



FARS

FOOTHILLS AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

The FARS Relay

March 2014

See you down the log

Volume 44, Number 2

www.fars.k6ya.org

MARCH CLUB MEETING

When & Where

Date: Friday, March 28th, 2014

Time: Socializing at 7PM
Meeting starts at 7:30PM

Guests are welcome to join us

Place: Covington School, 205 Covington Rd, Los Altos
(near Foothill Expressway and El Monte Rd)

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.



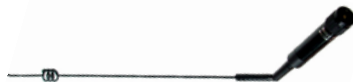
Raffle Prizes

We will have a great selection of Raffle Prizes as well as the CA\$H Wish-You-Were-Here Prize.

1st Prize: Yaesu FT-60R HT
2m/440



2nd Prize: Diamond NR-770HB
Mobile Antenna 2m/440
and Hiflux Mag Mount



3rd Prize: NARCC 2014 NorCal Repeater Directory

Wish-You-Were-Here Prize: A CA\$H prize awarded to a member who is present and has paid their 2014 dues.

Presentation

Presentation:

**Personal
Computers
&
Operating Systems
—
Problems and Solutions**

Speakers:

**Rami Ersheid
&
Tasneem (Taz) Rafiq**



See page 3 for a details!

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

www.fars.k6ya.org/events/calendar

* Visitors are welcome at all FARS events! *

FARS is an amateur radio organization in the southern San Francisco Peninsula area serving residents of Los Altos, Palo Alto, Mountain View, and several other communities.

MARCH

- 28 **FARS Club Meeting**, Covington School, Los Altos, CA, 7PM
Personal Computers & Operating Systems – Problems & Solutions

APRIL

- 9 Board Meeting, Los Altos, CA, 7:30PM
12 [Electronics Flea Market](#), DeAnza College, 5AM
13 [BARC Meeting](#), Los Altos Public Library, CA, 6PM
Bay Area Radio Builders Club
See the website / Yahoo Group for details.
20 [ARRL Rookie Roundup Phone](#), 1800 UTC – 2359 UTC
A great opportunity for new operators to get on the air and practice operating. “Rookies” are those licensed in 2014, 2013 or 2012.
25 **FARS Club Meeting**, Covington School, Los Altos, CA, 7PM

MAY

- 10 [Electronics Flea Market](#), DeAnza College, 5AM
tbd [BARC Meeting](#), Los Altos Public Library, CA, 6PM
Bay Area Radio Builders Club
See the website / Yahoo Group for details.
14 Board Meeting, Los Altos, CA, 7:30PM
23 **FARS Club Meeting**, Covington School, Los Altos, CA, 7PM

UPCOMING

- 6/28 **Field Day 2014**
Come join FARS for this on-the-air event!
7/18 [ARRL National Centennial Convention](#), Hartford, CT
A 3-day celebration w/ forums, exhibits, flea market, banquet & more
9/14 [ARRL VHF Contest](#), 1800 UTC Sat – 0259 UTC Mon
Fun on the air!
10/4 [California QSO Party](#), aka “CQP”
Fun on the air!
10/10 [Pacificon Amateur Radio Convention](#), Santa Clara, CA

FARS Membership

Joining FARS
and
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!

Join us!

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

*Email your FARS newsletter
editor at K6YL@ARRL.net*

P R E S I D E N T ' S C O R N E R

Mikel KN6QI

Membership Meeting. Our next membership meeting is on March 28th and our program is “Personal Computers and Operating Systems – Problems and Solutions” with Rami Ersheid and Taz Rafiq. While a computer is not required equipment in the shack, in this age of amateur radio it is a powerful addition to your setup. Digital radio technology, logging programs, online resources, SDR's and more are all dependent on your shack's computer. So what options do you have if your computer breaks? Come and find out.



Henry Coe State Park Backcountry Weekend on April 25th-27th. This event is in need of ham volunteers to provide communication support. Participation in this event is by lottery and costs \$30-\$65, but as a volunteer you can partake of this special activity for free! You only need to provide communication help for a few hours and you can enjoy the beauty and wildness of this great park for the rest of the weekend. More information on this event can be found at <http://coepark.net> (look for the backcountry weekend links). Contact me (kn6qi at arrl.net) for more information about volunteering.

Field Day 2014 is only 3 months away. Mark your calendars for June 28th-29th! FARS is planning to operate in the 3A category with 3 HF stations – SSB/Voice (80-10 meters), CW/Digital (80-10 meters), and Low Band (160-80 meters). We also plan to have a VHF station (6m, 2m and 70cm) and a HF GOTA (Get On The Air) station (20-10 meters). Reserve the Saturday and Sunday for some operating and fun, as well as the preceding Friday (setup). Sign-ups will begin next month and we'll be looking for our members' help to put the event on the air.

