

February 2012 Volume 42, Number 2
Time for fun on 160-meters! www.fars.k6ya.org

February Club Meeting ai6re

Date: Friday, February 24th, 2012
Time: Socializing at 7PM, Meeting starts at 7:30PM
Place: Covington School, 205 Covington Road, Los Altos
(near Foothill Expressway and El Monte Rd)

“Balloons and the California Near Space Project” **Ron Meadows K6RPT & Don Ferguson KD6IRE**

UPDATE: New vanity call AI6RE!

Ron and his son Lee have been outfitting balloons with high tech electronics since 2009. They've put GPS, APRS, cameras and crossband repeaters on balloons filled with hydrogen and helium, and have been written up in two articles on the ARRL's website.

In 2011 they set new records for both altitude and distance, beating US government agency records. The records were confirmed by the use of onboard GPS, and balloons were tracked by their APRS transmissions.

Come and hear the exciting story of these amazing feats of Amateur Radio and ballooning.

Snacks: Cookies and coffee will be served.
Questions: Bring your hardest radio questions.
 The mysterious Dr. Know-It-All reveals all answers.
Post-Meeting Snacks: Denny's on Mathilda in Sunnyvale.

Raffle Prizes

1st Prize: Tigertronics Signalink
 Sound Card – Radio Interface SL-USB-6PM



2nd Prize: MFJ Dry Dummy Load
 300 Watt 0-600 MHz MFJ-260C



3rd Prize: MFJ LCD Atomic Clock w/ Date & Temp
 MFJ-130BRC

The Wish-You-Were-Here prize is a CASH prize awarded each meeting to a member who is present and has paid their dues. It grows each month not collected!

The FARS RELAY President's Corner

Membership Meeting. Our next membership meeting is at 7PM on Friday, February 24th. Our program is **“Balloons and the California Near Space Project”** presented by Ron Meadows K6RPT and Don Ferguson AI6RE (formerly KD6IRE). They outfit helium-filled balloons with GPS, APRS, cameras, and repeaters and track their travels through the atmosphere.



March Membership Meeting. Our program for March 25th is **“Rethinking Field Day Outside the Box”** with Jim Peterson K6EI. Jim shares some ideas on how clubs can boost Field Day innovation, participation, and outreach – and have more fun in the process.

CQ World Wide 160-Meter Phone Contest. FARS is setting up K6YA on February 25th to participate in this 160-meter contest. We have obtained permission to use the field up at Maryknoll for the event (same location we use for Field Day in June and California QSO Party in October). We'll set up the station Saturday morning and operate Saturday evening through Sunday morning. We have refreshments for those participating, but bring necessary clothing to keep warm. Contact Phil KA6MZE to volunteer to help with this activity.

Electronics Flea Market. The electronics flea market begins its 2012 season on March 10th, 2012. The sponsor for this first flea market is the **Silicon Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross**. Note that daily campus parking permits have increased to \$3 per vehicle, so bring an extra buck. The flea market is a great place to find a bargain and it supports your local ham clubs. For all the details check out www.electronicfleamarket.com.

de Mikel KN6QI

It's that time of year!

FARS Membership Renewals

Renewing your membership to FARS provides much needed support for your club activities, qualifies you for the **CASH** Wish-You-Were-Here prize awarded at each membership meeting, plus you'll receive a **FARS Relay** to your email each month!

FARS activities incl. Field Day, the 160m contest in February, the California QSO Party, and more!

The reduced annual membership fee of \$15 has been extended through 2012. Put your \$5 savings in your pocket or use it to purchase raffle tickets.

CLUB INFORMATION

www.fars.k6ya.org

President: Mikel Lechner KN6QI
Vice President: Steve Stearns K6OIK
Treasurer: Dick Baldwinson N6ATD
Secretary: (open)
Radio Officer: Phil Hawkins KA6MZE
Training Officer: Kevin Weiler K6XXX
Relay Editor: Joanna Dilley K6YL
FARS Board: Robert Flemate KE6TFU
Charlie Morrin KI6FX
K6YA Trustee: Phil Hawkins KA6MZE

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

Email Announcements: Members and non-members are encouraged to subscribe to the FARS Announcement list to receive reminders of FARS activities and other news. Browse www.fars.k6ya.org/mail, click on Subscribe/Unsubscribe and follow 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 require approval by the moderator.

