

THE EAST BAY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.

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THE BLOWN FUSE

CLUB STATION W6CUS

VOLUME LXIX NUMBER 8

AUGUST 2021

EBARC Meetings

August 13, 2021, 7:30 p.m.
TBA

Check your email for Zoom link



The Executive Board meets monthly before each general meeting. For the date, time, & location, contact President Jay Sparks, at rajama@pacbell.net.

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THE EAST BAY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.
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The Blown Fuse is published monthly by the East Bay Amateur Radio Club, Inc. and is free to its members. *The Blown Fuse* welcomes articles of interest to its members and amateur radio in general. *The Blown Fuse* reserves the right to edit or reject any material submitted. Material submitted becomes the property of *The Blown Fuse*. Permission is hereby granted to reproduce material printed herein provided proper acknowledgment is given. Editor: Sharon Primbsch, AA6XZ

Deadline for Sep. issue: Tues., Aug. 17th
This is a very short deadline this month!

[Articles may be submitted by "snail" mail, by dictation over the 'phone 510-741-8227, or by e-mail to aa6xz@earthlink.net

August 13th EBARC Meeting

The general EBARC meeting will again be held as a virtual Zoom meeting only. The Zoom link will be sent via email and be posted on ebarc.org. We hope you join us! Because of the pandemic, future meetings for (TBD) more months will also be held via Zoom.

We Need Your Venue Info! Sharon Primbsch, AA6XZ

Thank you to members who volunteered to research general meeting venues. The Executive Committee wants several options to choose from. So please send your results to EBHam.office@gmail.com ASAP. Thanks!

What is HIJKLMNO? Water (H to O)

When oxygen and magnesium started dating, I was like OM. Gee!

I saw a ham radio on sale with a broken volume control for only \$10. I couldn't turn it down.

Treasurer's Report June 2021 Audrey Nieman, W6BBQ, Treas.

JUNE GENERAL FUND¹

Beginning Balance\$11,395.54

Income:

New Member, KC9DLM\$22.50

Earned Interest.....0.04

PayPal Reimbursement.....96.80

Total General Income:.....\$119.34

Disbursements:

GoDaddy Renewal\$105.85

Total General Disbursements.....\$105.85

Ending Balance\$11,409.03

(portion as petty cash..... \$40.00)

(portion as a US Bank CD... \$5,000.00)

¹\$100 earmarked for youth scholarships

JUNE PAYPAL ACCOUNT

Beginning Balance\$96.80

Close PayPal Account.....-96.80

Ending Balance\$0

July 2021 General Minutes Todd Teachout, W8BIK, Secretary

The EBARC General Meeting was held July 9, 2021, virtually, via the Zoom Internet conferencing application as a result of COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions. 29 people attended. The President called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.

An agenda was distributed via e-mail on 7/7/2021.

The President welcomed attendees. He thanked Sharon and Martin for agenda suggestions. Jay indicated the meeting today would include a debrief of Field Day 2021 and a presentation about Pico Balloons.

Officer Reports:

3rd VP-Membership/Newsletter/VE Testing:

Sharon reported the deadline for the August *Blown Fuse* newsletter is July 27th. No new members joined EBARC in the last month. Due to pandemic restrictions the July VE session in Oakland will not occur. An October session is being discussed, but is not yet confirmed. She is verifying if the past test site is still available.

Secretary: Todd reported that the draft June 2021 EBARC general meeting minutes were published in the July 2021 *Blown Fuse* newsletter. He reported receiving no correction requests. He asked if there were corrections. No correction requests were made. He recommended that the group approve the minutes. Motion to approve by Jay, seconded by Katie. Minutes were approved by affirmation.

Treasurer: No Report.

President: No Report.

1st VP Programs:-See Program below

2nd VP Hospitality: No Report.

Old Business

Proposed "Code of Conduct." 3rd VP and Bylaws Committee Chair Sharon Primbsch mentioned at the June 2021 general meeting and in the club newsletter, *the Blown Fuse*, the proposed new Code of Conduct for members. The draft document was distributed via link at ebarc.org. Sharon reported receiving no comments beyond those of the Bylaws Committee members which were considered and finalized in the distributed document. She

reported that the Code needed a majority of members in attendance voting (15) to approve it to become EBARC policy.

Sharon recommended the members adopt the policy and motioned that it be approved. Jay seconded the motion. Motion was passed by a hand count of the members present.

Proposed revised Bylaws. 3rd VP and Bylaws Committee Chair Sharon Primbsch mentioned at the June 2021 general meeting and in the club newsletter, *the Blown Fuse* of proposed new Constitution and Bylaws for members. The draft document was distributed via link at ebarc.org. Sharon reported receiving no comments beyond those of the Bylaws Committee members which were considered and finalized in the distributed document. She reported that the Bylaws needed a 2/3 majority of members in attendance voting (20) to approve it to become EBARC policy.

Sharon recommended the members adopt the policy and motioned that it be approved. Jay seconded the motion. Motion was passed by a hand count of the members present.

