front of her face, on her arm. She started to laugh.

"It's good that you are laughing, but that is going to hurt. Just please focus on the chicken. You are going to be OK."

She focused on the chicken, and calmed right down. It worked! I talked out loud each step in the process as we awaited the paramedics.

We eventually got additional help to direct traffic, and a course photographer placed his tent canopy over the cyclist to keep her warm. It was cold and windy that day and his canopy blew right off the tent frame. Little did he know it would serve a much more valuable purpose than shade.

I realized that in helping this woman, I had given up finishing my ride, but it was a no brainer. Before thirty minutes had passed, an ambulance showed up and the paramedics took over. She was going to be OK. The other cyclist, the photographer, and I gathered up the woman's things for collection by a SAG vehicle. I slipped a little rubber chicken in her seat bag.

As a matter of good practice, rather than just leave, I said to the paramedics, "Am I allowed to leave?" Until they said I could, I would not leave. As a first responder, it is a matter of carrying the ball and properly handing it over. They said I could go.



"Thank you! There is a little gift for you in your ambulance." I had left a handful of rubber chickens for them on the front seat.

*After he finished the Ride, Hans returned to Sorenson's Resort where he was staying and found a fan and her pet chicken waiting to meet and congratulate him.*

## From the Internet:

Jeff Cauhape K7BCV shared this from Hackaday.com:

### **Spain's First Open Source Satellite**

by [Sharon Lin](#)

[Fossa Systems], a non-profit youth association based out of Madrid, is developing an open-source satellite set to launch in October 2019. The FossaSat-1 is sized at 5x5x5 cm, weighs 250g, and will provide free IoT connectivity by communicating LoRa RTTY signals through low-power RF-based LoRa modules. The satellite is powered by 28% efficient gallium arsenide TrisolX triple junction solar cells.

The satellite's development and launch cost under EUR 30000, which is pretty remarkable for a cubesat -- or a picosatellite, as the project is being dubbed. It has been working in the UHF Amateur Satellite band (435-438 MHz) and recently received an IARU frequency spectrum allocation for LoRa of 125kHz.

<https://hackaday.com/2019/08/15/spains-first-open-source-satellite/#more-371582>

## And More From Hackaday:

### **Easy Drection Finding Thanks to Quad SDRS**

**By Lewin Day**

Direction finding has long been a pastime of the ham radio community. Fox hunts and other DF events have entertained many, as they swept their antennas hunting for a transmitter. As with rock and roll and flared pants, time changes all things, and (Corrosive) has been experimenting with a very modern way to go about direction finding with SDR.

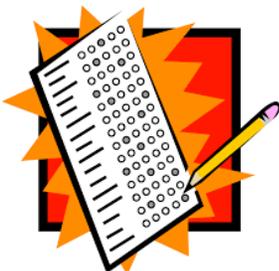
Click the link to read the full article, watch the video, and meet (Corrosive).  
[https://hackaday.com/2019/08/22/\\_trashed-3/#more-372824](https://hackaday.com/2019/08/22/_trashed-3/#more-372824)

**Jeff Cauhape also found some interesting articles in this newsletter from the Inspire Journal. This is an organization that sponsors STEM projects to augment young people's science education.**

[http://theinspireproject.org/downloads/INSPIREJournal\\_Summer2019\\_Volume24Online.pdf](http://theinspireproject.org/downloads/INSPIREJournal_Summer2019_Volume24Online.pdf)

**And Mike Whitten KI7NIP shares these links about the Creek Naval Radio Station:**

- 1) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPTq4A8flZs>
- 2) <https://jimcreek.navylifepnw.com/news/65022c39-50ce-479f-b2b1-329674038e67>
- 3) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim\\_Creek\\_Naval\\_Radio\\_Station](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim_Creek_Naval_Radio_Station)



**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](mailto:KG7DMI@frontier.com) for more information.

**The next Licensing exam: September 21st.**

**Check us out on Facebook:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/SIERA>

You don't have to join Facebook to see our SIERA page. If you have a news item you'd like to post, send it to [scauhape2002@yahoo.com](mailto:scauhape2002@yahoo.com). Also, tell your friends about the SIERA Facebook page. It's open to the public and our worldwide audience is growing.



