Foothills Amateur Radio Society
Relay

December 2008 Volume 38, Number 12

December Club Meeting

Date: Friday, December 19, 2008
(Note the meeting is **one week early this Month**)
Time: Socializing at 7 pm, Meeting at 7:30
Place: Covington School, 205 Covington Road, Los Altos (near El Monte Rd and Foothill Expy)
Topic: Using High Power Coaxial Chokes to Kill Receive Noise and RFI
Speaker: Jim Brown, K9YC

Summary: Jim Brown, K9YC, always talks about topics of great interest to Radio Amateurs. This time he will clear up myths and confusions about baluns versus chokes. Do you know the difference? Jim will cover: How ham antennas are inherently unbalanced, Common- and differential-mode current on transmission lines, How to wind chokes, How to measure chokes And lots of other fun stuff. You may remember Jim's popular talk "RFI and Ham Radio" from FARS December 2007 meeting. Jim's presentation slides can be found at his web site http://www.audiosystemsgroup.com/publish.htm.

There will be great raffle prizes at this meeting: First prize: Heil "The Traveler" dual headset with boom mic. Second: Powerwerx Battery Tender Jr. Third: ARRL 2008 Handbook.

Pre-meeting dinner: Great "Early Bird" specials at Beausejour, 170 State Street, Downtown Los Altos

The club offers refreshments (great coffee, great cookies) and technical advice at the meeting: Bring your questions for Dr. Know-It-All and get great answers. Be sure to attend for an enjoyable evening.

January Amateur Radio Technology Day

The January Amateur Radio Technology Day has not been scheduled at this time, so watch the web site (www.fars.k6ya.org/amtechday/) or the email list (www.fars.k6ya.org/mail/) for the date and program information. Come out and enjoy a wonderful day of fun and friendship at this FARS sponsored event.

Upcoming Events

Dec 19	7:00 PM, Club meeting, Covington School
Jan 8, '09	7:30 PM, Board Mtg at the Los Altos Town Crier
Jan '09	8 AM to 9 PM, Am-Tech Day, SLAC
Jan 23, '09	Winter Banquet
Feb 5, '09	7:30 PM, Board Mtg at the Los Altos Town Crier
Feb 27, '09	7:00 PM, Club meeting, Covington School
Mar 2009	Electronics Flea Market will start again next year
Thursdays	8:00 PM, FARS net, 145.230(-), 100 Hz PL

See more events, FARS Calendar <http://www.fars.k6ya.org/events/calendar>

President's Corner

Membership Meeting. Our next meeting is Friday, December 19 at 7pm (http://www.fars.k6ya.org/meeting).

The December meeting is "**Using High Power Coaxial Chokes to Kill Receive Noise and RFI**" with Jim Brown, K9YC. Jim advises on how to eliminate RFI (Radio Frequency Interference) problems in the shack.

Annual Member Meeting. Our November meeting was our annual meeting of the membership. At this meeting the membership elected four directors to the Board of Directors of the Foothills Amateur Radio Society (by callsign suffix):




Dick Baldwinson, N6ATD; Peter Chow, AF6DS;
Charlie Morrin, KI6FXY; Barbara Neuhauser, AE6RM

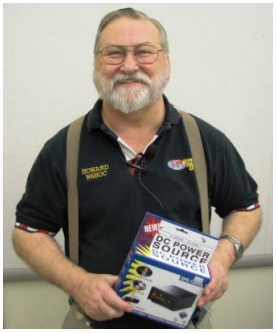
FARS/PAARA Winter Banquet 2009. The banquet is scheduled for January 23rd at Michael's at Shoreline. This is the same great venue as last year. The program is "**What Will the Real ET be Like?**" with Dr. Seth Shostak of the SETI Institute See later in this Relay for information on the speaker and pricing and for sign up information. We've plan for over $1,100 in raffle prizes. Save this date on your calendar.

Email Notices. Subscribe to the FARS Announcement list (www.fars.k6ya.org/mail/) to receive reminders of FARS activities and other news.

- de Mikel, KN6QI

November Meeting Report

Howard Califf from HRO, W6HOC, showed the latest in gear and accessories. Howard showed a variety of antennas, batteries and other power items, headphone, books, adapters, keyers, powerpole items, RF chokes, HT holders, an atomic clock and more – all items a shack or mobile system could have.



