

Section Manager

East Bay Section Newsletter

September, 2026

ARRL East Bay Family,

As of this writing, there are 14,993 valid ham radio licenses in the East Bay Section. Of those, only 1,229 are ARRL members. That's a membership rate of 8%. Such a low membership rate has a significant negative impact on the ARRL's ability to provide the multitude of services it does for all hams. That's right. The great majority of services the League provides are for all hams in the U.S., not just ARRL members. By far, the most important is the very preservation of our craft. Without the League's constant vigilance and hard work protecting our frequency allocations, big-pocket corporations would have long since siphoned away all of the useful bands we have. And that effort to take our bands is never ending. In fact, it's even greater today than in the past. See a list of membership benefits at (<https://www.arrl.org/membership#benefits>), but understand that even that one is not a complete list of services provided to all hams. And when you meet a ham that is not an ARRL member, ask them why. Then perhaps tell them about all the services the League provides, including those they're getting but aren't supporting.

Pacificon is only 6 weeks away. If you haven't thought about it yet, now's the time. Get your registration in soon. The deadline for on-line registration is Wednesday, October 7. After that, registration is at the door only, more expensive and often with a long line. If your club is considering requesting a non-profit table, get that in right away, too. There's a limited number of spots available.

Congratulations and thank you to the Amateur Radio Club of Alameda and the Lamorinda Area Radio Interest Group for becoming affiliated with the ARRL on September 15, 2004 and September 17, 2019, respectively.

*** Question:**

What is a likely cause of irregular fading of signals propagated by the ionosphere?

- A. Frequency shift due to Faraday rotation
- B. Interference from thunderstorms
- C. Intermodulation distortion
- D. Random combining of signals arriving via different paths

(See the last page for the answer.)

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Section & Division News:

*** MDARC in QST**

The long-awaited article about the Mt. Diablo ARC is in the September issue of QST on page 13. It's a good article. Mostly because, as President Larry says in the article, "MDARC is the sum of its members".

*** Outstanding Club Website**

As part of ARRL's 2026 Year of the Club spotlight, Affiliated Clubs were invited to show how they use two important communications tools — their websites and newsletters — to engage members, strengthen their organizations, and promote amateur radio. The response was enthusiastic, with more than 80 entries submitted in each contest from clubs across the country. And a Pacific Division club's website won second place. The Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club, W6EK, in Auburn, California earned the honor with its website at (www.w6ek.org). Congratulations, SFARC! See the full ARRL announcement, with all winners of the Outstanding Newsletters and Outstanding Websites awards, at (<http://www.arrl.org/news/view/arrl-year-of-the-club-contests-celebrate-outstanding-club-websites-and-newsletters>).

* SNARS Reno Ham Swap

If you're looking for a reason to get outta town, head up to Reno for their Ham Swap on Saturday, September 12. The gate opens to the public at 8:00 AM, with a raffle drawing at 10:00 AM. Hosted by the Sierra Nevada Amateur Radio Society, the Swap will be at Cabela's Reno - East Parking Lot; 8650 Boomtown Garson Rd, Verdi, NV. That's about 6 miles across the state line from California. For more details, see the SNARS web page on the Swap at (<https://snars.org/activities/renohamswap/>).

* KARO ECHO Fall Simulated Emergency Test

The KARO-ECHO club out of Kensington and El Cerrito is holding its biannual Simulated Emergency Test (SET) on September 26 from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. This is one of two SETs run by KARO ECHO each year and is a great opportunity to practice message handling in a realistic disaster response scenario. There will be plenty of time to get up to speed if you haven't participated before and there are opportunities to pair with experienced operators during the SET to help get you oriented. To get involved, send an email to (info@karoecho.net).

* Benicia Ham Class Reminder

The Benicia ARC will host another one-day ham class on Saturday, October 3, 2026. It will be from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm with a one-hour lunch break, at the Benicia Senior Center, 1205 East 2nd Street. The class offers training for both the Technician and General Class licenses. The fee is \$35.00, which includes the exam fee. For details, see (<https://beniciaarc.com/hamclass/>).

* Save the Date. The DX Convention is Back in Visalia

The 2027 International DX Convention, sponsored by the Northern California DX Club, will be held in Visalia, California from March 12th to the 14th, 2027. Hotel room rates are only \$129 per night. Registration is not yet open and most details, such as forum topics and exhibitors, have not been announced yet. So keep an eye on the website. But get it on your calendar now. See their website at (<https://dxconvention.com/>).