**From the Bishop Amateur Radio Club Facebook page:**



SilentKeys

It is with deep sadness I write of the passing of a wonderful friend to many of us. Richard "Rich" Rynne, KF6YLW, passed away mid-morning on August 6, 2019. Both amateur radio and astronomy were passions of his.



Willing to help others to a fault, he was a great mentor helping me get started in Ham radio, and was a fixture at both the Wild West Marathon and the Bishop High Sierra Ultra. The photo shows Rich handling communications from Junction Aid Station during one of many Bishop Ultras. For many years, Rich acted as one of the primary net controls for the BARC nightly net and a regular on the BARC Sunday HF net. If you did not have the pleasure to meet him, you are probably familiar with his voice and Boston accent that stayed with him despite decades in Lone Pine.

Rich closed each net with a phrase most suitable for this post:  
"May the Good Lord take a shining to you."

Rest in Peace my friend, you are missed down here.  
Keith Franson W6KRF

A Mass for Rich will be held September 14th at 11 AM in the Santa Rosa Catholic Church on Locust Street in Lone Pine.

<https://www.samaritanfuneralhome.com/obitua.../Richard-Rynne/...>



## **DCART News: Hams and the Red Cross in Shelters**



Ben Etchavarria N7BBE talked about the use of hams in Red Cross shelters and how, because "we don't have enough wildfires in our area," the Red Cross has moved its offices and personnel to Las Vegas, with the major decisions coming out of Salt Lake City. Tom Tabacco KE7NCJ inserted that when the Red Cross arrived at a shelter where he was set up to work, they rudely told him to leave. This says a great deal about the new attitudes toward using Hams during emergencies and inside shelters. Apparently, they believe that because they have satellite phones and other radios, they don't need hams around to clutter up the room.

Doug Abrams KA7FOO added that northern Nevada will be left pretty much on its own with the Red Cross leadership moving to Salt Lake City. This means that DCART plays an important role under the supervision of Director, Ron Sagen, of Douglas County 911 Emergency. And as for Red Cross shelters, Ben is now THE MAN who shows up to unlock the door and set up the shelters with the local CERT team. This organization has also gained a lot of strength and capacity in their work.

Doug further encouraged DCART members to attend all the meetings of as many agencies to develop a ham radio presence in the emergency community. A good place to start would be showing up at LEPC meetings. (Local Emergency Planning Committee) They include all the local agencies involved in emergency response to major disasters.

Depending on who's leading the response organizations, such as the Salvation Army, many of these groups don't know or have forgotten hams exist and provide professional level radio communications. There has been a cultural shift where people today can't imagine never being able to use their phones. While WinLink is becoming the state standard in Nevada, due to Doug's work on this, it still uses the Internet or phone infrastructure to send messages to FEMA leaders' phones back east. WinLink does have an HF capacity and can send messages by radio, however, FEMA still relies solely on their phones.

As SIERA proved to Ron Sagan of 911 during Field Day, though, we can provide expert communications from our totally off-grid trailer, using our own power sources. While the State of Nevada ranks WinLink as their No. 1 mode, packet as second, and fldigi as third modes to use, DCART and SIERA both can pick up the HF mic and contact hams outside our disaster affected area without relying on fragile infrastructure. According to Sheila Clement KA7AJQ, Ron Sagan is totally on board and supportive of DCART's contributions.

We have a lot of work to do to get a radio station in Alpine County, but Bob Williams K7VOC has been working with the Sheriff's Department there every time he does the Death Ride. At present, the antenna is installed on the sheriff's building during that event. With Bob's work to build relationships with that department, we have a good chance to develop a more permanent presence in Alpine County. As for finding a place for a Red Cross shelter there, however, much work needs to be done.