Meetings: FARS 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 November & December (for holidays). **Visitors are always welcome!** Directions on the website as well as in this newsletter. Talk-in: N6NFI (145.23-/100Hz) or W6ASH repeater (145.27-/100Hz).

Membership: Annual FARS membership is \$15. A club badge is \$9. With membership you'll receive the monthly FARS Relay, and you'll also qualify for the monthly CASH Wish-You-Were-Here drawing at each membership meeting.

Newsletter: The 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! Photos, operating news, articles, etc. can be submitted to the editor at any time. Contributions are subject to editing and/or compression.

Newsletter Editor:

Joanna Dilley K6YL Joanna.K6YL@gmail.com (also Yahoo)
PO Box 5153 Also available at FARS meetings.
Redwood City, CA 94063 Photos © K6YL unless noted otherwise.

**What can YOU do
to help protect and preserve
spectrum and privileges
for all amateur radio operators?**

SUPPORT YOUR NATIONAL SOCIETY →



**The Amateur Radio Relay League
(ARRL)**

www.arrl.org

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

www.fars.k6ya.org/events/calendar

Visitors are welcome at all events!

FEBRUARY

- 24 [Club Meeting](#), Covington School, Los Altos, 7PM
"Balloons and the California Near Space Project"
Ron Meadows K6RPT & Don Ferguson KD6IRE
- 25-26 [CQ World Wide 160m Contest](#), Maryknoll
(same location at Field Day and CQP)
FARS will again participate in this annual event, w/
a full operation including a 160m Beverage antenna
for receive and a vertical antenna for transmit.
Come and join us! (Details on page 3)

MARCH

- 1 Board Mtg, Los Altos Town Crier, 7:30PM
- 3 [RadioFest Monterey 2012](#)
and Parachute Mobile Jump! (Details on page 4)
- 8 [BARC Meeting](#), Tech Shop Menlo Park, 7PM
Bay Area Radio Builders Club (a FARS Spec Int Grp)
- 10 [Electronics Flea Market](#), DeAnza College, 5AM
First for 2012!
- 23 [Club Meeting](#), Covington School, Los Altos, 7PM
"Rethinking Field Day Outside the Box"
Jim Peterson K6EI

APRIL

- 5 Board Mtg, Los Altos Town Crier, 7:30PM
- 12 [BARC Meeting](#), Tech Shop Menlo Park, 7PM
Bay Area Radio Builders Club (a FARS Spec Int Grp)
- 20-22 [Intl DX Convention 2012](#), Visalia, CA
Very popular 3 day event just south of Fresno.
- 27 [Club Meeting](#), Covington School, Los Altos, 7PM

FARS Membership Dues Reduced for 2012

Payment of dues supports the club and provides you with current membership status – you'll qualify for the CASH Wish-You-Were-Here prize awarded at each membership meeting, and you'll also receive the FARS Relay in your email each month. The FARS board has voted to extend the \$15 reduced membership dues through 2012. Use your \$5 savings to purchase raffle tickets, or put it in your pocket and be \$5 richer. FARS is a California 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, so donations and membership dues are tax deductible with the California Franchise Tax Board and the Internal Revenue Service.

**UPCOMING FARS EVENT:
2012 CQ WORLDWIDE 160M PHONE CONTEST**

Saturday, February 25th, 2012

The night of Saturday, February 25th FARS will again participate in this annual event, the [CQWW 160-Meter Contest](#). We'll have a full operation, including a 300 foot Beverage antenna for receive and a quarter wavelength (135 foot) sloper antenna for transmit. Phil KA6MZE is always looking for help with operating and setup, but of course you can also stop by just to see the action.

Setup: Saturday mid-day
Take-Down: Sunday morning

The location is **Maryknoll Residences in Los Altos**, the same spot used by FARS for both Field Day and the California QSO Party. Their soccer field has plenty of space for the Beverage antenna, and a nice elevation and take-off angle.

23000 Cristo Rey Dr,
Los Altos -
up driveway,
through metal gate

The exchange is easy:
"K6YA 59 California"

www.cq160.com

Talk-in:
W6ASH repeater
145.270 MHz (-)
PL 100.0 Hz

Call if
gate is
locked!

SSB: 2200Z February 24 to 2200Z February 26

NOTE: FARS will operate **Saturday night February 25th**, from **sunset to sunrise**.

OBJECTIVE: For amateurs around the world to contact other amateurs
in as many U.S. states, Canadian provinces, and countries as possible utilizing the 160 meter band.