Howard Califf, W6HOC
November Speaker

Mikel and Jeff
Raffle Winners

First Prize, a MFJ -4125 Compact Power Supply 25 amp, was won by Jeff Ohriner, KF6VFK. Second Prize, an Arrow J-pole Antenna 146/440-2 two piece element version, was won by Mikel Lechner, KN6QI, FARS President. The Wish You Were Here number for Tom Walsh, K1TW, was chosen. Unfortunately, Tom was not present to claim the prize.

CLUB INFORMATION

President:	Mikel Lechner, KN6QI
Vice President:	Steve Stearns, K6OIK
Treasurer:	David Cooper K6WA
Secretary:	
Radio Officer:	Phil Hawkins, KA6MZE
Training Officer:	Kevin Weiler, K6XXX
Relay Editor:	Mark Hardy, AF6DO

FARS Board: Dick Baldwinson N6ATD, Peter Chow AF6DS, Robert Flemate KE6TFU, Nimit Hongyim K6XOX, Charlie Morrin KI6FXY, Barbara Neuhauser AE6RM.

Station Trustee:	Phil Hawkins, KA6MZE
FARS Web Page:	http://www.fars.k6ya.org
Download Relay:	http://www.fars.k6ya.org/relay

Club members and non-members are encouraged to subscribe to the FARS Announcement list by browsing www.fars.k6ya.org/mail, clicking on Subscribe/Unsubscribe and following the instructions under "Subscribing to fars-announce.

You may submit announcements to the FARS Announcement at fars-announce@svpal.org. The list is moderated and messages will be posted as approved by the list moderator.

Contact the FARS board of directors at fars-board@svpal.org

Club meetings are held at 7 PM on the fourth Friday of each month except January (Winter Banquet); and sometimes there are changes for June (for field day) and Nov. & Dec (for holidays).

Annual club membership is $20. Club badges are $9. Visitors are always welcome! Directions in this newsletter. Talk-in: N6NFI (145.23-, 100 Hz) or W6ASH repeater (145.27-, 100 Hz).

FARS *Relay* is the official monthly newsletter of the Foothills Amateur Radio Society. Contributions to the newsletter from members, family, and guests are earnestly solicited! Contributions are subject to editing and/or compression. All readable forms welcome.

Here is how to reach the editor:
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Mail: P.O. Box 2248
Santa Clara, CA 95055
Voice: 408-243-0701 (Before 9 PM, preferred)
Email: mark.af6do@gmail.com, At FARS meetings.

FARS Field Day 2008

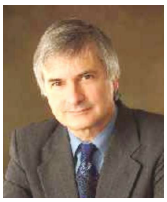
The 2008 Field Day scores were posted on the ARRL website not too long ago. FARS participated in Field Day with the club callsign K6YA and the GOTA callsign K6RJN. Operating in the 3A category in the Santa Clara Valley (SCV) Section, FARS achieved a score of 4578 with 1294 QSOs and 25 participants. This score qualified FARS in the 279th spot out of 2410 Field Day entries. FARS scored 53rd of 303 entries in the 3A category. In the Pacific Division, FARS scored 17th out of 138 overall, and 2nd out of 15 in the 3A category. In the Santa Clara Valley section FARS scored 7th out of 39 entries, and 1st out of 4 entries in the 3A category. See more information later in this Relay.

FARS/PAARA Winter Banquet

The FARS / PAARA annual banquet takes place on Friday evening, January 23, 2009. The Foothills Amateur Radio Society and the Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association (www.paara.org) team up to put on this special ham radio event. The banquet will be held at Michael's at Shoreline in Shoreline Park in Mountain View. Reservations are required.

Topic: What Will the Real ET Be Like?

Speaker: Seth Shostak, SETI Institute



Speaker Information: Dr. Shostak updates us on the latest developments in the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence.

Seth Shostak, N6UDK, has a B.A. in physics from Princeton and a Ph.D. in astronomy from Caltech. He did research in radio astronomy at several observatories before joining SETI. He has published numerous articles in professional journals as well as a number of popular magazines. He is the host of the SETI Institute's weekly radio program on science. He is also responsible for many outreach activities for the SETI Institute.

We plan to have over $1100 in raffle prizes!