### **Interested in learning Morse Code?**

J.D. fowler AD7CD and David Thompson AG7TX are teaching a small group in Carson City. If you want to join them, bring your key and contact David at [ag7tx@arrl.org](mailto:ag7tx@arrl.org).

### **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 Gardnerville.**



### **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.

## Amateur Radio Equipment For Sale

Contact Jim Murch, AA6M, 650-787-4328, aa6m@msn.com

| <u>Antennas</u>       |               |                   |          |   |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------|----------|---|
|                       | Hygain        | 204BA             |          | 4 element 20 Meter beam - good condition but needs new hardware.  |
|                       | Hygain        | 204BA             |          | 4 element 20 Meter beam - good condition but needs new hardware.  |
|                       | Hygain        | 204 MK5           |          | 5th Element Conversion Kit for 204BA.   |
|                       | Hygain        | TH6DXX            |          | 6 Element tri-band beam. Complete but needs new plastic trap caps and new hardware  |
|                       | Hygain        | TH6DXX            |          | Same as above but generally available for spare parts.  |
|                       | KLM           | 21.0-21.5-4       |          | 4 Element 15 Meter Beam- Covers the entire band. Balun Included.. Needs new hardware.   |
|                       | KLM           | 28-30-4           |          | 4 Element 10 Meter Beam- Covers the entire band. Balun Included. Needs new hardware   |
| <u>Classic Radios</u> |               |                   |          |   |
|                       | Collins       | 75A4 Receiver     | See Note | Classic radio from 1957 era. Generally the first SSB commercial radio on the Market. Not perfect but in good condition and works. Has 3 filters which are included. One filter is modified from a military R-390 receiver but it works fine.  |
|                       | Collins       | KWS-1 Transmitter | See Note | Classic radio from 1957 era. Generally the first SSB commercial radio on the Market. 500 Watts on all bands, SSB, CW and even works on AM at reduced power. Original power supply is included as well as several sets of spare final amplifier tubes  |
|                       | Hall-crafters | S-38              |          | Also a classic but not in the same class as the above radios. Free to a new good home!  |
| <u>Notes/Costs</u>    |               |                   |          |   |
|                       |               |                   |          | Antennas- \$100 each as is. The aluminum alone is worth more than this.   |
|                       |               |                   |          | 75A4 and KWS-1 are to be sold as a set. Absolutely no packing and shipping. However I can deliver the equipment to the Reno/Carson area. Price will be determined by best reasonable offer with an emphasis on reasonable. At one time these radios commanded prices upwards of \$10K in working condition. |
|                       |               |                   |          | As noted, the S-38 is free to a new good home   |



# SIERA General Meeting August 3, 2019

## Call to order

1:15 p.m.

## Membership

Twenty-five members and guests were present (out of 73 members), including new member Robert Plant KI7OXS. The President requested that while introducing themselves, people indicate their special interest. This request resulted in some humorous—and always fascinating—stories. During the introductions, Tom Tobacco KE7NCJ encouraged people to contact him if they would be interested in being a part of communications support during Nevada Day, at the end of October.

## Treasurer's Report

### Checking Account

|                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Starting Balance    | <u>1925.23</u> |
| Deposits Membership | 0              |
| Withdrawals         | 0              |
| Ending Balance      | <u>1925.23</u> |

### Savings Account

|                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Starting Balance</b> | <b><u>4071.53</u></b> |
| Dividends               | .17                   |
| <b>Ending Balance</b>   | <b><u>4071.36</u></b> |

**Grand Total** **5996.93**

## Board Report

### Survey

The Board will distribute printed surveys at the September 7 meeting, as well as sending them out by e-mail to all members, in order to obtain feedback from members on directions for the Board to take SIERA in the coming year.