* "In a major disaster, look for the houses with the antennas"

RichmondSide, a local news website for the Richmond area, has a story in its August 4 edition on amateur radio and GMRS for disaster response. A good story, with numerous photos. See it at (<https://richmondside.org/2026/08/04/emergency-ham-radio-operators-west-contra-costa/>).
[Thankx to Doug KI6DOG, for the tip.]

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ARRL News:

* Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

The League's Board of Directors met July 17 and the full minutes are now available. I outlined some of the actions they took in last month's newsletter. The main point of interest to us is that the Board formally approved having Pacificon as the 2028 National Convention in item 32 of the minutes. See the full minutes at ([https://www.arrl.org/files/file/About%20ARRL/Board%20Meetings/ARRL%20July%202026%20Board%20of%20Director%20Meeting%20Minutes%20\(f\).pdf](https://www.arrl.org/files/file/About%20ARRL/Board%20Meetings/ARRL%20July%202026%20Board%20of%20Director%20Meeting%20Minutes%20(f).pdf)) [PDF, 26 pages].

* ARRL 2025 Annual Report

The 2025 ARRL Annual Report is now available online, highlighting the organization's work to advance amateur radio and serve its members. The report shares accomplishments across education, advocacy, emergency communications, publications, technology, and member services, while recognizing members, volunteers, and the generosity of donors who make ARRL's mission possible. This year's theme, Developing the Next Generation of Radio Amateurs, reflects ARRL's growing investment to inspire and educate youth. The Annual Report also includes a Report to America, highlighting the impact of Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®) volunteers and the wider amateur radio community in serving their communities during disasters, emergencies, and public service events. Read the full report at (<https://www.arrl.org/annual-reports>). ARRL's 2025 IRS Form 990, equivalent to a tax return for non-profits, is also available at (<https://www.arrl.org/irs-form-990>).

* ARRL EME Contest

This year's second ARRL EME (Earth-Moon-Earth) Contest weekend is September 5 - 6, 2026, 0000 UTC on Saturday through 2359 UTC Sunday, and encompasses the bands 2.3 GHz and up. The contest objective is to work as many amateur stations as possible via the EME path on the bands associated with the above weekend dates. "Our goal is scoring

– while grid squares are shown in the contest log upload for every QSO reported,” said ARRL Radiosport and Field Services Manager Bart Jahnke, W9JJ. See the rest of the ARRL announcement at (<https://www.arrl.org/news/the-arrl-eme-contest>).

* WAS Award Video

If you’ve earned the new ARRL America250 Worked All States (WAS) Award or are pursuing it, you’ll want to see the new video that the League recently released. It walks viewers through logging into Logbook of The World® (LoTW®), creating a new LoTW Worked All States account or selecting an existing account, adding a QSO Set and related rules, and viewing award progress at (<https://america250.arrl.org/>). Once you’ve qualified for the award, return to america250.arrl.org to apply for and purchase your certificate. View the new video at (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yRKSibLFj5w>).

* Upcoming: 2026 ARRL Simulated Emergency Test (SET) Reminder

The annual ARRL Simulated Emergency Test (SET) will be held October 3-4, 2026. The September 2026 issue of QST includes a one-page announcement for this year’s test. As always, local and Section SET teams are encouraged to conduct their exercises on that or another date throughout the autumn season (or practically any date throughout the calendar year) if those dates happen to be better for their group, groups, or Section and served agencies with which they are working. This nationwide exercise is the chance to test your personal emergency operating skills and the readiness of your communications equipment and accessories in a simulated emergency deployment. More information is available at (<https://www.arrl.org/simulated-emergency-test>).

Government News

* CalOES Needs Radio Operators

“There are a number of opportunities for Radio Amateurs and others to volunteer their service to the public through a number of levels of government. In California, at the state level, the Office of Emergency Services does provide requested staff responses and/or equipment support to anywhere in the state via the Mutual Aid Plan. OES is currently recruiting volunteers for its Communication Reserve Unit (CRU) covering the Pacific Division and our Mutual Aid Regions II, III, IV & V. (Basically, all Northern CA up RT 101, I5, RT 99 and RT 395.) Some jobs will be field work and others are voice and digital state and federal net operations. Please check out our Web Site via this shortcut: ‘CalOES Communications Reserve Unit’ (<https://www.caloes.ca.gov/office-of-the-director/operations/public-safety-communications/ca-9-1-1-emergency-communications-branch/tactical-communications/cal-oes-auxiliary-communications-service/>). Thank you for your efforts. Covid and the retiring of many of our ‘Old Timers’ that came on board in the 80s & 90s has depleted our ranks.”