New Business

Members' Roster Distribution Changes. The EBARC membership roster was previously printed out as a hard copy document and mailed to all current members of EBARC via the U.S. Postal Service.

Recently the database used to create the roster stopped functioning as it had in the past. To manage a possible data failure the latest roster and related documents were moved from the 3rd VP's personal computer to EBHam.office@gmail.com within the Google space (a part of "the Cloud"). With the information now "in the Cloud," Sharon raised the issue of future roster distribution.

Sharon had two questions of the membership: 1) Are you ok with digital roster being sent via blind copy from EBHam, and 2) Are you ok

with the digital roster being accessible from a password-protected area of the EBARC website if that is done in the future. Members present generally were ok with distribution of a digital roster. Sharon reported future rosters would be distributed digitally at least annually after renewals are in for the year. The updated roster will also be sent to everyone after a new member joins. Sharon indicated that she will send out an e-mail to members asking if they want to opt out of having their information emailed via blind cc or in a future password protected section of the club website.

Questions were asked and answered about the roster changes. Some members suggested revisions to the new format of the information in the digital roster. Since it is digital, it can be copied into a spreadsheet, then sorted and organized however the particular member prefers to see it. It can also be searched.

Meeting Site: Sharon developed a list through the years of possible venues for meeting places. With COVID 19 pandemic restrictions easing, there is a desire to hold meetings in a face-to-face setting. The pandemic ended use of the last in-person meeting site, the El Sobrante United Methodist Church, which was enabled as a favor and benefit to Ron Smith and Rick Taft who are members of both EBARC and the church. This church site was expected to be a stop-gap location due the loss of an earlier meeting site at the El Sobrante Public Library. The library underwent two projects to remodel it after a fire and then to reconstruct its parking lot. Use of the church site turned into a nearly four-year period of time and the pandemic restrictions halted the use of the church location. There is an opportunity to find alternative site. Some members have been advocating for a more centrally located meeting site. The venues on the list need to be evaluated. The Executive Committee needs the help of interested members to review the list and assist in evaluating sites on the list. Members are also invited to suggest other venues not currently listed. Sharon will distribute the list to

members along with a questionnaire that is to serve as a screening criteria for the sites being evaluated. The hope is that a suitable location can be found and secured to allow face-to-face meetings in September.

Field Day 2021: 2021 Field Day Coordinator and 1st VP Katie Carney gave a report of Field Day, which was held on June 26, 2021 from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Don Simon and Howdy Goudey also discussed results.

EBARC collaborated with the KARO-ECHO radio club. Together they operated workstations at Upper Canyon Trail Park on Gatto Street in El Cerrito. EBARC operated an HF Get on the Air station (GOTA) and made 33 contacts. KARO-ECHO operated four stations. An HF digital pavilion was set up. A second HF pavilion was set up for SSB operation. A third HF pavilion was set up for CW and operators made 38 contacts. A fourth pavilion was set up for VHF/UHF bands. There were also demonstrations of GMRS and FRS radios. Several dipoles and a hex beam antenna were used for the HF stations. The UHF/VHF station used a vertical antenna.

Mark Gilligan set up a Mesh node at the site and got it connected with the wider regional network.

All stations were powered by batteries with Solar panel back-up.

The Mayor of El Cerrito and 2 Council members paid visit to the site. CERT officials from Albany and Richmond paid visits. The Kensington Fire Board member, Larry Nagy, paid a visit, too. The Field Day operations attracted a number of neighborhood residents who had not planned to visit but were curious. The park attracts people interested in tennis and baseball games. It is also use for picnics and for walking dogs. Turnout exceeded expectations.

A big thank you was expressed for those who were able to help setup/take down and operate

stations. Additional thanks to those who came out to see and to operate.

Program

Martin Rothfield gave a presentation about his latest radio adventures; building, launching then tracking pico balloons.

A pico balloon is a small and very lightweight solar powered radio. Average weight of a pico balloon is 15 grams (1/2 ounce). The balloon has four major parts: balloon, solar panel, antenna and radio. Pioneers in the field such as Bill Brown, WB8ELK, have learned and shared much over 30 years of balloon/radio experimentation. Others have developed lightweight tracker radio designs based on the SI351 and ATMEGA 328P chips that transmit position information. Pico balloons are typically tracked using APRS (Automatic Packet Recording System) and WSPR (Weak Signal Propagation Reporter). NOAA's Hysplit tool has been used to predict the path of the flight.

Energy to operate the radio is collected by lightweight solar panels. The energy is typically stored into a capacitor. The processor chip in the radio is programmed to discharge the capacitor periodically and in doing so, flight location information is transmitted. Pico balloons that travel far tend to reach elevations of approximately 45,000 feet. In comparison, weather balloon radios are bigger, heavier and reach elevations of about 100,000 feet. Pico balloons, being so light, are much less expensive to assemble and less risky to air traffic.

