

Hamtrak 2022

On occasion the subject of trains comes up for discussion on the repeater. There seem to be a number of train aficionados (don't call them "foamers") out there as those train discussions attract numerous and protracted stories of memorable trips. One item mentioned frequently is the train trip from Sacramento to Reno. It travels through some of the most beautiful scenery in the United States if not the world. The most common comments: "That's on my bucket list" or "I want to do that someday." And it remains on the bucket list forever or until the day you decide to just DO IT! Well that day is near.

The Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club, as part of its undeclared and previously unknown "Let's do things together" program, has decided to sponsor just such a trip. We are calling it "Hamtrak 2022." (Thanks to Josh, KK6VHH for coming up with the name) Here are the details.

16 March 2022 - Wednesday – Sacramento to Reno

17 March 2022 – Thursday - Reno to Sacramento

Why those dates? Many reasons. First, we wanted to do this while there was still a chance of snow and March usually qualifies for this. Second, because it is mid-week the hotel rooms in Reno are cheaper. Third, it may be easier to get seats on the train in mid-week. And fourth it is the week after our Club meeting so we will have time to make plans.

We will be riding to Reno on the California Zephyr, Amtrak train #6 and back also on the California Zephyr, Amtrak train #5

Amtrak #6 leaves Roseville at 11:35 am (if it is on time). You can also catch the same train at Sacramento, Colfax or even Oakland (different times, of course). It arrives Reno at 3:56 pm.

Amtrak #5 leaves Reno at 8:36 am and arrives Roseville at 12:55 pm. This train starts in Chicago and is often late getting to Reno.

It's up to you to buy your own tickets – it's between you and Amtrak. There are non-refundable tickets and refundable tickets. You decide which is best for you. You also decide when you want to buy the tickets but we are advised that these trains sometimes sell out to Reno so the earlier you buy your tickets the better. If you use the Amtrak web site [be sure to book the train](#) to Reno and [don't accidentally book the bus](#).

We believe the train seats are not reserved. There is upper level and lower level seating for you to choose once you are aboard. Amtrak says the difference is "Bi-level Superliner trains offer coach seats on both levels. While most passengers ride in the upper level for a panoramic view of the passing scenery, the lower level coach seats provide the convenience of well-appointed restrooms within the car." In other words the bathrooms are downstairs.

As for the hotel, there are three hotels that are connected together the closest of which is about 2 blocks from the train station. The hotels are: El Dorado, Silver Legacy and Circus Circus. You decide which hotel you want and make your own reservations.

We can take our radios on the train. The train seats are not reserved so we should be able to find seating near each other. Gerry will bring his ClearNode. As long as we can get wifi we'll be able to check in to the W6EK repeater and regale those not on the trip of our minute-to-minute progress as they will undoubtedly enjoy hearing us talk incessantly about our trip all day long.

At the hotel we will have happy hour and dinner together (the Silver Legacy has a nice buffet).

The Club's role in this trip is that of organizer not benefactor. The responsibility to buy your tickets, make reservations and the like is all yours.

Gerry, WA6E, will be the point of contact and trainmeister for this excursion. You can direct questions to him. Email: WA6E@ARRL.NET

So it's a shared responsibility. The Club initiated and coordinate the idea but you implement it. If you want to come along, buy your tickets and make your reservations. Not only is this a beautiful trip it will be a lot of fun shared with the other members of the Club. All aboard!