[from Bill Pennington / WA6SLA; Chief, Communications Reserve/Admin./State RACES Officer; Communication Reserve Unit; Tactical Communications Unit; California Governors Office of Emergency Services]

* FCC Cites GMRS Licensee for Illegal Linked Repeater Network

The FCC has issued a Notice of Violation to Gary M. Beckstedt, Sr., of Newnan, Georgia, for operating a network of nearly two dozen linked General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) repeaters in violation of FCC rules for the service. Beckstedt is co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of North Georgia GMRS, Inc., and licensee of GMRS station WQYU407. He also holds amateur radio license WB4GMB. According to the FCC Notice, “There are only eight repeater frequency pairs shared nationwide by more than 300,000 active GMRS licensees and millions of Family Radio Service users. Because GMRS spectrum is so limited, the service only works as intended when local users can hear each other and cooperate in the sharing of channels. Linking multiple repeaters is not in the public interest because it enables the retransmission of messages over much larger geographic areas, thereby limiting localized availability of the GMRS channels, monopolizing a limited spectrum resource, and increasing the potential for interference.” It notes that GMRS repeaters may be connected to the telephone network “or other networks” (such as the internet) only for the purpose of remote control. Repeater linking is permitted in the Amateur Radio Service, but not for GMRS communications for the reasons explained in the Notice. See the FCC’s Notice at (<https://www.fcc.gov/document/gary-m-beckstedt-sr-licensee-station-wqyu407PO>).

* FCC Issues Alert Over Scammers Impersonating Its Commissioners

The FCC is warning consumers about scam calls and texts from fraudsters posing as agency commissioners or employees. “In a recent scheme, callers impersonating FCC Commissioners or staff falsely claim that a consumer’s phone number is under investigation for criminal activity.” The Consumer Alert reminds the public that “FCC employees will never: Call

to say your phone number is under investigation; Direct you to a special law enforcement hotline; Demand payment, personal or financial information or threaten legal action.” Also, “If you receive such a call, hang up immediately. If the call or text includes a threat of violence or harm, immediately report it to local law enforcement.” See the full Consumer Alert at (<https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-424107A1.pdf>) [PDF, 2 pages].

Other News:

* Route 66 Centennial

The old historic Route 66 celebrates its 100th birthday this year, on November 11. And the Route 66 On the Air special event will be celebrating its 27th anniversary September 12-20, 2026, from 0001 UTC September 12 (5:01 PM Sept 5 Pacific Time) through 2359 UTC September 20 (4:59 PM Pacific Time). This event commemorates the history of the “Mother Road,” connecting east and west areas of the US from Illinois to California. There will be 25 stations participating with their 1×1 W6 callsigns. For details on the special event, see (<https://w6jbt.org/route-66-on-the-air>). Be sure to hover over the “Route 66 On The Air” item in the top menu for several other pages of information. For more on the Route 66 Centennial, see (<https://www.route66centennial.org/>).

There is an excellent article about the highway in the September issue of American Heritage magazine; written by a Dutchman, surprisingly. Apparently, the old highway is popular in Europe. The article includes mention of several historic old towns along the highway, including Kingman, AZ; home of our own East Bay transplant, Vicki Zumwalt, N6KLS. Vicki has been very active in ham radio over the years, including serving as president of MDARC; appearing at several Pacificons, and serving as national president of the Young Ladies Radio League. See the American Heritage article at (<https://www.americanheritage.com/route-66-international-symbol>). The Wikipedia page is at (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Route_66). By the way, the highway was officially given the name Route 66 in my home town, Springfield, MO.

* Detect Dark Matter’s Mark from Your Backyard with a DIY Radio Telescope

Looking for a radio project that’s a little bit different? With this one you can join astronomers worldwide in searching the mysteries of dark matter with this homemade radio telescope. The main materials the author used were a roll of roof flashing and an emptied one-gallon paint-thinner can. Sounds like it could be fun. See the article on IEEE Spectrum’s website at (<https://spectrum.ieee.org/dark-matter>).

[IEEE = Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers]

* Ham Radio and Rock & Roll

Here’s a fun video with a ham-themed song in the style of 1950s-60s rock & roll. Very well written & performed by Chris Reynen, PE1NIB in the Netherlands. Especially good if you’re an Elvis fan, as it sounds a lot like him. Enjoy it at (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NmGrFAp5RsM>) [YouTube, 00:02:33].

[Thankx to John AA6ZT for the tip.]