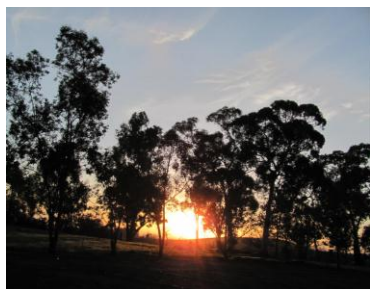
Thank you to Phil Hawkins KA6MZE for your hard work each year on this contest, as well as to your fellow volunteers, and thank you also to MaryKnoll in Los Altos for again allowing us the use of their soccer field.



Phil KA6MZE operating CQWW 2010



Beverage Antenna for receive on 160-Meters



Sunrise on Sunday



View towards the Bay



Maryknoll Residences



Clark KE6KXO



Radiofest Monterey Bay 2012

Sponsored by the Naval Postgraduate School Amateur Radio Club (NPSARC)

**Saturday
March 3, 2012**

8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

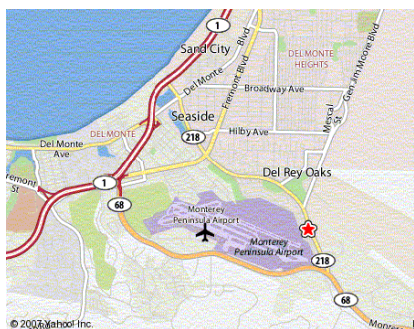
Parachute Mobile!



An ARRL Santa Clara Valley Section Convention
Admission is only \$1.00 Dollar!



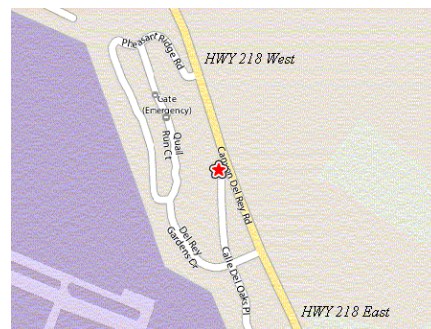
**BREAKFAST AND LUNCH AT A GREAT PRICE
COMMERCIAL VENDOR BOOTHS
HAM RADIO DEMOS
INDOOR AND OUTDOOR SWAP MEET
LICENSE EXAMS @ 2PM (\$14 CASH)
FANTASTIC SPEAKERS
DOOR PRIZES (Grand Prize Drawing @ 4:01 PM)**



Location:

Monterey Moose Family Center
555 Canyon Del Rey (Hwy 218)
Monterey, CA

Talk-in: 146.970- pl 94.8



From North Monterey County

Take U.S. 101 South to Prunedale, then take Hwy 156 (Monterey Peninsula) exit, traveling West to merge with Hwy 1 Southbound at Castroville. Stay on Hwy 1 southbound to Seaside, take Hwy 218 (Canyon Del Rey) exit, turn left onto Hwy 218 (Canyon Del Rey), travel East, turn right onto Del Rey Gardens Dr., turn right onto Calle Del Oaks, go straight ahead to the Moose Lodge.

From South Monterey County

Take U.S. 101 North to Salinas, then take Hwy 68 (Monterey Peninsula) exit. Turn right onto South Sanborn Rd., continue onto E. Blanco Rd, turn left onto Hwy 68 Westbound, turn right onto Hwy 218 (Canyon Del Rey Blvd), turn left onto Del Rey Gardens Dr., turn right onto Calle Del Oaks, go straight ahead to the Moose Lodge.



**PHOTO TIME:
Electronics Flea Market**



This “shotgun” mic was a fun find at one of last year’s Electronics Flea Markets. The next one is 3/10.

**License Examinations also offered
at the ARRL “RadioFest” convention in
Monterey on
Saturday 3/14!**

Technician, General, & Amateur Extra.

Cost: \$14 (cash only). 2pm.
Email to reserve a spot as class size is limited.
→ cve@sbcare.org.

See www.radiofest.org for more details.

**Upcoming
FARS General License Course**

FARS will again offer a six-week General License course, same as we have the last few years with **great success**. Look for an end-of-April start date!

Stay tuned for more information

FARS Member Badges

We’re ready to take your order online or at the mtg.