Next Electronics Flea Market on April 12th. I expect to see many of you there! The Electronics Flea Market started its 2014 schedule on March 8th and will run through September 13th. There is no market in October this year since it conflicts once again with Pacificon the same weekend. Full details at <http://www.electronicfleamarket.com/>.

Time To Renew Your Membership. Well we are into February, so it's time for you to renew your membership if you have not already done so. Membership is only \$20 (\$10 youth rate applies for applicants under 18) for the year and supports all of our activities including our monthly programs, and our radio operating events. Look for a membership form on the back of this newsletter, or check on-line on our web site at <http://k6ya.org/membership>.

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. Note that donations to our raffles are also considered gifts, so they are generally deductible as well. Consult your tax advisor for details.

Email Notices. Subscribe to the FARS Announcement List (<http://www.fars.k6ya.org/mail/>) to receive reminders of FARS activities and other news.

de Mikel KN6QI

R A F F L E P R I Z E W I N N E R S F O R F E B R U A R Y

Congratulations!

Cheers to the following winners!

1st Place – Paul KK6HWN

C.Crane WiFi Internet Radio, 16,000+ stations worldwide, clean clear audio, can also use an Ethernet connection

2nd Place – Elise KI6PUO

Koss SB45 Communications Headset

3rd Place – Bob WB2URF

Diamond SRH77CA 2m/440/40cm HT Whip Antenna





FARS PRESENTATION FOR MARCH

Details



When: Friday, March 28th, 2014
Speaker: Rami Ersheid and Tasneem (Taz) Rafiq
Presentation: Personal Computers and Operating Systems - Problems and Solutions

Every Radio Amateur's ham shack probably has a computer. Computers were used originally for simple roles such as looking up call signs and DX zones from a database or logging contacts or programming the memories of an HT radio. Computers subsequently found a role controlling things such as antenna rotators. In satellite operations, they do tracking calculations continuously and move the antenna to follow the satellite. Today, computers increasingly serve as the front panel displays (graphical user interface or GUI) of many new software-defined radios or SDRs. Most hams will agree that the computer has emerged as a useful tool in the shack.

So what do you do if your computer breaks? In this day of throw-away electronics, should you hang on to that Windows 98 or XP machine a while longer? Can your legacy 32-bit software run on a 64-bit quad-core hyper-threaded machine? If Microsoft really stops supporting Windows XP on April 8, is Windows 8.1 a suitable replacement? Rami Ersheid and Taz Rafiq from QuickFix Computers will answer these questions and more. They will talk about common hardware problems, software and operating system problems, and IT problems - everything from what hardware breaks most often to how to configure Windows 8 to eliminate its most undesired features or how to get rid of Windows 8 entirely, how to protect against malware, how to recognize infections, and what to do about them. This presentation is a "must see" for the modern Radio Amateur.

About the speakers: Rami Ersheid and Taz Rafiq are senior staff computer experts at QuickFix Computer Sales, Services, & IT Solutions in Mountain View. They specialize in fixing hardware, software, and IT problems of desktop, laptop, tablet, and pad computers. If your computer breaks, they can fix it for you.

HAM RADIO NETWORK PROJECT

Request from James KH2SR

Are you interested in setting up 2.4GHz Broadband-Hamnet / HSMM-MESH nodes? This is done by replacing the firmware of widely available and inexpensive wifi routers with free new ham radio-specific firmware that completely changes the wifi router to essentially become a networkable broadband data ham radio that automatically links to other nodes when in range.

The process is actually quite easy and can be done in a few minutes using any computer that has a web browser and an ethernet port. Wifi channels 1-6 actually overlap into our ham bands so we are permitted under FCC part 97 regulations to utilize a combination of directional / omni gain antennas and RF amplifiers to link the nodes around the area together. The more nodes that go on the air the wider the network coverage and the better the odds are of being able to link to other nodes.

Here is a condensed list from the Broadband-Hamnet.org website that describes just a few of its many capabilities:

- Mesh nodes are self discovering, self configuring, self advertising and fault tolerant.
- Mesh nodes are small, portable, low-power and inexpensive. They are easily battery powered.
- Mesh nodes can easily have a range of 10 miles or more using stock power and gain antennas if you have true line of sight.
- Mesh nodes are a data network without the wires. Most tasks that you can do over a wired or wireless network at your home or office will work on a mesh node.
- Mesh nodes communicate with other nodes over Wi-Fi frequencies and only talk to other mesh nodes on the wireless port.