### Insurance

We already have liability insurance when working in an official capacity, but will be buying insurance through ARRL for the Leviathan repeater and for the equipment in the trailer (covering lightning, replacement costs, theft) for a total of \$140—about half for the Leviathan repeater and half for the trailer equipment. Further information is available at [ARRL.insurance.com](http://ARRL.insurance.com). The cost is \$1.40/\$100, with the insured determining the amount to be paid. Part of the reason for purchasing repeater insurance is that a number of other organizations have added their equipment to the Leviathan location, increasing the likelihood of problems developing.

### NVCON report

Greg Moore KG7DMI reported from NVCON that he and Barry Bettman K6ST worked with Scouts to conduct a class offering twenty-three boys/girls the chance to earn a radio merit badge (including one Scout who convinced his whole family to drive up from Las Vegas for the class!). They even prepped the class members so they were able to run that evening's net! Mike Yee WU7C took a contesting class from Jim Shepherd, and a class on emergency communications. Diana Moore KJ7GVY was delighted with what she learned from the classes that she attended. Cathy Carney used the time to talk with the ARRL Nevada Section Manager John Bigley N7UR and ARRL Nevada Youth Coordinator Barry Bettman K6ST regarding school and youth involvement.

Tom Tobacco KE7NCJ reported that NVCON was well-attended: 400 participants this year, compared with 300 last year. However, the overall conference lost \$1800—perhaps because the entrance fee was only \$5, in contrast to \$25 last year. Most of vendors reported they did not recoup their costs money: the classes apparently robbed participants from the vendor area. The organizers are considering moving NVCON back to Vegas next year and/or raising the entrance fee to break even in the future. Since the education efforts (the Scouts and the other classes) did made money, one idea raised was to ask vendors to put on some presentations. The vendors, though, noted that they cannot have all their staff on the road. Networking with community colleges, or with technical people from local utilities, to offer classes was proposed. Another option mentioned was to use communication technology to bring in presenters, as travel expenses are an obstacle.

### **Pony Express Re-Ride**

Tom Tobacco KE7NCJ attended the Pony Express Re-Ride meeting. Next year, the ride will be from West to East. The decision is that hams will provide coverage next year only where it is really needed—where other communication options are not available. In one section, from Sand Mountain to Cold Springs, no one is needed, as the route runs along Highway 50, which parallels the trail. In other sections, hams will shadow riders in 4-wheel drive vehicles, using repeaters on mountaintops.

Planning will begin in January. Contact Tom to be part of the team, enjoying the chance to see more of eastern Nevada than Highway 80 offers. For example, towns like “Tippets” (this side of Utah) still has old telegraph poles standing.

Jim Marshall K6LR has followed the Pony Express for three years, and shared stories about some of his experiences, including seeing Cassidy—one of the riders each year, and a quite short woman, finding a way to mount her 17-hands-high horse!

### **Contributing to ARRL**

Cathy Carney KI7NIR highlighted a brief note from the August QST journal, which describes how to provide contributions to ARRL at no cost to yourself, whenever you shop on Amazon. To initially set this up, go to [www.smile.Amazon.com](http://www.smile.Amazon.com) to select the charity you wish to contribute to (ARRL or a different charity). Then, whenever you make a purchase on Amazon, sign onto [www.smile.Amazon.com](http://www.smile.Amazon.com) (instead of Amazon.com), and a small part of what you send Amazon will go to the charity that you selected.

### **Jim Marshall Presentation on Digital Operation**

Jim Marshall K6LR gave a short presentation providing SIERA members a way to continue to make HF contacts in our present time of weak signal propagation, using digital modes such as PSK-31, FT-4, FT-8 and RTTY. All that is needed to go digital is an external sound card and a computer connected to your transceiver. He also mentioned that calling CQ a few times is better than just listening on the bands for someone to talk to. (A more detailed summary is provided elsewhere in this Beacon.)

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

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