

KB6USJ-11 Spends One Year In Orbit Around The Earth

An educational outreach program demonstrated to students at Mt. Oaks Charter School in Sonora, the students learned about the history of early radio, and the many facets of the hobby of Amateur Radio. At the end of the presentations they were introduced to one of those facets and were given the opportunity of participating in a Pico Balloon Launch. Many students were impressed with how the Balloons can transmit information digitally as it orbits the Earth. Four Hams took part in this unique mission all from different Radio Clubs so you can say it was a collaborative effort. David Voit WB6T0U, Skip Chraft N6NFB (Lodi Amateur Radio Club), Paul Bailey KN6CWT (Tuolumne Radio Club) and Michael Grcevich KB6USJ (Calaveras Amateur Radio Club). Our expectations and that of the students was that the Balloon could orbit the Earth for a time before the Balloon would fail rendering it back to Earth.

The students really enjoyed tracking KB6USJ-11 as it traversed the planet passing over countless countries and continents using tracking software developed like WSPR and APRS.FI. I'm overjoyed to report our mission is not over the Balloons performance in the high altitude has gone far beyond expectations. Today a year later it is orbiting the Earth beaconing its position and other telemetry, the electronics and the materials used in construction of the Balloon have held up admirably. The Pico Balloon group as well as the students wish it to continue on its travels.



Dave, Skip and Mark



Let's Go!



Skip and Mark observing



Signatures on Pink pad could it still be there



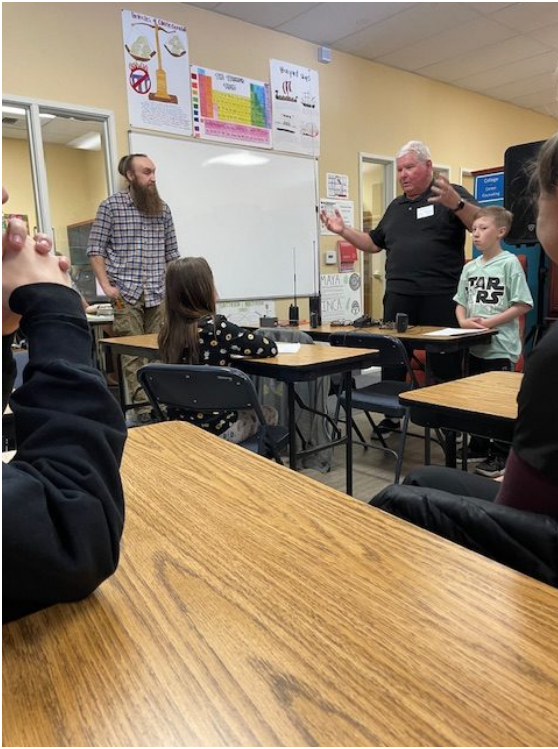
Participants



Balloon on its way!



Dave and his Pico Balloon Lecture



Paul and Mike with student