Banquet Sign-up

You may print the form in this Relay or from the website at http://www.fars.k6ya.org/events/banqsignup. Fill it out and mail along with your check for payment. We must receive your sign-up by January 19th. Last minute sign-ups must use the on-line form.

You may register online with a PayPal account or a credit card at http://www.fars.k6ya.org/cgi-bin/bq-signup to make your payment. To register, you need to provide at least your name and email address. On-line sign-ups will be accepted until noon on January 21st.

Schedule:
6:00pm - Open Bar (No Host)
7:00pm - Dinner
8:00pm - Presentation
9:00pm - Announcements, Awards, Raffle

Menu

Choice	Menu Description	Price
Beef	Roast Prime Rib of Beef	$ 40
Chicken	Breast of Chicken, Florentine	$ 31
Fish	Broiled Salmon, Lemon Beurre Blanc	$ 36
Veg	Vegetarian Brochette w/ Wild Rice	$ 27

Each entree is served with seasonal greens, fresh vegetables, potato du jour, french rolls and coffee. We selected an ice cream parfait for dessert. The above prices listed above include service and taxes.

We have a NO HOST BAR for soft drinks, wine, beer, etc.

[The banquet is open to anyone who wants to attend. Note that unlike our regular meetings, attendance at the banquet is by reservation only and prepayment of fees is required. Our arrangement with the restaurant does not allow us to accept walk-ins.]

One Ham's Introduction to "Top Band"

Published in QST November 1991 by Jim Peterson, K6EI (was AA6OZ in 1991)

I've been in the habit of jogging on my lunch hour with coworker and fellow ham, Paul Jensen, AA6PB. With the usual tales of recent "ones that got away" and discussions of future Field Day plans, our conversations frequently drift to the topic of ham radio in the "good old days" and Paul's early exploits on 160 meters.

"Back in '41 when I was W5JWX," he puffed one day as we plodded along the jogging trail, "all radios glowed in the dark. Almost everybody was operating on 160 meters with Zepps or random-length wire antennas. Most of us went home-brew using 6L6s, 807s or maybe a push-pull pair of 813s." Paul winced as I commented that I always assumed he'd used cat-whisker detectors and spark-gap equipment in his youth. "Actually," he explained, "I did get a heck of a shock once when I tried out a spark-gap transmitter I'd built using the spark coil from an old Model T. Normally, though, I ran 10 watts from a Stan Cor kit into a wire-wrapped bamboo pole. You could always count on the ol' Top Band for a good, late-night ragchew. The static could be ear numbing and DX was any contact spanning more than 100 miles, but 160 meters was fun and a real challenge for us old-timers."

Hearing Paul's stories sparked my interest. What might this mysterious band be like today? I had recently upgraded my station from a pair of 1957-vintage "boat anchors" to a modern rig (i.e., a used transceiver only 10 years old). After discovering the new settings on the band switch, I was having a great time testing the new WARC bands. HF operating was great, but which might MF (medium-frequency) work have in store -- especially for a straight-key pounder like me?

The Scale is Larger on 160

One way to find out was the upcoming ARRL 160-Meter Contest. Quick scans of the band had previously shown CW activity on Top Band to be limited or nonexistent. A review of the previous year's 160-Meter Contest results in QST, however, made it clear that plenty of domestic activity and a smattering of CW were possible. I marked the impending contest weekend on the December page of my calendar with anticipation and began planning how to use my limited real estate to maximum advantage.

A full-size dipole on 160 meters was out of the question -- my suburban lot on Ferndale Avenue measures only 60 x 100 feet. My next thought was to somehow modify my 40-meter dipole to resonate as a shortened 160-meter dipole. My residence had already taken on the nickname among the neighbors of "Radio Ferndale" because of the imposing appearance of my wire antenna zigzagging between our palm tree and strategically placed TV push-up masts. Certainly, I thought, this magnificent piece of structural engineering could be converted into a Lean Mean DX Machine for the contest. Sadly, a glance at my ARRL Antenna Book and a few pokes at my calculator showed that my "imposing" 50-foot-high dipole loaded up on 160 meters would be the equivalent of a 4-foot dipole suspended 3 feet off the ground on 10 meters -- not a design likely to gain entry in the annals of 160-meter lor

The alternative was to turn my existing skyhook into some type of vertical radiator. A second glance at the Antenna Book explained that by shortening the two conductors of my ladder-line feed together near the base of the center-support mast and feeding this from my shack, the dipole and vertical feed-line segment could be considered a vertical antenna with a two-legged top hat. With an antenna tuner and a counterpoise ground-plane system suspended over my house and yard, it might get me on the air with a decent signal.