Available for pick up at the next club mtg

FARS Relay

**Have a photo, article, or operating
news to share?**

Please contact Joanna.K6YL@gmail.com

FARS Weekly Net

Thursdays @ 8 PM

N6NFI repeater, 145.23-/100Hz

This net is open to all interested hams.

The purpose of the net is to keep club members informed about club activities; to exchange other club-related info; and to socialize.

9AM Talk Net

Weekdays @ 9 AM

N6NFI repeater, 145.23-/100Hz

This net is open to all interested hams.

This is an informal net that is very popular.

www.9amtalk.net

Ready to Upgrade Your License?

What is a Passing Score you might ask?

Technician & General exams – 26 out of 35 (74.2%)

Amateur Extra exam – 37/50 (74%)

www.baears.com – This group holds “Ham Crams” 4 times a year. Pre-registration required, sign up on the website. \$30

- Saturday 4/21/12, 8 AM @ Santa Clara

www.amateur-radio.org – The Sunnyvale VEC holds test sessions on Saturdays often alternating between Sunnyvale and Redwood City. Walk-ins only, no pre-registrations. \$15

- Saturday 3/17, 10:30 AM @ Redwood City
- Saturday 4/14, 10:30 AM @ Sunnyvale

www.pdarrrl.org/vec/vecscv – The Silicon Valley ARRL VE holds test sessions on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month. Arrive between 8 AM and 10:30 AM to the Saratoga Fire Station at 14380 Saratoga Avenue. Walk-ins only, no pre-registrations. \$15

- Saturday 3/3
- Saturday 3/17

www.sbara.org – The Tri-City VE Group holds test sessions at Hurricane Electric in Fremont each month, alternating between Saturday morning and Tuesday evening. The address is 48233 Warm Springs Blvd. Walk-ins welcome. \$15

- Saturday 3/10, 9:00 AM
- Tuesday 4/10, 6:30 PM

BAEARS Ham Cram

Next Session: Saturday, April 21st
8 AM
Santa Clara, CA
www.baears.com

Electronics Flea Market

Saturday, March 10th

Host: Silicon Valley Chapter, American Red Cross

www.electronicfleamarket.com

FARS Email Notices

Easy to subscribe!

www.k6ya.org/mail

Receive reminders of activities and other news.

Weekly FARS Net

Thursdays @ 8 PM

N6NFI Repeater 145.230(-), 100 Hz PL

63rd Annual International DX Convention 2012 Visalia, CA

April 20, 21, 21

www.dxconvention.org



[The Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center](#)
in Visalia, CA (just south of Fresno)
[Link to map](#)

**The raffle prizes will top even the famed
Dayton raffle prizes!**

MakerFaire 2012 is coming!

World's Largest DIY Festival

May 21st & 22nd, 2012
San Mateo, CA

Maker Faire®

<http://makerfaire.com/bayarea/2012/>

*Come celebrate MAKE magazine's
11th Maker Faire
and seventh anniversary
in the Bay Area,
showcasing creative and resourceful
people in the areas of
science and technology, engineering,
food, and arts and crafts.*

**FARS will again sponsor
a booth at the Maker Faire.**

Stay tuned for more info from Michael NE6RD.

Bay Area Radio Builders Club

"BARC"

A FARS Special Interest Group

Next Meeting: March 8th
TechShop in Menlo Park

We are a group of mostly Amateur Radio operators
who want to gain a better understanding of the topics
covered in the General and Extra class tests.
We want to learn electronics, antenna theory,
kit building, and kit design.

For more info join the Yahoo Group:
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ba_radio_builders/

FARS Membership Renewal Form

Note that the annual dues for 2012 has been reduced to \$15. You may also renew online by logging onto the FARS website, then using PayPal to pay.

<https://www.fars.k6ya.org/membership>

Date: _____

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

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

Mailing Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

ARRL Member? _____ Email: _____

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

I'm willing to Elmer new hams with: _____

Special topics of interest / suggestions for club meeting speakers: _____

Dues: \$15 per year. Membership runs from January 1 to December 31. New membership applications accepted later in the year may have their dues prorated (see dues schedule). Please include \$9 for a club badge if desired. Your call sign and first name as it appears above will appear on the badge. Renewing members should provide at least their name, call, and the date. Also include any info that may have changed. Put "N/A" where you wish to remove (or not provide) info.

Send your check payable to FARS, to:

FARS c/o Michael Lechner, 436 Memphis Drive, Campbell, CA 95008



How to get to FARS meetings (*Visitors are 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.