The goal is to recruit enough hams to eventually have a 2.4GHz Broadband-Hamnet data network that covers the entire Bay Area. It could then provide voice/data communications services ranging from every day fun ham activities, hamfests, field days, to providing a secondary emergency communications network during a disaster. For now the plan is to just spread the word about this system and get more hams to join in on the fun. I have already convinced several other hams in Sunnyvale, San Jose, Milpitas, Fremont, & Union City to setup nodes on the air and be listed on the official map.

If you haven't heard about Broadband-Hamnet / HSMM-MESH please check out the following website: <http://www.broadband-hamnet.org/just-starting-read-this.html>. Membership is free and allows you to check out the map of nodes worldwide as well as access to the forums where this technology is discussed. It's really quite an interesting and inexpensive ham radio project to be involved in. Interested? You can contact me at KH2SR at arrl.net.

RADIO IN THE PARK

A Fun First!

On Saturday, March 15th a group of hams met up at a local park to play with our radios and antennas. Organized at the last minute, we were thankful for the use of the FARS email list to distribute the invitation. It ended up being a gorgeous day, and Agnews Historic Park in Santa Clara was a great location. We are organizing additional events this summer, so please stay tuned to the FARS email list. We will attempt to give more advance notice next time!



Yaesu FT-857D



Rick N6DQ



Elecraft KX1



Mikey NE6RD and Rick N6DQ



Elecraft KX3



Ron W6AZ, Dave W6VYC, and Charlie W4NJK

RADIO IN THE PARK

Fun in the sun!

Putting your portable setup to the test is an important step in preparing for a disaster. While this park in Santa Clara does have an outlet nearby, all attendees chose to operate off the grid. It soon became obvious that one of the batteries wouldn't hold power, and we learned that Power Pole connectors lose a lot of their benefit if not everyone is set up with them. We also needed to get creative when one person forgot the mast for their antenna, but we pulled it together!



The 1st contact made by Mikey NE6RD was 9A9A in Croatia!

The MFJ-259 antenna analyzer always comes in handy.



Buddipole



Tom Schiller Bravo 7K vertical antenna



Dave W6VYC's hanging antenna!



Agnews Historic Park



Mikey NE6RD operating a FT-857D



RIP to the battery that held no more.

ELECTRONICS FLEA MARKET 2014

Sponsored by ASVARO

The Association of Silicon Valley Amateur Radio Organizations

www.electronicfleamarket.com

When: The Electronics Flea Market is held on the second Saturday (pre-dawn) of each month, March through September, 5AM to 12 noon.

Where: The market is located in the parking lot of De Anza College in Cupertino, near highway 85 and Steven Creek Blvd. (~ ¾ mi. south of I-280 on highway 85). GPS N37.3215 W122.0435

Note: Buyers enter free. Parking at the college is \$3 (in one dollar bills or quarters).



DIRECTIONS

From the Peninsula:

Take Highway 101 or 280 to Route 85 south. Exit east on Stevens Creek Boulevard.

From the East Bay:

Take Highway 880 south to route 237. Take Route 237 west to Route 85. Exit east on Stevens Creek Boulevard.

From Gilroy/Morgan Hill:

Take 101 north to Route 85 north. Exit east on Stevens Creek Boulevard.

Enter the Campus from Stelling Road:

From Steven Creek Blvd. turn south onto Stelling Road and enter on the right. Park in the open parking in lots B and C, obtain a day-use parking permit (\$3).

Support your local non-profit electronics organization!

SCHEDULE 2014

Saturday, Mar. 8	Hosted by Silicon Valley Emergency Communications System (SVECS)	
Saturday, Apr. 12	Hosted by West Valley Amateur Radio Association (WVARA)	*NEXT ONE*
Saturday, May 10	Hosted by Silicon Valley Chapter, American Red Cross	
Saturday, June 14	Hosted by Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association (PAARA)	
Saturday, July 12	Hosted by South Peninsula Amateur Radio Klub (SPARK)	
Saturday, Aug. 9	Hosted by Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Association (SCCARA)	
Saturday, Sep. 13	Hosted by Southern Peninsula Emergency Communications System (SPECS)	
Saturday, Oct. 11	Hosted by Foothills Amateur Radio Society. Canceled due to conflict with Pacificon	

See you on April 12th !!

FARS Member Badges

Place your order online or at the meeting.
Available for pick up at the next club mtg

BAEARS Ham Cram

Next Quarterly Session: Saturday, Apr 19th
8 AM
Mountain View, CA
www.baears.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

Bay Area Radio Builders Club

“BARC”

A FARS Special Interest Group

*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.*

Meetings: Usually the 2nd Sunday of the month
at 6pm. **The next meeting is April 13th.**

Location: Los Altos Public Library

Join the Yahoo Group:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ba_radio_builders/

More Info:

www.barbc.org

www.fars.k6ya.org/events/barbc

Next Electronics Flea Market

April 12th

**De Anza College
Cupertino**

5AM to 12 Noon



HAM RADIO NETS – Getting On The Air

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.
Check out www.9amtalk.net for more information.