"Wait a minute," my beloved wife questioned me upon hearing of my planned entry into the world of MF operating, "you mean that instead of getting on the higher bands that use smaller antennas and give you easy long-range coverage, you're doing all this to maybe talk to somebody in the Midwest? That sounds pretty cockeyed to me." My wife had questioned my wisdom on previous radio-related activities, such as shimmying up lofty pine trees during our mountain vacations to install yet another "ultimate DX" wire beam. "Au, but, Dear," I explained, "you don't yet understand the mystique , yes, even the romance of spanning the late-night ether on 160 meters!" (I made a mental note that future lobbying might be in order when the time came to acclimate my wife to the idea of my spending two full nights on the air during the upcoming contest.)

It Takes a Bit of Work

I tracked down the odds-and-ends I'd need to get my signal on 160, including a simple tuning unit and wire for a counterpoise. When the Friday of the contest arrived, I was ready. I took the afternoon off from work to get my radiating system ready for use. Step One was to deploy as efficient a counterpoise as possible, given my limited real estate. My design consisted of running a dozen radials, elevated about 6 feet off the ground, to the fence line surrounding my property, from the point on the roof where I was feeding my vertical. Each radial was connected to a second plastic-coated copper wire that ran along the top of the fence around our lot. I connected additional concentric loops of wire tot eh radials at various distances from the monopole. The resulting network of wires took on the appearance of a huge spider's web draped over my house and yard.

As I was installing this network of wires, I noticed curious glances from nearby windows. "No big deal," I told myself, "This will just give the neighbors something new to talk about at their next bridge night."

Having installed the elevated ground system, the next step was to get the "top hat vertical" resonant somewhere near 1.8 MHz. This proved easier said than done. As I passed through the kitchen on repeated trips from the shack to the ladder leading to the roof and the tuning unit, my wife showed interest in my progress. [*note: this article was written in 1991 before the arrival of antenna analyzers]* My responses changed from enthusiasm to frustration. By now the contest had begun and a scan of the band revealed heavy contest activity, even though sunset was still hours away.

After two hours of trotting back and forth through the house and up and down the ladder, I deduced that a more user-friendly solution was called for. The natural solution was to carry the rig, SWR meter and a long extension cord up to the roof where the feed point and tuning coil were located. My temporary operating position on the peak of the roof drew even more curious glances from the neighbors as I experimented with various feed methods. After shortening the legs of my top hat and trying numerous tuning-coil adjustments, I finally achieved an SWR close to 2:1.

Overcoming Interference

"At last," I thought, as I pulled out my contest log and dupe sheets, "Time to knock off a few multipliers!" *[Note: logging software wasn't common in 1991, either]* I knew from QST write-ups of past 160-Meter Contests that activity could be brisk -- and was it ever. Although sunset was an hour away and daytime absorption was evident, the band was hopping and I began making contacts up and down California and into Oregon.

Unexpectedly, there was a knock at the shack door. "Guess what," my wife said, as she popped in with a Mona Lisa smile, "Your father just dropped inn from out-of-town and wants to treat us to dinner." I looked up with dismay and hesitated. Blood may be thicker than water, but this was no run-of-the-mill contest. My first thought was to feign a highly contagious illness and lock the radio-room door. After a moment of two, however, I regained my composure and dutifully left the shack (and the evening's grayline period" for a few hours of good food and family conversation -- not that my attention didn't wander from time to time to thoughts about band conditions.

Later that evening, I returned to the clamor of the contest. The band was wide open to the rest of the continental US. To all appearances, it more closely resembled 80 meters on a Sweepstakes weekend than the sedate gentleman's band I'd listened to on preceding evenings. Although no exotic signals were apparent in the "DX window", I did my best to resist the temptation to contact the few Ws calling CQ TEST in the 1.830-1.835 MHz segment. My wife was understanding enough to let me operate uninterrupted for the rest of the evening, and my log and dupe sheets began filling up. Although the majority of my contacts were on the West Coast, I was surprised and pleased to see sections from the Midwest and a few from the East Coast make it into the log. So this is what a simple antenna on Top Band could do!