* Tracking Satellites, Space Weather and Amateur Radio Activity

A new website has been launched that “brings together satellite information, orbital data, amateur radio resources, space weather, news and interactive tools designed to make low Earth orbit easier for anyone to explore.” “Visitors can discover satellites and learn about their missions, orbital characteristics and the larger constellations and systems operating around Earth. Interactive tools and visualizations are designed to make orbital information understandable while preserving the technical detail useful to more experienced users.” The site “helps licensed HAM radio operators discover amateur radio satellites and explore information about passes, frequencies and operating capabilities.” See the story at (<https://www.desmoinesregister.com/press-release/story/114076/leo-space-launches-free-platform-for-tracking-satellites-space-weather-and-amateur-radio-activity/>). The website itself is at (<https://leo.space/>).

* Sending a Radio Signal Through Solid Rock

Can’t be done? This article argues otherwise, granted, with some significant limitations. The major reason to send signals through rock is for safety communications for people exploring or working in caves. “The reality is that radio signals do penetrate rock, but are attenuated at a rate that depends on their frequency.” That frequency depends on the composition of the rock. For most cave areas, the frequency that works best is around 100 KHz. But at that frequency, antenna size becomes an issue. See this article from the publisher of the maker movement’s Make magazine to learn how one might solve that and other problems, on a ham radio operator’s budget. (<https://makezine.com/article/electronics/cave-radio-talking-through-solid-rock>).

Hamfests And Special Events:

* 09/12/2026

Western Placer Amateur Radio Club 20th Anniversary HamFest. Location: Lincoln, CA. Sponsor: Western Placer Amateur Radio Club. Website: (<http://wparc.org>).

* 10/03/2026

Third Annual Micro Expo, ARRL Santa Barbara Section Convention. Camarillo, CA. Sponsor: The Bored Net Group. Website: (<https://www.theborednet.net/index.php/2026/06/22/2026-microexpo-is-on/>).

* 10/03/2026

51st Lumberjack Day. Oct 3, 1500Z-2300Z, W6WPT, West Point, CA. Northern Calaveras Emergency Radio Operators. 14.250 14.074 7.240 7.074. QSL. NCERO - C/O Sam Hernandez, PO Box 526, West Point, CA 95255. We will be operating during the 51th Lumberjack day from VFW Post 3322 in West Point, CA.

* 10/10/2026

Redding 2026 Hamfest. Location: Redding, CA. Sponsor: Bentronics/Amateur Radio Club of Anderson/Shasta-Tehama ARES. Website: (<http://st-ares.org/>).

* 10/16-18/2026

Pacificon. Location: San Ramon, CA. Sponsor: Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club. Website: (<https://www.pacificon.org/>)/

* 03/12-14/2027

International DX Convention 2027. Location: Visalia, CA. Sponsor: Northern California DX Club. Website: (<http://dxconvention.com>).

Search for all hamfests at (<https://www.arrl.org/hamfests-and-conventions-calendar>)

Search for all Special Event Stations at (<https://www.arrl.org/special-event-stations>)

Significant Events in Telecomm History – September

** Note: Send me the date and location your club was founded, so I can add it to this list. **

09/01/1859	The most intense geomagnetic storm in recorded history, called the Carrington Event, began, lasting into the next day; disrupting telegraph lines worldwide, among numerous other effects.
09/02/1869	ARRL co-founder Hiram Percy Maxim, W1AW, was born in Brooklyn, New York.
09/02/1938	The building housing ARRL station W1AW in Newington, Connecticut was inaugurated.
09/02/1984	The Pacificon Convention hosted the first ever license examination session coordinated by the ARRL VEC office. This followed a 1982 law (see below) and a July Memorandum of Agreement authorizing the ARRL to coordinate examinations.
09/02/2020	A cross-band FM amateur radio repeater was activated on the International Space Station with a downlink on 437.800 MHz.
09/03/1928	At his laboratory in San Francisco, Philo Farnsworth held what is widely regarded as the first electronic television demonstration.
09/07/2006	SuitSat-1 re-entered the atmosphere after about 7 months in orbit. A repurposed decommissioned Russian spacesuit fitted with ham radio equipment; it transmitted short messages in a number of languages after being released from the International Space Station during a spacewalk.
09/11/1845	Jean-Maurice-Émile Baudot, was born in Magneux, Haute-Marne, France. Baudot was a French telegraph engineer and pioneer of telecommunications. He invented the Baudot code, the first means of digital communication; and a multiplexed printing telegraph system. The "baud", a unit of digital transmission, was named after him.
09/11/1958	The FCC reassigned a portion of the amateur 27 MHz 11-meter band to the Class D CB service, creating what is commonly known today as "Citizens Band".