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%)

BAEARS (Bay Area Educational Radio Society) Crams & Exams, www.baears.com –

This group holds “Ham Crams” 4 times a year for Tech and General licenses (Amateur Extra test available but no cram). A guided study consisting of six 45-minute reading periods, with breaks and lunch. They have a high success rate!
Pre-registration required, sign up on the website. \$30

- Saturday 4/19, 8 AM @ Mountain View (exam starts at 4 PM)

Sunnyvale VEC Exams, www.amateur-radio.org –

Holds test sessions on Saturdays often alternating between Sunnyvale and Redwood City.

Walk-ins only, no pre-registrations. \$15

- Saturday 4/12, 10:30 AM @ Sunnyvale
- Saturday 4/19, 10:30 AM @ Redwood City
- Saturday 5/10, 10:30 AM @ Sunnyvale



Silicon Valley ARRL VE Exams, www.svve.org –

Holds test sessions on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month. Arrive between 8 AM and 10:00 AM to the Saratoga Fire Station at 14380 Saratoga Avenue (in downtown Saratoga).

Walk-ins only, no pre-registrations. \$15

- Saturday 4/5
- Saturday 4/19
- Saturday 5/3

Tri-City VE Group Exams, http://www.sbara.org/tricity_ve.html –

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

- Tuesday 4/8, 6:30 PM
- Saturday 5/10, 9 AM
- Tuesday 6/10, 6:30PM

CURRENT US AMATEUR RADIO BAND PLAN: www.arrl.org/band-plan ([click here for printable PDF](#))
Effective March 5, 2012

CLUB INFORMATION

www.fars.k6ya.org

President:	Mikel Lechner KN6QI
Vice President:	Steve Stearns K6OIK
Treasurer:	Dick Baldwinson N6ATD
Secretary:	(open)
FARS Board:	Charlie Morrin KI6FX Y Phil Hawkins KA6MZE Bob Bynum WB2URF Doña Kerns KI6DAR
Radio Officer:	Phil Hawkins KA6MZE
Training Officer:	(open)
K6YA Trustee:	Phil Hawkins KA6MZE
Relay Newsletter Editor:	Joanna Dilley K6YL

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

Membership: An annual FARS membership is \$20 and provides much needed support for your club activities, qualifies you for the CA\$H Wish-You-Were-Here prize drawn at each membership meeting, plus you'll receive a FARS Relay to your email each month! An optional club badge is \$9.

FARS is a California 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, so donations and membership dues are tax deductible with the CA Franchise Tax Board and the Internal Revenue Service.

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.

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.

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

K6YL at arrl.net

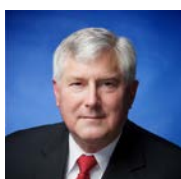
PO Box 399, San Carlos, CA 94070

Also available at FARS meetings.

Photos © K6YL unless noted otherwise.



Mikel KN6QI



Steve K6OIK



Dick N6ATD



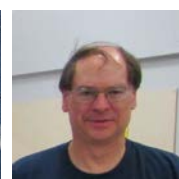
Phil KA6MZE



Joanna K6YL



Charlie KI6FX Y



Bob WB2URF



Doña KI6DAR

FARS New Membership / Renewal Form

The annual dues for 2014 is \$20. You may renew with this form or online by logging onto the FARS website and then using PayPal. <https://www.fars.k6ya.org/membership> Membership runs from January 1 to December 31. New membership applications accepted later in the year may have their dues prorated (see dues schedule).

Date: _____

Name: _____

Callsign: _____ Phone: _____

Class (eg Technician, General): _____ ARRL Member? _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

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

Optional FARS Badge -- Please include \$9 if desired.

First Name for Badge: _____ Select: Clip / Magnet / Pin

Send your check payable to FARS, to:

FARS, PO Box 112551, Campbell, CA 95011



DIRECTIONS TO FARS MEETINGS:

Visitors are always welcome.

Meetings are held at the Covington Elementary School 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.

From Interstate 280 – Take the El Monte exit Northeast. Cross Foothill Expressway. * At the first traffic light turn right on Covington. 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 – Turn Northeast onto El Monte, then follow directions as above at the *.

From US101 or El Camino – Take San Antonio Road west (to Foothill Expressway), then follow directions as above at the *.

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