The hectic activities of the day caught up with me about 1am and I signed off for some shuteye. Following 40 winks in the early morning hours, I was on the air for the sunrise grayline. Although the West Coast was hopping and I could hear W6s and W7s making transpacific contacts, my lowly "vertical T" seemed better designed for picking up noise from the local power lines than the faint signals of JAs operating at 1.907-1.912 MHz. Thoughts of those lucky hams in Wyoming and Idaho with acres of real estate for V-beams and rhombics passed through my head. "If only I had a 500-foot Beverage antenna running to the northwest," I moaned. But common sense convinced me that suspending a long wire from street light to street light up our block would just further convince my neighbors that I'd finally gone over the edge.

The Hook Is Set

The contest was great fun, with band conditions the second night even better than the first. By the end of the weekend, I had run up a respectable score -- 116 QSOs in 28 sections. Although I hadn't made the top slot for my section by a long shot, I'd had a great introduction to Top Band, not to mention a good start on 160-meter WAS.

That was last year. Now it's time to get ready for this year's contest. I wonder if Paul would be interested in entering the multioperator category to man the controls during the graveyard shift? Then the only question is how to deploy a 2000-foot buried-snake receiving antenna through the local sewer system and a 5/8 wavelength balloon-supported vertical . . . .

Phi Phi Island Amateur Radio Club Repeater.

Phi Phi Island, Krabi, Thailand – by Nimit Hongyim, K6XOX

I just got back from a Thailand trip a couple days ago, but I still have feelings from the place that can be called paradise on earth which was hit hard by the Tsunami in Dec 2005. Many people on this island were dead and disappeared from the wave caused by an under water Earthquake located in Indonesia. This island is located off the west coast south of Thailand, 800 Km from Bangkok, in the Andaman Sea. To get there I took a 1 hr flight by Airplane from Bangkok to Krabi or Phuket Island and then 1:51 Hr by ferry to Phi Phi Island.

There are many Hams on this Island and the numbers are increasing, because the Tsunami event convinced the local officers to allow more Ham licenses and to give permits to install the repeater and Echolink nodes so that we can make contact to the outside world by RF in case of emergency.

For the Repeater station, they gave permission to use a mountain top Tower, which is used by Telecom and Cell phone companies, free of charge. We have to walk up to the location on foot – it took 2 hours!

They only gave us permission to use the small tower not the big one. I heard that the Club already asked and they will be considered for the big Tower next year.

Once we got up there and relax by the view on the top down to see the nice beach and Blue sea down below and you can see a small bay which good for the boat anchor. On the top there are many areas which are good for DX (I already planned for the next trip). I will be back here for an overnight stay and will bring all the HF gear from the USA. This trip I asked around to see if anyone had a HF transceiver but unfortunately no one has one because they only have Technician Class licenses.

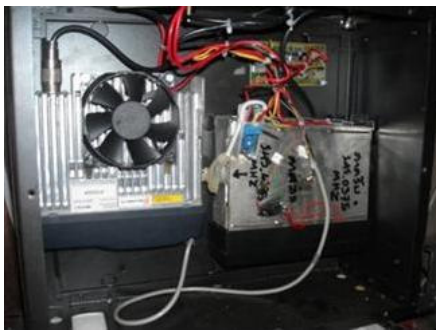
Folded Dipole 4 stacks Antenna

Here is the Ham shack. The Repeater controller is kept inside to protect it from the rain.

Repeater Power by Car Battery

Here we see the home made repeater controller. It consists of an ICOM IC2800H and a MOTOROLA radio. The controller is very simple, nothing fancy at all – no features like we have here. No need to have CW ID or tone or anything. By regulation, Amateur radio is still not allowed to have a PL Tone or TSQ to be installed on any Transceivers.

I promised to make them one or provide one from US that has the same feature that we have on N6NFI/R. because the system that they have does not have a time-out or any protection from someone keying up or forgetting to release key for a long time and the P.A. of the transmitter always blows-up.



Here is the inside of the repeater controller station. They used a Motorola for receiving and an ICOM for transmitting. The controller has a simple circuit to take care of the audio and COS signal for PTT. The fan was running full time.