As part of the San Francisco High Altitude Balloon group Martin, Bryan Koflas, KF6ZEO, and others have collaborated on several

launches in the central Bay Area. They have followed balloons from the Berkeley Marina to nearby Skaggs Island and as far as the Mexican state of Chihuahua, somewhat near Texas.

There is more information about pico balloons at sf-hab@groups.io. Bryan has a blog: <https://www.klofas.com/blog/tag/picoballoon.html> Magazine articles about pico balloons have appeared in the May 2017 issue of QST and the October 2020 issue of CQ.

Meeting adjourned 8:47 p.m. Next meeting is August 13, 2021.

Many thanks to Michael McMillan, K6MCM, for preafrooding this month's *Blown Fuse*.

Future Bay Area Events

- Current Bay Area Public Service Events: See www.ebarc.org, click on "Current Events", then scroll to "Calendar of Bay Area Ham Radio Public Service Events."
- EBARC, ORCA, and ARCA sponsor joint ARRL VEC Amateur Radio test sessions quarterly at 9 a.m. in the Media Room, 1605 Martin Luther King Jr. Way (at 16th St.), Oakland. Because of COVID, there are only tentative plans for the 4th Sunday in Oct in 2021. The fee is \$15. Candidates must preregister at davidotey@comcast.net or call 510-741-8227.
- East Bay Section ARRL ARES; arrl.volunteerhub.com/lp/eb. CoCoCo ACS Training: Details from "DJ" djovida, KJ6DJ, kj6dj@arrl.net, (415) 215-6658, or via RACES net, 6:45 p.m., Thursdays on 145.11 MHz. Also see Sheriff Office's Communications Unit David Nielson, K6CDN, davidnielson@yahoo.com

The East Bay Amateur Radio Club, founded in 1947, is a California non-profit organization of amateur radio operators in Contra Costa and Alameda counties. The club is open to anyone interested in amateur radio. Annual dues are \$30 for individual membership, \$35 for a family membership, and \$10 for students K-12. For information, send email to ebham.office@gmail.com, contact any EBARC officer, see Web page www.ebarc.org, or write EBARC, P.O. Box 1393, El Cerrito, CA 94530. You can also follow us on Twitter using @w6cus, or on Facebook's "East Bay Amateur Radio Club."

2021 East Bay Amateur Radio Club Executive Committee

Jay Sparks, KJ6HSH, President..... 384-4233
 Katie Carney, KN6APB, 1st VP - Program Chair 326-3886
 Martin Rothfield, W6MRR, 2nd VP - Hospitality Chair / W6CUS Trustee /
 Webmaster,..... 202-262-6345
 Sharon Primbsch, AA6XZ, 3rd VP - Membership / *Blown Fuse* Editor..... 741-8227
 Todd Teachout, W8BIK, Secretary..... 799-6051
 Audrey Nieman, W6BBQ, Treasurer / Finance Chair..... 682-7938

2021 EBARC's Other Committee Heads and Contacts

Steering Committee: Katie Carney, KN6APB..... 326-3886
 Education: Ken Fowler, KO6NO..... 222-0830

AMATEUR RADIO NETS

NET	DAYS	LOCAL TIME	FREQ, MHZ
"Over the Hill Gang" Breakfast/Commute Net	Mo-Fr	0710 (PL 82.5-)	145.110
Contra Costa Com. Club Digital Net (by arrangement)	Tue*	1900 (PL 82.5+)	444.275
Contra Costa Communications Club Net	Tue	1930 (PL 82.5-)	224.300
"QRM Net"	Tue	1930 (PL 82.5-)	224.300
UCB ARC (W6BB) EMMCOMM Net	1 st Wed	1200 (PL 131.8+)	440.900
UCB ARC (W6BB) EMMCOMM Net	1 st Wed	1200 (PL 107.2-)	145.490
UCB ARC (W6BB) EMMCOMM Net	1 st Wed	1200 simplex	145.430
UCB ARC (W6BB) Club Net	Wed	1900 (PL 103.5+)	442.275
West Contra Costa EMCOMM Net	Thu	1845 (PL 82.5-)	145.110
KARO/ECHO ARES EMCOMM Net	Thu	~1900 simplex	146.415
NALCO ARES EMCOMM Net	Thu	1915 (PL 131.8+)	440.900
Oakland ARES Emergency Communications Net	Thu	1930 (PL 77-)	146.880
Contra Costa Communications Club Net	Thu	1930 (PL 82.5-)	145.110
Bay Shores Richmond EMCOMM Net	Sat	0900 (PL 82.5-)	145.110
Bay Shores Richmond EMCOMM Net	Sat	0915 (PL 82.5-)	224.300
Bay Shores Richmond EMCOMM Net	Sat	0930 (PL 82.5+)	444.275

ACS West CoCoCo: "DJ" djovida, KJ6DJ, kj6dj@arrl.net, (415) 215-6658.*
 Frequencies: #1=145.110, #2=147.570s.