09/12/1958	Jack S. Kilby demonstrated the first working integrated circuit to managers at Texas Instruments in Dallas, TX.
09/13/1982	Public law 97-259 was enacted, amending the Communications Act of 1934 to permit the FCC to accept the services of private individuals and organizations acting to prepare and administer examinations for applicants wishing to obtain (or upgrade) an Amateur Radio license
09/15/2003	The ARRL's Logbook of The World (LoTW) QSO database system for confirming contacts was released.
09/15/2004	The Amateur Radio Club of Alameda became affiliated with the ARRL.
09/17/2019	The Lamorinda Area Radio Interest Group became affiliated with the ARRL.
09/21/1973	The ARRL Foundation was founded, to provide philanthropic support for amateur radio through scholarships, club grants, and other programs to ensure a strong and vibrant future for the amateur radio avocation.
09/22/1791	Michael Faraday was born in Newington Butts, England. He is the namesake of the unit of capacitance.
09/25/1807	Alfred Vail, partner of Samuel Morse during the development of the Morse Code and telegraph system, was born in Morristown, New Jersey.
09/25/1928	The Galvin Manufacturing Corporation was founded. The company later changed its name to Motorola.
09/25/1956	The first transatlantic undersea telephone system, TAT-1, went into service between Canada and Scotland.
09/26/1905	Albert Einstein published his paper on the special theory of relativity, now used in numerous forms of telecommunications, among other fields.
09/30/1947	The New York Yankees beat the Brooklyn Dodgers, 5-3, in Game 1 of the World Series—the first Fall Classic game broadcast on television.
09/30/2015	The Navy Military Auxiliary Radio System (MARS) ceased operation.
09/??/1935	The ARRL Emergency Corps was announced in the September, 1935 QST (page 47). Its name was later changed to the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES).

New Hams:

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KO6OJB	Justin Quan	Alameda
KO6OJN	Karl Meyer	Clayton (General)
KO6ONJ	Sreepriya Ganga	Fremont
KO6ONH	Lee Lechner	Fremont
KO6OPX	Jacob Mattos	Fremont
KO6OOT	Nancy Avila	Fremont
KO6OJU	Glenn Huang	Fremont
KO6OPH	Paul Hamann	Livermore
KO6OOP	Miles Anderer	Livermore
KO6ONW	Alexander Verbeck	Martinez
KO6OOK	Earnest Johnson	Napa
KO6OIL	Fox Bullis	Napa
KO6OLR	Calvin Lince	Pleasanton
KO6OQF	Tianren Zhang	Dublin
KO6OME	Lyra Kapadia	San Ramon
KO6OMS	Josiah Buckner	Suisun City
KO6OHF	Daniel Kook	Vallejo
KO6OHI	Peter Andrijasevich	Vallejo
KO6OIT	Josephine Myka	Vallejo (General)
KO6OJA	Nailah Ngaophasy	Vallejo
KO6OIC	Tomas Flores Zamudio	Vallejo
KO6OIU	Launce Phi To	Vallejo (General)
KO6OIN	William Long	Vallejo (General)
KO6OIJ	Olivier Bonjour	Vallejo
KO6OIH	Petra Angstenberger	Vallejo
KO6OIZ	Sebastian Zepeda	Vallejo (General)
KO6OJD	Alice Sandel	Vallejo
KO6OIO	Richard Kowan	Vallejo

KO6OIA	Katherine Crosby	Vallejo (General)
KO6OIX	Tu-Nan Zhang	Walnut Creek
KO6OHQ	Khalil Rasheed	Oakland
KO6OPG	Avery Humphreys	Oakland
KO6OKG	Mabyn Lam	Albany
KO6ONZ	Evan Starr	Albany
KO6OQC	Marco Aguilera	Richmond

Upgraded Hams:

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None

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Question & Answer:

What is a likely cause of irregular fading of signals propagated by the ionosphere?

D. Random combining of signals arriving via different paths

[Technician Class question pool (2026-2030) no. T3A08 (<https://www.ncvec.org/index.php/2026-2030-technician-question-pool>)]

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If you'd like a better-looking PDF version of this newsletter, or want to refer to previous editions, they're all available on the East Bay Section website at (https://arrleb.org/index.php/files/get_dir/Newsletter).

Until next time, remember that the East Bay Section team is here to serve you, the hams of the East Bay. If you have a question or a problem concerning ham radio, don't hesitate to contact us.

Mike Patterson, N6JGA
ARRL East Bay Section Manager

Email: n6jga@arrl.org

Website: <https://www.arrleb.org>

East Bay Section Discord: <https://discord.gg/DNAAfC7hax>

ARRL HQ Help Desk: 888-277-5289 or hq@arrl.org

Index of Contacts at ARRL HQ: <http://www.arrl.org/contact-arrl>

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