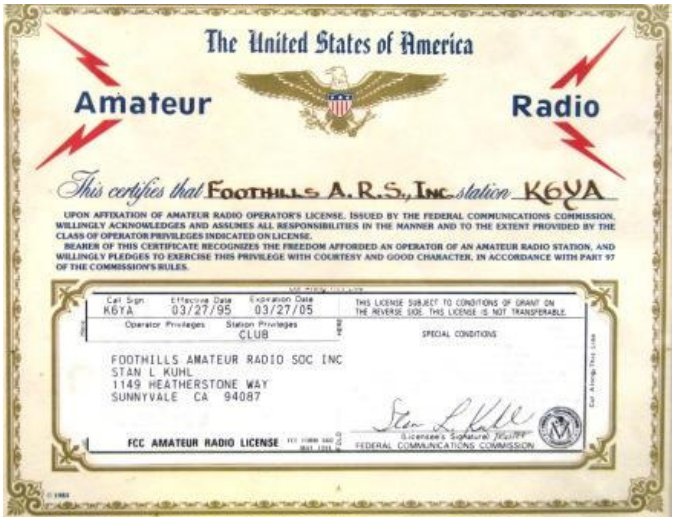
Walk Down from the top and see the white sand beach below

Here is the installation team, Next to me is HS9MVU (No shirt) who helped make the club repeater possible. ☺

Field Day Results for 3A Field Sites in the Pacific Division

Call	Score	Category	QSOs	Power Mult	GOTA Call	Section	Participants	Club
W6CUS	7160	3A	1830	2	AA6XZ	EB	30	East Bay ARC
K6YA	**4578**	**3A**	**1294**	**2**	**K6RJN**	**SCV**	**25**	**Foothills ARS**
W6SW	4344	3A	1388	2	KE6DAX	SJV	10	San Andreas Faultline Survivors
K6LY	3610	3A	943	2	K6NPS	SCV	30	Naval Postgraduate School ARC
N6FR	3064	3A	792	2		SV	20	GARC
WW6OR	2570	3A	573	2	N6ORC	EB	50	Oakland Radio Comm Assn
WA6SJV	2336	3A	509	2	WA6WTF	SJV	30	San Joaquin Valley ARS
W6AJF	2140	3A	415	2		SF	10	Valley of the Moon ARC
K6EAG	1438	3A	160	2	N6MQQ	EB	33	Hayward RC
W6GGF	1406	3A	337	2		SCV	5	Garlic Valley ARC
WA6IRC	1072	3A	208	2		SJV	40	Independent RC
NB6GC	836	3A	93	2		EB	8	USS Hornet ARC
W6AK	734	3A	79	2		SV	10	Sacramento ARC
K6SRA	696	3A	75	2		SCV	6	Northern CA Cactus Repeater Assn
KI6QCY	450	3A	75	2		SJV	19	

FARS Station License



Picture of the FARS Station License, signed and held by long time Station Trustee Stan Kuhl.

Missing Owners

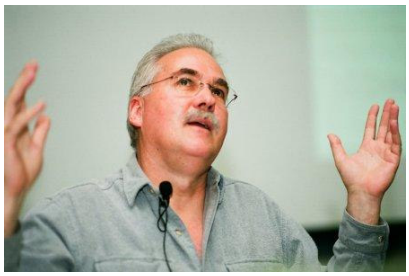
These badges are missing their owners. Please help them find their homes at the next club meeting.

AMATEUR RADIO – TECHNOLOGY DAY #48
Saturday, November 1, 2008

A review of information and photos not seen in the November 2008 newsletter.

VOLUNTEERS - Morning: TEAM 48 (AM Site Setup Team) (Photo Not shown):

Arv WA6UUT, Charlie KF6CDO, Charlie KI6FXY, Dave KE6PFF*, Gerry K6TXD, Phil KA6MZE*, Robert KE6TFU*, Tuk W6TUK.
*Denotes FARS Board Member



Speaker Kevin Weiler, K6XXX* describes one of the rockets seen during his trip to the Black Rock Desert launching site during his interesting & exciting presentation.

Photo Copyright 2008 Dave K6WA

Photo Copyright 2008 Dave K6WA

Several Hams involved with Digital Radio Modes confer; left to right, first seated: Phil KA6MZE*, Michael KI6QNZ, Robert KE6TFU*, Dave AA6XV, Kit WA6PWW, Gerry K6TXD, Nimit K6XOX*.

Prepared for the VERY unusual atmospheric conditions (For any Am – Tech Day, that is), Carol W6GEM, flashes a smile as she steps outside. Perhaps her plan is to evaluate the various antennas that are arrayed and in use on the lawn, eh?

Photo Copyright 2008 Dave K6WA

Dave AA6XV, sets up the digital filtering on The Societies' HF GOTA (Get-On-The-Air) Station Transceiver, available for use during each Am – Tech Day.

Photo Copyright 2008 Dave K6WA

Photo Copyright 2008 Dave K6WA

VOLUNTEERS - Evening: TEAM 48 (PM Site Recovery Team) left to right, front first:

Phil KA6MZE*, Lloyd KD6FJI, Peter AF6DS*, Nimit K6XOX*. Dave (then) KE6PFF*, Robert KE6TFU*, Gerry K6TXD

AMATEUR RADIO – TECHNOLOGY DAY #49
Saturday, December 13, 2008

Photo Copyright 2008 Robert KE6TFU

VOLUNTEERS - Morning: TEAM 49 (AM Site Setup Team) left to right, front first

Phil KA6MZE*, Charlie KI6FXY, Barbara AE6RM*, Michael KI6QNZ, Dave K6WA*, Bob K6LOG, Nimit K6XOX*, Michael, Charlie KF6CUU, Robert KE6TFU*.

Dozens of Amateurs and their friends braved the sometimes chilly air to enjoy the camaraderie and networking activities at another, never-routine, Am – Tech Day.

Those fortunate to arrive midday found Gordon KI6UH, and his daughter Brianna, with their QRZ Engraving equipment and displays, just as is found setup each year at Pacificon. Many Hams were able to get new identification badges, nameplates and many other items that were engraved to order and on-the-spot. Thanks goes to Gordon & Brianna for spending the day with us.

The somewhat ravenous lunch (and dinner) crowd didn't comment to me – I had forgotten to pick-up tomatoes & onions to slice up – going at the food nonetheless with a

certain amount of zeal, as it were. We also neglected to put out the assortment of packaged chips at lunch. Hmmmm… Maybe - if we didn't serve up any lunch at all – would anyone notice?

Photo courtesy Jim Newton

Guest Speakers; Jim Newton, Founder of TechShop, LLC in Menlo Park (www.techshop.ws) who talked and shared information about the Maker concept & TechShop and Nimit Hongyim, K6XOX*, who discussed and showed both still photographs and video of his vacation in Thailand.

Two interesting presentations made for a great continuation of the afternoon. Jim Newton, founder of TechShop in Menlo Park, discussed the way the Maker Concept varied over the years & decades, sharing many visual examples. He also discussed a great holiday pricing schedule; with the main facility just a few miles away in Menlo Park, further investigation may be beneficial for those who need access to the vast assortment of tools, equipment & training available there. www.techshop.ws.

FARS Board Member Nimit Hongyim, K6XOX*, smoothly rounded out the days formal presentations with interesting & informative Thai Amateur Radio activity photographs, as well as an underwater video production of his recent vacation in Thailand. Sharing many images of the Amateur Radio community in Thailand as well as explaining the way Amateurs there involve themselves in Amateur Radio projects was very interesting. The underwater video was well done and showed many underwater plants & creatures, indeed.

Everyone seemed to have a good time, which seems to be a Hallmark of the activity. Unfortunately, at the end of the evenings activities there was more than a minor effort expended by the Volunteer PM Site Recovery Team #49. The crew consisted of only *three* volunteers, VS a minimum of six individuals that are minimally required for the job: ten volunteers is an ideal amount to get the many tasks quickly accomplished.

Attendees may not realize that a considerable physical effort is required to both set up and break down the site each Am – Tech Day. While not hard work, it requires some attention to detail and is sometimes tedious in nature, especially if the tasks are accomplished by only a few individuals. All the equipment & materials necessary for the activity not only must be collected & recovered, but must be relocated to remote sites both on and off the property. The site must be returned to exactly the way it was when we arrived Saturday morning.

Phil KA6MZE*, the Society's Radio Officer, personally transports in & sets up much of the GOTA and VHF/UHF stations, including antennas, then does the reverse at the end of the day. Volunteers always assist him when they are available. He has willingly performed this task for The Society for years. Robert, KE6TFU*, quietly devotes complete days (both Teams, AM & PM) to the activity for years, as well. Barbara, AE6RM*, monthly improves, is Control Operator and instructor for the GOTA & VHF/UHF stations and does so anytime she is available. Each of these individuals sets a great example for all of the many Volunteers who have come forward and assisted over the years; there are certainly many other individuals who have done a lot, as well.

Each individual who helps with the activity, a little or a lot, shares in the ongoing success of the operation. If you can donate an hour or two once in a while, it would be sincerely appreciated. I don't imagine that many small Teams, both AM & PM, will be fielded before even the most stalwart Volunteer will not show up. Without ongoing help the activity will subside and then end.

In every Volunteer activity there are always a few individuals who do 'a little (or a lot) extra' to make things happen. This has always been the way things have been; some folks just "…swing aboard for the ride…" and then disappear. Even those individuals know a good thing when they see it though, don't they? So… whether you have helped Am – Tech Day a lot or a little, it is time to insure that what the Society has sponsored continues on for the foreseeable future. Sign up to help a little, once in a while. Or, help a lot! That would be greatly appreciated by the *really* small teams that have spent three lonely hours putting away everyone else's good time.

On a more happy note, when we get meeting date approvals from the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory for Amateur Radio – Technology Day we will post them as soon as possible on the FARS Am – Tech Day web site for your reference. If you have not attended this activity yet, make sure to make the effort to stop by for sure; thirteen hours in one day of Amateur Radio activities in Menlo Park should include YOU!

- de Dave, K6WA*

Photo Copyright 2008 Robert KE6TFU

VOLUNTEERS - Evening: TEAM 49 (PM Site Recovery Team) left to right:

Phil KA6MZE*, Robert KE6TFU*, Dave K6WA*

FARS 2009 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM Date: _____

PLEASE fill out the form for all new/renewal memberships.

Name(s) & Callsign(s) & Class (E-A-G-T-N-None): _____

_____

Mailing Address: _____

_____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Fax (H or W?) _____ Packet BBS Address: _____

E-mail: _____ ARRL Exp Date(s): _____

Preferred modes: (e.g. HF-SSB/VHF/QRP/Other): _____

I'm willing to Elmer new hams with: _____

_____

Special topics of interest / suggestions for club meeting speakers:

_____

Dues: $20 per year, new members add $9 for badge fee. **Please note:** Membership runs from January 1 to December 31.

FARS/PAARA 2008 WINTER BANQUET SIGNUP (January 23, 2009 at Michael's at Shoreline)

Deadline for signups for the banquet is January 19, 2008.

Name & Call		Meal Choice	Amount
You	_____	_____	_____
Email	_____		
Guest1	_____	_____	_____
Guest2	_____	_____	_____
Guest3	_____	_____	_____
Guest4	_____	_____	_____
		Total	_____

This form may be used for membership renewal, banquet signup or both.

Send your check payable to FARS, to:

David A. Cooper
PMB 41
270 Redwood Shores Parkway
Redwood City, CA 94065-1173

Choice	Menu Description	Price
Beef	Roast Prime Rib of Beef	$ 40
Chicken	Breast of Chicken, Florentine	$ 31
Fish	Broiled Salmon, Lemon Beurre Blanc	$ 36
Veg	Vegetarian Brochette w/ Wild Rice	$ 27

How to get to FARS Club meetings (Visitors always welcome)

Meetings are held at the Covington Elementary School (directions below) on the fourth Friday. Socializing at 7 PM with the regular meeting at 7:30 PM. There may be changes in the meeting dates for January, June, November, and December.

DIRECTIONS:

From Interstate 280. take the El Monte exit Northeast. Cross Foothill Expressway. (A) At the first traffic light turn right on Covington. (B) Immediately at the fork take the left street (Covington). Go about 1/10th of a mile. Turn left into the parking lot. The gym is the tall building to your right with red and white stripes.

From Foothill Expwy., take the El Monte exit and go Northeast; then follow directions as above at point (A).

From US101 or El Camino: take San Antonio Road west (to Foothill Expressway). Then follow directions above at point (A).

TALK-IN via the N6NFI (145.230-; 100Hz PL) repeater or the W6ASH 145.27- (100Hz PL) repeater.

FARS Meeting
FRIDAY 19 December 2008
Covington School